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Negotiating Religious Change:the Later Reformation in East Kent Parishes 1559-1625

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

This study investigates the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism within the diocese of Canterbury following the accession of Elizabeth in 1558 until the death of James I in 1625: that is, after the reforms of the first half of the sixteenth century, but before the changes brought in by Archbishop Laud and the events leading to the outbreak of the English Civil War. While the actions of the state and the political motivations of key figures are touched upon, the main focus is the development of religion at parish level and how attitudes and customs changed over time as the demands of the Elizabethan Settlement of religion took root within the parishes.

The historiography of the Reformation has revealed wide variation in how religious change has been viewed at the local level. This thesis challenges the revisionist view which has described the progress of the later Reformation in England as protracted and contested at every step by the majority of people. It argues instead that some revisionist writing has been too pessimistic when applied to the diocese of Canterbury, and demonstrates that, in east Kent, resistance and division were not the default response following the 1559 Settlement. Communities were able to negotiate a path which stayed within the bounds of the law but which reflected their individual parish context. In this respect, this thesis proposes a less antagonistic view of religious change than has appeared from the historiography.

By using a small number of carefully chosen case studies, this thesis offers a refined sense of place concerning the growth of Protestantism in both urban and rural communities in Kent. The case studies focus on the city of Canterbury, on the towns of Sandwich and New Romney and on the surrounding parishes which formed the rural hinterlands to these three urban communities. They reveal the complexities of religious change, and suggest that a homogenous response to state-imposed reforms cannot be assumed, even in parishes which were geographically close. Extending the research to 1625 has enabled an examination of the consolidation of Protestantism into the Jacobean period. This indicates how parish religion continued to develop after the death of Elizabeth, by which time people had clearer expectations and were prepared to demand more of their clergy. At James's death, parish religion in the diocese of Canterbury was strong.

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Notes

Original spelling and punctuation have been retained wherever possible. Where contractions have been expanded this is indicated by the use of brackets. In a small number of cases punctuation has been silently added in order to aid comprehension.

The start of the new year is taken to begin on the 1st January.

The majority of pre-1700 printed works have been digitally sourced from Early English Books Online.

Unless otherwise noted, the place of publication of referenced works is taken to be London.

Abbreviations

APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council</i>
Abp	Archbishop
Arch Cant	<i>Archaeologia Cantiana</i>
BL	British Library
CCA	Canterbury Cathedral Archives
CCCC	Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
CCEd	Clergy of the Church of England database
CSPD	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
D&C	Dean and Chapter
EEBO	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
HJ	<i>The Historical Journal</i>
HR	<i>Historical Research</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
L&P	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i>
REED	Records of Early English Drama
SPO	<i>State Papers Online</i>
THRS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
TNA	The National Archives

Maps

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Introduction

In 1595 Josias Nichols, the vicar of Eastwell in the diocese of Canterbury, published *An order of Household Instruction* as a tool for masters when instructing the members of their households in the 'principal points of the Christian religion without the knowledge whereof no man can be saved'.¹ In the book Nichols was at pains to point out that although it had been thirty-seven years since Protestantism had been re-introduced in England 'there are to bee found so many that knowe not how they should bee saved or how they are justified'.² His evidence for the parlous state of religion in the area came from conversations he had had with parishioners, encountered when he was out and about in local parishes. In these conversations he was shocked, he wrote, to find such a large number of so-called Christians who were 'so ignorant and brutish and so farre from being indeed that which they delight to bee called'.³ Nichols is well known for claiming in the early years of the seventeenth century that in his parish of Eastwell, after over twenty years of his own leadership, only one in ten of the communicants understood the basics of the Christian religion.⁴ Nichols' pessimistic attitude towards the progress of the Protestant Reformation is one which has also been evident in the writings of a number of historians who have focused not only on the unwillingness of the bulk of the population to embrace Protestantism, but even on the inability of many people to understand the new religion.

The aim of this study is to investigate the Reformation in the diocese of Canterbury following the Elizabethan Settlement of religion in 1559 until the death of King James I in 1625. In 1971, Keith Thomas suggested that conformity to the established religion after 1559 had 'little or no impact on the lives of ordinary people'.⁵ Just over a decade later Christopher Haigh noted that conservative attitudes remained strong in the first half of Elizabeth's reign, and that even in the second part of the reign, the 'efforts of godly ministers' were only able to create a 'small Protestant

¹ Josias Nichols, *An Order of Household Instruction* (1595), sig. B.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., sig. B1v.

⁴ Josias Nichols, *The Plea of the Innocent* (1602), p. 213.

⁵ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1971), p. 116

minority rather than a thoroughly Protestant nation'.⁶ This thesis will examine the extent to which such views can be applied to the parishes of east Kent. Was the re-introduction of Protestantism after 1559 as unsuccessful as Nichols and some subsequent historians have suggested? Using a case study approach this research will examine how Protestantism was first re-introduced and then consolidated in the diocese, examining how ordinary people responded to the religious change that was imposed upon them. The study will challenge the view that for large sections of the population within the diocese Protestantism was deeply unpopular, and will suggest that compliance and conformity were more important than conflict for most people during these years of consolidation. It will argue that even within a small geographical area such as a diocese there was significant variety in the way that communities responded to the initial Settlement and that such differences can be traced through to the end of the sixteenth century and on into the Jacobean period. In this introduction I will first survey the current state of Reformation historiography in order to set out the general context in which this study is placed. I will then outline the approach that I have taken in this research and the sources I have used before providing an outline of the chapters which follow.

Historiography

The south-east of England has traditionally been seen as a region where state-imposed religious change was willingly accepted. Focusing on ordinary people, A. G. Dickens included Kent in the 'great crescent' of counties which he identified as having accepted Protestantism from an early date, suggesting that since 'this large heartland constituted the wealthiest, most populated and best educated region of England', it was a region which 'the government could least afford to disregard'.⁷ Similarly, Palliser referred to the 'textbook picture of the south and east more receptive to Protestantism during the period of uncertainty and a north and west less so. As a

⁶ Christopher Haigh ed., *The Reign of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke, 1984), p. 202 and 213. Haigh concluded that 'Nichols was testing if those parishioners were Protestants, and they were not'.

⁷ Dickens, *English Reformation*, 2nd edn (1989), pp. 326 and 329. The other counties cited by Dickens were London and Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, East Sussex and parts of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

crude generalisation, with many exceptions allowed, it may be acceptable'.⁸ Viewing the Reformation from a different vantage point, but still of the opinion that the issues were relatively clear cut, G.R. Elton emphasised the role of the government in initiating religious change in the early sixteenth century. As with Dickens, Elton suggested that the Reformation was a relatively speedy affair. Indeed, in 1977 his widely quoted opinion on the Reformation in England was unambiguous. 'The fact is' he wrote, 'that by 1553 England was almost certainly nearer to being a Protestant country than to anything else; unless that fact is recognized what follows becomes incomprehensible'.⁹

Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, however, there have been a number of historians for whom 'that fact' was not in the least recognized. The debate which followed, which emphasised the vibrancy of the late medieval Catholic church in England and the contested nature of the Protestantism which was being introduced, ushered in a change in the way that the Reformation in England was perceived, with a new emphasis on the difficulties which state and church authorities faced in trying to convert an unwilling population. Key protagonists in this camp were Jack Scarisbrick, Eamon Duffy and Christopher Haigh.¹⁰ Scarisbrick's well-known claim that 'on the whole, English men and women did not want the Reformation, and most of them were slow to accept it when it came' highlights the main thrust of the revisionist position at the end of the twentieth century.¹¹ Some of the claims of the revisionists have been fairly extreme. For example, in explaining the unpopularity of Protestantism, Haigh wrote of its 'awesome and perhaps unachievable standards' and that ministers were trying to propagate 'too intellectual and demanding a religion, above the capacities of ordinary people'.¹² Some of these views were perhaps exaggerated in the spirit of argument and debate and, indeed, Haigh himself claimed in *The Reign of Elizabeth* that

⁸ D. M. Palliser, 'Popular Reactions to the Reformation in York during the Years of Uncertainty, 1530-1570' in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. by Christopher Haigh (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 94- 113 (p. 104).

⁹ G. R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England 1509 – 1558* (1977), p. 371.

¹⁰ Key publications include: J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford 1984); Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400 – c. 1580* (1992); Haigh, *English Reformation Revised*.

¹¹ Scarisbrick, *Reformation*, p. 1.

¹² Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993), p. 283.

the volume did 'not present a party manifesto, rather an agenda for discussion of neglected issues'.¹³

The revisionists questioned the inevitability of Protestantism's success, but this in itself threw up more questions. If the late medieval church was as strong and popular as some of the revisionists claimed, and if religious change was as unwelcome as was sometimes suggested, how was it that Protestantism managed to survive and ultimately thrive? One way of answering this dilemma was to emphasise the strength of the late Tudor and early Stuart administrative and bureaucratic systems, plus the longevity of Elizabeth. This was the approach taken by Ronald Hutton in 1987, for example, who concurred with Scarisbrick and Haigh that the Reformation was deeply unpopular but claimed that 'the machinery of coercion and supervision deployed by the government was so effective that for most parishes passive resistance was simply not an option'.¹⁴ However, this is not entirely convincing. Haigh himself stated the problem: 'Now we are all post-revisionists, trying to understand how the impossible happened and people learned to live with it. There is a convergence of sorts, as we examine how the awful became normal.'¹⁵ It is one of the contentions of this study that after the initial shockwaves, which are likely to have been uncomfortable for many people, the re-introduction of Protestantism after 1559 should not unquestioningly be seen as something which was regarded as 'awful' by most people.

Although a great deal has been written about the English Reformation, therefore, this has not necessarily led to clarity.¹⁶ Even in the midst of the revisionists' critique of traditional interpretations, Dickens maintained his position, stating that 'having widely surveyed the evidence so far presented, I still conclude that by 1553 Protestantism had already become a formidable and seemingly ineradicable phenomenon in fairly large and very populous areas of marked political importance'.¹⁷

¹³ Haigh, *Elizabeth*, p. 234.

¹⁴ Ronald Hutton, 'The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformations', in *English Reformation Revised*, pp. 114-138 (p. 137).

¹⁵ Christopher Haigh, 'A.G. Dickens and the English Reformation', *HR*, 77 (2004), pp 24-38 (p. 37).

¹⁶ Peter Marshall noted in 2009 that the first seven years of the twenty-first century saw the publication of 563 books with the word 'Reformation' in the title. Peter Marshall, '(Re)defining the English Reformation', *JBS*, 48 (2009), pp 564 – 586 p. 564. In the subsequent eleven years the catalogue of the British Library records a further 900 such titles.

¹⁷ A. G. Dickens, 'The early expansion of Protestantism in England, 1520–58', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 78 (1987), pp. 187–221 (p.189).

The liveliness of the debate was well summed up by Alexandra Walsham in 2007: 'Any attempt to capture the current state of consensus on the origins, impact and long-term legacies of the Reformation appears predestined to fail – doomed to appear antiquated and obsolete even before it is further fossilized in print'.¹⁸ More recently, accounts have moved away from earlier polarities and are now presenting the Reformation less as something dramatic and catastrophic and are focusing on interpretations which take account of gradual change. Different questions are being asked which place a greater emphasis on the process of accommodation rather than the speed of acceptance, and this has led to less of an emphasis on the binary opposites than were often apparent in earlier accounts. Norman Jones, for example, whilst concurring with an interpretation of the Reformation as something cataclysmic and unwelcome, has changed the question he is asking from what did people believe? to what did people do?¹⁹ Peter Marshall's recent narrative of the Reformation, *Heretics and Believers* focuses on the nature of religious change, what sort of process the English Reformation was, 'why it mattered then and continues to matter now', as well as how religious identities were formed.²⁰

This more measured approach was evident in the inter-disciplinary volume of articles concerning Kent edited by Robert Lutton and Elizabeth Salter in 2007. *Pieties in Transition* focuses on how Protestantism was assimilated rather than how quickly or how successfully.²¹ The stated aims were 'to explore the changing pieties of townspeople and villagers before, during and after the Reformation'.²² The approach taken by the authors includes social, cultural and religious history, literary and manuscript studies, social anthropology and archaeology. From this perspective the Reformation in Kent is described less as a 'watershed than as part of a more complex system of shifts and transitions in religious culture that were already underway in pre-Reformation society'.²³ The dates 1400-1640 enabled the authors to emphasise the

¹⁸ Alexander Walsham, 'Afterword' in *Pieties in Transition: Religious Practices and Experiences c 1400-1640* eds, Robert Lutton and Elizabeth Salter (Aldershot, 2007), p. 182.

¹⁹ Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation* (Oxford, 2002), p. 3. He describes 'sharp blows followed by prolonged confusion [which] hit English culture like a series of earthquakes. Things slowly fell apart as public commitment and certainty waned'.

²⁰ Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (2017), p. xi and xv.

²¹ Lutton and Salter, *Pieties in Transition*, p. 1.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Walsham, 'Afterword', *Pieties in Transition*, p. 182.

diversity of piety before the Reformation and the continuities which existed in many communities afterwards. Pieties are seen to be 'multiple, malleable and continually evolving'.²⁴ Lutton concluded that 'underlying long term mentalities were more important in setting the tone and direction of parishes than leading conservative or radical figures'.²⁵ As will be shown below, while there is evidence of this in the three areas which form the focus of this study, particularly in the case of Sandwich, there is also evidence of the difference that committed individuals could make at parish level.

This is the general context in which this study is placed. The historiography has shown not only that there were wide differences in the way that regions responded to religious change in the early modern period, but also that it can be dangerous to make broad generalisations and extrapolate change from one area and assume a similar response elsewhere.²⁶ This is particularly true when examining responses of ordinary people who have left little behind in the historical record and where a variety of different factors determined their responses to change. This study will build on the work of Peter Clark, whose *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution* remains the key publication concerning the history of early modern Kent, and whose general conclusions have much in common with Dickens and Elton in terms of a quick and popular Reformation.²⁷ Clark's account, written in 1977 before revisionism took hold, is extremely wide-ranging, taking in politics, economics, education and the law, in addition to the religious history of the county. Although Clark does look in some detail at the religious development of Kent, in some respects this is subsidiary to his central aim which was to examine the changing nature of 'the relationship between the London government and the county'.²⁸ His view is that the Reformation was rapidly imposed on the county, with the work of Cromwell and Cranmer seen as important in the early phases of religious change. He does also point to the significance of early Lollardy within the county during the early years of the Reformation, tracing a 'crude topographical correlation' between the Protestant martyrs of Mary's reign with earlier Lollard centres. However, the main driving force

²⁴ Ibid., p. 190.

²⁵ Robert Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', *Pieties in Transition*, p. 38.

²⁶ It is significant that much of Haigh's initial research centred on Lancashire and that Duffy's Morebath is a parish in Devon, both areas which were slower to accept Protestantism.

²⁷ Peter Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Hassocks, 1977).

²⁸ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 3.

for Protestantism in Clark's account came from 'above'. During this period, the spread of Protestantism earlier in the century is seen to be significant, together with the work of the gentry, which Clark regards as a significant driving force with regard to religious change.²⁹ Clark concludes that following Mary's death and the reintroduction of Protestantism after 1559, within three years 'the task of securing at least outward conformity to the Protestant order had been accomplished'.³⁰ He does go on to modify the picture somewhat, pointing to weaknesses within the Elizabethan church throughout the rest of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. Nevertheless, his account is characterised by the quick and relatively uncontested nature of the re-introduction of Protestantism following the Elizabethan Settlement. Clark's broad sweep approach does not allow very much room for an understanding of individuality in the way that particular parishes responded. Michael Zell's edited volume on early modern Kent broadly concurs with Clark's conclusions.³¹ The volume contains two chapters on the Reformation, one focusing on the early Reformation under Henry VIII and the second focusing on the subsequent changes brought in by each of his three children. Zell concludes that although there was some struggle, on the whole the people of Kent cooperated readily with government demands.

Approach

Diarmaid MacCulloch has recently noted that 'we have all moved on over the decades, as historians do... but these days we might not unquestioningly sign up to the famous formulation now two decades old: 'The English Reformation, a premature birth, a difficult labour and a sickly child' – maybe not even its author?'³² This thesis will argue that, while the labour may have been difficult, the child was far from sickly; that conflict was neither extensive nor long-lasting, and that compliance with official pronouncements, and conformity to the idea of Protestantism were both achieved relatively quickly in most places. In response to the historiography, the decision has been taken to adopt a case study approach in order to investigate in detail how a small number of parishes responded within the diocese. In this way it is hoped to avoid

²⁹ Ibid., p. 151.

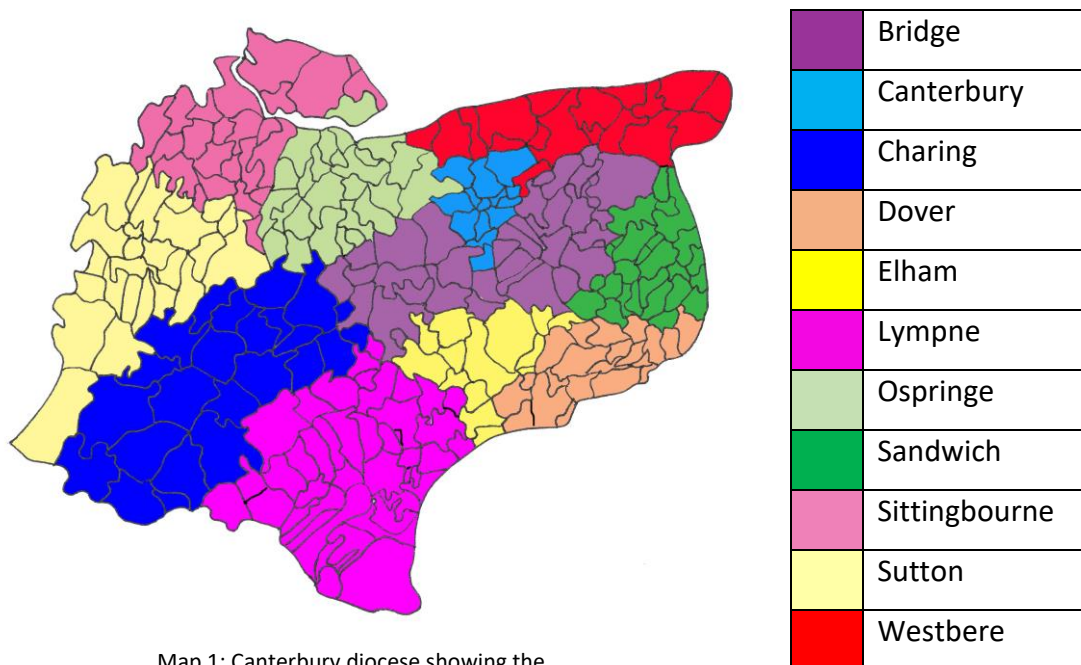
³⁰ Ibid., p. 162.

³¹ Michael Zell, ed., *Early Modern Kent: 1540-1640* (Woodbridge, 2000).

³² Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New: Writings on the Reformation* (2016), p. 249. The quotation is taken from the title of Christopher Haigh's article, 'The English Reformation: a Premature Birth, a Difficult Labour and a Sickly Child', *HJ* 33 (1990), 449-459.

what has been described as the ‘farce of two historians working from very largely the same set of sources with one stating that the Protestant Reformation was a ‘howling success’ (in establishing a Protestant culture) and the other that it hardly happened at all (because of Catholic survivalism)’.³³ Questions such as how quickly/slowly? or from above/from below? are useful. In addition, this thesis aims to consider the question of the character of religious change in these communities. The intention here is not to attempt the broad sweep of Clark’s *English Provincial Society*, which covers the whole of the county of Kent over almost a hundred and fifty years, but to focus on three key urban areas together with their rural hinterlands. Although religious change was imposed upon parishes by the government, it should not be assumed that parishioners were passive by-standers. As fully-engaged participants in the process they responded in a variety of ways and, as this thesis will demonstrate, while each community’s experience of religious reformation after 1558 may have followed a similar path, each path had its own unique character.

The case studies



Map 1: Canterbury diocese showing the eleven deaneries.

³³Michael Questier, ‘What Happened to English Catholicism after the Reformation’, *History*, 85 (2000), pp. 28-47, (p. 32). The quotations are taken from: Diarmaid MacCulloch, ‘The Impact of the English Reformation’, *HJ*, 38 (1995), 151-3 and Christopher Haigh, ‘Revisionism, the Reformation and the History of English Catholicism’, *JEH*, 36 (1985), pp. 394-405.

In the early modern period, the diocese of Canterbury, which covers the eastern part of the county of Kent, consisted of 257 parishes and twenty-two dependent chapels, organised into eleven deaneries. Table 1 on page 270 in the Appendix lists each of the parishes together with the deanery, the patronage and the value as given in the *Valor Ecclestaticus* of 1535 for reference throughout the study. The region had several distinctive features which make it worthy of study. Politically and economically relevant to early modern governments, its proximity to London and relatively easy accessibility to and from mainland Europe meant that it was important to governments that the diocese conformed and, therefore, government policies were more enthusiastically pursued here than in some other regions of the country. There were various factors which facilitated this. The diocese is fairly compact and contained, and is considerably smaller than some, such as Lincoln, York or Coventry and Lichfield. It consisted of only one archdeaconry. Until 1597 when the role was left in abeyance, the church authorities in the diocese also had the support of the suffragan bishop of Dover, a role which was filled from 1569 by the Marian exile, Richard Rogers. The diocese did not have any powerful, resident, Catholic peers, such as Lord Montague in Sussex, who was able to use his patronage of a number of advowsons to hinder the progress of Protestantism in that area, and although numbers of advowsons had come into lay hands during the earlier sixteenth century, the proportion of lay patronage was lower for Canterbury than for some other areas. This provided the archbishops and other church authorities with greater control than is sometimes assumed. In addition, two sizeable Stranger communities were settled in the diocese. Uniquely, when the cathedral was re-founded in 1541, Canterbury was also provided with the institution of the Six Preachers in addition to the cathedral prebendaries, and, as Peter Clark has shown, the area also benefitted from a significant expansion of schooling during the sixteenth century.³⁴ All of these factors were important in facilitating the establishment and consolidation of Protestantism within the diocese. Since the intention is to examine the communities in detail, this study will focus on just three distinct areas of the diocese, the city of Canterbury and the towns of Sandwich and New Romney and their rural hinterlands. In this way it is possible not only to place

³⁴ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, pp. 185-201.

individual responses within their local context but also to draw comparisons between the way in which particular local communities responded.

It is one of the contentions of this thesis that the nature of religious change was significantly influenced by the complexion of the clergy who were appointed to lead at parish level. The attitude of the incumbent was particularly important in the early years of Elizabeth's reign when, in many instances, conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism was required. Henry Gee's influential estimate that fewer than 300 clergymen were deprived or resigned their benefices at this time has recently been questioned, most notably by Peter Marshall and John Morgan, and Gee's conclusion that 'when Elizabeth came to the throne no wholesale turning out of the clergy took place', has been successfully challenged by them.³⁵ With reference to the higher clergy of Elizabeth's church, Andrew Foster has suggested that 'it is perhaps too easy to underestimate the extent of the shock that those in the Church must have experienced in the 1560s. Yet the devastation of the Church structure in the years 1558–9 was truly remarkable'.³⁶ Each of the case studies will address this issue with regard to the parish clergy in east Kent in an attempt to identify the level of disruption which existed in the crucial early years following the Settlement and to consider what this signifies. On the one hand the high turnover was disruptive and would have hindered the introduction of the Elizabethan Settlement as incumbents began to build relationships in their new benefices at the same time as overseeing the required changes. On the other hand, it potentially provided patrons with an opportunity to create a body of men who were positively willing to serve within the new Protestant regime. The case studies will demonstrate that this was more significant in some areas than others. Once the initial difficulties of staffing the parishes had been addressed, questions about the quality and the level of education achieved by the clergy became more important. This thesis will examine the rise in educational standards and the move towards a graduate clergy within east Kent. The Reformation had brought about significant changes in the role of the clergy and the way that individual clergymen were perceived in their communities.

³⁵ Henry Gee, *The English Clergy and the Settlement of Religion, 1558-1564* (Oxford, 1898), p. 247; Peter Marshall and John Morgan, 'Clerical Conformity and the Elizabethan Settlement Revisited', *HJ*, 59 (2016), 1-22.

³⁶ Andrew Foster 'Bishops, Church, and State, c. 1530-1646', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume 1: Reformation and Identity c. 1620-1662*, ed Anthony Milton (Oxford, 2017), pp. 84-102 (p. 89).

The role continued to evolve as the turmoil of the mid-sixteenth century gave way to more settled patterns. As this study will show, by the early seventeenth century, clear differences can be perceived in the body of clergy serving east Kent.

A second focus will be on ordinary people and how they reacted to the religious changes which were being introduced. There are a number of difficulties associated with this intention. The nature of the sources is such that the more extreme views which stand towards the end of the continuum of belief often emerge as the loudest voices, even though these were not representative of the mass of the population. In addition, a significant amount of contemporary published literature had a polemical intention, which again can skew impressions if taken at face value. This raises the question of the labels that are used to identify people who held moderate views and who did not identify with either of the extremes. Catholics who refused to accept the introduction of Protestant worship, who rejected the royal supremacy, maintained the spiritual authority of the Pope and who sustained a belief in the real presence, can be contrasted with the Puritans who described themselves as the 'godly', who believed in predestination and often in a Presbyterian form of church government, who looked towards greater reform of the church in England and who were often highly critical of those who did not share their zeal and religious commitment. Such attitudes are not difficult to identify. The problem lies with the majority of parishioners who fell somewhere between these two extremes. The majority of people do not seek conflict and will try to avoid it or minimise it when it does occur. In a review of *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England*, Michael Questier noted how 'under certain circumstances people could muddle along if left in relative peace by those who always seek to complicate and problematise everything'.³⁷ This thesis is about those people trying to 'muddle along' as they negotiated religious change in the parishes of east Kent. Whether people agreed or disagreed with the Settlement, the most usual response would be to remain on the right side of the law if people possibly could.

³⁷ Michael Questier, 'Review of *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England*', *Catholic Historical Review*, 99 (2013), 364-366.

It is also relevant to ask what was (and is) meant by the term Protestant, and how this changed over time. When asked to accept the new religion, what were ordinary people being asked to accept? The Creed outlines the core beliefs, the Ten Commandments outline basic morality and the Lord's Prayer provides some guidance on how to pray. Even had Josias Nichols met with a general understanding of these basics in his quizzing of local parishioners, however, it would not have been enough to satisfy him. Nichols suggested that on a Sunday, in addition to attendance at morning and evening prayer, on their return home the members of the household should be tested on what they had learnt from the pastor's teachings. The head of the house could then 'teach them a point or two of the principles of religion'. During the week a further two hours of teaching at home might result in 'a great gaine by this little labour, even a blessing from the Lord our God'.³⁸ However, there are many who may have regarded all of this as more than a 'little labour'. If people rejected Nichols' high standards of instruction and study, what were they rejecting? Protestantism? Reformed Protestantism? Puritanism?

In 1582 George Gifford had one of his characters describe the basics of Protestant belief:

Atheos: God forbidde that all those shoulde bee awry which are not learned: is it not enough for plaine countrie men, plow men, taylours, and suche other, for to haue their ten commaundementes, the Lordes prayer, and the beliefe: I thinke these may suffice vs, what shoulde wee meddle further: I knowe men whiche are no scripture men, whiche serue god as well as the best of them all. Will yee condemne such?³⁹

Gifford, via the character Zelotes, did condemn such. For Gifford the answer was to ensure a preaching ministry 'through absence of which there is a flood of ignorance and darkness overflowing the moste parte of the lande'.⁴⁰ In his opinion, part of the problem was that although Catholicism had been taken away, little had been put in its place so that people 'doe stand as men indifferent so that they may quietly inioye the world, they care not what religion come'.⁴¹ Christopher Haigh followed a similar line

³⁸ Nichols, *Household Instruction*, sig. B4, B4v.

³⁹ George Gifford, *A briefe discourse of certaine points of the religion which is among the common sort of Christians, which may bee termed the countrie diuinitie with a manifest confutation of the same, after the order of a dialogue* (1582), p. 29.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3v.

to Gifford's Zelotes, describing the views of Atheos as 'worthy sentiments... but, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, they are not Protestantism – and the godly ministers were still trying to crush them'.⁴² Patrick Collinson also took a similar view claiming that 'it is hardly an exaggeration to say that it [Puritanism] was the real English Reformation'.⁴³ In an article on the Puritan Edward Dering, Collinson noted that what 'we call Puritanism at this time was nothing but authentic Protestantism'. Elsewhere, he wrote that 'evidently, what is called Puritanism in many of the sources cannot be readily distinguished in the field from mere Protestantism, the Protestantism, that is, of the convinced, the instructed and the zealous'.⁴⁴

Examples such as Gifford could be replicated many times over, as the more radical or the more committed criticised the rest for their lack of zeal. But should the views of the most zealous on the less zealous always be taken at face value, or was there more than one way of being a good Protestant, or at least, a Protestant? It is perhaps this equating of Puritanism with Protestantism that has led to some of the gloomy evaluations of the progress of the Reformation by some historians. Haigh's pessimism has already been noted. In his view not only were people not able to understand Protestantism's intellectual tenets, but even where preaching was provided, the campaign was counter-productive. 'It was clear to the ministers, as it must surely be to historians that the preaching campaign had produced only a small minority of godly Protestants, leaving the rest in ignorance, indifference or downright antipathy'.⁴⁵ It is the contention here that, while it may certainly not be correct to classify the majority of parishioners in the diocese as the 'godly', it does not follow that they were ignorant, indifferent or antipathetic. In this sense, this thesis has more in common with the arguments of Judith Maltby who has noted that 'much of the work on religion at the local level rests on the belief that nonconformists took their faith more seriously than men and women who conformed to the lawful worship of the Church of England'.⁴⁶ Haigh himself has moderated some of his views more recently,

⁴² Haigh, *English Reformation Revised*, p. 214.

⁴³ Patrick Collinson, *The Reformation* (2003), p. 117.

⁴⁴ Patrick Collinson, 'A Mirror of Elizabethan Puritanism: Godly Master Dering', in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (1983), pp. 289-324 (p. 292); Collinson 'The Godly: Aspects of Popular Protestantism' in *Godly People* pp. 1-18, (p. 1).

⁴⁵ Haigh, *Elizabeth*, p. 209.

⁴⁶ Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Jacobean England* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 116.

admitting that ‘perhaps not all of post-Reformation Protestantism was as bad as I had once cracked it up to be. The Church of England provided spiritual solace for its people – with some ceremonies and psalms to help them along. It taught its people the catechism and taught them to hate the pope – although lots of ministers thought that was not much of a Reformation’.⁴⁷ Perhaps not much of a Reformation, but a Reformation nevertheless.

Patrick Collinson suggested that ‘we can hardly talk of a Protestant church without Protestant preachers proclaiming the Protestant gospel on a regular basis, for such preaching in the eyes of Protestants themselves was the ‘ordinary means of salvation’ and the ‘the very essence of the Church’s organised and active existence’.⁴⁸ It is true that many Protestants did see preaching as vital for salvation, but by the end of the sixteenth century alternatives to the kind of Protestantism favoured by the likes of Nichols and other Puritans were being proposed. In 1589 the clergyman Leonard Wright described his idea of a worthy minister. He ‘must be carefull to keepe in credite the authority of his office, not to vary in doctrine from his fellow labourers, neither to minister any matter amongst ye ignorant people that may breede contention or disorder’.⁴⁹ The importance of preaching was played down by Wright. Indeed, in his opinion, it was better for younger ministers to avoid the pulpit altogether and focus instead on reading the holy scriptures and the homilies and on catechising their congregations which ‘is a very profitable kind of teaching, till age bring discretion’ and they have learnt ‘to prate less and live better’.⁵⁰ By the end of the sixteenth century theologians and churchmen such as Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes, among others, had extended this approach and were presenting a different form of piety to that favoured by the Puritans, a form of piety which emphasised the importance of the sacraments as much as preaching.

⁴⁷ Haigh, ‘Dickens’, p. 37.

⁴⁸ Patrick Collinson, ‘England’ in *The Reformation in National Context*, ed. by Bob Scribner, Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 80-94 (p. 83).

⁴⁹ Leonard Wright, *A Pattern for Pastors* (1589), p. 51.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

In the case studies which follow, a broad understanding of the definition of Protestantism has been adopted. Someone who has conformed to the teaching of the established church, attends their local parish church each Sunday and receives communion at least once a year is taken to be a Protestant. Within this definition some will be church papists or parish Anglicans, some will be zealous and seriously committed and some will be lukewarm and half-hearted but, given the nature of the sources, it is now impossible to know which category the majority of people would fall into. Alec Ryrie has noted that ‘the division between Puritans and conforming Protestants which has been so important in English historiography, almost fades from view when examined through the lens of devotion and lived experience’, and while this is not completely the case here, the arguments and disagreements which were played out nationally were far less extreme in the local communities where relationships and community counted for much.⁵¹ This study fits within a post-revisionist perspective in which the binary opposites which have sometimes been employed in the past are softened to allow for difference and variety and a more gradual Reformation as local communities negotiated a workable accommodation for the every day.

The decision to focus on a small number of case studies has meant that some interesting areas have necessarily had to be excluded. Towns of the weald have not been included since they have been the focus of previous studies, but this still leaves several significant urban areas such as Maidstone, Faversham and Dover, among others, which would have been interesting to investigate had space allowed.⁵² The city of Canterbury has been included as it was the administrative centre of the diocese, significant for its traditional role as the birthplace of English Christianity, the seat of the archbishops of Canterbury, and the home of the shrine of Thomas Becket. It is also significant that it is a cathedral town, the existence of which adds an interesting line of enquiry to this study. During the early modern period, there were some who did not agree that the existence of cathedrals was appropriate any longer within a Protestant state. An intention here, rather than viewing the cathedral in isolation, is to consider

⁵¹Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2013), p. 2.

⁵² For example, Patrick Collinson, ‘Cranbrook and the Fletchers: Popular and Unpopular Religion in the Kentish Weald’, in *Godly People*, pp. 399-428.

the impact that the institution had on the wider community and how the religious landscape in the area, therefore, was affected by it. This study will also attempt to draw comparisons between the cathedral city and other towns within the diocese.

The second of the case studies focuses on the town of Sandwich, known to be a centre of early Protestantism and, therefore, an interesting contrast to the cathedral city. As a busy port, Sandwich was open to influences from mainland Europe and as a key member of the Cinque Ports Confederation it had also been an important administrative centre since the early middle ages. To some extent this was also true of the third of the case study towns, New Romney on Romney Marsh within the deanery of Lympne. In theory, it might be supposed that these latter two communities would have experienced the Reformation in similar ways. Both towns, as ports, had relatively easy access to new ideas, books and people coming in and out of the country; both had an identified part to play in the defence of the country as members of the Cinque Ports Confederation and both existed on the periphery of the diocese⁵³ However, this study will demonstrate that both towns experienced the Reformation quite differently. In this respect the findings concur with recent studies on the urban Reformation in England where Collinson and Craig have concluded that 'there was not so much a number of regional regularities as the almost infinite variety of experience which the Reformation in hundreds of English towns entailed'.⁵⁴

The historiography of the Reformation has suggested that Protestantism was more readily accepted in the towns than the countryside since people in towns were more likely to be literate and more likely to have access to Protestant preaching. Christopher Haigh suggested that 'Protestantism could spread quite easily among the merchants and artisans of English towns, but the Reformation shift from a ritualistic to a bibliocentric presentation of religion was a disaster in the countryside'.⁵⁵ Did the towns convert a reluctant countryside? The rural hinterlands of each of these three urban areas will be examined to draw the contrasts between the town and the

⁵³ As the crow flies, Sandwich is twelve miles from Canterbury and sixty-five from London. New Romney lies twenty miles from Canterbury and fifty-nine from London.

⁵⁴ Patrick Collinson and John Craig, eds, *The Reformation in English Towns, 1500-1649* (Basingstoke, 1998), p. 15.

⁵⁵ Haigh, *English Reformation Revised*, p. 24.

country, to ascertain how the urban and the rural areas compared, and the extent, if any, to which the towns were influencing their rural neighbours.⁵⁶ There is no suggestion that these communities are representative of religious change across the country, or even of the diocese, but given the differences of opinion highlighted in the historiography, detailed local studies still have much to contribute to a wider understanding of the complexities which existed at parish level and the way that change was worked out in individual communities. Although written as long ago as 1978, Palliser's comment regarding the importance of local studies is still relevant. He suggested that the most promising lines of research are 'those concentrating on religious belief at the most local level, for regional studies have too coarse a mesh. Broad generalisations can be made about the distribution of conservatives and radicals, but any determinist view based on geography or economic and social structure would ignore the vital role of committed individuals'.⁵⁷ In this respect, this study will show that individual clergymen played a significant role at parish level both in the conversion process and in the subsequent way that Protestantism developed within that parish over time.

The time frame for this study is from the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the death of King James. The reforms of Henry VIII and Edward VI laid some of the foundations for what was to happen after 1559 but they are taken to be preparatory to the narrative outlined here. The difficulties of the early years of Elizabeth's reign with regard to the clergy has already been noted, but in other respects it is now generally acknowledged that the Elizabethan Settlement had actually settled very little and that it is instructive, therefore, to examine not only the process of the reintroduction of Protestantism following Elizabeth's accession, but also the consolidation of religious change as the century progressed. Nicholas Tyacke has suggested that while historians of mainland Europe tend to take a long term view of the Reformation this has often not been the case with regard to England 'where the

⁵⁶ The rural hinterland to the city of Canterbury consisted of a further eight parishes and in Sandwich deanery there were a further twenty-three parishes and one dependent chapel. The deanery of Lympe was very large, containing forty parishes and four chapels. This study will focus on the marshland parishes. There were originally seventeen parishes on the marsh but by the sixteenth century Broomhill was no longer operating as a parish and there were a further four parishes which still appointed an incumbent but were ruined by the early modern period.

⁵⁷ D. M. Palliser, 'Popular Reactions', p. 105.

Reformation remains largely corralled in the mid-sixteenth century and the recent revisionist accounts seek only to edge forward a few decades'.⁵⁸ Indeed, a review of recent publications shows a number of studies which end after the early or mid-years of Elizabeth's reign.⁵⁹ Zell's study of early modern Kent, for example, focussed on the establishment of the Protestant church and did not journey much further than ten years after 1559.⁶⁰ The ambiguity of the early years of Elizabeth's reign meant that people knew they now had to be Protestant but the shape of that Protestantism had not been definitively drawn. In the early years it was still possible to stretch the boundaries of what orthodox Protestantism might look like and the desire for inclusivity meant that people of a variety of outlooks could find a home within the church. The excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570 changed the situation, although the difficult choices presenting Catholics after this date did not affect as many people in east Kent as in some areas since the number of Catholics remained low throughout the period. The 1590s have been described as a 'pivotal decade' in the history of the English church.⁶¹ This was a time when the dominant Calvinism of the church in England started to be challenged by a different style of piety which placed a greater emphasis on the sacraments and ceremonial. Peter Marshall ended his recently published *Heretics and Believers* in 1590 by which time, he suggests, 'a number of crucial questions had been settled, or shown themselves incapable of being settled'.⁶²

Although it is not usual to extend a study of the Reformation into the Jacobean period, there is much to be gained by including the early years of the seventeenth century. Religion during this period is often examined from the perspective of the outbreak of the English Civil War, and religious change during James' reign is often analysed with half an eye on what was to come later. However, there is value in

⁵⁸ Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of Protestantism c. 1530 – c.1700* (Manchester, 2001), p. 37.

⁵⁹ For example, J. F. Davis, *Heresy and the Reformation in the South East of England, 1520 – 1559* (1983); Beat Kümin, *The Shaping of a Community: the Rise and Reformation of the English Parish c. 1400 – 1600* (Aldershot 1996); Katherine French, Gary Gibbs and Beat Kümin eds, *The Parish in English life 1400 – 1600* (Manchester, 1997); Clive Burgess and Eamon Duffy eds, *The Parish in Late Medieval England* (Donnington, 2006); Jeremy Goring, 'Reformation and Reaction in Sussex, 1534 – 1559', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 139 (1996), pp. 141-154; Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*; Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989).

⁶⁰ Michael Zell, *Early Modern Kent*, pp. 207-244.

⁶¹ Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547-c.1700* (Oxford, 2007), p. 74.

⁶² Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p. xviii.

examining Jacobean Protestantism in its own right and not as the prelude to later difficulties. Can Nicholas Tyacke's 'Calvinist consensus' be identified in the parishes? Is there evidence of friction as this consensus was destroyed by the rise to prominence of Arminian sentiments? Anthony Milton has suggested that the Jacobean Settlement was 'more of a ceasefire than a consolidation of a settled Reformation' and that the arguments which remained unresolved then 'reappeared in the 1640s provoked by (but not created by) Laudianism'.⁶³ Peter White used the term 'via media' to characterise the church of James, a church where people such as John Boys, Dean of Canterbury in the later years of James' reign, were just as much at home as those of a Puritan persuasion.⁶⁴ This period saw the consolidation of certain Elizabethan tendencies. By the time of Elizabeth's death, a graduate ministry had been achieved in the diocese and the importance of regular preaching had become standard. But the period should not solely be characterised by continuity and consolidation. The canons of 1604, while they may not always have been strictly enforced, now provided clear guidance on what Protestantism should look like and the parishes can be seen responding.

Sources

It will never be possible to reconstruct the whole picture of what was happening at parish level; the evidence does not permit this. Belief is an internal attitude and, although it is possible to draw conclusions from peoples' actions, it is not easy to know the extent to which those conclusions accurately reflect a person's motivations. It is acknowledged that the sources that are available were not produced with the historian in mind, and they, therefore, have their own drawbacks and limitations as well as benefits and uses. In addition, the selective nature of survival must be taken into account.

A useful tool which was not available to earlier historians for identifying individual clergymen is the Clergy of the Church of England database. Launched originally in 1999 with several upgrades since then, the database contains details of

⁶³ Anthony Milton ed., 'Unsettled Reformations, 1603-1662', in *Oxford History of Anglicanism*, pp. 63-83 (p. 63).

⁶⁴ Peter White, 'The Via Media in the Early Stuart Church', in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, ed. by Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 211-230 (p. 215).

individual clergymen taken from over fifty archives in England and Wales. This has facilitated, in many cases, an understanding of who was serving the cure, the level of education and how this changed over time, as well as levels of vacancy and pluralism. Statistical information supplied by the database has been supplemented with evidence from archival records such as visitations, most significantly the archdeacons' visitations which took place twice yearly and which have survived in unusually large numbers for the diocese. At times, these indicate that it was high quality parish leadership that was significant in driving forward the Reformation, and at other times, the mediocrity of incumbents reveals the extent to which Protestantism had become an integral part of the parish as parishioners actively sought improvements.

Visitation presentments, particularly those from the archidiaconal visitations, have also been heavily used to identify responses to the Reformation amongst the laity. Canterbury is very fortunate that it has a good run of these core records compared to many other dioceses, the diocese of Rochester being a good example. Returns exist for the whole of the period under discussion here. It is recognised that although these records can provide a wealth of useful information, they must be used with some caution. Christopher Haigh has suggested that we should not trust these presentments since we cannot trust the churchwardens who were charged with reporting the deficiencies. He claimed that 'the office of warden was an unpopular one and sometimes, especially at chapels, no one could be found who was willing to serve'.⁶⁵ This fact, together with the size of some of the parishes which formed the basis of his study led him to conclude that 'we can therefore be sure that the detection rate for offenders was low, particularly if the local community was sympathetic and some offences went unrepresented for years'.⁶⁶ It is certainly relevant that the churchwardens who were charged with presenting deficiencies were also members of the communities they served. They had their own religious outlook and priorities and, although we might assume that in the majority of cases they carried out their duties conscientiously, we cannot be sure that all known misdemeanours were presented to

⁶⁵ Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 230.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

the courts. Their thoroughness is likely to have varied according to the enthusiasm with which they took up the task as well as the religious tone of the parish they served.

There is some debate over the kind of people who served as wardens. In 1571, for example, Sir Owen Hopton of Suffolk described churchwardens as ‘simple men’ and such as ‘woulde rather incurre the daunger of perjurie then displease some of their neighbours’.⁶⁷ Churchwardens were not always literate and certainly it is true, as Hopton suggests, that on occasions they succumbed to intimidation and failed to present misdemeanours in the parish. Several of the churchwardens who served the parishes covered by this study were in turn presented themselves for their negligence or their own misbehaviour. In 1616, for example, having reported that the church book of Tilmanstone was so torn that the minister could not read the appointed lesson, psalms and collect, and that the church was so badly repaired that the pews were much affected by pigeon dung, the minister then made it clear that part of the problem was that the churchwarden who was responsible for addressing these issues ‘contemptuously neglecteth his owne p[ar]ishe church and resorteth to others’.⁶⁸ In 1591, the year after he had served as churchwarden for Sholden, Thomas Smith was presented for not receiving Holy Communion and in 1611 Henry Griggs, churchwarden for Shepherdswell, was presented himself for harrowing on a Sunday. The *Detecta* contain several such examples.⁶⁹

In contrast to areas such as Lancashire, however, it is arguable that the situation in Canterbury diocese was more positive than either Hopton or Haigh suggest.⁷⁰ Not only were the parishes smaller, with fewer chapelries, but it is likely that the office of churchwarden was regarded far more favourably than is sometimes thought. An investigation into who served as warden at St Andrew’s parish in the city of Canterbury, about whom more is known than for many parishes, indicates that the role was often a stepping stone to civic office. Between 1600 and 1625, for example,

⁶⁷ T. E. Hartley ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, Vol. 1 (Leicester, 1981), p. 202.

⁶⁸ CCA- DCb/J/X.5.7, fol. 205.

⁶⁹ X.2.5, part 1, fol. 106; X.5.7, fol. 12.

⁷⁰ Not all assessments are negative. From his study of Suffolk, John Craig suggested that the churchwardens were not the most substantial men of the parish, but as husbandmen and yeomen they were also not the poorest. Wrightson and Levine suggested that the churchwardens of Terling consisted of the ‘midling sort’. John Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics: The Growth of Protestantism in East Anglian Market Towns 1500-1610* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 42; Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling 1525-1700* (Oxford, 1995), p. 104.

seventeen out of twenty-three known churchwardens were members of the civic corporation at some point. Eight of these men served as aldermen and six of the twenty-three served as mayor.⁷¹ In itself, St Andrew's was not a typical parish since its position in the centre of Canterbury meant that it was home to a substantial number of corporation members, but the example serves to counter-balance some of the more critical opinions. Indeed, it is clear from a contextual reading of the returns that many churchwardens did take their responsibilities very seriously. In 1616, for example, in the parish of Snargate on Romney Marsh, when Elizabeth Taylor 'taking to her selfe manly curradge did w[ith] owt regard of womanlynes assault and strike Joseph Gilphin w[ith] a cudgel likelie to have broke his head being ye churchwarden of the p[ar]ishe'. Gilphin was unbowed by the intimidation and Taylor was presented by the churchwardens at the next archdeacon's visitation. In the following year in the nearby parish of Snavesham the churchwarden, Roger Horton, suffered verbal abuse from Widow Wyborn, described as 'a common slanderous woman of her tongue' and she, too, found herself in the church court.⁷² It is impossible to know how often the churchwardens colluded with parishioners and/or the minister to avoid presenting misdemeanours they wished to be kept quiet, and this must be borne in mind in the conclusions about parish religion that are drawn.

Another issue with the *Detecta* is that they were created as a result of the visitation articles which usually had a very specific purpose and that purpose was not to serve the future historian. This has led Margaret Spufford to suggest that 'visitation records are no guides to the opinions or doctrines of the laity... possibly... because in the 16th century at least, the very subject of parochial doctrine below the level of the gentry appeared to lack importance to the episcopate'.⁷³ Certainly the nature of the questions being asked at visitations affected the nature of the deficiencies being reported. In 1586 the churchwardens of Waldershare reported that 'to the articles all is in good order saving they have noe service and have no curatt'.⁷⁴ With no services

⁷¹ Anne Le Baigue and Avril Leach, 'Where Streams of (Living) Water Flow': the Religious and Civic significance of Archbishop Abbot's Conduit in St Andrew's, Canterbury, 1603-1625', *Arch Cant*, 139 (2018), pp. 111-134 (p.8).

⁷² X.6.1, fols 23v and 63v.

⁷³ Margaret Spufford, *Contrasting Communities: English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 270.

⁷⁴ X.2.5, part 1, fol. 31v.

and no curate, it is difficult to appreciate that everything could have been in such good order in the parish. These examples give a flavour of the difficulty in using these returns as evidence of religious change, but it is hoped that by using the *Detecta* along with other sources of evidence to dig deeply into individual parishes an accurate picture of parish religion has emerged.

Surveys of the diocese have also been useful across the thesis, for example, the diocesan survey of 1563 which has been used to indicate the number of parishioners in each parish. The returns for Canterbury are not entirely straightforward since two versions exist, both with the same title but containing different sets of figures.⁷⁵ In *The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603*, Dyer and Palliser suggest that one of the documents, MS Harley 594, may be the initial response from Canterbury to the Privy Council's request for information in 1563, a response based, perhaps, on an existing survey.⁷⁶ They suggest that this outdated set of figures was subsequently revised with more accurate data, but the process of updating was not complete. This would explain why the second version, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 122, has many more gaps than the Harleian manuscript. It is fortunate that in 1565 and 1569 two more surveys were taken of Kent communicants and households so that, in the opinion of Dyer and Palliser, by cross referencing with these other surveys 'the basic integrity of the 1563 survey can be preserved by a sensible interpretation of all the surviving documents in the face of what seem to be discouragingly incomprehensible inconsistencies'.⁷⁷

Where they are available, churchwardens' accounts have been utilised in this research. Unfortunately, only three sets of accounts have survived for the parishes which form this study: those of Brenzett on Romney Marsh, which exist up to 1568, and two far more detailed sets for the city of Canterbury, those of St Andrew's and St Dunstan's.⁷⁸ As evidence in the task of reconstructing religious change, again, they are

⁷⁵ Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 122 pp. 291-318; British Library MS Harley 594, ff. 63r-84r.

⁷⁶ Alan Dyer and D. M. Palliser eds., *The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603* (Oxford, 2005), p. 38.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39. The 1565 survey: CCA- MS Z.3.8, fols, 132-143; 1569 survey: KHL (PRC) 43/13/1.

⁷⁸ Cotton, Charles, ed., 'Churchwardens' Accounts of the Parish of St Andrew, Canterbury, from AD 1485 to AD 1625: part IV, 1557-1596', *Arch Cant*, 35 (1921), pp. 41-107; 'part V, 1597-1625', *Arch Cant*, 36 (1924), pp. 81-122; J. M. Cowper, 'Accounts of St Dunstan's Church, Canterbury, AD 1508-580' *Arch Cant*, 17 (1887), pp. 77-139.

not without their problems. Clive Burgess, for example, has cautioned those trying to get to grips with such accounts against the danger of floundering ‘under a welter of minutiae, of planks, laths, nails and hinges... while never extracting a narrative or much of an impression of the characters involved’.⁷⁹ Each of the parishes certainly had their fair share of nails and hinges. It can also be difficult to try to reconstruct a narrative over a period of years since the accounts were compiled by pairs of men serving usually for two years at a time with a new partner elected each year. This means that there is not necessarily continuity in the way that accounts are presented and procedures are not always explicit or consistent. Significantly, not all of the money that came through the parish was accounted for in this way and silence cannot, therefore, be confirmation that something did not exist. The accounts were constructed with a specific purpose, accountability to the parish and to the church hierarchy. It is not possible to draw exact comparisons between the parishes from these accounts, which cover different years and also include different categories of expenditure. However, as several recent publications have shown, these accounts can provide a wealth of detail, not only about how quickly parishes responded to state-imposed change, but also about attitudes and priorities within the parish.⁸⁰

These sources have been supplemented by an examination of will preambles. As with the churchwardens’ accounts, wills have been used by a number of Reformation historians and have been strongly criticised as a reliable guide to religious attitudes by a number of others.⁸¹ The people who made a will were certainly not representative of the population as a whole, with the poorest people in society not represented at all, the poorer sort hardly represented, and men far outnumbering

⁷⁹ Clive Burgess, ‘Pre-Reformation Churchwardens’ Accounts’, *EHR*, 117 (2002), 306-332 (p. 308).

⁸⁰ For example, Valerie Hitchman and Andrew Foster, eds, *Views from the Parish: Churchwardens’ Accounts C.1500-C.1800* (Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2015); Andrew Foster, ‘Churchwardens’ Accounts of Early Modern England and Wales: some Problems to Note, but Much to be Gained’, in *The Parish In English Life*, pp. 74-93; Duffy, *Morebath*; Beat Kümin, ‘Late Medieval Churchwardens’ Accounts and Parish Government: Looking beyond London and Bristol’, *EHR*, 119 (2004), 87-99.

⁸¹ For example, J. D. Alsop, ‘Religious Preambles in Early Modern English Wills as Formulae’ *JEH*, 40 (1989), pp. 19-27; John Craig and Caroline Litzenberger, ‘Wills as Religious Propaganda: The Testament of William Tracy’, *JEH*, 44 (1993), pp. 415-431; Clark, *English Provincial Society*, pp. 58-59; Dickens, *English Reformation* p. 214-5; Caroline Litzenberger, ‘Local Responses to Changes in Religious Policy based on Evidence from Gloucestershire Wills’, *Continuity and Change*, 8 (1993), pp. 417-439; G. Mayhew, ‘The Progress of the Reformation in East Sussex, 1530-1559’, *Southern History*, 5 (1993), pp. 38-67; Michael Zell, ‘The Use of Religious Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth Century’, *Bull. Hist Res*, 122 (1977) pp. 256-249.

women. The business of the ordering of worldly affairs before moving on to the next life was also not generally a preoccupation of the young. One difficulty in using preambles as an indication of changing attitudes lies in the way that different historians have categorised the various types of preamble. Clark, for example, identified three categories: conservative, in which the testator leaves his/her soul to God, the Blessed Virgin Mary and/or the saints in heaven, reformist, in which the testator omits all mention of intermediaries with the deity, and radical where the testator stresses hope of salvation through the merits of Christ alone'.⁸² Others have devised different categories. In her study of 3,500 Gloucestershire wills Caroline Litzenberger identified seventeen types of preamble which she grouped into three broad categories of traditional, Protestant and ambiguous. From her analysis she has suggested that even the term 'the elect' is not without its problems and she has, on occasions, categorised the term as traditional where it seems that it has been used in place of reference to the saints. Even where the testator described themselves as being 'one of the number of the elect', she has categorised the will as neutral. This rather restrictive definition of Protestantism has led her to conclude that it was only in the 1570s that people began to accept the established religion.⁸³

Whereas W. K. Jordan described the will 'in this age of profound faith' as 'mirrors of men's souls as truly as they were mirrors of their mundane aspirations', others have suggested that this was often not the case, pointing to the significance of the scribe in determining the wording of the preamble.⁸⁴ Duffy, writing about wills of the mid-Tudor period, has suggested that much of the work which has focused on wills has 'been dogged not only by misunderstanding and unfounded assumption, but by an insufficient attention to the external pressures which often counted for more than inner conviction in the shaping both of will formulas and specific will provisions'.⁸⁵ It is impossible to quantify the extent to which the preamble truly reflected the religious attitudes of the testator. Their formulaic nature, plus the existence of books which

⁸²Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 59, n. 75.

⁸³ Caroline Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire 1540 – 1580* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 164.

⁸⁴ W. K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480-1660 : a study of the changing patterns of English social aspirations* (1959), p. 16; Margaret Spufford, 'The Scribes of Villagers' Wills in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and their Influence', *Local Population Studies*, 7 (1971) pp. 28-43

⁸⁵ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 504.

could be used to provide suitable templates, at least by the seventeenth century, means that a critical approach is needed.⁸⁶ It may also be significant that in the context of this study, apart from members of the Stranger community examined in chapter three, nuncupative wills very rarely include any preamble. At this most significant moment of life, when time was short and death was imminent, the preamble was the element which was often abandoned.

Litzenberger concluded that 'the demarcation lines in this forest of expressions of faith can indeed be quite vague and difficult to establish', and while this and other criticisms make a quantitative use of will preambles problematic, the importance of wills cannot be denied.⁸⁷ In this study a more inclusive definition of Protestantism has been adopted than that used by Litzenberger. Where the testator has referred to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the company of the saints or to the holy company of heaven, this is categorised as traditional or Catholic. Where salvation is thought to be only due to the saving work of Christ, this is taken to be Protestant. Often, the preamble is very simple such as 'I bequeath my soul to Almighty God'. While this could mean the testator no longer retains faith in the saving power of Mary and the saints, it could also be a sign of deliberate ambiguity where the testator is concerned to obscure their real beliefs. It is also just as possible to interpret such neutral preambles as evidence of the confusion which has been identified by some historians. Alec Ryrie has concluded, with reference to the period before 1553 for example, 'if the shift in preamble formulae, from time honoured phrases to new and more opaque ones, can be taken to mean anything at all, it is a sign neither of enthusiastic conversion nor of diehard conservatism, but rather of turbulence and confusion'.⁸⁸ Wills from the last months of Mary's reign are included in the samples used for this study since by this time it might be assumed that testators with strong traditional beliefs would be more confident that their views could be expressed freely; they did not know the nature of the changes that lay ahead. In the period after 1558 the difficulties of a statistical use of preambles is acknowledged, but by examining the wills within the framework of individual

⁸⁶ Alsop, *Religious Preambles*, p. 20.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁸⁸ Alec Ryrie, 'Counting Sheep, Counting Shepherds: the Problem of Allegiance in the English Reformation', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. by Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 84-110 (p.87).

parishes and with some understanding of context and local relationships, it is possible to trace similarities and differences in the phraseology which are significant. Even where the influence of the scribe can be identified, this can be used to indicate the tenor of belief in the parish, especially where the scribe is the incumbent. Whilst being aware of the difficulties, therefore, it is important not to throw the baby out with the bathwater and exclude this potentially rewarding source because of the difficulties.

These sources, supplemented with civic records and church records such as the Cathedral Chapter Act books where appropriate, provide the foundation for each of the case studies. Some of the individuals who were prominent in the communities discussed here published books and sermons, and these have also been used to explain opinions and motivations. A key source which has added depth to our understanding of the impact of the cathedral is the preaching diary of the prebendary Thomas Jackson.⁸⁹ This demonstrates the contribution that an individual could make to the number of sermons available where there was the commitment and the will.

Structure

The thesis consists of six chapters. For each of the communities discussed, the process of religious change will be considered, including the main catalysts which were driving change forward. In this respect, this thesis fits into the framework of current historiography which looks to adopt a more nuanced approach to the Reformation. The aim is to try to tease out the influences which were either facilitating the consolidation of Protestantism, or holding back change. Chapter one will provide an overview to introduce the diocese as a whole, using the issue of patronage as the organising idea. If the parishes were to be staffed with men sufficiently able to drive the Protestant Reformation forward, the attitude of those who held church patronage was relevant. The chapter will engage with the assertion that the transfer of large amounts of church patronage into lay hands following the dissolution of the monasteries had a detrimental effect on the church's ability to staff the parishes effectively. It will show that in contrast to some parts of the country where the balance of patronage had tipped in favour of the laity by 1559, church authorities in

⁸⁹ DCc/ Miscellaneous Accounts, 52, reverse pp. 256-245. See p. 133 for further details of Jackson's preaching.

the diocese retained a high proportion of patronage and therefore greater control over ecclesiastical appointments. The chapter will include an examination of how effectively that patronage was used to secure high quality parish leadership and will show that the archbishops, particularly, but also several of the archdeacons and the suffragan bishop of Dover, played an important role in raising the standard of parish leadership.

Chapter two will focus on the city of Canterbury. The city's two large monastic foundations, Christ Church and St Augustine's, were both dissolved in 1540 and Christ Church was re-founded in 1541 as a secular cathedral. The influence that the cathedral continued to exert over the city, and beyond, until its abolition in 1649, was significant and has not been closely examined before. Therefore, a separate chapter has been devoted to the contribution which the institution made to the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism within the city and the diocese. It will be argued that, although Canterbury has a reputation for being a conservative city, in fact strong reforming elements existed alongside the conservatives throughout the period. Chapter four will address the Reformation in the town of Sandwich, demonstrating that religious change came early to the town and that, in contrast to Canterbury, there were a significant number of people who embraced more radical ideas and practices from early in Elizabeth's reign. Chapter five will consider the development of Protestantism in the town of New Romney. As noted, it might be expected that the town would have followed a similar path to that of Sandwich but in exploring the differences, the chapter will underline the importance not only of locality, but also the importance of parish leadership in determining the flavour of religious change. Chapter six will examine the rural parishes which formed the hinterland to the three urban areas. This chapter will show that the rural parishes were all influenced by their nearby towns. As is to be expected, they all accepted Protestant ideas more slowly than their urban neighbours, but the early adoption of Protestantism in the town of Sandwich and the more contested Reformations in both Canterbury and New Romney can all be identified in their rural hinterlands.

There is not very much here about Catholics. This is partly because the focus of the thesis is on the process of Protestantism's re-introduction under Elizabeth and then on how Protestant beliefs became consolidated at parish level. The spotlight therefore falls naturally on what Protestants were doing. Additionally, the evidence

for Catholic activity across most of the diocese during this period is extremely sparse. Catherine Warren concluded her 1997 thesis on Recusancy in Kent by stating that ‘the role of the gentry seems to be a key factor in explaining why the advances under Mary were not exploited by the conservatives with the result that the Catholic community under Elizabeth dwindled almost to the point of extinction’.⁹⁰ There were a small number of recusant gentry families, but there were no large, resident, Catholic magnate families who might have taken the lead in organising the Catholic community. However, the small numbers and negligible impact should not obscure the fact that there were pockets where conservative attitudes lingered longer across the diocese.

It is the contention of this study that a refined sense of place is important if we are to avoid the stark polarities that have been the hallmark of some earlier writing about the progress of the Reformation; each of the case studies will demonstrate the importance of locality in determining responses to the Reformation. Although there were some who would not accept the Elizabethan Settlement, and in the later sixteenth century and in the Jacobean period there were some who refused to accept the authority of their vicar or rector, overall, the levels of conflict in this diocese were not high.

⁹⁰ Catherine Warren, ‘The Nature and Extent of Catholic Recusancy in Kent’ (unpublished MA thesis, University of Kent, 1997), p. 16.

Chapter 1

Introduction to the diocese with a focus on patronage

Introduction

When Matthew Parker accepted the position of Archbishop of Canterbury in 1559 the church in England was facing many serious challenges, not least that of finding sufficient men of a high enough calibre to take the lead in the re-introduction of Protestantism at parish level. If the leaders of the Elizabethan church were to secure more than a superficial acceptance of Protestant ideas after the Settlement of religion, it was clear that the choice of personnel at parish level would be crucial, but it was also clear that the staffing of the parishes with conscientious, able and committed Protestants was not going to be an easy task. Following the religious uncertainties after Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534, and the short reigns and conflicting religious policies of Edward VI and Mary I, it is likely that a career in the church was not an attractive proposition to many potential new recruits during the mid-years of the sixteenth century. Even given the numbers of ex-monks and ex-chantry priests who fed into the pool of available parish ministers after the 1530s and 1540s, the number of available ministers willing to serve the new regime was still not equal to the number of parishes needing to be served. Not only was there a shortage of men coming forward for ordination to take up parish roles at this time, but the problems were compounded by the system of patronage which the archbishops had inherited from pre-Reformation days, a system which prevented ecclesiastical leaders from taking full control over appointments to parish positions. Historians have highlighted the complexities of this system, complexities which had become even more marked following the extensive changes in land ownership that had accompanied the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1540s.¹ This meant that the system inherited by the archbishops of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which had already lacked some coherence before the Reformation had, by the time of Elizabeth's accession, become even more haphazard.

¹ Most notably, Rosemary O'Day, 'The Law of Patronage in Early Modern England', *JEH* 26 (1975) pp. 247-260.

The effectiveness with which these parochial staffing issues were addressed after 1559 will form the focus of this chapter. In addition, the chapter will provide an overview and an introduction to the diocese in order to set out the context for the case studies which follow. The first section of the chapter will examine the condition of the diocese at the outset of Elizabeth's reign before considering who the individuals and institutions were who controlled the patronage within the diocese. The following sections will examine the way that this patronage was used by the two most significant groups of advowson holders. In section three this concerns lay individuals and other lay institutions such as the Crown. Section four will focus on how ecclesiastical authorities used their patronage. In the early years of Elizabeth's reign, the urgent need was to staff the parishes with men who were both able and willing to lead the change from Catholic to Protestant. As time progressed, the need to provide long-term stability, plus a more highly educated body of men who were able to preach in their parishes became increasingly important. This chapter will examine how effectively this was achieved in Canterbury diocese.

While for most of the men who served in the diocese little or no biographical evidence now remains, there is a great deal that, nevertheless, can be concluded from general surveys and visitations. For example, the 1557 and 1558 visitations of the diocese by Archdeacon Nicholas Harpsfield provide much useful information about the state of the church in the last years of Mary's reign and, therefore, a clear indication of the strength of the local church which Elizabeth inherited.² The visitation of 1557 included returns from most of the parishes of the diocese, although, unfortunately, not all have survived. In the deanery of Canterbury only the returns for the two parishes of Hackington and Harbledown now exist, and torn pages mean that some of the detail for other parishes, mainly from the deanery of Ospringe, are missing. However, since returns for the majority of rectories, vicarages, perpetual curacies and chapels do still exist, this is an extremely valuable set of records. The returns give the name of the incumbent and whether there was a curate, and they also provide the names of the churchwardens. The patron, and often the value of the living is provided, and in many cases the number of households in the parish. Of particular interest are the

² CCA-Z.3.32. A two-volume record of the visitation has been published by the Catholic Record Society: L. E. Whatmore, *Archdeacon Harpsfield's Visitation, 1556-1558* (London, 1950 and 1951).

presentments since these provide evidence of how the parishes had responded to the return to Catholic worship. The returns for 1558 are less detailed, providing the names of incumbents, curates, churchwardens and notable parishioners with very occasional presentments. Each of the deaneries are included here except that of Sandwich, which is represented solely by the parish of Ash.

Archbishop Parker's survey of the church from 1561 provides another useful snapshot at the beginning of the new reign. The returns, referred to as the Parker Certificates, provide the name of the incumbent, the level of his education, his marital status, whether or not he was licenced to preach, whether he was resident and hospitable and the number of other cures that he held at the time.³ Extensive use has also been made of the Clergy of the Church of England database as well as the *Liber Cleri*. From these sources it has been possible to identify, in many cases, the names of the incumbents, their role within the parish, the dates of their incumbency, their educational qualifications and, in the case of the 1569 *Liber Cleri*, their marital and residency status.

In terms of the secondary literature, Michael Zell's article on the clergy of Kent in the Reformation period has been useful, although his focus was on the period before 1558 and his aim was to provide a survey of the types of incumbents in Kentish parishes at this time rather than looking specifically at patronage.⁴ Claire Cross has published on patronage, tending to focus on the significance of lay patronage during the period. Rosemary O'Day has examined the issue extensively, considering how the large number of patrons from the local gentry and towns as well as heads of colleges and ecclesiastical leadership determined the nature of the local church. In a number of books and articles she has examined the way in which the system of patronage played its part in shaping the body of clergymen into a profession during this period, one which had become increasingly attractive by the early seventeenth century. Her focus is mainly on the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, the case study for her PhD thesis.⁵

³ Corpus Christi College Cambridge, MS 580c, fols 22-31v. My thanks to Maggie Young for sharing some of her transcriptions of this manuscript.

⁴ Michael Zell, 'The Personnel of the Clergy in Kent in the Reformation Period', *EHR*, 89 (1974), 513-533.

⁵ Claire Cross, 'Noble Patronage in the Elizabethan Church', *HJ*, 3 (1960), 1-16; Rosemary O'Day, 'The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Lord Keeper 1558-1642', *TRHS 5th Series*, 23 (1973), 89-109; Rosemary O'Day, 'The Law of Patronage'; Rosemary O'Day, *The English Clergy* (Leicester, 1979).

The local impact of Archbishop Parker has been examined by John Daeley in his PhD thesis of 1967.⁶ More recently, Thomas Reid's PhD thesis has examined the clergy of Canterbury during the seventeenth century from a prosopographical perspective with the aim of identifying who the clergy were and analysing certain key characteristics about the men who served within the diocese.⁷ In contrast to much of this earlier research, this chapter aims to identify not only who the patrons were, but also to consider how these patrons used their patronage in the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism across the diocese.

The condition of the diocese of Canterbury in 1558

The returns from Archdeacon Harpsfield's visitation conducted in the summer of 1557 indicate that the church which Elizabeth inherited just over a year later was far from strong, that the problems were deep-seated, and that the challenges facing the ecclesiastical hierarchy would be difficult to address quickly and effectively. Just over twenty percent of the parishes for which the information has survived were vacant in 1557, or experienced a vacancy in the following year.⁸ In some cases it was explicitly stated that the vacancy was due to the poverty of the living, for example, at Kingsdown in the deanery of Sittingbourne, which reported that *'quia fructus et decime predictae rectorie tam tenues sunt ut curatum sustentare non possunt'*.⁹ At Linton the problem was compounded by the fact that the rectory was inappropriate:

Because the smale tithes and the iii markes a yeare aforesaide be not able and sufficient to finde a curate, Grigbee the proprietarie was demanded whether he woulde geve so much to the same as shalbe able to find a priest. He answereth that he thincketh no cause whye for because he paide for the same ccxxj libri and x libri for the patente and saithe that he is well contented to surrender his patente so that he may be repaid his money agayne.¹⁰

The overwhelming majority of parishes (seventy-seven percent) reported problems with their buildings, either the church, chancel, vicarage house or rectory. It was

⁶ John Daeley, 'The Episcopal Administration of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury 1559 – 1575' (PhD thesis, University of London, 1967).

⁷ Thomas Reid, 'The clergy of the diocese of Canterbury in the seventeenth century' (PhD thesis, University of Kent, 2011).

⁸ That is, 59 of the 279 parishes.

⁹ Whatmore, *Visitation*, p. 234.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.196-197.

reported that the parsonage at Eythorne was so badly decayed that 'xx libri will not reparaire the same'.¹¹ As above, this issue was sometimes made more difficult to address where church assets had been farmed out, such as at Whitfield which had a vicarage and fourteen acres of land and 'yt ys xiiij yeres past sync they have had any vicar and one Master Cumberford that nowe dwelleth in another counntre received the frutes for vi yeres and found a prest and sync that tyme the[y] have had none but at there owne charges'. The chancel 'ys utterlie fallen downe and the church ys almost in lik case and they have no kind of ornamentes belonging to their church'. Whitfield was a poor parish with a small population which does not seem to have been well served by the farmer.¹²

In addition to the problems, the data from Harpsfield is also interesting for the hints that the returns give of the strength of the Catholic revival in Canterbury's parishes and, therefore, the magnitude of the task confronting Elizabethan Protestants in reversing this. Eamon Duffy has suggested that the visitation, while certainly demonstrating some of the problems that the Marian church was facing, also reveals 'the startling extent to which the depredations of the Edwardine regime had already been repaired and the herculean efforts being made by clergy, wardens and parishioners to reconstruct the ritual and sacramental framework of traditional religion'.¹³ However, while efforts to restore much of the equipment necessary for Catholic worship may well have been 'herculean' in many parishes, there were also a significant number of places, not only where much still needed to be done to conform to Catholic worship, but also where examples of an attachment to Protestant teaching or a rejection of Catholic practices was identified by the visitors. For example, at Elmstead, Dover, Hythe, Horton and Capel Le Ferne the churchwardens were admonished to present those 'that do were no beades', and at Pluckley where 'Bournes wife received at the parsons handes after Easter before masse and mattens and so departed from the church'. She was presented, along with a number of other parishioners who, 'beinge suspected of heresie' were to be secretly apprehended and brought to the commissioners.¹⁴ In several parishes the minister was instructed to

¹¹ Ibid., p. 41.

¹² Ibid., p. 48. The 1563 survey listed 12 families in the parish.

¹³ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 526.

¹⁴ Harpsfield, *Visitation*, pp. 18, 25, 53, 68, 99 and p. 121.

'burie none that refuse to be confessed or to receive the sacramente. Neither that he doe minister the sacrament at Easter to suche as will not crepe to the crosse'.¹⁵

It must be acknowledged that the nature of this evidence is skewed towards the negative, listing what was wrong and what had not yet been restored, whilst at the same time ignoring the efforts that had taken place. However, and without minimising the scale of the task, especially for the poorest communities, there are clear indications that some parishes were dragging their feet, and hints of a lukewarm attitude towards the re-introduction of Catholic worship. Certainly, within four years of Mary's accession it is not likely that parishes could possibly have supplied everything expected by the visitors, but some of the deficiencies are significant. Thirty-four parishes had not yet 'set up the sacramente decently', sixty had issues over their rood screen and one hundred and fourteen were criticised over their altar; either these parishes were censured for not having yet set up their second altar, such as at Preston where the parish was instructed to 'provide that ther be another aulter to be set further on the side of the channcell dore', or deficiencies still existed with the main altar, as at Newington, where they were instructed to 'take doune the table from taltar and to erecte the altar with a stone or super altar before Alhallon'.¹⁶ Over thirty parishes lacked a patten, as at Shadoxhurst, where they were instructed to 'provide a patten of silver for the chalice before All Saintes and the curate to seye no masse after the same tyme without'.¹⁷ More than twenty were criticised over missing service books, whether mass book, portass or antiphoner. At Guston, for example, the churchwardens were ordered to 'provid a masse book owte of hande' and at Milton near Sittingbourne all three books were lacking.¹⁸ Several parishes were required to hand their Bible and Paraphrases to the authorities in Canterbury. At fourteen parishes, the churchwardens were admonished to 'warne them that can singe to serve the quier apon Sonndaies and halliedaies and to make certificate of them that refuse'.¹⁹ Over thirty parishes also reported examples of open commitment to the Protestant faith.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 185.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 71 and 58.

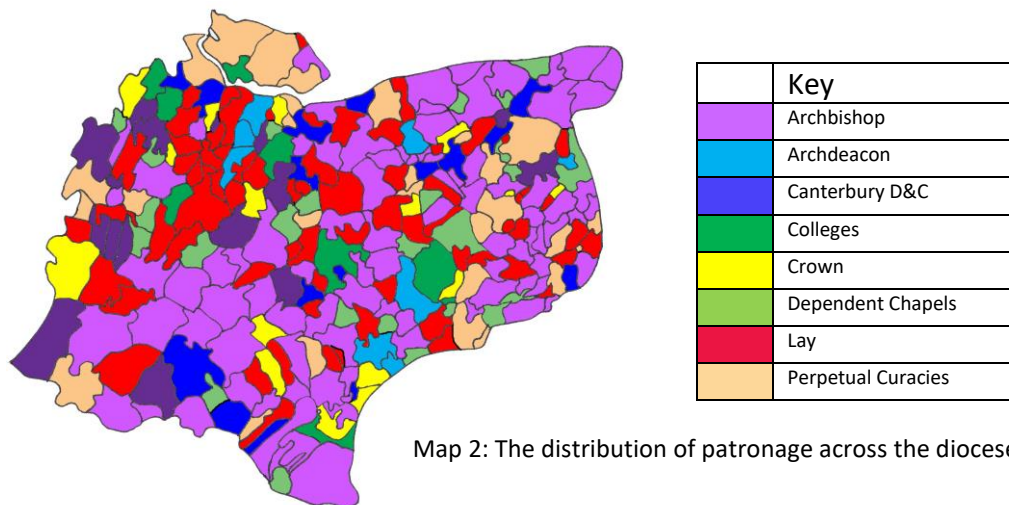
¹⁷ Ibid., p. 101.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 48 and 271.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 207.

Clearly, in many cases there were financial constraints limiting churchwardens' freedom of action over a very short space of time, but as the parish of Morebath in Devon indicates, where there was a strong collective will, it was possible to restore what was necessary for Catholic worship relatively quickly. Duffy described the parishioners of Morebath as 'working at full stretch to meet the stringent requirements of the official Catholic restoration', such that by the end of 1558 the parish was able to look back over 'the previous five years as a period of triumphant rebuilding, a restoration not merely of the church's ornaments and building but of the parish's Catholic spirit'.²⁰ The evidence of Harpsfield's visitation suggests that there were many parishes in Kent for which the same could not be said. Therefore, while in some respects the visitation illustrates the entrenched weaknesses which existed in the diocese at parish level in 1557 and which would undoubtedly be difficult to address, in other respects the returns point to the strength of Archbishop Cranmer's influence in Canterbury during the early years of the Reformation. In some parishes there was a clear reluctance to conform, and where Catholicism had not been thoroughly re-introduced by 1558, there was likely to be at least some enthusiasm at parish level for the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559, and some grounds for optimism for the reformers. This then provides a snapshot of the diocese just before the accession of Elizabeth. The next section will consider who the patrons were who had the responsibility for staffing the parishes.

Who were the patrons?



Map 2: The distribution of patronage across the diocese

²⁰ Duffy, *Morebath*, pp. 161 and 165.

It has been noted that one of the consequences of the dissolution of the monasteries was the increase in the number of lay men and women who gained rights of presentation to benefices following acquisition of ex-monastic lands. This issue could be so acute that Rosemary O'Day has estimated in some areas of the country five out of six advowsons were in the hands of the laity by the time of Elizabeth.²¹ The problems this could present to ecclesiastical authorities were well illustrated by Anthony Upton in his study of the parochial clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry where 'out of 147 presentations in the whole of the diocese (of Coventry and Lichfield) between 1560 and 1570 Bishop Bentham collated only five candidates, including two in Coventry archdeaconry, both *per lapsum temporis*'.²² This situation was replicated in other areas of the country. Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, for example, have shown that in the diocese of Worcester by the end of the sixteenth century 102 out of 176 benefices were controlled by laymen, and in Lincoln diocese 788 out of 1272 had become the property of lay men and women.²³ Clearly, in areas where the majority of the advowsons were in the possession of laymen and women, the ability of ecclesiastical authorities to determine religious leadership at the local level will have been severely hampered. In this respect, however, the diocese of Canterbury was not typical, and the proportion of advowsons which were in lay hands, although far from insignificant, was not as great as elsewhere in the country.²⁴

In addition to the increased number of lay men and women who owned church patronage, there were also lay institutions which were able to wield significant influence. Nationally, the greatest beneficiary of the changes in land ownership at the dissolution was the crown, at least initially, although in many cases these monastic lands came into the hands of lay landowners within a short space of time. In Canterbury after 1558 the Crown held the patronage of only eighteen parishes, and so in this respect, again, the diocese was not typical of the situation elsewhere. However,

²¹ O'Day, *English Clergy*, p. 150.

²² Anthony Upton, 'The Parochial Clergy in the Archdeaconry of Coventry 1500-1600' (PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2003), p. 140.

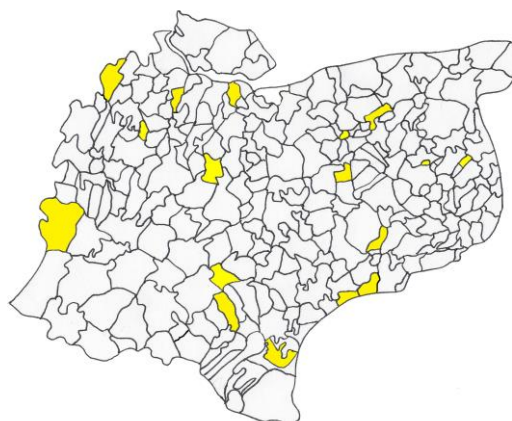
²³ Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 328.

²⁴ See Table 2 in the Appendix, p. 276. This breaks down the patronage across the diocese by deanery.

with over a third of parishes in lay hands, the way that these lay patrons used their patronage was significant for the success with which Protestantism was re-introduced and consolidated across the diocese. The impact that this lay patronage, specifically that of the Crown and lay individuals, had on Canterbury diocese will be examined in the next section.

Crown Patronage

Not only did the Crown only hold a relatively small number of advowsons, but Crown patronage was also unevenly spread across the diocese. Within the deaneries of Canterbury and Lymgne the Crown had the patronage of four and five parishes respectively, but elsewhere in the diocese only one or none of the advowsons were in the Crown's gift. Therefore, whereas in the opinion of Rosemary O'Day the 'lord keeper had sufficient patronage throughout the country to make a considerable impact upon the character of the English parochial clergy', this was clearly not the case in Canterbury diocese.²⁵



Map 3: The distribution of Crown patronage. Canterbury city centre contained two parishes in the hands of the Crown, All Saints and St Mildred's.

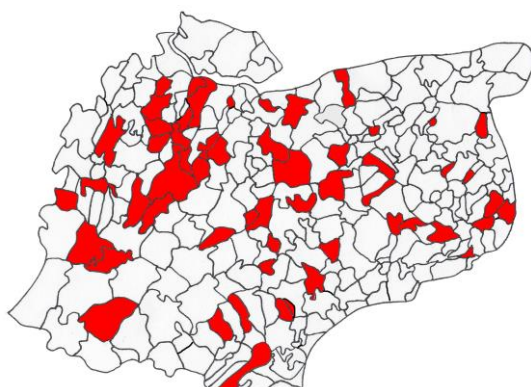
A number of the parishes held by the Crown were of relatively low value, with only four being listed as worth over £10 and only one over £20 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. This meant that it will have been hard to recruit the best men to these poorer livings. None of the men already in post in 1558 had a university qualification, although, this was not unusual at that time, but, between 1558 and 1625, of the ninety-eight appointments to Crown benefices, almost half (forty-seven percent) of the men had no qualification. This should be set against the rising level of education nationally such that by the early seventeenth century the vast majority of incumbents were university educated. Based on her study of the patronage of the Lord Keeper

²⁵ O'Day, *English Clergy*, p. 121.

Rosemary O'Day has concluded that 'a strikingly high number of Crown livings went to clerics with MAs or higher degrees', a fact that would seem also to be borne out here. Although the number with no qualification is high, at the other end of the scale the number with an MA or better was thirty-five (that is, forty-two percent of the total appointees and seventy-seven percent of those with a qualification had an MA or higher).²⁶

As with the Crown, the number of lay institutions which held the patronage of benefices within the diocese was also relatively small.²⁷ Much more significant for the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism at parish level were the lay men and women who owned advowsons. There were sixty-nine parishes which were held by lay men and women. The crown presented to these lay parishes on thirty-five occasions, mostly because of lapse, but on four occasions due to the minority of the legal patron. The archbishop of Canterbury presented on two occasions due to lapse. Some parts of the diocese were influenced to a far greater extent than others by lay involvement. For example, almost forty percent of the parishes in the deaneries of Sittingbourne and Sutton to the west of the diocese had lay patrons compared to Westbere where only one parish was in lay hands. Similarly, only the parish of St Mary Bredin in the city of Canterbury itself was presented to by laymen and women.

Lay Patronage



Map 4: Advowsons held by lay men and women

During the years 1559-1625 there were 136 individuals who made presentations, of whom eleven were women, and there were eighteen instances where more than one man or woman presented jointly. Some gentry families made several presentations to more than one parish over the period, but even in

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ A small number of colleges held patronage in the diocese: All Souls College, Oxford held the patronage of the parishes of Elmley, New Romney and Upchurch, Christchurch College, Oxford presented to Hawkhurst, Merton College Oxford to Elham and St John's College to Headcorn. The town corporation of Sandwich presented to St Peter's Sandwich, Eton College to Newington and the Master of Eastbridge Hospital to Blean.

those areas where this was the case, no one family could be said to dominate and no family owned more than a handful of advowsons across the diocese. The Sentleger family owned the highest number, but this still only meant an interest in six parishes, to which twelve presentations were made during the reigns of Elizabeth and James.²⁸ In 1966 Alan Everitt, writing about a slightly later period, highlighted the significance of the inter-relatedness of the twenty or thirty leading gentry families of Kent, and this same 'county community' can be seen operating here.²⁹ The case of Nicholas Sentleger, for example, illustrates the significance of close family links between the leading gentry families of Kent. As a younger son he did not inherit any patronage himself, but gained the opportunity to present through his wife, Katherine Finch, who was the daughter of Sir Thomas Moyle of Eastwell and the widow of Sir Thomas Finch of The Moat near Canterbury. She had a life interest in the parishes of Eastwell and Eastling and together they used their patronage to support well qualified men who could preach the word of God.³⁰ It was not unusual for church patronage to move from one of these gentry families to another through marriage and inheritance.

Although there were blocks of lay patronage, individual families each owned only small numbers of advowsons. The example of the Sentleger family also well illustrates the particular situation which existed in Kent whereby, except for a small number of parishes towards the north west of the diocese, the lay patronage that did exist was fragmented. Powerful noble families in possession of a large number of advowsons who could compete with the archbishops in terms of parochial patronage did not exist in Kent, and this fact, together with the system of partible inheritance customary in the county, meant that much of the lay patronage was owned by a large number of gentry families without any one family assuming a dominant position. This

²⁸ Anthony Sentleger Sr. presented Thomas Deve to Selling (1541-1559, CCEd Person ID: 40652); Warham Sentleger presented Nicholas Sympson MA to Lenham (2562-1580, CCEd Person ID:38503) and John Farbrace to Selling (1564-1569 CCEd Person ID: 40880); Anthony Sentleger Jr. presented Richard Horsemanden to Ulcombe (1596-1627, CCEd Person ID: 41986); Nicholas Sentleger presented John Walsall DD to Eastling, (1574-1618, CCEd Person ID: 205494), Richard Pickard MA to Eastwell (1579-1580, CCEd Person ID: 90624), Josias Nichols MA to Eastwell (1580-1603, CCEd Person ID: 46723) and John Stibbing BA to Tonge (1573-1579, CCEd Person ID: 38633).

²⁹ Alan Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion: 1640-1660* (Leicester, 1966).

³⁰ For example, at Eastwell after the death of the long-serving Gregory Clemens in 1583, the couple made three presentations, John Stibbing, BA and a licensed preacher (CCEd Person ID:38633), Richard Pickard, MA (CCEd Person ID: 90624) and the well-known non-conformist, Josias Nichols, MA (CCEd Person ID: 46723).

lessened the potential of an individual family to use its patronage to shape the religion of a wider area. In contrast, Jeremy Goring in his study of the Sussex ministry has demonstrated how Viscount Montague, the leading Catholic of the area, owned an impressive sixteen out of the forty-two advowsons in the deaneries of Dallington and Hastings. Together with Lord Buckhurst he controlled over a third of the advowsons in the east of the county, a fact that can only have added to the problems which Bishop Curteys shared with the rest of the episcopate in attempting to provide high quality, reliable parish leadership.³¹ In Canterbury diocese where, for the most part patrons presented to only one or two parishes, this situation did not exist.³²

It should also be remembered that, whereas the existence of numbers of lay patrons across the diocese undoubtedly took control away from the archbishops, where committed Protestant families held the advowson they could work in conjunction with the church hierarchy to provide the kind of local leadership that could lead to religious change in the parishes. This can be seen happening in the case of the Wotton family who owned the patronage of the parishes of Ringwold in the deanery of Sandwich and Boughton Malherbe in Charing. Thomas Wotton's Protestant credentials can be demonstrated by his refusal during Mary's reign to conform when in 1554 he was summoned before the council and subsequently committed to prison for his 'obstinate standing against matters of religion'.³³ Several key protestant writers dedicated books to him; for example, Edward Dering in his '*Sparing Restraint*' printed in 1568. The first opportunity to present to the parish of Ringwold following Elizabeth's accession occurred in 1565, an opportunity that Wotton granted to John Bacon, *pro hac vice*, who used the grant to present Theodore Newton MA.³⁴ Newton could be described as a high status clergyman who had been a Marian exile, having spent time

³¹ Goring, 'The Reformation in Sussex', p.353.

³² The Boys family presented to five parishes, Eythorne, Barfreston, Betteshanger, Denton, and jointly with Dudley Digges, to Temple Ewell. Three families presented to four parishes; the Kempe family to Chilham, Bonnington, Stowting and Crundale; the Finch family to Eastling, Fordwich, Eastwell and Kingsdown; the Cheyney family to Otterden, Warden, Chilham and Patricxbourne. Six families presented to three parishes; the Wotton family presented to Ringwold, Boughton Malherbe and Cheriton; Members of the Sondes family presented to Leaveland, Selling and Throwley; Members of the Partriche family presented to Patricxbourne, Kingston and Wychling; the Moyle family presented to Bonnington, Eastwell and Newington; Members of the Gay family presented to Barfreston, Denton and Wotton; Members of the Crispe family presented to Frinsted, Stonar and Wotton.

³³ APC, Vol 4 (1552-1554), p. 389.

³⁴ CCEd, 'Theodore Newton', Person ID: 72926.

with John Knox's congregation at Geneva, and who had been appointed a canon of Canterbury in October 1559.³⁵

Claire Cross has written that 'throughout Elizabeth's reign Protestantism made remarkable progress through the active co-operation between zealous local clergy and local lay people', and several examples of this can be seen in Canterbury diocese.³⁶ Thomas Scot of Eastwell was a committed protestant who secured the presentation of Bircholt from Richard Hawke of Wye in order to present Robert Carrier.³⁷ The parish was not wealthy, worth only £2 10s 10d a year in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, but with only a handful of houses it was a useful sinecure to support a worthy clergyman. In addition, during the lifetime of Carrier the parish was united with the parish of Brabourne, worth a more respectable £11 12s 6d. The Scots also owned the patronage of Orlestone in their own right, another parish with only a handful of communicants. In 1569 Thomas Scott presented Robert Elizander, another returning exile who was criticised in 1569 and again in 1573 for his non-conformity in terms of dress.³⁸ Another radical Protestant, John Grimstone, was presented to the rectory by Scot in 1588. Grimstone was one of the ministers who was to fall foul of Whitgift for his unwillingness to subscribe to the Articles of 1584.³⁹ Of the seven men presented by the Scott family during the period, five were Masters of Arts, a higher proportion of university educated men than average, an indication of their commitment to providing a well-educated, preaching ministry for the people of the county.

Roland Usher suggested that there is evidence in some places of radical Protestants buying up blocks of advowsons or buying the grant of next presentation in order to place key individuals within a parish.⁴⁰ Whereas in Canterbury diocese there is little evidence of individuals buying up blocks of patronage, there are instances of men and women buying the grant of next presentation in order to support a particular individual. For example, in 1567 Thomas Cole, Archdeacon of Essex and a Marian exile himself, obtained the patronage of the vicarage of Linton from Alexander Grigby in

³⁵ Stamford Lehmborg, 'Theodore Newton', *ONDB*.

³⁶ Claire Cross, *Church and People: England 1450 – 1660* (Oxford, 1999), p. 133.

³⁷ CCEd, 'Robert Carrier', Person ID: 68156.

³⁸ CCEd, 'Robert Elizander', Person ID: 40771; John Daeley, 'Parker', p. 276.

³⁹ CCEd, 'John Grimstone', Person ID: 41202.

⁴⁰ R.G. Usher, *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, Volume 1 (New York, 1910), p. 142.

order to present it to a fellow exile, Anthony Carrier MA. In this case, the presentation was 'following agreement between the latter and the parishioners of Linton'.⁴¹ Grigby's response to criticism during Harpsfield's visitation of 1557 indicates that his interest in the spiritual development of the parishioners came second to personal profit in the way he used his church patronage.⁴² Despite examples such as this at Linton, the practice does not seem to have been widespread in Canterbury.

A self-confident attitude among some of the gentry in terms of their role and responsibilities with regard to the church can be discerned in the controversy over clergy subscription to Whitgift's Articles of 1584. As many as twenty-five Kentish gentlemen took the trouble to travel to Lambeth Palace in May of that year to meet with Whitgift in support of those clergy in danger of deprivation for refusing to subscribe. The group included men such as Nicholas Sentleger, Thomas Wotton and James Hales, all church patrons within the county. A key player in the negotiations was Thomas Scot of Godmersham. As the son of a younger son of the Scot family Thomas did not own any rights of patronage himself, but his position as spokesman for this group indicates a broader concern for church government amongst certain groups of Kentish gentry. In *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* Collinson stated that 'no episode more strikingly illustrates the contempt with which the Elizabethan governing classes entertained for prelates'.⁴³ But whether it was contempt or not, the report of the conversations given by Commissary Lakes who was present at the conversations between the gentlemen and Whitgift suggests not only a degree of frustration on the part of the hierarchy, but also a clear indication of the group's position concerning their role in church government. When speaking out in defence of Josias Nichols, rector of Eastwell, Lakes commented on their use of 'that oft repeated verse viz *'None can tell better than we; None can tell better than we'*', suggesting that this was a group of laymen who felt it was certainly their place to speak up on matters of religion which affected their locality.⁴⁴ Collinson presented Whitgift as being convinced of the necessity that non-conforming preachers be silenced, telling Sir Christopher Hatton

⁴¹ CCEd, 'Anthony Carrier', Person ID: 39496.

⁴² See above page 37.

⁴³ Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), p.259.

⁴⁴ John Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift D.D: The Third and Last Lord Archbishop of Canterbury in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1822), p. 277.

that if these men 'were countenanced against the law, against the conformable preachers and against himself, he could do no more good in Canterbury or anywhere else'.⁴⁵ Significantly he also recognised the importance of powerful gentry support for this brand of Christianity in Kent. 'Unless such contentious persons were some way animated and backed, they would not stand out as they do'. Strype would seem to be right in his conclusion that Whitgift 'had his hands full' at this time'.⁴⁶

It might be expected that those patrons who retained a conservative outlook in terms of their religion were in a difficult position after the accession of Elizabeth since they were not able to use their patronage openly to support their own religious view. It is possible that in the early years of Elizabeth's reign the situation was easier for such patrons than it became later in the century. Clark has suggested that after 'a few critical months at the start of Elizabeth's reign' a group of important conservatives such as Thomas Kempe and Warham Sentleger were able to retain some influence in the county, partly as a result of the government's desire to 'create as much continuity as possible with the late Marian regime'.⁴⁷ Certainly these men were actively presenting to their parishes during the early part of Elizabeth's reign. Warham Sentleger, for example, used his patronage in support of the prebendary, Nicholas Sympson, by presenting him to the parishes of Lenham in 1562 and Wychlyng in 1564. Sympson became a Cathedral prebendary in 1580. Diarmaid MacCulloch has stated that up to 1606 even Catholic recusants with patronage rights to benefices within the Church of England seemed to be able to use those rights as they pleased.⁴⁸

Ironically, it could even be that the existence of openly Catholic patrons, or at least openly conservative patrons may, in some respects have aided the church hierarchy in its attempts to provide Protestant leadership in the parishes. Goring, for example, has shown how Viscount Montague's Catholicism and his lack of interest in presenting candidates who might be acceptable to the hierarchy, led him on occasions to lease out his patronage even if this was 'often to militant Protestants'.⁴⁹ Montague, in addition to his Sussex patronage, also owned the advowson of the wealthy parish of

⁴⁵ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 259.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴⁷ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 128.

⁴⁸ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England: 1547 – 1603* (Basingstoke, 1990), p. 97.

⁴⁹ Goring, 'Reformation in Sussex', p. 353.

Wickhambreux in the deanery of Bridge, and he seems to have been happy to grant away his patronage rights in a similar way. For example, in 1560 we find a yeoman, Owen James, presenting John Smith to the rectory where he remained for the next forty years.⁵⁰ Montague's grandson and heir, Anthony Browne, implicated in the Gunpowder Plot in 1605, also seems to have been happy to grant his ecclesiastical patronage of the parish away. In 1603 he granted the right to another yeoman, Richard Parker, who presented Smith's son, another John Smith, who continued the family business by serving the cure for a further forty years.⁵¹ At the very least these men provided stability of spiritual leadership: both men served only this one parish, and since John Smith the younger also served as curate from 1599 there was even a period of apprenticeship before he took over the reins on his own.

Another possibility for those conservatives who were not particularly interested in finding good Protestant ministers to serve their parishes was to leave the post vacant, something which can be seen in the way in which the Baker family used their patronage. John Baker senior (c 1589-1558) was one of the conservative old guard of Kent who was prominent during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI and who managed to retain influence during Mary's reign. Having inherited 'but a single tenement' he had built up a large estate by the time of his death, much of which had come from ex-monastic lands.⁵² He was well known for his conservatism in religion, the room above the porch of the church in Cranbrook coming to be known as 'Baker's jail' during Mary's reign owing to the number of Protestant suspects held there before being questioned in front of Baker'.⁵³ In his will Baker advised his son, Richard, 'above all things see thou serve God and thy soverayne, apply thy learning, be curtosse and gentill to any bodye...avoid bribery, extortion, corruption and dissimulation, and eschew idleness'.⁵⁴ Whether or not he heeded his father's advice, the family certainly remained well disposed towards Catholicism with Richard's daughter in law, Mary (nee Guildforde) being presented at the Kent Quarter Sessions for failing to attend her

⁵⁰ CCEd, 'John Smith', Person ID: 38574.

⁵¹ CCEd, 'John Smith', Person ID: 38567.

⁵² J.D. Alsop, 'John Baker', *ODNB*.

⁵³ Patrick Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', in *Godly People*, p. 177.

⁵⁴ F. V. Baker, 'Notes on the life of Sir John Baker of Sissinghurst, Kent', *Arch Cant*, 38 (1926), 5-28 (p. 25).

parish church for the previous three months.⁵⁵ The family had the presentation of Kingsnorth in Lympne deanery and Frittenden in Charing. Following the death of Thomas Oliver in 1588 thirty-six years after his presentation by John Baker senior, the family did not use their powers of patronage again until John Baker's great grandson, Henry, and the lapse in incumbent provided the opportunity for the archbishop to provide the men to fill the vacancies.⁵⁶

Other examples could be cited of conservative patrons presenting men whose private lives caused dismay in certain quarters, such as Margery Hendley who presented Gervase Linche to the parish of Elmestone in 1550, where he remained for the following thirty years.⁵⁷ In 1560 he was presented since, although he was resident in the parish, he was not performing his duties and 'he doth receive the fruit and profits, being a temporal man, leaving none to serve the cure'.⁵⁸ William Darrell managed to secure the patronage of the conservatives Warham Sentleger, Mary Guldeford and Thomas Kempe at various times in his career and these helped him to gather a wide array of church positions. During a period of over thirty years this arch pluralist served eleven different parishes, plus three chapels, a prebend at the Cathedral, four benefices outside of the diocese and a royal chaplaincy. His case also shows the county network in operation again; on his presentation to the vicarage of Chilham the right of presentation was granted by Henry Cheyney jointly to Thomas Kempe and George Darrell for the purpose.⁵⁹ Clearly, as lay nominees, men such as Lynch and Darrell did not have the monopoly on lacklustre service, and Darrell was able to secure the patronage of both Archbishops Cranmer and Parker as well as the Dean and Chapter, but it does indicate how the patronage system was not always used positively with the spiritual benefit of the parish in mind.

A consideration of the way that lay patrons used their patronage in the diocese, therefore, indicates that in several respects the diocese of Canterbury did not follow the same pattern as other dioceses. The number of lay patrons, while significant, was

⁵⁵ TNA online QM/51/1593/10.

⁵⁶ CCEd, 'Thomas Oliver', Person ID: 39090.

⁵⁷ CCEd, 'Gervaise Linche', Person ID:46174.

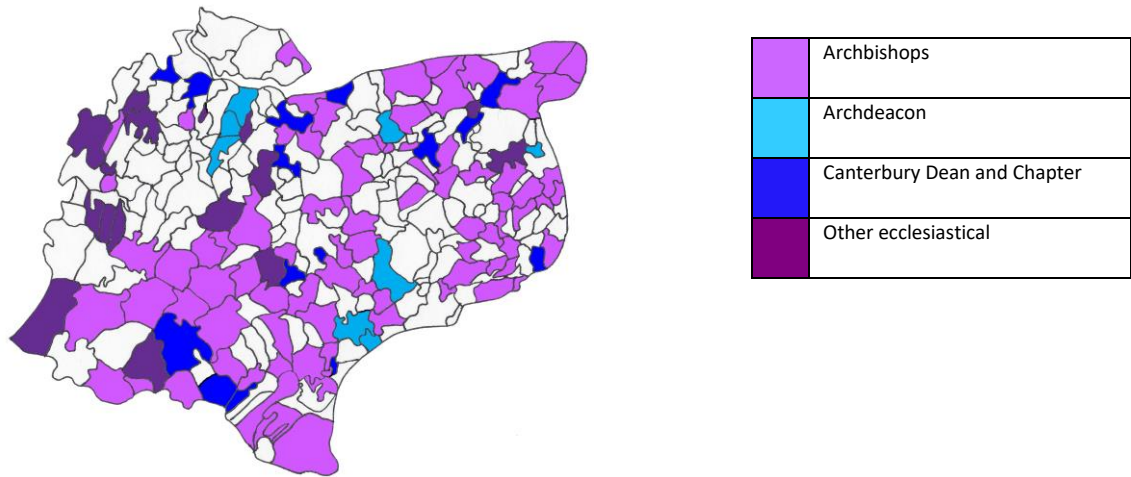
⁵⁸ Peter de Sandwich, 'Some East Kent Parish History', *Home Counties Magazine*, 3 (1901), pp. 20-24 (p. 22).

⁵⁹ CCEd, 'William Darrell', Person ID: 40566.

not as high as some other areas of the country, and lay institutions, such as the Crown, were also under represented. The fact that a relatively large number of lay families held small numbers of advowsons meant that no one family could come to dominate the religious character of an area. While undoubtedly taking some control away from church authorities, lay patronage was not necessarily a bad thing when the beliefs and attitudes of patrons were in line with official policy and numbers of Protestant gentry were able to use their patronage to further the consolidation of Protestantism at parish level.

Ecclesiastical Patronage

Although the number of lay patrons across the diocese was not insignificant, of greater importance was the way that successive archbishops used the patronage which remained to them to further the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism. Untypically, the archbishops retained the right to present to over a third of parishes in the diocese, and, if the parishes presented to by other ecclesiastical authorities are added to this, the total of parishes with an ecclesiastical patron rises to over fifty percent. This meant that, with careful management, the potential for the archbishops to have a positive influence over the nature of religious belief and practice within the diocese was significantly greater than for some of the bishops elsewhere in the country. The differences in the spread of this patronage across the individual deaneries has not been noted before, yet this is significant. For example, the contrast between the potential to effect change in the deanery of Westbere, and that of Sittingbourne is noteworthy. Even in those deaneries with a more even split between archiepiscopal and lay patronage, groupings of parishes would have been significant. For a single-minded archbishop there were greater opportunities to use patronage in areas such as Thanet, the Romney Marsh and parts of Dover district and the Weald to determine the direction of religion than has been suggested. Thus, while it may be true to claim that the system of patronage inherited from the pre Reformation church was haphazard and fragmented, and that it was not well designed to give church leaders much freedom of choice, this grouping of parishes meant that there was some possibility, in theory, for the archbishops to work within the faulty system to make a real difference on the ground. Map 5 shows the spread of ecclesiastical patronage within the diocese.



Map 5: The distribution of ecclesiastical patronage

The priority for Matthew Parker after his election to the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1559 was to ensure that all of the parishes had an incumbent in place. These were exceptional times, with a flu epidemic adding to the number of clergymen lost from the church through deprivation following the Oath of Supremacy, and the task was a challenging one. Rosemary O’Day has noted that the system of patronage could be regarded as an ‘almost insuperable barrier’ to the development of a high-quality, reformed ministry.⁶⁰ It is certainly true that the legal nature of an advowson as a piece of property meant that the archbishops were not always able to act effectively should the incumbent later prove to be unsuitable, not just in terms of education and professionalism but also should he display religious sentiments in conflict with the official view; whilst it was not impossible to remove such a man, it was certainly very difficult. Edward Dering is a good example of this. He was collated by Matthew Parker to the rectory of Pluckley in 1568, but within three years he had become an outspoken critic of various aspects of the church in England. Collinson noted Dering’s ‘chequered, but for the most part protected career’ such that both Parker and Grindal were powerless to ‘suppress a preacher who enjoyed the support of the great and the good in court, country and city’.⁶¹

The short-term solution to the problem of the shortage of incumbents was the ordination of an unusually high number of men in a short space of time. Patrick

⁶⁰ O’Day, *English Clergy*, p. 75.

⁶¹ Patrick Collinson, ‘Dering, Edward (c.1540–1576)’ *ODNB*.

Collinson pointed to the fact that 'in Parker's own diocese there were 233 ordinations in the first eight months of his archiepiscopate, as against less than fifty in the following fifteen years, and 150 of these were ordained in a single day.'⁶² The Parker Certificates of 1561 show that, although the situation was still far from good, limited gains had already been made since Harpfield's visitation, even despite the high number of deaths from illness and loss of clergymen either through deprivation or an unwillingness to serve the new regime.⁶³ In 1561 thirty-nine (seventeen percent) of the 228 rectories or vicarages which are listed separately in the Certificates were vacant, with five of these communities having a curate serving the cure in place of the incumbent. It is noteworthy that the spread of these vacancies was not even throughout the diocese and a slightly different picture emerges if individual areas of the diocese are examined. Thus, whereas the deanery of Canterbury, which had a number of very poorly endowed parishes, had thirty-two percent of its parishes unfilled in 1561 and the deaneries of Westbere and Dover on the furthest edges of the diocese had fifty-three and forty-two percent of their parishes unfilled at that time, in contrast, the deaneries of Bridge and Lympne both had less than five percent of their parishes lying vacant.

As the vacancies were filled, the educational qualifications of the incumbents were not always as high as many, particularly reformed Protestants, would have wished. As early as August 1560 Parker himself was willing to admit that the steps taken to fill vacancies and provide leadership at parish level may have been ill-judged. Writing to Grindal he admitted that 'by experience it is seen that such manner of men, partly by reason of their former profane arts, partly by their light behaviour otherwise and trade of life, are very offensive unto the people, yea, and to the wise of this realm are thought to do a great deal more hurt than good'.⁶⁴

The following chapters will examine in detail how effectively the issue of staffing was addressed in particular areas, but across the diocese as a whole, the

⁶² Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal: the Struggle for a Reformed Church, 1519-1583* (London, 1979), p. 113.

⁶³ CCCC MS 580c, fols 22- 31v.

⁶⁴ John Bruce and Thomas Perowne, eds., *The Correspondence of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury*. Comprising Letters Written by and to him from AD 1535 to his death AD 1575 (Cambridge, 1853), p. 120.

Parker Certificates provide a useful snapshot of the level of education at this early date. An interesting variety of terms is used - *indoctus*, *potius indoctus*, *doctus parvum*, *sic satis doctus*, *doctus*, *latine doctus*, *anglice doctus*, *bene doctus*, *optime doctus* - and it is difficult now to know how contemporaries would have understood the subtleties of the language used. Exactly what was the difference in learning, for example, between someone described as *latine doctus* and *bene doctus*? Only eleven parishes (five percent) reported that their minister was poorly educated, which included only eight individual men since Robert Carrier was the incumbent of three of these parishes and Christopher Badcock of two.⁶⁵ At the other end of the scale, while only five men (two percent) were listed as being *bene* or *optime doctus*, a further fifty-eight incumbents were recorded as *doctus*, and when those listed as *latine doctus* are added to this total, the figure rises to forty-two percent of parishes with an educated incumbent or at least one who professed a knowledge of Latin. The description most often found was *mediocriter doctus*, with the incumbents of almost a third of the parishes across the diocese falling into this category.

The level of education was lower for the perpetual curacies, as might be expected. Thirty-nine parishes were served by a curate in 1561, and of these, thirteen were vacant. Of those parishes served by a curate, although none reported their curate was poorly educated, none reported that he was well-educated. Four of the sixteen men were described as *mediocriter*, four as *doctus* and a further two that they had a knowledge of Latin. In terms of university education, by 1569 less than twenty percent of the men listed in the *Liber Cleri* for that year had a university degree and only around twenty percent of incumbents were licensed preachers.⁶⁶ This supports the view that while Parker was beginning to address the immediate crisis by providing men to fill vacant posts, he was not able to be too demanding over the quality of the incumbents he was recruiting.

These minimum standards were clearly not good enough. One of the aspirations of 'godly' Protestants was to ensure a highly educated ministry, and

⁶⁵Incumbents described as *indoctus/non doctus*: Bapchild (Sittingbourne); Brabourne (Elham), Hastingleigh (Elham), Newington (Dover), Orgarswick (Lympne), Sellinge (Lympne), Sevington (Lympne), Shadoxhurst (Lympne); as *minime doctus*: Bircholt (Elham); as *doctus parvum*: Alkham (Dover); as *potius indoctus*: Tonge (Sittingbourne).

⁶⁶ CCA-DCb Z.3.10.

although in this regard the archbishops started from a very low base, as things began to stabilise and more men began to put themselves forward, the educational standards of Canterbury incumbents did rise in line with improvements nationally. By the time of Archbishop Abbot the situation had improved dramatically. For example, of the seventy-two men collated to a benefice by Abbot up to 1625 only one man, Leonard Rowntree, did not have a university qualification. Rowntree is an interesting character. He was originally a Roman Catholic seminary priest who converted to Protestantism in 1613 and, therefore, wider political and religious considerations are likely to have come into play in his promotion to a benefice. Michael Questier has suggested that Abbot made a point of 'recruiting ex-Catholic clergy who would propagate his anti-Romanist political line' and in this case the appointment was possibly motivated partly for its propaganda value.⁶⁷ This example aside, Abbot was seen to be playing his part to favour well qualified men to serve in the diocese. Of the men collated by Abbot, twenty four percent were Doctors of Divinity, a dramatic improvement in educational standards over the period.

The increase in the number of clergymen within Canterbury diocese with a university degree was made possible by the expansion of university education from the last quarter of the sixteenth century and does reflect similar improvements in other parts of the country. However, while those parishes with lay patrons also saw a rise in qualified incumbents, their qualifications remained, on average, slightly lower over the period as a whole. For example, during the period of Abbot's archiepiscopate ninety-one percent of the presentations by the laity involved men with a university degree, and of these only eleven percent were Doctors of Theology. This indicates the priority that the archbishops placed on securing the most well-educated to provide parish leadership.

Referring to Archbishops Parker and Whitgift, Peter Clark has been critical of the way in which archiepiscopal patronage was used not to 'reward godly folk as Cranmer had done but to fatten and fluff out their minor kinsfolk so that they could join the ranks of the gentry'.⁶⁸ The example of John Bungey could be cited, who secured several livings including the wealthy rectory of Chartham from 1565 to 1595

⁶⁷ Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580-1625* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 47.

⁶⁸ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 160.

following his marriage to one of Parker's nieces.⁶⁹ Or that of William Kingsley who was collated to the rectory of Ickham by George Abbot after Kingsley's marriage to Abbot's niece.⁷⁰ However, despite the fact that in this respect the archbishops were working within the conventions and expectations of the age, there do not seem to be many such examples, and it could be that such use of patronage may have been more of an issue in perception, both for contemporaries and historians, than in fact.

As noted above, the archbishops did use their patronage to favour well educated, high status incumbents.⁷¹ Typical of this type of clergyman is Thomas Bickley. He was collated to the rectory of Biddenden in 1562, a parish which he served at the same time as being a canon at Lincoln before moving on to the archbishopric of Chichester in 1585. He was well educated, having obtained his Doctorate of Theology in 1552 from Magdalen College, Oxford and has been described as a 'zealous reformer', although he is also described after 1563 as toeing 'Parker's increasingly authoritarian line'.⁷² In 1566, in support of his candidacy for one of the prebends of Canterbury Cathedral in the gift of the crown, Parker described Bickley as one 'who hath done service and is ready to continue and is both honest and well learned'.⁷³

Less positively, this example also raises the matter of pluralism, an issue that caused great consternation in some quarters. Early in the reign the Parker Certificates reveal that forty-four percent of parishes where this information was provided had to share their incumbent. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Josias Nichols, referring to ministers of the church who accepted more than one cure at a time, quoted the Old Testament prophets in describing them as 'blind watchmen, dumbe dogges, and greedie dogges which can never have enough'.⁷⁴ This was not an issue, however, which the archbishops were in a position to address. When a bill was introduced into the commons in 1584 designed to abolish pluralism Whitgift opposed it for many reasons, including that it would discourage the 'best sort of clergy' and

⁶⁹ CCEd, 'John Bungay', Person ID:2239.

⁷⁰ Scott Robinson, 'Ickham Church, its Monuments and its Records', *Arch Cant* 14 (1882), 113-133 (p. 130).

⁷¹ As will be seen, this was particularly the case on Romney Marsh where the archbishops held the advowsons of a number of wealthy parishes.

⁷² Kenneth Carleton, 'Bickley, Thomas (c.1518–1596)', *ODNB*.

⁷³ Bruce and Perowne, *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, p. 290.

⁷⁴ Nichols, *Plea of the Innocent*, p. 36.

encourage the 'factious and contentious'.⁷⁵ By the end of the sixteenth century pluralism was still held by many to be a necessary evil and, on into the seventeenth century, the eight rectories and prebends which Bancroft held before he became archbishop meant that his defence of pluralism was not surprising. The case of Thomas Bickley here is one example from among many that highlights the issue. Whereas he was clearly useful in the service he was able to offer the church, neither of the curates listed as serving during his non-residency had a university degree and one, John Domright, was also curate of Nonnington at the same time, over thirty-six miles from Biddenden.⁷⁶ Bickley's 'honesty' and 'learning' were clearly of value to the hierarchy but this needs to be balanced with the need also to provide a learned and preaching ministry at parish level.

Although the evidence that the archbishops used their patronage to reward their minor kinsfolk is thin, there is more evidence that their servants were rewarded with lucrative livings and that this often included holding several benefices in plurality. O'Day claimed that 'there is little doubt that the domestic chaplaincy was the accepted route to high preferment in the church during the period', and certainly this seems to have been significant for the way each of the archbishops used his patronage.⁷⁷ Several examples could be offered, such as Andrew Peerson, one of Parker's chaplains, collated to the wealthy rectory of Ivychurch whilst also holding the rectory of Brasted, the rectory of Chiddingstone and the eleventh prebend at Canterbury Cathedral.⁷⁸ Whitgift continued to patronise Peerson after Parker's death. Another example is William Redman, who was chaplain to both Grindal and Whitgift, and who was rewarded with the wealthy living of Bishopsbourne before moving on to the bishopric of Norwich in 1594.⁷⁹ In 1614, John Sandford, chaplain to George Abbot, was given the wealthy sinecure of Blackmanstone which had been valued at £16 in 1588 but had no houses and no communicants.⁸⁰ Sandford was also collated by Abbot to the vicarage of Ivychurch in 1615, the same year that he became a canon of Canterbury.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Christopher Hill, *The Economic Problems of the Church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament* (Oxford, 1956), p. 232.

⁷⁶ CCEd, 'John Domright', Person ID: 2425.

⁷⁷ O'Day, *English Clergy*, p. 149.

⁷⁸ CCEd, 'Andrew Peerson', Person ID: 39042.

⁷⁹ CCEd, 'William Redman', Person ID: 31872.

⁸⁰ Edward Hasted, *The history and topographical survey of the county of Kent, Volume 8* (1799), p. 275

⁸¹ CCEd, 'John Sandford', Person ID: 38344.

Although this could be seen as a means of rewarding associates to the detriment of the parishioners, it could also be argued that there was some purpose to be had in collating able and reliable men to these parishes who would then be in a position to 'strengthen the bishop's reach and control over his diocese'.⁸²

The problem of the lack of suitable candidates coming forward in high enough numbers for presentation was a serious one which needed time and stability to be solved satisfactorily. In an attempt to solve the problem in the short-term Matthew Parker was able to make use of married ministers who had not had an opportunity to serve under Mary. The evidence taken from the *Liber Cleri* shows an unexpectedly high number of such collations. For example, seventy-three percent of the clergy in the deanery of Bridge for whom we have evidence were married; for the deanery of Westbere the figure is seventy-one percent.⁸³ A.G. Dickens stated that the 'assumption that married priests necessarily held advanced doctrinal opinions would carry us far beyond the evidence and beyond common sense itself', a point which is underlined by Helen Parish in her study of clerical marriage.⁸⁴ She pointed to the case of Henry Hays, the married Isle of Wight vicar who 'stayed in p[er]a[mbulations at crosses', failed to preach against the pope and who 'put away his wiff from him in Quene Mareyes dayes'.⁸⁵ However, common sense would also suggest that such men must have had some loyalty to the regime that allowed them to serve, and some antipathy to the idea of a return to a Catholic regime that could require them to put their wives aside again. At the very least, the overwhelming number of collations involving married men suggests that the new church was staffed by numbers of men who were not staunchly opposed to a Protestant future following the accession of Elizabeth, and this will have made a significant impact on parochial beliefs and practices across the diocese.

Another way for Parker to fill vacancies quickly was to use his patronage to support returning Marian exiles, whose dedication to Protestantism will have had an

⁸² K. Fincham, 'The roles and influence of household chaplains, c. 1600-c 1660', ed. by H. Adlington, T. Lockwood and G. Wright, *Chaplains in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2013), p. 18.

⁸³ CCA-DCb Z.3.10.

⁸⁴ A.G. Dickens, *Reformation Studies* (1982), p. 106.

⁸⁵ Helen Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation: Precedent, Policy and Practice* (Aldershot 2000), p. 210.

influence on those communities with which they came into contact. Peter Clark claimed that around thirty livings across the Canterbury diocese as a whole were filled with returning exiles.⁸⁶ Some were given a variety of roles in order to utilise their experience and in order that the diocese might benefit from their Protestant conviction. An example would be Richard Rogers, who was given office early on following his return to England from Frankfurt when he was instituted to the rectory of Great Dunmow in Essex by Grindal as Bishop of London. Parker agreed with Grindal in recognising Rogers' talents and six years later collated him to the rectory of Great Chart in Kent before recommending his consecration within two years to the suffragan bishopric of Dover. This may have been an 'all important gesture to radical opinion' as Clark asserts or more likely a recognition of his enthusiasm and energy in furthering religious reform.⁸⁷ Rogers' qualities were further recognised when he was recommended to replace Thomas Godwin as Dean of Canterbury by Whitgift in 1583. Clark described Rogers as being 'highly sympathetic to radical ministers' and he demonstrated this sympathy in nominating George Carslake to Ashford in 1580. One of the problems of this strategy was that this Protestant zeal may have been more than the religious hierarchy was happy to embrace. Clark also described Rogers as condoning an 'accelerating slide into unorthodoxy' in the 1580s such that there was an 'almost endemic omission of the surplice, parts of the litany and most of the baptismal ritual'.⁸⁸ Detailed case studies reveal that there was, indeed, a rise in non-conformity across the diocese during the 1580s, and although it is perhaps stretching the point to suggest that omission of the surplice was 'endemic', Rogers' leadership did encourage a degree of freedom that Whitgift was to find problematic.

Some of the Marian exiles who were patronised by the archbishops were authors, whose writings and Protestant zeal would have had an effect on the diocese. An example is Robert Pownall, collated to the rectory of Harbledown in 1563 and the vicarage of St Clement, Sandwich the following year.⁸⁹ As well as being an author and translator, he also took on the role of Six Preacher at Canterbury Cathedral in 1570. As an exile in the 1550s he had written *An Admonition to the towne of Callys* in which he

⁸⁶ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 150.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁸⁹ CCEd, 'Robert Pownall', Person ID: 46935.

criticised the inhabitants of the town for not holding firm to the true faith and for ‘such gaddi[n]ge to the masse’, and ‘such mu[m]bling in the prystes eare’ which he believed must inevitably lead to physical disaster for the town.⁹⁰ He spoke out against the inhabitants for ‘sainge one thing with thy mouthe & thi[n]kinge the co[n]trary with thy mi[n]de’.⁹¹ The strength of his feeling against Catholicism with its ‘stinki[n]g dou[n]ge’ of doctrine led by ‘sweinishe papistical pigges’ is clear throughout.⁹² Pownall also translated three books from French into English and for each of these he wrote an introductory epistle which, again, clearly demonstrated the strength of his feeling against the Catholic Church and his disappointment with those who had conformed to the changes from what he regarded as the true religion to superstition. He was also critical of the change from ‘vigilant bishops and faithful ministers into grievous wolves and bloud thirsty murtherers. And thy infinite nu[m]ber of gospellers and faithful Christians into dissembling hypocrites and hollowe harted Papists’.⁹³ On his return to England Pownall acknowledged how greatly he was influenced by the work of the fiercely Protestant writer, Six Preacher and canon of Canterbury Cathedral, John Bale, asking in his will to be buried in the Cathedral next to the spot where Bale was buried.⁹⁴ Numbers of men such as this working in the diocese would have had an impact on the consolidation of Protestantism at parish level.

Richard Turner is another radical who, before the end of Henry VIII’s reign in the parish of Chartham, had ‘stopped the use of anointing in baptism, of holy water, of incense and of holy candles’.⁹⁵ Having moved to Basel shortly after Mary’s accession he was appointed Six Preacher at Canterbury Cathedral on his return to England and was then favoured by Parker after 1559, being involved in the visitation of the diocese in 1560.⁹⁶ Some of these returning exiles were given wealthy livings on their return as a stepping stone to greater things, for example, Thomas Willoughby, who held Bishopsbourne from 1559 and who went on to become dean of Rochester from 1574 to 1585.

⁹⁰ Robert Pownall, *An Admonition to the Towne of Callys* (1557), sig. AS iii v.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, sig AS iii r.

⁹² *Ibid.*, sig AS ii r.

⁹³ Wolfgang Musculus, *The Temporisation* (1555), sig. Aiii v.

⁹⁴ Andrew Pettegree, ‘Pownall, Robert (1520–1571)’, *ODNB*.

⁹⁵ Alec Ryrie, ‘Turner, Richard’, *ODNB*.

⁹⁶ Strype, *Matthew Parker*, p 144.

There are a number of less high-profile Marian exiles patronised by Parker who would have carried out the work of consolidating Protestantism more quietly amongst their parishioners. Examples include Eustace Frencham, collated to the vicarages of Elmstead in 1564 and Kennington in 1563, and Nicholas Champion, collated to the rectory of Little Chart in 1560.⁹⁷ It is possible that the Protestantism and experience of these men may have contributed to elements of non-conformity later in Elizabeth's reign. The numbers of men such as these were not high, but their influence in the communities with which they came into contact will have been significant, particularly where they were concentrated in particular areas of the diocese. Daeley, for example, has concluded that over half the churches in the Dover deanery came into direct contact with non-conformist practices between 1569 and 1573, partly as a result of such returning exiles.⁹⁸ Where this did occur, it would seem that Parker did not always move decisively against non-conformity within his diocese. For example, Laurence Hollenden, vicar of St Lawrence in Thanet had been criticised for his non-conformity in 1569 but was still admitted as vicar of Teynham in 1570. Edward Dering, initially favoured by Parker, resigned his living in 1568 and, perhaps frustrated by the pace of change and lack of perceived urgency from the church hierarchy, publicly criticised Parker with 'the lax administration of his province and for the religious condition of Kent in which only two parishes out of six hundred enjoyed adequate instruction'. Dering also criticised Parker for allowing his sons and retainers to wear 'monstrous great breeches'.⁹⁹

It was frequently, although not always, the case that where the incumbent was a pluralist curates were employed to serve the benefice. The situation with regard to the quality of the curates is interesting since, as the examples above show, they were often the men working on a daily basis within the parish while their better educated and higher status colleagues were elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ Zell concluded that few assistant curates ever moved to become beneficed clergy and O'Day maintained that this state of affairs continued to the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁰¹ She has suggested that in

⁹⁷ CCEd, 'Eustace Frencham', Person ID: 41113; 'Nicholas Champion', Person ID: 39678.

⁹⁸ Daeley, 'Parker', p. 278.

⁹⁹ Patrick Collinson, 'Dering, Edward (c.1540–1576)', *ODNB*.

¹⁰⁰ See chapter six p. 237 for more detail on the work of curates.

¹⁰¹ Zell, 'Personnel of the Clergy', p. 533; O'Day, *English Clergy*, p.232.

Kent, curacies often provided a dead end for the occupant and that the ‘beneficed normally secured their places soon after ordination, even in the 1620s’. Occasionally a curate was able to move on to a wealthy living, such as William Smith, who managed to secure the wealthy rectory of Adisham valued at £29 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* three years after taking up the curacy at Chartham.¹⁰² A more common pattern was for men to move from the lowly paid and insecure curacies into vicarages and rectories of less wealthy parishes. A typical example would be John Mugg who started out as curate of St Andrew’s in 1569 and Ash from 1575 to 1578 before taking on the rectory of St Martin in Canterbury valued at £9. The year before his death he took on the additional curacy of Thanington and the rectory of St Mary Northgate (£11).¹⁰³ Three of the sixteen curates who served benefices in the gift of the archbishop during Parker’s time in office remained curates throughout their career, and the rest appear momentarily and then disappear from the record. The situation seems to have improved over time, and of those licensed during Grindal’s time thirty-three percent were able to move on to more secure livings. At the beginning of the seventeenth century a similar pattern can be identified. Reid’s study of the clergy of the diocese of Canterbury across the seventeenth century has shown that this figure remained fairly constant, with thirty-four percent of curates moving on to the greater security of a benefice during their careers.¹⁰⁴

A distinction should be made between assistant curates and those appointed to one of the twenty-six perpetual curacies within the diocese, fifteen of which were in the possession of the archbishops. Here, O’Day perceived a more positive situation, with a perpetual curacy seeming ‘on occasion to have formed an intermediate step between an assistant curacy and a regular benefice’.¹⁰⁵ Over the period 1559 to 1625 ninety-four men were appointed to such curacies in Canterbury diocese. Over half of these men stayed as curates, moving from one curacy to another throughout their career, or appear momentarily and then disappear from view. Of the remaining men eighteen percent moved from a perpetual curacy to a rectory or vicarage rated more than £10 a year in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, twelve percent to a benefice worth less

¹⁰² CCEd, ‘William Smith’, Person ID: 38571.

¹⁰³ CCEd, ‘John Mugg’, Person ID: 39986.

¹⁰⁴ Reid, ‘The Clergy of Canterbury’, p. 50.

¹⁰⁵ O’Day, *English Clergy*, p. 15.

than £10 and fifteen percent combined the curacy with one or more rectories or vicarages or another role in the church such as Six Preacher or minor canon. Thus, thirty percent did use a perpetual curacy as a preparation to securing a benefice. This agrees with Reid's findings which showed that, although the majority of perpetual curates did remain curates throughout their careers, there were also significant numbers who were able to move on from here.¹⁰⁶

In their efforts to staff the parishes with able men, the archbishops might expect the support of the Dean and Chapter and the Archdeacon who, together, had the patronage of a small but significant number of parishes in the diocese.¹⁰⁷ During the period there were six Deans at Canterbury, Nicholas Wotton (Dean from 1541 to 1567), Thomas Godwin (1567 to 1584), Richard Rogers (1584 to 1597), Thomas Nevile (1597 to 1615), Charles Fotherby (1615 to 1619) and John Boys (1619 to 1625). Given the difficulties of the church during the mid-years of the sixteenth century, the evidence suggests that the Dean and Chapter were able to achieve some success in securing sufficient numbers of men to serve in their parishes. During the period of Wotton's leadership, for example, there were only three short periods of vacancy, at St Mary Bredman and St Peter in the city of Canterbury and also at Willesborough in the deanery of Lympne, all of which were very poorly endowed parishes. Given the length of time each man served as Dean, and the changing conditions as time progressed, individual deans had differing opportunities, and met with differing levels of success, in exercising their patronage. Some patterns do emerge however. Dean Godwin and the Chapter had the opportunity to present to a benefice on thirty-two occasions, which provided them with a higher opportunity to put good people in place than some of the other Deans.¹⁰⁸ On only a very small number of occasions is it possible to say anything about the incumbent; for example, in 1569 John Taylor, a minor canon at the Cathedral was appointed to Littlebourne, in 1571 George Ely, sub-precentor at the King's school

¹⁰⁶ Reid, 'The Clergy of Canterbury', p. 42.

¹⁰⁷ The parishes within the gift of the Dean and Chapter were: Brook, Brookland, Canterbury St George, St Mary Bredman, St Mary Magdalen, St Paul, St Peter, Faversham, Littlebourne, Lower Halstow, Milton Regis, Monkton, Preston, Seasalter, Sheldwich, Stone, Tenterden, Westcliffe, Willesborough, Woodnesborough. The Archdeacons presented to a further ten parishes: Lympne, Doddington, Linstead, Teynham, Sandwich St Mary, Sandwich St Clement, Canterbury St Margaret, Hackington, Lyminge, West Hythe.

¹⁰⁸ In comparison, the Dean and Chapter presented on thirteen occasions during the Deanship of Nicholas Wootton, twenty-six under Richard Rogers, sixteen under Thomas Nevile, seven under Charles Fotherby and five under John Boys.

was presented to Tenterden, in 1574 William Darrell one of the Cathedral prebends was presented to Brook and in 1575 Israel Pownall, the preacher son of Isaac Pownall was presented to Orgarswick. The main issue during this period was the number of times that Dean and Chapter livings were allowed to fall into lapse: there were seven occasions, for example, when the Crown stepped in to institute men to Dean and Chapter livings during the time when Godwin served as Dean.¹⁰⁹ At first glance this might seem surprising, particularly since on two occasions the very wealthy living of Faversham, valued at over £26 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was left unfilled, a living which could have served as a valuable way to reward members of the Chapter itself, or to support other members of the Cathedral such as minor canons or Six Preachers. The situation can perhaps be explained by the tensions and difficulties which existed within the Chapter during this time. The period of Godwin's leadership was characterised by tension and disagreement within the Chapter, with Godwin himself accused of financial irregularities in 1567 as a result of which he was forced to approach Parker for support in refuting the charges.¹¹⁰

During the Deanship of Richard Rogers it is possible to trace a much more positive use of Dean and Chapter patronage. As a Marian exile himself, Rogers can be seen using patronage to promote a number of men known for their preaching, a practice which was also followed by subsequent Deans.¹¹¹ Whereas the Dean and Chapter can be seen to have patronised Six Preachers on several occasions during the period, it is also interesting to note how few of the livings within their gift were taken up by members of the Chapter itself. Out of one hundred presentations, there were only nine occasions when this happened. Members of the Chapter did take on parish roles, but these were more likely to be the more lucrative parishes, most usually in the gift of the archbishop, as well as a number which were in lay hands.¹¹²

The situation with regard to the archdeacons is interesting. After the deprivation of Nicholas Harpsfield a further five men held the position during the

¹⁰⁹ These parishes were: Lower Halstow, Faversham, Monkton, Canterbury St Mary Magdalen, Canterbury St Mary Bredman, Canterbury St Peter, Stone in Oxney.

¹¹⁰ For more details on the difficulties during the deanship of Godwin see chapter three, p. 121.

¹¹¹ For example, John Igulden, Milton Regis, 1584; Richard Colfe, Six Preacher, Monkton, 1585; Anthony Kingsmill, Milton Regis 1585; Thomas Wilson, Canterbury St George 1586; Isaac Colf, Stone in Oxney 1586 and Brookland 1587.

¹¹² Table 4 on page 284 in the Appendix lists the parishes held by cathedral prebendaries.

Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. The first two, Edmund Guest and Edmund Freke held the archdeaconry in comendam with the bishopric of Rochester. The following three men each held the position for at least twenty years.¹¹³ The archdeacons held the patronage of just ten parishes, but overall, they presented men with an impressively high level of education. Thirty-five of the fifty-two individual incumbents presented by the archdeacons had a university education over the period.

Conclusion

This overview has demonstrated that the evidence for the diocese of Canterbury challenges the orthodox view that the dissolution had so favoured the laity that it had resulted in a system of patronage which presented the archbishops with an 'almost insuperable barrier' in their desire to provide high quality leadership in the parishes. This is not to minimise the problems, which were very real and could not be solved quickly, but the ecclesiastical authorities who led the church in England from the accession of Elizabeth to the death of James I did use their parochial patronage to some effect in their work of consolidating Protestantism in the diocese. Their ability to make a difference in Canterbury was higher than for some other areas of the country due to their control of a relatively high number of advowsons and this meant that there was real potential for them to determine the direction developments would take. Clear progress was made in filling vacancies and, after the early years of crisis, the number of livings without an incumbent was never high. Educational standards rose dramatically.

On the other hand, there were some things that the archbishops were not able to change. The poverty of many of the parishes was a problem that could not be solved in the short term, and if the resulting acceptance of pluralism and non-residence were to be totally eliminated, church leaders would have needed to break the vested interest of patrons. This included not only the Crown and those landowners who held advowsons, but also, and perhaps more importantly given the numbers, ecclesiastical patrons who allowed well-educated career churchmen to benefit from holding several lucrative positions in Kent while they undertook their other church duties elsewhere. This was not something that was likely to happen. Although there is evidence that the

¹¹³ Edmund Guest (1559-1571), Edmund Freke (1572-1574), William Redman (1576-1595), Charles Fotherby (1595-1619), William Kingsley (1619-1648). Charles Fotherby was also the Dean of Canterbury.

Archbishops did patronise family members and associates, it is also clear that they were attempting to do far more than simply 'fatten and fluff out their minor kinsfolk' in the way they used their parish patronage.

This chapter has provided an overview of the diocese. Contained within the overall picture, however, were clear differences in the ways in which communities responded to religious change. The aim in the chapters which follow is to look in detail at how the three areas of Canterbury, Sandwich and Romney Marsh responded to the Settlement of Religion, beginning with the city of Canterbury itself.

‘Canterbury: the Metropolis or Head-Towne of Kent, if not of All England’.¹ The development of Protestantism in the City of Canterbury

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to examine how the city of Canterbury responded to religious change after the Elizabethan Settlement of religion in 1559. Canterbury was the administrative centre of the diocese, the location of civil and ecclesiastical justice, and the most important market in the east of the county. Long before the sixteenth century it had become a city dominated by the church. As the seat of the Archbishop, and the home of the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket, the number of people who depended on the maintenance of the religious *status quo* for their financial security had been considerable.² The religious reforms of Henry VIII, particularly the dissolution of the monasteries between 1536 and 1540, were devastating for the city, and the shifting policies of Edward VI and Mary Tudor had done little to provide the stability necessary to enable the city’s ecclesiastical authorities to ensure strong leadership at parish level. By the later sixteenth century, inhabitants would also have been aware of the declining fortunes of their city which, according to Lambarde in 1570, had fallen from ‘great wealth, multitude of inhabitants and beautiful buildings to extreme povertie, nakedness and decay’.³

In 1559, Canterbury, like every other community in the country, was setting out on its journey towards the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism, a journey which continued to demonstrate the city’s own individual character and the particular influences which would affect the path that its spiritual development was to

¹ James Cleland, *Iacobs wel, and Abbots conduit paralleled, preached, and applied (in the cathedrall and metropolitall Church of Christ in Canterbury)* (1626), p. 43.

² For example, the city had been home to: Christ Church Priory, St Augustine’s Abbey, the Grey Friars, the Black Friars, the Austin Friars (sometimes referred to as the White Friars), the Austin Canons of St Gregory, the Priory of St Sepulchre and the hospitals of St James, St John, St Lawrence, Poor Priests, Eastbridge and Harbledown. There were also several chantries within the Cathedral and the Roper family had its own chantry.

³ William Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent, A Perambulation of Kent: Conteyning the Description Hystorie and Customes of that Shyre* (1576), p. 268.

take. There were several factors which would affect the progress of religious change in the city. The cathedral, re-founded in 1541, exerted a conservative influence over the city, and continued to be regarded with distrust by those who were hoping for a more rapid and thorough reformation. Despite the keenly held reservations of some contemporaries, however, the cathedral did also provide some stability and continuity, and did offer a number of extra opportunities for Protestant preaching within the city and beyond, particularly given the existence of the Six Preachers.⁴ Later in the century a large community of Dutch and French religious refugees settled within the walls, and while some historians have questioned the impact of this settlement, a community of committed Protestants fleeing Catholic persecution and consisting, according to some writers, of up to a third of the population by the 1580s, was not inconsequential at a time of religious transformation.⁵ Serious weaknesses existed at parish level, with the city having some of the poorest benefices in the diocese, several of which were vacant at the time of Elizabeth's accession. Their poverty would add to the difficulties in finding suitable men to serve the cure throughout the period. On the other hand, the reintroduction of Protestantism would build on strong foundations which had been laid down by Archbishop Cranmer's committed patronage of the radical cause earlier in the century.

Recent historiography has suggested that it was in England's towns where Protestantism was most readily accepted. Collinson and Craig, for example, have written that 'it was in the urban context that such familiar features of Reformation as town preachers, weekly lectures and 'combinations' of preachers, the tightening of social discipline and the growing influence of Sabbatarianism and the emphasis on 'godly learning' developed and flourished'.⁶ The historiography also suggests that towns reacted in widely different ways to the coming of Protestantism. Whereas Claire Cross has demonstrated that the people of Doncaster accepted Protestant reform from an early date, in Caroline Litzenger's Tewkesbury reform came much more

⁴ For detail on the impact of the cathedral see chapter three.

⁵ Patrick Collinson, 'Protestant Strangers and the English Reformation', in *From Strangers to Citizens: the Integration of Immigrant Communities in Britain, Ireland and Colonial America, 1550-1750*, ed. by Randolph Vigne and Charles Littleton (Brighton, 2001), pp. 57-67 (p. 60).

⁶ Collinson and Craig, *Reformation in English Towns*, p. 11.

slowly.⁷ This was also true of cathedral cities. Muriel McClendon's study of Norwich emphasised the importance of the town's magistrates who worked with reforming clergy to bring about a smooth transition to Protestantism from early in Elizabeth's reign. Later, the city became known as a bastion of Puritanism, described by Collinson as a 'self-contained East Anglian Geneva' by the end of the sixteenth century.⁸ Like Canterbury, Norwich was the focus of sustained reforming activity during the early years of the Reformation and was also home to a large Stranger community from early in Elizabeth's reign.⁹ At Worcester, Alan Dyer has also suggested a speedy Reformation: 'The parochial clergy were either sympathetic or amenable to Protestantism' and any 'residual Catholicism in the city council soon disappeared and the old faith became essentially a feature of the Worcestershire countryside, and not of its towns'.¹⁰ Clearly, this was not the situation everywhere, the problems in Chichester being a good example of the difficulties that could exist.¹¹

The city of Canterbury has been characterised as a stronghold of conservatism in the early years of Elizabeth's reign.¹² The first part of this chapter will consider the evidence for such a view, including the role played by the civic authorities, and will argue that, although conservative elements did exist in the early years after the Settlement, including within the aldermanic bench and within the Cathedral, to regard the city purely as a force for conservatism misrepresents the true situation. From early in Elizabeth's reign there were a number of noisy radicals within the city who threw themselves enthusiastically into the task of conversion. One of the factors influencing

⁷ Other town studies include: Susan Bridgen, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989); Claire Cross, 'Parochial Structure and the Dissemination of Protestantism in Sixteenth-Century England: a Tale of Two Cities' in *The Church in Town and Countryside* ed. by Derek Baker (Oxford, 1979), pp. 269-278; Wallace MacCaffrey, *Exeter 1540-1640: the Growth of an English Country Town* (Cambridge, MA., 1975); David Marcomb, *English Small Town Life: Retford 1520-1642* (Nottingham, 1993); Graham Mayhew, *Tudor Rye* (Falmer, 1987); D.M. Palliser, *Tudor York* (Oxford, 1979); Martha Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c. 1530-c.1570* (Oxford, 1993).

⁸ Collinson, *Religion of the Protestants*, p. 144.

⁹ Muriel McClendon, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich* (Stanford, 1999). This view has recently been challenged by Matthew Reynolds who stressed the divisions which existed in the city and the contested nature of the Reformation in contrast to McClendon's smooth and rapid transition. Reynolds regarded the large Stranger community as attracting local hostility which catholic 'plotters' were then able to exploit. Matthew Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and their Opponents in Early Modern England: Religion in Norwich, c.1560-1643* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 40.

¹⁰ Alan Dyer, *The City of Worcester in the Sixteenth Century* (Leicester, 1973), pp. 237-238.

¹¹ See, for example, R. B. Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex: a Study of the Enforcement of the Religious Settlement 1558-1603* (Leicester: 1969), particularly chapter three.

¹² Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 154.

religious change after 1559 was the quality of parish leadership, and this will be addressed in section two. Key questions include: how quickly were patrons able to put the staffing of the parishes on a firm footing after the initial turmoil, what was the quality of the men appointed to serve, and how did this change over time? The following section will consider the evidence for a more radical brand of Protestantism within the city. Finally, the chapter will consider the influence of the Stranger community. In each case the intention is to consider the impact of these influences at parish level.

The main sources of evidence upon which the chapter is based are the archdeacon's *Detecta*, churchwardens' accounts and a sample of wills. The returns from the archdeacon's visitations have survived in large numbers from 1560 for the majority of the city's parishes, the exceptions being St Alphege, St Martin, St Mary Bredman and St Mary Magdalen.¹³ Churchwardens' accounts survive for two of Canterbury's parishes, St Andrew's and St Dunstan's, those of St Andrew's covering the whole period up to 1625 and those for St Dunstan's up to 1580. These accounts have been transcribed and published as a series of articles in *Archaeologia Cantiana*.¹⁴ The Clergy of the Church of England database, together with various contemporary surveys of the clergy such as the Parker Certificates of 1561, have been used to identify individual clergymen and basic details such as their qualifications.

A Conservative City?

In suggesting that in general the towns of Kent served as the main conservative strongholds after 1559, Clark added that Canterbury was probably the most important of these conservative centres where, he suggested, those magistrates who had 'welcomed the return to Romanist ritual in the early 1550s fought hard to keep control of the city' following Elizabeth's accession.¹⁵ It is true that there were conservative influences in the city at this time, but this conservatism did not go unchallenged and it is also possible to identify strong reforming elements working to effect change within

¹³ There are returns from 1560 through to 1625 with only 1588/9, 1594/5 and 1606/7 missing.

¹⁴ Cotton, Charles, ed., 'Churchwardens' Accounts of the Parish of St Andrew, Canterbury, from AD 1485 to AD 1625: part IV, 1557-1596', *Arch Cant*, 35 (1921), 41-107; part V, 1597-1625', *Arch Cant*, 36 (1924), 81-122; J. M. Cowper, 'Accounts of St Dunstan's Church, Canterbury, AD 1508-580' *Arch Cant*, 17 (1887), 77-139.

¹⁵ Clark pp. 153 and 154.

the city. It is the argument here that the city's conservatism has been overstated and that although there were examples of conflict, there was also co-operation with the new regime.

There is certainly evidence of turmoil in the city in the early years of the reign, and this turmoil contributed to a series of disturbances significant for the involvement of a number of individuals among church and civic authorities. Conservatives within the Cathedral who refused to subscribe would soon be deprived, but before that, Archdeacon Nicholas Harpsfield, with others, organised a procession within the city as a very public demonstration of his disapproval of Elizabeth's religious policies. Harpsfield had briefly been canon of the cathedral and, from 1554 as archdeacon of the diocese, had been actively involved in the suppression of Protestantism during the reign of Mary Tudor. The procession of May 1559, coming so soon after the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, was designed to be provocative, drawing on the symbolism of the martyr Thomas Becket by following the same route that the Marching Watch and the Pageant of St Thomas had traditionally taken before the Reformation.¹⁶

It was in such a climate of religious upheaval that in May 1560 an argument erupted, significant for the glimpse that it provides into the nature of the disagreements within the city in the early years following the Settlement. The argument concerned the making of a costume for one of John Bale's plays. Bale, Marian exile, canon of the cathedral and radical Protestant, believed in the significance of preaching, but he also believed that dramatic performances could provide an effective way of disseminating doctrine and encouraging devotion. His decision to stage one of his plays in the city for the Protestant alderman, George May, and the subsequent argument which erupted, indicates the depth of anger that could be felt by those who favoured traditional ways and who felt that the beliefs and practices they held dear were being denigrated. The fracas was between the conservative Richard Okeden, the son of alderman John Okeden, and a tailor, Hugh Pilkington. Pilkington

¹⁶ J.B. Sheppard, 'The Canterbury Marching Watch with its Pageant of St Thomas', *Arch Cant*, 12 (1878), 27-46 (p. 39); The event was mentioned by Bishop Quaedra in a letter to King Philip of 30th May 1559 who wrote that 'on Sunday last they had a procession of the Holy Sacrament in Canterbury in which 3000 people and many persons of worth of the country side took part'. Quoted in H. N. Birt, *The Elizabethan Religious Settlement* (1907), p. 405.

had been asked by Bale to make a friar's habit for the play but on learning this, one of the witnesses reported that Okeden became angry and insulted Pilkington saying, 'mr bale doth well practise himself to sett furth playes against religious men and not com in to the pulpit to make sermons. And saith further apon communication he the said okeden called Pilkington knave with an oth or twayne being in a greate rage and anger and further examined saith that they had mutche more talke and communication and were in grete rage and okeden called knave twyse or thrise'.¹⁷ The fact that George May and Okeden's father had served together on the aldermanic bench on opposite sides of the religious divide may have fuelled Okeden junior's anger against the play.

In addition to such die-hard conservatives such as Harpsfield, it is also significant that in the very early years of the reign there were some members of the civic authority in Canterbury who were prepared to demonstrate a public stand against Protestantism by their continued support for certain Catholic rituals. During the summer of 1561, for example, there was controversy over the lighting of bonfires as part of the Midsummer celebrations. The 24th June was traditionally celebrated as the Nativity of John the Baptist but also as the summer solstice, and as such had pagan overtones. As David Cressy has noted, it is virtually impossible to determine the attitudes of early modern people, whether they were aware of the pagan origins or whether they 'were innocent of conscious pagan associations'.¹⁸ Whatever the people thought, however, such festivities were frowned upon by the reformers, who regarded them as superstitious customs which needed to be eradicated. We know about the dispute in Canterbury in 1561 from an account by John Bale, an account which reveals his frustration that such Catholic practices were still being allowed, even encouraged, to continue, and that despite the official re-introduction of Protestantism 'yet had men rather have styl that darkesse, than the clere lyghte of the Gospell'.¹⁹ A number of the bonfires were made before 'some of the aldermennys dores for good examples sake'. Although he exhorted the mayor and aldermen to step in to encourage the people to abandon these customs, in the short term at least, Bale's exhortations seem

¹⁷ X.10.7, fols 36-39.

¹⁸ David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (1989), p. 25.

¹⁹ E. J. Baskerville, 'A religious Disturbance in Canterbury, June 1561: John Bale's Unpublished Account' *HR*, 65 (1992), 340 – 348.

to have met with little response. His summing up of the calibre of the city's civic leaders was may 'god sende that cytie better and more godly governours'.²⁰

Such criticism directed by Bale towards the city's civic leadership can be contrasted with the view of another of the city's radicals, Thomas Becon, concerning the civic leadership of the town of Sandwich. In the dedication of his book, the *Demaundes of Holy Scripture*, written in 1563, Becon described the leaders of Sandwich as 'true, faithful and godly philosophers'. Their godly rule of the town, he said, had led to a community where 'the word of God raigneth, ruleth and triumpheth' and where diligent preaching was received with great joy.²¹ It would seem that the civic leaders were exerting a different influence on the city of Canterbury in the crucial early years of the Settlement. Bale was particularly critical of John Twyne, the school master and also various alderman, for encouraging such activities. As in the case of Harpsfield's procession, the fact that this very public display of Catholic practices was supported by people in authority clearly added to Bale's exasperation, that 'they settinge fourth those unruly pageauntes, whose dewtye it had bene to have seane best rule' were not leading by example.²²

Religious tensions also played a part in the disputed mayoral election of 1562, a dispute which resulted in the involvement of the Privy Council in the affairs of the City. Both of the candidates who had been put forward for the election were deemed to be unsuitable and fresh elections were called. Then, following an enquiry by Lord Cobham, the town clerk and six of the city's aldermen were dismissed, including John Okeden, on the basis that he was 'very evyll and p(er)versely geven to funder the order of relygyon establysshed in the realme'.²³

All of these events might suggest a strong city-wide defence of Catholicism, but this would only be a part of the picture since in all cases Protestants within the city mobilised to counteract these conservative displays. In response to Harpsfield's

²⁰ Ibid., p. 347.

²¹ Thomas Becon, *The Demaundes of Holy Scripture* (1577), sig, Aii v.

²² Baskerville, *Disturbance*, pp. 345 and 347.

²³ CCA-FA/14, fol. 39r.

procession the city's Protestants organised a procession of their own. This second procession was given the title 'The Pope's taking farewell of his friends of Canterbury and his shipping over at Dover', and to make sure that the message was clear, the marchers deliberately passed by the houses of people known to be Catholics.²⁴ In terms of the midsummer bonfires, preachers were mobilised in support of the new regime in an attempt to convince the people to end the custom. An interpretation which simply highlights the actions of the conservative faction, therefore, only highlights one side of the debates and does not take account of what Walsham has described as 'the heady religious ferment of the mid-sixteenth century, when Protestantism was a novel, defiant and infectious phenomenon with the power to make immediate and genuine converts'.²⁵ In considering the meaning to be ascribed to these processions and protests, it is also important to recognise the significance of the cultural identity of the city. Whilst acknowledging that for some people attendance at the midsummer pageants was certainly designed to send a message of defiance, for others the religious reasons for attending may have been of secondary importance. John Stow in his *Survey of London* of 1603 described the midsummer celebrations there with some nostalgia, explaining how in London the wealthier sort had been accustomed to set up tables outside their houses with good food and drink 'whereunto they would invite their neighbours and passengers also to sit and be merrie with them in great familiaritie, praying God for his benefites bestowed on them'.²⁶ Not only were these enjoyable occasions, but they were also times for the healing of division between neighbours. Disputes over attendance at the celebrations in Canterbury in the early years of Elizabeth's reign perhaps indicate a community trying to find its way through another round of religious change, a community which had been at the forefront of religious discussion and debate since the reforming attention paid to it by Archbishop Cranmer in the 1530s and 1540s. In recognising the complexity of a community's response to the Reformation, the collective and communal importance of celebrations such as these should not be under-rated, and an alternative interpretation is to see these events as demonstrating the vibrancy of the

²⁴ B. Carier, *A copy of a letter, written by M. Doctor Carier beyond seas, to some particular friends in England* (1615), pp. 41-42.

²⁵ Walsham, 'Afterword', *Pieties*, p. 181.

²⁶ Charles Kingsford, ed., *A Survey of London by John Stow: Reprinted from the text of 1603, Volume 1* (Oxford, 1908), p. 101.

cultural life of the community, and the agency of the people of a city well used to religious debate. In this, doctrinal change was only one element of the popular discussion and it is unsurprising that the polemical value of processions, pageants and plays, which had been an extremely important part of the culture of the pre-Reformation city, would be employed in the latest round of religious changes. These activities provided an opportunity for individuals from both sides of the debate to express their opinions during the early unsettled months of the Settlement when many may not have expected the changes to be permanent. Certainly, the Protestant reaction demonstrates that the conservatives did not have the monopoly of popular expression in the very early years.

This view is corroborated by the existence of a reformist contingent which existed within the corporation at the start of Elizabeth's reign and which had existed for several years. It is clear from an analysis of wills that a group of Protestants were serving as aldermen and councillors during Mary's rule and into the early years of Elizabeth's reign, and that these men were able to work with the ecclesiastical authorities in removing known conservatives and in furthering the Protestant cause.²⁷ In February 1560 the mayor of Canterbury was charged to apprehend the curate of St George's, John Baseden, and 'some one also that was present whan he spake the lewde words layed to hys charge.' The following month the mayor was ordered to see that he 'acknowledge his follye and recante the same', although despite the mayor's efforts, Baseden refused and was later apprehended in Dover attempting to flee to the continent.²⁸ This suggests that although some conservatives did remain in the city, it was also becoming a more unwelcome place to those who were unwilling to accept the religious changes of 1559.

This is not to deny the continued existence of conservative elements within the governing body throughout the 1560s and 1570s, however, but to temper the strength of some earlier claims. In 1569 Canterbury's aldermen and common councillors met together on the advice of their lawyer, William Lovelace, to draw up a certificate to

²⁷ See below p. 94.

²⁸ APC, Vol 7 (1558-1570), pp. 62, 63, 100.

demonstrate their loyalty and obedience to God and the Queen in the same way that Justices of the Peace had already been required to do. It may be significant that this was done voluntarily on Lovelace's advice for the 'avoyding of all suspycyon of papistrye amongst us', presumably in an attempt to counteract criticism.²⁹ Religious divisions remained throughout the period. In September 1573 a petition was drawn up criticising the city's governors. The petition stressed that while the government of the city had been strong in earlier years, now, due to divisions between the mayor and aldermen and between that group and the commons, 'the comen welthe of the same ys lyke p(re)sently to come to utter ruen and decaye'.³⁰ A subsequent investigation by the Privy Council concluded that the accusations were untrue and inspired by 'lewd & unquiet p(er)sons who favoryng papistrye and myslyking of the state of religion p(re)sently set furth by her maiest(es) orders' had impugned the good government of the city. Common councillors Phillip Lewys and Henry Peyrs were dismissed as a result of their involvement in the petition. However, these early indications of conservatism should not be over-emphasised and certainly this does not suggest that Canterbury should be regarded as a stronghold of conservatism at this time. In June 1559 the burghmote responded quickly to the new regime by discontinuing the controversial Pageant of St Thomas and by 1562 had not only introduced new ordinances against drinking and dancing but had also instituted morning prayers for the governing body at the church of St Mary Bredman.³¹

Any conservative influences which did remain within the city in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, were counteracted by significant Protestant influences which were also at work in the city. A number of Marian exiles had returned to Canterbury, filled with missionary zeal and a clear determination to convert the people, and although their numbers were small, they were a determined group and they were able to build upon the Protestant foundations which had been laid down in the city during the archiepiscopate of Thomas Cranmer. In this atmosphere of argument and debate, the work of the parish clergy would be of crucial importance in either furthering or

²⁹ SP/12/59/fol. 166.

³⁰ G Durkin, 'Civic Government and Economy in Elizabethan Canterbury' (PhD thesis, Canterbury Christ Church University, 2001), p. 55.

³¹ CCA, A/C/1, fol. 146r.

hindering the progress of Protestant reform. The next section will consider the nature of parish this leadership across the city, focusing on the success with which church patrons staffed the benefices and the calibre of the men who were appointed to lead.

The Nature of Parish Leadership

In 1558 Canterbury had twelve parishes within its walls. There were also two parishes, St Martin's and St Paul's which were outside the walls but within the liberty of the city. St Dunstan's lies in the suburbs but is close enough to be considered with the city centre parishes. The suburban parish of Hackington will be considered along with the rural parishes in chapter six. As has been noted, ecclesiastical authorities across the diocese of Canterbury retained a far higher proportion of church patronage than some authorities elsewhere, a fact which is reflected within the city of Canterbury itself where, by the early modern period, eleven of the city's fifteen parishes were in the hands of church officials: the Dean and Chapter presented to five, the archdeacon to one, and six belonged to the archbishops, leaving only two parishes in the gift of the Crown and just one, St Mary Bredin, in lay hands. However, while this did, in theory, provide a high level of control over parish appointments, such control needs to be balanced against the poverty of the benefices.³² The level of poverty was not untypical: five of the parishes in York, for example, were valued at less than five marks, and one as little as £1 3s 1 1/2 d., but this did add to the difficulties in finding suitable men to serve.³³ With only two worth more than £10 and none at all worth more than £15, poverty was to remain a significant issue throughout the period.

The weaknesses identified by Archdeacon Harpsfield in 1558 indicate the difficulties facing the church authorities after 1559.³⁴ The visitation identified five of the city's fifteen parishes as having no rector, vicar or curate at the time of the visitation, plus a further four which had no incumbent but were served by curates.³⁵

³² See Table 1 in the Appendix, p. 270 for the value of each of the city's parishes as given in the VE.

³³ Palliser, *York*, p. 3.

³⁴ Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation, Vols I and II*.

³⁵ The parishes with no minister were All Saints, St Dunstan's, St Martin, St Mary Bredman, St Peter. Those with no incumbent but served by a curate were St George, St Margaret and St Mary Northgate, St Paul.

For some of these parishes the difficulties carried on well into Elizabeth's reign. Whereas St Martin's and St Paul's benefitted from the arrival of a rector from 1560 and St Dunstan's saw the re-admittance of its Edwardian vicar early in Elizabeth's reign, All Saints, St Mary Bredman and St Peter's had to rely on curates for over a decade before a suitable incumbent could be found. All Saints, valued at only £7 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, was without an incumbent for at least three years before Elizabeth's accession and, following the appointment of two curates at the very end of the 1560s and in the 1570s, it did not receive its first Elizabethan rector until the institution of Henry Fysshier in 1579.³⁶ A similar pattern was followed in the parish of St Mary Bredman, a parish which was worth less than £10 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, and was served by curates until the institution of John Alderstone as rector in 1584. So too the parish of St Peter's, valued at only £3 10s 8d, which was served by a curate for the first twenty years of the reign until the institution of Thomas Deale in 1581.³⁷ To some extent this situation reflected the national context whereby the numbers of resignations, deprivations and the unusually high number of deaths from flu in the early years of the reign led to real difficulties in finding good men to lead the parishes. The 'considerable evidence for the dramatic disruption and turnover in clerical personnel' noted by Peter Marshall and John Morgan is certainly evident in the city during the first decade of Elizabeth's rule.³⁸ In addition to the five vacant parishes at the beginning of the reign, seven parishes saw a change of minister through resignation, sequestration or death within the first five years of the reign and only three parishes experienced any kind of continuity, St Alphege, St Andrew's and St Mary Magdalen. This shows a very high level of discontinuity.

Eamon Duffy has claimed that 'the early Elizabethan church was that anomalous thing, a Protestant Church largely made up of a population as yet unconvinced of the worth of the Reformation and mainly staffed by former catholic priests, relatively few of whom had embraced a full blooded Protestantism'.³⁹ The

³⁶ CCEd, 'Henry Fysshier', Person ID: 40907.

³⁷ CCEd, 'John Alderstone', Person ID: 37682; 'Thomas Deale', Person ID:77.

³⁸ Marshall and Morgan, 'Clerical Conformity', p. 11. For a summary of clerical turnover across the whole diocese see Table 3 on page 277 in the Appendix.

³⁹ Eamon Duffy, 'The Shock of Change: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Elizabethan Church of England', *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, 7 (2004), 429-446 (p. 444).

evidence for Canterbury, however, suggests that, given the high turnover of personnel, there was at least the potential to appoint men favourable to the new regime if such could be found, and that Canterbury's parishes were not necessarily, therefore, 'mainly staffed by former Catholic priests' as may have happened elsewhere. There are hints of this from an examination of the ratio of married to unmarried ministers reported in the Parker Certificates of 1561. It has been suggested that the decision to marry was not a matter of doctrine and that high numbers of married ministers should not be used to gauge the progress of Protestantism, but it is the contention here that a man who chose to marry was, in fact, making a point, not least in the eyes of his congregation.⁴⁰ In comparison to the city of York, where, Claire Cross has suggested, judging from clergy wills 'most of the Elizabethan civic clergy still abstained from marriage, in contrast to their Jacobean successors', within the group of eleven ministers serving Canterbury's parishes in 1561, only two were described as '*non coniugatus*'.⁴¹ As noted above, a decision to marry cannot be taken to imply the rejection of all aspects of Catholic teaching, but at the very least it does indicate some openness to the idea of change, and the high number of Canterbury's ministers who had chosen to marry is significant.

In order to address the problems of staffing in the first instance, where ministers were absent or non-resident, some parishes provided preachers, although this was not necessarily with the approval of all parishioners. Thus, William Darrell of St Andrew's was presented in 1560 after he 'rayled upon with Russell preacher of godes worde.' If this was the same Russell presented the following year for calling the churchwardens of Great Chart 'false procured doges' it may have been the preacher's prickly attitude which was causing offence.⁴² Where vacancies existed another solution was to share ministers. Thus in 1558 the parish of All Saints, with neither rector nor curate of its own, was to share the services of the rector of St Alphege. For every two days John Aldey spent at St Alphege he would spend one at All Saints until a suitable minister could be found, a situation which continued into the 1560s when the

⁴⁰ For example, Christopher Haigh, *English Reformation* p 227.

⁴¹ Claire Cross 'Priests into Ministers: The Establishment of Protestant Practice in the City of York, 1530 – 1630' in Peter Brooks ed., *Reformation Principle and Practice* (1980), pp. 205 – 225 (p. 219); Parker Certificates, fols 296-326.

⁴² X.1.2, fol. 4v; Arthur Willis, *Church Life in Kent: Being Church Court Records of the Canterbury Diocese, 1559-1565* (1975), p.15.

situation became less acute.⁴³ However, while this arrangement may have addressed the issue on paper, in reality problems remained. In 1560 the parish reported that 'devyne s[er]vyce is not sayd in due tyme', and although a curate had been found the following year, he again had responsibility for two parishes and the churchwardens were again complaining, this time that 'he ys not resident nor kepeth hospitalite'. They also complained that the church did not have the Bible nor the paraphrases, and also that the chancel was in a state of disrepair.⁴⁴

As was the case for all of the areas under consideration in this study, another of the ways that the authorities were able to staff the parishes was through pluralism. Of the eleven men serving a Canterbury parish in 1569 for whom detail is provided in the *Liber Cleri*, all but one is listed as having one or more other roles. As was common in cathedral cities, several of the minor canons also served at parish level.⁴⁵ In Canterbury, five ministers in 1569 were minor canons and a further eight parishes benefitted from the services of a minor canon at some point over the period. Writing in the seventeenth century the Puritan Richard Culmer, appalled by the low quality of some of the incumbents, together with the tendency to combine parish work with roles at the cathedral, was of the opinion that this only served to exacerbate the negligence with which these men approached their parish responsibilities. In *Cathedrall News*, Culmer highlighted 'Mr late Tobacco pipe-maker reprieved from the Gallowes, now reading-priest and Parson of St Martin's and peticanon'.⁴⁶ This man can be identified as Matthew Warryner who was collated to the parish of St Martin's in 1612, and who also served as precentor within the cathedral.⁴⁷ According to Culmer, in order for men such as Warryner to have the time to carry out their cathedral service, 'they do huddle over Prayers and Sermons (if any be) in their Parishes, at unseasonable houres; wherebye the people (for the most part resting themselves content with what they find at their owne Parish Church) are kept in wofull ignorance,

⁴³ Whatmore, *Harpsfield*, p. 337.

⁴⁴ X.1.2, fol. 6r; X. 1.3, fol. 22.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Claire Cross on the city of York, in *Reformation Principle and Practice*, p. 22; Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), p. 141.

⁴⁶ Richard Culmer, *Cathedrall News from Canterbury* (1644), p. 2.

⁴⁷ The parish was valued at £9 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. CCEd, 'Matthew Warriner', Person ID: 15990; CCA-DCC-CA/4, p. 241.

and profane the Lords day to the prejudice of their Soules, scandal of our Religion, dishonour to God and the disgrace of the Ministry and Church of England'.⁴⁸

There does seem to be some truth in these kinds of accusations. The visitation returns for St Margaret's in the early 1560s, for example, highlighted deficiencies with the minister, who was also a minor canon, and who was not providing services at convenient times. He was also presented for appearing twice a year for his money and rents but then promptly disappearing.⁴⁹ In these early years of the reign there were also criticisms of the ministers of St Andrew's, and St Mary Magdalen, both of whom were also minor canons.⁵⁰ But it was not just those who combined parish and Cathedral roles who were accused of negligence. For example, a vicar who appears several times in the presentments is Henry Hevysade who, in addition to serving as vicar of St Paul's, was also vicar of Patricbourne with Bridge chapel. He was presented in 1561 for not instructing his parish 'according to the Queen's injunctions', and criticised for not holding a service on Easter day in the parish. His failings were compounded by his wife's behaviour, described as 'a very scold ...and it is supposed that she hath not receved in two yeres'.⁵¹ Thus, while pluralism did provide some attempt to address the problem of staffing, and in some cases it worked well, it was only a partial solution, and parishes were still often left without the strong leadership which was needed. By the time that Culmer was writing, recruitment to parish livings had become easier than it had been in the mid-sixteenth century, but until the issue of the poverty of these city benefices could be addressed, it would continue to be a struggle to attract the best men unless other sources of income, such as cathedral positions, could be found.

Culmer was calling for a wholesale redistribution of the revenues of the cathedral in order to ensure that every parish would be able to support its own learned minister, but in the absence of such a re-organisation, it could be argued that the availability of additional ecclesiastical roles within the institution could enable men on an otherwise inadequate income to survive. As a case in point, it is doubtful

⁴⁸ Culmer, *Cathedrall News*, p.2.

⁴⁹ X.1.3, fol. 19v and X.1.5, fol. 88v.

⁵⁰ X.1.2, fol. 5r and fol. 6r (1560).

⁵¹ X.1.3, fol. 4r (1561).

whether the incumbent of St Dunstan's, valued at only £4 17s 10d, could survive with an acceptable standard of living without another source of income, especially if he also had a family to support. Richard Weekes, for example, who served as vicar of St Dunstan's during the 1570s, received a further £13 6s 10d for his position as a minor canon to supplement his meagre parish stipend.⁵² For people such as Culmer, this practice underlined the unreservedly negative influence of the cathedral on the spiritual development of the city. Pragmatically, however, given the unlikelihood that church finances would be reformed any time soon, the cathedral did at least have the potential to supplement the work being done at parish level.

Despite the undoubted problems, it is clear that as the century progressed, staffing did improve within the city's parishes. By the end of the sixteenth century, every parish was staffed with a vicar or rector and, although six of these were pluralists, from the 1570s onwards presentments of ministers for non-residency and for services not taking place 'in due time' were much reduced, indicating that the problem of staffing the parishes was being addressed more effectively by this time. More effectively, it could be argued, than in some other towns and cities. In Protestant Colchester, Mark Byford has noted that during Archbishop Parker's visitation of 1560 all twelve of the town's benefices were vacant, and even after a small number of appointments were made in 1562, at any one time the town did not have more than two beneficed men.⁵³ Compared to the city of Exeter, Canterbury's situation appears to be even stronger. In 1601, for example, there were complaints that several of Exeter's parishes were still without an incumbent even by this late date, and it was, therefore, suggested that six of the parishes should be amalgamated to create sufficient funds for a preaching minister to be appointed. These parishes 'for many yeres together have bene voyde of incumbents whose offices are supplied by certen reading curates each curate having two or three of the same parish churches'. Parts of the service were being omitted to enable these curates to move on to their

⁵² CCEd, 'Richard Weekes', Person ID: 45111.

⁵³ M. Byford, 'The Birth of a Protestant Town: The Process of Reformation in Tudor Colchester, 1530-1580', in *Reformation in English Towns*, pp. 23-47, (p. 38).

next parish and, as a result, the people 'doe remayne untaught'.⁵⁴ By 1600, serious weaknesses such as this no longer existed in Canterbury.

In addition to having more vicars and rectors in post, it is clear that the educational qualifications of the men who served Canterbury's parishes also increased significantly over the period, so that by the early seventeenth century standards were almost comparable with the situation nationally. For example, by 1625 eleven (seventy-three percent) of the city's fifteen parishes were served by a minister with a university qualification. A series of snapshots taken across the period, in the years 1569, 1589 and 1609 demonstrate these gradually improving educational standards with one (seven percent), five (thirty-three percent) and eight (fifty-three percent) parishes respectively being served by a university educated minister. Various local studies indicate that the situation in Canterbury compares favourably with other areas of the country. For example, in Chichester archdeaconry in 1585 Manning has shown that of the 118 clerics in post, thirty-four (twenty-nine percent) possessed a university degree. In the archdeaconry of Lewes by 1603 twenty-nine (forty-three percent) of the sixty-seven men for whom information is available held a degree.⁵⁵

As Parker's letter to Grindal had made clear, having a minister in place did not ensure that the church experienced high quality leadership, and throughout the period churchwardens felt compelled to present their ministers for a variety of misdemeanours.⁵⁶ Ministers were not always leading by example; thus, Henry Fisher of All Saints was presented in 1583 for living incontinently with one Jane Bellinger, and allowing her daily into his house 'to the great greefe and offence of the inhabitants of the same p[ar]ish and others'. A year later there was no change in his living arrangements. The parish was also unhappy about his unwillingness to catechise.⁵⁷ At Mary Magdalen the churchwardens reported that they had not had any preaching in

⁵⁴ SP 12/282/49, fol.100. MacCaffrey notes that a bill was put to Parliament in 1581 to try to improve the situation, but 'the bishop was immediately aroused to opposition largely because of jealousy of the corporation' and nothing came of it. MacCaffrey, *Exeter*, pp. 196 and 197.

⁵⁵ R. B. Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex: a Study of the Enforcement of the Religious Settlement 1558-1603* (Leicester: 1969), p. 178.

⁵⁶ Noted on page 53. Bruce and Perowne, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, p. 120.

⁵⁷ X.2.8, fol. 30r.

their church 'according to the articles' of visitation, and neither were the homilies being read. St Margaret's also had not had the quarterly sermons.⁵⁸

St Peter's church remained in trouble throughout Elizabeth's reign and is a good example of the problems which existed in attracting high quality incumbents when the benefice was worth so little. In 1586 the churchwardens presented the minister, Nicholas Pettifer, for 'cawsing one George Pawle, they not nowing where he dwelled nor from where hee came to serve, preache & expounde in the saide church of St Peters without showing of sufficient licence hereunto by the ordynarye and yet yt was required of the said Nicholas Pettifer that hee sholde have yt'.⁵⁹ Neither were the children and apprentices being catechised. At the following archdeacon's visitation Pettifer was again presented for not reading the divine service correctly. According to the presentment he was blind and could not see to read the service, his solution to the problem being to ask his son to read out the words to him which he would then repeat to the congregation, a solution which was clearly not working. The boy is described as 'yonge' and of 'noe discretion' who repeated the words 'sometyme very disorderly, untrewlye and corruptlye and in the p[ro]mpting and reading to him hee (Pettifer) falleth owte in rayling and chiding with his saide boye with unseemele words... to the offence of the congregation.' His behaviour was said to be discouraging a great part of the congregation from attending the services and parishioners were requesting that a curate or teacher could be found 'to instructe us for the healthe and conforte of our sowles for further wee receive not fruct of this hes reading.' 'And we will praye to god ever to assiste yow with his holy spirit in this and all other your godlie actions and p[ro]ceedings'.⁶⁰

The presentment of the vicar of St Mary Northgate, John Stibbing, in 1584 hints at differences in religious outlook between the minister and congregation. Something of the churchwardens' frustration comes through in their complaint shortly after his arrival that 'we have not had owr service orderly as we ought to have since the first of August laste paste therefore div[er]s of the p[ar]ish do inquire why sholde he not doe

⁵⁸ Ibid., fols 99r, 100r, 111r (1586).

⁵⁹ Ibid., fol. 127r.

⁶⁰ Ibid., fol. 152v.

his dewty as well as to ask his dewtie and findeth grete fawte with us'.⁶¹ On the one hand this could refer to a pluralist minister not holding the services at a reasonable time as referred to above, but Stibbing was a non-conformist who had been presented in 1582 for not always wearing the surplice at services at another of his parishes, St Peter's in Sandwich. It is also possible, therefore, that his non-conformity had come into conflict with the more conservative attitudes he found in Canterbury in the later part of the sixteenth century.

In the early years of the seventeenth century the *Detecta* contain no such reports of less than satisfactory ministers, suggesting that a rise in levels of satisfaction had accompanied the rise in qualifications. By this time Canterbury benefitted from some strong, committed leaders, such as Thomas Wilson of St George's and William Swift of St Andrew's. Also, George Marson of St Margaret's, a man well known for his music, who had been brought to Canterbury from Trinity College Cambridge by Dean Thomas Nevile. Several vicars were also licensed as school masters.⁶² The evidence, therefore, suggests that after the initial difficulties in terms of staffing, from the 1570s onwards, the city's parishes experienced a marked rise in the quality of local leadership. A similar picture to this also emerges in terms of parishioners' responses. In the very early years following the Elizabethan Settlement, with examples of inadequate parish leadership and equivocal civic leadership it is clear that some Catholic beliefs and practices remained within the city, but it is also clear that these practices disappeared relatively quickly in most of the city's parishes.

Parish Responses

The Archdeacon of Canterbury's visitation returns provide several examples which show the reluctance of some people to give up their traditional customs, people such as Margery Inwood of St Margaret's who was presented in 1561 for continuing to wear her beads in church despite warnings to the contrary.⁶³ Some people revealed

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 41v.

⁶² CCEd, 'Thomas Wilson, MA', Person ID: 39147, rector of St George's 1582 to 1622; 'William Swift, MA', Person ID: 38693, rector of St Andrew's 1592 to 1624, curate and rector of Harbledown 1592 to 1624, Commissary 1595; 'George Marson, BA, BMus', Person ID 43674, rector of St Mary Magdalen 1607 to 1631 and curate of Nackington 1621 to 1628.

⁶³ X.1.3, fol. 18v (1561).

their displeasure at the turn religious policy was taking by disrupting the services, such as the wife of William Bell of Holy Cross, who 'left the church at the singing of the psalms, cursing and railing'.⁶⁴ Others publicly criticised the new religion, for example, Mother Wells of St Mary Northgate who 'derided the present religion and said she hoped they would have mass again shortly'.⁶⁵ Some, such as Hugh Jones of St Andrew's quietly shut up his shop windows on the 'nativity of Our Lady', according to his conscience, and then found himself being presented for the fault.⁶⁶

Examples such as these disappear from the *Detecta* relatively early, however. Following several presentments in 1560 and 1561, from the 1570s evidence of conservative attitudes in the parishes is limited to the parishes of St Dunstan's and St Paul's. With very few reports of recusancy within the city throughout the period, St Dunstan's is one of the parishes that stands out for having a small number who were fined considerable amounts for their beliefs. For example, a common place book, probably written by the lawyer John Hales at the beginning of the seventeenth century, contains a list of people who were fined for recusancy between 1581 and 1593. The list names John Beake, gentleman of St Dunstan's, Thomas Grene gentleman, Elizabeth Barham gentlewoman, who were all fined £124 in 1581. James Tompkins, yeoman, was fined £124 in 1582 and Thomas Beake, gentleman, and Elizabeth Finch 'late of London, now of St Dunstan's widow' were both fined £140 in 1583.⁶⁷ The Roper family was an influential Catholic family based in the parish.⁶⁸

In 1570 Elizabeth Stone of St Dunstan's was presented on suspicion of being an enemy to god's true religion and she was also accused of practising witchcraft. Accusations of witchcraft increased in the later sixteenth century and although they are not numerous, there are more of such cases in Canterbury than for any of the other parishes which form the focus for this study. For example, at St Paul's, Champney's 'wyfe and daughter ar suspected for wyches accordynge to informacon geven by Lawrence Walker and his wyffe sayenge that they have bewitched his childe'.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 8v.

⁶⁵ X.1.5, fol. 91v (1561).

⁶⁶ X.1.3, fol. 1r (1561).

⁶⁷ L. E. Whatmore, *Recusants in Kent: Studies and Documents* (1973), p. 24.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Later, in 1585, Champney's wife appeared again upon suspicion of enchantment and sorcery and it is significant that 'there doe resorte soe manye to her for helpe'.⁶⁹ This indicates that some in the parish had not entirely abandoned their superstitious ways despite nearly thirty years of Protestant teaching.⁷⁰

There are also examples of people simply absenting themselves from Protestant church services, although whether this was a deliberate act of conscience, demonstrating a rejection of current church policy or for other reasons, it is not easy to judge. Occasionally the reason is made explicit such as when in 1562, following the presentation of Thomas Gyll and others who had been absent from church, their vicar stepped in and explained that 'they are poor and seek their living abroad'.⁷¹ Or sometimes the motivations for non-attendance are more prosaic, such as John Bat of St Alphege who claimed he had not received Holy Communion because he had no decent apparel, or when presented for non-attendance at St Paul's church in 1567, John Fisher's wife who admitted the offence but claimed that it was because 'she was muche out of raiment'.⁷²

There are also various examples of people missing church services in order to carry out their profession, such as James Norham and Emery Wotton of St Dunstan's, for that they 'kepith victuallyng in sarvyce tyme and commythe not to the church', or John Janyuges of St Andrew's who 'hath used and exercised his occupacion of a barber upon the sabbethe days and holy dayes'.⁷³ In the 1580s there was clearly an issue with the butchers of the city, those of St Mary Magdalen presented in 1583 because they 'doe open their shoppes the sundayes in the service time'.⁷⁴ And in the same year the churchwardens of St Andrew's were being brought before the court to answer for the fact that 'the butchers of this parish was not prevented for selling of fleshe on the saboth daies'.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ X. 2.8, fol. 62.

⁷⁰ For a consideration of the significance of witchcraft see chapter five, pp. 204 and 221.

⁷¹ X.1.4, fol. 6v, 7r.

⁷² X.1.5, fol. 28r and X.1.9, fol. 7v.

⁷³ X.1.2, fol. 3v and X.2.8, fol. 33r.

⁷⁴ X.1.5, fol. 150r.

⁷⁵ Cotton, 'Churchwardens' Accounts of St Andrew', *Arch Cant* 36 (1924), p. 82.

The archdeacon's presentments indicate how people's behaviour changed over the period. They demonstrate that the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign reflect a church in crisis, with serious issues in staffing the parishes and with parishioners suffering from the subsequent vacancies and pluralism. Despite these difficulties however, and although it took until the early 1580s for every parish to be staffed by a vicar or rector, by the end of the 1560s the situation in terms of staffing was very much improved. The presentments show fewer criticisms of the ministers' behaviour as time passes. Also, whilst the lack of detail in the sources make definitive conclusions difficult, it is possible to discern broad trends in the numbers of people being presented for absence from church. In the first three years, during the period of conversion, most parishes presented between five and ten people for non-attendance, exceptions being St Andrew's with a far higher number and St Mary Northgate and St George's with fewer. The vacant parishes returned no absences. During the later 1560s and the 1570s, during the period of consolidation, the numbers fell, dramatically in most cases, before rising in the 1580s and falling back again in the early years of the seventeenth century. It is possible that the continuing religious divisions within in the city might account for these fluctuations. Two examples are specified, with Stephan Dane said to be travelling to Wye instead of worshipping at St Margaret's and two of the parishioners of Holy Cross travelling to Herne, both parishes with known non-conformist ministers at this time.⁷⁶ In the early seventeenth century a couple from St Mary Northgate were in trouble for attending the parish services at St George's where the radical Protestant, Thomas Wilson had been rector since 1586.⁷⁷

This demonstrates that while some conservative influences did remain, Protestantism had made considerable headway and this view is corroborated by the two sets of churchwardens' accounts, which exist for the city, the parishes of St Dunstan's and St Andrew's. Both sets of accounts have been transcribed and published in *Archaeologia Cantiana*. Those for St Dunstan's exist for the years up to 1580 with some surviving pages after that, although these survivals do not allow for any continuity. The St Andrew's accounts are much fuller and cover the whole period 1558-

⁷⁶ X.2.8, fol. 31 (1588).

⁷⁷ X.5.10, fol. 1v (1615).

1625.⁷⁸ As noted in the introduction, as evidence in the task of reconstructing religious change such accounts are not without their problems and it is not possible to draw exact comparisons between the two parishes from these accounts, which cover different years and also include different categories of expenditure. For example, St Dunstan's makes no mention of paying out for bread and wine despite the fact that this must have been a regular expense. Conclusions must of necessity be tentative, but nevertheless, the accounts do provide a wealth of information about the two parishes and how they responded to the religious changes of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

Both churches came under the patronage of the archbishops, but in terms of size, wealth and character they were quite different. St Andrew's parish was situated in the centre of the city and had links to city government, the mayor having his own pew in the church and with many of the churchwardens also fulfilling roles within the civic government over the period.⁷⁹ The parish was relatively wealthy, the rectory being valued at £13 6s d in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, which made it the wealthiest of the city's parishes by far; only one other parish, that of St Mary Northgate was worth more than £10 and five parishes were worth less than £5. St Andrew's was also home to many of the city's wealthier inhabitants. It was relatively large for a city centre parish, having seventy-three households at the time of the Parker Certificates in 1561, making it the fifth largest parish at that time.

In contrast, St Dunstan's was a suburban church outside of the city walls and was worth a mere £4 17s 10d in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. In 1588 it had 156 communicants. Before the Reformation its position on the road from London into Canterbury had made the church an important stopping point for many pilgrims on their journey into Canterbury to visit the shrine of St Thomas Becket; indeed, it was the starting point for King Henry II's penitential barefoot journey to the shrine in 1174. The parish was also the home of the Roper family with marriage connections to Thomas

⁷⁸ Cowper, 'Accounts St Dunstan'; Cotton, 'Accounts St Andrew'.

⁷⁹ Anne Le Baigue and Avril Leach, "'Where Streams of (Living) Water Flow': the Religious and Civic significance of Archbishop Abbot's Conduit in St Andrew's, Canterbury, 1603-1625, *Arch Cant*, 139 (2018), 111-134 (p. 117)

More. St Dunstan's parish had a slightly higher turnover of incumbent over the period than St Andrew's, with twelve ministers compared to St Andrew's seven. Only the last incumbent during the period, James Penny, stayed in the parish for longer than ten years, but of the other eleven five stayed less than five years. On the other hand, the incumbents were more highly qualified than for other Canterbury parishes, with five of the twelve having a Master's degree.

The men who served as churchwardens of the two parishes were also very different. At St Dunstan's not all of the wardens were literate, for example neither William Nutte (churchwarden 1571-3) nor John Crucher (1573-4) were able to sign their name but rather put their mark when witnessing an agreement between John Nightingale and John Crucher in 1572.⁸⁰ During the nineteen years of the surviving accounts that are relevant to this study fifteen separate men served as church wardens, some of them, such as Lawrence Kavell and Henry Wotton, serving on several separate occasions. None was elected to the burghmote nor served as alderman.⁸¹ In contrast at St Andrew's, of the thirty-five men who served as churchwardens from 1558-1601, the parish provided the mayor on eleven occasions, nine wardens also served as aldermen and a further sixteen served as common councillors, certainly not the 'meanest and lewdest' of the parish.⁸²

What is clear from the accounts is that both parishes complied with instructions concerned with the dismantling of Catholic worship and with the introduction of items for Protestant worship without too much delay. At St Andrew's the accounts for 1558-9 include both the last mention of money received for the paschal candle and the hocktide gathering and the first mention of the remodelling of the church for Protestant worship, with 20d paid out to Goodman Lancelot for 'taking downe ye rode, defacing of yt and for taking downe ii lytell alters and defacing of ye Imagys'. For taking down the high altar 12d was paid out and Lancelot was paid a

⁸⁰ Cotton, 'St Andrew', (1921), p. 133.

⁸¹ The names of these men were John Perkyn, Mr Hareh, Laurence Kevell, Thomas Tyrry, Henry Wotton, John Poredge, William Nut, Edmond Essex, John Crocher, John Rowle, William Kemp, Steven Wells, John Nightingale, George May and Ambrose Symson

⁸² The names of the aldermen and common councillors are taken from G Durkin, 'Civic Government and Economy in Elizabethan Canterbury'.

further 4d for 'takyng downe ye sepulture and ye ymages under ye clowthe'.⁸³ During the same period, Goodman Johnson received 2d for 'puttyng owt ye payntyng on ye walls'.⁸⁴ During the office of the next pair of wardens, the remaining part of the rood loft was removed and sold on, and in place of the altar a communion table costing 4s 8d was purchased.⁸⁵ At this time the parish also set about removing the rood screen which was then sold to Pyerce Harris for 6s 8d, some recompense for the 3s 4d paid out to have the screen removed.⁸⁶ The speed with which these changes happened suggests a high degree of conformity to the demands of the Elizabethan Settlement from this parish.

The response at St Dunstan's was slightly slower. There are no accounts for 1558-9 but the parish can be seen selling off church goods to various members of the congregation in the 1561-3 accounts in order to comply with the religious requirements of the new regime. For example, two old albs are recorded in the 1561/3 accounts as being sold to Mr Courthopp, a vestment worth 6s 8d to the vicar and two old rochets to the 'old man' for 10d. In the same accounting period Bartholomew Sandy bought three painted cloths plus a banner and also a 'carved piece' for 4d.⁸⁷ It is interesting to speculate on what motivated these purchases. The rood screen was also removed at this time. In line with the Royal Order of October 1561, both parishes can be seen paying for the writing out of the Ten Commandments to be fixed on the table over the 'communion board'.⁸⁸ Chalices were sold and communion cups bought. In the years 1561-3 St Dunstan's paid out 5s for a service book. There was also the purchase of the book of Homilies for 12d at this time, also a psalter for 14d and part one of the paraphrases, two psalters for the quire and a 'lyttell booke' of prayer. A similar pattern was repeated at St Andrew's parish which purchased a new communion table and the Paraphrases for 4s 6d in 1560/1. The second clause of the Royal Order of 1561 stated that 'the steps which be as yet at this day in any cathedral,

⁸³ Cotton, 'St Andrew', (1921), p. 51.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁸⁷ Cowper, 'St Dunstan', p. 116. Bartholomew Sandy was excommunicated in 1562 for going about the county with a wench, X.1.2, fol. 3.

⁸⁸ Cowper, 'St Dunstan', p. 56.

collegiate or parish church' should not now be 'stirred nor altered'.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the church wardens at St Andrew's paid out money in 1564/5 'for the taking up of the stepe in the chawncell and the making up of the same agayne with the seates townd about'.⁹⁰ In 1571 the accounts at St Dunstan's show 6s 2d being paid out for 'mending of the idolaterous steapes of the chawncell'.⁹¹ It is interesting, and a little surprising that this did not happen until later at St Dunstan's given that the parish had had a protestant incumbent from early on. Thomas Panton had first been collated to the vicarage in 1545, although his Protestant beliefs had got him into trouble during Mary's reign when, following the uttering of 'certayn unsemely woordes against the quenes Heignes', the Privy Council intervened and wrote to the mayor of Canterbury asking him to 'set on the pillery one Panton, vicare of St Dunstanes besides Canterbury'.⁹² It is likely that he was removed from the parish after this as at the time of Archdeacon Harpsfield's visitation in 1558 St Dunstan's was listed as having no vicar and no curate. During the last year of Mary's reign the church wardens' accounts include 12d to be paid on two separate occasions to two visiting preachers, one of whom, Robert Serles, was one of the Six Preachers at the Cathedral known for his conservative views. Panton seems to have been reinstated to the parish after Elizabeth's accession where he stayed until 1568. From 1561 he was also vicar of St Mary Bredin where he was resident, so perhaps it was his focus on Mary Bredin which led to his toleration of the 'idolatrours steps' together with the Royal Order of 1561, despite his Protestantism. The lack of action on the steps may also have been influenced by the conservatism of a number of local residents. Following the short incumbency of Edward Blundell from 1568 to his death in 1571 the cure was served by Richard Weeks, who was presented in 1573 for administering communion in common bread, and it was during his incumbency that the steps were finally removed.

Eamon Duffy has commented that such actions which can be documented from churchwardens' accounts up and down the country, were not 'in most cases the result

⁸⁹ W.H. Frere and W.M. Kennedy eds., *Visitation Articles and Injunctions, Vol III 1559-1575* (1910), p. 109.

⁹⁰ Cotton, 'St Andrew', (1921), p. 56.

⁹¹ Cowper, 'St Dunstan', p. 130.

⁹² APC, Vol. 4 (1552-1554), p. 330.

of a landslide of Protestant fervour, but of weary obedience to unpopular measures'.⁹³ In Coventry and Lichfield he wrote that a commission of March and April 1565/6 to look into the survival of objects used in Catholic worship indicated that the picture that emerges from the returns shows 'unmistakeably a slow and reluctant conformity imposed from above with little or no evidence of popular enthusiasm for or commitment to the process of reform'.⁹⁴ The picture that emerges in Canterbury is neither slow nor reluctant. Both churches responded and, where individuals were reluctant to conform, they were presented by the churchwardens, as was the case of Randall Tatnall of St Dunstan's in 1562, who was presented for keeping a mass book and other Latin books.⁹⁵

A study of wills also indicates that Protestantism found steady acceptance amongst Canterbury citizens. Again, this challenges the view that Canterbury should be regarded as a centre of Catholicism even during the early years of Elizabeth's reign and indicates that it is more valid to see the city as containing a broad spectrum of belief in the early years which quickly settled down to reflect widespread Protestant conformity. The following analysis is based on wills from St Andrew's parish whose position in the centre of the city, and the abundance of city officials as members of its congregation, make it a useful case study. Fifty-eight wills were considered which were proved between 1558 and 1625. They show that before 1559 the preamble was usually, but not inevitably, Catholic in wording. Where patterns can be discerned, it might be assumed that those testators who deviated significantly from the standard might be worthy of further investigation. If the wills of Elizabeth and Thomas Guilham are taken to be typical of a Catholic will, the subsequent wills can be judged against these. Thomas died in 1557 and left his soul 'to allmyghty god my redeemer and to our blessed ladye the vyrgen & to all the sayntes in heaven'.¹⁰³ His wife who died the following year also invoked God, and the 'blyssed company of heven'.¹⁰⁴ Both left money for diriges and priests at their funerals. In line with a belief that the living could do much to affect the situation of the dead, Thomas specifically charged his wife to do

⁹³ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 570.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 573.

⁹⁵ X.1.4, fol. 2v, and X.1.3, fol. 1r.

¹⁰³ PRC/17/31/17.

¹⁰⁴ PRC/17/31/15.

all things as he had requested for his soul and 'she shall answere before the face of god when she partes this world that she do all suche thing as I have requested'. Elizabeth herself asked for a dirige by note and a half trental mass at her funeral with money willed for her month's and year's minds plus money for masses to be said for the next seven years, as well as 'money for my husbandes sowle and myne & all chryste sowles'.

In contrast to this there were testators in the late Marian period who were obviously not following the Catholic pattern stated above, men such as George Webb, who merely committed his soul to almighty God, and John Arras who simply committed his soul to God.¹⁰⁵ While the significance of this kind of short, non-specific preamble has been questioned, it is the contention here that it is possible that this indicated someone who had not fully embraced Catholicism during the interval of Mary's reign. The witnesses to Webb's will included George Toftes, a well-known early adopter of Protestantism, and Henry Aldey and Thomas French. Aldey and French were both fellow aldermen and Aldey, certainly, was also known for his Protestantism. John Arras's will links him to George May and Nicholas Fish, both aldermen. This group which can be linked with Protestant preambles during the Marian period represent half of the aldermanic body in 1556. This is significant as it suggests that in addition to the conservatives on the aldermanic bench, a group of reform minded men also existed who might be supposed to have provided an element of civic support for the Protestant changes following the Elizabethan Settlement. In this respect Canterbury could be contrasted with York where Claire Cross has shown that it was not until the later 1580s and 1590s that the leading citizens were beginning to express strongly Protestant sentiments in their wills.¹⁰⁶

The first surviving will from the parish after the accession of Elizabeth is that of Robert Madler in 1560. He adopted a simple Protestant preamble that was typical of the wills of the parish for the next twelve years until the collation of Thomas Swift as minister in 1573. During this period testators simply bequeathed their soul to 'almighty

¹⁰⁵ PRC/17/32/151; PRC 17/32/276C.

¹⁰⁶ Cross, *Reformation Principle and Practice* p. 223.

God my maker and redeemer. The exception is Nicholas Lyster who added 'and Jesus Christ by the effusion of whose most precious blood I trust to have remission of my sins,' a wording more typical of the end of the century.¹⁰⁷ There was clearly a group of more committed Protestants in the parish at this time. Two of the men who witnessed Lyster's will have left wills of their own and both of these include distinctive preambles which emphasise their Protestant faith. Thus Clement Bassock, when he came to write his own will in 1582 began with the formulaic sentence that was common, 'I commend my soul to almighty God my only maker, saviour and redeemer' but added that it was through Christ's merits that he was trusting to 'enjoy the heavenly kingdom appointed before all worlds for his elect and chosen'.¹⁰⁸ His wife went a stage further the following year adding '... and to the holy ghost my heavenly comforter who hath sanctified me three persons and one omnipotent and everlasting and ever living God through whose only mercy I am persuaded by the word of God that I am out of his elect and chosen people'.¹⁰⁹ Another of Lyster's witnesses, Anthony Webb, also wrote a very individual preamble:

I commit my soul to the hands of the almighty who blots out all my offences and receives my soul into his merit and although my sins are many yet the Lord's merit is much more and therefore I hope the Lord will receive my soul into his heavenly kingdom although of me altogether undeserved and so I wholly depend upon the Lord's pleasure still looking for that heavenly kingdom where all those which serve the Lord sincerely are appointed to take their rest of conscience to the which place I beseech the almighty to bring me. Amen.¹¹⁰

Patterns can be discerned which correspond with the change of incumbent. Following the collation of Thomas Swift in 1573, it became usual to include an emphasis on the fact that it was only by the death of Jesus 'and no other means' that a person was to be saved. This pattern continued throughout the incumbency of his son, William (1592-1624) and William's successor, Edward Aldey (1624-1643). The frequency with which this standard preamble was used during the later and early seventeenth centuries means that when the simple preamble common in the earlier period is used,

¹⁰⁷ PRC 17/37/69.

¹⁰⁸ PRC 17/44/121a.

¹⁰⁹ PRC 17/45/226.

¹¹⁰ TNA Prob/11/82.

it stands out starkly. For example, that of Hugh Jones in 1593.¹¹¹ Jones had been presented in 1561 for keeping the 'Nativity of Our Lady' and so the simplicity of his preamble may well indicate that he had still not fully embraced Protestantism at the time of his death.

Wills provide evidence of links between the cathedral and inhabitants of the city, for example, in 1564 Simon Fisher left money to the singing men of the cathedral. He also requested to be buried in Christ Church yard next to Mr Swift's child.¹¹² Three other testators also asked to be buried in the cathedral, demonstrating that the institution was still regarded as important to some in the city. Only two wills mention books or Bibles. In 1592 Stephen White left two volumes of the *Acts and Monuments* to his son, Simon and in 1609 Richard Goldfinch left 40s for an English Bible to be put in the body of the Cathedral.¹¹³ Neither is there much emphasis on leaving money for sermons to be preached at the testator's funeral, only Alice Potter in 1573 and Richard Goldfinch mentioned above.¹¹⁴ In her study of religion in Leeds and Hull Claire Cross suggested that the bequest of money to a minister was usually in order that they would preach a funeral sermon and that this could be associated with the presence of 'evangelical' clergymen. This does not seem to have been the case at St Andrew's.

Given the problematic nature of will preambles as evidence of religious outlook, caution needs to be used when drawing conclusions, but taken together with the other evidence outlined above, these wills hint at a high degree of conformity and suggest that after the early years of crisis, Protestantism had become relatively quickly established within the city. As the sixteenth century progressed, the nature of the city's Protestantism continued to develop, and by the end of the century and into the early years of the seventeenth century a more radical influence can be identified within the city. This greater radicalism was reflected in the outlook of a number of clergymen who were serving Canterbury's parishes by this time, the parishes of St

¹¹¹ PRC 17/49/216a.

¹¹² PRC 17/39/222b.

¹¹³ PRC 17/48/387; PRC 17/56/381.

¹¹⁴ PRC 32/32/188.

Andrew's and St George's serving as good examples of this consolidation of Protestantism at parish level.

Seventeenth Century leadership

By the end of the sixteenth century parish leadership across the city was experiencing greater stability than in the mid years of the century, and it had become far more usual for vicars and rectors to remain in post for long periods of time. At St Andrew's, for example, Thomas Swift's twenty-year incumbency from 1573 was followed by the collation of his son, William, who continued as the parish minister for over thirty years until his death in 1624. In 1586 the preacher Thomas Wilson was instituted to the nearby parish of St George through the patronage of the Dean and Chapter, a parish which he served until his death in 1621.¹¹⁵ Wilson was also one of the Six Preachers at the Cathedral. Further detail about the significance of the cathedral for the development of Protestantism within the city will be provided in chapter three, but it is noted here how close the links were between Wilson's role as a parish minister and the worship of the cathedral. In his *Christian Dictionarie*, published in 1612, Wilson thanked Thomas Nevile, the Dean, for the comfort he had received 'through the great loue & care of that Reuerend and most courteous Deane of that Church, whereof I am a Member'. He also included a dedication to Henry Robinson, bishop of Carlisle, who he described as 'under God, the foundation of all the learning and preferment which I enioy, hauing cherrished me in his Colledge (whereof he was a most worthy Prouest and Gouvernor, neglecting himselfe and his, for the good of his house) and afterward, sending mee to the place where yet I abide, by Gods goodnesse'.¹¹⁶ Henry Robinson was also one of the Six Preachers from 1583 to 1589. The extent to which the cathedral had an impact on the wider city in ways such as this has not previously been fully recognized.

Wilson published several books giving an indication of his religious outlook and, therefore, the essence of the preaching that people of the parish, and beyond, were receiving. Wilson's church was inclusive and, in contrast to those whose

¹¹⁵ CCEd, 'Thomas Swift', Person ID: 38694; 'William Swift', Person ID: 38693; 'Thomas Wilson', Person ID: 39147.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Wilson, *Christian Dictionary* (1612) sig. A4r.

predestinarian teaching could be accused of encouraging a sense of anxiety among the elect, Wilson wanted to reassure his listeners. In *Saints by Calling* he wrote that some will inevitably be called sooner in their lives and some later since 'God in his eternall counsell hath ordained the time of euerie ones calling'. Giving the example of the thief who was crucified with Jesus: 'Wee reade of one whom Iesus called at the last houre of the day, to wit, the theefe conuerted at his death'. However, Wilson also pointed out that while this should be an encouragement, it should not breed complacency, 'but only one such we reade of, least any presume; yet one, least any which are long uncalled, should despaire.'¹¹⁷ From this he advised, therefore, that people should never 'give final sentence upon any man, to brand him for a reprobate: for who can tell if a wicked man will so continue unto the end of his life'.¹¹⁸

This did not mean that Wilson offered a watered-down version of the doctrine of predestination. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the task of conversion could be regarded as having been completed, at least outwardly, and except for a very small minority most people regarded themselves as Protestants. As Leif Dixon has suggested, Wilson saw this as a potential problem. Wilson, he says 'did not want people to be Protestants because they were natural conformists, because they believed what they had been brought up to believe or because a part-time religiosity fitted in well with their otherwise busy lives'.¹¹⁹ Wilson's teaching shows an awareness that times had changed and that pastoral care needed to adapt too. His incumbency demonstrates that a clergyman of a more Puritan outlook did not necessarily spell division and discord within a parish.

Further insights about the type of Protestantism which existed in Jacobean Canterbury is provided by the funeral sermon for Wilson, which was preached by fellow clergyman, William Swift, in January 1621, and published the following year.¹²⁰ The text for the sermon was based on Romans 8:18: 'If we suffer with Christ we shall also be glorified by him', and the main message was that all Christians are liable to

¹¹⁷ Thomas Wilson, *Saints by Calling* (1620), p. 6.

¹¹⁸ Wilson, *A Commentarie upon the Most Divine Epistle of S. Paul to the Romanes*, (1614), p. 879.

¹¹⁹ Leif Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians in England c.1590-1640* (Farnham, 2014), p. 194.

¹²⁰ William Swift, *A sermon preached at the funerall of that painful and faithful servant of Iesus Christ Thomas Wilson*, (1622).

affliction in life either due to sin or as a result of God's 'trials of thy faith, love, obedience, patience and constancy'. However, Christians are not to despair since the joy of the elect after such affliction is great, so great, in fact, that it cannot even be described.

Swift was clearly lamenting a friend. His sermon is emotional and subjective, but it nevertheless provides useful detail. Firstly, the sermon demonstrates that clear links existed, not only between the two rectors but also between the two congregations. One of the reasons given by Swift for going to print was to provide a more lasting copy of the sermon for those members of the St Andrew's congregation who had held Wilson and his teaching in high regard. In the dedicatory epistle, for example, he stated that 'I am persuaded many of you are well affected to the deceased even for his message sake'.¹²¹ Swift ended the printed version of the sermon with a 'word to the congregation' in which he tried to encourage the inhabitants of St George's parish by underlining again the links between the two parishes. 'You are not alone', he wrote, 'but have many abroad that do share with you in your sorrows that sometimes were partners with you in the comforts of your minister'.¹²² These links between parishes are significant.

Swift went on to emphasise the close bond which he believed existed between Wilson, the godly minister, and his parishioners, by using the analogy of marriage when referring to their relationship. He described the congregation as having been left 'lamenting as a widow without a teacher or comforter' at the death of their pastor.¹²³ This analogy suggests a very different sort of relationship between minister and people from that which had existed between priest and congregation in pre-reformation days, and could even help to explain why Wilson was content to lead just the one parish throughout his career in an age when pluralism was common and the income from that parish very small.

Swift's sermon also demonstrates the way that godly preaching might divide opinion in an area. Despite Wilson's 'orthodoxy' and 'excellent interpretation' and his

¹²¹ Ibid., p.2.

¹²² Ibid., p. 21.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 16.

opposition to 'idolatry, superstition and all false worship', or perhaps because of it, he 'reaped the malice of some, but especially of one who opposed him to the uttermost of his power'. Eventually, this person 'having been unmasked, forsook his friends, living, country, and all, and departed from us'.¹²⁴ That person's name is not revealed in the text, but he has been identified by Patrick Collinson as Benjamin Carier, the Canterbury prebendary who famously fled abroad in 1613 where he converted to Catholicism.¹²⁵ Clearly, therefore, not everyone in Canterbury held Wilson in such high esteem as Swift did. Indeed, Swift made it clear in the dedicatory epistle that he was well aware that 'it is a thing too common in these days among the enemies of truth, secretly and cunningly to deprave such after their death who have been worthy instruments of God's glory'.¹²⁶ Other sources suggest that there were still a number of religious conservatives in Canterbury in the early seventeenth century, so Swift may have been hoping that the publication of the sermon would preserve the positive view of Wilson for posterity within such an environment. This demonstrates the existence of both conservative and radical elements within the city throughout the period.

In contrast to this opposition, Swift was at pains to draw attention to the love displayed by many people within the city, referring to the 'unfained affection, true zeal' and 'fervent love of so great a multitude within this city to the gospel of Christ' as preached by Wilson.¹²⁷ He also acknowledged the deep sadness felt by parishioners grieving at the loss of their minister. He noted the 'tears falling from many eyes and other signs of mourning in this auditory'.¹²⁸ Their loss was seen to be all the greater because of the conscientiousness with which Wilson had carried out his duties, especially in terms of his preaching. He is described as having been an industrious preacher who was 'eloquent, and a powerful dispenser of the word', preaching three times each week at the church throughout his time in the parish. Visiting Wilson on his sick bed shortly before his death, Swift felt compelled to counsel him to slow down a little and Wilson's response is indicative of the importance with which he viewed the

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.17.

¹²⁵ Patrick Collinson, 'The Protestant Cathedral', in P. Collinson, M. Sparks, N. Ramsay, eds, *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), p. 184.

¹²⁶ Swift, *Funerall*, A3v.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

task of preaching to his people. He replied to Swift 'woe to me if I preach not the gospel, but in my sickness I know the Lord will not require it of me'.¹²⁹

The efficacy of preaching as a tool to bring people to a deeper understanding of Protestantism has been questioned, both by contemporaries and by historians. In addition to the examples of Puritan ministers from the end of the sixteenth century exclaiming about the ignorance of the people despite years of Protestant teaching, even where sermons existed in abundance, it has also been suggested by some historians that the Protestant preaching ministry was a failure, with most people unable to take on board even basic Protestant doctrine. Christopher Haigh, for example, has stated that despite Puritan efforts, the English people 'could not be made to understand, accept and respond to the Protestant doctrines offered to them'.¹³⁰ Swift claimed that Wilson was able to speak to all members of the community who were willing to listen. 'In his sermons he gave good content to such as were most judicious, yet still spake to the capacity of the meanest'.¹³¹ This was important as it shows Wilson responding to the times in which he lived. As noted above, he was not interested in watering down the message, but nevertheless was interested in the souls of all of his parishioners. Dixon has suggested that Wilson's position was a compromise, in which he tried to maintain standards whilst at the same time 'setting the bar at a level which most people who showed willing could clamber over'.¹³² In this respect, a commonplace view of the hotly contested nature of the Reformation which compares a tightly-knit community of the godly ranged self-righteously against the rest might be contrasted with the daily reality of local communities trying to get on with the everyday task of living.

Having looked to the benefits of the past as a result of the institution of such a worthy man to the rectory, Swift then considered the uncertainties of a future which lay in the hands of the patron of the parish, the Dean and Chapter. By this time the Dean of the Cathedral was John Boys. Clearly Wilson himself was concerned about

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 18.

¹³⁰ Haigh, *The Reign of Elizabeth*, p. 184.

¹³¹ Swift, *Funerall*, p.18.

¹³² Leif Dixon, 'Calvinist Theology and Pastoral Reality in the Reign of King James I: the Perspective of Thomas Wilson', *Seventeenth Century*, 23 (2008), p. 173-197 (p. 186).

who his successor would be since, according to Swift, 'with his last dying breath he prayed and willed all good to the church of Christ in general but to you, his flock in special, namely his hearty desire was that the patrons of his church would place such a one in his room as should be able to teach his poor flock'.¹³³ Wilson was, in fact, succeeded by Thomas Jackson, the son of Thomas Jackson the prebendary and it is questionable whether he served the parishioners as faithfully as Wilson had done and would have wanted. In 1636 Jackson was one of a group of ministers from Canterbury and the surrounding district who were reported to Archbishop Laud for tavern haunting and drunkenness.¹³⁴

Nevertheless, the city did continue to retain strong godly influences as the seventeenth century progressed. In 1626, preaching in the city was supplemented by a new lectureship which was set up at St Alphege, to which the first appointment was the Puritan preacher, Herbert Palmer. In an account of Palmer's career written in the mid-seventeenth century, Samuel Clarke described how, when Palmer first came to Canterbury to preach in the cathedral, he preached 'with so much true zeal and reall savour of piety as did much affect the godly hearers'.¹³⁵ According to Clarke, during this time Palmer 'did much edify the people there [Canterbury], both by sound doctrine, and exemplary conversation. His sermons were altogether spiritual and heavenly, full of solid explications and practicall applications of the Word of God'. After the sermon in the cathedral Palmer preached at St George's underlining the link which existed by that time between the cathedral and the godly within the city.¹³⁶

According to Clarke it was the leader of the Stranger church in the city, Master Delme, who was instrumental in bringing Palmer to Canterbury. Delme travelled to Wingham when he knew that Palmer was visiting family there, and afterwards worked with 'divers others of the most considerable Gentlemen and Citizens' to encourage Palmer to move from Cambridge where he was a fellow of Queens' College in order

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³⁴ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series, Charles I 1636-7*, ed. John Bruce, (1867), p. 89.

¹³⁵ Samuel Clarke, *The Lives of Two and Twenty English Divines Eminent in their Generations for Learning, Piety and Painfulness in the Work of the Ministry and for their Sufferings in the cause of Christ* (1660), p. 220.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

that he might work with the godly in Canterbury.¹³⁷ On Palmer's initial visit to Wingham, after he had been invited to preach a sermon in the cathedral, it was Delme who encouraged him to preach a second sermon at St George's. Patrick Collinson suggested that 'there is no evidence that the Strangers contributed much to the local cause', and although integration between the two communities may well have been fairly limited, this example indicates that the community did have some effect on the wider city.¹³⁸ Although it is not easy to quantify, it is the contention of this chapter that the presence of a large number of religious refugees was a factor in the assimilation of a spirit of Protestantism within the city, as will be shown below.

The Stranger Community

Francis Cross, writing in 1898 believed that the presence of the Strangers must have had a significant influence on the city, for, in his opinion, not only did their settlement help 'in no small measure to reveal to the English people the character of the great spiritual movement which was then in progress', but their experience of persecution and exile and 'their simple faith and noble courage directed to a higher level the thoughts and aims of our own reformers'.¹³⁹

There had been a history of such settlement in England, with numbers of people coming to settle during the reign of Henry VIII and Edward VI, although before the accession of Edward the settlers had tended to come in small groups or singly and did not set up their own community, obscurity being important to their safety at this time. The death of Henry in 1547 followed by the death of Francis I of France three months later changed the situation and resulted in more refugees fleeing to England. The accession of Henry II in France led to strengthening persecution in France at the same time as the accession of Edward VI in England led to a warmer welcome to foreign Protestants. Mary's reign witnessed a mass exodus but the accession of Elizabeth again saw numbers of Protestants fleeing into the country. In the early days of the reign the majority of Strangers moved through Kent quickly on their way to Stranger settlements in London.

¹³⁷ Clarke, *Lives*, p. 221.

¹³⁸ Collinson, 'Protestant Strangers and the English Reformation', p. 60.

¹³⁹ Francis Cross, *History of the Walloon and Huguenot Church at Canterbury* (1898), p 1.

Initially, the communities of refugees in east Kent were invited to settle in the belief that they could make a positive contribution to the local economy. In 1561, with growing numbers in the London Stranger community, the government encouraged a number of refugees to move to Sandwich, stating explicitly that this would be of benefit to the town because of 'the[e]xercise there of the facultie of making saes, bay and other cloth, which hath not been used to be made in this our realme of Englonde, or for fishing in the seas.'¹⁴⁰ The same was true in the 1570s when the community of Strangers was established in Canterbury, at a time when Canterbury was no longer flourishing economically.

The first record of the Canterbury community was in 1567 when the Burghmote noted that:

yt ys agreed that there maye be a company of the straungers received to inhabytt within the libertye of the cytty by order from the Quenes maiesties Counsell and upon orders to be devised by theis house.¹⁴²

But it would seem that it was not until several years later that Strangers actually began to settle in the city. Cross suggests that the first settlers came from the community which had been settled in Winchelsea, and these people were then joined in 1575 by a larger community of Walloons from Sandwich. The Canterbury community flourished, and estimates suggest that by the end of the century almost a third of Canterbury's population were foreign textile workers.

For a while the community certainly exerted a significant impact on the city economically. Most of the newcomers were involved in the textile industry, and whilst the agreement between them and the city authorities did not allow them to become involved in the retail trade, they were able to set up their looms in private houses and make sufficient profits to support themselves in addition to numbers of destitute newcomers as well as those who arrived in the city on their journey on to London. The city undoubtedly benefited from this industry, with numbers of local businessmen able to make a profit from the supply of materials to the community. These economic links were important and often involved the upper stratum of Canterbury businessmen, for

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁴² CCA-CC-A, Vol. B, fol. 215.

example, the Canterbury drapers who supplied the Strangers were all freemen and some, such as William Whiting and Clive Carter also served as mayor. The significance of this economic activity can be seen in a letter of support written in 1623 by the Dean and Chapter to the government in which they allude to the benefit that the community continued to bring to the city:

We are verily perswaded that the example of their painfull industry and diligent labours doth move and stirre up the honest poore of our Nation to set themselves to work.¹⁴³

It is difficult to document the exact influence that the community exerted on the city aside from the economic benefits. Although the community kept itself very much to itself, the presence of the Strangers would certainly have been very apparent to the local population and, it might be argued, the existence of such a large community of religious exiles in the midst of the city would have acted as a clear symbol of the evils of the papacy. While some of the individuals were economic migrants, most were unwilling refugees who had been forced to leave their homes in the face of Catholic persecution. Having suffered such disruption on account of their beliefs, their commitment to the Protestant religion was neither half-hearted nor lukewarm. The community was also an example of Presbyterianism working in practice.

In addition to the networks which existed between the godly of the town and members of the Stranger community, there were also clear links between the community and the cathedral. When the Strangers first settled in Canterbury they were given the use of St Alphege's church, the Chapter Act Book reporting that 'yt ys agreed the Walloons Strangers shall be licensed as much as in us the deane and chapter lyeth to have thuse of their comen prayer and sermons in the paryshe Church of St Elphies in Canterbury and in such sorte & at such tyme as the parysheners there be not hyndred or disturbed of theyre comen prayer'.¹⁴⁴ The Chapter Act book does not record the decision, but it is clear that within a short space of time the increase in numbers led to the Cathedral crypt becoming their place of

¹⁴³ Cross, *Walloon and Huguenot Church*, p 90.

¹⁴⁴ CCA-DCC-CA/2 Chapter Act Book 1568-1581, p. 40.

worship. Evidence shows that Strangers were renting houses in each of the six wards across the city demonstrating that they were living closely alongside the English even if they were not worshipping alongside.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that neither of the historiographical extremes can accurately be applied to the city. The use of Archdeacons' presentments, churchwardens' accounts and a sample of wills has shown that after initial difficulties, which included a lack of strong leadership and an unwillingness by some sections of the population, including members of the city corporation, to embrace the religious changes which accompanied Elizabeth's accession, from the later 1560s the people of Canterbury, in general, accepted Protestantism with few outward signs of resistance. The issue of staffing had been more or less effectively addressed by the 1570s and by the 1580s there were sufficient numbers of more radical Protestants on the aldermanic bench to oversee the reformation of manners. By the seventeenth century three-quarters of the city's clergy had a university qualification. The Jacobean period also benefitted from the stability which had been achieved in the city's parishes by the end of the sixteenth century and it became usual for the incumbents to remain within the parish for an extended period of time enabling strong relationships to be forged.¹⁴⁵ The quality as well as the commitment of a number of these men was also different. Only six of the Jacobean incumbents held more than one cure, two of which were curacies of nearby city parishes.¹⁴⁶ By the early seventeenth century a committed preacher such as Thomas Wilson was not only able to provide for his own parishioners at St George's but, as one of the cathedral's Six Preachers, was also able to provide for the wider city. His brand of more radical Protestantism was supplemented by the appointment of Herbert Palmer as the city's lecturer. The existence of the cathedral benefitted the city's parishes by providing other roles to supplement inadequate

¹⁴⁵ Each of the parishes except St Dunstan's and St Margaret had the services of an incumbent during this period who stayed at least twenty years, and often longer. For most, this stability was achieved from the beginning of James' reign. For Holy Cross, St Martin and St Mary Northgate this happened from the middle of the reign.

¹⁴⁶ David Platt (CCEd Person ID: 38932) of St Alphege was also vicar of Graveney, James Bissell (CCEd Person ID: 39285) of St Mary Bredman was curate of Thanington, Kennard Sampson (CCEd Person ID: 42432) of St Mary Northgate was also curate of Eythorne, Richard Allen (CCEd Person ID: 37692) of St Mildred was also rector of Stowting, William Walsall (CCEd Person ID:48374)of St Paul was also curate of St Margaret, and Rufus Rogers (CCEd Person ID: 38141) of St Peter was also rector of Hurst.

stipends, particularly in the early, volatile years and, although this could also mean that a man's time might be stretched to the detriment of his parishioners, it did also mean that every parish was served.

However, there were also some elements within the city which were slower to embrace Protestantism particularly in the early days of the Settlement, but also, in some cases, through to the end of the sixteenth century and beyond. Peter Clark has referred to a disturbance in 1625 when a group of Catholics entered the cathedral, one of whom even tore pages from the Great Bible. Clark has also suggested that the disputed parliamentary elections of 1593 and 1620 were both influenced by religious differences.¹⁴⁷ This demonstrates that the situation was never clear cut, that conservatives remained, and that religious tensions continued to be important even into the seventeenth century. It has been argued that the existence of the Cathedral was a factor in encouraging this element of conservatism within the city. The next chapter will examine this suggestion by examining the role that the cathedral played in the city and further afield after its re-foundation in 1541.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Clark, 'Thomas Scott and the Growth of Urban Opposition to the Early Stuart Regime', *HJ*, 21 (1978), 1-26 (p. 12).

The Cathedral: 'an Epicurean Colledge of ryot and voluptuousnesse'?¹

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to consider the part played by the cathedral in Canterbury in the development of Protestantism within the city during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. The reformation had necessarily brought about a change in the role of cathedrals since the primary role of the medieval institutions, which had been to provide continual repetitions of the mass for the souls of the dead, was no longer relevant to a church that had rejected the existence of purgatory and banned the veneration of relics and saints. During this period, the ceremonialism of cathedrals was frowned upon by some reformers who were wary of any practices which were reminiscent of the popish past, and while the defenders of cathedrals might point to their importance in providing salvation for the souls of the living through the preaching of the word of God, this rationale did not always satisfy. The continued existence of the institution might, therefore, be seen as both puzzling and anomalous. Claire Cross has referred to the way in which the existence of Cathedrals after the Reformation caused offence to more radical Protestants visually, pastorally and also economically, so that it was 'not surprising that so few bewailed the demise of Deans and Chapters' when they were eventually suppressed in 1649.² Stamford Lehmberg has taken a more positive view of the role of cathedrals in the early modern period, claiming that as preaching took on a more central role after the Reformation, cathedrals became 'more outward looking.... and in that sense more intimately related to lay society'. Unlike the monasteries, cathedrals had survived the early sixteenth century religious turmoil, and, 'restructured, renewed, secularized and modernised, they accepted an altered role in society, different from the position they had enjoyed in the Middle Ages

¹ Culmer, *Cathedrall News*, p.2.

² C. Cross, "'Dens of loitering lubbers': Protestant protest against cathedral foundations, 1540-1640', in *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest*, ed. by Derek Baker (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 231-238 (p. 237).

but no less vital because of the impact of the Reformation'.³ It is the nature of this altered role that this chapter will address.

Certainly, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, some people, particularly Puritans, maintained that there was no longer any place for cathedrals in a post-Reformation world, criticising them for the way in which they diverted large quantities of the church's limited resources away from the parishes towards undeserving and self-serving individuals, which they then squandered in idleness and rich living. The view is sometimes taken that as Protestantism took hold in the parishes, the cathedrals remained centres of conservatism, backward looking and reactionary.⁴ There is undoubtedly some truth in these criticisms, but this was not the whole picture. At Canterbury, alongside the indolent and pleasure-loving, were canons who were committed to furthering the Protestant cause and who were energetic in their efforts to share the word of God among the people. Vast sums of money were, indeed, spent on the cathedral which could have been more effectively used elsewhere, but this is not to dismiss entirely the contribution that the cathedral was able to make to the spiritual life of the city. It is the argument of this chapter that although there was much about the cathedral that lent itself to criticism, and some truth in the claims of some of the reformers that what happened after the cathedral was re-founded in 1541 was a missed opportunity, nevertheless, the cathedral in Canterbury did play a positive role in the development of Protestantism within the city and beyond.

The story of England's cathedrals in the early modern period has been ably written by Stamford Lehmberg in several individual volumes.⁵ In addition, although many studies of cathedrals focus on architecture and art rather than the communities of people who worked and worshipped there, a number of studies of individual cathedrals have been published which provide some context into which the role of

³ Stanford E. Lehmberg, *The Reformation of Cathedrals: Cathedrals in English Society 1485 – 1603* (New Jersey, 1988), pp. 305 and 306.

⁴ See for example, Ralph Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation 1535- 1628', in *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese 1096-1996* ed. by Ian Atherton, Eric Fernie, Christopher Harper Bill, Hassell Smith (1996), pp. 507-539 (p. 539).

⁵ Stamford Lehmberg, *English Cathedrals: A History* (2005); *The Reformation of Cathedrals* (1988); *Cathedrals under Siege: Cathedrals in English Society 1600-1700* (Exeter, 1996).

Canterbury can be placed.⁶ A history of Canterbury Cathedral from the Anglo-Saxon period to the twentieth century was published in 1995.⁷ The historiography indicates that in some cities the cathedral chapter worked to hinder the progress of Protestantism. In Canterbury, if the expectations of those who drew up the re-foundation statutes in 1541 were followed faithfully, the cathedral had the potential to become a significant centre of preaching and a powerful force driving the Reformation forward. One objective of this chapter is to consider the extent to which this happened in practice. The first section will consider the purpose of the post-Reformation cathedral by examining the foundation statutes of 1541. The theory will then be tested in section two, asking the question, ‘to what extent did the cathedral fulfil the original expectations?’ In order to address this question, the nature of the men who served in the cathedral will be examined, particularly with regard to their record on preaching. Section three will consider the role played by the school and section four the role of the cathedral in providing alms for the community.

The key primary source for the chapter is the series of Chapter minute books.⁸ These, although produced with administrative and bureaucratic purposes in mind, do provide useful information about attendance at Chapter meetings and also about the changing priorities that faced the Chapter over time. They cover practically the whole period under discussion here, beginning in 1560, although, unfortunately, the earlier ones have been quite badly damaged by fire, and parts are difficult to read. Several of the prebendaries and preachers published books and collections of sermons, and these are helpful as an indication of the beliefs and attitudes of these high-status clergymen.

The purpose of the post-Reformation cathedral

In 1559, following a visitation of the Southern Province, John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, reported somewhat positively that he had found the people ‘sufficiently well disposed towards religion, even in those quarters where we expected most difficulty’,

⁶ For example G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant, *History of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977); Frederick Bussby, *Winchester Cathedral 1079 – 1979* (Southampton, 1979); L.S. Colchester, *Wells Cathedral* (Somerset, 1982); Mary Hobbs ed., *Chichester Cathedral: An Historical Survey* (Chichester, 1994); David Marcombe and C.S. Knighton, *Close Encounters: English Cathedrals and Society Since 1540* (Nottingham, 1991).

⁷ Patrick Collinson, Nigel Ramsay and Margaret Sparks eds., *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 2002).

⁸ CCA-DCc-CA/1-4.

although he was surprised by the extent of the 'superstition' that had sprung up during Mary's reign. He reserved his criticism for the cathedrals which he described as 'nothing else but dens of thieves, or worse, if anything worse or more foul can be mentioned'.⁹ Other critics of cathedrals were particularly outspoken in their condemnation. For example, John Field and Thomas Wilcox in the *Admonition to Parliament* in 1572, described cathedrals as 'dens of loitering lubbers' where the clergy lived lives of privilege and idleness. Having listed fifteen different roles performed by cathedral personnel ranging from the Dean and Canons through to the singing men and vergers, the *Admonition* went on to claim that these roles should not be given a place in a reformed church since they 'came from the Pope as oute of the troian horses bellye, to the destruction of Gods kingdome. The churche of God never new them, neither doth any reformed churche in the world know them'.¹⁰ Certainly, for people such as Field and Wilcox, cathedrals no longer had any part to play in the development of the religious life in England.

Writing in the early 1640s specifically about Canterbury, the clergyman Richard Culmer presented a similar view of the cathedral as a haven of privilege, idleness and immorality in his tract, *Cathedrall News from Canterbury*. Culmer addressed his opinions to 'The Honourable Committee of the House of Commons', declaring his hope that by a better understanding of what had actually been happening in Canterbury, they might act quickly in order to 'more perfectly cure the malignant disease called the Cathedrall evill'.¹¹ He did acknowledge that some work of reformation had already been completed with the removal of idols, but was vitriolic in his criticism of the institution as it remained at that time, especially the quality of the people to be found working within it. He described the cathedral as that 'huge, dry, flintie Rocke', 'built upon the sandy foundation of Ignorance, Superstition, Ambition, and Covetousnese', 'a nest of non-residents; an Epicurean Colledge of ryot and voluptuousnesse'.¹² Culmer was also critical of the cathedral for the way in which it diverted the resources of the church away from the parishes, only to be squandered in dissolute living within the

⁹ Quoted in Gee, *Elizabethan Settlement of Religion*, p. 99.

¹⁰ Printed in W.H. Frere and D.C. Douglas, *Puritan Manifestoes: A study of the Origin of the Puritan Revolt with a reprint of the Admonition to the Parliament and kindred documents, 1572* (1907), p. 32.

¹¹ Culmer, *Cathedrall News*, p.2.

¹² *Ibid.*, and p. 13.

cathedral precincts. He referred to the institution as a den of ‘carding, dicing, dancing, swearing, drunkenness and drabbing’, and reported that it was not unusual to see ‘the sacke bottles keepe ranke and file’ in the studies of the prebendaries. Culmer asked that the House of Commons Committee would over-turn this state of affairs and ensure that the ‘oyle of the fat revenues of the Cathedrall Convent’ might ‘supply burning and shining lights to enlighten those many miserable adjacent Parishes which have a long time sate in darkenesse’.¹³

As Puritans, Field, Wilcox and Culmer might be regarded as hostile witnesses and, therefore, not necessarily reflective of widespread opinion at the time, but criticism did also come from more established figures. At the time of the re-foundation of the cathedral in 1541 Archbishop Thomas Cranmer had expressed his reservations as to whether the appointment of prebendaries at the new cathedral was the best way forward. In a letter to Thomas Cromwell regarding the plans for the new foundation Cranmer wrote that ‘having experienced both in times past and also in our days how the said sect of prebendaries have not only spent their time in much idleness and their substance in superfluous belly cheer, I think it not a convenient state or degree to be maintained and established’. His description of the typical prebendary as being ‘neither a learner, nor a teacher but a good viander’, is telling.¹⁴ He, therefore, proposed that the £40 suggested yearly allowance for each of the prebendaries could be ‘altered to a more expedient use’ which he proposed could be the appointment of twenty divines ‘at £10 apiece, like as it is appointed to be at Oxford and Cambridge, and forty students in the tongues and sciences and French to have 10 marks apiece’.¹⁵

Cranmer did not get his wish and the cathedral was re-founded with a Dean and twelve prebendaries. Despite Cranmer’s reservations, however, for those who saw the preaching of the word of God as the primary weapon in the fight against residual Catholicism, there was much looking forward that was positive about the statutes of the new cathedral. These statutes required each of the twelve prebendaries plus the

¹³ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁴ John Edmund Cox, ed., *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer* (Cambridge, 1846), p. 396.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.397; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven, 1996), pp. 264-267.

Dean to preach at least once a quarter on Sundays 'so that no Lord's day of the whole year go without a sermon'. In addition, the Dean or his deputy was to preach on the holy days of Easter, Whitsunday and the Lord's birthday, and the Archdeacon, or someone appointed by him, was to preach on the Feast of the Lord's Ascension plus on the accession of the monarch.¹⁶

As noted above, Canterbury, uniquely, also benefitted from the introduction of the institution of the Six Preachers as part of the new cathedral foundation, whose role was to preach twenty sermons each year in 'the country, in villages and towns near to our Church, or elsewhere in parishes and villages where the manors and estates of the same Church are situate, or where they have the cure of souls'.¹⁷ They were also required to preach in one or other of the parish churches in the city of Canterbury as the need arose. In addition, they were to preach in the cathedral 'in their order and turn every year' on a number of extra days.¹⁸ To supplement all of this, the cathedral's lecturer was to provide a lecture every Wednesday, and in 1610 the Chapter further decided that on the special days of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun, the lecturer would preach in the quire before communion. On these occasions the usual sermon would then be deferred until the afternoon. From 1620, a Sunday afternoon sermon was added as a regular feature of the cathedral's diet of teaching.¹⁹

If the statutes of the cathedral and later decisions by the Dean and Chapter were followed faithfully, the resulting number of sermons will have had a considerable influence on the city, and even for those parish congregations which lacked a preacher of their own, sermons would have been readily available for those men and women who desired them. It is difficult to know who attended these sermons, although both William Swift and Samuel Clarke refer to links which existed between the cathedral and the parishes, at least by the beginning of the seventeenth century.²⁰ Given the emphasis which Protestants placed on the value of preaching, and given the potential

¹⁶ *The Constitution and Statutes of the Cathedral Church of Christ, Canterbury*, (Canterbury, 1965), p. 31.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁸ These days were; All Saints Day, The Circumcision, The Epiphany, Purification of the Blessed Mary, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Rogation Days, Third day of Whitsun week and the Nativity of John the Baptist.

¹⁹ CA/4, p. 264.

²⁰ See above p. 102.

abundance of preaching within the city, Canterbury's godly reformers should have been very optimistic for the future on the passing of the Elizabethan Settlement in 1559. As has been shown, Canterbury's churches at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign were in a sorry state and, given the difficulties that the church authorities faced, this provision might be regarded as all the more significant in addressing the staffing crisis, particularly in the early years of the reign. However, despite the potential, it is clear that not all of the men who were appointed to cathedral positions were committed to furthering Protestant reform, and, as the next section will demonstrate, there was a wide variety in the contribution which individual prebendaries and preachers made to the spiritual life of the city.

The men who served in the cathedral

Later in the century Archbishop Whitgift defended the existence of lucrative cathedral posts as an important means of attracting ambitious men of the highest quality to train to enter the church, without whom the church as an institution would be the poorer.²¹ In this respect it is certainly true to say that the men who were appointed as the cathedral's prebendaries and preachers were very highly educated. During the period 1558 to 1625 sixty individuals served as prebendaries of the cathedral, consisting of thirty-three Doctors of Divinity, thirteen Masters of Arts, seven men held a Bachelor's degree, three were lawyers and one, George Hovenden, was also a medical doctor. Each of the three men who did not have a university qualification was appointed before the accession of Elizabeth. In this respect the situation at Canterbury was typical. Lehmborg has observed that nationally seventy-four percent of cathedral clergy during the sixteenth century were graduates, rising to ninety-three percent for the seventeenth century. Although the level of education is not distinctive at Canterbury it is nevertheless significant given the fact that in 1558 only one of the incumbents of the city's parish churches had a university qualification.²²

²¹ Hill, *Economic Problems of the Church*, p. 232.

²² Lehmborg, *Cathedrals under Siege*, p. 92; See above p. 83 for the level of education of Canterbury incumbents.

In the same way that the canons were almost all university educated, the majority of men appointed to one of the Six Preacher positions, were also graduates. Over the same period, there were only four men who did not hold a university qualification: nine were Doctors of Divinity, fifteen held a Master's Degree and there were six who were Bachelors of Divinity. Even at the outset of Elizabeth's reign when few clergymen held a university qualification, there were three Doctors of Divinity, two Masters of Arts and one Bachelor of Arts. Whereas it might seem reasonable to criticise such a concentration of so many very highly qualified men within the cathedral precincts as elitist, the situation would appear more acceptable if it could be shown that these men were not just inward-looking and self-serving but were able to exert a positive influence on the city's religion and worship.

Certainly, a number of individuals performed roles outside of the cathedral precincts in the city and beyond. As has been noted, several of the minor canons also took on parish appointments to supplement their income, with both positive and negative results. While most of Canterbury's prebendaries also had parish appointments, none of these were city parishes: the income was just too low to attract such high-status clergymen. Some parishes within the gift of the archbishops would seem to have been set aside for Chapter members, three or four of their incumbents over the period being Chapter members.²³ Otherwise, it was the more lucrative parishes of the diocese which were more likely to see the presentation of a cathedral prebendary when the benefice became vacant. In most cases, a curate was put in place to serve on a daily basis, although this was not always the case for the parishes located close to the city and occasionally also for parishes further afield.²⁴ This indicates that there was at least some potential for this group of highly educated clergymen to have some impact at parish level, although exactly how much time was ever spent in the parish obviously remains a moot point.

From the beginning, the impact of this body of highly qualified men was ambiguous. During the 1540s an enthusiastic preaching campaign from both sides of

²³ For example, Chartham, Bishopsbourne, Great Chart and Saltwood.

²⁴ See Table 4 on p. 284 in the Appendix for a list of benefices held by Cathedral prebendaries.

the religious divide caused disruption and dispute, with differing opinions being presented to the people from the pulpits of both the cathedral and the parish churches, by prebendaries and preachers, as conservatives and radicals battled for dominance. Thus, while John Scory, one of the cathedral's preachers, was preaching against superstitions, such as the making and blessing of crosses on Palm Sunday and the ringing of bells during thunderstorms, other preachers, such as Robert Serles, were publicly complaining that 'some that occupy this place of preaching say no matins, mass, nor even-song, once in a quarter..... Beware of their doctrine'.²⁵ The enthusiasm with which Serles engaged in anti-Protestant preaching led Cranmer to note that 'he preacheth no sermon but one part of it is an invective against the other preachers of Christ's Church'.²⁶ These tit-for-tat sermons at the cathedral and elsewhere heightened awareness of the arguments surrounding religious change across the city.

It is hard to quantify, but for some people this preaching campaign back and forth between conservatives and reformers is likely to have been confusing and disruptive, bringing the authority of the church into disrepute. For those who had traditionally accepted the authority of the church without too much question, this preaching campaign of the 1540s would have led some to begin to question the religious claims for themselves, thus preparing the ground for the work of the Elizabethan reformers and leading to a variety of different practices in the parishes. Strype claimed, for example, that a visitation was held in 1543 chiefly 'because of the jangling of the preachers and the divers doctrines vented among them according as their fancies, interests or judgments led them..... Notice may be taken what ignorance was then in some of the priests: what bandying against one another and what good progress the Gospel did begin to make and what good numbers of priests and laymen there were that savoured of the Gospel Doctrine'.²⁷

²⁵ John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God, Thomas Cranmer, Volume 1* (Oxford, 1840), p.149.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

On the accession of Elizabeth, this mixture of conservative and radical remained within the cathedral, although, following a number of deprivations during Mary's reign, the balance had by this time tipped in favour of the conservatives.²⁸ Two of the prebendaries in 1558, Arthur Sentleger and John Milles, who were long-standing members of the Chapter, had been involved in the Prebendaries Plot against Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1543, and were clearly not in favour of a return to Protestantism. Strype reported Cranmer's words during the investigation of the plot: 'O Mr Sentleger, I had in you and Mr Parkhurst a good judgment and especially in you, but ye will not leave your old mumpsimus'.²⁹ It was also reported that Milles had advised one of the petty canons in 1543 to write into his will that 20d. should be distributed after his death to every vicar of Christ Church 'that had a pair of beads and would say our Lady's psalter for his soul departed'.³⁰ While the possession of beads and prayers for the dead had not been outlawed at this time, the behaviour of both prebendaries sums up an attitude of determined recalcitrance over the introduction of Protestantism amongst some members of the Chapter.

In 1559 the nature of the Chapter was radically changed following the Oath of Supremacy, and the balance tipped back in favour of the reformers. Within the first five years following Elizabeth's accession four men were deprived owing to their unwillingness to conform, including Archdeacon Harpsfield, and a further three died, a level of turnover which was comparable to other cathedrals across the country.³¹ At Worcester, for example, the dean and half of the canons were replaced, and, nationally, Lehmborg reports that twelve deans, twenty-five archdeacons and just over a hundred prebendaries were deprived or replaced between 1558 and 1564.³² It was possible, therefore, to bring in a number of committed Protestants in the early years of the reign. Thus by the end of 1560 Theodore Newton, Thomas Becon, Thomas

²⁸ Of the twelve men serving as prebendaries in 1558 six were appointed during Mary's reign and might be thought to be of a conservative outlook: George Lily (1557); William Darrell (1554); Ralph Jackson (1554); Robert Collins (1554); John Warren (1554) Hugh Turnbull (1554).

²⁹ Strype, *Cranmer* p. 170.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

³¹ The four men who were deprived were: CCEd, 'Robert Collens', Person ID: 65581; 'Thomas Wood', Person ID:66003; 'Richard Fawcet', Person ID: 65623, 'Nicholas Harpsfield', Person ID: 41461. The men who died within five years of Elizabeth's accession were: George Lilye (Hasted), Ralph Jackson (Hasted), CCEd, 'Hugh Glasier', Person ID: 65651.

³² Lehmborg, *Reformation of Cathedrals*, p. 147.

Willoughby, Alexander Nowell and John Bale, all men with clear reforming credentials, had joined the Chapter, and although conservative attitudes did not disappear at this time, this did provide an opportunity to create a Chapter far more amenable to Protestant reformation and the possibility that the tumultuous divisions of the 1540s could be avoided in the future.

The change in personnel certainly led to a more evangelistic Chapter in the early years of the reign. Thomas Becon, for example, combined the role of prebendary with that of Six Preacher, and not only was he a prodigious writer, publishing over forty books between 1543 and his death in 1567, but the number of editions of these books which appeared even into the seventeenth century testify to the popularity of his writings. In his works, Becon repeatedly spoke of the importance of preaching for one of God's ministers and the evils that would follow a non-preaching ministry. For example, in *The Demaundes of Holy Scripture* he wrote that 'for as there can not be a greater jewel in a Christian commonweal than an earnest faithful and constant preacher of the Lord's word, so can there not be a greater plague among any people than when they have reigning over them blind guides, dumb dogs, wicked wolves, hypocritical hirelings, popish prophets which feed them not with the pure wheat of God's word but with the wormwood of men's trifling traditions'.³³ Again in *An invective against swearing* of 1543 he made it clear that it is the duty of ministers and preachers 'to bring the gospel to every creature'.³⁴ Significantly for the consolidation of Protestantism within the city in these crucial early years of Elizabeth's reign, he saw himself, as he wrote in the introduction to his *Works*, as a preacher for ordinary people, not just an educated elite.³⁵ Given the difficulties faced by the church during the middle years of the sixteenth century, it could be argued that a passionate local preacher who could speak to ordinary people in images and language they could readily understand, was more important than high and refined theology for the highly educated few if the teaching were to make an impact.

³³ Becon, *The Demaundes of Holy Scripture*, sig. Aiii v.

³⁴ Thomas Becon, *An Invectyve agenst the moost wicked and detestable vyce of swearing newly compiled by Theodore Basille* (1543), sig, Ai v.

³⁵ John Ayre ed., *The Early Works of Thomas Becon* (Cambridge, 1843), p 28.

Another committed reformer, prebendary John Bale, spent three years at Canterbury following his return to England after Mary's death. His account of the midsummer celebrations which took place in Canterbury in 1561 referred to above, whilst criticising certain members of the civic body, also emphasised the importance of the cathedral.³⁶ In his account, which suggests that he personally witnessed the events, he described how in 1561, since the 24th June was a Saturday, the cathedral was able to mobilise one of its preachers, Simon Clerk, who, in his sermon the next morning, touched on the 'origynall of supersticyouse bonfyres' in his sermon and he explained to the congregation that such customs should now be put away. Bale made it clear that the city's preachers were facing a difficult job, stating in his account that the number of people attending the sermons at the cathedral was not large 'as the preachers have bene in the pulpett, with a very small number of hearers afore them, the cytie neverthelesse being populouse and great, they have mocked them with their Maye games'. He also referred to the low opinion which some people had of the city's preachers, claiming that it was well known in Canterbury that the people 'do abhore the doctrine of God, they contempne the preachers therof, they disdayne them, malice them, mocke them, hate them, blaspheme them'.³⁷

In this case, it would seem that cathedral preaching had mixed results in terms of regulating the behaviour of the people. On the one hand it seemed to spur on those who were disdainful of the preaching since the bonfires were lit again the following Saturday, this time 'twyse as manye as afore.' The following morning a second sermon was delivered, on this occasion by Richard Beseley another of the cathedral's preachers, and, like the previous Sunday, this sermon also did not have the desired effect. Beseley reiterated the spiritual dangers of lighting such bonfires and 'very charitably, peaceably and godly exhorted the mayer and aldermen to see suche superstitiouse and mockynge customes as were the bonefyres abolysed'.³⁸ That evening, however, the fires were lit again, this time at the Bullstake, and this time the sheriff, Philip Lewes, and the constable, Randolf, among other officers of the city, were active participants, adding faggots and pitch to fan the flames. The commotion was led

³⁶ See chapter two, p. 72.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 346.

by Richard Borowes, 'a generall jester or mynstrell also for baudy songes at all bankettes of the papistes', and was joined by 'an hundred boys at his tayle'. Bale specifically identifies some of the offenders as boys, and as such this could perhaps be seen as a sixteenth-century example of youth's desire to kick back against authority. Susan Bridgen has made the point that the outlawing of holy days, processions and games by the Protestants may have had a disproportionate effect on the young who were thereby denied 'at the least a chance for insolent behaviour' in a world which might be described as 'gerontocratic' and where the young were allowed little authority. Once Protestantism had become the orthodoxy, to be rebellious was to 'look towards the restoration of the old faith which now had the appeal of exotic forbidden fruit'.³⁹

In contrast to the conservative influence of members of the civic authority who were seen publicly to support the 'supersticyouse bonfyres', the cathedral authorities can be seen acting as a force for reform since, although the sermons seem to have spurred on some disaffected elements, cathedral preaching does also seem to have encouraged other sections of the population, at least to question what was happening in the city. 'Two honest mens wyves, perceyvynge thys to be done in contempt of religion and of that the preachers had spoke afore, asked what it meant? Thys kynde of doynge (sayd they) hath bene spoken against by the preachers'. The preaching seems to have convinced some not to get involved since, in the midst of the fun 'men of discredysson and Christen honestie, smellynge out their wicked atttemptes, gave place and so peaceably departed thens and by and by went home to their own howses'.⁴⁰

Bale's account indicates that the cathedral did play a positive part in the re-introduction of Protestantism within the city. This impetus for reform can be contrasted with other cathedrals, such as Durham, which were dominated to a far larger degree by conservatives in the early years of the reign. Here, several of the cathedral personnel who had initially refused the Oath of Supremacy later changed their minds, thus enabling them to remain in post, so that when people rose in

³⁹ Susan Bridgen, 'Youth and the Reformation', *Past and Present*, 95 (1982), pp. 37-67 (p. 67).

⁴⁰ Baskerville, *A Religious Disturbance*, p. 346.

rebellion during the Northern Rising of 1569 they were in a position to oversee the restoration of the Latin mass in the cathedral, and to allow a preacher to use the pulpit to pronounce the reconciliation of the faithful to Rome.⁴¹ In a similar way, at Lincoln, although several of the prebendaries were deprived, the Dean, Francis Mallet, the conservative ex-chaplain to Queen Mary, was allowed to stay and was then able to resist change at the cathedral for many years.⁴² The early years of Elizabeth's reign at Canterbury are characterised by a far more evangelistic attitude.

Over time, the cathedral experienced differing levels of spiritual commitment from the body of men who served within the precinct. In 1561, in response to Archbishop Parker's request for information, a report by the Vice Dean and several of the Prebendaries on the state of the cathedral described an institution in good shape: 'ffirst wee doo certifie that there is no doctrine taught or defended by us, or any of us, nor by any preacher of our church to our knowledge ther than that which is approved by the worde of God and set further w[I]t[h]in this Realme by publique authority'.⁴³ The prebendaries were said to be present at prayers at least once every day, suitably clothed, as also the petty canons and lay clerks. The school masters and scholars were present on Sundays and holy days. Also, they certified that 'towching the manners usages and behaviours for our selves for ye Preachers and other Inferiour mynisters with in our Church we knowe non that lyveth unorderlie or to use his selfe otherwise then is by order prescribed and permitted'.⁴⁴ It is very likely, however, that the actual situation was nowhere near as positive as this account suggests. From the late 1560s the initial enthusiasm of the Chapter seems to have evaporated as reformers died or resigned, and for several years it becomes difficult to find evidence of a positive impact which either the prebendaries or the preachers exerted on the wider city.

During the Deanship of Thomas Godwin (1567-1584), particularly, the spiritual commitment of the men holding cathedral positions was on occasions more than

⁴¹ Lehmborg, *English Cathedrals*, p. 157.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴³ CCCC MS 122.p. 323.

⁴⁴ This document was signed by Thomas Willoughby, William Darrell, John Butler, Thomas Beacon, Theodor Newton, Henry Goodricke and Andrew Peerson.

questionable.⁴⁵ There were some who might be described as committed Protestants, such as Thomas Lawse who served as Commissary General from 1570, and Anthony Rushe the school master, described by Wood in *Athenae Oxoniensis* as a 'florid and frequent preacher of his time'.⁴⁶ Another was Andrew Peerson who was chaplain to Archbishop Parker, and whose learning is suggested by his involvement in the production of the Bishops' Bible. Despite the presence of these men, Archbishop Parker's visitation of 1573 revealed that by that date all was far from well at the cathedral. It was reported, for example, that some prebendaries had not been present at any sermon or lecture in the cathedral since the previous visitation in 1569, and that the relationship between the Dean and the Chapter was breaking down; in the words of Strype, the Chapter was experiencing a 'decay of obedience'.⁴⁷ Godwin was accused of embezzling church stock, criticised that he did not pay the ministers their wages on time, and there were also accusations that the alms money was not being distributed as it should have been. Parker remained supportive of Godwin, suggesting in a letter to Cecil that the maliciousness may have been triggered by antagonism towards the issue of clerical marriage: 'It is no great marvel though Pope Hildebrande's sprite walketh furiously abroad to slander the poor married estate, seeing credit is so ready to believe the worst'.⁴⁸ At this time Parker felt it necessary to forbid the granting of leases at any time other than at the general Chapter meetings, in order, according to Strype, 'to prevent frauds and tricks which at the smaller chapters might be imposed upon some that should happen to be then absent'.⁴⁹ To the injunction demanding a fine of a penny should any of the minor canons be absent from prayers, lectures or communion, the Chapter replied that 'it is not convenient to perform that injunction because it is contrary to the statutes.' To the requirement that the canons were to officiate personally at each of the greater festivals, the Chapter replied that since the Book of Service did not clearly set out which were the greater festivals, they

⁴⁵ Prebendaries serving during this time were: Thomas Lawes, Anthony Rush, William Darrell, John Bungay, Thomas Willoughby, John Butler, George Boleyn, William King, Andrew Peersoh, Paul French, John Langworth, John Hill, John Winter, Stephen Nevinson.

⁴⁶ Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses: An Exact History of the Writers and Bishops who have had their Education in the University of Oxford*, Vol. 1 (1815), p. 429.

⁴⁷ Strype, *Parker*, Vol. II, p. 301.

⁴⁸ Bruce and Perowne, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, p. 304.

⁴⁹ Strype, *Parker* Vol. II, p. 302.

were 'doubtful when to observe the same.'⁵⁰ The tenor of the Chapter at this time was one of non-cooperation and entrenchment, and there were undoubtedly some individual members who were doing little to further the consolidation of Protestantism.

One such man was William Darrell, a senior figure who held the third prebendal stall from 1556 through to 1580. He had been one of the prebendaries involved in the election of Matthew Parker as archbishop at the cathedral in 1559 when, according to Strype, 'all and singular the Canons and Prebendaries present, approved the said election so made and pronounced by the Dean and declared the same ratified and accepted by them with all Chearfulness.' Darrell was then specially chosen by the Chapter to 'publicly declare and denounce the said election and person elected, before the Clergy and people then and there assembled in a convenient multitude'.⁵¹ Despite this early identification with the establishment, Darrell's subsequent behaviour was not what the reformers might have hoped for from a man in a position of authority. In 1575 he was forced to appear before the ecclesiastical courts when he was allegedly caught trying to smuggle a woman into his home in a laundry basket.⁵² He also came to the attention of the government in 1579 when the Privy Council wrote to Edmund Grindal to ask the archbishop to investigate 'certain horrible offences committed by him'.⁵³ Darrell was a pluralist and, during the time he spent as a prebendary at the cathedral, he also served as rector of Little Chart (1546- 1560), rector of Lower Hardres (1560-1568), vicar of Benenden (1562-1577), vicar of Monkton (1561-1579), rector of Chawton (1562), vicar of Lenham (1562), vicar of Brookland (1564-1572), vicar of Chilham (1565-1572), vicar of Brookland (1569-1572), rector of Upper Hardres (1569-1577), and rector of Brook (1574).⁵⁴ He was deprived of his prebend in 1580.

Another early Elizabethan example of a prebendary who could not be said to present a positive image of reformed Protestantism, and who could not be described as a positive ambassador for the cathedral was George Boleyn, a relative of Queen

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵² Peter Sherlock, 'William Darrell', *ODNB*.

⁵³ *APC*, Vol. 11 (1578-1580), p. 315.

⁵⁴ *CCEd*, 'William Darrell', Person ID: 40566.

Elizabeth. He was presented to the ninth prebendal stall by Elizabeth in 1566 and remained a prebendary of the cathedral until his death in 1603.⁵⁵ In 1573 he is said to have threatened to nail the Dean, Thomas Godwin, to the wall and was also charged with trying to strike one of the other canons, Anthony Rushe.⁵⁶ In 1574 he was in trouble again, this time for attacking Thomas Wood, one of the cathedral's preachers. A bill of complaint was presented to the Chapter meeting of November of that year which accused him of 'drawing his dagger and stayking of the said Mr Woode therewith', a complaint which he accepted and for which he was 'ordeyd by Mr Deane of the said churche wyth the consent of Mr Darrell, Mr Willoughbye, Mr King, Mr Ffrench, Mr Bungaye, Mr Hyll and Mr Lawes, p[re]bendaryes of the sayd church in full chapter that thesayd Mr Bolen shulde be sequestead from the chapter untyl his better behavio[ur] newe approved & allowed of by the sayd deane and chapter'.⁵⁷ Perhaps fortunately for Canterbury, he was appointed to be Dean of Lichfield in 1567 and from that date his attendance at Chapter meetings became less frequent.

John Langworth, who held the second stall from 1577 to 1614, might be cited as an example from later in Elizabeth's reign.⁵⁸ Writing to Sir Francis Walsingham in 1584, the Canterbury lawyer Sir James Hales felt compelled to share his opinion of John Langworth in order to undermine Langworth's attempt to succeed Thomas Godwin as Dean of the cathedral. Langworth was an active member of the Chapter, regularly attending Chapter meetings, but, Hales' view was that, having first behaved so as to encourage 'divers honest and religious' people to think well of him, the true nature of this 'most notable ypocrite', 'given to many lewde qualities as swearing filthie talke, and suspected for incontynencie of lyffe' then became apparent. Hales also shared the rumour that Langworth was suspected of adultery with a local woman.⁵⁹ Described by Michael Questier as a 'crypto-Catholic' who to all outward appearances was a conforming Protestant, but for whom a Catholic priest was provided at the time of his death, Langworth is a good example of the conservatism

⁵⁵ CCEd, 'George Boleyn', Person ID: 9198.

⁵⁶ Stamford Lehmborg, 'George Boleyn', *ODNB*.

⁵⁷ CA/2, p. 85v.

⁵⁸ CCEd, 'John Langworth', Person ID: 46079.

⁵⁹ Sir James Hales to Sir Fr. Walsingham. Document Ref: SP 12/169 f.48 Folio Number: 48, March 23 1584.

often associated with cathedral chapters and a reason why radical Protestants were so keen to see their demise.⁶⁰

In common with other cathedrals, the Dean and Chapter at Canterbury experienced problems with the minor canons and lay clerks who needed discipline from time to time. In 1583, for example, a lay clerk was expelled from the cathedral for the selling of beer and wine in the precincts.⁶¹ At this time, presumably to ensure that all duties were completed effectively, it was also agreed that the petticanons were not to serve more than one cure in addition to their cathedral responsibilities. This seems to have been a problem for some time since in 1570 it was agreed by the Chapter that any of the minor canons and lay clerks who failed to attend any of the three services held each day were to be fined for their absence.⁶² This type of behaviour was typical at most cathedrals, and many examples could be provided from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Following Bishop Richard Bancroft's visitation of St Paul's cathedral in 1598, for example, a report stated that members of the choir 'be for the most part of us very slack in coming to the choir after the bell tolled and when we be there divers think the service very long til they be out of it again'. It was admitted that these disorders were longstanding and nothing was ever done to address the issue despite questions being asked at such visitations. The report concluded that 'when all allowance has been made it is evident that the condition of the cathedral and the way of life of its clergy and other officers were offensive to many serious minded citizens'.⁶³ In contrast, the number of such complaints highlighted in the Chapter Act Books at Canterbury is not high, and, indeed, it would seem that at least on some occasions the Chapter was more than happy with the work of lay clerks since in 1597 it was agreed that the 'laie clerkes shall have given to them by waie of rewarde vii li'.⁶⁴

As might be expected, there is plenty of evidence of the prebendaries looking to further their own interests. As noted, some of the more lucrative benefices in the gift of the Dean and Chapter were set aside for allocation to the prebendaries. The

⁶⁰ Michael Questier, 'Crypto-Catholicism, Anti-Calvinism and Conversion at the Jacobean Court: The Enigma of Benjamin Carier', *JEH*, 47 (1996), 45-64 (p. 47).

⁶¹ CA/3, p. 233a.

⁶² CA/1, p. 43.

⁶³ W.R. Mathews and W.M. Atkins, *A History of St Paul's Cathedral* (1957), p. 153.

⁶⁴ CA/3, p. 180.

Chapter Act Book recorded in 1614 that 'it is agreed that ... the next living that shall after happen to be void shalbe conferred on Mr Jackson accordingly that these decrees be not p[re]judiciall to anie that have been formerly made'.⁶⁵ Support at university can be seen going to relatives of the prebendaries, as in 1624 when 'it is agreed that the exhibicon of vi li here allowed to Dr Masters sonne at Cambridge shalbe conferred on John Dee, Dr Warner's nephew at Oxford', and at the death of a prebendary support was occasionally conferred on his relatives. The wife of Ralph Talboys and her two small children, for example, were given £20 in 1596 at the time of his death, and his mother, described as a 'poure widow' was also given £10 for her relief. The £3 6s of alms money granted to 'old Mrs Byrd', however, seems to have been as much to encourage her to leave the precincts following the death of her husband, Richard Byrd, to enable his successor to move into the house, as it was an act of charity, since the grant was only if she were to 'depart from this church before Mighelmas, to be paid at her departure'.⁶⁶

As is to be expected, there were also those who used the cathedral as a means of providing a livelihood for themselves while they carried out their business elsewhere, and on occasions this was sanctioned at the very highest level. Peter Du Moulin is a good example, who, from his appointment in 1615, was not only given 'special grace and favour' to receive the benefits of his prebendal stall without any expectation of residence, but in 1625 he went further and even though he was 'not only absent but also far remote from the said charch hee desired of the deane and chapiter rather to have a certaine annuall stipend for the whole benefice that shall happen by anie meanes to his place of prebend then to depend upon farther uncertainties'.⁶⁷

The statutes demanded ninety days residence, twenty one of which were to be continuous, for a prebendary to receive the full benefits of his position, although there were still benefits to be had for those who did not make this level of residence.⁶⁸ For

⁶⁵ CA/4, p. 124. Thomas Jackson held the third prebend. He was described by Patrick Collinson as 'godly, grasping Jackson', See p. 133.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁶⁸ *Statutes of Canterbury Cathedral*, p.27. Nevertheless, Chapter meetings were well attended at Canterbury. See p. 128 below.

example, in May 1625 it was agreed that anyone who resided for twenty one days and was also present at the General Chapter meeting of 25th November would receive a share of the £59 which was usually divided at this time.⁶⁹ In line with other cathedrals, residence was often an issue and, over time, the non-residence of some of the preachers also came to be seen as a problem for the cathedral Chapter. In January 1617 it was decided that those preachers who were not living in their houses in the precincts and who 'let their houses for rent that they shall make reparacons of them at their owne charge or els that the officer repaire them out of their sev[er]all stipends'.⁷⁰

Unsurprisingly, disagreements did occasionally erupt. During the General Chapter meeting of November 1569, for example, the Dean and prebendaries were not able to reach an agreement over the election of officers, despite the meeting continuing into the afternoon and then again into the next day. The Chapter Act Book records that at the end of the first day, during which there had been disagreements and contention, 'then the chapter was contynued until vii of the clocke in thaffternone of the daye next folowinge when because there hade bene contention between Mr Deane and the prebendaryes..... yt was in avoydyng further contention agreed that tharchebisshoppe his grace shulde have thorderyng of all the matters and that the daye of appearance before hym shulde be on mondaye the vth of December.'⁷¹ Following Archbishop Parker's intervention the election eventually took place with William King, John Hill and John Bungay being chosen as the officers for that year.

In 1619, there were squabbles over precedence with the archdeacon, William Kingsley, believing this role gave him greater precedence over the other prebendaries. The minutes are clear that although the role did not entitle him to greater precedence out of 'respect unto my Lord of Canterbury his grace who hath written unto us for him, out of our love for him as also for the maintenance of love and unity amongst us' they were prepared to allow Kingsley the greater precedence.⁷² When, in 1620, it was agreed that an extra sermon would be preached every Sunday afternoon, there was disagreement over where this should take place, since 'Mr Deane, Dr Master, Dr

⁶⁹ CA/4, p 281.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 187.

⁷¹ CA/2, p. 19.

⁷² CA/4, P. 212.

Hoveden, Mr Tunstall and Mr Samford do thinke the sermon house the fittest place and Dr Warner the quire', and again, since they were not able to reach an agreement the matter was referred to the archbishop to decide.⁷³

A close study of the Chapter Act Book thus reveals a chapter which was inward-looking and self-serving, devoting most of its time to disputes over precedence and income as well as the business of renewing leases for land owned by the cathedral and other business dealings. The nature of the source makes this impression almost inevitable. Such examples of immorality, conservatism, non-residence and division as outlined above certainly provided ammunition for those who were ideologically opposed to the existence of cathedrals, but this is not whole picture. What the Act Book does also indicate is that a large number of prebendaries attended the meetings and were involved in the work of the cathedral on a very regular basis, with at least seven or eight of the twelve names consistently appearing in the minutes for every meeting. As an indication, if a snapshot is taken at four points in time between 1558 and 1625, it emerges that there are only a small number of prebendaries who rarely or never attended. For example, in 1569, whilst not always attending every meeting, nevertheless, all twelve of the prebendaries did regularly make an appearance. Fifteen years later, in 1584, regular attendance was slightly lower, with only William King and Paul French not present at any of the chapter meetings. George Boleyn was not a regular attender during this year, since by this time he was resident in Cambridge, although he did still attend twice in the year. By 1599 those rarely attending included, again, George Boleyn and Paul French and also John Langworth who had been appointed to the Archdeaconry of Chichester. Interestingly the chapter minutes note in July 1598 that 'it is agreed that Mr Ffrench for divers good causes us thereto movinge shall have yearlie allowed him 60 li in regard of his wages and all dyvidents and things due to him in respect of his prebende heere'.⁷⁴ By 1614 ten of the twelve prebendaries were attending regularly with only Henry Airey and Thomas Anian not appearing at all. Airey, as Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, was not resident in Canterbury and was never an active member of the chapter. Considering the period as

⁷³ Ibid., p. 232. The Sermon house refers to the chapter house.

⁷⁴ CA/3, p. 221.

a whole, from the early 1560s when the earliest Act Book survives, until 1625, only six prebendaries rarely or never attended the meetings. In contrast to this, out of the thirty-two men who were members of the Norwich Cathedral Chapter between 1566 and 1628 'eighteen attended fewer than a third of the meetings and only thirteen attended more than two-thirds'.⁷⁵

Clearly it is important not to overstate the case since attendance at meetings does not guarantee lively participation, nor does it mean that the individuals were necessarily making a positive contribution to the spiritual life of the cathedral and the city. However, it does suggest an interest in affairs and that the members of the Canterbury Chapter were not entirely the 'loitering lubbers' that some Puritans claimed. In addition, despite the examples of division especially during the late 1560s and 1570s, it would seem that Canterbury was not as seriously affected as some other institutions, such as Chichester, for example, where in the 1570s the existence of faction made the smooth running of the cathedral almost impossible.⁷⁶ At Wells Cathedral L.S. Colchester has observed that by the early seventeenth century, 'both structurally and spiritually the cathedral was in decline'.⁷⁷ This was not the case at Canterbury, and indeed, from the end of the sixteenth century, particularly during the deanship of Thomas Nevile, but also that of Charles Fotherby and John Boys, there are indications that Canterbury was moving into a new phase of its history with a number of individual prebendaries beginning to exert a more positive impact upon the city. A similar pattern can be discerned with regard to the cathedral's preachers.

The cathedral as a preaching institution

The institution of the Six Preachers was unique to Canterbury and, given that the *raison d'être* of the men appointed to the post was to preach, it should be expected that this institution would have had a marked impact on the city. This was not always the case, however, and as with the prebendaries, it is also possible to be critical, particularly after the initial enthusiasm following the accession of Elizabeth had abated. According to the Statutes, the Six Preachers were to be chosen and appointed

⁷⁵ Ralph Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation', p. 517.

⁷⁶ John Fines, 'Cathedral and Reformation, 1500-1540', in *Chichester Cathedral* ed. by Mary Hobbs, p. 90.

⁷⁷ Colchester, *Wells Cathedral*, p. 156.

by the archbishops. They were to be very well rewarded for their efforts, being provided with a stipend of £25 a year, which compares very favourably with the stipend of £17. 6s 8d which was originally provided for each of the prebendaries. In addition, they were to be assigned a house in the precincts, allocated by the archbishop on the advice of the Dean and Chapter, and also with a horse, stable and fodder. The position also included an allowance for firewood. The expectation was that the preachers would be resident in Canterbury and that they would not keep separate households but would board with the Dean or one of the canons. This ensured a high social status for the preachers and the potential to attract high quality men to fulfil the role.⁷⁸

Patrick Collinson wrote that the Six Preachers did not 'make much of an impression on the historical record even as preachers' and that after the early years of Elizabeth's reign 'one searches in vain for a single name which historians of the Elizabethan church would recognize as belonging to a "godly" preacher in the sense of an outspoken evangelist, tending to what would presently be called Puritanism'.⁷⁹ An exception was Robert Pownall. Pownall was certainly a significant figure, publishing four works whilst in exile in Wesel during Mary's reign, together with two translations from the French. He served as rector of Harbledown from 1562 until his death in 1571. However, he only served as Six Preacher for a very short time and it is not clear how significant a contribution he was able to make to the religious development of the city during this time.

For several of the men who took the Six Preacher stipend between 1558 and 1625 no evidence has been found to judge the contribution that they made to the consolidation of Protestantism in the parishes. For others, about whom more is known, it is questionable how great an impact they may have had. Lancelot Ridley, for example, whilst he had embraced Protestantism early and published several books during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI demonstrating his belief in the importance of the reading of scripture in English and also justification by faith alone,

⁷⁸ *Statutes*, pp. 43-45.

⁷⁹ Collinson, *Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 168.

was also the rector of Stretham near Ely at the same time as he was re-appointed to his position at the cathedral. Since he was not resident in Canterbury and it is questionable how much of his time he spent in the city, even during the short time he served as preacher, we might conclude that his influence was negligible.⁸⁰

Much more positive is the example of Thomas Wilson, Six Preacher and rector of St George's parish, whose contribution has already been noted.⁸¹ In this context, the funeral sermon preached by William Swift of St Andrew's makes it clear that by the early seventeenth century the cathedral was fulfilling a positive role for the godly of the city. In addition to the preaching available at St George's, Swift's sermon shows that members of the congregation clearly also took advantage of the preaching provided by other cathedral staff. Swift considered the people to be 'well neighboured also by the cathedral church adjoining to you whither you do often resort and receive instructions from divers very learned divines'. He went on to describe this as 'a continued springing fountain' which was 'no small benefit to this city if they respect the welfare of their souls'.⁸²

Wilson also published several books during his lifetime, the most prestigious of which was his *Christian Dictionary* written in 1612. This book was very popular, four editions being published before the end of the seventeenth century. The dictionary was dedicated first of all to Edward Wotton, Baron of Marleigh, partly because of Wotton's 'great affection to the Divine truth' and partly as gratitude for Wotton's generosity to Wilson. Wilson also added a dedication to Henry Robinson, the Bishop of Carlisle, Henry Parry, Bishop of Worcester, and also to Thomas Nevile, the Dean of the cathedral. In addition to Wilson's own comments in his *Exposition* of 1600 concerning criticism he had received, William Swift's funeral sermon highlights the religious tension which existed both in Canterbury and in the cathedral in the early years of the seventeenth century, and this might explain why Wilson was keen to obtain powerful patrons for the work. He hoped that his Dictionary might find shelter underneath their 'wings against the carping tongue of the enemies who neither will put forth their

⁸⁰ CCEd, 'Lancelot Ridley', Person ID: 32207. He was a Six Preacher from 1543 to 1560, Rector of Willingham 1545 to 1554 and Rector of Stretham with Little Thetford 1559 to 1570.

⁸¹ See chapter two, p. 97.

⁸² Swift, *Sermon*, pp. 21 and 22.

strength to do good nor yet will bear with others which desire to employ their talents'.⁸³

Wilson's choice of patrons is interesting. The relationship which must have existed between Wilson and Edward Wotton is curious. Wilson, the Puritan, signed himself in the dedication as Wotton's chaplain at the time he published his *Dictionary*. At this time Wotton was already flirting with Catholicism, although he would not openly admit this until 1624. In a letter of August 1610, the Spanish ambassador, Alonso de Velasco, told Philip II that Wotton was already a Catholic in private and that he was, at this time, requesting a document which would absolve him at the time of his death from not openly admitting his renunciation of Protestantism. The dedication to Wotton only appears in the first two editions, those of 1611 and 1616, and by 1622 only the dedications to Robinson, Parry and Nevile remain. Wotton was the patron of the parish of Thurnham in the deanery of Sutton. In 1600 he presented Benjamin Carier, prebendary and later Catholic convert. It is interesting to consider the relationship that must have existed between the would-be Catholic and his Puritan chaplain.

Henry Parry had been minister of the parishes of Monkton (1591-4) and Great Mongeham (1594-6) in the east of the diocese before his appointment as royal chaplain and then Dean of Chester in 1605, followed by his appointment to the Bishopric of Gloucester in 1607 and finally his translation to Worcester in 1610. He was a friend of conservatives, for example, Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Hooker, involving himself in the publication of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* after Hooker's death in order to preserve the theology for future generations, and, significantly, he was also well known as a preacher. The inscription on his tombstone in Worcester Cathedral compliments him for his 'assiduous preaching of God's word'. Henry Robinson had served as a Six Preacher at the same time as Wilson before promotion to his bishopric. He has also been described as being an enthusiastic preacher. In 1610, following presentation to the rectory of Greystoke whilst he was also serving as Bishop of Carlisle, a list of occasions when Robinson preached compiled by the churchwardens of the parish demonstrates that he took his parish preaching duties seriously. In the first

⁸³ Wilson, *Christian Dictionarie*, sig. A4v.

eighteen months the churchwardens record twenty-seven occasions when Robinson preached, an average of one sermon every three weeks, despite the calls on his time as bishop⁸⁴. All of this underlines the role of the cathedral as a centre of preaching.

There were also members of the cathedral whose churchmanship was more conformist than Wilson's but who undoubtedly exerted a positive influence on the city and beyond. An example was the prebendary, Thomas Jackson, described, perhaps a little unfairly, by Collinson as 'godly, grasping, Jackson', the survival of whose sermon note book indicates that although he did seem to have a gift for accumulating wealth to supplement his stipend, he certainly did not spend all of his time in 'much idleness and [his] substance in superfluous belly cheer'.⁸⁵ Not only was Jackson frequently present in the cathedral, as shown by his regular attendance at chapter meetings, he was also a committed preacher. Born in Lancashire, he took up a preaching role on his arrival in Kent in the 1590s, when he was appointed to serve as curate of Wye. He maintained the connection with Wye for the rest of his life, returning each year to preach the St Andrew's day sermon in the parish church and returning on occasions, in 1618 and 1619, for example, to preach the funeral sermon for members of that parish. As a young man he also honed his preaching skills when he served as combination lecturer at Ashford, taking his turn with four others in providing the Saturday market-day sermon each week.⁸⁶

During his clerical career Jackson benefitted from the patronage of several members of the Kentish gentry for example, Robert Honeywood, who presented him to the rectory of Milton in 1604, a parish about two miles from Canterbury with only a handful of communicants. Jackson dedicated seven of his published sermons under the title *Dauids Pastorall Poeme* to Honeywood, thanking him and his wife in the dedication for their support, describing them as 'the first friends that ever I had in this Countrey'.⁸⁷ He went on to explain that 'as you heard the first sermon that ever I preached, your Sonne was the first child that ever I baptised and your daughter the

⁸⁴ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp. 69, 253, 272; William Richardson, 'Henry Parry', *ODNB*; Margaret Clarke, 'Henry Robinson', *ODNB*.

⁸⁵ Collinson *Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 184. Jackson served as prebendary from 1614 to 1634.

⁸⁶ C.W. Sutton and Margaret Sparkes, 'Thomas Jackson', *ODNB*.

⁸⁷ Thomas Jackson, *Dauids Pastorall Poem or Sheepeheards Song* (1603), sig. i3.

first that ever I married', it seemed right to dedicate the first of his published sermons to them. In 1614, it was through the patronage of Sir Thomas Twisden of Wye that he was presented to the 3rd prebendary at the cathedral, a position which was usually in the gift of the crown. In 1624 Dudley Digges presented him to the vicarage of Chilham, a connection that went back at least as far as 1614, when Jackson dedicated another of his published works, the funeral sermon for John Moyle, to Digges. In 1621 Jackson baptised Digges' son Edward. Later, in 1622, which Jackson describes as 'the evening of my life' although he was to live for over twenty more years, he dedicated a series of sermons to Sir Isaac Sidley of Great Chart, a parish of which he had been rector since 1617.⁸⁸

Jackson published seven collections of sermons in addition to the funeral sermon for John Moyle, but notes on many more of the sermons preached by him between 1614 and 1638 exist in the cathedral archives and these confirm that he was a prodigious preacher.⁸⁹ It would seem that that during those years he delivered at least 1300 sermons including at least 740 sermons on Sundays and holy days. In December 1614, shortly after taking up his role in the cathedral, he added the position of cathedral lecturer to his list of appointments 'by the whole consent of the prebends' for which he was to 'inioye the stipend and all other profite belonging to the lecturer of the said church'.⁹⁰ Ian Green suggested that in his role as cathedral preacher he delivered 'perhaps as many as 600 weekday sermons in the cathedral or the adjoining parish of St George's' before his death in 1646. It is certainly true to say that, over the period covered by this study, the frequency with which Jackson entered the pulpit is attested to by the 348 separate preaching occasions in over twenty different locations which he noted in his account book, particularly impressive since this figure does not take account of the series of sermons or lectures which he preached and which could consist of as many as twenty two separate lectures. Jackson himself noted in *Six Sermons on Ierem 7:16* that he was often preaching 'thrice in one week in the pulpit.'⁹¹

⁸⁸ Thomas Jackson, *Six Sermons on Ierem 7:16, lately preached in the Cathedrall Church of Christ in Canterburie and Elsewhere* (1622), sig., A.

⁸⁹ Miscellaneous Accounts 52.

⁹⁰ CA/4, p. 135.

⁹¹ Jackson, *Six Sermons*, sig. A3i.

Jackson's preaching was not limited to the cathedral precincts. Within the city he regularly preached in the parish of St George's, particularly during the 1620s after his son had taken over as rector following Thomas Wilson's death. This reinforces the point that has been made previously of the strength of the connections between St George's parish and the cathedral. But there were also occasions when he entered the pulpit of All Saints, of Holy Cross, St Dunstan's, St Margaret's, St Mildred's and St Mary Bredman, although his visits to these churches were probably infrequent and often for the purpose of delivering a funeral sermon. Nevertheless, this, again, indicates the ties which existed between the cathedral and the parishes. Outside of the city Jackson preached regularly in the churches of Chartham, Chilham, Great Chart and Milton. Chartham, a parish just over three miles south west of Canterbury, had clear links with the cathedral over the period covered by this study, with four of the five rectors also serving as canons at the cathedral. Chilham, Great Chart and Milton were Jackson's own benefices and, like Chartham, both Chilham and Great Chart often had to share their rector with the cathedral, with two out of four, and four out of nine incumbents respectively also serving as prebendaries at the same time. Jackson's notebook demonstrates that, even when a minister had several different responsibilities, parish preaching need not necessarily suffer. During his time at Chilham, Jackson's curate was Henry Seller, who also served as a Six Preacher. Between such a curate and such a rector, the congregation of Chilham cannot have lacked a lively round of preaching.⁹²

On occasions Jackson ventured further afield, recording sermons in Dover, Sandwich, Gravesend, Faversham, Littlebourne and Goodnestone. In his preaching he did not attract controversy. According to Ian Green, his preaching was deliberately inclusive and in terms of the Calvinism of the day he 'was apparently seeking a middle ground between what he called bold presumption of salvation and timorous despair'.⁹³ In this respect he was providing a useful service in the consolidation of Protestant beliefs in the city.

⁹² CCEd, 'Henry Seller', Person ID: 38367.

⁹³ Ian Green, 'Preaching in the Parishes', in McCullough, Adlington and Rhatigan eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon* (Oxford, 2011), p. 150.

Another example of how the cathedral was able to exert a positive influence outside the walls of the precincts is the work of Richard Clerke, Six Preacher from 1602 to 1633, whose ministry was described by Collinson as 'evidence of what we may call a Whitgiftian (but distinctly pre-Laudian) Conformist churchmanship in a Canterbury where the centre of gravity in the days of Deans Nevile, Fotherby (both the Fotherbys), and Boys was well to the right of Thomas Jackson'.⁹⁴ A volume of Clerke's sermons was published after his death by fellow Six Preacher, Charles White, in the preface of which White described how Clerke 'daily frequented God's house esteeming it his happiness to offer up both *sacrificium laudis*, his thanksgiving, and *vitulos laborum*, his prayers to God in the great congregation'.⁹⁵ White drew attention to Clerke's learning, being 'one of the most learned translators of our English Bible', and also to his preaching. Clerke was also the vicar of the parishes of Minster and Monkton in the Isle of Thanet until his death in 1634.⁹⁶ Again, this demonstrates that the presence of highly-educated, committed Protestants within the cathedral could have a wider impact.

The appointment of John Boys as dean in 1619 further underlined the role of the cathedral as a centre of preaching. Boys, an ex-pupil of the cathedral school, is well known for the publication of his *Workes*, in which he provided a systematic exposition of the church's lectionary. In his dedication of the book to King James he wrote that: 'I did ever esteeme as a second Bible the booke of Common Prayer in which (as I have here proved) every tittle is grounded upon the Scripture'.⁹⁷ But in addition to great respect for the Book of Common Prayer, Boys was also a committed preacher. The anonymous R.P. who posthumously published a collection of his sermons and writings attested to his influence: 'the streames of his goodnesse flowed abroad plentifully to the refreshing of many a dry and barren land', and emphasised his 'continuall preaching unto' his flock.⁹⁸ During his time as Dean an extra 'catechisticull' sermon was added to the Sunday afternoon provision, initially to be preached by the Dean,

⁹⁴ Collinson, *Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 183.

⁹⁵ Charles White, *Sermons preached by that reverend and learned divine Richard Clerke, Dr. in Divinitie* (1637), sig. A2v.

⁹⁶ Clerke was involved in the 1611 translation of the Bible. CCEd Person ID: 39555.

⁹⁷ John Boys, *The Workes of John Boys, Doctor in Divinitie and Deane of Canterburie* (1622). Preface unpaginated.

⁹⁸ R. P., *Remaines of that reverend and famous postiller, Iohn Boys, Doctor in Divinitie, and late Deane of Canterburie Containing sundry sermons; partly, on some proper lessons vsed in our English liturgie: and partly, on other select portions of holy Scripture* (1631). Sig. A1v. and A4.

Prebendaries and Preachers in turn, and from 1624 by a funded preacher.⁹⁹ It has also been suggested that Boys, as Deans Nevile and Fotherby before him, made a significant contribution to the development of music at the cathedral during the Jacobean period.¹⁰⁰

There is no doubt that individuals such as Becon, Bale, Jackson, Clerke and Wilson exerted a positive influence on the spiritual development of the city, but it is not easy to identify how widespread their impact was, nor how typical they were of the Chapter as a whole over the period. Collinson has categorised the staff of the cathedral as reflecting a 'humdrum worthiness', but while many of the members of the cathedral do seem to have been more than happy with a conventional approach than these more high-profile characters, Collinson's criticism is not entirely fair. Certainly, Canterbury compares favourably to the city of Chester, for example, where for some years John Nutter, Dean from 1589 to 1602, was the only member of the chapter there who was actually resident and where the preaching regimen must inevitably have been severely compromised.¹⁰¹ It should also be noted that, although it is hard to quantify the frequency with which visiting preachers preached in the cathedral, the pulpit was certainly not limited to the prebendaries and Six Preachers. The significance of the cathedral as a wider centre for preaching was referred to by clergyman James Cleland in a sermon noted at the beginning of this chapter. In the sermon, which was published in 1626 but probably delivered in 1621. Cleland made it clear that, not only had he been invited to preach in the cathedral on more than one occasion, but he was one of a number of 'rural ministers who come hither now and then upon intreatie' to preach.¹⁰²

In examining the contribution of individuals such as these, a change of emphasis becomes apparent at Canterbury, whereby after the initial enthusiasm in the first years of Elizabeth's reign, the late 1560s and 1570s are characterised by a divided, self-interested, inward-looking chapter, before the appearance in late Elizabethan and

⁹⁹ CCA-DCC-CA/3. p. 264.

¹⁰⁰ Roger Bowers, 'The Liturgy of the Cathedral and its Music, c. 1075-1642' in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, pp. 407-450 (p. 442).

¹⁰¹ Lehmborg, *The Reformation of Cathedrals*, p. 277.

¹⁰² Cleland, *Jacobs wel*, p. 25. CCEd 'James Cleland, DD', Person: ID 39547. Cleland was rector of Old Romney 1615-1628 and rector of Chartham 1618 – 1628.

Jacobean Canterbury of individuals who seem to be more lively and outward-looking. It is not clear, however, whether this impression is a product of the sources or represents an actual change, and the issue of the survival (or otherwise) of evidence means that some caution should be used. Had Jackson's sermon book failed to survive, our understanding of his contribution may have been limited to his quest for monetary gain rather than his undoubted contribution to the spiritual life of the city. Had Wilson been less willing to publish, or had Charles White not stepped in to publish Clerke's sermons on his behalf, an understanding of their contribution would have been far less clear. Could others within the chapter have been similarly enthusiastic in their preaching or evangelism but the evidence has not survived? It is now impossible to say.

Certainly, throughout the period a wide spectrum of belief was contained within the cathedral, and it may be more accurate in the later period to identify individuals who were more outward-looking and conscientious than to characterise the institution as a whole as such. Undoubtedly, throughout the period it is possible to identify individuals who held *avant garde*, even crypto-Catholic views. Adrian Saravia, for example, who held the seventh prebend from 1595 to 1613, was a supporter of divine-right episcopacy and has been described by Collinson as representing 'the idea of an anti-Calvinist High Churchmanship almost before its time had come'.¹⁰³ Crypto-Catholics such as John Langworth mentioned above and Benjamin Carier, who held the seventh prebend from 1608 until his death in 1614 ensured that the cathedral continued to contain a conservative influence despite the existence of more radical Protestants such as Wilson within the city. These ambiguities can be observed in the case of the radical lecturer, Herbert Palmer. When he first came to Canterbury he was able to use the cathedral as the location of one of his sermons, which, according to his biographer, Samuel Clarke, did 'much affect the godly hearers' there. On the other hand, Clarke also related how Palmer was forced to work against 'those innovations and corruptions, both in doctrine and worship which in those dayes were creeping on apace by reason whereof that leven of formality, which many of the Cathedralists were promoting (who preferred pompous Ceremonies before the power of Godlinesse)'.

¹⁰³ Collinson, *Protestant Cathedral*, p. 180. Although Saravia did also have strong links with the Stranger church in Canterbury.

Although Clarke believed that preaching such as Palmer's was preventing this conservative attitude 'from spreading and corrupting' as much as otherwise it might have done, it is significant that it was the Dean, Isaac Bargrave, who stepped in and tried to put a stop to the lectureship in 1629 after only three years. Samuel Clarke believed that such opposition from the cathedral was due to a fear that Palmer's 'godly courses and exact walking might be a blemish to their loose and carnal waies'.¹⁰⁴ Clearly, the Laudian attitude emanating from the cathedral had spread more than some Protestants would have wished, since in June 1623 it had been reported that 'a greate many papistes have declared themselves at Canterbury', and two years later, 'emboldened by rumours of impending toleration, large numbers of Catholics gathered in the city, and one even mutilated the Great Bible in the Cathedral'.¹⁰⁵

From this it can be seen that the influence exerted by the cathedral after 1559 in terms of the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism contained both positive but also some less positive elements. It is clear that conservative influences remained within the precincts throughout the period, although it would also not be completely accurate to describe the men who inhabited the institution as entirely coming, in the words of the *Admonition to Parliament*, 'from the Pope as oute of the troian horses bellye, to the destruction of Gods kingdome'.¹⁰⁶ Those who drew up the Statutes at the re-foundation of the cathedral in 1541 hoped that the institution would 'provide diligently that the praises of God be celebrated constantly morning and evening', and that the Dean should see that 'sermons be preached upon the appointed days, that the boys be profitably taught and that alms be distributed to the poor'.¹⁰⁷ Despite the lapses mentioned above, there is evidence that sermons were indeed preached, and the praises of God were indeed celebrated. The following section will consider the third of these aims, the education provided by the cathedral school, and the extent to which it could be seen as contributing to the propagation of the Protestant message within the diocese.

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Clarke, *Lives*, p. 222.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Clark, 'Thomas Scott and the Growth of Urban Opposition to the Early Stuart Regime', *HJ*, 21 (1978), 1-26 (p. 12).

¹⁰⁶ Frere and Douglas, *Puritan Manifestoes*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁷ *Statutes*, pp. 3, 57 and 85.

The School

It was stated in the statutes that one of the purposes of the school was 'to the end that piety and sound learning may in our Church for ever blossom, grow and flourish and in their season bring forth fruit to the glory of God and the advantage and adornment of the Commonwealth'.¹⁰⁸ In addition to the twenty divines and forty scholars that Cranmer had originally envisaged for the re-founded cathedral, he was also keen to see that any scholarships were given to poorer boys who would be able to benefit from the investment.¹⁰⁹ When it was suggested that it was more 'meet for the ploughman's son to go to plough, and the artificer's son to apply the trade of his parent's vocation, and the gentlemen's children are meet to have the knowledge of government and rule in the common wealth', Cranmer's opinion on the matter was summed up in a letter to his secretary, Morice, in which he wrote 'utterly to exclude the ploughman's son and the poor man's son from the benefit of learning, as though they were unworthy to have the gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them, as well as upon others', was not the best way forward.¹¹⁰ The statutes clearly stated that the boys were to be 'both destitute of the aid of friends and as far as may be with minds naturally apt for learning, who shall be supported out of the funds of our Church'.¹¹¹ Any boy who was 'remarkable for extraordinary slowness or dulness' was to be expelled 'and despatched elsewhere, lest as a drone he devour the honey of the bees'.¹¹² Peter Clark has asserted that 'by 1635 many of the students at Canterbury school were the sons of less ambitious folk who took them away as soon 'as they were fit to make apprentices'.¹¹³ Whereas this may have had negative implications in terms of income, it does suggest that the school was having some influence on the locality and that the founders' intentions that the school should be a benefit to the local area and to train up local boys so that they could take their place as an asset to society, was being at least partially fulfilled. Certainly, compared to the city of Norwich, Canterbury was doing well. In 1547 it was decided that the Norwich Chapter should allocate £88 to the salaries of a master, usher and twenty boys, yet at the same time the prebendaries

¹⁰⁸ *Statutes*, p. 57.

¹⁰⁹ Henry Jenkyns ed., *The Remains of Thomas Cranmer*, Vol. I, (1833), p. 291.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Statutes*, p. 57.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹¹³ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 197.

were excused from making these payments until sufficient money had become available. Sufficient money never became available, and so it was later necessary for a grammar school to be set up and maintained by the city.¹¹⁴

It is likely that during the early years of Elizabeth's reign, the school retained a conservative flavour under the leadership of the first headmaster, John Twyne, who held the position for twenty years from 1541 to 1560. Following the Visitation of 1560, the Dean and Chapter were informed that 'Mr Twine their Schoolmaster shall not intermeddle with anie publicke office of the incorporation of the Towne or Cittie of Canterberie, and that he should utterlie abstaine from riott and dronkynnes'.¹¹⁵ Later, Twyne was accused of popery and witchcraft and with harbouring a familiar spirit which was described as 'a black thing, like a great rugged dog, which would dance about the house and hurl fire about the house'.¹¹⁶ He was replaced by Anthony Rush, a committed protestant who performed the role for five years before moving on to the role of prebendary of Canterbury in 1568 and Dean of Chichester in 1570. Apart from these two, it is difficult to provide greater detail about the Headmasters who followed since they have left little evidence in the historical record. In stark contrast to the prebendaries, both the Headmasters and Ushers at the school stayed on average for a short time in the post, with four of the eight headmasters of the period remaining less than five years.¹¹⁷ A letter from Henry Wotton to the vice-dean and chapter suggests that, in his opinion, difficulties in finding men to fill the Usher's role in the early years of the re-founded school were likely to continue owing to the stipend of only £10 a year and, indeed, the Ushers who were appointed did, on average, only stay a short time in the post before moving on to pursue other roles. Seven of the eleven men stayed less than five years.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Atherton, *Norwich Cathedral*, p. 537.

¹¹⁵ D.L. Edwardes, *A History of the King's School, Canterbury*, (1957), p. 71.

¹¹⁶ CCL. Y.2.24, fol. 69v.

¹¹⁷ The Headmasters were: John Twyne (1541-1561), Anthony Rush (1561-1565), William Absalom (1565-1566), John Gresshop (1566-1580), Nicholas Goldsborough (1580-1584), Anthony Shorte (1584-1591), Roger Raven (1591-1615), John Ludd (1615-1634).

¹¹⁸ The Ushers were: Mr Saunders (probably less than a year), Thomas Pollen (6 years), Peter Levens (2 years), Paul Coleman (2 years), Edward Caldwell (4 years), George Ely (2 years), Robert Rose (14 years), Augustine Lake (3 years), Thomas Constant (3 years), Rufus Rogers (9 years), John Ludd (5 years before becoming Headmaster), Samuel Raven.

The quality of the education provided by the school varied over time. The less than conscientious attitude of the chapter in the 1570s is again attested to by their lukewarm attitude towards education. Despite Archbishop Parker's wish outlined in the Visitation Injunctions of 1573/4 that on admission every new boy should be allocated one of the prebendaries who would oversee his progress and make sure that he had everything that he needed, the Dean and Chapter stated that this would not be possible, since 'few or none of the prebendaries or preachers are willing to take upon them the function'.¹¹⁹ Later in time the chapter does seem to have been more concerned that standards were maintained. In 1584, on his appointment as Headmaster, for example, Anthony Shorte was granted an extra 5 marks 'to encourage hym in his diligence and his paynestakinge in teachinge', although it would seem that Shorte did not or could not take his responsibilities seriously enough, since in 1588 the Chapter recorded their desire that he should have 'greater care and to be more diligent than he hath byn that the scholars of the schole may better profit in learning, as well as in good manners and civility, than late they have done'.¹²⁰ It is difficult to know the extent to which the school may have acted as a nursery for Protestants. There is no register which lists all of the boys who studied at the school, although a list has been compiled from the Treasurers' Books which contain the names of the boys who were King's Scholars.¹²¹

As with the cathedral's record on preaching, the record of the school as a vehicle for communicating the Protestant message was, therefore, a mixed one and it can be seen that, while the expectations of those who had drawn up the re-foundation articles for the cathedral had been met more or less successfully, there was certainly room for improvement. In addition to preaching and education, the statutes also hoped that the institution would come to fulfil an important role in the distribution of

¹¹⁹ Frere and Kennedy, *Visitation Articles*, p. 362.

¹²⁰ CCA-DCC-CA/3, p. 200 v.

¹²¹ CCA-DCC-TB. My thanks to Peter Henderson at the King's School for a copy of this list. Some famous names include: Christopher Marlow (1579), Benjamin Carier (1580), John Boys (1587), William Harvey (1588). Several of the boys later served in the cathedral, for example, Christopher Pashley (15700, Six Preacher; Isaac Colf (1572) Six Preacher; Richard Horsemonden (1587) Prebendary. Others went on to become misters in local parishes, for example, Josias Nichols (1563), Israel Pownall (1568), Mark Graceborough (1574), William Swift (1587), Rufus Rogers (1587). Ralph Partriche (1589) emigrated to New England in 1637 and Henry Jacob (1577), has been described as a 'semi-separatist' minister, see *ODNB* entry by Stephen Wright.

alms. The success with which the cathedral fulfilled this aspect of its role will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

The cathedral as a dispenser of alms

For the pre-Reformation church, criticisms directed against the wealth of monasteries and cathedrals could be countered by pointing to the requirement to provide hospitality and alms for the poor. The teaching of Jesus made it clear that this was one of the duties of all Christians, but specifically the responsibility of all Christian ministers:

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'¹²²

For the Protestant cathedral, the situation might be seen as less clear-cut. As Felicity Heal has pointed out, for Protestants 'the religion of the Word placed preaching, not social practice, at the centre of good ministerial behaviour', and this, together with the increasing emphasis on secular authorities as providers of poor relief meant that thinking became more ambiguous.¹²³ Whereas there were some reformers, for example, the Edwardians, William Turner and Martin Bucer, who looked towards continental methods of organising poor relief, this was not unanimous.¹²⁴ Thomas Becon saw hospitality as serving the dual purpose of addressing the concerns of the critics whilst also acting as an evangelistic tool. 'Hospitality', he wrote 'was so greatly regarded in times past among the faithful of Christ's Church that if any spiritual pastor that were of ability did not nourish and succour the poor it was counted a sufficient cause to deprive him of his spiritual promotions'. He also believed that if the people could see 'in the preachers a ready and greedy affection and fervent study to help the poor, to maintain hospitality, to relieve the needy, to succour all men that are in necessity to the uttermost of their power' then the people would 'receive the gospel and delight in the gospel'.¹²⁵

¹²² Matthew Chapter 25, verses 34-36.

¹²³ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998), p. 286.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

¹²⁵ Ayre, *Early Works of Thomas Becon*, pp. 23 and 26.

To describe the members of the Chapter at any point during the period as helping the poor and needy 'with a ready and greedy affection' and 'to the uttermost of their power' would be far from accurate, and as has been observed above, several of the prebendaries demonstrated rather more indolence and self-interest than compassion for the poor and needy. Thomas Lawse, for example, prebendary from 1569 to 1589, was also Master of Eastbridge Hospital, described in 1576 as 'ruinous and let out into tenements'. In the later sixteenth century it fell to the civic corporation to step in and organise relief provided by the city's hospitals.

In addition to the stipulation in the statutes that support be given to twelve poor men within the precincts, each of whom was to receive the sum of £6 3s 4d a year, the cathedral was of necessity involved in the wider issue of poverty within the city. During the economic difficulties of the 1590s it would seem that the number seeking alms from the cathedral was increasing to such an extent that in September 1596 the issue was discussed at the Chapter meeting. The larger numbers seeking support were clearly making greater demands on those prebendaries who were resident at the cathedral, so it was decided that those who 'keepethe not howse w[i]thin the precynctes of theis church by the space of one quarter in everye yere' would no longer have the dividend of corn that was due to the prebendaries for the keeping of hospitality. The extra could then be shared instead between those who were actually providing the hospitality and the alms. At this time of economic hardship in Canterbury it would seem that the cathedral and civic authorities were working together, as in June 1598 following the Mayor and Aldermen's undertaking 'to keepe theire poore from resortinge to this church to begg' it was decided that the cathedral would contribute sums of money to the parishes most in need. Thus, for example, St Mildred's parish was to receive £15 from the cathedral's alms money and St Margaret's £13 6s 8d, the payments to continue at the Dean and Chapter's pleasure.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ CCA-DCC-CA/3, p. 200.

Given the sums that the cathedral collected in each year, the £150 set aside for charity was a paltry amount, especially since during the difficult years of the 1590s this was even reduced to £100.¹²⁷ Some individual prebendaries may have regularly distributed sums to the poor but it is impossible to know the extent of this charitable giving. Occasionally some bequeathed money in their wills, such as Richard Clerke who left money to the Hospitals of St Johns in the city and St Nicholas in Harbledown, as well as to the school. He also set aside money to be used as loans for farmers in his parish of Minster to help them to improve their stock.¹²⁸ However, it is much more usual to find prebendaries leaving their money to family members than to any charitable purposes. Overall, Canterbury's record on almsgiving was decidedly unimpressive.

Conclusion

To what extent was the Cathedral a 'burning and shining light to enlighten those many miserable' parishes of the City?¹²⁹

In *The History of Canterbury Cathedral*, Collinson asked the question, 'What could a cathedral contribute to the service of God after the Protestant Reformation had undermined the value of good works, attributing salvation to faith alone?' Collinson's answer was that 'the truth is that for a hundred years no convincing answer to our question was forthcoming, until, in the 1640s it was answered abruptly with the suppression of cathedrals and their endowments, a temporary extinction which must have appeared irrevocable at the time'.¹³⁰ An answer had been provided by the statutes of 1541, although it is arguable whether this answer could be described as 'convincing': praises of God were provided morning and evening (although not always diligently), alms were distributed to the poor (although not very much), and a large number of boys were taught at the school (although the headmasters were not always conscientious). The element which emerges in the most positive light was the cathedral's record on preaching.

¹²⁷ Collinson, *Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 182.

¹²⁸ PRC 32/50/322.

¹²⁹ Culmer, *Cathedrall News*, p.2.

¹³⁰ Collinson, *Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 154 and 156.

There was certainly much about the institution which was far from positive, and much of the criticism levelled at the cathedral did contain some truth. It is not difficult to find examples of immorality, conservatism, self-interest and non-residence and it is also doubtful whether the existence of the cathedral could be justified in terms of value for money. But, particularly at the outset of Elizabeth's reign and then from the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, sermons were preached in abundance, including sermons which appealed to the godly of the city as well as those who favoured more ceremonialism. It could be argued that the emphasis on preaching, and thereby instruction and education, led to the post-Reformation cathedral becoming of more rather than less relevance to the people of the city. The cathedral attracted highly qualified men to the city, and those of the local population who wished to could take advantage of their learning. It is also possible that the ceremonialism which remained within the institution, and the links with the past in terms of music, while anathema to radical Protestants, was comforting to some in a world of religious change and uncertainty.

There is no doubt that the cathedral did continue to exert a conservative influence on the city throughout the period. The existence of radicals and conservatives vying with each other for dominance within the precincts was a feature of the cathedral throughout the period with peaks at the time of the re-foundation, at the accession of Elizabeth and from the end of the sixteenth century, reflecting the debates in society more widely. Conservatives continued to find a welcome within the city, and examples of non-conformity were less evident than certain other places within the diocese, for example, the town of Sandwich. Chapter four will examine the influences on Sandwich which contributed to a very different Reformation for the people of that town compared to that experienced by the people of Canterbury.

‘Sandwich: where true, faithfull and godly philosophers raigne and beare rule’¹

Introduction

The town of Sandwich provides a clear contrast in the way in which parish religion developed after 1559. There were some similarities between the two communities: both came under the early influence of Archbishop Cranmer, both became host to a large number of Protestant refugees during the later sixteenth century, and both were experiencing significant economic decay by the time Elizabeth acceded to the throne. However, it is the differences between the two which are of more significance. Whereas in Canterbury the early years of the Reformation, particularly the years immediately following the re-foundation of the cathedral, were characterised by contention and dispute, in Sandwich the early influence of reforming leadership created sound Protestant foundations and a ready acceptance of Protestant ideas amongst large numbers of the population following Elizabeth’s accession.

It is the contention of this chapter that Protestantism became established very early in the town and that by the late sixteenth century there were significant numbers of people who were embracing more radical ideas and practices. This early consolidation of Protestantism was due to a number of factors, including the town’s role as a busy port as well as its position in the south east of England. The parishes benefited from strong Protestant leadership, and this was augmented by sympathetic leadership from the town corporation and gentry support. As happened in parishes across the diocese, there was some disruption following Mary Tudor’s death, but this was not as significant in Sandwich as in other areas. Indeed, it is argued that the strength of the Protestant roots which had been planted during the archiepiscopate of Thomas Cranmer put the town’s Protestants in a strong position to survive the short-term difficulties experienced during the five years of Mary’s reign. Following her death, particularly during the 1560s and 1570s, there were a number of highly

¹ Becon, *The Demaundes of Holy Scripture*, sig. Aii. V.

educated reformist ministers working in each of the three parishes. Later in the century, and in the early years of the seventeenth century, this caused problems when the appointment of several vicars with a more conservative outlook resulted in conflict with those members of their congregations who had become used to a more reformed brand of Protestantism.

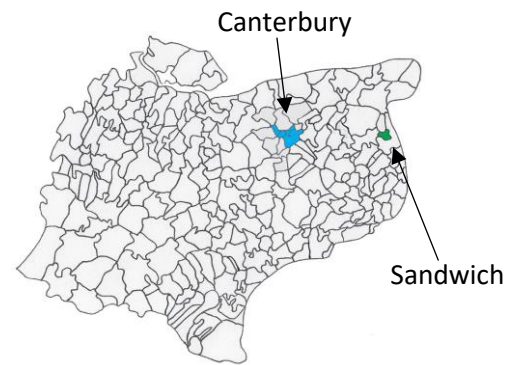
A number of publications have told the story of Sandwich's history, although little has been written specifically on the religious development of the town. Several publications have concentrated on its role within the Cinque Ports Confederation and these tend, therefore, to have a military and economic focus.² The most recent general history, *Sandwich: The Completest Medieval Town in England* covers the history of the town from its origins to the year 1600, although, coming out of an archaeological background the emphasis of the book is on the buildings and their historical context, and, with a focus on the middle ages, little is said specifically about religion within the town after the Reformation.³ Those publications which do examine religion have focused on particular elements, such as Marcel Backhouse, who has completed a great deal of research on the town's Stranger Community, on which he remains the authority. Robert Acheson's 1983 PhD thesis provides further detail on the development of religious separatism in Sandwich as part of his study on the rise of separatism within the wider diocese.⁴ No study which focuses specifically on the religious development of Sandwich during the Reformation period has been completed. This chapter, therefore, in addition to providing detail about how one of the region's key ports responded to religious change, will also provide a further piece to add to the patchwork of historiographical debate on the national development of Protestantism after 1558.

² For example, Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Cinque Ports: A historical and Descriptive Record* (1900); Kenneth Clark, *Sandwich: the story of a Cinque Port* (Rye, 1993).

³ Helen Clarke, Sheila Sweetinburgh and Bridgett Jones eds., *Sandwich: The 'Completest Medieval Town in England': A Study of the town and Port from its Origins to 1600* (Oxford: 2010); Earlier general histories include T.L. Richardson *Historic Sandwich and its Region* (Sandwich: 2006); Helen Bentwich, *History of Sandwich in Kent* (Deal: 1971); Dorothy Gardiner, *Historic Haven: The Story of Sandwich* (Sandwich, 1954).

⁴ Marcel Backhouse, *The Flemish and Walloon Communities at Sandwich during the Reign of Elizabeth I (1561-1603)* (Brussels, 1995); Robert Acheson, 'The Development of Religious Separatism in the Diocese of Canterbury 1590-1660' (PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 1983).

After a short description of the town, this chapter will consider how Protestantism developed in the early years after the Settlement, including an examination of who the men were who held the cure of the three parishes, St Clement's, St Mary's and St Peter's. The next section will focus on developments in the later period, including the existence of non-conformity and the rise of separatism. The town's grammar school was founded early in Elizabeth's reign and section three will consider the impact this had in terms of the consolidation of Protestantism. The final section will consider the work of the town corporation.



Map 6: The location of the town of Sandwich

The sources used in this chapter will be similar to those used for Canterbury in chapter two. Archdeacons' visitation returns are available for the majority of years from 1560 for all three of the town's parishes.⁵ Will preambles from the last year of Mary's reign and the first five years of Elizabeth's reign have been used in an attempt to identify the tenor of belief within the parish, to identify the extent to which Catholic ideology had become entrenched during Mary's reign and the speed with which leading members of the parishes adopted a Protestant tone following the Settlement of 1559, or at least the speed with which they moved away from a belief in the intercessory power of Mary and the saints. A further study of wills proved during the 1590s has also been undertaken in order to highlight the extent to which Protestantism had become consolidated by the later years of the century. In addition, the Sandwich Year Books have proved useful. These books, which record the meetings of the Mayor, Jurats and Common Council, survive in an unbroken run through the period 1558 to 1625.⁶ As an administrative record they document the day to day organisation of the town, but they are also a valuable source in trying to piece together the religious development of the three parishes. In particular, the town council's dealings with the Stranger Community are documented. Much of this

⁵ The returns begin in 1560 and cover the period to 1625 with the following exceptions: 1562-6, 1568-9, 1572-6, 1596, 1603, 1615-16, 1619-21.

⁶ Sa/Ac 1-5.

material was brought together and published by the antiquarian William Boys in his 1792 *Collections for an History of Sandwich*.⁷

The town

Sandwich lies on the Kent coast approximately fifteen miles distant from Canterbury. During the middle ages it had been one of England's most important ports and, as a leading member of the Cinque Ports' Confederation, had profited from significant economic benefits which the mayor and jurats continued to guard jealously. The economic decay being experienced by the town by the mid-sixteenth century was not untypical of towns across the diocese, but the situation was considerably worse in Sandwich due to the silting up of its harbour. By 1558 this was already limiting the size of the ships that could dock and this was to get progressively worse and never better despite repeated efforts to address the issue. The town even tried to take advantage during the celebrations put on for the Queen's visit of 1573 when a very great effort was made to impress; buildings were repaired, houses beautified, streets paved and dung removed, butchers were asked to carry their offal out of the town and brewers were requested to brew good beer for the duration of the visit.⁸ When the vicar of St Clement's, Richard Spicer, delivered the oration, he used the occasion to highlight the problem of the harbour and begged for some support to repair 'oure port which some tyme was verie comodious, but nowe greatly decaied'.⁹ Nevertheless, and despite the very real problems, during the Elizabethan and Jacobean period Sandwich remained a major departure and arrival point for travel to the continent, a fact which undoubtedly influenced attitudes and beliefs. Reformist ideas were easily brought into the town by travellers from abroad, and after 1561 as one of the earliest hosts outside London of a sizeable community of Dutch and French religious refugees, its inhabitants were early exposed to the practical outworking of reformist Protestant ideas within the town. Its role as a port and its location between London and Europe meant that links with other towns, and especially London, were strong, a fact which also contributed to the development of separatist ideas by the later sixteenth century.

⁷ William Boys, *Collections for an History of Sandwich* (Canterbury, 1792).

⁸ John Nichols, ed., *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, Volume 1* (1823), p. 337.

⁹ Richard Spicer, *An Oration made to the Queenes Maiestie* (1573), sig. C.

Of the town's three parishes in the early modern period, St Peter's and St Mary's were contained within the town boundaries whereas St Clement's extended beyond the town and had a rural element in addition to the urban. At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, St Mary's, with its sixty-two families, was the smallest and the poorest of the three parishes, worth only £8 12d in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. St Clement's had eighty-one households and was worth £13 17s in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. The largest and wealthiest was St Peter's with 138 families in 1563.¹⁰ It is listed in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* as being worth an impressive £24 18s 4d a year, placing it in eleventh place in the diocese as a whole in terms of income. The wealth of this parish is particularly unusual given that towns often contained the poorest parishes in the diocese. Patrick Carter has noted, for example, that barely one fifth of the benefices from a sample of fifteen larger provincial towns were reported in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* as worth £10 or more and that the majority were worth less than £6 13s 4d.¹¹ As has been noted, the wealthiest of Canterbury City's parishes was St Andrew's, worth only £13, and several of the city's parishes were worth less than £5 per year, making St Peter's an exception to the diocesan and national rule.

Parish Leadership – the First Decade following the Settlement of Religion

One of the most striking characteristics of the group of men who served as vicars, curates and preachers in Sandwich's three parishes was the level of their education. Of the twenty-two individuals who held positions between 1558 and 1625, fourteen (sixty-seven percent) had a university qualification. In the city of Canterbury during the same period this figure was only thirty four percent. If this is broken down by parish it emerges that seventy-eight percent of the incumbents of St Clement's had a university degree.¹² This is very impressive. Of the two men who did not have a university qualification, neither were completely uneducated. The curate, John Hall, who served the parish until 1563, was described as 'doctus' in the Parker Certificates of 1561, and Robert Pownall, who was vicar from 1564 until 1569, had been a Marian exile, was a published author and was appointed one of Canterbury's Six Preachers on

¹⁰ CCCC MS 122 pp. 299 and 300.

¹¹ Patrick Carter, 'The Economic Problems of the Provincial Clergy during the Reformation' in Collinson and Craig, *The Reformation in English Towns*, pp. 147-158 (p.149).

¹² Five had Masters Degrees, one was a Bachelor of Civil Law and one was a Doctor of Divinity. The patronage of the parish was held by the Archdeacons of Canterbury.

his return to England in 1558, all indicating that he had achieved a high level of education without formal qualifications.¹³ At St Mary's three of the five vicars had a university qualification and at St Peter's five of the eight men who served the benefice as vicar or curate were university educated.

It is likely that the town already had a reputation for being a centre of Protestantism before the accession of Elizabeth and this, perhaps, helped to attract highly qualified ministers to the area. MacCulloch has described Sandwich as a 'place where Cranmer had an active interest', and this interest in encouraging the development of Protestantism within the town seems to have been successful at a time when Cranmer had been struggling to find wider support from the majority of Kentish gentry.¹⁴ In 1534 Cranmer had been accused by a monk from St Augustine's in Canterbury of twice in one week ordering John Twynne to ride to Sandwich to deliver what the monk considered to be a 'lecture of heresy'. The monk also criticised Cranmer for promising a buck in winter and a doe in summer to the 'heretics of Sandwich'.¹⁵ Cranmer's interest in the town seems to have had a lasting impact since during the years of Mary's reign Protestant sympathies can be traced in each of the parishes among the men serving as either vicar or curate.

The patronage of the parishes lay in the hands of the archdeacons of Canterbury, the Crown and the mayor and jurats of the town.¹⁶ The archdeacons of Canterbury presented to St Clement's and St Mary's, and the mayor and jurats presented to St Peter's alternately with the Crown. Until 1575 the archdeaconry of Canterbury was held *in comendam* by the Bishop of Rochester and therefore William Powys, Robert Pownall and Thomas Pawson were all presented by Edmund Guest during his time at Rochester, all of whom were non-conformists at some point during their incumbencies.¹⁷ Edmund Freake presented George Joye, another non-

¹³ CCCC MS 580c, fol. 24v; Derek Ingram Hill, *The Six Preachers of Canterbury Cathedral 1541-1982* (Ramsgate, 1982), p. 29.

¹⁴ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp. 176 and 203.

¹⁵ L & P, VII, document 1608.

¹⁶ This, perhaps, also helps to explain the unusually high level of education achieved by the incumbents of St Clement's. As noted in chapter one, the archdeacons as a group presented more highly qualified men than other groups of patrons. See p. 65.

¹⁷ William Powys was instituted to the vicarage of St Clement's in 1563 by Guest; Robert Pownall was instituted to the vicarage by Guest in 1564; George Joye, who also served as vicar of St Peter's from 1570 to 1573, was instituted to the vicarage of St Clement's in 1575 by Edmund Freake.

conformist. This is slightly surprising since neither Guest nor Freke are known for their non-conformist views. On the contrary, in May 1565 for example, Guest, described by McCulloch as 'one of the bishops on Elizabeth's bench farthest from the Reformed ethos', was involved in the commission which deprived his former household chaplain, Edward Brocklesby, for refusing to wear the surplice.¹⁸ Perhaps, given the nature of religion within the town, this discrepancy hints at the possibility that these clergymen were being encouraged by non-conformist attitudes at parish level. After 1575, the right of presentation was held by Charles Fotherby and William Kingsley in their role as archdeacon. It was after this time that problems arose from a difference in expectations between ministers and certain members of their congregations.

Sandwich did not suffer as badly as other areas of the diocese from the instability that was widespread across the country during the first five years of Elizabeth's reign, although because of the early adoption of Protestantism in the town it is likely that it had experienced a deal of instability earlier in the century. Edward Boys noted that in 1553 'the vicars and curates in Sandwich, being all married men, there are no ministers to perform divine service'.¹⁹ However, although finding suitable men to serve the town's churches was not entirely unproblematic, it is possible to trace a degree of continuity from the 1540s through to the accession of Elizabeth. At St Clement's, an early Protestant influence can be discerned in the presentation to the vicarage of the evangelical Protestant preacher, Thomas Swynnerton, through the patronage of Edmund Cranmer in his capacity as archdeacon. Swynnerton fled the parish for Emden on the accession of Mary, and the parish was then listed as vacant by Harpsfield's visitation in 1557.²⁰ However, there was a curate, John Hall, who was listed in the visitation and who continued to serve the parish until at least October 1558 when he witnessed the will of Gyles Batchelor. Hall was described as non-married and no preacher in the Parker certificates, but, as previously noted, he was also described as 'doctus'. There was a John Hall serving as a chantry priest at St Clement's chantry in the 1540s. It is not clear exactly when Hall either died or left the parish, but it was certainly before 1563 when William Powys was instituted

¹⁸ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 621.

¹⁹ Boys, *Collections*, p. 687.

²⁰ CCEd, 'Thomas Swynnerton', Person ID: 38697; R. Rex, 'Swynnerton, Thomas', *ODNB*; Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation* p. 29.

as vicar. However, Powys had also been involved in some sense in the life of the parish before his institution as vicar as he not only witnessed Batchelor's will alongside Hall in 1558, describing himself at that time as curate, but he also witnessed the wills of John Roke and John Lowe, both of St Clement's, in February 1559 and 1560 respectively.²¹

The situation which existed at St Mary's in the middle years of the sixteenth century is somewhat similar to St Clement's. Harpsfield's visitation shows John Steward as vicar of the parish, a position which he held until his death until 1564. Although the records do not show exactly when he was instituted to the vicarage, he was certainly active in the parish for many years before this time, having been admitted to the parish's Cundy chantry by Archbishop Cranmer in 1538.²² In the Parker certificates he is described as '*coniugatus, mediocriter doctus, residet et hospitalis, non predicat*'.²³ However, whilst he may not have been highly educated, evidence from wills suggests that Steward continued to exert some kind of Protestant influence during Mary's reign. Eight wills from the parish were proved between 1558 and 1564, not one of which invoked Mary and the saints in the preamble and in only one was money bequeathed for masses to be said at the time of the testator's month's mind.²⁴ The early evangelical influence in the parish can also be discerned in the details of Harpsfield's visitation of 1557. In addition to altar cloths, banners and streamers, which were regularly reported to be missing across the diocese by the visitors, St Mary's was also presented for lacking candlesticks, a chrismatory, a latten cross, a holy waterstock and a lock and key for the font, as well as a side altar and a 'convenient' light before the rood. The churchwardens were also required to apprehend 'all suche as lyve disorderatly and bryng them before the commissions' as well as one Willard who was 'suspected of heresy qui *iam recessit patria*'.²⁵ This suggests a lack of urgency in restoring Catholic worship within the parish under Mary.

²¹ PRC17/33/258 and PRC 17/34/225.

²² Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation*, p. 27.

²³ CCCC MS 580c fol. 24v.

²⁴ Elizabeth Blythe, Jan. 1558, CCA PRC17/34/242b; William Lownde, July 1558, PRC/17/32/233a; John Master, August 1558, PRC/17/32/104; John Sears, Sept. 1558, TNA Prob 11/44; Margaret Strowde, Oct 1558 PRC/17/34/39; John Lemans, 1560, PRC/1734/227; Nicholas Yeomans 1559, PRC/17/36/65; Robert Graye, 1560, PRC/17/35/135b

²⁵ Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation*, p 28.

It is harder to ascertain whether St Peter's parish experienced a similar level of continuity during the early years of Elizabeth's reign as existed in the other two parishes. The Clergy of the Church of England database lists the first of St Peter's Elizabethan ministers as William Powys, who was instituted in 1551 and remained until his death in 1564. This is the same William Powys with links to St Clement's parish. The last two Marian visitations by Archdeacon Harpsfield, however, indicate that this was not the case. In 1556 Robert Charles was given as rector of the parish and in 1557 the rectory is given as vacant, with neither rector nor curate.²⁶ In 1554 Powys was confined to his parsonage house by the mayor and jurats for 'saying evensong in English contrary to the Queen's proclamation' and he was also a married man so it is possible that, although he seems to have remained within the town, he was suspended during Mary's reign.²⁷ Certainly he was active in the parish by 1557 when he witnessed the will of, among others, the blacksmith Stephen Wetstone, describing himself at that time as 'curate of St Peter's'.²⁸ The Parker certificates of 1561 described him as 'baccalaureus iuris civil'. He was also a licenced preacher.²⁹

The evidence suggests that each of these men had Protestant credentials and that they were able to re-invigorate Protestant ideas that had been prevalent in the town before Mary's accession. A study of wills adds to this impression, and suggests that the growth in Protestant belief of the 1540s and early 1550s had been far from eradicated during the five years that Mary was on the throne. Thirty-five wills which were proved between January 1558 and the end of 1563 have been examined, of which seven were from the parish of St Clement's, eight from St Mary's, ten from St Peter's and three from residents of St Bartholomew's Hospital. For seven of the thirty-five testators the parish cannot be identified and three of this sample were nuncupative. The strength of Protestant influence can be seen by the inclusion of an obviously Catholic preamble in only seven of the wills proved between these dates. For example, John Paris, who in June 1558 bequeathed his soul to 'almightie God, o[u]r blessed ladie and to all the holie companie of heven'.³⁰ It is interesting to note that

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 302.

²⁷ Boys, *Collections* p. 309.

²⁸ PRC 17/33/33b.

²⁹ CCCC MS 580c, fol. 24.

³⁰ 1558: John Bartholomew of St Mary's (PRC/10/37/195), John Paris of St Peter's (PRC/17/33/34a), John Alee of St Peter's (PRC/17/31/4); 1559: Clement Rose of St Bartholomew's Hospital (PRC/32/28/23a)

even for these seven testators, however, the preamble is not always a reflection of unambiguous Catholic belief. Thus John Bartholomew wrote in September 1558 that he bequeathed his 'soul to almighty God my maker and redeemer in whom ys all my trust of salvacyon by his precious dethe & passion', suggesting a Protestant understanding of salvation which came only through the saving work of Christ. At the same time, however, he asked for 'o[ur] blessed lady St Mary with all the blessed company of heaven to pray for me', suggesting that he also held a belief in purgatory. It is not surprising that this should occur given the roller coaster of religious change since the 1530s, especially at this early date, and especially given the ambiguities which existed in the Elizabethan religious Settlement itself. Peter Marshall has noted, for example, that 'remarkably, the Elizabethan primer of 1559 appeared to sanction prayers for the repose of the dead'. Perhaps a relevant question might be why more testators did not consider invoking prayer for their soul in these religiously confused and chaotic early years of the reign.³¹

In addition to those testators who looked towards Mary and the saints to ameliorate their situation after death, there were a further two whose wills contained a simple preamble but which also demonstrated a belief in purgatory by their request for a month's mind and a twelve month's mind. Thus, John Master, whose will was written in August of 1558, having left the traditional small sum of money to the high altar for tithes negligently forgotten then requested that ten masses would be said at his burial and at his month's day.³²

It is significant how few of the wills have an overtly Catholic feel to them, even those proved during the last months of Mary's reign and, although the sample is small and far from definitive, this is further evidence that Protestant roots, strongly laid down before 1553, were not eradicated during the five years following Mary's accession. This sample also indicates the element of choice which existed for testators, and the example of curate Willim Powys is noteworthy in this respect. Powys, who had links to two of the town's three parishes, was witness to eleven wills proved during these years. Five of the eleven contain a preamble which is clearly Protestant, such as

³¹ Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2002), p. 181.

³² John Master (PRC/17/32/104).

that of Gyles Batchelor of St Clement's, written in October 1558. Batchelor bequeathed his 'soul to almighty God the father trusting that he, through his only savio[ur] Jesus Christ my alone savio[ur] will take me into his mercye'. However, despite Powys' Protestant credentials, four of the wills also contained references to Mary and the Saints, including that of John Paris, which like that of John Bartholomew appears to contain both Protestant and Catholic elements. The remaining two contained simple preambles, 'I bequeath my soul to almighty God'.³³

Since this sample of wills is so small, the conclusions must necessarily be treated cautiously. Nevertheless, the evidence presented here adds weight to the argument that the evangelism of the 1540s, together with some continuity in personnel in the mid-years of the century, had created strong Protestant roots in the town before the accession of Elizabeth. Indeed, in contrast to the city of Canterbury, where the cathedral exerted a conservative influence, and where turnover of personnel in 1558 might be described as a crisis time for the church, the most difficult time for Sandwich's parishes in terms of Protestant leadership came, not with the accession of Elizabeth and the accompanying imposition of new religious ideas from the government, but five or six years into Elizabeth's reign when each of the three parishes experienced a change of incumbent. In 1564 William Powys, vicar of St Clement's and curate of St Peter's, died and it is probable that John Steward died the following year. Despite this, for those looking for a further reformation in religion, however, the men who took the reins and served the town from the mid-1560s until the end of the century overwhelmingly sat towards the radical end of the religious spectrum, and the period of their incumbencies saw elements of religious radicalism increasing within the town.

³³ The five with Protestant preambles are: Gyles Batchelor of St Clement's, 1558 (PRC/17/33/196), William Browne of St Peter's, 1558 (PRC/17/32/235), Agnes Gryffyn of St Bartholomew's written 1558 and proved 1562 (PRC/17/37/82), Richard Roke of St Clement's 1559 (PRC/17/33/258), Richard Hendley of St Peter's, 1561 (PRC/17/35/273). The three with Catholic preambles are: John Alee of St Peter's, 1558 (PRC/17/31/4), Elizabeth Style of St Peter's, written 1557 and proved 1560 (PRC/17/35/38a), Stephen Whetstone of St Peter's, written 1557 and proved 1558 (PRC/17/33/33b). The two with simple preambles are: John Lowe of St Clement's, 1560 (PRC/17/34/225), Peter Seathe of St Clement's, written 1557 and proved 1558 (PRC/17/33/32). John Paris, 1558 (PRC/17/33/34a).

The Development of Protestantism in the Later Period

In the parishes of both St Clement's and St Peter's similar patterns of development can be traced: an element of continuity between the first phase of the Reformation under Henry VIII and Edward VI, a series of radical vicars during the sixteenth century accompanied by an increase in Puritan ideas amongst members of the congregations, followed by more conservative appointments from the beginning of the seventeenth century and reaction by groups of parishioners unhappy with the change in emphasis. The parishes also followed a similar pattern to that found in Canterbury whereby the ministers in the mid-sixteenth century tended to stay for a shorter time and were often, although not always, the least well qualified. By the end of the century stability had been established with incumbents typically remaining in the parish for over twenty years. Over the period 1558 to 1625 in St Peter's parish, for example, of the five men who served as vicars up to 1578, none stayed longer than four years, whereas John Stibbing, instituted in 1578 remained for twenty three years, and his successor, Harim White remained in the parish for the next twenty seven years. Half of the men seem to have concentrated their efforts on the parish, holding only this one cure during their time in Sandwich.

Following William Powys, St Peter's had a further seven ministers over the period.³⁴ Some, such as Thomas Palley, died a short time after their institution and have left little behind in the historical record. But it is clear that if the parish began the Elizabethan era with a loyal Protestant minister in Powys, several of his successors were of a similar outlook. For example, Thomas Pett, who served the parish from 1566 to 1569, was presented in that year for administering communion in 'fine manchet bread'.³⁵ This was something of a controversial issue at that time since the 1559 Prayer Book instruction to use bread at the communion had been contradicted by the Injunctions of the same year which stipulated that wafers should be used. In this early period the insistence on bread was often taken to imply dissatisfaction with the Religious Settlement of 1559 and a desire for further reformation. Like Powys, Pett was

³⁴ These were: Thomas Palley 1564-1566 (CCEd Person ID:73183); Thomas Pett 1566-1569 (CCEd ID: 39058); George Joye 1570-1573 (CCEd ID: 3965); William Bonham 1573-1577 (CCEd ID: 67829); Hugo Smith 1577-1578 (CCEd ID: 38576); John Stibbing 1578-1601 (CCEd ID: 38633) ; Harim White 1601-1628 (CCEd ID:45133).

³⁵ de Sandwich, 'Some East Kent Parish History', p. 20.

also married and was a licensed preacher.³⁶ Although he had just a Bachelor's degree, the extent of his knowledge and learning was recognised by his fellow ministers when he was appointed one of the initial three speakers at the prophesying meeting in Ashford in 1572 following his appointment there in 1571.³⁷ His successor at St Peter's, George Joye, continued the tradition of administering communion in fine white bread, for which he was presented in 1573, and for which he showed little remorse. When appearing before the court he admitted the accusation, adding that 'yt is so appointed he should both by the service book, the injunctions and the last parlements'.³⁸ John Stibbing, vicar in the last years of the century was also in trouble with the authorities, being presented in 1582 for not wearing the surplice 'as he ought', although it is significant that the churchwardens added that 'he doth divers times were the same and doth not obstinately refuse the same'.³⁹ Either Stibbing's non-conformist beliefs were not as deeply held as some, or the churchwardens were sympathetic to the issue and keen to lighten the presentment. Perhaps, also, it may have been members of the congregation who were encouraging him not to wear the surplice on occasions, which might imply a more radical attitude amongst members of the parish. Stibbing had been instituted to the vicarage in 1578 through the patronage of the mayor and corporation, the mayor that year being Edward Wood. He was a pluralist and at the time of his incumbency he was also serving as curate of Ash. He was also vicar of St Mary Northgate from 1584 to 1597 when he exchanged the Canterbury city centre parish for the rectory of Ham. The last of the vicars of this period was Harim White whose time in the parish spanned the years of James' reign, ending with his death in 1627.

The long history of Protestant leadership in the parish, and the resulting consolidation of Protestant belief amongst the congregation led to difficulties during the later Elizabethan and the Jacobean period when numbers of parishioners began to vote with their feet and absented themselves from church services or, more seriously, began to show more active resistance to the rites and ceremonies of the prayer book.

³⁶ CCED, 'Thomas Pett', Person ID:39058.

³⁷ Peter Clark, 'The Prophesying Movement in Kentish Towns During the 1570s', *Arch Cant*, 93 (1977), pp. 81-90 (p. 88).

³⁸ Claude Jenkins, 'An Unpublished Record of Archbishop Parker's Visitation 1573', *Arch Cant*, 29, (1911), pp. 270-318 (p. 287).

³⁹ X.2.5, part 2, fol. 23r.

There were high levels of non-attendance at all three of Sandwich's churches, but particularly so at St Peter's where, between 1597 and 1601, for example, over 50 different people were presented for absence from church or for not receiving communion. Sometimes this was caused by an individual's excommunication and a subsequent unwillingness to be reconciled, or, as in the case of Thomas Cooke, absence could be explained by an inability to attend church. Cooke reported in 1601 that he 'was imployed in her ma[jes]ties service uppon the seas and my wife, as Mr White o[u]r minister hathe learned, was very sicke'.⁴⁰ There are the usual examples of people presented for engaging in non-church activities during the time when they should have been at church, such as William Hawley, Daniel Hooke and John Hall who were presented for 'playing shovel board at the time of divine service' and refusing to pay the 12d fine imposed upon them for the offence.⁴¹ However, there are significantly fewer such examples at St Peter's than appeared at the same time in the parishes of the city of Canterbury.

A study of wills proved during the 1590s provides further evidence of the consolidation and development of Protestantism that had taken place by the end of the century, as well as the influence of the Stranger community within the town. During the decade, eighty-two wills were proved, of which sixteen belonged to members of the Stranger community and twelve were nuncupative and contained no preamble. There were a further three which contained no preamble and which may, therefore, have been nuncupative, although there is no evidence to confirm this. Nine of the wills from members of the three parishes contained a very simple preamble, for example, 'I commend my soul to God'. Of the remaining forty-two, roughly a third contained a slightly longer preamble which referred to the saving power of Christ as redeemer, and a further thirteen either stressed the testator's strong and steadfast hope in salvation through the death of Christ, or emphasised that the salvation which they were hoping for was to be found only in Christ's death. A distinctive feature of this sample from the 1590s was the number of testators whose wills contained a more developed preamble, further evidence of the existence of the consolidation of

⁴⁰ Ibid., fol. 204v.

⁴¹ Ibid., fol. 257v.

Protestant beliefs within the town by that time. Thus Roger Manwood spoke of committing his:

soul into the m[er]ciful handes of almighty god my creator beinge fully assured that my sines are clerlye remitted and forgiven by the death and precious bloodshedinge of jesus my only saviour and redeemer not for anie desert or merit of mine owne but of his mere love and favo[ur] bestowed on me and all the elect.⁴²

There are also several which speak of the resurrection of the body.

Manwood's apparent confidence in his own salvation was not echoed by William Gaynye of St Clement's whose preamble suggests a little more doubt that he would be counted as one of the elect:

At this present visyted wth much bodylie greeffe acknowledginge my selfe an unprofytable servantes towardes my god and creator beseechinge him still to strengthen my mynde and spirites that I may with all willingnes yeelde the same unto him that fyrst gave the same unto mee assuering my self that for his infynyte m[er]cies in jesus christ my only savio[r] and redeem[er] hee will forgyve me all my misdeeds and receyve my soule into his everlasting glory.⁴³

It is interesting to note in terms of doles, that while the wealthy Manwood left considerable sums towards relief of the poor, he was mindful that this should be done 'quietlye, insteede of troublous and disordered doales usuallye to be donne att the dayes of burials mongeste numbers of people disorderlye flocking and assembling from sundrye parishes and places and farr from their own dwellinge'.

The influence of the Stranger community is also apparent in the will preambles. Here again there are examples of simple preambles, such as John Stallen in 1591 who committed his 'soule whensoever shee by gods will shall departe from my body to god my heavenlie father', but this is not typical. The majority of wills from the community follow a formula much more rigidly than those from the native population, something which is likely to have been influenced by issues of language as well as custom. On

⁴² Roger Manwood, written 1589 and proved 1591 (PRC/17/48/55b).

⁴³ PRC/17/51/299.

several occasions the will explicitly states that it has been translated from the Dutch, most usually by the public notary, Peter Ent. Several wills are written in the third person, but unlike nuncupative wills from native testators which rarely included any preamble, the Strangers' wills always began with a consideration of the soul on every occasion except one. The formula began by stressing the fragility of human life. Typical of the sample is the will of Charles Werkesteene:

of the town and port of Sandwich in England borne in the parish of Menes in west fflanders baymaker the which, considering the frailnes of mens nature and that nothing is more certeine then deathe and nothing so uncerteine then the houre of the same, he doth comit his soule whensoever it shall please god to call him out of this worlde unto god his heavenlie father and his son jesus christ his only saviour and redeemer trusting oneli by him to be saved.⁴⁴

A key feature of the wills from the Stranger community, not surprisingly, is the sums that were set aside for the poor. Seventy-five per cent of the community left money to the poor, most commonly sums of 20s or 40s, but in the case of John Corsyn and Joan Wecksteen the very large sums of £10 and £30 respectively were bequeathed.⁴⁵ In terms of the native population, the figures were much lower. None of the nuncupative testators left money to the poor, but of the remaining fifty-one testators from the native population, twenty (thirty-nine percent) did consider the poor in their wills.⁴⁶ The majority of these left quite substantial sums. John Dunken the butcher, as an example, left 30s to the poor of Sandwich in 1590 and William Gaynye left 20s to the poor of St Clement's parish, plus a further 6s 8d to both St Peter's and St Mary's.⁴⁷

These wills of the 1590s reinforce the view that a more radical brand of Protestantism was becoming more common in the town by the last quarter of the sixteenth century, a fact that is borne out by evidence from the Archdeacon's visitation returns for the town. By the end of the century there is evidence that this was affecting each of the town's three parishes, with an increasing number of people

⁴⁴ PRC/17/51/316.

⁴⁵ John Corsyn, PRC/17/51/174; Joan Wecksteen, PRC/17/49/383b.

⁴⁶ This compares with the town of New Romney, where only thirteen percent provided for the poor in their wills. See chapter five, p. 216.

⁴⁷ John Dunken, PRC/17/48/67; William Gaynye, PRC/17/51/299.

whose actions suggest dissatisfaction with the rites of the established church.⁴⁸ By the end of the century clear evidence emerges of numbers of individuals who were actively opposing elements of the Elizabethan religious Settlement, as separatism and non-conformity became more widespread within the town.

Non-conformity and Separatism

In 1591, Edward Thomas of St Peter's parish, was presented for not ever having received the communion since his arrival in the town two years previously. While this, in itself, is not unusual, it is significant here that the presentment specifically stated that he was attending the church to 'hear sermons and lectures', suggesting that his absence from communion was not an indifference to Protestantism or a rejection of a religious way of life, but was an unwillingness to accept the rituals of the prayer book services.⁴⁹ The situation became particularly problematic during the incumbency of Harim White when a group of active protesters caused difficulties over his moderate Protestant leadership of the parish. White was presented to the vicarage in 1601 through the patronage of the Crown. He was also a chaplain to James I. There was clearly a mis-match between the views of some of the leading individuals of the parish, who were hoping for a more thorough reformation, and the vicar, who would seem to have been a conformist servant of the church. Conflict existed in the parish throughout his incumbency. Within two years of his arrival the churchwardens presented that 'we doe heare by the common reports of sondrie people of o[u]r parish and towne that the said Mr Whight not long since... did lye with Elizabeth Aldye his maid servant'.⁵⁰ By 1607 he was accused of not catechising the young and that he once 'refused to baptize a child upon the 25th December last being brought to the church because he had not knowledge afor'.⁵¹ Whatever the truth of these accusations, however, it is clear that the issue was more deep-seated than the morality or behaviour of the minister.

In 1607 Jane More was presented for 'disturbing ye minister in ye administraction of ye hollie sacrament of baptism' when she violently snatched her child away from the hands of the minister during the baptism service before the signing of

⁴⁸ X.2.5, part 2, fol. 23r.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 129v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 17v.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 21v.

the cross, making it clear that she would not be bringing the child back again.⁵² The following year she was also presented for refusing to kneel during the prayers and for standing during the Creed, in contradiction 'to the appointed order and uniforme practice of o[u]r congregation'. The presentment makes it clear that More was not alone in her rejection of such ceremonies but that there was a group of parishioners who were making their opposition plain. Having been 'gentlie admonished' for her refusal to kneel, she nevertheless continued with the practice 'with others of her faction, most impudentlie'.⁵³

White also had to deal with issues over the funeral service. Two years after the disagreements over the sacrament of baptism, several people from the parish were presented by the minister for an unwillingness to accept the prayer book rites accompanying burial. In 1609 a group including Thomas Bartlet, Moses Fletcher and the wife of James Chilton were presented for burying a child 'pryvatly... without anie notice given to me or my clarke or any companie of neighbours'. The presentment recorded that by acting in this way they were deliberately 'calling into question the lawfullness of the kinges constitutions within this and other behalves, affirming those things to be popishly ceremonious and of no other force'.⁵⁴ In 1609 Moses Fletcher was presented again, this time for burying his own child 'in the sermon tyme very disorderlie and unseemlie'.⁵⁵ In a parish with a low number of presentments of people who refused to pay the cess during this period, it is conspicuous that when money was needed to repair the bells, a group of parishioners refused to contribute. These included John Ellis who, along with Chilton and Fletcher, was later to become a separatist, moving first to Leiden and then in the 1630s to America.⁵⁶

Another thorn in White's side were the two Richard Mastersons, father and son, who were outspoken in their refusal to accept the form of ceremonies enjoined

⁵² X.2.5, part 3, fol. 139v.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., fol. 153v.

⁵⁵ Ibid., fol. 162v.

⁵⁶ Acheson, *'Religious Separatism'*, p. 38.

by the government. A Richard Masterson of St Peter's was presented in 1612 with Thomas Allen and Thomas Barber, two other noted separatists, for affirming that the:

forme of godes worshipp in the churche of England established by lawe and contained in ye boke of comon prayer and administracon of the sacraments is a corrupt and unlawfull worshippe and repugnant to ye scriptures and that ye rites and ceremonyes in ye churche of englande by lawe established are wicked and ante christian and sup[er]stitions and such as religious godlie men cannott neather maye with anye good conscience use or approve of.⁵⁷

In 1613 the ministers of the three parishes wrote to the Privy Council requesting their support in dealing with such separatists within the town. The council responded by writing to Henry Howard Earl of Northampton in his capacity as Lord Warden of the Cinque ports to complain about the existence of 'many notable sectes and heresies there spredd and receaved amongst the people, by such as have recourse unto the towne of Amsterdam, and other partes beyond the seaes,' and asking him to step in to rectify the situation.⁵⁸ The two Richard Mastersons were identified along with Thomas Allen and John Ellis as being the chief instigators of the discord. It is significant that the Privy Council also included criticism of members of the town corporation in their letter, not only for their negligence in suppressing the 'hereticall practise' as their role presupposed that they should, but also for allegedly providing support and protection for the offenders. Two of the four members of the town's government mentioned in the letter, John Jacob and Nicholas Richardson, had served as mayor, Jacob in 1605 and 1612 and Richardson in 1603 and 1611. Northampton's intervention resulted in several individuals being called before the Privy Council and subsequently being asked to leave the town, and by the end of the decade certainly Richard Masterson and Thomas Ellis had become established as key members of the separatist congregation at Leiden.⁵⁹

The expulsion of the ring-leaders did not solve the issue and in October 1614 the Privy Council felt the need to intervene again to require the mayor, John Harbart,

⁵⁷ X.5.7, fol. 59r.

⁵⁸ APC, Vol. 33 (1613-161), p.304.

⁵⁹ Acheson, 'Religious Separatism', p. 38.

to work with the ministers of the town to prevent the spread of unacceptable beliefs and also to inhibit the entry of people into the town from such places as Amsterdam and Leiden.⁶⁰ This demonstrates the significance of Sandwich's position as a port on the south coast for the relative ease of transport between the town and the Low Countries of both people and ideas. It also underlines the importance of members of the corporation in the development of radical Protestantism within the town. It is also likely that large numbers of Protestants from mainland Europe living in the town had an influence on attitudes towards radicalism and separatism.

Not all of the opposition to White was separatist in nature and there are examples of members of the congregation showing their dissatisfaction with the leadership of White but not a rejection of the wider church. In 1619 Helen Field and Elizabeth Tybb, for example, were presented for abusing the minister calling him 'dumme dogg and sayeing that he and all his hearers shall goe to the devill'.⁶¹ White, however, was not a dumb dog. He had a Bachelor's degree, and in 1617 a published edition of a collection of four of his sermons shows him to be an uncontroversial Calvinist.⁶² He emphasised the importance of preaching, and it may have been his proficiency from the pulpit that led the churchwardens to report in 1610 that everything was in good order in the church 'save the book of homilies, the which we have no use for'.⁶³ In his sermons he emphasised that a person's duty was always to obey authority, and in those matters where scripture was not entirely clear about how to proceed, a person's duty was to obey the church's instruction. For example, in a sermon preached at St Peter's on the election of the mayor in 1618, he made it clear that 'for those things which are inioyned neither against the faith nor against good manners but are comely in their order and ordained to the representation of any good or to the inflaming of godly devotion, before it be commanded it may be held adiaphorall or indifferent, but being once concluded by authoritie it ought to be held necessarie and to be obeyed by all'.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ APC, Vol. 33 (1613-1614), p. 614.

⁶¹ X.5.7, fol. 209.

⁶² Harim White, *The Ready Way to True Repentance: or, A Godly, and Learned Treatise of the Repentance of Mary Magdalen* (1616).

⁶³ X.2.5, part 3 fol. 188.

⁶⁴ White, *True Repentance*, p. 78.

At this time there was a group of people who were meeting together to pray outside of the regular times of the church services. William Ellwood led this group and he was presented in 1618 for 'as the report goeth', he 'doth every sondaye in the night entertayne many people of both sexes and preacheth unto them and prayeth and when they go to prayars thay (as the fame goeth) eyther put owt the candle or remove yt into an other roome'.⁶⁵ Ellwood defended his actions by claiming that he was not preaching, but explaining points of the sermon to his household. In 1620 he was presented again for 'disturbing o[u]r minister Mr Harim White in his sermon by excessive laughter and other unsufferable behaviour denying him to his face impudentlie'.⁶⁶ Acheson suggests Ellwood's behaviour could be explained by a contempt for White as a minister rather than a rejection of 'the doctrinal standpoint of the church of England', but since Ellwood had already been presented for 'obstinately refusing to receive the sacrament and also for refusing to kneel, it seems likely that his contempt for the minister was motivated by disapproval of the church which White represented and defended.⁶⁷ The presentment of 1619 contains a sense of the frustration felt by White and others in the parish over the disorders. Ellwood had been presented for refusing to kneel and 'we have long complained thereof but we see noe order enoynd for his reformacon and therefore we forebeare further to p[re]sent the same till order be appoynted therein by the ordinary'.⁶⁸ It may be that the unwillingness of the church authorities to deal decisively with the situation encouraged Ellwood's outburst in 1620 which, it was claimed, was in front of '500 people at the least'.

In 1627 following the death of White there were clearly questions over the patronage of the parish, and the mayor and corporation had to provide records to prove their interest in the same. The Lord Keeper did eventually conclude that they had the right of next presentation but, significantly, made the request that 'of those

⁶⁵ X.5.7, part 2 fol. 3r.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 41.

⁶⁷ Acheson, 'Religious Separatism', p. 43.

⁶⁸ X.5.2, part 2 fol. 21r.

that shall be recommended to you for that place, special care be taken in your choice of a worthy preacher and one free from faction'.⁶⁹

As at St Peter's, the Protestant leadership of St Clement's parish seems to have been strong from early in Elizabeth's reign. As has already been noted, the parish had come under Protestant influence from the early 1540s, and although there was no vicar in place following Swynnerton's move to Emden, the parish was served by a curate, John Hall. Robert Pownall, who served as vicar between 1564 and 1569 following the death of the Protestant minister William Powys, had clear Protestant credentials as noted above. Pownall's successor, Richard Spicer, served as master of the school for a short while, and, in fact, it is likely that he was brought to the town because of his willingness to teach as much as for his Protestant credentials. Although the parish was in the patronage of the Archdeacons of Canterbury, on this occasion Roger Manwood, the founder of the school, presented Spicer to the benefice. Spicer did not always conform, and was presented in 1569 for administering the communion in 'fine common white bread'.⁷⁰ It is perhaps testament to the support that members of the corporation demonstrated towards more radical proponents of Protestantism that despite Spicer's presentation and also his central involvement in the prophesying movement in Sandwich in the early 1570s, he was still chosen to provide the oration during Queen Elizabeth's visit to Sandwich in 1573.

Given the strength of Sandwich's Protestant past, it is not surprising that the town should have become involved in the prophesying movement that existed in Kent during the 1570s. The articles for the deanery of Sandwich which were drawn up in 1572 have been published by Peter Clark.⁷¹ They stipulate that three moderators were to be appointed, men who were deemed to be 'the gravest, best learned and discretest' of the ministers, whose role was to organise the meetings and to direct proceedings and to keep order. These moderators were to choose the ministers who would speak and also the part of scripture that was to be discussed. The articles make clear that the speakers were to keep to the literal sense of the scriptures and 'digress not into exhortatyon and especyally into invectyves'. They were to take a word or

⁶⁹ William Boys, *Collections*, p. 347.

⁷⁰ de Sandwich, 'Some East Kent Parish History', p.20.

⁷¹ Clark, 'Prophesying Movement', p. 85.

phrase of scripture and examine how it is used 'and so by conference of places to open the texte and the cause of the wryttinge of the appostle or evangelist and such other circumstances as may open the lettre'. The articles acknowledged that not all ministers then serving in the deanery had the same standards of education or the ability to speak knowledgeably on the scriptures, and so it was decided that the 'inferior sorte', identified by the moderators, should write down their thoughts on the text being studied and submit this to the moderators for their consideration. The moderators were also given some responsibility for the moral life of ministers in the deanery, being authorised by the articles to 'call before them any such of the ministers as they shall thinke mete and them to reprehende yf they see cause or otherwise to enforme them yf any mysdemeanor ether in lyef or negligence in Studye'. The venue for the first of the prophesying meetings was to be St Mary's church in Sandwich, and the meetings were to take place on the first Tuesday of the month.⁷² Richard Spicer was appointed to be the moderator of this Sandwich meeting.

It is not clear to what extent these prophesyings were intended to involve lay men and women or whether they were a private activity for the local clergy. Peter Iver Kaufman argued that in 'the public phase, a few sermons delivered consecutively on the same passage of Scripture, drew large crowds on market-day mornings'. There is no mention of a public phase in the articles for Sandwich, and since market days were Wednesdays and Saturdays in Sandwich, not Tuesdays, the large crowds spoken of by Kaufman may not be relevant in this case.⁷³ Although these meetings were short-lived due to Elizabeth's disapproval, the fact that Sandwich was selected to be the centre for east Kent underlines the reputation of the town as a place where Protestantism had become consolidated amongst numbers of the population from an early date. Spicer remained in the parish until 1575 when he returned to his native Somerset, but the radical Protestant direction of the parish continued for the rest of the century under the leadership of George Joye who combined his incumbency of St Peter's with that of St Clement's.

⁷² Ibid., p. 86.

⁷³ Peter Iver Kaufman, 'Prophesying Again', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, 68 (1999), pp. 337-358 (p. 338).

As at St Peter's, St Clement's also saw a distinct change in outlook of the vicar from the end of the sixteenth century. By the time of Joye's death in 1600, the patron of the benefice was no longer Edmund Freake but Charles Fotherby in his role as archdeacon of Canterbury. Fotherby instituted three men to the parish, Peter Symons, William Hull and Francis Fotherbye, none of whom continued with the radical leadership which had been established since the accession of Elizabeth. William Hull was one of the Six Preachers but his impact on the parish was negligible since he died within months of his institution. Of Peter Symons, the first of the three, little can now be said about his theology. In terms of the everyday, the *Detecta* show him to have shown little concern for the fabric of the buildings during the sixteen years of his incumbency. He was presented in 1607 for his failure to repair both the chancel and the vicarage house. The churchyard was also in a state of decay, with pigs allowed to dig up the ground, the fence having been broken down in several places and clothes were being washed and spread out to dry on it to the great annoyance of many.⁷⁴ There were also allegations of moral decay when in 1614 the mayor and jurates intervened to complain to the Lord Warden that Symons was hiring out his vicarage house to whores and thieves.⁷⁵ In addition to the physical and moral decay, the impression given is that there was an accompanying religious decay, or at least division and dissatisfaction with his leadership amongst some in the parish. Large numbers of people began to absent themselves from services at this time, as happened at St Peter's during the incumbency of Harim White. It may be significant that in 1603 the churchwardens emphasised the fact that the list of people being presented for not taking communion was 'as our mynister saythe' suggesting they may have been trying to distance themselves from the presentments.⁷⁶ There was certainly division between the churchwardens and the minister during this time. In 1607 Symons presented the churchwardens, John Amye and William Griffin, for allowing the burial of John Burfoot in the church yard even though he had been excommunicated for his non-attendance at communion.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ X.2.5, part 3. fol. 17.

⁷⁵ John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, (Oxford, 1824), p. 703.

⁷⁶ X.2.5, part 3. fol. 18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 124.

Whereas the majority of the presentments for non-attendance give no indication as to the reasons why people were absenting themselves, in 1609 William Talbot of St Clement's was presented 'for that he gooth to private meatinges as prayer or some other exercises but whether wee knowe not'.⁷⁸ It is significant that, in contrast to the example of William Ellwood at St Peter's, in this case the presentment makes it clear that Talbot was not attending his parish church, so that this action suggests separation from, rather than in addition to, established church services. Talbot eventually did separate from the church and by 1619 he was living in the Leiden community with Masterson and others from the town.

The divisions within St Clement's became more acute during the incumbency of Francis Fotherby from 1618 until his ejection from the parish in 1642. As with White, there were accusations that his lifestyle did not conform to the high standards that were expected of all Christians. Suspected of being overly fond of drink, in 1621 he was presented for 'particularly and purposely impeaching a point of doctrine preached by Mr Richard Marston our late lecturer', arguing that a man could not be said to be drunk as long as he could get out of the way of a waggon, and thereby, according to the parishioners, encouraging the young people of the parish to drink as much as they liked 'as long as they could bear it away'.⁷⁹ The churchwardens also complained that they did have a Book of Canons and Fotherby did read from it, 'but when in reading he met with any canon that concerned his duty, he skippeth over it, and readeth it not'.⁸⁰ Eventually Fotherby appointed a curate, John Brooke, to serve the parish in his place while he devoted his attentions to his other parish of Lynstead in the deanery of Ospringe. Brooke's outlook is likely to have been more to the liking of some of the more outspoken members of the congregation; in 1622 he was presented for allowing the people to receive communion standing and that he did 'not advise them to kneel, neither publicly or privately'.⁸¹ His custom was also to baptise without the sign of the cross, and he was even prepared to baptise children from other parishes whose parents were of a similar attitude.

⁷⁸ Ibid., fol. 156r.

⁷⁹ de Sandwich, 'Some East Kent Parish History', p. 20.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 25.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 26.

St Mary's parish was not as badly affected by division as the other two. A key figure in the parish was Thomas Pawson who served from 1564 until his death in 1597. He was clearly an evangelical Protestant, refusing to conform in terms of clerical dress and the type of bread used for communion at both the 1569 and 1573 visitations.⁸² Little can be said about the three year incumbency of Humphrey Aleworth from 1597-1600, but from that date until 1624 the parish was served by another vicar who did not conform to the church's injunctions, Stephen Huffam. In 1622 William Ellwood applied to be allowed to worship in St Mary's parish, giving the reason that St Peter's was at that time in the possession of the Strangers. It is more likely that Ellwood was happier with Huffam's religious stance than that of his own minister, Harim White.⁸³

There are several factors which influenced the increased incidence of non-conformity and separatism within the town of Sandwich. Cranmer's earlier influence, the quality of parish leadership and the town's role as an active port were all significant. It is also likely that the existence of a very large community of religious refugees within the town was relevant to the nature of the Protestantism which existed after 1559. The next section will consider the influence of this Stranger community on the religious development of the town.

The Stranger Community

Just as in Canterbury, the size of the community of religious refugees who lived in the town during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was considerable, although the Sandwich community was established earlier and was significantly larger than at Canterbury. Again, as at Canterbury the town council took the initiative in the foundation of the community which was established at its invitation. In June 1561 it was agreed at a council meeting to send John Tysar and John Gilbert, two of the town's jurats, to London to negotiate with Roger Manwood in the drawing up of articles for the establishment of a Stranger community, and on the 6th July Elizabeth signed the letters patent giving permission for the Settlement to begin.⁸⁴ The articles allowed for between twenty and twenty five families of between ten and twelve people to make

⁸² Daeley, 'Parker', p. 276; X.2.5, fol. 26v, (1594).

⁸³ X.5.7, part 2. fol. 45.

⁸⁴ Sa/Ac4 (1552-1567), fol. 180v; SP/12/18 fol. 21.

the journey from London to settle in the town, envisaging, therefore, a community of around 250 people. The original agreement suited both parties. For the town it was hoped that the arrival of skilled textile workers would re-invigorate its ailing economy through the introduction of men of 'nowliche in sondrie handy craftes..... as the making of says, bay and other cloth w(hi)ch hathe not been usyd to be made in this o(u)r realme of Englande afore', and for the increasingly overcrowded London Stranger community it provided an alternative site for settlement, a site whose port was to provide a convenient point of departure for return journeys back and forth to the continent.⁸⁵ Throughout the history of the Stranger settlement in Sandwich the majority of the refugees were Dutch speaking Flemings with only small numbers of French speaking Walloons.

One of the more striking aspects of the Stranger community in Sandwich was its size. Although the London and Norwich communities of strangers had larger numbers than Sandwich, as a proportion of the native population the Sandwich community was the most significant. Despite the initial limit of no more than twenty-five families, by 1574 Marcel Backhouse has estimated that Sandwich was host to about 2400 Flemings and about 500 Walloons at a time when he estimated the native population to be only 1600. It was partly this increase in numbers which led to the transfer of several Walloon families to Canterbury in 1575. Over the period the numbers of the Stranger community fluctuated, with waves of new arrivals arriving as a result of increased persecution on the continent followed by periods when some felt the situation had stabilised sufficiently for them to return to their homes. This was particularly so during the 1580s and 1590s when difficult economic conditions in the country led to increased poverty within the town, and as a result greater attempts by the town council to extract more money from the Stranger community. Nevertheless, throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the size of the Sandwich community remained noteworthy.⁸⁶

As the numbers of refugees increased from the original twenty-five families during the later 1560s and 1570s, and as the Stranger community became a significant

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Backhouse, *Flemish and Walloon Communities*, p. 31.

physical presence within the town, it is not surprising that episodes of tension arose periodically between the two communities. In terms of economic activity, alongside the increase in numbers went an expansion of the trades being followed by the refugees despite the initial stipulation that the community was only to be made up of skilled craftsmen in the 'new draperies'. From a census of 1582 William Boys identified almost sixty different occupations amongst the Flemish population of the town, from apothecary and cobbler through to potter and wheelwright.

Whilst the textile industry remained the most common trade, it can be seen that twenty years after the initial settlement the Strangers were engaged in a wide variety of occupations across the town. Complaints to the Corporation were made in 1569, 1571, 1575, 1577 and 1578 by certain townsmen whose business interests had been affected by the increase in the number of Strangers, and in 1579 fines were issued to members of the Stranger community for trading contrary to regulations. In 1581 a major issue arose which prompted the intervention of the Privy Council. In that year the Privy Council wrote to Lord Cobham as Warden of the Cinque Ports asking him to investigate a complaint that the mayor and jurats had issued a decree which prohibited 'the said straungers, denizens and others, to kepe anie outward shoppe, nether inwardlie nor outwardlie to sell, barter, exchange or utter by retaile anie wares or marchaundizes by them made within the said towne or otherwise upon paine of forfeiting for everie weake xl^s'. Lord Cobham was also to investigate the accusation that the mayor, John Porredge, had forced entry into a number of homes to confiscate goods to cover the sum he claimed was owed in fines.⁸⁷ Some of the Stranger community were claiming that since they had become denizens they should be able to 'enjoy like liberties and freedome as other subjectes of this Realme doe or ought to doe'.⁸⁸ The result of the dispute was that those who were engaged in industries specified in the original Letters Patent or had been admitted to the freedom of the town or who were engaged in brewing or were joiners or artificers should be allowed to remain 'so long as they shall behave themselves honestly and dutifully as they ought to do', but others who were not so employed were required to leave the town. At this time it was very clearly laid out that those who were involved in the

⁸⁷ APC, Vol. 13 (1581-1582), p. 576.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 664.

‘making of sayes, bayes and suche like clothe or tapistrie as hathe not ben heretofore used to be made in this Realme’, and dependent trades, or were fishermen, could remain but even so the Strangers were forbidden to be ‘retailours or shopkeepers and especiallie not use the misteries of tailours, shomakers, cobblers, coopers, masons or bricklayers, bakers, blacksmithes, shipwrightes and cowekeepers’.⁸⁹

This is not to say that the relationship between the two communities was always problematic. The town council, having originally invited the refugees to settle, did periodically pass decrees to encourage Stranger business, mindful of the weakness of the town’s economy given the silting up of the haven, and aware of the impact that Stranger industry might make. For example, in 1564 it was agreed that Symons, one of the ‘dutch congregation might open his shopp & worke his sciens as a taylor in the same towne quyety w[i]th owt lett or denyal of the said taylors’.⁹⁰ Nevertheless it is clear that much of the tension between the two communities was the result of insecurity over economic activity, with the native English acting to protect their own businesses from competition and the Stranger community trying to maintain the best possible conditions given their foreign status within the town. The English businessmen may have wanted the Flemish expertise but they did not want to encourage any undue competition.

In addition to tension caused by fears of economic competition which were addressed by the involvement of the town council, there were also individual examples of aggression towards members of the community: for example, when four Englishmen broke into the house of a Flemish weaver and ‘made search for Dutch taylors supposed there to bee at work’.⁹¹ Nevertheless, such examples are fewer than might be expected given the presence of such a large refugee community. The surviving evidence suggests that tensions arose when business interests were perceived to be under threat but that otherwise the two communities were able to live side by side with some amity.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Sa/Ac 5 fol. 250v.

⁹¹ Sa/Ac 6 fol. 37.

Aside from economic matters it is less easy to identify the impact of the community on the town. The original families who moved to Sandwich in 1561 were said to be of good character. In August 1561, following the issue of the Letters Patent by the Queen the previous month, the Mayor and jurats wrote to the Dutch consistory in London requesting that they recommend suitable people to make the move to Sandwich who were 'approved men and knowen by your experience to be of suche honeste and quiet conversacon as you wold answere for and also of suche ablytie to sett aworke everye howseholder accordynge to faculty lymittid and prescribed'.⁹² On a visit in 1563 Archbishop Parker spoke approvingly of the impact of the refugees describing them as 'very godly on the Sabbath day and busy in their own work on week days and their quietness such as the maior and brethren had no cause of variance between themselves coming before them'.⁹³ Ten years later when Queen Elizabeth visited Sandwich members of the community were put on show in an attempt to impress the Queen with the impact of their contribution to the town's economic development. During the visit upon 'a scaffold made upon the wall of the scole howse yarde were dyvers chidren english and dutche to the number of cth or vi score all spyning of suche bay yarne, a thing well lyked both of her majestie and of the nobilletie and ladies'.⁹⁴

The Strangers of Sandwich lived side by side with the native population in ten out of the twelve wards, but in many respects they kept themselves separate from the native community. They were required to be members of the church congregation which, as in other Stranger communities which were settled in English towns, took responsibility for keeping discipline among its own members. When an individual refused to conform to that discipline the consistory would work with the town corporation to have the matter dealt with, as in the case of the 'eight notorious druncken Flemings which would not be reclaimed from their beastly drunckeness' who were banished from the town in 1584.⁹⁵ The Crown certainly believed that it was important in terms of control for all Strangers living in the town to be members of the church and from time to time a purge was ordered to expel any who did not belong.

⁹² Sa/SB3/58.

⁹³ Strype, *Matthew Parker*, p. 139.

⁹⁴ William Boys, *Collections*, p. 695.

⁹⁵ Robert Jager, *Custumal of Sandwich* (1634), p. 47

For example, in the troubles of 1582 the Privy Council intervened to order the mayor and jurats to make 'diligent serche and enquiry of all soche persons (not of the Church there established) and uppon notice to be given from the ministers and seniors of the said congregation to commaund the said persons to departe', and enjoined the mayor and jurats 'to be more diligent and carfull in the observacion therof then hertofore they have ben'.⁹⁶

From the Stranger side, too, discipline and control were seen to be important and the Sandwich consistory was active in over-seeing matters of morality within the community. It was expected that members of the congregation would not marry outside of the community. At a Colloquium of the refugee churches in 1576, for example, it was concluded that members of the Stranger communities across the country should only marry someone 'who upheld the true Christian doctrine'; that is, someone of the refugee community, and since large numbers had settled in Sandwich it would not have been difficult for the Sandwich Strangers to marry within their community. Clearly there was some intermingling of the two communities since in January 1560 one 'Van Hugorne, Fleming, and Agnes Haywood of late being founde and taken lyeng together in Sandw[hi]ch ffor whos beastly mysbehavyours they had received punyshem[en]t and for the better rule and order hereafter in the like to be established to the terror of others yt is further ordered and decreed by the said maior and jurats that the offenders aforesaid shall tomorrow in the markett tyme ride in a carte thorough the said towne and so to be banyshed the same towne'.⁹⁷ However, this seems to have been rare. From a study of extant parish registers between 1561 and 1599 Marcel Backhouse concluded that only one marriage between a Flemming and an English woman took place, when Henry Cornelly's son married Jane Gresson in May 1577.⁹⁸

Many of the refugee community did remain relatively poor, living just above subsistence level, but some individuals managed to rise above minimum levels to become respected members of the town. Some, such as Jan Carboneel (d. 1620) and Jacob de Meyer (d. 1594) were able to leave several hundred pounds at their deaths,

⁹⁶ APC, Vol. 13 (1581-1582), p. 664.

⁹⁷ Sa/Ac 4 (1552-1567), fol. 155.

⁹⁸ Backhouse, *Flemish and Walloon Communities*, p. 56.

leaving bequests totalling £700 and £200 respectively.⁹⁹ Some also left bequests to the native poor of the town, such as Jacob de Loye who bequeathed 10s to the English poor, Barnard Lente who left 20s to the poor of St Peter's parish and William Even who left £5 to the poor of St Mary's. Clearly, at least some of the Stranger community identified with the needs of the wider town in addition to those of their own tight-knit community.¹⁰⁰

In terms of the impact of the community on the religious development of the town it is reasonable to assume that, as a living example of reformed Protestantism existing side by side with the English population, at the very least the possibility of an effective alternative to the Elizabeth Settlement was evident to those inhabitants of the town for whom such matters were of interest. The tight discipline of the community members would have been apparent to the wider population, subject as they were to the authority of the countrywide Colloquium which met once a year, as well as on a day to day basis being subject to the discipline of the consistory. And since the community did not have their own place of worship but worshipped first in St Clements church and later at St Peter's, in this respect, too, a viable alternative to the Elizabethan Settlement was in evidence. The English inhabitants of the town were able to see a church successfully organised along presbyterian lines at a time when presbyterianism was not deemed to be an acceptable form of church government.

It is significant that there is evidence of radical ideology amongst some of the men who led the congregation in Sandwich.¹⁰¹ The town's port enabled members of the community to move relatively easily between England and the continent during the period of their exile. For example, Jacob de Buyzere, who originated in the Westkwartier region of Flanders, and who was assistant minister of the Dutch Refugee church in London in 1561, was sent to lead the Sandwich community later in that year. However, by 1566 he had returned to the Westkwartier where he became involved in the Iconoclastic Fury which was taking place there. By 1569 he was back in

⁹⁹ PRO, Prob 11/136, fol. 428v; PRC/2/6, fol. 296.

¹⁰⁰ PRO, Prob 11/68, fol. 201v; Prob 11/68, fol. 95v; Prob 11/84, fol. 234v.

¹⁰¹ The names that have been identified by Backhouse as serving as ministers in Sandwich are Jacob de Buyzere, Godfried van Wingen, Isbrand Balk, Christiaan van Wauwere and possibly also Nicolaes de Raet and Joannes Vijt, p. 47.

Sandwich.¹⁰² Backhouse has identified 289 Strangers who travelled to the town of Leiden between 1576 and 1625, some as a result of being ordered to leave the town, but some voluntarily. Leiden, as well as being an important textile centre, was also the home of a separatist Protestant community of English exiles to which several of Sandwich's radical Protestants moved in the early seventeenth century, such as Richard Masterson and Thomas Ellis. It is interesting to speculate on any interaction that might have taken place between the Stranger community and Sandwich's own radical Protestants during the later years of the sixteenth century and how this may have influenced individuals' decisions to separate from the established church. As early as 1564 a decree had been passed by the town council prohibiting any Dutchmen from disputing openly about religion, indicating that there had been concerns from an early date over the influence that the Strangers might have on the English community.¹⁰³

The authorities were certainly aware of the potential influence of the community on the native population, and there was clearly a fear that Anabaptism might become established within the town as a result of the existence of the refugees. The issue of baptism had been raised in 1571 by the town council when it was decreed that 'the dutch shall have their children baptized according to the order now here used under pain of banishment', and was taken up again in 1575 when a commission was appointed to look into 'sundry strangers born in the low countries who maintain the moste horrible and damnable error of anabaptists'.¹⁰⁴ It was feared that such beliefs might 'be spred in sundrie places of her majesty's realme where these straungers do inhabit, and so would dayly increse yf it be not in tyme crefully foresene and suppressed'.¹⁰⁵ As a result, a series of articles of orthodox belief were drawn up to which the minister and twenty five members of the Sandwich community subscribed on their own and the community's behalf.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Backhouse, *Flemish and Walloon Communities*, p 137.

¹⁰³ William Boys, *Collections*, p 690.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 691.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p 744.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* The articles were; 1. That Christ take fleshe of the substance of the virgin. 2. That the infants of the faithfull are to be baptized. 3. That it is lawfull for a christian to take an othe. 4. That a christian man may be a magistrat and beare the office of auctorite. 5. That it is lawfull for a christian magistrat to execute obstinate heretiques. 6. That it is lawful for a christian man to warre. 7. That it is lawfull for a

The numbers of Strangers inhabiting the town began to decline after the 1580s. Despite this, and despite the difficulties in quantifying the impact of the community on the religious development of the town, it is clear that as one of the factors affecting religious change, the community played an important part in the early consolidation of Protestantism within the town. The same could be said of the school which was founded in the town early in Elizabeth's reign, by the committed Protestant layman, Roger Manwood. As the next section will demonstrate, Manwood's Protestant beliefs were instrumental in defining the nature of the school which, in the early years of its foundation at least, was another useful tool in the propagation of the Protestant message within the town.

The role of the school in the consolidation of Protestantism

Until the suppression of the chantries in 1540 education in the town was provided by one of the priests of Thomas Ellis' chantry in St Peter's church. The last of these chaplains, Edmund Greene, who was appointed by Cranmer in 1534, was described by William Boys as a 'great beater-down of papistry', again underlining the influence of key Protestant individuals within the town during the early years of the Reformation.¹⁰⁷ Roger Manwood, someone who was instrumental in furthering the development of education within the town, was educated at the Thomas Ellis chantry school.¹⁰⁸ After the suppression of the chantries Greene was dismissed, and it is not clear how education was organised until the foundation of a free school in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. Roger Manwood, working with the mayor and jurats of the town, provided both money and court connections in order to get the project underway and to see it through to completion. In 1563 it was agreed that the mayor would organise a subscription from leading townsmen and this raised £286 7s 2d. At the same time Manwood agreed to endow the new school with sufficient lands to support the maintenance of the buildings and to provide a stipend of £20 for the minister. Archbishop Parker was a keen supporter of the idea of founding a new school. Having visited Sandwich, and having assured himself that all was in order there,

christian man to require the auctorite of the magistrat and of the lawe , that he may be delivered from wronge and restored to right. 8. That a christian man may lawfullie have propriety in his goodes, and not make them common; yet ought he accordinge to the rule of charitie to releve the nedie accordinge to his habilitie.

¹⁰⁷ William Boys, *Collections*, p. 841.

¹⁰⁸ Sybil M. Jack, 'Roger Manwood', *ODNB*.

he approached the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral to obtain a grant of land, and wrote to William Cecil to gain his support in obtaining a licence from the Queen.¹⁰⁹ The licence was granted in October 1563.

Contemporary attitudes towards Manwood were divided, with some people criticising him as a 'proud and cruel man who oppressed and deceived his neighbours, and who resorted to corruption and bribery to further his advance towards high legal office'.¹¹⁰ Richard Barrey who was lieutenant of Dover Castle wrote that 'five hundred in Kent would rejoice at his death'. However, he was also a committed benefactor to the town. The rules for the school as set out by Manwood emphasised the godly as well as the academic education that the scholars were to receive. Manwood decreed that every school day should begin at 6.30am with prayers, and that there should be more prayers as the scholars reconvened at one o'clock for the afternoon session. He also ordained that on every Sabbath and holy day the boys were to process from the school to the church with the master leading the way. Before setting off for the church the scholars were to pray together for 'the church, the realme, the prince, the estate of the towne, and the fownder and his posteritie'.¹¹¹ Manwood also suggested that each year, 'consideringe that vertewe and knowledge by praise and reward is in all estates maynteined and encreased', a disputation was to be organised. The town's ministers 'with one or two other of knowledge or more dwelling nigh' were to be the judges who were to identify the most worthy three boys who would then be rewarded by a pen of silver ranging from 2s 6d for the winner to 2s or 20d for second and third place respectively. The whole school was then to go to the church with the winners wearing a garland on their heads and the school body to 'saie or singe some convenient psalme or himpne, with collet having some convenient remembraunce'.¹¹²

Manwood was able to secure scholarships to both Oxford and Cambridge for deserving boys. In 1568, as joint executor with Richard Haywood to the will of Joane

¹⁰⁹ Bruce and Perowne, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, p. 188.

¹¹⁰ History of Parliament, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/manwood-roger-1532-92>

¹¹¹ William Boys, *Collections*, p. 229.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Trapps, he arranged for land in Whitstable to provide funds to send two scholars to Lincoln College, Oxford and a further two scholarships to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Later, in 1581 this was augmented by Manwood himself who provided money to fund a further two scholarships to Gonville and Caius College in Cambridge.

The records are not complete so it is not possible to be exact about who served in the role of master at the school. Manwood was keen that the men chosen to fill the roles of master and usher should themselves provide positive role models for the scholars, and no one was to be appointed who was a 'common gamester and haunter of taveryns' but 'in all points they owtghte to shewe themselves an example of honest, contynente and godlie behaviour'.¹¹³ It was to be hoped that on the vacancy of the mastership, two names would be presented from Lincoln College, one of whom would be chosen within twenty days by the governors, and should this not happen the archbishop of Canterbury should step in to make the nomination.¹¹⁴ However, despite Manwood's detailed provision for the stipend, the house, garden and orchard for the master and the very generous stipend of £10 for the usher from the will of Thomas Manwood, it is clear that securing the right man for the post was not trouble free. It is likely that the school buildings were completed by 1564 which is the date on the front wall of the Elizabethan building or, shortly afterwards, yet it is not possible to identify anyone holding the position of master or usher until the appointment of Richard Spicer in 1570. As has been noted, Spicer was appointed vicar of St Clement's in 1569, and although the patronage of the church was in the hands of the Bishop of Rochester, the patron on this occasion was Roger Manwood, indicating a personal relationship between the two men.¹¹⁵ It is probable that Spicer stepped in to fill the vacancy until a more permanent master could be found. In 1570 Manwood wrote to the mayor and jurats of Sandwich recommending a Mr Abselon from Canterbury, whom he described as 'especially comendyd by my lords grace of Canterbury his letters to be skole master of my gramer skole'.¹¹⁶ Manwood added that according to Parker 'for his conversion and skylfulnes in teaching he ys such a meet man as for that purpose hardly the lyke ys to be had'. Whatever his religious persuasion and his teaching skills, however, Abselon

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 225.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 201.

¹¹⁵ CCEd, 'Richard Spicer', Person ID: 59638.

¹¹⁶ William Boys, *Collections*, p 484.

stayed only two years. He was succeeded by Richard Knollys, an academic from Lincoln College Oxford who remained at the school for many years, but who was not always the most industrious of school masters. He is known as a historian and particularly for his writings on the history of the Turks, and it is possible that this took precedence to teaching during much of his time at the school. Knollys stated in the preface to his *Generall Historie of the Turkes* published in 1603 that he wished in his work to be 'profitable to the Christian commonweale which long since in my nursing mother's house, Lincolne Colledge in Oxford where I was sometime fellow, I did purpose to perform, as it should please God in time to give me means and occasion', and it could be that he was prepared to accept the post of school master in a town such as Sandwich not only because of the generous £20 stipend, but also in the belief that the role would provide the 'means and condition' for his own writing and study. Knollys secured the support of Peter Manwood, Roger's son and heir, whom he described as the 'first mover of me to take this great worke in hande and my continuall and onely comfort and helper therein'.¹¹⁷ Wood praised his abilities saying 'he did much good in his profession and sent many young men to the universities'.¹¹⁸ When he died in 1610 he is said to have left behind him 'the character of an industrious, learned and religious person' but it is possible that his literary interests distracted him from his school master duties, prompting criticism of his commitment to the school in the latter part of his career.¹¹⁹ For example, in 1602, Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, intervened in the question of the school in his role as Lord Warden of the Cinque ports and following his intervention the corporation minutes acknowledged that whilst he and they recognised that reformation of the school was necessary, 'Richard Knolles now master is found not to have intended the same with that diligence as was meet he should'. It was therefore decided 'for the better education of the youth of this town that a more industrious master should be appointed for the said school' but that since Knolles had been appointed by Roger Manwood, the founder, he should be provided with a pension of £12 a year after his dismissal.¹²⁰ It would seem that despite Knolles' description of his life in early seventeenth century Sandwich in the dedication to the

¹¹⁷ Richard Knollys, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes from the First Beginning of that Nation to the Rising of the Ottoman Familie* (1603), Sig. A.iii.

¹¹⁸ Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis*, Vol. II, p. 80.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹²⁰ John Cavell and Brian Kennett, *A History of Sir Roger Manwood's School, Sandwich* (1963), p. 271.

Historie of the Turkes as ‘a world of troubles and cares, in a place that afforded no means or comfort to proceed in so great a work’, he was nevertheless reluctant to leave, since in July 1606 he was again being offered £12 if he would leave the school by Michaelmas.

It is unclear when Knollys did, in fact, leave but CCEd indicates that a Peter de Thoor was teaching at the school from 1614, and by 1622 Christopher Chalfont had been appointed to the position. Chalfont fulfilled the role until his death in 1637. Unfortunately, after 1625 the earlier problems with finding a suitable school master became significantly worse. After this time Peter Manwood’s heir, John, stopped paying the master’s stipend altogether and despite a Commission of Inquiry set up in 1633 by Archbishop William Laud, it seems that the arrears were never paid.¹²¹ Thus, despite the considerable efforts of Roger Manwood and the mayor and townspeople during the 1560s, it would seem that the school struggled to provide the kind of godly education that had initially been envisaged. This apathy in the early years of the seventeenth century contrasted with the lively and contentious religious atmosphere within the wider town.

In terms of the early and widespread conformity within the town, it is clear that throughout the period the attitude of the town corporation was significant. In 1563 Thomas Becon, Marian exile, Canon of Canterbury Cathedral and vicar of Sturry in Kent, dedicated his *Demands of Holy Scripture* to the mayor and Jurats of the town of Sandwich describing them as ‘true, faithful and godly philosophers.’ Their godly rule of the town, he said, had led to a community where ‘the word of God raigneth, ruleth and triumpheth’ and where diligent preaching was received with great joy by the people of the town, whose hearts had been primed to receive and believe the message.¹²² While Becon may have been over-stating the joy with which some elements of the town population viewed the re-introduction of Protestantism after 1559, there would nevertheless seem to be some truth in his comment. As will be demonstrated below, the support of the corporation should be seen as another

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 50.

¹²² Becon, *Demaundes of Holy Scripture*, sig. Aii. V.

important factor in the development and consolidation of Protestantism in Sandwich following the death of Queen Mary.

The Town Corporation

In his consideration of the religious development of Sandwich Peter Clark noted the conflict that the town experienced in the 1560s and 1570s, which he linked to the 'conservative, introspective magisterial cliques'.¹²³ He further suggested that the rise in separatism of the later sixteenth century 'appears to have come into its own as a consequence of the conflict in the 1590s between the townsfolk and the civic oligarchy.' There was some conflict, but it is possible that Clark has overstated the significance of this; as has been indicated here, the rise in non-conformity can be traced to a variety of factors affecting the town and there is reason to take a more favourable view of the role of the civic authorities in the introduction and consolidation of Protestantism within the town, particularly in the early years of Elizabeth's reign.

As with the town's ministers, there is evidence of continuity of Protestant belief amongst some of the town's civil leaders during the reign of Mary Tudor. Simon Lynch, for example, who served as jurat between 1549 and 1554, and again between 1557 and 1565, and was mayor in 1560, was chosen to represent Sandwich along with John Perrott at Mary's first parliament in 1553, during which time he opposed legislation for the re-introduction of Catholicism. In December of that year, despite having already been designated the next mayor, a letter sent from the Privy Council suggesting that such an election would be contrary to 'good order and law' resulted in the election of John Tysar in his place. It is significant, however, that his lack of support for the re-introduction of Catholicism in 1553 did not have a long-lasting effect and he was chosen again in March 1554 to represent the town in Parliament.¹²⁴ Lynch was elected mayor in 1560 and it was during his mayoralty that the initial steps were taken for the establishment of the Stranger community in town. Other examples could be cited,

¹²³ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 178.

¹²⁴ History of Parliament Online, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/linch-simon-1521-74>.

such as John Seers, one of the town's jurats during Mary's reign whose will written in September 1558 displayed a Protestant religious outlook.

The mayor and jurats were instrumental in securing the foundation of the school in 1563. At a council meeting in the spring of that year ' it was moved by ye seyde maior (Henry Butler) what a godly acte & worthie of memorye yt shuld be to make & fowend a free scoole w[i]t[h]in this towen for the godly educacon of children in the knowledge & feare of god.'¹²⁵ In order to support the project, Simon Lynch, jurat, promised to contribute £20 and seven of the remaining jurats promised £10 each. It was during the planning for the foundation of the school that Archbishop Parker visited the town, which he described in glowing praise:

Though the morning was very foul and rainy, yet I found the mayor and his jurats ready at the town-gate to accompany me to my lodging, and so to the church, being men of honest civility, and comely grave personages of good understanding..... their service sung in good distinct harmony and quiet devotion; the singing men, being the mayor and the jurats, with the head men of the town, placed in the quire fair and decent, in so good order as I could wish. My auditory great and attentive to hear and also to understand the Queen's pleasure in publication of the general prayer and fast.¹²⁶

It would seem that members of the town had made an effort to present a positive image for the Archbishop's visit.

During the early years of Elizabeth's reign, the town council can be seen working in co-operation with the church towards the consolidation of Protestantism. For example, in October 1561 it was ordered that no m[er]channte Inhabiting w[i]tin this town hereafter do open ther shopp wyndowes to sell ther wares or m[er]chandizes on the sondayes for asmoche as it is contrary to the lawes of Almightye god & the lawes of this realme savyng onely two bouchers every sondaie maye open ther shoppes & sell their flesh untill the bell be reinge twyse to the mornynge s[er]vice upon payne that every offender to paie for a fyne to the use of this towne 10s.'¹²⁷ The council involved

¹²⁵ Sa/Ac5 fol. 226v.

¹²⁶ Bruce and Perowne, *Parker*, p. 189.

¹²⁷ Sa/Ac5 fol. 182v.

itself in the moral behaviour of the town, as in September 1559 when eight of the town's inhabitants were collectively fined 30s 4d for 'playing of unlawful games of dyce', or in 1561 when John See was fined £10 by the council for that he 'obstinately and disobiently hath kept a naughty adowterous woman not being married to her.'¹²⁸ There is a clear contrast here between the attitude of the Sandwich corporation and those members of the Canterbury corporation who were involving themselves in the 'idolatrours' midsummer bonfires so disliked by reformers such as John Bale.

The Council can also be seen playing a part in the choice and maintenance of the town's ministers. Holding the right to appoint to the vicarage of St Peter's alternately with the Crown, the Council chose Thomas Pett in 1566, William Bonham in 1573 and John Stibbing in 1577. Little can be said about William Bonham, but the other two appointments both show an unmistakable preference for men who had adopted reformed Protestantism, both being accused of non-conformity during their time at Sandwich. However, the Council's concern was not limited to St Peter's church, and steps were taken to ensure that all three of the town's ministers were adequately supported in order for them to be able to carry out their duties effectively. In December 1563 because the 'lyvenge of the preachers & mynisters in this towen ys very small and yet the same also unc[er]teyne and also the devosyon and good wylles of maynye inhabyting in this seyd towen ys not only gretly decayed but al most cleane extinquyshed in the mayntenance & supportyng of their lyvinges' the Council decided that an extra tax would be raised to ensure an adequate income.¹²⁹ It is significant that at this early date the Council is referring to both ministers and preachers, indicating the importance of preaching in the town at this time. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the town was served by more conservative ministers, the corporation set aside the sum of £30 for the appointment of a town lecturer.

The corporation worked to support the church authorities in eradicating residual Catholic belief. In May 1565 Anthony Robinson, a tailor, appeared before the council accused of uttering seditious words against the church. He was accused of saying that he 'trusted to se the lawes turne shortelye & to see masse' and in the

¹²⁸ Sa/Ac5, fols 146 and 178.

¹²⁹ Sa/Ac4, fol. 238.

meantime since the mass was unavailable to him at home he could easily travel to Flanders to hear it said there. He confidently asserted that he was not alone in wanting to hold to the Catholic faith, saying that 'I am suer themost p[ar]te of the nobillitie and all the northe contrey do holde w[i]th yt & do kepe yt still and they will not have it putt downe.'¹³⁰ The council ordered that as punishment for his words he was to parade through the market on the coming Saturday with a paper on his head and then be banished from the town for ever. Should he ever return he would be put in the pillory and his ears would be cut off. In addition to the active support of the corporation, this incident demonstrates the significance of the town's port. Not only did it provide access for persecuted Protestants from the continent to find safe haven in England, but it also provided a means of escape for English men and women who were struggling to accept the re-introduction of Protestantism after 1559. At the same meeting of the council it was decided that a woman who was accused of witchcraft was to receive the same punishment, and after parading through the market advertising her crime was to be banished from the town.

It is significant that by the early seventeenth century the Privy Council was criticising the town corporation not only for demonstrating insufficient energy and enthusiasm in dealing with the issue of separatism, but that members of the corporation including the mayor may even have been supportive of the separatists. In a letter of October 1614, the Privy Council wrote:

Yow that hold the place of maior in that towne have ben too remisse and carelesse, if otherwise not a maintainer and faviourer of such ill affected persons, [therefore] we have thought meete hereby seriously to admonish yow for the future to be more vigillant and carefull in this behalf and to give better prooffe and testimony as well of your affeccion and indeavor for the suppressing and correcting of such sectaristes..... as in favouring and assisting this bearer together with the ministers of that place against any Brownist or sectary.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Ibid., fol. 282.

¹³¹ APC, Vol. 33, (1613-1614), p. 615.

Conclusion

In the seventeenth century when town clerk Robert Jager published a copy of the customs of the town it recorded that during the mayoral year of John Manwood (1558-9) 'all the roods and images [were] burnt.'¹³² Although it is difficult to verify the accuracy of this statement, which is added in a different hand to Jager's manuscript, the evidence shows that Protestantism was certainly established early in Elizabeth's reign and that a strong tradition of radical belief grew in the town as the sixteenth century progressed. There were several factors which contributed to this: firstly, there was a robust history of Protestantism before the accession of Elizabeth. Whereas both Canterbury and Sandwich were affected by Archbishop Cranmer's reforming attentions in the early years of the Reformation, the results of this were very different in the two towns. The two towns were singled out by Foxe as having received Cranmer's attentions:

Then brought they agaynst hym a new kynd of accusation, and caused Syr Iohn Gostwike Knight, a man of a contrary Religion, to accuse the Archbishop openly in the Parliament house, laying to his charge his Sermons preached at sandwich, and his lectures red at Caunterbury, wherin should be contened manifest heresies agaynst the Sacrament of the aaltar. &c. which accusation came to the kinges eare.¹³³

At Canterbury the early preaching campaigns led to dispute, division and confusion. At Sandwich, in contrast, it would seem that the solidly Protestant foundations laid down in the early years of the Reformation were not seriously weakened in the five years of Mary's reign. This contributed to the rapid re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism following Elizabeth's accession, and eventually to a tradition of separatism later in the century. This suggests that the receptiveness of the population is an important factor in determining the path that religious change was to take and indeed, by the beginning of the seventeenth century there is evidence of congregations demanding higher standards from their ministers. Secondly, the community of Dutch and French Protestants which settled in Sandwich was very large, and while it is difficult to specify the impact in terms of religion, the presence of so

¹³² CP/Z4, p. 95.

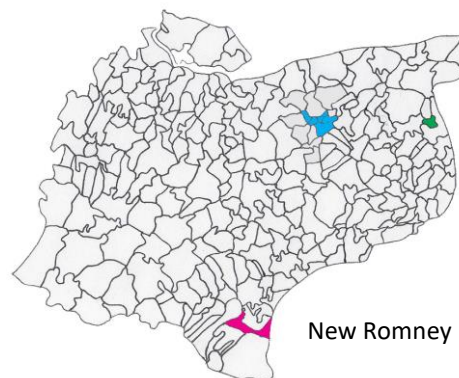
¹³³ John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1570 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 10.03.3017], p. 2080.

many refugees will have not only been a constant reminder of the dangers of Catholicism but the community also served as a living example of Presbyterianism at work. In addition, the opportunity for regular travel backwards and forwards to mainland Europe by inhabitants of the town, strong leadership at parish level and sympathetic leadership from the town corporation, were all significant. These factors show that, in contrast to claims of a slow and painful reformation experienced in other towns across England, the reformation in Sandwich was both fast and comparatively unproblematic.

‘Sometime a good, sure and commodious port’: The town of New Romney¹

Introduction

The chapters on Canterbury and on Sandwich have indicated the complexity of people’s responses to religious change in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Both towns were relatively close geographically, but their distinctive characteristics, history and culture, resulted in quite different reformation experiences. The same is true of the third of the areas which form the focus of this study, the town of New Romney which was situated on Romney Marsh to the south of the diocese.² There are points of similarity between the three towns, but it is the points of difference which contributed to the variance in the ways in which Protestantism was first adopted and then consolidated within the three communities. New Romney and Sandwich, in particular, had a number of similarities; both were key members of the Cinque Ports Confederation stretching back to the early middle ages, both are sited at the periphery of the diocese and both were experiencing serious economic difficulties by the sixteenth century due to the silting up of their harbours. Despite this, both communities responded to religious change in very different ways, and the ready acceptance of Protestantism at Sandwich was not replicated in the town of New Romney. By the later sixteenth century Protestantism could be described as well consolidated within the town, but this had happened less quickly and less smoothly, and conservative attitudes remained through the sixteenth century and beyond. At the time of Elizabeth’s accession there were two towns on Romney Marsh, Lydd and New Romney. Although by this time New Romney’s pre-eminence was being challenged by the town of Lydd, it was still considered to be the head town of the



Map 7: Location of New Romney

¹ Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, p. 178.

² The town lies twenty miles from Canterbury, just over twenty-six from Sandwich and fifty-nine from London as the crow flies.

marsh and still played a prominent role within the Cinque Ports Confederation and so of the two towns the decision has been taken to focus on New Romney.

It might be supposed that as a port town New Romney would be open to new ideas and might have accepted the change from Protestant to Catholic quickly and willingly. However, there are several reasons why in fact Protestantism was consolidated more slowly in New Romney compared to either Canterbury or Sandwich. Although it had been a busy port, by the mid-sixteenth century this was no longer the case and poor road links meant that communications with the rest of the diocese were difficult. New Romney had not been the recipient of the reforming attentions of Archbishop Cranmer earlier in the century, and was not influenced by the existence of a Stranger community as were Canterbury and Sandwich. The town did benefit from strong parish leadership, but perhaps the most important factor influencing the nature of the town was the geography of the area. It will be argued that the development of Protestantism within the town needs to be set within an understanding of the nature of the environment since this played a significant role in determining the customs and mentalities of the people who lived on the marsh and therefore the course which the Reformation was to take. Whereas the coastal position of Sandwich to the east of the diocese led to an outward-looking attitude concerning religious change, with the town's port leading to a significant exchange of people and ideas from across the English Channel, at New Romney this was not the case. In contrast, New Romney's position, on the marsh and close to the coast led to an ever-present sense of threat, not only that the area might be regarded as a potential site for an invading army but even in terms of the landscape itself which was constantly subject to the threat of flooding from both rivers and the sea. As the forces of nature took control, land appeared and disappeared over the course of time and this, it is argued, influenced the identity of the communities which existed on the marsh. As a result of the liminal nature of the environment, the marshes were more self-contained and inward-looking than either Canterbury or Sandwich discussed above.

As with Canterbury, it has been suggested that New Romney was a conservative town. The first part of this chapter will assess the evidence for this, acknowledging that there were certainly examples of conservative attitudes, but also arguing for an interpretation which takes greater account of complexity of the

situation. The second part of the chapter will examine the consolidation of Protestantism within the town and hints at growing non-conformity by the last quarter of the sixteenth century. By this time the consolidation of Protestantism was being influenced by the existence of radical views in the wider area and by the appointment of Henry Stafford as vicar in 1576. An examination of wills proved during the 1590s corroborates this view. Nevertheless, conservative attitudes remained strong throughout the sixteenth century and are evident into the early years of the seventeenth century.

Although the area of Romney Marsh has attracted some attention by historians, and various general histories have been published, very little has been written about the religious development of the area. For example, following a general history written by William Holloway in 1849, several books have been published directed towards a popular market. The unique nature of the landscape was recognised in 1985 with the formation of the Romney Marsh Group, which two years later evolved into the Romney Marsh Research Trust. The aim of the Trust was to research and make available the history, archaeology and landscape-history of the area, and, although the Trust was wound down in 2012, several volumes were published which brought a number of these articles together in one place.³ These articles are also still available on the website.⁴ The bulk of this research concerns the history of the landscape and how this has changed from earliest times, with a significant minority of publications devoted to the medieval period, particularly to the ways in which the changing environment has influenced human settlement. A very small number of articles on the website refer to the Early Modern period, although, again, often with the main focus on the environment and landscape.

New Romney's civic archive is relatively good. A small number of extracts from this archive have been published in a volume by M. Teichman-Derville, who has also published a more detailed account of the political development of the area in *The Level and Liberty of Romney Marsh*. As the head town of the Cinque Ports

³ Jill Eddison, *Romney Marsh: Evolution, Occupation, Reclamation* (Oxford, 1988); Jill Eddison, *Romney Marsh: The Debatable Ground* (Oxford, 1995); Jill Eddison, *Romney Marsh: Survival on a Frontier* (Stroud, 2000).

⁴ <http://rmrt.org.uk/>

Confederation New Romney has attracted some attention, such as Margaret Bentnall's *Cinque Ports and Romney Marsh* published in 1972. These publications focus on the political, military and environmental history of the town. This chapter will take the scholarship forward by examining the religious history of the town.

In addition to the civic records, as with the case studies for Canterbury and Sandwich, the principal primary sources for this chapter are the returns from the archdeacons' visitations, plus a sample of wills. New Romney was an exempt parish and, whereas regular archidiaconal visitations still took place, the survival rate is not quite as good as the returns which have survived for Canterbury and Sandwich.⁵ Nevertheless, there are survivals which cover the whole of the period and this has constituted a valuable source of evidence for identifying changing attitudes at the local level. In terms of the wills which have been consulted, as with Sandwich, the sample consists of two snapshots, the first containing wills proved between 1558 and 1563 with the aim of attempting to identify the tenor of belief in the parish around the time of Elizabeth's accession, and a second snapshot from the 1590s to identify the extent to which Protestantism had become consolidated in the town by the end of the sixteenth century.

The environment

Traditionally, marshlands were seen as desolate places, remote and abandoned by God, a perception which may have influenced the siting of a number of religious houses in the area during the middle ages.⁶ It is to be noted that the landscape here, much of which lies below sea level, was not stable and there were periods when a great deal of effort was expended in constructing ditches and walls to protect the land from flooding, and times when considerable efforts were directed towards the reclamation of new land. Despite such significant effort put into managing the landscape, there were times when the ferocity of the weather could not be resisted. This was the case, for example, with the storms of the thirteenth century, particularly that of 1287 when not only was the town itself badly flooded and covered with

⁵ The missing years are: 1558-1559, 1563-1567, 1573-1577, 1583-1587, 1598, 1601, 1609-1614, 1618-1625.

⁶ Luke Barber and Greg Priestley-Bell, *Medieval Adaptation, Settlement and Economy of a Coastal Wetland: The Evidence from around Lydd, Romney Marsh, Kent* (Oxford, 2008), p. 299.

sediment, silt and debris which was never entirely removed, but far more significantly for future developments within the town, the storm altered the course of the river Rother. This led to the silting up of the haven, which no efforts were able to halt, so that the 'good, sure and commodious port' quoted at the beginning of this chapter had long gone by the time of Elizabeth's accession. In this respect, the problems experienced by New Romney were similar to those of Sandwich, but whereas Sandwich was still operating as a busy port in the sixteenth century, albeit with limits on the size of the ships which could dock, at New Romney by the sixteenth century there was no longer a port to operate. John Leland's account, written in the early 1540s illustrates the problem. Romney, he wrote:

is one of the v portes, and hath bene a metely good haven, yn so much that withyn remembrance of men shyppes have cum hard up to the towne and cast ances yn one of the chyrch yarges. The se ys now a ii myles fro the towne so sore therby now decayed that where ther wher iii great paroches and chirches sumtyme, is now scant one wel mayteined.⁷

Geography also played a large part in the political aspects of the town's development, its location constantly presenting threat as well as opportunity. There was a long history of fear that an invasion of the country could come through the marsh. As far back as 1066 it was reported that men from Romney had successfully repulsed a number of William of Normandy's troops, thereby forcing them to travel round the coast to Pevensey before engaging with Harold at the Battle of Hastings. For this reason, since the early middle Ages, the town had been a key member of the Cinque Ports Confederation which was established as a means to defend the coast from potential attack. As with Sandwich, membership of this confederation conferred on the town a range of economic and legal privileges from the Crown in exchange for agreeing to provide ships for the country's defence of the coastline. This also meant that from early in its history the town was given the right to govern itself, with a bailiff who was appointed by the archbishop as lord of the manor, and twelve jurats who were elected by the entire commonalty of the town. In return for these privileges New

⁷ Thomas Hearne, ed., *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary, Vol. 7* (1744), p. 133.

Romney was obliged to contribute five ships, each of which was to have the complement of twenty-one men and one boy.

Despite its decline, New Romney was still able to maintain its position as head town of the Confederation and it continued to be the location for the meetings of the Confederation's two representative assemblies each year, the *brodhull* and the *guestling*. This was likely to have been because of its position between the Kent and Sussex members of the Confederation rather than any intrinsic merit of the town itself. It is possible that the decline contributed to a sense of insecurity among the town's leaders and this encouraged them to be even more determined to guard their privileges throughout the period, not only as head town of the Confederation, but also as the head town of the marsh. In 1563 the town was granted a new charter by Elizabeth, replacing the bailiff and giving the town the right to choose its own mayor to be elected by the jurats and the commonalty. Notwithstanding this extension of its privileges, however, it is clear that by the middle of the sixteenth century New Romney was struggling to maintain its position.

The area remained of strategic importance. In the summer of 1588, a letter to Burghley stated that there was every possibility that this area could be chosen as the site of the Spanish invasion:

the place of descent for the Spanish army should seem by most advices to be in some part of Scotland; others say in the west of Ireland; some say at Sandwich, others fear Romney Marsh, where the landing is easy, the ground full of cattle and horse, and with small labour made guardable for a time.⁸

By 1588 New Romney was struggling to provide the requisite number of ships for the Crown in the face of the expected Spanish invasion and this led to friction with the nearby town of Lydd. By this time Lydd was both more wealthy and more populous than New Romney. In that year a letter was written to the local gentleman, Thomas Scot, among others, asking them that, since the inhabitants of Lydd were 'nowe of farre greater wealth and habilitye then those of Newe Rumney and will not make other contribucion with the said towne then they have ben accustomed', inhabitants of the

⁸ SP 84/24, fol. 206.

town might be encouraged to reassess their contribution 'according to their abilytyes and not as in tymes past or to anie accustomed composition between the Portes and Members'.⁹

The town's decline can also be identified with respect to its churches. As Leland had reported, during the middle ages it had supported five churches, but by the beginning of the reign of Edward VI this had been reduced to just one, that of St Nicholas. Originally the church had been part of the possessions of Pontiniac Abbey in France, but the parsonage and advowson of the vicarage had been in the hands of All Souls College in Oxford since the reign of Henry VI. It was not a lucrative parish, worth only £6 16s in the *Valor Ecclesiastus*, and it was not very populous. The Parker Certificates reported in 1563 that the parish was comprised of just seventy households.

Evidence of conservatism.

It is within this context of decline that the town's religious development should be seen. Jealously guarding its historical privileges, aware of the potential dangers of foreign attack and conscious of its vulnerability in the face of the forces of nature, the town became inward looking. Although the traditional historiography suggests that Protestantism was quickly and willingly accepted by communities in the south east of England, there is some evidence that this may not have been the case for New Romney. Certainly, in comparison with Sandwich the differences seem to be clear. Thus, in 1563 when Archbishop Matthew Parker visited the town of Sandwich, his report of the town contained in a letter to William Cecil of August of that year indicates a place of religious harmony, with the town corporation working co-operatively with local Protestants in the re-introduction of Protestantism. At the service he attended he found the 'singing in good, distinct harmony and quiet devotion, the singing men being the mayor and the jurats with the head men of the town, placed in the quire fair and decent and in so good order as I could wish'. He deputed the minister of the town, who he described as a 'grave and learned man', to 'exercise ecclesiastical censures' although 'hitherto little has been spied'.¹⁰ Whereas

⁹ APC, Vol. 16 (1588), p. 54

¹⁰ Bruce and Perowne, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, p. 189.

Parker saw the people of Sandwich 'laudably behaving themselves' and reported the 'joy which I have here by them in this outward corner of my diocese', at the same time in New Romney the community were busily engaged in the re-introduction of their passion play. This has been regarded as a clear indication of the conservative attitudes that remained within the town. Indeed, whereas most medieval passion plays across the country had been suppressed earlier in the century, the New Romney play was still being performed as late as 1568, a fact which is seen by some to illustrate a clear unwillingness to embrace the Protestant religion following the accession of Elizabeth. Peter Clark, for example, has described the community's production of the play as 'emphatically restating the community's belief in the old order', and has suggested that the plays 'restored under Mary were a major focus for continuing conservative activity in East and mid Kent into the 1560s'.¹¹

There had been a suggestion as early as 1517 that perhaps the town should think carefully about the appropriateness of staging such a play when the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Sir Edward Poynings, contacted the town corporation to demand caution. The accounts record:

Paid on the 25th day of May to a serjeant of the Lord Warden, who then brought a mandate to the Barons of New Romene here that they ought not to play the play of the Passion of Christ until they had had the King's leave etc 9d.¹²

Nevertheless, the play continued. The records are not complete and so it is not possible to say whether the performances did stop, but there are references in the accounts to expenses for the play in 1539, and in the 1540s and 1550s.¹³ The accounts for 1560 are exceptionally detailed and provide a very full picture of the scale of the production. These show that a great deal of effort was expended by a large number of people on the play, inhabitants of the town as well as many people from the surrounding towns and villages. The 1560 accounts list one hundred and three individuals as being involved in either the costumes, the props, dealing with the money

¹¹ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, pp. 98 and 154.

¹² Historic Manuscripts Commission Fifth Report p. 553.

¹³ James M. Gibson ed., *Records of Early English Drama: Kent, Diocese of Canterbury*, Vol. 2 (Toronto, 2002), p. lix.

or as performers.¹⁴ Members of the town's elite and of the corporation were heavily involved. Each year playwardens were chosen to oversee the procedures; in 1560 these included two jurats, Robert Kennet and Thomas Etheyrck, plus two wealthy citizens, John Parker and Richard Godfrey. In February of that year sixty of the town's male inhabitants met together in the church to plan the play, most of them promising to devote two or three days to work on it and/or to contribute money, usually in the form of a loan. Not everyone displayed the same level of enthusiasm to become involved and Mr Cheeseman, for example, a burgess who was to become the town's first mayor in 1563, contributed 20s 'so that he be not charged with any thinge or any offyce touchinge the play'.¹⁵ Rehearsals took place within the church, 6d being given to Lawrence Fane for beer provided for the rehearsal of the 31st March.¹⁶ Tight control seems to have been exerted over the proceedings. On the 13th May, for example, the Jurats' Record Book recorded that 'every man that is here appoynted to buylde the stages neglectyng & not doynge his duytie in buyldynge the same at such tyme as shalbe appoynted by master Baylif & jurates shall lose forfeyt & paye to thuse of the towne xxs'.¹⁷

Where items could not be provided locally men were dispatched to Canterbury and to London to procure what was needed. Thus, 10s was paid in London 'for our playe ffyrst iiii beardes & heares for the bane cryers & a heare & beard for the ffoole'.¹⁸ More locally, neighbouring towns were not only involved in providing props but also in the financing of the production. For example, Lydd provided 'Copes and Vestures', and also lent 10s towards the production. The village of Ivychurch lent 3s 4d, all of which was later repaid from the money made from the performances.¹⁹ The play was advertised in the area, 2d, for example, being paid to 'Dodd to proclayme our playe at Heithe'.²⁰ We know that for an earlier production in 1556, perhaps with

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 782; Jurats Record Book NR/JB7, fol. 40.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 786.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 793.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 791.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 785.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 787.

earlier prohibitions in mind, someone was sent to the Lord Warden 'to have his good wyll touching our play'.²¹ The Lord Warden by this date was Sir Thomas Cheyney.

The play books no longer exist so it is not possible to be completely sure of exactly what was being performed, but because the accounts are so detailed, including lists of the characters involved, it is possible to piece together the likely content. Gibson has suggested that there were four plays, the first dealing with key episodes in Jesus' ministry taken from the gospel of John: his baptism, his meeting with the woman of Samaria, the healing of the blind man, the raising of Lazarus and the triumphal entry. The second play depicted the arrest and trial of Jesus, the third Jesus' death and descent into hell. The fourth depicted the resurrection and ascension. In summary, the 'numerous hints about the passion play's content, structure, and staging drawn from the surviving New Romney records, then, reveal a fully developed passion play performed on fixed staging, dramatizing scenes from Christ's baptism to his ascension, and probably based on the Gospel of John'.²²

The play was clearly very popular, not only amongst the inhabitants of the town itself, but also in the local area. In 1560 the receipts from the first play were £12 5s 6d, from the second play £6 10s 9 ½ d, from the third play that year £4 9s and from the fourth play 42s 6 ½ d.²³ The large numbers of people involved suggests that the production was not the result of a small clique of conservatively-minded individuals. Whilst the driving force behind the productions were the wealthy and the powerful of the town right up until the last production in 1568, the numbers of people involved in producing the play and the huge numbers who came to see the performances demonstrate that the entertainment was very popular among many of those living in the area. Gibson has estimated, given the total receipts of £25 12s 10d from the four-play cycle staged in 1560 that, if the probable cost of a penny a head is accurate, then at least 6000 people must have attended.²⁴ In the early 1560s if there were any dissenting voices over the decision to reinstate the play, they have not been recorded.

²¹ NR/FAC7, fo.96.

²² Gibson, *REED* Vol. 1 p. LXii.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 785.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. lx.

This is very different to the situation which existed in Canterbury at the same time. Here there was disagreement and division between members of the corporation over the pace of reform, division which seems to have been absent or negligible in New Romney at this early time. In 1560 when the mayor and jurats of New Romney were planning the introduction of their 'new' play with such meticulous detail, in Canterbury, John Bale, one of the reforming prebendaries of the Cathedral, was also preparing a play, but in contrast, he was meeting with quite a deal of opposition.²⁵ When asked whether he would attend John Bale's play in Canterbury, Richard Okeden, son of one of the city's aldermen, 'ymmedyatly sayd nay godes blode I wil not com ther I will goo to Romney wher ther is good play'.²⁶ Bale's opinion following further disturbances two years later was may 'god sende that cytie better and more godly governours.'²⁷ It would be interesting to know what Bale must have thought of the New Romney Corporation.

It is difficult to be sure of how the clergy viewed the continuation of the play. The vicar at the time was Richard Webb who was possibly resident in Oxford and therefore not closely involved in parish life. While it is possible that John Forcett was working in the parish as the curate during this period, gaps in the evidence mean that this cannot be assumed for certain. A John Forcett was involved in copying out the parts of the play, although this was more likely to have been the Town Clerk who went by the same name. Should the play be interpreted as 'emphatically restating the community's belief in the old order' as Clark has suggested? Certainly, the performances do not suggest a strong reforming attitude amongst some members of the town's elite, especially in contrast to other areas of the diocese. However, an alternative interpretation suggests that the situation may have been more complex than Clark has claimed. Given the decline of the town, not only in terms of economic success, but also in terms of population and prestige, and also given the town's determination to preserve its ancient privileges and standing, particularly compared to the growing dominance of the town of Lydd, it is also possible to view the play as much an expression of civic pride as a distinct attachment to traditional beliefs. While the

²⁵ See above page 71.

²⁶ X.10.7, fols. 36-39.

²⁷ Baskerville, 'A religious Disturbance in Canterbury', p. 347.

town had managed to maintain its place as the head town of the Cinque Ports Confederation, its primacy was based on an affluent and powerful past which was long gone by the early modern period. A successful play, therefore, could have enhanced the town's prestige as well as the self-esteem of the ruling group. Members of the civic corporation were the driving force, and this is significant. It is also relevant that the play generated a large profit for a town suffering from severe economic difficulties. The inhabitants certainly showed a high degree of community spirit, pulling together to make the performances a success.

As has been widely noted, in the early years following the Elizabethan Settlement there must have been many people who were not entirely convinced that the changes had come to stay. Even for those people who had accepted that the Settlement was likely to be permanent, the New Romney play raises interesting questions. What did it mean to be identified as a Protestant? Was it possible for people to think of themselves as good Protestants and still attend the play without any pricking of their consciences? Patrick Collinson claimed that it is wrong to assume that such dramas were widely condemned in the early years of Elizabeth's reign and, indeed, as Bale's play in Canterbury showed, early Protestants were also happy to use drama as a way to communicate their message. Collinson pointed to Martin Bucer who stated that:

for the making of tragedies the Scriptures constantly offer an abundance of material..... for these stories are thickly packed with godlike and heroic people.... since all these qualities have wonderful power to strengthen faith in God, to arouse love and desire of God and to create and increase not only admiration of piety and justice but also the horror of impiety and of the sowing and fostering of every kind of evil.²⁸

Collinson suggested that it was not until the 1570s that the greatest change came about in this respect, and when this did happen it was due to a Puritan agenda.²⁹

It is the argument here that it was indeed possible for the large numbers of people who attended the plays at New Romney to enjoy the drama and still believe

²⁸ Patrick Collinson, *From Iconoclasm to Iconophobia* (Reading, 1986), p. 12.

²⁹ Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: religious and cultural change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Basingstoke, 1986), p. 98.

they were keeping within the spirit of the law. From her study of cheap print, such as ballads, woodcuts and chap books, Tessa Watt suggested that 'the first generation of Protestant reformers in England made no sharp break with the pre-Reformation attitudes to traditional recreations. Their ballads, metrical psalms, interludes and martyrologies were all attempts to appropriate pre-Reformation cultural forms in the service of Protestantism'.³⁰ It is likely that the same was true of popular drama. Although some reformers may have been keen to describe society in terms of binary opposites, the messiness of everyday life, especially in a remote area such as the marsh made identities much less clear cut.

Nevertheless, as official disapproval gained momentum, the play could not continue and the last performance was staged in 1568. A note in the Chamberlain's accounts in March of that year suggests that by this date people were aware that they might not be able to continue with the production for very much longer. The accounts note that:

Appeared at the comen place John Parker Mayer, William Epps, John Cheesman, Gregorie Holton, Laurence Ffann, Peter Wallishe, William Tayler jurates & comerners of the seid towne have agreed that all the playeres or the most parte of them shall enter in to sufficient bounde of xli li to Mr Wallishe at or before the next deye of rehershall, & he theeseid Peter Wallishe; to enter in to leke bounde to the Mayor lurates & comminaltie of newe Romeney with condycon to effectually to procecute & playe the same, otherwyse every player having partes shall presently surrender all their partes upp agayne in to the hondes of arthure bee & so to be no more spoken of, or any more repeticion & rehershall thereof had & made'.³¹

After the demise of the play, there is evidence that during the rest of the century, conservative attitudes remained in some quarters, and that any unity that seems to have been in existence in the 1560s gave way to examples of disagreement as the situation, both politically and in terms of religion, became more divided. Given the interest shown by members of the town corporation in staging the passion play for far longer than other towns managed to keep their plays after the re-introduction of

³⁰ Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 41.

³¹ Gibson, *REED*, p. 798.

Protestantism, it is also interesting to note several examples of witchcraft in the area which point to the continuance of traditional beliefs amongst some people into the later years of the sixteenth century and beyond. For example, in 1569, a woman living in the parish of Ruckinge on the very edge of the marsh was presented at the Archdeacon's visitation because 'with certain prayers and a cloke wrapped about a bramble she had one to help her to draw her child under the said bramble three times'. When questioned as to why she would do such a thing she answered 'it was the use of her country, but she thought no hurt in it as she sayeth'.³² The woman's response suggests that this kind of behaviour was accepted as part of everyday life in the area. In the same parish at that time another woman was presented on a suspicion of practising witchcraft.³³

It is true that a belief in witchcraft cannot simply be equated with the existence of Catholicism, and certainly Catholic authorities were as keen as Protestant authorities to speak out against the practices and to see the phenomenon eliminated from their jurisdictions. That belief in the power of the supernatural was not the prerogative of only the Catholics or those who remained conservative in their attitudes is testified to by the passing of the Injunctions of 1559 and the Witchcraft Acts of 1563 and 1604 which acknowledged its existence whilst stressing that resort to witchcraft no longer had a place in Protestant England. Injunction thirty-seven, for example, had banned the use of 'charms, sorcery, enchantments, invocations, circles, witchcrafts, soothsaying or any such like crafts or imaginations invented by the devil'.³⁴ It is possible to argue for a degree of continuity in this, as in other aspects of post-Reformation belief. Joanna Ludwikowska, for example, suggested that, given the changes in worship and doctrine which had been imposed by the reformers 'beliefs in the supernatural, magic, witches or holy properties of herbs live[d] on, as stable in their plurality as before, with rhetoric of superstition voiced against them well-known and familiar, and thus easily ignored'.³⁵

³²Hussey, 'Archbishop Parker's Visitation of 1569', p. 115.

³³X.1.3, fols 11 and 19.

³⁴Frere and Kennedy *Visitation Articles*, p. 5.

³⁵Joanna Ludwikowska, 'Objects, Words and Religion: Popular Belief and Protestantism in Early Modern England', in *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 52 (2017), 103-145 (p. 114).

However, the point might be not so much whether superstitious beliefs were the prerogative of either the Catholics or Protestants, but that they increasingly came to be associated, in some quarters at least, with the superstition associated with Catholicism. In the eyes of some contemporary writers, superstitious beliefs did in many cases demonstrate a sympathy for traditional ways and, at the least, indicated that the ideas of reformed Protestantism had not been fully accepted. For example, when Richard Barnard suggested in the early seventeenth century that witches are ‘those that be superstitious and idolatrous, as all papists be’ he added that this ‘is not to be doubted for sorcery is the practice of the whore, the Romish synagogue’.³⁶ Closer to home the Canterbury prebendary, John Bale, characterised idolatry, as James Sharpe has noted, as an old witch who:

Can by sayenge her Aue marye,
And by other charmes of sorcerye,
Ease men of toth ake by and bye,
Yea, and fatche the deuyll from hell.
She can mylke the cowe and hunte the foxe,
And helpe men of the ague and poxe.³⁷

Another contemporary writer who equated the existence of witchcraft with popery was the local gentleman, Reginald Scot, who published a book on the subject in 1584, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*. Scot made the point in the book that recourse to witches was no different from idolatry since anyone who hoped for supernatural help from that quarter was thereby attributing to another human being powers which rightly belong only to God. He stated in the introduction to the reader that his purpose, in part, in writing the book was to convince people that the power which witches claim to wield is not real. He hoped instead that he could convince that:

³⁶ Richard Bernard, *A Guide to Grand Jurymen* (1627), p. 99.

³⁷ James Sharp *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia, 1996), p. 27; John Bale, *A comedy concernyng the lawes, of nature Moses, & Christ, corrupted by the sodomytes. Pharysees and Papystes* (1548), sig. Biii.

the glorie and power of God be not so abridged and abased as to be thrust into the hand or lip of a lewd old woman whereby the worke of the creator should be attributed to the power of a creature.³⁸

According to Scot, anyone 'that attributeth to a witch such divine power as dulie and onelie apperteineth unto God (which all witchmongers doo) is in hart a blasphemmer, an idolater and full of grosse impietie'.³⁹

In *The Discoverie* Scot provided a number of stories and examples to illustrate his belief that witches were mostly no more than deceivers and fraudsters, one of which concerned the mayor of the town, Thomas Epps. Scot related how Epps' wife had become ill and, rather than seek God's help through prayer, her mother and father-in-law 'being abused with credulitie concerning witches supernaturall power' went to a woman locally known as a witch 'called mother Baker, dwelling not far from thence'. The witch asked the family whether there was anyone they mistrusted and, when they answered that indeed they doubted a woman who lived close by, the witch told them that she already knew of the woman and was aware that the woman had already tried to bewitch someone else by making a heart of wax which she then pricked with pins and needles. The family were to go home and search for something similar hidden somewhere in their house. After a search was made, which did not uncover anything untoward, the witch went herself to the house where 'as some of the wiser sort mistrusted that she woulde doo, laieng downe privilie such an image as she had before described in a corner which by others had beene most diligently searched' and so her 'cousenage' was revealed.⁴⁰ This points to the credulity and perhaps also the ignorance of the Epps family.

Peter Marshall has noted that, 'Protestants, both elite and popular, continued to live in a world alive with supernatural forces both angelic and demonic and while some might have been uncomfortable with the word 'miracle' they were accustomed to read spiritual meanings into all manner of events'.⁴¹ These spiritual meanings were not Catholicism, but as Protestant reformers increasingly tried to draw a distinction

³⁸Reginald Scot, *The discoverie of witchcraft (1584)*, sig. bii.

³⁹ Scot, *Discoverie*, p.7.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

⁴¹ Peter Marshall, *Reformation England*, (2012), p. 177.

between what was regarded as magic, and therefore unacceptable, and religion, which was therefore acceptable, behaviour such as this tipped into superstition. Therefore, in the context of the reform of religion in England, despite the caveats, it is possible to view witchcraft and superstition as indicating the existence of traditional views within a community during this time of transition, or at the least that orthodox Protestant teaching had not been fully assimilated.

It is significant that Epps was a leading member of the community and yet was still resorting to witchcraft to cure his wife. It is also, perhaps, significant that this incident took place in 1584 at a time of serious division between members of the corporation, and, although this division was primarily political, the evidence suggest that the difficulties may have been exacerbated by growing religious differences in the town at that time. Certainly, it is possible to identify more and less conservative attitudes within the two factions which emerged during the conflict. In 1584 Thomas Epps was being challenged for power by a group of leading townsmen who were disputing the mayoral election. Epps, as mayor, had disenfranchised four of the opposing group for drunkenness which had resulted in a situation where no one seemed to be willing to compromise to find a solution. The matter was referred to the Privy Council who sent Sir Thomas Scot together with Richard Barry, lieutenant of Dover Castle, to the town to sort out the problems. The two men spent four days in the town in March, investigating the controversies and hoping that their intervention would solve the issues. 'Whe have also used all the good means we can for the passefyeinge and ending of all other p[ar]ticuler matters mensioned in the saied order the wch we trust wylbe imbrased by both sydes'.⁴² However, the issues were not sorted and the ensuing disagreements and divisions reverberated in the town for many years to come. Two years later two of the jurats, Steven Bunting and John Brett, were writing again to the Privy Council over the 'many greate disorders crepte into the government of the said towne.....' complaining again of 'some disorderly bretheren, prefering their owne particuler before the common good of their whole towne'.⁴³ Again, in 1587 some of the citizens of the town felt the need to write to the Dean complaining 'that of late there was a great tax or fyne layed upon them by the Maiour,

⁴² SP 12/169 fol. 69.

⁴³ APC, Vol. 15 (1587-1588) p. 301.

Jurates and Commonalty there, amounting to the somme of fower score and twelve poundes, and of diverse mysgovernmentes of the said Maiour and his faccion, through which occacions the welthier sort had and would withdrawe them selves and leave the towne, whereby the poore that had ben by them maynteyned and sett on work were nowe reduced to great want and poverty, to the great impoverishment of the said towne'.⁴⁴

There are suggestions, therefore, that in contrast to the assumption that the south-east of the country witnessed a rapid and willingly accepted reformation, that in communities such as New Romney, the acceptance of the new religion was more contested, with continuities being more obvious in the initial phases of the Elizabethan reformation. Within the context of this perceived reluctance to embrace Protestantism, the role of the clergy, and the extent to which individuals either pushed for or hindered the progress of reform, was significant.

Parish Leadership

The clergy of the Church of England database lists nine vicars in the parish of St Nicholas between 1558 and 1603, three of whom employed curates. Exactly who was serving the congregation in the early years of the reign remains unclear, however; unfortunately, neither the Bishops' returns nor the churchwardens' accounts survive which might have provided a signature to identify who was serving the cure. The first vicar listed by CCEd is Richard Webb, who was instituted to the parish in 1561. Webb was not resident and is shown in the Parker Certificates as living in Oxford. It is possible that he resided at All Souls College, which was the patron of the parish, although his name is not listed in Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses*. After he left New Romney Webb served as rector of the far more lucrative parishes of St Mary in the Marsh, listed at £23 4s in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* and Burmarsh listed at £20 10s 6, through the patronage of Archbishop Parker and the Crown respectively.⁴⁵ Before Webb, Archdeacon Harpsfield's visitation of 1557 gives John Crise as vicar of the parish with John Pashe as the curate. The editor of the published account of the visitation suggested that Crise had been in the parish since 1526, which would mean he had

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 421.

⁴⁵ CCEd, 'Richard Web', Person ID:76290.

been in post for over thirty years by the time Elizabeth acceded to the throne.⁴⁶ In 1558 Pashe was bequeathed 20s in the will of William Rowse, and in this document he was referred to as the vicar of the parish, although this may have been a mistake on the part of the testator.⁴⁷ Regardless of whether he was vicar or curate this does indicate that Pashe was actively involved in parish life in the last months of Queen Mary's reign. That Pashe provided continuity with the Marian past is demonstrated in the early months after the Settlement when he was criticised for reading the 'place libera me' at the funeral of Mistress Padiam.⁴⁸ The records of New Romney show that in 1559 the minister of St Nicholas was convicted of theft and speaking against the queen. Two years later he was ejected from the parish as a 'sower of evil doctrine' although unfortunately the records do not reveal the name of this man.⁴⁹ It is possible that during the incumbency of Webb the parish was served by the curate, John Forcett. The records are not clear about exactly when he arrived in the parish, nor the specific role he had when he first arrived, but the will of John Adent, written in 1553, mentions one of the witnesses, John Forcett, as serving as curate at that time.⁵⁰ Certainly John Forcett was a dominant presence in the parish. Of the twenty-two wills from the first five years of the reign, John Forcett appears as writer or witness for nine of them. He also witnessed or wrote wills for testators living in the parishes of Ivychurch, Newchurch and Lydd. In 1565 he was instituted to the vicarage of New Romney on the departure of Richard Webb. Although it is difficult to give precise dates for the arrival and departure of vicars and curates in this early period in New Romney, it does seem likely that, despite the deprivation of the minister in 1561, a degree of continuity was experienced by the congregation in the early year of Elizabeth's reign. Whereas continuity in terms of the clergy in Sandwich contributed to the assimilation of Protestantism owing to the earlier influence of Archbishop Cranmer, in Romney it is likely to have contributed an element of conservatism to the parish in the early years.

⁴⁶ Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation*, p. 162.

⁴⁷ PRC 32/28/45.

⁴⁸ Y.2.24, fol. 30r.

⁴⁹ NR/JB 7; Court Book 1559 – 1578, fol. 7v.

⁵⁰ PRC 32/27/79.

Following Forcett's death in 1572 the parish was served by three vicars in quick succession before the institution of Henry Stafford in 1576, who then served the congregation for the next thirty years.⁵¹ There were two further vicars in the Jacobean period, Richard Ingram and Peter Knight. It was less common for the vicars of New Romney to employ a curate than for ministers of the rural parishes close by, although three of the nine vicars did employ someone to deputise. These three men employed at least six individuals between them. In terms of the qualifications of the vicars, four of the nine had a Masters qualification and four of the six curates had a university qualification, three were Masters of Arts and one had a Bachelor of Arts degree. In this respect the vicars were, as a group, slightly less well qualified than the incumbents of the town of Sandwich and the rural parishes of the marsh, but more highly qualified than the incumbents of the city of Canterbury.⁵² This level of education for the curates was comparatively very high, and, as is argued below, was significant. Pluralism does not seem to have been an issue in New Romney. Six of the nine vicars held only this one cure. Of the others, John Forcett was also vicar of the nearby marsh parish of Dymchurch, John Cornwall was a minor canon at Canterbury Cathedral and Henry Stafford also held one other marsh cure.

Although it is possible that the high level of continuity in terms of parish leadership in the early years after the Elizabethan Settlement may have played some part in encouraging the conservative attitudes which have been identified in the parish, the situation is not as straightforward when considered in detail. There were certainly those within the town who held onto conservative views, such as John Smith, a tailor who was presented in 1569 as:

a common drunkard, common ribald, common railer and also a contempner of the minister of God's holy word and also a slanderer and contempner of the holy matrimony of priests in so much that on S James' day last he did both at the ale-house or tavern and also openly in the street call John Forsett our vicar knave and the said

⁵¹ CCEd, 'John Wykham, MA', Person ID: 3305; 'John Cornwall', Person ID: 39633, also minor canon at Canterbury Cathedral; 'George Smith MA, Person ID: 38579; 'Henry Stafford', Person ID: 38613.

⁵² In the rural parishes 63% of incumbents had a university qualification. In the town of Sandwich the figure is 63% and for the city of Canterbury 34% were university educated.

John Forcett's wife errant whore and said moreover that all the married priests in England are knaves and their wives are very whores and that he would abide by it'.⁵³

In 1572 William Wheles travelled to New Romney from the nearby village of Old Romney 'to tippling houses, and swears terrible oaths and rails on diverse clergy'.⁵⁴ It is interesting to speculate whether Wheles was able to meet with like-minded individuals in New Romney's tippling houses which made the journey worthwhile.

Despite such attitudes from some quarters, however, an examination of wills proved between 1558 and 1563 indicates a slightly different story and suggests that the town had come under some kind of Protestant leadership during these years. Twenty-seven wills were proved between 1558 and 1563. Each one begins with the same preamble, either 'I commend my soul to almighty God', or 'I commend my soul to almighty God, my maker and redeemer'. None of the three nuncupative wills contains any preamble at all. It is noteworthy that there are no deviations from these two formulaic preambles. Since there is no doubt that these testators were using a formula, the preamble is of little use here. The content of the wills does provide some hints of religious beliefs, however. David Cressy has suggested that regardless of Protestant teaching on salvation, the official disappearance of purgatory and the impossibility, therefore, for the living to influence the fate of the dead, 'provisions for obits and months minds and prayers for all Christian souls were not uncommon in wills of the 1550s, 1560s and 1570s'.⁵⁵ In New Romney this was not the case. There were just three testators who requested a month's and twelve month's mind in the early years of the reign, and none after 1560. Thus, both jurat John Parker, whose will was proved in 1558 and wealthy townsman Thomas Tadlow whose will was proved in 1560, after beginning by commending their souls to almighty God, maker and redeemer, both then asked that 20 shillings should be given to the poor at their burial, at their month's mind and again at their twelve month's mind. Thomas Taylor in 1559 asked for as much bread as might be baked from a bushel of wheat to be distributed to the poor of the town at his month's mind together with a barrel of beer. Even in precociously Protestant Sandwich, seven of the thirty-five testators whose wills were

⁵³ Hussey, Parker's Visitation, p. 114.

⁵⁴ X.8.9, fol. 14.

⁵⁵ David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle* (Oxford, 1997), p. 398.

proved between 1558 and 1560 included an explicitly Catholic preamble or asked for a mass or dirige for their soul. Clearly this does not mean that beliefs about purgatory, or the desire to pray for the dead had been more or less eliminated, but it does suggest a high degree of conformity amongst numbers of people to the Elizabethan religious Settlement, even in one of the more remote parts of the diocese. This is also evidence that a degree of caution should be used when using binary opposites, Catholic/Protestant in the early years of the Elizabethan Reformation when identities were still fluid.

The consolidation of Protestantism

After the incumbency of Forcett, the parish experienced another long period of continuity with the institution of Henry Stafford in 1576, and this period also saw the parish coming under more radical influences from the wider area. Before arriving in New Romney Stafford had been involved in the prophesying meetings which had been arranged for the ministers of the deaneries of Charing and Lympe. The articles, drawn up in 1572, specified that these meetings would firstly be held in the town of Ashford, described by Clark as 'a leading centre of Puritanism in East Kent', and afterwards 'as it shalbe apoynted at their assemblyes and thoughte convenient'.⁵⁶ It is not entirely clear how effectively Stafford carried out his duties in New Romney. In 1577 he was presented for not wearing the surplice, suggesting he may have held non-conformist attitudes. By the 1590s, an element of dispute or dissatisfaction seems to have crept into the parish. In 1591, for example, the perambulation of the parish did not take place 'by reason that a sufficient number of the auncyent and substantiall men of the p[ar]ishe did not com and meet together to go the same'.⁵⁷ Since these were occasions when people could come together as a community, this lack suggests difficulties in terms of relationships within the town. It is possible that Stafford distanced himself from the parish as time went on. In 1597 when he was presented for not catechising the youth of the parish he gave as his reason that 'he hath ii cures and of late hath been destitute of a curat he hath somewhat neglected the catechising of youth since Easter but sayth he will p[ro]vyde a curat forthwith and see the youth catechised'.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Clark, 'Prophesying Movement' pp. 88 and 83.

⁵⁷ X.8.13, fol. 4v.

⁵⁸ X.8.16, fol. 59v.

CCEd lists his other parish at this time as the nearby parish of Hope. This is interesting since Hope was a tiny parish, described by Hasted as ‘being an entire flat of marshes, very fertile, without a tree or hedge to shelter them’. At the time of Harpsfield’s visitation there had only been eleven communicants from four households, and only nineteen were reported by the time Hasted came to write so it does not seem likely that Stafford was over-worked. The parish was valued at £10 12d in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, putting it in the top half of parishes across the diocese, but Stafford was clearly having financial issues. In 1589 he petitioned the Archbishop to consolidate the two parishes for his lifetime since they were of such slender value.⁵⁹

During the time of his incumbency Stafford did employ a number of curates at New Romney who after 1589 also served at Hope. One of these men, Gilbert Wightman, described as a preacher in CCEd, was also presented for not wearing the surplice in 1590.⁶⁰ By the 1590s, if not sooner, there was a group of parishioners who were demanding regular sermons and who were willing to travel to different parishes in order to hear a sermon each week, if necessary. In 1597, for example, following the presentation of a group of wealthier citizens from the parish for non-attendance at the church, their response was that they ‘were never absent from their p[ar]ishe church but when they are at Lid or Dimchurch at a sermon or at some other p[ar]ishe neere thers about and that they go not from their owne p[ar]ishe churche in contempte of her maiesties lawes or their minister’.⁶¹

It is also likely that from the 1570s divisions within the town were being influenced by the religious controversies that were taking place within the wider local area. As has been noted, Henry Stafford had been involved in the prophesying meetings which were initiated in Ashford in 1570s, as were a number of ministers from other nearby parishes in the deanery of Lympe. Table 7 in the Appendix lists the men who were signatories to the Articles drawn up for the prophesyings in May 1572. The notes are taken from Clark.⁶² The Prophesyings were shut down because of disapproval by the Queen, but they indicate the growing demand by some for a higher

⁵⁹ Hasted, *Topographical Survey*, Vol. 8, p. 419.

⁶⁰ X.8.10, fol. 57 and X.8.13, fol. 129v.

⁶¹ X.8.16, fol. 251v.

⁶² Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 89 and 90.

quality ministry in order for the church to be in a position to oversee the consolidation of Protestantism in the parishes. This situation was further inflamed by the appointment of John Whitgift as Archbishop in 1583 with his desire to ensure greater conformity amongst the Kentish clergy which provoked a backlash from some of the more radical clergy in the diocese. The centre of the opposition was within or on the edges of the deanery of Lympe. Thus, at the same time that the civic disputes in New Romney were rumbling on, and the very same year of the resort to witchcraft by the mayor, Thomas Epps, radical Protestants were involved in a serious dispute with Whitgift over conformity, a dispute which then also drew in a number of the Kentish gentry.

The most prominent of the gentlemen who became involved in the disagreement with Whitgift over the conformity of the Kentish clergy was Sir Thomas Scot, Reginald Scot's cousin, who acted as the spokesman for the group. Reginald was often at the Scot family home in Smeeth fifteen miles from New Romney and he had dedicated *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* to his cousin, 'I being of your house, of your name, & of your bloud; my foot being under your table, my hand in your dish or rather your purse'.⁶³ Reginald also served as burgess for the town of New Romney in 1588, so was clearly heavily involved in local issues. It is perhaps significant that Reginald Scot's book was published in the same year as these disputes. There are hints in the book that the civic disputes at New Romney were being influenced by religious divisions. One of the messages that Scot was trying to get across was that witchcraft could often divide communities and create the social disorder that prosecutions were aiming to address, in the same way that religion could potentially divide communities. Scot was, therefore, writing at a time when religious disorder was a lively issue in the area. In his account of the incident of witchcraft concerning the Epps family he was at pains to emphasise the point that the woman being accused 'was of the honestest & wise sort of hir neighbours, reputed a good creature'.⁶⁴ In terms of the reformation of manners, the honesty and upright nature of this woman is contrasted with the credulity of those who had refused to give up their reliance on superstition.

⁶³ Scot, *Discoverie* sig. Aiiii, v.

⁶⁴ Scot, *Discoverie*, p. 147.

In this respect, the good order of true religion is contrasted with the potential for chaos if people continued to hold onto the superstitious beliefs of the past. In this case, as in the later local case of witchcraft which came to a head in 1617, accusations of witchcraft were accompanied by behaviour which could be seen as criminal or at least anti-social.⁶⁵ During the dispute with Epps another of the town's jurats, William Southland, had taken possession of a parcel of the town lands around which he had put up some fencing. 'The said mayor had caused the same in the night tyme to be pulled down and the pales cutt in peces'.⁶⁶

The troubles in the town seem to have been financial in origin and have been caused by the corruption of certain members of the corporation but they also reflect religious divisions. One of the several petitions from the townspeople complained 'that greate sommes of money are oftentymes demaunded for employement in th'affaires of the towne without any due accomptes made for the disbursinge'.⁶⁷ In 1589 the *Detecta* for New Romney report behaviour of a small group of the town's elite who had entered the church and stayed there overnight, during which time they had 'fyre, breade and drinke in the said church', with the aim of preventing the freemen coming to church the next day to take part in the mayoral election.⁶⁸ The *Detecta* also state that it was not possible, therefore, to hold the church service on that day.⁶⁹

The Consolidation of Protestantism: the Evidence from Wills

It is certainly clear that the second half of the sixteenth century was characterised by political and religious division within the local area. At parish level, too, an examination of wills proved during the 1590s also provides evidence of the development in religious belief and behaviour which had taken place by the end of the sixteenth century. Thirty wills from the parish were proved during the decade, of which seven were nuncupative and, as might be expected, striking differences can be discerned between this later group and those of the earlier period discussed above. At this time a significant number of the wills still largely conformed to a formula, the most

⁶⁵ See below, p. 221.

⁶⁶ SP/12/169, fol. 97a.

⁶⁷ SP /2/15, fol. 573.

⁶⁸ X.8.11 fol. 162v.

⁶⁹ Ibid., fol. 163.

common preamble consisting of a simple statement such as 'I bequeath my soul to Almighty God', most usually with the addition of 'my maker and redeemer'. Of the thirty wills, fourteen (forty-seven percent) began with this very simple formula. However, in comparison to the earlier date, by the 1590s, five of the testators also added the emphasis that this salvation was only through the death and passion of Jesus Christ. William Taylor is illustrative of this. In his will written in 1592 he bequeathed his soul to 'him that derelye hath bought it, christe jesus my onlie savior and redemer'.⁷⁰ A further four, which hint at a more radical form of Protestantism in the town by the later sixteenth century, also deviated from the usual formula. Thus, William Small wrote in 1593:

I commit my soul into the hands of almighty God who hath created it and redeemed it in his deare son my lord and savior, and my body to the church yard of New Romney which I trust my saviour Jesus Christe in the day of resurrection of all people will joyne with my soul and receive it into the kingdom of heaven which he has prepared for the elect of God by his death and resurrection in which number thorough the grace of God towards me in his deare son my lord and savior I assure myself to be one.⁷¹

Another clear change between the earlier and later sets of wills is the way in which testators viewed the body after death, reflected in their requests concerning where they wished to be buried. In the earlier period the standard request was for the body to be buried in the parish church yard, with one example where the testator requested that he be buried elsewhere, in this case in the church yard of Woodchurch. Four of the twenty-three earlier sample were more specific, such as Thomas Tallow in 1560, who asked to be buried, 'in the church yard nigh unto the graves of my father, mother and wife', or the wealthy jurat, John Parker, who requested that he be buried in the north chancel of the church 'near where I sytt'.⁷² Excluding the nuncupative wills, four of the earlier testators made no mention at all about where they wished to be buried.⁷³ This reflects what Clare Gittings has described as a 'mental map of the

⁷⁰ PRC/32/37/97c.

⁷¹ PRC/32/37/166b.

⁷² PRC/32/28/63 and PRC/32/27/152.

⁷³ William Rowse, PRC/32/28/45, 'my body to the earth wherever it shall please God'; and Stephen Gyllot, PRC/32/29/133, 'at the pleasure of God'; Robert Whytlock PRC 32/27/332 and Alice Yong PRC32/27/444 asked for 'Christian burial.

church very different from that which prevailed in pre-Reformation England, when testators usually described their chosen burial places with reference to the nearest altar, saint's statue or light'.⁷⁴ By the later sixteenth century, it is apparent that attitudes towards place of burial had changed as Protestant ideas became consolidated more broadly amongst members of the community.

Thus, by the 1590s over sixty percent of the testators were no longer specifying where they wished their body to be buried. For example, John Watson, whose will was proved in 1591, having bequeathed his soul to God, simply asked for his body to be buried in the grave 'until the resurrection when I hope both body and soule to rise by christ to life everlasting'.⁷⁵ The will of Philip Wayte, which was proved in 1595, is interesting since, although it was nuncupative it still, unusually, contained a preamble. First Wayte commended his 'sowle into the handes of god my maker hoping assuredly through the onely meryts of Jhesus Christ my saviour to be made p[ar]taker of life everlasting'. He then asked for his body to be put in the earth 'whereof it was made'.⁷⁶ In the will Wayte made bequests to, among others, Thomas Worme, one of the group specifically mentioned in the *Detecta* for travelling to nearby parishes whenever a sermon was not being preached on a Sunday at New Romney.

Various Protestant writers held the view that, while a decent burial was necessary in order to show respect to the dead, the actual place of burial was irrelevant. The Canterbury prebend, Thomas Becon, for example wrote in 1568 that 'the bodies of the dead saith S Auste[n] are not to be dispised and to be caste away, & specially the bodyes of the righteous & of the faithful whom as instruments & vessels unto all good works the holy ghost hath used'.⁷⁷ Becon also believed that place of burial was of little significance. In *Sick Man's Salve* he had one of his characters say that, 'it is all one to me, church or churchyard for the earth is the lords and all that is contayned in it. I am not curious of the place wheresoever I lie. I doubte not but that ye Lord our God at ye last day shal raise me up againe & geve me a body like unto ye glorious body of our Lord & Saviour Christe Jesus. Let ye body therefore returne unto

⁷⁴ Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (1984), p. 87.

⁷⁵ PRC 32/36/240b.

⁷⁶ PRC 32/37/275a.

⁷⁷ Becon, *The Sick Man's Salve* (1568), p. 159.

the earth fro[m] which it came & the spirit unto God which gave it'.⁷⁸ A more extreme attitude was held by Henry Barrow who believed that it was not even necessary to bury the dead in consecrated ground, suggesting that customs towards burial often reflected an unacceptably superstitious attitude. 'If they be not buried there, and that by the priest, with his book, then are they buried like dogs, say the common people'.⁷⁹ There is some evidence of the existence of a more radical form of Protestantism within the town, such as William Vinall whose will was proved in 1593. Vinall wrote that after his burial:

I trust my saviour Jesus Christ in the daye of the resurrection of all fleshe will ioine unto my soule and receave yt into the kingdome of the father w[hi]ch he hath promised for the electe of god by his death and resurrection of wch number thoroughe the good grace of god towards me in his deere sonne my lord and saviour I assure my selfe to be one.

However, there is no evidence that extreme views, such as those of Barrow about place of burial, found acceptance in New Romney, and no evidence of people stepping in and attempting to bury their own dead as happened in Sandwich. Nevertheless, changing attitudes towards the body after death as Protestantism became assimilated in the town are demonstrable from this study of wills.

Within the sample, however, there are also hints that a more traditional outlook remained among some sections of the parish. In 1593 Abraham Breech made a nuncupative will in which he left 4s to be given to the men who 'should ring at such time as he was caried to be buried'.⁸⁰ Keith Thomas suggested that traditions such as the tolling of the bell at the time of a person's funeral, as well as the giving of doles to the poor were seen by Puritans as 'superstitious and heathenical'.⁸¹ Abraham Breech, along with three other testators from the sample, also left money to be given to four men 'w[hi]ch should carry my bodie to the church to be buried'.⁸² By the 1590s it was no longer acceptable to provide doles of money, food or drink to the poor at the time

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 156.

⁷⁹ Henry Barrow, *A Brief Discoverie of the False Church* (1590), p. 126.

⁸⁰ PRC 32/37/159a.

⁸¹ Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 66.

⁸² The other three testators were John Roose in 1590, PRC 32/36/167b; Thomas Wyman in 1593, PRC/32/37/119c; Henry Tompkin in 1593 PRC/32/37/120a.

of the funeral in the hope that the recipients might pray for the soul of the departed. It is possible that this practice, which is reminiscent of the custom, was a way of keeping within the law but also as a way for the dead to reach out to the living one more time. The numbers are very small and a handful of conservative testators cannot be used to prove a point, but it is interesting to note the differences between this sample and that of Sandwich for this decade where no such hints of conservative attitudes existed.

By the later sixteenth century, testators in New Romney were less likely to leave money for the poor; this is despite the fact that Protestant clergy stressed the importance of charitable giving. While such charity was no longer seen as necessary for grace, it was still seen as one of the fruits of grace. Becon, for example, stressed that 'wealth possesses no other virtue than to be employed in the advancement of Christ's purposes and in the maintenance of His poor', and that 'I have ever thought it better to send my works before me, while I live in this world then to have them sent after me, I know not by who[m] whe[n] I am gone'.⁸³ Of the thirty wills examined, however, only four (thirteen percent) contained bequests for the poor, ranging from 6s 8d to 20s, and only one of the testators left money to be put towards repairs of the church. This differs sharply from the earlier period, when twelve of the twenty-three testators made such a charitable bequest. It also differs from the situation which existed in Sandwich where thirty-nine percent of the testators during the decade provided for the poor in their wills.⁸⁴ This seems to go against trends happening elsewhere. W. K. Jordan, for example, saw such giving as a very effective way of addressing the issue of poverty which continued in popularity until after the Restoration and has concluded that charitable giving across the county of Kent exceeded that of other counties such as Norfolk or Somerset.⁸⁵ Possibly fears of disorder may have been relevant, at least in the small numbers who bequeathed money to be given in doles on the day of burial.

Keith Thomas suggested that since Protestants no longer believed in purgatory 'Protestant doctrine meant that each generation could be indifferent to the fate of its

⁸³ Becon, *Sick Man's Salve* p. 132.

⁸⁴ See above p. 160.

⁸⁵ Jordan *Philanthropy*, p. 335.

predecessor'.⁸⁶ In one sense this is clearly true since Protestantism taught that nothing could be done for the soul after the moment of death had passed, but an inability to influence a soul's fate is not the same thing as indifference. Although the disappearance of purgatory necessitated a different way of thinking about the relationship between the living and the dead, this did not mean that the dead would not be remembered.

The Stuppney tomb in New Romney's parish church is an interesting example of a post-Reformation memorial which portrayed a different sort of message from some of the fancy tombs erected elsewhere during the Jacobean period, such as that of Sir Roger Manwood in Hackington church or John Boys in Canterbury Cathedral. In 1622 Clement Stuppney re-erected the tomb of his great grandfather, Richard Stuppney senior. The newly erected tomb was a very simple table-top tomb, covered by a brass with the inscription:

Here lyeth buried the bodye of Richard Stuppenye, jurate of this town in the first yeare of K Hy VIII who dyed in the XVIII yeare of the sayde kynges reigne of whose memorye Clement Stuppenye of the same port his great grandsonne hath caused this tombe to be newerected for the use of the ancient meeting and election of maior and jurats of this port town, June the 10th anno DM 1622.

There are several points of interest here. Firstly, Richard Stuppney Senior died in 1540 and not 1526. While this could have been a simple mistake, Sheila Sweetinburgh has suggested that it may rather have been a way for Clement to lessen 'the problems of how to envisage his Catholic ancestors'.⁸⁷ Elections for mayor had only taken place since the time of the Elizabethan charter in 1563, since before that time the archbishops had appointed a bailiff for the town. Thus, Clement was linking himself to the 'ancient' customs through his own ancestors. Rather than being indifferent to the fate of his great grandfather, Clement could be seen to be calling on his ancestor to validate his position in the present and also into the future.

⁸⁶ Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 603.

⁸⁷ Sheila Sweetinburgh, 'Eternal Town Servants: Civic Elections and the Stuppney Tombs of New Romney and Lydd', in *Negotiating Heritage: Memories of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Mette B. Bruun and Stephanie Glaser (Belgium, 2008), pp 149-172, (p. 164).

Thus, an examination of wills from the 1590s illustrates that some steps had been taken towards the consolidation of Protestantism within the town, whilst at the same time hinting at the continued presence of more conservative attitudes existing alongside this. In this respect, the case of William Godfrey who was brought before the mayor in 1617 on an accusation of witchcraft sheds some light on how attitudes had changed since the 1580s. The case is also noteworthy because it is so untypical of the majority of witchcraft prosecutions at the time, involving as it did accusations against a man, William Godfrey, who was neither on the margins of society, nor was he poor. It is also unusual for such detailed testimony from the witnesses to have survived.⁸⁸ In 1617 Godfrey was accused of using *maleficium* to cause damage to the goods of a neighbour and the death of his tenants' child, although the detailed records, which include the testimony of the witnesses, show that there had been suspicions about him for several years before this time. Godfrey was described as a husbandman who was married with a family and who was certainly not poor, living himself in a two-storey house in the town with another house which he rented out.

It has been suggested that changes in social norms by the seventeenth century meant that where witchcraft was suspected recourse to the courts became a more likely option.⁸⁹ It is also possible to see in this case the success that Protestantism had achieved in ensuring that activities traditionally carried out by ordinary people to counteract suspicions of bewitchment had, perhaps, become socially unacceptable. So too had the possibility for people to consult with witches themselves in order to neutralise potential threats such as had happened in the incident with the Epps family in 1584. It is possible that the case against William Godfrey was made more likely by the growing Puritan ethos within the town, whereby perceived deviant behaviour which might have been neutralised by charms and spells was now being prosecuted through the courts. The case against Godfrey was thrown out by the mayor and jurats.

The evidence from the *Detecta* indicate that conservative attitudes remained within the town into the seventeenth century. In 1616, for example, one of the parishioners, Edmund Abbye, was presented at the visitation for his views on

⁸⁸ NR/JQp/1/30, fols 5-7.

⁸⁹ Malcolm Gaskell, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent: Stereotypes and the background to accusations', in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Jonathan Barry (Cambridge, 1996), p. 265.

transubstantiation. He claimed that 'the bodie of Christ is received in the sacrament reallie, actually and substantially'. If not then 'christ was an idle fellow to speake as he doth in the Gospel of St John, my flesh is meate indeed and my blood is drinck indeed'. He also claimed that he could pray just as easily in the fields on the sabbath day as he could in church.⁹⁰ It is difficult to know how typical of New Romney parishioners Abbye's views were. There are also hints that the Jacobean vicar, Peter Knight, like Henry Stafford in the later years of the sixteenth century, was experiencing tension with his parishioners. In 1617 he was presented by the churchwardens for 'not praying eny Sunday according to the 16th article. Also, for not instructing the youth according to the 26th article'.⁹¹ He answered that he preached every other Sunday at the least and that he was ready to instruct the youth if 'onely the masters and fathers of families would send them'.⁹² The community of New Romney was far from unique in failing to send its young people to be catechised, but this does indicate that the more zealous brand of Protestantism widespread in the local area had not made much headway in the town. The *Detecta* from the seventeenth century for Romney contain very little concerning people's religious views, particularly when compared to the other areas included within this study. The usual litany of repairs needed for the church or churchyard are lacking and there are no presentments for the lack of a Bible, homilies or other necessary items as was regularly found elsewhere. Neither, for all the hints at conservatism, was a problem of recusancy reported by the churchwardens. The report of 5th December 1614 'concerninge the knowlege of the church wardenes, we knowe not of any popishe or recusantes in our parish of new romny that forebare to come to church' is repeated verbatim year after year.⁹³ What is to be made of this? It is possible that New Romney was one of those communities where churchwardens failed to present like-minded parishioners, although there is clearly no way of proving this suspicion.

Another difference between the three towns, New Romney, Sandwich and Canterbury, was in terms of education. In New Romney no grammar school was established during the sixteenth century. From his study of educational change across

⁹⁰ X.9.13, fol. 22.

⁹¹ X.9.13, fol. 137.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ NR/FAc 6, fol. 19.

the county Peter Clark suggested that the areas most likely to provide schooling were those which were economically advanced and also areas which were 'centres of committed Protestantism'.⁹⁴ Whereas the nearby communities of the Weald had had permanent schooling from at least the last quarter of the sixteenth century, New Romney had to wait until the Jacobean period for the establishment of its school. In 1610 John Southland's will stipulated that the lands he was bequeathing to the town were to fund a hospital for 'two couple of poor folk' and a school for two poor children up to the age of fourteen, to be taught to read and write in English and to be able to 'caste accompt'.⁹⁵ Even taking into consideration the size of the town, the school founded by John Southland was a very small affair. This lack of a school in New Romney until the seventeenth century underlines the fact that the town was not only struggling economically by the early modern period, but also suggests that there were not enough committed Protestants of a sufficiently high standing to ensure that educational provision be provided.

Conclusion

Thus, it would seem that New Romney was a town where conservative attitudes continued to exist into the Jacobean period, and where, possibly because of its remote position and poor communications, Protestantism was consolidated far more slowly than in either Sandwich or Canterbury. In general, churchwardens' presentments to the archidiaconal visitations for the parish give an impression of parish life running smoothly and in the midst of much political disagreement and division there are few hints of a divided parish from the *Detecta*. There are the usual incidences of adultery, incontinency and children born out of wedlock, but fewer of such examples compared to some other parishes that are the focus of this study. Apart from the group referred to above who were happy to travel from parish to parish for their sermons, there were only a small handful of names mentioned for not attending church, and no one presented for working on the Sabbath. There are hints that the political divisions, which were protracted and deep seated, and which divided the prominent families of the town, were reflected in growing religious division as a small number of people became influenced by the radical Protestantism which was

⁹⁴ Clark, *English Provincial Society*, p. 201.

⁹⁵ PRC/28/6/513.

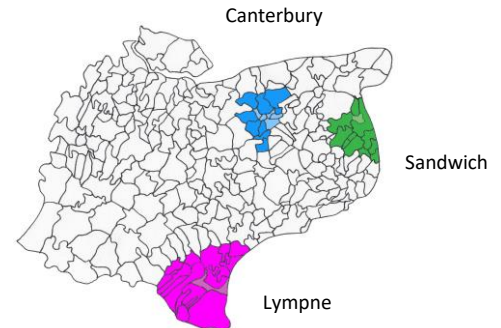
prevalent within the wider area but the overall impression is of a conservative outlook within the town.

The three urban case studies, therefore, show clearly that individual communities within the diocese reacted very differently to the coming of reform. The final chapter will consider the rural hinterlands to each of these three urban areas to examine the extent to which the rural communities reflected the developments of their nearby towns.

The rural parishes

Introduction

The focus of the final case study is the rural parishes which formed the hinterland to the three urban communities. There are two main questions to be asked in this chapter, firstly how did the calibre of parish leadership of the rural parishes compare with that of the urban, and secondly how did the rural communities respond to the reintroduction of Protestantism? The



Map 8: Rural parishes in the deaneries of Canterbury, Sandwich and Lympne

historiography suggests that rural communities were more conservative than urban, that Protestantism was assimilated more slowly in the countryside and that it was the towns which acted as the main evangelical influence on the countryside. Patrick Collinson, for example, wrote that ‘as the alteration of religion became official and general it was more often than not the towns which became centres of more than a merely formal and nominal Protestantism and centres of regional evangelism’.¹ The point is further underlined by Robert Whiting who concluded from his study of the south west that ‘the majority of Protestants lived in urban communities’.² Whilst this study broadly concurs with the view that towns often did act as influential centres of Protestantism, it goes further to suggest that the rural communities of the diocese were neither forgotten by the church authorities nor was their Protestantism necessarily ‘merely formal and nominal’. Previous chapters have demonstrated that communities which were relatively close geographically could still react to the Elizabethan Settlement in quite different ways, and it will be demonstrated here that this was also true of the rural parishes of the diocese.

Following a short description of the rural parishes which are to be included here, the chapter will consider the issue of parish leadership, examining how significant the turnover of clergy was, how quickly patrons were able to fill the

¹ Collinson, *Birthpangs*, p. 40.

² Robert Whiting, *Blind Devotion*, p. 260.

vacancies and what calibre of men were serving in these areas. A distinctive feature here, particularly in the area of Romney Marsh, was the high number of curates who were employed, a feature which will be addressed in some detail. Little has been written about the work of curates, partly due, perhaps, to deficiencies in the sources compared with those that deal with incumbents, and which make it difficult to undertake any kind of statistical analysis. However, by looking in depth at these areas, this chapter is able to shed some light on their work and the valuable role they were able to play. Finally, the response of the communities will be considered.

While much of the historiography of the Reformation has focused on towns, this is not to say that rural communities have been completely ignored by historians. The county of Sussex, for example, has been examined by Roger Manning where, owing to its isolation and the number of conservative peers and conservative gentry, Manning suggested that the response to religious change had more in common with those areas of the north and west whose conservatism has been well documented.³ As noted in chapter one, this was not the situation in Kent, where there were few resident peers and where the advowsons held by members of the gentry tended to be scattered, making it harder for individuals to use their patronage to influence the religious flavour of a region. Indeed, for the communities of Romney Marsh, owing to the specific nature of landholding and the distinctive nature of the environment, there were even very few resident gentry who might influence the pace and nature of religious change. Haigh's *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* sets out very clearly the difficulties facing the Elizabethan authorities in enforcing Protestantism in the north, difficulties which are echoed for the counties of Devon and Cornwall by Whiting and by Duffy's *Voices of Morebath*, but which are not seen to the same extent in Kent.⁴ Whiting identified conformity to the regime's directives but concluded that for the majority of the people 'acquiescence or co-operation in the assault upon traditional religion was motivated by essentially non-spiritual considerations. Protestant conviction was less important than a sense of duty, xenophobia, desire for

³ Manning, *Elizabethan Sussex*; MacCulloch's study of Suffolk also highlights the importance of conservative peers in affecting the consolidation of Protestantism in an area.

⁴ Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*; Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath*; Spufford, *Contrasting Communities*. This political and social account of village life in Cambridgeshire has a section on dissenting religion in the seventeenth century.

moral freedom, financial calculation, or even physical fear'.⁵ It is not easy to reconstruct exactly how most individuals responded to the Elizabethan Settlement after 1559. It is even more difficult to understand confidently the beliefs which stood behind those responses, but it is the contention here that, although each of the three areas responded differently following the Settlement of 1559, overall the rural communities embraced Protestantism without many of the problems that have been highlighted elsewhere.

In addition to specific local studies there have been a number of more wide-ranging accounts of the impact of the Reformation on the countryside which have brought together evidence from across the country.⁶ Given that responses could be so different from one region to another, by looking in depth at a small number of parishes from the diocese this chapter aims to add to the scholarship by showing how three specific rural areas of the diocese responded to changes in religion imposed by the state after 1559.

There is a good run of returns from the Archdeacons' *Detecta*, and these form the basis of this chapter along with will preambles.⁷ For the period 1558-1563 the sample contains thirty wills from the Canterbury parishes, forty-three from the parishes of the marsh and forty-eight from the parishes of Sandwich deanery. Because some of the parishes were small there are a number which are not represented at all in the sample, and this must be borne in mind when drawing conclusions.

The Parishes

The deanery of Canterbury, consisted of a further nine parishes in addition to the urban parishes examined in chapter two. The parish of Milton was very small and contained no households and has therefore not been included in this examination. Fordwich, categorised as a town in 1558, was a member of the Cinque Ports

⁵ Whiting, *Blind Devotion*, p. 259.

⁶ For example, Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*; Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*; Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: the Ritual Year 1400-1700* (1994).

⁷ The volumes are listed in the manuscript bibliography. The years 1561-1576 and 1609-1614 are missing for Canterbury deanery. For Lympne deanery the years 1559-60, 1564-1567, 1570-1576, 1599, 1612, 1614, 1619-20 are missing. For Sandwich deanery the returns begin in 1577 and the years 1619-1621 are missing.

Confederation as a subordinate town to the port of Sandwich. Situated on the river Stour it contained a busy quay for river traffic from the coast to Canterbury but by the early modern period this traffic, and consequently also the town, had declined so that by the time of Edward Hasted it was described as lying 'very low and unhealthy, close to the marshes, on the southern bank of the river Stour, a lonely place, of little or no thoroughfare. It is but small and mean, consisting of about thirty houses and cottages'.⁸ Because it was more similar to the rural parishes by the early modern period, it has been included here. Sandwich deanery had twenty-two rural parishes in 1558. The deanery of Lympne was large, containing forty parishes, some of which were situated on marshland and some on higher, drier ground. This chapter will focus on those parishes which were situated fully within the marsh and which formed the hinterland to the town of New Romney.⁹ This is partly because of considerations of space, but more importantly, the distinctive environment of the marsh provides an interesting contrast to the other two areas. Of these marsh parishes, Blackmanstone, Eastbridge and Orgarswick, although being provided with a rector or vicar, were all ruins by the sixteenth century. By the sixteenth century Broomhill had no church and no incumbent.

As would be expected, the rural parishes were small in terms of the number of households. The largest was Eastry in the deanery of Sandwich which had eighty-two households, but the majority of parishes had less than fifty. Many were also geographically small, a fact which could confer some advantages for Protestant authorities in the work of re-introducing Protestantism to the countryside. Julia Merritt has suggested that 'in rural areas (especially in the north) parishes were often too large for their scattered populations, making regulation of conformity more difficult and potentially impeding the regular preaching and catechizing that facilitated the word-centred piety of Protestantism'.¹⁰ This was not the case in Canterbury diocese.

⁸ Hasted, *History and Topographical Survey of Kent Vol. 9*, p. 60.

⁹ The parishes of the marsh originally were: Blackmanstone, Brenzett, Brookland, Broomhill, Burmarsh, Dymchurch, Eastbridge, Fairfield, Hope, Ivychurch, Lydd, St Mary in the Marsh, Midley, New Romney, Newchurch, Old Romney, Orgarswick, Snargate, Snaue.

¹⁰ Julia Merritt, 'Religion and the English Parish' in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, pp. 122-147 (p. 128). Christopher Haigh has also made this point, stating that the average Lancashire parish contained 350 households in 1563 and that whereas in 1603 there were on average 243 communicants in each parish nationally, in the diocese of Chester the figure was 696. *Resistance and Reformation* p. 231.

None of the parishes were either too large or too populous for a committed Protestant minister to make a difference. In *Contrasting Communities*, although her discussion focused mainly on the issue of dissent in the seventeenth century across a number of Cambridgeshire villages, Margaret Spufford suggested that dissent was more likely to flourish in large settlements and that 'a small settlement was better controlled, and therefore the inhabitants had less chance to pursue their beliefs'.¹¹ It is likely that the small number of households in these parishes aided the consolidation of Protestantism in this area.

Several parishes, particularly in Canterbury and Sandwich deaneries, were also relatively small in terms of wealth, and this could make securing high-quality leadership more difficult for the patrons. However, at the same time these areas also contained some of the wealthiest parishes in the diocese and, as will be shown, this also affected how religious change was implemented. As stated in the overview in chapter one, some areas, such as the marsh for example, had a concentration of archiepiscopal patronage.

Parish Leadership

The rural parishes of Canterbury deanery began the Elizabethan period in a slightly stronger position than their urban counterparts in terms of staffing. At Archdeacon Harpsfield's visitation of 1558, for example, only two of these parishes were without a minister, Fordwich and the tiny parish of Nackington.¹² However, in terms of the high turnover of personnel that has been reported for other areas they did not fare so well. Within the first five years of Elizabeth's reign every parish, with the possible exception of Thanington, definitely suffered either a period of vacancy or a change of minister. Since Thanington was served by curates, precise records showing who was working in the parish do not exist but, ironically, while it is not possible to be definitive, it is likely that the parish was better served in the crucial first five years of the reign than the other parishes in the deanery, at least in terms of having a man in post.

¹¹ Spufford, *Contrasting Communities*, p. 314.

¹² Whatmore, *Harpsfield's Visitation*, p. 340. At the time of the visitation, five of the urban parishes were completely unserved and two of the city's rectories and two vicarages were served by curates.

Following this high level of disruption and discontinuity, however, stability was achieved in most parishes by the mid-1560s, and by all by 1570, a situation which was more positive than the city centre parishes which had to wait until the 1580s for every vacancy to be filled with a vicar or rector. Although several parishes had no incumbent in these early years, curates were able to step in to fill the gaps. However, this does not mean that all was necessarily well, and the *Detecta* indicate that the late 1570s and 1580s were still difficult times for several parishes. At Fordwich in 1579, for example, the minister was presented for being overmuch given to drink and for only preaching three of the obligatory four sermons that year.¹³ At Nackington from 1582 to 1586 there are repeated complaints of services not being held and sermons not being preached.¹⁴ Only in the parishes of Blean and Hackington were there no complaints during the early years of the Settlement.

For the rural parishes of Sandwich deanery there were only three vacant parishes at the time of Harpsfield's visitation, Little Mongeham, West Langdon and Worth, suggesting that the deanery also began the Elizabethan era in a relatively strong position with regard to having a minister in place.¹⁵ While it is not always possible to tell the reason for a change in personnel, it would seem that in Sandwich in only three cases was a new appointment made within the early years of Elizabeth's reign due to the death of the previous incumbent, and in only one case did the death occur in 1558, suggesting that the deanery was not as badly affected by the flu epidemic which caused such discontinuity in parishes elsewhere in the country and in the diocese.¹⁶ However, this is not to say that Sandwich was unaffected by turnover of ministers in the crucial early years of the reign. There are examples of the Marian incumbent being deprived of his benefice, such as at East Langdon, a relatively small parish of twenty-two households where the Marian rector, Thomas Alstone, was deprived in 1563. As a non-resident rector it is debatable how much of an impact he had exerted on the parish during the period of his incumbency, it being recorded in the

¹³ X.1.2, fol. 58.

¹⁴ X.1.2, fol. 118; X.2.8. fols 8, 40, 40v, 107v.

¹⁵ Whatmore, *Visitation*, pp. 31 and 38.

¹⁶ Stephen Nethersole of Waldershare died in 1558; John Crofte of Walmer and Richard Stertover of Knowlton both died in 1562.

1557 visitation that he *'non residet nec fuit hic super beneficia a tempore inductionis'*.¹⁷ At Eastry John Lawson was deprived in 1561.¹⁸

Half of the parishes for which there is clear evidence experienced some continuity over the period, indicating that the turnover which existed in the deanery was not as large as at Canterbury.¹⁹ It might be assumed that this would encourage conservative attitudes to linger for longer in these places, but there is also evidence that the early influence of Archbishop Cranmer which has been identified in the town of Sandwich was also operating in the countryside. For example, Cranmer collated Roger Jackson to the parish of Barfreston in 1534, who remained in the parish until his death in 1564.²⁰ He also served as vicar of Shepherdswell during this period. Jackson clearly held strong Protestant beliefs since during Mary's reign he was presented for pulling down the rood of Barfreston church and breaking it into pieces.²¹ In his will, written in 1564, he committed his soul to 'almightie God trusting to be saved by the deathe and passyon of Jesu Christ my onlie saviour and redemer'.²² As an unmarried man, having provided for his housekeeper, he left the rest of his goods jointly to the ministers of Eythorne and Tilmanston, William Watson and Thomas Lilforth. By the mid-1560s the deanery was experiencing some stability, with every parish served by an incumbent who remained for at least the next ten years.

Of the fifteen parishes of Romney Marsh none was officially vacant at Harpsfield's visitation in 1557. Some of the parishes were forced to share their curate, such as at Midley where, although Martin Collins served as rector from 1546 to 1569, in the archdiaconal visitation of 1557 it was noted that *'curatus nullus sed cura desseruitur per curatum de Veteris Romeneye alternis vicibus'*.²³ However, in this case the very small number of communicants should be taken into consideration since even without illness and other legitimate reasons for not being at church, the congregation

¹⁷ Whatmore, *Visitation*, p. 37.

¹⁸ CCEd, 'John Lawson', Person ID: 46142.

¹⁹ The parishes which experienced continuity during the first five years of Elizabeth's reign were: Tilmanstone, Stonar, Ripple, Ringwould, Ham, Great Mongeham, Eythorne, Betteshanger, Barfreston.

²⁰ Whatmore, *Visitation*, p. 42.

²¹ C. Eveleigh Woodruff, 'Extracts from Original Documents Illustrating the Progress of the Reformation in Kent', *Arch Cant*, 31 (1915), 92-120 (p.109).

²² PRC/17/38/77.

²³ Whatmore, *Visitation*, p. 163.

would only ever amount to a tiny handful of people. Again, there is some evidence of instability amongst the marsh parishes, with half of the parishes where it is possible to be sure having to deal with a change of incumbent within the first five years of the reign. For example, the vicar of Brenzett, who had served the parish since the 1540s, died in 1562, and in 1563 the parish of Ivychurch saw the death of John Armerer who had served the parish since 1555 following the resignation of the elderly diplomat, Nicholas Wootton. The ministers of both Burmarsh and Dymchurch resigned their cure in 1563 and both then disappear from view, and, although there is no direct evidence as to the reason why, it is possible that this was down to an unwillingness to co-operate with the new regime. St Mary in the Marsh also saw a change of incumbent in 1559.²⁴ It is not clear exactly when the rector Thomas Griffith was collated to the parish, but in the archidiaconal visitation of 1557 he had been described as 'egrotat' and he was certainly dead by 1559.²⁵ The marsh was also affected by the deprivations which occurred at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign for those who felt unable to accept the Oath of Supremacy. Robert Hill, for example, one of the Six Preachers of Canterbury Cathedral who had been appointed to the parish of Old Romney by Mary in 1557, was deprived of the cure in 1560.²⁶

In terms of having a minister in place, therefore, the evidence shows that all three deaneries experienced relatively high levels of instability in the very early years of the Settlement but that in the majority of cases stability had been achieved by the mid or late 1560s. On the one hand, although the instability must have been detrimental to the smooth re-introduction of Protestantism, it also meant that in a large number of parishes there was a real opportunity for change. From the later 1560s, in addition to greater stability in terms of incumbents, there was also a significant increase in the qualifications that these incumbents possessed. In line with national trends, in the early years following the Settlement ministers in these parishes were unlikely to have a university degree but numbers of graduates increased steadily so that by the early seventeenth century there was only one incumbent who did not possess a university qualification. Patrick Collinson noted the efforts that Archbishop

²⁴ CCEd, 'Thomas Chapman', Person ID: 39521; 'John Armerer', Person ID: 37717; 'Ralph Whitlyn', Person ID: 76363; 'William Best', Person ID: 67629.

²⁵ Whatmore, *Visitation*, p. 318.

²⁶ CCEd, 'Robert Hill', Person ID: 65691.

Grindal in particular made to improve the ministry, suggesting that ‘in placing graduate ministers, Grindal had an eye to the strategic urban parishes’.²⁷ Although the numbers here are small, there are hints that Grindal was also using his patronage effectively among the rural parishes of the diocese. During his short time in office there were eleven appointments to these parishes, of which one was DD, five were MA, one was BD and one was a Six Preacher at the Cathedral. Of the remaining three parishes, two had lay patrons.²⁸ This was impressive. However, as the table below indicates, the greatest change came during the archiepiscopate of John Whitgift.²⁹

	1563	1583	1603	1623
DD	1	0	5	8
MA/BD	0	2	2	0
MA	4	6	17	23
MD	0	0	0	1
BD	1	1	1	1
BA	0	3	5	4
LIT	0	0	1	0
No qualification	32	26	6	1

Table 1: Qualifications of incumbents

This data highlights the significance of location and indicates, again, that the diocese of Canterbury was much better placed than some other dioceses for the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism. For example, in 1563 the number of university-educated clergy in these parishes was almost identical to that of the diocese of Durham, but, as Jane Freeman has shown, by 1578 the percentage in Durham had risen to only twenty two percent and by the early 1660s was still at only sixty percent.³⁰ Kenneth Fincham noted how bishops in some poorer upland areas were still struggling to ordain well qualified men even into the early years of the seventeenth

²⁷ Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519 – 1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (1979), p. 209.

²⁸ The ministers were from Canterbury deanery: William Smith, BD (lay), Simon Somersall (lay), John Bridges, MA (Abp). From Lympe deanery: Richard Storer, Six Preacher (D&C), Israel Pownall, MA (Abp), Henry Robinson, DD (Abp), Thomas Bowsfield, MA (Abp), Richard Topcliffe, MA (Abp), Richard Fountain (Lay). From Sandwich deanery: John Seller, MA (Abp), James Aucher (Abp).

²⁹ As a comparison, of Canterbury’s fifteen parishes in 1603 two men were MA and one was DD. In 1623 one was BMus, six were MA and one was DD.

³⁰ Jane Freeman, ‘The Parish Ministry in the Diocese of Durham, c. 1570-1640’ (PhD thesis, Durham University, 1979), p. 28; For the county of Essex James Oxley has shown that in the 1560s sixteen percent of the parochial clergy were graduates, rising to only seventeen percent in the 1570s; James E. Oxley, *The Reformation in Essex to the Death of Mary* (Manchester, 1965), p. 265.

century. He cites Bangor diocese where only forty-nine percent of ordinands between 1617 and 1625 were graduates and suggested that this was probably also the case in the dioceses of Llandaff, St Asaph and St David's.³¹

Since it was much more common for the most highly educated to serve more than one benefice, this number of university-educated ministers must be balanced against the issues associated with pluralism. In Canterbury deanery, for example, fifty-four percent of university educated ministers held another benefice, or had other responsibilities in addition to their Canterbury benefice, compared with twenty-eight percent of those who had no qualification. Looking at it positively, pluralism was not only an accepted way of providing leadership at parish level, but it was also a useful way of providing staffing in the difficult early years of Elizabeth's reign.³² In his study of pluralism during the archiepiscopate of Matthew Parker, John Daeley has shown that following the initial difficulties when pluralism rose sharply, Parker was able to bring about real change by the time of his death in 1575.³³ However, while this is true of Canterbury deanery, it is not reflected in the other two deaneries under examination here. On the marsh in 1561 ten of the fourteen parishes for which there is evidence were served by a non-pluralist incumbent, with three parishes vacant at that time. Twenty years later, although the vacancies had been filled, there were more pluralists, with seven of the fourteen parishes served by an incumbent who had two or more benefices. In Sandwich deanery in 1561 seven of the eighteen parishes had a non-pluralist incumbent with two parishes vacant. By 1583, again, the vacancies had been filled but the situation with regard to pluralism was not greatly improved, with eight parishes being served by a non-pluralist incumbent. Parker undoubtedly made advances in filling vacancies but, although the percentages of parishes served by a

³¹ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p. 182.

³² In Canterbury in 1563, for example, the incumbents of Blean, Thomas Macander, Fordwich, William Harwood, and Milton, Bartholomew Inkpen, served just the one parish, while for three of the parishes their rector or vicar combined this work with other responsibilities. Robert Pownall at Harbledown was also rector of St Clement's in Sandwich and in 1570 was to become a Six Preacher at the cathedral. William Darrell at Lower Hardes in addition to being a notorious pluralist, was also a prebendary at the cathedral. Thomas Becon at Sturry also served as a prebendary at the cathedral. Once the crisis early years had passed, the problem of pluralism was less marked in the rural parishes of Canterbury deanery than in the city centre and by 1583 only Hackington and Harbledown were served by pluralists: Richard Coste of Hackington was also vicar of St Margaret's in Canterbury and a minor canon and John Bridges of Harbledown was also vicar of Herne in the deanery of Bridge and Dean of Salisbury.

³³ Daeley, 'Matthew Parker', p. 44.

pluralist minister continued to fall slightly, this issue remained under the leadership of each of the subsequent archbishops.³⁴

One inevitable consequence of high levels of pluralism was non-residence, since a clergyman could clearly only live in one of his benefices at a time. In 1561, for example nine of the incumbents of marsh parishes were listed as not being resident. Whilst in some instances these men were living locally, at New Romney in the case of the rectors of Dymchurch and St Mary in the Marsh, more usually they were living further afield. Thus, the incumbents of Newchurch, Old Romney and Midley were resident in Stourmouth, Sandwich and Rochester Cathedral respectively. The rectors of Ivychurch, Burmarsh, and the vicar of Newchurch were living in London and John Bucke of Snargate was resident in Winchester. Significantly, of these non-resident ministers only the rectors of Dymchurch and Old Romney were employing a curate in 1561, and even here some reluctance to live in the parish can be seen since the curate of Dymchurch was recorded as living in the nearby town of Hythe rather than his own parish.³⁵ Although the number of incumbents who were not resident in their parish remained high, as time progressed they were more likely to be employing curates to serve the parish in their place.

Perhaps as a result of these high levels of pluralism and non-residence, there were problems throughout the 1570s and into the 1580s in several parishes where it was reported that preaching was not taking place on a regular basis. In Canterbury deanery this was not as much of a problem as elsewhere, but on several occasions the two perpetual curacies reported difficulties. In 1584, for example, the parishioners of Nackington were complaining that they had had no services on Wednesdays and Fridays, a problem caused by the lack of a curate, and that on occasions the church wardens reported that the prayers were said by 'our elder'.³⁶ The following year the parishioners had their own curate, but were still unhappy, reporting that since the minister had arrived there had been no homilies read, no evensong on Sundays and

³⁴ In the rural parishes overall, fifty-five percent were served by a non-pluralist minister in 1583, fifty-three percent in 1603 and forty-seven percent in 1623.

³⁵ CCCC, MS 580c fols. 29v – 30v.

³⁶ X.2.8, fol. 8.

holidays and the minister was not catechising the youth.³⁷ A similar situation existed in Thanington at the same time, with the churchwardens presenting George Toftes, the curate, for the lack of sermons over the previous twelve months, the only sermon being at a burial of one of the parishioners.³⁸ After 1586 neither of these issues was mentioned again.

A lack of sermons was particularly in evidence in Sandwich deanery where during the 1570s and 1580s the Archdeacons' *Detecta* reveal that all but six of the parishes reported deficiencies.³⁹ This was caused by a variety of factors, either because of the advanced age of the incumbent, as with William Somersall at Sutton in 1577, or non-residence, as at Sholden in 1586, or simply lack of conscientiousness, as at Great Mongeham, where the incumbent reported there were no sermons as he was unable to find someone to preach.⁴⁰ By the beginning of the seventeenth century these presentments fall away sharply suggesting that it was not until this late date that a preaching ministry was widespread across these areas. An examination of preaching licences supports this view. At the time of the Parker Certificates of 1561 only twenty-three percent of these parishes had a preaching minister. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, this figure had risen to seventy-five percent.⁴¹

It is noteworthy that complaints about a lack of preaching was not such an issue on the marsh. In 1561, although only twenty-two percent of marsh parishes had a preaching minister, there were only three examples in the *Detecta* of parishes reporting a lack of preaching: Brookland and Newchurch reported in 1569 that there were no sermons, and Dymchurch reported the deficiency in the 1570s.⁴² As

³⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 40v.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, fol 6.

³⁹ The parishes which did not report problems were Eastry, Knowlton, Ham Shepherdsweil, Ripple and Little Mongeham. The reforming credentials of two of the incumbents are hinted at. For example, Thomas Pawson at Eastry was a known non-conformist; Christopher Burton was presented in 1586 for not wearing the surplice (X.2.5, fol. 36).

⁴⁰ X.1.16, fols 11 and 54, X.2.5. fols 4 and 19v.

⁴¹ CCA- DCb V.V.9; Across the diocese as a whole, twenty-three percent of parishes had a preaching minister in 1561. By 1603, this figure had risen to seventy-seven percent, a figure which compares favourably with several other areas of the country: for example, while the percentage for Salisbury, Ely, Bangor, Rochester, Lincoln and York was over seventy in each case, for a number of dioceses, such as Gloucester, Hereford and Lichfield, Worcester and Durham, the figure was less than fifty percent. (My thanks to Kenneth Fincham for these figures taken from Harl. MS 280).

⁴² Hussey, 'Archbishop Parker's Visitation, 1569', pp. 113 and 115; X.1.17, fol.31.

happened elsewhere across the diocese, the numbers of preaching incumbents on the marsh rose significantly as the sixteenth century progressed so that by 1603 seventy-three percent of parishes were served by a preaching incumbent. This is not to say that these men were always resident on the marsh, and, in fact, non-residence in these parishes remained an issue. Despite this, the *Detecta* suggest a more positive situation here, particularly when compared with Sandwich deanery, and this may have been due to the greater use of curates on the marsh from the late 1560s onwards. Given deficiencies in the evidence, it is not always easy to identify the exact role played by curates, but it is clear that the work of these men was significant in the consolidation of Protestantism at parish level. The next section will examine the role played by curates and, since the employment of these clergymen was more prevalent on the marsh than in other areas of the diocese, the examination of the role will focus specifically on curates who served in this area.

The Role of the Curate

There are several reasons why the employment of curates may have been so high on the marsh. There were more very lucrative parishes here and more parishes in the patronage of the archbishops. This attracted a large number of high-status clergymen who were in a position to appoint a curate to serve in their place while they concentrated on other responsibilities elsewhere. Whereas across the diocese as a whole forty-eight percent of parishes were worth less than £10, on the marsh, if the ruined parishes are excluded, there were only two parishes with an income of less than £10 and four with an income of more than £20 per year. A good example is the parish of Ivychurch within the gift of the archbishops which was listed at £44 6s 4d in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. Here, after the death of the Marian incumbent in 1563, each of the following four rectors could be described as high-status and each one employed a series of curates.⁴³ Only five of the diocese's two hundred and fifty-seven parishes was worth a higher sum. Not every parish on the marsh was served by curates but, overall,

⁴³ Andrew Peerson, BD (1563 – 1589) was a canon at the Cathedral; Henry Wayland, MA/BD (1589 – 1614) was a Six Preacher; John Nidd, DD (1614 – 1615) was a canon at the Cathedral; John Sandford, MA (1615 – 1629) was chaplain to Archbishop Abbot and canon at the Cathedral.

just under half of incumbents of marsh parishes employed at least one curate during their incumbency.⁴⁴

Another significant factor which made this area distinctive was the physical environment, an environment which was so unpleasant that it discouraged some incumbents from making their home in the benefice. William Lambarde summed this up succinctly in his *Perambulation of Kent* written in 1537, describing the area as ‘bad in winter, worse in summer and at no time good’.⁴⁵ By the eighteenth century, when Edward Hasted wrote his survey of Kent, little had changed. In his opinion both the air and the water in Burmarsh, for example, made ‘dreadful havoc on the health of the inhabitants of this sickly and contagious country, a character sufficiently corroborated by their pallid countenances and short lives’. Similarly at Snave, described as ‘much the same as Brenset last described’, where there was no village and a just a number of ‘straggling houses’ along the green besides the church but ‘nothing further worth mention in it’. In a similar way, Snargate was described as a ‘very forlorn, unhealthy place partaking of the same bad qualities of both air and water as the neighbouring parishes of the marsh, and if possible to a greater degree, for the whole is an entire flat of marshes several of which lie so low as to become swampy.’⁴⁶

Difficulties in recruiting suitable men continued throughout the period, and even from the last quarter of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when recruitment was no longer a serious issue elsewhere in the diocese, problems remained on the marsh. Whereas examples of long vacancies were rare, non-residence remained high and there are several instances in the *Detecta* indicating that even where non-resident incumbents were willing, they could still find it difficult to find suitable replacements. In 1581 in the parish of Brookland, for example, the complaints at the visitation were heartfelt. The parish complained about the absence of their minister, requesting that:

we maye have iustyce that these faultes maye be amended for yt is not without greate cause we complayne for this is not the first tyme we have lacket a mynyster. We are

⁴⁴ There were ninety-one incumbents who served marsh parishes over the period. Of these, thirty-seven employed ninety-seven curates between them.

⁴⁵ Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, p.181.

⁴⁶ Hasted, *History and Topographical Survey of Kent, Volume 8*, pp. 376, 447, 301.

used as no paryshe is the lyke for the benefyce is well able to mayntayne a mynyster contynnuallye and not to be served with the sexten or ells to have no servyce.⁴⁷

The churchwardens went on to say that if it were not possible for the archdeacon to amend the situation the parishioners would take the matter personally to the archbishop. The vicar, Richard Pillsworth, answered that at the times mentioned in the presentment he was unable to find a minister who would serve, although he did make it clear to the court that he had since appointed a Mr Baldock to work in the parish.⁴⁸ This example demonstrates the frustration that could be felt at parish level when incumbents took the income but did not provide the required service, but it also indicates the high level of conformity which existed in the parish at the time. Having vented their frustration, the churchwardens then presented the man who had stepped in to take the services, which included marriage, baptism and the burial service, since he knew that it was forbidden for him to do so.⁴⁹ A similar situation was reported from the parish of Snargate in 1587. When the churchwardens presented that they had not always had the services to which they were entitled, the response from the rector, Nicholas Geer, was that he had agreed with 'two or three mynysters' to serve the cure but they had all disappointed him.⁵⁰ The following year when he was criticised again, this time for not keeping hospitality as he should have done, he was explicit that it was for reasons of his health that he did not live in the parish, although again he did state that he had by this time been able to appoint a curate in his stead.⁵¹

In 1942 E.R. Brinkworth described the parish curate as 'a half-literate, ill-paid hireling constantly on the move from place to place'.⁵² There may have been some to whom this criticism was appropriate, but this was not necessarily the case on the marsh. As occurred elsewhere, a number of curates appear briefly in the record as serving one particular parish and then disappear from view. This accounted for thirty-seven percent of the curates who were licensed to serve in marsh parishes. While many of these men may have simply decided to pursue employment elsewhere, it is

⁴⁷ X.1.17, fol. 54.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 56; Richard Pillsworth, CCEd Person ID: 38928; William Baldock, CCEd Person ID: 38037.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fol.56v.

⁵⁰ X.3.3, fol. 16v.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, fol.35.

⁵² E. R. Brinkworth ed., *The Archdeacon's Court: Liber Actorum 1584 Volume 2* (Oxford: 1942) p. vii.

also likely that numbers of them succumbed to the difficult living conditions that existed on the marsh. The unhealthy environment which contributed to the high number of non-resident incumbents is also likely to have resulted in a higher than average death toll amongst the curates who lived in the parishes they served. In a study of death and disease in the south east of England, Mary Dobson has described Romney Marsh as the most deadly place in the country and has suggested that life expectancy may have been as low as twenty five to thirty years.⁵³ In addition to the usual array of infectious diseases, the marsh was also affected by malaria and, since the native population would have built up some resistance to the disease, it was newcomers such as these clergymen who were least likely to survive an attack. Because of the nature of the sources it is very difficult to know whether these curates moved away or died in the parish, but a comparison of the movement of marsh incumbents may provide some hints. It is clear that a higher than average number of incumbents moved from their marsh parish relatively quickly, at least in comparison with those who worked in Canterbury and Sandwich deaneries. Thirty-six percent left the marsh within five years following their collation or institution, a figure which is slightly higher than the thirty percent from Canterbury and Sandwich. However, if those incumbents who employed a curate, and who therefore might be supposed to have spent most of their time away from the marsh are excluded, the figure rises to fifty-eight percent. Clearly, this may or may not have been the same for the curates, but it is indicative when taken together with descriptions of the healthiness of marsh life.

The case of John Streating, who worked in the marsh parish of Ivychurch, provides an interesting example of someone who saw himself as 'ill-paid' but who was certainly not 'half literate' nor 'constantly on the move'. Streating, who had gained an MA in 1617, wrote to Sir Edward Dering in 1641 requesting his help. He testified to the length of time he had spent as a curate, eight years at Bishopsbourne under the prebendary John Warner and eighteen years at Ivychurch, first under the prebendary

⁵³ Mary J Dobson, 'Death and Disease on Romney Marsh in the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth centuries in Romney Marsh: Environmental change and Human Occupation', in *Environmental Change and Human Occupation*, pp. 165 and 167.

John Sandford and then the prebendary Thomas Jackson.⁵⁴ Despite the high status and the potential connections of all three men, Streating stated 'yet never could I get any preferment under them (though I have had many good words and faire promises from them)'. He requested some help towards 'some small benefice' or 'an augmentation of meanes allowed me in the cure of Iyechurch' which, he says, was worth almost £300 per year, from which he was only given £30. It is significant that Streating makes it clear that he lived on the marsh even though it is 'an unhealthful place and among rude and ill-nurtured people for the most part'.⁵⁵ This incident sums up several of the issues which many of the marsh parishes faced. Their wealth attracted high-status clergymen but these men were less likely to be resident.

This is just one example, and not necessarily typical. Curates were often less well educated than the incumbents who employed them, particularly during the sixteenth century before the rise in educational standards meant that a degree was almost a requirement for securing a benefice. Over the whole period there were ninety-seven appointments of curates to marsh parishes involving eighty-three individual men, and of these thirty-nine percent held a qualification. This compares to sixty-three percent of incumbents. The level of qualification achieved also differed between curate and incumbent. Almost half of the curates with a qualification were Master of Arts with the rest holding a Bachelor's degree. In comparison, just fourteen percent of incumbents had only a Bachelor degree, and twenty-four percent were doctors of Divinity. Although they were less well educated as a body than the incumbents who employed them, the level of education that the curates had received was, nevertheless, far from negligible.

Almost a third of the men who worked in these parishes were also licensed schoolmasters. Gareth Owen in his study of curates working in London suggested that this was a widespread means of supplementing a meagre curate's income, but given

⁵⁴John Streating (CCEd Person ID: 17195); John Warner (CCEd Person ID: 3243), First Prebend, rector of Bishopsbourne from 1619 until his death in 1638; John Sandford (CCEd Person ID: 38344), Sixth Prebend, collated rector of Iyechurch 1615, died 1629; Thomas Jackson (CCEd Person ID: 50065), Third Prebend, rector of Iyechurch 1619 to 1647.

⁵⁵ L. B. Larking (ed), *Proceedings Principally in the County of Kent in Connection with the Parliament Called in 1640 and Especially with the Committee or Religion Appointed in that Year* (Camden Society, Old Series, 80 (1862), p. 154.

the stress placed upon education for all by reforming Protestants, it will also have benefitted the communities in which they worked.⁵⁶ This was a feature of all three of the areas from the 1580s, with the marsh parishes more affected than the other two areas.⁵⁷

Occasionally, as in the case of Streating, it is possible to determine that the same man stayed for several years in the same parish. Other examples include John Simons, who served in Burmarsh from at least 1586 to 1592, and William Richards of St Mary in the Marsh, who served from at least 1611 to 1617.⁵⁸ However, in most cases it is difficult to be sure exactly how long a curate remained in his post since, while the date he took up the post is available from his licence to serve, the date he left the parish is not usually known exactly. The *Liber Cleri* provide useful information by listing who was in post at the time of the visitation, but not the date of leaving. Although very occasionally a curate would move on to a benefice, this only happened for five men over the period and so was clearly not a career option which was generally available.⁵⁹

It is possible that the impact of the high number of curates discouraged the forging of strong relationships between minister and congregation and this may have led to incidents where a lack of respect for the minister and also for the institution of the church is apparent. An example is the parish of Brookland at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In 1600 there were issues over the wine for communion. In that year John Englet was presented because he:

at the communion doth use to keep back the wine from the minister not allowing sufficient but using to keep the bottle under his cloke doth power it into communion cupp sparingly and pinchingly and that w[hi]ch remayneth doth carlect away to his own use.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Gareth Owen, 'Parochial Curates in Elizabethan London', *JEH*, 10 (1959), pp. 66-73 (p. 68).

⁵⁷ See table 5 in the Appendix, p. 285, for a list of the curates and the cures they served.

⁵⁸ John Simons (CCEd Person ID: 38495); William Richards (CCEd Person ID: 38175)

⁵⁹ Of these five men two were originally curates in the parish of Brookland, two from Old Romney and one from Ivychurch.

⁶⁰ X.4.2, fol. 86.

In 1616 there were again issues with the wine. At this time the curate presented two men for 'unseemly carrying themselves at communion on Whit Sunday in drinking between them two almost a whole pint of wine.'⁶¹ The presentment includes a letter from the curate saying they might deny it but it is true, again indicating a lack of respect. During these sixteen years the parish was served by five different curates.

There is, therefore, some justification in Brinkworth's claim that curates were likely to be 'on the move', although often this was fairly local with several of the curates having two or more curacies across the marsh itself. Nevertheless, it is clear that on the marsh these men did fulfil a vital function and they certainly were more than just mere 'hirelings'. Partly due to the work of curates this section has demonstrated that problems of staffing the parishes were not as acute here as in some places. It is true that in contrast to the towns, the 1570s and 1580s saw several parishes still struggling to receive even the statutory number of sermons, but by the beginning of the seventeenth century this was no longer being presented as an issue.

It has been suggested that Protestantism was assimilated more slowly in the countryside than in the towns. As will be seen below, there is some truth in this with regard to this group of rural parishes, although, again, the evidence suggests clear differences between the three areas.

Were the rural parishes more conservative than the urban parishes?

In Canterbury deanery conservative influences can be identified in several parishes in the very early years after the Settlement. Blean, for example, seems to have embraced the reintroduction of Catholicism during the Marian interlude rather enthusiastically and conservative attitudes remained into the early 1560s. Whilst the church building, described by Hasted as 'small and mean', was in need of repair in 1557, the equipment necessary for catholic worship seems to have been more complete than in many other parishes at this time, and this despite the small number of parishioners. The parish was required to provide a veil for the rood and to paint the rood and provide a lock and key for the font, but this was all. The will of George Higgs, the first Elizabethan vicar, written in October 1558, shows a conservative attitude,

⁶¹ X.6.1, fol. 27.

requesting 'o[u]r blessed ladye and all the holy companye of heaven' to pray for him.⁶² This will was witnessed by Christopher Badcock, vicar of Westgate in Canterbury and when Badcock came to write his own will in 1565, it also began with an uncompromisingly conservative preamble invoking the 'intercession and prayer of the most blessed vyrgyn mary, mother of our savyor and redeamer Jhesus christe by the intercessyon and prayer of all the holy company of heven and by the intercessyon and prayer of the holy catholyc church of chryste whom I beseche all to pray for me'.⁶³ This indicates some of the conservative links between the city and the rural parishes in the very early years of the reign. There is no evidence, and it must remain conjecture but, given the proximity of the parish of Blean to the city centre, it is very possible that parishioners may have been involved in the midsummer celebrations in the city in 1560 which had so upset John Bale.

An examination of wills indicates that, while Catholic ideas lingered longer in certain rural parishes it also challenges the view that people in the countryside were necessarily slower to embrace Protestant ideas than their neighbours in the towns. In Canterbury deanery thirty wills were proved between 1558 and 1563, in Sandwich deanery forty-eight, and on the marsh forty-three wills were proved during this time.⁶⁴ In Canterbury deanery the practice of leaving money to provide for funeral masses disappeared surprisingly quickly, with only three of the ten wills of 1559 stipulating such services. One of these was the minister of Hackington, Thomas Nichols. In his will written in May of that year he bequeathed his soul to:

almightie God, trusting to be saved by the mercye of the most blessed blode and passyon of my savyour and redeemer Iesus Chryste, my sowle to be presented unto him by the intersession and prayers of ye blessed virgyn Mary Mother of our saviour Iesus Christ, of all the hollye company of heaven and by the intercessions and prayers of the holly catholic church of Chryste.

⁶² PRC/17/34/271b.

⁶³ PRC/10/1/83.

⁶⁴ Overall, the figures show that in Canterbury deanery twenty-seven percent of wills in the earlier period contained some reference to Catholic ideas, either in the preamble or by reference to masses or month's mind. The last example was in 1560. In the parishes of the marsh forty-four percent contained reference to Catholic ideas, the last being in 1563. In Sandwich deanery, the figure is thirty-three percent and the last example was in 1560.

He asked for ten trental masses and a mass of requiem and a dirige to be said and sung at his burial 'for my soule and for all xtian souels'.⁶⁵ Gregory Huson was another who asked for a dirige and a mass to be sung by note and four low masses for his funeral, and there were two other testators who did not ask for masses but wrote overtly Catholic preambles which made their conservative religious views clear.⁶⁶ The last will to include allusions to Catholic belief was that of Thomas Milles of Blean who bequeathed his soul to 'almightie God and to all the companye of heven' in 1561.⁶⁷ Of the rest, the overwhelming impression is that of conformity, with the majority of wills from the early years of Elizabeth's reign including only very simple preambles and no mention of Mary or the Saints or the good works that may have quickened the testator's passage through purgatory.

An examination of wills proved in the deanery in the 1590s indicates how views continued to change over time. Forty-three wills were proved during this decade, of which seven were nuncupative. A number, as in the earlier period, contained a very short, simple preamble, such as 'I commend my soul to almighty God and my body to be buried....' Whereas many of the preambles were similar to the non-Catholic wills of the earlier period, by the 1590s there were subtle differences indicating the consolidation of Protestantism in the parishes by this date. Three of the testators refer to the precariousness of life in a way that is not evident in the earlier group, for example, Thomas Lawse who began his will with the words 'All flesh is grass and nothing more certain to man than death, and nothing more uncertain than the hour of death'.⁶⁸ Several testators also referred explicitly to the hope that they would be among the elect at the time of their death, and in these cases there is also often a desire to speak to those still living to encourage them to live a godly life. An example is Elizabeth Johnson of Fordwich, who in 1592 bequeathed goods to her son 'wishing godes holye spirite and that he may with the rest of my children live in the feare of god'.⁶⁹ Although at this date a belief in the efficacy of good works for salvation is missing, and there is usually an emphasis on the fact that salvation is only through the

⁶⁵ PRC/17/33/216.

⁶⁶ PRC/17/33/138.

⁶⁷ PRC/17/35/174b.

⁶⁸ PRC/32.37/196b, Blean, 1594.

⁶⁹ PRC/17/48/238a.

death and passion of Jesus Christ and 'no other means', there are still testators who bequeath money for the poor or for repairs to the parish church. There is also a small number of testators who specifically request that a sermon be preached at the time of their funeral, such as John Harrison of Sturry in 1593, who asked for his executrix to appoint a 'learned preach[er] to expound som p[ar]cell of the scriptures at my burial for the good instruction of such as shall accompany my body to the earth'.⁷⁰

On the marsh traditional beliefs seem to have lingered slightly longer and wills overtly demonstrating Catholic beliefs were still being proved as late as 1562 and 1563. The parishes concerned were Brookland, within the patronage of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, and Ivychurch and Newchurch, both of which were in the gift of the Archbishop. It is clear that in the case of Brookland the Dean and Chapter were using this fairly wealthy parish as a means of rewarding Cathedral personnel whose other responsibilities led to high levels of non-residence.⁷¹ Brookland is also a good example which demonstrates the rollercoaster of Tudor religious policy. During the reign of Edward VI, a cathedral canon, William Devenish, was instituted to the benefice, to be deprived of the same after the accession of Mary. Devenish was succeeded by Robert Hill who was himself deprived in 1560. He in turn was succeeded by the arch-pluralist, William Darrell, who was not resident in the parish. By the early 1560s the people of Brookland could perhaps have been forgiven for not quite knowing what they were supposed to believe, or for supposing that the latest round of religious changes may not have been there to stay.

In contrast to this the rural parishes of Sandwich show evidence that Protestantism was established from an early date in this area, reflecting the early consolidation of Protestantism in the town. In the first few months after the Settlement some conservative views are evident, more so than in the town, but these disappear very quickly. Thus, in 1558 eleven of the fifteen wills have either an explicitly Catholic preamble, or the testator bequeathed money for masses and diriges at their burial, their month's and twelve month's mind. Two of these testators, John Fuller of Deal and Margaret Sutton of Eastry, bequeathed their soul in a traditional manner but

⁷⁰ PRC/17/49/297.

⁷¹ The parish of Brookland is listed at £17 8s in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. Between 1558 and 1625 two of the six vicars were prebendaries and one was one of the cathedral's preachers.

did not provide for masses to be said on their behalf.⁷² But not only are there no explicitly Catholic wills after 1560, there are also hints of strong Protestant leadership in several of the rural parishes. Of the wills proved during 1559 several have links to the rector of Deal, John Croft, and it could be that he had been exerting some kind of Protestant influence during the years of Mary's reign. The parish stands out for the fact that of the fourteen wills proved between 1558 and 1563 only one, that of John Fuller written in October 1558, has an explicitly Catholic preamble and only one testator, Leonard Smythe, left money for three burial masses, specifically requesting that one be in the name of Jesus, one in the name of the Virgin Mary and one other.⁷³ Apart from these two men none of the other wills contain references to either the virgin, the saints, or masses for the burial, month's or twelve month's mind. It seems likely, therefore, that Croft was influencing the religious outlook of the parish. He took over from Hugh Glasier as rector in 1559 but he had been active in the area during the 1540s and 1550s.⁷⁴ Another of the non-Catholic wills from 1558 was by Thomas Horne of Great Mongeham. Croft witnessed several wills from the parish of Great Mongeham and his own will written in 1562 was witnessed by the rector of that parish, Thomas Burton, indicating the links that existed between these two parishes at that time.⁷⁵

Occasionally a parishioner seems to have been somewhat confused, for example, John Bigg of East Langdon, who wrote his will in December 1563. Bigg bequeathed his soul to:

almighty god who hathe created me and all mankind and to his sonne Jesus Xpe who hath redeamed me and all mankynde and to the holye goste who sanctifyeth me and all the elect of god.

⁷² For comparison, eight wills from St Mary's parish were proved between 1558 and 1564 and not one of these invoked Mary and the saints in the preamble. In only one was money bequeathed for masses to be said at the time of the testator's month's mind; PRC/32/27/354 and 32/26/169b.

⁷³ PRC/32/27/345.

⁷⁴ Croft was also vicar of St Mary's Sandwich during the 1550s. See Chapter Four p. 7 for the early evangelical influence in this parish. (CCEd Person ID: 40481); Hugh Glasier (CCEd Person ID: 65651), a prebendary at the Cathedral was deprived in 1559.

⁷⁵ For example, James Holman, 1558, PRC/32/27/352; William Bewell, 1559, PRC/32/27/430; Richard Stoddard 1561, 32/29/44b; Alys Clement, 1560, Great Mongeham, PRC/17/34/148.

In his avoidance of mentioning the Virgin Mary and the holy company of heaven as was traditional, Bigg instead drew on the Holy Ghost and the elect of God. However, in addition, he left money for two bushels of barley and two bushels of wheat for drink and bread at his month's mind also suggesting a belief in the importance of good works for salvation. John Enyver was the rector of East Langdon from January of 1563 on the deprivation of the Marian incumbent, Richard Alstone.⁷⁶

While this examination of will preambles demonstrates that these communities responded quickly to changes in official policy, the evidence also illustrates the legitimacy of seeing conversion as a process as much as an event. This is particularly shown in the case of Thomas Lilford. Lilford served as vicar of Tilmanstone from 1554 until his death in 1586 and as rector of Betteshanger from 1564. He witnessed several wills in several parishes during the period, and can be seen as somewhat of a conservative influence during the early years of Elizabeth's reign. Every one of the wills he witnessed from the parishes of Tilmanstone, Betteshanger and also Northbourne and East Langdon included explicitly Catholic preambles and in every one money was also provided for the testator's month's mind and twelve month's mind. The will of John Roger of Betteshanger, written in May 1559 and witnessed by Lilford, indicates the ambiguity which could exist in these early years of the reign. Having acknowledged Elizabeth's supreme governorship 'in thinges ecclesiastical as temporal', Roger bequeathed his soul to God almighty, to the blessed virgin Saint Mary and to all the holy company in heaven. In terms of the services to pave his way into heaven he wrote that 'I will have at my forth fare, my month's mynd and 12 months mynde accordinge as the lawe will serve in masses or other charytable deedes at the discretion of my executrix at every tyme.....6s 8d'.⁷⁷

There was no ambiguity when Lilford came to write his own will in 1586. While he was clearly not a preacher himself since the churchwardens at Betteshanger complained in 1578 and again in 1581 that they had not had the quarterly sermons that they should have had, he nevertheless recognised the value of preaching since he

⁷⁶ CCEd, 'Richard Alstone', Person ID: 37699.

⁷⁷ PRC 17/35/43.

provided Nicholas Munday, rector of Barfreston, with a 'dubble duckett of gold' to preach a sermon at his funeral, and ended his will with:

And thus the lord of his infinite greate mercye and grace receyve my soule unto his blessed tuition and the same so placed amonge his electe children in his blessed kingdome of heaven, to whom be all laude, praise and everlastinge glore forever and ever amen.⁷⁸

This demonstrates how Lilford's views had changed over time. His openness to new ideas and willingness to learn from other clergymen in the area is also demonstrated by his involvement in 1572 in the prophesying movement in east Kent, having been one of the signatories of the 'Artycles agreed uppon by the mynysters of the Deanryes of Sandwich and others for due or orderly exersye or conference to be had among them'.⁷⁹

The view that the rural parishes were necessarily more conservative than the urban is also challenged by an examination of the *Detecta* where cooperation and conformity is much in evidence. In this respect, the parish of Old Romney might be seen as illustrative of many of the parishes under discussion here. Described by Hasted as having only about fifteen 'mean, stragglng' houses with the church in 'the middle of them and set in open, unsheltered flat marshland', the parish clearly started out in Elizabeth's reign with conservative leadership.⁸⁰ The first Elizabeth rector was Robert Hill who was deprived in 1560. Following this the parish was provided with two clearly Protestant ministers both of whom were associated with more radical parishes in Sandwich, John Steward and William Lotte. Following Lotte's death in 1568, Kenelm Digby was collated to the parish and remained in the benefice for the next thirty-five years, serving just this one parish during that time. Digby was a non-conformist, being described as such in Archbishop Parker's visitations of 1569 and 1573.⁸¹ He was also the subject of several presentments to the archdeacon's court, although the impression given is that members of the congregation were, on the whole, not unhappy with their minister. On several occasions he was presented for not wearing

⁷⁸ PRC 17/46/78.

⁷⁹ Clark, 'Prophesying Movement', p. 87.

⁸⁰ Hasted, *Survey of Kent*, pp. 439-445.

⁸¹ Daeley, 'Matthew Parker', p. 276.

the surplice, to which he responded that although it was true that he did sometimes omit to wear the surplice, he would always wear it during communion. It is surely telling that in 1584 the churchwardens were at pains to add that 'we think [this] to be of forgetfulness for he weareth it for the most times.'⁸² There must have been some support for his non-conformist attitudes within the parish, or at the very least support for him as a member of the community. During the same year Digby was also presented for not making the sign of the cross in baptism, for not catechising as he should according to the articles and for omitting certain parts of the Book of Common Prayer which 'he doth mislike..... in divers points.'⁸³ He admitted that on occasions he did leave out whole sections of the Prayer Book and sometimes changed some of the words to make a point. In the late 1580s there is an example of Digby refusing communion to a man refusing to live with his wife and the usual examples of immorality, but otherwise the presentments are remarkably quiet.⁸⁴

Indeed, in 1588 the presentment makes it clear that should there be any issues members of the parish were happy to address those issues themselves:

Touching the articles given us to enquire of we finde nothing worthie of complaine for reformation yet wee confesse that there is not anye thinge soe p[re]cislie observed as of o[u]r dutie yt showlde, and we earnestlie desire that if there be matters of great importance amisse as yet amongst us wee hope that brotherlye admonition will serve wch if yt doe not wee will further complaine and desire helpe to reforme that wch shalbee amysse'.⁸⁵

The impression given is that whatever was going on in the parish, in general terms, people were happy to conform and that they were also happy to tolerate their minister's tendency towards non-conformity. Perhaps above all they just wanted to be left alone and outside help would only be needed should brotherly admonition prove unsuccessful. It is interesting to note that in 1577 the churchwardens reported that even though a number of people had been negligent for the previous seven years in coming to church on holy days as well as Wednesdays and Fridays, they had not been

⁸² X.1.17, fol. 117v.

⁸³ Ibid., fol. 121.

⁸⁴ X.3.3, fol. 57v

⁸⁵ X.3.3, fol. 25.

presented for the fault and that their negligence was continuing.⁸⁶ Over the whole period only two men were presented for not attending church and both of these were also presented for immorality suggesting that theological disagreements may not have been the prime cause of their non-attendance.

Following Digby's death, the benefice was presented to Benjamin Carier, a Doctor of Divinity and high-status clergyman, who served as one of Archbishop Whitgift's chaplains, was a chaplain to Prince Henry and to King James and, from 1608 was also a prebendary at the Cathedral.⁸⁷ He was collated to the parish in 1603 and in 1613 he converted to Catholicism. It is interesting to consider the effect that this man had on the parish when he arrived given his conservative attitudes. There were at least six curates working in Old Romney during his incumbency.⁸⁸ Given his wider responsibilities and the fact that he appointed so many curates during his time at Old Romney, it is hard to quantify the impact he may have had on the parish. It would be good to know how carefully he chose those curates, how often he visited the parish and how often he preached there. In *A treatise* written in 1614 to explain his motivation in converting to Catholicism he stated that:

I am persuaded that the religion prescribed and practised by the Church of Rome is the true Catholic religion, which I will particularly justify and make plain from point to point, if God give time and opportunity, and therefore I cannot choose but persuade the people thereunto.⁸⁹

Yet, even after the previous forty-four years of solid Protestant leadership, even radical Protestant leadership, there is nothing in the *Detecta* that gives any indication that rector or curate was attempting to persuade the people of the truth of Catholicism or even that there had been any change in the tenor of the leadership of the parish. During Carier's incumbency six individuals were named as failing to attend church or failing to take communion, but of these one stayed away because of his excommunication, one is described as a fugitive, one a masterless man and one a

⁸⁶ X.1.13, fol. 44v.

⁸⁷ Anthony Ryan 'Benjamin Carier', *ODNB*.

⁸⁸ CCEd, 'Anthony Carrier' (1603), Person ID: 39491; 'Thomas Ballard, (1603)' Person ID: 2096; 'Bartholomew Newman' (1603), Person ID: 37903; 'Giles Harrison' (1603), Person ID: 41474; 'Thomas Wood' (1610), Person ID: 45260; 'John Hubart' (1612), Person ID: 41966

⁸⁹ *Carier, A treatise*, p. 40.

cripple who was 'both blind and lame and so cannot go'. For the other non-attenders no reason was given. If the preaching and leadership of the parish had taken on a more Catholic tone at this time the churchwardens did not allude to it. After Carier's deprivation in 1614, the new man, James Cleland, was collated to the parish by Archbishop George Abbot. Cleland, another high-status, ambitious clergyman, was vicar of Chartham at the same time, although there is no evidence that he employed curates to serve in his place at Old Romney. Cleland's writings suggest that he was uncontroversially Calvinist in outlook. Again, during his incumbency there is little evidence of any dissatisfaction or disrespect. There are several ways that this example might be interpreted. It could be argued that this demonstrates the deficiencies of using the *Detecta* as evidence of belief, since it may be that opposition existed but was simply not being reported. Alternatively, this could be seen as evidence of indifference. Whiting has suggested that 'in most regions of England, as in the South-West, the Reformation may have been less a transition from Catholicism to Protestantism than a decline from religious commitment into conformism and indifference' and it could be that this is what was happening.⁹⁰ However, it is the contention here that it is not necessarily valid to assume that a lack of opposition to religious change should be equated with indifference. A consideration of what it was that people wanted from the church and also what it meant to be a member of the church in England at this time might suggest a more positive interpretation. As Judith Maltby has convincingly argued it was perfectly possible for people to conform through conviction and not just through indifference.⁹¹

John Craig has suggested that 'at the heart of the relationship between ecclesiastical authority and local communities in the latter half of the sixteenth century was the problem of co-operation'.⁹² At Old Romney it seems that the congregation were able to cooperate effectively, but this was obviously not the case everywhere. The marsh parish of Burmarsh is a case where there is much evidence that cooperation was lacking. Following the appointment of Thomas Lane in 1593 there was continual discord and dispute in the parish and this lasted until his death in 1622. During the

⁹⁰ Whiting, *Blind Devotion*, p. 268.

⁹¹ Maltby, *Prayer Book and People*.

⁹² John Craig, 'Co-operation and initiatives: Elizabethan churchwardens and the parish accounts of Mildenhall', *Social History*, 18 (1993), 357-380 (p. 357).

1570s and 1580s the vicar had been repeatedly presented for his non-residence despite the fact that he served no other cure at this time, sermons were lacking, and the fabric of the church, chancel and vicarage house were all in some disrepair. The arrival of Thomas Lane heralded a more hands-on approach which did not seem to go down well amongst some of his parishioners. In his first year he was refusing communion to a number of the congregation although the churchwardens made it clear that they were unable to provide any reason why. Opposition to Lane came mainly from the members of one particular family who refused to accept his authority. For example, it was reported in 1596 that Christopher White had not received communion for the previous twelve months, came negligently to church and when he did come 'behaveth himself disorderly coming many times very late and manie times turning his back before the sermon be done'. In 1600 White was presented for calling Lane a 'counterfeit knave' and claiming that he taught false doctrine'.⁹³ That Lane's godly approach was more widely unpopular in the village is suggested by the tenor of a sermon which he preached in 1600 based on the story of Salome and the beheading of John the Baptist during which he said that 'none but hores and harlots and damned doggs in hell did use the exercise of daunceinge'. Unsurprisingly his words were reported to be to, 'the great offence of the said congregation'. It is likely that relationships were soured here by disputes over tithe as well as doctrine since, as Paula Simpson has shown, there were a relatively high number of tithe disputes in the parish.⁹⁴ But the example also hints at how important the choice of incumbent could be in determining the character of parish religion. The arrival of the non-conformist, Kenelm Digby, at Old Romney in 1568 does not appear to have caused too many issues and he seems to have been able to bring the congregation along the path of religious reform with him. At Burmarsh Lane's appointment led to conflict and antagonism from the very outset.

Across these rural parishes of the marsh as well as in Canterbury deanery, high levels of conformity are also indicated by low levels of non-attendance. In this respect, the situation which existed in Brookland was not untypical. Here in 1608 it was

⁹³ X.3.3, part 2 (1594) fol. 43; (1596) fols. 150, 170, 172; X.4.2. (1597) fols. 37v, 65, 65v, 93, 98, 98v; (1600) fols. 109, 113, 119, 129v. After 1611 there are fewer complaints.

⁹⁴ Paula Simpson, 'Custom and Conflict: Disputes over tithe in the Diocese of Canterbury 1501 – 1600' (PhD thesis, University of Kent, 1997) pp. 59 and 300.

reported that 'all our parishioners do diligently resort to our parishe church on sondays and do there abyde during sermon and service time except Thomas Norris and William Goare his wife who do stand excommunicate'.⁹⁵

As has been noted, the evidence from wills suggests that the rural parishes of Sandwich deanery conformed quickly to the Elizabethan Settlement, and this view is corroborated by an examination of the *Detecta*. Whereas the *Detecta* from the first years of Elizabeth's reign show that some areas, the city of Canterbury for example, included numbers of individuals who were reluctant to conform, this is rarely the case in Sandwich deanery. Instead, a significant focus in the early years, but one which did not diminish until the very end of the sixteenth century, was the fabric of the buildings. This highlights the poverty of several of the communities and the difficulties they faced. A typical example is Walmer. In 1578 the churchwardens presented that the chancel was in decay, lacking both tiling and glazing for the windows. The same complaint was repeated in 1580 and again in 1583.⁹⁶ In 1579 the parishioners of Woodnesborough were worried about the urgent repairs needed for their roof since 'when it rains it wetteth the communion table most unseemly' and in 1585 those of Eythorne were concerned about the possibility of birds coming in since 'the church is not sufficiently repaired, neither clenlie kept from pigeons and byrds donge'.⁹⁷ However, by the end of the sixteenth century these kinds of problems became far less serious and the report from Eythorne that the church was somewhat out of repairs in tiling 'the whiche we mean p[re]sentlie to do', became more typical.⁹⁸

It has been noted that the arrival of a godly minister could cause division and discord when the congregation did not share his level of commitment. There is some evidence of this happening in Sandwich deanery, for example at Coldred after the arrival of Mark Graceborow in 1603. Within a year of his arrival Graceborow was being presented for not wearing the surplice at public prayers and seldom at Holy Communion. He was also criticised for not saying the litany, neither reading the communication about sins, nor the Canons of 1604. He seems to have struggled to win

⁹⁵ X.4.2, part 2 fol. 158.

⁹⁶ X.1.16, fols 21v, 67, 141.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 44v. and X.2.5, fol. 6v.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 157v.

the respect of some of the parish. A real sense of grievance can be felt from his report in 1604 of the 'very notable abuse which hath bene offered in ye church and to my p[er]son, I mean in regard of my place and office'. In his presentment, Graceborow cites problems during catechism when some of the young men behaved irreverently and there were some who were 'froward in their answers, in behavior very scoffing, distempering the whole company of youth, refusing to be instructed'. On one occasion during evening prayer one of the young men came up behind Graceborowe, sat on the communion table and made faces behind his back 'to the offence of many'.⁹⁹ Whereas refusal to administer communion was not at all common in the deanery, Graceborowe is reported to have refused communion on two separate occasions. In 1604 he refused a servant to Mr Finch for some reason unknown to the churchwardens and in 1617 following some kind of falling out with Joane Rose, she having called him a 'scurvy fellow', he then refused her communion. Again, the churchwardens reported that although she presented herself for communion, she was put back by the minister 'we know not why'.¹⁰⁰ Graceborowe seems to have been a conscientious minister, but perhaps it was partly his earnestness which contributed to his problems. He also served as vicar of Sibbertswold from 1602 until his death in 1638. Here, there were no similar complaints suggesting that the Protestantism of Sibbertswold's congregation may have been more in line with Graceborowe's outlook than the inhabitants of Coldred.

In fact, there is more evidence from several parishes of the deanery, not of the problems that could occur when the congregation was less committed than their minister, but the problems that occurred when the congregation was more committed. An example is that of Northbourne and Sholden. Henry Sowthousand was collated to both parishes in 1563 and he remained in post for over forty years until his death in 1608 relieved both congregations from his lack-lustre leadership. A catalogue of deficiencies was reported over the period indicating that relationships between Sowthousand and members of his congregation were always problematic. He was described as a quarreller, and was presented himself in 1579, 1585, 1586, 1587, 1595

⁹⁹ Ibid., fol. 56v.

¹⁰⁰ X.5.7, part 1, fol. 196v; Part 2, fol. 8.

and 1602.¹⁰¹ The lack of respect that some of the congregation had for him is demonstrated by an incident of 1590 when John Hadley, who 'hath usuallie provided bread and wyne for the communion for the whole p[ar]ishe... porred beer into the communion cup and the minister ministered the wyne unto the communicants whereby there was beere ministered instead of wyne'.¹⁰²

When Sowthousand died in 1608 he was succeeded by Henoah Clapham who was of a very different character. On two occasions he had spent time in prison, in 1593 as a result of his Presbyterian views, and again in 1603 for teachings which contradicted the official measures put in place by the authorities to deal with the plague. During the 1590s he had lived for a while with English exiles in Amsterdam, although his views seemed to have mellowed over time and it may be, as Alexandra Walsham suggests, that his appointment to Northbourne, through the patronage of Archbishop Bancroft, was due in part to his agreement to turn tables and to publish and preach against the Puritans and separatists in East Kent.¹⁰³ Clapham wrote many books, including two after his return from Amsterdam. These last two take the form of a series of dialogues which Clapham uses to explain some of the contemporary religious opinions which had seduced him and which were currently seducing others within the church.¹⁰⁴ He ends the *Error on the Right Hand* with the conviction that the church in England was the one true church:

May God for his sonnes sake reduce other wandring soules to peaceable unitie with our church; that so we may be as one flocke, under that our great archbishop of our soules, Christe Jesus'.¹⁰⁵

Although Clapham did become embroiled in legal action after 1610 to clear his name following accusations that he had fallen from his horse in a drunken state, his time in Kent does seem to have been one of 'peaceable unitie', at least in comparison with the troubles of Southouse's incumbency. Clapham was deprived of the benefices in 1614,

¹⁰¹ X.1.16, fols 36v, 96v, 155; X.2.5 fols 26, 34, 36v, 162, 197.

¹⁰² Ibid., fol. 98v.

¹⁰³ Alexandra Walsham, 'Henoah Clapham', *ODNB*.

¹⁰⁴ Henoah Clapham, *Error on the right hand, through a preposterous Zeale Acted by way of dialogue* (1608); *Error on the left hand, through a frozen securitie Howsoever hot in opposition, when Satan so hears them. Acted by way of dialogue* (1608).

¹⁰⁵ Clapham, *Error on the right hand*, p. 63.

and it is significant that within two years of his departure the churchwardens at Sholden were complaining again about a lack of sermons in the parish. A sense of their frustration can be felt from the presentment:

We have not on Sundays any morning prayer at all for which we have heretofore complained of by way of p[re]sentment but yet have fownd no redresse. Therefore now beinge much grieved in general for our want thereof and being inforced to go to other parishes to hear the sam. Ou[r] living of Sholden without Norborne being as wee take it worth £30 a yeare and deserveinge to be supplied therewith we live in hope of an injunction for serveing on sondaies in the forenoone and do p[re]sent the same.¹⁰⁶

A similar situation existed in the parish of Woodnesborough. Here, the presentation of the sixteen-year-old Walter Harrison in 1568 was followed by continual criticism of his leadership. Following his death in 1597 and the appointment of James Watts, the fractious nature of the presentments disappears. Watts was university educated, and he served this one parish until his death in 1620. He was a preacher, and in place of complaints that the parish was not receiving regular sermons, there were two occasions at the beginning of the seventeenth century where Watt's sermons were perhaps a little too long for some in the parish. In 1600 three parishioners were presented for leaving the sermon before the end, and in 1610 a member of the congregation was presented for 'often sleeping in time of divine service and the sermon.'¹⁰⁷

From the later sixteenth century there is also evidence of a willingness to travel to other parishes by some laity if their home parish were not up to standard. For example, in 1585 the churchwardens of the small parish of West Langdon were complaining that their minister, Richard Taylor, was not resident and that they were not receiving their quarter sermons such that in their opinion, he 'very negligentlie regardeth his flocke to the offence of the people'.¹⁰⁸ The schoolmaster of Ringwold had clearly stepped in to take services and found himself presented for doing so without a licence. In 1587 Taylor was being presented again, this time for churching a

¹⁰⁶ X.5.7, part 2, fol. 62.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., fol. 127 and X.2.5, part 3, fol. 184.

¹⁰⁸ X.2.5, part 1, fol. 4.

woman in her own home when she wanted to go to church, for administering communion at unreasonable times, such as on New Year's Day very early in the morning, and because he 'will not stave for sufficient tyme untill the people bee readye and on all tymes whensoev[er] hee cometh to us he cometh in greate haste'. They also complained about the irregularity of the services, 'sometymes wee have service tymes and sometymes wee have none'.¹⁰⁹ In 1612 a group of people from the parish had given up and were regularly travelling to Sutton to hear sermons there.¹¹⁰ The religious outlook of the curate at Sutton is suggested by the presentations in 1604 and 1614 that he was not using the sign of the cross at baptism. The outlook of some members of his own congregation was suggested by their support in 1604 when shortly after his arrival in the parish he was presented for not wearing the surplice for which they took the responsibility:

Owr minister hath no surplice or hood to our knowledge for we have not seen him wear any but we will provide them as soon as we conveniently can.¹¹¹

This demonstrates that people in this area were not only happy to accept Protestantism but they were also not prepared to accept second rate leadership.

In contrast to the urban parishes of the diocese there are relatively few examples of parishioners being presented for not attending church and no evidence of the separatist ideas that were circulating in some of the towns. Whereas in the urban parish of St Peter's in Sandwich between 1597 and 1601 over fifty different people were presented for absence from church or for not receiving communion, in the rural parishes the numbers are extremely small, one or two people being named at a time.¹¹² This corroborates the view that there was no mass rejection of the religious diet being offered at the parish church. On occasions in the reports it is made clear that absence from church did not necessarily mean a rejection of Protestantism or Christianity more generally. For example, in 1578 Peter Lyce of Tilmanstone was presented for never having received communion even though he was over twenty years of age. He was part of the household of Vincent Boys who reported that his

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., fol. 44.

¹¹⁰ X.5.7, fol. 54v.

¹¹¹ X.2.5. fols 52, 62; X.5.7, fol. 132.

¹¹² See above p. 159.

wife, his servants and Mr William Boys had all 'taken greate paynes to make hym learne the cathecism or the lordes prayer or crede and tenne commandements and our vycar hath had hym in excommunicacon dyvers times and p[re]vayleth lyttle'. The issue was put down to his 'lack of wysdom'.¹¹³ In 1580 John Rycorde was presented for not receiving communion at Easter, but the churchwardens added that 'we judge that his sickness then was an occasion why he came not', and the same was true of John Hylles.¹¹⁴ In the case of Bartholomew Watson of Great Mongeham, it seems that going to church was just too much trouble, 'he neglecting his service dyvers times on sondaies lying abed in service time being in health'.¹¹⁵ In 1607 Henry Smith of Sutton was presented for being absent for several Sundays, but on investigation he claimed that it was because he was in debt to various people'.¹¹⁶ There are also few examples of people working on the Sabbath when they should have been at church, and only two examples in the 1570s of people drinking and playing cards during service time, one of which specifically mentions that the ale house was kept open to serve Flemmings during service time.¹¹⁷

This is not to say that absence was never an issue, however, and in the same way as Canterbury deanery had small numbers of gentry families who consistently refused to attend church, from this area it was the Monins family who could not be brought on board. Edward and Elizabeth Monins' refusal to receive communion began with their arrival in Waldershare parish. The couple were first presented in the early 1590s, and on this occasion, Elizabeth claimed that she was not able to come to church because the place where she should sit was 'unrepaired and not decent'. Her husband put his absence at communion down to the fact that he was unquiet in his mind due to his troubles in the land. In 1597 Elizabeth was again presented for not having received communion for the previous seven years. The couple's son, William, and their servants were also presented on several different occasions. In 1600 Edward was in trouble for arranging a Christian burial for his wife even though he knew her to be excommunicated, and since the excommunication was also known to the minister,

¹¹³ X.1.16, fol. 3v.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 94.

¹¹⁵ X.2.5, part 1, fol. 27.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, part 3, fol. 93v.

¹¹⁷ Ringwold, 1579, X.1.16, fol. 58v, and Woodnesborough, 1578, *ibid.*, fol. 33v.

Francis Redman, Monins was forced to find another man to perform the ceremony. He admitted that 'Mr Jones, a minister, came unto this r[es]pondent to burie his said wife'.¹¹⁸ However, the Monins family was not typical and is one of the very few families to have demonstrated this level of refusal to conform.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the Protestantism of the rural parishes was in many cases far more than merely formal and nominal, and that although there is much evidence for widespread conformity within the communities, this should not imply indifference. The three areas all broadly conformed to the accepted historiography of a rapid Reformation in the south east of the country, but it has also been possible to identify differences in the three areas. Canterbury deanery was slower to accept Protestant ideas, but once Protestantism had become accepted there is no evidence of the growth in more radical ideas that has been identified in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries within the city. On the marsh, despite the remoteness of several of the parishes, there is evidence of communities pushing for greater commitment from their ministers. In Sandwich deanery there is greater evidence of a greater commitment to Protestantism from an earlier date, and in this respect, the rural parishes are reflecting the rapid conversion of the town. Whereas in Lancashire Haigh could speak of the clergy of the later sixteenth century as 'not equipped for winning over so many souls to God' and that the 'prospect for widespread conversions to Anglicanism were poor', in these rural parishes the patrons were able to address the issue of staffing quickly and effectively.¹¹⁹ Indeed, compared to other areas of the country, the level of education achieved by the body of clergymen serving these parishes was exceptionally high. Having a well- educated clergy did not ensure that the incumbents were either able or willing to lead their parishes diligently and there are some examples of unsatisfactory ministers, but extremely few across the whole period. The high concentration of ecclesiastical patrons in some areas contributed to high levels of pluralism and non-residence, but this chapter has demonstrated that despite the problems traditionally associated with

¹¹⁸ X.2.5, part 1, fols 89,115, 133v; part 2 fols 2v, 14v, 94; part 3. fol. 129.

¹¹⁹ Haigh, *Resistance and Reform*, p. 243.

the deployment of curates, in these areas the curates fulfilled a vital function in the consolidation of Protestantism.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the re-introduction and consolidation of Protestantism in the diocese of Canterbury. The choice of Canterbury has proved to be an interesting one. In many respects the diocese was not typical. It included several distinctive features, such as its location close to London and the channel ports, its size, the extent of the progress of the early Reformation directed by Archbishop Cranmer, the Stranger communities and the attentions of subsequent archbishops, all of which impacted on the nature of change. The approach taken here has been to investigate the local and the particular rather than the broad and generalised, and this has provided a number of advantages. By using a small number of targeted case studies, it has been possible to investigate the character of religious change and to consider how individual communities responded and negotiated a path which they could (mostly) happily live with. In this respect, the scope of this study has been far narrower than Clark's broad overview of early modern Kent, and this has made it possible to provide a more textured sense of place than has been presented previously.

Clark's study was completed over forty years ago, before the revisionist re-evaluation had taken place. While in some respects this present study has concurred with the widely accepted view of the Reformation as being much more rapidly accepted in those areas to the south and east of the country, the approach has meant that it has been possible to expand upon this interpretation. The case studies have demonstrated the complexity of the situation and have highlighted the dangers of assuming a homogenous response, even in communities which were geographically close. There has been a tendency in the past, both by those who favoured the traditionalist interpretation of a quick and easy Reformation, and by some of the revisionists who favoured a slow and painful Reformation, to use findings from one part of the country to make broad and over-arching claims which ignore a sense of locality. As has been shown, the Reformation in the town of Sandwich was very different from that experienced in the city of Canterbury, which was different again from the experience of the town of New Romney.

By defining Protestantism more broadly than has sometimes been the case, this study has shown, not only that the views of some contemporaries may have been unduly pessimistic about the progress of reform, but also that some modern historians may have excluded many law-abiding people whose Protestantism put them amongst the conforming majority, but who should be considered as Protestants nonetheless. The religious outlook of a man such as Josias Nichols cannot be doubted, and his biography can contribute much to our understanding of post-Reformation religion in east Kent. He was a man of Kent. He was probably born in Canterbury and certainly attended the King's School in Canterbury before study at Oxford, ordination and, following a short spell as a curate, institution in 1580 to the parish of Eastwell. His appointment to the parish was through the patronage of Katherine Finch and her husband Nicholas Sentleger. He was a Puritan and as his response to the Protestant Reformation was wholehearted and committed, but as this study has shown, his way of responding was just one way, and his way should not be regarded as the only 'right' way for communities to react to religious change. Each of the communities contained within this study negotiated their own path through the religious changes imposed by the state, a negotiation which in the majority of cases involved conformity within the parameters which had been set out for them.

As Christopher Haigh noted in 1984, these people might 'properly be spoken of as 'parish anglicans' –'anglicans', because of their stress on the Prayer Book and insistence that 'there is as good edifying in those prayers and homilies as in any that the preacher can make; and 'parish' because of their emphasis on the harmony and vitality of the village unit at play and at worship'.¹ This study would concur with these views. However, the evidence from east Kent does not support Haigh's subsequent conclusions that this represented a lesser form of Protestantism. The importance of local harmony should not be underestimated, and the behaviour of the inhabitants of parishes such as Old Romney, as an example, who experienced such a wide difference in outlook from their vicars, from the appointment of the non-conformist Digby to the crypto-Catholic (eventually Catholic) Carrier without much evidence of complaint,

¹ Haigh, 'Church, Catholic and the People', in his *The Reign of Elizabeth*, p. 218.

should not be taken to indicate indifference or that their religion was a 'residual' religion, and certainly not that they were 'spiritual leftovers'.²

As Peter Marshall has noted, 'there was, more or less, only ever one approved pattern of religious worship and practice at any one time in England' during this period, to which people were forced to conform.³ However, they did not all conform in the same way. In the city of Canterbury, this study has demonstrated that the existence of the cathedral influenced the development of Protestantism within the city, and, it might be argued, provided an alternative way of conforming. In one sense, it is certainly true that as a vehicle for driving forward religious change the record of the cathedral was far from glowing, and there was certainly much to criticise about the institution and some truth in the negative views both of contemporaries and of later historians about its value. It could not be described as a good use of limited resources. However, this study has also demonstrated that, in some respects, the cathedral exerted a far more positive influence than has previously been noted. By avoiding the polemics of sixteenth and seventeenth century Puritans who could see no purpose in retaining what, in their eyes, was simply a monument to the popish past, it has been possible to identify evidence of a more positive impact. One benefit to the city was the amount of preaching that was provided by the cathedral. This not only included those sermons which were stipulated by the re-foundation statutes involving the Dean and prebendaries and also the Six Preachers, but also those sermons which supplemented this programme provided by other local preachers, including, by the seventeenth century, Puritan preachers. It is not possible to be certain how reliably the prebendaries fulfilled their duties, nor the extent to which people took advantage of the sermons which were being provided. However, the survival of Thomas Jackson's preaching diary, together with passing comments which can be gleaned from a variety of sources, such as the sermon, which James Clelland published in 1626 or William Swift's funeral sermon for Thomas Wilson, indicate that there was likely to have been far more preaching than has previously been noted.

² Ibid., p. 219.

³ Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p. xvi.

In addition, when the cathedral was re-founded during the reign of Henry VIII, the men appointed as the first of the Six Preachers were deliberately chosen to represent both the traditional and the radical views being debated at that time. After a period during the mid years of Elizabeth's reign when mediocrity seemed to be the order of the day, by the end of the sixteenth century the cathedral again began to embrace a wider variety of views, and by beginning of the seventeenth century it had become home to a very broad spectrum of attitudes. Both Puritans and Catholics could be found within its walls. As a supplement to the prescribed religious diet which a person was obliged to consume on a weekly basis in their parish church, the cathedral offered a layer of choice for those who wanted more. It is clear that some did take advantage of that choice.

Another of the themes of this study has been the importance of the clergy in overseeing religious change at parish level. Although the issue of church patronage has been addressed for other areas of the country, the impact of the situation which existed in east Kent in the early modern period has not been fully explored before. This study has demonstrated that in this respect, again, the diocese of Canterbury was not typical. By retaining a higher amount of patronage than has been shown was the case in other areas of the country, the church authorities in Canterbury diocese were able to use their rights of patronage to further Protestant reformation in the area. Each of the archbishops can be seen working to improve the standard of the clergy and in this they were assisted, particularly, by the archdeacons and the suffragan bishop of Dover. The contribution of the Dean and Chapter differed over the period with some, such as Godwin using their patronage less well, sometimes allowing less lucrative parishes in their gift to remain vacant whilst using the more lucrative parishes of the diocese to reward pluralist prebendaries. The absence of powerful Catholic magnates with rights of patronage who were resident in the diocese meant that, on the whole, the church authorities were supported in the task of providing parish leadership by numbers of the gentry who were also patrons. In the city of Canterbury and the town of Sandwich, the civic authorities can also be seen to have been actively working with the church in furthering Protestant reform. In New Romney, in contrast, there is little evidence that the civic government made any significant contribution to the development of Protestantism after it cancelled the Passion Play in 1568. The fractious nature of the

government throughout the period was caused by economic rather than religious disagreements but the continual disputes meant that furthering religious reform was not the most pressing priority.

This study has identified several distinct stages in the progress of religious change which each of the areas experienced. During the first stage immediately following the Settlement of 1559 the parishes in east Kent reflect the situation which existed widely across the country in demonstrating a high level of disruption and turmoil. Andrew Foster has suggested that given 'the so-called *via media* beloved of Anglican hagiographers... it is perhaps too easy to underestimate the extent of the shock that those in the Church must have experienced in the 1560s'.⁴ This study has demonstrated the extent of that shock in east Kent. With over a fifth of parishes vacant in 1558 and the majority experiencing a change of incumbent within the first five years of the Settlement, there were only just over a fifth of parishes which experienced any kind of continuity. The broader issue of staffing the parishes could not be solved by the church authorities alone since the under-funding of some benefices was a national issue which needed the active support of the monarch and parliament if it were to be solved, and this was not forthcoming. Some parishes in the diocese remained woefully under-resourced throughout the period. Nevertheless, within the very real constraints which they were facing, church patrons in east Kent did manage to address the issue of staffing with some success. Vacancies were filled in most cases by the middle of the 1560s and although pluralism remained an issue, the increasing use of curates in some parts of the diocese meant that the number of communities who had no incumbent or curate remained low throughout the period. The role of curates has not previously been widely addressed. This study has demonstrated that these men could fulfil a useful role at parish level. On Romney marsh, for example, where the lucrative nature of several of the parishes, together with higher than average amounts of archiepiscopal patronage meant that benefices were often supplied to high-status clergymen who were not resident, it was often the curates who maintained the smooth running of the parishes on a daily basis.

⁴ Foster, 'Bishops, Church, and State', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, p. 89.

During this stage, the messiness of Elizabeth's Reformation enabled local communities to forge the character of their own Protestant identities. Whilst there is evidence of the strength of the acceptance of Protestant ideas in Sandwich, at this time in Canterbury religious change was being strongly contested, with both conservatives and Protestants vying for control over the path that subsequent reform would take. In New Romney, there is little evidence of the division which existed in Canterbury, but also limited evidence of the progress of reformed ideas at this early stage. This is also apparent in the rural parishes. In all three areas Protestantism was slightly slower to become established than in the towns, but this was obviously to be expected, since several of those factors which encouraged the development of new religious ideas were not present in the countryside. Within this broad characterisation it is also possible to discern differences between the deaneries which indicate the influence of the individual towns on the parishes in their locality. Thus, in Sandwich deanery there is evidence of a greater commitment to Protestantism from an earlier date, reflecting the early conversion of the town. In Canterbury deanery and the parishes of the marsh Protestant ideas were slightly slower to be accepted, also a reflection of the nature of the Reformation in their nearby towns.

By the late 1560s, although great success had been achieved in providing an incumbent across all of the case study areas, the quality of incumbent was not always as high as it might have been. The level of education of those men in post in 1561 at the time of the Parker Certificates demonstrates that much needed to be done if the men taking the Reformation forward in the parishes were to be of the standard that reformed Protestants would have found acceptable. In several of the parishes in the 1570s and 1580s sermons were not taking place as regularly as they should have been and, particularly in Sandwich deanery, there were problems with the fabric of the church buildings, sometimes serious problems which impacted on the smooth running of the services.

Many studies of the Reformation finish by the end of Elizabeth's reign or sometimes by the mid years of her reign or even the beginning of the reign. By extending this study to 1625 it has been possible to identify how Protestantism had become well established at parish level by that time. To some extent the roots of the

stability experienced by the Jacobean church can be traced to the later years of Elizabeth's reign. By this time a graduate clergy had been achieved and complaints about the negligence of individual clergymen were much reduced. Sermons were taking place regularly and, in most cases, young people were being catechised. However, it could be argued that there are hints that the Jacobean church was identifiably different to the late Elizabethan church and that it was not merely the consolidation of earlier developments. By the seventeenth century there is evidence across the parishes covered by this study of parishioners being clearer about what they expected of their clergy, and being prepared to demand that high standards be maintained. In Sandwich, for example, a series of more conservative clergy appointed in the early years of the seventeenth century resulted in conflict with their more radical congregations. But a more demanding attitude from congregations was not limited to this deanery where Protestantism had become established so much earlier than elsewhere. Even on the marsh, the incumbency of Henry Sowthousand caused a litany of complaints up to the point he was replaced by the non-conformist Henoah Clapham who provided just over a decade of peaceful leadership until his deprivation in 1614 caused the complaints to start up again. In Canterbury, the incumbency of Thomas Wilson demonstrates how matters had changed by the beginning of the seventeenth century. His Calvinism was inclusive and comforting and showed an awareness of the changing times and the changing needs of pastoral care. His friend, William Swift used the analogy of the congregation 'lamenting as a widow without a teacher or comforter' when Wilson died in 1621.⁵ This analogy suggests a very different sort of relationship between minister and people from that which had existed between priest and congregation in pre-reformation days, but also which had existed, perhaps, for much of Elizabeth's reign.

The relationship between congregation and clergy had developed by the beginning of the seventeenth century. There are also signs that people's relationship with their parish church was beginning to change by this time. When writing about the materiality of the church in the sixteenth century, John Newman, the author of the Pevsner volume on North East and East Kent stated that 'in Elizabeth's reign,

⁵ Swift, *Funeral Sermon*, p. 16.

ecclesiastically, there is just a blank', both in terms of the building itself and the fittings for worship. 'Church fittings tell the same story of total inactivity in the later sixteenth century and pride resumed after about 1620'.⁶ The detail gleaned from the *Detecta* about the state of the buildings reveals hints of this, with perceptible differences across the three areas. This aspect of people's attitudes towards their religion by the early seventeenth century would undoubtedly repay further investigation as the consolidation of Protestantism and people's changing attitudes began to be demonstrated in very material ways. It is not the scope of this study to consider what happened after James' death, but it would seem from the evidence of east Kent that when James died in 1625, the church he left behind was in a strong position.

Owing to limitations of time and space there are several other themes concerning the development of Protestantism in the diocese of Canterbury which have not been fully addressed here but which would contribute to an understanding of post-Reformation religious change in the region. There is scope, for example, to explore the role of the curates in more depth. Whereas this study has uncovered some details of the role, particularly for those parishes with non-resident clergy, a study of the preaching licences held by the curates would provide a clearer view of the quality of the service that these men were providing. There is also scope to investigate more fully the role the role of these men as school masters.

A further area of future study might look towards the west of the diocese. The three case study areas of this study have all been towards the east of the diocese and it would be interesting to consider how these communities differed from those in the west. Parishes of the Weald have been the focus of previous studies, but the deaneries of Ospringe and Sittingbourne have not been explored in detail. Since there was a far higher incidence of lay patronage in these deaneries, a comparative study would be of interest. It is also hoped that this thesis might encourage further micro-studies of communities, both in the county and also further afield, and by engaging with the findings of this PhD, examine more widely the typicality, or otherwise, of these communities.

⁶ John Newman, *The Buildings of England: North East and East Kent* (1969), pp. 91 and 92.

Appendix

Table 1: Showing parish, deanery, patronage and value given in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535

Parish	Deanery	Patron	Households CCCC MS 122 ¹	VE
Acrise	Elham	Crown	(12)	£6 13 4d
Adisham	Bridge	Archbishop	40	£28 12s
Aldington	Lympne	Archbishop	(40)	£38 6s 8d
Alkham	Dover	Archbishop	9	£9 7s 4d
Appledore	Lympne	Archbishop	(52)	£21
Ash	Bridge	Curacy	(60)	
Ashford	Charing	Rochester D&C	128	£70 13s 10d
Baddlesmere	Ospringe	Lay	(6)	
Bapchild	Sittingbourne	Chichester D&C	(17)	£8
Barfreston	Sandwich	Lay	(12)	£7 14s
Barham	Bridge	Chapel	(34)	
Bearsted	Sutton	Rochester D&C	58	£6 7s 4d
Bekesbourne	Bridge	Archbishop	17	£6 1s 8
Benenden	Charing	Lay	150	£17 12s 6d
Bethersden	Charing	Archbishop	(100)	£12
Betteshanger	Sandwich	Lay	2	£6 4s 4d
Bicknor	Sittingbourne	Crown	4	£5
Biddenden	Charing	Archbishop	160	£35
Bilsington	Lympne	Curacy	(20)	priory
Birchington	Westbere	Chapel	40	
Bircholt	Elham	Lay	(2)	£2 18s 10d
Bishopsbourne	Bridge	Archbishop	(20)	£48 14s 2d
Blackmanstone	Lympne	Archbishop		£4
Blean	Canterbury	Eastbridge Hospital	23	£9
Bobbing	Sittingbourne	Lay	(60)	
Bonnington	Lympne	lay	(11)	£10 13s 3d
Borden	Sittingbourne	Lay	(50)	£8 10s 4d
Boughton Alulph	Bridge	Lay	39	£11 6s 10d
Boughton Malherbe	Charing	Lay	(30)	£13 15s
Boughton Monchelsea	Sutton	Rochester D&C	34	£7 13s 4d
Boughton under Blean	Ospringe	Archbishop	(80)	£9 4s 8d
Boxley	Sutton	Roch D&C	70	£ 12 19s 2d

¹ Where the figures are missing from MS 122, figures from Harly MS 594 have been provided in brackets.

Brabourne	Elham	Archbishop	45	£11 12s 6d
Bredgar	Sittingbourne	Lay	42	£9
Bredhurst	Sutton	Chapel	(10)	
Brenzett	Lympne	Lay	(24)	£7 19s
Bridge	Bridge	Chapel	(20)	
Brook	Bridge	Dean & Chapter	(24)	£7 7s
Brookland	Lympne	Dean & Chapter	(40)	£17 12s
Broomfield	Sutton	Chapel	12	
Broomhill	Lympne	Chapel		
Buckland	Dover	Archbishop	15	
Buckland	Ospringe	Lay	(2)	£5 6s 8d
Burmarsh	Lympne	Crown	(20)	£20 10s 6d
Canterbury All Saints	Canterbury	Crown	29	£7
Canterbury Holy Cross	Canterbury	Archbishop	87	£13 2s
Canterbury St Alpege	Canterbury	Archbishop	74	£8 13s 4d
Canterbury St Andrews	Canterbury	Archbishop	73	£13 6s 8d
Canterbury St Dunstans	Canterbury	Archbishop	63	£4 17s 10d
Canterbury St George	Canterbury	Dean & Chapter	61	£7 18s
Canterbury St Margaret	Canterbury	Archdeacon	44	
Canterbury St Martin	Canterbury	Archbishop	16	£9
Canterbury St Mary Bredin	Canterbury	Lay	18	£4 16d
Canterbury St Mary Bredman	Canterbury	Dean & Chapter	40	£8 13s 4d
Canterbury St Mary de Castro	Canterbury	Crown	0	£2 18s
Canterbury St Mary Magdalen	Canterbury	Dean & Chapter	40	£4 10s
Canterbury St Mary Northgate	Canterbury	Archbishop	108	£11 8s 8d
Canterbury St Mildred	Canterbury	Crown	102	£7 19s 8d
Canterbury St Paul	Canterbury	Dean & Chapter	100	£9 18s 9d
Canterbury St Peter	Canterbury	Dean & Chapter	43	£3 10s 8
Capel Le Ferne	Dover	Chapel	20	
Challock	Bridge	Chapel	62	
Charing	Charing	St Paul's D&C	(60)	£8
Charlton	Dover	Lay	7	
Chart Sutton	Sutton	Rochester D&C	45	
Chartham	Bridge	Archbishop	73	£41 5s 10d
Cheriton	Dover	Lay	29	£16 12s 6d
Chilham	Bridge	Lay	90	£5 4s 4d
Chillenden	Bridge	Crown	17	£4 18s 8d
Chislet	Westbere	Archbishop	56	£29 19s 8d
Coldred	Sandwich	Archbishop	13	£6 2s 6d
Cranbrook	Charing	Archbishop	500	£19 19s 6d
Crundale	Bridge	Lay	(20)	£11 10 8
Davington	Ospringe	Curacy	(10)	
Deal	Sandwich	Archbishop	63	£19 10s
Denton	Elham	Lay	7	£5 19s 4d
Detling	Sutton	Archbishop	26	

Doddington	Ospringe	archdea	(30)	£6 13s 4d
Dover St James	Dover	Archbishop	95	£4 17s 6d
Dover St Mary	Dover	Curacy	13	
Dymchurch	Lympne	Crown	15	£7 2s 10d
East Bridge	Lympne	Archbishop		
East Langdon	Sandwich	Lay	22	£7
East Sutton	Sutton	Chapel	10	£15 8s 4d
Eastchurch	Sittingbourne	Curacy	(21)	
Eastling	Ospringe	Lay	(16)	£14 4s 8d
Eastry	Sandwich	Archbishop	82	£17 11s 9d
Eastwell	Charing	Lay		£9 16s 8d
Ebony	Lympne	Chapel	(24)	
Edgerton	Charing	Chapel	(40)	£47 5s 4d
Elham	Elham	Merton College	140	£20
Elmley	Sittingbourne	All Souls' College	0	£5
Elmsted	Elham	Archbishop	47	£6 13s 4d
Elmstone	Bridge	Lay	(10)	£6 7s 7d
Ewell	Dover	Lay	30	£6 10s
Eythorne	Sandwich	lay	17	£15 12s 6d
Fairfield	Lympne	Curacy	(9)	
Faversham	Ospringe	D&C	(300)	£26 17s 4d
Folkestone	Dover	Curacy	160	£10
Fordwich	Canterbury	Lay	32	£5 15s 2d
Frinted	Sutton	Lay	20	£9 11s 8d
Frittenden	Charing	lay	(60)	£15 14s 8d
Godmersham	Bridge	Archbishop	64	£9 3s 8d
Goodnestone	Bridge	Archbishop	41	
Goodnestone	Ospringe	Lay	(10)	£5 2s 7d
Goudhurst	Sutton	Rochester D&C	168	£26 19s 2d
Graveney	Ospringe	Archbishop	(30)	£12
Great Chart	Charing	Archbishop		£24 18s 6d
Great Mongeham	Sandwich	Archbishop	20	£17 15s
Guston	Dover	Chapel	13	
Hackington	Canterbury	Archdeacon	34	£6 2s 2d
Ham	Sandwich	Crown	3	£5 6s 6d
Harbledown	Canterbury	Archbishop	29	£9 2s 6d
Harbledown Hospital	Canterbury	Archbishop	0	£6 5s
Hardres Upper	Bridge	Lay	(30)	£19 13s
Harrietsham	Sutton	All Souls' College	(60)	£11 10s
Hartlip	Sittingbourne	Rochester D&C	(30)	£9 10s 8d
Harty	Ospringe	Curacy	(10)	£20 5s 11d
Hastingleigh	Elham	Archbishop		£10 5s
Hawkhurst	Charing	Curacy	(200)	£33 10s 10d
Hawkinge	Dover	Archbishop	12	£7 7s 10d
Headcorn	Charing	Archbishop	93	£15 6s 8d
Herne	Westbere	Archbishop	143	£20 15s 1d
Hernhill	Ospringe	Archbishop	(60)	£15

High Halden	Charing	Archbishop	(60)	£19 4s 6d
Hinxhill	Lympne	Lay	15	£7 16s 8d
Hoath	Westbere	Chapel	28	
Hollingbourne	Sutton	Archbishop	64	£28 14s 9d
Hope	Lympne	Crown	6	£10 12d
Hothfield	Charing	Lay	50	£17 5s
Hougham	Dover	Archbishop	15	£6 13s 4d
Hucking	Sutton	Chapel	12	£7 6s 8d
Hurst	Lympne	lay		£4 18s 4d
Hythe	Elham	Chapel	150	
Ickham	Bridge	Archbishop	42	£28 11s 9d
Ivychurch	Lympne	Archbishop	--- ²	£44 16s 6d
Iwade	Sittingbourne	Curacy	(16)	
Kenardington	Lympne	Lay	(30)	£12 12d
Kennington	Charing	Archbishop	42	£12
Kingsdown	Sittingbourne	Lay	(13)	£5 9s 2d
Kingsnorth	Lympne	Archbishop	(20)	£11 9s 10d
Kingston	Bridge	Lay	(20)	£16
Knowlton	Sandwich	Lay	1	£6 5s 2d
Langley	Sutton	Lay	10	£6 19s 8d
Leaveland	Ospringe	Lay	(6)	£4
Leeds	Sutton	Curacy	(70)	£33 11s 4d
Lenham	Sutton	Lay	(120)	£13 15s 2d
Leysdown	Sittingbourne	Archbishop	10	£10 10d
Linstead	Ospringe	Archdeacon	(40)	£8 3s 10d
Linton	Sutton	Lay	(30)	£7 13s 4d
Little Chart	Charing	Archbishop	16	£13 10s 10d
Little Mongeham	Sandwich	Archbishop	(7)	£5 15
Littlebourne	Bridge	D&C	(30)	£8
Loose	Sutton	Curacy	14	
Lower Halstow	Sittingbourne	D&C	(24)	£8 2s
Lower Hardres	Canterbury	Crown	14	£7 19s 8d
Luddenham	Ospringe	Crown	16	£12 8s 4d
Lydd	Lympne	Archbishop	(150)	£55 12s
Lydden	Dover	Archbishop	12	£6 2s
Lyminge	Elham	Archdeacon	68	£21 10s
Lympne	Lympne	Archdeacon	30	£9 16d
Maidstone	Sutton	Curacy	352	
Marden	Sutton	Crown	100	£7 18s 4d
Mersham	Lympne	Archbishop	90	£26 16s 5d
Midley	Lympne	Archbishop	(2)	£30
Milstead	Sittingbourne	Lay	(20)	£8 15s
Milton	Canterbury	Lay	1	£4 13s 4d
Milton	Sittingbourne	D&C	(80)	£13 2s 3d
Minster	Sittingbourne	Curacy	(60)	
Minster	Westbere	Archbishop	53	£33 3s 4d

² Nothing listed but 83 households given in 1565 (MS Z.3.8, fol. 134r).

Molash	Bridge	Chapel	(30)	
Monks Horton	Elham	Archbishop	28	£7 10s 8d
Monkton	Westbere	D&C	15	£14 8s 4d
Murston	Sittingbourne	lay	12	£10 14s 2d
Nackington	Canterbury	Curacy	5	
New Romney	Lympne	All Souls' College	70	£19 6s 4d
Newchurch Rectory	Lympne	Archbishop	(20)	£19 16
Newchurch Vicarage	Lympne	Archbishop	(20)	£8 4s
Newenden	Charing	Archbishop	(20)	£7 13s 4d
Newington	Dover	Lay	42	£7 12s 6d
Newington	Sittingbourne	Eton College	(60)	£14
Newnham	Ospringe	Lay	(20)	£5 12s 6d
Nonnington	Bridge	Curacy	(40)	
Northbourne	Sandwich	Archbishop	51	£12 11s 8d
Norton	Ospringe	Bp Rochester	(16)	£10 18s 4d
Oare	Ospringe	Curacy	(15)	
Old Romney	Lympne	Archbishop	(30)	£15 19s 2d
Orgarswick	Lympne	D&C		£3
Orlestone	Lympne	lay	10	£4 10s 9d
Ospringe	Ospringe	St John's College	48	£10
Otham	Sutton	Lay	(24)	£9 17s 5d
Otterden	Ospringe	Lay	(16)	£6 14 0
Paddlesworth	Elham	Chapel	6	
Patricbourne	Bridge	Lay	(30)	£14 7d
Petham	Bridge	Lay	(55)	£8 0s 1d
Pluckley	Charing	Archbishop	66	£20 17d
Postling	Elham	Archbishop	18	£6 8 2
Poulton	Dover	Chapel	(2)	
Preston	Bridge	D&C	12	£9 15s
Preston	Ospringe	Archbishop	6	£6 14s 2d
Queenborough	Sittingbourne	Chapel	(20)	
Rainham	Sittingbourne	Crown	(57)	£14 4s 8d
Reculver	Westbere	Archbishop	45	£9 20d
Ringwould	Sandwich	Lay	30	£13 12 6d
Ripple	Sandwich	Lay	12	£5 19s 4d
River	Dover	Archbishop	17	£5 12d
Rodmersham	Sittingbourne	Lay	(32)	£8 6s 8d
Rolvenden	Charing	Rochester D&C	(100)	£9 5s 10d
Ruckinge	Lympne	Archbishop	(16)	£14 13s 5d
Saltwood	Elham	Archbishop	(20)	£42 13s 4d
Sandhurst	Charing	Archbishop	(60)	£19 12s 6d
Sandwich St Clement	Sandwich	Archdeacon	81	£13 17s
Sandwich St Mary	Sandwich	Archdeacon	62	£8 12d
Sandwich St Peter's	Sandwich	Lay corporation	138	£24 18s 4d
Seasalter	Westbere	Dean & Chapter	20	£11
Selling	Ospringe	Crown	34	£6 13 2
Sellinge	Lympne	Crown	(40)	£6 19s 2d

Sevyngton	Lympne	lay	(20)	£8 14s
Shadoxhurst	Lympne	Crown	(20)	£7 13s
Shelwich	Ospringe	D&C	41	£6 16s 8d
Shepherdswell	Sandwich	Archbishop		£5 18s
Sholden	Sandwich	Archbishop	20	
Sittingbourne	Sittingbourne	Crown	(70)	£10
Swarden	Charing	Archbishop	110	£24 2s 6d
Smeeth	Lympne	Chapel	29	
Snargate	Lympne	Archbishop	(16)	£15 12s
Snave	Lympne	Archbishop	19	£19 7s 3d
St John, Margate	Westbere	Archbishop	96	£8
St Laurence Thanet	Westbere	Archbishop	98	£7
St Margaret at Cliffe	Dover	Archbishop	(20)	£6 9s 8d
Saint Mary in the Marsh	Lympne	Archbishop	13	£23 4s
St Nicholas at Wade	Westbere	Archbishop	33	£15 19s 4d
St Peter's Thanet	Westbere	Archbishop	107	£8 17s 8d
Stalisfield	Ospringe	Crown	(24)	£5
Stanford	Lympne	Chapel	18	
Staple	Bridge	Chapel	(30)	
Staplehurst	Sutton	Lay	120	£26 5s 10d
Stelling	Bridge	Chapel	(20)	
Stockbury	Sittingbourne	Rochester D&C	(30)	£9 11s 1d
Stodmarsh	Bridge	Curacy	15	no sum
Stonar	Sandwich	Lay	(20)	6s 8d
Stone	Lympne	D&C	45	£8 12s 7d
Stone	Ospringe	Chapel		
Stourmouth	Bridge	Roch bp	(20)	£18 19s 10d
Stowting	Elham	Lay	18	£7 17s 10d
Sturry	Canterbury	Archbishop	58	£13 20d
Sutton	Sandwich	Curacy	13	
Sutton Valance	Sutton	Rochester D&C	60	£7 9s 2d
Swalecliffe	Westbere	Lay	9	£11 9s 4d
Swingfield	Dover	Curacy	27	
Tenterden	Charing	D&C	195	£33 12s 10d
Teynham	Ospringe	Archdeacon	50	£10
Thanington	Canterbury	Curacy	20	?
Thornham	Sutton	lay	24	£7 11 10
Throwley	Ospringe	St Paul's D&C	50	£7 11s 8d
Tilmanstone	Sandwich	Archbishop	18	£7 12s 6d
Tonge	Sittingbourne	Lay	18	£8 6s 8d
Tunstall	Sittingbourne	Archbishop	(16)	£14 8s 4d
Ulcombe	Sutton	Lay	54	£16 5s 10d
Upchurch	Sittingbourne	All Souls	60	£11
Waldershare	Sandwich	Archbishop	5	£5 8s
Walmer	Sandwich	Curacy	29	£12 11s 8d
Waltham	Bridge	Archbishop	(30)	£7 15 4
Warden	Sittingbourne	Lay	0	£4 15s

Warehorne	Lympne	Crown	(40)	£18 7s 2d
West Hithe	Lympne	Archdeacon	(7)	£8 14s 6d
West Langdon	Sandwich	Curacy	10	
Westbere	Westbere	Crown	21	£6 17s 6d
Westcliffe	Dover	D&C	(16)	£6 9s 8d
Westwell	Charing	Archbishop	(100)	£13
Whichling	Sittingbourne	Lay	(12)	£4 20d
Whitfield	Dover	Archbishop	12	
Whitstable	Westbere	Curacy	98	£20
Wickambreax	Bridge	Lay	36	£30
Willesborough	Lympne	D&C	55	£8 16s 8d
Wingham	Bridge	Curacy	(65)	£34
Wittersham	Lympne	Archbishop	(60)	£15 8s 6d
Womenswold	Bridge	Curacy	(15)	
Woodchurch	Lympne	Archbishop	(80)	
Woodnesborough	Sandwich	Rochester D&C	35	£10 6s
Wootton	Elham	Lay	14	£8 10s 4d
Wormshill	Sutton	Lay	20	£9 11s 1d
Worth	Sandwich	Chapel	26	
Wye	Bridge	Curacy	(72)	£93 2s

Table 2: Showing the breakdown of patronage across the diocese

	Bridge	Canterbury	Charing	Dover	Elham	Lympne	Ospringe	Sandwich	Sittingbourne	Sutton	Westbere	Total parishes	Percentage
Archbishop	8	8	13	9	6	18	5	9	2	2	8	88	31.3
Canterbury D&C	3	5	1	1	0	4	2	0	2	0	2	20	7.1
Archdeacon	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	2	0	0	0	10	3.6
Chichester D&C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.4
St Paul's D&C	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
Rochester D&C	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	6	0	11	3.9
Bishop of Rochester	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
Crown	1	3	0	0	1	5	2	1	3	1	1	18	6.4
College ³	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	6	2.1
Eton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.4
Lay	9	3	5	4	4	8	8	8	10	9	1	69	24.6
Lay Corporation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.4
Hospital	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
Perpetual Curacy	6	2	1	3	0	2	2	4	3	3	1	27	9.6
Chapel	6	0	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	23	8.2
Total	34	24	24	19	14	43	26	28	27	26	15	280	100.0

³ All Souls College Oxford held the patronage of the parishes of Elmley, New Romney and Upchurch, Christchurch College Oxford presented to Hawkhurst, Merton College Oxford to Elham and St John's College Cambridge to Headcorn.

3: Showing the turnover of ministers across the diocese

Deanery	Parish	Not clear	Vacancy In 1558	Change of incumbent 1558-1560	Change of incumbent 1561-1563	Change of incumbent 1564 - 6	Change of incumbent 1566 or later	Notes
Bridge	Adisham		Y					First rector listed CCEd 1577
Bridge	Ash	Y						CCEd lists curates from 1568
Bridge	Barham	Y						Chapel annexed to Bishopsbourne
Bridge	Bekesbourne				Y			
Bridge	Bishopsbourne						Y	1569
Bridge	Boughton Alulph				Y			
Bridge	Bridge		Y					Chapel annexed to Patrixbourne
Bridge	Brook			Y				
Bridge	Chartham						Y	1565
Bridge	Chilham						Y	1565
Bridge	Chillenden				Y			
Bridge	Crundale			Y				
Bridge	Elmstone						Y	1580
Bridge	Godmersham				Y			
Bridge	Goodnestone							
Bridge	Hardres Upper			Y				
Bridge	Ickham						Y	1568
Bridge	Kingston			Y				
Bridge	Littlebourne				Y			
Bridge	Molash	Y						Chapel annexed to Chilham
Bridge	Nonnington	Y						Curates
Bridge	Patrixbourne		Y					Vicar in place before 1569 (libc)
Bridge	Petham				Y			
Bridge	Preston			Y				
Bridge	Staple	Y						Chapel annexed to Adisham
Bridge	Stelling		Y					Chapel annexed to Upper Hardres
Bridge	Stodmarsh	Y						
Bridge	Stourmouth						Y	Next rector listed by CCEd in 1577 (libc)
Bridge	Waltham						Y	1567
Bridge	Wickambreaux			Y				
Bridge	Wingham	Y						CCEd lists curates from 1568 (libc)

Bridge	Wye	Y						CCEd lists curates from 1568 (libc)
Bridge	Wymenswold		Y					CCEd lists curates from 1567
C'bury	Blean			Y				
C'bury	All Saints		Y					Curate by 1569. Rector by 1577
C'bury	Canterbury Holy Cross			Y				
C'bury	Cant St Alpege						Y	1571
C'bury	Cant St Andrews					Y		
C'bury	Cant St Dunstons		Y				Y	1568
C'bury	Cant St George		Y					Rector in place 1561.
C'bury	Cant St Margaret		Y					Curate 1558. Rector in place 1560
C'bury	Cant St Martin		Y					Rector collated 1560
C'bury	Cant St Mary Bredin					Y		
C'bury	Cant St Mary Bredman		Y					Curate by 1569 (libc). Rector in place 1584
C'bury	Cant St Mary Magdalen						Y	Rector appointed 1553. Next appointment 1580 (libc)
C'bury	Cant St Mary Northgate		Y					Curate in 1558. Vicar in place 1560
C'bury	Cant St Mildred					Y		
C'bury	Cant St Paul		Y					
C'bury	Cant St Peter		Y					Curate by 1569 (libc) Rector 1582
C'bury	Fordwich		Y					1563
C'bury	Hackington						Y	1568
C'bury	Harbledown					Y		
Cant.	Hardres Lower			Y				
Cant.	Milton						Y	
Cant.	Nackington curacy		Y					Curate by 1569 (libc)
Cant.	Sturry					Y		
Cant.	Thannington curacy	Y						
Charing	Ashford						Y	1571
Charing	Benenden					Y		
Charing	Bethersden			Y				
Charing	Biddenden			Y				
Charing	Boughton Malherbe						Y	
Charing	Charing			Y				Not listed in 1558 visitation.
Charing	Cranbrook			Y				
Charing	Eastwell			Y				
Charing	Egerton	Y						Chapel annexed to Charing
Charing	Frittenden						Y	1569
Charing	Great Chart			Y				
Charing	Hawkhurst	Y						Curate listed by CCEd from 1569 (libc)

Charing	Headcorn		Y					1560
Charing	High Halden	Y						Change of rector before 1569 (libc)
Charing	Hothfield				Y			
Charing	Kennington				Y			
Charing	Little Chart			Y				
Charing	Newenden		Y		Y			1562
Charing	Pluckley						Y	1568
Charing	Rolvenden	Y						Change of vicar before 1569 (libc)
Charing	Sandhurst			Y				
Charing	Smarden					Y		
Charing	Tenterden				Y	Y		1561
Charing	Westwell				Y			
Dover	Alkham						Y	1569
Dover	Buckland		Y					Nothing listed in CCEd until 1577 (libc)
Dover	Capel le Ferne		Y					Chapel annexed to Alkham
Dover	Charlton		Y					First rector listed CCEd 1577 (libc)
Dover	Cheriton						Y	1570
Dover	Dover St James	Y						Not listed 1558. Vacant in 1557. First rector collated 1574
Dover	Dover St Mary		Y					Curates. Not listed 1558. Vacant 1557
Dover	Ewell		Y					1561
Dover	Folkestone						Y	1569
Dover	Guston		Y					Chapel
Dover	Hawkinge						Y	1591
Dover	Hougham						Y	1582
Dover	Lydden		Y					Vicar collated 1560
Dover	Newington					Y		
Dover	River		Y					Curates
Dover	St Margaret		Y		Y			
Dover	Swingfield	Y						Curates
Dover	Westcliffe		Y					First vicar listed CCEd 1595
Elham	Acrise					Y		
Elham	Bircholt		Y					1561
Elham	Brabourne						Y	1567
Elham	Denton			Y				
Elham	Elham						Y	1577
Elham	Elmsted					Y		
Elham	Hastingleigh					Y		
Elham	Hythe chapel							Chapel annexed to Saltwood
Elham	Lyminge				Y			
Elham	Monks Horton		Y					Rector collated 1568
Elham	Paddlesworth		Y					Chapel annexed to Lyminge

Elham	Postling					Y	1567
Elham	Saltwood				Y		
Elham	Standford	Y					Curates
Elham	Stowting				Y		
Elham	Wootton		Y				
Lympne	Aldington					Y	1569
Lympne	Appledore					Y	1569
Lympne	Bilsington	Y					Curates
Lympne	Blackmanstone					Y	
Lympne	Bonnington				Y		
Lympne	Brenzett				Y		
Lympne	Brookland					Y	
Lympne	Broomhill						Ruined before 1500
Lympne	Burmarsh				Y		
Lympne	Dymchurch				Y		
Lympne	Eastbridge	Y					Not listed in 1558 visitation. Rector 1569 (libc)
Lympne	Ebony		Y				Chapel annexed to Appledore
Lympne	Fairfield	Y					Curates
Lympne	Hinxhill					Y	
Lympne	Hope					Y	
Lympne	Hurst						Y 1569
Lympne	Ivychurch				Y		
Lympne	Kenardington				Y		
Lympne	Kingsnorth					Y	1588
Lympne	Lydd			Y			
Lympne	Lympne				Y		
Lympne	Mershan					Y	
Lympne	Midley					Y	1569
Lympne	Newchurch			Y			
Lympne	Orgarswick					Y	
Lympne	Orlestone					Y	1566
Lympne	Romney New			Y			
Lympne	Romney Old			Y			
Lympne	Ruckinge			Y			
Lympne	Sellinge			Y			
Lympne	Sevington			Y			
Lympne	Shadoxhurst					Y	1574
Lympne	Smeeth	Y					Chapel annexed to Aldington
Lympne	Snargate					Y	1567
Lympne	Snave					Y	1567
Lympne	St Mary in the Marsh			Y			
Lympne	Stanford						Chapel annexed to Lyminge
Lympne	Stone					Y	1569
Lympne	Warehorne			Y			

Lympne	Willesborough		Y					Vicar instituted 1562
Lympne	Wittersham			Y				
Lympne	Woodchurch					Y		
Ospringe	Baddlesmere			Y				
Ospringe	Boughton under Blean						Y	1574
Ospringe	Buckland			Y				
Ospringe	Davington	Y						
Ospringe	Doddington	Y						
Ospringe	Eastling		Y					By 1569 (libc)
Ospringe	Faversham	Y						By 1569 (libc)
Ospringe	Goodnestone		Y					Curate 1558, vicar 1569
Ospringe	Graveney		Y					1565
Ospringe	Harty		Y					
Ospringe	Hernhill						Y	1567
Ospringe	Leaveland		Y					Rector in place 1577
Ospringe	Linstead	Y						Vicar by 1569 (libc)
Ospringe	Luddenham				Y			
Ospringe	Newnham		Y					Vicar instituted 1570
Ospringe	Norton				Y			
Ospringe	Oare	Y						Curates
Ospringe	Ospringe		Y					
Ospringe	Otterden	Y						
Ospringe	Preston				Y			
Ospringe	Selling			Y				
Ospringe	Shelwich	Y						Vicar by 1569 (libc)
Ospringe	Stalisfield		Y					Vicar appointed 1561
Ospringe	Stone	Y						Chapel annexed to Tenterden
Ospringe	Teynham			Y				
Ospringe	Throwley	Y						Vicar by 1569 (libc)
Sandwich ⁴	Barfreston					Y		
Sandwich	Betteshanger					Y		
Sandwich	Coldred					Y		
Sandwich	Deal			Y				
Sandwich	East Langdon				Y			
Sandwich	Eastry				Y			
Sandwich	Eythorne						Y	1569
Sandwich	Great Mongeham						Y	1575
Sandwich	Ham					Y		
Sandwich	Knowlton				Y			
Sandwich	Little Mongeham	Y						By 1569 (libc)
Sandwich	Northbourne				Y			
Sandwich	Ringwould					Y		

⁴ There are no returns for Sandwich deanery in 1558. This is based on the visitation of 1577 plus CCEd.

Sandwich	Ripple					Y	1568
Sandwich	Sandwich St Clement	Y					
Sandwich	sandwich St Mary				Y		
Sandwich	Sandwich St Peter's			Y			Rector instituted 1564
Sandwich	Shepherdswell				Y		
Sandwich	Sholden	Y					Chapel annexed to Northourne
Sandwich	Stonar					Y	1570
Sandwich	Sutton	Y					
Sandwich	Tilmanstone					Y	1586
Sandwich	Waldershare			Y			
Sandwich	Walmer	Y					
Sandwich	West Langdon		Y				Rector instituted 1562
Sandwich	Woodnesborough	Y					
Sandwich	Worth		Y				Chapel annexed to Eastry
Sandwich	Oxney	Y					
S'bourne	Bapchild					Y	1559
S'bourne	Bicknor					Y	1567
S'bourne	Bobbing	Y					Vicar by 1577 (libc)
S'bourne	Borden					Y	1570
S'bourne	Bredgar		Y				Rector instituted 1562
S'bourne	Eastchurch	Y					Curate by 1569 (libc)
S'bourne	Elmley					Y	
S'bourne	Hartlip			Y			
S'bourne	Iwade	Y					
S'bourne	Kingsdown		Y				Rector by 1569 (libc)
S'bourne	Leysdown			Y			
S'bourne	Lower Halstow		Y				Rector instituted 1564
S'bourne	Milstead		Y				By 1569 (libc)
S'bourne	Milton				Y		
S'bourne	Minster	Y					Curates
S'bourne	Murston				Y		
S'bourne	Newington				Y		
S'bourne	Queenborough		Y				Chapel annexed to Minster
S'bourne	Rainham				Y		
S'bourne	Rodmersham	Y					Vicar by 1569 (libc)
S'bourne	Sittingbourne			Y			
S'bourne	Stockbury					Y	1571
S'bourne	Tonge			Y			
S'bourne	Tunstall			Y			
S'bourne	Upchurch				Y		
S'bourne	Warden		Y				Rector by 1569 (libc)
S'bourne	Whichling				Y		

Sutton	Bearsted		Y					Vicar collated 1563
Sutton	Boughton Monchelsea			Y				
Sutton	Boxley					Y		
Sutton	Bredhurst	Y						Chapel annexed to Hollingbourne
Sutton	Broomfield	Y						Curates
Sutton	Chart Sutton				Y			
Sutton	Detling	Y						
Sutton	Eastsutton	Y						Chapel annexed to Sutton Valence
Sutton	Frinsted		Y					Rector collated 1560
Sutton	Goudhurst			Y				
Sutton	Harrietsham					Y		
Sutton	Hollingbourne						Y	1567
Sutton	Hucking	Y						Chapel annexed to Hollingbourne
Sutton	Langley						Y	1569
Sutton	Leeds	Y						Curates
Sutton	Lenham		Y					1562
Sutton	Linton		Y					Vicar instituted 1562
Sutton	Loose	Y						Curates
Sutton	Maidstone	Y						Curates
Sutton	Marden				Y			
Sutton	Otham						Y	1567
Sutton	Staplehurst			Y				Beseley deprived for being married. Reinstated under Elizabeth
Sutton	Sutton Valence					Y		
Sutton	Thornham						Y	1572
Sutton	Ulcombe			Y				
Sutton	Wormshill						Y	1569
Westbere	Birchington		Y					Chapel annexed to Monkton
Westbere	Chislet		Y					Vicar collated 1562
Westbere	Herne				Y			
Westbere	Hoath		Y					Chapel annexed to Reculver
Westbere	Minster				Y			
Westbere	Monkton				Y			
Westbere	Reculver			Y				
Westbere	Seasalter						Y	1569
Westbere	St John, Margate				Y			
Westbere	St Laurence Thanet		Y					Vicar collated 1561
Westbere	St Nicholas at Wade						Y	Before 1577 (libc)
Westbere	St Peter's Thanet				Y			
Westbere	Swalecliffe		Y					
Westbere	Westbere				Y			
Westbere	Whitstable	Y						Curates

Table:4 Parishes in the diocese held by cathedral prebendaries

Deanery	Parish	Patron	Name of prebendary plus the dates the prebend was held	Curate employed?
Bridge	Adisham	Archbishop	Martin Fotherby, 1597 – 1618	Y
	Bishopsbourne	Archbishop	Charles Fotherby, 1595 – 1615 William Redman, 1589 – 1594 John Warner, 1619 – 1638	Y Y Y
	Chartham	Archbishop	John Mylles, 1546 – 1565 John Bungay, 1567 – 1570 Martin Fotherby, 1597 – 1618	Y Y Y
	Chilham	PHV H Cheyney to T Kempe & G Darrell Dudley Diggs	William Darrell, 1556 – 1580 Thomas Jackson, 1614 - 1634	Y Y
	Ickham	Archbishop	William Kingsley, 1614-1634	Y
	Kingston	PHV Affra Auger to Gilbert Hyde	John Butler, 1560 -1570 William King, 1565 -1590	Y N
	Upper Hardes	Richard Hardres Crown	Andrew Peerson, 1562-1594 William Darrell, 1556-1580	N Y
Canterbury	Blean	Eastbridge Hospital	Nicholas Simpson	Y
	Harbledown	Archbishop	Andrew Peerson	Y
	Lower Hardes	Archbishop	William Darrell, 1556 – 1580	N
	Milton	Honeywood	Thomas Jackson, 1614 – 1634	N
	Sturry	Archbishop	John Becon, 1560 - 1567 William Tunstall, 1613 – 1622	N N
Charing	Benenden	John Guildford	William Darrell, 1556 – 1580	Y
	Frittenden	John Baker	John Hill, 1570 – 1595	N
	Great Chart	Archbishop	Nicholas Simpson, 1580-1614 Adrian Saravia, 1595 – 1613 Thomas Jackson 1614 – 1634 William Kingsley 1614 - 1634	Y Y Y Y
	Little Chart	Archbishop	William Darrell, 1556 - 1580	Y
	Sandhurst	Archbishop	William Master, 1603 – 1628	Y
Elham	Lyminge	Archbishop	Richard Fawcett, 1556 – 1560	N
	Saltwood	Archbishop	Alexander Nowell, 1560-1564 Stephen Nevinson 1562-1580 Ralph Talboys, 1594 1596	N Y N
Lympne	Aldington	Archbishop	Charles Fotherby, 1595 -1615	Y
	Appledore	Archbishop	William King, 1565 – 1590	Y
	Brookland	Dean and Chapter	Richard Byrd, 1590 – 1609 William Darrell, 1556 – 1580	Y Y
	Ivychurch	Archbishop	Andrew Peerson, 1563-1594 John Sandford, 1615 – 1629	Y Y
	Lydd	Archbishop	John Hill	Y
	Mersham	Archbishop	William Master, 1603 – 1628	N
	Old Romney	Archbishop	Benjamin Carrier, 1608- 1614	Y
	Orgarswick	Dean and Chapter	Anthony Rush, 1568 – 1577	N
	Ruckinge	Archbishop	William Master, 1603 - 1608	N
	Snave	Archbishop	John Sandford, 1615 – 1629	Y
	Stone	Dean and Chapter	William Master	Y
	Woodchurch	Archbishop	Richard Byrd	Y
Ospringe	Teynham	Archdeacon	Charles Fotherby, 1595-1615	N
Sandwich	Deal	Archbishop	Hugh Glaser 1543-1559 Alexander Chapman 1618-1629	N Y
	Eythorne	Thomas Bargrave	Isaac Bargrave, 1622 – 1625	Y

	Gt Mongeham	Archbishop	Martin Fotherby, 1596 – 1618	Y
	Ringwold	Nicholas Wootten (Dean)	John Mills 1546 – 1565 Theodore Newton, 1569 (?) – 1569	Y Y
Sittingbourne	Leysdown	Archbishop	Nicholas Sympson 1580-1614	Y
	Lower Halstow	Dean and Chapter	William Tunstall, 1613-1622	N
	Milton Regis	Dean and Chapter	Richard Colfe, 1582-1613	N
	Wichling	Warham Sentleger	Nicholas Simpson	Y
Sutton	Harietsham	All Souls Oxford	George Hovenden, 1609- 1625	Y
	Hollingbourne	Archbishop	Arthur Sentleger 1541-1568	Y
	Sevington	John Boys	William Master	Y
	Thurnham	Edward Wootten	Benjamin Carrier, 1608-1614	Y
	Ulcombe	?	Arthur St Leger, 1541-1568	N
Westbere	Chislet	Archbishop	William Tunstall, 1613-1622	N
	Herne	Archbishop	Richard Colfe, 1582-1613 Alexander Chapman, 1619- 1629	Y Y
	Minster	Archbishop	John Butler, 1560-1570 John Hill, 1570-1595	Y Y
	Monkton	Archbishop	Richard Colfe, 1582-1614 Ralph Talboys, 1594-1596	N N
	Westbere	Crown	Stephen Nevinson, 1562- 1580	Y

Table 5: Curates who also worked as school masters

Parish	Deanery	Curate	Date appointed
Eastry	Sandwich	Nicholls	1581
Midley	Lympne	Bishop	1581
Harbledown	Canterbury	Okell	1584
Dymchurch	Lympne	Venebles	1592
Snave	Lympne	Jeffrey	1592
Dymchurch	Lympne	Evans	1595
Hackington	Canterbury	Bower	1596
Thanington	Canterbury	Bissell	1596
Little Mongeham	Sandwich	Finch	1597
Snave	Lympne	Blackwood	1597
Deal	Sandwich	Webster	1600
Deal	Sandwich	Weston	1600
Barfreston	Sandwich	Ewell	1601
Harbledown	Canterbury	Rogers	1601
Betteshanger	Sandwich	Patterson	1603
Old Romney	Lympne	Newman	1603
Snave	Lympne	Singe	1603
St Mary in the Marsh	Lympne	Clark	1604
Brenzett	Lympne	Sheffield	1605
Brenzett	Lympne	White	1605
Fairfield	Lympne	Goodgroome	1605
Fairfield	Lympne	Peerson	1607
Tilmanstone	Sandwich	Hannington	1607
Brookland	Lympne	Greenfield	1608
Newchurch	Lympne	Ballard	1609
Brenzett	Lympne	Sharp	1610
Snave	Lympne	Hawker	1611
Ivychurch	Lympne	Ballard	1616
Walmer	Sandwich	Broomstone	1616
St Mary in the Marsh	Lympne	Baker	1620
Fairfield	Lympne	Hewett	1624

Table 6: Showing ministers involved in the Ashford prophesyings. The notes section comes from Peter Clark, *English Provincial Society*.

Name		Parish	Notes	Deanery
Brimstone	Anthony	Aldington	Later non-conformist rector of Monks Horton	Lympne
Bond	George	Appledore	No cap or tippet. Also curate of Snave, Fairfield and Newchurch in the 1570s and 1580s	Lympne
Pett	Thomas	Ashford	Previously rector St Peter's in Sandwich	Charing
Grime	George	Benenden	No preacher or graduate	Charing
Dowle	Andrew	Bethersden	Minor Canon	Charing
Selhurst	William	Brenzett	Reads service in body of church. Also curate Snave (69) and Snargate (78)	Lympne
Martin	Robert	Dymchurch	Feeds cattle in churchyard. Dresses 'not comely', peace-breaker. Curate St Mary in the Marsh 1569.	Lympne
Mantell	John	Hawkhurst		Charing
Grave	Thomas	High Halden	Uses common bread	
Horsmanden	Thomas	Hothfield	Omits surplice	
Levett	John	Kenardington	Also rector of Snargate	
Brainford	John	Kennington		
Oliver	Thomas	Kingsnorth		
Stafford	Henry	New Romney	Reader at Smallhythe, later vicar of New Romney	
Digby	Kenelm	Old Romney	Omits surplice	Lympne
Dunslake	Richard	Rolvenden		Lympne
Baker	George	Ruckinge	No sermons. Also curate Woodchurch, Brookland and St Mary in the Marsh in the 1580s	
Coleman	Paul	Selling	Uses common bread. Also vicar of Newchurch 1576 - 1580.	
Charlton	Henry	Snargate	Also curate of Oare, Davington and Doddington in the 1570s and 1580s	
Brimstone	Thomas	Stone	Neglects preaching	
Ely	George	Tenterdden	MA. Uses common bread. Suspended by Whitgift in 1584	Charing
Barret	Thomas	Warehorne	Also Curate Brenzett 1569	
Newman	Roger	Westwell	Marian exile	
Ireland	John	Willesborough	Uses common bread.	

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X.4.4	1598-1608
X.5.3	1609-1616
X.5.7	1611-1639
X.5.10	1615-1624
X.6.1	1616-1631
X.6.5	1624-1632
X.8.5	1561-1563
X.8.6	1568
X.8.8	1569-1570
X.8.9	1571-1572
X.8.10	1578-1582
X.8.11	1583-1585
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