

Parish churches in the diocese of Rochester, *c.* 1320–*c.* 1520

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The core of this article is an alphabetical list of the parish churches belonging to the diocese of Rochester in the fifteenth century. Their distribution is shown by the accompanying map (Fig. 1). More precisely, the list as it stands describes the situation existing *c.* 1420; but information is also provided which will enable the reader to modify the list so that it describes the situation existing at any other chosen date between *c.* 1320 and *c.* 1520.

Though many of the facts reported here may seem sufficiently well-known, the author is not aware of any previously published list which can claim to be both comprehensive in scope and accurate in detail. The information given below is all taken from primary sources, or, failing that, from secondary sources closely dependent on the primary sources. Where there is some uncertainty, this is stated. Apart from these admittedly doubtful points, the list is believed to be perfectly reliable. Readers who notice any errors or who can shed any further light on the areas of uncertainty should kindly inform the author.

Before anything else, it needs to be understood that a large part of the diocese of Rochester did not come under the bishop's jurisdiction. More than thirty parishes, roughly one quarter of the total number, were subject to the archbishop of Canterbury. They constituted what was called the deanery of Shoreham. In the fourteenth century, if the archbishop had occasion to write to the bishop concerning one of these parishes, he was careful to describe it as being 'of your diocese and of our immediate jurisdiction' (where 'immediate' means 'unmediated'). This arrangement was nothing special to the diocese of Rochester: in every diocese, wherever the archbishop owned a manor, he also had jurisdiction over the corresponding parish.¹ But in Rochester's case the number of exempt parishes was especially large, because there was so much property here belonging to the church of Canterbury.

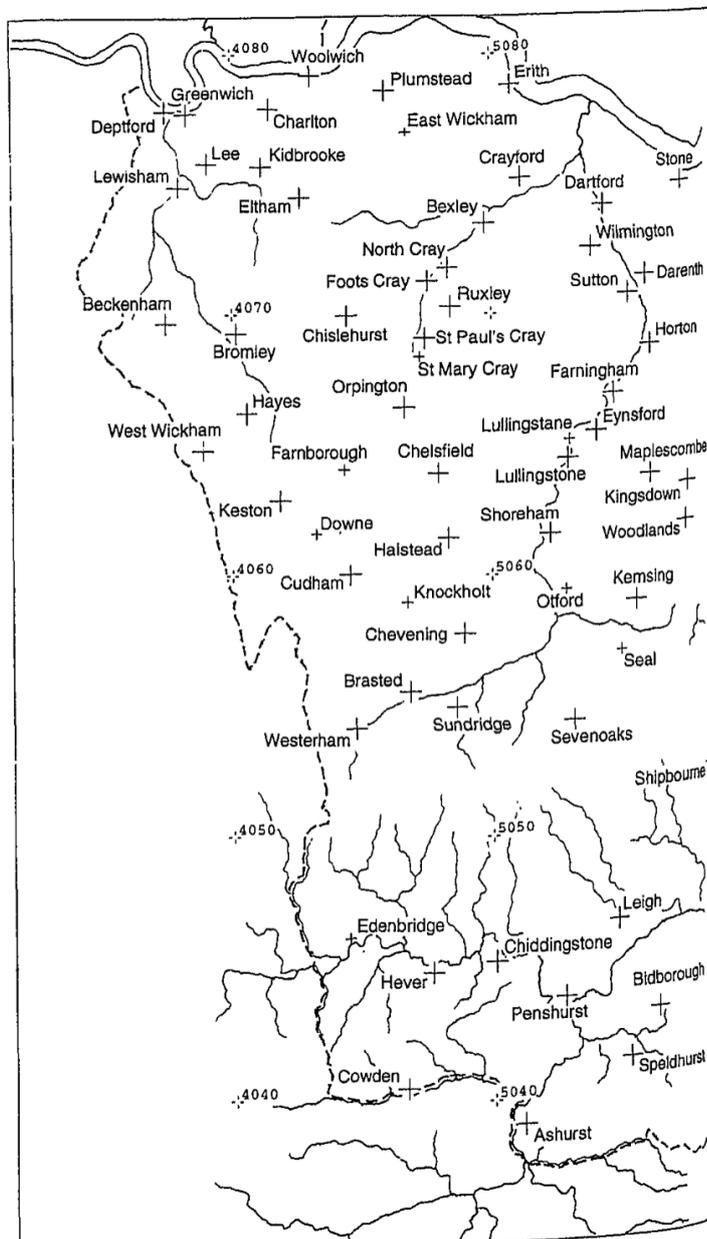
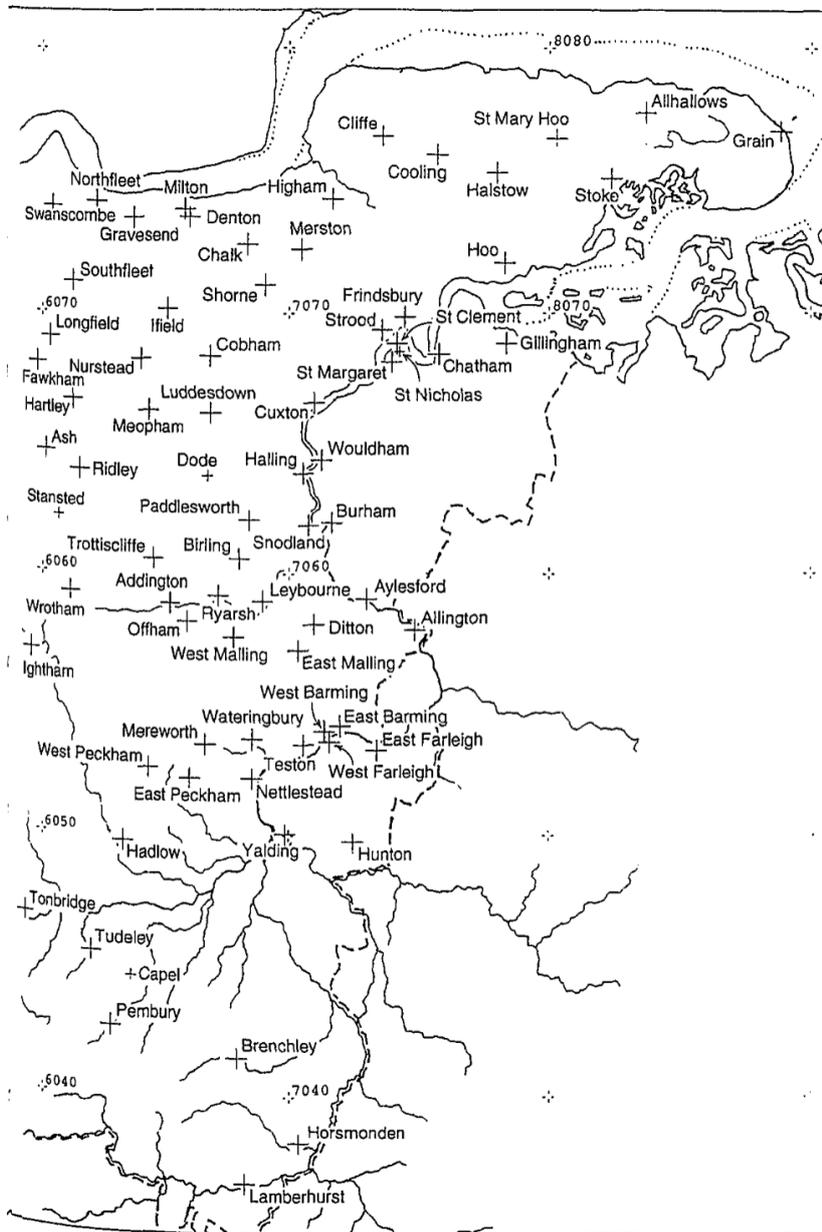


Fig. 1. Map of the diocese of Rochester, c. 1420



Two connected parishes, Plumstead and East Wickham, were similarly exempt from the bishop's jurisdiction. Instead they came under the jurisdiction of the abbot of St Augustine's. This is clear, for a start, from the negative evidence of the Rochester registers, which hardly ever mention these two parishes; but an entry in the register of Archbishop Chichele (ed. Jacob, 1937–47, vol. 1, 305) tells us explicitly that Plumstead church was in the abbot's jurisdiction, as well as in his patronage. In the diocese of Canterbury, the abbot did sometimes try to claim jurisdiction over the parish churches belonging to his abbey, but all such attempts were thwarted by the archbishop. In the diocese of Rochester, the claim was successfully asserted. As far as we know, it was never contested by the bishop.

Throughout the following paragraphs, these jurisdictional complexities have to be borne in mind. The word 'bishop' does not always mean the bishop of Rochester. With regard to the deanery of Shoreham it means the archbishop of Canterbury; with regard to Plumstead with East Wickham it means the abbot of St Augustine's, acting in a quasi-episcopal capacity.

For the whole period covered by this paper, the structure of administration remained unchanged. There was one archdeaconry, coterminous with the diocese, so far as it fell under the bishop's jurisdiction; and there were four deaneries – Rochester, Malling, Dartford and Shoreham.² The dean of the deanery of Shoreham was, of course, appointed by and answerable to the archbishop; the deans of the other three deaneries were appointed by the bishop.

The bishops' registers, now deposited in Maidstone, are listed in an Appendix. They are described individually by Smith (1981, 171–8). Only one has been printed – the first of the series, the register of Bishop Hethe (ed. Johnson, 1914–48) – but all are now available on microfilm (Harvester Press, 1987). Some registers are missing; and some of these that survive are nearly illegible in places, where the ink has faded. Even so, taken together, the registers contain a wealth of information from which it is easy to ascertain the status of the parish churches under the bishop's jurisdiction.³

Some of the clearest evidence comes from the entries recording institutions to vacant benefices. In its simplest form, the procedure worked like this. Whenever a church became vacant, through the death or resignation of the rector, the person who owned the patronage selected a suitable candidate and presented him to the bishop. Having satisfied himself that the church was indeed vacant, that the person presenting was truly the patron, and that the person presented was properly qualified, the bishop admitted him; and then he wrote to the archdeacon, or to the dean of the deanery in question, ordering

him to see to it that the new rector was inducted into his church. The various documents resulting from this process do not often survive, but a note of the transaction would be entered in the bishop's register summarizing the essential facts – the date, the name of the person presented, the name of the church, the name of the patron. In any bishop's register entries of this type are one of the basic ingredients.

There were several churches of which the bishop himself was patron. When one of these churches fell vacant, the bishop did not write a letter of presentation addressed to himself: the acts of presentation and admission were fused into a single act, and this was called collation.

Historically, a parish church was a piece of property belonging to the lord of the manor. In the course of time, however, many churches were given by their owners to some religious community. What was conveyed, more exactly, was the patronage of the church.⁴ During the period which concerns us here, such gifts could not be made without written permission from the king; so we find them documented in the records of central government. The bishop, though presumably he might expect to be consulted, was not himself a party to this transaction. From his point of view, nothing changed until the next vacancy, when the new rector would be presented by the religious community, not by the lord of the manor.

Once they had secured possession of the patronage, the community could think of asking for the church to be appropriated to them. In other words, they could ask to be instituted collectively as the church's rectors. This might happen straight away, as soon as they acquired the church; it might happen long afterwards; or it might never happen at all. If or when they decided to take this step, they needed first to obtain the king's permission. Then they applied to the bishop (or to the pope, if they had the right to go over the bishop's head). If the bishop was minded to agree, some suitable arrangement would be worked out.⁵ Usually the outcome was the creation of a vicarage enjoying some specified share of the church's income. At the next vacancy, and from then onwards, a vicar would be presented by the community, admitted by the bishop, and put in possession of the vicarage. These admissions too were recorded in the bishop's register.

In addition to these routine entries, some registers contain copies of documents shown to the bishop to justify a claim to the patronage of some church or vicarage. Luckily for us, there are large collections of documents transcribed in both the earliest and the latest of the relevant registers – i.e. in the registers of Hamo de Hethe and John Fisher.⁶

For churches in the deanery of Shoreham, information of the same kind is contained in the archbishops' registers. Moreover, when the see of Rochester was vacant, all business which would normally have been dealt with by the bishop was handled by the archbishop; and that includes collations, because any patronage belonging to the bishop himself came into the archbishop's hands for as long as the vacancy lasted. In any other diocese (not excluding Canterbury) the right of presentation would have passed to the crown; but Rochester was exceptional.⁷

Arrangements in the deanery of Shoreham tended to be more complicated than in the rest of the diocese. Most notably, there were five churches here – but none elsewhere – which supported both a rectory and a vicarage.⁸ The rectories were all in the archbishop's gift, and were often conferred on members of his administrative staff. Two of the vicarages (Sevenoaks, Wrotham) were also in his patronage; in the other three cases (Eynsford, Orpington, East Peckham) it was the rector who presented to the vicarage.

For the vicarage of Plumstead with East Wickham we would need to consult the registers of St Augustine's. From the fact that the abbey possessed both jurisdiction and patronage, it follows that the appointment of a new vicar would involve an act of collation by the abbot.⁹ One such letter of collation, dated 5 April 1317 and issued under the common seal of the abbot and convent, survives through having been copied into the abbey's 'White Book' (PRO, E 164/27, fol. 183v), as a model to be used again on subsequent occasions.

The king had no patronage in the diocese of Rochester beyond what defaulted to him in special circumstances – during intervals, for instance, when the archbishopric was vacant. From time to time, pieces of patronage reverted to the crown through accidents of various kinds – by forfeiture, or because the heir was a minor, or for any other pretext that the king's lawyers could discover. Presentations made by the king were routinely recorded on the patent rolls, but entries relating to the diocese of Rochester are, for the reasons stated, few and far between.¹⁰ Also on the patent rolls are the licences for churches to be granted or appropriated to religious corporations, and in matters of this kind the record ought to be (and seems to be) complete.

From the late thirteenth century onwards, for purposes of taxation, the government maintained records which consisted of lists of churches, organized by diocese and deanery, with a note of the value of each.¹¹ These records are certainly important, and the author made use of them, at an early stage, in assembling data for the diocese of Rochester. But in fact they tell us nothing – except for the financial

particulars – which cannot be discovered more reliably from other sources. In the end, therefore, the author chose to exclude them from the present discussion. The best way of dealing with these records, which are not by any means correct in every detail, is to check them against a list drawn up from independent evidence.

In the fifteenth century, at frequent intervals, the bishop was required to submit a list of the benefices which happened to be vacant at the moment, or which were so poorly remunerated that they were exempted from taxation. The author does not know whether these records survive centrally, but several were copied into the Rochester registers. They allow us occasional glimpses of the situation existing on the ground. It is regularly reported, for instance, that a few of the vacant livings have been vacant for some considerable time, because no one is willing to accept them ‘on account of the meagreness of the stipend’.¹² Records of this kind, dealing in hard facts and hard cash, add some grit to the bland entries found in the bishops’ registers, which give the impression that everything always went smoothly.

Lastly, wills are another important source. When somebody died, his or her will was proved in the bishop’s court. From the 1440s onwards the records survive; and all sorts of bits and pieces of information were winnowed out of them by Duncan (1895; 1906–7). It is here, for instance, that we can meet the curates and chaplains who were responsible for doing much of the work, but whose terms of employment did not require them to be presented to the bishop. Invisible in the registers, they make themselves known, as beneficiaries or witnesses, in the wills of their parishioners. Wills from parishes in the deanery of Shoreham were processed through the archbishop’s court. Its records have mostly been lost, but those that exist were also searched through by Duncan (1898b). Wills from the parishes of Plumstead and East Wickham, which do not appear in the Rochester records, must apparently have been proved in the court of the abbot of St Augustine’s, but (as far as the author is aware) there are no surviving records.¹³

PARISH CHURCHES

The following list is largely in agreement with the lists put together by Duncan. There are seven additions, all securely attested: Allington, West Barming, Dode, Kidbrooke, Lullingstane (not to be confused with Lullingstone), Paddlesworth and Woodlands. Except for Allington, these parishes all disappeared between the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries; but they all existed, without any doubt, during part at least of the period covered here.

Each entry in the list gives the name of the parish, the dedication of the church, its grid reference (all in square TQ), plus, in italics, the deanery to which the parish belonged. Alternative names or spellings of the name are mentioned in the endnotes, wherever some clarification seems desirable. The dedication of the parish church is often found mentioned in wills, seldom in other kinds of record. Where no source is cited, the reader may assume that the evidence is given by Duncan. Endnotes identify the few additions which the author has been able to make. Only medieval evidence is cited: the evidence of 'local tradition', which, where it can be checked, quite often turns out to be wrong, is disregarded.

Some churches were subordinate to others, in which case a brief note is made in the entry to explain the situation. Because of the existence of such relationships, there are some borderline cases. Of the churches which the author has decided to include in this list, the most marginal are Downe, Farnborough, Knockholt and St Mary Cray, which were all regarded, not as parish churches in their own right, but as chapels within the parish of some other church.¹⁴

The rest of the entry deals with the disposition of the rectory, and of the vicarage (if one existed). For churches which were not appropriated, the patronage is specified if it belonged to some ecclesiastical person or corporate body. If no such specification is made in the entry, the reader may assume that the patronage was in lay hands. The patronage of the vicarage is specified only if it belonged to some person or body other than the rector or rectors of this church.

What these entries describe is the situation as it existed *c.* 1420. For the changes which had occurred over the preceding hundred years, or which would occur over the subsequent hundred years, the reader will need to consult the third section of this paper.

Churches belonging to the diocese of Rochester, c. 1420

- Addington : St Margaret : 6558 : *Malling* : rectory¹⁵
Allhallows : All Saints : 8377 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester¹⁶ : vicarage
Allington : St Peter¹⁷ : 7457 : *Malling* : rectory
Ash : St Peter and St Paul : 6064 : *Rochester* : rectory¹⁸
Ashurst : St Martin : 5139 : *Malling* : rectory
Aylesford : St Peter and St Paul : 7258 : *Rochester* : appropriated to Strood hospital : vicarage
- East Barming : St Margaret : 7154 : *Malling* : rectory¹⁹ (prior and convent of Leeds)
West Barming²⁰ : ? : 7153²¹ : *Malling* : rectory²²
Beckenham : St George : 3769 : *Dartford* : rectory
Bexley : St Mary : 4973 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Holy Trinity, London : vicarage
Bidborough : St Laurence : 5643 : *Malling* : rectory
Birling : All Saints : 6860 : *Malling* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Bermondsey : vicarage
Brasted : St Martin : 4655 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
Brenchley : All Saints : 6741 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Tonbridge : vicarage
Bromley : St Peter and St Paul : 4069 : *Dartford* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
Burham : St Mary : 7161 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and brethren of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England : vicarage
- Capel : St Thomas the Martyr : 6344 : *Malling* : annexed to Tonbridge
Chalk : St Mary : 6872 : *Rochester* : appropriated to Cobham college²³ : vicarage
Charlton : St Luke : 4177 : *Dartford* : rectory (abbot and convent of Bermondsey)
Chatham : St Mary : 7568 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Leeds²⁴
Chelsfield : St Martin : 4763 : *Dartford* : rectory
Chevening : ? : 4857 : *Shoreham* : rectory²⁵ (archbishop of Canterbury)
Chiddingstone : St Mary : 5045 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
Chislehurst : St Nicholas : 4469 : *Dartford* : rectory²⁶ (bishop of Rochester)
Cliffe : St Helen : 7376 : *Shoreham*²⁷ : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
Cobham : St Mary Magdalene : 6668 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Bermondsey²⁸ : vicarage appropriated to Cobham college²⁹
Cooling : St James : 7575 : *Rochester* : rectory³⁰
Cowden : St Mary Magdalene : 4640 : *Malling* : rectory
5175 Crayford³¹ : St Paulinus : 4769 : *Shoreham* : rectory
Cudham : St Peter and St Paul : 4459 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prioress and convent of Kilburn : vicarage³²
Cuxton : St Michael : 7066 : *Rochester* : rectory³³ (bishop of Rochester)
- Darenth : ? : 5671 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester : vicarage

Dartford : Holy Trinity : 5474 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the bishop of Rochester : vicarage³⁴
Denton : St Mary : 6673 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the bishop of Rochester³⁵
Deptford³⁶ : St Nicholas : 3777 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Bayham : vicarage
Ditton : St Peter's Chains : 7058 : *Malling* : rectory³⁷ (prior and convent of Leeds)
Dode : ? : 6663 : *Rochester* : annexed to Paddlesworth³⁸
Downe : ? : 4361 : *Shoreham* : chapel in Hayes

East Wickham : St Michael : 4676 : *Dartford* : annexed to Plumstead
Edenbridge : St Peter and St Paul : 4446 : *Malling* : annexed to Westerham
Eltham : St John the Baptist : 4274 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Keynsham : vicarage
Erde, *see* Crayford
Erith³⁹ : St John the Baptist : 5078 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Holy Trinity, London : vicarage
Eynsford : St Martin : 5465 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury) : vicarage

East Farleigh : ? : 7353 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to Maidstone college⁴⁰ : vicarage

West Farleigh : All Saints : 7153 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Leeds : vicarage

Farnborough : St Giles : 4464 : *Dartford* : chapel in Chelsfield

Farningham : St Peter and St Paul : 5466 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Canterbury⁴¹ : vicarage (archbishop of Canterbury)

Fawkham : St Mary : 5968 : *Rochester* : rectory

Foots Cray : All Saints : 4771 : *Dartford* : rectory (prior and convent of Southwark)

Frindsbury : All Saints : 7469 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the bishop of Rochester : vicarage

Gillingham : St Mary : 7868 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prioress and convent of Sheppey⁴² : vicarage

Grain : St James : 8876 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prioress and convent of Sheppey⁴³ : vicarage

6373 Gravesend : St Mary : ~~6673~~⁴⁴ : *Rochester* : rectory (abbot and convent of St Mary Graces)⁴⁵

Greenwich⁴⁶ : St Alfege : 3877 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Sheen⁴⁷ : vicarage

Hadlow : St Mary : 6349 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and brethren of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England : vicarage

Halling : St John the Baptist : 7063 : *Rochester* : appropriated to Strood hospital : vicarage

Halstead : ? : 4861⁴⁸ : *Shoreham* : rectory (rector of Shoreham with Otford)⁴⁹

Halstow⁵⁰ : St Margaret : 7775 : *Rochester* : rectory⁵¹

Hartley : All Saints : 6166 : *Rochester* : rectory

Hayes : St Dunstan⁵² : 4066 : *Shoreham* : rectory⁵³ (rector of Orpington)
Hever : St Peter : 4744 : *Shoreham* : rectory (prior and convent of Combwell)
Higham : St Mary : 7174 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prioress and convent
of Higham : vicarage
Hoo : St Werburga : 7871 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and convent of
Rochester⁵⁴ : vicarage
Horsmonden : St Margaret : 7038 : *Malling* : rectory
Horton⁵⁵ : St Mary : 5668 : *Dartford* : appropriated to Cobham college⁵⁶ : vic-
arage
Hunton⁵⁷ : St Mary : 7249 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)

Ifield : ? : 6570 : *Shoreham* : rectory
Ightham : ? : 5956 : *Shoreham* : rectory

Kemsing : St Mary : 5558 : *Malling* : with Seal annexed : appropriated to the
abbot and convent of Bermondsey⁵⁸ : vicarage
Keston : ? : 4162 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
4076 Kidbrooke : St Nicholas⁵⁹ : ~~24175~~⁶⁰ : *Dartford* : rectory (prior and convent of
Southwark)⁶¹
Kingsdown : St Edmund : 5763 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and
convent of Rochester⁶² : vicarage⁶³
Knockholt⁶⁴ : St Catherine : 4658 : *Shoreham* : chapel in Orpington

Lamberhurst : St Mary : 6836 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent
of Leeds : vicarage
Lee : St Margaret : 3975 : *Dartford* : rectory⁶⁵
Leigh : St Mary : 5446 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of
Tonbridge⁶⁶ : vicarage
Lessness, *see* Erith
Lewisham : St Mary : 3774 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prior and convent of
Sheen⁶⁷ : vicarage
Leybourne : St Peter and St Paul : 6858 : *Malling* : rectory (abbot and convent
of St Mary Graces)⁶⁸
Longfield : St Mary Magdalene : 6069 : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Roch-
ester)
Luddesdown : St Peter and St Paul : 6666 : *Rochester* : rectory
Lullingstane : St John the Baptist⁶⁹ : 5265⁷⁰ : *Dartford* : annexed to Lulling-
stone⁷¹
Lullingstone : St Botulf : 5264 : *Dartford* : with Lullingstane annexed : rec-
tory

East Malling : St Mary⁷² : 7057 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the abbess and
convent of Malling : vicarage
West Malling : St Mary : 6757 : *Malling* : appropriated to the abbess and con-
vent of Malling : vicarage
Maplescombe : ? : 5663 : *Rochester* : rectory
Meopham : St John the Baptist : 6466 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the prior
and convent of Canterbury⁷³ : vicarage (archbishop of Canterbury)

Mereworth : St Laurence : 6653⁷⁴ : *Malling* : rectory⁷⁵
 Merston : St Giles : 7072⁷⁶ : *Rochester* : rectory⁷⁷
 Milton : St Peter and St Paul : 6573 : *Rochester* : appropriated to Milton hospital⁷⁸

Nettlestead : St Mary : 6852 : *Malling* : rectory
 North Cray : St James : 4871 : *Dartford* : rectory
 Northfleet : St Botulf : 6274 : *Shoreham* : appropriated to the archbishop of Canterbury⁷⁹ : vicarage
 Nurstead⁸⁰ : St Mildred : 6468 : *Rochester* : rectory

Offham : St Michael : 6658 : *Malling* : rectory
 Orpington : Holy Trinity⁸¹ : 4666 : *Shoreham* : rectory⁸² (archbishop of Canterbury) : vicarage
 Otford : St Bartholomew : 5259 : *Shoreham* : annexed to Shoreham⁸³

Paddlesworth : St Benedict⁸⁴ : 6862 : *Malling* : with Dode annexed : rectory
 East Peckham⁸⁵ : St Michael : 6652 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury) : vicarage
 West Peckham⁸⁶ : St Dunstan : 6452 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Leeds⁸⁷ : vicarage
 Pembury⁸⁸ : St Peter and St Paul⁸⁹ : 6242 : *Malling* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Bayham : vicarage
 Penshurst⁹⁰ : St John the Baptist : 5243 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
 Plumstead : St Nicholas : 4578 : *Dartford*⁹¹ : with East Wickham annexed : appropriated to the abbot and convent of St Augustine's : vicarage

Ridley : St Peter⁹² : 6163 : *Rochester* : rectory (abbot and convent of St Mary Graces)⁹³
 Rochester : St Clement : 7468⁹⁴ : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Rochester : St Margaret : 7368 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester : vicarage
 Rochester : altar of St Nicholas⁹⁵ : 7468 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester : vicarage⁹⁶ (bishop of Rochester)
 Ruxley : St Botulf : 4870 : *Dartford* : rectory
 Ryarsh : St Martin : 6759 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Merton : vicarage

St Mary Cray : St Mary : 4768 : *Shoreham* : chapel in Orpington
 St Mary Hoo : St Mary : 8076 : *Rochester* : rectory⁹⁷
 St Paul's Cray : St Paulinus : 4769 : *Dartford* : rectory
 Seal : St Peter and St Paul : 5556 : *Malling* : annexed to Kemsing
 Sevenoaks⁹⁸ : St Nicholas : 5354 : *Shoreham* : rectory⁹⁹ (archbishop of Canterbury) : vicarage (archbishop of Canterbury)
 Shipbourne : St Giles : 5952 : *Malling* : annexed to Tonbridge
 Shoreham : St Peter and St Paul : 5261 : *Shoreham* : with Otford annexed : rectory¹⁰⁰ (archbishop of Canterbury)

Shorne : St Peter and St Paul : 6971 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Bermondsey¹⁰¹ : vicarage
 Snodland : All Saints : 7061 : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Southfleet : St Nicholas : 6171 : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Speldhurst : St Mary : 5541 : *Malling* : appropriated to the college of St Laurence in Candlewick Street¹⁰² : vicarage
 Stansted : ? : 6062 : *Shoreham* : annexed to Wrotham
 Stoke : St Peter and St Paul : 8275 : *Rochester* : appropriated to the abbot and convent of Boxley : vicarage
 Stone : St Mary : 5774 : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Strood : St Nicholas : 7369 : *Rochester* : appropriated to Strood hospital¹⁰³
 Sundridge : ?¹⁰⁴ : 4854 : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)¹⁰⁵
 Sutton¹⁰⁶ : St John the Baptist : 5570 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester¹⁰⁷ : vicarage (bishop of Rochester)
 Swanscombe : St Peter and St Paul : 6073 : *Rochester* : rectory

 Teston : St Peter and St Paul : 7053 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Leeds : vicarage¹⁰⁸
 Tonbridge : St Peter and St Paul : 5946 : *Malling* : with Shipbourne and Capel annexed : appropriated to the prior and brethren of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England : vicarage
 Trottscliffe : St Peter and St Paul : 6460 : *Malling* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Tudeley : All Saints : 6245 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Tonbridge : vicarage

 Wateringbury : St John the Baptist : 6853 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Leeds : vicarage
 Westerham : St Mary : 4454 : *Malling* : with Edenbridge annexed : appropriated to the prior and convent of Canterbury¹⁰⁹ : vicarage
 West Wickham : St John the Baptist : 3864 : *Dartford* : rectory
 Wilmington : St Michael : 5372 : *Dartford* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Rochester¹¹⁰ : vicarage
 5660 Woodlands¹¹¹ : ? : ~~25761~~¹¹² : *Shoreham* : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury)
 Woolwich : St Mary : 4379 : *Dartford* : rectory¹¹³ (bishop of Rochester)
 Wouldham : All Saints : 7164 : *Rochester* : rectory (bishop of Rochester)
 Wrotham : St George : 6159 : *Shoreham* : with Stansted annexed : rectory (archbishop of Canterbury) : vicarage (archbishop of Canterbury)

 Yalding : St Peter and St Paul : 6950 : *Malling* : appropriated to the prior and convent of Tonbridge : vicarage

CHANGES OF STATUS

In this section is a list, in chronological order, of all the changes of status affecting the churches above which occurred between *c.* 1320 and *c.* 1520. Each entry begins with a synopsis consisting of three elements: the date, the name of the church concerned, and a summary of what happened. The relevant documents are cited, so far as the author is aware of them, but not discussed in detail. The last sentence in each paragraph explains how the list of churches should be modified to take account of this change.

1322 – Milton – granted to the master and brethren of Milton hospital by Aymer de Valencia, Earl of Pembroke, and appropriated to them by Bishop Hethe.

Several documents relating to the foundation of Milton hospital are copied in Reg. Fisher (fols. 87r–89r); among them is a charter of Edward II, dated 7 December 1321, confirming two charters of the Earl of Pembroke. The bishop's letter is dated 17 December 1322 (Reg. Hethe, ed. Johnson, 1914–48, 117). The king's licence for the appropriation, issued (after the event) at the request of the earl's widow, is dated 22 June 1326 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1324–7*, 275). Before that, Milton was a rectory, with the patronage in lay hands.

1328 – Westerham (with Edenbridge annexed) – appropriated by Bishop Hethe to the prior and convent of Canterbury.

A series of documents relating to Westerham was printed by Thorpe (1769, 677–84) from one of the Christ Church registers. The church (together with West Cliffe, near Dover) was given to the prior and convent by Queen Eleanor, and the grant was confirmed by Edward I in a charter dated 20 June 1290 (*Calendar of charter rolls*, vol. 2, 357). A letter from the prior and convent applying for the appropriation is dated 3 September 1327; the bishop's letter is dated 25 January 1328 (Reg. Hethe, ed. Johnson, 1914–48, 50). Before that, after 1290, Westerham was a rectory in the patronage of the prior and convent.

1328 – Chalk – appropriated by Bishop Hethe to the prior and convent of Norwich.

The king's licence is dated 10 February 1327 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1327–30*, 10); the bishop's letter is dated 30 January 1328 (Reg. Hethe, ed. Johnson, 1914–48, 3). The ordination of the vicarage, not entered in Reg. Hethe, is transcribed in Reg. W. Bottlesham (fol. 14r–v), and in an *inspeximus* dated 24 May 1391 (below, 1380). Before that, Chalk was a rectory in the patronage of the prior and convent.

1347 – Speldhurst – granted by its patron, John de Pulteneye, to the master and chaplains of the college of St Laurence in Candlewick Street, and appropriated to them by Bishop Hethe.

The king's licence for this and other advowsons to be alienated to the college

is dated 1 July 1345 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1343–5*, 489); the bishop's letter is dated 25 May 1347 (Thorpe, 1769, 615–17, from Reg. Hethe). Before that, Speldhurst was a rectory, with the patronage in lay hands.

1354 – Leigh – appropriated by Bishop Sheppey to the prior and convent of Tonbridge.

The king's licence is dated 23 July 1348 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1348–50*, 118); the bishop's letter is dated 25 February 1354 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Kent charter 123*; copies in Reg. Sheppey, fols. 9r–10v, and Reg. Fisher, fols. 81r–83r; printed by Thorpe, 1769, 464–7). Before that, Leigh was a rectory in the patronage of the prior and convent.

1364 – Cobham – new arrangements introduced, following the foundation of Cobham college.

The church had been appropriated, since the twelfth century, to the priory of Bermondsey. Under the new arrangement, the prior and convent were to share with the founder (or the founder's heirs) the right of presentation to the mastership of the college, and the master and chaplains were to act as vicars of the church. A letter of Pope Urban V, dated at Avignon, 29 April 1364 (*Lettres communes*, vol. 3, no. 11510; cf. *Calendar of papal petitions*, vol. 1, 492), confirms this arrangement; it also confirms the statutes drawn up by the college's founder, John de Cobham, in consultation with Bishop Wittlesey, dated 10 December 1362. Before that, the usual arrangement existed: Cobham was a vicarage in the patronage of the prior and convent of Bermondsey.

1367 – Dode – annexed to the rectory of Paddlesworth by Bishop Trilleck.

The bishop's letter is dated 1 May 1367 (Reg. Trilleck, fol. 9r–v). Before that, Dode was a rectory, with the patronage in lay hands.

1377 – Cudham – granted by its patrons, Thomas de Wolton and William Topclyf, to the prioress and convent of Kilburn, and appropriated to them by Bishop Brinton.

The king's licence is dated 1 December 1376 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1374–7*, 391); the bishop's letter is dated 20 June 1377 (Thorpe, 1769, 264–6, from Reg. Fisher, fols. 39r–40r, where it is followed by a copy of the licence). Before that, Cudham was divided between a rectory (the patronage of which was in lay hands) and a vicarage (to which the rector presented). The arrangement is clear from the relevant entries in Reg. Hethe, but the author does not know how it had come about.

1378 – Horton – granted by its patron, John de Cobham, to the master and chaplains of Cobham college, and appropriated to them by Bishop Brinton, by order of Pope Gregory XI.

The grant was originally made on the strength of a licence from the king dated 24 November 1376 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1374–7*, 381), but there was some irregularity in the procedure, the king's pardon for which is dated 12 September 1379 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1377–81*, 383). The

pope's letter is dated at Avignon, 28 June 1376; the bishop's letter ordaining the vicarage is dated 10 April 1378 (Thorpe, 1769, 431–4, perhaps from the copy in Reg. Fisher, fols. 62v–63v). Before that, just like Cudham (see above), Horton was divided between a rectory (the patronage of which was in lay hands) and a vicarage (to which the rector presented). Here again, the arrangement is clear from the entries in Reg. Hethe, but the author does not know how it had come about.

1380 – Chalk – exchanged by the prior and convent of Norwich with the master and chaplains of Cobham college.

The king's licence is dated 1 September 1380 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1377–81*, 543); earlier licences, not acted upon, had been issued in 1368 and 1369 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1367–70*, 98, 218). The existing ordination of the vicarage (above, 1328) was confirmed by Bishop Brinton in an inspeximus dated 24 May 1391 (Caley, Ellis and Bandinel, 1817–30, vol. 1, 187–8, from Cotton Faustina C. v). Before that, after 1328, Chalk was a vicarage in the patronage of the prior and convent of Norwich.

1385 – Meopham – granted and appropriated to the prior and convent of Canterbury by Archbishop Courtenay.

The king's licence is dated 17 November 1385 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1385–9*, 59). Before that, Meopham was a rectory in the archbishop's patronage.

1395 – East Farleigh – transferred by Archbishop Courtenay to the master and chaplains of Maidstone college.

The church had previously been appropriated to the hospital founded in Maidstone by archbishop Boniface. In the 1390s, when Archbishop Courtenay was planning to found a college attached to the parish church, he obtained permission from the king for all of the hospital's property to be made over to the college. The king's licence is dated 2 August 1395 (Caley, Ellis and Bandinel, 1817–30, vol. 6, 1394–5; cf. *Calendar of patent rolls, 1391–6*, 635). Before that, East Farleigh was a vicarage in the patronage of Maidstone hospital.¹¹⁴

1398 – Gravesend, Leybourne, Ridley – granted by the king to the abbot and convent of St Mary Graces.

The king's letter is dated 3 July 1398 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1396–9*, 389). Only Gravesend and Leybourne are mentioned by name, but Ridley seems to have been included in the grant.¹¹⁵ Before that, the patronage of all three churches was in lay hands.

1402 – Kemsing (with Seal annexed) – granted by its patron, Guy Mone, to the prior and convent of Bermondsey, and appropriated to them by Bishop (John) Bottlesham, by order of Pope Boniface IX.

The king's licence is dated 6 Jul 1397 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1396–9*, 291); the pope's letter is dated 5 September 1397 (Thorpe, 1769, 450). There was some delay, however, before the appropriation took effect.¹¹⁶ The bishop's letter ordaining the vicarage is dated 12 October 1402

(Thorpe, 1769, 451–3, from a copy inserted later in Reg. J. Bottlesham, fols. 29r–30r); the letter of the abbot and convent presenting the first vicar is dated 26 October 1402 (Reg. J. Bottlesham, fol. 32r–v). Before that, Kemsing was a rectory, with the patronage in lay hands.¹¹⁷

1408 – Northfleet – appropriated to the archbishopric of Canterbury by Pope Gregory XII, at Archbishop Chichele’s request.

The king’s licence is dated 4 July 1406 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1405–8*, 208); the pope’s letter is dated at Lucca, 1 June 1408 (*Calendar of papal letters, 1404–15*, 133–4). Before that, Northfleet was a rectory in the archbishop’s patronage.

1413 – Lullingstane – annexed to the rectory of Lullingstone by Bishop Yong.

The bishop’s letter is dated 8 October 1413 (Thorpe, 1769, 477–8, from Cotton Faustina C. v; copied also in Reg. Langdon, fol. 49r–v). Before that, Lullingstane was a rectory, with the patronage in lay hands.

1414 – Greenwich, Lewisham – transferred by the king to the prior and convent of Sheen.

These two churches, since the early thirteenth century, had been appropriated to the abbot and convent of St Peter of Gent, who owned the manor of Lewisham with various other lands and rents in the same area. For the purpose of managing this property, the abbey maintained a cell called the priory of Lewisham: a few of the monks from Gent would normally be sent to live there. During much of the fourteenth century, however, the abbey’s English possessions were in the king’s hands ‘on account of the war with France’. (In these circumstances, when either vicarage fell vacant, the king presented.) Finally, under a law which passed through Parliament in 1414, all property belonging to the abbey in England was confiscated; and most of it was used, shortly afterwards, for endowing a Carthusian priory at Sheen, newly founded by the king. The charters defining the endowment are dated 25 September 1414 and 1 April 1415 (*Calendar of charter rolls*, vol. 5, 469–70, 479–80). We do not know how this matter was handled by Bishop Yong, whose register has been lost (except for one tattered quire); but it is clear that the existing appropriation remained in force, and that the relevant documents from the Lewisham archive came into the possession of Sheen priory (Reg. Fisher, fols. 64r–65v). Before that, Greenwich and Lewisham were vicarages in the patronage of the abbot and convent of Gent.

1423 – Rochester, St Nicholas – the parish church completed and dedicated.

This marked the end of a very long story. As far back as the thirteenth century, the citizens of Rochester – those who belonged (as most of them did) to the parish of St Nicholas – had been trying to build themselves a church of their own, to replace the altar in the cathedral church, access to which was controlled by the monks.¹¹⁸ Despite the citizens’ resentment, not to mention an occasional riot, the prior and convent, as proprietors of the altar of St Nicholas, insisted on maintaining the status quo. In 1418, an attempt to settle the issue was made by Bishop Yong but blocked by the

prior and convent (Thorpe, 1769, 560–2, from the surviving fragment of Reg. Yong, fol. 6r–v). In 1422, Archbishop Chichele intervened. His arbitration resulted in a vast document, dated 7 March 1422, which resolved most (but not all) of the matters in dispute (Jacob, 1937–47, vol. 4, 226–32, from Reg. Chichele; Thorpe, 1769, 563–6, from Reg. Langdon, fols. 10v–12v). In particular, the citizens were finally authorized to proceed with the completion of the unfinished building. Within less than two years, the new church was ready to be dedicated, and another vast document, dated 18 December 1423, records the fact that the citizens have renounced all rights regarding the altar of St Nicholas (Thorpe, 1769, 568–70, from Reg. Langdon, fols. 30v–31v). After that, the church was a vicarage in the bishop’s patronage. The vicar continued paying a pension to the prior and convent.

1428 – Kidbrooke – appropriated by Bishop Langdon to the prior and convent of Southwark.

The bishop’s letter is dated 3 January 1428 (Thorpe, 1769, 455–7, from an inspeximus of Bishop Lowe, dated 27 March 1459); there is no indication that a vicarage was created. After that, Kidbrooke seems to have fallen into disuse. The parish became merged with Charlton, but the author does not know when that happened.

1448 – Kingsdown – disappropriated by Bishop Lowe, with the assent of the prior and convent of Rochester.

A marginal note added in Reg. Brouns (fol. 7r) remarks that Kingsdown was converted from a vicarage into a rectory in the time of Bishop Lowe, ‘through a new agreement’. There is no copy of this agreement in Reg. Lowe, but it took effect on 21 December 1448, when the nominee presented by the prior and convent was admitted as rector by the bishop (Reg. Lowe, fol. 16v). After that, Kingsdown became a rectory in the patronage of the prior and convent.

1449 – Speldhurst – disappropriated by Bishop Lowe, with the assent of the master and chaplains of the college of St Laurence in Candlewick Street.

The letter renouncing the appropriation is dated 4 March 1449 (Thorpe, 1769, 618, from Reg. Lowe, fol. 17r). After that, Speldhurst became a rectory in the patronage of the college.

1455 – Merston – new arrangement made by Bishop Lowe.

The bishop’s letter is dated 26 November 1455 (Thorpe, 1769, 498, from Reg. Lowe, fol. 28v): it releases the rector from the obligation to reside, on condition that he arranges for mass to be said in the church each year on the feast of the patron saint. This arrangement, ostensibly a temporary one, seems to have become permanent. After that, Merston is often referred to as a chapel. The rectory became a sinecure; the parish became merged with Shorne.

1486 – West Barming – annexed to the rectory of Nettlestead by Bishop Audley.

The bishop’s letter is dated 24 April 1486 (Thorpe, 1769, 162–6, from the original). After that, West Barming is usually referred to as a chapel.

PATRONAGE

The information given in the lists above could be indexed and cross-referenced in various ways. One further list will be particularly useful. This indexes the distribution of patronage, so far as it belonged to ecclesiastical persons or corporate bodies. Here again, the situation described is the situation existing *c.* 1420. All complications are ignored: for the details of each individual case the reader should consult the list of parish churches.

Archbishop of Canterbury – Brasted, Chevening, Chiddingstone, Cliffe, Eynsford, Farningham, Hunton, Keston, Meopham, Northfleet, Orpington, East Peckham, Penshurst, Sevenoaks, Shoreham with Otford, Sundridge, Woodlands, Wrotham with Stansted

Bishop of Rochester – Bromley, Chislehurst, Cuxton, Dartford, Denton, Frindsbury, Longfield, Rochester St Clement, Rochester St Nicholas, Snodland, Southfleet, Stone, Sutton, Trottscliffe, Woolwich, Wouldham

Rector of Orpington – Hayes

Rector of Shoreham with Otford – Halstead

Abbot and convent of Bayham – Deptford, Pembury

Abbot and convent of Bermondsey – Birling, Charlton, Cobham, Kemsing with Seal, Shorne

Abbot and convent of Boxley – Stoke

Prior and convent of Canterbury – Farningham, Meopham, Westerham with Edenbridge

Abbot and convent of St Augustine's, Canterbury – Plumstead with East Wickham

Master and chaplains of Cobham college – Chalk, Cobham, Horton

Prior and convent of Combwell – Hever

Prioress and convent of Higham – Higham

Prior and brethren of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England – Burham, Hadlow, Tonbridge with Shipbourne and Capel

Abbot and convent of Keynsham – Eltham

Prioress and convent of Kilburn – Cudham

Prior and convent of Leeds – East Barming, Chatham, Ditton, West Farleigh, Lamberhurst, West Peckham, Teston, Wateringbury

Prior and convent of Holy Trinity, London – Bexley, Erith

Master and chaplains of the college of St Laurence in Candlewick Street, London – Speldhurst

Abbot and convent of St Mary Graces, London – Gravesend, Leybourne, Ridley

Master and chaplains of Maidstone college – East Farleigh

Abbess and convent of Malling – East Malling, West Malling

Prior and convent of Merton – Ryarsh

Master and chaplains of Milton hospital – Milton

Prior and convent of Rochester – Allhallows, Darenth, Hoo, Kingsdown, Rochester St Margaret, Rochester St Nicholas, Sutton, Wilmington

Prior and convent of Sheen – Greenwich, Lewisham

Prioress and convent of Sheppey – Gillingham, Grain
Prior and convent of Southwark – Fooks Cray, Kidbrooke
Master and brethren of Strood hospital – Aylesford, Halling, Strood
Prior and convent of Tonbridge – Brenchley, Leigh, Tudeley, Yalding

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This paper is dedicated to the memory of Peter Tester, whose generous advice helped in the writing of it.

APPENDIX

The surviving bishops' registers are all deposited at the Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone. In the eighteenth century (probably), the registers were bound together to make six composite volumes. Till recently, therefore, they were usually cited under some such title as 'Reg. Spirit. Ep. Roff.', with a number or letter denoting the individual volume. Now that they have been separated again, it has become the convention to refer to them by the name of the bishop concerned. The entire series was published on microfilm in 1987.

Hamo Hethe (1319–1352) – DRb/Ar1/1¹¹⁹
John Sheppey (1353–1360) – DRb/Ar1/2
William Wittlesey (1361–1364) – DRb/Ar1/3
Thomas Trilleck (1364–1372) – DRb/Ar1/4
Thomas Brinton (1373–1389) – lost¹²⁰
William Bottlesham (1389–1400) – DRb/Ar1/5
John Bottlesham (1400–1404) – DRb/Ar1/6
Richard Yong (1404–1418) – one surviving quire, DRb/Ar1/7
John Kempe (1419–1421)
John Langdon (1421–1434) – DRb/Ar1/8
Thomas Brouns (1435–1436) – DRb/Ar1/9
William Wellys (1436–1444) – DRb/Ar1/10
John Lowe (1444–1467) – DRb/Ar1/11
Thomas Rotherham (1468–1472)
John Alcock (1472–1476)
John Russell (1476–1480)
Edmund Audley (1480–1492)
Thomas Savage (1493–1496) – DRb/Ar1/12
Richard Fitzjames (1497–1503) – DRb/Ar1/13, fols. 1–22
John Fisher (1504–1535) – DRb/Ar1/13, fols. 23–165

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NOTES

¹ Conversely the bishop of Rochester had jurisdiction over two parishes (Isleham and Freckenham) in the diocese of Norwich.

² For a list of the archdeacons the reader should refer to Jones (1963, 37–40), taking note of a few corrigenda (Horn 1967, 60). Lists of the deans of the deaneries can be found in Fielding (1910, 236, 186, 79, 256); but the evidence is patchy, and Fielding is unreliable.

³ The sequence of Canterbury registers begins about forty years earlier than the Rochester sequence. The author has consulted all the published registers, from Pecham to Parker; but several registers remain unpublished, and the author has not had access to these. A few points arising from the registers of Archbishops Pecham and Winchelsey are mentioned in the notes below, though strictly they do not fall within the scope of this article.

⁴ This is the language of the bishop's chancery. In the terminology of civil lawyers the right of presentation was called *advowson*.

⁵ From 1328 onwards, each new appropriation required an annual payment – a pension so-called – to the bishop. In theory, this was meant to compensate for the loss of income the bishop would suffer, now that the church in question would never be vacant. A list survives of all the pensions received in 1434–5 (Thorpe, 1769, 135–6, and again 572, from the verso of a stray leaf now bound as Reg. Langdon, fol. 72A); a similar list survives for 1508–9 (Thorpe, 1769, 142, from Reg. Fisher, fol. 32r). Both lists have been annotated by later hands: added entries include the entry relating to West Barming in the first list and the entry relating to Higham in the second.

⁶ The documents transcribed into Fisher's register came from the archives of Kilburn (fols. 39r–40r), Cobham college, Sheen, Rochester, Boxley, Leeds, Holy Trinity, Bermondsey, Tonbridge (fols. 62v–83r), and Milton hospital (fols. 87r–89r).

⁷ The bishop's patronage would pass to the crown only in the rare event that Canterbury was vacant at the same time. In these circumstances the king would present, and the prior and chapter of Canterbury would admit. But this did not happen in the period that we are concerned with.

⁸ All these arrangements were in place before 1300, as is clear from the registers of Archbishops Pecham and Winchelsey. See also the entry for Sundridge in the list of churches.

⁹ It was only in the 1540s, after the abbey had ceased to exist, that vicars of Plumstead began to be admitted by the bishop of Rochester.

¹⁰ Besides, the clerks who drafted these letters were sometimes poorly informed. On occasion, it seems, presentations were made experimentally, just to see what would happen – as when the king tried presenting to the non-existent church of 'Great Peckham' in 1369 (*Calendar of patent rolls, 1367–70*, 312).

¹¹ A version of this list, so far as it concerns the diocese of Rochester, can be found in the fourteenth-century *Registrum temporalium* (DRb/Ar2), fols. 83r–84r.

¹² The returns cover the period from the 1430s till the late 1460s (after which there is a gap in the sequence of registers). Among the livings which are said to be hard to fill, two are mentioned every time, Kidbrooke and Maplescombe; those mentioned once or twice are Lee, Lullingstone, North Cray and Ruxley. With the exception of Kidbrooke, which ceases to be heard of, all these churches survived. Even Maplescombe seems to have been regularly manned from the 1490s onwards (when the sequence of registers resumes).

¹³ Again it is only in the 1540s, after the abbey's dissolution, that wills from Plumstead and East Wickham start appearing in the Rochester records.

¹⁴ Each was served by a curate in the 1530s (Duncan, 1897); two at least – Downe and St Mary Cray – had graveyards of their own in the fifteenth century (Duncan, 1898b).

Of the chapels the author has chosen not to include, the two closest to the borderline are Hilles (in Darenth) and Lidsing (in Gillingham).

¹⁵ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, in lieu of tithes.

¹⁶ Allhallows was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Hoo, but it had a separate vicarage.

¹⁷ Conway (1911, 36), citing a fine dated 1279.

¹⁸ The rector paid a pension to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, as compensation for a claim to the patronage.

¹⁹ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Leeds.

²⁰ Often called Barminget, with East Barming then called Barming. (But sixteenth-century clerks were prone to confuse the names, treating Barminget as an alternative name for East Barming.) The spelling Barnjet is modern, but reflects the fact that the -g- was soft.

²¹ The church has vanished, but its site is known.

²² See under changes of status, 1486.

²³ See under changes of status, 1328 and 1380.

²⁴ There was no vicarage. One of the canons was presented to the bishop and admitted to the wardenship of the church. In 1316, at the request of the prior and convent, bishop Thomas (de Wouldham) issued a letter explaining the arrangement in detail (Thorpe, 1769, 215–16, from Reg. Fisher).

²⁵ The rector paid a pension to the rector of Shoreham.

²⁶ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, as compensation for a claim to the patronage.

²⁷ At a later date, though Cliffe continued to be regarded as part of the deanery of Shoreham, it ceased to be subject to the authority of the dean. The rector of Cliffe answered to nobody except to the archbishop in person. This anomaly seems to be connected with the fact that on three occasions – in 1493, 1540 and 1560 – a rector of Cliffe was promoted to a bishopric but allowed to retain possession of the rectory (Robertson, 1883). A dean, of course, could not have authority over a bishop; and apparently these precedents were invoked, without regard to the special circumstances existing in each case, to justify a claim to permanent exemption for all the rectors of Cliffe.

²⁸ Cobham was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Shore, but it had a separate vicarage.

²⁹ See under changes of status, 1364.

³⁰ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, in lieu of tithes.

³¹ More often called Erde, the usual name till *c.* 1500.

³² See under changes of status, 1377.

³³ The rector paid a pension to Strood hospital.

³⁴ The vicar paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, as compensation for a claim to the patronage.

³⁵ There was no vicarage. The author does not know the date or the circumstances of the appropriation.

³⁶ Often called West Greenwich, with Greenwich then called East Greenwich.

³⁷ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Leeds.

³⁸ See under changes of status, 1367.

³⁹ Often called Lessness, the usual name till *c.* 1400. Perhaps it should be emphasized that this is entirely certain: Erith and Lessness were alternative names for one and the same church. Anyone wanting proof might start by looking at Reg. J. Bottlesham, fols. 40v–41r.

⁴⁰ See under changes of status, 1395.

⁴¹ Farningham was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Eynsford.

⁴² The appropriation included Grain, regarded as a chapel of Gillingham.

⁴³ Grain was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Gillingham, but it had a separate vicarage.

⁴⁴ The church has vanished, but its site is known. For precise information regarding the site the author is indebted to R. Hiscock.

⁴⁵ See under changes of status, 1398.

⁴⁶ Often called East Greenwich, with Deptford then called West Greenwich.

⁴⁷ See under changes of status, 1414.

⁴⁸ The church has vanished, but its site is known.

⁴⁹ In the 1280s, the archbishop collated to Halstead on two occasions (Reg. Pecham, ed. Davis 1908–14, 127, 52), possibly by default: the rector of Shoreham at the time was an absentee Italian.

⁵⁰ Called High Halstow in civil records.

⁵¹ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, as rectors of Hoo.

⁵² Reg. Chichele, ed. Jacob 1937–47, vol. 1, 274.

⁵³ The rector paid a pension to the rector of Orpington.

⁵⁴ The appropriation included Allhallows, regarded as a chapel of Hoo. Pensions were paid to the prior and convent of Rochester, as rectors of Hoo, by the rectors of Halstow and St Mary Hoo.

⁵⁵ Called Horton Kirby in civil records.

⁵⁶ See under changes of status, 1378.

⁵⁷ Often spelt Huntington.

⁵⁸ See under changes of status, 1402.

⁵⁹ Reg. Sheppey, fols. 19v, 20r.

⁶⁰ The church has vanished, ~~and its site does not appear to be known.~~

⁶¹ See under changes of status, 1428.

⁶² Kingsdown was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Sutton, but it had a separate vicarage. See under changes of status, 1448.

⁶³ The vicar paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester.

⁶⁴ Spelt Nockholt; the K- is modern. Etymologically, the name is Ockholt ('oak wood'), and that was the usual spelling until the fourteenth century. In civil records the place is sometimes called Scott's Ockholt.

⁶⁵ The rector was supposed to pay a pension to the abbot and convent of Stratford (i.e. Stratford Langthorne, in Essex), as compensation for a claim to the patronage. This payment was being enforced in the 1320s and 1330s (Reg. Hethe, ed. Johnson, 1914–48, 97, 438, 526), but seems later to have been allowed to lapse.

⁶⁶ See under changes of status, 1354.

⁶⁷ See under changes of status, 1414.

⁶⁸ See under changes of status, 1398.

⁶⁹ Reg. Lowe, fol. 15r. In 1447, the archbishop tried to appoint a warden for the chapel of St John the Baptist of Lullingstane, on the pretext that it belonged to the deanery of Shoreham; but Bishop Lowe resisted the manoeuvre successfully.

⁷⁰ The church, what little survives of it, was rediscovered and excavated in 1958 (Meates, 1979, 123).

⁷¹ See under changes of status, 1413.

⁷² The dedication is not certain. It is reported only by a single will, and Duncan (1898b, 114) suspected that there might be some confusion with West Malling.

⁷³ See under changes of status, 1385.

⁷⁴ The church has vanished, but its site is known.

⁷⁵ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Leeds, as compensation for a claim to the patronage. The prior and convent relinquished this pension later, in a letter dated 20 November 1496 (Thorpe, 1769, 497).

⁷⁶ The church, what little survives of it, was rediscovered and excavated in 1956–7 (Allen, 1958).

⁷⁷ See under changes of status, 1455.

⁷⁸ See under changes of status, 1322. There was no vicarage.

⁷⁹ See under changes of status, 1408.

- ⁸⁰ Spelt Nutstead; the -r- is modern.
- ⁸¹ Robertson, 1880, 383, citing Reg. Warham, fol. 365v.
- ⁸² A pension was paid to the rector of Orpington by the rector of Hayes.
- ⁸³ This was already the case in 1299; but Otford was still a separate rectory in the 1270s (Reg. Winchelsey, ed. Graham, 1917–56, 548, 1064).
- ⁸⁴ Reg. Bourghier, ed. Du Boulay, 1957, 292.
- ⁸⁵ Occasionally called Up Peckham in civil records.
- ⁸⁶ Sometimes called Little Peckham.
- ⁸⁷ The appropriation was made by bishop Thomas (de Ingoldisthorpe) on 19 October 1287 (Thorpe, 1769, 514–15, from Reg. Hethe, fols. 10v–11v). In writing the date, by a slip of the pen, the scribe gave the year as 1387, and that has caused some confusion.
- ⁸⁸ Spelt Peppingbury.
- ⁸⁹ But the evidence is not consistent. In two wills the church is called ‘the church of St Peter and St John the Baptist’ (Duncan, 1895, 282).
- ⁹⁰ Sometimes called Penchester (as in Reg. Pecham, ed. Davis, 1908–14, 78–9); but that name disappeared *c.* 1350.
- ⁹¹ Though always regarded as belonging to the deanery of Dartford, the parish was under the jurisdiction of the abbot of St Augustine’s.
- ⁹² Reg. Savage, fol. 10r. This is the same reference cited in a different form by Duncan (1895, 282).
- ⁹³ See under changes of status, 1398.
- ⁹⁴ The church has vanished, but its site is known.
- ⁹⁵ There was no parish church: the altar of St Nicholas was in the nave of the cathedral church, and this was where services were said for the parishioners. The anomalous arrangement caused continual trouble, but was obstinately defended by the prior and convent. See under changes of status, 1423.
- ⁹⁶ The vicar paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester.
- ⁹⁷ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, as rectors of Hoo.
- ⁹⁸ Spelt Sevenoak; the -s is modern.
- ⁹⁹ The rector paid a pension to the rector of Shoreham.
- ¹⁰⁰ Pensions were paid to the rector of Shoreham by the rectors of Chevening and Sevenoaks.
- ¹⁰¹ The appropriation included Cobham, regarded as a chapel of Shorne.
- ¹⁰² This establishment was called, in full, the college of Corpus Christi adjoining the church of St Laurence in Candlewick Street, London. See under changes of status, 1347 and 1449.
- ¹⁰³ There was no vicarage.
- ¹⁰⁴ Fielding (1910, 272) cites evidence giving the dedication as St Mary, but the author has not been able to verify this.
- ¹⁰⁵ In the 1280s, Sundridge had both a rectory and a vicarage (Reg. Pecham, ed. Davis, 1908–14, 109, 51, 72), but that arrangement seems to have lapsed before the period covered by this paper.
- ¹⁰⁶ Called Sutton at Hone in civil records.
- ¹⁰⁷ The appropriation included Wilmington and Kingsdown, regarded as chapels of Sutton.
- ¹⁰⁸ The vicar paid a pension to the prior and convent of Leeds.
- ¹⁰⁹ See under changes of status, 1328.
- ¹¹⁰ Wilmington was (or had once been) regarded as a chapel of Sutton, but it had a separate vicarage.
- ¹¹¹ Spelt Woodland; the -s is modern.
- ¹¹² The church has vanished, but its site is marked (perhaps not very accurately) on Hasted’s map.
- ¹¹³ The rector paid a pension to the prior and convent of Rochester, as compensation for a claim to the patronage.

¹¹⁴ That was the arrangement existing in 1279 (Reg. Pecham, ed. Davis, 1908–14, 121) and 1295 (Reg. Winchelsey, ed. Graham, 1917–56, 44–5).

¹¹⁵ The patronage of Ridley, which had become separated from the lordship of the manor, belonged to the Earl of Huntingdon in the 1340s. After reverting to the crown, it seems to have been included in a package of property, all formerly owned by the earl, which Edward III was intending to grant to the abbey. That was how Hasted read the evidence, and rightly, so it seems.

¹¹⁶ Frampton (1893, 260–1) explains the matter in detail. During this interval, the priory of Bermondsey was promoted to the status of an abbey.

¹¹⁷ Before 1396, the patronage of Kemsing had become detached from the lordship of the manor. It was acquired – i.e. bought – by Archbishop Courtenay, who, in his will, asked his executors to dispose of it as they thought best (ed. Duncan, 1898a, 66). The archbishop died on 31 July 1396 and his will was proved on 15 September. Guy Mone, rector of Maidstone, was one of the executors: apparently he arranged to buy the patronage and then gave it to Bermondsey.

¹¹⁸ Archbishop Pecham, writing to the bishop of Rochester in 1283, refers to the lack of a separate church as ‘an inconvenience which cannot by any means be tolerated’; he goes on to speak of a church ‘which had been begun some time ago and was afterwards wickedly demolished’ (Reg. Pecham, ed. Martin, 1882–5, vol. 2, 624). By the strength of his language the archbishop makes it plain that in his opinion the church should be rebuilt; but he stops short of ordering the bishop to see that this is done. A possible reference to this church occurs in the close roll for 1233: the bishop of Rochester is to have twenty oaks from the king’s forest of Tonbridge ‘for the work of a certain church which he is building in Rochester’ (*Calendar of close rolls, 1231–4*, 231).

¹¹⁹ Edited by Johnson (1914–48) for the Canterbury and York Society. Reg. Hethe refers several times to the existence of earlier registers: in particular it cites the register of bishop Laurence de Sancto Martino (1251–1274).

¹²⁰ The register of Bishop Brinton is cited by a note added in the margin of Reg. J. Bottlesham, fol. 4r.

[This is a page-for page, line-for-line reproduction of an article which appeared in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 119 (2000 for 1999), 285–310. I have removed some unwanted capitals, added or removed a few commas, but made no material changes. A few errors are corrected in the margin. The sites of two vanished churches which I was unable to locate, Kidbrooke and Woodlands, are marked on the first-edition six-inch maps, which are now available online; so I have been able to supply more accurate references for them.]