

Image and Reality: The Hanoverian Church in Southern England¹

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The eighteenth century Church has been beleaguered with attacks from churchmen who came after it. These attacks have come from a number of directions. 'As plentiful as blackberries' was how the nineteenth century historian W.H. Hutton described the deficiencies of the eighteenth-century Church. Hutton went on to claim that, in the pages of great bishops, the eighteenth century 'shows an almost entire blank'.² Conservative High Churchmen, like Hutton, attacked the Hanoverians for their Latitudinarianism, and radical reformers, like John Wade, attacked it as a symbol of a corrupt Establishment that needed reform. In writing about the Church in the 1830s Wade was determined to paint it at its blackest in order to promote the arguments for reform. He used the tools of hyperbole and exaggeration, wildly overstating the values of dioceses: claiming in 1832 that the bishopric of London was worth £100,000 a year and Winchester £50,000.³ Later in the nineteenth century other groups joined the attack. The young evangelical William Thomson, whilst at Queen's College, Oxford, wrote in his diary 'one pardons good men of the last century for losing sight of the Doctrine of the Apostolic Succession. They did not believe that their clergy were descended from the Apostles, for there was no trace of family likeness.'⁴ It is the intention of this article to suggest that attacks of this nature were inaccurate, and that in a number of particular fields the perceived abuses and corruption of the Church of England in the eighteenth century, particularly in the South of England, have been erroneously interpreted. The quality of the clergy and episcopate has been unjustifiably blackened by accusations of rapacity, greed and corrupt patronage. But, in fact the clergy's involvement in politics was not invariably a symptom of corruption; it was one of a series of social responsibilities placed upon the eighteenth-century Church. Moreover a growing sense of professional duty was actually stimulating greater pastoral activity, and with it the enhancement of the status of the clergy.

I

One of the commonest historical criticisms of the Hanoverian Church is that its clergy were too heavily engaged in politics. That the clergy were active in politics is undeniable, though this was not a new phenomenon.⁵ At a local level the chief instrument of political involvement at the disposal of the clergy was the pulpit, though its value was perhaps in the rarity rather than the frequency with which it was used. It was, for the most part, regarded by the clergy as a weapon of last resort. This was in part because when the clergy chose to speak on politics from the pulpit they ran the risk of provoking their adversaries to do the same. In 1734 a Sussex Presbyterian minister used his pulpit to answer his Anglican opponents by warning his flock not to join forces with the Tories against the Duke of Newcastle.⁶ As a result of such dangers, direct canvassing by clergy was rare, though not unknown, and clergy were referred to as black-coated recruiting sergeants until the nineteenth century. It often occurred in areas in which a single landlord exercised great political power and where as a result political division was particularly fierce, as in Sussex. Even in such circumstances public canvassing was less common than private persuasion. In January 1741 the Duke of Newcastle, with an eye to the coming general election, asked his agent Archdeacon Ball of Chichester to speak to two local worthies, John Page and Alderman Soane, to correct any 'ill impressions that may have been made to our prejudice'. Later in the month Ball was also engaged to speak to a leading Catholic layman to gain his support for Newcastle. Even after the general election of 1741 Ball assured the Duke of his willingness to be his spokesman and supporter in the county of Sussex.⁷

The public and visible support of the clergy was as valuable a weapon to politicians as their private canvassing. In the period immediately before the 1741 election the Duke of Richmond was able to write in triumph to Newcastle that he had managed to persuade Dean Hayley of Chichester to attend a public election meeting at Horsham, and that a great number of persons of distinction had also attended it.⁸ On occasion, Sussex clergy were used as the public agents of ducal gratitude for political support. Canon Hargreaves of Chichester, for example, was responsible for apportioning joints of venison from the Duke of Newcastle to his supporters as thanks for their votes at the 1734 election.⁹

This visible demonstration to the electors of the clerical sanction for parliamentary candidates was an important symbol of the support the Church afforded to the State. At its most fundamental, clerical support for politicians promoted the legitimacy of the State in the minds of the

people. Whilst on a local level the clergy might be subservient to the influence of the local gentry, on the national stage it was the State that sought the sanction and support of the Church.¹⁰ The involvement of the Hanoverian clergy in politics was not simply the activity of a fractious professional group in an age of faction and political turbulence, as some historians have suggested. The clergy, like the members of other professions, had a duty of service to the State and this principle underpinned the activity of many clergy, as it did that of soldiers, lawyers and politicians.

Structuralist explanations for clerical involvement in politics are also tangible and convincing. The active part the clergy played in politics, in the pulpit, as canvassers and as political agents was an important element in the structure of society. Eighteenth-century political theory did not permit the twentieth-century view that religion and politics could be separated, they were perceived as part of a single whole. Until the mid-eighteenth century theologians and political theorists agreed that Church and State were a single entity: religion was politics and political activity could not be simply a secular activity, but one that was rich in religious meaning and implications. The Test Acts symbolised this by excluding from politics anyone who did not subscribe to the doctrines of the Church of England. In circumstances in which the Church and State were a single institution, contemporaries recognised that the activities of the two were inextricably interrelated. For the eighteenth-century clergyman the idea that he could be criticised for involvement in politics would have been inexplicable and absurd. In 1769 Parson John Woodforde, for example, regarded it as quite natural that parliament occasionally required proclamations to be made from the pulpit.¹¹ Just as in the seventeenth century, clergymen perceived a duty to support the causes of parliamentarianism or royalism, so in a time of less turbulence the clergy could fulfil this duty through political activity at election time.

The clergy could also reasonably claim that their involvement in politics arose from the Church's position as a great landed institution. The electoral system of the eighteenth century, perhaps more than any other era, institutionalised the political and constitutional power of the landed interest. The franchise represented property in general, and land in particular. Influence over tenants, qualifications for the franchise, and the wealth to support a candidate all stemmed from land ownership. The Church claimed that the land it owned, for the most part as parsons' freeholds, carried exactly the same duties, rights and responsibilities as land owned by the laity. For some clergy their status as freeholders gave them a sense of independence, and they resented any interference in

their independent exercise of the franchise. In 1734 Bishop Hare of Chichester recognised this when he told the Duke of Newcastle that 'the clergy ... have their interests and opinions as others have, and therefore it cant be expected they should act all alike, or as one could wish in affairs of this nature'. The same view was advanced by Archdeacon Ball.¹² When the clergy or their dependants refused to conform to the role of the compliant freeholder it confounded their peers. Major Battine was infuriated by Bishop Hare's inability to exercise absolute control over his tenants, urging him to adopt violent measures to bring them into line.¹³ Nevertheless from 1722 onwards both the Dukes of Newcastle and Dorset treated local clergy in Sussex as having the status of freeholders during elections. As a result the clergy were invited to the assize festivities along with local gentry, and in a by-election in 1722 the clergy were included in the invitation to the Lewes meeting of Whig supporters together with gentlemen and freeholders, the high sheriff and candidates.¹⁴ At a meeting of voters before the election, the higher clergy led the way. Bishops were also great landowners, and therefore occupied an important position at election time. In 1734 the Bishop of Chichester made his palace the centre of activities for the Whigs, offering hospitality to Newcastle, and appearing at Newcastle's side at the hustings.¹⁵ In this way the contemporary view that land carried the duty of political involvement, a view that was generally eroded during the nineteenth century, was a legitimate justification for clerical involvement in politics.

Some clergy formed a corps of men who could gather and pass on intelligence. Those clergy who saw their duty as being to support an interest were prepared to act as agents of ministers when ministerial survival required a working majority in the Commons. In Sussex, Archdeacon Ball and other clergy, formed a network of political agents for Richmond and Newcastle. In 1740 Richmond told Newcastle that Ball was 'the best agent we have in your parts, and will do whatever you have him'.¹⁶ Chaplains were often useful supporters. Richmond used his chaplain as a messenger to the local worthies of Chichester.¹⁷ Similarly the Revd Jeremy Branston, chaplain to the Duke of Somerset, was the means of informing Richmond and Newcastle that Somerset's candidate would not contest the Sussex county seat in the 1741 election. It was a deceitful promise, as Somerset actively raised his own candidates during the campaign and paid their expenses. As the 1741 election approached, the clerical agents of Richmond and Newcastle reported Somerset's activity. Parson Hancock of South Berstead warned Richmond that Mr Peckham was unwilling to support him at the Lewes election. The Revd Thomas Hurdis of Ringmer sent regular reports to Newcastle on the feeling in Sussex, even attending local cricket matches to collect political

information.¹⁸ Sometimes clergymen had to undergo uncomfortable experiences in the cause of the Whig interest. In August 1733 Dr Hargreaves, rector of Waldron and East Hoathly, went at Newcastle's prompting to preach at Horam before Sir Thomas Dyke Bart, who was supporting an opponent of Newcastle's. After the service, Hargreaves, Sir Thomas and the local gentlemen repaired to the parsonage, where they studiously avoided discussing politics. As Hargreave put it, Sir Thomas 'delayed as long as he could to prevent ... my correspondence with Mr Offley and Mr Fuller'. Eventually, Sir Thomas could stand it no longer and stalked off, leaving Hargreaves to take the gentlemen round the garden and read a letter from the Duke to them.¹⁹ The contribution of some clergy to electoral support for the government was even sufficient to justify payment from the secret-service monies. In 1754-60 Dean Ashburnham of Chichester was paid a secret service pension of one hundred pounds, and other clergy were paid similar sums.²⁰ In many cases politicians were content to exploit the talents of the clergy to their own advantage. Bishop Benjamin Hoadly of Winchester rose through the lower ranks of the Church because he supported the governments by writing political pamphlets.²¹

In contrast to the widely-held assumption that Tory clergy were the defenders of the Church, the Whigs often did so in response to the perception of an imminent threat to the Church. The Hanoverian Succession of 1714 had ensured that the throne remained in Protestant hands, rather than passing to the Catholic Old Pretender. But the security of the succession was by no means a foregone conclusion: many Anglicans entertained grave fears that a successful Jacobite invasion and an imposed Catholic succession would spark off religious wars similar to those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was only in retrospect that the essential weakness of the Jacobite challenge could be identified, but for the clergy over much of the eighteenth century there was not only a plausible possibility of a military invasion, that would bring a Catholic monarch to the throne. It is therefore small wonder that the clergy were anxious to defend the Hanoverian succession and the Whig settlement of 1714. The Jacobite rebellion of 1715, for example, acted as a clarion call to Archbishop Wake and all the other bishops. A Declaration of Adherence to the new King and against the Pretender was agreed by the bishops, which was to be read in all churches. Wake was particularly vigilant in supervising the reading of the Declaration, and he was joined in ensuring the loyalty of the clergy by bishops like the moderate Tory Jonathan Trelawny of Winchester. In his first visitation in Hampshire Trelawny pressed the duty of loyalty on the clergy, claiming 'I hope I was not faint in my arguments or in my utmost contempt for that weakling

ye Pretender'. In his charge he indicated that the new King would save the clergy 'from all ye devices of ye phanatics'. Scares such as that of the Swedish invasion in support of a Catholic coup in 1718, and the treason and banishment of Bishop Atterbury of Rochester in 1722, fuelled fears of an ever-present threat. In the Duke of Newcastle's home county of Sussex, Tory-Jacobitism was present and active in the family of the Duke of Norfolk. In 1741 Norfolk entered politics at the Arundel election, trying to pack the borough with supporters of his Tory candidate.²² A year later the Duke of Richmond perceived a Jacobite threat if the livings of Slyndon and Binstead were to fall into the hands of a Tory clergyman because they lay

in the corner of the county where a clever Jacobite parson might do us a great deal of mischief. The present incumbent, to give him his due, is a Jacobite, but he is ... eternally drunk with rum brandy.²³

It is therefore understandable that apparent stirrings of Toryism and Jacobitism generated a more active political response than simply a frisson of horror, particularly within the ranks of the clergy. In 1749 Edmund Pyle, a royal chaplain and Canon of Winchester, wrote to Samuel Kerrich about the Jacobite riots in Oxford on the birthday of the Pretender's son. The riot was so serious, Pyle reported, that the Vice-chancellor had been called to London to give an account. Pyle commented that he had heard from the Court that Jacobitism 'wears less reserve, and cares less about the decency of the exterior than in the year '15. God save us'. Eight years later Pyle even questioned whether, in the event of a Jacobite invasion, the militias of seven counties, including Hampshire, would defend the Hanoverian dynasty. The country seemed to contain a host of Jacobites who 'secretly speeded' their cause with toasts and mottoes.²⁴ In such circumstances it was expected that clergy should defend the State, as the Revd Richard Wainhouse, a Wiltshire parson wrote in 1746, he had preached each week against the Jacobites 'one Sunday excepted ever since ye 15th of Sept'.²⁵

The Jacobite rebellion of 1745, which saw rebel troops capture much of northern England, seemed to confirm that the clergy had not underestimated the threat the country faced. The Whig clergy reacted to this persistent fear of revolution in their urgent support of the Hanoverian succession. Few clergy could have welcomed the expense, disruption and disharmony that these threats brought with them; most felt that they had a need to do so in order to defend the morally and politically legitimate order.

Like preceding regimes, the Hanoverian ministers and local patrons rewarded the clergy for their involvement in politics. Clergymen who

had been politically valuable as agents of the Whig interest were often provided with benefices and other rewards. In the mid-eighteenth century the Duke of Newcastle dominated the systematic reward of clergy in the mid-eighteenth century, particularly in his own fiefdom of Sussex. In 1741 he rewarded Canon Green, the chaplain of his neighbour and ally the Duke of Richmond, for his political support by exercising influence with his brother, Henry Pelham, to obtain the chaplaincy of Chelsea College for Green.²⁶ Newcastle was also responsible for distributing the patronage that many politicians sought for their ecclesiastical allies. George Bubb Doddington, having been returned for the borough of Bridgwater in Somerset in 1753, and having exercised great influence in the parish of Weymouth of which he was patron, applied to Newcastle for

my two parsons of Bridgwater and Weymouth ... He [the Duke] entered into it cordially, and assured me that they should have the first Crown livings that were vacant in their parts, if we could look out and get him the first intelligence.²⁷

It was expected that a clergymen promoted by Newcastle would act for him in subsequent political contests; indeed patron and client regarded such obligations as part of the natural order of society. A good example of this is a letter William Pulteney wrote to Zachary Pearce, on his appointment to the deanery of Winchester in 1739. The letter released Pearce from obligations to Pulteney in these terms:

Doctor Pearce, though you may think that others besides Sir Robert [Walpole] have contributed to get you this dignity, you may depend upon it, he is all in all, and ... you owe it entirely to his good will towards you. And therefore as I am engaged in opposition to him, it may happen that some of our party ... may prevail upon me to desire you to act there in assistance of some friends of ours; and Sir Robert, at the same time, may ask your assistance in the election of a friend of his own against one whom we recommend. I tell you therefore, beforehand, that if you comply with my request rather than with Sir Robert's, to whom you are so very much obliged, I shall have the worse opinion of you ...²⁸

It was a generous gesture, and one that paid unexpected dividends for Pearce since in due course Pulteney was able to obtain a bishopric for him.

The political motives that lay behind an appointment did not however affect the personal qualities required of clergy. The Duke of Newcastle adopted strong views regarding the conduct he expected of political

appointees. He was, for example, approached on numerous occasions by his ally Richmond on behalf of the Revd. Lucius Hibbins (as well as being bombarded with letters by Hibbins himself) who had consistently supported the Whig interest as a magistrate and as a Surrey clergyman. However Newcastle formed the view that Hibbins was unworthy of preferment, he was too factious and litigious, and Newcastle refused to allow him other than a poor living and a few pounds in charity.²⁹ The importance of merit as well as political performance was also illustrated in 1741, when the Duke of Richmond wrote to Newcastle recommending a Mr Clarke to him for the next vacancy at the deanery of Chichester. Clarke, Richmond emphasised, had two principal qualifications: he was a Whig but he was also 'a better man' than the other candidates. Two years later Richmond advanced the cause of another Sussex clergyman, the Revd Thomas Bloomer. Bloomer was also politically reliable but he was also 'a worthy clergyman ... and very deserving of Royal favour'. In the months after January 1746 Richmond also espoused the cause of one Sussex agent, the Revd Simon Hughes. Hughes compromised himself as a young cleric when he had made a servant pregnant. Richmond argued that Hughes, now twelve years older, had become 'an unexceptionable man ... [whose] life, conversation and behaviour has really been thoroughly modest and good'. In spite of strong urging from as important an ally as Richmond, Newcastle had doubts about Hughes's character. Richmond, aware of the political value of Hughes, pressed Newcastle on the subject on five further occasions. Hughes was eventually granted a modest benefice in July 1750, but it was clear that he would receive no further reward as Newcastle's doubts about his fitness to receive preferment outweighed the obligation occasioned by political service.³⁰ However worldly the motives for appointing a clergyman, the essential qualities of good character and merit were rarely ignored. Even when a clergyman failed to toe the Whig line his career was not always destroyed if he was a man of merit, as exemplified by the Revd. John Edwards, Vicar of Banstead in Surrey in 1734. Edwards had been promised 'a very good living' by the Lord Chancellor, which he needed to support his large family. But Edwards refused to vote for the Whig candidate, George Onslow, in the county election. The Lord Chancellor denied Edwards the living as a result. However the conviction of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, that Edwards was a deserving cleric enabled him to become chaplain to her grandson-in-law and thus qualify for the second living that was offered to him.³¹

So accustomed are historians to a stereotype of the rapacious eighteenth-century clergymen that it is overlooked that on occasion there were clergy whose commitment to a political cause made them choose to forgo

advancement. Archdeacon Thomas Ball of Chichester was offered the deanery of Chichester in 1741 as a reward for political service in the Newcastle interest, but Ball anticipated that such promotion would compromise his political efficiency. He wrote

as archdeacon and judge of the Ecclesiastical Court I have a pretty considerable intercourse with and influence over members of the clergy, churchwardens, and other freeholders in this half of the county, whereas the authority and interest of the Dean of Chichester as such, is infinitely less extensive and chiefly confined to this city and suburbs, and even there I cannot conceive he has any greater capacity of doing good offices or engaging more persons to his interest than an active and hospitable residentiary with the same spirit and fortune.

It took thirteen years before Ball was prevailed upon to accept the deanery.³²

The involvement of the Church in politics was also part of the wider networks of patronage and patron-client obligations that pervaded and dominated eighteenth-century society between individuals; and at local and national levels. These obligations were often of a personal nature. As George Bubb Doddington wrote in 1754

service is obligation, obligation implies return. Could any man of honour profess friendship, accept the offer of his friend's whole services, suffer those offers to be carried into execution, avail himself of their whole utility, and then tell him he could not or would not make him any return? Could there be such a character? ... If this connection, and the acceptance of my effectual services was not ratify'd by effects that justified them I must be contented to pass for a dupe, and they, for sharpers; the world would justly call me fool, and them by a much harsher name³³

Such networks of obligation, favours and counter-obligations were often activated in the sphere of local politics in which the clergy played such an important role. In 1735 Newcastle was approached by Richmond respecting Garton Orme, an important Sussex landowner. Richmond was under an obligation to Orme, and wanted the further favour of the nomination to one of the livings of which Orme was patron. Richmond's only course of action was to ask Newcastle, who carried far greater weight in the County, to make the request of Orme. The effect of the request was to draw Orme, Newcastle and Richmond together in a series of interlocking obligations. Orme's expectation of a return for his favour delayed his final departure to the Tories by twelve years and the interests of Richmond and Newcastle were bound together even more tightly.

Richmond could not however always rely on his neighbour to act with such generosity; on occasion even the Duke relied on one of the principal features of eighteenth-century patronage; submission and condescension. In 1746 one of Richmond's requests concluded, 'I beg pardon for saying so much as it looks like giving you advice, which may be impertinent in me'. Richmond abased himself in order to acknowledge Newcastle's superiority, but it was a feature of patronage that flattered the patron, and thus tended to work. On other occasions Richmond achieved the same effect with a more subtle form of self-abasement, emphasising the inadequacy of his own influence compared with that of Newcastle. In 1747 Richmond begged Newcastle to join with him in asking the Bishop of Winchester for a living for a politically useful client. 'Alone', he wrote, 'I despair of success'. In the same letter Richmond indicated that he had surrendered the claims of his own client to a living in the gift of the Bishop of Chichester in favour of Newcastle's client. This visible evidence of obligations threw into relief the power and influence of the patron, and thus served to heighten his status.

For the most part however, patronage was effected through the cascade downward of commitments and obligations. In 1750 Richmond asked Newcastle to advance the Revd Robert Norton to the post of reader at the Charterhouse. The obligation Richmond felt was not to Norton, but to his father, Robert Norton Senior, the influential mayor of Chichester. Nevertheless both Nortons benefited from the appointment, and both subsequently owned an obligation to their ducal patrons. Where political contests were strongest the client-patron relationship was most vulnerable. In 1750, when the living of Donnington in Sussex had fallen vacant, Newcastle wanted to use it to repay a debt. Richmond however recognised that this was inappropriate, since Donnington lay near the estate of John Page, the independently-minded MP for Chichester. Page was determined that Mr Smelt should have the living, and Richmond who, with Dean Hargreaves, had spend years trying to win Page for the Whig cause, felt that it was crucial that Page be obliged. In such circumstances Richmond roughly told Newcastle that the plan to prefer anyone other than Smelt 'would never do ... that scheme is not practicable'.³⁴

It should not be assumed however that clergy devoted all their time to politics, or that there were not those who eschewed involvement in political matters. There were some clergy who were reluctant to undertake an active role in politics however. In 1738, for example, Bishop Edmund Gibson of London deliberately absented himself from the Whig election meetings in Sussex. Later the Archbishop of Canterbury proved equally unwilling to be drawn into politics. On 29 September 1739 the Duke of Newcastle recorded that Archbishop John Potter 'slipt away after dinner,

unknown to everybody, before business began'.³⁵ The desire to avoid political entanglements occasionally led to the need to balance ecclesiastical appointments to avoid an imbalance in the local political equilibrium. In 1735, for example, Bishop Francis Hare of Chichester agreed to appoint both a Whig and a Tory clergyman to vacant canonries in order to avoid an imbalance in the Chapter of Chichester during the run up to an election.³⁶

II

One of the principal goals of the relationship of Church and State was the desire of ministers for political and religious tranquillity. In the sphere of patronage, as in other matters, the ministers wanted uncontroversial choices. The Duke of Newcastle took care to consult senior bishops such as Potter, Sherlock, Gibson, Wake and Herring before making appointments, to ensure that they were acceptable. When Bishop Gibson, in 1725, opposed the elevation of John Gilbert to a see his comments were taken seriously. Gilbert was only thirty-four years of age, he had achieved rapid promotion without, claimed Gibson, 'evidence of any remarkable natural talents to justify so unusual a course'. Bishops, argued Gibson, were 'grown to be grave men, and had gained experience, and arrived to some figure in the world'; Gilbert had not achieved this. Walpole conceded the point and Gilbert was rejected.³⁷ The need for tranquillity in ecclesiastical appointments was satisfied in a number of other ways. In some cases it was necessary to reach a compromise between opposing factions, as in the nomination to Bath and Wells in 1727. Queen Caroline advanced the claims of Dean Hare of Chichester; whereas Bishop Gibson supported those of Bishop Kennett of Peterborough, leaving the two sides deadlocked, and neither side prepared to relent. In this case the senior prelate, Bishop Wynne of St Asaph, was the compromise nominee.³⁸

Peace in the provinces was also important. The appointment of John Thomas, the future Bishop of Winchester, to a prebend of Westminster in 1753 was a product of Newcastle's need to maintain the support of Sir Kerrick Clayton, Thomas's patron and an important Whig borough-monger.³⁹ Those occasions on which peace and tranquillity were not maintained have attracted much attention from historians, but they were a minority of quite exceptional cases. Bishop Benjamin Hoadly of Winchester is often cited as a typical eighteenth-century bishop. In fact he was unique in many ways: in holding four dioceses in succession, in being too crippled to perform his professional duties and in his tolerance toward dissenters. He was also rare in being the cause of so much disturbance to successive governments. From the Bangorian controversy in 1717, in

which Hoadly denied the existence of a visible Church, Hoadly was rarely other than a cause of irritation and concern to ministers. In 1718 he was suggested as a possible candidate for the vacant Irish see of Derry, largely to remove him from England. But the Archbishop of Dublin wrote to Archbishop Wake of Canterbury that Ireland did not want 'that ... obnoxious bishop ... who is disliked or troublesome in England'.⁴⁰ Even prelates of the same political and theological hue as Hoadly did not approve of his 'loose theology' or of his rapid preferment within the Church.⁴¹ Governments did not fail to learn the lesson of Hoadly's appointment: controversial bishops were to be avoided wherever possible. As a result in 1723, when Edward Waddington was offered the see of Chichester, he was asked whether he had anything in his past that might embarrass his political masters.⁴²

There were of course bishops who actively courted advancement from politicians. Peter Virgin has seen these men as representative of the bench as a whole, whereas in fact they were the exception. Detailed examinations of the episcopate reveal that bishops were willing to ignore political factors and to act and vote in the House of Lords upon their principles regardless of the effect.⁴³ There is also evidence that the bishops of the eighteenth century have been misjudged regarding the level of their ambition for a diocese. Certainly an examination of the clergy in the period who refused a bishopric, either as a first see or a translation, suggests that the episcopate was by no means as rapacious or unaffected by scruple as might have been expected. Throughout the period under review clergy refused appointments to bishoprics simply because of a sense of their inadequacy.⁴⁴ Other bishops were conscious of their age like Edmund Gibson and Thomas Sherlock. In 1730 Gibson refused the offer of translation to Winchester⁴⁵ on the grounds that 'old age and growing infirmities would not allow him to think of entering upon a new scene of life, which was necessarily attended with such a variety of business and required such constant application'.⁴⁶ Gibson's later refusal of the primacy caused the Duke of Newcastle to offer it to Sherlock, bishop of Salisbury. Sherlock, himself aged seventy, also refused claiming

if I had health and strength equal to my inclinations to serve his Majesty, I would gladly accept ... I ... have little reason to expect to live much longer ... in an infirm state of health what use can I be to his Majesty, to my country or to my Church ?⁴⁷

One of the principal factors, besides age and capacity, that affected whether a clergyman would accept a diocese was money. Financially, a diocese was by no means an attractive proposition. The diocese of Winchester was a good example. In spite of an income that fluctuated

between £3500 and £5000 a year in the eighteenth century, appointment to Winchester was a financial gamble. The costs of election, confirmation, consecration and enthronement as well as entry into the diocese were huge, often running into thousands of pounds.⁴⁸ A rule of thumb was that appointment to a diocese would involve a bishop in debt for three or four years.⁴⁹ Winchester was especially unattractive, as the bishop of Winchester had three vast palaces to maintain at Wolvesey and Farnham together with Winchester House in London. As one of the senior bishops he also had an obligation to provide a high standard of hospitality. Bishop Hoadly's chaplain remarked that at Winchester House the bishop was obliged to provide diners with ten dishes each day.⁵⁰ Other expenses crowded in: attendance on parliament, visitations, legal suits to ensure duties were undertaken, charitable donations and the costs of a large administrative staff. The effect of this was that as late as 1760 only 28.1% of bishops held a rich see for more than four profitable years.⁵¹ It is therefore not surprising that some bishops sought to avoid bankruptcy. John Egerton, for example, refused to accept Hereford in 1724 until he was also allowed to retain his rectory of Whitchurch as an additional source of income, and in 1750 John Conybeare refused Bristol until he was allowed the deanery of Christ Church in commendam.⁵²

The danger for a clergyman who considered accepting a mitre was that he might leave his family without provision. On a bishop's death his income, accommodation and status lapsed. As a result it was expected that a bishop would make provision for his family from his diocese, and not to do so was regarded as reprehensible.⁵³ In this context the nepotism practised at Winchester was regarded as entirely acceptable. Successive bishops, Trelawny, Trimnell, Hoadly and North appointed sons and other relatives to canonries and livings in the diocese. A warning to them of how perilous was the position of clerical dependants was the case of William Trimnell, son of Bishop Charles Trimnell of Winchester. Bishop Trimnell was appointed in 1721, aged fifty eight, with a reasonable expectation that he would survive long enough to discharge his debts. In fact he survived for less than three years, during which he was fortunate in managing to appoint his son to the deanery of Winchester; otherwise his family would have been destitute.⁵⁴

There was moreover an important functional role for nepotism. A bishop newly-appointed to a diocese inherited his predecessor's personnel, with no guarantee that they would support and promote his policies. Jonathan Trelawny found this situation on his appointment to Winchester in 1707. As a moderate Tory, Trelawny entered a diocese bristling with Whig archdeacons and senior clergy. In the years after 1707 Trelawny

systematically appointed supporters to key appointments in his diocese. The judge of the commissary court was imported from Trelawny's former see of Exeter; two of the bishop's chaplains were appointed to vacant canonries of Winchester; Trelawny's son Charles was appointed to the rectories of West Meon and Cheriton and to a canonry of Winchester. To safeguard his financial position Bishop Trelawny appointed his brother to the office of Keeper of Wild Beasts and another son to the Stewardship of Winchester.⁵⁵ In effect therefore Trelawny surrounded himself with supporters, and those who would help to ensure his policies were implemented across the diocese. It was this security and support that allowed Trelawny to be an extraordinarily effective and energetic bishop.

III

The most important episcopal activity for the leadership of the parish clergy was that of diocesan visitation. Visitation enabled the bishop to enquire into the spiritual and material state of the church in his diocese, and to correct abuses. In doing so, bishops established professional standards of behaviour in parishes and expectations of the level of clerical duty to be undertaken. The sermon preached to the clergy at each visitation gave them guidance and leadership. Thus visitations were the principal instrument for episcopal management. One recent writer has described the nature of episcopal visitation in the eighteenth century

he [the bishop] visited his diocese in summer, occasionally touring the countryside ... these episcopal visitations were not a pleasant part of his duties, travelling about was slow and tedious ... it was almost certainly the case that he had not been promoted for such administrative capacities⁵⁶

Yet there is a growing recognition of a need for a revision of this view of eighteenth-century episcopal duties.⁵⁷

Eighteenth-century bishops undertook visitations at a transitional point in their evolution, before the development of the nineteenth-century model of a visitation focusing on a published charge delivered to the diocesan clergy. The bishops in the eighteenth century were active in developing visitation articles, questionnaires circulated to each parish asking for details of the size of the parish, the clerical residence and duty, numbers of communicants, nonconformists and charities. However the central aim of visitations remained the detection of irregularities and the supervision of the clergy. Bishops undoubtedly took the function of the correction of clerical irregularities extremely seriously. Bishop Jonathan Trelawny of Winchester was a veritable scourge of the clergy.

His visitations produced a plethora of admonitions and prosecutions. Records survive of prosecutions for non-residence, for scandalous behaviour, for conducting clandestine marriages, for refusal to take the oath of a rural dean, for failing to keep curates, for preaching without a licence and for neglect of pastoral duty. Subsequently his energetic primary visitation of Winchester diocese in 1712 generated a huge workload of legal cases for his registrar. In a flurry of advice and warnings Trelawny bombarded his clergy with his requirements that they adhere to the order of prayers in the prayerbook; that they desist from criticising the government of the day; that they refrain from conducting clandestine marriages; that they preach against simony and that they engage and dismiss curates only with his permission. Trelawny also travelled in person to demand that the Mayor of Winchester break up a Roman Catholic school in the city and submit to him the oaths of allegiance of the city Catholics. Clergy prepared for such visitations equally thoroughly. In 1778 the Revd Joseph Greene of Stratford-on-Avon listed his preparations for his archdeacon's visitation as 'filling up Briefs for losses by fire, for rebuilding churches etc; writing out parchment transcripts from ye register books ... of all ye Marriages, Baptisms and burials yt have happen'd therein since this time twelvemonths, etc'.⁵⁸

Visitations were undoubtedly an onerous duty. But there is evidence that bishops saw them as an important function, that justified the exertion involved. Moreover they were not undertaken grudgingly, however burdensome they might be. Bishop Manningham of Chichester described his visitation to Archbishop Wake in 1718 in these words

I thank God that under all my weaknesses I have been enabled to do my duty and to undergo rough journeys, and bad lodgings better than I thought I could; besides this 'tis very bad for one who is subject to frequent strangenesses and grippings to be confined so long together in the Church with one's episcopal habit on. The expense one is at in doing this duty ... would be considerable to some, for it cost me nearly twenty pounds in executing this little part of my office; a constant table to be kept for the clergy and some others; paying for ringing ...; giving to the poor, who are ready to devour one; besides other items which can make a good sum when put together; but all this I count dross for the sake of serving our great Master.⁵⁹

A similar commitment on the part of Bishop Thomas Newton of Bristol proved fatal. In 1776 Newton resided in his diocese during the summer recess as he did each year. His friends, aware of the Bishop's illness, advised him not to undertake a visitation, but Newton insisted. Touring Dorset he undertook huge confirmations at Blandford, Dorchester and

Bridport, but as a result burst a blood vessel and lost blood for a week. Newton

was not able to proceed any further in his visitation; the Archdeacon visited for him at Shaftesbury and the visitation at Bristol he was forced to send and put off ... This was his first failure of going to Bristol; and by living and residing there so much, he was in hopes that his example would have induced the other members of the Church to perform also their part.⁶⁰

When John Wynne was asked by Archbishop Wake to visit the disabled Bishop Benjamin Hoadly's diocese, his reply to the primate was,

I shall very readily comply with your Grace's request, as far as conveniently as I can. I am afraid I shall not be able to go this year into ye remoter parts of ye Diocese ... But I shall be willing to go into such places as are not far distant from me. And if ye same occasion should require it another year I shall be ready to go, God willing, and do ye same office in ye remoter parts of ye diocese.⁶¹

A major obstacle to visitation was the age and infirmity of bishops. In itself this was not unique; in the mid-nineteenth century it was recorded that the bishops of all of the dioceses between London and Truro were affected by ill-health. Bishop Manningham of Chichester fought illness in 1718 to undertake his visitation.⁶² Bishop Hoadly's crippled knee was believed to have excluded him from visitations in any of the four dioceses he held. But recent research has indicated that in fact he did undertake visitations, albeit irregularly, in the dioceses of Hereford, Salisbury and Winchester.⁶³ In Winchester diocese Bishop Hoadly's son, John Hoadly, was chancellor and vicar-general, and was exceptionally active in undertaking duties at visitation on behalf of his father.⁶⁴

Bishop Wynne's willingness to visit for Hoadly has already been noted, but this was by no means an isolated practice. The eighteenth-century Church generally made up for the ill health and activity of its bishops in the House of Lords by the support they received from their brethren. Thus Bishops Mawson and Pearce supported Hoadly by visiting and confirming for him at Winchester. And it was quite usual for bishops agree to support each other when attendance at parliament made visitation and confirmation tours difficult to arrange. During the eighteenth century bishops gradually separated visitations and confirmations, undertaking these duties on separate tours. In effect this doubled the travelling a bishop had to undertake.

In addition to visitations bishops had the duties of confirmations and ordinations to undertake. Even those bishops whose reputations had suffered more than most could claim that their record for ordinations were not poor. Bishop Hoadly examined candidates for Orders personally, though he often delegated the actual ordination to his brethren. The demand for well-educated clergy was important. The clergy of the seventeenth century have been attacked for their low social status, in part because so few were graduates. During the eighteenth century this changed, with a significant majority of clergy graduating from the universities. In 1783 seventy-five percent of Wiltshire clergy were graduates. Given the fall in the numbers of graduates of the English universities after 1730, these figures were a remarkable achievement.⁶⁵

The Church's 'gold standard' in public worship was 'double duty', two parish services each Sunday with a sermon. With significant numbers of non-resident clergy the chances of achieving double duty in every parish were low; indeed it is doubtful whether complete double duty even in the seventeenth or nineteenth centuries was ever more than an aspiration. Fred Mather found that double duty was less a feature in the south than the north of England.⁶⁶ Figures for double duty in the eighteenth century were nevertheless respectable, and occasioned some exertion on the part of the clergy. The Revd John Ford, curate of Andover, recorded on 6th March 1777 that he had taken the morning service and preached at Andover at 9.30am and managed to get to the small chapelry of Foscott within the parish by 11.30am to begin the celebration of the sacrament. In the afternoon he returned for evening prayer at Andover.⁶⁷ The high standards of double duty did not exclude frequent communions. In August 1766 Ford recorded his terms as curate of Andover: 'two sermons every Sunday morning and afternoon. Prayers twice every Wednesday and once every Friday and on all saints days. Sermons also on St John's day, Good Friday and some other days. Prayers twice every day in Passion Week, and twice on ye Holy days at Xmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. Sacrament the first Sunday in every month.'⁶⁸ A monthly communion, was far in excess of the canonical minimum of three communions a year, and suggests that the High Church adherence to the sacraments was alive throughout the eighteenth century.⁶⁹ In Wiltshire seventy three percent of churches held quarterly or more frequent celebrations. In Oxford diocese the vast majority of churches easily exceeded the canonical minimum of three celebrations annually, causing Diana McClatchey to conclude that 'the accepted view of rural churchmanship at the end of the eighteenth century may well be too pessimistic'.⁷⁰

An important feature of the clergy in the eighteenth century was a rise in their social status. In part this increase was achieved through the

growth of differentiated clerical echelons, with more rungs on the clerical career ladder, that attracted clergy from noble and genteel families. Without the differentiation of the clergy into 'generals, field officers and subalterns'⁷¹ there was no competition for places that allowed the men of ability and quality to rise to the highest ranks. Historians have tended to focus on the use made of the elongated ladder of preferment by patrons, like Newcastle, rather than on the advantages it brought to the Church. It ensured that the qualities of the clergy were steadfast and consistent. George II, for example, told Dr John Thomas, a future bishop of Winchester, that he would have to move gradually through the ranks of the Church: a living, followed by a royal chaplaincy, then a prebend and perhaps a deanery. Indeed a decision in 1727, that any chaplain in ordinary to the King had to resign his chaplaincy if he were appointed to a deanery or senior Church office, created in effect a quite separate rung in the ladder of Church preferment.⁷² Indeed the ladder of preferment, with rich prizes at its apex, transformed the clergy from a down-trodden and lowly profession in the seventeenth century into one that attracted men from the middle and noble classes in the eighteenth.

One of the ways in which this was achieved was through clerical pluralism. Pluralism was permitted for clergy who fulfilled certain qualifications: an MA, a college fellowship, a chaplaincy to a peer or a cathedral office. These were the 'middle managers' of the Church from whom the future bishops were likely to be chosen. Pluralism enabled the middling clergy to enjoy a higher income and to form a different layer in the Church hierarchy. This development created a class of affluent 'squarson' clergy, who raised the standing of the clergy as a whole. Higher incomes, status and greater respectability made Holy Orders more attractive to those from the gentry and nobility, and this in turn further enhanced the status of the clergy. By the end of the eighteenth century the chapter of Winchester included a baronet, the sons of two earls and of a baron.⁷³ Moreover one estimate of eighteenth-century Hampshire clergy suggests that a quarter married into the peerage or gentry.⁷⁴

IV

Attempts to evaluate life in parishes in the eighteenth century is notoriously difficult. The Church of England was spread across thirteen thousand parishes, and extrapolating evidence from any one to draw general conclusions is inevitably problematic. However there may be lessons to be drawn from parishes which have the profile of the most likely to be neglected. An example of an eighteenth century parish cited

as an illustration of corruption and decay is St Mary's, Southampton. Hearnshaw commented in his *Short History of Southampton* that the eighteenth century was a period that saw the 'Church's neglect of her duty' and specifically spoke of the rectors of St Mary's neglecting their work.⁷⁵ Certainly the rectors of Southampton display the signs of a corrupt regime. Ralph Brideoak's (1702-1742) appointment as both rector and archdeacon of Winchester arose from transferred nepotism since his grandfather had been bishop of Chichester. His successor John Hoadly (1743-1776) was the son of Bishop Hoadly of Winchester who also held the offices of chancellor and canon of Winchester, the rectories of Alresford, Overton, Michelmersh, Wroughton and the Mastership of St Cross, and scandalised society by his play 'The Suspicious Husband'. One writer accused him of being 'the greatest (that is the worst) pluralist of his age'.⁷⁶ Newton Ogle (1776-1797), who succeeded Hoadly, was archdeacon of Surrey, Canon of Durham and Dean of Winchester as well as rector of St Mary's. The final rector of the century was Francis North (1797-1850), son of Bishop Brownlow North of Winchester, who was also rector of Alresford and Master of St Cross. In other words, St Mary's Southampton was a *grandees'* church, carrying a huge income of over two thousand pounds a year.

With such pluralist rectors the neglect of the parish seems almost inevitable. Yet both the fabric and services of the church were maintained successfully throughout the century. Up to 1711 the church was in a 'wretched condition' when Brideoak succeeded in rebuilding it. The Church had been in disrepair for centuries: as early as 1550 comment was made of the 'rubbish of St Mary's Church' being used to repair town roads.⁷⁷ In 1711 the corporation granted £40 and several other subscriptions were collected towards the total rebuilding cost of £920. The rebuilt church consisted of a new nave fitted to the existing chancel. In 1723 Brideoak added a new chancel at a cost of £400. Subsequently he erected 'at the sole charge of the rector' a cupola on the chancel roof to hold the church bell, that had hitherto been housed in a wooden tower.⁷⁸ By 1763 John Hoadly's will speaks of the church as built 'in a substantial, yet a very expensive manner, and on a much larger scale than the use of the parish alone required'. John Hoadly was concerned that the Church would again fall into disrepair. In his will he directed that since 'the inhabitants [of the parish] were chiefly poor persons, so that in the process of time the repair of the church was likely to become a heavy burden to them' he gave to the rectors of St Mary's £100 on trust, so that the interest from the sum should be added to the capital until the interest reached £50. The sum was then to be spent on major repairs to the 'roofing, timber, main walls, iron work etc ...' By 1797 Newton Ogle

transferred almost £253 to his successor Francis North for the repair fund.⁷⁹ Throughout the 1760s and 1770s regular repairs were undertaken on the Church, including at Easter 1769, 17s. 3d. spent on repairs to the heating system and in November 1770, £128 10s. on structural repairs. In May 1777 the cupola needed repair and Dr Ogle was empowered to employ a surveyor to either repair or remove it; he chose to repair it. In 1780 the roof was replaced and in 1783 the cupola repainted.⁸⁰ Under Francis North, the Church was again rebuilt, largely to add sufficient seatings for the booming population of the city; nave walls were pulled down and pillars with galleries erected and aisles laid out in the centre of the Church. A rather critical description held that 'a plain wall with two ranges of windows of the meanest carpenter's Gothic enclosed and added materially to the ugliness, affording some elevations hardly to be matched in the county.'⁸¹

Evidence of the residence of the rectors is thin. However it is possible to infer that these pluralist rectors were frequently resident in the parish. Ralph Brideoak suffered the privation of the rectory twice burning down, in 1706 and 1712. On the latter occasion its rebuilding cost £4000, and on the site of the original rectory two large wings were added to the new one. Later he established a claim to a part of the rectory garden from which he had removed the wall to allow carriages to enter the rectory courtyard more easily. In 1743 John Hoadly remodelled the rectory garden, spending £40 clearing a 'yew wilderness' and establishing a three hundred foot terrace.⁸² Newton Ogle, in addition to the deanery in Winchester, resided from time to time at the rectory, arranging in 1777 for his servants to have their own pew allotted in the Church.⁸³

The rectors were also careful that all the requisites for proper services were provided: in 1708 Ralph Brideoak gave two large silver chalices to the Church, in 1713 he contributed a marble font, in 1717 and 1725 gave velvet coverings for the altar and also two quarto prayerbooks. Hoadly in 1743 paid for the repairs to the bell, for a pulpit and reading desk cloths in 1769 and for blinds for the south windows in 1772.⁸⁴ The rectors employed curates to take services during their periodic absences; the longest-serving was Owen Davies, who acted for the rectors for over forty years from 1740. John Hoadly seems to have employed at least three other clergy who officiated from time to time.⁸⁵ Nevertheless the rectors were not strictly non-resident. The registers record periodic marriages, baptisms and burials undertaken by the rectors. Ralph Brideoak's registers are littered with personal comments on the weather, cold winters, warm summers and early or late harvests.⁸⁶ In 1734 he personally appeared as rector of St Mary's at the visitation.⁸⁷ His return to the visitation queries of 1725 also indicate that he was resident since he answered that he

had no curate because he 'does the duty of the cure himself'.⁸⁸ The parish registers include the baptism in 1748 of a soldier by John Hoadly. Hoadly signed the transcription of the registers at the bottom of each page, and in 1754 arranged to purchase a new register to conform to the Marriage Act of that year.⁸⁹ In 1788 Newton Ogle confirmed at the visitation that he was resident,⁹⁰ and he examined the churchwardens accounts in 1778, and in 1791 exercised the right to appoint a grave digger for the parish.⁹¹

Of the services at St Mary's there is only the thinnest evidence: on the death of Brideoak in 1742 his entry in the burial register was marked by the comment 'to the great grief of his friends and of the parish in general'.⁹² More revealing was the churchwardens' examination in July 1777 of the parishioners complaint that their 'pews being greatly crowded by the parishioners of other parishes so as to prevent seating'.⁹³

The Church in southern England in the eighteenth century encompassed all those features that the Victorians found profoundly unacceptable: direct involvement in politics, place-seeking and preferment hunting, pluralism and non-residence, the search for uncontroversial appointments, nepotism, and a growth in clerical incomes. To Victorian historians therefore, the clergy of the preceding century seemed to live in 'the age of guzzle'. But these historians lived in an industrial economy, a stable political environment and an age in which ideas of merit and competition were developing, and one in which the Church had reconciled itself to competition from other denominations. It was against these standards that they judged the Hanoverian Church, and naturally found it wanting. The eighteenth-century Church resembled more closely the Church of the Reformation than that of the nineteenth century, and it is in these terms that it should be judged. For the people of St Mary's, Southampton, the clergy of the parish served their cure well. They were men of some status, and were rewarded with a number of appointments. When they were not in Southampton, curates undertook their duties for them. The rectors' wealth enabled them to repair the neglected fabric of the church and rectory, and to endow the church to prevent future neglect. Their fellow clergy were involved in politics, but they lived in an era in which Church and State were indivisible and that placed political as well as religious duties upon them. Thus when William Thomson saw little family resemblance between the apostles and the clergy of the eighteenth century, it reflected as much his vision as it did the institution he sought to criticise.

Notes

1. This article is based on a paper originally given at the English Local History Postgraduate seminar at King Alfred's College, Winchester, in 1996 and at the Southern History Conference in Winchester at Easter 1997.
2. C. Wordsworth, *Social Life at the English Universities in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge 1874), p. 1. W. H. Hutton, *Burford Papers* (London 1905), p. 237.
3. J. Wade, *The Black Book of 1832* (London 1832), p. 47.
4. E. H. Thomson, *The Life and Letters of William Thomson* (London 1919), p. 19.
5. In 1614 the Bishop of Bath and Wells told Sir Edward Phelips of Montacute that he would 'send to all my tenants that if they go not with your son [at the election] they shall smart soundly for it'. Somerset Record Office, DD/PH/92.
6. B. Williams, 'The Duke of Newcastle and the Election of 1734' *English Historical Review*, 12 (1897), p. 470.
7. L. P. Curtis, *Chichester Towers* (New Haven 1966), pp. 69-93.
8. T. J. McCann (ed.), 'The Correspondence of the Dukes of Richmond and Newcastle 1724-50' *Sussex Record Society*, 73 (1983), pp. 36-37. G. D. Nadel 'The Sussex Election of 1741' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 91 (1953), p. 103.
9. Williams, op. cit., 470.
10. An example of such interdependence is to be found in W. M. Jacob, 'Church and Borough: King's Lynn 1700-1750' in W. M. Jacob and N. Yates (eds), *Crown and Mitre* (Woodbridge 1993), pp. 63-80.
11. J. Beresford (ed.), *The Diary of a Country Parson, 1758-1801* (Oxford 1978), p. 60.
12. B[ritish]. L[ibrary]. Add. Ms. 32,688, f. 135. Curtis op. cit, p. 103.
13. Williams, op. cit., p. 467.
14. Curtis, op. cit., pp. 45-48.
15. Williams, op. cit., pp. 468, 478.
16. McCann, op. cit., p. 41.
17. Curtis op cit., p. 67.
18. McCann, op. cit., pp. 63-77 and Williams, op. cit., p. 468. Hurdis was a pluralist rector of three Sussex parishes, but Thomas Turner who listened to him preach twice at East Hoathly on 22 April 1759 noted 'he is as fine a churchman as almost ever I heard.' G. Jennings (ed.), *Thomas Turner: The Diary of a Georgian Shopkeeper* (Oxford 1979), p. 10.
19. A. E. Doff, 'Social Conditions in the Cuckmere Valley 1660-1780: the influence of Church and Dissent' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Open University, 1986), pp. 118-9.
20. L. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at The Accession of George III* (London 1973), pp. 99-100, Appendix A.
21. Later in the century other clergy fulfilled the same role. In 1761 John Douglas wrote *Seasonable Hints from an Honest Man* ... a combination of 'high wisdom and lofty sentiments ... virulent invective and bitter recrimination'.

- It was an attack on the old Whig ministers of George III and an appeal to support Lord Bute's new interest. Douglas quickly became the semi-official pamphleteer of the Bute faction. L. Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (London 1976), pp. 60, 64. Not all clergymen were necessarily partisan in their political interests. From time to time clergymen were chosen as the means of independent communication between political rivals. Dean Friend of Canterbury was chosen in 1761 as a mediator between Sir James Creed and Thomas Best, the quarrelsome Whig candidates for Canterbury, and later between Best and the Tories when Best left the Whig fold.
22. Nadel, op. cit., pp. 101, 106-7.
 23. McCann, op. cit., p. 93.
 24. A. Hartshorne, *The Memoirs of a Royal Chaplain 1729-1763* (London 1905), pp. 147, 288, 295-6.
 25. Public Records Office, State Papers, 36/75/30.
 26. McCann, op. cit., p. 79.
 27. J. Carswell & L. A. Drake (eds), *The Political Journal of George Bubb Doddington* (Oxford 1965), p. 243.
 28. *The Lives of Dr Edward Pocock . . . Dr Zachary Pearce . . . Dr Thomas Newton . . . and Revd Philip Skelton* (London 1816), p. 392.
 29. W. Gibson '“Importunate Cries of Misery”: the Correspondence of the Revd Lucius Hibbins with the Duke of Newcastle 1741-58', *British Library Journal*, 17, 1 (1991).
 30. McCann op. cit., passim.
 31. G. Scott Thomson (ed.), *The Letters of a Grandmother 1732-35* (London 1946), pp. 121-3.
 32. Curtis op. cit., pp. 99, 107.
 33. Carswell and Drake, op. cit., p. 281.
 34. McCann op. cit., pp. 15, 232, 240, 303-4.
 35. Ibid., pp. 23, 28.
 36. Curtis op. cit., p. 21.
 37. N. Sykes, *Edmund Gibson* (Oxford 1926), p. 124.
 38. W. Gibson, 'The Diocese of Bath and Wells in the Eighteenth Century: the Careers of Bishops Wynne, Willes and Moss' (Unpub. M.A. thesis, University of Wales, Lampeter, 1982), p. 13.
 39. C. J. Abbey, *The English Church and its Bishops 1700-1800* (London 1887), 2 vols, ii, p. 75.
 40. N. Sykes, *William Wake* (Cambridge 1957), 2 vols, ii, p. 230.
 41. Kennett regarded Hoadly's preferment to Hereford as 'not a popular thing', and Edmund Gibson in 1724 was mightily relieved when Hoadly was not made primate G. V. Bennett, *White Kennett* (London 1954), pp. 151-154.
 42. D. R. Hirschberg, 'A Social History of the Anglican Episcopate 1660-1760' (Unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Michigan University, 1976), p. 329.
 43. P. Virgin, *The Church in an Age of Negligence* (Cambridge 1989), p. 159. Hirschberg thesis, pp. 313-4. R. K. Pugh, 'Bishop Hoadly: A Plea in Mitigation', *Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society Proceedings*, 41 (1985), passim.
 44. See for example W. Gibson, *The Anglican Achievement 1689-1800: The Confessional State in Eighteenth Century England* (Lewiston NY, 1995), chapter two.

45. N. Sykes, 'Bishop Gibson and Sir Robert Walpole' *English Historical Review* (1929), pp. 628-633.
46. B. L. Add. Mss. 32713, f. 243.
47. E. Carpenter, *Thomas Sherlock* (London 1936), p. 140.
48. C. Jones, 'The Political and Financial Costs of an Episcopal Appointment in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Huntington Library Quarterly* (1990).
49. Hirschberg, thesis, pp. 370 et seq.
50. Hartshorne, op. cit., p. 178.
51. Hirschberg, thesis, p. 408.
52. Hartshorne, op. cit., p. 70; Hirschberg, thesis, p. 347.
53. W. Gibson, 'Patterns of Nepotism and Kinship in the Eighteenth Century Church', *Journal of Religious History*, 14, 4 (1987).
54. J. M. Horn (ed.), *John Le Neve's Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857* (London 1974), III, pp. 82-5.
55. M. G. Smith, *Fighting Joshua . . . The Career of Jonathan Trelawny . . .* (Redruth 1985), pp. 140, 141, 156-7.
56. Virgin, op. cit., p. 159.
57. This plea is made more fully in W. Gibson, 'The Hanoverian Church in Search of a New Interpretation' *Journal of Religious History*, 16, 3 (1991); and evidence that bishops were willing to endure great pains to discharge their duty in visitation can be found in idem, *The Anglican Achievement*.
58. Smith op. cit., pp. 65, 141, 144. L. Fox (ed.), *The Correspondence of the Revd Joseph Greene . . .* (London 1965), p. 118.
59. Christ Church, Oxford, Wake Mss. 20, cclxxvii, f. 501.
60. *The Life of E. Pocock*, . . . , ii, p. 171.
61. Wake Ms. Letters, 21, f. 264.
62. N. Sykes, 'Episcopal Administration in England in the Eighteenth Century' *English Historical Review*, XLVII (1932), pp. 440-441.
63. Pugh, op. cit.
64. H[ampshire] R[ecords] O[ffice], 21M65.
65. M. Ransome (ed.), 'The Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries 1783', *Wiltshire Record Society*, 27 (1971), p. 8; Virgin op. cit., p. 135.
66. F. C. Mather, 'Georgian Churchmanship Reconsidered: Some Variations in Anglican Public Worship 1714-1830', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36, 2 (1985), p. 268.
67. HRO 29M65/2.
68. HRO 29M65/1.
69. Mather op. cit., p. 270 found that monthly communion was probably the most common patter of celebration.
70. D. McClatchey, *Oxfordshire Clergy 1777-1869* (Oxford 1963), p. 86. Ransome, op. cit., p. 6.
71. N. Sykes, *Church and State in England in the XVIII Century* (Cambridge 1934), p. 147.
72. *The Life of E. Pocock* . . . , ii, 83. Thomas eventually received the bishopric of St. Asaph. But in contradiction to the oft-repeated assertion that royal chaplains received the best preferment in the Church the career of Edmund Pyle is instructive: he received only the archdeaconry of York and a prebend

- of Winchester. Hartshorne op. cit., pp. 3–5. D. Baldwin, *The Chapel Royal, Ancient and Modern* (London 1990), p. 266.
73. These were Sir P. Rivers Bart., Canon 1766–90; the Hon. Edward Legge, Canon 1795–7; the Hon Nicholas Lechmere, Canon 1750–70; the Hon George Pelham, Canon 1797–1801.
74. Virgin, op. cit., p. 110.
75. H. F. C. Hearnshaw, *A Short History of Southampton* (Oxford 1910), p. 225.
76. *Hampshire Advertiser and Southampton Times*, 15 June 1935, in S[outhampton] R[ecords] O[ffice], D/NC/5. In the same article the writer makes the astonishing claim that Hoadly's income was £40,000 a year. W. R. Ward asked 'for what intellectual services to the Church is his memory cherished? Poet and Dramatist'. W. R. Ward 'Parson and Parish in Eighteenth Century Hampshire: Replies to Bishops' Visitations' *Hampshire Record Series*, 13 (1995), p. xxi.
77. Hearnshaw op. cit., p. 221.
78. SRO PR5/1/2.
79. SRO PR5/6/2.
80. SRO PR5/6/1.
81. J. S. Davies, *A History of Southampton* (London 1886), pp. 342–3, 345, 388. Phillip Brannon described the Church in 1850 thus: 'It is ... remarkable for its bold defiance of all architectural propriety, than for any other characteristic: tall clustered columns being carried from floor to support a horizontal beam or entablature close to the ceiling, whilst plain round windows contrast the pointed arch of the ancient chancel ... Mr J. G. Poole was the architect.' P. Brannon, *The Picture of Southampton* (Southampton 1850), p. 45.
82. SRO PR5/1/2.
83. SRO PR5/6/1.
84. SRO PR5/1/2.
85. See for example entries in SRO PR5/1/18.
86. SRO PR5/1/2.
87. HRO 21M65/B1/74. The visitation records for Winchester diocese suggest that it was visited with astonishing regularity under all the bishops, including Hoadly.
88. HRO 21M65/B4/1/2, f. 314. There was a curate in the parish at the proprietary Jesus Chapel at Pear Tree where the curate read prayers and preached fortnightly.
89. SRO PR5/1/1.
90. HRO 21M65/B4/3/131. By 1788 the income of the Pear Tree chapel had risen as a result of the investment of an additional £100 and a further £200 from Queen Anne's Bounty. Between 1725 and 1788 the estimates of the population of the parish rose from four hundred and fifty to six hundred. In 1725 there were ten births, five marriages and seven burials; by 1788 this had risen to fifty one, fourteen and forty three respectively.
91. SRO PR5/6/1.
92. SRO PR5/1/1.
93. SRO PR5/6/1.