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# SOME EARLY VISITATION ROLLS PRESERVED AT CANTERBURY.

## II.

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THE present article is a continuation of one which appeared under the above title in the last Volume (XXXII.) of *Archæologia Cantiana*. It deals with the proceedings of the Court of the Commissary of the Prior and Chapter of Christ Church, Canterbury, exercising visitatorial jurisdiction when the Primacy was vacant after the death of Archbishop Walter Reynolds. Reynolds died 16 November, 1327. His successor, Simon of Mepham, was enthroned on the 22nd January, 1329; therefore the vacancy extended over more than fourteen months. During the interval the spiritualities of the See were in the hands of the Prior and Chapter, who appointed Master Hugh de Forsham\* as their Commissary, and instructed him to hold visitations throughout the diocese. The record of his proceedings was inscribed on strips of parchment, which were sewn together so as to form a long roll. Only portions of the roll are now extant, namely, those relating to the following churches and chapels:—Ickham with Well Chapel, Adisham, Staple, Eastry with the Chapel of Worth, St. Bartholomew's Hospital outside Sandwich, Deal, Maidstone (All Saints and St. Faith), Loose, Detling, Westwell and Charing.

In the important parishes of Ickham, Deal and Maidstone the Rectors were non-resident. At Maidstone the benefice was held by the notorious Cardinal Anibald de Ceccano, Archbishop of Naples.† He seems to have retained the

\* Rector of Sundridge and Canon of Chichester.

† See Cave Browne's *History of the Parish Church of All Saints, Maidstone*, pp. 69, 70.

rectory of Maidstone until his death, which occurred in 1350, the duties of the cure being performed by parochial chaplains. At Ickham and Deal the rectors were "at school"—that is to say, they were studying at a university (*studium generale*), their parishes being administered by parish chaplains, apparently inefficiently, since in both churches there were many defects in the ornaments and vestments, and at Deal the chaplain not only neglected to visit the sick, but upbraided those who asked for his ministrations. At Welle, a chapelry united to the Rectory of Ickham (the ruins of the chapel may still be seen on the left bank of the lesser Stour below Bekesbourne), a curious entry occurs on the roll. The Rector,\* it was alleged, neglected to find two lights for the high altar and he was enjoined to make good the defect, but was permitted to use for the altar lights the wax left over from the Paschal candle. At Westwell also the Rector was non-resident. Here a vicarage had already been ordained, but the Vicar being blind and inefficient, the church was served by a chaplain.

The Master of the little Hospital of St. Bartholomew, outside the walls of Sandwich, had the temerity to close the gates against the Commissary, who promptly laid the house under an interdict, which was only taken off through the friendly intervention of the Mayor and Barons of Sandwich after the brethren had made their submission.

At Eastry two presentments of special interest should be noted, namely, that the high altar was not dedicated—probably there had been some recent structural alterations in the chancel which had necessitated the rebuilding of the altar—and the statement that two of the piers in the nave were much out of repair. For the latter, of course, the parishioners were responsible, and they were ordered to make good the defect before the Feast of St. John the Baptist (June 24) or pay a fine of forty shillings. Probably the Churchwardens found it necessary to rebuild one of the

\* The Rector was Robert de Solbury. He became Provost of Wingham College in 1351, and was apparently an ecclesiastical lawyer of repute. See *Arch. Cant.* XIV., p. 126, and Mr. Hussey's *Wingham*, p. 147.

piers, and their work may be identified to-day in the second pier from the west end of the southern arcade, which is octagonal in form, whereas the others are cylindrical. That the churches were well provided with funds for their upkeep at this period is abundantly clear from the number of entries on the rolls which relate to the detention by dishonest people of rents and live stock which had been bequeathed by pious benefactors for this purpose.

Offences against the sanctions of the Church with regard to sexual relationships occupy a good deal of space on the rolls. I have transcribed, but not translated these entries. In only two of these cases is the defendant a clerk in higher orders, a circumstance which seems to prove that there had been improvement in clerical morality during the thirty-five years which separate the Visitation of Richard de Clive from that of Hugh de Forsham, whereas in the record of the Court of the former the clergy figure much more frequently.

With the above exceptions, I give a literal translation of the proceedings.

132½.

[Roll IV.]

A Visitation made in the Church of Icham by Master Hugh de Forsham, Commissary General of Canterbury, during the vacancy of the see, on the Saturday next after the feast of St. Valentine, in the year of the Lord one thousand three hundred and twenty seven.

*Well Chapel.*

The Chrismatory is insufficient and without a lock; the font is insufficient and without a lock. On March 19 the parishioners appeared, and were enjoined to cause the said defects to be repaired and made good before the feast of Pentecost, under penalty of ten shillings.

The cruets (*phiala*) are insufficient, and there is no basin for the sacristy\* (*sacrarium*); the manual is insufficient, one psalter requires binding, and all the books are without fastenings (*cerura*), a rochet is lacking and one surplice. On the same day the Rector appeared by his chaplain, who acted as his proctor, and was

\* It has been suggested by the Editor that probably in these rolls *sacrarium* means the altar drain, now generally called *piscina*.

ordered to cause the said defects to be repaired before Pentecost, under penalty of ten shillings.

The Rectors in times past, and the present Rector, were wont to find two wax lights with their candlesticks on (*super*) the high (*maius*) altar, and the present Rector has taken them away, and does not find lights at celebrations on week days in the church. On the 19<sup>th</sup> March the Rector appeared as above, and said that he does (*facit*) and provides (*invenit*), as his predecessors have done, and as he by law is bound to do; wherefore he was enjoined to find a light at time of celebration from the wax of the paschal candle, because he saith that he hath nothing else wherewith to find a light for this purpose.

Symon Florens, of Garrington in the parish of Adisham, detains iij<sup>d</sup> of annual rent from the Chapel of Well, and has withheld it for two years. On March 19 Simon did not appear, therefore he is suspended for his contumacy, and it was decreed that he should be summoned on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1328 in the Church of S<sup>t</sup> Elphege, Canterbury. Simon appeared on the said day and saith that he is bound to pay two pence yearly, but denied the rest, and submitted himself to an inquest, and six men of Well should be summoned for Saturday next after the feast of our Lord's Ascension in Christ Church, and Symon hath the day and place aforesaid to do what shall be just. He has given security for the fine (*satisfecit pro pena*).

Thomas, son of Luke of Garrington, and Matilda his sister, executors of the will of Sarah Bodes, detain viii<sup>d</sup> left by the testament of the said Sarah to the fabric of the said chapel of Welle. March 19 the woman though cited did not appear, wherefore she is suspended; the man cannot be found. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1328, the woman appeared and received absolution, and saith she hath satisfied the wardens and done her penance, and she was dismissed.

The rector does no good in the parish. March 19 the rector appeared by his proctor, as above, and was enjoined to distribute (alms) to the poor according to his means and ability.

Willelmus de Lyle coniungatus notatur de adul' commiss' cum Emmota serviente eiusdem . . . comparuit et vir negavit delictum a tempore correccionis facte coram visitacionibus bone memorie dñi W. Cant' Archiēpi defuncti . . . unde diem Sabbati prox' post festum Assencionis dñi in ecclesia Cant' Xpi Cantuar' ad docend' de correccione et ad purgand' se sexta manu, mulier non est inventa; postmodo idem Wills' comparuit personaliter et purgavit se

legitime cum compurgatoribus infrascriptis videlicet dñō Willelmo Capellano de Icham, dñō Joñe Capellano de Welle, Rogero de Garwynton, Bartho' Rolf, Henr' atte Doune, Joñe atte Gaole, Hamo de Welle, et dimissus est, exhibuit eciam literas correccionis facte coram dñō W. quondam Archiēpo sub dato apud Bourn Episcopi xiiij. Kalñ Septemb' anno dñi millesimo ccc<sup>mo</sup> vicesimo sexto.

*Ickham.*

A chalice which the rector should find is lacking. Two phials are lacking, the surplice is torn, the blessed cloths (*tualle benedictę*) are bespattered with wax (drippings), two processional candlesticks are lacking. The Rector appeared by his proctor, and was enjoined to repair the said defects before the feast of Pentecost on pain of twenty shillings.

The crosses for the dead (*cruces pro mortuis*) are lacking; the font hath no lock. The parishioners appeared, etc., and say that a new lock has been put on the font, and they were enjoined to find the crosses for the dead before the feast of Pentecost, under a penalty of ten shillings.

The Rector doth not reside. The Rector appeared by his proctor, and saith that he hath licence to study in the schools, wherefore he shall exhibit his licence at the next visitation if he be cited again. Sir William, the parish Chaplain, did not celebrate on one Sunday, and the parishioners were without a mass on that day . . . the said chaplain appeared and confessed to the charge (*articulum*), but alleged that the reason why he did not celebrate was because certain suspended persons, who were forbidden to enter the church—in that they had not performed the penance enjoined upon them—were present in the church, and that he was unwilling to celebrate in their presence. Wherefore he was formally dismissed, because his excuse is confirmed by evidence (*quia hoc testificatur*).

The Clerk (*beneficiarius*) is married, the parishioners appeared and were enjoined to provide another clerk for the purpose of serving at the altar.

Elyas Lyeperer is bound to pay to the church a rent of xvi<sup>d</sup> a year, and he hath kept back therefrom four pence during ten years. He appeared and denied the charge; the parishioners appeared and allege that there are charters and muniments relating

to the said rent, wherefore they should show them if a new citation be issued.

Thomas Hortyn, and Robert of Lewes, bought certain land of John de Aldemed of Wingham, which is held of the Church at an annual rent of xvi<sup>d</sup>, and they had not paid it for four years. John and Thomas appeared, and the said John confessed that he once paid the sum, but knoweth not on what land; Thomas saith that he holdeth no land burdened with rent of the Church of Icham aforesaid, wherefore the parishioners have the Tuesday after Quadragesima (Sunday) in Christ Church to prove their case, and Thomas also hath the aforesaid day; Robert was not found. At length on Saturday after the feast of the Ascension in the year of our Lord 1328, in Christ Church, Canterbury, the wardens of the Church appeared, together with Robert of Lewes, Thomas Hortyn, and John Aldemed of Wingham, and with the consent of the parties submitted themselves concerning the premisses to an inquest of lawful men, which having been taken and sworn, found that the said Thomas and Robert hold one and a half virgates of land, which land they acquired of John Aldemed aforesaid, and hold of the Church of Icham at xii<sup>d</sup>, and they have held it for one year, and the said John held it for three years, wherefore the said Thomas and Robert are condemned to pay the xii<sup>d</sup> within fifteen days, and the said John to pay iij<sup>s</sup> within a month, and inquiry is to be made whether it ought to be paid to the church or the rector.

John de Ledbury procurator rectoris tenet quamdam mulierem in domibus rectorie nomine Ceciliam concubinam. March 7th comparuit Johannes et negavit delictum commissum cum eadem, dicit quod dicta Cecilia est consanguinea rectoris domini sui et ideo moram trahit ibidem et purgavit se de delicto, et dimissi sunt ambo.

Dominus Willelmus Boydyn capellanus qui nunc moratur apud Forduicum tenet et diu tenuit Julianam atte Sole de Icham in concubinam iij Non Mart' (March 5) comparuit dictus Willelmus et negavit delictum a tempore correccionis facte coram magistro Willimo de Wenderton commissario tunc rectoris, unde habuit diem, etc. . . . ad purgandum se de recidivo vij<sup>ta</sup> manu sui ordinis et decretum est quod vocentur parochiani de parochiis de Icham et Fordwyco. Quo die adveniente dictus Willelmus personaliter comparuit et nichil exhibuit. Inscriptis rotulis rectoris de correccionibus factis nichil fuit inventum de aliqua correccione facta; unde abiuravit

peccatum commissum cum eadem sub pena suspensionis a celebratione divinatorum in dioc' et pro commiss' multatus est ad viij<sup>s</sup> quos soluit, mulier non est inventa unde inquiratur ubi moratur, et citetur.

Thomas atte helle for' cum Cristina de Cherlefeld . . . comparuit virum et fatebatur correccionem et negavit de recidivo et purgavit se et ambo dimissi sunt.

Walterus atte Bregg et Dionisia de Seton diu fuerunt adiudicatum in virum et uxorem in Conistorio Cant', et adhuc non est solemnizatum matrimonium inter eosdem . . . comparuit Walterus et fatebatur se contraxisse matrimonium cum eadem et quod ad aliam ius non habet nisi ad eam et dicit quod post contractum matrimoniale habitum cum eadem ipsam carnaliter cognovit, unde iniunctum est sibi quod faciat celebrari matrimonium inter eos citra festum Sci Michaelis sub pena excommunicationis.

The glass of the windows in the chancel is broken. There are no desks (*lectoria*) nor benches (*formule*) in the chancel . . . the Rector appeared by his proctor, and was enjoined to cause the said defects to be made good before the feast of Pentecost under penalty of twenty shillings.

Walterus Maheu de Tropham coniungatus adul' cum quadam Isabella que moratur cum Emma Kete . . . dicti Walterus et Isabella comparuerunt personaliter et negavit delictum et prefixus est eisdem dies martis prox' post dominicam qua cantatur quomodo geniti (*the introit of the first Sunday after Easter*) in ecclesia Xpi Cant', ad purgandum se videlicet utraque viij<sup>a</sup> manu\* ii Id' Aprilis; die supra dicto comparuerunt ambo personaliter et purgaverunt se et dimissi sunt.

Alicia Stybi de for' comiss' cum quodam capellano cuius nomen ignoratur . . . certificatum est quod mulier non est citata, ideo decretum est quod citetur et quod inquiratur de nomine viri.

Margeria Sharp vocatur de for' commiss' cum Waltero de Ealdwyn . . . certificatum fuit quod vir non fuit inventus nec mulier citata, unde vocentur ambo . . . mulier citata non comparuit ideo suspensa; vocentur ambo; postmodo . . . comparuerunt ambo personaliter et mulier est absoluta et fatebantur ambo delictum adinvicem commissum et abiuraverunt sese abinvicem sub pena eis infligenda et pro commissio vir fustigationi quater et mulier vi., paret, satisfecerunt.

\* That is by calling eight witnesses on his behalf.



A Visitation made by Master Hugh de Forsham, etc., in the Churches of Adisham and Staple, on Monday after the feast of St. Vincent, 1327.

*Staple.\**

The ceiling in the chancel is cracked (*fracta*), there is no vessel for the oil of the sick, two candlesticks for processions are lacking, the apparels of the albs belonging to the ferial vestment are in poor condition (*debiles*) and torn, there is no surplice for the priest, nor choir-cope, because the existing one is insufficient, the tunicle and dalmatic are in poor condition and torn (*fracta*), one psalter wants binding, there is no processional book, the manual wants binding (*male ligatum*), there is no separate psalter (*psalterium separatum*) . . . . the Rector appeared by Sir Adam, his chaplain, and was enjoined to cause the said defects to be made good by the feast of the Nativity, under a penalty of half a marc.

The foot of the chalice is defective, so that it does not stand firm, there is no vessel for the incense, the gradual wants binding and is in poor condition . . . the parishioners appeared and were enjoined to have the said defects made good by the feast of Easter, under penalty of half a marc.

Alexander Overye and William, his brother, keep back a rent of one penny due to the fabric of the church, and have done so for twelve years and more . . . Alexander appeared and saith that he only owns part of the said property, and that there are four other tenants of the same who have not been summoned, wherefore they should be summoned under a new citation.

Alexander Overey doth not frequent his parish church as he is bound to do . . . he confessed the charge (*articulum*), and swore that he would come in future.

William le Flessch keepeth back a yearly rent of xiiij<sup>d</sup>, and has done so for sixteen years . . . William was cited but did not appear, wherefore he was suspended. On the Saturday next after the feasts of the Ascension of our Lord 1328, it was certified that William could not be found. John Flessch now holds the land from which the said rent is derived. He was cited but did not appear, wherefore he was suspended and should be summoned. On the 5<sup>th</sup> July John was cited but did not appear, wherefore he was excommunicated and should be summoned.

Bertram de Twytham hath withheld for seventeen years and

\* A chapelry attached to the Rectory of Adisham,

more an annual rent of ij<sup>d</sup> due to the Church. (No proceedings recorded.)

Sir Stephen, the chaplain, hath withheld iij<sup>d</sup>, Richard de Byneaker  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>d</sup> and Alexander de Bernesole  $\frac{1}{4}$ <sup>d</sup>, Seman de Graveney i<sup>d</sup> yearly rents due to the Church, and have done so for ten years. William le Brek is bound to pay to the Church iij<sup>s</sup> ii<sup>d</sup> a year, and has withheld it for eleven years. (No proceedings recorded.)

Willelmus Kyngelot coniugatus notatur de adul' commisso cum Emma de Hwytesfelde . . . comparuerunt ambo personaliter et negarunt delictum a tempore correccionis facte in visitacione dñi Archiepi et purgaverunt se et dimissi sunt.

Walterus de Windesore notatur for' commis' cum quadam Isolda que moratur cum eodem . . . comparuit vir et fatebatur quod contraxit matrimoniam per verba de presenti cum eadem, per ista verba accipio te, et cet, dicit quod post modo carnaliter cognovit, et abiuravit peccatum suum donec constiterit, et citetur mulier . . . comparuit et fatebatur contractum et carnalem copulam subsecutam; unde decretum est quod bannis editis solempnizeretur matrimonium inter eos citra festum Ascencionis domini.

Johannes filius Adame clerici notatur de for' commis' cum Thoma de Staple de Sandycio . . . comparuit mulier et fatebatur delictum et abiuravit peccatum sub pena suspensionis infligenda et pro commiss' fustig' quater, vir non est inventus.

Thomas atte Ware of Wingham has withdrawn one halfpenny rent due to the Church for eight years . . . the man was cited but did not appear, wherefore he is suspended and should be summoned.

The foot of the principal Chalice is broken (*fractus in pede*), the vessel for incense is insufficient, the processional Cross is broken, the walls of the Churchyard are out of repair, the stole and maniple belonging to the principal vestment are in poor condition (*debiles*) and unsuitable, the Canon of the missal is incomplete . . . the parishioners appeared, and were enjoined to cause the repairs to be done and the defects made good before the feast of Pentecost, under penalty of half a marc.

The roof of the Church is out of repair (*patitur defectum*) . . . the parishioners appeared, and were enjoined to have the repairs carried out by the feast of St. John the Baptist, under penalty of twenty shillings.

There is no basin in the *sacrarium*, one of the censers (*turibulum*) requires new chains (*patitur defectum in cordis*), the maniple and

stole for the Sunday vestment are in poor condition and insufficient, there is no processional book . . . the rector was enjoined, in the person of his chaplain, to cause the defects to be made good by the feast of St. John the Baptist, under penalty of half a marc.

The Clerk (*beneficiarius*) doth not carry holy water to Hameletun of Garwynton (Garrington) . . . it was certified that he doth and carrieth as he is bound to do, and he was dismissed.

The Rector received thirty sheep left by the will of Master Richard, his predecessor, to maintain a lamp in the chancel to burn by day and by night, and it doth not burn by night . . . the Rector appeared and saith that he knoweth nothing about the matter, wherefore it is decreed that inquiry be made and that the Rector be summoned.

#### *Adisham.*

William of Wenderton hath kept back ten shillings, due yearly to the aforesaid Church, for four years . . . William appeared and confesseth that he is willing to account for the sum of money abovesaid, and is prepared to satisfy the Wardens that the said money hath been spent for Church purposes (*in utilitate ecclesie*), as was ordered by disposition of the Rector and parishioners.

The Rector hath x<sup>s</sup> which he received of William of Wenderton, and they are due to the Church, but he keepeth them back from the use of the Church . . . the Rector appeared and saith that he hath received nothing of the said William, and the said William confesseth that this is so, but saith that he gave the said money to Sir William of Petwode to celebrate for the souls of certain persons, concerning which matter directions were to be given by the Rector himself.

A tree in the churchyard is in a dangerous state, and the parishioners fear that it may cause damage to the church.

Thomas de Cotmanton coniugatus notatur de adul' commiss' cum Emma uxore Ricardi of Wolrynton . . . they both appeared in person and denied the offence, and purged themselves (*se purgaverunt*).

The Clerk (*beneficiarius*) neglects school (*non vadit ad scholas*) nor doth he serve in the Church, either on Sundays or week-days, neither doth he come to the canonical hours; and he is at the same time Sexton, but he doth not ring at the canonical hours . . . he was enjoined to serve the Church as he is bound to do, and the parishioners were enjoined to find a fit person to serve in the office of Sexton.

A visitation held in the Church of Eastry, and the Chapel of Worth annexed thereto, by Master Hugh de Forsham, etc., on Tuesday next after the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1327.

*Hospital of St. Bartholomew next Sandwich.*

M<sup>d</sup> that on the day and year above said, We, the Commissary of Canterbury aforesaid, coming in person to the hospital of St. Bartholomew next Sandwich, situate within the bounds and limits of the parish of Eastry, to exercise our visitatorial office found the gates of the hospital closed and made fast by the brethren of the hospital, so that though we knocked we could not get in. Whereupon taking our seat close to the door we laid the same hospital under an interdict, and executed sentence of excommunication against all who impeded us. At length, on the Friday next before the feast of the Purification of the blessed Mary the Virgin, in the Church of Christ at Canterbury, there appeared Sir John de Dover, Sir John Spicer, and Sir Stephen atte Crouche, Chaplains celebrating in the said Hospital, who were officially cited, and who were sworn to declare the truth. When asked if after the said day on which the said Hospital had been laid under the interdict they had celebrated therein, they said that they had not, but the said John of Dover said that he did celebrate on the same day, but whether before or after he knoweth not, because the said interdict was unknown to him. The said Sir John Spicer said that immediately after the interdict was imposed he entered the said Hospital. The said Sir Stephen said that on the two preceeding and two following days he came within the Hospital, not knowing that entry was forbidden. Wherefore he was enjoined not to celebrate in the same but elsewhere until the interdict had been relaxed, and the said John and John were suspended from celebration of divine service until they have proved their innocence of the same (offence). Afterwards, at the request of the Mayor and Barons of the town of Sandwich, the interdict was relaxed by the Prior and Chapter, and then the said John and John vindicated their innocence, and were dismissed.

On the Saturday next after the feast of St Valentine in the Church at Icham appeared John Stel, Master of the said Hospital, and Michael, brother of the said Hospital, who were cited for having closed the gates and hindered our entrance, and at the

request of the Mayor and Barons as above stated, they were officially dismissed for the nonce (*ista vice*.)

### Worth.

The pix for the Body of Christ is without a fastening, one breviary (*portiforium*) is badly bound, the gradual is insufficient and not of the use of Sarum, two antiphonaries are badly bound and of little value (*modici valoris*), two psalters are badly bound and of little value, all the books are without fastenings, the blessed cloths belonging to the week day vestment are dirty and of little value, two blessed cloths for the Sunday vestment are lacking, one pair of corporals is lacking, one altar covering (*superaltare*) is lacking . . . . The Rector appeared, by Sir John his Chaplain, and was enjoined to cause the defects to be made good before the feast of S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist under penalty of half a marc.

The crismatory is insufficient, a bell which is carried before the bodies of dead-folk is cracked, a vessel for the incense is lacking, the font is without a lock . . . . The parishioners appeared and said that the font has now a fastening, and they were enjoined to have the other defects made good by Pentecost, on penalty of half a marc.

The trees in the churchyard have been felled and sold by the parishioners without the consent of the Rector . . . . The parishioners appeared and said that it was done with the consent of the Rector, and this was testified to by John, Chaplain of Eastry, and they were dismissed.

The parishioners appropriate a share of the offerings made to the Cross (Rood) in the church . . . . The parishioners appeared and confessed the charge, and it was enjoined that in future they should not participate in any offering, under pain of excommunication, which we publish forthwith in this record (*quam ex nunc ut ex tunc ferimus in hiis scriptis*).

John de Haghe keepeth back half a silver-marc left in the will of William of Worth to the fabric of the Church of Worth . . . . John appeared and confessed that he was willing to give satisfaction, and he was condemned to pay the said half marc to the Warden of the Church of Worth before the middle of Lent.

Elyas atte Welle and Stephen, brother of the same, made an agreement and pact together when letting their lands that, if either

one or the other of them did not keep the pact, he should give half a marc to the fabric of the Church of Worth. The said Stephen did not keep the agreement, and thus incurred the penalty . . . . The said Stephen appeared and denied the charge, submitting himself to an inquest, which was taken, and the said inquest declared on oath that the said Stephen had not kept the pact and agreement, wherefore he was condemned to pay to the Wardens of the fabric of the Church half a marc before Mid-Lent.

Alicia Courtepye duxit in maritum Matheum de Syberteswelde et eum non admittit prout decet . . . . Certificatum fuit quod non fuerunt inventi, ideo decretum est quod vocentur, postmodo certificatum est quod vir est mortuus.

Idonea uxor Johis atte Forde diffamatur de adul' commis' cum Johe But de Sandwyco . . . . comparuit mulier et negavit delictum et purgavit se, vir est non inventus.

Johes de Pelham & Agnes Pope simul cohabitavit sicut vir et uxor, et non est ut dicitur matrimonium inter eosdem solempnizatur . . . . comparuit mulier et dicebat iurata quod matrimonium non est inter eos solempnizatum et fatebatur carnalem copulam habitam inter eosdem et abiuravit peccatum suum et pro commis' fustigat' ter, vir citatus non comparuit, ideo excommun' et decretum est quod vocetur. [In margin *pendet in Capitulo.*]

### *Eastry (Estry).*

One chalice is faulty in the foot, the ceiling of the chancel is cracked (*fracta*), the high altar is not dedicated, there is no vessel for the incense, the gradual requires binding, the proper requires binding, two psalters require binding—one of them is also in poor condition; of the two antiphoners, one requires binding and the other is incomplete (*insufficiens*); the lessons proper of the Seasons (*Legenda temporalia*) requires binding, the footpace (*passus*) of the high altar is defective, the glass window behind the high altar is broken, the window in the vestry is broken and faulty, the chancel door between the nave (*ecclesiam*) and the chancel is broken, and without a fastening . . . . The Rector appeared by Sir John, his chaplain, and in the person of the said Sir John, the Rector was enjoined to cause the said defects to be made good before Pentecost, under pain of half a marc.

A Cross for funerals (*pro mortuis*) is wanting, the missal requires binding . . . The parishioners appeared and were enjoined to cause the said defects to be made good before the feast of Easter, under penalty of half a marc.

Two pillars (*columpnæ*) in the Church are in bad condition (*ruinosæ*) . . . The parishioners appeared, and were enjoined to have the said defects repaired and made good before the feast of St. John Baptist, under penalty of forty shillings.

William Horygand, of the parish of Norbourne, keepeth back, and hath kept back for sixteen years, four sheep which John of Gore received from the Wardens of the lights of the Church of Estry; and Alicia, the wife and executrix of the last will of the said John, transferred these sheep and other goods to the house of the said William, and the said Alice was under the guardianship of the said William up to the time of her death.

John Wagge received of the Churchwardens a cow, and he detaineth the cow and payeth not rent for the same . . . John appeared and saith that he received a cow, and, through no fault of his own, the cow suddenly died, wherefore he was enjoined to satisfy the wardens, who were advised to be moderate in their demand (*sint in exaccione graciosi*). [In the margin "*Pax est.*"]

Adam Routere, of Worth, keepeth back six sheep and the rent of the same, pertaining to the Church of Estry . . . He appeared, and confessed to both sheep and rent, wherefore he was condemned to give satisfaction by the feast of St. Michael.

Hugh Stonibel doth not make use of (*exercet*) his parish church on Sundays or feast-days, but doeth his businsss on those days . . . Hugh appeared and confessed that he sometimes doeth business (*exercet mercata*), and swore that he would in no wise do so in future, but as far as he was able would frequent his parish church, as the rest of the parishioners do, and the penalty for his fault is held over at his request.

[The next entry is a long one relating to the conflicting rights of the Vicar of St. Mary's, Sandwich, and the Rector of Eastry to take tithe of lands in the manor of Poldre "in a field called Bynnesmelle, otherwise Pottilsdoun, next to a place called Serlescrouch." The Archdeacon of Canterbury, as rector of St. Mary's, fearing that his interests might be prejudiced, asked for delay, which was granted, but there is no record as to how the dispute terminated.]

*Deal.*

A Visitation made in the Church of Deal on the Wednesday next after the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1327, by Master Hugh de Forsham, etc.

A bell to carry before the bodies of dead folk is lacking, the gradual is in bad condition . . . The Parishioners appeared and say that the bell is now supplied, and they were enjoined to find a sufficient gradual, if they are legally bound to do so.

The Rector is non-resident and does no good in the parish, and the same Rector causeth his corn to be winnowed (*ventilari*) in the churchyard . . . The Rector appeared by his proctor, Master Roger of Congherst, and saith that the Rector is at school (*stat in scolis*) by licence of the Archbishop, now deceased, wherefore he shall exhibit his letters of licence, and it was enjoined that he should cause distribution (of alms) to be made amongst his parishioners in accordance with his legal obligations (*prout de iure tenetur*), and that for the future he shall not suffer his corn to be winnowed in the churchyard, under pain of excommunication. After Easter the Rector's licence to study expired, and as he is non-resident, the fruits (of the benefice) are sequestrated.

The paten belonging to the week-day chalice is broken, one phial is lacking, the troper requires binding, there is no martyrology nor ordinal, one antiphoner requires binding, one psalter requires binding, the ceiling in the chancel is cracked, one blessed cloth for the Sunday vestment is insufficient, the surplices are in bad condition and dirty, one choir-cope is in bad condition and torn, two glass windows in the chancel are broken, the chancel door is broken and without a fastening . . . The Rector appeared by his proctor, as above, and he was enjoined to have the said defects repaired and made good by the feast of Pentecost, under penalty of twenty shillings.

Johes Hosewyf duxit in uxorem Joham sororem Henrici Code, qui Henricus duxit in uxorem Ceciliam Kynges, quibus Joha et Henr' mortuis dictus Johes ducere vellet in uxorem dictam Ceciliam . . . Comparuerunt Johes et Cecilia et fatebantur contractum matrimoniale habitum inter eosdem unde decretum est quod bannis editis solempnizetur matrim' inter eosdem non obstante dicto articulo si aliud canonicum non obsistat.

The parish Chaplain doth not visit the sick, but when anyone cometh to ask him to visit sick persons, he saith bad words to



him . . . Sir Symon the Chaplain appeared, and denieth the charge, and he was enjoined to visit the sick and do his duty, under pain of suspension from the celebration of divine service.

Robert Byng grazeth his animals in the churchyard, and maketh it a common pasturage. Robert appeared and confesseth that on one occasion his animals entered the churchyard, and he swore that for the future he would not allow the animals to enter if he knew it, and for his fault he was flogged thrice.

[Roll II.]

*Maidstone.*

A visitation held in the Church of the blessed Mary\* in the town of Maydestan on the Saturday next after the feast of St. Hilary, in the year of our Lord one thousand three hundred and twenty-seven, by us, H(ugh) de Forsham, Commissary of Canterbury *Sede vacante*.

John atte Wetere hath kept back vi<sup>d</sup> of the annual rent due for the light of the blessed Mary in the parish church . . . he appeared and saith that he holdeth nothing which is owing, wherefore official enquiry should be made, and an inquest summoned.

The Master of the New Work† keepeth back iij<sup>d</sup> of the annual rent due to the light of the blessed Mary . . . the parishioners appear on the Friday next after the feast of the Holy Trinity, and say that he is ready to pay and make satisfaction for what he hath kept back. The Rector is non-resident, and doth no good in the parish. In the pix in which the body of the Lord for the eucharist is placed, the two *particles* (*persone*) adhere together and cannot be separated on account of the damp and decomposition (*propter humiditatem et putrefacionem*). On the Friday next after the feast of the Holy Trinity the charge was delivered to the Rector's proctor.

The *sacrarium*‡ next to the high altar is dirty and very ill kept . . . later it was certified that this was amended.

A psalter requireth binding. A breviary (*portiforium*) was taken away by Sir John Page, whose executors are his brothers Geoffrey and Robert . . . both appeared, and deny that they are executors.

Sir John de Sharstede, Chaplain, alienated a psalter, and his

\* The parish church of St. Mary was demolished by Archbishop Courtenay when he erected the collegiate church of All Saints in 1395.

† Archbishop Boniface's Hospital on the West bank of the Medway.

‡ See note at foot of page 73.

executor is Master John Atwater . . . Master John saith that he administered (the estate) by order of the Rector, and promised that the church should suffer no loss by the feast of All Saints.

Sir John Doget alienated a certain song book (*librum de cantu*), and James of Boclonde is the executor, and his co-executor is Robert Ate Rye . . . they appeared and exhibited and delivered the book.

Thomas de Kershoke hath alienated two new surplices, out of which chrisoms could be made . . . it is reported that they are in the hands of the proctors of the rector, who ought to be sequestered for the same, until he answereth (for the above) and for one psalter belonging to Lose taken away by him, and for a bell in the Rectory taken away by him.

The principal cross for processions is lacking . . . the parishioners appeared and say that they have one and that it is being painted, wherefore they were enjoined to have one ready by the feast of the Nativity of St. John.

Sir John Skarbut, chaplain, who was a Carmelite friar, celebrates in the Church . . . the chaplain appeared and saith on oath that he only stayed with the friars ten weeks,\* and that he was a chaplain before that time, and he swore that as long as he shall celebrate there he will do nothing to the prejudice of the Rector, and will make obedience.

#### *St. Faith.†*

The Chalice is faulty because its foot does not stand firm (*claudicat in pede*) . . . the Rector appeared by his proctor, and was enjoined to have it repaired by St. Augustine's day, under penalty of half a marc.

A basin for the *sacrarium* is lacking.

#### *Loose.*

The bell tower of the church, and porch at the entrance to the church are badly covered . . . the parishioners appeared, and were enjoined to have the said defects repaired by the feast of All Saints, under penalty of forty shillings.

\* Presumably at their house at Aylesford.

† The chapel of St. Faith and the churches of Loose and Detling were chapelries attached to the parish church of Maidstone, and were served by chaplains.

The ceiling of the chancel is cracked and in bad repair (*ruinosa*) ; there is no pix for the Body of Christ ; . . . the rector appeared, and was enjoined to have the defects made good by the feast of St. Michael, under penalty of forty shillings.

The Body of Christ is placed in a case (*bursa*) without a lock.

The censer is deficient in chains . . . the parishioners were enjoined to have it repaired by St. Augustine's day, under penalty of half a marc.

Two candlesticks, and two tapers (*cerei*) for processions are lacking . . . the Rector was enjoined to find them by the feast of St. Michael ; the missal wants binding.

In the name of God Amen. We the Commissary abovesaid, warn and enjoin you the Chaplains celebrating in the Church and Chapels, that without special licence of the prior and chapter of Christ's Church, Canterbury, during the vacancy of the see, you exercise not jurisdiction nor intermeddle, under pain of excommunication on all those who controvert (the said order) and of an interdict on the Church and Chapels, which excommunication and interdict we forthwith publish (*ferimus*) in these writings.

A gradual is lacking ; the psalter and manual want binding ; all the albs are dirty ; a stole and maniple are lacking ; the principal cloths are lacking ; there is no rochet ; there is no surplice for the Clerk ; the font is all broken, and is without a lock ; the churchyard is badly fenced.

### *Detling.*

There are no stoles ; the pix for the Body of Christ hath no lock . . . The Rector appeared by his proctor and was enjoined to have the defects repaired by St. Augustine's day, under penalty of half a marc.

The chrismatory is not in safe keeping, and hath no lock . . . the parishioners were ordered to have it repaired, under penalty of ten shillings.

The albs are without apparel (*sine parura*) and unseemly because the apparels are worn out (*insufficientes*) ; the chasuble is torn ; the chancel is in bad condition, it is (to be repaired) by St. Augustine's day, under penalty of twenty shillings.

The roof of the nave (*ecclesie*) is in bad condition ; the missal requires binding . . . The parishioners are to make good the defects, under penalty of ten shillings.

The gradual requires binding; the psalter requires binding; all the books require binding; a stole, rochet, and surplice are lacking . . . the Rector (to make the defects good) by St. Augustine's day, under penalty of twenty shillings.

The font is without a lock . . . the parishioners are suspended until one be provided.

The *sacrarium* is dirty and ill kept . . . the Chaplains appeared and were suspended until the above be amended,

The Rector hath sold the tithe that was not collected . . . he appeared and denied the charge.

[Roll V.]

*Westwell.*

[1328.]

A Visitation in the Church of Westwell on the Monday next after the feast of St. Hilary.

[No defects in church furniture are noted in this roll.]

The Rector doth not reside, but he giveth a share of his Church (profits) in alms to the poor, as is seemly.

The Vicar is blind and incompetent (*insufficiens*), nor is there any one (serving the Church) except one chaplain.

The Vicar hath no clerk serving in the Church. The Vicar (saith that he) hath, and to this the parishioners testify.

The Clerk (*beneficiarius*) hath a wife . . . the parishioners say that they chose him as sexton, and that another person is clerk.

The tithe lambs are pastured in the churchyard in spring . . . the Vicar was enjoined that this should not be done in the future, and a similar injunction was given to the parishioners.

[Certain small annual rents due to the Church, but detained or withdrawn by the tenants, are mentioned, amongst which is the following]:—Sir John, rector of the Church of Pette hath withdrawn a pension of iijs due to the Vicar of Westwell . . . the Vicar appeared and said that he was satisfied.

*Charing.*

A visitation held in the Church of Charing on the Friday next after the feast of St. Hilary.

The parishioners do not pay tithe on underwood sold . . . the parishioners were enjoined to give satisfaction for the arrears, and for the future to pay the tithe, on pain of excommunication.

The parishioners do not pay tithe of milk after the feast of St. Peter in chains (Aug. 1). [Penalty as in the last.]

Edmund of Grenehelde of Egerton hath kept back for three years one pound of wax due to the high altar of Egerton . . . Peter de Sedenore saith he is willing to give satisfaction therefor, because E. is a person of bad character and under sentence (*condempnatus*).

Laurence de Oteryndenn coniugatus notatur de recid' adul' commisso ut dicitur cum Cecilia de Broxcombe de Eggerton, comparuit mulier et negavit recidivum a tempore correcionis facte coram W. Cant' Archiepo vel suis clericis et purgavit se vir est . . . coram auditore causarum.

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With reference to the complaint at Eastry that "the door between nave and chancel was broken and without a fastening" (as also the similar—though less explicit—complaint at Deal), and the penalty threatened for neglect to remedy the same defect, Mr. Aymer Vallance points out that this is a matter of interest because it refutes the erroneous opinion that, for a wholly imaginary symbolic reason, the doors or gates of mediæval rood-screens were never intended to shut nor fasten! If ever old rood-screen gates do not happen to meet and close tightly, it is due to nothing else but the fact that centuries of wear have strained the hinges and caused the gates to drop.