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FINANCES AND GOVERNMENT OF CANTERBURY EIGHTEENTH- TO MID NINETEENTH-CENTURY CANTERBURY COURTS OF JUSTICE

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INTRODUCTION

The extant royal chapters, particularly that of James I (1609), from which the government of the City and the County of the City of Canterbury derived its authority, and which operated throughout the eighteenth century and up to 1835, gave Canterbury County its own Commission of the Peace, separate from the County of Kent. Magistrates for Canterbury were specified by charter as the Mayor for the time being and those Aldermen who had fulfilled the office of the Mayor. They were assisted in all legal matters by a Recorder, a man learned in law, appointed by the Burghmote. Not all the twelve Aldermen would necessarily at any one time have held the office of Mayor, so that for most of the time justice in Canterbury was in the hands of the Mayor, the Recorder and about half a dozen Magistrates.

The senior court in Canterbury was the court of Quarter Sessions, under the Chairmanship of the Mayor, with at least two other Magistrates plus the Recorder sitting with him. In addition to various matters concerned with the administration of local affairs, Quarter Sessions had powers of jurisdiction which included judging murder cases and those offences of felony which could receive the death penalty. Between sessions, Magistrates met monthly under the Mayor's chairmanship, in Petty Sessions, to deal mainly with administrative matters and with some misdemeanours. The Mayor also held a fortnightly Court of Record, in which pleas of Trespass were heard from Citizens. Then, from 1752 onwards, a Court of recovery of Small Debts was appointed yearly, with the Mayor as chairman and the Recorder as a permanent member, and other members drawn from Aldermen, Councillors and citizens.

Some account of the operation of each of these Courts is given below.

QUARTER SESSIONS

Composition

Canterbury Sessions were supported by a Clerk of the Peace, who generally also held the office of Town Clerk for the City, and that of Coroner for the County of the City. He might also at the same time be Clerk to the Court of Guardians. A Grand Jury of between 12 and 23 citizens (mostly about 15) was appointed and sworn in for each session, and in attendance were the Constables and Borsholders for each of Canterbury's six wards and of St. Martin's Parish. Also present were the City Sheriff, the Keeper of the Goal, the Master of the Bridewell (or House of Correction, who would also be the Master of the Workhouse) and four Sergeants at Mace. Altogether, Canterbury sessions assembled between 40 and 50 people with official roles of one type or another, in addition to prosecutors and those indicted. Each year, the Chairman of the session changed as the Mayor changed. The constant and guiding force year by year was the Recorder, whose appointment could last until retirement or death.

FREQUENCY AND SCOPE

For most of the eighteenth century from 1727 onwards, sessions were held only three times a year, generally in December, March/April, and August/September, though, when necessary, sessions were adjourned to resume a week or two later. In the early years of the nineteenth century, they were down to two a year, but, from 1826 onwards, by recorded decision of the Court, they were held regularly four times a year, in January, April, July and October. After the replacement in 1836 of the old Burghmote by a newly elected Council under the reforms of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, the

¹ For instance, J. Knowler was Recorder for 30 years from September 1733 to 7 July 1763 when he died aged 66. Alderman were of course elected for life, and after becoming JP's would, through long service, have gained considerable experience in dispensing justice. Alderman Gray, for example, was Mayor in 1748 and continued as Alderman and Magistrate until 1783. He would not, however have necessarily attended every session as was the Recorder's duty.

Chairman of the Sessions of 4th January and 7th April, 1836 was the newly elected Mayor, supported by three Aldermen ex-mayors and the Recorder. For the session of 27th June, 1836, the Recorder sat unsupported by magistrates, but with a Grand Jury. Records of sessions from then until at least 1842 show that the Recorder continued to sit alone. By Charter of William IV of 1836, Canterbury had been regranted the privilege of its own Quarter Sessions, which the Corporations Act had swept away.²

The purview of the Sessions covered the complete range of misdemeanours and crimes, such as felony, burglary, robbery, stealing on the King's Highway, assault, sex crimes, murder and manslaughter, forgery and false pretences, disturbances of the peace. In addition, a whole range of administrative matters concerned with local government were dealt with. The operation of the Poor Laws, including Bastardy and Settlement, was of major concern. Before the establishment of the Pavement Commissioners in 1787, the Magistrates authorized the imposition and collection of rates for the upkeep of highways, and for the provision of lamps, in the City. They imposed fines for nuisances and misdemeanours presented to them principally by Constables and Borsholders of the wards, and they were not averse to imposing fines on minor officials of the City for dereliction of duty. They dealt with rating disputes, offences connected with weights and measures, they were the authority with the power to dissolve indentures of apprentices, and they licensed theatre performances and religious premises (other than C. of E.). They also had a concern for the regulation of corn prices and for the control of livestock epidemics.

POOR LAW CASES

A considerable amount, perhaps the major part, of each Session's business consisted of bastardy and settlement cases, reported in the records fully and in stylized form. Bastardy cases were generally brought by churchwardens and overseers of the parish concerned, supported by the Canterbury Guardians of the Poor, to establish parentage and compel the father to reimburse the Guardians for the cost of lying-in and to obtain weekly payments for the support of the

² A complete run of notebooks of Canterbury Sessions from 1726 to 1842 is available in Canterbury Cathedral Library, under reference CC JQO 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 and the information in these paragraphs is drawn from those records.

child. Settlement cases mainly consisted of appeals by alien parishes against actions by Canterbury parishes to transfer paupers out of Canterbury. Appeals were mainly, therefore, attempts to quash in the Canterbury Sessions orders for removal of paupers out of Canterbury made originally by Canterbury justices. More often than not, the sessions produced judgements setting aside orders by two of their own justices, awarding costs, which could amount of several pounds, against Canterbury parishes.

Appeals against Poor Law rate valuations were quite rare, presumably made only when recourse to the Guardians or Petty Sessions had failed. They generally resulted in the upholding of the Guardians valuations. A notable appeal was made in 1767, by the Parish Clergymen of Canterbury, acting separately, but at the same time. In these cases the combined influence of the incumbents of Canterbury obtained significant decreases. Consideration of the appeals, however, extended over two adjournments, with a month between the first discussion and the verdict, no doubt allowing for private discussion to produce an acceptable result.³

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Crime, its Incidence and Consequences

Canterbury was one of those County Boroughs whose Royal Charters gave its Magistrates in Quarter Session the authority to try and punish all manner of offences, including murder and those felonies for which the death penalty could be inflicted. Until 1836,4 Canterbury Sessions fully exercised such authority, and in addition to the death penalty had at their discretion a full range of sanctions, including fining, detention in the House of Correction (Bridewell), branding (burning on the hand), goal with or without hard labour, whipping in varying

³ CC JQO 19. 24 Sept., 25 Sept., and 30 Oct., 1767. Rev Dr. Duncombe of St. Andrew's and St Mary Bredin had his valuations reduced from £32 to £25, and from £88 to £75; Rev. Mr Hearne of St Alphage and St Mary Northgate, reduced from £46 to £37 10s. and from £30 to £29 5s.; Rev. Mr Decaufor of St Mildred and All Saints from £67 to £55 10s. and from £30 to £27; Rev. Mr Ayerst of St Peter's and Holy Cross from £40 to £26 5s. and from £10 to £6 5s.; Rev. Mr Leigh of St Margaret's and St Mary Bredin from £60 to £45 and from £10 to £5 5s.; Rev. Mr Gregory of St George the Martyr and St Mary Magdelene from £62 to £55 10s. and from £40 to £35 15s.; Rev Mr Anson of St Paul's and St Martin's from £17 to £8 15s.

⁴ In 1836 Canterbury's Royal Charters were set aside by the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, and a new Council was elected to replace the Burghmote.

degrees of severity, transportation for 7 to 145 years and putting in the stocks or pillory.

From a study of the notebooks of the Canterbury Sessions from 1727 to 1846, information relating to the number of criminal cases tried and convicted in the sessions year by year has been extracted.

From this, it is clear that the number of cases tried yearly in the years 1726 to 1790 reached double figures only once (in 1785), and that for most years during that period the number was less than half a dozen - in some years, apparently, zero. Few cases brought to trial in those years were found not guilty or dismissed. Beyond a broad description of the crime, such, as 'Felony', 'Petit Larceny', 'Grand Larceny', its nature is seldom detailed in the note books. Nor is information such as age or standing (employment) of the accused normally noted.

From his work on crime and the Courts in England and particularly in Surrey County, J.M.Beattie⁶ has demonstrated some correlation in the eighteenth century between the number of indictments of crimes against property, and the years of poor harvest and of war and peace. Fluctuations within the small numbers tried in Canterbury in the years 1727-1790, and the paucity of information about the nature of the crime and the age and standing of the accused, do not allow such a correlation to be attempted. All that can be noted for these years in Canterbury is that a modest overall increase in crime took place.

The years from 1790 to 1810, however, show a distinct increase in crimes tried, sometimes approaching 20 cases a year. From 1810 to 1818, there is a trough, but in years from 1818 to 1846 the rate increases considerably, reaching peaks of 38 in 1824, 44 in 1837, and 54 in 1844. At the same time, it must be observed that the number of cases found 'Not Guilty' or dismissed for other reasons, were high in those years, amounting in some years to over 50 per cent of those brought to trial. The rise in the number of convictions in the years 1818-1846 compared with the years 1720-1790 is, therefore, not as great as the comparison between cases tried, but the increase is still striking.

⁵ In 1718, the Transportation Act established Transportation to American colonies as a punishment.

⁶ J.M.Beattie, 'Crime and the Courts in England 1660-1800', Clarendon Press 1986; 'Crime and the Courts in Surrey 1736 - 1753', In (Ed.) J.S. Cockburn, Crime in England 1550-1800, Methuen 1977. The general thesis was that with the full employment of war years a downturn in crime might be expected, with increase in the years immediately after the war, or in times of bad harvest. Beattie finds troughs in the years 1739-48, 1756-62, 1776-82, and 1795-1815.

Information on the average yearly prices of a quarter of wheat against time for the years 1720 to 1850- is available in Stratton and Houghton Brown's book of 1978. From this it can be seen that between the years 1727 to 1790 the price of wheat rises and falls within narrow limits around an average of 40-45 shillings but the years 1790 to 1810 show significant rises up to 120 shillings, the incidence broadly matching the rise in crime for these years, though the peak years for wheat prices do not tally exactly with the peak years for crime.

Events in Canterbury during the near famine and high price years of 1795/6 and 1800/1 are worthy of closer study. The years 1795/6 were particularly severe for food prices in the Canterbury area, as evidenced by contemporary sources.8 Early in 1795, a severe frost and a great snow were experienced, with temperatures of two degrees below zero in January. There was a great dearth of provisions and wheat sold in Maidstone at £5 5s. to £6 10s. a quarter (higher than the average of £4 16s. given by Stratton for that year.) The severe frost and heavy snow deprived many of outside employment, and that, combined with a rise in the price of basic foodstuffs, caused suffering among the industrious poor. Nevertheless, indicted crimes at Sessions in Canterbury apparently were no higher than 12 that year and considerably less than 12 for the years 1794 and 1796. But the City Authorities, the Dean and Chapter, and the better off citizens made attempts to alleviate the hardships of the poor. A subscription fund was raised by the Mayor and Corporation, with the Dean and Chapter, and the £500 raised was sufficient to relieve 2500 men, women and children with tickets, for bread and flour for four weeks. A further fund of £191 was raised in July, and used to distribute standard wheaten loaf at a price substantially below the high prices determined at the assize of bread.9

Additionally, the Magistrates, following the lead of His Majesty's Privy Council decided that they and their families would set an example to the general populace by eating only standard wheaten bread, made from flour containing the whole produce of the grain (excluding bran or hull). They urged citizens to do likewise, and they also requested bakers only to produce standard wheaten loaves, all this in an effort to make the supply of flour go further and to decrease

⁷ Agriculture Records A.D. 220-1977. J.M.Stratten and Jack Houghton Brown, edited by Ralph Whitlock, pub. John Baker, 2nd edn., 1978.

⁸ J. Vidian, Kentish Chronologer and Index, Maidstone 1807, 98.

⁹ Simmons, Kirkby and Jones, Kentish Register, vol. III, 274, Canterbury 1795.

the price of bread. By the end of August, the new harvest was in, and the price of flour and bread decreased and the Magistrates accordingly felt able to revoke their previous orders.

The crisis appears then to have been over, and without rioting or undue disturbance of the civilian populace. One potentially serious incident, of soldiers forcing retailers to sell provisions below the going rate was contained by the Mayor, his fellow Justices, and a contingent of City Volunteers, with the assistance of the Army Commander in Chief of Kent District.

Similar actions were taken to assist the poor in the food and price crisis in 1800-1801. Again, a soup committee, headed by the Dean and Chapter with the Mayor and Corporation raised over £500 to supply soup daily to 1000 persons a day for 9 weeks (March to May); a total of 70,000 pints was distributed. When at the end of the year the price of flour and bread rose again sharply, the soup establishment was reconstituted with further donations totalling nearly £600. Soup and cheap potatoes were supplied to the poor daily from January to March 1801 when a second round of donations of £270 extended the effort for a further few weeks. In addition, Alderman Simmons, through his Abbotts Mill, sold flour by the gallon for cash prices at 1s. 6d.when the going rate was 2s. 2d. He claimed to have relieved over 3000 poor for some weeks in mid 1800 in this manner. 10

This time, Canterbury came closer to a serious disturbance. In late September 1800, inflammatory words had been chalked on shop shutters and papers had been found in the streets, giving 'pretty strong symptoms of riot and disturbance, and an intention to prevent the regular course of business in our market on Saturday'. With this warning the mayor with Constables prevented a potential riot early on 20th September by seizing the potential ring leader and committing him to goal. Some reduction in the price of butter and meat was made, and the mayor also committed several disorderly persons later in the day. It was reported that 'the people went away well satisfied'. Subsequent to this incident, steps were taken by the Mayor and Commonalty to enforce strict timing for the opening of sales in the markets, and to ban the sale of produce to inhabitants in their houses or in the streets. Such measures were aimed at preventing the illegal forcing up of prices by 'the evils of forestalling, regration and engrossing'.

It would seem that Canterbury avoided civil rioting in the troubled years 1795-1796 and 1800-01, when so many cities and districts

¹⁰ Kentish Chronologer and Index, op. cit., 100.

throughout the kingdom were torn by riots. The philanthropy of the Church, Magistrates, Corporation and better off citizens in bringing some relief to large numbers of industrious poor affected by high prices and shortages, and the firm actions of the City Magistrates in preventing unrest developing into riot, must have been significant factors in maintaining the peace. Both factors must have played a role in preventing large rises in crime levels.

In the years from 1840 to 1847, the continuing high crime rate does not reflect the relative decline in wheat prices from the peaks of 1800/01 and 1810/12. Other reasons may be adduced to try to explain the high crime rate in these years, and, more generally the pattern

shown by the crime versus time diagram for this period.

For instance the rise in the population of Canterbury from about 5000 in 1700 to about 10,000 in 1800 and then to about 12,000 in the 1820s may account for some of the increases. The presence of a large military contingent in Canterbury from 1792 onwards may also be a factor. Construction of permanent barracks began in 1791, and throughout the Napoleonic Wars the City was the chief military station on the Southern District of England. The continuous presence of perhaps up to 3000 men not only added to City numbers and general prosperity, but it also attracted camp followers and hangers on to Canterbury suburbs who would have potentially contributed to crime levels. In this respect, so far from reducing crime levels in Canterbury, the Napoleonic war years are likely to have contributed to them.

Then, too, in the 1820s and onwards, the aftermath of war may have contributed to crime. A high incidence of unemployment in those years can be deduced from the high rates of expenditure by the Guardians of the Poor of Canterbury. By the late 1820s, early 1830s, the annual spend by the Guardians on the inpoor in the Workhouse, and on the relief of the outpoor may have been as much as £8000 a year, perhaps a five-or six-fold increase in the cost of poor relief in the middle years of the eighteenth century. 12 Although in the late 1830s and in the 1840s there was a significant downturn in poorlaw

¹¹ See Gostling, 'A Walk in and about the City of Canterbury', 5th edn. 1804, footnote to p. 3. 'Between the years 1802 and 1803 when many other towns in the British Dominion suffered from the paralysing effect of war, the City of Canterbury considerably increased in size and population, but this prosperity may be partly ascribed to its being the chief military station in the southern District of England and having a general's staff, a park of artillery and several regiments constantly stationed in its vicinity.'

¹² F.H. Panton 'Finances and Government of Canterbury 18th to mid 19th Century'; 'The Court of Guardians', Arch. Cant. cxvi (1966).

expenditure, it remained several times higher than in the mid eighteenth century. Moreover, some of the downturn may have resulted from the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, one of whose aims was to refuse out-relief to the able bodied poor. Deprivation of support may have led to increased crime levels.

Two other possible factors may be mentioned. It was not until the early 1800s that the Canterbury Courts began as a matter of course, to pay the expenses of private prosecutors, and not until 1837 that Quarter Sessions decided that 'in all cases of difficulty and importance prosecutors should be allowed costs and charges of employing solicitors and Counsel not exceeding 40s. for Brief and 2gns for Counsel fee'. 13 These moves may have encouraged private prosecutors to pursue wrongdoers with greater determination, and therefore have added to the cases brought to the Sessions. Another factor is that under the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act, the new Canterbury City Council from 1836 onwards set up a permanent paid police force for the City to replace the old voluntary force of Ward Constables and Borsholders. Conceivably, this may have led to increase in detection, apprehension and indictment of crime.

Further evidence of the incidence of crime in the years 1809 to 1838 is given in three record books which have survived. The Petty Sessions record book provides information on numbers of persons in Canterbury goal at the start of Quarter Sessions in the years 1809 to 1824;¹⁴ a Goal Diary for 1820 to 1826,¹⁵ lists month by month the names and offences of prisoners in goal and records sentences handed down by Quarter Sessions, and a Commitments Book for the goal for the years 1824-1838 records commitments to prison for whatever purpose or reason during those years.¹⁶

In the Petty Sessions book, information is recorded regarding numbers in goal at the start of each Quarter Session in the years 1809 to 1824, provided by the Canterbury Justices to Boteler, their Recorder, in connection with moves in Parliament to improve the management and facilities of goals throughout England and Wales. (A summary of the numbers is given in Appendix A.) For the years 1809 to 1821, the numbers in goal before the start of each Session

¹³ CC JQO 22. 2 Jan. 1837 Quarter Session.

¹⁴ CC JQO 24 'Monthly Justices' 1820-1826 Canterbury Cathedral Library.

¹⁵ CC JQ P2 'Gaol Diary' 1820-1826 Canterbury Cathedral Library.

¹⁶ CC JQ P1 'Commitments' 1824-1836 Canterbury Cathedral Library.

¹⁷ See later section of this article, 'Petty Sessions', for a fuller discussion of the circumstances surrounding Boteler's request.

varied from 2 to 10, with no discernible pattern. Before the June 1822 Session, it was 13, and before the four Quarter Sessions in 1823 it was 11, 15, 4 and 7. In 1824, it rose to 10.

These figures are broadly reconcilable with those in the Goal Diary for the years 1820 to 1824. For 1825 and 1826 the Goal Diary shows rises to 16, 19 and 24 in June 1826, when, tantalisingly, the Diary ends. (In passing, it may be noted that the goal was not rebuilt until 1828-30, and that 24 in 1826 was beyond its capacity of 15-16. The over crowding must have been unbearable!)

The Commitments Book is somewhat difficult to interpret. It lists a total of 1119 commitments to goal over the years 1824-1838. (A summary of the yearly committals is given at Appendix B.) These numbers appear to include those persons held for short periods on suspicion, for further examination before possible indictment; those who may have received short sentences (of days) on summary jurisdiction by individual Magistrates for a minor offence; those indicted for trial at Quarter Sessions: and those serving sentences already given, in addition to debtors and deserters from the military. To attempt to relate these numbers to the numbers of people appearing at Quarter Sessions, we may note that of the 1119 commitments, 804 were listed as for 7 days or less. This indicates a total of some 300 with sentences more than 7 days, and bears some relation to the total of some 230 people recorded as having been sentenced by Quarter Sessions in the years 1824-1838.

The yearly incidence of commitments indicates that peak years were 1826 (106), 1827 (118), 1828 (130) and 1834 (101), with the years 1829, 1839, 1831, 1832 and 1833 down somewhat to 68, 52, 57, 61 and 85 and with 1835 at 75. The rise and fall of these figures does not exactly parallel the figures for trial or conviction at Quarter Sessions in the equivalent years, as given above, though the years in 1826 and 1834 are peak years in both sets. But certainly, both sources show sustained high levels of crime or suspected crime rates in the 1820s and 1830s. Overall, the evidence suggests that in the 1820s and 1830s numbers of commitments yearly may have been more than twice the numbers indicted to trial, with the numbers convicted at Sessions in some years being not much greater that 50 per cent of those indicted. This may indicate a desire on the part of the judiciary, in the face of rising discontent, to ensure that all suspected criminals were subjected to scrutiny, even at the cost of a relatively low success rate in terms of indictments and convictions.

The Goal Diary additionally gives some information on the sort of crime committed. For instance, in March 1823 prisoners listed were Geo. Coatham (under his former sentence); Thos. Moore (12 months);

John Austin (6 months); a deserter from the East Kent Militia; James Orpington (3 months); Thomas Coventry (stealing a plain (sic)); Edward Pemble, William Pemble, Elizabeth Pemble (house breaking); Edward Waller (stealing a great coat); Edward Granville Brown (assault); Thos. Spears (stealing a watch); Wm. Leach (stealing wool); Thos. Hargrave (Breach of Peace); a total of 15 persons, plus a military deserter. In March 1830, 5 were in goal for felony, 2 on suspicion of horse stealing, one for a misdemeanour, two for debt and one deserter.

PUNISHMENTS

Punishments imposed by the Quarter Session in general followed the pattern described by Beattie and Cockburn¹⁸, Emsley¹⁹ and others. For the first three quarters of the eighteenth century, fining, burning on the hand, whipping and transportation to the American colonies were the most used. Gaol sentences were seldom given, and were rarely longer than three months and practically never more than one year.

Whipping was specified in varying degrees of severity, and persisted throughout the eighteenth century, though with decreased frequency and severity in the nineteenth. Whipping in the eighteenth century was generally carried out in the most public place, preferably on a market day, presumably to bring the maximum shame on the offender and to deter others from committing crimes. For instance in 1741 Samuel Haines²⁰ was sentenced to be whipped in the Corn Market on a Saturday for stealing a barrel of red herrings. In 1742, May Butt21 convicted of Petit Larceny, was sentenced to public whipping naked from the waist upwards 'until her back be blooded'. A more severe sentence was inflicted on Christopher Hocker for Petit Larceny in 1769; he was to be whipped at the Cart's tail from Westgate to St. George's (the length of Canterbury's main street) naked to the waist.22 At the same sessions, Mary Buckle, a rogue and vagabond, was sentenced to be stripped to the waist, whipped at the Corn Market, and sent to the House of Correction for a week, for running away and leaving a child. On 21st December, 1769, Elizabeth

¹⁸ Op. cit. note 6.

¹⁹ Clive Emsley, Crime and Society in England 1750-1900, Longman 1987

²⁰ CC JQO 18, 17th December, 1741

²¹ Ibid., 1 April, 1742.

²² CC JQO 19, 10th July, 1769.

Lawrence was sentenced to a whipping at the Corn Market for Petit Larceny, and Elizabeth Cook to be whipped at the Cart's tail from Westgate to St. George's on the same charge.²³ Other sentences of whipping at the Cart's tail were recorded in 1772 (Thomas Marsh, Petit Larceny),²⁴ 1773 (Jane Galam, rogue and vagabond),²⁵ 1774 (John Beswick, Petit Larceny),²⁶ 1776 (John King, Petit Larceny),²⁷ 1781 (Stephen Revell)²⁸ and in 1785 (John White, False Pretences).²⁹

Until the secession of the American colonies, transportation for 7 or (seldom) 14 years was given as a punishment for Grand Larceny. Between 1737 and 1773, some fifteen sentences of 7 or 14 years transportation for Grand Larceny were handed down. 30 For the period from 1773 to 1790, when transportation was not available, sentences for Grand Larceny were generally a combination of whipping and goal, though sometime whipping only. On 22nd October, 1779, Hannah Henning was sentenced to public whipping for Grand Larceny, similarly, Elizabeth Hart of 21st December, 1780. On 12th August, 1782, May Hanson was sentenced to whipping at the Cart's tail and 3 months in goal. Sarah Lec on 23rd December, 1783, received a particularly severe sentence of 6 months imprisonment, with whipping at the Cart's tail three times, once at the beginning, once at the end and once in the middle of her gaol term. In 1785, John Asham was publicly whipped, and given a 6 months goal sentence, and William McBride privately whipped; Robert Fish privately whipped in 1786, and in 1789 Michael Molineux whipped, and Thomas Purer given 3 months and whipped three times.³¹

By 1790, transportation to Australia was available, and sentences of transportation 'to such a place as the Privy Council may think fit'

²³ CC JQO 19, 21st December, 1769.

²⁴ Ibid., 22nd December, 1772.

²⁵ Ibid., 3rd June, 1773.

²⁶ Ibid., 22nd December, 1774.

²⁷ Ibid., 12th September, 1776.

²⁸ Ibid., 20th December, 1781.

²⁹ Ibid., 18th July, 1785.

³⁰ CC JQO 18 (21st December, 1738, two persons, male; 24th September, 1741, two persons; 21st August, 1743, - Lewens; 17th April, 1746, female, for stealing cloth; 3rd April, 1751, Samuel Wear; 3rd January, 1754 - Jupp; 17th July, 1755, Thomas Dugman; 18th December 1755 - Waller; 4th September, 1761, - Godden; 24th December, 1761, Simon Beverton; 19th December, 1765, William Ward, Philip Paris; CC JQO 19, 21st August, 1764, Philip Jackson; 30th May, 1771, Stephen Stanmore; 22nd December, 1772, William Blanchett; 3rd June, 1773, William Wood, William Bennett.

³¹ See CC JQO 19 for years up to 1787 and CC JQO 20 for years from 1787 to 1800.

began to be handed down. Some of these sentences may, however, have been worked out, at least in part, in prison hulks on the Thames. Over 30 such sentences, for Felony or Grand Larceny were given in the years between 1790 and 1836.³²

In the 120 years between 1727 and 1846, only 22 trials resulting in 28 death penalties are recorded. Of these, 11 death penalties were recorded as being pardoned and commuted to transportation for 7, 14 years or for life, or banishment from the UK for 14 years. Only two of the trials were for murder (of a bastard child by its mother, and of a husband by his wife) and these were not pardoned. Others were for robbery on the Kings's Highway (5 trials); Burglary (5 trials); stealing from houses (3 trials); forging with intent to defraud (1); using a money order with intent to defraud (1); forging a note (1); rape (1); killing a sheep with intent to steal (1); stealing a lamb (1); Robbery (1) (See Appendix C for a list of capital cases).

From the rather sketchy evidence available, it is difficult to discern why particular sentences were given in particular cases. In general, in cases where the death penalty may have been possible, it is clear that judgement was swayed by whether or not a house or property or the King's Highway was violated, whether or not violence was used, and whether or not the value of money or goods involved could be assessed as above or below 40 shillings. Then, too, the previous record, age, and the standing of the accused, particularly the reputation amongst his neighbours would no doubt be factors to be taken into account. From time to time, court records show evidence of

³² CC JQO 20. All listed below 7 years, except where otherwise stated, 12th July, 1790, Arthur Bradley, Felony; 11th July, 1791, John Mead, Felony; 23rd April, 1792, Mary Springate, Grand Larceny; 14th January, 1793, Sarah Ann Sutton, Grand Larceny; 12th January, 1795, James Owenson, Felony; 22nd September, 1880, John Carter, Grand Larceny.

CC JQO 21. 2nd May, 1802, Francis Cobb, Felony; 3rd May, 1802, George Bailey, Felony; 9th January, 1804, Thomas Hardy, Grand Larceny; 14th January, 1805, William Andrews and Arthur Hubbard, Felony; 14th October, 1805, Charles Turyman, Felony; 11th July, 1808, Barnabas Rex, Felony; 11th July, 1814, John Gold, Grand Larceny; 12th July, 1819, George Savage, Felony; 15th July, 1822, George Coulther and Edward William, Grand Larceny; 13th January, 1823, Richard Stanley, Grand Larceny; 10th April, 1823, Edward Pemble, Burglary guilty of stealing 40 shillings.

CC JQO 22. 9th January, 1826, John Upton, Grand Larceny; 10th July, 1826, Ralph Adams, Felony; 19th October, 1826, William Browne, Grand Larceny; 12th July, 1830, John Lewen, Felony; 27th June, 1831, George Smith, Felony; Maria Hyde, Felony with a further Felony making 14 years; 31st December, 1832, Edward Beard, Felony; 10th April, Baptist Barber otherwise Dobbs, Felony - 14 years; January 1835, John Davis, false pretences; 4th January, 1836, Jacob Fagg, Felony; William Covier, Felony; George Tucker, Felony.

exercise of leniency within the broad guidelines of relationship between offence and prescribed penalty. For instance, Edward Pemble was indicted for Burglary on 10 April 1823, an offence for which the penalty could be death. He was found guilty of the lesser offence of stealing 40 shillings, and was sentenced to 7 years transportation. His wife, who was indicted with him, was found not guilty.³³ On 19th December, 1765, when William Wood and Philip Davis were each given a sentence of 7 years imprisonment for Grand Larceny, Jonathan Grover who was indicted with them for the same offence, was burnt on the hand and freed. Similarly, Elizabeth Prior was sentenced to be burnt on the hand in Court for Grand Larceny, when at the same session, William Bennnett was given 7 years transportation for the same offence.³⁴

Few instances of branding by burning on the hand can be found in the records, and none after 1765. The punishment, as demonstrated above, would seem to have been used in larceny cases where the offence did not warrant whipping or transportation. Even fewer instances of putting in the stocks or pillory are recorded. One such was on 19th December, 1771, when Thomas Viney was sentenced to sit in the pillory for 1 hour on Saturday 28th December, 1771. He was also given 14 days in goal.³⁵

LAMPS AND LIGHTING IN THE CITY

The Act of 1727,³⁶ setting up the Court of Guardians, contained in it paragraphs to enable the Magistrates in Canterbury Quarter Session to arrange for the 'better enlightening the street of the city'. They were authorized to appoint a proper person or persons to organize the placing and lighting of lamps in the streets and public places of the City between 1st September and 1st May, daily from dark until 12 midnight, and to levy a rate of up to 3d. in the £1. To facilitate this, a person in each parish was appointed to act as assessor, the Magistrates to oversee the accounting for such moneys.

Accordingly, we find in the Session Books from 172837 onwards, a

³³ CC JOO 22.

³⁴ CC JOO 19.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ J Geo. II C.20.

³⁷ CC JOO 18, Canterbury Sessions 1726-1765.

lamp overseer was appointed yearly. He would be a freeman, with a respectable trade such as grocer, feltmaker, tallow chandler, etc., occasionally a Councillor or an Alderman, but most often a man yet to make his mark on the Canterbury hierarchy. The session's records do not indicate how large were the actual rates levied, nor who actually lighted and maintained the lamps. However, surviving Ward papers for Westgate record the names of two people from each of the fourteen parishes charged with collecting a lamp rate in February 1766 and similar lists are given for 1767 and 1768. In 1767, three Aldermen were listed as having been responsible for overseeing the collection - Knowler, Bying and Avery and in 1768 Hayward, Bying and Stringer.

In the late 1770s some disquiet was expressed about the adequacy of lighting, probably with respect to Burghmote property; Court Leet records for Newingate and for Westgate in 1776 refer to a Petition for Better Lighting the Streets, and a number of persons were designated to attend a meeting in the Guildhall.38 Two years later, in 1778, the Burghmote commanded the Chamberlain to provide lamps for inhabitants at City expense (that is not at the expense of the Lamp rate levied by the Magistrates in Quarter Session) at the following locations: Two at Westgate, 2 St. George's, 2 King's Bridge, 1 Ridingate, 1 Northgate and one each at the Flesh, Butter, Fish and Corn Markets - 13 lamps in all, and all at sites controlled by the Burghmote. The Chamberlain's accounts for 1778-1779 list Mr John Barwick as being paid for lighting lamps in 1777/1778, 'omitted from last years accounts, £3 8s. He also paid £15 19s. for lighting lamps in 1778/1779 and in 1780-81 the accounts list £18 18s. as having paid to him for lighting lamps. In 1781-1782 he was paid a further £14 6s. for lighting 13 lamps for the City.³⁹ John Barwick was appointed lamp master by the Magistrates on their behalf yearly from 1776 to 1782.40

In 1787, the Act of 27 Geo. 111 which set up the Canterbury Pavement Commissioners, empowered that Corporation to light the City Streets with lamps in such number and sort and at such times as the Commissioners thought proper. Effectively, the direct control

³⁸ Cathedral Library, Ward Papers, Westgate Courts Leet October 1774-1797. Newingate; Courts Leet 1774-1791

³⁹ Cathedral Library, Chamberlains Accounts.

⁴⁰ CC JQO 19 1776-1786.

over lamp lighting passed from the Magistrates in Quarter Session that year, but it was not until 1790 that Commissioners had let a contract to supply lamps to the City. The Magistrates continued to appoint a lamp master until 1791, when, in that year, they did not reappoint Richard Gorely, who had held the post for nine years.⁴¹

HIGHWAYS

Up to 1787, Magistrates in Canterbury Quarter Sessions had a duty to authorize highway rates for the separate parishes to keep their highways in repair, and to hear and judge complaints about the state of maintenance of, or nuisances such as impediments, rubbish or dung, inflicted upon the streets. Complaints about nuisances on and misuse of, the streets would generally have come from Ward Courts Leet through the Ward Constables. For instance on 19th December, 1751, John Lade was fined 6s. 8d. for laying dung in the street; not an isolated incident of this type. Parishes were fined as well as individuals; on 18th December, 1777, St Mary Bredin and St George parishes were fined 1s. each for nuisances. In 1764, the inhabitants of Burgate were presented to the sessions for having ruinous highways, and in the same year representatives of St Mary Magdalene parish pleaded guilty to the same charge. Even the Mayor and Commonalty were not beyond jurisdiction. On 19th December, 1776 (in the year of Alderman Simmons' first mayoralty). after some prevarication, they pleaded guilty to not repairing part of the common gutter in St George's on the outside of the Cattle Market, and were fined 1s. each on two charges.

There seems to have been no regular application from the parishes for licence to levy a highway rate, and indeed not all parishes are recorded as having applied at any time. Applications from Northgate appear most regularly; in 1734, 1737, 1739, 1741, 1757, 1759, 1767, 1768, 1776 and 1786 applications were made and granted for rates of 6d. in £1. Application for Westgate (1741) St Mildred's (1739) St Alphage (1784) and St Paul's (1780) may also be noted and were 6d. in £1. We must infer from this rather fragmentary evidence that the streets of Canterbury were not methodically cared for in the first three quarters of the eighteenth century. Even Northgate parish, which seems to have paid more regular attention to its streets, was not always successful - in 1759 the Recorder presented the Parish to the Quarter Sessions as having ruinous highways.

⁴¹ CC JQO 20 1787-1800.

In 1787, however, the Corporation of the Commissioners of the Pavement took over responsibility for the care and maintenance of Canterbury's streets, within the Walls of the City. Rates on householders and occupiers of land or property were to be levied on Annual Values as assessed for the Relief of the Poor.

The Commissioners were entitled by the Act to charge tolls on traffic entering Canterbury, to impose duty on coals imported into the City, and to levy rates on inhabitants. For the speedy completion of their task, they were empowered to raise loans on the security of these sources of income up to a limit of £10,000. They went about their tasks with despatch and in a methodical manner, re-planning the enforced voluntary system overseen sporadically by the Magistrates, with a workforce on a paid, contractual basis, and by 1790 had transformed Canterbury's streets. Another area of civic administration had been transferred from the direct control of the Magistrates in Quarter Session.

SESSIONS FINANCES; COUNTY RATE

There is no mention of a County Rate in the Sessions Records before 1773. In that year, the Magistrates took advantage of an Act of 12 Geo 111 (1772) 'For the more easy assessment collecting and levying of County Rates, and likewise the several aims to which the County Rate is directed.......' to start levying a rate to defray the expenses of Sessions and the matters which the Magistrates dealt with, including the Goal. Before 1773, the Mayor and the Commonalty in Burghmote met these costs through the Chamberlain's accounts, though it is generally not possible with assurance to identify such items in those accounts. They would not have amounted to more that a few tens of pounds a year - at that time the courts paid no allowances or expenses to prosecutors or defenders, and no salaries to goal officials.

On the 11 January, 1773, the Magistrates ordered a County Rate based on the Poor Rate assessment.⁴³ An Alderman (Parker) was appointed County Treasurer, and Churchwardens and Overseers in the Parishes were charged with collecting the rate, handing this over to the Ward Constables for them to deliver to the County Treasurer within 8 days. The first rate levied was 1d. in £1. Amounts expected

⁴² Cathedral Library. Minutes of the Canterbury Commissioners 1787-1866, See also F.H. Panton 'Turnpike Roads in the Canterbury Area', Arch. Cant., cii (1985).

⁴³ CC JQO 19

from each parish were specified, and the total yield expected to be £41 1s. For the first time, the Magistrates as a body had funds at their disposal separate from those of the Burghmote. However, at first, there appeared to be confusion as to whether the Burghmote or the magistrates should pay for specific items of expenditure connected with the Sessions, until in 1781 the Burghmote ordered (presumably with the consent of the Mayor and Aldermen Magistrates sitting as members of the Burghmote) that 'several sums of money, paid to the Clerk of the Market for returning prices of Corn to the Mayor, Window tax for the Gaolers House, The Gaolers salary, cleaning the County Hall, repairs to the Goal and the Gaolers House, expenses of Constables attending at the Sessions shall from Michelmas last be paid out of the County Rate instead of out of revenues belong to the Mayor and Commonalty of the City'. The amounts in question were, probably: Corn Price return £2 2s. p.a. Window Tax, Gaolers House, Salary £5 5s., Cleaning County Hall £1 4s. Expenses of Keeper of Gaol, Correction House and Constables 14s. each session (1s. each).

Even after that, some expenses connected with law enforcement continued to occur in the City Chamberlain's accounts, such as expenditure on the City Gaol or expenses of City Officials attending Canterbury County Sessions. In the 1820-21 Chamberlain's Accounts there is an item 'Paid Alderman Frend, County Treasurer for extra constables and other items disallowed in the County Rate £22 3s. 4d.', and in 1823-24 under 'Casual Disbursements' in the Chamberlain's Accounts are items relating to sergents, Grand Jury, and Sessions Dinner expenses for the January, July and October sessions totalling some £20.

A rate was ordered yearly from 1773 by the Magistrates, mostly at 1d. in £1, until 1793 when it was raised to 3d., for several years, an increase of yearly income from £41 1s. to £123 3s. In 1787, the Magistrates, following an Act of 24 Geo III (Amending and explaining 11/12 WIII) which made it lawful for JPs in Quarter Session to appoint such salaries and allowances to Gaolers and Assistants in lieu of profits derived principally from the sale of liquor, decided to pay a salary of £10 out of the County Stock to William Rucke, Gaoler. Other official and court attendants began to be given salaries and prosecutors and defenders to be given allowances and expenses. By 1823, the Gaoler's salary was £25 p.a., The Chaplain £15 p.a. and the Surgeon £15 p.a. Calls on the County Stock therefore mounted. In 1810, exceptional levies of 8d. in January and 6d. in July were raised and in subsequent years to 1820 the annual rate fluctuated between 2d. and 6d. By the 1830s it was

seldom less than 1s. In 1835, the year before the new Council took responsibility for law and order in the City, rates of 1s. and 2s. were collected.

An Account book of the Treasurer of the County Stock for the years 1813 to 1836 has survived. This records that Alderman Halford, City Chamberlain for the years 1790 to 1823 also held office as Treasurer of the County Stock until 1796, when Alderman Frend took over. In the twenty-four years covered by the book, expenditure of about £20,000 is recorded. However, at least £3,500 of that expenditure went on enlarging and rebuilding the County Gaol, a controversial month dealt with in a later section of this chapter. In 1835, a Report by a Parliamentary Select Committee on the expenditure of County Rate included a report from Frend of Canterbury's income and expenditure on the county rate for the years 1792 to 1823 (Appendix D).

In summary, before 1773 the rather minimal expenses of the Canterbury Magistrates and Quarter Sessions were borne out of the Burghmote's income, through the Chamberlain's accounts without recourse to rates. From that year, Magistrates levied a County Rate to cover their expenditure, starting at 1d. and rising in the 1820s and 1830s to at least 1s. in £1 yearly. This represented amounts rising from £41 1s. p.a. to £500 a year or more.

In addition to the payment of increasing salaries to gaolers and other assistants after 1787, of salaries and allowances to prosecutors, and the increasing use of gaol sentences with the upgrading of gaols, the increase in the numbers of cases dealt with in the early decades of the nineteenth century added substantially to costs.

CANTERBURY COUNTY GAOL

Canterbury County maintained a goal quite separate from Kent County, using its West Gate Towers as its goal. For the whole of the eighteenth century and for the first part of the nineteenth the accommodation provided was insanitary, unhealthy and at most for 15-17 people. In his 1812 report on 'State of Prisons', James Neild described Canterbury's gaol in the most derogatory terms. It had one common day room between the two Towers, 27 feet square. With five cells taken off it, a fire place at one end with a stone sink at the other, and in one corner an unenclosed, uncovered and filthy sewer, it was '....now a mere slip of a room.' Neild commented that 'The pump is luckily supplied with water by a forcing siphon from below, otherwise it must be unbearably offensive. In this wretched place, debtors and felons, male and female, with those committed for

assault or bastardy mix indiscriminately throughout the day'. The nasty state of the walls, ceilings, floors, paid little attention to statute obligation to whitewash at least once a year. Each of the two towers had a sleeping room 11 ft. 5 in. in diameter, well-ventilated, but with a bucket for a sewer and no water. There was no courtyard for exercise, no rules, no orders. Nield's conclusion was that 'the state in which this miserable prison is suffered to remain is certainly a discredit to this highly respectable City - a Metropolitan See'. He also commented that the prison was seldom if ever visited by Magistrates.

From the discussion in a previous section on Canterbury Magistrates sentencing policy, it can be seen that they relied on corporal punishment and transportation as the chief punishments for most offences, for most of the eighteenth century. They meted out few prison sentences, seldom more than a few months long. The large majority of prisoners served 7 days or less, probably detained for investigation, or having been subject to summary jurisdiction of one of the Magistrates. The size of the goal and its facilities would hardly have been adequate to contain more and longer prison sentences. Then, too, until at least 1781, the upkeep of the goal was the concern of the Mayor and Commonalty, and not of the Magistrates in Quarter Session. It is understandable, therefore, that Quarter Sessions paid little attention to the goal throughout most of the eighteenth century, except perhaps to ensure that they did not overtax its resources by handing down too many goal sentences.

Even before Nield's damning report, the Grand Jury of the 23rd April, 1792 Session presented, through Hammond, the Town Clerk and Clerk of the Peace, a very bad report of the state of the goal. Nothing much seems to have been done at that time, but after Nield's report, the Magistrates on 11th January, 1813, appointed a committee of the Mayor, and five Aldermen to be visitors to the Goal. At the same session, the Grand Jury stated that more space was needed to separate male from female, debtor from felon. They suggested that the Gaoler's house was the proper place for debtors. They jibbed at the probable expense of erecting a new Gaol, when poor rates were high and rising, and gave their decided and unanimous view that the City should not be put to so great an expense at that time. At the next session on 12th July, 1813, the Grand Jury told the Magistrates that without radically changing the exterior of the goal, the interior could by judicious expenditure be made to possess those comforts and conveniences of which the building was capable.

After that, some internal changes may have been made, but it was not until 1823 that the Magistrates set up a Goal Committee. In October of that year, in accordance with an Act of 4 Geo IV, for consolidating and

regulating certain goals and Houses of Correction, plans of the goal together with rules and regulations were provided by the Mayor to the Secretary of State. On 30th August, 1824, the Grand Jury presented an opinion that the Goal and its premises were 'insufficient for the purpose of employment and classification of prisoners' and also that the Bridewell was very unhealthy and inadequate. At the next Session on 11th January, 1825, the Grand Jury underlined the view that the 'present buildings were extremely inconvenient', but urged the Magistrates to proceed with the utmost economy. On the 11th July, 1825, the Court ordered the views of the Grand Jury to be put in the local newspapers and in January 1826 the surveyor was ordered to produce plans for a new Gaol. However, by 28th March, 1826, cold feet had developed and all proceedings were suspended for a year.

The problem for the Magistrates was of course the possible cost, and where to find the money to defray it. In their membership of the Burghmote, they had been party to the spending in 1825 of perhaps £9,000 on the new Corn and Hop Market, and the Mayor and Commonalty were in debt to the tune of over £12,000. It could hardly be expected, therefore, that the Burghmote would wish to add further to their debts.

The land on which the extension was built was owned by the Burghmote and let in two lots to William Clark and Daniel Decaufor. On 22nd September, 1829, it was ordered by the Burghmote that the land in Pound Lane 'be conveyed to the Magistrates for the purpose of alteration and addition to the Goal......and thatall expenses of the same be borne by the Magistrates'. The account book of the County Stock on 20th October, 1828, records a payment of £287 10s. 6d. to William Clark and on 12th January, 1879, of £200 to Daniel Decaufor, presumably to buy out their tenancies.

The Burghmote was plainly not willing to take on an extra burden against their own assets. For the Burghmote to raise a rate for the purpose was out of the question; it would seem that their Royal Charters were interpreted as not authorizing them to raise a rate for any purpose. However, a strong body of opinion in Canterbury held that the Burghmote had no right to decide that the Magistrates (i.e. the Mayor, Recorder and those Aldermen who had served as mayor and were therefore Magistrates) should bear the cost on the County Rate.

A pamphlet of the time, by G. Sandys at the request of dissidents ('An inquiry into the liability of the Corporation of Canterbury to maintain the Goal of the City' printed and sold by R. Colegate, Kentish Chronicle Office 1828) rehearsed all the arguments why the Burghmote should bear the cost from its own resources. Sandys

summarised the many Royal Charters from which the Burghmote drew its authority, to demonstrate that the Goal had always been a responsibility of the Corporation and had been recognised as such by them. His detailed arguments were briefly:

the Gaol has always belonged to the Mayor and Commonalty, who have custody of it; the appointment of the Gaoler rested with the Mayor and Commonalty and not with the Magistrates or the Sheriff; The Corporation have in fact provided for and supported the Goal; recent statutes relating to County Rates and Gaols had not transferred the burden from the Corporation to the City at large; and all rents etc. of the Corporation are there to be expended to Public as of the City.⁴⁴

In the event Sandy and his supporters had no effect on the Burghmote's decision. The County Stock had no capital assets, relying solely on income from rates to cover annual expenses. Nevertheless, the Grand Jury on 14th January, 1828, recommended that the plan for a new goal at a cost not exceeding £3,500 should proceed. Tenders were sought in October 1828. There were six bidders, with estimates ranging from £2,870 to £3,497. In December 1828, the Magistrates awarded the contract to the Canterbury team of Lavender and Lancefield, having got them to reduce their bid to £3,097. Work was to begin on 1st March and end on 31st December, 1829. The Magistrates borrowed the £3,500 in tranches of £550 and £1,800, from Canterbury personalities such as Deane John Parker, and organisations such as the Kent Fire Office, at a very acceptable 5 per cent interest.45 All but a few hundred pounds of the debts were still outstanding when the County Stock was merged with the Borough accounts in 1836, when the Canterbury Council, newly set up by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, assumed control over law and order in Canterbury. The end result seems in fact to have been that Sandys' view prevailed, since the Council began immediately to sell off property to pay debts left to them by the Burghmote.

CORN PRICES

During the Napoleonic wars shortage and high price of corn, bearing particularly on the poor, became a cause of concern to the Magistrates

⁴⁴ F.H. Panton, 'Finances and Government of Canterbury. Early to mid 19th Century', Arch. Cant., cxii (1993), 29-31.

⁴⁵ CC JOO P4 City Gaol. Contract to Erect 1828-1830.

particularly in 1795 and 1800. On 13th July, 1795, to conserve supplies, bakers were ordered not to bake or sell any sort of bread purporting to be of superior quality at higher prices that the standard wheaten bread. This order was not to have validity for one month, but in the meantime bakers were asked to observe it. The Magistrates also pledged themselves not to eat superior bread, and citizens were urged to do likewise. The Grand Jury expressed their thorough support for this measure. However, on the 31st August, 1795, a specially convened session revoked the order, because the wheat harvest had begun to come in. A similar crises occurred in 1800, and on 13th January that year the Magistrates again considered the expediency of prohibiting bread of superior quality. They reached no decision, but, reconvening on 5th February, then decided to advertise a recommendation that bread should be kept 24 hours after baking before eating in order to save consumption. (The logic of this move is somewhat difficult to see - it might rather have led to stale bread being thrown away!) At this time William Wild was appointed Inspector of Corn at £4 4s. a year from the County Rate (before 1781, £2 2s., probably paid by the Chamberlain for the Burghmote). In July 1822, William Wild's salary was raised to £5.

Other moves to alleviate the suffering of the industrious poor in those years were sponsored by the Mayor and Commonalty, with the co-operation of the Dean and Chapter, and with the support of better off citizens (see above, under Crime).

CATTLE MARKET

On 22nd December, 1748, to stem the spreading of distemper among horned cattle, the Magistrates ordered a stop be put to selling of any Ox, Bull, Cow, Calf, Steer or Heifer in the Cattle Market or in any place in the City or County for two calendar months. Constables and Borsholders to act. Inspectors of the Horned Cattle were appointed to inspect all before slaughter. A similar situation occurred in 1749, and on 21st September that year traffic in long-horned cattle was stopped for 7 weeks, subsequently extended to the 1st January, 1750.

LICENCES

The Magistrates licensed the performance of plays in the City. Mrs. Sarah Baker, who ran a string of theatres in towns of east Kent, of which the theatre in Prince of Orange Street, Canterbury, was one,

first obtained on 11th January, 1790, a license to open a theatre in Canterbury and perform there such Tragedies, Comedies, Interludes, Operas, Plays or Farces as were permitted by Act of Parliament, for 60 days within the space of 4 months, viz. January, February, March and August. A License of this type was renewed yearly by her until 1816, when a W. Dowton took over.

The Magistrates also licensed places of worship other than Church of England, and Friendly Societies. As instances of the former, we find that the Magistrates on 13th January, 1823, gave licence to Henry Freeman, Minister, for a room in King Street Chapel, St Alphage, to be used as a place of worship for Protestants, and on 11th July, 1823, Cheveling House in Dover Street gained a certificate as a place of Religious Worship. Friendly Societies were controlled under an Act of 33 Geo III, and, as examples, on the 12th January, 1795, the Amicable Society of Carpenters and Bricklayers was established at the White Lyon, St. George's, and a Friendly Society of Handicrafts at the City Arms, St. Mary Northgate; a similar Society was licensed at the Eight Bells, St Alphage, and at the Two Brewers, St Mildred's. Other societies, with the aim of mutual financial support in time of need were established and their rules accepted by the Magistrates in the 1820s and 1830s. Among these were: 1827, 'Canterbury Friendly Society' held at the sign of the Prince of Wales, King Street, St Alphage; 1830, 'United Kentish Britons', the 'Supporting Brothers' and the 'Union Friendly Society'; 1831, 'Female Union Society'; 1832, 'Amicable Society' at the White Lion; and 1834, the 'County Friendly Society'. No details are given in the Sessions Record of the rules accepted.

PETTY SESSIONS

In addition to Quarter Sessions, Magistrates met monthly under the Chairmanship of the Mayor, but apparently without the Recorder, to deal with a variety of largely administrative matters. These included - the issuing of licences to sell ale and strong liquor; to approve the appointments of Overseas of the Poor of the Parishes; of Constables and Borsholders of the Wards; of Highway Surveyors; of Commissioners to the Court of Requests; and of Hop Assistants; to hear appeals against Poor Rates, Pavement Rates and Church Rates; to hear excise offences and cases of selling liquor without licence; to oversee the control of the application of standard Weights and Measures; to consider matters concerning the Goal; and to deal with minor misdemeanours.

The Petty Sessions were convened as the 'Monthly meeting of H.M. Justices and also a special session of the Highways within the City and the County of the City of Canterbury', and the broad agenda for each monthly meeting throughout the year was presented as:

January	Petty	sessions	for	transferring	licences	also	Common

Business.

February Common Business

March Petty Session for transferring licences and also Precepts

for Constables to return list of Overseers and Collectors.

April Appointment of Overseers within 14 days after 25 March.

May Petty Session for licences and also Common Business.

June Common Business

July Petty Sessions for transferring licences to deal in game

and also Common Business.

August Precepts to Constables to affix notices of General

Annual licensing on church doors and to serve the

Alehouse Keepers and Magistrates with the like.

September General Annual Licensing meeting also Petty Sessions

for transferring licences. Precepts for Constables to affix notices on church doors for holding Petty Sessions and to serve Alehouse Keepers and Magistrates with the

like and also precepts to summon surveyors.

October Appointment of Surveyors and also Common Business.

November Appointment of Surveyors and also Common Business.

December Common Business. 46

The Annual General Meeting on licensing in September considered applications for renewal of all licensed premises in Canterbury.⁴⁷ At the Session on 7th September, 1820, the licences granted totalled 61,

⁴⁶ Information on the conduct of Petty Sessions is derived from CC JQC 24 'Monthly Justices' 1820-1836.

⁴⁷ The sixty-one premises were: King's Arms, Black Griffin, Three Compasses, Crown and Sceptre, King's Head, Fleur di Lis, The George, Chequers, Golden Lion, Bricklayer's Arms, Guildhall Tavern, Orange Tree, Sun, Prince of Orange, Eight Bells, Prince of Wales, Seven Stars, Jolly Sailor, White Swan, City Arms, Weaver's Arms, King's Head, Cavalry Barracks, Artillery Canteen, Infantry Canteen, Ordnance Arms, Lord Wellington, Crown, Gate, Saracen's Head, Two Sailors, Duke of Cumberland, Ship, Princess Charlotte, Rose, Fleece, Black Boy, Butcher's Arms, Castle, Shakespeare, Flying Horse, White Lion, Blue Anchor, Star, Cross Keys, Duke of York, Toby Philpott, Cardinal's Cap, Castle, Royal Exchange, Black Dog, Maidenshead, Duke's Head, Wheatsheaf, Fountain, Mermaid, City of London, George and Hog, Queen's Head. A surprising number of these public houses still trade in the same place under the same name.

and these included licences for the Artillery Canteen, and two Infantry Military Canteens at Cavalry Barracks. The licences were granted to a named landlord, and each landlord's application was supported by two recognisances of £30 and £20. By September 1835 the number of licensed premises had risen to 68.

The appointment of Overseers of the Poor (two for each parish) and Surveyors of Highways was a simple matter of approving names put forward by the parish. Appointment of the even more unpopular jobs of Constables and Borsholders was not so straightforward. A list of names for the posts was put forward from the Courts Leet annual meetings in the six wards, but the final list approved by the Petty Session was invariably greatly different. For instance, at the session on 2nd November, 1820, none of the 6 Constables appointed and sworn was the same as put forward by the Courts Leet, and 2 of the 6 Borsholders were different. The practice of nominated constables and Borsholders paying substitutes to do the job for them was obviously condoned by the Magistrates.

The appointment of Highway Surveyors was limited to seven parishes; St Mary Northgate, St George the Martyr, St Mary Magdalene, St Paul, St Mary Bredin, S. Mildred, two surveyors each. It is not clear why appointments for other parishes were not called for, not how the surveyors' responsibilities interfaced with those of the Pavement Commissioners. Requests for permission to levy highway rates were infrequent; St George's was granted rate of 1s. in November 1822, St Mary's 6d. in December 1822, St Paul's 1s. 9d. in May 1826, St Mary Bredin 1s. in November 1828, and a further rate for St Paul's in October 1833. At least twelve Hop Assistants were appointed annually, for a purpose not specified. Annual appointments to the Court of Requests included 3 Aldermen, 5 Councillors and 14 Citizens, one from each Parish (see below).

Appeals against Poor Rates were regularly made, as were those against Pavement Rates, particularly in the late 1820s, early 1830s when rates were increasing greatly. In March 1827, there were 13 orders to pay in respect of pavement rates, and in April 1827, 7 appeals; in August 1828, 11 appeals; in March 1831, 18 appeals. Similarly in March 1831, 18 non payments of Poor Rate were brought into Court, and in September 1831, 19 appeals were heard, in January 1832, 5 appeals; April 1832, 16 appeals; June 1832, 10 appeals; October 1832, 10 appeals; February 1833, 12 appeals; March 1833, 13 appeals; January 1835, 11 appeals; April 1835, 7 appeals; September 1835, 6 Poor Rate appeals. Applications to constrain goods and chattels for non payment of Poor Rates in four cases were made by Samuel White, Collector of the Poor Rate, in March 1833

and were granted. In March 1828, the Collector of Poor Rates applied for a distress warrant against the Philosophical Institute. The Magistrates said they would 'take the application into consideration at a further period'. No further reference to this matter can be found in the records.

Regarding the Gaol, there are a number of references to its administration in the Petty Sessions Book. On 3rd February, 1820, it was proposed that a Chaplain be appointed at 15 guineas, subject to sanction by the next Session. On the 10th March, 1824, a special Petty Session considered a letter from Boteler, the Recorder. He was seeking information from the Magistrates about numbers in gaol at the time of sessions as backing for an attempt to gain some relief from the provisions of the Goal Act then under consideration by Parliament. The reply gave him information on numbers in gaol at Sessions time from 1809 to 1824. The numbers were mostly in the range from 2 to 8, though rises to double figures and above were reported for the years 1822-1824. A further communication from Boteler in May 1826 gives an account of his plea to the Parliamentary Gaol Committee for exemption from some of the Gaol Act provisions for Canterbury as a small jurisdiction, on the lines of exemption for Welsh Counties, or by special clause. Without such exemption, Boteler believed that Canterbury would be put to the expense of a larger goal than they needed, or would lose control of prisoners to a larger gaol under a larger authority. He quoted the population of Canterbury as 12,745 in 1820, comparing it with counties in Wales which, except for Radnor, had populations of over 50,000. Boteler claimed that the result of this was that Canterbury was relieved of the provisions of the General Gaol Act of 1823, and the question was whether or not the plans for the Gaol could now be modified. The answer of the monthly meeting was that they did not consider themselves competent to alter the decisions of the last Session, and the plans to enlarge and rebuild the Gaol therefore proceeded.

On 4th May, 1826, it was ordered that the Gaol be provided with 6 pair of shoes, 8 jackets and trousers from the Workhouse, 6 sheets, one pint pot, and that the trunk from the sink to the privy be repaired. On the 4th July a clothes basket, one dozen wooden platters and a Commitments Book were ordered to be provided, and that the privy should be cleared by Mr Lavender. Mr Hacker was ordered to repair the leaden pipe in the hall of the Gaol. Some attempts were obviously being made to improve the management and facilities of the Gaol. By 1828, preparations were well advanced for the enlargement of the Gaol, and the Magistrates on 7th March met to consider providing a new residence for the Gaoler and selling the materials of his then

House, which would be subsumed in the enlargement of the Goal. The drains continued to give problems, and on 6th November, 1828, it was ordered that a Stink Trap should be placed in the Drain leading from the Privy to the River. In 1834, Petty Session attention was again drawn to the Gaol, when they approved the appointment on 3rd July of Thomas Andrews as Surgeon at £20 a year. On 17th July, orders were given for a supply of coal, oatmeal and bread to the Gaol.

The Magistrates had problems from time to time in admonishing Constables for failure of duty, particularly in supervising the Watch for the Pavement Commissioners. In 1825, the Magistrates asked the Pavement Commissioners to provide a Watch House with keeps, and later that year, when they fined 8 Constables for neglect of duty, they repeated that request. In August 1834, it was agreed that Constables should be paid 4 shillings for attendance.

Surveyors of the Highways had to be reminded of their duties from time to time. On 2nd November, 1826, the surveyors of six parishes were fined 10s. each and ordered to present their accounts, and on 4th October, 1827, surveyors were ordered to answer for default in not attending the Session on that day.

Few misdemeanours and offences were dealt with in Petty Session. One example is that of William Gillett, who was fined a total of 3s. for poaching fish in the river just below Abbotts Mill. On 15th August, 1822, Richard Penny was committed to Sessions for stealing a pair of shoes out of the Workhouse. On 3rd March, 1826, an apprentice was sent to the Bridewell with hard labour under a charge of misconduct presented by his master. On 1st May, 1826, it was ordered that Ann, wife of Christopher Underwood be excluded from the Female Union Society (no reason or explanation recorded). On 6th November, 1828, May Bateman appealed against being struck off the books of the Female Union Society for being aged 42 when the stipulated limit was 35. It was ordered that all money paid since 1819 less whatever she had received from the Box be returned to her minus a share of costs. On 12th July, 1832, Thomas Timothy Gable was convicted as a rogue and vagabond, after he had left his wife and children, and sent to the House of Correction for 3 months. On 2nd January, 1834, James Hoare was fined 20s. for leaving his dray in Butchery Lane. A few people were found guilty each year and fined for excise offences and for selling ale or liquors without proper licence. The fines could amount to quite large sums; for instance, a £50 penalty for selling liquor without licence, though this might be reduced in the event to £5.

The only instance recorded in the years 1820 to 1836 of conflict

between the Court of Guardians and the Petty Sessions occurred in April 1829. In an exchange of letters, the Guardians requested that when a County Rate be granted, it should be ordered to be collected separately from the Poor Rate; the Magistrates replied that this was considered impracticable at present. This was obviously an attempt by the Guardians to distance themselves from the controversy surrounding the payment for the new Gaol out of the county Stock.

PLEAS IN THE COURT OF RECORD

'Mayor's Court'

Manuscript volume CC JBP in the Canterbury City Archives records the proceedings of a Court of Record from 1740 to 1833 under the Chairmanship of the Mayor. The Court generally met fortnightly, whether it had any substantive business or not, and the record of the proceedings of each meeting is introduced with a standard formula.

'Pleas in the Court of Record (date and year) according to the use and custom of the said Court, time out of mind and approved in the same according to custom privileges liberties and Franchises to the Citizens of the said City and to the Mayor and Commonalty of the same City and their successors by Charters of Divers progenitors of our said Lord the King confirmed'

While its purview is not explicitly expressed, and while reports of cases brought before it are somewhat cryptic, seldom giving any description of the offence being investigated other than 'trespass', the Court seems to have dealt with complaints by citizens of transgressions of law or right which were not treason or felony. The procedure of the Court seems to have been (at least until the middle of the eighteenth century) that, once the formal charge had been made by the plaintiff, one of the Mayor's four Sergeants at Mace was charged with further investigation. In a large percentage of cases, when the Sergeants at Mace reported back to the Court that the matter had been satisfactorily concluded without further need for Court action, in the words 'he hath taken the Body of the Deffendant and the parties are agreed' If no agreement had been made the Court would proceed to try the case with Accuser and Defendant present, and with what evidence the Sergeant could produce.

The procedure was not without cost to those concerned. In the Record Book there is an undated loose leaf which lists an old rate of fees to be paid to the Clerk of the Court (who was also Town Clerk),

and to the Sergeant at Mace for services in connection with the Court's proceedings (see Appendix B). These were not large, but they might have loomed large in the minds of plaintiffs seeking to recover small debts.

In his collection of minutes (or notes) on matters collected from the ancient records and accounts in the Chamber of Canterbury, Cyprian Rondean Bunce, in No xxxviii Supplement to his Minutes, gives details of the origins and workings of the Court of Pleas, called the 'Mayor's Court'.

Bunce traces the Court of Pleas back to the time of King Henry III, when the Bailiffs presided over the court. However, it was not until in 1448 when King Henry VI confirmed the Court to be presided over by a Mayor instead of Bailiffs, that the jurisdiction of the court was made clear. According to Bunce, Actions of every kind if the venue arose within the liberties of the City, could be tried and determined. However, of late years (wrote Bunce in 1800) 'the practice of it has been confined, chiefly to ejectments, actions of debt, trespass, assault and such like proceedings'. Bunce commented that since proceedings on all courses for above 40s. were liable to transfer to a superior court, there was little left to be done in the Court of Pleas, and the business was easily transacted by being held every fortnight on Mondays.

According to Bunce, Attorneys to conduct business on behalf of suitors were licensed by the Courts own appointment. They had to be Freemen of the City, and to have been previously admitted, as practising attorney in one of the King's Court at Westminster. In the mid seventeenth century Attorneys of the Court were eight in number, reduced to four by 1661. Attorneys continued to be admitted up to the end of the eighteenth century. In 1760, George Lacy (jnr) and Thomas Hammond were admitted Attorneys to the Court, and on 23rd March, 1761, a case is listed as Charles Keane (Thos. Hammond) v. Richard Mead (Geo. Lacy). Other Attorneys admitted were John Barnby (1769), Harry Arnold (1778), J. Simmons (1776) and J.Hodges (1793).

Records of fortnightly meetings (which often had no cases to list, and most sessions never dealt with more than a handful of cases) are complete from 17th November, 1740, to 3rd January, 1780. Gaps then appear; there is one meeting in 1783, two in 1784, one in 1790, two in 1791, two in 1792, one in 1793, two in 1828. The last recorded meeting was on 14th February 1833. In October of the early years, the Sheriff of the day is reported as having been sworn in and taking the oath on appointment.

A few cases are recorded in sufficient detail for them to be

interesting. For instance on 4th October, 1742, Thomas Kelly complained against Henry Watson and Richard Sheafe that they had taken 14 pewter plates, one jack and one clock, five chairs, two tables and one case of drawers, of his Goods and Chattels. By the 5th November the case had somehow been settled, since the plaintiff withdrew his complaint in Court. On the 16th May, 1743, Nicholas Rayner brought Robert Petman to Court over debt pledges, and Petman was committed to goal for want of bail. John Mead also made a complaint against Petman, but this lapsed on 9th August because of Mead's death. However, Mead's widow on 3rd October, 1743, revived the charge against Petman for debt arising out of Mead's will. George Frend also had a charge against Petman. From the record, the charges against Petman stood until they were superseded, on 12th September, 1748. (It would seem that Petman may have languished in gaol for 5 years for want of bail!). On the 25th July, 1763, in the case of David Lance (Hammond) against John Palmer (Lacy) judgement was given not exceeding the value of £10 of Palmer's possessions, excluding his clothing, bedding for his family and his working tools and equipment.

COURT FOR THE RECOVERY OF SMALL DEBTS

In 1752, a Court for the Recovery of Small Debts (under 40s.) was set up in accordance with an Act of Parliament which had cost £172 11s. 2d. to procure. The first Commissioners appointed to the Court were:

William Cook (Mayor) - by virtue of office Jno. Knowles (Recorder) - by virtue of office Aldermen Thomas Davies and Jno. Robinson Common Councilmen John Lover, Thomas Denn, Jno. Sawlins, Jno. Davison and Richard Bolting, together with 13 Householders, one each from thirteen parishes.⁴⁸

The Petty Sessions record book 1820-1936 lists the yearly appointments, generally in July, of three Aldermen, five Councillors and fourteen Citizens (one from each parish).

No records of the transactions of this Court seem to exist, and it is not clear how its proceedings interfaced with those of the Court of Record. That the Court of Record before 1752 dealt with small debts is instanced by the fact that, in 1747 one of the cases has in the margin of its record, a note 'under 40 shillings'. One must assume that after

⁴⁸ Alderman Grey's Note Book. Cathedral Library Supplementary MS Note.

1752, the Court of Record left the recovery of small debts to the New Court. If so, it is not surprising that the Mayor's Court had effectively become redundant by 1800.

APPENDIX A

PRISONERS IN CANTERBURY GAOL AT THE START OF QUARTER SESSIONS 1809-1824

Information as supplied to Recorder Boteler, 1824

Quarter	Session	No. in Gaol		
1809	January	8		
	July	14		
1810	January	8		
	July	8		
1811	January	3		
	July	3 2		
1812	January	4		
	July	5		
1813	January	8		
	July	4		
1814	January	7		
	July	6		
1815	January	7		
	July	7		
1816	January	6		
	July	9		
1817	January	8 2 5		
	July	2		
1818	January	5		
	July	8		
1819	January	5		
	April	6		
	July	7		
1820	January	13		
	July	11		
1821	January	6		
	July	7		
1822	January	13		
1823	January	11		
	April	15		
	July	4		
	October	7		
1824	January	10		

APPENDIX B

COMMITMENTS 1824-1838

Year	Total	7 Days or	Above 7 days	
	Commitments	below	50	
1824/5	52	30	12	
1825/6	106	81	25	
1826/7	118	96	32	
1827/8	130	90	40	
1828/9	68	49	19	
1829/30	52	34	18	
1830/1	57	39	18	
1831/2	61	49	12	
1832/3	85	79	6	
1833/4	101	75	26	
1834/5	75	46	29	
1835/6	30	17	13	
1836 (6 months)	45	26	19	
1836 (6 months)	47	31	16	
1837 (6 months)	16	9	7	
1837 (6 months)	26	20	65	
1838 (6 months)	36	24	12	
1838 (6 months)	14	9	5	
TOTAL	1,119	804	315	

APPENDIX C

CANTERBURY SESSIONS DEATH PENALTY CASES 1727-1836

7 August, 1737

Benjamin Reader and Daniel Plummer burglary and felony. Sentences commuted by Royal Pardon to transportation to H.M. Colonies and plantations in America for 14 years. Twelve people shared an award of £80 for apprehending the criminals.

20 December 1774

William Hook three burglaries. Seven people share £40

20 December, 1774 William Hook three burglaries. Seven people share £40 reward for apprehension.

13 September, 1748 James Stone stealing 3 six and 30 shilling pieces, 3 moidores and £11 3s. 6d. from a dwelling house.

3 January, 1754	Thomas Smith felony, petit larceny and stealing £22 10s. Commuted to 7 years transportation.
10 December, 1754	Margaret Mantle, murdering her bastard child. Her body to be given to the City Surgeons for dissection.
22 April, 1756	William Hudson, William Bethel and Richard Rapier felony and robbery on the King's Highway. £120 awarded to be divided between several people for apprehension.
10 December,. 1782	Thomas Stokes robbery of Bernard Astle, Esq., in a field near the King's Highway in St Mary Bredin. Reward of £40.
18 July, 1785	David Love and Charles Tevelen stealing goods upwards of 40s. from a dwelling house. Pardoned on condition they left the Kingdom for 14 years.
23 April, 1792	John Head, otherwise Cheeseman, uttering a draft for payment, knowing it to be forged, with intent to defraud George Gipps, James Simmons and Henry Gipps. Pardoned and transported for life.
9 July, 1798	Margaret Hughes of St George's, poisoning her husband, killing him. Pleaded for a stay of execution, on grounds of pregnancy. Jury of matrons 10 July, 1798, assessed her as quick with a live child. Finally sentenced on 22 July, 1799, to be hung on 24 July.
20 April, 1801	Thomas Broughton, burglary at house of Henry Goldfinch. Pardoned, transported 14 years. Reward of £40 shared by 4 persons for his apprehension.
3 May, 1802	George McLeish and Thomas Dundane robbery on the King's Highway in St Mary Northgate. Executed 26 May at Westgate. £80 reward divided between 7 people.
9 July, 1810	Michael Daras robbery, King's Highway in St Mary Northgate. Commuted to transportation for life.
14 January, 1811	Joseph Newson forging a note. Reprieved by Prince Regent until further pleasure be known.
18 August, 1815	Nicholas Nolan and Michael Burke, robbery of Pierre Delplangue, a Frenchman, on the King's Highway Northgate. Nolan executed, Burke transported for life.
14 July, 1817	Stephen Jordan, killing a sheep with intent to steal. Commuted to life transportation by Prince Regent.

APPENDIX D

CANTERBURY RETURN FROM THE TREASURER ON EXPENDITURE OF COUNTY RATES

Date	Amount received			Amount expended		
	£	S.	d.	£	s.	d.
1792	72	18	11	71	19	63/4
1793	253	14	11-11	232	19	81/2
1794	251	8	181	275	7	61/2
1795	169	8	1.0	168	13	101/2
1796	165	7	51/2	168	8	11/2
1797	149	1	-	107	5	41/2
1798	66	15	6	129	3	9
1799	180	15	5	180	9	3
1800	220	2	9	201	3	10
1801	315	16	-	361	15	9
1802	55	18	?	77	9	?
1803	246	3	?	212	18	3
1804	126	13	-	113	-	6
1805	327	19	6	350		11
1806	353	1	6	424	12	-
1807	246	6	-	180	1	1
1808	322	7	6	304	13	3
1809	167	2	51/2	331	8	7
1810	579	18	3-3	390	4	41/2
1811	205	5	-	235	8	7
1812	343	4	10	413	18	11
1813	475	7	6	370	18	9
1815	664	15	120	555	5	9
1816	369	9	-	360	10	2
1817	516	12	6	492	1	41/2
1818	552	18	-	584	11	-
1819	539	9	6 2 8	528	13	6
1820	426	8	2	380	-	81/2
1821	542	14		576	-	10
1822	410	7	6	480	9	4
1823	624	3		461	4	41/2