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Author(s)	Higashide, Isao
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Bishops of England and Their Connection with the King

1272-1485

(Part Two)

Isao HIGASHIDE

CORRIGENDA to Part One

- page 1, line 4 *for* Lancasterians *read* Lancastrians
page 3, line 24 *for* unsuccessful *read* removed
page 3 n. 3) *for* rejected *read* removed
page 14 *under* BEK, Anthony
for 1230-30 *read* 1320-20
page 15 *under* BERSTED, Stephen
insert Berksted *before* Burgsted *within* brackets
page 17 *under* BRINTON, Thomas
insert Brunton *before* Brintone *within* brackets
page 21 *under* GODELE, John
insert Godelegh *after* Godelee *within* brackets
page 22
rearrange the three GRAVESENDs in alphabetical order *between*
GRANDISSON *and* GRAY
page 23 *under* HALLUM, Robert
insert Hallam *before* Halom *within* brackets

GILBERT, John (Gilbard, Gilbert) d. 1397.

(Bangor 1372-75) Her. 1375-89. (x): "... Dominican ..." (W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1955, p. 21 n. 2)

HETHE, Hamo (Heath, Hythe) d. 1352.

Roc. 1317-52. (x): "... the monk Hamo de Hethe ..." (K. Edwards, "The Political Importance of the English Bishops during the Reign of Edward II", *EHR.*, 1944, p. 342.)

KINGSCOTE, John (Kyngescot, Kyngescotes) d. 1463.

Car. 1462-63. k's gift: "Grant to J. Kyngescot, dr., in recompence of 600 l. due to him from the k's father and the k., of the temps. of the bpric. of Car. during its present voidance by the death of the late bp." (1461-67, p. 186.)—(a) dean of the k's free chapel (?): "Grant to J. Kyngescote ... of the deanery of the free chapel of St. Mary within the castle of Hastynge ..." (1452-61, p.

481)—(b) NOTE: The k's father in (a) was Richard, the duke of York, who died in 1460. Thus, Bishop John's connection with the Yorkists had evidently begun before Richard's death. Was John, the dean under the Lancastrian k., Henry VI, in (b), Bishop John himself?

MAIDSTONE, Walter (Maidenestan, Maydenstan) d. 1317.

Wor. 1313-17. k's cl.: "... W. de Maidstone, the new bp. of Wor... all of whom had formerly been royal clerks..." (K. Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 327f.)

MERKS, Thomas (Merkes) d. 1409.

Car. 1397-99 (Salmas 1399-) k's ser.: "... among the 'courtier bishops'... T. Merke, monk of Westminster (promoted to Car.)" (Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 21.)

STAPLEDON, Walter (Stapelton) d. 1326.

Ext. 1308-26. k's cl.: "... W. Stapleton... all of whom had formerly been royal clerks..." (K. Edwards, *op. cit.*, loc. cit.)

WALDBY, Robert. d. 1398.

(Air in Gascony 1387-; Dublin 1390-95) Chi. 1395-96; York 1396-98. k's physician: "... R. Waldby, an Austin friar, said to have been the k's physician (promoted to Chi. and York)..." (Pantin, *op. cit.*, loc. cit.)

III

In the previous section, we were able to establish pre-episcopal connections with the king in 154 cases among 244 bishops (154/244, ca. 63.1 per cent). Of 15, because we could find no decisive evidence, an interrogation mark was put to each indication of their connections (ca. 6.1 per cent). The remaining 75 are marked with (x), because no evidence has yet been forthcoming to show the connections (ca. 30.7 per cent).

Now let us examine these results in greater detail. For establishing the connection, there were five clues to which reference has already been made. Among the 154 bishops, those who had borne the title "king's clerk" number 114 (114/244, ca. 46.7 per cent). The holders of other titles, such as "king's chaplain", and the like, number 19 (ca. 7.8 per cent). As regards 6, only the fact that they were "king's kinsmen" supplies us with any clue whatever (ca. 2.4 per cent). For 7, we have to rely upon evidences of the "king's service" they rendered (ca. 2.9 per cent). With 8, we come to those bishops whose pre-episcopal connection with the king can be inferred only from the "king's gift" granted to them (ca. 3.3 per cent).

Out of the 15 prelates to whom an interrogation mark is affixed, 12 are supposed to have been king's clerks. There are 2 who might have been holders of other titles, and 1 who might have rendered the king's service.

William de la Corner was elected bishop of Salisbury in 1289. No direct evidence has yet been found to show unquestionably that the bishop himself had once been a king's clerk. In 1271, there was a man named Master William de la Cornere (*sic*), "king's clerk of the household", and the next year he appeared as "papal chaplain and king's canon" who was the candidate for the archbishopric of Dublin. Were Bishop William and Master William, king's clerk, two different persons? Here is a large gap of seventeen years. In 1276, Master William himself, king's clerk, reappeared as Master "William de Corneria, papal chaplain", and as one of the "king's proctors at the court of Philip (III) king of France."¹⁾ After a lapse of ten years, we find the name of "Master William de la Cornere" among the members "going beyond seas with the king", and in 1287 a record tells us of "Master William de la Cornere, staying beyond seas with the king."²⁾ The election of Bishop William took place two years later. Hence, it might be not so reckless to conclude that the bishop himself had once been a king's clerk, even though an interrogation mark is affixed.

Walter Giffard was elected bishop of Bath and Wells in 1264. A record

1) *CPR.*, 1272-81, p. 147.

2) *CPR.*, 1281-92, pp. 238, 268.

dated January 18, 1261, tells us of "Master Walter Giffard and Ralph de Dungun, king's clerks, as proctors" before Louis, king of France. It is still in doubt that Bishop Walter himself had formerly been a king's clerk. But both his parents had intimate relations with the royal family,¹⁾ and his younger brother, Godfrey Giffard, afterwards bishop of Worcester, was no doubt a king's clerk. So it is very likely that Bishop Walter too had been a king's clerk. The election of Robert Gilbert took place in 1436. Whether or not he had been a king's clerk is still open to question. What is certain is only the fact that in 1425 there was a "dilectus Clericus noster, Magister Robertus Gilbert, nuper Decanus Cappellae carrissimi & Patris nostri Regis Defuncti." Robert Hallum may have been a king's clerk, and the reason for so supposing has already been noted. These are a few examples taken out of those 12 prelates who are supposed to have been king's clerks.²⁾

William Bottlesham and John of Pontoise are supposed to have been holders of other titles. Of William, the contributor to the *Dictionary of National Biography* tells us "... a Dominican ... and, *it would seem*, a preacher of high repute with King Richard II." John was made bishop of Winchester in 1282. In 1275, we can find among the king's proctors at the court of the king of France the name of John Pontey (sic). Here is an interval of some seven years during which nothing is known about him. Was the proctor himself identical with the future bishop?

Ralph Ergham is supposed to have rendered the king's service. As already noted, there is no doubt that there was a man named Ralph Ergham who had played no small part under Edward III in 1374. It seems unlikely that another Ralph Ergham's promotion took place the following year.

In a word, probability of the identification of each prelate to whose name an interrogation mark is put varies in degree from one to another. It is strong in some cases and weak in others. If further research provides us with unquestionable evidence in favour of our supposition, the total number of those who had any connection with the king in their pre-episcopal days will rise to somewhat more than 154.

Now, we come to the remaining 75 prelates who are marked with (x). Amongst them, the pre-episcopal careers of John Bottlesham, John Bradfield and William Percy are utterly unknown. Of 72, the pre-episcopal careers are more or less known. At least 30 of them belonged to the regular as opposed to the secular clergy. For example, Reginald Boulers, William Heyworth and William

1) Gibbs & Lang, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

2) Those who are not mentioned here: Richard Bell, James Berkeley, John Booth, Reginald Brian, Thomas Brouns, John Gynwell, Thomas Trillek, Gilbert Welton.

Wells had been abbots. Wulstan Bransford, John Horncastle and Walter Lyghe had been priors. Hugh Balsham, Robert Graystones and Richard Kellaw had been sub-priors. Thomas Brinton, Thomas Hempnall, Hamo Hethe and John St. German had been called monks. Robert Kilwardby had been "‘professor’ of the order of Friar Preachers"; John Pecham "of the order of Friars Minors"; Robert Reade "a Dominican friar and master of arts"; and John Gilbert was one of "Dominican bishops in the later fourteenth century". This does not necessarily mean that all the regular clergy are (x)-marked. Philip Repingdon, "clericus specialissimus domini regis Henrici", had been called "late abbot of Leycestre".¹⁾ Willim Alnwick and Richard of Bury had been monks.²⁾ John Burghill, king's confessor, had been a friar; Simon Langham, treasurer, an abbot; Thomas de Lisle, king's nuncio, "of the order of the Friars Preachers"; John Low, king's confessor, a friar; and Thomas Milling, privy councillor, an abbot.³⁾ True, the king could find his faithful servants not only among the secular but also among the regular clergy. What is quite natural, however, is that the regular elements seem to have been less important in the field of royal administration. "From the point of view of general history," says Marion Gibbs, "the monks represented in the episcopate were unimportant. This seems true not only because of their numerical insignificance, but because in comparison with their colleagues from the schools and the royal court, there is no record of any formative work they carried out in Church or State."⁴⁾ Those monks who subsequently became bishops were in a small minority under the later reigns also, and not merely under the reign of Henry III with which Gibbs deals. They were, on the other hand, (x)-marked for the most part; whereas among the (x)-marked bishops, they showed no small percentage (at least 40 per cent). Thus, the gate that led to the royal court as well as to the episcopal see was much narrower for the regular than for the secular clergy.

Besides these "monks", there was another category of the "diocesan and cathedral clergy" (the term used by Marion Gibbs). Needless to say, some monks were also diocesan and cathedral clerks⁵⁾; the category was not necessarily confined to the (x)-marked bishops. Here, for example, out of the (x)-

1) *CPR.*, 1405-08, p. 2.

2) *DNB.*, sub nominibus.

3) Cf. *supra* (Part One), p. 3.

4) "Nor had they much opportunity," she continued, "... three ruled over the small diocese of Ely; four, elected during the minority, had remarkably short episcopates, and three were elected during the troubles of the last part of the reign. And the relatively small number of monks who became bishops is emphasized by a proportionately large number, who, duly elected, were rejected by King or Pope for various reasons." (Gibbs & Lang, *op. cit.*, p. 5.)

5) John of Halton had been a prior and canon of Carlisle.

marked ones only, Thomas Appleby had been “canon of the church of St. Mary, Carlisle”; Stephen Bersted, canon of the cathedral church of Chichester; Walter Haselshaw, dean of the cathedral church of St. Andrew, Wells; and Richard de la More, archdeacon of Winchester. Among the (x)-marked bishops, at least 27 had been diocesan and cathedral clerks.

To those who could not expect royal patronage, promotion might have come sometimes as a reward of their faithful service in the diocese or at the cathedral church. Stephen Bersted had been a “bishop’s chaplain”, as opposed to the king’s. William Strickland¹⁾ and Richard Swinfield were also bishop’s chaplains. Richard Newport had been the vicar-general of Ralph Baldock, bishop-elect of London.²⁾ There were also “bishop’s kinsmen”. Anthony Bek (d. 1343) and his younger brother, Thomas Bek (d. 1347), were the kinsmen of both Anthony Bek (d. 1311), bishop of Durham, and Thomas Bek (d. 1293), bishop of St. David’s, Wales. Stephen Gravesend was a nephew of Richard Gravesend, bishop of London. John Trefnant was not the king’s but the pope’s chaplain. Henry Dispenser was a grandson of Hugh le Dispenser the Younger. Henry might have owed his speedy promotion partly to his noble birth. But to a greater extent, it must have been the outcome of his service to the pope. It is said that he spent some time in Italy fighting for the pope, and “his career throughout is that of a soldier rather than of a churchman.” In 1370, he was at Rome and was nominated to the bishopric of Norwich, by the pope’s special provision.³⁾

Lastly, another reference must be made to some of the bishops. As mentioned above, out of the 15 prelates indicated by an interrogation mark, 12 are supposed to have been king’s clerks. But the (?)—marked king’s clerks are by no means limited to these 12. Robert Braybrook is numbered among the 6 king’s kinsmen, because a record clearly reveals “. . . the king’s kinsman, Robert, bishop of London.” We can also classify him among the 19 holders of other titles, because in April, 1379, another record calls the future bishop “Master Robert de Braybroke, the king’s secretary.” Only five months later, two letters of pardon are issued under the privy seal “at the supplication of the king’s clerk, Master Robert Braybrook (or Braybrok).”⁴⁾ Was the supplicant, king’s clerk, the future bishop himself? It is only for safety’s sake that an interrogation mark is used here. William Gray was included among the 8 grantees of the king’s gift, because he had no doubt been granted “the canonry and prebend . . . in the cathedral church of York . . . in the king’s gift” in 1425. Twelve years

1) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

2) *CCR.*, 1302-07, p. 284.

3) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

4) *CPR.*, 1377-81, pp. 391, 393.

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earlier, there was a man named William Grey (*sic*) who was nominated "to receive the pension wherein . . . (the abbot and convent of Bardeneve, co. Lincoln) are bound to one of the king's clerks." Here, a hasty conclusion must be suspended. John Harewell was reckoned among the 7 who had rendered the king's service, because his promotion was the outcome of "the great services in the parts of Aquitaine rendered to the king (Edward III) and Edward (the Black Prince)." In 1351, the archdeaconry of Norfolk was granted to "the king's clerk John de Harewell . . . in the king's gift." There is a connecting link missing between the two pieces of evidence.

VI

Are there any significant differences to be noted from bishopric to bishopric? First, let us notice TABLE ONE.

TABLE ONE¹⁾

	K's Cl.	K's Chap. etc.	K's Kin.	K's Ser.	K's Gift	(?)	(x)	Total
B&W.	11			1		1	3	16
Can.	13	3	1	1			4	22
Car.	5	2		1	2	2	9	21
Chi.	9	5				1	7	22
C&L.	7	2	1				3	13
Dur.	10		1				4	15
Ely	10	5					4	19
Ext.	8		1	1		2	3	15
Her.	7	4	1				6	18
Lin.	7		1		2	1	6	17
Lon.	10	1	2	1	2	1	4	21
Nor.	9				1	1	7	18
Roc.	7	2		1		3	9	22
Sal.	10	2	1		2	3	2	20
Win.	8		1		1	1	2	13
Wor.	15	2		1		2	7	27
York	13	3	1			2	4	23
Total	159	31	11	7	10	20	84	322

In this table, the total numbers are given instead of the actual ones. At first glance, the table seems to show some remarkable differences from bishopric to bishopric. Taking into consideration all those who had evidently had some pre-episcopal connection with the king, Canterbury shows the highest percentage (18/22, ca. 82 per cent). Next to Canterbury, the following bishoprics show percentages above 70: Ely, Coventry and Lichfield, Winchester, London, Bath and Wells, Salisbury, York, and Durham. The lowest percentage is marked both at Carlisle and Rochester (below 50 per cent). It may be safe to conclude that there is a significant difference between Canterbury and Rochester, or between Ely and Carlisle. But we must be careful not to be misled by slight or insignificant differences, for example, between Winchester and London, or between

1) The same abbreviations are used as in Part One, pp. 32f.

Carlisle and Rochester. Out of the 13 bishops who filled the episcopate of Winchester, 10 had had some pre-episcopal connection with the king (10/13, ca. 77 per cent). Out of the 21 bishops of London, those who had had such a connection numbered 16 (16/21, ca. 76 per cent). It is numerically — but only numerically — true that 10/13 is greater than 16/21. But if the denominator is small, the slightest difference of the numerator will affect the percentage to no small degree. The smaller the denominator, the less reliable the percentage. Hence, what TABLE ONE shows us is quite an obscure spectrum.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, the table does give us the total numbers instead of the actual ones. For example, Thomas Arundel filled successively the episcopates of Ely, York, Canterbury, (St. Andrews, Scotland) and Canterbury again. He is reckoned four times altogether in the table. He was *translated* from Ely to York in 1388, from York to Canterbury in 1396, from Canterbury to St. Andrews in 1398, and was *restored* to Canterbury in 1399. Wulstan Bransford was once elected bishop of Worcester in 1327, and quashed soon after. He was *re-elected* bishop of the same bishopric in 1339. John Hales resigned the episcopate of Exeter in 1456, and was *reprovided* to be bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1459. In 1278, Edward I tried to translate Robert Burnell from the see of Bath and Wells to the archbishopric of Canterbury, and persuaded the monks of Christ Church to *postulate* for Burnell as archbishop. "An earnest letter of entreaty from the king accompanied their postulation to Rome; but Nicholas III yielded to his entreaties only as far as to appoint a commission of three cardinals to examine Burnell's fitness. After long inquiries, circumstances came to the pope's ears which, he declared, made it impossible for him to consent to Burnell's appointment, and he nominated the Franciscan John Peckham instead. Edward concealed his disappointment, and again on 20 March 1280 his influence obtained the election of Burnell to Winchester. But the pope simply bade the chapter proceed to a new election." ¹⁾ Burnell was quashed twice and obliged to remain at the see of Bath and Wells until his death in 1292. The postulation for Philip Morgan as archbishop of York was made in 1423, and it was also quashed soon after. Another case worthy of note is that of Lewis of Luxemburg who appears as "the king's kinsman, Louis de Luxemburgh, bishop of Terouane, the king's chancellor of France", in 1437. King Henry VI nominated him to the archepiscopate of Rouen, and afterwards gave him the bishopric of Ely, "lorsqu'il fut obligé de se réfugier en Angleterre." ²⁾ He seems to have continued in office as the archbishop of Rouen, and consequently he could not be made bishop of Ely, in the strict sense of the word. He was provided *in*

1) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

2) *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, Paris, 1862, tome 32, p. 326.

commendam on September 24, 1437, and the temporalities of the bishopric were delivered on April 3, 1438, to "Lewis, archbishop of Rouen, administrator of the see of Ely."¹⁾ With the utmost care taken in his precarious position, Henry VI granted on May 2, "that Lewis, administrator of the see of Ely, shall enjoy all liberties, jurisdictions, quittances and immunities which the bishops of the see have had."²⁾ It is significant that, on July 20, the king ordered "to all persons of the diocese of Ely to obey as their bishop Lewis, perpetual administrator of the church of Ely."³⁾ Including these cases, total translations amount to 82 during the reigns under consideration; while other forms of reappointment amount to 18.⁴⁾

As a matter of fact, the translated or reappointed bishops are worthy of particular attention. Thomas Peverel was translated from Llandaff, Wales, to Worcester in 1407. His first episcopate was that of Ossory, Ireland, whence he was translated to Llandaff in 1398. No evidence has yet been found to show his connection with the king before he was made bishop of Ossory. But after his promotion, he could no longer be quite a stranger to the king. A record tells us of "Thomas, bishop of Llandaff, going on the king's service in the king's company to Wales."⁵⁾ Reginald Pecock was also one of the (x)-marked bishops. He was translated from St. Asaph, Wales, to Chichester in 1450. In 1446, Henry VI granted to the bishop and others "in frank almain . . . a piece of ground" in Middlesex.⁶⁾ Richard Young, one of the (x)-marked bishops, was translated from Bangor, Wales, to Rochester in 1404. As the bishop of Bangor, he appeared several times among the king's commission "to hear and determine" (*oyer et terminer*).⁷⁾ John Gilbert, (x)-marked, was translated from Bangor to Hereford

1) *HB.*, p. 244; *CPR.*, 1436-41, p. 154.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 191. The same measures were taken repeatedly by Henry VI. "Grant that Lewis, archbishop of Rouen, may sue and be sued by the name of Lewis, perpetual administrator in matters spiritual and temporal of the church of Ely (October 4)" (*Ibid.*, p. 245). "Grant that Lewis, archbishop of Rouen, perpetual administrator in things spiritual and temporal of the see of Ely, may plead and be impleaded under such style (the same)" (*Ibid.*, p. 281). "Grant by the authority of Parliament to Lewis, archbishop of Rouen, administrator of the church of Ely, that the restitution of the temporalities of the see made to him under that style, shall be as effectual as if made to him in the name of bishop, entitling him to all the privileges in that behalf of the bishop of such church (November 26, 1439)" (*Ibid.*, p. 426.)

3) *Ibid.*, p. 183.

4) From the *HB.*, the following translations are omitted: Thomas Brouns "trs. Worcester 21 Feb. 1435" (p. 249), Robert Hallum "trs. York 23 Oct. 1407" (p. 251), Thomas Hempnall "trs. Norwich 14 Mar. 1337" (p. 261) and Richard Clifford "trs. Bath and Wells 19 Aug. 1401" (*loc. cit.*)

5) *CPR.*, 1405-08, p. 31.

6) *CPR.*, 1446-52, p. 29.

7) *CPR.*, 1399-1401, pp. 524, 542, 548; *CPR.*, 1401-05, pp. 315, 385.

in 1375. In 1374, Richard II gave "powers to John, bishop of Bangor, Master John de Wicylf, professor of Theology . . . to treat with the ambassadors of the pope upon certain matters for which the king sent . . . to the apostolic see."¹⁾ As was the case with Thomas Peverel, it seems, every bishop who had already been consecrated at another bishopric might no longer be quite a stranger to the king. Supposedly, to be a bishop means by itself to stand in more or less substantial connection with the king.

From another point of view, it may be laid down as a general rule, if not strictly, that the translated or reappointed bishops were better experienced in episcopal or sometimes royal administration than those who had been just promoted for the first time. We must, therefore, give further consideration to the translated and reappointed bishops. Let us notice TABLE TWO.

TABLE TWO

	Newly-appointed				Trans- lated & Reap- pointed	Total
	K's Cl.	K's Chap. etc. K's Kin. K's Ser. K's Gift	(?)	(x)		
B&W.	8	1		3	4	16
Can.	5			4	13	22
Car.	5	5	2	7	2	21
Chi.	7		1	5	9	22
C&L.	5	2		1	5	13
Dur.	8			4	3	15
Ely	6	2		3	8	19
Ext.	6	2	2	3	2	15
Her.	7	4		5	2	18
Lin.	4	1	1	6	5	17
Lon.	8	4	1	4	4	21
Nor.	8	1		6	3	18
Roc.	7	2	1	8	4	22
Sal.	8	3	2	2	5	20
Win.	5	1	1	2	4	13
Wor.	8	2		3	14	27
York	6		1	3	13	23
Total	111	30	12	69	100	322

1) CPR., 1370-74, p. 462.

In this table the actual numbers are given under the heading of “newly-appointed”. For example, out of the 16 bishops of Bath and Wells (in the total number), 8 (in the actual number) had been king’s clerks; while in TABLE ONE, king’s clerks numbered 11 (in the total number), including the 3 who had been translated from other bishoprics. John Barnet was translated from Worcester, Walter Skirlaw was from the see of Coventry and Lichfield, and Nicholas Bubwith from Salisbury. All of them had been king’s clerks in their pre-episcopal days. Here is another bishop who was translated from Salisbury to Bath and Wells: Ralph Ergham. He is marked with (?) as the bishop of Salisbury, and is included among the translated bishops as bishop of Bath and Wells. It is true that no direct evidence has yet been found to show his pre-episcopal connection with the king. But in 1377, Richard II appointed the bishop of Salisbury, Ralph, among others, as the king’s councillor.¹⁾ All 4 bishops, therefore, had had some substantial connection with the king before they were translated to the see of Bath and Wells.

To take only the translated and reappointed bishops into account, it is at both Canterbury and York that the highest percentage is reached: Canterbury (13/22, ca. 59 per cent) and York (13/23, ca. 57 per cent). Next comes Worcester (14/27, ca. 52 per cent). These three cathedrals saw the most frequent changes of their heads, and were most frequently brought under the rule of experienced hands. With the exception of these, no bishopric shows such high percentage. On the other hand, the translated and reappointed bishops were in a small minority (below 20 per cent) at London, Rochester, Norwich, Exeter, Hereford and Carlisle—the lowest percentage at Carlisle (2/21, ca. 9.5 per cent). It is quite reasonable that the archepiscopate of Canterbury as the primate of all England looks like a terminal station for the advancement of all prelates. As compared with the 13 prelates²⁾ who came from other episcopates, there were only 2 who went out elsewhere: in 1278, Robert Kilwardby was removed to the cardinal-bishopric of Porto and Santa Rufina, the temporalities of which were said to be incomparably inferior to those of Canterbury,³⁾ and in 1397, Thomas Arundel was removed to St. Andrews, Scotland. There were also 13 who came to York and 4 who went out: Alexander Neville to St. Andrews, Rober Hallum to Salisbury, Thomas Arundel and John Kempe to Canterbury, that is, to the terminal station. As for Carlisle, Robert Reade came from the Irish see of Lismore and William Barrow from Bangor, Wales; while Robert Reade went out

1) *CPR.*, 1377–81, p. 19.

2) Including Robert Burnell, who had already been bishop of Bath and Wells, in 1278, and Thomas Arundel, who was restored to the archbishopric in 1399.

3) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

to Chichester, Thomas Merks was translated to the "church of Samaston",¹⁾ Marmaduke Lumley to Lincoln, Nicholas Close to the see of Coventry and Lichfield, and Edward Story to Chichester. Among those who left Carlisle, none could ultimately find his way to Canterbury or to York. Carlisle must, therefore, have been one of the lowest episcopates in status.

Thus, there are some significant differences to be noted from bishopric to bishopric. But we must be careful not to exaggerate slight differences between them. Moreover, for example, the bishopric of Ely deserves special attention. It is at Ely that, next to Worcester, the fourth highest percentage is reached as to the translated and reappointed bishops (8/19, ca. 42 per cent). This does not mean, however, Ely's relatively high rank among the 17 episcopates. As a matter of fact, Thomas Bourghier is reckoned twice in TABLE TWO. In 1436, he was once translated from Worcester by the papal bull of provision, but the provision itself was annulled the following year. Thus, he had to stay at Worcester until 1443 when he was translated again thence to Ely. The provision was annulled through an arrangement with the pope, because the king's ministers wished to reward Lewis of Luxemburg, whom we have already mentioned, with the revenues of the same bishopric.²⁾ The revenues of this small bishopric were given to Lewis, king's kinsman and king's chancellor of France, as a means of last resort necessitated by his taking refuge from abroad. John Fordham was translated from Durham "to the smaller and poorer see of Ely."³⁾ His translation was nothing but a demotion. As was the case with Ely, a high percentage of translated and reappointed bishops does not necessarily, or not always, represent the high rank of a bishopric.

Intrinsically, such a problem as that of varying importance of each episcopate, in the eyes of the king, should be discussed qualitatively rather than quantitatively. Without further detailed information, therefore, a statistical approach will never go to any greater length than a rough indication to the problem.

1) "Grant to T. Merk . . . late bishop of Carlisle, whom the pope has translated to the church of Samaston, in which there is no clergy or Christian people, so that he is in notable poverty, of licence to sue in the court of Rome for benefices to the value of 100 marks yearly . . ." (*CPR., 1399-1401*, p. 450.) Samaston: Salma or Selma, in Persia.

2) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

3) Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

V

Another approach to the problem must be tried from a chronological point of view. To begin with, let us take a cross-sectional view of the episcopates as of November 20, 1272, when Edward I came to the throne. At that moment, of the 17 episcopates, 6 were filled by those who had been king's clerks, 1 by Roger Longespee, king's kinsman, 1 by Walter Giffard, (?)—marked, and the remaining 9 were by the (x)—marked prelates.¹⁾ There were 2 among them who had already been made bishop at another church and translated from there. Nicholas of Ely, king's clerk, had been made bishop of Worcester in 1266, and was translated from that church to Winchester in 1268. Walter Giffard had once been made bishop of Bath and Wells, and in 1266 he was translated to the cathedral church of York. Thus, including these 2, 8 prelates had already stood in some connection with the king.

It is from August 7 to October 17, 1302, that the (x)—marked prelates show the highest percentage (14/17). Winchester was under the rule of John of Pontoise, (?)—marked. The bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield was under Walter Langton, king's clerk, and that of Durham under Anthony Bek, king's clerk.

To the contrary, from August 30 to November 20, 1419, all the episcopates were under the rule of those who had had some connection with the king. From December 4, 1448, to March 23, 1450, there were no (x)—marked and (?)—marked prelates at any one of the episcopates. On March 23, 1450, Reginald Pecock, (x)—marked, was provided to be bishop of Chichester, but he had already been bishop of St. Asaph, Wales, and translated from there to the episcopal see of Chichester. It was not until August 14, 1450, that another (x)—marked bishop, Reginald Boulders, was provided anew to be bishop of Hereford.

On August 22, 1485, Richard III died. At that moment, the episcopate of Carlisle was filled by Richard Bell, (x)—marked. The bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield was then under the rule of John Hales, (x)—marked. But John had already been made bishop of Exeter, and was reprovided to be bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1459. The remaining 15 episcopates were all filled by those who had had some pre-episcopal connection with the king.

These cross-sectional views will be incorporated into TABLE THREE following. In order to trace the changing view more precisely, further cross-sections will be shown at intervals of twenty-five years. All of them are as of

1) Those who had been king's clerks were John Breton, Walter Bronescombe, Robert Chaury, Nicholas of Ely, Godfrey Giffard and Lawrence of St. Martin. The (x)—marked are Hugh Balsham, Stephen Bersted, William of Bitton (II), Richard Gravesend, Robert Kilwardby, Henry Sandwich, Roger Skerning, Robert Stichill and Robert Wickhampton.

December 31, unless otherwise indicated.

TABLE THREE

	Newly-appointed			Trans- lated & Reap- pointed
	K's Cl. etc.	(?)	(x)	
1272 (Nov. 20)	6	0	9	2
1275	8	0	7	2
1300	4	1	11	1
1302 (Aug. 7 to Oct. 17)	2	1	14	0
1325	12	0	2	3
1350	11	1	4	1
1375	9	1	4	3
1400	5	0	4	8
1419 (Aug. 30 to Nov. 20)	9	0	0	8
1425	5	0	4	8
1448 (Dec. 4 to Aug. 14, 1450)	9	0	0	8
1450	8	0	1	8
1475	11	1	0	5
1485 (Aug. 22)	9	1	0	7

Disregarding a narrow range of fluctuations, let us take a broad view of the changing scene. At first glance, it is evident that the reign of Edward I was the heyday of the (x)-marked bishops, and that of Edward II was characterized by a sharp decline. To take at shorter intervals some cross-sections of the 17 bishops under Edward II, there were still 11 (x)-marked bishops on July 7, 1307, when his father died; there were 9 at the end 1310; 8 in 1315; 4 in 1320; 2 in 1325; and likewise 2 on January 20, 1327, when he was deposed from the throne.

One of the reasons for this rapid decline will be supplied by the changing system or procedure of promotion during all the reigns under consideration. Ralph Baldock was not *provided* but *elected* to be bishop of London in 1304.¹⁾ To the contrary, William Booth was not elected but provided to be bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1447.²⁾ As was the case with William, sometimes the papal provision was a substitute for the capitular election. Sometimes, on the other hand, the papal provision superseded the election which had taken place beforehand.³⁾ John Chedworth was elected bishop of Lincoln before February,

1) *HB.*, p. 239.2) *Ibid.*, p. 234.3) *Ibid.*, p. 203.

1452, provided in May, and consecrated in June.¹⁾ John Morton, bishop of Ely, was *nominated* by the king, elected in August, 1478, and provided in October.²⁾

With regard to the procedure for appointment of every bishop, materials at the writer's disposal give us only scanty information. This is why we cannot but rely upon Powicke and Fryde, though their *Handbook* is by no means sufficient. In the *Handbook*, the editors have aimed at including the following dates "where they could be exactly, or even only approximately, discovered":

- (i) *Capitular election*, or *postulation* (*i. e.* the putting forward by the electors of a person who requires dispensation from some canonical defect or translation from another see) or *royal nomination*;
- (ii) *Papal provision* (whether this superseded prior election or was a substitute for it);
- (iii) *Consecration* (supposed to be celebrated on a Sunday or an important festival);
- (iv) *Restitution of temporalities* by the Crown;
- (v) *Voidance of the see* by resignation, translation or death.

For the present purpose, the first two are all important.

In TABLE FOUR following, the procedures will be classified into four categories: "election" (as was the case with Ralph Baldock, mentioned above), "election and provision" (with John Chedworth), "provision" (with William Booth)³⁾ and "translation etc." Under the heading of "translation etc." come the translations, re-elections, reprovisions, restoration and the like. It will be sufficient to divide all the reigns under consideration into three periods at intervals of about seventy years.

TABLE FOUR

	Election	Election & Provision	Provision	Translation etc.
1272-1340	76	9	18	15
1341-1410	5	13	40	40
1411-1485	5	12	44	45
Total	86	34	102	100

1) *Ibid.*, p. 236.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 224.

3) As mentioned in Part One (p. 14), a record calls William Bateman "Master W. de Norwico, bishop elect of Norwich." It would appear as if he were made bishop by election. But both *HB.* and *DNB.* tell us nothing of his election. He is, therefore, classified under "provision" to which both *HB.* and *DNB.* refer. The same is also true of Robert Braybrook, James Goldwell, John Salmon, John Waltham, and others.

The three periods are divided mainly for convenience. But at a glance, it is evident, there is what might be called a significant difference between the first period and the second. Compared with this, the difference between the second period and the third is negligible. All the episcopates saw a total of 118 changes of their heads during the first period, 98 during the second, and 106 during the third.

Under the heading of "election", that is, election not followed by the papal provision, 76 of the first period are known to us (76/118, ca. 64 per cent). Those of the second period known to us (5/98, ca. 5.1 per cent), as well as those of the third (5/106, ca. 4.7 per cent), marked a sharp decrease from those of the first. It is at more than half the sees that the last election of this kind took place within the first period, that is, until 1340. Such an election took place in 1296 at the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield, in 1316 both at Ely and Winchester, in 1317 at Rochester, in 1320 at Lincoln,¹⁾ in 1327 at Exeter,²⁾ in 1328 at Canterbury, in 1329 at the see of Bath and Wells, and in 1340 at London. "Bishop Trilleck of Hereford (1344)", says W. A. Pantin, "seems to have been the last English bishop who was not provided to his see."³⁾ By this, perhaps, Pantin means that Trilleck's election was the last one which was not followed by a papal provision. If Pantin is right, Powicke and Fryde are wrong in that they fail to discover the dates of provision which might have followed prior election, for example, of Thomas Hatfield (1345, Durham), John Wakeryng (1415, Norwich), Edmund Lacy (1417, Hereford) and John Chaundler (1417, Salisbury). There are also several bishops for whom the dates of provision are not given: Walter Lyghe (1373, Worcester), Thoma Langley (1405, York), Simon Sydenham (1426, Salisbury) and Thomas Brouns (1429, Chichester). The latter four were quashed shortly afterwards. It is questionable, indeed, that without being quashed they might have been provided by the pope after election. If they had been provided, we should have transferred them under the heading of "election and provision", and consequently those who had been elected but not provided would have become less numerous. But, in the present paper, they were inevitably classified under the heading of "election".

Under the heading of "election and provision", comes a group of those bishops both dates of whose election and provision are given by Powicke and Fryde. But to this, Thomas Appleby and Thomas Brinton form exceptions. Although the *Handbook* gives no reference to Appleby's provision, there is no

1) & 2) Both elections were quashed within the same year.

3) W. A. Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

doubt that he was provided to the see.¹⁾ Likewise, it gives no reference to Brinton's election, but Pantin says "In 1373 the monks of Rochester elected their Prior as Bishop of Rochester. Their choice was set aside, and the pope instead provided Brunton (*sic*) to the see of Rochester."²⁾ Hence, Appleby and Brinton should be classified not under "election" or "provision" but under "election and provision". The elections followed by the papal provision showed a slight or negligible increase during the second period, and maintained almost the same level during the third.

Meanwhile, the provisions as well as translations and other form of re-appointment increased considerably during the second period, and maintained also almost the same level during the third. Their increase indicates a decrease in elections. Reasons for the former will be furnished by those for the latter. What kind of men were chosen by "election"? Throughout the reigns under consideration, 86 prelates were chosen by way of election. Among them, the (x)-marked ones numbered 43 (50 per cent). To put it otherwise, out of the 75 (x)-marked bishops, 43 won their episcopates by being elected (ca. 57 per cent). In this respect, decreasing elections meant fewer opportunities for the (x)-marked prelates to be chosen bishop. It is significant that, as we have seen in TABLE THREE, the great majority of (x)-marked bishops appeared especially during the reign of Edward I, and under later reigns they decreased remarkably. It is true that sometimes elections themselves might have come under powerful influence by the pope or the king.³⁾ But in theory at least, an election represents the will or interest of the electors. Hence, decreasing elections meant also a waning autonomy on the part of capitular electors.

"The system of papal provision", says W. A. Pantin, "meant that men were promoted to offices and benefices by the central authority, the pope, instead of by local methods of appointment." We have just seen a capitular election as one of the "local methods of appointment." "The pope's right to dispose of all benefices", he adds, "was based on and indeed was part of the *plenitudo potestatis* which he wielded."⁴⁾ It means—in theory at least—that a papal provision

1) "... to deliver the temporalities of the bishopric of Carlisle to Thomas . . . whom the pope, after quashing his election to be bishop of that place by the chapter of the said church, has provided to be bishop thereof . . ." (*CPR.*, 1361-64, p. 391.)

2) Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

3) It is significant that, out of the 44 (x)-marked bishops who were duly elected, 7 were quashed (including Thomas Appleby, quashed but soon provided, to whom reference has been made above): Anthony Bek (1320, Lincoln), Wulstan Bransford (1327, Worcester), Robert Graystones (1333, Durham), John Horncastle (1353, Carlisle), Walter Lyghe (1373, Worcester) and John St. German (1303, Worcester).

4) Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

represents ultimately his will or interest. But here we must remember that, as the first stage of the procedure for petitioning a papal bull of provision, the petitioner had "to get his petition for a benefice presented to the pope, backed if possible by some influential person, a cardinal or a bishop or the king or a lay magnate."¹⁾ As far as episcopal provisions were concerned, the king must have been the most influential of all, even though the pope made provisions sometimes against the king's will. Under the reign of Edward II, for example, "the papal provisions against the king's wishes", says Pantin, "all came after 1316, that is to say, under Pope John XXII. In these cases, the pope often provided a royal servant, but not the particular one that the king had asked for, and where the pope turned down the king's nominee, he sometimes tried to satisfy him later on. For instance, Burghersh, disappointed of Winchester in 1319, was provided to Lincoln in 1320."²⁾ Conversely, a case where a papal provision was confronted by the king's refusal occurred in 1400,³⁾ when Richard Clifford "was promoted by papal provision to the see of Bath and Wells; but as the king refused him the temporalities, he was translated to Worcester."⁴⁾ On the whole, to the detriment of autonomy on the part of local churches, the increasing provisions meant growing interventions by the pope, at least in theory, and of the king, in practice.

Translations, as well as provisions, became more frequent also, perhaps to the detriment of local church autonomy. Here, Richard Clifford's case is very interesting. After the king's refusal to which we have just referred, the king, Henry IV, granted a licence on June 20, 1401, "for the prior and convent of the cathedral church of Worcester to elect a bishop in the place of Tideman, last bishop, deceased."⁵⁾ Richard was elected on 27 inst., and was provided to be bishop of that place on August 19.⁶⁾ He was translated by way of election and provision. To what extent, then, was this a free election in the proper sense of the word? In most cases, translations themselves might have taken place in accordance either with papal wishes or with royal, or in conformity with both, even if against the will of local churches. Besides, we must not overlook the wishes of powerful courtiers. "Bishops were translated", says Pantin, "as reward or punishment, on political grounds. Thus in 1388 as a result of the triumph of the magnates in the Merciless Parliament, royalist bishops were banished or demoted; Alexander Neville was translated from York to St. Andrews

1) *Ibid.*, p. 49.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 55.

3) "About April 1401" (*DNB.*) or "12 May 1400" (*HB.*)?

4) *DNB.*, sub nomine.

5) *CPR.*, 1399-1401, p. 505.

6) *HB.*, p. 261.

(which was a kind of ecclesiastical Botany Bay, being in the hands of the adherents of the anti-pope), Rushock went from Chichester to Kilmore in Ireland, Fordham from Durham to the smaller and poorer see of Ely; while a baronial supporter like Arundel was promoted from Ely to York. In 1397, with Richard's 'second tyranny', the tables were turned, and this time royal protégés were promoted, Tideman, the king's physician being moved up from Llandaff to Worcester, Waldby from Dublin to Chichester, Metford (*sic*) from Chichester to Salisbury, while on the other hand Arundel was banished from Canterbury to St Andrews, and the veteran John Buckingham, whose promotion had been pressed on the pope by Edward III with so much difficulty, was now, after more than thirty years at Lincoln, removed to Lichfield to make way for the youthful Henry Beaufort. After the revolution of 1399, Arundel was brought back in triumph to Canterbury, and his supplanter, Roger Walden, was moved down to London; while Thomas Merke was removed from Carlisle and translated to a see *in partibus infidelium*." ¹⁾ Some of them were not the king's adherents but opponents in the proper sense of the word. But even these opponents were closely connected, if not with the king himself, with the court, a crucible of these political ups and downs. The weaker the pope became, the stronger grew the king's influence upon episcopal translations. It is significant that "in the reign of Richard II, after the outbreak of the Great Schism, the popes were in a weaker position and more complaisant, and the provision of royal nominees had become more of a habit." ²⁾

1) Pantin, *op. cit.*, pp. 24f.; cf. *supra* p. 26 n. 15).

2) *Ibid.*, p. 24.

VI

The surveys attempted in the previous sections may be briefly summarized by means of the following points. In the first place, out of the 244 prelates who ruled the episcopates of England from 1272 to 1485, those who had had some form of pre-episcopal connection with the king numbered at least 154 (ca. 63.1 per cent). What is more, leaving aside the reign of Edward I when these elements were still in a small minority, they showed much higher percentage than this under the later reigns. It is well known that, in the middle ages, the royal administration had depended largely upon the services rendered by churchmen. Now, it is clear, the ecclesiastical administration, in its turn, had also depended to a great extent upon personnel more or less connected with the king, or with his court.

In the second place, these prelates, together with those who had already experienced an episcopate elsewhere, were stationed in the greatest numbers at the most important churches, such as Canterbury and York. The more numerous the king's adherents who occupied what might be called "strategic points", the easier it was for the king to exercise his influence upon the ecclesiastical administration.

In the third place, from a chronological point of view, it is evident the reign of Edward I shows a striking peculiarity in comparison with the later reigns. As mentioned above, his reign is characterized by a numerical inferiority of the king's adherents on one hand, and by the predominance of capitular elections over other forms of episcopal appointment on the other. Under the later reigns, we can see the majority of episcopates filled by the king's adherents, and elections giving way to provisions and translations. In other words, with the decreasing elections, the gate that led to the episcopate became much narrower for strangers to the king. With only a few exceptions, aliens too were excluded from the English sees.¹⁾ It is true that the papacy at Avignon and under the Great Schism retained the *de iure* rights of provision and translation. But the papacy was gradually losing its former influence upon the English church, whereas the king's *de facto* rights of episcopal appointment were strengthened. Henceforward, every churchman who was ambitious for power either in State or Church, or in both State and Church, had to be anxious for the king's favour. If failed to receive the king's patronage, he had to seek that of a powerful magnate in the court, where a powerful bishop was also a powerful courtier. Here lies an important problem of ecclesiastical patronage, but for which we have no room for further reference. At any rate, an ambitious churchman could

1) Pantin, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

no longer stand outside the influence of the court.

As mentioned towards the beginning of this paper, it is true that under the Lancastrians and the Yorkists a tide of laicization or secularization was rising in some field of royal administration, especially at the wardrobe as well as at the exchequer. The keeperships of these departments were passing from the hands of churchmen into those of laymen. Conversely, it seems that there remained much stronger State control over the Church, through the exercise for royal rights of patronage as regards leading prelates.

The period under consideration, that is, from 1272 to 1485, was characterized by the following events: the decline of the papacy, the outbreak and end of the Hundred Years War, disasters of the War of Roses, depositions of kings, changes of dynasties, the Wycliffite movement, and so on. Of course, these events never failed to affect such and such prelates' ups and downs. They were also subject more or less to the influence of socio-economic and constitutional changes of the day. But materials at the writer's hand preclude his attempts at further research.