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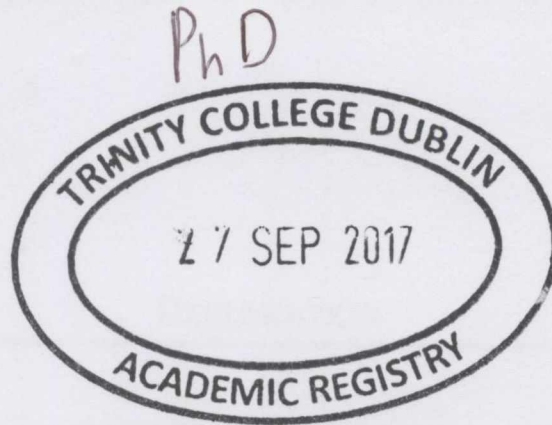
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School of Histories and Humanities

Bishop and chapter: the organisation of Irish medieval cathedrals, c. 1111–1378



**Trinity
College
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A thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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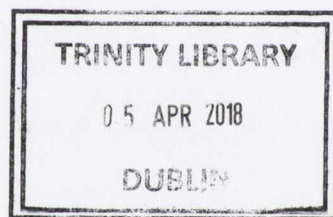
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SUMMARY

This thesis explores the organisation of Irish cathedral chapters and places them within the wider European context of medieval cathedral studies. As the seat of the bishop, cathedrals were the focal point in every diocese and the most important churches outside of Rome. The objective is not to produce a history of the liturgical life of the cathedral, but rather a study of the cogs on which the machinery of the cathedral turned – its chapter. Therefore the aim of this thesis is to examine the morphology of Irish cathedral chapters from the Synod of Ráith Bressail in 1111 to the dawn of the Great Western Schism in 1378.

Two central research questions will shape the direction of this study. Firstly, to what extent do Irish chapters mirror the ‘four-pillars’ paradigm of those in England and continental Europe? This prosopographical profiling highlights any patterns and inconsistencies between the *ecclesia inter Hibernicos* and the *ecclesia inter Anglicos*. Having anatomised the development of cathedral churches, this thesis explores how these varied and diffuse institutions functioned. It establishes the structures and internal hierarchies of the cathedral chapters in Ireland and their relationship with their bishop. In a comparative capacity it draws on existing studies of English and European cathedral structures to determine the extent to which the Irish church conformed to or deviated from either.

The second research question centres on identity and the two-nations theory popularised by Professor J.A. Watt in the 1970s. What this thesis will show is that the simple ‘two-nations’ description must be tangled and further complicated to allow for the differing shadings that are apparent when one looks at the makeup of the church personnel in this period. It will look at the movement of clerics and bishops, the value of their benefices and the paths to an episcopal seat. A number of case studies provide a forum for arguments which challenge the simplicity of this theory, the extent of the Anglo-Norman participation in the

development of the four-pillars model and the partisan attitude of the crown towards the indigenous people. The cathedral chapter of Ferns, for example, was mostly likely initiated by an Irishman and not by one of the newly settled English. Moreover, this particular Irishman was even favoured by the crown for the see of Ferns.

The twelfth century European-wide reform movement sought to introduce a more centralised, uniform church. On a national level, this was fostered through the hierarchical church, specifically the cathedrals. Papal provision, part of the pope's *plenitudo potestatis*, empowered him to elect and transfer bishops, move seats and redefine boundaries. However, as the staple commodity of a cathedral church, the right to benefices and prebends was fraught with contentions. If the crown opposed a candidate put forward by the chapter, the appellate capacity of the pope could be used. The burgeoning supremacy of the pope and the unease this engendered in the secular authorities manifested itself in the episodes of the Great Western Schism. In England this was channelled through Statutes of Provisors and Praemunire (1353–93), seriously curtailing the machinery of papal governance in English courts. This affront to papal authority, reinforced by the Statutes of Kilkenny (1366), which set down the king's right to vacant benefices, thus deprived the papacy of its efficacy. This secular muscle flexing, on the eve of the schism, illustrates the growing external tensions which directly impacted on the machinery of the cathedral churches of Ireland.

Evidently there is a need for a history of Irish cathedrals. Over the last half-century or so, the cathedral communities of medieval England have been the focus of a number of scholarly enquiries. Initiated by the pioneering efforts of Kathleen Edwards in 1949, the study of English cathedrals has continued to ignite the passion of scholars from many disciplines. Unfortunately, this enthusiasm has been slow to gather momentum in Ireland. Nevertheless, this thesis would not be possible but for the efforts of earlier Irish scholars. It will, it is hoped, be a

timely reconsideration of the work of Professor John Watt, undertaken almost fifty years ago, just as Professor Flanagan's recent study of the Irish church in the twelfth century revised the landmark initial researches of Aubrey Gwynn.

CONTENTS

<i>Declaration</i>	i
<i>Summary</i>	ii
<i>List of illustrations and maps</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
<i>Bibliographical abbreviations</i>	x
<i>Simple glossary</i>	xix
 Introduction	 1
0.1 Aims and objectives of the thesis	1
0.2 Historiography and sources	9
 Chapter 1	
The origin and evolution of cathedral chapters	20
1.1. The formation of capitular bodies from the eighth to the twelfth century	20
1.2 The function of European capitular bodies	31
1.3 The <i>principales personae</i> of cathedral communities	39
1.4 Recruitment of canons and the size of cathedral communities	52
1.5 Conclusion	57
 Chapter 2	
The formation and evolution of Irish cathedral chapters	59
2.1 The organisation of the early Irish church	59
2.2 The episcopate	75
2.3 The thirteenth century	77
2.4 The <i>principales personae</i> of Irish cathedral chapters	78
2.5 Bishops and the establishment of capitular bodies	116
2.6 Conclusion	123

Chapter 3

The monastic cathedrals	125
3.1 Introduction	125
3.2 Christ Church (Holy Trinity) cathedral, Dublin: The Augustinian cathedral	127
3.3 St Patrick's cathedral, Downpatrick: the Benedictine cathedral	132
3.4 SS Peter and Paul's cathedral at Newtown Trim, diocese of Meath	136

Chapter 4

The later medieval Irish cathedral chapters	150
4.1 Ethnic composition of cathedral chapters	150
4.2 Ecclesiastical monopolies and dispensations <i>de defectu natalium</i>	162
4.3 Career paths – promotions to the episcopate	176
4.4 Revenue and the value of dignities and benefices	184
4.5 Were Irish cathedral clergy educated?	195
4.6 Conclusion	207

Chapter 5

The composition of the episcopate and appointments to dioceses	210
5.1 Introduction	210
5.2 Methods of episcopal appointment: the role of the pope and crown	218
5.3 Government administration and the church hierarchy	226
5.4 Ethnic composition of the episcopate	229
5.5 The anglicisation of the Irish episcopate: The first English bishops in Irish dioceses	237
5.6 Government administration and the election of bishops	252
5.7 Monk bishops in the cathedral	259
5.8 Careerist bishops in the government administration	267
5.9 Irish suffragan bishops in English dioceses	272
5.10 The Great Western Schism and the Irish church hierarchy	276
5.11 Conclusion	279

Conclusion	282
Appendices	
A.1 Value of dignities in each of the four provinces	288
A.2 Table of dispensations for plural benefices	292
<i>Bibliography</i>	298

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

Illustrations

Fig. 1	<i>Imago ecclesiae</i> . Durham cathedral library ms.	70
Fig. 2	Capitular seal of Killaloe	82
Fig. 3	Capitular seal of Cashel	82
Fig. 4	Capitular seal of Waterford	82
Fig. 5	Seal of the archdeacon of Cashel	95
Fig. 6	Seal of the precentor of Limerick	106
Fig. 7	Promotion to the episcopal seat, excluding bishops	178
Fig. 8	Ethnic origin of bishops across the four ecclesiastical provinces	231
Fig. 9	Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Armagh	231
Fig. 10	Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Cashel	231
Fig. 11	Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Dublin	232
Fig. 12	Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Tuam	232

Maps

Map 1	The dioceses of Ireland in the later Middle Ages	xxv
Map 2	Diocesan boundaries in England & Wales before the conquest	27
Map 3	Diocesan boundaries in England & Wales in the later medieval period	28

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	<i>Annala rioghachta Eireann; annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the four masters from the earliest period to the year 1616</i> , ed. & trans. John O'Donovan, 7 vols (Dublin, 1851; New York, repr. 1966)
ALC	<i>The annals of Loch Cé: a chronicle of Irish affairs from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590</i> , ed. W.M. Hennessy, 2 vols (London 1871; Dublin, repr. 1939)
AU	<i>Annala Uladh ('Annals of Ulster'), otherwise Annala Senait ('Annals of Senat'): a chronicle of Irish Affairs A.D. 431 to A.D. 1540</i> , ed. W.M. Hennessey & Bartholomew MacCarthy, 4 vols (Dublin 1887–1901; repr. 1998)
<i>Anal. Hib.</i>	<i>Analecta Hibernica, including the reports of the Irish Manuscripts Commission</i> (Dublin, 1930–)
<i>Anc. rec. Dublin</i>	<i>Calendar of the ancient records of Dublin, in the possession of the municipal corporation</i> , eds Sir J.T. Gilbert & Lady Gilbert, 19 vols (Dublin, 1889–1944)
<i>Annals St Finn Barre's</i>	<i>The annals of St Fin Barre's cathedral, Cork, compiled from records in the British Museum; the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Public Record Office, London, the chapter books of the cathedral, the council books of the corporation of Cork, and other authentic sources</i> , ed. Richard Caulfield (Cork, 1871)

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- Ann. Inisf.* *The annals of Inisfallen* (Ms Rawlinson B 503), ed. and trans. Seán Mac Airt (Dublin, 1951)
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- Archiv. Hib.* *Archivium Hibernicum: or Irish historical records* (Catholic Record Society of Ireland, Maynooth, 1912–)
- Black bk Limerick* James MacCaffrey (ed.), *The black book of Limerick, with introduction and notes* (Dublin, 1907)
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- Cal. chart. rolls* *Calendar of the charter rolls, 1226–57 [etc.]* 6 vols (London, 1903–27)
- Cal. close rolls* *Calendar of the close rolls, 1272–9 [etc.]* (London, 1900–)
- Cal. doc. Ire.* *Calendar of the documents relating to Ireland, 1171–1251 [etc.]* 5 vols (London, 1875–86)

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- Cal. Gorm. reg.* *Calendar of the Gormanston register: from the original in the possession of the right honourable the viscount of Gormanston*, eds James Mills & M.J. McEnery (Dublin, 1916)
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- Cal. papal letters* *Calendar of the entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland: papal letters, 1198–1304 [etc.]* (London, 1893–)
- Cal. papal letters (petitions)* *Calendar of the entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland: petitions to the pope, 1342–1419* (London, 1896)
- Cal. pat. rolls* *Calendar of the patent rolls, 1232–47 [etc.]* (London, 1906–)
- Cal. reg. Sweteman* *The register of Milo Sweteman, archbishop of Armagh, 1361–80*, ed. Brendan Smith (Dublin, 1996)
- Charter rolls* *A calendar of the charter rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, printed under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records* (London, 1903–27)
- Chartul. St Mary's* *Chartulary of Saint Mary's abbey, Dublin [...]*, ed. J.T. Gilbert, 2 vols (London 1884–6)
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- Chronica* Roger of Dowden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols (RS, 1868–87)
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- Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum* *Monasticon Anglicanum, or the history of the ancient abbies, and other monasteries, hospitals, cathedral and collegiate churches in England and Wales. With divers French, Irish, and Scotch monasteries formerly relating to England* by Sir William Dugdale, 3 vols (London, 1693)
- ed. editor
- eds editors
- EHR* *English Historical Review*
- Exeter charters* ‘Unpublished charters relating to Ireland, 1177–82, from the archives of the city of Exeter’, by Eric St John Brooks, *RIA Proc. C*, 43 (1935–37), 313–66

<i>Fasti St Patrick's</i>	<i>The fasti of St. Patrick's, Dublin</i> , H.J. Lawlor (Dundalk, 1930)
Flanagan, 'Reg. Clogher'	'The register of the diocese of Clogher', P.J. Flanagan, <i>Clogher Record</i> 1/1 (1953), 32–7
<i>Fædera</i>	Thomas Rymer (ed), <i>Fædera [...]</i> , eds Adam Clarke & Frederick Holbrooke, 4 vols in 7 (London 1816–69)
<i>Grace's annals</i>	<i>Jacobi Grace, Kilkenniensis, annales Hiberniae</i> , ed. Richard Butler (Dublin, 1842)
Hadden & Stubbs, <i>Councils</i>	<i>Councils and ecclesiastical documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland</i> , 3 vols (Oxford, 1869–78)
Hogan, <i>Llanthony Ireland</i>	<i>The priory of Llanthony prima and secunda in Ireland 1172–1541</i> , Arlene Hogan (Dublin, 2008)
IER	<i>Irish Ecclesiastical Record. A monthly journal under episcopal sanction</i>
IHS	<i>Irish Historical Studies: the Journal of the Irish Historical Society and the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies</i>
<i>Irish exchequer payments</i>	<i>Irish exchequer payments 1270–1446</i> , ed. Philomena Connolly (Dublin, 1998)
JCHAS	<i>Journal of the Cork Archaeological and Historical Society</i>
JGAHS	<i>Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society</i>
JRSAI	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
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<i>Peritia</i>	<i>Peritia: Journal of the Medieval Academy of Ireland</i> (Cork, 1982–)
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RCB library	Representative Church Body library
RCH	<i>Rotulorum patentium et clausorum cancellariae Hiberniae calendarium</i> , ed. Edward Tresham (Dublin, 1828)
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<i>Rep. DKR</i>	<i>Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records</i>
<i>repr.</i>	reprint
RIA	Royal Irish Academy

RIA Proc.	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i>
RS	Rolls Series
RSAI Jn.	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
Ríocht na Midhe	<i>Ríocht na Midhe. Journal of the county Meath historical society</i>
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St John Brooks, Irish Llanthony	<i>The Irish cartularies of Llanthony prima & secunda</i> , ed. Eric St John Brooks (Dublin, 1953)
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TNA	The National Archives of the United Kingdom [formerly the Public Records Office (PRO), London]
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
Theiner, Vetera monumenta	<i>Vetera monumenta hibernorum et scotorum historiam illustrantia, quae ex Vaticani</i>

*Neapolis ac Florentiae tabulariis deprompsit
et ordine chronologico diposuit (Old
memorials illustrating the history of the Irish
and the Scots taken from the Vatican,
Neapolitan and Florentine archives and
arranged chronologically, ed. Augustus
Theiner (Rome, 1864)*

trans.	translated
UCC	University College, Cork
UCD	University College, Dublin
UJA	<i>Ulster Journal of Archaeology</i>

SIMPLE GLOSSARY ¹

Abbot

The title bestowed on the head or superior of an abbey.

Advowson

The right to present a member of the clergy to a particular benefice.

Annates

The first-fruits (the entire revenue of one year) paid to the pope by bishops on their appointment to a see.

Archbishop

Metropolitans who have jurisdiction over an ecclesiastical province.

Archdeacon

A cleric with a defined administrative authority delegated to him by the bishop in the whole or part of the diocese. The territory assigned to him is known as an archdeaconry which bestows on him a territorial title.

Benefice

The original meaning is a grant of land (*beneficium*) for life as a reward for services. A Benefice refers to a church endowed with revenue for the performance of divine service. The holder of a benefice is usually called the incumbent.

Bishop

The highest order of ministers in the church.

Canon

- (1) The term canon originally referred to a rule or decree of the church.
- (2) A term usually applied to secular clergy belonging to a cathedral and who ordered his life according to the canons of the church (secular canons). Canons that follow the Rule of St Augustine are known as canons regular.

Cantor

An official of the choir of the cathedral or large church, who leads the liturgical music of the church. In English and Irish cathedrals he became known as the precentor. His stall is on the north side of the choir stalls,

opposite the dean.

Capitular

Relating to a cathedral chapter, e.g. capitular election.

Cathedral

The seat of the bishop. The chief church of a diocese where the bishop has his throne and where the administration of the diocese is decided.

Chancel

An area within the main body of the church east of the nave.

Chancellor

The chancellor is one of the four principal dignitaries (dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer). He was responsible for the cathedral school and also the library. He sat on the eastern side of the choir, on the dean's side.

Chapter

- (1) A part of a monastic rule, as read daily in the chapter house of a monastery.
- (2) The assembly of the members of a monastery.
- (3) The members of a religious house in a corporate sense.
- (4) The body responsible for the government of a religious institution such as a cathedral.

Clergy/cleric

The general name given to the body of ecclesiastics of the church, in contradistinction to the laity.

Clerk

A term applied loosely to all clergy in minor orders.

Cure of souls

The spiritual charge or oversight of parishioners or lay people.

Deacon

The rank in the Christian ministry next below the presbyter (priest) and bishop. They assist the priest in the divine service.

Dean

The most senior of the four pillars (dean, precentor, chancellor and treasurer). The head of a cathedral chapter, he controls the services and administration of the cathedral, largely independent of the bishop, to

whom he ranks next. His seat is the chief stall in the choir, which is usually at the west end of the southern side of the choir opposite the precentor.

Dignity

An office in a cathedral church, such as the dean, precentor, chancellor or treasurer.

Dignitary

The holder of the dignity. For example, the person who holds the office of dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer, or archdeacon.

Diocese

The territorial unit of administration in the church.

Dispensation

A licence granted, usually by the pope, to do something otherwise canonically illegal.

Erenagh (airchinnech)

A position in the Irish church. He was a hereditary tenant of church lands and governor of the temporalities.

Four-pillars constitution

The four principal dignities in a cathedral chapter, consisting of the dean, precentor, chancellor and treasurer. The term quite literally refers to their seating position in the choir.

Monastic

Relating to an order which follows a rule.

Incumbent

The holder of an office in the cathedral church.

Installation

The formal induction of a canon or prebendary to a seat or stall in a cathedral or collegiate church.

Postulant

One who is undergoing a preliminary stage of testing as a candidate for an episcopal seat.

Prebend and prebendary

A prebend is a benefice in a cathedral church, and a prebendary is a member of the cathedral chapter who holds the benefice. The prebend was supposed to supply (*prebere*) a living to the holder, and in the early Middle Ages it became usual to divide up the endowment of the cathedral into separate portions, one for each member of the chapter. In the late eleventh and early twelfth century Germany, *praebenda* could be used to mean the entire income of a secular or monastic community, after which time it referred to the individual share of each canon in the revenue of the church. In England, its meaning was the canon's benefice with its material appurtenances, in lands, tithes, churches, etc.

Precentor

One of the four principal dignitaries, dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer. He is a member of the chapter who ranks next to the dean, and commonly delegates his duties to a deputy known as the succentor. The precentor is responsible for the choral services.

Prior

In a priory (the normal house of the Augustinian order) the head of the convent in an abbey the second-in-command or a deputy head.

Proctor

In ecclesiastical terms, a proctor is one who acts on the appointment of the bishops and as his representative.

Provision

Normally referring to papal provision, which is the pope's right to appoint an incumbent to a benefice.

Provisors and premunire (Statute of)

A series of royal statutes introduced to check the practice of papal provision. The first (1351) laid down that the king and other lords should present to benefices of their own and not the Bishop of Rome. The second (1353) applied the penalty of premunire to any who sued in a foreign court or did not accept a judgement in an English court. The third (1365) was a

confirmation of the first. The fourth (1389) laid down that benefices accepted contrary to the earlier statutes were void and forfeited, and provided penalties for anyone enforcing a papal provision by legal process or excommunication.

Provost

An officer in some cathedral churches and in collegiate churches. In some of the earlier cathedral churches he was the head of the chapter, whereas in certain Irish dioceses, he seemed to replace the chancellor. In collegiate churches he was the head of the college of canons.

Official

Also known as the official principal. He was an officer appointed by the bishop and entrusted to exercise his coercive jurisdiction.

Sacristan

An official who is responsible for the contents of the church, especially those used in divine worship.

Secular clergy

Priests who are not 'regular', i.e. who do not belong to a religious order.

Suffragan bishop

- (1) Any bishop in relation to his archbishop or metropolitan.
- (2) An assistant bishop appointed to help the bishop of a diocese.

Succentor

The deputy of the precentor. He is generally a minor canon.

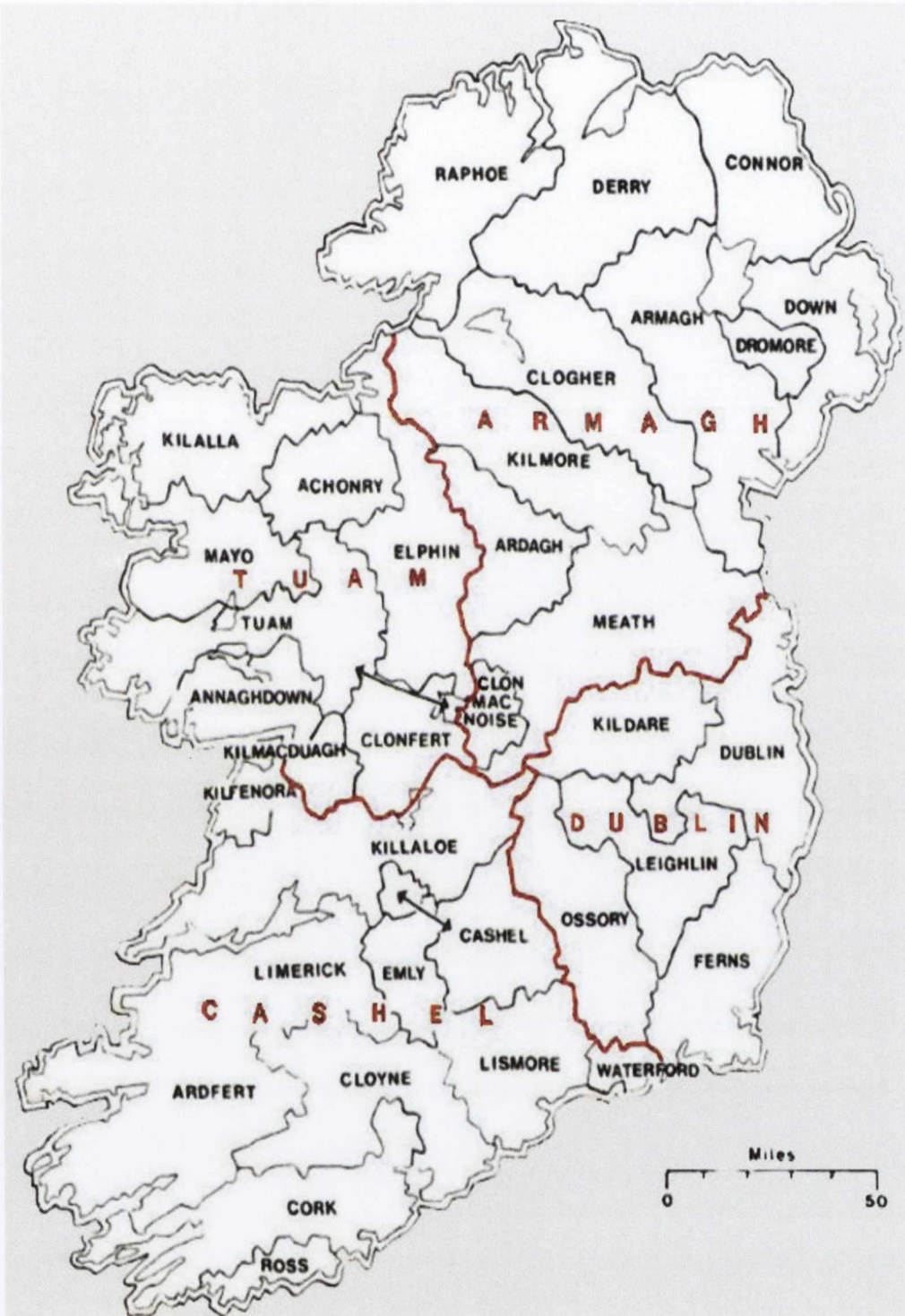
Synod

A formal meeting (council) of bishops and representatives of churches convened for the purposes of regulating doctrine or discipline.

Treasurer

One of the four principal dignitaries, dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer. He is responsible for the safe keeping of the treasury, which contained the valuables of the church, the chapter seal, the muniments, or the diocesan taxes collected by the chapter.

¹ The glossary is taken from the following texts: W.E. Addis, *A catholic dictionary, containing an account of the doctrine, discipline, rites, ceremonies, councils, and religious orders of the catholic church* (London, 1957); Julia Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends: a comparison of twelfth-century German and English practice', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37 (1986), 537–8; Jerome Bertram, *A simple glossary of Catholic terms* (2009); F.L. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian church* (London, 1958); W.F. Hook & W.R.W. Stephens (eds), *A church dictionary: a practical manual of reference for clergymen and students* 14th edn., (London, 1887); R.E. Lantham, *Medieval Latin word list from British and Irish sources* (Oxford, repr. 1980); Ferdinand Lot & Robert Fortier, *Histoire des institutions Françaises au moyen age, tome trisième institutions ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1962); Gerald O'Collins & E.G. Farrugia, *A concise dictionary of theology, revised and expanded edition* (Edinburgh, 2000); Oxford English Dictionary online, www.oed.com; J.S. Purvis, *Dictionary of ecclesiastical terms* (Edinburgh, 1962); P. Torquebiau, *Dictionnaire de droit canonique: contenant tour les termes du droit canonique, avec un sommaire de l'histoire et des institutions et de létat actuel de la discipline, tome Troisième* (Paris, 1942).



Map 1 The dioceses of Ireland in the later Middle Ages. J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (Cambridge, 1970), 53.

INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

THIS THESIS explores the foundation, organisation and structure of Irish cathedrals in the later medieval period. It focuses on the body of clerics, known as chapters, which managed these institutions, as well as examining the composition of the Irish episcopate and its relationship to its cathedral chapter. In some ways this thesis is an expansion of Professor John Watt's theory of the two-nations dichotomy in the Irish church, as indeed any study of later medieval Ireland is, because Ireland was a conflicted place, divided between the English colonists, on the one hand, and the native Irish population on the other.¹ How this schism between the two nations impacted on the composition of Irish cathedral chapters and their diocesans is central to this investigation. Previously, historians of medieval Ireland have tended towards the view that the conflict between the two nations was inherent in the Irish church and, as the Middle Ages progressed, ethnic tensions reverberated throughout. The following study will show that whilst there was a division in lay society between the English of Ireland and the Gaelic Irish, it was not to the fore within the church and that interaction between the two communities was actually facilitated by the church.² For instance, Gilla Críst Ua Mucaráin, bishop of Louth (c. 1187–1193), witnessed the arrival in Uriel of the English settlers. The numerous benefices, which he granted in his diocese to the newcomers, demonstrated his acceptance and willingness to cooperate with the new status quo.³ One could also refer to the preferment by the crown

¹ J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (Cambridge, 1970).

² A clear-cut division between the two nations is exemplified in the following works: Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 173–97; Robin Frame, "'Les Engleys nee en Irlande': the English political identity in medieval Ireland", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 3 (1993), 83–103, esp. 93, Katharine Simms, 'The archbishops and Armagh and the O'Neills, 1347–1471', *IHS* 19 (1974), 38–55, esp. 38.

³ H.J. Lawlor, 'A charter of Cristin bishop of Louth', *RIA Proc.*, C, 32 (1914–16), 28–40; Eric St John Brooks, *The Irish cartularies of Llanthony prima & secunda* (Dublin, 1953), no. 9; *Reg. St Thos*

of Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid, to the archbishopric of Cashel in 1206 (chapter 4) as an example of how ethnic tensions were not so important in the early days of the colony as opposed to the more hardened attitudes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Additionally, it will be shown that Gaelic Irish clerics operated within the English areas of the lordship and sometimes beyond, in England itself, in order to advance their career in the episcopate (chapters 3 & 4).

Nevertheless, outside of the church, the two-nations divide was a real challenge and differences existed between the church in Gaelic Irish-controlled areas and the church in the Lordship. The archdiocese of Armagh, for instance, was split between the church *inter Anglicos* and the church *inter Hibernicos*.⁴ This division inadvertently reinforces the notion of a church existing between two nations, yet it glosses over the complexity of the situation as a whole. Professor Watt was not alone in promulgating the idea of a divided two nations as is evidenced in the

abbey, no. 314; Aubrey Gwynn, 'Armagh and Louth in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *Seanchas Ardmhaca* 1/2 (1955), 17–38, esp. 23.

⁴ On this point see Watt, *The church and the two nations*; idem, 'Ecclesia inter Anglicos et inter Hibernicos: confrontation and coexistence in the medieval diocese and province of Armagh', in J.F. Lydon (ed.), *The English in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1984), 46–64; idem 'The church and the two nations in late medieval Armagh', in W.J. Sheils & Diana Woods (eds), *The churches, Ireland and the Irish* (Oxford, 1989), 37–54; idem, 'Gaelic polity and cultural identity', in Art Crosgrove (ed.) *A new history of Ireland II: medieval Ireland, 1169–1534* (Oxford, 1987), 314–51, esp. 340; Katherine Walsh, 'The clerical estate in later medieval Ireland: alien settlement or element of conciliation?', in John Bradley (ed.) *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland: studies presented to F.X. Martin O.S.A.* (Kilkenny, 1988), 361–77; eadem, 'One church and two nations: a uniquely Irish phenomenon?', in David Loades & Katherine Walsh (eds), *Faith and identity. Christian political experience* (Oxford, 1990), 81–98. For Armagh and the church *inter Hibernicos* and *inter Anglicos* see the introduction to William Reeves, *Acts of Archbishop Colton in his metropolitan visitation in the diocese of Derry* (Dublin, 1850), esp. xiii–xiv. See also Aubrey Gwynn, *The medieval province of Armagh, 1470–1545* (Dundalk, 1946); idem, 'Armagh and Louth', 17–37.

historiography – Aubrey Gwynn and Canice Mooney were equally convinced.⁵ Mooney's anachronistic perspective saw the Gaelic Irish church as backward and not in step with continental developments. In my opinion, rather than promoting an ethnic divide, the church was burdened by the unsuccessful attempts of a secular government to enforce a divide.

Attempts to hamper the promotion of Irish clerics to high ecclesiastical positions occurred throughout the period in question. In 1217, a mandate by the regency government ordered the justiciar (Geoffrey de Marisco) not to permit the election of native Irishmen to cathedral churches. Again, in 1285, government advised the church hierarchy that no Irishman should be made archbishop or bishop. The colonial government remained steadfast in its exclusion of Irishmen from ecclesiastical offices when it produced a mandate in the sixth year of the reign of Edward II (1312–13), which proclaimed:

for various causes we have established that no *mere Irishman* shall be admitted in religion amongst the English in a land of [the king's] peace or in ... parts of Ireland on account of the discords frequently arising between such English and Irish.⁶

In 1360 and again in 1361 the government introduced statutes allowing loyal Irishmen to live peacefully among the English.⁷ Five years later, in 1366, the Statutes of Kilkenny were issued which had a markedly different tone.⁸ These statutes, incorporating the language of the previous rulings, went a step further

⁵ Aubrey Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries* (Dublin, 1968); idem, *The medieval province of Armagh*; Canice Mooney, *The church in Gaelic Ireland: thirteenth to fifteenth centuries* (Dublin, 1969).

⁶ See J.F. Ferguson, 'The "mere English" and the "mere Irish"', *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, 1 (1850–51), 508–12.

⁷ *Stat. Ire. John to Henry V.*, 273 (3 Hen. II), 420 (25 Ed. III), 435 (40 Ed. III), 445 (40 Ed. III), 481 (4 Richard II).

⁸ G.J. Hand, 'The forgotten Statutes of Kilkenny: a brief survey', *Irish Jurist* 1/2 (1966), 299–312; Peter Crooks, '"Hobbes", "dogs" and politics in the Ireland of Lionel of Antwerp, c. 1361–6', *Haskins Society Journal* 16 (2005), 138–44; David Green, 'The Statute of Kilkenny (1366): legislation and the state', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 27/2 (2014), 236–62.

in banning the Irish from joining religious houses and stipulating that beneficed persons must speak English. These policies were only ever partially enforced, undermining their effectiveness as a whole. In addition to this, the efforts of the government to exclude Irishmen from religious offices were not endorsed, or encouraged, by the papacy who tried to rule the church with an even hand.

Successive popes were cautious when it came to Irish affairs and they tended to intervene only when ethnic tensions interfered with church matters. In 1381–2 a delegation of Anglo-Irish clergymen petitioned Urban VI (1378–89) that the bishops in Ireland should be able to speak English. Urban refused to support the petition although none of the ‘politically difficult bishops’ were appointed to Irish sees after this date.⁹ There are two famous papal provisions in 1400 and 1401, which illustrate that the papacy did not endorse racial prohibition. Both concern the racially exclusive St Mary’s Cistercian abbey of Granard in the diocese of Ardagh. Hence, the statutes of the abbey prohibited Irishmen from entering the religious house. Because of this the pope was compelled to order the bishop of Ardagh to facilitate the acceptance of Maurice Olloran into the Cistercian abbey, and a year later of Adam Margatyre, ‘notwithstanding their statutes, especially those which provide that none but an Englishman can be so received’.¹⁰ Circumstances such as these are rare yet they could give the false impression that the church in Ireland was fiercely segregated, in spite of the fact that there are only a handful of such cases reported in the records. Moreover, papal provisions prove that the papacy did not discriminate on ethnic grounds in its collations to benefices. In some cases it had to intervene to find a ‘happy medium’ between the two nations as is evident in the appointments of Albert of

⁹ J.A. Watt, ‘The papacy and Ireland in the fifteenth century’, in Barrie Dobson (ed.), *Church, politics and patronage in the fifteenth century* (Gloucester, 1984), 140.

¹⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 331, 346.

Cologne (Suerbeer) and his successor Reginald of Bologna to the archbishopric of Armagh.¹¹

The origins and evolution of Irish cathedral chapters are underpinned by developments across Latin Christendom, where in the seventh century, Bishop Chrodegang of Metz first introduced communal living for the secular canons at his cathedral (chapter 1).¹² The Norman conquest of England transformed the Anglo-Saxon church both architecturally (through the vast financial resources of the Normans) and ideologically so that, in its aftermath, the cathedrals of England were comparable to their continental European counterparts.¹³ In Ireland the transformation occurred at a much slower pace during the long twelfth century and was instigated by native bishops but with the involvement of two foreign archbishops of Canterbury – Lanfranc (1070–89) and Anselm (1089–93).¹⁴

¹¹ For Albert of Cologne, see Patrick Conlan, 'Albrecht Suerbeer, archbishop of Armagh: "Albrecht the German"', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 20/1 (2004), 19–23; M.T. Flanagan, "Suerbeer, Albert (Albertus, Albrecht)", in James McGuire & James Quinn (eds), *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, 2009), (<http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8368>). By comparison very little has been written about Reginald of Bologna. See M.H. MacInerney, *A history of the Irish Dominicans: from original sources and unpublished records, vol 1 (Irish Dominican bishops, 1224–1307)* (Dublin, 1916), 66–131.

¹² Chrodegang of Metz and his ideas on communal living are detailed in Jerome Bertram's, *The Chrodegang rules: the rules for the common life of the secular clergy from the eighth and ninth centuries. Critical texts with translations and commentary* (Aldershot, 2005); see also idem, *Vita communis: the common life of the secular clergy* (Gloucester, 2009).

¹³ Still the best text on the evolution of the secular cathedral chapters in England is Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals in the Middle Ages. A constitutional study with special reference to the fourteenth century* (Manchester, 1967).

¹⁴ For Lanfranc see *The letters of Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury*, eds & trans. Helen Clover & Margaret Gibson (Oxford, 1979); Aubrey Gwynn, 'Lanfranc and the Irish church', *IER* 58 (1941), 1–15; *IER* 58 (1941), 97–109; M.T. Flanagan, *The transformation of the Irish church in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries* (Woodbridge, 2010), 31–2, 39–41, 208–9. For Anselm's involvement see Aubrey Gwynn, 'St Anselm and the Irish church', *IER* 59 (1942), 1–14; John

The formation of Irish cathedral chapters and their adoption of the four-square pillars design, which reflected the seating arrangements of the four principal dignities in the cathedral choir,¹⁵ evolved over much of the thirteenth century. Even so, not all of the Irish cathedrals conformed to the standard pattern and, as will be discussed, provincial trends prevailed (chapter 2). Patterns in office-holding which have up till now been regarded as distinctly Irish will be shown to have similarities with some of the cathedrals of continental Europe. The introduction of cathedral dignities into Irish cathedrals is considered in relation to the ethnic divide of the Anglo-Norman colonists, on the one hand, and the native Irish clergymen on the other. The prevailing view that the first English bishops of Irish dioceses precipitated the introduction of Englishmen into cathedral chapters as part of the anglicisation process is challenged and an alternate view is presented (chapter 2.3).

The monastic cathedral was a rarity across Latin Christendom and usually considered an English phenomenon. Ireland, however, had three: Christ Church cathedral in Dublin, St Patrick's cathedral in Downpatrick and SS Peter and Paul's cathedral at Newtown Trim. Much ink has been spilt on the history of Christ Church, more so than any other Irish medieval cathedral. Downpatrick has also received its fair share of academic attention but Newtown Trim has remained elusive, until now. Since they were dictated by a rule, monastic cathedrals were governed differently from their secular counterparts. Due to their minority on the Irish ecclesiastical stage, the monastic cathedrals are not the main focus of this study; nevertheless they merit an explanation (chapter 3).

Fleming, *Gille of Limerick (c.1070 –1145): architect of a medieval church* (Dublin, 2001), esp. 96–7; Martin Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Peritia* 14 (2000), 111–60; *The transformation of the Irish church*, esp. 45–54.

¹⁵ The four-square pillars constitution is explained more extensively in chapter one and is defined in the glossary, xix.

By the fourteenth century, secular Irish cathedral chapters largely resembled those found across the Christian world in that they were managed by a group of clerics, which was headed up by an archdeacon and a dean and a number of other named dignities. Nevertheless, a number of events, both local and international, occurred over the century, which had the potential to dramatically alter the composition of Ireland's cathedral clergy (chapter 4). The Bruce invasion ignited a Gaelic resurgence, which incited widespread division between the two nations.¹⁶ Internationally, the plague epidemic led to universal population decline and opened up the possibility of social and geographic mobility on a scale never before experienced.¹⁷ A large number of settler clergy returned to England where more prosperous positions awaited them, whilst numbers of Gaelic Irish clergy began operating in the Leinster region and other English-controlled areas.¹⁸

Against the background of these events, the ethnic origins of the cathedral clergy as a class are ascertained, as far as is possible. This prosopographical study will show that during this period there was a sharp rise in the number of dispensations granted by the Pope, particularly for illegitimate sons who would otherwise have been excluded from an ecclesiastical career. The extent of family monopolies of ecclesiastical benefices, particularly in the western dioceses, was not as great as one might assume. Indeed the old hereditary lineages in the Irish church, whilst not as popular as they had once been, continued into the fourteenth and even fifteenth centuries. Yet illegitimate clergymen and family monopolies were not characteristics distinct to the Irish church: remnants existed in the English and continental churches too. The fourth chapter also explores potential career paths to the episcopate – the holders of which dignities

¹⁶ The collection of essays edited by Seán Duffy is perhaps the most comprehensive text on the subject. See Seán Duffy (ed.), *Robert the Bruce's Irish wars: the invasions of Ireland 1306-1329* (Stroud, 2002).

¹⁷ Maria Kelly, *A history of the Black Death in Ireland* (Stroud, 2001).

¹⁸ Virginia Davis, 'Irish clergy in late medieval England', *IHS* 32/126 (Nov., 2000), 152–7.

were most likely to be promoted to an episcopal see? Were there provincial trends? And were these reflections of widespread trends across the Latin church? The disparity of monetary values of dignities across the four provinces is used to assess the variances between the church in Gaelic Ireland and the church in the colony, with some surprising results (appendix 1). The last section seeks to comprehend the educational requirements for cathedral canons and the level of education amongst this class. Very little is known about education in the cathedral schools of Ireland and many clerics who aspired to positions in the church hierarchy travelled abroad to study at some of the famous universities, such as Paris, Oxford or Cambridge, because, in Ireland (apart from one aborted fourteenth-century experiment), a university was not established until 1592.

A study of the organisation and administration of the cathedrals of medieval Ireland is not complete without a corresponding study of the bishops under whose management the cathedrals existed. The composition of the episcopate and the patterns of appointments to dioceses do not necessarily correspond with the composition of cathedral chapters. Although blighted by the two-nations divide (for example, after Lorcán Ua Tuathail, only those of Anglo-Norman descent ever ruled in the archdiocese of Dublin), methods of episcopal appointment were very much in tune with the rest of Latin Christendom. For instance, the fourteenth century saw a sharp rise in the number of papal provisions, which is reflected across the Roman church. The numbers of monk bishops and careerist bishops are also investigated where diocesan and provincial trends are examined with a view to understanding the composition of the Irish episcopate more fully.

The Synod of Ráith Bressail (1111) is a landmark date since it was the first reforming council to address Irish diocesan structures and the organisation of

the hierarchical church.¹⁹ The Great Western Schism (1378) marks the cut-off date for this thesis. It was chosen because it is an important date in the history of the medieval church and so corresponds with the opening date of 1111. More importantly, however, the schism divided the whole of Latin Christendom, and threatened the very existence of the Latin church. In Ireland, it served to deepen the cultural divide between the two nations, which is evidenced in the routine life of cathedral chapters.

Noticeably absent from this thesis is an architectural or archaeological appraisal of the cathedral churches of Ireland. An understanding of the organisation and the mechanisms by which Irish cathedral churches were governed does not depend on the architectural style, which awaits its own independent study. What this thesis will demonstrate is that the development of Irish cathedral chapters was in line with the rest of Latin Christendom and that native Irish clergymen were the architects of the four-pillars model in Ireland. It will further demonstrate the differences between the provinces, particularly in terms of the two-nations divide. It will also show that while the cultural and ethnic divide so inherent in Irish society – on a local, island-wide and even supra-national level – at times over-spilled into church matters, overall, the church endorsed a more amicable interaction between the two ethnicities.

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND GUIDE TO SOURCES

Primary sources

In contrast to their English, or even continental European, counterparts, the records of the Irish medieval cathedral chapters are lamentably sparse. All historians of medieval Irish history deplore the destruction wreaked in 1922 on the records of the administration, which were held in the public records office in

¹⁹ Two of the most prominent modern works on the topic are: *The transformation of the Irish church*; Colmán Etchingham, 'Episcopal hierarchy in Connacht and Tairdelbach Ua Conchobair', *JGAHS* 52 (2000), 13–29.

the Four Courts.²⁰ This was not the first time such an incident had occurred. In 1630, King Charles I lamented that due to the rebellions, the 'ancient records and charters concerning the dean and chapter of the cathedral church of St Patrick of Armagh, have been lost, burned or defaced'.²¹ The task of the historian has been to find alternative methods of piecing together Ireland's lost history.²² The recently launched CIRCLE database is one of the alternative resources to be employed in this thesis. It has reconstructed the documents of the medieval Irish chancery. This arduous task is no less significant for the ecclesiastical historian. In fact, the former editor of the *Calendar of papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Dr Michael Haren, has said that 'more than most historiography, that of the late medieval Irish church (because it is still at such a pioneering stage) is jigsaw-like and one new piece can be crucial either in providing or upsetting a framework'.²³

The immense source material available for English cathedrals, such as the audited accounts of the chapter, the chapter act books, the episcopal registers and formularies, are simply not available for Irish cathedrals where primary sources are at best scant, and at worst non-existent.²⁴ Nevertheless, we can still piece together some of the histories of these institutions. Many of the surviving

²⁰ See Peter Crooks (ed.), *CIRCLE*, <https://chancery.tcd.ie/content/destruction-irish-chancery-rolls-1304-1922> for a general background to the destruction of the public records in 1922.

²¹ *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Chas I*, ed. J. Morrin (Dublin, 1864), 565.

²² Philomena Connolly, *Medieval record sources* (Dublin, 2002).

²³ Michael Haren, 'Social structures of the Irish church: a new source in papal penitentiary dispensations for illegitimacy', in Herasgegeben von Ludwig Schmugge & Mitarbeit von Béatrice Wiggerhauser (eds), *Illegitimität im spätmittelalter* (München, 1994), 207–26, at 209.

²⁴ For information on cathedral monographs in England see Eric Fernie, 'The cathedral monograph' in Janet Backhouse (ed.), *The medieval English cathedral. Papers in honour of Pamela Tudor-Craig. Proceedings of the 1998 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donnington, 2003), 52–55. For a survey of the source material for English cathedrals see Diana Greenway, 'Cathedral clergy in England and Wales: *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae*', *Medieval Prosopography* 1 (1980), 15–22, at 16–7.

materials of both secular and ecclesiastical government – of Irish, English and papal origin – have been transcribed and published in calendars. Although meagre, diocesan registers and, in some cases, charters from ecclesiastical houses have survived. This does not necessarily mean that such records include data on cathedral appointments. In fact, detailed information on cathedral appointments is most rare. Remarkably, a considerable set of episcopal acta from the registers of the archbishops of Armagh has survived.²⁵ The two Dublin cathedrals (St Patrick's and Christ Church) are by far the best-served cathedrals in terms of primary source materials, many of which have been edited or calendared.²⁶ The *Dignitas decani* of St Patrick's, an early sixteenth-century register, has transcripts of earlier deeds and documents from the twelfth century on. Christ Church has the best profile, with two surviving registers, *Liber niger* (fourteenth century) and *Liber albus* (sixteenth century), both containing copies of earlier documents; the *Book of obits*, which comprises the anniversaries of the

²⁵ D.A. Chart (ed.), *The register of John Swayne, archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland, 1418–39* (Belfast, 1935); H.W. Love (ed.), *The records of the archbishops of Armagh, being an indexed catalogue of manuscripts, documents and books in the archiepiscopal registry of Armagh* (Dundalk, 1965); W.G.H. Quigley & E.F.D. Roberts (eds), *Registrum Johannis Mey: the register of John Mey, archbishop of Armagh, 1443–1456* (Belfast, 1972); Brendan Smith (ed.), *The register of Milo Sweteman, archbishop of Armagh, 1361–1380* (Dublin, 1996), M.A. Sughi (ed.), *Registrum Octaviani, alias liber niger: the register of Octavian de Palatio, archbishop of Armagh, 1478–1513* 2 vols (Dublin, 1999); Brendan Smith (ed.), *The register of Nicholas Fleming: archbishop of Armagh 1404–1416* (Dublin, 2003).

²⁶ H.F. Berry (ed.), *Register of wills and inventories of the diocese of Dublin in the time of archbishops Tregury and Walton, 1457–1483 from the original manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1898); H.J. Lawlor (ed.), *A calendar of the liber niger and liber albus of Christ Church, Dublin* (Dublin, 1908); N.B. White (ed.), 'The reportorium viride of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin, 1533', *Anal. Hib.* 10 (Jul., 1941), 171, 173–222; idem, *Dignitas decani*; A. Coleman (ed.), 'Obligationes pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis, 1421–1520', *Archiv. Hib.* 2 (1913), 1–37, 39–72.

deceased cathedral clergy and a list of the relics of the cathedral.²⁷ The archbishops' registers, *Crede mihi* and the *Liber niger Alani*, which contain documents from the thirteenth century on, have likewise been, respectively, edited and calendared.²⁸ For the diocese of Ossory there is the fourteenth-century *Red book of Ossory*,²⁹ preserved in the Ossory diocesan archives at Kilkenny, but edited and printed by H.J. Lawlor and latterly digitised by the Representative Church Body Library in 2008. Limerick benefits from the fourteenth-century *Black book of Limerick*,³⁰ which Geoffrey Hand pointed out has a copied charter for the cathedral chapter dating to 1205, during Bishop Donatus's episcopate.³¹ As Hand showed with Limerick, many of the registers have material copied from earlier documents; containing information relating to the rights of the bishop, the administration of his episcopacy, papal bulls, royal grants, appointments, resignations, and disciplinary measures.³² There is an

²⁷ J.C. Crosthwaite (ed.), *The book of obits and martyrology of the cathedral church of Holy Trinity, commonly called Christ Church, Dublin* (Dublin, 1844). The manuscript is preserved in Trinity College Archive.

²⁸ J.T. Gilbert (ed.), *'Crede mihi': The most ancient register book of the archbishops of Dublin before the Reformation now for the first time printed from the original manuscript* (Dublin, 1897); Charles McNeill (ed.), *Calendar of archbishop Alen's register, c. 1172–1534, prepared and edited from the original in the registry of the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough and Kildare by Charles McNeill; with an index compiled by Liam Price* (Dublin, 1950).

²⁹ H.J. Lawlor (ed.), 'Calendar of the liber ruber of the diocese of Ossory', *RIA Proc.* 27 (1908), 159–208. The book contains transcripts of documents relating to the diocese between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.

³⁰ James MacCaffrey (ed.), *The black book of Limerick, with introduction and notes* (Dublin, 1907).

³¹ G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Mary's cathedral, Limerick', in J.A. Watt, J.B. Morrall & F.X. Martin (eds), *Medieval studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn, S.J.* (Dublin, 1961), 75.

³² Raymond Refaüssé, *Church of Ireland records (Maynooth research guides for Irish local history 2)* (Dublin, 2006), 20.

extensive record of fifteenth-century annates (diocesan valuations), which have been calendared and printed in the journal *Archivium Hibernicum*.³³

The principal primary source for this thesis is the multi-volume series of *Calendar of papal letters* (20 volumes published to date). The papal calendars contain an abundance of information regarding the dioceses, the cathedrals, and the church in Ireland as a whole. Furthermore, Augustus Theiner's calendared edition of materials in the Vatican archives relating to Ireland has numerous references to Irish cathedrals from the thirteenth century.³⁴ The records of the English and Irish administration, although of more limited value, have helped to fill in gaps left by the ecclesiastical records. Naturally these records are of greater use for the churches within the Lordship, where the king's writ extended. They contain licences to elect, information regarding episcopal vacancies, and letters and documents which correspond with those of the papal administration. The CIRCLE database has been a great advantage when lacunae occur in the ecclesiastical records.

During the reign of Richard II (1377–99), administrative changes took place at Westminster, which saw entries regarding Irish matters less frequently recorded in the English patent and close rolls. The annates of the fifteenth century would have been an invaluable source of information had they been enforced in Ireland during the early period. Record keeping, by English standards, was underdeveloped and Michael Haren added the caveat that whilst later destruction of

³³ So far sixteen dioceses have been printed in *Archiv. Hib.*: 'Obligationes pro annatis': Dublin, Kildare 2 (1913); Killaloe, Limerick 10 (1943); Lismore, Waterford 12 (1946); Ferns 18 (1955); Ossory 20 (1957); Ardfer, Clonfert 21 (1958); Elphin 22 (1959); Cloyne 24 (1961); Tuam 26 (1963); Cashel, Emly 28 (1966); Cork, Ross 29 (1970).

³⁴ Augustin Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum historiam illustrantia quae ex Vaticani, Neapolis ac Florentiae tabulariis depromsit et ordine chronologico disposuit* (Old Memorials illustrating the history of the Irish and Scots taken from the Vatican, Neapolitan and Florentine archives and arranged chronologically (Rome, 1864).

the records is the predominant reason why Ireland suffers from a lack of archival documents, another source, which cannot be ignored, is the contemporary neglect of record-keeping. As an example of such neglect Haren cites the register of the bishop of Meath. One could assume that Meath, a diocese well within the royal government's sphere of influence, was at the forefront of administrative developments, following the example set by English contemporaries. However, the fourteenth-century register of the diocese was in such a bad state that it was illegible, even in its own time.³⁵

The approach of the medieval Irish administration to record keeping was careless as was observed by one sixteenth-century commentator:

there is noe Parliament records here but a fewe and those sithence the time of H. 6, remaining in the Mester of the Rolls office here (and not elsewhere) to be founde, saveing for other records remaining with the chiefe Remembranser, the Auditer and Surveyor, concerning her Majesties revenues and casualties only, and some fewe in the office of chiefe plase.³⁶

In terms of the western dioceses, for which material is rather lean, the thesis benefits from the many annals and genealogical tracts, as well as from papal records. The works of later antiquarians and collectors of manuscripts have also been of immense help in filling in lost details. For instance, Sir James Ware, an avid collector of manuscripts, produced eleven significant historical volumes drawing on an array of sources. He paid particular attention to episcopal succession, producing *Archiepiscoporum cassiliensium et Tuamensium vitae* in 1626, followed two years later by a catalogue of Leinster bishops. These works

³⁵ Michael Haren, 'Social structures of the Irish church', 208; G.O. Sayles, 'Ecclesiastical process and the parsonage of Stabannon in 1351. A study of the medieval Irish church in action', *RIA Proc. C*, 4 (1952–3), 21.

³⁶ Advice and directions for summoning a Parliament in Ireland, written long since by a learned anonymous lawyer, found amongst Mr. Selden's Papers, MS. Bodley, Rawl. D., 922, ff. 53v–54, taken from M.V. Clarke, *Medieval representation and consent. A study of early parliaments in England and Ireland, with special reference to the modus tenendi parliamentum* (London, 1936), 36.

were later amalgamated, with supplementary sources, when Ware produced his greatest tome *De praesulibus Hiberniae* (1665), which detailed all the dioceses in Ireland.³⁷ Local sources and the work of antiquarians should not be underestimated, many of whom transcribed and printed documents that are no longer extant. The first significant history to be produced was Monck Mason's *History and antiquities of the collegiate and cathedral church of St Patrick*.³⁸ The value of Mason's history lies in the appendices which, as G.J. Hand has remarked, 'show the author patiently to have steeped himself in the original records of the cathedral and the diocese, while the forty-six large pages of selected texts which he appended display his accuracy and care in transcription'.³⁹ Mason was an avid chronicler, and his history of Christ Church, although never published, is housed in the Manuscripts and Archives Research Library of Trinity College Dublin, along with other documents appertaining to the provinces of Dublin, Armagh, Cashel and Tuam.⁴⁰ Other nineteenth-century antiquarians, such as Michael James Hardiman, John O'Donovan, Anthony Cogan and Michael Comerford quote passages at length from original documents that have since disappeared or been destroyed.⁴¹ More recently, historians are displaying an increasing interest in

³⁷ Sir James Ware, *De praesulibus Hiberniae, commentarius, a prima gentis Hibernicae ad fidem Christianum conversionem, ad nostra usque tempora...* (Dublin, 1665). Ware is best known for the work printed posthumously, *The antiquities and history of Ireland* (Dublin, 1705).

³⁸ A manuscript version of Mason's history is preserved in the Manuscripts & Archives Research Library, Trinity College, Dublin, IE TCD MS 10529.

³⁹ G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, 1: the early period', *Reportorium Novum* 3/2 (1964), 229–48, at 230.

⁴⁰ Manuscript draft of the 'History of the cathedral of the Holy Trinity, commonly called Christ Church, from its foundation to the year 1809', IE TCD MS 10530. 'Extracts from ecclesiastical records of the provinces of Dublin, Armagh, Cashel and Tuam (mostly mediaeval to 17th c.) 5 vols, IE TCD MS 1782–6 (S. 2. 5–9).

⁴¹ See for example, Próinséas Ní Chatháin, Siobhán Fitzpatrick & H.B. Clarke (eds), *Pathfinders to the past: the antiquarian road to Irish historical writing, 1640–1960* (Dublin, 2012). James Hardiman's *History of the town and country of the town of Galway from the earliest period to the present time* (Dublin, 1820), contains transcriptions of original documents, many of which no longer exist. John O'Donovan produced the first fully translated edition of the *Annála Rioghachta*

local studies and there is a widespread enthusiasm (supported by the Irish Manuscripts Commission) to disseminate printed versions of original manuscripts.

Secondary sources

This thesis is influenced by the pursuit of academics in England where, over the last half-century or so, the cathedral communities have been the focus of a number of scholarly ventures. Initiated by the pioneering efforts of Kathleen Edwards in 1949, the study of English cathedrals has continued to ignite the passion of scholars from many disciplines. Unfortunately in Ireland this enthusiasm has been slow to gather momentum, as there has been a tendency towards insularity. Consequently, and indeed fortuitously, this thesis has been stimulated and informed by the sheer abundance of scholarship from abroad.⁴² My research represents the first attempt to understand the formation of Irish

Éireann. Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616. Edited from MSS in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy and of Trinity College Dublin with a translation and copious notes 7 vols (Dublin, 1848–51). Anthony Cogan compiled a diocesan history, *The diocese of Meath, ancient and modern* 3 vols (Dublin, 1862–70). Dr. Michael Comerford, bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, is best known for *Collections relating to the dioceses of Kildare and Leighlin* 3 vols (Dublin, 1883–6).

⁴² See for instance, A.H. Thompson, *The English clergy and their organisation in the later Middle Ages, the Ford lectures for 1933* (Oxford, 1947); Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*; Diana Greenway, 'Cathedral clergy in England and Wales: *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae*', 15–22; Julia Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends: a comparison of twelfth century German and English practice', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37 (1986), 536–67; David Lepine, 'The origins and careers of the canons of Exeter cathedral, 1300–1455', in Christopher Harper Bill (ed.), *Religious belief and ecclesiastical careers in later medieval England. Proceedings of the conference held at Strawberry Hill, Easter, 1989* (Woodbridge, 1991), 87–120; idem, *A brotherhood of canons serving God*; M.J. Pearson, 'The creation and development of the St Asaph cathedral chapter, 1141–1293', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 40 (2000), 35–56; idem, 'The creation of the Bangor cathedral chapter', *The Welsh Historical Review* 20 (2000), 167–81; Julia Barrow, *Clergy in the medieval world: secular clerics, their families and careers in north-western Europe, c. 800–c. 1200* (Cambridge, 2015).

cathedrals as a class. It builds on the achievements of a small group of scholars who have revised our understanding of the Irish church in the later medieval period.⁴³ Since Monck Mason's history of St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin, individual cathedrals and dioceses have been appraised, yet there has been no examination of the cathedrals of Ireland as an aggregate.⁴⁴

The closing remarks of Professor John Watt's 1970 text *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* refer to an island divided by two conflicting *nationes* where:

the natural antagonisms of invaded and invader were never assuaged, this endemic conflict, even when not itself the direct cause of dispute, was always a poison to fester the sores of other frictions.⁴⁵

In terms of the church, particularly the hierarchical church, the two-nations theory would appear to fit the mould where, as we have seen, one could view

⁴³ The indefatigable efforts of earlier academics such as Aubrey Gwynn, G.J. Hand, Kathleen Hughes and J.A. Watt are exemplified in the following works: G.J. Hand, 'Medieval cathedral chapters', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee* (1956), 11–14; Kathleen Hughes, *The church in early Irish society* (London, 1966); G.J. Hand, *The church in the English lordship 1216–1307* (Dublin, 1968); Aubrey Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Dublin, repr., 1992); J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (London, 1970); idem, *The church in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1972). Latterly, scholars such as M.T. Flanagan and Colmán Etchingham have acknowledged the contributions of their predecessors and revisited their landmark texts. See for example Colmán Etchingham, *Church organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, 1999); *The transformation of the Irish church*.

⁴⁴ William Monk Mason, *The history and antiquities of the collegiate and cathedral church of St Patrick near Dublin* (Dublin, 1820). The list of individual cathedral studies is far too long to include in a footnote. Some of the more prominent publications are: Aubrey Gwynn, *The medieval province of Armagh*; Aubrey Gwynn & Brian Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe* (Dublin, 1962); K.W. Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', *Archiv. Hib.* 31 (1973), 102–11; J.A. Watt, 'The medieval chapter of Armagh cathedral', in David Abulafia, Michael Franklin & Miri Rubin (eds), *Church and city 1000–1500: essays in honour of Christopher Brooke* (Cambridge, 1992), 219–48; Kenneth Milne (ed.), *Christ Church cathedral, Dublin: a history* (Dublin, 2000); John Crawford & Raymond Gillespie (eds), *St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin: a history* (Dublin, 2009); Paul MacCotter, *A history of the medieval diocese of Cloyne* (Blackrock, 2013).

⁴⁵ J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 216.

the archbishopric of Armagh, for instance, as deeply divided between the church *inter Hibernicos* and the church *inter Anglicos*.⁴⁶ This deep division, however, is not as simple as may first appear and in many cases matters of the church took precedence over any ethnic or cultural divide.

The outstanding inventory of medieval religious houses, produced by Aubrey Gwynn and Neville Hadcock, furnished this thesis with a list of Irish cathedrals.⁴⁷ Indeed, their tremendous handbook has long been the first port of call for scholars wishing to delve a little more deeply into the history of any of Ireland's medieval religious houses. Marie Therese Flanagan has praised the 'inestimable amount of valuable scholarship that went into Gwynn and Hadcock's compilation'.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the compilers are not without fault and their inventory is long overdue an update. Many of their references rely on secondary sources whose interpretations have since been queried by modern scholars. Aubrey Gwynn's contribution to the study of the church in medieval Ireland remains fundamental for students of this period and even though modern researchers have found flaws in some of his arguments, their value is undisputed.⁴⁹ Both Marie Therese Flanagan and Colmán Etchingham made

⁴⁶ For other examples in J.A. Watt's work, see 'Ecclesias inter Anglicos et Hibernicos: confrontation and coexistence in the medieval diocese and province of Armagh', in James Lydon (ed.), *The English in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1984), 46–64; idem 'The medieval chapter of Armagh cathedral', 219–48.

⁴⁷ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*

⁴⁸ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 136–7.

⁴⁹ For instance, Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Katharine Simms have queried Gwynn's belief that the church reform was a good thing for Irish society. Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Máel Muire Ua Dunáin (1040–1117), reformer', in Pádraig de Brún et al. (eds), *Folia Gadelica. Essays presented to R.A. Breatnach* (Cork, 1983), 47–53; idem, 'The church and secular society', *L'Irlanda e gli Irlandesi nell'alto Medioevo: Spoleta, 16–21 aprile 2009* (Spoleta, 2010), 261–321. Katharine Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church – regional and cultural', in Robin Frame, Katharine Simms & Terry Barry (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland. Essays presented to J.F. Lydon* (London, 1995), 177–200. See also *The transformation of the Irish church*, xi.

enormous advancements in the study of the church in Ireland on the eve of the transformations of the twelfth century. Flanagan's ground-breaking study *The transformation of the church in the twelfth century* updates Kathleen Hughes's version of Irish church organisation in which the place of bishops was relegated to being subordinate to that of abbots and in which the growth of monasticism and hereditary lineages created a situation ripe for reform. Rather, Flanagan champions the arguments of Richard Sharpe and indeed Colmán Etchingham, to the effect that the early church was a mix of an episcopal and monastic hierarchy.⁵⁰

This thesis is also indebted to the number of localised histories, which have been produced on individual cathedral churches and dioceses.⁵¹ Without these specialist works a broad study such as this would be considerably more difficult. In particular, the multi-volume succession lists of Irish cathedral clergy by Canon James B. Leslie have aided this study tremendously and provided a framework for comparison with my own succession lists –rarely did the two lists diverge.⁵²

The chronological period of this thesis is one of the more neglected phases in Irish medieval church history. While works on the pre-twelfth century reform church have become more widespread in recent decades so too have studies on

⁵⁰ Colmán Etchingham, *Church organisation; The transformation of the Irish church*; Richard Sharpe, 'Some problems concerning the organisation of the church in early medieval Ireland', *Peritia* 3 (1984), 230–70. See also Martin Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church', 111–60. In a review of Flanagan's book, Etchingham deemed it a 'lost opportunity' in which 'numerous interesting lines of enquiry and promising sources are skimmed over', see Etchingham, 'The "reform" of the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Studia Hibernica* 37 (2010), 237.

⁵¹ Most recently the two Dublin cathedrals have been the focus of collaborative texts, see Milne (ed.), *Christ Church cathedral*; Crawford & Gillespie (eds), *St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin*.

⁵² Canon Leslie produced succession lists for every single Irish medieval diocese. Not all were published, but all are preserved in manuscript form in the Representative Church Body Library in Dublin.

the Reformation church. Brendan Bradshaw, Nicholas Canny, Henry Jefferies, Felicity Heal and most recently James Murray have all advanced the study of the Reformation in Ireland.⁵³ But there has been a tendency to skirt around studying the church in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries with many believing it to have been exhausted by Aubrey Gwynn, Geoffrey Hand, John Watt and Margaret Murphy. However, some of these historians were writing almost half a century ago and, as has already been mentioned, their works need some updating.

⁵³ Brendan Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (London, 1974); Nicholas Canny, *From reformation to restoration: Ireland, 1534–1660* (Dublin, 1987); Henry Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor reformation* (Dublin, repr. 2010); Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland* (2003); James Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland: clerical resistance and political conflict in the diocese of Dublin, 1534–1590* (Cambridge, 2009).

1. THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS

1.1

THE FORMATION OF CAPITULAR BODIES FROM THE EIGHTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Chrodegang of Metz and the Council of Aachen

THE ORGANISATION of secular cathedrals originates in the ideas of an eighth-century bishop, Chrodegang of Metz (712–66), who sought to introduce the *vita communis* into his own cathedral. He was influenced by the work of St Boniface who had regarded clerical marriage as an evil and strove to re-establish the episcopal *familia*. In fact Chrodegang of Metz is considered by some as ‘the great continuer of the work of Boniface’.¹ At a synod held at Ver Chrodegang produced a rule, in thirty-four chapters, for the canons of his cathedral church. The Rule of Chrodegang imposed communal life on the canons as well as instituting various duties. It soon spread across the Frankish kingdom and became the basis of a later rule introduced by Carolingian reformers at Aachen (816–7).² Chrodegang was from an aristocratic background and educated at the Benedictine monastery of St Trond, it is no surprise, therefore, to find that his rule was heavily influenced by the Benedictine rule.³ The most striking element of the Rule of Chrodegang was the idea of communal living, emulating how the early apostles had once lived. This reverberated throughout the Frankish church and even reached England where the Legatine Statutes of 786 decreed on the conduct of the *canonici*, and in 808 x 13 when Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury (805–32),

¹ J.C. Dickinson, *The order of the Austin canons and their introduction into England* (Oxford, 1950), 16; Emile Amann, *L'Époque Carolingienne (Histoire de l'Église)* (Paris, 1937), 25.

² In recent times quite a bit has been written about Chrodegang and his rule. For a good analysis see: Julia Barrow, ‘Review article: Chrodegang, his rule and its successors’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 14/2 (May, 2006), 201–12, esp. 202. See also M.A. Claussen, *The reforms of the Frankish church: Chrodegang of Metz and the regular canonicorum in the eighth century* (Cambridge, 2004); Jerome Bertram, *The Chrodegang rules*; idem, *Vita communis*.

³ Bertram, *Vita communis*, 66; Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 83.

referred to the *mensa* and the manner in which the canons should live – i.e. communally based around a dormitory and refectory.⁴ Of course there is no direct link between the movement in England towards communal living and the rule propagated by Chrodegang, but at least it shows that at this point in time a more structured life for canons was envisaged across the Christian world.

Almost a century later, at the Council of Aachen (813), the idea of a structured life for secular canons was high on the agenda because it was being practiced at varying rates across Latin Christendom without the guidance of an authoritative rule. The *Institutio Canonorum*, also known as the Rule of Aachen, was the product of this synod and essentially a development of the earlier Chrodegang rule. The first part consisted of one hundred and thirteen chapters taken from patristic literature and conciliar decrees. The second part of the new rule placed a greater emphasis on clerics, their titles and the description of their duties. For instance, it differed from the Chrodegang rule in which the archdeacon was placed at the head of the chapter. Indeed, the Rule of Chrodegang only mentioned two dignitaries – the archdeacon and the *primicerius* (equivalent to that of the later office of provost). Moreover, Metz and the neighbouring dioceses of Toul and Verdun retained the office of *primicerius* for many centuries, although it failed to become popular north of the Alps.⁵

In the Aachen statutes the provost (*praepositus*) stood at the head of the chapter. Julia Barrow has emphasised that the Rule of Aachen was most likely used by cathedral communities as a more general guidance rather than relying on it as a strict law, forming the basic framework for cathedral communities throughout the Frankish empire.⁶ Some time after the introduction of the

⁴ John Blair, 'Secular minster churches in Domesday Book', in Peter Sawyer (ed.), *Domesday book. A reassessment* (London, 1985), 116–7. Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 202. See also Bertram, *Vita communis*, 78.

⁵ Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 49.

⁶ *ibid.*, 83–4.

Institutio Canonorum another rule was introduced into the church, known as the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang which is effectively a combination of the earlier two rules. This new rule was quick to be adopted into England where a manuscript version, written in old English, survives even today.⁷

The conquest and the English cathedrals

FROM THE mid-eleventh century the secular cathedrals in England were following the quasi-monastic trend established by the Rule of Chrodegang, the Aachen Rule and the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang. The monastic style cathedral, which has become synonymous with the English church, was first championed by Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury (c. 959–88), when he added a Benedictine abbey priory to his cathedral.⁸ At the time of the conquest there were four monastic chapters, at Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, and Sherborne.⁹ The Normans reorganised the ecclesiastical arrangement in Britain by re-founding many cathedrals on a secular basis beginning with Salisbury, Lincoln, London and York. Kathleen Edwards, the doyenne of English cathedral studies, highlighted the fact that the bishops of Lincoln, London and York were all signatories to the foundation charter of Salisbury; likewise the bishops of London, Salisbury and

⁷ For the old English version of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang see A.S. Napier, *The old English version of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang together with the Latin original* (London, 1916).

⁸ Outside of England and Ireland only Normandy and Sicily maintained a monastic cathedral. Christopher Brooke, 'The cathedral in medieval society', in Wim Swaan, *The gothic cathedral* (London, 1969), 18.

⁹ At Canterbury, Dunstan added a Benedictine abbey priory to the cathedral but it was not until Lanfranc's time that it became fully monastic. According to Kathleen Edwards, St Ethelwold (963–84) was the first bishop in the south of England to eject the clerks from his cathedral at Winchester and replace them with Benedictine monks. Worcester became Benedictine in the second half of the tenth century and Sherborne became a Benedictine priory c. 993 and the see was later transferred to Old Sarum in 1075. See Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 10–11; David Knowles & R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval religious houses, England & Wales* (Harlow, 1971), 61, 81, 76.

York witnessed the foundation of Lincoln.¹⁰ Nevertheless Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury (1070–89), retained some cathedrals in the Benedictine habit and through his influence the monastic cathedrals increased from four to ten, roughly half the total number.¹¹ Under Archbishop Lanfranc (1070–89), Rochester and Durham were transformed into monastic chapters and during Anselm's time (1093–1109) a further three were created at Coventry, Norwich and Bath, which emerged as the monastic replacements for Chester, Thetford and Bath, respectively. By 1133 both Ely and Carlisle were transformed into monastic chapters, ensuring ten monastic chapters as opposed to nine secular ones. According to Martin Brett the peculiarly English monastic chapter 'was no more than a logical extension of a movement which was European in its scope', only in England it persevered throughout the Middle Ages.¹²

Nevertheless, the implanting of Norman culture – socially, economically and politically – was driven by the desire to wipe out barbaric Anglo-Saxon customs. The English secular cathedral chapters were no exception, quickly absorbing the formula of the Norman secular chapter brought over by Norman bishops when they were installed in the English cathedrals. In Hereford on the English border with Wales, the cathedral chapter began to emerge in the 1130s and the term *capitulum* first occurs in the records in 1134, which is considerably early for an English cathedral.¹³ The development of its chapter was, according to the erudite

¹⁰ Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 12–13.

¹¹ Of the monastic cathedrals, Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, Rochester and Durham had all been sees prior to the conquest. Ely was carved out of Lincoln c. 1109. Elmham, Lichfield, and Wells were all removed to Thetford (later to Norwich), Chester (later to Coventry), and Bath, and on their removal they were given Benedictine chapters. Carlisle was the only monastic cathedral to follow the Augustinian rule. Under the reorganisation which took place after the conquest, there were nine secular cathedrals: Salisbury, Lincoln, York, London, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, Chichester and Wells.

¹² Martin Brett, *The English church under Henry I* (Oxford, 1975), 186.

¹³ English episcopal acts, vii, no. 17, cf. R.E. Lantham, (ed.), *Dictionary of medieval Latin from British sources* (Oxford, 1981), 272.

studies of Julia Barrow, strongly influenced by successive Norman bishops.¹⁴ In the nineteenth century, Henry Bradshaw asserted that Bayeux was in fact where the English chapters had originated; however this was later proven by Edwards to be incorrect. Actually, it is more commonly accepted that Bishop Osmund (d. 1099) of Old Sarum (Salisbury) was the leading figure whose constitution set the benchmark in terms of the organisation of the secular cathedrals in England and Scotland.¹⁵

The early influence of the Chrodegang rule was short-lived in England and by the twelfth century only Exeter cathedral remained in observance. The influences on these newly founded secular cathedrals were traditionally thought to be rooted in the arrangement favoured at Rouen;¹⁶ Kathleen Edwards was not convinced that either Rouen or Bayeux (as was suggested by Henry Bradshaw) were direct models for the four-square pillars design, which has since been considered characteristic of both English and Norman cathedral government. Indeed Normandy was a conduit for ideas from the rest of France where the establishment of a cathedral hierarchy had begun that bit earlier than in England.¹⁷ The Norman conquest also brought Britain closer to continental Europe, thus allowing ideas and influences to flow freely. By the close of the twelfth century this model was well established and the only differences between the Normans and the English were in the ranking system of the officers. In Normandy, the treasurer usually ranked third amongst the dignities whereas

¹⁴ Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', in Gerald Aylmer & John Tiller (eds), *Hereford cathedral: a history* (London, 2000), 27.

¹⁵ Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 12–13; I.B. Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995), 79–96.

¹⁶ A.T. Bannister, 'The origin and growth of the cathedral system', *Church Quarterly Review* 105 (1927), 95–6.

¹⁷ See for example, Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', 21; see also David Spear, 'L'administration épiscopale normande: archidiacones et dignitaires des chapitres', in P. Npiet & F. Neveux (eds), *Les évêques normands du XIe siècle* (Caen, 1995), 81–102.

in England he was fourth, after the dean, precentor and the chancellor.¹⁸ The move towards the four-pillars design in English cathedrals is best defined by the developments at Old Sarum (Salisbury) cathedral, beginning with Bishop Osmund's *Institutio* (c. 1091) and completed by Bishop Richard Poore's *Consuetudinarium* or Customary (c. 1210), forming what became known as the *Use of Sarum*.¹⁹

When Osmund succeeded to the newly formed bishopric of Old Sarum in 1078, he inherited a building site, rather than a cathedral. By 1091 Osmund had introduced a new arrangement at the cathedral consisting of secular canons who lived together under a rule which was almost certainly a version of the Chrodegang rule and bore resemblance to the canonical life at Exeter, Wells and York. Old Sarum is significant because it is believed to have provided the blueprint for the architectural design of St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin.²⁰ Under Bishop Richard Poore (1217–25), the cathedral constitution was developed creating a chapter that consisted of the four *principales personae* – the dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer – the four archdeacons, the subdean and succentor and the ordinary canons, each with their own prebend. Its constitution

¹⁸ Of course much of this is thanks to the seminal work of Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 'Introductory', 1–32. For further analysis of the four square design see also: Henry Bradshaw, *Statutes of Lincoln cathedral* 2 vols (Cambridge, 1892–7); A.H. Thompson, *The cathedral churches of England* (London, 1925); A.T. Bannister, 'The origin and growth of the cathedral system', *Church Quarterly Review* (1927), 86–6; Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*; C.N.L. Brooke, 'Continental influence on English cathedral chapters in the XIth and XIIth centuries', in *Resumes des communications XI congrès international des sciences historiques* (Stockholm, 1960), 120–1. More recent studies are listed in the bibliography.

¹⁹ See Diana Greenway, '1091, St Osmund and the constitution of the cathedral', in Laurence Keen & Thomas Cocke (eds), *Medieval art and architecture at Salisbury cathedral* (Leeds, 1996), 1–9.

²⁰ Michael O'Neill, 'St Patrick's cathedral Dublin and its place in the history of Irish medieval architecture' (TCD, PhD, 2 vols, 1995).

was later adopted by St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin,²¹ whose founder, John Cumin (1181–1212), quite possibly envisaged St Patrick's as the model for all of the Irish cathedrals.²² Until Diana Greenway's research, Bishop Osmund had been promoted as the author of the *Use of Sarum* along with the idea that Salisbury must have been the model for all of the English secular cathedrals since it was the first cathedral to champion the four-square dignities. Greenway refuted the idea that Osmund was the author of the *Use of Sarum* and insists that the *Institutio* did not originate in 1091 but rather in three (much later) stages, first in the 1150s, next in the 1160s and completed around 1200.²³ Osmund is not completely passed over by Greenway who says that he did produce a charter endowing lands from the previous two bishoprics from which Salisbury emerged (Sherborne and Ramsbury). His charter also states that he introduced canons to the church which is supported by the fact that Domesday does not make any reference to a chapter of canons at Salisbury.²⁴ He was not, as some historians believed, the instigator in England of the four-square pillars design.²⁵

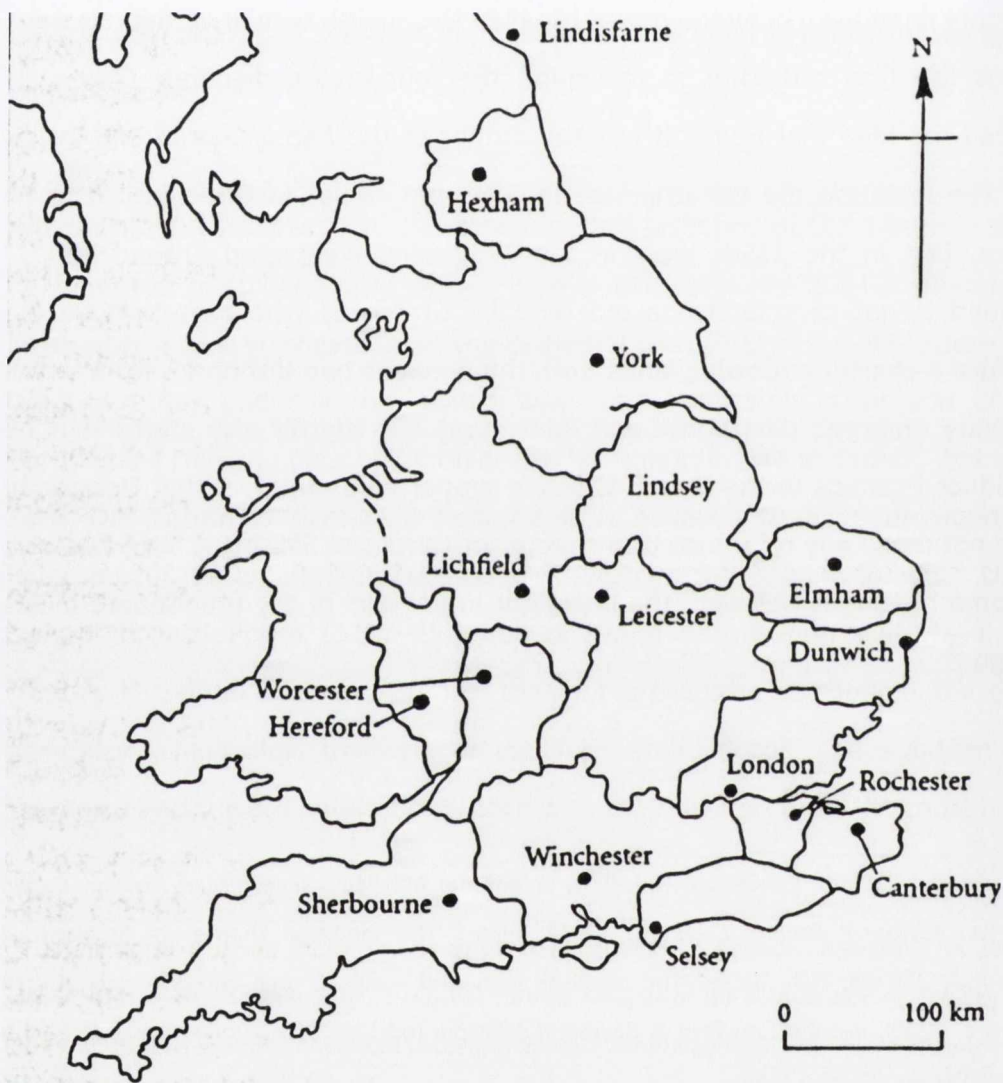
²¹ Geoffrey Hand, 'Cambridge University Additional MS 710', *Reportorium Novum: Dublin Diocesan Historical Record* 2 (1958), 17–32; idem, 'The medieval chapter of St Patrick's cathedral', 229–48; H.B. Clarke, 'The medieval cathedral – cult, church and collegiate church before c. 1220', in John Crawford & Raymond Gillespie (eds), *St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin: a history* (Dublin, 2009), 23–44.

²² For the career of John Cumin see Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration of the diocese and province of Dublin 1181–1298' (TCD, PhD, 1988), 1–28.

²³ Diana Greenway, 'The false Institutio of St Osmund', in Diana Greenway, Christopher Holdsworth & Jane Sayers (eds), *Tradition and change: essays in honour of Marjorie Chibnall, presented by her friends on the occasion of her seventieth birthday* (Cambridge, 1985), 77–101.

²⁴ Greenway, 'St Osmund and the constitution', 3.

²⁵ C.L.N. Brooke, in his short article, 'Continental influences on English cathedral chapters in the XIth and XIIth centuries', supports the false notion that Osmund introduced the four pillars, 121.



Map 2 Diocesan boundaries in England & Wales before the conquest, c. 850. Francis Pryor, *Britain in the middle ages: an archaeological history* (London, 2007), 113.



Map 3 Diocesan boundaries in England & Wales in the later medieval period.

Hélène Millet (ed.), *I canonici al servizio dello Stato in Europa secoli xiii-xvi. Les chanoines au service de l'état en Europe du XIIIe au XVIe siècle* (Modena, 1992), 10.

The Norman conquest also affected the Welsh church. The assimilation of the Welsh church into the organisation established by the reformers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries partially represented the completion of the Norman conquest of that church.²⁶ This bears a striking resemblance to the situation in Ireland where it might be thought that the reform of the church to some extent represented the completion of the Anglo-Norman conquest of the Irish church. In Wales, as in Ireland, the Normans found a church 'disorganised and in part, perhaps, demoralised, but by no means dead. Under pressure from the new challenge, the Welsh clergy revived their traditions.'²⁷ Rather than imposing new diocesan boundaries the Normans followed the native patterns which the Welsh kingdoms had long established, much like the demarcation of the dioceses in Ireland.²⁸

The Third and Fourth Lateran Councils

THE TWELFTH and thirteenth centuries witnessed the tightening of the mechanisms governing the cathedrals across Latin Christendom, introducing these institutions to a medley of new influences. Geoffrey Barraclough stressed that 'law never developed so rapidly as during the period'²⁹ of the long twelfth century which

²⁶ At least, C.N.L. Brooke believes this to be true. See Brooke, *The church and the Welsh border in the central Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1986), 2.

²⁷ Brooke, *The church and the Welsh border*, 2.

²⁸ Brooke, *The church and the Welsh border*, 2; Huw Pryce, 'The church and society in Wales, 1150–1250: an Irish perspective', in R.R. Davies (ed.), *The British Isles, 1100–1500. Comparisons, contrasts and connections* (Edinburgh, 1988), 27–47. Colmán Etchingham, 'Bishoprics in Ireland and Wales in the early Middle Ages: some comparisons', in J.R. Guy & W.G. Neely (eds), *Contrasts and comparisons: studies in Irish and Welsh church history* (Llandysul, 1999), 7–25. See also Paul MacCotter, *Medieval Ireland: territorial, political and economic divisions* (Dublin, 2008), esp. 45; idem, 'Túath, manor and parish: kingdom of Fir Mauge, cantred of Fermoy', *Peritia* 22/23 (2013), 224–74.

²⁹ Geoffrey Barraclough, 'The making of a bishop in the Middle Ages', *Catholic Historical Review*, 19 (1933–4), 284.

peaked with the Third (1179) and Fourth (1215) Lateran councils.³⁰ Nevertheless there were elements of this movement yet to be implemented, such as the removal of laity from positions within the church. In the Irish church, this meant displacing laymen from coarbial, and other such, offices. Hereditary succession for positions such as an Irish coarb was still being practiced in some areas across Latin Christendom and could prove to be very lucrative, particularly if it concerned an episcopal church. The situation in Armagh during the second half of the twelfth century is a prime example of the difficulty faced by reformers confronted with hereditary succession.³¹ Celibacy was equally a concern of the movement since its observance had been largely ignored across the Christian world.³²

In terms of cathedral organisation the Third Lateran Council implemented the requisite age for bishops (thirty) and cure of souls (twenty-five) for election to offices and the mandatory requirement that all cathedrals should have a master (*magisteri*) to teach the clerks of the church and the poor scholars.³³ This last point is important because the master evolved into the chancellor and was thus the only cathedral dignity to be officially sanctioned by the papal curia; the other three principal dignities (dean, treasurer, precentor) emerged gradually until they formed part of the customary arrangement in all cathedrals. It also shows that the church hierarchy was aware of the need to promote and support the

³⁰ See *The transformation of the Irish church*, 1 for her understanding of the 'long twelfth century'. See also Etchingham, 'Review: The 'reform' of the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', 215–37, at 217, in which he criticises M.T. Flanagan for her 'willingness to take as read the reality and broad character of the "reform"'. He cites her use of the 'long twelfth century' as an example of this.

³¹ The coarbial office of Armagh was controlled by Clann Sínaich during the second half of the eleventh century, see Kathleen Hughes & David Dumville, *Church and society in Ireland, AD 400–1200* (London, 1987), 107.

³² See Julia Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, esp. chapter 4: 'Clergy as family men: uncles and nephews, fathers and sons among the clergy', 115–157.

³³ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 22, 227–8, c. 18.

education of its clerics. The Fourth Lateran Council is often cited as the crucial council of the reform movement because it promoted new ideas about the secular clergy and about the 'appropriate ways for them to live and act, about their relation to lay society, and about the importance of their pastoral functions'.³⁴ The most significant decrees, in terms of this study, were that episcopal elections were deemed canonical and free and that all regular clergy were to adopt the Cistercian system of general chapters as well as acknowledging the visitation rights of bishops. David Knowles writes that the church as it emerged from the twelfth century 'was a comprehensive, orderly, rationalised machine, driven by the papacy'.³⁵

1.2

THE FUNCTION OF EUROPEAN CAPITULAR BODIES

The emergence of cathedral chapters

'CLERICAL COMMUNITIES were headed by groups of dignitaries, each responsible for a particular aspect of the church's activities'.³⁶ These clerical communities became known as the cathedral chapter and their emergence was a corollary of the reform movement. The *ecclesia maior*, or cathedral church, of a diocese depended upon a corporation of canons to ensure its successful daily operation. Liturgically speaking, cathedral churches engaged in a constant round of worship, saying the hours and the mass for the dean, venerating the saints, and sometimes catering for the parish, but in the main they were the principal church that provided for the whole diocese.³⁷ The origin of the cathedral chapter

³⁴ M.C. Miller, 'Secular clergy and religious life: Verona in the age of reform', in Constance Hoffman Berman (ed.), *Medieval religion, new approaches* (Abingdon, 2005), 157.

³⁵ David Knowles (with Dimitri Obolensky), *The Christian centuries: a new history of the Catholic church. Vol 2. The Middle Ages* (London, 1969), 234.

³⁶ Julia Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 301.

³⁷ Julia Barrow, 'Vicars choral and chaplains in northern European cathedrals, 1100–1250', in W.J. Sheils & Diana Woods (eds), *The ministry: clerical and lay* (Oxford, 1989), 88.

lies in the bishop's *familia* or his household.³⁸ When the Spanish cathedral of Valencia was first formed in the early thirteenth century (out of a re-consecrated mosque), the staff numbered only five and was most likely chosen directly from the bishop's household.³⁹ As the pastoral and administrative duties of the bishop grew, and the governance of the cathedral and diocese became more exacting, the need for a separate corporate body emerged.

Anna Manara Ciardi argues that cathedral chapters existed as soon as there were indications of a corporate body, 'recognised and organised with its own regulations and leader, even though it is not explicitly referred to as a 'chapter' except in sources from a later date'.⁴⁰ If this is the case, then in Scandinavia cathedral chapters appeared in Denmark in the 1060s and 1070s, which was much the same time that they began to surface in England and in Normandy.⁴¹ By the mid to late thirteenth century, the organisation of cathedral chapters in Scandinavia, as well as Normandy and England, were settled. The first cathedral chapter in Finland was not founded until the first half of the thirteenth century and in Iceland, some believe that there were no cathedral chapters until the later Middle Ages. Those that advocate this view, use the lack of documentary sources as evidence for the lack of references to cathedral chapters.⁴² In Verona the cathedral chapter had adopted the communal life by the early twelfth century, as is shown in the notarial clauses indicating where chapter documents were

³⁸ A.H. Thompson, *The English clergy and their organisation in the later Middle Ages: the Ford lectures for 1933* (Oxford, 1947), 58; Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, xii, 3, 34, 90, 138, 177, 244, 255, 308.

³⁹ R.I. Burns, 'The organisation of a mediaeval cathedral community: the chapter of Valencia (1238–1280)', *Church History* 31 (May, 1962), 15–16.

⁴⁰ A.M. Ciardi, 'Saints and cathedral culture in Scandinavia c.1000–1200', in Haki Antonsson & I.H. Garipzanov (eds), *Saints and their lives on the periphery. Veneration of saints in Scandinavia and eastern Europe (c. 1000–1200)* (Turnhout, 2010), 45–6.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid.*, 48.

redacted.⁴³ In Germany's Rhineland, for example, by the turn of the twelfth century, in the bishopric of Speyer, the 'amorphous body of clerics serving the cathedral' dissolved rapidly upon the 'sudden appearance of a strong, sensitive, and increasingly well-defined corporate body enjoying legal personality and marked autonomy from the bishop.'⁴⁴ Christopher Brooke referred to the existence of a variety of structures, insisting that there was no uniformity across western Europe; communal living was not endorsed by all, neither was a vow of poverty; most prevalent was that canons often lived in 'fine houses in the close and were comparatively well off',⁴⁵ and by the fourteenth century the office of canon in a secular cathedral became the preserve of the wealthy, particularly in London.

The complex organisation involved in managing a cathedral was devolved to dignitaries, chapter officials who held endowed offices known as dignities.⁴⁶ In France, the dignitaries within the cathedral chapters varied and their hierarchical order could also differ, but broadly speaking the main offices were the dean (*le doyen*), the precentor (*le chantre*), the schoolmaster (*un écolâtre*), the chancellor (*le chancelier*), the penitentiary (*le pénitencier*), the treasurer, sometimes called the chamberlain (*le trésorier, appelé quelquefois chambrier*), the sacristan (*le sacristain*) and the lesser offices of ringer (*le sonneur*) and porter (*le portier*).⁴⁷ The influence of the Norman churches guaranteed that the English churches would keep pace with continental developments. Such influences could be seen

⁴³ Miller, 'Secular clergy and religious life: Verona in the age of reform', 160.

⁴⁴ L.G. Duggan, *Bishop and chapter: the governance of the bishopric of Speyer to 1552* (New Jersey, 1978), 13.

⁴⁵ Christopher Brooke, 'The cathedral in medieval society', in Wim Swaan, *The Gothic cathedral* (London, 1969), 18.

⁴⁶ Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', 35. See also above, Simple glossary, xx.

⁴⁷ Ferdinand Lot and Robert Fawtier, *Histoire des institutions Françaises au moyen age, tome troisième institutions ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1962), 189–90.

in the 'increase in the size of the cathedral communities ... new chapters were presided over by deans and other officials, had a range of religious, administrative and educational duties, and were commonly sustained by prebends'.⁴⁸ The Salisbury model was, without a doubt, instrumental in influencing the structures of many of the Irish cathedral chapters. Bishop Osmond's *Institutio* initiated the organisational hierarchy but it was a later contribution, the *Consuetudinarium* (1214), which defined the 'duties of the cathedral staff – dignitaries, canons, vicars, choir and other participants in divine service'.⁴⁹ Even so, the first express mention of 'cathedral chapters' did not occur until the thirteenth century.⁵⁰

The powers and responsibilities of the chapter increased throughout the medieval period but 'even after the division of income and jurisdiction between bishops and chapter, many links bound the two authorities together'.⁵¹ The

⁴⁸ Paul Dalton, Charles Insley & L.J. Wilkinson, 'Introduction', in Paul Dalton, Charles Insley & L.J. Wilkinson (eds), *Cathedrals, communities and conflict in the Anglo-Norman world: studies in the history of medieval religion* (Woodbridge, 2011), 8.

⁴⁹ John Le Neve, *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1066–1300: 4 Salisbury* (London, 1991), xxvii. For information on bishop Osmund and Salisbury see Diana Greenway, 'The false institutio of St Osmund', in *Tradition and change*, 77–101.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 'The false institutio of St Osmund', 77–101. See also Laszlo Kosta 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', in *Encontro internacional "carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente Cristão séc. xii–xiv"*, Lisboa, 2006 - *carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente cristã : séc. XII–XIV*. (Lisboa, 2007), 13; H.V. Vilar, 'Canons and cities: cathedral chapters and their social composition in medieval Portugal', *e-Journal of Portuguese History* 5/2 (Winter, 2007), 4.

⁵¹ C.R. Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries 1100–1250* (Manchester, 1950), 6. For a definition of cathedral chapters see P. Torquebiau, *Dictionnaire de droit canonique: contenant tour les termes du droit canonique, avec un sommaire de l'histoire et des institutions et de l'état actuel de la discipline, tome troisième* (Paris, 1942), 530–1, roughly translates as: 'The chapter of the cathedral has the most important role in the administration of the diocese, it is born to advise the bishop and has an obligation to ask his opinion or consent'. See also W.F. Hook & W.R.W. Stephens (eds), *A church dictionary: a practical manual of reference for clergymen and students*

degree of independence vis-à-vis their diocesan bishop, or archbishop, characterised their relationship throughout the Middle Ages until cathedral chapters were recognised as independent of their diocesan. The autonomy of the chapter from its bishop was one of the major developments arising out of canon law at this time, and as the responsibilities of the chapter grew, they came to share the administration of the cathedral with their bishop. In York, for instance, the dean and chapter exercised a peculiarly extensive jurisdiction, such as their right during vacancies of the cathedral dignities. They had the right of institution and visitation as well as power to hear cases concerning contraventions against canon law.⁵² Economically, those cathedrals with secular chapters channelled much wealth to their secular clerics who served as dignitaries and canons as well as allowing a greater hold to be placed on them by monarchy or ruling lords and according to Hugh Thomas, over three hundred cathedral prebends existed throughout England by the thirteenth century.

The dignities were the chief officers of the cathedral, charged with its day-to-day management. By the early thirteenth century all cathedrals had adopted the four-square pillars constitution, which consisted of four cathedral dignities, the dean (*decanus*), chancellor (*cancellarium, scholasticus*), precentor (*primicerius, cantor*) and treasurer (*thesaurius, custos*), in order of superiority and with a wide variety of lesser dignitaries such as subdean or succentor. The four-square (sometimes four-pillars) design quite literally refers to the seating arrangement in the cathedral choir. This arrangement was the mainstay throughout Latin Christendom; everything else was subject to local variations. For instance, the dignitaries in a cathedral did not have to be canons of the cathedral although they usually were. The prebendal income differed according to province and cathedral. The bishop, with the exception of the dean who was appointed via

(14th edn., London, 1887); Revd Canon J.S. Purvis, *Dictionary of ecclesiastical terms* (Edinburgh, 1962); F.L. Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian church* (Oxford, 1958).

⁵² R.C.E. Hayes, 'The jurisdiction of the dean and chapter of the cathedral church of St Peter in the city of York', in D.M. Smith (ed.), *The church in medieval York* (York, 1999), 87.

capitular election, appointed all of the dignities. Except for at Laon, where the bishop chose the archdeacons and the treasurer and the chapter elected the other members.⁵³

Typically the dean was the head of the chapter although his authority could vary depending on the strength of the chapter, the involvement of the bishop or more rarely, the position of a provost. He was responsible for the entire administration of the cathedral and was appointed via election of the chapter and episcopal confirmation. The chancellor had a multi-functioning role: he was secretary to the chapter, but his principal charge was the cathedral school. The precentor, cantor or chanter as he was sometimes called, held a liturgical post, taking charge of the music and liturgy within the cathedral. The treasurer was responsible for guarding the 'treasures' or vestments of the church. He also managed the fabric of the church, overseeing the physical upkeep of the cathedral building. The precentor, cantor or chanter as he was sometimes called, held a liturgical post, taking charge of the music and liturgy within the cathedral. The chancellor was primarily in place to educate the canons of the cathedral and in most cathedrals he fulfilled the role of *magister*. At the Third Lateran Council, canon 18 stipulated that all cathedrals should employ a *magisteri* to teach the clerics and the poor scholars of the church. One could go as far to suggest that this canon effectively launched the cathedral schools, many of which were later to develop into the universities. It may be noteworthy to point out that Ireland never had a medieval university, despite a still-born attempt in 1320.⁵⁴ In some cathedrals, care of the library and archives was also the chancellor's responsibility, as well as secretarial work.⁵⁵ The archdeacon's role was territorial

⁵³ Fernando Picó, 'Membership in the cathedral chapter of Laon, 1217–1238', *Catholic Historical Review* 61 (Jan. 1975), 5.

⁵⁴ See below, chapter 4.5 'Were Irish cathedral clergy educated?', 195.

⁵⁵ Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 220–1; R.B. Dobson & D.N. Levine, 'Two English cathedrals: Exeter and York', in Hélène Millet (ed.), *I canonici al servizio dello Stato in*

and outside of the cathedral precincts, although his duties often brought him into contact with the chapter and more often than not he held a stall in the choir.

The day-to-day practices of cathedral chapters across Europe have been studied extensively. Accordingly, both Diana Greenway and David Spear have demonstrated that the development of chapters and of the constitutions that set out these hierarchies, did not happen overnight, but was a sustained process over a long period of time.⁵⁶ Julia Barrow has shown the stark differences and distinctions between the cathedral chapters in England and Germany in the twelfth century – not least that of property rights. One aspect shared by all chapters across Europe, however, is their growing independence and separation from the authority of the bishop⁵⁷ – an independence often indicated by the role of the dean. As the demands of the diocese grew, episcopal activity tended to concentrate on that which was beyond the walls of the cathedral, leaving the activities within the walls the preserve of the chapter. According to Brooke, the polarisation of the bishop from cathedral administration made him ‘almost a stranger in his own cathedral in the late Middle Ages’.⁵⁸

Moreover, there are plenty of cases where the burgeoning power of the chapter clashed with the authority of the bishop. In France, the chapter became an autonomous body, a rival power to the bishop.⁵⁹ The clashes over jurisdiction,

Europa secoli xiii-xvi. Les chanoines au service de l'état en Europe du XIIIe au XVIe siècle (Modena, 1992), 10–11.

⁵⁶ Greenway, ‘The false *Instituto*’, 81.

⁵⁷ Julia Barrow, ‘Cathedrals, provosts and prebends’, 536–67; Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 113–34.

⁵⁸ C.N.L. Brooke, ‘The archdeacon and the Norman conquest’, in Diana Greenway et al. (eds), *Tradition and change*, 11.

⁵⁹ ‘devient ainsi un corps autonome, une puissance rivale de l'évêque’, Lot & Fawtier, *Histoire des institutions Françaises au moyen age*, 191.

between bishop and chapter, became a common occurrence across medieval Europe. At Langres, Reims and Viviers matters went as far as arbitration.⁶⁰ Even the larger cathedrals in England, such as Salisbury, Lincoln and Exeter, were not exempt from disputes.⁶¹ Clashes broke out between bishops and their chapters across Hungary in the 1250s over the right of episcopal election.⁶² The clash of episcopal and capitular jurisdiction is also evident in the records of the Irish cathedrals: those of St Patrick's cathedral and Holy Trinity (Christ Church) in Dublin demonstrate some of the contentious issues that arose in Ireland. The priory of Holy Trinity tested the extent of their autonomy as early as 1192. On the establishment of the collegiate church of St Patrick's, Archbishop John Cumin reached a *modus vivendi* with the priory; they were to have free rein over their affairs and they would not object to the consecration and establishment of the collegiate church of St Patrick.⁶³ In 1306, the dean and chapter of St Patrick's had to safeguard their privileges, which they claimed had been neglected.⁶⁴ Further jurisdictional problems arose throughout the thirteenth- and fourteenth-centuries and not only between the archbishop of Dublin and the chapter, but also between the two existing chapters – Christ Church and St Patrick's.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, 192.

⁶¹ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 101–5, 113.

⁶² László Kosta, 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', 21.

⁶³ *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 30–1. See also G.J. Hand, 'The rivalry of the cathedral chapters in medieval Dublin', *JRSAI* 92 (1962), 193–206.

⁶⁴ Newport White, *Dignitas decani*, 144.

⁶⁵ See Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 234–70, and Raymond Refaüssé, 'Introduction', in Kenneth Milne, *Christ Church cathedral, Dublin: a history* (Dublin, 2000), 13; Kinsella, 'From Hiberno-Norse to Anglo-Norman', in *ibid.*, 50–2; James Lydon, 'Christ Church in the later medieval Irish world, 1300–1500', in *ibid.*, 75–6; A.J. Fletcher, 'Liturgy in the late medieval cathedral priory', in *ibid.*, 139.

1.3

THE PRINCIPALES PERSONAE OF CATHEDRAL COMMUNITIES

The dean (decanus)

THE ORIGIN of the office of dean derives from the early monastic life. *Decanus* means someone at the head of a group of ten men. Pachomius the Great grouped his monks in ten, adopting this practice from usage in the Roman army. In the eighth and ninth century customs of the rule of Benedict, the dean was ranked third in command, after abbot and provost and by the tenth century, the Cluniac monks favoured priors instead of deans.⁶⁶

From the tenth century, the dean begins to emerge as head of the cathedral chapter, and in many cases he replaced the position of the provost. In England, Osmund of Salisbury, Remigius of Lincoln, and Thomas of Bayeux first introduced the dignity sometime in the eleventh century. Even so, it was only from the twelfth century that the dean became a common feature in English secular cathedrals.⁶⁷ In some cases, however, the office was slowly embraced. For instance, at Valencia in Spain, the dean was not officially established until 1260, almost thirty years after the formation of its chapter.⁶⁸ At St Asaph's in Wales, a fully constituted chapter, headed by the four pillars, was in existence from 1230s. Although the first mention of the dean is in the 1220s.⁶⁹ In Scotland, all of the secular cathedrals had a dean as the head except for Sodor (the Isles), which entertained a provost.⁷⁰ Similarly, at Clermont in France, it was not the dean but the provost who held the first place in the chapter and occupied the premier stall

⁶⁶ Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 85.

⁶⁷ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 138–50.

⁶⁸ R.I. Burns, 'The chapter of Valencia', 18.

⁶⁹ Pearson, 'St Asaph cathedral chapter', 44.

⁷⁰ I.B. Cowan, 'The organisation of Scottish secular cathedral chapters', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 14 (1960), 21.

in the choir.⁷¹ Furthermore, German cathedrals tended to employ provosts as the head of the chapter.

The precentor (primicerius, cantor)

THE PRECENTOR, chanter or cantor was second in command to the dean and held the second place in the choir. Music and liturgy were paramount to the day-to-day functioning of the cathedral and so the position of the precentor was of major importance. The office was instituted early on in the cathedral churches of Normandy and in England, where the title is found in the major cathedrals of Salisbury, Lincoln and York in the eleventh century. Edwards has suggested that there may have been a cantor at Exeter as early as 1050 because the cathedral had adopted the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang.⁷² At Hereford, the office is not introduced until the middle of the twelfth century, approximately fifty years after the archdeacon was introduced.⁷³ More recently, Julia Barrow has amended this, saying that from the 1180s the cantor begins to appear with the more formal title of precentor.⁷⁴ The earliest known precentor at Exeter was Robert Blund, who held the post from 1127 until 1155.⁷⁵ In Scotland, according to Ian Cowan, all of the secular cathedrals had a precentor, except Sodor, which appeared to have no cathedral organisation but due to lack of documentary sources this is difficult to verify.⁷⁶ In the Welsh diocese of St Asaph, the

⁷¹ ('le prévôt était le premier du chapitre; celui qui marchait en tête ... celui qui occupait la première stalle du chœur') Louise Welter, 'Le chapitre cathedral de Clermont: sa constitution, ses privilèges', *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, tome 41 (1995), 6. See below, 43 and chapter, 2.4 'The principales personae of Irish cathedral chapters', 113.

⁷² Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 160.

⁷³ Z.N. Brooke and C.N.L. Brooke, 'Hereford cathedral dignitaries in the twelfth century', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 8 (1944), 6.

⁷⁴ Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', 36.

⁷⁵ David Blake, 'The development of the chapter of the diocese of Exeter, 1050–1161', *Journal of Medieval History* 8/1 (1982), 4.

⁷⁶ Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland*, 81–2.

precentor first appears alongside the dean in 1239.⁷⁷ Further afield, in Valencia, a precentor was certainly in existence by 1248, if not before.⁷⁸ In France, the office was more commonly known as the cantor, and can be traced to the tenth century where he appears as a witness to official charters,⁷⁹ and sometimes rivalled the dean for supremacy within the chapter. For instance, at Laon, the precentor would, on occasion act as head of the chapter.⁸⁰ At Chartres, he actually claimed precedence over the dean right up until the eighteenth century.⁸¹

The chancellor (cancellarium, scholasticus, magister scholarum, secretarius)

THE TITLE of chancellor was somewhat slow to be adopted across Europe. It was not until the 1140s when it began to be used in most of the Norman cathedrals. Before that time, the individual concerned was referred to as schoolmaster (*magister scholarum*) and sometimes secretary (*secretarius*). This is because he not only took charge of educating the canons but he also kept the bishop's seal, looked after the charters and documents of the cathedral and performed general administrative duties. A similar evolution can be seen in the office of treasurer, which likewise developed from that of secretary. In the cathedral at Valencia, the precentor and chancellor were amalgamated into the one post, with the alternate title of *magister scholarum*.⁸² Excluding Rouen, none of the cathedrals in Normandy gave the chancellor the charge of education. Rather, the Norman cathedrals favoured the separate title of *magister scholarum* or *scholasticus*.⁸³

⁷⁷ Pearson, 'St Asaph cathedral chapter', 42.

⁷⁸ R.I. Burns, 'The chapter of Valencia', 17.

⁷⁹ Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 303, fn. 193.

⁸⁰ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 160.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² R.I. Burns, 'The chapter of Valencia', 17–18.

⁸³ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 176.

This officer, however, was not ranked as high in the hierarchy of the chapter as the chancellor.

In England, the chancellor begins to appear from the mid-twelfth century at Lincoln. Prior to this, the cathedrals of Lincoln, Salisbury and York, maintained, as at the early Norman cathedrals, a *magister scholarum*.⁸⁴ Although a cathedral school existed in Hereford in the 1130s, the introduction of the dignity of chancellor was not rapidly accepted and the earliest known reference to a formally endowed chancery was in the 1190s when William de Vere appointed his nephew Henry to the dignity.⁸⁵ Exeter, a relatively poor diocese, had no dean or chancellor until 1225, and from 1050 to 1161 the only dignities to be found at this cathedral were the treasurer and the precentor.⁸⁶ In Scotland, the chancellor seems to be the last of the four dignitaries to be introduced in the cathedral chapters. In Aberdeen he appears in 1240, followed by Glasgow (1249x1258), Brechin (1274), Dunblane (1274), and Dunkeld (1274). In St Andrew's the dignity, which proved to be short-lived was not erected until 1447x1449.⁸⁷ In St Asaph's cathedral in Wales, the office of chancellor is first attested in 1233, which also happens to be the earliest mention of this office in the Welsh church.⁸⁸

The treasurer (thesaurius, custos)

THE LAST of the four *principales personae* is the treasurer. He occupied a different place in the hierarchy of Norman and English cathedrals. In Normandy, the treasurer was ranked third amongst the dignitaries, after the chancellor, whereas in England he was positioned fourth after the other three dignitaries. The treasurer's hierarchical position in England was only widely adopted after

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, 179.

⁸⁵ Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', 36.

⁸⁶ David Blake, 'The development of the chapter of the diocese of Exeter', 4.

⁸⁷ I.B. Cowan & D.E. Easson, *Medieval religious houses, Scotland with an appendix on the houses in the Isle of Man* (London, 1976), 202–12.

⁸⁸ Pearson, 'St Asaph cathedral chapter,' 42.

Richard le Poore's *Consuetudinarium* for Salisbury in the late twelfth century. In other areas of France, this dignitary was sometimes head of the chapter, although at Chartres cathedral, he was ranked last of the seventeen dignitaries.⁸⁹ The earliest mention of this office in England is perhaps at Exeter in the 1130s, where Edwards suggests that a canon named 'Vivian' held the post. At this stage, however, the office had not been conferred any special status or dignity.⁹⁰ Not long after this, in Hereford, a treasurer is mentioned as a witness to a charter in 1144.⁹¹ At St Asaph in Wales, the treasurer does not appear in the records until the late 1280s – fifty years after the other dignities.⁹² Where evidence survives for the Scottish cathedrals, it appears that in most cases, the treasurer was the last of the four dignitaries to be instituted. In Aberdeen, plans for a regular chapter occur sometime between 1238 and 1242, although dignitaries were recorded before this time. The treasurer makes his first appearance in 1228x1239. In the diocese of Dunblane, the chapter is first mentioned in the records sometime between 1239 and 1240. The treasurer is only first mentioned some fifty years later, in 1296. Whereas in Glasgow, the treasurer had been in existence for a hundred years by the time Dunblane had instituted the office.⁹³ In Valencia the treasurer was established sometime around 1232, just after the city had been conquered. Not long after, in 1255, the chapter decreed that the treasurer was to be a priest.⁹⁴

The provost (prepositus)

IN THE early Middle Ages, many of the continental European cathedrals supported the office of provost (*prepositus*), whose role was analogous to that of archdeacon. In many of these cathedrals the archdeacon or the provost held the

⁸⁹ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 16–17 and 217–8.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, 219.

⁹¹ Brookes, 'Hereford', 12.

⁹² Pearson, 'St Asaph cathedral chapter,' 42.

⁹³ Cowan & Easson, *Medieval religious houses, Scotland*, 202–12.

⁹⁴ R.I. Burns, 'The chapter of Valencia', 17.

first place in the chapter. It harks back to the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang; essentially the Rule of Chrodegang augmented with material from the Aachen rule.⁹⁵ In this rule, allocation is made for an archdeacon or provost. The position of provost as head of the chapter was particularly common in northern France and Germany and by the middle of the ninth century in Western Francia it was the norm to have a provost as well as a dean.⁹⁶ In most European cathedrals, however, the dean later supplanted the provost and by the time cathedral structures were forming in Ireland, the dean was accepted as head of the chapter in much of Europe whereas the office of provost was increasingly associated with collegiate churches. Nevertheless German cathedrals still entertained the dignity. At Speyer in the twelfth century, the cathedral chapter supported four provosts before the provostships became the archdeaconries. While the origins of archdeaconries in Germany remain ambiguous, we are on firmer ground by the thirteenth century when the four archdeaconries became 'firmly established with substantial rights and property.'⁹⁷ Its importance in German cathedrals is demonstrated by Julia Barrow who insists it was a 'common jumping-off point for promotion to the episcopate in the twelfth century'.⁹⁸ The office did not disappear entirely from French cathedrals either; at Chartres and Amiens the provost survived but his powers were limited from at least the eleventh century.⁹⁹

In England in the late thirteenth century, Wells had a provost; he was not a dignity and so had no voice in the chapter.¹⁰⁰ This was a reversal of policy since, according to Julia Barrow, a provost headed the chapter at Wells in the eleventh

⁹⁵ Jerome Bertram, *The Chrodegang rules*.

⁹⁶ Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 301.

⁹⁷ Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 41–2.

⁹⁸ Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 303.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, 295.

¹⁰⁰ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 237.

century.¹⁰¹ At Lincoln, the provostship was both elective and temporary, being re-granted on an annual basis by the dean and chapter.¹⁰² Overall, however, the provost disappeared from English cathedrals by the twelfth century, except for the rare occurrence, as at Wells. Rather surprisingly, Kirkwall in Scotland had a provost as the head of its chapter and not a dean.¹⁰³ In the later Middle Ages, there are a few scattered references to provosts in northern French cathedrals, where the term refers only to individuals appointed to administer the funds of divided prebends. In Germany, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the provost represented his community in disputes and managed the prebendal estates – a far cry from his original role as head of the chapter.¹⁰⁴ Hungarian cathedral chapters, on the other hand, particularly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, appear to have appointed provosts as their leaders. Sometimes, the provost of a Hungarian cathedral was also its vice-chancellor.¹⁰⁵ According to Kathleen Edwards, there were approximately thirty-five cathedrals in northern Italy who maintained a provost as their head and not a dean. In terms of Irish cathedrals, the provost only occurs in the western province of Tuam, in the fourteenth century. Moreover, his appearance seems to signal the end of the chancellor, who disappears from the records relating to that province.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Julian Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends', 554.

¹⁰² Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 237.

¹⁰³ I.B. Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland*, 79.

¹⁰⁴ Julia Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends', 544–5.

¹⁰⁵ László Kosta, 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', 23.

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 2.4, 'The *principales personae* of Irish cathedral chapters', 113–5.

*The archdeacon (archidiaconus)*¹⁰⁷

By the mid-twelfth century, the office of archdeacon was one that was frequently encountered in cathedrals across Europe. It was one of the first dignities to be introduced and his inauguration presaged the cathedral chapters themselves. Due to the increased administrative duties of the bishop, surplus work had to be taken on by others. The archdeacon, originally head of the deacons, and the chief member of the bishop's *familia*, began to acquire the overspill diocesan work of the bishop. As the *oculus episcopi*, the archdeacon exercised the bishop's powers over church property and benefices, and oversaw cases in the ecclesiastical courts on behalf of his diocesan. He was the bishop's representative in the chapter, which meant that the archdeacon was not, despite his importance in all of the extant records, one of the four pillars, nor had he any prescriptive right to a place in the chapter, although in the main he was a chapter member. His position outside of the chapter has encouraged the view that he was 'a person with functions distinct from and interests inimical to the bishop's'.¹⁰⁸ The bishop appointed him but once installed he could not be dismissed.¹⁰⁹

Prior to the Norman Conquest, deacons were appointed to the church as administrators, whereas the first archdeacons were the leading figures amongst the deacons who assisted the bishop in his see. During the eleventh- and twelfth-centuries, the archdeacon had a dual role as leader of the deacons but also as an official of the see. Christopher Brooke's investigative study of the archdeacons in England at the time of the Norman conquest saw a mushrooming of the rank of

¹⁰⁷ For the monastic archdeacon see Jane Sayers, 'Monastic archdeacons', in C.N.L. Brooke, D.E. Luscombe, G.H. Martin & Dorothy Owen (eds), *Church and government in the Middle Ages. Essays presented to C.R. Cheney on his 70th birthday* (Cambridge, 1976), 177–204.

¹⁰⁸ Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 7.

¹⁰⁹ Paul Fournier, *Les officialités au moyen âge* (1880); c.f Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 7–8.

archdeacon after 1066, which preceded the reorganisation of the cathedral chapters. 'By the early twelfth century the archdeacons were firmly established as part of the establishment of the new secular chapter - in the regular cathedral chapters the archdeacon remained until the Dissolution something of an alien, secular presence'.¹¹⁰

Dioceses were administratively divided into archdeaconries and it was customary across Europe to have more than one archdeacon. For instance in England, Salisbury and Exeter supported four archdeaconries each, as opposed to Lincoln, one of the largest territorial dioceses in England, which maintained eight.¹¹¹ Of the smaller dioceses, such as Carlisle, only one archdeacon was supported.¹¹² The ancient diocese of Glasgow in Scotland had a single archdeacon in 1126x1127. The other dignitaries, according to Ian Cowan and David Easson, appear comparatively late in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.¹¹³ In Wales, the archdeacon was one of the earliest offices to be introduced, because the 'elite of a cathedral comprises a *familia*, and is always carried through into a chapter'.¹¹⁴ In the case of St Asaph, in northern Wales, the archdeacon seems to have been in existence from 1130s, a century before the first reference to even a dean or a chapter.¹¹⁵ By the same token, at Bangor cathedral (also in northern Wales), the archdeacon appears from at least 1130, fifty years before the estimated birth of its chapter.¹¹⁶ The monastic archdeacon was somewhat different to his secular counterpart because he had to contend with, or at least accept, the position of his abbot or prior, who wielded extensive ecclesiastical

¹¹⁰ Brooke, 'The archdeacon and the Norman conquest', 9.

¹¹¹ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 248–9.

¹¹² Revd Canon Wilson, 'Constitutional growth of Carlisle cathedral', *The Scottish Historical Review* 17 (April, 1920), 199–218.

¹¹³ Cowan & Easson, *Medieval religious houses, Scotland*, 208.

¹¹⁴ M.J. Pearson, 'St Asaph cathedral chapter', 42.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, 40–42.

¹¹⁶ M.J. Pearson, 'Bangor cathedral chapter', 172.

powers. He first appears in 1071 but occurs most frequently from c. 1190, 'during the period of territorialisation of the ordinary archdeacon in the diocese'.¹¹⁷

Although its beginnings are quite clear, defining the archdeacon's office has proved difficult, even for scholars such as Kathleen Edwards, purely because of its complexity. Whilst he was not a chapter member many of his duties involved the chapter. It is also because his position in an English cathedral differed to that in a continental European cathedral, where he was often interchangeable with a provost. In Italy for instance, 141 cathedrals had archdeacons at their head, instead of a dean.¹¹⁸ The archidiaconate in Germany also differed from its English counterpart. In the case of Speyer, the diocese supported four archdeacons who were themselves the provosts. Provostships were a feature of the earlier medieval episcopacy but that of archdeacon on the whole supplanted their role. Rather than surrendering the title of provost, German cathedrals merged the two roles and maintained both titles.¹¹⁹ In the Spanish diocese of Valencia two archdeaconries were allocated at its foundation and by the late thirteenth century it had increased to four. Barcelona, by contrast, had only one archdeacon in the thirteenth century, to which three more were added in 1324.¹²⁰ Eleventh-century Rouen, in northern France, had only one archdeacon and by the twelfth century the number fluctuated between five and seven.¹²¹ Laon, in north-eastern France had only two archdeaconries.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Jane Sayers, 'Monastic archdeacons', 179.

¹¹⁸ Ughelli, *Italia sacra*, loc. cit. A.H. Thompson, *Archdeacons and rural deans*, 8–9.

¹¹⁹ Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 42–3.

¹²⁰ R.I. Burns, 'The chapter of Valencia', 19.

¹²¹ David Spear, 'Les archidiaques de Rouen au cours de la période ducal', *Annales de Normandie* 34 (1984), 15–50, esp. 36–9.

¹²² Hélène Millet, *Les chanoines du chapitre cathédral de Laon, 1272–1412* (Rome, 1982), 45–6.

In his study of English bishops' chanceries, Cheney showed that in twelfth-century England, a sub- or vice-archdeacon seems to have taken on the archdeacon's role.¹²³ Cheney also points out that these offices were seldom referred to in the records on the continent so it is perhaps significant to find a single reference to a vice-archdeacon in an Irish diocese. In Waterford in 1222, Roger the vice-archdeacon is sent to the king to seek license to elect.¹²⁴ Nevertheless this is the sole reference to the office in Ireland and it appears that whilst Roger was vice-archdeacon in Waterford, Master Henry was the archdeacon of the diocese.¹²⁵ Therefore Cheney's thesis that vice-archdeacons were substitutes for the archdeacon does not seem to have been the case in Waterford in the early thirteenth century.

In c. 1198 the archdeacon of Bedford clarified his role in a letter to papal judges delegate. He said that 'part of our office [is] to bear witness to the truth concerning ecclesiastical benefices committed to our care, and to declare publicly the deeds which we have learnt about by full enquiry'.¹²⁶ The administrative and jurisdictional nature of the archdeacon's office is clearly outlined in this statement. One of the fundamental aspects of the office was knowledge of the churches and benefices within their jurisdiction and this is often the reason why archdeacons were called upon as witnesses to deeds and charters.¹²⁷ Perhaps because of his judicial duties, the archdeacon could act in the capacity of official, if called upon to do so by the bishop.¹²⁸ The archdeacon

¹²³ Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 9 fn. 1.

¹²⁴ *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, 164.

¹²⁵ *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, 155.

¹²⁶ Joyce Godber (ed.), *The cartulary of Newnham priory*, (Bedford, 1963–4), ii, no. 921, in Brian Kemp, 'Informing the archdeacon on ecclesiastical matters in twelfth-century England', in M.J. Franklin & Christopher Harper-Bill (eds), *Medieval ecclesiastical studies in honour of Dorothy M. Owen* (Woodbridge, 1995), 131.

¹²⁷ Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 7.

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, 7–8.

was also empowered to enact visitations on the diocese, principally to collect procurations from the parish churches. In England, this was a yearly occurrence and was not welcomed by the clergy; as with bishops' visitations it was known to cause disputes.¹²⁹ There is no actual evidence of archidiaconal visitations in Ireland but there are surviving records of exemptions from an archidiaconal visitation showing that it was a real threat.¹³⁰ As the chief auxiliary of the bishop, the regulation of the parish churches was an important part of the archdeacon's role, as demonstrated by Brian Kemp. Nevertheless, there was no consistency between dioceses in medieval England and the extent of the archdeacon's role in the parishes could vary quite widely.¹³¹

Doubtless because of its place as second in command to the bishop, the archdeaconry was often seen as a stepping-stone to a career in the episcopate. For high-flying clerics, securing a position as an archdeacon (or in Germany as a provost) greatly increased the chances of promotion to the episcopate. 'Thus, thirteen or fourteen out of twenty bishops of Würzburg between the 1080s and the middle of the thirteenth century had been provosts; eight out of nineteen bishops of Liège in the eleventh and twelfth centuries had been provosts or archdeacons. In Normandy between 911 and 1204 at least twenty out of ninety-one or ninety-two bishops had been archdeacons before their elevation; in

¹²⁹ The Fourth Lateran Council and the councils of Oxford (1222) and London (1237) laid down the provisions for visitation. See Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 22, 982–1067; Powicke & Cheney, *Councils and synods with other documents relating to the English church*, vol. 2, 1205–1313 (Oxford, 1964), pt. I, 100, 1215, 238–259.

¹³⁰ Holy Trinity (Christ Church) in Dublin claimed exemption for its churches. See William Monck Mason *The history and antiquities of the collegiate and cathedral church of St Patrick near Dublin* (Dublin, 1820), appendix no. 6: 'quod dicte ecclesie cathedrals et metropolitice sin tuna et in omnibus linertatibus pares habeantur'; see also *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 17.

¹³¹ Brian Kemp, 'Archdeacons and parish churches in England in the twelfth century', in George Garnett & John Hudson (eds), *Law and government in medieval England and Normandy. Essays in honour of Sir James Holt* (Cambridge, 1994), 341–64.

England and Wales at least seventy-eight out of 321 bishops between 1066 and 1300 had been archdeacons'.¹³²

The official (officialis)

THE OFFICIAL (*officialis*), official principal (*official principalis*), or the bishop's official, as was sometimes referred to, is the only comparable office-holder to the archdeacon. Rather remarkably, this dignitary has received very little academic scrutiny, save for the occasional paragraph. Notwithstanding, he became a particularly important and often referenced dignitary in ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland and in England, from the mid-fourteenth century. Like the archdeacon, the official was associated with the diocese (and hence the bishop) and not the cathedral. He shouldered some of the functions of the bishop, which the bishop himself was unable to undertake. He officiated in the ecclesiastical court, and beyond him there was no appeal. According to Cheney it is evident that the official is an administrator and lawyer because he officiates over the bishop's court.¹³³

The emergence of this dignity is somewhat obscure and scholars are still debating the terminology of such a title.¹³⁴ Cheney calculated that the official occurs in England in the middle of the twelfth century and is widespread by the early years of the thirteenth century.¹³⁵ In England, the first appearance of the official is in the later twelfth century, at Winchester.¹³⁶ In Scotland, prior to 1250, none of the twenty-one designated officials is known to have studied law,

¹³² Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 50.

¹³³ Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 20.

¹³⁴ D.M. Smith, 'The "Officialis" of the bishop in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England: problems of terminology', in M.J. Franklin & Christopher Harper-Bill (eds), *Medieval ecclesiastical studies in honour of Dorothy M. Owen* (Woodbridge, 1995), 201–20.

¹³⁵ Cheney, *English bishops' chanceries, 1100–1250*, 20.

¹³⁶ R.M. Haines, *The administration of the diocese of Worcester in the first half of the fourteenth century* (London, 1965), 105.

regardless of the fact that they were senior ecclesiastical judges.¹³⁷ In Carlisle cathedral after the Reformation, the official was combined with the chancellor, since the responsibility of both offices had diminished.¹³⁸ The office in Germany was established somewhat late, in the 1270s and then only as a response to the burgeoning power of the archdeacon.¹³⁹ In the cathedral church at Speyer, the chapter demanded that the bishop's official be a canon of the cathedral.¹⁴⁰ The archdeacon, as illustrated above, had a similar function to the official. Both archdeacon and official were not authorised members of the chapter, rather, their role centred on the diocese as a whole. The evolving role of the official, from personal servant of the bishop to administrator of the diocese at large, is also evident in the records. The thirteenth-century references associated the office with its prelate, whereas the later references, on the whole, have coupled the office with a chapter dignity. This sits quite nicely with developments in the diocese of Worcester where in the twelfth century, the official's duty was to assist the bishop. Yet by the fourteenth century his function at Worcester included the judicial element referred to earlier as well as other diocesan administrative duties.¹⁴¹

1.4.

RECRUITMENT OF CANONS AND THE SIZE OF CATHEDRAL COMMUNITIES

ON THE whole recruitment into cathedral chapters was a local occurrence. But as cathedrals and dioceses acquired more wealth, recruitment was drawn from a much wider geographical sphere. David Spear's scholarship has focused on the

¹³⁷ N.F. Shead, 'Compassed about with so great a cloud: the witnesses of Scottish episcopal acts before ca 1250', in *The Scottish Historical Review* 86 (October, 2007), 168.

¹³⁸ Wilson, 'Constitutional growth of Carlisle cathedral', 212.

¹³⁹ Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 43–4.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ R.M. Haines, *The administration of the diocese of Worcester*, 106–7.

prosopographical analysis of the Norman and English cathedral hierarchy. He asserts that recruitment in the early period (i.e. the eleventh and twelfth century) was 'when personalities counted ... [and] ecclesiastical structures fully reinforced the political underpinnings of the Norman Empire'.¹⁴² Indeed it would seem that in Ireland the political underpinnings often dictated the make up of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.¹⁴³ Other factors could determine the recruitment of new members. At York and Exeter, although the bishop had the right to appoint a new canon, he could not formally do so without the consent of the chapter.¹⁴⁴ During episcopal vacancies, prebends were in the gift of the king and it was in the interest of both bishop and king to further the careers of clerics with administrative abilities.

In the diocese of Lincoln, about thirty-five per cent of canons whose background can be traced came from outside of the diocese, whereas both Exeter and Chichester tended to recruit from the local pool, and York retained a number of Italian canons in the late twelfth century.¹⁴⁵ Under half of the canons at Hereford, on the border with Wales, were enlisted from Herefordshire and the surrounding areas, while the other half tended to originate from the south-eastern counties in England.¹⁴⁶ In Wales, where local recruitment was the normal pattern, Anglo-Norman families who migrated and established themselves from the twelfth century, altered the make up of the cathedral chapters until the two nations were equally represented in the cathedral churches.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² David Spear, 'The Norman empire and the secular clergy, 1066–1204', *The Journal of British Studies* 21/2 (1982), 4.

¹⁴³ See below, chapter 5.8 'Careerist bishops in the government administration', 267–72.

¹⁴⁴ Martin Brett, *The English church under Henry I*, 196.

¹⁴⁵ Julia Barrow, 'Origins and careers of cathedral canons in twelfth-century England', *Medieval Prosopography*, 21 (2000), 23–40; eadem, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 279–84.

¹⁴⁶ Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268', *Hereford cathedral*, 27.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid*, 282.

In Lisbon, the most prosperous of the Portuguese dioceses, the number of canons whose origin can be traced to Lisbon itself is a mere 4.9 per cent, whereas the number of foreign ecclesiastics is twenty-nine per cent.¹⁴⁸ In Portugal the number of cathedral canons varied quite extensively from only twelve in Lamego to thirty-six in Braga. The vast differences in the number of canons indicated the relative importance of the cathedral, its wealth and its status; factors affecting the social composition of the institutions.¹⁴⁹ In the lesser well off dioceses recruitment tended to remain local. In the thirteenth and fourteenth century the 'dominant noble lineages do not appear as chapter members in most Portuguese dioceses, except for a small group of middle and low-ranking noble families who sought to climb the social hierarchy by appointment to a cathedral dignity.'¹⁵⁰ This seems to be the case in France and England where the middling noble families pursued ecclesiastical careers as a means of consolidating the family's power.¹⁵¹

The number of canons permitted in any cathedral was not decreed by Rome, it was at the discretion of the cathedral itself. Be that as it may, economic circumstances tended to dictate the size of a capitular body. The principal source of income for a cathedral was drawn from its prebendal rectories. Consequently, the value of prebends and the greater the number created commanded the number of canons a cathedral could sustain. In England, by the thirteenth century, secular cathedral chapters were quite substantial. Lincoln had fifty-eight canons, Wells maintained fifty-five, and Salisbury had fifty-two.¹⁵² Exeter was one

¹⁴⁸ Vilar, 'Canons and cities: cathedral chapters and their social composition in medieval Portugal', 11.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 6–7.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 7.

¹⁵¹ Jacques Pycke, *Le chapitre cathédral Notre-Dame de Tournai de la fin du XIe à la fin du XIIIe siècle*. (Brussels, 1986), 85–93; David Lepine, *A brotherhood of canons serving God. English secular cathedrals in the later Middle Ages* (Suffolk, 1995), 48–54.

¹⁵² Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 33.

of the poorest dioceses in medieval England, out of the nine secular cathedrals its membership was almost on par with the smallest, with only twenty-four canons, despite the fact that it supported four archdeacons.¹⁵³ Lichfield, the smallest of the English cathedrals had only twenty-one prebends whereas Hereford, was marginally bigger with twenty-eight.¹⁵⁴

The figures given for Scotland and Wales appear to be on par with hypothetical figures for Ireland and are certainly much lower than in England.¹⁵⁵ Of the secular cathedrals, Glasgow was the largest, served by thirty-two canons.¹⁵⁶ In Aberdeen, in 1240, the capitular body consisted of four dignitaries and seven ordinary canons. By 1445, Aberdeen had a cathedral chapter consisting of four dignitaries, an archdeacon and twenty-four simple canonries, making it the second largest of the secular cathedrals. The smallest, Dornoch, held only thirteen canons.¹⁵⁷ In 1235, the cathedral church of Fortrose in Scotland supported only four canonries and because the prebends were so small none could reside.¹⁵⁸ Brechin, on the east coast of Scotland, had six prebends by 1274, whereas Moray (Elgin cathedral) had eighteen in 1226 and twenty-three by 1242.¹⁵⁹ The largest of the four Welsh dioceses, St David's reached a peak of eighteen in 1253, levelling off at sixteen towards the end of the century. Bangor maintained only eleven members in the thirteenth century.¹⁶⁰ On the whole, however, the Welsh cathedrals, excluding St David's, did not develop orthodox

¹⁵³ David Lepine, 'The origins and careers of the canons of Exeter cathedral, 1300–1455', 87.

¹⁵⁴ Julia Barrow, 'The statutes of St David's cathedral, 1224–59', in J. Wyn Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: cult, church and nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), 318.

¹⁵⁵ See below, A.1 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

¹⁵⁶ Cowan & Easson, *Medieval religious houses, Scotland*, 201–2.

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 202–3.

¹⁵⁸ I.B. Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995), 82.

¹⁵⁹ *Fasti ecclesiae Scoticanæ mediæ ævi ad annum 1638*, ed. D.E.R. Watt & A.L. Murray (Edinburgh, 2003), 57, 283.

¹⁶⁰ M.J. Pearson, 'Bangor chapter', 168. Julia Barrow, 'The statutes of St David's cathedral, 1224–1259', 318.

chapters with prebends until well into the thirteenth century. The loose arrangement of the Welsh dioceses, like their Irish counterparts, makes it difficult to pin-point any sort of membership numbers.¹⁶¹

At its height in 1259, the cathedral in Valencia had twenty. In Majorca in the mid-thirteenth century, the number of canons the cathedral could permit was set at twelve only. Vich in Catalonia, was comparable with Valencia, maintaining up to twenty canons. Nevertheless there were two Spanish chapters whose ambitions of grandeur prescribed for up to forty canons – Toledo and Seville.¹⁶² The number of canons at the cathedral church of Speyer in Germany oscillated from fourteen to nineteen – a relatively modest number by German standards. One of the reasons for such a fluctuation was that newly elected canons did not automatically qualify for a prebend. Rather, they had to wait for up to five years and thirty days before they could claim it,¹⁶³ a situation contrary to the rights and privileges available to Irish cathedral canons. The papal records relating to Ireland allude to canons obtaining a prebend at the institution of their new office. For instance, in 1333, Otho Sapiti, canon of Chichester, was immediately granted the ‘canonry of Dublin and prebend of Suerds [Swords]’.¹⁶⁴ The largest German cathedral, at Würzburg had fifty-four canons. In France, the cathedral at Chartres, whose capitular body consisted of seventy-seven canons, superseded this figure.¹⁶⁵ Between 1217 and 1228 the cathedral at Laon maintained eighty-seven prebends and, according to Fernando Picó, this figure remained relatively unchanged until the chapter was dissolved in 1790.¹⁶⁶ Based on the number of prebends, and allowing for the fact that the dean and chapter had two prebends each, and one set aside for the *presibterium* (the twelfth priest-canon),

¹⁶¹ See all of M.J. Pearson’s articles on the Welsh cathedral chapters.

¹⁶² R.I. Burns, ‘The chapter of Valencia’, 16.

¹⁶³ Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 189.

¹⁶⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 326.

¹⁶⁵ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 33.

¹⁶⁶ Fernando Picó, ‘Membership in the cathedral chapter of Laon’, 4.

membership of the cathedral of Laon stood at eighty-four during the medieval period.¹⁶⁷ The scale of this prebendal estate illustrates the sheer size and wealth of Laon cathedral. According to László Koszta, Hungarian chapters were modest when compared to their European counterparts. In the largest chapters there could be up to forty benefices, whereas the smallest ones by comparison, had as few as twelve or even ten benefices.¹⁶⁸

1.5

CONCLUSION

THE ORIGIN and evolution of cathedral chapters unfolded over many centuries. Commencing in the eighth century with the Rule of Chrodegang of Metz, the idea of the *vita communis* evolved until corporations of secular canons emerged as the standard for secular cathedrals across Latin Christendom. The cathedrals of Normandy were influential in establishing the four-pillars design which soon became associated with the English secular cathedral. Nonetheless, the organisation of cathedrals across Latin Christendom varied according to local requirements. For instance, the German cathedrals persisted with the office of provost instead of that of archdeacon. In Kirkwall in the Scottish Orkney islands, the head of the chapter was a provost and not a dean. Certainly, this must be of comparative value when considering the cathedral churches in the province of Tuam, except for the fact that in Tuam the provost replaced the chancellor. Even some of the northern French cathedrals retained the provostship but downgraded its importance.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ László Koszta, 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', in *Encontro Internacional "Carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente cristão, séc. XII-XIV"*, (Lisboa, 2007), 18.

There was no prescribed size for cathedral communities, and as the evidence shows, they varied enormously. In Scotland the smallest community consisted of only four canons, whereas at Chartres in France the capitular body consisted of seventy-seven. Geographic and social origins of canons have been investigated for many cathedrals across Latin Christendom. Overall it would appear that politics and the social hierarchy played a role in the appointment of clerics. The results suggest that the more prosperous the diocese, the more the ruling classes involved themselves. This is evident in Irish dioceses also, where one finds greater competition for the more affluent prebends and less interest in the smaller or less well off dioceses.

Scotland and Wales are perhaps most comparable with Ireland as shall be evident in the succeeding chapters. All three countries were late developers in terms of capitular arrangements, lagging behind the rest of Europe. The influence of the Anglo-Normans is indisputable, particularly when surveying the churches in the English colony. Indigenous Irish reformers initiated a process of transformations, which took place in the mid-twelfth century. These transformations accelerated after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans from the late 1160s. In all three cases, evidence is of a fragmentary nature and may not always provide the details found at other cathedrals. Nevertheless, in Scotland all of the four pillars, which came to be associated with the English model, were on the whole represented in the eleven secular cathedrals of Scotland (the remaining two were monastic). The only exception being Sodor (the Isles) in which they do not appear.¹⁶⁹ The four Welsh cathedrals all adopted the four-pillars design but in some cases this was not fulfilled until the second half of the thirteenth century, well after their counterparts in England.

¹⁶⁹ Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland*, 78–9.

2. THE FORMATION AND EVOLUTION OF IRISH CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS

2.1

THE ORGANISATION OF THE EARLY IRISH CHURCH

THE TWELFTH century in Ireland witnessed a monumental upheaval in terms of church structure and episcopal jurisdiction, which was first addressed at the synod of Ráith Bressail in 1111.¹ A decisive watershed in Irish history, it brutally swept aside the monastic culture of the early Irish church, ushering in a new territorially-based diocesan structure as advocated by a reformist papacy in Rome. In this new church of Ireland, the demarcation of dioceses, the choice of seat (or see) for each, and the limits of its territorial boundaries reflected the pre-existing secular division, known as the *trícha cé*.² The synod restructured

¹ Ráith Bressail is recorded by the seventeenth-century historian Geoffrey Keating, see Geoffrey Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn: the history of Ireland*, S. Dineen & David Comyn (eds), (CELT: Corpus of Electronic Texts, a project of University College, Cork, 2002), iii, 298–307, 312–6. Giraldus Cambrensis also refers to the synods of the twelfth century in *Expugnatio Hibernica – the conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis*, ed. and trans. A.B. Scott & F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), 99–101. For an analysis of the synods of the twelfth century see: John Mac Erlean, ‘Synod of Ráith Bressail: boundaries of the dioceses of Ireland, A.D. 1110 or 1118’, *Archiv. Hib.* 3 (1914), 1–33; Aubrey Gwynn, ‘The first synod of Cashel’, *IER* 66 (1945), 81–92; M.J. Connellan, ‘The see of Tuam in Ráith Bressail synod’, *JGAHS* 14 (1950), 19–26; Aubrey Gwynn, *The twelfth century reform. A history of Irish Catholicism*, vol. 2, (Dublin, 1968); Anthony Condon, ‘Ráith Bressail: a suggested identification’, *Peritia* 3 (1984), 326–29; Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 155–233; M.T. Flanagan, ‘Henry II, the council of Cashel and the Irish bishops’, *Peritia* 10 (1996), 184–211; Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, ‘The emergence of the metropolitan see: Dublin, 1111–1216’, in James Kelly & Dáire Keogh (eds) *History of the diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 51–71; Holland, ‘Dublin and the reform of the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries’, 111–60; Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘The synod of Cashel, 1101: conservative or innovative?’ in David Edwards (ed.), *Regions and rulers in Ireland, 1100–1650: essays for Kenneth Nicholls* (Dublin, 2004), 13–19; Martin Holland, ‘The synod of Kells in ms BL, Add. 4783’, *Peritia*, 19 (2005), 164–72; *The transformation of the Irish church*, 34–5.

² Literally translating as ‘thirty hundreds’. See Paul MacCotter, *Medieval Ireland*, 13.

the framework of the *ecclesia Hibernicana* by introducing an archiepiscopal and primatial hierarchy as recommended by Gille, bishop of Limerick, in his two tracts, *De statu ecclesiae* and *De usu ecclesiastico*, essentially setting out to define the offices of the ecclesiastical hierarchy according to contemporary European customs.

The position and authority of bishops in the Irish church before the twelfth century reforms are extraordinarily complex issues and have been best tackled by Thomas Charles-Edwards, Colmán Etchingham, Marie Therese Flanagan, Aubrey Gwynn, Kathleen Hughes and Richard Sharpe.³ Nevertheless one cannot write about the church in later medieval Ireland without first painting a picture of the pre-Anglo-Norman church scene. Unlike continental Europe, Ireland (and indeed large parts of Britain) did not inherit the traditions of the late antique Romanised world and so its development was in some ways insular, and it was certainly slower to adopt aspects of the wider reform such as cathedral building and diocesan boundaries.⁴ The arrangement that existed in the early Irish church

³ The foundation of this entire section rests on the following works: Aubrey Gwynn, 'Lanfranc and the Irish church'; idem, 'St Anselm and the Irish church', *IER* 59 (1942), 1–14; Kathleen Hughes, *The church in early Irish society* (London, 1966); Richard Sharpe, 'Some problems concerning the organisation of the church in early medieval Ireland', *Peritia* 3 (1984), 230–70; Kathleen Hughes, *Church and society in Ireland, AD 400–1200*; Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*; Colmán Etchingham, 'Bishops in the early Irish church – a reassessment', *Studia Hibernica* 28 (1994) 35–62; idem, 'Bishoprics in Ireland and Wales in the early Middle Ages: some comparisons', 7–25; Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, esp. chapter six: 'The organisation of the early Irish church', 241–81; M.T. Flanagan, 'Irish church reform in the twelfth century and Áed Ua Cáellaide, bishop of Louth: an Italian dimension', in Michael Richter & J.-M. Picard (eds), *Ogma: essays in Celtic studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Catháin* (Dublin, 2002), 94–104; eadem, *The transformation of the Irish church*.

⁴ See Richard Gem, 'The Irish cathedral in the 12th century: the dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe', in Roger Stalley (ed.), *Limerick and south-west Ireland. Medieval art and architecture* (Leeds, 2011), 63.

was observed by Bede (672–735) in his ecclesiastical history of the English people in which he noted that the people were:

accustomed to have an abbot in priest's orders as [their] head, so that both the entire province and also the bishops themselves are required, by an unusual ordering of affairs, to be subject to his authority. This is in accordance with the example of Iona's first teacher, who was not a bishop but a priest and monk.⁵

Nevertheless, early Christian Ireland had many merits and, while the institutional church might be thought to have been developing at a more leisurely pace than its continental cousins, Irish monks were revered across Christendom for their monasteries and learning. Colmán Etchingham's revision of the historiography of the early church highlighted the sophisticated, all-embracing 'work of the ecclesiastical intelligentsia, who produced exegesis, computistics, annals, genealogies, legal tracts, poetry and narrative prose both in Latin and the vernacular', whilst drawing attention to the fact that Bede's comment on ecclesiastical organisation has subversively influenced modern historiography.⁶ Indeed, the *schottenkloster* of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, albeit later, are testament to the longstanding influence of the Irish monastic movement.⁷

⁵ See Bede, *History of the English people*, iii. 4, in Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 241. 'Habere autem solet ipsa insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum. Cuius iuri et omnis prouincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi ordine inusitato debeant esse subiecti, iuxta exemplum primi doctoris illius, qui non episcopus, sed presbyter extitit et monachus ...'

⁶ For details of the errant historiography see Colmán Etchingham, 'Bishops in the early Irish church', 35–6.

⁷ See Liam de Paor, *Ireland and early Europe: essays and occasional writings on art and culture* (Dublin, 1997), 160–2; Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, 'Irish kings and bishops in the memoria of the German Schottenklöster', in Próinséas Ní Chatháin & Michael Richter (eds), *Irland und Europa – Ireland and Europe. Die Kirche im Frühmittelalter – the early church* (Stuttgart, 1984), 390–404.

*Collectio canonum Hibernensis*⁸

THE EIGHTH-century *Collectio canonum Hibernensis* is probably the most important document tackling the organisation of the early Irish church. Its opening sections deal with the episcopacy, from which one can build a profile of bishops.⁹ It gives an indication of the hierarchical patterns in the early Irish church through citations such as *episcopus primae sedis* (bishop of the prime see), *metropolitanus episcopus* (metropolitan bishop), *major sedes* (greater see), and *episcopus episcoporum* (bishop of bishops).¹⁰ Charles-Edwards suggested that if the *Hibernensis* is viewed in conjunction with other contemporary sources, such as the saints' lives, then it is entirely plausible that an archiepiscopal system was developing prior to the twelfth century.¹¹ In the text, the episcopate was expected to be canonically consecrated and bishops to have no more than one wife. Personal probity, religious zeal, and learning, were all recommended. He was empowered to confirm, ordain and consecrate and held the general supervision of the pastoral ministry. Both Etchingham and Sharpe have agreed that this introductory section was most likely seen as a guide or manual for contemporary bishops.¹² Marie Therese Flanagan has summarised the old prevailing view as one which saw bishops as marginalised figures who were 'little more than sacramental functionaries with their duties restricted to the ordination of priests, the consecration of other bishops and conferral of the sacrament of confirmation'.¹³

⁸ Roy Flechner, *A study and edition of the collectio canonum Hibernensis* (Oxford, 2006).

⁹ Etchingham, *Church organisation*, 47–63; Richard Sharpe, 'Some problems', 235–7, 239.

¹⁰ Etchingham, 'Bishops', 53–4.

¹¹ Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 416–40.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 36.

Historiographies of the early Irish church have been dominated by the traditionally applied 'convenience-term of "monasteries"',¹⁴ but latterly called 'para-monastic bodies',¹⁵ which circumscribed and eclipsed all other churches. Much ink has been spilt on whether these establishments became the focal point of *civitates* – pre-urban proto-towns.¹⁶ In the 1960s Kathleen Hughes contended that the monastic church was not as successful over the episcopal church as earlier scholars once believed. She argued that an episcopally controlled administration existed alongside the monastic *paruchia* (proto-parishes) well into the seventh century, although by the end of the century the monastic *paruchia* prevailed.¹⁷ Most recently Colmán Etchingham stressed the 'diversity of realities' in which the episcopal, abbatial and 'coarbial', authorities existed, but yet which were not all necessarily represented in every individual church.¹⁸ It

¹⁴ Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity in pre-Norman Ireland: the case of Glendalough* (Maynooth, 1996), 216.

¹⁵ Colmán Etchingham, 'The organisation and function of an early Irish church settlement: What was Glendalough?', in Charles Doherty, Linda Doran & Mary Kelly (eds), *Glendalough: city of God* (Dublin, 2011), 26.

¹⁶ The debate on the existence of monastic proto-towns is re-emerging as a hot topic in academic circles. For discussions see Kathleen Hughes, *The church in early Irish society*, 148–9; R.A. Butlin, 'Urban and proto-urban settlements in pre-Norman Ireland', in R.A. Butlin (ed.), *The development of the Irish town* (London, 1977), 20–5; Charles Doherty, 'The monastic town in early medieval Ireland', in H.B. Clarke & Anngret Simms (eds), *The comparative history of urban origins in non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Russia from the ninth to the thirteenth century*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1985), 45–76; Mary Valante, 'Reassessing the Irish "monastic town"', *IHS* 31/121 (1998), 1–18; H.B. Clarke, 'Quo vadis? Mapping the Irish "monastic town"', in Seán Duffy (ed.), *Princes, prelates and poets in medieval Ireland: essays in honour of Katharine Simms* (Dublin, 2013), 261–78. The historiography of monastic towns has been succinctly surveyed by Colmán Etchingham in 'The organisation and function of an early Irish church settlement: what was Glendalough?', 22–35, 38–53.

¹⁷ Kathleen Hughes, *The church in early Irish society*, 39–133, 111–33; Sharpe, 'Some problems', 244, 234. See also Colmán Etchingham, *The Irish 'monastic town': is this a valid concept? Kathleen Hughes memorial lectures*, 8 (Cambridge, 2010), 34; idem, 'What was Glendalough?', 25–7.

¹⁸ Etchingham, *Church organisation*, 456.

is likely that bishops resided within these para-monastic establishments since there is no reference to early palaces or abodes of any sort. Although dioceses were not created until the synod of Ráith Bressail, bishops of the early Irish church were generally known by the name of the church to which they belonged. By the tenth century, the territorial titles seem to have encompassed a much larger area where the bishop of Cenél nEógain or the bishop of Thomond is found.¹⁹ This mirrored continental Europe where bishops took on titles which linked them to certain polities, such as the bishop of Rheims or Hamburg.²⁰

The failure of the Irish church to establish a diocesan system may be attributed to the lack of fixed episcopal seats, or cathedrals. As Kenneth Nicholls pointed out, there is evidence for bishops in the early Irish church but not one mention of cathedrals, which can only suggest that the *cathedra* did not yet exist in Ireland. The annals and other sources have multiple references to bishops and yet it appears that these bishops were not identified in terms of a geographical space, i.e. they did not have fully defined dioceses, nor perhaps did they have a mother church (cathedral) at the centre of the diocese as is suggested in Gille's tracts in which he assigns a mother church to the new diocese of Limerick.²¹ In addition to this, the early Irish church had a large number of abbots, coarbs and erenaghs operating as rulers of their own great monastic churches. In fact, the situation left little need for cathedral churches as the monastic settlements of this period operated within that space.

The lack of territorial dioceses and the number of married clergy were traits that made the episcopacy incompatible with the Gregorian reforms. Thirst for reform of the institutional Irish church began to be felt in the late eleventh century and

¹⁹ *AU*, sub anno 917.3; *AI*, sub anno, 927.3.

²⁰ Robert Bartlett, *The making of Europe: conquest, colonization and cultural change, 950–1350* (London, 1993), 5–7; Angus Mackay, with David Ditchburn (eds), *Atlas of medieval Europe* (London, 1997), 38–40.

²¹ See below, 66, f.n. 29.

is evident in the invitation extended to successive archbishops of Canterbury to consecrate bishops in the Hiberno-Norse towns.²² For example, in 1096, a letter was sent to the archbishop of Canterbury requesting that Mael Ísa Ua hAinmire be consecrated as bishop of Waterford. This petition is evidence that the church in Waterford felt it needed an archbishop to perform the consecration and looked to Canterbury to achieve this.²³ Thus, one could conclude that the Irish reform movement was aided and abetted by two Italian archbishops of Canterbury, Lanfranc (1070–89) and St Anselm (1093–1109). In a letter to King Toirdelbach Ua Briain (1063–86),²⁴ Lanfranc charged the Irish church with abuses including ‘that bishops are consecrated by one bishop only; and that many bishops are ordained in villages rather than cities’, both of which practices were contrary to canon law.²⁵ Twenty years later, in 1096, Anselm shared his predecessor’s concerns over the Irish church, asserting:

Again, it is alleged that far and wide in your country bishops are elected and established without a defined place of episcopate, and that they are ordained as bishop by a single bishop, as though they were any priest. This is undoubtedly entirely contrary to the sacred canons, and those who are so instituted or ordained, together with those ordaining them, should be admonished to be deposed from episcopal office. A bishop, unless he has a defined diocese and people whom he watches over, cannot be established in accordance with [the will of] God; for the one who does not have a flock

²² See for example, Martin Holland, ‘Dublin and the reform of the Irish church’, *Peritia* 14 (2000), 111–60.

²³ Holland has thoroughly examined the decretum in which this letter survives and the connection between the Hiberno-Norse sees and Canterbury. See Martin Holland, ‘Decreta of late eleventh-century Irish bishops-elect’, *Peritia* 21 (2010), 233–54.

²⁴ Turlough O’Brien was king of Munster and high king of Ireland, see F.J. Byrne, *Irish kings and high kings* (Dublin, repr., 2015), 107, 257, 261, 271–2, 276, 279, 297.

²⁵ Helen Clover & Margaret Gibson, *The letters of Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury* (Oxford, 1979), no. 10, at 70–73 ‘verum inter multa quae placent relata nobis sunt quaedam quae disciplinant, videlicet [...] quod episcopi ab uno episcopo ab uno consecrantur; quod in villis vel civitatibus plures ordinantur’.

whom he pastures is worthy of having neither the name nor the office of pastor among the laity.²⁶

Gille of Limerick and the synod of Ráith Bressail

In 1101 Muirchertach Ua Briain, king of Munster, convened a synod at Cashel to address the reform of the Irish church.²⁷ The involvement of the secular arm of society in church affairs potentially provided the justification for developing the Irish episcopacy. The absence of Samuel, bishop of Dublin (1096–1121), from both Cashel in 1101 and the later synod of Ráith Bressail in 1111 is striking. Firstly, it negates Dublin's involvement in the Irish church suggesting that Dublin, one of the Hiberno-Norse sees, was answerable to Canterbury. Martin Holland argues that, by not attending either synod, Samuel was illustrating his allegiance to Canterbury in the hope of gaining archdiocesan status for Dublin in the English church.²⁸ It could also suggest that since both of these synods were Munster-based – convened by authorities in Munster and held in Munster also – Dublin was ignoring them as provincial synods which had no authority over Dublin as a diocese.²⁹ Indeed, Martin Holland believes that the clergy of Connacht and Leinster were not even present at the synods.³⁰ According to Holland, Samuel refused to attend the consecration of Gille as bishop of Limerick in c. 1106, which

²⁶ Richard Gem, 'The Irish cathedral in the 12th century', 64–5, c.f. F.S. Schmitt (ed), *S. Anselmi cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia*, V, (Edinburgh, 1851), epistle 435, at 382–83; See also Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*.

²⁷ *AFM*, sub anno, 1101.5; *AT*, sub anno, 1101; *AC*, sub anno, 1101 etc. See also Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'The synod of Cashel, 1101: conservative or innovative?', 17.

²⁸ Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church', 145.

²⁹ Historians have remarked on the obvious Munster bias of the synod of Ráith Bressail, particularly the detailed description of the diocese of Limerick. Lawlor noted thirteen named geographical points on the border of the diocese of Limerick and, unlike all the other dioceses, Limerick has a named principal church – the church of Mary. H.J. Lawlor, *St Bernard of Clairvaux's life of St Malachy of Armagh* (London, 1920), xliv.

³⁰ Martin Holland, 'The introduction of a new organisational structure to the Irish church (1072–1152)', (TCD, PhD, 2003), 319.

demonstrates Dublin's detachment from Irish church affairs. Michael Richter has referred to a letter (c. 1106) from Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, to Gille, bishop of Limerick, in which he implicitly states that Gille had not been ordained by the archbishop of Canterbury. Richter quite rightly cited this as a significant indication of the growing independence of the Irish church.³¹

Gille was the first bishop of Limerick (1106–40), papal legate and the architect of the synod of Ráith Bressail.³² His two tracts, *De statu ecclesiae* and *De usu ecclesiastico*, proposed a fixed hierarchical structure for the Irish church that would (to appropriate the title of Flanagan's monograph) transform the Irish church from the twelfth century onwards. His origins and education are mysterious and concrete information regarding Gille's early years is unknown. He was an acquaintance or even friend of Anselm, whom he met in Rouen or Bec, and which is attested to in an exchange of letters between the two men.³³ Presiding over the synod of Ráith Bressail, Gille had the authority and opportunity to enact a new organisation, as propounded in his ecclesiastical tracts.

The only known detailed record we have of Ráith Bressail is preserved in Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, written in the seventeenth century about events up to the coming of the Anglo-Normans. Keating availed of a source that has not survived the passage of time. The book of Clonenagh (*Cluain Eidhneach Fionntain*), to which Keating referred, copied the acts of the synod as laid out by the reforming party. Essentially, it sought to follow the precedent already established in England – two archiepiscopal sees each with twelve

³¹ Michael Richter, 'Gilbert of Limerick revisited', in A.P. Smyth (ed.), *Seanchas: Studies in early and medieval Irish archaeology, history and literature in honour of Francis J. Byrne* (Dublin, 1999), 341.

³² See for example John Fleming's monograph, *Gille of Limerick (c.1070–1145)*.

³³ Fleming, *Gille of Limerick*, 96–7.

dioceses.³⁴ The *Annals of Inisfallen* record over three hundred priests and fifty bishops in attendance at the synod, but the annals lack the depth of detail found in Keating's account.³⁵ The dioceses chosen at the synod were based on political divisions and the diocesan centres were not determined fortuitously but often because they were the centre of existing royal or political power. For example Cashel was chosen as a diocesan seat because it had long been one of the major power-centres in southern Ireland.

Recent scholars appear to be at loggerheads as to the impact of external influences on the reform movement. John Fleming, and more recently Marie Therese Flanagan, firmly believe that the strong pseudo-Isodorian undertone of Gille's text reflects, as Martin Brett formerly pointed out, an Anglo-Norman reading, casting aside the continental influences that some afford to Gille.³⁶ Approaching this from another angle, Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel makes many parallels and connections between the Irish church of the twelfth century and that in Germany. She refers to the Book of Obits or Necrology (c. 1150), compiled in the Schottenkloster at Würzburg but now kept in the Vatican Library (MS 10 100). She draws attention to the fact that one of the presiding dignitaries of the synod of Ráith Bressail, Mael Íosa Ua hAinmire (d. 11 April 1135), as well as a number of the Irish ecclesiastical hierarchy, are recorded in the book.³⁷ Also, Michael Richter suggested that the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which was afforded a sizeable section in Gille's text, could have English or continental influences, most

³⁴ Geoffrey Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn*, 301–3. See also RIA Ms. 24 p. 23: cat. no. 43, c. 1641–46.

³⁵ *AI*, *sub anno*, 1111.3.

³⁶ Martin Brett, *The English church under Henry I* (Oxford, 1975), 32, n.4; Fleming, *Gille of Limerick*, 74–88; and *The transformation of the Irish church*, 56–7.

³⁷ Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, 'Cashel and Germany: the documentary evidence', in Damien Bracken & Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006), 182.

particularly German imperial influence.³⁸ On the other hand, scholars agree that Gille's text has hallmarks of home-grown influences, such as the earlier *Collectio canonum Hibernensis* in which the ecclesiastical grades are listed in reverse order to Gille's text.³⁹ Nevertheless, Gille's definitions of the offices within the Irish church do not deal directly with the offices within the cathedral chapters; rather he considers the wider diocesan church 'fourteen priestly offices, to preside, to serve, to pray, to offer, to preach, to teach, to baptise, to bless, to excommunicate, to reconcile, to anoint, to communicate, to commend souls to God, to inter bodies'.⁴⁰ This begs the question – when were the structures of cathedral chapters first considered in Ireland? Furthermore, what sway did Gille's tracts have on the shape of these structures? Certainly, his major bequest to the Irish church is in his pyramid, in which this church is hierarchically divided into three levels (*fig. 1*). The apex is reserved for the pope as the patriarch of the church. The next level, termed 'the universal church', is the preserve of the episcopal orders, the primates, archbishops and bishops. Below them is the pontifical church, which is made up of the diocesan churches.⁴¹ Whilst not framing the offices of the cathedral chapters, Gille does detail the office of the bishop whose function has three strands: the *munus regendi* is the governance of the diocese, the *munus sanctificandi* is his pastoral duties, and the *munus docendi* is his role as a teacher. Rather tellingly, Fleming's view is that Gille's theory portrays the bishop, the supreme authority within his diocese, as the 'one who determines how those subject to him function'.⁴² Does this mean that there was flexibility about how the ecclesiastical offices could be tailored to suit local peculiarities?

³⁸ Michael Richter, 'Gilbert of Limerick revisited', 346.

³⁹ See Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 124–33.

⁴⁰ Fleming, *Gille of Limerick*, 37.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 82.

⁴² *ibid.*, 83.

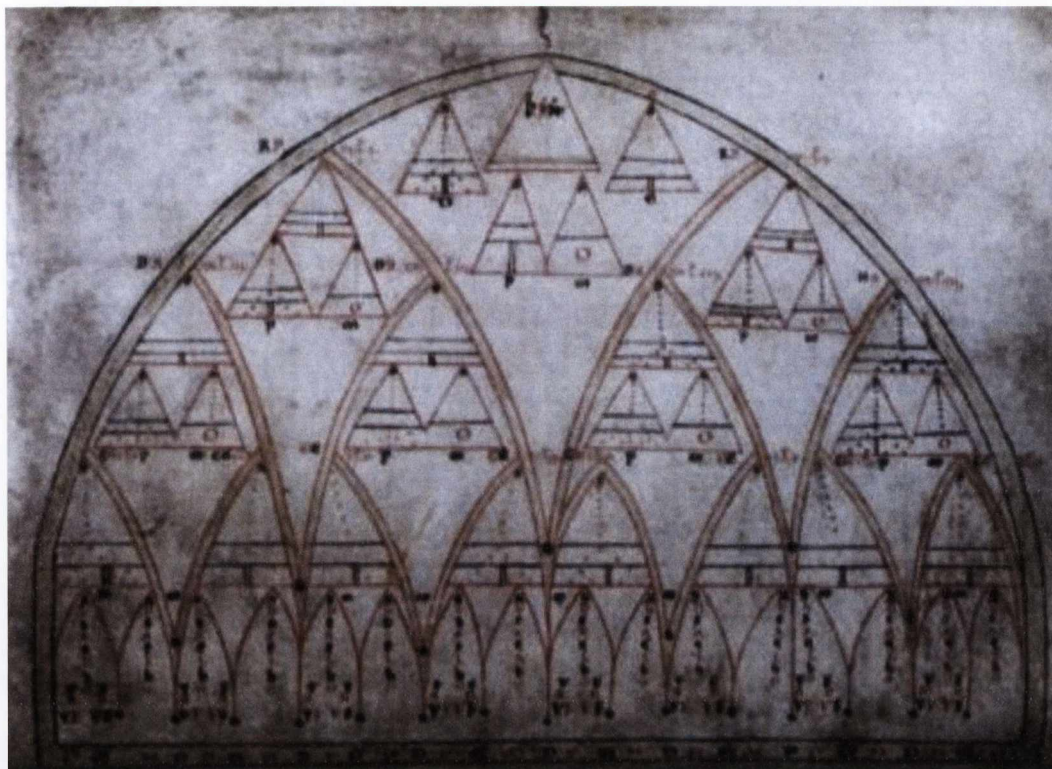


Fig. 1 *Imago ecclesiae* (Durham cathedral library manuscript, ms B.II.35, fol 36v. (John Fleming, *Gille of Limerick* (c.1070 –1145): architect of a medieval church (Dublin, 2001), 120).

Dublin and the reform movement

There is, beyond question, ample evidence that there was significant interaction between the church in Ireland, England and the continent, though it is difficult to determine the extent of these influences. The synod of Ráith Bressail was the first major ecclesiastical event to demonstrate such connections. It may also be seen as a bold attempt by the Irish church leaders to extricate themselves from English authority. The decision to exclude mention of the Hiberno-Scandinavian sees of Dublin and Waterford by subsuming them under the dioceses of Glendalough and Lismore respectively, remains a contentious issue amongst historians to this day. Recently, Mac Shamhráin promoted the idea that the new diocesan structure was a marker of identity and the first steps along the road to

emancipation from Canterbury.⁴³ The new territorial boundary for the Dublin province, as marked out by the synod of Kells/Mellifont, coincided with Mac Murchada's provincial kingdom, which supports Mac Shamhráin's idea of an intended emancipation. Holland has further advanced this, claiming that Ráith Bressail was a 'direct challenge ... [and] a deliberate attempt to thwart'⁴⁴ Dublin's aspiration to become a metropolitan see under the primacy of Canterbury. The earlier doyen of medieval Irish ecclesiastical studies, Aubrey Gwynn, viewed the manoeuvre as political – it had, after all, been a bishopric for eighty years prior to Ráith Bressail and, by all accounts, the first three bishops of Dublin had embraced and played prominent roles in the Irish reform movement.⁴⁵

Despite its absence from Ráith Bressail, Dublin was one of the earliest dioceses to join the reform movement. Its first bishops were all Benedictines with links outside of Ireland.⁴⁶ Aubrey Gwynn's analysis was that Dublin joined the continental pattern of reform during the episcopacy of its first bishop, Dúnán (c. 1030–74), whom he believed was consecrated at Canterbury.⁴⁷ More recently, however, Flanagan argues that Dublin's early connections were probably with York, rather than Canterbury, insisting that '*more antecessorum nostrorum*' in Lanfranc's letter to King Gofraid of Dublin referred to previous letters sent to

⁴³ Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, 'The emergence of the metropolitan see: Dublin, 1111–1216' in James Kelly & Dáire Keogh (eds), *History of the Catholic diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 54.

⁴⁴ Holland, 'New organisational structure', 321.

⁴⁵ Aubrey Gwynn, 'The first bishops of Dublin' in H.B. Clarke (ed.), *Medieval Dublin: the living city* (Dublin, 1990), 55, first published in *Reportorium Novum* 1 (1955–6), 1–26.

⁴⁶ In recent years much has been written about Viking Dublin. *Medieval Dublin*, a series based on the annual symposia, and edited by Seán Duffy, often has articles on aspects of Viking Dublin. See also, A.J. Fletcher & Annagret Simms (eds), *Dublin in the medieval world; studies in honour of Howard B. Clarke* (Dublin, 2009); H.B. Clarke & Ruth Johnson (eds), *The Vikings in Ireland and beyond: before and after the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2015). Seán Duffy's most recent contribution to Viking Dublin, *Brian Boru and the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2013), offers a new interpretation of the role of Vikings in Irish affairs.

⁴⁷ Aubrey Gwynn, 'The first bishops of Dublin', 39–42.

earlier Irish kings rather than to a previous consecration.⁴⁸ Furthermore, if Dúnán had been consecrated at Canterbury as Gwynn has argued then this act would surely have been used to impose Canterbury's claims in Ireland.⁴⁹ It is likely that Canterbury's connection with Dublin commenced with the episcopacy of Gilla Pátraic (1074–84) who studied at Worcester, which was closely connected to Canterbury and that he was the first Irish bishop to be consecrated at Canterbury.⁵⁰ Indeed, more recently, Dagmar O'Riain Raedel's researches have connected Dublin, specifically Christ Church cathedral, with Cologne in Germany.⁵¹

The outcome of the Synod of Kells/Mellifont (1152), as reported by Geoffrey Keating, recorded that:

a famous council ... held at Ceanannus [Kells] ... in which Lord John Cardinal Priest of St Lawrence in Damascus, presiding over many abbots and priors ... gave four pallia to the four archbishops of Ireland, to wit, to those of Dublin, Cashel, Tuaim and Ard Macha [Armagh]. Moreover, he appointed the archbishop of Ard Macha as primate over the other bishops.⁵²

The synod summoned by Cardinal John Paparo was held in two places, firstly at Kells and then at Mellifont. At Kells, simony and usury were condemned, the payment of tithes was decreed, the new archbishops were acknowledged. At Mellifont the *pallia* were ceremonially presented to the new archbishops. The event effectively brought the Irish church one step further along the road to emancipation from the English church generally, but from the church at

⁴⁸ See M.T. Flanagan, *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers, Angevin kingship. Interactions in Ireland in the late twelfth century* (Oxford, 1989), 9–15; Lanfranc, *Letters* no. 9; James Ussher, *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum sylloge*, iv, (Paris, 1665), 490.

⁴⁹ Mark Philpott, 'Some interactions between the English and Irish churches', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 20 (1998), 187–204, at 192.

⁵⁰ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 6–7, 9–10; idem, *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers*, 8–13; Martin Brett, 'Canterbury's perspective on church reform and Ireland, 1070–1115', in Bracken & Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century*, 13–35.

⁵¹ See below, chapter 3, 'The monastic cathedrals', 125.

⁵² Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn*, 315–7.

Canterbury specifically. Prior to Kells/Mellifont, the jurisdictional claims of the English church were balanced on increasingly shaky ground as the reformers in the Irish church began to emerge from under the wings of Canterbury. It is plausible to argue that the first signs of this were in the demarcation of dioceses following the synod of Ráith Bressail; notably that Dublin was not awarded an archbishopric, nor did it make the grade as a diocesan see; instead, a gap was left on the assumption that Dublin would eventually join the twelve other dioceses created at the synod. This unity of the Hiberno-Norse urban hub and the 'monastic city' of Glendalough may have been a carefully planned machination of the indigenous reformers, which initiated a process of emancipation from the church at Canterbury. This is reinforced by the linking of Hiberno-Norse Waterford with Lismore and Wexford with Ferns. The second phase, as it were, came as a result of the synod of Kells/Mellifont when it was decided to create two further metropolises, Tuam and Dublin.⁵³

The impact of the Anglo-Normans

The church in Ireland was, for some time between Kells/Mellifont, in 1152, and 1169, independent, having severed its links with Canterbury through a tactical manoeuvring by the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. The Anglo-Norman settlement, well under way by the end of the twelfth century, coincided with the later stages of the reform movement. Indeed one might suggest that the church reforms were aided by the colonists who invoked *Laudabiliter*, which effectively validated the conquest of Ireland.⁵⁴ The Council of Cashel in 1172 was convened

⁵³ See J.A. Watt, *The church in medieval Ireland*, 24–7, particularly 25 for the map illustrating the diocesan divisions established by Ráith Bressail (1111) and Kells/Mellifont (1152). Martin Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church', 111. *AFM*, sub anno 1152; *AT*, 1152; Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn*, 312–6.

⁵⁴ J.A. Watt devotes a whole section to *Laudabiliter* in his book *The church and the two nations*, 35–40. See also Maurice Sheehy, 'The Bull "*Laudabiliter*": a problem in medieval diplomatique and history', *Galway Arch. Soc. Jn.*, 29, 3/4 (1961), 45–70; A.J. Duggan, 'The making of a myth: Giraldus Cambrensis, *Laudabiliter*, and Henry II's lordship of Ireland', *Studies in*

by none other than Henry II and by all accounts the native bishops welcomed the English king's intervention in Ireland.⁵⁵ In his commentary on the Council, Giraldus Cambrensis observed that 'in all parts of the Irish church all matters relating to religion are to be conducted hereafter on the pattern of Holy church and in line with the observances of the English church'.⁵⁶

One could speculate that the transformations of the twelfth century, implemented by native reforming clergy, may or may not have continued had the Anglo-Normans not intervened. According to John Watt 'it is impossible to believe that Ireland was incapable of continuing self-reform',⁵⁷ which seems plausible when one recounts that native Irish clergy were responsible for the reforms of the twelfth century. However, Adrian Empey warns against the assumption that the Anglo-Normans merely finished off the programme of the twelfth-century reform. In his consideration of the successes of the native reforming clergy, Empey wonders would their success have continued had the 'Anglo-Normans decided to occupy themselves elsewhere'.⁵⁸

Mac Shamhráin has suggested that the reform movement was strongest in the Anglo-Norman occupied areas and that there was a continuity of hereditary office-holding in the Gaelic Irish areas.⁵⁹ On the other hand, the independence of the Irish church under the Lordship was somewhat compromised. Under English law, licence had to be sought from the crown when electing a new bishop. The

Medieval and Renaissance History 4 (2007), 107–58; Michael Haren, 'Laudabiliter: text and context', in M.T. Flanagan & J.A. Green (eds), *Charters and charter scholarship in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2005), 140–63.

⁵⁵ See M.T. Flanagan, 'Henry II, the council of Cashel', 184–211.

⁵⁶ A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin (eds), *Expugnatio Hibernica: the conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis* (Dublin, 1978), 101.

⁵⁷ Watt, *The Church in medieval Ireland*, 27

⁵⁸ Adrian Empey, 'The sacred and the secular: the Augustinian priory of Kells in Ossory, 1193–1541', *IHS* 24 (Nov., 1984), 131–51, at 132.

⁵⁹ Mac Shamhráin, 'The emergence of the metropolitan see', 66–7.

need for the king's approval for appointments enforced English practice in Ireland – ensuring that English influence and interests were to be observed and maintained in Ireland; John Cumin's appointment to the archbishopric of Dublin (1181–1212) could conceivably be evidence of this. Cumin was spectacularly promoted by Henry II when he was merely a monk at Evesham Abbey in Worcestershire. It became increasingly common, particularly from the thirteenth century on, for primates to act as 'dispensers of royal justice'.⁶⁰ Moreover, recent studies have shown that crown forces may have exploited existing divisions or tensions within the chapter.⁶¹

2.2

THE EPISCOPATE

THE extant records for the pre-reform period, which pertain to episcopal appointments and consecrations, show a very different organisation to that which existed in the later medieval period. Most of these sources are hagiographical, such as Bernard of Clairvaux's *Life of Malachy*, in which he commented on the appointment of Irish bishops generally, saying they 'were changed without order or reason and they were multiplied at the whim of the metropolitan until one episcopal see was not satisfied with one bishop, but almost every single church had its own bishop.'⁶²

The ecclesiastical and political transformations in twelfth-century Ireland show a church hierarchy that was evolving in accordance with the rest of Latin

⁶⁰ Margaret Murphy, 'Archbishops and anglicisation: Dublin, 1111–1216' in James Kelly & Dáire Keogh (eds), *History of the Catholic diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 73.

⁶¹ Murphy, 'Archbishops and administration', 1–131; H.B. Clarke, 'Cathedral, close and community, c. 1220 to c. 1500', in Crawford & Gillespie, *St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin*, 45–72; H.B. Clarke, 'External influences and relations, c. 1220 to c. 1500', in *ibid.*, 73–95.

⁶² *The transformation of the Irish church*, 40. See also Jean Leclercq, 'Documents on the cult of St Malachy', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 3 (1959), 318–32.

Christendom. A number of contemporary commentators were blatant in their disapproval of the pre-reform structure, and even suggested how the clergy in Ireland should present themselves.⁶³ Bernard of Clairvaux described the Irish people as 'wanton in their way of life, so cruel in superstition, so heedless of faith, lawless, dead-set against discipline, so foul in their life-style; Christians in name, yet pagans at heart'.⁶⁴ Giraldus Cambrensis echoed this sentiment in his late-twelfth century denunciation of the Irish church hierarchy as it had been on the eve of the Anglo-Norman invasion.⁶⁵ There is also the anonymous life of St Flannán of Killaloe, written sometime in the 1160s, after the two major reforming synods of the century.⁶⁶ In the life, the author goes to some length to detail his idea of the perfect bishop. The value of such hagiographical sources lies in its portrayal of an exemplary episcopate and of how it perceived the church in twelfth-century Ireland. The lives of Irish saints open a window onto the pre-invasion Irish church, the native reformist clergy of the period, and their aspirations for the future conduct of the episcopate. We know from the work of the likes of Aubrey Gwynn and Martin Holland, that most, if not all, of the eleventh and early twelfth century bishops of Dublin were Irishmen who had trained in Benedictine houses. We also know that, certainly by the twelfth century at least, it was the norm for bishops to have been educated abroad or at

⁶³ Diarmuid Scully investigates this point in his article 'The portrayal of Ireland and the Irish in Bernard's life of Malachy', in Bracken & Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century*, 239–56, esp. 240–1, 254. For example, the author of the anonymous life of Flannán (1162x67), patron of the church of Killaloe, describes how an exemplary bishop should live according to his office. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy reflects Bernard's 'conception of episcopal office'; whereas Giraldus Cambrensis presented a wholly negative view of the Irish in *Topographia Hiberniae*, see J.J. O'Meara (ed. and trans.), *The history and topography of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis* (Dublin, 1982).

⁶⁴ *Life & death of St Malachy the Irishman by Bernard of Clairvaux*, trans. and annotated by R.T. Meyer (Kalamazoo, 1978), 33.

⁶⁵ See Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hiberniae*, 110–16.

⁶⁶ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 92–117.

one of the new universities.⁶⁷ For instance, Gille of Limerick, who presided over the synod of Ráith Bressail was most likely educated at the abbey of Bee in Normandy, which is where he first became acquainted with Anselm of Canterbury.⁶⁸

2.3

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

THE THIRTEENTH century saw the gradual evolution of Irish capitular bodies, mostly along the same lines as their European counterparts. There is, as Kenneth Nicholls has pointed out, no evidence that cathedral organisation was addressed by the Irish reformers of the twelfth century.⁶⁹ In fact, there is no evidence for cathedral bodies of any sort before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169. The transformation of the cathedrals of Anglo-Saxon England was effected by the Norman conquest which saw all of the cathedrals rebuilt on a much grander scale. The transformation of the Irish church, on the other hand, was episodic and protracted through the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Certainly, a cathedral needed some administrative staff, and it may be that prior to these developments in organisation, members of the bishops' household or *familia* assisted in the running of the cathedral and diocese.

The Irish cathedral chapters, with the exception of Christ Church (Holy Trinity) in Dublin, Downpatrick in Down, and Newtown Trim in Meath, consisted of corporations of secular canons. Of the three exceptions, Christ Church was

⁶⁷ Aubrey Gwynn, 'The first bishops of Dublin', 39–42; Martin Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church', 111–60; A.B. Scott, 'Latin learning and literature in Ireland, 1169–1500', *A new history of Ireland II: prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2005), 937. See below, chapter 4.5 'Were Irish cathedral clergy educated?', 195.

⁶⁸ John Fleming, *Gille of Limerick*; Michael Richter, 'Gilbert of Limerick revisited', 341–7.

⁶⁹ To date, the most complete article about the formation of Irish cathedral chapters has been written by K.W. Nicholls, see, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters'.

Augustinian, Downpatrick was Benedictine, and Newtown Trim was of the Victorine branch of the Augustinians. The normal arrangement of secular chapters across Europe consisted of a dean, dignitaries and canons. The formation of Irish cathedral chapters did not happen instantly, it was a gradual process, and the chapters themselves were not, as shall be demonstrated, constituted on one uniform plan. For instance, not all cathedrals entertained every named dignity and neither were they prescribed by Rome to do so. As shall be shown in this chapter, none of the cathedrals in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam, except for the cathedrals in the archdioceses themselves, supported the four-pillars paradigm (comprising the dean, precentor, chancellor and treasurer). In fact most of these churches only sustained one of the dignities, that of dean. The geographic remoteness of these provinces in relation to the rest of Christendom, the relative poverty of many of these dioceses and the fact that most lay outside of the sphere of influence of the English crown may go some way to explain why their cathedrals did not support all of the four pillars. However, the somewhat flexible arrangement of cathedral chapters was not a peculiarly Irish phenomenon, as we know that the offices and the number of canons in the rest of the Roman church were equally varied.

2.4

THE PRINCIPALES PERSONAE OF IRISH CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS

THE EARLIEST references to Irish cathedral chapters begin to appear from the late twelfth century, but are themselves open to interpretation. In c. 1230–4, in a confirmation charter of Hugh de Lacy (c. 1135–86), his son, Walter, guaranteed to the church of St John the Baptist of Llanthony, a number of tithes and revenues which his father had confirmed with the assent of ‘certain archbishops and bishops of Ireland and with consent of their chapters’.⁷⁰ Because the original charter has not survived one can only speculate as to whether Hugh actually

⁷⁰ Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 288–9. St John Brooks, *Irish Llanthony*, lxviii, 83.

referred to chapters or whether it was a later inclusion by his son, Walter. There is another example at Cork, in 1180, when Bishop Gregory sought the advice of the whole chapter '*tocius capituli ecclesie sue consilio*', as he authorised his archdeacon, Reginald, to grant the church of St Nessen to the abbey of St Thomas in Dublin.⁷¹ Gwynn and Hadcock questioned the assumption that this reference is proof that a chapter existed at Cork at this time, simply because the bishop's confirmation charter refers to 'our community' (*nostro conventu*) and not to chapter.⁷² Although Reginald was archdeacon in the diocese of Cork in 1180, no other dignities appear in the records until the turn of the thirteenth century. On the other hand, Cork's Hiberno-Norse population and its suspected position as a suffragan church to Canterbury could support the evidence for the early reference to a chapter.⁷³

All in all, only three dioceses, Cork (1180), Ardfert (1193–7) and Leighlin (1198) have specific references to chapters in the twelfth century, followed later by references for Cashel (1206), Lismore (1203) and Limerick (1205).⁷⁴ All except Leighlin are in the province of Cashel and in each case, although the references belong to the post-conquest period, only Irishmen had occupied the episcopal seat until Richard Fleming's appointment in 1217 to Leighlin. Ardfert's chapter is referred to once in the twelfth century and not again until 1236 when the chapter was reprimanded for not seeking royal licence to elect a new bishop on the death of Gilbert.⁷⁵ In fact, specific mention of chapter members at Ardfert is considerably later than it is in the rest of the province of Cashel. In Leighlin, the chapter is first referred to in 1198, in a letter of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216), in

⁷¹ *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, i, 219.

⁷² *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, i, 220; *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 67.

⁷³ For the early history of the diocese of Cork and its connection with Canterbury see Evelyn Bolster, *A history of the diocese of Cork*, I (Shannon, 1972), 34–60.

⁷⁴ *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, i, 219–20, Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, 98, 125, 210; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 44; *Black bk Limerick*, 115–7.

⁷⁵ Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, 210; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 53.

which the pope confirms the appointment of the chapter's chosen candidate.⁷⁶ As was the case at Ardfert, the chapter is not explicitly referred to again until some time later, in 1228, when they proceeded to elect a new bishop without the king's consent.

Overall, chapter members do not begin to surface in the records of the administration, both royal and ecclesiastical, until well into the thirteenth century and specific mention of dignities is recorded most often in the latter half of that century. The majority of cases concern penalties for failing to accede to the new regulations, such as seeking licence from the crown to elect a new bishop. The lack of evidence prior to their first mention is not itself evidence that they did not exist but rather of limited contact with the authorities. It was not until the thirteenth century that the administration of both crown and papacy grew in sophistication and complexity and the maintenance of records and archives developed on a much more advanced scale. The earlier references are to some extent vague and without mention of named officers; they address the community of the church, which later readings assume to be its chapter. By the turn of the thirteenth century, Cloyne diocese consisted of a chaplain, archdeacon, and an *officialis* who happened to be a nephew of the bishop. This scant information comes from the only charter to have survived from the time of Laurencius Ua Súillebáin, bishop of Cloyne (c. 1201–05). According to Flanagan, the appointment of an *officialis*, such as the one in Cloyne, 'implies a separation of functions within the episcopal household with the *officialis* generally exercising judicial duties in the episcopal court'.⁷⁷ Perhaps this separation of functions was anticipating the development of the four-pillars design. The

⁷⁶ Sheehy, *Pontificia Hib.*, i, 98; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 3.

⁷⁷ M.T. Flanagan, 'Some early charters relating to St Thomas' Abbey, Dublin', in Emer Purcell, Paul MacCotter, Julianne Nyhan & John Sheehan (eds) *Clerics, kings and Vikings. Essays on medieval Ireland in honour of Donnchadh Ó Corráin* (Dublin, 2015), 129.

chapter of Cloyne was in existence by 1216 when it appears in a deed executed between Daniel, bishop of Cloyne and Geoffrey de Marisco.⁷⁸

Not all of the principal dignities had been introduced into Irish cathedrals by the close of the thirteenth century and the four-pillars model was only complete at Armagh, Cashel, Cork, Dublin, Emly, Ferns, Kildare, Limerick, Lismore, Ossory and Tuam. Even so, the cathedral church of Emly is the only recorded example whereby the old monastic style may have persevered into the thirteenth century, until 1215, despite the fact that Luke Netterville had been archdeacon in 1206 and that men of English origin were beginning to acquire stalls in its choir. In 1215, the king commanded Henry, bishop of Emly, to send 'by two of his monks, ... all the K.'s property in his custody'.⁷⁹ The patent rolls from which Sweetman drew up his calendar also refer to '*monachis*', confirming Sweetman's translation and thus the assumption that monks were at Emly in the thirteenth century. Quite possibly the king could have been issuing a general statement without specific knowledge of Emly itself, but one can only speculate. It could further be suggested that Bishop Henry of Emly (1212–27), formerly abbot of Bindon in Cornwall, restructured the chapter from the old monastic style as a result of attending the Fourth Lateran Council (1215).⁸⁰

Like the early cathedral chapters, medieval Irish capitular seals are uncommon, unlike the seal of the bishop. The most ancient capitular seals are those of Killaloe (1313) and Cashel (1315). The Killaloe seal shows a building, which is believed by Richard Caulfield to be St Flannan's oratory. On top of the altar are a cross, chalice and lamp – the utensils used in the daily worship (*fig. 2*). In the Cashel seal, the central figure represents St Patrick who sits or stands beneath a

⁷⁸ *Rotuli litterarum patentium in turri Londinensi asservati, 1201–16*, ed. T.D. Hardy (London, 1833–44), 16.

⁷⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 87. *Rot. lit. Londinensi*, 144.

⁸⁰ See Dunning, 'Irish representatives and Irish ecclesiastical affairs at the Fourth Lateran Council', *Med. studies presented to A. Gwynn*, 90–113.

canopy, while below him is a dragon, which, according to Caulfield, is 'the emblem of pestilence and death' (*fig. 3*). Waterford cathedral chapter also has a medieval seal, although its date is unknown. Notwithstanding that it was still being used in 1577 and 1627, Richard Caulfield deemed it to be 'of a considerable antiquity' (*fig. 4*).⁸¹



fig. 2 Capitular seal of Killaloe (1313); **fig. 3** Capitular seal of Cashel (1315); **fig. 4** Capitular seal of Waterford. Richard Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae illustrata* (Dublin, 1853).

Only two Irish cathedrals have extant foundation charters: St Mary's in Limerick and St Patrick's in Dublin.⁸² Because of this the institution of cathedral dignities in Ireland can only really be discussed with certainty in terms of these two cathedrals. The office of dean in the cathedral of Ferns is an exception because a record survives which shows that the deanery was created in 1255. The survival of such a record is incredibly rare, particularly given that the pope granted the deanery's creation and that the evidence survives in the papal registers.⁸³ There are no surviving documents detailing the institution of any of the other dignities

⁸¹ Richard Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae illustrata: the episcopal and capitular seals of the Irish cathedral churches illustrated, parts 1–4* (Dublin, 1853), 45, 10, 18.

⁸² The foundation charter for Limerick is in the *Black bk Limerick*, cxlviii, 115–7; the Dublin charters can be found in *Dignitas decani*, 1–4.

⁸³ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 321; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 68.

for the cathedral at Ferns, which emphasises the rarity of the records of a dean's introduction.

The Limerick cathedral chapter was founded by Bishop Donatus O'Brien (Donnchadh Ua Briain) c. 1204–6. The dating of the foundation charter has been ascribed to this period because of the signatories at the end of the document.⁸⁴ The only copy to survive is in the *Black book of Limerick*, which itself probably dates from the episcopate of Bishop Stephen de Valle (1360–69), and is a collection of documents kept in the cathedral treasury. Included at its institution were four dignitaries – a dean, archdeacon, precentor and treasurer. There was no provision for a chancellor until later when Bishop Edmund (c. 1208/15–22) extended the number of prebends to thirteen.⁸⁵ An allowance for a further eight canons was also built into the original charter, four of whom were assigned prebends for their support while the other four had to rely on the communal fund for their sustenance. At its institution then, the cathedral chapter of Limerick consisted of twelve members, a figure it had in common with most of the Irish cathedrals, except for St Patrick's in Dublin which was comparable with some of the English secular cathedrals.⁸⁶ Worth mentioning also is that the charter appears to list the archdeacon as one of the dignitaries, who was ranked next to the dean, whereas the usual four-pillars model ranked the precentor next to the dean.⁸⁷ Nicholls has suggested that the ranking of archdeacon next to that of dean is a departure from the normal model and is a distinctly Irish feature, in spite of the fact that Donatus founded a chapter 'in imitation of the English custom' (*'anglicanam considerantes consuetudinem'*).⁸⁸ It is not a feature which

⁸⁴ *Black bk Limerick*, no. cxlii, 117–8; G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Mary's cathedral, Limerick', *Med. studies presented to A. Gwynn*, 75.

⁸⁵ *Black bk Limerick*, no. cxlviii, 121–2. See also *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 270 for inspeximus grant.

⁸⁶ *Black bk Limerick*, no. cxlii, 115–6. *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 97.

⁸⁷ See Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 162–3, 169–71.

⁸⁸ See also G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Mary's cathedral, Limerick', 74–89.

can be ascribed to all of the Irish cathedrals since the survival of foundation charters is so meagre (to say the least). In fact, it may even be a feature exclusive to Limerick because by 1272 the archdeacon of Limerick is ranked in the more usual position, which was after the other four dignitaries.⁸⁹ In St Patrick's in Dublin, the only other cathedral with an extant foundation charter, the archdeacon is not ranked next to the dean, although he is a chapter member.⁹⁰ Even though the Limerick chapter was established around 1200, the first dignitaries only appear with their initials, revealing nothing of their ethnicity or background. Certainly by mid-century the whole cathedral chapter of Limerick was comprised of Englishmen.⁹¹

St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin is not exemplary of Irish cathedrals, although it was probably intended to be. It was first raised from a parish church to collegiate status by Archbishop John Cumin, and elevated to a cathedral under his successor, Archbishop Henry of London (1213–28).⁹² When it was founded it had no named dignities, not even that of dean, being established initially with canons alone. The first named office to appear in the cathedral was in fact the precentor, followed by the chancellor and treasurer. Indeed the dean was the last member of the cathedral to be instituted.⁹³ When establishing the offices of chancellor, precentor and treasurer, Henry of London reckoned that the uncultured and untrained Irish church required a wholesome organisation, such as St Patrick's, to increase the worship of God.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ *Black bk Limerick*, no. lxxxvii, 78–9.

⁹⁰ *Dignitas decani*, 7.

⁹¹ *Black bk Limerick*, lxii–lxiii, 52–4.

⁹² For the career of Henry of London see, Margaret Murphy, 'Archbishops and administration', 30–61.

⁹³ *Fasti St Patrick's*, 4ff. See also *Dignitas decani*, 1–5.

⁹⁴ *Dignitas decani*, 3. 'inter cetera pietatis opera que ad informationem ecclesiastice discipline propriam exercuit diligentiam, ecclesiam beati Patricii Dublin in edificationem divini ministerii et aliorum instructionem prebendam instituit'.

More than any of the other Irish cathedrals, St Patrick's represents the church of the Anglo-Norman colony. In both its administrative arrangements and in its architecture, St Patrick's emulated Salisbury cathedral.⁹⁵ About a year after its foundation as a collegiate church (c. 1191), Archbishop John Cumin granted to the priests all the liberties that the secular canons of Salisbury enjoy, '*omnes libertates quas habent canonici seculares Sarisburiensis tam in ecclesia sua collegiata quam in eorum prebendis et pertinentiis suis*'.⁹⁶ The link between Salisbury cathedral and St Patrick's is copper-fastened by the fact that a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century manuscript copy of the *Consuetudinarium* of St Osmund was copied for St Patrick's and preserved there amongst its muniments.⁹⁷ In her monumental book on the subject, Kathleen Edwards detailed this constitution at some length, because it is considered to be the prototype on which the constitutions of English secular cathedrals were modelled.⁹⁸ It sets up the four-pillars framework of chapters and makes provision for archdeacons, a subdeacon and a succentor. Furthermore it confirms that the dean, as head of the chapter, is responsible for the governance and administration of the chapter. Individually, the canons were expected to be resident, holding a territorial prebend and enjoying the daily commons. Hierarchically, the rule conferred seniority to the archdeacon but ultimately the

⁹⁵ See Michael O'Neill, 'St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin and its place in the history of Irish medieval architecture'. See also G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Patrick's', 229–47; idem, 'Cambridge University Additional Ms 710', 17–32.

⁹⁶ *Dignitas decani*, 41; and Margaret Murphy, 'Archbishops and anglicisation: Dublin, 1111–1216', 139. For the architectural influence of Salisbury on St Patrick's see Michael O'Neill, 'St Patrick's cathedral Dublin and its place in the history of Irish medieval architecture'; idem, 'Architectural history of the medieval cathedral', in Crawford & Gillespie, *St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin*, 96–119.

⁹⁷ Murphy, 'Archbishops and administration', 140–1; G.J. Hand, 'Cambridge University additional MS. 710', 17–32.

⁹⁸ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 42–6, 181–3.

bishop held the supreme position.⁹⁹ The organisation, however, of Irish cathedrals is not so straightforward – some, most notably Meath, had no formal chapter of any kind. In his survey of the Irish cathedral churches in the western provinces, Kenneth Nicholls showed that they were not outside the sphere of English influence, as one might have assumed. Both Kilmacduagh and Killala in the province of Tuam accommodated the office of provost, a characteristic of some English secular cathedrals.¹⁰⁰ The fourteenth-century dignities for the diocese of Clonfert also followed the English pattern, accommodating a dean, an archdeacon, a precentor, a chancellor and a treasurer.¹⁰¹ These pivotal constitutions set down in writing ideas as to how cathedral chapters should be governed, but it does not necessarily follow that these concepts were put into practice. Nevertheless, the Salisbury custom, as it was known, was adopted by Cumin's successor, Archbishop Henry of London and confirmed by Pope Honorius III when St Patrick's was elevated to cathedral status.¹⁰² By far the largest in Ireland, St Patrick's supported up to twenty-eight prebends, more than double its Irish equivalents, although not particularly large when compared to the English secular cathedrals.¹⁰³ Its prebendaries commanded the highest income of any single benefice in an Irish cathedral which is demonstrated in the earliest list of prebends from 1227.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Diana Greenway, 'The false Institutio of St Osmund', in Diana Greenway, Christopher Holdsworth & Jane Sayers (eds), *Tradition and change: essays in honour of Marjorie Chibnall, presented by her friends on the occasion of her seventieth birthday* (Cambridge, 1985), 77.

¹⁰⁰ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 102–11.

¹⁰¹ K. Egan, 'Diocesan organisation: Clonfert', in *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee*, (Dublin, 1956), 5.

¹⁰² *Dignitas decani*, 38–9; Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, no. 96.

¹⁰³ *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 297. English secular cathedrals ranged in size from fifty-eight at Lincoln to as few as twenty-four at Exeter. See above, chapter 1.4 'Recruitment of canons and the size of cathedral communities', 52.

¹⁰⁴ Swords commanded an income of one hundred marks, see below, A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289; see also G.J. Hand, 'Medieval chapter of St Patrick's', 235; *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 47.

The first dignities to be introduced into St Patrick's were the chancellor, precentor and treasurer (1213–4). The dean was introduced later, in 1220, and its charter mirrors the earlier document which established the other dignities. The canons of the cathedral were not actually granted independence from the archdeacon's jurisdiction until c. 1225–8. The year before that, in 1224, they were granted jurisdiction in their own prebend, as existed at Salisbury.¹⁰⁵ Except for the deans, relatively little is known about the early members of the cathedral chapter of St Patrick's, despite it being the best recorded of the Irish cathedrals. The five deans of the thirteenth century were each closely connected with their archbishops, regardless of the fact that the chapter held the privilege of free election for the post of dean, whilst all other dignities were in the collation of the archbishop.¹⁰⁶ When the office of dean was founded in 1220, Henry of London chose his nephew, Master William Fitz Guido or William of London.¹⁰⁷ It must be remembered that Archbishop Henry was also justiciar, hence one of the most powerful players of the period. The second dean of St Patrick's, Richard de Gardino, was nephew of Archbishop Luke, Henry's successor.¹⁰⁸ Richard de Sancto Martino who was a clerk of Archbishop Luke succeeded Richard de Gardino as dean.¹⁰⁹ His successor, John de Sandford, was brother or more likely the illegitimate son of Archbishop Fulk de Sandford.¹¹⁰ The final dean of the thirteenth century, Thomas de Chaddesworth, held multiple roles – he was a clerk of Archbishop Fulk, deputy treasurer of Ireland, justice of the bench and one of the principal collectors of the tenth.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ *Dignitas decani*, 7–8.

¹⁰⁶ *Dignitas decani*, 4–5; *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 42; *Fasti St Patrick's*, 12–19.

¹⁰⁷ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Henry of London, Archbishop of Dublin: a study in Anglo-Norman statecraft', *Studies* 38/151 (Sept., 1949), 295–306, esp. 297.

¹⁰⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1232–47*, 118. Archbishop Luke in Myles Ronan, 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and Diocese', *IER* 46 (1935), 154–71.

¹⁰⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1232–47*, 197.

¹¹⁰ See Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 110–123, esp. 111. For the career of Fulk de Sandford see eadem, 80–102.

¹¹¹ *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 93–4; *Irish exchequer payments*, 16, 132, 178.

The cathedral chapter in the diocese of Waterford, one of the old Hiberno-Norse sees subject to Canterbury, is regarded as an early establishment. The first mention of the dean and canons was in 1210, although the archdeacon and the dean appear in documents as early as 1200.¹¹² The first express mention of the other dignities is later still, indicating that the chapter was not fully formed until sometime after this.¹¹³ On the other hand, according to a lost royal licence of 1463, King John as Lord of Ireland is said to have founded the chapter, endowing it with land for the support of twelve canons and twelve vicars.¹¹⁴ Assumpta O'Neill supposes that the chapter must have been established as early as John's expedition to Ireland in 1185, before his ascension to the English throne. She argued that this was in keeping with the trends in England where 'a move was begun in 1186 to replace the chapter of regulars at Canterbury by one of seculars, a move which had the active support of the king'.¹¹⁵ Considering that Waterford had been a suffragan of Canterbury, it is a little difficult to accept that the trends were established in Waterford before being established in Canterbury. In addition to this, the archdeacon and the dean do not appear in Waterford until the turn of the century, fifteen years after the supposed establishment. Granted, the chapter of Waterford was most likely an early establishment, in the Irish context, as were all of the Hiberno-Norse sees, by the very fact that they were under Canterbury. In contrast to the other cathedral chapters in Ireland, and in fact elsewhere, Waterford did not give its archdeacon a seat in the choir or a vote in the chapter.¹¹⁶ In England and on the continent

¹¹² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 36. *Cal. Ormond deeds*, i, 7, no. 14. Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, 144.

¹¹³ The precentor and chancellor first make an appearance in 1227 and the first mention of a treasurer does not occur until 1349. See W.H. Rennison, *Clergy of Waterford, Lismore and Ferns: biographical succession lists* (Belfast, 2008), 39, 41, 42.

¹¹⁴ The royal license of 1463 is apparently one of the casualties of the burning of the Public Record Office. See Rennison, *Clergy of Waterford*, 35.

¹¹⁵ Assumpta O'Neill, 'Waterford diocese, 1096–1363: IV. The diocesan chapter and the extents of the diocese', *Deices* 46 (1992), 22.

¹¹⁶ Rennison, *Clergy of Waterford*, 44

archdeacons were normally assigned honorary positions in the cathedral choir, provided they held prebends.¹¹⁷

The development of the cathedral chapters in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam occurred at a much more leisurely pace, if the extant records are anything to go by. In some cases archdeacons did not even emerge until the second half of the thirteenth century – almost half a century later than in the provinces of Cashel or Dublin.¹¹⁸ In most cases, the introduction of the dean preceded the introduction of the archdeacon, a somewhat different pattern to that which existed in the other provinces, or indeed in England.¹¹⁹ It is also rather striking that in both the provinces of Armagh and Tuam only the archdioceses themselves supported the four-pillars model. Indeed, almost the whole north-western part of the country did not support the four-pillars model. On the other hand, all of the dioceses in the provinces of Cashel and Dublin adhered to the pattern. In the province of Armagh very few dioceses maintained a chancellor, precentor and treasurer, or at least there is no evidence which proves the existence of these office holders. On the whole, very few names of English extraction appear in the cathedral chapters of this province. For example, Clogher had an archdeacon, a dean and even (although fleetingly) a chancellor, but not one Englishman can be seen amongst its chapter members. Nevertheless, it appears that Clogher had some form of capitular arrangement as early as 1188 when, as recorded in a charter of Bishop Cristin (c. 1187–93), the whole chapter (*'tocius capituli nostri'*) was consulted, albeit that the chapter referred to probably more closely resembled a community of regular canons

¹¹⁷ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 246.

¹¹⁸ The first reference to an archdeacon of Clonmacnoise is as late as 1240; in Down he appears in c. 1241–5. In the province of Tuam, the diocese of Raphoe first has an archdeacon in 1218 and in Dromore he first appears sometime before 1245, whereas in Clogher he does not appear until as late as 1268. See *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 190; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 379; Leslie, *Raphoe succession list*, 47; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 414.

¹¹⁹ Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 246.

than the institutions of the later Middle Ages.¹²⁰ The capitular body at Clogher, according to its register, consisted of twelve canons, a figure common amongst most of the Irish cathedrals.¹²¹ The arrangement at Clogher was unusual throughout this period because it was the only cathedral in which there was a fixed number of canons, and yet no distinction of prebends (*'prebendarum distinctio non habetur'*).¹²² In the archdiocese of Tuam, a similar arrangement existed in 1421, where there was neither a fixed number of canons nor any distinction of prebends.¹²³ This is not in keeping with Kenneth Nicholls's thesis that for the whole province of Tuam the number of canons was fixed at twelve.¹²⁴ In Elphin, governance seems to have been exercised by the 'community and chapter', where only a couple of the recommended dignities existed.¹²⁵ The diocese of Raphoe is noticeably vacant from the records of the administration, and the annals, which one would normally rely on for the history of Gaelic areas, are also silent when it comes to the organisation of the cathedral chapter. The earliest reference to a chapter existing in this diocese is as late as 1261, when the chapter divided over the election of a new bishop. This reference is the only time the diocese appears in the records for one hundred years.¹²⁶ The chapter of Achonry usually hovered between twelve and fourteen. At the dissolution, the chapter consisted of fourteen canons, which seems rather

¹²⁰ H.J. Lawlor, 'A charter of Cristin, bishop of Louth', *RIA Proc.* 32 (1914-16), 28-33.

¹²¹ Leslie, *Clogher succession list*, 29; *Black bk Limerick*, no. cxlii. *Cal. papal letters 1198-1304*, 97; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 22; *Cal. papal letters 1198-1304*, 97. In fact this same figure is found outside of Ireland, in Norway, for instance where the prebends of the Bergen chapter were fixed at 12, see Ciardi, 'Saints and cathedral culture in Scandinavia c.1000-1200', 39-66. Also in Scotland, the chapter of the diocese of Brechin was made up of twelve, one of whom was the bishop himself, see C.A. Gray, 'The bishopric of Brechin and ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns in the central Middle Ages', (University of Glasgow, PhD, 2013), 87.

¹²² *Cal. papal letters 1396-1404*, 100; *Cal. papal letters 1404-15*, 232.

¹²³ *Cal. papal letters 1417-31*, 160-1.

¹²⁴ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval cathedral chapters', 105-6.

¹²⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1396-1404*, 494-5.

¹²⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1198-1304*, 393-4; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 92.

excessive considering the relative size and poverty of the diocese.¹²⁷ Clearly in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam, where most of the dioceses were beyond the reach of the colony, a different arrangement existed, perhaps one which was more in tune with local needs.

The evidence is unfortunately too meagre to ascertain exact figures for the numbers in Irish cathedral chapters. This is further exacerbated by the fact that prebends were not essential in obtaining a canonry. This is particularly the case in 1397, when Florence Macmixheartad, canon of Ardagh, held his canonry without obtaining a prebend but was given papal dispensation to hold a canonry and prebend elsewhere.¹²⁸ Similarly, in Cashel, the twelve canons of the capitular body were only assigned their prebends in 1224.¹²⁹ This differs from the situation at Clogher or even Tuam where, as we have seen, there was no distinction of prebends. Even more peculiar to the chapter of Clogher is that it had the appointment of the canons. We know this because in 1366, the right of appointment devolved to the bishop because of the negligence of the chapter.¹³⁰ Despite this, not all of the Irish cathedrals had a recognisable chapter. Kilmore lacked a cathedral and a capitular body until 1455, when the bishop, with the consent of the pope, appointed the parish church of St Fethlimidh in Kilmore to be the cathedral, governed by thirteen canons.¹³¹ For the duration of the pre-Reformation period the diocese of Connor had no chapter. In this case the election of bishops was performed by 'the clergy of the city and diocese (to whom the election, the church having no chapter, by custom ordinarily

¹²⁷ Liam Swords, *A people's church*, 26.

¹²⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 79.

¹²⁹ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 22; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 97.

¹³⁰ *Cal. reg. Sweteman* no. 47, 46–7.

¹³¹ *Cal. papal letters 1455–64*, 240. For a history of the origins of the diocese of Kilmore see Aubrey Gwynn, 'The origins of the diocese of Kilmore', *Breifne* 1/4 (1961), 293–306; Philip O'Connell, *The diocese of Kilmore: its history and antiquities* (Dublin, 1937); J.C. Combe, *St Fethlimidh's cathedral, Kilmore: a short history* (Lurgan, 1992).

belongs').¹³² William Reeves suggested that Kells Augustinian Abbey, which is only half a mile from Connor, may have acted as the chapter for the cathedral.¹³³ This theory is also put forward by Kenneth Nicholls.¹³⁴ There is, however, no evidence to support this. According to Gwynn and Hadcock the monastery at Kells was destroyed by Edward Bruce in 1316. This was followed by a tumultuous period in which William de Burgo, earl of Ulster was murdered (1333), and by the Black Death (1348–9), which left little time or perhaps inclination to rebuild the monastery until the beginning of the fifteenth century.¹³⁵ There is only one known record which refers to a chapter at Connor and there is every possibility that this was a mistake. It comes in the form of a letter from Pope Alexander IV, addressing the chapter of Connor on their recent election of a new bishop.¹³⁶ Meath is another example of a diocese without a formalised chapter, albeit that it was a monastic establishment. The functions of a chapter were carried out by the archdeacon and clergy of Meath, who assisted the bishop in the running of the diocese.¹³⁷

In the relatively large diocese of Cloyne in the thirteenth century, the original capitular arrangement consisted of twelve canons.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, the earliest list of prebends for that diocese, dated c. 1300, numbered fifteen.¹³⁹ An

¹³² *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 336. A chapter was not established at Connor until 1609, as indicated by a charter of James I. In it, provision was made for an archdeacon, a dean, a chancellor, precentor and treasurer. See J.B. Leslie, *Connor succession list*, 42–52.

¹³³ William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore*, 95–6, 261.

¹³⁴ 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 109–10.

¹³⁵ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 181.

¹³⁶ Sheehy, *Pontificia*, no. 445, 272. 'nostro Guillelmo Connerensi episcopo tunc capellano nostro manacho Wintoniensis ecclesie sugffragaei percepimus..'. See also Powicke, *Handbook of British Chronology*.

¹³⁷ TNA, SP 63/216/258, c.f. Brendan Scott, *Religion and reformation in the Tudor diocese of Meath* (Dublin, 2006), 30.

¹³⁸ MacCotter, *A history of Cloyne*, 58.

¹³⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–07*, 310–16.

inquisition taken as late as 1609 found that the primatial see had 'in ancient times' sixteen prebends, 'and that eight of the said prebends of the said cathedral received their livings out of the English Pale and the other eight of the said prebends had their livings out of the county of Tyrone', nearly half that of its rival church, St Patrick's in Dublin.¹⁴⁰ In the post-Reformation period, and in the aftermath of the Ulster plantation, the new settlers re-established the cathedral church of Armagh, reinstituting the same dean and the same dignitaries. Under the king's authorisation, the cathedral community consisted of 'one dean, one archdeacon, chantor, chancellor, and treasurer, and also four prebends, which shall be called the dean, dignitaries, and prebends of the cathedral church of St Patrick's of Armagh'.¹⁴¹ This suggests that the pre-Reformation chapter of Armagh cathedral consisted of nine – a far cry from the earlier assemblage. In the province of Dublin, the cathedral of Kildare purportedly had only eight canons, a rather small arrangement considering its location relative to Dublin. Nevertheless, the printed valor of the fifteenth century lists only five prebendaries – Lullymore, Rathangan, Ballyshannon, Dummarkill and Donedea.¹⁴²

The archdeacon (archidiaconus)

THE OFFICE of archdeacon appears early on in the history of the medieval cathedrals. Yet its existence does not presuppose the existence of a chapter, because, as we have seen, archdeacons were not by custom members of the

¹⁴⁰ Leslie, *Armagh succession list*, 31.

¹⁴¹ Leslie, *Armagh succession list*, 31. For further information on the diocesan chapter of Armagh see J.A. Watt, 'The medieval chapter of Armagh cathedral', in David Abulafia, Michael Franklin & Miri Rubin (eds), *Church and city 1000–1500: essays in honour of Christopher Brooke* (Cambridge, 1992), 219–48.

¹⁴² 'Obligaciones pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis, 1413–1521', *Archiv. Hib.* ii (1913), 39–72; See also M.A. Lyons, *Church and society in county Kildare, c. 1470–1547* (Dublin, 2000), 69. Lyons also details the ethnic origins of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Kildare during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which could be used alongside my own findings (chapter 5) for comparative purposes.

chapter, their membership being at the discretion of the chapter itself. As a territorial title, archdeaconries were concentrated outside of the cathedral precincts, and thus the archdeacon's role within the cathedral did not warrant him a seat in the choir.¹⁴³ Furthermore, the archdeaconry was a prestigious office, and promotion to it signalled a career in the episcopate. For instance, the first four archdeacons of Killaloe were all elected to the bishopric, but, then again, so were its deans. Macrobius, one of the earlier archdeacons in Dublin, was promoted to the bishopric of Glendalough.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the appearance of the office certainly suggests that the Irish cathedrals, under the administration of Irishmen, were keeping up with trends across Europe. The office of archdeacon came to Ireland as part of the reforming process, thus initiating the changes which would see the introduction of all of the *principales personae* in the cathedral. Aubrey Gwynn has previously suggested that archdeacons were acting as executive officers of bishops long before the formal erection of a chapter.¹⁴⁵ It certainly would seem that the early references to archdeacons precede the early references to deans and other chapter members, primarily because the office was created to serve the needs of the bishop. The earliest known seal of an Irish archdeaconry belonged to John, archdeacon of Cashel and can only be roughly assigned to the thirteenth or the fourteenth centuries when there were three 'Johns' who held the archdeaconry, in 1220, 1230 and 1365 (*fig. 5*).¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ For the role of the archdeacon in England see Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 243–50, A.H. Thompson, *Diocesan organisation in the Middle Ages. Archdeacons and rural deans* (London, 1944). Paul Fournier, *Les officialités au moyen-âge* (Paris, 1880).

¹⁴⁴ *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, 291–2, *Chartul. St Mary's*, i, 173, *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 11, 13, 20.

¹⁴⁵ A. Gwynn, 'Derry & Raphoe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *Donegal Annual* 4/2 (1959), 93.

¹⁴⁶ Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae*, 14.



Fig. 5 Seal of the archdeacon of Cashel. Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae*.

Archidiaconal registers do not survive for any of the medieval dioceses in Ireland. Even so, there is evidence from a provincial synod convened at Christ Church (Holy Trinity) in Dublin by Archbishop John Cumin, which tells of at least one of the earliest duties of the archdeacon in an Irish diocese. The council decreed that bishops were forbidden from ordaining 'a candidate from another diocese without letters of recommendation from his proper bishop or archdeacon'.¹⁴⁷ This would indeed indicate that the archdeacon was second in command to a bishop. Later, during Archbishop Fulk de Sandford's incumbency (1256–71), another provincial synod was held, which confirmed the earlier statutes with regard to archdeacons.¹⁴⁸ As with all of the cathedral dignities, it is not known when these titles were first used in Irish cathedrals because of the poor survival of the documentary sources. It appears, however, to be much later than in much of the rest of Latin Christendom. As Margaret Murphy pointed out there is no mention of the office in the earlier correspondences between Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, and the Irish church, or in the *Liber de statu ecclesiae*

¹⁴⁷ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Provincial diocesan decrees of the diocese of Dublin during the Anglo-Norman period (1186–1367)', *Archiv. Hib.* 11 (1944), 31–117, 43, no. 8. 'ne aliquis Episcopus Parochianum alterum sine Literis Episcopi proprii vel Archidiaconi commendaticiis ordinare praesumat'.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 46–50.

of Bishop Gilbert of Limerick.¹⁴⁹ The first known record of an archdeacon in an Irish diocese was in 1157 at Cork.¹⁵⁰

In Ireland, it appears that most dioceses supported only one archdeacon. This was probably, as was the case in Wales, dictated by diocesan size and finance.¹⁵¹ Ireland was comparatively smaller than most of the countries of Latin Christendom, and, as well as this, the endowments were so modest that dioceses were on the whole economically impoverished.¹⁵² Nevertheless there are a number of exceptions, the first of which is Elphin, where the records show that in 1244 there were two archdeacons.¹⁵³ Elphin was not a large diocese in geographic terms, and neither was it a particularly rich diocese. It did not support the four-pillars paradigm (only deans and one treasurer are recorded) and no man of English extraction either ruled this diocese or was a member of its cathedral body. This may reflect the existence of a very temporary situation because mention of the two archdeaconries ceases after this reference. The case of Ardfert and Aghadoe is also an exception and is certainly untypical of the Irish arrangement: Aghadoe is said to have been the seat of a bishop of the early Irish church but was not confirmed as such at Ráith Bressail (1111) or Kells/Mellifont (1152). However no evidence survives to suggest that Aghadoe was anything

¹⁴⁹ Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 198; Lanfranc's letters in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 150 *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 159, (<http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk/>).

¹⁵⁰ T.C.D. MS IE 806.

¹⁵¹ M.J. Pearson wrote his PhD thesis on the Welsh cathedral chapters, most of which was published in a number of journals. See 'St Asaph cathedral chapter', 35–56; *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066–1300* (9). *The Welsh cathedrals (Bangor, Llandaff, St Asaph, St Davids)* (London, 2003); 'Bangor cathedral chapter', 167–81.

¹⁵² Bruce Campbell, 'Benchmarking medieval economic development: England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, c. 1290', *Economic History Review* 61/4 (Nov., 2008), 896–945.

¹⁵³ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 108, (where unfortunately the source is unidentified).

other than an archdeaconry in the church of Ardfert.¹⁵⁴ The dioceses of Cloyne and Meath supported two archdeaconries, one of which was *archidiaconus major*.¹⁵⁵ According to W.M. Brady, Trim and Kells were archdeaconries in Meath. Trim, however, was united to the bishopric in 1317.¹⁵⁶ It is unfortunate that Brady does not cite his source for this information. Nevertheless, the archdeaconries do appear to have been united because in 1397 a petition was sent to the pope which sought the establishment of a second archdeaconry.¹⁵⁷ Armagh probably sustained more than one archdeaconry, as is suggested by the grant of the archdeaconry of Uriel to William de Nortfeld in 1247.¹⁵⁸

In some instances, episcopal seats within the early Irish church were demoted to archdeaconries when their sees were united with larger neighbouring sees. For example, in 1289, the pope addressed a number of dignitaries in the archdiocese of Tuam. Amongst them were 'John and Concord, archdeacons of Tuam and Mayo'.¹⁵⁹ Mayo was not chosen as a diocese at Ráith Bressail but was instead part of the territory of the archdiocese of Tuam, and thus from this example it would seem there were two archdeacons operating in Tuam at this time. After Glendalough lost its episcopal status it too became an archdeaconry within the archdiocese of Dublin.¹⁶⁰ Elsewhere the demotion from diocesan status did not

¹⁵⁴ See Leslie, *Ardfert & Aghadoe succession list*, 43, in which he lists the archdeacons of Aghadoe. No bishops are included in Leslie's list; *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 101.

¹⁵⁵ Cloyne had a second archdeaconry at Ballyhay, see MacCotter, *A history of Cloyne*, 58. In the diocese of Meath the second archdeaconry was at Kells, see *Cal. Gorm. reg.*, 52, *Chartul. St Mary's*, i, 336; *Christ Church deeds*, 54–5, nos. 107–9; *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, 9–11; *Cal. docs France*, no. 314–5; Brooks, *Irish Llanthony*, 84.

¹⁵⁶ John Brady, 'The archdeacons of Meath', *IER* 65 (1945), 39.

¹⁵⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 74–5.

¹⁵⁸ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 431; *CIRCLE PR 2 Hen. V §83* (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/2-Henry-V/patent>).

¹⁵⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 498.

¹⁶⁰ *Cal. charter rolls 1226–57*, 119–20; *Crede mihi*, f. 87. For information on the diocese of Mayo see W.H. Grattan Flood, 'The diocese and abbey of Mayo', *IER* 4/22 (1907), 603–9. For the

invariably translate to an archdeaconry. The pre-reform cathedral of Iniscathaigh (Scattery) lost its episcopal status at Ráith Bressail. Rather than becoming an archdeaconry in the diocese of Killaloe, it became a collegiate church – an entirely different category.¹⁶¹ The cathedrals of Achonry, Annaghdown and Kilmacduagh were all amalgamated with their metropolitan see of Tuam in c. 1327; none became archdeaconries.¹⁶² The complicated situation between these three dioceses warrants further scrutiny. Both Annaghdown and Achonry existed under the constant threat of a union with Tuam. Even in 1283, when Annaghdown's first English bishop was 'elected' to the diocese, the metropolitan, also an Englishman, tried to distract the newly elected bishop with a promise of the archdeaconry of Tuam. In fact, just prior to the election of John de Ufford in 1283, Annaghdown had been acting as an archdeaconry of Tuam, because successive archbishops had petitioned for it.¹⁶³ Pope John XXII sanctioned the union of the three dioceses in 1327, allowing the existing prelates to retain their positions for their lifetime. The union, therefore, was supposed to take place on the deaths of the suffragans. Even so, bishops of each diocese are

see of Glendalough see Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity in pre-Norman Ireland*. Indeed Seán Duffy has suggested that the absence of Glendalough from the list of bishoprics confirmed to Archbishop John Cumin in 1182 could indicate that steps were underway to absorb Glendalough into the larger diocese. See Seán Duffy, 'The Bruce brothers and the Irish sea world, 1306–29', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 21 (1991), 55–86, at 61, fn.9.

¹⁶¹ Collegiate churches are churches that are attached to a college of canons. There are three different classes of collegiate church – the educational, the semi-cathedral type and the chantry college. In Ireland only the chantry college ever existed. For more information on collegiate churches see Paul Jeffrey, *The collegiate churches of England and Wales* (London, 2007) or G.H. Cook, *English collegiate churches of the Middle Ages* (London, 1959).

¹⁶² TNA, SC 8/242/12094; G.O. Sayles, *Documents on the affairs of Ireland before the king's council* (Dublin, 1979), 146–7.

¹⁶³ *Cal. justic. rolls Ire. 1295–1303*, 114–15, 144, 306–7. For a detailed account of the tensions between Tuam and Annaghdown see Michael Robson, 'Gilbert Ó Tigernaig Bishop of Annaghdown, c. 1306–23' *JGHAS* 48 (1996), 48–68.

found for generations to come and in 1346, the chapter of Achonry, with consent of the metropolitan, successfully petitioned the pope for a repeal of the union.¹⁶⁴

In the twelfth century, archdeacons appear most frequently in the province of Cashel, with five recorded from mid-century. According to Ware, Cork was the earliest diocese to support an archdeacon, Patrick McCarthy, from 1157; Christian was archdeacon of Cloyne from 1192; Luke in Emly from c. 1194; “D” (possibly Domnall), was in Killaloe c. 1198 and Richard was in Lismore at the same point in the late part of the twelfth century; a further five materialised around the turn of the thirteenth century at Limerick (1200), Waterford (1200), Kilfenora (1205), and Cashel (1206).¹⁶⁵ Two archdeacons are recorded in the province of Armagh in the twelfth century – at Meath (Clonard), from 1172, where Ralph le Petit was archdeacon, and at Connor in 1183; neither diocese ever had a constituted chapter but rather relied on the clergy of the diocese.¹⁶⁶ In fact, Echtigern mac Maoil Ciaráin, the last Gaelic Irish bishop of Clonard (as it was in the twelfth century), established the archdeaconry.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 279; *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 318. See also Liam Swords, *A people’s church: the diocese of Achonry from the sixth to the seventeenth century* (Dublin, 2013), 67, 69.

¹⁶⁵ TCD IE MS 806; ‘Unpublished charters relating to Ireland, 1177–82, from the archives of the city of Exeter’, ed. St John Brooks, *RIA Proc.* 43 (1935–37), 313–66, at 344, 354; MacCotter, *A history of Cloyne*, 215; J.D. Seymour, *Clergy of Cashel and Emly compiled by Ven St J.D. Seymour; Clergy of Leighlin compiled by J.B. Leslie; biographical succession lists* (Belfast, 2012), 64; Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, says in the time of Bishop Felix 1179–1203; *Black bk Limerick*, lxxvii, 61–4; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 44.

¹⁶⁶ TCD IE MS 806; *Cal. doc. France, 918–1206*, 105. For the diocese of Connor see H.J. Lawlor, ‘Diocesan anomalies (the diocese of Connor)’, *UJA* 2 (1939), 147–157. For Clonard see H.J. Lawlor, ‘A diocese in the making’, *The Irish Church Quarterly* 2/7 (Jul., 1909), 224–42; Benignus Millett, ‘Dioceses in Ireland up to the 15th century’, *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 12/1 (1986), 1–42, esp. 19–20; Elizabeth Hickey, ‘Clonard as a diocesan town’, *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 18/1 (1999/2000), 66–72, esp. 70.

¹⁶⁷ *Reg. St Thos. abbey*, 267–8.

The earliest mention of an archdeacon in the province of Dublin is in the archdiocese itself where 'Torquello arcidiacono' is a witness to a charter of Archbishop Lorcán Ua Tuathail (1162–80) confirming the possessions of Holy Trinity.¹⁶⁸ His position in the witness list is after a succession of bishops and before a series of priests. Nevertheless, it is not clear from this charter where Torquellus is archdeacon. If he is not archdeacon of Dublin then the next mention of one is in 1185 when Macrobius, archdeacon of Dublin, witnessed a ratification of Archbishop John Cumin.¹⁶⁹ Cornelius McGelany is listed by Ware as archdeacon of Kildare in 1190, before being promoted to the bishopric in 1206.¹⁷⁰ In Leighlin, there is mention of an archdeacon as early as 1199: after petitioning the pope, the archdeacon of Leighlin was restored to his office because 'H. vagabond, monk of Canterbury', had deprived him of it.¹⁷¹ The early references to such an office should indicate its relative importance within the diocese. On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that archdeacons, or any of the dignities of the later Middle Ages, existed for the province of Tuam during the twelfth century which may indicate that the offices of *airchinnech* (erenagh) or even princeps were fulfilling the administrative role of the diocese in the Connacht church.¹⁷² In his succession list of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, William Maziere Brady recorded Colmán Ua Scannláin '*airchinnech*' of Cloyne as the first

¹⁶⁸ Lawlor, *Cal. liber Albus*, 24–5. The date ascribed to the charter is somewhere between the death of Etru Ua Miadhachain, bishop of Clonard (1173) and that of Archbishop Lorcán Ua Tuathail (1180).

¹⁶⁹ *Chartul. St Mary's*, i, 173.

¹⁷⁰ TCD IE MS 806. Bishop by c. 1206.

¹⁷¹ *Cal. papal. letters 1198–1304*, 8.

¹⁷² See Colmán Etchingham, *Church organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, 1999), in which he claims that the '*airchinnech* is the ecclesiastical head', 64; idem, 'Episcopal hierarchy in Connacht and Tairdelback Ua Conchobair', 16; idem 'Bishops in the early Irish church: a reassessment', in *Studia Hibernica* (1994), 35–62; Hérold Pettiau, 'The officials of the church of Armagh in the early and central Middle Ages, to A.D. 1200', in *Armagh history and society*, 121–186, esp. 123–4. Most recently Ciaran Ó Scea, 'Erenachs, erenachships and church landholding in Gaelic Fermanagh, 1270–1609', *RIA Proc.*, 112 (2012), 271–300.

archdeacon of the diocese.¹⁷³ This, however, could be an over-simplification of both the roles of *airchinnech* and archdeacon. Without doubt the *airchinnech* held an administrative role in the church hierarchy before the introduction of archdeacons but this does not quite correlate with the role of archdeacon in the later medieval period. More recently, Paul MacCotter seems not to have shared the same opinion as he did not include Colmán in his list of archdeacons.¹⁷⁴

The dean (decanus)

IN IRELAND, every cathedral had a dean except for the monastic cathedrals of Christ Church (Dublin), Downpatrick, and Newtown Trim. In this latter type of cathedral the tradition was somewhat different because the canons who staffed the cathedral were directed by their monastic order. For instance, a prior headed the Augustinian priory chapter of Christ Church in Dublin, and Gervase, the first named prior, appears as witness to a deed sometime between 1172 and 1181.¹⁷⁵ Rather peculiarly, however, Connor had no dean, having, as noted earlier, no identifiable chapter of any kind. Indeed, Gwynn and Hadcock remarked on the fact that Connor had no dean or chapter, adding that its arrangement could be reminiscent of an old-fashioned practice, not necessarily monastic but certainly not influenced by the Anglo-Norman practice.¹⁷⁶ The earliest references to the office of dean in Ireland are in the provinces of Cashel and Dublin, where the dean occurs first at Lismore (1203), then Waterford (1210), Dublin St Patrick's (1219–20), and Ardfert (1225).¹⁷⁷ It is more than just coincidence that two of the dioceses mentioned were once suffragan to Canterbury. Though a relatively late addition to the cathedrals of medieval Ireland, St Patrick's, as discussed above, is the only definite Anglo-Norman cathedral foundation in Ireland and at its

¹⁷³ *AFM, sub anno 1179* for Colmán Ua Scannláin, *airchinnech* of Cloyne. William Maziere Brady, *Clerical and parochial records of Cork, Cloyne and Ross*, ii, 220.

¹⁷⁴ *Pipe roll of Cloyne*; MacCotter, *A history of Cloyne*.

¹⁷⁵ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 468, 123.

¹⁷⁶ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 66.

¹⁷⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 15, 36; *Dignitas decani*, 4; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 194–5.

institution it had dignities and canons. As alluded to earlier, there is only one case, that of the dean of Ferns, in which the pope sanctions the establishment of an Irish cathedral dignity. In Ferns in 1255, the bishop and chapter were granted papal authorisation for the institution of the deanery: 'confirmation to the bishop of Ferns of his creation, with consent of the chapter, of the office of dean'.¹⁷⁸ This mid-thirteenth-century date is rather surprising considering the antecedents of Ferns. It is an ancient royal and ecclesiastical site whose history stretches as far back as the seventh century. Numerous sources catalogue the succession of bishops from the pre-reform period as well as detailing Diarmait Mac Murchada's links with the place.¹⁷⁹ Yet, despite the fact that it lay at the heart of the English colony in Ireland after the late 1160s, it appears to have been bypassed by the Anglo-Norman four-pillars structure until at least the middle of the thirteenth century.

With the exception of Connor, Down and Meath, which never supported a dean, a small majority of the first deans in Irish cathedrals were in fact ethnically Irish. The only dioceses never to accommodate an English dean, throughout the whole period, were Achonry, Annaghdown, Clogher, Dromore, Elphin, Kilfenora and Raphoe. This is not surprising considering that these were the smallest and poorest dioceses in Ireland, and that geographically these dioceses were remote and distanced from English influence. Furthermore, in the dioceses of Dromore and Raphoe the first reference to a dean occurs in the fourteenth century, almost one hundred years after their introduction in Ireland. What emerges is a

¹⁷⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 321; see also Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 68. 'Cum igitur, sicut ex parte tua fuit propositum coram bobis, tu ecclesie Fernensis utilitatem diligenter attendens, de consensu Capituli tui Decanus dignitatem de novo in ipsa creaveris, statuens, ut de cetero in eadem ecclesia sit Decanatus'.

¹⁷⁹ For example see *AFM*, sub anno 737, 1222; *Grace's annals*, sub anno, 1171; *Ann. Tig.*, sub anno, 678. See also Evelyn Mullally (ed. & trans.), *The deeds of the Normans in Ireland: La geste des Engleis en yrlande: a new edition of the chronicle formerly known as The song of Dermot and the earl* (Dublin, 2002); W.H. Grattan Flood, *History of the diocese of Ferns* (Waterford, 1916).

clear geographical division between those dioceses where native Irishmen succeeded to deaneries and those where Englishmen secured the office. In Dublin and parts of Cashel and Armagh, Englishmen held the deanery whereas in Connacht, the western parts of Cashel and most of the province of Armagh, Irishmen were promoted to the dignity. The whole of the province of Dublin, rather predictably, chose Englishmen to take up the first deaneries. Outside of the Dublin province, this predilection continued in the dioceses of Armagh, Cashel, Derry, Emly, Killaloe, Limerick and Lismore which elected to have English deans.

The precentor (primicerius, cantor)

SECOND IN command to the dean is the precentor, although his infrequent presence in Irish cathedrals would leave one to think otherwise. Attesting to his place as second in command to the dean is a document of Richard Talbot, archbishop of Dublin (1417–49), on the form of the processions. After the archbishop, the ‘prior of Holy Trinity and the dean of St Patrick’s together took the principal place ... then came the sub-prior of Holy Trinity and the precentor of St Patrick’s together, and after them the canons of the churches two by two’.¹⁸⁰ The precentor first makes an appearance in the sources at St Patrick’s, in Dublin, and, as with the chancellor, a copy of the foundation charter has been preserved. In 1213–14, Philip of Bray was granted the precentorship of Dublin.¹⁸¹ The next reference, twenty years later, is at Clogher (1237), then Armagh (1247), and Cashel (1253).¹⁸² On the whole, the representation of the precentor is haphazard, in that most of the dioceses in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam make no reference to the dignity, whereas every diocese in the provinces of Cashel and Dublin records a precentor at least once during their history. Almost all of the dioceses in the province of Cashel supported Irishmen in that role,

¹⁸⁰ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 277, 87.

¹⁸¹ *Dignitas decani*, 4.

¹⁸² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 163–4; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 435; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 287.

whilst the Dublin province chose English candidates only. In those dioceses where the precentor has a presence, the information given in the reference reveals little if anything about the post, as normally he arises as a witness to an official document, or newly appointed by the king because of a vacancy in the bishopric.¹⁸³ The only surviving seal of a member of a medieval cathedral chapter is that of the precentor of Limerick (*fig. 6*).¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, minutiae of detail can be garnered about the precentorship in St Canice's cathedral in Ossory, where the prebend of Tillaghtyrn was attached to it, which was in the gift of Robert de Vere (1362–92), sometime duke of Ireland and marquess of Dublin. Because of the advowson, de Vere was able to order that Thomas Forstall be admitted to the precentorship of Ossory and assigned a stall in the choir.¹⁸⁵ There are a handful of cases in which a precentor succeeded to a bishopric. Malachy (or Maurice) Ó hEoghanáin a native of Cloyne and the precentor of that cathedral succeeded to the bishopric of Ross in 1253, despite the fact that he was illegitimate.¹⁸⁶ Nicholas FitzRichard, precentor of Ossory, was elected to the bishopric by 'a portion of the chapter' in 1289. Incidentally, he was also the canon whom the chapter sent to England to seek licence to elect.¹⁸⁷ Richard de Haverings, papal chaplain and precentor of Dublin, was partially elected (the two chapters supported different candidates) and subsequently appointed to the archbishopric in 1307; he resigned in 1310 and took up once again his post as precentor, due to the protests of both chapters who now supported Alexander

¹⁸³ See for example *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 297; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 127, 484, 515; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 87–8; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 164; *Chartul. St Mary's*, i, no. 293, 526–8. Pipe rolls of the Irish exchequer, *Appendix 45 Rep. Dk*, (1913), 16; J.H. Bernard, 'The charters of the Cistercian abbey of Duiske in the county of Kilkenny (preserved among the monuments of the Marquess of Ormonde in Kilkenny Castle)', *RIA Proc. C*, 35 (1918), 128–9.

¹⁸⁴ Richard Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae*, 37.

¹⁸⁵ *CIRCLE*, PR 10 Richard II, §187 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/10-Richard-II/patent>)

¹⁸⁶ MacCotter, *A history of Cloyne*, 61–2. *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 297.

¹⁸⁷ Prynne's records, iii, 299, 386.

Bicknor.¹⁸⁸ John Lech was a king's clerk when appointed as precentor of St Patrick's by the king, due to a vacancy in the archbishopric.¹⁸⁹ He had been the king's chosen candidate for the bishopric of Dunkeld in Scotland in 1309 but was not successful.¹⁹⁰ Lech was subsequently thrust into the Dublin archdiocese by King Edward II, who took advantage of the disagreement between the two cathedral chapters at Christ Church and at St Patrick's.¹⁹¹ Other precentors who succeeded to a bishopric were John to Lismore, Mauricius Ó hÓcáin to Killaloe, Denis, precentor of Limerick to the bishopric of Ossory, Robert to Ferns, and Odo to Kilmacduagh.¹⁹² According to Kenneth Nicholls, by the fifteenth century the precentorship in Irish cathedrals had degenerated to a state where it was no more than a nominal title.¹⁹³ The office was not a major dignity, nor was it elective. It did have cure of souls, except in the diocese Killaloe where ancient custom dictated that a stipendiary, and not the precentor should exercise the cure.¹⁹⁴ Its value varied also, fluctuating between one or two marks in Cloyne, Kilmacduagh and Killala to up to twenty in Limerick, Ossory or Dublin.¹⁹⁵ In fact, it appears that the precentorship was only ever a nominal title, except maybe in the dioceses of the province of Dublin, where it can be seen as a stepping-stone to some of the more affluent posts and where its functions were perhaps more

¹⁸⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 14, 25, 80. See also A. Gwynn, 'The medieval university of St Patrick, Dublin, *An Irish Quarterly Review* 27 (1938), 199–212, 437–54.

¹⁸⁹ *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 6.

¹⁹⁰ *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 202; *Cal. doc. Scotland*, iii, 1307–57, no. 182.

¹⁹¹ Rymer, *Foedera*, iii, 258, c.f. Aubrey Gwynn, 'The medieval university of St Patrick, Dublin', 119–212, esp. 205–6.

¹⁹² *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 144, 408; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 209; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 90, 190; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 228.

¹⁹³ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 107–8.

¹⁹⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 256.

¹⁹⁵ See below, 4.4 'Revenue and the value of dignities and benefices', 184; see also below, A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

necessary.¹⁹⁶ Certainly, in Limerick by 1432 the dignity had fallen into disrepute when Awly O'Longsygh was deprived of it because 'he had dilapidated the goods of the precentorship, and was a notorious fornicator'.¹⁹⁷



Fig. 6 Seal of the precentor of Limerick.

Caulfield, *Sigilla ecclesiae Hibernicae*.

The chancellor (cancellarius, scholasticus)

As was the custom in the rest of Europe, the chancellor in Irish cathedrals ranked third after the precentor. It was neither a major nor an elective dignity but it did have cure of souls. Only the bishop could appoint a chancellor, although this tradition was breached by the fifteenth century when the pope began to exercise his authority by means of papal provisions. In Ireland, the first recorded chancellor can be found at St Patrick's cathedral in a charter issued in 1213–14 by Archbishop Henry of London, in which master Thomas Castle is instituted as chancellor of that church (*'instituimus etiam magistrum Thomam de Castello in eadem ecclesia Cancellarium'*).¹⁹⁸ The office is subsequently recorded for

¹⁹⁶ Two precentors of Dublin became archbishops because of their connection with the King. Walter de Islip, the king's clerk, treasurer of Ireland, held the precentorship of Ferns whilst in the king's service.

¹⁹⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1447–55*, 522.

¹⁹⁸ *Dignitas decani*, 4.

Kilkenny (1218), Clogher (1237) and Annaghdown (1247).¹⁹⁹ Of the four provinces, it is in Armagh where the office is almost absent from the records, only occurring in the archdiocese of Armagh (1246) and the diocese of Clogher (1237).²⁰⁰ Its status in the chapter is demonstrated by the fact that only three chancellors are promoted to Irish sees: at Emly in 1227, Lismore in 1227, and Kildare in 1299.²⁰¹

The chancellorship occurs most frequently in the provinces of Cashel and Dublin. The whole south-eastern part of the country, including some of the more westerly dioceses such as Limerick and Emly, all had English chancellors as the initial office-holder. Most of the dioceses in the province of Tuam had no known chancellor whatsoever, except for Kilmacduagh, Annaghdown and the archdiocese itself. Even so, both Annaghdown and Kilmacduagh only record one chancellor: 'A.' chancellor of Annaghdown was called upon (along with 'P. dean and R. archdeacon') to examine whether the choice of Thomas, elect of Annaghdown, was canonical, since he was 'the son of a bishop and a nun'.²⁰² In Kilmacduagh the dignity of chancellor first surfaces in the sources in 1405, when Denis McGillavanach, deacon of Kilmacduagh, obtained the chancellorship 'in ignorance of the law' by authority of the ordinary, and not by the bishop's appointment, as was the custom.²⁰³ In Dublin, only Glendalough and Christ Church have no reference to the office. This is not surprising, considering that Glendalough ceased to be an episcopal see from 1216, just as the new system was beginning to take hold in Ireland, and Christ Church was a monastic-type establishment, following the Augustinian rule. On the whole, there is very little evidence of its existence: for instance, in the dioceses of Cashel, Ardfert and Kilfenora, there is only one known chancellor recorded and trace of the office

¹⁹⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 127; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 76, 163–4, 232.

²⁰⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 228, 163–4.

²⁰¹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 230; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1293–1301*, 331.

²⁰² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 232.

²⁰³ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 63.

disappears until the fifteenth century when they begin to appear more frequently.²⁰⁴

In the ecclesiastical province of Tuam, the chancellor disappears from the records and appears to be replaced by the provost. According to Kenneth Nicholls this is part of the 'usual Connacht pattern',²⁰⁵ though one should perhaps note that in his paper on the medieval cathedral chapters of Ireland, Nicholls does not mention cathedrals in continental Europe where the replacement of the chancellor with a provost has been shown to happen, and, as a consequence, he neglects to draw comparisons with these examples.²⁰⁶

The treasurer (thesaurius, custos)

IN IRELAND, evidence for the treasurer is the most uncommon of any of the four dignities and in some cases he does not occur at all. Nearly all of the dioceses in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam have no reference to the office. He is the least important out of the four-square pillars, and this is shown only by the sporadic instances in which the office occurs in the records for Irish cathedrals. The first treasurer to appear is at Limerick, where, on the foundation of the

²⁰⁴ See J.D. Seymour, *Clergy of Cashel and Emly*, 24; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 611; *Cal. papal petitions, 1342–62*, 100; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–07*, 294; *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 172; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 533; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 165; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 40. For the diocese of Clogher, Isaac, the first recorded chancellor, was not in ms 61, Leslie's transcripts in the RCB library, see *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–07*, 87–8. *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 45, 261, 478; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 162–4.

²⁰⁵ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 108.

²⁰⁶ See above, chapter 1.3 'The *principales personae* of cathedral communities', 44, for an examination of the office of provost in English and continental European cathedrals. See also Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 237; I.B. Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995), 79; Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 41–2; Julia Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends', 552; László Koszta, 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', 23.

cathedral chapter (c. 1204–6), William of Cardiff is granted the office.²⁰⁷ The next reference occurs at Emly, where John, treasurer of Emly appears in the plea rolls in 1211.²⁰⁸ Next is St Patrick's in 1213–14, in the foundation charter granting Ralph of Bristol the newly constituted office.²⁰⁹ Hereafter references to the offices occur at Ardfert (1223), Ossory (1243), Leighlin (1250) and Ferns (–1253).²¹⁰ There is a clear absence of treasurers in the records of the provinces of Armagh and Tuam. In terms of provincial trends, the province of Armagh only threw up references to the treasurer twice, once in Derry and once in that quasi-monastic cathedral of Meath.²¹¹ Other dioceses with only a single known reference to the treasurer are Cloyne, Emly, Elphin, Kilmacduagh, Meath and Tuam. Without those singular references, both the provinces of Tuam and Armagh (except for the archdiocese of Armagh) would have no record whatsoever of the dignity. Needless to say the lack of references does not confirm or deny the existence of the treasurer in these dioceses. As is the case with the other three principales personae, the treasurer is mostly present in the dioceses of the east and south of the country. As might therefore be expected, the number of Englishmen to hold the first treasurerships is highest in the provinces of Dublin and Cashel, and not one English name is associated with this dignity in the dioceses of Armagh, Cloyne and Kilfenora.

A rather striking characteristic of Irish cathedrals is that the treasurer, more so than the chancellor, could be promoted to episcopal status, and not just in his

²⁰⁷ See *Black bk Limerick*, lxxvii, 61.

²⁰⁸ Seymour, *Clergy of Emly*, 64.

²⁰⁹ *Dignitas decani*, 4

²¹⁰ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 168; Leslie, *Ossory succession list*, 91; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 260; Leslie, *Ferns succession list*, 44.

²¹¹ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval Irish cathedral chapters', 109, Nicholls does not give his source; A treasurer first appears in Armagh in 1433, see Leslie, *Armagh succession list*, 42–3, (quotes diocesan registers); *Cal. doc. Ire. 1293–1301*, 45 (not listed by Leslie); *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 241.

own diocese. For instance, Ralph of Bristol, treasurer of St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin, was promoted to the bishopric of Kildare in 1222.²¹² Kildare's own treasurer was likewise promoted to the see in 1279 but one half of the chapter supported Stephen, the dean. The matter was settled when both parties renounced their right.²¹³ Before becoming dean of St Patrick's and succeeding to the archbishopric, John de Sandford was treasurer of Ferns.²¹⁴ In fact Ferns had three former treasurers who succeeded to the bishopric: both Hugh de Lamport and John St John were elected to the bishopric of Ferns.²¹⁵ The first three treasurers of Ossory were likewise promoted to bishoprics: Geoffrey St Leger, the first treasurer, became bishop in 1260, his successor Maurice de Blanchfield (Blanchville) succeeded to the bishopric of Leighlin and Milo Sweteman was elected bishop of Ossory but never actually confirmed.²¹⁶ Incidentally, the treasurer of Ossory was the only member of the cathedral chapter to witness the trial of Alice Kyteler, the Kilkenny woman accused of heresy and witchcraft in the early fourteenth century.²¹⁷ Cashel, Cork, Derry and Lismore also had treasurers who succeeded to an Irish bishopric.²¹⁸ Limerick established its own trend and supported a sub-treasurer (*sub-thesaurarius*), although it is not clear whether he was a member of the chapter.²¹⁹ Surely the Limerick cathedral was in a position

²¹² *Cal. doc. Ireland, 1171–1251*, 161, 202; *AFM, sub anno 1232*; *Irish exchequer payments*, i, 273; *Cal. charter rolls 1257–1399*, 93.

²¹³ 'Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis', in *Anal. Hib.* 6 (Nov., 1934), 248–450, at 314.

²¹⁴ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 133; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 479.

²¹⁵ *Cal. patent rolls 1247*, 641; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 96; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 167, 170, 347; *Cal. patent rolls 1216–25*, 372.

²¹⁶ H.F. Berry, 'Ancient charters in the liber albus Ossoriensis', *RIA Proc.*, 27 (1908/9), 117; *Duise charters*, 128–9; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 45.

²¹⁷ The case of Alice has most recently been examined by M.B. Callan in her book *The Templars, the witch, and the wild Irish: vengeance and heresy in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2015).

²¹⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 325; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 133, 245; *Annals St Finn Barre's*, 5; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1293–1301*, 45; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 39; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 292; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 58–9.

²¹⁹ *Black bk Limerick*, lxvi.

to support an extra dignity because it was one of the larger and wealthier dioceses?

The official (officialis)

THE OFFICIAL, or the official of the bishop, as he was more commonly known, was not a member of the cathedral body, but rather, as his name suggests, a servant of the bishop. The earliest reference to an Irish official is in the diocese of Ferns where Master William Forrest, official of Ferns, witnesses a charter of Dunbrody Abbey. He later becomes the official of Ossory.²²⁰ There are only four other references to the office in the thirteenth century, occurring first in Armagh (in 1252), Dublin (in 1260), Connor (in 1289) and Cork (in 1293).²²¹

From the late fourteenth century the official begins to reappear, commonly holding more than one post.²²² In Clonfert, in 1397, for instance, the official is also the dean; this is also the case in Elphin (1398) and Clogher (1422).²²³ In the dioceses of Kilmore and Killaloe, in 1398, the official also held the archdeaconry. The combination of these two last roles is easier to digest than the fusion of dean and official. The archdeacon, as illustrated above, had a similar function to the official and in some cases the same man assumed both roles.²²⁴ Neither the archdeacon nor the official were authorised members of the chapter; rather, their role centred on the diocese as a whole. The evolving role of the official, from personal servant of the bishop to administrator of the diocese at large, is also evident in the records. The thirteenth-century references associated the office with its prelate, whereas the later references, on the whole, have coupled

²²⁰ *Chartul. St Mary's*, ii, 172; *Duiské charters*, 64–5.

²²¹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 110; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 277, 497; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1293–1301*, 10; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 95, 371, 493.

²²² Ardagh, Achonry, Cork, Derry, Dublin, Elphin, Ferns, Kildare, Killala, Kilmacduagh, Limerick, Ossory all have multiple references to the office.

²²³ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 160, 242–3, 106.

²²⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 109.

the office with a chapter dignity. This sits quite nicely with developments in the diocese of Worcester where, in the twelfth century, the official's duty was to assist the bishop; yet by the fourteenth century his function at Worcester included the judicial element referred to earlier as well as other diocesan administrative duties.²²⁵ In fifteenth-century Killaloe, when Ruoricus Olonyrgayn and Donald O'Grady held the post, the title had evolved into 'the official-general of the city of Killaloe' and the 'official-general of the episcopal court of Killaloe', both suggesting detachment from the bishop.²²⁶ In the *Black book of Limerick*, John de Penrys, official, is referred to as the seneschal of bishop, '*seneschallio episcopi Lymericansis*'.²²⁷

During periods when the bishop might be absent from his diocese, or even during a vacancy in the see, the official could be called upon to act in that capacity. For example, in the diocese of Meath, William Bardedor, official of the diocese, assumed the bishop's role in a case concerning the land belonging to the abbot of Kells.²²⁸ Similarly, the official of Cashel, during vacancy in the see, declared the election of Peter, dean of Kilfenora, as bishop of that see.²²⁹ Nevertheless, the office of the official was not seen as a stepping stone towards a bishopric, except in Clogher in 1268 when Michael MacAnthsair was forcibly intruded into the see by the primate, against the wishes of the chapter who had selected their archdeacon. The appointment was overturned and Michael resumed his post as official.²³⁰

²²⁵ R.M. Haines, *The administration of the diocese of Worcester*, 106–7.

²²⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 252, 256.

²²⁷ *Black bk Limerick*, xlvi, 42.

²²⁸ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1285–92*, 92–3.

²²⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–07*, 79.

²³⁰ *Cal. reg. Sweteman*, no. 47, 46–7.

The provost (prepositus)

COMMENCING WITH Chrodegang of Metz and continuing with the 'enlarged rule' and the *Institutio canonicorum*, provision was made for an archdeacon and provosts, which by the ninth century had developed into provost and dean at most of the major cathedrals.²³¹ So it is to be anticipated that Irish cathedrals should also have provosts. Rather peculiarly, however, he appears predominantly in the records in the ecclesiastical province of Tuam. There is a single reference to a provost of Dublin – Ralph de Stanes – who witnessed a grant to Holy Trinity in 1234.²³² However, Ralph de Stanes was not provost in the ecclesiastical sense but rather he served the secular government as chief magistrate or *provost*. Furthermore, the ecclesiastical provost was a non-elective office and a minor dignity.²³³ This indicates that it was not comparable with the early medieval provost who took charge of the chapter, nor can the provost be compared to, for example, his Hungarian namesake, since the provostship seems to have maintained traits of the earlier period. It may be that the provost in the Connacht church is akin to those found in the French or German cathedrals of the same period.²³⁴ Having said that, the provost in the diocese of Killala, according to the transcription in the papal registers, was an elective dignity, because in 1417 Charles Ohamuthy, clerk of the diocese, was given papal dispensation 'as the son of a priest and an unmarried woman, to be promoted to the provostship of Killala, a non-major, elective dignity with cure'.²³⁵ It was even valued at sixteen marks, which was no mere pittance when compared to some of the more established dignities in that diocese.²³⁶ The provostship of Tuam was

²³¹ Julia Barrow, *The clergy in the medieval world*, 301–6.

²³² *Christ Church deeds*, no. 47., 44.

²³³ *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 160–1.

²³⁴ See above, 1.3 'The *principales personae* of cathedral communities', 44, for an analysis of the office of provost in England and in continental Europe.

²³⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 91.

²³⁶ *ibid.* See below, 3.4 'Revenue and the value of dignities and benefices', 160; see also below, A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

valued at only five marks in 1308, when Edmund de Burgo was granted the office. This was a third of the value attached to Killala.²³⁷ On the other hand, Edmund de Burgo supplemented his income through additional prebendal stipends from Emly and Clonfert, as well as a church in the diocese of Exeter and in Derry.²³⁸ The first instance in which the records refer to a provost is in 1245 when the promotion of the provost of Elphin to the bishopric was cancelled.²³⁹ There is no other mention of this office for another sixty years, until in the 1308 reference.²⁴⁰ Remarkably, the provostship in the fourteenth century province of Tuam might share similar traits to its Hungarian counterpart, in that there is a shift from provost to chancellor. Both Kilmacduagh and Tuam had chancellors who disappear from the records. In the archdiocese of Tuam, the chancellor ceases to be mentioned in or after 1289 just before the provost is introduced.²⁴¹ A similar pattern occurs in Kilmacduagh. The office of chancellor ceases to be mentioned in the registers after 1405 and the provost begins to be recorded from 1411.²⁴² This peculiarity could indicate that the fourteenth-century province of Tuam was closer to its continental cousins than it was to the rest of Ireland, or even to England. Furthermore, it is possible that links with continental Europe were made through the episcopacy itself, despite the fact that many of the prelates during this period were of Irish extraction. There is always the slight possibility that the senior dignitaries in Tuam studied in France or Germany where the provost controlled the prebendal estates. It seems that Kenneth Nicholls's idea of a purely 'Connacht pattern' of 'dean, provost, archdeacon and canons', may have overlooked the comparison which could be made with some of the European cathedrals, such as at Speyer in Germany.²⁴³

²³⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 43.

²³⁸ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Tuam.

²³⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 218.

²⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 43.

²⁴¹ *ibid.*, 498; *Cal. papal letters 1305–1341*, 43.

²⁴² *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 63, 261.

²⁴³ Nicholls, 'Mediaeval cathedral chapters', 108. L.G. Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 42–4.

There are only two examples where the provost is promoted to a bishopric. Firstly at Down in 1353, when Gregory, provost of Killala, was promoted to the bishopric of Down by papal provision;²⁴⁴ and secondly at Ardfert, when Brandanus, provost of Ardfert is elected by the chapter to the see.²⁴⁵

Other titles

OTHER OFFICES such as a subdean, deacon, succentor and sacristan appear in the records at varying degrees. The lesser dignities are harder to detail in the Irish context because of the lack of source material. The nature of their duties was not enough to be a concern for the papacy and so it is only in rare cases that they are mentioned. A *magisteri* has not appeared in any of the records of the Irish cathedrals, despite the fact that canon 18 of the Third Lateran Council (1179) required every cathedral church to appoint one to teach the clerics and the poor scholars of the church. According to some distinguished scholars, this canon effectively launched the cathedral schools, many of which were later to develop into the universities.²⁴⁶ Ireland, however, never had a medieval university, although attempts were made by Archbishop John Lech to establish one in Dublin in 1312.²⁴⁷ As regards other offices, however, Ardagh and Derry had deacons in 1414 and 1418. William, bishop elect of Connor in 1353, was

²⁴⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 482.

²⁴⁵ *Cal. patent rolls 1232–47*, 204; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 363.

²⁴⁶ For analysis on education in the Middle Ages see, Julia Barrow, 'Education and the recruitment of cathedral canons in England and Germany 1100–1225', *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 20 (1989), 117–38; idem, 'Churches, education and literacy in towns, 600–1300', in D.M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge urban history of Britain, vol. I, 650–1540* (Cambridge, 2000), 127–52; R.M. Haines, 'The education of the English clergy during the later Middle Ages: some observations on the operation of Pope Boniface VIII's constitution *Cum ex eo* (1298)', *Canadian Journal of History* 4 (1969), 1–22; C.H. Haskins, *The rise of the universities* (New York, 1923); Hastings Rashdall, *The universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, F.M. Powicke & A.B. Emden (eds) 3 vols (Oxford, repr. 1969); Fergal McGrath, *Education in ancient and medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1979).

²⁴⁷ Aubrey Gwynn, 'The medieval university of St Patrick's', 199–212.

previously the archdeacon and deacon of Down. Cashel had a sacristan and cellarer in 1254.²⁴⁸ There is reference to a *vicarius* in the diocese of Limerick, which possibly refers to a vicar general, although the reference itself does not make this clear.²⁴⁹ In the diocese of Clogher, the bishop had his own chaplain, as well as a letter-writing office.²⁵⁰

2.5

BISHOPS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPITULAR BODIES

IT HAS long been the view that the first English bishops of Irish dioceses instituted the cathedral chapters with dignities and canons as part of the anglicisation process within the Irish church.²⁵¹ An inspection of the first known or recorded dignitaries would suggest otherwise. It was native Irish clergy, as presented by Marie Therese Flanagan, who transformed the Irish church during the twelfth century.²⁵² This reorganisation set the framework for the institution of cathedral chapters; it is highly unlikely that the reforming Irish bishops were selective in their reforming practices.

The bishop of Lismore, Gilla Críst Ua Connairche (or Christianus), was appointed papal legate by pope Eugenius III no later than 1151 – the same year in which he escorted Cardinal Paparo to Ireland.²⁵³ In 1172 Christianus presided over the

²⁴⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1417–21*, 80; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 432; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 475; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 305.

²⁴⁹ *Black bk Limerick*, lxvi.

²⁵⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 541; see also Brendan Smith, 'The late medieval diocese of Clogher, c. 1200–1400', in H.A. Jefferies (ed.), *History of the diocese of Clogher* (Dublin, 2005), 74.

²⁵¹ See for example, Watt, *The church in medieval Ireland*, 87–116, 256–7.

²⁵² *The transformation of the Irish church*, in particular the conclusion, 243–8.

²⁵³ See M.T. Flanagan, 'Henry II and the council of Cashel', 186–7; See also *Chartul. St Mary's*, ii, 263, 265, 288.

council of Cashel which was summoned by Henry II himself. His successor, Bishop Felix, is said to have attended the Third Lateran Council in 1179.²⁵⁴ Because of these substantial links with the papacy, and the involvement of the Lismore bishops at the reforming synods, it is hardly startling to find this diocese supporting an archdeacon, and even a dean, in the twelfth century; notwithstanding the fact that its first canons appear in 1218 and that it did not have any named prebends until the fifteenth century.²⁵⁵ It is almost certain that the chapter of Lismore was established by its Irish bishops and not its first English bishop, Robert of Bedford, who was a royal clerk.²⁵⁶ The cathedrals of Kildare and Ossory supported archdeacons and deans before the institution of their first English bishops. The last Irish bishop of Kildare, Cornelius McGelany (Cornelius Mac Fáelán, 1206–23) is also the first recorded archdeacon of the diocese. Due to the occurrence of deans in particular, prior to the first English bishops, it can be confidently assumed that chapter formation was begun under native Irish clergymen. Armagh was the only diocese in its province to entertain all of the four pillars, and none of the other dioceses in the province followed this pattern. It is most likely that Luke Netterville, the first English archbishop, established the chapter at Armagh since all of the dignities (except for the archdeacon) appear after his promotion, as well as the fact that, as Gwynn and Hadcock have pointed out, all of his predecessors were either monks or regular canons.²⁵⁷ Like Armagh, only the archdiocese of Tuam supported all of the four pillars, none of the other dignities being supported in the province.

The formation of the cathedral chapter of Ferns

²⁵⁴ Patrick Power, *Waterford & Lismore, a compendious history of the united dioceses* (Cork, 1937), 7.

²⁵⁵ *Monasticon Hibernicum*, 691–3; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 127; Rennison, *Diocese of Lismore*, 49–75.

²⁵⁶ Robert of Bedford, first English bishop of Lismore (elected December 1218, died 1223), was a royal clerk and bishop elect of Glendalough. *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 127.

²⁵⁷ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 60.

The development of the cathedral chapter at Ferns can be used as a case study to support the hypothesis that indigenous Irish clergy introduced the continental four-pillars design. The last native Irish bishop of Ferns, Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid (Albin O'Molloy), was bishop from c. 1186 until his death in 1223.²⁵⁸ Previously, he had been abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Baltinglass in the diocese of Leighlin. His successor, John St John (1223–53), is perhaps falsely credited with establishing the cathedral chapter. Celebrated by John O'Donovan, editor of the *Annals of the four masters* as 'the great rival of Giraldus Cambrensis',²⁵⁹ Ailbe was an advocate for the native Irish clergy, defending them against the criticisms of the likes of Giraldus.²⁶⁰ He was also a defender of the rights of the church over secular powers and the latter part of his career is overshadowed by his dispute with William Marshal.²⁶¹ One might assume, not least from his rivalry with Giraldus, that he was the last guardian of a native episcopal tradition and a doggedly conservative protector of native episcopal values, and that it was only the unavailability of Anglo-Norman candidates so early in the history of the lordship that allowed him take the office in the first place. However, Ailbe was a dynamic individual who was in tune with developments across the wider church; he was one of six or seven native Irish bishops in attendance at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 for which the king granted him protection for his stay.²⁶² It is also entirely plausible that the anti-Irish sentiment, aired most audibly by Giraldus Cambrensis, was not a view which was shared by the Angevin kings at

²⁵⁸ Emmett O'Byrne, 'O'Mulloy (Ua Máel Muaid), Ailbe (Aulbin)', *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, 2009), (<http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a6901>)

²⁵⁹ *AFM*, *sub anno*, 1222. According to Ware, Ailbe was appointed to Ferns when Giraldus Cambrensis refused it, see Walter Harris (ed.), *The whole works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland I*, (Dublin, 1739), 440.

²⁶⁰ Giraldus Cambrensis, *De rebus a se gestis, libri iii*, ed. J.S. Brewer (London, 1861), 66, 67.

²⁶¹ G.H. Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans*, iii, (Oxford, 1920), 29–31. See also *Pat. Rolls 1216–25*, 148–9, 173–4.

²⁶² See Dunning, 'Irish representatives and Irish ecclesiastical affairs at the Fourth Lateran Council', 90–113, esp. 91. *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 101. See also *Pontificia*, i, no. 114, 199–200.

least as regards their dealing with the Irish church hierarchy.²⁶³ The surviving records cast a positive light on Ailbe's relationship with the English colonisers. He supported his metropolitan, John Cumin, the first English archbishop of Dublin, and witnessed several deeds issued from Christ Church cathedral, mainly relating to the Cistercian abbey of St Mary's in Dublin. In 1189 he attended the coronation in Westminster Abbey of Richard I, returning to England in 1192 when he chaperoned Prince John on his journey to Nottingham.²⁶⁴ In 1206 King John nominated him for the vacant metropolitan see of Cashel, willing that 'they [the chapter?] unanimously consent to and hasten Albin's promotion, assuring them that the King wishes no one but the bishop to be promoted.'²⁶⁵ His Cistercian peers in England must have respected him greatly because in 1201 he consecrated the infirmary chapel at Waverley Abbey in Surrey, and in 1214 he returned to dedicate a further five altars there.²⁶⁶ In 1216 Ailbe was honoured by the king's grant to him of the custody of the vacant see of Killaloe.²⁶⁷

His successor, John St John, was sent to Ireland as a royal clerk, assuming the role of treasurer at the king's exchequer, for which he received a stipend of

²⁶³ See for example, W.L. Warren, 'King John and Ireland', in J.F. Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1981), 26–42. Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, 'Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid, Uí Chennselaig and the *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae*', in Seán Duffy (ed.), *Princes, prelates and poets in medieval Ireland*, 309–38, at 309.

²⁶⁴ N.B. White, *Red book Ormond* (Dublin, 1932), 87. *Chronica*, 3, 8.

²⁶⁵ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 44.

²⁶⁶ 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia, 1–1291' in *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores, or Chronicles and memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, ed. Henry Richard Luard (London, 1865), 282. The Benedictine prior and convent of the cathedral church of St Swithun's, Winchester, admitted him into their fraternity, and on hearing of his death, they celebrated a requiem mass for him, as would normally be done for one of their own. His name is, according to Charles Kerry, entered on the register of St Swithun's priory (C. Kerry, *A history of Waverley Abbey in the county of Surrey* (Guildford, 1872), 10–11).

²⁶⁷ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 110. *Rot. lit. claus*, 197.

about £40 out of public funds.²⁶⁸ In 1220 St John failed to secure the see of Ossory, even though he was the new king's chosen candidate (or at least that of the regency government), but was elected to Ferns in 1223.²⁶⁹ Although relieved of the office of the treasurer by the king in order to fulfil his episcopal duties, after his election he remained a servant of the crown, maintaining positions in the Dublin administration as itinerant justice and treasurer.²⁷⁰ His career, unlike his predecessor Ailbe, was enmeshed with the interests of the state and was buttressed by the crown. His successors to the bishopric during the Middle Ages, all of Anglo-Norman descent, would follow John's path and serve the interests of both church and state.

As mentioned above, the lack of extant documentary sources for medieval Irish cathedrals makes the history very difficult to chart, not least for the pre-invasion period for which we know almost nothing. The capitular body at Ferns cathedral is not attested until as late as 1229, and then not again until 1253, during the episcopacy of Geoffrey St John, the second English bishop of the diocese.²⁷¹ This, however, is not an indication of the establishment of the chapter because dignities are attested to long before the first mention of the chapter. It would appear that the office of the archdeacon of Ferns existed for twenty years prior to any of the other cathedral dignities.²⁷² In fact, an archdeacon is the earliest referenced dignity in all cathedrals. The first known chancellor, Geoffrey St John,

²⁶⁸ *Anc. rec. Dublin*, i, 166. He was in fact the first incumbent of this office, since prior to this the role of treasurer was incorporated into that of the exchequer *Rot. lit. claus*, 305. See also Richardson & Sayles, *Administration of Ireland*, 21-2.

²⁶⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171-1251*, 167. *Patent rolls 1216-25*, 258; *Rot. lit. claus.*, 543.

²⁷⁰ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171-1251*, 171; *Anc. rec. Dublin* i, 166. There are multiple references to his role as treasurer in *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171-1251*, 117, 129, 134, 151, 166, 167, 174, 185.

²⁷¹ *Duiske charters*, 64-5; *Cal. chart. rolls 1226-57*, 123; *Cal. pat. rolls 1247-8*, 248.

²⁷² Reginald de Dene. Appears in 1229 in a charter for Duiske Abbey see *Duiske charters*, 64-5. He appears alongside Geoffrey St John, official of ferns.

future bishop of Ferns, is recorded in 1243;²⁷³ a treasurer, Luke, is supposed to have existed during the incumbancy of John St John, so sometime between 1223–53.²⁷⁴ The dean, the only one of the dignities for which we have a foundation date, first occurs when Urban IV sanctioned its creation in 1255. Indeed, these references would support the hypothesis that John St John established the chapter at Ferns. Nevertheless, the fact that chapter members are first recorded during the bishopric of St John does not mean that the chapter was established then. Yet in spite of this evidence, there is a case to ascribe its establishment to St John's predecessor, Ailbe.

The first known record of named dignitaries in the cathedral dates from the very year that John was promoted to the bishopric; it is not fanciful to think that Ailbe had already initiated the process before his death. Certainly he would have been aware of, if not an active player in, the ongoing reforms within the universal church, and his attendance at the Fourth Lateran Council is evidence of this; almost half of the episcopal contingent from Ireland attending the latter consisted of native Irish clergymen – a sure sign that the Irish church was not backward in its formal structures until the 'anglicisation' of the thirteenth century. Moreover, the first references to the dignities of Ferns cathedral are not in relation to newly instituted offices (except that of dean); rather, the impression given is that these dignities were in existence prior to 1223. Ailbe's associations with Waverley Abbey in the diocese of Winchester, and with its cathedral church of St Swithun, support the case, although it falls short of proving it. He acted as suffragan in the diocese in 1201 and 1214, and Peter des

²⁷³ Geoffrey St John, *official* of Ferns, quite possibly a nephew or even brother to bishop John, appears as a witness to a charter relating to the Cistercian abbey of Duiske, see *Duiske charters*, 64–5. Both Henry Cotton and J.B. Leslie were of the opinion that the official equates to the post of chancellor, and thus, Geoffrey St John was Ferns' first chancellor, see Henry Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: the succession of the prelates and members of the cathedral bodies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1848), 358; Leslie, *Ferns succession list*, 2, 36.

²⁷⁴ Luke, the treasurer, see Leslie, *Ferns succession list*, 44.

Roches, bishop of Winchester, was present when he consecrated the five altars at the abbey.²⁷⁵ Bishop des Roches had been a royal nominee to the see of Winchester and was an associate of King John's, so he and Bishop Ailbe had something in common. The pointers presented here suggest that it is indeed within the bounds of possibility that the four-pillars constitution of Ferns cathedral was initiated by the last Gaelic Irish bishop of that place.

The dean is the only office for which a foundation date can be ascribed, and because of this it warrants further investigation. It is also the key to unlocking the argument which favours Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid as the founder of the chapter. Sanctioned by the pope in 1255, two years after St John died, it is most probable that John St John had intended to institute a dean, but it was not until the incumbency (1254–58)²⁷⁶ of his successor, Geoffrey St John, former chancellor of Ferns, that the pope confirmed 'to the bishop of Ferns ... with consent of the chapter, of the [creation of the] office of dean'.²⁷⁷ If it took two years for John St John to inaugurate the office of dean, then is it also plausible to suggest that the other dignities, which occur in 1223, had the wheels in motion from, at the latest, 1221, during the incumbency of Ferns's last Irish bishop, Ailbe. Richard de Northampton, the first named dean of Ferns, does not occur in the records until 1270, when he is listed as one of the auditors of the account of Hugh de Taghmon, bishop of Meath, treasurer Henry III.²⁷⁸ Accordingly, even though the office was instituted in 1255, it is another fifteen years before there is any record of a named officeholder. Once again, this could put weight in favour of Ailbe as the founder of the cathedral chapter of Ferns, since the earliest reference to named officers is in 1223. In addition to this, the earliest references that we have for these dignitaries do not imply that these were new offices, but rather

²⁷⁵ 'Annales monasterii de Waverleia', 282.

²⁷⁶ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252-84*, 50, 91.

²⁷⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1198-1304*, 321; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 68.

²⁷⁸ *Irish exchequer payments*, 1.

established ones, which had been in existence for some time prior to their first occurrence in the extant records.

2.6

CONCLUSION

THE IDEA that Irish capitular bodies were organised by a native Irish episcopacy supports Marie Therese Flanagan's view that the Irish church prior to 1169 'had acquired structures that were broadly in line with those in the rest of Latin Christendom'.²⁷⁹ The restructured episcopate, most of whom were native Irish were actually the architects of the Anglo-Norman four-pillars model and Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid might be typical of the Irish church hierarchy of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. The office of provost would also suggest that the cathedrals of Ireland were not cut off from developments in continental Europe, but that in Tuam, at least, they followed trends which also suited the climate of the native clergy. All of the dioceses in the province of Cashel supported the four-pillars paradigm, which was a predominantly Anglo-Irish province, although Cloyne barely fits into this category as it only has a handful of references to a chancellor and one citation of a treasurer, both occurring late in the fourteenth century.²⁸⁰ This would suggest that these offices were instituted rather late in the development of the cathedral and perhaps barely sustained. In Tuam, as at Cashel, the archdiocese itself would not, it appears, have supported the full four-pillars model were it not for a chance reference in 1289 to four officials we would assume that Tuam did not adhere to the four pillars model. In the reference, John de Alatro, precentor, Nicholas de Hyndelinge, treasurer, and Thomas de Watford, chancellor, were empowered by the chapter of Tuam to

²⁷⁹ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 243.

²⁸⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 228; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 64, 100; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 398, 445.

elect a bishop on the death of Stephen de Fulbourn.²⁸¹ It is bizarre that these dignities do not appear again in the history of this medieval cathedral. Geoffrey Hand's analysis assumes that only Clonfert supported the four-square pillars constitution in the province of Tuam, doubting the existence of the design at any of the other dioceses in the province.²⁸² Indeed, Kilmacduagh, Killala and Elphin had abnormal secular organisation. In the archdiocese of Armagh, an irregular organisation developed, which continued to support ancient customs reminiscent of the early Irish church, whilst paradoxically submitting to the four square pillars design. This is probably the case because the cathedral was *inter Hibernicos*. In the province of Armagh the picture was perplexing where Dromore, Clonmacnoise and Clogher maintained irregular secular chapters, whilst Down maintained a Benedictine chapter and Kilmore, Derry and Raphoe remain obscure. The four-pillars design became a badge of Anglo-Norman identity. It was not widespread in Ireland, but concentrated around the provinces of Dublin and Cashel, both more geographically and politically aligned with England, than areas in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam.

²⁸¹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 498.

²⁸² G.J. Hand, 'Two Irish secular cathedrals in the Middle Ages: St Patrick's, Dublin, and St Mary's, Limerick', (UCD, PhD, 1955), 134.

3. THE MONASTIC CATHEDRALS

3.1

INTRODUCTION

MONASTIC CATHEDRALS were a rarity across the Christian world, usually considered an English phenomenon (save for a small number in Normandy and Sicily). Nevertheless, in the later medieval period Ireland had three: the Augustinian canons regular at Christ Church cathedral (Holy Trinity) in Dublin, the Benedictine canons at St Patrick's cathedral in Downpatrick in Down and the Augustinian Victorine canons at SS Peter and Paul's in Newtown Trim in Meath. Due to the fortuitous survival of its archives and the magnificence of its architecture, Christ Church, out of all of the Irish cathedrals, has received the most academic attention.¹

Prior to the thirteenth century relatively little is known about the cathedrals of Ireland. Since diocesan sees were established at Ráith Bressail and Kells/Melifont, cathedral churches within fixed dioceses can only have been operating from 1111 at the earliest. Prior to this, monastic communities may have undertaken some form of diocesan management, secular cathedral chapters and fixed dioceses not yet being in existence. Certainly, by the later Middle Ages some religious communities claimed that their antecedents sprang from diocesan centres of the early medieval period, such as at Bangor, where the community of Augustinians claimed that they had been the original diocesan

¹ The most significant works on Christ Church are: G.J. Hand, 'The rivalry of the cathedral chapters in medieval Dublin', 193–206; Kenneth Milne (ed.), *Christ Church cathedral, Dublin: a history* (Dublin, 2000); Stuart Kinsella (ed.), *Augustinians at Christ Church: the canons regular of the cathedral priory of Holy Trinity, Dublin (Christ Church studies, 1)* (Dublin, 2000). Medieval sources now calendared: James Mills (ed.), *The account roll of the priory of the Holy Trinity, Dublin, 1337–1346* (Dublin, 1996) and M.J. McEnery & Raymond Refaüssé, *Christ Church deeds* (Dublin, 2001).

centre (if such an anachronistic term can be used) of Bangor. There is some evidence that monastic communities formed quasi-cathedral chapters in the pre-reform Irish church.² For instance, Clonard formed the chapter of Meath until the cathedral was moved to Newtown Trim; St Mary's Augustinian church in Louth administered to the diocese before it was transferred to Clogher; the early abbey of Mayo acted as the cathedral for the short-lived diocese but became a collegiate church before the middle of the thirteenth century; the diocese of Roscrea was administered by a community of canons until it was united with Killaloe.³ In England, where the monastic cathedral was well established, only Carlisle followed the Augustinian rule, the other nine committing to the Benedictine order. It may be that Downpatrick, Ireland's only Benedictine cathedral, was following the earlier English example. In Italy and France the Augustinian cathedrals flourished in the late eleventh and early twelfth century.⁴ Notwithstanding the intermittent existence of these earlier monastic cathedrals, there were for any considerable length of time only three cathedral priories in Ireland: Holy Trinity (Arrouaisian canons regular, 1163–1541), Downpatrick (Benedictine, 1182–1538), and Newtown Trim (Victorine canons of St Augustine, 1202–1541). Holy Trinity is not only the best recorded of all of the cathedrals but

² See for example M.T. Flanagan who says it is 'difficult to gauge how many cathedral churches might have adopted Arrouaisian usages during the lifetime of Malachy', suggesting that many of the cathedral churches of Ireland started off as monastic before transforming into secular churches in *The transformation of the Irish church*, 144.

³ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1307*, 207, 433; H.J. Lawlor, 'The genesis of the diocese of Clogher', *Louth Archaeological Society Journal* 4/2 (1917), 139; Nicholls, 'Reg. Clogher', 375; *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 241–2; Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 267–8; Gwynn and Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 130; *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 64, 65.

⁴ Fano c. 1060, Florence pre 1102, Pistoria conf. 1094, Arles c. 1060, Toulouse c. 1077, Carcassonne conf. 1088, Narbonne conf. 1093, Villeneuve-les-Maguelonne conf. 1095, Cahors conf. 1096, Avignon conf. 1094, Lescar 1101, Comminges c. 1073–1125, and Nice c. 1136, in J.C. Dickinson, *The order of the Austin canons and their introduction into England* (London, 1950), 244–5.

it also happens to be the only Augustinian community to persevere as a monastic cathedral community throughout the Middle Ages.

3.2

CHRIST CHURCH (HOLY TRINITY) CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN: THE AUGUSTINIAN CATHEDRAL

Christ Church: the Benedictine years

THE EARLY years of Christ Church (Holy Trinity) cathedral are well documented by Aubrey Gwynn and Stuart Kinsella.⁵ The first Irish Benedictine house settled on an already existing church site which was founded by the Hiberno-Norse King of Dublin, Sihtric Silkbeard, in the first half of the eleventh century; it was the location of the future Christ Church cathedral. Three of the first four bishops of Dublin (c. 1028–1121) were Benedictines so it would seem quite natural that Christ Church (Holy Trinity) should follow this tradition.⁶ Little else is known about the early church except for what has been preserved in two narratives contained in the *Liber niger of Christ Church*.⁷ Only one of these documents references Sihtric as the founder when it says that he ‘gave to the Holy Trinity

⁵ Stuart Kinsella, ‘From Hiberno-Norse to Anglo-Norman, c. 1030–1300’, in Kenneth Milne (ed.), *Christ Church cathedral*, 25–52; Aubrey Gwynn, ‘Origins of the see of Dublin’, *IER* 57 (1941), 40–55, 97–112, repr., with changes, in *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 50–67.

⁶ The first four bishops of Dublin were: Dúnán (Donatus) (1028–74), Gilla Pátraic (1074–84), Donnóg Ua hAingliu (1085–95), Samuel Ua hAingliu (1096–1121).

⁷ Stuart Kinsella, ‘From Hiberno-Norse to Anglo-Norman, c. 1030–1300’, 28; H.J. Lawlor, ‘A calendar of the *liber niger* and *liber albus* of Christ Church, Dublin’, *RIA Proc.*, C 27 (1908/09), 1–93; Aubrey Gwynn, ‘Some unpublished texts from the black book of Christ Church, Dublin’ *Anal. Hib.* 16 (Mar. 1946), 281, 283–37; *Christ Church deeds*, no. 364c; *Cal. Alen’s reg.*, 28–30 (148b). Both Ware and Ussher have commented on the earlier church. See for example, Sir James Ware, *De praesulibus Hiberniae commentaries* (London, 1654), 140–1.

and to Donatus [Dunan], the first bishop of Dublin, a site on which to build a church to the Holy Trinity'.⁸

The Benedictine origin of Christ Church has occupied the attention of scholars who have sought to establish a date for its foundation as such. Until recently, it was believed that there were two possible ways in which this order came to be at Christ Church. The first hypothesis favoured the idea that the Benedictines were established in Dublin before Donnus Ua hAingliu (1085–95), the second Benedictine bishop of Dublin. The second and more preferred argument was that Benedictine monks were sent to Christ Church along with Donnus who took up the episcopal seat in 1085 after his return from St Alban's Benedictine house where he received his training.⁹ Donnus came to Ireland with books, vestments and church ornaments from Lanfranc, which some have argued may indicate that the Benedictine monks arrived with Donnus and not before him.¹⁰ If, however, the Benedictine monks were already in Dublin, then Aubrey Gwynn believed that they arrived with Gilla Pátraic (1074–84), Dublin's second bishop.¹¹ It could also be the case that Lanfranc sent monks from Canterbury to help Donnus establish his cathedral church. Essentially, the connections with Canterbury, not least of which is the fact that they both share the same name, are what set scholars on the wrong path for so many years.¹² However, these hypotheses have recently

⁸ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Origins of the see of Dublin', 45–50.

⁹ See D. Bethal, 'English monks and Irish reform in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Historical Studies* 8 (Dublin 1971), 116–8. Aubrey Gwynn (ed.), *The writings of Bishop Patrick, 1074–1084* (Dublin, 1955), 6, 9–13; idem, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 100; Eadmer, *Historia Novorum*, ed. M. Rule (Rolls series, 1884), 73.

¹⁰ Ussher, *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum*, iv, no. xxxix; Holland, 'Dublin and the reform of the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', 120–1.

¹¹ Aubrey Gwynn, *The writings of Bishop Patrick 1074–1084*, 7.

¹² K.E. Miller, 'Ecclesiastical structural reform in Ireland and Scotland in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', (University Aberdeen, PhD, 2003), 80; A.W. Hadden & W. Stubbs, *Councils and ecclesiastical documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1869–78), ii, 154–5; G.W.S. Barrow, 'From Queen Margaret to David I: Benedictines and Tironensians', *The Innes Review* 11

been refuted by Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, who has firmly set to bed any doubts as to the origin of the cathedral chapter of Christ Church by establishing a definite connection with Cologne rather than Canterbury.¹³

The misconception as to the origin of the first chapter in Dublin originates with a translation, provided by two eminent Irish historians, of a single sentence in Anselm's letter: 'cum ipsa ornamenta non ei sed ecclesiae data sint sicut fratres Cantuariensis ecclesiae filii attestantur'.¹⁴ H.J. Lawlor's interpretation read: 'for ornaments were given not to him, but to the church, as the brothers, sons of the church of Canterbury, bear witness'.¹⁵ Aubrey Gwynn's version is somewhat different, emphasizing the connection between Anselm and his monks: 'for these ornaments were not given to the bishop, but to the church, as our brethren, the sons of the church of Canterbury, bear witness'.¹⁶ It would appear that Lawlor was convinced that the monks were from Canterbury but that they were already in Dublin, whereas Gwynn seemed to think that the monks were the brethren of Anselm at Canterbury. Because of these two translations other connections between Canterbury and Dublin have been pushed in an effort to prove the hypothesis.¹⁷ By the end of the eleventh century Bishop Samuel Ua h Aingliu (1096–1121) had expelled the monks who served at Christ Church, and was reprimanded by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁸ Flanagan has suggested

(1960), 27; Kenneth Veitch, 'A study of the extent to which existing native religious society helped to shape Scotland's reformed monastic community, 1070–1286,' (University of Edinburgh, PhD, 1999), 27–9.

¹³ Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel is yet to publish her findings, which she presented at the Medieval Dublin symposium in 2016.

¹⁴ Ussher, *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum*, iv, 530; Martin Holland, 'Dublin and reform', 121.

¹⁵ H.J. Lawlor, 'Note on the church of St Michan, Dublin', *JRSAI*, 56 (1926), 19; Holland, 'Dublin and reform', 121.

¹⁶ Gwynn, 'Bishop Samuel of Dublin', *IER* 60 (1942), 82; Holland, 'Dublin and reform', 121.

¹⁷ Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 101.

¹⁸ *Letters of Anselm*, ii, no. 278; Ussher, *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum*, iv, no. xxxix.

that he replaced the original monks with Benedictines, since he followed that order himself.¹⁹ The Augustinian canons regular were introduced to Christ Church by Lorcán Ua Tuathail (Laurence O'Toole) following his consecration in 1162. There is a document in the *Chartularies of St Mary's abbey*, which reveals that Lorcán dispatched two of his canons to Rome to seek papal approval of the adoption of the Arrouaisian tradition in his cathedral church of Dublin.²⁰

Christ Church: the Augustinian years

BECAUSE LORCÁN was an Augustinian, he shared the offices and refectory with his Arrouaisian chapter in Holy Trinity. Theoretically, the bishop was head of the community where a regular chapter existed. In practice, however, if the bishop was not himself a regular canon his involvement in community life was limited. In a dispute between the canons of Holy Trinity and John Cumin, for instance, it was resolved that 'the prior should have plenary power over his house' in all matters internal and external.²¹ Due to the survival of its records, many of the offices of the cathedral of Holy Trinity are known today. The accounts of the cathedral reveal that during the Middle Ages, it had a prior, sub-prior, seneschal, treasurer, cellarer, kitchener, precentor, sacrist, and master of the works.²² The prior had his own cook, chamberlain, clerks and squires.²³ This sort of information has not survived for any of the secular cathedrals, where nothing is known about the domestic occupations within the cathedrals. The changeover from native Irish to Anglo-Norman monks is evident in the records of the

¹⁹ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 144.

²⁰ *Chartul. St Mary's*, ii, 265–6. See also Stuart Kinsella (ed.), *Augustinians at Christ Church*, 4. The history of the cathedral from the Hiberno-Norse period right up to the Anglo-Norman colonisation has previously been detailed by Stuart Kinsella see: Stuart Kinsella, 'From Hiberno-Norse to Anglo-Norman, c. 1030–1300', 25–52.

²¹ Charles Plummer, 'Vie et miracles de S. Laurent', 138; *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 30.

²² James Mills (eds), *Account roll of the priory of the Holy Trinity Dublin 1337–1346*, 95–6, 107, 26–54, 106, 143, 159, 50–1, 147, 158, 202, 20, 21, 124, 161. *Registrum novum*, vol i, 350, 34, 355; *Christ Church deeds*, no. 513.

²³ Mills, *Account roll*, 99, 92, 91, 99, 4, 88, 91–2, 145.

cathedral, where in the late twelfth century a reorganisation appears to have been the goal. After the death of Lorcán Ua Tuathail, all of the archbishops of Dublin were Anglo-Norman administrators. The first listed prior, Gervase, is almost certainly of Anglo-Norman origin, although the name of his successor, Columbanus, would suggest he is of native Irish stock.²⁴ Aside from Columbanus, for the ensuing century all of the priors were of English extraction. By 1300, the community's transition from Gaelic Irish or Hiberno-Norse (Ostman) to English would seem to be complete, when a list of some of the community shows they all bore what appear to be English names:

Prior Adam de Balscham, Philip de Braybrok, sacrist, brothers, Gilbert de Winchester, sub-prior, Walter de Clontarf, Henry de Kork, Nicholas de Medlers, precentor, William de Cari, John de Forneys, Philip de Braybrok, John de Balscham, Richard de Nottingham, Ellias Was, and Hugh de Sutton, canons of Holy Trinity.²⁵

One could further suggest that membership of Holy Trinity at this stage was not confined to men from England and that recruitment of a local pool of Anglo-Normans such as Walter de Clontarf and Henry de Kork, was considered acceptable. Stuart Kinsella lists other pieces of evidence showing that Christ Church was evolving into an English-styled monastic cathedral. From about 1200 the number of deeds and other records relating to the cathedral begin to increase in volume, suggesting a more centralised form of record-keeping similar to the monastic chapters of England. The second piece of evidence is found in the building activity at Christ Church, where, as Roger Stalley has argued, the Gothic style resembles examples found in the west of England.²⁶ Nevertheless, the monastic community at Christ Church was in constant competition with the newer, wealthier, English-modelled secular cathedral of St Patrick's. From its elevation to cathedral status up to the dissolution, St Patrick's cathedral

²⁴ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 468f.

²⁵ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 164.

²⁶ Stuart Kinsella, 'From Hiberno-Norse to Anglo-Norman, c. 10130–1300', in Kenneth Milne (ed.), *Christ Church cathedral, Dublin*, 47–8; Roger Stalley, 'The architecture of the cathedral priory buildings, 1250–1530', in *Christ Church cathedral, Dublin*, 95–128.

contributed seven archbishops of Dublin, whilst Christ Church produced none, a sure sign that the older cathedral had been outshone by the new model.

3.3

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DOWNPATRICK: THE BENEDICTINE CATHEDRAL

Downpatrick and Bangor: competition for the see

TRADITION HAS it that the first church for the diocese of Down was established by St Malachy when he divided his bishopric of Connor and Down, to which he had been promoted in c. 1124. Malachy appointed a fellow reformer to the diocese of Connor and retained Down as his own diocese. According to Bernard of Clairvaux, Malachy instituted a convent of regular clerics (*de filiis suis conventum regularum clericorum*) to administer the cathedral of Down in 1137.²⁷ Scholars have hotly debated this statement, as some believe that the first Augustinian houses to be established in Ireland were in c. 1148 as recorded in the annals.²⁸ Gwynn and Hadcock were convinced that Malachy established the canons regular at Bangor, from where he administered his diocese, but also at other places in Ireland before 1137, such as Gill abbey in Cork and Cong in Mayo.²⁹ Most recently, Marie Therese Flanagan weighed in on the debate, and, while erring on the side of caution, she concluded that 'although it has been suggested that when Malachy refounded the abbey of Bangor in 1124 he introduced the Augustinian rule, there is no reliable evidence to that effect'.³⁰ Certainly it would

²⁷ *Vita S Malachiae*, c.xiv; Bernard, *Life & death of St Malachy the Irishman*, 48.

²⁸ *Chron. Scot.*, sub anno 1148.2, '*ocus fear ro athnuigh manchine oculus canonach riagulla hecailsi nErenn*'; K.E. Miller, 'Ecclesiastical structural reform in Ireland and Scotland', 85. Miller presents a thorough examination of whether or not Malachy established Augustinians in Ireland, at 85–92. Sarah Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine in medieval Ireland: an overview' (TCD, PhD, 1996), 17–18. E.W. Beck, 'The order of Austin canons in Ireland', *IER* 10 (1889), 974.

²⁹ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 146–7.

³⁰ *The transformation of the Irish church*, 136.

seem that by 1202, when one of the monks was elected to the archdiocese of Armagh, Bangor had become Augustinian.

The early history of Bangor and its connection with Downpatrick is important because Bangor was never granted diocesan status. This impacted on the election of bishops to the diocese of Down and created a dispute between the two communities as to which was the rightful cathedral chapter. Things came to a head in 1244 when the pope was requested to settle this dispute between the Augustinians at Bangor and the Benedictine chapter at Downpatrick.³¹ The papal letter sets out that Malachy had ruled the diocese of Down from Bangor and not from Downpatrick. The case for the community at Bangor rested solely on this point and because of this the community claimed to be the true chapter of the diocese. At the very least they believed they had a right to vote in the election of future bishops. In spite of this, Bangor was not deemed a cathedral. In fact, Marie Therese Flanagan casts doubt on whether there ever was a cathedral church at Downpatrick prior to de Courcy, since not one reference to a cathedral church at Downpatrick exists. Nevertheless, Ráith Bressail had designated Downpatrick as the seat of the diocese of Down and probably because of this the Bangor chapter lost its petition to the pope.

John de Courcy and St Patrick's cathedral, Downpatrick

JOHN DE COURCY, who was possibly trying to stamp his authority on his newly-acquired lordship of Ulster, established the Benedictine chapter at Downpatrick. The widely accepted view on the foundation of the Benedictines at Downpatrick is the one first put forward by Sir William Dugdale in his ecclesiastical history of these islands, written between 1655 and 1673. Every historian since has in one form or another paraphrased his short paragraph:

Founded *An. Dom.* 1183. For Monks and a prior from St Werburgs at Chester, but without any subjection to the church of Chester. The Bishop of

³¹ Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, no. 52; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 207; *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 161.

Down was custos and Abbot of this Monastery, in like manner as the Bishops were in the churches of Winchester and Coventry. John de Curci the founder of the monastery endow'd it with divers revenues, and tithes, among other things of all his hunting.³²

Dugdale was referencing the known charter for Downpatrick (c. 1180), which was witnessed by Lorcán Ua Tuathail, archbishop of Dublin, in his capacity as papal legate, and Tomaltach Ua Conchobair, archbishop of Armagh. It confirmed to Malachy III and his successors that they would be the abbot and the guardians, as was the case at Winchester and Coventry.³³ The mention of Winchester and Coventry (both Benedictine priory cathedrals) indicates that Downpatrick was now being established under Benedictine rule. What is also apparent from this document is that this new (and rare) establishment in Ireland was supported by both the papal legate and the primate. In another document, de Courcy bolsters the position of the new cathedral priory and provides it with extensive grants of tithes.³⁴ It was in the interests of both Bishop Malachy III and John de Courcy to ensure that Downpatrick survived as the centre of the diocese, despite opposition from Bangor. In fact, de Courcy famously went as far as commissioning a hagiographer (the well-known Jocelin of Furness) to inculcate the tradition of St Patrick at Down, which has been preserved to this day.³⁵

Not only did he establish the cathedral but also the installation of Benedictine canons at Downpatrick is said to have been at the behest of John de Courcy.³⁶ It could be that de Courcy was attempting to emulate the Benedictine cathedrals in

³² Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ii, no. 1021. A good synopsis of the establishment of the see of Down is given in M.T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy,' 157–8.

³³ M.T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy,' 165; Aubrey Gwynn, 'Tomaltach Ua Conchobair, coard of Patrick (1181–1201)', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 8 (1975–7), 231–74, at 244–6; MacNiocaill, 'Cartae Dunenses: XII–XIII céad', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 5/2 (1970), 419–20.

³⁴ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 221–2.

³⁵ Jocelyn (1175–1214), a monk of Furness, was commissioned by de Courcy to write a life of St Patrick.

³⁶ M.T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy,' 164–5.

England. It could equally be argued that the establishment of Benedictines at Downpatrick was an effort to offset the Augustinians at Bangor. Further speculation focuses on the origin of de Courcy's Benedictine chapter, since his plantation of Ulster, both ecclesiastical and lay, was, needless to say, accomplished with men from England.³⁷ Seán Duffy drew attention to de Courcy's connections with northern England, specifically Cumbria, through his maternal side and many of his tenants in Ulster were from that part of England and that many of the religious houses which he established in his lordship also reflected this Cumbrian connection.³⁸

Virtually nothing is known of the composition of the cathedral chapter of Down. Nor do records survive which detail its day-to-day administration. The first Benedictine monks of the cathedral were from St Werburgh's in Chester, and William de Ettleshall, a monk from Chester, was installed as the first prior of the cathedral church of Down.³⁹ Records of the ecclesiastical and the government administration make passing reference to Downpatrick and from these records one can be sure that throughout the Middle Ages the cathedral chapter of Down was ethnically English.⁴⁰ Because this was a monastic cathedral, it was not organised in the same way as a secular cathedral – there were none of the four square pillars. One can only assume that Downpatrick aimed to mirror its English counterparts.⁴¹

³⁷ See Seán Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation: John de Courcy the men of Cumbria', in T.B. Barry, Robin Frame and Katharine Simms, *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland. Essays presented to J.F. Lydon* (London, 1995), 1–28. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy', 154–78.

³⁸ Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation', 1–28; see also, Flanagan, 'John de Courcy', 154–5.

³⁹ J.B. Leslie & H.B. Swanzy, (eds), *Biographical succession lists of the clergy of diocese of Down* (Enniskillen, 1936), 17.

⁴⁰ See Leslie, *Down succession list*, 1–4, 17–18, 27–28.

⁴¹ Joan Greatrex, 'Prosopography of English Benedictine cathedral chapters: some monastic *curricula vitae*', *Medieval Prosopography* 16/1 (1995), 1–26.

3.4

SS PETER AND PAUL'S CATHEDRAL AT NEWTOWN TRIM, DIOCESE OF MEATH⁴²***The early years: Clonard and Newtown Trim***

NEWTOWN TRIM is the most perplexing of the three monastic cathedrals because its status as such is hugely questionable. It is not an ancient ecclesiastical site from which a cathedral emerged during the transformation of the twelfth century. In fact there is no evidence whatsoever to show that officialdom chose to transfer the mother church of the diocese from Clonard to Newtown Trim, and yet this is what appears to have happened.

Clonard was chosen at the Synod of Ráith Bressail (1111) as the diocesan centre for Meath. Its early history, from the time of its patron saint, Finnian of Clonard (470–549), up to its emergence as the dominant church in Meath, is well known.⁴³ Prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, St Peter's abbey of the Augustinian canons regular at Clonard acted as the mother-church for the diocese. Nonetheless, in 1183, the colonists established a second Augustinian house in Clonard, St John's Priory, for Victorine canons. The rule of St Victor set the English canons apart from their fellow canons regular at St Peter's and its establishment was doubtless an effort on the part of Hugh de Lacy and his cohort

⁴² Whilst St Patrick's, Downpatrick and Christ Church, Dublin have been the focus of academic studies, Newtown Trim has received very little attention and as such it warrants an extended explanation. A more in-depth version of this can be found in Rhiannon Carey Bates & Tadhg O'Keeffe, 'Colonial monasticism, the politics of patronage, and the beginnings of gothic in Ireland: the Victorine cathedral priory of Newtown Trim, Co. Meath' in *Journal of Medieval Monasticism* (forthcoming – 2017).

⁴³ Ráith Bressail is the most important ecclesiastical synod of the twelfth century, at which the dioceses of Ireland were first created. *AFM*, sub anno 1111.5; *AU*, sub anno 1111.8; *AI*, sub anno 1111.3; *Ann. Tig.*, sub anno 1111. Kathleen Hughes, 'The cult of St Finnian of Clonard from the Eighth to the Eleventh Century', *IHS* 9/33 (Mar., 1954), 13–27. Anthony Cogan also deals with the early history of Clonard in his multivolume book, *The diocese of Meath, ancient and modern*, i (Dublin, repr. 1992), 7–20.

to wrench the diocesan church from the native Irish clergy in St Peter's abbey. Neville Hadcock was convinced that Hugh de Lacy brought 'other Augustinian canons of his own nationality into Meath' between 1183 and 1186, which seems credible given that St John's priory is believed to be a daughter house of St Thomas's abbey in Dublin, which was itself an Anglo-Norman foundation.⁴⁴ Hadcock neglects (or at least glosses over) the issue of a cathedral church for Clonard prior to the invasion and assumes that Newtown Trim was the seat of the later diocese of Meath.⁴⁵ Sarah Preston, who completed her doctoral thesis on the Augustinians in Ireland, is of the impression that the canons regular of the abbey of St Peter formed the chapter of Meath in the twelfth century.⁴⁶ The pre-reform dioceses were probably administered to by the bishop's *familia*, who were invariably monastic at that time. This quasi-chapter arrangement is potentially what existed at Clonard prior to the formal introduction of cathedral chapters along the four-pillars model.⁴⁷ Considering the existence and status of St Peter's priory, it is improbable that Hugh de Lacy would have considered founding a regular house. Indeed all seven of the Victorine foundations in Ireland were created by Anglo-Normans, as opposed to the regular canons which were, in the main, established prior to the invasion.

⁴⁴ Neville Hadcock, 'The origin of the Augustinian order in Meath', 130.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 124–31.

⁴⁶ S.M. Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine', 179; see also *Reg. St Thos abbey*, i, 241–2; Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 267–8.

⁴⁷ For the pre-Anglo-Norman church arrangement see, Colmán Etchingham, 'The organization and function of an early Irish church settlement: What was Glendalough?', in Charles Doherty, Linda Doran & Mary Kelly (eds), *Glendalough: city of God* (Dublin, 2011), 22–35, 38–53; Kathleen Hughes, *The church in early Irish society* (London, 1966), 148–9; Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity in pre-Norman Ireland*, 216.

The rule of St Victor

The rule of St Victor, a branch of the Augustinian order, was predominantly contemplative and aspired to silence.⁴⁸ The canons of St Victor sprang from the abbey of St Victor of Paris founded in 1108 and were richly endowed by both royalty and noblemen alike. The abbey soon became famed for its piety and learning, and was visited by the likes of Bernard of Clairvaux and Thomas Becket. Resemblances have even been drawn between some of the Cistercian customs and those of the Victorines.⁴⁹ According to J.C. Dickinson, Victorine chapters did not flourish for more than a century, after which many seem to have assimilated with the Arrouaisian tradition. A British Library manuscript of c. 1360, listing the black canons in England, neglected to distinguish the Victorines from the regulars, which may be because, at this stage, there was little difference between the two, notwithstanding that they attended different chapters in the thirteenth century. Moreover only a handful of Victorine houses were ever established in England and nearly all of them were in the Somerset-Gloucestershire area.⁵⁰ The chief Victorine house in England was St Augustine's in Bristol, followed by Wigmore, Worspring, possibly Keynsham and Stavordale; none very remote from Bristol.

St Thomas' abbey, Dublin

IN IRELAND, eight Victorine houses were established, all in the southeastern corner of the country, where the Anglo-Norman presence was strongest. The first and

⁴⁸ See Sarah Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine: the twelfth century reform in action', *Augustinians at Christ Church*, 25 for a brief synopsis of the different sections of the Augustinian order.

⁴⁹ Naturally most of what has been written about the abbey is in French. There is, however, one English paper by E.C. Sweeney, 'Hugh of St Victor: the Augustinian tradition of sacred and secular reading revised', in E.D. English (ed.), *Reading and wisdom: the de doctrina christiana of Augustine in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame Conferences in Medieval studies, 6) (Notre Dame, 1995), 61–83. J.C. Dickinson, *Austin canons*, 78. See also Jocque et Milis, *Liber ordinis sancti Victoris Parisiensis* (Brepols, 1984).

⁵⁰ Dickinson, *Austin canons*, 86; Salter, *Chapters of Augustinian canons*, xlv, 278–9.

foremost was St Thomas's abbey in Dublin.⁵¹ St Thomas's began life as a priory and was upgraded to abbey status by at least 1192 when it was referred to in a charter of John Cumin, archbishop of Dublin, as '*in ordine sancti Victoris instituta*'.⁵² Because Victorine houses generally had abbatial status it is possible that St Thomas's was raised around this time.⁵³

The close connection between St Thomas's and the priory of SS Peter and Paul originates with Hugh de Lacy, the first lord of Meath, and one of the first and most prominent Anglo-Norman adventurers in Ireland, but also with Simon de Rochfort, the first Anglo-Norman bishop of Meath. These connections have been discussed at length elsewhere. Suffice to say that Simon de Rochfort's first position in Ireland was at the royally endowed St Thomas's priory and, as a Victorine canon, he was the perfect candidate for the new episcopal church for Meath.⁵⁴ Equally, the connection between St Thomas's in Dublin and Newtown

⁵¹ Bridgetown priory (Cork), St Thomas's abbey (Dublin), Enniscorthy Priory (Ferns), Muckamore Priory (Connor), Newtown Trim Priory (Meath), St Catherine's Priory (Dublin), St Wolstan's Priory (Kildare) and Waterford Priory (Waterford).

⁵² Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, 55 for the papal confirmation of St Thomas's by Gregory VIII (9 December, 1187), referring to Simon, prior of St Thomas's. *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 284 for the charter of John Cumin which refers to the Victorine abbey. See also M.T. Flanagan, 'Some early Cork charters relating to St Thomas' abbey, Dublin', 141.

⁵³ For a history of St Thomas's abbey see, A.L. Elliott, 'The abbey of St Thomas the Martyr, near Dublin', *RSAI Jn.*, (1892), 25–41; Aubrey Gwynn, 'The early history of St Thomas' abbey', 1–35; Virginia Davis, 'Relations between the abbey of St Thomas the Martyr and the municipality of Dublin c. 1176–1527', *Dublin Historical Record* 40 (1987), 57–65; Flanagan, 'Some early Cork charters', 127–46. For its adherence to the rule of silence see H.F. Berry, 'On the use of signs in the ancient monasteries', *RSAI Jn.*, 22 (1892), 107–25 and TCD MS 97, ff. 121r–122r, printed in *English historical documents 1189–1327* iii (London, 2004), 751–5; see also TCD ms 97, ff. 73–95 (Hugh of St Victor's commentary on the Rule of St Augustine), ff. 95–102 (the only known version of Richard of St Victor on the same), ff. 107–48 (parts of the Victorine customs).

⁵⁴ See Carey Bates & O'Keeffe, 'Colonial monasticism, the politics of patronage, and the beginnings of Gothic in Ireland: the Victorine cathedral priory of Newtown Trim, Co. Meath',

Trim might originate from the earlier Victorine house of St Peter at Clonard, which was a daughter house of St Thomas's. It is doubtful that Newtown Trim was founded directly from St Thomas's as it did not appear to be administratively or financially dependent on the senior house, which, as Sarah Preston says, was a feature of such a relationship. The abbot of St Thomas, for example, was granted full control over St John's in Enniscorthy, which was to be governed according to the rule of St Augustine and the customs of the monastery of St Thomas.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the abbot and convent of St Thomas's had the right to appoint the prior, although they could not remove or replace a prior once instituted, nor without the permission of the bishop of Ferns.⁵⁶ This sort of administration was never exercised between St Thomas's and Newtown Trim. However, there are other examples which suggest a bond between the two monastic houses, such as Nicholas Allen, bishop of Meath (1353–67) and former abbot of St Thomas's.⁵⁷ Little is known of Nicholas. He was treasurer of Ireland (1357–61) and died while holding the episcopal office. He resigned his post as abbot of St Thomas's a few years prior to his provision to the see of Meath.⁵⁸ On his appointment to the diocese in 1353, which had been reserved by Clement VI (1342–52), the then pope, Innocent VI (1352–62), sent letters to 'the clergy and people of the diocese, to the archbishop of Armagh, and to the king', but none was sent to the chapter of Newtown Trim which suggests that the house was not functioning as the cathedral of the diocese.⁵⁹ Anthony Cogan erroneously wrote that Nicholas had been elected by the archdeacon and clergy of Meath; a statement for which

forthcoming; Aubrey Gwynn, 'The early history of St Thomas' abbey, Dublin', 34; Flanagan, 'Some early Cork charters', 142, fn. 3.

⁵⁵ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 187: 'per ordinacionem et disposicionem dictorum abbatis et conventus Sancti Thome preficiendos gubernetur secundum regulam Beati Augustini et consuetudines dicti monasterii Sancti Thome'. See also Sarah Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine', 91.

⁵⁶ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 190.

⁵⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 475.

⁵⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 264.

⁵⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 475.

he provides no authority.⁶⁰ Another abbot of St Thomas', Thomas Scurlog, can also be linked to the two places. Presumably from Scurlogstown just outside of Newtown Trim, Thomas was abbot in Dublin and prior in Newtown Trim, as well as treasurer of Ireland and vicar-general of the bishop of Meath.⁶¹

Plans to build a new cathedral

IN THE first year of his episcopate, Hugh de Taghmon, bishop of Meath (1254–82), was granted faculty by the pope, pending confirmation from his metropolitan and its chapter, to build a cathedral for the diocese of Meath, since there was none, nor was there a cathedral chapter.⁶² There is no documentary or archaeological evidence (to date) to suggest that any sort of construction work took place during this period. The acrimonious relationship between Hugh de Taghmon and his metropolitan, the archbishop of Armagh, was probably the reason why a cathedral was not built there in the thirteenth century. Hugh's election to the bishopric was opposed by Reginald, archbishop of Armagh, who claimed that it had taken place outside of the canonical period; it was therefore the primate's prerogative to provide a new bishop.⁶³ After appealing to the papal curia, the case was settled and Hugh was granted the bishopric.⁶⁴ At a synod held in Drogheda in 1262, a compromise was reached which agreed 'that it should be

⁶⁰ Anthony Cogan, *The diocese of Meath*, i, 76.

⁶¹ *CIRCLE*, PR 1 Hen. VI, § 230 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/1-Henry-VI/patent>); *CIRCLE*, PR 13 Hen. IV, § 198 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/13-Henry-IV/patent>); *Irish exchequer payments, 1326–1446*, 540; *Cal. fine rolls 1356–68*, 286. *CIRCLE*, PR 29 Edw. III, § 230 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/1-Henry-VI/patent>).

⁶² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 312. Sheehy, *Pontificia*, ii, 228, Theiner, *Vetera monumeta*, 65. Brendan Scott erroneously cites Deodatus as the receiver of the papal permission to build a cathedral, *Religion and reformation in the Tudor diocese of Meath*, 31. Throughout the whole period there never was a cathedral chapter.

⁶³ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 9, 23, 31, 39, 47–8, 72; *Cal. papal reg. 1198–1304*, 307, 312. Sheehy, *Pontificia*, ii, 218–20. See also Robin Frame 'Ireland and the baron wars', *Ireland and Britain 1170–1450*, 59–69, and Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 162–3.

⁶⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 307; *Charter rolls 1257–1300*, 214; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 72.

lawful for the archbishop of Armagh and his successors, without any cause of offence to visit the bishop and clergy of Meath and their successors'.⁶⁵ Nevertheless the animosity continued and in 1263 the *Annals of Loch Cé* record 'a great war between the comarb of St Patrick [the archbishop of Armagh] and the bishop of Meath'.⁶⁶ Later, in 1289, the bishop of Meath, Thomas St Leger (1286–1320), tried to resist future metropolitan visitations by seeking from the Holy See an exemption.⁶⁷ Considering the protracted dispute between the two sees it is improbable that the bishop of Meath would embark on constructing a new cathedral since he did not have the support to do so.

There was a second attempt, in 1397, to establish a secular cathedral for the diocese of Meath by converting the church of the current monastery of SS Peter and Paul in Newtown Trim. The document makes certain that 'although the bishopric of Meath had a certain defined diocese with two archdeaconries having cure of souls, it had no cathedral church, canons or chapter'.⁶⁸ The proposal was to extinguish the name of the monastery and re-edify it with the title of the church of Meath, instituting twelve secular canonries and prebends plus the traditional four square pillars (dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer), together with one archdeacon which would make a chapter of sixteen (presumably it was the intention to abolish the archdeaconry of Kells). The prior and convent rejected the proposition and the executors, one of whom was the abbot of St Thomas's in Dublin, were ordered to enquire into and confirm the veracity of the claims.⁶⁹ There was no further attempt to transform the priory at Newtown Trim into the cathedral church of the diocese. At the dissolution it was

⁶⁵ Walter Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 68.

⁶⁶ *ALC*, sub anno 1263.

⁶⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 506.

⁶⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 75. See Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 253, and St John Brooks, *Irish Llanthony*, lxxxvi, 93.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

one of the first monasteries to be dissolved in Meath, along with Bective and Duleek.⁷⁰

The cathedral that wasn't

THE FACT that Newtown Trim followed the rule of St Victor strongly casts doubt on its cathedral status. The Victorine aspiration for silence and the use of sign language was not a medium through which a cathedral church could function. It should be noted here that its status as a Victorine establishment is not under any doubt; the fact that St Mary's priory at Bridgetown was founded by Alexander Fitz Hugh as a joint establishment from Newtown Trim and St Thomas's, is testament enough.⁷¹

Immediately preceding the transference to Newtown Trim, the Augustinian priory of St John in Clonard was claiming to act as the diocesan church since its establishment in c. 1183, not long after the foundation of St Thomas' in Dublin (1177).⁷² It could be argued that de Lacy founded St John's as a daughter house

⁷⁰ TCD ms. 1060, fo. 80r., Newport White, *Extents of Irish monastic possession*, 270, 298, 318; John Brady, 'The medieval diocese of Meath', 40. For the procedure involved in the monastic suppressions, see Ronan, *The reformation in Dublin*, 154–5 and Brendan Scott, *Religion and reformation in the Tudor diocese of Meath*, 96.

⁷¹ Bridgetown is confirmed as being founded from St Thomas's and Newtown Trim in an inseximus and confirmation charter of Alexander Fitz Hugh, in which it says: 'If they [the canons at St Mary's Bridgetown] cannot find a proper prior among themselves they shall elect one from the houses of Sts. Peter and Paul of Meath or of St Thomas the Martyr of Dublin, from whom they received their origin and their form of order', see *Cal. charter rolls 1257–1300*, 342, taken from Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicani*, vol. 6. pt. 2, 1046, in which he has transcribed the Latin charter. See also Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 141.

⁷² See *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 241–2 that has a ratification of the churches in the diocese of Meath, which refers to St John's as the cathedral chapter of the church of Meath ('*prior de sancto Johanne de Clunard et ejusdem loci capitulum cathedralis ecclesie Midensis salutem*'). See also Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 253, in which the Llanthony charters also record 'the prior of St John of Clonard and the chapter of the same place belonging to the cathedral church of Meath'; eadem, 6.

of the newly established royal abbey of St Thomas is Dublin, of which he was a benefactor, and that he intended it to be the new diocesan church of Meath instead of St Peter's regular house.⁷³ Some accounts declare that St John's was indeed staffed by canons from St Thomas's, and although compelling, proof of this is lacking.⁷⁴ It does, however, strongly suggest that St John's in Clonard was Victorine, which would explain why Newtown Trim followed the same rule, and why Newtown Trim was closely associated with St Thomas's.

The amalgamation of St Peter's and St John's in Clonard to form the combined abbey of SS Peter and John for canons regular must have happened after the destruction of Clonard and the move to Newtown Trim in 1202. The dedication, however, never settled on SS Peter and John, often shifting from one to the other.⁷⁵ It is entirely conceivable that when Simon de Rochfort moved his seat to Newtown Trim he took with him the dedication of St Peter in order to also transfer the rights and status from (the now destroyed) St Peter's in Clonard to the new church at Newtown Trim. Moreover, it would appear that since the burning of the priory of St John at Clonard, the Victorine canons had no home, and Simon, himself possibly a Victorine canon, needed staff for his cathedral, and so brought the Victorine canons from Clonard with him to Newtown Trim, thus establishing the Victorine priory of SS Peter and Paul. This also explains why the Clonard priory of SS Peter and John was staffed by native Irish canons regular while the priory at Newtown Trim was staffed by English canons.

⁷³ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, xiii, 6, 7, 8.

⁷⁴ Sarah Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine', 179.

⁷⁵ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 163. See also *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252–84, 111 where in 1260 'the prior and convent of St John of Clonard, in the diocese of Meath', request license to elect since 'the death of N[---], late abbot of their poor little house'. See also, *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252–84, 114, where in 1261, the king confirmed the election 'lately made in the church of St Peter of Clonard of Brother Eugenius'. However, there are occasions when the monastery is referred to by its correct name, see *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252–84, 551, where the 'prior and the convent of the monastery of St Peter and St John of Clonard, of the order of Augustinians' notify the king of the death of their abbot. See also *Cal. patent rolls 1327–30*, 530.

Regardless of intention, the religious house at Newtown Trim never received recognition as a cathedral, nor was it ever referred to as one, except for a single document which states, 'St Peter at Novimidia near Trym, the cathedral church of Meath', and which Hugh Jackson Lawlor, the editor of an early calendared version of Archbishop Fleming's register has proved to be a forgery.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the dedication of Newtown Trim to both SS Peter and Paul may be a modern misunderstanding of medieval sources.⁷⁷ There are merely two occasions in which the priory is referenced in terms of both saints, when compared with the number of times it is referred to as the priory of St Peter. The first instance is in a confirmation charter of Edward I confirming the rights of Bridgetown priory.⁷⁸ The second reference is also a confirmation charter, of Edward III, in frankalmoin to 'the church of St Peter and St Paul *de novo loco*, Atrum [Trim]'.⁷⁹ These are the only two known instances when both saints are mentioned in relation to this religious house. A single occurrence might be explained as a mistake on the part of the editor of the printed version of the roll, but two references are enough to suggest otherwise.

Editorial errors in the printed register of St Thomas's can be deceiving. For example, the editor, J.T. Gilbert, erroneously translated, 'canonici Sancti Petri de Novo Loco, apud Trum', as the 'priory of SS Peter and Paul of canons regular at Newtown, near Trim'.⁸⁰ The original Latin does not refer to Saint Paul, nor does it suggest that Newtown Trim was comprised of canons regular. Furthermore,

⁷⁶ Lawlor's *reg. Fleming*, 127–8.

⁷⁷ See for example *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 97, 190; See also A. Cogan, *The diocese of Meath: Ancient and modern*, 20, 46–7; J. Healy, *History of the diocese of Meath*, 75, 100–1; John Brady, 'The cathedral and chapter of Meath', *IER* 52 (1938), 286–7; idem, 'The medieval diocese of Meath', *Ríocht na Midhe* 1/3 (1957), 35–6; Neville Hadcock, 'The origin of the Augustinian order in Meath', *Ríocht na Midhe* 3/2 (1964), 130.

⁷⁸ *Cal. charter rolls, 1257–1300*, 342, taken from Dugdale, *Monasticon*, vol. 6, pt. 2, 1046.

⁷⁹ *Cal. patent rolls, 1327–30*, 530.

⁸⁰ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, i, 40.

there is not one entry in the whole printed text referring to the priory as the cathedral of Meath; it is always the priory (or church) of St Peter.⁸¹ There is a second discrepancy, found in the index to the register, which is again deeply misleading. Simon de Rochfort is listed in the index as archdeacon of Meath, which would suggest that his promotion to the bishopric resulted from the office he previously held. Prior to de Rochfort's appointment to the bishopric in 1192, the archdeacon of Meath was Ralph le Petit (Parvus) who held the post from at least 1172, the year in which Hugh de Lacy was granted Meath by Henry II.⁸² There never was an archdeacon named Simon de Rochfort, but there was an archdeacon called Simon de Burford (c. 1225–40).⁸³ He witnessed a charter in 1235 between Robert Tel and William of London along with his colleague, Adam Parvus, archdeacon of Kells.⁸⁴ It is probable that Simon de Burford is son of Master Richard de Burford who was witness to some of the early grants to St Thomas's abbey.⁸⁵ Gilbert makes a similar error in his edition of *The chartularies of St Mary's abbey, Dublin*, in which Richard de Bureford is confused for Simon de Rochfort in the index to the chartularies.⁸⁶

⁸¹ For some references to St Peter's priory see *Reg. St Thos abbey*, i, 344 'Domino Henrico, Dubliniensi electo, W., priore sancti Petri de Nova Midia (Master Henry, elect of Dublin, W., prior of St Peter of New Meath), see also 40, 45, 178, 264–6. The papal taxation of c. 1302 also refers to St Peter's priory, see *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–07*, 267; 20 Nov., 1374, *CIRCLE*, CR 48 Edw. III, §§5–7 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/48-Edward-III/close>), *CIRCLE*, CR 7 Henry V, §§ 87–88 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/7-Henry-V/patent>); *Cal. papal letters 1455–64*, 631; TCD ms 1060, Bishop Reeves manuscripts, taxation from the rolls of Bishop Hugh Inge (1512–21), f. 167, 168, 180. *Christ Church deeds*, 202, no. 972, refer in 1463 to the 'house of St Peter, Newtown, near Trym', see also 54, no. 107 in the same book for the same reference. See also *CIRCLE*, PR Henry VI, § 230 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/1-Henry-VI/patent>).

⁸² 'King Henry the brave, landed at Waterford with five hundred knights and among other things gave Meath to Hugh de Lacy', J.T. Gilbert (ed.), *Chartul. St Mary's*, ii, 273.

⁸³ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, 10, 276, 277.

⁸⁴ For Simon de Burford see *Chartul. St Mary's*, i, 336; *Reg. St Thos abbey*, i, 25, 30; *Cal. Gorm. reg.*, 152; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 167; *Reg. St John the Baptist*, 176.

⁸⁵ *Reg. St Thos abbey*, i, 25, 30.

⁸⁶ *Chartul. St Mary's*, ii, 504.

There are numerous lesser signs that Newtown Trim was never a cathedral, starting with its relationship to its bishop. If Newtown Trim was the cathedral of the diocese then the bishop of Meath would have been (theoretically at least) its head, as was the case with the archbishop of Dublin and the canons regular at Christ Church where Thomas de Chaddesworth, vicar-general, described the Archbishop as 'abbot of the house of Holy Trinity'.⁸⁷ There is no such supporting statement for the canons of Newtown Trim, which suggests that it was not the cathedral priory of the diocese of Meath. Be that as it may, the archdiocese of Dublin was unusually ruled by two cathedrals and is in fact an atypical example for comparative purposes. Nevertheless the canons in Newtown Trim never appear in the records during episcopal appointments, which is unusual for a cathedral chapter. In the diocese of Clogher, for example, an unnamed canon was embroiled in the disputed election of Nehemias Ó Bracain as bishop of Clogher.⁸⁸ Then there is the example of Down, in which the canons of Bangor claimed the right of the election of the bishop of Down over a century after the death of Malachy.⁸⁹ The lack of evidence in the case of Newtown Trim certainly suggests that it was never officially instituted as a cathedral and as such the rights of a chapter were never bestowed on its canons. Yet another example which casts doubt over Newtown Trim's episcopal status, is that the canons never held the custody of the temporalities of the diocese when vacant. Between 1367 and 1369 there appears to have been an interregnum in the diocese and there is no reference to the temporalities during this hiatus. Custody of the temporalities was often granted to the chapter of the cathedral church of the diocese during a vacancy in the bishopric.⁹⁰ It appears that on the whole the

⁸⁷ M.P. Sheehy, 'The *registrum novum*: a manuscript of Holy Trinity cathedral: the medieval charters', *Reportorium Novum* 3 (1963–64), 249–81, at 355.

⁸⁸ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 36.

⁸⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 207; Sheehy, *Pontificia*, ii, 259.

⁹⁰ For examples in Armagh, Ferns and Dublin, see, *Cal. close rolls, 1339–41*, 472–3; *Cal. close rolls, 1346–9*, 31, 336, 477.

king retained the temporalities of the see of Meath during vacancies.⁹¹ Furthermore, the fact that Simon de Rochfort held a synod at Newtown Trim in 1216 is not an indication of cathedral status because a synod could be located wherever the metropolitan, or the bishop, chose. For instance, in 1291, the Archbishop of Armagh summoned a provincial synod to be held at the Dominican house in Trim.⁹² In addition to this, metropolitan visitations were held at Newtown Trim, as well as many other monastic and secular churches in the diocese of Meath.⁹³

On the eve of the Reformation in Ireland, an act was passed which appropriated the church of Galtrim to Newtown Trim. It does not make reference to a cathedral, but rather a monastic house: 'at the humble supplication of the prior and convent of the monastery ... of Newtown beside Trim.'⁹⁴ Nor was it reestablished as a secular cathedral, rather it was parceled out to wealthy merchants and landowners. The extent of the possessions of the priory includes a description of the church without reference to its cathedral status, not even when an annuity is granted to the late prior, Thomas Broun.⁹⁵ All of the post-reformation grants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries refer to the late priory or monastery; there is not one grant which alludes, by any stretch of the

⁹¹ *Cal. close rolls 1349–54*, 336–7.

⁹² Watt, *The church in medieval Ireland*, 178. The synod held in 1216 discussed (amongst other things) the creation of rural deaneries. Instituting Trim, Kells, Slane, Skyrne, and Dunshaughlin. See *Wilkins Consilia*, I, 547; see also Philip Callary, 'The abbey of SS Peter and Paul, Newtown, Trim', *IER* 16 (July–December, 1920), 483–96, esp. 494–6. For an English version of the text of the Synod see Healy, *History of the diocese of Meath*, 75–7.

⁹³ *Reg. Sweteman*, 189, see also L.P. Murray, 'Archbishop Swayne's visitation of Meath (A.D. 1428)', *IER* 22 (1923), 240–6.

⁹⁴ Dean Butler, 'Some notices of the castle and of the ecclesiastical building of Trim', 232 (the act was passed in 1533–4).

⁹⁵ Newport White, *Extents of Irish monastic possessions*, 292, 298.

imagination, to a cathedral church.⁹⁶ Given the evidence, it would seem that Newtown Trim was founded prospectively as the new cathedral church of the diocese of Meath with the Victorine canons from St Peter's at Clonard, hence the dedication to St Peter. Officialdom, however, never recognised it and, probably for logistical reasons, it could never fully function as the cathedral church of the diocese.

⁹⁶ See 1537, Irish Statutes, Henry VIII; the king's grant to Francis Goston in 1608; the king's grant to Thomas Fitzsimons in 1610, again to Sir John Elliot in 1611, and to Richard Harding in 1612, John Eustace in 1613, to Sir James Ware, assignee of Sir Charles Wilmott in 1617 etc. See Cogan, *The diocese of Meath*, i, 315–7.

4. THE LATER MEDIEVAL CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS

4.1

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS

Introduction

THE ETHNIC and social origin of cathedral communities across Europe has been extensively studied in the last number of decades and the prosopographical approach has proven the most popular among academics.¹ In 1994 Barrie Dobson rejoiced that ‘never before perhaps has medieval church history been pursued more energetically – in England, in western Europe, across the Atlantic’ than it had in recent years.² Dobson was referring to the recently published *I canonici al servizio dello Stato in Europa secolu XIII–XVII. Les chanoines au service de l’Etat en Europe du XIIIe au XVIe siècle*, edited by Hélène Millet. Both Millet and Dobson recognised a vacuum in the study of the medieval hierarchical church, which they considered could be filled by a prosopographical investigation into the geographical and social origins, the education, the finances, and the

¹ To name but a few studies: R.I. Burns, ‘The organisation of a mediaeval cathedral community: the chapter of Valencia (1238–1280)’, *Church History* 31 (1962), 14–23; Barrie Dobson, ‘The prosopography of late medieval cathedral canons’, *Medieval Prosopography* 15 (1994), 67–92; Joan Greatrex, ‘Prosopography of English Benedictine cathedral chapters: some monastic curricula vitae’, *Medieval Prosopography* 16 (1995), 1–26; Diana Greenway, ‘Cathedral clergy in England and Wales: fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae’, *Medieval Prosopography* 1 (1980), 15–22; Laszlo Kosta, ‘Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)’, in *Encontro Internacional. Carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente cristão, sec. XII–XIV* (Lisboa, 2007), 13–28; David Lepine, ‘“My beloved sons in Christ”, the chapter of Lincoln cathedral, 1300–1541’, *Medieval Prosopography* 16 (1995), 89–113; Hélène Millet, *Les chanoines du chapitre cathédral de Laon, 1272–1412* (Rome, 1982); Nicholas Orme, *The minor clergy of Exeter cathedral: biographies, 1250–1548* (Exeter, 2013); Fernando Picó, ‘Membership in the cathedral chapter of Laon, 1217–1238’, *Catholic Historical Review* 61 (January, 1975), 1–30; David Spear, *The personnel of the Norman cathedrals during the ducal period, 911–1204* (London, 2006).

² Barrie Dobson, ‘The prosopography of late medieval cathedral canons’, 68.

political influences of cathedral canons across Europe, which would in turn provide a basis for a comparative history of cathedral canons throughout Christendom. In Hélène Millet's own words, 'gathered together in episcopal cities, the canons formed in fact a numerous population, well documented, present throughout Europe, a population which lent itself remarkably well to the demands of a history which wished to be comparative'.³

Barrie Dobson's study of the canons of Exeter cathedral found that most came from families of property or substance, much like their contemporaries in Germany or France, whereas the origins of those at York, he concluded, varied widely.⁴ In many cases, however, conclusions could not be drawn because there was far too little information. David Lepine warned that, in Exeter, information regarding the social origins, education and ordination of two-thirds of the chapter remains unknown.⁵ At a more general level, Lepine examined the social and geographical origins of cathedral canons in England, where he argued that in spite of the 'opacity in the evidence, it is clear that most came from landholding families, though there was a considerable variation in their status and wealth ranging from the yeomanry to the peerage'.⁶ At a cathedral such as Lincoln, one of the wealthiest in England, the local recruits made up roughly thirty per cent of the membership, indicating the importance of local recruitment despite the cathedral's attraction for the aristocracy.⁷ Extending farther out into continental Europe, Fernando Picó's study of the cathedral chapter of Laon in northern France, during the episcopate of Anselme de Mauny (1215–38), concluded that

³ Millet (ed.), *I canonici al servizio dello stato in Europa secolu XIII–XVII*, 7.

⁴ Barrie Dobson, 'The canons of York cathedral 1400–1500', in Hélène Millet, *Les chanoines du chapitre cathédral de Laon, 1272–1412* (Rome, 1982), 21–2.

⁵ Lepine, 'The origins and careers of the canons of Exeter cathedral, 1300–1455', 88.

⁶ idem, *A brotherhood of canons serving God. English secular cathedrals in the later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995), 48.

⁷ idem, "'My beloved sons in Christ'", 94.

the chapter was by and large recruited from the local area, but decreasingly so.⁸ Nevertheless, this was a prosperous chapter 'jealous of its privileges, resentful of efforts to diversify its membership with the addition of absentee members'.⁹ Stephanie Mooers Christelow warns of the dangers when trying to distinguish the ethnic origin of cathedral canons generally. She says that it was not always the case that a place name as a surname indicated their geographic or ethnic origin but rather where the canon had been educated. Citing Thurstan and Audoin 'of Bayeux' as examples, Christelow shows that both were born in the former *pagus* of Bessin but trained at Bayeux.¹⁰ Whilst scholars of European cathedrals should take heed of this caveat, it is less relevant in the Irish case where no university existed and where many canons travelled abroad to England and Europe for their tutelage.¹¹

Problems and possibilities for a prosopography of Irish cathedral canons

Ireland, unfortunately, suffers from a lack of record sources and the details which one finds in an English or continental European diocese are simply not available here. This has probably hampered the efforts to produce a prosopography of Irish cathedrals, which as yet has only been partially attempted by Michael Haren and Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin.¹² Furthermore, a study into the composition of Irish cathedral chapters is without doubt weighed down

⁸ Picó, 'Membership in the cathedral chapter of Laon, 1217–1238', 29.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Stephanie Mooers Christelow, 'Chancellors and curial bishops: ecclesiastical promotions and power in Anglo-Norman England', in Christopher Harper Bill (ed.), *Anglo-Norman studies*, 22. *Proceedings of the Battle Conference, 1999* (Woodbridge, 2000), 52.

¹¹ See below, 3.5, 'Were Irish cathedral clergy an educated lot?', 170.

¹² Michael Haren, 'Social structures of the Irish church: a new source in papal penitentiary dispensations for illegitimacy', in Herasgegeben von Ludwig Schmugge & Mitarbeit von Béatrice Wiggerhauser, *Illegitimität im spätmittelalter* (München, 1994), 207–26; Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, 'Prosopographica Glindalachensis: the monastic church of Glendalough and its community, sixth to thirteenth centuries', *RSAl Jn.* 119 (1990), 79–97.

by a preoccupation with the colonial nature of Irish society, distinguishing it from its counterparts elsewhere.

Because cathedral canons tend to be less well documented than their diocesans it can be extremely difficult to ascertain the ethnic or national background of individuals.¹³ For instance, John, Gilbert and Thomas are quite common names among cathedral canons but without a surname, descriptor, or other evidence, it is immensely difficult (if not impossible) to ascertain their ethnic origin. For example, one would find among the deans of Dublin, John de Stanford in 1286, Gilbert in 1295 and Thomas de Chaddesworth in 1296.¹⁴ These men are, without doubt, of English heritage because they hold positions in a diocese controlled by the English. One would also find Gilbert Okathail, dean of Kilfenora in 1302, John O'Hara, dean of Achonry in 1428, or Thomas Okeallach, archdeacon of Elphin before 1398.¹⁵ In these instances, their surnames provide evidence of their ethnic origin. Even so, there are many other cases where no surname is given. For example, Thomas [McBlosgaigh], dean of Derry prior to 1367 is without doubt Irish, which his surname suggests. Had the record simply referred to Thomas, the dean, it might be assumed that he was of English extraction.¹⁶ In 1319, Derry had another dean called Thomas but whose surname remains elusive. It is most probable that this Thomas was Irish simply for the fact that Derry was *inter Hibernicos*.¹⁷ In other cases where the ethnic origin is more ambiguous, as at Emly where the first English archdeacon could have been either

¹³ Sparky Booker faced the challenge of establishing ethnicity by patronymics in her PhD thesis. See, for instance, Sparky Booker, 'Gaelicisation and identity in the 'four obedient shires' of Ireland, 1399–1534', (TCD, PhD, 2012), 32.

¹⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 479–80; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252–84, 521; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1293–1303, 97; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 565; *Cal. close rolls 1307–13*, 179.

¹⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 241; *Cal. papal letters 1427–47*, 73; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 179.

¹⁶ *Cal. reg. Sweteman*, 185.

¹⁷ Leslie, *Derry succession list*, 28.

Luke in c. 1194 or John in 1220, one must examine the appearance of other chapter members, in order to make an educated guess as to the ethnic origin of the chapter as a whole. In this particular case the probability lies with John whose induction as archdeacon coincides with the introduction of the first English dean and chancellor, whereas Luke is likely to have been Irish since there is no evidence for men of English ethnicity during his incumbency.¹⁸

Fourteenth-century developments

The events of the fourteenth century weakened the colony and increased the divide between the two nations. The Bruce invasion (1315–18) was, claimed one historian, ‘the most decisive three years in Irish history since Strongbow arrived’¹⁹ because it ushered in a new era of Gaelic resurgence. Edward II reacted to the widespread support for the Scots by requesting that no native Irishman be promoted to the position of archbishop or bishop during the turbulent times unless they received royal assent.²⁰ Both the archbishop of Armagh, Nicol Mac Máel Ísu, and the bishop of Down, were accused of having made constitutions which prohibited the admission of any clerks born in England into the religious houses in those dioceses.²¹ In Kilkenny in 1311, at a meeting of magnates, all religious orders within the colony were forbidden to receive any but Englishmen into their ranks.²² The Irish Remonstrance of 1317 has been viewed as an early statement of Irish national identity. The document, which was sent to Pope John XXII, was essentially an appeal for papal support against English rule. It stressed the discrimination that the Irish suffered and the abuses

¹⁸ For the appearance of the cathedral dignities at Emly see Seymour, *Clergy of Cashel and Emly*; Leslie, *Leighlin succession lists*, 64; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, esp. 63, 64, 89, 230, 451, 475.

¹⁹ Edmund Curtis, *A history of medieval Ireland from 1086 to 1513* (Oxon, repr. 2012), 197. For further information on the Bruce’s in Ireland see Sean Duffy (ed.), *Robert the Bruce’s Irish wars*.

²⁰ Rymer, *Fædera*, 3, 616–17.

²¹ Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 198.

²² Fitzmaurice & Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province*, xxiv.

of the English. In terms of the Irish church, the Remonstrance insisted that because of the English:

the bounds of the church have been so far restricted, curtailed, and cut down that some cathedral churches have been forcibly despoiled of a half of their lands and possessions and even more, while nearly every liberty of the church has been by these same persons cast adrift. For bishops and dignitaries are summoned, arrested, taken and imprisoned without respect by the king of England's ministers in Ireland; and though they suffer repeated and serious wrongs of this kind they are so overpowered with slavish fear that they in no wise dare to intimate them to your Holiness.²³

The Black Death – one of the most severe of the crises of the fourteenth century – led to universal population decline, drastically altering the composition of the clergy across Latin Christendom. In the fragmentary *registrum* of Clogher, the plague is said to have almost completely depopulated the diocese.²⁴ In Waterford the epidemic was attributed to the just indignation of God, which had been provoked by the ‘abomynable trade of horedome’.²⁵ In Ireland generally, many clerics from settler families found opportunities to return to England and Wales where positions in more lucrative benefices awaited. Virginia Davis’ study of Irish clerics in the English ordination lists revealed an increase in the numbers of Irish men seeking ordination in England after the Black Death.²⁶ In Ireland this period coincided with a shrinking of the control of the Dublin government, which reduced the opportunities for English clergy in Ireland. Davis concluded that ‘the continued decline of the colony after the expedition of Lionel of Clarence [1361–

²³ Johannis de Fordun, *Scoti-chronicon*, Thomas Hearne (ed.) 5 vols (Oxford, 1722) 3, 906–26. An English translation can be found in *Irish Historical Documents 1172–1922*, Edmund Curtis & R.B. McDowell (eds), (London, 1943; New York, repr. 1968), 38–4.

²⁴ Nicholls, ‘Reg. Clogher’, 393.

²⁵ N.J. Byrne (ed.), *The great parchment book of Waterford. Liber antiquissimus civitatis Waterfordiae* (Dublin, 2007), 146, f. 93.

²⁶ See for example, Virginia Davis, ‘Irish clergy in late medieval England’, in *IHS* 32/126 (Nov., 2000), 152–7; Maria Kelly, *A history of the Black Death in Ireland* (Stroud, 2001), 91; Bruce Campbell, ‘Benchmarking medieval economic development’, 902.

66] may well have rendered the prospect of ministering to people there increasingly unattractive, leading to a shortfall in the number of priests needed to fill vacant positions'.²⁷

The Black Death also impacted upon many other aspects of religious life in Ireland. The number of educated clergy dropped significantly and a period of quiescence can be seen at various medieval universities in the decades immediately following 1348.²⁸ In addition, there was an increase in the holding of multiple benefices in the period following the plague; and indeed, canon law relaxed its stance and allowed this. The papal registers do not, unfortunately, record the number of benefices which became vacant as a result of the plague. Furthermore, some vacancies were not officially filled until years after the calamity. For example, in 1358 David was provided to the Augustinian priory of St Catherine in Waterford which 'became void in the time of the pestilence, that is in June 1349 by the death of Prior Philip'.²⁹ Mortality was indeed high, particularly in the Leinster region and in urban areas generally. In Christ Church cathedral, Waterford, two successive bishops, a prior and two chapter members died as a result of the plague. St Patrick's in Dublin was severely damaged too – the archbishop and the treasurer both died of plague in 1349, as did three successive deans of the cathedral; two of whom died before they could take possession: Roger Moclowe was appointed in 1348 but died before he could take possession; his successor, Hugh Earit, befell the same fate; in 1349 Matthew de Brissells died in his first year of office.³⁰ Rules regarding illegitimates and the

²⁷ Davis, 'Irish clergy in late medieval England', 153.

²⁸ W.J. Courtenay, 'The effect of the Black Death on English higher education', *Speculum* 55/4 (1980), 696.

²⁹ *Cal. papal letters (petitions) 1432–1414*, 287, 331, 346.

³⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 290; *Cal. papal letters (petitions) 1342–1414*, 412; *Fasti St. Patrick's*, 60, 68–9, 150ff. Charles McNeill (ed.), *Registrum de Kilmainham: register of the chapter acts of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem in Ireland, 1326–1339, under the grand prior, Sir Roger Outlawe, with additions for the times of his successors, Sir John Mareschall, Sir John*

canonical age of newly qualified priests were relaxed throughout the later fourteenth century, as desperate times called for desperate measures. Archbishop Richard FitzRalph was allowed to dispense sixty people with impediments – forty of illegitimate birth and twenty who were either married men or under age to hold a benefice. Likewise, in 1363, the archbishop of Dublin and the bishop of Emly were granted similar permissions. There is a rare example in the papal registers, for 1352, when the pope was petitioned for a benefice in the diocese of Ferns for one young man, 'not withstanding that he is over twelve and under fourteen years of age'.³¹

Discrimination against the native Irish was rife throughout the century as characterised by the Statutes of Kilkenny – the most draconian legislation of the period. In terms of the church, the legislation sought to restrict the inclusion of the indigenous people in the church hierarchy. It also, according to Katharine Simms, was partly an effort to curtail family monopolies and thwart the power of cathedral chapters in local church politics.³² J.A. Watt's assessment of the Statute was that it did not actually mark any major departure or radical change in policy. Rather, it was 'a codification of earlier legislation'.³³ Nevertheless, Katharine Simms notes that in the years following the enactment at Kilkenny, those Gaelic-Irish prelates who wished to form an alliance with the English administration were given very little stimulation to do so. In fact, the Kilkenny statute increased the division between the two nations where:

'Pure Irish' scholars attending Oxford or other schools in England or the English area of Ireland were suspected as enemy spies, clerical proctors entitled to take their seats in the Anglo-Irish parliament were excluded on

Larcher and Sir John FitzRichard, Grand Priors of Ireland (Dublin, 1943), xii; Maria Kelly, *The Black Death in Ireland* (Stroud, 2001), 112–3.

³¹ *Cal. papal letters (petitions) 1342–1414*, 207, 193, 231, 444, 461–2, 445.

³² Katharine Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church – regional and cultural', in Robin Frame, Katharine Simms & Terry Barry (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland. Essays presented to J.F. Lydon* (London, 1995), 182.

³³ J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 199.

the same grounds, and the see of Armagh was monopolised by men of English blood after the death of Primate David MacOireachtaigh in 1346.³⁴

The Great Western Schism rocked the universal church and it reverberated in Ireland also. The generalisation is that Gaelic Ireland supported the antipope Clement VII and Anglo-Ireland followed England in supporting Urban VI. Confusion surrounded appointments to benefices and the same is true of promotions to the episcopate. On the whole the episcopate fared worse than the clergy, there being many disputed or deposed candidates to episcopal sees, but the schism had less impact on cathedral chapters than it did on the bishops.³⁵ An exception would be in Ossory, where, over a twenty-three year period, three candidates occupied the deanery, each overlapping. Canon Leslie suggested that the overlap was probably owing to the schism in the papacy.³⁶ Katherine Walsh's study of the papal schism in Ireland concluded that it had a profound impact during the years 1379–85 but that it only really affected the provinces of Tuam and Armagh, and for a brief period Cashel. Dublin was unaffected by it because its loyalty was, understandably, firmly with the English candidate, Urban VI.

The composition of Irish cathedral chapters was distinct from that of their continental cousins, if for no other reason than ethnic or racial makeup. Katharine Simms has previously studied the ethnic composition of clergy in the western dioceses during the fifteenth century. As part of this, she examined the movement of Gaelic Irish clergy from these dioceses into English-occupied areas, remarking that it was 'quite unusual even for parishes within the English Pale to have a mixture of pastors'.³⁷ In another study of Gaelic Ireland in the later

³⁴ Katharine Simms, 'The brehons of later medieval Ireland', in Daire Hogan and W.N. Osborough (eds), *Brehons, serjeants and attorneys* (Dublin, 1990), 68–9.

³⁵ See chapter 4.10, 'The Great Western Schism and the Irish church hierarchy', 251–4.

³⁶ Leslie, *Ossory succession list*, 54; see also *CIRCLE*, PR 5 Hen IV, §§65–66 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/5-Henry-IV/patent>); PR 12 Rich. II, §49 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/12-Richard-II/patent>).

³⁷ Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church', 184.

Middle Ages, Simms commented on the number of Irish clerics who held benefices in Louth. She noted that many of these men originate from erenagh families – hereditary church officials unique to Gaelic areas. The rectory of Dunleer, for instance, considered to be *inter Anglicos*, was held by a member of the Ó Maolchalainn sept in 1450 who were the hereditary keepers of the shrine of St Patrick's bell and important figures in Armagh *inter Hibernicos*.³⁸ Simms, and more recently Sparky Booker, cite numerous other examples in order to show that prominent ecclesiastical families of Armagh *inter Hibernicos* were also serving *inter Anglicos* in the late fifteenth century.³⁹ The movement of Gaelic Irish clergy into areas under English control was not special to the province of Armagh. Even in the province of Dublin, native Irish clergy were accruing in numbers.⁴⁰ At a provincial council held in the cathedral church in Kilkenny at around the same time as the parliament of 1366 that promulgated the Statutes of Kilkenny, Archbishop Thomas Minot acknowledged the large number of native Irish clergy administering in his archdiocese. His legislation took measures to deal with clergy living in Irish-controlled areas; they were only to be ordained by English bishops and, to ensure their support, they were required to take an oath of loyalty prior to ordination.⁴¹ The purpose of the council was to introduce

³⁸ Sparky Booker has recently updated Simms work on this subject. See Sparky Booker, 'Irish clergy and the diocesan church in the 'four obedient shires' of Ireland, c.1400–c.1540', *IHS* 39/154 (2014), 179–209, at 187. The anglicised dioceses in the province of Armagh were Meath, Down and Connor. The Gaelic Irish dioceses were Raphoe, Derry, Clonmacnoise, Kilmore, Dromore, and Clogher.

³⁹ Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church', 184; eadem, *From kings to warlords; the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1987), 170; Sparky Booker had recently updated Simms work on this subject. See Booker, 'Irish clergy and the diocesan church', 187.

⁴⁰ Sparky Booker's PhD thesis has a section explaining the Pale, as well as the four counties: see Sparky Booker, 'Gaelicisation and identity in the 'four obedient shires'', 21–2.

⁴¹ Archbishop Thomas Minot was one of the eight prelates that underwrote the Statutes of Kilkenny. For the provincial council see Aubrey Gwynn (ed.), 'Provincial and diocesan decrees of

legislation which would support the Statutes of Kilkenny as well as addressing the problems in his own province.

Identity in the four provinces

The diocese of Armagh was divided between the church which was *inter Hibernicos* and the church *inter Anglicos*. The cathedral of the archdiocese was situated amongst the Irish, suggesting that the diocesan chapter was itself Irish. The archbishop's response to the colonial administration's writs would indicate that the chapter was indeed made up of indigenous Irish, as is indicated by Archbishop Fleming in 1409, when, in returning to chancery the name of the proctor chosen by the clergy of Armagh among the English to represent them at the forthcoming parliament, he noted that:

delivery of this writ to the dean and chapter of Armagh cannot be properly executed, just as similar writs in the past were not executed because the dean and chapter are pure Irish living *inter Hibernicos* to whom the king's council is not accustomed to reveal the confidential business of the council nor ought it to do so.⁴²

This reply would suggest that a huge gulf existed between the archbishops of Armagh (most of whom were Anglo-Irish) and the diocesan chapter which lay *inter Hibernicos*. Watt, however, has previously shown this not to be the case; that, in fact, the archbishops of Armagh tended to work in conjunction with the chapter of the cathedral, rather than in mutual isolation. In some cases, the archbishop employed Irishmen to act as his proctor on metropolitan visitations, as well as on trips to Rome.⁴³ The Armagh diocesan chapter was mainly Irish, and very few men of English extraction served as chapter members right up until the

the diocese of Dublin during the Anglo-Norman period', *Archiv. Hib.* 11 (1944), 31–117, at 36–37, 90–2; See also, Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 205.

⁴² *Lawlor's reg. Fleming*, 118; TCD MS 557/2, p. 359; Watt's assessment of the relationship between the two nations as it played out in the Armagh chapter is discussed in his essay, 'The medieval chapter of Armagh cathedral', 219–48, 223.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 223–6.

dissolution.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the archdeacons of Armagh were mostly English. This may be because in Armagh the archdeaconry was not an elective office, but rather in the gift of the archbishop, nor was the archdeacon permitted as a member of the chapter. Only one Irish archdeacon is recorded for the whole archdiocese, William Omulchrey, who was appointed by a papal provision in 1398.⁴⁵ In the thirteenth century, the chapter mainly consisted of Englishmen, but by the fourteenth century, this trend reversed and Irishmen far outweighed any English. This fits nicely with the broader view that the thirteenth century was a period in which the Anglo-Norman influence was at its height and the fourteenth century which saw a movement towards Gaelic resurgence.⁴⁶

In contrast to the archdiocese of Armagh, the chapter of the archdiocese of Dublin was comprised of Englishmen and has been called by one historian 'a tenth English secular cathedral'.⁴⁷ This is to be expected since the cathedral was located within the stronghold of English administration in Ireland. Because of its location, many of the members of St Patrick's (including the archbishops) were also in the employ of the government.⁴⁸ Where one does find the indigenous Irish is in the former diocese of Glendalough, which was united to the see of Dublin in 1185 (although annexation did not actually take place until c. 1212). The distribution of Gaelic Irish clerics has been remarked upon by both Michael Haren and Sparky Booker in their studies of the Irish clergy in the fifteenth

⁴⁴ Even in the fifteenth century, Aubrey Gwynn points out that the chapter consisted of Irishmen. See Aubrey Gwynn, *The medieval province of Armagh*, 79.

⁴⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 178.

⁴⁶ Mary Ann Lyons surveys the archdeacons in fifteenth century Kildare, where she concluded that the office was open to men of both nations. See Mary Ann Lyons, *Church and society in Co. Kildare*, 70. H.A. Jeffries study of sixteenth century Meath found that the archdeacons were often from Gaelic Irish backgrounds because there was a general lack of Englishmen in the area at that time. See Jeffries, *Priests and prelates of Armagh in the age of reformations, 1518–1558* (Dublin, 1997), 90.

⁴⁷ G.J. Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Mary's Limerick', 87.

⁴⁸ See below, 4.8 'Careerist bishops in the government administration', 242–7.

century.⁴⁹ The archdiocese of Cashel presents the most balanced combination of the two ethnicities, where an Englishman could succeed an Irishman in any one of the four dignities. For example, the treasurership in Cashel alternated between the two nations: Reginald, an Englishman and treasurer of Cashel, was succeeded by John O'Grady, an Irishman, who was in turn succeeded by Alan Ohachern, another Irishman, who was followed by Richard FitzStephen an Englishman.⁵⁰ In the latter part of the fourteenth century, in the heartland of Desmond, the Limerick cathedral chapter boasted at least five FitzGerald's – no doubt members of the Geraldine earls of Desmond.⁵¹ In Tuam very few Englishmen were members of the cathedral chapter, which is predictable given that the vast majority of the whole province of Tuam was outside of the control of the English colony.

4.2

ECCLESIASTICAL MONOPOLIES AND DISPENSATIONS *de defectu natalium*

THE LARGE numbers of illegitimate children being born across Latin Christendom compelled the church to address its strict attitude against allowing them entry into clerical orders. From the pontificate of Urban II (1088–99) the church created a system of dispensations enabling illegitimate sons, who would otherwise be excluded, to enter into an ecclesiastical career. It did this by

⁴⁹ Haren, 'Social structures of the Irish church', 211; Booker, 'Irish clergy and the diocesan church in the 'four obedient shires'', 179–209.

⁵⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 316; *Cal. patent rolls 1307–1313*, 275; Seymour, *Clergy of Cashel and Emly*, 25. See also J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations*, in which he says 'the Cashel chapter was apparently of mixed national composition', 74.

⁵¹ Maurice, son of Peter of the Geraldines, archdeacon of Limerick (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 58); John de Geraldinis, archdeacon of Limerick, (*Cal. papal letters, 1417–31*, 518); John de Geraldinis, chancellor of Limerick (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 346); Thomas, son of John de Gaealdinis (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 429); Gerald FitzMaurice de Geraldinis (*Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 107).

introducing the impediment of defect of birth. The capacity to dispense was only entrusted to the papal penitentiary during Martin V's (1417–31) pontificate: prior to this it could only be performed by the pope.⁵² Three types of dispensations to illegitimate clerics could be granted: the *de defectu natalium* (the defect of birth) allowed the petitioner to be ordained to major orders and to attain up to three benefices with pastoral care. The second form, dispensation *in prima forma*, was granted to supplicants who were at the beginning of their ecclesiastical career, and the third form, *de uberiori*, referred to further graces and allowed the petitioner to obtain additional benefices.⁵³ Bishops were permitted to dispense illegitimate men for entry into lower orders, reserving the power of dispensation into higher orders for the pope.⁵⁴ On occasion, the pope might grant such power to bishops and archbishops, as was the case in 1343, during the period of the plague, when Pope Clement VI granted to John, archbishop of Cashel, 'faculty to dispense twelve Irishmen of illegitimate birth, so that they may be ordained and hold a benefice apiece'.⁵⁵ By 1350, common law shifted and recognised that all bastards were born free, but canonically they remained ineligible for orders unless dispensed.

The lack of source material, particularly native sources, seriously disrupts thorough research in this area and the only other study of dispensations in the Irish church, produced by Michael Haren, explored dispensations *in uberiori forma* in the later fifteenth century in the eastern dioceses, where sources are

⁵² For an introduction to the sources of the papal penitentiary see C.H. Haskins, 'Sources for the history of the papal penitentiary', *The American Journal of Theology* 9/3 (1905), 421–50.

⁵³ For further explanation of the different forms of dispensations see H.C. Lea, *A formulary of the papal penitentiary in the thirteenth century* (Philadelphia, 1892); Kirsi Salonen & Jussi Hanska, *Entering a clerical career at the Roman Curia, 1458–1471* (Burlington, 2013), 38–41. See also below, A.2 'Dispensations for plural benefices', 268–3, which lists dispensations granted to hold more than one benefice. In some cases the value is unknown and the total number of benefices per applicant.

⁵⁴ Emile Friedbert (ed.), *Corpus iuris canonici*, vol 2, (Graz, 1879–91), 977.

⁵⁵ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 279; *Cal. papal letters 1343–44*, 136.

more plentiful. The sparse survival of records in Ireland is a massive obstacle when one considers the fact that canon law stipulated that bishops could dispense from the irregularity of the defect of birth as far as the lower orders were concerned and without pastoral duties. Papal dispensation was required for orders from subdeacon upwards and positions which came with pastoral care. This means that a vast number of bishop's dispensations will never be known because the records are no longer extant.

Haren's pioneering prosopographical analysis of the later medieval Irish church presents rather curious results. Between 1450 and 1524, only two per cent of petitioners were from the Dublin diocese. Haren suggested that those with Gaelic Irish names (mainly recognised as those with the prefix 'O' or 'Mac'), are in fact belonging to the former diocese of Glendalough, and one of whom, a MacDowell, gives his diocese, under the year 1524, as Dublin *alias* Glendalough.⁵⁶ In the case of Dublin, only those who have English or anglicised names (about half of the total) can be taken as 'of Dublin', whilst the other half who bear Gaelic names are likely to be clerics or aspirant clerics from the archdeaconry of Glendalough active or hoping to make a career in the Dublin diocese.⁵⁷ Likewise, in the diocese of Meath, just under half of the petitioners presented with English surnames, reflecting, to some extent, penetration of the diocese of Meath by Gaelic clerics. In Kildare, the picture is somewhat different where only four per cent of petitioners have surnames of English origin. Overall, however, Haren's thesis rests on the suggestion that Gaelic clerics, if we assume their 'parvenu' status, were emigrating to the more wealthy dioceses under the control of the English. Whilst these statistics appear quite stark, particularly in the case of Kildare, they should not be used to assume that most of the clergy of Kildare, for instance, was Irish in the latter part of the fifteenth century, only that those applying to the papal penitentiary for dispensation over illegitimacy were

⁵⁶ Haren, 'Social structures of the Irish church', 211.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

on the whole Irish. Haren's evidence is indeed in keeping with the results of study of the annates of the fifteenth century in which over four fifths of the entries in respect of benefices in Kildare have Gaelic names. His results, however, represent a mere ten per cent of dispensations; notwithstanding that these are some of the richest and most populous dioceses in the country. The other ninety per cent represent the largest part of the country, that which is outside of the king's jurisdiction.

The area outside of crown control was neither culturally nor politically homogeneous. Dioceses which had been heavily affected by the Anglo-Norman settlement, such as Ossory, Waterford, Lismore, Cashel, Emly, Limerick, Cork, Ross and Ardfert, maintained in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the dioceses those families who originated in that settlement. In Tuam and Annaghdown, where the de Burgo family penetrated, they became indistinguishable from the surrounding Gaelic culture, even acquiring a Gaelicised name, that of MacWilliam. Those dioceses in western Ulster – Armagh, Clogher, Kilmore, Derry, Raphoe – remained wholly Gaelic, racially, culturally, politically and ecclesiastically. In her doctoral thesis, Sparky Booker assesses the distribution of Irish clergy in the diocese of Meath in the fifteenth century. Her analysis noted that much of the western part of the diocese was inhabited primarily by Irish people who were themselves served by Irish clerics. Nevertheless this divide was constantly shifting and not so sharply defined.⁵⁸ The extent to which the results of the later part of the fifteenth century agree with the results of this study form the basis of the next section.

Haren's study can be used as a comparative tool for this thesis bearing in mind of course that the later fifteenth century benefits from a far greater amount of source material, which allows for a more accurate reading. The main source for dispensations for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are the Lateran and

⁵⁸ Sparky Booker, 'Gaelicisation and identity', 116–7.

Vatican Registers (*Registra Lateranensis* and *Registra Vaticana*), printed in summary translation as the *Calendar of papal registers*.⁵⁹ Haren's study avails of the registers of Supplications, which consist of the Lateran Briefs (*Brevia Lateranensia*) and other beneficiary material from the fifteenth century and the registers of the Sacred Penitentiary.⁶⁰ Nevertheless the paucity of source material for the earlier period is not a serious impediment for a comparative study.

Luke McNerney's recent monograph examines clerical and learned lineages of county Clare in the fifteenth century. Like Haren, McNerney notes high rates of illegitimacy among clerics, especially in the diocese of Kilfenora, which he finds surprising.⁶¹ But the high proportion of illegitimates in Kilfenora is matched by those in Killaloe and leads McNerney to conclude that these dioceses are not anomalies to be explained by their geographical remoteness and the dominance of clerical kindreds. He reckons that a high proportion of clergy in Ireland, and up to half of the clergy in Gaelic areas, were sons of clerics.⁶² Hereditary succession is another widespread feature in later medieval Ireland, where the transmission of professional offices was so entrenched. Again, relying on Kilfenora as an example of hereditary succession, McNerney reinforces the point. The Uí Chonnmhaigh clan maintained their status in the diocese of Killaloe because they had a relation who attained the episcopacy to enlarge the family interest.⁶³

⁵⁹ *Calendar of entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland, papal letters* eds. W.H. Bliss et al. (London & Dublin, 1893–). Armagh benefits from archbishops registers (Milo Sweteman, 1361–80; Nicholas Fleming, 1404–16; John Swayne, 1418–39; John Prene, 1439–43; John Mey, 1443–56; Octavian de Palatio 1478–1513; George Cromer, 1521–43).

⁶⁰ For further information on the Vatican Archives as a source of the study of the Irish church see: Michael Haren, 'Vatican archives as a historical source to c. 1530', *Archiv. Hib.* 39 (1984), 3–12.

⁶¹ Luke McNerney, *Clerical and learned lineages of medieval Co. Clare: a survey of the fifteenth-century papal registers* (Dublin, 2014), 98–9.

⁶² *ibid.*

⁶³ *ibid.*, 186.

The results for these western dioceses fit with Haren's findings for the later fifteenth-century province of Dublin, as well as supporting the evidence presented in this chapter. Nevertheless, cronyism was not confined to the local situation. Even the pope used his influence on occasion. For example, in 1306, Pope Clement V installed his nephew, Richard de Sancto Leger, as archdeacon of Dublin, on the death of John de Havering.⁶⁴

The research undertaken for this thesis found that sons of religious men are by far the largest group seeking dispensation, where forty-nine in total are recorded; by comparison only four are from liaisons outside of wedlock and for twenty-six illegitimate men, nothing more is known – both of which could easily be masking sons of cleric-fathers. These results would suggest that ecclesiastical lineages were rife throughout the medieval period, despite efforts by the papal curia to enforce clerical celibacy. In terms of ethnicity, dispensations for illegitimacy were predominantly granted to Gaelic Irishmen. Few of Anglo-Norman origin appear to have sought dispensations, save for the handful of obvious candidates in the areas firmly within crown control, such as in Meath (Simon de Burford, Philip Whyte, John Freinsfield), Dublin (Peter, Thomas Faffock), Ferns (Richard Dean, Thomas Furlong, Patrick Wise), Leighlin (Walter de Gnoushale), Ossory (Walter Fyll, Peter Mauveisin, Nicholas de Wich).⁶⁵ Where the two nations divide is less stark, as in the province of Cashel, dispensations for illegitimacy are only granted to Irishmen, except for possibly Waterford where William, bishop of Waterford is granted dispensation in 1255 and Framund le Brun, archdeacon of Waterford is dispensed in 1265.⁶⁶ This mix of ethnicities would seem to suggest that the province of Cashel was a zone of interaction between the two nations.

⁶⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 17; *Cal. close rolls 1327–30*, 486–7.

⁶⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 69, 93, 167, 355; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 32, 384, 417, 418; *Cal. papal petitions 1432–1419*, 468–573; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 377; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 127, 146.

⁶⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 313, 389.

What the dispensations do not reveal is the extent of family monopolies of ecclesiastical offices within Irish cathedral chapters. This is most apparent in Tuam and Armagh where 'noble' Gaelic families can be seen to hold multiple offices within the cathedrals, yet none usurping a single office. For instance, an examination of the Armagh chapter shows that variations of the name O'Loughlin appear throughout the period – no doubt members of the same family.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, and in agreement with John Watt's findings, Armagh, unlike other dioceses, did not fall 'under the control of any one ecclesiastical lineage or group of lineages, [which is] always a danger given the close kinship structure of Irish society and the prevalence of clerical marriage'.⁶⁸ That being said, two Anglo-Norman brothers succeeded one another to the archbishopric: Walter (1307–11) and Roland (1311–32) Jorz (Jorse). The brothers were from a wealthy London family who had six sons join the Dominican order. It is most likely that Walter and Roland (both papal appointees) owed their positions to their brother Thomas Jorz who was made cardinal in 1305 and who served as an envoy of Edward I and Edward II in Rome.⁶⁹ The only other diocese where this occurs is in Waterford where Walter de Fulbourn succeeded his brother, Stephen, to the episcopal see.⁷⁰

The Loughlin family name is also quite prominent in the see of Derry where two succeed to the bishopric – Geoffrey MacLoughlin (1297) and Michael McLoughlin (1319). The O'Kerrulan's recur as deans of Derry from before 1367 when Donat O'Kerrulan held the dignity. A further four O'Kerrulan's hold the dignity before

⁶⁷ *Anal. Hib.*, 9; Leslie, *Armagh succession list*, 8, 64, 84, 108, 136, 197, 211. See also J.A. Watt, 'The medieval chapter of Armagh cathedral', 230, in which he states that the O'Loughran's were 'a leading family of the church of Armagh *inter Hibernicos*.'

⁶⁸ J.A. Watt, 'The medieval chapter of Armagh', 243.

⁶⁹ *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 4; *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 92.

⁷⁰ See below chapter 4.2 'Methods of episcopal appointments', 200.

the dissolution.⁷¹ Other common family names in the Derry chapter are O'Cathan/O'Kathan and McCloskey.⁷² In the neighbouring diocese of Raphoe, records for which are extremely sparse, there is one family, MacGillabrid, which it could be said, dominates the records.⁷³ The spread of a family or clan is evident in the province of Armagh, particularly in those areas *inter Hibernicos*. The MacCawell family appear quite prominently in the dioceses of Armagh, Clogher and Derry as archdeacons, bishops, officials subcustos and prebendaries from at least mid-fourteenth century right up to the post-Reformation period, as do the Loughlin's in both Armagh and Derry.⁷⁴ In Achonry, the cathedral clergy were mainly recruited from amongst the old ecclesiastical families of Ó Clúmháin, ÓhEadhra, Mac Donnchadha and Ó Mocháin.⁷⁵

The province where family monopolies of ecclesiastical offices are most obvious is Tuam. The western province was almost entirely outside of crown control, and the place most likely to maintain semblances of the hereditary succession of the early Irish church. In Clonfert, for instance, the O'Kelly family name is spread across all of the ecclesiastical dignities where at least four bishops, two deans and one archdeacon carried the name.⁷⁶ In Kilmacduagh, variations of the

⁷¹ *Cal. reg. Sweteman*, 185; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 421; *Lawlor's reg. Fleming*, no. 147; *Leslie, Derry and Raphoe succession list*; see also Reeves, *Acts of Archbishop Colton*, 18, in which he locates the habitat of the Okerbulan tribe.

⁷² *Cal. patent rolls 1292–1301*, 248, 256; *Cal. papal letters 1305–41*, 256; *Reg. Swayne*, 383; *Annats, Ulster I*, 202–3.

⁷³ *Cal. papal letters 1417–21*, 149, *Reg. Swayne*, 111; *Cal. papal letters 1431–47*, 105; *Cal. papal letters 1427–47*, 101, 452–3.

⁷⁴ Reeves, *Acts of Archbishop Colton*, 19–20, n.s.

⁷⁵ See Liam Swords, *A people's church*, 26.

⁷⁶ Thomas O'Kelly 'of a noble family' (1259–64), Thomas O'Kelly (1347–77), Maurice O'Kelly (1378–93), Thomas O'Kelly II (1405–38), two deans (Nicholas O'Kellaich (–1398) and Thady O'Keallych (–1398)) and one archdeacon (Malachy O'Keallaich (1398) carry the name. *AU, sub anno 1263.5 Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 742; *ALC, sub anno 1377.6*; *Cal. papal letters (petitions)*

O'Loughnan patronymic recur most often and are represented by five bishops, as well as two archdeacons.⁷⁷ The deanery was dominated by the O'Donoghue clan, where five successive deans would appear (based on their surname) to be from the same family. In 1393–4 Denis O'Dubgilla held the deanery of Kilmacduagh, followed by Dermot O'Donoghue (O'Donnchuga) (–1413–18), Denis O'Donoghue (Ydonchua) (1418–41) and David O'Donchair (–1458).⁷⁸ There was also an O'Donoghue who held the treasurership in 1430 and another two who held the precentorship in 1425 and 1441.⁷⁹

In the archdiocese of Cashel, the family names that arise on multiple occasions are those of O'Lonergan and Mac Cerbaill (also Carroll or MacCarroll), both notable noble families from the Thomond area.⁸⁰ In the cathedral at Emly, where the two nations divide is less stark, there appears to be no significant repetition of family names but the appearance of names such as MacCarvill and MacBrien would indicate that the aristocratic families of Thomond held a presence in this

1432–1414, 541, *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 392; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 6; *Cal. papal letters 1431–47*, 225; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 180; Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Tuam.

⁷⁷ (Maurice O'Loughnan (O'Leyan) (1254–82), Laurence O'Loughnan (1290–1307), Nicholas O'Loughnan (previously dean) (1358–93), Gregory O'Loughnan (previously dean) (1393–5), Nicholas O'Loughnan (1395–9)) and two archdeacons (John O'Lean (O'Loughnan) (–1322) and Gilbert O'Lean (–1393). *Cal. patent rolls 1247–58*, 250, 291; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1285–92*, 759, *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 62; *Cal. patent rolls 1281–92*, 364, 381; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 591, *Cal. papal letters 1305–41*, 224, 471; *Cal. papal letters (petitions) 1342–1414*, 31, *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 538, 449, 538, 449, 450, 538.

⁷⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 449; *Cal. papal letters 1417–21*, 3, 4, 18, 367, 90; *Cal. papal letters 1431–47*, 157, 172, 387, 388; *Cal. papal letters 1447–55*, 564.

⁷⁹ Cornelius O'Donoghue holds the treasurership in 1430, Thady O'Donoghue (Odonnchuaga) held the precentorship prior to 1425 and John O'Donoghue held it in 1441. *Cal. papal letters 1427–47*, 201, 564.

⁸⁰ *Cal. papal letter 1198–1304*, 611, 253, 304; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 68, 78; *Cal. papal letters 1342–1419*, 119; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 224, 279; J.D. Seymour, *The succession of parochial clergy in the united diocese of Cashel and Emly, compiled from original sources* (Dublin, 1908), 23, 39, 30.

diocese also. In Cork, two brothers, Nicholas and Sachery O'Grady are both granted dispensations as sons of a subdeacon.⁸¹ Likewise in Killaloe, the O'Grady family name, an ancient aristocratic family whose seat and territory was at Killballyowen in County Limerick, is markedly discernable in the records.⁸² Maurice O'Grady (1343), Donald O'Grady (1411) and Dermot O'Grady (1418), canons of Killaloe appear to be legitimate since no dispensations are recorded.⁸³ Traditionally, the O'Grady's were the hereditary coarbs of Tuamgraney, and their lands had been known as Termon Uí Gráda.⁸⁴ John O'Grady, in 1364, was dispensed as the son of a subdeacon; Thomas O'Grady left his ecclesiastical office to marry sometime prior to 1397; and James O'Grady was dispensed in 1398 as the son of a deacon.⁸⁵ In 1355 the crown granted Nicholas O'Grady the archdeaconry of Killaloe which was in the king's gift due to the voidance of the bishopric.⁸⁶ It is not known whether he was illegitimate but he must surely have been part of the O'Grady clan. By the same token, Donald O'Grady was presented to the chancellorship in 1389.⁸⁷ The O'Grady clerical lineage is best represented when one considers that John O'Grady was archbishop of Cashel (1332–45), his son became the archbishop of Tuam (1365–71), his son (another John) was provided to the see of Elphin in 1407. In fact, there is quite a bit of suggestive evidence, put forward by Dermot Gleeson, of a union between the ecclesiastical families of MacCarwill and O'Grady in Tuam and Cashel.⁸⁸ Evidently, the aristocratic families made sure to have at least one or two

⁸¹ *Cal. papal letters 1342–1419*, 23, 76.

⁸² See Gwynn & Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, in which they emphasise the dominance of the Ua Gráda family in Killaloe, 141, 192–3, 204, 457–60, see also Gleeson, 'The coarbs of Killaloe diocese', *RSAI Jn.*, 19 (1949), 160–9.

⁸³ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 138; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 252; *Cal. papal letters 1417–21*, 7, 91.

⁸⁴ Gwynn & Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 32.

⁸⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 64–5, 262.

⁸⁶ *Cal. patent rolls 1354–8*, 264.

⁸⁷ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Killaloe.

⁸⁸ Gleeson, *Diocese of Killaloe*, 369–70.

members in the church, possibly as a way of providing them with a livelihood without drawing on the resources of the family estate.

The papal registers record the occasional instance in which there was no apparent effort to disguise a family's claim to an ecclesiastical dignity. In fifteenth century Ardfert, for instance, David Fitmaurice succeeded his father as 'chancellor of that church'.⁸⁹ There is also Maurice Stak, dean of Ardfert, who held the dignity while his father held the archdeaconry of the diocese.⁹⁰ In Armagh, Peter Okerballan, chancellor of the cathedral, was dispensed by the Archbishop of Armagh, Milo Sweteman, to hold the deanery of Derry as the successor of his father 'Peter Okerballan ad decanatum Derensem vacantem dispensando cum ipso non obstante quod pater suus carnalis et legitimus immediate et ultimo extitit decanus ibidem'.⁹¹ In Cloyne in 1413, William Meyer, formerly the precentor of the cathedral, was dispensed to hold the deanery of Cloyne, even though his father, John, held the archdeaconry.⁹² In some cases, the offspring of clergy did not follow their fathers into an ecclesiastical office, but no effort was made to hide their familial relationship. This was the case with John O Corcráin, a Benedictine monk and doctor of decretals of the monastery of St James, Würzburg, who succeeded to the bishopric of Clogher in 1370. His son, Thomas, was a public notary by imperial qualification.⁹³ A single reference in the justiciary rolls for 1307 mentions Matilda, daughter of Robert, the archdeacon of Limerick. This is probably the same Robert, archdeacon of Limerick, whose daughter Matilda was abducted by Adam, son of John Bretnagh, and Walter Fitzwalter.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1427–47*, 455.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *Cal. reg. Sweteman*, nos. 103; 104, 183, 184, 185, 187.

⁹² *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 445; see also, *Pipe roll Cloyne*, 122.

⁹³ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 349; *AU*, sub anno 1385.

⁹⁴ *Cal. justiciary rolls 1305–7*, 259, 450–1.

Very few families monopolised the ecclesiastical dignities in the province of Dublin suggesting that family monopolies were representative of the hereditary succession of the early Irish church. In the archdiocese itself no one family reigned supreme. This ties in quite nicely with the number of dispensations issued for that province, which is far below the numbers for the other three provinces. Family ties to ecclesiastical dignities are also less discernable in those areas influenced by English authority but beyond the Dublin province. In Emly for instance, where the ethnic makeup of the cathedral is more or less evenly divided, there is no evidence for family monopolies whatsoever. Of course, Emly was a diocese on the border between Gaelic Ireland and Anglo-Ireland and it is no surprise to find that it did not succumb to any one powerful family. This is of course all the more poignant considering that the bishop of Emly was one of two Gaelic Irish bishops to accompany the archbishop of Cashel, David Mac Carwill (1254–89), in seeking the extension of English law to the native Irish.⁹⁵ Hereditary succession may be associated with the early Irish church but the monopolization of prosperous positions was evident in the English-controlled dioceses too. For instance, in the diocese of Meath, within one of the four obedient shires, Walter de Fulborn was provided to the see despite protestations from the archdeacon and the clergy.⁹⁶ A second case, involving Walter de Brackley and Ralph le Petite, saw the clergy of the diocese succeed with their chosen candidate.⁹⁷

Family possession of Irish cathedral dignities was clearly part of the norm in later medieval Ireland, even into the fifteenth century, which is not strictly within the timeframe of this thesis. These almost hereditary lineages are not distinct to Ireland, as Laura Wertheimer's paper on 'Illegitimate birth and the English clergy,

⁹⁵ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Edward I and the proposed purchase of English law for the Irish, c. 1276–80', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 10 (1960), 111–27.

⁹⁶ *Cal doc. Ire. 1285–92*, 44–5, 92.

⁹⁷ See below, chapter 4.5 'Government administration and the election of bishops', 224–5.

1198–1348’ demonstrates.⁹⁸ As noted ecclesiastical lineages were rampant in later medieval Ireland where the same family names recur but their monopolies of certain benefices were in fact not as common as may first appear. Katharine Simms study of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages has shown that monopolies of an incumbency in a particular parish were not the norm, conclusions which were later supported by Henry Jefferies in his study of the late medieval diocese of Armagh *inter Hibernicos*.⁹⁹ Furthermore, Simms argues that the frenetic ‘Rome-running’ of the Gaelic Irish clergy in the later Middle Ages shows that benefices in Ireland were ‘fair game’ for litigation which contradicts the previously held theory that possession was heavily influenced by kinship.¹⁰⁰ It could be proposed that the papacy tacitly accepted the two nations reality of later medieval Ireland, through the proliferation of clerical lineages and illegitimate births, which persisted throughout the period. Expanding this even further, one could say that the papal curia turned a blind eye to the balancing of local interests, even when it involved clerical kindreds, but especially when it involved important benefices.¹⁰¹

Elsewhere in Latin Christendom dispensations for illegitimate children of clergymen were surprisingly high throughout the later Middle Ages, measuring, on average, over fifty per cent of all petitions to the penitentiary.¹⁰² Kirsi Salonen

⁹⁸ Laura Wertheimer, ‘Illegitimate birth and the English clergy, 1198–1348’, *Journal of Medieval History* 31/2 (2005), 211–29.

⁹⁹ Simms, ‘Frontiers in the Irish church’, 181; H.A. Jeffries, *Priests and prelates of Armagh*, 80.

¹⁰⁰ Simms, ‘Frontiers in the Irish church’, 181, n. 13.

¹⁰¹ See Katherine Walsh, ‘The clerical estate in later medieval Ireland: alien settlement or element of conciliation?’, in John Bradley (ed.), *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland: studies presented to F.X. Martin, O.S.A* (Dublin, 1988), 360, 366. See also Sparky Booker, ‘Gaelicisation and identity’, 95.

¹⁰² I.G. MacDonald, *Clerics and clansmen. The diocese of Argyll between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries* (Leiden, 2013), 167; Ludwig Schugge, ‘Cleansing on consciences: some observations regarding the fifteenth-century registers of the papal penitentiary’, *Viator* 29 (1998), 359; Haren, ‘Social structures’, 219, 224–5; Kirsi Salonen & Ludwig Schugge, *A sip from*

focused solely on the pontificate of Pope Pius II (1458–64) when studying dispensations across Latin Christendom, of which seventeen per cent belong to the *defectus natalium* group: considerably less than the average figure for the whole period as cited by Iain MacDonald. Salonen noted that most petitions originated from the populated areas near the centre of the church and that the further away one was from the Holy See, the fewer petitions occur, because geography dictated access to Rome.¹⁰³ Her study showed that in Ireland there were six hundred and fifty petitions to the penitentiary, not even a sixth of those originating in France (4412.5 cases) but twice the number of Scottish petitions (342.5).¹⁰⁴ About half of all Irish petitions to the curia were marriage petitions and thirty-three per cent were illegitimacy cases. How does this compare with other territories? Scandinavia had the highest percentage of petitioners seeking dispensation for illegitimacy (forty-nine per cent), followed by England and Wales at thirty-four per cent and then Ireland, at thirty-three per cent. Ireland was the third largest territory in this category.¹⁰⁵

On a smaller scale, Laura Wertheimer's study of the illegitimate English clergy between 1198 and 1348 found that access to dispensations was greater than previous scholarship had implied, perhaps making it a lesser impediment for an ecclesiastical career. Her results, which benefited from local records as well as those of the papal curia, suggest that sons of priests were not as large a percentage of the illegitimate clergy as indicated by the papal records.¹⁰⁶ By the

the *“Well of Grace”*: medieval texts from the apostolic penitentiary (studies in medieval and early modern canon law) (Washington, 2009), 59; Kirsi Salonen, 'The supplications from the province of Uppsala: main trends and developments', in *The long arm of papal authority*, 42–59.

¹⁰³ Kirsi Salonen, 'The penitentiary under Pope Pius II. The supplications and their provenance', in Torstein Jaritz & Kirsi Salonen (eds), *The long arm of papal authority. Late medieval Christian peripheries and their communication with the Holy See* (Budapest, 2005), 17.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Wertheimer, 'Illegitimate birth and the English clergy', 214.

time of Pope Pius II's pontificate, illegitimate English petitioners were thirty four per cent of the overall number of petitions to the pope.¹⁰⁷ In the Scottish diocese of Argyll, over two-thirds of illegitimate clerics were the offspring of religious men, and the vast majority of these were sons born while their fathers were in major orders.¹⁰⁸

4.3

CAREER PATHS – PROMOTIONS TO THE EPISCOPATE

CAREER PROSPECTS within the medieval church were influenced by a number of factors. Theoretically-speaking, a cleric could enter a whole range of ecclesiastical appointments right up to that of archbishop; reality, however, was somewhat different. The identification of careerist clerics is almost impossible because virtually nothing is known about most of the clergy of medieval Christendom, and in Ireland even less is known. The principal sources for information on the promotion of clergy in Ireland are the multi-volume papal registers which give little detail about the movement of clerics unless it is to an episcopal office. Richard Davies notes of the English episcopate in the later fourteenth and early- fifteenth centuries that at least eighteen bishops were directly from families of baronial status or higher, of whom twelve owed their promotion to the episcopate immediately to their birth.¹⁰⁹ In Exeter cathedral, the preference for appointing local canons to the episcopate was 'virtually constant' throughout the later Middle Ages.¹¹⁰ The chapter of St Paul's cathedral in London was made up of men who were not only 'senior members of the English church hierarchy, they were also usually important figures in royal or

¹⁰⁷ Kirsi Salonen, 'The penitentiary under Pope Pius II. The supplications and their provenance', 20.

¹⁰⁸ MacDonald, *Clerics and clansmen*, xxvi.

¹⁰⁹ R.G. Davies, 'The episcopate', in C.H. Clough (ed.) *Profession, vocation and culture in later medieval England* (Liverpool, 1982), 53–4.

¹¹⁰ David Lepine, 'The origins and careers of Exeter cathedral', 93.

ecclesiastical administration, men with relatively little time to devote themselves exclusively to their cathedral duties.¹¹¹ In Germany, members of the local aristocracy were appointed to canonries in an effort to form alliances to protect the autonomy and property of the chapter and the bishopric.

The career paths of those who succeeded to an Irish episcopate are obscure and in some cases indeterminable because of the lack of record sources. As a result, for a vast number of Irish clerics, especially those in the western dioceses, we know very little about their rise to the upper echelons within the church hierarchy. The information we do have, however, is not without merit. They reveal general trends concerning possible paths to the episcopal office. For instance, it is most apparent that the ideal stepping-stone to an episcopal seat in medieval Ireland, as elsewhere in Latin Christendom, was through the office of archdeacon.¹¹² Thirty four per cent of all those elevated to archbishoprics/bishoprics (excluding those translated from other episcopal sees) came from the archdeacon's office, and as one would expect, the dean's office was the second highest, with twenty three per cent of the overall figures (see fig. 7).¹¹³

¹¹¹ Virginia Davis, 'The lesser clergy in the later middle ages', in *St Pauls. The cathedral church of London*, 157.

¹¹² For a wider continental European analysis of the path to episcopal office see Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments in England*, esp. chapter six: 'Episcopal appointments in a European context', 189–228.

¹¹³ The total number of dignities succeeding to bishoprics in fig. 7 is 153; of that number fifty-four archdeacons were appointed to bishoprics. Therefore, the total percentage of archdeacons to succeed to episcopal sees was thirty-four per cent.

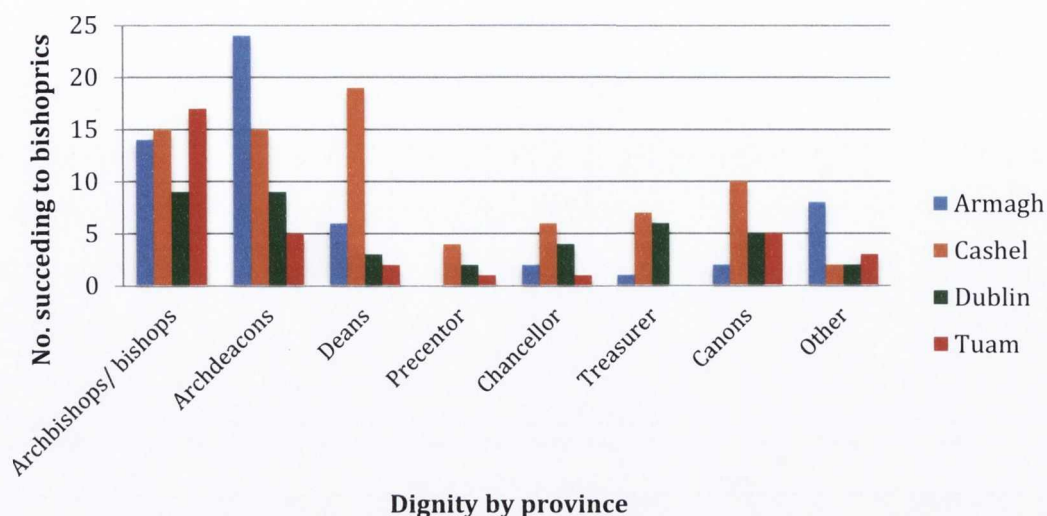


Fig. 7 Promotion to the episcopal seat (1170–1400) seat

As previously stated, because of its association with its diocesan, the office of archdeacon was not an elective office. In times of vacancies in the bishoprics the archdeaconry was in the gift of the king. In these instances, Englishmen were usually promoted to the post, most of whom were already in the service of the crown. At least three Armagh archdeacons were also in the employ of the crown – Luke Netterville, Robert Lutterel and William de Birton. An archdeacon of Meath, William St Leger, was also a crown employee prior to his appointment.¹¹⁴ Career advancement could also come from association with the bishop. For instance, in the diocese of Dublin, the five men who held the office of dean during the thirteenth century were all closely connected with their archbishop. The first dean of St Patrick's, William of London, was nephew of Archbishop Henry of London. The next dean, Richard de Gardino, was a nephew of Archbishop Luke. His successor in the deanery, Richard de Sancto Martino was a clerk of Archbishop Luke. The fourth dean, John de Sandford, was brother of Archbishop Fulk de Sandford. His successor, Thomas de Chaddesworth, had previously been a clerk of Archbishop Fulk's in 1262.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 48–9; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*: 362, 417; *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 64; *Cal. close rolls 1343–6*, 511.

¹¹⁵ Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 149–50.

The most likely method of promotion to an archiepiscopal see was as a suffragan bishop in the archdiocese. This, however, does not account for two major issues. Firstly, for approximately half the bishops for the whole country over this period, there remains no information on how they were elected to their episcopal sees, so that information regarding past positions remains elusive. Secondly, it is perhaps because of their episcopal office that records survive detailing their movement between diocesan seats. Excluding the translation of bishops, the stepping-stone to an episcopal seat was clearly through the office of archdeacon, as previously mentioned (see *fig. 7*).¹¹⁶

Do the results reveal any provincial trends? In the first place, it is evident that there was no consistency running between the provinces: each followed its own path. Just over half of all known appointments to episcopal (and the archiepiscopal) seats in the province of Tuam were by means of translation. Four of the bishops of Clonfert originated from other dioceses within the province, whereas, in Elphin, three of its bishops were translated to the province of Armagh (one to the archdiocese and two to Derry). Overall, however, the majority of those appointed to bishoprics in the province of Tuam originated from that province. In Armagh, for instance, forty-two per cent of all known archdeacons made it to an episcopal seat. Cashel, on the other hand, favoured deans as the results show that twenty-four per cent succeeded to a bishopric. In the province of Dublin an equal number of archdeacons and archbishops/bishops rose to the episcopal or archiepiscopal seat.

The most favoured dignities for a career path in the episcopate should correlate with the recorded values of cathedral dignities, in that the more prosperous the

¹¹⁶ The total number of dignities including bishops/archbishops succeeding to bishoprics in *fig. 7* is 209; of that number fifty-five bishops/archbishops were appointed to bishoprics. Therefore, the total percentage of bishops/archbishops to succeed to episcopal sees was twenty-six per cent. If we were to recalculate the number of archdeacons succeeding to bishoprics according to the new figure of 209, they would make up twenty-six percent of the total.

dignity in monetary values the further up it should be in the overall hierarchy.¹¹⁷ In the province of Armagh, there are almost no values recorded for the chancellor, precentor or treasurer, each of which scored dismally in terms of promotion to an episcopal see (two chancellors, no precentors and one treasurer). The archdeaconry was the most popular office for promotion to a bishopric and this is reflected in the diocese of Meath where four of its archdeacons succeeded to bishoprics, and where its value ranged from seventy marks in 1398 up to one hundred and twenty marks in 1411.¹¹⁸ The archdeaconry was also occupied without interruption by Englishmen. For much of the province, as at Clogher, Derry, Down, Kilmore and Raphoe, there were no values recorded for the archdeaconry. On the other hand, archdeacons in England were, according to Stephanie Mooers Christelow, usually poor and young, at the start of a career, which would almost certainly lead to a bishopric.¹¹⁹

Nevertheless it would appear that on average the deanery garnered the greatest revenue, although figures are absent for Kilmore and Dromore and no dean ever existed at Connor, Down and Meath. In the province of Cashel the values recorded for the dignities do not concur with the trends as regards the episcopal see. In most dioceses the deanery is a relatively poor dignity, recording values between ten and twenty marks, much the same as those recorded for the precentor, one of the lesser of the four dignities. On the other hand, the archdeaconry, which made up nineteen per cent of those who succeeded to a bishopric, was by far the most prosperous dignity, with values reaching as high as

¹¹⁷ See 3.4 'Revenue and the value of dignities and benefices', 160; see also below, A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

¹¹⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 187–8; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 243; see below A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

¹¹⁹ Stephanie Mooers Christelow, 'Chancellors and curial bishops: ecclesiastical promotions and power in Anglo-Norman England', in Christopher Harper Bill (ed.), *Anglo-Norman studies*, 22. *Proceedings of the Battle Conference, 1999* (Woodbridge, 2000), 51.

sixty marks in Killaloe, but as low as ten marks in many of the other dioceses in the province. Killaloe was one of the most important ecclesiastical centres in the diocese of Cashel and its links with the O'Brien's of Thomand have been discussed elsewhere.¹²⁰ This might explain why the values are far higher here than in other dioceses in Cashel. In the province of Dublin the archdiocese itself boasts high values for all of its dignities and is therefore an atypical example of Irish cathedrals. In the rest of the province, however, the archdeaconry commands the greatest value followed closely by the treasurer, which agrees with career promotion prospects, where the archdeacons made up twenty-two per cent and treasurers followed with fifteen per cent. Even so, there are discrepancies between the recorded values of dignities and the career path to the episcopate that is directly linked to the paucity of source material, which in some cases leaves no records at all.

Movement between provinces occurs mostly in Cashel and Dublin where ten and sixteen prelates are recorded as being promoted outside of the province. Of the ten in the province of Cashel, three become archbishops of Tuam (all Gaelic Irishmen), one to the bishopric of Killala, three to the bishopric of Meath, two to Ferns and one to Leighlin. Of these appointments Robert Elyot, translated from the bishopric of Waterford to Killala, was the only Englishman to be placed in a diocese under Gaelic Irish influence. Elyot was deprived of Waterford by the pope only a year after his institution, following which he was translated to Killala in 1351, at the height of Black Death. His deprivation of the see of Waterford came at a time when efforts were being made to unite the two sees of Waterford and Lismore. One can only assume his efforts had not been enough and that his replacement, Roger Cradock, was a better candidate to enforce such a union.¹²¹ The province of Dublin saw the greatest movement of bishops and

¹²⁰ See Gleeson, 'The coarbs of Killaloe diocese, *RSAI Jn.*, 79 1/2 (1949), 160–9. Gleeson & Gwynn, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 336.

¹²¹ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 339, 442.

archbishops to dioceses outside of the province, none of which was to the province of Tuam until the latter part of the fourteenth century.¹²² Of the fifteen Dublin prelates who moved outside of the province, five were appointed to the archbishopric of Armagh and three to the archbishopric of Cashel. It would appear that the most lucrative positions were gained by those who held offices in the province of Dublin which itself held the greatest promise in terms of career advancement. Four successive bishops of Ossory went on to hold episcopal office elsewhere, which would suggest that the see of Ossory was seen as an important rung on the episcopal ladder. There was even some movement between the two rival sees of Armagh and Dublin. Between 1381 and 1417, one chancellor, one treasurer and a canon of St Patrick's were promoted to the primacy of all Ireland.¹²³ Two archdeacons of Armagh, Thomas Bache and his successor William Pirron, exchanged the archdeaconry of Armagh with the precentorship of Dublin.¹²⁴

¹²² Stephen O'Bragan, archdeacon of Glendalough became archbishop of Cashel (1290), Donald, archdeacon of Glendalough, became bishop of Derry (1418), Robert FitzHugh, chancellor of St Patrick's was elected to Armagh but never consecrated (1417), John Colton, treasurer of St Patrick's succeeded to the archbishopric of Armagh (1381), Richard de la Corner, canon of St Patrick's became bishop of Meath (1231), Nicholas Fleming, canon of St Patrick's was promoted to the primatial see (1404), John Swayne, canon of Ferns was likewise promoted to the primatial see (1418), Radulphus Ó Ceallaigh, bishop of Leighlin was translated to the archbishopric of Cashel (1346), William Mercier, archdeacon of Kildare was later appointed to the diocese of Connor (1353), William Fitz John, bishop of Ossory was promoted to the archbishopric of Cashel (1317), Alexander Petit, bishop of Ossory was appointed to the bishopric of Meath (1386), John Waltham, bishop of Ossory was translated to Dromore (1400), Roger de Appleby, bishop of Ossory was moved to the united diocese of Waterford and Lismore (1402), Milo Sweteman, chancellor of Ossory was promoted to the archbishopric of Armagh (1361) and John Esmond, Bishop of Ferns was translated to Emly (1356).

¹²³ John Colton (1381), Nicholas Fleming (1404) and Robert FitzHugh (1417). *Cal. papal letters* 1396–1404, 245; *Cal. papal letters* 1404–15, 5, 126.

¹²⁴ Leslie, *Armagh succession list*, 47.

The lack of representation of the other dignities is enormously affected by the fact that not every cathedral in Ireland supported all of the four square pillars. For instance, of the scanty records which survive for the diocese of Ardagh, five archdeacons succeeded to its bishopric, yet the cathedral itself did not support three out of the four square pillars (chancellor, treasurer or precentor), and so its recruitment pool was smaller than that of other cathedrals. In Down, for example, where none of the four dignities existed because it was a monastic cathedral, seven priors succeeded to its bishopric, in turn completely inflating the overall percentage of the category of 'other'.

Career advancement in the ecclesiastical hierarchy was not, as Swanson has pointed out, meritocratic, nor could it be said that certain dignities guaranteed promotion to bishoprics or archbishoprics. Many other factors determined the makeup of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Local politics and relations with both the papal curia and the English crown were but one element. Both the supply of priests and clerics and the demand of these services are other factors in the makeup of the church hierarchy, albeit secondary to the local political and social factors.¹²⁵ Overall, Swanson concluded that episcopal career patterns depended on a succession of benefices, but that succession was not dependent to any one benefice. But it was not church involvement which led men to an episcopal see, rather the main dynamic in their promotion was service to the state.¹²⁶ This is intriguing for the study of the Irish church since many of the western dioceses remained untouched by the the English crown, although heavily influenced by the local Gaelic ruling elite.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ See Swanson, 'Clerics and careers', in *Church and society in late medieval England*, 27–88, esp. 29, 80, 81.

¹²⁶ Swanson, 'Clerics and careers', 80.

¹²⁷ Katherine Simms is the authority on Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages as is attested to by her scholarly output. See for example, Katherine Simms: *From kings to warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1987, repr. 2000). For a more general study see K.W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1972).

4.4

REVENUE AND THE VALUE OF DIGNITIES AND BENEFICES

THE FISCAL state of the medieval Irish church is not a new subject, yet very few scholars have ever attempted to write about it, probably because there are very few available sources from which to garner information. James Lydon's paper on 'The church and taxation in fourteenth century Ireland', discussed the clerical subsidy (a tenth), which the English parliament attempted to impose on the Irish church. He acknowledged the pioneering work of Maude Clarke, H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, all of whom addressed the subject of royal taxation and the Irish church.¹²⁸ Maude Clarke's researches on the Irish church and taxation explored, firstly, the proctors of the clergy and their involvement in parliament, and secondly, the parliament and its levies on the ecclesiastical authorities of Ireland. Twenty years after Clarke's work, Richardson and Sayles produced their definitive texts on the medieval parliament in Ireland.¹²⁹ Their investigations uncovered documents which had been previously unknown to scholars. In one such collection, amongst the 'Ancient Correspondence', were three letters showing the Irish clergy's reaction to Edward I's demands of a clerical tenth. Stephen O Brogan, archbishop of Cashel and John de Sandford, archbishop of Dublin, successfully obtained the consent of their suffragans to pay this new tax, but the lower clergy of each province withheld payment. In Tuam, the Anglo-Norman archbishop, William Bermingham, was unable to convince his suffragans or lower clergy to pay the tax, and instead they appealed to Rome. Aside from these innovating investigations, historians of the medieval Irish church have tended to veer away from discussions of the value of benefices or the taxation of the church simply because a detailed survey is not possible.

¹²⁸ J.F. Lydon, 'The Irish church and taxation in the fourteenth century', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee* (1964), 3–10; Maude Clarke, 'The Irish church and taxation', in M.V. Clarke (ed.), *Medieval representation and consent* (London, 1936), 33–69.

¹²⁹ H.G. Richardson & G.O. Sayles, *Parliaments and councils of medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1947); *The Irish parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1952).

In terms of overall ecclesiastical wealth in Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland, Bruce Campbell estimated (on the basis of Pope Nicholas's taxation lists c. 1303–6) that Ireland ranked third behind England and Scotland but that it had the second largest number of benefices after England, and that these benefices commanded the lowest income of all of the four nations.¹³⁰ Information regarding these benefices is absent and a detailed survey of the value of benefices in Ireland is unfeasible. Nevertheless, a certain amount of information about the wealth of the individual Irish dioceses can be ascertained through the records of the papal registers, Pope Nicholas IV's taxation in 1306, and the occasional reference in an episcopal register. The papal taxation of Pope Nicholas originated in 1288 when King Edward I obtained a papal grant for six years of the tenth or tithes of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales on the condition that he would go on a crusade to the Holy Land. In 1291, Pope Nicholas IV instructed Thomas St Leger, bishop of Meath, and Thomas de Chaddesworth, dean of Dublin, his collectors in Ireland, on matters of procedure. The church in Ireland was so impoverished when he imposed his taxation that the archbishops of Cashel and Tuam and the bishop of Kildare, pleaded that they could not meet the demands placed on them. As a result the 1291 taxation was not levied in Ireland until 1302–6, for which we have almost complete data. Hence the following discussion and conclusions must be viewed tentatively.

The economy of cathedral chapters outside of Ireland

The records for English cathedrals are much more in-depth than the scanty remains found in Irish cathedrals. Accounts, wills and inventories have survived for the households of the dignities in some of the English secular cathedrals. These documents reveal information relating to the decoration, furnishing and possessions of the richest cathedral dignities in England, whose opulent displays

¹³⁰ Campbell, 'Benchmarking medieval economic development', 902. See also J.H. Denton, 'The valuation of the ecclesiastical benefices of England and Wales in 1291–2', *Historical Research* 66/161 (1993), 231–50.

of wealth reinforced their status in society.¹³¹ The value of prebends and the income of dignities varied widely in the English cathedrals. In thirteenth-century Salisbury, there was a mix of poor and wealthy prebends. Thirteen canons had an income below £10, seventeen had incomes ranging from £10 to £20, twelve had an income from £20 to £40 and five (mainly dignities) had an income of £40 to £60. Hugh Thomas draws an analogy between the income of a prosperous knight and those canons that earned from £20 upwards, bearing in mind that cathedral canons did not necessarily have to concern themselves with food provision or the day-to-day upkeep of a home.¹³² In Scotland, the best information on the evaluation of benefices comes from the supplications of the clergy.¹³³ However, Iain MacDonald warns that these should be approached cautiously since it was in the interest of the clergy to submit a lower valuation in order to avoid the payment of annates – a tax levied by the curia upon provisions to benefices worth over twenty-four florins. The German cathedral chapters were far more independent than their insular counterparts, particularly in the wealthy diocese of Speyer where the chapter assumed a large place in the finances of the bishopric and even loaned the bishops money. This is because many within the chapter were aristocrats who had their own sources of income. The wealth of the chapter also meant that it took on the burden of taxation of the diocese right down to 1404.¹³⁴

In England and in Normandy the common fund (a communal kitty normally for the support of the residentiary canons) developed from the twelfth century onwards. This fund supplied cash or food payments for residentiary canons. In Germany around the same time oblations began to emerge – small parcels of property whose revenues could be enjoyed by individual canons. These were a

¹³¹ Lepine, *A brotherhood of canons serving God*, 121–2.

¹³² Hugh Thomas, *The secular clergy in England, 1066–1216* (Oxford, 2014), 58.

¹³³ *Calendar of Scottish supplications to Rome*, E.R. Lindsay, A.I. Cameron, A.I. Dunlop & James Kirk (eds) 5 vols (Edinburgh, 1934–97).

¹³⁴ Duggan, *Bishop and chapter*, 87–8.

particularly important feature at Bamberg and Würzburg and were created by canons or their families and tended to be hereditary. In the Rhineland and Westphalia regions, obediences developed. These were pieces of chapter property, held by a singular canon but whose revenue had to be shared amongst all of the cathedral clergy. Unlike the oblations, obediences were not hereditary. It would be fascinating to find a comparison to these forms of revenue in Gaelic Ireland where hereditary office-holding was such a feature of the medieval church.¹³⁵ Very little is known about the common fund in Irish cathedrals. In the archdiocese of Dublin, archbishop Henry of London was responsible for portioning the common fund of St Patrick's cathedral (the funds of the monastic cathedral of Holy Trinity were dictated by its rule), two parts of which were for the archbishop's use whilst a third part was for the archdeacon.¹³⁶ Howard Clarke's survey of fifteenth-century and post-medieval evidence, led him to the conclusion that the community's common fund was 'administered by a member of the chapter, chosen each year and called "proctor of the economy"'.¹³⁷ In Killaloe, about one third of the revenue of the temporal lands of the diocese went to the bishop.¹³⁸ In Limerick the communal fund consisted of all the fruits of the cathedral of Limerick 'in testamentis, in redditibus, in obventionibus, in oblationibus', the only exception being that if the bishop said the mass in the cathedral then he was allocated half the oblations. This restriction was due to the poverty of the diocese but was removed during the episcopate of Bishop

¹³⁵ Julia Barrow, 'Cathedrals, provosts and prebends', 536–67; eadem, 'German cathedrals and the monetary economy in the twelfth century', *Journal of Medieval History* 16/1 (1990), 13–38.

¹³⁶ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 34, 41.

¹³⁷ H.B. Clarke, 'Cathedral, close and community', *St Patrick's cathedral*, 68. See also G.J. Hand, 'Chapter of St Patrick's', 242.

¹³⁸ Philip Dwyer, *The diocese of Killaloe from the Reformation to the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1878), 134.

Hubert (1223–50).¹³⁹ Bishop Hubert even inspired lay patrons of the common fund, amongst whom was John FitzThomas, head of the Munster Geraldines.¹⁴⁰

Revenue of Irish cathedral dignities¹⁴¹

St Patrick's cathedral has the most complete (as well as the earliest) evidence for the value of its prebends. In 1227, the year before Archbishop Henry of London died, twenty prebends are listed which range in value from £5 right up to £80. Howard Clarke's map in *St Patrick's cathedral Dublin: a history* shows the churches that contributed to the papal tenth of 1302–3 and grouped them according to their value. Unsurprisingly, the churches closest to Dublin commanded the greatest income whereas those nearer the Wicklow mountains fared worst.¹⁴² The most striking revelation from these valuations is that the prebends of St Patrick's cathedral compare (at least at this stage) quite favourably with those of English secular cathedrals.¹⁴³ A partial fifteenth-century rental for the diocese of Clonfert was published by Kenneth Nicholls who concluded that it had to be a fragment of the lost episcopal register of Clonfert. It is unfortunate that the document does not provide enough information on the revenue of the cathedral dignities and focuses instead on tithe revenue for the diocese as a whole.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ *Black bk Limerick*, lxx.

¹⁴⁰ Hand, 'The medieval chapter of St Mary's, Limerick', 80; *Black bk Limerick*, nos. xxxv, xliii, cxl.

¹⁴¹ For comparative purposes see A.1, 'Value of dignities in each of the four provinces', 289–92.

¹⁴² H.B. Clarke, 'Cathedral, close and community', 69.

¹⁴³ Monck Mason, *St Patrick's*, appendix, viii; *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 47–8; Geoffrey Hand, 'Chapter of St Patrick's', 235–6.

¹⁴⁴ K.W. Nicholls, 'The episcopal rentals of Clonfert and Kilmacduagh', *Anal. Hib.* 26 (1970), 130–43.

The information regarding the value of Irish cathedral dignities is random and unfortunately dates and values do not always coincide. Before attempting a comparison of the value attached to each of the cathedral dignities there are a couple of more general points to be made. Firstly, it would seem that there was a standard value set for a prebend or a benefice in Ireland. On a number of occasions the curia provided individual clerics with reservation of a prebend or benefice, with or without cure. This customary phrase was used if one was receiving a general grant without specific details, i.e. once a prebend or benefice became available, the dispensed person was in line to receive it. These cases all have the formula that if the benefice was with cure then it could not exceed twenty-five marks in value but if it was without cure it could not exceed eighteen marks. This must have been considered the benchmark value for benefices in Ireland.¹⁴⁵ Secondly, there are a number of instances in which a dignity yields little to no revenue, particularly in the wake of the Bruce invasion and during the period of the Black Death. In 1343, Stephen Lawless, chancellor of Limerick, held canonries and prebends in Ardfert, Cashel, Lismore, Cloyne and Cork, from which he received no income.¹⁴⁶ In Ardagh in 1346, it was recorded that the value of the archdeaconry was so little (three marks only) that it remained vacant for sixteen years.¹⁴⁷ Feargallus Oconry, dean of Kilfenora, was dispensed to hold multiple benefices because the 'prebend and the deanery of the said church, canonically united ... value not exceeding 13 marks, were insufficient.'¹⁴⁸ The precentorship of St Patrick's in Dublin was so impoverished by 1366, on account of the troubles with the Irish, that the archbishop united the church of Kilmactalway to the precentor's revenues. It was hoped that the increased revenue would enable the precentor to 'live hospitably, give alms, and answer

¹⁴⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 90, 321, 398; *Cal. papal letters 1427–47*, 59.

¹⁴⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1342–1419*, 15; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 59.

¹⁴⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1342–1419*, 120.

¹⁴⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 171.

the expenses and charges of his dignity.¹⁴⁹ A similar case occurred in 1412, when Donald Macdonnchaid, dean of Elphin, revealed that the dignity, normally worth thirty marks, was 'on account of wars and other calamities in those parts,' almost useless to the dean.¹⁵⁰

In so many cases, especially in those dioceses beyond the reach of the Dublin administration, the value of cathedral dignities is completely unknown. The best recorded are the offices of archdeacon and dean. Virtually nothing is known about the value of a treasurership in an Irish cathedral outside of Dublin, Ferns, Kilfenora and Meath. Likewise, data for the chancellor and precentor is really only (partially) available for the provinces of Cashel and Dublin. In the diocese of Clogher, no values could be found for the archdeacon, precentor, chancellor or treasurer and the generally low figures associated with the diocese are supported by a statement in the unification grant of the bishopric of Clogher to that of Armagh which reads: 'Grant that the bishopric of Clogher be united to the archbishopric of Armagh, on account of the poverty of each see ... Mandate to cause A[lbert] archbishop of Armagh to have seisin of all lands and tenements belonging to the see of Clogher'.¹⁵¹

The archdeaconries of the whole province of Tuam were valued considerably lower than elsewhere – four were valued at ten marks or under and only Tuam and Elphin valued theirs slightly over those figures, at fifteen marks for the archdiocese and twenty-four marks for Elphin.¹⁵² Nevertheless, in 1404, the

¹⁴⁹ 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and diocese' *IER* 47 (1936), 43. See also *Cal. Alen's reg.*, A. f. 472; Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 333.

¹⁵⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 254.

¹⁵¹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 374.

¹⁵² Nicholls discusses some of the power struggles which involved the diocese of Elphin in the fourteenth century in 'Rectory, vicarage, and parish in the western Irish dioceses', *RSAl Jn.* 101 (1971), 53–84. Achonry, Annaghdown, Killala, and Kilmacduagh were all valued at ten marks or

archdeaconry of Elphin was recorded as being worth twenty-four marks in one document and sixty marks in another – considerably higher than the value accorded to the archdeaconry of the archdiocese.¹⁵³ Twenty marks seemed to be the average value of an archdeaconry in the province of Dublin except for in the archdiocese itself where it was worth one hundred marks and in Ossory where it fluctuated from sixty to ninety-six marks throughout the first quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁵⁴ The province of Cashel seemed to have the greatest disparities between the values of the dignity in each of its dioceses. The archdiocese valued its archdeaconry at thirty marks, Ardferf at twenty-four marks, Cloyne fluctuated from ten marks in 1350 to thirty marks in 1417 and back to twenty marks in 1418. Cork remained relatively low at ten and fifteen marks in 1396 and 1398 rising only to sixteen marks by 1418. The only figure given for Emly was a modest twelve marks. The archdeacon of Killaloe was valued the highest for the province at sixty marks. Kilfenora was also low, at only twelve marks. Lismore and Limerick were on par with the archdiocese, valuing their archdeacons at thirty and forty marks.¹⁵⁵ Dublin and Meath claimed the highest values for their archdeaconries, followed (much further down the scale) by Killaloe, Ossory and finally Limerick. It is rather surprising that Armagh, the best recorded of the provinces, has almost no record of values for its archdeacons. Unfortunately, for comparative purposes, Armagh falls far short of the mark.

The office of dean – the most important of the four square pillars – would seem to be a relatively poor dignity. In the provinces of Cashel and Tuam, the value of

under. *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 43; *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 313–4, 342; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 454.

¹⁵³ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 580.

¹⁵⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 367–8; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 92, 164, 184–5.

¹⁵⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 36, 39, 83, 399, 476; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 88, 89, 540–1; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 606; *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 58, 331–2, 473–4, 542; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 170, 179–80, 307–8.

the office did not tend to reach above thirty marks. Kilmacduagh returned the lowest value of two marks, followed by Killaloe at three marks, Annaghdown at four marks and Cloyne at seven marks.¹⁵⁶ The archdiocese of Cashel has no recorded value for the deanery, as did the neighbouring diocese of Emly. In the province of Dublin, a dean could expect a far greater income than elsewhere in the country; the archdiocese ranged from one hundred marks in 1306 to three hundred in 1428.¹⁵⁷ The deaneries in Ossory and Ferns both returned higher values than any of the deaneries in the provinces of Cashel and Tuam and most of the deaneries in the province of Armagh. In the archdiocese of Armagh, no value could be found for the dioceses of Dromore and Kilmore and, the dioceses of Connor, Down and Meath returned no values because they had no deans. As expected, Armagh recorded the highest value for the province at seventy marks.¹⁵⁸ The offices of chancellor, precentor and treasurer are particularly difficult to discuss since most of the dioceses record no values. Where references do exist (in the east and south of the country), the returns reflect offices of relatively low value. The province of Dublin records the highest values for these three dignities and no values are returned for most parts of the provinces of Armagh and Tuam.

Further investigation of the recorded values of benefices in Ireland show large disparities between the figures presented in the taxation records of Pope Nicholas and later figures taken mostly from the papal registers. This seems to have been missed by other scholars and is in fact new evidence that the church in Ireland, particularly in the dioceses outside of crown control, were, like their

¹⁵⁶ *Cal. papal letters* 1404–15, 445, 476; *Pipe roll Cloyne*, 122; *Cal. papal letters* 1417–31, 124, 353; *Cal. papal letters* 1362–1404, 449; *Cal. papal letters* 1396–1404, 612; *Cal. papal letters* 1427–47, 2–3.

¹⁵⁷ *Cal. papal letters* 1362–1404, 383; *Cal. papal letters* 1427–47, 63.

¹⁵⁸ *Cal. papal letters* 1417–31, 164; *Cal. papal letters* 1427–47, 651; *Cal. papal letters* 1396–1404, 180.

Scottish counterparts, undervaluing their benefices.¹⁵⁹ Of course in several of the examples the only comparative figure for the 1306 papal taxation is an early fifteenth-century sum. Nevertheless, allowing for some inflation for the large lapse in time, it would still seem that certain benefices might have been economical with the truth. The archdeaconry of Ardagh valued at forty shillings in 1306, was listed as three marks in 1346 and eight marks in 1407.¹⁶⁰ The archdeaconry of Clonfert was submitted as being worth sixty-six shillings and eight pence in 1306 but ten marks in 1398 and fifteen marks in 1404.¹⁶¹ A canonry in the diocese of Kilmacduagh ranged from being worth four shillings in the papal taxation of 1306 to twenty shillings in the papal records for the same year.¹⁶² The value of the deanery of Ardagh in the 1306 papal taxation has an attached note saying 'this does not suffice for service'. It was valued at forty shillings; by 1346, it was worth merely three marks.¹⁶³

There are other anomalies in the papal taxation which warrant mention. Killaloe had an unusually high value attached to its archdeaconry from the late fourteenth century, especially when compared with the rest of the province of Cashel (sixty marks in 1394, fifty marks in 1398, and 24 marks in 1424).¹⁶⁴ The only early record of its value is from the 1306 taxation of the diocese in which the calendared text records it as three(?) marks.¹⁶⁵ Another oddity is that the total revenue for the diocese of Connor in the papal taxation is greater than any

¹⁵⁹ Cowan, *The medieval church in Scotland*, 77–96.

¹⁶⁰ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 221; *Cal. papal letters 1342–1419*, 120; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 120.

¹⁶¹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 221; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 179; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 46.

¹⁶² *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 221.

¹⁶³ *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1302–7, 224.

¹⁶⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 473–4. *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 179, *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 352.

¹⁶⁵ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 303. Is the question mark next to the value querying the editor's interpretation of the manuscript or the low value of the dignity?

of the other dioceses in the province of Armagh. This is perplexing since Connor had no chapter to sustain and nor was it considered a relatively wealthy diocese. Perhaps even more peculiar is that the diocese of Clonfert returned values for the precentor, the chancellor and the treasurer; despite the fact that the records suggest that there never was a precentor, chancellor or treasurer at Clonfert.

Wealth and economic resources are associated with a well-organised cathedral. If there is an increase in wealth then the organisation of the cathedral is improved. The larger and more prosperous cathedrals maintained all of the four dignities plus other (lesser) dignities to help in the successful running of the institution. The wealthier dioceses had high-valued benefices, which were sometimes hotly contested between interested parties. For instance, the rectory of Kinsale was under continual dispute between the Benedictines of Bath and the cathedral chapter of Cork. In the case of Kinsale, the monastery of Bath succeeded in its claim in 1386.¹⁶⁶ Economic success could also be reflected in the social standing of the prebendary, as was the case when Robert Fitz Hugh succeeded to the chancellorship of St Patrick's in Dublin in 1404. The value of the dignity was worth only twenty pounds in 1344 but by 1404 it had increased by five times its original value to one hundred pounds. Lapse of time is surely not enough of a reason for such a steep inflation. It is noteworthy that Robert Fitz Hugh, who was awarded the newly valued dignity in 1404, was son of Henry Fitz Hugh, third Baron FitzHugh, of Ravensworth, Yorkshire and the future bishop of London.¹⁶⁷ There is only one case of a misevaluation and because of its singularity it is worth noting here. In 1419 in a confirmation grant of the deanery of Killaloe to James Olonirgayn, it was pointed out that when he originally

¹⁶⁶ Wyse Collection, UCC, BL/EP/W, 12 April 1386.

¹⁶⁷ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 579–80. See also Irene Zadnik, 'Fitzhugh, Robert (c.1383–1436)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, (Oxford, 2004); [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9609>, accessed 23 May 2016]

obtained the deanery it was valued at seven marks but that it 'should have been stated as amounting to twelve marks a year.'¹⁶⁸

In general, the results presented here show that the value of benefices and dignities amongst the Gaelic Irish cathedrals was far lower than the benefices amongst the English cathedrals, which were themselves lower than their counterparts in England. A constant state of poverty was the experience of several Irish dioceses and the values attached to the dignities reflect this. Wars between the Irish and the English, and more generalised lawlessness, weighed heavily on the revenues of the church. At the turn of the fourteenth century, Richard Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, was granted faculty to 'retain for five years all his benefices, and to collate to them when he pleases ... the debts of the see being heavy, on account of its frequent voidance, and wars in which it has suffered.'¹⁶⁹ The overall valuation of the archdiocese fell drastically from £2,800 in the late thirteenth century to just £800 after the Bruce invasion and in Ossory, the value of prebends was almost halved, falling from £56 down to £28.¹⁷⁰ In addition to wars, the plagues (and famines) of the fourteenth century ravaged some of the already poor dioceses, leaving ecclesiastical revenues far below their counterparts in England.¹⁷¹

4.5

WERE IRISH CATHEDRAL CLERGY EDUCATED?

IT WAS the norm throughout medieval Europe for bishops to be educated, particularly at one of the universities. Nevertheless it was not a prerequisite as

¹⁶⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 124.

¹⁶⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1305–31*, 26.

¹⁷⁰ G.J. Hand, 'The dating of the early fourteenth-century ecclesiastical valuation of Ireland', *Irish Theological Quarterly* 29 (1957), 273.

¹⁷¹ The annals record famines in 1315, 1316, 1317 and 1318, *Ann. Conn. sub anno* 1315.19, 1317.11, 1318.8.

R.G. Davies pointed out in his prosopographical study of the English episcopate. In England, in 1375, seven out of the nineteen bishops in office had not been to university.¹⁷² Davies argues that in England, at least, professional competence was given more merit by the crown than a university education, reflecting 'their important services in royal administration, in which many had made their whole careers'.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, during his period under scrutiny (1375–1461), in which one hundred and twenty-eight bishops held dioceses in England and Wales, only twenty-seven had not received a university education.¹⁷⁴ If this was the standard which bishops sought to achieve then one wonders what sort of education was required of the cathedral clergy?

The education of Irish clergy is a barely tackled subject because information is too meagre to piece together a complete picture. Episcopal registers (of which very few survive) did not always record the educational qualifications of those ordained. Likewise, the papal letters, which remain the main source for the history of the later medieval Irish church, do not always reveal details about the schooling of Irish canons. Early Christian Ireland is renowned for its learning. Even the venerable Bede acknowledged that 'such was the reputation of the Irish schools in the seventh century ... that they attracted visiting students not only from Britain but also from Francia'.¹⁷⁵ But in the later Middle Ages, at a time when universities were being established all over Europe, Ireland failed to secure one of its own, despite more than one attempt. It has been argued that it was the general instability of the English colony in Ireland, as well as the island's

¹⁷² R.G. Davies, 'The episcopate', 54. See also Virginia Davis, 'The contribution of university-educated secular clerics to the pastoral life of the English church', in C.M. Barron & J.S. Shaun Tyas (eds), *The church and learning in late medieval society: essays in honour of R.B. Dobson* (Donnington, 2002), 255–72.

¹⁷³ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *eadem*, 55.

¹⁷⁵ Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, 'Hiberno-Latin literature to 1169', *A new history of Ireland I: prehistoric and early Ireland*, 383.

geographic isolation, that prevented the development of centres comparable to Oxford or Paris.¹⁷⁶

In 1997 Mary Hayes Somers undertook a prosopography of Irish scholars who attended the medieval universities of Oxford and Paris.¹⁷⁷ Her study was facilitated by Emden's *Biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*. Whilst both studies go some way to filling the lacuna in evidence for the tutelage of the Irish during the Middle Ages, neither can obviously shed light on the numbers of Gaelic Irish whose education was received at home and not in one of the European universities. Rashdall Hastings multi-volume study of *The universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* accepted that only a small number of Gaelic Irish clerics attended universities, or at least were recorded as attending universities.¹⁷⁸ Consequently, the numbers of Irish clerics venturing abroad to study do not correlate with the number of educated clergy. This is because a formal university education was not the only means available for aspiring clerics, as has been pointed out by Canice Mooney in his study of Gaelic Irish society in which he said that the native schools of canon and civil law were 'considered adequate for promotion to the priesthood and other ecclesiastical offices'.¹⁷⁹ Similarly, Brian Scott's paper on learning and literature in Ireland suggested that attendance at university for native Gaelic clergy was not essential to carving out a successful ecclesiastical career but that family ties could be equally

¹⁷⁶ A.B. Scott, 'Latin learning and literature in Ireland, 1169–1500', 937. See also Huw Pryce, 'The church and society in Wales, 1150–1250: an Irish perspective', *The British Isles, 1100–1500: comparisons, contrasts and connections* (Edinburgh, 1988), 37, in which he compares the education of cathedral clergy in Ireland with their counterparts in Wales.

¹⁷⁷ M.H. Somers, 'A prosopography of Irish scholars', *Medieval Prosopography* 18 (1997), 139–87.

¹⁷⁸ Hastings Rashdall, *The universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, F.M. Powicke & A.B. Emden (eds) 3 vols (Oxford, repr. 1969), 296.

¹⁷⁹ Canice Mooney, *The church in Gaelic Ireland: thirteenth to fifteenth centuries* (Dublin, 1969), 25.

important.¹⁸⁰ Even so, Gaelic Ireland did feature in the universities. The clergy of the diocese of Killaloe, for example, maintained a strong presence at Oxford University. Both Matthew O Hogain (1268–84) and Maurice O Hogain (1282–98) were, according to Emden, Oxford graduates.¹⁸¹ Nicholas O'Grady, a canonist, studied at Oxford.¹⁸² John O'Grady, archbishop of Tuam (1365–71), son of John O'Grady, archbishop of Cashel (1332–45), was a bachelor of canon law who, Emden has claimed, studied at Oxford, although concrete evidence of this is lacking.¹⁸³ It is not known where another bishop of Killaloe, Thomas O'Cormacain II, studied canon law, where Gleeson has assumed to be Oxford.¹⁸⁴

The level of education amongst cathedral canons outside of Ireland is, according to R.B. Dobson, well documented. Nonetheless, the early fifteenth century canons in York 'sustained administrative work in royal service [which] seems to have been accepted as a satisfactory route to residentiary status at York, without benefit of a university degree. However, between 1435 and 1500 every single canon who protested his residence at York minster was a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge Universities' with one solitary exception.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, the majority of York residentiaries held degrees higher than that of Master of Arts, and, in order to be accepted to higher administrative office, a degree in canon law was regarded as essential. The rise in the numbers of *magistri* in English cathedrals is another signifier of the importance placed on education. Julia Barrow's studies have shown that in the second quarter of the twelfth century

¹⁸⁰ A.B. Scott, 'Latin learning and literature in Ireland, 1169–1500', 938.

¹⁸¹ A.B. Emden, *A biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1957) II, 2204.

¹⁸² *Cal. papal letters (petitions) 1432–1414*, 19, 23, 39–40. A.B. Emden, *A biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, II, 1393; M.H. Somers, 'A prosopography of Irish scholars', *Medieval Prosopography* 18 (1997), 177.

¹⁸³ Emden, *A biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, II, 2203.

¹⁸⁴ Gwynn & Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 369.

¹⁸⁵ R.B. Dobson, 'The canons of York cathedral, 1400–1500', in *I canonici al servizio dello stato in Europa*, 22.

the numbers of *magistri* in the cathedrals of Wells, Hereford, London, Lincoln and Salisbury were negligible but by the first quarter of the thirteenth century they provided almost a third of the canons at Wells and half at the other cathedrals.¹⁸⁶ In England, where roughly half of the cathedrals were monastic, exposure to university education became more widespread throughout the Middle Ages, resulting in some of the larger priories establishing their own colleges at Oxford (Durham College, Canterbury College and Gloucester College). The Benedictines, like the Dominicans, placed great emphasis on learning and study, whereas, significantly, the only Augustinian cathedral, Carlisle, records no canons being educated at Oxford or indeed Cambridge.¹⁸⁷ Above and beyond the desire for piety and perhaps a love of learning, education provided powerful clerical families with a useful edge in the fierce competition for benefices.¹⁸⁸ That being said, Richard Davies points out that in 1375, out of the nineteen bishops in English episcopal sees, seven had not been to university.¹⁸⁹

In Poland from at least the mid-thirteenth century, it was expected that prospective bishops were well educated because the episcopacy formed part of the Polish intellectual elite. Unfortunately, Polish records, like their Irish counterparts, are too meagre and have hampered a thorough investigative study.¹⁹⁰ In Hungary and the surrounding areas, few of the cathedral chapter engaged in academic studies of any sort, although the situation shifted during the later medieval period. Only one-fifth of the cathedral chapter of Esztergom in northern Hungary is documented as having studied in a higher education

¹⁸⁶ Julia Barrow, 'Education and the recruitment of cathedral canons in England and Germany 1100–1225', *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 20 (1989), 134, 138.

¹⁸⁷ Joan Greatrex, 'Monk students from Norwich cathedral priory at Oxford and Cambridge, c. 1300 to 1530', *EHR* 106/420 (Jul., 1991), 555–6.

¹⁸⁸ Hugh Thomas, *The secular clergy in England*, 112.

¹⁸⁹ R.G. Davies, 'The episcopate', 54.

¹⁹⁰ Jacek Maciejewski, 'Which way to bishopric? Origin and careers of Polish bishops in the thirteenth century', *Centro de estudos de história religiosa* (Lisbon, 2005), 213.

institution.¹⁹¹ In medieval Hungary, as in Ireland and in fact Norway, education was impeded by the lack of a permanent university. The German cathedral chapters, on the other hand, expected every member to be academically qualified.¹⁹²

The Irish annals are the primary source for information on education and learning in Gaelic Ireland, although details are scant; often men are referred to as being of great learning, such as John Mac Eoaigh, 'the most learned of the bishops of Ireland', who died in 1340.¹⁹³ Less frequent are the more explicit references, such as Seán Mac Giolla Coisgle of Derrybrusk, who was lector or lecturer in canon and civil law.¹⁹⁴ Or Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, who 'was the preceptor of the schools of Ireland and Scotland in poetry and general erudition'.¹⁹⁵ Although these references tell us that schools existed in Ireland, they do not disclose any particulars on the location, the curriculum, or even the students. Canice Mooney lists a number of Gaelic scholars who are panegyrised in the annals. His list is made up of historians, lawyers and judges, physicians, musicians, craftsmen, calligraphers, and polymaths.¹⁹⁶

The papal registers differ from the annals in that they record the number of clerics who were dispensed to absent themselves from Ireland in order to study abroad. In many cases, however, the location was not divulged, which again hampers a thorough investigation of where Irish cathedral canons chose to

¹⁹¹ Laszlo Koszta, 'Conclusions drawn from the prosopographic analysis of the canons belonging to the cathedral chapters of medieval Hungary (1200–1350)', 25.

¹⁹² Mária Lupescu Makó, 'The career of two archdeacons of the Later Middle Ages', *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia* 56 (June, 2011), 55. See also Àslaug Ommundsen, 'The cults of saints in Norway before 1200', *Saints and their lives on the periphery*, 67–95.

¹⁹³ *AU*, sub anno 1340.13.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, sub anno 1384.12.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, sub anno 1448.2.

¹⁹⁶ Canice Mooney, *The church in Gaelic Ireland*, 26–7.

receive an education. For instance, Matheus McConmare was granted licence by the king to study:

in the schools of Oxford or elsewhere in Eng. as he sees fit, and to remain there on his education for as long as he wishes, his Irish condition or any ordinance or proclamation made to the contrary before this time notwithstanding; so long as he maintains himself well and faithfully towards the K., his heirs and ministers, and keeps the K.'s peace.¹⁹⁷

The papal records can themselves be vague as is the case with Mattheus McConmare or the many other instances in which clerics are referred to as having studied canon and civil law for several years.¹⁹⁸ The Irish memoranda rolls also contain many examples of copies of licences granted to clerics from areas under the Dublin administration, which sanctioned clerics to absent themselves from their benefices to study outside of Ireland for a certain duration.¹⁹⁹ There are also numerous ambiguous cases, such as Richard Dean, who was granted permission to absent himself from Ireland for three years. Presumably this was to educate himself, although his name does not appear amongst the records of any of the English universities.²⁰⁰ Again the archdeacon of Ferns and parson of the free chapel of Carryk, was granted licence to absent himself from Ireland for three years. According to J.B. Leslie, his licence of absence was granted so that he could study in the university of Oxford.²⁰¹ Indeed, an education was not necessarily received at a formal institution, as was the case with Carbricius O'Feargal of Ardagh who was dispensed to hold the archdeaconry of Ardagh, a

¹⁹⁷ CIRCLE, PR 49 Ed. III, § 96 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/49-Edward-III/patent>).

¹⁹⁸ See for example, *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 287; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 43, 399, 429; *Cal. patent rolls 1399–1401*, 386; *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 473–4; *Cal. papal letters 1417–31*, 148.

¹⁹⁹ See James Lydon, 'Survey of the memoranda rolls of the Irish exchequer, 1294–1509', *Anal. Hib.* 23 (1966), 49–134.

²⁰⁰ *Cal. patent rolls 1388–1382*, 140.

²⁰¹ CIRCLE, PR 12 Rich. II, §49 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/12-Richard-II/patent>); Leslie, *Ferns succession list*, 50.

non-major, non-elective dignity with cure. In his descriptor, we are told that he is 'by both parents of noble race, has studied canon law for about seven years in places where there is no university'.²⁰² Katharine Simms has shown that in place of a home-grown university, local schools were established which taught university subjects. Therefore, the title 'Master' may not always be a reliable indicator that a person had graduated from a foreign university. She cites John MaccGiolla Choisgle, 'erenagh and parson of Aireach-Broska [in Fermanagh], who was an approved lecturer of both laws, but especially canon law'.²⁰³

Attempts to establish a university were made on a number of occasions. The archbishop of Dublin, John Lech, applied to Clement V for authority to found a university in Dublin because 'in these parts there are few literate persons.'²⁰⁴ Permission was granted, but it was not until the episcopacy of Alexander Bicknor that a university was established, although in name only. Friar John Clyn referred to it as such in his annals in 1320 'a university started up at Dublin, but would that it had been a reality rather than just a name' (*inceptit universitas Dublinie, universitas quoad nomen, sed utinam quoad factum et rem*).²⁰⁵ The lack of evidence for its existence has left scholars to conclude that this was a university in name only.²⁰⁶ This was followed by yet another failed attempt to establish a *stadium generale* in 1358.²⁰⁷ In a petition to the king, 'the clerks and scholars of Ireland', pleaded that:

both on account of lack of opportunity and also because of peril which they have frequently sustained in crossing the sea in the interests of study, they

²⁰² *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 241.

²⁰³ Katharine Simms, 'The brehons of later medieval Ireland', 69.

²⁰⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 102.

²⁰⁵ *Clyn annals*, 14. See also translation provided by A.B. Scott, in 'Latin learning and literature in Ireland, 1169–1500', 937, fn. 9.

²⁰⁶ Rashdall, *The universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, 325–8.

²⁰⁷ E.B. FitzMaurice & A.G. Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province of Ireland, A.D. 1230–1450* (Manchester, 1920), 220.

cannot any longer cross to foreign parts for that reason; and that they propose to read and learn theology, civil law, the sacred canons and other clerical sciences in Dublin [jus civile, canones sacros, & alias clericales ciencias legere & audire proponant], and (with God's intervention) to study there.²⁰⁸

By 1363, a group of Irish clerics sent another petition to the pope, in which they lamented the fact that in Ireland there was no university and so the pope should not be surprised that the petitioners had no degrees.²⁰⁹ These clerics echoed a sermon of Primate Richard FitzRalph in which he has enumerated three occasions as to why Marian intercession should be sought.

Because of the pestilence which is flooding the land, because of the abounding malice of men, and because of the ignorance that is due to the lack of all higher education.²¹⁰

Three further attempts to found a university were made in the fifteenth century but to no avail. The final failed attempt was made by Archbishop Walter Fitzsimon, who, at a provincial synod held in Christ Church in 1496, requested contributions to 'the maintenance of a staff of lecturers in theology at the school of St Patrick's'. It was not until 1592 that Ireland received its first such institution on the grounds of the site of the former priory of All Hallows.²¹¹

Because Ireland lacked a university, those who aspired to further their careers through learning often sought an education outside of the country. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge were the favourites, although Emden alludes to Glasgow University (est. 1451) as having educated Irishmen.²¹² John

²⁰⁸ *CIRCLE*, PR 32 Ed. III, §73 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/document/patent/32-edward-iii>). For a discussion of this document see L.R. Mooney, 'An English record of the founding of a university in Dublin in 1358', *IHS* 28/111 (1993), 225–7.

²⁰⁹ *Cal. Papal letters (petitions) 1432–1414*, 467. Canice Mooney, *The church in Gaelic Ireland*, 21.

²¹⁰ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Richard FitzRalph, archbishop of Armagh', *Studies* 22 (1933), 399.

²¹¹ The final three attempts were made at Drogheda in 1465 and in Dublin in 1475 and 1496. Aubrey Gwynn, 'The medieval university of St Patrick's'.

²¹² Emden, *A biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, II, 314.

O'Corcoran, bishop of Clogher, is the only known Irish cleric to have received a bachelor degree at the University of Prague.²¹³ There were also Irish colleges abroad, most of which were founded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after the reformation and long after the period in question here. According to Michael Burrows, the Gaelic Irish travelled mostly to Oxford, with the intention of studying laws. Three hundred and fifteen Irishmen received degrees from Oxford during the Middle Ages and about four-fifths of the Irish undergraduates studied canon law; few remained in the universities long enough to obtain higher degrees. Only sixteen people who were born in Ireland studied at Cambridge during the same period.²¹⁴ (The population of Oxford University, estimated to be in the region of 1,500 in the later medieval period, was far greater than the population of Cambridge University, which held about six hundred students).²¹⁵ Irish clerics were financed at the universities by their benefices at home in Ireland. In 1370, the crown issued a statement which concluded that all those attending schools in England should have two thirds of the profits of their benefices of ten marks or more, the third part to be at the disposal of the lord lieutenant for defence purposes.²¹⁶ In 1413, however, legislation was introduced which attempted to prohibit native Irishmen from entering the universities, the exception being made for graduates actually studying at the universities.²¹⁷

Cathedral schools were most likely part of the daily routine, although evidence in Ireland is non-existent. St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin is widely considered to have started life as a collegiate church with an emphasis on maintaining a

²¹³ Katherine Walsh, 'Bishop John O'Corcoran of Clogher (1378–1389) at the University of Prague, the Purgatorium Sancti Patricii and the debate about purgatory in the later Middle Ages', *Clogher Record* 16/1 (1997), 7–36.

²¹⁴ Michael Burrows, 'The Irish episcopate and pastoral care, 1318–1534', (TCD, MLitt, 1986), 227.

²¹⁵ T.H. Aston, 'Oxford's medieval Alumni', *Past & Present* 74 (1977), 3–40.

²¹⁶ *CIRCLE*, CR 44 Ed. III § 24 (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/roll/44-Edward-III/close>).

²¹⁷ Rashdall, *The universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, III, 111.

cathedral school. Yet it is suspicious that no evidence survives of the records of this school until 1555.²¹⁸ The chancellor, keeper of the library and records of the cathedral, was often employed as master of the cathedral schools. In spite of the large number of clergy who studied abroad, particularly at the universities in Oxford, Cambridge or Paris, there are nevertheless indicators that educational institutions may have existed in Ireland. For instance the thirteenth-century archbishop of Tuam, Florence O'Flinn (1250–6), was, according to Fergal McGrath, a great benefactor of the Dominican friary of Athenry where he constructed a 'house of scholars' for them. This house of scholars may have been intended to educate the secular clergy in his cathedral.²¹⁹ Canon Maguire and Fergal McGrath put forward one further fragment of evidence to support the notion that cathedral schools existed in Ireland. In 1368 John O'Farrell was dispensed on account of illegitimacy to accept a dignity inferior to that of bishop. The mandate described John O'Farrell as 'belonging to the diocese of Ardagh, and member of the fraternity of Cornelius, Bishop of Raphoe'.²²⁰ Maguire and McGrath believe the 'fraternity' actually refers to a theological school under the aegis of the bishop of Raphoe.²²¹ No other evidence has been uncovered to support this hypothesis, leaving it on shaky ground. In his study of the archdiocese of Tuam, E.A. D'Alton asserted that at the end of the fifteenth century there were many 'unworthy holders of ecclesiastical benefices', the cause of which was twofold: the patronage of the chieftains and the lack of education. D'Alton is firm when he says there were no seminaries where the priests could be educated, which meant that they were either schooled by the mendicant orders or by a member of the diocesan chapter.²²² This was a common occurrence throughout Latin Christendom, where the large majority of

²¹⁸ *Fasti St Patrick's*, 252.

²¹⁹ Fergal McGrath, *Education in ancient and medieval Ireland*, 168.

²²⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 74.

²²¹ Canon Maguire, *A history of the diocese of Raphoe*, part I, 82; Fergal McGrath, *Education in ancient and medieval Ireland*, 169.

²²² E.A. D'Alton, *History of the archdiocese of Tuam*, 2 vols (Dublin 1928) II, 55.

clerical students were educated locally, a few managed to study at the cathedral schools (where they existed) and even fewer were educated at the universities. Reverend Denis Buckley focused on the term used in some of the papal dispensations, '*studium particulare*', which he believes is evidence of cathedral schools in Ireland.²²³ There is, however, a huge gulf between a passing reference to a *studium particulare* and evidence for the existence of cathedral schools in medieval Ireland. The only other references to clerical teaching during the Middle Ages are at St Thomas' in Dublin, which was obliged to support and educate twenty-four clerks, and at Holy Trinity, Dublin where a small choir school was set up in the fifteenth century.²²⁴

In the monastic cathedrals of Ireland we know almost nothing about education. Neither Downpatrick nor Newtown Trim preserved any records, and those of the ecclesiastical and government administration do not reveal anything about the education of cathedral monks. In Christ Church (Holy Trinity) cathedral, Sarah Preston has alluded to reading during meal times, but of course this activity must be regarded as normal in most monastic settings. There is also the case of Nicholas Staunton, the prior of Louth, who was allowed to become prior of Holy Trinity, Dublin, on the condition that he achieved a certain standard in Latin.²²⁵ The records of Holy Trinity contain a single reference to a canon having studied at Oxford which would suggest that a university education was desirable within the monastic cathedrals.²²⁶ Nevertheless, in his introduction to the *The book of obits and martyrology of the cathedral church of the Holy Trinity*, the nineteenth century historian, James Henthorn Todd, criticised the educational standards

²²³ Denis Buckley, 'III. Diocesan organisation: Cloyne', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee* (1956), 11.

²²⁴ PRO C 47/10/22/16, cited by Gwynn, 'The early history of St Thomas's Abbey, Dublin', 33; *Christ Church deeds*, 319.

²²⁵ Sarah Preston, 'The canons regular of St Augustine', 196.

²²⁶ *Christ Church deeds*, no. 383, 147.

within the cathedral, highlighting the mistakes in grammar and syntax, which he said:

are calculated to leave an impression upon the reader by no means favourable to the learning and intelligence of the good old priors and monks of the Convent of the Holy Trinity, Dublin. They are bound by their rule to the constant reading of this work in Chapter, and the fact that they could go on for years reciting it, without discovering or correcting any of the monstrous blunders it contains, seems scarcely consistent with the existence of any tolerable knowledge of Latin (to say nothing of ecclesiastical history) in any of their members, for a century at least before their dissolution.²²⁷

4.6

CONCLUSION

IT WOULD seem, perhaps not surprisingly, that the ethnic composition of cathedral chapters depended largely on the location of the diocese vis-à-vis English influence. Those areas in the west of Ireland, embedded in Gaelic life and culture, had far fewer Englishmen operating in their cathedrals. On the other hand, the ethnic divide is somewhat blurred in the eastern counties where one might expect to find a predominance of Englishmen. Places such as Cashel and Killaloe, on the border with English governance supported a surprisingly large number of Englishmen, yet also maintained Gaelic Irish bishops and dignitaries. This is of course surprising considering the words of one contemporary Englishman who said that the diocese of Killaloe was 'situate amongst the Irishrie where no Englishman dare distrain or act to the king's advantage.'²²⁸ Likewise the Limerick cathedral chapter supported a large number of Anglo-Irish (settled English) amongst its ranks. Nevertheless, these dioceses which were

²²⁷ James Henthorn Todd, 'Introduction', in J.C. Crosthwaite (ed.), *The book of obits and martyrology of the cathedral church of Holy Trinity, commonly called Christ Church, Dublin* (Dublin, 1844), lxxvii.

²²⁸ Gwynn & Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 351.

geographically distanced from Dublin and crown control were less likely to attract royal or even papal servants and so recruitment remained a local activity. In the 'four obedient shires'²²⁹ the number of Irish clerics in the cathedrals is not as miniscule as might have been expected, which numbers, according to Michael Haren, are maintained into the fifteenth century. In these counties, the Irish clerical population was acquiring more of a presence from the fourteenth century onwards. Despite the efforts of parliament, from as early as 1310, to exclude Irish clerics from holding benefices in areas under English control, native Irish clergymen continued to circulate throughout the provinces with little interference from the secular administration. Given that the Black Death had devastated the ecclesiastical population and given the Irish resurgence in the wake of the Bruce invasion, the idea of Irish clerics in English-controlled areas does not seem so implausible. Sparky Booker's study of the eastern province in the later fifteenth century also recognised the increasing presence of Irish clergymen which, she said, mirrored the rising Gaelic lay population.

The value of benefices in Ireland was on the whole not as great as those in England. The benefices in areas in Ireland under English influence were, as has been shown, vastly greater than those in the western dioceses. This could explain why Gaelic clerics appear in the eastern dioceses – migrating to the more affluent areas for the more lucrative positions.²³⁰ Indeed, there are even discrepancies in some of the figures which would suggest that undervaluation was a feature in some areas, as it was in Scotland. It would also seem that the numbers who received a university education were not as great as in England or in many of the major continental European universities. Because Ireland lacked such an institution until the sixteenth century (despite numerous attempts to establish one), aspiring Gaelic Irish clerics were probably taught in local centres

²²⁹ An anachronistic term since it is not used until 1488 – see Booker, 'Gaelicisation and identity in the four obedient shires of Ireland', 13–34, esp. 20.

²³⁰ See Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church', 184; and Michael Haren, 'Social structures', 212.

of learning, unless members of aristocratic families. Both Oxford and Cambridge educated some of medieval Ireland's finest elite.

Although on the whole the papacy accepted the sovereignty of the English crown in Ireland, it did not acknowledge the exclusionary policies in terms of appointments to benefices and other church matters. The church encouraged an ethnically mixed population within its religious houses and the Irish clergy were operating within churches which were situated under English crown control. The province of Dublin was home to many Irish clerics and the cathedrals of Ferns, Kildare and Ossory all entertained dignitaries who were ethnically Irish, as well as the preponderant Englishmen. In the Dublin archdiocese itself fewer Irishmen took up positions in St Patrick's cathedral, although Irish clerics are nonetheless found in the records operating in churches in the diocese.²³¹

²³¹ Sparky Booker, 'Irish clergy and the diocesan church in the 'four obedient shires' of Ireland, c. 1400 - c. 1540', 185-6.

5. THE COMPOSITION OF THE EPISCOPATE AND APPOINTMENTS TO DIOCESES

5.1

INTRODUCTION

BISHOPS HELD the highest ecclesiastical office in the diocese; they were the pivotal connection between the pontiff in Rome and the rest of Western Christendom. The office was both pastoral and proprietorial and, as a result, appointments to bishoprics garnered much interest. The diverse and multifaceted nature of the role of the bishop meant that they possessed both sacramental and jurisdictional powers. Bishops of the Middle Ages were the monarchy's most prestigious officials and advisors. They 'governed for the ruler, furnished much of his army, and provided indispensable support'. In short, the episcopate was inextricably enmeshed in the machinery of monarchical government.¹

The Lordship status imposed on Ireland had been approved by the papacy, which introduced an incongruous church hierarchy made up of 'two nations'. Episcopal appointments were governed by three main considerations: local interests (including those of the chapter), the papacy, and the English crown. This chapter examines the methods of episcopal appointment and the extent to which these methods determined the composition of the Irish episcopate from the arrival of the English in 1169 to the dawn of the Great Western Schism in 1378. It will detail the procedures by which bishops were appointed to dioceses, the shifting trends across Latin Christendom and the local factors which influenced the formation of the Irish church hierarchy. The relationship between the English crown, the papacy and the Irish church will also be considered as regards how these relationships impacted on the composition of the Irish episcopate.

¹ Robert Benson, *The bishop-elect. A study in medieval ecclesiastical office* (Princeton, 1968),

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries all present different evidence and appointments to the episcopate can be examined against the backdrop of the ruling English monarchs and their policies towards the new colony. The impact of the English invasion is paramount in any study of the Irish church since it effectively redesigned the composition of the church in medieval Ireland. Henry II himself summoned the Council of Cashel in 1171–2 at which many of the practices that existed in the English church were instituted in Ireland. The council set out to establish a *modus vivendi* between church and state, setting the church in Ireland on a distinctly new trajectory, adding another layer of complexity and amplifying existing tensions.²

King John's reign was not a period of anglicisation of the episcopate *per se* but rather one of cooperation and conciliation, where both Irishmen and Englishmen were promoted to Irish sees. With regard to the thirteenth-century Irish church, however, there were other more local concerns which underpinned the situation. The burgeoning English colony introduced a new status quo in which the church and the secular authority had to coexist. The crown felt, quite naturally, that it had a vested interest in the nomination of bishops. It needed to ensure that English law was adhered to in the new colony just as it was at home. Anti-Irish legislation began to be introduced by the regency government during the minority of Henry III (1216–26), the first item of which was launched merely months after the death of King John in 1216. The authorities went as far as attempting to introduce legislation preventing Irish clerics from obtaining high ecclesiastical dignities. The legislation actually directed that the king's own faithful servants should be elected when future vacancies should arise:

The King to the justiciary, as the peace of Ireland has been frequently disturbed by elections of Irishmen, the King commands that for the future no Irishman be elected or promoted in any cathedral. By counsel of Henry Archbishop of Dublin, the King directs that his clerics and other honest

² M.T. Flanagan, 'Henry II, the council of Cashel', 184–211; J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 38–41, 50–1.

Englishmen useful to the King and his kingdom be elected and promoted to sees and dignities when vacant.³

The English crown pursued a similar strategy in the appointment process of Welsh bishops, where it sought to prevent candidates who were born in Wales from succeeding to Welsh sees. Gerald of Wales himself was passed over for the bishopric of St David's in favour of an English-born candidate.⁴ Nevertheless, because the conquest of Ireland ran out of steam, vast areas remained impervious to the influence of English law, as is evidenced in the province of Tuam where it will be shown that few English prelates governed. On the other hand, there were areas where English law was adhered to completely. From the early thirteenth century, the whole province of Dublin plus the nearby dioceses of Meath and Waterford all had an uninterrupted succession of English bishops.⁵ The legislation introduced in the early years of the thirteenth century had a dramatic impact on the appointment of bishops where predominantly Englishmen were promoted to Irish sees.⁶ Henry III rescinded the legislation once

³ *Cal. patent rolls 1216–25*, 22–23. (*Cum per electiones factas de Hibernicis in terra nostra Hibernie pax ipsius terre nostre frequentius fuerit perturbata, vobis mandamus, precipientes, in fide qua nobis tenemini, ne permittatis de cetero quod aliquis Hiberniensis in terra nostra Hibernie eligatur aut promoveatur in aliqua cathedrali. De consilio vero venerabilis patris nostri, domini H. Dublinensis archiepiscopi, et vestro, modis omnibus procuretis quod clerici nostri et alii Anglici viri honesti, nobis et regno nostro necessarii, eligantur et promoveantur in episcopatibus et dignitatibus cum vacaverint*). Translated in *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, 113. See also Myles Ronan, 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and diocese', *IER* 45 (1935), 576–95.

⁴ See Huw Pryce, 'The church and society in Wales, 1150–1250: an Irish perspective', in R.R. Davies (ed.), *The British isles, 1100–1500: comparisons, contrasts and connections* (Edinburgh, 1988), 31.

⁵ For the anglicisation of the bishopric of Dublin, see Margaret Murphy, 'Balancing the concerns of church and state: the archbishops of Dublin, 1181–1228', in Terry Barry, Robin Frame & Katharine Simms (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland: essays presented to J.F. Lydon* (London, 1995), 41–56; eadem, 'Archbishops and anglicisation: Dublin, 1111–1216' in James Kelly & Dáire Keogh (eds), *History of the catholic diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 72–91.

⁶ Between 1217 and 1227 15 Englishmen succeeded to episcopal seats in Ireland.

he took personal charge of government in 1227, by which time many English bishops were already positioned in Irish dioceses.

The fourteenth century witnessed the widespread rise of papal provisions, where capitular elections were no longer the popular means by which a bishop was appointed. During the reign of Edward III (1327–77), provisions to Irish sees surpassed the number of elections in every diocese – a trend that was maintained during the reign of Richard II (1377–99). The fourteenth century was, as has been shown, a tumultuous period in the colony. The Bruce Invasion in the first quarter of the century ruptured the image of a flourishing English colony and instead heralded a period of decline. Anti-Irish legislation began to rear its ugly head once again in response to the Gaelic resurgence.⁷ Even amongst the religious orders divisions between the two nations had been festering since the late thirteenth century. For example, the appointment of Nicholas Cusack O.F.M. to the see of Kildare (1279–99) marks the beginning of the divide in the Franciscan province. In a letter to the king, Cusack warned of the seditious teaching of Irish Friars. He alerted the king that ‘the peace of the land is frequently disturbed by the secret counsels and suspect and poisonous colloquies which certain insolent religious of the Irish tongue, belonging to diverse orders, hold with the Irish and their kings’.⁸ Cusack advised that ‘only good and select Englishmen with English companions should be sent among the

⁷ For the Gaelic resurgence of the fourteenth century see for example Seán Duffy, ‘The Bruce brothers and the Irish Sea world, 1306–29’, 55–86; idem (ed.), *Robert the Bruce’s Irish wars*; Robin Frame, ‘The Bruces in Ireland, 1315–18’, *IHS* 19 (1974), 3–37; J.F. Lydon, ‘The Bruce invasion of Ireland’ in *Historical Studies IV*, ed. G.A. Hayes-McCoy (London, 1963), 111–25; J.R.S. Phillips, ‘The Irish Remonstrance of 1317: an international perspective’, *IHS* 27 (1990), 112–29; Katharine Simms, ‘The battle of Dysert O’Dea and the Gaelic resurgence in Thomond’, *Dál gCais* 5 (1979), 59–66; J.A. Watt, ‘Negotiations between Edward II and John XXII concerning Ireland’, *IHS* 10 (1956), 1–20.

⁸ TNA, Ancient Correspondence, XVI, 99 in E.B. Fitzmaurice & A.G. Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province of Ireland, A.D. 1230–1450* (Manchester, 1920), 52–3.

Irish in future'.⁹ This was followed shortly by a state paper (c. 1285), which recommended that no Irishmen should ever be made bishop or archbishop. At the same time, but elsewhere in the country, ethnic divisions amongst churchmen were becoming more frequent.¹⁰ This sort of rhetoric coincided with a revival of national sentiment, which in turn spurred the Gaelic revival of the early fourteenth century.

By mid-century, the whole church hierarchy was threatened by the plague that swept across Europe (1346–53) and wiped out perhaps a third of the population. Although figures are not available which might recount the number of churchmen who died of plague, an insight is given into death rates by Friar John Clyn, who recorded twenty-five friar minors dying in a single year in Drogheda. The mortality amongst the clergy as a whole must have been devastating.¹¹ Between 1348 and 1350 eight Irish bishops died while in office.¹² Certainly there

⁹ Fitzmaurice & Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province*, xxii.

¹⁰ See for example, Friar John Clyn, in whose annals the events in Cork in 1291 are recounted. *The annals of Ireland by Friar John Clyn; edited and translated with an introduction by Bernadette Williams* (Dublin, 2007).

¹¹ *ibid.* See also Aubrey Gwynn, 'The Black Death in Ireland', in *An Irish Quarterly Review*, 24 (1935), 37; Maria Kelly, *A history of the Black Death in Ireland* (Stroud, 2001). Peter Heath has a very comprehensive chapter on the Black Death and the church in *Church and realm, 1272–1461* (London, 1988), 149–155.

¹² Alexander Bicknor, archbishop of Dublin, apparently died of plague in July 1349. See M. Ronan, 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and diocese', *IER* 46 (1935), 577–96; *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 165–6, 168, 202. Máel Sechlain Mac Áeda, archbishop of Tuam died in 1348, See Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Tuam. William of St Paul, bishop of Meath died in 1349 *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 339. In the annals William Ó Dubhda, bishop of Killala is recorded as dying of plague in 1350 and two bishops of Waterford died within a year of each other – Robert (Richard) Fraunceys (1349) and his successor Roger de Cradock, see Aubrey Gwynn, 'Fragmentary annals of the west of Ireland', *RIA Proc.* 37 (1924–7), 149–57. Geoffrey Grandfeld, bishop of Ferns, died in 1348, *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 312. Michael Mac Lochlainn, bishop of Derry, died sometime before 18 December 1349, see *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 256.

appears to have been a greater number of dispensations 'in spite of illegitimacy' granted in the years immediately following the catastrophe, which might suggest a crisis of manpower in the church.

The events of the fourteenth century suggest that Ireland had indeed become enormously fractured. On account of the Gaelic resurgence, and the threat that this posed to the status quo in Dublin, John de St Paul, archbishop of Dublin (1349–62) and chancellor of Ireland (1350–6), issued writs against the native Irish. Even though this was done in his capacity as a government official, it is difficult not to think this must have made some impact on his ecclesiastical self.¹³ With the colony in retreat and the Gaelic revival gaining momentum, the deepening fissures between the native Irish and the Anglo-Irish became more exposed by the introduction of some of the most racially biased policies of the period. The 1366 Statutes of Kilkenny accentuated a dichotomy between the *ecclesia inter Hibernicos* and the *ecclesia inter Anglicos*.¹⁴ In actuality, however, the statutes had little effect because they were introduced at a time when the English colony was steadily shrinking and the English dominion had little sway outside of what would later be called the pale. The papacy was by no means oblivious to the struggle between the two nations. In another effort to prohibit Irishmen from entering high ecclesiastical offices, and perhaps echoing the earlier Statutes of Kilkenny, crown envoys were sent to Pope Urban VI (1378–89) maintaining that since "the greater and better part of the land" spoke English ... all prelates should be ordered to command their subjects to speak English'.¹⁵

¹³ M.V. Ronan, 'The diocese of Dublin and its beginnings, II. Bishops of Dublin', *IER* 47 (1936), 36–7.

¹⁴ See for example G.J. Hand, 'The forgotten statutes of Kilkenny: a brief survey', 299–312; Peter Crooks, "'Hobbes", "dogs" and politics in the Ireland of Lionel of Antwerp, c. 1361–6', 117–148; David Green, 'The Statute of Kilkenny (1366): legislation and the state', 236–62.

¹⁵ F.W. Maitland, *The history of the English law before the time of Edward I* (2nd edn., Cambridge, 1911) ii, 550; J.A. Watt, *The church in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1972), 149.

There was also a renewed increase in papal provisions which was met in England by the reactionary Statutes of Provisors (1350–1) and Praemunire (1353).¹⁶ Essentially they were introduced to protect English subjects from foreign powers, and ecclesiastics from papal provisions. For instance, one of the clauses prohibited appeals to foreign courts, such as the papal curia. Historians have exaggerated the importance of these statutes whereas, according to W.A. Pantin, contemporaries did 'not seem to have taken much notice of the 1351 and the 1353 statutes (as distinct from the reissues of 1365, 1390, and 1393)'.¹⁷ This could explain why neither features much in affairs of the Irish church and its extension to Ireland, made in the English parliament, was in fact fairly vague. English statutes were considered part of common law and thus binding in Ireland. Nevertheless, the king could legislate in the English parliament specifically for Ireland. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most of the statutory law of England was irrelevant and 'the Irish government and parliament were moved at times to select what should be enforced'.¹⁸ With regard to the Statutes of Provisors and Praemunire, there is a singular case, that of Robert Godyn, in which the king issued him a fine, because of the provision which was made to him of the treasurership of Limerick, contrary to the Statute

¹⁶ General information on the statutes can be found in: W.T. Waugh, 'The Great Statute of Praemunire', *EHR* (April, 1922), 173–205. W.A. Pantin, *The English church in the fourteenth century, based on the Birkbeck Lectures 1948* (Cambridge, repr. 2010), esp. 84–7; Peter Heath, *Church and realm*, esp. 128–33, 143–5, 214–8, 215–17, 294–5. J.N. Palmer & N. Wells, 'Ecclesiastical reform and the politics of the Hundred Years War during the Pontificate of Urban V (1362–70)', in C.T. Allmand (ed.), *War, literature, and politics in the late Middle Ages* (Liverpool, 1976), 169–89. Cecily Davies, 'The statute of provisors of 1351', *History* (1953), 116–33. J.N. Palmer, 'England, France, the papacy and the Flemish succession, 1361–9', *Journal of Medieval History* 2/4 (1976), 339–64.

¹⁷ Pantin, *English church in the fourteenth century*, 87.

¹⁸ Richardson & Sayles, *The Irish parliament*, 244.

of Provisors.¹⁹ On at least three occasions Archbishop Richard FitzRalph (1346–60) appealed to the papal curia (as opposed to the English crown), effectively ignoring the statutes.²⁰ Indeed, these examples prove Pantin's point that, on the whole, the statutes were almost impotent or at least ignored in the Irish context. By the end of the fourteenth century, capitular elections were a thing of the past and papal control of episcopal appointments, despite the efforts of the English crown, had become the standard method of selection.

In respect of the universal church, the shift in the fourteenth century to papal provision is an aspect of broader movements across Latin Christendom. In the thirteenth century the role of the papacy in the election of bishops did not extend further than being arbiter of disputes; the papal curia acted as a court of appeal. Nevertheless, papal intervention was rare in the thirteenth century and since the decretals of the Fourth Lateran Council, the making of a bishop was a local operation. Where election disputes arose between the choice of the chapter and the choice of the crown, the papacy tended to come down on the side of the local body. In fact, there is not one instance where the papacy chose to impose a royal candidate at the expense of a capitular one. Moreover, under canon law, if a bishop resigned, the power to appoint a successor became the reserve of the pope. Then again, resignations were not frequent; most bishops were actually 'lifers' – those who maintained their position until death.

The dividing lines between the secular and the religious powers were not so clear-cut, as is suggested by the episcopacy of John de St Paul, archbishop of Dublin. Indeed, Ireland is merely a reflection of the rest of Christendom where church and state were deeply intertwined. Even before the English invasion, the

¹⁹ 'paid by the sureties into the Irish exchequer in Easter term 1361, because Robert could not obtain possession by virtue of the said provision after the king's revocation', *Irish exchequer payments*, 517.

²⁰ See Katherine Walsh, *A fourteenth-century scholar and primate. Richard FitzRalph in Oxford, Avignon and Armagh* (Oxford, 1981), 134 fn. 26, 302, 420 fn. 47.

Irish kings and their extended dynasties were deeply involved in church affairs. As Katharine Simms has shown, cadet branches of some of the royal families assumed hereditary positions within the church hierarchy. Simms cites the relationship between the pope and the local Gaelic dynasties as proof of the interaction between the religious and secular authorities. In 1201 Innocent III granted Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchobhair (O'Connor), 'illustri regis Conactie',²¹ a right to veto the episcopal elections to all cathedrals in the province of Connacht.²² This grant, although rescinded in 1216, is akin to the concordat reached between King John and Pope Innocent III in 1215 on the roles of the pope and king in the election of bishops in the wake of the papal interdict.²³

5.2

METHODS OF EPISCOPAL APPOINTMENTS: THE ROLE OF THE POPE AND CROWN

THE EUROPE-WIDE reform movement introduced successive rafts of conciliar legislation in an effort to create a more centralised, uniform church.²⁴ The shift in electoral procedures within the church was laid down at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Canons 23–26 set down regulations for episcopal elections, granting electoral power to cathedral bodies. Both the election and the elected candidate were to be scrutinised by the metropolitan or, in the case of an

²¹ 'The illustrious king of Connacht', see Sheehy, *Pontificia* i, 113–4.

²² Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church', 194–5.

²³ The concordat reached between King John and Innocent III reiterated the earlier 'Freedom of Election Charter' (1214), which John had issued. See Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments in England* (Farnham, 2014), 13–28.

²⁴ For Ireland's connection with the European reform movement see Bracken & Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century*. For Ireland and church reform see also Aubrey Gwynn, *The twelfth century reform*; idem, *The transformation of the Irish church*. For a general introduction to the Gregorian reform movement see Colin Morris, *The papal monarchy: the western church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford, 1991), esp. 121–5, 169–181.

archiepiscopal election, the pope, after which came the consecration. As a result, capitular elections were considered the sole means of appointment (in the thirteenth century) and, as will be demonstrated, Ireland without a doubt reflected this Europe-wide trend.

The relationship between the papacy and the English crown was not always amicable. Prior to the Fourth Lateran Council, tensions existed between the jurisdictional authority of the crown and that of the pope. In 1203 Innocent III issued a letter to King John rebuking him for interfering in church matters. The king was accused of claiming for himself 'power beyond your rights ... applying the revenues of the churches to your own uses, ... attempting to prevent elections, and in the end by your unlawful persecution you are forcing the rightful electors to choose in accordance with your arbitrary decision'.²⁵ In the same letter the king was berated for his treatment of John Cumin, archbishop of Dublin.²⁶ Noteworthy of course in this document is that whilst King John's authority in church matters is questioned, his position as *dominus Hibernie* is not in any doubt. Matters came to a head in 1208 when Innocent III placed England under interdict – suspending Christian services and the administration of certain sacraments. The interdict was lifted by 1213 after John agreed to be a vassal of the Pope, who was now 'Lord of England'.²⁷ That same year, Innocent issued another letter to all of the secular and ecclesiastical hierarchy of Ireland

²⁵ C.R. Cheney & W.H. Semple (eds), *Selected letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England* (London, 1953), 50.

²⁶ For the career of Archbishop John Cumin see Myles Ronan, 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and diocese', *IER* 45 (1935), 148–164; 274–91. Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 1–28; For Cumin the administrator see eadem, 'Balancing the concerns of church and state', 41–56; eadem, 'Archbishops and anglicisation: Dublin, 1111–1216', 72–91.

²⁷ For the papal interdict and the relationship between John and Innocent see Z.N. Brooke, *The English church and the papacy: from conquest to the reign of John* (Cambridge, 1931), 215–6, 225–6; C.R. Cheney, 'King John and the papal interdict', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (1948), 295–317.; Christopher Harper-Bill, 'John and the church of Rome', in S.D. Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, 1999), 289–315.

requesting that they 'with ready spirit and sincere heart ... remain steadfast in loyalty'²⁸ to the king. If nothing else, these letters prove that Innocent III saw the Irish church as part of the English church, confirming the assertion made by Professor John Watt that the pontificate approved the Lordship status of Ireland.²⁹

Each of the secular rulers of Europe were mindful that bishops were great landlords as well as political figures whose loyalty could, if tested, be divided between church and state. Accordingly, the method by which a bishop was appointed to his see was certainly no small consideration for a king. In England, part of this concordat saw the crown promising not to 'hinder, nor permit or instigate our agents to hinder, the electors ... from freely appointing a pastor over them whenever they so wish after the prelacy has become vacant, provided that permission to elect be first sought of us and our heirs, a permission which we will not refuse or postpone'.³⁰ In March of 1215, John and Innocent III confirmed the role which the crown would have in the appointment process of English bishops. The agreement essentially confirmed John's Freedom of Election Charter issued the previous year (1214). The most important element of this agreement was the acknowledgement by King John that 'in all and each of the churches and monasteries, cathedral or conventual, through our whole realm of England there will be for ever *free* [emphasis added] elections of whatever grade

²⁸ *ibid.*, 157.

²⁹ J.A. Watt, 'The papacy and episcopal appointments in thirteenth century Ireland', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee*, (1959)', 1. See also M.T. Flanagan, 'Hiberno-Papal regulations in the late twelfth century', *Archiv. Hib.* 34 (1977), 55–70; J. Dunning has written a number of articles on Pope Innocent III's involvement in Irish ecclesiastical affairs. See for example J. Dunning, 'The letters of Pope Innocent III to Ireland', C.W. Dugmore & C. Duggan (eds), *Studies in Church History* 1 (London 1964), 154–9; *idem*, 'Irish representative and Irish ecclesiastical affairs at the Fourth Lateran Council', in *Med. studies presented to A. Gwynn*, 90–113.

³⁰ Cheney & Semple, *Selected letters*, 199.

of prelate, great or small'.³¹ The letter further confirmed that, as tenants in chief of the crown, the nomination or selection of bishops was of major importance to the king. The agreement saw the pope accept that the electors (namely the chapters) had to obtain royal licence to elect. The chosen candidate then had to be presented to the crown for the assent of the king. Finally, during vacancy of a bishopric the temporalities of the see would be taken into the king's hands and only restored to the newly elected bishop once fealty was sworn.³² The charter was confirmed by Pope Gregory IX in 1227 and Innocent IV in 1246.³³ Although fashioned with the English situation in mind, it did not prohibit the English crown from (rather successfully) exercising the ruling in Ireland. According to John Watt's calculations, by the end of the thirteenth century, out of the thirty-four existing Irish dioceses, no fewer than thirty were regularly asking for licences to elect and presenting their candidates for royal assent, while no fewer than twenty-two dioceses had their temporalities (or part of them) in royal custody during vacancies.³⁴

The role of the king in episcopal appointments had to be reasserted throughout the Middle Ages. The pope challenged the royal right to the custody of the temporalities on numerous occasions. The defining case appeared in the early fourteenth century, during the appointment of Primate Walter Jorz (Jorse) to the archbishopric of Armagh.³⁵ When the archbishopric fell vacant by the death of

³¹ 'ut de cetero in universis et singulis ecclesiis ac monasteriis cathedralibus et conventualibus totius regni Anglie in perpetuum libere fiant electiones quorumcumque prelatorum maiorum etiam et minorum' (1215), *ibid.*, 199.

³² For an excellent summary to the background of King John election charter see Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments in England* (Farnham, 2014), 13–28.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ J.A. Watt, 'The papacy and episcopal appointments', 3.

³⁵ Primate Walter Jorz (Jorse) was an English Dominican and brother of Roland Jorz, archbishop of Armagh (1311–22). For further information on the Jorz brothers see David Beresford, 'Jorz (Jorse), Walter', in James McGuire and James Quinn (eds), *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) (<http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4352>)

Nicol Mac Máel Ísu (1303), the chapter chose a Franciscan friar, Michael Maglachlyn.³⁶ Pope Benedict XI did not admit the postulation of Michael Maglachlyn and instead appointed Denis, the archdeacon of Armagh, who resigned the post almost immediately.³⁷ Benedict died and the see remained vacant until Clement V (1305–14), on becoming pope, appointed two of his cardinals to select the new archbishop; one of whom was Thomas Jorz, cardinal of Santa Sabina. In 1306 they choose John Taafe who died at the papal court soon after his appointment.³⁸ The two cardinals then chose Walter Jorz, an English Dominican and brother of Thomas Jorz.³⁹ In his letter of appointment, Clement V granted to Jorz the care and administration of the archdiocese (*'curamque et administrationem ipsius in spiritualibus et temporalibus'*).⁴⁰ Papal letters of appointment had been awarding the spiritual and temporal administration to the chosen candidate as a matter of course, and Clement V was merely following in the footsteps of his predecessors. What is important to note here is the king's response to the appointment of the new prelate, which subsequently became a standard policy pursued more rigorously than by previous monarchs. Although it was not the first time an English monarch had made such a request (see the two previous appointments of Richard de Ferings to Dublin in 1299 and Mauricius Mac Cerbaill to Cashel in 1303), it marks a turning point in crown policy.⁴¹ Affirming the position of the crown, Edward II ordered that Walter Jorz renounce the papal letters 'so far as the same may be to the prejudice of the king's crown and dignity,' paying a fine of £1,000, on account of which the king agreed to accept the fealty from and to restore the

³⁶ *Cal. papal letters* 1301–7, 148. For Nicol Mac Máel Ísu see Aubrey Gwynn, 'Nicholas Mac Maol Iosa, archbishop of Armagh, 1272–1303', in John Ryan (ed.), *Féil-sgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill: essays and studies presented to Professor Eoin MacNeill* (Dublin, 1995), 394–405.

³⁷ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 174.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ *Cal. papal letters* 1455–64, 26; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 176.

⁴⁰ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 176.

⁴¹ *Cal. papal letters* 1292–1301, 518; *Cal. papal letters* 1301–7, 243.

temporalities to him.⁴² More specifically, the king was asking the candidate (Walter Jorz) to formally renounce the clause in the bull of appointment which claimed the pope's right of bestowing the temporalities on the appointee.⁴³ The temporalities which Walter eventually received had been in the escheator's hands since the death of Nicol Mac Máel Ísu, four years previously. In the preceding year and a half the temporalities had provided the royal treasury with a tidy sum of £268.⁴⁴ This may explain why the king had no objection to the lengthy vacancy in the archbishopric. A similar case occurred in 1348, when the king ordered Walter de Birmingham, justiciar, to deliver the temporalities of the see of Armagh to Richard FitzRalph who was provided by the pope and who had 'renounced all words contained in those letters prejudicial to the king'.⁴⁵

By the fourteenth century provisions became the predominant method by which clergy acceded to (or were intruded into), ecclesiastical benefices. Thomas W. Smith presents the prevailing historiographical interpretation of provisions, which is that popes proactively 'developed an autocratic and nepotistic system of provision, expanding their own powers to reserve benefices through encyclicals ... so as to increase their authority over the Western church'.⁴⁶ But Smith has challenged this by emphasising the importance of the petitioners, rather than the popes, in fuelling the development of provisions. He particularly highlighted those with a university education who aspired to fast-track their careers by utilising papal influence. In Ireland the situation was different because no enduring third-level institution existed and less emphasis was placed on educational merit.

⁴² *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 4.

⁴³ Rymer, *Foedera*, III, 181. c.f. MacInerny, *A history of the Irish Dominicans*, 517–18.

⁴⁴ 39 Rep DKR, 23.

⁴⁵ *Cal. close rolls 1346–9*, 477. See also Ferns diocese, the episcopacy of Geoffrey (1347): *Cal. close rolls 1346–9*, 336. For another example see Sheehy, *Pontificia*, ii, 197.

⁴⁶ T.W. Smith, 'The development of papal provisions in medieval Europe', *History Compass* 13/3 (2015), 110–21, esp. 110.

The first recorded case of a papal provision request in Latin Christendom was in 1137 and was followed by a handful of other examples. Clement IV's encyclical *Licet ecclesiarum* (1265) ensured the pope's right to reserve benefices for provision. This paved the way for his successors to extend their powers further as is evidenced by John XXII's *Ex debito* (1316?) and Benedict's XII's *Ad regimen* (1355).⁴⁷ From the thirteenth to the fourteenth century, papal provision experienced a rapid growth until the system was structurally sound, from which time Christendom experienced a mushrooming of provisions. The basic premise on which provisions functioned was that the right to appoint a bishop was reserved to the pope. On occasion, due to a failure in communication, a chapter would not be aware of the pope's reservation. There are several documented cases in Ireland in which the chapter proceeded with an election in ignorance of the fact that the pope had reserved the appointment. To recount one instance, Thomas Den, a student at Oxford who held the archdeaconry of Ferns was elected to the bishopric by the chapter in 1356, regardless of the fact that the pope held the reservation. A few years later the pope rubberstamped the chapter's decision and confirmed the appointment.⁴⁸

With regard to early cases of papal intervention in Ireland, there is a particularly illuminating dispute between the chapter of the metropolitan see of Cashel and the suffragan bishops of the province over the candidacy for the archbishopric of Cashel. Coincidentally, the king was opposed to the capitular election of David Mac Cerbaill in 1254 because when he was dean of Cashel he had previously sided with the king's enemies. Despite the protestations of the suffragan bishops, the pope chose to come down on the side of the chapter 'confirming to

⁴⁷ Geoffrey Barraclough, *Provisions*, 8–11; idem, *The medieval papacy* (London, 1979), 121–2; I.S. Robinson, *The papacy, 1073–1198: continuity and innovation* (Cambridge, 1996), 289–91; Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments*, 133–5; Smith, 'The development of papal provisions', 111.

⁴⁸ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 322.

David, archbishop elect, formerly dean of Cashel, his election'.⁴⁹ Examples of disputes between a chapter and their metropolitan saw the pope favouring the local body, such as the disputed election of the bishop of Meath in 1283. On the death of Hugh de Taghmon, the clergy of Meath elected the archdeacon of the diocese, Thomas St Leger. Despite this, Primate Nicol Mac Máel Ísu installed Walter de Fulbourn, brother of Stephen de Fulbourn, justiciar and archbishop of Tuam. It is entirely likely that the provision made to Walter de Fulbourn was made under duress from the justiciar.⁵⁰ In any event, the matter was settled by the pope who appointed Fulbourn to the bishopric of Waterford (where he had been dean), and provided St Leger to the bishopric of Meath.⁵¹ Another election dispute requiring papal intervention was at Downpatrick in 1244. The election to the bishopric of Down was disputed between the Benedictine chapter of Downpatrick and the Augustinians at Bangor, who claimed a right to elect the bishop. The pope came down in favour of the chapter of Downpatrick.⁵² Nevertheless, 'by the end of the [thirteenth] century, local disputes had drawn the papacy from its position of watching over the stream of episcopal succession, into the turbulences of that stream'.⁵³

⁴⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 304. The actual petition is still in the National Archives at Kew, see ancient petitions SC 1/3/180, signed by Christian, bishop of Kilfenora, Brother Daniel, bishop of Cloyne, Laurence, bishop of Cork, Gilbert, bishop of Emly, Robert de Emly, bishop of Limerick, Isaac O'Cormacain, bishop of Killaloe and Christian, bishop of Ardfert, suffragans of Cashel, to Henry III: disputes over the election of an archbishop of Cashel. Cork. 5 June, 1254.

⁵⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 488.

⁵¹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 488. *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 456, 489. *Cal. doc. Ire. 1285–92*, 44.

⁵² For the dispute between Bangor and Downpatrick, see Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 81; Sheehy, *Pontificia*, i, no. 259.

⁵³ P.A. Williams, 'The Irish episcopal succession and the early Avignon papacy, 1305–34', (M.A., UCD, 1961), 3.

5.3

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND THE CHURCH HIERARCHY

THE IRISH church may not have been as severely subjected to royal interference as its English counterpart but it was still obliged to seek a royal licence to elect in order to obtain the temporalities of the bishopric, which the king, by custom, held during vacancies. The king's representative in Ireland, the justiciar, began to take on the king's role in episcopal appointments from the early fourteenth century. For example, in 1305, on the election of Robert Walrand (1305–11) to the diocese of Ferns, the chapter requested that the justiciar, John Wogan, be allowed to assume the king's role in the election process by granting licences to elect, issuing consent and bestowing the temporalities.⁵⁴ When the diocese of Down fell vacant in 1305 the justiciar was allowed to give the royal assent, take fealty and restore the temporalities to the elected candidate.⁵⁵ On the death of Walter de Fulbourn in 1307, John Wogan was once more empowered to act on the king's behalf 'to spare them [the chapter of Waterford] the expense and trouble' of having to travel to England.⁵⁶

Other examples can be seen at Armagh in 1307, Achonry in 1312, Clonfert in 1308, Elphin in 1309, and Tuam in 1313.⁵⁷ In 1314, the chapter of Down again sought licence to elect and the justiciar, Theobald de Verdun, gave the assent and accepted the fealty of the new bishop-elect, Thomas Bright. In this instance the justiciar was reprimanded by the king for having usurped the royal prerogative.⁵⁸ There are also a few occasions, during the pontificate of Clement V (1305–14), in which a cathedral chapter proceeded with an election before being granted assent by either the justiciar or the king. This occurred at Emly in 1306,

⁵⁴ *Cal. patent rolls 1301–7*, 313. *Justiciary rolls 1305–7*, 48–9.

⁵⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1301–7*, 326.

⁵⁶ *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 27–8.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 4, 459, 57, 105, 562.

⁵⁸ *Cal. fine rolls 1307–19*, 216.

Killala also in 1306, and Limerick in 1307.⁵⁹ In his M.A. thesis, P.A. Williams contends that examples such as these show a disregard for the laws of the English crown. It could also be argued, however, that the chapters themselves regarded royal licence as merely a formality and so proceeded with the election. After all, the agreement between King John and Innocent III in 1215 clearly states that the crown will not 'refuse or postpone' permission.⁶⁰ It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that most chapters expected the assent to be forthcoming, as at Killala in 1306 where royal assent was indeed given after the election had taken place.⁶¹ There is a single case, which appears to be an anomaly in the overall history of episcopal elections in Ireland, in which the crown empowered the chancellor of Ireland to restore the temporalities of the bishopric of Elphin.⁶² In 1307 in Elphin, on the death of Bishop Donnchad Ó Flannacáin, the crown sanctioned the chancellor, Geoffrey de Geneville 'that he may substitute for the king'.⁶³ Richardson and Sayles have argued that the precedence of the chancellor had advanced by the fourteenth century and probably even during the closing years of the thirteenth century.⁶⁴ His substitution for the king in the case of Elphin could very well be evidence of this higher ranking.

The office of escheator was a much more important office in medieval Ireland than it was in England, ranking next to the chancellor and the treasurer.⁶⁵ As the collector of the king's lands in Ireland, the escheator was responsible for taking

⁵⁹ *Cal. patent rolls 1301–7*, 460, 434, 400.

⁶⁰ Cheney & Semple, *Selected letters*, 199.

⁶¹ *Justiciary rolls 1305–7*, 275.

⁶² For the office of chancellor see Richardson & Sayles, *The administration of Ireland*, 92–7.

⁶³ *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 2–3.

⁶⁴ Richardson & Sayles, *The Irish parliament*, 28.

⁶⁵ Richardson & Sayles, *The administration of Ireland*, 27–9, 125–130. See also E.R. Stevenson, 'The Escheator', in W.A. Morris & J.R. Strayer (eds), *The English government at work, 1327–1336* (Massachusetts, 1947), 109–67.

charge of the revenues arising out of vacant bishoprics. In England and Ireland, it has been stated

the administration of the lands of vacant bishoprics, abbeys, and priories was an important part of the escheator's duties in the time of Henry III and Edward I; but by 1327 the work of the escheator in this field had been somewhat restricted. This had been effected in two ways: first by the practice of leasing the temporalities during the vacancy to the ecclesiastical bodies most concerned, and second by the appointment of commissioners *ad hoc*.⁶⁶

Because the Irish escheator was authorised with retaining and reissuing the temporalities of vacant bishoprics, the accounts highlight some anomalies in the administration of Irish episcopal temporalities.⁶⁷ There are two known cases where the only official record of a vacant bishopric is in the escheator reports. According to these reports the dioceses of Waterford and Lismore were vacant in 1323 but there is no evidence of these vacancies in the records of the English government.⁶⁸ Because the escheator kept a record of when the temporalities were delivered, it is reasonable to assume that he was acting on the orders of his superiors, such as those of the justiciar, who, it would seem, was operating without the full knowledge or approval of the crown, as had occurred some years previously in Leighlin in 1309 and in Down in 1314.⁶⁹ In the case of Waterford – a diocese firmly within crown control – the temporalities were delivered to the dean and chapter, which must have occurred after they sent a special petition, since it was not the normal procedure. The orders to the escheator to deliver would usually have come from the crown or his representative in Ireland, the justiciar. It is rather curious that the records of the English administration do not record any part of the Waterford case and the Irish evidence, most of which is absent, only survives in the escheator accounts.

⁶⁶ Stevenson, 'The Escheator', 138.

⁶⁷ See Richardson & Sayles, *The administration of Ireland*, 27. See also *Cal. patent rolls 1258–66*, 306; *Cal. patent rolls 1266–72*, 35, 456, 501, 525, 533.

⁶⁸ 42 Rep. DKR, 45, 56. *Clyn's annals*, 15, records the consecration of the two new bishops on Palm Sunday.

⁶⁹ *Cal. fine rolls 1307–19*, 216.

Indeed, the evidence here is meagre, but it suggests that the crown's representatives in Ireland did not proceed in accordance with the full knowledge of the king, but that he was usurping the royal prerogative in Irish episcopal elections.⁷⁰ It would seem that by 1323, the crown was aware of the rogue actions of the Irish justiciar in relation to episcopal elections. The patent rolls record a mandate sent to the justiciar concerning:

the cathedral, conventual and collegiate churches of the king's patronage, that he is henceforth not to give the royal assent to election, take fealties from or restore temporalities to the elect in the king's name without special mandate, as the king wills that licence to elect shall be sought of him before the election, and the royal assent given by him and no other, and that the elect, having obtained confirmation, shall come to the king to do fealty for restitution of the temporalities, unless the king grants special grace, which he intends will be granted as it was in the times of his predecessors.⁷¹

5.4

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE EPISCOPATE

THE ETHNIC or national divide amongst the bishops of Ireland after 1169 is indeed a factor in the composition of Ireland's religious elite.⁷² Whilst John Watt *et alia* have alluded to such a divide none has attempted a comparison of the four provinces. Such an exercise is somewhat complicated by the ethnic ambiguity of certain names, as was addressed in an earlier chapter of this thesis.⁷³ The

⁷⁰ (1296) 38th rep. DKR, 40. Other examples in the reports of the escheator's powers in granting the temporalities: see 38th rep. DKR, 58, 83; 39th rep. DKR, 30.

⁷¹ See Williams, 'Irish episcopal succession and the early Avignon papacy'. See also *Cal. patent rolls 1321–24*, 332

⁷² See for example Aubrey Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life*; Canice Mooney, *The church in Gaelic Ireland*; J.A. Watt, 'Ecclesias inter Anglicos et Hibernicos: confrontation and coexistence in the medieval diocese and province of Armagh'.

⁷³ The following categories have been employed in the subsequent analysis: 'Irish' represents the indigenous Gaelic people; 'English' refers to all those who have an English origin, whether they are the English of Ireland or the English of England; and 'other' is used to represent any

attempts of the English crown in the early thirteenth century to prevent Irishmen from taking up episcopal seats were not endorsed by the papal curia. Nevertheless, these attempts had some successes, particularly during the regency government under William Marshal (1216–27), where, of the thirty-six vacancies to arise during this period, at least twenty-two were filled by Englishmen and fourteen by the native Irish.⁷⁴ This period, however, as earlier noted, is not characteristic of the reign of Henry III who, like his Angevin predecessors, had no racially biased policy against the indigenous people of Ireland, so long as they recognised the authority of the English crown. It could even be suggested that the crown sought stability in the new colony which could only be achieved by working with the native people. In fact, overall, more indigenous Irish bishops ruled Irish sees during the entire reign of Henry III (1216–72), except for in the province of Dublin, where Englishmen dominated (*fig. 9*). It is also worth remarking that the dioceses which promoted Englishmen during this period were also those areas where English authority was strongest. For instance, between 1216 and 1227 not one Englishman was promoted to an episcopal seat in the province of Tuam. The next significant push to oust native Irishmen from the church hierarchy came about in the mid-fourteenth century, during the reign of Edward III (1327–77). This was possibly as a response to the Gaelic resurgence, which preceded such legislation as the Statutes of Kilkenny (1366). Prior to the reign of Edward III, in the provinces of Armagh and Cashel, Irishmen held the majority of sees. During the reign of Edward III, however, there

ethnicity which falls outside of the first two categories. For the ambiguity of certain names, as addressed in the previous chapter, see 4.1, 'Ethnic composition of cathedral chapters', 150–62.

⁷⁴ For William Marshal in Ireland see M.T. Flanagan, 'Defining lordships in Angevin Ireland: William Marshal and the kings' justiciar', in Martin Aurell & Frederic Boutoulle (eds), *Les seigneuries dans l'espace Plantagenet, c. 1150–c. 1250: actes du colloque international*, (Boutoulle, 2009), 41–57. In the province of Armagh, there were nine vacancies, four of which were filled by Englishmen and five by Irish. In the province of Cashel, there were fifteen vacancies, twelve of which were filled by Englishmen and three by Irish. In the province of Dublin there were six vacancies, all of which were filled by Englishmen and in of the six vacancies in the province of Tuam all six vacancies were filled by Irishmen.

was a sharp rise in the numbers of Englishmen succeeding to Irish sees in these two provinces (figs 9 & 10). One can only speculate but it would seem that the rise in the number of English bishops during this period coincides with the anti-Irish response of the government administration.

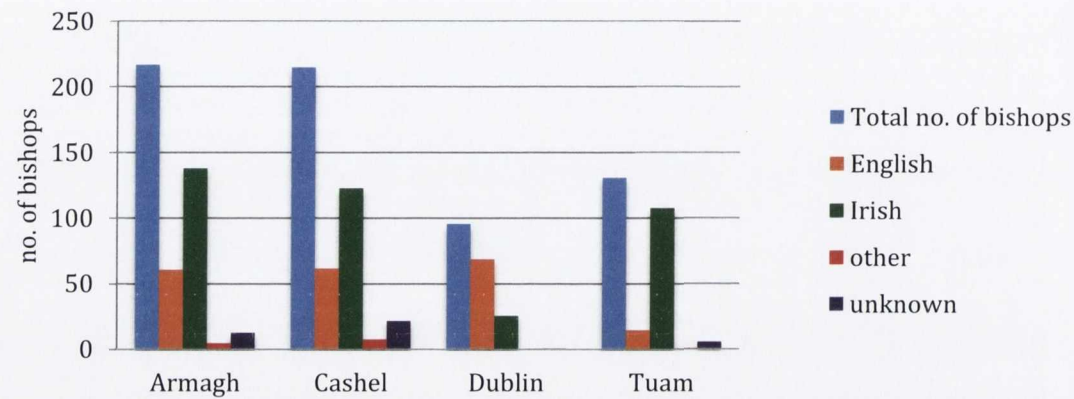


Fig. 8 Ethnic origin of bishops across the four ecclesiastical provinces

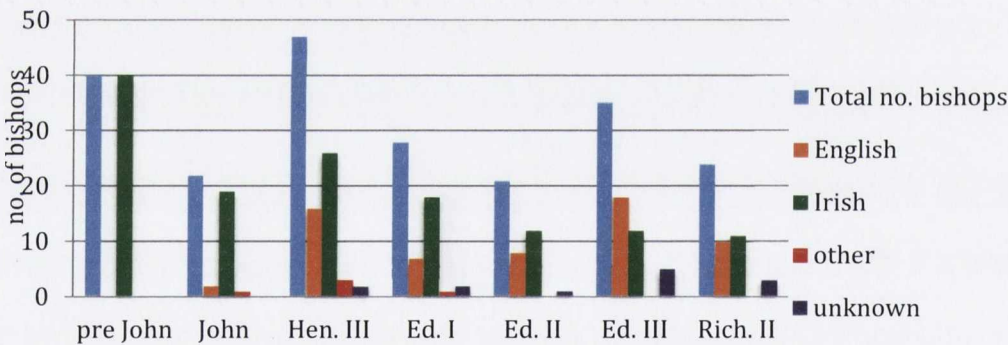


Fig. 9 Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Armagh

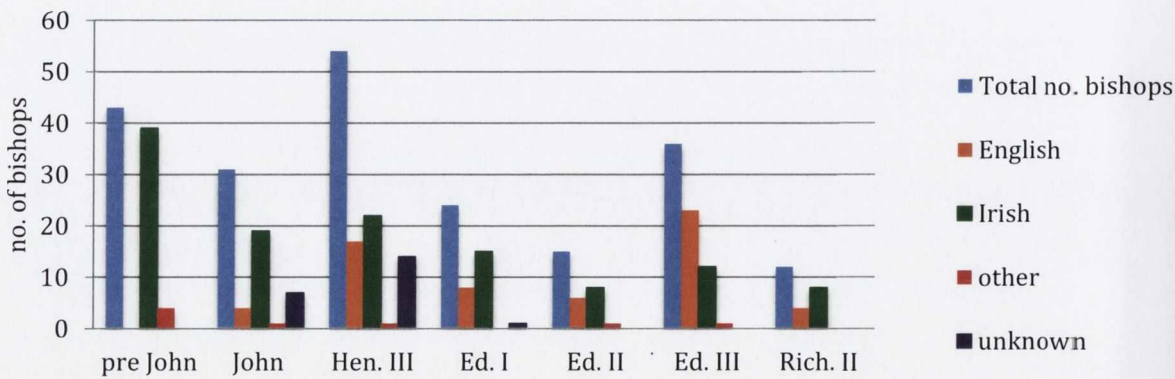


Fig. 10 Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Cashel

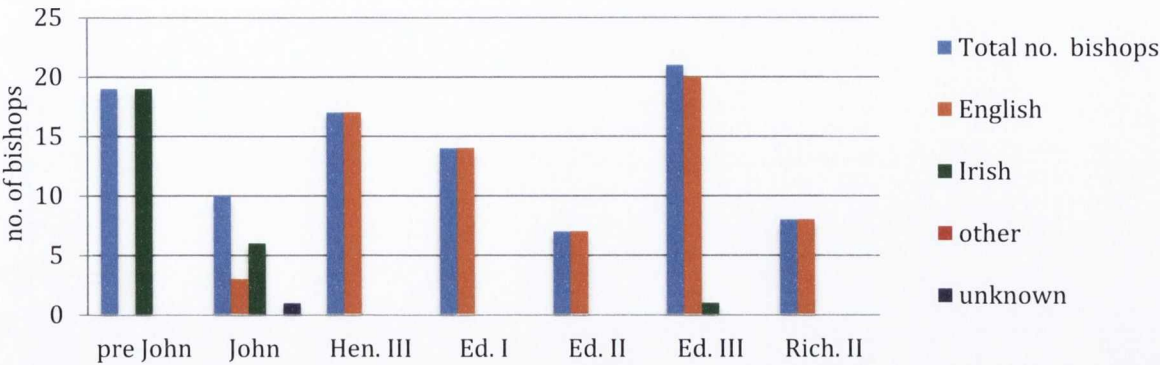


Fig. 11 Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Dublin

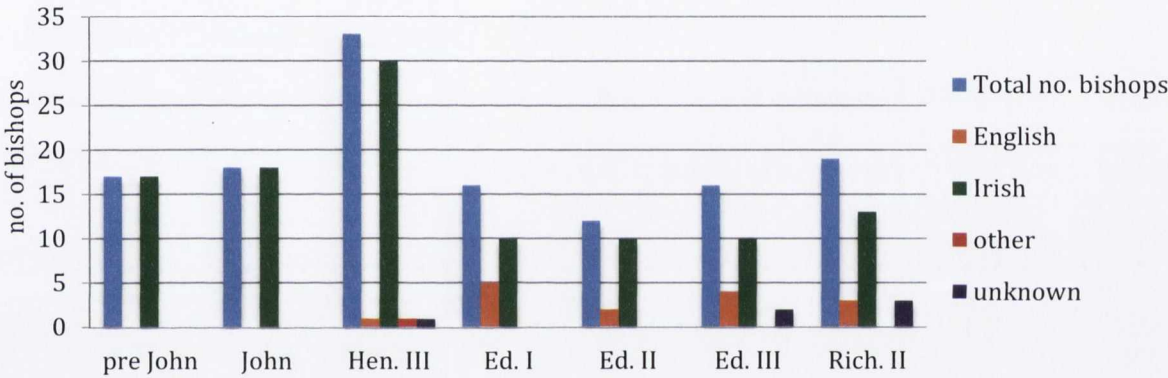


Fig. 12 Ethnic origin of bishops in the province of Tuam

Over the whole period covered by this thesis, in the provinces of Armagh, Cashel and Tuam, the majority of bishops or archbishops were in fact Irish. Vast areas of Armagh were controlled by the Gaelic-Irish and remained so throughout the Middle Ages; much of Connacht was substantially untouched by the English; and the far westerly dioceses within the province of Cashel were also, for the most part, outside of English influence.⁷⁵ The province where the king’s power was paramount was Dublin, which of course supported mainly English bishops and archbishops. Across the four ecclesiastical provinces only fourteen in the

⁷⁵ The colonists failed to penetrate Killaloe, one of the most westerly dioceses in the province of Cashel, which was in the O’Brien kingdom under the protection of the Dalcassian kings. See for example, Gwynn & Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*.

category of 'other' take up an Irish bishopric – five in the province of Armagh, eight in Cashel and one in Tuam (*figs 09, 10 & 12*). In Dublin, no 'other' succeeded to a seat, probably because the English dominated in this province. Tuam on the other hand was possibly less of an enticing prospect for a foreign prelate, particularly if that prelate did not have a command of the native tongue. Of the category of 'other', five out of fourteen were provided to their position, whilst only one, David the Welshman (1204–9), was elected to the see of Waterford. The remaining eight were all transferred from other dioceses by the pope. The fact that David is the only one from the category of 'other' to be elected to a bishopric in Ireland is exceptional in itself. Nonetheless the circumstances surrounding his election are vague, to say the least, but one could assume that secular forces played a role in his election, since the patent rolls of the reign of King John refer to the election of David, clerk and *cousin* [emphasis added] of the justiciar Meiler fitz Henry.⁷⁶

Both the provinces of Dublin and Tuam return rather predictable results where one finds Englishmen ruling in Dublin from the reign of Henry III. Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid (1186–1223), bishop of Ferns, was the last native Irishman to hold the episcopal office in the whole province of Dublin until the Carmelite Ralph Ó Ceallaigh's provision to Leighlin in 1344.⁷⁷ Prior to this Ó Ceallaigh had been in the service of the pope and was probably provided to the see as a consequence of his acquaintance with the papacy. His provision did not actually take effect and after a spell as a suffragan bishop in York and Winchester, he was provided to the archdiocese of Cashel.⁷⁸ In Tuam the indigenous Irish were the dominant

⁷⁶ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 36, 41, 50; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 36–7.

⁷⁷ Ralph Ó Ceallaigh was provided to the bishopric of Leighlin in 1344 but was not consecrated, it was after this failed provision when he was promoted to Cashel in 1346. See also Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 201–2; David Beresford, 'Ceallaigh (O'Kelly), Ralph', in *Dictionary of Irish biography*. (Cambridge, 2009) (<http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do#>)

⁷⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 125. S.F. Hockey (ed.), *The register of William Edington, bishop of Winchester, 1346–66*, I (Hampshire, 1986), 6–7. Winchester, one of the larger English dioceses,

ethnic group holding the majority of sees throughout the province. The first English bishop in the province took office during the reign of Henry III, when in 1257, Walter de Salerno, dean of St Paul's in London and possibly a relative of the papal legate John de Salerno, was appointed to the archdiocese of Tuam by papal provision. He was followed by John de Ufford to Annaghdown in 1284, Robert to Clonfert in 1296, David of Kilheny to Achonry in 1312 and James de Birmingham to Killala in 1344. Out of these five appointments, four were seemingly elected to their sees, whilst only one was provided (Robert). Robert, bishop of Clonfert probably never even visited his diocese. He was a monk of Christ Church Canterbury and served as suffragan of that see for his whole episcopacy (1296–1307).

The contrast between the two nations is less stark when one looks at Armagh, where the numbers of English prelates almost match the numbers of Irish holding diocesan seats. Nevertheless, the generalisations made here do not take into account the fact that there were still dioceses within the province where no English prelate (and in some cases Irish) could rule. For instance, for much of the medieval period Clogher had no English incumbent, whereas in the neighbouring diocese of Down, only Englishmen held the episcopal seat from the reign of Henry III. Clogher lay in the Gaelic territory of the province of Armagh and would not have been a welcome prospect for an English prelate. Raphoe was one of the most geographically remote dioceses from the reaches of English administration. It rarely surfaces in the records and it is one of the last Irish dioceses to receive an English bishop. In 1263, John de Alneto, an English Franciscan who had been appointed to the diocese, begged the pope that he be allowed to decline the appointment on grounds of ill health. According to Aubrey Gwynn, Alneto belonged to a notable Norman family who took their name from the castle of

crops up time and again in relation to bishops in Irish dioceses. See for examples, 239, 250, 251, 252 in this chapter. See also Dónal O'Connor, 'Malchus (c. 1047–1135), monk of Winchester and first bishop of Waterford', *Decies* 61 (2005), 123–50; idem, 'Bishop Malchus: his arrival in Lismore, and the Winchester saints in a Waterford calendar', *Decies* 62 (2006), 49–66.

Alnetum (Gwreigron) in Flintshire.⁷⁹ In the province of Cashel there were more Irish incumbents than there were English until the fourteenth century. Edward III's reign marks a turning point in the dioceses of Cloyne, Cork and Emly, which each see a shift from Irish to English bishops. The archiepiscopal seat seemed to alternate between Irish and English men from the time of Bishop Mauricius Mac Cerbaill (1303–16).⁸⁰ In Cloyne, the see alternated between English and Irishmen until the provision in 1333 of John Brid, abbot of the Cistercian house of Cumbe in Lichfield and a master of theology, after which only Englishmen were provided.⁸¹ In Emly, the provision to the see of William de Clifford, papal chaplain, marked the beginning of a long line of English bishops of Emly until the provision of Cornelius Ó Cuinnlis, O.F.M., in 1444, after which Irishmen held the see until the Reformation.⁸²

Over the whole period, Armagh had double the number of Irish bishops than it did those of English ethnic origin and Tuam had four times as many Irish prelates as it did English. The province of Cashel maintained a balance between the two ethnicities, although there are dioceses which clearly favoured one race above another. For instance, both Kilfenora and Killaloe were decisively Gaelic areas and this is reflected in the episcopal succession; not one English prelate succeeded to the bishopric of Kilfenora during this period. Only one English bishop succeeded to Killaloe, Robert Travers, who was nephew of the then justiciar. His episcopacy was short-lived and plagued by issues of legitimacy; even

⁷⁹ Gwynn, 'Raphoe and Derry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', 97.

⁸⁰ Mauricius Mac Caerbaill (1303–16) was succeeded by William FitzJohn who was transferred from Ossory (1317–1326), his successor was Seoán Mac Cerbaill (1327–29). The next archbishop of Cashel was Walter le Rede (1329–31) who was succeeded by Eóin Ó Gráda, treasurer of Cashel (1332–45). Ó Gráda was followed by an Irishman, Ralph Ó Ceallaigh (1346–61), who was succeeded by an Englishman, George Roche (de Rupe) who held the seat for only one year (1362). Roche's successor was an Irishman Tomás Mac Cearbhaill (1365–72). This pattern continued up until 1440 when John Cantwell I assumed the archiepiscopal see.

⁸¹ Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 259.

⁸² *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 127–8; *Cal. papal letters 1331–47*, 435.

the pope stated that Travers had been promoted because of the influence of his uncle.⁸³ Furthermore, in 1226, the chapter of Killaloe, with the backing of their metropolitan, petitioned the pope to have Robert Travers ousted from the see.⁸⁴ Needless to say this incident occurred during the early thirteenth century when the power of cathedral chapters was at its strongest.⁸⁵ Moreover, Killaloe was in an area outside of Anglo-Norman influence and the diocese itself was unwavering in its choice of Gaelic Irish prelates over English. In fact, one bishop of Killaloe was described as 'a pure Irishman of a hostile nation living amongst the king's enemies and adhering to them, and not regarding the king's laws or mandates'.⁸⁶ In 1323, when the escheator granted the temporalities to the newly elected bishop of Killaloe, Benedict, he observed that those lands of the bishopric which are in Thomond are 'among the Irish' and beyond his reach.⁸⁷ By comparison, Emly, which sat in the heart of the province, does not appear to have been affected by the ethnic divide at all, if ethnic origins of bishops are anything to go by. From the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries the diocese had twelve English bishops and ten Irish. By the end of the period under scrutiny in this thesis, the ethnic composition of the Irish episcopate was firmly divided between the Irish in the western Gaelic provinces and the English in the *terra pacis* in the east. Preaching before Clement VI in Avignon, Richard FitzRalph (1346–60) expressed his concern saying 'the two nations are always opposed to one another from a traditional hatred, the Irish and Scots being always at variance with the English'.⁸⁸

⁸³ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 112.

⁸⁴ Dermot Gleeson, 'The diocese of Killaloe in the 13th century', *The Thomond Archaeological Society and Field Club, formerly the North Munster Archaeological Society* 1 (1936–9), 147–9.

⁸⁵ See 'Introduction' in Kathleen Edwards, *The English secular cathedrals*, 1–21.

⁸⁶ Gleeson and Gwynn, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe*, 351.

⁸⁷ 42nd Rep. DKR, 45, 56.

⁸⁸ See Aubrey Gwynn, 'The Black Death in Ireland', 31.

As previously mentioned, by the fourteenth century the standard means of episcopal appointment had shifted towards papal provisions. All of the early (i.e. twelfth- and thirteenth-century) English bishops of Irish dioceses were, it would seem, elected to their sees, since provisions were not yet the norm. What is yet to be determined, however, is why Irish cathedral chapters were electing Englishmen to these powerful positions. There are, of course, many threads to untangle in order to understand the mechanisms governing such an anomalous occurrence. Theoretically, capitular elections were autonomous, but, in practical terms, this freedom was limited since chapters required the consent of the king, the metropolitan and the pope. As Margaret Murphy put it, elections 'were the result of a complicated interplay of forces, in which royal or papal interests often proved stronger than those of the cathedral clergy'.⁸⁹ Cronyism was not just a feature of the early Irish church, where hereditary succession was the norm. It was rife in the Lordship where illegitimate sons sought dispensations. For example, William de la Corner, illegitimate son of Richard de la Corner, bishop of Meath (1231–52), was promoted to the bishopric of Salisbury in 1289, despite his bastard status.

5.5

THE ANGLICISATION OF THE IRISH EPISCOPATE: THE FIRST ENGLISH BISHOPS IN IRISH DIOCESES

THE FIRST English bishops to be instituted into Irish dioceses were all appointed by means of election. Yet in the early years of English colonisation, one might assume that few Englishmen were chosen to succeed to bishoprics by their capitular bodies. The racially divided nature of Irish society (and by association the Irish church too) might suggest otherwise.

⁸⁹ Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 172.

The initial anglicisation of the Irish episcopate can be divided into a two-stage approach; firstly, under John, Lord of Ireland and secondly, under the regency government, during the minority of Henry III. From 1177, when John was granted the Lordship of Ireland until his death in 1216, fifteen English prelates took up bishoprics in Ireland. During the reign of the regency government a further twenty-two English bishops were elected to Irish sees, making a total of thirty-six English bishops in Irish dioceses between 1177 and 1227. To put this in perspective, during the same period sixty-four Irishmen governed Irish sees, fifty during John's reign and fourteen during the minority of Henry III. In Cashel, for example, there were thirty-seven bishops in episcopal seats across the province from 1177 until 1227. Twenty of the ruling bishops during John's reign were Irish and only three were English. During the reign of the regency government, however, three Irishmen held episcopal seats in the province of Cashel whereas twelve Englishmen succeeded to bishoprics in this province.⁹⁰

The approach which the first phase followed was markedly different to that which existed under the regency government. Neither John nor his father Henry II had attempted to alienate Irish clergy so long as their loyalty to the crown remained, a prime example of which can be seen in the career of Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid, bishop of Ferns. Nevertheless, those dioceses which were most firmly within the colonised lands received English bishops. The very first Irish diocese to support an English bishop was Connor, in 1178, which was most likely an enterprise of John de Courcy and not at the behest of the crown. Connor was in the heart of de Courcy land and Reginald appears as bishop in a charter for St

⁹⁰ Ethnic division in the province of Cashel during John's reign (1177–1216). Irishmen: Cashel: Muirges Ua hÉnna, Donnchad Ua Lonngargáin I, Donnchad Ua Lonngargáin II; Ardferf: David Ua Duib Díthrib; Cloyne: Laurentius Ua Súillebáin; Cork: Reginaldus I, Aicher, Murchad Ua hÁeda, Mairín Ua Briain; Killaloe: Constantín mac Toirrdelbaig Ua Briain, Diarmait Ua Conaing, Conchobar Ua hÉnna II; Limerick: Donnchad Ua Briain; Lismore: Felix, Malachias; Ross: Daniel, Florentius; Waterford: Augustinus Ua Selbaig. Englishmen: Emly: Henry; Waterford: David the Welshman, Robert II.

Mary's Abbey in Dublin only a year after John de Courcy's invasion.⁹¹ The chapter could not have elected him because a chapter was never established at Connor.⁹² Similarly, Simon de Rochfort's rise to Meath is probably due to the influence of Walter de Lacy, and part of the consolidation of the lordship of Meath.⁹³ Almost nothing is known of the career of de Rochfort prior to his arrival in Ireland but it is assumed he was a royal clerk. Dublin, one of the old Hiberno-Norse sees, was quite obviously a royal stronghold and its first English bishop, John Cumin, is said to have been chosen by Henry II at Evesham Abbey with the agreement of the clergy of the cathedral church of Dublin (the cathedral being Christ Church since St Patrick's was not yet in existence).⁹⁴ Of course Cumin's appointment probably had little to do with John since the latter was only fifteen in 1181. Rather than episcopal appointments feeling the weight of royal influence, it is the suggestion here that John's barons were responsible for the early influx of Englishmen to Irish dioceses during the early years of the colony. The approach of the second phase was to expand the colony by inserting Englishmen into dioceses which were within Gaelic controlled areas. During this period also, from 1216 until 1226, the regency government introduced a number of racially discriminatory policies in an attempt to exclude Irishmen from high ecclesiastical offices.

⁹¹ William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical antiquities*, 191, 256. See also M.T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy, the first Ulster plantation and Irish church men,' in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Britain and Ireland, 900–1300: insular responses to medieval European change* (Cambridge, 1999), 154–78.

⁹² *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 336. See also chapter 2.4, 'The principals personae of Irish cathedral chapters', 92, for a discussion of the absence of a chapter at Connor.

⁹³ Henry Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: Ulster*, 247; J.T. Gilbert (ed.), *Chartularies of St Mary's abbey, Dublin*, vol 2 (London, 1884), 287, 305; John Healy, *History of the diocese of Meath* (Dublin, 1908), 45–7. The de Lacys are the focus of a recent monograph by Colin Veach, *Lordship in the four realms: the lacy family, 1166–1241* (Manchester, 2014).

⁹⁴ See Margaret Murphy, 'The archbishops and administration', 175; *Gesta Henrici secundi*, vol I, 280; *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 196–8.

The election of William Piro to the bishopric of Glendalough (1192–1212) is perhaps the only example in which John becomes personally involved. As has been referred to in chapter two, the diocese of Glendalough was subsumed within the larger diocese of Dublin in the early thirteenth century. As early as 1181, the crown had sought the union of these two sees but Glendalough persisted as a diocese. On the death of Macrobius (1192–1212), the bishopric fell vacant and according to Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, it was John who ensured the election of William Piro, the first English bishop of that diocese, and that Piro being little more than a caretaker bishop until a union of the two dioceses could be effected.⁹⁵ Aubrey Gwynn favoured the idea that Piro was essentially an archdeacon and was dominated throughout his episcopate by John Cumin.⁹⁶ John's involvement in the actual election of Piro is yet to be proven nevertheless, events during his episcopate would suggest that John's intention was the union of the two dioceses. Mac Shamhráin draws attention to a number of properties and church sites within Glendalough that John made over to the archdiocese of Dublin and which were indeed Glendalough abbatial property.⁹⁷ When Henry of London succeeded to the archbishopric of Dublin the abbot of Glendalough sought confirmation of his rights. King John issued a charter to Thomas, abbot of Glendalough, securing the possessions of the abbacy for his lifetime, after which they would be transferred to the archbishopric of Dublin.⁹⁸

In 1202 a further two Englishmen succeeded to vacant Irish dioceses – Hugh Rufus to Ossory and Ralph to Down. Once again the extent to which the elections of these prelates were independent of greater powers should be scrutinised. Hugh (Hugo de Rous) was a secular priest in Bodmin, Cornwall. On the foundation of the Augustinian priory at Kells in Ossory, Geoffrey FitzRobert, baron of Kells, seneschal of Leinster, selected Rufus and three others from

⁹⁵ Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity in pre-Norman Ireland*, 162.

⁹⁶ Gwynn, *The Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 146.

⁹⁷ Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity in pre-Norman Ireland*, 163. *Cal. Alen's reg.* 17, 20, 24.

⁹⁸ *Charter rolls* John 15 m.3; *Cal. doc. Ire.* 1171–1251, 77.

Bodmin to staff his new foundation.⁹⁹ FitzRobert was the Marshal's principal man in Ireland and possibly an illegitimate son of Robert FitzStephen.¹⁰⁰ He had two prestigious marriages – the first of which was to Basilia, sister of Strongbow and widow of Raymond le Gros. His second marriage was to Eva de Birmingham, widow of Gerald Fitzmaurice. Obviously, FitzRobert was a well-connected man and it is perhaps his connection with the Marshal that secured Hugh Rufus's appointment to Ossory, almost ten years after his arrival to Kells. From this point on only Englishmen ever governed this see. It is unclear how he received his appointment to the bishopric; Ware states that he was unanimously elected by the clergy and was consecrated in 1202, although today no evidence of the election survives.¹⁰¹ Despite the lack of evidence, it is indeed questionable that Irish clergy would promote an Englishman to rule their see without some kind of provocation or interference from elsewhere. It is likely that Hugh developed the chapter at Ossory and that his predecessor, Felix Ua Duib Sláine, had initiated the process since an archdeaconry existed during his episcopacy.¹⁰²

Ralph (Radulphus), bishop of Down, was a Cistercian monk, and previously abbot of Melrose on the Scottish border between 1194 and 1202. Prior to this he was abbot of Kinloss (1194–1202), a Cistercian abbey north-east of Inverness and a daughter house of Melrose.¹⁰³ Considering his abbacy of two Scottish Cistercian

⁹⁹ The foundation charter of the priory of Kells in Ossory is translated and reprinted in *Ormond deeds*, I, 14–16, no. 30. See also Edmund Curtis (ed.), *Irish episcopal and monastic deeds*, 1–3, for a transcription of the foundation charter. See also *Monasticon anglicanum*, vol. 2, 259–60 and William Carrigan, *History and antiquities of the diocese of Ossory*, iv, 53–6.

¹⁰⁰ W.H. Grattan Flood, 'Enniscorthy in the thirteenth century: who built the castle?', *RSAl jn.* 34/4 (1904), 380–83.

¹⁰¹ See Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 403.

¹⁰² Reginald, archdeacon appears in documents from St Thomas's Abbey, Dublin c. 1205 so one might assume that he was instituted prior to this date. See *Reg. St Thos Abbey*, 135, 311.

¹⁰³ See Stevenson, *Chronicles of Melrose*, 47, 49, 51. Henry Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: the succession of the prelates and members of the cathedral bodies in Ireland: the province of Ulster* (5 vols, Dublin, 1845–78), 199. A bibliographical reference to Ralph is in the *People of*

houses, it is likely he was himself a Scotsman and not in fact English. His connection with Down was not, as may first seem most convenient, through John de Courcy, but through the papal legate for Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man, John de Salerno.¹⁰⁴ Salerno visited Melrose in 1202 where he spent a considerable time, and where, as claimed by the Chronicle of Melrose, he was 'favourably impressed' by Abbot Ralph.¹⁰⁵ According to Emilia Jamroziak, the papal legate orchestrated Ralph's promotion to the see of Down.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, the appointment could have been prompted by Innocent III's instruction to find a candidate for the disputed archdiocese of Armagh who was neither Irish nor English.¹⁰⁷ In 1202 John de Salerno, papal legate for Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man, held a synod at Athlone. Since the English invasion, John was the first non-native legate appointed to Ireland.¹⁰⁸ He had officiated over the disputed election of the archbishop of Armagh, Echdonn Mac Gille Uidhir (Eugenius), in which the crown failed to secure its candidate. He was responsible for the elevation of both Malachy to Lismore (1202) and Felix Ua Ruanada to Tuam (1202).¹⁰⁹ Salerno's embroilment in Irish church affairs did not stop there, however, because according to a papal petition issued much later, in 1397,

Medieval Scotland database, see PoMS, no. 4052 (<http://db.poms.ac.uk/record/person/4052/>). See also Emilia Jamroziak, *Survival and success on medieval borders. Cistercian houses in medieval Scotland and Pomerania from the twelfth to the later fourteenth century* (Turnhout, 2011), 159.

¹⁰⁴ John de Courcy had connections with Dryburgh in Scotland, southeast of Melrose so one might assume that he was responsible for placing the Scotsman in Down. For John de Courcy's connections with the north of England and with Scotland, see Sean Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation', 11.

¹⁰⁵ *Chronicle of Melrose*, 147, c.f. Jamroziak, *Survival and success on medieval borders*, 159.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* See also 'John of Salerno', in P.C. Ferguson (ed.), *Medieval papal representatives in Scotland: legates, nuncios, and judges-delegate, 1125–1286* (Edinburgh, 1997), 65–71, esp. 70.

¹⁰⁷ M.T. Flanagan, 'Hiberno-papal relations in the twelfth century', *Archiv. Hib.* 34 (1977), 66.

¹⁰⁸ Flanagan's paper, 'Hiberno-papal relations in the twelfth century', investigates the papal legates appointed to Ireland.

¹⁰⁹ See Sheehy, *Pontificia*, I, no. 220 for Lismore. At the synod held in Athlone in 1202 John appointed Felix to the archbishopric. See Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 605.

Salerno moved ('transmuted') the see of Meath from Clonard to 'the place then called Novimidia by Trym, now called in Latin 'Novailla,' or vulgarly Newton by Trym'.¹¹⁰

The cases of Emly, Limerick and Lismore are a little more peculiar than the early appointments. Emly's first English bishop was called Henry. He was Cistercian and formerly abbot of Bindon in Dorset. In 1209 a vacancy occurred in the diocese and according to Gwynn and Hadcock an election was held at Emly by a chapter which was probably monastic.¹¹¹ An archdeacon existed at Emly from at least 1194, whereas the other dignities do not begin to appear in the records until 1219.¹¹² Evidence of a connection between Emly and Bindon is completely lacking and it is difficult to say how Henry secured this bishopric. In 1207 John nominated Geoffrey, parson of Dungarvan, for the bishopric of Limerick but was unable to secure the appointment.¹¹³ In 1215, Edmund, the first English bishop of Limerick, appears. There is no record of his election but considering John's earlier attempt it is possible that this time he was successful. In 1216 Thomas was elected and consecrated to the see of Lismore. All of his successors were Englishmen except for Ailinn Ó Súillebáin who was translated from Cloyne in 1246. Thomas's election comes at the end of a long dispute between Waterford and Lismore, the former trying to incorporate the latter. Successive bishops of Waterford had tried violently to absorb Lismore within their dioceses.¹¹⁴ The crown, however, never actually got involved in the dispute. Nevertheless it

¹¹⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 75.

¹¹¹ Sheehy, *Pontificia*, I, 145–8; *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 78.

¹¹² J.D. Seymour, *Clergy of Cashel and Emly compiled by Ven St J.D. Seymour, biographical succession lists* (Belfast, 2012), 63–4.

¹¹³ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Limerick.

¹¹⁴ The Lismore and Waterford controversy is detailed in J. Dunning's article, 'Pope Innocent III and the Waterford-Lismore controversy, 1198–1216', *Irish Theological Quarterly* (1961), 229–53.

seems somewhat convenient that an English bishop was elected to Lismore just as the dispute came to its end.

As earlier noted, the events which followed William Marshal's advancement to the position of regent indicate a sharp policy change for the Irish church. His first act in Ireland in this capacity came in November 1216, when he reissued Magna Carta.¹¹⁵ Shortly after this, in January 1217, Marshal issued an order to the justiciar, Geoffrey de Marisco (who happened to be the nephew of Henry of London), that the King commands that for the future no Irishman be elected or promoted in any cathedral. The legislation went as far as directing that the king's own faithful servants should be elected when future vacancies should arise. It was not until 1227, when young King Henry established his personal authority, that the policy was abandoned.¹¹⁶ Henry of London's position as justiciar, papal legate and archbishop of Dublin is important during this period as he pursued the English interests.¹¹⁷ Opposing him, however, was the archbishop of Cashel, Donnchad Ua Lonngargáin I, who went to Rome seeking support for the native Irish clergy. He addressed Pope Honorius III and presented his complaints. Honorius dismissed Henry of London as legate and instructed the new legate to abolish the English policy of exclusion. Respite from this policy was short-lived and by 1221 Henry of London, archbishop of Dublin, was once again justiciar of Ireland, a position which gave him opportunities to further the policies of the colonists.

¹¹⁵ *Cal. patent rolls 1216-1225*, 31.

¹¹⁶ *Cal. patent rolls 1225-32*, 125.

¹¹⁷ Henry of London, see Myles Ronan, 'Anglo-Norman Dublin and diocese', 485-504. Henry of London was justiciar of Ireland from (1213-1215) and again from 1221-24. He was temporarily succeeded by his nephew Geoffrey de Marisco (1215-21). Henry held the bishopric of Dublin from 1213-28 and acted as papal legate from 1217-20/21. See also Margaret Murphy, 'Balancing the concerns of church and state: the archbishops of Dublin, 1181-1228', 41-56; eadem, 'Archbishops and anglicisation: Dublin, 1111-1216', 72-91.

It would seem that initially, at least, the Marshal's policy was faithfully adhered to because five Englishmen were elected to Irish dioceses. Ardagh, Ardfert, Armagh, Killaloe and Leighlin all elected Englishmen in 1217. Ardagh elected its first English prelate, Robert in 1217, who incidentally is believed to have instituted the chapter at Ardagh.¹¹⁸ Although the link is tenuous, there is enough evidence to cast doubt over the free election of the chapter of Ardagh. *The chartulary of St Mary's abbey* contains a document which describes his induction as abbot of St Mary's to the church of Drumcar, by the archbishop of Armagh. Presiding in the church at Drumcar, the archbishop caused his charter to be read and sealed, after which the archdeacon, who, at this point, was Luke Netterville (the future archbishop of Armagh), performed the ceremony of induction.¹¹⁹ It appears rather convenient that the future archbishop of Armagh was previously connected to his future suffragan bishop of Ardagh. Incidentally, in 1227, after Marshal's policy had been abandoned, the chapter of Ardagh chose to promote their archdeacon, an Irishman, Joseph Mac Teichthecháin to the bishopric.¹²⁰ In fact, Robert was the only Englishman ever to succeed to this bishopric which can only be explained because of the government policy. Not one chapter member during the whole period under examination here was of English descent. The first occurrence of an Englishman in the chapter of Ardagh is sometime prior to 1407, when Sir Charles, dean of Ardagh appears in a letter of inhibition.¹²¹

Luke Netterville, the archdeacon of Armagh was elected to the archdiocese in 1217.¹²² We know he was archdeacon because he appears as witness to a charter between Robert, abbot of St Mary's, Dublin and the archbishop of Armagh in 1207. The earliest record for Luke Netterville as archdeacon is significant as it supports Aubrey Gwynn's hypothesis as to how he came to be

¹¹⁸ See J.J. MacNamee, *History of the diocese of Ardagh* (Dublin, 1954), 187.

¹¹⁹ *Chartularies of St Mary's*, vol. 1, 36, 155, 180, 214, 378, 380.

¹²⁰ Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 251.

¹²¹ *Lawlor's reg. Fleming*, no. 57, 113.

¹²² *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 119; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 48–9.

archbishop.¹²³ In the charter, the archbishop of Armagh, Echdonn Mac Gilla Uidir [Eugenius],¹²⁴ confirmed the rights of Roger Pipard's hospital at Ardee, Co. Louth. Witness to this charter was 'L.' archdeacon of Armagh. Gwynn proposes that this charter became a bargaining tool for the king, because at this point Echdonn still had not received the king's confirmation of his own election in 1201. Prior to this charter, Luke Netterville had been one of the king's clerks in Dublin, and as is evidenced by one of the Irish charters of Llanthony, he was the archdeacon of Emly.¹²⁵ Gwynn argues that 'John gave his recognition of the *fait accompli* in 1207 in return for a promise that Echdonn's successor should be an Englishman. The most effective guarantee of such a promise would be to make the future archbishop of Armagh Echdonn's archdeacon, with right of succession'.¹²⁶ Prior to the election of Luke Netterville as Archbishop of Armagh, the King issued a warning to the dean and chapter of Armagh, commanding them 'not to presume to elect any person as Archbishop without the King's assent'¹²⁷ – perhaps reminding the chapter of the earlier promise to elect archdeacon Luke. It may only be coincidental that when Luke was archdeacon of Emly, the diocese was under the administration of its first English bishop, Henry, a Cistercian abbot of Bindon.¹²⁸

The crown was not always successful in securing its candidate, particularly in the early days of the colony. On the death of Tommaltach mac Áeda Ua Conchobair, archbishop of Armagh (1180–1201), the majority of the chapter of Armagh

¹²³ Aubrey Gwynn, 'Armagh and Louth', 29–30.

¹²⁴ See *ibid.*, 17–37. J. Dunning, 'Irish representatives and Irish ecclesiastical affairs at the Fourth Lateran Council', in *Med. studies presented to A. Gwynn* (Dublin, 1961), 90–113.

¹²⁵ St John Brooks, *Irish Llanthony*, 113.

¹²⁶ Gwynn, 'Armagh and Louth', 30.

¹²⁷ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 114.

¹²⁸ John Hutchins, *The history and antiquities of the county of Dorset compiled from the best and most ancient histories ...* vol. III (London, 1861–73), 355; G.D. Drury, 'The abbots of Bindon', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* (1933), 1–19.

elected Echdonn, abbot of the Augustinian house at Bangor. King John, however, had different ambitions when it came to the primatial see. He ordered the chapter to meet at Drogheda where only two appeared for the election, Simon de Rochfort, bishop of Meath and Gregory mac Gille Na nAingeal, abbot of Mellifont. The crown's preferred candidate, Humphrey de Tickhill, was duly elected and King John refused to acknowledge Echdonn until 1206, when it was fast becoming apparent that he needed the cooperation of the favoured archbishop.¹²⁹ Leighlin's first English prelate, Richard Fleming (sometimes Robert) was also elected in 1217. Previously he had been archdeacon of Leighlin.¹³⁰ Relatively little is known of his episcopacy or his election. One could assume maybe that he was a member of the prosperous Fleming family of Meath, but this is of course conjecture.

Both John in Ardfert (1217–24) and Robert Travers in Killaloe (1217–21), are especially fascinating cases as documents show that they were certainly not freely elected by their chapters but imposed on their dioceses by Geoffrey de Marisco, the justiciar who was responsible for enacting the legislation which was introduced in 1217. John was a Benedictine monk who spent the last ten years of his life at the abbey of St Albans.¹³¹ In 1217 he was foisted onto the diocese of Ardfert, but the archbishop of Cashel refused to consecrate him.¹³² The following year the pope ordered a commission into the matter because 'certain persons,

¹²⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 38. See also Colmcille Conway, *Story of Mellifont*, (Dublin, 1958), xlii–xliii, Gwynn, 'Armagh and Louth', 28; Brendan Smith, 'The Armagh – Clogher dispute and the "Mellifont conspiracy"; diocesan politics and monastic reform in early thirteenth century Ireland', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 14 (1991), 26–38; M.T. Flanagan, 'St Mary's abbey, Louth, and the introduction of the Arrouaisian observance into Ireland', *Clogher Record* 10/2 (1980), 223–34.

¹³⁰ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 244.

¹³¹ Matthew Paris, *Mattaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Historia Anglorum, sive, ut vulgo dicitur, Historia minor. Item, ejusdem Abbreviato chronicorum Angliae*, F. Madden (ed.), 3 vols (London, 1866–1869), 511.

¹³² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 10.

thrust into those sees by lay power¹³³ had been consecrated. In 1224 the Pope sent a mandate to the archbishop of Dublin to 'remove John, priest of the diocese of Emly, who was intruded into the bishopric of Ardfert by G[eoffrey] de Marisco, justiciary of Ireland'.¹³⁴ Robert Travers, nephew of the justiciar, was likewise thrust on the diocese of Killaloe, against the wishes of the chapter who had selected David, their archdeacon.¹³⁵ What is particularly interesting in the case of Killaloe is that the usurpation of the diocese by Robert Travers occurred within days of the writ which sought to exclude Irishmen from the church hierarchy. Both imposters were sent back to England in 1218, where we know John exercised the office of bishop by permission of his diocesans and was even suffragan in Canterbury in 1222.¹³⁶

In 1226, the crown granted the dean and chapter of Cloyne licence to elect a bishop, provided they choose an Englishman.¹³⁷ All of the Hiberno-Norse sees maintained throughout the medieval period an unbroken succession of English bishops, the only exception being Cork. Geoffrey, rector of Dungarvan, appears around 1207 in a mandate issued by King John for his election to Limerick.¹³⁸ He was succeeded by an unbroken line of English prelates. In Dublin, after the election of John Cumin,¹³⁹ every successive archbishop was an Englishman. The same can be said of Waterford after the episcopacy of Robert I.¹⁴⁰ In spite of this

¹³³ *ibid.*, 53.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, 98.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, 110; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 5; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 112.

¹³⁶ There is an excellent account of the case of Robert Travers by Dermot Gleeson, 'The diocese of Killaloe in the 13th century', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* 1 (1936–9), 147–9.

¹³⁷ *Cal. patent rolls 1225–32*, 59: 'Decanus et capitulum Clonensis habent licentiam eligendi, dum tamen talem elegant qui Anglicus sit'; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 217.

¹³⁸ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Limerick.

¹³⁹ See Murphy, 'Balancing the concerns of church and state', 41–56; Aubrey Gwynn, 'Archbishop John Cumin', *Repertorium Novum* 1 (1955), 285–310.

¹⁴⁰ For a fasti of the episcopal succession in Ireland see T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin & F.J. Byrne (eds), *A new history of Ireland IX: maps genealogies, lists* (Oxford, 1984), 264–332.

there were also unsuccessful attempts to gain positions for royal favourites in other dioceses. In 1206, on the death of Muirges Ua hÉnna, archbishop of Cashel, King John tried (unsuccessfully) to appoint Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid, bishop of Ferns, as his successor. John 'willed no one but the bishop to be promoted'.¹⁴¹ Indeed Ailbe was the crown's personal nominee who the king presented as 'an upright man'.¹⁴² In another attempt, King Henry III begged the chapter of Armagh to accept Hubert de Burgh, canon of Athassel, and bishop of Limerick as their metropolitan in 1227.¹⁴³ Hubert was not, however, favoured by the pope who after issuing a commission to discover whether he was illegitimate, simoniacal, ignorant and disobedient to his metropolitan, chose to excommunicate him.¹⁴⁴ There is another case concerning Walter de Brackley, who (just as the crown was giving up its discriminatory policies), was unsuccessfully intruded into the bishopric of Meath in 1227.¹⁴⁵ He was granted the office of custodian of the temporalities of the bishopric¹⁴⁶ but the clergy of Meath (there was no formal chapter in this diocese),¹⁴⁷ who were granted licence to elect from the justiciar, elected Ralph le Petit instead, the brother of William le Petit, the justiciar of Ireland and constable of Meath.¹⁴⁸ It is rather curious that the last Gaelic bishop of Clonard, Echtigern mac Maél Ciarain, established the archdeaconry of Meath, and chose Ralph le Petit, the future bishop of Meath, as archdeacon. There was a similar case in Armagh on the death of Luke Netterville. Henry of Limerick was

¹⁴¹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 44.

¹⁴² *Rot litt pat 1201–16*, 61a.

¹⁴³ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 231.

¹⁴⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 117.

¹⁴⁵ *Cal. patent rolls 1225–32*, 115.

¹⁴⁶ *Calendar of the patent rolls 1225–32*, 133: 'Hibernia: pro Waltero de Brachele. — Dominus rex commisit Waltero de Brackele episcopatum de Mida custodiendum quamdiu domino regi placuerit. Et mandatum est G. de Mariscis'.

¹⁴⁷ See chapter 3.4 for further information on the organisation of Meath.

¹⁴⁸ In one of the Llanthony charters William Petit refers to his brother Ralph the archdeacon of Meath, see Hogan, *Llanthony Ireland*, 252. *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 226.

given sesin of the temporalities, but the chapter postulated Donat, bishop of Clogher, who was successfully translated to the see in 1227.¹⁴⁹

There were of course attempts by later monarchs to influence the composition of the episcopate. For instance, in 1320, Edward II intervened in the election at Connor and requested from the prior of St Patrick's, the abbot of Connor, the archdeacon of Connor and John de Birmingham, earl of Louth, that they help the Dominican Adam de Sancto Laudo be elected to the see of Connor.¹⁵⁰ No records survive to show that Adam succeeded to the bishopric but the period from 1320 until 1323 is suspect because three bishops are elected to the see during this time but were not necessarily in possession of it. Records survive which show a Richard as bishop of Connor in 1320 and that James of Couplith was elected in 1321, but did not gain possession and in 1323 John of Eglecliff was transferred to the see but was unable to secure possession.¹⁵¹ There are no records referring to Adam. Another attempt was made to insert the king's chosen candidate at Armagh. On the resignation of Roland Jorz (1311–22), the pope reserved the right to appoint a successor, another Englishman, Stephen Segrave.¹⁵² It is highly likely that royal influence played an important role in Segrave's appointment. He was a member of the Leicester house of Segrave, and held a doctorate of canon law from Cambridge University, and served as chancellor of the university for three years. In 1309 he was a clerk of the royal household and the king's chosen candidate (albeit failed) for the see of Glasgow.¹⁵³

Evidently there was a push early on to insert Englishmen into Irish dioceses, thus altering the composition of the episcopate but this was not necessarily a crown

¹⁴⁹ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 234.

¹⁵⁰ *Cal. close rolls 1318–23*, 217.

¹⁵¹ Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 221.

¹⁵² *Cal. papal letters 1305–41*, 229.

¹⁵³ T.F. Tout, 'Seagrave, Stephen (d. 1333)', rev. Katherine Walsh, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25042>).

endeavour. As we have seen, the reign of King John was not characterised by the need for anglicisation but rather by efforts of conciliation, as the case of Ailbe illustrates.¹⁵⁴ The introduction of English bishops in Irish dioceses may very well be a protracted reverberation of the synod of Cashel in 1172 in which the church in Ireland accepted the customs of the English church, effectively handing over control of episcopal appointments to the crown. The granting of the custody of the bishopric of Killaloe to Ailbe, bishop of Ferns suggests that John's intentions were, as W.L. Warren noted, to respect Irish interests. Merely four months later, the regency government, did a complete u-turn when it introduced the first anti-Irish policy in relation to episcopal appointments.

On the whole, the efforts were not successful; in many cases diocesan succession reverted back to Irishmen. The dioceses of Ardagh, Ardfert, Killaloe, Annaghdown and Clonfert all resumed electing Irishmen, whereas, no Englishman was elected to sees in the dioceses of Achonry, Cashel, Dromore, Elphin, Kilfenora, Kilmacduagh, Raphoe and Ross in the thirteenth century (all Gaelic territories). In the province of Tuam, not one Englishman was successfully elected to a diocese in the thirteenth century, although three English prelates were present in dioceses: as we have seen, John de Ufford, most likely a relative of the justiciar Robert (Ralph) de Ufford, was 'elected' to Annaghdown in 1283 but never consecrated; Stephen de Fulbourn was translated to Tuam archdiocese in 1286 and Robert was provided to the diocese of Clonfert in 1296 (although he

¹⁵⁴ King John also showed favour towards another Irish archbishop, Matthew Ua hÉnni, archbishop of Cashel. See K.W. Nicholls, 'A charter of John, Lord of Ireland, in favour of Matthew Ua hÉnni, archbishop of Cashel', *Peritia* ii (1983), 267–76. W.L. Warren makes an excellent case for the conciliatory efforts of the Angevin kings as opposed to the anti-Irish policies of the regency government. See W.L. Warren, 'Church and state in Angevin Ireland', *Peritia* 13 (1999), 277–91.

never actually set foot in it).¹⁵⁵ De Ufford's election was marred by difficulty, not from the chapter, but from his metropolitan, a fellow Englishman, who tried to unite the two dioceses and install de Ufford as archdeacon of Tuam.¹⁵⁶ Annaghdown remained, for the English, a difficult diocese to penetrate. In 1393, the newly elected bishop John sought permission from the king to bring two hundred archers with him to Ireland, at his own expense, in order to recover his bishopric from the Irish.¹⁵⁷ There was never an English bishop in Elphin or Kilmacduagh. As expected, English bishops were few in numbers in the province of Tuam, where Irishmen held on to the episcopal seats.

5.6

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND THE ELECTION OF BISHOPS

ELSEWHERE IT has been shown that thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Ireland followed the widespread trend of episcopal appointment: capitular elections were the norm in the thirteenth century shifting towards papal provisions in the fourteenth. Clement V's accession in 1305 cemented the papal right to reserve a bishopric and his successor, John XXII, firmly established the system of papal provision when he introduced *Ex debito* (1316). The third, and less commonly utilised, method in the selection of bishops was that of translation. Only the pope could perform a translation from one diocese to another. A chapter could present a candidate to the papacy for postulation but they could not perform the translation. Most cases of translation look to have been motivated by political objectives. The province of Cashel had the highest number (eight in total), most of whom were being promoted to the metropolitan see from a suffragan diocese and were members of local royal dynasties, such as David Macgillpatrick,

¹⁵⁵ Ralph de Ufford as justiciar is detailed in Robin Frame, 'The justiciarship of Ralph Ufford: warfare and politics in fourteenth century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica* 13 (1973), 7–47. *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252–84, 476, 525; *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 487, 561.

¹⁵⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 610.

¹⁵⁷ TNA, SC 8/215/10722; see also *Cal. patent rolls 1391–96*, 301.

archbishop of Cashel (1238–53).¹⁵⁸ Walter de Fulbourn, who was translated from Meath to Waterford in 1286, was the only bishop to be translated during the thirteenth century who was not Gaelic Irish.¹⁵⁹ Although his move from Meath to Waterford was indeed political (occurring at a time when his brother Stephen was justiciar) it was not of a comparable nature to the other three in the province. There are reports which attest to Stephen, ‘oppressing the archdeacon and clergy of the diocese of Meath, expelling some from their livings, breaking into their churches and taking their possession’, while his brother was bishop of that see, which may be the reason why Walter was translated to Waterford.¹⁶⁰

Even in England, translations were extremely rare; only six took place between 1200 and 1300. The English ecclesiastical historian Katherine Harvey has suggested that translations between dioceses ‘allowed the pope to use episcopal vacancies as a form of patronage’,¹⁶¹ a means by which the pope could ensure that the most suitable candidates were appointed to the most prestigious sees. Yet they were also a means of promotion; where a favourite could move from a less well off or modest diocese to a more distinguished one. For instance, twelve bishops were translated to dioceses in the fourteenth-century province of Armagh, of which Meath had the greatest number.¹⁶² This is clearly no

¹⁵⁸ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 304.

¹⁵⁹ See above, 200.

¹⁶⁰ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1285–92*, 44, 45, 92.

¹⁶¹ Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments in England*, 83.

¹⁶² Fourteenth century translations: John Eglecliff was translated to Connor in 1323 but he did not get possession (*Cal. papal letters 1305–1341*, 231; *Cal. patent rolls 1324*, 11). Robert Wirsop was translated to Connor in 1323 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 231) and Jacobus Ó Certhernaig was translated from Annaghdown to Connor in 1324 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 238). Simon was translated to Derry from Clonmacnoise in 1349 (*Cal. papal letters, 1342–62*, 339). John Dongan, was translated from Derry to Down in 1394 (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 480). Thomas Orwell O.F.M. was translated to Dromore from Killala in 1398 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 238). John Waltham was translated to Dromore from Ossory in 1400 (*Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 504). Seoán Mac Cerbaill was translated to Meath from Cork in 1321 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 212).

coincidence, considering that Meath was one of the wealthiest dioceses in the province and was politically aligned with the Dublin administration. Similar experiences can be seen elsewhere, the archdiocese of Cashel received five of the eight-recorded translations in the province in the fourteenth century.¹⁶³ Out of three translations in the province of Dublin, two were to the archdiocese itself.¹⁶⁴

In those dioceses where there was no chapter or where perhaps the diocesan centre was transferred the election format could be further complicated. The diocese of Clogher, chosen at Ráith Bressail, was transferred to the Arrouaisian monastery of St Mary's in Louth by bishop Aodhán Ó Caollaighe, after the synod of Kells. By the close of the twelfth century, however, the diocesan centre had

Stephen de Valle was translated to Meath from Limerick in 1369 (Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Limerick). His successor, William Andrew O.P. was translated from Achonry in 1380 (Healy, *History of the diocese of Meath* I, 146) and his successor Alexander Balscot, was translated from Ossory in 1386 (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 348). Thomas Rushook was translated to Tirbrunensis in 1388 (*Cal. patent rolls 1389–92*, 228, 239).

¹⁶³ John of Balyconingham was translated to Cork in 1329 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 315). William FitzJohn was translated from Ossory to Cashel in 1317 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 148) and his successor, Seoán Mac Cerbaill was translated to Cashel from Meath in 1327 (*Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 255) and his successor, Walter le Rede, was translated from Cork in 1329 (*Annals St Finn Barre's*, 7; *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 306). Ralph Ó Ceallaigh was translated to Cashel from Leighlin in 1346 (*Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 203). Tomás Mac Cearbhaill, was translated from Tuam to Cashel in 1365 (*Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 48). Bernardus Ó Conchobhair was translated from Ross to Limerick in 1399 but was never consecrated (*Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 543). Peter Curragh was translated from Limerick to Ross in 1399 but the translation did not take effect (*Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 287).

¹⁶⁴ In Dublin, Robert Waldeby O.S.A. was translated to the archdiocese in 1390 and Richard Northallis was translated in 1395. See *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 382; Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 336. In Ossory, John Griffin was translated to the see in 1385. See Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware*, I, 412–3.

reverted back to Clogher.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, St Mary's in Louth continued to play a part in the election of the bishop. The archbishop of Armagh, Donatus Ó Fidabra (formerly bishop of Clogher), complained to the pope that the election of Nehemias Ó Brácaín as bishop of Clogher had been 'procured by some married clerks of that church and *one canon regular* [my emphasis] in secular garb, in contempt of the dean, precentor and chancellor of the same church'.¹⁶⁶ The mention of a canon regular suggests that the St Mary's Augustinian house in Louth (the former centre of the diocese) retained a voice in the election of bishops, in spite of the transfer of the cathedral to Clogher. This idea is further enforced when one considers that three of the earlier bishops of Clogher, Áed Ua Cáellaide (1138–78), Gille Tigernaig Mac Gilla Rónáin (c. 1197–1218) and Donatus Ó Fidabra (c. 1218–27), had been priors of St Mary's in Louth.

Although papal provisions during the thirteenth century were far less common they were still one of the means of appointing new bishops. In the province of Armagh, where six provisions were made during the thirteenth century, only one was for an Irishman. With regard to papal provisions, they were most common in the province of Armagh. Further analysis of the number of provisions by ethnicity shows that of the six provisions in this province, one was Irish, three were 'other' and two were English. Énri Mac Airechtaig, otherwise known as Henry of Ardagh, an Irishman and bishop of Derry (1294–7),¹⁶⁷ is an anomaly because he is the only Irishman to receive a provision at this juncture. His provision is somewhat dubious and may not have actually taken place. The theologian and bibliographer Henry Cotton is the only source to say that Henry of Ardagh was provided to the bishopric of Derry.¹⁶⁸ All other sources are ominously silent on the matter. To emphasise the point further, excluding the

¹⁶⁵ Katharine Simms, 'The origins of the diocese of Clogher', *Clogher Record* 10/2 (1980), 180–98.

¹⁶⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 163–4.

¹⁶⁷ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1293–1301*, 74, 86.

¹⁶⁸ Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: Ulster*, 312.

suspicious provision of Henry of Ardagh, every other provision which took place during this period, across the four ecclesiastical provinces, was to Englishmen and only one 'other', none was Irish. Furthermore, during the thirty-five year reign of Edward I only thirteen papal provisions took place, four of which were to the metropolitan see of Dublin. By the end of the century every member of the episcopate was appointed by provision, none was elected.

In the fourteenth century, during the pontificate of Clement V, there were ten vacancies in the province of Armagh (two in Armagh, two in Down, two in Clogher, two in Dromore, one in Derry and one in Kilmore). During a vacancy it was the pope who had the right of appointment. There is a lack of information from the administrative records regarding these vacancies. P.A. Williams suggested that since English power was weakest in these areas, the local churches were choosing their own bishops during vacancies and by their own methods. He also doubts, however, the existence of cathedral chapters at this date, an assertion which has been challenged in chapter two of this thesis.¹⁶⁹

For argument's sake, we might compare with the English church, in which the first papal provision occurred in 1224, after which the number of appointed bishops and archbishops increased over the course of the century.¹⁷⁰ From 1341 on, all bishops in England were appointed by papal provision, whereas in fourteenth-century Ireland there were still a significant number of elections. This could potentially show the strength of the Irish cathedral chapters over their counterparts in England or it could simply illustrate that the changes in the wider church took longer to take root in Ireland.

¹⁶⁹ Williams, 'Irish episcopal succession', 12.

¹⁷⁰ Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments*, 131–2.

It is open for debate but the first evidence for a papal provision in Ireland is actually earlier than in England. In 1223, Michael Scott,¹⁷¹ the mathematician, was provided to the see of Cashel.¹⁷² Scott was never actually consecrated and resigned the same year. Given that this provision was not successful the next instance in Ireland is sixteen years later, in 1239, when a German, Albert of Cologne [Albrecht Suerbeer], was provided to the archbishopric of Armagh.¹⁷³ He was provided by Otto, cardinal deacon and papal legate for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Albert had previously been nominated to a German bishopric but the nomination was disputed and the papacy ruled in favour of his opponent. At that time Otto had been papal legate in Germany and some historians have viewed Albert's Irish provision as compensation by Otto for the earlier loss. There is another suggestion for the introduction of foreigners into the primatial see. Since the English invasion, Irish dioceses had been in a state of flux. In an attempt to subdue and bring order to the situation the Holy See began introducing foreign-born men, such as Albert of Cologne, to the archbishopric of Armagh.¹⁷⁴

The rise of papal provision in England and in Ireland served to marginalise the role of the chapter, perhaps more so in the English context when one considers the figures. Thus the fourteenth century saw a dramatic movement from capitular election to papal provision. Granted, the number of elections was almost on a par with provisions but there is no denying a shift in the appointment process. Cashel was the only province which barely sustained the

¹⁷¹ For information on the work of Michael Scott see C.H. Haskins, *Studies in medieval culture* (Oxford, 1929), 148–59.

¹⁷² *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 94, 97–98.

¹⁷³ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 348, 365, 373, 435. For a good biography of Albert of Cologne see Patrick Conlan, 'Albrecht Suerbeer, archbishop of Armagh: "Albrecht the German"', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 20 (2004), 19–23.

¹⁷⁴ See Aubrey Gwynn, 'Derry and Raphoe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', 84–100, esp. 94.

power of the chapter over papal intervention. One might assume that, in Ireland, the rise of provision is perhaps best observed in those areas which were most closely under English control. This, however, is not the case as can be seen in Armagh. This province saw the sharpest rise in papal provisions, from six in the period between 1170 and 1300 to thirty-three between 1300 and 1400. Dublin, on the other hand, jumped from two provisions in the earlier period to eighteen in the fourteenth century, whereas capitular elections in Dublin only dropped from twenty-three to seventeen in this period. Only two dioceses in the whole country were untouched by papal provisions, Kildare and Dromore. Kildare elected four bishops in the fourteenth century, all of whom were English, and three of whom were members of the chapter. Kildare of course had a long history of monasticism and it is possible that its chapter drew strength from this and was able to maintain its power of election. Dromore on the other hand was one of the smallest and poorest dioceses within the Irish church. Between 1300 and 1400 it had six bishops, of whom all but one were Irish; Thomas Orwell, the exception, was a Franciscan friar who was translated to the see from Killala in 1398, but who acted as suffragan in Ely and Norwich.¹⁷⁵ In England during this period, the few elections which did take place normally occurred in dioceses which were financially and politically crippled, a parallel perhaps to the situation in Dromore.

What do these statistics reveal in terms of the two-nations divide? In the province of Armagh, for instance, of the known appointments, twenty-two Englishmen were provided to their dioceses, whereas only nine were elected by the chapter. The appointment of Irish bishops in this province presents a more balanced picture – fourteen were elected by the chapter and fifteen were

¹⁷⁵ See W.M. Brady, *Episcopal succession in England, Scotland and Ireland, A.D. 1400–1875*, vol 2 (1876–77), 710. *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 254, 342. While bihsop of Killala and suffragan at Ely (1389–1404), Thomas made out his will, dated 1401 and proved in 1404, which requested to be buried at Grey Friars, London. This is kept in the National Archvies, Kew (PROB 11/2A/114).

provided by the pope. In the province of Cashel, nineteen Englishmen were appointed by papal provision and twelve were elected, while five Irish were provided and fourteen were elected. The results for Dublin, the most anglicised province of all, are the least surprising, not one Irishman being elected to an episcopal seat, although one was provided to the diocese of Leighlin. A total of sixteen English prelates were elected to dioceses in the province of Dublin and seventeen were provided to their sees. Finally, in Tuam, the most Gaelic province, only three Englishmen were actually elected by their chapters, in the dioceses of Killala, Elphin and Achonry, while ten Englishmen were provided to sees by the pope. A total of sixteen Irish were elected to bishoprics in the Tuam province and fourteen were provided by the pope. The key here is to look closely at the election figures, which concur with John Watt's two-nations dichotomy. Armagh, a divided province, elected fourteen Irish and nine English to its dioceses. Fourteenth-century Cashel was, in political terms, within the sphere of English influence, but also had some heavily gaelicised areas which is reflected in the diocesan election figures: fourteen English and twelve Irish were elected to sees. The results for the province of Dublin are the most stark; no Irishman was elected to any bishopric during the fourteenth century, whereas sixteen Englishmen were elected by their chapter. On the other side of the coin is the province of Tuam, where three Englishmen and sixteen Irishmen were elected to dioceses. Perhaps the election figures reflect the ethnic composition of cathedral chapters in each of the ecclesiastical provinces.¹⁷⁶

5.7

MONK BISHOPS IN THE CATHEDRAL

THE RELIGIOUS orders were one of the mainstays in medieval Irish society. The number of monk-bishops appointed to dioceses has not yet been considered in the Irish context. Because all except two or possibly three of the Irish cathedrals

¹⁷⁶ See chapter 4.1 'Ethnic composition of cathedral chapters'.

were secular,¹⁷⁷ it is no surprise to see secular prelates in a majority. Ireland boasted the second greatest number of religious houses in these islands, after England. Despite that, however, relatively few were promoted to bishoprics in either Ireland or in England.

In England, according to Katherine Harvey, there was hostility towards monk-bishops, and very few existed throughout the later medieval period. Her explanation for this hostility is attributed to the way in which the English perceived a 'model bishop' to be. 'The great wealth of many of the English bishoprics' she says, 'combined with their sheer physical size, meant that administrative ability was of great value in a member of the episcopate'.¹⁷⁸ Yet it was believed that members of the religious orders did not have the capacity or experience for such administrative duties. By contrast, in Scotland and in France, the powers of the bishop were somewhat diluted, as was the negative opinion of monk-bishops. Irish dioceses were on the whole territorially smaller than their English counterparts, and significantly poorer, perhaps more comparable to Scottish dioceses. The following analysis suggests that Dublin, the most anglicised of the provinces, adopted the English hostility towards monk-bishops, despite the fact that it was host to a monastic cathedral. This is evidenced by the fact that Dublin supported very few monk-bishops (only fifteen per cent of what Armagh sustained) whereas Armagh supported the greatest number of monk-bishops.

The Tuam province provides similar figures to Dublin in that very few in the religious orders held bishoprics, yet it is doubtful that it adopted the English hostility towards monk-bishops, since it had an overwhelming majority of Irish bishops, and only a paltry twenty-three English bishops between 1170 and 1400. Nevertheless, there is also an obvious lack of representation from the religious

¹⁷⁷ See the chapter three for an analysis of the monastic cathedrals.

¹⁷⁸ Katherine Harvey, *Episcopal appointments*, 219.

orders in this province. It is not so straightforward as to say that the area inhabited by the native Irish appointed monk-bishops more than their counterparts in the English lordship. Perhaps the religious orders were not well represented in the episcopacy of Tuam because there was a lack of religious orders generally in the province. For instance, the Benedictines were never established in the province of Tuam. Because Benedictine foundations occurred in English-established areas it may explain their absence in the province of Tuam. The only Benedictine to succeed to a bishopric in the province was an Englishman who was promoted by means of provision. Robert, a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury was provided to the see of Clonfert on the translation of John de Alatre to the archbishopric of Benevento in 1295.¹⁷⁹ According to Canon Leslie he never resided in his diocese but instead acted as suffragan in Canterbury, 1296–1307,¹⁸⁰ having a three-year sojourn in Rome from 1296.¹⁸¹

There were only ever four Franciscan houses founded in the province of Tuam, which is reflected in the complete absence of Franciscan bishops prior to 1300.¹⁸² A sample look at some of the dioceses within the province during the whole period supports this theory. For instance, Killala only had two Augustinian priories, one in Aughris, just west of Sligo, and another at Crossmolina in county Mayo, not far from Ballina, founded c. 1270. It maintained one Cistercian house, at Clare Island, founded c. 1224 and one Dominican friary in Rathfran, in north county Mayo, founded in 1274.¹⁸³ During the whole period, the diocese supported two Dominican bishops and one Franciscan. The first Dominican bishop, Seoán Ó Laidig, was elected in 1253 to the diocese of Killala.¹⁸⁴ Up until

¹⁷⁹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 561.

¹⁸⁰ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Clonfert.

¹⁸¹ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 568.

¹⁸² Claregalway (1252), Kinalehin (c. 1371), Roscommon (c. 1268), Ross (1351), Strade (1252).

See *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 240–1.

¹⁸³ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 153–6, 121–3, 220.

¹⁸⁴ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 395.

1252, Athenry was the only Dominican foundation in the province of Tuam and so it can be assumed that, if Seoán Ó Laidig was a local man, then he must have been a member of the Athenry friary since no other Dominican house existed up to that point. Killala was the only diocese in the province to support a Franciscan bishop, Thomas Horwell (Orwell), who was provided to the see in 1390.¹⁸⁵ He was suffragan in Ely (1389–1404) and Norwich (1395–8); it is most likely that he never visited his diocese since he was translated to Dromore in 1398.¹⁸⁶

The greatest number of monk-bishops in the diocese of Achonry came from the Cistercian order, despite the fact that not one Cistercian house was ever founded there.¹⁸⁷ Killala and Elphin were the only two dioceses in the whole of the province of Tuam to have Cistercian foundations, at Clare Island (Killala) and at Boyle (Elphin).¹⁸⁸ There were two earlier failed foundations at Drumcunny and Grellachdinach, before the Cistercians settled on Tuam.¹⁸⁹ In light of this it is rather surprising that Achonry had three Cistercian bishops, two of whom were Irish and whose links to Irish houses can easily be ascertained and one Englishman, Simon, who was provided to the see in 1385. Connmach Ó Torpaig, Cistercian abbot of Mellifont, was elected to Achonry in 1220. In the following century, Nicol alias Muirheartach Ó hEadhra, a Cistercian monk of Assaroe in the diocese of Raphoe was provided to the see of Achonry in 1348.¹⁹⁰ Simon's

¹⁸⁵ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 254; *Cal. papal letters 1404–15*, 499.

¹⁸⁶ See above, 258; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 254.

¹⁸⁷ For a wider analysis of the Cistercians and the episcopate generally see Joel Lipkin's prosopographical study of Cistercian bishops and archbishops, Joel Lipkin in 'The entrance of the Cistercians into the church hierarchy 1098–1227: the Bernardine influence', in E.R. Elder and J.R. Sommerfeldt (eds), *The chimaera of his age: studies on Bernard of Clairvaux* (Kalamazoo, 1980), 62–73.

¹⁸⁸ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 121–3, 128–30.

¹⁸⁹ Britta Kalkreuter, *Boyle Abbey and the school of the west* (Wordwell, 2001). Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian monasteries of Ireland: an account of the history, art and architecture of the white monks in Ireland from 1141 to 1540* (London, 1987).

¹⁹⁰ Ms 61, Leslie, transcripts, Achonry; *Calendar papal letters 1342–62*, 279.

decade-long reign of the diocese was probably as an absentee bishop for he is recorded as a suffragan bishop in four of England's most cosmopolitan dioceses – first in London (1385), then Winchester (1385–95), Canterbury (1386) and Lichfield (1387).¹⁹¹

One Dominican was provided to the bishopric of Achonry during this period, William Andrew, an Englishman who acted as suffragan in Canterbury before being translated to the more prosperous diocese of Meath in 1380.¹⁹² When William Andrew was provided to the see of Achonry there was only one Dominican house in the diocese, at Strade, in county Mayo. Nevertheless, it is highly doubtful that this English bishop (only the second to rule the diocese) came from the local house at Strade since Achonry was predominantly Gaelic Irish.¹⁹³ The metropolitan see of Tuam had only one archbishop from amongst the religious orders, Felix Ua Ruanada, Cistercian prior of Saul just outside Downpatrick in county Down. His career has been well documented, as he was no mere player on the national stage.¹⁹⁴

Nevertheless this hypothesis does not explain why Armagh had the greatest number of monk-bishops, particularly when one considers the number of religious houses in the province.¹⁹⁵ Over the whole period, the archdiocese of Armagh had two Augustinian bishops (both of whom were Irish and both appear relatively early in the period), two Franciscans (Irishmen who appear in the

¹⁹¹ William Stubbs, *Registrum sacrum Anglicanum: an attempt to exhibit the course of episcopal succession in England, from the records and chronicles of the church* (Oxford, 1947), 208.

¹⁹² John Healy, *History of the diocese of Meath*, 146. William Stubbs, *Registrum sacrum Anglicanum*, 204.

¹⁹³ *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 220.

¹⁹⁴ For instance see Henry Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: Connacht*, 1; AFM, *sub anno* 1238. Dunning, 'Irish representatives and Irish ecclesiastical affairs at the Fourth Lateran council', 90–113, esp. 92, 99–100; Katharine Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish church', 186, 195.

¹⁹⁵ This is especially vivid in R.N. Hadcock's *Map of monastic Ireland* (Dublin, 1959).

fourteenth century), and six Dominicans (four of whom were English, one German and one Irish).¹⁹⁶ In statistical terms it would appear that the archdiocese of Armagh, during this period, was well represented by the religious orders; it hosted one Benedictine house, one Cistercian, five Augustinian priories, two Dominican foundations, two Franciscan friaries and one Carmelite house. What is abundantly clear, however, is that most of these foundations were in county Louth, near the English-settled centres of Louth and Drogheda – a stark contrast to the more isolated picture in the north of the diocese where the English presence was far weaker.¹⁹⁷

On a national scale, the Augustinians and the Benedictines fare the worst with minimal representation amongst the episcopate. It is telling that between 1170 and 1300, the Cistercian order consistently provided the greatest number of bishops and archbishops of all of the religious orders. This could be explained by arguing that the Cistercians were one of the principal religious orders to reach Irish shores and that they spearheaded the twelfth-century reform of the Irish church. Indeed, Joel Lipkin's prosopographical analysis counted one hundred and fifty-one Cistercian bishops and archbishops across Latin Christendom between 1098 and 1227.¹⁹⁸ Therefore it is quite natural that they had the greatest representation amongst the prelates of Ireland. Nevertheless, it should be noted that fifteen Cistercian bishops were appointed between 1200 and 1250, with only half the amount being appointed prior to 1200 and twelve after 1250. In

¹⁹⁶ Conchobar mac Meic Con Caille, was abbot of SS Paul and Peter, Armagh before being elected to the archdiocese in 1174 and Echdonn Mac Gilla Uidir, was abbot of Bangor before his election and consecration in 1202. Michael Mac Lochlainn, O.F.M., lector of Armagh convent, was elected to the archbishopric in 1303 but was never consecrated. Thomas Ó Calmáin, O.F.M. was provided to the archbishopric by the anti-pope, Clement VII but his provision was without effect. The six Dominicans who succeeded to Armagh were Robert Archer (elected 1238, never consecrated), Albrecht Suerbeer of Cologne (1239–46), Rainaldo (1247–56), Máel Pátraic Ó Scannail (1261–70), Walter Jorz (1307–11), Roland Jorz (1311–22).

¹⁹⁷ See Hadcock, *Map of monastic Ireland*.

¹⁹⁸ Lipkin, 'The entrance of the Cistercians into the church hierarchy, 1098–1227', 63.

terms of their race, they were on the whole Irish; out of thirty-five, only five English Cistercian bishops ruled over Irish dioceses for the period 1170 to 1300.¹⁹⁹ Considering that in the thirteenth century Stephen of Lexington's denunciation of the Irish Cistercian houses had crippling effects, it is surprising to see so many members of the order in the Irish church hierarchy.

The Franciscans elected to Irish bishoprics in the second half of the thirteenth century bear mostly Irish names but by the second half of the fourteenth century and continuing into the fifteenth century this trend had completely shifted. For example, James O'Lagnan was elected to the archbishopric of Tuam in 1256, only to have his election quashed by the pope. Mauricius, precentor of Cloyne resigned the bishopric of Ross citing scandals and homicides as the cause. Before his promotion in 1253, he had vowed to enter the order of Friars Minor. Mauricius was succeeded in Ross by a fellow Franciscan Ualter Ó Mithigéin, who was elected in 1269. Alanus Ó Longáin, O.F.M. was elected to Cloyne in 1275; Malachy to the archbishopric of Tuam in 1279, but rejected by the pope; William O'Duffy elected to Cloyne in 1290 and his successor in that see, Donald O'Brien, who was elected in 1303; Michael Mac Lochlainn was elected to Armagh in 1303 but rejected by the pope; and Gilleburtus Ó Tigernaig, who was elected to the bishopric of Annaghdown in 1306.²⁰⁰ According to E.B. FitzMaurice and A.G. Little, all of these candidates, including those who were rejected, received the royal assent. Only two English friars succeeded to Irish sees during the thirteenth

¹⁹⁹ English Cistercian bishops in Ireland: Robert, abbot of St Mary's in Dublin, elected to Ardagh in 1217. Jocelinus, monk of St Mary's in Dublin was elected to Ardagh in 1232 and may have been English simply by association with St Mary's in Dublin which at that time was staffed by Englishmen. See Aubrey Gwynn, 'The origins of St Mary's Abbey, Dublin', *JRSAI* 79 (1949), 110–25. Adam, abbot of Wardon, in Bedfordshire was elected to Connor in 1242. William of Jerpoint was elected to the bishopric of Cork in 1265. Henry was abbot of Bindon in Dorset before he was elected to Emly in 1212. Radulphus, abbot of Melrose, was mostly likely Scottish and so not included as one of the five. He was elected to Down in 1202.

²⁰⁰ *Cal. papal letters 1198–1304*, 345; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 86, 139, 192, 311–12; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1302–7*, 84; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, 95.

century and both were appointed by the pope: John de Alneto was provided to Raphoe in 1263 and Nicholas Cusack was provided to Kildare in 1279. In the second half of the fourteenth century English Franciscans become more dominant in the church hierarchy than their Irish counterparts. For example, Ralph of Kilmessan, was provided to Down in 1329; Philip of Torrington was provided to the archbishopric of Cashel in 1373 (but was succeeded by an Irish Franciscan friar); Milo Corr, was provided to Clonmacnois in 1388, Thomas Orwell was translated to Dromore in 1398; David Corre was provided to Clonfert in 1398.²⁰¹

In the following century, the general trends stay much the same. The province of Armagh appointed the greatest number of monk-bishops and Dublin and Tuam were the least favourable towards them. The most popular religious order within the episcopate during this period is by far the Dominicans, ten of whom were appointed to dioceses in the province of Armagh. There does not appear to have been much of an ethnic divide in the Dominican order; over the period they supplied a balanced number of Irish and English prelates.

Conflicts between bishops and their chapters, when one party belonged to an order, were not completely unheard of in medieval Ireland. Nevertheless, the only clear example from the surviving records occurred in the short-lived see of Louth.²⁰² A dispute arose because property, which had once been vested in the bishop and chapter as a unit, was disputed between the two when the bishop

²⁰¹ *Cal. papal letters 1305–42*, 285; *Cal. close rolls 1368–74*, 609; *Cal. papal letters 1362–1404*, 337; *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 254; D.W.T. Crooks & J.B. Leslie, *Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert and Kilmacduagh succession list*, 351.

²⁰² On the life-span of the see of Louth see *Medieval religious houses Ire.*, 92–3. See also Gwynn, 'Armagh and Louth in the twelfth (and thirteenth) centuries', *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 1(1954), 1–11, 2 (1955), 17–37; H.J. Lawlor, 'The genesis of the diocese of Clogher', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society* 2 (1917), 129–153; Katharine Simms, 'The origins of the diocese of Clogher', *Clogher Record* 10 (1980), 180–98.

was no longer a member of the Augustinian community. On the whole the bishop was a member of the order and it would appear that he was on good terms with his chapter, as is supported by a charter granted to Peter Pippard by Bishop Cristin and Prior Thomas, with the consent of the chapter.²⁰³ Similarly, the earlier grants to Holy Trinity were made to the archbishop and convent without distinction between the two.²⁰⁴ Some monk bishops retained close links with their communities, although no longer part of them, and it may be that some used their episcopal status to aid their original house. The abbey of Athassel, for example, was engaged in a long-running dispute with the diocese of Limerick, which originated from a grant of benefices to the abbey by a former bishop without the chapter's leave. Twenty-five years prior to the settlement of the dispute, Hubert, bishop of Limerick had been abbot of Athassel, suggesting that he may have been the responsible for the grant of benefices without the chapter's permission.²⁰⁵

5.8

CAREERIST BISHOPS IN GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

WHERE THE divide between the two nations is expressed most clearly is in the appointment of ecclesiastics to prominent positions within the government.²⁰⁶ Throughout the period under examination seventy-one prelates held government positions, all of whom were of English extraction. It is also clear that

²⁰³ *Cal. doc. Ire. 1172–1251*, 12.

²⁰⁴ *Cal. Alen's reg.*, 34, 38, 52, 54.

²⁰⁵ *Black bk Limerick*, CIII-CXV, 1243–53; CII, 1239.

²⁰⁶ See also Stephanie Mooers Christelow's essay for an English example 'Chancellors and curial bishops: ecclesiastical promotions and power in Anglo-Norman England', in *Anglo-Norman studies: proceedings of the Battle conference xxii 1999* (Woodbridge, 2000), 49–69. More recently Elizabeth Gemmil has discussed lay patronage in terms of the English clergy: see Elizabeth Gemmil, 'Jobs for the boys?', *The nobility and ecclesiastical patronage in thirteenth-century England* (Woodbridge, 2013), 68–97.

some are of Anglo-Irish origin, such as Hugh de Taghmon, bishop of Meath (1254–82), treasurer and justiciar of Ireland.²⁰⁷

Furthermore, a prosopographical analysis of ecclesiastics in the government shows that bishops in the province of Dublin tended to monopolise affairs of state.²⁰⁸ The archdiocese of Dublin itself supplied three chancellors, four justiciars, and four treasurers, all of whom were loyal royal servants.²⁰⁹ Ferns contributed three to the government, two treasurers and one king's escheator.²¹⁰ Leighlin supplied a mere two, one chancellor and one vice treasurer and Ossory held nine positions within the government administration – three treasurers, four chancellors and two deputy justiciars.²¹¹ It is noteworthy that the same names rotate between the different posts fuelling the idea that cronyism was behind the government appointments. The only diocese in the Dublin province not to be concerned with government matters is Kildare which is astonishing given the fact that since the episcopacy of Ralph of Bristol, in 1223, every successive prelate was English.²¹²

²⁰⁷ Hugh de Taghmon was of an Anglo-Irish family from Taghmon in Co. Westmeath. See Anthony Cogan, *The diocese of Meath: ancient and modern*, 3 vols (Dublin, 1862–70), I, 73–5; See also Ronan Mackay, 'Taghmon (Tachmon), Hugh de', in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) (<http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do#>).

²⁰⁸ J.A. Watt briefly examined careerist bishops in terms of social mobility in 'The Anglo-Irish colony under strain, 1327–99', in *A new history of Ireland II: medieval Ireland, 1169–1534*, 362–3.

²⁰⁹ Chancellors: Robert Wikeford, Robert Waldeby, Thomas Cranley. Justiciars: Henry of London, Fulk de Sandford, John de Sandford, Alexander Bicknor. Treasurers: John Lech, Alexander Bicknor, John St Paul, Thomas Minot. For a list of Chancelors, Justiciars and Treasurers see *A new history of Ireland, vol. IX: maps, genealogies, lits* (Oxford, 1984), 469–77, 500–05.

²¹⁰ Treasures: John St John, William Charnells. King's Escheator: Geoffrey St John.

²¹¹ Leighlin: Chancellor: John Griffin. Vice-Treasurer: John Young. Ossory: Treasurers: Geoffrey de Tourville, Hugh de Mapilton, Alexander Petit. Chancellors: Geoffrey de Tourville, William FitzJohn, Alexander Petit, Richard Northallis. Deputy Justiciar: Geoffrey de Tourville, Alexander Petit.

²¹² W.H. Grattan Flood, 'The episcopal succession of Kildare (1206–1577)', *IER* 22 (1923), 154–63.

Another characteristic of these 'double-jobbing' bishops was that over the course of their careers they tended to hold more than one government position; for instance, most men who held the chancellorship also held, at another point, the position of treasurer. Indeed, in England it became customary to hold positions in the hierarchies of both church and state. Every one of King John's chancery clerks became bishops.

Not one bishop or archbishop from the province of Tuam held any position in the Dublin government. There are a number of reasons as to why this could be the case. Firstly, the province of Tuam was a heavily Gaelic area where very few English prelates ruled. In cases where there were English bishops appointed to dioceses in Tuam, many were non-resident, acting as suffragans in England. Moreover, because of the poverty and size of some of its smaller dioceses, there was little competition for the sees. Since the language of the west was largely Irish, presumably no English bishop was interested in considering a diocese in which he could not understand the people, particularly members of his own cathedral chapter. In practical terms, Tuam was geographically and politically distanced from Dublin, which meant that it was less likely to attract 'careerist' bishops. In her study on the Dublin archbishops, Margaret Murphy points out that their positions as administrator-bishops put them in situations where their 'landed power and their affinity with a particular social and economic group imposed a political role on them'.²¹³ Since they were all English, this would, one might assume, accentuate the two-nations divide.

Figures for the local picture back up the national scenario. The commissioners of the peace were inducted into the administration from about 1300 and appointed to every county in the country. As their name suggests they were enforcers of

²¹³ Margaret Murphy, 'Balancing the concerns of church and state: the archbishops of Dublin, 1181–1228', in *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland*, 42.

the law, and so those men who were appointed as commissioners were sure to be loyal crown servants. Unfortunately, records are not plentiful enough to detail all who sat as commissioners of the peace. Some counties, such as Carlow and Cork, or even the whole of Connacht, provide very sparse information, whereas records of the commissioners in Dublin are more abundant. During the fourteenth century only eleven bishops performed the role of commissioner of the peace, two of whom were Irish: Thomas Ó Cormacáin, bishop of Killaloe, commissioner of the peace for Tipperary in 1356 and the chief keeper in 1358, and Peter Curragh, bishop of Limerick, commissioner of the peace for Limerick in 1378.²¹⁴ There does not appear to have been any bishop appointed to keep peace in any of the western counties and only one bishop appointed to serve Ulster, Richard Calf, bishop of Down who served in 1376 or 1377.²¹⁵ Members of the episcopate as commissioners of the peace occur in counties Cork, Limerick, Louth, Meath, Tipperary, Ulster and Wexford. As expected, bishops are not represented in local government in the western dioceses, and neither are they represented in Dublin. The English crown was weakest in the western half of the country and the church hierarchy in this area was almost exclusively Irish. It was left to the likes of the de Burgh dynasty to serve the crown in Connacht. In Dublin, however, it could be suggested that the episcopate was busying itself with higher matters. Rather than serve the local government, where there would be sufficient choice of loyal royal servants, bishops tended to be involved in the higher offices of the Dublin administration.

Although the primatial see, Armagh lacked a real presence on the political scene, particularly when viewed in comparison to Dublin. It is doubtful that the archbishops of Dublin were more political than their counterparts in Armagh. On the whole, the dispute between the two archdioceses over the primacy of the

²¹⁴ For a discussion of the role of the commissioners of the peace and for a list of those holding the office, see Robin Frame, 'Commissions of the Peace in Ireland, 1302–1461', *Anal. Hib.* 35 (1992), 1–43.

²¹⁵ Frame, 'Commissions of the Peace', 31.

Irish church meant that many of the Armagh archbishops were reluctant to visit Dublin, which in turn kept them distanced from positions in the colonial government.²¹⁶ In addition to this, the archbishops of Armagh often found themselves caught up negotiating with the Irish of Ulster on behalf of the government.²¹⁷ What transpired for the archbishops of Armagh was that they 'were present at almost every treaty and parley that took place between the English and the Irish of the region'.²¹⁸ The desire for an amicable relationship between the Irish and the English was one that was pursued by at least two fourteenth-century archbishops of Armagh. Richard FitzRalph (1346–60) had chastised the settler population for excluding the Irish from guilds in Drogheda, and preached that the killing of or stealing from Irishmen was a sin.²¹⁹ Likewise John Colton (1381–1404) lectured on the ethnic divide, threatening those who endorsed it with excommunication.²²⁰

Another point to be made here is that the dignities in the diocese of Dublin were more likely to hold positions in either the local or national government. Six members of St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin had some kind of presence in the Dublin government and thirteen archbishops of Dublin were likewise appointed to government positions (excluding those who acted as commissioners of the

²¹⁶ For the dispute over the primacy see J.A. Watt, 'The disputed primacy of the medieval Irish church', *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* (Vatican, 1988), 373–83.

²¹⁷ Katharine Simms, 'The archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills 1347–1471', in *IHS* 19/73 (Mar., 1974), 38–55. See also J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations*, 208–10.

²¹⁸ Simms, 'The archbishops of Armagh', 43.

²¹⁹ Katherine Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph in Oxford, Avignon, and Armagh* (Oxford, 1981), 342.

²²⁰ *Reg. Swayne*, 11–12. See also J.A. Watt, 'John Colton, justiciar of Ireland (1382) and archbishop of Armagh (1383–1404)', in J. Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later Middle Ages: essays in honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven* (Dublin, 1981), 196–213.

peace).²²¹ In contrast, Armagh cathedral only had two archdeacons in the royal administration and only one archbishop.²²²

5.9

IRISH SUFFRAGAN BISHOPS IN ENGLISH DIOCESES

MOONLIGHTING IN the political sphere was only one method by which a bishop might maintain his household. Another source of extra income was by serving as a suffragan in another diocese. The term suffragan has more than one usage; in this case it refers to a bishop who worked as assistant to another English bishop, in, specifically, a diocese in the church in England. On the whole, these

²²¹ Thomas de Chaddesworth, dean of St Patrick's was one of the principal collectors of the tenth in Ireland (*Irish exchequer payments*, 132). Thomas de Montepessullano (Montpellier), canon of St Patrick's, was appointed as attorney of the archbishop of Dublin in 1327 (*Irish exchequer payments*, 326). William de Rodyerd, dean of St Patrick's, acted as deputy treasurer (*Irish exchequer payments*, 336), and chief justice of the Dublin bench (*Irish exchequer payments*, 337). Before he was archbishop of Armagh, John Colton was dean of St Patrick's and treasurer of Ireland (*Irish exchequer payments*, 528). Robert Dyke, archdeacon of Dublin was also keeper of the rolls of chancery (*Irish exchequer payments*, 573, 575, 576, 578). William Chambre, archdeacon of Dublin was also treasurer (*Irish exchequer payments*, 544). Archbishops of Dublin: Henry of London (*Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 75–6, 87, 140, 129, 152–3, 156, 180, 161, 219, 221), Fulk de Sandford (*Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 123, 124), John de Sandford (*Irish exchequer payments*, 26, 66, 111, 113, 121, 116), Alexander Bicknor (*Irish exchequer payments*, 184, 200, 220, 255, 394), John Lech (*Cal. patent rolls, 1307–13*, 585), Thomas Mynot (*Irish exchequer payments*, 481, 493, 509), Robert Wikeford (*Irish exchequer payments*, 542). Bishops of Ferns: John (*Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 347), William Charnells (*Irish exchequer payments*, 508). Bishops of Ossory: Geoffrey (*Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 33), Hugh (*Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 469; *Cal. doc. Ire. 1252–84*, 33), William FitzJohn (*Irish exchequer payments*, 223, 236, 238, 242), Alexander Balscot (*Irish exchequer payments*, 541).

²²² Robert Lutterell, archdeacon of Armagh (1237) held the treasury of Dublin with Geoffrey de Turville (1234), the chancellorship of Ireland for Ralph of Chichester (1234). *Cal. doc. Ire. 1171–1251*, 314, 335, 417. William de Birton, archdeacon of Armagh was also a King's clerk. *Cal. patent rolls 1307–13*, 64.

individuals tended to be English-born bishops appointed to Irish dioceses that had no intention of visiting their diocese. They maintained themselves instead within their suffragan diocese, which usually happened to be their native diocese. There are other layers to consider, however, such as the fact that most cases of suffragan bishops can be found in the poorer Irish dioceses. That is to say, if an English bishop (because they are mainly English) is appointed to a poor Irish see he was inclined to supplement his income by assisting in an English diocese. There is also the issue of appointing English bishops to predominantly Gaelic dioceses. In certain cases, some bishops were unable to take possession of their diocese, either because the clergy or even their metropolitan forced them out, or as I have already commented on, they simply did not understand the language. Acting as suffragan was not peculiar to English bishops alone. There was the occasional case where an Irish bishop was compelled to take up a suffragan bishopric in England because he could not enter his Irish diocese. For instance, the long-running struggle between the dioceses of Annaghdown and Tuam overshadowed the episcopate of Gilbert, bishop of Annaghdown between 1306 and 1323, who in consequence of this struggle assisted in dioceses in England. He was suffragan in Winchester in 1313, Worcester in 1313 to 1314 and Hereford in 1315.²²³ Gilbert died in England, sometime prior to 1322, when he was serving as suffragan in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield.²²⁴ This more or less explains why the fourteenth-century province of Tuam had a much higher rate of suffragan bishops than any other. Rather remarkably, fifteenth century Dromore had nine bishops who acted as suffragans in England.²²⁵ Although outside of the timescale for this study, it is worth noting such a peculiarity. What this case could possibly reveal is either the dire poverty of the diocese or the fact that local tensions (to put it mildly) prohibited the bishops from attending to their diocese which was still largely in Irish hands.

²²³ William Stubbs, *Registrum sacrum Anglicanum*, 208.

²²⁴ Michael Robson, 'Gilbert Ó Tugernaig, bishop of Annaghdown', 48–68.

²²⁵ Anthony Lynch, 'Religion in late medieval Ireland', 4.

Owing to the events which fractured the fourteenth century, many English bishops who were appointed to predominantly Gaelic sees showed no inclination to spend time in their diocese and if the offer of a suffragan office in England appeared, the appeal would be much stronger. It appears that this is particularly the case in the province of Tuam where the royal government was weakest. Considering the divided nature of Irish society, an individual in the church hierarchy could potentially be representative of a new secular order. For example, the foisting of an English bishop onto a predominantly Gaelic diocese could be seen by the indigenous people as an attempt to safeguard the interests of the English colony. This could explain why for instance Tuam province had the greatest number of Irish bishops acting as suffragans in England in the fourteenth century, when the Gaelic resurgence was at its height and the colony was increasingly weakened.

Out of the thirty bishops who acted as suffragans in England from 1170 to 1400, eight of them were Irish. The earliest of these was Eugenius, bishop of Ardmore and suffragan in the diocese of Lichfield between 1184 and 1185. Indeed, he was the only Irish bishop of the twelfth century to act as suffragan in England, the next being Ailbe Ua Máel Muid of Ferns who served at Winchester in 1201.²²⁶ We know that Eugenius was suffragan in an English diocese because his name appears three times in the pipe rolls of the English Exchequer.²²⁷ Each time it is in relation to payments made for episcopal duties. Of the indigenous Irish bishops who served in English dioceses, two were elected to their bishoprics in Ireland, two were provided, one was transferred and for the remaining three we are

²²⁶ See Dónal O'Connor, 'Eugenius, Bishop of Ardmore and suffragan at Lichfield (1184–5)', *Decies* 60 (2004), 71–90; idem, 'Bishop Eugene of Ardmore revisited', *Decies* 63 (2007), 23–34; H. Hoare, *History of the town and county of Wexford. The town, castle, and cathedral church of Ferns; the town and castle of Enniscorthy; the towns of Gorey and Newtownbarry; and the northern part of the county* (London, 1911), 185.

²²⁷ *Pipe Roll Society*, xxxiv (London, 1913–), 24, 142.

lacking in evidence.²²⁸ All of them belong to a religious order except for Eugenius, bishop of Ardmore. In addition to this, each one of these bishops was involved in affairs outside of Ireland, either with the papacy, as is the case with Ralph Ó Ceallaigh, archbishop of Cashel and suffragan to the bishops of York and Winchester, or with the English crown, such as Gilbert, bishop of Annaghdown and suffragan in at least nine English dioceses.²²⁹ Some, however, were simply appointed to serve English dioceses because they were already in England on business with the crown.

The province of Tuam had by far the largest number of bishops serving in English dioceses, four of whom were bishops of Annaghdown, two bishops of Achonry, two of Clonfert and one bishop of Killala.²³⁰ Throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was an on-going battle for the unification of the dioceses of Annaghdown, Achonry and Kilmacduagh with Tuam. It caused difficulty for some of the bishops serving in the dioceses to the extent that they

²²⁸ Cairpre Ó Scuapa, O.P. was provided to the bishopric of Raphoe and suffragan in Canterbury, 1273; Radulphus Ó Ceallaigh was provided to the bishopric of Leighlin and acted as suffragan in York in 1344, he was translated to Cashel in 1346 and suffragan in Winchester, 1346; Eugenius, bishop of Ardmore was suffragan in Lichfield in 1184/5; Tomás Ó Mellaig I, bishop of Annaghdown was suffragan in Lincoln in 1246; Gillebertus Ó Tigernaig, was elected to Annaghdown in 1306 and acted as suffragan in Coventry & Lichfield in 1308–9, 1312, 1322, Lincoln in 1308–9, 1312–13, 1322, Chichester, 1309, Salisbury in 1311, York in 1313–14, Bath and Wells in 1314, Winchester in 1313, in Worcester in 1313–14, and in Hereford in 1315; Ailbe Ua Máel Muid was bishop of Ferns and suffragan in Winchester in 1201; Ralph de Kilmessan was provided to the see of Down in 1329 and acted as suffragan in Lincoln in 1329.

²²⁹ Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae: Munster*, 88; *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 203; William Stubbs, *Registrum sacrum Anglicanum*, 206, 208.

²³⁰ In terms of ethnicity, it was mainly English bishops in the province of Tuam who acted as suffragans in England. It is likely that these men were unable to take up their positions in Tuam because of the Gaelic resurgence. Annaghdown: Tomás Ó Mellaig I (1242–7), Gilbert (Gillebertus) Ó Tigernaig (1306–23), Robert Petit (1325–8) and Henry Trillow (1394–1402). Achonry: William Andrew (1373–80) and Simon (1385–95). Clonfert: Robertus (1296–1307), Robert (1320–23). Killala: Thomas Orwell (1390–8).

were not always able to visit their bishopric because of the threat from their own metropolitan. This might explain why so many bishops from these dioceses resided in England.

5.10

THE GREAT WESTERN SCHISM AND THE IRISH CHURCH HIERARCHY

The divide in the church came about after the death of Pope Gregory XI in Rome in 1378. It emerged when the College of Cardinals became unwilling to accept the authority of the newly elected Pope, Urban VI (1378–89). Many cardinals withdrew their support for him and elected Robert of Geneva, Clement VII (1378–94), who returned to Avignon. Both popes had their followers: France, Spain, Scotland and Sicily aligned themselves with Clement while Urban was supported by the Holy Roman Empire, England, Hungary, Scandinavia and most of Italy. The previous chapter noted that the cathedral chapters remained relatively untouched by the schism in the western church because there is no evidence to suppose that the rival popes attempted to exploit local tensions; the Irish episcopate, however, was a different matter.

Since papal provisions were the normal means of appointment in the later half of the fourteenth century, the rival popes were able to exploit political tensions and loyalties to their own advantage. There is evidence to suggest that the Irish church divided its allegiances according to the generalisation made in the previous chapter – that Gaelic Ireland supported the anti-pope and that Anglo-Ireland supported Urban VI. The Archbishop of Tuam, Gréagóir Ó Mocháin, openly favoured Clement VII in Avignon, and issued a mandate for his suffragans to follow suit.²³¹ One of his suffragans, Bishop Robert of Killala (1351–81), an Englishman from Waterford, was an Urbanist and refused obedience to Clement. In response his archbishop attempted to depose him as a bishop but Robert

²³¹ He was himself deposed by Urban VI in 1386. *Cal. papal letters 1342–62*, 245. See for example, Liam Swords, *A people's church*, 76.

responded by publically declaring the archbishop excommunicated.²³² English influence was weakest in the western half of the country, particularly since the Gaelic resurgence which had taken place in the first half of the fourteenth century. In Elphin, Thomas Barrett, archdeacon of Annaghdown, was provided to the bishopric in 1372 only to be deprived the following year by Clement VII who promoted a local priest, Seoán Ó Mocháin, to the episcopal seat.²³³ Robert, bishop of Killala, was also deprived of his see because he 'acknowledged Bartholomew [Urban VI] as the true pope'.²³⁴ In Cashel, the see alternated between English and Irish archbishops throughout the fourteenth century. During the early years of the schism the archdiocese was held by an English Franciscan, Philip Torynton (1373–81), who was a vociferous supporter of the Urbanist cause. Clement VII saw Torynton's death as an opportunity to insert an archbishop who was sympathetic with his own cause. Drawing on his support amongst the Irish Franciscan province, Clement provided Michael, minister of the Irish province to the archbishopric of Cashel in 1382.²³⁵ The provision was swiftly overturned by Urban VI who provided Peter Hackett, a member of a local prominent Anglo-Norman family to the see and transferred Michael to Sodor (the Isles of Scotland). In Armagh, six out of the eleven dioceses changed hands due to rival submissions. All of the dioceses in the province of Dublin supported Urban VI and there appears to not have been any attempt by the anti-pope to interfere with provisions in this province since loyalties were firmly embedded. Of the ten suffragan sees in Cashel, Waterford and Lismore (which had been united in 1363) remained in English hands; Cork and Cloyne had been under

²³² Katherine Walsh, 'Ireland, the papal curia and the schism: a border case', *Genèse et débuts du grand schisme d'Occident. Avignon, 25-28 Septembre 1978* (Colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 586), 570–1.

²³³ *Cal. papal letters* 1342–62, 245–6.

²³⁴ *ibid.*

²³⁵ *Bullarium franciscanum romanorum pontificum*, VII, 243, Sbaralea, Rossi, & Eubel (eds) c.f. Fitzmaurice and Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province of Ireland*, 162. *Cal. papal letters* 1362–1404, 246. See also Walsh 'Ireland, the papal curia and the schism', 566–7.

English control for over a century and continued on this path. Limerick had been under English rule since the beginning of the thirteenth century but in 1400 a Gaelic Irish prelate, Conchobhar Ó Deadgaidh, was provided to the see.²³⁶ The western dioceses of Ardfert, Ross, Killaloe and Kilfenora were under native control.

The political dimension had a huge effect on the composition of the episcopate during the schism and the two-nations divide was exploited as part of this. The anglicisation of the Irish episcopate was, as Katherine Walsh has illustrated, once again on the agenda for the English crown. In 1381 the English ambassador in Rome reported that tensions and open warfare in Ireland resulted in candidates appointed to ecclesiastical offices within the lordship who were not ethnically English nor able to speak the language. In the interests of the Urbanist cause, the pope should appoint candidates who 'conformed to the standards suggested by the English crown in this respect'.²³⁷ This strongly implies that efforts were being made to exploit the situation in Ireland in order to gain concessions for crown candidates. In their study of the Irish Franciscan province, Fitzmaurice and Little commented on the large number of English names appearing amongst the episcopate, many of whom were absentees who intended on remaining as suffragans in England and Wales.²³⁸ Overall, the schism had its greatest impact in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam where Gaelic influence was strongest and where appointments to sees were often disputed. In Dublin, the schism had much less of an impact since loyalties were undivided and English control over

²³⁶ *Cal. papal letters 1396–1404*, 268. Angela Bolster details the bishops in the diocese of Cork during the schism in her paper 'The diocese of Cork and the Great Western Schism', *JCHAS*, 71–2 (1966), 92–102.

²³⁷ Walsh, 'Ireland, the papal curia and the schism', 567–8.

²³⁸ E.B. Fitzmaurice & A.G. Little, *Materials for the history of the Franciscan province of Ireland*, xxix–xxx. See also Michael Robson's article 'Franciscan bishops of Irish dioceses active in medieval England. A guide to the materials in English libraries and archives', *Collectanea Hibernica* 38 (1996), 10.

the secular and the ecclesiastical administration remained steadfast: Robert Wikeford, archbishop of Dublin (1375–90) was also chancellor of Ireland from 1376 until 1385.

5.11

CONCLUSION

THE PATTERN of episcopal appointments in Ireland was to some extent distinct from that which existed in England, or elsewhere for that matter. Primarily because local factors reigned over the larger political situation, ethnic tensions reverberated through a great many aspects of Irish life. The method of appointments to Irish dioceses exposes an episcopate which was blighted by efforts to enforce the two-nations divide, yet at the same time in tune with the wider developments of Latin Christendom.²³⁹ The thirteenth-century Irish church appears to be one that adhered to the enactments established in 1215. Nevertheless, capitular elections were perhaps not as authentic as may first appear. Behind the scenes, other forces were working to ensure the election of the 'right' candidate. At different points in the century the crown and the justiciar imposed their own candidates on Irish sees. But if challenged by the chapter, the pope would always favour the local candidate. The fourteenth century saw the development of provisions, allowing politics to play a greater role in the election process. The role of the king was somewhat diluted by papal letters of appointment until Edward II confronted it in a new policy in which the election-candidate 'renounced' the pope's right to the temporalities. Crown mandate in this respect, which differed to practice in England, was carried out by the justiciar and the escheator. During the reign of Edward II it became the norm for chapters to seek royal licence to elect from the justiciar. By the mid-

²³⁹ Katherine Harvey has a very comprehensive chapter on episcopal appointments in England, France, Scotland and Italy, see *Episcopal appointments in England, c. 1214–1344*, chapter 6, 'Episcopal appointments in a European context', 190–228.

fourteenth century papal provisions were the convention across Latin Christendom. Rather than it being a planned effort at centralizing the Roman church, provisions stemmed from an increase in the number of appeals to the papal curia. P.A. Williams suggested that the increase in papal activity in Ireland should be seen as geographic, rather than anything else. Avignon was simply more accessible than Rome and so the traffic thereto increased.²⁴⁰

On the whole the results presented here are predictable, and both the western and eastern dioceses more than adequately fit their stereotypes. The episcopal sees within the English Lordship were dominated by English men who themselves were involved in the government of the Lordship. The western dioceses maintained their links with Gaelic lords and recoiled from the influence of the English colony. In Elphin, for instance, there appear to have been no English bishops during this period whatsoever. Nevertheless, there are anomalies, such as Henry of Ardagh, bishop of Derry, apparently appointed by papal provision. Or thirteenth-century Kildare, a diocese in the heart of the English Lordship, governed consecutively by four English bishops, none of whom were active in the political sphere. The ecclesiastical *milieu* of twelfth- and thirteenth- century Ireland was indeed a fractured and ethnically divided body. Still, the racial bitterness born out of the divide between the two nations may not have always been the foremost concern of the church in Ireland, but it 'was ever latent, often open and always a poison to aggravate wounds inflicted in quarrels about other things'.²⁴¹

The royal position in Irish episcopal elections is extremely difficult to classify. Firstly, there is the issue of the temporalities and the power of the justiciar in assuming the royal functions, and not always with crown approval. During Edward II's reign, from 1323, the unapproved activity was stopped and the king

²⁴⁰ A. Williams, 'Irish episcopal succession', 83.

²⁴¹ J.A. Watt, 'Edward I and the Irish church', in *Med. studies presented to A. Gwynn*, 137.

sought to re-establish his control. Perhaps the king's renewed interest in Irish episcopal elections relates to the position of the colony in the first half of the fourteenth century, which was weakened by the Gaelic resurgence. This interest is further evidenced in the fact that in 1324–6, the crown tried to persuade the pope to reorganise the dioceses of Ireland with increased crown control. This, however, was not successful. Edward III appears to have had less interest in controlling the temporalities of the Irish episcopate. He dropped his father's scheme of reorganisation and increased crown control and in terms of appointments to bishoprics he seems to have had less involvement. Nevertheless, his reign saw a sharp peak in the numbers of Englishmen succeeding to Irish sees in both Armagh and Cashel.

CONCLUSION

The twelfth century ushered in a new era in which the Irish church moved closer to Rome. The demarcation of dioceses was the first step to a more administratively defined ecclesiastical arrangement. These new dioceses were ruled by cathedrals, which were themselves governed by a body of clerics, known to us as chapters. One could suggest that the twelfth century was the era of cathedral building *par excellence* across the Latin world, indeed by the thirteenth century cathedrals and their chapters were firmly entrenched. Not only was the church in Ireland transformed on a massive scale but also the territory itself was conquered and partially colonised by its closest neighbour, the English crown. The new status quo created, as Archbishop John Swayne would later observe, a severed land.¹ How this dichotomy between two nations impacted on the cathedrals in medieval Ireland has been assessed in this thesis.

The formation and development of Irish cathedral chapters was an episodic and protracted transformation, which took place over much of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The restructuring of the twelfth-century Irish church was implemented by native Irish clergy, many of whom were the architects of the newly modeled cathedral chapters along the four-pillars design. The careers of bishops such as Ailbe Ua Máel Muaid, bishop of Ferns, or Gilla Críst Ua Connairche, bishop of Lismore, illustrate that the Irish were at the forefront of developments which had their roots in the European church reform movement. Nevertheless many Irish cathedral chapters did not institute all of the four square pillars, particularly in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam where dioceses were poor, the cathedrals themselves were built on a small-scale, and the number of canons (when recorded) were few. It was neither necessary nor feasible for such cathedrals to employ all of the named dignities that one might find at any of the larger cathedrals in Latin Christendom. The only places in the

¹ *Reg. Swayne*, 111.

north-west of the country to support the four dignities were the archdioceses of Armagh and Tuam. Even here, Englishmen were under represented whilst in some dioceses they were entirely absent. Conversely, in the south-eastern part of the country, namely in the provinces of Cashel and Dublin, all of the four pillars were represented in the cathedrals. Because there was not an overarching 'one size fits all' plan for secular cathedrals, individual anomalies existed, for instance at Limerick, where, for some time, the archdeacon ranked next to the dean. Provincial trends sometimes prevailed, such as with the institution of the office of provost and the demise of the office of chancellor in the province of Tuam, which had parallels in areas of continental Europe. Overall it transpires that the four-pillars design, although commenced by native Irishmen, was ultimately concentrated among those dioceses which were geographically and politically aligned with England. Nonetheless, this pattern may actually have less to do with political or ethnic allegiances than it did with economic affluence.

The monastic cathedrals in Ireland were an anomaly and only numbered two or possibly three. Their perseverance during a time when secular cathedrals were flourishing is likely testament to their patronage. Christ Church (Holy Trinity) was one of the richest cathedrals in Ireland, and although it produced no archbishops for its archdiocese in the later medieval period, it was nevertheless one of the most important institutions in ecclesiastical Ireland. The Benedictine community at St Patrick's cathedral in Downpatrick was established by John de Courcy. His patronage established it as the cathedral for the diocese of Down and his choice of Benedictine canons was likely an attempt to emulate the Benedictine cathedrals in England. Newtown Trim may have functioned as a cathedral but, its official status as such is highly questionable as the evidence suggests. Nevertheless, it is the most intriguing of all of the monastic cathedrals, and like its counterparts in Dublin and Downpatrick, it owed its survival to its patron, the de Lacy's of Meath.

Ascertaining the ethnic composition of cathedral chapters has proved a challenging task because patronymics are not always recorded. On the whole, however, the results have been predictable, with very few surprises. The Gaelic Irish were dominant in the cathedrals in the western dioceses and in those beyond English jurisdiction, such as Killaloe. In these areas recruitment was from the local pool and English or, for that matter, even papal servants were less likely to be attracted to positions in these parts. The efforts of the parliament to exclude Irishmen from holding benefices in areas under English control were effectively still-born and the Black Death served to increase the capacity of canons to move from the less prosperous areas to more affluent ones. This resulted in a large number of Gaelic Irish clerics working in areas which traditionally favoured Englishmen. In addition to this, the value of benefices in the eastern dioceses was on average greater than those of the western dioceses, which made them more attractive to Gaelic clerics. The Bruce invasion and the Black Death impoverished many dioceses, as is evidenced in the declining values of prebends. The discrepancies in some of the values, namely those presented in Pope Nicholas's taxation, alongside later financial data from the papal registers bring to light evidence previously overlooked by scholars. Like their Scottish counterparts, some Irish dioceses were significantly undervaluing their benefices or at least being economical with the truth. Since there is enough evidence to suggest that two countries in Latin Christendom were distorting the value of benefices, a further examination of that which pertained in other countries would be of interest. Assessing the path to the episcopal office has also proved a challenge, considering the total number of bishops over the whole period and the lack of extant information for some dioceses. Overall, the path to promotion was through the offices of archdeacon and dean, which reflected more widespread trends.

Increased papal activity in episcopal succession in Ireland from the fourteenth century was concomitant with an accretion of local control over selection. For

instance, the provisions of John Mac Cerbaill (1307) and John O'Grady (1332) to Cashel were probably at the behest of the chapter. In terms of the highly contested positions, such as at Cashel in 1254, the papacy tended to side with the local candidate. The stakes changed, however, if the pope had a third candidate, as was the case when Walter Jorz was appointed to the archdiocese of Armagh in 1307.

That Irish bishops were receptive to the involvement in Irish affairs of the English crown is evidenced as early as 1172 when the Irish bishops attended the Council of Cashel, which was summoned by Henry II.² The royal position vis-à-vis Irish bishops is complicated by the involvement of the justiciar in episcopal elections but also by events such as the Gaelic resurgence, which weakened the colony. The appointment of Irishmen to episcopal offices during the lordship of John suggests that amicable relations existed between the crown and the Irish church hierarchy. Henry III's reign is overshadowed by the efforts to anglicise the episcopate during his minority. In the 1270s, during the reign of Edward I, the archbishop of Cashel, supported by the bishops of Killaloe and Emly, led a movement (albeit failed), which sought the extension of English law to the whole of Ireland.³ This would suggest that prejudices between the two nations were not entirely intractable, or at the very least it implies that Irish bishops saw some merit in the advantage of English rule. That said, each king ruled according to events of the time and his own mien. Despite the weakening state of the colonial administration and the racially discriminatory policies of anglicisation (of which the 1366 Statutes of Kilkenny is the pinnacle), the attempts to accentuate a dichotomy between the *ecclesia inter Hibernicos* and the *ecclesia inter Anglicos* were not as successful as they first appear because the foremost concern of the church was with matters spiritual and not temporal.

² Flanagan, 'Henry II, the council of Cashel and the Irish bishops'.

³ Seymour Philips, 'David MacCarwell and the proposal to purchase English law, c. 1273–c. 1280', *Peritia* (1996), 253–73.

This thesis set out to establish the arrangement of Irish cathedral chapters and to compare them with their counterparts across the Christian world. Because Ireland was a colony of the English crown, one might expect to find similarities with the secular cathedrals of England. Less anticipatory in the findings were the similarities with nations further afield, such as Germany and surprisingly Poland. Indeed, these findings will hopefully prompt future research in this field. An additional thread running through this thesis explored the two-nations theory first popularised by Professor J.A. Watt in the 1970s. As pointed out in the introduction, any history of later medieval Ireland must consider this dichotomy since it affected every aspect of life in Ireland. The results presented in this thesis, in terms of how the church functioned in Ireland, challenge this theory. Certainly there was a geographic divide between the westerly dioceses and the eastern dioceses but this divide arguably had more to do with practical obstacles such as the language barrier or the economic poverty of the westerly dioceses, than it had with racial prejudice. What became most apparent was that the dominant concern of the church, whether in Ireland, England or elsewhere, was not of racial prejudice, although human nature at times allowed such prejudices to seep in, as was seen when the archbishop of Armagh and the bishop of Down were accused of making constitutions which prohibited Englishmen from joining the religious houses in their dioceses.

The broad spectrum of this thesis has lain the foundations for future avenues of research. The cathedrals of the archdioceses of Armagh and Dublin would benefit from further comparative analysis now that we have an understanding of their foundation and function. Both cathedrals have received their fair share of scholarly attention but neither had been the focus of an in-depth comparative study. Armagh's cathedral chapter was predominantly Irish and yet it was ruled by mainly English archbishops who were constantly preoccupied with the ethnic divide amongst the lay people of the archdiocese. Furthermore, the episcopal and diocesan registers might be used for a study of the relationship between the

chapter and its diocesan and the relationship between chapter members themselves, particularly for the fifteenth century, which has not been addressed in this thesis. There is also cause to extend the time frame of this thesis up to the Reformation. Had this been attempted here it would possibly have made the current study too unwieldy and proved impractical given the time-constraints of the project, and it was felt that it is important to understand the foundation of cathedrals before attempting an examination of the latter generations. Chapter four, which focused on bishops in Ireland, particularly the anglicisation of the episcopate, brought to the fore the involvement of the English crown in this regard. It has also paved the way for further study on the relationship between each of the monarchs of England and the Irish church hierarchy right up to the Reformation. Overall, however, the formation and function of Irish cathedral chapters, whilst distinct in some respects from the experience elsewhere, could draw many parallels from its counterparts in England and elsewhere. Although, therefore, Ireland was at the edge of Europe, it was nonetheless at the centre of developments across the Christian church.

A.1 VALUE OF DIGNITIES IN EACH OF THE FOUR PROVINCES

VALUE OF DIGNITIES IN THE PROVINCE OF ARMAGH											
	ARMAGH	ARDAGH	CLOGHER	CLONMACNOIS	CONNOR	DERRY	DOWN	DROMORE	KILMORE	MEATH	RAPHOE
ARCHDEACON	50m. (1398), 20m. (1427), 40m. (1427)	40s. (1306), 3m. (1346), 8m. (1407), 10m. (1411)	NO VALUES	7s. 8d. (1306), 12m. (1422)	12m. (1394) (6 for the archdeaconry and 6 for the attached benefice), 12m. (1418)	NO VALUES	NO VALUES	3 m. (1306), 4m. (1414)	NO VALUES	70m. (with canonry & prebend of Howth, St Marget's in Lincoln, church of Patryngton in York) (1398), Kells in Meath 120m. (1411), Kells in Meath 100m. (1417), Kells in Meath 100m. (1420), 100m. (1421)	NO VALUES
DEAN	200 gold florins (1366), 70m. (1398), 60m. (1414)	12m. (1412), 20m. (1418), 30m. (1422)	3 m. (1306), 20m. (1399), 14m. (1411), 12m. (1422)	2s. (1306), 6m. (1398), 12m. (1421), 20m. (1426)	NONE	20m. (with it's benefice) (1401), 40m. (1404), 30m. (1407), 40m. (1409), 60m. (1420)	NONE	NO VALUES	NO VALUES	NONE	21s. (1306), 30m. (1420), 30m. (1425)
PRECENTOR	NONE	NONE	NO VALUES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NO VALUES	NONE
CHANCELLOR	26 shillings (1365), 8m. (1421)	NONE	NO VALUES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
TREASURER	NONE	NONE	NO VALUES	NONE	NONE	NO VALUES 4m. (1407), 6m. (1411), 12m. (1411), 5m. (1411), 8m. (1412), 6m. (1412), 7m. (1412), 10m. (1412), 7m. (1412), 5m. (1414), 8m. (1414), 15m. (1414), 3m. (1415), 9m. (1415)	NONE	NONE	NONE	10m. (1411)	NONE
CANONRIES & PREBENDS	25m. (1257), 15m. (1404), 12m. (1413), 16m (1416)	5m. (1397), 6m. (1397), 4m. (1397), 14m (1397)	1m. (1306), 25m. (with cure of souls or 18 without (1395), 12m. (with cure) (1398), 20m. (1409)	2 s. (1306), 2m. (2 prebends) (1398), 6m. (1398)	NONE	NONE	NONE	3m. (1392), 4m. 1407, 4m. (1414), 6m. (1420), 8m. (1422), 5m. (without cure) (1422), 4m. (1429)	NO VALUES	25m. (1395), 16m. (1405), 6m. (1405), 18m. (1421)	
OTHER							PRIOR, 50m. (1420)				

VALUE OF DIGNITIES IN THE PROVINCE OF CASHEL										
	CASHEL	ARDFERT	CLOYNE	CORK	EMLY	KILLALOE	KILFENORA	LISMORE	LIMERICK	WATERFORD
ARCHDEACON	30m. (1406)	24m. (1396),	10m. 50s. (1306), 10m. (1350), 30m. (1417), 20m. (1418)	10m. (1396), 15m. (1398), 20m. (1414), 16m. (1418)	8l. (1306), 12m. (1418)	60m. (1394), 50m. (1398), 24m. (1424)	12m. (1390), 15m. (c. 1405), 10m. (1405)	30l. (with two benefices) (1389), 10m. (1427)	40m. (1366), 50m. (1414), 40m. (1427)	NO VALUES
	NO VALUES	20m. (1410), 23m. (1432)	7m. 10s. (1306), 14m. (1413)	10m. (1418), 5m. (1427)	7l. (1306)	3(?)m. (1306), 10m. (1414), 12m. (1419), 12m. (1424)	10m. (1411), 10m. (1419), 11m. (1420)	16m. (1398)	34l. 2s. 8d. (1306), 20l. (1354), 21m. (1357)	10m. (1351), 20m. (1396), 24m. (1401), 20m. (1421)
PRECENTOR	NO VALUES	10m. (1422)	10l. (1306), 1m. (1413)	NO VALUE	10m. (1306)	9m. (1411), 8m. (1414), 6m. (1428)	NO VALUES	8l. Old sterling (1425)	20l. (1421), 40m. (1429)	7m. (1394)
CHANCELLOR	NO VALUES	7m. (1410), 8m. (1417)	28 1/2m. (1306), 12m. (1397), 15m. (1398)	NO VALUE	10m. (1306)	8m. (1404)	3m. (1404), 6m. (1420), 5m. (1421)	NO VALUES	14l. (1343), 40m. (1392), 40m. (1399), 50m. (1421)	12m. (1400)
TREASURER	NO VALUES	NO VALUES	8m. (1306)	NO VALUE	4l. (1306)	NO VALUES	6m. (includes a benefice) (1405)	NO VALUES	NO VALUES	NO VALUES
CANONRIES & PREBENDS	20 florins (1357), 15m. (1406), 40m. (1406)	14m. (1422), 10m. (1396), 25m. (for 2 benefices) (1396), 15m. (for 2 benefices) (1398), 70m. (1398), 12m. (1398), 14m. (1422), 2m. (1422)	5m. (1352), 4m. (1359)3m. (1395), 3m. (1397), 12m. (1398), 20m. (1406), 10m. (1406), 7m. (1407), 25m. (1413), 18m. (1413), 23m. (1418), 20m. (1418).	6m. (1393), 10m. (1400), 8m. (1406), 10m. (1406), 9m. (1411), 6m. (1418), 6m. (1418), 7m. (1418), Perpetual vicarage Kinsale (40 m., 1418), 1m. (1425),	NO VALUES	9m. (with another benefice) (1390), 10m. (1394), 30m. (Scattery/ini scathaig (1397), 8m. (1398), 12m. (1398), 5m. (1399), 4m. (1399), 12m. (1399), 9m. (1411), 12m. (1428), 3m. (1411)	3m. (1405), 1/2m. (1414), 3m. (1414), 5m. (1419)	8m. (1400), 2m. (1422), 60m. (rectory of Dungarvan in king Richard's patronage) (1400), 4m. (1400), 30m. (1405)	18m. (1354), 21m. (1357), 3m. (1357), 20 gold florins (1368), 12m. (1398), 25m (1405), 8m. (1405), 15m. (1406), 12m. (1406), 8m. (1414), 16m. (1420), 16m. (1421), 20m. (1427), 12m. (1427)	NO VALUES

VALUE OF DIGNITIES IN THE PROVINCE OF DUBLIN					
	DUBLIN	FERNS	KILDARE	LEIGHLIN	OSSORY
ARCHDEACON	40l. (1306), 100m. (1412)	20m. (1393).	18l. 6s. 8d. (1306), 20m. (1421)	20m. (1401)	60m. (1418), 96m. (1420), 70m. (1421)
DEAN	100m. (1306), 100m. (1391), 250m. (1400), 300m. (1428), 150m. (1428).	30m. (1437).	53s. 4d. (1306)	16m. (1421)	50m. (1403), 30m. (1407), 60m. (1412), 40m. (1412), 40m. (1413), 60m. (1417), 80m. (1420)
PRECENTOR	40m. (1306)	20m. (1398), 30m. (1418)	26s. 8d. (1306)	10m. (1412)	15 or 20m. (1421)
CHANCELLOR	40l. (1306), 20l. (1344), 20m. (1354), 100m. (1404).	NO VALUES	26s. 8d. (1306)	4m. With its annexed canony and prebend (1424)	20m. (1405)
TREASURER	20l. (1306), 50m. (1391), 60m. (1401).	20m. (1412)	26s. 8d. (1306)	NO VALUES	NO VALUES
CANONRIES & PREBENDS	60l. (Swords) (1306), 15m. (1407), 8m. (1407), 60m. (Lusk) (1411), 80m. (Howth) (1414), 86m. (Castleknock) (1417), 200l. (Swords) (1420), 360m. (Swords) (1421)	6m. (1352), 25m. (1389), 10m. (1389), 20m. (1393), 30m. (1400), 80m. (Taghmon) (1400), 24m. (1410), 20m. (1411), 24m. (1412), 30m. (1418)	12m. (1400), 10m. (1404), 3m. (1407), 12m. (1427),	2m. (1407), 15m. (1413), 6m. (1418), 3m. (1424)	10l. (1363), 10m. (1400), 25m. with cure, 18 without (1402), 14m. (1418), 10m. (1424)

VALUE OF DIGNITIES IN THE PROVINCE OF TUAM							
	TUAM	ACHONRY	ANNAGHDOWN	CLONFERT	ELPHIN	KILLALA	KILMACDUAGH
ARCHDEACON	15m. (1398)	6m. (1401)	10m. (1413), 8m. (1419)	66s. 8d. (1306)10m. (1398), 15m. (1404), 15m. (1425)	24m. (1404), 60m. (1404)	6/. (1308), 15m. (1398)	5m. (1306), 8m. (1393)
DEAN	£204. 14s. 1d (c. 1306), 8m. (1413), deanery of Mayo 8m. (1419)	8m. (1428), 30m. (1412)	4m. (1419), 3m. (1428)	4l. (1306), 14m. (1398), 25m. (1411),	12 florins (1350), 30m. (1391), 8m. (1394), 30m. (1404), 24m. (1411)	10m. (1410)	2m. (1306), 10m. (1418)
PRECENTOR	NO VALUES	NONE	NONE	1s. (1306)	NONE	2m. (described as simple office (1400)	6s. 8d. (1306), 2m. (1425)
CHANCELLOR	NO VALUES	NONE	NO VALUE (only one)	17s. 9d. (1306)	NONE	NONE	1 gold ducat (1405)
TREASURER	NO VALUES	NONE	NONE	37s. 9d. (1306)	NONE	NONE	24s. (1306)
CANONRIES & PREBENDS	6m. (1401), 8m. (1411), 1 1/2m. (1418), 2m. (1419)	5m. (1396), 3m. (1397), 5m. (1401), 25m. (1412), 15m. (1418)	NO VALUES	2m. (1398), 4m. (1398), 3m. (1405), 2m. (1413), 2m. (1425), 3m. (1427), subdeacon 12m. (1398)	25m. (1397), 8m. (1398), 5m. (1411), 8m. (1413),	4m. (1411), canonry with no value (1423), 8m. (1428), 3m. (1428),	4s. (1306), 10s. (1306), 20s. (1306), 4m. (1407), 3m. (1423), 2m. (1423), 1m. (1425)
PROVOST	with a canonry, prebend 5m. (1308), 3m. (1401), with parish church of Dunmor 28m. (1421)	10m. (1418), 8m. (1420), 5m. (1428)	NONE	NONE	NO VALUES	16m. (1417), 20m. (1427)	30s. (1306)

A.2 DISPENSATIONS FOR PLURAL BENEFICES*

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIOCESE	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Armagh	1245	?	?	grant to archbishop to provide for others plurality of benefices
	1256	>2	25m.	Master Abraam, archpriest/chaplain to Archbishop, one benefice with cure, besides the two which he has
	1330	>2	100l.	Stephen, archbishop , to hold benefices in addition to his see
	1346	>2	?	Charles Macheda, canon of Armagh, church of Tambacktieth in Armagh, prebend in the diocese of Annadown, canonries in Armagh, Tuam, Annadown and Derry, third part of the fruits of the church of Donachmore in Derry and the moiety of the rectory of Atochill in Connor
Ardagh	1367	2	?	Peter Okerbyllan, canon of Armagh, dispensed to hold the church of Dompnachfinrym and the rectory of Diriluran
	1427	2	40m.	William Hadesors, archdeacon and priest of Armagh, the parish church of Dever
	1421	2	?	Donatus Olucharean, chancellor , the rectory of Aregaldachero, the rectory of Acheocaille
	1411	2	18m.	Carbrius Ofergail, archdeacon of Ardagh, the perpetual vicarage of Kyllinasichigi
Clogher	1397	2	14m.	Florence McMurtagh, canon of Ardagh without a prebend, the perpetual vicarage of Sraid Maigibreachai
	1411	2	19m.	Odo Olucheran, dean , priest, rectory of Dompnachfyndra in Clogher
	1398	2	?	John Obanan, canon , rectory of Deruaylayn in Clogher
	1398	2	?	dean
Clonmacnois	1398	2	6m. +?	dean
Connor	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
	1404	>2	?	Donald Macgillibridy, dean of Derry, canon & prebend of Raphoe, rectory of Teachbuechyn in Raphoe
Derry	1420	>2	60m. +?	John Macmolynd, dean of Derry, canon and prebend of Clogher
	1414	>2	?	Maurice Macblosaid, canon and prebend of Derry, vicarage of Tamlachasrda/Ardo (8m.) and rectory of St Mary's Balembonaid (15m.)
	1421	>2	?	Nellanus Macmolphansig, canon & prebend of Derry, rectory of Dompnachmor (8m.)
Down	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
Dromore	1392	>2	?	Adam Orogonya, canon of Dromore, prebend, church of Dromoloinn in Dromore
	1422	>2	5m. + 2m. +?	John Magynd, canon of Dromore, perpetual vicarage of St Ronan de Land in Dromore (2m.), perpetual benefice/prebend of the parish church of St Mowus de Dompnachluana (5m.)
	1254	>2	?	Richard of Malmesbury, archdeacon , 2 other benefices.
Meath	1401	2	?	Robert Montayne, bishop , parish church of Kyldalke in the diocese
	1254	2	?	Grant to Peter de Berkeley, clerk of Hugh, bishop to hold two benefices with cure in the province of Canterbury
	1363	>2	?	Philip Blont, alias Whyte, dispensation to hold two canonries and prebends
	1254	2	?	Faculty to Hugh, bishop , to grant dispensation to 3 clerks of his diocese to hold two benefices each with cure in the province of Armagh
	1411	2	?	Adam de la Naas, archdeacon of Kells in Meath and canon of Dublin, prebend of Tyb in Dublin
	1420	>2	400m.	Thomas Rosell, archdeacon of Kells in Meath to which the parish church of Nobber is annexed, perpetual vicar of St Peter's in Drogheda, canon and prebend of Swords, in Dublin, canon and prebend of Glemethan in Dublin, canon of Lincoln

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIOCESE	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Raphoe	1405	>2		? Phillip Macgrabuartyaġh, deacon , canon, prebend and benefice of Raphoe
	1420	>2		? Cornelius Macgilkbridi, dean of Raphoe, canon and prebend of Derry
	1427	>2		? John Ogubuyrn, canon & prebend of Raphoe and Derry, rectory of Cluoinmane, canon of Limerick and of Ossory with expectation of prebends
Cashel	1406	>2		? William Oduyr, canonry and prebend of Kilmilchen, Cashel, canonry and prebend of Tallaghbrek, Limerick, parish church of Kilucg in Ferns (15m.)
	1343	>2		David Odonir, canonries & prebends in Cashel, Cloyne and Killaloe, the rectory of Adealachachillis and the vicarage of Cluchour
	1364	>2		? John Ograde, archdeacon of Cashel and canonry and prebend of Killaloe
	1420	>2		? Nicholas Haket, treasurer of Cashel, dean of Ossory, canon and prebend of Inysnak, Ossory and Kyhtagayn and Donnachmoyr in Lismore, archdeacon of Ossory (96m.) (resigns treasurership upon obtaining archdeaconry
	1396	2		? Nicholas Bull, archdeacon of Ardfert, holds a vicarage in the diocese also
	1424	2		? Maurice O'Hullochayn, treasurer of Ardfert held without dispensationthe rectory of Rynduera
Ardfert	1396	>2		? Theodoric Oconchur. Rector of Dubhachacha, in Ardfert, dispensed to hold one, two or more benefices, not a canonry and prebend in the cathedral church...
	1422	>2		? John Fitzmoris, precentor of Ardfert, recotry of Kylllury in Ardfert, canonry and prebend of Kyllgobnythan, Lismore, canonry and prebend of Fyenayim, Ardfert
	1398	>2		? Gerald FitzMoris, canonries and prebends of Bellachachacha in Cloyne and Effyn in Limerick, canonry of Lismore with prebend, the rectory of Dungarvan (60m.) in the diocese of Lismore and the rectory of Moynachyghacha in Limerick
Cloyne	1398	>2		? Nicholas Oconyll, chancellor of Cloyne, canonries and prebends of Ardfert, Cloyne and Cork
	1398	>2		? Edmund Fitx Adam, canonries and prebend of Cloyne, Lismore, and Kyllide in Limerick
	1418	>2	20m. + 15m. + ?	Richard de Muer, priest of Ardfert, canon and prebend of Belachaha in Cloyne (20m.), rectory of Cluberby and the perpetual vicarage of Anyin Cloyne and Emly (value together 15m.)
	1406	>2		? Eugene Offelayn, dean of Cloyne, canonries and prebends in Limerick and Lismore
	1406			? Phillip Ohaylle, canonry and prebend of Culeuney in Cloyne (10m.), and canonry and prebend of Balaghach in Cloyne also
	1418	>2		? Donald Omongayn, deacon of Cloyne, canonry and prebend of Kyll Brogayn in Cork (6m.), rectory of Bruchundy in Cork (7m.)
Cork	1391	>2		? John Rede, archdeacon of Cork, holds canonries and prebends of Lismore, Downaghmore in Limerick, Ferns, Cashel and Waterford
	1418	>2	10m. + 7m. 40m.= 57m.	? Richard Pellayne, dean , holds canonries and prebends of Lismore and Emly, and the perpetual vicarage of Kynsall
	1343	2		? Nicholas Ograda, canonries and prebends in Cork and Killaloe
	1383	>2		? Phillip Lowe, rector of Holy Trinity, Cork, dispensed to hold benefice with cure and further dispensation granted in 1383
	1406	>2		? John Corre, rector of Kylmuid, canonry and prebend of Lisperi in Cork (8m.), holds the perpetual benefices of Rosomunly and Bailemmolan and Kylmo in Cork.

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIOCESE	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Emly	1290	>2	?	William, bishop of Emly, reservation for 2 years, of the churches of Wessinton, Brinton, and Hyrecestre, in the dioeses of Durham and Lincoln
	1418	2	12m. +8m. =20m.	Thomas O'Riordan, archdeacon of Emly (12m.), canonry and prebend of Effyn in Limerick (8m.)
	1405	>2	?	Maurice Coggran canonries and prebends of Esterlawran in Emly, Glasmore in Lismore, Tillaghbrek in Limerick
	1390	>2	?	Malachy Ohymayr, clerk, archdeacon of Kilfenora with cure (12m.), canon and prebend of Limerick
	1404	2	?	John Odalayg, deacon and chancellor of Kilfenora
Kilfenora	1405	>2	?	Ruadricus Odallayn, deacon, perpetual beneficiary (portionary) in Kilfenora, treasurer , the united parish churches of Bunrate and Drumlaygill in Killaloe
	1421	>2	?	Nemeas Macgyrrenaystyr, clerk, canon, prebendary and chancellor of Kilfenora
	1405	2	?	Florence Olochlaynd, archdeacon of Kilfenora (10m.), perpetual vicarage of Carudnahymyan
	1394	>2	?	Cornelius O'Dea, subdeacon and archdeacon (60m.) of Killaloe, perpetual rectories of the parish churches of Dissertmolacala, Killnafearwagy and Kyllkady, canonries and prebends of Killaloe and Kilfenora
	1343	2	?	Thomas Ocornakan, canon , dispensed to hold two benefices
Killalloe	1343	2	?	Nicholas Ograda, canon, dispensed to hold two benefices
	1343	2	?	Maurice Ograda, canon, dispensation to hold two benefices, one of which may be a canonry and prebend of a cathedral church
	1411	2	?	Rory Olonyrgayn, official general in the city of Killaloe of bishop Donatus, precentor (9m.)
	1390	> 2	?	Robert Ohuallachayn, canonry and prebend of Killaloe, and canonry and prebend of Ross and the perpetual vicarage of the parish church of Kyllbalieoy in Killaloe (9m.)
	1398	2	?	Thomas Macraith, canon and prebend of Killaloe, the church of Drungbeib and a benefice in the gift of the bishop
Limerick	1398	> 2	?	Donatus Oachaegayn, rector of Birr (12m.), canonry and prebend of Lorchayn in Killaloe, the rectory of Kenelarga, (16m.), subdeacon
	1399	2	?	Thomas Okeallaygh, canon and prebend of Killaloe, perpetual vicarage of Tuaymfynlacha (5m.)
	1343	2	?	Stephen Lawelles, chancellor of Limerick and canon and prebendary of Ardfer, Cashel, Lismore, Cloyne and Cork
	1405	> 2	?	Thomas Obroggy, canon and prebend of Donmachmor in Limerick, perpetual vicar of Tuaymfynilacha in Killaloe, the rectory of Kyllchumayn in Limerick, and any mutually compatible benefices, of any number and kind, even if canonries and prebends and dignities, major or principal or unique respectively and elective
	1414	>2	?	Thomas de Santo Jacobo, archdeacon of Limerick, canon and prebendary of Limerick
Lismore	1421	>2	?	Robert Howgan alias de Cork, rector of Compton Basset in Salisbury, chancellor of Limerick, perpetual vicarage of Kynsalle in Cork and canonry and prebend of Tylachbrik in Limerick canonry of Cork and prebend.
	1259	>2	?	John, dean of Lismore, indult to hold one benefice in Ireland with cure of souls besides those which he has
	1398	>2	12m. + 16m. +?	Henry Carthynt, dean of Lismore (16m.), canon of Limerick, priest, and canonries and prebends of Culeqwyne in Cloyne (12m.)
	1389	2	30/.	David Macuinrcharad, archdeacon of Lismore, and vicar of Lismore
	1389	2	12/.	Beanus Johannis Andree, dean of Lismore, rector of St manengs in Lismore
	1344	2	?	Hughe O'Kelly, canonries and prebend of Lismore and St Patrick's in Dublin
	1389	>2		Beanus Johannis Andree, rector of St Manengs, in Lismore, granted the deanery of Lismore, dispensed to hold tow benefices the fruits of both amounting to no more than 12/.
	1400	2	?	Maurice Ocoggran, canonry and prebend of Claismora inLismore (4m.), rectory of Dirrigalwan in Limerick, (4m.), and a benefice in Lismore

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIocese	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Waterford	1329	>2	?	John de Preston, canonries and prebends of Cashel, Cork, Waterford and Lismore, rector of Kilikide in Limerick
	1400	>2	?	John Nugent, perpetual chancellor of Waterford, canonry and prebend of Lismore
	1354	>2	?	Nicholas Disaard, canonries and prebends of Kilagy (Killwagon) in ferns, Clonemery in Ossory, Ballicassyn in Waterford and Donachmer in Lismore (value together 5l.), canonry and prebend of Coleevny in Cloyne
	1239	2	?	Richard de Garde, dean , rector of Tunebrigg in Rochester
Dublin	1300	?	?	Ralph de Manton, precentor of Dublin and King's clerk
	1409	>2	60m.	Robert Sutton, canon (with prebends) of Dublin, Ossory and Cashel, the free chapel without cure of St Bicholas, Karig, in Ferns, and the church of Slane
	1306	?	?	Richard de Haverings, precentor of Dublin and papal chaplain
	1346	>2	?	Hugh de Calce, chancellor of Dublin, dispensed to hold an addition church, he being unable to geet anything from the devastated church of Arpeston, annexed to the cahncellorship
	1363	2	10l. + 20m.	Nicholas de Chelington, Chancellor of Dublin (20m.) and canonry and prebend of Ossory 10l.
	1355	>2		Thomas Minot, archbishop of Dublin, held canonries in England and Ireland
	1398	>2	?	Robert Mey, canon and prebendary of Dublin, rector of Balygarth in Meath, provision to hold another benefice with or without cure in the gift of the Bishop of Meath
	1412	>2	?	Robert Carran, archdeacon of Dublin, provided with a canonry and prebend of Dublin and of a benefice with or without cure
	1414	>2	?	Robert Sutton, canonry and prebend of Howth in Dublin (80m.), rector of Slane in the diocese of Meath, and another canonry of Dublin and the prebend of Swords (80m.)
	1417	>2	?	Thomas Saint Ledger, canon and prebendary of Castleknock in Dublin (86m.) and canonries and prebends of Molaghynan in Cashel and Oghorath in Ossory
	1349	>2	?	Matthew de Briselee, dean of Dublin, holds canonries and prebends of Lincoln and Salisbury
	1329	>2	?	William de Lescapou, canon and prebend of Dublin, rector of Athboy in Meath
Ferns	1331	2	?	John Fleming, canon and prebend of Dublin and rector of Slane, in Meath
	1331	2	?	Henry Lehwyra, canon and prebend of Dublin, rector of Athboy in Meath
	1223	2	?	Geoffrey, precentor of Ferns, granted an additional benefice, provided he reside thereon
	1398	2	?	Gerald Sutton, precentor of Ferns (20m.), canon and prebend of Limerick
	1412	>2	?	Nicholas Broun, treasurer of Ferns (20m.), prebendary of Monemolyng, parson of the chapel and churches of Kylduwe, Balycongy, Carne, dispensed to hold an addition benefice with cure, the deanery of Ossory (60m.)
	1412	>2	?	Augustine MacBradaich, treasurer of Ferns, perpetual vicar of the parish church of Dreng and Leachtrach in Kilmore (10m.), archdeacon of Elphin (60m.), benefice called the rectory (14m.), the parish of Telachgarve, dispensed to hold for three years
	1389	2	25m. + 8m. = 33m.	Patrick Wisse, canonry and prebend of Kyllaugny in Ferns (25m.) and the vicarage of St Michael's, Coventry (8m.)
	1318	2	?	William Bodenham, canon of Ferns, with a pension from the chapter of 20s., canonry of St Patrick's in Dublin
	1389	2	?	Reginald Offrey, priest, canon and prebend of Ferns, vicarage of St Patrick, Bylmor in Ferns (10m.)

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIOCESE	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Kildare	1407	>2	?	Henry Poule, canonries and prebends in Kildare (12m.), Leighlin (2m.), canonry and prebend of the second portion of Typerkevine in Dublin (8m.), and perpetual vicar of St Kevin's in Dublin (1407).
	1421	2	?	William Edwardi, archdeacon of Kildare (20m.), and the canonry and prebend of Ley in Kildare
Leighlin	1412	>2	?	Donald Macka[t]mail, precentor of Leighlin (10m.), canonry and prebend of Nurny in Leighlin, archdeacon of Glendalough, the rectory of Gildigni in the said diocese, value 40 and 28 marks respectively
	1351	>2	?	Walter de Gnoushale, treasurer of Leighlin, canon of Dublin, dispensed so that he may hold three benefices
	1391	>2	?	Walter Fyll, canon and prebendary of Ossory, church of Kiltakan in Ossory
	1238	>2	?	William de Kilkeny, canon of Salisbury, king's clerk, dispensed to hold multiple benefices
Ossory	1346	>2	?	William Obrodyr [O'Brody], canonry and prebend of Ossory, canonry and prebend of Cashel and two vicarages
	1406		40m.	John Ocurke, canonry and prebend of St Malla in Ossory, the perpetual vicarage of Fethard in Cashel, value together 40m.
	1407	>2	?	Patrick Fox alias Raghat, dean of Ossory (30m.), canonry and prebend of Culene in Cloyne (7m.)
	1427	>2	?	John Ogubuy, canon & prebend of Raphoe and Derry, rectory of Cluoinmane, canon of Limerick and of Ossory with expectation of prebends, he later became bishop of Derry
	1414	>2	?	Maurice Coggeran, archdeacon of Ossory, canon of Lismore, rector of Dungarvan
Tuam	1421	2	28m.	Remundus Bremycheam, dispensed to hold the provostship of Tuam and the parish church of Dunmor in Tuam value 28m.
	1289	>2	?	Master William rector of Tynachtin, in Tuam, church of Cuccanffan in Cashel, (given to him in his 11th year), church of Moydrisue in Killaloe (before he turned 23), the churches of Athnetyg and Castle Oconheur and Tynachtin in Tuam and Killala and an episcopal dignity
	1418	2	8+2=10	William de Burgo, canon of Tuam, rector of Roba in Keraenach Dryleand and Home in the diocese of Tuam (8m.), and the canonry and prebend of Turlachomachyn in Tuam (2m.)
	1401	>2	?	Raymond de Birmingham, provost of Tuam (3m.), deanery of Tuam, the parish church of Raharanay in Tuam (14m.)
	1401	>2	?	Cormac Ocoymiean, archdeacon of Achonry (6m.), the rectory (6m.) of the lands of Cuilofind and Ranna in Achonry
Achonry	1397	2	6m.	Thomas Maccannadan, the perpetual benefice of St Athracha in Achonry (3m.), the perpetual vicarage of Kyllasraich in Achonry (3m.)
Clonfert	1389	>2	10 + 8 + ?	Malachy Okeallaich, archdeacon of Clonfert (10m.), canon of Clonfert, canonry and prebend of Keallabecga in Tuam, the rectory of Cnocdrum Calrigi, canonries of Clonfert and Elphin (8m.)
	1414	>2	16m	Thomas Olongain, dean of Clonfert, perpetual vicarage of Kyllmacagondain alias Fochinnach in Clonfert, the canonry and prebend of Theachsassain in Tuam and a canonry of Cloyne, value together (16m.)

Dispensations for plural benefices				
DIocese	DATE	NO.	VALUE	TITLE/STATUS PETITIONER
Elphin	1390	>2	?	Thady O'Keall, dean of Elphin, dispensed to hold three other benefices
	1411	>2	?	Donald Macdonnchaid, dean of Elphin (30m.), the perpetual benefice of De Dachorand, in Achonry (25m.), the perpetual benefice, called the rectory of Ratharannan alias Simmailruan in Tuam
	1400	2	?	Thomas Macmurchertaich, canon of Elphin and Ardagh
Killala	1257	2	?	Master Thomas, archdeacon of Killala, canonry and prebend of Tuam
	1427	>2	?	Laurence Obeollayn, provost of Killala, canonries and prebends in Killala, Achonry and Elphin
	1398	2	?	Thomas Baret, archdeacon of Killala (15m.), canon of Killala
	1400	>2	2m. + 60m. = 62	Magonius Oduda, precentor of Killala (2m.), any benefices in the church of any number and kind to the value of 60m., whether they be canonries and prebends or dignities
	1426	>2	?	Nemeas Obeollayn, canon and prebendary of Killala and Elphin, and perpetual vicar of Druymcliyab in Elphin (16m.)
Kilmacduagh	1407	>2	?	Nicholas Odubgilla, canonry and prebend of Kyndiuara in Kilmacduagh (4m.), the perpetual vicarage of Ardrachayn in Clonfert
	1393	2	?	Laurence Odendehuga, archdeacon of Kilmacduagh, the perpetual vicarage of Ardrathyn in the said dioceses (3m.)
	1396	>2	?	Maurice Macgillananach, archdeacon of Kilmacduagh, dispensed to hold one or two benefices, value together 25m. with cure or 18m. without

*

- 1 pound (L) = 20 shillings (s)
- 1 crown = 5 shillings
- 1 shilling = 12 pence (d)
- 1 penny = 4 farthings
- 1 mark = 13s 4d

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