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CHORAL INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE ENGLISH CHURCH:-

Their constitution and development 1340 - 1500.

(1342 Adkins)

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Thesis submitted to the University of East Anglia
for the degree of Ph.D.

1975

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Abbreviations:- Printed Sources

CCR	Calendar of Close Rolls
CChR	Calendar of Charter Rolls
CPR	Calendar of Patent Rolls
C.Pap.Reg.	Calendar of entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland.
MMB	F.LL.Harrison, Music in Medieval Britain (2nd. edn., London, 1963).
Monasticon	ed.W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum (new edn., ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, 6 vols. in 8, London, 1817-30)
3NOHM	ed. A. Hughes and G. Abraham, "Ars Nova and the Renaissance (c.1300-1540)":- New Oxford History of Music, vol.3 (London, 1960)
B iv (1) RISM	Repertoire International des sources musicales:- ed.G. Reaney, Manuscripts of Polyphonic Music, 11th-early 14th century (München, 1966).
B iv (2) RISM	Repertoire International des sources musicales:- ed. G. Reaney, Manuscripts of Polyphonic Music c.1320-1400 (Munich, 1969)
SCMA	K. Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages (2nd edn., Manchester, 1967)
Stat. Sal	C. Wordsworth and D. Macleane, Statutes and customs of ... Salisbury Cathedral (London, 1915)
VCH	Victoria County History
VE	ed. J. Caley and J. Hunter, Valor Ecclesiasticus, 6 vols, (Record Commission, 1810-34).

Abbreviations:- Journals

In order to limit the use of abbreviations to a manageable level, the titles of journals are not given in abbreviated form in the footnotes, but appear in full. For quotations from journals, the method of reference used in legal writings has been adopted; hereby the number of the volume appears in Arabic numerals before the name of the journal (rather than in Roman numerals after it, which is the standard, rather cumbersome practice).

Abbreviations:- Manuscript Collections and Repositories

ACL: Manuscripts of the Archbishop of Canterbury;- the Library, Lambeth Palace, Lambeth, London.

BAO: Bristol, Manuscripts of the City and Corporation:- Bristol Archives Office, Council House, Bristol.

BM: British Museum, London.

BMC: Boston, Manuscripts of the Borough and Corporation:- Borough Library, Boston, Lincolnshire.

BRO: Berkshire Record Office, Abbey Gateway, Reading.

CDC: Canterbury, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, the Cathedral, Canterbury, Kent.

CKC: Cambridge, Manuscripts of the Provost and Fellows of King's College:- College Library, King's College, Cambridge.

CSJ: Cambridge, Manuscripts of the President and Fellows of St. John's College:- College Library, St. John's College, Cambridge.

CUL: Cambridge University Library, West Road, Cambridge.

DLD: The De L'Isle and Dudley Manuscripts, being the manuscripts of Viscount De L'Isle, V.C., K.G.:- Penshurst Place, Tonbridge, Kent.

EDC: Ely, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Cambridge University Library, West Road, Cambridge.

EPF: Eton, Manuscripts of the Provost and Fellows of St. Mary's College:- College Library, Eton College, High Street, Eton-by-Windsor, Berkshire.

GRO: Gloucestershire Record Office, County Hall, Gloucester.

KRO: Kent Record Office, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent.

LGL: City of London Record Office:- Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2.

LRO: Lincolnshire Archives Office, The Castle, Lincoln.

NDC: Norwich, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, the Cathedral, Norwich, Norfolk.

NNRO: Norwich and Norfolk Record Office, Market Square, Norwich, Norfolk.

NthRO Northamptonshire Record Office, Delapre Abbey, Northampton.

OBL: Oxford, the Bodleian Library:- Catte Street, Oxford.

OMC: Oxford, Manuscripts of the President and Fellows of the College of St. Mary Magdalen:- College Library, Magdalen College, Oxford.

PDC: Peterborough, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Muniment Room, the Cathedral, Peterborough, Huntingdonshire.

PRO: Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London W.C.2.

SBR: Manuscripts of the Bishop of Salisbury:- The Bishop's Registry, The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

SCL: Salisbury, The Cathedral Library:- The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

SDC: Salisbury, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- The Diocesan Record Office, The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

SRO: Somerset Record Office, Obridge Road, Taunton, Somerset.

WinDC: Winchester, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, The Cathedral, Winchester, Hampshire.

WlsDC: Wells, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, the Cathedral, Wells, Somerset.

WlsVC: Wells, Manuscripts of the College of Vicars Choral:- Chapter Library, the Cathedral, Wells, Somerset.

WndDC: Windsor, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- The Aerary, St. George's Chapel, The Castle, Windsor, Berkshire.

WorDC: Worcester, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, the Cathedral, Worcester.

WorRO: Worcestershire Record Office, St. Helen's Church, High Street, Worcester.

WrkRO: Warwickshire Record Office, Priory Park, Cape Road, Warwick.

WSRO: West Suffolk Record Office, 8 Angel Hill, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

WstDC: Westminster, Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter:- Chapter Library, The Abbey, Westminster.

PART ONE:- Introductory

1.1. Scope, Context, and Parameters of Study

This thesis deals with the history of English liturgical choirs between the years 1340 and 1500. It seeks to enlighten the history of pre-Reformation English church music by relating to it the history of the personnel to whom its performance was entrusted. In the period of 160 years which is covered, the forces available to perform liturgical and religious music in England experienced an eventful history. In the first place, the number of choral establishments which already existed in 1340 was greatly expanded not only by a steady stream of wholly new collegiate and other foundations, but also by the adoption of musical responsibilities by existing religious institutions which previously had shown no particular enthusiasm for music. Further, the constitution and composition of liturgical choirs, and the functions and duties expected of their various members, underwent far-reaching modifications over this time. As one period succeeded another, the statutes of new establishments reflected changing conceptions of what constituted the ideal (or best practical) force for performing the church music of its time; to which older-established institutions had either to adapt the composition of their own personnel, or get left behind. This research seeks to expose and clarify the nature of these successive modifications, and to offer explanations for why they were found necessary.

The sum total of these developments may be considered to be of no small importance in the history of music. The difference between the liturgical choir of 1500 and that of 1370 is as great as the difference between the symphony orchestra of 1900 and that of 1770. The expansion of musical imagination expressed by the evolution of the classical and romantic styles of composition was linked inextricably with - and made possible by - a parallel expansion in the performing medium of music:- in this case, the evolution of the full symphony orchestra out of the small-scale court bands of the 17th century. In the 14th and 15th centuries in England, the performing medium of the then predominant form of serious music-making was the liturgical choir; the particular growth and evolution of the choir during this period can similarly be intimately related to the emergence and development of new and more demanding forms of musical composition, which were the expression of a

late medieval expansion of musical imagination just as fertile, and just as important for musical history,as that of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The date limits adopted may seem to require explanation, for neither 1340 nor 1500 is an evident turning-point in the history of English church music. The year 1340 was selected largely for its mere convenience. Firstly, it is only from about the middle of the 14th century that archive material first begins to survive in sufficient quantities to make possible the compilation of a coherent picture drawn from a representative selection of choral establishments. There are indeed scattered references to music, choirs and organs going back some 700 years previous to that. However, for most of the Anglo-Saxon period, Canterbury and York were frontier provinces of Western Christianity. In the counties and on the coasts of England, Christianity and paganism met and fought with varying fortunes. In the circumstances of those days, to seek to read into the tenuous historical remains any evidence of the permanent or persistent survival of musical institutions of any sort would be wholly inappropriate. From the late 11th century onwards, however, the surviving material takes on a far less equivocal nature, and steadily increases in quality and quantity thereafter. 1340, therefore, remains the declared starting-date for this study; however, material from the previous 100 years and more does exist, and will be freely drawn upon where it seems relevant.

Secondly, by 1340 some principal features of the general environment within which all choral institutions operated had reached the final form of their medieval development, and were to remain essentially unchanged until the Reformation. The 50 years following the Norman Conquest witnessed a major unheaval in the existing diocesan organisation, with the creation of new dioceses and the re-location of many cathedral churches. Except for a few further adjustments complete by the late 12th century, these proved to have been the final re-arrangements which were necessary. Thereafter, the site of the cathedral church, the secular or monastic nature of its staff, and the boundaries of each of the 17 dioceses, underwent no changes until the fresh upheavals of 1538-50. In this more settled atmosphere there went ahead the development and codification of the individual diocesan liturgies, each following the same general

pattern (ground that was common not merely to all the dioceses of England, but to those of all Western Christendom), but each containing its own individual peculiarities - until these, too, had by 1340 reached in all essentials the final form of their development.

With the consolidation of these liturgies, there necessarily went also the consolidation of the constitution of the choral forces provided at the cathedral church of the diocese to perform them. In broad outlines, the constitutions of the choirs of the secular cathedrals had been drawn clearly enough by the end of the 12th century; and at all of them the final details had been drawn in by 1340. The liturgies, and the choral forces which evolved at the secular cathedrals to perform them, became the models on which were based both the manner of worship, and the composition of those appointed to conduct it, at all the lesser secular establishments then existing or to be founded subsequently. Thus the choice of 1340 as starting-date permits the exposition at the outset of certain definitive facts and concepts which remain in effect for the entire period covered by this study.

Thirdly, it was the period of 150 years or so following the year 1340 which witnessed the creation of the English peerage. This was a phenomenon which - in its guise as the creation of a class of potent and wealthy patrons of music and musicians - was in the present context of great, though as yet only imprecisely calculable importance. There steadily emerged a small select aristocracy, whose number at any one time only once exceeded 20 families, but who constituted the great of the land. In the chapel establishments which they began to maintain in their households during their lifetime, and in the colleges of chantry priests which they founded for the welfare of their souls after their decease, they provided for the livelihood of a very significant proportion of active church musicians. It was their emergence as a privileged peerage in the years following 1340 which helped to make possible the initial expansion of the numbers of greater secular choral establishments in the 14th century, and to maintain the momentum of such foundations thereafter.

The year 1340 is, therefore, a useful date at which to start. 1500 was chosen to conclude this study because it represents the climax of a particular trend which began shortly after 1340, and becomes the leading theme of this study. In 1340, the choir of mixed voices as

a medium for the performance of polyphonic music was unknown. The full chorus of voices was utilised only for monodic plainsong; it was left to just three or four selected soloists to perform polyphonic compositions, and these items called only for men's voices. By contrast, the surviving contents of the Eton Choirbook, containing music composed mostly between 1470 and 1500, demonstrate the final eclipse of these older traditions by more modern, and more demanding, methods of performance. This was music which could not be tackled by just a few adult soloists. It called for a chorus of expert singers, boys as well as men, able to sing complex music in up to five parts and more; it recorded and reflected the establishment of SATB as the fundamental timbre of vocal music. By 1500 the chorus of human voices, as a medium for the performance of composed polyphony, had arrived at a point of development over which the experience of a further 475 years has not been able to effect any improvement; the year 1500, therefore, seemed a suitable point at which to bring this study to a close.

1.2. Method and organisation of research

There is no medieval religious institution for which the published primary sources exist in sufficient completeness for the purpose of compiling a history of its choir; reliance on unpublished manuscript material is therefore essential in every case. So even to study the history of only the major choirs of this period would have constituted an undertaking far beyond the scope of a doctoral thesis. The method adopted, therefore, was to take a representative selection from each of the major categories of religious institution, and to submit the archives of these to as thorough a search as time would allow. In all cases, examination of material was pursued as far as 1540-50; however, 1500 remains the declared terminal date for its utilisation for the purposes of this study. There follows a list of the institutions the range, extent, and accessibility of whose archives made them suitable subjects of study in depth:-

(1) Secular Cathedrals - St. Mary, Salisbury; St. Andrew, Wells.

(2) Collegiate churches -

(a) Colleges of prebendal canons - St. George, Windsor; St. Mary, Warwick.

(b) Colleges of chantry priests - St. Mary, Fotheringhay; Holy Trinity, Tattershall.

(c) Academic Colleges - St. Mary, Eton; King's College, Cambridge; St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford.

(3) Hospital chapels - (none sufficiently well documented).

(4) Monastic Lady Chapel choirs - the cathedral priories of Canterbury, Ely, Norwich and Worcester.

(5) Household Chapels - the Chapel Royal.

(6) Parish churches - (none sufficiently well documented).

The information provided by these principal studies required supplementation. It was decided to effect this not by turning to just a few other major collections of archives (a number of which, therefore, remain wholly unsearched), but by collecting information - whether of a corroborative or contrasting nature - from as broad as possible a sweep of institutions whose archives have survived in a fashion far less complete than those already listed. Emphasis was placed on two categories where more information was most evidently needed:- collegiate churches, the largest single category and the one involving the greatest variety of detail; and monastic Lady Chapel choirs, the category in which greatest difficulty in the interpretation of information had been experienced. The institutions selected for secondary study were as follows:-

(2) Collegiate churches:-

(a) Colleges of prebendal canons:- St. Mary Newarke, Leicester; St. Mary de Campis, Norwich.

(b) Colleges of chantry priests:- St. Antony, London.

(3) Hospital chapels:- St. Giles, Norwich.

(4) Monastic Lady Chapel choirs:- the abbeys of Bury St. Edmunds, Glastonbury, Ramsay, Peterborough and St. Benet at Hulme; and the cathedral priory of Winchester.

In addition there were found, in passing, odd manuscript references to the choral establishments of a great number of religious institutions, too large to list here. Further, the information drawn from manuscript sources has at all stages been supplemented by such information as can be drawn from printed sources, both primary and secondary.

1.3. Some unavoidable omissions

Three types of religious institution are conspicuous by their absence, and these omissions must now be explained. The title of this study was deliberately worded so as to exclude choirs composed of regular clergy. The largest single class of religious institution in medieval England was the monastery, of which the number between

1340 and 1536 fluctuated around the 800 mark. The majority of these were small, rural, unpretentious institutions unlikely ever seriously to have contemplated the cultivation of any music other than the standard ritual chant. However, there still remained some 50 or 60 monasteries with annual incomes ranging from £500 to over £3,000 p.a., maintaining choirs (the community was the choir) numbering from 15 to over 90; such institutions as these had the funds and facilities and, very possibly, the talent to attempt something more ambitious. Generally, however, the opportunity seems not to have been taken up, as will be explained in its place; and even in the three or four instances which are known to have been exceptions, very little positive information has survived. What musical talent was available at the greater monasteries seems generally to have been exercised not in the monks' choirs, but in the Lady Chapel choirs - and these have been fully researched. Discussion of the music cultivated in the monks' choirs has therefore been generally omitted; but it seems unlikely that this represents any great loss.

The second type of institution omitted is the friary. For these, no records survive. The various orders of friars were in principle - and to a large degree, in fact also - mendicant and without possessions. With little or no landed endowment, any sort of obedientiary system was out of the question, so there are no surviving accounts; nor were there any charters to preserve, so there are no registers, either. The houses were mostly small; and anyway, the whole ethic of the orders of friars, their genesis as a reaction away from the enclosed world of cloister and choir, and their emphasis on outside preaching, seem to militate against any likelihood that the embellishment of Divine Service with music figured at all highly on their priorities. As with the monks' choirs, their omission is regrettable, but probably represents no great loss.

The third omission is of greater moment; this is the choir of the type which was maintained in parish churches, of which the earliest examples probably came into existence during the second half of the 15th century. In the course of the collection of material for this study, the surviving archives of the following parish churches were examined:-

St. Botolph, Boston (Lincs.); St. James, Louth (Lincs.);
St. Laurence, Reading; St. Giles, Reading (Berks.);
All Hallows, Sherborne (Dorset); St. Michael, Cornhill, London.

It became plain that the best of the choirs established in parish churches were institutions of considerable musical significance, and that this study would not be complete without discussion of them. However, unsuspected difficulties began to arise. The type of archive most commonly surviving from parish church administration is the annual accounts of the churchwardens, but these give only a limited and incomplete picture of the choirs maintained there. On the whole, the maintenance of these choirs was the responsibility not of the churchwardens, but of the religious fraternities and gilds established in the church by the devout laity of the parish. In order, therefore, to discover accurately the constitution of each choir, it is necessary to find not only a set of churchwardens' accounts, but also sets of accounts of the parish fraternities. Some examples of these do exist, but they are not at all common; it is rarer still to find material of both types surviving from the same church, and yet rarer to find material dating from prior to 1500. Unhappily, the number of examples of fully documented parish church choirs remains insufficient to permit a valid attempt to be made at assessing the real nature, character and occurrence of choirs of this kind for the period in question. Rather than admit a good deal of speculation to the discussion, therefore, it seemed better to omit them altogether, pending the discovery of further relevant archive material.

Even after allowing for these omissions, this study still in no way pretends to present a complete history of all the major church choirs in the pre-Reformation period. Indeed, it is quite certain that many important choirs are in fact never mentioned in it at all. It merely seeks, by comparing and contrasting what can be learnt of the history of just a few choirs, and by setting this in its contemporary background, to isolate and expose the trends and influences which were at work on all of them, shaping the future and influencing the nature not only of the choirs themselves, but also of the music which they performed.

1.4. Previous work in this field of research

Almost without exception, the work previously done in this field consists of specialised studies of individual institutions. Of these quite a large number - of varying quality - have been published; some will be found listed in the Bibliography. There have been studies going

little beyond mere lists of names of members of a particular choir; studies concentrating on the constitutional history of just the choral forces of individual religious institutions; histories of the music cultivated at particular establishments; and histories of specific institutional "song schools". There have also been a few similar studies of continental institutions; reference has not been made to these in this study, since it seems as yet premature to attempt comparison of English and continental practice, valuable as such an endeavour will most certainly be, if ever material in sufficient quantity becomes available. All such studies have been useful at least as guides to the kind of manuscript sources which do exist. However, all of them suffer to some degree from the isolation in which their subjects are treated. In few cases has any author tried to illuminate the history of his own chosen institution by comparing with it the history of other similar institutions; and none has ever tried to align the nature and history of his subject with the nature and history of the music which it existed to perform.

The genuine pioneering work in this field, therefore, is that of Prof. F.Ll. Harrison. In chapters 1 and 4 of his Music in Medieval Britain (London, 1958; 2nd. edn., 1963) he assembled for the first time information displaying the various types of structure associated with a broad cross-section of liturgical choirs; and he related the nature and history of his many subject institutions both to each other by category, and to contemporary developments in the music which they performed. Prof. Harrison's work has been neither superseded, nor even emulated in any more recent writings. His book was the inspiration for this present study; and the frequency with which it is cited in the foot-notes will demonstrate amply the degree to which I have remained indebted to it throughout the whole protracted course of research and writing which has gone into the preparation of this dissertation.

1.5. Acknowledgements

No research project of this nature could possibly be undertaken and brought to completion without the help and co-operation of a great many corporate institutions and a great many individual people. It is a pleasure as well as a duty to record my thanks here to all who have assisted in any way with the preparation and production of this thesis. For permission to consult, transcribe and quote from manuscripts in their possession, I am indebted to Viscount De L'Isle, V.C., K.G.; to the corporations of the city of Bristol, and the borough

2. The choral institutions in 1340

2.1. The requirements of the liturgy

Invisible, but impinging at every turn upon the day-to-day world of medieval man, there existed another, peopled by God and his saints and the souls of the righteous - influencing his thoughts and actions, responsible for his very being, and destined eventually to judge him and either commit him to everlasting bliss, or condemn him to everlasting perdition. While on earth, the worship of God was one of the imperative duties of mankind, his finest, though fallen, creation. The great and mighty God demanded and deserved great buildings in which he could be worshipped continuously and perpetually. In response, the medieval church devised the almost infinitely elaborate and complex liturgies of praise and worship, of reflection on the Divine Order and of re-enactment of the sacrifice of the Mass; and in collegiate and monastery churches throughout Western christendom there could duly be found bodies of men who had committed themselves to devoting a great part of each day's waking hours, and thus a great part of their lives, to the rendering down here below of the Opus Dei, the worship of God.

These liturgies were the products of a lengthy process of evolution, extending over many centuries; but at least by 1340 the liturgies of the English dioceses had reached the final stage of their medieval development, and were to remain essentially unchanged until their abolition in the 16th century. The liturgy was composed of a fusion of three distinct but essential elements - text, chant and ceremony. This is not the place to attempt any elaborate analysis of the differences which had developed between the liturgies observed by the secular clergy and those observed by the regular clergy, or of those slighter differences which had developed among the secular liturgies of the various English dioceses[1]. Here it is sufficient to explain that the secular liturgies agreed in requiring for their performance three distinct groups of clergy. On each side of the quire there were to be three rows of stalls, facing each other across the central aisle which separated them. Steps raised each row above the level of the one in front of it; the back, and therefore topmost row of each side stood adjacent to the quire wall. Any choral institution intending to provide a faithful performance of the liturgy had

[1] For some detailed observations, see MMB, pp 46-102 passim, and the sources there quoted.

to be able to provide clergy to occupy each of the three rows on both sides of the quire. To the clerks of the top form was deputed the performance of the most significant of those parts of the liturgy which were allotted to individuals, or to small groups of individuals; to the clerks of the second form, those of lesser significance; while to the clerks of the bottom form were allotted those parts of the ceremony which seemed most suitable for performance by the boys, and those texts most suitable to be sung by boys' unbroken voices. Those sections of the liturgical chant not deputed to individuals or small groups were rendered by omnes - by everyone expected to be present at that particular service.[1]

Thus the secular liturgies required for their faithful and complete performance two distinct groups of men - clerks of the top form, and clerks of the second form - and a team of boys for the bottom form.[2] It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate the exact nature of the provision actually made in c.1340 by the various types of secular religious institution to secure the performance of the liturgy as the ordinals and customaries required.

2.2. Collegiate Churches

Any survey made of secular collegiate institutions in the year 1340 can only emphasise their relative scarcity, as compared with the houses of religious. The number of the latter just before the Black Death of 1348-9 has been estimated to have approached 1,000 - some 800 monasteries and nunneries, and 150-200 houses of friars, totalling some 18,000 inmates.[3]

1 This bald account will suffice for present purposes; it is, however, an extreme simplification, derived from only a meagre sample of the customaries of the Uses of Salisbury and Exeter:- ed. W.H. Frere The Use of Sarum and ed. J.N. Dalton, Ordinale Exon. In the elaborate manner in which the several phases of the liturgy were carefully distributed around the various members of the choir, there must lie a whole system of symbolism which still awaits its revelation by scholarly research.

2. In England there had existed no regular practice of admitting boys to monastic communities since the mid-12th century, and by the mid-14th century the religious orders' own legislation forbade the admission of anyone under the age of 18, except in exceptional circumstances; consequently, the monastic ordinals allotted no part of the liturgy to boys. D. Knowles, The monastic orders in England pp.418-22; D. Knowles, The Religious orders in England, vol. 2, p.230; MMB, pp.39-40.

3. D. Knowles, The Religious orders in England, vol. 2, pp.256-7; D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses, p.494. The figures quoted apply to England and Wales.

Of collegiate churches (including the secular cathedrals, which were merely collegiate churches which happened also to be the seat of a bishop) there probably were fewer than 70 - and barely half of these were sufficiently large to have been of very much significance. Many indeed only doubtfully count as collegiate churches at all.[1] Yet all of them had been founded to observe the perpetual celebration of divine worship, and some at least were sufficiently well endowed in personnel and resources not only to give an efficient and faithful rendering of the Opus Dei, but also to give scope to men of creative ability to enhance that service by the skills they were able to command. At the greater collegiate churches the music of the liturgy in particular offered scope to men of musical talent for the exercise of their gifts.

2.2.1. Colleges of Prebendal Canons

2.2.1.A. The Secular Cathedrals

The cathedrals of nine of the seventeen dioceses of medieval England were constituted as collegiate churches of secular canons:- Chichester, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, Lincoln, London(St.Paul's), Salisbury, Wells and York. These were the centres where the secular liturgies were first evolved; and, in terms of sheer numbers, they maintained in 1340 the largest choirs of seculars that then existed. Indeed, despite major contractions in their numbers from the mid-15th century onwards, they continued to do so throughout the period under consideration, the choirs of the Chapel Royal and St. George's Chapel, Windsor alone expanding sufficiently to match them. Their sheer size did indeed render them, in a number of respects, decidedly untypical; but nevertheless, it remained true that every subsequent secular foundation ultimately derived much of its character from the models which the secular cathedrals provided.

All cathedrals were conceived as truly exceptional churches, whose importance as the seat of the bishop and as mother-church of the diocese was expressed in their great physical size,and in the maintenance within their walls of the perpetual celebration of divine worship by a large body of men set apart for that specific purpose. Such an enterprise required the provision of copious resources and the services of a great many people. The functions involved in its execution may be grouped under four main headings. Principally there was the actual performance of the Opus Dei, the daily round of divine service. Secondly, there was the management of the materials and personnel involved - the supervision of the ministers of the cathedral,

1. A.H. Thompson, The English Clergy, pp.85-7.

the safeguarding and administration of its property and endowments, and the direction of its finances. Thirdly, there was the performance of the extraneous religious services which the cathedral was committed, by private endowment, to see discharged. Fourthly, there was the maintenance and protection of the fabric of the cathedral church itself, and the laying out of its working materials.

The execution of these various functions was committed to distinct groups within the cathedral staff. The performance of the cathedral's principal function, the perpetual celebration of the Opus Dei, was in the hands of the vicars - choral and choristers. The execution of the second group of functions was the sphere of the residentiary canons; of the third group, the chantry priests and altarists; and of the fourth, the vergers or sacrists and their assistants. Each sub-group within the cathedral staff attended mostly to just its own duties, and there was little overlapping of the various spheres of activity. The tasks of the last three groups of persons were no more than ancillary to the principal function of the cathedral, and their involvement in the actual performance of the choral service was only slight. True, the Opus Dei was being offered in the cathedral, and it is clear that - in varying degrees - it was incumbent on most of those who worked there to attend upon it, from the Dean down to the Sacrist's boy. However, all the principal aspects of its actual performance lay in the hands of just the one group of staff to whom its execution was specifically committed, namely the vicars - choral (and their equivalents under various names) and the choristers.

(i) The vicars-choral

The nature of the status and duties of the vicars-choral can best be understood in the light of their origins. The senior clergy of any secular cathedral was its body of canons. By 1340, it was a long-established principle that a cathedral's endowments in manors, tithes, rectories,etc. should be split into a certain number of prebends, each held by one canon as his source of income[1], and a common fund out of which the remaining expenses of maintaining the cathedral and its services were met. The number of prebends thus determined the number of canons, and by 1340 this system had, at all the cathedrals, reached the final stage of its development; there were 58 canons of Lincoln, 54 of Wells, 52 of Salisbury, 36 of York, 32 of Lichfield, 30 of Chichester, 30 of London, 28 of Hereford,

[1] For the rather different arrangements in force at Exeter Cathedral, see SCMA pp.40-41.

and 24 of Exeter.[1]

Strictly the celebration of High Mass each day required the attendance of clergy in each of the three major orders, priest, deacon and sub-deacon. This had led in many cases to the association of each prebend with one or other of these orders, in which order its incumbent was traditionally supposed to have been ordained. At Salisbury, for instance, of the 52 prebends 22 were priest-prebends, 18 deacon- and 12 sub-deacon prebends.[2] At Wells, of the 54 prebends 13 were priest-prebends, 17 deacon- and 17 sub-deacon; 6 were, unusually, allocated to men in minor orders only, 4 to acolytes and 2 to taperers.[3] The remaining prebend, that of Biddisham, was allocated to St. Andrew, the patron saint of the Cathedral; it could therefore never be conferred on any canon, and its revenues were applied to the maintenance of the cathedral services.[4]

In theory, therefore, the body of canons was (except for the absence of boys' voices) in itself fully equipped to perform High Mass and the daily Office. And there may once have been a time, back in the 11th and 12th centuries, when Divine Service at each cathedral had indeed been performed by its staff of canons.[5] However that may be, it is certain that by 1340 this had long ceased to be the case. In the first place, a practice of canonical non-residence had begun to develop by the 12th century, and was an established custom by the beginning of the 13th.[6] By 1340 barely a third or a quarter of the chapters of Wells

1. Mostly taken from SCMA p.33, corrected slightly as regards Wells. (see below, p. 2005).
2. The lists in Stat. Sal. p.159 may be verified by reference to SDC Reg Hutchins p.134, and SBR Reg. Dean Chandler, ff 145v and 148r.
3. WlsDC Book without reference (covered in vellum on which has been written the date '1535', [illegible] cardboard box in which it now rests as 'Valor Ecclesiasticus temp: Polydore Vergil') p.79. A similar list appears in WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS fo.8v. Both these lists date from the early 16th century, but there seems to be no reason to believe that the situation which they record had been in any way different 200 years earlier.
4. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo 220r, and Dean Cosyn's MS fo 8r; Communar's A/cs 1343/4 -1547/8 passim, under the heading "Biddesham".
5. For summaries of the evidence for the conflicting views that the institution of vicars-choral was (a) coeval with the establishment of secular chapters or (b) an accretion of the 12th century, see SCMA pp.256-64. Dr. Edwards considers alternative (b) to be the more plausible on the evidence available.
6. SCMA pp 20-1, 35.

and Salisbury kept any residence at all[1], and for most of them, 'residence' involved sojourning in the close for no more than 6 months of the year[2]. Further, even for those canons who still did reside, residence had ceased to involve any great degree of attendance at service in choir. Except for those performing their probationary residence, and those entabled in their turn to serve as "hebdomadary canon" in choir, the canons residentiary had discharged themselves almost completely from any obligation to attend service at all; to qualify for the rewards of residence, it was enough to appear in choir no more than once a day, at one of the more important services - vespers, matins or High Mass.[3]

That the canons resident attend at service was recognised as being desirable, if only to lend a sense of gravity to the occasion, and to help keep the vicars-choral in order. However, it was found that to secure such attendance, concessions might have to be made. For instance, in 1318 it was requested and conceded at Wells that in order to encourage the canons to come to matins at all, they might be freed from the practice of having to learn the service by heart, and might have their own books and lights before them. In 1323 Bishop Drokensford was prepared to say that there was anyway no custom obliging the canons to memorise the service, and he extended this privilege to all services both day and night.[4] How successful this device was in improving the canons' attendance record is not known. By 1510, however, the residentiaries were unable to agree on the enforcement even of a minimum attendance of only one service per day (matins, prime, mass or vespers) five days a week.[5]

1. At Wells there were 15 canons resident in 1327/8, 19 in 1343/4 and 18 in 1346/7:- WlsDC, Communar's A/cs, years specified. At Salisbury there were between 10 and 14 in the four quarters of the year between January 1343 and October 1350 for which records survive - SDC Communar's A/cs 1-4.
2. SCMA pp.50-56, esp.pp.53 and 55.
3. SCMA pp.56-59, esp.pp.57-8. In this respect Exeter and York were rather more exacting than the other cathedrals, requiring attendance at two and three services a day respectively.
4. WlsDC Liber Albus I ff 143v, 163r.
5. WlsDC Liber Ruber, pt.2, fo.176r. (14 March 1510).

It seems clear, therefore, that by 1340 the small groups of residentiary canons had come to be recognised as being no more than just the governing body of each cathedral, managing the estates of its common fund, supervising the maintenance of the fabric and the worship of the cathedral, and maintaining order within the close. Such responsibilities were not inconsiderable, and the undertaking of them was essential. Arguably, it was in the best interests of the cathedral that, on top of their managerial and supervisory duties, the canons resident should not be burdened with a heavy duty of attendance at service every day as well. This being so, the provision of substitutes in choir for all canons, resident as well as non-resident, had long before 1340 already become essential - and had been, in fact, since as early as the end of the twelfth century.[1]

These substitutes were the vicars-choral. In general terms, each canon was required to present to the Dean and Chapter - at his own expense in the first instance - a man who was in the appropriate holy orders, and was suitably qualified to acquit him and take his place in choir at the performance of Divine Service. It was on these vicars-choral, therefore, that fell the burden of sustaining the daily round of worship that comprised the Opus Dei. In the case of most of the cathedrals, the number of vicars-choral bore a more or less exact relationship to the number of canons. At Salisbury, for instance, and despite the poverty of some of the prebends[2], it is clear that no canon was exempt from maintaining a vicar-choral at the cathedral. The full complement of vicars was recorded on a deed of 1352 as numbering fifty-two, the same as the number of prebendaries[3]; and this is confirmed by a chapter act of the same year which records that on a day on which there were forty-six vicars present, there were a further six who were absent.[4] A complete list of the names of the vicars-choral in 1297 similarly numbers 52.[5]

1. At least at Salisbury; a letter of apparently twelfth century date, sent by the chapter of Salisbury to the bishop of Bath (one of a group of four, explaining some of the finer details of the Salisbury constitution, evidently for application at Wells) recites as generally applicable the rule that all canons 'indifferenter' should have a vicar - WlsDC Liber Albus I fo 29v.
2. According to the valuation recorded in the time of Dean Chandler (1404-17), there were nine prebends worth £8 p.a. or less, of which two were worth only £5 p.a., and one only 40s.:- SBR Register of Dean Chandler ff 145v and 148r.
3. D.H. Robertson, "Salisbury Choristers", 48 Wiltshire Archeological Magazine (1939-40), p.207.
4. SDC Reg.Corfe, fo 42v.
5. CPR 1292-1301, p.266.

At Wells, the number of prebends reached its final total of 54 in the time of bishop Joceline (1206-42)[1]. An early fifteenth-century account of his episcopate records that by the time of his death, the maintenance of vicars-choral at the cathedral had been required from all the prebends except the three very poorest; it also records that up to the time of writing, this deficiency had never been corrected.[2] Nor was it ever rectified throughout the rest of the Middle Ages; one list of the early 16th century, and one of the mid-16th century, record that the two taperer-prebends of Holcombe and Curry, and one sub-deacon prebend, that of Barton, maintained no vicar-choral at the cathedral.[3]

Further, the income of the vicar-choral of St. Andrew, prebendary of Biddisham, was applied to augmenting the salary of the master of the cathedral grammar school.[4] The schoolmaster had his allotted stall in choir[5], and appears to have been expected to perform some choir-duties in consequence of this - at all events, in 1408/9 the schoolmaster was deprived of his commons allowance and half his stipend on the grounds that non portavit habitum in choro nec aliquid fecit in eodem.[6] However, his duties in school must have prevented his ever attending choir except on holy-days when lessons were suspended, and he cannot be considered as having been a regular member of the community of vicars-choral. Their full effective complement at Wells, therefore, stood at 50.

As at Salisbury, it would seem that at the beginning of the period under review, every attempt was being made to keep the number of vicars up to the full complement. The survival of 32 communar's annual accounts for the period 1327-1548 permits a calculation to be made of the average number of vicars-choral actually present and

1. C.M. Church, Chapters in the early History of the Church of Wells p.142.
2. WlsDC Liber Albus II, fo 300r; printed as ed. J.A. Robinson "The Historia Minor and the Historia Major of Wells" in ed. T.F. Palmer, Collectanea I, 39 Somerset Record Society (1924) pp.48-71, @ p.65.
3. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS. fo.8v; book marked '1595' (see p. 2005, n.3 above) p.79.
4. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS. fo 8r.; Communar's a/c 1534/5:- ".....in stipendio Magistri Scolarum vicarii Stalli Sancti Andree xxvj s. viijd."
5. WlsDC Liber Ruber pt.2, fo 23v.
6. WlsDC Communar's a/c 1408/9.

ministering in the cathedral each day. Part of each vicar's total salary was supplied by the penny paid to him by the Communar for every day that he performed his full duty in choir.[1] Over a full year, therefore, a vicar stood to earn up to 30s.5d. from this source. The total sum paid out each year appears on the Communar's accounts; this may be divided by 30s.5d. to give a figure representing the average number of vicars-choral in receipt of the daily penny through the year. For 1327/8 the number lies between 44 and 45; for 1343/4 47-48, and for 1346/7 45-46.[2]

These figures, however, give only an absolute minimum for the number of vicars. They are very useful as indicating the sort of numbers actually attending service, but do not take into account such vicars as were on the books, but were absent with leave on pilgrimage or at university, or without leave looking after their own affairs; those under suspension from choir for misconduct; and those forfeiting their daily penny simply for neglecting to attend the services. As calculations of the total number of vicars-choral fully admitted and installed at any one time, these figures are, therefore, certainly too low. It may fairly be concluded, then, that around 1340 the chapter's policy was to keep full the total complement of 50 vicars.

At most of the other secular cathedrals, similar arrangements seem to have been in force at least by 1340, and in most cases, very much earlier. There were 32 vicars at Lichfield and 30 at Chichester, there being at both cathedrals statutes of late twelfth or early thirteenth century date obliging all canons, resident or not, to maintain a vicar.[3] At Hereford, the wholly exceptional history of the institution of vicars-choral had by 1340 contrived to produce a situation that was, in fact, very similar to that obtaining at these other cathedrals. Only one prebend was of much value, and the prevailing poverty of the prebends seems to have precluded the establishment of any rule requiring the canons, resident or otherwise, to provide vicars. There could be few vicarages choral therefore unless and until benefactors chose to endow them. All that ever was to be achieved in this direction had been completed by 1330, by which time there were some 25 or 27 vicars at the cathedral, practically the same

1. This practice had been begun by bishop Joceline in 1242:-WlsDC Liber Albus I, fo.51r.
2. WlsDC Communar's a/cs, years specified. These figures exclude the grammar school master; he received a daily penny for performing his duties as schoolmaster, but this was accounted for as a separate item.
3. SCMA.pp.263-264.

as the number of prebends.[1]

At Lincoln, the six poorest of the 58 prebendaries were exempt from providing a vicar; and exceptionally, so also were those canons performing the greater residence of two-thirds of the year (34 weeks and 4 days). There was thus no fixed "full complement" of vicars, the number varying according to the number of canons resident. There were 15 residentiaries in 1339/40; a full complement of vicars that year would thus have been 37.[2]

St. Paul's and Exeter were exceptional in that the functions performed elsewhere by the body of vicars-choral were there committed to double bodies, the two components roughly corresponding respectively to the vicars of the top form and the vicars of the second form elsewhere. At St. Paul's the 30 prebendaries maintained 30 vicars-choral in the usual way; however, these were all to be in deacon's or sub-deacon's orders, and clearly were devised to provide the core of the body of clerks of the second form . The choir-clerks of the top form were supplied by a wholly distinct body of twelve "minor canons", of whom all were to be in priest's orders. This body of minor canons was unique to St. Paul's; they were entirely distinct from the vicars-choral, and had ahistory presumably entirely separate from theirs. They were in no way attituled to individual canons, and their salaries were paid wholly out of the common fund. The minor canons and vicars-choral together provided a total of 42 voices for the choir.[3]

At Exeter, it was by 1268 a custom of long standing that all 24 canons should maintain a vicar at the cathedral. However, Exeter was exceptional in that all the prebends were priest-prebends; all the vicars therefore were likewise to be in prest's orders. Strictly, this gave all of them a claim to stand at the top form, leaving no-one to perform the liturgical functions assigned to the clerks of the second form. The problem was obviated by the provision - at the expense not of the canons, but of the Common Fund - of 12 secundarii or simply clerici secunde forme. All these were to be clerks in the orders of deacon or sub-deacon, and their existence therefore ensured the

1. ibid, pp.258-9, 39, 267.
2. ibid, pp.264, 52, 340.
3. ibid, pp.252-4, 259-263.

availability of all the grades of personnel required by the liturgy.[1] The total number of voices for the choir was thus 36; and so two of the smallest of English chapters, London and Exeter, maintained choirs whose total numbers in fact considerably exceeded the number of prebendaries.

Lastly, at York, there were statutes of thirteenth century date requiring all 36 canons, resident or not, to maintain a vicar at the Cathedral,[2] and a York charter of 1394 that has strayed to Wells mentions "the college of 36 vicars".[3] Further, both at York and at its three daughter minsters of Ripon, Beverley and Southwell, there were, between the categories of chorister and vicar-choral, the intermediary stages of thuribularius, subdeacon and deacon. The thuribularii were probably senior choristers,[4] the subdeacons and deacons, who at York seem to have numbered only six between them, probably were equivalent to the secundarii at Exeter, and should be included amongst the personnel of the choir.[5]

1. ibid., pp.259-61, 35, 253, 303-4. Although Dr. Edwards lumps them all together (pp.303-4), the duties of the secundarii at Exeter were by no means analogous to those of the [illegible] and Salisbury, and the "poor clerks" at Lincoln. The Exeter secundarii were full-time clerks of the choir, closely akin to the vicars-choral, the sphere of whose duties lay in the performance of the Opus Dei; whereas the very miscellaneous duties of the other three groups concerned them mostly with the chantry-priests and the sacrists, and very little with the choir-service at all. (See Appendix A2, below, pp. A008 - 13).
2. ibid., p.264.
3. WisDC Charter 471.
4. See below, Appendix A1, pp. A003 - 7.
5. ed. H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth, Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral vol.ii, p.103; ed. J. Raine, Fabric Rolls of York Minster p.125.

(ii) The choristers

Alongside the vicars-choral, one other group of ministers was provided to constitute that section of the cathedral staff charged with responsibility for performing the Opus Dei:- the choristers. These had a longer history than the vicars-choral; the choristers of Salisbury were mentioned incidentally in the Institucio Osmundi of c.1091[1], and indeed, the existence of boys in the households of bishops from the seventh century onwards[2] must have led to the use of boys' voices being a familiar feature of cathedral worship from the very earliest times.

At Salisbury, although the statutes of 1319-24 did not formally lay down a statutory number of choristers,[3] it is clear that at least by 1314 their number had been fixed at 14.[4] This having been found to be the optimum number by the early 14th century, it was maintained at that figure both in 1352,[5] and consistently throughout the next period for which information is available, namely the last third of the 15th century.[6] This being so, it seems fair to speculate that for Salisbury fourteen was considered as the full ~~statutory~~ customary complement of choristers throughout the period under consideration.

The number of choristers maintained at Wells was never laid down in any of the numerous partial codes of statutes that exist for the 13th and 14th centuries, and the evidence supplied by other sources is very contradictory. According to the official summary of a charter engrossed on the Patent Rolls in 1349, there were 10[7]; six choristers only are mentioned on a list of all the members of the cathedral establishment copied early in the sixteenth century[8]; six again is the number mentioned on two Communar's Accounts of the early 15th century[9]; while [illegible]

1. Stat.Sal. p.32
2. SCMA. pp.308-9
3. Stat.Sal. pp.262-6
4. CPR 1313-1317 p.112; the text of the charter there calendared is to be found in SBR Registrum Rubrum ff 105v-106r.
5. D.H. Robertson, "Salisbury Choristers" 48 Wiltshire Archeological Magazine (1939-40), pp.207-8.
6. Indenture of John Kegwyn, 1463:- SDC Reg. Newton p.57; Accounts of Waltham obit on SDC Fabric A/cs 1464/5 and 1477/8; accounts of Metford obit on SDC "Accounts of Masters of the Fabric on receipts from St. Thomas' Church" 1486/7 - 1537/8; SDC Communar's A/C.No.84 (Oct.-Dec.1488); Choristers' Collector's A/cs. 1463/4-1525/6
7. CPR 1348-50 p.351
8. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS fo.8v
9. WlsDC Communar's A/cs 1428/9, 1430/1

there were 13.[1] Fortunately, it is possible to resolve these contradictions, enabling the conclusion to be reached that at Wells the number of singing-boys throughout the period concerned was in fact nine; six were known as choriste and three - apparently the senior boys - as tabellarii, but all alike comprised the team of singing-boys maintained by the Cathedral.[2]

The number of choristers at the remaining secular cathedrals may much more readily be determined. In 1340 their numbers stood at 14 at Exeter; 12 at York and Lincoln; 10 at Chichester; 8 at Lichfield and London St. Paul's; and 5 at Hereford.[3] The choral staffs of the 9 secular cathedrals in 1340 may therefore be tabulated thus:-

Table 1. :- Choral staffs of the secular cathedrals c. 1340

Boys		Men			Cathedral	Totals	
Choristers	Senior Choristers	Clerks of the top form	Clerks of the second form	Clerks of either form		Men	Boys
10		24 vicars choral	12 secundarii	30 vicars choral	Chichester	30	10
14					Exeter	36	14
5				25 or 27 vicars choral	Hereford	25 or 27	5
8				32 vicars choral	Lichfield	32	8
12				37 vicars choral	Lincoln	37	12
8		12 minor canons	30 vicars choral		London	42	8
14				52 vicars choral	Salisbury	52	14
6	3			50 vicars choral	Wells	50	9
7	5		6 deacons and subdeacons	36 vicars choral	York	42	12

1. VE, vol.I, p.128
2. The resolution of this contradictory material is involved and lengthy, and appears separately as Appendix A1, pp. A003-7.
3. SCMA, p.307. As at Wells, the twelve singing-boys of York were divided into two groups - of 7 choriste and 5 thuribularii:- J.Raine, Fabric Rolls of York Minster p.125. For confirmation of eight as the number of choristers at Lichfield, see below, p. 6060.

(iii) The disposition of the clergy in choir.

At service in choir, the members of the choral force were disposed on the three rows of choir-stalls according to a judicious mixture of dignity and seniority. In Salisbury Use [1], on the top row of either side there were the places of those canons who held the senior offices in the administration of the cathedral (Dean, Precentor, Chancellor and Treasurer) and of the diocese (the Archdeacons), and the places of the remaining canons of greater standing (whenever any of them were present); the top row was also occupied by all the vicars who were in priest's orders, and by a few of the most senior and most worthy vicars in deacon's orders. At the second form stood the canons of lesser standing (insofar as any might be present), all the remaining vicars, in deacon's orders and below, and any other adult clergy of the cathedral present at the service. On the bottom row stood the boys of the choir - any boy canons there might have been, and the regular cathedral choristers.[2] The various members of the choir at Wells Cathedral were disposed in the stalls in a manner exactly similar[3], and mutatis mutandis, a scheme similar in all essentials was applied at Exeter Cathedral also[4]. Indeed, it was the standard pattern, and, as far as local conditions would allow, may well have been observed at all secular institutions to which it was applicable down to the Reformation and beyond.

1. Throughout this dissertation every effort will be made to avoid writing the objectionable terms "Use of Sarum" or "Sarum Use". As has often been pointed out, the word "Sarum" is an inaccurate expansion of "Sa$\bar{r}$ ", which is the contracted form of the Latin words Sarisberia (Salisbury) or Sarisberiensis (of Salisbury). The actual word "Sarum" does not appear to occur any earlier than the 16th century, and is not found in any medieval sources. When earlier writers using the vernacular wished to refer to the Salisbury liturgy, they either borrowed the Latin contracted form of the word Salisbury (i.e. Sa$\bar{r}$), or actually wrote "Salisbury Use" in full. For instance, Lollard writers of c.1390 referred to "þe ordynal of salusbury" (ed.F.D.Matthew, Unprinted works of Wyclif pp.170,187,192) and to "Salisbury usse" (ibid., p.193); an inventory written in 1419 in the vernacular listed "j messall of Salesbury use" (W.P.Baildon, "Three inventories....", 61 Archeologia (1908), p.173); and in 1477, Caxton advertised his new printed Ordinal as being "of Salisburi use" (OBL, MS Arch.G.e.37). Musicologists and liturgiologists who have freely used the term "Sarum Use" have - inconsistently but very properly - refrained from referring to any such monsters as the "Herf Use", or the "Use of Eborum". The terms "Sarum Use" and "Use of Sarum" are therefore unhistorical, inconsistent and unscholarly, and it is to be hoped that their employment will soon be wholly superseded by the correct terminology.
2. W.H. Frere (ed.), The Use of Sarum, vol.1, p.13. Frere's text B (OBL, MS Bodley 443) appears to transmit the most reliable text at this point.
3. WlsDC, Dean Cosyn's MS, fo 17v; MS Statuta Ecclesie Cathedralis Wellensis p.55.
4. J.N.Dalton, ed., Ordinale Exon, vol.1,p.2. See also MWB, pp.50-1

It seems possible that a practice was observed of entabling the individual reading duties at service to those standing on one side of the choir, and the individual singing duties to those standing on the other. Certainly at Salisbury the boys' duties were so divided. In 1434 three errant vicars-choral were temporarily demoted from their places on the top two rows and sentenced to stand at service among the boys; two were to stand in gradu ultimo puerorum lectorum, and one in gradu ultimo puerorum cantatorum.[1] Similarly the Wells Consuetudinary made it clear that at least on ferias and feasts of three lessons, the hebdomadary boys on the choir side sang the Responsory, while the hebdomadary boy on the other side read the lesson.[2] Week by week about, therefore, it may have regularly been the custom for one side of the choir to have been responsible for providing the readers, and for the other side to have provided the solo, or solo groups, of singers - for the performance of the ritual plainsong at least.

(iv) The qualifications of the vicars-choral

If the system of committing the performance of divine service to canons' deputies was to work satisfactorily, it was essential that those admitted as vicars should be competent and suitable for the job. If this could be ensured, then arguably - as far as the cathedral's music was concerned - the commission of the performance of the Opus Dei to vicars-choral ought only to have been beneficial. For there is no evidence to suggest that any test of musical competence was, or ever had been, imposed on the holders of canonries; but the chapters of canons resident certainly could, and did, impose such tests on those presented to them as prospective vicars-choral, and they were empowered to reject any who did not meet the required standard. Certainly the imposition of such tests was necessary - but probably more to ensure that unsuitable men were kept out, rather than to ensure that only competent men got in. For a vicarage-choral was a not particularly valuable, but still useful, part of the patronage at the disposal of the holders of cathedral prebends - and in the first instance, they could dispose it on whom they wished.

1. SDC Reg. Harding, fo.106r.
2. WlsDC, Dean Cosyn's MS, fo.20r; MS Statuta Ecclesie Cathedralis Wellensis, p.59.

In the staffing of the cathedral, therefore, there could develop an element of conflict - between the resident chapter seeking to maintain the standards of singing the service, and the non-resident prebendaries, merely seeking to dispose of their patronage in the way most profitable to them - in which matter, the question of whether their presentees could sing or not might be of little importance. A test of some sort, therefore, was essential to sift out and discard unsuitable presentees.

The benefit to be derived from such tests depended, of course, solely on the efficiency and impartiality with which they could be conducted, and the rigour of the entry standards to be enforced. Ideally a vicar-choral needed to have a good voice, be of a sober, grave and conscientious disposition, and needed to have committed to memory the entire corpus of plainsong chant, beingable to sing every service without recourse to any book. The first qualification was easily discoverable; the second could be discerned after a few months' acquaintance. The third took some years of hard work, but was considered to be a necessary part of the equipment of any cathedral vicar. At Wells, for instance, it was conceded in 1318 and 1323 that canons coming to matins might have their books and lights before them, freeing them from any necessity to learn the service - provided that the vicars were allowed no access to the canons' books, nor were permitted, by overlooking the canons' books, to become more negligent than usual in their services.[1] When, in 1389, a vicar of Salisbury submitted himself for examination by the chapter in his knowledge of the chant, the items he was asked to sing appear to have been selected at random from just anywhere in the three basic plainsong books - the assumption being, apparently, that a competent, conscientious man would have had their contents so methodically filed away in his memory that recall would be immediate and virtually [illegible].[2]

At Wells, indeed, it is clear that until 1273 it had been customary that when a canon presented to the chapter a man to be his vicar, he was presented as one who already had both a good voice and a knowledge of the chant (quod scilicet tam scientiam habeat cantandi quam eciam instrumentum), and on the mere strength of the candidate's swearing that this was so, he would be immediately admitted a vicar, without further examination. In 1273, the chapter noted that this was not proving

1. WlsDC Liber Albus I ff.143v., 163v.,
2. SDC Reg. Dunham fo 43v.; and see below, p. 2022.

to be a wholly satisfactory method of appointing the vicars-choral, and in its place they established an elaborate system of tests and probationary periods, to be undertaken prior to a presentee's full admission. The overt justification for this change was that a man presented as one who already had knowledge of the chant, and who was promptly admitted a vicar-choral on his taking an oath that that was so, did in fact almost inevitably run the risk of perjury. This was so because any man embarking on a career as a vicar-choral would in reality by no means yet have a perfect knowledge of the great corpus of liturgical chant; therefore, it seemed better that he be no longer obliged to swear that he had.

In order to avoid any presentee's ever again being put in so invidious a position, while at the same time modifying neither the rules nor the chapter's desired standards, it was enacted that henceforth a presentee for a vicarage-choral should not be fully admitted immediately, but spent his first year on probation. During this time he was to perform all the duties, and receive all the emoluments of a vicar; and he swore that he would work diligently to learn the Psalter, Antiphoner and Hymnal by heart.[1] To assist in this, the Precentor was to allot to him an experienced vicar as Auscultor, to guide his learning, and to hear him sing through the items he had learnt. In addition to this, in the case of a man who was wholly inexperienced, an initial trial period of at least 15 days was to be imposed - after which, the presentee might enter even the probationary year only if he had given satisfactory evidence of his capacity in singing and chanting. If, at the end of the probationary year the vicars-choral as a body, and the Auscultor, were both able to testify to the chapter (the candidate being absent) that he had been found to be of good behaviour and diligent in his work, then the Chapter was to admit him as a fully admitted vicarius perpetuus; if not, he was to be rejected and turned out.[2]

The effect of these new rules could only have been beneficial - provided, of course, that they were enforced with consistency and rigour. This, however, seems not to have been easy to accomplish. In 1296 the chapter found that despite the imposition of entrance tests 20 years before,

1. The full text of the vicar-choral's oath appears in BM Harley 1682 fo 25r., and WlsDC Liber Albus I fo.81v.
2. Statutes of 1273:- WlsDC Liber Ruber, part 1, fo.3r.

a tightening-up of the vicars' standards had nevertheless again become necessary. No less than 20 of the vicars were considered to know their service only imperfectly; so to them 5 experienced vicars were appointed as Auscultores to teach it to them. Those who did not know their liturgy despite having been vicars for more than a year were required to pay two shillings for the Auscultor's services. They were given a year to make themselves proficient. However, the chapter were not sufficiently rigorous in following up their own moves; for by February 1298 the Chapter was still ordering those who still had not yet rendered all their service to their Auscultores to do so:- under penalty (of removal) as laid down in the statutes[1]. And yet in the same year (1298) it was again noted that abuses were creeping into the manner of conducting Divine Service, "giving lay folk cause the less to respect the clerical estate, and to hold divine worship in reduced veneration." The chapter decided, therefore, that the 1273 statute on the admission of vicars was henceforth to be observed without violation.[2] And they took energetic action against the existing vicars. Ten were singled out, and promptly directed to learn their service efficiently within one year, under penalty of removal, quia non habent vocem placabilem[3]. The action taken seems forceful enough - until it is noticed that two of the ten were amongst those who had received precisely the same orders, under threat of the same penalty, three years before, during the purge of 1295.

For in fact, no matter how sound the scheme of probationary periods for prospective vicars-choral looked on paper, there were - working against it - influences at large with which no chapter of resident canons could cope. Indeed, one continuing feature of the history of the vicars-choral of the secular cathedrals is the disproportionate prominence secured by the persistent existence among them of men wholly unsuited to the job. Full consideration of this phenomenon must await discussion of a period for which fuller evidence is available.[4] However, it seems clear that, in the fourteenth century at least, it was caused not by an actual shortage of suitable men (such as had become the case by 1476, at Salisbury anyway[5]) but by the

1. WlsDC Liber Albus I ff 125v., 126r.
2. Statutes of 1298:- WlsDC Liber Albus I ff 215r, 218r; Liber Ruber, part 1, ff.19r, 21v.
3. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo.121r.
4. See below, pp. 5015-20.
5. SCL MS 189 fo.38r

intrusion of unsuitable ones through favouritism, nepotism and intimidation.

For it was clearly impractical for the chapter to expect the presentation,as prospective vicars-choral, only of men who were already learned, seasoned and experienced singers. The job was not particularly well paid, and conditions were less than ideal. Moreover, aspiring vicars, both the competent and the incompetent, had to learn their service somewhere. There was no alternative to taking on men who were but beginners, while hoping that by the scheme of probationary periods, the unsuitable could be sifted out. But influences could be brought to bear to render the probationary periods and the tests of competence inoperable, if it was in the interests of a powerful man to do so.

In 1338, for instance, it was noted that, as ever, many prospective vicars, newly presented by canons of the cathedral, had neither knowledge of, nor the voice for, chanting and singing; but nevertheless, despite their evident incapacity they were still being admitted to the successive probationary periods, and then to perpetual vicarages. The sifting out system was not working - and the reason was simple. When, at the end of the 15-day trial period, or of the probationary year, the vicars were summoned before the chapter to testify as to the presentee's fitness, a few vicars who favoured him deposed as to his suitability, while the rest - on account of fear or favour of the presentee and his friends - chose to keep quiet about his incapacity for the job, and said nothing either way. The consequent admission of unsuitable men, complained the chapter, was leading greatly to the diminution of divine service in the cathedral. The Chapter enacted, therefore, that henceforth no presentee should be admitted to probation or perpetuation unless every single vicar had been summoned for the purpose and had been required to testify as to his fitness, and unless all the vicars - or at least, the greater and wiser part of them - had deposed that the presentee was indeed suitable. Suspension for six months was threatened against any vicar who, for fear or favour, wilfully absented himself from making his deposition, or knowingly made a false one.[1] However, there was only a limited degree to which any Chapter could cope with bribery and intimidation, actual or merely anticipated. It is difficult to believe that these sanctions can have weighed much against the fear of angering

1. Statues of 1338:- BM Harley 1682 fo.17v.

a cathedral canon, who very probably was also an influential clerk in royal service, and had both scope and opportunity to demonstrate his displeasure in practical ways. And as long as a canon's right to nominate and present a vicar-choral continued to constitute a valuable and useful part of the patronage which he was able to dispose towards his friends and clients, such situations could only recur, much to the detriment of the cathedral's music.

Indeed, the residentiary chapter itself was not above abusing vicarages-choral for its own advantages - on which occasions, even if the vicars did record their misgivings about a candidate's suitability, the chapter might find that it preferred to over-rule them. In 1391 canon Robert Perle presented to the chapter a youth named Robert Wodelond to be his vicar-choral. The customary procedure was observed, and the dean committed the due examination of the candidate in reading and singing to all the vicars then present. Their spokesman subsequently reported that he was suitable in reading and singing, but had only a youthful voice (vox iuvenilis). But Perle was a canon resident, and Robert Wodelond was his kinsman; the chapter dismissed the vicars' misgivings, and the dean admitted Wodelond as a probationary vicar. At this point, the whole object of the exercise emerged; foron account of his youth, the new vicar was promptly given permission to absent himself from the cathedral for one year in order to study at school. For their own relatives, that is, the canons resident were prepared to convert a vicarage-choral into a student's grant, despite the consequence of reducing the size of the cathedral choir.[1]

A third case, from 1388, shows further how the rigour of the statutes could be relaxed - though in this instance, with perhaps rather more justification. At his examination at the end of his probationary year, John Lye proved not to have displayed diligence in learning the antiphoner, psalter and hymnal; but on account of his good behaviour, he was not turned out, but allowed a further year to make himself proficient.[2]

Despite its many loop-holes, and its gaping opportunities for evasion, this system of probation and examination for prospective vicars, which was established in 1273, appears to have undergone no major alteration or modification throughout the rest of the Middle Ages.

1. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo. 298r.
2. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo. 294r.

Certainly the system operated intact down to the eve of the Reformation. Cases which in some way set precedents were entered into the Cathedral Registers:- for instance, a probationary vicar admitted vicar perpetual in 1360 on testimony of all the vicars that he was entirely suitable; another rejected at the end of his year's probation on testimony of all the vicars that he was so ill-behaved that he must be rejected, although he was capable enough in singing and reading.[1] The sole surviving volume of chapter acts shows that the standard process of appointing two periods of probation, each followed by certification by the vicars as to the presentee's suitability, with the appointment of an Auscultor for the probationary year, continued to be observed well into the sixteenth century.[2] The same source shows equally that the system continued to let in men whose suitability for the job was at best suspect, and at worst, totally wanting.

A similar system of tests and periods of probation was enforced at Salisbury Cathedral, and had been since at least c.1260.[3] As explained by the code of statutes prepared in 1319 and accepted by 1324[4], no-one was even to be presented as a vicar - and certainly not admitted - unless, besides his other merits, he possessed a good voice and was skilful in chant (instrumentum habeat idoneum modulandi et cantus periciam). This was a re-enforcement of a statute of c.1260. A presentee's possession of these qualifications was to be established by examination by the dean; in practice, the vicars-choral were summoned to be present at this examination, and it was their expressed opinion - either way - on which the Dean acted. If found unsuitable, the presentee could be turned away without even being admitted to probation.[5] Otherwise, the candidate was then admitted to a year of probation, during which time he was to learn by heart the Psalter and the [illegible] the probationary year, he was to offer himself for examination[6]; if this was satisfactory, and if his conduct had been satisfactory during the year, he was to be admitted a perpetual vicar - if not, he was to be rejected and turned away. In fact, notices of the perpetuation of

1. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo.247r.
2. WlsDC Liber Ruber pt.2, e.g. ff.6v, 9r, 21r, 140v, 149v,150r.
3. Stat.Sal.p.74
4. ibid. pp.210-4, 220-2.
5. SDC Reg. Corfe, fo.41v.
6. Again, the vicars-choral were present at this final examination - SDC Reg.Corfe, p.137

vicars in the earliest surviving Chapter Act books often record that they were examined in the hymnal as well as in the antiphoner and psalter[1]; and after 1388, when the chapter laid down the texts of the oaths to be taken by the vicars on their first and second admissions, all probationary vicars swore to learn all three books by heart, and present themselves for examination at the end of the year. On successful examination and admission to a perpetual vicarage, the vicar swore to go on and commit to memory the totality of his service - the most important remaining sections of which would have been the gradual and processioner[2].

There survives a record of one such final examination, which preserves the actual content and conduct of the examination. On 4 January 1389 there appeared before the chapter of Salisbury William Elys, a vicar probationer for nearly 6 years, who had never yet offered himself for examination for perpetuation. He had been summoned to appear before the chapter on a variety of charges; and while the chapter had him in front of them, he was asked if he had yet committed his service to memory as he was sworn to do at his first admission. He answered that he was learning, and, at his request, the president of the chapter "did immediately examine him in the psalter - in the psalm Quam bonus; in the hymnal - Tu Civitatis Unitas; in the antiphoner - in the responsories at Matins on the octave of St. John the Evangelist; and in other items in the psalter, hymnal and antiphoner. Out of which, the examinee knew how to repeat, without book, neither the psalm, nor the hymn, nor the responsory, not one nor another." [3]

As the previous paragraph suggests, in the admission of unsuitable men as vicars, the chapter at Salisbury experienced problems similar to those met by the chapter of Wells. In the statutes of 1319-24, Bishop Roger Martival noted that the statute of c.1260 which required that none be admitted vicar unless he have a good voice, and already have skill in singing, was not being observed; and that "sometimes through favour, sometimes through inordinate affection, frequently through reward for services rendered or to be rendered", and through

1. E.g. SDC Reg. Hemingby fo.28r., Corfe fo.3r., Dunham fo.11; and see HM Chew, Hemingby's Register, p.42.
2. SDC Reg. Dunham fo.20v.,; C.Wordsworth, Ceremonies and Processions of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury, p.116
3. SDC Reg. Dunham, fo.43v.

the importunities of those seeking the office, the statute was not bearing its expected fruit. Men who were less than suitable were being presented and were being admitted. He ordered that thenceforth all such partialities should be set aside, and that the ordinance of c.1260 be inviolably observed.[1] This indicates that - as at Wells - unsuitable and unskilled men were being admitted as vicars; again, not through a shortage of competent men, but for other, more devious reasons. Probably Martival's attempted re-enforcement of the earlier ordinance made little difference. In the first place, the way in which a probationer vicar was (in practice) left to choose his own moment for presenting himself for examination for perpetuation, allowed the less competent among them to delay ever doing so at all; and secondly, as at Wells, the chapter was in no strong position to resist the sort of undesirable pressures that could be exerted by secular persons or non-resident canons, least of all during the succession of absentee deans with which the cathedral was afflicted between 1297 and 1379. In 1331 for instance, the chapter wrote to the Dean (in Italy) bewailing the consequences for the cathedral of his non-residence; they included the claim that in his absence, the collations to vicarages-choral belonging to him by devolution[2] were being conferred on unsuitable men, many of whom, contrary to the customs and statutes of the church, had neither voice nor skill in singing, "so that they do not sing but, rather, hoot (ululant), to the horror and stupefaction of all who hear them, and to the great dishonour of the church."[3]

And yet in some respects, Salisbury was fortunate. Presumably its reputation stood high amongst the cathedrals, as the source of Salisbury Use, and during the currency of Hemingby's Register (1329-1348) most of the presentees to vacant vicarages were of men already in priest's orders, and therefore at least familiar with the Opus Dei.[4] Wells and the other cathedrals may have been less fortunate in this respect. Nevertheless, though the Wells and Salisbury chapter

1. Stat.Sal. pp.210-2
2. for which see e.g. H.M. Chew Hemingby's Register p.41; Stat.Sal.p.74
3. SDC Reg. Hemingby ff.21v-22r.
4. H.M. Chew, Hemingby's Register pp.43-4

acts make only too evident the persistent appearance among the vicars-choral of men unworthy of the job, the impression with which the searcher is left is that the black sheep were only a minority, whose escapades and inadequacies unfortunately draw a disproportionate degree of attention away from the competent and conscientious majority, in whose hands the conduct of Divine Service could probably be left safely enough.[1]

(v) The qualifications of the choristers.

As for the choristers, they were recruited for the quality of their singing voice, and their capacity for decorous behaviour. The statutes of 1319-24 required that at Salisbury boys born in the diocese should be preferred to others, provided they be found suitable for the job; but this regulation could be dispensed with if there were available boys from outside the diocese, their equals in good behaviour, who far exceeded them in the excellence of their singing.[2] A boy then remained a chorister for as long a period as he retained the unbroken voice necessary for singing the chants assigned to be sung by choristers in the Consuetudinaries.[3] From such evidence as is available, it would appear that a boy was generally received as a chorister between the ages of eight and ten, and remained until his voice broke at about the age of fourteen or fifteen.

The privilege of admitting boys as choristers of the cathedral lay with the precentor. While all clerks of the top and second forms - that is, all canons and vicars (and their equivalents) - were admitted to membership of the cathedral body by the Dean[4], his authority did not extend to the bottom form. Both the nomination and admission of the choristers lay with the precentor[5]; though by the mid-15th century, at Wells at least, the boys nominated by the precentor were actually chosen for him by the Instructor of the Choristers.[6] To add proper formality to the occasion of the admission of a chorister, the precentor of Salisbury conceded in 1319 that henceforth he (or in his absence, the succentor) should admit boys as choristers only in the Chapter House and not elsewhere, and in the presence of the dean and

1. For a discussion of the degree to which this impression remains true for the fifteenth century also, see below pp. 5015-20.
2. Stat.Sal. p.266
3. See e.g. SDC Reg. Dunham fo.4r.
4. W.H. Frere (ed.), The Use of Sarum, vol.1,p.2; WlsDC Liber Ruber pt.i fo.41
5. W.H. Frere (ed.), The Use of Sarum,vol.1,p.3; WlsDC Liber Ruber pt.1, fo.41v; SCMA 165-6
6. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS, fo.8v, p.347; Liber Ruber pt.2 fo.82r.

canons[1]; and, as mentioned above, the precentor accepted that - provided they were found suitable - boys born in Salisbury diocese should be preferred to others, unless it should happen that boys from outside the diocese, their equals in good behaviour, should far exceed them in the excellence of their singing.[2]

(vi) The duties of the vicars choral

The nature of the functions of the vicars-choral remained unaltered throughout the whole period under discussion. In the words of the oath of the Salisbury vicars, it was "faithfully to acquit his master in both the day and the night services"[3]; and certainly throughout the fifteenth century, the chapter's justification for recalling the vicars to their due attendance at service in choir was always that they were under oath "to take the place of, and excuse their masters, at the day and night Hours."[4].

However, it seems unlikely that this was ever understood to indicate that every vicar was bound to be present at every service. Regulations laid down at Wells in 1298 permitted a reduced attendance at certain of the lesser Hours. At matins and matins of the Blessed Virgin, prime, High Mass, and Vespers with Compline, every vicar was to attend; absence from any of these services incurred forfeiture of the daily penny from the Common Fund. At terce, sext and nones, especially when nones was sung after dinner, a minimum number of six vicars on each side of the choir was set. As no measures were seen to be required at the time establishing some rota system whereby this minimum attendance might be enforced, it would appear that at the time, six per side was thought of as a safety-limit unlikely actually to require enforcement, rather than as a target which would need special measures to ensure its observance. Attendance at service would be excused to those who were ill, or were being blood-let, or had other good reason, without forfeiting their daily penny. Attendance would also be excused to those who were old and infirm[5]; and certainly, at both Wells and Salisbury, throughout this period license to desist

1. This rule was re-enforced in 1394 - SDC Reg Dunham fo.131v.
2. Stat.Sal., p.266
3. C. Wordsworth, Ceremonies and Processions... p.116; cf.SDC Reg. Corfe fo.5v. (1348) and Reg. Hemingby fo.70v.; the concept had been formulated at least by 1268:- Stat.Sal. p.214, and without doubt had always been the reason for the vicars-choral's existence.
4. e.g. SDC Reg. Burgh fo.23v; Newton p.5; Machon p.244; SCL MS 189 fo.36r.
5. Statutes of 1298:- WlsDC Liber Albus I fo.215r, Liber Ruber (part I) fo.19r.

from having to rise at midnight so as to be present at matins was a privilege regularly granted to the older vicars.[1]

At Salisbury, it seems that there was a general pattern of required attendance similar to that obtaining at Wells - but the ordinances laying down its exact details appear to be lost. The statutes of 1319 recorded that there were vicars neglecting to attend service in the cathedral, and that henceforth all existing statutes and ordinances concerning their duties must be obeyed. No such ordinances are now known to exist; but it is known that there was enacted in 1268 a statute now lost headed Super incontinentia et negligencia Vicariorum, which may have laid down some details of the vicars' minimum permissible attendance.[2] It is known, however, that the full details of the attendance required of the vicars were laid down in some statute headed De observacione vicariorum. By 1476, this was of long enough standing for large sections of it to have fallen into disuetude; so Dean Davyson had it written out on parchment on a large wooden tabula to hang in the vicars' hall, so that none could plead ignorance of it, and demanded its observation in every detail.[3] There is no statute so entitled in the code of 1319-24 and unfortunately its text seems not to have survived anywhere else.

The likelihood is, however, that as at Wells, a degree of absence from the less important services was usually permissible. Indeed this appears to be rendered certain by the fact that in 1386 and 1440 the chapter could actually punish vicars by requiring them to attend Mass and all the Canonical Hours every day, for three months in the first case, and seven weeks in the second.[4] Beyond whatever degree of absence was permissible, failure to attend the services incurred forfeiture of the daily penny. However, what rigidity there was in even these rules was vitiated, apparently deliberately, by the liberality of the escape-routes allowed by the cathedral statutes. In the first place, it was directed that forfeiture of the daily penny was to be enforced only on persistent offenders, and in the case of infrequent offenders might be mitigated. Secondly, for good reasons the

1. See e.g. SDC Reg. Hemingby ff.47r., 49r.; Holmes fo.43v.; Pountney 24v.; Burgh 4v.; Machon p.89; WlsDC Liber Ruber (part 2) ff.23v., 94v. In 1410, two vicars-choral of Salisbury were granted total retirement from active service on grounds of old age:- SDC Reg. Vyryng fo.28r.; see also Pountney fo.2v.
2. Stat.Sal. pp.218, 111.
3. SCL MS 189 fo.36r.
4. SDC Reg. Coman fo.32v., Hutchins p.13.

president of the chapter was empowered to give a vicar permission to absent himself from service; and the 1319 statutes seem to anticipate that such permission would be widely and persistently sought, for it was deemed necessary to stipulate that the president was not to grant such permission to so great numbers that there should not be at least 13 vicars present in the stalls on each side of the choir at each of the Canonical Hours, and the same number at Mass on ferial days likewise, over and above those vicars entabled to minster at the altar.[1] There would appear to be in this an implication that a full attendance was mandatory at Mass on all Sundays and feast-days. At Salisbury, 13 per side continued to be considered the legitimate minimum attendance at any service, Mass or Canonical Hour, until well into the fifteenth century.[2] At York Minster similarly, it is known that the chapter demanded a minimum attendance of 12 vicars on each side at every service.[3]

(vii) The daily Lady Mass

As has been seen, the original theory was that the vicars performed the core of the Opus Dei - daily High Mass and the canonical hours - merely as the deputies of the canons. However, at least by the early thirteenth century, the maintenance of Divine Worship had become so very much the concern solely of the vicars that it was already being viewed as their proper sphere of work in the cathedral in their own right. Thereafter, whenever new services were added, the fiction that their performance was the canons' function ceased to be persevered with; rather it was deputed directly to the vicars in their own right, as being within their specific sphere of the cathedral's work.

Of these added services, the daily Lady Mass was by far the most important. At Wells, this was instituted by Bishop Savaric (1192-1205) who endowed this Mass, and a daily Lady Mass for the souls of previous bishops and benefactors of the church, with an income of £10 per annum.[4] However, it was his successor, bishop Jocelin in 1206, who organised the daily Lady Mass on a permanent footing, endowing it with an income of £20 p.a. in its own right from the manor of Combe, and drawing up in detail the manner in which it should be conducted.[5] He ordained that

1. Stat.Sal. pp.214-20, 226-8, 240.
2. SBR Ep.Reg. Aiscough ff.84v. (§32) (1440), 87r. (§5)(1447); SDC Reg.Newton p.13 (1461)
3. SCMA p.266
4. WlsDC Liber Albus I fo.46v. 5. WlsDC Liber Albus II fo.128v.

every day, the mass should be attended by thirteen vicars-choral. Every year, three vicars in priest's orders were to be selected,[1] to attend the Mass on every day of their year, taking it in turns, week by week, to act as celebrant; for the year in question, these priest-vicars were known as the tres priores Capelle[2] or as the tres capellani beate marie[3]. Each week, ten of the remaining vicars were deputed, by rote, to attend upon the mass every day as well; and, in addition, all 13 daily recited the Hours of the Virgin at her altar. In the early fourteenth century, Lady Mass was celebrated in the Lady Chapel behind the high altar in the Cathedral itself[4], not in the separate Lady Chapel adjoining the cloister. Probably this had been the site of the celebration of Lady Mass ever since the building of the first East end Lady Chapel in the time of Bishop Savaric, and it probably so remained right down until the extinction of the service in 1548.[5] All thirteen vicars received one penny per day for performing these duties; in addition, the three priests received ½d. per day from the Common Fund, and ½d. per day from the endowments of the Lady Mass. Absence from any part of the daily devotions to the Virgin incurred forfeiture of these payments. These arrangements remained basically unchanged down to the Reformation[6]; daily Lady Mass remained the concern solely of the vicars-choral, the only part any canon taking in it being actually to celebrate on the greater double feasts.[7]

Similarly at Salisbury, Lady Mass was the province solely of the vicars-choral. As soon as the first part - the Lady Chapel - of the cathedral of New Salisbury was consecrated in 1225, a daily Lady Mass was

1. Until 1535 by the bishop; thereafter by the Dean and Chapter (WlsDC, Dean Cosyn's MS fo.9r., and Ledger Book D fo.30v.-31r).
2. refs. as in note 1 above.
3. this being the term used on the Communar's Accounts.
4. WlsDC Charter 179:- Will of Richard Chepmanslade, vicar-choral, made 1311. He bequeathed 40d.p.a. 'ad luminare beate marie ubi cantatur Salve sancta parens retro magnum altare dicte ecclesie'
5. See e.g. the indenture of Richard Hygons, 1479, printed in MMB p.426; also WlsDC Liber Ruber fo.151r., Ledger Book D.fo 57v. The Lady Chapel adjoining the cloister was, in practice, effectively no more than just the Sutton chantry chapel.
6. see WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS fo.9r.; Communar's a/cs, passim; Ledger Book D fo.30v.; VE vol.1, p.134; and the a/cs of the Warden of the Lady Chapel:- WlsDC, Muniments of the Vicars Choral, MSS B 118, B 154; SRO DD/CC 131921/1.
7. A/Cs of the Warden of the Lady Chapel, refs. as in note 6 above.

instituted there by bishop Richard Poore, who endowed it sufficiently to provide 1d. per day to each of the thirteen vicars participating in the performance of the Mass - an arrangement roughly parallel with that at Wells.[1] Measures to enforce the vicars' attendance at this Mass were written into the statutes of 1319-24.[2] Bishop Richard's intentions, however, were not so well carried out at Salisbury as were bishop Jocelin's at Wells. Probably as a consequence of the endowments of the Lady Mass having been given to the vicars themselves to administer, complaints were being made by the middle of the 15th century that only some 3 or 4 vicars were actually turning up each day to the Mass and Hours of the Virgin.[3] The vicars' own accounts show that by 1493-94 they were supplying only seven vicars per day for the Lady Mass.[4]

A vicar of Wells Cathedral, therefore, observing the full round of service incumbent upon him as a vicar, would attend each day at Matins and Lauds, Prime, High Mass and Vespers with Compline; at Terce, Sext and None when he felt so disposed, or as often as was necessary to maintain the chapter's minimum number; and at Lady Mass and the Hours of the Virgin when his turn came round, one week in every four or five. There were also extraneous services, such as obits, which probably he would attend if he could, since they were easy money compared with his regular job. Probably the practice of the other secular cathedrals differed from this in few material particulars.

(viii) The duties of the choristers

As for the choristers, their duties of attendance at service were guaged so as to place the bulk of the responsibility for carrying out their functions on the older boys, so as to allow the younger boys much time away from choir to enable them to learn their duties adequately.[5] At Wells, the complete team of boys was present every day at the three major services of prime, High Mass and Vespers. After Vespers on Sundays, and on double feasts and feasts of nine lessons, all remained for compline as well; on other days (ie.ferias and feasts of three lessons), compline was attended only by those boys who were entabled to do so. All the boys attended at vigils of the

1. K. Edwards, "The Cathedral Churchof Salisbury" in 3 VCH Wiltshire, p.168
2. Stat.Sal.p.250
3. S&R Ep.Reg. Aiscough fo.84r.; SDC Reg. Burgh fo.49r.; Newton P.74; Machon p.170.
4. SDC A/cs of the Communar of the Vicars, term 3 1492/3 and term 4 1493/4; no refs., now kept in boxes marked "Misc.Account Rolls, connected with Masters of the Fabric, and Procurator of St. Thomas", and "Choristers (I)" respectively.
5. SCMA pp.315-6; however, the account given there of the choristers' duties of attendance is not wholly accurate.

dead when performed with the body actually present, and at the subsequent trental and anniversary; but this would not occur very often. It would apply only when the deceased were the bishop, or a member of the resident cathedral community; it was not usual for outsiders to be buried in the cathedral graveyard, except perhaps for particular benefactors. Beyond this, no full attendance of choristers was expected at any time. However, each week two senior boys were deputed to be pueri hebdomadarii, "boys of the week"; these attended every service on every day of their week, and thus were the only boys ever present at matins and the lesser hours of Terce, Sext and None.[1] The regulations at Salisbury were essentially identical, except for some slight modifications to the rules for the provision of the two hebdomadary boys. One boy undertook all the reading duties during his week, while the other undertook all the singing duties; however, the attendance of this latter hebdomadary boy at the lesser Hours was lightened during certain times of the year. At compline, only those boys who were actually entabled needed to attend, whatever rank of day it was.[2]

The boys were very junior servants of the choir, and their contribution to the conduct of the liturgy was, with a few conspicuous exceptions, not of any great significance or moment. They appear to have been employed as much - if not more - in the ceremony of the liturgy than in its music. At mass and procession and the Hours throughout the year, the older boys served as thurifers and crucifers, the younger as taperers and bearers of the holy water. On the other hand, on any given day in the liturgical year, the higher its place in the hierarchy of feasts, the less did the boys take individual parts in the rendering of the music of the liturgy.[3] The role of the boys of the choir was thus as much decorative as musical; indeed, in the constitutions of many smaller secular establishments, they were an item which, if necessary, could be altogether dispensed with.

(ix) The attendance of other cathedral staff at service

Apart from a few canons, and the vicars-choral (and their equivalents under other names) and choristers, the statutes of the various cathedrals make it clear that two other groups of staff might occasionally appear at service in the quire of the cathedral.

1. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS fo.19v. In 1507 the Chapter increased the choristers' duty of attendance at Matins thus:- on ferial days and feasts without ruling of the choir two boys were to be present; on feasts with ruling of the choir, four boys; and on double feasts, seven boys:- WlsDC, Liber Ruber (part ii) fo.146v.
2. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1., pp.40, 93-4, 98-9.
3. drawn from ibid., pp.41 and 304-5, and refs. there quoted.

These were the chantry-priests and the altarists; extremely rarely there might also be some extra clerks in minor orders joining the choristers on the bottom form. The contribution of any of these to the music of the services, however, seems unlikely to have been of any significance at all, and consideration of it has been relegated to an Appendix.[1] Indeed, to a greater or lesser extent, it is possible that all the members of the cathedral staff, from the Dean down to the verger's boys, were expected to attend upon, and perhaps even take some small part in, the conduct of divine worship in the quire.[2] However, all these categories of cathedral staff had their own specific duties to perform, and of only the vicars-choral and choristers was the conduct of the Opus Dei the principal function. So it seems fair to state that in evaluating the forces supplied at the secular cathedrals for the performance of the choir service, only the vicars-choral (and their equivalents under the names of minor canon and secundarius) and the choristers need be taken into serious consideration.

1. Appendix A2, below, pp. A008-13.

2. At Wells, a statute of 1495 required even the sacrist (= verger) to be at least in exorcist's orders, to be tonsured, to be unmarried, and to be able to read and sing plainsong competently, ut lecciones et Responsoria ut moris est sacristarum legere et canere valeat:- WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS., fo. 3v.

2.2.1.B. The secular cathedrals:- the direction of the music and services

(i) The Precentor and Succentor

The conduct of the services and the direction of the music lay in the hands of the canon who held the office of Precentor. A feature common to all the English secular cathedrals was the division of their government into four principal fields, each the province of one of the four great dignitaries:- dean, precentor, chancellor and treasurer.[1] Since the very raison d'être of cathedral churches was the perpetual observance of the Opus Dei, the Precentor - whose charge this was - ranked second only to the Dean in importance and precedence in chapter, at all the secular cathedrals except St. Paul's.[2] From the very beginning of capitular organisation at the secular cathedrals, the Precentor, in his own person or that of his deputy, was bound to constant residence. His duties were to direct the choir as far as concerned the singing, to see that all the choir sang together in regular time and tune, and to set the pitch of the chanting.[3] His functions in the direction of the music were most clearly in evidence in his contribution to the drawing up of the weekly tabula. This was a duty shared between the Precentor and the Chancellor. The tabula was a large waxed board on which, each Saturday, were written in due order the names of those members of the foundation who were to take individual parts in the performance of the Opus Dei during the ensuing week. The Precentor selected all those who were to sing, those who were to minister at the altar at Mass and in the choir during the Office, and those canons and vicars who were to act as rectores chori; the chancellor selected the (far fewer) persons who were to read the lessons.[4]

On major double feasts, the precentor himself served as the senior of the four rulers of the choir at mass; and on all double feasts, accuracy in the performance of the chant was to be secured by his instructing the rulers of the choir in the chants which it was their function to begin. Probably as a matter of tact, the precentor was always to be present in church when the bishop also was present, to pre-intone to him those chants which he was to begin.[5]

1. SCMA, pp.135-6
2. ibid., pp.160-1
3. Stat.Sal. pp.26,28; WlsDC Liber Ruber, part 1, fo.41v.
4. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1, pp.3-4; WlsDC Liber Ruber, part 1, fo.41v. (where a gap in this, the oldest surviving text, may be supplied from Dean Cosyn's MS, fo.1v.); Liber Albus I, fo.219v.
5. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1, p.3; WlsDC Liber Ruber part 1, fo.41v. For some slight variations, of little importance in the present context, in the functions of the precentors at the other secular cathedrals, see SCMA pp.163-4

It was, therefore, always greatly to the cathedral's advantage for the bishop to nominate as precentor a man who was in his own right an expert in the liturgy and its chant. How far this was actually done, in fact, remains a matter for speculation. The precentorship was - or should have been - no sinecure; its functions and responsibilities were considerable, in view of the complexity of the Liturgy. This was realised at Salisbury, at least, where a mid-15th century hand copied out the 13th century text of the customs defining the precentor's duties, and significantly added that in order to carry out these duties, he was permitted to have his service-books open in front of him when and whenever he pleased - making it appear that he was the only member of the choir so privileged.[1] The earliest known recipient of the degree of Doctor of Music, Dr. Thomas Saintjust, was precentor of Salisbury in the last few months of his life (Jan.-Sept. 1467).[2] How far his predecessors and successors, and his colleagues at the other cathedrals, were so well qualified as he remains, however, open to investigation.

It is also doubtful how far precentors actually did observe the unrelieved residence imposed on them by statute. When, in 1500, a non-resident canon was appointed precentor of Wells, this was reckoned as a novel departure worthy of much condemnation.[3] At Lincoln, on the other hand, Dr. Edwards' lists of canonical residence indicate that in the years 1304-40 and 1360-1401, precentors kept residence only in the periods 1360-6 and 1385-1401;- 22 years out of 77.[4] Certainly from a very early date, the precentor was - like the other three great dignitaries - supplied with a deputy, the succentor.[5] He had few distinct functions of his own - largely, he merely performed those of the precentor in his absence.[6] He was bound to continual residence, and it was directed that both succentor and precentor were never to be absent from the cathedral at the same time.[7]

Exceptionally, the succentor at Wells appears always to have been one of the other canons resident.[8] At Salisbury, he could be either a

1. SBR MS Statuta ecclesie Sarum, fo.69r.
2. MMB, pp.178,462
3. ed. T.f. Palmer, Collectanea I, 39 Somerset Record Society (1924). pp.38-40
4. SCMA, pp.326-348
5. SCMA., pp.169-72
6. Stat.Sal. p.30; WlsDC Liber Ruber, part 1, fo.41v.42r - an early text which reads Succentor a cantore que ad cantoriam (precentorship) pertinent possidet, a better reading than the 'cantariam' of the various printed texts; ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1, p.8
7. Stat.Sal. pp.162-4; WlsDC Liber Ruber part 1 ff.41v,42r.
8. SCMA. p.170 An exception was the years 1447-1497, when the succentorship was held by Henry Abyndon, a canon of Wells who could never be resident since he was a clerk of the Chapel Royal. Abyndon's career is sketched out in Appendix A9, below, pp. A039-44.

canon resident or one of the senior vicars. During the 13th and 14th centuries he was often a residentiary canon[1]; however, after the general return to residence of the greater dignitaries, including the precentor, at the end of the 14th century[2], the practice of collating one of the senior vicars to the succentorship became permanently established. As late as 1425 there was still some fluidity in the status of the succentor; a will made in that year included provision for payments to the choir of Salisbury cathedral at the testator's burial, and to the canons residentiary, and to the succentor si non sit canonicus[3]. However, from 1390 onwards, all the names of succentors that have been recovered are those of vicars-choral. At York the duties of the precentor's deputy were shared between the succentor canonicorum and the succentor vicariorum who were a canon and vicar respectively. At the other six secular cathedrals, the succentor was always one of the vicars.[4]

Clearly it was the more practical expedient for one of the vicars to be appointed succentor. Ultimate oversight of the conduct of Divine Worship would always be with the canon precentor; but even when he was keeping residence, his actual corporal presence in choir must have been pretty infrequent, unless he were sufficiently conscientious to exceed the minimum requirements of his residence for attendance in choir. Day-to-day direction of the services would thus come to rest on the succentor, who - as a vicar - was bound far more rigorously to attend at service. In 1394 the Dean and chapter of Salisbury took the vicars to task for slackness in attending services, and in the singing of the psalms and chants - especially in allowing the chanting to go flat. They laid the blame partly on the succentor, as being too remiss in correcting the vicars, and partly on them for ignoring him when he did. The Dean required the vicars for their part to amend themselves in these respects and to pay heed to the succentor, and he for his part to be alert to correct errant vicars as his office required.[5] In the person of the precentor or the succentor, that is, there was nearly always present in choir an official responsible for, and empowered (if he felt so disposed) to exact the orderly and accurate performance of the Opus Dei.

1. SCMA.p.170
2. K. Edwards, "The Cathedral Church of Salisbury", VCH Wiltshire, vol.3, pp.171, 176-7.
3. ed. E.F. Jacob, The Register of Henry Chichele, vol.2 p.348
4. SCMA pp.170-2.
5. SDC Reg. Dunham fo.130r.

(ii)The Instructor of the Choristers[1]

One other important part of the precentor's sphere of activity concerned the choristers[2]. As has been seen, the privileges of both the nomination of the choristers, and their admission to the cathedral foundation, lay with the precentor.[3] With him lay also ultimate responsibility for their discipline[4], at all times except for their discipline in choir on occasions when the choir was ruled, when it was the responsibility of the rulers to see that the boys did not mis-behave, or leave the choir without permission.[5]

Ultimate responsibility for the instruction of the choristers likewise lay with the precentor[6]; however, his functions as regards both the discipline and instruction of the boys were matters which he discharged entirely by deputy - at one, or even two removes. At Exeter and Hereford, the precentor's general deputy, namely the succentor (a vicar-choral), himself acted as Instructor of the Choristers.[7] Elsewhere, this duty was deputed to yet a third individual, appointed either by the precentor or succentor; this is the individual known variously as Instructor, Informator or Magister Choristarum. The 12th-century Statuta Antiqua of Wells remark that the precentor ruled the song school per officialem suum - "through his deputy". In this case, this refers not to the succentor, who is mentioned separately, but to a third party altogether.[8] Similarly, at York, Lincoln and St. Paul's, the precentor appointed a separate Instructor of the Choristers wholly distinct from his other deputy, the succentor.[9] At Salisbury, the 13th-century

1. This term will be consistently used to denote the official charged with the instruction of the choristers. The more usual term in modern writings is "Master of the Choristers"; but the former term seems preferable, insofar as the Latin equivalent of the latter (Magister Choristarum)was used with a number of different meanings in the Middle Ages, rendering use of its English translation liable to ambiguity.
2. SCMA pp.165, 311-2 3. above, p. 2024.
4. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol. 1, p.3.; WlsDC Liber Ruber part 1 fo.41v.; SCMA pp.165-6
5. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1,p.40; WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS.fo.19v.
6. ed. W.H.Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1,p.3;WlsDC Liber Ruber part 1,fo.41v.
7. SCMA.p.167
8. WlsDC Liber Ruber, part 1, fo. 41v. The appointment of the Instructor of the Choristers remained the direct responsibility of the precentor throughout the Middle Ages (WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS, p.347 (1460) and Indenture of Richard Hygons (MMB p.425) (1479))- as indeed, it does to this day.
9. SCMA, p.167 and ibid., fn.2.

Consuetudinary remarks that the succentor supplied the place of the precentor in his absence, and ruled the song school (that is, appointed the Instructor of the Choristers) per officialem suum - that is, through the succentor's own deputy.[1] When in 1454 complaint was made at a visitation that there was no Instructor in cantu this was said to be because the succentor had failed in his duty to provide one.[2] Lichfield Cathedral followed Salisbury in having the succentor appoint the master of the song school[3].

The role of the Instructor of the Choristers in the cathedrals of the 14th century made little impression on the archives of the time. Certainly, his duties had attained nothing like the importance that he was to acquire by the end of the 15th century; so lowly did his role appear at least until c.1400, and so rarely did he warrant any mention in the archives of the period, that even so richly detailed a work as Dr. Edwards' standard study "The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages" barely mentions him.[4] Nevertheless, his functions were absolutely essential. Cathedral chapters could lay down that vicars-choral must already know much of the chant and ceremonial at their admission, and (optimistically) expect them to get down to the job of teaching themselves the rest thereafter. However, no such specialised knowledge could be expected on the part of the choristers. Their parts in the liturgy they would have to be taught, and someone would have to be provided to teach them.

In determining the content of the boys' training and education, the first priority must always have been the provision of boys able to perform their due service in choir, well coached day by day in the ceremonial and chant proper to the successive services in which they were entabled to take part. In general, the boys would have to be trained firstly in the art of memorising chant, text and ceremonial action; and secondly in the skills of singing at sight from plainsong notation, and of reading Latin texts, those both of the psalms and chants themselves, and of the Lessons assigned to be read by choristers at Matins.

1. ed. W.H.Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1, p.8.
2. SDC Reg. Burgh fo.50r.
3. SCMA p.167
4. He crops up in passing in the sections dealing with "The Song School," SCMA pp.166-8, and the choristers pp.312-4

Indeed, at least for the older boys, to whom the reading duties were deputed, the ability also to understand the Latin they were reading was little less than indispensible. Cathedral chapters were often concerned lest the lessons from Holy Writ be turned into nonsense by inexpert reading of the Latin text; a standard feature of the duties of the Chancellor was "to determine the length of the lessons, and hear the readers practise them beforehand."[1] The choristers were not excluded from this. The statutes at Wells particularly directed that no vicar, altarist or chorister should read any lesson, Gospel or Epistle without having been heard through first, unless he was adequately skilled in reading. If anyone neglected to do so, and make mistakes in accentu, dictione vel sillaba, he was to be punished by the Dean and Chapter, or, in the case of a chorister, by the Instructor of the Choristers.[2] Given the prevailing manner of abbreviating all texts written in Latin, especially the final inflections, it would scarcely be possible for a boy to read a lesson accurately (unless, of course, he had it memorised, word for word) without a sound knowledge of at least the basic elements of Latin grammar and vocabulary.

Latin grammar was the basic element - indeed, virtually the sole element - in the formal education of any medieval schoolboy, and there is every reason to believe that the choristers in the song schools of cathedral and collegiate churches received a Latin education no less than any other schoolboys. If this situation altered at all, then it did not begin to do so any earlier than the last third of the 15th century.[3] In 1314, the bishop of Salisbury, Simon of Ghent, endowed the Dean and Chapter with certain rents to be applied to the perpetual maintenance of the 14 choristers of the cathedral, and of a master to teach them grammar; this scheme was brought to realisation by his successor, bishop Roger de Martival.[4] It didn't matter that by 1448 this master had ceased to teach the choristers grammar, since the boys then went to the regular cathedral grammar school instead.[5] At Wells, the Instructor of the Choristers seems to have been expected to be able to teach grammar as well as chant. When, in 1408/9, the cathedral was burdened with an unsatisfactory master of the cathedral grammar school, it was to the Instructor of the Choristers that the chapter turned as a man able to fill the gap.[6] The rules evolved for

1. SCMA, pp.214-5
2. B.M.Harley 1682 fo.18r. This statute was enacted in 1332; the BM text written c.1400 concludes vel per preceptorem si sit chorista; a text of c.1505 (WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS fo.12r.) less plausibly reads 'pracentorem' 3. See below, pp. 6089-91.
4. D.H.Robertson, Sarum Close pp.39-43 5. SDC Reg. Burgh, fo.8v.
6. WlsDC, Communar's A/C 1408-9:-item in communiis Magistri Scolarum nil hoc anno quia non portavit habitum in choro....in reward' Magistri

(contd.)

the running of the choristers' boarding house by Robert Cator some time in the 1430's or 1440's[1] required the Instructor to be well-grounded in grammar as well as in chant, and contemplated the boys' being sufficiently thoroughly taught in Latin to be able to proceed straight from choristerhood at the cathedral to University.[2] Similarly, up to the middle of the 15th century at least, the statutes of newly-founded collegiate churches generally directed that the choristers were to be taught grammar as well as chant, either by the same master, or by two separate masters. Learning the boys' part in the music and ceremonial of the church services was thus only part of a chorister's education; once the choir-learning was done, every effort was made to give the boys the same education in Latin grammar that they would have been acquiring in an ordinary grammar school.[3]

5.cont'd (from p.2037)
Scolarum xiij s iiij d [instead of the usual 26s.8d.] Et non plus hoc anno quia non portavit habitum in choro nec aliquid fecit in eodem....item pro rewardo facto Johanni helcombe magistro choristarum pro labore suo circa informacionem puerorum ecclesie in gramatica vj s viij d.

1. WlsDC Dean Cosyn's MS, pp.347-55; put into written form, for confirmation by bishop Thomas Bekynton and the chapter in 1460:- ibid., pp.354-5
2. ibid., pp.347, 348
3. For further examples, see below pp. 3014, 4052-3, 4054, 4057, 5093-5, 6083-90. also A.F. Leach, Educational Charters and Documents, p.270; and for some general observations, below pp. 5093-5, 6083-91.
It seems necessary to labour these points, since the nature of the song schools of cathedral and collegiate churches has been much misunderstood. Historians who have written on these schools have accepted at their face value A.F. Leach's conclusions that such song schools (a) offered a general course of study, at merely an elementary level, as a stage preliminary to attendance at a grammar school, and (b) were open to all comers, and not just to the choristers of the parent institution; see A.F. Leach, "Schools", VCH Lincolnshire, vol.2 p.423, and cf. SCMA, pp.167-8 and N. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages, pp.60, 63-70, esp. p.64. Considering the highly specialised nature of the education of chorister-boys, such as their liturgical duties demanded, it comes as no surprise to find that, in fact, barely a single shred of evidence can be adduced in favour of the ideas that the song schools attached to cathedrals or to the major collegiate churches were ever either (a) regularly open to non-choristers, or (b) offered purely an elementary education. Rather, they were schools which existed solely to educate choristers and train them to do their jobs in church; each was run by its parent institution just for the benefit of its own choirboys. The song schools were parallel to the grammar schools, not preliminary to them, and were never public schools in any sense of the word.

Essential as the duties of the Instructor of the Choristers were, they must have been very humdrum and routine. It will be demonstrated that boys' voices only began to be used in composed polyphonic music about, or shortly after, the middle of the 15th century.[1] An enterprising Instructor of the Choristers could, if given the necessary scope by the Precentor or Succentor, instruct his most musical boys in the art of improvising descant over the traditional plainsong. Indeed, this seems to have been required of the Instructor at Lincoln Cathedral, where the 13th century Consuetudinary directed that on lesser double feasts, boys were to sing Benedicamus Domino at the end of Lauds in (presumably improvised) polyphony[2]. Otherwise, however, the Instructor was concerned only with teaching reading, Latin grammar, and the plainsong and ceremonial of the Liturgy. The only extra-professional requirements he would have needed were patience, and - probably - a strong right arm. The job certainly enjoyed no very high status, and at some institutions indeed seems to have been regarded as rather a chore. For the 14th century, it has yet been possible to draw up a list of Instructors of the Choristers for only one institution, St. George's Chapel, Windsor.[3] Here the statutes required that one of the vicars-choral be chosen as Instructor.[4] The list does admittedly have many gaps; but even allowing for these, still it remains significant that in the 50 years 1360-1410 no-one is known to have kept the post for more than 2½ years, while often it changed hands after a year, six months, or even less. It seems that no vicar-choral came to St. George's in order to take up the post of Instructor; it was a job which went round the staff already there, and which, it seems, each passed on as soon as he could. The position appears to have had little creative scope, and no musical significance; it was a routine job, and a dull routine at that. The total transformation in the nature of the post of Instructor of the Choristers that occurred during the 15th century is a symptom of many of the most important changes - musical and institutional - with which this thesis will be concerned.

1. See below pp. 6002-20.
2. ed. H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth, Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral, vol.1 pp.369, 373; discussed in MMB, p.111
3. Judging by the material A.F. Leach was able to find, it would be possible to draw up such a list for Lincoln Cathedral - see his article on "Schools" in VCH Lincolnshire, vol.2, pp.423ff. For her own period, the list of Instructors at Windsor to be found in AKB Roberts St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, p.106, is far more reliable than that to be culled from the better known E.H. Fellowes, Organists and Masters of the Choristers of St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, pp.x, 1-6. My own list appears below as Appendix Bi, p. A048.
4. See below, p. 3014.

It remains to establish precisely who on the cathedral staff was considered eligible for appointment as Instructor of the Choristers. For neither Salisbury nor Wells can a list of Instructors during the 14th century be drawn up. At both cathedrals, however, all those known to have served as Instructors by the middle of the 15th century were vicars-choral, and probably this had long been the practice at all the secular cathedrals. The earliest Instructor yet traced at Wells was John Helcombe, admitted vicar-choral in 1384[1], whom the Communar's Account for 1408/9 incidentally mentions as having been Instructor in that year. Seven of his successors down to the Reformation can be traced, all of them vicars-choral.[2]

At Salisbury, the matter is complicated by the fact that when the term Magister Choristarum appears at all, it is used to denote not the Instructor of the Choristers, but the Warden, the canon resident deputed to supervise the endowments of the choristers' house. Under the terms of bishop Roger Martival's organisation of the choristers' house, a second individual served as the boys' resident housemaster and grammar teacher; his commonest title was submagister choristarum.[3] It seems very likely that he was also the man selected by the succentor to conduct the song school, and was thus responsible for teaching the boys their parts in the music and ceremonial of the choir service as well. All the indications are that Bishop Martival organised the Choristers' House at Salisbury exactly on a model he already knew - that at Lincoln, where he had been dean for five years before becoming bishop of Salisbury.[4] The constitutions of both Choristers' Houses were, and must have remained, pretty well exactly similar; for when in 1440 Bishop Alnwick of Lincoln drafted a new code of statutes for his cathedral, he was able, for his statute concerning the choristers, to take large sections verbatim out of Martival's statute of 1319 for the Salisbury choristers[5]. At Lincoln, the same resident sub-magister taught the boys both grammar and chant[6], and the same probably was true of Salisbury. Indeed, in chapter acts

1. WlsDC Liber Albus I, fo.239v.
2. A check-list appears below as Appendix B2, p. A049
3. Stat.Sal., pp.262-5; D.H. Robertson, Sarum Close, pp.39-43; ed.K.Edwards C.R. Elrington and S. Reynolds, The Register of Roger Martival, part 5 (C.R. Elrington, ed.) 58 Canterbury and York Society (1972), pp.413-4.
4. Compare the constitution of the Choristers' House at Lincoln (ed. H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth, The Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral, vol.1, p.410) with that at Salisbury (Stat.Sal.,pp.262-5; D.H. Robertson, Sarum Close, pp.39-43)
5. ed. H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth, The Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral, vol.2, p.362.
6. ibid., pp.lii, 298

of 1410 and 1414, the sub-magister was actually referred to as Magister Scole Cantus.....scolam huiusmodi occupans, which seems fairly unequivocal[1]. At least until the mid-15th century, therefore, it can be taken that the sub-magister choristarum was the effective Instructor of the Choristers at Salisbury. The earliest known sub-magister is John ffarle, who appears to have held the job c.1390[2]; thirteen of his successors have been traced down to the Reformation, all of them vicars-choral[3]. Indeed, it seems highly probable that the selection of a vicar-choral to act as Instructor of the Choristers was invariably and consistently practised at all the secular cathedrals, at least down to the middle of the 15th century.

2.2.1.C Other Colleges of prebendal canons

(i) Distribution

Besides the secular cathedrals, there were some sixty other collegiate churches existing in England in 1340.[4] Over 20 of these were of pre-Conquest origin, survivors of what had once been a much larger class. Those that still existed in 1340 were mostly located towards, or beyond, the fringes of Lowland England, and included the three great minsters within the diocese of York - Ripon, Beverley and Southwell; South Malling (Sussex); All Saints', Derby; Wimborne Minster, Dorset; Ledbury and Bromyard in Herefordshire; St. John the Baptist, Chester; a group in the far South-West, including Crediton and Chulmleigh (Devon) and St. Buryan (Cornwall); and a West Midland group, including St. Mary's Stafford, Gnosall, Penkridge, Tamworth, Tettenhall and Wolverhampton(Staffordshire), and St. Mary, Shrewsbury, St. Chad, Shrewsbury, and Pontesbury (Shropshire). Alongside these, there were a number of colleges which had been founded in the half-century immediately following the Conquest. Almost without exception these had been established by earls and barons of the new Norman aristocracy, either in the immediate vicinity of, or actually within, the castles that were the centre and source of their authority.

1. SDC Reg. Vyryng fo.27v, Pountney fo.4v.
2. In 1440, John Sanger, vicar choral aged 60 years or more, thinking back to his own boyhood as a chorister, recalled that one dom John ffarle had then been submagister choristarum - SDC Reg. Hutchins p.20. This must relate to some time within the decade 1385-95; and indeed, John ffarle appears as one of the priest-vicars on a list of 1390:- ACL, Archiep. Reg. Courtenay fo.150v.
3. A list appears below, Appendix B3, p. A05C.
4. Nearly all the information on the following pages has been drawn from G.H. Cook, English Collegiate Churches, pp.1-21, and D.Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, Medieval Relioious Houses, pp.411-446

Those still surviving in 1340 included St. Mary de Castro, Leicester; St. Nicholas, Wallingford; St. Mary Magdalen, Bridgnorth(Shropshire); St. Mary, Hastings; St. Michael, Shrewsbury; St. Martin le Grand, London; and St. Mary, Warwick.

During the course of the 12th and 13th centuries, the more significant of these collegiate churches abandoned their previous amorphous forms of internal organisation. Instead they were re-modelled on lines first worked out at the reformed Anglo-Norman secular cathedrals, the government of each being placed in the hands of a Dean or senior Canon and chapter of prebendaries. Indeed, the latest of these foundations, St. Mary, Warwick (1123) was established on prebendal lines from the outset.[1] However, the incumbents of many of the smaller pre-Conquet collegiate churches never instituted the prebendal system; they therefore,like Ledbury and Bromyard, remained constituted as amorphous bodies of co-parceners. For the period covered by this thesis, they appear not as collegiate churches proper, but merely as parish churches with 3 or 4 absentee rectors rather than one. Without proper prebendal organisation, it seems unlikely that there could have been any obligation upon the portioners each to appoint a vicar-choral; joint provision of a single parish vicar would have sufficed. With no resident chorus of voices to conduct Divine Service, these quasi-colleges were musically insignificant, and need no further consideration here.[2]

After c.1125, the foundation of collegiate churches ceased almost entirely for 150 years. The spate of foundations of houses of religion continued, but founders favoured the regular rather than the secular clergy, and established monasteries, or hospitals under Augustinian canons, rather than colleges. Those who did found collegiate churches in the period 1125-1275 were, almost without exception, bishops - especially bishops of wealthy dioceses, where the cathedral was staffed not by secular prebendaries, but by monks. Their motive seems clear enough. Bishops of such dioceses found that their cathedrals offered no prebends for distribution to their clerks and clients; so they created collegiate churches, under Dean and Chapter rule and with endowments divided into distinct prebends, which thus offered to themselves and their successors the patronage which their cathedrals did not.

1. Monasticon, vol.6 part 3, p.1326; D.Styles, Ministers' Accounts, p.xxi.
2. G.H. Cook, English Collegiate Churches, pp.5-6. A number of these quasi-colleges are discussed by A.H. Thompson, The English Clergy,pp.85-7

Amongst such collegiate churches established by 1340 may be listed:-

Durham:-	Darlington (Bishop Pudsey c.1170); Norton (founder unknown, established by 1227); Lanchester (1283), Chester-le-Street (1286) and Bishop Auckland(1292) (all founded by bishop Anthony Bek).
Canterbury:-	South Malling, Sussex (pre-Conquest; re-founded by Archbishop Theobald c.1150), Hackington (Archbishop Baldwin 1185; abortive) and Wingham (Kilwardby and Peckham 1273-87).
Winchester:-	Marwell (Blois, c.1150; augmented des Roches 1226).
Worcester:-	Westbury-on-Trym (re-invigorated 1288, bishop Gyffard).
Norwich:-	possibly St. Mary de Campis, Norwich (c.1250)[1]

Bishops of Ely preferred to found colleges to serve the university of Cambridge within their diocese, a special class of college which will be discussed separately. The only two other bishops in this class, those of Rochester and Carlisle, were too ill-endowed to contemplate the expensive business of founding and endowing colleges.

The bishops of certain of the other dioceses also established collegiate churches, thus augmenting the amount of patronage at their disposal. For instance, Walter Giffard, archbishop of York, created St. Peter, Howden, in 1265. Various bishops of Exeter were vigorous in this field. Bishop Warelwast re-founded Holy Trinity, Bosham (Sussex) in 1121; bishop Briwere, Crantock (1236); bishop Bronscombe, Glasney (1264-75); while bishop Grandisson founded Ottery St. Mary (1338) and revived Holy Cross, Crediton (1334).

(ii) The state of worship at the lesser colleges

It is very much open to doubt how much life these colleges had in them in 1340 - especially those founded 100 or more years previously. The institution of prebendal canonries at these churches had exactly the same long-term effects as at the cathedrals. To the patron in whose gift it lay, the collation to a canonry and its associated prebend became merely a useful method of ensuring that his clerks received adequate emolument at no cost to the patron's own treasury. Clerks in papal, royal, episcopal or aristocratic service had better things to do with their time than fulfil any associated conditions of residence. Indeed, non-residence may have become even more a feature of collegiate church chapters than of cathedral chapters. At many of the smaller colleges, neither the Dean nor the Canons might ever have kept any residence at all - such

1. The history of the foundation of this college is very obscure - see J.C.Cox in VCH Norfolk, vol.2,pp.455-7. The fact that collation to prebends at this college lay in the hands of the bishops of Norwich suggests strongly that one of their number was the principal force behind its foundation.

apparently was the case at Bridgnorth, a college of a Dean and five canons, collation to all of which lay with the King.[1] In 1366 bishop Whittlesey of Worcester made a visitation of the collegiate church of Westbury-on-Trym, and discovered that none of its five canons had ever made any residence at all.[2]

It may well be doubted how far canons so totally uninterested as these ever bothered to nominate vicars-choral to take their place to maintain the fabric of divine service in the collegiate church. At Westbury, for instance, Whittlesey found that only one of the five had done so[3] - musically the college must have been totally dead. Indeed, in the same year one of its canons described the college as destituta consilio et ministris - "destitute of personnel and of policy"[4].

In 1340 the college of St. Mary, Warwick, was probably in very similar straits. It had been created in 1123 when Roger Beaumont, earl of Warwick, removed the canons of the collegiate chapel of All Saints established in his castle of Warwick to St. Mary's, the pre-existing parish church of the town. From the outset the college was established on secular capitular lines[5], and consisted of a dean and five canons, collation to all six prebends lying with successive earls of Warwick[6]. Non-residence must soon have become a feature of the college, four vicars-choral being listed among witnesses to a document of as early as c.1160[7]. St. Mary's, however, had a particularly unfortunate history. Indeed, in 1367, the college Register noted how "noblemen of old founded houses of religion and holiness, for the praise of God, for the strengthening of the catholic church, and for the safety of their souls and those of all the faithful departed; but as their successors have fallen away in the deterioration of time, devotion has grown cold, vanity has increased, the works of piety have been abandoned, and the old symbols of virtue have run to seed."[8]

1. W.G. Clark-Maxwell and A.H. Thompson, "The College of St. Mary Magdalene, Bridgnorth", 2nd ser.34 Archaeological Journal(1930) pp.6-7.
2. K.B. Macfarlane, John Wycliffe..., p.14
3. ibid.
4. A.H. Thompson, The English Clergy..., p.246
5. See above.p.2042, n.1
6. ibid., and the Register of St. Mary's,Warwick:- PRO E 164 22 fo.59v. Initially there was a seventh prebend, of very small value, which was not allotted to any canon, but belonged to the prior of St. Sepulchre's Priory, Warwick (a small Augustinian house); this was abolished in 1395/6 (D.Styles, Ministers' Accounts, p.xxi)
7. PRO E 164 22, fo.10r.
8. ibid, fo.55v.

Of the seven churches in and around Warwick which were partly appropriated to the college, three had become almost completely de-populated and produced virtually no income; and much of the remainder of the original 12th century endowment had been alienated, reducing the college to poverty.[1] The six prebends were of little value, ranging from £10 p.a. down to only £2;[2] coupled with only minimal prospects of any dividend at the end of the year, this can only have led to total non-residence on the part of the canons. Further, the four canons whose prebends were worth £3. 6. 8d. p.a. or less could hardly have been expected to maintain vicars-choral at the college either. In fact, in the year 1410/11, the properties and other sources of revenue which the college and its prebendaries had enjoyed in 1340 produced less than £50; and nearly half of this sum came from items such as oblations and legacies which presumably produced virtually nothing in the days when the college was moribund.[3] Probably therefore the college's annual revenue did not then exceed £30; and so small a sum barely covered the payments due to the dean and canons for their prebends, leaving virtually nothing as a Common Fund for the maintenance of the fabric of the church and of the Opus Dei within it.

It was the major re-endowment of the college effected at the end of the 14th century by Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, (1345-1401) that permitted the full choral staff to be restored. The fortunate survival of the Treasurer's Account for 1410/11, shortly after the re-foundation was completed, shows that the full choral staff then consisted of six vicars-choral, a master of the song school, and six choristers[4]; it can also be shown that there were maintained at the college three clerks in minor orders.[5] It is not improbable that this represented a full and almost exact restoration of the original 12th-13th century choral establishment. However, it can be established that by the early 14th century at the latest, the choristerships had probably lapsed altogether, and had to be restored from scratch, apparently in the 1390's[6]. Also during a preliminary attempt at re-endowment of the college in 1367, it was found necessary

1. ibid., ff.55v-57v; D.Styles, Ministers' Accounts, pp.xiiii-xxiii passim.
2. D. Styles, Ministers' Accounts, pp.xxii-xxiii
3. Calculated from Treasurer's A/c 1410/11 (WrkRO MS CR 895/9) using information relating to the college's endowments and the dates of their acquisition drawn from D.Styles, Ministers' Accounts, pp. xiii-xvii, xxii, and 3 fn.3.
4. WrkRO MS CR 895/9
5. See the full discussion of the constitution of the choral staff of St. Mary's below, pp. 4014-8.
6. ibid., and see also Appendix A5, A020-5.

to enact that thenceforth the number of vicars should match the number of prebends, and stand at six - as had previously been the custom.[1] This suggests strongly that in the period immediately prior to 1367 the number of vicars had been allowed to fall below its customary number. All considered, St. Mary, Warwick in c.1340 may well have been musically and spiritually as dead as Westbury-on-Trym was evidently found to be in 1366.

Of how many more of the seventy or so colleges existing in 1340 this conclusion would be equally true, it is as yet impossible to say. The conditions which had produced the kind of torpor evident at Westbury, Warwick and (probably) Bridgnorth may have applied equally to a fairly high proportion of them:- uninterested patrons, non-resident chapters, small and/or dwindling endowments. Nevertheless, there certainly remained a hard core of well-endowed colleges, able to maintain their own momentum, and to retain the traditional observance of the Opus Dei with the choral forces at their disposal. The information available for the precise constitution of these colleges is, however, very sparse. For the three important colleges within the diocese of York - Beverley, Ripon and Southwell - the surviving material does allow the outlines of the working choral staff to be deduced[2]; while for Ottery St. Mary, there remains the founder's very comprehensive set of statutes of 1339[3]. For the rest it is necessary to rely, with all due reservations, on chance references on the Patent Rolls or in Episcopal Registers or other documents.

It seems clear enough that the models for these lesser collegiate churches were the secular cathedrals. The government of each college lay in the hands of a Dean or senior canon, and a largely non-resident chapter of secular canons. The performance of theOpus Dei in the collegiate church was the responsibility of the vicars-choral - one for each canon - who were resident. In sources prior to the mid-fourteenth century, the ministri inferiores are only ever mentioned incidentally. Reference is occasionally made to choristers, and - if it be allowed that

1. Evidently the very small seventh prebend had never been burdened with the maintenance of a vicar-choral; PRO E 164 22 fo.59v. A later and incomplete, but grammatically sounder text of these statutes appears in PRO E 315 492 ff 1-4v.
2. Much of this material has been printed:- A.F. Leach ed. Memorials of Beverley Minster; J.T.Fowler ed., Chapter Act of Ripon Minster, and Memorials of the Church of SS Peter and Wilfrid, Ripon; and A.F. Leach, ed. Visitations and Memorials of Southwell Minster.
3. J.N. Dalton, ed., The Collegiate Church of Ottery St. Mary.

the secular cathedrals were the models for these lesser colleges - a few probably were provided for at most of them.[1] The clerks of the top form, required by the cathedral liturgies which the colleges adopted, were presumably supplied by the senior vicars, especially those in priest's orders, while the clerks of the second form would be supplied by the vicars in deacon's and subdeacon's orders.[2] Distinct clerks of the second form appear to occur only at certain collegiate churches within the dioceses of York and Exeter:- Beverley, Ripon and Southwell, and Ottery St. Mary; this is not surprising since in both cases the cathedral church of the diocese similarly made provision for distinct clerks of the second form.[3] A rather hasty and uncritical glance through the relevant volumes of the Victoria County Histories indicates that some 20-25 major collegiate churches may still have been observing the Opus Dei with tolerable efficiency and regularity in c.1340.

1. The choristers of Glasney College were mentioned in a will of 1418:- ed. E.F. Jacob, The Register of Henry Chichele, vol.2 p.156; and those of Crantock College in 1351:- G. Oliver, Monasticon Diocesis Exoniensis, p.58
2. See above p.2014. At the collegiate church of St. Martin le Grand, London, it is known for certain that the practice of the secular cathedrals was observed, whereby some vicars were in priest's orders (and thus eligible as clerks of the top form) and some were in orders below those of priest (and thus suitable as clerks of the second form) - at least in 1427, when John Eascourt, dean of the college, made a will making bequests at separate rates to the vicarii presbiteri and the vicarii non presbiteri:- ed. E.F.Jacob, the Register of Henry Chichele, vol.2 p.372.
3. The three distinct clerks of the second form at St. Mary, Warwick - the "clerks of the old foundation" - were exceptional in this respect. Their existence was necessitated by a rule that all the vicars of the college had to be in priest's orders, see below, pp. 4015-6.

2.2.2. Colleges of Chantry Priests

As has been explained, the constitution of the choral forces of these collegiate churches, whereby the Opus Dei was performed by vicars-choral (all of whom were in one or other of the three major Orders) and choristers, was perfectly adequately suited to the requirements of the liturgy and its music as they stood in c.1340. However, from the last quarter of the 13th century onward, there began to appear a distinct type of college, with choral forces somewhat differently composed, which by chance was to find itself rather better constituted to adapt to the changes in musical practice which occurred in the 15th century. For convenience, these are generally referred to as chantry colleges.

Reasons why the era of the popularity of chantries should have begun in the 13th century may be sought elsewhere.[1] Particularly important, however, in the present context, are two principal motives for this movement. Firstly, there was the increasing importance of the mass in the 13th century, and belief in the efficacy of the eucharist in alleviating the plight of the souls of the dead in purgatory; and secondly, the establishment of the rule that normally no priest should celebrate more than one mass a day.[2] Therefore, any man proposing to found a chantry for the benefit of his soul after death had no alternative but to found a new living, and establish a distinct chantry-priest; and a founder who felt that his soul would have need of more than one mass per day wasobliged simply to establish more than one chantry-priest. A founder of a multiple chantry could establish it as simply a group of priests, sustained from the same endowments and celebrating in the same chapel for the same intention; or he could establish it as a college. Strictly the minimum number of priests for a college was three, a warden and two subordinate chaplains being sufficient. One the whole, the distinctions between multiple chantries and chantry colleges are not relevant here.

However, these new chantry colleges, which were beginning to appear from c.1275 onward, were in many ways different from the colleges of prebendal canons founded prior to them, andmany of their distinguishing features were of great importance in affecting their manner of

1. e.g. K.L. Wood-Legh, Perpetual Chantries, p.5.
2. ibid, pp.5, 8

conducting divine service. For the older colleges had been based exactly on cathedral models, constituted so as to include the two ranks of men and one of boys which were essential to the performance of as faithful a replica of the cathedral liturgies as possible. At the same time the prebends were held by largely non-resident service clerks, to such an extent that the provision of a source of patronage may be considered to have been a second aspect of the very reason for the existence of many of these institutions.

By contrast, the emphasis of the constitutions of the chantry colleges was wholly different, and at the time, wholly novel. Primarily they were concerned less with the performance of the Opus Dei than with intercession - they existed mainly to secure the recitation day by day of the greatest number of masses for the soul of the founder that the endowments could possibly sustain. Thus these colleges were in no way conceived as incorporating a reservoir of patronage; the emphasis was solely on the provision of resident priests,for no founder could afford to set aside any portion of the revenues of the college to serve as prebends for non-resident clerks. Such colleges therefore had no chapters of absent prebendaries - the warden and chaplains were the governing body, and they were always required to be wholly resident. The constitutions of such colleges therefore needed make no provision for vicars-choral, since principals who were permanently resident needed no vicars.

Secondly, chantry colleges were established for the primary purpose of the recitation of as manydaily masses as possible; and this feature had two further important consequences of its own. In the first place it meant that resources could rarely be made available to perform adequately any part of the liturgy except the mass. Although the statutes of multiple chantries and chantry colleges often stated in great detail the manner in which the Canonical Hours were to be celebrated each day - most frequently, according to Salisbury Use - it is clear that the celebration of the Hours was of secondary importance. Everything was ploughed into the provision of as many priests as possible for the celebration of mass; in these colleges the non-priestly elements were a dispensible item. Therefore, for instance, few of them made any provision at all for choristers.

Further , all the chaplains were of necessity to be in priest's orders; all the principal staff therefore were adult men of mature years, 24 being the minimum age for the priesthood. Unlike the vicars-choral of a cathedral or old-style collegiate church, therefore, they contained no young men in deacon's or sub-deacon's orders who

could perform such necessary duties as serving as clerks of the second form at the office, reading the gospel and epistle at Mass of the Day, and serving the priests at their private chantry masses. As at Exeter Cathedral, where - exceptionally - the same consideration applied, distinct clerks of the second form would have to be supplied. Moreover the chapels and churches of chantry colleges were rarely large enough to require full-time sacrists or vergers to clean the church, ring the bells, prepare the altars, light the candles etc; so these functions were often deputed to a lower category of clerks of the chapel staff. In the smaller chantry colleges neither category of clerk ever numbered more than the bare minimum - one or two at most. However, the existence of their particular slot in the constitutions of chantry colleges was later to be of considerable significance, for it was an indistinct and ill-defined slot which later periods could mould to suit the requirements of their times. They could even be modified to accommodate professional musicians. It has been noted that the working staff of these colleges were the resident chaplains; statutes and foundation-charters generally insisted that they be bene cantantes, but unlike the vicars-choral of old-established colleges and cathedrals, musical and vocal abilities were not amongst the main criteria for their selection. If the founder, or a subsequent warden, of a chantry college desired the enhancement of the Opus Dei by the services of skilled musicians, they would have to be fitted in somewhere else. The clerkships which these colleges provided were the obvious solution; and therefore, when - by the mid-15th century - members of the musical profession had become very largely lay in status, it was these colleges of chantry priests which found themselves best constituted to find a slot in which professional musicians could be employed. Paradoxically, it was the very emphasis on the priestly character of the principal staff that allowed the admission of distinct lay elements into the constitution of such colleges.

A good example of the smaller type of chantry college, displaying the characteristics outlined above, is that founded by a royal clerk, Thomas Sibthorpe, Keeper of the Hanaper in Chancery, in the Lady Chapel of the parish church in the village of his birth, Sibthorpe in Nottinghamshire. It was founded as a simple chantry of one priest in 1326[1]; but as Sibthorpe's wealth expanded, so did his ambitions for his chantry. In 1335 it was refounded as a college of one warden, two priests and one clerk; the function of this latter was to

1. A.H. Thompson, The English Clergy, pp.247-76, @ pp.247-8

serve the chaplains at Divine Service, prepare the altars and look after the candles, sleep in the church to guard it and its contents, ring the bells at all appropriate times, and teach the small boys of the parish their letters.[1] In 1343 the college was again expanded to what was to prove its final statutory dimensions - it was to consist of a warden and six chaplains, one clerk with the same duties as before, and one chorister.[2] Thus the resources that Sibthorpe ploughed successively into his chantry were directed almost entirely towards expanding the priestly element, the provision for clerks and choristers falling far behind, and remaining - by comparison with cathedrals and the older colleges - quite inadequate. It was directed that the Use of York, as performed at Southwell, should be observed by the college[3a]; but with resources as circumscribed as these, wholesale modifications to the consuetudinary must have been inevitable. To Sibthorpe himself, however, this was evidently preferable to reducing the number of his mass-priests.

The great majority of these multiple chantries and chantry colleges were in size similar to, or smaller than, that established at Sibthorpe. Establishments where the emphasis in the disposal of all available resources was placed so exclusively on just the maintenance of a large number of daily masses could offer no scope for putting into practice any belief in the desirability of embellishing divine worship by such extras as music beyond the standard liturgical chant. Occasionally, indeed, an individual founder might specifically direct otherwise. For instance, when in 1344-51 John Lord Mowbray and others founded a chantry of three priests at Epworth on the Isle of Axholme, Lincolnshire, express provision for the performance of polyphonic music at Divine Service was made. The chantry was to be staffed by three chaplains and four clerks; of the latter, it was directed that "one shall know sufficiently how to sing the tenor (tenorem), and another the mean (medium), and the other two the treble (cantum tertium)"[3b]. This provision was only short-lived, since in 1365 ~~however~~ bishop John Buckingham authorised a reduction in the number of clerks, in order to raise the salaries of the chaplains - a significant order of priorities.[4] Indeed, on the whole, the multiple chantries and the smaller chantry colleges which were founded in considerable numbers

1. ibid., pp.254-6.
2. ibid., pp.261-7.
3a. ibid., p. 272.
3b. ed. C.W. Foster and A.H.Thompson, "The Chantry Certificates for Lincoln and Lincolnshire", Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers, vols. 26-7 (1922-23), pp.246-51
4. K.L.Wood-Legh, Perpetual chantries p.83

between the 13th and 16th centuries are too unlikely to have offered scope for musical initiative to require systematic consideration in the present context.

However, from the turn of the 14th century onwards, the foundation of a chantry college became a principal expression of piety on the part not only of the merely rich - such as Thomas Sibthorp - but also of the very great. At the far more wealthy colleges founded by these latter, there generally were resources still left over to provide properly for ministri inferiores even after the desired maximum of priests had been provided for. Further, there appear to have been a few founders of colleges of only middling dimensions, who were nevertheless prepared to forego a couple of extra mass-priests in order to provide properly for clerks of the second form and choristers. Such colleges as these turned out both to have the necessary resources, and to offer adequate scope in the performance of the totality of the liturgy, for the enhancement of the services with formsof music more demanding than just the traditional plainchant. Indeed, these larger chantry colleges proved in the long run to be among the principal sustainers of composers and highly-skilled choirs in the 15th and 16th centuries.

They were in fact very much a product of the 160 years covered by this study. By 1340 there were perhaps some 25 chantry colleges already in existence - but of these, only one as yet represented the class of larger collegiate chantries. This was the College of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Winchester, founded in 1301 by John de Pontoise, bishop of Winchester, for a provost, 6 chaplains, 6 clerks (3 to be deacons, and 3 subdeacons) and 7 choristers.[1] Little more is known about this college; but in the elaboration of its personnel, consisting of a head (called dean, master, provost or warden), and numbers of priests, clerks and choristers, it was already archetypical of its kind.

1. A garbled account of the constitution of the college was printed by J.C.Cox in VCH Hampshire, vol.2, pp.212-3; see also Monasticon, vol.6, pp.1339-41

2.3. Hospitals

In some respects akin to the choirs of the chantry colleges, though stemming from quite different origins, were the choirs established in the chapels of a dozen or so of the very largest hospital foundations. The grandest of such establishments looked after a number of permanent inmates in an infirmary for the sick and in a hospice for the elderley; also they maintained a dispensary from which daily doles of food and alms were distributed to the healthy poor of the immediate vicinity. This routine work was performed by staffs of lay serving men and women. However, the foundation of such a charitable organisation was, of course, a work of piety, and these establishments were always directed to be administered by men in Holy Orders. Thus the government of such hospitals was placed in the hands of a warden and a number of resident chaplains, all of them priests who were in many instances enjoined to observe some loose form of the rule of Augustinian canons[1]; they ministered to the spiritual needs of the sick, and by them was the fabric of divine worship constantly maintained in the hospital chapel.

In the hundreds of smaller hospitals that existed, where the chapel staff consisted of just the three or four priests, the manner of conducting divine service can have offered no more scope for musical enterprise or initiative - or even expertise - than the multiple chantries and smaller chantry colleges. In the richest hospitals, however, probably numbering not more than 6 or 7, a more complete chapel staff could be supplied, by the provision of chapel clerks in minor orders to assist the priests and serve as clerks of the second form, and by the provision of boys to act as choristers. However, in the case of hospitals where the priests were not seculars, but were bound by a form of the Augustinian rule, it would have been most irregular to admit boys as formally instituted choristers, for whom strictly there was a place only in secular institutions. The usual practice, therefore, was for the hospital to make informal provision for the maintenance of a certain number of boys on the alms , or even amongst the lay inmates of the hospital, rather than as actual members of the foundation. A common way of

1. e.g. St. Giles' Hospital, Norwich (see below, pp. 2054-55), where the chaplains were to observe the Augustinian Rule as regards fastings and feastings, but were to be as seculars in all other respects, especially in wearing secular habit in choir. Great Hospital, Foundation Charter (c.1250):- NNRO, City Archives, Press G, Case 24, Shelf b.

effecting this was to include among the recipients of the hospital's charity a number of poor scholars - boys who were maintained at the city grammar school, and who earned their keep by serving as choristers in the hospital chapel when not at their lessons - mainly, that is, on holy-days.

The archetype of these greater hospital establishments equipped with complete chapel staffs appears to have been the Hospital of St. Cross, Winchester, founded c.1132 by Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, of which the chapel staff comprised the warden and four priests, and seven boys who lived in the Hospital, (apparently) attended the City grammar school, and acted as choristers in chapel.[1]

Another example of these greater hospital foundations was St. Giles' Hospital, Norwich, founded in 1249 by Walter Suffield, bishop of Norwich.[2] A document of c.1250, combining elements of both a foundation charter and a body of statutes, laid down the constitution of the hospital staff:- a master; four chaplains to observe divine service in the chapel; 30 resident infirm poor, with 3 or 4 serving-women to attend them; and 4 lay-men to assist in the administration of the hospital. Also 13 non-resident paupers were to be fed at the hospital every day, and with them 7 poor scholars, teachable boys of the [grammar] school of Norwich, to be chosen by the Master of the Hospital on the advice of the schoolmaster.[3] In this case the statutes did not specifically direct that the boys who fed at the Hospital were also to serve as choristers in the chapel; but an exact parallel with e.g. St. Cross Hospital, Winchester, may be suspected, especially in view of the fact that in a document of 1451 they were specifically referred to as "scholar-choristers".[4] Before his death in 1257 Suffield revised the Hospital Statutes slightly; Blomefield worked from a copy of them which differs from that now in NNRO, and is in fact, still untraced; it was dated 1256. This revision added to the chapel staff two clerks to assist the priest-chaplains, one to be in deacon's orders, the other in sub-deacon's; and directed the observance of Salisbury Use.[5] In his will, Bishop Suffield bequeathed to the Hospital the goblet from which the boys drank at meal-times; and to William, clerk of the chapel, the Liber cantus which had belonged to John Bygot[6] - presumably for use in the chapel. In 1310 four further

1. A.F. Leach, A History of Winchester College, pp.34-36; A.F. Leach, 'Schools' in VCH Hampshire, vol.2, p.260
2. Great Hospital, Inspeximus of Charters of bishop Walter, and of confirmation of them by pope Alexander 4, by Prior of Bromholm:- NNRO, City archives Press G, Case 24, Shelf B. An account of the history of St. Giles' Hospital may be found in F. Blomefield, An essay towards a topographical history of the County of Norfolk, vol.4, p.376 ff.
3. Great Hospital, Foundation Charter:- NNRO City Archives, Press G, Case 24, Shelf b.
4. 'septem pauperes scolares choriste':-Great Hospital, Letters Patent of

chaplains were added to the foundation[1]; therefore in 1340 the chapel staff consisted of 8 chaplains, two clerks, and 7 part-time choristers.

Amongst other such larger hospitals existing in 1340 was St. Leonard's Hospital, York, an 11th century foundation richly endowed during the reign of King Stephen, and to which an orphanage for 23 boys was added in 1280. In January 1376, it was reported that the annual outlay of the Hospital was an immense £969; the full establishment included the master, 13 chaplains on the foundation (10 in 1376), 4 extra chaplains (3 in 1376), and the unprecedented number of 30 choristers, doubtless composed mostly of the boys of the orphanage.[2] The hospital of St. Katherine by the Tower, London, founded in 1148, was completely refounded in 1273 by Queen Eleanor, widow of Henry 3, for a master and three priests; a number of resident poor were maintained, and a dole of 12d. was handed out daily to 24 non-resident paupers, 6 of whom were poor and deserving scholars who assisted the chaplains in divine worship in the chapel when their studies permitted.[3]

At the hospital of St. Mark, Billeswick, Bristol (Gaunt's Hospital), which became an independent foundation c.1232, the chapel was served by the master, three chaplains, and 12 poor scholars who were to have their finding of the hospital, and to attend and sing in the choir.[4] Lastly, in 1332 Bishop Grandisson refounded the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Exeter, adding to the master and four priests eight boys to learn grammar.[5]

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4. (p.2054) contd.. 29 Henry 6:- NNRO ibid.
5. (p.2054) F. Blomefield, An Essay...vol.4 p.382
6. Great Hospital, will of Bishop Walter de Suffield:- NNRO City Archives, Press G, Case 24, shelf b.

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1. F. Blomefield, An Essay...vol.4 p.383
2. Monasticon, vol.6 pp.607,610-11; T.M.Fallow in VCH Yorkshire, vol.3 pp.337-40; D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses, p.407; PRO C 47 20/1 no.6
3. Monasticon, vol.6, p.696; M. Reddan in VCH London, vol.1 pp.525-6.
4. R.Graham in VCH Gloucestershire, vol.2 p.114; also ibid., p.359. The hospital was reconstituted in 1259; however VCH and A.F.Leach, The Schools of Medieval England, p.128 have totally different accounts of the effect this had on the chapel staff.
5. A.F. Leach, A History of Winchester College, p.85

Probably the significance of the choirs maintained by these half dozen or so greater hospital establishments should not - at this period anyway - be over-rated. Certainly, they were composed of both men and boys, and therefore were sufficiently equipped to perform at least a tolerably faithful replica of the full cathedral liturgies; but of course, the boys were only available when holidays from grammar-school permitted their attendance in choir. This contrivance did indeed render them better able than most hospitals to perform the Opus Dei adequately, but it did not lift them into the same category as the greater collegiate churches. Between the years 1380 and 1420 there evolved more rigorous and more clearly defined ideas of how a liturgical choir could best be constituted to perform its duties - whereupon it was these rather amorphous hospital chapel establishments that were the first to be seen to need reform on lines more clearly defined.[1]

2.4. University Colleges

A type of college not yet discussed was that to be found relatively thickly on the ground in the two University towns of Cambridge and Oxford. By 1340 King's Hall, Michaelhouse and Peterhouse already existed in Cambridge, and Balliol, Exeter, Merton, Oriel and University in Oxford. The principal raison d'être of these university colleges was neither the performance of the Opus Dei, nor the offering of intercessory masses for deceased founders, but simply the provision of lodging and maintenance for graduate scholars of the University, usually numbering (in practice) less than a dozen at each college. It is easy, in the light of subsequent developments, to over-estimate the significance of these colleges before the 16th century. All but a few were small and poor, much inferior to the hostels in importance, tucked into inadequate quarters down back streets.[2] Many did not even have a chapel of their own, but used a neighbouring parish church. As communities of clerks in orders, all observed the usual religious devotions - some sort of chapel building was as essential as a dining-hall. However, the cultivation of the chapel music is not likely to have figured highly on the priorities of men whose principal role was as students reading and studying for the higher degrees.[3] Founders of

1. See below, pp. 5008 - 12.
2. See e.g. J. Venn, Early Collegiate Life pp.41-6; A.C. Cobban, The King's Hall, Cambridge, pp.4-5, 43: J. Saltmarsh "University of Cambridge - King's College" in VCH Cambridgeshire vol.3,p.387
3. The arrangements made at these early colleges for the daily celebration of Divine Service are dealt with in MMB pp.30-31.

later periods, who wanted the Divine Office fully and fitly observed in the college chapel, did not seek to impose this burden on the fellows and scholars[1], but made provision for a distinct chapel choir, fully on the foundation but not drawn from the student body, and with no responsibilities other than those towards the chapel. On the whole it is only the few academic colleges with distinct chapel choirs that need be studied in the present context.

In intention, at least, the earliest such college was Queen's College, Oxford, for which an elaborate body of statutes was compiled in 1340, providing for a chapel staff of 13 chaplains, 2 clerks and a large number of boys.[2] It is clear, however, that the founders of these university colleges consistently over-estimated the staff that their endowments could support, and there was usually a very large gap between what the founders intended, and what the colleges actually found to be practical - and Queen's College,Oxford has been singled out as a particularly conspicuous example of this.[3] Without careful study of the accounts and other muniments, therefore, it would not be safe to draw too many conclusions from the statutory provisions at Queen's.

1. Except for an attempt at Merton College, Oxford, to impose musical qualifications on new scholars in 1507; this, however, proved impractical and failed to take root - MMB pp.167-8
2. See MMB p.31
3. by A.C.Cobban, The King's Hall, Cambridge, pp.51-2

2.4 Household Chapels

All the choral institutions so far discussed were established as perpetual foundations, sufficiently endowed to ensure their permanence and equipped with their own buildings on a fixed site. It is these favourable circumstances that have permitted the survival of archive material from a sufficient number of them to make this study possible. There was one class of choral institution, however, which enjoyed none of these advantages - the household chapels of the king and of the richer bishops and aristocrats. The great of the land lived in a perpetual crowd; they cultivated and encouraged the awe in which they were held by consuming their wealth as conspicuously as possible, especially in the maintenance around their persons of lavish and populous households.[1] This applied not only to the secular lords, the king and the nobility; it applied also to the spiritual lords - the two archbishops, the richer bishops, the abbots of the greater monasteries, and the priors of the greater cathedral priories - men whose consequence arising from their positions in the religious hierarchy was at least matched, if not dwarfed, by their importance as lords of great landed estates.

In the households of the lay aristocrats the personal chaplains of the lord himself must always have been men of considerable consequence. This arose not only from the spiritual services which they could perform, such as hearing his confession, celebrating mass in his presence (probably daily) and baptising his children. Besides the lord and his family, the chaplains probably constituted the only genuinely literate element in the household, and they were therefore indispensible as chief administrators, secretaries and chancellors, and thus necessarily as advisers and confidants also. Thus the great had always maintained chaplains in their households; but it is clear that by 1340 there were certain quarters where this was being taken a stage further, amounting to more than just the mere maintenance of personal chaplains, and adding up to the establishment of a fully-staffed personal household chapel. The chaplains retained their personal role towards their lord, but also became the priests of a chapel establishment within the household, which was augmented

1. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England, pp.95-101, 109-113.

to include also the necessary clerks and choristers and, if necessary, extra chaplains. This body of personnel would then be equipped with the required vessels, vestments and service-books to make possible the performance of the whole of the Opus Dei, canonical hours as well as Mass, according to some secular Use. As part of the household, this body had to be mobile; they would perform Divine Service for the good estate of their employer, and for the souls of his ancestors and benefactors, in the chapel of whatever manor-house or castle the lord and his household then happened to be resident in.

Detailed documentation of this development has proved very difficult to come by. Unlike the choirs of permanent ecclesiastical foundations, household chapels had no archives of their own; they were merely one department of a large household. But magnate households were broken up when the line of succession failed, or a minority supervened, and whatever accounts and registers may have been kept have been dispersed and for the most part lost. It seems plausible to suppose that the practice of maintaining a full household chapel began either at the very top of the social pyramid, in the royal household, or amongst the archbishops and bishops. In the protocol of the time bishops ranked on the same level of precedence as the earls; but just how far the practice of maintaining a household chapel had taken root at these twin levels by 1340 cannot yet be determined.

2.5.1. The Chapel Royal

The early history of the Chapel Royal has been traced by Dr. Ian Bent.[1] He has shown that Edward 1 (1272-1307) was the earliest English King to maintain within his household the permanently established body of priests and clerks to which the term "Chapel Royal" may appropriately be applied. In his reign its staff was of modest proportions, consisting of no more than eight members, four of whom usually bore the title of chaplain; of these one was already coming to the fore as "chief chaplain".[2] The constitution of the Chapel Royal comes into clearer focus during the reign of Edward 2 (1307-27); according to the Ordinances of December 1318, the chapel was to consist of a chief chaplain, five other chaplains, and six clerks.[3] It is from the same period that the earliest evidence of the existence of choristers of the chapel can be drawn; for by July 1317 Edward 2 had had sent to Cambridge "our dear clerks,

1. I.Bent, The Early History of the Chapel Royal.
2. Ibid., pp.145, 147, 158-63.
3. T.F. Tout, The place of the reign of Edward II, p.278

John of Baggeshote and twelve others, children of our chapel" to reside in a hostel rented for them there, to study in the schools of the University.[1] In his study of the history of the King's Hall, Dr. Cobban puts forward reasons for believing this experiment to have been a recent one, scholars having been first sent to Cambridge from the royal court within just the 12 months preceding the issue of the writ of July 1317.[2] However, since it seems very unlikely that there were, at any time in the 14th century, more than 3-5 choristers of the Chapel Royal[3], the 10 or 12 sent to Cambridge in 1316 or 1317 would appear to include also the superannuated choristers of the previous five or six years.

Thus it may well be that it was in the reign of Edward 2 that the Chapel Royal was first fully staffed with the full-time priests, clerks and choristers necessary to make possible the celebration of the whole Opus Dei, as far as the peripatetic nature of the royal household would permit. By 1340 its composition had undergone slight expansion. The account book of the Treasurer of the Household[4] covering the period November 1341 - April 1344 records his bi-annual disbursements of cash in lieu of livery to most of the household, including John Wodeford, chief chaplain of the King's chapel, six chaplains of the King's chapel, and seven clerks of the King's chapel.[5] No indication of the number of choristers appears until 1360, when 3 surplices were made for the choristers of the King's private chapel.[6]

1. A.C. Cobban, The King's Hall, pp.9-10; the Queen's Commissioners, Documents relating to the University and Colleges of Cambridge, vol.1, pp.66-7. I. Bent, The early history of the Chapel Royal, pp.227-34, enters some caveats about the interpretation of these documents, but I find it difficult to agree with his rejection of the apparent meaning of the term einfaunz de nostre chapelle.
2. A.C. Cobban, The King's Hall, pp.9-10, 21-25
3. See below, pp. 3028-9, 4029-30.
4. For all practical purposes this officer is synonymous with the "Keeper of the Wardrobe of the Household". Both must, however, be distinguished from the "Keeper of the Great Wardrobe", whose functions within the administration of the royal household were wholly distinct.
5. PRO E 36 204, ff.89r., 89v., 90r.
6. Roll of Liveries from the Great Wardrobe 1360-61:- PRO E101 393/15 m2

2.5.2 Household chapels of lay and spiritual magnates

How far the maintenance of comprehensively-staffed private household chapels (as opposed to the maintenance of merely a few chaplains) was observed in the households of the archbishops, the wealthier bishops, and the earls by 1340 is a subject which it has yet proved possible barely to begin to explore. Certainly the private household chapel of the great magnate was a familiar institution by the time the treatise Quatuor Principalia was written - in Oxford in 1351 - by an unknown Franciscan friar from Bristol.'He complained of two debasements of solmisation practice in plainsong among the singers of his day; and said that if asked on what grounds they pronounce semitone for tone, they cite as authority and justification the singers in magnates' chapels. Such singers, they say, do not sing this way without good reason, since they are the best singers. And so, deceived by the example of others, they fall one by one into their errors .' This was hardly complimentary, of course; but at least it is testimony to the high reputation of magnates' chapels amongst singers themselves.[1]

Queen Isabella, the Queen Mother (wife of Edward 2, mother of Edward 3), who, from her son's assertion of authority in 1330 until her death in August 1358, lived in a state of fairly comfortable disgrace at Castle Rising, Norfolk, maintained a modest household which included clerks of her chapel.[2] The boys of the household chapel of Richard Bury, bishop of Durham, are mentioned on an account roll of Durham Cathedral Priory for 1335/6.[3] The roll of household accounts of Ralph Shrewsbury, bishop of Bath and Wells, for the year 1337-8 make no mention of a chapel within his household[4]; one was eventually instituted, however, for by the terms of his will, made in 1363,the bishop made bequests to clerks and choristers in his household chapel.[5] A search among the wills and surviving muniments of other bishops, magnates and scions of the royal family could possibly substantially multiply these few examples.

1. from I. Bent, The early history of the Chapel Royal, pp.246-7
2. Household a/c, apparently for period 30 Sept.1357 - 4 Dec.1358 (on which day the household of the deceased queen was broken up):- BM Cotton MS Galba E xiv fo.43v.
3. ed. J.T. Fowler, Extracts from the account rolls of the Abbey of Durham, vol.2 p.527.
4. ed. J.A. Robinson, in ed. T.F.Palmer, Collectanea I, 39 Somerset Record Society (1924), pp.85-157.
5. Translation printed in J.H. Parker, The Architectural Antiquities of the City of Wells, p.31

These private household chapels have great importance, and it is regrettable that more has not been discovered about them at this early period. Their interest lies in the fact that they were not formally constituted by anything so immutable as a body of statutes. To a large extent, of course, their overall size depended simply on the wealth and resources - and the whim - of the patron himself; but their internal constitution depended on the fashion of the time, and was entirely free to alter as fashions altered. Thus the constitutions of these household chapels may serve as the most reliable barometer we have, accurately indicating, as one period succeeded another, the form of chapel establishment considered by contemporaries to be best suited to the liturgical and musical needs of the time.

2.6. The monasteries.

The position of the monasteries in c.1340 has already been discussed above.[1] Certainly the greatest of these establishments had at their disposal the funds, facilities and personnel necessary to observe the Opus Dei with all the elaboration for which the liturgies called; and it does indeed seem certain that until the mid-14th century it was the greater Benedictine monasteries that were the principal centres of composition and performance of polyphonic music.[2] It seems, however, that this distinction had been largely lost by the end of the 14th century, one or two of the largest institutions alone remaining exceptional in their continuing cultivation of polyphonic music in the monks' choir. It appears that details of the composition, nature and organisation of monks' choirs can be omitted without serious loss to either the content or the balance of the present study.

2.7. The choirs and the performance of Polyphonic music.

In 1340 the staple musical diet of all the choirs discussed above was the traditional ritual plainsong of the liturgy. At the most ancient secular cathedral and collegiate churches the choirs and the liturgies which they existed to perform had evolved together, each in some respects the master of the other, each in other respects the servant. Consequently the demands of the liturgy and its plainsong matched precisely the possibilities which were offered by the manner in which the choirs were composed; and,

1. Introduction, pp.1005-6above.
2. MMB. p.113; and see below, pp. 2064-5.

vice versa, the choirs were composed in a manner which matched precisely the demands made by the format of the liturgy. By 1340 the basic shape of both was pretty well fixed.

As far as can now be discerned, however, there were two other species of music, in addition to plainsong, open to liturgical choirs to perform. These were:- (a) instant polyphony of the type produced by following the rules laid down for improvising descant, counter and faburdon; and (b) fully composed polyphony. As might be expected, these forms of polyphonic music, as they had evolved by the 14th century, could be performed by choirs which had been designed primarily to render only the unadorned monodic plainsong, quite without any modification to the choirs' basic structure. Both types of polyphony were performed by soloists only, did not necessarily require boys' voices, and needed only the three, or at the outside, four best voices in the choir for their performance. Polyphony, that is, had not yet developed to a point where it was beginning to make demands which could not be met by the resources normally available to any choir adequately equipped to sing the plainsong of the liturgy.[1]

In some churches, the practice of performing polyphonic settings of parts of the liturgy could already have been known, intermittently perhaps, for up to 300 years by the year 1340.[2] Nevertheless, it is not to be supposed that its practice was at all wide-spread. The circumstances in which most manuscripts of composed polyphony at this period have survived suggest that only the greater institutions seem to have attempted its performance at all. Indeed, polyphony had grown up in spite of, rather than because of, the format of the liturgies and of the choirs which performed them; and the performance of polyphony remained very much an optional extra, for which the customaries only rarely made any specific call.[3] The precise character of the role played by polyphonic music in the celebration of the liturgy has been

1. See M.F. Bukofzer, "The beginnings of choral polyphony" in Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music, pp.176-89. For some observations on the performing pitch of composed polyphonic music of this period, see below, pp. 6003-11.
2. The earliest surviving English polyphony - the two-part settings in the Winchester Troper - may be dated c.1000-50:- MMB, p.115
3. Instances where surviving customaries did call for, or permit, polyphonic performance of parts of the liturgy are fully discussed in MMB, pp 109-15

expressed very clearly by Prof. Harrison:-

> "Polyphony ... gained a place in the liturgy by its ability to lend ceremonial distinction to the performance of the established plainsong. Its function, therefore, was analogous to that of the many other forms of ceremonial by which the more significant parts of the ritual were distinguished from the less significant, the more important services of the day from the less important, and the services of the various ranks of festival from each other and from ferias."[1]

Indeed, in the 14th century the singing of polyphonic music was primarily just one more part of the apparatus available in the larger churches for lending distinction to festive occasions - an item to be deployed alongside the richest copes and vestments, the heaviest candles, the finest incense, plate, vessels and ornaments. And, probably, only at those greater churches which could afford the rest of the apparatus for the elaborate commemoration of high days and holy days, would it have seemed appropriate to indulge also in the additional splendour offered by the performance of polyphonic settings of selected parts of the liturgy of the day.

It is unfortunate that the surviving material is far too sparse to permit anything constructive to be written about the repertory of any one identifiable institution. In the meagre sources of English provenance which date from the period c.1280-1350[2] there survive motets and conductus on non-liturgical texts[3], apparently for use either after the Sanctus during Mass, or as a substitute for Benedicamus Domino at the conclusion of any one of the greater Hours services[4]; and settings of movements from the Ordinary of theMass[5]. Both the Reading List and the Worcester Fragments also include settings of the proper of the Mass, particularly Alleluias.[6]

1. MMB, p.104
2. The following observations are drawn from MMB pp.104-115, 128-155, 295-6,344-7; F.Ll.Harrison, "English Church Music in the Fourteenth Century" in 3 NOHM pp.82-96; P. Marr, Reading Abbey, pp.13-26.
3. Oxford, New College MS 362; OBL, MSS Bodley 257, Hatton 81 and e.mus.7; BM, MS Harley 978; Oxford, Worcester College MS 3 16A.
4. MMB 126-7; F.LL.Harrison "English Church Music in the Fourteenth Century" in 3NOHM, p.93 fn.1.
5. ed. L.A. Dittmer, The Worcester Fragments
6. ibid.; MMB pp.135-8; P.Marr, Reading Abbey pp.18-21.

3. 1340 - 82:- The growth of royal and aristocratic patronage.

3.1. Royalty and aristocracy as patrons of church musicians.

The period of 150 years following the year 1337 witnessed the creation of the English peerage in its enduring form.[1] Prior to 1337 there had been no peerage as such. At the bottom of the social pyramid there was the common herd, and at the top there was the King. Between them there was just the quality of nobility - a quality shared indifferently by a mass of some 3,000 land-owning families, which included, as no more than merely a favoured elite, those families whose head the King had honoured with the hereditary title of earl. By 1330, the number of earls had shrunk to no more than 10, and they might soon have vanished altogether. Before this could happen, however, Edward 3 reversed the trend, and initiated a new policy, maintained by his successors. For the large and heterogeneous group of families which had enjoyed the quality of nobility, the years 1337-1500 were a period of definition, stratification and - mostly - exclusion. The great majority of these armigerous families came to be labelled gentry, and were set on a middle level, above the common herd, but below the specially privileged small select aristocracy. This distinct peerage, never numbering more than 30 or 40 families, was itself methodically stratified into the ranks of baron, viscount, earl, marquis and duke.

In its guise as the creation of a class of potent and wealthy patrons of music and musicians, this movement was in the present context of great, though as yet of only imprecisely cálculable importance. The top three levels of the peerage, whose number at any one time only once exceeded 20 families, constituted the great of the land; and in the chapel establishments which they began to maintain within their households during their lifetimes, and in the colleges of secular priests which they founded for the welfare of their souls after their decease, they provided for the livelihood of a considerable proportion of active church musicians. Their emergence as a privileged peerage in the years following 1337 had much to do with the creation of large-scale secular choral foundations in the 14th and 15th centuries.

1. The material for this paragraph has been drawn from K.B.McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England, pp.268-9, 274-5, 6-9, 122-5, and from his course of Lectures of the same title delivered to the school of Modern History in the University of Oxford in 1965.

The emergence of a new lay peerage, vastly enriched by the wars against France, is the principal new feature at work in the period 1340-82. During these 42 years the foundation of a college of secular priests emerged as the standard method whereby a man of wealth could so dispose of his treasure on earth as to lay up treasure in heaven. By now the creation of houses of religious had almost totally lost its attraction to founders both lay and spiritual:- in the two centuries 1340-1540 the number of new monastic or mendicant foundations did not exceed a score. Meanwhile, in the 40 years 1340-80 alone, some 25 new colleges of secular priests were founded; the stream of such foundations continued throughout the 15th century, and was barely even to begin to lose pace until the very eve of the dissolution of the colleges, 1542-48.

Further, the foundation of a secular college ceased to be - as until c.1340 it had been - the preserve of bishops, and of substantial civil servants of middling wealth, bad consciences, and no heirs. From that date onwards, kings and the greatest aristocrats begin to figure for the first time since 1123 among the founders of secular colleges[1] - men who could plough into their foundations resources sufficiently substantial to create in these colleges a milieu in which it was possible to cultivate the most lavish adornments of the Opus Dei. They were equipped with vestries, sacristies and treasuries appropriately stocked to permit such adornment in terms of ceremonial, and with choral staffs selected for their capacity to offer this in terms of the music. Of not least importance, it was the period 1340-82, with the substantial royal and aristocratic foundations which it witnessed, that ensured that as the monasteries began to abdicate their leadership in the cultivation and composition of polyphonic music for the liturgy, the secular colleges would be found to be supplied with the necessary resources to take up the tradition.

1. Only one aristocratic foundation of a secular college is known to me for the years between 1123 and 1348:- the re-endowment (and virtual re-creation) of St. Nicholas, Wallingford by Edmund, earl of Cornwall, in 1268 - see J.C. Cox in VCH Berkshire vol.2, p.104.

3.2. New collegiate foundations 1340-82

3.2.1. The choral forces of the new foundations.

(a) The canons and vicars

Four institutions of this period may be taken as examples of the more significant types of foundation. These are the colleges of St. George, Windsor and St. Stephen, Westminster, founded by Edward 3 in 1348; the college of St. Mary, Leicester (known as Newarke College), the foundation by which Henry Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, was in progress from 1353 to 1356; and Holy Trinity college, Arundel, founded by Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, in 1380. Also worth consideration is the college of St. Mary, Warwick, a decayed and poverty-stricken establishment partly re-endowed by Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, in 1341 and 1364-67.

The foundation by Edward 3 of St. George's Windsor and St. Stephen's Westminster represented the first venture of an English king or lay baron into the field of founding a secular college since 1123. The royal letters patent in which the foundation and establishment of each college was announced were issued on the same day, 6 August 1348[1]. The quantity of documentary material which has survived relating to St.Stephen's is exceedingly meagre; what little there is suggests that it was planned as an almost exact twin of St. George's. Each was a college of prebendal canons, being constituted on the models offered by the secular cathedrals and the 13th century colleges of episcopal foundation. The statutes of St. George's, promulgated on 30 November 1352[2], laid down the precise composition of the college, which for present purposes may be divided into three groups[3]. The college personnel was to consist of (a) a chapter of

1. CPR 1348-50, pp.144-7
2. There is no printed edition of the Statutes of St. George's College. The earliest complete text is one of the early 15th century in the 'Arundel White Book':- WndDC MS iv B 1, ff 74r-81r (now bound and foliated out of order, the middle two bifolia of the gathering having been transposed). A transcription of this text was made by Canon J.N. Dalton, The statutes and injunctions of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and a typescript copy of this is available in the Aerary at Windsor. Both were consulted during the collection of this material, and references to both will be given.
3. The early constitution of St. George's has been analysed in great detail by A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, pp.6-12, 50-106.

a dean and 12 canons; (b) their 13 vicars-choral, with four clerks and six choristers, and a verger; and (c) 26 "poor knights of England brought low by poverty".[1] These three groups of staff could perform all the functions necessary to the running of the college and its chapel, and to the fulfilment of all the duties which the King expected of it. The dean and canons were to be the governing body of the college, and supplied its principal administrative officers - Precentor, Treasurer and Steward[2]; the poor knights were to attend chapel three times a day to say prayers for the good estate of the Knights of the Garter[3]. On the vicars, clerks and choristers was to fall the burden of maintaining the constant performance of the worship of God in the college chapel.[4] Probably St. Stephen's College, Westminster was founded on lines exactly similar, except that no provision was made for 'poor knights'. The chantry certificate of 1548[5] shows that its chapter consisted of a dean and 12 canons, requiring for the chapel a team of 13 vicars-choral (11 were named on the certificate); there were four clerks and seven choristers, the seventh chorister probably being a later addition, like the "seventh chorister" at St. Mary College, Leicester.[6]

The chapter and chapel staff of St. Mary, Leicester, founded within 8 years of the inception of St. George's Windsor and St. Stephen's Westminster, were modelled on lines almost exactly similar.[7]

1. Preamble to Statutes:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.74v; Dalton p.4
2. Statutes 37,38:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.79v., 78r.: Dalton pp.13-15
3. Statutes 5, 6:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.75v; Dalton p.6. Throughout the Middle Ages no more than 3 poor knights seem ever to have been maintained at once:-AKB Roberts, St. George's Chapel, p.12. The nature of the relationship between the Order of the Garter and the College of St. George is discussed by M.F. Bond in S.Bond, The Chapter Acts of the Dean and Canons of Windsor, pp.viii-ix.
4. Statute 11:-WndDC iv B1 fo.77r;Dalton pp.7-8. The verger was the chapter's executive officer in the chapel; his duties were laid down in Statute 54:-WndDC iv B 1 fo.80v, Dalton p.19.
5. PRO E 301 88
6. See below, p. 6061.
7. The original statutes of Leicester College exist in 3 versions:- (A) The founder's statutes as originally submitted to Bishop Gynewell, probably in 1354; (B) the bishop's revision, made in 1356 at the formal foundation and inauguration of the college: hereby the statutes were temporarily modified, partly to suit its then incomplete endowment and partly to make them more realistic, tempering the Duke's idealism with a more practical appreciation of human frailty; and (D), text B as modified by a codicil (C), added in consequence of an augmentation of the endowment, completed by early 1361, whereby the restoration of some of the founder's original statutes was made possible. Version (D) became the approved text of the statutes, until a complete revision was effected in 1491. The Latin text of version (A), with the variant readings of (B), and the codicil (C) were printed by A.H. Thompson as an appendix to his article 'Notes on Colleges of Secular Canons in England', 74 Archeological Journal (1917) pp.199-239. A shortened English translation appears in A.H. Thompson, A History of the Hospital..., pp.42-81; for the ratification of text (D) as the approved text of the statutes, see ibid., p.41

The chapter consisted of a dean and 12 canons; the chapel staff of their 13 vicars-choral with three clerks and six choristers, plus a verger; the hospital side of the foundation consisted of 100 poor men with 10 serving-women to look after them.[1]

Holy Trinity College Arundel was founded as a college not of prebendaries but of chantry-priests.[2] It is an example of a large-scale chantry college where the body of mass-priests was enhanced by provision of just about sufficient clerks and choristers to make possible a faithful performance of the liturgy of the Office as well. The origins of the college lay in the chantry of three priests founded in a chapel in Arundel Castle in 1344-5 by Richard Fitzalan, fifth earl of Arundel. At the time of his death in 1376, he was in the process of expanding this chantry into a college of six priests and three clerks; and his heir and successor promptly inflated this scheme still further. On 1 April 1380 letters patent were issued for the creation of the college, and at least by 1383 it was probably in full working order. The statutes were approved by the bishop and promulgated on 1 December 1387[3]. The college was to consist of a master and 12 chaplains; 6 clerks, two each in the orders of deacon, sub-deacon and acolyte; and 4 choristers.[4]

In 1341 Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, initiated an attempted revival of the moribund college of St. Mary, Warwick[5], by granting to it the church of Pillerton Hersey (Warwickshire), and he actually embarked upon rebuilding the quire of the collegiate church itself. In 1364, with the onset of old age making provision for the safety of his soul increasingly urgent, he initiated (but did not live to complete) steps further to increase the college's revenues, by completing the appropriation to it of the seven parish churches of Warwick. In order to ensure permanent application of his intentions as to the manner in which the money arising from his benefactions should be spent, he petitioned pope Urban 5 to grant a faculty to the bishop of Worcester permitting him to make fresh statutes for the college[6]; these were

1. Preamble to Statutes:- AH Thompson, "Notes on Colleges..", p.203.
2. The history of the college is related in M A Tierney, The History and Antiquities of the Castle and Town of Arundel, pp.592-612
3. These statutes are printed ibid., pp.752-772
4. Statute 1, ibid. pp.753, 755. This appears to be a correct account of the constitution of the college, being confirmed by the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 (VE vol.1, p.314). A rather incorrect account, apparently formulated by J.Dallaway, A History of the Western Division of Sussex, vol.2, part 1, p.167 was unfortunately repeated in Monasticon vol.6, part 3, p.1377, and from there has made its way into the general literature.
5. For an assessment of the state of this college in 1340, see above p. 2044-5.
6. D. Styles, Ministers' Accounts of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary, Warwick. pp.xiii-xvi.

promulgated on 24 December 1367.[1]

In line with the acknowledged priorities of the period, the new statutes were clearly designed so as to plough the college's newly acquired resources into maximising the number of resident priests. The division of the college's estates into six unequal territorial prebends was abandoned. Instead, a single treasury of receipt and disbursement was created, into which was directed the totality of the college's income; and from this, generous sums were to be paid to such canons as kept residence:- 40 marks p.a. to the dean, and 20 marks to each canon keeping residence for 260 days of the year. To non-resident canons there was allowed no more than a nominal £2 p.a.[2] To perform the services in chapel, the college was required henceforth to employ one vicar-choral for each canon.[3] This added up to a body of six vicars-choral, very probably the traditional number, which the falling value of the old territorial prebends had caused to decline. Of the choristers, however, the 1367 statutes made no mention. Probably earl Thomas's benefactions were recognised as being insufficient to permit their rehabilitation as well; choristers were anyway considered to be a dispensible commodity in the smaller colleges of this period.

In any event, the statutes of 1367 must have remained simply an indication of intention, rather than a guide to actual practice in the college. The appropriation of the seven churches was not brought to completion[4], and the college's net gain from Earl Thomas's benefactions was no more than the £21 p.a. farm of the church of Pillerton Hersey.[5] Between 1341 and 1392 the college's total income probably did not exceed £60 p.a. It was certainly not enough to restore St. Mary's even to merely the adequate working order envisaged in the 1367 statutes:- a resident dean, a few canons resident, and six vicars - choral (with, possibly, the three "clerks of the old foundation"). The interest that St. Mary, Warwick, has at this period, therefore, lies rather in the intentions implicit in the 1367 statutes, rather than in its practice as a working choral institution, a position to whichit probably could not yet be restored.

1. Register of the College, PRO E 164 22, ff.55r-60v. Certain readings in this text may be improved by reference to a later and incomplete, but more grammatical copy in PRO E 315 492, ff.1r-4v.
2. PRO E 164 22, fo.59r.
3. ibid., fo.59v.
4. D. Styles, Ministers' Accounts...., pp.xvi-xvii.
5. It produced £21. 0.0d. gross in 1410/11:- WrkRO CR 895/9.

Almost the only respects in which these colleges were in any way novel were (a) the identity and quality of their founders, and (b) the relatively lavish scale on which they were endowed - as well as (c) the scale on which their muniments and archives have survived to the present day.[1] In almost all other respects, especially in the constitution of their choral forces, and in their manner of conducting Divine Service, they followed very closely the models presented by the secular colleges already in existence.

For the canons of the prebendal colleges, requirements of residence and attendance at service were by no means demanding, and rarely would more than merely a token number have been seen in chapel at service.[2] Under these circumstances the burden of maintaining divine service must have fallen - as it can only ever have been intended to - on the body of vicars-choral; the inspiration for this arrangement was, of course, the example of the secular cathedrals and the old-established colleges. As the executants of the Divine Office, all the vicars were required to keep constant residence, except for the ill-paid vicars

1. A fair quantity of archive material from Arundel College survives among the muniments of the Duke of Norfolk, but it was not consulted during the preparation of this thesis.

2. At Windsor and Warwick, the statutes - if observed - would have secured the attendance of 2 or 3 canons at matins, high mass and vespers; the attendance of canons at the lesser hours was apparently not even contemplated. Windsor, Statutes 2, 7, 11:- WndDC iv B 1 ff 75r., 75v., 77r. (Dalton pp.5, 7, 7-8); Chapter Act of 1430, avowedly confirming established custom:- S. Bond, The Chapter Acts..., p.1; the incidence of canonical residence in the first 60 years of the college is discussed in A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, p.139. Warwick, Statutes of 1367 and 1441:- PRO E 164 22 fo.59r. E 315 492 fo.5v. The statutes of Leicester College appear on the surface to have been rather more demanding; however, a closer examination reveals that the founder was resigned to persistent and incurable absenteeism. Visitation records reveal his fears to have been well justified, a condition recognised by the revised statutes of 1491. 1361 Statutes, nos.30,33, 78; 1491 Statutes, no.33:- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges", pp.214, 216-7, 231; pp.216-7. ed. A.H.Thompson Visitations of Religious Houses in the diocese of Lincoln, vol.2 pp.190, 198, 200; ed. A.H. Thompson, Visitations in the diocese of Lincoln, vol.3, pp.1, 3.

of Leicester College who were allowed two months' leave per year.[1] Attendance at every single service - High Mass, Lady Mass, and all the Canonical Hours - was obligatory on all, fines being inflicted on those who absented themselves.[2] No statutory provision was made for any reduced attendance at the lesser Hours, such as was made possible at the secular cathedrals by the much larger number of vicars maintained there.[3] At Arundel College, the master and 12 chaplains were the working priests of the chapel, and they similarly were bound to constant residence, and attendance at every service, with the standard fines as sanction.[4]

Close examination of the statutes of these colleges reveals certain respects in which they recognised and embodied some of the significant developments which had taken place since the 12th century in the manner in which secular colleges arranged the provision of the personnel necessary to conduct divine service. In particular, the old idea that the singing of the services was properly the function of the canons, who presented and paid deputies actually to do the work for them, was patently obsolete. The actual practice of the cathedrals and colleges was making necessary a more realistic conception of the respective roles and status of the canons and the vicars-choral, and to some extent, this found expression in the constitutions of these 14th century colleges. Any endowed college of priests existed to perform the worship of God, and since the canons now were conceived as principally supplying just the governing body of the college, the vicars-choral had to be recognised as being those particular members of the college to whom its principal function was committed. In these 14th century college statutes, therefore, the team of vicars was realistically presented as a full and essential - indeed, characteristic - department of the foundation.

Some traces of the origin of the post of vicar-choral did indeed remain, especially in the way in which at all four colleges being discussed the number of vicars exactly matched the number of canons. However, significantly, the custom whereby the vicars appeared in choir as mere substitutes for the canons was clearly on its way out.

1. Statute 30:- A.H. Thompson "Notes on Colleges...", p.214
2. Windsor, Statute 11:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.77r; Dalton p.8. Leicester, Statutes 30,33:- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges...", pp.214,217. Warwick, 1441 Statutes, no.15:- PRO E 315 492 fo.8v.
3. Exceptionally, at Windsor less than the full number of vicars was entabled to attend at daily Lady Mass and Requiem Mass. Statutes 11,14,26:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.77r., 77v., 76r.,; Dalton pp.8, 8, 11.
4. Statute 7:- M. Tierney, The History....of Arundel, pp.759-61

At St. Mary Warwick even the privilege whereby vicars were nominated and presented by individual canons - the practice which had given vicars-choral their very name - was abandoned by the 1367 statutes which restored the vicarages-choral at the college. Instead, the vicars were established as the college's acknowledged team of singing-men. They neither represented, nor were presented by, individual canons; rather each vicar was appointed, like all other acknowledged servants of the college, by the Dean and Chapter as a body.[1] More significant still was the manner in which the vicars were paid. At the secular cathedrals the tradition of the vicars being essentially canons' substitutes was preserved in the way in which each individual canon still paid part of the salary of the vicar who occupied his stall.[2] At none of the 14th century prebendal colleges was this distinctive tradition adopted, however. At all, the vicars were recognised as full and essential members of the college, and were therefore paid lump annual salaries out of the central treasury:- £8 p.a. at Windsor, £6.13.4d. p.a. at Warwick, and £3.18.8d. p.a. - which fell some way short of being generous - at Leicester.[3]

(b) The clerks.

In one other respect, also, new ideas current in the 14th century caused a significant departure to be made from the constitutions of earlier secular colleges. By this period, as has been observed, the chantry intention behind every new foundation was causing the maximisation of the number of priests available to say masses at each institution.[4] No longer were colleges even of secular canons founded for clergy in all three major orders; it was required at both

1. PRO E 164 22, fo.69v. The statutes of Leicester College, as originally drafted, similarly denied any right to individual canons of nomination and presentation of vicars-choral, reserving this privilege to the Dean; however, bishop Gynewell's revision restored the traditional practice, requiring each canon to present to the chapter a man suitable to be his vicar. Statute 23:- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges...." p.212. At Windsor, individual canons similarly retained the right to nominate and present their vicars:- Statute 15, WndDC iv B 1, Dalton p.8.
2. SEMA p.269; for Salisbury, see VE vol.2 pp.74-7; for Wells, WlsDC MS '1595' (see above, p. 2005, fn. 3) p.79.
3. Windsor, Statute 3:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.75r., Dalton p.5; Warwick:- PRO E 164 22, fo.59v; Leicester, Statute 9:- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges.." p.207.
4. See above, Chapter 2, pp. 2048-50.

Windsor and Leicester that all the canons be in priest's orders, and likewise all the vicars.[1] The 1441 statutes of St. Mary, Warwick similarly required that all 6 vicars be in priest's orders[2], a custom that could well have originated much earlier, being made possible by the existence of the three "clerks of the old foundation". A consequence of this was that the middle row of the choir stalls could not be staffed by younger vicars not yet in priest's orders; therefore (as at Exeter Cathedral, where, exceptionally, the same consideration applied) at all these colleges provision had to be made for a specific team of clerks of the second form.

The statutes of the four colleges, taken together, give just about enough information for a coherent picture of the status and duties of the clerks to be compiled. Assessment of the nature of the clerkships at this period will permit comparison with their status and duties 100 years later. From comparison of the contributions which the clerks were expected to make to the music of the services at both periods, it will be possible,in due course, to draw conclusions about the growing importance of music to the manner of conducting divine service over the intervening century.[3]

None of the colleges was generously provided with clerks - three at Leicester and Warwick, four at Windsor and St. Stephen's Westminster, and six at Arundel. They were to be ordained in the holy orders immediately below priest's orders. At Windsor, one was to be a deacon, one a sub-deacon, and the other two in minor orders;[4] at Arundel two were to be deacons, two sub-deacons and two acolytes.[5] Of the three "clerks of the old foundation" at Warwick no information is available, except that one was in sub-deacon's orders.[6] The clerks were to observe constant residence, and were to be present in chapel at all times of divine service - or suffer penalties in case of default.[7]

1. Windsor, Statutes 10, 3:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.77r. 75r., Dalton pp.7,5; Leicester, Statute 1;- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges..." p.205.
2. PRO E 315 492, fo.8r.
3. See below pp. 4040 - 50, and pp. 5056 - 67.
4. Statutes 3,17:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.75r, 77v.; Dalton pp.5, 9.
5. Statutes 1,10:- Tierney, A History of....Arundel, pp.755,768. The minimum age for ordination as acolyte was 14; the two acolyte clerks at Arundel may not have been readily distinguishable from older choristers elsewhere.
6. PRO E 164 22 fo.56v.
7. Windsor, Statute 11:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.77r., Dalton p.8; Leicester, Statute 33:- A.H.Thompson "Notes on Colleges.." p.216; Arundel, Statute 7:- Tierney, A History of ....Arundel, pp.759-61.

The statutes give no precise information as to the part taken by the clerks in the liturgy - there was no need to, since this was more the scope of the Consuetudinary than of an institution's code of statutes. Other evidence makes it clear enough, however, that at service the role of the clerks was to perform the duties ascribed by the Consuetudinary to the clerici secunde forme. Indeed, a summary of the annual income and expenditure of St. George's Windsor dated 1378, actually entitles them the clerici secunde forme[1]; and on the accounts for obit payments on the Treasurer's Accounts for 1376 and 1377 they are listed as clerici secundarii[2], the term in use at Exeter Cathedral for the body of clerks of the second form there. At Mass the clerks in major orders performed the duties of deacon and sub-deacon, especially in reading, respectively, the gospel and epistle. Such certainly was the case at Windsor[3]; and by the 16th century, the subdeacon clerk at Warwick had come actually to be known as the 'epistoler'.[4]

At other than service times, the clerks were expected to make themselves useful about the chapel,performing all the small routine tasks essential to its smooth running. At Arundel the clerks were to assist the chaplains in the divine offices, and to perform such duties around the chapel as the Master or Submaster required of them, two being specifically to serve as bell-ringers.[5] At Leicester one of the three clerks was to look after the high altar, lighting and extinguishing the candles, folding and putting away the vestments etc; the other two were responsible for ringing the bells, and served the priests at their private masses at the altars in the nave of the chapel.[6]

1. Clericis iiij secunde forme - xviij li xiij s iiij d:- WndDC xv 53 64. This document is actually dated 2 Richard 3, but this must be an error for Richard 2; the handwriting is certainly late 14th century, and the document refers to John Atte Lee, a chaplain maintained at St. George's at the request of King Edward 3 (AKB Roberts, St. George's Chapel, pp.64-5)
2. WndDC xv 34 11, xv 34 13.
3. In 1406/7 payments were made to the vicars for reading the gospel pro defectu unius diaconi ad hoc constituti, and to the clerks in minor orders for reading the epistle, pro defectu unius subdiaconi ad hoc constituti:- WndDC xv 34 24.
4. VE vol.3 p.86
5. Statutes 1, 5:- M. Tierney, A History of ...Arundel, pp.755,758
6. Statutes 25-6:- A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges...", p.213

It may be deduced that at these colleges the clerks were envisaged as being youths and young men, progressing through the minor and major orders on their way to the priesthood. The statutes of St. George's, Windsor, make it especially clear that a clerkship was merely a stepping-stone to higher things. If approved on examination, the deacon and subdeacon were to be admitted as full members of the college (perpetui), and as they arrived at priest's orders they were to be promoted to vacant vicarages-choral as opportunity arose. Meanwhile, as the two clerks in minor orders progressed to major orders on the title of the chapel, they were to be admitted successively to the posts of subdeacon and deacon clerk, to become in their turn candidates for vacant vicarages as they progressed to priest's orders.[1] This would indicate that the clerks would be between about 16 and 24 years of age; according to canon law, acolyte's orders could be taken at the age of 14, sub-deacon's at 17, deacon's at 19 and priest's at 24.[2] Other features of the statutes, too,point to the clerks' being envisaged as youths and young men only. For unlicensed absence from service, they shared the choristers' penalty of being punished at the warden's discretion, rather than by the fixed fines imposed on the more mature chapel staff.[3] Similarly, it was to the clerks as well as to the choristers that the warden could grant permission to be absent from service when necessary for their instruction and education.[4]

It is clear that at the time of the making of the St. George's, Windsor, statutes (1352) it was not envisaged that anyone could make a life-time career of being a clerk in such a college. The clerkships

1. This, at any rate, appears to be the import of Statute 17:- Statuimus quod quatuor clericorum in dicta Capella existere debencium, ut prefertur, unus sit in ordine diaconatus et alter in ordine subdiaconatus constituti antequam admittantur; quos approbatos, ut prefertur, admissos esse debere perpetuos ordinamus in vicarios, cum opus fuerit et expediens, assumendos. Ceteros vero duos clericos premissorum quatuor esse sufficiat in minoribus ordinibus constitutos, qui, si ad titulum dicte Capelle ad sacros ordines se promoveri fecerint, perpetui extunc similiter existant. WndDC iv B 1 fo.77v., Dalton p.9.
2. Corpus Iuris Canonici, ed. Friedberg II 1140, quoted J.N.Dalton, The Collegiate Church of Ottery St. Mary, p.95
3. Statutes 11, 14:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.77r., 77v.; Dalton p.8. The same applied at Leicester College:- Statute 33, A.H. Thompson, "Notes on Colleges.." p.217.
4. Statute 11:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.77r., Dalton p.8.

were geared to the requirements of young men progressing through the minor and major orders to the priesthood; in themselves they offered no opportunities for achieving anything except the next stage upward. It was in the first decades of the 15th century that a new need for musical expertise caused a total transformation in the nature of the clerkships, which turned them into the posts occupied not by young apprentice vicars-choral, but by a new class of expert lay church musicians.[1]

(c) The choristers

In other respects, these mid-14th century colleges departed in their manner of conducting divine service very little from the models presented by the secular cathedrals and earlier colleges. They were fortunate in being equipped with choristers, even if not very generously - 6 at Windsor, Westminster and Leicester, and four at Arundel.[2] At many of the lesser colleges of secular priests (especially at the colleges of chantry priests) founded around this period, choristers were a dispensible item, and frequently no provision was made for them at all. To many founders, choristers and clerks could be sacrificed to secure the endowment of the greatest possible number of priests. At the larger colleges, however, there were funds available to ensure the employment of representatives of all the ranks of chapel staff, sufficient to secure the performance of the liturgy as the Ordinals and Customaries required. The duties of the choristers would have been in no way different from those of the choristers of the secular cathedrals; their work and attendance in chapel was governed not by college statutes but by the directions in the Salisbury Customary - all four colleges were directed to observe Salisbury Use.[3]

1. See below, pp. 4040-50, 5056-67.
2. See above, pp. 3003-5, passim, and p. 3010, fn. 5.
3. Except that matins was to be sung at dawn, and not in the middle of the night. Windsor, Statutes 21,22:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.76r, Dalton p.10; Leicester, Statutes 32,27,39:- A.H. Thompson "Notes on Colleges.." pp. 215-6,213,218; Arundel, Statute 8:- M. Tierney, A History of....Arundel pp.762-3; Warwick, Statute 23:- PRO E 315 492 fo.10r. At Windsor the statutes did indeed include the choristers in their blanket requirements that every member of the chapel staff attend every service; but to this a rider was added directing that in the case of the clerks and choristers the dean or his deputy could excuse them from attendance when necessary for their instruction.(Statute 11:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.77r., Dalton p.8) No doubt this exemption was used to restore precise observance of Salisbury Use as regards the attendance of the choristers at service, as laid down in the Customary. At Leicester College, the statute requiring the unrelieved attendance of the canons and chapel staff at every service conspicuously omitted to mention the choristers. Evidently it was recognised that such a requirement was inappropriate to them; rather, a separate statute directed specifically that the choristers should minister in the chapel "according to the manner of the choristers of the church of Salisbury". Statutes 33,27:-A.H.Thompson,"Notes on Colleges....", pp.216-7, 213.

(d) The Instructor of the Choristers.

The appointment of officials to secure the orderly and accurate performance of the liturgy again followed the existing practices of the secular cathedrals. At the three larger colleges for which information is available, ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the services rested with the dignitary who was in status second or third after the head of the college:- at Arundel, a chaplain, at Windsor and Leicester a canon. Their duties were equivalent to those of the precentor at a secular cathedral; at Leicester, however, the title he enjoyed was sacrista (until 1491 when the revised statutes replaced it with cantor), and at Arundel succentor .[1] By the 1370's at least, the canon-precentor of St. George's had acquired a deputy, although the statutes made no provision for one:- this was one of the vicars, given the title of succentor and paid an extra 26s.8d. per year.[2]

After a fashion the instruction of the choristers was also provided for, although only the statutes of St. George's, Windsor, entered into any particular detail. There it was directed that one of the 13 vicars, more learned than the others in teaching grammar and the chant, and himself well instructed therein, should be bound diligently to instruct the chorister boys of the chapel in grammar and chant - at those times of the day at which that vicar and the choristers were not bound to be at service in the chapel. For this service he was to be paid a further 26s. 8d. p.a. over and above his salary as a vicar. Before being admitted to his office, he was to be examined as to his suitability by the Dean and Canons.[3] At Arundel, one of the chaplains or clerks was to be deputed by the Master of the college as instructor of the choristers at an extra salary of 20s. p.a.[4]

1. Windsor, Statute 37:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.79v, Dalton pp.13-14. The duties of the precentor at this period are discussed fully in A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel pp.80-98. Leicester, Statutes 4, 57:- A.H.Thompson "Notes on Colleges...." pp.206,226. Arundel, Statutes 1, 6, 8:- M. Tierney, A History of....Arundel, pp.753,759,761. Warwick College, with only six canons, never had any dignitaries other than the Dean and the Treasurer:- D.Styles, Ministers' Accounts, p. xxiv.
2. A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, pp.101-2 and references there quoted.
3. Statutes 16,15:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.77v., Dalton pp.8-9. Amongst his other responsibilities towards the choristers, their Instructor also managed their pay for them - receiving their money month by month, paying it out for their food and other essentials, and handing over to each boy the residue of his pay at the end of every year. He also was to explain to the chapter the legitimate reason - if there was one - for any chorister's absence from service. Statutes 4,37:- WndDC iv B 1, ff 75v., 79v.; Dalton pp.6, 13.
4. Statute 14:- M. Tierney, A History of .....Arundel, p.771

The statutes of Leicester College made no detailed provision for the instruction of the choristers. Their nomination lay in the hands of the sacrist, and to him also was deputed responsibility for their general supervision.[1] This, however, was merely expressed as custodia et regimen, and no specific provision was made for actually having the choristers instructed in chant and grammar. What arrangements were made by the sacrist to see that the boys did receive instruction do not appear; the delegation of this duty to one of the vicars-choral seems very likely. Until the later 15th century, however, what evidence there is points to the conclusion that the college and its successive sacrists frequently abandoned the boys to conditions of almost total neglect.[2] It was the requirements of the succeeding century that eventually obliged the college to make proper provision for the instruction of the choristers; and since the statutory composition of the college made no provision for an instructor, all that could be done was to create a totally new post.[3]

The significant factor here is that it is difficult to believe that the omission of such a post from so lengthy a code of statutes, carefully drawn up, twice revised, and extending to no less than 96 chapters, could have been by an oversight. The even more extended statutes of New College, Oxford, and Winchester College, both drawn up in 1400, similarly omit to make any provision for an Instructor of the Choristers.[4] This is a striking testimony to the degree to which, at this period, the job could be dismissed as being of too little significance, even to be worth legislating for. The archives of St. George's, Windsor, permit a list, albeit very imperfect, of the Instructors of the Choristers there to be compiled for the period 1361-96[5]. The job seems to have been regarded as simply a chore. The list does admittedly have many gaps; but even allowing for these, it still remains significant that over those 35 years no-one is known to have kept the post for more than 2½ years, while frequently it changed hands after only a year, six months or even less.

1. Statutes 11, 27, 65, 86:- Thompson, "Notes on Colleges",pp.207,213,228,235.
2. Compare the original with the successively revised forms of the statutes concerning the choristers:- Statutes 11,65, 86:- ibid., pp.207-8, 228, 235; also ed. A.H. Thompson, Visitations of religious houses in the diocese of Lincoln, vol.2 pp.188,194-8, 204 (where the passages which A.H.T. was too squeamish to print may be restored from LRO, MS Diocesan Archives Vj I fo.103r.); and ed. A.H.Thompson, Visitations in the diocese of Lincoln, vol.3 pp.4, 138, 141,188,240.
3. See below pp. 6067-8.
4. See below, pp. 4056-7.
5. See Appendix B1 below, p. A048.

In the 12 years 1366-78 no less than 9 men are known to have held the job, five of them in just the last three years. It was a routine job, and a dull routine at that. It appears that the choristers' duties at service were limited just to their contributions to the ceremony and plainsong of the liturgy as required by the Salisbury Customary, and very little more.

(e) The rationale behind the chosen provision of choral forces.

From the provisions made by these codes of statutes can be derived a pretty clear idea of the order of priorities operating in the minds of the founders of colleges, in the period immediately before the appearance of the heresy of John Wyclif and the Lollards.

The adequate performance of the liturgy seems to have come only second in their scheme of values. The first priority was the provision of the maximum number of priests, to assure to the founder, in life and after death, the benefit of that perpetual intercession at the altar which was profitable, maybe essential, for his salvation. At Leicester, Windsor, Westminster and Arundel the number of working priests of the chapel was 13. Whether 13 priests were or were not really required for an adequate performance of the liturgy was a consideration probably not taken into account. Founders who were sufficiently wealthy (and many who weren't) commonly settled on a Dean plus 12 others as a suitable number for the canons or chaplains of their colleges; presumably they were attracted by its symbolic representation of Jesus and the 12 disciples, as well as by its being an agreeably substantial number. After getting this far, there were, in the case of vicars-choral, traditions which - even though their foundations were now obsolete - still dictated that the number of vicars should exactly match the number of canons.

The number of working priests of the chapel, therefore, whether chaplains or vicars, was apparently not at all determined by the actual needs of the liturgy; rather, it was decided by the workings of obsolete traditions, the exigencies of finance, and the high value placed on the Mass which only men in priest's orders could celebrate. The pious founder, favoured by the Lord in the provision of earthly wealth, sought to raise his stock in the eyes of Heaven by so disposing of it as to provide a livelihood on earth for as large a number of priests of the Lord as he was able. The augmentatio divini cultus, universally given as a motive for the foundation of colleges, could best be served by sheer weight of numbers.

Amongst these numbers, priests were favoured even at the cost of providing only just enough clerks and choristers for the adequate performance of the liturgy. All four colleges were directed to observe Salisbury Use.[1] The ritual of this elaborate Cathedral liturgy could always be performed faithfully enough; but the ceremonial, calling for a large cathedral's resources in personnel, was - for the smaller colleges - a rather different matter. The 3 clerks at Warwick and Leicester and the 4 at Windsor and Westminster, were, perhaps, too few in number adequately to perform the liturgical function of clerks of the second form; it may have been necessary to depute some of the second-form duties to the younger priest-vicars. Given the superfluity of vicars, this could be arranged without difficulty. Six was perhaps just about the bare functional minimum of choristers, from whom it would always be possible to provide two hebdomadary boys, with their lessons, chants and ceremonial adequately learnt. None of the five colleges considered in this chapter could have supplied the seven choristers required by the Salisbury Consuetudinary for the singing of Gloria Laus at the procession before Mass on Palm Sunday[2]; but in other respects, the number of boys was just about sufficient.

Indeed, the degree of elaboration of the cathedral liturgy really made its adoption and performance a practical proposition at only the larger colleges and collegiate chantries - a category into which their founders just about placed Windsor, Westminster, Leicester and Arundel, albeit by not very comfortable a margin. These four were not ill-provided with staff - many colleges had to get by with considerably fewer, and as a result had either to resort to unusual devices to swell their ranks when necessary,[3] or (presumably) had to make wholesale adaptations to the Consuetudinary. The larger colleges, however, with between 16 and 19 men's voices forming the backbone of the chorus, could effectively enough perform the plainsong of the liturgy. Between them, the vicars, clerks and choristers of Windsor, Westminster, Leicester and Arundel had just about sufficient strength of numbers to put on in their college chapels a small-scale, but efficient and tolerably faithful replica of the daily round of services as performed at Salisbury, their model.

1. See refs. given at note 3, p.3013 above.
2. ed. W.H. Frere, The Use of Sarum, vol.1, pp.59-61; vol.2, pp.161-2.
3. St. Mary's Warwick, for example, with only 6 vicars and 3 clerks, had to draft in the two schoolmasters to act as rectores chori on greater festivals, in order to leave much of a chorus at all once the four rectores had been supplied :- PRO E 164 22 ff.2v.,3r., printed in A.F. Leach, Educational Charters, pp.272-6.

Nor indeed need the possibility of performing polyphonic music have been neglected. Certainly the repertoire of polyphonic music continued to change and develop through this period. Conductus and Benedicamus settings appear to have vanished altogether c.1350[1]; while on the other hand, the earliest surviving examples of polyphonic settings of Marian antiphon-type texts and Magnificat are attributable to about the same period.[2] Motets and settings of movements of the Ordinary of the Mass continued to be composed throughout the period; and while it appears that no polyphonic settings of music for the Office - e.g. hymns and responsories - have survived from this period, there seems to be no reason why their composition should have ceased at all. However, the performance of the polyphony of the second half of the 14th century made demands on the choir no different from earlier polyphonic music; it continued to require only 3 or 4 solo adult voices, which could be supplied from any chorus of vicars-choral without any adaptation of or modification to its constitution.

1. See MMB, p.416
2. See MMB pp.295-6, 345-6. A setting of Magnificat from this period, discovered by the present author in SRO (MS DD/WHb 3182), has been edited and published by Prof. Paul Doe.

3.2.2. St. George's Chapel Windsor, 1361-85

Only at St. George's Windsor can the actual working out of these arrangements for the performance of the services actually be observed in practice, in the period prior to, say, 1385. There survive for these years 13 treasurer's accounts, covering seven complete years and three incomplete years[1]; 7 precentor's accounts, four covering complete years, the other three irregular periods[2]; the record of a visitation of 1378[3]; an inventory of the chapel goods made in 1384 or 1385[4]; and a register of attendance at chapel services for October 1384- May 1386.[5]

The statutory complement of vicars, clerks and choristers was certainly never exceeded, and it seems that the efforts made to keep it full were hardly consistent; but in the aftermath of repeated visitations of plague, conditions were admittedly pretty difficult. The earliest surviving account, that for 1 December 1361 - Michaelmas 1362[6] reveals the college recovering from the particularly virulent "Secunda Pestis" of 1361; for the month of December only 6 vicars, 2 clerks and 4 choristers were paid. However, in February 1362 the deacon-clerk was admitted a vicar[7], and in March some conscientious recruiting of vicars began, restoring their numbers to 12 by June - though the number of clerks and choristers remained at 2 and 4 respectively for the rest of the year, and the college remained without its deacon-clerk for the whole of the next year.[8]

No similarly detailed information is available again until 1371 and the years following, when complete lists of the numbers of chapel staff attending at obits began to be entered on the treasurer's accounts. The deacon, subdeacon, two clerks and six choristers generally appear fully constituted. Of vicars, the number fluctuated considerably:- 8-11 during 1370/1, 11-13 during 1371/2, 8-9 between February and September 1376, 8-13 between March 1377 and Michaelmas 1378.[9]

1. WndDC xv 34 1-2, 4-14.
2. WndDC xv 56 1-7.
3. Patent Roll 3 Richard 2, part 2, m.17; transcribed by J. Dalton, The Statutes and Injunctions, pp.21-2. This discloses some unsatisfactory conduct on the part of the Dean and other top officials, but has little to say about the conduct of the chapel services.
4. printed by M.F. Bond, The Inventories of St. George's Chapel, p.32f.
5. WndDC v B 1
6. WndDC xv 34 1; for the correct dating of this document see A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, pp.222-3
7. probably John Aylmer, to whom the college paid 40d. to cover his expenses when taking orders:-WndDC xv 34 1.
8. WndDC xv 34 2:- item solut' vicariis collegii pro Euwangeliis legendis per totum annum pro defectu Diaconi iiij li xiiij s ob.
9. Obit a/cs on Treasurer's a/cs:- WndDC xv 34 7, 8, 11-14.

There would appear to have been some lack of alacrity, therefore, in filling up vacant vicars' places, which cannot have improved the choir's capacity to give an adequate rendering of the liturgy. Whether other colleges were any more successful in keeping numbers full at this difficult period is not known.[1] At Windsor, however, the fact that in 1378 complaint was made at a visitation that the Dean was guilty of keeping for himself the salaries allocated to vacant vicars' stalls[2], suggests that the existence of such vacancies may not have been entirely due to causes beyond the chapter's control. Perhaps the visitation had an ameliorating effect on this situation - in October 1384, the next period for which there is evidence, the presence of a complete chapel staff is recorded, for the first half of the month, anyway.[3]

An Instructor of the Choristers was duly appointed according to the requirements of the statutes; always, as far as can now be discerned, one of the vicars. For the years 1361-85 there was only one period, namely the year 1362/63, when no appointment - or, at least, no payment - was recorded as having been made.[4] Of those who held the office, none is any more than a mere name. The only remarkable thing about the list is the frequency with which the office changed hands; in the 12 years 1366-78, for instance, no less than 9 different men are known to have held this post. The likely implications of this have been discussed earlier.[5]

At Windsor, as also at Leicester and Warwick, a vicar was to be admitted only if he was known to be of good reputation, and - no matter what his other virtues - had a good singing voice, adequate knowledge of the chant, and had been satisfactorily examined in both singing and reading.[6] The elaborate requirements for knowing the whole corpus of plainsong by heart that feature in the statutes of the secular cathedrals are conspicuously absent from the statutes of these later collegiate churches. At St. George's all the services were specifically ordered to be sung cum nota[7], but there was no requirement that they be sung without recourse to books. Probably the vicars and clerks were expected to know by heart the ceremonial, chants and texts of the most frequently repeated sections of the litrugy - the Psalms, for instance; but considerable

1. Neither at Salisbury nor at Wells were the cathedral chapters able to keep their very large complements of vicars-choral intact at this time - see below, pp. 4036-7, 4038.
2. A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, p.149.
3. WndDC v B 1 fo.1
4. WndDC xv 34 2.
5. See above, pp. 3015-6.
6. Windsor, Statutes 13, 15:- WndDC iv B 1 ff.77r, 77v. Dalton p.8; Leicester Statute 23:- A.H.Thompson, "Notes on Colleges.." p.212; Warwick, Statute 13:- PRO E 315 492 fo.8r.
7. prout in ecclesiis cathedralibus est fieri consuetum:- Statute 22, WndDC iv B 1 fo.76r., Dalton p.10.

numbers of the appropriate service books were provided from which they could sing at sight the less familiar chants. Only thus, presumably, could be secured a performance of the liturgy that was always competent. The Inventory of 1384 lists 11 breviaries (9 noted), 5 antiphoners (3 with psalter) and 1 separate psalter; 2 collectars, and 1 legend for the whole year in two volumes; 8 graduals and 10 missals; 1 epistoler and 2 gospellers; 2 books containing the verses of the responsorial chants for the Mass - graduals and alleluyas - one of which was kept on the pulpitum; 11 processioners; 1 ordinal; and a number of miscellaneous items.[1]

The statutes required that, within three years of the making of the statutes, all the service-books in the chapel be checked to see that they concord.[2] The chapter, however, went to lengths further than this to see that the service-books represented accurately the practices of Salisbury Use. In 1362/63 one of the canons, John Aleyn, and one of the vicars-choral, Adam Pencrich, spent 86 days at Salisbury itself, taking the chapel's service-books with them to check and correct them against authentic Salisbury exemplars.[3]

Given favourable conditions, St. George's was an institution where the cultivation of the music of the liturgy could well begin to flourish. The college was too prominently placed ever to fall into a backwater; rather it was prominent enough for a momentum of innovation to be created and maintained. It enjoyed the patronage of the King and of the important men who were created Knights of the Garter, and the scope for ceremonial was being constantly enlarged by a steady stream of gifts of plate, ornaments and vestments.[4] Windsor was one of the principal royal castles, a favourite residence of a long succession of kings, and a centre of pageantry that would give plenty of scope for embellishing services in St. George's Chapel with all available materials - polyphonic music included.

The canons of the college included many chaplains of the Chapel Royal, who included canonries at St. George's amongst their frequently numerous other preferments - but who, being in royal service, could

1. M.F. Bond, Inventories of St. George's Chapel, pp.32-4
2. Statute 51:- WndDC iv B 1 fo.80v., Dalton p.19
3. Treasurer's A/c 1362/3:- WndDC xv 34 2
4. M.F. Bond, Inventories of St. George's Chapel, pp.4-5 etc.

actually put in residence and share in chapter business whenever the court, or other royal affairs, took them to Windsor.[1] William Mugge, the second Dean of the College (1349-81) had been a chaplain of the Chapel Royal in 1341-44[2]; also his name occurs in the text of a motet which sings the praises of Mugge and 13 other English musicians of the mid-14th century.[3] Of his successors as Deans of Windsor, all the next four (down to 1452) similarly were, or had been, deans or chaplains of the Chapel Royal.[4]

Of the canons, one - John Aleyn (canon 1362-73) - already mentioned as the canon deputed in 1362/63 to take the chapel service books to Salisbury for correction, has been fairly convincingly identified (a) as the John Aleyn who was a chaplain of the chapel royal from 1363 to 1373 [5]; (b) as the composer 'Aleyn' who contributed a setting of Gloria to the Old Hall Manuscript[6]; and (c) as the Johannes Alanus, who composed the motet Sub Arthuro - Fons citharizancium - In omnem terram, mentioned above as the motet which celebrates Dean Mugge and other English musicians of the period; it now survives only in two continental manuscripts, but is considered to have been composed for a spectacular gathering of Garter Knights at Windsor Castle in 1358.[7]

This item was not, of course, necessarily sung by the St. George's Chapel choir; they were concerned only with services held in their own college chapel, and not with any celebrations going on elsewhere in the Castle. The performance of composed polyphonic music by the chapel choir is, however, made probable by the inventories of 1384 and 1409, both of which list among the chapel books unus rotulus de cantu music' (one roll of polyphonic music) bequeathed to the chapel by this same canon John Aleyn (died 1373)[8] A manuscript book now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford - MS Bodley 384 - was the property of St. George's until it was given to Sir Thomas Bodley in 1612. Bound in as fly-leaves are 3 parchment leaves bearing polyphonic music dating from the latter part of the 14th century[9]; they contain 4 settings of the Gloria from

1. A.K.B. Roberts, St. George's Chapel, p.139. 2. PRO E 36 204 fo.89v.
3. B. Trowell, "A fourteenth century ceremonial motet and its composer", 29 Acta Musicologica (1957) pp.65-75.
4. Walter Almaley, dean of Windsor 1381-89, chapel royal 1366-77; Thomas Butler, dean of Windsor 1389-1402, chapel royal 1383-86; Richard Kyngstone, dean of Windsor 1402-18; dean of the chapel royal 1399-1402; John Arundel, dean of Windsor 1419-52, chapel royal 1402-21.
5. PRO E 101 394/16 m.9, 396/2 fo.56r., 395/10, 396/11 fo.16v, 397/5 ff. 43r., 82r.
6. A. Hughes and M. Bent, "The Old Hall Manuscript", 21 Musica Disciplina (1967), pp.109, 136-7.
7. B. Trowell, "A fourteenth century ceremonial motet and its composer", 29 Acta Musicologica, pp.65-75.
8. M.F. Bond, Inventories of St. George's Chapel, pp.34, 102
9. F. Harrison, "English Church Music in the Fourteenth Century" in 3 NOHM, pp.99-100.

the Ordinary of the Mass.[1] There is, unfortunately, nothing to indicate that the volume was at St. George's as early as the early 15th century, when the manuscript and the fly-leaves were enclosed together in the present binding.[2] Certainly it is possible to say that towards the end of the 14th century there was one choir somewhere in the country which included in its repertoire music for the mass in isorhythmic style, and in various elaborations of descant style; but the evidence is nowhere near sufficiently conclusive definitely to state that this choir was that of St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

St. George's Windsor was a reasonably well and comprehensively staffed college, so favoured by its circumstances that it could never lapse into obscurity. Certainly an opportunity was being presented to its staff to adopt and themselves practise the traditions of cultivating and enhancing the music of the liturgy which were already observed at the secular cathedrals, and formerly at the greater monasteries also. What remains impossible to assess, however, is the degree to which this opportunity was vitiated by the sporadic neglect and occasional shortages of personnel to which the chapter subjected their choral staff.

1. The official descriptions of this MS (A. Hughes, Medieval Polyphony in the Bodleian Library, p.9, and B iv(2) RISM pp.252-4) may be slightly amended. ff iii-ii is a bifolium which has been bound in inside out. If it be mentally reversed, it will be seen that ff.i-iii-ii, in that order, form 3 consecutive leaves. Fo.ir contains the conclusion of Gloria A, 3 parts in score, in a developed descant style. ff i v.-iiir contain Gloria B complete; it is in 4 parts, the top 2 parts (at the heads of ff.i v. and iiir respectively) carrying between them the complete text of the Gloria, telescoped after the fashion of certain settings in the Old Hall MS; the two lowest parts are untexted isorhythmic tenors, the first tenor being marked with the cue Exaudi pie pater, the other merely being marked Tenor Secundus. The foot of fo.iiir preserves the beginning of Gloria C, which is continued to completion on the next opening, ff iii v-iir; 3 parts in score, all but the concluding section (fo iir:- parallel descant with lightly decorated triplex) being illegible. The foot of fo.iir preserves the beginning of Gloria D which is continued on fo.ii v; only the section on fo.iir is now transcribable, and is in straightforward parallel descant. Further leaves from probably the same MS were once used as fly-leaves at the back of the book. They are now lost, but a reverse image of part of the last leaf has survived on the leather of the binding - which (after the fly-leaves were removed) in its turn left a fragmentary true image on the last leaf of the MS proper. Enough remains to show that the lost fly-leaf was laid out like fo.i v.- a texted part occupying the first six staves of music, followed by one or two untexted voices.

2. F. Madan and E. Craster, Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, vol.2, part 1, pp.259-60.

3.3. The Household chapels of the lay and spiritual magnates.

Conspicuous - and expensive - as these collegiate foundations undoubtedly were, royal and aristocratic patrons of the church and its spiritual services did not restrict themselves to the establishment and cultivation of collegiate churches. Such works of generosity and piety would benefit their souls both before and after death, and they also provided a convenient resting-place for their mortal remains; but while they still lived, they and their families and households needed the constant services of priests much more instantly accessible and available to attend upon them than the choir-priests of a college which might be many miles away. It was to secure these more immediate spiritual services that, by the time this period opens, the great of the land may already have been maintaining within their households, chapel establishments fully manned and equipped to sustain and perform the worship of God and the sacrifice of the Mass in the presence of, and for the benefit of, their patron and employer.[1] Nor, probably, was the magnate concerned purely with the welfare of his soul. The great cultivated the awe in which they were held by maintaining around themselves lavish and populous households with which to impress all comers with their magnificence and might; only with splendour, therefore, could they appropriately order their daily devotions, as being in a manner befitting their status and esteem. A well-equipped and well-staffed chapel was conspicuous testimony to their piety and orthodoxy - and to their wealth and importance.

3.3.1. The Chapel Royal

Of such household chapels as are known to have been maintained at this period, only the chapel royal comes into anything like clear focus; and even here, virtually nothing is known beyond the mere number and names of its personnel. The Ordinances of York of 1318 [2] certainly reveal that already the chapel was a specialised department of the household, its chaplains and clerks being regarded as quite separate from the general run of household clerks. The household accounts for the 14th century tend to confirm this view; although there are explicable exceptions to the rule, it remains true that on the various lists of household clerks that they contain, the gentlemen of the chapel at least can be clearly distinguished from the members of other departments of the

1. See above pp. 2058 - 62.
2. T.F. Tout, The place of the reign of Edward II, p.278

household. Such complications as do exist in the interpretation of these lists - and their resolution - are explained in an appendix.[1] The humbler members of the chapel staff, however - those of valectus and garcio status[2] - are listed on separate sets of accounts which prior to 1374 do not distinguish them from other members of the household of their rank; so far, therefore, they remain rather obscure.

Taking the history of the Chapel up to the adulthood of Richard 2 - say, 1384 - the main observable feature is the settling of its numbers and composition in a manner which reflects exactly those values and priorities of the period whose influence on the constitutions of newly founded collegiate churches has already been observed. In short, there can be detected a growing emphasis on the priestly element in the chapel, almost to the exclusion of men not in priest's orders; this occurred even though, in the absence of any chantry obligations, there was no particular need to maximise the number of priests of a household chapel. Secondly, overall numbers and internal composition eventually settled on a pattern almost identical to that provided by their statute-makers for the colleges at Windsor, Leicester, Westminster and Arundel. This perhaps is what could be expected; it is not surprising that what was considered the optimum composition for the working staff of the chapel of a collegiate church should also be considered the optimum composition for a household chapel.

The Ordinances of 1318 established the personnel of the Chapel Royal with equal numbers of priests and clerks:- a dean, 5 chaplains and 6 clerks, with presumably some three or four choristers.[3] This proportion was retained while numbers rose slightly:- in 1341/44 there were a dean, six chaplains and seven clerks, total 14.[4] At this point

1. Prof. Trowell's statement in respect of these accounts, that "up to the reign of Henry V, no distinction is made in the lists between singers and administrative staff", ("The Early Renaissance" in ed. A.Robertson and D. Stevens, The Pelican History of Music, vol.2 p.25.) is,happily, not borne out by close examination of the documents. See Appendix A4, pp. A017-9.
2. The staff of all large households were divided into three ranks, registering their place in its hierarchy. Senior staff in posts of considerable responsibility were termed armigeri or generosi (gentlemen); the middle ranks were termed valecti (yeomen); menial servants and boys occupied the bottom rank, and were termed pagetti, garciones or pueri.
3. The earliest of the larger colleges of chantry-priests, the college of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Winchester, founded in 1301 was equipped with a choral staff similarly composed of almost equal numbers of priests and clerks:- a provost and 6 chaplains and 6 clerks. See above, p. 2052.
4. PRO E 36 204 ff.89r., 89v., 90r.

the replacement of clerks by priests began; in 1347, apparently, the 14 members of the chapel consisted of the dean, 8 chaplains and 5 clerks.[1] Probably the re-organisation was complete by the time that Edward 3's prolonged absences from his wife, occasioned by his war with France, first caused the staff of the Chapel Royal to be split between those who accompanied King Edward to France, and those who remained at home with Queen Philippa. Six chaplains were attached to the Queen's household[2]; the Dean, 7 chaplains and 1 clerk were with the King's household in 1353/4, and the Dean and 7 chaplains and clerks (the precise numbers of which were,unfortunately,not indicated) in 1359/60.[3] The gentlemen of the combined chapels at this period, therefore, comprised the Dean some 12 or 13 priests, and one or two gentlemen clerks, totalling some 14-16 persons.

After the treaty of Brétigny was signed in 1360, Edward 3 did not personally go campaigning again; in practice the Queen's chaplains and the personnel of the Chapel Royal probably then amalgamated, although until the Queen's death in 1369 her chaplains often appear listed separately on the accounts. Between 1360 and 1384 the numbers of gentlemen of the chapel that can be derived from the accounts so consistently settles at 16 that it can be considered that this number then represented the accepted complement of the Chapel Royal. Fortunately there survives a list which can be ascribed to Christmas 1366[4], which distinguishes between priests and laymen by the careful insertion of the title 'Sir' where appropriate (the list is in French); and from this, it is possible also to calculate the proportion of laymen to priests among the gentlemen of the chapel for a few years either side of 1366 as well. The composition of the chapel may be tabulated thus:-

1. J. Nichols, A Collection of Ordinances, p.10. On the interpretation of the documents printed on pp.3-10 see the caveat entered by T.F.Tout, Chapters in Administrative History, vol.1, pp.37-8
2. PRO E 101 395/10, 396/11 fo.17r.
3. PRO E 101 392/12 ff 40r., 40v.; 393/11 ff 76r., 76v.
4. PRO E 101 395/10.

Table 2:- Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal 1363 - 1384

Date	Priests		Clerks	Total
	Dean	Chaplains		
1363/4 [1]	1	14	1	16
Whitsun 1366 [2]	1	13	2	16
Christmas 1366 [3]	1	13	2	16
Whitsun 1369 [4]	1	13	2	16
1371/2 [5]	1	13	2	16
1372/3 [6]	1	13	2	16
		Chaplains and Clerks		
1376/77 [7]	1	15		16
July 1377 [8]	1	14		15
1383/4 [9]	1	14		15
1 October 1384 [10]	1	15		16

1. PRO E 101 394/16 m.9
2. PRO E 101 396/2 fo.56r.
3. PRO E 101 395/10; consisting of the dean, seven chaplains and two clerks of the chapel of the King's household, and six chaplains of the Queen's household - one of the latter chaplaincies being vacant.
4. PRO E 101 396/11 ff.16v., 17r.; consisting of the dean, seven chaplains, and two clerks of the King's chapel, one clerkship being vacant; and six chaplains of the Queen's chapel.
5. PRO E 101 397/5 fo.43r. John Massyngham and William Dole are the only men on this list not known to have been priests; they appear at the end of the 40s. livery section, where the clerks normally occur, and in compiling the table are presumed to have been laymen . Numbers as at Whitsun, 1372; one chaplain, John Exeter, joined the chapel between Christmas 1371 and Whitsun 1372.
6. PRO E 101 397/5 fo.82r.
7. PRO E 101 398/9 fo.31r. Two interlopers, John Haverburgh and William Pidyngton, occur among the 40s. chaplains and clerks; among the 15 names in this section, they alone are not otherwise known to have been members of the Chapel Royal, and if they are discounted the complement of chapel members totals 16.
8. PRO E 101 397/20 m.30 :- funeral of Edward 3 (died 21 June 1377). The one vacancy was very recent; Richard Haukdon had left the Chapel between the compilation of the Whitsun livery a/c and the funeral of Edward 3, and had not yet been replaced.
9. PRO E 101 401/2. Figures as at Christmas 1383; Simon Clement and Robert Asshendon left between Christmas and Whitsun and were not immediately replaced.
10. PRO E 101 401/6 mm.24, 25. This is the earliest of a different type of list and is difficult to interpret. Dean and 11 others, chaplains of the chapel royal, actually listed as such; two other known chaplains, John Exeter and Thomas Marton, appear as Clerici hospicii ipsius capelle Regis, whatever that may mean; two others, Edward Southworth and John Menhir, appear to be omitted, although from other sources they are known to have been members of the chapel at this time, and were therefore reckoned in for the purposes of compiling the table.

As confirmation of 16 as the acknowledged complement of gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, 16 surplices were delivered to the Dean for the use of the clerks of the chapel on 29 October 1376, a further 16 on 6 June 1377[1], and 16 more on 18 October 1377[2].

One other minor internal reorganisation of the gentlemen of the chapel may be noticed. As the proportion of chaplains to clerks altered, the annual allowances for livery as established by the Ordinance of 1318 - 46s. 8d. p.a. for a chaplain, 40s. for a clerk[3] were not maintained. After 1371 the 46s. 8d. p.a. was paid to just a small group of senior chaplains, who might number between two and five; 40s. p.a. was paid to all the rest, whether they were chaplains or clerks. Thus was created, within the framework of the chapel, a smaller group of long-serving chaplains who were probably those identified by the title dignіores clerici capelle, which occurs on a list of 1385.[4]

The numbers so far discussed represent just the senior fully-fledged members of the chapel staff, those enjoying generosus (gentleman) status. They do not include the yeomen of the chapel (the clerici valecti), nor such ancillary staff as the sumptermen of the chapel, nor the boys of the chapel (pueri capelle)- the choristers. The sumptermen were merely porters and took no active part in the actual conduct of the services of the chapel; however, the yeomen and boys of the chapel certainly did. There is virtually no information at all to be found about these latter two categories of staff until the rolls of livery from the Great Wardrobe begin to list them both by name and office from 1376 onwards. Probably there were normally two clerici valecti; John Menhir and Thomas Wynchecombe held this office in 1377 and 1378[5]. (Both of these were eventually promoted gentlemen-clerks, Menhir by 1383, Wynchecombe by 1385.[6]) Two again are listed at Christmas 1383, October 1384 and Christmas 1384[7]. Surplices were provided for 3 choristers in 1360/1; and livery for 4 boys (parvi clerici) in December 1376, 3 in December 1377, 4 at Christmas 1378, 4 at Christmas 1383, 5 in October 1384 and 5 again at Christmas 1384.[8]

1. PRO E 101 397/20, mm.26, 29.
2. PRO E 101 400/4, m.24
3. T.F. Tout, The place of the reign of Edward II, p.278
4. PRO E 101 401/16 m.13:- delivery of four surplices ordinata pro dignioribus clericis capelle infra hospicium domini Regis ad utendum in maioribus duplicibus festis.
5. PRO E 101 400/4 m.21 (12 Dec.1377 and Christmas 1378)
6. PRO E 101 401/2 fo.42r., 401/6 m.23.
7. PRO E 101 401/6 mm.17, 24, 23.
8. PRO E 101 393/15 m.2; 397/20 m.27; 400/4 m.21; 401/6 mm 17,25,23.

Thus for the reign of Edward 3, and for the first 7 years of that of Richard 2, it appears that the number of gentlemen of the Chapel, established at 12 in 1318, was standing at 14 by the 1340s and had become 16 by the 1360s, where it remained at least until 1384. Subject to minor fluctuations the full complement of chapel staff for the last 25 years of this period probably stood at a dean and 13 chaplains (all of gentleman status), 4 clerks (2 of gentleman status, 2 of yeoman status) and 4 choristers - an establishment directly comparable with the choirs created for the colleges at Windsor, Westminster, Leicester and Arundel.[1]

Certainly the Chapel Royal was seen as a specialised department of the household, whose personnel was seen as being, and was kept, distinct from those of its other multifarious departments. They were specialists, men selected for, and able to devote their time to the duties that their particular department existed to provide. Of the music and services of the chapel at this period, however, very little can be learnt, except insofar as three of its members may be identifiable with their namesakes who appear as composers in the Old Hall Manuscript. These are John Aleyn, chaplain of the Chapel Royal 1363-1373[2]; John Exeter, chaplain of the Chapel Royal 1372-1397[3]; and Roger Gervays, chaplain of the Chapel Royal 1376-1377, minor canon of St. Paul's Cathedral 1384-86, and vicar-choral of St. George's Chapel, Windsor and Instructor of the Choristers in 1396[4].

1. Whether the two different grades of clerk reflected (as at St. George's Windsor) a distinction between clerks in the order of subdeacon and deacon, and clerks in minor orders only, is not known for certain, but does seem plausible.
2. PRO E 101 394/16 m.9, 397/5 fo.82r.
3. PRO E 101 397/5 fo.43r., 403/10 fo.43v.
4. PRO E 101 398/9 fo.31r., 397/20 m.30, 400/4 m.21; A. Hughes and M. Bent, "The Old Hall Manuscript", 21 Musica Disciplina (1967) p.112, fn.86; WndDC xv 34 18.

3.3.2. Other household chapels.

Of aristocratic household chapels, the Chapel Royal was probably merely the most prominent of many maintained by the princes of the land and the princes of the church. It is particularly to be regretted that so little information concerning these has yet been discovered; for the most part, only isolated chance references remain to demonstrate that such chapels did indeed exist at all. Probably the best documented of these is the chapel in the household of Edward of Woodstock (1330-76), Prince of Wales (the Black Prince), eldest son of Edward 3. Born in 1330, he had but one chaplain attached to his household between 1346 and 1348[1]; however, apparently in 1353, a fully-fledged chapel was established. In 1357 this consisted of a Dean (William de Oxewyk), 10 chaplains, 2 clerks and 2 choristers[2] - dimensions falling little short of the Chapel Royal itself, as might be expected of the household chapel of the heir apparent to the throne. Amongst the chaplains was John Ipswich, mentioned in the text of John Aleyn's motet Sub Arthuro, referred to above.[3] After the death of the Black Prince in May 1376, his son Richard of Bordeaux (born 1367, acceded as Richard 2, 1377) became heir to the throne, and some sort of chapel establishment was created for him; a surplice was made for a boy of this chapel in September 1376.[4]

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster (1340-99), third son of Edward 3, maintained a household chapel which by 1380/1 consisted of a dean, 4 chaplains, 2 clerks and 3 choristers[5]; Henry Grosmont, Duke of Lancaster (1299-1361), founder of Leicester College, maintained a chapel with a Dean at its head in 1353.[6] Amongst the princes of the church, Thomas Arundel (younger brother of Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, founder of Arundel College),bishop of Ely, maintained a household chapel between 1381 and 1384 including choristers and an Instructor for them.[7]

What was being created at the larger colleges of royal and aristocratic foundation, and in the households of royalty and the great landed and ecclesiastical magnates, were choirs which were far smaller than those of the secular cathedrals and the greater monasteries, but which consequently were far more manageable and flexible. At the time of their foundation, they were supplied with the staff necessary to enable them to perform the

1. Richard de Rotheley, chaplain of the Prince:- M.C.B. Dawes, Register of Edward the Black Prince, vol.1 passim
2. ibid., vol.4 pp.94, 227,205,129
3. See above. p. 3022.
4. PRO E 101 397/20 m.13.
5. MMB pp.24-5
6. MMB, p.24
7. N. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages, p.322

duties then expected of them - the perpetual celebration of the ceremonial and music of the daily liturgy, as directed by the Consuetudinary and service books of Salisbury Use. As has been observed, any choir constructed to sing plainsong could also manage any of the forms of polyphonic music in vogue during the 14th century, and the new foundations of the 1340-1382 period certainly fell within this category. Over the ensuing 40 years the potential thus created began to be realised.