

# THE PROVISION OF BOOKS FOR CHURCH USE IN THE DEANERY OF DUNWICH, 1370–1547

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THERE IS PRECIOUS little left of that vast store of riches which adorned the late medieval Church. Records of the destruction of plate, vestments, books, images and imagery make sad reading, and the rare survivals only sharpen the sense of deprivation. Hundreds and thousands of sacred treasures perished, and their absence now disguises their former profusion. What is not always appreciated is what a generous provision of such artefacts there had been, even in relatively humble parish churches. The exploits of William Dowsing in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, for example, leave no doubt that imagery, at least, was still abundant in the 17th century. The 'superstitious pictures', the angels in the roofs, the pious inscriptions, which he noted and most of which he so successfully obliterated, were a testament to former beliefs and practices. So, too, had been the plate, vestments and books, but these had suffered an earlier demise in the 16th century, the furnishings of the old order denied a place in the liturgical life of the Reformed faith.

The intrinsic value of gold and silver plate was realised in the melting pot, while many vestments found new employment as domestic articles, such as bed hangings or clothing. Many books, too, were re-cycled on account of their dangerous and subversive contents, and were re-used as bindings, end-papers or linings; many more, however, were utterly destroyed. The Reformers undertook their task thoroughly, and few books survived the iconoclasts' fire.

Parochial church records listing books have suffered the same vicissitudes as the volumes which they recorded. Documentation is therefore scarce and, where it exists, is never as detailed as we could have wished. Nevertheless, sufficient is extant to provide a background, for books appear in church inventories, churchwardens' accounts and wills. From these sources it is possible to make some assessment of the provision of books, the cost of their production and the extent to which both the clergy and the parishioners supplied them.

The Deanery of Dunwich was the largest in late-medieval Suffolk, although certainly not the wealthiest. It stretched from Benacre in the north to Aldringham in the south, and westwards as far as Cratfield. Its boundaries were therefore similar to those of Blything Hundred, but the Deanery also included Kelsale and Carlton, which were part of Hoxne Hundred. There were fifty-two parishes in the Deanery, two abbeys, three priories, and two friaries. From this ample establishment of parish churches and religious houses, only five inventories enumerating books have survived, relating to the parishes of Cratfield, Huntingfield and Rumburgh, the last of which has three. Churchwardens' accounts in which books are noted as being purchased or repaired are available for Cratfield, Huntingfield and Walberswick. Wills become plentiful throughout the Deanery after 1440; they show that in more than three quarters of the parishes either the church received the gift of a book or a parishioner made a bequest in which books were included.

## BOOKS IN INVENTORIES

In 1305 the Constitutions of Robert Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, required eight service-books to be provided for every parish church within the province of Canterbury by the parishioners, who were also to be responsible for their reparation and replacement. Essential 'furniture and fittings', such as vestments and plate, were also included in Winchelsey's list, which resembled the list issued at the provincial synod of York by Archbishop Walter de Gray in 1250 (Wordsworth 1904, 26–30). Winchelsey's obligatory books included both liturgical and musical

volumes for various services, and any book considered desirable over and above these was to be the responsibility of the incumbent. The obligatory books on Winchelsey's list were: the missal or Mass book;<sup>1</sup> the gradual (or grail) and the proper (or sequence book), both containing the music sung by the choir during the celebration of Mass; the antiphoner, which contained the music for divine office;<sup>2</sup> the legendary or lesson-book containing readings for Matins, but also Bible readings, homilies and sermons (Watkin 1948, xxviii); the psalter; the manual (so called because it was small and portable), with the occasional offices of baptism, marriage, visitation of the sick, etc.; and finally the ordinal, a general reference book used by clerics to ascertain the order of service for particular days (Watkin 1948, xviii).

It is not possible to say to what extent the parishioners within the Deanery of Dunwich obeyed Winchelsey's constitutions but, from a surviving inventory made by the Archdeacon of Norwich in 1368, it appears that within the 358 churches in his Archdeaconry, he found the eight books present in 94 per cent (Watkin 1948, xxv-xxxiv, ci). There is no reason why the parish churches in the Archdeaconry of Suffolk would have differed greatly from those in the Archdeaconry of Norwich. There is no testamentary evidence from the Deanery of Dunwich before 1370, and it is somewhat sparse until 1440, but after that date the will registers of the court of the Archdeacon of Suffolk survive. Nevertheless the performance of the parish responsibility can be seen in the bequests of lay parishioners. The wills of clerical testators also show an appreciable sense of responsibility to ensure that their benefices, and frequently those of neighbouring rectors and vicars, possessed not only the books required, but also texts additional to Winchelsey's constitutions.

Two inventories survive for parish churches within the Deanery of Dunwich, both compiled more than 150 years after those from the Norwich Archdeaconry: St Mary's, Cratfield c.1528 and St Mary's, Huntingfield c.1534.<sup>3</sup> Three 15th-century inventories have also survived for the Priory of Rumburgh, however, where the Priory church of St Michael was also the parish church. These are dated c.1439, 1448 and 1482 and were drawn up when priors retired and their successors were elected.<sup>4</sup> They provide a closer comparison to the Norwich inventories and were closer, too, in time, but they also refer to a religious foundation where a full range of service-books would have been expected, even though the house was depleted in brethren.

Cratfield's inventory of 1528 listed twenty-six books. Only one, a missal, was described as 'of paper printed'. Three had no description and the remaining twenty-two were entered as 'of vellum written'. Of the service-books required by Winchelsey, there were four missals, five grails (two of which were described as small), two antiphoners and three shortened antiphoners, a manual and a lesson-book. There was no psalter, ordinal, or proper, but these could have been bound in with other books for convenience and economy (Watkin 1948, xxv-xxix).

This inventory showed that Cratfield also possessed six processionaries, containing the music for anthems and responses sung in procession before Mass, at Rogationtide, and on feast days (Watkin 1948, xxxii). Cratfield also had a coucher, a term referring to the size rather than the type of book, as a 16th-century description shows: 'a whole boke is commenly called indifferentlye a volume, a boke, a coucher, but a volume is lesse than a boke, and a boke lesse than a coucher' (Wordsworth 1895, 64). There was also a written quire of the Visitation of Our Lady, a feast promulgated in three stages in 1389, 1441 and 1475, the last being the date when official observance began in England (Pfaff 1970, 46-47). Finally there were the books of tracts: the first described as an exposition of the holy words of God with their meaning, 'also conteyning the harde wordes of the sauter and also conteyning the harde words of all the serves in the yere';<sup>5</sup> the second was for following the sacrament of baptism 'and all other'. Sir John Rusale, possibly a gild priest, but certainly a member of the gild of St Thomas, and the only Cratfield testator to bequeath books, left his processionary to the town of Cratfield.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps this book was among the six processionaries in the inventory. Huntingfield's inventory of c.1534 is recorded in less detail, but shows nevertheless that the church possessed a 'greet' antiphoner, two old antiphoners, a grail, two missals, three processionaries and a manual. There were a

half-legend, an old psalter, and a quire for Jesus Mass, a votive Mass which had developed in the early 15th century from what had originally been a personal devotion (Pfaff 1970, 63–80).<sup>7</sup> There was also a quire with the Sentence. The Great Sentence was the form of excommunication used four times a year on the first Sundays of Advent and Lent and the Sundays after Whit Sunday and the Assumption of Our Lady. It included a very comprehensive curse on sinners when ‘sleeping and waking going’, sitting and standing, speaking and riding, eating, drinking, in wood, in water, in field, in town, until amendment and satisfaction were made (Wordsworth 1895, 270–72). It survives in the Book of Common Prayer as A Commination, to be used on the first day of Lent. Huntingfield Church was rather better equipped with obligatory service-books than neighbouring Cratfield but, on the other hand, there were no book bequests from any Huntingfield testators.

Although the inventories from Rumburgh Priory represented books for a monastic cell, they were also, of necessity, the books of the parish church (see Table I).

TABLE I: RUMBURGH PRIORY SERVICE-BOOKS IN THREE 15TH-CENTURY INVENTORIES

<i>Service-book</i>	1439	1448	1482
Bible		1	1
Missal	2	2	2
Graill	4	3	3
Troper	2	2	2
Antiphoner	1	1	1
Half antiphoners	6	4	4
Legend	2	2	2
Psalter	4	4	4
Manual		1	
Portiforium	4	3	2
Processionary	2	1	
Martyrology	1	1	1
Collect Book	3	2	2
Consonar	1	1	1
Consertenaar	3	1	
Office of Virgin Mary	1	1	

It is not possible to apportion these books to the Priory or the parish church, except that in both the 1448 and 1480 inventories two portiforia were distinguished, ‘one at the church of St Michael and one for secular use’. The portiforium or breviary contained all the service books needed for the canonical offices in one volume, and sometimes contained music (Watkin 1948, xxvii).<sup>8</sup> The inventories also include two troopers, a martyrology – the lives and sufferings of saints and martyrs, read in monastic chapters after the service of Prime (Wordsworth, 1895, 146–47) – and, as a gift from the retiring prior Thomas Goldsburgh mentioned in the 1448 inventory, a Bible.<sup>9</sup> In this same inventory it is noted that one processionary had been bought by the inhabitants of Rumburgh.<sup>10</sup> Collect-books also appear in the inventory. The office of the Virgin Mary was entered in 1439 and 1448 but was not itemised in the 1480 inventory, although there was a quire containing the *historia* of St. Anne.<sup>11</sup>

The priory was certainly not over-endowed with service-books, but possessed a greater variety in comparison with the selection from the other two parishes under consideration. It may compare badly with similar monastic establishments, but it has to be borne in mind that in 1286 there were only two monks recorded at the Priory. There is nothing to suggest that the house had increased in numbers between the end of the 13th century and the middle of the 15th. The

perceptible reduction in the number of service-books revealed in the forty-year period covered by the inventories would support this assumption. Taken as a whole, however, the inventories show the range of liturgical books which would have been found in parish churches throughout the Deanery between 1370 and 1547.

Other works listed in the Priory inventories in addition to the service-books, however, indicate the contents of the small, impoverished library housed there (Table II).

The descriptions of the library books are as accurate as possible, given the abstruse nature of many of the titles. An unusual item is No. 13, the table of hymns and prayers to St Bege. St Bega, otherwise St Bee of Cumbria, was held in special affection at Rumburgh, as she was by the monks of Rumburgh's mother house, St Mary's in York. On Michaelmas day, offerings of money and cheese were made to her image, which was adorned with a black velvet tunic and jet beads, with a lamp of silver hanging before it. The table may have resembled the wooden table, in the form of a triptych, which stood some three feet high in the church of Bawburgh, Norfolk. The legend of St Walstan, buried at Bawburgh but born in Blythburgh, was inscribed upon it, which 'served as a guide to visitors, informing them of the history or curiosity of the place' (James 1917, 240, 249).

Only one Bible, that of Prior Thomas Goldsburgh, appeared in any of the inventories within the Deanery (see Table I). The vernacular Bible 'of the largest volume' was not ordered by injunction until 1538, when the parish clergy were required to set up 'the same [Bible] . . . in some convenient place within the said church that ye have cure of . . . the charge of which book shall be ratably borne . . . the one half by you and the other half by them [the parishioners]'.<sup>12</sup> Throughout the land, there was a reluctance to comply immediately, possibly due to the connection between the English Bible and heretical beliefs associated with the Lollards.<sup>13</sup> Priests and parishioners in the Deanery were not normally slow to expend their money on service-books, as will be seen, yet they too seemed loath to make the purchase.

The injunctions of 1538 came too late for the Bible to appear in the Cratfield or Huntingfield inventories; Cratfield did not purchase a Bible until 1540–41 (Raven 1895, 56). Huntingfield had purchased one for 4s.8d. by 1541, and had paid 16d. 'for the lytell lectorn'.<sup>14</sup> By 1547, the parish of Chediston had paid 12d. for a lectern on which to lay the Bible, and Frostenden had paid 6s.8d. for a Bible 'of the greatest volume'. Wenhaston's purchase seems to have been deferred until the very last moment, when a Bible of the greatest volume cost the parishioners 13s.4d.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the cost of 6s.8d., or even 13s.4d., would not have deterred the parishioners from purchasing a Bible if they had so wished, and this reluctance was certainly not restricted to east Suffolk (Whiting 1989, 190–91).

#### THE COST OF SUPPLYING BOOKS

The rarity of the survival of churchwardens' accounts throughout the deanery is to be regretted. The destruction of the accounts is particularly keenly felt in the study of book production, the costs involved, and the evidence of the end product on lecterns and choir desks in the parish churches. What is clear from two of the three fragmentary churchwardens' accounts that survive, however, is that in Cratfield and Walberswick there was constant replenishing and refurbishing of the service books required for the pre-Reformation liturgy. Yet entries in the accounts are never explicit enough to allow an assessment of the total cost of a book, and this lack of detail makes it difficult to compare the costs in the two parishes. Huntingfield's churchwardens' accounts have few references to books. While the inventoried books of Cratfield and Huntingfield can be compared, the quality, and therefore the value, is unknown, for there was no standard size, no standard covering, and a wide variation in script and decoration.

Payments for book production in the Walberswick and Cratfield churchwardens' accounts

TABLE II: RUMBURGH PRIORY – ADDITIONAL LITERATURE IN THREE 15TH-CENTURY INVENTORIES

<i>Inventory Entry</i>	1439	1448	1482	<i>Identification/ Translation</i>
1 i liber de Greco	1	1	1	Unidentifiable book of Greek.
2 i paria decretorum	1	1	1	Works on canon law.
3 i paria decrees	1	1		Works on canon law.
4 Expositio v librorum Moseyii	1	1		Commentary on, or a glossed, Pentateuch.
5 Vitae S.Thome Archiepiscopi Cantuar' et S.Hugonis Linc. episcopi	1	1	1	Lives of SS.Thomas and Hugh.
6 Liber cum nova historia	1	1		Compendium of readings.
7 ii parvi libri unde i de meditatione S.Bernardi et i deologue	2	2	2	<i>Meditation</i> of St Bernard and <i>Dialogue</i> .
8 i quaterna de historia S.Anne			1	
9 i liber vocatur Magister Sentenciarum	1	1	1	Peter Lombard's commentary (Watkin, 1948, xlviii).
10 ii libri vocantur Dextra Pars et Sinistra Pars Oculi Sacerdotis			2	Two of three parts of <i>Oculus Sacerdotis</i> by William de Pagula, early 14th-century vicar of Winkfield, a manual for confessors, instructors, etc.
11 Pupilla Oculi		1		<i>Pupilla Oculi</i> , written c.1384 by John de Burgh, Chancellor of Cambridge University; a handbook for priests.
12 Summa Raymond	1	1	1	St Raymond of Peñafort, d.1275. Largely responsible for the compilation of the Decretals of Gregory IX used in the <i>Summa</i> Table of hymns and prayers to St Bege (Bee).
13 Tabula de ympnis et orantibus Sancte Bege		1		
14 i liber vocatur Diadema Monachorum			1	Compilation of largely patristic writings by Smaragdus, abbot of St Mihiel, d. after 825.
15 i liber juris vocatur Code			1	Probably <i>Codex Juris Canonici</i> (Watkin, 1948, xliii).
16 i liber de sermonibus cum tabula principio			1	
17 iii quaternis de diversis tractatibus			1	
18 i liber de propriis legendis cum lectione			1	
19 i liber de propriis historiarum			1	
20 i liber de statutis Benedicti et statutis cellarum			1	The statutes of St Benedict and the statutes of the cells.
21 i liber de Voragine	1			The <i>Golden Legend</i> of Jacobus de Voragine.
22 i liber super Epistolas per annum unum ligatur qui est in manibus episcopi suffraganii Londoniensis			1	

were made piecemeal. A sheepskin cost 3d. at Cratfield and 5d. at Walberswick, although the presence of the flocks grazing the coastal heath at Walberswick would suggest that the price should have been lower here. These prices, while giving a rough idea of one item at basic cost, do not lead to a meaningful estimate of the total cost to the provider of the book, because details such as the size and number of folios go unrecorded. In most cases, the type of book is unspecified in the accounts.

While Cratfield's accounts between 1493 and 1498 give little information, the following extracts nevertheless contain several useful details which do not appear in the accounts for Walberswick:

1493	for vellum	iiis. iiijd.
1494	For iiiii schepys skynnys	xijd.
	For ii calbys skynnys	viijd.
	For parchemyn	vd.
	For papyr	id.
1495	For ii bookschynnys	iiis.
	to William Bocher for ledyr	vjs.
	for claspys	vjs.
	to Josep of Laxfield for a calbeschyne	vd.
1496	to John Swette the scrivener for wrytyng of the quayyers	vjs. viijd.
1498	Sylk for the chappetrys of the bokys	vjd.

The one purchase of paper is interesting but may have been used for the accounts themselves rather than for book-making, for Cratfield's inventory showed only one book with paper leaves. The Cratfield churchwardens distinguished between vellum and parchment, but the quantities bought were not recorded. Vellum, the finest quality of calf-, lamb- or kid-skin, was used for the leaves, and the purchase in 1493 must have been vellum ready prepared for writing.<sup>16</sup> Parchment, which came from sheep or goats, was also used for leaves but was of a coarser grain. This was purchased in 1494 at the same time as the churchwardens paid a penny for the paper, but in the same year sheepskins and calfskins were also bought, which presumably were to be used for manuscripts; the buckskins, expensive items at 1s. 6d. each, were probably used for covers.

Walberswick's accounts offer a wider variety of entries, but the lack of specific detail means that they suffer from the same shortcomings as those of Cratfield. The very varied range of production costs was not limited to this particular locality and, even references relating to the same type of book show that disparate payments were to be found further afield. For example, it is difficult to give an average price for a manual. In 1452, 8s.8d. was paid to 'Sir Edmund' by the Walberswick churchwardens for making a manual (Lewis 1947, 3),<sup>17</sup> while in 1439, to make a manual for St Michael's, Bath had cost the churchwardens there 16s.8d., with a further payment of 1s.6d. for two men to go on horseback to fetch it. In Somerset again, the churchwardens of Yatton paid £1 3s.4d. for a manual in 1495 (Wordsworth 1895, 44). The Walberswick payment, therefore, may have been an interim payment for only one stage in the book's production, with Sir Edmund perhaps only responsible for the script. Additional expenses for binding, covers and clasps may occur elsewhere but there are no headings in the accounts, nor is there any discernible order in the entries. Manuals, however, could not have varied so greatly in size, and the disparity in the cost of the volumes mentioned here could be due to a piecemeal payment made to Sir Edmund by Walberswick, or to other qualities in the two more expensive books which are not described, such as the superiority of the writing surface, the excellence of the border illustration or even the cost of one gold initial letter, which could alter the price considerably. Materials were far more expensive than labour in the Middle Ages, and the script was sometimes secondary to the embellishment, hence the heartfelt cry attributed to the books themselves: 'For in us the natural use is changed to

that which is against nature, while we who are the light of faithful souls everywhere fall a prey to painters knowing nought of letters, and are entrusted to goldsmiths to become, as though we were not sacred vessels of wisdom, repositories of gold leaf.<sup>18</sup>

In 1458–9, an antiphoner was being repaired at Walberswick. These service-books, as already mentioned, were frequently of great size, like the contemporary Ranworth antiphoner from Norfolk which measures 52.7cm × 39.4cm and contains 285 folios. The Walberswick antiphoner was described as ‘grete’. Skins were recorded costing 12d., and 7s.10d. was paid ‘for byendynge new off the grete Antiphoner and for oder geer wryting to syr laurens’ (Lewis 1947, 8–9).<sup>19</sup> Testamentary evidence from the Deanery shows that most bequests towards antiphoners were a portion of the total cost, and indeed, Margaret Palmer’s bequest of 6s.8d. towards a new antiphoner for Fordley church was for a smaller amount than the cost of repair entered in the Walberswick accounts.<sup>20</sup> A more realistic bequest for a new antiphoner would have been the five marks towards the emendation of the Chediston antiphoner in 1444, the twenty shillings left ‘to making one book called antiphoner’ for Yoxford church in 1473, or the bequest of Thomas Craven of Wangford in 1418 ‘to the making of two new antiphoners to the priory 10 li’.<sup>21</sup>

Music copies were always needed and the noting of a prick-song book cost 2s. at Walberswick in 1482. In the following year, the clerk was paid 8d. for noting and writing the service of Our Lady (Lewis 1947, 50–51). This would have been a quire (‘quayyer’ or *quaterna*), probably similar to the quire for the writing of which John Swette was paid 6s.8d. by the Cratfield wardens. In 1496, Sir John Wylkynson was paid 2s. for a book called a pye (a later name for the ordinal), but the pye had been in print since Caxton’s edition of 1477–78, and there is nothing to indicate whether the Walberswick pye was in print or manuscript (Lewis 1947, 76; Wordsworth 1895, 242). In 1498 occurs the only reference to what may have been illuminated letters, possibly designed and executed at Blythburgh: ‘to Robard Gardener for tornyng and florysyng of the letters of the new feasts and for his labour for helping to bind the book 6s.8d.’ (Lewis 1947, 70). Unfortunately there is no evidence to identify the volume.

The costs of book production undertaken by the parishes of Cratfield and Walberswick demonstrate the financial outlay needed to supply and maintain the required service-books. The details from the churchwardens’ accounts also highlight the interest and involvement of the parishioners, whether living or dying, in the new feasts which required a constant updating of the liturgy. These concerns are supported by testamentary evidence, recording death-bed requests for the Jesus Mass, St Gregory’s trental, the Mass of Scala Celi, and the Mass of the Five Wounds of Jesus. To be instrumental in supplying the church with service-books, or even with innovative tracts, must have seemed, to priest and parishioner alike, a deed well done.

#### LOCAL BEQUESTS

The gift of a book to the parish church was as significant a bequest as the rosary given to adorn an image or the silver spoon willed to the high altar, for books were treasured items of personal possession.<sup>22</sup> They were bequeathed for a variety of spiritual reasons, remembrance through intercessory prayer being not the least of these,<sup>23</sup> but on a more earthly level, existing books were often left to a particular church because there was a special need there.<sup>24</sup> If the need had been identified, sometimes the purchase money for the book was bequeathed. Combined efforts of lay testators are infrequently documented but, when they are, they may indicate where this need was most keenly felt.<sup>25</sup> Such gifts, whether in cash or kind, were part and parcel of normal testamentary practice.

Bequests for book repairs,<sup>26</sup> on the other hand, might not appear so worthy; being generally unspecific, they also lack the details which would enable us to add to our knowledge of the range of literature bequeathed in the wills. Nevertheless, if repair and replenishment were required by the Church, then gifts towards repair must have been prized as highly as those for supply, and would have warranted commemorative prayers accordingly.

Books possessed by priests had their own purchasing power; William Hawe's Mass book was to be sold 'for me and my friends', the profit undoubtedly to be used for commemorative prayers;<sup>27</sup> and clerical legacies account for the majority of all book bequests. Thus personal service-books were frequently bequeathed to the parish church by a dying incumbent, or his books were bequeathed to other clerics in return for soul masses and obits,<sup>28</sup> to be celebrated either in his parish church, or perhaps by his clerical acquaintances in their own parishes. Books also appeared as part of the usual accoutrements of chantry foundations,<sup>29</sup> and were occasionally left to young male legatees if by chance they joined the priesthood.<sup>30</sup>

For whatever reason, or by whoever, books were bequeathed, they were much prized as objects of rarity and value. They were sometimes pawned to raise money.<sup>31</sup> Some of those mentioned in the Dunwich Deanery wills may have been of great beauty and artistic merit. Many would have borne marks of personal patronage, such as heraldic arms and devices. But primarily, books were instruments of instruction.<sup>32</sup> Books were the key to education,<sup>33</sup> and liturgical books were at the core of the people's faith. To a largely illiterate congregation, those books must have represented much of the magic and mystery of the Church.

Bequests in local wills showed a distinct preference for liturgical books and spiritual literature. This situation was also found in the city of Norwich between 1370 and 1532, when the books mentioned in the wills of lay testators were mostly service-books (Tanner 1984, 110–12, 193–97, 224). During the period 1370–1547, just under 4 per cent of the Norwich laity mentioned books in their wills, compared with 2 per cent of testators from the Deanery, a comparison made between two discrete communities, Norwich on the one hand urban, mercantile and prosperous, the Deanery on the other, rural, agricultural and of varying fortune.

It is no surprise to see that 23 per cent of the clerical wills in the Deanery contained book bequests. Books were the tools of the clerical 'trade' and bequests of books by clerics were comparable to the hundreds of bequests of stock and equipment willed by husbandmen, yeomen and fishermen to maintain the proper enrichment of the churches in the Deanery; or the sums of money not immediately to hand but left to enhance and maintain God's service with profits from the land at some later date.<sup>34</sup>

Nor is it surprising to learn that the most popular book to be bequeathed by both clerics and laity at all probate levels was the missal, for, by this period, the Mass had reached the centre of the stage in the liturgical life of the Church, and was the one pivotal feature in the thousands of commemorative services requested in the wills and testaments of clerics and laity alike. Missals, then, were often willed, although not always as generously as those bequeathed by John Sharp, a Benacre priest, who in 1513 left instructions for twenty missals to be bought and given to twenty named parishes in Suffolk and Norfolk.<sup>35</sup> The cost to the testator could be as little as 4s. for a book in print, or as much as the 10 marks sterling bequeathed in 1477 by Thomas Cook, vicar of Chediston, to purchase a missal.<sup>36</sup> The last pre-Reformation bequest for a missal was made by Margaret Fale of Blythburgh in 1542, after the dissolution of the priory there, when she left 'to the church 6s.8d. to buy a print mass book for the high altar'.<sup>37</sup>

There was active participation by lay testators in providing three of the obligatory service-books – the missal, grail and antiphoner – required by Archbishop Winchelsey for parish worship. The bequests towards the cost of grails were sums never less than 10s., and these came from six lay and one clerical testator. A will from Westleton, naming one Peter Hamond, ordained that he was

to have a close with the parcell [of land] for the which lands the said Peter shall deliver to the church of Westleton a complete grayle by the feast of Pentecost next coming and then the said Peter to have entrance in the said lands and to pay, or to do be payed to attorneys 6 marks, every year to pay 13s.4d. at the feast of the Purification of Our Lady,

until the six marks were collected.<sup>38</sup>

Antiphoners appeared more often in bequests than grails, but they did not attract such large



sums of money. The division of the antiphoner into two parts *c.*1494–95 would have given the testator the chance to bequeath *Pars Hiemalis* or *Pars Estivalis*, but there is no instance of this although the purchase of antiphoners of two half-years appear in several bequests. Manuals were only bequeathed by four clerics, one to a colleague in Halesworth, two to the town of Southwold and one each to the parish churches of Covehithe and Kelsale.<sup>39</sup> There were, however, nine bequests of portiforia by clerics. These books were truly personal possessions, Henry Shank of Blythburgh leaving *his* portiforium to be placed on a bookstand to serve the saying of matins and vespers.<sup>40</sup>

There was only one bequest of a primer, although primers must have been owned by a certain percentage of the testators.<sup>41</sup> The primer was the prayer-book of the laity, but often contained private intercessions, family notes and references in its pages, and therefore would have been truly a personal possession.<sup>42</sup> The one personal bequest of a psalter, that of Thomasine Hopton to Nicholas Sidney, her son,<sup>43</sup> could well have comprised another private collection of prayers added to the psalms, for lay psalters fulfilled much the same purpose for their owners as the primer. The other five bequests of psalters were made to parishes, four of them given by priests. One was accompanied by a Book of Commemorations and two of the psalters were described as 'with common gloss' and 'noted'.<sup>44</sup>

Books other than service-books belonged almost exclusively to the clergy. This statement might, however, have to be modified if the works included in the eight lay bequests of anonymous books could be identified. Tanner refers to the one surviving inventory of books among the Norwich wills, that of John Baker, rector of Pulham St Mary Magdalen, who died in 1518 (Tanner 1984, 35–37, 237–40). Baker's will survives but, of the twenty-six books named in the inventory, none are mentioned in the will. Tanner therefore makes the point that books mentioned in the wills of other secular clergy doubtless represent a fraction of the books which they actually owned. At the same time Watkin, summing up the Norwich Archdeaconry inventories of 1368, remarked that the lists of ornaments and books were merely the endowment of the church. No privately owned books of incumbents or other individuals were included, yet the number of service-books remaining in college libraries, private collections, etc., showed that private ownership must have been considerable (Watkin 1948, ci–cii).

Books containing guide-lines for parish priests also occurred in the Deanery. At the time of the 1368 Norwich inventory, *Oculus Sacerdotis* was probably no more than fifty years old and *Pupilla Oculi*, 'perhaps the best work of its kind by an Englishman in the late Middle Ages', had not yet been written (Tanner 1984, 39; Pantin 1980, 197, 213–14). They were both invaluable aids for clergy in their cures. Both works were noticed in the inventory from Rumburgh Priory and, in the Deanery, *Pupilla Oculi* occurred four times and *Oculus Sacerdotis* twice. The *Pupilla Oculi* volumes bequeathed to Sibton and Uggheshall were to be chained, the first in the chancel, the second 'to lie in the overende of the parson stall'.<sup>45</sup>

*Dieta Salutis*, a treatise on vice and virtue usually ascribed to Bonaventure, came from Master Roger Scolys and was left for the instruction of priests 'here following'.<sup>46</sup> There were two clerical bequests for '*Hugutio*', one being willed to Spexhall church and the other left by William Yarmouth, vicar of Covehithe, to a colleague.<sup>47</sup> It is difficult to say precisely what this book was. Perhaps it was a gloss on the *Decreta*, or perhaps the *Etymologicum*, both by Hugh of Pisa (Watkin 1948, xlv, n.5). Three copies of the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus de Voragine were bequeathed, one by a lay testator, the other two by clerics. A copy of *Gesta Romanorum* and 6s.8d. were willed by Robert Rome, chaplain of Covehithe, to Sir Robert Mego, priest, in 1467. Rome also bequeathed his best portiforium to the vicar of Covehithe, William Yarmouth, for a mortuary payment.<sup>48</sup> The 'boke of Fesyk' left to John of Hoo, accompanied by a gift of coral beads, remains a mystery.<sup>49</sup> Nicholas Sidney inherited his mother's 'Ocliff'.<sup>50</sup>

Too little is known about the education available in rural parishes, but the groups of unidentifiable books contained in clerical bequests, described only as 'Latin' or 'grammar' books or sometimes not described at all, indicate that these clerical testators were not ill-educated.

Books there certainly were, and these were willed where the appreciation or the need was the greatest. Walter Dyke, vicar of Bramfield, left 'a book' to Halesworth church, and three more bequests of 'another book' to the chaplain of Walpole, the vicar of Westleton, and a chaplain named Dom. Henry Sciliard.<sup>51</sup> Henry Heyward, who was probably a parish chaplain himself, bequeathed a book which he described as '*Johannes Nydar super Precepta*', to his neighbouring priest at Knodishall.<sup>52</sup> Sir John Andrew of Sibton willed his English books to his brother and ordained that 'all my other books of Latin be given to priests', while Master Roger Scolys left his astronomy books and his astrolabe to Clare Hall, Cambridge.<sup>53</sup>

On Scolys's death, the living at Reydon was taken by John Hopton, another Cambridge graduate. One of Scolys's executors, William Yarmouth, vicar of Covehithe and also a graduate of Cambridge, was certainly teaching the sons of local gentry between 1463 and 1470, one of his pupils being the Nicholas Sidney mentioned above. Other youngsters had been taught by Robert Iverich, vicar of Brampton (Richmond 1981, 133–34), whose predecessor there, Richard Pethawghe, left gifts of books to Brampton church.<sup>54</sup> In the neighbouring parish of Uggeshall, John Ovy, also a Cambridge graduate and the owner of the grammar books noted above, was probably another cleric who taught the local, but gentle, youth.<sup>55</sup>

Little is known about the general schooling available for the lesser members of society, but possibly a more rudimentary education was expected by a Cratfield testator, John Warn, who left instructions to his widow to 'fyndyng the said William and John to scole in the said town of Cratfield or ells where tyll they be instructe and lernyd wryght and rede as ther capacitye may yt take. . . .'<sup>56</sup>

#### THE SURVIVAL AND DESTRUCTION OF BOOKS

There are few extant volumes that can be traced back to the Deanery and none that are directly attributable to testators. A missal of pre-Reformation date is said to have been discovered buried in sand during the Victorian restoration of St Peter's church, Spexhall in 1876.<sup>57</sup> Recent efforts to locate it again have proved fruitless. More successful has been the identification of a book of music for Masses in the library of St John's College, Cambridge. It was catalogued in 1913 by M.R. James, who attributed the faded arms on the cover to the Hastings family and interpreted the inscription 'Lancelot Prior' as the Christian and surname of the one-time owner (James 1913, No.234). The true owner was Lancelot Wharton, the penultimate prior of Rumburgh, whose arms closely resembled those of Hastings, with whom the Whartons claimed a relationship. Wharton sang bass!

A book of hours which may have belonged to a Deanery parishioner is now in Cambridge University Library.<sup>58</sup> It is particularly interesting from the Deanery point of view in that it contains two obits in the calendar, added in a later hand than the original. The first obit is entered on 4 March and reads 'Obitus domine Margerie Carbonell uxor John Carbonell 1426', the second on 2 September, 'Obitus Margarete Hevenyngham AD 1432'. The Carbonell family lived in Badingham, a parish adjacent to Heveningham but lying on the far side of the boundary between the deaneries of Dunwich and Hoxne. The Heveninghams lived within the Deanery. There is no further evidence to place the early ownership of the book any closer than that. There is no trace of Thomasine Hopton's missal, her psalter or the Hoccleve volume. Thomasine's grandson, William, was the first Sidney to live at Penshurst. Few books remain there, the bulk of the library having been sold by the seventh Earl of Leicester in the 18th century. There is, however, a volume of Hoccleve in the Bodleian Library<sup>59</sup> which bears the arms of William Hopton, her step-son, but there is nothing to suggest that he bequeathed the book to Thomasine when he predeceased her in 1484.

John Bale, a native of Covehithe and a former Carmelite brother, was, by the 1530s, an active

and ardent Reformer. He was as energetic a saviour of books as he was a propagator of the Reformed faith. Referring to the loss of books at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, he wrote:

. . . To destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be unto Englande for ever, a moste horryble infamy amonge the grave senyours of other nacyons. A great nombre of them whych purchased those superstycouse mansyons, reserved of those lybrarye boke, some to serve theyr iakes, some to scoure theyr candelstyckes, & some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sope sellers, & some they sent over see to ye bokebynders, not in small nombre, but at tymes whole shyppes full, to the wonderynge of the foren nacyons. . . .<sup>60</sup>

What happened to the additional books at Rumburgh Priory is not known. Rumburgh was one of the small monastic establishments suppressed in 1528 to provide the endowment for Cardinal Wolsey's foundation at Ipswich. Its limited non-liturgical library may have survived for a few more years in the parish church. So, too, may similar books from Blythburgh and Wangford Priors, where the churches served both priory and parish. Blythburgh was suppressed in 1537 and Wangford in 1539. The Abbeys of Leiston and Sibton possibly had quite extensive libraries, but Sibton surrendered voluntarily to the Duke of Norfolk in 1536 and Leiston was dissolved in 1537.

About 4,000 books were recorded in the Archdeaconry of Norwich in 1368, and the inventory also listed an additional 1,600 books not required by Winchelsey's constitutions. Watkin, writing in 1947, said that not a single volume could be proved to be still in existence and that 'the books had apparently disappeared' as early as 1552, when the Edwardian inventories were taken (Watkin 1948, cii). The Reformers had done their work well, following the earlier injunctions of Edward VI in 1549-50 which ordained that 'all books called antiphoners, missals, grails, processional, manuals, legends, pies, portuises, primers in Latin or English, couchers, journals, ordinals or other books or writings . . . used for the service of the church . . . shall be . . . clearly and utterly abolished, extinguished, and forbidden for ever . . . ' (Williams, 1967, 853). All references to the Pope and St Thomas of Canterbury had already been expunged from service-books and associated manuscripts after Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome (Wordsworth 1895, 9, 67). Particularly dear to the English laity, although declining in popularity, was St Thomas of Canterbury, whose name was scored out from the calendars contained in the lay primers. (Gone, too, was his visage from illuminations, screens and windows.)

There is no official or unofficial record of the fate of the service-books from the Deanery. The destruction of similar volumes in Lincolnshire is described in *Inventarium Monumentorum Superstitionis*, edited by Edward Peacock in 1866. Although these Lincolnshire inventories were taken in 1566, Peacock stressed that the objects enumerated, 'few and poor' and destroyed during the early years of Elizabeth's reign, were unrepresentative of the great volume of church treasures which had existed before the Reformation began (Peacock, 1866, 21). The books 'serving for Idolatrie' in the Lincolnshire parish of Edenham, for example, had been defaced and burnt before Mary came to the throne. All the missals and books of papistry from the parish of Aswardby had been torn into pieces 'and sold to pedlars to lap spice in' during the first year of Elizabeth's reign. The majority of entries from the 150 Lincolnshire parishes recorded that the books had been burnt by the churchwardens, but some went missing. The churchwardens of Somerby reported that the missal had gone in the first year of Elizabeth during the curacy of Sir Richard Thirlil, who 'in the said year departed into Leicestershire where he dyed and what became of the said mass booke wee knowe not but the moste of the parishe suspecteth he had it' (Peacock 1866, 75, 33, 140). With examples like those from Lincolnshire, it is not surprising that little late-medieval literature has survived from the Deanery of Dunwich, but the catalogue of destruction from another county goes a long way to illustrate the fervour with which Reformers addressed their task.

## CONCLUSION

Parish churches in the Deanery of Dunwich appear to have been fully furnished with obligatory service-books, for the wills of both clerics and laity show that the provision and refurbishment of books was the intention of many testators. Clerics widened the knowledge of both clergy and laity, too, by bequests of alternative literature. Testators' bequests were tempered to the needs of the parish church and channelled towards the demands of their religion and therefore the disinclination to provide the obligatory Bibles in 1538 seems out of character. A distrust of the vernacular Bible apart, this reluctance was most likely a demonstration of dumb disaffection for the new order.

While it is not possible to assess the testators' literacy, it seems that the provision of books was made by the wealthier members of society in the Deanery. Their grief at the destruction of books would have been more keen, perhaps, than that of their unlettered fellow parishioners who had already seen their own instructive 'books' of stained glass, images and murals shattered, burnt and whitewashed. Although the devastation of books described above took place in the diocese of Lincoln, it was a common story throughout the land and a sad fact that the increase of literacy and the ability to read in the mother tongue contributed greatly to the spoliation of liturgical texts and religious literature in England. Their destruction, too, was a reminder that commemoration was a fragile entity, and all means of material patronage destructible. But let the books themselves have the last word:

In the first place, we are expelled by force and arms from the homes of the clergy, which are ours by hereditary right, who were used to have cells of quietness in the inner chamber, but, alas! in these unhappy times we are altogether exiled, suffering poverty with out the gates . . . And hence it is that we have to mourn for the homes of which we have been unjustly robbed; and as to our coverings, not that they have not been given to us, but that the coverings anciently given to us have been torn by violent hands, insomuch that our soul is bowed down to the dust, our belly cleaveth unto the earth.<sup>61</sup>

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## NOTES

- 1 The Mass book or missal contained everything necessary for a priest singing Mass. Special altars often had their own missals, and chantry or gild altars would also be endowed with Mass books. John Swan of Blythburgh left a missal to the value of 6s.8d. to the side-altar of the Salutation of Our Lady in 1515 (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/7, f. 193). He also left instructions for prayers to be said by Sir John Bretfield, the parish priest (altar unspecified), but bequeathed wax to burn at the altar of the Salutation. At Cratfield the gild of St Thomas flourished, but it is unlikely that the Cratfield inventory entry of four missals included the service books of the gild. One of the four missals, however, may have belonged to the fifteen-year service set up by John Everard (see N.R.O., N.C.C. Wolman 34, and note 6 below).
- 2 Antiphoners could be in two parts, one for the feasts of the saints and the other for the liturgical feasts. In the Norwich Archdeaconry inventories of 1368 there were on average two or three antiphoners in every church. It may be that the shortened antiphoners in Cratfield's inventory were the *antiphonale sanctorum* and the *antiphonale temporalis*. An antiphoner, however, could be of a considerable size and it was then referred to as a 'great' antiphoner. A 'great' antiphoner is mentioned in the Hungingfield inventory.
- 3 S.R.O.I., FC 62/E4/1; FC57/A1/1, 41-44.
- 4 S.R.O.I., HD 1538/335/1, ff. 52, 57, 32.
- 5 This 'tract' sounds very similar to the book bequeathed to Southwold by Master Roger Scolys in 1470, described as a book interpreting difficult words and other words frequently used in church (N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 83, Roger Scolys, Reydon, 1470).

- 6 N.R.O., N.C.C. Popy 113, John Rusale, Cratfield, 1495. Sir John left part of his house to the town of Cratfield; if the property were sold, the proceeds were to go towards 'the making of a beryall booke for the holy days in the quere of Cratfield on the side that I was wont to be on'. John Everard of Cratfield in his will in 1488 (N.R.O., N.C.C. Wolman 34) nominated Rusale to say prayers for him for a term of fifteen years at a salary of 5 marks p.a. He was also to have 53s.4d. p.a. from the profits of the land left in trust for Everard's son. Rusale was named as one of Everard's executors.
- 7 Wills from the deanery of Dunwich show this to have been the most popular votive or indulgenced Mass during the period 1370-1547. This was also true of the city of Norwich, 1370-1532 (Tanner 1984, 221). Its popularity may have been associated with its generous indulgences.
- 8 S.R.O.I., HD 1538/335/1, ff.57, 32; Wordsworth 1895, 49, 69-100. The portiforium could be large enough to be described as a coucher, or small enough to be printed in quarto form, or even smaller. After the psalter and the primer [book of hours], the portiforium was the volume most likely to be found in lay possession.
- 9 S.R.O.I., HD 1538/335/1, f.57.
- 10 There is no evidence of this in the testaments from that period, and the only will that showed any interest in the supply of books to the parish of Rumburgh was that of Elianor Payne, who in 1529 left 3s.4d. towards the buying of a missal.
- 11 The feast of St Anne was introduced in England in 1383, and by 1500 the Mass of St Anne was well established. The quire in the Rumburgh inventory is unlikely to have been the 'story' of St Anne and, in view of the great popularity of the Mass in her name, may have been a quire that contained her service.
- 12 Williams 1967, 811.
- 13 Haigh 1993, 157-58. Dickens (1964, 23-24) points out that in England after 1408, any translation of the Bible had to be sanctioned by the bishops; whereas in Germany there were multiple translations between 1466 and 1522, and several in France from 1477, it was not until 1526 that Tyndale broke the deadlock with his translation of the New Testament.
- 14 S.R.O.I., FC 57/A1/1, 55-56.
- 15 *E.A.N.Q.*, N.S., I, 160, 251; II, 244.
- 16 Fifteen vellum skins for St Laurence's church, Reading, cost 10s. in 1531-32, and a dozen parchment skins cost 2s. 2d. Three buck skins cost 2s. The joiner was paid 20d. for the boards and the binder 24s. for an unknown quantity of books (Wordsworth 1904, 44).
- 17 Sir Edmund was probably Sir Edmund Scherms, described as a chaplain at Blythburgh in 1458 (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/2, f.14, Robert Pynne, Blythburgh, 1458). Two priests are named in the Walberswick accounts, both of whom are mentioned in Blythburgh wills, and appear to have been secular chaplains at Blythburgh. It may be that the Priory of Blythburgh undertook the local production of books.
- 18 Thomas 1902, 33. The author was Richard de Aungerville, priest and bibliophile, born near Bury St Edmunds, 1281, died during his episcopate of Durham at Auckland, 1345.
- 19 Dom. Laurence appears in two Blythburgh wills, those of John Alann, 1461 (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/2, f.62, in which he is described as stipendiary) and Robert Watford, 1464 (N.R.O., N.C.C. Broyard 349, where the name is given as Dom. Laurence Hullynghedge).
- 20 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/3, f.126, Margaret Palmer of Middleton, 1491.
- 21 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/1, f.31, John Mann of Chediston, 1444; S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/2, f. 267, Richard Cook of Yoxford, 1473; N.R.O., Norwich City court books, Liber 8, ff.145-46, Thomas Craven of Wangford, 1418.
- 22 In 1499 John Weybred of Dunwich left the grail 'that is with me' to St John's church, Dunwich (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/4, f.36).
- 23 In 1495 John Rusale of Cratfield left his *dirige* book to be given to some priest of good conversation 'for to remember me and my good friends and all Christian souls' (N.R.O., N.C.C. Popy 113); in 1503 William Walpole of Bramfield bequeathed a vestment, a pair of chalices, a Mass book, pax, cruets and a sacring bell' with the which said ornaments I will have an honest priest for one year' (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/4, f.98) - in other words, he was setting up a short-term chantry for a year.
- 24 In 1505 John Hynchecliff of Peasenhall left his missal to the church of Blakenham if they had not bought one already, or else it was to go to some other church 'as most need is' (N.R.O., N.C.C. Ryxe 366).
- 25 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/10, f.9, Walter Gymyngham of Walberswick, 1527: '... to the making of a boke that Robert Ganer began, 25s.'
- 26 John Mell of Bramfield left 4 marks to repair the books in the church, the money to come from the sale of his land in Wenhaston (N.R.O., N.C.C., Broyard 216).
- 27 N.R.O., N.C.C. Popy 514, William Hawe, priest, of Kelsale, 1504; see also note 31.
- 28 N.R.O., N.C.C. Wolman 9, John Herbert, priest, Theberton, 1487.
- 29 John Walter, chantry priest, left a coucher and missal and 'all the library books' to the chantry chapel of St Anne in Halesworth church in 1503 (N.R.O., N.C.C. Ryxe 218).
- 30 P.R.O., P.C.C. Stockton 23, Walter Martyn, chaplain, of Westhall, 1461.
- 31 The will of John Appleyard of Brakon, Norfolk, 26 Aug. 1498 (P.R.O., P.C.C. Horne 26), suggests that the parish of Mundham had lost its breviary to pawn, for he says '... I will and requyre that the portues that was lade to pleg to Francis of Norwiche be restored to the parishe church of Munden'.

- 32 Master Roger Scolys, professor of theology, Reydon, in 1470 left books to Southwold town 'for instructing priests here following' (N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 83).
- 33 N.R.O., N.C.C. Ryxe 2, John Ovy, priest, of Uggeshall, 1504.
- 34 In 1487 Richard Hunt of South Cove left 5 marks to a new missal, 23s. to be paid at the next Michaelmas, the balance at the Michaelmas following (S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/3, f.44).
- 35 N.R.O., N.C.C. Johnson 168.
- 36 N.R.O., N.C.C. Gelour 194.
- 37 N.R.O., N.C.C. Cooke 175-76.
- 38 N.R.O., N.C.C. Garnon 100, John Cotenham, Westleton, 1506.
- 39 N.R.O., N.C.C. Wylbey 10, John Godard, chaplain, Covehithe, 1444; N.R.O., N.C.C. Hyrnyng 115, William Gresley, rector of Kelsale, 1423.
- 40 A bookstand of 15th-century date still stands in Blythburgh church, and it is tempting to think that this also might be part of the Shank bequest.
- 41 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/2, f. 191, Elizabeth Morell, Halesworth, 1469; Tanner 1984, 194. In Norwich, fifteen primers were mentioned in lay wills, which may have reflected the wealth of the Norwich citizens in contrast to the relative poverty of the parishioners from the deanery of Dunwich. There were seven primers bequeathed in clerical wills from Norwich during the same period.
- 42 Essentially, the primer contained the Hours of the Blessed Virgin (hence its alternative name the Book of Hours), the seven penitential psalms, the fifteen gradual psalms, the litany, the office for the dead and the commendations.
- 43 P.R.O., P.C.C. Horne 18, Thomasine Hopton, Yoxford, 1497.
- 44 N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 94, John Styward, 1464; N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 83, Roger Scolys, Reydon, 1470; Lambeth Palace, Morton ii, William Salman, chantry priest, Huntingfield, 1499.
- 45 N.R.O., N.C.C. Spyltumber 178, John Andrew, priest, Sibton, 1507; N.R.O., N.C.C. Ryxe 2, John Ovy, priest, Uggeshall, 1504.
- 46 N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 83, Roger Scolys, Reydon, 1470.
- 47 N.R.O., N.C.C. Heydon 193, John Brown, priest, Cookley, 1381; N.R.O., N.C.C. Wolman 212, William Yarmouth, vicar of Covehithe, 1494.
- 48 N.R.O., N.C.C. Jekkys 94.
- 49 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/2, f.247, John Glaswyke, Blythburgh, 1471.
- 50 P.R.O., P.C.C. Horne 18, Thomasine Hopton, Yoxford, 1497. The book by Thomas Hoccleve (c.1368-1450) is not named. Hoccleve, poet, pupil and friend of Chaucer, a clerk of the Privy Seal and a professional scribe, numbered among his patrons Henry IV, Henry V, John of Gaunt, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and John, Duke of Bedford (Furnivall and Gollancz 1970).
- 51 N.R.O., N.C.C. Gelour 192, Walter Dyke, Bramfield, 1478.
- 52 N.R.O., N.C.C. Whytefoote 92-93, Henry Heyward, Sizewell, 1543. The book would have been *Expositio decalogi sive preceptorum divine legis* by the German Dominican, John Nider (c.1380-1438); it was also known as *liber Preceptor* (Tanner 1984, 36).
- 53 Scolys's will, N.R.O., N.C.C. Betyns 83, contains the closest approximation to an inventory of books in the personal possession of a Deanery testator. Unfortunately, this only runs to seven named books. These are a psalter with a common gloss, a noted portiforium, *Legenda Aurea*, *Dieta Salutis*, *Pupilla Oculi* and an assortment of 'small books', an anonymous dictionary and astronomy books. In Clare College Library, Cambridge (Safe C: 1/7), the Master's Old Book, a late medieval memorandum book, records Scolys's undated gift of books to Clare Hall library. It is likely that they were destroyed in the fire of 1521.
- 54 N.R.O., N.C.C. Surflete 183-84, Richard Pethawghe, priest, Brampton, 1435.
- 55 Emden 1963, 439. John Ovy graduated B.A. in 1476/7, M.A. in 1481. He was resident at Corpus Christi College in 1483 and vicar of St Stephen's, Coleman Street, London for six months in 1493-94, after which he became rector of Uggeshall. He died here c.1504, and asked to be buried beside his mother at Blythburgh, where he had briefly been the parish chaplain (N.R.O., N.C.C. Ryxe 2).
- 56 S.R.O.I., IC/AA2/13, f.83, John Warn, Cratfield, 1538.
- 57 White 1885, 571.
- 58 C.U.L., li.VI.2.
- 59 Bodl., MS Digby 185. The volume also contains the Brut Chronicle, an English chronicle compiled temp. Edward III.
- 60 This passage from Bale's *The Laboryouse Journey & Serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquitees* is quoted in Aston 1984, 313-37, at p.327.
- 61 Thomas 1902, 28-29.

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*Abbreviations*

- Bodl. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- C.U.L. Cambridge University Library.
- E.A.N.Q.* *East Anglian Notes and Queries*.
- N.C.C. Norwich Consistory Court.
- N.R.O. Norfolk Record Office.
- P.C.C. Prerogative Court of Canterbury.
- P.R.O. Public Record Office.
- S.R.O.I. Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich Branch.

# NINA LAYARD, HADLEIGH ROAD AND IPSWICH MUSEUM, 1905–1908

by STEVEN J. PLUNKETT

THE IMPORTANCE OF 7th-century Ipswich is understood from archaeology alone, and was wholly unknown at the start of this century. Almost ninety years have passed since Miss Nina Layard (Pl. IX) unearthed the first of this evidence in a major rescue dig beside the Hadleigh Road in Ipswich (Fig.39). An Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the late pagan period was discovered during land-levelling operations conducted by Ipswich Corporation. Throughout the whole of 1906 and January 1907 Miss Layard worked just ahead of a large team of labourers to record and rescue the contents of some 165 graves, mainly inhumations, before the land surface was destroyed. Most of the finds are still preserved at Ipswich Museum, and the excavation results were published both in *Archaeologia* and (with a different text) in these *Proceedings* (Layard 1907a, b).

The cemetery contained a roughly equal number of male and female burials aligned S.W.–N.E., with a few urned cremations. The wealthier graves were rich in goods and were of a very consistent character. Females were often buried with bead necklaces of glass and amber, and commonly wore girdle-rings with iron pendants or chatelaines. Eight large square-headed brooches, two keystone garnet disc-brooches and several bronze annular brooches (some in pairs) were also found with the women. The men had spears and sometimes shield-bosses, but no swords. Iron knives were found at the waist in graves of either sex. Other precious objects included glass flasks and palm cups, bone combs, a large Frankish buckle and a fine silver necklet. Urns of a rough grass-tempered fabric were found both as cremation and libation vessels. Some years later, a very beautiful hanging bowl with decorative escutcheons was retrieved from the same area.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Layard published a full inventory of the contents of each grave, but sadly the objects were never numbered, but were accessioned at Ipswich Museum collectively (Museum, 1907.29). Some items can be recognized from her descriptions, and others cannot. The reconstruction of grave-groups is possible only in certain cases, and none of the commoner objects such as knives are ever likely to be traced to individual graves. Even some of the square-headed brooches are confused in this way: but since the richer graves were so uniform, the loss of data is irritating rather than catastrophic.

Miss Layard's almost single-handed efforts to rescue this valuable archive, sustained for over a year, with most intensive work in the winter months, was an astonishing achievement for a single lady in the social and political world of the Edwardian period. It was coloured by the fact that the labourers (at times over 200) who were destroying the site were participants in a sensitive Council project for the relief of the unemployed. There were factors of class difference and political interest confronting Miss Layard, and she overcame them by effort, diplomacy and grim determination. Her dealings with officialdom and the academic world were also difficult because she was a woman.

In her published accounts, Miss Layard did not fail to highlight these problems. Although her work was praised for its thoroughness at the time, it has always been difficult to ascertain from the printed sources how effective the investigation may have been, or how complete a record of the cemetery was preserved. Little precise detail of the methods was given, and Miss Layard's pardonable dramatization of the circumstances gives an alarming impression. What follows is a detailed reconstruction of the discovery, the excavation and display of the finds, based on previously unknown correspondence and ephemeral sources. The story reveals much about the dig itself, and how it affected the development of local archaeology at Ipswich Museum. It supplies a forgotten chapter in the history of Edwardian Ipswich.





PLATE IX – Nina F. Layard, F.L.S., F.S.A., 1853–1935 (photograph: Ipswich Museum).

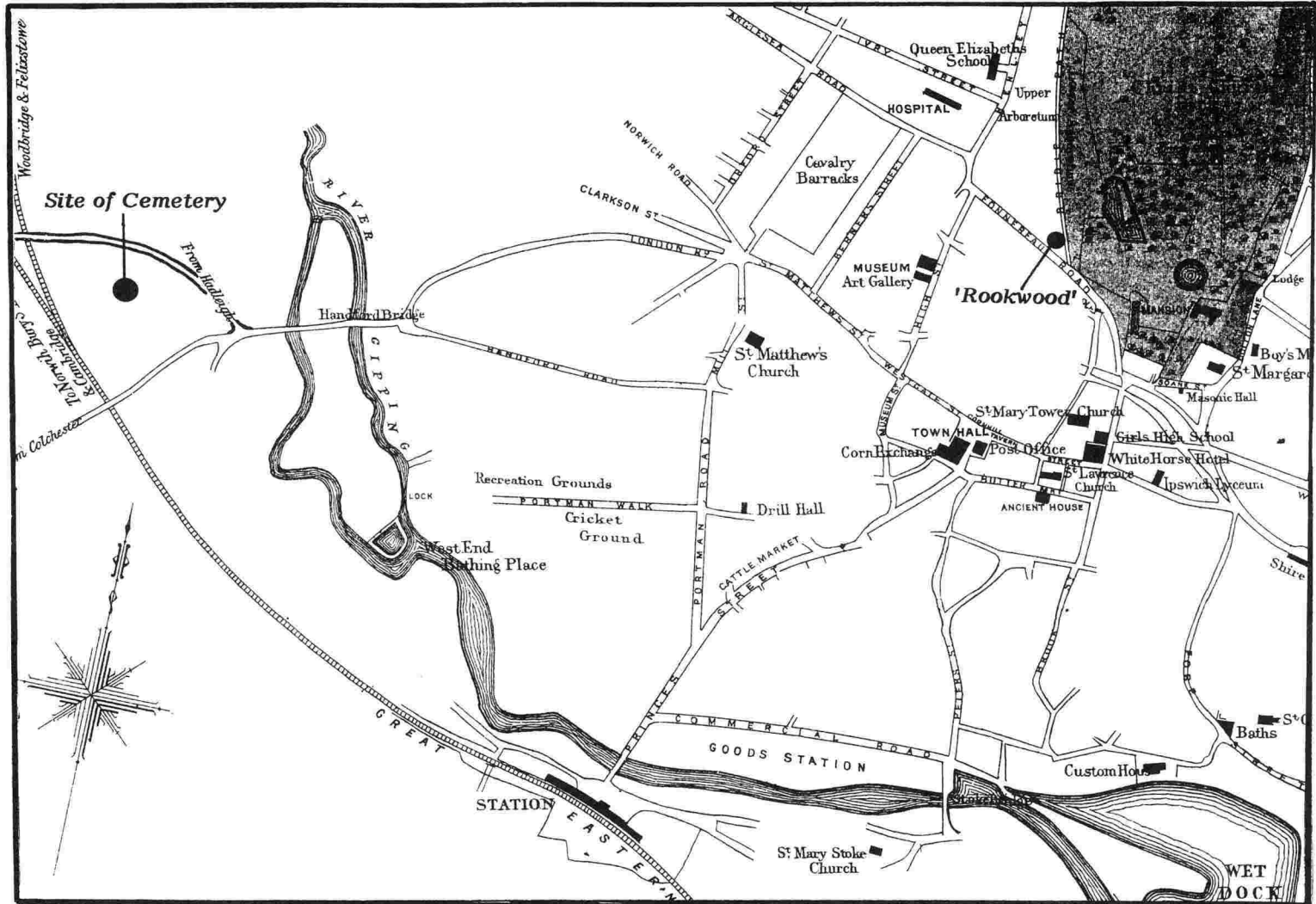


FIG. 39 – Site of the Hadleigh Road cemetery, Ipswich (based on a map of 1895).