

ESTATE MANAGEMENT IN THE WINCHESTER DIOCESE BEFORE AND AFTER THE INTERREGNUM: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this article is the management of the episcopal and cathedral estates of the diocese of Winchester in the seventeenth century. The cathedral estates have hardly been examined hitherto and previous discussions of the bishop's estates draw questionable conclusions. This article will show that the cathedral, but not the bishop, switched from leasing for 'lives' to 'terms'. Otherwise, either through neglect or cowardice in the face of the landed classes, neither really exploited 'early surrenders' or switched from leasing to the more profitable direct farming. Rental income remained static, therefore, with serious implications for the ministry of the Church.

INTRODUCTION

Ownership and management of estates, though secular activities, were central to the operations of both bishops and cathedrals. Property generated the money which enabled them to finance and thus fulfil their respective duties. Bishops could not have repaired their palaces, travelled their dioceses, offered hospitality, given charity, made bequests, or asserted any independence without money. Cathedrals likewise could not have maintained their buildings, offered charity, or supplied a musical establishment without income from their estates.

It might be thought that a distinction should be drawn between the respective responsibilities of the bishop, an individual, and the cathedral, a corporation, but such a distinction is not very meaningful in this context. It is true that spending commitments were more

specific in the case of the cathedral and that, over allocation of moneys, the bishop seems to have been largely his own man. Business at the cathedral was conducted by a 'board', that is, the dean and chapter. Responsibilities in the diocese or at the cathedral, however, were often similar if not identical. Whether it was a new bishop's palace or a new chapter house, both bishop and cathedral clergy had to think, sometimes, at least, not just of themselves and their immediate gains from the spoils, but also of the long term. Money was set aside accordingly. This came from the resources at the bishop's disposal – mainly income from his estates – and the cathedral's income before the distribution of dividends to individual canons.

Both the bishop and the cathedral enjoyed impressive portfolios of property. The bishop's estates comprised at least 50 manors, the cathedral's nearer 20. The cathedral had some 25 rectories, the bishop three or four at most. Likewise the cathedral appears to have possessed many more tenements, mainly in Winchester, than the bishop.¹ Both enjoyed, between them, an assortment of liberties, boroughs, messuages, woods, mills, crofts, and fishing rights. Episcopal properties stretched over seven southern counties from Surrey to Somerset. The cathedral's possessions were somewhat more clustered and mainly in Hampshire and Wiltshire, but with outlying properties as far afield as Somerset and Denbighshire. It will be clear from all this that both institutions commanded considerable resources but, as will be shown in a later section, the bishop was much richer than the cathedral.

In the middle of the seventeenth century there was, of course, the almighty explosion

of the Civil Wars. In quick succession came the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, when church land was seized and sold, and the Restoration, when the lands were recovered. Information about sales of the bishop's estates appears to have survived,² but, momentous though these disruptions must have been, little seems to have survived concerning sales of cathedral properties by the trustees of the Commonwealth.³ Quite astonishingly, nothing at all is recorded about the recovery of their property by either bishop or dean and chapter at the Restoration. The respective records of both bodies simply resume in the autumn of 1660 without comment, as it were, and as if nothing had happened.

Sequestration and restoration of these lands would make a fascinating story. As it is, too few documents have survived to tell the tale and, in any case, the point of this enquiry is the long-term impact of mid-century disruption on ecclesiastical estate management. It will focus on the 1630s and the 1670s – the decades immediately before and after the disruption – and will compare practice, episcopal and cathedral, in order to determine what, if anything, changed in the case of either body over this period.

In one extremely important way, the Interregnum is highly relevant to this study. The sequestration of church lands, already mentioned, was for a purpose: it was one way of addressing and augmenting clergy stipends.⁴ This activity in the 1650s shows that, far from being anachronistic and far from such issues arising only in the 1830s or 1850s, re-direction of church income was a central concern of at least a proportion of the political population of mid-seventeenth century England.

Ecclesiastical stipends were certainly low. A sample of some thirty parishes in the diocese shows annual average stipends at £57 in the 1650s and £77 by the early eighteenth century.⁵ Parish clergy came above farmers and artisans, on the social scale, but below lawyers, merchants, and gentry, let alone knights and peers. The implications of such penury for the church's ministry was not the monopoly merely of the revolutionaries. Charles I, before the Wars, and

Charles II, after them, had expressed concern, considering £80 to be a 'competent' annual income.⁶ A crescendo of complaint climaxed in Queen Anne's bounty in the next century.⁷

It was possible to tackle the problem less drastically than by the sequestration of church property, as under Cromwell, or by the allocation of First Fruits and Tithes, as under Queen Anne. The letters of Charles I and Charles II urged deans, chapters, and bishops to transfer surplus profits from their endowments to augment parish clergy stipends. Winchester cathedral chapter had long adopted this course. The wills of Dean Clarke and Bishop Morley, both after the Restoration, addressed the issue. Although commendable, the scale of such giving was far too modest an inroad. Contemporary opinion as high as the crown considered greater transfers from episcopal and cathedral endowments to be the best solution.

The need to finance all these activities – whether usual and routine, such as building repairs, or the newer expectations concerning augmentations – raises questions about the quality of estate management by the bishops and the cathedral clergy. Phyllis Hembry has examined the estates of the bishops of Bath and Wells before 1660 and Christopher Clay has surveyed management of ecclesiastical estates after 1660. A number of writers have included some discussion of property management in their histories of dioceses and cathedrals. It is also possible to trace developments in the published chapter act books of other cathedrals. For Winchester, Felicity Heal has studied the bishops' leasing records of the 1630s, comparing them with Canterbury and Chichester, and Clay makes occasional reference to both episcopal and cathedral estates in this diocese. There is no detailed account of these estates and certainly no attempt to expose how far its management changed – or remained the same – after the Interregnum.⁸

Writing about the stewardship of bishops Neile (1628–32) and Curl (1632–47), Heal claims that they subverted the instructions of Charles I and Archbishop Laud, that they persisted in the practice of leasing for 'lives' rather than for 'terms', and that they exercised an early surrender

policy on their lessees. They were able, by these means, to exact larger entry fines and at more frequent intervals. This, she concludes, was 'intelligent exploitation of the three-lease life'.⁹

If evidence is wanting for Winchester in the Interregnum, it is much more plentiful before and afterwards. Heal relied on surviving bishops' lease books and these are indeed a crucial source for any study of the Bishop of Winchester's leasing record before – and after – the Interregnum. For the bishop there are also the Winchester pipe books, which are at first continuous, but, for the seventeenth century, more intermittent and often damaged or incomplete. Winchester Cathedral has excellent series of ledgers and compotus rolls. Much evidence can be gathered from all these sources to reconstruct, more thoroughly and with a wider range than formerly, the leasing policy of the bishop and the cathedral.

The statistical foundations of this article rest on sample periods of years in the 1630s and 1670s. Lease documentation before the Wars is not quite so plentiful for the bishops as for the cathedral. The one surviving bishop's lease book only begins in 1619 and proceeds apparently erratically, its entries only becoming regular in the 1630s. There are no entries after 1640. Two of the four years of Neile's operations have been included, since he has already been the subject of some discussion. The 1630s are, otherwise and fortunately, the crucial years, together with the 1670s, for comparing leasing practice immediately before and after the Interregnum. Five-year samples for the middle of both decades have been used both for the bishop and for the cathedral. The samples may seem small, but such selectivity is necessary for reasons both of space and manageability. Although not used statistically in this article, a far larger number of leases has been consulted to ensure typicality.

The central question posed at the beginning of this article is the long term effects of the Interregnum on both episcopal and cathedral estate management. This article will first discuss the pattern of leasing for lives or terms to establish the policy of the bishop and the cathedral and to see if either changed its ways after the Interregnum. It will proceed to consider the extent

to which an early surrender policy was pursued. It will next examine whether any alternative policy was tried. It will conclude by discussing the effects, if any, of these developments on the respective incomes of the bishop and the cathedral. All this should show, in short, how 'intelligent' was the management of these estates in the seventeenth century.

LEASING FOR LIVES OR TERMS

Leasing – whether to lease for lives or for a term of years – was a central issue for ecclesiastical finance in the seventeenth century. Lessees appear to have preferred leasing for lives. Such leases were not without risks as lives could end prematurely; but they were usually thought to be safer because three lives were involved, safer still if they were young lives. The lessee would never face renewal problems if his was one of the lives. Bishops and cathedrals were able to exact larger fines for these leases. Leasing for a 'term' of years had the advantage of much more predictability. It was likely to present more frequent opportunities to review leases and to raise rents in line with costs – an altogether more efficient arrangement – with better returns in the long run.

The comment of Croft, Dean of Hereford before the English Civil Wars and Bishop of Hereford at the Restoration, that 'in my long experience ... the profits arising from leases for years was (sic) seven times greater than from leases for lives', shows, if at all representative, that the clergy understood this well enough.¹⁰ So did the king and his archbishop in the 1630s. They were determined to maximise potential or, in the words of William Laud, to be 'careful of the church's maintenance .. else the bees make honey for others'.¹¹ The cathedral statutes of 1544 and 1638 are explicit about leasing policy: for land, no leasing for lives but for terms of 21 years; for buildings, up to 50 or 60 years maximum (1544) or 30 years (1638).¹² A letter, moreover, from Laud to the dean and chapter of Winchester in September 1637 underlined the ban on lives.¹³ This was in line with general government policy on the subject.

Table 1 Comparison of Leasing for Lives (L) and Term (T)

<i>Neile</i>									
<i>1630</i>					<i>1631</i>				
L		T			L		T		
2		0			6		2		
<i>Curl</i>									
<i>1633</i>		<i>1634</i>		<i>1635</i>		<i>1636</i>		<i>1637</i>	
L	T	L	T	L	T	L	T	L	T
7	1	8	0	5	3	0	3	3	2
<i>Duppa</i>									
<i>11–12/1660</i>									
				L			T		
				17			10		
<i>Morley</i>									
<i>1673</i>		<i>1674</i>		<i>1675</i>		<i>1676</i>		<i>1677</i>	
L	T	L	T	L	T	L	T	L	T
8	9	4	6	5	9	5	4	2	5

Royal letters banning leases for lives had been addressed to ‘all the bishops in the kingdom’ in June 1634.¹⁴

During Neile’s tenure (1628–32), with only three complete years, the bishop’s office appears to have issued 29 leases, but the flow was erratic, with stops and starts and a spate of 17 in his last few months. While the last two complete years of his episcopate reflect, to some extent, this unevenness, they also show that he or his officials were issuing both types but with a balance towards leases for lives. This seems fairly typical for these four years. Neile issued leases mainly for ‘lives’, as Felicity Heal appears to imply; and not mainly for ‘terms’, as Andrew Foster has claimed.¹⁵

Under Curl (1632–47), the flow, though less erratic than under Neile, was inevitably variable. Examination of the middle years of the 1630s shows that in every year, with one exception, leases for lives outnumbered leases for terms. Clearly the royal sanction, coming in 1634, towards the beginning of this phase, had little, if any, effect at Winchester. Evidence of conversion of leases from lives to terms would show decisively the effectiveness of the royal order. There appears to be only one instance of this – in 1635 – and – astonishingly, in view of prevailing official policy – two conversions of terms to lives!¹⁶

Whether the royal letter applied in the Restoration is none too clear but, if there were regulations regarding bishops, they were often

Table 2 Cathedral Leasing

1631 – 1635				
<i>Property</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>21 Years</i>	<i>40 Years</i>	<i>Lives</i>
Manors	13	8	0	5
Rectories	14	11	0	3
Tenements	6	0	6	0
Miscellaneous	19	12	1	6

Number of Leases: where a manor or a rectory was leased more than once it has been counted separately – in each period.

Distinction between tenements and miscellaneous properties is sometimes arbitrary – in each period.

11/1660 – 12/1660				
<i>Property</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>21 Years</i>	<i>30 Years</i>	<i>Lives</i>
Manors	10	10	0	0
Rectories	14	14	0	0
Tenements	29	0	29	0
Miscellaneous	11	10	1	0

1671 – 1675				
<i>Property</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>21 Years</i>	<i>30 Years</i>	<i>Lives</i>
Manors	19	18	0	1
Rectories	14	14	0	0
Tenements	25	0	25	0
Miscellaneous	34	31	3	0

ignored under Duppa (1660–62) and Morley (1662–84). Far more of Duppa's leases were for lives than terms and, while under Morley term leases outnumbered lives in four of the five sample years, leases for lives continued to form a substantial proportion – over 40% – in the mid-1670s. Nor is there evidence of any switching from lives to terms at this time, but, again quite astonishingly, one change, involving a relation of Morley's, from term to lives.¹⁷ Matters seem to have continued in this way, to judge from the lease books, for the rest

of Morley's time, though by the mid-eighteenth century Bishops of Winchester stood guilty of a preponderance of leasing for lives.¹⁸ It would seem that this aspect of leasing policy was never fully 'lawful', nor was it, in the long term, sensible. Research elsewhere suggests these were common outcomes.¹⁹ One might even question whether there was any real policy at all in the seventeenth century. It seems that bishops in the main renewed leases on whatever basis they had previously been issued.

Leasing records of Winchester Cathedral

show that, while the rules were being observed in the majority of cases, significant numbers of properties were being let for lives by Dean John Young (1616–54) and his chapter in the early 1630s. Between 1631 and 1635 five out of 13 manors, for example, were leased for lives, one of which named two children aged 5 and 8 (though this youthfulness and the likely longevity of the lease may have been reflected in a larger fine!)²⁰ While there was apparently greater conformity with royal orders at St Paul's,²¹ at Chichester and Canterbury, as at Winchester, law and practice diverged and, on admittedly somewhat less certain evidence, 'years to lives' proportions were similar.²²

Although the regulations were, if anything, tightened by the archbishop's letter and the new statute in the late 1630s, an intervention by Charles I in March 1642 relaxed the ban.²³ Subsequent entries in the cathedral registers show little change over rectories and tenements, but, with manors, the dean and chapter appear to have fallen to temptation and six out of eight leases in the following months were based on lives.

Several historians have claimed that there was a repeat of the royal letter banning leasing for lives by cathedrals at the Restoration, but this would seem to be a misreading of the evidence.²⁴ Although Charles I cancelled his instructions, at least for Winchester on the eve of the Civil War, the new statute of 1638 would still have applied in the 1660s. Imminent expiry dates, deaths of original cathedral lessees, and feelings of insecurity among Commonwealth and Protectorate purchasers caused an inevitable rush of renewals and new leases at that time and, during this spate of leasing activity, the cathedral, under Dean Alexander Hyde (1660–65), closely observed its statutes. All the substantial properties – manors and rectories – were leased for 21 years, as were nearly all the other 'miscellaneous' – woods and farms – properties. Even larger numbers of tenements were leased, every one for 30 years, in accordance with the statute of 1638. This continued in the 1670s under Dean William Clarke (1666–79). Manors, rectories, and miscellaneous properties were leased for 21 years, tenements for 30 years. The one exception, the granting of the lease of Manydowne in November

1674, was made at the crown's specific intervention.²⁵ There is evidence at Wells and Canterbury of persistent leasing for lives but at Winchester – and at Lincoln and Norwich – the chapter appears to have conformed with its statutes and the crown's injunctions.²⁶

To clinch matters with the cathedral, all leases issued for lives between 1631 and 1645 became leases for terms in the 1660s and 1670s. The four rectories which had been leased for lives in the 1630s and 1640s were changed to terms at the Restoration and the seven manors likewise.²⁷

From this discussion of leasing practice so far it appears doubtful that there was much of an episcopal policy on leasing for terms or lives, other than to continue former practice, but that the cathedral, whatever its preferences, was more compliant towards royal thinking on the matter than were the bishops. The different relationship with their assets of the bishops, on the one hand, and the dean and chapter, on the other, may explain this. It could be argued that the former was an individual whose interests were short-term, especially if he was likely to move on, like Neile, and whose focus was on fines and therefore leases for lives; while cathedral clergy, responsible for an institution, were more 'corporate'. There may be some truth in this, but the bishop no less than the canons had responsibilities to the diocese and the canons no less than the bishop had personal short term interests in their dividends.

Change in the standing of the deans may be another explanation. Young, son of the executor of James I, was presumably in a favoured position and certainly had access to the royal presence, though, if he entertained Calvinist sentiments, his standing might have been damaged by the 1630s.²⁸ He may have been encouraged by Charles I's retreat over leasing in the 1640s. Hyde was a relation of Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor, though whether this made him more compliant or more favoured, thus enjoying more latitude, is difficult to say. Clarke appears to have had no such connexions and may have had no choice but to comply.

Another possibility is that clergy blessed with more foresight governed the cathedral after

the Restoration. Alternatively they may have learned lessons from the upheavals of the 1640s and 1650s and realised that church finance required a stronger basis.

Leasing for terms ought to have been good news for the cathedral. The implications for rents must remain for a later section, but at least they were in a potentially stronger position over rents than the bishop. Whether the change to terms, with or without rent increases, was received in such good spirit by potential lessees is more doubtful. This illustrates the dilemma faced by the church authorities. If they leased for lives, they pleased lessees and imposed larger fines, but lost in the long term. If they leased for terms, they stood to gain – in the long term – but raised less in fines and upset the landed classes. They were, classically, damned if they did, damned if they did not.

EARLY SURRENDER POLICIES

Early surrender of a lease and its renewal offered another opportunity for the bishop and the cathedral either to impose new terms – rents and fines – on former tenants before a lease had run its course or, if the tenant declined to renew, to find a new lessee. Identifying early surrenders can be problematic. Doubts, in particular, may linger around some bishop's leases which use the word 'surrender'.²⁹ It is possible that this signals an early surrender, but could just as easily mean that the lease had run its course either by completing its term or because all the lives had expired. In view of such doubts, these leases have not been counted as early surrenders. For leases regularly renewed for a specific term of years, usually 21 years, it is a relatively simple matter to measure whether the lease had run its full course or been cut short. Leases for lives are, again, more problematic as the fate of the lives is not always certain and identification can be difficult. If it is clear that at least one of the original lives was still living, the lease is considered here not to have run its full course.³⁰

For some of the bishop's term leases, early surrender is quite striking. Thus Thomas

Willis's lease of Overton was cut short by some 14 years in July 1631 and Francis Lucy's of a tenement in Southwark had 31 years remaining in September 1673. Other bishop's leases, in the 1630s at least, state of the lives that 'two are yet living' which, on the definition used here, has been read as early surrender.³¹ Many of the bishop's leases appear to have suffered early surrender. The samples typically show that there were some in every year. If there is a difference between the time of Curl and the time of Morley, this may be explained by the fact that there are fewer antecedents for the leases of the 1630s than for those of the 1670s. Hence establishing whether a lease had run its term of years or exhausted its lives becomes more difficult.³²

It was rare for a cathedral lease to run its course. Matters are not quite so certain for the 1630s, especially with the manors, since five from a sample of thirteen of these leases were for lives, which raises the usual problem of identification of particular 'lives' and establishing their fate.³³ We can be much more certain about early surrendering in the 1670s, since most of these leases were for terms and measuring them, as we have seen, a relatively easy business.

A pattern of leasing on the understanding of renewal fines at regular intervals during the existence of the lease obtained at some cathedrals, apparently as standard practice.³⁴ It would seem, from two or three entries in Young's *Diary*, that neither party to a Winchester Cathedral lease in the 1630s, at least, expected it to run its full course.³⁵ It is possible to envisage a policy of paying fines in instalments on 'deferred terms' in particular cases. Examination of renewals at Winchester – whether episcopal or cathedral leases – shows no system or pattern. If there was a convention that a lease, though taken for a specific term or number of lives, would be renewed at regular intervals before expiry or an understanding that the fine was to be paid in instalments, there appears to be nothing explicit in surviving documents.

Of early surrenders, whether at regular intervals or not, there can be no doubt. The critical question is whose initiative precipitated the early surrender. Heal implied that Bishops

Table 3 Early Surrenders of the Bishops

		<i>Neile</i>			
		<i>1630</i>		<i>1631</i>	
	Total Leases	2		8	
	Early Surrenders	2		7	
		<i>Curl</i>			
	<i>1633</i>	<i>1634</i>	<i>1635</i>	<i>1636</i>	<i>1637</i>
Total Leases	8	8	8	3	5
Early Surrenders	4	2	2	1	2
		<i>Duppa</i>			
		<i>11+12/1660</i>			
	Total Leases		27		
	Early Surrenders		12		
		<i>Morley</i>			
	<i>1673</i>	<i>1674</i>	<i>1675</i>	<i>1676</i>	<i>1677</i>
Total Leases	17	10	14	9	7
Early Surrender	14	8	11	4	6

Table 4 Early Surrenders of the Cathedral

	<i>1631/1635</i>	<i>1671/1675</i>
Manors		
Total Leases	13	19
Early Surrenders	12	17
Rectories		
Total Leases	14	14
Early Surrenders	14	14

Note: it is difficult to identify many tenements and miscellaneous properties over time in the cathedral registers and, in the interests of simplicity and accuracy, they have been left out of this discussion.

Table 5 Sample of Bishops Leasing Intervals

<i>Manors</i>	<i>Lengths 1631–42</i>		<i>Lengths 1660–75</i>	
Adderbury	3.7	0.3	0.0	
Crawley	0.0		4.3	
Downton	5.7		9.5	5.9
Hambledon	6.7		4.8	9.6
Overton	0.5		0.0	

Note: numbers before the point = years, numbers after the point = months
0.0 = no renewal in the period in question

Table 6 Sample of Cathedral Leasing Intervals

<i>Rectories</i>	<i>Lengths 1631–42</i>				<i>Lengths 1660–75</i>		
Barton Stacey	4.0	4.11			4.0	7.0	
Christchurch	5.0	4.5	0.7		5.1	3.11	4.0
Preston Candover	7.0				7.11		
<i>Manors</i>							
Chilbolton	7.0				1.0	14.0	
Sutton	7.0				7.0	4.0	4.0
Wonston	1.5	5.7	3.5	0.4	6.0		

Neile and Curl took the initiative by enforcing early surrenders and imposing more frequent fines on their tenants. There seems to be little hard evidence for this in surviving documents – no specific policy statements – and any such claims have to be inferred, from a study of the leases themselves.

A case can be made out, in a circumstantial way, for some episcopal and cathedral initiatives before and after the Interregnum. There would always be pressure – indeed, temptation – on both bishop and dean and chapter to seek opportunities for large fines, if not rent increases, which would probably only have benefited their successors. If, at renewal of the lease, there was much time left, or all three lives were still living, the lessee might have felt fairly secure. It could be seen as strange to ‘volunteer’

a fine and risk a rent rise when there was no need and renewal in those circumstances might be seen as coming from the Church.

The highest number of renewals for any of the bishops under consideration may have been five, by Morley, in 1674 – out of eight early surrenders (and ten leases issued altogether in that year). In three of the years in question there is no evidence of episcopal instigation; and lessee initiatives – because of time or lives expiring – outnumber bishops’ by six of the sample years to three. Under half the cathedral’s early surrenders may have been at the initiative of the cathedral in the five year period from 1631 to 1635; and, while by the 1670s the cathedral may have been responsible for surrender and renewal of more manorial leases, its part in early surrender of rectorial

Table 7 Episcopal Initiative in Re-Leasing

	<i>Neile</i>				
		1630		1631	
Early Surrender		2		7	
Bishop's Initiative		0		1	
Lessee's Initiative		2		3	
?		0		3	

	<i>Curl</i>				
	1633	1634	1635	1636	1637
Early Surrender	4	2	2	1	2
Bishop's Initiative	0	2	1	0	1
Lessee's Initiative	3	0	1	1	1
?	1	0	0	0	0

	<i>Morley</i>				
	1673	1674	1675	1676	1677
Early Surrenders	14	8	11	4	6
Bishop's Initiative	3	5	4	1	1
Lessee's Initiative	8	2	4	0	2
?	3	1	3	3	3

Table 8 Early Surrender Initiatives by the Cathedral

	1631/1635	1671/1675
Manors		
Early Surrenders	12	17
Cathedral Initiatives	5	11
Lessee's Initiative	5	2
?	2	4
Rectories		
Early Surrenders	14	14
Cathedral Initiatives	6	4
Lessee's	3	2
?	5	8

leases remained small, and overall numbers – 15 out of 31 – were still less than half the total for renewals at that time. Perspective needs to be remembered, as most are single figures and all are spread over five year periods.

Arguments for the ecclesiastical authorities exercising an early surrender policy even on these few occasions are none too convincing and such initiatives are far more likely to have come from the lessee in most cases. Neither the bishop nor the cathedral chapter was in a position, in truth, to force an early surrender policy unless there was a breach in the conditions of the lease. Contracts existed and the lessee was protected at law. Nor was it in the interests of the lessee to allow a lease to run its full course. If the term was close to expiry or the lives were running out, he would be the one to want to renew in order to ensure security. If he had lives or years in hand, he could, at one and the same time, demand a renewal and resist a rent rise (or any other unfavourable requirements), all the while dangling an early and tempting fine in front of the bishop or the dean. Alternatively he could live out the term.

It must seem very doubtful whether the church authorities in the diocese of Winchester exercised much of a policy of early surrender either before or after the Interregnum. If they did, the occasions were rare – probably fewer than the possibilities already outlined – and they ran the risk of antagonising the landed classes with their demands for extra fines. It seems much more likely that the church remained at the mercy of the gentry. When the latter were willing to pay renewal fines, while resisting rent rises, both bishop and dean reaped something from the harvest. Otherwise they had little choice but to allow estate income to stagnate.

DIRECT FARMING

Yet another way by which estates might have been exploited and income increased would have been for the bishop and the cathedral to reduce or abandon altogether leasing of their estates and for them to farm the lands directly themselves.

Leasing out properties meant the bishop (or, indeed, the cathedral) could dispense with the whole apparatus of management and the concomitant commitments. No more expense for repairs; no more bailiffs, stewards, and their stipends; and no more exposure to fluctuations in crop and stock yields, inevitable if only because of the weather. In their place came a regular yearly rent and, presumably, some large entry fines.

Fines were, on the other hand, occasional. If the bishop and the cathedral leased out land, they lost the regular copyhold rents and fines, profits from produce, and proceeds from the manorial courts. These went to the lessee who would not have leased if there had not been the prospect of profits from such sources after paying the fine and the annual rent!

It might be thought that bishops and canons would not have had the interest or experience for direct management of property. While it certainly was not their main *raison d'être*, resources were essential underpinning for their 'real tasks', as argued at the beginning of this article, and they could easily have employed the secular staff to do the day to day work and administration. Indeed, Mark Page has drawn attention to switches of episcopal policy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries – leasing out properties at one time, managing property directly at another – as circumstances changed.³⁶ If it could be done then, it is difficult to see why it could not be done in the seventeenth century.

There does not, in fact, seem to have been much change of policy either by the bishop or the cathedral. Comparison of cathedral compotus rolls of the 1630s and the 1670s shows a change of arrangements for one manor only and this was from a mixture of leasing and direct managing to wholly leasing.³⁷ Comparison of the episcopal pipe books of 1628–29 and 1678–79 shows, likewise, switchings of only three properties and these were all from direct farming to leasing.³⁸

Other surviving documents indicate how much larger could have been the income of the cathedral and the bishopric if they had directly managed all their properties. Instead of annual

rents and occasional fines they could have had annual profits running into thousands of pounds. The cathedral was apparently satisfied, for example, with rent of £58 a year, plus an occasional renewal fine of £450 from its rectory of Christchurch, when it could have had annual profits of £800.³⁹ The bishop did not disclose his fines, but appeared content with rent of £22 a year from his manor at Hambledon even though the parliamentary commissioners had considered the 'improved value of the premises over and above the rent reserved of £111-0-0'.⁴⁰ It was as if the episcopal and cathedral authorities were content with half a loaf while their lay neighbours wolfed the plentiful products of the bakery.

INCOMES

All these manoeuvres – leasing for terms instead of lives, early surrenders and renewals, direct farming instead of leasing – could have brought in more money. Incomes changed very little, however, and this helps to confirm the finding that these options were not tried at all or not tackled with sufficient thoroughness to make a difference.

Rents, except for a few rises, mainly by Neile⁴¹ and mainly in shillings, remained static. Leasing records can be traced for 11 bishops' manors leased out in the years immediately before and after the Interregnum. Ten show no change in rents.⁴² Information can, similarly, be traced in cathedral ledger books for 18 manors and 21 rectories and each of the 18 manors and 21 rectories bore the same rents at both times.⁴³ In both cases, astonishingly, rents from some of their properties do not seem to have changed since the Reformation! In 1632 the bishop's rent from a mill at Winchester was £4-6-8 – as in 1588, from another at Farnham £12-13-4 – as in 1558.⁴⁴ There are difficulties in comparing rents from cathedral manors but the matter is much easier – and the results most striking – with its rectories.⁴⁵ Eighteen have records common to the 1540s and the 1680s. In these the cathedral continued to draw the same rent from 15, while there was very little

movement – within five pounds – among the other three.

Overall figures for rental income from property inevitably reflect this stability. Certainly the figures in the pipe books, for the bishop, and in the compotus rolls, for the cathedral, remain ominously stable between the 1630s and the 1670s. The bishop received some £3,800 gross per annum and the cathedral some £1,700 gross per annum.⁴⁶ The cathedral may have switched from leasing for lives to leasing for terms – a course the bishop, it will be remembered, did not follow – but it does not seem to have turned this to advantage and to have charged more rent.

Fines present problems, particularly in the case of the bishop, and remain a mystery. They appear to have gone straight to him without recording of any kind. There are tantalising hints – 'a competent sume of lawfull money of England' – or, for the majority, smothering in such phraseology as 'for divers other good Causes and Considerations';⁴⁷ but a specific fine – £20 for fishing rights – is a rare occurrence in the lease books of the 1630s and the 1670s.⁴⁸ D.R. Hirschberg has suggested increasing estimates of bishops' income by one-third to take into account entry fines and £1,500 p.a. from this source for Winchester may not be far wide of the mark.⁴⁹

There is much better documentation for fines at the cathedral. Annual income from fines ranged from c. £800 to £1,350 p.a. in the 1630s and from c. £1,500 to £3,000 in the 1670s.⁵⁰ These figures seem to be in line with proceeds from fines at Canterbury and Durham Cathedrals in the Restoration.⁵¹

Cathedral fines, then, rose in the Restoration and we are not able to establish the amount or progress of the bishop's fines. If the bishop's fines remained static while the cathedral's rose, the cathedral's switch from 'life' to 'term' leasing, presenting more opportunities for collecting fines, may explain matters. Although early surrenders were practised by the cathedral, both before and after the Interregnum, only erratic intervals emerge, as we have seen, and there is no evidence of more frequent renewals in the 1660s and 1670s than

in the 1630s. The increase in money from fines may have come, alternatively, from larger fines rather than more frequent fines.

To return to episcopal fines, it is quite possible that they rose similarly. Indeed, it would be surprising if they did not in view of the increases exacted by the bishop's cathedral neighbour. It was also probably for the same reason – larger rather than more frequent fines – and the earlier suggestion of £1,500 p.a. in fines for the bishop after the Restoration may be too conservative an estimate.

There remains the question of how much of this increased revenue, all from fines rather than from rents, was 'public' income – available for the commitments of the diocese and the cathedral – or 'private' income – for the personal use of bishop, dean, and canons. The 'public' income of the cathedral rose, as we have seen, between the 1630s and the 1670s, and so did the 'private' dividends of its clergy.⁵² The bishop's 'public' income remained static over the same period, while his 'private' income (fines) may have risen. This may seem a comparison unfavourable to the bishop but, in his case, the distinction between 'public' and 'private' incomes may be misleading. It is not clear, for example, whether the source of the money for Morley's largesse, including the new palace at Chelsea, came from 'public' income, from his 'private' fines, or from both.

At the same time, these fines, both episcopal and cathedral, appear to have been abated below market levels – thousands of pounds below at the Restoration. Duppa was quick to publicise abatements from fines of £30,000 – if not his takings! – while cathedral revenue from fines of £64,483 was apparently cut by abatements of £24,666 in the 1660s.⁵³

It should be said that neither static rental income,⁵⁴ nor abatement of fines,⁵⁵ was unique to Winchester. As there appears to have been enough money for ordinary commitments, some may think it not worthy of comment. On the other hand, the need for more money, if only because of inflation, let alone any obligation they might have felt towards wider spending, such as augmentation of clergy stipends, ought to have exerted pressure. In the case of the cathedral,

unlike the bishop, there were statutes. These did not freeze rents.⁵⁶ Though stipends were prescribed in the statutes,⁵⁷ this did not prevent the cathedral authorities from raising them above statutory minimums⁵⁸ – which implies they could have done the same with rents. If, as it appears, there was widespread mid-century disruption of tenancies, with consequential costs to lessees, perhaps the church, through its abatements, was acting circumspectly to avoid trouble from the gentry. Alternatively at the Interregnum both bishop and canons, lulled by a bonanza of fines, felt able to show some generosity at a sensitive time.

Fines, then, rose at the cathedral and the bishop probably enjoyed a similar rise, in spite of abatements, while rents for both bodies remained stubbornly frozen. It is difficult to say which course, if either, represents 'intelligent' estate control. Static rents weakened the church and its ability to fulfil its functions but pleased the landed classes. Rising fines countered static rental income but ran the risk of upsetting the powerful landed interest. It seems hard to avoid the earlier conclusions that, yet again, the bishops and the cathedral were caught in a dilemma.

CONCLUSION

It is necessary, in light of all these developments, to attempt answers to the questions posed in the introduction to this article. First, leasing for lives or terms. The bishops proved impervious to royal demands – if there were any by the 1660s – and, in the main, if the former lease was for lives, so it remained, if for terms, likewise. The cathedral emerges as the more compliant body and there were hardly any leases for lives after 1660.

Secondly, early surrenders. These may have been practised by both bodies but so small are the numbers that doubts must be raised about the existence of a policy at all. Thirdly, an alternative policy. There does not appear to have been any significant shift from leasing to direct management of estates in the timescale under review. Fourthly, income. The bishop probably and the cathedral certainly raised more from

finances in the Restoration, though much appears to have been diverted into private incomes, while rents remained in the deep freeze. It is therefore questionable, at the least, whether there was much that remains 'intelligent' about the management of ecclesiastical estates in the seventeenth century.⁵⁹

At the same time the church faced pressures for reform – inflationary pressures and pressure for augmentation of lower clergy stipends. The three possible approaches considered in this article – leasing for terms rather than lives, imposing early surrender on lessees, and switching from leasing to direct farming would have brought in more money but none was pursued with vigour or really tried at all. The exception is the cathedral over leasing for terms but it did not take advantage of this to raise rents. The only other aspect pursued with any vigour was the increase in fines and much of this was reduced by abatements or disappeared into private coffers. A certain amount of self-interest – greed – and considerable amount of lethargy seem to have been the characteristics of ecclesiastical estate management.

A very likely reason for the neglect lay in the power of the landed classes. They dominated the clientele of both the bishop and the cathedral. Gentry, together with knights and peers, formed two-thirds of the bishop's lessees in both the 1630s and the 1670s; and proportions in these classes approached three-quarters at both times for the cathedral's manors and rectories.⁶⁰ Such people, moreover, were the bulk – three-quarters in the 1630s and over 90% in the 1670s – of parochial patrons in

the diocese of Winchester in the seventeenth century.⁶¹ It should be said, on the other hand, that the rents even of widows and tradesmen remained as static as those of nobles and gentry and it may be that the blame lay as much in generally lethargic management as in fear of the overmighty.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bodl – Bodleian Library Oxford
 BL – British Library London
 CAB1 etc – Chapter Act Book 1 etc.
 CSPD – Calendar of State Papers Domestic
 DNB – Dictionary of National Biography
 HRO – Hampshire Record Office
 LPL – Lambeth Palace Library
 NA – National Archives
 PCC – Prerogative Court of Canterbury
 WC – Winchester Cathedral

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Winchester Cathedral
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 Chapter Act Book 2 etc
 Computus Rolls T4/1/5
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ENDNOTES

- 1 HRO 11M59/B1/1 etc.; 11M59/E2/15564/2/3/4; WC L7/R12; L9/R13 2nd; L10/R15+R16; L12/R18; T4/1/5. See also Mayberry, *Estate Records*, 4; Page, *Pipe Roll 1301/2*, ix; Page, *Pipe Roll 1409/10*, xii.
- 2 Burn, *Sale of Manors and Church Lands ...*; see Shaw, *English Church*, vol. 2, 558, 559, 566–67; also NA SP 28/289.
- 3 Shaw, *English Church*, vol.2, 514, 566.
- 4 Houston, *Catalogue*, 88; Shaw, *English Church*, vol. 2, 496, 522, 550, 565, 569; O'Day & Hughes, *Augmentations and Amalgamations*.
- 5 See Thomson, *Diocese of Winchester*, 231–36
- 6 WC T4/3/7/3; *CSPD 1660–61*, 183. 53 out of 77 parishes in the 1650s & 85 out of 114 early in the 18th century were below £100 (Thomson, *Diocese of Winchester*, 231–36).
- 7 2 & 3 Anne, c. 20. For excellent summaries, see Overton, *Life in the English Church*, 304; Pruett, *Parish Clergy*, 97–98.
- 8 Hembry, *Bishops of Bath and Wells*; Clay, *Greed of Whig Bishops?*; Atherton, *Dean & Chapter 1541–1660*; Meadows, *Dean & Chapter Restored 1660–1836*; Atherton & Holderness, *Dean & Chapter Estates*; Bowker, *Historical Survey, 1450–1750*; Collinson, *Protestant Cathedral, 1541–1660*; Gregory, *Canterbury & the Ancient Regime*; Gregory, *Restoration*; Tomlinson, *Restoration to Reform*; Lehmberg, *Cathedrals under Siege*; Sherwin Bailey, *Wells Chapter Act Book*; Peckham, *Acts ... of Chichester*; Heal, *Archbishop Laud*.
- 9 Heal, *Archbishop Laud*, 149.
- 10 Croft was Dean (1644–62) and Bishop (1662–91) of Hereford (LeNeve, *Fasti*, vol. 1, 472, 478); quoted by Tomlinson, *Restoration to Reform*, 110.
- 11 Heal, *Archbishop Laud*, 149.
- 12 Section 6 of both statutes, Kitchin & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, for 1544; Stephens & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral* or Goodman & Hutton, *Statutes Governing ... Winchester*, both for 1638.
- 13 See Stephens & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, 19.
- 14 *CSPD, 1634–35*, 88, which notes 'all the bishops in the kingdom had the like'.
- 15 Heal, *Archbishop Laud*, 145. Foster, *Function of a Bishop*, 48 & Foster, *Archbishop Richard Neile*, 93, 262, need qualifying.
- 16 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2: lives to term, 178 (1635) &, outside the sample, 210 (1638); term to lives, 76, 147; although before the royal order (1634), disapproval was already clear.

- 17 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/3, 82 – to Francis Morley.
- 18 Clay, Greed of Whig Bishops? 143.
- 19 There was little leasing for lives at Canterbury 1660–61 (Gregory, *Restoration*, 112) and flat denial of the practice at Gloucester in the 1660s (Bodl MS Add. c. 302, fo.85r); but for Durham see Tanner 92, fo.11.
- 20 WC L7/R12, fo.98r.
- 21 Keene, *St Paul's*, 309.
- 22 I calculate, from Peckham, *Acts of Chichester*, for 1631 to 1635, 20 leases for 21 years, 19 for 40 years, and 16 for lives.
- 23 WC CAB2, fo.73v & *CSPD*, 1641–43, 298.
- 24 Meadows, Dean & Chapter, 196; Tomlinson, *Restoration to Reform*, 110; Gregory, *Restoration*, 112; Gregory, *Canterbury & the Ancien Regime*, 243.
- 25 WC CAB3, 282; L12/R18, fo.52v.
- 26 Sherwin Bailey, *Wells Chapter Act Book*, e.g. 30, 34, 41, 42; Bodl MS Tanner 123, fos.36?, 65; but see Gregory, *Restoration*, 113; Gregory, *Canterbury & the Ancien Regime*, 243; Bowker, *Historical Survey*, 198; Atherton & Holderness, *Dean & Chapter Estates*, 669.
- 27 Alton, Benstead, Bulkington, Quidhampton (WC L7/R11, fo.57v; L7/R12 fos.82r, 89v, 151r; L10/R15, 162, 172, 234; L12/R18, fo.2v); Exton, Hannington, Littleton, Longstreete, Silkstead old, Silkstead new, Wonston (L7/12, fos. 87v, 150r, 158r, 158v, 156r, 157r, 149r; L10/R15, 132, 256, 59, 61, 155; L10/R16 fos.61v, 69r).
- 28 See *DNB/Young* and also Goodman, *Diary of John Young*, 3, for tutoring; for royal contact (*ibid.*, 133); for Calvinism, ambivalent references (*ibid.*, 84, 107, 108).
- 29 E.g. HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 135 (Curl); 11M59/E2/15564/3, 2+ (Duppa) & 68 (Morley).
- 30 E.g. HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 109 (Neile), 141 (Curl) & 15564/4, 92 (Morley); WC L7/R12 fo.87v, L12/R18 fo.52v (cathedral).
- 31 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 75/76; 15564/3, 452; 15564/2, 104, 199.
- 32 E.g. HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 140. Bishops Lease Books begin in 1619 and only get into their stride in the 1630s. Marginal notes to Morley's leases facilitate establishing their histories.
- 33 Identification, e.g. the William Blakes in the Exton leases (WC L7/R12, fo.61r & fo.87v); fate of 'lives', as well as too many Williams and Gilberts, e.g. Manydowne (L7/R12, fos.45r, 101r; L12/R18, fo.52v).
- 34 E.g. Keene, *St Paul's*, 310.
- 35 Instances of mismatch between the length of a lease and the period covered, e.g. WC L7/R12, fos.109r, 137v; Goodman, *Diary of John Young*, 121.
- 36 Page, *Pipe Roll 1301–02*, xiv; Page, *Pipe Roll 1409–10*, xvi.
- 37 Oxenbridge Manor.
- 38 Brightwell, Meon, and Waltham, HRO 11M59/B1/315, B1/323.
- 39 WC Commonwealth Survey W52/82, fo.85; Goodman, *Diary of John Young*, 121.
- 40 HRO 11M59/E2/155646. It is clear that the bishop had been selling himself short.
- 41 There are rent rises in HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2: by Neile, 104 (8 shillings), 105 (5 shillings), 111 (3 shillings and 4 pence), 130 (£1–16–8); by Curl, 208 (£2–0–0).
- 42 The exception was Downton where there was a cut of c. £50! HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 188 & 15564/3, 262.
- 43 WC L7/R12, L9/R13 2nd, L10/R15 & 16, L12/R18.
- 44 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2, 109 (Winchester); 38, 116 (Farnham).
- 45 Comparisons of cathedral rents in the 1540s and 1680s are based on Kitchin & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, 9, 83, 183. These documents and all compotus rolls are bedevilled by arrears (some paid, some not); see also Keene, *St Paul's*, 311.
- 46 Pipe books, HRO 11M59/B1/315 & B1/323 (bishop); Kitchin & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, 83, 183 & WC, compotus rolls T4/1/5 (cathedral). For incomes, see Thomson, *Diocese of Winchester*, 213–230.
- 47 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/2/3/4, *passim*.
- 48 HRO 11M59/E2/15564/4, 117.
- 49 Hirschberg, *Episcopal Income*, 217.
- 50 WC W56–2/6 (1630s) & WC T4/3/3.
- 51 Bodl MSS Tanner 217, fo.151 (Canterbury); Tanner 92, fo.6? (Durham).
- 52 Annual average dividends were £66 (1630s) and £108 (1670s) – BL Add MS 20058; WC W56–2/6; WC T 4/3/3; WC T4-3/7/4. Before the Wars, Canterbury may have been higher (Collinson, *Protestant Cathedral*, 81); otherwise lower: Chichester (Foster, *Dean and Chapter*, 89); Hereford (Lehmberg & Aylmer, *Reformation to Restoration*, 104); York (Cross, *From Reformation to Restoration*, 229). After the Wars, Hereford (Tomlinson, *Restoration*

- to Reform, 119); Lincoln (Bowker, *Historical Survey*, 200); Wells (Sherwin Bailey, *Wells Chapter Act Book*, xxiv); York (Owen, *From the Reformation to 1822*, 246); but St Paul's higher (Keene, *St Paul's*, 311).
- 53 Bodl MSS Tanner 141, fo.101 (bishop); Tanner 140, fo.123 (cathedral).
- 54 Bishops' incomes, see Gregory, *Restoration*, 113 (Canterbury); Hembry, *Bishops of Bath and Wells*, 134, 243 (Wells); Cathedrals' income, e.g. Atherton & Holderness, *Dean and Chapter Estates*, 668 (Norwich); Bowker, *Historical Survey*, 187 (Lincoln); Gregory, *Restoration*, 113 (Canterbury); Gregory, *Canterbury & the Ancien Regime*, 244 (Canterbury); Keene, *St Paul's*, 309, 310 (St Paul's); Lehmborg & Aylmer, *Reformation to Restoration*, 105 (Hereford).
- 55 Abatements in other dioceses: Bodl MSS Tanner 141, fo.101 (Canterbury), Tanner 92, fo.4 (Durham), Tanner 130, fo.66 (Lincoln), Hembry, *Bishops of Bath and Wells*, 250 (Wells); Gregory, *Restoration*, 111 (Canterbury); for cathedrals, Tanner 123, fo.57 (Canterbury); Tanner 144, fo.9 (Carlisle); Atherton & Holderness, *Dean & Chapter estates*, 674, 676 (Norwich); Gregory, *Restoration*, 111 (Canterbury); Gregory, *Canterbury & the Ancien Regime*, 214 (Canterbury). Clay, *Greed of Whig Bishops?* (*passim*) argues that the Church did not gain anything like market value from its land and that attempts to do so floundered.
- 56 Section 6, Kitchin & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, for 1544; Stephens & Madge, *Winchester Cathedral*, for 1638.
- 57 Section 15 (1544), 16 (1638), *ibid.*
- 58 WC W/39A/2 (1625); T43 /7/4.
- 59 Heal, *Archbishop Laud*, 149, but her evidence is slender.
- 60 Bishop's lessees in the 1630s included a privy councillor, a Lord Chamberlain & Warden of the Stannaries, and in the 1670s Lord Cornbury (a Hyde).
- 61 See Thomson, *Diocese of Winchester*, 65, footnote 48.