

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN KENT, 1480-1660

ment of the poor. In 1628 this endowment had been increased to £250 by other gifts, the principal of which was a bequest of £30 made by Sir Richard Smith, and the income was employed to provide facilities, tools, and materials for the manufacture of various fabrics.¹

A very large charitable estate was created in 1636 under the will of Sir John Hayward of Rochester, whose fortune stemmed from the mercantile prowess of his father and his father-in-law in London. Hayward left to two trustees the rich manor of Minster in the Isle of Sheppey and other lands, which together possessed a capital worth of upwards of £1,000 in the year of the bequest. His feoffees, with the advice of named persons, were to use this great endowment for the erection of workhouses and furnishing the poor with remunerative work in such places as might be decided on, provided only that St. Nicholas' parish, Rochester, be one. In 1651 the trustees vested a major portion of the property, then yielding £50 p.a., for the erection and maintenance of such a workhouse to serve the needs of the poor in Rochester, while at a much later date a similar establishment was provided at Crediton (Devon) by the then trustees, harassed as they were by the litigation arising from the imprecise instructions of Hayward's will.²

C. Municipal betterments.

The benefactors of Kent gave approximately as much for various undertakings designed to bring physical improvements to their communities as they had given for experimentation in social rehabilitation. In all, £11,558 15s., or 4.59 per cent. of the whole, was provided for the several heads included under this somewhat amorphous category. As compared with several other rich and socially mature counties, this

¹ *PP* 1837, XXIII, 409; *Hasted, Kent*, VI, 378, 403, VII, 537. This well-founded charity was flourishing in Hasted's day, employment at that time (ca. 1790) being given to about sixty poor persons in the bleaching of Irish linen.

² *PCC* 69 Pile 1636; *PP* 1819, X-A, 133; *PP* 1820, V, 81, 226; *PP* 1824, XIII, 57; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 388, 474; *PP* 1837-38, XXV, 423; *Hasted, Kent*, VI, 220-221. Hayward's father, a London clothworker, was Sir Rowland Hayward, Lord Mayor of London in 1571 and again in 1591 (*vide* Jordan, *Charities of London*, 231, 392, 395). Sir John made a rich marriage with Catherine, a daughter of Customer Smith, and settled near Rochester. He purchased the manor of Minster, with the site of the monastery, from Sir Michael Livesey in 1623.

This charitable estate increased enormously in value. When it was sold and the funds re-invested in the early nineteenth century, the total worth was £10,300 12s. 6d., of which Rochester received one-half. The workhouse at Crediton, established in 1805, was to care for twenty-four persons and to provide education for the children, training in trades, and apprenticeship stipends. Surplus income accruing to the Rochester branch of the charity had in 1718 been assigned towards the support of three charity schools for Rochester, Strood, and Frindsbury.

It should be noted, as well, that before his death Sir John had given an annual rental of £20 for the support of a school at Bridgnorth, Shropshire, previously founded by his father.

THE STRUCTURE OF ASPIRATIONS

represents a remarkably slight interest in municipal betterments,¹ particularly when, as we shall observe, these gifts were so heavily concentrated on the improvement of communications. The small sum of £235 was provided for public parks and recreation, and of this amount the largest benefaction has perhaps been somewhat dubiously assigned to this charitable head.² A total of £938 10s. was likewise given to various merchant and tradesman companies, the income of which was designated for the general charitable benefit of a number of communities. In every decade at least a nominal amount was given for a great variety of civic purposes, with the bulk of these bequests concentrated in the period 1591-1660. We should discuss at least briefly a few of these gifts in order to indicate the breadth of interest in benefactions of this type.

In total, £2,448 10s., or not quite 1 per cent. of Kentish charities, was given for various civic purposes. One of the earliest of these trusts was established at Eltham in 1492 by royal grants of scattered lands in the parish with an estimated capital worth of £300, the income to be employed for the relief of the parish from the weight of taxation, the care of the poor, and other civic needs.³

Two generations later a merchant and bailiff of Lydd left a considerable estate for various charitable uses in his native town. Thomas Hart, who wished to be buried in his parish church "in the place before the upper seat where the bailiff sitteth", provided in his will, proved in 1557, that accurate measures of one gallon, one pottle, one quart, and one pint be made in brass by the "stander of the Tower" and continually kept by the Bailiff of Lydd for his official use. He likewise bequeathed an estate of sixty-eight acres, then valued at about £600, the income of which should be distributed in equal portions for the uses of the chamber of the town, for the repair of the parish church, and for the maintenance of the poor of the community.⁴ Some years later, in 1574, Alexander Dence of Cranbrook, some of whose charities have already been mentioned, left one hundred marks for the better

¹ The proportion of total charitable wealth given for these uses in the several counties is as follows :

| | % | | % |
|-----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Bristol | 9·10 | London | 4·95 |
| Buckinghamshire | 8·80 | Norfolk | 10·58 |
| Hampshire | 10·92 | Somerset | 0·78 |
| Kent | 4·59 | Worcestershire | 5·44 |
| Lancashire | 1·22 | Yorkshire | 2·51 |

² *Vide ante*, 27.

³ *PP* 1837, XXIII, 455 ; *Hasted, Kent*, I, 483 ; *Kentish Note Book*, II (1892), 359. It may be noted that in 1674 a commission for charitable uses decreed that the property, then yielding £56 9s. p.a., was thenceforward to be employed for the relief of the poor.

⁴ *K.A.O.* : CCC 26/155, 1557 ; *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, IV (1922), 71 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 483.

paving of the market place in that town, £100 in lands to provide a community Christmas dinner in the inns and taverns of the community for householders, meaning "not the poor nor the ritche", and created a fund of £230 for the maintenance of roads in the vicinity of his town, which had benefited so greatly from the interesting and lively group of charities he left.¹ And, finally, we should mention the bequest of Edward Barnes of Greenwich, who in 1641 left "unto the parliament of England now assembled at Westm' the summe of *Lli.* to be employed and disposed for the good of the state". There can be little doubt regarding the political sentiments of this testator.²

Helpful and heartening as the gifts made for the general needs of numerous Kentish communities may have been, the interest of most donors was throughout our period concentrated in this regard on the betterment of transport. The principal lines of communication to the Continent ran across the county, while Kent itself was an important agricultural and industrial community with a geographical situation which imposed serious needs for bridges, the maintenance of havens, and the protection of low-lying areas against tidal floods. In all, the considerable total of £7,936 15s., amounting to 3·15 per cent. of all Kentish charitable funds, was disposed in the course of our period for uses of this general kind. One of the most notable of these improvements, the building of the great bridge at Rochester, in point of fact had been completed in the late fourteenth century, while pious benefactors had provided in the course of the next generation a substantial endowment for its maintenance. But the bridge was in poor condition towards the close of the fifteenth century, when in 1489 Archbishop Warham appealed for gifts to carry forward repairs and to augment the endowment under promise of remission of sins. It is impossible to separate the later from the earlier benefactions with any comfortable certainty, but we have estimated with all too little supporting evidence that something like £2,000 of outright gifts and endowments were supplied at this time.³

We possess much more accurate information concerning a charitable trust created sometime prior to 1520, very possibly in 1511, for the maintenance of a stone bridge in the centre of Edenbridge. Scattered parcels of land with a total capital worth of about £100 were provided for the perpetual care of the structure. The trustees were local freeholders, who each year paid over the income to bridge wardens charged

¹ *Vide ante*, 39, and *post*, 81.

² Thorpe, *Custumale*, 57. But there is doubt concerning his identity. He was very possibly the Edward Barnes (or Baron) who in 1607 augmented his father's gift of £100 to the Mercers' Company for loans to young men of the company with a gift of £33 6s. 8d. (*PP* 1822, IX, 298).

³ Becker, M. J., *Rochester Bridge* (L., 1930), *passim*; Smith, *Rochester*, 398-423; Harris, *Kent*, ii, 255-262.

with keeping the fabric in good repair. In 1594 the charity was re-constituted and new feoffees appointed, at which time the endowment was yielding approximately £4 p.a.¹

A London merchant, James Wilford, who had purchased two manors in Cranbrook, stated in his will, proved in 1526, that he had built at his own charge a highway between Riverhill (Kent) and Northiam (Sussex) during his lifetime at a cost which cannot be estimated. By the terms of his will, which required certain distributions to be made by the Merchant Taylors' Company, to which he had given £433 6s. 8d. in 1514, Wilford revoked a chantry bequest of £7 p.a. and ordered this amount to be made available for the maintenance of his highway upon the request of any one of the three towns through which it ran, and with the further provision that income unexpended for this purpose in any one year should be laid out on other roads of the neighbourhood. Wilford's son, John, either carrying out his father's wishes or sharing his passion for road-building, excited the admiration of Lambarde for the great causeway which he built about 1530 just outside Tonbridge on the London road.²

The largest single benefaction for municipal betterments was made in 1533 for the benefit of Faversham by a rich merchant adventurer and jurat of that town, Henry Hatch. Hatch, in a particularly—indeed, a magnificently—complicated will, left extensive estates in Sussex and Kent to the mayor and jurats on trust after the death of his wife, subject to the securing of a licence in mortmain by the trustees, stipulating an extraordinary dispersal of the assets in the event the licence was not forthcoming. However, the licence was obtained by the town at a charge of £200. The properties evidently possessed a capital value of about £2,400 7s. at the time of Hatch's death. The will specified that one jurat and one commoner should be named by the mayor and jurats as receivers of the income and that an annual public report on outlays should be rendered before the city government and "four of the most honest and discreet commoners" of the town. During the first five years following the death of his widow, the testator instructed that the income should be distributed £1 p.a. to the feoffees, £40 p.a. for the repair of a lane and the road leading to the quay of

¹ *Arch. Cant.*, XXXI (1915), 202; *PP* 1908, LXXVIII, Kent, 67-68.

² PCC 13 Porch 1526; *Arch. Cant.*, XLVIII (1936), 29-37; *PP* 1826-27, X, 430; Hasted, *Kent*, V, 201; Beaven, *Aldermen of London*, II, 20; Furley, *Weald of Kent*, II, ii, 491; Lambarde, *Perambulation*, 383. Wilford's wife was a native of this region in which her husband, a rich merchant tailor, made his manorial purchase. Wilford was at various times master of his company, auditor, and Sheriff of London. The son, John, was in his turn an alderman of London and in 1544-1545 sheriff. Another son, Nicholas, represented the City in Parliament in 1542-1544.

This stretch of highway was part of the main road from London to Rye. The causeway built by John Wilford formed part of the highway.

Faversham, £10 p.a. to the repair and maintenance of the common wells of the town, and 15s. p.a. to a monastery in Canterbury. During the following nine years the whole of the income was to be applied to the betterment and maintenance of the inlet (the Creek) extending for about three miles from the Swale to Faversham haven. Then in the next interval of six years the income was to be used for the repair, ornamentation, and betterment of the parish church, including the purchase of a new organ at a cost of £26 13s. 4d. and a new hearse-cloth for £15, and the residue for the building of a new jewel house for the church. After the first period of twenty years, the whole of the income was to be used for the maintenance of roads in and near Faversham, the care of the haven and inlet, and the refurbishing of the ornaments of Faversham church.

This delightfully complicated will, creating as it did a charitable trust which could not become effective until the death of a widow who remarried and survived Hatch for more than forty years, was of course an invitation to the bitter litigation which in the Tudor period could be a form of private warfare. The first round at law lay between the widow and Hatch's heirs. The widow, now Lady Arncott, then attempted to set aside the will by unscrupulous methods, including the dangerous attempt to enroll a forged will. The town, having spent £200 already to obtain the licence in mortmain, gave battle manfully and bore further legal costs of upwards of £300, raised in part by direct taxation, until the doughty widow was at last defeated in Chancery. But Lady Arncott took her revenge by living, as Tudor widows often did, an unconscionable length of time, and it was 1574 before the estate came into the hands of the town and could be applied for the charitable uses for which it was intended. A portion of the property was sold for £400 to repay the legal costs that had been incurred, while the income on the remainder had been reduced over the preceding generation, with the result that the revenues available at the institution of the charity were only £66 13s. 4d. p.a. It is pleasant to note, however, that the properties, particularly a large holding of 313 acres in Sussex, were valuable and that under good and steady management by the feoffees the income was rapidly restored, having risen to £250 p.a. in 1774 and to a gross total of £694 13s. 10d. in 1863.¹

The remainder of the substantial benefactions for the betterment of communications within the county must be much more briefly treated. Thus in 1567 a member of the gentry, John Tufton of Hothfield, left, in addition to an outright bequest of £30 to the poor and £3 8s. for sermons, the sum of £200 to be expended on the "amendmente of ffoule

¹ K.A.O. : CCC 15/212, 1533 ; Jacob, *Faversham*, 131-134 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VI, 358, 363 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 203 ; *PP* 1867-68, LII, i, Kent, 34-35 ; *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, III (1919), 45-46.

ways" in Kent and Sussex.¹ A full generation later, John Rose, a mayor and merchant of Canterbury, who had some years earlier created by gift a substantial workhouse trust for his city, left a considerable sum for the deepening of the Stour in order to give the city direct access to the sea. His will, proved in 1592, recited that the donor had long had in mind an attempt to make the river navigable, but "it had pleased God to lay his loving and favourable visitation of sickness" on him, with the result that God would probably "call him to his mercy before he should see the performing thereof". Rose accordingly left £300 to the mayor and commonalty of Canterbury on condition that it be spent within six years to make the Stour navigable for vessels of at least ten tons burthen.² George Abbot, one of the most generously charitable of all the archbishops of Canterbury, built a useful and much-needed conduit of stone for the city at an estimated cost of £400 during the late years of his life.³ At about the same time Sir John Fowle of Sandhurst left the residue of his estate, with a capital value of at least £80, the income of which he wished to be employed for the repairing of such roads in Sandhurst as might be decided upon by the trustees and surveyors.⁴

As we have observed, the total provided for the various kinds of municipal improvement, communications aside, was surprisingly slight in a county which dealt so richly and generously with all other charitable uses. This may well be explained by the fact that the interests of donors in the county were so persistently fastened upon other charitable needs and by the fact that Kent was, in terms of its internal development, even at the outset of our period one of the most mature and advanced of the counties of the realm. None the less, as we have seen, large and enduring public works had been undertaken

¹ PCC 32 Stonard 1567; Cokayne, G. E., ed., *Complete Baronetage* (Exeter, 1900-1906, 5 vols.), I, 70; Hasted, *Kent*, VII, 517. Tufton, originally of Northiam, Sussex, had been granted the manor of Hothfield late in the reign of Henry VIII. He married Mary, daughter of Sir John Baker, Recorder of London. He was Sheriff of Kent in 1562. His son, Thomas, was created a baronet.

² K.A.O.: CCC 37/22, 1591; Hasted, *Kent*, XI, 139; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 282; *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, V (1925), 331. In 1575 Rose, then mayor, had vested in trustees 15 acres of land and his own house at Wickhambreaux, with a total capital worth of about £140, the income to provide a stock of hemp and wool on which the indigent of the city might be gainfully employed. This endowment was ultimately lost, or more probably consumed.

An attempt to deepen the Stour was authorized by an act of Parliament in 6 *Henry VIII*, but failed, as did Rose's venture. A more ambitious effort to open the river to boats of twelve tons burthen undertaken in the Jacobean period was likewise unsuccessful, as was another made in 1638.

³ PCC 85 Russell 1633; *DNB*. Abbot's great endowment of an almshouse in Guildford and his other charities are not included in this survey of Kentish benefactions, since they brought no benefit to the county and since the lands constituting the endowments lay outside the county.

⁴ *PP* 1837, XXIII, 592-593. Fowle's trust also provided an annuity of £1 10s. for poor relief and £2 10s. for the apprenticing of poor children.

as the result of the generosity of many benefactors, with the result that Kent was a better county in which to live and work as the aspirations of these donors were realized.

D. Education.

The benefactors of Kent were through the entire course of our period deeply interested in expanding and strengthening the educational resources with which the county was provided at the close of the Middle Ages. In all, the great total of £58,255 16s. was given for the various educational uses between 1480 and 1660, amounting to almost a quarter (23·14 per cent.) of the whole of the charitable funds of the county.¹ This proportion was only slightly less than that given for the numerous religious needs of Kent (26·77 per cent.), but was of course dwarfed by the outpouring for the several forms of poor relief. Even during the decades prior to the Reformation substantial sums were provided for the educational needs of the shire, the total of £13,286 10s. given in this interval substantially exceeding the whole amount given for poor relief and amounting to about 18 per cent. of all benefactions made during these decades. This proportion rose slightly in the troubled Reformation era and then very sharply indeed during the Elizabethan age, when somewhat more than a fourth (25·38 per cent.) of all benefactions was designated for educational purposes. The great outpouring occurred in the early Stuart period, when £25,170 7s. was provided for the various educational needs, an amount accounting for 26·79 per cent. of all charities in the interval. It will be observed, too, that during this one generation substantially more than 40 per cent. (43·21 per cent.) of the entire sum vested in education during our whole period was given by some scores of donors. Gifts for all purposes fell away steeply indeed during the period of political revolution, though it may be noted that the £6,111 10s. given for education in these decades represents somewhat more than 23 per cent. of the whole of the charitable funds then provided.

By far the largest proportion of the benefactions made to education was given for the founding of grammar schools or for the augmentation of the endowments of existing schools. The very large total of £28,308 18s. was provided for these purposes, representing 11·24 per cent. of

¹ Kent devoted approximately the same proportion of its charitable resources to educational needs as did most English counties, with the notable exception of Lancashire and Yorkshire. The proportions are as follows for the several counties :

| | % | | % |
|-----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Bristol | 21·33 | London | 27·04 |
| Buckinghamshire | 21·26 | Norfolk | 23·00 |
| Hampshire | 24·84 | Somerset | 25·88 |
| Kent | 23·14 | Worcestershire | 26·77 |
| Lancashire | 41·79 | Yorkshire | 31·12 |