

ON THE PARISH CLERKS AND SEXTON OF
FAVERSHAM, A.D. 1506—1593.

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ABBREVIATED copies of Documents Nos. 1 and 2 are contained in Jacob's *History of Faversham* (1774). The date was misprinted by him as 22 Henry VIII., instead of 22 Henry VII.

Complete copies, which have been carefully compared with the original entries in the Wardmote Book of the Corporation of Faversham, are now given.

The "Articles" were enacted by the Mayor, Jurats, and Commons of Faversham, assembled in Wardmote, within whose civil jurisdiction the parish church was situate.

It appears by these regulations that the clerks acted as "servers" at the mass, and also as "Rectores Chori" or "Cantors," in which capacity they probably wore the copes of green bawdekyn which are mentioned in the Inventory printed in *Archæologia Cantiana*, XVIII., 108. When the choir men or boys sang out of tune, the clerks were to cease singing the "faux bourdon" or harmony, and to take up the "plain song" or melody until the choir got out of difficulty.

They also had to attend to much of the cleaning of the church, which afterwards devolved on the sexton, and they or their deputy slept in the steeple, helped the sexton to ring, and each Sunday carried holy water to every house.

The clerks' duties also included that of teaching children to read and sing in choir, and the instruction probably embraced that which, on the foundation of the Grammar School in 1527, was required of every child previous to admission thereto; namely, to say and read matins, evensong, VII psalms, Latin *dirige*, and Commendations.

The sexton or his deputy was also every night to sleep in the steeple. The mode of ringing curfew, nones, matins, masses, evensong, etc., was defined, and he was directed as to opening the church, lighting the lamps, tapers, and large candles, filling the holy water stoups, cleaning the church, and guarding the churchyard.

These Articles do not appear to have been expressly repealed, but probably such customs as were repugnant to the letter or spirit of the new Book of Common Prayer ceased gradually to be observed.

A succession of two clerks (as will be seen by Document No. 3) was continued until 1548, when the number was reduced to one. As long as two remained it is probable that they made as few alterations as possible in the routine of their duties, and were glad by a continuance of them to justify the payment of their accustomed wages.

Document No. 4 gives new regulations for the sexton in the thirty-fifth year of Queen Elizabeth.

These several Orders were framed, Nos. 1 and 2 in 1506, when William Warham was Primate, and Henry VII. was King; No. 3 in 1548, when Thomas Cranmer was Primate, and Edward VI. was King; No. 4 in 1593, when John Whitgift was Primate, and Elizabeth was Queen.

No. 1.

✠ The Articles of the Office of the Parish Clerks of the Parishes of Faversham, by them to be fulfilled and executed by them as hereafter followeth, which Articles were made and enacted at a comon Wardmote holden at Faversham forsaid the Sunday next after the Fest of All Seynts the xxijth yere of the reigne of Kyng Henry the VIIth byfore me Rob^t Wythiott Mayor of the same.

I. cla.—*Inprimis*. The said Clarkys or one of theym dilygently shall intende upon the Vicar or his depute in mynstracion of the Sacrements and Sacrementallis at all tymes, both be daie and nyghte as oft as nede shall requyre, and to be dilygent and obedient to the Vicar or his depute in all suche lefull thynggs and comaundments as shall belong to their Office to be don.

II. cla.—*Item*. The said Clerkis or one of theym shall daily apparell in his rogett* at morowe masse,† and at high masse, apparell the auters and to revest the prests syngyng the said masses and see that lighte or fire be contynually in the Chaunsell or Chirche before none every day, while their is any masse to be songe as of olde tyme hath be acustomed.

III. cla.—*Item*. The said Clerkys or one of theym daily shall apparell the Auters wher any prests is to syng masse after the morowe masse and bere and bryng to the Auters the chalice, masse boke and cruets with wine and water, and bere agayne to the vestry the same masse boke chalice and other ornaments wheche shalbe occupied at the said masses as of olde tyme hath be acustomed.

IIII. cla.—*Item*. The said Clerkys at every masse be note shall syng the grayle‡ at the upper dexte in the body of the quyer and the pistell§ and to be dilygent to syng all the office of the masses be note. And to be dilygent to syng and doo ther dute at all servyces to be songe be note. And to bryng forth suche bookis in to the quyer as shalbe necessarye as well for masses to be songe in the said chirche as any other service ther to be song be note. And to bryng forth in to the quyer att every pryncipall feste surplyces rochetts coopis and other ornaments as shall for the convenyent service accordyng to the solempnite of the fest and to ley the same books half on the oon side of the quyer and the other halff of theym on the other side. And at every pryncipal feste the said clarkys,

* The rochet differs from the albe, in reaching only to the knees, and from a surplice, in having straight sleeves.

† The early morning mass.

‡ The Graduale, a portion of a psalm following the Epistle.

§ The Epistle.

and every of theym shall diligently come to the Wardeyns of the Wardeyns [*sic*] of the said Churche for the tyme beyng and shewe theym what ornaments shalbe necessary to be occupied for the pryncipall fest. And theruppon to helpp theym to fett the same ornaments out of the treasure house on to the vestry and ther diligently to gyve theym and order theym as of olde tyme hath be accustomed. And after the pryncipall fest is past to folde up the coopis* and other ornaments manerly and bryng theym agayne diligently in to the said treasure house.

V. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis or one of theym at all tymes whanne ony servyce shalbe done by note, shall sett the quyer not after his owne brest, but as every man beyng a synger may synge convenyently his part. And wher playn songe fayleth one of them shall leave faburden and kepe the playne songe unto the tyme the quyer be sett agayne.

VI. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis or one of theym dayly shall sett and putt in to the cruettis freshe water for the prestis to synge with and see the said cruettis to be made clene within.

VII. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis or one of theym every weke shall make clene the quyer the Trynite chapell and specially over the Auters and about theym and brusshe away the cobwebbis as well over the Auters in the quyer and chappellis as over the wallis and windowes of the same and shall apparrell all the said Auters ayenst every pryncipall fest with suche apparrell as belongeth to theym.

VIII. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis or one of theym or a sufficient man for theym shall lye nyghtly in the churche stepill. And from All Hallowtide unto the fest of the Annunciacion of our Lady they or one of theym or ther sufficient depute shalbe in the Churche every nyght by vii at klok and from the fest of the Annunciacion of our Lady unto the Fest All Hallow the same clarks or one of theym or their sufficient depute shall nyghtly be in the said Churche by viii at klok at the forthest.

IX. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis and either of theym shall be obedyent to the Mayor Juratts and Comons of the said Towne and not to have no sklaunderous words ne make none occasion of debate in words nor in dede bitwene the curatt and parissshyns ne betwene parissshen and parissshen.

X. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis or one of theym as moche as in theym is shall endeavour theymsel to teche childern to rede and synge in the quyer and to do service in the churche as of olde tyme hath be accustomed thei takyng for their techyng as belongith therto.

XI. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis and either of theym at all tymes whan the Sextayne of the said Churche shall lak helpp to ryng to evyn-song mateyns or masse thei and either of theym for lak of suche help shall helpp the said Sextayne as moche as in theym is to ryng for the spedynes of the service ther to be don.

XII. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkys and either of theym or their

* Cope, a vestment like a long cape or cloak worn in solemn services, processions, etc.

sufficient depute every Sunday in the yere shall ber haly water to every mannes house as of olde tyme hath be accustomed. And if the same clarkis or any of theym make defaute in bering of holy water in the said forme thanne he or thei so makyng defaute shall forfait for every such defaute viii d. And this mony to be levied by the Church Wardeyns for the tyme beyng to thuse of the said Church. Provided alway if the said clarks or any of theym be occupied with any besynes for the parisshe or if ther fell any principall Fest on the Sunday then the said Clarks and either of theym shal be excused in beryng of holy water the same pryncipall fest and discharged of their penalte for every suche pryncipall fest.

XIII. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis and every of them shalbe alway dilygent to the Church Wardeyns of the same Church for the tyme beyng and obedient to theym and dilygently do and execute all such lefull commaundements as to theym or to any of them shall be commaunded by the said Wardeyns or any of them for anythyng concernyng the well of the said parishe and as shal belong to their office.

XIII. cla.—*Item.* The said clarkis and every of theym shall skoure and kepe clene the holy water stoppis of laton, and the basyn and ewer whoche be ordeigned for christenyng of childern and theym so kepe and skoure and make clene as often as nede shall requyre in that behalve.

XV. cla.—*Item.* From hensforth every clark, when he is admytted to the office of the clerkshipp in the said chirche shall swer upon a booke that he on his behalf shall endeavour hymself as moche as in hym is truly to fulfill and execute all the said articles and everyche of theym.

No. 2.

✠ The Articles of the office of the Sextayne of the parishe of Faversham by hym to be fulfillid and executed as hereafter followyth which Articles war made and enactid at a Comon Wardmote holden at Faversham forsaid the Sunday next after the fest of the Epiphany of our Lorde the xxiith yere of the raigne of Kyng Henry the VIIth by fore me Robt Wythiott then beyng Mayor of the said Towne togeder with the Juratts and comons of the same Towne.

I. cla.—*In primis.* The said sextayn or his sufficient depute every nyght shall lye in the said Church stepill.

II. cla.—*Item.* The said sextayn or his sufficient depute every nyght from All Hallowtide unto the fest of the Annunciacion of our Lady nyghtly shalbe in the said Church or stepill by vii at klok in the evyn and ther shall contynue abyde and lye from that howre unto vii at klok on the next morowe and from the Annunciacion of our Lady unto All Hallowtide the same sextayn or his sufficient depute nyghtly shalbe in the Church or stepill by viii at klok in the evyn and ther shall contynue and ly from that howre unto v at klok in next mornyng. And every nyght the same sextayn or his sufficient

depute at VIII at clok shall ryng couvrefewe by the space of oon quarter of an hour with suche a bell as of olde tyme hath be accustomed.

III. cla.—*Item.* The said sextayne or his depute every day in the mornyng in somer shall open the Churche doores at v at clok, and in wynter at vi at clok.

IIII. cla.—*Item.* The said sextayn or his depute every Saturdaie Seynts Evyns and pryncipall festes shall ryng noone with as many bells as shall be convenient for the Saturdaies Seynts Evyns and pryncipall festes and as shalbe longe accordyng to the tyme; and at afternoone at everyche of the said daies ryng to evyn song, with as many bellys as belong to the tyme at a convenyent hour as of olde tyme hath be accustomed. And on the morowe of everyche of the said daies to ryng to matyns, and masse, and evyn song accordyng as belongith, at convenyent hours, and as many peelys as of olde tyme hath be acustomed. And on the Werk daies to ryng every daie to masse at a convenyent hour, as shalbe requyred by the Vicar or his depute as of olde tyme hath be accustomed.

V. cla.—*Item.* The said sextayn or his depute whan he shall ryng noone or to the first evyn song matyns masse and last evyn song or to any other service he and such persons as shall ryng with him, shall ryng in dewe ordour and in as good tyme, as they may or can and not to ryng to long tyme over to short tyme but as it is convenyent.

VI. cla.—*Item.* The said sextayn or his depute every Werke day shall toll three tymes to the morow masse, with the iiiijth bell at v of the clok in somer and at vi at clok in wynter; and at the first tollyng he shall strike xxx strokis with the claper of the same bell; at second tollyng within a quarter of an hour after xv strokes; and at the thirde tollyng vi strokis; and after as sone as the parish clark hath ronge all in to the morowe masse with the litell bell, the same sextayn or his depute shall toll yn xii strokis with the said fourth bell. And besidis this the same sextayn or his depute every Werke day shall tolle to the sakeryng of the high masse with the furst bell and the iii^d bell as hath be used of olde tyme.

VII. cla.—*Item.* The same Sextayn or his depute every daie shall make provision for the lightyng of the lampe in the quyer before any prest goo to masse and so to se it contynue as long as ony masse is to be songe ther. And besides this, the same Sextayn or his depute daily and nyghtly shall kepe the lampe in the quyer to brenne if he have oile therfore And if he lak oile thanne he or his depute diligently to complayne to the Churche Wardeyns for the tyme byng or to som of theym for the spedy reformacion therof.

VIII. cla.—*Item.* The said Sextayn or his depute every holy evyn, at the first Evyn song, mattyns masse, and last evyn song, shall light the tapers and bemys* accordyng to the solempnyte of the fest and custome of the said Churche he takyng for his labour for lightyng of every of the said bemys as of olde tyme hath be accustomed and used.

* Lighted candles placed before the "beam" or "rood."

IX. *cl.*—*Item.* The said Sextayn or his depute every Saturday at none shall fell the holy water stoppis in the body of the Churche with fresshe water, and as often in the Weke as nede shall requyre, and every day in the mornyng to see the Churche made clene for shomeryng of doggs.

X. *cl.*—*Item.* The said sextayn or his depute every weke shall make cleen the body of the Churche, and the crosse Hlis, from dust or other filthes, and also on the evyn of every pryncipall fest, and brusshe away all the cobwebbis and make cleen over and about all the Auters, wallis and wyndowes in the body of the said Churche, as often tymes as nede shall requyre.

XI. *cl.*—*Item.* If their com any bestis into the churcheyerd by escape or non closure of the Churche Wallis thann the same Sextayn or his depute shall dryve them out in as hasty tyme as he can. And if any person or persons of his or their wilful mynde putt any best into the said churche yerd ther to pastur then the same Sextayn or his depute in the namys of the Churche Wardeyns for the tyme beyng courtesly shall goo to the owners of the said bests and requyre them to fett them away And if the same owner or owners upon suche request refuse to do then the same sextayn or his depute immediatly after suche refusell made shall dryve the said bestis to the lordis pounde and ther to remaine unto the tyme the owner or owners of them have agreed with the Vicar or his depute for that offence the same Sextayn takyng for his labor for every best so offendyng and dryven to the pound 1 d.

XII. *cl.*—*Item.* The said Sextayn and his depute shalbe diligent to the Vicar and his depute and diligently shall doo and observe all leful commaundements concernyng his office whoche to hym or his depute shall be commaunded by the said Vicar or his depute.

No. 3.

Anno 1548 E. vjth ij^{do} tempore Thome Ardern* Maioris.

“And whereas there hath bene tyme wherof no mannys mynde hath bene to the contrarye Twoo Clercks whiche have hadd at the equal charges of the Towne iiiith every of them of whiche viijth

* In 1537 Thomas Arderne was one of the clerks of Edward North, Esq., Clerk of the Parliament, and received from the Treasurer of Augmentations £6 13s. 4d., “in recompense of such pains as he and his fellows have taken in and about the writing and making of certain books of Acts of Parliament for the King’s Highness, concerning as well the suppressed lands as the King’s Highness’ purchased lands.”

His subsequent career at Faversham and his murder there are described in an Essay on the Tragedy of *Arden of Feversham*, by Rev. C. E. Donne, M.A., 1873.

By his wife Alice, daughter of Sir Edward North, he left issue an only child Margaret, who afterwards became the wife of John Bradborne.

By Deed, 3 November 10 Elizabeth, Margaret widow of John Bradborne granted to Robert Eyre of Boughton-under-Blean, Esq., Richard Barrey of Barham, Esq., Richard Parrett of Sandwich, Esq., and Robert Fagg of Faversham, gent., hereditaments in Abbey Street, the Church mead, the Abbey green,

hath bene recowped and taken toward the fynding of one Sexten xxvi^s viii^d for as moche as thise payments hath growen in consideracon of suche great travayllas the Clerks heretofore susteyned in thexecucon of their office, whiche travaylls for asmoche as they be decreased and dymnysshed so the Inhabitants of the said towne having respect thereunto have thought it mete to abate not onely the clerks wages but the number of the Clerks And yet not mynding to have the same somes so abated to be extincted and discharged But to remayne to good uses as the same did before, conclude, establishe, and agree, that it shalbe ordeyned, and decreed, in manner and forme folowyng, That is to saye, that there shalbe no moo Clercks then one, within the said parisshe churche, And that the same Clerk shall have for his wages yerely liij^s iiij^d, and that also there shalbe a Sexten within the said parisshe whiche said Sexten shall yerely have for his wages xxvj^s viij^d. And the other iiij^{ll} sterling shall yerly for ever be paid to and for the wages of the Comon caryer before rehersed.* And every parissshoner to paye and make contribucon for the payment of the said viij^{ll} so appoynted to and for the payment of the parisshe Clerk, Sexten, and Carter, in lyke forme and after suche severall porcions as here to fore they or any of theym have paid and bene assessed or taxed, when they hadd ij Clerkes and that it shalbe lawfull for the Mayor for the tyme beyng to comnytt to warde every such person refusing to paye to the same as they have done before, there to remayne till they have paid ytt."

No. 4.

Faversham. Commune Concilium tentum ibidem die lune viz. xxix^o die Octobris anno regni domine nostre Elizabethæ Dei Gratia Anglie Francie et Hibernie Regine fidei defensor etc. tricesimo quinto coram Roberto Banes maior ville predictæ Nicholo Upton Roberto Lame Johanne Castelocke Johanne Upton Willielmo Sakar et Willielmo Tyllman juratis eiusdem ville Johanne Hallett Johanne Ellfrythe Thoma Pelham Willielmo Chatbourne Georgio Cruttall Johanne Reve Ricardo Pyerce Ricardo Danyell Roberto Allen et Daniel Gyeles.†

the Setry, the washhouse croft, the Thorne house, and meadows at Faversham, to the use of horsell for life; remainder to the use of Nicholas her son by said John Bradborne, and the heirs of his body in tail; remainder to the use of the heirs of the body of the said Margaret in tail; remainder to the use of Thomas Northe, Esq., and Edward North his son, their heirs and assigns.

* An order was made at the same Wardmote for the appointment of a Common Carryer and avoider of all the mire, dung, and other contagious filths and refuse within every street of the town or their liberties, such refuse, etc., to be laid at such place as the Mayor and three Jurats should appoint, not more than half a mile out of the town, and to be carried twice a week.

† PERSONS NAMED IN DOCUMENT NO. 4.

Allen, Robert (Grocer), Chamberlain 1583-4; Commoner 1585 to 1595; Jurat 1595 to 1614; Mayor 1601. Buried at Faversham 1631. (See also *Archæologia Cantiana*, VI., 321.) He gave a house in Partridge Lane, Faversham, now made into two tenements, for poor widows. Arms: Gules, a cross ermine, on a chief three pellets.

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An Act touchinge the Sexten of the Churche. Yt ys agreayd bye the foreseide Maior Juratts & Comynaltye here assemblyd & gatheryd together that the Saxten from henceforth shall give attendance at the Churche & ryngte to Servyce as heretofore of late tyeme hathe byn usyd within the same Towne And that the same Sexten shall yerelye for hys wages have payed hym bye the Churche-wardens of the same Towne for the tyeme beinge xl^s of lawfull monye of Englande quarterlye at the fower usuall feaste dayes of the yere viz. at the feaste daye of the Natyvytye of our lorde God, the Annuncyacon of our ladye S^t Marye the Vyrgyn, the Natyvytye of S^t John the Baptyste & S^t Mychaell the Archangell bye evyn porc'ons and also that the same Saxten shall lykewysse yerelye have payed hym bye the Chamberleyens of the same Towne for the yere beinge xl^s of lawfull monye of Englande at the foreseide feaste dayes bye the lyke porc'ons for ringynge to sermons And further that the same Sexten shall have hys accustomed fees for towlyng of the passinge bell ringinge of knelles ryngynge to buryalls makynge of Graves as well in the Churche as in the Churchyarde as ys allreadye sett downe in a Table now hangynge in the Churche for that purpose And moreover for the rynginge of the greate bell to everye funerall sermon the some of vi^s viii^d In consyderacon of which hys foreseide wages & fees to be payed as aforeseide the seide Sexten shall dayelye througheout the whole yere ryngte Curfewe with the fowreth bell at eyghte of the clocke in the evenynge bye the space & tyme of one quarter of an hower And also that the same Saxten shall daylye thorowhe the whole yere ryngte the fowerthe bell for a daye bell at fower of the clocke in the mornynge bye the lyke space & tyme.

Banes, Robert, Jurat 1591 to 1600; Mayor 1593.

Castelocke, John, Commoner 1580; Churchwarden 1584; Jurat 1584 to 1613; Mayor 1588, 1603. Nephew of the last Abbot of St. Saviour's, Faversham. On a mural monument in Faversham Church:—"Here lieth John Caslock the elder late Jurate and twice Mayor of this Towne and Captaine of the select band. Who died the 26 day of February 1613 being about the age of threescore and one; and Alice his wife who died the third day of March 1613 being about the age of threescore and nine; they were married some forty years and had issue fower sonnes John, Mayor at the time of their death, William, Daniel, Abraham, and two daughters Bennet and Elizabeth."

Chatbourne, William, Churchwarden 1581; Commoner 1580 to 1611.

Cruttall, George, Commoner 1587 to 1600.

Danyell, Richard, Commoner 1592 to 1596, when he died.

Ellyfrythe, John, Commoner 1573 to 1604.

Gyeles, Daniel, Commoner 1592 to 1599.

Hallett, John, Commoner 1584 to 1593; Jurat 1593 to 1598; Mayor 1596.

Lame, Robert, Commoner 1565; Jurat 1574; Churchwarden 1585; Mayor 1586, 1589.

Pelham, Thomas, Commoner 1583 to 1593; Jurat 1593 to 1598.

Pyerce, Richard, Commoner 1592 to 1599.

Reve, John, Commoner 1592 to 1596, when he left Faversham.

Sakar, William, Commoner 1567; Jurat 1587; Mayor 1590. By will, dated 6 October 1585, he gave a rent-charge from his lands in Harty, viz., £10 for the poor, and £5 for a weekly lecture at Faversham. Arms: Sable, a bend engrailed between two bulls' heads erased or.

Tyllman, William, Commoner 1590; Jurat 1592; Mayor 1594.

Upton, John, see *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. X., p. 230.

Upton, Nicholas, see *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. X., p. 230.

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