

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN KENT, 1480-1660

We may conclude with the benefaction of Thomas Nevile, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Dean of Canterbury. Nevile, on his death in 1615, left a substantial bequest to Eastbridge Hospital in Canterbury, but his great concern was with the completion of the quadrangle of his college. During a period of seven years he was said to have lent £3,000 towards this work, while from his own purse he laid out approximately £1,000 towards building the second court of the college as well as contributing manuscripts and books to its library.¹

E. Religion.

The first region in England to be well and permanently organized as Christian, Kent was maturely gathered into a parochial system long before the beginning of our period. Divided for administrative purposes between Canterbury and Rochester, it likewise benefited from the nearness to two powerful and interested prelates, with the result that the visitations of its churches and religious houses were more effectively and continuously carried forward than in any other county in England. Moreover, its parochial clergy were on the whole more consistently protected from the spoliation of monastic and lay proprietors than was the case in most dioceses, and they very probably enjoyed larger average stipends than those to be found in any other rural diocese in the realm. But, at the same time, Kent had been from the Lollard days a notable centre of heresy and was very early indeed to have many Protestant sympathizers. Several large and well-organized Protestant groups from abroad obtained sanctuary in Kent during the Elizabethan age, which were in their turn to become centres, if not of dissent, of a most lively and influential religious life outside the bounds of the Establishment. Puritanism and later dissent became firmly rooted in Kent in the late sixteenth century, particularly in Canterbury and the market towns, embracing as well a considerable and an increasing number of the rural gentry and yeomanry.

The parochial structure of the county seems to have been quite mature as early as the Domesday Inquest, which named as many as 360 settled places in the county and which listed about half as many churches. Somewhat more than two centuries later, in 1291, an official *Taxatio* lists 353 churches and chapels in the county, 243 being in the diocese of Canterbury and 110 in Rochester, which of course means that even then the great task of building the church fabric of the shire must have been well advanced.² Strong efforts were in fact made in

¹ PCC 118 Rudd 1615 ; *DNB* ; *Alum. cantab.*, I, iii, 244 ; Fuller, *Worthies*, II, 185 ; Cooper, *Memorials of Cambridge*, II, 264 ; Hasted, *Kent*, XII, 10. Nevile was graduated from Pembroke College in 1569. He was Master of Magdalene from 1582 to 1593 and of Trinity from 1593 until his death. He was Dean of Canterbury, where he was buried, from 1597 to 1615.

² *VCH, Kent*, II, 50.

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the course of the fourteenth century to protect existing churches and parishes by preventing the further fractionation of the parochial system, a return for 1563 listing 367 churches and chapels in the county, showing an actual decline of nineteen in the diocese of Rochester.¹ Our own records reveal bequests in a total of 395 distinct communities in the course of a period of almost two centuries, a figure which we shall use for statistical purposes, though it is doubtful that there were ever quite this number of parishes at any given date.²

Kent's benefactors, as we should expect, were to give very generously indeed to the religious needs of the county and its already hallowed institutions. In all, the large total of £67,389 10s. was provided for the various religious uses during the course of our period, or somewhat more than a fourth of all the charitable benefactions of the age.³ Yet, generous as this total was, it amounted to no more than a large fraction of the £102,519 7s. given for the several forms of poor relief and not a great deal more than the £58,255 16s. provided for the educational needs of the county. Also, it is most important and revealing to note that of the great sum given for religious purposes the amazing total of £45,519 12s. was provided during the relatively short interval prior to the Reformation. In this period, slightly more than 60 per cent. of all charitable benefactions were designated for one or another religious use in a great outpouring from all classes of men, which suggests to us how very different the temper of even late medieval men was from that of their sons and grandsons. Of this great total, well over a third was given for the chantries and masses which were so shortly to become at first distrusted and then extra-legal. The sum of £16,725 5s. was provided by the pious for this purpose, an amount exceeding by far that for any other specifically religious use, save for the £14,415 15s. given for the care of the magnificent ecclesiastical fabric which Kent had inherited from the earlier Middle Ages. In fact, of the great total of £74,494 10s. given for all charitable purposes during these years, almost 42 per cent. was dedicated to two ends, the repose of the souls of the donors in the world to come and the care of the fabric of the visible church which men had inherited from their forefathers.

In the course of the next period, when the great Reformation con-

¹ Harleian MSS., 594, f. 63.

² There were, for example, only 350 parishes in 1603.

³ This proportion may be compared with the percentages given for religious uses in the other counties comprised in this study :

	%		%
Bristol	13·18	London	19·50
Buckinghamshire	13·45	Norfolk	23·01
Hampshire	18·46	Somerset	27·35
Kent	26·77	Worcestershire	17·94
Lancashire	31·94	Yorkshire	28·07

troversies were at their most bitter, the gifts made for religious purposes, as we should expect, fell dramatically. The total of contributions for all church uses amounted to no more than £3,669 3s., a proportion (31·16 per cent.) only scantily more than half that for the preceding age. Quite surprisingly, the essential conservatism of the countryside is suggested by the fact that almost a third (£1,139 3s.) of this amount was provided for masses, while not quite so much (£1,061 8s.) was given for the always prudent purpose of church repair.

It is in the Elizabethan era that the full significance of the great revolution that had occurred so swiftly and so permanently in the structure of men's aspirations became boldly evident. In this long and prosperous age, only £3,908 17s. was given for all the religious needs, an amount representing only 8·65 per cent. of the charities of these two generations. The unbelievable smallness of this amount, as compared with the past, is suggested when we assess it against almost three times as much given in these years for education, six times as much for the care of the poor, and a roughly equal amount for various experiments in social rehabilitation. Further, it is important to observe, very nearly three-fourths of the really tiny amount given for religious uses was designated either for church building or repair, a form of philanthropy as often as not civic rather than religious in its motivation. Nor was there any improvement of consequence in the early Stuart period, despite the friendlier concern of the Crown and, towards its close, the frantic efforts of the Laudian clergy. Though this was the period when the great welling-up of Kentish charitable giving was to occur, only £9,504 16s. was given for religious purposes, or just slightly more than 10 per cent. of the whole. Once again, the care of the fabric rather more than the care of souls seems to have interested donors, since substantially more than half the total was concerned with church building or repairs. There was, it must be noted, a sharp percentage increase in gifts for religious uses during the revolutionary era, when the total of £4,787 2s. provided represents 18·17 per cent. of the whole of the charitable funds given during these two decades,¹ though it remains very clear indeed that the whole structure of men's aspirations had become predominantly secular about the time of Elizabeth's accession and, save for minor shifts, was to remain so with remarkable and convinced persistence.

It seems probable that the gifts and bequests made for the general needs of the church constitute the best single criterion of the interest and dedication of a society to the necessities of religion—the truest measure of men's estimate of its importance in their lives and aspira-

¹ It must be noted that there is a degree of statistical distortion here, since £1,483 18s. of contributions of an uncertain date have for convenience been included in the total for this interval.

tions. We have included a wide variety of gifts under the head of "church general": gifts for lights, for the support of the service, for altars and images, and for undesignated church uses. For a long time past in Kent, as in other English counties, such gifts, particularly in the form of bequests, had become customary in all classes of society and were almost automatically included in wills when drawn even by the simplest persons, in part, it must be supposed, because the parish priest so often either drafted or witnessed the will. A glance at the bequests in any Kentish parish before 1560 will suggest how important a source of general revenue these legacies were in meeting the expenses for the conduct of the services and discharging the multifarious spiritual responsibilities that had come to be connected with parochial life.

For the whole of our period, gifts for the general uses of the church totalled £5,672 2s., or 2·25 per cent. of the charitable funds of the county. Though most of the gifts comprising this sum were very small indeed, it may be remarked that a substantial proportion of the whole (87·34 per cent.) were made as capital additions to funds held by the parish officers, though not uncommonly in the hazardous form of cattle, sheep, or fowl, which, it was hoped, might reproduce themselves in parish hands in perpetuity. During the long interval that preceded the Reformation, the flow of gifts and bequests for this important purpose continued without particularly significant interruption until the final decade. A total of £3,200 6s. was provided for the general services of the church in this era, an amount very probably sufficient to care for the needs not financed by tithe revenues and, not infrequently, by the generosity of the priest himself. But it is significant that slightly more than 56 per cent. of all benefactions for this purpose were made in the period just prior to the Reformation. There was no drastic slackening of these gifts during the Reformation era itself, when slightly more than £300 was provided in each decade, but a cataclysm of indifference marks in a very precise fashion the accession of the great Queen. During the whole course of this long reign the total given by men and women of the county for the general uses of the church amounted to no more than £297 3s., and, if the next decade (1601-1610) may be added, to £329 9s. This means, in the ultimately important parish terms, that over a period of a half-century no more than 16s. 8d. was given on the average to each church in the county for the support of its ministrations. This is a secularism so complete as to be almost paralysing in its impact and in its significance for the history of the society and it was, as we shall see, a secularism equally apparent over the whole range of the continuing needs of the church.

There was at least a slight improvement in giving for general church purposes during the early Stuart period, when a total of £1,043 3s. was provided. But the improvement, even in the two decades marked by

the dedicated efforts of Archbishop Laud, must be assessed as very slight indeed when we bear in mind the immense outpouring of charitable funds during these years. For example, it is true that £453 was given for church needs between 1621 and 1630, but in this same interval the great total of £24,875 9s. was provided for all charitable causes, which of course means that the tiny proportion of 1·82 per cent. of all benefactions was disposed for this particular use. Further, it will be noted, during the era of religious and political uncertainty with which our study closes, the amounts given for the general needs of the church dropped back to the austere levels of Elizabethan giving.¹ Laud's most earnest efforts had had no more than a slight and certainly a temporary effect in altering the now established patterns of men's aspirations.

The revolutionary shift in sentiments and interests that was under way may perhaps best be documented by a brief but more precise analysis of the structure of giving for the general uses of the church. In the decade 1501-1510, for example, £550 was provided for this purpose by 503 donors of the county. There happened to be one substantial gift of lands and quit-rents with an estimated capital value of £180 for the general uses of Great Chart church in the decade, which should perhaps be excluded as wholly untypical and hence distorting our average. This means, therefore, that 502 benefactors in this decade gave in all £370 for this most important purpose, or an average of 14s. 9d. for each donor. These gifts were very broadly based, ranging in amount from many of 1d. and 2d. to eleven of £5 or more. What is perhaps even more important, such gifts have been noted in a total of 331 parishes of the county, which may have been close indeed to the whole number in this period.

In contrast, just two generations later (1561-1570) the total of gifts made for this charitable use in the whole of Kent amounted to no more than £72 19s. There were for this decade only twenty-one gifts or bequests rendered for the general uses of the church, of which, again, one valued at £42 accounts for a large proportion of the whole. Nine of these gifts were in amounts of 1s. or less, eight were in the range of 1s. 1d. to £1 ; while four were more than £1 in amount. This suggests that popular support for the general needs of the church was almost at an end ; that the customary legacies were disappearing, having been replaced by small doles left for the relief of the poor ; and that an all but complete realignment of men's basic aspirations for their society and its needs had taken place.

¹ We must again mention the fact that £400 15s. of gifts for the general uses of the church are of an unknown date and are somewhat improperly included for statistical purposes within this period. A large proportion of these gifts was certainly made prior to 1560.

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In view of these facts, it is remarkable indeed that Kentish donors were so devoutly interested in the founding of chantries and in securing arrangements in their wills for at least simple offices for the repose of their souls. As we have noted, in many parts of England such foundations, when more than nominal in amount or for quite precisely appointed masses, were suspect long before the Reformation. But this was not so evidently the case in Kent, save for the elaborate safeguards which quite commonly sought to secure the terms of the trust and which reflect the sorry record of chantry trusts in the county prior to the Reformation. In all, the large total of £17,864 8s. was provided for prayers in the years prior to the accession of Elizabeth, or 7·10 per cent. of all charitable benefactions in our whole period, a proportion very high indeed among the counties included in this study.¹ This total accounts for well over a third of all gifts made for religious purposes in the decades before Elizabeth's coming to the throne and rivals the amount given for such purposes as church repairs and university endowments during the whole course of our period. Most of these legacies were of course small bequests for a trental of masses or for prayers on anniversary days, but a very heavy proportion was in the form of endowments for permanent chantries or to secure prayers for a term of twenty years or more. In all, the substantial sum of £14,961 18s. was capitalized to secure the services of stipendiary priests, which suggests that, at the rates prevailing for such clergymen in Kent, something like 107 priests may have gained the whole or most of their support from these foundations. One cannot help reflecting, since these endowments were either lost by maladministration or expropriated by the Crown, how greatly the church in Kent would have been strengthened had this considerable augmentation of revenues been disposed for the support of the parochial clergy.

Chantry foundations were, of course, within the means of relatively few men, particularly if a chapel as well as the endowment for a priest was provided by the donor. We have noted in all twenty-two endowed chantry foundations in the period 1480-1560, of which three were made by members of the upper gentry and five by the lower clergy. Seven in all were founded by members of the clergy, two being bishops, while three were established by lawyers and public officials. Three were the creation of members of the mercantile aristocracy, while one was established by a widow of uncertain social status.

¹ The amounts and the proportions given for prayers in the various counties were as follows:

	£	s.	%		£	s.	%
Bristol	4,461	11	4·85	London	69,353	18	3·67
Buckinghamshire	708	3	0·80	Norfolk	11,328	14	6·37
Hampshire	1,019	10	1·17	Somerset	10,818	12	9·28
Kent	17,864	8	7·10	Worcestershire	2,689	18	5·11
Lancashire	5,843	7	5·63	Yorkshire	25,568	10	10·49

The relative religious conservatism of Kent is quite as amply documented by the substantial and the continuing benefactions by men of the county to its monasteries. In total, £4,782 9s. was provided for various monastic needs in the course of our period. Under Queen Mary, a forlorn effort was made to revive at least a few of the earlier foundations, the Queen herself giving £620 of the total of £680 bestowed on Kentish monasteries during her reign.¹ Excluding the gifts made later than 1540, the total represents the relatively impressive proportion of 5.51 per cent. of all charitable bequests made during the pre-Reformation decades and 9.01 per cent. of all the gifts made in this period for the various religious purposes.² This was not, of course, a considerable total when we take into account the numerous and the very old monastic foundations of the county, which, under the usually vigilant eye of Canterbury, were probably better administered than were monasteries in most parts of England. The monasteries of Kent ranked fifth in their wealth in the whole of England at the time of their dissolution, possessing revenues of £6,897 8s. 2d. p.a., or a capital worth of possibly £137,948, which, it may be noted, is only slightly more than half the whole amount provided during our entire period for the charitable needs of the county. Great as may have been the contribution of these foundations in the medieval past, it is evident that they had all but disavowed their charitable responsibilities by the beginning of our period. The monasteries of Kent, just prior to the Dissolution, were dispensing under trusts no more than £115 10s. p.a. in alms, which in terms of their income means that only 1.67 per cent. was being employed for the care of the poor, the halt, and the rejected.³ It can scarcely be said that the dissolution of the monasteries in the county created any particularly grave social vacuum, whatever the

¹ It should be noted that in Kent as in other counties only gifts made to Kentish monasteries, whether by local or out-of-county donors, are included in our totals. This is made necessary by the fact that the support of monasteries was less parochial than any other form of charity, save gifts to the universities, and only by this convention could confusing duplications be avoided. It should also be remarked that Table I includes under *Religion* no head for monastic gifts, which were relatively small in most counties and which persisted for only a short portion of our period. The "gathered gifts" to monasteries are being treated as an entity in the present discussion, but for other purposes are distributed to four great heads: church general, clergy, church building and repairs, and prayers.

² Comparisons with the other counties included in this study can perhaps be most meaningful if presented in the totals actually given for monastic uses:

	£	s.		£	s.
Bristol	1,139	0	London	41,883	12
Buckinghamshire	182	0	Norfolk	2,008	1
Hampshire	208	18	Somerset	1,792	14
Kent	4,782	9	Worcestershire	375	19
Lancashire	794	13	Yorkshire	3,525	1

³ Savine, Alexander, *English monasteries on the eve of the Dissolution* (Oxford, 1909), 236, 274-275.

spiritual effects may have been. Private endowments for the care of the poor in the two decades of the Reformation created resources providing well over twice as much as the relatively insignificant sum distributed in alms by all monasteries of the county.

Moreover, it should be observed that the £4,782 9s. given for various monastic uses during a period of two full generations represents an increase of no more than 3·46 per cent. in the capital resources presumably available to the monastic foundations of the county in 1480. This would mean a rate of augmentation quite insufficient to maintain the elaborate fabric of the establishment, to meet the considerable erosion of fire and decay, and to replace the capital losses so steadily being incurred by monastic maladministration.

The contribution made by the county to its monasteries was the gift of 271 individual donors, of whom approximately half made their gifts in the first two decades of our period. These gifts and bequests range from seventy which were for amounts less than 10s.—a healthy indication of continuing support among the poorer classes—to ten in amounts of £100 or more. The largest of all the individual benefactions, as we have mentioned, was the gift of £620 made by Queen Mary for re-establishing the order of Dominican nuns at Dartford and the restoration of the building of the Observant Friars at Greenwich. The largest aggregate amount, £1,960 17s., was provided by pious donors for the general support of the monastic clergy of the county. A total of £982 7s. was given for undesignated purposes, while a slightly smaller sum, £970 6s., was vested in the monasteries of the county to secure endowments of prayers of various sorts. The repair of the fabric and further building commanded £868 19s. from benefactors of the period.

It has been possible to establish the social status of 184 of the donors to monastic needs. Since the eighty-seven benefactors whose social identity is unknown numbered almost one-third of the donors, yet gave only about a tenth of the whole of the funds provided, it is clear that these benefactors were on balance drawn principally from the ranks of the lower social groups and, since they were almost entirely rural donors, this would probably mean that they were yeomen and husbandmen. By far the largest total contribution to Kentish monasteries was made by the Crown, in five grants by three sovereigns, with a total of £1,235 12s., or slightly less than a fourth of the entire amount. There was one gift from the nobility, in the trifling amount of £3 7s. The upper gentry of the county contributed £666 12s. to monastic requirements in gifts from thirteen individuals, ranging in amount from 5s. to £267, the median gift being £9 13s. The Crown aside, the lower gentry of the county were the largest contributors, thirty-five of this class having given a total of £785 3s. in amounts ranging from 2s. to £157, the median gift being exactly £5. The

certainly identified yeomen, twenty-one in number, gave a total of £124 12s. to monastic needs, in amounts ranging from 1s. to £80, the median gift being £1 2s. We have recorded gifts from seven husbands totalling £1 12s., though it seems certain that many additional gifts, in very small sums, principally to local foundations, were made by unidentified members of the class. Three members of the upper clergy gave in all £110 13s. to Kentish monasteries, but it ought perhaps to be mentioned that there were large benefactions made by the class to monasteries in other parts of the realm. The lower clergy gave in all £507 18s. in twenty-eight separate gifts ranging from 1s. to £290, the median benefaction being £4 7s., and comparing very closely with the pattern of giving of the lower gentry. The merchants of the county, eleven in number, mostly residing in Canterbury and giving to its great establishments, gave the surprisingly large total of £630, in amounts that ranged from £1 to £320, with a very high median gift of £23 16s. There were thirteen men and women donors of the somewhat ambiguously defined burgher class, who gave £51 11s. in all, while twenty-four tradesmen gave a total of £83 6s. in sums ranging from 3s. to £50. And finally, it is interesting to observe that twenty-eight artisans gave a total of £31 9s., save for two cases always to local foundations, in sums ranging from 3d. to £4 7s.

The plight of the monasteries and their comparative neglect by donors of the county was, in terms of the basic needs of the church, by no means so serious as the plight of the parochial clergy, particularly after the Reformation. When compared with the clergy in most other essentially rural counties, as we have remarked earlier, the parish clergy of Kent had been reasonably well protected against both monastic and lay despoilers of their revenues. But with their almost universal practice of marriage after 1558, the disappearance of the regular clergy, the ever-rising costs of living, the drying up of the customary gifts and bequests for the uses of the church, and the loss of the steady flow of chantry bequests, the clergy of the county found themselves subjected to the same severe strains that beset their brethren throughout the realm during the Elizabethan period.

Quite sporadic efforts were made by troubled and pious benefactors to remedy this deplorable situation by outright bequests to named clergymen and, more importantly, by the creation of endowments designed to secure the augmentation of clerical income in particular parishes. In the whole course of our period £8,718 17s. was provided for the clergy, of which £7,188 6s. (82.45 per cent.) was in the form of endowments of one sort or another. Well over a third of this considerable sum, which amounted to 3.46 per cent. of all charities in the county, was given in the pre-Reformation period, when £2,944 3s. was provided for the support of the clergy. But, most unfortunately,

the greater part of this amount was given specifically for the better maintenance of the regular clergy, and the whole of these endowments, together with the £14,961 18s. of capital given in the same interval for the support of the stipendiary clergy, disappeared in the maw of the Reformation settlement. During the Reformation period £758 13s. was given for maintenance, but of this considerable amount £620 is represented by Queen Mary's ill-fated effort to re-establish the regular clergy in the county.

The intense secularism of English life after 1558 is again most dramatically demonstrated by the fact that in the long interval from 1561 to 1600 the total provided for the maintenance of the clergy of Kent was no more than £598 15s. This means that, in a period when the clergy were subject to an unrelieved and steadily worsening financial strain, in average terms not more than £1 10s. 3d. was given in each parish of the county for the augmentation of clerical stipends. There was in Kent, as elsewhere, at least a relative betterment in the early Stuart period, when a total of £2,295 5s. was given for this purpose, which considerably improved the clergyman's lot in six parishes and at least afforded some capital augmentation in fourteen others. This movement continued and was in fact most substantially strengthened during the era of civil disturbance, when in two brief decades the most impressive total of £2,122 1s., of which all save £37 7s. 4d. was in capital, was provided for the bettering of clerical stipends.

At least a few of the larger of the benefactions for this eminently worthy purpose may be briefly described, though a number have been noted in earlier connections. In 1481 Sir Thomas Bryan, of Cheddington, Buckinghamshire, gave extensive properties worth £267 for the support of the impoverished Dominican nuns of Dartford.¹ A merchant of Faversham, Richard Colwell, probably about 1525, gave to the abbey there land with a capital worth of approximately £320 for the better support of the monastic clergy.² These are perhaps typical of the numerous gifts designed to strengthen the ministrations of the regular clergy. But for exactly a half-century, 1541 to 1591, there was no benefaction made in an amount as great as £100 for the support of the parochial clergy. Such gifts and bequests as were made consisted chiefly of small outright legacies for a named minister or small endowments for an annual sermon of remembrance. Thus in 1561 Thomas Tarboke of St. Paul's Cray, himself a clergyman, left one red heifer with a white face and two houses with a total worth of £41 for an annual sermon in the parish church, to be preached by his successor.³ George

¹ PCC 13 Moone 1500 ; *VCH, Kent*, II, 185.

² Lewis, *Faversham*, 39, 83 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VI, 278, 280 ; Jacob, *Faversham*, 120. Colwell was Mayor of Faversham in 1534.

³ PCC 9 Loftes 1561 ; Duncan, L. L., and Arthur Hussey, eds., *Testamenta Cantiana* (L., 1907), i, 15.

Usmer, a gentleman of East Sutton, tried at least to secure the services of a resident curate for that place in 1566 when he devised lands with an estimated value of £70, the income to be employed for his maintenance, or, if this condition were not met, for church repairs.¹ A member of Parliament for Rochester, Thomas Page, in 1569 gave a tenement in Shorne, with an estimated capital value of £30, to be held in trust as a residence for the vicar of that parish.² Sir Thomas Sondes, whose foundation of a school in Throwley has already been mentioned, in 1592 left £100 to be distributed over a period of twelve years for two funeral sermons each year, a considerable, if limited, betterment of a clergyman's income.³ But the first large and well-conceived benefaction of this kind did not occur until the close of this half-century of almost complete disinterest in the needs of the clergy when, as we have already observed, Sir Roger Manwood in 1592 augmented the stipend of the clergyman at Hackington with an income conservatively valued at £12 p.a., as well as providing an annuity of 13s. 4d. for an annual sermon.⁴

There was, as we have suggested, at least relative improvement in the efforts to secure more appropriate remuneration for the clergy of the county after 1610, though the instances of really significant augmentations are very few indeed. In 1620 the Puritan knight, Sir Robert Brett, charged his estate in Gloucestershire with the maintenance of a weekly lecture which he had been supporting at West Malling, setting aside £26 p.a. of income for the payment of the lecturer at the rate of 10s. each week. In addition, he provided £10 p.a. as an augmentation of the living of the clergyman of the parish, or a total capital outlay of perhaps £720 for what must have been a most efficacious remedying of the needs of at least one community.⁵

An interesting effort was made by Thomas Stanley, lord of the manor of Hamptons, to secure regular services and a resident curate for the community lying about the village of Plaxtol, itself upwards of three miles from the parish church at Wrotham. Stanley in 1638 conveyed to the redoubtable Sir Henry Vane and four other feoffees real property, then valued at £7 p.a., for the maintenance of a curate provided that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood should within a reasonable time raise an additional £8 p.a. An ordinance of Parliament in 1647 separated the district into a parish distinct from Wrotham, and

¹ *PP* 1837, XXIII, 395, 397; Hasted, *Kent*, V, 381; *vide ante*, 20.

² Smith, *Rochester in Parliament*, 97.

³ *Vide ante*, 82, and *post*, 113.

⁴ *Vide ante*, 42-43, and *post*, 120.

⁵ PCC 85 Soame 1620; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 372; Hasted, *Kent*, IV, 511, 528; Ducarel, *Repertory*, 190-191. Brett also left a large annuity of £26 for the complete support of twenty poor of the parish. Brett, who was lord of the manor, was descended from an old Somersetshire family. His wife was the only daughter of Sir Thomas Fane.

in 1648 a chapel was erected from funds secured in the county and from a collection taken throughout England. With the Restoration the community was reunited for spiritual purposes with Wrotham despite the violent objection of the inhabitants, though Stanley's stipend was saved when after legal action the Vicar of Wrotham ceded £20 p.a. for the augmentation of the curate's stipend.¹

In 1658 an ejected Anglican divine, John Stanley, who had inherited a considerable fortune from his father, a Canterbury merchant, in a most interesting will devised to charitable purposes a total of £921, of which £217 was for poor relief, £224 for the support of almshouses, and £480 for the assistance of needy clergymen. Stanley left £20 each to twenty-four named clergymen, all of whom had probably been deprived, an amount which, as it was to turn out, may well have been sufficient to secure their support until the Restoration.² In 1660, probably just after the Restoration, a Canterbury spinster, Anne Line, presumably by purchase of the lease from the Archdeacon of Canterbury, secured an augmentation of £8 p.a. for the curate of the chapel at Iwade, then dependent on the the parish church of Teynham.³

These rather feeble and certainly sporadic efforts to augment the livings of clergymen in the county cannot and perhaps should not be too cleanly separated from the efforts of donors with Puritan leanings to establish more vigorous and godly preaching in the region. Gifts and bequests for this purpose began in a modest way in the mid-Elizabethan period and continued in every successive decade. Despite the strong Puritan sentiment in the county, a surprisingly small total of £1,724 14s. was provided for this purpose, amounting to only 0·69 per cent. of the whole of the charities of the county. Almost half this total was given in the one decade 1611-1620, when £733 7s. was vested for lectureships. It is rather surprising, too, that only slightly more than half (56·51 per cent.) of the whole amount given for lectureships was in the form of capital amounts, these donors evidently, and correctly, fearing ecclesiastical or governmental intervention and endeavouring to accomplish their ends by annual and hence more flexibly controlled stipends.

¹ Hasted, *Kent*, V, 24, 60; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 375.

² PCC 285 Wootton 1658; Hasted, *Kent*, XI, 249. Stanley was graduated from Corpus Christi, Cambridge, in 1627. He was chaplain of Magdalene College from 1630 to 1647, when he was ejected, and was Rector of Kirkby Overblow, Yorkshire, from 1646 to 1648 (*Alum. cantab.*, I, iv, 147).

The charities mentioned in the text included £12 10s. p.a. for four years for clothing ten poor of Hullavington, Wiltshire; £12 10s. p.a. for two years for clothing ten poor of St. Paul's, Canterbury; £10 p.a. for two years for the same purpose in Northgate, Canterbury; £15 for one year for twelve poor of St. George, Canterbury; £12 10s. p.a. for eight years for clothing ten poor of St. Mildred's, Canterbury. £7 was left to the poor of Herne and the whole of the £224 for almshouses was given to Canterbury institutions.

³ Ducarel, *Repertory*, 69; Hasted, *Kent*, VI, 205.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN KENT, 1480-1660

In no respect was the profoundly important shift in men's aspirations from religious to secular preoccupations more dramatically apparent than in the amounts provided by private charity for the care of the fabric of the churches of the county. Under this head we have included not only benefactions made for the normal repair of church structures, but an almost infinite variety of gifts that were made for the ornamentation of churches, objects used in the service, vestments worn by the clergy, and, indeed, the whole rich complex of paraphernalia with which men of piety love to adorn their church and its ritual. Over the whole course of our period the substantial total of £19,138 9s. was provided by Kentish donors for these uses. This sum, somewhat larger than that given for the support of the universities, amounted to 7·6 per cent. of all charitable benefactions in the county and to well over a fourth (28·4 per cent.) of the total of funds provided for all religious causes. In fact, Kentish donors designated substantially more for this use, so closely linked with civic pride as well as piety, than did donors in any other county studied, London of course aside.¹

But the staggering fact is that of this great total £14,415 15s. was given during the six decades prior to the Reformation, which amounts to almost exactly three-fourths of the whole of the funds given during our entire period for the care of the fabric of the churches of the county. In other words, on the average the substantial total of £36 9s. 11d. was provided for the care of each church in the county and the adornment of its ritual in the two generations extending from 1480 to 1540. In the four generations following, however, the broad and almost certainly adequate base of this support was all but destroyed as the cold winds of secularism swept over England. From 1541 to 1660 only £4,722 14s. was given for church repairs in the entire county, which would mean, again in average terms, that slightly less than £11 19s. 1d. was given for this chronic need in a very long interval, an amount wholly inadequate for even the essential repairs required by any edifice built by the hands of men. The withdrawal of this support was as decisive as it was abrupt with the accession of Queen Elizabeth. During the whole of her age no more than £1,155 11s. was given for this use, or in average terms only £2 18s. 6d. for each church in this shire. Through a full century (1561-1660) there was in fact a total contribution for this purpose equal to as much as £1 for each church in only one decade.

¹ The amount given in each of the several counties to church repairs and its proportion to the total charities for each county is as follows :

	£	s.	%		£	s.	%
Bristol	872	7	0·95	London	33,601	12	1·78
Buckinghamshire	2,958	4	3·35	Norfolk	13,004	13	7·31
Hampshire	2,967	0	3·41	Somerset	4,265	0	3·66
Kent	19,138	9	7·60	Worcestershire	1,806	6	3·43
Lancashire	5,802	4	5·59	Yorkshire	6,774	0	2·78

THE STRUCTURE OF ASPIRATIONS

These facts provide all too eloquent documentation for the constant complaints in the early seventeenth century that the magnificent architectural heritage of the county was in serious and nearly universal decay. They provide equally convincing evidence that very few men cared, since even the strident remonstrations of Archbishop Laud and his followers were without effect in Kent.

We may most accurately assess the immensely significant shift in men's aspirations by comparing their contributions for church maintenance in a late medieval decade with a similar period just a century later at the close of the Elizabethan age. In the brief period 1491-1500 the relatively great total of £7,361 11s. was provided by pious men and women for the care of the churches of the county, or an average of almost £19 for each church in all of Kent. This great sum, by far the most to be given in any decade for this use, it should be remarked, was constituted from 461 individual gifts and legacies. Thus the average gift was relatively high, being almost £16, but this is misleading, since the benefactions of sixteen large donors account for upwards of £1,800 of the whole sum and six churches of the county were provided with rood lofts in this decade at a fairly tightly estimated total cost of £180.¹ The significant fact is the great breadth of the interest of all men in the county in the care of their parish churches, to which almost every testator, doubtless under the firm tuition of his priest, left at least a nominal amount. In all, there were 241 donors whose bequests amounted to less than 5s. during this interval, indicating the extent of the support which had made possible not only the building but the preservation of the medieval ecclesiastical fabric. It is noteworthy, too, that at least something has been recorded as bequeathed or given for church repairs in 306 of the parishes of the county in this extraordinary decade.

Space will perhaps permit the recording of at least a few of the many smaller and more typical bequests which betoken the strength and the universality of the interest of men in this pious need just a generation before the advent of the Reformation in England. In 1491 a widow of Hawkhurst, Elinora Barnes, left £2 for the repair of her parish church,² while Joan Belser left a stained rood cloth of 3s. value as well as a saucer to St. Dunstan's in Canterbury.³ Probably in the same year a husbandman of Deptford, Richard Blake, left 3s. 4d. to

¹ The county was unusually late in providing rood lofts, which were placed in most English churches much earlier in the fifteenth century. We have counted benefactions or gifts for forty-two rood lofts in Kent in the period 1481-1540, with a heavy concentration in the third decade of the sixteenth century. We have noted only the contributions of known amounts made for this purpose, many of which were of course insufficient for the completion of the work. The total given for this purpose was £617 4s.

² *Test. Cant.*, ii, 156.

³ *Arch. Cant.*, XVI (1886), 313, 315.

church repairs in that parish,¹ and Henry Buckland gave 4d. to "the painting of St. Christopher" at Hythe.² A burgher of Faversham, James Buckland, bequeathed £1 to the repair of Stone church, among other and larger charitable bequests³; James Burmond of Canterbury provided £1 4s. for a cross in St. Margaret's church⁴; while John Cayser [Keyser] of East Peckham, probably a wool grower, left a relatively large sum of £8 6s. for such purposes as opening or repairing windows, providing a chalice, repairing a crucifix, and painting and repairing images and crosses in that parish church.⁵ A fisherman of Hythe, Thomas Chandler, left £1 7s. for church works, together with more substantial secular charities⁶; William Church of Eastry provided 3s. 4d.⁷; and John Coke of Sandwich gave an estimated £1 for the lead required in the "regeying of Our Lady Chancel" in St. Peter's church there.⁸ A substantial bequest of £12 for church repairs and decorations at Kingston was provided by the will of Thomas Denne in this same year⁹; Philip Dodington left 3s. 4d. for similar purposes in Hythe¹⁰; while Robert Estxlon of St. Peter Extra gave £1 6s. 8d. for painting and mending the high cross and 13s. 4d. to make a holy water stoup.¹¹ William Godfrey of Southfleet left £6 13s. 4d. for the repair of vestments, copes, and altar cloths in his church,¹² while the impecunious Vicar of Hackington, Simon Hoggis, left 1s. 8d. for the maintenance of his church.¹³ To conclude our recording of but a few of the representative bequests for church repairs and decorations left in the single year 1491, we may mention the £3 6s. 8d. left by Alice Malin to the chapel of St. Leonard, Hythe, for a chalice and other necessary works,¹⁴ the 13s. 4d. left by William Messinger of Bapchild for the shingling of his church,¹⁵ the £1 given for general maintenance needs by a donor named Nickeless [Nicholas] of Margate,¹⁶ and the relatively large bequest of £12 made by John Page of Shorne, of which £2 was designated for painting the rood loft and £10 for a new bell.¹⁷

¹ Drake, H. H., ed., *Hasted's history of Kent* (L., 1886), 36.

² *Arch. Cant.*, XLIX (1938), 169.

³ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 323-324.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ii, 53, 67.

⁵ PCC 45 Milles 1491; Cook, A. R., *A manor through four centuries* (L., 1938), 24; *St. Paul's Ecclesiological Society Transactions*, III (1895), 282.

⁶ *Arch. Cant.*, XLIX (1938), 143.

⁷ *Ibid.*, XXXVIII (1926), 178.

⁸ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 289, 291.

⁹ *Kent Records*, XII (1936), 170.

¹⁰ *Arch. Cant.*, XLIX (1938), 149.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, XXXI (1915), 34.

¹² *Test. Cant.*, i, 71; Thorpe, *Orustumale*, 43.

¹³ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 144.

¹⁴ *Arch. Cant.*, L (1939), 115.

¹⁵ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 10-11.

¹⁶ Mockett, John, *Journal* (Canterbury, 1836), 172.

¹⁷ *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 287-288; *Test. Cant.*, i, 69.

THE STRUCTURE OF ASPIRATIONS

In the most pronounced contrast stands the record of a decade just a century later (1591-1600), towards the close of Elizabeth's reign. During this great decade a total of £12,683 8s. was provided by Kentish donors for all charitable purposes, of which, however, only £208 8s. was given for church repairs and decoration. This amount represents but 1·64 per cent. of all charitable benefactions for the interval, compared with the 37 per cent. of their gifts which men a century earlier had designated for this particular use. It is likewise important to observe that this need, which was by all accounts now desperate, attracted the charitable interest of only forty-four donors during the entire decade and that, so far as our research indicates, some repairs or renovations were undertaken in only 38 of the 395 churches in the whole of the county, at least with resources provided by private charity.

Among the gifts and bequests made for this purpose in the decade under review at least a few may be mentioned. Ralph Finch, a gentleman of Kingsdown, left £4 for church repairs and the purchase of needed books in 1591,¹ while Elizabeth Lovelace of Bethersden, also of a gentle family, gave 5s. towards mending the lead on her parish church.² Richard Austen, a yeoman of Adisham, in 1592 gave a communion cup for the use of his parish,³ while Sir Thomas Sondes of Throwley in the same year, among other and larger bequests, provided £6 for the maintenance of his parish church.⁴ Nicholas Annesley of Lee in 1593 gave a paten to his church worth approximately £4 5s.,⁵ while Henry Ellis, a citizen and ironmonger of London, whose family had been long resident in Chislehurst, bequeathed £2 to the churchwardens of that parish for the erection of two new pews,⁶ and John Roberts of Brenchley left his church £2 for necessary repairs.⁷ Thomas Allen, a gentleman of Dover, gave £1 to the repair of St. Mary's church in that town in 1594⁸; Nicholas Heard of High Halstow provided a rent-charge of 10s. p.a. for needed repairs on his parish church⁹; Anthony Calthorpe of Bromley, among other charitable benefactions totalling £179 6s., left 6s. for the repair of his church¹⁰; while a yeoman of West Farleigh, Thomas Taylor, in the same year provided £8 for needed maintenance in that church.¹¹ To conclude this review of representative

¹ PCC 44 Sainberbe 1591; *Arch. Cant.*, XIII (1880), 336.

² *Ibid.*, X (1876), 204.

³ *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser., 5, V (1925), 334.

⁴ *Vide ante*, 82, 108.

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, XVI (1886), 378.

⁶ PCC 69 Nevell 1593; Webb, E. A., et al., *History of Chislehurst*, (L., 1899), 265, 390.

⁷ *Essex Institute Historical Collections* [Salem, Massachusetts], XLIII (1907), 319-320.

⁸ PCC 38 Dixy, 1594; Waters-Withington MSS.

⁹ PP 1837, XXIII, 357.

¹⁰ PCC 68 Dixy 1594.

¹¹ PCC 54 Dixy 1594.

gifts made to the needs of the fabric of Kentish churches during this decade, we might mention the bequest, also in 1594, by Peter Manwood, which was the largest benefaction for this purpose during the interval. Manwood left to the church at Hackington plate of an estimated value of £11, together with two small tenements and a half-acre of land, with a total value of about £30, the income of which was to be employed for church repairs.¹

In Kent, as in most other counties, the curve of giving by private donors for church building parallels very closely that which we have just traced out for church repairs and ornamentation. During the course of our period a total of £14,271 was given for new building or major renovation in the county, a substantially larger amount, London again aside, than that recorded for any other county examined.² This considerable sum, representing 5·67 per cent. of the whole of Kentish charitable funds, was somewhat less than the amount provided in a much shorter period for prayers, only half as much as was given for grammar schools, and somewhat greater than the total given for the various charitable uses we have grouped under the head of *Social rehabilitation*.

But the interest of men of the county in the enlargement or the replacement of the religious facilities which they had inherited was, as was the case with church repairs, heavily concentrated in the decades just prior to the Reformation. The large total of £8,234 3s. was given for church building during these six decades, an amount, it should be remarked, accounting for 57·7 per cent. of the whole sum devoted to this purpose during our entire period. Church building of any kind was all but ended during the period of the Reformation, when not more than £100 seems to have been expended for the purpose. During the Elizabethan era a total of £1,678 15s. was given for church building of various kinds, about half of this amount being concentrated in one of the four decades of the period. This sum amounted to about 3·7 per cent. of all charitable funds given during these years, as contrasted with slightly more than 11 per cent. which had been devoted to church construction in the years prior to the Reformation. There was a marked increase in the amount being expended by private benefactors on new building during the early Stuart period, when a total of

¹ Hasted, *Kent*, IX, 50 ; *Arch. Cant.*, XVI (1886), 381.

² It should be indicated, though, that in the more significant terms of its relation to the total funds given for charity, this amount given to church building places Kent rather low in the group of counties studied :

	%		%
Bristol	2·67	London	8·68
Buckinghamshire	6·39	Norfolk	3·15
Hampshire	7·74	Somerset	9·54
Kent	5·67	Worcestershire	6·34
Lancashire	11·55	Yorkshire	4·53

£3,658 2s. was provided for this purpose, with a particularly heavy accumulation in the third decade (1621-1630), in which £2,558 2s. was given for the building of new edifices or the substantial betterment of older structures. But this revival of concern was very brief indeed, beginning to fall away in the Laudian decade (1631-1640) and dropping back to Elizabethan proportions during our closing interval.

There was considerable interest in Kent in the building of chapels in various existing churches during the earlier years of our period. We have noted such additions of these facilities in twenty-one churches of the county, not including the numerous chantry chapels. With data permitting a considerably closer estimate than has been the case in most counties, we would suggest that something like £1,613 was expended on these chapels, twenty of which were completed prior to 1541. Among these may be mentioned the chapel provided in 1480 in Pluckley church by a gentleman of that parish, Richard Dering, at a probable cost of about £50.¹ The Lady Chapel in Rochester Cathedral was lengthened a few years later at a charge of £30,² while two chapels were provided by unknown donors at Crayford in *ca.* 1500.³ Two chapels were likewise built in Strood church between 1501 and 1518 at a probable total cost of £120, towards which a considerable number of small benefactions have been noted.⁴ A chapel was being built in Boxley Abbey, at a quite uncertain cost, in 1503 when John Sweham of Maidstone left 3s. 4d. towards its completion,⁵ while a chapel was provided at about the same date at Charing, at a cost of perhaps £40. where a new bell tower was likewise under construction.⁶ William Heede of Hunton in 1513 gave £20 for the making of a chapel in that church and the same amount for a new church porch, as well as founding a chantry in his chapel with an endowment of £7 p.a.,⁷ while three years later William Jones left a bequest towards the building of a new chapel at Dartford.⁸ A more elaborate chapel was under construction at Smallhythe (in Tenterden parish) from 1516 to 1519, to which John Donett seems to have been the principal contributor.⁹

¹ K.A.O.: PRC, A. 3/332, 1480; Dearn, *Kent*, 207; *Test. Cant.*, ii, 247-248; *Arch. Cant.*, X (1876), 343. In the next year, Christyn Dreyland, who was buried in the south porch of Pluckley church, left £6 13s. 4d. "to the further building of Our Lady Chapel", suggesting that it had not been completed (*Test. Cant.*, ii, 248).

² Smith, *Rochester*, 276.

³ *Arch. Cant.*, XXVI (1904), 61.

⁴ As for example the £2 given by John Williams in 1501, 1s. provided by Nicholas Noone in 1517, 6s. 8d. by Walter Noone, in 1518, and the same sum given by John Wales, a butcher, also in 1518 (*Test. Cant.*, i, 76).

⁵ PCC 31 Blamyr 1503; *Test. Cant.*, ii, 32.

⁶ *Ibid.*, ii, 71-74.

⁷ PCC 18 Fetiplace 1513; *Test. Cant.*, i, 42; *Arch. Cant.*, XXIII (1898), 142-143.

⁸ PCC 18 Holder 1516; *Test. Cant.*, i, 19.

⁹ *Ibid.*, ii, 310; *Arch. Cant.*, XXX (1914), 133.

The great Prior Goldstone of Christchurch monastery, Canterbury, who died in 1517, rebuilt the prior's chapel there as well as the chapel in the prior's mansion house at Bekesbourne, at a probable cost of £163, in addition to his extensive building on the priory church.¹ At about the same date (1518) Nicholas Boughton wished to be buried in the chapel "that I lately caused to be made in the p'isshe church" of Woolwich, where he likewise arranged for prayers for twenty years with an annual stipend of £6 13s. 4d.² A chapel was built in West Malling church probably in the same year.³ At about the same date a chapel was provided at Shoreham,⁴ while a few years later, probably in 1522, a chapel was completed at Dover at an estimated cost of £80, this being the contribution of many small donors. In 1522 Sir John Peche of Lullingstone left to his wife gold chains valued at £220 with which "my chapell at Lullingstone . . . shalbe made vpp and fynyshid of my costes as I haue shewid vnto my frendes", while at the same time providing for a perpetual chantry in his chapel with an income of £7 13s. 4d. p.a.⁵ A chapel of quite uncertain cost was built at Lydd in ca. 1521,⁶ while Sir John Wilshire in 1526 left £30 for the construction of a chapel at Dartford.⁷ This closed, almost abruptly, the age of

¹ *Arch. Cant.*, VII (1868), 68, 170, XIV (1882) 288; Goodsall, R. H., *Canterbury* (Canterbury, 1930), 45; Woodruff, C. E., and William Danks, *Memorials of Canterbury Cathedral* (L., 1912), 210-214; Legg, J. W., and W. H. St. J. Hope, eds., *Inventories of Christchurch Canterbury* (L., 1902), 122, 129-131, 138, 149, 174, 203, 237; Hasted, *Kent*, XI, 457; Wharton, Henry, *Anglia sacra* (L., 1691, 2 vols.), I, 146. Thomas Goldstone, prior from 1495 to 1517, was a friend of Henry VIII and was used by him on diplomatic missions. He raised the great central tower of the church, rebuilt the deanery, replaced old vestments and what might perhaps be called the religious facilities of the priory with new and much more elaborate articles, as well as repairing many of the manor houses belonging to the priory. These building costs have not, however, been reckoned as charitable benefactions, since they were drawn principally from priory income.

² PCC 15 Ayloffe 1518; *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 3, I (1896), 67 n.; *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 296; Hasted, *Kent*, I, 449, II, 202. The manor of Woolwich was acquired by this family in the reign of Edward IV and its holdings were greatly enlarged by Nicholas Boughton's son, Sir Edward, who acquired extensive monastic properties in Plumstead.

³ Waters-Withington MSS.

⁴ Kilburne, *Topographie*, 248.

⁵ PCC 25 Maynwar yng 1522; *Arch. Cant.*, XVI (1886), 102-104, 107, 227-240; Hasted, *Kent*, II, 542; *PP* 1822, IX, 267; *Kent Records*, XIV (1936), 75-76. Peche was a large benefactor, his charitable dispositions totalling £892 3s. In addition to the bequests mentioned above, he left £230 to the general uses of three Kentish churches, £10 for church repairs, and stipulated also that a fund of £500 vested with the Grocers' Company prior to his death should be disbursed in such wise as to employ £104 of the capital for poor relief, £103 for the clergy, and £293 for general charitable purposes. He was the son of Sir William Peche, Sheriff of Kent in the reign of Edward IV. Sir John was sheriff in 1495, when he rallied the county against those who would have supported Perkin Warbeck. The family was originally of merchant beginnings, John Peche, an alderman of London, having purchased the manor in 1368.

⁶ *Arch. Cant.*, XXXI (1915), 29-30; *Test. Cant.*, ii, 202.

⁷ PCC 16 Poreh 1526; *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 291.

chapel building in Kent, though a gentleman of Tudeley, Richard Fane, built a chapel there in about 1540 at an estimated cost of £60,¹ and very much later indeed (1627) Sir John Baker of Cranbrook rebuilt and rededicated in that church a chapel built at a charge of perhaps £120.²

No county in England was exempt from the enthusiasm which in the fifteenth century adorned earlier churches with steeples and towers. This interesting architectural development, which carried over well into the sixteenth century in many counties, was quite as much secular as religious in its aspirations, there clearly having been intense local pride in the benefactions with which these towers were built; such donors were perhaps animated even more by the height or massive girth of the steeple in the next parish as by any late Gothic reaching after God. In Kent twenty-eight such towers or steeples seem to have been built wholly or in part from private benefactions during the course of our period, assisted by charitable gifts for this purpose totalling £1,897 19s. Of this number, all but four were completed or well under way prior to 1541, this form of architectural expression having exhausted itself in Kent, as in most of England, by the time of the Reformation. Among these building undertakings may be mentioned the construction of the tower at Lewisham, for which many small gifts and bequests are recorded from 1480 to 1510, with a particularly heavy concentration in the earlier years of this period.³ A steeple was being built in Deptford as early as 1483,⁴ while that at Faversham was being completed about a decade later, when Edward Tomson, a former mayor, left £60 towards its building.⁵ Richard Cromer of Chartham left 13s. 4d. for beginning a steeple in that parish in 1495,⁶ while among numerous bequests for the building of the steeple of St. Augustine's in Canterbury we might mention that of a grocer, John Underdowne, who provided £2 13s. 4d.⁷ John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, commenced the building of the tower of Lyminge church in

¹ PCC 26 Alenger 1540; *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 294.

² Dearn, *Kent*, 80; Waters-Withington MSS.

³ These were principally quite small amounts, it having very evidently become a fairly fixed tradition that some bequest should be left for the purpose. Thus in 1483 John Almayn, a husbandman, bequeathed 1s. to the new steeple, John Newman gave £2, and another husbandman, Simon Bate, left 10s. for the same purpose, while in the next year a yeoman, Richard Combe, left nine bushels of corn for the building and a bushel for the bason light (*Test. Cant.*, i, 46-47; Hasted-Drake, *Kent*, 273). These are but a few of the examples which might be cited.

⁴ *Test. Cant.*, i, 21.

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, XVIII (1889), 106, 113. Tomson also left 3s. 4d. to an anchorite for prayers and £20 for the repair of "foul ways".

⁶ *Ibid.*, XXXI (1915), 27.

⁷ *Ibid.*, XXXI (1915), 45.

1492¹ and laid out from his own funds something like £300 towards the building of the middle tower of the cathedral church.²

The steeple of the church at Wittersham was built in the early years of the sixteenth century,³ while the tower of the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Canterbury was completed about 1503 at a charge of not less than £130.⁴ Repairs were made on an early tower at Aldington during the first decades of the sixteenth century, and construction of a fine new tower at the west end of the church was commenced in about 1528, gifts and bequests being made for this purpose until 1547.⁵ The building of the new tower at Edenbridge was under way as early as 1502,⁶ while John Mills of Chevening left £2 towards the building of a steeple on his parish church in 1506.⁷ Work had begun on the steeple at West Wickham in 1509, when a yeoman, John Cawston, bequeathed £3 6s. 8d. towards carrying the work forward.⁸

To mention a few more of these building undertakings in the years nearer to the Reformation, we may note that work was under way on the steeple at Leigh in 1525, when Roger Lewknor, a member of a well-known family of that neighbourhood, left £4 13s. 4d. for its continuation.⁹ The tower of Stoke church, begun in the late fifteenth century, was not to be completed until 1550, but much of the work and most of the contributions were concentrated in the years 1520-1539, when upwards of £60 was left to advance its building.¹⁰ Building had apparently begun on the steeple at St. George's, Gravesend (the chapel),¹¹ Godmersham,¹² and East Langdon¹³ in about 1534, while

¹ Davis, A. W., *History of Lyminge* ([Canterbury], 1933), 14; Mackie, *Folkestone*, 223. This tower was completed in 1527, with the help of Archbishop Warham.

² PCC 10 Moone 1500; Hasted, *Kent*, XII, 434; Dart, John, *History of Canterbury Cathedral* (L., 1726), 165; *DNB*.

³ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 370, and various wills.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i, 57-58, and various wills.

⁵ *Ibid.*, App. B, 386; *Arch. Cant.*, XLI (1929), 143.

⁶ *Test. Cant.*, i, 22.

⁷ PCC 13 Adeane 1506; *Test. Cant.*, i, 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, i, 81.

⁹ *Ibid.*, i, 45-46.

¹⁰ A few of the many bequests may perhaps be mentioned. A yeoman of Burham, Richard Ware, who also left £38 3s. for prayers, in 1511 gave 10s. towards the cost of construction (K.A.O. : CCR 6/307a); James Barnes, Vicar of Hoo Allhallows, bequeathed 3s. 4d. for the tower in 1512 (K.A.O. : CCR 6/323b), while a husbandman, Thomas Stephen of Stoke, left a cow for the same purpose in 1523 (K.A.O. : CCR 7/293b). Larger benefactions were provided by two members of the gentry of the region, Giles Palmer, who in 1533 gave £10 towards the building costs (K.A.O. : CCR 9/100a), and John Mott, who in 1534 provided £4 13s. 4d. (K.A.O. : CCR 9/142b). John Ferror, probably a husbandman, gave 6s. 8d. in 1538 (K.A.O. : CCR 9/272[2]a), while John Seethe of Milton provided £3 6s. 8d. for the same use in 1540 (K.A.O. : PRC, A. 21/184).

¹¹ *Test. Cant.*, i, 30.

¹² *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, III (1919), 47.

¹³ *Test. Cant.*, ii, 184-185.

similar edifices were approaching their completion at Charing¹ and Great Chart.² To conclude, we have noted contributions towards the building of only four steeples in the county after 1560, all of which were in point of fact for the rebuilding of earlier structures which had been destroyed by lightning or by structural collapse.

Almost half the total amount which we have included under church building was given by benefactors for the enlargement of existing structures or for carrying out major renovations on older buildings. In all, we have noted gifts for such purposes totalling £6,672 9s., in several instances clearly supplementing additional amounts raised by rates or other non-charitable means. It is significant that of the thirty-two churches in the county which received such major rehabilitation, with the help of private donors at least, all save ten were assisted in the period prior to the Reformation, while most of the remainder were improved during the Laudian era.

Very early in our period, quite extensive repairs were undertaken on the church at Aldington,³ while at about the same time a new reredos and a large window were provided for the church at East Peckham.⁴ Extensive work was carried forward in *ca.* 1491 on the fabric of St. Nicholas' church, Deptford, at an estimated cost of £40, which church, it might here be noted, was enlarged about 1630 by the building of a north aisle, to which the East India Company made the principal contribution.⁵ An aumbry was provided for the ancient church of St. Martin, Canterbury, towards the close of the fifteenth century,⁶ while at about the same date the north aisle of the church at Plumstead was built, apparently at a cost of about £80.⁷ John Pympe, a gentleman of Nettlestead, defrayed the cost of very extensive renovations on the church of that community in 1496.⁸ At about the same time, John Marshall, a native of Crayford who had prospered in London, added an aisle to the church of his birthplace at an expense of about £60,⁹ while a few years later the north aisle and arcades at Eynsford were constructed.¹⁰ We have likewise included, somewhat doubtfully, as from private charity the great works which brought to completion the fabric of Canterbury Cathedral in the years 1486-1503, which

¹ Ireland, *Kent*, III, 172.

² *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, III (1919), 164.

³ *Test. Cant.*, App. B, 386.

⁴ Cook, *Manor through four centuries*, 22 [plate].

⁵ Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An inventory of the historical monuments in London* (L., 1924-1930, 5 vols.), V, 15-17; Hasted, *Kent*, I, 367; Dews, Nathan, *History of Deptford* (L., 1884), 60.

⁶ *Arch. Cant.*, XIV (1882), 109.

⁷ Royal Comm. on Hist. Mon., *An inventory*, V, 102.

⁸ PCC 2 Horne 1496; *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 281; *Arch. Cant.*, XXVIII (1909), 275-276. Ireland (*Kent*, III, 470) suggests a later date.

⁹ PCC 28 Horne 1498; *Kent Records*, XIV (1936), 40-41.

¹⁰ *Arch. Cant.*, XLVI (1934), 173.

included inserting two doors and raising the great central tower. It is known that the monastery spent upwards of £4,000 on the completion of the tower alone, which, while certainly the fruit of earlier and pious charity, included relatively few gifts made for the purpose during our era.¹

The church of Cranbrook was considerably enlarged and rehabilitated between 1520 and 1530 when the middle aisle was built at a total charge of £366 17s. In all there were seventy-eight known contributions to this undertaking in amounts ranging from Henry Thristo's gift of 1s. 4d. and Thomas Cooper's donation of £2 13s. 4d. to Stephen Drayner's gift of £40 and the benefaction of a wealthy clothier, Robert Brickenden, who gave £100 for this purpose.² A new aisle was likewise built at Biddenden at about the same time at a cost of perhaps £110,³ while a porch was added to the church at Hunton with the funds received from gifts and bequests from 1513 to 1532.⁴

These are the principal of the major enlargements undertaken by private benefactors on the churches of the county prior to the Reformation. During the Elizabethan period works of this sort were almost wholly neglected by private donors, who were evidently no more interested in the needed enlargement of existing churches than they were in maintaining the deteriorating fabric. Sir Roger Manwood did, probably about 1590, build an aisle in St. Stephen's church, Hackington, for which he also provided other renovations, all at an estimated cost of £200.⁵ The church at Charing was gutted by fire in 1590, but Elizabethan donors did no more than restore the roof of the nave in 1592, the chancel remaining uncovered for another generation.⁶

Sir Thomas Watson in 1609 carried out repairs and enlargements on the church at Halstead, at a cost of about £280, which very nearly amounted to a rebuilding of the structure.⁷ A new porch was provided, probably by private benefactors, for the church at Ashurst in 1621,⁸ while in the same year Oliver Stile, a London merchant who had retired to his estates in Kent, considerably enlarged the church at Beckenham

¹ Woodruff, *Memorials of Canterbury*, 207-208; *Arch. Cant.*, XIV (1882), 287-288; [Burnby, John], *The Church of Christ, Canterbury* (L., 1783), 61-64.

² Tarbutt, William, *Annals of Cranbrook* (Cranbrook, 1870-1875, 3 parts), i, 8-9, 50; *Test. Cant.*, ii, 90.

³ Bagshaw, Samuel, *History of Kent* (Sheffield, 1847, 2 vols.), II, 612.

⁴ *Test. Cant.*, i, 42; Fielding, C. H., ed., *Records of Rochester* (Dartford, 1910), 147.

⁵ *Vide ante*, 42-43, 108.

⁶ *Arch. Cant.*, XVI (1886), 263.

⁷ PCC 3 Savile 1622; Hasted, *Kent*, III, 15; Stow, John, *Annales of England* (L., 1615), 910; Harris, *Kent*, 141. Watson had purchased the manor with London capital in 1585.

⁸ Glynn, S. R., *Notes on the churches of Kent* (L., 1877), 180.

by building two aisles and vaults at a cost of £438 ls. 10d.¹ A bequest of £10 was left towards the building of a gallery in Tenterden church in 1628,² and the gallery in Sellinge church was completed just two years later by a benefactor at a probable charge of £40.³ Sir William Russell, Treasurer of the Navy and an astute speculator, was the principal contributor to the funds raised in *ca.* 1631 for the enlargement and embellishment of the chancel of the church at Deptford,⁴ while Sir William Selby of Ightham some years earlier had built a gallery in the church at that place.⁵ The church at Charlton (near Greenwich) was all but rebuilt under the terms of the will of Sir Adam Newton, a Jacobean courtier, his executors shortly after 1630 greatly enlarging the church and providing a new steeple, at an estimated charge of £350.⁶ At about the same time, 1638, the church of Stone St. Mary (near Dartford) was badly damaged by fire. Extensive alterations as well as repairs were undertaken in 1640 when the groined roof was taken down, the walls lowered and in part rebuilt, and changes made in the fenestration of the structure. But, since it seems at least probable that the considerable charges incurred were raised from non-charitable sources, no entry has been made for this, the last church to be substantially enlarged or re-edified during the course of our period.⁷

When we turn to a consideration of the churches built or rebuilt during the course of our long period, we have even more dramatic evidence of the growing secularization of men's interests and aspirations. It is true that the county was remarkably mature in its parochial system by the close of the fifteenth century, but it was growing steadily during the decades under study and significant shifts in population were taking place in the late sixteenth century. Moreover, there is clear evidence that upwards of thirty parish churches were destroyed by fire or the slower ruin of neglect during our period. There were, however, fewer parish churches in Kent at the close of our period than at its beginning, since it appears that only sixteen churches were built

¹ PCC 62 Savile 1622 ; Beaven, *Aldermen of London*, II, 46, 175 ; Borrowman, Robert, *Beckenham* (Beckenham, 1910), 99, 260, 268. A London grocer, Stile had been sheriff in 1605. He was prominently associated with the East India Company.

² *Arch. Cant.*, XXXI (1915), 261.

³ Harris, *Kent*, 276.

⁴ Hasted, *Kent*, I, 367.

⁵ *Vide ante*, 88.

⁶ PCC 112 Scroope 1630 ; Hasted-Drake, *Kent*, 120, 130 ; Royal Comm. on Hist. Mon., *An inventory*, V, 17-18. Newton had purchased the manor of Charlton in 1607 for £4,500. He had begun his interesting career in 1599 when he was appointed tutor to Prince Henry with a stipend of £200 p.a. for life. After the death of the prince he was made tutor to the future Charles I. In 1611 he was granted the rich offices of Secretary to the Principality of Wales and Clerk of the Council. He was created a baronet in 1620.

⁷ *Arch. Cant.*, III (1860), 109-110.

or rebuilt during this interval of almost two centuries. In all, we have recorded charitable contributions for such building in the amount of £4,087 12s., of which, it must be emphasized, a fair proportion is no more than roughly estimated from quite inadequate data.

The church at Ashford was wholly rebuilt by Sir John Fogge, a privy councillor in the reign of Edward IV, some years prior to his death in 1490, the donor also founding in the precincts a college for which he left property sufficient to provide a very small endowment.¹ At about the same time, the Order of Observants (Grey Friars) were building a church at Greenwich as part of the monastic establishment they had founded there with the active aid of Edward IV. The church was begun in 1482 and was completed in *ca.* 1492, at an estimated cost of £500, but towards which charitable gifts or bequests of no more than £109 4s. have been recorded.² The church at Gravesend, St. Mary's, was destroyed by fire early in the sixteenth century and was rebuilt on a modest scale beginning in 1504.³ The church at Lee, which was reported derelict two generations later, was apparently built by private benefactors early in the reign of Henry VIII.⁴ St. Mary's church at Chilham was either built or rebuilt, in about 1534, largely at the expense of the various owners of Chilham Castle,⁵ while the church at Wingham was rebuilt between 1536 and 1562 at an approximate charge of £400, much of which was supplied by a great number of relatively small gifts and bequests.⁶

As we have suggested, almost the whole of church-building activity in Kent after 1540 was confined to replacing at least a fraction of the buildings which had been destroyed by fire or structural decay. In 1565 the church at Kenardington, which had been lost by fire in 1559, was being rebuilt by local donors,⁷ while a few years later something

¹ K.A.O. : CCC 3/280, 1490 ; *Kent Records*, XIV (1936), 6-8 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VII, 533, 537, 542 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 410 ; Parsons, Philip, *Monuments of Churches in Eastern Kent* ([Canterbury], 1794), 44. Fogge was a favourite of Edward IV and was on several occasions Sheriff of Kent. He was attainted under Richard III but escaped execution and was restored to his estates on Henry VII's accession.

² *Archæological Journal*, LXXX (1923), 81 ; Hasted, *Kent*, I, 408 ; Cotton, Charles, *Grey Friars of Canterbury* (Manchester, 1924), 49. It may be remarked that Henry VII by will left £200 to these friars for closing their garden and orchard with a wall.

³ *Test. Cant.*, i, 28 ; Bagshaw, *Kent*, I, 351 ; and various wills.

⁴ *Test. Cant.*, i, 45 ; and various wills.

⁵ Igglesden, *Saunters*, I, 32 ; Cross, *Rambles round Canterbury*, 132.

⁶ Thus William Kenton, a yeoman, gave £1 in 1536 ; another yeoman, Thomas King, provided £2 in 1541 ; John Pierce, of a Canterbury merchant family, gave £4 towards the roof in 1542, while a yeoman, Henry Pender, left £2 for the carrying forward of the work as late as 1559. In 1562 a bequest was left for making new pews and a window, indicating that the edifice was all but complete by that date. (*Arch. Cant.*, XL [1928], 132-133 ; *Test. Cant.*, ii, 367-368.)

⁷ In that year Henry Horne, Esq., gave £6 13s. 4d. towards the cost (*Arch. Cant.*, XXXI [1915], 29).

like £200 was raised for the rebuilding of the small church at Ebony.¹ The tiny church at Ifield was rebuilt in 1596 at an estimated cost of £250, principally with the aid of Nicholas Child, lord of the manor.² The church of St. Alphage in Greenwich was burned in 1614, but it was rebuilt about 1617 by unknown donors.³ Similarly the church at Hothfield, which was burned at about the same time, was rebuilt prior to 1624 by Sir John Tufton, whose principal seat was in this parish.⁴ Neglect as well as fire could take its toll, as is suggested by the fact that St. Nicholas' parish church in Rochester, built as recently as 1423, was in a ruinous state in 1620 and had to be razed. The church was rebuilt during the next four years by unknown donors at a very roughly estimated cost of £450.⁵

The decayed chapel at Groombridge (Sussex), in the parish of Speldhurst, was wholly rebuilt by John Packer in 1625 at a cost of about £240 and dedicated to public worship out of gratitude for the safe return of Prince Charles from the feckless mission which he and Buckingham had undertaken to Spain. At the same time, Packer endowed the chapelry most generously with a stipend of £30 p.a. for the maintenance of the service and the sustenance of the chaplain.⁶ The church at Chiddingstone was severely damaged by fire in this same period, being rebuilt by unknown donors in 1629.⁷ Similarly, the small church at Farnborough was rebuilt about a decade later at an approximate cost of £200.⁸ And, finally, a chapel was built at Plaxtol in 1649 with collections taken through the country, when, as we have noted, Thomas Stanley had attempted to relieve the inhabitants by arranging for an

¹ Thus in 1569 Henry Goulding of Appledore gave £20 for this purpose (*Test. Cant.*, ii, 5; *Misc. gen. et her.*, ser. 5, IV [1922], 248).

² Miller, William, *Jottings of Kent* (Gravesend, 1864), 84; Ireland, *Kent*, IV, 301.

³ Fielding, *Records of Rochester*, 120.

⁴ PCC 29 Byrde 1624; *Complete baronetage*, I, 70; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 420; Hasted, *Kent*, VII, 517. Tufton was the son and heir of John Tufton, who was in 1562 Sheriff of Kent. He succeeded to the estate in 1567, was Sheriff of Kent in 1575, and was knighted in 1603. Tufton was created a baronet in 1611. He also left an endowment of £60, the income of which was to be used for the relief of the poor of the parish.

⁵ Hasted, *Kent*, IV, 158-159; Miller, *Jottings*, 39.

⁶ PCC 153 Fairfax 1649; *DNB*; Hasted, *Kent*, II, 291; Glynne, *Churches of Kent*, 181; *St. Paul's Eccles. Soc.*, III (1895), 290; Dearn, *Kent*, 221. Packer (1570?-1649) was educated at both universities. He became a favourite at court, in 1604 obtaining the reversion of the clerkship of the Privy Seal. He served both Somerset and Buckingham as secretary and was rewarded in 1617 by an annual pension of £115. He purchased the manor of Groombridge from Lord Dorset and in 1625 was given the manor of Shillingford in Berkshire by Charles I as a mark of his favour. Packer's political sentiments underwent a change, however, after his serving in Parliament in 1628, possibly as a consequence of his friendship with Eliot, and in 1640 he not only declined to advance money to the King but allied himself with Parliament.

⁷ Fielding, *Records of Rochester*, 57.

⁸ Glynne, *Churches of Kent*, 303.

endowed curacy which would permit the separation of this rural community from the parish of Wrotham.¹

It would seem very evident indeed that the chronic episcopal lamentations regarding the state of the church fabric of the county in the later sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century were well founded. Private benefactors were far more charitably disposed than they had ever been before, but their interests had been transformed into a deep and enlightened concern with the more immediate and tangible needs of mankind. The churches of Kent were not well or adequately maintained during our period and on balance must have been in a decayed condition indeed at its close. There had been, as well, very little church building aside from the replacement of a few of the structures which had suffered from time and fire. It will likewise be observed that such building or major renovations as were carried forward were in a surprising number of cases at the charge of the more recent additions to the upper gentry of the county and more particularly of families enriched and then endowed with the respectability of lands at the court of the early Stuarts. One is led to wonder whether these new men of Kent were so much aspiring after God as seeking status and acceptance in a rural society far more cautiously conservative than the court that had spawned them.

¹ *Vide ante*, 108-109.