THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

The Minster Churches of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell 1066-c.1300

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by

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Contents

Abbreviations Used

BCA, vol. 1- *Beverley Chapter Act Book*, A.F. Leach (ed), volume 1, (Surtees Society, 98, 1897)

BCA, vol. 2- *Beverley Chapter Act Book*, A.F. Leach (ed), volume 2 (Surtees Society, 1903)

SWB- *The Registrum Album of Southwell*, Nottinghamshire Archives Reference SC/01/01

EYC- *Early Yorkshire Charters*, vol. 1, W. Farrer (ed.), (Hanson, Edinburgh, 1914)

Map


Rievaulx
Ripon
Fountains
Bridlington
York
Beverley
Meaux
Hull
Howden
Southwell
Nottingham

1. Introduction

The Parameters of this Study- Outline and Terminology

This work is concerned with the comparative study of three minster churches, those of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell, in the period 1066-c1300.

It will seek to establish the course of their institutional development in the period, the role they played within the Archdiocese of York, and the effects of change in this period on their institutional identities both individually and collectively. As a study of non-cathedral institutions after the Conquest, it will also necessarily touch upon the relationship between central and local power, the dynamics of institutional change, and the mechanisms employed for the extension of archiepiscopal authority.

Even before such considerations as the reasons for selection of both this group of institutions and the time frame over which I examine them, these parameters require some definition of what exactly a minster church is. For earlier periods, and indeed for the earliest years of this one, this is potentially a complex question, although it has been simplified somewhat by Blair's approach to identifying minsters on the basis of Domesday Book's evidence.[1] For the majority of the period, however, the definition of the term was more stable, though as I shall suggest, the implications associated with it may have changed considerably period thanks to the efforts of these minster chapters and other figures around them. For now, Tillotson's definition of a minster as 'a church served by a body of canons or prebendaries'[2] at least has the advantage of straightforwardness. Unfortunately, as with most of the possible definitions of a minster, this one merely pushes the need for definitions up a stage, and also starts to reveal some of the circularity at the heart of those definitions. A working definition of a

[1] J. Blair, 'Secular Minster churches in Doomsday Book' P. Sawter (Ed) *Domesday Book: A Reassessment*, (Edward Arnold, London, 1985) and see chapter 2. See also S. Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006) for more detailed discussion of the Anglo-Saxon "minster question"

[2] J. Tillotson, A Medieval Glossary, http://medievalwriting.50megs.com/churchglossary 2nd July 2009

prebendary is given as 'a cathedral or collegiate church canon supported by a prebend'[3] while a prebend is 'a cathedral or collegiate church benefice; normally consisting of the revenue from one manor of the cathedral estates which furnished a living for one cathedral canon, or prebendary.'[4]

It is also worth noting that all three of these institutions were bodies of secular canons, as opposed to their Augustinian counterparts. That is to say that, while the canons were technically bound to residence,[5] they were not so closely bound by a rule as were canons regular. In this, they were in line with the prebendaries of a number of cathedrals, including York.

The Minsters

Having attempted to define the term that united them, it now seems important to explain the choice of these institutions as objects of study. In particular, why should such local institutions be of interest when cathedrals also possessed bodies of secular canons? Why Beverley, Ripon and Southwell? And why compare the three, when writers such as McDermid have argued that the appearance of any relationship between them is illusory, merely the product of a shared status as bodies of secular canons within the Archdiocese of York?[6]

To answer the last of those questions first, whatever the implications of McDermid's suggestion for an actual relationship between the minsters,[7] two points, their shared status and their location within the archdiocese, seem like a more than adequate basis for comparison. The answer to the question of why it should be these three minster churches in particular follows on from this, in that the location of the

[3] *ibid*.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] Though see chapter 3 for discussion of the issue of non-residence.
[6] R.T.W. McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Huddersfield, 1993) pxvii
[7] For which, see chapter 7

minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell within a single archdiocese provides a valuable opportunity for the study of such bodies of secular canons.

The decision to focus on smaller institutions, rather than on bodies of cathedral canons, is explained to some extent by the historiography of this field. As shall be seen below, cathedral chapters have received the majority of the attention given to secular canons in the period. Additionally, post-Conquest minster churches such as Beverley, Ripon and Southwell also provide the opportunity for studying chapters of secular canons in institutions that were not the dominant ones in the diocese or archdiocese, for exploring the complex web of relationships and influences that surrounded such smaller institutions, and for exploring the relationship between the central and the local in terms of a religious role, the secular canon, that was common to both.

In particular, the minster churches offer the opportunity to explore the adaptation of formerly important institutions to a period that contained substantial administrative and ecclesiastical change. More than that, it allows for comment on the sort of survival strategies employed by these institutions in the face of potential threats to their status such as the rise of new monastic orders and moves towards greater centralisation of power.

The Chronological Limits

The reasons for selecting the three minsters as objects of study are not, therefore, particularly difficult to understand. What though, of the chronological limits of this study? 1066 is something of a traditional starting point for studies of the central middle ages in England, though this does not make it entirely unobjectionable. Almost inevitably, the Conquest has a tendency to make us think of it as a point of transformation, even though for the minsters several important rights and prebends were

already in place thanks to Anglo-Saxon grants.[8] Perhaps the most convincing argument for its choice is that this study will show that the minsters did undergo a process of transformation following the Conquest, and that this transformation can be traced at least partly to a necessary redefinition of their roles following 1066.

The reasons for selecting 1300 as an approximate ending date are perhaps less obvious. One important justification lies in the structure of the minsters, in that it was only shortly before this date that all three minsters achieved their final numbers of prebends.[9] In other ways too, such as the development of the minster offices,[10] the formation of statutes to deal with pluralism and non-residence,[11] and the development of the role of vicars within the minsters,[12] the period up to about 1300 was vital to the institutional development of all three minsters. Indeed, as shall be seen, the period to that date seems to have been one of substantial institutional transformation in the minsters, and, moreover, substantial re-evaluation of their institutional identities.

The Sources

The Main Sources: Chapter Records

One advantage to the study of secular canons is that their chapters were a type of organisation likely to keep records, at least to a degree. All three chapters, moreover, have existed continuously since before the period under discussion, and have done so in relatively solid and weatherproof buildings, providing a considerable advantage for the survival of records. Some form of chapter records, therefore, survive for each of the three, in the form of chapter act books, cartularies, or other collections of documents retained by the chapters.

[8] See chapter 2
[9] See chapter 3
[10] See chapter 4
[11] See chapter 3
[12] See chapter 5

The principal such source for Southwell is its 'White Book', or 'Registrum Album',[13] Ripon has extensive cartularies,[14] while Beverley has its chapter act book[15] along with collections of records for its vicars, chantries and others.[16] All three of these institutional collections have been the subject of printed editions, though the quality and principles of selection employed between them vary considerably.[17]

The advantage of such record collections is of course in the amount of material relevant to the minsters that they bring to the attention of the historian. By collecting so many sources into one place, they provide an opportunity for assessing change within the institutions in ways that might be considerably more difficult if we were forced to rely on more scarce and widely scattered sources.

The disadvantages come in terms of those not inconsiderable gaps that still exist in what is presented. There is also a difficulty in that the most prolific periods for the cartularies of all three minsters were from slightly after the close of the period under discussion, leaving the bulk of their contents irrelevant to this work. Additionally, there is a risk of forgetting that such collections were subject to selection at the point of collection, and that the minsters, as active creators of their own histories,[18] might well have sought to influence their perception by those who followed them. Despite these

[13] The Registrum Album of Southwell (Southwell White Book/SWB), Nottinghamshire Archives Reference SC/01/01.
[14] Archive of the Dean and Chapter of Ripon, Leeds University: NRA 7213 Ripon D&C. Leeds Catalogue Number b2372433
[15] Beverley Chapter Act Book, NRA 27819, Society of Antiquaries ref: MS 81
[16] Rolleston Chantry Archive, Library of Congress Ref: MS Ac 1093 (item 12 (F))
Beverley Vicars' Cartulary, Bodleian Library Ref: University College MS 82
Beverley Records 1124-15th Century, British Library Ref: MS 61901
Cartulary and Life of St John of Beverley, British Library Ref: Add Ch 27324
Beverley Fabric Accounts, British Library, Corporate Ref: GB/NNAF/C108064
Grant of the Provost of Beverley, Huntington Library: Number HAD 3267 [197]
[17] A.F. Leach (ed), *Visitations and Memorials of Southwell Minster*, (Camden Society, Westminster, 1891)- Based on Southwell's White Book. *Memorials of the Church of SS. Peter and Wilfrid, Ripon,* Volume 1 (Surtees Society, No 74, 1882), Volume 2 (Surtees Society, 78, 1886) Volume 4 (Surtees Society, 115, 1908). A.F. Leach (Ed), *Beverley Chapter Act Book*, volume 1, (Surtees Society, 98, 1897), volume 2 (Surtees Society, 108, 1903)
[18] See chapter 3

issues, however, the chapter act books and cartularies of the minsters remain our best sources for their development over time, and as such are at the heart of this study.

Presence in Archiepiscopal, Papal and Royal Records

Of course, the minsters' own records are far from being the only sources for their chapters' activities in the period. Their connections to the Archbishops of York[19] mean that the chapters, or individual canons, appear in a number of documents in the archiepiscopal registers, while references in royal charters, papal bulls or other documents relating to those sources of authority are not uncommon. Such documents provide important suggestions as to the relationships the minsters enjoyed with the king and papacy, as well as, in several cases, setting out the minsters' most important rights and privileges.[20] Our information on the land holdings and incomes of the minsters comes almost entirely from such records, in the form of Domesday Book and Pope Nicholas IV's taxation.[21]

Having said that, it must be remembered that references to relatively small institutions such as the minsters within royal and papal records are comparatively rare. Many of those records that we do find are in fact the copies retained by the minsters within their cartularies. If the infrequency of these connections is not remembered, there is a danger of overstating the extent of the minsters' relationships, based on the importance of the rights gained or confirmed in those charters and bulls they did receive.

To an extent, a similar point must be made about the minsters' presence in archiepiscopal registers. Letters, statutes and grants addressed to the minsters by the archbishops occur in all of their registers, but still in only limited numbers. It is from

[19] See chapter 6
[20] See chapters 7 and 8
[21] *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicolai IV 1291*, (Public Records, 1802)

other factors, such as the presence of canons as archiepiscopal clerks,[22] that we must infer the closeness of any relationship with the Archbishops of York.

Domesday Book and the *Taxatio* both deserve further discussion, since they provide some of the best, and possibly only, means of assessing the overall wealth of the minsters near the start and end of the period. They also potentially allow us to suggest a number of other things about the minsters. Domesday Book may allow for the assessment of the minsters' income, for noting several of their rights, for reinforcing other assessments of their numbers of prebends, and even for understanding something of their relationship with the archbishop, at least in formal terms.[23] The *Taxatio* is slightly more limited, but can still give us a considerable amount of information about individual prebends and even their holders in addition to an assessment of the minsters' overall incomes.[24]

The most important difficulty with these two sources is that they seem to assess slightly different things. Domesday Book is principally concerned with the assessment of land, but the *Taxatio* is concerned primarily with the income of the institutions. There is sufficient crossover between the two to provide an impression of the changing wealth of the minsters, and each allows for the assessment of their wealth relative to both each other and to other institutions. Nevertheless, such comparisons cannot be made in a comprehensive way, simply because we cannot compare exactly the same things at each juncture.

Other Institutions/Sources

The interactions that the minsters had with their surrounding areas, and particularly with the surrounding ecclesiastical institutions, are of considerable importance to this study.

[22] See chapter 6
[23] See chapter 2
[24] See chapter 3

As such, their presence within the records of those institutions must also be addressed. There are certainly instances when they do appear. Beverley's chapter, for example, is mentioned regularly within the records of the monastic house of Meaux, principally for reasons of the two institutions' proximity to one another.[25] The other minsters, however, appear more briefly in such records. Ripon's minster, for example, appears only infrequently in those of Fountains Abbey, which in itself says something about the relationship between the institutions concerned. Those interactions that did occur seem to have been often of sufficient importance to also appear in other places, such as the minsters' own cartularies or the archiepiscopal rolls.

The importance of these records then is not principally as a source of information about the minsters. Instead, it lies in the existence of the relationship between the minsters and the other institutions, and in what the records can suggest about the nature of that relationship. The relationship between Beverley and Meaux, for example, is not suggested so much in the few records relating directly to dealings between the two as it is in the involvement of members of Beverley's chapter in Meaux's other grants and charters.[26]

Perhaps even more importantly, these records, combined with those archiepiscopal ones relating to the local area, help to place the minsters in the context of their localities. It has, as shall be suggested below, been common in the historiography relating to these minsters to view them almost entirely in terms of their structures, architecture and personnel. This, though entirely legitimate, perhaps fails to give a full picture of them. They were religious institutions with an important role in their local areas, and those aspects of their functions must be taken into account as much as the development of their internal structures. It makes sense therefore that those records

[25] G.V. Orange, 'The Cartulary of Meaux: a critical edition' unpublished thesis (Hull, 1965) and see chapter 7
[26] ibid

relating both to the towns and villages around them and to the surrounding ecclesiastical environment are essential. This is particularly true given the minster's limited presence in many other records. The *Episcopal Acta* series for Canterbury and Lincoln, for example, reveal just three individuals linked by their names to the minster towns, and none who can be tied with certainty to the three minsters.[27]

The Uses and Limits of the Sources

Although the available sources can allow us to glean a considerable amount about the minsters, their institutional structures and their relationships with other institutions or with sources of authority, there are still limits to what information they can provide.

The extent to which the available sources cover the period is one issue. The presence of cartularies, the location of the minsters within the records of other institutions, and the apparent survival of many of their records might create an impression that the minsters are well served with source materials. As far as it goes, this is true. Certainly compared to a minster such as that of Howden, like Beverley within the modern East Riding of Yorkshire, and for which few such sources survive,[28] there is a considerable amount of information available. Compared to the sort of total coverage the modern or early modern historian might expect, however, these sources still demonstrate huge absences of evidence that can be filled at best with sensible speculation, and at worst with an admission that we simply cannot know. Even compared to the mid-fourteenth century, where the minsters' cartularies and chapter act books become much more detailed, the period after the Conquest seems to have resulted

[27] D.M. Smith (ed) *English Episcopal Acta I: Lincoln,* (Oxford Unversity Press, London, 1980) C.R. Cheney and B.E.A. Jones (eds) *English Episcopal Acta II: Canterbury 1162-1190,* (Oxford University Press, London, 1986) eg p166 no194, C.R. Cheney and E. John (eds), *English Episcopal Acta III: Canterbury 1193-1205,* (Oxford University Press, London, 1986) eg pp.172-3 no.198

[28] See chapter 7

in few of the regularly occurring documents that might be used to track change in a consistent way.

Financial or land records for the minsters, for example, are limited to grants that do not seem to represent the whole of the minsters' transactions, and the information of one or two snapshots of information such as Domesday Book and Pope Nicholas IV's taxation.[29] Although certainly very useful in gauging the general wealth of the minsters at the start and end of the periods, these provide no way of tracking that wealth at the points in between. The sources also provide only limited information about the individuals who made up the chapters, the vicars and the officers of the minsters. The witness lists of the sources can tell us something of those witnesses' locations, demonstrating when they were present within particular institutions, and the contents can occasionally give some clue as to their actions, but even with the aid of prosopographies as comprehensive as McDermid's, there is little chance of knowing anything about these individuals as people.

Even when it comes to the institutional structure, there are still issues to contend with. Of offices, and sometimes entire bodies such as the vicars, often the best that we can say is that they were in place by a particular point, rather than being able to provide an accurate date for their arrival. Many of them appear in the records suddenly, but do so in ways that suggest they have been part of the minster structure for years. At the other extreme, Southwell's dean appears briefly in the sources before disappearing completely.[30] The vicars in particular present problems in this regard, since their lesser importance within the minsters' institutional structures makes their presence in sources

[29] *Taxatio P. Nicolai*
[30] See chapter 4

less common than for the canons,[31] but it is a point that applies equally to many of the minsters' offices.[32]

Of course, in outlining these difficulties, I am doing no more than noting obstacles common to the vast majority of medieval history. These difficulties in the sources do not make the task of understanding the minsters any more difficult than approaching any reasonably locally focussed medieval area of inquiry. They need to be outlined, nevertheless, if only to understand the limits of what it is possible to learn about the minsters, and to understand imbalances in the evidence which might otherwise encourage either too static a reading of the minsters' situations, or alternatively, create the illusion of sudden explosions of rights and changes where perhaps the evidence disguises something of a more gradual nature.

Section 2: Historiography

The Antiquarian Contributions

Any historiography of bodies of secular canons, and indeed of local religious houses in general, would be incomplete without recognising the earliest efforts in that regard, locally focussed antiquarian attempts to chart the institutional and architectural histories of the buildings near them. For Beverley, Ripon and Southwell, the most important name in this area is that of Arthur Francis Leach. Perhaps better known for his work on the history of grammar schools, Leach's contribution to the histories of these institutions included work on both Beverley and Southwell as an historian and editor,[33] and provided significant outlines of the institutions involved. If his methods

[31] See chapter 5
[32] See chapter 4
[33] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials.* A.F. Leach, 'The inmates of Beverley Minster' *Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society*, vol 2, 1894. *BCA*, volume 1

occasionally require considerable revision to be of any use,[34] several of the issues he raised on issues such as prebends and the minsters' offices are still of relevance.[35]

Other writers, such as C. Hallett for Ripon and the Rev. A. Dimock for Southwell, also contributed brief general histories in what came to be a wave of antiquarian interest in the three minsters in the 1890s and early 20th century.[36] There is even a case for saying that this wave of interest produced a certain amount of work that is still of value, given the existence of a relatively complete prosopography for Ripon's minster produced by Rev. A. J. Ward.[37]

In general, however, the productions of this antiquarian interest are typical of much of church history prior to the mid 20th century. They are essentially local histories, limited exclusively to the institutions in question, and written by men whose interest was principally based on their religious connection to the institution. There is a danger in suggesting that this combination should automatically lead to poor history, or in assuming that the individuals concerned lacked historical training, but nevertheless, the works in question must be characterised generally as of limited use or relevance. Even Leach, who stands out from the others, is still constrained, as much as any of us, by the historiographical concerns of his time. Despite working on more than one of the minsters, there is no effort in his work to compare them. Nor is there any effort made to place them in the context of their local environments. There is no concern, in short, for anything beyond the individual institution. Nor should there be, of course. To demand those things of the historians of the first years of the twentieth century is to demand that they take account of movements that for the most part appeared after their deaths.

[34] See chapter 2
[35] See chapters 3 and 4
[36] C. Hallett, *The Cathedral Church of Ripon*, (Bell, London, 1901), Rev. A. Dimock, *The Cathedral Church of Southwell*, (Bell, London, 1898)
[37] Originally 1861. Now in *Memorials of Ripon*, Vol. 2 as an appendix.

The Rise of Interest in Secular Canons

Despite the influence of this initial wave of local interest, histories of secular canons did not become any more common at this point than religious histories in general. Indeed, the wave of antiquarian interest noted above fits neatly with Berman's idea of late nineteenth and early twentieth century religious history being largely undertaken by those with an attachment to particular institutions, frequently with little training.[38]

Just as religious history in general only became popular with historians in the second half of the twentieth century,[39] so too did histories of secular canons, although popular here is a relative term. Even after this point, secular canons never attracted as much attention from historians as, for example, monastic orders or the papacy. This rise in interest did, however, result in the longer term in the printing of important sources such as the *English Episcopal Acta* series.[40]

The most important of the works that did focus specifically on secular canons was Kathleen Edwards' *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages*,[41] though it might be more appropriate in some ways to suggest that this work sparked the rise, serving as it did to remind historians that not all of the medieval religious world was staffed by canons regular or monks. The importance of this work derives partly from its role in reviving interest in colleges of secular canons, but principally for its comparative approach to England's secular cathedrals. It seems reasonable to suggest that prior to Edwards, the historiography had focused largely on the circumstances of particular cathedrals. Her work, by contrast, showed that through comparison, it was possible to derive the essentials of positions within cathedral chapters, and thus to understand better situations where particular chapters have differed from the normal state of affairs.

[38] C.H. Berman, *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, (Routledge, New York and London, 2005) p.1
[39] S. Farmer and H. Rosenwein (eds) *Monks and Nuns, Saints and Outcasts*, (Cornell, Ithaca and London, 2000) p.1
[40] eg. Smith (ed) *English Episcopal Acta I*
[41] K. Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages*, (Manchester University Press, 1949)

Edwards also shifted the focus of investigation for historians to some extent, by emphasising that, 'generally developments during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries seem to have been more important in moulding the form of the secular constitutions than any formal plan adopted at their foundations.'[42] This has, therefore, partially de-emphasised the focus on establishing the truthfulness or otherwise of cathedral foundation stories which may be seen in some of the nineteenth-century literature. Edwards also established the agenda for much of the modern historiography in this area by emphasising such things as the importance of the vicars choral and chantry priests, the purposes and occasional usefulness of non-residence, the role of prebends as a currency of ecclesiastical patronage and the importance of a cathedral's college of canons as a body distinct from, and sometimes conflicting with, the bishop of that cathedral.

This agenda has been applied to the study of particular cathedral chapters by writers such as Orme, with his studies of Exeter Cathedral,[43] and Hand, with his work on the cathedral chapters of Dublin.[44] The valuable role of comparisons between chapters even in works of this kind can be seen in Orme's ability to suggest that in many ways the Exeter Cathedral Chapter was perhaps the cathedral chapter least affected by non-residence and other abuses. Focused studies of this kind can be useful for the depth they achieve, but they are possibly only of relevance to this study as points of comparison. Certainly, general thoughts on canons extracted from these works may well be of use, and Hand's notes on the cathedral chapters of Dublin may provide insights into the way chapters in close proximity could interact, but in general these chapters were too remote from Beverley, Ripon and Southwell for studies of them to be directly relevant.

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[42] *ibid.* p. vi
[43] N. Orme, *Exeter Cathedral as it was 1050-1550*, (Devon, 1986)
[44] G.J. Hand, 'The rivalry of the cathedral chapters in medieval Dublin' H. Clarke (ed), *Medieval Dublin: The Living City* (Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1990) pp.100-111.

Of much greater use is the body of work making general comments on secular canons. Several key issues recur throughout this historiography. One is the role of 'foreign' canons, whether papal appointees, canons travelling with an incoming bishop or simply canons from beyond the bounds of the local diocese. This is an issue which has been addressed by Lawrence in terms of ecclesiastical benefices rather than canons and their prebends for a somewhat later period than this work is concerned with[45] and by Barrow while commenting more generally on the origins of cathedral canons.[46] Her conclusion that there was flexible geographical recruitment for canons with no local control of this process would seem to support at least the possibility of substantial intrusion by 'foreign' canons.

A related set of issues, which have largely dominated the historiography of secular canons, revolve around the concerns of canons over pluralism and non-residence. The link is a relatively straightforward one. A foreign canon, such as a papal appointee, would, if the appointment to the prebend occurred principally to secure a source of revenue, usually result in the canon in question being non-resident. He would also almost certainly be a pluralist. As Barrell has noted, one view of these medieval clerics is that they 'saw such benefices as merely a source of income, and their success in accumulating large collections of them was one of the principal determinants of the extent of their wealth.'[47] Although Barrell goes on to argue that pluralism and non-residence were not always entirely detrimental in nature, it seems that much of the historiography has been quick to notice those who played the system of dispensations to allow pluralism and non-residence for all it was worth. Barrell examines, for example,

[45] N.A.H. Lawrence, 'Foreign exchanges in the East Riding' *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 42, 1967, pp.56-60
[46] J. Barrow, 'Origins and careers of cathedral canons in twelfth century England' *Medieval Prosopography*, 21, 2000, pp.23-40
[47] A.D.M. Barrell, 'Abuse or Expediency? Pluralism and non-residence in northern England in the late Middle Ages' in J.C. Appleby and P. Dalton (eds), *Government, Religion and Society in Northern England 1000-1700*, (Sutton, Stroud, 1997) pp.117-130 (p.122)

the case of William de Wykeham, who held, amongst others, prebends in York, Beverley and Southwell.[48] Other writers, including both Edwards and Leach, have noted however that non-residence was to some extent the inevitable consequence of canons required to be present both for their duties as canons and in the churches that so often formed part of their prebends. Non-residence has also been seen partly as a necessary element for the education of canons, allowing them to spend long periods in study.

One of the key questions for non-residence was whether it was in fact harmful to the cathedrals. Edwards has argued that it became, 'a major problem for the cathedrals and for the church generally.'[49] Writers as early as Leach, however, have noted that the vicars choral and chantry priests were able to discharge the duties of non-resident canons perfectly well and that the leaving of property direct to the vicars choral suggests that the inhabitants of each diocese recognised this.[50] Barrow has argued further that vicars choral and chantry priests effectively acted as a single broad group to discharge these duties effectively due to considerable overlap between their roles.[51]

Beyond the issues of non-residence and pluralism, the recent historiography has included a general concern for the relationships of the chapters of secular canons, whether the internal relations of the chapter, relations with the bishop or archbishop in the diocese's cathedral, relations with other churches and chapters or relations with patrons of various sorts.

Several writers have focussed on relations between cathedral chapters and the bishop of that cathedral. Barrow, for example, has noted that from about 1130 episcopal households were a strong recruiting ground for canons and that the family ties of bishops were important in the selection of church officials, although she does limit this

[48] *ibid.* p.120
[49] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.21
[50] Leach, 'The inmates of Beverley Minster' p.116
[51] J. Barrow, 'Vicars choral and chaplains in Northern European cathedrals 1100-1250' *Studies in Church History*, 26 (1989) pp.87-98

by noting that the total number of officials affected was actually quite small.[52] Watt has also noted the ability of bishops to advance their favourites, noting the role of powers such as dispensations in doing so. Watt notes, however, that this was to some extent balanced by the right of the chapter as a whole to elect the bishop. He also notes that, for the most part, the bishop and chapter of Armagh cooperated.[53] Edwards has linked the growth of strong deans to conflicts between chapters and their bishops, and has emphasised that bishops were not automatically pre-eminent within the cathedral chapter.[54]

The ability to appoint the bishop was one of the central issues in conflicts between the regular canons of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Dublin and the secular canons of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.[55] Although two cathedrals in a single city is a rather isolated phenomenon which is not applicable to the cathedrals of England, Hand's comments on how the two chapters related to one another seem entirely relevant to the study of minster chapters. All such chapters were in a series of relationships, not just with their bishop and his cathedral; but also with other minsters in the area, with monastic houses and with dependant churches of their own. Hand has emphasised that with chapters of roughly equal status, while conflicts could occur over issues of the rights and honours accorded to each, for the most part such relations were harmonious.

Dunning has discussed the situation as regards dependant churches,[56] arguing that links to, and control over, the churches in their locality were essential to minsters and suggesting that such links were forged through insistence on High Mass at the mother church, through control over burial rights and through control of many of the

[52] Barrow, 'Origins and careers of cathedral canons in twelfth century England'
[53] J.A. Watt, 'The Medieval Chapter of Armagh Cathedral' in D. Abulafia, M. Franklin and M. Rubin, *Church and City 1000-1500*, (Cambridge University Press, 1992) pp.219-245
[54] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, especially pp.97-143
[55] Hand, 'the rivalry of the cathedral chapters in medieval Dublin'
[56] R.W.Dunning, 'The minster at Crewkerne' *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History*, vol. 120 (1976) pp.63-8

small tithes accruing to the dependant churches. This view seems entirely valid, but does appear to overlook the reciprocal nature of the relationship, particularly in the case of parish churches located within prebends, which were staffed, if not by the canon of that prebend, then at his expense. Barrell has argued that relations with local churches were not overly complicated by their control by absent foreign canons who mostly, 'held sinecure prebends rather than parish churches'[57] and in any case were not overly numerous.

Most recently, there has been a concern for the vicars choral and chantry priests of the cathedrals. Largely, this seems to have been an attempt to address bodies of individuals who are normally less fully dealt with, through a combination of lesser status compared to the canons and lesser presence within the sources. This actually provides one of the infrequent occasions where the study of secular canons or those associated with them has focussed on all three of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell, in the form of Dixon's study of their vicars choral.[58] This is also one of the only other instances of comparison between the three minsters that I have been able to find.

What we can see, therefore, is the growth of a relatively specialist field from 1949 onwards, but one that has still remained focussed, to a great extent, on the issues first raised by Edwards at that point. The key question is how this affected later works specifically affecting the minsters.

Later Works on the Minsters

Dixon's article on their vicars[59] demonstrates that the study of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell's vicars occasionally connects to this broader historiography of secular canons. More commonly, however, work on the minsters has remained essentially a

[57] Barrell, 'Abuse or Expediency?' p.129
[58] P. Dixon 'The vicars choral at Ripon, Beverley and Southwell' *Vicars Choral at English Cathedrals*, R. Hall and D. Stocker (Ed), (Oxbow, Oxford, 2005)
[59] *ibid.*

concern of more local histories, centred largely on the Friends of the Minster societies for the institutions in question. These histories have, moreover, frequently been concerned with the architectural histories of the minsters more than with their institutional or social roles. There has, for example, been a considerable amount of interest in Southwell's bells,[60] but rather less in the way the canons there related to their archbishop. Even relatively general histories of the institutions, such as Summers' *A Prospect of Southwell*,[61] follow this trend, having only short sections relating to the chapter of the place amid rather longer discussions of how the present building came to be. Another issue with some of the more locally focussed work on the religious life of the towns is that, in focussing on other aspects of that life, it occasionally manages to ignore the minsters completely. Foreman's work on Beverley's friary, for example,[62] barely mentions the minster, while Wardrop's work on Fountains Abbey manages much the same with Ripon's, despite the proximity of the two.[63]

To a great extent, of course, this is entirely understandable in the context of such focussed studies. Their principal object of study is a single institution, or indeed some particular aspect of a single institution such as its architecture. Some of them, such as McDermid's *Fasti* for Beverley, are extremely useful in the context of broader studies,[64] and it could even be suggested that more general studies of the minsters would be almost impossible without the presence of such locally focussed works. It is hardly reasonable to expect that works focussed on a single institution should also be studies of all the other institutions in an area, though it does seem that perhaps a full

[60] W.L. Exton, 'The Bells, 1055-1964' *Friends Report* (1964) pp4-5. J. Meredith 'The Minster Bells' *Friends Report* (1981)
[61] N. Summers, *A Prospect of Southwell*, (Phillimore, London and Chichester, 1974)
[62] M. Foreman, *Beverley Friary: The History and Archaeology of an Urban Monastery* (Humber Archaeological Partnership and Hutton Press, 1998)
[63] J. Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey and its Benefactors 1132-1300* (Cistercian Press, Kalamazoo, 1987)
[64] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*

understanding of the institution and its place within the local area is impossible without at least some understanding of the other institutions around them.[65]

The local approach is also understandable inasmuch as the study of secular canons still remains a specialised concern at broader levels of the historiography. Lynch's general history of the medieval church, for example,[66] makes only one mention of any sort of canons, and those are canons regular. In such a case, it is hardly surprising that the canons within the minsters do not always get the attention they deserve at a local level either.

Newer Institutional Histories

The more recent of these works have been influenced to some extent by both the remains of the Social History movement in the form of a concern for the social context of institutions, and also by postmodernist ideas about the construction of identity, which will be discussed further below. While not always directly connected to bodies of secular canons, the expansion of concerns brought about by these movements has provided vital context for the circumstances of institutions such as these minsters. Works such as Binski's *Medieval Death*, for example,[67] make it possible to place the minsters, and particularly the chantry chapels that grew up inside them, properly at the heart of a community fundamentally concerned for its well being after death. Attempts to understand religious institutions in terms of networks, particularly their patronage networks,[68] have encouraged this process, while concerns such as the shaping of

[65] See chapter 7
[66] J.H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (Longman, London and New York, 1992)
[67] P. Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation*, (British Museum Press, London, 1996)
[68] E. Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England 1066-1135* (Boydell, Woodbridge, 1998)

identity through symbolism have expanded our understanding of the nature of sacred spaces by exploring their role as a forum for status competition.[69]

The influence of these ideas, along with those of cultural history, gender theory, anthropology, and a mixture of others that varies almost from historian to historian, can be seen in some of the most recent institutional histories. As with much of the earlier work on religious institutions, the focus is again more on monastic history than on secular canons, but the terms in which these institutional histories are approached make them among the most relevant historiography to this study.

In particular, several of the most recent institutional histories have focussed on Cistercian houses. Iogna-Prat, for example,[70] has focussed on placing the Cistercian order in general, but specifically Cluny, in a context that stresses their interaction and engagement with various forms of non-Christian belief. Wardrop[71] has sought to re-examine Fountains Abbey in the context of its local community, as both an object of patronage and as an influence on the surrounding area. The only slight difficulty with Wardrop's work is that perhaps, as chapter seven will suggest, it is an analysis that does not go far enough, in that it largely ignores Ripon's minster. Wardrop is certainly concerned for the social, political and patronage based contexts of Fountains, but possibly less so for the religious context of the immediate area.

Perhaps the most important of the recent works on medieval institutions within Yorkshire is Jamroziak's work on Rievaulx,[72] which views that institution primarily in terms of its relationships with the surrounding areas, with patrons, with the archbishops of York, and with other outside groups. Her study, moreover, covers much of the same period as this work does, from Rievaulx's foundation in 1132 up until approximately

[69] e.g. A. Martindale, 'Patrons and minders: the intrusion of the secular into sacred spaces in the late middle ages' *Studies in Church History*, 28 (1992) pp.143-178
[70] D. Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion: Cluny and Christendom face Heresy, Judaism and Islam 1000-1150* (Cornell, Ithaca and London, 2002)
[71] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*
[72] E. Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey and its Social Context 1132-1300*, (Brepols, Turnhout, 2005)

1300. These similarities of approach must be acknowledged, and although Jamroziak does not mention any of the minsters under discussion here despite their nearness to Rievaulx, her discussion of Rievaulx's relationship with the chapter of York does raise valuable points for the relationships that existed between monastic institutions and secular chapters in the period.

Section 3: Technical and Theoretical Issues

The Construction of Identity

One key issue for this work will be the manner in which identities, and in particular the institutional identities of groups, are constructed. As shall be seen, the minster chapters appear to have taken the idea of what it meant to be a minster and altered it in conjunction with the archbishop. In doing so, they produced a conception of that type of institution more suited to the social, political, and particularly ecclesiastical landscapes that they found themselves in after the Conquest.

The most important theoretical point here is the acceptance of identity, and particularly institutional identity, as something both malleable and capable of conscious redefinition. At its most fundamental, it demands an answer to the question of what identity actually is. Specifically, it demands an answer to what identity can be for institutions with long histories, entrenched structures, and changing staff.

Those three points suggest three cornerstones of such institutional identity, in the form of an institution's perceived history, in the institutional structures it had in place, and in the individuals within it. Significant changes in any of those areas might be enough to affect the world's perception of what a particular institution was, and so its identity. That, in turn, raises another vital point, which is that it is often the perception of the wider world that is of importance here. A change in institutional identity could

affect the place that an institution occupied in the wider community, and could also be a response to shifts in that community. As such, the position of the minsters within their local communities and the church as a whole is important not just from the point of view of placing them in a wider context, but also for what it potentially says about their institutional identities.

Institutional Structures And The People Within Them

In any sort of institutional history, there is a risk of ignoring the fact that the institution was made up of collections of individuals. In part, this is a function of the evidence; of grants to the institution as a whole, of statutes that submerge individual identity beneath that of the chapter, and of records more concerned with the institutions' holdings than with their personnel. It is also to some extent a function of permanence. Despite changing considerably over the period, the institutions of the minsters still had more of a sense of continuity to them than individuals who might have been referred to only once or twice (or indeed not at all) in the available evidence.

Mostly though, the difference is down to the concerns of institutional history. Although it seems important to recognise the role that individuals could, and did, play in bringing about change within the minsters, the principal considerations here are those relating to the institutions as whole entities. Particularly when dealing with issues of institutional identity and the development of institutional structures, that seems entirely legitimate, so while the effects of individual actions are certainly addressed to some extent herein, they are not always the most important issue.

Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

One technical issue, which links to the coverage of the sources mentioned above, is the difficulty of producing substantial quantitative analysis for the minsters, their finances, their personnel, or indeed any aspect of them as institutions. The key problem here is one of incompleteness, which prevents more than sporadic comment upon those areas, and which makes a more qualitative approach to the issues frequently the most appropriate. That is not to say that there are no instances where a quantitative approach can be used to some degree, however. In those moments where it is possible to obtain details about the land holding or incomes of the minsters it is in fact quite useful, but in general, the opportunities for it are limited.

It must be asked, moreover, whether a quantitative approach can even be the right one when dealing with issues of identity, institutional change and the definition of a position within the wider religious community. Quantitative methods perhaps provide a brief illusion of empiricism, but are in fact no more automatically objective than any other historical method, and provide little insight into the sort of institutional relationships, and relationships with figures of authority, that are vital to understanding the positions of the minsters in the period.

Key Questions

In comparing the three minsters it is important to bear a number of questions in mind. The most basic of these is what their institutional structures consisted of during the period. How many prebends did they have? When did their offices come into being? What conditions applied to such issues as the residence of canons or the payment of vicars? These questions are the essential ones of the task of reconstructing the minster chapters, apply equally to all three minsters, and form a basis for at least the initial chapters of this work.

Perhaps a more important set of questions, however, centres on the minsters' relations with one another. At its most fundamental, we must ask whether there was any such relationship. Did the minsters have contact with one another? Did they ever act together? Is there any reason to see them as a coherent group, or were they simply isolated institutions? Connected to this, and also building on the straightforward comparisons needed to understand their institutional structures, is the question of whether changes in those structures over the period made them more or less similar. If they became more similar, was this a result of simple chance, or of a more active process of convergence between them?

The possibility of the minsters' convergence raises further questions, primarily about what could drive such a process. This question is at the heart of several of the later chapters, which examine the minsters' relations with the outside world. Although examining the possibility that such change might have come about through influences within the minsters themselves, these later chapters also explore the possibility that the change was in fact being driven by sources of authority outside their walls, or in response to changing circumstances.

There are, therefore, clear questions that need to be addressed in the examination of the minsters in this period:

1. What were their institutional structures, and how similar were they?
2. Did they become more or less similar over the period?
3. If they became more similar, what drove this process?
4. What effect, if any, did this have on the institutional identities of the minsters?

In an attempt to address these questions, I will begin by examining the position of the minsters immediately after the Conquest with the aid of Domesday Book. Having

established this starting position, I will go on to explore the development over the period of the most important elements of the minsters as institutions; their canons, their offices and dignitaries, and their vicars and chantry priests. In particular, I will be discussing the extent to which the minsters converged on a common model, the possible source for such a model, and the evidence that this convergence was deliberate.

After this I will examine the minsters' relationships with the Archbishops of York, with the wider Church, with the Church on a more local level, and with their most important patrons. Again, the similarity of the minsters' relations will be an issue, as will the extent to which they were treated as a coherent group in the course of those relations. Importantly, however, these sections will also be examining the influences on the minsters in the period in an attempt to determine both the reasons for any convergence that occurred between them and the principle groups or individuals responsible for bringing it about.

2- The Minsters at the Conquest

To compare the ways in which the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell developed in the period 1066-1300, it is first necessary to establish what their circumstances were at the Conquest. These are not necessarily straightforward to identify. The majority of charters and grants that can be used to explain their rights, for example, came into being later, while even the chapters' own records reveal little at such an early date.[1]

The most relevant sources here are the fragments of chronicle evidence that survive, such as the twelfth century Beverley canon William Kettell's account of the miracles of St John of Beverley,[2] along with the information about each minster to be found in Domesday Book. Of those, it is probably Domesday Book that offers the most. Blair has identified the ownership of land as one of the key aspects of identifying a pre-existing minster in Domesday Book,[3] and this land ownership has translated to a presence in Domesday Book for all three minsters. To some extent, of course, this presence also reflects good fortune since, as sub-tenants, Sawyer has shown that there was a considerable risk of being ignored by a process often more concerned with tenants-in-chief.[4]

Since Beverley, Ripon and Southwell are all mentioned, the question becomes principally one of what it is possible to do with the information available. Broadly, the possibilities divide into two areas. Firstly, there is a considerable amount of information to be gained about the minsters' landholding, about their wealth, and about their formal relations in terms of tenancy and sub-tenancy. These elements are relatively secure, though they are still subject to the sort of problems Barlow saw in Domesday Book

[1] For the minsters' most important rights, see appendix 1. For their interaction with the local area, see chapters 3, 7 and 8
[2] J. Raine (ed), *Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops*, (Stationary Office, London, 1894) pp.266-269. An earlier note, on page 261, suggests that his account was before 1152.
[3] Blair, 'Secular Minster churches in Doomsday Book'
[4] P. Sawyer, *Domesday Book: A Reassessment*, (Arnold, London, 1986)

when pointing out that 'at every stage there was an accumulation of every possible type of error.'[5] It is with this relatively secure type of analysis that I shall begin.

It also appears possible, however, to use Domesday Book in conjunction with other evidence in order to suggest points about the minsters beyond the scope of William I's questions on 'how much his kingdom was worth and how much he could squeeze out of it.'[6] Used carefully, Domesday Book appears to be able to at least make suggestions about the place of the minsters within their local areas, about some of their rights, and potentially about the development of their relationship with the Archbishops of York. In connection to Southwell, Leach even went so far as to suggest that careful analysis of Domesday Book could establish which of its prebends were in existence at the Conquest.[7]

Whether this is in fact legitimate is something that I shall discuss below, along with the other aspects of the minsters beyond the scope of their wealth and land ownership. To begin with, however, it is the more straightforward applications of Domesday Book that shall form the focus of our attention.

The Minster Lands in Domesday Book

"Straightforward" is a relative term here, however, and any assessment of the minsters' landholding in Domesday Book is subject to two important limitations. The first of these is the potential for discrepancies in terminology and the recording process to affect any results. It is possible that some terms may have been used in potentially variable ways by different recorders, while in other cases there are discrepancies in exactly what is recorded. Campbell, for example, has noted that the render of herrings is

[5] F.Barlow, 'Domesday Book: an Introduction', *Domesday Essays*, (University of Exeter, 1986) pp.16-28 (p.25)
[6] J.S.Matthews 'William the Conqueror's campaign in Cheshire in 1069-70: Ravaging and Resistance in the North West' *Northern History*, 40: 1 (March 2003) p.60
[7] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxv

only noted in Domesday Book for Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Norfolk and Suffolk.[8] While none of the minsters had any particular connection to herrings, it does serve to illustrate that Domesday Book was far from standardised. There are a number of areas where this could affect attempts to compare them, particularly because Southwell, being in Nottinghamshire, was recorded on a different circuit to Ripon and Beverley.

The second issue with Domesday Book in assessing the minsters concerns the level of ownership a minster had within manors displaying land ownership by more than one party. For Beverley, in particular, the picture in Domesday Book is far from straightforward, with the minster having total ownership in some manors and only a plough or two in lordship in others. Beverley itself is an example of this, with the outliers Skidby and Bishop Burton having some 31 carucates of land between them.[9] The notes on the value of the land make it clear that the archbishop as well as the canons had an interest in the town, with it being worth £14 to him.[10] Since the exact division of the available carucates is not given, it is impossible to know for certain how much of the town the canons owned. Although not an untypical situation within Domesday Book, it creates difficulties in assessing exactly how much land the minster possessed.

One option with such an assessment is to take a rigorously critical approach, and ascribe to the minster only those lands that can be demonstrated definitely to have belonged to the institution. The difficulty with this approach, of course, is that the final total will miss out lands from places where we can say that the minster owned land, but not how much. The opposite approach would be to include every portion of land that might have belonged to the minster in those cases that are uncertain, but this is just as

[8] J. Cambell 'Domesday Herrings' in C. Harper-Bill (ed) *East-Anglia's History* (Boydell, Woodbridge, 2002) p.7
[9] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, (Phillimore, London, 1986) 2E:1
[10] *ibid.*

likely to overstate the minster's land holdings as the previous approach is to understate it.

A solution of sorts can be found in providing both figures, and that is what I have endeavoured to do below. While neither the upper nor lower figure is likely to be an accurate reflection of the lands held by the minster in question, they will at least provide a range within which the extent of the minster's lands may have fallen. I have refrained from providing a "best-guess" figure in addition to these, for the simple reason that it would be no more than a guess, and possibly one to which too much weight might be attached. Instead, where appropriate, I have sought to comment on those points of confusion that do arise, giving some indication as to the likelihood of the various possibilities.

Beverley[11]

In total, there are ten areas specifically noted in Domesday Book as belonging wholly to St John's Minster, while twenty-eight entries mention no major landholder other than the minster. The minster appears to have had a partial interest in five more manors, although the precise extent of this interest is not always clear. Even a relatively conservative estimate of the minster's holdings, however, taking into account only those lands definitely belonging to Beverley Minster, has the minster owning 137 carucates of land. A maximum figure could be as high as 168 carucates of land.

The manors wholly owned by the minster are recorded within Domesday Book as having the potential for the use of 77 ploughs, while a further 19 were possible on lands partially owned by the minster. Five churches are recorded on lands belonging to the minster, along with four mills and a fishery. The Domesday Book entries suggest that somewhere between 139 and 161 villagers, and between 47 and 48 smallholders,

[11] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2E:1-2E:41

fell under the lordship of the minster. These villagers and smallholders possessed between an additional 47 ½ and 55 ½ ploughs.

The minster's lands included 96 acres of meadow, along with 4 ½ square leagues of woodland pasture. Based on the taxable values given, the minimum value of the lands was £23 7s, with the maximum some 40s higher. The minster appears not to have held lands in other counties; indeed the majority of the lands concerned appear to have been reasonably close to the minster if not directly adjacent to it. The lands were all held from the Archbishop of York.

Southwell[12]

The holdings of Southwell Minster appear to have been somewhat less extensive. Only five and a half carucates of land are noted in Domesday Book as being in the possession of the minster or its canons. At most, an additional two carucates and one bovate could be added to that. The minster is recorded as having some five and a half ploughs in lordship, with no more than an additional half plough for a maximum figure. These lands included lordship over between 44 and 52 villagers, 12 to 19 smallholders, and between 5 and 14 freemen. These had possession of between 16 and 22 ½ ploughs. The minster appears to have possessed both a mill and a fishery, while its lands had between 73 and 101 acres of meadow, along with 2-20 square furlongs of pasture.

Only two manors, Norwell and Bishop Cropwell, record St Mary's of Southwell as the sole landowner in that manor.[13] Bishop Cropwell, with the associated outlier Hickling, amounted to only two and a half carucates of land, but did have five freemen, 15 villagers and four smallholders along with 20 acres of meadow. Norwell amounted to only 12 bovates of land containing 22 villagers and three smallholders, but also had jurisdiction over Osmanthorpe, Willoughby, Caunton, Hockerton and Woodborough,

[12] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, (Phillimore, London, 1977) 5:1-5:19
[13] *ibid.* 5:3 and 5:13

which amounted to a further 17 ½ bovates of land with 26 acres of meadow.[14] It also contained a church and priest. Including that priest, four clerics mentioned in Domesday Book could reasonably be connected with Southwell Minster, the others being noted as landholders within Southwell itself.[15]

Although Southwell Minster possessed fewer parcels of land than Beverley Minster, the manors in question appear to have been reasonably valuable. Norwell was worth 100 shillings to the minster, while Bishop Cropwell was worth 50 shillings. The town of Southwell was assessed at an additional £40 15s, but again it is difficult to know what portion of this was the value of the canons lands within the town. It is likely, given their limited holdings within the town, that it is only a relatively small percentage of it. As such, it is probably reasonable to suggest that the lands belonging to the canons of Southwell were not quite as valuable as Beverley's holdings. Again, the lands were held from the Archbishop of York.

Ripon[16]

Ripon Minster appears to have had less land still. Domesday Book records a mere 14 bovates of land are noted as being in the possession of either the canons or the minster.[17] The manor of Ripon, containing the minster, was somewhat larger, with ten ploughs possible, two held in lordship by Archbishop Thomas. The entry in question records both a mill and a fishery, worth a total of 13 shillings to the archbishop.[18] Ripon is recorded as containing eight villagers and ten smallholders as well as ten acres of meadow and an unspecified amount of underwood. Most of the outliers for Ripon are

[14] *ibid* 5:14-5:18
[15] *ibid.* 5:1
[16] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2W:7-2W:13
[17] *ibid,* 2W:7
[18] *ibid.*

noted as being waste. [19] Prior to 1066 these outliers amounted to 43 carucates with thirty ploughs possible; this had been reduced to nine ploughs by 1087 although 75 acres of meadow was attached to these lands, along with a league of woodland pasture. Ripon is also recorded as having had jurisdiction over a number of other manors, amounting to 21 and a half carucates of land in total.[20] A further half a carucate of land in Nunwick is noted separately as falling under the jurisdiction of Ripon.[21] The difficulty here is that none of this land is directly associated with the minster in Doomsday Book, instead belonging to the archbishop. The town of Ripon is assessed at £7 10s, but again, this represents a maximum value, and is included only because it is impossible to accurately separate Ripon's lands within the town from the total value. Once again, the lands were held from the Archbishop of York.

The Minsters' Relative Wealth

From these figures, we can see that the three minsters held rather different levels of land from the archbishop, and had apparently different incomes as a result. On Domesday Book's evidence, Beverley was easily the wealthiest of the three, while Ripon had hardly any land beyond the small amounts necessary for prebends, and Southwell came in somewhere between the two.

Taken alone, these figures therefore present an intriguing picture of the relative wealth of the three minsters. They suggest, for example, that the minsters were very much individual institutions with different circumstances, including different positions as landholders. On the other hand, presented alone, these figures tell us little about the minsters' position compared with the rest of the country. This can only be established in comparison both with other institutions and with landholders more generally.

[19] *ibid.*
[20] *ibid* 5:8
[21] *ibid* 5:9

Burton[22] has provided figures for the yearly income of a number of monastic houses, dividing them into groups with a value of £100-200, £200-500, and £500-900. The first group includes houses such as those at Malmesbury and Evesham, the second such houses as St Albans and Shaftesbury, and the third the likes of Glastonbury and St Augustine's at Canterbury. All three of these groups have in common a higher level of income than that shown above for the minsters. Does this mean that they were not on the same level of status or prestige as England's monastic houses? Certainly, it seems to imply that they had considerably less wealth than the vast majority of them. This is, perhaps, in keeping with a position for the minsters as secondary to York.

The difficulty here though is the sheer scale of the gap in wealth between the minsters and the monastic houses. The evidence of Domesday Book suggests that they were not, financially, even close to being on the same level as the lowest tier of monasteries. Given their later importance within their areas, and indeed their later levels of wealth,[23] this does not entirely make sense. Instead, it appears reasonable to conclude that something else is happening here.

One answer might lie in the structure of the minsters' income. As will be seen in chapter three, much of the canons' incomes were in forms such as shares of tithes, thraves due to the minster in the case of Beverley, and other payments that might not have shown up as part of the taxable value of the land in Domesday Book. Other elements, such as the freedom from tax guaranteed for Beverley, and possibly for Ripon in the form of its 'league'[24], may also add largely unquantifiable elements of value to this figure. Since Burton is dealing with overall income rather than just the assessed geld values of Domesday landholding, it may simply be that we are not comparing like with like. Certainly if we compare the Domesday holdings of Beverley to the nine

[22] J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300* (Cambridge University Press, 1994) p.9
[23] See chapters 6 and 3
[24] 2E: 1 and 2W: 7

carucates that formed the foundation of Rievaulx in 1132, the difference is not nearly so marked.[25]

Having said that, it must also be noted that another possibility exists, which shall be discussed more fully below, in the form of a suggestion that the closeness of the minsters' ties to the archbishop may have somewhat obscured their level of wealth, perhaps by disguising their sub-tenancy on some of the archbishop's lands. Even so, it still seems reasonable to suggest for the moment that the minsters probably did not have the same level of wealth as the most important monastic institutions. Those monasteries are not, however, the only possible point of comparison. Palmer, in his article 'The wealth of the secular aristocracy in 1086'[26] categorised the aristocracy of England according to the wealth in their demesne holdings. In this, not only do we gain a point of comparison with the minsters' secular surroundings, but we may also find that, as Palmer was working with the values of holdings in Domesday Book, a more direct comparison can be made.

He produced seven categories, A-G, with levels of wealth ranging from more than £300 in category A to less than £1 in category G. Working with these classifications, we can see that Beverley and Southwell would both have fallen into category E (£5-£45), while the lack of any separate statement of income for Ripon's minster means that strictly speaking it should not even make it onto the scale. If, however, we are generous to the point of allotting it most of the value ascribed to the town of Ripon, it could just about have made it into the same category. As with Burton's assessment of monastic wealth, this does not create an impression of the minsters as extremely wealthy institutions. The comments about the minsters' incomes based on things other than direct ownership of land apply just as much here as with the

[25] Rev. J.C. Atkinson, *Chartulary of Rievaulx*, (Surtees Society, No 83, 1887) pp.16-21
[26] J.J.N. Palmer 'The Wealth of the Secular Aristocracy in 1086' *Anglo Norman Studies XXII*, C. Harper-Bill (ed), (Boydell, Woodbridge, 2000) pp.279-291

monastic houses, of course, but even so it does seem that they had considerably less wealth than the most important landholders.

They did not, however, have less wealth in their demesne and other holdings than the majority of those landholders. Palmer's analysis shows that only 143 landholders were in the categories above the minsters, while some 5184 were in those below them. Category E accounted for some 940 landholders, possessing between them the highest proportion of the overall wealth, at 34%. Therefore the minsters were probably at a level of wealth equivalent to most minor nobles, certainly to those who made up the bulk of the country's wealth. They were not as wealthy as the most important individuals or institutions, but this is to be expected, since they were not the most important institutions, but rather institutions of lesser importance within the archdiocese. It seems reasonable to suggest that they had exactly the sort of wealth we might expect from such subordinate institutions, and that they fit into Palmer's analysis approximately where they might be expected to.

The above represents what can be said certainty about the minsters on the evidence of Domesday Book. It serves to place them both in a position relative to one another, and relative to other landholders in Domesday Book. However, there are other suggestions that can be made based on both this evidence and chronicle accounts, providing it is recognised that they are suggestions, and as such are less secure than the most clear cut applications of the evidence in Domesday Book. They include suggestions as to the minsters' rights, as to their canons and prebendal structures, as to their relationship with the archbishop, and as to their status in the local area.

The Minsters' Rights

To take the first of these issues, what can be said of the rights of the minsters at this point? In particular, were they the same for all three minsters? Were they even clearly defined by the Conquest?

The charter evidence would initially seem to suggest that they were, with the rhyming charters of Beverley and Ripon in particular purporting to demonstrate a number of rights granted to the minsters by Aethelstan. Although the charters in question will be discussed further in chapters three and eight, it is sufficient to say here that they are probably later forgeries,[27] and that the association of Aethelstan with the minster's rights instead of just the minster was not even made until 1136 for Beverley.[28] As such, the charters are far from being straightforward guides to the privileges of the institutions concerned. Used in conjunction with the guesses made as to earlier rights made by such charters, however, Domesday Book can at least suggest what sorts of rights might have been in place.

The first right mentioned in the entry for Beverley is that, 'St John's carucate was always free from the King's tax'.[29] No such right is recorded for either Ripon or Southwell and so it must be assumed that they did not have the same privilege immediately after the Conquest. A similar phrase is used, however, to refer to the area around Ripon Minster; it is called, 'St. Wilfred's Territory'[30] in the translation, although the use of the word Levga in the Latin appears to imply that, 'St. Wilfred's League' might also be a valid translation, particularly since the entry goes on to record that the lands of the archbishop and canons in Ripon fell 'one league around the church'.[31] Since

[27] J. Witty, 'The Rhyming Charter of Beverley' *Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, xxii, 1921,* pp.36-44
[28] H.WC. Davis (ed), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normanorum*, Volume 3, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968) p.36
[29] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2E:1
[30] *ibid.* 2W7
[31] *ibid.*

both Beverley and Ripon had rights of sanctuary extending the protection of those concerned out to around a mile, with varying penalties for its breach depending on the distance,[32] this phrase could possibly suggest the existence of that right prior to the Conquest, particularly since this is in line with the later rhyming charter.

The potential difficulty with this argument lies with the entry for Southwell, which refers to the minster simply as St Mary's of Southwell and gives no hint as to the existence of a territory around the minster, still less as to one associated with a specific distance. As will be seen when the charter evidence is discussed, Southwell had very similar rights in this regard, and those rights were punishable in varying degrees depending on the distance of the individuals concerned from the Frith Stool in the church.[33] The similar structure of this right to Beverley and Ripon, along with the association with a much older object in the form of the Frith Stool, probably suggests that Southwell's rights in this regard were every bit as old as Beverley's or Ripon's, yet there is nothing to hint at this as there is in Domesday Book. Partly, this may simply be another difference in language between those recording the Nottinghamshire Domesday survey and those recording for Yorkshire. The difference may also owe something to the way the minster is recorded within the town. With both Beverley and Ripon, the minster is the first item noted in the entries for the towns.[34] The canons of Southwell, by contrast, are mentioned only in passing; the town was very definitely the archbishop's.[35] This in turn may suggest a slightly greater role for Beverley and Ripon's minsters within their respective towns than for Southwell's minster.

There is a faint possibility that this overstates the case somewhat. It may be possible that these references to St John's carucate and St Wilfred's territory simply represented expressions of the associations between those towns and the saints in

[32] See below and chapter 8
[33] SWB p18
[34] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2E:1 and 2W7
[35] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:1

question, and that the references were a way of referring generally to the territory of the minsters. This, though, seems unconvincing. Not only is there no repetition of the term in other sources to suggest it as a general name, but also the specific measurement of a carucate in the case of Beverley, along with the freedom from taxation by the king, seems too precise for such an explanation.

Domesday Book also implies that there were some rights the minsters definitely did not have over their lands. The Nottinghamshire Domesday survey notes those who had, 'full jurisdiction and market rights and the king's customary dues of two pence'[36] and includes the archbishop on that list for his own lands. For Yorkshire, it is noted that no one but the archbishop had customary dues, 'except as a burgess'.[37] In both cases the implication appears to be that only those mentioned had the rights in question. As such, it appears that at this point none of the minsters had customary dues or market rights. The minsters did, however, have at least one freedom in this regard. Domesday Book states that, 'In the demesne manors the Earl had nothing at all' and goes on to state that a number of ecclesiastical institutions including both St John's and St Wilfred's were free from customary dues.[38]

Southwell does not appear to be the beneficiary of a similar term, but it seems likely that, falling within the lands of the archbishop, it was subject to his customary dues rather than those of the earl at this point. Whether this would have made any difference to the canons is possibly rather doubtful.

The Canons and their Prebends in Domesday

Domesday Book is not a record of the internal structures of the institutions that occur in it. Nevertheless, because the prebends that supported each minster's canons were based

[36] *ibid.* S
[37] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, C:1a
[38] *ibid.* C:37

at least in part on the income from the surrounding land, [39] it appears possible to deduce a certain amount from the information presented on those lands in Domesday Book. This is something that others have also attempted, approaching different areas of minster structures in their assessments. Blair's work has attempted to identify minster churches based on this evidence, along with identifying fundamental features of minster churches in the period.[40] Leach's earlier work on Southwell attempted to go further, in using traces in Domesday Book as a means for establishing the presence of particular prebends.[41] It is Blair's methodology that we will turn to first, in an attempt to answer the most fundamental question about the minster's structures: were all three bodies of secular canons at the Conquest? The answer appears to be an unequivocal yes.

The status of the three churches as minsters is not necessarily the most important point in this, since not only does the term make little distinction between secular and regular canons, but also it does not appear to be a term used in connection with Southwell, Ripon or Beverley. Where the minsters are mentioned, it is by the names of their respective saints. There is little argument that they were not definitely minsters, however. Blair identified six indicators for a church to be recognised as a minster on the evidence of Domesday Book.[42] These were:

1) Groups of resident clerics
2) Endowments of at least 1 carucate
3) Separate tenure of the Church or its land
4) Separate valuations of the church or surveys of its assets
5) Various marks of status
6) Possible Episcopal or Royal ownership

[39] see chapter 3, and below.
[40] J. Blair, 'Secular Minster churches in Doomsday Book'
[41] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, pxxv
[42] J. Blair, 'Secular Minster churches in Doomsday Book'

Even if the known histories of Beverley, Southwell and Ripon did not point to them being minsters by the time of the Conquest, all three appear to meet enough of the above criteria that it is clear that they were minsters. Even the canons of Ripon managed to hold more than a carucate of land[43] while all combined separate mentions of their assets with apparent control by the archbishop, even though, as noted above, there is some suggestion that the holdings of Ripon and Southwell might have been subsumed to an extent in the holdings of the Archbishop of York. All appear to have had tenure over those lands they held and marks of status appear to be an indicator that is likely but not required.

The problem with this approach for the purposes of this work, of course, lies with the first criteria and the circularity it creates. The identification of the three institutions as minsters cannot be used as proof of the presence of canons immediately after the Conquest for the simple reason that the presence of canons is one of the defining criteria. Thankfully, Domesday Book is sufficiently clear on the point as to render this approach largely unnecessary. Speaking of 'St John's Carucate' the Domesday Book notes that, 'the canons' had one plough in lordship.[44] For Ripon, Domesday Book notes that, 'the canons' had fourteen bovates of the land in Ripon.[45]

Southwell is at first glance a little more ambiguous, since the entry for Southwell in Domesday Book refers, not to canons, but to three clerics, who held one and a half carucates of land in the town. Domesday Book, however, goes on to record that two bovates of the land concerned were in prebend, thus demonstrating that the three clerics were canons.[46]

[43] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, W2:7
[44] *ibid.* E2:1
[45] *ibid.* 2W:7
[46] *Doomsday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:1

Were the canons secular? It is interesting that the canons of Ripon and Beverley, which have a reputation for starting in an essentially monastic form, are referred to as canons in Domesday Book,[47] while the canons of Southwell are referred to as clerics.[48] Does this suggest some difference between them, that the canons of Ripon and Beverley were perhaps regular canons at this point? It appears clear that it does not. We know that by the end of the period the canons of both institutions were secular canons, and there is no evidence in the period of a transition from being regular canons to secular ones. The lands are described as being in prebend,[49] and a later entry for Bishop Cropwell refers to canons.[50] The only conflicting evidence comes from the situation at York, which only acquired separate prebends under Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux.[51] If he needed to introduce the idea there, it perhaps creates difficulties for the secular status of the minsters' canons, especially with Beverley's collective land holding.[52] Perhaps it is more appropriate to acknowledge Archbishop Thomas' potential influence, therefore, and to say that the minsters were definitely secular ones shortly after the Conquest, while for Ripon and Southwell in particular there is no evidence of any later transformation to a less collective way of life.

What can be said of the canons based on the evidence of Domesday Book? Despite the evidence of recording variations noted above, there seems to be sufficient reason to suspect at least some differences between the canons of Ripon and Beverley on the one hand and Southwell on the other. It is, for example, interesting that the entry for Southwell refers specifically to three clerics, while comments on the land holdings of the canons of Ripon and Beverley refer to the canons as a group without mentioning

[47] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2W:7 "habent canon xiiii bovates" and 2E:1 "Tc ual canon xx lib"
[48] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:1 "Tres clerici"
[49] *ibid.* "in prebenda"
[50] *ibid* 5:3 "Ibi habent canon"
[51] C. Norton, *Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux and the Norman Cathedral at York*, Borthwick Papers (100), (University of York, York, 2001) p.5
[52] See above and chapter 3

their number. It is of course possible that this is simply a difference in recording again, but it could also be suggestive of a somewhat less corporate lifestyle for the clerics of Southwell. The entries suggest that the three canons mentioned in the Southwell entry owned the land mentioned on their own, separate from any fellow canons.

As such, there would seem to have been a difference at this point between Southwell, whose canons had individual control of lands, and the other two minsters. This interpretation would seem to fit particularly well with what is known of the later history of Beverley Minster, which initially had no prebends per se but instead assigned canons to the church's altars and paid them from the common fund.[53]

The Prebends

Having been able to establish that there were secular canons at all three minsters by the conquest, the next question becomes one of their numbers. Leach has argued for seven in the case of Southwell,[54] citing both the similarity of such a number to those of York, Beverley and possibly Ripon and emphasising the evidence of Domesday Book. While his comment as to the similarity of numbers may initially seem to make sense, it seems a poor basis for certainty, particularly as Leach goes on to suggest that over the course of their histories Beverley increased only to nine canons, while Southwell went on to house some sixteen canons.[55] Any indication of Ripon having seven prebends seems to be pure confusion on Leach's part, since Ripon's seventh prebend, Sharrow, was founded after the Conquest, by Archbishop Thurstan.[56] These figures suggest both that any argument from similarity is flawed, and that there is no reason whatsoever why Southwell could not have supported more canons than the other minsters.

[53] See chapter 3
[54] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxv
[55] *ibid.* p.xxvii
[56] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.95

Leach's approach to the evidence of Domesday Book, however, demands more serious consideration. Leach's method appears to have been to look at the areas given as the geographical sites of the prebends and seek evidence for the involvement of the minster. He concluded that there was evidence for the prebend of Normanton, for the three prebends of Norwell, for the two of Cropwell and for the prebend of Woodborough. This seems a remarkably precise examination given how little evidence there is even for the canons of the minster in question. It seems important, therefore, to ask exactly how strong this evidence is.

The three prebends of Norwell are perhaps the most strongly supported by Domesday Book. St Mary's of Southwell certainly owned land there, and there was both a church and a priest in Norwell.[57] Normanton also has a little evidence supporting the idea of a prebend there, since it is specifically noted that there was 'jurisdiction in Southwell' for the manor and a priest named Ernwy is recorded as holding five bovates of land within the manor, although there is no definite connection made between him and Southwell.[58] Again, in Bishop Cropwell, there was land attributable to St Mary's and the canons held two ploughs in lordship.[59] Woodborough, similarly, is recorded as belonging to Southwell and a cleric is noted as having had one bovate of land under the archbishop.[60]

Leach argued that this evidence was sufficient to demonstrate the presence of prebends in the lands mentioned. However, I would suggest that while the evidence is perhaps suggestive of the influence of St Mary's of Southwell in at least some of the areas concerned, it is far from conclusive proof of prebends there. The cleric in Woodborough is taxed directly under the archbishop in Domesday Book, while no

[57] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:13
[58] *ibid.* 30:11
[59] *ibid* 5:3
[60] *ibid.* 5:18

mention is made of St Mary's.[61] This would seem to suggest that the cleric in question was not a canon of the minster at all, but was more probably connected directly to the archbishop. In the same way, there is no definite proof of the strength the priest Ernwy's connection to the minster either.

Leach's approach seems to be largely dependent therefore upon knowing the answer in advance, focussing only on those prebends he believed to have been in existence. One way to test this is to look at the other prebends of Southwell and seek evidence for the presence of the minster in 1087. North Muskham seems the logical place to start, since Leach seems confused over it, initially giving the number of prebends for Southwell as seven, which would exclude North Muskham, then stating that it was, 'probable that North Muskham was an original prebend.'[62]

In fact, Leach's approach would suggest that North Muskham was not an original prebend; the evidence he cites for clear control of the manor by Southwell does not appear to be present in Domesday Book, and there is certainly no mention of the minster, or of clerics or canons more generally.[63] South Muskham, which Leach dismisses as a prebend, likewise shows no evidence of connection to the minster, although it was at least partly owned by the archbishop.[64]

Most of Southwell's other prebends have well documented beginnings, but one, Sacrista, does not. It is tempting to say that this came into being with the creation of the office of the sacrist for Southwell; indeed, the prebend existed solely as a way of supporting that particular office. The difficulty with the evidence, as will be discussed below in chapter four, is that while it provides a date by which the sacrist was already in existence as an office, it does not provide a date for the creation of that office. Is it possible that the prebend of Sacrista, and indeed the office it supported, was in

[61] *ibid.*
[62] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxvii
[63] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:2
[64] *ibid. 5:5*

existence shortly after the Conquest? Any evidence for it within Domesday Book would be found in the entry for Southwell itself, since the prebend consisted of, 'no lands, except a house and garden attached to it' both near the minster.[65] As has been noted, the Domesday entry for Southwell mentions three cannons, holding some two bovates of land in prebend between them. Leach does not appear to have discussed these canons and it does not appear that he assumed that these were the three canons of Norwell, since he notes that, 'the vicarage of Southwell was in the presentation of the prebendary of Normanton'[66] and so seems to accept that it was this canon with the greatest influence within Southwell.

It does not initially seem implausible to suggest, therefore, that the sacrist could have been one of the canons mentioned in connection with Southwell.[67] There are, however, problems with this. The first is the lack of land associated with the Sacrista prebend in the course of Southwell's later history. The three canons mentioned owned more than a single house. Unless the prebend lost some of the land it possessed at the Conquest, and there is no record of this, then the sacrist was not one of the three canons mentioned in Domesday Book. This does not preclude the existence of the Sacrista prebend at the Conquest, but it does mean that its existence cannot be proven through Domesday Book.

Another difficulty stems from discussion of the role of the sacrist within Southwell. While this will be discussed in more detail later,[68] it seems unlikely that that office of the sacrist was in existence until somewhat after the Conquest, although it is not impossible. If there was no sacrist until later, it logically follows that there would have been no prebend for him at the Conquest. Even the possibility that a pre-existing prebend was simply attached to the office of the sacrist at a later date seems unlikely,

[65] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxvi
[66] *ibid.* p.xxvi
[67] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire* 5:1
[68] See chapter 4

both through the lack of positive evidence for such an attachment and because the lack of land associated with the Sacrista prebend differed so markedly from the other prebends of Southwell that it seems very much a special creation rather than an adaptation of something already existing.

Attempting to apply Leach's methods to Ripon and Beverley reveals even greater problems. For Ripon, an immediate difficulty presents itself in that the prebends of Ripon were not initially named on a geographical basis, but were instead named after their holders. Only later (possibly as late as 1301) did they come to be named after principal villages or hamlets within them.[69] The risk, therefore, is that if the geographical focus of a prebend were to have changed over time, it could render the results of Leach's methodology essentially meaningless. The application of Leach's method to Beverley brings even less consistent results. Of the three discussed, Beverley is the minster with the most clearly recorded influence on the manors in its local area. Yet, at least at that point, it had a structure based not on prebends linked to specific locations, but on the common fund.[70]

It is perhaps possible to interpret the evidence of land ownership in a way that supports this, however. The canons of Beverley are mentioned in Domesday Book, and noted as receiving rents, or deriving income from land, or having ploughs in lordship. When carucates and bovates of land are mentioned, however, it is the minster that is referred to as owning them. The minster owned land, from which the chapter derived income, or upon which it owned things of value, and this fed into the common fund. There is no need, therefore, to see the mentions of the minster's interest in a particular place as necessarily indicative of the presence of a prebend.

Overall, this approach seems far too hit and miss to function effectively as a means of locating prebends. There is perhaps something to be gained through its

[69] Hallett, *The Cathedral Church of Ripon,* p.18
[70] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xix

application, in terms of suggestive and supporting evidence, but Domesday Book here is forced too far to be of real use. Instead, regression from the known totals of prebends seems to present a better guide to the numbers of prebends the minsters possessed at the conquest. Taking away additional post-Conquest foundations leaves totals of six prebends for Ripon and seven for Beverley,[71] albeit with the caveat that Beverley's prebends did not become stable individual incomes from particular parcels of land until later.[72]

For Southwell, things potentially become a little more difficult. Leach settled on seven prebends,[73] but having demonstrated above that his main reason for doing so was flawed, it would seem that the number has no more in its favour than a certain symmetry with both the other minsters and York. Instead, removing those prebends that we know to have come at a later date[74] leaves ten prebends. So, we can say with certainty that there were ten prebends or fewer in 1066, while the exact number is difficult to pin down.

There is a temptation here to settle on seven anyway, because if Ripon, Beverley, and indeed York all probably had seven or fewer prebends at this point, wouldn't it make sense for Southwell to follow the pattern? The difficulty here is that the plausibility of this similarity is based on an initial acceptance that the minsters were fundamentally the same at the Conquest, when most of the discussion above has suggested that there were differences. We cannot even take seven as a minimum number with any certainty, given Ripon's circumstances. Instead, as chapter three argues further in discussing the foundations of Southwell's remaining prebends, the most that can be said with certainty is that by 1120 there were ten prebends at Southwell.

[71] See chapter 3 for these foundations.
[72] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xix
[73] Leach, *Memorials of Southwell*, p.xxvii
[74] See chapter 3

The Minsters and the Archbishop

The information on the minsters' lands has done much to establish their relationship with the archbishop at the conquest. It has also pointed out one of the areas of similarity between them at that point: they were all his sub-tenants. In particular, this demonstrates the importance of the relationship between the minsters and the archbishop on a temporal level; the personnel of the minsters were not just his religious subordinates, they also held their land from him. In this, we might see a precursor of one aspect of the relationship between the archbishop and the minsters throughout this period.[75] The lands belonging to the minsters remained distinct from those of the archbishop, but the archbishop was nevertheless closely involved with the minsters' lands, providing portions of them in grants, setting limits on what could be done with them, possessing estates nearby, and, on at least one occasion, giving instructions for their recovery following poor deals.[76]

A clear example of the closeness of this relationship may be seen in Domesday Book in the case of Beverley Minster, which effectively shared the town of Beverley with the archbishop, it being worth £14 to the archbishop and £20 to the canons of the minster in 1087.[77] It is tempting to suggest that the fall in the value of the archbishop's share, from £24 before 1066, might be indicative of a shift in the balance of power within the town. Such a fall could be explained, for example, in terms of the canons moving from a state of relative dependence on the archbishop to being in more complete control of the land on which they resided, and thus their own affairs. This approach produces difficulties almost immediately, however, since although the value of the archbishop's lands did fall, those of the canons stayed static instead of rising. Essentially, this leaves three explanations for Beverley:

[75] See chapter 6
[76] SWB p.5
[77] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2E1

1) The lands of the canons were left untouched by the Conquest, while those of the archbishop suffered damage.
2) The archbishop withdrew to some extent from his lands within Beverley, but did not transfer those lands to the canons.
3) The canons did gain some of the archbishop's lands within Beverley, but the general reduction of land values in the area coincidentally reduced the lands to the same value.

While the third of the above explanations would perhaps suggest the greatest independence on the part of the minster, it also seems the least plausible. Not only is there no record in Domesday Book of the transfer of land from the archbishop to the canons, which exists in other manors, but it seems to ask too much of coincidence to suggest that the value of the lands would have been reduced to exactly the same amount as the lands of the canons were worth before the conquest.

Although the first explanation is fractionally more plausible, given the medieval historian William Kettell's insistence that William I agreed to leave the minster lands alone out of respect for St John,[78] it does seem reasonable to suggest that within the confines of a town, action taken to damage the lands of the archbishop would also have damaged those of the canons. We must also remember, moreover, that Kettell was writing in the 12th century, with more of an eye to the promotion of St John and his minster than to the detail of the Conquest. The most likely explanation, therefore, is that the archbishop became less involved in Beverley than prior to the Conquest. Such an explanation is interesting in its implications, as it suggests that the canons were

[78] Raine (ed), *Historians of the Church of York,* pp.266-269

somewhat less closely connected to the archbishop than before the Conquest, while still not being fully in control of their immediate locale.

If the level of the archbishop's influence of the lands surrounding the minsters may be taken as an indication of the level of the archbishop's temporal influence over those institutions, then this suggests that the minsters of Southwell and Ripon were somewhat more closely controlled than Beverley. In Ripon, as has been noted, the archbishop had almost full ownership of the town and its outliers while in Southwell only one and a half carucates of land around the minster were in the possession of the canons.[79] All three minsters existed within the archbishop's lands, but the minsters of Southwell and Ripon appear to have lacked even the clear cushion of chapter lands around them that Beverley possessed.

It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that this disparity in land holding between Beverley and the other two minsters might, therefore, reflect a difference at the start of the period in their level of independence from the archbishop. The limited land holdings of Southwell and Ripon around their institutions appears to suggest a level of dependence on the archbishop, particularly as they were in towns belonging to the archbishop. Beverley's minster, on the other hand, was sufficiently independent to own more lands in its own right, and to have control of at least part of its surrounding town.

Such a view is reinforced by an examination of the other manors in which the minsters had possessions. In both South Dalton and Middleton, Beverley Minster acquired lands that had been Archbishop Aldred's prior to the Conquest.[80] This could be seen as part of the redistribution of lands away from those who had resisted the Conquest. At the very least, it reinforces the image of the canons benefiting at the expense of the archbishop, and being independent enough from him to be able to do so. After all, if there were not such a clear separation between what belonged to the

[79] *Doomsday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:1
[80] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2E:12 and 2E:2

archbishop and what belonged to the minster, there would have been little point to the reallocation of land in the minster's favour.

The land ownership of Southwell and Ripon, by contrast, appears to have been altogether more static, with their possessions being approximately what they were before the Conquest. Certainly, neither came into ownership of lands previously belonging to the archbishop in the same way that Beverley did. This would appear to be evidence that at this point at least, there was no particular attempt made to treat the three minsters as any kind of a group. Indeed, it would seem to imply that Beverley's canons initially had a different type of relationship with the archbishop than those of the other two minsters, one rather less closely bound up with him, though far from entirely independent of him.

The Minsters and their Local Areas

It may also be reasonable to suggest that the strength of the minsters' connections to the archbishop following the Conquest affected the nature of their relationships with their local areas. All the minsters were landholders, particularly in the case of Beverley. As such, they interacted with the local population on more than one level, being landlords as well as places of worship. This was, of course, true of the majority of medieval churches, but it does suggest a common point between the three. Even Southwell and Ripon, with less land than Beverley, still had strong links to the archbishop, who was one of the most important landholders in the area.

They were, moreover, situated within the main towns of at least their immediate locality. These towns were at least partially owned by the minsters and the archbishop again owned much of what they did not. This must have meant that anybody wishing to do business on a regular basis in the areas around Ripon, Southwell and Beverley would

have come into contact with the canons, or something controlled by them, on a fairly frequent basis.

The canons of Beverley, for example, had control of key businesses within Beverley in the form of three mills and a fishery of seven thousand eels.[81] The mills in particular suggest that the local inhabitants would have had to deal with the minster on a regular basis. In Ripon, it was the archbishop who held the mill and fishery,[82] but it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that, given the strength of its connection to the archbishop, the minster would have had at least some influence over these things. A similar argument applies in the case of the two mills, fishpond and ferry within Southwell,[83] and is reinforced further by the distance between York and Southwell, which suggests that the archbishop would not have been able to exercise constant or direct control over his holdings.

This idea should not be taken too far, of course. The archbishop had bailiffs to control the majority of his more distant interests, and came to have residences in all three,[84] meaning that the minsters would not have been in direct control of them. Any influence they did have would have been of a more indirect kind, based on their association with the archbishop. However, even in those cases where the minsters were not in control of key services of the towns, they still had an obvious presence within important towns in their areas, meaning that they had the opportunity to impress those drawn to the towns on other business.

What of the minsters' relations with other ecclesiastical institutions? The first thing to be assessed is how important the minsters were in relation to other ecclesiastical institutions within their areas. It seems an obvious point to make, but all three were less important than the cathedral at York, at least in as much as the three

[81] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2E:1
[82] *ibid.* 2W:7
[83] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:1
[84] See chapter 6

were beneath the Archbishop of York, whose principal seat it was. The relations of the minsters with the archbishop have already been discussed, but it would also appear reasonable to suggest that York's superiority was not directly dependant upon the archbishop. That is, the mere fact of York's cathedral status gave it greater authority than the minsters, even if the archbishop was not actually in residence. This is a point that has implications for the potential relationship between the minsters and York at the Conquest, in that they were in no sense a set of four equal institutions whose status was decided by the location of the archbishop. This is an important distinction, both for establishing the possibility of the canons of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell having to deal with another institution as subordinates and for those later occasions when the archbishop chose to reside at one of the minsters rather than at the cathedral.[85]

The minsters were, however, of considerable importance on the evidence of Domesday Book. In the Nottinghamshire survey, Southwell Minster is the only church mentioned by name as a landholder. Two abbeys, Burton and Peterborough, are recorded in similar terms.[86] Beverley and Ripon form part of a group of eight churches, including the cathedrals at York and Durham, recorded as specific entities within the Yorkshire survey. Even this number might be reduced, since it is the Abbot of Selby rather than the institution itself that is referred to.[87] Regardless of the issues over their wealth noted above, therefore, Beverley, Ripon and Southwell were of a level of importance and prestige enjoyed by only a small number of other institutions and, as such, were of greater importance and prestige than the vast majority of churches within the area. This does not, of course, necessarily translate to any authority over them, and

[85] See chapter 6
[86] *Domesday Book, Nottinghamshire,* 8 and S5
[87] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2B1

in many cases the minsters had none,[88] but it may have represented an advantage in respect in any dealings they had with other institutions.

The number of churches that were directly controlled by the minsters is naturally a difficult thing to establish, not least because Domesday Book certainly does not contain every church that existed.[89] Nonetheless, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the minsters may have controlled churches on lands owned by the institution in question. For Beverley, Middleton has a church and priest as do Welwick, Ottringham, Sigglesthorne and Leven.[90] All of those manors are either directly recorded as belonging to St John's, or are recorded as outliers belonging to St John's. For Southwell only Norwell has a church and priest,[91] while none of Ripon's prebends show evidence of having had a church.

This appears to demonstrate another instance of disparity between the minsters. We have five churches under the apparent control of Beverley Minster, and one between the other two. Possibly, the scale of this difference could be explained by some churches not being recorded in Domesday Book. This, though, would simply move the difference up a stage, by suggesting that Beverley controlled more important or prestigious churches than Southwell or Ripon, which were more likely to be recorded.

A more useful solution is to see it principally as another expression of Beverley's greater landholding. Beverley had control of more churches through the direct ownership of land that happened to feature churches. Because Ripon and Southwell do not appear to have owned as much land, they did not have the opportunity to possess as many churches. Despite this difference it seems reasonable to maintain the conclusion reached above, that, based on the evidence of Domesday Book, all three

[88] See chapter 7
[89] J. Blair, 'Secular Minster Churches in Domesday Book' p.106
[90] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2E:12, 2E:23, 2E:26, 2E:38 and 2E:41
[91] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire*, 5:13

minsters essentially had a relationship based upon superiority with the majority of ecclesiastical institutions around them at the Conquest.

The Aftermath of the Conquest

It is not just the rights of the minsters that are potentially confirmable through the use of Domesday Book. A specific piece of history connected with the Conquest may also be verifiable, and may suggest something about how the Conquest and its aftermath affected the three minsters. The twelfth century writer William Kettell wrote that in his Harrowing of the North, King William had spared Beverley after hearing of the miracles of St John of Beverley[92] and had additionally confirmed Beverley's pre-existing rights.

Examining this event with the aid of Domesday Book largely involves the comparative levels of waste around each of the minsters, in an effort to see whether Beverley suffered significantly less waste than the other minster towns. This is perhaps an approach at odds with some of the historiography, when writers such as Matthews have been inclined to stress that the use of the term 'waste' does not automatically imply the passage of the Conqueror's army,[93] and others such as Palliser have been more inclined to see it as a largely administrative term.[94] It is, however, in line with Palmer's assertion that, for Yorkshire at least 'there is no room to doubt that the Conquest was responsible, either directly or indirectly, for concentrations of waste.'[95]

Perhaps a balanced approach is required, recognising the potential for damage from other sources, such as the encroachments of the Danes. I find it hard to accept the idea of waste as a purely administrative point, particularly if it is intended that it should mean something along the lines of "No Information Available". That seems to beg the

[92] Raine (ed), *Historians of the Church of York*, pp.266-269
[93] Matthews 'Ravaging and Resistance' *Northern History* 40:1
[94] D.M. Palliser, 'Domesday Book and the "harrying of the north"' *Northern History*, xxix (1993) pp.1-23
[95] J. J. N. Palmer 'War and Domesday Waste' A. Strickland (ed) *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France* (Paul Watkins, Stamford, 1998) p.262

question of why words to that effect were not used rather than a term that suggests at least disruption to the land on some level. Reading waste as administrative disruption,[96] appears to achieve little, since disruption on that level still seems to be indicative of the direct or indirect affects of violence. Between that thought and Palmer's analysis it seems reasonable to view Yorkshire waste as a probable outcome of aggression on some level.

As such it seems reasonable to suggest that, if Kettell's account has an element of truth to it, Beverley and the lands belonging to St John's should have suffered a lower incidence of waste than lands around the other two minsters, Ripon especially, since Southwell was perhaps protected somewhat by its more southerly location.

Examination of Domesday Book shows no areas of waste land recorded for the town of Beverley, but the wider lands owned by St John's demonstrate seven instances of waste land.[97] Kelk and Garton[98] were both formerly held by Wulfgeat, which perhaps suggests that they would not have been protected by any benevolence shown towards Beverley, but the others were held by the minster prior to the Conquest. Although some of the waste might be attributable to causes other than the Conquest, particularly to the arrival of the Danes, it still seems that the lands of St John's were not entirely spared its impact.

In comparison to Ripon, however, this seems to be very little damage. Although the limited lands directly held by St Wilfred's make a direct comparison between the minsters difficult, the damage done to the town of Ripon and its outliers is suggestive. Ripon is recorded in Domesday Book as having had fourteen outliers, containing forty-three taxable carucates of land.[99] All but the manors of Markington, Herleshow and

[96] As Dalton seems to do, P. Dalton, *Conquest, Anarchy and Lordship*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994)
[97] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, 2E:1 for the town. 2E:14 - 2E:17, 2E:24, and 2E:37 for the waste.
[98] *ibid* 2E:14 and 2E:15
[99] *ibid.* 2W:7

Monkton are given as waste. Although the town of Ripon is as free from waste as Beverley, the considerable waste around Ripon does seem to suggest that Beverley suffered rather less as a result of the Conquest. This is broadly in line with what Kettell wrote, while the statement of Beverley Minster's freedom from the king's tax tends to support the view that William confirmed the minster's rights. By way of comparison, Southwell and its immediate environment do not appear to have suffered any significant wastage,[100] which tends to reinforce the idea that the minster did not suffer to the extent that Ripon, for example, did. The limited drop in Beverley's overall value to the archbishop and canons, from a total of £44 to a total of £34, might also reflect such a lack of damage and tends to confirm this conclusion.[101]

Conclusions

What then, was the position of the minsters at the Conquest? The limitations of the evidence available make it impossible to answer with accuracy in every area. In some, such as the minsters' relations with the Archbishops of York, tentative suggestions can be made that perhaps point to elements also present in the minsters' later histories.[102] In other areas, particularly those directly connected with the minsters' wealth, rather more can be deduced, allowing for meaningful comparisons to be made between them.

The results of those comparisons appear to suggest differences between the three minsters at least as much as they suggest similarities. The similarities that occur seem generally to be of a broad nature, such as a shared status as bodies of canons or fitting into the same general category of wealth. Alternatively, apparent similarities, such as a supposedly equal number of canons, do not stand up to close scrutiny.

[100] *Domesday Book: Nottinghamshire,* 5
[101] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, 2E: 1
[102] See chapter 6

Instead, therefore, the picture that arises of the minsters at the Conquest is one that suggests considerable differences between them. They owned lands to widely varying extents, appear to have differing levels of income in all but the broadest terms, and may well have had different numbers of canons. The limited evidence that can be applied to the subject suggests that they may have had quite different levels of institutional development, while the closeness of their relationship with the archbishop may also have varied. Even the aftermath of the Conquest seems to have treated the minsters and their surrounding towns in different ways.

It might plausibly be argued that this sense of difference depends rather too much on the more tenuous conclusions to be drawn from the evidence. The sense of similarity to be drawn from the most clear-cut applications of Domesday Book is not, however, overwhelming. And, while the inferences drawn in the second half of this chapter are not concrete, they certainly seem to be suggestive of difference where they can be drawn. Overall therefore, the overriding impression of the minster churches of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell at the Conquest is not of three essentially similar institutions, but rather of three very separate institutions linked by a shared status as bodies of secular canons and by a position in the Archdiocese of York, but by little else.

3- The Canons and their Prebends

Having established the positions of the minsters at the Conquest, it now becomes necessary to trace their ensuing institutional development, while keeping in mind the key questions of the extent to which they converged on a common model and the reasons why they might have done so. In the interests of simplicity, it seems most appropriate to divide the discussion of the minsters' structures into three main areas, according to the three main groups of personnel at the minsters: the canons, the minster office holders, and the vicars. This structure also has the advantage that it broadly follows the divisions used by Edwards in examining the institutional structures of the secular cathedrals.[1]

This chapter, therefore, will be concerned with the minsters' canons, and with the prebends designed to support them. To reiterate Tillotson's definition, a prebend is 'a cathedral or collegiate church benefice; normally consisting of the revenue from one manor of the cathedral estates which provided a living for one cathedral canon, or prebendary.'[2] This chapter will discuss the growth of those prebends at the minsters, along with their value to the canons who held them. It will go on to explore variations in their natures at each institution, and will examine the way the issues of non-residence and pluralism affected both the canons and the running of the minsters. It will also attempt to understand the relationship between the canons and their prebends, and whether this varied between the minster structures.

The Development of the Prebends

We will begin with by attempting to date the foundation of the prebends at each of the minsters. This period featured an explosion in the number of prebends at secular cathedrals, with the likes of Lincoln and Wells rising to fifty-four prebends by the

[1] K. Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*
[2] http://medievalwriting.50megs.com/churchglossary (02/07/2009)

thirteenth century, and York's seven prebends rising to thirty-six.[3] Tracing the expansion of prebends at the minsters will demonstrate that this process was mirrored rather unevenly by the smaller institutions, but that they still showed signs of expansion.

Since this section is concerned with dating the minsters' prebends, the process of these foundations is not discussed here. Instead, along with the possible reasons for it, that process is discussed in more detail in chapters six and eight. Likewise, chapter two has already established probable numbers of prebends for each minster at the Conquest, so the concern here will principally be with those prebends created afterwards.

Southwell

As might be noticeable from chapter two, Leach had suggestions for the foundation dates of Southwell's prebends. These suggestions, however, were not always entirely clear. The prebend of South Muskham in particular appears to have been the subject of a certain amount of confusion on Leach's part. He initially suggests that papers relating to its augmentation might in fact relate to its creation,[4] which would appear to suggest a date of around 1220 for that creation, but then goes on to suggest that it was probably created by Archbishop Thomas II between 1108 and 1114.[5] Neither of these assertions appears to be quite correct. A papal letter of Innocent III for 1204 confirms the possession of the prebend of 'Muskham' by Thomas de Disce and notes that he was the first possessor of that prebend since it was newly created.[6] If we accept, as chapter two suggests, that Northmuskham was a prebend prior to the Conquest, this would appear to place the creation of the prebend of South Muskham in c.1204.

[3] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.33
[4] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxvi
[5] *ibid.* p.xxvii
[6] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England and Wales*, C.R. Cheney and M.G. Cheney (Eds), (Oxford, Clarendon, 1967) p.91 no 557

For the prebends of Beckingham and Dunham, there is a charter of Henry I showing that they were in existence by about 1120,[7] while for the Rampton prebend foundation deeds survive, dating the prebend to approximately 1200.[8] Southwell's Halton prebend is interesting in that the vast majority of the available evidence places the date of its inception at 1160, under Archbishop Roger,[9] but one reference to its existence under Archbishop Thurstan also exists.[10] The issue is further confused by a papal bull for the prebend, claiming to be a bull of Urban II's, but then corrected to read as a bull of Alexander III's. Should the date of the prebend therefore be 1160, which is the solution Leach supports, some time prior to 1140 to accommodate the reference to Thurstan, or even a date prior to 1099 to accommodate the reference to Urban II?

In this, the internal inconsistencies provide the best clue to resolving the issue. There are, as mentioned above, references to Archbishop Thurstan and Archbishop Roger in relation to the prebend, but none to any archbishop consistent with the foundation of the prebend under Pope Urban II. As such, it seems more likely than not that the correction to the papal bull for the prebend is accurate, and that the prebend was created in the papacy of Alexander III. If we accept this, then the references to Archbishop Roger are preferable to those mentioning Thurstan, on the basis that Thurstan's period as archbishop ended before the Papacy of Alexander III began. Accepting this accounts for both of the anomalies mentioned and so provides a measure of confirmation for 1160 as a plausible date for the Halton prebend.

A charter of Archbishop John le Romeyn in 1290 founded the Eton prebend of Southwell, which was the penultimate Southwell prebend to come into existence.[11] The

[7] SWB, p.13 and p.21
[8] *ibid.* p.36
[9] *ibid.* pp.26-27
[10] *ibid.* p.26
[11] *ibid.* p.28

last of them was North Leverton, created a year later.[12] This gives reasonably certain dates for six of Southwell's sixteen prebends following the Conquest.

To return briefly to the question of the number of Southwell's prebends at the Conquest,[13] it must be acknowledged that, in the absence of definite dating evidence for at least three of the remaining prebends, potentially more of Southwell's prebends were created during the period than those outlined above, depending on whether the remaining prebends are viewed as pre or post Conquest.

There are three potential solutions to this question. The least likely is to suggest that Leach's suggestion of seven prebends at the Conquest was in fact correct,[14] then to accept that three extra prebends were created over the course of the period under discussion, but not recorded with foundation deeds, charters, or grants of land. Although technically possible, since Southwell's cartulary was compiled in the fourteenth century from existing sources, this seems exceptionally unlikely. The attention accorded to the other prebends created in the period seems to make it clear that the non-recording of three such foundations would be highly anomalous. Only the prebend of Rampton was created by someone other than an archbishop, and even that left records of being funded by Robert Malluvel and his mother Pavia.[15] It would seem reasonable to expect, therefore, to find evidence of the foundation of those prebends in archiepiscopal records even if the foundation deeds did not appear in Southwell's cartulary.

Possibly a more convincing approach is simply to suggest that the three undocumented prebends were created at or shortly after the Conquest, perhaps as a mechanism for adapting Southwell to the needs of the changed administration. Since the earliest of the prebends mentioned above, Beckingham and Dunham, were not recorded

[12] SWB, p.24
[13] See chapter 2
[14] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxv
[15] SWB p.36

until 1120,[16] this leaves a reasonable period in which three new prebends could have been created. This approach is more plausible still if it is remembered that the evidence for the Beckingham and Dunham prebends is indirect, and not in the form of foundation deeds. As such, it suggests that foundation deeds might realistically not exist for any prebend created earlier.

This still requires an acceptance of Leach's view of seven prebends at the Conquest, however. Since I have already established that his method for assessing the number of prebends, while suggestive, is far from conclusive,[17] it seems just as likely that the three prebends were created before the Conquest. This is particularly true of the Sacrist's prebend, which was of so little value in relation to the others that it might plausibly have been ignored. This does not necessarily contest Leach's assertion that there were probably only seven original prebends, but it does question whether that was still true by the Conquest.

In truth, it is impossible to be absolutely certain which of the latter two explanations is the correct one. If the second seems fractionally more likely than the last, it is only because of the pleasing symmetry it suggests with the prebends of York and the other two minsters. Ultimately, the precise timing of these foundations is probably not of very great importance. Essentially, the choice lies between three prebends made shortly before the Conquest, or three prebends made shortly after it. Although that might possibly tell us something about whether the foundation of prebends might have been used as part of the consolidation of the Norman position around Southwell, it seems likely that even that thought would remain as speculation. It seems safer, and more useful, to say just what we can be relatively certain of, which is that ten prebends were in place at Southwell prior to the addition of the prebends of Beckingham and Dunham around 1120.

[16] SWB p.13 and p.21
[17] See chapter 2

Ripon

Compared with Southwell, the prebends of the other two minsters are somewhat simpler to date, principally because they acquired so few during the period under discussion. Ripon appears to have gained only the Sharrow prebend in this period. This cannot be dated exactly, but was founded by Archbishop Thurstan, narrowing the field of dates to a point between 1114 and 1140.[18] Ripon's other prebends all came into being prior to the Conquest.[19]

Beverley

For Beverley, the issue is complicated somewhat by the initially collective nature of the thraves, or renders of corn, on which the prebends were based. Dating them becomes a question of establishing a date for a change in the fundamental nature of the prebends.[20] In one sense, Beverley's prebends were as well established as Ripon's by the Conquest. In another, it might be argued that the prebends came into being together during this period as rights over thraves became more individualised and territorially linked. Exactly when this was is hard to gauge with any precision. At what point does a collection of rights to shares of corn become sufficiently individualised, sufficiently tied to a particular piece of land, and sufficiently separate from the collective whole that it can be regarded as an individual prebend? McDermid seems to favour a date in the early-mid twelfth century for this,[21] based largely on the greater likelihood of Beverley's gift of thraves to Bridlington Priory if such thraves were held in common.[22] This seems a reasonable conclusion, and prevents the formalisation of Beverley's

[18] *Memorials of Ripon 1*, p.95
[19] See chapter 2
[20] See below for more on this nature
[21] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xix
[22] BCA, II, pp.289-290

prebends before that point. It is also consistent with Orme's comments regarding Exeter Cathedral, which, while not an exact parallel, did see the canons moving from communal to separated living by the mid-twelfth century.[23] Despite this, however, the coalescence of Beverley's prebends can only be dated in the broadest terms. Given the apparently gradual nature of the transformation, it is essentially impossible to produce any kind of "foundation date" for those prebends more precise than McDermid's suggestion.

The Nature of the Prebends

This, of course, raises a vital point about the prebends at the three minsters. They were not initially entirely similar in their nature, with Beverley's in particular being different from those of Ripon and Southwell. The extent of this difference may even create difficulties for the definition of a prebend outlined at the start of this chapter. The definition assumes that normally, prebends were parcels of land and the incomes deriving from them. This would not initially appear to be problematic, since Southwell's prebends in particular conform very neatly to such a definition. Prebends such as Woodborough or Oxton and Crophyll bore the names of places, and, as has been suggested in chapter two at least have a chance of having been strongly focussed on the places in question.

The other minsters, however, present more problems. Beverley's prebends are by far the most difficult to fit into the definition suggested above, for they had no strong connection with particular localities, but were instead based around thraves of corn. McDermid is emphatic, however, that the thraves of Beverley did amount to a system of prebends, and bases his argument principally on the fact that the thraves were eventually

[23] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*

not held in common, like churches put towards the common fund, but were instead the jealously guarded property of the altars of which their owners were the canons.[24]

This issue suggests that the minsters under discussion were fundamentally different in the characters of their prebends. Certainly, the reliance on thraves rather than the income from specific parcels of land seems to imply a certain level of difference between Southwell and Beverley in this respect. I would like to suggest, however, that the difference between the minsters in terms of their canons' prebends is less extreme than might be supposed.

As McDermid has noted,[25] the thraves of Beverley moved from being an essentially communal source of income to being carefully defined as belonging to individual canons. It must be remembered, moreover, that Beverley's prebends appear to have become linked to specific areas as time went on, since the thraves from particular areas appear to have become linked to particular prebends. McDermid has again clarified this, producing a map linking specific areas to the prebends they provided thraves for.[26] The pattern of the allocation of thraves suggests a number of things.

At least some of the prebends came to possess thraves in reasonably coherent geographical groupings. The prebend of St Michael, for example, had thraves in North Dalton, Bainton, and Middleton on the Wolds, all next to one another. Only a partial share in thraves from Cherry Burton and thraves from Elloughton mar the coherence of the grouping. Likewise, the thraves linked to the prebend of St James were also relatively in a relatively coherent group, with only thraves in Holme on the Wolds, South Dalton, Etton and Cherry Burton again forming a second group away from the main one. Although these anomalies mean that this geographical link does not provide

[24] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xix
[25] *ibid.*
[26] *ibid.* Extra sheet

neat, coherent blocks of land that can be labelled as 'the prebend', it does appear that the groupings that came to characterise Beverley's prebends were strong enough for Beverley's thraves to be seen in much the same category as the prebends of both Ripon and Southwell.

It may also be that, in assuming that Beverley's system was something radically different, we are overestimating the coherence of the prebends of Southwell and Ripon and, indeed, of prebends in general. The editors of the *Beverley Chapter Act Book* mention the case of the St Paul's prebend that was 'swept away by the sea in the Essex marshes'[27] as an example of the enduring nature of most prebends' links to specific parcels of land. Instead, it seems that the continuation of a prebend for that area despite the loss of the land suggests that canons in general were not in any sense rigidly linked to coherent areas of land. After all, if the land no longer existed, it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the canon in question gained much of an income from it. As such, we must conclude that prebends were not necessarily as strongly linked to particular parcels of land as might initially be supposed, even when the prebend bore a manor's name.

To apply this to the question of the coherence of Ripon and Southwell's prebends, we must consider the acquisition of additional rents and incomes by those prebends above those lands that formed their heart.[28] As time went on, the acquisition of these other sources of income meant that Southwell and Ripon's prebends became considerably less wholly land based in terms of their revenue. Instead, we see a mix of income from land, tithes from particular churches, such as those split in 1266 between three canons of Southwell,[29] and an assortment of less area based grants. A comment on the vicarage of Rampton in 1301 specifically mentions that tithes of corn and hay

[27] BCA, p.xliii
[28] See chapter 8
[29] SWB p.20

belong, not to the vicar, but to the prebendary,[30] suggesting that, by the end of the period under discussion at least, some elements of Southwell's prebends closely mirrored those of Beverley.

As a result of these changes, it seems reasonable to suggest that, at least by the end of the period under discussion, the term prebend came to mean something similar for all three minsters. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this amounted by that point to something a little more complex than a straightforward link between the income from a specific manor and a particular canon, but we can say that the prebends were definitely a series of clearly divided livings with at least some geographical basis.

This rather complex situation is complicated still further by noting that for Beverley, the holdings of figures other than the canons, also expressed as income from thraves, appear to have had much the same character as the canons' prebends. The provost of Beverley in particular appears to have held the thraves for a block of land as geographically coherent as those belonging to any of the canons' prebends.[31] That this holding was in much the same terms as the canons' thraves is shown by the fact that he shared the thraves from areas like Skidby and Hunmanby with the prebends of St Andrew and St Martin respectively. This could be seen as merely a way of providing the provost with funds needed to see to the affairs of the minster, but I believe that it also says something about the nature of the office. This is particularly true when it is considered that the Sacrist of Beverley had the thraves of Brandesburton, Long Riston and Sutton on Hull earmarked as his own.[32] This seems almost comparable to the small prebend granted to the Sacrist of Southwell, and I would like to suggest that it was intended as much the same thing. The difference, perhaps, lay in the level of formality that the prebends of the minsters concerned possessed at the point when the decisions

[30] SWB p.38
[31] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, Extra Sheet.
[32] *Ibid.*

were taken. Southwell appears to have had a more coherent system of prebends than Beverley, and it achieved formality in those prebends earlier. As such, it would appear that giving land to the sacrist had to result in the creation of a prebend, however minor, and consequently a canon filling the role.

Beverley was able to maintain its offices at a status just below that of the canons.[33] This, I would suggest, was because when the thraves from particular areas were given to officers such as the sacrist and provost, Beverley's approach to the matter of prebends was still fluid. As such, the allocation of thraves did not have to result in the creation of a prebend. While a prebend may have seemed like the only way for Southwell to support its sacrist, Beverley's initially looser approach to thraves may have provided a solution that stopped short of that.

The Archbishop's 'Prebend'

The discussion of the nature of prebends at the minsters is complicated still further by the existence of the archbishop's so called prebend. In particular, this "prebend" creates questions over the defining lines between prebends and corrodies. At times it is referred to as a prebend, but at others, such as in 1286 when the archbishop gave it to Walter the butler,[34] the reference is to the archbishop's corrody. Clearly, in exploring what a prebend meant at each of the minsters, we cannot simply ignore this confusion, but must instead seek to determine what exactly this particular living was.

The reasons for the confusion are intriguing, and probably lie in the question of whether the archbishop could sit in chapter meetings as a right. Although he might occasionally have been able to argue it based purely on his position, as when archbishops summoned meetings of the chapters in order to discuss the findings of visitations, holding a prebend allowed for a much stronger claim to full involvement in

[33] See chapter 4
[34] BCA, vol2, p.148

day to day chapter business. Allowing a certain lack of clarity to flourish over the status of their 'prebend', therefore, would have held tangible benefits for the archbishops in their relations with Beverley's chapter. Indeed, this is precisely the picture that presents itself after the close of the period under discussion when Archbishop Neville tried, in 1381 to have his right to sit in chapter meetings on account of his "prebend" recognised.[35]

The outcome of this case in favour of the chapter, combined with the archbishop's ability to give his prebend to his butler, who is not recorded as being in holy orders,[36] strongly suggests that this was not a prebend in the full sense. Perhaps the description of this living as a corrody is closer to the truth. It certainly seems to have conferred neither the rights to participate in chapter business nor the obligations to perform a canon's duties that went with a prebend in its normal sense.

What, however, does all of this mean for the nature of the prebends at Beverley, Ripon and Southwell? Certainly it suggests that the picture was a relatively complex one, prevented from fitting into a neat definition both by Beverley's reliance on thraves and by issues such as the archbishop's 'prebend'. It also suggests that at the start of the period the three minsters were very different in the characters of their prebends. Southwell and Ripon appear to have fit the normal definition of a prebend reasonably neatly, particularly Southwell, but Beverley's initial holding of thraves in common makes it difficult to even identify the existence of separate prebends at the Conquest.

What we see though is the nature of the three minsters' prebends converging considerably over the course of the period. As Beverley's thraves became linked to specific canons according to area, it moved closer to the model of prebend found in Southwell and Ripon. As Southwell and Ripon's prebends acquired rights, incomes, rents, and other things not directly derived from their original lands, they moved a little

[35] BCA, vol. 1, p.xlvii
[36] BCA, vol. 2, p.148

closer to Beverley's. By the very end of the period, we even see one of Southwell's prebends defined at least partly in terms of their rights to specific shares of corn.[37] By that point, it would presumably have been remarkably difficult to tell the prebends of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell apart purely in terms of their characters.

Additionally, we must recognise that all three minsters can be said to have gained prebends in this period, and that this was the last period in which they did so. As with York, which reached its full complement of thirty-six prebends in the period,[38] all the minsters reached their final quotas of canons before 1300.

Working from this, therefore, it might be reasonable to characterise the growth of the minsters' prebends as a pattern of change following the example of York. All the minsters gained prebends in the period, although the pattern of that growth was uneven. That the growth of the minsters' prebends was so unequal perhaps demonstrates the extent to which the minsters, while taking much of their lead from York, were still individually affected by factors such as their institutional characters, the availability of resources, their locations, and the individuals involved in the process. Even so, it seems reasonable to suggest that in their shared periods of growth, and in the changing natures of the prebends concerned, the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell became more similar than different in the years prior to 1300.

The Value of the Prebends

How much were these prebends worth? For the bulk of the period it is impossible to say with certainty. For the final years of it, however, there is a clear guide in the form of Pope Nicholas IV's *Taxatio* of 1291, in which the prebends of all three minsters are listed as part of the assessment.[39] This assessment gives numbers for the prebends at

[37] SWB p.38
[38] F. Harrison, *Life in a Medieval Collage,* (Murray, London, 1952) p.25
[39] *Taxatio P. Nicolai,* Southwell p.312, Ripon p.308, Beverley p.302

that point, with Southwell at sixteen, Ripon at seven and Beverley at seven. While the figure for Southwell is undoubtedly correct, that for Beverley appears to ignore the prebend of the altar of St Katherine, listing no figure for it. It is possible that this exposes flaws in the reporting procedure involved in the compilation of the *Taxatio*, though it is equally possible in St Katherine's case that this was simply due to a quirk of the prebend concerned, since McDermid has suggested that initially the income of the prebend of was dependant solely on oblations, allowing for no fixed assessment of income.[40] In any case, there is no reason to suspect that the figures that are given in the *Taxatio* are not accurate enough to use effectively.

For an assessment of the overall income of the minsters, we have their total taxable values. Interestingly, given what we shall see below, Southwell initially appears to have the highest taxable value, at £342 13*s* 4*d*. The taxable holdings of Beverley's chapter are given as £279 13*s* 4*d*, and those of Ripon as only £263 6*s* 8*d*. This picture is complicated somewhat by the amounts assessed separately for Beverley under its provost, which came to £232 19*s*. Although, since it was assessed separately from the chapter's taxable wealth, there is a strong case for leaving the figures as they are, if we add this amount to the chapter's taxable wealth, it gives a total figure for Beverley of £512 12*s* 4*d*. Of course, such overall values are only part of the picture, and it is only with individual values for the prebends that we can start to get a sense of the situation at each minster.

The most valuable prebend listed for any of the minsters was that of Monkton at Ripon. It was valued at £46 13s 4d. Only the prebend of St Martin at Beverley comes close to that figure, at £45. The most valuable prebend at Southwell was that of North Muskham, valued at £40. With a value of only £5, the sacrist's prebend at Southwell appears to have been the least valuable. The focus on most and least valuable prebends,

[40] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.101n

however, probably does not give a useful picture of the relative value of each minster's prebends. As such, an average value of some sort is required.

This is not as precise a process as it might appear, thanks at least in part to the limitations of the evidence. Inevitably, any figure produced from the *Taxatio* figures represents a snapshot of the prebends' value, rather than a full assessment of it. There is also the question of what to include in the figure. Beverley's assessment, in particular, includes a figure for the common fund. In the interest of producing an assessment focussed closely on the prebends, I have chosen to discuss this figure, but not to include it in calculating average values. The aim of those figures is to find values for the prebends, not of the prebends plus a portion that varied along with the canons' residence, particularly not when Southwell and Ripon also had such funds, but they were not mentioned in the *Taxatio's* assessment. At the other extreme I have chosen to include the value of prebends such as Southwell's Sacrista prebend, where the status of the prebend was perhaps somewhat less, on the basis that it was still technically a prebend.[41] One case where this was not possible was with the prebend of St Katherine at Beverley, since no figure for its value was given in the *Taxatio*. It is excluded on that ground, rather than as a comment on its status.

With those qualifying statements, it is possible to attempt to find average values for the minster prebends. Ripon's prebends had the greatest mean value, at £32 18*s* 4 and1/2*d.* The median value was £40, though with such a small sample, perhaps this figure is less relevant than the mean. It is notable, however, that only two of Ripon's prebends had values of less than £40. These were still more valuable than the averages reached for Beverley and Southwell, having values of £26 13*s* 4*d* and £30.

Beverley's prebends were the next most valuable, with a mean value of £25 17*s* 1 and 1/2*d*. A median figure of £25 is again lower than Ripon's. It should be noted that

[41] See chapter 4 and below.

this does not necessarily mean a lower overall level of wealth for Beverley, since the *Taxatio* notes a common fund of £66 13*s* and 4*d*, and the provost's funds were treated separately in the assessment. However, this exercise is concerned solely with the value of the prebends, placing the prebends of Beverley second.

Southwell, despite the highest overall taxation value, still had by far the lowest mean value for its prebends. In part, this was due to the greater number of them, sixteen in total, and the overall figures were influenced by a number of very poorly paid prebends. Even the most valuable of them was only equivalent to Ripon's median value, at £40. Southwell's mean prebendal value comes to £20 13*s* 2 and 1/2*d*. Its median value is only £13 6*s* and 8*d*.

It must be remembered, though, that in comparison to cathedral prebends, all these figures are low. York featured the richest prebend in the country, along with no fewer than six worth over £100.[42] That variation is hardly surprising, in that secondary institutions such as the minsters could hardly hope to compete with the wealth of the cathedral they came under, but it does perhaps show that, as with their wealth at the Conquest,[43] the variations in the detail of the minsters' incomes are less important than a shared general level of wealth below that of more important institutions.

The Common Fund

The canons' prebends were far from the whole story of their incomes. Those canons who chose to be resident relied at least in part on their share of the common fund for their income, and it was also a major element of attempts to encourage residence, as it was in cathedral chapters.[44] It will also be discussed elsewhere in connection to its

[42] *Taxatio P. Nicolas*, p.297-298
[43] See chapter 2
[44] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals,* p.42

wardens and their role within the minsters.[45] For now, however, it is the value of the common fund that is in question.

Establishing that value is somewhat less simple than for the prebends, because inevitably the figure involved is a variable one. Potentially, it included all sorts of ad hoc payments, such as fines, or one-off gifts. It seems likely that, for all three minsters, it is also a figure that rose over the course of the period, as the chapter as a whole acquired new sources of income. Grants such as Archbishop Romeyn's 1289 gift of the church of Eton to Southwell, for example, were designed specifically to bolster the common fund,[46] perhaps because this provided a mechanism for ensuring that the grants benefited resident canons the most.[47] Despite these changes, some attempt at least must be made to define the value of something that was so important a supplement to the canons' incomes.

In the case of Beverley, this is relatively straightforward. The 1291 assessment of Beverley provides figures in this regard and is somewhat unusual in that, while a value was placed on the common fund of Beverley, no corresponding figure for Ripon or Southwell can be found under that name.[48] The figure given for the value of Beverley's common fund in 1291 was £66 13s 4d. This figure did not include any of the income accruing to the provost; a considerable portion of which appears to have been spent on the minster,[49] but it might be reasonable to suggest that this is more a matter of the minsters' fabric funds than their common funds, and so does not necessarily affect the figures involved.

The figure for Southwell is somewhat more difficult to assess, because there is no neat figure for its common fund in the *Taxatio*. Instead, the values of a number of

[45] See chapter 4
[46] SWB p.28
[47] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.42
[48] *Taxatio P. Nicholai*, p.302
[49] See chapter 4

churches are given individually in amongst the values for the canons' prebends. Since these churches were noted as being given to augment the common fund, some rough figure can be derived from their values. It must be remembered, however, that any such figure takes no account of fines or other additions to the fund. With these reservations, a figure of £26 6*s* and 8*d* can be produced.

No figure for Ripon can be produced, because while the value of the prebends are given in the *Taxatio*, no other sources of income are discussed for Ripon. The most likely answer derivable from this is that considerable discrepancies occurred between the three minsters when it came to reporting. This would potentially represent another point of difference between the minsters. It would, however, be a minor one, more concerned with the individuals supplying the information than with the minsters as a whole. It is also possible, however, that the lack of information regarding alternative sources of income on the part of Ripon points to less of a reliance on the common fund than with either Southwell or Beverley. The advantage of this approach is that it goes some way to explaining the high value of Ripon's prebends, since their higher individual values could be seen as a response to less support from the common fund.

Which of these two explanations is more likely to be the correct one? Of the two, the second is potentially a useful explanation, but it does appear to require the existence of some special arrangement regarding the lack of a common fund. It would, moreover, have made it impossible for Ripon to reward the residence of its canons effectively, because, as seen above, the most important reward for continuous residence was a share of the common fund. As such, it seems much more likely that the lack of information on Ripon's common fund was due to variations in reporting than to an actual variation between the minsters.

Again, however, the figures involved seem very low in comparison to those figures that can be found in cathedrals. The chapter of Lincoln Cathedral shared a

common fund of £150 in 1304, a figure approximately twice those for Beverley and Southwell put together.[50] As with other variations between the minsters' incomes and those of cathedrals, this seems to be principally a reflection of the difference in status between cathedral communities and the minsters, which serves to reinforce the point that the minsters were on broadly the same financial footing by the end of the period, even if the detail of that footing differed.

Residence and Non-Residence

It is not enough, of course, simply to note the presence or absence of prebends at the minsters, or to establish their values. The way the canons interacted with those prebends is also of vital importance. Two of the most important issues here are, unsurprisingly, pluralism and non-residence, which have both been key concerns in the historiography of secular canons.[51] Their prevalence in cathedral chapters, certainly by the end of the period under discussion, has been commented on extensively by Edwards,[52] while McHardy has explored its effects on the development of the system of vicars in the cathedrals.[53] How common were non-residence and pluralism in smaller institutions though? Just as importantly, were the effects of pluralism and non-residence uniformly negative in those communities, or were they, as Barrell has suggested, of limited impact on the running of the institution?[54]

The requirements of residence varied, both between the minsters and over time, with the requirements for all three minsters initially unclear. Whether this is simply a quirk of the evidence, or a function of initial residence sufficiently regular not to require clarification, is difficult to say with certainty. What is clear is that, over the course of

[50] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.49
[51] e.g. Barrell 'Abuse or Expediency?' and Dalton, *Government, Religion and Society*
[52] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, pp.84-96
[53] A.K. McHardy, 'Careers and Disappointments in the Late-Medieval Church: Some English Evidence' *Studies in Church History 26* (1989) pp.111-130
[54] Barrell 'Abuse or Expediency?' p.123

the last third of the period under discussion, the situation changed. The minsters acquired statements of their residence requirements. They did so separately. By 1225, the residence requirement at Southwell was three months continuous residence, divisible into two halves if the canon wished.[55] Continuous residence was based around presence at Matins and although any canon present was granted either 3d or 6d depending on whether there was a double feast, only those canons who met the residence requirement were supposed to benefit from the division of any remaining money at Whitsuntide.

As with many cathedral requirements, the study of theology elsewhere counted towards the period of residence.[56] On 22nd September 1260, however, this statute was subject to further clarification by the canons, stating that students of theology would only count as such if they were studying at a recognised university (Paris, Oxford or Cambridge) for at least two terms of the year, and that canons could only break their period of residence for clerical duty at the prebendal church, and then only with permission from the other canons.[57] While the existence of such a clarification suggests a desire on the part of the canons to fulfil their obligations, the necessity of it perhaps suggests that canons were quick to exploit loopholes in the rules on residence to their advantage. That canons took advantage of these provisions may be seen in the existence of dispensations such as the one granted to John de Peneston, a canon of Southwell, in 1268, granting him permission to study theology at Oxford for three years. Of course, there is no suggestion that this was anything other than a genuine attempt to further that canon's education, and it must be remembered that the majority of such dispensations were probably genuine ones.

[55] SWB p.45
[56] *ibid.*
[57] *ibid.*

Beverley was subject to similar statutes, but somewhat later, in 1290, and under different terms.[58] While Southwell required only three months of residence, Beverley required twenty-four weeks of the year to qualify for a share of the common fund. Its canons, however, do appear to have been able to divide that period as they wished, which was in contrast to the rigid one or two periods of residence required at Southwell by the 1225 statute.[59] If the length of residence required appears to demonstrate a clear difference between Southwell and Beverley on this matter, this difference is perhaps more illusory than it first seems. This is because the same statute that required twenty-four weeks of residence per year from the canons of Beverley also made provision that canons that resided for twelve weeks or more could take a proportionate share of the common fund. This twelve-week requirement roughly equates to the three months required by Southwell, and this may perhaps have been in mind when it was set in place.

It seems likely that the original period of twenty-four weeks a year for Beverley derives from the residence period at York, which required twenty-six weeks of residence in a canon's first year, and twenty-four thereafter.[60] As such, it might be reasonable to see the course of Beverley's residence requirements as an initial push towards York's model, followed by a relaxation since Southwell's requirements were not quite so stringent. It is also appropriate to note that York had similar difficulties to the minsters with non-residence, often having no more than four or five canons resident.[61] Even this is perhaps not on the same scale as Southwell making provision for running the minster should none of the canons be resident, while requiring only one to be.[62] Although a precaution rather than a record of residence it at least suggests that the

[58] *The Register of Archbishop John Le Romeyn*, (Surtees Society, 123, 1913) pp.386-387
[59] SWB p.45
[60] Harrison, *Life in a Medieval Collage*, p.26
[61] *ibid.*
[62] see below

possibility was considered a genuine one. This does not necessarily imply any major difference between Southwell and York in terms of the prevalence of non-residence, however. The difference can be explained instead by remembering that Southwell had, at sixteen, a considerably smaller body of canons than York, which meant that the depletion of their numbers was a greater threat.

The methods of enforcing the canons' residence appear to have been a combination of positive benefits for residence, in the form of the canons' commons and share of the remainder of the common fund, and of punishments for non-residence in the form of fines. We can see these fines principally through cases such as that in 1270, for example, when Archbishop Walter Giffard instructed that Henry of Skipton, a canon of Southwell, was to be let off the fine for non-residence he had incurred.[63] There seems to be little evidence for the presence of such fines at Beverley and Ripon, however. Indeed, what we find instead are complaints from Beverley's provosts about the absence of the canons such as that in 1252,[64] and mandates such as that of 1224 to order the canons' presence,[65] with no mention of attendant fines. In this, Beverley and Ripon may have been closer to the example of York than Southwell, since, unlike cathedrals like Salisbury and Lincoln, York imposed no tax on non-residents.[66]

In some respects, it is perhaps also possible to suggest that the issue of non-residence was not regarded in practice in quite as serious a manner as the rhetoric of the statutes suggests. In the minsters, the presentation of a valid excuse appears to have been enough to prevent accusations of non-residence. The Southwell statute of 1225 referred to above, for example, allowed for breaks in the period of residence for urgent business if licensed by the other canons, while the 1260 clarification explicitly

[63] *Register of Walter Giffard,* (Surtees Society no 109, 1904) p.63
[64] *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Papal Letters, Vol 1, 1198-1304, W.H. Bliss (Ed) (Stationary Office, 1893) p.280
[65] *ibid.* p.100
[66] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.39

envisaged the necessity of short periods of non-residence. In a number of cases, these instances may have been due to undertaking duties for the archbishop. The registers of the Archbishops of York contain several examples of letters giving instructions that particular canons were not to be fined for particular instances of non-residence. In 1270, for example, Archbishop Walter Giffard instructed that Henry of Skipton, a canon of Southwell, was to be let off the fine for non-residence he had incurred.[67]

Another element influencing the residence of the canons was the necessity, especially later in the period, of announcing an intention to reside. This is a necessity in line with the majority of cathedrals, in which the requirement of an oath to reside led to clear division of the canons into resident and non-resident groups.[68] At Southwell the declaration of intent to reside was made necessary by a statute of Archbishop Thomas Corbridge in 1300.[69] One stipulation attached to this requirement was that the canon in question had to have held quiet possession of his prebend for a period of one year. There are two reasons that suggest themselves for this. The first is both simple and financially practical. The value of a canon's prebend went for the good of his soul, or for outstanding debts, for a year following his death.[70] It was not, therefore, practical for a new canon to reside during that year. The second reason is that it mirrors York's probationary period for new canons.[71] This also does something to bridge the apparent gap between Southwell's continuous period of residence and Beverley's seemingly more ad hoc arrangement. The requirement of a declaration of intent to reside inserted an element of pre-planning into the arrangement, which may well have made it more convenient to reside in something akin to the one or two periods required of Southwell's canons.

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[67] *Reg. Giffard*, p.63
[68] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.35
[69] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.212
[70] *Memorials of Ripon*, 1, p.293
[71] B. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages' in G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds) *A History of York Minster*, (Clarendon, Oxford, 1977) p.49

What we see, therefore, is a system that became increasingly carefully set out over time. By the end of the period under discussion however, it would appear that non-residence, certainly at Southwell, had become more problematic. In 1302, the archbishop felt it necessary to insist in statute form that at least two canons should always be resident there. However, the same statute appears to envisage that from, 'inevitable and legitimate,' causes situations might arise in which no canons whatsoever were resident, and makes provisions that in those circumstances, the rule of the church was to be given over to someone who was to be put under oath.[72]

Although it does not mention what those inevitable and legitimate causes might be, in a community with a nominal strength of sixteen canons such a statute appears to point to a serious breakdown in standards of residence by the end of the thirteenth century. The only mitigating element in this analysis is that Beverley received a similar instruction in 1300,[73] which allowed for chapter business to be discussed by a stand-in if no one was resident. This could point to a general instruction with no specific application to Southwell. On the other hand, it could suggest that Southwell and Beverley shared similar concerns over non-residence, or at least that Archbishop Corbridge had similar concerns about both.

Ripon's problems with non-residence may be inferred relatively directly. In 1289, Roger Swayn, who was a canon of Ripon and also an official of the archbishop, was given a mandate to summon the canons of Ripon to reside there.[74] Roger Swayn was again the only canon resident in 1302, when the archbishop complained that not one of the six canons summoned to be resident before Lent had done so, which led to an instruction for them to be resident within three months.[75]

[72] SWB p.51
[73] BCA, vol2 p.182
[74] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 2, p.15
[75] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 2, pp.38-39

Pluralism

The other main issue affecting the canon's prebends was that of pluralism, and dispensations for multiple prebend holding are common in papal registers for all three. In 1255, for example, Alan de Watsand received such a dispensation for his prebend at Ripon in addition to an earlier dispensation for other benefices,[76] while in 1258 there was an indulgence for John, canon of Beverley and papal sub-deacon,[77] to hold an additional benefice with cure of souls.[78] In 1289, Robert de Forda of Southwell received a dispensation covering both his pluralism and his illegitimacy.[79] Some of these held several extra benefices, churches, or other sources of income. In 1259, for example, John Clarell of Southwell received dispensation for six churches, his prebend, and the option of another benefice with cure of souls.[80]

This string of dispensations helps to demonstrate their usefulness in identifying how common an issue pluralism was in the minsters. It also emphasises the role of such dispensations in allowing multiple benefice holding, turning it from something forbidden into a useful mechanism for the support of officials. In particular, it shows that, as with non-residence, pluralism came to be every bit as accepted at the minsters as it was in cathedral chapters.

Pluralism appears to have come to be the case even with some of the minster officers. Aymo de Carto, Provost of Beverley, was cited to appear before the archbishop in 1303.[81] This citation was on the basis that he was also the Precentor of Lyons and the Provost of Lausanne. As with other examples of plurality, the key issue was cure of souls. Although he also held the Rectory of Dungarvan, it was the posts at Lyons and Lausanne that principally attracted the archbishop's attention. It is difficult to see,

[76] *Calender of Papal Registers*, p.316
[77] see chapter 7
[78] *Calender of Papal Registers*, p.358
[79] *ibid.* p.498
[80] *ibid.* p.254
[81] BCA, vol. 1, p.7

however, how a number of Beverley's provosts can have failed to be pluralists. Of course, the office did not technically come with a prebend, so the provosts were not pluralists in the same sense that some of the canons were, but as shall be seen in chapter four, a number of prominent figures held the post, usually in conjunction with other duties. Occasionally, these other duties meant that they were provosts in little other than name.

What were the effects of such multiple office holding on the part of Beverley's provosts? In one sense, it provides an explanation for the frequent absences of the office holders. But if the provost was frequently absent, what were the consequences? Since the duties performed by the provost did not cease to be necessary simply because the provost was not resident, and since there are not complaints in the evidence that the duties of the provost were not being performed, we must conclude that non-residence and plurality of benefices on the part of the provost produced a de facto devolution of some of the provost's powers to others, at least on a temporary basis. It might be possible to go further and suggest that the choice of a number of individuals who were likely to be absent as provost represented a deliberate move on the part of the chapter of Beverley; one designed in part to prevent the transformation of the role into that of a strong leader. The provost was already kept, along with the other offices of the minster, at a level of dignity slightly below that of the chapter, but it was an office with control over many of the minster's resources. The combination of such resources and a sufficiently influential personality might have been enough to transform the office into a genuine leader for the minster.

However, in light of the discussion of the minsters' deans and equivalent figures in chapter four we must ask how likely Beverley's chapter was to have held such a fear. As shall be seen there, none of the minsters developed a nominal head who then went on to achieve real power over an extended period. The closest to it, Southwell's dean,

was to maintain influence for only a little over 20 years.[82] As such, it seems unlikely that Beverley had enough to fear from their provost that they would have had to take steps to ensure his continued weakness.

A second consequence of the instances of non-residence or multiple office holding among the provosts is that it gave the archbishop a means of bringing them into line if necessary. In cases such as that of Ayomo de Carto,[83] pluralism gave the archbishop an effective means of removing the provost from the post if it became necessary. While a picture of unrelenting conflict between the archbishop and the minsters would be unrealistic, it seems equally unlikely that an archbishop would have ignored such a potential advantage completely.

It is worth remembering that not all canons who held multiple prebends were pluralists. It was perfectly possible for them to hold a string of prebends consecutively, resigning each as they acquired the next. The case of Thomas de Disce serves to illustrate this point. He was the prebendary of [South] Muskham at Southwell from its inception in 1204[84] until 1210, when R. de Sourebi was made its canon following his resignation.[85] A papal letter from between 1212 and 1216 then mentions complaints made against Thomas de Disce, who is referred to as a canon of Ripon.[86]

The case of R. de Sleaford, noted by the editor of the register of John le Romeyn, is a good example of this in the later thirteenth century,[87] and he also demonstrates the role of dispensations in sanctioning much of the pluralism that did exist. In 1281 he was collated to the prebend of Rampton, only to have to resign to make way for a candidate provided by the pope. He was made a canon of Beverley in

[82] See chapter 4
[83] BCA, vol. 1, p.7
[84] *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.91 no.557
[85] *ibid.* p.143
[86] *ibid.* p.191 no.1166
[87] *Reg. Romeyn,* p.260n

1282 and resigned in 1286 to take the prebend of Normanton at Southwell, which he retained through a dispensation when he was made a canon of York in 1289. Only following this was he a pluralist as we would understand it, but his frequent changes of position sit at odds with any imposed ideal of a canon devoting himself wholly to a single prebend, or even a single institution.

Such movement between prebends can be explained at least partly in terms of differences in the value of each minster's prebends. To return to the case of Thomas de Disce for a moment, it is easy to see why he went from being the first prebendary of (South) Muskham, to being a canon of Ripon. There is no exact statement of which prebend de Disce held at Ripon, but the figures above make the comparison relatively straightforward to make. The *Taxatio* gives a figure of £13 6*s* and 8*d* for the prebend of South Muskham at Southwell. Although this was not the least valuable prebend at Southwell, and was in fact worth the median value listed above, it was still only half the value of the least of Ripon's prebends. That was Thorpe, listed at £26 13*s* and 4*d*. Even if Thomas de Disce got this prebend, it still represented a significant increase in income.

These varied issues amount to a pattern of both pluralism and non-residence in all three minsters by 1300. Although hardly a similarity they sought out deliberately, the measures taken to combat, and at times enable, these issues were similar across all three minsters. Those measures were sometimes on similar terms to those employed at York, but occasionally differed, perhaps suggesting variations to suit the circumstances of each minster. In any case, the fact that all three minsters had to develop strategies for dealing with non-residence and pluralism through the period suggests at least one area of similarity between them, and with cathedral chapters more generally.

The Powers of the Canons within the Prebends

Assuming that they were both present and not distracted by other benefices, what were the canons' powers within their prebends? Assessing the powers of an individual canon within a prebend is somewhat awkward, because it necessitates a distinction between the individual canon and the chapter as a whole. The minster chapters came to have roughly the same powers over their lands, and may have possessed them even prior to the Conquest if we accept one possibility, which is that Ripon and Beverley's rhyming charters were merely attempts to put pre-existing rights into charter form.[88] Certainly after York's 1106 letter to Southwell stating their shared rights[89] the confirmation of the rights of soc and sac to Beverley prior to 1069,[90] and the confirmation of the rights claimed by Ripon and Beverley in the 1228 case against the archbishop,[91] they all held similar rights over their lands, including effective control over the application of at least some justice in their towns, along with the rights of soc and sac, toll and team. Other rights accrued more directly to the canons. King Stephen, for example, granted the canons of Southwell the right to take what they wished from woods in their prebends,[92] while Henry III's grant of free warren in 1256 was focussed solely on John Clarell and his successors in the prebend of Norwell Overhall.[93]

Of course, whatever the powers of the canons within their prebends on a theoretical basis, their ability to exercise that power was still governed by other issues, such as the influence of figures including the archbishop and pope, the restrictions of canon law and the maintenance of good relations within the chapter. Non-residence and pluralism may both have had an impact in this regard. If a canon was frequently absent from his prebend, he was probably not in a position to attend to its affairs to maximum

[88] See chapters 6 & 8. See appendix 1 for a list of these rights.
[89] SWB p.18
[90] *Early Yorkshire Charters*, Volume 1, W. Farrer (ed.), (Hanson, Edinburgh, 1914) p.87
[91] See chapter 6
[92] SWB p.14
[93] SWB p.228

effect. Even allowing for the role of proxies, it seems likely that non-residence would have affected the canon's decision making regarding the prebend, both because of the practicalities of communication involved while he was away and because of the less constant concern with its issues. This last point is also relevant to the potential impact of pluralism, since the canon would have had to divide, not just his time, but also his effort and interest between the affairs of more than one prebend.

Above, the value of the prebends for each minster was discussed. In doing so, however, it must be remembered that the monies concerned did not simply appear. They had to be collected, and the canons' powers in that regard directly affected the practical value of their prebend. The canons' ability to enforce payments due to them, moreover, represented an important reinforcement of the position of that canon within his prebend. Inevitably, the evidence for this system is most readily available on the occasions when it broke down.

In an entry of Beverley's chapter act book for 1303, for example, we find a letter from Archbishop Thomas Corbridge to the Archdeacon of the East Riding. In it, he addresses a complaint from the chapter of Beverley that the archdeacon was no longer acting on their mandates to proceed against those people who did not pay the thraves that they owed.[94] The letter argues that without the thraves that are owed, the church would be left desolate. While undoubtedly an element of rhetoric, this comment does serve to emphasise both the importance of the thraves to Beverley and the importance of their efficient collection. Since the letter ends with the archbishop instructing the archdeacon to follow the chapter's orders in the matter, it also emphasises that the canons did possess a means of enforcing the payment of the monies they were owed. Although the position of the archdeacons is discussed more fully in chapter seven, this also serves to demonstrate something of the relationship between them and the canons.

[94] BCA, p.4

The canons appear to have had a considerable degree of power within the minster towns, but work outside and around them required the assistance of the archdeacons, which in turn seems to have relied principally on the minsters' relations with the archbishop.

There were limits to what the canons could do with their prebends, of course, and since these limits were largely defined by canon law, they were the same, not only for all three minsters, but also for cathedral chapters. As with most church property in the period,[95] the canons were not free to alienate their prebends, though the presence of a statute of 1293 for Southwell, for example, which found it necessary to reiterate that the canons' lands were not to be let to laymen,[96] along with an instruction from Pope Urban II to the Prior of Thurgarton to retrieve lands for Southwell sold on in transactions found to be illegal under canon law,[97] perhaps suggests that this was a limitation the canons occasionally disregarded.

Perhaps this can be ascribed purely to the canons ignoring the rules, but it may well also have had something to do with the complex status of prebends. On the one hand, they were church property, and as such subject to the limitations on alienation outlined above. On the other, at all three minsters, they were portions of lands, rents or other incomes linked to specific canons, potentially for their lifetimes. This might sound like no more than another definition of what a prebend was, but this was not necessarily the case at all secular cathedrals. Exeter maintained both a common life and equal prebends for much of the period.[98]

To some extent, this is reminiscent of Beverley's early position, and perhaps explains why the chapter of Beverley was able grant its rights to thraves in Bridlington

[95] J. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, (Longman, London, 1995) p.102
[96] SWB p.52
[97] *ibid.* p.5
[98] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, pp.40-41 and Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.34

and Holderness to the canons of Bridlington c.1135-1140.[99] But that was an action of the chapter as a whole, not of an individual canon. It was an action, moreover, that had to be confirmed by the archbishop. While the first could be taken simply as an expression of the collective nature of Beverley's thraves at that point, the second reinforces just how seriously any such alienation of property was taken.

There is an example of a more individual action when Master R. Corubien granted the thraves from his prebend to the chapter of Beverley in exchange for two marks per year.[100] This would seem to go against what has just been said by implying that the canon in question was free to dispose of part of his prebend, but again, this freedom is not as great as it might at first appear. The exchange was essentially an internal one in that it occurred between the chapter of Beverley and one of the canons. It did not, moreover, permanently dispose of the thraves in question and did not involve the disposal of the prebend itself. In fact, it seems reasonable to suggest that because the canon was forced to go to the chapter of Beverley when seeking to exchange thraves for ready cash, the incident serves to demonstrate just how limited the canons of Beverley were in terms of their 'ownership' of their prebends.

The relationship of the canons with their prebends, therefore, was potentially a complex one. It was one, moreover, that did not necessarily end with their death. Just as the prebends existed as a source of income for the good of the canons while they were alive, so too they were capable of acting as a source of income for the good of each canon's soul after his death. Through a statute of Archbishop Thurstan, the period for which this was true was a year following the death of a canon.[101]

This provides further similarities between the minster canons' relationships with their prebends, since the statute affected all three minsters, but also with York, since the

[99] *EYC*, vol. 1, pp.97-98
[100] *The Register of Walter Gray* (Surtees Society, 56, 1870) p.2
[101] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.293. EYC p.129, No. 149

statute was directed principally at them.[102] In fact, it created two areas of similarity in the individual canon's relationship with his prebend. Not only did it provide a continuing connection between the prebend and the deceased canon at all four institutions, but it also meant that for the period of that year, the income from that prebend would not be available to support a new canon.

Conclusions

In some ways, most particularly the number and value of their prebends, the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell moved apart over the course of the period. From an initially equal number of prebends, they grew unequally in both numerically and in terms of wealth accrued, so that by 1300 Southwell had more prebends than either of the other minsters, but those prebends were worth rather less on average.

This, however, is only part of the story. The minsters also moved closer to the same model in a number of areas, arguably more fundamental ones. From an initial position of collective holding of thraves, Beverley acquired a system of stable prebends linked at least loosely to areas of land, moving closer to the models of both York and the other minsters. All three minsters shared similar issues over pluralism and non-residence (and in the case of pluralism, they occasionally shared personnel). The solutions they found for those issues were largely the same, and appear to have been at least derived from York's model, if not actively imposed by the archbishop on those lines. The canons came to have very similar powers within their prebends, and their relationships with those prebends were governed by the same restrictions.

Even the difference in the number of prebends can be seen as partly reflecting a conflict between the desire of successive archbishops to have the minsters homogenize and the desire to have them do so on York's model. Ripon and Beverley stayed

[102] *ibid.*

essentially similar, perhaps because other factors limited prebendal growth, while Southwell grew along with York, though only to the limits of its own resources.

Overall though, despite this difference, what occurs here is not a picture of the minsters diverging. Instead, those changes that occurred in the minsters in this period to affect the canons and their prebends appear to have drawn them closer, and to have done so largely on York's model.

4- The Minster Offices

Writing of Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux's transformation of the chapter of York, Hugh the Chanter states that in addition to establishing the model of York's prebends and rebuilding the church, Archbishop Thomas 'appointed a dean, treasurer and precentor, endowing each of them as befitted the church's dignity, his own, and theirs. He had already established a master of the schools.'[1]

Hugh's words make two points of vital importance here. Firstly, they are a reminder of the importance of the chapter's offices to the successful running of an institution; as important, apparently, as the physical reconstruction. Secondly, they are a reminder that the period after the Conquest was the key period for the expansion of offices among English cathedrals.

The question, therefore, becomes one of the extent to which this expansion was mirrored in the minsters. To return again to the key questions of this study, to what extent did those offices change over the period? Did they change in similar ways? In particular, did they change in ways similar to York, perhaps suggesting that the process driving this change was an emulation of York's institutional model?

To examine those points, this chapter will explore the development of the minster offices in turn, beginning with the most important posts. It will also explore some of the less important office holders of the minsters, on the basis that the minsters' small size compared to cathedral communities may have increased their relative importance within the institution. It will then explore the place of office holders in general within the minsters, before going on to examine what can be determined of the incomes of the offices in this period.

[1] Hugh the Chanter, *The History of the Church of York 1066-1127*, C. Johnson (ed), (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1990) pp.19-20

Dean, Provost or Nothing

It seems appropriate to begin with the "head" of the institution, the dean. For the cathedrals of England, Edwards has pointed out that, 'between 1086 and 1225 a dean was instituted as the immediate head under the bishop of each of the nine English secular cathedrals,' though she goes on to point out that this was, 'by no means universally the practice in medieval cathedrals.'[2] York was one of the cathedrals concerned and did, indeed, possess a dean. The minsters had occasional connections to those deans. John Romanus was both a canon of Ripon and sub-dean of York,[3] while Leach has pointed out that Robert of Pickering was both Dean of York and a canon of Beverley.[4] Chapters two and three have already shown similarities in structure between the minsters and York, including occasionally shared personnel, and a shared position under the authority of the archbishop. It would seem reasonable to expect, therefore, that the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell would all have acquired deans in this period after the manner of York.

A dean, however, headed none of the minsters for an extended period of time during the years 1066-1300. Instead, each of the minsters was different, with a head, or figurehead, appropriate to its needs. Southwell probably came closest to the expectations outlined above, in that it did, briefly, have a dean. Hugh, Dean of Southwell, is mentioned in Archbishop Gray's register in 1220, as a witness to a confirmation by the archbishop of a grant by Hugh.[5] Leach discusses this dean, but seems to suggest 1221 as the earliest date for him[6] and appears to give 1234 as the likely year of his death. Since no other Deans of Southwell appear in the period under discussion, these dates for Hugh's holding of the office must also be taken as the likely

[2] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.138
[3] C.T. Clay (ed), *York Minster Fasti* (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1958) p.30
[4] Leach, 'The inmates of Beverley Minster', p.115
[5] *Reg. Gray*, p.233
[6] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, pp.xxxv-xxxvii

dates for the existence of the same office. The presence of a dean from approximately 1220-34, however, means that for both the first 154 years of the period under discussion and almost the last seventy, the chapter of Southwell had no official head.

Beverley, meanwhile, had a provost, who, along with the rest of Beverley's dignitaries, was not superior to the chapter.[7] Even so, he had considerable power. The provost appears to have had the authority to make grants, at least when backed by the chapter, and had nominal control over the appointment of the minster's other offices, though a 1287 request from the archbishop to the provost to make Robert of Bytham chancellor is a reminder that this was not a totally free choice, but one constrained by outside influences.[8] The presence of a number of absent provosts, including Thomas Becket, also suggests that it turned on several occasions into something closer to a sinecure, without the direct exercise of any power possessed. This was not always the case, however, and on other occasions the provosts show up in a number of grants, appearing to have been a force in the minster's relations with others since the office's inception in 1092. What we see, therefore, is an office of nominally limited authority, affected substantially by the individuals who took it on.

The chapter of Ripon, much like Southwell, appears to have been without an official head for much of the period under discussion, despite acquiring a dean later. I can certainly find no evidence for a dean or provost in the available charter evidence for the period, despite Ripon having developed other offices, such as the precentor and sacrist. This is not as illogical as it might sound, since the above two officers were essential to the running of the minster while, in a small chapter at least, a dean or provost might reasonably have been considered superfluous. Those functions that a chapter head fulfilled, which could be defined broadly as making grants with the backing of the chapter, running the chapter, and acting as a point of contact with figures

[7] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xvii
[8] *Reg Romeyn*, p.57

of authority, appear to have been largely performed by individuals within the chapter. It was Geoffrey de Lardare, for example, who represented the chapter of Ripon in its dispute with the archbishop over rights in 1228,[9] while when Pope Innocent III ordered the enforcement of the tithe payment on William de Laceles, his mandate was addressed to the Abbot of St Mary's, York, the Prior of Holy Trinity, York and William de Gilling, one of Ripon's canons.[10]

Why should the chapters have such different heads? Logically, if the minster chapters were merely copying the institutional model of the chapter of York, the most visible part of them, the head, would have been the same. Instead, Southwell flirted with a dean, Beverley maintained a provost, and Ripon went without either. To find part of the answer, we must consider exactly what such chapter heads provided, and for whom.

Their institution by bishops and archbishops in cathedral environments suggests that they provided something of value to those figures. Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux was responsible for the institution of the dean at York as part of a general reorganisation of the institution in 1093,[11] while Bishop Briwere introduced Exeter's somewhat after the reorganisation of other offices, in the 1220s.[12] Exeter, however, seems to have developed the full forms of a secular cathedral quite late, and indeed retained communal elements for much of this period.[13] This possibly suggests the most important function these chapter heads provided, in as much as Exeter's only became necessary as the rest of its structure became more complex. Deans and other chapter heads, therefore, probably came into existence principally to ensure the smooth running of increasingly complex organisations.

[9] *Memorials of Ripon*, 1, pp.51-63
[10] *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.23 no.126
[11] Norton, *Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux*, p.7
[12] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.34
[13] *ibid.*

This probably explains at least some of the differences between the minsters in respect of their chapter heads. Beverley, having gained its provost at or around the same time York gained its dean,[14] was probably caught up in the same burst of reform from Archbishop Thomas. Its slightly different structure regarding prebends may well explain why it got a provost rather than a dean who was part of the chapter, simply because the lack of full definition in Beverley's prebends at that point may have made it difficult to establish such a prebendary.[15]

This does not, of course, do anything to explain why Southwell or Ripon did not get caught up in this reforming process, or why Southwell briefly flirted with a dean. Institutional inertia may have played a part, though this begs the question of why Beverley's should be overcome when theirs was not. Instead, it seems more appropriate to explain the differences through the interaction of two key factors: the tailoring of institutional change to institutional need and the potential difficulties that a formal chapter head could pose.

The first of these points is reflected in Beverley's acquisition of a provost rather than a dean. This difference between Beverley and York shows that Archbishop Thomas was willing to adapt his programme of institutional change to the circumstances of the institutions concerned. As I will suggest elsewhere, this is a reflection of a pragmatic approach to alterations in the minsters on the part of the Archbishops of York generally.[16] For now though, the important point is that that individual circumstances at the other two minsters may not have demanded a strong chapter head.

The second issue largely centres upon the possibility of a strong chapter head becoming a focal point for resistance to the archbishop. Edwards has suggested that this

[14] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xviii
[15] See chapter 3
[16] See chapter 6

occurred on several occasions with cathedral chapters,[17] while Geoffrey de Lardare's central role in Ripon's 1228 assertion of its rights against the archbishop,[18] suggests that even in a situation where the position of chapter head remained informal, a sufficiently charismatic figure could still create difficulties for the archbishop.

Between these two factors, it becomes possible to suggest an explanation for Hugh the dean's brief tenure as the head of Southwell's chapter. As chapter three has shown, Southwell continued to expand in terms of its prebends to a greater extent than either Beverley or Ripon. This possibly suggested that it had become necessary to acquire a chapter head to ensure its smooth running, while its institutional structure, unlike Beverley's, could accommodate a dean.[19] The failure of that experiment with a dean can then be seen either as a recognition by the archbishop that the figure was not in fact necessary, or a recognition that such a figure provided a potential focal point for a chapter too far away to maintain control over directly, or some combination of the two.

It should be remembered, of course, that there is no direct evidence for Hugh organising resistance to the archbishop at Southwell, and in that light the idea of the potential threat posed by the dean might seem somewhat fanciful. It should also be remembered however that, if the placement of Hugh's death in 1234 is correct,[20] the point when Hugh was not replaced fell only some six years after Ripon's organisation around its de-facto leader. That might not have been, in itself, enough to warrant the removal of an effective office. But if the minster did not in fact require a dean, and the institution's continuing ability to function after the removal suggests that it did not, then the potential problems of a dean might have been enough to warrant its discontinuation.

[17] Edwards, *English Secular Cathedrals*, p.97
[18] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol 1, pp.51-63
[19] See chapter 3
[20] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*¸ pp.xxxv-xxxvii

The differences in the type of chapter head the minsters had, therefore, can largely be explained in terms of functional issues such as the growth of their institutional structures and the necessity of maintaining stability within them. We must also ask, however, whether differences between a provost, a temporary dean, and a series of senior canons in fact amounted to differences in practice. To determine that, it is necessary to examine both the position of these figures within the minsters and the extent of their powers over them.

Firstly, were they present in the minsters? The potential absence of some of Beverley's provosts has been noted above, but were they all distant figures, with limited interaction with their minster? It would appear that in at least some cases, connections to the immediate area did exist. One provost, Thurstan, had such a connection in the form of his father, who was tenant of two bovates of land in Siglestorn,[21] which were confirmed by charter to Thurstan and his descendents. This charter also granted Thurstan and his heirs four bovates of land in Walchentune [Walkington?] in return for an annual rent.

On the other hand, this charter also reinforces the point that these chapter heads frequently had other concerns. John Mansel, a provost of Beverley, was appointed a papal chaplain in 1251, for example,[22] while another provost, William of York, was instituted to the church of Sandal by the prior and convent of Lewes in 1244.[23] Southwell's one dean in the period also appears to have been parson of Biddlesthorpe.[24] Where the chapters lacked formal heads, the canons there may still have been absent much of the time,[25] though, as shall be discussed below, those canons who were present probably enjoyed a considerable measure of control over the minsters. It should also be

[21] *Huntington Library: Number HAD 3267 [197]*
[22] *Calendar of Papal Registers,* p.269
[23] *Reg. Gray*, p.92
[24] *ibid.* p.30
[25] See chapter 3

remembered that the role of Provost of Beverley was by no means a job for life. A number of provosts, including Thomas Becket, resigned from the role. Principally they did so in order to allow them to take up more important positions elsewhere. This occasionally created situations such as the one where two Provosts of Beverley witnessed the same charter of the Archbishop of York; Fulk Basset in his status as Bishop of London, William of York as the then provost.[26]

Taking into account these absences, occasionally brief tenures, and other limiting factors, how much power did the minsters' formal and informal chapter heads have relative to their minster chapters? Inevitably, the caveat for any question of this sort must be that, in practice, it depended very much on the individual who held the office in question. Thomas Becket, for example, held the office of Provost of Beverley until 1162, but there is no evidence that he actively performed its duties.[27] As such, it seems unlikely that he had any influence over the Beverley chapter. Southwell's one dean appears to have been able to get the chapter of Southwell to confirm those grants that he chose to make, for example the grant of a toft to William de Neuton,[28] and he obviously had some control over the disposition of the vicarage of Biddlesthorpe, but neither of these points to a great deal of power within the minster. The influence over the disposition of the vicarage of Biddlesthorpe does not relate directly to the chapter, and would not have created an opportunity for patronage within the chapter, since the canons were already of a higher status than vicars. The power, moreover, appears to relate specifically to Hugh's position as parson of Biddlesthorpe and so was probably not a consequence of his position as Dean of Southwell.[29]

The ability to get the chapter to confirm grants is also somewhat limited as a demonstration of power within the minster. At best, it demonstrates that Hugh was able

[26] *Reg. Gray*, p.201
[27] A. Duggan, *Thomas Becket* (Arnold, London, 2004) p.18
[28] *Reg. Gray*, p.233
[29] *Reg. Gray*, p.30

to influence the chapter of Southwell to act in the way he wished and also suggests that Hugh was at least able to make the initial grant independently, without recourse to the chapter. Even this interpretation, however, suggests that Hugh was not able to dispense with the chapter's authority altogether, and it was still either necessary or at least desirable for the canons to confirm his grants once they were made. There are no examples of grants made by Hugh alone, and as such it seems that the powers of Southwell's dean may have been fundamentally subject to the will of the chapter.

For Beverley, the question of how much authority the provost had over the chapter appears to be clear, at least in formal terms. The officers of Beverley existed at a level of status immediately below the canons.[30] The provost also functioned as a 'purely temporal officer'.[31] As such Beverley's provosts did not have authority over the chapter. Even Fulk Basset's attempts in 1237 to get them to eat at the common table featured recourse to the authority of the archbishop and pope rather than the exercise of any authority of his own.[32] On the other hand, the provost did have the power to select his fellow officers, giving him power over at least one key area of the institution.[33]

For Ripon, and for Southwell in the years when it did not have a dean, no figure had additional powers over the chapter. Instead, the most that can be said is that those canons who were consistently resident were in a position to exercise the chapter's authority in a way that absent canons were not.[34] The task of heading chapter meetings, meanwhile, must be presumed to have fallen to the most senior of those canons present. In fact, this must also have been true for Beverley, given the position of the provost outside the chapter, highlighted above.

[30] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xvii
[31] Leach 'The inmates of Beverley Minster'
[32] *Reg. Gray*, p.175 and p.177
[33] *Reg. Romeyn*, p.57
[34] See below

In that much, the minsters remained similar through most of this period, yet differed from cathedral chapters. All three lacked a formal head during chapter meetings except for the brief interlude of Southwell's dean. Beverley gained a provost, but that must be seen as more of a pragmatic development to deal with the minster's temporal affairs than a move to the same model that cathedrals were adopting. In this area, more than any other, the practicalities of the minsters' needs seem to have outweighed any desire to bring them onto a common model.

The Sacrist

One office that we can be certain Southwell possessed was that of the sacrist. This is demonstrated by the existence of the prebend of Sacrista, which appears to have existed specifically to support the office. The prebend is however of limited use in dating the presence of the sacrist, since there appears to be no surviving grant for its foundation. Chapter three has already shown that those Southwell prebends created prior to 1120 cannot be dated with confidence. As such, the best that can be said of it is that, as with several of Southwell's other prebends, it was created either shortly before, or shortly after, the Conquest.[35]

In discussing cathedral sacrists, Edwards has suggested that the power of the office was highly variable, since at Lincoln the term was equivalent to the position of sub-treasurer at other cathedrals, while at Salisbury, the position was a minor one, concerned with bell ringing and maintaining good order during services.[36] Where in this scheme does the Sacrist of Southwell sit? John le Romeyn's charter of 1293 appears to provide an answer for this, dealing with some of the sacrist's duties in among discussions of other aspects of the minster.[37] The instructions of the archbishop were

[35] See chapter 3
[36] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.227 and p.229
[37] SWB p.52

that the sacrist was to sleep in the church and ensure that the bells were rung at the correct times. The doorkeeper was to be beneath him. On the whole this does not appear to be a description amounting to an office of great power, and in the emphasis on bell ringing appears to be more similar to the office of sacrist in Salisbury than that of Lincoln.

There are some aspects of this assessment, however, that seem worrying. Firstly, if the sacrist was such a minor office, why did it have a prebend attached to it? It is just about conceivable that, in the minster's pre-Conquest days, in the absence of a body of vicars at the minster, it was felt that any office holder had to be a canon. This would explain the small size of the prebend of Sacrista, and might also explain why later offices did not come with prebends attached. A second suggestion might be drawn from the late date of the charter setting out these duties for the sacrist, which might point to a gradual transformation of the sacrist's role between the Conquest and 1293. This explanation would serve to explain the possession of a prebend by the sacrist and would also allow for a relatively powerful early sacrist. This seems important, since the sacrist was the oldest of Southwell's officers, and it seems inconceivable that in a period lacking in other officers, the sacrist would have been in the weak position suggested by Archbishop John Le Romeyn's charter.

Beverley also possessed a sacrist, and the position makes for an interesting comparison with that of Southwell. Leach suggests that the sacrist was an important position among the officers of Beverley, though he is unable to state with certainty which was first in rank.[38] In 1290 Archbishop John Le Romeyn wrote to the officers of Beverley requiring reasons why they should not keep continuous residence.[39] This suggests that the sacrists of Beverley and Southwell were both intended to reside consistently. This is not in itself a statement of the position of Beverley's sacrist,

[38] Leach, *BCA*, p.lv
[39] *Reg. Romeyn*, p.384

however, since the statute required continuous residence from all Beverley's officers, thus implying no special high or low status for any one of them.

As Leach has pointed out, the chapter act book of Beverley does contain an instruction that the clerks of the sacrist were to ring the bells precisely at the appointed hours.[40] Although coming in 1311 and thus falling beyond the scope of discussion here, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the office of sacrist was unlikely to have changed substantially over the course of a decade. As such, inferences as to the sacrist's office in the period under discussion might reasonably be drawn from this document. Firstly, the sacrist was again fundamentally concerned with seeing that the minster bells were rung on time, which has already been taken, in discussing Southwell above, as suggesting one of the less powerful and important types of sacrist. A key difference, though, lies in the way in which the sacrist was to achieve the end of the bells being rung. The Southwell sacrist, taking into account the instruction to sleep in the church, appears to have been intended to ring the bells himself. The Sacrist of Beverley, by contrast, had a staff of clerks beneath him to perform the necessary duties. Of course, the Sacrist of Southwell was not entirely without subordinates, since the doorkeeper was beneath him,[41] but the sacrist belonging to Beverley does initially appear to have been the more powerful office.

It may be, however, that this is not the complete picture. The note in the archbishop's statute that the doorkeeper was beneath the sacrist at Southwell does not necessarily imply that the doorkeeper was the sacrist's only subordinate, but might instead have been a clarification as to which of the minster officers the doorkeeper was answerable to. It does not seem likely, however, that the Sacrist of Southwell was superior to a substantial staff; the apparent requirement to ring the minster bells personally tends to suggest that the sacrist was not in a position to delegate the duty.

[40] *BCA*, p.289
[41] SWB p.52

One factor that tends to speak against the Sacrist of Beverley being the more important office is the position of the individuals concerned within their own minsters. The Sacrist of Beverley, as with all the dignitaries of Beverley, was positioned in the minster's institutional structure below the canons and was not a canon himself. The Sacrist of Southwell, by contrast, held a prebend and so was at least technically a canon. Increasingly, however, Leach's view that, 'The Sacrist prebend was never a prebend in the full sense,'[42] seems valid, since this appears to fit the relative importance of the sacrist's offices at Beverley and Southwell much better than the idea of the Southwell sacrist as a full canon with a real prebend.

A third possible explanation exists, one that points to a closer degree of similarity between Beverley and Southwell. Since neither institution was as large as the great cathedrals, it seems entirely possible that a lack of personnel could have made the sacrists of those minsters a form of hybrid office, responsible for both great tasks and menial ones. This explanation has the advantage of reconciling the sacrist of Southwell's stated minor tasks with the level of importance suggested by the possession of a prebend, though it does not then explain why the Sacrista prebend was without substantial lands. This could be put down to a changing perception of what the office entailed, or to an attempt to ensure perpetual residence through the allotment of a prebend that was too small to encourage non-resident possession. The absence of a significant staff for the sacrist at Southwell could be explained either in terms of Southwell Minster being somewhat smaller than York, despite having the most canons of the three minsters, or by remembering that a comment that the doorkeeper was under the Sacrist did not preclude others from being in a similar position.

The Sacrist of Ripon is a somewhat more elusive figure than his counterparts at Beverley and Ripon. One sacrist, William, appears in the witness list of the charter

[42] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxvi

founding the Skelton chapel. This is not an act implying great importance on his part, however. Not only was the creation of this chapel witnessed by the chapter, all the chaplains, a clerk, four deacons and a number of other individuals not directly connected to the minster, but William was not even near the top of that list. Instead, he witnessed the charter after the chapter, the vicars and the clerk had all done so. Another grant mentioning the sacrist as a witness occurred in 1233,[43] and again, the sacrist is well down the list of witnesses, behind both the one canon who witnessed the grant in question and a number of vicars. This would appear to imply that the office of the sacrist was relatively unimportant in the context of the minster, certainly when compared to Southwell's sacrist. Since Ripon's sacrist is mentioned separately from the chapter, moreover, and since he does not appear to have had enough authority to witness the grant ahead of the vicars, it seems relatively certain that at Ripon the office of the sacrist was not reserved for one of the canons. In this, it was perhaps closer to the model employed at Beverley than to Southwell, with its Sacrista prebend.

What is interesting here is that, even where the sacrist undertook relatively important duties in the minster concerned, at no point in the period did it develop fully into a treasurer's office, as it did at York,[44] or at Salisbury.[45] Perhaps this is to some extent a question of semantics, and the difference in name did not necessarily mean a difference in the office. From the varying role of the sacrist in the minsters, though, it does seem that the minsters genuinely did not develop the treasurer's/sacrist's office as fully as in cathedrals. It seems that, as with their chapter heads, the minsters copied the cathedral model available to them in York, but did so only as far as it was useful to their overall organisation.

[43] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.66
[44] Norton, *Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux*, p.5
[45] D. Keene et al, *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2004) p.29

The Precentor

As institutions focussed around liturgy and the choir, the secular cathedrals of England all acquired precentors in this period. Some, such as Exeter, acquired them early, before even its dean or chancellor.[46] Others, such as St Paul's, developed them gradually, only formally endowing the precentor's office in 1204.[47] As in the cathedrals, the minsters' precentors were responsible for co-ordinating music within the minsters. Leach has argued for the precentor being a relatively late invention at Beverley,[48] but when one was in place, his duties were those generally expected of a precentor, having the correction of clerks of the second rank in their reading and singing in 1305.[49] It is intriguing that the statement of the powers of the precentor from which this is taken notes that he had those powers only in relation to the clerks' singing and reading. This would seem to suggest that, while the Precentor of Beverley had considerable power within his sphere, he was considerably restricted in the exercise of that power beyond matters connected to his principal duties. The same statement of the precentor's powers notes that the admission of clerks of the second rank was subject to an examination by the precentor in singing. This again suggests the power of the Precentor of Beverley within his specific area, but also serves to reinforce how limited he was beyond it, for the examination of the clerks in letters fell to the chapter, as did the final decision on admittance.

Southwell's precentor is mentioned in a statute of Archbishop Thomas Corbridge for 1302, in which the precentor is required to examine the (music) books of the minster and correct discordances.[50] Leach suggests that the precentor may have been present at Southwell as early as 1120, though he admits of the individual concerned

[46] N. Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.34
[47] Keene et al, *St Paul's,* p23
[48] *BCA*, p.lv
[49] *BCA*, p.53
[50] SWB p.51

that, 'It is just possible that this may have been a precentor of York'.[51] This seems likely, or at least it seems unlikely that a precentor of Southwell was in existence on any consistent basis at that point. A statute of John le Romeyn for 1293 instructs that Southwell's music books should be made concordant, yet makes no mention of the precentor.[52] Since, in ordering the bells to be rung at the correct hours, the same statute was careful to note that it was the responsibility of the sacrist, it seems reasonable to suggest that, had there been a precentor, he or a deputy would have been specifically mentioned as having been given the duty of making the songbooks concordant.

For Ripon, the precentor, like Southwell's sacrist, was linked to a specific prebend, since the holder of the prebend of Stanwick was specifically given the duty of ruling over the choir.[53] The prebend is interesting, in that Archbishop Gray appears to have intended that it should consist principally of the church of Stanwick. As such it appears to parallel Southwell's Sacrista prebend in not attaching a great deal of land to the prebend intended for the use of one of the minster's offices. A further point of comparison exists in that, just as the sacrist was eventually compelled by statute to sleep within the minster,[54] so too the grant of land for the Stanwick prebend in 1230 bound the prebendary to perpetual residence. In doing so, Ripon appears to have affirmed the importance of the precentor's role to its efficient functioning by implying that even brief periods of non-residence were likely to be detrimental. The similarity to the Sacrista prebend of Southwell in creating a relatively small prebend raises the question of whether this might not have been linked to the nature of minster offices, or a comment on the importance of the offices in question. It seems unreasonable to suggest that Ripon's precentor was a relatively weak office in the same way that could be argued for Southwell's sacrist, because Ripon's own sacrist does not even appear to have been a

[51] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials,* p.xxxix
[52] SWB p.52
[53] *Reg. Gray*, pp.51-52
[54] SWB p.52

canon, as has been suggested above, and there was no dean in the period under consideration. As such, Ripon's precentor must be considered possibly its most important office. As an institution with a strong emphasis on singing and the choir, moreover, no minster's precentor could be described as truly unimportant. The allocation of only a minor prebend cannot automatically be taken as a sign of reduced importance here.

Two possible explanations can resolve the issue. The first is that the prebends in question were principally a mechanism to ensure the perpetual residence of the individuals concerned. This makes sense in as much as the granting of a prebend would theoretically ensure residence, but fails in practice. As shown in chapter three, non-residence was as much a problem for the minsters as for cathedral chapters. A prebend did not guarantee residence on the part of either officer. Beverley, moreover, felt that it was possible to impose perpetual residence on officers who were not members of the chapter. The second explanation is rather simpler and involves accepting that, while Ripon's precentor had a relatively important place among the dignitaries of that minster, it did not necessarily equate to an important position within the chapter. The Precentor of Ripon effectively existed in a position that was too important to be assigned to someone who was not a canon and yet not important enough to warrant either one of the larger prebends or a prebend created specifically for it.

With Beverley, there is relatively little early evidence for a precentor, at least by that name, with the first reference coming in 1199.[55] McDermid has argued both that this points to the late achievement of formality by this office in Beverley and that the duties of the office were principally undertaken by deputies.[56] The former view is consistent with the probable situation at Southwell, as outlined above, while the latter possibly suggests a reason why the absence of direct references to the precentor in

[55] *Chartulary of Guisborough,* Volume 2, (Surtees Society, 86, 1889) p.148
[56] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, pp.xxiv-xxv

Archbishop Romeyn's 1293 statute might not necessarily imply the lack of such an office at Southwell. If the archbishop was aware that at Southwell, as at Beverley, a deputy would probably be undertaking the work, then he had good reason not to direct the instruction to make Southwell's music books concordant directly to the precentor.

The Chancellor

The last of the four great dignitaries of the secular cathedrals was the chancellor. York acquired one with its other dignitaries, under Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux.[57] Exeter acquired one late, in the 1220s, as with its dean.[58] As well as being concerned with the letters and books of the minster, the chancellor was fundamentally concerned with the management of those schools linked to the cathedral. Indeed, Hugh the Chanter's account of the initial foundation of the offices at York refers to a master of scholars rather than a chancellor.[59]

Curiously, the chancellor seems to be the office within the minsters that is mentioned least in the minsters' statutes. In part, this may be because in both Beverley and Southwell the earlier references to the chancellor are as the master of scholars or in connection with duties appropriate to that master. At Southwell, for example, there is the note in the margin of the White Book,[60] commenting on the willingness of a chancellor to give away the right to appoint to Newark Grammar School. This note makes it clear, moreover, that by the time the note was written, at least, the chancellorship had been attached to the prebend of Normanton for as long as anyone could remember. There are obviously difficulties with this as evidence for the period with which we are concerned here. If Leach's assertion that the note was made at the time the White Book was composed is accurate, and it seems the most likely timing,

[57] Norton, *Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux*, p.5
[58] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.34
[59] Hugh the Chanter, *The History of the Church of York*, pp.2-3
[60] SWB p.136

then the note was made at least thirty years after the end of the period under discussion.[61] As such, it cannot be taken with certainty as evidence about the office of the chancellor before 1300.

Nevertheless, combining this later note with other evidence makes it possible to draw some inferences. Firstly, it seems likely that the office of chancellor was annexed to the prebend of Normanton relatively early in the office's development. Something as important as the formal association of an office of the minster with a particular prebend would seem likely to produce evidence in the form of a statute or other instruction to that effect, but none appears. While that could be seen as simply an accident of evidential survival, it seems just as likely to imply that the association with Normanton was not something created later, but was instead present from the office's inception.

Secondly, for at least some of the period under discussion, it seems probable that any control the minster exercised over grammar schools in the archdeaconry of Nottingham fell to its chancellor. This is in accordance with practice elsewhere and also fits with the eventual state of affairs at the time the note was made. The 1248 statute, moreover, makes it clear that neither schools of Grammar nor Logic were to exist within Southwell's prebends except in accordance with the customs of York.[62]

A third point can be made based principally on the relative paucity of evidence relating to Southwell's chancellor. It would appear, from those matters in which evidence does exist and from the roles accorded to the registrar and the resident canons, that the Chancellor of Southwell had few, if any duties that were not connected with the control of education. In effect, the role does not appear to have changed significantly from that of a master of scholars.

[61] Leach, V*isitations and Memorials*, p.lxvii
[62] *ibid.* p.205

For Beverley, McDermid has suggested that the *Magister Scolarum* performed duties more readily identifiable as those of the precentor than those of the chancellor.[63] This would tend to suggest that the officers developed in different ways at Beverley and Southwell, despite eventually resulting in fairly similar offices. However, this approach does tend to ignore the point that the Chancellor of Beverley's powers did became very similar to those of his counterpart at Southwell by the end of the period. He had control over appointments to the grammar school, and it would appear that, if he did not personally suppress unauthorised schools, it was at least done in his name.[64] As such, the sense of difference between the two minsters created by McDermid's comment appears to be largely unfounded. Instead, it would appear that both Beverley and Southwell featured chancellors with similar powers and a similar focus on matters relating to the minsters' grammar schools.

If there is a difference, it perhaps lies in the extent to which the Chancellor of Beverley was involved in other aspects of minster business. The 1178 agreement to which Angot was witness as *Magister Scolarum*[65] was an agreement between Ripon and Rievaulx over a dispute concerning the chapel of Nidd. As such it appears to have no connection with any duty of the chancellor regarding the grammar school. This is equally true of Gilbert de Dantesey's witnessing of a grant to the Provost of Beverley, Fulk Basset, between 1222 and 1224.[66] Neither case amounts to an active use of power on the part of the chancellor, and so there can be no inference of greater powers than those demonstrated by Southwell's chancellor, but the involvement of the chancellors in a way that identified them by their titles, even if only as witnesses to the agreements of others, perhaps suggests a wider remit.

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[63] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xxiv
[64] e.g. BCA p.48
[65] *Memorials of Ripon*, 4, pp.50-51
[66] *Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, Volume 1, (PRO, London, 1890) p.54

The principal difference between the chancellors again lies with the difference in their status. Southwell's chancellor was a canon. Since the office was attached to the prebend of Normanton it was impossible for him to be anything less. Beverley's, by contrast, occupied the position that all the dignitaries of Beverley Minster occupied, slightly below the level of the chapter. Both had authority when dealing with outsiders, but only Southwell's chancellor had authority deriving from his position when dealing with the chapter.

The Registrar

The registrar is mentioned only briefly in the statutes of Southwell. In the 1248 statute he, along with a resident canon and a vicar, is instructed to perform yearly visitations on behalf of the minster. The importance of this function should not be underestimated. The commons of both the vicars and canons were naturally of great importance to them, but the necessity, in the case of the canons, of producing accounts within chapter probably reduced the influence of the registrar on them. He did, however, represent a consistent point of contact between the minsters and their holdings, which potentially offered him considerable influence. Particularly for habitually non-resident canons, the registrar's visitations would have been their principal means of gathering information about the holdings of the minster. It is also likely that, as the only member of the visitation party guaranteed to be the same from year to year, the registrar would have had considerable influence over the progress of the annual visitations. As such, it would seem that the registrar potentially had the ability to considerably influence the way in which the chapter saw their holdings, and consequently, the way in which they acted towards them.

Wardens

Wardens existed to perform a number of functions outlined in the statutes of each minster. These wardens fell into a number of distinct types. Churchwardens appear to be the least frequently mentioned in the statutes of the minsters, and to have had the least important duties. Although it seems likely that they had a number of minor duties around the minster, the principal duty assigned to Southwell's church wardens by the 1248 convocation of canons was the reporting of offences against the rules of the church or those that the canons had laid down.[67] These offences were to be reported directly to the canons, which makes sense in terms of the canons' ability to correct the other inhabitants of the minster, but does also tend to suggest that, in the organisational structure of the minster, the church wardens were not specifically attached to a particular officer. It should be noted that these wardens had no powers of correction in themselves, but were limited to reporting offences that they observed.

Wardens were also assigned at the minsters to administer the common fund. Southwell, for example, had wardens over their common fund and the church of Rolleston from 1225, who were to be elected annually by the canons.[68] From 1260, when a convocation of canons confirmed a statute of Archbishop Walter Gray, the wardens of the commons were required to render yearly accounts. They were then required to resign, though they could be re-elected by the canons after two or three days' deliberation.[69] There are several points to note here. The first is that there was more than one warden of the commons. This would appear principally to be a device to prevent the mishandling of the common fund. The requirement to render accounts yearly further tends to reinforce the idea that the wardens of the common fund were not simply allowed to perform the duties as they saw fit, which is understandable given the

[67] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.208
[68] SWB p.44
[69] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials,* p.205

importance of the common fund as a source of income for the canons. The requirement that the wardens resign prior to any potential re-election, when coupled with the requirement of a break of two or three days before the election of new wardens and the requirement to render accounts, seems to suggest that every step possible was taken to make the election of the wardens of the commons for Southwell more than just a formality.

Another common form of warden was the warden of the fabric. As in cathedrals, there was, 'a clear-cut line of division between the administration of their common fund, used for common chapter expenses, and the fabric fund, which was devoted to the building and repair of the cathedral fabric.'[70] There was certainly a warden of the fabric at Southwell prior to 1248, when he was required to render yearly accounts personally before two resident canons, and was given a colleague.[71] In 1260 the number of wardens of the fabric was raised to two once again, suggesting that the first attempt had been less than successful.[72] In this, it may have been following the example of York, where, 'there were always two vicars or chantry priests, elected annually to be clerks of the works.'[73]

Ripon probably had a warden of the fabric by a similar time, since the office is mentioned in an undated grant witnessed by Geoffrey de Lardare,[74] suggesting a date in the early to mid thirteenth century. There are certainly similarities with the established cathedral practices of the period. The wardens of the fabric were not, for example, allowed to begin new work in the church without the consent of a general chapter.[75] Such precautions may have been necessary, since the wardens of the fabric were potentially dealing with large sums of money such as the £1000 given by the

[70] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.233
[71] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.205
[72] *ibid.* p.204
[73] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.236
[74] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.323
[75] SWB p.44

Archbishop of York for the rebuilding of Ripon.[76] As well as gifts, the fabric fund was a favourite recipient for fines levied on the canons in connection with other matters, as with the threat made to alien canons of Southwell in 1293, that if they did not repair their houses, heavy fines would be levied against them and used for the fabric of a new chapter house.[77]

Wardens did not just see to the affairs of the canons, they were an indispensable part of all aspects of the minsters. At Southwell, the vicars followed the example of the canons in 1248, when they were given a warden of their commons.[78] This is interesting, as the first mentions of a similar officer for the vicars of York are later, in a charter that can be dated to 1266-69,[79] perhaps suggesting that for once the general trend was reversed, and it was the success of the idea at Southwell that encouraged the move at York. It is notable that the statute implies only a single warden of the vicars' commons at Southwell, when, as we have seen, there was more than one warden for both the common fund of the canons and the fabric fund. This would appear to suggest that the administration of the vicars' commons was regarded as requiring less stringent checks than the administration of the canons' commons, or of the fabric fund. In turn, this would tend to imply that the role of warden of the vicars' common fund was of less importance to the canons than the wardens of their own commons, and so was of lower status within the minster.

It is notable in Southwell's 1248 statute that the warden of the vicars' commons was to be elected by the vicars rather than appointed by the canons. This might again be a reflection of the lower status of this warden, and would tend to suggest that the warden of the vicars' commons at Southwell was taken from among the vicars. It also

[76] EYC, vol 1, p.113
[77] SWB p.52
[78] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials,* p.206
[79] N.J.Tringham (ed), *Charters of the Vicars Choral of York Minster*, (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1993) p.xviii

suggests that this warden was largely answerable to the minster's vicars, at least in as much as they constituted his electorate. The sense of the warden of the vicars' commons lack of importance is further reinforced by the lack of detailed instructions in the statutes as to the details of how he should fulfil the role, at least at Southwell. In that minster, there appears to be no comment in the statutes requiring him to keep accounts, or requiring his yearly election. In the absence of such notes it is difficult to state with certainty that either of these things occurred, though it seems reasonable to suggest that the warden of the vicars' commons would have existed on a roughly similar basis to the wardens of the canons' commons.

The duties of the warden of the vicars' commons at Southwell, at least, are set out in the minster statutes. The statute establishing the office also serves to provide its principal function, namely the division of legacies and payments for masses or obits evenly amongst the vicars.[80] In doing so, it also suggests a reason for the creation of the office, as it insists that vicars should not argue among themselves. Presumably, therefore, the value of payments to the vicars had grown sufficiently large by 1248 to foster dissent amongst them over the apportionment of those funds. The same statute also gave the warden of the vicars' commons another function, receiving fines of 1d for the failure of vicars to attend hours without a good reason.[81] Although in other respects the warden of the vicars' commons appears to have had little to do with the canons, in those circumstances it was up to the canon who the vicar represented in the choir to pay the fine, which went towards the vicars' commons.

The Minster Offices and the Minsters

Having established something about the individual offices of the minsters, it also seems important to understand the position of those offices within the minsters in more general

[80] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.206
[81] *ibid.* p.208

terms, particularly since the three minsters differed somewhat in the way that their offices fitted into their overall organisation. As has been outlined above, at Beverley the office holders did not possess the same degree of status as the chapter, or indeed as individual canons. Holding one of Beverley's offices was an entirely separate matter from holding one of its prebends, and did not confer the same degree of authority or power. As such, to an even greater degree than might be usual in other bodies of secular canons, the officers of Beverley Minster did not control the running of the minster.

To an extent, this may have been offset by the personal authority of the individuals concerned, or by their connections to figures in positions of authority. Of the four chancellors of Beverley known in the period under discussion, three had close connections to the archbishop; through being one of his clerks, through being related to him, or through being raised up from relative obscurity at his request. Other officers, such as Thomas Becket in his period as provost, may have been able to bring a measure of personal prestige to the role. It is even possible to suggest that some of the officers of Beverley received their roles partly because of the prestige that they could bring with them, though this cannot be applied to every case.

Set against the argument of personal authority are both the formal status of the officers and an argument in respect of their residence. The personal status of the office holders may have helped to close the gap between them and the canons, but it does not affect the fact that in formal terms, the officers of Beverley were below its canons. Even if, in practical terms, a particular official may have been able to exercise a degree of authority, that does not eclipse the difference that this represented between Beverley and the other minsters.

Then there is the issue of residence to consider. Even if the arguments as to the role of personal authority are accepted as bringing Beverley closer to a model in which the dignitaries of the minster had significant power, it must still be remembered that

many of Beverley's officials appear to have been willing to ignore requirements as to perpetual residence. There does not, for example, appear to be any evidence for Becket having spent time at Beverley fulfilling his nominal role as provost. Furthermore, since such non-residence was probably based on the existence of other, more pressing, duties elsewhere, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that it was precisely those figures with the highest degree of personal prestige and authority who would have been least likely to be present to use it. On that basis, it becomes much harder to argue that the formal position was offset by personal circumstances. Instead, the model Beverley's institutional structure with its officers below the canons in status looks much more like it reflect the reality of the authority of the minster as well as just the formal circumstances.

At Southwell, the situation appears to have been somewhat different. The officers, or at least major ones such as the chancellor and sacrist, seem to have been prebendaries. As such, they had a place in chapter meetings, ensuring not only closer links to the chapter but also a say in its decision making process. Since they were nominally bound to perpetual residence, it is also possible that their greater presence would have allowed a fuller measure of involvement in the minster's affairs than the majority of other canons. Even Southwell's dean, although never referred to in connection to a prebend, appears to have occupied a position greater in honour than that of the Provost of Beverley. Although his powers were probably subject to limitations that allowed the chapter continuing control over the affairs of the minster, it does seem to have been willing to confirm his grants and he was of sufficient importance to be named in the witness lists for those grants ahead of the chapter.

The Resident Canons

Despite the differences in position for the offices of the three minsters, at none of them did they appear to achieve clear superiority over the canons. As such, much of the power in the minsters remained with the canons, and particularly with canons who chose to remain resident. We can see this in statutes such as one of 1248 for Southwell, requiring that all those ordained from Southwell had to pass an examination before the resident canons,[82] or in the passage later in the same statute requiring yearly visitations of churches, prebends, commons, and the laity, by a canon resident accompanied by both a vicar choral and the registrar.

This situation was normal enough, of course, and in fact reflects little more than the point made above about the supremacy of the chapter.[83] The low numbers of canons at the minsters also meant limited numbers of resident canons, as chapter three has discussed. In fact, a 1293 statute of Archbishop John le Romeyn directed at Southwell seems to have envisaged very small numbers of resident canons working on something like a rota system.[84] In this statute, he ordered that, when one resident canon succeeded another, he should not deliberately countermand the instructions of the first. This instruction was repeated one of Archbishop Thomas Corbridge's statutes of 1302,[85] with the instruction that the orders of a canon in residence should not be revoked unless obviously wrong.

This type of instruction is interesting, partly for what it says about the level of control resident canons were able to exercise within the minsters, and partly because it suggests that low numbers of resident canons may sometimes have resulted in the exercise of that power by a single individual. When combined with the formalisation of

[82] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.206
[83] See above, and McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xvii
[84] SWB p.52
[85] *ibid.* p.51

the position of resident canons through requirements to declare an intention to reside,[86] it might be reasonable to suggest that, for the minsters, the post of resident canon became almost a de facto office of the minster. Indeed, in the absence of both chapter heads and other canons, any canon finding himself a sole resident would have been easily the most powerful individual in the minster.

Of course, this suggestion serves mostly as a reminder of the relative positions of canons and office holders within the minsters. It does not attempt to imply that resident canons were officers of the minster in any formal sense, since it was a position any, and in theory all, canons could achieve. The comparison with the officers of the minster serves, however, to demonstrate the importance of the resident canons to the day-to-day running of the minsters and their concerns.

There is also the question of proxies to consider. Leach in particular has argued that the existence of proxies for the non-resident canons meant that they were never excluded from chapters in the fashion of non-residents elsewhere. I am slightly less convinced by this approach, however. While it seems reasonable to accept that the canons of Southwell may have used proxies in chapter meetings, especially since the 1248 statutes of Southwell make it clear that they are with the consent of all the canons who were present and of the proxies of those who were absent,[87] it may be that Leach has overrated the importance of proxies within the minster. It is true that Archbishop Romeyn's statute of 1293 required every canon to have a proxy capable of speaking in chapter,[88] but it would also appear that, in practice, the word proxy has been used in relation to Southwell on occasions that might simply refer to the canon's vicar choral and the normal duties of such a vicar.

[86] e.g. Leach, *Visitations and Memorials,* p.212
[87] *ibid.* p.205
[88] SWB, p.52

It should also be remembered, moreover, that while these proxies, who judging by the contents of witness lists were most probably the vicars anyway, had a role to play within the chapter on behalf of their canons, many of the powers attributed to the resident canons of Southwell occurred outside of the context of the chapter. As such, even with proxies in place, it seems reasonable to suggest that the resident canons still played a much fuller role in the running of the minster and its affairs than the non-residents.

The Value of the Minster Offices

Perhaps though, this confuses somewhat the question of the place of each minster's offices within that minster. To an extent, at least, a more definite answer can be produced through an examination of their monetary value. Obviously, this does not tell the whole story of each office's role within the minster, and the factors mentioned above are of considerable importance, but it does provide a valuable point of comparison.

The equivalent cathedral offices could be valuable. Those of St Paul's were worth more than its prebends in 1291, at £144.[89] The dean and treasurer of York were taxed on £373 6*s* 8*d* and £233 6*s* 8*d* respectively, though as with Beverley's provost, below, these figures probably included funds meant for the running of the institution. Other officials there had less, and York's precentor received only £16 13*s* 4*d*.[90] Chapters two and three have both suggested that the minsters could not hope to match the wealth of the cathedrals directly with either their prebends, or their Domesday holdings. As such, it would be unrealistic to expect them to match the cathedrals with the wealth of their offices. The question, instead, becomes one of whether the minster

[89] Keene et al, *St Paul's,* p.24
[90] *Taxatio P. Nicholai,* pp.297-298

offices received similar proportions of their minsters' incomes, suggesting a similar status within the institutions.

Beginning with Beverley, the sacristy at Beverley is given in Pope Nicholas' taxation as being worth £12.[91] This places the value of the office, and so presumably its importance, above that of the precentor, given at £6 13*s* 4*d* in the same document under the title of the cantor[92] and £5 6*s* 8*d* in a certificate of vacant benefices of 1306.[93] Pope Nicholas IV's *Taxatio*, moreover, would appear to suggest that the office of chancellor at Beverley was of equivalent value to that of precentor, again being worth £6 13*s* 4*d* in allowances for victuals.[94] These figures would appear to suggest that, at Beverley, the sacrist was more important than either the precentor or the chancellor.

The most valuable office at Beverley, however, was that of the provost. McDermid has suggested an income figure of around £100 for the provost at the time the chantry certificate was issued, based on a figure of £426 3*s* 6$^{1/2}$*d* less statutory outgoings.[95] The figures in Pope Nicholas' taxation only provide a total on which he could be taxed, but, even though the total of £232 19*s* is considerably less than the chantry certificate figure, it still suggests an office considerably wealthier than the others.[96] Working with the figures above, we can establish that approximately 23.46% of the listed income in the chantry certificate was left following necessary outgoings. Applying the same ratio to the taxable figure in the 1291 taxation gives a figure of just over £55, more than four times the allowance even of the sacrist. These are of course approximations, given the lack of details as to the provost's outgoings in the *Taxatio*, but the figure seems like a valid one in light of the later evidence.

[91] *ibid.* p.302
[92] *ibid.*
[93] *BCA*, p.143
[94] *Taxatio P. Nicholai IV*, p.302
[95] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, pp.1-2
[96] *Taxatio P. Nicholai IV*, p.302

The figures in the 1291 taxation are somewhat less precise for the minsters of Southwell and Ripon, serving to highlight yet again the difference in approach to the minster offices in the three institutions. Where Beverley's offices existed separately from the canons and were supported by stipends that could be taxed separately, Southwell and Ripon both had offices that were fundamentally linked to prebends. Those offices that were not so linked, moreover, were either considered sufficiently unimportant, or were not sufficiently closely linked to the minster finances to warrant separate mentions.

As such, we know that Southwell's sacrist had an income of £5, because that is the income listed for the prebend,[97] but the *Taxatio* is yet another place where the precentor fails to make an appearance. The figure given suggests that Southwell's sacrist, in spite of his prebend, was less important than Beverley's, receiving less than half as much money, and this is consistent with the model of relatively ad hoc administration at Southwell outlined above. A figure can be determined for the chancellor, thanks to its association with the prebend of Normanton, though the figure of £26 13*s* 4*d* must inevitably take account of the holder's dual duties as both canon and chancellor. Only two prebends, Dunham and the one held by John Clarell, were valued higher.[98]

Ripon's office holders are just as difficult to pin down in the 1291 taxation. It can be determined, because the duty fell to the prebendary of Stanwick, that the precentor received as much as £40 from his prebend. Again, the high value of this prebend appears to have been in recognition of the combination of the duties of the office with the status of a canon, since it amounts to more than the precentor, sacrist and chancellor of Beverley put together. These higher figures would appear to point to Ripon and Southwell valuing at least some of their office holders more than Beverley

[97] *Taxatio P. Nicholai IV*, p.312
[98] *ibid.*

did, but I would argue instead that it points to a difference in approach to the office holders. Ripon and Southwell obtained at least some of their office holders from the ranks of the canons and appear to have remunerated them as canons. Of Ripon's eight prebends, half were valued at £40, suggesting that the prebend of Stanwick was no more or less than an ordinary prebend except for the duties attached to the office connected to it. It would seem, therefore, that the minsters of Ripon and Southwell treated their office holders in a way that viewed them as neither special nor separate. This fits with what we have seen of them above, and is in contrast to Beverley. There, despite the office holders being apparently less important than the canons of the minster, those office holders did at least warrant an especially arranged, and separate, mechanism to provide for their livings.

Conclusions

The situation with the offices of the three minsters appears to have been a complex one, and one where only limited similarities are immediately apparent. It is clear that all three minsters underwent a phase of expansion in their offices, gaining new offices through the period. It also seems clear that, by 1300, they had acquired many of the same offices, and indeed the same offices as York, gaining institutional structures that looked somewhat similar to one another at first glance.

Significant differences still existed in the detail of those offices, however. None of the minsters had the same type of figure at their head. Beverley maintained its offices separately from its canons, and consequently at a different place within its institutional structure to either Southwell or Ripon. Other offices, such as that of the sacrist, may have had the same name, but significantly different levels of importance in practice.

One explanation for this is probably the interaction between the individual needs of the minsters and the pressures on them to acquire what might be thought of as the full

set of offices common in cathedral chapters. They were considerably smaller institutions than cathedrals, with different individual situations and requirements. In some ways, it is perhaps remarkable that the minsters' offices ended up even as similar to one another as they did.

It may also be reasonable to suggest that, in terms of the essence of the offices, the minsters were not entirely different. The main differences between them seem to have come down largely to the way in which they interpreted the offices in question and situated them within their institutional structures. The roles those offices were created to fulfil, however, represented similar needs on the minsters' parts. None of them acquired a strong chapter head in the form of a dean on a permanent basis, for example, because none of them required one. On the other hand, whether in the form of a provost or simply a regularly resident senior member of the chapter, all gained someone who could handle the minster's day-to-day business. They all acquired chancellors and precentors, because again, they shared the need for the functions those offices were created to fulfil.

This sort of variation was entirely natural, and in fact mirrors the sort of variation that took place between different cathedral chapters. Exeter, for example, was slow to develop its offices, so that 'by the middle of the twelfth century, in addition to the two stewards there was a precentor… and a treasurer.'[99] St Paul's only developed its precentor late and to a limited extent.[100]

To some extent therefore, variations created by differences in institutional needs can be seen the inevitable consequence of their roles as bodies of secular canons. The important thing, however, is that it was in this period that they gained the majority of those offices that they did acquire. Partly, this may have been a reaction to the development of offices at the cathedrals, particularly York, but the case of Southwell's dean suggests that this was also partly because it was in this period that successive

[99] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral,* p.34
[100] D. Keene et al, *St Paul's,* p.23

archbishops recognised, or at least assumed, the need for those offices. In turn, if minster offices can be said to reflect the needs of the individual institutions, their growth in this period also suggests that it was a period where their needs, and possibly roles, also altered enormously.

5- Vicars and Chantry Priests

So far, this study has largely focussed on the actions and powers of the upper echelons of the minsters, particularly the canons. In some senses this must be understandable. They were in at least nominal, and usually substantive, control of the minsters, received the bulk of the revenue from those minsters, and were the subject of many of their statutes.

They were not, however, the minsters' only inhabitants. As with other bodies of secular canons, vicars and chantry priests played a substantial role in both the lives of the canons and the running of the minsters. The role of vicars within cathedrals, as with other areas, has been discussed by others,[1] but it must be asked here whether differences in the scale of the minsters, or in their importance, or in their characters, affected the place of the vicars and chantry priests within them. There is, moreover, the continuing question of whether the place of the vicars and chantry priests was the same within each of the three minsters, and of whether the circumstances of the vicars in each minster, as with other aspects of them, moved more in line with those of York as the period progressed.

The evidence regarding vicars is, as with much of the evidence about the minsters, somewhat incomplete. In theory, as the vicars were resident at the minsters more or less continuously, there should be considerable evidence of their presence. This is certainly the case in some of the cathedrals. At York, for example, there are the records of the vicars as a corporation from 1252, and these provide a substantial body of evidence about them.[2] For the minsters it is true, up to a point, that evidence for their vicars is also present, at least in as much as there are usually more vicars than canons on any given witness list. Unfortunately, this is merely evidence of the vicars' presence, and tells us little about them or their circumstances. Presumably because of the lower

[1] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, pp.275-313
[2] Tringham (ed), *Charters of the Vicars Choral of York Minster*

status of vicars within the minsters, evidence for their activities is not always so easy to obtain. The majority of grants, statutes, and other documents relating to the minsters were mostly addressed to the canons for whom they were supposed to be proxies rather than to the vicars themselves. Although this, and the occasions when that was not the case, are interesting in themselves, it does limit the amount it is possible to determine with certainty about the vicars.

Indications of Vicars at the Minsters

It is difficult to suggest much at all about vicars at the minsters in the early years of the period under discussion. This is perhaps understandable, in as much as it was only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that in cathedrals the practice of each canon having his own vicar became accepted.[3] It hardly surprising, therefore, that the minsters should have no earlier references to such an arrangement. The letter setting out the outcome of the 1106 inquiry into the customs of York, for example, makes no mention of vicars.[4] If, as seems likely, we accept the possibility that this was intended as a model for the constitution of Southwell, then it seems unlikely that there were vicars present at Southwell in any well-defined role. Indeed, since it mentions both Beverley and Ripon briefly, we may also infer that any presence of vicars at those institutions was also very limited at that point.

But when did vicars arrive at the minsters? At Southwell, vicars were definitely present in the institution from at least 1171, when the canons were given the right to select their own vicars by papal bull.[5] Indeed, the time required to procure such a bull, along with the time required to realise that one might be necessary, make it entirely possible that vicars were present at the minster considerably earlier than that. The total

[3] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.258
[4] SWB, p.18-20
[5] *ibid.* p.1

number of vicars at Southwell, however, is rather less certain. As late as 1293 it was still necessary for Archbishop John le Romeyn to insist after a visitation that every canon should have a vicar to act as his proxy when his absence was necessary.[6] Although this requirement could also be construed as a technical requirement to have a formal proxy, it seems more likely that this implies something less than a complete set of vicars at the minster.

Even this statute does not appear to have brought about a full complement of vicars for Southwell. While it did not have to be followed by any further warnings in respect of vicars choral, a statute of Archbishop Thomas Corbridge, based on the visitation of 1300, found it necessary to insist that perpetual vicars were put in place in all of the Southwell canons' prebendal churches within a year.[7] That said, neither of these statutes informs us as to the exact number of canons who did not have the requisite vicars to perform their duties. It is even possible, in the case of those canons inclined to be resident at the institution, that they did not feel the need for vicars, being able to fulfil many of the duties themselves. This would have been particularly feasible in the case of those prebends where the prebendal church was relatively close by, particularly since the act of the 1260 convocation of canons at Southwell allowed for breaks in residence of up to three nights to attend to duties at that prebendal church.[8]

At least one of the canons did not have a prebendal vicar until near the end of the period that concerns us. Southwell's White Book contains a note of the establishment of a vicarage for the Southmuskham prebend, dated 1295.[9] Although coming some five years before Archbishop Corbridge's visitation, it is still a relatively late date for this canon to have acquired a vicar within his prebend. Similarly, the

[6] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.211
[7] SWB p.51
[8] *ibid.* p.45
[9] *ibid.* p.23

prebend of Rampton did not acquire a vicarage until as late as 1287.[10] The vicarage of Southmuskham is somewhat unusual in this respect as two separate notes of its establishment can be seen within Southwell's White Book.[11] Although the last of these is as stated, the first is dated as early as 1225. While this could simply be a restatement of the existence of a vicar who was in being from 1225, it seems more likely that this combination of evidence is indicative of a lapse in the original vicarage followed by its re-establishment in 1295.

Dates for the establishment of other vicarages within the prebends can also be found in Southwell's cartulary. It must be remembered when considering these dates, of course, that they could relate to the establishment of a dwelling for a vicar already in existence. The absence of a vicarage does not necessarily imply that there was no vicar within the prebend. However, if a vicar was permanently established within the prebend, then it makes sense that eventually he would have needed a vicarage of some description. As such, while it cannot necessarily be held true in all cases, the dates found for the establishment of vicarages within the prebends probably provides at least a rough guide to the presence of prebendal vicars.

The dates for the vicarage of Southmuskham have been discussed, but the Rampton vicarage was also unusual. The prebend may have been in existence as early as 1200[12], yet it did not gain a vicarage until 1287.[13] The Southwell prebend of Eton, in contrast, gained a vicarage in the same year that the prebend was established, 1290.[14]

For Ripon, there does not appear to be an equivalent document setting out the position of the vicars. There are, however, references to them in other forms of documents. By 1221, for example, the vicars were sufficiently well established to

[10] *ibid.* p.37
[11] *ibid.* pp.23-24
[12] *ibid.* p.36
[13] *ibid.* p.37
[14] *ibid.* p.28

receive rents as a group on properties assigned to them.[15] While in theory this could happen from the moment vicars were at the minster, in practice it seems more likely that this is an indication of an established body of vicars that had been present for some considerable time. The difficulty here is that it is impossible to know exactly how long a time this was, and so impossible to date the arrival of vicars at Ripon accurately.

Beverley suffers from much the same problem, which is compounded by the limited surviving visitation records relating to the vicars. At best, we can say that by the end of the period there may well have been a full complement of vicars there, particularly in light of the bedern with its additional seven vicars.[16] In truth though, in a situation where it is initially impossible even to identify separate prebends, it seems unreasonable to expect to be able to consistently identify connections between the vicars of that institution and those prebends.

What inferences can reasonably be drawn from those dates that can be established? In spite of the late dates of many of the vicarages, and the repeated requests for the canons to have vicars, those instructions do seem to have died out in the very last years of the period. Ripon, as shall be seen below, also gained a communal bedern for its vicars shortly after the end of the period, suggesting their presence as a relatively complete body. It would appear, therefore, that despite the apparent resistance of the canons to converging on a uniform model where each canon had a vicar, they did so at some point before or around 1300. As such, the number of vicars choral at the minsters was almost certainly identical to the number of canons at each institution by that point. This makes sense in terms of the vicars' duties, since not only did such vicars fulfil an essential role as stand-ins in the choir, but also the requirements for canons to have proxies during periods of non-residence.[17]

[15] *Memorials of Ripon*, pp.135-136
[16] See below
[17] See chapter 3

Vicars and their Canons

To what extent did the vicars of the minsters exist in separation from the canons of those minsters? This issue is linked to the question of the vicars' corporate identity, which is discussed further below, though it is not quite the same. This issue is an examination of the vicars' relations with their canons, and their level of self-determination as a result. The question of corporate identity is more one of how the vicars related to one another as a group and how that group, if any, related to the canons as a body.

From the example of the cathedrals, where 'vicars, secondaries and choristers were closely dependant on their canons'[18] one might expect that the vicars existed in a state of relatively close contact with the canons. There is a certain amount of evidence for this to be seen. An 1171 papal bull of Alexander III states the right of the canons of Southwell to choose their own vicars for prebendal churches without interference,[19] which would tend to suggest the likelihood of a strong connection between the canons and those vicars that they chose.

At Beverley and Ripon too, the canons were responsible for the presentation of the vicars choral for their prebends. Most of the references to vicars within Beverley's chapter act book stem from such presentations, for example the presentation of John of Risindon in 1303 by Canon Walter of Gloucester.[20] This evidence for the arrangement is only available from the very end of the period, but there is no reason to believe that it represents a change from any other approach. In fact, since canons choosing their own

[18] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.39
[19] SWB p.1
[20] BCA p.27

vicars seems to have been normal in all other communities of secular canons that had them,[21] this arrangement is exactly what we would expect.

The only hint that things might ever have been otherwise lies in the papal bull mentioned above.[22] While it is possible that this represents no more than the formalisation of existing rights for Southwell, and that the canons there were always able to choose their vicars without interference, the necessity of this bull might also suggest that some attempts had been made to influence the process of selecting vicars. It cannot be suggested that this can have amounted to a full scale usurpation of that right by other parties, because it seems likely that such a thing would have caused a dispute more readily discernable in the source material. However, there may have been some attempt at the exercise of informal influence, which raises questions in the area of patronage.[23]

The canons were also responsible for paying their vicars, which again reinforces the connection. Additionally, they were, to a great extent, responsible for enforcing the good behaviour of their vicars. At Southwell, the canons were responsible from 1248 for deducting fines for absences from nocturnes and matins, 1*d*, from the wages of their vicars and for handing that fine over to the warden of the vicars' commons.[24]

This arrangement does, however, also suggest that the vicars were by that point a fully-fledged corporate body at Southwell. The necessity of a warden for their commons is one of the principal indicators of this. The fact that the vicars possessed a common fund demonstrates that they had attained at least a small measure of financial independence from their canons. The same statute that established the fines also established the office of the warden of the vicars' common fund. It states that the warden was to divide legacies as well as payments for obits or masses equally among

[21] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, pp.123-4
[22] SWB p.1
[23] See chapters 7 and 8
[24] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.209

the vicars. This points to the existence of three sources of income for the vicars not directly related to their canon. Such a separate income in turn suggests a measure of independence for the vicars concerned.

The method of selection of the warden of the vicars' commons also tends to suggest that they were both separate and corporate by 1248. While most other aspects of the running of the minster fell to resident canons at Southwell, the selection of the warden of the vicars' commons fell to an election among the vicars themselves. It is, of course, possible to view this as simply the most effective way of finding a warden who all the vicars trusted, and thus eliminating arguments over money. It is also possible to suggest that, as the issue did not directly affect them, the canons may simply have had no interest in the identity of the warden of the vicars' commons. Both of these approaches, however, imply a degree of separation between the canons and their vicars when examined more closely.

If the possibility that the canons felt the vicars were able to select their warden of the commons more effectively is advanced, then that perhaps suggests that the canons were not entirely familiar with the body of vicars as a whole. It would also tend to suggest a high degree of trust of the vicars' abilities. If the importance of finding a candidate that the vicars trusted is emphasised, it suggests that the canons felt that the vicars were a sufficiently important body within the minster that their contentment on the matter had to be ensured. This might not have meant real status, though. It might simply be that the functions that the vicars performed were sufficiently important to the running of the minster that the canons could not afford to have them disrupted by the arguments hinted at in the statute.[25]

If, on the other hand, the canons simply had no interest in the identity of the warden of the vicars' commons then that might also imply a degree of separation

[25] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.206

between the vicars and canons by that point. Firstly, it suggests a feeling on the part of the canons that the vicars and their commons were somehow none of their business. If this were the case then the very idea that vicars had their own business separate from the canons for whom they were principally substitutes suggests that the vicars were at least becoming a separate body in their own right. Secondly, it implies that the vicars, or at least their wardens, were not a suitable target for attempts to control the awarding of appointments, which again tends to imply that the office was different from the main offices of the minster.

How much control did the canons have over the day-to-day activities of their vicars? In theory, at least, the answer to that is that they had considerable control. The vicars were at the minsters specifically to fulfil duties on behalf of the canons. In some circumstances, they could act as proxies for the canons in the chapter as well as in the choir or the prebendal church. All of these roles indicate a relationship defined by the needs of the canon. However, although a certain amount of control is implicit in the very nature of the relationship between canon and vicar, there are other elements that suggest that in practice, such control was not always exercised.

Non-residence is again an issue here. The very nature of the vicar as proxy was to provide a mechanism to allow for the absence of the canon without disrupting the working of the minster. When a canon was absent, and particularly if they were habitually absent, then it becomes difficult to suggest that they were in a position to dictate the day-to-day activities of their vicars in detail. Certain activities, such as attendance in choir, were of course required and backed by the threat of fines. Even so, a vicar whose canon was rarely present had to be in a position of relative freedom.

The other reason for suspecting that the minsters' vicars were not always under the complete control of their canons is that the evidence suggests that they demonstrably

did behave in ways that their canons cannot have approved of. In amongst standard accounts of particular instances of misbehaviour, there is for Southwell a more general statement. This came in 1302 as a comment justifying a requirement that the canons pay their vicars more regularly, stating that doing so would hopefully prevent the vicars from doing what they currently were, which was neglecting their duties and bringing scandal to the church.[26]

This comment also reinforces the point that vicars were paid principally by their canons, despite the opportunity for additional income from oblations, obits and legacies. The amounts in question varied, both between the minsters and in comparison to York. In 1293, John le Romeyn insisted that the canons of Southwell should pay their vicars 60*s* per year and should be compelled to the regular payment of that sum.[27] Interestingly, the amount involved differs from that at York, which was set at 40*s* per year in both 1291 and 1294,[28] and perhaps suggests that the circumstances of Southwell necessitated something different to the York model, which the minsters appeared to be moving towards in other respects.

The archbishop noted that his creation of two new prebends, and the consequent introduction of two new vicars, meant that the vicars' alternative sources of income were being split between more people, thus leaving them all with less. As such, it seems that this figure of 60*s* was intended to be substantial to make up for this. As the statute is the same one requiring every canon to have a vicar as proxy, I would like to suggest that, by putting emphasis on their canons' payment as the principal source of the Southwell vicars' income, rather than for example paying them under a central figure, the archbishop may also have been seeking to reinforce the link between the canons and their vicars.

[26] SWB p.51
[27] *ibid.* p.52
[28] Harrison, *Life in a Medieval College* p.45

Vicars Beyond the Prebends

While each canon was required to supply a vicar as a proxy in choir, and would also have supplied a vicar to any prebendal church, not all of the vicars connected with the minsters were attached to specific canons. Beverley had the strange situation of its bedern, housing seven clerks separately from the main body of ecclesiastics. In the institution of the bedern, Beverley is unique among the three minsters. Ripon acquired one, but only well after the end of the period. Inevitably, attempts to establish why that should be the case must resort to guesswork, but at least one reasonable hypothesis might be drawn from the structure of the minster's offices. As suggested in chapter four, Southwell and Ripon relied heavily on their canons to fill the offices of the minster. Southwell's Sacrista prebend is merely the most explicit expression of this.

Beverley, on the other hand, relied on an administrative system both below the level of the canons in honour and largely separate from them.[29] By having a minster structure that could accept such additional personnel with their offices, Beverley may have been in a position to require and use the extra vicars of the bedern where the others were not. Of course, stating the issue in that way perhaps fails to take account of events immediately after the end of the period discussed. Dixon has argued that the grant of two messuages in 1304 amounted to the construction of a bedern.[30] If Ripon's structure did not require the extra vicars, why would it be constructed?

An answer to this is to see the construction of Ripon's bedern as a different matter from Beverley's. With Beverley, the bedern appears to have been used as a means of housing 'extra' individuals, principally a body of clerks known as *berefellarii*, and as such suggests that the minster needed such extra help to run efficiently. At Ripon, the bedern appears to have been intended as a location to house the existing

[29] See chapter 4
[30] Dixon 'The vicars choral at Ripon, Beverley and Southwell' p.139

body of vicars. As late as 1303, Archbishop Corbridge felt in necessary to insist up the canons of Ripon having permanent vicars,[31] so the move could have been a response to the final filling of the full complement of vicars at the minster. It could also, as discussed below, be seen as a sign of a change to a more corporate approach by Ripon's vicars at the end of the period, but it is not necessarily an indicator of the use of extra personnel by the minster.

Status of Vicars

At Ripon the vicars were required to be priests, in order to allow them to fulfil the full range of duties for the canons when they were acting as their proxies. This requirement, however, did not come until Archbishop Greenfield imposed it in 1306.[32] Naturally, this does not preclude the vicars of Ripon from having been priests prior to that date, but it strongly suggests that not all of them were. Southwell had at least some requirements of its vicars, because it had in place a requirement that vicars should take Annuals and Trentals at some point before 1248.[33] The same statute required that no one should be ordained there except after passing an examination before the canons. In this, of course, the minsters were not departing from the practices of those cathedrals that housed secular chapters. Only at St Paul's Cathedral were the vicars not routinely priests.[34] Here, as in many other areas, the example for the minsters was very definitely York, which had examinations for vicars from 1250,[35] and required them to become priests within a year of appointment from 1252.[36]

Although the running of the minster was nominally in the hands of the canons or the officers, it would appear that the vicars of each of the three minsters were not

[31] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 2, p.44
[32] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.72-78
[33] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.207
[34] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.257
[35] Harrison, *Life in a Medieval College*, p.48
[36] *ibid*, p.45

without status of their own. The statute of 1248 from Southwell required yearly visitations of churches, prebends, the commons and the laity on behalf of the minster.[37] As in the majority of Southwell's official capacities, a resident canon was required to be a part of this process of visitation. This is to be expected, in as much as the resident canons were responsible for much of Southwell's discipline and smooth running. What is more unexpected is that the same statute should require the presence of a vicar. It seems unlikely that the vicar was intended to be a part of the visitation merely as an assistant to the resident canon, or that his presence was purely for functional purposes such as making records. In either of these cases it seems reasonable to suggest that the vicar would not have been specifically mentioned in the statute. Instead, the resident canon would simply have used his authority to acquire assistance from the vicars as and when it was needed.

The presence of a vicar on the visitations at Southwell must, therefore, be explained in different terms. It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the decision to include the vicars in such visitations was a measure of their status within the minster. It effectively said that, for a visitation to have full authority, it had to have representatives of both the canons and the vicars, which in turn suggests that, although the vicars were by no means equal in status to the minster canons, they were regarded as a necessary, and even vital, part of the minster.

It would also appear that, at least in some matters, the vicars' wishes may have been taken into account. In 1272, for example, the Provost of Beverley arranged for the corrodies of the canons, vicars, clerks and others to be temporarily commuted in favour of a lump sum payment so as to clear debts.[38] The agreement in question appears to imply that it was a freely made concession on the part of all the groups concerned. What then does this suggest about the place of the vicars within the minster?

[37] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.206
[38] BCA, vol. 2, p.295

At the very least, it would appear to imply a level of continuing control over matters, such as corrodies belonging to them, which were specifically the vicars'. It should be noted that this amounts to no more than control over things that were the vicars' by right, and as such does not necessarily imply any sort of special status within the minster. Although this argument could be extended to imply that the vicars took a full role in decisions within the minster, that appears to run contrary to the whole concept of the chapter making decisions and in any case is not supported by the agreement to commute the corrodies. While the agreement in question does, admittedly, state that the canons, vicars, clerks and others conceded their corrodies in favour of a payment, implying a measure of collective decision making, it is not clear that this makes any statement about the details of the decision making process involved. It is far more likely that the form of words used implies a decision made by the canons, possibly, but not necessarily, with later agreement by the vicars. It might be more accurate to suggest, therefore, that what this decision implies is a certain amount of collective feeling, not just among the vicars, but from the institution as a whole.

However, it might also be a mistake to imply too much organisational coherence or collective power on the part of the vicars throughout the period under discussion. There is evidence for such a strong collective spirit amongst the vicars of York in the form of separate books of their grants, deeds and agreements, but this does not automatically translate to any such organisation among the vicars of the minsters. At Ripon, for example, there is such a collection of documents from the vicars' register, but the documents within appear to fall outside the period under discussion. This would seem to suggest that prior to the end of the thirteenth century, the vicars, of Ripon at least, were not as coherently organised as their counterparts at York.

This is not to suggest that the vicars were without any measure of collective organisation before 1300. The experience of Southwell, with a body of vicars with their

own fund managed by a warden, tends to suggest that the vicars could act in concert. Indeed, for Edwards the principal sign of corporate identity on the part of vicars was the division of excess funds in a common fund of their own.[39] With Ripon, the evidence seems to suggest, however, that the vicars' grouping was principally a matter of convenience, and was not an arrangement that had resulted in their incorporation. Indeed, some of the lack of coherence among Ripon's vicars in particular appears to have persisted long after 1300, since a pair of charters of Henry V required a stronger collective identity for the vicars in the form of a common seal, an elected provost, and a requirement to live in common.[40] Ripon's possession of a bedern from as early as 1304 perhaps argues against this somewhat,[41] but even so, that bedern did not come into being until the end of the period under discussion. As such, it is clear that throughout this period, Ripon's vicars had a somewhat limited level of collective identity.

The level of collective activity among the vicars does not appear to have been uniform throughout the three minsters. As suggested above, the level of such collective activity and identity was probably quite low at Ripon. At Beverley, the issue seems to have been influenced by the presence of both a relatively well-defined series of minster offices above the vicars and by the presence of the bedern, which served as a common living place for a number of vicars. There is a risk in inferring such collective identity from Beverley's bedern, in as much as the vicars there were not the same individuals that served as the canons' vicars, but the impression of a strong collective identity on the part of Beverley's vicars remains.

Southwell is perhaps less clear-cut. The number of canons there, and consequently the number of vicars, would appear to require some measure of organisation. They also clearly had a common fund of sorts, along with a warden for

[39] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.259
[40] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, pp.123-128
[41] Dixon 'The vicars choral at Ripon, Beverley and Southwell' p.139

it.[42] Similarly, as noted above, there is evidence that the vicars had a formal role to play in the running of the minster's affairs. These things would appear to suggest a collective spirit among the vicars. On the other hand, Southwell lacked features such as a bedern that would point to vicars living within the minster itself. The complaint of Archbishop Corbridge, moreover, which alleged that vicars were wandering the country causing disturbances,[43] tends to suggest a relatively low level of collective control over them.

Why should there be this variation among the minsters over their vicars? In part, at least, it is possible that the variation is illusory. The apparent differences could be due to variations in the survival of evidence. Given the lower level of evidence available for discussion regarding the vicars, this is a possibility. On the other hand, that argument could be levelled at most aspects of the minsters, and accepting it uniformly would effectively make any comparison of them impossible. Instead, we must accept that the evidence that has survived does seem to point to variations between the minsters.

One possible reason for the variation in the group coherence of the minsters' vicars might be the lower status of the vicars compared to the canons. The canons, although undermined somewhat by non-residence, were the important figures within the minsters. It was with the canons that the majority of business was done, to the canons that the archbishop gave orders and the majority of gifts, and around the canons that the majority of the minsters' structures were organised.

The vicars, by contrast, appear to have been less closely controlled from above. Instead, their disposition may be regarded as having been principally a matter for the canons of that minster. As such, the variations in this respect between the minsters could be explained principally in terms of the nature and requirements of the minster in question. In many ways, for example, it makes sense that Beverley's vicars should have

[42] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.209
[43] *ibid.* p.214

been relatively organised. The level of organisation seen in the minster's offices,[44] along with an emphasis on collective life shown by the relatively late division of the thraves into carefully guarded prebends, would make it surprising if the vicars of that minster were not equally organised.

Variation between the situations of the vicars at each minster, therefore, can probably best be explained by variations in the individual circumstances of each minster, resulting particularly in a varied speed of growth in the vicars' collective identity between the institutions. This does not eliminate the role of the Archbishops of York in their development. Instead, it suggests that the role they played in the vicars' development at the minsters was one of setting boundaries for that development, such as punishing individual infractions or insisting that all canons should have vicars, [45] rather than setting out the detail of the development. This seems consistent with other aspects of the minsters, and in particular with the development of their offices.[46]

Vicars and the Minster Offices

The interaction of the vicars with those offices must also be considered. Although the officers of the minsters usually existed at a higher level of the minster organisation than the vicars, this did not necessarily translate to a simple relationship between them.

On occasion, that relationship could be something close to a business relationship. In 1273, for example, the vicars of Beverley Minster rented a house that had been given to them to the precentor, Ralph de Ivingho, for 2*s* a year. This was in addition to an initial payment of 40 marks of silver.[47] Again, this possibly suggests something about the collective nature of Beverley's vicars, but it may also show something of the separation between them and the minster's officers.

[44] See chapter 4
[45] SWB p.52
[46] See chapter 4
[47] BCA, vol. 2, p.296

A more typical example of the relationship between vicars and office holders occurred with Beverley's provost, who appears to have had an important role to play in the running of Beverley's bedern. Certainly, as one of the financial affairs of the minster, it fell within his purview. Of course, against this we must set the issue of absentee provosts, discussed along with the office in chapter four. The likelihood is that, when this occurred, duties nominally in the provost's power would have fallen to vicars to perform, subject to his oversight. Between these aspects of the office, it seems likely that the vicars of Beverley had considerable interaction with their provosts.

For Southwell and Ripon, the picture is somewhat different. As I have suggested in chapter four, neither of those minsters had a figure that was exactly the same as Beverley's provost. Even when a dean or similar figure existed, it seems to have been as nominal head of the chapter. In contrast, Beverley's provost was a separate figure, and not one of the prebendaries. This appears to have meant that those deans and informal leaders that Ripon and Southwell produced were more concerned with the business of the canons than the business of their minsters' vicars.

The division between vicars and office holders was not always neat, however. We must also remember that vicars filled some offices. Although the major offices went to canons, some positions may have been too minor for the canons. A later example of this occurred at Southwell with the organist,[48] who was habitually a chantry priest, though this occurred after the period under discussion. There is less evidence for such occupation of offices by Southwell's vicars in this period, but it is likely that, where the main office holders had deputies and subordinates, those were not canons. We know that minor figures such as the doorkeeper were not, for example.[49]

One point about the vicars' relationship to the dignitaries of the minsters when compared with the canons is the influence of non-residence on the part of the canons.

[48] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.lxvi
[49] SWB p.52

At the very least, this meant that the majority of canons did not have a continuous relationship with the dignitaries of their minster, while their vicars probably did. Of course, at Ripon and Southwell at least, the positions of the dignitaries were filled, in so far as they existed, by canons. As such, the dignitaries of those minsters had their own vicars choral. In this, the difference in status between the dignitaries of Beverley and those of the other two minsters can be said to have had an effect upon the vicars of the minsters. To what extent it amounted to a practical difference in the experience of vicars at the minsters in question is more debatable. It might be reasonable to suggest the possibility that the close connection between specific vicars and the dignitaries of Southwell and Ripon meant a closer relationship between the vicars and those dignitaries than at Beverley, but this is impossible to know for certain.

Who Were the Vicars?

Attempts to understand the minsters' vicars as individuals inevitably suffer from the difficulties in evidence that are attendant on all areas with them. Even with the canons, much more than the identification of a name is often very difficult, especially towards the earlier part of the period. With vicars, aspects of their identification can be more awkward still. This might not initially seem to be the case, thanks to their more constant presence at the minsters, and consequently their more consistent presence in witness lists. However, how much does the presence of their name really tell us about them?

It is difficult to state with certainty, for example, whether the vicars of the minsters went on to have careers as canons. The use of only first names for the vicars in most witness lists, combined with a lack of continuity in the evidence, makes it hard to assess whether particular individuals with similar first names were in fact the same person. Even with the canons, it is difficult to work backward and find out whether they

could have been the vicars in question, because their brief appearances in witness lists are in many cases too infrequent to achieve that sort of continuity.

Even so, it is perhaps possible to suggest that the names of Ripon and Southwell's vicars did not usually bear a marked resemblance to those of the canons a few years afterwards. From this observation, it would appear that there is not a case for suggesting that there was any automatic transition from vicar to canon within the minsters. This conclusion is supported by the existence of those canons who we know came from other places. It is not just canons provided by the king or papacy who are relevant in this sense; even the case of someone like Peter de Fikelden, who was a canon of both Ripon and Beverley,[50] shows that many of the canons could not have been vicars at the places they were canons. In the case of pluralists or those who swapped one prebend for another, at least one of the prebends would be at a place where they were not originally a vicar.

This lack of an obvious progression from vicar to canon appears to be consistent with the evidence elsewhere. McHardy has emphasised that the chances of a vicar working their way up to hold a prebend were in fact quite slim, and principally determined by the extent of their connections.[51] This seems just as likely to be true for Beverley, Ripon and Southwell as it was for the cathedrals. Moreover, even in the case of the canons that were there, it is difficult to find records of them as vicars elsewhere.

As such, even in the minsters, it is probably better to view the vicars as very much a separate thing than as part of a career path that led to eventual positions as canons. It appears to have been more usual for the vicars to remain as such for relatively long periods, perhaps collecting more duties, and consequently more remuneration in the form of appointments to chantries as they went along, though this is only applicable in the latter part of the period under discussion. Before this, money for obits was most

[50] See chapter 3
[51] McHardy 'Careers and disappointments' pp.111-130

commonly a matter for any common fund the vicars possessed, and so did not accrue to individual vicars.

We know that the canons had the right to choose their own vicars. It would not be unreasonable to assume, therefore, that the vicars of the minsters mostly came from a pool of people known to the individual canons. This is probably true, though it was not an entirely free choice. As has been noted above, and as was also true of cathedrals, the regulations of the minsters gradually tightened to require increasingly high standards of education and ability of their vicars. For Southwell, the requirements of an examination before the canons and to take both Annuals and Trentals were set out in 1248,[52] though that also means that for almost eighty years after the 1171 papal bull mentioning their presence, the selection of vicars was probably not so rigorously controlled. Indeed, this papal bull may have had something to do with the lateness of these restrictions, since it is possible that its insistence on canons having a free selection for their vicars may have discouraged limitations on that selection even where those limitations were for good reasons.

The consequence of restrictions such as those at Southwell was that, instead of potentially selecting freely from a group of individuals known to them, the canons had to select from the smaller pool of those individuals with the correct qualifications to be vicars. In theory, therefore, the additional restrictions potentially opened up places within the ranks of the vicars choral to those with the correct qualifications but fewer connections. In practice, this is unlikely to have been true. Certainly, canons had to choose from those with the correct ecclesiastical qualifications, but, as canons supposedly resident in a church, and with connections in their prebendal churches, they were in an ideal environment to find such qualified individuals within their immediate circle of influence.

[52] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, pp.206-207

What then, can we say about the identity of the vicars within the minsters with any certainty? Ultimately the answer must be relatively little. It is likely that they came from a pool of qualified people known to the canons, at least by the end of the period when requirements on the vicars were more stringent. It is also likely that they were not usually close relatives, since those relatives were also likely to be in a position to become canons themselves, but they probably were not strangers either. It is also likely that, as with cathedrals, the individuals who became vicars had few expectations of becoming canons in the longer term.

The Appearance of Chantry Priests

Of course, vicars choral were not the only group of minor clergy present at the minsters. In the second half of the period to 1300, the minsters also found themselves occupied by chantry priests as well. Southwell appears to have been the first of the minsters to acquire them. Even so, the situation seems to have remained somewhat confused. There is evidence for the precursors of chantries continuing until relatively late in the period, with an agreement for prayers for the soul of Robert de Sutton by the vicars choral existing in 1260.[53] The 1248 statute mentioned above also seems to imply that it would be the vicars choral doing the majority of the work for the souls of the deceased in its expectation that the warden of the vicar's commons would have to divide payments for obits and masses.[54] This is somewhat confusing, since the same statute requires that chantry chaplains should not take Annuals or Trentals,[55] both of which are noted as prerequisites of the status of vicar choral. In other words, the statute appears to envisage the possibility that the vicars would be performing some duties associated with chantry chaplains, even as it attempts to reinforce the differences between the two groups.

[53] SWB p.28
[54] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.209
[55] *ibid.* p.207

Despite the agreement of 1260, evidence for chantries at Southwell appears to exist from approximately 1220, in the form of the chantry of St Nicholas, founded by William de Wydyington,[56] as can be seen below, at least two other chantries were founded before the date of the agreement for soul of Robert de Sutton. This tends to imply that a considerable degree of overlap existed within the minster between the roles of the vicars choral and the chantry priests. It is possible, however, that this fluidity was not permanent, since a chantry for *Richard* de Sutton was founded in approximately 1274,[57] and it seems unlikely that such a change of tack would have occurred in the fourteen years since the agreement with the vicars over Robert de Sutton unless chantries had become entrenched in the minster in the meantime.

To list Southwell's chantries more fully therefore, the following chantries were connected to Southwell and came into being during the period 1066-1300. All are mentioned within Southwell's White Book, in foundation deeds, or lists of their muniments, or in business relating to them.[58]

Chantry of St Nicholas- founded 1220[59]

Chantry of St John Evangelist- founded *c.*1241[60]

Chantry of the Altar of St Thomas-the-Martyr- founded *c.*1241[61]

Chantry of St Stephen- founded 1245[62]

[56] SWB pp.293-310
[57] *ibid.* pp.29-34
[58] The bulk of the documents relating to Southwell's chantries can be found in a section of SWB pp.293-426, except for Richard de Sutton's chantry, SWB pp.29-34
[59] *ibid.* p.293
[60] *ibid.* p.421
[61] *ibid.* p.333
[62] *ibid.* p.377

Chantry of Richard de Sutton- founded *c.* 1274[63]

Chantry of the Altar of St John the Baptist- founded 1275[64]

For Beverley, it would appear that its chantries came into being in connection with the existing altars of the church. For example, at some point between 1249 and 1266 a chantry was founded at the altar of St Michael for the soul of William Scott, a former Archdeacon of Worcester.[65] This makes sense in terms of the structure of the minster at Beverley, where the prebends were focussed on particular altars within the institution. It does, however, mean that there was little reason for the minster to develop an extensive series of separate chantry chapels within this period. There can thus have been little reason for a large body of separate chantry priests, particularly as the minster already had additional personnel at hand in the form of the vicars of the *berefellarii*.

The evidence for chantries at Ripon is somewhat more ambiguous during this period. There are certainly chapels mentioned, but these mostly take the form of private chapels and appear to be focussed more on personal worship than on masses for the dead. There are examples of grants made for the benefit of the dead, but these principally take the form of obits performed by the vicars of the minster rather than separate and permanent chantries. The exception here seems to be the chantry of the altar of St Andrew, founded c.1234.[66] The chantry of the altar of St Andrew is also mentioned in 1286, because the chaplain resigned after Geoffrey de Lardare purchased it.[67]

[63] *ibid.* p.29
[64] *ibid.* p.313
[65] BCA, vol. 2, p.292
[66] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, p.58
[67] *ibid.* p.67

Why should such a difference be apparent in the evidence pertaining to Ripon and Southwell? The most easily observable difference between the two minsters lies in the number of canons each supported, but can such an important difference on the subject of chantries be explicable in those terms? It might be possible to suggest that Southwell's greater number of canons allowed them to accommodate chantries more easily, but as has been shown in chapter three Ripon's prebends were probably worth more than Southwell's. It cannot be an issue of what each was financially able to support, therefore. Perhaps the issue lies in the area of control instead. Southwell's greater number of canons might have allowed a more reasonable expectation of continuous oversight of the chantries, and so might have encouraged it to allow a number of them while Ripon did not.

However, even taking this into account, the difference in numbers seems quite large. In these circumstances, it becomes necessary to consider the possibility that the limited references to Ripon's chantries are primarily a quirk of the evidence. A look at Beverley's chantries tends to support this conclusion, because it was in many ways the same. Chantries are mentioned in the business of the chapter act book for Beverley, for example in a series of documents relating to the chantry of St Nicolas,[68] but this is largely in the period immediately after 1300. For the period under discussion, there is little comment on them, perhaps suggesting that, as essentially peripheral elements of the minster organisations, they were simply not at the heart of the minster's normal business.

This is consistent with what we see of the chantry of St Andrew above. The two references are spread out over more than fifty years, with little sign of the chantry in the evidence in between. If the chantry was able to go so long from its foundation without appearing in the records, then it might be reasonable to suggest that any chantry not

[68] BCA pp.296-297

possessing a surviving foundation deed would be effectively invisible in the evidence. Although this might seem surprising, it in fact merely says something about the minor, and essentially peripheral, role of chantry priests within the minsters.[69]

As for the appearance of a number of chantries in the Ripon evidence after the end of the period, three explanations suggest themselves. One is that it is in some way linked to the closer residence of the vicars there and the attainment of their full complement. This may well have placed them in a position where they were able to staff chantries as they previously could not. Of the explanations, this is probably the weakest, as it tends to imply a lack of presence at the minster on the part of the vicars prior to 1300. The analysis of Ripon's vicars above has suggested a possible lack of corporate identity, but cannot definitely establish a lack of numbers. While not resident in a single building there and not at full strength, there were still almost certainly vicars for several of the canons.

The other two explanations are linked, and come down to the willingness of people to found such chantries. Even at Southwell, the foundation of a new chantry chapel was quite rare, and it is entirely possible that only a slight change in the efforts of the local aristocracy and the canons, who were the individuals mostly paying for such chantries, could reduce such scarcity to non-existence at Ripon. Personal willingness to create them is, therefore, one possible explanation.

Linked to this must be the timing of the creation of chantries more generally, so that the limited or nonexistent founding of chantries at the minsters must be seen in the context of a fashion for chantry chapels that had not yet reached full fruition.[70] Even Southwell's chantries were only founded in the last eighty years of this period. The limited number of chantries at Ripon, therefore, might reasonably be viewed less as an

[69] For which, see below.
[70] D. Crouch, 'The Origins of Chantries: Some Further Anglo Norman Evidence' *Journal of Medieval History,* 2001, vol. 27, No. 2, pp.159-180

anomaly than as a function of both the willingness of individuals to found them, and of the speed of their growth more generally.

Chantry Priests and the Minster Organisations

Exactly where did chantry priests fit into the organisation of the minsters? This is a question that appears to have been unclear to the minsters themselves for much of the period under discussion. As late as 1303 Southwell's canons had to resort to bringing a suit before York in an attempt to establish the chapter's jurisdiction over the minster's chantry chaplains.[71] The overriding difficulty lay in the nature of the chantry chaplains. Whereas vicars choral and the vicars of prebendal churches clearly existed to fulfil functions relating to the accepted duties of the canons, and were in effect principally proxies for those canons, the chantry chaplain fulfilled a function that was largely separate. Some clarification of their position was therefore essential. In this, again, the minsters follow closely the example of York. The chapter there forced an oath from its chantry chaplains in 1291 in an effort to exert greater control over them.[72] Again, the picture seems to be one of York providing a precedent that filtered out towards the minsters over time.

The chantries themselves appear to have been property to be bought and sold within the minsters. Evidence for this can be found in 1286, when Cuthbert of Leming, the chaplain of the altar of St Andrew in Ripon, resigned his position along with the lands, houses and rents, associated with it at the request of Geoffrey de Lardare, who had purchased the chantry in question.[73]

The question of the distinction between the chantry priests of the minsters and their vicars is an interesting one. Edwards has discussed the issue in relation to York,

[71] SWB pp.49-50
[72] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.298
[73] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, p.67

pointing out the complexity of a system where some chantries were staffed by members of the vicars choral, while others possessed separate chantry priests.[74] It is difficult to be certain how many additional priests the minsters' chantries added to their organisations. For Southwell, with its rule that chantry chaplains could not take the Annuals or Trentals that formed part of a vicar choral's requirement, it might be reasonable to suggest that each of the chantries founded in the period was attended by a separate chantry priest. Even this is uncertain, however. We know that the chantry priests could not take the requirements to become vicars, but it is difficult to tell if this was rigorously enforced. More to the point, there is no mention in the statutes of any restriction on already qualified vicars taking up the duties of chantry priests.

Even if we accept that the maximum possible number of chantry priests were present at the minsters, it is still questionable whether this amounted to as large an impact as at one of the cathedrals. For Southwell, according to the list above, the combined total of all chantries should have amounted to no more than six extra priests. When set against a potential population of sixteen canons, with the attendant vicars choral, prebendal vicars and other peripheral staff, this does not seem like a particularly large number. Even in the smaller minsters of Beverley and Ripon, it seems unlikely that the population of chantry priests could ever have been sufficient to significantly affect the minster populations. Beverley could boast nine vicars choral and the seven *berefellarii* clerks, along with the eight canons and the minster's dignitaries, while even Ripon managed seven canons, their attendant vicars, and minor officials.

To some extent therefore, examination of the chantry priests of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell is a peripheral endeavour. They were not central parts of their minsters at this time, only came into them late in the period, and even in the most numerous example at Southwell still only represented a tiny proportion of the minster's staff. Even

[74] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.296

so, their adoption points again to the minsters growing more similar between 1066 and 1300. There are perhaps some differences in the extent of their adoption by each minster, but that seems to represent more the speed with which they or their benefactors adopted the fashion than any fundamental difference between them. There are at least hints of chantry priests around all three, suggesting that the minsters all came to accept chantry priests in the period, even if they did so rates that varied considerably.

Conclusions

The cases of the vicars and chantry priests of the minsters are in some ways quite unusual ones, since the sort of gradual change appreciable in other areas of the minsters' affairs is harder to detect. In part, that is due to their late arrival at the minsters when compared to the canons. In part, it can be seen as an effect of the limited evidence available regarding them, which tends to mean we can only pick up on things after they had been in place for some time, rather than mapping the process of change. As such, the changes can appear somewhat more sudden than they may in fact have been, giving a potentially distorted impression of their importance.

Despite these limitations, there are some things that can be said about the vicars and chantry priests of the minsters with reasonable certainty. One is that they do not seem to have been present at the minsters on any model other than ones similar to York. Some of our very first indications of the vicars at the minsters come in statutes setting out their position within the institutions in terms very close to those enjoyed by York's vicars. It is tempting, therefore, to ask where the change is in this scenario, and whether it truly suggests a situation of gradual transformation from initially separate circumstances to a model closer to that of York.

It seems here that the answer lies in seeing the very creation of more vicars at the minsters as part of this homogenising process. As we saw above, the push towards a

full complement of vicars at each minster was an ongoing project of the archbishops, with the final insistences on each canon having his own vicar coming only in the last few years before 1300. It seems, therefore, to have been a case of the canons of the minsters not necessarily wanting a full complement of vicars, but being pressured into that model, York's model, at the insistence of the archbishop.

It should also be remembered that the statutes outlining the position of the vicars within the minsters did do so in terms similar to York's, even if circumstances prevented the sort of gradual transformation seen in other aspects of the minsters. The explanation for this is simply that York was changing as well, gaining vicars and chantry priests along with the minsters. Where, in areas such as the canons, or their relationship with the archbishop, there were elements already in place that needed to be changed slowly, with the vicars it was possible to mould them on that model from the start. That the model applied consistently in doing so was York's appears to be clear from those statutes that exist.

Of course, there were, as in other aspects of the minsters, elements that did not conform quite so well. Beverley, for example, possessed an anomalous group of vicars not connected to particular canons, while Southwell's vicars were paid half again as much by their canons as York's. I would like to think that these exceptions, rather than completely breaking down the idea of a movement towards greater uniformity, suggest that the model of York was applied with both discretion and concern for the individual circumstances of the minsters. Beverley's *berefellarii* appear to have been principally a reaction to its unusual initial situation regarding prebends,[75] while the pay increase for Southwell's vicars was given specifically as a means of coping with an increase in the number [76] of prebends there.[77]

[75] See chapter 2
[76] *ibid.* p.52
[77] SWB p.52

What this sort of example shows again, therefore, is that the process of convergence between the minsters over this period was a complex one, influenced by the existing circumstances of the minsters, their changing needs, the willingness of their personnel to implement instructions from the archbishop, and how strongly the archbishops in question felt that change was necessary to produce effective subordinate institutions. What the example of the vicars and chantry priests also demonstrates is that the model towards which the archbishops pushed the minsters was not always a stable one, since the chapter of York was growing and changing over much the same period. By approximately 1300, however, it does appear both that the similarities between the circumstances of the minsters' vicars were far greater than any differences, and that the model on which they had converged was demonstrably that of York.

6- The Minsters and the Archbishops

The relationships the minsters had with the Archbishops of York were some of the most important ones they had. They were, after all, all within the Archdiocese of York, and all subject to the archbishop's instructions. They were also, as chapter two has shown, largely surrounded by lands belonging directly to the archbishop. Even more importantly for this research, the archbishops seem to have been one of the major driving forces behind changes in the minsters, and consequently behind their convergence on a common model towards the end of the period. As such, understanding the relationship between the archbishop and the minsters is absolutely vital to understanding much of what was happening to them between the Conquest and 1300.

Gifts from the Archbishop

The archbishops made grants to the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell on a number of occasions. Those made to create or augment prebends will be dealt with below, as they perhaps involved different motives from other forms of grant. Many of the benefits the archbishops brought to the minsters were not direct grants but were instead solicited by the archbishop on behalf of the minsters. This can be seen most clearly in Archbishop Gray's program of improvements to the fabric of the churches. The principal documentary evidence for this process, and indeed the principal mechanism for it, can be found within his register in the form of indulgences for those who assisted the building.[1] All three of the minsters benefited from such indulgences and the documents outlining the indulgences were similar in form, briefly outlining the difficulties of the minster in question before making the offer of indulgence for those who would aid the repairs. Initially, therefore, it would seem that the archbishop treated the three minster churches in similar ways.

[1] *Reg. Gray*, p.56 and pp.64-65

In as much as all three of the minsters benefited from the use of indulgences to encourage improvements in their fabric this comment would appear to be justified. Archbishop Gray was, moreover, prepared to use similar measures in circumstances that were not directly connected to any of the minsters, as with his promise on 12th October 1233 of an indulgence for anyone who assisted in bringing about a road between Beverley and Bridlington.[2]

The timing of the indulgences, however, is interesting. The one designed to benefit Ripon was the earliest, coming on 19th December 1219,[3] while the indulgence in favour of Beverley was more than a decade later, on 17th August 1232.[4] The indulgence for the fabric of Southwell came in between, in 1223.[5] Although it is possible that the differing timings could simply be coincidental, it seems unlikely that indulgences for repairs spread over such a period amount to a consistent program of building. Instead, it seems to suggest that either Ripon was more favoured by the archbishop, and thus subject to this work earlier, or that the schedule for the building work was dictated largely by their relative needs for repair. It may well have been the latter, since there is evidence to suggest that Ripon was in need of work, in the form of a grant by Archbishop Roger, dated between 1164 and 1181, for repairs to the minster.[6]

The idea that Archbishop Gray held Ripon in some esteem also seems to be confirmed by his gift on 26th October 1231 of the church at Nidd to the common fund of that minster,[7] and by his willingness to offer indulgences of thirty days for pilgrimages to the bones of St Wilfred at Ripon.[8] Both of these actions demonstrate alternative ways in which archbishops brought benefits to the minsters. The indulgence for visits to the

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[2] *ibid.* p.38
[3] *ibid.* p.65
[4] *ibid.* p.56
[5] *ibid.* pp.64-5
[6] *EYC*, vol. 1, p.113. M.Lovatt (ed.) *English Episcopal Acta XX*: *York 1154-1181* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000) pp.94-5, no. 83
[7] *Reg. Gray* p.91
[8] *ibid.* pp.148-9

bones of St Wilfred effectively appears to have been a mechanism to increase Ripon's popularity with pilgrims, which would have presumably brought a number of indirect benefits, such as an increase in gifts from those pilgrims. The presentation of the church at Nidd is a demonstration that the archbishops were also capable of more direct gifts to the minsters. Southwell benefited in a similar fashion, receiving the church of Rolleston as an augmentation to the common fund in 1221,[9] but perhaps the best example of a direct gift from the archbishop is again from Ripon, in the form of the grant by Archbishop Roger for rebuilding work on the minster's basilica, mentioned above.[10] This grant was for a thousand pounds, and since there is no mention of other parties, it must be assumed that the money came directly from the archbishop.

Ripon, therefore, seems upon initial inspection to have received by far the greatest grants from the archbishops. It seems to have done so, however, largely on the basis of need, rather than particular favour. It should also be remembered that this assessment only represents direct gifts unconnected with the canons' prebends, which in turn amounted to only a small portion of the ways in which the archbishops could benefit the minsters.

The Archbishop and the Canons' Prebends

Some of the most important of these other effects were those that the archbishops had on the minsters' prebends. This included the creation of many of the prebends in question. Of Southwell's eventual sixteen prebends, at least seven were created in the period 1066-1300, five by reigning archbishops. Beckingham and Dunham were both founded under Thurstan, for example, while John le Romeyn was responsible for the creation of the prebends of Eton and North Leverton, in 1290 and 1291 respectively. Although Ripon had far fewer prebends created after 1066, the story is similar there.

[9] SWB p.44
[10] *EYC*, vol. 1, p.113

Archbishop Thurstan created the prebend of Sharrow through the grant of two bovates of land for that purpose to God and the church of St Wilfred.[11] In Beverley, Archbishop Aldred is given as creating the eighth prebend, that of St Katherine, although it is likely that this occurred before the Conquest, in as much as that minster had prebends per se at that point. The archbishop appears to have also been able to alter prebends, as with Walter Gray's undated transfer of lands from the prebend of Risceby to the prebend of St Mary in Beverley.[12]

The powers of the archbishop in this regard were far from absolute though. In particular, it would seem that they were tempered to a considerable extent by the wishes of the minster chapter. The grant to the prebend of St Mary by Walter Gray, for example, was specifically noted as being with the consent of the chapter of Beverley.[13] In this it is possible to discern the need to ward off the threat of prebendaries eager to maintain their share of a collective common fund by seeking their consent. The prebend of St Katherine, moreover, was never as powerful as Beverley's other prebends, since the prebendary of St Katherine did not enjoy a vote in the affairs of the chapter.[14] This points not only to the ability of the minster chapters to limit the power of the archbishop to create prebends, but also to them exercising this power with a view to protecting their own interests.

Whatever the interplay between the chapters and the archbishops in the creation of new prebends, it is also important to consider why the archbishops chose to create new prebends within the minsters, and particularly why they chose to create more within the minster of Southwell than within either Beverley or Ripon. Leach suggested that perhaps the main reason for the greater number of prebends at Southwell was its relatively southerly location, placing it in 'the safest, pleasantest, and most fashionable,'

[11] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, (Surtees Society, Durham, 1882) p.95. EYC p.109 no.116
[12] *The Register of Walter Gray*, p.68
[13] *ibid.*
[14] See chapter 3

area.[15] This argument appears largely to miss the point that it was not the canons collated to the prebends who dictated where those prebends would be, but the archbishop. The idea that the archbishop would have created prebends largely because of the pleasantness of the area to the canons seems both hard to credit and needlessly frivolous.

Even if the archbishop consistently acted with the support of the canons in the creation of prebends, it was still the archbishop who was largely responsible for their creation. As such, we must look for reasons for the creation of prebends that make sense in terms of his needs or wants, not those of the canons. What then could have been the archbishops' reasons for creating more prebends in Southwell than in Beverley or Ripon? One reason might be the ease with which prebends could be created at Southwell. As has been seen in chapter two, Southwell appears to have had clearly defined prebends by the time of the Conquest, which in turn would tend to suggest less of an emphasis on the common life and common fund. It might have been easier to create prebends in such circumstances than in the face of possible opposition from potentially tight knit chapters dependant upon a common life. The difficulty with this approach lies in the timing of the main period of prebend creation. As we saw in chapter three the main period of expansion in Southwell's prebends came in the latter half of the thirteenth century, a point by which Ripon and Beverley also had well defined prebends.

Some other explanation must therefore be sought. For Beverley, the willingness of the canons to guard their right to thraves from particular sources might suffice. It would certainly give them an excuse to resist attempts by the archbishop to create new prebends, and the reliance on this rather than the income from prebendal lands would explain the difference between Beverley and Southwell in this regard. The Provost of Beverley finding neither a permanent place in Beverley's chapter, nor a prebend of his

[15] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxvii

own in this period, while Southwell's sacrist, got an, admittedly small, prebend, also tends to support this explanation.[16]

The idea of ascribing increased resistance to new prebends based on Beverley's reliance on thraves does not, however, explain the discrepancy between the number of prebends created in Southwell and the number created in Ripon, whose prebends appear to have existed for the most part on a similar territorial basis to those of Southwell. It might, of course, simply be that the chapters of Ripon and Beverley were more inclined to resist the archbishop in this respect, and this is consistent with their tendency to resist the archbishop in other matters.[17] Southwell, however, also had instances in which it resisted the archbishop, and it is difficult to believe that the difference between Southwell on the one hand and Beverley and Ripon on the other could have existed without a more concrete explanation.

Perhaps an explanation based at least in part on location is not as unacceptable as it might first appear, although it would have to be stated in somewhat different terms to those Leach offered. The most obvious geographical point about Southwell is its relatively distant, southerly location. The important aspect of this, however, may well not be the southerly location, but its distance from York. By creating prebends at Southwell, the archbishop had a location in which to put canons that was away from York. The most likely reason for wanting to do this would be to provide a place for canons inserted by papal authority. As discussed in chapter three, there is some evidence to suggest that the minsters were used as a source of prebends for men sent under papal authority, and Southwell's greater number of prebends inevitably meant that it had more of these prebends to offer. McDermid has argued for Beverley that, 'papal provisors were few and far between'[18] and such a circumstance would certainly

[16] See chapter 4
[17] See below.
[18] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xx

tend to support the idea that Southwell had become the source of papal prebends to spare the other minsters. This argument is further supported by the case of Nicholas, the nephew of the bishop of Ostia, who was supplied by the pope and given a prebend at Southwell along with revenues from the church of Nottingham, specifically to keep him until a prebend at York was vacant.[19]

As well as his control over the substance of the prebends, the archbishop was ultimately responsible for the collation of canons to vacant prebends. Numerous examples of such collations occur in the archiepiscopal registers, as with the collation of Master Henry de Brandeston to the Southwell prebend of 'Caunton and Muskham' in 1241,[20] or the Collation of W. de Grenefeld to a prebend of Ripon in 1254.[21] The relevant question then appears to be whether this was a genuine power of selection, or merely a formal recognition of the collation on the part of the archbishop.

The ability of the archbishop to use the prebends of the minsters to achieve his ends would seem to argue in favour of the archbishops having had significant influence over the selection of canons for prebends. The collation of W. de Lund, a former Justice to King John, to one of Southwell's prebends in 1232[22] certainly suggests that prebends could be used as a gift for powerful men, but does not in itself show the hand of the archbishop. The gift of the prebend to Nicholas, the nephew of the Bishop of Ostia,[23] which has also been discussed elsewhere,[24] is a more clear-cut demonstration of the extent of the archbishop's powers in this area. This episode seems to demonstrate three things. Firstly, that the archbishop had the ability to grant prebends as he wished, or at least the pope believed him to have that ability. Secondly, the archbishop was limited in his selections by the influence of outside politics, in particular papal politics. Thirdly,

[19] See chapter 3
[20] *Reg. Giffard*, 1266-1279, p.84
[21] *ibid.* p.68
[22] *The Regiser of Walter Gray*, p.15
[23] *ibid.* pp.11-12
[24] see chapter 3

the archbishop was still constrained by the availability of prebends. He could not simply remove a canon from a prebend to give it to another, and his limitations in creating prebends have already been noted.

What differences, if any, existed between the archbishops' control over the prebends of Southwell and those of Ripon, or of Beverley? Did this level of control differ from that he exercised within York? If, as has been posited above, the archbishop was fundamentally constrained by the availability of prebends, then it must automatically be assumed that the differing numbers of prebends at the minsters also amounted to a difference in their usefulness to the archbishop in this respect. By the end of the period under discussion, Southwell had sixteen prebends, while the other two minsters couldn't manage that number between them. Simply as a function of the greater availability of prebends, therefore, Southwell would appear to have offered the Archbishops of York greater scope for the exercise of their influence.

There is some suggestion, however, that differences in the structure of the minsters' prebends may also have contributed to differences in the archbishops' abilities to influence them. Southwell's discrete, land-based prebends seem in great contrast to the essentially thrave-based prebends of Beverley, which have only really been argued for as true prebends since the work of McDermid.[25] In theory, the ties between Beverley's thrave based prebends should mean that the archbishop used Southwell more than Beverley as a resource for patronage, and this is certainly consistent with the argument above that many of Southwell's prebends were created at least partly as a resource for patronage.

This is countered slightly by Beverley's potential as a source of high prestige offices. The office of provost, in particular, has been argued by McDermid to have been essentially an honorary position for much of the period under discussion, and to have

[25] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xix

attracted important figures, although it did not strictly speaking have a prebend attached to it.[26] This is in contrast to Southwell, which for much of this period had no obvious figurehead to use in the same role. It is possible, therefore, that Beverley also offered the archbishops opportunities for patronage, but with its offices rather than through the availability of prebends. Ripon appears to have offered neither, though it perhaps had the advantage of offering the most valuable prebends of the three, even if their numbers were limited.[27] To put it another way, it might be reasonable to suggest that both Ripon and Beverley offered greater prizes than Southwell, but that Southwell offered a greater availability of those prizes. Again, this seems to point to the conclusion that the increase of Southwell's prebends might have been designed to absorb additional appointees, possibly with relatively cheap prebends.

The Minsters and the Chapter of York

Of course, the archbishop was not the only figure within the York's cathedral to whom the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell had to relate. Their relationship with the chapter of that cathedral was also vital. That relationship was necessarily different from the relationship with the archbishops, simply because the chapter of York didn't have any particular powers over the minsters. Any relationship with the minsters was founded instead on a combination of personal links, the connection produced by the minsters' location within the Archdiocese of York, and the status accorded to the chapter of York as a result of its links to the archbishop. These links are the principal reason why this relationship is treated here, rather than in chapter seven.

That this relationship was generally a positive one can be seen in the willingness of the chapter of York to send a statement of shared rights to the chapter of Southwell in

[26] *ibid.* p.xxv
[27] See chapter 3

1106, supporting their rights in the face of a royal inquiry.[28] Since the letter in question starts principally as a statement of the rights of the chapter of York before going on to claim that the chapter of Southwell shared the same rights, it also seems to show that the chapter of York shared the assumption of the archbishop that it should function as a model for the minsters.

This assumption was not made by all kings, however. In 1271 Henry III sent men with a writ of certiorari to inquire as to whether Southwell in fact had the same franchises as the chapter of York.[29] A similar inquiry into the rights of Ripon and Beverley took place in 1228.[30] Such inquiries seem to demonstrate that an automatic connection between the rights enjoyed by York and those enjoyed by the minsters not always made, which is in some ways hardly surprising, given that they were different types of institution. Simply accepting that the minsters enjoyed the same rights would also have amounted to allowing them significant protections from the influence of the king, and even the archbishop. This was, in fact, the crux of the 1228 dispute, where the chapter of Ripon asserted that the archbishop had no right to send his bailiff to seize goods to cover payments they owed him.[31]

Of course, not all of the relations between the chapter of York and the minsters were amicable. The potential for conflict existed, particularly in circumstances where the chapter of York felt that the minsters were usurping its rights or where the minster chapters felt that York was ignoring their own privileges. An important example of this occurred at some point between 1198 and 1203.[32] In response to a plea from the chapter of York, Pope Innocent III sent a mandate to Robert, the Abbot of York St Mary's, requiring him to hear a case between that chapter and Southwell. The case was an

[28] SWB p.18
[29] *Reg. Giffard*, p.198
[30] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, pp.51-62
[31] *ibid.*
[32] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.86 no.524

attempt by the chapter of York to prevent Southwell's Pentecostal procession, claiming that they had no right to one. This may be determined from a papal letter of 1204 relating to the same subject, referring to an initial papal letter against the procession.[33]

This incident suggests several things about the nature of disagreements between York and the minster chapters. Firstly, it was principally about the extent of Southwell's rights, with York seeking to protect its own privileges, and thus its status. It perhaps shows that the chapter of York was not happy for the minsters to copy it in all respects, particularly where that copying amounted to the copying of the symbols of that status. Secondly, it demonstrates that, despite York's superior cathedral status, the chapter of Southwell was quite prepared to dispute York's authority. This willingness on the part of the minsters to stand up for themselves is most fully demonstrated by the above mentioned 1204 letter, which effectively confirmed Southwell's appeal against the original decision by suggesting that York had obtained their papal letter under false pretences.

It might perhaps seem interesting that the dispute involved no initial appeal to the archbishop, despite both institutions being within the archdiocese. This makes sense once we recognise that Southwell's appeal was based on an assertion that they possessed a papal confirmation for their procession. What this seems to demonstrate is the extent to which the influence of outside powers such as the pope could potentially unbalance the relationship between York and the minsters. Here we have a situation in which an initial model of rights based on those of York but limited to maintain its position was undermined by initial papal grants of extra rights to Southwell.

There were also connections between the chapter of York and the minsters on a more direct level, since they frequently shared personnel, either through pluralism or through consecutive holding of prebends. The Percival whose prebends at Ripon and

[33] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.90 no.553

York Archbishop Walter Giffard asked the Pope not to give to another[34] is an example of this through pluralism, as is R. Corubien, the nephew of Henry III and Chancellor at York, who was also a prebendary of Beverley.[35] The case of Nicolas, the nephew of the bishop of Ostia, which has been used above, is again an example of this, since he held a prebend of Southwell while waiting for a prebend of York to become available. Connections were also possible beyond the chapter, as in 1269, when Phillip, the archbishop's bailiff for Ripon, was made a canon of York.[36]

What were the effects of this connection for the minsters? Although cases such as that of Nicolas appear to demonstrate that consecutive holding of prebends at one of the minsters and then at York could occur, inevitably, the practice of pluralism was involved to some extent for many of those connected with both the minsters and with York. It seems unlikely, moreover, that a canon holding more than one prebend would have been able to maintain residence for both. As such, the chapter of York could be seen as contributing to an extent to the pluralism and non-residence of the minsters' chapters. It seems reasonable to suggest, however, that the positive effects of close connections between the chapter of York and the minster chapters probably outweighed these difficulties. The attempts mentioned above of the York chapter to aid the minster chapters must be seen, at least in part, as a consequence of such connections.

The Archbishop and Statutes

The archbishop was also able to exert considerable control over the canons' lives by shaping the statutes under which they lived. The attempts of the archbishops to define residence, for example, sought to shape canonical behaviour and force certain minimum standards upon them. This may be seen in Archbishop Walter Gray's statute of 1225,

[34] *Reg. Giffard*, pp.148-149
[35] *Reg. Gray*, p.2
[36] *Reg. Giffard* p.60

requiring three months' residence per year at Southwell if a canon wished to receive a share of the common fund.[37]

The chapter of Southwell witnessed this statute, and that raises questions about their involvement in the process, and consequently about the relationship between the archbishops and the minster chapters. On the one hand, the example from cathedral chapters seems clear. At Exeter, the bishop was free to make such statutes affecting the minster as he saw fit,[38] while at York major reorganisations such as the division of the precinct or the foundation of officers demonstrate just how great a level of power the archbishop possessed there.[39] As such, we cannot suggest that the process of statute making necessarily involved the minster chapters' consent in matters of the canons' daily lives. It might, however, be reasonable to suggest that the presence of Southwell's chapter as witnesses might imply at least an attempt at the sort of consultative process which might in turn suggest that the presence of the chapter seal on the statute was as much a gesture of submission to the archbishop's will as a symbol of the necessity of true accord.

As well as the capacity to create statutes, the archbishop also appears to have had significant levels of control over the enforcement of those statutes that were implemented. As has been discussed in examining the canons' relations to their prebends, they could be non-resident or a pluralist with specific dispensations.[40] That is worth restating here, however, in order to also note that, while there are certainly papal examples, it was more frequently the archbishop who granted such dispensations.

In 1280, for example, Archbishop Wickwane granted W. de Clifford, a canon of Southwell, three years of leave to study, giving similar leave to Nicholas of Welles,

[37] SWB p.45
[38] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.32
[39] Norton, *Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux*, pp.5-13
[40] See chapter 3

another canon of Southwell, in 1281.[41] The archbishop, therefore, was responsible not only for creating statutes such as those that bound the canons of Ripon, Beverley and Southwell to residence through the threat of lost commons, and for their periodic restatement and amendment; he was also responsible for adapting those statutes to the necessities of day-to-day life through the use of dispensations. As with the case of Henry of Skipton, moreover, the archbishop had the power to limit the chapters' ability to collect fines. This was in spite of the York chapter's letter of 1106 appearing to demonstrate the minster chapters' control of fines through its statement that any fines collected for non-residence would go to the chapter.[42]

The necessity of the constant remaking of statutes for the minsters, however, raises the question of just how well enforced those statutes were. Statutes appearing to show the archbishop taking a hard line on issues of concern to him can in fact demonstrate the extent to which he adapted to the situation that existed. The 1302 statute for Southwell requiring at least two canons to be resident at all times is a case in point.[43] Although valuable evidence for non-residence in Southwell, it also demonstrates that the archbishop was prepared to accommodate the realities of changing situations in his statute making. That he felt it necessary to include instructions for what should be done in the event that no canons were there also tends to suggest the acceptance of a high level of disobedience or dispensation in its expectation that the demand for residence would not always be fulfilled.

It might also imply something further about the interaction between the canons and the archbishop in the formation of statutes. The statute in question initially contains the requirement for three resident canons, is then qualified by saying that there should be at least two, and is then further qualified through the inclusion of the clause

[41] *The Register of Archbishop Wickwane*, (Surtees Society, 114, 1907) p.11
[42] SWB, p.18
[43] *ibid.* p.51

envisioning the occasional absence of all the canons. Thus it appears very much like a statute that has been watered down through amendments, and so seems to point to a process of consultation, negotiation and compromise between the archbishop and the canons that were to be subject to the statute, even if the evidence of cathedrals shows that such a process was not strictly required.

Statutes were supplemented by a range of other instructions from the archbishop. These were both more frequent and usually over matters of more limited importance. These instructions often took the form of mandates, such as Archbishop Wickwane's mandate to the chapter of Southwell to repair their houses[44] or his mandate to the chapter of Beverley to obey instructions of the previous archbishop relating to one of their vicars.[45] These instructions point to a more continuous process of communication between the archbishop and the chapters than is perhaps suggested by the infrequent surviving statutes. It also suggests that the archbishop did not always, or even often, resort to the full formality of statutes. The processes involved in the application of statutes and instructions might suggest one reason for this. As has been discussed above, statutes for the minsters appear to have been at least partly a product of processes involving negotiation, compromise and cooperative action by the archbishop and the chapter concerned. Instructions and mandates, by contrast, appear to have offered little opportunity for such a process. This creates an interesting contrast between interventions in the day-to-day living of the chapters, handled by instructions, and more major interventions, which seem to have proceeded in a more consultative fashion.

The Archbishop in the Chapters

In this, it must be remembered that although the archbishop was principally associated with York, he was not always a distant figure. Archbishops visited the minsters for a

[44] *Reg. Wickwane,* p.10
[45] *ibid.* p.12

number of different reasons, and some of those visits resulted in notable consequences. Archbishop William was attacked while at Ripon in 1143, for example,[46] while a number of archbishops, including Thurstan, Thomas, Thomas II and Gerrard died at them.[47] Less dramatically, the archbishop also visited the minsters as part of his regular itinerary, visiting them more routinely for several days most years. This can be seen in the itineraries of archbishops such as Henry Murdac, Geoffrey Plantaganet and Roger, who all visited the minsters.[48]

Perhaps the strongest example of the archbishop's presence in the minsters occurred in Beverley, where the archbishop's place within the minster was at least theoretically assured through the existence of his "prebend".[49] Since Southwell and Ripon do not appear to have had equivalent prebends, does this imply that their relationship with the archbishop was substantially different from that of Beverley? Although it would initially appear to be the case, the presence or absence of the archbishop in the minster chapters by right of a prebend probably made little difference in the case of the minsters. The archbishop was able to effect visitations upon the minsters and create statutes for the minsters based on what he found. Those statutes, while often created with the assistance of the canons, do not appear to have required it. The archbishop, moreover, had connections to those canons who acted as his officials, or were related to him, or had gained their position through his favour, or who also held prebends at York. In short, in the minsters at least, the archbishop appears to have had no need for a formal prebend. There is also, as has been pointed out in chapter three the problem that the status of this "prebend" is rather questionable. It does not seem to have

[46] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.48
[47] J. Burton, *English Episcopal Acta V: York 1070-1154* (Oxford University Press, London, 1988) pgs 112, 113 and 117
[48] For Henry Murdac, see EEA 5 p.119. For Archbishop Geoffrey, see M. Lovatt, *English Episcopal Acta XXVII: York 1189-1212* (Oxford University Press, London, 2004) pp116-125. For Archbishop Roger, see EEA 20 pp178-182
[49] BCA p.xlvii. See also chapter 3 for a discussion of the status of this 'prebend'.

translated into an automatic place in the chapter after the fashion of, for example, Salisbury Cathedral.[50] As such the situation might have been somewhat closer to that at Southwell and Ripon than it might first appear.

The archbishop was also present in the minsters in the course of visitations. It is difficult, however, to find detailed evidence for these visitations. Archbishop Wickwane, for example, is noted as having shown, 'restless activity in visiting all parts of his diocese,'[51] yet there are no visitation records for Beverley, Ripon or Southwell's minsters within his register. The records of the minsters, moreover, demonstrate very few examples of corrections specifically stated as arising from visitations. Those that did, such as the 1293 statute of John le Romeyn, for example, which is noted as being in response to a visitation, are frequently important, representing major alterations to the canons' lives rather than minor corrections. This visitation resulted in such requirements as minimum standards of pay for vicars and the sacrist having to sleep in the church.[52] As important as instances such as this are, they are insufficient alone to provide a picture of the presence of the archbishop within the minsters.

Instead, we must turn to the evidence of the archbishops' itineraries. The itinerary of Archbishop John Le Romeyn provides an instructive example in this respect.[53] He was archbishop for more than ten years, and in both statutes such as the one just mentioned and his involvement in the creation of new prebends[54] appears to have been one of the more active archbishops in the minsters. Despite this, his itinerary suggests that he spent only 123 days of his period as archbishop in the three minsters. This consisted of 20 days in Beverley, 78 in Ripon, and 25 in Southwell. This means that Archbishop Romeyn spent an average of approximately just two days a year in both

[50] Keene et al, *St Paul's,* p.21
[51] *Reg. Wickwane*, p.xvi
[52] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.210
[53] *Reg Romeyn*, pp.191-203
[54] See above and chapter 3

Southwell and Beverley, and an average of just over a week per year in Ripon. In the first, second, third and tenth years of his reign, he did not visit Southwell at all.[55]

There is an important caveat to these figures, in that they take account only of time spent in the minster towns, and discount time spent near them. Beverley's lower level of presence by the archbishop compared to Ripon in particular might be skewed somewhat by the location of one important archiepiscopal residence in the nearby village of Bishop Burton.[56] Certainly, Bishop Burton features prominently in the itinerary of Archbishop Romeyn, and may therefore have taken away time that might otherwise have been spent in and around the minster.[57] The lower level of the archbishop's presence at Southwell, meanwhile, is probably explicable in terms of its greater distance from York, and the consequent temporary removal from the normal business of the archdiocese that going there must have entailed.

And even if the time in question was not particularly great it must be remembered both that the Archbishops of York did still spend time in each of the minsters, and that formal visitations did result in action. The mandate to Southwell in 1280, for example, compelling them to repair their houses, appears to be based on knowledge of their disrepair that suggests that the instruction might be the result of a visit.[58] Of course, it is difficult to prove this with any certainty in the absence of comprehensive records for visitations of the minsters, and it might be that the archbishop was simply informed of the disrepair by someone, but it seems reasonable to suggest the possibility, while the 1293 charter of John le Romeyn mentioned above is directly noted as being in response to his visitation on the Tuesday after Epiphany.[59] As such it can be said with certainty both that the archbishops did occasionally perform

[55] *Reg Romeyn*, pp.191-203
[56] M. Thompson, *Medieval Bishops' Houses in England and Wales*, (Ashgate, Aldershot, 1998) p.188
[57] *Reg Romeyn*, pp.191-203
[58] *ibid.* p.10
[59] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.210

visitations within the minsters and that these visits did occasionally result in significant change in those institutions.

The locations of archiepiscopal residences have been touched on above, and it is worth noting that the archbishops had residences in or close to, all three minster towns, along with the additional house near Beverley at Bishop Burton.[60] The exact time the archbishop spent at each those residences was of course down to a combination of personal preference and the necessities of the archdiocese's business, as with Archbishop Romeyn's apparent preference for, and death at, Bishop Burton.[61] Even if the figures above perhaps suggest that the archbishop was not necessarily present at those residences frequently, their presence is a reminder that the minsters existed very much in towns subject to him, and that he had the potential to be present at any one of them.

A more long-term example of that presence occurred in 1148, when the chapter of York refused to accept Henry Murdac as the new archbishop, and prevented entry to the cathedral of York. Instead, he chose to reside in the minster of Ripon.[62] This raises a number of issues. Firstly, why Ripon rather than Beverley or Southwell? The most likely explanation is one of personal preference, based on its proximity to Fountains Abbey, of which Murdac had been elected Abbot.[63] Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it demonstrates the growth of the minsters as secondary centres of the archbishop's power. When rejected at York, Murdac did not seek to return to Fountains, but instead went to the minster.[64] Partly, this may have been simply to avoid the appearance that he was giving up and returning to a purely monastic life. Partly though,

[60] Thompson, *Medieval Bishops' Houses,* p.188
[61] M. Borland and J. Dunning, *Bishop Burton and its People: A Village History* (Highgate, Beverley, 1992) p.5
[62] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.48-49 and J.R. Walbran (ed), *Memorials of the Abbey of St Mary of Fountains*, vol 1, (Surtees Society, Durham, 1863) p.103
[63] J. Raine (ed), *The Priory of Hexham,* vol 1, (Surtees Society, Durham, 1864) p.150. pp.150-159 for John of Hexham's account of the conflict.
[64] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.48-49

it must have been because Ripon's minster, with its body of secular canons, was a more appropriate centre from which to attempt to function as archbishop than a Cistercian monastery. It is also worth noting that he spent considerable time towards the end of his reign at another of the minsters, namely Beverley, and that this is reflected in his itinerary.[65]

To a great extent, the presence and absence of the archbishop demonstrates key aspects of the development of the minsters in this period. On the one hand, moments such as Archbishop Murdac's period at Ripon suggest that they became suitable subordinate institutions, places from which the archbishop could, if necessary, run his archdiocese. On the other, the limited presence of the archbishop suggests that they also became institutions that did not need constant supervision to function, and that they developed sufficiently well as extensions of the power of the archbishop that the actual presence of the archbishop was not required. Both the presence, and absence, of the Archbishops of York, therefore, demonstrate the extent to which the three minsters were successful in becoming effective secondary institutions within the archdiocese.

The Archbishop and the Minster Offices

The minsters offices are discussed more fully in chapter four. As such, here the discussion shall be limited to the role that the Archbishops of York played in their development and the influence that they subsequently had over the holders of those offices. For the cathedral chapters, bishops and archbishops were at the heart of the creation of their offices. For York, Hugh the Chanter makes it clear that the archbishop was responsible for the implementation of the dean, chancellor, treasurer and precentor.[66] For St Paul's, the bishop was responsible not just for the initial creation of

[65] EEA 5, p.119
[66] Hugh the Chanter, *The History of the Church of York*, pp.19-20

offices, but also for the appointment of every major office holder except the dean,[67] a situation that was mirrored at Exeter.[68]

The archbishop's role in the creation of offices extended to the minsters as well. In Southwell, for example, the role of the sacrist was attached to a prebend on a permanent basis, although there is little evidence for when this occurred. It seems likely therefore, given the key role played by the archbishop in the creation of Southwell's prebends,[69] that the archbishop was at least tangentially connected to the creation of that office. For Beverley, the dignitaries of the minster are attributed in *De fundatione abbathiae Beverlacensis* to Archbishop Arlfric.[70] Both of these assertions suffer from a degree of uncertainty, but in many ways more importantly, both point to the creation of dignitaries prior to the commencement of the period under discussion.

Where officers or dignitaries were created after the Conquest, however, it would appear that the archbishop did not always play the main role in their creation. This was particularly true of relatively minor offices, which the canons were capable of creating for themselves. In Southwell in 1260, for example, it was decided that the warden of the fabric should have a colleague. Even though the powers of this position were severely limited, for neither warden of the fabric was to begin new work without the approval of the chapter, the action still amounted to the creation of a position within the minster. The archbishop played no part in the creation of this warden, for it was done in a convocation of canons at Southwell without his input.[71]

For other, more important positions, such as the Precentor of Southwell, that are without definite charters or statutes bringing about their creation, it is again difficult to infer the hand of the archbishop in their creation. Had they been involved, it would

[67] Keene et al, *St Paul's*, p.21
[68] Orme, *Exeter Cathedral*, p.32
[69] See above and chapter 3
[70] BCA p.lv
[71] SWB, p.45

seem reasonable to expect some document forming the office in the registers of the archbishops. As such, at least some offices of the minsters must be seen almost as having 'sprung up' spontaneously.[72] The advantage of this explanation is that it accounts for some of the variations between the minsters' office structures seen in chapter four.

There are, however, instances in which the archbishop clearly did exercise his powers in the creation of offices. In 1230, for example, Archbishop Gray augmented the prebend of Stanwick in Ripon and made it supreme in the choir. The case of Southwell's dean would appear to be another example of this, indeed Leach refers to the probability that Hugh, Dean of Southwell was, 'an unsuccessful "try on" of the archbishop's'.[73] While this would be consistent with an archbishop able to force the hand of the chapter in matters relating to the minster offices, it is not consistent with a situation in which the canons had considerable say in their officers or in which officers had previously come into being in indefinable manners. The explanation perhaps fits with the creation of Stanwick's head of the Ripon chapter some ten years after Hugh the Dean is first heard of, and might thus point to a more general campaign by the archbishop to control the chapters,[74] but there are significant problems with it.

One problem is that Hugh was the only occupant of the office. Although this mostly suggests an unsuccessful experiment, no measures were taken by the archbishop, such as the creation of a prebend for the dean, which might have ensured greater permanency for the office. Secondly, the creation of a new office to control the chapter makes relatively little sense when at least one official was already in place in the form of the sacrist. It is difficult to accept that it would not have been easier for the

[72] See chapter 4
[73] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.xxxvii
[74] *Reg. Gray*, p.233

archbishop to have redefined the powers of such an existing official than it would have been to implement an entirely new position in Southwell's minster.

Thirdly, if the Dean of Southwell were a forced addition by the archbishop that was so unpopular the experiment was discontinued after a single incumbent, it would seem reasonable to expect signs of a struggle against that figure. Instead though, the first grant I can find that mentions Hugh the Dean of Southwell was confirmed by Hugh, by the archbishop and by the chapter of Southwell.[75] The willingness of the chapter of Southwell to back the grants of their dean appears to point more to a desire to reinforce his authority rather than a desire to resist the very existence of his office.

Certainly there is no evidence of any argument or struggle over the issue of the dean. No one was reminded of their obligations towards their dean, nor was anyone punished for disobeying him, as one might expect if the dean were an unwelcome 'try on' by the archbishop. Indeed the very nature of the office of the dean makes it unlikely that any archbishop would have seen it as a puppet. Not only did the example of the provost of Beverley tend to demonstrate the potentially ineffectual nature of officers in that regard, since they were frequently absent and did not have a position superior to the canons,[76] but Edwards has noted for cathedral deans that, 'Originally the rise of the dean had been a sign of the chapter's growing independence of their bishop.'[77] This would tend to suggest that the Dean of Southwell was as likely to have been a joint experiment on the part of the minster and archbishop, or even an experiment by the canons of Southwell, designed to aid in the organisation of the minster, rather than an archiepiscopal 'try on'.

[75] *Reg. Gray*, p.233
[76] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xviii
[77] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p.97

It is notable in this that all three of the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell had different officers and dignitaries.[78] The office of provost, for example, is unique to Beverley among the three. In itself, this tends to suggest that the archbishop was far from in complete control of the minster offices, since it seems reasonable to expect that, had this been the case, the offices would have been created in very similar forms and on very similar dates. Certainly a greater degree of uniformity that in fact existed would have been in evidence if the archbishop had been the sole driving force behind the minster offices.

The lack of uniformity in the minster offices also has implications as regards the closeness of the relationship between the minster chapters and the chapter of York. Were they merely copying York in every aspect of their structure, it would be reasonable to expect a greater level of uniformity between the minsters. Their differences in the area of their offices would seem to suggest either that the York chapter was not used as a model by the minsters in this area, perhaps suggesting a lack of closeness to it, or that the minsters all had special circumstances that required differences in their officers, which would again suggest crucial differences between the minsters and York, or that the minsters simply did not have the same level of organisational need for officers as York. Whatever the explanation, in this the minsters were definitely institutions with their own characters rather than mere copies of the cathedral that they were under.

The archbishop had continuing influence over the offices of the minsters following their creation. Partly this was because some instructions from the archbishop could best be carried out by the officers of the minsters. Archbishop Corbridge's instruction in 1302 that the songbooks of Southwell should be examined and made concordant, for example, could realistically have been directed to no figure other than

[78] See chapter 4

the precentor.[79] The archbishops also directed some of the attentions of their corrections to the minster officers, however. In 1293, Archbishop Romeyn was adamant, for example, that the Sacrist of Southwell should sleep in the church and ring the bells correctly. He also took the opportunity to note that the doorkeeper was under the sacrist.[80]

The Archbishop in the Towns

As has been argued in chapter two, several aspects of the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell are perhaps best understood in terms of the towns within which the minsters existed. Chapter three, moreover, has suggested that all three were important forces within the towns that housed them.

Despite their position within the towns and their surrounding environment, however, the minsters were not the dominant landholders in the area. Instead, the archbishop owned large portions of the towns, and had lands surrounding them. This added an additional layer to the relationship between the minsters and the archbishops, forcing them to act in concert on affairs affecting the towns. This can be seen in the grant by Henry I jointly to both St John of Beverley and Archbishop Thurstan, of an extension to the fair around the feast of St John. This fair is described in terms that imply ownership by both of the parties concerned, rather than the minster acting under the archbishop.[81]

[79] SWB p.51
[80] *ibid*. p.52
[81] *EYC*, vol. 1, pp.89-90

There are similarities in the grant made by Thurstan to the men of Beverley, in which he conferred on them the same liberties as possessed by the men of York.[82] Although the main source of authority was the king, under whose licence Thurstan gave the grant, it was done with the advice of the chapters of both York and Beverley. Although a much weaker statement of Beverley St John's position within the town than Edward the Confessor's charter, it still appears to demonstrate that the archbishop was unwilling to act unilaterally within the town.

Interestingly though, by the time of Archbishop William, the archbishop felt able to issue a similar grant without mentioning the chapter of Beverley at all.[83] Perhaps this implies that the archbishop felt more secure in his position within the town, but it also seems reasonable to suggest that since the grant in question was in effect a restatement of the grant under Archbishop Thurstan, the absence of a mention of the chapter is not as strong a statement against the position of the minster as it might otherwise be. In 1174, there was a strong restatement of the relationship between the archbishop and the minster within Beverley, in the form of a grant by Henry II of a nine day fair in the town.[84] This was granted specifically to, 'God and Saint John of Beverley,' rather than to the archbishop, reinforcing the position of the minster within the town. However, it was also done at the request of Archbishop Roger, perhaps suggesting his continuing interest. Put together, these two elements suggest the importance of the minster within the town, but also an interest by the archbishop in maintaining and supporting that position.

What this seems to imply, therefore, is a complex relationship within the minster towns. On the one hand, the archbishop was in a position to command the minsters to a great extent. On the other, the minsters were actually within the towns, while the

[82] *ibid.* pp.90-92
[83] *ibid.* pp.100-101
[84] *ibid.* p.103

archbishop usually was not, so they were in a better position to achieve immediate control over them. On occasion, the evidence suggests that both parties were free to act alone, but for the most part their shared interests in the towns made that impossible. For either the archbishop or one of the minsters to achieve an aim within the towns, therefore, usually required action that included the other, whether through simple consent, active participation, or complete partnership.

Resistance to the Archbishop

This should not, however, paint a picture of an entirely harmonious relationship between the archbishop and the minsters. Nor should the high levels of control that the archbishops were able to exercise over the minster structures be taken as amounting to complete control over the chapters. Certainly, nothing on the scale of York's refusal to accept Henry Murdac in 1148 occurred, but this was principally because the minsters were not in a position to do so, and there are distinct examples of resistance to the archbishops and their commands in the available evidence.

On a relatively minor level, the archbishop appears, on several occasions, to have needed to remind the minsters to pay money that they owed, either to him or to others. In 1288, for example, Archbishop John le Romeyn felt it necessary to write to all three minsters reminding them to pay the procurations from his last visitation,[85] while in 1294 seven canons of Southwell were ordered to pay sevenths of their prebends for the business of the church.[86] The order to pay in 1288 appears, moreover, to have been ignored, as in 1289-90 a canon of Ripon who was also an official of the Archbishop, Robert Swayn, was instructed to sequestrate the common fund and take the money to pay from it.[87] A similar order occurred three years later at Southwell, when four canons

[85] *Reg. Romeyn,* p.376
[86] SWB p.117
[87] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol.2, p.17

were ordered to pay a fifth of their prebends.[88] Such instances of non-payment did not always amount to resistance to the archbishop, though. In 1301, John de Evreux, a canon of Southwell, had to be ordered by the archbishop to pay a debt due to Ripon Minster.[89] This appears to say more about relations between the minsters than about the canon in question's obedience or otherwise to the archbishop.

One of the most significant instances of resistance to the archbishop was the one in 1228 that resulted in the confirmation of the rights of the minsters of both Ripon and Beverley.[90] To reiterate the fundamentals of that dispute, the archbishop sent his bailiffs onto the chapter's lands to seize goods, the chapter of Ripon disputed his legitimacy in doing so on the basis of the minster's rights, and proceedings ensued to establish the full extent of Ripon's rights. The decision confirmed a number of rights, including several derived from the forged rhyming charters.[91]

The rights confirmed within are discussed in chapter three,[92] but the incident is also vital for what it says of relations between the minsters and the archbishop. Obviously the case says little about Southwell's relationship with the archbishop, save that it shows that Southwell was somewhat separated from Beverley and Ripon in those dealings. There is more to be learned about Beverley and Ripon, however. The first point is that St Wilfred's in particular was prepared to resist the archbishop if his wishes did not accord with the interests of the minster. This incident does not perhaps say the same of Beverley, since the involvement of St John's in the incident appears to have largely secondary to Ripon's action, having its rights confirmed without having to make a significant stand against the archbishop's intrusion on those rights.

[88] SWB p.118
[89] *ibid.* p.123
[90] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, pp.51-62
[91] For which, see below.
[92] And listed fully in appendix 1.

Secondly, the incident outlines the kind of issues the minsters were prepared to resist the archbishop on. They were separate entities from the archbishop, with their own rights in particular areas, such as over their prebends and prebendal lands. They were prepared to act to defend those rights even against their superiors within the church. They were also particularly prepared to act when the actions of the archbishop encroached upon their financial security; on, for example, the revenues of the prebends, or on the common fund. Thirdly, the 1228 case demonstrates the key method by which the minster chapters could resist the wishes of the archbishop; namely through appeals to alternative sources of authority, in this case the king.

It is worth noting that the sources of authority appealed to had to be appropriate. They had to have a legitimate jurisdiction that could be exploited in favour of the minsters, which in turn suggests something about the range of influences working on the institutions. At Beverley in 1280, Archbishop Wickwane had a disagreement with the burgesses of the town of Beverley over pastureland. In the course of that disagreement, the burgesses appealed to the Archbishop of Canterbury for aid, and were excommunicated by Archbishop Wickwane as a punishment.[93] The order to excommunicate the individuals concerned specifically notes that the action was against the liberties of the See of York. Of course, the Archbishop of York's reaction to inappropriate appeals to alternative or greater sources of authority can only be gauged in general terms from this incident, since it was the burgesses of Beverley and not the canons of the minster that were involved.

Indeed, some degree of caution must be used in talking of "resistance" here, since it appears to imply a continuous undercurrent of resentment or ill feeling towards the archbishop that possibly did not exist. The canons of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell do not appear to have been actively looking for excuses to resist the archbishop, and do

[93] *Reg. Wickwane,* p.14

not even appear to have resisted him at every available opportunity. Their moments of resistance can be seen more as the normal friction of a relationship between subordinate and superior than as a concerted effort to maintain freedom from the archbishop.

The example of the burgesses in 1280, which led to their excommunication and the imprisonment of several to prevent them bringing cases against him before the king, is a case in point.[94] If the canons were inclined to resist the archbishop, or actively looking to expand their rights at his expense, one might expect them to have acted with the burgesses in this matter and, presumably, to have suffered some rebuke from the archbishop as a result. Instead, the minster was one of the instruments of the burgesses' penance and, although two priests are mentioned as having to do penance at Beverley minster, no canons are recorded as part of the dispute.[95] The difference between this and the 1228 dispute mentioned above suggests more of a desire by the minsters to defend their rights, and occasionally expand them if the situation allowed, than it suggests a desire to be free of the archbishop's influence. Indeed, why should they have wanted that freedom, when the archbishop remained possibly their most important benefactor?[96]

In their occasional resistance to the archbishop, it might be most appropriate to suggest that the minsters merely acted in line with their cathedral counterparts, which were, 'challenging the claims of their bishops to exercise authority over them,'[97] through much of the Middle Ages. The refusal of the York chapter to accept Henry Murdac, mentioned above, is only the most extreme example of this. If anything, the instances of resistance in the minsters could be seen as demonstrating the closeness of the connection between the minsters and the cathedral chapter at York, at least inasmuch as the minster chapters seem to have copied both York's attitude to the archbishop and the actions that occasionally stemmed from such an attitude.

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[94] *ibid.* pp.246-247
[95] *ibid.* pp.15-16
[96] See above and chapter 8
[97] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals,* p.98

The Archbishop as a Source of Authority for the Chapters

As chapter three has shown, the canons of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell had a great deal of power within the areas that fell under their control, especially when working together as a chapter. The extent of these powers is detailed elsewhere,[98] but their use, and the authority to back them, also pertains directly to the canons' relationship with the archbishop.

At least some of the authority of the canons stemmed from that of the archbishop. This is perhaps most noticeable in instances where canons tried crimes or resolved disputes on the archbishop's behalf. In 1280, for example, the archbishop sent a mandate to Nicholas of Welles, a canon of Southwell, to compel one Richard of Dunham to treat Maude of Burton as his wife.[99] This use of mandates is, of course, an entirely typical means for the period under discussion for those in authority to achieve their ends at a distance, but it is perhaps significant that, in these areas, the archbishop consistently chose the inhabitants of the minsters as his agents.[100]

Of course, not all the minsters' authority came from the archbishop. The minsters had in theory considerable freedom along with powers over their local areas.[101] Items such as the 1106 letter to Southwell's chapter,[102] the records of the 1228 case against the archbishop,[103] and even the forged rhyming charters effectively confirmed rights to oversee elements justice in much of the minster towns, without recourse to the authority of the archbishop.

In general, however, it is impossible to make that sort of clear separation. The minsters acted on instructions and mandates from the archbishop, the presence of the

[98] See appendix 1
[99] *Reg. Wickwane*, p.9
[100] For its use by other elements of the church with the minsters, see chapter 7
[101] see chapters 2&3
[102] SWB p.18
[103] *Memorials of Ripon* vol 1 pp.51-62

archbishop behind the minsters lent their actions moral authority, and just as the minsters ensured that the instructions of the archbishop were carried out, the archbishop occasionally helped to enforce the decisions of the minster chapters. As an example of this, in 1286 John le Romeyn wrote a letter to all the abbots, priors, archdeacons, officials, deans of churches, rectors, vicars, parish priests and other prelates of the Archdiocese of York, requiring them to publicly proclaim the excommunication of anyone excommunicated by the chapter of Beverley.[104] The decision over the excommunications appears to have been the chapter's, so the archbishop was, in effect, lending his authority to whatever action they chose to take in that regard.

What we see here, in short, is exactly the sort of interdependent relationship that might be expected of the archbishop and immediately subordinate institutions. It is, moreover, indicative of an attempt by the archbishop to use the minsters as ways to extend his power, influence, and authority over the particularly wide area covered by the archdiocese.

The Archbishop As Go Between

As part of this relationship with the minsters, the archbishop was able to significantly influence their rights through his influence with other sources of authority. An example of this occurred in 1293 when the king summoned John le Romeyn to question him as to his temporal rights. In the course of the document resulting from this, the rights of both Beverley and Ripon are confirmed, largely in the forms resulting from the inquiry of 1228. The rights of infangentheof and outfangentheof are confirmed for example,[105] as are the rights of Ripon and Beverley not to have the king's sheriff enter those towns.[106] It is notable in this, however, that Beverley and Ripon were treated separately

[104] *BCA*, p.1
[105] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.67
[106] *ibid.* p.70

from Southwell. Perhaps this was simply a result of the 1228 inquiry, although even that would only serve to push the date of the split back a few years, but there does appear to have been a definite connection between the minsters of Beverley and Ripon in terms of their rights that was not shared by Southwell.

A related issue was the ability of the archbishop to act both as a buffer against the ambitions of other sources of authority, most notably the king and the pope, and as a means of extracting benefits from those figures. In one of the earlier charters for Beverley, for example, Edward the Confessor appeared to grant privileges, not directly to the minster, but through the archbishop, who was both to draw up the privilege relating to the minster's lands and to, 'be thereto keeper and protector under me.'[107] The grant of Henry II in 1174 of a nine-day fair at Beverley, mentioned above, also shows the archbishop playing an active part in seeking benefits for the minsters.[108] In that grant, moreover, the archbishop initially appears to have gained little directly from the action, since the fair was given to the minster alone. Perhaps that would be an overstatement, however. The archbishop's involvement in the town, and his ownership of much of it, probably meant that any fair would have created indirect benefits for him in the form of increased trade revenues within the town. Even so, both of the above examples confirm the position of the archbishop over the minsters. The first does so directly, in making him the keeper of their rights, while even the fair emphasises his role within the town.

Not all attempts to influence the minsters were so benign, of course. Archbishop Giffard wrote to R. de Nedham at some point between 1265 and 1279, instructing him to attempt to induce the Archbishop of Ravenna to resign benefices he held at both York and Ripon.[109] Taken alone, this might appear simply a matter of the archbishop wanting

[107] *EYC*, vol.1, pp.85-86
[108] *ibid.* p.103
[109] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 2, p.6

to remove someone who was too far away to give those benefices the attention they required. There is another letter of 1268, however, in which the papal legate provided that the same man, his brother, should not have to pay tenths.[110] At the least, this seems to demonstrate that the Archbishops of York were prepared in some cases to put the needs of their churches, including the minsters, first, even when it meant resistance to figures close to the papacy. If we go further and draw a link between these two incidents, it might also suggest the extent to which the archbishop was unwilling to have his rights in the minsters compromised through papal intrusion.

The archbishop did not just act as a barrier to such influence, however. He could also act as a mechanism through which outside figures of authority were able to act upon the minsters. Walter Gray, for example, aided the king in gathering money from the minsters to support his wars by instructing them to pay a twentieth part of their incomes.[111] Letters regarding this were sent to both Ripon and Southwell, suggesting that the king saw the archbishop as the appropriate go between for his actions with all the minsters. Some archbishops may even be seen as having had an influence on the relationship between the minsters and other figures of authority prior to their investiture. Archbishop Thurstan, for example, was responsible in 1105 for drawing up a charter on behalf of the king that benefited Beverley in addition to York and the Church of St Peter.[112] The archbishop, therefore, served to regulate the minsters' interactions with other sources of power; limiting it on some occasions, encouraging it on others, but maintaining throughout a role as the minsters' principal relationship with authority.

[110] *ibid.* p.7
[111] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 2, p.7
[112] Quoted in D. Nicholl, *Thurstan: Archbishop of York*, (Stonegate, York, 1964)

Conclusions

The preceding chapters have largely been concerned with convergence between the three minsters, particularly convergence on the general model of York. Their canons, officers and vicars all developed in at least broadly similar ways from 1066. However, in terms of that convergence, their relationships with the Archbishops of York are far from clear-cut. Certainly, through much of the period the archbishops treated the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell in largely similar ways. It is also true that the rights, structures and statuses of the minsters that helped to define the boundaries of those relationships with the archbishops became broadly similar over the course of the period. On this structural level, at least, it is possible to say that the minsters' relationships with the archbishops of York came to be largely similar by approximately 1300.

What complicates things, inevitably, is the introduction of the human aspects of the relationships. As has been seen above, the archbishops had connections with the minsters through their personnel, through time spent at the minsters and through dealing with their immediate concerns. All three seem to suggest the important roles played by personality and individual circumstance in those relations. Adding in the role played by resistance to the archbishop, occasional as it was, suggests that the minsters' relationships with him were too complex to say that those relationships converged onto a common model on a detailed level, even if it is legitimate to suggest that they did so more broadly.

The importance of the minsters' relationships with the archbishop does not lie in their role as another area of convergence, therefore. Instead, exploration of the minsters' relationships with the Archbishops of York is important principally because it has ability to suggest a great deal about the mechanisms behind other aspects of their convergence.

By this point, it should hopefully be clear that the archbishop had a considerable influence on almost every aspect of the minsters. It should also be clear that the minster chapters' relationship with the archbishop was in many ways their primary relationship. He was their immediate superior in the church, his lands surrounded theirs, they existed within his archdiocese, and he occasionally took steps to act as a buffer between the minsters and other sources of authority. These two elements point to a single conclusion; that the convergence of the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell on York's model was largely brought about by successive Archbishops of York. Although the actions of the archbishops occasionally had the effect of separation, and although they were prepared to respond to the minsters' individual needs with individuated solutions, the general trend of the actions of the Archbishops of York towards the minsters was one of transforming them on that common model.

The question that must be asked here is why. Having established the archbishop as one of the principal actors in the convergence of the minsters on York's model, it is vital to understand his motivation for doing so. Why should the archbishop have played such a role in the minsters' gradual convergence? What benefit, either to himself or the church, did it bring?

In part, the answer is also revealed by the nature of the archbishops' interactions with the minsters. As we saw above, the minsters provided the archbishop with additional personnel, the chapters acted on his mandates, and, when they were not resisting the archbishops' authority themselves, they acted as extensions of it. They also acted independently as mother churches for their local areas, possessing chrism[113] and administering aspects of local justice. They acted in these areas in ways that the archbishops, and the chapter of York, were often too distant to.

[113] SWB p.2

This idea of the archbishops restructuring the minsters to fulfil these roles seems to explain the evidence better than either of the possible alternative explanations. These are that change happened either piecemeal without any true coordination, or that the archbishops undertook reform at the minsters for its own sake, perhaps in the hope of producing perfect bodies of secular canons. The former possibility does nothing to explain the level of similarity that came to exist between the minsters. The latter, by contrast, would seem to require that the institutions should have adopted exactly the same model as York, and so does not adequately explain those areas of difference that remained between them.

The actions of the archbishops in moving the minsters more towards York's model can, therefore, perhaps best be seen as a practical process, designed to fit them for the role of secondary institutions in the archdiocese. It was a process that involved moving them away from structural models that were adequate for independent institutions concerned only with their own affairs, and towards a model for a community of secular canons which the archbishops knew well, and which allowed them to act both as reflections of the authority of York and as extensions of the archbishops' religious authority in areas of the archdiocese that might otherwise have proved too distant. It did not, however, require them to be perfect copies of that model, merely effective enough ones to fulfil their roles under the archbishops.

7- The Minsters and the Church

Beyond the archbishops and chapters of York, the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell also had to deal with a complex network of relationships within the archdiocese, and indeed the Church as a whole. As with their relationships with the archbishops, these relationships provide not just a point of comparison between the minsters, but also an opportunity to assess the reasons for their convergence, in line with the key questions of this study.[1]

This chapter is broken into two sections. The first is concerned with the minsters' relationships with institutions and figures within the Archdiocese of York. The second is concerned with their relationships with the wider Church, including the papacy and the Archbishops of Canterbury. The division between these two aspects is both deliberate and potentially important, because, as the second section in particular shall demonstrate, those boundaries seem to have represented a barrier of sorts in the relationships the minsters had with the rest of the Church. Within that barrier, relationships with the rest of the church appear to have been complex, founded on personal relationships between the individuals involved, and backed up by some sense of the status of the minsters within the archdiocese. Beyond it, their relations seem to have been both more formal and more typical of institutions of their size.

The Minsters and the Local Church

First, however, we must examine those relationships the minsters had within the boundaries of the archdiocese. These relationships included subordinate chapels and churches, the other minsters, local churches not directly controlled by the minsters, and a number of monasteries, including both Fountains Abbey and Meaux. Several of the institutions local to the minsters have been the subject of investigation by historians.

[1] See chapter 1

This is particularly true of the Cistercian houses, and studies such as Jamroziak's on Rievaulx have touched on these local religious relations in seeking to place those institutions at the heart of extensive social networks.[2]

However, even where there is a concern for these networks, it does not always translate to an examination of the relations that existed between those monastic houses and the minster churches nearest to them. Wardrop's otherwise thorough work on Fountains Abbey, which is explicitly concerned with its social relations and benefactors, still manages to mention St Wilfred's church a mere three times, despite the abbey being only three miles from Ripon.[3] This is, of course, largely a function of the nature of such institutional history, and indeed of the sort of locally focussed history that has produced work on the other institutions in the area. Perhaps, as shall be discussed below, it is also partly a comment on the nature of the relationships that existed between the institutions concerned.

The Other Minsters

Before examining other relationships, however, there is the question of the extent to which the minsters had relations with one another. While it should be clear from the preceding chapters that the minsters acquired considerable similarities over the period, this alone does not imply direct relationships between them. Indeed, McDermid has argued against inferring too close a relationship between the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell, suggesting that the appearance of any such relationship is illusory.[4]

In light of this, is it possible to demonstrate actual connections between the minsters; through personnel, through contact, or through concerted action? Such

[2] Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey*
[3] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, pp.96-7, p.206, and p.217
[4] McDermid, *Beverley Minster Fasti*, p.xvii

contacts surely represented a distinct level of relationship within the relationships each minster had with other organs of the Church, since the contact was not with subordinates, or superiors, or even institutions of similar status but different form, but with other pre-Norman minsters functioning as secondary institutions in the archdiocese.

The rhyming charters imply a close connection of some kind between the minsters of Ripon and Beverley.[5] Were they genuine charters of Aethalstan, that relationship might have been no more than simply a desire by the king to place the minsters on similar terms. The charters, however, are usually considered to be thirteenth-century forgeries,[6] which places their date between 1201 and 1228, when they were used to support Ripon's case in a dispute with the archbishop.[7] The forged charters are so similar in both their style and terms that it is difficult to conceive of them having been created separately. As such they must be seen as a collaborative enterprise between at least some members of the minsters concerned, and thus as evidence of contact and cooperation between them.

It is notable in this context that the charters existing point to collective action in this matter on the part of Beverley and Ripon, but not from Southwell. Since no such charter exists for Southwell, it may suggest that Beverley and Ripon were somewhat more closely tied together at that point than they were to Southwell. It could also, however, simply be the result of Southwell's receipt, in 1106, of a letter from the chapter of York outlining that chapter's rights,[8] which appears to have been intended to imply that the chapter of Southwell had the same rights.[9] Since the chapter of Southwell

[5] See chapters 3 and 6, and appendix 1
[6] Witty, 'The rhyming charter of Beverley'pp.36-44
[7] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, pp.51-62
[8] SWB p.18
[9] see chapter 6

possessed a relatively complete statement of the minster's rights, it presumably had no need to forge one.

Of course, when it came to the 1228 case, only Ripon was called upon to defend those rights. This appears to have been largely a question of the immediate circumstances. Firstly, Beverley had no provocation from the archbishop to resist, since it was Ripon's lands into which he had sent his bailiff. Since the case is probably better seen as a reaction to a specific infraction against Ripon's perception of its own rights rather than a deliberate attempt to define those rights, it would have made little sense for Beverley to have been involved. A second, linked, element is the role of individual personality. Ripon had a relatively active personality in the form of their canon, Geoffrey de Lardare, to conduct their case. It might be reasonable to suggest that the case would not have gone ahead to anything like the same extent without him, so it does not appear unreasonable that Beverley, who did not have this particularly forceful canon pushing things along, were not involved.

This leaving out of Southwell, moreover, is offset considerably by the establishment, in 1239, of confraternity between the chapters of Southwell and Ripon.[10] A testimonial in 1269 appears to have reinforced this.[11] Although I will question, in connection with the minsters' relations with monastic houses, whether confraternity necessarily implied an exceptionally close relationship between two institutions, at the very least it implies some level of connection and friendly relations. In particular, the distance involved seems to point to an awareness of the institutions' shared status, creating an opportunity for the sort of confraternity more normally shared with local institutions.[12] There appears to be no equivalent agreement involving Beverley, and taken in conjunction with the cooperation between Beverley and Ripon outlined above,

[10] SWB p.136
[11] *ibid.* pp.136-137
[12] See below

this seems to suggest that the connections that existed between the minsters did so principally on a bi-lateral basis, rather than between all three minsters as a group.

Beyond this sort of cooperation there are also instances in which canons from one minster appear in the records of the others. Principally, this occurs when canons were witnesses to something that affected one of the other minsters. In a few cases, such as when Archbishop Romeyn wrote to Ripon from Southwell in 1291 about one of its prebends,[13] decisions affecting one minster were made at another. These cases, of course, can be seen as little more than an accident of location, a result of where the archbishop happened to be at the time, but even in that they still suggest a level of connection between the institutions through him.

Of perhaps greater interest is the recurrence of such figures in archiepiscopal documents because they worked for, or on behalf of, the archbishop. At some point between 1191 and 1206, for example, the archbishop presented Master Nacern to the Southwell prebend of Norwell. The witness list, although including several canons of Southwell, also included Alan, a canon of Ripon.[14] It seems likely that at least Alan, and possibly some of the other canons, was present because he was working for the archbishop. This was also probably the case when Roger de Schiftling, a canon of Beverley, and Ricardo de Lincoln, a canon of Southwell, both witnessed a letter of Archbishop Gray to Newminster.[15] That the archbishop might use canons in this way is not surprising, especially since prebends at the minsters provided an effective way for the archbishop to reward his officials.[16] The implications of this fact for relations between the minsters must be considered more closely, however.

Thanks to the archbishops' use of minster prebends in this way, a small but significant body of individuals from the three minsters came into contact with one

[13] Reg Romeyn, vol 2, (Surtees, 128, 1917) p.1
[14] SWB p.20
[15] Reg Gray, (Surtees, 56, 1870) p.291
[16] See chapter 6

another on a regular basis. More than that, in travelling with the archbishop, these individuals had the opportunity to visit the other minsters, even if these visits were not necessarily regular.[17] Because of this, it is possible to posit personal links between the minsters' canons, along with awareness on the part of each minster of the circumstances of the others.

Of course, the number of individuals brought into contact through such service to the archbishop was not great when viewed against the total number of canons at each minster. Such individuals, moreover, may have been kept away from their minsters more often than most. There is some evidence for this in the form of a request in 1270, for example, to excuse Henry of Skipton from a fine for non-residence, on the basis that he was working for the archbishop at the time.[18] On the other hand, it seems likely that they were at least resident some of the time, and that this might have had an effect on the links between the minsters as a result.

Not all the relations between the minsters were necessarily amicable, however, and disputes did occur. In 1301, for example, Archbishop Thomas Corbridge was asked to intervene in such a dispute, ordering John de Evreux, a canon of Southwell, to pay his debts to the chapter of Ripon.[19] This was following the sequestration of his goods in the same matter in 1298.[20] Although the dispute probably affected both minsters, however, this is not necessarily evidence of business dealings between the minsters in itself. The canon in question was a prebendary of both Ripon and Southwell at different times.

Overall though, what can be seen from this is that there were relationships between the three minsters, whether directly, or through connections brought about by their contact with the archbishop. Those connections were not frequent, but they were on occasion significant. Importantly, they also appear to demonstrate an awareness

[17] For the archbishops' presence in the minsters see chapter 6.
[18] *Reg. Giffard*, p.63
[19] SWB p.123
[20] *ibid*, p.134-6

between the minsters of their shared status, along with a desire to use that status as a basis for cooperation. That points to a series of relationships that were far more than illusory.

The Archdeacons

A second set of relationships for the minsters was with the archdeacons who operated under the authority of the archbishop. The question of the archdeacons is a potentially revealing one for the minsters, raising questions about where they fit within the structure of the archdiocese, and about the extent of their influence within their immediate areas.

There is at least one difference between the minsters in this area, in that none of them shared the same archdeacon. As there were separate archdeacons for the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire as well as for Nottingham, there was not the overlap of shared personnel that could occur in other areas. This is entirely understandable when viewed in terms of the minsters' convergence. Part of the point of the minsters' role within the archdiocese was that they could cover areas not within easy reach of York, or of each other. It would, in fact, be more of a surprise to see a connection between the minsters in this regard than to note this difference.

What we can look for instead is evidence of connections between the minsters and the archdeacons. There is one very concrete link in the case of Southwell, in the form of the canon excused from non-residence above, Henry de Skipton. He was an Archdeacon of Nottingham, but it is also clear that he was a canon of Southwell, being, amongst other appearances, one of a trio splitting tithes between them in 1266.[21] This perhaps does not amount to the close connection to the minster it might first appear to, since Henry de Skipton's prebend appears to have been given as a means of support

[21] SWB p.20

while he pursued the archbishop's work, making him frequently non-resident. This can be seen in the request from Archbishop Giffard asking that de Skipton be excused the fine for non-residence as he was away doing work for him.[22] Nevertheless, there was some connection. He was a canon of the minster, and, presumably, his duties did not keep him away from Southwell permanently. Indeed, there is no particular reason why Southwell might not have served as a base for some of his duties.

However, we should be wary of the assumption that, because the minster served as a home base and source of income for this archdeacon, that translated into the constant use of the minster as a place to conduct the archdeacon's business, or that this was necessarily true for other archdeacons. There are some references to such business, as when, in 1298, the Archdeacon of Nottingham was to be present at the purgation of two clerics held at Ripon, or when a year later the Archdeacon of the East Riding was present for the purgation of the prior of Ferriby.[23] Beverley's chapter act book also mentions Simon de Evesham, the Archdeacon of the East Riding, as a witness to the foundation of the Chantry of St Michael's altar between 1249 and 1266,[24] but these references seem both sporadic and confined to specialised circumstances.

Perhaps this might relate in some part to the archdeacons' roles as extensions of the archbishops' powers. On the few occasions they appear within the documents relating to the minsters it is either as an incidental witness to something else, as with Simon de Evesham,[25] to deal with the purgation of clerks, or in the course of enforcing the archbishop's instructions, most commonly to the minsters' benefit. They were, for example to proceed against those who refused to pay their share of Beverley's thraves.[26]

[22] Reg Giffard p.63
[23] Reg Romeyn, vol. 2, p.263 and p.226
[24] BCA, vol. 2, p.293
[25] *ibid.*
[26] BCA, p.4

By contrast, on those occasions where the archbishop acted against one of the minsters there appears to be little evidence of the archdeacons. To take Ripon's 1228 dispute with the archbishop as an example once again, the initial decision to seize land from Ripon appears to have come directly from the archbishop, while the actual seizure was the work of his bailiff.[27] The archdeacons' work usually consisted of acting for the archbishop throughout the archdiocese, but the position of the minsters appears to have largely precluded the archdeacons' involvement. For the most part, they had the right to dispense their own justice within the minster towns,[28] while their more serious disputes went to the archbishop, or indeed to the king or pope. The archdeacon's role with them was thus only a minor one, limited principally to the punishment of more serious infractions by members of the clergy.

Even in the areas around the minsters, it is difficult to demonstrate that the archdeacons had an important role to play. For the lands under the direct control of the minsters in particular, their impact seems to have been limited. To a great extent, this is because of similarities between the archdeacons and some functions of the minsters. The archdeacons were essentially a tool for extending the legal and administrative reach of the archbishop into the areas beyond York, but so, in many ways, were the minsters.

When Archbishop Wickwane had his dispute with the burgesses of Beverley, it was not the Archdeacon of the East Riding to whom he turned to enforce punishment, but the canons of Beverley Minster.[29] With Beverley and Ripon in particular, the forged, but accepted, charters of Aethalstan provide for powers to dispense justice within the lands under their direct control,[30] while for Southwell similar rights are suggested by the 1106 letter sent to them by York's chapter.[31] The same documents

[27] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.51
[28] See chapter 3
[29] See above
[30] BCA, vol. 2, pp.280-287, and see appendix 1
[31] SWB p.18, and see appendix 1

limit the powers of outside sheriffs and bailiffs to act within their lands. As such, certainly for their towns and prebendal lands, the minsters were able to fill the archdeacons' roles in imposing justice, while simultaneously maintaining levels of local administrative and liturgical functions that the archdeacons could not match. In essence it seems likely that the reason we see relatively little of the archdeacons in the minsters' documents is because the archdeacons did not have to do much there.

That is not to say that the minsters were never used by the archbishop as a base for some of those working for him, but it seems to have been more of an individual matter brought on by special circumstances than a regular occurrence. In 1280, for example, Robert le Grant and Symon of St Saviours, both described as 'decanum' were sent to Beverley to take custody of criminous clerks.[32] There is, however, no mention made of whether the clerks in question were from Beverley or the areas directly under the minster's control. As such, it is possible that this represents only a matter of convenience as regards transporting the clerks rather than a true reflection of the role of these agents of the archbishop within the minster. There is also the matter that the men in question do not appear to have been full archdeacons. There is a difference between lower level functionaries collecting people for judgement elsewhere and archdeacons conducting the business of justice in and around the minsters. It is perhaps a subtle difference, since the clerks in question were still being taken out of the minster's custody, but it is still not quite the same as acting directly within an area under the minster's control.

So what then, was the relationship between the minsters and the archdeacons? Just as importantly, what does this relationship say about the minsters' relations with the archbishop, the church, and their local areas? At its most fundamental, the relationship between the minsters and the surrounding archdeacons reminds us again

[32] BCA, vol. 2, p.138

that the minsters occupied the position they did in order to fulfil a purpose. It was a purpose that was at least partly similar to that of the archdeacons. In this, it reinforces chapter six's argument that their process of convergence was an essentially practical one, brought about largely by the archbishop to further the needs of his archdiocese. It also reminds us that, while secondary to York, the minsters had at least some authority, and exercised it to the exclusion of at least some other groups.

Important Local Institutions

Even so, the minsters were not the only important institutions in their local areas. They shared those local areas with other religious houses, including some of the most important monasteries in the country. The relationships between the minsters and other local institutions have not always been fully explored, even by writers focussed on the monastic houses in question.

This seems inexplicable, particularly for the latest years of the period under discussion. For the period immediately after the Conquest, it might be more understandable, since it is conceivable that the minsters did not initially have to deal with substantial change in the institutions around them. Platt has emphasised that there was not an immediate phase of building new religious houses, stating that, 'the great Norman baronial families… had exhausted their zeal for the foundation of new houses well before they came to England.'[33] Consequently, it was only from the early-mid twelfth century that they had to adjust to the arrival of foundations of Augustinian canons such as that at Kirkham (*c.*1120)[34] and Cistercian monks such as those at the Abbeys of Rievaulx, Meaux, and Fountains.

Even so, each of the minsters built relationships with surrounding institutions; both ones already in existence and ones that grew up during the period as part of the

[33] C. Platt, *The Abbeys and Priories of Medieval England* (Chancellor, London, 1995) p.2
[34] *ibid* p.24

changing ecclesiastical landscape of the archdiocese. An example of a relatively close relationship existed between the chapter of Beverley and the canons of Bridlington. It is documented by an agreement for the canons of Bridlington to keep alms that would have been due to Beverley in return for an annual lump sum payment.[35] If that had been the whole of the agreement, it would have implied no more than a relationship based on mutual profit, but the agreement was also one of confraternity, and stipulated that each institution would benefit from the prayers of the other and that the canons of each place would benefit from a service from the other upon their death. The agreement was confirmed by Archbishop Thurstan, between c.1135 and 1140.[36]

A similar agreement occurred in the case of Ripon with Fountains Abbey, in 1216.[37] Again, the agreement involved spiritual fraternity between the two institutions, including specific mention of the participation of all in the good done in each church in perpetuity. The agreement again contained conditions of a more immediate monetary nature in addition to the clauses regarding spiritual fraternity. In particular, clauses requiring the monks of Fountains not to use lands belonging to the canons of Ripon without permission and agreeing a fixed tithe payment on the part of Sleningford and Callache, suggesting that the agreement for spiritual fraternity was in many ways an adjunct to an agreement designed to sort out more immediate disputes over land. The inclusion of these elements again adds a continuing spiritual relationship, and thus a continuing connection between the institutions, to what would otherwise be a limited agreement.

There is perhaps a risk of overstating the importance of rights of fraternity to the minsters here. Although these rights would appear to imply a closer relationship than one based solely on money, other examples show that the minsters were perfectly

[35] *EYC*, pp.97-98
[36] *ibid*, pp.98-99
[37] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, pp.247-248

prepared to use such rights as a bargaining chip in situations that did not appear to involve a particularly close relationship. In 1140, for example, the chapter of Ripon granted rights of fraternity to Roger Albone. This was not an indication of particular favour on the part of the chapter, but was, instead, part of the settlement of a dispute over property in Asmunderby. The rights were, moreover, noted after it was recorded that the chapter would pay Roger Albone five marks for the land, perhaps suggesting that they were the less important part of the agreement.[38]

Viewed in those terms, it is easy to go to the other extreme, and suggest that the above paints a picture of institutional relations that did not go beyond a few brief moments of contact in which agreements were made. Not only would such an approach underestimate the degree of contact between the institutions concerned, but it also tends, as with other areas, to present an overly harmonious view of their relations. At the very least, clauses such as the agreement for the payment of five marks for the tithes of Sleningford and Callache created an ongoing obligation between Ripon and Fountains. The necessity of such an agreement, moreover, tends to point to a period of disagreement dealt with by the compromise, with the agreement for spiritual fraternity perhaps serving to demonstrate the renewal of good relations between the chapter of Ripon and the monks of Fountains. Papal letters confirm the existence of such a disagreement, since in 1215, Pope Innocent III sent a mandate to the treasurer and penitentiary of York along with one of the canons, requiring them to mediate between Ripon and Fountains.[39]

Connections with local monastic institutions could also occur indirectly, even through the minsters' relations with the archbishop. As noted in chapter six, Archbishop Murdac withdrew to Ripon's minster when York refused him entry. On one level this points to an occasionally close connection to the archbishop, since Henry Murdac was

[38] *ibid.* pp.96-97
[39] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.172

formerly of Fountains Abbey. However, the incident also implies an indirect connection to that institution through him. At the very least, it points to a willingness on the part of Ripon's minster to occasionally pursue the same aims as the abbey.

More generally, the position of the minsters in relation to the more important local institutions appears to have been one of independence, with both institutions acting separately. Certainly, neither the minsters nor the most important local monasteries had formal powers or rights over each other. In that sense, at least, they were equals. The minsters, however, almost certainly did not have the greater prestige.

The relative merits of secular canons and both regular canons and monks, in the minds of the church, are made clear by a statute of Archbishop Thurstan.[40] It is an expansion, between 1137 and 1140, of the statute requiring a canon's prebend to be put to the good of their soul for a year after death and allows for two thirds of the value of a prebend to go with the canon if they should choose to become either a regular canon or a monk. No equivalent scheme is mentioned should the reverse occur, and it appears that the statute was intended to provide incentives towards the monastic life. Given such incentives, the occupants of the minsters must surely have been aware that their superiors considered monks at institutions of equivalent power to be living a superior form of life.

It should be remembered, of course, that such a view is unlikely to have come as a shock to the canons. The role of secular canon was intended to be a less rigorous form of life than that of a monk, and as such it is no great surprise that a church concerned with greater rigor should encourage the monastic life. Still, it does suggest that the minsters perhaps enjoyed less moral authority than those institutions that might be considered their peers.

[40] EYC, vol.1, pp.130-131

Added to this was the problem of the relative size and wealth of the institutions. Chapter two has shown that the minsters were not on the same level as the most important monastic institutions in terms of their wealth. The minsters were also much smaller in terms of personnel, even once the arrival of vicars and chantry priests boosted their numbers.[41] We saw in chapter three that even put together the minsters could not match up to York's 36 canons. The disparity between the minsters and the major monastic institutions could be even greater. By Ailred of Rievaulx's death in 1167, *The Life of Ailred* gives the numbers of monks and *conversi* at Rievaulx as 140 and 500 respectively.[42] Even taking into account all the vicars, chantry priests, *berefellarii* at Beverley and other personnel, it is doubtful whether the three minsters combined could come close to approaching just the first figure.

In terms of both their incomes and personnel therefore, the minsters were simply outclassed by the growing monastic communities. However, there is a case for the minsters having enjoyed a measure of authority in at least one respect. All three minsters were mother churches for their areas. As such, they were able to fulfil a function within the community that large monastic institutions were unable to. I have suggested, moreover, that the reason for the minsters' status was to allow them to function as subsidiary power centres acting on behalf of York.[43] As such, it may be possible that a measure of the archbishop's authority translated to the actions and status of the minsters, providing an advantage in their dealings with other institutions that they would not otherwise have had.

It must also be suggested that the mechanisms of informal influence present in interactions between the three minsters were not as pronounced when the minsters dealt with bodies of monks or regular canons. Firstly, in dealing with monasteries, it seems

[41] See Chapter 5
[42] Walter Daniel, *Life of Ailred*, F.M. Powicke (ed), (Nelson, London, 1950) p.38
[43] See chapter 6

unlikely that there was any sense of shared position resulting in corporate action, since they were not the same type of institution. This was probably not a major factor, but there must certainly have been at least a small awareness of the difference between working with another body of secular canons and working with a comparable institution founded on a different basis.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, there was not the same chance of shared personnel that there was with interactions between the minsters. When Beverley, Ripon and Southwell came into contact with one another, there was always a possibility of one or more canons having either held prebends in both institutions, or being pluralists with prebends in both places. Neither of these chances for shared personnel existed with the minsters' relations with local monastic houses. The provisions allowing for a portion of the canon's prebend to go with him in the event of him becoming a monk[44] may have raised the possibility of someone starting their career at one of the minsters and ending it in the local monastery, but I have yet to find evidence for occasions when this occurred for Beverley, Ripon or Southwell.

Even so, there were clear relationships between the minsters and some of the nearest monastic institutions. The role of the papacy in establishing the rights of the Abbey of Meaux in relation to Beverley Minster has been noted above. The letters in question also raise other issues. Firstly, each letter or grant took the form of a formal *inspeximus* of the letters in question by the chapter of Beverley, and this was something repeated at each stage of reaffirmation of the abbey's rights. The chapter performed such an inspection, for example, when Pope Honorius III reaffirmed the freedom of Cistercians from the tithe and from sentences of excommunication in 1215.[45] Why would the chapter of Beverley have felt the need to inspect each letter and grant? One explanation might be that the chapter of Beverley was eager to preserve its own rights in

[44] Raine (ed), *Historians of the Church of York*, pp.64-66
[45] Orange, 'The Chartulary of Meaux' pp.48-50

its dealings with Meaux as far as possible. To do this it would have had to ensure that Meaux was entitled to any rights that it claimed. This is certainly plausible, and is consistent with the minsters' ardent defence of their rights against even the archbishop, but might not make as much sense as other potential explanations. If Beverley Minster wished to protect its own rights, then it might have been a more effective strategy for it to ignore all claims by Meaux until forced to accept them, instead of endorsing each letter confirming Meaux's rights.

Perhaps a better explanation might be to do with Beverley wishing both to form links with its monastic neighbour, and wishing to reinforce its importance in the local area as the main institution important enough to be asked to inspect these charters. In evidence for this it is noticeable that almost no other institution acted to inspect Meaux's charters and grants, while certainly none did so on the constant basis that Beverley did. By having Beverley's canons inspect their charters, or at least by agreeing to it, Meaux gained a measure of authentication from the other most prominent institution in the immediate area, while Beverley's minster gained recognition of that prominence.

Other religious institutions could have an influence within the towns in which the minsters existed as well. Rievaulx, for example, gained a marginal foothold in Beverley through the gift of a house there by John son of John the Vintner of Beverley.[46] The effects of this gift appear to have been quite limited, however. It certainly did not lead to wider expansion within the town, and the one house appears to have remained the extent of Rievaulx's holdings in Beverley. It was keen to restate its rights over that house on a number of occasions,[47] but it is likely that this was just a natural part of the process of reaffirming rights over all their property under successive kings. However, this also serves to demonstrate that once another institution created

[46] *Chartulary of Rievaulx,* p.84
[47] *ibid.* pages 126, 153 and 303

links within on of the minster towns, those links were likely to remain on a long-term basis.

Meaux appears to have been the recipient of similar gifts within Beverley. At some point in the later thirteenth century, William Lascelles made a grant to his son William of half a carucate in the fee of St John in Beverley. He specifically excluded from this grant land that he had already granted to the Abbey of Meaux.[48] As with the grant made above to Rievaulx, the amount of land involved does not appear to have been significant, and again the circumstances of the acquisition involved a grant by a single private individual. Neither grant can be said to have impacted significantly on the minster's position within Beverley, but both demonstrate that the minsters' positions within their towns did not exclude the influence of other institutions.

What these relationships with relatively powerful local institutions show for the minsters is how, over the course of the period, Beverley, Ripon and Southwell came to exist in a local environment where they were not the only important local institutions, or even possibly the most important of the local institutions. There are implications in this for their convergence, for all three institutions existed in local areas where major monastic houses grew up, and even extended influence into the minsters' towns. None of the institutions concerned was sufficiently powerful to have had a direct bearing on the minsters' process of convergence, but their growth may well have been one of the factors making it an acceptable process to the minster chapters.

The growth of monastic houses represented a change that seems to have threatened to leave the minsters behind. They were smaller, less wealthy, and really only able to maintain a level of importance similar to the monasteries through their connections to York. Where at the start of the period they were clearly the most

[48] Orange, 'The Chartulary of Meaux' pp.466-467

important institutions in their local areas,[49] faced with the growth of new monastic institutions, the minsters may well have felt that they needed to change in order to survive and maintain their status, and becoming something of use to the archbishop may have represented the best option for continued prestige.

Subordinate Churches and Chapels

Some measure of prestige did continue to exist for the minsters though. They were all, as chapter six has suggested, important secondary institutions for the archbishops. They were also the most important churches in their local areas at the Conquest.[50] Because of this status, it appears that the minsters enjoyed at least some control over a number of churches in those areas. In most cases, however, this control probably was not sufficient to warrant that term, amounting to no more than the influence that all major churches had within their environs.

This was not necessarily something new. Archaeological examination of the area around Ripon has revealed a number of early churches and graveyards near the current cathedral, and probably associated with its earliest phases of occupation.[51] Although the precise relationship between these structures and what became the minster cannot be precisely determined, it is tempting to see in them a mirror to the patterns of relationship found in the period 1066-1300.

One element of those relationships was that some churches, while not being run effectively through the agency of the minsters, still held a position that might be regarded as subordinate to them, inasmuch as they owed them enduring and carefully maintained debts. In a lot of cases, as with some private patronage for the minsters,[52]

[49] See chapter 2
[50] See chapter 2
[51] R.A. Hall and M. Whyman 'Settlement and Monasticism at Ripon, North Yorkshire, from the 7th to 11th Centuries' *Medieval Archaeology*, vol. 40, 1996, pp.62-150
[52] See chapter 8

this debt was expressed as money for lights, or even simply as amounts of wax. Southwell's White Book records a number of such arrangements. The prior and convent of Thurgarton, for example, owed two stone of wax from 1221 onwards,[53] while the Rectory of Northmuskham owed three stone.[54] These obligations occurred on a relatively local level, but the yearly charges for lights made by Southwell covered a wider area than that. The White Book records obligations related to the convent of Worksop, and to the chapter of Laund.[55] Indeed, it is this latter obligation that gave the chapter of Southwell its principal connection with the Archbishop of Canterbury, as seen above.

One mechanism for exercising the control the minsters had was through regular inspections and inventories. It is clear that these occurred with Southwell, thanks to the evidence for the roles of the registrar in this process,[56] but it was also true of Beverley and Ripon, just as it was true of most other large ecclesiastical institutions. Evidence for such inspections can be seen in Ripon's record of an inventory of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist in 1277.[57] There are relatively few examples of such inspections, however, which could perhaps suggest that the canons of the minsters were somewhat lax in ensuring that the process of inspection occurred. It seems more likely, however, that this is a trick of the evidence. It mirrors the lack of records for archiepiscopal visitations of the minsters.[58] There are, moreover, relatively few inventories even for Southwell, with its clear instructions for annual inspections. Both of these elements point more to the non-survival of the relevant documents than to a lack of the inspections themselves.

[53] SWB, p.58
[54] *ibid.* p.59
[55] *ibid* pp.58-59
[56] See chapter 4
[57] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, pp.205-206
[58] See chapter 6

The churches most strongly subordinate to the minsters were those given to them. This was done principally by the archbishop, as when Archbishop Walter Gray gave Rolleston Church to the chapter of Southwell in augmentation of their commons.[59] He performed a similar action in relation to Ripon in 1241, granting them the chapel of Nidd in augmentation of their commons.[60] It is notable that in both cases, the church or chapel went to augment the common fund of the canons. It should be noted that the gift was always made to the chapter as a whole, and was done in such a way as to benefit resident canons the most, since they received a larger portion of the common fund than non-resident canons. The gift, in being made to the common fund, seems also to have been intended specifically as a monetary gift through the church's tithes. The church was intended to be a source of income for all the canons of the minster in question and could not, therefore, be used as an opportunity for patronage on the part of the canons, or as a bargaining chip in other matters. As a part of the common fund, it seems likely that the churches in question were administered by the minsters through the agency of the wardens of the common fund. This was explicitly the case at Southwell, with the common fund and Rolleston Church placed under the management of wardens from 1225.[61] A further example of one of the minor ecclesiastical institutions being given to the minsters occurred in 1291, when Upton Rectory was given to the common fund of the canons of Southwell.[62]

The link between the minsters and those churches and chapels given to them was not, however, purely monetary in character. Rolleston church, for example, was not just treated as a source of income for Southwell's common fund. Instead, a perpetual vicarage was established there with cure of souls in 1248, suggesting a desire on the part of the canons to use it as a resource to benefit the souls of their parishioners. Of

[59] Leach, *Visitations and Memorials*, p.201
[60] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, p.48
[61] SWB p.44
[62] *ibid.* p.53

course, this example does not suggest an entirely altruistic approach to Rolleston on the part of the canons. If anything, it points to the opposite, because they were prepared to wait twenty-three years before establishing a perpetual vicarage there. However, in most cases the desire for the income the churches represented coexisted with the need for them to fulfil their roles within the local ecclesiastical structure.

The subordinate churches and chapels could, however, be a source of conflict for the minsters. This was principally because questions could arise over the extent of the minsters' control over their subordinate chapels, or indeed over whether they owned them at all. In 1178, for example, the chapter of Ripon argued with Walter de Newell over their jurisdiction over the chapel of Nidd.[63] A further example of arguments over the extent of control over subordinate chapels occurred around 1279, when Archbishop Wickwane intervened in a dispute over the chapel of St Mary, which was staffed by the same vicar attached to the altar of St Martin at Beverley.[64] The complaint that the archbishop sought to deal with was that the vicar had not been allowed to have his own books and chalices. While this could be seen as a simple matter of fiscal control on the part of the chapter, it also makes sense to view it as an expression of control over the chapel by the minster by keeping the vicar dependant on the minster's equipment.

Of course, despite the status of the minsters within their own areas, and despite their control over subordinate chapels, that control was neither absolute nor uncontested. Indeed, such terms are fundamentally at odds with the webs of influence, rights and authority that characterise the medieval local church. The minsters' influence in subordinate institutions must be seen in light of webs of influence that included the archbishop, papacy, other institutions and local nobilities. Even in those chapels most closely controlled by the minsters, the vicars attached to the chapels still had a considerable amount of independence and worked to maintain it. It also seems likely

[63] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, p.50
[64] BCA, vol.2, p.138

that, as with all the vicars and chantry priests connected to the minsters,[65] those seeing to the running of subordinate institutions would have benefited from the frequent absence of many of the minsters' canons. Perhaps this is not so great an issue as for the vicars of particular canons, since at least some canons were usually resident, but it may have had an impact nonetheless.

It would appear from this that, in the majority of cases, the minsters of Ripon, Beverley and Southwell related to their subordinate chapels and churches in fairly similar ways. They all received a portion of their income from them, had a measure of control over the institution of the vicars to run the chapels, and seem to have shared a willingness to leave the chapels to run themselves from day to day in the majority of cases. There is, however, a difference to be seen in the mechanism by which money was received and in the precise parts of the minster to which subordinate chapels related.

Other Smaller Institutions

Of course, it must be remembered that not all of the smaller ecclesiastical institutions with which the minsters came into contact were subject to their direct control. Instead, a relationship of sorts was created through simple physical proximity. As an example of this, the Dominican friary in Beverley appears to have been sited next to the minster and was present by 1240.[66] Inevitably, therefore, some sort of relationship must have existed between the two institutions. The evidence for it, however, is relatively difficult to find. In fact, the references to the friars in Beverley's chapter act book all occur after the end of the period under discussion. Of course, we must set against this fact the relatively narrow date range of the documents within the chapter act book, the focus of which was mostly outside of this period, but those documents before 1300 within it do not refer to the friars.

[65] See chapter 5
[66] Foreman, *Beverley Friary*, p.9

The later documents that are there may perhaps be used to suggest the general nature of the relationship that existed, however. One, from 1306, states that if the body of a late precentor of Beverley could not be buried in the minster then he should be buried in the friars' cemetery.[67] This would appear to suggest a relatively close relationship between the two institutions. Another document, from 1309, suggests that some friction nevertheless occurred, because it mentions a dispute between the friars and the minster over allegations that the friars had given the Mass at Easter to parishioners of St Martin's Church. This appears to have been a direct attack on the minster's status as the mother church for the area,[68] and as such tends to paint the friary in a more aggressive position towards the minster.

Other churches and chapels existed in a curious, in between state. Chapels such as the Sawley chapel in Ripon were not, strictly speaking, the property of the minster. The licence for it was a grant to a private individual, in this case Adam Ward and his descendants.[69] As such, the chapel could more properly be regarded as their property than the minster's. In some respects, however, the chapel was still dependent on the minster. The necessity of a licence is one measure of this. A private chapel was not a monastic institution with backing from the archbishop or papacy, able to move in as they wished. Instead, they needed the permission of the minsters. Principally, it was the issue of the chapels' chaplain's ability to give the Mass that was at stake. In this, the creation of a chapel did not remove the obligations owed to the minster granting the licence. The licence for Ripon's Sawley chapel makes it clear that Adam Ward and his family still had to visit Ripon for major feasts. It also reserves rights, including the tithe,

[67] BCA, pp.148-149
[68] *ibid.* p.243
[69] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, pp.196-199

to the minster, again making it clear that the chapel did not enjoy a truly independent status.[70]

In many ways, these terms were inevitable, and represented no more than the relative positions within the church of the minsters and the chapels around them. I am not suggesting, moreover, that this relationship was anything unique to the minsters. What it does show, however, is yet another point of comparison between the minsters. Additionally, because the relationship between the minsters and these minor chapels was similar in each case, and because this was principally a function of their positions within the structure of the church, it helps to emphasise just how big a factor the idea of what it was to be a minster was in determining the minsters' relationships.

The minsters were all bodies of secular canons. They were all mother churches for their areas. They were all directly answerable to York. These might appear relatively basic things to point out, but they, and the process of convergence that brought them still closer together on a common model, fundamentally shaped the minsters' relations with the church. The minsters' status gave them a measure of independence from York, and also a right to defend against pressure from other, smaller institutions. The directness of their relationship with York provided a potential source of conflict, but also lent the minsters a degree of authority and simplified the requirements imposed upon them. That they were all bodies of secular canons gave the minsters a more actively controlling role than might perhaps be ascribed to some surrounding monasteries.

The minsters relations to the monasteries are important, since the growth of major monastic institutions within the archdiocese in the period is one of the clearest expressions of the changing ecclesiastical environment within which the minsters had to operate. I have suggested above that the connections to York brought about by the

[70] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol1, pp.196-199

minsters' process of convergence, and thus their increased usefulness to it, may have helped to maintain the minsters' status as such institutions grew up. It seems reasonable to go a step further here, and suggest that the potential challenges of a changing local ecclesiastical environment were among the primary reasons why the minsters were willing to change with the archbishop's efforts. The potential for such alternate sources of religious authority may well, moreover, have been among the reasons why the archbishops felt it desirable to bring about the minsters' change into effective secondary institutions. In this, we can see both an influence on their process of convergence, and the beginnings of a suggestion that redefining what it meant to be a minster after the Conquest helped all three minsters to maintain a position within the Church.

The Minsters and the Wider Church

The previous section has dealt with the minsters' connections within the Archdiocese of York, but the minsters also all had connections and relationships outside of that archdiocese, with institutions that varied widely both in size and authority. Despite those variations, those relationships can all be seen as being characterised by three things. They were essentially typical, in that the relationships were largely those that might be expected of institutions of the size and type of the minsters. They were infrequent, in that they did not amount to the sort of day-to-day contact that may have occurred in the archdiocese. Thirdly, they were largely defined by the minsters' status as minsters, both pointing to the reinforcement of that identity over the period and emphasising the impersonal nature of many of the relationships involved.

The Papacy

This period was one characterised by substantial growth in the reach of the papacy, including increasing recourse to papal justice, the development and expansion of the judge-delegate system, and, towards the end of the period, the beginning of growth in papal provisions to offices. The popes under whom the minsters existed in the period have been the subjects of a wide variety of studies, from individual biographies,[71] to studies of the continuity of their impacts on reform.[72] At the same time Brundage has tracked the development of canon law in the emerging medieval universities, demonstrating among other things its role in the construction of papal administration.[73] This growth, as chapter three has demonstrated, is something that at least some of the minsters' canons were caught up in, since, like cathedral canons, they could and did receive dispensations for study at the universities.

[71] J. Sayers, *Innocent III*, (Longman, Harlow, 1994)
[72] I.S. Robinson, *The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII/Selected Sources*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004)
[73] Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*

This growth of this machinery of the papacy is important, because the simple distance between the minsters and Rome limited the extent to which their relationships with the papacy could be founded on personal connections. Instead, their primary relationship with the papacy consisted of appeals to it, and so was determined largely by existing canon law, based on the minsters' status and position within the Church. Amongst other things, this means that all three minsters related to the papacy in essentially similar ways.

There were papal judgements and bulls in response to requests on even quite local matters, as with a bull of Celestine III in 1191 inquiring into the case of a married cleric retaining the chapel of Nidd, near Ripon.[74] There were responses to requests for intervention in disputes, as with a 1215 bull of Innocent III requiring an end to Ripon's dispute with Fountains Abbey.[75] There were bulls that helped to shape the minsters' relations with local monastic institutions, as in 1185, when the chapter of Beverley inspected a letter of Pope Lucius III to the abbey of Meaux, stating that the Cistercian order was exempt from the tithe,[76] or in 1198 and 1204, when this was reaffirmed.[77] There are mandates to take action, such as a letter of 1199 mandating William de Gilling, a canon of Ripon, to enforce the payment of the tithe by William de Laceles[78] or the mandate to Roger, a canon of Beverley, to compel people holding benefices from Durham to obey their oaths of fidelity.[79] There are papal bulls confirming rights,[80] decisions in disputes such as Southwell's with the canons of Launde[81] and then York,[82] and also confirmations of the creation of prebends.[83]

[74] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.116
[75] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, pp.47-48
[76] Orange, 'The Cartulary of Meaux' pp.22-24
[77] *ibid.* pp.40-42 and 43-45
[78] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.23 no.126
[79] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.162 no.974
[80] *ibid.* p.64 no.395
[81] *ibid.* p.39 no.232
[82] *ibid.* p.86 no.524
[83] *ibid.* p.102

The pope also attempted to insert favourites into the minsters; as a response to requests to do so, as an attempt to provide livings, or as an extension of papal influence. In this, again, we see the sort of process that might be expected, and which is repeated at other institutions, but it does serve to illustrate that this element of papal influence was occurring on the local level. As one of the clearest examples of this provision of candidates in the minsters, on July 9th 1289, Archbishop John le Romeyn wrote to the chapter of Southwell, requiring them to admit one George de Solerio to the next prebend that became vacant, as he had been presented by Pope Nicholas IV.[84] It is this sort of provision that perhaps suggests that Southwell's extra prebends may have been a way of accommodating such candidates,[85] especially when combined with the possession of prebends there by papal chaplains such as Roland de Ferentino,[86] and Richard de Danfield.[87]

That is not to say that the creation of Southwell's extra prebends prevented papal influence at the other two minsters, however. In 1251 John Mansel, provost of Beverley, was appointed a papal chaplain.[88] Even where a figure was not presented, papal influence can still be observed. In 1241, for example, Henry de Brandeston was collated to the prebend described as 'Caunton and Muskham'. Attached to that collation is an agreement in which Henry de Bradeston agreed to pay the pope's nephew, Adinulf, 50 marks per year for life.[89] This agreement appears to demonstrate the necessity of considering papal interests even when no papally provided candidate was directly involved. This view is reinforced by the presentation of one Percival, brother to Cardinal Ottobonus, to the Sacristy at York, again under Walter Giffard.[90] The event is

[84] *Reg Romeyn*, p.378
[85] See chapter 2
[86] *Calendar of Entries in Papal Registers* pp.495-6
[87] *ibid.* p.535
[88] *ibid.* p.269
[89] *Reg. Giffard*, (Surtees Society, 109, 1904) p.84
[90] *ibid.* pp.148-149

of relevance here because of the letter then sent by the archbishop to the pope, which asked that neither the post of sacrist nor his prebends at York or Ripon should be granted to another. Only great care, it would appear, could prevent the minsters' prebends from being used as papal favours.

It would not be right however to overstate the extent of these papal provisions, since this was still something that affected only a relatively small proportion of the total minster population in the period under discussion. The cases where there is evidence for direct papal provision to the minsters are sufficiently rare that they might be seen more as anomalies, or precursors of greater numbers to come, rather than a substantial trend.

Having said that, it appears interesting that the archbishop should take steps to deal with such individuals if their numbers were so low. In particular, low numbers of papal provisions appears to create problems for the possibility that Southwell's large number of prebends was principally to deal with this issue. Perhaps the idea can still be seen as valid if we credit the Archbishops of York with the foresight to pick up on the emerging trend, or if it is remembered that even before the heyday of such papal provisions there were still insertions from other sources to consider, such as the king, and the archbishop's own requirements.

Canterbury

The minsters' connections to the Archbishops of Canterbury were considerably more limited than those they had with the papacy. Partly, this can be ascribed to Canterbury's distance from the minsters, though the distance to Rome does not seem to have been a barrier. Mostly though, it can be put down to the closeness of the relationship between the minsters and the Archbishops of York, along with York's rivalry with Canterbury for primacy. This was apparent in 1280, when the Archbishop of York excommunicated

burgesses of Beverley for appealing to Canterbury in a dispute involving him.[91] This did not directly involve the minsters, though Beverley was expected to pay a part in the penance of the individuals concerned. Nevertheless, it points to the Archbishop of York's position on relations with his main rival. By 1306, these feelings had been formalised in an instruction to Ripon that no one was to appeal to Canterbury.[92] The occasions when the minsters were involved with Canterbury must therefore be seen more as singular events than as indicators of a general pattern.

One such occurred when the canons of Southwell found it necessary to appeal to Pope Innocent III for aid in the matter of damages done by canons of Launde. In mandating the Archbishop of York, the prior of Newstead and Master Richard de Basselo to compel the canons of Launde to give satisfaction, the answering letter notes that the Archbishop of Canterbury assigned these lands to the chapter of Southwell in the course of litigation.[93] Another, more substantial connection came in the form of Becket's time as Provost of Beverley, though again it must be reiterated that there seems to be no evidence of Becket spending time in Beverley, and he resigned the office along with his others on becoming the archbishop in 1162.[94] As with the papacy, therefore, the connection of the minsters to the Archbishops of Canterbury should be seen less as something personal than as a formal relationship dictated by their status. This is something that appears to have been the case for almost every relationship the minsters had beyond the borders of the archdiocese.

Howden and The Bishops of Durham

The case of Howden, which came under the Bishops of Durham, appears to be one of the best examples of the importance of these diocesan lines in determining the closeness

[91] *Reg. Wickwane*, p.14
[92] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.74
[93] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p.38, no. 232
[94] Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, p.27

of the minsters' relations to the wider church. Howden was another church of secular canons, and was actually closer to York than Southwell, so we might expect some sort of connection with the other minsters. Instead, there is no sign of Howden in the other minsters' records, and while the lack of evidence about Howden in general can be put down to the non-survival of its documents, this lack among the other minsters' records cannot be explained so easily. Instead, it may be more useful to explain this lack of connection in terms of both the limits of the diocese and the control of the bishops of Durham.

While Howden was indeed closer to Beverley than Southwell was, it was separated from the other minsters by being under the auspices of the Bishop of Durham rather than directly under the Archbishop of York. Although there are instances of the Bishop of Durham being involved tangentially in Beverley, Ripon and Southwell's business, it perhaps makes sense to suggest that the lack of references to Howden in their documentation was at least partly down to this difference. Although it is of course impossible to know for certain, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that either the minsters did not see the need for strong connections to an institution separated by this difference in diocese or that Howden was discouraged from forming such links to maintain the primacy of its relationship with Durham.[95]

Other Institutions

Other institutions, however, were somewhat more willing to form links with the minsters. In particular, the business of the archbishop could provide links with the wider Church, if it happened to take place in one of the minsters. An example of this, taken from 1293, is the consecration of the Bishop of Galloway, which occurred at Ripon.[96]

[95] For more on the effects of this relationship between Durham and Howden, see F. Barlow, *Durham Jurisdictional Peculiars*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1950) pp.53-115
[96] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol.1, p.71

The importance of this is twofold. Firstly, it emphasises the extent to which the minsters were involved in the broader business of the Church. They were local centres, certainly, but they were of sufficient importance to be involved in at least some events relating to a national level. Secondly, however, it also re-emphasises the minsters' links to York by demonstrating the role of the archbishop in bringing such activity to them. Southwell's connections to the canons of Launde, mentioned above, also demonstrate the extent of the minsters' links, though these do not seem to have been brought about by the archbishops. At the same time, the pluralism of some of the canons may have provided occasional links to other institutions further afield. In general, though, these connections to were both limited in scope and relatively rare. What they show, if anything, is that the main focus of the minsters was within the Archdiocese of York.

Given that, can we reasonably suggest that any of the expressions of the Church with which they had contact outside of the Archdiocese of York might have been responsible for the minsters' convergence? There are only two institutions above, in the form of Canterbury and the papacy, which might have had the power required to bring such a process about. In both cases, the possibility seems to be defeated both by their level of contact with the minsters and by the formal nature of the relationships involved. Neither, in short, was sufficiently interested in the minsters to make the changes.

Aside from some limited moments of contact, such as Becket's time as (an apparently absent) Provost of Beverley, neither the Archbishops of Canterbury nor the papacy seems to have had the level of consistent personal connection to the minsters that might have made them want to bring about such a process of convergence. Instead, their relationships were largely the formal and reactive ones dictated by canon law. Those actions that they did take affecting the minsters were in response to sporadic requests from the chapters or others, and they acted only in limited ways. Those ways, moreover, were no more than the reactions that might have been expected from them for

any equivalent institution in similar circumstances. There can be no question, therefore, of a programme of institutional change from these sources. At best, the papacy can be said to have contributed to and confirmed elements of a process that was already taking place, and even then, successive popes did so at the request of either the archbishop or the minster chapters.

Conclusions

The relationships of the minsters beyond the boundaries of the archdiocese display clear similarities, in the range of those relationships, but particularly in their limits. Where their relationships within the archdiocese were marked by personal connections, the possibility of informal influence and complexity, their relationships outside it seem to have been largely impersonal, typical and determined by their position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

As with their relationships at the local level, however, the minsters' wider relationships demonstrate more than that. Where the minsters' local relationships suggested something about the reasons behind their convergence, their wider relationships in the Church appear to demonstrate its effects on their identities. In discussing Anglo-Saxon minsters, Foot has pointed out that the term minster is sufficiently broad to take in a wide variety of institutions, and argues against polarisation between minsters and monasteries.[97] What this section suggests, however, is that the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell related to the wider church in this period according to a specific, and shared, status as minsters. That status, moreover, had come to include connotations of their position as subordinate institutions to York, while the process of their transformation and shared status was fundamentally linked to the archdiocese, as the example of Howden shows.

[97] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*

As such, where previous chapters have pointed to the minsters' convergence and suggested the main mechanism for it in the form of the archbishop, the minsters' relations to the local and wider Church perhaps tell us more about the way this process altered their fundamental institutional identities. Their relationships with the local Church suggest that the process of their convergence was made necessary at least partly to fit a changing environment in the archdiocese, one in which they maintained their position principally because of the status acquired as subordinate institutions to York. Their relationships with the wider church suggest that this necessary transformation resulted in a clear definition of their post-Conquest identities as minsters, one that formed the basis of those relations less affected by personal, local connections.

8- Patronage

Having explored the minsters' relations with both the Archbishops of York and the wider Church, there still remains a category of relationships to be explored, in the form of the complex network of patronage relationships that surrounded any ecclesiastical institution in the middle ages.[1] These relationships have proven a vital area for understanding medieval religious institutions. Indeed, Wardrop's analysis of Fountains Abbey[2] explores it principally in terms of its interactions with key patrons, as does Jamroziak's analysis of Rievaulx.[3]

In examining this area for the minsters, the key questions remain the same. To what extent if any did the minsters exhibit patterns of patronage that were similar to one another? Is there any evidence that the minsters were treated as a coherent group by potential patrons, or that they acted together in matters relating to patronage? Just as importantly, did the minsters merely mirror patterns in the wider Church, and particularly York, in this regard, or did their particular status translate to a different approach to patronage?

As with the previous chapters, however, the subject of patronage is more than just another area in which the minsters exhibited points of similarity. It is, as with the archbishop and the wider Church,[4] an area in which we must investigate the potential for influence on the process of convergence between the minsters that appears to have occurred through the period. As it is possible that the minsters' most important patrons were in a position that could have influenced those changes, we must ask whether they in fact did so, and whether they had any role in bringing about the process.

It is worth defining at this point what is meant by patronage, and particularly to emphasise that the term is being used here in a rather broad sense, encompassing acts of

[1] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*
[2] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*
[3] Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey*
[4] See chapters 6 and 7

gift giving at all levels, whether the gifts in question were money, land, prebends, offices or enforceable rights. While an element of mutuality appears inevitable in the concept, moreover, I have deliberately sought to exclude payments, gifts or transactions occurring because of an existing obligation, as well as grants that were straightforward contractual arrangements. It is an approach that seems to be largely in line with Jamroziak's distinction between an institution's spiritual and economic contacts,[5] and hopefully provides a definition that is broad enough to encompass small individual gifts to the minsters and the granting of prebends, vicarages or other positions on the part of the canons, without getting caught up in the canons' business transactions.

It will not, however, encompass every act of patronage that occurred over the 234 years under discussion. In the space available, it is impossible to fully reconstruct the patronage networks for the three minsters, and I am not certain this would be the most profitable approach anyway, given the nature of this study. Doing so might tell us a great deal about the detail of the networks, but it is the nature of the acts of patronage, the influence of the patrons, and the influence the minsters extended during the process that seems most relevant to the process of their convergence. As such, I have instead sought to use relevant examples to illustrate the nature of patronage around each of the minsters, using this as a basis for comparison.

This discussion draws to at least some extent on the work of both Jamroziak[6] and Cownie,[7] both of whom do much to discuss patronage towards religious houses, albeit in ways largely focussed upon monastic institutions. Cownie's discussion of the mixture of reasons that informed lay patronage of religious institutions is particularly relevant here,[8] especially in relation to discussing the smaller patrons of the minsters, for whom the exertion of influence over the minsters was probably not realistic.

[5] Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey*, p.57
[6] Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey*
[7] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*
[8] *ibid.* pp.151-171

Jamroziak's discussion of the relationships between Rievaulx and its principal patrons, meanwhile, is of direct use in seeking to untangle what sort of influence on their process of convergence the most important of the minsters' patrons might have had. Other views, such as Martindale's, are also useful in understanding the process by which patronage could extend lay influence within religious institutions, albeit in a somewhat later context.[9]

The Patrons

Most of the individuals who gave to the minsters appear to have done so on the basis of strong existing links to the institutions. An example of this occurs for Ripon, probably in the late twelfth century, with Samson de Wigetoft, who gave land to the church in order to allow for the expansion of the churchyard.[10] The man was almost certainly a relative of the Ripon canon Ralph de Wigtoft. The significance of this is perhaps better understood by explaining what was not the case. There are relatively few instances of patronage involving individuals with no obvious connection to either the area or the minsters, except at the very highest levels. As will be discussed below, patronage from these individuals was different from most other patronage, in approach as well as simple scale. In general though, the minsters appear to have followed the pattern one might expect of an essentially local institution, being insufficiently famous, or important, to attract patronage from individuals without an existing personal or geographical link to them.

Key Patrons: The Archbishops of York

One of the most important patrons of the minsters was the Archbishop of York. Chapter six has already argued for him as one of the prime movers behind the minsters' process

[9] Martindale, 'Patrons and Minders'
[10] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.97

of convergence over the period, and has identified a number of acts such as the provision of lands for prebends and the granting of indulgences to gain outside assistance that might be seen as important acts of patronage. The question here is, therefore, neither whether the archbishop played a role in the minsters' convergence, nor whether he engaged in acts that could be seen as patronage. It is, instead, whether any of these acts of patronage can be considered as separate from this process.

In particular, the difficulty in examining these acts of the archbishops lies in this issue of the motivations behind them. Can grants from the archbishop be seen as true 'gifts' to the minsters, when the granting of lands or tithes was secondary to a reorganisation of some aspect of the minster in question? It might be more appropriate to view the creation of prebends in particular as more a reorganisation of the structure of the minsters than an act of patronage in itself. The use of indulgences to attract patronage from others is also problematic, in that it represents the solicitation of acts of patronage from others more than it does direct patronage on the part of the archbishop.

Chapter six went on to argue, moreover, that it may well have been in the archbishop's interest to have a number of functioning mother churches to better deal with the business, particularly the liturgical business, of the Archdiocese of York. As such, even some things that might otherwise be seen as spectacularly generous acts of patronage, such as the gift of a thousand pounds towards the rebuilding of Ripon, become instead pragmatic business decisions designed to facilitate the efficient running of his archdiocese. The grants towards the foundation of prebends in particular can potentially be seen as acts more of structural reorganisation than of patronage.

Do the benefits to the Archdiocese of York prevent these acts from being patronage, however? They were, in essence, still gifts on the part of the archbishops. Perhaps they were made with ulterior motives, or as part of the reorganisation of the minsters, but several of these occasions did not in fact require gifts. It would have been

possible for the archbishop to require the reorganisation of parts of the chapter, at least if he got the chapter's backing, and he could have done it through statute without additional grants. There is, moreover, no reason why he should have gone so far as to make the gift of a thousand pounds to Ripon, when archiepiscopal involvement in rebuilding work more commonly took the form of indulgences for others who contributed.[11]

Just as importantly, were not most acts of patronage essentially done for the benefit of the giver? If that is perhaps too strong a way of stating the situation, then it must at least be acknowledged that the majority of acts of patronage towards ecclesiastical institutions in the period involved some expectation of benefit to the giver, even if this was not the primary consideration. At the very least we must acknowledge the anthropological concept of reciprocity in any discussion of gifts.[12] The expectation might have been of benefit to the soul of the giver or others connected to them, of confraternity or of burial within the bounds of the institution, but it was there. That the benefits to their archdiocese were perhaps more worldly does not make the gifts of the archbishops any less examples of patronage.

It does, however, create something of a difficulty in assessing the extent of patronage by different archbishops. In theory, it should be relatively straightforward to go through archiepiscopal registers, tally up the amounts given to the minsters, and work out which archbishop gave the most to the minsters. Equally, such a process should give us a neat solution to the question of whether particular archbishops favoured one minster more than the other two. Unfortunately, things are not quite so simple. If it is accepted that many of the key gifts by the Archbishops of York were intended to bring about particular results for the benefit of the archdiocese, then these

[11] See chapter 6
[12] C.P. Kottak, *Anthropology: The Exploration of Human Diversity*, 11th edition, (McGraw Hill, Boston, 2006) pp.359-361

examples become not so much reflections of the personal inclinations of the archbishops towards the minsters, as reflections of needs perceived by those archbishops. To return to the example of the thousand pounds given to Ripon,[13] it is likely that Ripon would have received some grant in this respect regardless of who the archbishop was, because it desperately needed the rebuilding work. While the monetary gift might point to higher favour than an indulgence for the fabric, we cannot state that this gift makes archbishop Thurstan superior to the other archbishops in his regard for Ripon, because the timing of the gift was dictated by the needs of the institution rather than that regard.

Key Patrons: The King

The issues relating to patronage and the king for the minsters are perhaps more straightforward than those relating to the archbishop in at least one respect; the minsters were not routinely conducting ecclesiastical business on behalf of the king. As such, the questions over whether the archbishop made gifts to the minsters for altruistic or practical reasons do not apply to the same degree. That does not mean that gifts were made without any expectation of benefit, but it does possibly simplify the analysis somewhat.

The majority of the grants made by kings to the minsters were in the form of rights. The details of the minsters' rights as defined by these grants and charters are explored more fully in chapter three but the act of their gift deserves separate discussion. Although falling well before the start of the period under discussion, Beverley and Ripon at least were both inclined to trace their rights to charters purporting to be Aethelstan's.[14] The rhyming charters that have survived are almost certainly later forgeries, and I have argued elsewhere that their use in the 1228 action

[13] *EYC*, vol. 1, p.113
[14] Witty, 'The rhyming charter of Beverley'

between Ripon and the archbishop suggests that they may have been created for this.[15] Nevertheless, the existence of those charters requires that we ask whether they could have been based on existing rights, possibly ones actually bestowed by Aethelstan.

It seems impossible to know for certain, because of the absence of earlier evidence. The similarity of the rights claimed in the rhyming charters of Beverley and Ripon, however, would tend to suggest that perhaps these rights were exaggerated somewhat from any that did exist before. Essentially, the charters as they stand look very much as though Ripon and Beverley drew up a list of the rights that they thought they might like and then put them into charter form. Of course, this is only an impression, and it is just as impossible to prove as it is to speculate on the rights Aethelstan might have given them. What can be stated with some certainty is that people believed that Aethelstan had granted the minsters in question a series of rights, or at least that they possessed those rights. If this were not the case, Ripon's reliance on the forgery in 1228 would simply not have been sufficiently plausible to work.

Moving more firmly within the framework of the period under discussion, the first act of patronage by one of the Kings of England towards the minsters came during the Conquest, at least according to the writings of William Kettell.[16] He suggested that William the Conqueror was sufficiently in awe of Beverley's patron saint to leave the town unharmed, accept the mile's peace around the town, and exempt the minster from having to pay his taxes. The story is designed to glorify both St John of Beverley and the minster, but Domesday Book attests to several of the details. The entry for Beverley notes the exemption from the king's tax, while unlike the entry for Ripon, there are relatively few areas described as waste within the town.[17] While this is not necessarily an indication of damage done in the Conquest, the contrast appears too great to ignore.

[15] See chapter 6
[16] Raine (ed), *Historians of the Church of York*, pp.266-269
[17] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire,* vol. 1, W2:7. For the debate on waste in Domesday, see chapter 2.

We also possess evidence for at least some patronage on the part of William I in the form of a grant of the rights of soc and sac for Beverley's lands between 1066 and 1069.[18]

A number of William's successors confirmed this favour by granting the same freedom from the king's tax, though this was inevitably accompanied by the caveat that this should only be the case if it could be demonstrated that Beverley had in fact received this privilege before.[19] The emphasis, therefore, was less on any personal feeling for the minster than on the maintenance of existing rights at their present level. The insistence on proving the freedom from the tax may be because it is not mentioned in William's charter to Beverley's chapter, but this apparent doubt on the part of later kings is not in itself evidence that such a right was not granted.

The freedom from taxation is interesting, not because of any particular uniqueness, but because of the manner of it. More commonly, exemption from taxation arose as something from within the church, based largely upon the principle of the inalienability of church property.[20] Here though, the exemption is based on the precedent established by a royal gift. While the net result was much the same, it perhaps implies a closer relationship between the king and the minster than might have been possible with a monastery, for example.

The act of confirming rights is also interesting, even if it was an act repeated for almost every institution in the country. In some cases it amounted to no more than a simple pro forma confirmation with no mention of the rights in question. This was true of the confirmation in 1175 for Southwell, for example.[21] This sort of confirmation is also consistent with papal confirmations of those rights, such as Pope Urban's 1185

[18] EYC p.87
[19] SWB p.14
[20] *Brundage, Medieval Canon Law,* p.87
[21] SWB p.1

confirmation of rights and immunities granted by popes, kings and others.[22] In essence, it was an assertion of continuing control rather than an act of patronage, a reminder of who the source of those rights was. Other confirmations, however, 'confirm' rights not explicitly granted elsewhere. Some of these were not acts of patronage per se, in that they arose out of legal proceedings such as the 1228 Ripon case or even the recitation of York and Southwell's 1106 rights in response to demands to prove them.[23] These were responses to attempts to restrict rights, even if the attempts in question were not necessarily on the part of the king.

These confirmations demonstrate one other aspect of patronage in the form of rights from the king, or indeed from others. Unless subject to a process of confirmation and renewal, there was a tendency for the granted rights to be forgotten. This could, of course, be seen as a semi-deliberate attempt to undermine the existing rights of the minsters. In turn, that would make the process of confirmation no more than a typical continuing struggle over the extent of the rights in question. That is certainly a legitimate explanation, and must account for many, if not most of those confirmations.

I am, however, of the opinion that this was not always the process in operation, and that occasionally the minsters also found themselves subject to a level of genuine forgetfulness. Their smaller size and lesser importance, combined with a certain level of independence from York,[24] suggests that other institutions perhaps had no reason to keep careful track of the minsters' rights. In *c.*1220-1223, for example, Archbishop Gray sent a letter to the Chief Justice of England reminding him of Southwell's liberties under the previous king.[25] This could be seen as a reminder in the face of potential encroachments on those liberties, but no such encroachment is apparent from the evidence. Likewise, although Ripon's 1228 conflict with the archbishop over the

[22] *ibid.* p.2
[23] *ibid.* p.18
[24] See chapter 6
[25] Reg. Gray p.145

minster's rights is probably best seen as an example of testing the limits of rights,[26] Ripon's success in asserting rights based on forged charters only makes sense if no one was quite sure what the minster's rights were in the first place.

The repetition of apparently claimed rights is also typical. If Ripon and Beverley were honest in their claims to be free of providing troops thanks to Aethalstan, then Stephen's 1136-1140 charter freeing Ripon, Beverley, Southwell, York and Hexham from both military service and castle building amounted to a confirmation of existing rights for them.[27] This charter sheds considerable light on the process of patronage from the kings to the minsters. In addition to the repetition of rights, it is also important to note the grouping of institutions involved. The charter was designed to affect a specific group of important churches connected with, and centred upon, York. The impression that the charter gives therefore is that the rights in question were given because of that connection with York, and not as a result of any particular connection with any of the minsters.

From the point of view of this work, it is important that Ripon, Beverley and Southwell are treated together as a group in this example of patronage, and that York is present too. It can reasonably be suggested that King Stephen treated the three minsters as equivalent, connected and comparable. It also seems safe to suggest that he acted in such a way as to indicate an assumption that the minsters derived their constitutions, rights and organisational models from those of York. The difficulty with this argument is the presence of Hexham in the charter. The inclusion of Hexham damages any idea of the minsters having been seen as an exclusive group at the time. They were all included in the charter not because they were a group of institutions, but because King Stephen wanted to do as much work with one charter as he could. A similar impression is given by the 1303 charter of Edward I, granting free warren in Cawood, Beverley and

[26] see chapter 6
[27] EYC p.123

Southwell.[28] Strictly speaking, it is not even addressed to the canons, being a grant to the archbishop. The only reason to suspect that it was intended to include the canons is its inclusion in a section of Southwell's Liber Albus relating to the canons' rights.

Of course, there were also moments when kings patronised the minsters on a more individual basis. Stephen, for example, granted to Beverley's provost and canons the sum of 100s a year in 1142.[29] This type of grant suggests a division of sorts in the types of patronage occurring between the minsters and the king. On the one hand, there were the general grants and charters, often confirming existing rights and usually encompassing more than one institution. On the other were more specific grants such as this one. These had a much better chance of being monetary or land based, and were addressed to a specific chapter, or even to specific individuals. In 1256, for example, Henry III granted John de Clarell, the prebendary of Norwell Overhall, and his successors free warren within the lands of that prebend.[30] The naming of the specific canon suggests that this was a grant made on the basis of a link with a particular individual, and emphasises the importance of such personal links in securing patronage.

Large grants of rights given to the minsters in general can be said to have been granted almost as a matter of policy, in that they were granted to the minsters en-masse and appear to have been granted because the king decided to give particular rights to churches of a certain level of importance. For this, no special connection to the minsters was required, merely an awareness of their existence. The example of the grant to John de Clarell, on the other hand, tends to suggest that more specific grants from the king had their basis in more personal connections, reinforcing the suspicion that personal or geographical connections were at the heart of most grants to the minsters that were not of rights.

[28] SWB p.47
[29] EYC p.96
[30] SWB, p.228

Does this amount to enough to suggest that the king might have had a role to play in the minsters' convergence? Probably not. The earliest patterns of royal patronage in the minsters might have encompassed a willingness to grant individual minsters significant rights, but they do not appear to have been designed with the aim of bringing the minsters together. Involvements from slightly later show the king addressing the minsters as a group, but it is not a group based on just the three minsters, and suggests a certain distance in working through York rather than with the minsters directly. The personal grants within the minsters, on the other hand, were simply not far reaching enough that they could have formed part of a process of convergence. Perhaps, in the adjudication of disputes such as that in 1228, we can say that the actions of the kings of England had an effect on this process, but it appears to have been a largely accidental influence achieved as part of the assertion of authority, and not a deliberate role in it.

Key Patrons: The Papacy

As with the archbishop, some aspects of the papacy's patronage have been covered already, in chapter seven. Again, however, there is a distinction to be drawn between general, and expected, interaction and distinct acts of patronage. Burton has pointed to the role of the papacy in the development of the region's regular canons,[31] and this might perhaps hint at similar papal attention for their secular counterparts. Certainly, each of the minsters received papal bulls within the period under discussion, relating to rights, or prebends, or specific matters within the minsters. Largely, however, these came in response to appeals from within the minsters, suggesting that the minsters'

[31] J. Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire 1069-1215*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999) p.95

interactions with the papacy can be considered no more than typical for institutions of their size and type.[32]

Some of these amounted to direct acts of patronage. In 1206, for example, Pope Innocent III granted the church of Wheatley to the chapter of Southwell, in return for a taper burning before their high altar.[33] Others offered less in a material sense. Alexander III's bull in *c.*1160 confirming the Halton prebend was not a grant of money, or even of rights, but did lend authority to the creation of the prebend.[34] Again here there is a contrast between two levels of patronage, though it is perhaps less pronounced than in the case of the king. The contrast centres on the question of the individuality of papal bulls. Those papal bulls intended to grant rights to the minsters often appear to have been directed to individual minsters. In the case of confirmations of prebends, this is to be expected, but it also appears to be true for other such grants of rights.

One explanation for this may be the relative levels of proximity of the king and pope to the minsters. The Kings of England were in a much better position to be aware of the minsters than the pope was, or at least to give them attention. While this would seem to argue in favour of the king being the one who made more individual grants of rights, it in fact tends to suggest the opposite. Because the minsters were perhaps less immediately visible to the pope, grants of rights through papal bulls to them were only likely to occur in response to instigation on the part of the minsters. As such, they were more likely to be specific to the minster in question. The king, by contrast, was occasionally in a position to have a connection to a particular minster, and as such gave rights to individual minsters, or even individual prebends, more often than the pope.

As with the king, we must as whether this level and type of patronage was sufficient to indicate an involvement in the process of the minsters' convergence on a

[32] See chapter 7
[33] SWB, p.374
[34] *ibid.* p.26

common model. Again, the answer appears to be no. Leaving aside chapter seven, and concentrating only on the issue of patronage, we can see that the papacy's approach to patronage within the minsters was essentially too reactive, and too sporadic, for it to have formed an attempt to influence the minsters in the direction of convergence.

Joint Patronage

However, even if we must accept that neither the king nor the pope was sufficiently involved in the minsters to have been entirely responsible for their convergence, the possibility that they played a secondary role in it must still be examined. There is plenty of evidence for them working with the archbishops on issues relating to the minsters. Chapter six has already shown, for example, that the archbishops acted in a number of cases to secure benefits from both of them on the minsters' behalf.

While it is not my intention to re-examine the archbishop's role as a go between, there is a case for exploring instances of such co-operative patronage towards the minsters. The principal examples appear to have occurred at the point of the foundation of new prebends. Thanks to the minster's greater number of prebends, Southwell's White Book contains a number of examples of such foundations where the prebend was set up through a combination of royal, papal, and archiepiscopal power. The Halton prebend, for example, which was set up in approximately 1160, generated charters, deeds, and confirmations from all three parties.[35] There was a papal bull of Alexander III for its foundation, a pair of charters of Henry II, and a similar number of archiepiscopal charters relating to its creation. There is even a charter of confirmation by the dean and chapter of York.

It might, therefore, be possible to view the establishment of this prebend as a work of joint patronage by a number of powers outside of the minster. On a technical,

[35] SWB p.26-27. EEA 20, p.109 no.95

and possibly symbolic, level this is probably correct, but in other ways this explanation is somewhat unsatisfying. The process of creating a prebend was a complex one involving multiple permissions and acknowledgements,[36] and this is what I believe can be seen in the creation of the Halton prebend. Instead of a genuinely joint action by the pope, king and archbishop, it would appear more reasonable to suggest that what took place was an action on the part of the archbishop, and confirmations of that action by the king and pope, providing them with a way of maintaining a degree of authority within the process without having to contribute to it significantly. The confirmation by the dean and chapter of York can definitely be seen in similar terms. It was, after all, a confirmation of something already in existence and so played no part in the creation of the prebend.

An interesting variation on this approach is shown in the creation of Southwell's Rampton prebend. Here, the prebend was established through grants made by Robert Malluvel and his mother Pavia,[37] presumably immediately prior to 1206, when a bull of Pope Innocent III confirmed the prebend's creation.[38] It is this combination that creates the interest in the foundation of this prebend. The central role of these private individuals in the creation of the prebend is exceptional in itself, and has been discussed in chapter three, but this also demonstrates both the extent of, and purposes for, joint patronage. This example shows that such joint patronage was not limited to combinations of authority figures determined to have an official role in actions that shaped the minsters. It could also exist between those figures and ordinary people. Yet why did it? Innocent III presumably had sufficient resources to endow a prebend if he wished to do so, even if we note that money is not the same thing as having land in the

[36] See chapters 3 and 6
[37] SWB p.36
[38] *ibid.* pp.39-40

immediate vicinity of the minster. What would cause him to work with Pavia and Robert Malluvel in the creation of the Rampton prebend?

For an answer to this, it helps to remember that the papal bull was a confirmation of the prebend, rather than an attempt to found it. The impetus for the foundation appears to have come from the secular side of the foundation, along with the grant of land to make it work. Looked at from this angle, it then makes sense that papal recognition would be sought, both because of the use of such recognition in the creation of other prebends and as a source of ecclesiastical authority for the actions. Instead of the rather odd scenario of the pope arbitrarily deciding to create a prebend in a distant church of importance principally within the Archdiocese of York, we again have the more reasonable situation of Innocent III having to do relatively little to gain a measure of advantage in, and connection to, a newly formed prebend. This is an approach that seems to make more sense, and which certainly fits in with the essentially reactive role of the papacy as regards the minsters in general.[39]

A further variation on these approaches appears to have occurred in the case of the two prebends of Beckingham and Dunham at Southwell. In this case, the initial foundation of the prebends lay with Archbishop Thurstan, in approximately 1120,[40] but this was quickly reinforced by a charter from Henry I.[41] The addition of a grant from one William de Bamton added to the prebend and gave the prebends' creation a fuller mixture of official, ecclesiastical, and local parts to its foundation.[42] The key difference here is that the main part of the foundation came from the archbishop. This makes the foundation of the Beckingham and Dunham prebends more in line with all Southwell's other prebends, but it also shows the way in which archiepiscopal support for an idea helped to secure other sources of patronage.

[39] See chapter 7
[40] SWB p.21
[41] *ibid.*
[42] *ibid.* pp.21-22

In these examples at least, joint patronage could be seen as a response to the necessities of creating a prebend. The process essentially seems to have required three elements:[43]

Firstly, it seems to have required at least tacit approval from the chapter, though not necessarily formal approval, since most of Southwell's prebends lack a separate note of such approval by the canons. Secondly, it required a source of ecclesiastical authority, usually in the form of the archbishop. Thirdly, it required sufficient lands, funds or tithes to provide a living.

In theory, the archbishop could have achieved these requirements acting alone, through influence with the chapter, his own authority, and his own lands. This is the case with the minsters' earlier prebends, and is why not all the prebends are examples of this joint patronage. It was not, however, necessary for these elements to come from one source, and this sort of joint patronage makes sense both from a political and economic standpoint. Political, in that the creation of a prebend had an impact in the surrounding ecclesiastical landscape and opportunities for patronage, and joint patronage effectively secured 'permission' for that impact; economic, in that joint patronage allowed for the creation of prebends without reducing the assets of the archbishop.

This approach is important because it is the model of joint patronage most applicable to the other two minsters. Neither of them acquired the number of prebends that Southwell did and so a discussion of the models of patronage behind their establishment is less fruitful. Instead, the application of this patronage model for Beverley and Ripon comes in other areas, principally those of contributions to the fabric fund through the role of indulgences.

Papal or archiepiscopal indulgences for contributions to the fabric fund have also been discussed in chapters six and seven, but here the focus is on their role as a

[43] See chapters 3 and 6

factor within the network of patronage that surrounded the minsters. Obviously, the granting of indulgences to attract such patronage was common to almost every ecclesiastical institution, and so does not represent anything specific to the minsters, but it does seem to fall within the same sort of model of patronage outlined above. The minster had a particular need, or the archbishop felt they had that need, and gave the authority to act, but it was lay funding that provided the means to fulfil it. This is important because it shows that the model of joint patronage found in the establishment of some of Southwell's prebends was not special in itself. Certainly, the fact of those prebends' creation was a marked difference from the other two minsters, but the process of patronage funding those foundations was not.

Does this joint approach to patronage affect the potential impact of the king and pope on the minsters' process of convergence on a common model? Perhaps if such patronage had been genuinely a joint endeavour, it might have been possible to suggest a role for these figures in the minsters' convergence. That, however, is not what the above appears to show. Instead, the involvement of the king and pope in such joint exercises appears to have come principally only after the archbishops had already determined their directions, and then largely to maintain some minor stake in the institutions. They appear to have played no part in the planning stage of even these examples of joint patronage, and so it cannot be said that they helped to determine the shift of the minsters to a common model here any more than they did in those acts of patronage undertaken alone.

Local Patrons

Probably the greatest volume of patronage occurred between individuals close to the minsters and the chapters. This did not necessarily mean that they accounted for the greatest value of patronage, because the value of things given by the king, pope and

archbishop tended to be very high. Archbishop Roger's £1000 gift to Ripon is the most easily quantifiable of these gifts, but it is easy to see how something like the Beverley chapter's exemption from the king's tax also amounted to a substantial saving over time. In this, however, it is necessary to return to the issue of patronage done for reasons of policy. While it would indeed be artificial to suggest that grants of rights or privileges done to achieve policy related aims were not true acts of patronage, it would appear that a distinction of sorts can be drawn between those acts and acts of patronage that did not have such aims attached. Such acts, done for the souls of the individuals concerned or without mention of a reason, are easiest to find among the smaller acts of patronage.

Most commonly, and in line with cathedral chapters,[44] local patronage took the form of grants towards the minsters' lights. It may have helped that they provided a visible reminder of the patronage on a level that was affordable for potential patrons. Certainly, in this aspect of patronage, the three minsters of Ripon, Southwell and Beverley were reasonably similar.

Southwell's White Book contains no fewer than seven pages of rents dedicated solely to the maintenance of a single lamp in the choir,[45] along with individual grants for lamps and tapers at particular services, such as the one made in *c.*1220 for three tapers at prime and a lamp at matins.[46] For Ripon, we find Adam Outy's grant between 1216 and 1234 to fund a lamp for the soul of W. de Orleans, one of Ripon's canons.[47] This could almost qualify as a double act of patronage; once for the grant, and once for the act to benefit the soul of the dead canon. Other gifts to Ripon's lights include 6*d*

[44] Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals,* pp.225-226
[45] SWB pp.365-372
[46] *ibid.* p.374
[47] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.46

from one Gilbertus between1216 and 1234,[48] a toft from Peter de Richemond and his wife Agnes in *c.*1233,[49] and an undated toft from Nicholas de Bethula.[50]

Of course, not every contribution towards the minsters' lights should be taken as an act of patronage. Southwell's White Book, for example, notes charges for wax on both the Prior and Convent of Thurgarton[51] and the Prior and Convent of Worksop.[52] Such charges are not acts of patronage so much as the visible symbols of the sort of dominant relationship on the minster's part that was discussed more fully in chapter seven.

Another common form of local patronage involved small grants made to particular prebends. In form, these grants are similar to those made as business dealings, with the simple alteration that no money was involved. Typically, they were not especially large grants, amounting to a single toft or manse. An example of this occurred with Hugh son of Radulf, who gave a manse to the prebend of South Muskham for his soul and those of his wife, ancestors and successors.[53] Larger grants generally either involved an important, and usually ecclesiastical, patron or were the result of payments on the part of the minster.

This is, to a great extent, to be expected. Discussion of the wealth of the minsters in chapter three demonstrated that the individual prebends of Southwell in particular were often not particularly valuable. It would not be in line with these figures to expect a constant flow of significant gifts into the minsters' prebends. The variations in that wealth suggest that, even within the individual minsters, some of their prebends must have been better at attracting patronage than others. It seems impossible, for example, that Southwell's least valuable prebend, that of its sacrist, attracted such

[48] *ibid*. p.76
[49] *ibid*. p.78
[50] *ibid.* p.76
[51] SWB, p.58
[52] *ibid* pp.58-59
[53] *ibid.* p.23

patrons, or it would have been worth more than £5 by 1291.[54] There are several possibilities as to why this prebend in particular might not have attracted patrons, including its role as a living for a minster officer and its apparent lack of any lands to start with, which may have suggested to patrons that gifts of land to this particular prebend were not appropriate. Of course, this is speculation, and does not explain why the prebend did not attract gifts of a more monetary nature. Even so, it serves to demonstrate that the spread of patronage throughout the minsters' prebends was uneven.

The Patrons

I have used the term 'local patrons' above, but just how local were the minsters' patrons, and what might their location mean for the implications of their acts of patronage? For other institutions, locally focussed patronage seems to have been the norm. Jamroziak has emphasised the importance of an institution's immediate neighbours in determining the extent and type of patronage,[55] along with reliance on local families and their pre-existing networks.[56] Burton has suggested that barons perhaps spread their interests more widely, though even there the assessment of 'the consolidation of territorial interests in a particular locality' as a common motivation appears to place an emphasis on local connections.[57]

If we exclude major figures such as popes, kings and archbishops, it appears, for the most part, that the majority of patrons of the three minsters were local, in the sense that they at least had strong links to the areas around the minsters even if they did not always live there. Robert Maluvel, for example, who gave probably the most important private gift to Southwell in the form of the land for the prebend of Rampton, was part of a family with strong links to the area. His mother's family was there for at least three

[54] *Taxatio P. Nicolai*, p.312
[55] Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey*, p.63
[56] *ibid.* p.59
[57] Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, p.206

generations before him, while his family remained linked to the area until at least the reign of Richard II.[58]

This explains the patronage in perhaps two ways. Firstly, despite their strong links to York, all three of the minsters were essentially local institutions. They were important within the context of the local areas, but were not of sufficient importance to attract patrons from further afield. The cathedral offered an institution of greater importance within the archdiocese, while the monasteries that grew up there were perhaps more attractive in terms of the perceived holiness of their life. Even those figures distant to the minsters who became linked to them do not seem to have given gifts in any kind of consistent way. Beverley's provosts, for example, may have brought something to the minster in terms of the prestige of some of the individuals involved,[59] but do not appear to have made gifts to the minster on any regular basis.

In a way, though, this kind of local emphasis may explain some of the patronage. To return to Rampton for a moment, it would be overly cynical to suggest that Robert Maluvel created it as a sinecure for his relations, and in any case the evidence does not suggest it. H. de Corbridge and Reginald de Stowe, the first two incumbents, do not have such an obvious link to him. However, it does seem reasonable to see the gift as an attempt to improve the ecclesiastical endowments of the area, and thus to demonstrate a measure of commitment to that area. By making gifts to the local minster church, Maluvel may have intended to emphasise the strength of his family's links to the area, and possibly to have demonstrated his importance within that locality. As a statement of importance it was probably even quite effective, since no other private individual was able to achieve what he did, and found a prebend within one of these three minsters.

[58] Rev. R Chadwick, 'The History of the Manor of Rampton, in Nottinghamshire' *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, (1920) p.xxiv
[59] See chapter 4

One important patron for Southwell was the bishop of Lincoln. In 1283 he gave land for the creation of a chaplainry at Southwell, while between 1280 and 1288 he augmented the prebend of Northmuskham, allowing Henry de Newark, the canon of that prebend, all the lands of that place in exchange for a minimal rent of 1*d* per year.[60] This interest is intriguing principally because it suggests an ability on the part of Southwell to attract a measure of ecclesiastical patronage from further afield than its immediate environment. It is also of interest because it again suggests land coming from patrons other than the archbishop in order to form the bulk of a prebend. This is suggestive, perhaps, of the influence of the joint patronage approach outlined above.

There are a couple of limitations to this, however. The action was a business dealing, at least in name, although the minimal rent for the lands involved perhaps suggests generosity on the part of the bishop rather than a genuinely equal trade. It must also be remembered that the lands were a later addition to the prebend rather than a part of its creation, and that the Bishop of Lincoln had some link to the area in the form of his lands around Northmuskham. Nevertheless, this does serve to show patronage links for one of the minsters outside of its immediate area, and an ecclesiastical source of patronage for Southwell outside of the immediate control of both the Archbishop of York and the papacy.

Does this local patronage mean anything for the minsters' convergence? In some of the examples above we have a similar situation to that mentioned under joint patronage, where other resources filled the archbishops' aims. There was, moreover, the added point that these local patrons had a connection to the minsters. They certainly could not be seen as too distant to have had an interest in the process, as the king and pope possibly were.

[60] SWB p.31

They were, on the other hand, too local and unimportant. Even in the case of local nobility, it is hard to see how they could have had sufficient continuing influence on the minsters to contribute significantly to such a process, particularly since it was a process that took more than a single lifetime to complete. Such multi-generational influence is more the mark of an office permanently connected to the minsters, namely the archbishop, rather than a succession of individuals with presumably differing interests. These individual patrons also have the problem that they were almost always interested in just one minster from the three, the closest to them, and thus it is hard to see how they could have influenced a process involving all three.

The Minsters as Patrons

The minsters were the frequent recipients of patronage, but it is also important to remember their roles as sources of such patronage. The minsters possessed considerable resources, even if they were not at the level of cathedral chapters, and were occasionally moved to bestow those resources upon others.

To some extent, these examples of patronage relate more to questions of the minsters' relations with other parts of the Church than to patronage in general, because most of the key examples of patronage on the part of the minsters involved gifts to other ecclesiastical institutions. The expressions of mutual spiritual confraternity, as between Ripon and Fountains Abbey for example[61] could probably be seen in these terms, especially when, as with Beverley and Bridlington,[62] such confraternity was accompanied by gifts on the part of the minster. Examples such as this, which appear to involve the minsters' relations to the rest of the Church, are discussed more fully in chapter seven.

[61] See chapter 7
[62] BCA, vol. 2, pp.289-290

In discussing patronage on the part of the minsters, it is perhaps important to distinguish between patronage on the part of the chapter of a particular minster and patronage on the part of individual canons. Since the chapter was the principal controlling force in the running of each of the minsters, at least when the canons were resident, patronage granted by the chapter can be seen as patronage on behalf of the minster. Other acts of patronage made by specific canons are still interesting, but cannot be seen as the same thing, or as actions of the minster in any formal sense.

One possibility raised by this distinction is that of canons making grants to their own minster. Geoffrey de Lardare of Ripon, for example, made a number of grants to support a light in St Wilfred's tomb between *c.*1216 and 1234.[63] The grants in question do not seem to have enjoyed any special status and were not framed in language different to that of other grants. The stated reasons, when given, are for the good of de Lardare's soul and those of his ancestors. The grants are, in short, perfectly normal grants. But then, why wouldn't they be? It is entirely reasonable to expect that canons from the minsters felt the same needs that led to others making grants to those minsters, and for them to have made any such grants to the minster that they knew best.

The canons were not completely free to make grants as they wished, however. As was the case through much of the Church, there was a fear surrounding the minsters about the alienation of lands which belonged to the institutions[64] and on at least one occasion action was taken to recover them. In the second year of his papacy, Urban II instructed the Prior of Thurgarton to procure the restoration of Southwell lands given away in supposedly illegal grants.[65] It is of course hard to tell for sure whether the grants in question were in fact 'illegal' in this sense, because there is always the possibility that this action amounts to an attempt by the chapter of Southwell to

[63] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 4, pp.53-54
[64] Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, p.85
[65] SWB p.5

reconsider perfectly legitimate, but ill advised, dealings. It is equally clear, however, that at least some of the lands in question were considered inalienable, or the instruction to recover them would not have been given. It also perhaps suggests a divergence between the short term needs of the minster and the requirements of canon law. Southwell was hardly alone in this. As Brundage suggests, those attempting to enforce this aspect of canon law often had to be flexible to allow for the immediate needs of an institution.[66] This does suggest, however, that the attempt to reclaim Southwell's lands can be seen as part of broader movements, both to enforce this principle of canon law, and for reform in general.

Offices, Selection and Posts

To some extent, the control of selection to posts within the minsters has been covered in other chapters,[67] but there are still aspects that relate directly to patronage. As one of the most important opportunities for patronage the canons had, it is useful to make some attempt to explore how they used it. Did they use it to provide opportunities for a pool of existing friends, family and dependants, or was there scope for other individuals to receive posts? Almost inevitably, the answer is a mixture of both. There are certainly examples of posts being granted to those with existing connections to canons. The grant of the role of chantry priest to the altar of St Andrew at Ripon to Hugh de Makisey, for example, was at the presentation of Geoffrey de Lardare, whose deacon he was.[68]

The difficulty lies in establishing just how typical examples like this were. As can be seen from chapter four, the posts which individual canons, or even the chapter, were likely to have complete control over were usually of a relatively minor nature. As such, not only are records of appointments to such roles severely limited, but also the

[66] ibid.
[67] See chapters 4 and 6
[68] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 4, p.64

lack of stature of the individuals concerned makes it difficult to identify enough details about them to establish clear connections to particular canons. The main exception to this came in the form of the Provost of Beverley, who had the power to select his fellow office holders. The exercise of this power potentially put him in a much better position regarding patronage than almost any other figure in the minsters, but was probably offset at least somewhat by both the availability of posts and the frequency of his presence at the institution.[69]

The minsters also had a certain amount of control over selection to other places outside their structures. This might be because of the personal links of a particular canon, in which case it is of limited relevance here, but it might also be due to the acquisition of the right to that patronage. Ralph fitz Odo, for example, granted to the chapter of Southwell the right of patronage for the church of Boney, allowing them to control appointments therein.[70] This case is interesting, in that it shows that patronage itself, or at least the right of it, could be used as a form of gift by those wishing to patronise the minsters. Its value as such lay in the opportunity it granted for the minster to extend its influence over the surrounding area. This would seem to be simply the natural continuation of the rights of the canons over their prebends, but given the almost inevitable complexities of medieval patronage and the willingness of almost everyone to defend their rights in this regard, that was not necessarily the case. Between 1191 and 1206, for example, the right of presentation to the church of Norwell lay, not with one of the canons whose prebends involved that place, but with the archbishop, who presented Master Vacern to it for the sum of ½ Mark per year.[71]

In this, it is also important to distinguish between control over offices on the part of the minster chapters and control over offices accruing to canons for reasons other

[69] See chapter 4
[70] SWB p.3
[71] *ibid.* p.20

than their positions within the minsters. With Hugh, Dean of Southwell, for example, we must be wary of ascribing his control over the vicarage of Biddlesthorpe to his position within Southwell's minster. Instead, his presentation of a vicar to Biddlesthorpe in 1229 must be attributed to a secondary role as the parson of that place.[72] Inevitably this is true of all three minsters, and is entirely typical of bodies of secular canons where pluralism took place. We can perhaps suggest that Southwell's greater number of canons provided more individuals who could potentially produce this situation, but even this must be counterbalanced by the importance of some of Beverley's provosts, giving that minster individuals with potential control over more substantial outside appointments.

Differences in What the Minsters Received

It is one thing to observe patterns of patronage around the minsters in terms of the individuals making the gifts involved, but it also seems important to explore any differences in what was given, because this might suggest points of contrast within the minsters. Of course, it is important to be careful here. To a certain extent such differences amount to no more than the differences in the wealth of individual patrons, though even then it is important to ask why one minster might attract wealthier patrons than another.

To some extent, the overall wealth of the minsters, discussed in chapter three provides a suggestion as to this, simply because so much of the minsters' wealth and lands accrued in grants. This is, however, a relatively unreliable way of approaching the issue, and a more detailed attempt must be made. The difficulty is that the mixed nature of many of the grants makes true statistical analysis difficult, if not impossible. When grants specify gifts of a manse, or a toft, or a portion of land belonging to some previous

[72] *Reg. Gray*, p.30

tenant for which no other record exists, it becomes impossible to convert that to a simple monetary value for the purposes of comparison. How, moreover, is it possible to assess the exact value of something like spiritual confraternity, which was clearly of great value to institutions such as these, but which cost them little or nothing in a material sense to bestow?

Given the difficulties of producing an overall figure for gifts received and granted by the minsters, we are, instead faced with using a more subjective and impressionistic form of analysis, by taking what appear to be typical examples of such patronage from each minster and by noting some seemingly exceptional examples. While not entirely satisfactory, it does at least allow for some measure of assessment of the gifts in question.

For Beverley, typical gifts varied according to the status of the individual doing the giving. Grants from the major patrons discussed above included rights allowing significant control over the minster's immediate area, areas of land in and around the town, and rights that directly equated to increased status as an institution. These, however, are perhaps not of great significance, partly because they have already been discussed, and partly because the minsters of Ripon and Southwell received much the same things from the king, archbishop and pope.

Comparison of the Minsters with York

Of course, the other minsters are not the only relevant point of comparison here. It is also important to attempt to establish whether they followed the general pattern of York in their patronage. The presence of the archbishop at York naturally creates a key point of difference in this respect. As can be seen above, the archbishops were important patrons for the minsters, and for a large number of other institutions. There is a very clear difference if we attempt to find such a figure for the minsters. Perhaps, in a small

number of cases, the high status of some of Beverley's provosts might have been sufficient to allow a valid comparison, but even this is limited. A few of Beverley's provosts might have enjoyed considerable personal wealth and position,[73] but even they did not have the ability to make grants of privileges or indulgences that the archbishops enjoyed. Thus, it can reasonably be suggested that York possessed, in at least one respect, an ability to perform acts of patronage that the minsters could never hope to emulate.

At the same time, York's higher status seems to have given it an advantage in another respect. It had a high enough profile to attract patronage from a much wider area than the minsters did. In part, this is simply a question of the spheres of influence of the individuals concerned. The archbishop and the clergy around him were in a good position to make contact with potential patrons distant from their institution thanks to the geographical reach of the archbishop's influence, interests and duties. It is perhaps hardly surprising that someone who still argued that he was primate of all England should have been in a position to contact patrons throughout it, or that those around him should have been in much the same position.

The difficulties here are twofold, however. Firstly, a number of canons from all three of the minsters were actively engaged in assisting the archbishop and accompanied him as he travelled.[74] In theory, therefore, they had a similar level of access to far-flung patrons as their York based brethren. Secondly, it must be remembered that thanks to issues such as non-residence and the gift of prebends to foreign canons, the personnel of the minsters were no more limited to the immediate vicinity of their minsters than those of York.

Instead, it is the scope of the minsters that seems to make the difference. As has been suggested above, and in chapter six, the minsters were locally focussed

[73] See chapter 4
[74] See chapter 6

institutions, concerned with their immediate areas while York and the archbishop dealt with much of the wider world. Chapter seven has even suggested a distinct difference in the quality of the minsters' relations beyond the boundaries of the archdiocese. The minsters' relationship with the archbishop is also vital to the nature of the patronage they received. The archbishop was at the centre of much of the minsters' patronage, and indeed was the principle patron for all three. His presence seems in some ways similar to that of a founder at a small monastic institution, being bound up with the institution to such an extent as to limit patronage from other sources.

Even if this were not the case, the nature of archbishop's designs for the minsters probably achieved much the same effect. Chapter six in particular has suggested that the archbishop wanted the minsters as locally focussed institutions to serve as outreaches of York, particularly on a liturgical level. The local focus of the minsters' patronage can be seen, therefore, as a symptom of this rather than a mark of the limitations of the canons' personal connections. It is not necessarily a mark of an inability to seek patronage elsewhere, so much as it is a function of the minsters' close relationship with the Archbishops of York and their resulting transformation into institutions that could be of use to those archbishops.

Conclusion

The ways in which the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell received patronage were essentially similar in the period between 1066 and c.1300. They all received much of their patronage from a core of local figures, reinforced it with grants from others with a personal connection to the minsters or the areas around them, and received it through similar channels, such as grants towards the lights. For all of the minsters, the overall amounts involved were probably considerably less substantial than for larger institutions, such as York's cathedral.

The minsters all received larger grants, largely of rights, from figures such as the king or pope. All three received grants through processes that could be labelled as joint patronage. In that much, we can observe similarities between them. However, one of the most important questions regarding patronage was whether examining it could shed light on possible influences on the minsters' convergence. Were any of the minsters' patrons in a position to influence, or even bring about, their convergence?

The evidence seems to suggest that, largely, they were not. Those of the minsters' patrons with enough power to bring about such a change had a largely formal relationship with the minsters that provides no motive for doing so. Those with a close connection to one of the minsters usually had insufficient power over them to bring about their convergence, and in any case no connections to the minsters as a group. Even the possibilities of joint patronage do not provide for consistent outside influence in this regard, because closer examination of the process of such joint patronage shows, not genuinely joint endeavours, but attempts to become involved in processes already occurring.

If anything, what an examination of the way patronage affected the minsters does is to emphasise again the strength of their links to successive Archbishops of York. They were among the minsters' biggest patrons, were consistently at the heart of processes of joint patronage, and assisted in the procurement of other patronage through the use of indulgences. Their association with the minsters was so close that it may even have limited the extent of patronage from other sources, by suggesting that the opportunities for exercising influence through such patronage were limited. As such, an examination of patronage around the minsters suggests one clear conclusion, which is that the Archbishops of York were the only ones among the minsters' patrons in a position to have brought about their convergence on a common model.

9- Conclusion

Discussing the fate of Anglo-Saxon minster churches, Blair notes that 'by the twelfth century one old minster might be a great abbey with Romanesque cloistral buildings, another a mere parish church.'[1] In many cases, the changing structure of the church left the minster faced with a loss of prestige, as with the minster at Leominster, which became a dependency of Reading Abbey from 1123.[2]

The three minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell were in a similar position to other Anglo-Saxon minsters at the Conquest. They were individual institutions, with largely individual institutional structures. However, rather than transform into monastic houses, or degrade into simple parish churches, these three institutions found a way to continue to exist at a level of at least local importance, significantly altering their institutional identities in the process.

The institutional structures of the three minsters converged on a common model. This model was that of the chapter of York, which can be seen in the similarity of many of the structures and statutes to those in place at York. Also, even though York's own institutional structure was still evolving through the period, the similarities, and the way in which the minsters copied structures after they were in place at York, rule out the possibility of York and the minsters converging simultaneously on an abstract, ideal model.

This process of convergence, moreover, was not brought about by chance. It would be too much to ask that three institutions beginning from such different points could do so in the normal course of events. Nor does it appear that the process was simply brought about by the minster chapters. Instead, it seems relatively certain that the minsters' process of convergence was brought about by successive Archbishops of

[1] J. Blair, 'Anglo-Saxon minsters: a topographical review' in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish Church*, (Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1992) p.226
[2] J. and C. Hilliby, *Leominster Minster, Priory and Borough c660-1539*, (Logaston, 2006)

York, probably with the consent and assistance of the chapters, but with only limited input from other sources of authority such as the papacy or king.[3]

While it might be wrong to imply a single set of motivations for the series of individuals who held the office in the period, it also seems reasonable to suggest that, in general, the archbishops' interest was not in the convergence of the minsters for its own sake. It was not, in other words, an exercise in producing perfect bodies of secular canons. Instead, the Archbishops of York seem to have been principally concerned with producing useful secondary institutions to act as extensions of their reach administratively and, particularly, liturgically. This in turn seems to have been a mechanism for coping with the sheer size of the Archdiocese of York.

It is this, as much as anything, that brought about a fundamental change in the institutional identities of the three minsters. Following the Conquest they were faced with a potential loss of importance, then with threats to their position as other religious institutions grew up around them. No longer able to maintain a position on the strength of their own authority, becoming secondary institutions of use to the Archbishops of York defined their position within the Church, and particularly their relationships with those parts of it outside the archdiocese.

The findings of this study, therefore, are that in the period 1066-c.1300, the minster churches of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell underwent a process of institutional convergence on a model based on that of York. The prime movers in this process were the Archbishops of York, and it was a process intended to produce institutions of greater use to them. The result of this process was to provide the minsters with a defined place within the church after the Conquest, as secondary institutions in the Archdiocese of York.

[3] See chapters 6, 7 and 8

Summary

This study began by establishing the positions of the three minsters at the Conquest and immediately afterwards.[4] At that point, significant differences existed between the minsters, in their probable prebendal structures, in their incomes, in the possible closeness of their relationship with the archbishop and in the extent to which the conquest had affected them and their surrounding areas.

From there, I examined key aspects of the minsters' institutional structures through the three main groups of personnel present in the minsters: the canons, the officers, and the lesser clergy.[5] Chapter three, in looking at the canons' prebends, suggested that those prebends came to coalesce into similar forms as Beverley's prebends became more clearly defined and both Southwell's and Ripon's acquired less directly land-based incomes. It also argued both that all three minsters faced similar challenges from pluralism and non-residence, and that they all came to approach those challenges in ways that were essentially similar to the approaches used by the York chapter.

Discussion of the minsters' offices,[6] while noting differences in the minsters' approaches to their offices, particularly in the areas of their holders' places within the minster structure and the types of lead figure employed, went on to suggest that these differences were not in fact fundamental. Instead, all three minsters came to fill the same roles, even if they did so in different ways. These roles, moreover, were the same ones that came to be filled at York.

As an area of relatively late development in the minsters, their vicars and chantry priests came to occupy very similar positions.[7] They were subject to similar conditions in terms of pay and supervision; all made moves towards a greater separate

[4] See chapter 2
[5] See chapters 3, 4 and 5
[6] See chapter 4
[7] See chapter 5

corporate identity, and seem to have existed in relatively similar numbers. Again, there were persistent areas of difference, such as Beverley's *berefellarii*, but again, these differences were far less important to the day-to-day running of the minsters than their similarities. Again, moreover, the lines on which the similarities between the minsters grew seem to have been those employed at York.

These chapters on the minsters' institutional structures established that a process of convergence, and probably one based on York, occurred in the minsters in this period. The next chapters, dealing with the minsters relations with the Archbishops of York, the Church, and with patrons of all types, sought to explore the reasons for that convergence, to identify the individuals or institutions responsible for it, and to examine the effects on the minsters' identities as expressed in those relationships.

Examining the minsters' relationship with the archbishop,[8] demonstrated that the relationship was close enough to allow him to implement a process of institutional change in the minsters, and that the nature of that relationship, with the minsters growing to be secondary institutions within the archdiocese, was one that might well have encouraged successive archbishops to do so. It also established that the minsters' relations with the archbishops were largely similar, and were defined to a great extent by their shared status as minsters.

That status also proved to be vital in the minsters' interactions with the wider Church,[9] and with the minsters' patrons and benefactors.[10] Examination of these relationships suggested that neither patrons nor other elements of the Church, with the exception of the archbishop, were in a position to significantly affect their process of convergence. Local patrons and elements of the Church did not have sufficient authority

[8] See chapter 6
[9] See chapter 7
[10] See chapter 8

over the minsters to have played a role in bringing the process about, while more powerful elements such as the king or papacy were too distant in their relations to have an interest in doing so.

Perhaps more importantly, however, this section of the study pointed to one of the most important consequences of change in Beverley, Ripon and Southwell's minsters. It showed that they related to the outside world, particularly beyond the boundaries of the archdiocese, in ways that were both similar to one another and essentially typical in nature. In short, they related to the world *as minsters*. Since the Anglo-Saxon use of the term includes a broad range of institutions,[11] this implies that the process of the three minsters' convergence served to re-define the term, at least for these institutions. It did so in terms of their being important, but essentially secondary, bodies of secular canons.

Analysis

In the introduction to this study, I outlined four key questions:

1. What were the minsters' institutional structures, and how similar were they?
2. Did they become more or less similar over the period?
3. If they became more similar, what drove this process?
4. What effect, if any, did this have on the institutional identities of the minsters?

The first of these questions has been addressed in detail throughout this study, but the most important issue concerning the minsters' institutional structures is that they came to be modelled broadly on those of York. That they initially were not provides an

[11] Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England*

answer to the second question. The minsters institutional structures converged over the period, and they did so on the model of York.

The third and fourth questions are bound up together and are best approached by reiterating that this period was not always a particularly good one for smaller bodies of secular canons. It was a time that involved both significant ecclesiastical restructuring following the Conquest and the growth of new monastic orders competing for patronage. Smaller minster churches faced a struggle to maintain importance, status, and even in some cases to continue at all without being transformed into a body of regular canons.

The convergence of the minsters must be seen, in light of these threats, not as simply an interesting episode in their shared institutional histories, but as part of the process of their institutional survival. Alone and unchanged, there is no reason why they should have avoided the difficulties that befell other minsters. To survive, therefore, they had to adopt a different role, and that meant being changed by the archbishops of York into something more suited to their needs. Specifically, they became modelled at least generally on York so as to allow them to function effectively as secondary institutions within the archdiocese. This was a need fuelled, not just by the sheer size of the archdiocese in question, but increasingly by the presence of institutions that potentially posed a threat to the existence of the minsters. In a landscape filled with major monastic institutions, and with towns increasingly featuring minor ones, it is not hard to see how the use of secondary institutions to increase the archbishop's administrative, but more importantly liturgical, reach might have proved attractive.

Possibly, this concept of usefulness is also vital in that it proposes an overall shift in the tone of the minsters concerned. They were initially individual institutions concerned primarily with living a holy life. They then went through the process of institutional transformation, but this process was not aimed at perfecting their life, or the

continuing differences between the minsters would not have been tolerated. So they transformed from something essentially focussed on the individual lives of the canons to the usefulness of the institution as a whole.

But they also did more than that, as the chapters on the minsters' relations with the Church and with their assorted patrons have hopefully shown. The minsters had relations with a number of figures and institutions both too far-flung and too important for them to maintain consistent relationships based on the personal connections of the canons. It was inevitable then, that they had to relate in more formal terms. The important point is that they did so as minsters. Where before the Conquest the idea of a minster was possibly a rather awkward and imprecise one that means they can be identified only with some difficulty,[12] the minsters of the Archdiocese of York came to be treated as a group in their relations with the outside world on at least some occasions. Even where they acted separately, their relations came to be on the same terms. This seems to suggest that either their process of convergence in itself, or the connection of it to York, resulted in the lending of meaning to the term minster, at least for Beverley, Ripon and Southwell.

If we take these ideas together, of converging on a common model to become something useful to the archbishop and of strengthening their identities as minsters in respect of the rest of the world, they amount to a common theme. They show the minsters carving, or given the involvement of the archbishops in the process, being induced to carve, a place for themselves in the emerging ecclesiastical climate of the period. In doing so, the minsters of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell found a mechanism that allowed them to both survive as non-cathedral bodies of secular canons and to maintain a measure of importance.

[12] Blair, 'Secular Minster churches in Doomsday Book'

This study, therefore, is not simply about the changes in three local institutions after the Conquest. Instead, it is about the threats faced by such smaller institutions, the survival strategies they employed, and the ways in which those strategies resulted in fundamental changes to their institutional identities.

Appendix 1

An Outline of the Minsters' Key Rights

Several of the above chapters have mentioned the rights that the minsters possessed. These rights seem to have significantly affected the incomes of the minsters, their relations with outside powers, including the archbishop, and the interactions of the canons with the areas of their prebends. It seems important, therefore, to take a moment to establish what rights the minsters actually possessed.

Chapter two has suggested that some of the minsters' rights were in place by the Conquest. Beverley's freedom from the king's geld is mentioned explicitly in Domesday Book,[1] while its right to thraves of corn formed the foundation of its prebends.[2] Other rights, such as freedom from castle building[3] came in isolated later moments. In the case of some rights, such as those of free warren, they were granted only to individual canons, or to the holders of individual prebends.[4]

That is not to say, however, that it is useless to look for definitive statements of each minster's rights. Southwell has such a statement in the form of the 1106 letter sent to it by York's chapter, outlining York's rights and making it clear that the chapter of Southwell shared essentially the same rights.[5] For Beverley and Ripon, this search is complicated somewhat by the fact that the best such statements for both were forgeries, in the form of the rhyming charters.[6] With those, however, we are faced with the legitimisation of the rights claimed within following Ripon's 1228 dispute with the archbishop.[7]

[1] *Domesday Book*: *Yorkshire,* vol. 1, E2:1
[2] See chapter 3
[3] EYC p.123
[4] See chapter 8
[5] SWB p.18
[6] Witty, 'The rhyming charter of Beverley' pp36-44 and *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.89-93
[7] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.51-63

As well as those charters, this dispute mentions the 1106 inquest at York, suggesting two things. Firstly, it suggests that both Beverley and Ripon may have possessed their full set of rights from the same time as Southwell. Secondly, it strongly suggests that those rights were essentially based upon the York model, despite the minsters' later claims about rights granted separately by Aethelstan. Although the later assertion of rights against the archbishop still shows the minsters more as active claimants of their rights than as passive recipients of them from the archbishops, this mention of the 1106 inquest also does something to reinforce the idea of the archbishops of York being the prime movers behind the minsters' convergence on a common model.

The Rights: Ripon

So, what exactly were the rights contained in these statements? Because of the combination of the rhyming charter and its discussion during the 1228 inquest, Ripon probably has the clearest statement of the three. That combination mentions the following rights as belonging to the chapter, all of which were confirmed by the 1228 inquest:

1. Soc: Jurisdiction granted by the king
2. Sac: The right to deal with offences in a peculiar court
3. Tol: The right to a duty on imports
4. Tem: The right to compel possessors of stolen goods to say from whom they received them.
5. The right to a Wednesday Market
6. Infangethef: Jurisdiction over thieves within the franchise

7. Outfangethef: Right to bring thieves from within the franchise but caught outside to the relevant lord's court.
8. The right to conduct trial by ordeal through fire and water. The right to conduct trial by combat was specifically forbidden.
9. The right to employ other punishments, including the right to use pillories and the right to hang offenders.
10. Wrek: the right to anything washed up from shipwrecks, in the absence of living claimants.
11. Weyf: The right to claim stolen goods abandoned by thieves.
12. Stray: The right to unclaimed stray animals.
13. Merchet: the right to a fee from villeins for leave to give their daughters in marriage.
14. Lecherwyt: the right to damages from anyone corrupting a villein's daughter.
15. Blodewyt: The right to damages for bloodshed.
16. The right of sanctuary
17. Immunity of those within St Wilfred's League from a number of the king's taxes, most notably the geld, along with freedom from service at the wapentake and shire moot.
18. Right to a fair every October for two days either side of the feast of St Wilfred.
19. The right to bear St Wilfred's banner and relics in procession and his banner in war
20. The right to act as bailiffs and to be free of seizures by the archbishop, which won the canons their complaint in 1228.

Beverley

Beverley is covered by an almost identical rhyming charter to Ripon, a result of their mutual forgery.[8] It is also mentioned in the 1106 inquest into York's rights as having the same customs as York.[9] For the purposes of establishing Beverley's rights, however, the clearest statement comes as a minor comment in the midst of Ripon's 1228 inquest, when it is stated that the church of St John of Beverley has the same privileges as Ripon.[10] This statement comes before the section allowing the carrying of St Wilfred's banner and relics, and presumably elements specifically focussed on the saint of the church of Ripon were not intended to be shared, since it would have been rather awkward if Beverley had the right to carry St Wilfred's relics, but the other rights are definitely confirmed to Beverley's chapter just as much as to Ripon's.

As such, it is clear that the chapter of Beverley possessed the following rights: Soc, Sac, Tol, Teem, the right to a market, Infangethef, Outfangethef, The right to conduct trial by ordeal, the right to punish up to and including hanging, Wrek, Weyf, Stray, Merchet, Lecherwyt, Blodewyt, the right of sanctuary, and immunity from several of the king's taxes and service in the wappentake and shire moot.

Much of this was not new. Some of these rights, such as freedom from the geld and the right of sanctuary, were in place in Beverley at the Conquest.[11] Other rights, such as Beverley's right to a fair on the feast of St John secured by the archbishop,[12] are hinted at in the shared nature of the rights, but not spelled out in detail, since the focus was on Ripon. Despite this, we can say that what the inquest of 1228 did was to provide Beverley with its most comprehensive and authoritative statement of its full rights.

[8] See chapter 7
[9] SWB p.18
[10] *Memorials of Ripon*, vol. 1, p.59
[11] See chapter 2
[12] See chapter 6

Southwell

Southwell is not mentioned in the 1228 inquest. Instead, we must look to an earlier inquest of 1106, and the letter that the chapter of York produced as a result, stating both its own rights and those of Southwell.[13] Despite the difference in time and circumstance, the rights contained within are remarkably similar. Jurisdiction over justice in their lands, freedom for their tenants from attendance at the shire and wappentake moots, Soc, Sac, Tol, Teem, Infangethef and Outfangethef and freedom from seizures from the archbishop. This statement of rights is not quite so comprehensive as that arising from the 1228 proceedings, giving no sign of rights of Weyf, Wrek or Stray, and the details of what was permitted in the canon's jurisdiction over justice in their lands are not so clearly spelled out as for Ripon or Beverley, but the bulk of the rights seem to be essentially the same.

Indeed, they may have been even more similar than this statement allows, since after the period under discussion, in 1333, *quo warrento* proceedings designed to insist that itinerant justices arriving in Southwell should conduct their business at the door of the church also confirmed the chapter as free from the king's taxes and confirmed the rights of weyf and stray to its canons, at least for their tenants.[14] Importantly, these proceedings confirmed all these rights as things already in place, and so it seems entirely possible that the chapter of Southwell had these rights at points prior to 1300.

These Rights and the Local Area

These rights form the basis of the sort of relations between the minsters and their local areas touched on in chapter three. Jurisdiction in both prebendal and chapter courts over local justice placed the minsters at the administrative centres of their communities in addition to the religious centres. Rights over fines and claims for lost and stolen goods

[13] SWB p.18
[14] *ibid.* pp.6-10

not only supplemented the minsters' incomes, but also continued the process of binding up those incomes with the areas around them. Freedoms from attendance at wappentake moots and from the seizure of goods by the archbishop helped to limit the effects of competing sources of authority. For the limited areas under them, therefore, the minsters' rights made the prebendaries and chapters vital sources of local power.

They also have significance when considered in terms of the minsters' convergence. The minsters clearly began the period with at least some of the rights mentioned above, as Beverley's freedom from the geld shows,[15] but full statements of those rights only came in this period. The rights in question were almost identical in all three cases. They were, moreover, derived from the model of York. Explicitly so, in that the 1106 statement of York's rights formed the basis of Southwell's rights, and formed a significant portion of the evidence in 1228.[16] The minsters received, in effect, those rights that it was appropriate for a body of secular canons to receive, and these rights were those already in place at York.

[15] *Domesday Book: Yorkshire*, vol. 1, E2:1
[16] *Memorials of Ripon,* vol. 1, pp.51-63

Appendix 2

The Minsters' Prebends

These lists represent the minsters' prebends at the end of the period under discussion. Although Ripon's are named, it should be remembered that those names were not acquired in full until late in the period.[1] Despite the comments of chapter three on the subject, I have included the archbishop's "prebend" of St Leonard at Beverley. I have included brief dating details. For discussion of these, see chapter three.

Beverley-

Formalised in 12th Century?

Prebends as Altars of:

St Andrew
St James
St Martin
St Mary
St Michael
St Peter and Paul
St Stephen
St Katherine

St Leonard?

Ripon-

Original Prebends of:

Stanwick
Monkton
Givendale
Nunwick
Studeley
Thorpe

Sharrow (1114-1140)

Southwell-

Prebends of:

Oxton and Crophill
Oxton II
Norwell Overhall
Norwell Palishall
Norwell Third Part
North Muskham
Woodborough
Normanton
Sacrista
-All Pre-1120

Beckingham (c.1120)
Dunham (c.1120)
Halton (c.1160)
South Muskham (possibly c.1204)
Rampton (c.1206)
Eton (1290)
North Leverton (1291)

[1] See chapter 2

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