Suffragan Bishops in the Medieval Diocese of Lincoln

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The term ‘suffragan’ can have two meanings in relation to bishops: first, within the context of an ecclesiastical province it denotes those diocesan bishops subject to the metropolitan archbishop in the particular province — for example, the bishop of Lincoln is a suffragan of the archbishop of Canterbury; its second meaning, and perhaps its more generally recognised sense, is that of a bishop assistant to a diocesan bishop. It is the latter category I wish to discuss. As will become clear, my interpretation of this category is quite wide. Certainly, the technical term *suffragan* is not necessarily found in the early part of the period under consideration, when *vices eius in parochia sua peragens* or some similar phraseology was employed to describe these episcopal assistants.

Every bishop of Lincoln in the middle ages was presented with the onerous task of effectively administering a vast diocese stretching from the Humber to the Thames and incorporating within its borders the counties of Lincoln, Leicester, Rutland, Northampton, Huntingdon, Oxford, Bedford, Buckingham and a portion of Hertfordshire. It is true that the period witnessed the steady growth of the bureaucratic machinery of the diocese — developing out of the episcopal *familia* — with its hierarchy of permanent officers, the Official, and later the vicar-general and the diocesan chancellor, and their subordinates, to whom the execution of considerable administrative and judicial work could be delegated. Even so, if by the later middle ages the administrative organisation of the English diocese had realised a degree of autonomy which enabled it to function, if need be, with little intervention by the bishop in whose name it operated, it was still necessary for someone in episcopal orders to perform certain sacramental duties unable to be discharged by an absentee bishop’s officials, such as the ordination of clergy, the consecration and dedication of churches and churchyards, and the confirmation of children. To cope with this situation a variety of episcopal assistants — Welsh bishops, Irish bishops and later on bishops with exotic-sounding episcopal titles — were employed by absent, ailing or overworked English bishops. The activities of such episcopal assistants in the Lincoln diocese from the twelfth century to the Reformation form the subject of this study.

The Reformation, not unexpectedly, provides a suitable *terminus ad quem* for this investigation even though a few suffragans continued to function until the very end of Elizabeth I’s reign. In 1534 the Reformation Parliament turned its attention to suffragan bishops:

> Albeit that since the beginning of this present Parliament good and honourable ordinances and statutes have been made and established for elections, presentations, consecrations, and investing of archbishops and bishops of this realm . . . as by sundry statutes thereof made more at large is specified; yet nevertheless no provision hitherto has been made for suffragans, which have been accustomed to be had within this realm for the more speedy administration of the sacraments, and other good, wholesome, and devout things and laudable ceremonies, to the increase of God’s honour, and for the commodity of good and devout people . . .

Following this preamble Parliament went on to make provision for the establishment of suffragan bishoprics in twenty-five named towns. This act represents an important stage in the history of suffragan bishoprics in England. Apart from the obvious point that it removed papal control over the appointment of suffragans, the establishment of a new territorial system of Crown-appointed bishops replaced the somewhat *ad hoc* arrangements hitherto made by English diocesans to procure episcopal assistance. In effect it marked the formal admission that a suffragan bishop had a permanent and definite position in the diocesan hierarchy, in sharp contrast to the wording of medieval suffragan commissions which continue to record that absence or ill-health or pressure of work or attendance upon the king and so on were the ostensible causes for the suffragan’s temporary services, long after it had become an acknowledged fact that the occupants of larger dioceses always had one or two suffragans on a permanent basis to help out with the performance of episcopal duties.

Except for some collected papers published in the late eighteenth century and the study made by Professor Hamilton Thompson on suffragan commissions in his *Ford Lectures*, little work has yet been done on these auxiliary bishops in medieval England. No real attempt has been made to find out what sort of men were used as suffragans, and if there is any pattern discernible in their recruitment or employment. Similarly any discussion about their revenues and what sort of income they derived from their episcopal duties has so far been limited to generalisations, and it has proved possible to obtain more concrete information by a laborious searching of surviving diocesan records. This paper is the result of preliminary investigations among English episcopal archives undertaken to discover if our knowledge of suffragans could be extended beyond the one paragraph generalisations customary in works devoted to diocesan administration. The picture that I will attempt to build up will be from complete. I am not trying to exaggerate the suffragan’s relative importance in diocesan government — they must generally remain shadowy figures performing routine but necessary duties. My aim is merely to see if there is further information to be gleaned from the extant material. As may be imagined, the sources which yield information on suffragan activities are meagre and have their limitations. Moreover when relevant material does survive, it is fairly repetitive and regular in its nature, often restricted to a catalogue of ordinances held, polluted churchyards reconciled, portable altars dedicated or vows of chastity administered. The suffragans themselves often seem to have been particularly careless about keeping records of their activities, in spite of strict instructions from the diocesan bishops. The brief record of acts of a suffragan of Bishop Walter Reynolds of Worcester for a fortnight is contained in the register of Reynolds's
vicar-general, but this is unusual. It is not just that all the records have been lost. One suspects that in some cases there were financial motives, indeed financial advantages, behind the apparent administrative inefficiency of these suffragans — this will appear later. Certainly, the diocesan officials were very keen to try to prevent such inefficiencies. In 1347 the registrar of Archbishop Zwetche of York noted that Bishop Richard Bisaciensis, the suffragan, had failed to have the names of ordinands recorded or to send in any register, so that the clergy he had ordained had to find witnesses to testify to the conferment of their orders. 8

In spite of diocesan strictures obliging the suffragan to furnish the episcopal register with a record of his few close and other than ordinary, the episcopal registers or bound up with them. What will be found are commissions issued in the name of the diocesan bishop or his vicar-general, directing the suffragan for example to dedicate an altar or to reconcile a curacy. Such entries are misleading as an indication of the assistant bishop's activities as they are usually sporadic and specific commissions over and above the work to be undertaken by virtue of a general suffragan commission. Usually one can obtain no idea of the number of churches and curacies consecrated or reconciled or of confirmations held by the suffragan in his day-to-day employment. For example Thomas Ketel, bishop of Down, received a commission from Bishop John Dalderby of Lincoln in 1312 to carry out suffragan duties in the archdeaconries of Buckingham and Oxford. 9 In the following year Thomas was the recipient of thirteen separate commissions for work in the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Bedford, Northampton, duties outside the territorial scope of his original commission, and therefore requiring special authorisation. For the whole of the period 1312-13, however, there is not a single mention of work undertaken in the archdeaconries of Buckingham and Oxford, for the simple reason that any work performed in this area did not need further diocesan permission.

Episcopal accounts, although very scarce, can prove very helpful for the financial side of suffragan activities and papal registers can furnish additional information beyond the bare record of episcopal appointments. Incidental information about suffragan activities can also be found in monastic and even lay cartularies and very rarely in ecclesiastical court papers. Yet, if I can borrow a comment used by Professor Hamilton Thompson in another context, the sum of all these records in reality furnishes a halfpennyworth of information to an intolerable deal of common form. Episcopal commissions and ordination lists are somewhat repetitive and unproductive sources as far as the suffragans are concerned, and a great many episcopal registers have to be scoured to find one piece of valuable information which illuminate the suffragans’ careers or functions.

The actual duties of these assistant bishops are relatively unchanged. A typical episcopal commission would permit the suffragan to consecrate churches, chapels, altars and superaltars, and also curchyards not yet dedicated and to reconcile such places when profaned, to bless chalices, patens and vestments, to admit the profession of vows of those entering religion, to bless heads of religious houses, to grant indulgences, to hear confessions in reserved cases and to impose penances, to confirm children, to consecrate virgins, to confer first tonsure upon literate and fit persons and to ordain to all orders clerks of the diocese presented by the bishop’s Official or vicar-general. These commissions of course implied no security of tenure; they could either be issued during pleasure, revocable at will, or for specific periods, often as short as one month. Occasionally a suffragan is also found conducting a visitation, invariably in the company of one or more members of the diocesan bishop’s household, no doubt to keep an eye on him. For large dioceses such as Lincoln and York commissions did not normally extend to the whole diocese, merely to one or two archdeaconries, although the territorial delineation was by no means always kept. The suffragan spent much of the time between his episcopal duties, and normally at the time of his appointment a mandate was issued to the archdeacon and rural deans to make preparations for his advent and to advise those who would have business with him of his proposed itinerary. 10

As consecrations of churches and churchyards were a staple diet of suffragans, it is interesting to note what care was taken by most diocesan officials over these duties. Benedict, titular bishop of Sardica, was instructed to inform Bishop Henry Burghersh of Lincoln of all churches needing consecration before taking action, 11 and in fact the early surviving records of consecrations are more in the nature of a legal safeguard of rights and revenues rather than a formal record of the act of consecration.

An all too fleeting glimpse into the routine activities of a suffragan bishop is afforded by some vacancy legal papers of Canterbury cathedral priory relating to an appeal over the dedication of Stibbington church in Huntingdonshire in about 1271. The depositions record that in 1270 John of Anagni, rector of Stibbington, appeared before Thomas Liddell, bishop of Down, acting for Bishop Gravesend of Lincoln, because the latter, alleging that the church was not dedicated, had given notice of dedicating it on his next visitation. This task had now fallen to the suffragan. John of Anagni, as the deputation narrates, asserted that it had been dedicated before and, fearing prejudice to the church through its re-dedication, appealed to Rome and sought tution of the archiepiscopal court of Canterbury. One witness being asked how he knew that the said bishop feigned that the church was not dedicated and that he had given notice of his intention to dedicate it, said he was present in the cemetery of the said church on Tuesday after the said John’s appeal, where the said lord of Lincoln through the said bishop of Down caused the church to be dedicated; and this he both saw and heard. Asked how he knew that the said bishop of Down consecrated the church by authority of the bishop of Lincoln said he saw the letter of the bishop of Lincoln, to which his seal was appended and which he [the witness] knew well: which letter he heard read in the cemetery of the church between the tent of the said bishop of Down and the church, in which it was stated the said bishop of Down had power to dedicate undedicated churches and among other things contained a clause compelling gainsayers or rebels by ecclesiastical censure. Asked if the church was dedicated of old, he said that he had heard from the parishioners that every year on a certain day they observed the feast of the dedication and had a banner in token of dedication... he said, however, that the bishop of Down, on the day that he dedicated the church, said to the rector ‘You say this church is dedicated; we say it is not. By
affirmation and deny the matter is doubtful, therefore we wish to dedicate it. And he dedicated it, as the witness saw and heard!"  

Sadly the outcome of this case is not known, but besides the local interest, it sheds incidental light on the activities and difficulties of a suffragan.

Suffragans have generally had a bad press, often deservedly so it must be admitted. They were certainly never very popular as a group, even if sometimes in the Stibbingston case they were the butt of opposition to the diocesan bishop. Langland could speak contemptuously of the prelates of Nazareth, of Nineveh, of Naphthal and Damascus, suggesting that if they were true Christians they ought at least to go to their sees and preach to the heathen there. Clearly the diocesan bishop and his officials regarded them with scant consideration and respect, and they were very much shackled in their actions as provision was usually made in the commission for prior consultation with the diocesan or his vicar-general before taking any important action. Often, it must be stated, one can discern a somewhat healthy disrespect in the suffragan attitudes to the rights and status of the diocesan.

While it is very dangerous but all too easy to categorise and to see specific patterns emerging in the development of an office or institution, it does seem clear that in the four centuries before the Reformation there were noticeable changes in the types of bishops performing suffragan duties in England. Initially, two separate categories of bishops can be distinguished: first and most generally, those prelates who through force of circumstances came to be working as episcopal assistants, and second, those whose appointment was deliberately intended for suffragan duties, even if not so specified at the time of the provision. In the first category are the bishops of the Celtic fringe, the Irish, Welsh and Scottish bishops who gravitated towards England in considerable numbers in the early middle ages, either as political exiles, or as a result of the poverty of their sees and the need to supplement their small incomes. Bishop Richard of St Asaph is found working in the Northampton archdeaconry for Bishop Alexander of Lincoln in the 1120s; and in the thirteenth century several Irish bishops were active in the Lincoln diocese. Among their number was Robert of Bedford, bishop of Lismore. His particular case is not unusual. At the time he was working for Bishop Hugh of Wells in Lincoln, Robert was an exile from his see. He had been forcibly ejected by the neighbouring and belligerent bishop of Waterford, who claimed that Lismore was united to his own bishopric. It was during the period 1218-21 when the case was being argued before the papal judges that Bishop Robert is found in his native Lincoln diocese.

Although the Celtic fringe bishops constituted a presence in English dioceses from the twelfth century onwards, the surviving evidence does not suggest any great increase in the numbers of suffragans until the first half of the fourteenth century. What had brought about the need for more episcopal manpower can only be guessed. The expansion certainly cannot be ascribed solely to the composition of the diocesan episcopate or to the administrative complexities of episcopal government. There were absentee royal officials among the English bishops in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries just as in subsequent centuries. Naturally, wherever possible duties were performed by deputy, but there would always be business requiring the agent to be in episcopal orders. It seems probable, however, that before the increased employment of suffragans in the fourteenth century, other attempts were made to cope with the ever more burdensome situation facing diocesan administrators, for instance, by obtaining papal dispensation for the performance of frequent routine duties by non-episcopal deputys.

One such formidable administrative problem facing the medieval episcopate was the frequent and time-consuming task of reconciling, that is of reconsecrating, desecrated churches and churchyards, since canon law required that the reconciliation be performed by a bishop. That there was a problem by the end of the thirteenth century cannot be denied. Churchyards desecrated, for example, had to be reconciled relatively quickly, since no burials were permitted until reconciliation had taken place. In 1292, for instance, the vicar of Langtoft complained to the bishop that the rural deans of Ness and Holland had been so dilatory in enquiring into the presumed polluted state of his churchyard that no burials had taken place there for three years. No doubt in view of this and similar situations the pope was persuaded to grant a dispensation to the bishops. By that of Pope Nicholas IV issued in 1291, it was recited that pollution of churches and churchyards by bloodshed or sexual intercourse occurred so frequently, that it was impossible for the diocesan bishops to perform the reconciliations in person. It was therefore permitted to have commissaries not in episcopal orders delegated to perform such duties, provided that the bishop had blessed the holy water used in the ceremony. There are records of such papal dispensations, invariably valid for three or five years, for the bishops of Bath and Wells, Exeter, Lincoln and Worcester (and no doubt not yet discovered), and for several decades episcopal clerks, archdeacons and heads of religious houses are found employed as commissaries in such cases. By the second half of the fourteenth century it would appear that such reconciliations had more and more come to be performed by the suffragan then in office.

I have so far only dealt with those suffragan bishops who were obliged to do such work by force of circumstances, either pecuniary or political, the Celtic bishops, and the occasional prelates who had resigned their sees, the so-called Bishops in the Universal Church. I have yet to consider those who were especially consecrated for suffragan duties — the phenomenon particularly of the fourteenth century and later in England — the bishops with sees in partibus infidelium, more conveniently, and since 1882 in the Roman Catholic Church officially, known as titular bishops. As their designation implies, they were bishops appointed to sees (mostly in Asia or Africa) long since lost to the Christian Church and were naturally unable to exercise any episcopal jurisdiction in their territories or to receive any revenues from them.

These titular bishops suffragan had no permanent ties with any one bishopric. They were indeed wandering bishops and often in the fourteenth century, in particular, they spent a very short time in a diocese before moving on or possibly before being moved on. The Franciscan Peter of Bologna, titular bishop of Corbava, who acted as a suffragan for Henry Burghersh, bishop of Lincoln, also managed to serve the archbishops of Canterbury and York and the bishops of London and Winchester in a suffragan capacity. In the early fifteenth century, John Greenlaw, a Franciscan friar provided to the titular see Sollaniensis, managed to act as a suffragan for the archbishop of York and the bishops of Bath and Wells,
Exeter, Lincoln, and Salisbury within a very short period.

Obviously the Universal Church did not wish to relinquish its claim to bishoprics of the early church long since overwhelmed by heathen invaders. There had been wandering titular bishops for centuries — indeed one or two appear in England in the thirteenth century — but it was not until the early fourteenth century that there appear to have been firm papal attempts to control them. That this action was promoted by the need to provide episcopal assistants as well as the desire to reform abuses we can but suspect. Indeed, it seems possible that the availability of these ancient episcopal titles was used to cope with an increasingly difficult administrative problem. It was one matter to require episcopal assistants to help to administer a large diocese for an absentee, overworked, or ailing bishop; it was quite another matter to put forward any radical solutions to counter the problem which would affect the ordinary’s powers and privileges, such as the creation of suffragans attached to specific dioceses, or the division of a large bishopric into more manageable portions, both of which occurred at the Reformation.

I should perhaps point out that for the most part I have retained the episcopal titles in *partibus infidelium* in their Latin adjectival form. To attempt to render into modern place-names all but the most obvious is an exercise fraught with danger, for the simple reason that contemporaries were often unsure where the places were or how to spell them. William Egmund who served several dioceses including Lincoln as a suffragan in the late fourteenth century is referred to by the local episcopal clerks as bishop *Priensis*, *Priscinensis* and even *Pisonensis, Solitaniensis*, the see of the Franciscan John Greenlaw and the Dominican William Bellers has been variously identified by modern editors as Soldaya in the Crimea, and Solitane in Persia! This is a sufficient warning against attempting any but the most obvious identifications.

What sort of people become titular bishops, for that matter who was responsible for their appointments, and was there any pattern discernible in the recruitment or use of these suffragans? In the final resort, of course, they were appointed by the pope to their distant and abandoned sees and in spite of their total lack of any power, the fiction of a conventional appointment was maintained. The papal provision always ran on such lines as the following extract from Pope Urban VI’s letter of appointment for Robert Hintlesham, a suffragan in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, to the titular bishopric of Sebasteopol in 1379:

Urban, Bishop, servant of the servants of the Lord, to our beloved son Robert de Hintlesham, elect of Sebasteopolis, greeting and apostolic benediction.

Among the various anxieties by which we are constantly burdened, a specially pressing one is that the state of the churches committed by divine providence to our care may be both spiritually and temporally augmented. Over those churches which are known to be destitute of pastors and to deplore their vacancy, we study to set such ministers as shall by their rule promote this object . . . Not wishing the said church to be exposed to the inconveniences of a long vacancy, in our fatherly care and zeal, after diligent deliberation with our brethren, we have at length turned the eyes of our mind upon thee, professed of the Order of Friars of B. Mary of Mount Carmel, and in priest’s orders, of whose religious zeal, scholarship,

honesty of life and morals, and other manifold gifts and virtues we have been assured, and, after due weighing of all, have accepted thy person, and by the counsel of our said brethren do provide thee to the said church, and do set thee over it as bishop, and commit to thee the pastoral care and administration, in Him who giveth grace and bestoweth rewards, trusting that, the right hand of the Lord assisting thee, the said church may be directed into prosperity and happiness under thy rule, and, the Lord giving health, may receive both spiritual and temporal increment. Wherefore we commit to thy discretion, as a charge laid on thee by the Lord, the care and administration of the rule of the said church . . .

From the tone of this provision, one would be forgiven for thinking that Robert was actually going to reside in Sebasteopol, if he had been able to identify which Sebasteopol was intended! Of course, almost immediately a papal indult was issued on the lines that whereas he had recently been provided to the see and had been required to take himself there and reside, seeing that in his diocese there was no Christian man, and that he could not reside there and exercise pontificals, he was permitted to exercise his office in other cities and dioceses when required by the diocesans.

So far I have touched upon the different types of suffragan employed in the English bishoprics and their position in the diocesan structure. When an attempt is made to trace the career of one of these bishops in more detail, difficulties arise over the availability of the source material. One such fourteenth-century Lincoln suffragan whose activities have been comparatively well documented — not least because he was always in trouble with the diocesan officials and merited lengthy correspondence in episcopal registers — is Hugh, archbishop of Damascus. Even so, our knowledge does not go so far as to discover his family or territorial surname or his earlier history, save that he was an Austin friar, but his career provides a good if somewhat sensational example of the itinerant nature of a medieval suffragan’s life.

Recruitment of the later suffragans with sees in *partibus infidelium* was almost invariably from the regular clergy, preference being at first given to members of the mendicant orders, particularly Franciscans and Dominicans, but in the last fifty years or so before the Reformation more and more heads of monastic houses were promoted to such sees. It is difficult to know precisely how the titular bishops were chosen. Some, no doubt a small minority, were promoted through eminence or royal favour: Benedict of Norwich, titular bishop of Sardica, was a noted theologian and secretary to Queen Philippa; William Bottesham had been a confessore to King Richard II. Others had held responsible positions within their orders, but there were very few like Bottesham or John Kite who ever managed to be translated to diocesan bishoprics, the former from Bethlehem to Llandaff and then to Rochester, the latter from Thebes to Carlisle. Unfortunately the majority of the titular bishops are rather more obscure figures and we can only bemoan the loss of the bulk of the English archives of the mendicant orders. Even when a will of a suffragan survives, as for example in the case of Nicholas Warter, bishop of Dromore and a suffragan at York, there is little information to be gleaned from it. One learns that Warter was a local man with kinsmen among the leading citizens of York, but little more.
Clearly some diocesans petitioned the pope for specific, known individuals to be consecrated as their suffragans. In 1459 Bishop Bekynyon of Bath and Wells, with the support of King Henry VI, petitioned the pope for the consecration of John Valens, canon of the Augustinian priory of Blythburgh, as a suffragan. In the early sixteenth century Bishop Smith of Lincoln asked the pope for John Bransfort, a monk of Bury St Edmund's, while his successor, Bishop Longland, made a similar request for Thomas Hallam, prior of Newstead at Stamford. Others were less successful. In 1444, Bishop Thomas Spofford of Hereford, infirm and having been refused permission to resign by the King, asked Pope Eugenius IV to promote master Geoffrey Hereford, a Dominican, as his suffragan. His request was for some reason not acceded to until five years later and Hereford, now bishop of Kildare, acted as suffragan for Spofford’s successor, Richard Beauchamp. Yet, it is equally plain, owing to the peripatetic nature of these bishops, that often they would have been total strangers to the diocesan bishop when they presented themselves before him and offered their services as assistants. How else can such a ridiculous situation be explained as occurred in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield in 1375, when Bishop Robert Stretton commissioned William titular bishop Beliennis as his suffragan. A year later the registrar noted that doubts had arisen as to whether William was a bishop at all, and Stretton had the embarrassing duty of conditionally re-ordering hundreds of clergy in case Bishop William proved to be a charlatan. Quite clearly, bogus bishops were as much a problem for diocesan as illicit work performed by properly-ordained titulars. Five years after the Lichfield incident, Thomas Arundel, bishop of Ely, was prompted to notify the parochial clergy of his diocese of the following situation:

We are informed that there are certain evil-minded men who falsely pretend to be archbishops or bishops, who preach publicly, display rings on their fingers and other pontifical insignia, exhibit forged instruments of consecration whereby they may deceive the simple and extort their money, and who, in our own and other dioceses, without our licence, confirm boys, confer orders, grant indulgences, hear confessions, commute into money-payments to themselves the penances imposed by diocesan; moreover, who dedicate churches, cemeteries and altars, and grant dispensations even in cases reserved to the apostolic see. We therefore command you not to admit any such, even if they really be bishops, but to receive only bishops of the realm of England.

It has been suggested that heads of religious houses came increasingly to be preferred as suffragans because of the financial advantages to the diocesan bishops: namely, that they were not a drain upon episcopal revenues because they were permitted to retain their monasteries in commendam and so did not need monetary pensions or additional benefits, but merely their expenses. This is patently disproved upon an examination of the papal provisions of such titular bishops. When Robert King, abbot of Thame, was provided to the titular bishopric Reoensis in 1527, it was specified that he should retain his abbey but that the bishop of Lincoln was also to furnish him with an annual pension of £50 from the revenues of the see until he was provided with suitable benefices to the same value. Thomas Swillington, provided to the titular see of Philadelphia in 1532, was likewise granted an annual pension of £40 pending preferment. Such examples can be multiplied.

It seems a strong possibility that the increasing preference for monastic heads as opposed to mendicant friars in some degree reflects the growing need for a stable position of suffragan within a diocese — the need for a bishop, known to the diocesan, who would serve a particular diocese rather than a bishop wandering hither and thither. In the fifty years preceding the Reformation, it can be calculated that seventeen monastic heads, ten members of mendicant orders and two hospitaliers were promoted as titular bishops. A greater number of bishops seem to have stayed for a considerable time in one bishopric at this period (the appendix of suffragans active in the diocese would suggest this, and further corroboration evidence for other dioceses is forthcoming). Indeed, from 1450 to 1534, I have only traced eleven cases out of ninety-five in England where a bishop acted as a suffragan in more than two dioceses in his active life, in marked contrast to earlier suffragans.

The growing stability of the suffragans as a group also affected the sources of remuneration for their services. It is often stated that a suffragan was paid by the bestowal of benefices in the diocesan bishop’s patronage, rather than by a fixed monetary pension. This is too great a generalisation. In the fourteenth century an annual pension seems to have been the norm, rather than the exception. The reason is quite understandable, and it was not just because the majority of these assist any bishop belonged to the mendicant orders (after all, papal dispensations to hold benefices could be obtained). While the suffragans remained itinerant, it was hardly worth bestowing a rectory or other benefice upon someone who would probably not be remaining in the diocese long. By the fifteenth century this situation had changed and many benefices and dignities were conferred upon ‘permanent’ suffragans. For instance, John Young, bishop of Gallipoli and a suffragan of Bishop Longland, held at various times a rectory in Oxfordshire, one in Yorkshire, one in Wiltshire, three in the city of London, the archdeaconry of London, a canonry at Chichester, and the mastership of the hospital of St Thomas of Acon. Not all of these would of course have been conferred on him as a result of his suffragan activities but certainly some of them would. Augustine Church, bishop of Lydda, another Lincoln suffragan, received the benefices of Washington and Lincolnshire and Maulden in Bedfordshire; yet another, Robert King, bishop Reoensis, held in turn the Lincoln cathedral prebends of Crackpole St Mary and Biggleswade; Thomas Swillington, bishop of Philadelphia, received the prebend of Stow in Lindsey in the same cathedral; and John, bishop Arientsis, was also rector of Scampton.

Part of the suffragan’s remuneration was often received as hospitality and in kind. It was customary at the time of the issue of the suffragan commission to order the episcopal bailiffs and reeves to supply the suffragan with lodgings, hay and provisions from the episcopal manors and to keep an account of the expenses. Between 26 May and 15 June 1309 for instance, the suffragan of Worcester consecrated seven altars and five churches and chapels, blessed one abbey and received the professions of thirteen nuns. During this period he was entertained by religious houses on three occasions and for the rest of the time lodged at the expense of the bishop of Worcester. Diocesan bishops were careful, however, to prevent the
suffragans becoming a burden on the locality. To cite two examples, Bishop Gilbert of Annaghdown was ordered to take no more than 26s. 8d. in fees for consecrating or reconciling churches or churchyards and Archbishop Zouche of York warned his suffragan, Hugh of Damascus, not to linger too long with his retinue at Egglestone abbey when he went there to bless the new abbot, in case his visit became a financial embarrassment. In isolated instances, a formal agreement over remuneration survives. In 1316 Bishop John Dalerby entered into an agreement with Walter Jorz, an exarchbishop of Armagh, over his remuneration as a suffragan. While Walter was in the company of the bishop of Lincoln, he was to have the same food and drink as the bishop and his staff and he was to retain a friar of his own order as a companion, two servants, a page, and two horses. He was also to have an attendant to wait upon him at table. When he set out on his travels around the diocese, he was to have as many horses from the bishop’s stables as were necessary for his baggage and chapel and one attendant from the bishop’s household to provide him with food and drink. The bishop of Lincoln would pay the suffragan’s expenses, but any procurations taken by the suffragan for dedicating or reconciling churches and other acts were to be paid on to the diocese.

Archbishop Walter was to receive an annual pension of forty marks to be paid in equal instalments four times a year. Forty marks seems to have been an accepted sum in the fourteenth century and this was the annual stipend paid to archbishop Hugh of Damascus while he was at York. The Armagh indenture was virtually repeated at Lincoln in 1379 by Bishop John Buckingham when making arrangements with Nicholas Burbache, bishop of Chrysopolis. Bishop Nicholas was allowed the same number of attendants but two additional horses. His annual pension remained at forty marks but provision was made for the episcopal barber rather than the bishop to receive any money obtained for the first tonsure of clerks. Nicholas was further forbidden to go out of the diocese without Buckingham’s permission.

Another method of payment is illustrated by a surviving Worcester agreement of 1395. By this arrangement, the suffragan did not receive an annual pension but took a proportion of the fees received from each consecration, reconciliation, benediction and so on. William, bishop Pharenzis, the Worcester suffragan, was to receive for his labour and expenses in dedicating and reconciling churches 20s. of the normal 100s. fee due, for the celebration of orders, he was to receive 20s. from the fees obtained for issuing letters of orders, and for the consecration of altars he was to receive a third of the fee, the minimum of which was fixed at 6s. 8d.

It will now be clear why diocesan bishops were very anxious that their suffragans should keep precise records of all their activities. In both the above methods of payment, failure to report a consecration would have meant that the diocesan would not have received his fees. This fear of financial loss also helps to explain why the diocesan bishops were always prompted to vigorous action when confronted by troublesome suffragans. With lack of any security of tenure, some suffragans were clearly tempted to supplement their precarious incomes with illicit work. The records abound with notes about suffragans who ignored the revocation of their commissions to work in a diocese and continued to perform episcopal duties (and naturally to receive the fees due) to the just anger, and monetary loss, of the diocesan. At one point in the late fourteenth century, Bishop Buckingham of Lincoln had trouble with no fewer than three suffragans who took no notice when he revoked their commissions.

This preliminary survey of suffragans must end at the Reformation when they finally achieved, by statute, a recognised position in the diocesan hierarchy. By a supreme irony the 1534 act of parliament turned out to be the swan-song of the suffragan bishop. Although now formally established, it was soon evident that the changes brought by the Reformation had gradually rendered his office unnecessary, and by the end of the sixteenth century the English suffragans had all but disappeared as a group, not to be resurrected until 1870. Their disappearance is attributable to a variety of factors: the abolition of religious houses, and of such practices as indulgences, vows of chastity, and the reconciliation of churches and churchyards removed a great deal of their staple diet of work; there were fewer clergy, and therefore they were not so urgently needed to perform ordinations; and coupled with this, the diocesan bishops were now usually resident and fully able to perform their episcopal duties. For example, of the nineteen royal chancellors between 1401 and 1529, seventeen were bishops or archbishops, but from 1529 to the end of the sixteenth century there were only three bishops who had custody of the great seal as opposed to ten laymen.

I conclude with a check-list of such episcopal assistants in the Lincoln diocese as I have been able to discover from a preliminary investigation of the records. Lists have already appeared in Bishop Stubbs’s Registrum Sacram Anglicanum (2nd edn., London, 1897) and in F. M. Powicke and E. B. Fryde, Handbook of British Chronology (2nd edn., London, 1961) (hereafter H.B.C.), but they can be further supplemented from the diocesan records. I have not included those English diocesan bishops who helped out their colleague of Lincoln from time to time perhaps when passing through the diocese, and for economy’s sake I have been content to refer to the Handbook of British Chronology when a single known reference to a bishop noted there cannot be supplemented. The following abbreviations have been used:

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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>C.Y.S.</td>
<td>Canterbury and York Society.</td>
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<td>L.A.O.</td>
<td>Lincolnshire Archives Office.</td>
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Richard, Bishop of St Asaph

Ralph Nowell, Bishop of Orkney
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese c. 1147 (H.B.C.).

Unidentified bishop of St Asaph
In the 1170s Archdeacon Nicholas of Bedford informed the archbishop of Canterbury that the Bedfordshire chapel of Ruxoh was dedicated in the time of Bishop Robert Chesney (1148-66) by a bishop of St Asaph 'qui tunc temporis prefatis Lin[oln]j episcopi vices gerebat' (Early Yorkshire Charters vii, ed. C. T. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, extra series 5, 1947, no. 49). This could be either Geoffrey of Monmouth (1152-4) or Godfrey (1160-75).

Adam, Bishop of St Asaph
It has been plausibly suggested that Adam might have acted in a suffragan capacity for Bishop-elect Geoffrey Plantagenet in the Lincoln diocese. Certainly he is found in Geoffrey's company (English Episcopal Acta I: Lincoln 1067-1185, ed. D. M. Smith, British Academy, 1980, no.286) and he occurs in connection with legal business relating to places or individuals within the diocese (English Historical Review 56, 1941, pp.597-600; A Digest of the Charters preserved in the Cartulary of the Priory of Dunstable, ed. G. H. Fowler, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society 10, 1926, no.128B; Papal Decretals relating to the Diocese of Lincoln in the Twelfth Century, ed. W. Holtzmann and E. W. Kemp, Lincoln Record Society (hereafter L.R.S.) 47, 1954, no. xviii). For Adam, see Emden iii, pp.1959-60 and D.N.B. (under 'Adam Angligena').

Christian, Bishop of Whithorn
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1185 (H.B.C.).

Robert of Bedford, Bishop of Lismore
The quarrel between Robert of Bedford, elected as bishop of Lismore in 1218, and Bishop Robert II of Waterford has been mentioned above. While in exile in England, the bishop of Lismore acted as a suffragan of Bishop Hugh II, dedicating several churches and altars in Bedfordshire in 1219 (Annales Monastici iii, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series, 1866, p.56). He regained possession of Lismore in 1221. He possessed land in the Bedfordshire villages of Cople and Willington (The Cartulary of Newham Priory, ed. J. Godber, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society 43, 1963-4, nos.122,768). See also Emden i, p.146.

Thomas O Mellaig, Bishop of Annaghdown
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1246 (H.B.C.).

William de la Hay, Bishop of Connor
He acted for the absent Bishop Richard Gravesend in 1262 (H.B.C.).

Thomas Liddell, Bishop of Down
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1270, when he dedicated Stibbington church (see above).

Reginald, Bishop of Cloyne

John of Monmouth, Bishop of Llandaff
He received a general commission to carry out episcopal duties in the diocese during Bishop Sutton's pleasure in 1299 (The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton, 1280-99 vi, ed. R. M. T. Hill, L.R.S. 64, 1969, p.198) and he held two ordinances in that year (ibid. vii, L.R.S. 69, 1975, pp.115,119). Oliver Sutton died on 13 Nov. 1299 and the bishop of Llandaff continued to act in the Lincoln diocese until the consecration of Bishop Dalderby in June 1300 (Ep.Reg.III, ff.2v,3). He also acted as an episcopal assistant in the dioceses of Bath and Wells (Calendar of the Register of John de Drokensford, Bishop of Bath and Wells (A.D. 1309-1329), ed. E. Hobhouse, Somerset Record Society 1, 1887, p.52 (hereafter Reg.Drokensford)) and Worcester (Episcopal Registers, diocese of Worcester: register of Bishop Godfrey Giffard, 1268 to 1301, ed. J. W. Willis Bund, 2 vols., Worcestershire Historical Society 15, 1898-1902, i, pp.iv-v); see also Emden ii, p.1295.

Gilbert O Tigernach, Franciscan (hereafter O.F.M.), Bishop of Annaghdown
Bishop Gilbert acted as a suffragan for Bishop John Dalderby and his successor, Henry Burghers. He first occurs in the Lincoln records in June 1308 when he received a licence to dedicate altars and bless ornaments while passing through the diocese on his way from London to Lichfield (Ep.Reg.III, f.137). He is mentioned in 1309 (ibid., f.168) and in 1312 he received suffragan commissions for the archdeaconies of Leicester and Oxford (ibid., f.244-5) and later added the Northampton archdeaconry to his area (ibid., f.256 and see ff.264v, 267v for his activities 1312-13). In early 1322 he received further suffragan commissions (Ep.Reg.V, f.305v). He also acted as an episcopal assistant in the dioceses of Bath and Wells (Reg. Drokensford, p.78), Chichester (Eton College Records 56/57-8), Lichfield (Collections for a History of Staffordshire, William Salt Archaeological Society, old series 1, 1880, p.243), Worcester (The Register of the diocese of Worcester during the vacancy of the see, usually called registrum sede vacante, 1301-1435, ed. J. W. Willis Bund, Worcestershire Historical Society 8, 1897, pp.151,153 (hereafter Worcester Sede Vacante Register); The Register of Walter Reynolds, Bishop of Worcester, 1308-1313, ed. R. A. Wilson, Dugdale Society 9, 1928, pp.71-3, 140 (hereafter Reg. Reynolds), and York (The Register of William Greenfield, lord archbishop of York, 1306-1315 iv, ed. W. Brown and A. Hamilton Thompson, Surtees Society 152, 1938, p.220; ibid. v, Surtees Society 153, 1940, pp.115,135-6,141 (hereafter Reg. Greenfield)).

Walter Jorz, Dominican (hereafter O.P.), ex-Archbishop of Armagh
Before he resigned the see of Armagh in 1311, Walter is found acting as a suffragan for Bishop Dalderby. He first occurs performing such duties between 1310 and 1312 (Ep.Reg.III, ff.190v,220v,227,244). He reappears in the Lincoln diocese in March 1314, giving benediction to heads of religious houses, reconiling churches and churchyards, and dedicating altars (ibid., ff.292v,293v,296,297,298,299v). In June 1314 he received a suffragan commission until the feast of All Saints for the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Stow and Leicester (ibid., f.300); in Jan. 1315 another commission was issued during pleasure for the archdeaconries of Northampton, Bedford, Buckingham and Oxford (ibid., f.312); a third commission is dated
March 1315 (ibid., f.317v). Walter continued to act as suffragan at Lincoln until the end of Daldrey’s life (for references to his activities 1314-19, see ibid., ff.300r-v, 303, 306, 308, 312, 314r-v, 315v, 316, 317v, 323, 327v, 332v, 335v, 336v, 334, 344, 345, 348r-v, 349v, 354, 360, 361, 368, 380v, 381, 384v, 389, 394v, 399v, 401r-v, 402v, 415v, 416, 420), and he received a further commission from the Official sede vacante in 1320 (Ep.Reg.II, f.363). He died in the Lincoln Dominican convent in 1321 (Emden ii, pp.1023-4). He is also found working as a suffragan in the York diocese (Reg. Greenfield iv, pp.152-3). His brother, Roland, who succeeded him as archbishop of Armagh, is also found as a suffragan at Lincoln (see below).

Thomas Ketel, Bishop of Down
He is found performing suffragan duties for Bishop Daldrey from the second half of 1312 (Ep.Reg.III, ff.258v, 265, 266v) and received a commission for the archdeaconries of Buckingham and Oxford in Dec. 1312 (ibid., f.266v). He continued his work in the diocese until Nov. 1313 and clearly died soon afterwards (ibid., ff.266v, 271r-v, 274, 275r-v, 281, 282, 284r-v, 286r-v). On 13 Dec. 1313 Daldrey issued an indulgence for the soul of Bishop Thomas, whose body was buried in the conventual church of the Franciscans in London (ibid., f.288).

Anian Sais, Bishop of Bangor
Bishop Anian makes brief appearances in 1314 and 1316 reconciling a church and dedicating altars (Ep.Reg.III, f.298, 340). He was also active in the Worcester diocese (Reg. Reynolds, pp.63, 129, 139).

John of Eaglescliffe, Carmelite (hereafter O. Carm.), Bishop of Glasgow, and then of Llandaff
Bishop John occurs briefly in the Lincoln diocese in 1319 (Ep.Reg.III, f.420v) and a few years later, in 1322 and 1323, Bishop Henry Burghersh commissioned him to hold ordinations, dedicate churches and altars and reconcile polluted churches and churchyards (Ep.Reg.V, ff.313v, 314, 315, 318v, 319, 351). He also acted in the diocese of Bath and Wells (Reg. Drakensby, p.232).

Peter of Bologna, O.F.M., Bishop of Corbava (Corbaviensis)

William of St Paul, O. Carm., Bishop of Meath
He received a suffragan commission for the whole diocese, during pleasure, in 1327 (Ep.Reg.V, f.394r-v). He also occurs in the York diocese in the same year (Reg. Melton, no.277).

Ralph of Kilrossan, O.F.M., Bishop of Down

Matthew de Englefield, Bishop of Bangor
He received suffragan commissions for the whole diocese in 1329 and 1330 (Ep.Reg.V, ff.398, 399v). He held ordinations in Dec. 1329 (ibid., ff.430v-431) and in Jan. 1330 was commissioned by Bishop Henry Burghersh to dedicate the bishop’s palace at Lincoln (ibid., f.400).

Roland Jorz, O.P., ex-Archbishop of Armagh
Brother of Walter Jorz (see above), he received a general suffragan commission in 1334 (Ep.Reg.V, ff.484v-485). He also occurs in 1338 (ibid., f.558). He was active as a suffragan in the dioceses of Canterbury, York, Norwich (H.B.C.) and Worcester (Reg. Reynolds, pp.59, 132). He may have acted in the Lincoln diocese at an earlier date, for in 1329 he issued an indulgence for those visiting the chapel of Roger of Huntingfield at Fishtoft (L.A.O. 3 Anc.2/1, f.9v).

Benedict of Norwich, Augustinian friar (hereafter O.E.S.A.), Bishop of Sardica (Cardiciensis)
Consecrated 30 April 1330 (Eubel i, p.166). Bishop Burghersh commissioned him as a suffragan for the whole diocese in 1335 (Ep.Reg.V, ff.501v-502) and in 1337 (ibid., f.552), and he is found in that capacity on several occasions between 1335 and 1340 (ibid., ff.502r-v, 514v, 551v, 558v, 576, 585v). He was also a suffragan in the dioceses of Norwich and Winchester (H.B.C.). See also D.N.B. (under ‘Benedict’).

Richard, O.P., Bishop of Cherson (Cersionis

Boniface of Pisa, O.F.M., Bishop of Corbava (Corbaviensis)
Provision 3 June 1332 (Eubel i, p.208). Bishop Boniface was the recipient of a commission from Bishop Burghersh in 1338 permitting him to dedicate twenty portable altars in the diocese and to hear confessions (Ep. Reg.V, f.558). He was a suffragan in the bishopric of Durham (H.B.C.).

(?) Geoffrey Grandfield, O.E.S.A., Bishop of Ferns
H.B.C. states that Geoffrey acted as a suffragan in the Lincoln diocese c.1342. I have not found the reference to this occasion and the date certainly cannot be correct as he was not consecrated bishop until 1347 and died in 1348.

Hugh, O.E.S.A., Archbishop of Damascus
Archbishop Hugh worked as a suffragan for Bishop Thomas Bek from 1345 until the latter’s death in 1347 and then briefly in the vacant see by commission of the Official sede vacante (Ep.Reg.VII, ff.73v, 85, 86, 88, 89v-90v). He was also a suffragan at York (H.B.C.) and in the diocese of Rochester (Registrum Hemonis Hethe, dioecesis Ruffensis, A.D. 1319-1352 ii, ed. C. Johnson, C.Y.S. 49, 1948, pp.831-856). His somewhat notorious and unofficial activities in the Exeter diocese brought down on his head the wrath of Bishop Grandfield (Archaeological Journal 70, 1913, pp.540-1; ibid., 71, 1914, pp.107-9; The Register of John de Grandibus, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1327-1369), ed. F. C. Hingston-Randolph, 3 vols., London and Exeter, 1894-9, pp.1027-131).

Thomas, Cistercian (hereafter O. Cist.), Bishop ‘Magnassiensis’ (Magnatiensis)
Bishop Thomas held ordinations on behalf of the Official of Lincoln sede vacante in 1362 and 1363 (Ep.Reg.IXD, ff.107, 108, 109, 110v, 111v, 112) after the
death of Bishop John Gynwell. He also acted as a suffragan in the dioceses of Hereford, Lichfield, Llandaff and York (H.B.C.).

**Thomas de Illeye, Bishop 'Lamburgensis'**
Provision 11 Jan. 1359 (Euel i, p.290). He received two suffragan commissions from Bishop John Buckingham 'ad nostris alleviatiorem laboris' (both undated), the first c. July/Aug. 1366 (Ep.Reg.XII, f.34v), the second c. Aug. 1368 (ibid., f.59). He was also a suffragan in the dioceses of Bangor, London and York (H.B.C.).

**John de Langebrugge, O.F.M., Bishop 'Buduensis'**
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1367 (H.B.C.), as well as acting as a suffragan in the dioceses of Bath and Wells.

**Robert Worsnop, O.E.S.A., Bishop 'Prissinensis'**
Bishop Robert makes one appearance as a suffragan of Bishop Buckingham in 1373 (Ep.Reg.XII, f.120). He was a suffragan of Chichester, Hereford, Worcester, York (H.B.C.) and Lichfield (The Registers or Act Books of the Bishops of Coventry and Lichfield. Book 5, being the second register of Bishop Robert de Stretton, A.D. 1360-1385: an abstract of the contents, ed. R.A. Wilson, William Salt Archaeological Society, new ser. 8, 1905, pp.131,212,214 et passim (hereafter Reg. Stretton)).

**Nicholas Burbache, Bishop of Chrysolopolis (Christopolitam)**
Bishop Nicholas was commissioned to act as a suffragan of Bishop Buckingham in 1379 and an indenure was drawn up at this time about his remuneration (Ep.Reg.XII, f.187v-r). Some years later, in early 1382, he clashed with his former diocesan when he continued to act as a suffragan after his commission had been revoked (ibid., f.236).

**John, Bishop of Annaghdown**
He is mentioned in 1382 along with Bishop Nicholas (above) as unlawfully acting as a suffragan in the Lincoln diocese (Ep.Reg.XII, f.236).

**William Egmond (? or Ouneby, O.E.S.A., Bishop 'Prissinensis' (Piscinensis)**
Although usually known as William Egmond, a reference is found in 1397 (Ep.Reg.XII, f.445r-v) to William Ouneby and it is probable that it is the same person. Bishop William received several suffragan commissions from Bishop Buckingham in 1382 (ibid., ff.234,241v,242) and there is documentary evidence of his activities in the diocese from 1383 to 1385 (ibid., ff.264,305,312,315), in 1388 as 'Thomas de Ouneby' (Calendar of Patent Rolls 1383-9, p.500), in 1393 (Ep.Reg.XII, f.68r-v), and then under Bishop Henry Beaufort from 1399 to 1403 (Ep.Reg.XII, ff.5v,10v, 84v,86,88,91v,95,96,99,102,103,104v,106v,108, 109v,111). In 1395 he came into conflict with Bishop Buckingham when he continued to act in the diocese after the revocation of his suffragan commission (Ep.Reg.XII, f.422v). He was also a suffragan in the diocese of London (F.Roth, The English Saxon Friars, 1249-1538 ii, New York, 1961, p.216).

**Oswald, O.Cist., Bishop of Whithorn**
Bishop Buckingham issued a suffragan commission during pleasure for Bishop Oswald in 1387 (Ep.Reg.XII, f.337v). He also acted as a suffragan in the dioceses of Durham and York (H.B.C.).

**Thomas Butylor, O.F.M., Bishop of Chrysolopolis (Christopolitam)**
He received several commissions in 1395 and 1397 (Ep.Reg.XII, ff.424v,428,444r-v) but then disappears from the Lincoln records until 1418 when he was commissioned to hold confirmations in the archdeaconries of Bedford, Buckingham and Lincoln, and in Hertfordshire (Ep.Reg.XV, f.189v). He occurs again in 1420 during the vacancy after Bishop Repindon's resignation (The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443 iv, ed. E. F. Jacob, C.Y.S. 47, 1947, p.73 (hereafter Reg. Chichele)). He acted as a suffragan in the dioceses of Salisbury, Winchester and Worcester (H.B.C.). In 1400 he was deputed by the Pope to receive the contributions in support of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II in his war against Sultan Bajazit (The Episcopal Register of Robert Rede, ordinis predicatorum, lord bishop of Chichester, 1397-1415 i, ed. C. Deedes, Sussex Record Society 8, 1908, p.73 (hereafter Reg. Rede)).

**William Bellers, O.P., Bishop 'Soltainensis'**

**Richard Payl, O.P., Bishop of Dromore**
He occurs as a suffragan in the diocese in 1409 (Reg. Repindon i, p.146).

**John Craneroyt, Gilbertine, Bishop 'Ancoradensis'**

**John Sewale, Bishop 'Surroenensis' (Surriensis)**
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1414 and 1415 (Ep.Reg.XV, ff.115v,129v). He was also a suffragan for the bishops of London, St David's, Salisbury and Winchester (H.B.C.). He held an ordination at St Albans in 1417 (The St Albans Chronicle, 1406-1420, ed. V. H. Galbraith, Oxford, 1937, p.103).

**John Greyby, O.F.M., Bishop 'Stephanus'**
He received a suffragan commission from Bishop Repindon in 1418 (Ep.Reg.XV, f.198) and in 1423 is referred to as suffragan in the archdeaconries of Bedford and Huntingdon (Ep.Reg.XVI, f.183). He
received another commission for the same archdeaconry from Bishop Gray in 1431 (Ep.Reg.XVII, f.89v) and the last mention I have found of him acting in the diocese is in 1434 (ibid., f.215). He was also a suffragin in the Ely diocese.

(H.B.C.).

John Greenlaw, O.F.M., Bishop 'Solaniensis' 

William Gunwardby, Bishop of Dunkeld
Bishop Gray commissioned Bishop William as a suffragan in 1431 (Ep.Reg.XVII, f.89v) and from then on intermittently until 1454 he is active in the Lincoln diocese (ibid., ff.187v, 188, 204, 207v, 210v, 216v, 217, 220, 221; Ep.Reg.XVIII, ff.31, 42v, 76; Ep.Reg.XIX, f.10; Ep.Reg.XX, f.19). He was also a suffragan in the Ely diocese (H.B.C.).

Thomas Salscot, Bishop of Annaghdown
He held ordinations in the Lincoln diocese between 1449 and 1452 (Ep.Reg.XIX, ff.1, 6v, 8, 11, 15, 28, 29v, 30v, 31v, 32v, 33, 34, 37v, 55, 55Av, 58, 59).

Thomas Leger, Augustinian canon (hereafter O.S.A.), Bishop of Limerick
He performed a variety of suffragan duties in the diocese between 1457 and 1461 (Ep.Reg.XIX, ff.32v, 46v, 54; Lincoln Diocesan Documents 1400-1544, ed. A. Clark, Early English Text Society, orig. ser. 149, 1914, pp.104-5; 116). He was also a suffragan in the diocese of Exeter (H.B.C.). See also Emden ii, p.112.

Nicholas Longe (O Flanagan), Bishop of Elphin
He occurs in the Lincoln diocese in 1466 and 1467 (Ep.Reg.XX, ff.75v, 78v).

Thomas, 'Bishop in the Universal Church'
The identity of this bishop is not certain. The title 'Bishop in the Universal Church' was usually given to those prelates who had resigned their sees. He held ordinations in the Lincoln diocese between 1472 and 1477 (Ep.Reg.XXI, ff.134, 137v, 144v, 146v, 149v, 151v, 154v, 155v, 156, 160).

Thomas Ingleby, Bishop of Rathlur

John Walton, O.S.A., Archbishop of Dublin
He held an ordination in the diocese in 1473 (Ep.Reg.XXI, f.138). He was also abbot of Osney, a house situated within the Lincoln diocese. See Emden iii, p.1975.

Thomas Barrett, Bishop of Annaghdown
He held an ordination in the diocese in 1477 (Ep.Reg.XXI, f.158). He also acted as a suffragan for the bishops of Bath and Wells and Exeter (H.B.C.).

Thomas Ford, O.S.A., Bishop of Achonry
He acted as a suffragan in the diocese between 1496 and 1505 (Ep.Reg.XXIV, ff.11r-v, 2v, 3, 4v, 5v, 6, 7v-8v, 10, 11r-v, 12v, 13v, 14, 117, 19v, 21, 22, 23, 25v, 32, 33v, 36v, 37v, 39, 40, 41v, 42v, 43, 46-47v) and in 1501 his suffragan commission extended to the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Stow, Leicester and Huntingdon and the deanery of Rutland (ibid., f.217v). In 1500 he received a papal dispensation to hold additional benefices from Alexander VI (ibid., ff.177v-179). He was also a suffragan in the Lichfield diocese (H.B.C.).

Augustine Church, O.Cist., Bishop of Lydda (Lidensis)
He was also abbot of Thame. He held ordinations in the diocese between 1501 and 1512. (Ep.Reg.XXIV, ff.29v, 30, 31, 34v, 35v, 38, 41, 48v, 51r-v, 53, 54, 55v, 56v, 58, 59v, 65v, 67v, 69v, 71, 72v, 73v, 74v, 76v, 77v-9, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85v, 86, 87). There is a mention of him in 1515 (Ep.Reg.XXXV, f.116), but this is probably an error for Roger, Bishop of Lydda (see below). He was also a suffragan in the dioceses of Exeter and Salisbury (H.B.C.).

John Bell, O.S.A., Bishop of Mayo
He acted as a suffragan for Bishops Smith, Wolsey, Atwater and Longland between 1507 and 1530 (Ep.Reg.XXIV, ff.61, 66v, 68, 71, 78, 80r-v, 82, 85, 86v, 87v, 88v, 89, 90r-v, 91v-93v; Ep.Reg.XXV, ff.79, 9, 10v, 113v, 118-19, 121v, 123, 124v, 125v, 127v, 130, 131v, 133r-v; Ep.Reg.XXVI, ff.1-2, 3r-v, 4v-6v, 7v-9, 10-11, 12-13v, 15-16, 18-25, 26r-v, 30). In 1521 he was commissioned as a suffragan in the archdeaconries of Northampton, Huntingdon and Leicester (Ep.Reg.XXXVI, f.69). He was vicar of Goxhill (ibid., f.166v). He also acted as a suffragan in the dioceses of Canterbury, Exeter, Lichfield, and Salisbury (H.B.C.), London, and Bath and Wells (Eubel ii, p.184).

Thomas, Bishop 'Puriensis' (Pariensis)
He held ordinations for Bishop Wolsey in 1514 (Ep.Reg.XXV, f.8, 9v).

Roger Smith, Bishop of Lydda (Lidensis)
Consecrated 17 Apr. 1513 (Eubel ii, p.225). He was active as a suffragan in the diocese between 1514 and 1526 (Ep.Reg.XXV, ff.111-12, 114v, 116v, 117, 119v, 120, 121, 124, 126, 127, 130, 131; Ep.Reg.XXVI, f.12, 28). In 1521 he was commissioned as a suffragan in the archdeaconries of Oxford, Bedford and Buckingham (Ep.Reg.XXXVI, f.69). He was also a suffragan in the diocese of Salisbury (H.B.C.).

John, Bishop 'Ariensis'
He held ordinations for Bishop Atwater from 1519 and during the subsequent vacancy of the see in 1521 (Ep.Reg.XXXV, ff.129, 132v, 133v, 135r-v). In 1521 he was commissioned as a suffragan in the archdeaconries of Lincoln and Stow (Ep.Reg.XXXVI, f.69).

Matthew Mackerell, Premonstratensian, Bishop of Chalcedon (Caledonien)
He was abbot of Barlings. He occurs in 1532 (Ep.Reg.XXXVI, ff.32, 208v) and received a suffragan commission in 1535 (ibid., f.258v). He was a suffragan
in the diocese of York (H.B.C.) and was executed in 1537 for his part in the Pilgrimage of Grace.

John Young, Bishop of Gallipoli (Calipelonis)
Consecrated 3 July 1513 (Euelii iii, p.147). He received a suffragan commission for the archdeaconries of Northampton, Buckingham and Oxford in 1525 (Ep.Reg.XXVI, f.69) and held ordinations in the diocese until 1526 (ibid., ff.10v,14,17). He was also a suffragan in the diocese of London (H.B.C.). He died on 28 Mar. 1528 (Euelii).

Robert King, O.Cist., Bishop 'Reonensis'
He was abbote of Thame and was provided to the titular see Reonensis on 7 Jan. 1527 (Brady i, p.115). He acted as a suffragan in the archdeaconries of Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford and Huntingdon from 1527 until 1542, when he was translated to the newly-established see of Osney (later Oxford) (Ep.Reg.XXVI, ff.25,27-28v, 29v,30v,31v,34,35,36v,-37v,38,39,41r-v, 44v,45,46,51,52v, 53v,54,55,56-7,58-61v,117,135v, 169v,190v,231,248,250,259v,280v,289). See also Emden ii, p.1072.

William Duffield, O.F.M., Bishop of Ascalon (Ascalonensis)
He received a suffragan commission for the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Leicester, Northampton, Huntingdon and Bedford in 1531 (Ep.Reg.XXVI, f.72v) and held ordinations in the diocese between 1532 and 1533 (ibid., ff.30,32,33). He was also a suffragan in the dioceses of Canterbury and York (H.B.C.) and St Asaph (Euelii iii, p.119). See also J. R. H. Moorman, The Grey Friars in Cambridge 1225-1358, Cambridge, 1952, pp.172-3.

Thomas Swillingl (or Hallam?), O.S.A., Bishop of Philadelphia
Dom David Knowles believes Swillingl and Hallam to be the same person (The Religious Orders in England iii, Cambridge, 1959, p.494); Canon Cole disagrees (Chapter Acts of the Cathedral Church of St Mary of Lincoln, A.D. 1520-1536, ed. R. E. G. Cole, L.R.S. 12, 1915, p.xxv, n.2). He was prior of Newstead by Stamford and was provided to the titular see of Philadelphia on 12 July 1532 (Brady i, pp.116-17). He received a suffragan commission for the archdeaconries of Lincoln and Leicester in 1533 (Ep.Reg.XXVI, ff.229v-230) and he performed suffragan duties in the diocese until 1545 (ibid., ff.42,43,51,52v-v, 53v,54v, 57v,59v,60,62-64v,281,293v). He also acted as a suffragan in the diocese of London (H.B.C.).

This article is based on a paper read to the Lincoln Record Society on 27 September 1975.

FOOTNOTES
4 As will become obvious, documentary evidence from diocesan sources other than Lincoln has been cited from time to time to illustrate a specific point or for comparative purposes.
5 Reg. Reynolds, p.10.
7 This and subsequent references to Lincoln suffragans are noted in the appendix, and for the sake of economy it has not been thought necessary to repeat them in these footnotes.
9 For a good example of the division of suffragan responsibilities in the Lincoln diocese, see Chapter Acts of the Cathedral Church of St Mary of Lincoln, A.D. 1520-1536, ed. R. E. G. Cole, L.R.S. 12, 1915, pp.xiv-xv, n.2, which describes the situation under Bishop John Longland (1521-47).
13 Piers Plowman by William Langland: an edition of the C-text, ed. D. Pearsall, London, 1976, p.286: Allas! bat men so longe on Macometh bileeuth, So many prelates to preche as pe pope maketh, Of Nasareth, of Nyneue, of Neptulym of Damase, That they ne wente in world as holy wyth byd: Ite in universum mundum, sethe 3e wilne be name To be prelates, and preche the passion of Jesus, And as hym sualde sa to lyue and deye.
14 (Passus XVII, lines 187-93). For another contemporary comment on these titular bishops, see The English Works of Wykel hitherto unprinted, ed. F. D. Matthew, Early English Text Society, orig. ser. 74, 2nd revised edn., 1902, p.225: \( \ldots \) bat be [not maad] bishops of hepane men & sweren to go pider & couteure hem, & hanne myntened to be suffragans & sellen sacraments & robben pe pele & maken hem heau goddes curs for here money. (from How Religious Men should keep certain Articles no.XI).
20 Calendar of Papal Letters xi, H.M.S.O., 1933, p.12.
24 Reg. Stretton, p.313.
26 Brady i, p.115.
27 Ibid., p.116-17.
31 Chapter Acts . . . of Lincoln, A.D. 1520-1536, p.xxv, n.2.
33 Ep.Reg.III, f.244. Occasionally there would be a reluctance to pay the episcopal procurations at all, as Bishop Gray of Lincoln discovered (Ep.Reg.XVII, f.177v).
34 B.I., Reg.II, f.80.
36 B.I., Reg. 10, ff.259,287,289v; see also ibid., f.256r-v for a suffragan indenture of 1344 (Ralph, Bishop of Leighlin).
38 Worcester Sede Vacante Register, pp.356-7.