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THE ARCHIVES OF
YORK DIOCESAN
REGISTRY

by

THE REV. J. S. PURVIS

M.A., D.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.



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YORK DIOCESAN
REGISTRY

Their Provenance and History



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A General Account of the Archives in the York Diocesan Registry

RECENT years have seen a remarkable increase of interest in archives and of appreciation of their value as historical material, and also a change no less remarkable in the policy of the more enlightened Diocesan Registries in relation to their records. Not least notable of these is the Diocesan Registry at York. Long subject to the restrictions which made its records almost completely unknown and useless to students of history, it has now become a pioneer in proposals for a wide use of its treasures by competent persons.

It is the purpose of these pages to forward this new policy, by giving some account of these Registry archives, their nature, their value to the student in historical research, their history in the past, and the uses to which it is proposed that they shall be put in the future.

The archives of the York Diocesan Registry are a still unexploited mine. Not only is there no general knowledge amongst scholars of their contents in detail, but there is even a wide ignorance of their nature and accessibility. Until recent years the archives have been unknown, even forbidden territory. But they are about to enter on a new period of their history, in a new and more adequate Record House than they have yet enjoyed. The work which was begun just before the outbreak of war in 1939, and continued in spite of increasing difficulties and dangers throughout the war, has now reached a stage when the archives are becoming ready for general consultation by students. Such consultation has been quite impossible in the past for several reasons. In the first place, it should be realised that the public in general, and even scholars, can claim no kind of right to demand access for inspection of the documents in a Diocesan Registry. The Diocesan Registrar is the Archbishop's legal secretary, and the documents in his keeping are largely the product of the legal business conducted by him either for the Archbishop personally or on his behalf in his diocesan or provincial capacity. They are therefore strictly private papers, as are those of any lawyer's office. In the second place, the confusion of arrangement of the documents themselves, and the utter absence of any kind of general index or catalogue raised almost insuperable difficulties in the way of research, for it was impossible to know the range, the nature, or even the existence of any particular section of the collection. There were also sufficient good grounds for the not unnatural reluctance of the Diocesan Registrars in the past to allow search in any but a very restricted part of the archives. It is not too much to say that with the exception of the Archbishops' Registers,

and to some small extent the Institution Books, and the Parish Register Transcripts and the Marriage Licence Bonds, no part of the collection was ever used at all extensively, or even known in any detail.

A striking example of the unfortunate effects which were produced by the former state of the Registry archives is supplied by the well-known and important "Marian Reaction" of W. H. Frere. Such was the state of the Registry when he came to it that not only did he remain completely unaware of the existence of the two Books of Proceedings against Married Clergy, which would have been so greatly to his purpose, but also he overlooked—as so many have so strangely contrived to overlook—the *Sede Vacante* Register with its long list of Deprivations in 1554 to 1556, the absence of which he actually more than once deploras. He would have been saved thereby from such direct mis-statements as that relating to the deprivation of Matthew Watson. Though the main conclusions in his book are not invalidated, his evidence would have been much extended and strengthened by reference to York records which were actually available but concealed from him through the lack of any list or catalogue. That situation is now a thing of the past. A new policy was begun by the late Registrar, Mr. A. V. Hudson, which has been continued and much extended by the present Registrar, Col. Innes Ware, and this, together with the progress made towards a general Index, is opening to research one of the greatest collections of original documents in the nation.

The Provenance and History of the Archives

There is much that is yet obscure in the history of the documents in the Diocesan Registry, although the documents themselves give some information; there are few notes of any kind relating to the history of the collection. The greater part of the archives are, of course, the papers and books accumulated by the successive generations of those who through seven centuries have held the office of Registrar, in the course of their duties as successively the legal official of the Archbishop. These are based on and developed from the magnificent series of archiepiscopal Registers. Associated with these are parts of the collection which have come into the Registry as records during vacancy of the See. But there are also parts which are present because the Archbishop's Registrar was the legal official of one or more Archdeacons; there was also a copious flow of papers from at least seven Ecclesiastical Courts.

The history of the office of Diocesan Registrar of York is still unwritten and even unstudied, and no doubt will be found at many

points not a little obscure. There is no question, however, that by very ancient custom the Registrar is by virtue and for the duration of his office the custodian and for that time the legal owner of all the archives in his care. This may throw light at once on the jealous care with which the archives have so long been preserved and also from another direction the freedom with which some Registrars have thought themselves entitled to treat the documents. For there can be no doubt that the collection as it is now at the present time, though vast in extent, is actually a part, and perhaps not even the greater part, of the total which at one time or another has been housed in the Registry. The survey of the archives which has been made already has shown that in the later Middle Ages and in Tudor times there was in existence a system whereby not only the Archbishop himself, but also the Dean separately, the Dean and Chapter as a body, the chief Residentiaries individually, and forty (later thirty-six) Prebendaries, besides four Archdeacons and certain Peculiars, were exercising separate jurisdictions and holding their separate Courts, on the general model of archiepiscopal procedure, and that records from any, or all, of these might find their way into the care of the Diocesan Registrar or his earlier equivalent. The Archbishop's Courts were numerous: Audience; Consistory; Chancery, Prerogative and Exchequer. The Court of Admiralty, which, to judge by surviving records, was particularly active in the second half of the XVII Century, was associated with the Chancery Court. Such a complication of powers and officials was in actual practice intolerable and unworkable, and it is probably on the whole a matter for satisfaction, by reason of the endless iteration involved, that all the records of all these Courts have not survived, although enough has remained to establish the former existence of such a system.

Much has been lost, no doubt, through accidents, through damage of various kinds, and through wear and tear. But much also seems to have been deliberately destroyed. The internal evidence of the group calendared as "Cause Papers, Precedents" appears to show that these are the remains of a much more numerous collection of files. There seems to be evidence that they can best be explained by supposing that about the year 1740 someone, who was probably Mr. Registrar Jubb, decided to make a selection of original papers which would be useful as precedent forms, for which there is always a demand in the Registrar's Office. He therefore took a large number of files or bundles of papers, mainly of the second half of the XVII Century, chose out those which seemed to him most characteristic or useful for his purpose, and destroyed the rest of the files or bundles. At any rate, no similar files or bundles can now be found in the Registry with which these papers can be associated. In particular, with the exception of such Admiralty Court papers as are to be found in these "Cause Papers, Precedents", no Admiralty Court papers can now be found in the Registry. Another

smaller but valuable survival was a bundle of papers from the High Commission Court of London, four of them with the signature of Archbishop Laud with other Commissioners, apparently brought to York and so saved from destruction because a London proctor was transferred to York as Attorney General in 1634 and conveyed these papers with him as part of his collection of precedents.

Little has yet been worked out in detail of the organisation of the Registry in mediaeval times, with its steadily growing increase of departmentalism or classification of business, as shown in process in the Archbishop's Registers and Act Books. Nor is much more yet available for the history of the archives before the XVIII Century. The only document found as yet which gives any explicit information about the state of the archives in the XVII Century, or makes particular reference to the great havoc which was undoubtedly made during the Commonwealth period, is one of the Cause Papers, Precedent, listed as R.X.iv.9, a note by Mr. Jubb himself, which runs:

"In the search made from the Restauration till 1714 when Mr. Mawde dyed and I Thomas Jubb was made Registrar for the Dean and Chapter of York the following things are to be observed.

1. That when I entered upon the said office every thing there was in great disorder and confusion and so indeed Mr. Mawde found that Office at Mr. Squire's death.

2. That there are no files of (Marriage) Licence Bonds in being which wer dispatcht before the Troublesome Times during which the Office was gutted and loose papers destroyed, as many ancient people living in my time (as old Mistress Wright who was daughter to Mr. Waddington a proctor, and old Mr. Godfrey and others all now dead) could have witnessed, and I have heard them declare as much.

3. That all the Licence Bonds which have been dispatcht since the Restauration till 1714, were or are to be found, as plainly appears from the small number now put upon files by me, for which reason it's not to be wonder'd at, that there are not many more instances, than for that reason appear to be, of Licences granted by the Dean and Chapter's authority in prebendal peculiars.

4. That even upon the Bonds that are now in the Office, very few, scarce any of them are quoted—and therefore I could not supply the places of the aboad of both man and woman—or the Church to which the Licences were directed, Save only in those few Instances Inserted in the List made upon perusing all the said Licence Bonds."

After this, there is no further definite information until the appearance of the First Report on the Public Records in 1800, by which time the Registry had changed its home. Before 1790 the Office of the Registrar and the house of all his papers was in a building on what was then the south side of the Close, opposite to the South Transept of the Minster. Shortly after 1790 a move was made to the building of which a part is still in use as the Diocesan Registry, adjoining the South Transept on the west; this was originally constructed in the early XV Century and used as a Song School for the Minster on the ground floor and as the Library of the Dean and Chapter on the floor above. The Deputy Registrar in 1800, Mr. Joseph Buckle, said in the First Report that

"the Dean and Chapter were prevailed on to give it up, and it was divided into two rooms, one for his office and one for the Consistory Office, and they were fitted up by subscription from the late Archbishop Drummond, the then Commissary and Chancellor of the Courts and the principal Registrars; and this room is well secured with a strong double door of oak, and the windows with iron bars; it is also secure from fire, and not damp."

It was not long before the latter part of his statement was put to the test. Somewhere before 1839, and perhaps not much before, the roughly triangular space between the old Library building and the angle formed by the Nave and the South Transept of the Minster was built in and roofed over, to form a series of three so-called Strong Rooms for the keeping of the Registry muniments. It seems possible that the documents had been installed here by the date of the disastrous fire in the Western Towers and the Nave, which took place in 1840; many of the older bundles show traces of damage which seemed to be by water rather than by damp, and some, perhaps, by fire. There is no doubt, also, that serious damage was done by the methods of storage in use for the documents, and this is revealed in the same Report by Mr. Buckle; he was referring to the storage of the Wills, but his remarks, unfortunately, apply to many other classes of document there:

"The original Wills are in general in good preservation, but some of them of the oldest dates having formerly been filed and hung up at the top of two old dark dirty rooms for a great number of years have been injured and are in part mutilated, but are now put up in the present Record Room, having been taken from the files and cleaned, and put up in a different form likely to preserve them better, which has been done from time to time as opportunity offered, and the other duties of the Deputy Registrar would permit."

After this, the Strong Rooms were disposed after a system which does not seem ever to have been altered. This system was that

the West Room, with its gallery, was occupied by the huge accumulation of the Parish Register Transcripts and of Marriage Licences, the small central compartment held Tithe Awards and some papers of Peculiars, and the East Room held a confusion of all other classes. The conditions of storage left very much to be desired; in general, files were roughly bound up in brown paper, and many documents were rolled, crushed or folded into bundles, and thrust much too closely together on the shelves; a large number suffered damage, either from damp or from nearness to the heat of the pipes which warmed the Strong Rooms in winter, or from the rough folding or the constriction of the strings with which they were tied; all suffered severely from dirt, the accumulation of a thick coat of fine black dust. Old files of which the strings had burst, allowing the members to be scattered, had been gathered up hastily and made into bundles and thrust away into any handy nook on the shelves, where they remained unwanted and undisturbed for year after year. As documents steadily accumulated, the congestion became worse, and there was never time for any systematic arrangement or even inspection by the Registry clerks, and the contents of the Registry became more and more unknown. Much of the initial work upon the documents which was necessary when the present writer began the task of exploring the collection with a view to making a hand-list was the heavy and unpleasant, and certainly very unclean, business of counteracting as far as possible the effects of this neglect. It is not proposed to dwell at all here on the difficulties of this task in war time but rather to refer briefly to the happier subject of the new policy regarding the Registry archives. The late Registrar, Mr. Hudson, by whose death a deep knowledge of the Ecclesiastical Courts of York was lost, received very favourably a proposal promoted by Archbishop Temple for accepting a generous offer made by the Pilgrim Trust for the building of a new Registry and archive house. In 1939 the Archbishop invited the present writer to undertake the work of examining the archives, of listing them, and of giving them, as far as possible, the attention required before they were removed to their new home. The work had hardly been begun before war broke out, but has been continued, through all the inconveniences and difficulties, and even the dangers, of the war. Even when it was judged prudent to remove for safety the documents earlier in date than 1600, some work went on. Since the end of the war, and with the full co-operation and encouragement of the present Registrar, progress has continued at a better rate, until now in 1952 the St. Anthony's Hall scheme, supported by the munificence of the Pilgrim Trust, is about to set the whole collection in a worthy Record House, with a permanent Archive Staff, where they will be accessible to students for research and study.

Arrangement of the General Index :

The Working Scheme

For purposes of classification the system adopted is as follows. A letter R has been given to the whole collection, which is sub-divided into ten main groups. These groups are allotted as follows:

- R.I. Archbishops' Registers.
- R.II. Convocation Records.
- R.III. Terriers and Tithe Awards.
- R.IV. Benefice Papers.
- R.V. Peculiars.
- R.VI. Visitation Books and Papers.
- R.VII. Books and Papers of Courts and Causes.
- R.VIII. Parish Register Transcripts.
- R.IX. Marriage Licences.
- R.X. Miscellaneous, including Precedent Books and Papers.

Groups IV, VI and VII are further sub-divided. Group IV is divided into: R.IV.A, Presentations and Ordinations, and R.IV.A.R.I, Crown Presentations. R.IV.B.a, Inductions; B.b, Collations and Institutions; B.c, Bonds on Institution; B.d, Subscription Books; B.e, Sequestrations. R.IV.C, Pluralities; D, Unions and Deeds of Exchange; E, Orders in Council; F, Faculties; G, Parsonages; H, Surrogates Papers; I, Non-residence Papers; J, Consecrations; K, Churches, Chapels and Burying Grounds; L, Nominations; M, Curates' Licences; N, Schoolmasters' Licences; O, Dissenters' Licences; P, Mortgage Papers; R, Builders' Papers; no Q, to avoid confusion with O; S, etc., as required.

Group VI is sub-divided as:

- VI.A. Archiepiscopal Books and Papers.
- VI.B. Books and papers at Bishopthorpe. It was Archbishop Temple's intention to combine these ultimately with the Registry archives, where they would be treated as a separate group, to preserve their identity.
- VI.C. Exhibit and Call Books.
- VI.D. Archdeaconry of the East Riding.
- VI.E. Archdeaconry of York.
- VI.F. Archdeaconry of Cleveland.

The massive and important Group of Discipline, R.VII, is divided as:

- VII.A. Court Books.

- VII.B. Citations.
- VII.C. Excommunications.
- VII.D. Penances.
- VII.E. Cause Papers, XIV Century.
- VII.F. Cause Papers, XV Century, and so by centuries.

This method of description can be made capable of great distinction in detail; thus, R.IV.L.89.a.i, could describe a small note on a paper pinned on one of the pieces in file 89 of the Nomination Papers; and so with any of the classes.

Description of the Archives

Precedence both for importance and for completeness must be given to the magnificent series of Archbishops' Registers, 51 in number. The range begins with the two rolls of Walter de Gray's Register, which have been published, although not altogether satisfactorily. Volume 3 is a Sede Vacante Roll with a Visitation of Durham, about A.D.1310, which has never been transcribed. The series is thence complete, except for the lost Registers of de Boville and Ludham, down to Maclagan, after which there are no modern volumes bound up and set on the shelves. There is a separate volume of Ordination Register for Zouche, and a particularly interesting volume which includes all the Sede Vacante Registers from the late XIII Century to 1556, yet seems to have been singularly overlooked by some who have used the other Registers freely. Many of the volumes include more than one archiepiscopate; Vol. 35 has those of Frewen, Sterne, Dolben, Lamplugh and Sharpe; on the other hand, Thomson takes Volumes 45 to 49, inclusive. Many of the XVII and XVIII Century Registers, for the greater part of their contents, are concerned with Wills. The Volume George Neville II is not so much a Register as a collection of Letter Books and Formularies, of considerable interest. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Registers for the whole history of the Northern Province in the Middle Ages; a great part of the material in them is still unexplored.

Even more complete in its way is the series of the Archbishops' Act Books of Institutions, ranging from A.D. 1545 to the present day, invaluable for information on Ordinations and Benefices and the personal history of the clergy. The information contained in these Books, much more revealing than might be supposed, when studied for the history of the greater religious movements, has been incorporated in the Index volumes known familiarly as the "Tudor Crockford" and the "Stuart Crockford", about which more is said below.

There were 175 parcels of Convocation Papers, ranging in date from 1534 to present times, although of course the quantity of the

earlier records is comparatively small. The accessions since 1920 are not included in this number. These are now arranged almost entirely in boxes.

There are 324 bundles of Terriers, containing an average of 80 Terriers in a bundle. The importance of these is high, for although none of them are of date earlier than 1600, they give remarkably complete evidence in great detail for the condition, endowments and furniture of the parish churches of the Province, including the Archdeaconry of Nottingham.

The accumulation of Benefice Papers is enormous. They fall roughly into two groups: those concerned with personnel, and those concerned with churches and parsonage houses and vicarages. The personal papers enable the searcher to trace the career of the clergy, especially of post-Reformation times, from the first Letters Testimonial through Ordination, Institution and so forth, to Resignation and the administration of wills. Some approximate figures may be illuminating; as the papers have now been put into boxes, each of the original bundles may be housed in several boxes.

- Ordination Papers, 1751-1938, 204 parcels.
- Presentations, 1515-1774: 4,255 indexed, down to 1713.
- Institution Bonds, 1538-1644, 309 in number.
- Crown Presentations, 1739-1878, 462 in number.
- Nominations, Admissions and Licences, 188 bundles, several containing 200 and upwards.
- Bishops' Patents of Consecration, 1560-current date, about 150.
- Consecrations, 1635-1939, 90 boxes.
- Subscriptions, 1606-1893, 50 volumes, besides some in the Act Books. These afford many interesting signatures, as those of Andrew Marvell's father, and of Patrick Bronte, as well as those of many clerics later notable.
- Induction Mandates, 1724-1938, 10 boxes.
- Orders in Council, 1828-1942, 676 in number, with current accessions.
- Faculties, 1790-1850-1937, 58 bundles and 4 boxes, with current accessions.
- Deeds of Exchange, 1721-1895.
- Non-residence Papers, 14 bundles.
- Archbishops' Leases, 1605-1626.
- Builders' Papers and Mortgages, 1793-1878, 15 boxes.
- Surveyors' Reports, 61 bundles.

This, without being exhaustive or brought down in all cases to the present day, will serve to give some idea of the contents and magnitude of this group. These documents have much value besides that originally intended. The Presentations give a rich series of autographs and seals, including the signature of Anne of Cleves;

the armorial seals in Box R.IV.A.G, taken at random for instance include those of the Archdeacon of Nottingham (G.4), Hilyearde of Winestead (G.10), Philip, Earl of Arundel (G.17), Hotham of Scarborough (G.30), Stapleton (G.41), Ingleby (G.42), Dacre (G.45), and the Bishop of Chester (G.49), while seals of minor gentry are found on G. 26, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 41, and many others. The Lincoln Diocesan Archive House has shown in its recent publications the value of these Presentations and the use which can be made of them, and the York series is probably at least as rich. The Faculty Papers illustrate inimitably the development of ecclesiastical art and taste throughout the XIX Century, and particularly in the 1830's to the 1850's provide a sometimes startling commentary on Church building and furnishing and the ecclesiastical taste of the time.

In Group V, Peculiars, the outstanding case is that of Howden and Howdenshire, where almost every class of record in the Registry is represented independently in those of the Peculiar, between the dates 1661 and 1852. For the reason of this completeness, the Howden records have been kept together and not dispersed into their various classes in the general Index, which would destroy all their special character as a collection for a Peculiar. The earliest material for Peculiars, notably of Hexham, is to be found dispersed in the Archbishops' Registers. That surviving elsewhere is mainly of the XVII and XVIII Centuries, except for a considerable fund of papers relating to prebendal Peculiars mainly to be found in the Askwith group.

Group VI, Visitation material, is rich and of great importance. R.VI.A has 43 books and bundles of papers. These rank high in value as historical sources. The earliest volume, which is a general volume or Act Book of the Archbishop's Court of Audience, includes, besides much dealing with charges brought as a result of the Archbishop's Visitation, an unusually important account of the examination of about 65 schoolmasters in 1563 and 1564, as well as an early copy of the Articles for Subscriptions under the Act of Uniformity of 1559. For the study of recusancy as well as of many sides of church and parochial or social life generally, these books are invaluable.

R.VI.B. There are separate lists of the Bishopthorpe papers. With certain exceptions, they are disappointing in range and quantity.

R.VI.C. 69 original bundles. Of great value for biographical details of incumbents, and for parochial history.

R.VI.D. 202 bundles, one of which, R.VI.D.56, contains presentments from 166 parishes.

R.VI.E. 140 bundles.

R.VI.F. 70 bundles. A smaller Archdeaconry, and a shorter period of record.

Group VII, above others, has had particular attention. This special attention has been given with consideration, for two main reasons: that there is no other part of the Registry archives which will be found so rich for the study of social and economic conditions as well as of ecclesiastical history and law, and that there is no part of the archives which hitherto has been so generally neglected and unknown. It is not proposed to give here any exact account of the contents of this group, but a few figures will serve to give an idea of the range of them. There is first a superb series of Court Books, 317 volumes, ranging in date 1416 to 1875. This does not include the books in the class R.As. There are 9 volumes of Caveat Books and 12 of Citation Books, mainly of the XVII Century. There is a highly interesting Office Book of the Registrar from 1534 to 1540, with notes of business of many kinds . . . cases in the Courts (mainly Consistory and Exchequer), tables of fees, costs of enthronisation of Archbishops, details of wills, lists of Rural Deaneries and Chapter Peculiars, and some unique notes on the destruction of the head-shrine of St. William of York. There is a range of nineteen Act Books of the High Commission of York, probably the finest series of their kind in the country, if not the only series; they are to be the subject of a separate and fully detailed description at some later date. In addition to these, some three hundred separate papers or small files of papers relating to cases entered in these Act Books have been traced and identified, most of them widely scattered through different and unrelated classes in the Registry. There were originally 177 bundles of these Cause Papers, with a large number of separate books; these are now stored in several hundred boxes. These are the actual files of papers recording the proceedings and evidence, so far as these now survive, in cases heard before the Courts—normally the Consistory, the Exchequer and the Audience—; they have been indexed in some detail down to the year 1800. For the XIV Century the number of files is 288, the earliest being of date 1302; for the XV Century, 323, and for the XVI, 3,282. The total for the XVII Century is about 6,000, and for the XVIII, not yet quite completely handled, about 3,000 or rather more. The chief value of these files will be found in the extraordinary mass of detailed attestations by witnesses, illustrating in the most copious and often unexpected manner almost every side of contemporary life. Indeed, for the study of almost every aspect of religious, social and economic history in the Northern Province from the XIV Century to the XIX these papers are invaluable. More than one eminent scholar has described them recently as a "revelation", and their study will almost certainly modify some views previously accepted and published by writers on history, especially on the history of the Reformation period and of the life of the Church down to the middle of the XVIII Century.

It may be pointed out that the inter-relation between the Court papers and the Visitation papers and also certain of the records in Group IV is evidently so close that it is not possible to study or to understand thoroughly any one section of the Registry archives in isolation, but only by general reference and comparison.

Groups VIII and IX do not require description in detail; the number of documents in each Group is enormous, perhaps amounting to about 200,000 in the former and 300,000 in the latter. No attempt to catalogue Group IX has yet been possible, but some progress has been made with framing an index of Group VIII, by parishes. This Group is frequently consulted for legal and genealogical searches.

Reference has already been made to the Precedent Papers in Group X; there are also about 30 Precedent Books, of the XVII and XVIII Centuries.

Finally, there is the detached group R.As, or the Askwith Papers. These have always been regarded, apparently, as a separate collection, for although they were completely unknown to the Registrar and his staff, they were discovered by the present writer in 1939 as a compact body of 172 books and bundles of papers wedged in the middle of the Marriage Licence Bonds. They seem, from internal evidence, to be a collection from the office of a proctor named Askwith, who was Registrar to the Dean and Chapter about the third decade of the XIX Century, and to owe their presence in the Registry to the fact that they relate mainly to proceedings during vacancy of the See, or contain matter useful for precedents, and owe their confused state and wide range to hasty collection for transfer from one office to another, perhaps at the time of one of the fires in the Minster, in 1829 or 1840. Although often fragmentary, they are important for three reasons in particular:—they contain an unusually high proportion of prebendal papers, often of great interest; they are rich in documents of the period 1550 to 1560; they include the remarkable volume of "Comperta" in the Jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter which covers a period of no less than a century, 1389 to 1490; books of monastic "comperta" are fairly numerous, but those of this date for secular clergy and laity are much more rare. A brief study of this book, including a sketch of the Court procedure, has been published privately by the present writer.

Until the whole collection of records in the Registry has been examined in some detail, it would obviously be premature to attempt the construction of any detailed general Indexes or catalogues. Those calendars which already existed were few and narrowly restricted in scope; they related only to certain groups such as Terriers, Consecrations, Faculties, a small part of the Parish Register Transcripts, and a few others. Some printed lists of Wills,

also, had been published, in the Record Series of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. But with the progress of examination of the archives the opportunity, and the need, for more comprehensive lists became greater. The first class to be handled for this purpose was that of the Cause Paper files, which in the scheme devised by the present writer were numbered by centuries, beginning with a reference title R.VII.E. for the XIV Century, R.VII.F. for the XV, and so on. These files have now been indexed in this way for groups E to I inclusive, that is, from A.D. 1302 to 1800, under the following headings: Number of the file; date; subject of the suit; parties in the suit; details of special importance or interest, if any. The same method is now being applied to the papers of the Askwith group.

There are now also two Index Books, known respectively and familiarly as the "Tudor Crockford" and the "Stuart Crockford", which aim at providing a framework in which can be entered all references in the Registry documents to all Clergy beneficed in the Diocese, but not including the whole Province or Chantry Priests, in the XVI Century in the former volume and in the XVII in the latter. This information is arranged under six headings: name of Incumbent; Degrees, if any; dates of Ordination; dates of Institution, Collation, etc.; any references during incumbency; dates of death, resignation, will, deprivation, etc. This information may come from any part of the Registry, so that each list is in effect to some extent a combined index to the Archbishops' Registers, the Institution and Subscription Books, the visitation records, the records of the Courts, and the numerous divisions of Group R.IV set out above (p. 9). These lists are of course capable of receiving additions from any part of the Registry archives as new references are noted in the course of the examination of the records. The number of Incumbents already noted in the Tudor Crockford at present exceeds 4,000, with an average of about four entries for each name. For the Stuart volume, the number is at least as large, but the number of additions still to be made is probably larger, and the average of entries rises more rapidly, except for the period 1641 to 1661, which is of course generally a blank spot in the Registry records. These lists have already amply proved their value and convenience, not only in saving time in searches where individual biographies are concerned or in the construction of lists of Incumbents for particular parishes, but also in supplying cross-references to check or supplement information in one class or another of the Registry records and for wider and more general topics, as, for example, the number of ex-religious who were beneficed after the Dissolution, or the number of Clergy who remained apparently undisturbed in their parishes throughout the Commonwealth usurpation.

There is a similar Index to take material relating to Schools and

Schoolmasters and to education generally, where the information comes mainly but not only from the Visitation records and the Subscription Books. Three further indexes are in process of construction. These are: an index to the important class R.As, on the general lines of the Index of Cause Papers; an Index of the original Faculty Papers; and a Card Index of Subjects. The purpose of the last named is to provide a guide, not to large general topics but to those more specialised matters which might help a research student who wished to discover whether in the Registry documents he might find anything relating to a particular topic in which he was interested for study. This Index will include cards saying where and in what calendars the more general lists and information may be found, particularly if these lists are printed, but will not itself supply them. This index, again, is capable of great expansion and variety, and not likely to be complete for a very long time to come.

Since the new policy towards the Registry archives was inaugurated, a scheme for making publicly known the nature and extent of the records has been pursued by the present writer, chiefly by articles on selected topics in the "Journal" of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and by lectures to societies and bodies of many kinds. Such publication has been regarded as an essential preliminary to the success of those purposes intended by the Archbishop and the Diocesan Registrar, and taken over from them by the Academic Development Committee of the York Civic Trust. In that scheme the present account of the documents is designed to take a place; its purpose is to give specific information in some detail about this great and important but hitherto almost unknown collection. It aims to make known in the appropriate quarters in what way the archives are open to those who should have access to them for purposes of research, of profitable study and publication, and how this has come about, and to show briefly what the searcher may expect to find in this great mine of the history of the Northern Province.