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978-1-107-62326-2 - A History of Vicarages in the Middle Ages

R. A. R. Hartridge

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A HISTORY OF VICARAGES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

BY

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*Thesis approved for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of London*

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1930

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107623262

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First published 1930
First paperback edition 2013

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-107-62326-2 Paperback

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GENERAL PREFACE

THERE is only too much truth in the frequent complaint that history, as compared with the physical sciences, is neglected by the modern public. But historians have the remedy in their own hands; choosing problems of equal importance to those of the scientist, and treating them with equal accuracy, they will command equal attention. Those who insist that the proportion of accurately ascertainable facts is smaller in history, and therefore the room for speculation wider, do not thereby establish any essential distinction between truth-seeking in history and truth-seeking in chemistry. The historian, whatever be his subject, is as definitely bound as the chemist “to proclaim certainties as certain, falsehoods as false, and uncertainties as dubious.” Those are the words, not of a modern scientist, but of the seventeenth-century monk, Jean Mabillon; they sum up his literary profession of faith. Men will follow us in history as implicitly as they follow the chemist, if only we will form the chemist’s habit of marking clearly where our facts end and our inferences begin. Then the public, so far from discouraging our speculations, will most heartily encourage them; for the most positive man of science is always grateful to anyone who, by putting forward a working theory, stimulates further discussion.

The present series, therefore, appeals directly to that craving for clearer facts which has been bred in these times of storm and stress. No care can save us altogether from error; but, for our own sake and the public’s, we have elected to adopt a safeguard dictated by ordinary business commonsense. Whatever errors of fact are pointed out by reviewers or correspondents shall be publicly corrected with the least possible delay. After a year of publication, all copies shall be provided with such an erratum-slip without waiting for the chance of a second edition; and each fresh volume in this series shall contain a full list of the errata noted in its immediate predecessor. After the lapse of a year from the first publication of any volume, and at any

time during the ensuing twelve months, any possessor of that volume who will send a stamped and addressed envelope to the Cambridge University Press, Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4, shall receive, in due course, a free copy of the *errata* in that volume. Thus, with the help of our critics, we may reasonably hope to put forward these monographs as roughly representing the most accurate information obtainable under present conditions. Our facts being thus secured, the reader will judge our inferences on their own merits; and something will have been done to dissipate that cloud of suspicion which hangs over too many important chapters in the social and religious history of the Middle Ages.

G. G. C.

July 1930

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

A PORTION of the present work was awarded a Sudbury-Hardyman Research Prize of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1927. In the following year a revised and enlarged version was awarded the Prince Consort Prize of Cambridge University. For the help and encouragement that I received from these awards, I must express my deepest gratitude.

The book is not a complete history of vicarages in all countries in the obedience of the Popes in the Middle Ages, but rather a study centred intensively on our own country and spreading over the neighbouring lands with diminishing intensity. The reader will find that the Swiss and German examples are taken from one or two documents that offer corroborative testimony of great value, but that the descriptions of French conditions are founded on a considerable mass of documents. Italian conditions, which, as I understand, have peculiar characteristics, have not, as yet, found any place at all in my studies. Nevertheless, it may be hoped that my work is the more valuable for having overstepped our insular boundaries.

The minor subject of choral vicars in cathedrals and collegiate churches has been left untouched, as lying, in spite of its similarities, outside the scope of parochial institutions. It is to be hoped, however, that some student of those corporations will soon give us an adequate account of non-parochial vicars.

My supervisor in research in the University of London was the Rev. Professor Claude Jenkins, whose gentle and patient guidance has been one of the most charming influences in my education. The authorities of University College, whose award of the Sir William Meyer Studentship made this work possible, have shown the greatest kindness throughout, and forbearance when unavoidable circumstances interrupted my studies. The Master and Fellows of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, by means of a research grant and by their hospitality, gave me invaluable assistance. To all these kindest of friends I offer my heartiest thanks.

My debt to the editor of this series, Dr G. G. Coulton, must be most apparent. He has devoted many hours of his time to discussion of my difficulties, corresponded with me constantly, and always treated me with such friendliness that never at any time have I felt myself, by weight of his authority, forced towards any conclusion at which I could not honestly arrive. To Mrs Coulton I am indebted for useful advice concerning the Index.

To the Syndics of the Press I offer sincere thanks for their generous kindness in publishing this volume.

R. A. R. H.

EMMANUEL COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

July 1930

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