

**That the Hartland Church and the Harton Borough Accounts 1612-1706 respectively can form an investigation of the methodology of responsibility for payments to itinerant travellers who sought alms in Hartland during this period?**

**Stephen Hobbs**

Administration of the remote Devon parish of Hartland in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century was divided between the offices of the Manorial Borough of Harton and those of the ecclesiastical. The parish had long been separated into the secular and religious land holdings, since the grant of the Manor of Stoke to a small number of canons<sup>1</sup>. The line of division effectively gave a north and a south area of secular holding in the hands of the Dynham family as the Manor of Hartland, and a central portion, which eventually formed the land holding of Hartland Abbey<sup>2</sup>. A fourth area of approximately 160 acres was granted in 1295 by the Dynhams to form a manorial borough. On the death of the last Lord Dynham, Lord of the Manor of Hartland, in 1501, his estates were divided between his four sisters and managed by a steward<sup>3</sup>. On the Dissolution the religious land holding was sold in 1546 to the Abbat family and has remained with their heirs ever since, Map 1.

How these three administrations interacted to form the 'local government' of the area is a subject that has not been explored in any depth. Were there strictly established lines of responsibility or were the boundaries blurred with various financial aspects inter-related? An investigation, by using the accounts of the Churchwardens and the 'Governors of Goods of the Church', and the accounts of the Portreeves of Harton Borough on the payments to itinerant travellers may give an insight into how much co-operation existed. The manorial estates and the manorial borough under the Dynham's heirs would be co-existing and have in place management such as steward, bailiff and courts.

The first known ledger of the church accounts runs from 1597–1706 and is a combination of the 'Governors of Goods of the Church' and the Churchwardens accounts. Their income was derived from the rate collections<sup>4</sup> each year, together with a small and irregular sum from gifts, sales of seats in the church and minor trades. The churchwardens' income was largely from the Governors account but also from bequests either as money or gifts, such as sheep to be sold off. Both bodies kept their accounts separately but eventually a combined set was produced from 1664 for presentation to the Rural Dean<sup>5</sup>. The average income/expenditure for the church over the period was £34-19-5<sup>d</sup>/£31-19-1<sup>d</sup> per annum respectively.

The composition of church and borough organisation were very similar, each had a body of governors. The church had twenty-four 'Governors of Goods of the Church'; from these four were chosen to be in office for a four-year period. One of these four was then selected as a Receiver for twelve months and the position rotated through the four year period of office. There are occasions when a receiver stayed in office for a second year especially if they were involved in complex parish affairs. Two churchwardens were elected each year, one for the parishioners and a second for the minister, and up to six people were appointed as gather collectors<sup>6</sup>.

The operation of the accounting system for the church is rather complex running from April of each year; it is not such as the modern, profit and loss system. The money collected from the rates in the gathers was passed into the receivers account for the church. The success of the rate collection was variable and frequently the accounts show entries for 'arrearages' due and being paid. The consequence of this is that the tallied income could vary considerably each year. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Gytha, mother of King Harold gave her manor of Nistenstok to 12 secular canons in thanksgiving for the life of her husband saved from shipwreck. (Chope, R.P. 1940)

<sup>2</sup> The manor of Nistenstok is considered to be the foundation lands of the Abbey at Hartland on its translation to an Augustinian house. (Chope, R.P. 1940)

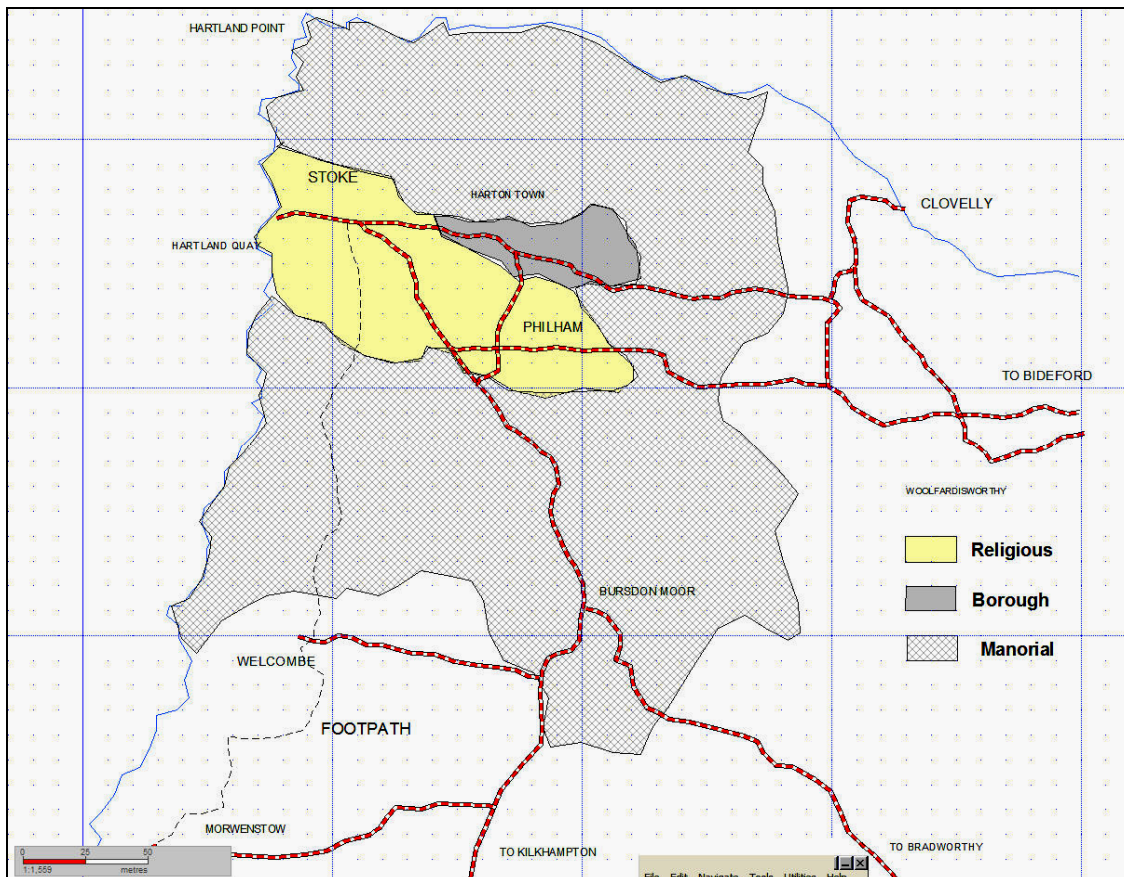
<sup>3</sup> The records of the Arundel's of Cornwall are deposited in the Cornwall Records office, Truro and open the discussion of the management of the Dynham lands following the division in 1501.

<sup>4</sup> The rate collection at Hartland amounted to £16-00 for a penny rate and £8-00 for half penny. The number of rates per year varied up to a maximum of 32 in one year.

<sup>5</sup> Locally the Rural Dean was identified within the account books as the 'Dene Rular'.

<sup>6</sup> Gathers; Hartland parish was divided into three areas known as gathers, north, west and middle. The boundaries of these areas were established aligned with the primary river valleys of the parish and could be very ancient by their nature.

culmination of the four year rotation often a balancing of the account was undertaken and the 'church stock' was increased or decreased accordingly. There are entries in the church accounts indicating where men of substance, usually a governor, agreed to lend money to cover shortages, the amount being repaid when funds allowed or in some cases reclassified as a gift. The churchwardens operated their own account and often ran at a loss, this was made good from the receivers account and on any occasion when a profit occurred then the same was paid to the receiver. The Governors mainly came from the primary farming families and contained men of wealth and influence<sup>7</sup>.



**Map 1; Divisions of Hartland parish and some principal roads**

The Borough held its Charter to the benefit of the Manor of Hartland on annual payment of a rental fee, which was often remitted, collected by the manor steward on behalf of the heirs of the Dynham estates. The administration of the borough and its accounts were the responsibility of a Portreeve chosen annually, from a body of seven governors, for a period of office of twelve months from the feast of St Michael the Archangel. In common with the church, the finances of each administration utilised a 'stock' sum which formed a float, the borough stock amounted to £40. The income of the borough was derived from the tollage, stallage and payments from the two annual fairs and also a bailiwick collection, and to these incomes were added the rentals of houses, shops, shambles and various privileges: The average income/expenditure for the borough over the period was £8-8-1<sup>d</sup>/£6-7-6<sup>d</sup> per annum respectively.

The payments recorded for itinerant travellers form a common aspect of both sets of account books and will form the basis for an investigation, supporting data may be obtainable from the accounts of the Overseers of the Poor, Parish Constable and Bastardy, Habitation and Apprenticeship records of Hartland. Further supporting data may be obtained from the churchwardens accounts of the neighbouring parishes or Tithing where available.

<sup>7</sup> See; St Nectan's: A question of a Seat, Hobbs 2004

It is not possible to provide a regular calendar of payments from either set of accounts as no dates other than the year are recorded and there is no discernable sequence by which the accounts were written. There can be little doubt that in each case they are transcribed from the notes, invoices, receipts etc of the organisations officers. This can be seen in the palaeography as each account is in one hand; one mix of ink, if the entries had been written daily or weekly then this would not be the case<sup>8</sup>. This then does not allow a decision if the arrival of people seeking aid coincided with the markets, festival days or similar occurrences in the district.

Both sets of accounts used for this investigation have to be paired across a core period. The church accounts run from 1597–1706 in the first account ledger and continue in further ledgers until the present day. The borough accounts commence at 1612 and run until 1688 when there is a break in recording until 1703 in their first ledger, from when they continue in various ledgers until 1898 when the borough was reorganised into a Parish Council and a charitable trust, The Harton Town Trust, which still manages the property of the ancient borough<sup>9</sup>.

It will therefore be appropriate for an investigation to take a period of 1614–1688 as the core period, as this is within both account books. The years from both accounts which fall either side of the core period will supply supplementary evidence of possible trends in payments and the range of payments to all categories of travellers are common in both sets of accounts.

In the strictest terms all the payments given were to people travelling through the parish, however both administrations saw it necessary to identify their payments for certain categories of travellers: thus there are identifications for Seamen, Irish, Soldiers, Travellers, Families, Prisoners, Poor, those with briefs to collect and some official responsibilities<sup>10</sup>. It has to be said that the categorisation is not definitive and cross-category identification occurs, such as ‘...paid 5 Irish travellers their wives and children...’ which would be equally well placed in three categories, Irish, travellers and families. However by selective, or if appropriate multiple, categorising then the information contained in such entries can be effectively used to show trends and reflect national events on the parish; and possibly extended to other parishes throughout the country.

The church vestries in undertaking their lawful responsibilities used such as Overseers of the Poor and the Parish Constables to organise and control the indigenous parish poor by means of relief payments and provision of accommodation and employment for both adults and children. The itinerant traveller posed a separate problem, less predictable in behaviour or numbers. The control of such people was defined in a variety of ways, such as restrictions of movement, rights of habitation and the necessity to have passes to travel. Certain categories of traveller often placed a duty on a parish to offer monetary and or sustenance by aid, naval sailors travelling from ship or port to another, soldiers on passage to quarters or deployment often carried passes of entitlement to relief. People ejected from a parish due to their non-residence status were passed from parish constable to parish constable until they arrived at their rightful parish.

Event	1597-1613	1614-1688 (core period)	1689-1719
Church	7	243	176
Borough		485	0

**Table 1; Tabulation of events of aid payments to travellers 1597-1719**

During the core period under investigation, the Borough of Harton paid out to a considerably greater number of travellers than the church, across all categories, Table 1. This would appear to

<sup>8</sup> Other books of record of the same period that were kept at regular periods show a different hand and certainly many shades of ink mix.

<sup>9</sup> Harton Town trust is a charitable organisation under the care of seven Trustees, and manages the ‘residue’ of the ancient borough and holds the borough archive.

<sup>10</sup> Official responsibilities amounted to the payments to classes of people travelling within their employment on government service and such as people being returned to the rightful parish of residency under the Poor Law.

be expenditure outside the borough responsibility, of management of the fairs, markets and borough property on behalf of the manorial owners and it is not readily apparent why such payments were made.

Are there topographical reasons why the borough may have been a more appropriate first call for a traveller than the church? To understand Hartland's position within its neighbourhood an explanation of the commerce and transport systems is beneficial. Hartland parish had a number of advantages; historically the presence of a large monastic house and a market provided a centre for commerce and a status in the community. The harbour, built in late 16<sup>th</sup> Century, would have provided a relatively safe haven for shipping on what is a very treacherous coastline, as well as a trading port for import and export of produce. The use of this port for military purposes is not specifically recorded, but as a sponsor was Sir Richard Grenville, it could be taken that such purpose was available if needed.

The Borough of Harton was a principal regional market town and the recorded income of the Portreeve shows how steady this commercial enterprise was throughout the period under consideration. The entries in the borough account book for sales across the 'tome' stone recording purchases by people from some considerable distance, mainly for cattle and horses: There was also the trade from the shambles in such as leather, meat and dairy products. There were further markets at Stratton, Bradworthy and Bideford all a thirteen mile radius of Hartland.

The road system had not yet fully adopted the modern layout<sup>11</sup> and possibly more accurately reflected the earlier tracks on high ground, passing from village to village. To travel east from Hartland the main roadway passed through Woolfardisworthy, Parkham, Littleham into Bideford where it could cross the river Torridge. To travel south the road passed through the hamlets of Philham, Tossbury and over the high moorland at Bursdon heading towards Morwenstow and Kilkhampton. A further high ground road linked the area by passing through Bradworthy and onto Holsworthy. The presence of large tracts of culm lands and wet moor made the older tracks more reliable passageways, Map 1.

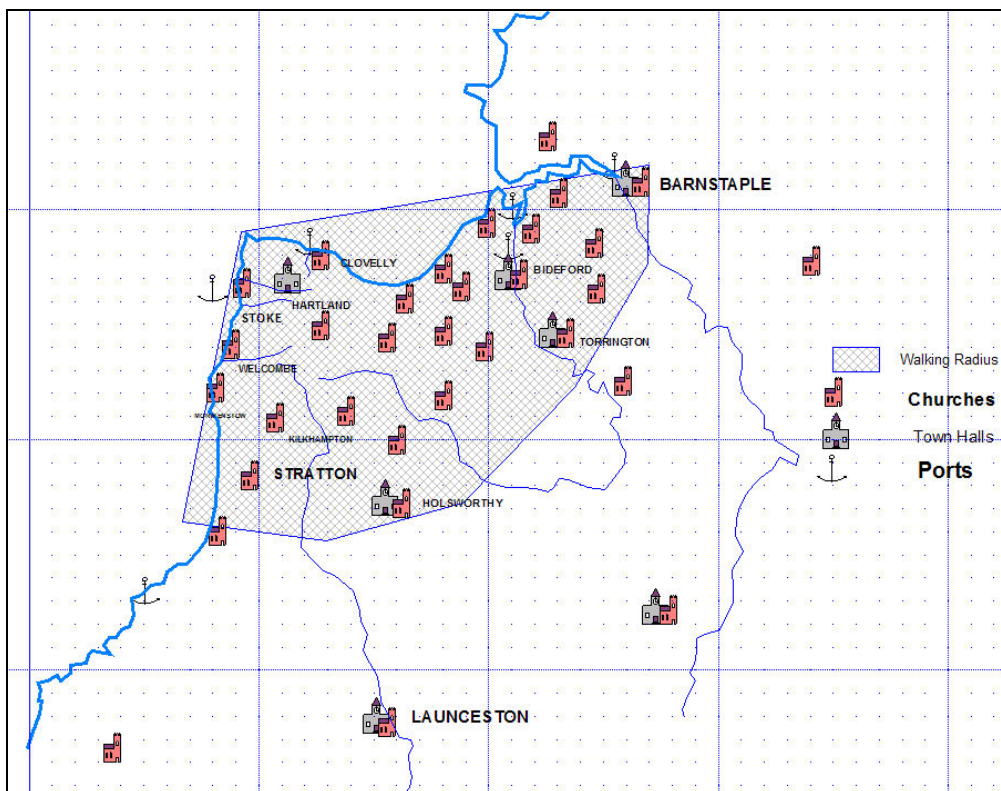
From this broad description, Hartland can be seen as a regional centre and as such would have been well known in the north Devon area, this combined with its position on a recognised road system ensured it was a convenient calling point for a steady flow of travellers. Within the recorded events of either set of accounts, there are only a small number that refer to a traveller arriving or leaving by any means of transport; this being by horse. Walking would have been the most common way of travelling and therefore dependent on the physical abilities of each person. A days walking distance between centres of aid would have to be aimed at. Combined with being able to walk are other variables, such as weather conditions, road state and no doubt in some categories harassment. Rather than assume a measured distance as a possible area to be covered in a day then this should be tempered with consideration of the other suitable towns, villages, or churches within a radius of Hartland able to provide aid. The geography does help in only allowing an approximate 90° angle within which to locate other habitations and the relative sparseness of such makes selection in some respects obvious.

On the south and western radius are Morwenstow, Kilkhampton, Stratton, Bradworthy and Holsworthy. The eastern radius has an increased number but of smaller habitations such as Clovelly, Woolfardisworthy, Parkham, Buckland Brewer, Littleham, Abbotsham, Appledore all are within range or even possibly Barnstaple, Torrington and Bideford, the latter large townships and regional centres. The demands placed by travellers arriving seeking aid must have placed a substantial burden on smaller communities, dependent on how their churches raised their income.

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<sup>11</sup> An example of the progression of the modern road system can be seen when comparing the 1809 Ordnance Survey map with the similar map of 1900 whereby a number of the older tracks are passed over in favour of upgraded roads that take fuller consideration of the use of wheeled transport.

It may have been mutually beneficial for all parties if the larger communities were the habitations that travellers headed for.



Map 2; Approximate days walking radius from Hartland

A traveller arriving in Hartland by sea would be less than a mile from the parish church and normally would have to pass the building on their way to other localities. Similarly a traveller arriving in the parish from the south would on ascending the moor at Bursdon see the tower of the church some seven miles away. The road system would have gently directed them towards the church rather than the town<sup>12</sup>. From the east the borough town would be the point of arrival for a traveller, as the church is in an isolated hamlet two miles west of the town.

Would the location of the church and borough be reflected in the categories of traveller seeking aid? As the church was closest to the port it may be expected to see a greater number of mariners arriving at its doors? However, this is not substantiated in the tabulation except in possibly two isolated years until 1688, Table 2.

Event	1597-1613	1614-1688 (core period)	1689-1706
Church	0	114	26
Borough		173	0

Table 2; Totals of aid payments to mariners 1597-1706

A shift in emphasis from 1689 until 1706 saw an average of 3.2 mariners a year being given aid, as opposed to a rising average within 3 of the 25 year extractions of the core period: 1597-1633 of 0: 1634-58 of 0.21: and 1659-88 of 5.6 by the church authorities. If the increasing average, from 1688, would have been comparable in the lost borough accounts is not known. What is illustrated is that the close location of the port to the church is not a dominating factor in the core period, as the borough consistently aided a greater number of mariners possibly seeking a ship in a larger port, Table 3.

<sup>12</sup> The road entering Hartland parish from the south crosses Bursdon Moor on its western edge thus passing the wettest areas. This may be a reflection of earlier times and be combined with a period when the habitation of Stoke, as a veneration spot to St Nectan and the religious foundation, was of more importance than the habitation of Harton thus reflecting a more direct route.

5 year aggregate	1614-18	1619-23	1624-28	1629-33	1634-38	1639-43	1644-48	1649-53	1654-58	1659-63	1664-68	1669-73	1674-78	1679-83	1684-88	Totals
Church					2		3	1		1	2	9	23	18	55	114
Borough	4		3		1	2	4	2	5	21	20	25	33	27	26	173

5 year aggregate	1597-1602	1603-07	1608-13	Totals	1689-93	1694-98	1699-1703	1704-08	1709-13	1714-19	Totals
Church	0			0	14	12			1		27
Borough	0			0	0						0

**Table 3; Totals of mariners receiving aid (5 year aggregation)**

There are no contemporary accounts of the port of Hartland which could expand on the entries within either the church or the borough accounts. It would be undoubtedly the case that a proportion of the mariners given aid had a link with the local port. A second port located at Clovelly, three miles east of Hartland, on the north coastline as opposed to the exposed western coast at Hartland, can be shown to have worked in commercial conjunction with Hartland dependant on weather and sea conditions and there are specific entries in both church and borough accounts naming Clovelly as the source of some mariners seeking aid. Other named maritime locations are Falmouth, Penzance, Fowey and Padstow in Cornwall: Bideford and Bristol are ports named east of Hartland.

A consistent annotation in the entries for mariners alludes to shipwrecks ‘....having lost their ship...’ and the southwest peninsula would have been a location for many of these events, to survive a wreck was not always due to good fortune and local assistance. The value of cargoes, salvage and flotsam became a deciding factor in if assistance was forthcoming as the law of possession was perverse by today’s standards in needing no survivors before salvage rights could be claimed<sup>13</sup>.

Another category that can offer a further insight into the question of payments made to those in need is that of ‘civilian travellers’. In both sets of accounts they are a named group; however there is a difficulty in this being a strictly defined group of people. In recognising that all the separate classifications were actually travellers, then the use of a word to limit it to one type of person may be indicative of a generalisation used by the scribes. It is not possible to redefine enough entries to make the tabulation more accurate; it is a firmer argument to combine the categories of traveller and that of families as one unit. In most aspects they deal with civilians as opposed to people who have an occupational need to travel i.e. mariners and soldiers. Either group involve large numbers of people, combined they form the majority of events and totals of people receiving aid, Table 4 and 5. The same argument could be used to include both the poor and those defined as Irish. The numbers classified as poor represent less than 5% of the suggested combined group. The Irish have a valid reason to be dealt with as an individual group due to the religious turmoil over an extended period which resulted in persecution and property loss<sup>14</sup>.

Event	1597-1613	1614-1688 (core period)	1689-1719
Church	0	356	744
Borough		331	0

**Table 4; Totals of combined travellers and families 1597-1719**

<sup>13</sup> Reference to this change is made by Rev. Stephen Hawker in his writings and the compassion he tried to introduce in the locality for the victims of such incidents of shipwreck.

<sup>14</sup> References to these events are alluded to in *Sir Thomas Stucley; Traitor Extraordinary*, John Izon. Although not a full academic text on Ireland, as Stucley was closely linked to Hartland, it seemed an appropriate reference on the trend of events.

5 year aggregate	1614-18	1619-23	1624-28	1629-33	1634-38	1639-43	1644-48	1649-53	1654-58	1659-63	1664-68	1669-73	1674-78	1679-83	1684-88	Totals
Church						6			2		71	42	63	57	115	356
Borough		1	2	13	3	30	42	2	8	18	35	21	68	31	57	331
5 year aggregate	1597-1602	1603-07	1608-13	Totals											Totals	
Church	0	0	0	0											744	
Borough			0	0											0	
										1689-93	1694-98	1699-1703	1704-08	1709-13	1714-19	
										270	451	0	1	10	12	
										0			0	0	0	

**Table 5; Five year aggregates, totals of travellers and families**

The pattern of travellers arriving seeking aid followed that of mariners. The town paid out to larger numbers until the period 1664-68 when the tabulation shows a rising number of people paid from the church account. The climax recorded in 1694-98 when an accumulation of 451 people passed through, this was equivalent to approximately one third of the resident population of Hartland parish at this time<sup>15</sup>. This is a reflection of national trends when it is accepted that large numbers were traversing the countryside, a change in the Poor Law eventually reduced this to a trickle as can be dramatically illustrated in Table 5 for the period 1699-1703 after the introduction of new settlement requirements in 1697<sup>16</sup>.

5 year aggregate	1614-18	1619-23	1624-28	1629-33	1634-38	1639-43	1644-48	1649-53	1654-58	1659-63	1664-68	1669-73	1674-78	1679-83	1684-88
Borough events	15	21	37	20	21	28	26	9	10	37	35	48	63	37	78
Town; passes	1	4	2	2		4	2	2	3	21	7	19	53	27	30
Church events	2		3	7	11	4	1	15	2	6	22	20	34	36	80
Church; passes					1	2				3	16	8	15	33	74

**Table 6; Totals of travellers and families arriving with passes 1614-1688**

Categories aided		
Account	Gender	Totals
Church	Female	66
Church	Male	216
Church	Mixed	55
Church	Un-stated	92
Borough	Female	44
Borough	Male	402
Borough	Mixed	4
Borough	Un-stated	18

**Table 6a; Totals aided by gender**

<sup>15</sup> Michael Wickes and R. Pearse Chope each estimated the population of Hartland parish as around 1500 in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>16</sup> Settlement Act of 1697: Strangers were allowed to settle in a new parish if they were armed with a certificate from their home parish guaranteeing to take them back if they became in need of poor relief. Paupers were to wear a capital P on their clothing followed by a letter indicating their home parish.



The reason why people were travelling is as complex a subject as discovering their true parish of residence. The care of these people should have been the responsibility of the churchwardens but at Hartland the borough also shouldered the payments and the regional road system brought people into Hartland on what was probably a well known and used transit route<sup>17</sup>.

From the tabulation of events for travellers and families, Table 6, it is the case that the borough was more inclined to make payments to people who had arrived without a pass, 36% of recipients of the borough had passes whilst 62% were in possession of a pass at the church. The reason may be that the borough had at its disposal the hundred and parish constables and methods of punishment for vagrants, beggars and travellers without due permission to travel. Within the full tabulation there are a number of official payments of which some cover the costs of dealing with vagrants and criminals. The whipping and ejection from the parish is recorded on several occasions as well as the presentation before the justices and delivery to a jail.

Table 6a illustrates that the overwhelming majority of travellers were male, 618, as opposed to female, 110, even allowing for the addition of mixed groups, the balance remains.

The compassion within the parish is shown in its dealing with people or their representatives who have arrived with a licence or brief to collect. This was a style of collection normally undertaken at the church service when the detail of the warrant was read and a collection made of the retiring congregation. The recording of payments to such people by both borough and church indicates that these are payments in addition to the congregational collections and in some cases are quite substantial amounts.

Overall payments per category																														
Category	Totals	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	27	30			
Brief	22	1	16	2		1	1				1																			
Cornish	9		1	1	3	3		1																						
Dutch	1		1																											
Family	104	13		20	11	11	10	12	4	4	3	6	5		2	2				1										
French	16		1	1	3	7	1	3																						
Irish	113	11	16	11	15	16	8	10	8	4	2	5	3	1			1				1					1				
Italian	1		1																											
Official	20	5	5	4	3	2	1																							
Pass	3		2		1																									
Poor	21		13	2	2	3	1																							
Prisoner	11	1	9	1																										
Scottish	1						1																							
Seaman	330	5	39	60	44	38	14	34	15	18	18	11	9	3	3	6	3	4	3	2						1				
Soldier	61	5	21	15	6	3	2	1			1							1	2			1	1	1		1				
Traveller	203	12	33	38	15	23	7	12	8	14	11	4	9	3	1	5	2	2	1	2							1			
Welsh	2		1	1																										

**Table 7; Totals of payments by category, in pence (Cols 0-30=pence); Church & Borough**

From these illustrations, it is clear that the borough was overall the majority paymaster and calling point for those seeking aid. The reason why the local community chose this option of undertaking their fiscal responsibility may be a local financial consideration first and one of compassion second.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Tull, Vicar of Rose Ash, Devon wrote a short article to support a charity walk by his parishioners on the route of mariners passing through north Devon en route for Bristol.

Although it is outside the scope of this paper it is worth exploring further the reason that people of some categories were itinerants. In very brief terms the Westcountry has always had a seafaring tradition and in the case of mariners passing through Hartland such a category would be expected. The local ports of Bideford and Barnstaple were major setting off places for troops going into Ireland and similarly for the refugees from Ireland. These sailors and soldiers may well have been sent on to other ports and ships further into Cornwall, or opposite, towards Bristol. The Irish people landing here were at the start of dispersal across Britain and indeed towards the Americas. The turmoil in Ireland had entered a particularly disruptive period during the period covered by this investigation and had resulted in severe persecution on religious grounds, the loss of land and property caused many to emigrate either by choice or forcibly.

The period up until 1697 had seen an increase in the number of people travelling around the countryside, partly due to the changes in agriculture and the rise of urban living. The Poor Law sought to control the movement of these people by various means especially by making their home parish responsible for their upkeep if they fell into hard times. The law imposed a system of rights of habitation within a parish for incomers both monetary and on property rights. The rise in numbers eventually brought the change of 1697 which stemmed the flow severely and for a period saw few people travelling in the countryside or at least claiming alms if doing so. The latter may be an additional group of people that then became titled vagrants or beggars and were the most severely dealt with by punishments such as imprisonment and whipping before being returned to their home parish.

The period of the English Civil War is within this investigation period, it would be expected to see a sharp increase in people asking aid, but the records do not show this. There are entries for soldiers passing through particularly from various battles such as Stratton, Bristol, Barnstaple and Torrington, but the numbers as civilians was relatively small, maybe due to restrictions on travel or the need to be in an environment in which people felt safe such as with close family. There are a small number of references to foreigners, Dutch, Scottish, French, Italian in the main these can all be associated with conflicts and could be people making their way home following a period of detention. Appendix 1, gives a short list of some of the events that relate to reasons for itinerants during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

The financial implications of paying out increasing sums in aid, is reflected in the fiscal arrangements of both the church governors and the portreeves accounts. In raising its income, the church depended on an annual rate, collected usually in two gathers. This was not the only rate collected in the parish as there were often further assessments instigated at regional, county and national level which in one year reached a strenuous 32 rates (£256). The popularity of having a rate demand placed on an occupier would be no more so then than now. The value of a rate being based on the property or estate and in Hartland was a constant and stable figure through much of the period covered (See footnote 4). If the church governors saw an opportunity to negate any rise in the rate, would it not be an attractive proposition if they could attach part of such a demand, with agreement, onto the borough?

The borough had its main income stream from the revenue of the two annual fairs or markets. Although the income was a monetary collection it was not one that fell totally on the local population, especially not the property or landholders. If as can be illustrated from the borough accounts the market was successful and formed a steady income flow then the attraction of using this income to meet the parish responsibilities for aid may have been beneficial to all parties, including the general parishioners.

The suggestion that the payments made to travellers by the borough was a 'parish' fiscal decision can be explored by a comparison of the effects on the income and expenditure of both church and borough. The income of both organisations is detailed in Table 8. The expenditures are more

complex and can be seen from their respective need to cover many aspects of the administration in the locality.

Expenditure for the churchwardens was the purchase of wine and breads for the Sacraments and for a small number of years the cost of aid for the travellers. The 'Governors of Goods of the Church' held the responsibility for the fabric of the church and considerable sums were spent on its maintenance. There are various sums for such as church armour, legal expenses, and administration costs such as Clerk, dog whipper, gatekeeper plus the destruction of vermin of various types in addition to their parish obligations such as roads and bridges.

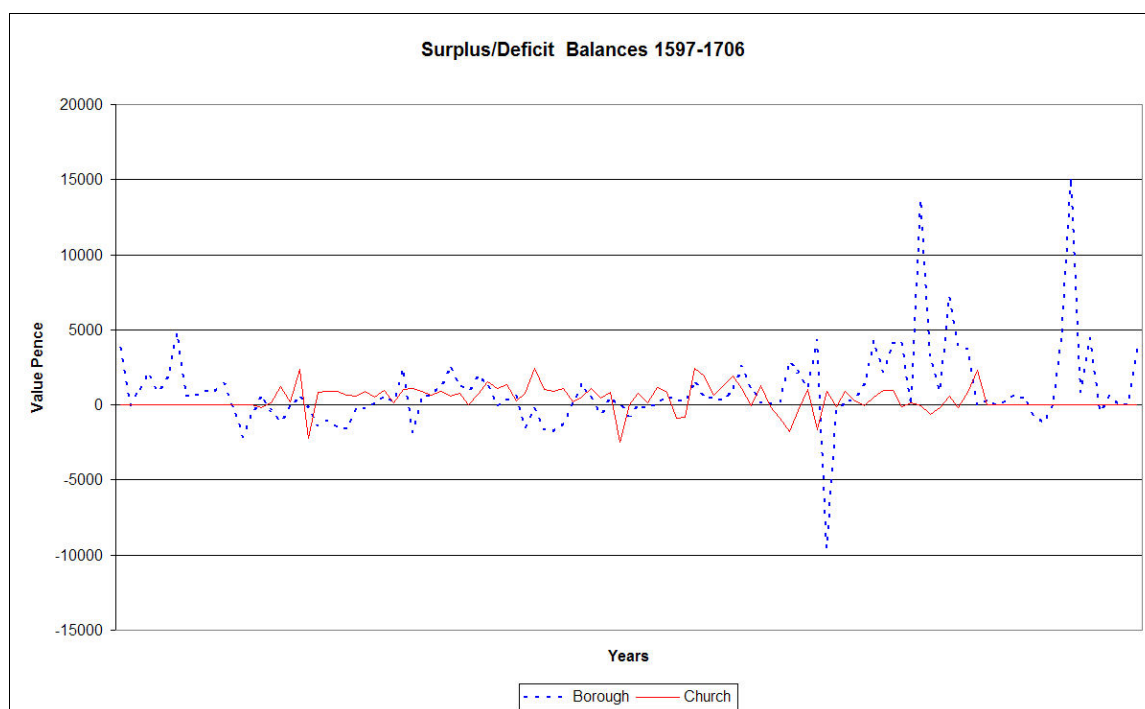
Expenditure for the Portreeve would be costs of administering the borough, such as the attendance of the steward, court costs, food, drink and gloves for the fair-days plus assorted costs of the labour for erecting and operating the market stalls. More general expenses for maintenance of the highways and bridges, apparently only within the borough, the costs of the supply of water via pumps and wells and the paving and cleansing of the streets. There are very few entries for any repairs of the borough houses, which would indicate that such was the responsibility of the tenant. The cost of repairs and improvements to the Town Hall and clock, the costs for bull baiting and the supply and repairs to the 'cucking' stool or tumbrel are regular entries; the latter is not for over use but a fine for the lack of care or supply of a means of punishment.

Without substantially breaking down the account of the churches income<sup>18</sup>, to refocus the actual yearly income, it would be difficult to form a view on the proportion of the annual income that was directed to cover aid to travellers. The expenses recorded being the actual years costs will be a better source on which to make a cost comparison of how the church finances managed what was a largely unpredictable expense.

The borough account was stable in its operation, recording actual receipts in the year they occurred and similarly the expenses for the given year. The income from the market or fair would have been collected on the day giving, little opportunity for non-payment. Although the Portreeve did have arrears on their account this was from property rentals and some took many years to balance out. At the end of the year, the account was balanced and the surplus or deficit transferred into the town stock.

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<sup>18</sup> The church account suffered constantly from under-collection at the gathers, subsequent payments of the debt are then recorded in the year it is paid. This is a reflection of the accounting style of the period where a modern profit and loss is not being recognised. The consequence is a fluctuating income flow that would need to be rebalanced to form a true reflection of the actual yearly income due. Therefore the calculation is made on monies received per year as recorded in the account books.



**Chart 1; Surplus or Deficit account of Church and Borough 1597-1706 (annually)**

From the extraction shown in Table 8 it can be seen that the income for the borough was relatively steady and overall the borough made a surplus in twelve of the sixteen - five year aggregates and the remaining periods losses were not substantial. The church had a surplus in ten of the periods. It would appear from this that there was not an overwhelming financial requirement to use the borough finances to relieve any financial pressure on the church, Chart 1.

The payments made for aid as a percentage rose above 4% in only three of the sixteen periods in the borough and only once for the church: The overall averages being 0.03 and 0.6% respectively. On a cost per person aided the borough gave an average of 2.9 pence and the church 3.7 pence over the period. The actual value of payments would appear to be totally arbitrary, no obvious method of calculation is apparent indeed some amounts paid, in particular to groups, would hardly provide for minimum sustenance<sup>19</sup>. There are examples of specific aid whereby a householder is paid to supply effectively 'Bed & Breakfast' to a traveller. The sum paid in these cases is a greater amount than that paid direct to a traveller thus the presumption must be that in the majority of cases the aid given was not sufficient to provide both shelter and food '*...1661; Paid John Rogers from quartering of four travellers which required us by the King's orders..44d..*' [for 4 people] as opposed to '*...1627; Gave unto 4 poor people..4d...*' [for 4 people]<sup>20</sup>. This leaves a picture of travellers having to find shelter where it can be found, not a scenario to endear them to the population.

<sup>19</sup> If some form of judgement was being made by the almoner it was not apparent as some payments made to individuals far exceeded the amount paid to groups of 10 people. It may be a form of public relations in action, spreading the idea that large groups of itinerants would not be welcome in this parish and any payment reflected this, but this has to be conjecture as there is no supporting evidence of any system of allocating monies.

<sup>20</sup> These two examples are typical of the difference in payments direct to a recipient and those paid to a third party for 'quartering'.

Org	Period	Years	Income PENCE	Expend PENCE	Balance	Surplus or deficit	aid PENCE	No. of People	% of income	% of Expenses
Church	P 002	1597-1602	29428.5	19983.5	9445	P	12	2	0.041%	0.060%
Church	P 003	1603-07	27955	20165.5	7789.5	P	58	47	0.207%	0.288%
Church	P 004	1608-13	38852.5	40205	-1352.5	L	60	3	0.154%	0.149%
Church	P 01	1614-18	45738.5	47962.5	-2224	L	66	3	0.144%	0.138%
Church	P 02	1619-23	34294	38847.5	-4553.5	L	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Church	P 03	1624-28	32571	31110	1461	P	120	5	0.368%	0.386%
Church	P 04	1629-33	43340	37079	6261	P	66	24	0.152%	0.178%
Church	P 05	1634-38	44225	39554.5	4670.5	P	113	24	0.256%	0.286%
Church	P 06	1639-43	26712	31207	-4495	L	64	23	0.240%	0.205%
Church	P 07	1644-48	23098.5	22997	101.5	P	54	32	0.234%	0.235%
Church	P 08	1649-53	15229	15732.5	-503.5	L	145	100	0.952%	0.922%
Church	P 09	1654-58	30050.5	27279.5	2771	P	12	4	0.040%	0.044%
Church	P 10	1659-63	27659	22621.5	5037.5	P	94	22	0.340%	0.416%
Church	P 11	1664-68	34829.5	30412	4417.5	P	352	105	1.011%	1.157%
Church	P 12	1669-73	62735.5	65105.5	-2370	L	323	93	0.515%	0.496%
Church	P 13	1674-78	46916.5	38597	8319.5	P	408	105	0.870%	1.057%
Church	P 14	1679-83	83986.5	58857	25129.5	P	461	119	0.549%	0.783%
Church	P 15	1684-88	81728.5	65939	15789.5	P	1434	276	1.755%	2.175%
Church	P 16	1689-93	29377	27619	1758	P	1623	390	5.525%	5.876%
Church	P 17	1694-98	50394.5	32635.5	17759	P	2238	719	4.441%	0.000%
Church	P 18	1699-1703	44534.5	39161.5	5373	P	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Church	P 19	1704-08	24503	20825.5	3677.5	P	24	2	0.098%	0.115%
		Total	878159	773897	104262		7727	2098	0.495%	0.565%
							Average cost per person 3.68d			
Borough	P 002	1597-1602	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 003	1603-07	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 004	1608-13	6884	6895.5	-11.5	L	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 01	1614-18	13108.5	10677	2431.5	P	130	19	0.992%	1.218%
Borough	P 02	1619-23	10695	6753.5	3941.5	P	97	55	0.907%	1.436%
Borough	P 03	1624-28	9342	5559.5	3782.5	P	256	140	2.740%	4.605%
Borough	P 04	1629-33	11170.75	7414.5	3756.25	P	84	56	0.752%	1.133%
Borough	P 05	1634-38	11453.5	6752.5	4701	P	102	83	0.891%	1.511%
Borough	P 06	1639-43	10828.5	5406.5	5422	P	121	107	1.117%	2.238%
Borough	P 07	1644-48	7709	4315.5	3393.5	P	168	131	2.179%	3.893%
Borough	P 08	1649-53	9636.5	10439	-802.5	L	58	38	0.602%	0.556%
Borough	P 09	1654-58	11729	8981	2748	P	51	25	0.435%	0.568%
Borough	P 10	1659-63	13303	6486	6817	P	210	86	1.579%	3.238%
Borough	P 11	1664-68	13812.5	15413	-1600.5	L	242	79	1.752%	1.570%
Borough	P 12	1669-73	9014	9217	-203	L	318	126	3.528%	3.450%
Borough	P 13	1674-78	9037	6485	2552	P	485	178	5.367%	7.479%
Borough	P 14	1679-83	9454	9152	302	P	425	86	4.495%	4.644%
Borough	P 15	1684-88	10287	6929	3358	P	1073	120	10.431%	0.000%
Borough	P 16	1689-93	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 17	1694-98	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 18	1699-1703	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
Borough	P 19	1704-08	0	0	0	U	0	0	0.000%	0.000%
		Total	167464.3	126876.5	40587.75		3820	1329	0.025%	0.0250%
							Average cost per person 2.87d			

**Table 8; The incomes and expenditures showing % effects of payments to travellers  
(5 year aggregates)**

**Note: Col 1, organisation; Col 2, ID of period; Col 3, year; Col 4, Income in pence; Col 5, Expenditure in pence; Col 6, surplus/deficit; Col 7, ID; Col 8, Aid paid to travellers in pence; Col 9, Number of people aided in the period; Col 10, % of the income; Col 11, % of expenses.**

Name	Official Position	Residence	Ex Abbey lands
Keene, Henry	Gov of Goods [1608-1611]	Philham [1628]	Yes
Bremmacombe, Frances	Church Warden' [1597]	Galsham [1628]	Yes
Cole, Richard	Church Warden' [1613]	Kernstone [1625+8]	Yes
Deyman, Lawrence	Gov of Goods [1600-1604]	Marcedon + Harton [1628]	Yes
Burden, Nicholas	Gov of Goods [1600-1604]	Harton + Galsham [1625+8]	Yes
Perce, John	Church Warden' [1611] [+ Gabriell Piers]	Lee [1628]	Yes
Luttrell, Nicholas	Gov of Goods [1608-1611]	Hartland Abbey or attached property	Yes
Husband, Marten	Church Warden' [1605/6]	Greenlake [1625]	Yes
Velly John gent	Gov of Goods [1612-1615]	Galsham Farm [1625]	Yes
Colwill, Thomas, gent	Gov of Goods [1604-1607]	Elmscott [1625+8]	No
Blagdon, William	Port Reeve	Milford [1625+8]	No
Yeo, Justinian	Port Reeve	Pitt [1625+8]	No
Bagelhole, William	Port Reeve	Harton [1628]	No
Deyman, William	Gov of Goods [1616-1620] + Petty Constable	Harton	No
Yeo, Charles	Gov of Goods [1616-1620] + Port Reeve	Harton [1625+8]	No
Blagdon, Peter	Gov of Goods [1600-1604]	Blagdon [1625+8]	No
Prust, Thomas	Gov of Goods [1600-1604] + [1612-1615] + Church Warden' [1613]	Natcott [1625+8]	No
Tooker, Lawrence-wife	Gov of Goods [1608-1611] [husband]	Longfurlong [1625+8]	No
Prust, George	Gov of Goods [1604-1607]	Lutsford [1625+8]	No
Cleverdon, Robert	Gov of Goods [1604-1607] + Church Warden' [1600]	Titchberry [1628]	No
Hooper, William	Gov of Goods [1596-1599]	Highford [1625+8]	No
Docton, Thomas	Gov of Goods [1616-1620]	Welsford	No
Hamlyn, Anthony-wife	Church Warden' [1614] [+ Oliver Nicholls] [husband]	Trellick [1625+8]	No
Sherme, Simon	Gov of Goods [1612-1615] + Church Warden [1599]	Cheristow	No
Row, Frances	Gov of Goods [1608-1611] + Church Warden' [1598]	Hescott [1625+8]	No
Prust, Hugh	Gov of Goods [1612-1615]	Gorvin [1625+8]	No
Nicholl, Hugh	Gov of Goods [1604-1607]	Brownsham [1625+8]	No
Carwithy, John	Church Warden' [1607]	Longfurlong [1625+8]	No
Cornish, Hugh	Church Warden' [1597]	Natcott [1625+8]	No
Vine, Henry	Church Warden' [1597] [+ John Moyse]	Eddistone [1625+8]	No
Galsworthy, John	Church Warden' [1599] [+ William Dark]	Moore [1625+8]	No
Snow, William-wife	Church Warden' [1600] [husband]	Wellsford [1625] + Tosberry [1628]	No
Prust, John	Church Warden' [1601]	Elmscott [1625+8]	No
Heard, Henry	Church Warden' [1602]	Milford [1625+8]	No
Cann's, Leonard-wife	Church Warden' [1602] [husband]	Norton [1625+8]	No
Docton, Thomas	Church Warden' [1604]	Welsford	No
Atkin, William	Gov of Goods [1596-1599]	Blegberry [1625+8]	No
Downing, Thomas	Church Warden' [1605/6]	Milford [1625]	No
Crang, Richard	Port Reeve	Harton [1566] + [1625+8]	No
Dungey Thomas	Church Warden' [1607]	Thorry [1625+8]	No
Colwill, William	Church Warden' [1608]	Southole [1628]	No
Nicholl, John of Etson	Church Warden' [1608]	Etson	No
Nicholl, John	Church Warden' [1608]	Harton [1625+8]	No
May, Phillip	Church Warden' [1609] [+ Giles Shapley]	Netherton [1625+8]	No
Sherme, William	Church Warden' [1610]	Cheristow [1625+8]	No
Prust, William	Church Warden' [1610]	Elmscott [1625+8]	No
Cornish, John	Church Warden' [1612]	Pitt [1625+8]	No
Blagdon John	Church Warden' [1612]	Blagdon [1625+8]	No
Seccombe, John Gent	Gov of Goods [1596-1599]	Gawlish [1566] + Fattacott [1625+8]	No
Perce, Robert	Church Warden' [1604]	Norton [1625+8]	No
Holman, John-wife	Church Warden' [1603] [+ Barnabas Hatherly] [husband]	Unknown	
Cooke, George	Church Warden' [1601]	Unknown	
Yeo Richard	Gov of Goods [1596-1599]	Harton	No

**Table 9: Identified residences of officials named in accounts (Taken from the Church Seating Plan 1613<sup>21</sup>)**

<sup>21</sup> St Nectan's: The Question of a Seat, 2004. S.J. Hobbs

The results from the tabulations and analysis of the data indicate that the church and the borough each undertook their fiscal responsibilities; that the apparent collaboration possibly only extended in dealing with travellers. In other respects it is possible to show instances, within both sets of accounts, where co-operation is lacking especially in the church paying the borough ground rent for its properties within the borough boundaries<sup>22</sup>. This trade should give a balancing credit/debit entry within the accounts but there are omissions on both sides.

Therefore this interpretation of collaboration could show a cosmetic fiscal operation whereby the 'parish' is meeting its liability in the way that is cost effective to its residents, especially those faced with payments of rates. What circumstances would allow such collaboration to take place?

Management of the parish was directed by a compact complexity of families of status covering a wide spectrum of interests. The majority of the manor land and borough holding was under the control of a steward on behalf of the four absentee landlords, the old monastic property had passed into the possession of a private owner. The day to day management involved a combination of the steward, church and borough officials. The twenty-four 'Governors of Goods of the Church' were mainly from agricultural backgrounds whereas the borough would appear to have burgesses as its governing body. There was some cross-over particularly in the churchwardens appointed as the borough was well represented. The succession of father to son is well recorded by the use of 'junior' appended to entries in both sets of accounts.

At the root of this governing group is an intricacy of marriages, very few of the families recorded in the accounts were not inter-married often over many generations. New families entering the parish that had or achieved a status soon became part of the inter-relationships<sup>23</sup> and this situation continued well into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

It could be argued that Hartland presented a peculiarity in terms of the 'management' of the parish. That over time the effect of the Dynham family making their principal residence at Nutwell<sup>24</sup>, on the Exe estuary, leaving Hartland vacant from a landlord aspect: That the Abbat family having purchased the dissolved religious house did not exert as much in the way of influence as may be expected, especially in view of the deeply entrenched localised families, some of considerable wealth, such as the Prust, Prideaux, Velly, Arundel & Bouchiers. It is interesting to note that in the early period covered by this investigation that the tenants of farms forming the landholding of the dissolved Abbey did not provide many people who occupied a position as an official, Table 9. This possibly could reflect the system of land leases in operation with three lifetimes being a standard format. Therefore the tenants had not achieved the same status as on property held under the Dynhams and which was increasingly being sold off in portions to its tenants by the heirs of Lord Dynham; the 'new' owners achieving an increase in standing and therefore becoming eligible to hold office.

This combination of circumstances had produced a parish that had become familiar to being administered by its own 'minor' gentry elite and that through this system had developed a method

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<sup>22</sup> The church owned a farm called Troy and a holding called Colehouse within the borough on which a ground rent was payable. Both these properties and a third called Staddon were the subject of protracted enquiries at the dissolution into the Abbot failing to disclose the full extent of the property of the Abbey. It was many years before these properties reappeared on the church books ostensibly at the end of their fixed tenancy agreements?

<sup>23</sup> In St Nectan's: The question of a Seat, I have explored the family connections of all the people seated within the church as indicated on the seating plan of 1613. The intermarriages of all families are exceptional but those within the upper echelons are such that they form a consistent theme through the periods up until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. At this point the disposal of lands and estates is such that many 'new' families also enter the parish and proceed to take up positions of authority thus a weakening of that dominant group, being replaced by a more fluid group of locally influential people.

<sup>24</sup> Karen Jankulak gives a detailed breakdown of the Dynham family and its English/Brittany estates up until the 1501 division; *The Medieval Cult of St Pertoc*, Boydell, 2000.

of negating direct taxation where and when possible: That payments to itinerant travellers is an identifiable residue of such collaboration.



## Appendix 1:

### A Brief Calendar of Events:

1558 Act of Supremacy  
1572 Establishment of Overseers of the Poor  
1592 Relief of Soldiers Act.  
1601 Poor Relief Act amended  
1603 Death of Elizabeth I.  
1618 Protestant riots across northern Europe.  
1620 Pilgrim Fathers arrived in America.  
1625/29 Denmark, Holland and England rose against Catholic Spain.  
1625 James I died.  
1627/8 Irish problem  
1629 Ship tax introduced.  
1639 England fought against Scotland.  
1640 Confirmation of 1601 Poor Relief Act.  
1641 October- Catholics rose in Ulster and massacred the protestant settlers.  
1641 The Scottish army had withdrawn and the English Army was being disbanded.  
1641 The troops in Ireland were being stood down.  
1642 English and Scottish armies land in Ireland.  
1642 Start of English Civil war.  
1643 Battle of Stratton.  
1645 Siege of Bristol  
1645 Surrender of Barnstaple.  
1646 Battle of Torrington.  
1646 Hartland clubmen rise.  
1649 Cromwell landed in Ireland.  
1650 England defeated Scottish army at Dunbar.  
1651/ 54 Anglo Dutch war  
1651 Long Parliament dissolved  
1651 The long Parliament  
1660 Restoration of Monarchy, Charles II.  
1662 Act of Uniformity.  
1662 Poor Relief Act (division of parishes, Bastardy, vagrancy, settlement)  
1663/ 67 Anglo Dutch war  
1672/ 78 Anglo Dutch war.  
1673 Test Act bans Catholics from holding office.  
1678 Titus Oates Popish plot.  
1685 Monmouth Rebellion.  
1688 William & Mary.  
1689 War with France.  
1696 Settlement Certificates regulation strengthened.

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