

Saving the Souls of Medieval London

**Perpetual Chantries at St Paul's Cathedral,
c.1200-1548**

Marie-Hélène Rousseau

Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West

General Editors

Brenda Bolton, Anne J. Duggan, and

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About the volume

St Paul's Cathedral stood at the centre of religious life in medieval London. It was the mother church of the diocese, a principal landowner in the capital and surrounding countryside, and a theatre for the enactment of events of national importance. The cathedral was also a powerhouse of commemoration and intercession, where prayers and requiem masses were offered on a massive scale for the salvation of the living and the dead. This spiritual role of St Paul's Cathedral was carried out essentially by the numerous chantry priests working and living in its precinct. Chantries were pious foundations, through which donors, clerks or lay, male or female, endowed priests to celebrate intercessory masses for the benefit of their souls. At St Paul's Cathedral, they were first established in the late twelfth century and, until they were dissolved in 1548, they contributed greatly to the daily life of the cathedral. They enhanced the liturgical services offered by the cathedral, increased the number of the clerical members associated with it, and intensified relations between the cathedral and the city of London.

Using the large body of material from the cathedral archives, this book investigates the chantries and their impacts on the life, services and clerical community of the cathedral, from their foundation in the early thirteenth century to the dissolution. It demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of these pious foundations and the various contributions they made to medieval society; and sheds light on the men who played a role which, until the abolition of the chantries in 1548, was seen to be crucial to the spiritual well-being of medieval London.

*To my grand-mothers Simone Ouellet Rousseau
and Yvette Goulet Rousseau*

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Perpetual Chantries at St Paul's Cathedral, c.1200–1548

MARIE-HÉLÈNE ROUSSEAU



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List of Abbreviations

<i>Alumni</i>	John Venn and J.A. Venn, <i>Alumni Cantabrigienses. A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge from the Earliest Times to 1900</i> (3 vols, Cambridge, 1922–1954)
<i>BRUC</i>	A.B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge</i> (Cambridge, 1963)
<i>BRUO</i>	A.B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to 1500</i> (3 vols, Oxford, 1957–1959)
<i>BRUO, 1501–1540</i>	A.B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford A.D. 1501 to 1540</i> (Oxford, 1974)
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
<i>Chamber Accounts</i>	Betty R. Masters (ed.), <i>Chamber Accounts of the Sixteenth Century</i> , London Record Society, 20 (London, 1984)
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>CSPD</i>	C.S. Knighton (ed.), <i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Edward VI (1547–1553) Preserved in the Public Record Office</i> (London, 1992)
Dugdale	Sir William Dugdale, <i>The History of St. Paul's Cathedral</i> . With a continuation and additions by H. Ellis (London, rep. 1818)
<i>Fasti I</i>	John Le Neve, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066–1300</i> , vol. I: <i>St Paul's, London</i> , compiled by Diana E. Greenway (London, 1968)
<i>Fasti II</i>	John Le Neve, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300–1541</i> , vol. V: <i>St Paul's, London</i> , compiled by Joyce M. Horn (London, 1963)
<i>Fasti III</i>	John Le Neve, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541–1857</i> , vol. I: <i>St Paul's, London</i> , compiled by Joyce M. Horn (London, 1969)
GL	Guildhall Library, London
HC	Husting Court

- Hennessy George Leydon Hennessy, *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (London, 1898)
- Kitching C.J. Kitching (ed.), *London and Middlesex Chantry Certificate, 1548*, London Record Society, 16 (London, 1980)
- Letter-Book* R.R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall* (11 vols, London, 1899–1912)
- Letters & Papers* *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* (21 vols, London, 1862–1932)
- LMA London Metropolitan Archives
- McHardy A.K. McHardy (ed.), *The Church in London, 1375–1392*, London Record Society, 13 (London: The Society, 1977)
- Newcourt Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (2 vols, London, 1708–1710)
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004)
- Sharpe R.R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of Wills proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London, 1250–1688* (2 vols, London, 1889–1890)
- Sudbury* R.C. Fowler and Claude Jenkins (eds.), *Registrum Simonis de Sudbiria Diocesis Londoniensis, AD 1362–75* (2 vols, London, 1927, 1938)
- TNA The National Archives, UK
- Wriothesley Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England during the Reigns of the Tudors from A.D. 1485 to 1559*. Edited by William Douglas Hamilton, Camden, 11, 20 (2 vols, Westminster: Nichols, 1875–1877)

Introduction

St Paul's Cathedral stood at the centre of religious life in medieval London.¹ From the time of its foundation in 604, its community of secular clergy offered continual rounds of worship for the glory of God. The cathedral served as the bishop of London's principal seat and the mother church of the diocese, acting as a flagship in liturgy, music and visual splendours for all other religious institutions of the diocese of London.² Historical circumstances had denied St Paul's a metropolitan status, but because of London's particular standing as the kingdom's nucleus of economic and political activities, the cathedral's prestige extended beyond the borders of the diocese.³ The Dean and Chapter counted among the principal landowners in the capital and surrounding countryside, and the cathedral, over 600 feet in length and one of Europe's greatest Gothic churches, functioned as the theatre for the enactment of events of national importance. Every day Londoners and visitors from the kingdom and abroad entered the cathedral for a myriad of pious, professional, entertainment and educational purposes.⁴ The medieval cathedral also played yet another role: St Paul's served as a powerhouse of commemoration and intercession, where prayers and requiem masses were offered on a vast scale for the salvation of the living and the dead.

This spiritual role of St Paul's was carried out essentially by the numerous chantry priests working and living within its precinct. Unlike other members of the cathedral staff, whose services at St Paul's were supported by the cathedral's original endowment and whose positions were part of its bureaucracy and personnel, these chantry priests drew their livelihoods exclusively from private

¹ St Paul's has been the subject of a magisterial study undertaken under the editorship of Derek Keene, Arthur Burns and Andrew Saint (eds), *St Paul's. The Cathedral Church of London, 604–2004* (New Haven/London, 2004).

² The medieval diocese of London covered the city of London, the counties of Middlesex and Essex and the Hertfordshire deanery of Braughing.

³ Pamela Taylor, 'Foundation and Endowment: St Paul's and the English Kingdoms, 604–1087', in Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's*, pp. 5–16, esp. p. 5.

⁴ For a discussion of the various roles and functions of St Paul's in the Middle Ages, see Derek Keene, 'From Conquest to Capital: St Paul's c.1100–1300', in Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's*, pp. 17–32; and Caroline M. Barron and Marie-Hélène Rousseau, 'Cathedral, City and State, 1300–1540', in *ibid.*, pp. 33–44.

funds bequeathed to the cathedral by individual donors. Convinced of the general and specific benefits of the celebration of the Eucharist, these donors invested large sums of money, farm lands or city properties expressly to increase the number of priests at the cathedral celebrating daily masses. In return for their financial contributions, the donors were recognised as founders and main beneficiaries of the religious services performed by these priests, and were given the opportunity to determine the priests' selection process, define their duties and responsibilities, and appoint the patrons who would oversee their chantry foundations.⁵ At least eighty-four individual chantries were established in the cathedral from the late twelfth century onwards with the intent that they would last in perpetuity.⁶ Although a minority disappeared and others were amalgamated, these perpetual chantries contributed substantially to the daily life of the cathedral by enhancing its liturgical services, increasing the numbers of priests, and intensifying the relations with the city of London.

Chantries owed their existence to a combination of Christian tenets that had long-established roots in the Middle Ages. The teachings of the Church held that while Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the Cross made atonement for man's original sin, it did not redeem Christians from the venial or minor sins they committed during their lifetimes. Unless they atoned for these sins, Christians would be steered away from the gates of heaven towards the fires of hell, where they were doomed to languish for eternity. The Church through its dispensation of the sacraments, however, offered avenues for salvation. The sacrament of penance, especially, enabled the reconciliation of sinners with both God and the Church.⁷ While absolution had to be achieved on earth, satisfaction could be undertaken in the next life, if not entirely fulfilled in the course of this one.⁸ The place where sins could be atoned and souls cleansed was purgatory: a 'third place' between heaven and hell.⁹ Although collectively depicted as

⁵ The key study on these foundations in England remains Kathleen Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge, 1965).

⁶ In addition there were temporary chantries where incumbents celebrated masses at St Paul's for a specific number of years. These are not included in this study, since these incumbents did not become members of the cathedral clergy.

⁷ Kenan Osborne, 'Reconciliation', in Richard P. McBrien (ed.), *The Harper-Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York, 1995) pp. 1083–7.

⁸ Clive Burgess, 'A Fond Thing Vainly Invented': An Essay on Purgatory and Pious Motive in Later Medieval England', in S.J. Wright (ed.), *Parish, Church and People. Local Studies in Lay Religion, 1350–1750* (London, 1988), pp. 56–84, esp. p. 63.

⁹ For a historical account on the theological development of the concept of purgatory, see Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*. Transl. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, 1984). Le Goff argued that since the noun *purgatorium* did not exist before the late twelfth century, purgatory as a place was not yet born. R.W. Southern places the development of the idea of

hell with agonising fires, purgatory came to embody an extension of earth and likewise an expansion of this lifetime.¹⁰ The length and intensity of torments varied according to the sins perpetrated. It was possible to ease post-mortem agony by carrying out good works on earth. These could take many different forms, including prayers, almsgiving, fasting, and the sacrament of the altar (the mass).¹¹ The development of another Catholic tenet, the Communion of Saints, also offered assistance.¹² The prayers and suffrages of Christians on earth could be directed towards gathering the intercession of the saints to help Christian souls in purgatory. The three components of the Church were interlinked: the Church militant on earth, the Church suffering in purgatory and the Church triumphant in heaven, and their contacts were reciprocal.¹³ Alongside prayers and suffrages, the offering of the Eucharist soon became the preferred instrument for the cult of the dead, and anniversaries provided privileged occasions to intercede for them. In 211 Tertullian alluded to the observance of the anniversary day of the departed, and St Cyprian recorded the offering of the Eucharist for the repose of the soul of a recently deceased Christian.¹⁴ St Augustine and Gregory the Great both contributed greatly to the practice of praying for the dead by asserting the mutual solidarity of all Christians, the living as well as the dead.¹⁵ Because priests were the only ones authorised to celebrate mass, the Church soon dominated the domain of intercessory commemoration, which contributed to its increasing prosperity.¹⁶ Hope for spiritual returns prompted countless pious foundations and donations to the Church in the Middle Ages. Kings and magnates founded great abbeys throughout Christendom to redeem their sins by channelling continuous prayers performed by monks.¹⁷ Although monasteries were especially associated with the cult of the dead, they never enjoyed a monopoly over intercessory practices. The same intention accounted

purgatory about a century earlier; see his review of Le Goff's work, 'Between Heaven and Hell', *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 June 1982, pp. 651–2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 652.

¹¹ Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 266; Burgess, "A Fond Thing Vainly Invented", p. 66.

¹² For the importance and development in the Middle Ages of the concept of communion of saints, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Purgatory, the Communion of Saints, and Medieval Change', *Viator*, 20 (1989), pp. 61–84.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁴ Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 47; Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantry*, p. 2.

¹⁵ McGuire, 'Purgatory, the Communion of Saints', pp. 70, 73; Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 66–9, 90–93.

¹⁶ Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 135.

¹⁷ Clive Burgess, 'London Parishes: Development in Context', in Richard Britnell (ed.), *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages* (Stroud, 1998), pp. 151–74, esp. p. 156; R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), Chapter 6.

for the founding of numerous colleges and benefactions within parish churches staffed by secular priests.¹⁸ The less well-off in society also made contributions to the Church: in numerous religious institutions, small landowners and townsmen financed the provision of lights and lamps in return for spiritual benefits.¹⁹ They could also join guilds, whose members, men and women, lay and religious, were bound together by religious duties. Found in England from at least the late tenth century, these guilds provided funeral rites and commemorative masses for their members after death.²⁰

This quest for continuous prayers for the living and the dead shaped the religious landscape of medieval London.²¹ By the late twelfth century, in addition to St Paul's Cathedral and a parochial network of more than one hundred churches encompassed within a square mile area, London housed St Martin le Grand, a pre-Conquest collegiate foundation, the English headquarters for two crusading orders (the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller), and a number of Augustinian houses, such as the priories of Holy Trinity, St Bartholomew, St Katherine by the Tower, and St Mary Bishopsgate, which were all served by canons. The thirteenth century witnessed London's enthusiastic reception of the newly created orders of friars and the installation of six mendicant communities. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, wealthy Londoners endowed colleges, such as Pountney's College and Whittington's College, where secular priests prayed for them and performed complementary good works. While these various foundations reflected changing trends in devotional practices, they nevertheless responded to a common goal: to increase the liturgical provisions generated in the city while funnelling some of that devotional energy towards the salvation of the founders' souls. Others shared the same ambitions as these founders, but rather than establishing new houses, they invested in existing ones to support their liturgical activities. In return for donations, these benefactors were commemorated by religious services, such as anniversaries or obits that re-enacted funeral masses, usually on the anniversary dates of the founders' deaths.

¹⁸ For a reappraisal of collegiate churches, see Clive Burgess, 'An Institution for All Seasons: The Late Medieval English College', in Clive Burgess and Martin Heale (eds), *The Late Medieval College and Its Context* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 3–27.

¹⁹ David Postles, 'Lamps, Lights and Layfolk: "Popular" Devotion before the Black Death', *Journal of Medieval History*, 25 (1999), pp. 97–114, esp. p. 105.

²⁰ Gervase Rosser, 'The Anglo-Saxon Gilds', in J. Blair (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: the Local Church in Transition, 950–1200* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 31–4, esp. p. 31.

²¹ The following is based on Barron's excellent introduction in Caroline M. Barron and Matthew Davies (eds), *The Religious Houses of London and Middlesex* (London, 2007), pp. 5–24.

By the late twelfth century, the first chantries were established at St Paul's Cathedral. By the mid-thirteenth century they were also founded in several monastic, collegiate and parochial churches in the capital, and became a characteristic feature of London's religious panorama in the later Middle Ages.²² Their emergence and popularity were the result of interlinked developments. On the one hand, by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries theological doctrines about the notion of purgatory, the sacrament of penance, and the belief in the efficacy of prayers increased the demand for the celebration of intercessory masses; while on the other hand, the availability of very large endowments required to found a religious house was declining. The appeal of chantries was not, however, due only to their affordability: while being within the means of a larger segment of the population, chantries were also the pious projects of magnates and kings who could and did fund other religious institutions. It has recently been proposed that it was the monastic incapacity to cope with the high demand for intercessory practices that propelled the chantries to the top rank of pious foundations.²³ Burdened by the weight of their obligations, monastic orders began regrouping the celebration of anniversaries and post-mortem commemorations. In response, founders explored other venues for pious provisions, especially by endowing chantries.²⁴ Because they were served by secular priests who, unlike monks, were not bound by monastic vows, chantries offered more flexibility to founders to shape their foundations according to their preferences. In addition to the daily celebration of liturgical tasks, they could add supplementary duties to the incumbents, such as distributing alms, teaching children, helping with the cure of souls and participating in the choir services. These extra-liturgical activities varied according to the founders' wishes, and the needs of the religious establishments and communities in which they were founded. The private and collective benefits of chantries were interlinked: while chantries appealed to the founders' preoccupations with their own salvation, they were additionally intended to contribute to the general welfare of society by securing grace on earth.²⁵ Accordingly, long after founders had died and their

²² Examples can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 80, 199; and in Sharpe, vol. 1, pp. 10, 14, 21, 23, 29.

²³ Howard Colvin, 'The Origin of Chantries', *Journal of Medieval History*, 26 (2000), pp. 163–73.

²⁴ David Crouch, 'The Origin of Chantries: Some Further Anglo-Norman Evidence', *Journal of Medieval History*, 27/2 (2001), pp. 159–80. Crouch discusses the tradition of magnates patronising secular churches, such as collegiate churches, and sees them as precursors to chantry foundations.

²⁵ For a discussion of this, see Clive Burgess, 'St George's College, Windsor: Context and Consequence', in Nigel Saul (ed.), *St George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 63–96; *idem*, 'London, the Church and the Kingdom', in Matthew

memory was fading, chantries were maintained because of the contributions they made to society.

The sheer number of perpetual chantry foundations established at St Paul's offers a unique opportunity to scrutinise the contributions made by chantries, how they were influenced by, and in turn shaped, the cathedral, the roles played by the chantry priests within the cathedral church and precinct, and the efforts made over several centuries to maintain them. By the late twelfth century, when the earliest chantries were established in St Paul's, the cathedral was already a venerable institution, observing its own customs and rules based on the *institutio canonica* written by Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz (c.755).²⁶ St Paul's was one of the nine secular cathedrals of England that were staffed by secular clerics.²⁷ The bishop of London had his palace in the precinct and, throughout the centuries, many bishops played an active role in the affairs of the cathedral. The cathedral was organised on a prebendal system, with thirty canons who were granted part of the cathedral endowment, in the form of estates or parish churches, or in a fixed cash sum, to support them.²⁸ Only a small minority of these canons, however, were permanently resident at the cathedral. The daily management of the cathedral was the responsibility of the four dignitaries: the dean had cure of souls for the cathedral personnel, the treasurer was in charge of the plate and vestments, the precentor was responsible for the choir and the song-school, and the chancellor was the keeper of the seal and archives of St Paul's as well as the *magister scholarum*. By the twelfth century, the chancellor himself was not expected to teach; he had been replaced by a schoolmaster, but the supervision of the grammar school and the theology school remained his prerogative. By custom these last three offices – the treasurer, the precentor and the chancellor – ranked below the archdeacons of London, Essex, Middlesex and Colchester in the cathedral hierarchy. Although ranked immediately after the dean in terms of prestige, these four archdeacons exercised no authority within the cathedral. Junior officers, such as the sacristan, succentor, almoner and chamberlain, assisted

Davies and Andrew Prescott (eds), *London and The Kingdom. Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron. Proceedings of the 2004 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donington, 2008), pp. 98–117.

²⁶ Kathleen Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages. A Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1949), p. 9; Christopher Brooke, 'The Earliest Times to 1485', in W.R. Matthews and W.M. Atkins (eds), *A History of St Paul's Cathedral and the Men Associated with it* (London, 1957), pp. 1–99, esp. p. 12.

²⁷ The other eight were Salisbury, Lincoln, York, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, Chichester and Wells. In addition to these there were ten cathedrals served by monks and one by Augustinian canons.

²⁸ On the cathedral personnel and organisation, see Keene, 'From Conquest to Capital', pp. 17–32.

the four main officers in their tasks. The major part of the *opus Dei* was assumed by the minor clergy, whose organisation was unique to St Paul's.²⁹ There were thirty vicars choral, who were first appointed at the cathedral to act in the choir as deputies to the absent major canons. Earliest mentions of them date from the twelfth century and, having evolved into a formal body, by 1273 they lived in a common hall. Although in clerical orders, these vicars were not required to be ordained priests; thus they did not celebrate mass. This task was fulfilled instead by a body of twelve minor canons, whose origins were probably contemporary with the vicars. Chosen by the dean, the subdean had the leading position, and was followed by two minor canons bearing the unusual title of senior and junior cardinals in charge of disciplining their fellow minor canons and monitoring the choir services. At their induction, chantry chaplains joined the ranks of the minor clergy. Because they were priests, they were placed above the vicars choral in the cathedral hierarchy but below the minor canons, whose ancient origins gave them precedence.³⁰ None of these groups were members of the cathedral chapter, which was formed exclusively of the resident major canons.

The chantries at St Paul's merit a new investigation, not least because the main studies of these institutions were undertaken in the seventeenth century by Sir William Dugdale and in the nineteenth century by William Sparrow Simpson.³¹ The Guildhall Library now houses the cathedral archives, which contain numerous documents relating to chantries, such as foundation ordinances, accounts, tenement sales, inventories and records of chaplain appointments. Most are still in their original form, usually individual rolls of parchment, but some chantry documents were transcribed in cartularies.³² Unfortunately they were never copied into a single manuscript, a *liber cantariarum*, such as the one that exists for Lincoln Cathedral.³³ Moreover, these chantry documents do not cover the whole period in a consistent way. Post-thirteenth-century foundations are generally better documented than their earlier counterparts, but

²⁹ See Virginia Davis, 'The Lesser Clergy in the Later Middle Ages', in Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's*, pp. 157–61.

³⁰ William Sparrow Simpson (ed.), *Registrum Statutorum et Consuetudinum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Sancti Pauli Londinensis* (London, 1873), pp. 138–9.

³¹ Dugdale, pp. 18–28, 354–8, 391–2. William Sparrow Simpson, 'On a Newly-Discovered Manuscript Containing Statutes Compiled by Dean Colet for the Government of the Chantry Priests and Other Clergy in St Paul's Cathedral', *Archaeologia*, 52 (1890), pp. 145–74. Repr. in *idem*, *S. Paul's Cathedral and Old City Life* (London, 1894), pp. 97–124. St Paul's chantries were also studied in an MA dissertation by Nichola Gear, 'The Chantries of St Paul's Cathedral' (Royal Holloway, University of London, 1996).

³² GL Ms 25501; Ms 25502; Ms 25504; Ms 25505.

³³ Dorothy Owen, 'Historical Survey, 1091–1450', in Dorothy Owen (ed.), *A History of Lincoln Minster* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 112–63, esp. p. 149.

inconsistently: several documents relate to a single chantry, while others, founded in the same period, may be barely recorded. At different times, beginning in the mid-thirteenth century, the cathedral authorities drew up lists of chantries that provide details such as names of founders, places of worship, chaplains' names and wages, and endowments.³⁴ Information on the day-to-day managerial tasks carried out by the Dean and Chapter can be found in the surviving medieval Chapter Act Book covering the years 1411 to 1448.³⁵ For chantries on the eve of the Reformation, Dean Sampson's register (1536–1560) is a key source.³⁶ The registers of the bishops of London also refer to chantry foundations within their gift, as do London civic records for those in the mayor's care.³⁷ In addition, the wills of some founders and chaplains survive. Those of founders often contain regulations for the chantries they wished to found at St Paul's. These instructions should be treated with caution, however, as they testify to the founders' intentions, and not to their success in actually achieving their aims.³⁸ For example, Henry de Guldeford (d.1313) asked for a chantry of three priests, but his executors provided for only one chaplain.³⁹ In other instances, the projected chantries seem never to have seen the light of day. Although Dean Thomas Lisieux (d.1456) left provision for the establishment of a chantry to be endowed with the money he was owed by Henry VI, the chantry was never set up, presumably because the king never repaid his debt.⁴⁰ Royal sources also supply information about St Paul's chantries. In 1279, Edward I issued the statute *De viris religiosis*, usually known as the mortmain statute, which aimed to put an end to any unauthorised transfer of properties to institutions, called 'dead hands' because when lands or properties were given into them, the Crown could no longer levy feudal dues. Although the legislation was not exclusively aimed at the Church, it was the principal target.⁴¹ From 1299 onwards, royal licences were granted to by-pass this regulation. Chantry founders then sought

³⁴ GL Ms 25121/1954, Ms 25502, fols 100–101; Ms 25504, fols 93–93v., 127v.; Ms 25505, fols 65v.–66; Dugdale, pp. 310–36; Cambridge, University Library, Ms Ee 5.21.

³⁵ GL Ms 25513.

³⁶ GL Ms 25630/1.

³⁷ GL Ms 9531; Letter-Books (1272–1509), Journals (1416–1548) and Repertories (1495–1550) now kept at LMA.

³⁸ The limitations of the information to be obtained from wills are discussed in Clive Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in Michael Hicks (ed.), *Profit, Piety and The Professions in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 14–33.

³⁹ Sharpe, vol. 2, p. 233; GL Ms 25121/1754.

⁴⁰ TNA PROB 11/4, fols 56–58 and Brooke, 'Earliest Times', pp. 96–7.

⁴¹ Sandra Raban, *Mortmain Legislation and the English Church 1279–1500* (Cambridge/New York, 1982), p. 14.

these licences to alienate endowments to support their pious provisions, and there are surviving mortmain licences for eighteen chantries at St Paul's. More were presumably sought, but were not enrolled or have been lost.⁴² On the other hand, a handful of licences were granted for chantries for which there is no other evidence.⁴³ As with wills, mortmain licences may reveal intention rather than actual foundation.

This book investigates the chantries and their impact on the life, services and clerical community of the cathedral. The evidence assembled here demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of these pious foundations, and explores the contributions they made to the clerical and lay communities in which they were established. For the first time some light is shed on the men who played roles that, until the abolition of the chantries in 1548, were seen to be crucial to the spiritual well-being of medieval London.

⁴² In the foundation deed of 1386 (GL Ms 25121/1925), it is stated that John of Beauchamp had received a licence from Edward III to found a chantry at St Paul's, but the licence has not survived, nor is it enrolled.

⁴³ *CPR, 1377–1381*, p. 499; *CPR, 1422–9*, p. 269; *Letters & Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. 1, part 1, p. 827, no. 1804 [40].

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Chapter 1

Founding Chantries

As intercessory foundations, chantries had their roots in a system of beliefs and customs strongly established by the late twelfth century. Well before they took their place in the spectrum of commemorative options, endowments provided intercession to lessen the sufferings of souls in purgatory, in the forms of monastic prayers, anniversary masses, corporate masses, guild masses and even daily masses.¹ Chantries evolved from these customary practices sometime in the late twelfth century. The spontaneous and simultaneous nature of this evolution, however, renders it hard to pinpoint their first manifestations with any accuracy. Wood-Legh, the pioneer of chantry studies, suggested the college of four chaplains established at Marwell in Hampshire by Henry of Blois (d.1171), bishop of Winchester, as her candidate for the first chantry ever established on English soil.² Endowments provided for contemporary foundations at the cathedrals of Paris, Amiens, Rouen and Lichfield in the 1180s and 1190s.³ At St Paul's Cathedral, the close of the twelfth century was also the period when the earliest chantry foundations were established: the first was founded presumably in the 1180s with the money that Richard Foliot, former archdeacon of Colchester (d.1181), bequeathed to the Dean and Chapter for the maintenance of a chaplain who would pray for him and for all the faithful departed; while three others date from the 1190s.⁴ During his episcopacy (1189 × 1198), Richard Fitz Neal established a chantry of two chaplains to commemorate all the kings of England and the bishops of London.⁵ He also set up an altar dedicated to the Merovingian Queen

¹ Crouch, 'Origin of Chantries', p. 163; Colvin, 'Origin of Chantries', pp. 163–73.

² Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries*, p. 4. Crouch suggested that this particular foundation should be seen as a prototype rather than a full-fledged chantry foundation, but agrees that the late twelfth century was the period when chantries first took form; 'Origin of Chantries', pp. 174–7.

³ Colvin, 'Origin of Chantries', p. 165; Crouch, 'Origin of Chantries', p. 177; Grégoire Eldin, 'Les chapellenies à Notre-Dame de Paris (XIIe–XVIe siècles). Recherches historiques et archéologiques' (Thesis, École nationale des chartes, 1994), vol. 1, p. 44.

⁴ GL Ms 25121/160.

⁵ Gibbs, Marion (ed.), *Early Charters of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul*, Camden, 3rd series, 58 (London, 1939), no. 186.