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**A service for the dead: the form and function of the anniversary
in late medieval Bristol**

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A service for the dead: the form and function of the Anniversary in late medieval Bristol

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Introduction

Precise appraisal of the influence exercised by the late medieval church on the lives of English men and women is precluded by want of evidence. Aspects of religious belief and practice may, however, be examined with profit; these include the services commonly commissioned to mitigate the purgatorial ordeal that all souls, save saints, had in store.¹ While the living undoubtedly established services for their own spiritual benefit, these were almost invariably *ad hoc* arrangements;² only commissions to function after death – *post obit* – may be examined in any detail as their discharge depended upon written instruction. A number of *post obit* services repeated certain rites for considerable periods, if not in perpetuity. The most striking of these was the chantry, a provision for Mass to be celebrated daily at an altar within the beneficiary's parish church. But the anniversary was also very common. While the chantry has been the subject of sustained scrutiny,³ examination of the anniversary is long overdue. It will be undertaken here.

This study is restricted to a single location, late medieval and particularly 15th-century Bristol, for reasons which are twofold. Feasibility is perhaps the prime factor. Hardly less important is the availability of evidence. A reasonable number of contemporary wills may, by good fortune, be used in conjunction with invaluable archival material from Bristol's parishes.⁴ Some of these – St Ewen's, All Saints' and St John's – have Church Books which, although differing in bulk, offer an immensely rewarding melange of accounts, inventories, parish memoranda and liturgical detail.⁵ Most of Bristol's parishes also have collections of late medieval deeds relevant to the present study as many are concerned with properties devised by parishioners to support *post obit* services.⁶ Bristol, as perhaps the third or fourth largest town in late medieval England and as an international trading centre of considerable importance, may not be the best of exemplars when attempting to appraise the religious mores of late medieval Englishmen.⁷ Nevertheless, the relative abundance of its sources fully justifies concentrating on the town in this pilot study.

The form of the anniversary

Prefatory to detailed discussion, the anniversary's essentials should be outlined. The service was usually commissioned by individuals for the good of their soul. It was celebrated annually in the founder's parish church on the same two specified and consecutive days for a span of years commensurate with the founder's wishes or means. The service was usually conducted by the rector or vicar, assisted by the rest of the parish clergy and sometimes by priests from elsewhere. Liturgically it was, with few alterations, a repetition of the rites accompanying – or, more strictly, preceding – the interment of the body after death.⁸ This fundamental explains why anniversaries were frequently referred to as obits.⁹

The funeral service would begin on the afternoon of the day preceding interment with the Vespers of the Dead (known as the Placebo, after the word with which the service commenced).¹⁰ Early next morning, after the Matins and Lauds of the Dead (known as the Dirige), it was the custom in some circles to celebrate the Mass of the Trinity and the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After breakfast, a solemn high Mass of Requiem was celebrated, after which the burial service would be said and the body interred. The anniversary, while spreading over two days, saw the performance of both the Vespers and the Matins and Lauds – usually referred to in Bristol as the *exequies* – on the afternoon or evening of the first day. On the following morning a Requiem Mass was celebrated. Anniversaries, however, consisted of considerably more than *exequies* and a Mass. For the other practices which regularly accompanied funerals, like bell-ringing, candle-burning and alms-giving, were part and parcel of the observance.

But first impressions of the service vary considerably from source to source. Bristol's wills are often terse; mentioning many anniversaries, they offer but little detail. For example, in 1401 John Somerwell commissioned two chantries to run concurrently for four years in St Werburgh's.¹¹ He also asked for an anniversary to be kept for the good of his soul and his wife Alice's soul, simply specifying that the service was to last for twenty years and that 40s. be annually spent on it. In 1473, John Laynell, a parishioner of All Saints', left a will in which, in addition to a request for a ten-year chantry, were instructions for a ten-year anniversary on which his executors were annually to spend 13s. 4d.¹² And Elizabeth Cornwall's will, made in 1489 and indicating that the testatrix's loyalty was to the Hospital of St Mark, Bristol, may also be mentioned.¹³ It records that she left £20 to the Hospital so that an anniversary might be celebrated there for ever for her soul and the souls of her friends.

In other wills, however, anniversaries were commissioned which appear much more elaborate. To take one example, in 1454, William Pownam *alias* Bonham of St James' parish founded a perpetual chantry and prescribed an anniversary to be celebrated in perpetuity on 9 February.¹⁴ If rather less elaborate than the perpetual anniversaries prescribed by some of late medieval Bristol's citizens, like William Canynges and John Shipward, Pownam's service appears reasonably typical of the anniversaries prescribed by testators of obviously ample means.¹⁵ Chantry and anniversary alike were to be supported by rent accruing from property held by feoffees.¹⁶ Pownam requested that with the guidance of the parish priest or, failing that, the churchwardens of the parish, five secular chaplains were to attend the *exequies* and Requiem, each being paid 4d. for doing so. The parish clerk was to be paid 2s. for ringing the bells of the church. For proclaiming the anniversary in the town, the beadsman was to be paid 4d. In addition, Pownam left instructions that 18d. was to be spent on two wax candles to burn at the service and that 10s. in bread was to be distributed annually, a halfpenny loaf being given to each pauper.

Documentation surviving in Church Books and in parish deed collections often concerns anniversaries closely resembling Pownam's. Brief reference will be made to one service encountered in these sources, the anniversary established by Elizabeth Sharpe for her husband, John, herself and others, in St John's in 1471. Conveniently, both the St John's Church Book and parish deeds provide details.¹⁷ Elizabeth Sharpe enfeoffed a group of men (all or most of whom were parishioners of St John's) with a tenement and two vacant tofts in Bristol so that they and their heirs could annually hold an anniversary, 'by note', on the Monday following Palm Sunday – presumably meaning that the *exequies* and Mass were to be observed on the Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week. For discharging these the rector of St John's was to have 4d. and six priests were to have 2d. each for attending these offices. The parish clerk was to have 4d. for ringing two long peals of the church bells at the *exequies* and another at the Mass. The churchwardens were to have one silver penny each 'to offer at the Mass'. The beadsman of the

town was to have 4*d.* for publicly announcing the anniversary and 40 paupers were to have 40 loaves, each costing a farthing. Two wax candles were to be provided to burn about the hearse at the exequies and Mass each year. Elizabeth Sharpe also instructed, first, that any surplus accruing from the endowment be devoted to its maintenance and also to funding a priest celebrating in the Crowde of St John's.¹⁸ Second, that if St John's ever neglected the service for two years, the property and associated duties were to pass to St Stephen's church.

As a final example, the anniversary celebrated for Thomas and Joan Halleway in All Saints' merits consideration. The Halleways funded a perpetual chantry and anniversary from a single endowment established in the early 1450s: the detailed specifications for each service are in a municipal compilation, *The Little Red Book of Bristol*.¹⁹ Moreover, accounts were maintained by successive churchwardens of All Saints' to monitor the Halleways' endowment, a good series of which survives.²⁰ Thus, a clear impression may be derived both of the Halleways' intentions and of what was actually provided year by year. The anniversary was to be kept on the Tuesday after the Feast of St Lucy (13 December). On the eve, Placebo and Dirige were to be said 'by note' with twenty priests and two clerks in attendance; they were also to attend the Requiem. On its completion, the churchwardens were to pay each priest and clerk 4*d.* The friars were also to attend the exequies and Mass, the Franciscans receiving 6*s.* 8*d.* and each of the other three orders 3*s.* 4*d.* For ringing four peals on the day of the exequies 'from the hours of one to seven' and on the Tuesday a peal from nine to eleven, the parish clerk was to be paid 2*s.* For proclaiming the anniversary, the beadsman was to be paid 4*d.* The sum of 50*s.* was to be given to the poor at the Mass, with each who came receiving a penny; special care was to be taken, however, to give priority to those in most need. The Halleways' chantry priest and the vicar of All Saints' were to oversee the service. Moreover, the attendance of the civil authorities of Bristol was sought: the mayor was to be paid 6*s.* 8*d.* for being present, the sheriff 3*s.* 4*d.*, each bailiff 1*s.* 8*d.*, the town clerk 1*s.*, the sword bearer 4*d.*, and the sergeants sharing 1*s.* The vicar of All Saints' was to be paid 3*s.* 4*d.* annually for the diligent discharge of his duties and to encourage his benevolence toward both chantry and anniversary. The churchwardens of All Saints', who were to keep the accounts for the Halleways' chantry and anniversary, were each to be paid 6*s.* 8*d.* 'for their time and effectual service and diligence'.

The surviving accounts are striking testimony to successive churchwardens' diligence. They reveal that the Halleways' wishes were faithfully observed, although financial constraint apparently made for less extravagant celebration than that prescribed. It took time to establish the service fully. Payment to the mayor and civic dignitaries implies their presence year by year, but the Halleways would have been disappointed by the number of priests attending. In 1464, for instance, only six were present.²¹ Attendance improved subsequently and, by the 1470s and after, payment was generally made to a dozen or more. Their number, however, never reached the specified twenty. Similarly, friars were not mentioned until 1491, and even then each order received less than was stipulated: the Franciscans 3*s.* 4*d.* and each of the others 2*s.* Thereafter friars were an intermittent rather than a regular feature. Nor were the poor as generously treated as the Halleways intended. There is nothing in the earlier accounts which could be interpreted as alms; payment only appears in the 1480s for bread to be given to the poor. The value of the bread was generally 7*s.* or 8*s.*, although 15*s.* was devoted to it in 1500. The cost of the anniversary rose steadily: in the early and mid-1460s a little over £1 was spent on it annually; by 1481–82, £2 6*s.* was spent; by 1491–92, £3 5*s.* 7*d.* – at which level it remained for the rest of the century. The Halleways' anniversary was not perhaps as elaborate an occasion as the founders had intended. It was, nevertheless, an important and complex ceremony.

But how did the Halleways' anniversary compare with John Somerwell's or John Laynell's?²² It is all too easily assumed that it far outstripped them in lavish ceremonial. But anniversaries

identified only by one terse clause should not be underestimated. An annual expenditure of 40s. would surely have meant that as a ceremony Somerwell's anniversary would have resembled the Halleways'. Moreover, Pownam's and the Sharpes' anniversaries cost 15s. 6d. and 5s. respectively, while Laynell's was to cost 13s. 4d. annually.²³ Despite its temporary duration and the simplicity of the clause in Laynell's will, it is clearly wrong to assume that it was a less elaborate observance than either of the others' services.

A few anniversaries were small-scale affairs. In 1403, John Palmer requested an anniversary in Ss Philip and James' to cost 2s. annually: it could, presumably, have consisted of nothing much more than exequies and a Mass.²⁴ By contrast, other anniversaries were, perhaps, unusually lavish. The presence of mayor and civic dignitaries was possibly the preserve of the very rich, clear evidence of the practice being associated only with perpetual chantry founders.²⁵ Nevertheless, Somerwell, himself once mayor of Bristol, could have secured the formality.²⁶ Moreover, given that for 5s. the Sharpes benefited from a ceremony which included all the observances of services considerably more expensive than their own, it is evident that anniversaries generally conformed to a well established arrangement – as the following demonstrates. Comparison of the Halleways' anniversary ordinance with the details that Pownam and the Sharpes left for their respective anniversaries suggests that the Halleways' service lacked candles to burn at exequies and Mass as reference was not made to them nor payment budgeted.²⁷ Entries in the Halleways' chantry accounts, however, indicate otherwise. The early accounts, it must be admitted, make no reference to them. But in 1474, 6d. was paid for two torches which burnt about the hearse; and in 1475, 6d. was spent on hiring two torches which burnt about the hearse.²⁸ Thereafter, entries indicate that, if anything, the practice grew more elaborate with the passage of time: in 1491, for instance, the torches weighed 16 lbs. and cost 7s. 7d.

Prescriptions for anniversaries vary, but it would appear that as long as there was sufficient funding, practice was sufficiently well established to have been followed as a matter of course. Differing in duration, anniversaries shared the same formalities: in addition to the exequies and Mass, the essentials were a hearse and candles, bell-ringing, the beadsman and alms-giving. Careful attention will be paid to each to establish as precisely as possible what contemporaries understood by and wanted from the service.

Component observances

Information on the liturgical practices at anniversaries in late medieval Bristol is so scarce that little may be added to the description of the exequies and Mass already given. The rector or vicar of the founder's parish attended, although whether this was at both exequies and Mass is not altogether clear. Other priests from the parish, and sometimes elsewhere, attended either assisting with or providing the services. Whether vicar and priests were to concelebrate at the Requiem Mass is never specified; but as priests, and not clerks, were required, concelebration may well have been normal.²⁹ Moreover, in the absence of specific instruction, it seems fair to assume that celebration might customarily have been at high altars.

Many founders specified that a silver Mass-penny be offered for their soul during the Requiem Mass and it is probable that founders generally expected some such donation to be made on their behalf.³⁰ Where instructions survive, the Mass-penny was to be offered to the celebrant by a churchwarden. This meant that churchwardens were acting as chief mourners, probably collecting and presenting whatever was given at the service.³¹ It also meant that founders could count on the attendance and participation of parish officials. Nevertheless, founders sought to ensure that their estates provided an offering since, symbolically, doing so was an act of homage to God and would be to the profit of their soul.³²

Exequies and Mass were usually to be performed 'by note', implying that they were to be chanted or, more probably, sung.³³ As I have argued elsewhere that the standard of musical performance in Bristol's parish churches was improving in the later 15th century, it is plausible that exequies and Masses became musically more sophisticated in the century preceding the Reformation.³⁴ It would, moreover, seem that the 'other priests' from the founder's parish and elsewhere who were to attend anniversary services would have included chantry priests.

To clarify some of these observations, the specifications of Henry and Alice Chestres' anniversary in All Saints' merit careful consideration.³⁵ Appearing sparse, they are in fact the most detailed surviving evidence for the liturgical and musical procedure at an anniversary in late medieval Bristol. In 1477, Alice Chestre and her son, John, stated their requirements: the churchwardens of All Saints' were to ensure that the vicar or his 'locumtenant' and six other worthy priests were to say and sing solemnly and with music the Placebo and Dirige with nine lessons.³⁶ On the morrow, the Feast of St Valentine – on which day Henry Chestre died in 1470 – they were bound to celebrate a Requiem Mass for Henry, Alice, their family and descendants, and all the faithful departed, the churchwardens offering 1*d.* for the souls at the Mass and, after the service, paying the vicar and priests 4*d.* each. These instructions suggest that the vicar was to attend both exequies and Mass and that music be employed in each rite. Details in a later document confirm the latter.³⁷ The exequies, the Placebo and Dirige with nine lessons, were to include the psalm Miserere and other customary psalms to the end of the Benedictus and the customary prayers,³⁸ all intoned 'in neupmate' – that is, in plainsong or descant. The Requiem, similarly, was to be celebrated with music and singing: six chaplains were to be paid 4*d.* for being 'present singing in surplices'. The Chestres' prescription is unusual only in its detail: the service, costing 7*s.* 1*d.* annually, was certainly not an extravagant celebration. By the later 15th century, it is probable that in Bristol all anniversaries were celebrated with singing and music as a matter of course.

Exequies and Mass formed the core of the anniversary, but other observances may hardly be deemed less important. Scrutiny of them may profitably begin by examination of the striking requirement that hearse and candles should be set out at exequies and Mass. As hearses appear to have been used without charge, founders presumably relied on parish equipment, probably a simple wooden framework, supported by a bier, over which the pall was draped to shroud the corpse or coffin at funerals and to which prickets for lighted tapers were attached.³⁹ The hearse was probably to stand in the chancel before the high altar for the duration of the service, near to those celebrating and visible from the nave. Some founders – like the Spicers – had a pair of hearses, standing side by side in the chancel presumably.⁴⁰ Employed perhaps by the very rich, there is nothing to indicate that this practice was common.

All founders, however, would surely have expected a hearse to be draped with a pall for the duration of the observance, which item did not have to be specified as it invariably accompanied the hearse. Palls were standard items of parish equipment, acquired as the result of parishioners' munificence and certainly associated with anniversaries. The All Saints' Church Book, for instance, records that Alice Chestre considered the parish to have no pall 'of any reputation in value' other than that which the Halleways had provided for their anniversary.⁴¹ Moved by the love and honour that she had for almighty God and All christian souls, and for the ease and succour of the parish 'unto whom she owed her good will and love in her days', she gave a 'hearse cloth' of black worsted embroidered with her and her husband's initials in gold and with a text exhorting onlookers 'to pray for the souls of Henry Chestre and Alice his wife'.⁴²

Closely associated with the hearse are requests that lights be burnt. Elizabeth Sharpe wanted two wax candles to burn about the hearse; and Matthew Cachemay, in 1502, asked for two wax tapers to burn on his hearse.⁴³ Two lights seems to have been the standard requirement, the

Spicers with two hearses, for example, burning four candles.⁴⁴ Nigel Fisher of St Nicholas' specified, moreover, that two tapers 'of sufficient size' should burn, one at the head of the hearse and one at the foot – an arrangement probably representing standard practice.⁴⁵

It would also appear that candles were to burn during the exequies and during the Mass, not continuously. Fisher's, for instance, were to burn during the 'offices'.⁴⁶ Nicholas Pittes specified that his two candles were 'to be alight at the exequies and Mass'.⁴⁷ And the Halleways, whose chantry accounts reveal that by 1491–92, 26 lbs. of wax was purchased to provide two candles which could clearly have burnt for the longer duration had it been required, nevertheless had lights that burnt at 'Dirige and Mass', not for the longer period.⁴⁸

Wax had to be provided afresh each year and anniversary prescriptions suggest that the responsibility for providing lights generally fell to the vicar concerned. Those in the St John's Church Book stipulate that the vicar was to be paid either 'for his labour and light of wax',⁴⁹ or 'for his labour and his light burning around the hearse'.⁵⁰ And although vicars may, at first, appear to have received more than other priests for their pains, this advantage was illusory. Part of their payment was to provide the candles. Joan Geffrey, for instance, provided her vicar with 4*d.* for himself and 8*d.* for two tapers – 4*d.* being the very sum which the other priests attending her services were to receive.⁵¹ And John Shipward, whose provision was undeniably elaborate, allotted the rector of St Stephen's 2*s.* for having light at the exequies and Mass, but only 4*d.* for attending and singing.⁵²

It is worth considering what would have been done with unspent wax. Instructions for its disposal are rare. Richard Spicer, who established a chantry and anniversary in St Nicholas' in 1377 providing 6*s.* 8*d.* annually for each of the two torches to burn at his anniversary, specified that these be burnt daily throughout the year at his chantry Masses.⁵³ Entries in the Spicer's chantry account for 1475 and 1476 suggest a more common intention.⁵⁴ The four one pound candles were to be distributed, two to the prior of St James' and two to the churchwardens and parishioners.⁵⁵ Had they purchased the candles in the first place, vicars may well have been entitled to the residue. As each of Bristol's parishes undoubtedly saw a number of celebrations annually, anniversary wax probably made a valuable contribution to a vicar's obligation to provide lights in the chancel at parish Masses.⁵⁶ Founders thus engaged vicars' interest in the proper maintenance of services; they may, moreover, have taken comfort that their provision made a small but symbolically significant contribution to the celebration of the parish Mass, itself the very centre of the parish liturgy.⁵⁷

Other observances publicised anniversaries. The generosity of the otherwise lowly parish clerk's remuneration for bell-ringing is striking. In Agnes Fylour's specifications, for instance, for 'doing all', which probably included procuring wax, the vicar of All Saints' was to have 1*s.* and for attending and assisting at the service a number of priests were to receive 4*d.* each.⁵⁸ But the parish clerk was to receive 2*d.* for 'his duties',⁵⁹ and 1*s.* for ringing the bell, making him much the best paid participant of the service. Even at more elaborate anniversaries, like the Spicer's, priests were paid 4*d.* for attending and assisting, while the clerk in 1472 was paid 2*s.* for ringing 'Dirige and Mass'.⁶⁰

To merit such payment the duties must have been both onerous and of considerable significance. Scrutiny substantiates both assumptions. The Halleways certainly required that bells be rung for a long period.⁶¹ For ringing four peals, three at the Dirige from the hours of one to seven, and one on the day of the Mass from nine until eleven, the clerk of All Saints' was to be paid 2*s.*, or 2*s.* 4*d.* if he added another two hour peal after the Mass. Walter Frampton provided for the clerk of St John's to be paid 6*d.* for his service, including ringing all the bells – sounding one peal at Dirige and another at curfew, with a third at the Mass.⁶² The sound of bells was to complement and emphasise the main liturgical elements of the anniversary service, ringing indeed during exequies and Mass.⁶³

Also to publicise anniversaries and stimulate prayer, 'bedesmen' or 'belmen' were to proclaim the events to the inhabitants of Bristol. To identify the 'bedesman', two wills may be examined. Thomas Jonys, in 1464, instructed the common beadle to proclaim his anniversary in return for 4*d.*; Henry Gildeney, in 1430, used a more familiar term when he made provision to pay the town crier 4*d.* if he would go around the town proclaiming his obit.⁶⁴ A town official, then, rather than any parish appointee, was to fulfil this task. His duties may easily be deduced. He was to walk around the town – or, as instructed by Nigel Fisher, was to follow the customary route (*per plateas prout moris*).⁶⁵ It may be noted, however, that in one instance the 'belman' was to be paid 2*d.* 'to go in half the town' – suggesting that 4*d.* ensured that the whole town would be covered.⁶⁶ And although he would have had a hand bell to ring as he walked (surely implicit in the term 'belman'), he was also to shout out his message.⁶⁷ What he was to proclaim is revealed by instructions in the St John's Church Book for Excestre's, Frampton's and Howell's anniversaries; the 'belman' was to exhort people to pray for those whose souls were being commemorated.⁶⁸ Moreover, in Nigel Fisher's instructions, the 'belman' was both to pray and to proclaim the obit, suggesting that the official, as he walked, may have prayed aloud for the benefit of the souls commemorated.⁶⁹

There is, however, no information as to the precise stage of the proceedings at which the exhortation was to be broadcast. A perambulation on the first day, perhaps before and probably during the exequies and simultaneously with the pealing of the parish bells, may have been appropriate. Townspeople would then have known whose soul was being commemorated and would have been kept mindful by the protracted tolling of the parish bells of the soul's need for and of their duty to provide prayer. They may also have been moved to attend the Requiem Mass. Whatever the details, sounding bells was an exhortation to pray, widening the service to include as many as possible in the prayerful commendation of soul or souls commemorated. And just as the sums paid to the clerks ringing bells reveal the significance of their task, so the crier's remuneration suggests that his presence was counted no less important than that of the officiating clergy – both usually received 4*d.*

One further aspect of anniversary procedure awaits consideration. More money was devoted to it than to any other, presumably as a result of the belief that spiritual benefit would increase with the amounts given. I refer to the giving of alms, which not unusually disposed of something in the region of half the total allocated to support a service. Agnes Fylour, for instance, stipulated that of the 10*s.* spent annually on her service, 5*s.* be devoted to the poor; and Joan Geffrey allocated 3*s.* 4*d.* from 6*s.* 8*d.*⁷⁰ Notice might also be drawn to the anniversary celebrated in St John's for the souls of John Whyte and others.⁷¹ At 3*s.* 4*d.* its outlay was small, but, if anything, the proportion devoted to the needy is all the more striking: 9*d.* was to be given to the poor and 10*d.* to the prisoners of Newgate. More lavish anniversaries devoted correspondingly generous sums to the poor. The Halleways intended that no less a sum than 50*s.* be distributed annually; their chantry accounts, however, indicate that the donation fluctuated between 6*s.* 8*d.* in 1486, and £1 in 1497.⁷² Stipulations in other provisions may have been similarly unrealistic; but the testimony of the Spicers' accounts, at least, is that 11*s.* 8*d.* was regularly paid.⁷³ Neither this nor the sums mentioned in the Halleways' accounts may be dismissed as negligible.

There were, however, two variations in the manner of distribution. First, founders' preference apparently determined at what point in the proceedings alms were given. Some left instructions that they be given on the day of the Offices of the Dead;⁷⁴ others specified the day of the Requiem Mass.⁷⁵ Second, the agents assigned the responsibility for distribution also varied. A founder leaving executors in charge of his service usually expected them to make the distribution, as in the case of William Coder who entrusted his executor, William Hoton with the responsibility.⁷⁶ Others who granted their anniversary endowment to acquaintances might assign them the

responsibility. In 1494, John Bagod left instructions that on the day of his Requiem his grantees were to give 3s. 4d. in alms to the prisoners of Newgate and to other poor and needy.⁷⁷ Where founders trusted their parish with the annual observances, churchwardens made the distribution.

Alms were usually given as bread, 'farthing loaves' being the choice that most founders made: the stipulation was invariably that each pauper should have one farthing loaf only.⁷⁸ Rather than an appreciable contribution to the needs of a few destitute, founders made an almost token gesture year by year to as many as possible. Some, like the Halleways, were concerned that their largesse be used with discrimination, but the 'benefit' of a large number of poor was the founders' aim.⁷⁹ But William Pownam, for instance, who unusually specified that each pauper be given a halfpenny loaf at his anniversary, still intended that no fewer than 240 should benefit, since he set aside 10s. for alms.⁸⁰ Moreover, it may be noted that accompanying the meagre sums provided in small-scale anniversaries – like the 7d. and 9d. in the anniversaries to be celebrated in St John's for Nicholas Excestre and John Whyte and others – stipulations limited the recipients to the poor of one parish.⁸¹ More ample sums, of 3s. 4d. or more, contain no such proviso, presumably for the simple reason that worthy recipients could not be mustered in any one parish if well over one hundred loaves were to be distributed.

Alms-giving in the manner envisaged had interesting implications. As Christ had lived in poverty, so the poor were identified with him: honest poverty was a state of unimpeachable virtue.⁸² To relieve the sufferings of the honest poor was, of course, meritorious and, as it helped to redeem worldly success, especially beneficial for the wealthy donor's soul.⁸³ But the status of the poor enabled them to discharge a more positive function in return, for their intercession was particularly efficacious.⁸⁴ Anniversary founders prompted the poor to intercede for their souls and, clearly, the proportion of anniversary revenues devoted to them is eloquent testimony to the value attached to their commendation. But the characteristic of involving as many paupers as possible by giving one loaf to each must have been intended to maximise benefit, obliging as many paupers as possible to pray. Doles were presumably distributed at the church either before or after the exequies and Mass, the tolling of bells or the town crier having summoned the poor. Founders probably hoped that beneficiaries would attend their services – the bread, indeed, may have been given in return for attendance. In addition to the founders' acquaintances or descendants, the poor may have attended, creating a sizeable congregation whose prayers might profitably combine with those of the townspeople made mindful of the occasion by the tolling of bells and by the town crier.

Motives for foundation

Having established what anniversaries involved, there should be some attempt to determine why the inhabitants of Bristol commissioned the service. To this end, Wood-Legh's comments on the evolution of the anniversary in her book *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* are worthy of note. Discussing the origin of repeatedly celebrating Masses for the repose of the soul, she points out that while most were content with services consisting of a specified number of Masses, some desired an annual service, 'feeling, perhaps, that if the saints and martyrs were remembered each year with thanksgiving, it was equally fitting that individual sinners and their need of divine mercy should be annually remembered'.⁸⁵ Anniversaries originated, she judges, in the 9th century. But as the conviction grew that the Mass, more than any other service, best secured the grace of God, men and women inevitably sought to maximise their benefit by endowing services, known as chantries, which provided a daily celebration of the Mass. Established in England by the 12th century, the chantry's more evident popularity may be dated from the 13th century until the Reformation. In Wood-Legh's words, 'Chantries came into existence as a sort of extension of

anniversaries. This character they never wholly lost; for all founders of them [perpetual chantries] prescribed that their anniversaries should be kept with special solemnity, and if, for any reason, a chantry came to an end, the anniversary was usually nevertheless continued.⁸⁶

The frequency of respective reference in Bristol's late medieval source material confirms that the anniversary had been eclipsed by the chantry.⁸⁷ But by then, anniversaries were not simply the last resort for men and women unable to afford a chantry who nevertheless sought a long-term suffrage. The two services fulfilled different and complementary functions. Consider the phenomenon, to which Wood-Legh refers and which was certainly manifest in Bristol, whereby the wealthy commissioned both a chantry and an anniversary in perpetuity: if the celebration of Masses was all that founders required then surely the anniversary would long since have been abandoned, so negligible was the contribution it might make. Rather, the utility of the anniversary is implicit in the observances it embraced – for, save interment, the service was an exact and annual repetition of the funeral, as but one example must suffice to illustrate. Walter Seymour, who was buried in St Werburgh's in 1409, requested the attendance of 24 chaplains at his exequies, Mass and funeral and set aside 6*d.* for each of them.⁸⁸ For attending his exequies and Mass and for praying for his soul, three orders of friars in Bristol were each to receive £1, and the Carmelites £3. Money, bread and ale, to the value of 10 marks, were to go to the poor and needy sick on the day of his burial for the benefit of his soul. The clerk of St Werburgh's was to be paid 2*s.* to ring the bells of the church at his exequies and Mass. Moreover, twelve new torches and four round wax tapers were to burn around his body on the day of his burial. Each torch was to be carried by a poor man supplied with a gown and a hood by Seymour's executors.

More elaborate and expensive than most anniversary celebrations, Walter Seymour's funeral was very much the same ritual. And as candles and torches surrounded his corpse as it rested on the hearse covered by the pall, so the anniversary's regular use of a hearse, pall and burning candles would infallibly have suggested that a corpse was present once again. Consonant with bells and the town crier keeping the townspeople mindful of the dead and inclining them to prayer, setting forth the hearse and repeating the funeral liturgy must have evoked the presence of the dead. By blatant suggestion founders prompted a particularly vivid memory for any acquaintances present; and even had the anniversary been long established and attended only by clergy and the poor, the hearse would surely have concentrated the mind. Essentially, anniversary founders wanted to be remembered and brought their need for intercession to the attention of the living. They wanted to be prayed for and prayed for effectively. Doubtless they might hope to derive some benefit from the celebration of a Mass. Their main object, however, was to make their presence and needs as real as possible year after year to prompt clergy, parishioners, townspeople and the poor to commend their soul in prayer.

Both chantry and anniversary were long-term services established to benefit the soul. But if the chantry had evolved from the anniversary it had done so to fulfil a need in a new way, usurping the latter's original function. By the 15th century, the chantry exploited the Mass while the anniversary was a commemorative rite, a public statement of an individual's need for intercession. It seems ironic that the chantry, a relatively unobtrusive celebration, has attracted historians' attention, while for all its ceremony the anniversary has attracted virtually none.

The incidence of anniversaries

If, as I hope I have demonstrated, the anniversary was an 'obtrusive' observance, some attempt should be made to assess its place in and contribution to parish and town life. To establish, first, whether or not the service was common, the number of anniversaries established in 15th-century Bristol and the dates of the year when they were celebrated will be considered. Thereafter, the

financial and other arrangements upon which founders depended to sustain anniversaries will be examined. These undertakings may more efficiently be discharged by tabulating all the available information.

Table 1 Documented Anniversaries in 15th-century Bristol's parishes

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Founder</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Duration</i> (<i>& Chantry</i>)	<i>Cost</i> <i>Per Annum</i>	<i>Date of</i> <i>Exequies</i>
All Saints	Thomas Marshall	1434	Perp. (10 yrs)	?	8 January
	Thomas Halleway	1454	Perp. (Perp)	£2-£3	12 December
	Henry Chestre	1470/7?	Perp. (12 yrs)	7s. 1d.	13 February
		?	Perp.	7s. 1d.	4 March
	Agnes Fylour	1467	Perp. (3 yrs)	12s.	20 November
	John Laynell	1473	10 yrs (10 yrs)	13s. 4d.	?
	Thomas Baker	1492	Perp. (20 yrs+)	10s.	15 February
	Clement Wilteshire	1492	4 yrs (3 yrs)	?	?
	William Newbury	?	Perp.	6s.	?
Holy Cross Temple	William de Brunby	1402	6 yrs	10s.	?
Holy Trinity	Joan Geffrey	1492	20 yrs (5 yrs)	6s. 8d.	?
	John Seynte	1471	Perp. (1 yr)	?	28 October
	Richard Erle	1491	80 yrs (Perp) + 3 elsewhere	6s. 8d.	16 June
St Ewen					
St James	Richard Stephenes	1421	Perp.	6s. 8d.	?
	William Pownam	1454	Perp. (Perp)	15s. 6d.	9 February
St John	John Spicer	1456	Perp. (Perp)	£1 10s./£2	?
	Nich. Excestre &c.	?	Perp.	2s. 6d.	Thursday in Easter week
	John Whyte &c.	?	38 yrs	3s. 4d.	Friday in Easter week
	Agnes Wellishorte	1457	20 yrs	?	?
	John Sharpe	1472	Perp.	?	Monday after Palm Sunday
St Katherine Bedminster	Richard Arneys	1474	20 yrs	3s. 7d.	1 June
	William Howell	?	Perp.	5s. 5d.	9 September
	Thomas Halleway	1434	Perp.	?	Tuesday in Witsun week
St Leonard	William Coder	1473	Perp.	13s. 4d.	?
St Mark	Thomas Walshe	1490	Perp.	?	?
	Elizabeth Cornwall	1489	Perp.	?	?
	John Hemmyng	1498	Perp.	?	?
St Mary le Port	John Innyngh	1457	Perp.	?	13 February
St Mary Redcliffe	Robert Lygh	1401	6 yrs (1yr)	6s. 8d.	?
	Richard Spaldyng	1412	90 yrs	6s. 8d.	?
	Belinus Nansmoen	1416	Perp.	Return for books given	?
	John Blekker	1434	Perp.	19s. 6d.	20 July
	William Canynges	1467	Perp. (Perp)	57s.	Tuesday after 1 August
	Nicholas Pittes	1468 1494	Perp. (Perp) Perp. (Every third year)	56s. 8d. 13s. 4d.	17 November ?

St Michael	Foster/Esterfeld	1490s	Perp. (Almshouse)	?	Monday after feast of St Martin		
			Perp. (Almshouse)	?	First Monday in Lent		
St Nicholas	Henry Gildeney	1430	Perp. (7 yrs)	?	Tuesday in Easter week		
			Richard Jones	1444	Perp.	?	In Easter week
			Thomas Jonys	1464	Perp.	?	20 September
			William Lumbarde	1486	Perp.	4s.	16 March
St Peter (Bellhouse)	Foster/Esterfeld	c. 1500	Perp. (Almshouse)	?	Low Sunday		
			Cachemay/ Longforde	1502	Perp.	?	26 December
Ss Philip & James St Stephen	John Palmer	1403	?	2s.	?		
			John Leycestre	1436	? (3 & 20 yrs)	10s.	?
			John Shipward	1473	Perp. (25 yrs + Perp)	32s.	2 August
St Thomas	Robert Chepe	1407	3xPerp. (Perp)	?	?		
			Thomas Aissehe	1457	7 yrs (7 yrs)	?	?
			Nicholas Pittes	1494	Perp.	13s. 4d.	Octave after Easter
St Werburgh	John Somerwell	1401	20 yrs (2x4 yrs)	40s.	?		
			Katherine Calfe	1408	6 yrs (long as possible)	?	?
Bristol Bridge Chapel	John Bathe	1420	Perp.	?	?		
			John Bagod	1494	Perp.	?	11 May

Some 50 anniversaries may be identified, of which a third are referred to only in parish records. The woeful inadequacy of the surviving evidence, however, renders this figure a gross underestimate of reality. Two factors may be mentioned which indicate that many more than 50 anniversaries were established in 15th-century Bristol.⁸⁹

First, the figure is derived from a small and much depleted sample of evidence. The wishes of only a very small proportion of Bristol's citizens are represented in 350 or so surviving wills, although precisely what proportion may not be determined.⁹⁰ And while information derived from wills is profitably supplemented by Church Books, the chance survival of a few of these serves only to emphasise how very little is known of a parish like Ss Philip and James, for instance, for which nothing comparable survives. And even if, by good fortune, the material pertaining to anniversaries in All Saints' parish is relatively rewarding, it may not be assumed that all the anniversaries established there have been accounted for. As chance reference is all too frequently sole reference, there can be no doubt that many more anniversaries were established in Bristol than surviving sources indicate.

Secondly, sources can be misleading, as comparison of wills and parish records indicates. To take but one example, Clement Wiltshire, parishioner of All Saints' and mayor of Bristol when he died in 1493, made no mention of an anniversary in his will.⁹¹ The All Saints' Church Book, however, refers to a four year anniversary celebrated for the benefit of his soul.⁹² Far from suggesting that Wiltshire was in any way furtive about his intentions, the example simply pinpoints a phenomenon that I deal with elsewhere.⁹³ Services of all descriptions might be established by widows, offspring, associates, or, more generally, executors acting either on long-standing instructions or simply to dispose of an estate residue in 'pious uses'. The scope for such foundation was enormous. Testamentary evidence fails to reflect it. Even among testators

whose wishes survive, many would have profited from anniversaries and other services to which they never referred.

Given that testamentary evidence under-represents all of Bristol's 15th-century *post obit* services, the survival of approximately 120 testamentary references to different chantries may nevertheless suggest that they were more numerous than anniversaries.⁹⁴ Given also that chantries provided a daily celebration and represented a more substantial investment, they can be regarded as the more important of the two services.⁹⁵ But anniversaries may not be dismissed. That they were cheaper – easily provided for 5s. per annum as opposed to the minimum of £5 required by a chantry – suggests, for instance, that of the two services they may more frequently have been chosen by executors disposing of estate residues. And even if anniversary observances were no match for those of a chantry, it is worth emphasising that relatively few chantries had a duration of more than five years.⁹⁶ Anniversaries, by contrast, were usually celebrated for a much longer term: of those founded in 15th-century Bristol whose duration is specified, 27 were to function in perpetuity and only fifteen for a fixed term. Taking the evidence as it stands, sufficient perpetual anniversaries had been established in the century preceding 1500 to mean, by that date, that on average not a fortnight needed to pass without at least one of Bristol's parish churches witnessing an anniversary celebration. Bearing in mind that the evidence is deficient, that fixed-term anniversaries functioned for different periods of the century and also that services established in the 14th century survived into the 15th, anniversaries would inevitably have been prominent in parish liturgies.

This prompts two questions: on what days of the year were anniversaries celebrated in 15th-century Bristol? and what factors determined these dates? As far as the evidence allows, a table best satisfies the first of these.

Table 2 The incidence of datable Anniversaries in late medieval Bristol

(parentheses are indicative of 14th- or 16th-century foundations)

<i>Founder</i>	<i>Date of Exequies</i>
Marshall (Turner)	7 January 23 January)
Pownam	9 February
Innyng	13 February
Chestre	13 February
Baker	15 February
Chestre	4 March
Lumbarde	16 March

Observances determined by date of Easter:

Foster/Esterfeld	} See Table 1 for details
Sharpe	
Gildeney	
Jones	
Excestre	
Whyte	
Spencer	
Pittes	

(Frampton Bagod (Spicer)	5 May) 11 May 31 May)
Arneys Erle	1 June 16 June
Blekker	20 July
Canynge Shipward (Blanket)	1 August 2 August 14 August)
Howell Jonys	9 September 20 September
(Fisher (Aylowf Seynte	20 October) 27 October) 28 October
Canynge Fylour	17 November 20 November
Halleway (Cachemay	12 December 26 December)

As to the factors which determined these dates, if parish clergy or churchwardens exercised any influence, as surely they must, no evidence directly illustrative of their part is to be had; initiative appears to have lain with founders. The example which proves most instructive when determining why certain dates were selected is William Canynge's arrangement. A merchant of considerable wealth and equal piety, Canynge made elaborate provision for his soul. Among other arrangements were two perpetual chantries in St Mary Redcliffe, associating a perpetual anniversary with each, one at the altar of St Katherine, the other at the altar of St George, founded in 1466 and 1467 respectively.⁹⁷ The ordinances for the first stipulate that the anniversary was to be celebrated on the Monday and Tuesday next after the Feast of St Peter *ad vincula* (1 August). Moreover, on these two days an anniversary was to be provided in the Franciscans' conventual church in Bristol, supervised and attended by the mayor of the town.⁹⁸ But the anniversary associated with the chantry at St George's altar was to be celebrated 'annually for ever . . . on the day that I . . . shall depart from this world,' which, it transpired, occurred on 17 November 1474.⁹⁹ Thereafter, exequies were performed on this date and the Requiem Mass celebrated on the day following. The mayor of Bristol was also to attend this ceremony.

Arrangements made by others closely resemble Canynge's requirements. Thomas Halleway, whose anniversary in All Saints' has already been described, also established a perpetual observance in 1434 to take place annually on the Tuesday and Wednesday in Whitsun week.¹⁰⁰ It was to be celebrated at the Hospital of St Katherine in Bedminster, a suburb of Bristol, and was to benefit his soul and his wife's, as well as those of a number of his relations.¹⁰¹ The anniversary in All Saints', however, was to be celebrated on the Tuesday and Wednesday after the Feast of St Lucy (13 December).¹⁰² An entry in the All Saints' Church Book reveals that Halleway died on 13 December 1454.¹⁰³ Alice Chestre ensured her late husband, Henry, was to profit from an anniversary celebrated on 13 and 14 February – the Feast of St Valentine being the day on which he died in 1470.¹⁰⁴ The Chestres were also to have an anniversary on 4 March.¹⁰⁵ And Robert

Chepe, who died in 1409 providing for a perpetual chantry in St Thomas', merits particular attention.¹⁰⁶ He required three annual celebrations funded by his chantry endowment: one was for his late wife, but the other two were for his own benefit and he refers to them as *die obitus mei et anniversarium meum*.¹⁰⁷

Two principles determined the dates chosen. Annual commemoration of the date of the founder's death – Chepe's *die obitus mei* – was obviously thought appropriate. But the factor determining the date of Chepe's *anniversarium* was much less clear cut. Some sought celebrations in a period or on dates of significance in the Christian calendar, like Whitsun week in the Halleways' case, or, in Canynges' case, the Feast of St Peter *ad vincula*. Flexibility would, however, have been obligatory for all founders: the parish clergy would surely not have countenanced an anniversary had it clashed with a major feast day; moreover, if the mayor and municipal officers were to attend, a date when they were unencumbered with other commitments would be essential. Such factors probably explain why founders varied over the precise timing of their services; some stipulating that their Requiem Mass be celebrated on the selected date more,¹⁰⁸ while others said that their exequies were to inaugurate proceedings on that day.¹⁰⁹

It should, however, be emphasised that relatively few founders commissioned two or more anniversaries. Most had one and opted for a celebration to commemorate the date of death, as in Agnes Fylour's case.¹¹⁰ Her will is dated 8 November 1467 and was proved on 30 November of that year, but, in common with a number of testators, she did not specify the date for the celebration. By good fortune, the All Saints' Church Book reveals that it was observed on 20 November, a date which is clearly likely to have corresponded with that of her death.¹¹¹ Presumably this date was arranged as convenient for the All Saints' clergy and wardens and of significance to the testatrix. In other wills, however, the anniversary request did specify a date. The correspondence between this and the likely date of death is so exact as to suggest that the testators themselves could not have chosen it in advance; executors probably inserted the detail, acting on the testator's wishes, having first gained permission. Thomas Jonys of St Nicholas' parish, for instance, 'specified' that his exequies be celebrated annually on the vigil of the Feast of St Matthew – implying that the Requiem Mass would have been on the Feast, 21 September.¹¹² His will is dated 18 September 1464, and he must have died soon after as it was proved on 24 September. His executors would surely have arranged this very suitable celebration date. And Richard Erle, as parishioner of Holy Trinity and founder of a perpetual chantry there when he died in 1491, made an unusual request for four 80-year anniversaries – one in Holy Trinity, another in the conventual church of the Blessed Mary of 'Wyttham', a third in Wells Cathedral and the last in the abbey church of St Augustine in Bristol.¹¹³ His will is dated 15 June 1491 and was proved at Lambeth in the same year on 5 August, and in Bristol a week later. Insofar as the exequies were to be observed in each of the four churches on 16 or 17 June, Erle's executors probably made arrangements – which, as a result of prior commitments, may have differed by a day at different churches – but which nevertheless marked the day of his death.

But a few anniversaries were celebrated at times which had other significance. The precise date of Henry Gildeney's death may not be ascertained.¹¹⁴ It is, however, apparent from his will, made in 1430, that his intentions and those of Fylour, Jonys and Erle differed. He made the Feast of Easter a spiritual focus. His anniversary was to be held in his parish church, St Nicholas', on the Monday and Tuesday in Easter week.¹¹⁵ His executors were to provide a Paschal taper annually in St Nicholas' and he requested that his name be rehearsed in the church every Easter so that parishioners would be particularly inclined to pray for his soul. He was determined that his presence was to be felt in the church at the most solemn Feast in the calendar, and he timed his anniversary appropriately.

When an anniversary was celebrated for a group – like the anniversaries for Nicholas Excestre

and others and John Whyte and others – it would clearly have been invidious to select a date of significance to only one of the beneficiaries.¹¹⁶ So the alternative was adopted. The anniversary for Nicholas Excestre and others was on the Thursday and Friday of Easter week and that for John Whyte and others on the Friday and Saturday, one dovetailing neatly with the other into the liturgy of St John's. Such dates can only have been selected after consultation with the clergy; and the frequency with which they were celebrated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays – as with the anniversaries founded by Canynges, the Halleways and Gildeney – may well have reflected the clergy's wishes. Similarly anniversaries on a specified date commemorative of the founder's death would probably have been moved to the succeeding Monday and Tuesday when the date coincided with a Sunday or a movable feast day.

Some tentative remarks may be made concerning the distribution of anniversaries in Bristol throughout the year. First, there was a concentration of services at Eastertide, but none appear to have clashed. Secondly, there were more services in the summer and autumn than in the winter – which, if death were the most common determinant of the date of celebration, is unexpected. But, thirdly, the pervasive impression is of relatively steady incidence throughout the year. Easter apart, no cult or saint's day attracted founders in any number; indeed, when Canynges set an anniversary by reference to a saint's day, the clergy's convenience and the availability of the mayor were probably his main considerations. Scant as the available information is, founders apparently wished to avoid the coincidence of their service with any other – although how far this would have been possible for executors obliged to negotiate a suitable date with the founder's parish is an imponderable. Nevertheless, given that anniversaries embodied a public plea for intercession such an aim was reasonable. Coincidence with another service would inevitably have diminished the attention and, consequently, the profit that a soul might garner. But whatever the case, sufficient celebrations were probably operative in any given period to provide a steady flow of services throughout the year. Clearly, the needs of the dead and, as far as the living were concerned, the duty to intercede would have pressed heavily on the citizens of Bristol. For some, familiarity may have bred indifference. Equally, others may have been assiduous in prayer whenever prompted – and there were sufficient anniversaries in 15th-century Bristol to have set the common devotional practices of its citizens apart from those in smaller towns and villages.

Finance and administration

Finally, the questions of anniversary finance and administration must be considered: the two topics will be taken together as it was common practice (and common sense) to combine financial arrangements with those ensuring the proper discharge of the observance. It is to be noted, first, that a number of men and women arranged endowments to support an anniversary and a chantry in perpetuity, their appointees administering both services – as indicated in *Table 1*. In these cases the anniversary was an adjunct, accounting for a small fraction of the revenue, commanding relatively little supervision and undoubtedly being deemed of inferior spiritual significance. An impression of how these anniversaries were supported may be derived from other works more concerned with chantry finance.¹¹⁷ Scrutiny of the anniversaries that stood free of chantries will be undertaken here. The conclusions are salutary. When independent of chantries, anniversaries were the dependent aspect of other substantial transactions. In short, anniversaries were almost always adjuncts.

This observation is best explained by examining, first, an example of anniversary funding which, by dint of its simplicity, may reasonably have been assumed typical – that is, the provision of a lump sum sufficient to pay for the required observances for the specified number of years. Robert Lygh, a parishioner of St Mary Redcliffe who made his will in 1401, assigned the

churchwardens of Redcliffe 40s. on the assumption that for six years they would spend 6s. 8d. on his anniversary.¹¹⁸ His arrangements were to be supervised by the wardens and his executors, but, if they neglected this duty, the sum was to revert to Lygh's next of kin. Clearly this procedure was best suited to anniversaries of relatively short duration. That anniversaries commonly had extended durations, however, is not enough to explain the startling fact that Lygh's provision is without parallel in Bristol's evidence. The adoption of this method must surely have been impeded by the intricacy of anniversary services. Their proper discharge took effort and organisation, added to which they impinged upon the parish regime. Lygh offered wardens and parish scant compensation for the pains and inconvenience his service would prompt, for clearly, the sums that he or any other founder provided for clergy and wardens were hardly generous.¹¹⁹ Had the wardens of Redcliffe declined to comply with his wishes, allowing his relatives to take the 40s., the parish would have lost little or nothing. Chantry founders, by contrast, might rely on an appreciative reaction to their plans as their priest, whose costs they entirely defrayed, was a welcome supplement to a parish's spiritual resources.¹²⁰ Anniversaries demanded attention but of themselves gave little or nothing in return.

To those responsible for anniversary administration, be they family members or parish officials, inducement had to be offered. Association with a chantry might guarantee a parish's interest. Alternatively, and more frequently, anniversaries were sustained as accessories to property transactions – as the return, for instance, that a parent might expect from a son or daughter to whom property had been devised, or that a generous benefactor might expect from the parish that he had substantially enriched. The obligation to keep the anniversary would, then, remind beneficiary of benefactor, of the debt owed and of the duty to provide for the latter's soul.

I will first consider the relatively straightforward provisions resulting from family legacies. In 1457, Agnes Wellshot of St John's parish left her daughter, Agnes Gaywode, the residue of her estate. Using this – or part of this – Agnes was to provide her mother with an anniversary for twenty years.¹²¹ Similarly, John Laynell of All Saints', who died in 1473, asked that his executors, who were his widow, Katherine, and son-in-law, Henry Dale, provide him with a ten-year chantry at a cost of £60, and a ten-year anniversary costing 13s. 4d. annually.¹²² Each received a generous legacy and shared the residue of Laynell's estate: his services would undoubtedly have been funded from these sources.¹²³

Although the anniversaries provided by family legatees were usually of limited duration, occasionally a perpetual return was required from successive generations of heirs. William Lumbarde, for instance, a parishioner of St Nicholas' church who died in 1486, left a tenement in Bristol to his wife, Elizabeth, on condition that she celebrate an anniversary for him.¹²⁴ After her death, the tenement was to revert to their son, Thomas, and to his heirs and assigns on condition that the anniversary be held in perpetuity. When a testator had no direct heirs, his executor's heirs and assigns might be entrusted in the same way, as in the case of William Coder of St Nicholas' parish who, in 1473, left property to his executor, William Hoton, expressly requiring that he devote at least some of its revenues to an anniversary.¹²⁵ In his own will, William Hoton devised this property to his heirs and assigns with instructions that Coder's anniversary be maintained from its revenues.¹²⁶

But many who, in the short-term, devised to their immediate family, intended the property to revert to their parish church, to the continuing profit of their souls. For, with the property went the responsibility of maintaining the anniversary. John Seynte of Holy Trinity, for instance, who made his will in 1471, devised properties in Bristol to his widow, Alice, with instructions that they were to revert, first, to his son, John, and thereafter to his daughter, Joan, on condition that each should maintain his anniversary.¹²⁷ After their decease, the churchwardens of Holy

Trinity were to maintain the anniversary, implying presumably that the property should revert to the church. Similarly, John Hemmyng, who died in 1498, instructed his widow, Alianore, to order his funeral services and, later, a Mass on the day of the anniversary of his death, over which the Master of the Hospital of St Mark was to preside.¹²⁸ After his widow's death, property on St Augustine's Green in Bristol was to pass to the Master of the Hospital to maintain the service in perpetuity.

Others, whose preference was that their heirs should benefit in perpetuity, nevertheless prepared for all eventualities. To guarantee both that their property should not simply be dispersed if their heirs died without issue and that intercession be provided in perpetuity for their souls they made arrangements that, in the event of family extinction, their property should pass to their parish church and its officials – who were, of course, self-perpetuating. In 1434, John Blekker granted a messuage and five shops on Redcliffe Hill to his son, Walter, on condition that he and his heirs celebrate an anniversary with the Requiem on the feast of St Margaret the Virgin (20 July) in St Katherine's Chapel in St Mary Redcliffe, his parish church.¹²⁹ If Walter or his heirs died without issue, property and obligation were to revert to other of Blekker's issue. If the line failed completely, property and obligation were to pass to the vicar and churchwardens of St Mary Redcliffe, who in any case were to oversee the proper discharge of the anniversary. Blekker's prudence was not misplaced. One or two early 16th-century accounts surviving for St Mary Redcliffe contain entries entitled 'Costs of Obits' in which the sums that churchwardens paid to sustain anniversaries entrusted to the parish are recorded.¹³⁰ Significantly, payments of 19s. 6d. and 19s. 10d. were made for John Blekker's anniversary. As a result of either death or negligence, Blekker's family had been unable to maintain his service; Redcliffe had assumed the property and the reciprocal responsibility for the anniversary – and although early in the 16th century the parish was spending almost £1 per annum, the revenues from the messuage and five shops probably exceeded this by an appreciable margin.¹³¹

Most long-term or perpetual anniversaries were, however, supported by property entrusted to church and churchwardens, the donors seeking to profit both their parish and their soul. When parish churches were beneficiaries more documentation survives and the character of the services emerges more fully. The disparity between the value of the endowment and the required expenditure is particularly striking. Some arrangements were relatively informal. Belinus Nansmoen stipulated, in 1416, that in return for a gift of two books, the vicar and chaplains of his parish, St Mary Redcliffe, were to keep his anniversary in a fitting manner in the choir of Redcliffe.¹³² Were his wishes neglected his books were to go elsewhere, to a church sufficiently appreciative to keep the service. Others gave cash. In 1393, for instance, Agnes Spelly instructed her executors to give £20 to St Leonard's church to keep her anniversary there in perpetuity.¹³³ In 1489, a gift of £20 enabled Elizabeth Cornwall to establish a perpetual anniversary in the Hospital of St Mark.¹³⁴ Each institution may have considered the gift sufficiently generous to warrant the addition of another annual service to its obligations. Or, if invested, the sum may perhaps have brought a return of £1 per annum, more than enough both to secure an anniversary and yield parish or hospital an income of 10s. or more every year.¹³⁵

The anniversary celebrated for twenty years in the crypt of St John's as a result of a provision in 1474 by the perpetual vicar of St Nicholas', John Arneys, is a more typical example.¹³⁶ It was to benefit the souls of Richard and Elene Arneys – John's parents, probably – and a number of others', and was to be maintained by a revenue of 6s. 8d. annually issuing from a tenement in Gropelane. The transcription of the indenture, recorded in the St John's Church Book, itemises the services that the wardens of St John's were to provide. Their total cost was 3s. 7d. per annum. Arneys specified that the residue, which at 3s. 1d. was not far short of half the revenue, be devoted to the ornament and fabric of St John's for the duration of the service.

The All Saints' Church Book reveals much the same concerning William Newbury's provision, although in this instance both the service and the church's annual profit were perpetual.¹³⁷ No date is given for Newbury's donation; but, in addition to a gift of £1, he gave All Saints' a rent of 12s. per annum issuing from a house in Baldwin Street 'to have an obit yearly'. By good fortune, sums the churchwardens spent on this service are recorded in the parish accounts: between 1475 and 1478, for instance, expenditure was 6s. per annum. All Saints' benefited to the tune of 6s. per annum, half the revenue annually accruing.¹³⁸

In other examples, parish and parish church may have benefited from considerably more. Nicholas Pittes, as perpetual vicar of St Mary Redcliffe, had neither widow nor issue. In 1494 he devised the residue of his property to successive churchwardens of Redcliffe on condition that they take two marks annually from the revenues accruing, spending one mark on an anniversary in Redcliffe (on a date corresponding to that of his death, apparently) and giving the other to the wardens of St Thomas the Martyr so that they too might hold an anniversary (with the Requiem celebrated on the second ferial day after the octave of Easter) for the benefit of his soul.¹³⁹ Each was to be celebrated in perpetuity; but if ever the wardens of Redcliffe neglected his wishes, property and responsibilities were to pass to the wardens of St Thomas'. The surviving Redcliffe accounts indicate that the wardens kept Pittes' wishes as faithfully as their counterparts would have maintained surveillance, for Pittes' rents brought in £4 per annum while his obits cost the stipulated 26s. 8d.¹⁴⁰ But it was not Pittes' intention that Redcliffe should simply profit by £2 13s. 4d. per annum. A one-year chantry was to be celebrated for him in the church when sufficient surplus accumulated. He would, then, have profited from a chantry every third year. And for that year, too, Redcliffe would have profited from the ministrations of an additional priest in church, choir and parish at no extra charge.¹⁴¹

The anniversary was frequently commissioned as one service among others, absorbing a small proportion of the revenue accruing from property devised. In 1521, for instance, John Mathew devised a house to St Ewen's.¹⁴² From it the parish was annually to derive 33s. 4d. From this sum, 6s. 8d. was to be used to relieve poor householders of their contribution to the clerk's wages; another 6s. 8d. was to pay for an anniversary benefiting John Mathew's soul, the souls of his late wives, Elizabeth, Julyan and Anne, and those of his children; another 6s. 8d. was to provide for prayers to be said every Sunday 'by name in the bede roll' for his and his wives' souls. The remainder was to be set aside to maintain the house.

Consider, too, Henry and Alice Chestre, parishioners of All Saints' who died in 1470 and 1485 respectively.¹⁴³ When widowed, Alice was notably generous to the parish, her benefactions including a silver cross for Sunday processions, altar cloths and a hearse cloth, and also the refurbishment of a number of church fixtures, including two tabernacles, the 'lady altar', a carved frontal for the rood altar and a new rood loft. The benefactions attributed to both Henry and Alice, however, were spiritual provisions. In addition to commissioning a chantry of long duration, they granted All Saints' a tenement in Broad Street. This was to provide a 'mass of Jesus by note to be kept and continued every Friday' and a perpetual anniversary, the Requiem of which was to be celebrated on St Valentine's day. The cost of the former is never specified, but the All Saints' Church Book and an early 16th-century document reveal that 7s. 1d. was annually to be spent on the anniversary.¹⁴⁴ An additional anniversary also costing 7s. 1d. was to be celebrated for the Chestres' souls on 4 March. The profit that All Saints' was to derive from the provision is never unambiguously stated. The Church Book mentions that the parish was 'to have of the house 4 marks [53s. 4d.] as the rent goes now', but it is not clear whether the cost of the other provisions was to be deducted from this sum or whether this was the sum to remain 'clear' to the church. That the latter was the case is suggested by a lease of 1486 which indicates that the church derived rent of 100s. from the tenement.¹⁴⁵ From a rent of £5 per annum, then, the

anniversaries were to account for 14s. 2d., the parish was to take 53s. 4d. and the weekly Jesus Mass would have cost 32s. 6d.¹⁴⁶ The costs of the different aspects of the provision are perhaps suggestive of their relative significance: even if the parish was expected to maintain the endowment from the revenues it received, it would still have been the main beneficiary.

Scrutiny of the Chestres' arrangements, moreover, reveals much about the management of such provisions. In the 1486 lease, the lessors were referred to as 'John Thomas, clerk, perpetual vicar of All Saints', and Thomas Snygge and Richard Stevyns, wardens of the goods, chattels and ornaments of the church', who were said to be acting with the consent and assent of all the parishioners. The rent was to be paid at the usual quarter days to the vicar and wardens or their attorneys. Other founders, like Nicholas Pittes and John Mathew, by entrusting their provisions to St Mary Redcliffe and St Ewen's, doubtless depended upon respective vicars and churchwardens to administer their suffrages in the same way. The fortuitous survival of additional documentation for All Saints', however, suggests that the Chestres' depended upon other agents. The Chestres' tenement was to be held for All Saints' by feoffees, parish worthies whom Alice Chestre and her son, John, enfeoffed in 1477.¹⁴⁷ The feoffees were also to hold the tenement so that the churchwardens of All Saints' could have and enjoy the 'outgoings and profits' from the tenement on condition that they hold an anniversary on 14 February and that they keep the Jesus Mass.¹⁴⁸ The declaration also reveals that ideally there were to be thirteen feoffees, stipulating that when nine were dead, the four survivors were within four months to enfeoff another thirteen 'respectworthy and honest men of the town' to hold the tenement. Were the churchwardens remiss, lukewarm or negligent concerning the anniversary, however, the feoffees were 'to hold to the use of the Prior and Brothers of Kalendars' on the same conditions, the profits of the tenement accruing to the latter. If they failed to administer the obit as prescribed, the feoffees were to hold the tenement to the use of the mayor and commonalty of Bristol who were to dispose of the revenue at will to the common use and profit of the Chamber. Early 16th-century evidence reveals that the wardens and parish had retained responsibility for the Chestres' provision, and were obliged to 'pay and distribute' money to the priests, clerks, beadsmen and poor. The feoffees were said to hold the anniversary 'through' the churchwardens, the latter clearly bearing responsibility for its administration. Nevertheless, the phraseology is salutary. The Chestres' feoffees had an important legal and supervisory role. Very few provisions are as well documented as the Chestres': it is by no means inconceivable that feoffees may commonly have held the properties on which anniversaries and their concomitant services depended, the familiarity of the arrangement ironically meaning that specifications were not usually included in the parish archives which generally survive. The full implications of Pittes' service, for instance, has to be pieced together; Mathew's is recorded only very tersely. The property on which each depended, about which we are told very little, could easily have been held by feoffees.¹⁴⁹

Provisions were usually administered by close relatives of the founder or parish officials. But two examples may be described where other agencies were entrusted. Matthew Cachemay, who made his will in 1502, referred to himself as from St Briavels, a village in south-west Gloucestershire, and requested burial in the cemetery of the village church there.¹⁵⁰ But most of his will is devoted to instructions for a provision in the chapel of Our Lady of the Bellhouse, 'late begun' in St Peter's church, Bristol, administered by members of the fraternity there.¹⁵¹ 'To the honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and to sustain a chaplain praying for the souls of the brothers and sisters of the fraternity', Cachemay assigned to two brothers, Matthew Cottynton and John Baker, and their heirs and assigns, all lands, tenements and appurtenances in the town and suburb of Bristol which had recently belonged to John Longforde, late bailiff of the town.¹⁵² Cachemay exhorted the two brothers, out of their respect for almighty God, to dispose righteously of all profits derived from the rents, instructing them to sustain a chaplain for the

fraternity who had the special duty of praying for the souls of John Longforde, Matthew Cachemay, Matthew Bocke and others. Additionally, Cottynton and Baker were to hold an anniversary celebrated on the Feast of Stephen, presumably for the souls just mentioned. The anniversary was again a subordinate service, but notably, Cachemay relied on two brothers of the benefiting fraternity to administer property and revenue. He had no apparent qualms about their heirs and assigns assuming responsibility after them, apart from insisting that his own heirs and executors might re-enter the property if his instructions were not observed.

John Bagod's provision was established in 1494.¹⁵³ Like Cachemay he was not dealing with patrimony, but was concerned with property awarded to him after a dispute. And as Cachemay dealt with property benefiting a fraternity, appointing brothers to administer it, so Bagod displayed strong allegiance to a fraternity, that of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Bristol bridge, and depended on men who were clearly brothers. In the first instance, his widow, Elizabeth, was to supervise his arrangements, but preparatory for her death he granted the property to John Esterfeld, John Druex, John Walshe, George Monoux, Richard Vaughan, John Fuyster and David Phillips, and their heirs and assigns, who, after Elizabeth's death, were to hold the property on condition that an anniversary was celebrated in perpetuity on 12 May in the chapel of the Assumption on the bridge, for the souls of John and Elizabeth Bagod, Clement and Alice Bagod, and Robert and Elizabeth Russell.¹⁵⁴ The remainder of the revenue was to be given to the use and benefit of the mayor and aldermen of Bristol. In return, successive mayors of Bristol were to swear, among the other items in their inaugural oath, that Bagod's will would be truly executed. Bagod also stipulated that the three priests 'which be ordeined and be atte exhibicion of the Mayor and his bretheren shall specially pray for the souls abovesaid as they do for other benefactors'.

Two points arise. First, although we are not told of the precise value of the revenue of which Bagod disposed, the calibre of his grantees certainly suggests that it may have been appreciable. By 1494, three of the grantees, Esterfeld, Druex and Vaughan, had been mayors of Bristol, as Bagod himself had been. A fourth, George Monoux, was to be mayor seven years later.¹⁵⁵ It is likely that the others were also prominent citizens.¹⁵⁶ Second, Bagod's arrangements suggest close interconnection between Bristol bridge, the chapel and fraternity of the Assumption, and the mayor and aldermen of the town. In the 13th century, the bridge and neighbouring quays had been built under the direction of the mayor and corporation.¹⁵⁷ A proprietary link may well have been maintained. Mayor and aldermen certainly retained a close physical link, regularly assembling in a large vaulted room under the chapel on the bridge.¹⁵⁸ If for no better reason than proximity, entrusting the mayor with surveillance of a service in the chapel was prudent.¹⁵⁹ Bagod's final instruction, however, betokens a close association between chapel and mayor and aldermen. The residue of his revenue was to lighten the financial burden on the latter by helping to support the three priests they maintained. This merited the inclusion of Bagod's name as a benefactor in the priests' prayers. It is likely that contributing towards the expense of the three 'municipal' priests – who probably served in the chapel of the Assumption – was the most substantial aspect of Bagod's provision. It would have been welcomed by the mayor and aldermen and explains why Bagod could enlist the one as a supervisor and the others as grantees. His anniversary simply guaranteed at least one explicit commemoration annually. His main beneficiaries were Bristol's civic élite who should, without doubt, be closely identified with the fraternity of the Assumption.

Anniversaries, then, were almost invariably subordinate aspects of transactions intended in the main to benefit heirs or parishes or, occasionally, a fraternity or the mayor and corporation. They were reciprocal services guaranteeing personal commemoration and adding to the profit that a benefactor would in any case derive from, for example, funding a priest. Many perpetual

anniversaries, if not part of a perpetual chantry arrangement, were supported by revenues profiting a parish church and were, as a consequence, administered by churchwardens. The very value of the endowments was probably their own best protection and founders' best safeguard: too much was at stake for churchwardens to be negligent or unscrupulous.¹⁶⁰ What evidence there is certainly indicates that parish officials took their responsibilities seriously. Unbound accounts for All Saints' made in the last decades of the 15th and in the early 16th century include, year by year, itemised records of the expenditure on Newbury's, the Chestres' and the Fylours' anniversaries.¹⁶¹ It is not always possible to identify what each endowment contributed.¹⁶² The accounts, however, demonstrate unequivocally that the associated reciprocal duties were being carefully maintained.

It is, however, worth dwelling on the fact that by 1485–86 the Fylours' anniversary was being maintained by All Saints' parish. It represents the denouement of a struggle which itself furnishes a final, indisputable example of how, far from being an onerous imposition, the administration of anniversary endowments could be hotly contested because of the profits involved. Agnes Fylour died in 1467, her husband, Thomas, having predeceased her in 1425.¹⁶³ Provision had been made for their offspring, two of whom, Thomas and Joan, are mentioned in Agnes' will. Agnes' priority, then, was to profit her own and her late husband's soul. In return for property, All Saints' was to provide them with an anniversary. The parish's reaction to this plan is striking. In the section of its Church Book which rehearses benefactions made by its clergy, reference is made to Maurice Hardwick, vicar, who 'procured, moved and stirred' Agnes Fylour to give her dwelling house in the High Street in Bristol to All Saints'.¹⁶⁴ Hardwick was a benefactor for having persuaded Fylour to devise her dwelling house to All Saints'. The reciprocal anniversary was to cost 10s.; whether there were to be other services and what income would have remained clear to the church is not divulged. Nevertheless, that it became contentious is a measure of the property's value.

In 1467, Agnes' son, Thomas, a mercer and citizen of London, contested her plan and laid claim to the property. Maurice Hardwick and the two churchwardens, William Rowley and John Compton, 'by plea withstood him'.¹⁶⁵ The wardens' account for 1467 reveals that the parish spent 11s. 8*d.* writing and sealing Agnes Fylour's testament and, thereafter, a further 28s. 10*d.* on defending its interests.¹⁶⁶ The case appears to have ended in compromise. In her will, Agnes devised the property to Thomas with reversion to Joan, both of whom were charged with the faithful observance of the anniversary. After Joan's death, property and concomitant obligation were to pass to the wardens of All Saints' – which had occurred by the mid-1480s. While Thomas had apparently been able to protect his own and his sister's interest, he had not been able to secure their heirs'. He was also obliged to pay All Saints' a sum of money, effectively in damages. An entry in the Church Book reveals that the wardens brought clear to the church 50s. 6*d.* after the case, implying that Thomas had paid some 90s. in all.¹⁶⁷

Predictably, Agnes' response to her son was intemperate. Her anniversary may not have been in danger but the revenue that was to go to All Saints' and to the benefit of her own and her husband's souls was threatened. The All Saints' Church Book reveals that 'When . . . Thomas her son would have broken her last will and allowed the house to his own use, [Agnes] promised the said Maurice great good to assist him.' The benefit that Agnes sought was, in the event, delayed rather than denied. But however hazily the details of this case may be perceived it is instructive: founders, parishes and, indeed, heirs took the suffrages of which anniversaries were part very seriously. A parish which could extol a vicar as a benefactor for persuading a parishioner to endow such a suffrage and which fought a law suit to protect its interests, would hardly be likely to neglect its reciprocal duties and risk confiscation.

But what of founders' offspring? Ensuring their fidelity might prove much harder, particularly

as the claim to patrimony was strong and its confiscation for renegeing on an agreement presumably much more difficult. Filial piety, may not, of course, be measured – although I would not be inclined to make light of it. An example may be cited, however, which demonstrates that succeeding generations would maintain anniversaries for the simple reason that the spiritual benefits accruing were desirable and that they could share in them. The 1519 charter of re-enseffment which survives for the Chestres' provision, furnishes a striking indication of how family – and indeed family at several removes – sought to benefit from an anniversary.¹⁶⁸ For the charter includes the specification that the Requiem Mass was to be celebrated for 'the souls of Henry Chestre and Alice his wife; of John Chestre and Ann, sometime his wife, afterwards wife of Humphrey Hervey; of Humphrey and Agnes, his first wife; of John Thomas, Richard Hervey and John Collys, when they shall have migrated from this light; of their kindred, friends and benefactors and of all the faithful departed.' The spectacle of ever more tenuously related men and women attaching themselves as beneficiaries is salutary: far from being predators, those alive in 1519 (John Thomas, Richard Hervey and John Collys) clearly hoped to share in the profit of the anniversary and were doubtless interested to ensure that it was functioning when they died. With good reason, founders might depend on the self-interest of either parish or family to maintain their provisions.

The implications of anniversary foundation

The anniversary, then, was of more significance than its long neglect by historians suggests. In late medieval Bristol it was well-established, commonly used and functioned with noteworthy uniformity. Liturgically a repetition of the funeral, the anniversary's more obtrusive aspects – the ringing of bells and exhortations by the town crier – express the purpose for which it was established: it was to stimulate intercession by the living for the dead. The use made of the anniversary is an affirmation – if another were needed – of the intensity of the belief in Purgatory in the period immediately prior to the Reformation, it being one service among the many celebrated to expedite the progress of the soul after death.¹⁶⁹

Anniversary foundation, however, frequently betokened a substantial endowment to a parish.¹⁷⁰ Although the most conspicuous and, indeed, often the identifying aspect of the larger provisions in the surviving sources, anniversaries were by comparison of minor importance. Founders must have expected to benefit more from, for instance, endowing a parish financially or with a priest or a weekly service. These benefits were of much more moment than anniversaries from the parishes' point of view. The revenues of All Saints', for instance, were significantly augmented by the Chestres' endowment. With the parish's total annual income ranging from £10–£15,¹⁷¹ their provision made a substantial contribution, enabling churchwardens to clean and repair, to purchase new equipment and, among many other things, to pay for feasts on certain dates in the church year, greatly enhancing the benefit of all parishioners, both living and dead.¹⁷² However imperfect our grasp of them, the benefactions of which anniversaries were a small part might well be essential for the adequate administration of a town parish.

Study of the anniversary thus reveals a hitherto unappreciated aspect of parish finance: having fathomed the intentions of a number of benefactors, other shreds of evidence which mention anniversaries assume considerable importance. In 1383, Nicholas Geyl, archdeacon of Gloucester and executor to John Blaunke, erstwhile vicar of Redcliffe, secured agreement with the churchwardens of Redcliffe.¹⁷³ In return for a house in Redcliffe Pit, part of Blaunke's estate, presumably, the wardens undertook to provide an anniversary for Blaunke's soul in perpetuity. In the year following, the churchwardens of St Nicholas' undertook to provide Nigel Chepstowe with an anniversary in perpetuity in return for a grant of two shops in Baste Street, the revenues

from which were to be used for the fabric of St Nicholas' church.¹⁷⁴ A century later, in 1490, Thomas Walshe of St Leonard's parish devised his wife two houses in Love Lane and two in Baldwin Street, in return for which she was to provide him with an anniversary.¹⁷⁵ The property was to revert to the churchwardens of St Leonard's, doubtless on condition that they maintained the service. Other arrangements involved larger accumulations of property. In 1457, John Innyng entrusted a number of men with fifteen shops and a holding called 'le Rcke' in Temple Street, as well as a holding in Bear Lane, on condition that an anniversary was celebrated in perpetuity, with the Requiem on the Feast of St Valentine, in St Katherine's chapel in the parish church of St Mary le Port.¹⁷⁶ Explicit statement is absent, but details at the end of the document – specifying that the churchwardens, feoffees and parishioners of St Mary le Port were to keep one copy of the tri-partite indenture – strongly suggest that the feoffees were holding in the parish's interest, just as the Chestres' feoffees held for the advantage of All Saints'. Finally, consider Thomas Stephyns' grant, made in 1483, to Nicholas Smith, his son-in-law, who was parish clerk of St Peter's.¹⁷⁷ For, while the two shops in Winch Street and a garden in Les Barres were to profit St Peter's only in default of Smith's heirs, the instructions dealing with this eventuality are refreshingly straightforward. A number of trustees, all parishioners of St Peter's, were to hold the property on condition that the revenues were devoted to the parish, to the praise of God and the maintenance of the parish church, and that an annual service be held in perpetuity so that Stephyns be remembered once a year.¹⁷⁸

Detail in these examples is far from plentiful. Nevertheless, it is patent both that the practice in question was well established and, in all probability, that many similar benefactions, now unidentifiable, were made to Bristol's parishes before the Reformation. Precisely how much parishes derived may not, of course, be ascertained. But, as Innyng's benefaction surely indicates, the gains could have been of considerable value in a number of cases. The reciprocal services in addition to anniversaries – none of which are itemised in the above examples, although Stephyns talks of maintaining the parish church – would probably also have made a marked practical and liturgical contribution to parishes if, for instance, the Chestres' intentions were in any way typical.

There is the question, however, of why anniversaries were so invariably mentioned, sometimes in considerable detail, in parish archives when the more substantial transactions of which they were but an appendage, were omitted. Their prominence – most strikingly encountered in the St John's Church Book, much of which is a list of the anniversaries to be observed in the parish – is easily explained. It was imperative for parishes that anniversaries be maintained, as their neglect would have led to confiscation of the endowment and subsequent and substantial financial and liturgical loss. As the interval between celebrations was appreciable and as founders differed slightly in their requirements, the details had to be written down so that successive churchwardens might discharge their obligations correctly.¹⁷⁹

Indeed, the volume of detail that parish archives contain is particularly expressive of the close connection existing between churchwardens and anniversaries, which, as the formers' responsibilities may at last be fully appreciated, must now be emphasised. For the anniversaries entrusted to parishes were ultimately in the charge of churchwardens. Rectors or vicars undoubtedly had responsibility for the strictly liturgical aspect of anniversary celebrations: Pownam's instructions for the incumbent of St James' certainly suggest that he was to guide and control the officiating clergy, just as the payment of 3s. 4d, with which Halleway planned to reward the vicar of All Saints' 'for the diligent of his duties' similarly suggests that his role was significant and his good will desirable.¹⁸⁰ But the duty of remembering the correct dates and of alerting the clergy in good time presumably fell to the wardens. Similarly, they would probably have ensured that parish clerk and town crier were informed of their obligations, that they

discharged them fully and that, subsequently, they were appropriately remunerated. The wardens would also have been obliged to ensure that the hearse was set forth and that a pall was available. They certainly had to attend the Requiem and offer the Mass-penny. They would also have been occupied in issuing doles to the poor. In short, as wardens held the purse for anniversaries in parish care, they held overall responsibility for the services and their correct discharge. But their duties were, in fact, more comprehensive where services supported by endowments were concerned, for they were obliged to ensure that the properties were maintained in good repair and leased for optimum rents. The accounts kept by the wardens of All Saints' in the later 15th and early 16th centuries, which itemised both the expenditure on anniversaries and the repairs that were made to endowments, are eloquent testimony to the care with which they discharged their duties. They also indicate that the preservation of endowments was a far from negligible aspect of the wardens' annual duties. Anniversaries were a troublesome and intricate aspect of wardens' responsibilities; what was at stake, however, rendered them crucial.

Anniversaries imposed burdens on others, too, for executors and close relatives were obliged to administer associates' or parents' services in return, often, for legacies. These services naturally impinged much less on parishes, although clergy would still have been involved liturgically and remunerated for their pains, and wardens were often to exercise some supervisory function.¹⁸¹ It is striking, however, to reflect how high a proportion of Bristol's late medieval citizens would have been intimately involved, perhaps for long periods of their adult lives, with administering services for dead relatives or co-parishioners. And, as pointed out earlier, the anniversary was but one service among the many celebrated to expedite the progress of the soul after death.

It may not be out of place, finally and very briefly, to ponder the effect of these services on the quality of the religious experience of a citizen of late medieval Bristol. For apart from prayers, Masses for the dead and manifold charitable acts, *post obit* services provided parishes with many, often sumptuous artefacts, vessels and vestments, as well as increasing the numbers of stipendiary priests. Liturgical standards were appreciably ameliorated. Socially, the rites of death and the demands of the dead were inescapable. With their vivid and repeated funerary re-enactment, anniversaries were among the most insistent reminders that the dead were hardly less than present in a parish and that they be accorded their dues – for having endowed the Jesus Mass, or provided for a stipendiary priest in perpetuity, or refurbished the Rood Loft, or for any number of good reasons which themselves were of help or comfort to the living. In a late medieval parish in a relatively wealthy town, the living must constantly have been aware of the presence of 'all the faithful departed'. The intensity of this presence was doubtless an important factor, albeit among many others, distinguishing the quality of town life from the quality of life in village or countryside.¹⁸²

Notes

1. In view of the plethora of intercessory services commissioned to benefit souls in Purgatory, it would be difficult to over-emphasise the profound effect that the doctrine of Purgatory had in shaping the beliefs and attitudes of individuals in the later medieval period; useful discussion of the doctrine and precise appraisal of its effects are, however, surprisingly hard to come by. I have attempted to remedy this with an essay '“A fond thing vainly invented”: Purgatory and Pious Motive in Later Medieval England', forthcoming in S. Wright (ed), *Parish, Church and People*. For the strength of the doctrine in late medieval England and its eventual reverse, see A. Kreider, *English Chantries: the Road to Dissolution* (Cambridge, Mass. 1979); and on the context of late medieval belief in Purgatory and the efficacy of the Mass, see J. Bossy, 'The Mass as a Social Institution 1200–1700', *Past Present* 100 (Aug 1983), 29–61, and particularly 42–44.
2. B.L. Manning, *The People's Faith in the Time of Wyclif* (2nd edn., 1975), chapter 8.

3. K.L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (1965); Kreider, *English Chantries*; C. Burgess, 'Chantries in Fifteenth Century Bristol' (unpublished D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford 1981) copies of which are deposited in the Bristol Record Office [hereafter cited as B.R.O.] and in the Bodleian. As a detailed study of the services provided for the dead by religious confraternities in France, mention should also be made of A. Molinier, *Les Obituaires Francais* (Paris 1890).
4. Well over 300 wills survive for the citizens of later medieval Bristol. They are to be found in the Great Orphan Book (hereafter cited as G.O.B.) in B.R.O., E. Veale (ed), *The Great Red Book of Bristol* (Bristol Record Soc. ii (introduction), iv, viii, xvi, xviii (text), 1931–1953) [text hereafter cited as *G.R.B.* i–iv]; and in the Registers of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in the Public Record Office in London [hereafter cited as P.R.O.]. There are also other individual wills, deposited now in B.R.O., in the collections assembled by antiquaries like Braikenridge and Fox. The legal status of such wills is not clear but they undoubtedly reflect some contemporaries' wishes.
5. B. Masters and E. Ralph (eds), *The Church Book of St Ewen's, Bristol, 1454–1584* (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Soc, 1967) [hereafter cited as S.E.C.B.]; 'The All Saints' Church Book' [hereafter cited as A.S.C.B.] in B.R.O. (this book, although in ms., has been paginated); 'The St John's Church Book' [hereafter cited as S.J.C.B.] in B.R.O.
6. Virtually all of late medieval Bristol's parish Deeds are deposited in B.R.O. The parish of All Saints', Bristol, has perhaps the fullest collection of Deeds, recently arranged and calendared by P.L. Strong, available in B.R.O. [hereafter cited as A.S. Deeds].
7. W.G. Hoskins, 'English Provincial Towns in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Trans Roy Hist Soc* (5th ser) 6 (1956), 1–19. I do not propose to analyse the fortunes or character of later medieval Bristol here; for the best short history of the town with invaluable street and parish maps, see M.D. Lobel and E.M. Carus-Wilson, 'Bristol', in M.D. Lobel and W.H. Johns (eds), *The Atlas of Historical Towns* 2 (1975).
8. On funerals, see D. Rock, *The Church of Our Fathers* (1903–4), ii, 377ff and notes; G. Rowell, *The Liturgy of Christian Burial* (Alcuin Club Collections, 59, 1977), 64–73; 'Burial, 3' in J.G. Davies (ed), *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (1972); and see below, p.176.
9. The terms 'obit', and 'year's mind' may also be found in Bristol's evidence and were used indistinguishably from 'anniversary'; s.v. Anniversary B. 2 in OED.
10. Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*, ii, 404–5 and note 86; see also F. Procter and C. Wordsworth (eds), *Breviarium ad usum insignis Ecclesiae Sarum* (1879–1882) i, cols. xlii–li, and 2, cols. 271–283.
11. G.O.B., fo. 76.
12. P.R.O., 14 Wattys (fo. 104).
13. P.R.O., 23 Milles (fo. 189v).
14. *G.R.B.* iii, 103–107.
15. For instance, Thomas Jonys, d. 1464, G.O.B., fos. 180v–181; Joan Geffrey, d. 1494, P.R.O., 15 Vox (no page number).
16. Kreider, *English Chantries*, 77–79. See also my unpublished D.Phil thesis (referred to in note 3 above), chapter 4.
17. S.J.C.B., fos. 13–14; and St John's Deeds, no. 597.
18. That is, the crypt of the church – the Fraternity of St John was sited therein.
19. F. Bickley (ed), *The Little Red Book of Bristol* (Bristol 1900) [hereafter cited as *L.R.B.*] ii, 199–206.
20. The accounts are unpublished and are in B.R.O., P/AS/C1.
21. The accounts are unbound but consist of folded 'booklets'; this reference and those that follow may be found in the account for the specified year.
22. See above, notes 11 and 12.
23. See above, notes 14 and 17.
24. G.O.B., fos. 85–85v.
25. Apart from attending the Halleways' anniversary, the mayor and civic officials attended the Spicers' too: see the Spicers' chantry accounts in B.R.O. P/St.J/Ca/1. See below, note 158.
26. Somerwell had been mayor of Bristol in 1388 and 1394, see Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (Camden Soc, 1872), 37.
27. See above, note 19.
28. See above, notes 20 and 21.
29. On the possibility of concelebration, see A.A. King, *Concelebration in the Christian Church* (1966).
30. In the S.J.C.B., for instance, see the anniversaries founded by John Arneys, fo.11v, the Sharpes, fos.13–14, and William Howell, fo.16. In G.O.B., see Thomas Jonys, fos. 180v–181. On the Mass-penny, see L. McGarry, *The Holy Eucharist in Middle English Homiletic and Devotional Verse* (Washington 1936), 126–128 and notes.
31. Rock, *The Church Of Our Fathers*, ii, 404–5.
32. T. Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy* (1969), 109; J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* (Revised edn., 1961), 88 and 319–21.

33. See S.J.C.B., Excestre's provision fo.9v and Frampton's fo.15v; see also John Bagod's will, *G.R.B.* iv, 106, and Shipward's and Erle's wills in *G.O.B.*, respectively fos. 205v–208v and fos. 242–243.
34. See my article, 'For the Increase of Divine Service'; Chancies in the Parish in late medieval Bristol', *J Ecclesiastical Hist* 36 (1985), 46–65.
35. Henry Chestre died in 1470, P.R.O. 1 Wattys (fo. 4v); his anniversary was inaugurated in All Saints' in 1477, see A.S. Deeds, BS. B. 11. Alice Chestre died in 1485, P.R.O., 14 Logge fos. 103v–104; for a description of her benefactions to All Saints', see A.S.C.B., pp. 139–142.
36. A. S. Deeds, BS. B. 14a/b.
37. *Ibid.*, HS. C. 11a/b.
38. Procter and Wordsworth, *Breviarium ad usum insignis Ecclesiae Sarum* ii, cols. 271ff and especially 281.
39. Rock, *Church of Our Fathers* ii, 416 and notes, and iii, 79–81 and notes; J.C. Cox, *Churchwardens' Accounts* (1913), 170. It is worth pointing out that A.S.C.B., 321 reveals that the parish had a board with two trestles for obits; the St Nicholas Church Book referred to 'parish coffins', E.G.C. Atchley, 'On the medieval parish records of the Church of St Nicholas, Bristol', *Trans St Paul's Ecclesiological Soc* 6 (1906–10), [hereafter cited as *Records of St Nicholas*], 65.
40. Spicers' chantry accounts for 1475, 1476 and 1477 (see above, note 25) specifically mention that two hearses were used.
41. A.S.C.B., 141.
42. See also Joanna Thorne's provision, *G.R.B.* iv, 3.
43. Sharpe: see above, note 17; Cachemay: B.R.O., Fox Collection, no. 66.
44. See above, note 40.
45. *Records of St Nicholas*, 38–9.
46. *Ibid.*
47. P.R.O. 16 Horne (no page number).
48. See above, notes 20 and 21.
49. S.J.C.B., fo. 10v.
50. *Ibid.*, fos. 9v and 10.
51. See above, note 15.
52. *G.O.B.*, fos. 205v–208v.
53. *Records of St Nicholas*, 44.
54. See above, notes 25 and 40.
55. William Coder was also to have 4 candles, *G.O.B.*, fos. 197v–198v.
56. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney, *Councils and Synods with Documents relating to the English Church 2, AD 1205–1313* (1964) i, 378, 404, 513, 592; ii, 990.
57. Edmund Blanket's provision, *L.R.B.* i, 224, is also worthy of note: eight candles were to be burnt next to his tomb at his anniversary and at other festivals throughout the year.
58. *G.O.B.* fos. 186–186v; it should be noted that Agnes Fylour, while mentioning the sum of 12s. in her anniversary prescription, in fact awarded 2s. of this sum to the churchwardens of her parish for services not wholly concerned with the anniversary.
59. Cf. A.S.C.B., 74, where instructions were given that the clerk was to be paid 2d. for his 'dirige', presumably implying that he was to say or sing the offices, too.
60. See above, note 25.
61. See above, note 19.
62. See above, note 33.
63. This is certainly implied by William Spencer's will, made in 1494, P.R.O. 17 Vox (no page number). His instructions stipulated that bells were to ring and lights burn while the service was solemnly celebrated in St Nicholas', with the Placebo and Dirige on the eve and the Requiem on the morning following.
64. Thomas Jonys: *G.O.B.*, fos. 180v–181; Henry Gildeney: *G.O.B.*, fos. 159–161.
65. See above, note 15.
66. In the anniversary celebrated for Excestre and others, S.J.C.B., fo. 9v.
67. S.J.C.B., fo. 11v uses 'to cry out', and the wills of Jonys and Gildeney 'proclaim'.
68. See above, notes 30 and 33.
69. See above, note 45; and s.v. bellman, 1.
70. See above, notes 58 (and also A.S.C.B., 74) and 15.
71. See above, note 50.
72. See above, notes 19, 20 and 21.
73. See above, note 25.
74. Frampton and Howell: see above, notes 33 and 30.
75. Exestre and White: see above, note 50.
76. *G.O.B.*, fos. 197v–198v.

77. *G.R.B.* iv. 106; and see below, p. 202.
78. Sharpe's sets of instructions give a clear impression of what precisely was required, see above, note 17.
79. See above, note 19.
80. See above, note 14.
81. See above, note 50.
82. G. Shepherd, 'Poverty in Piers Plowman', in T.H. Aston, P. Coss, C. Dyer and J. Thirsk (eds), *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R.H. Hilton* (1983), 174; see also Manning, *The People's Faith*, 148.
83. *Ibid.*, 145–7.
84. *Ibid.*, 148–9.
85. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries*, 3.
86. *Ibid.*, 4.
87. In the surviving sample of testamentary evidence, for example, anniversaries were explicitly commissioned by some 35 testators, as compared to over 120 chantries; see below, pp. 192–4.
88. *G.O.B.*, fos. 112v–113.
89. Added to which, the figure omits anniversaries established in the 14th century which functioned in the 15th, like Frampton's perpetual chantry and anniversary which was founded in St John's in 1375 and maintained until the dissolution: see above, note 33, also *L.R.B.* i, 198–202, and J. Maclean (ed), 'Chantry Certificates, Gloucestershire', *TBGAS*, 8 (1883–4), 236–7.
90. For 15th-century Bristol, whose population is usually put at approximately 10,000, some 350 wills survive. Norwich's population was larger, standing at approximately 12,500, but for the period 1370–1532, over 1800 wills survive; see N. Tanner, *The Church in late medieval Norwich* (Toronto 1984), 113–4.
91. *G.O.B.*, fos. 244–245. Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe*, 48.
92. *A.S.C.B.*, 150.
93. See my, 'By quick and by dead: wills and pious provision in late Medieval Bristol', *Eng Hist Rev* 102 (1987), 837–58.
94. See above, note 87.
95. My article in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (see above, note 34) illustrates the importance of the contribution that chantries made to parish churches.
96. See my unpublished D.Phil thesis (above, note 3), 133a–133e.
97. E.E. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges in St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol* (1950), 65–6, 71–2.
98. *Ibid.*, 65. And see *B.R.O.*, Braikenridge Collection, no. 264.
99. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges*, 77–8 and 78n.
100. A.E. Hudd, 'Ancient Bristol Documents, numbers IX and X, Two Deeds of 1343 and 1434 relating to St Katherine's Hospital, Bedminster', *Proc Clifton Antiquarian Club* 2 (1892–3), 247–9.
101. For St Katherine's, see Lobel and Carus-Wilson, 'Bristol', Appendix II, no. 14.
102. See above, note 19.
103. *A.S.C.B.*, 137.
104. See above, note 35.
105. *A.S. Deeds*, HS.C.11 a & b.
106. *P.R.O.*, 13 Marche (fos. 102–102v).
107. In general, however, founders would not appear to have applied the distinction implied here between 'obit' and 'anniversary', see above, note 9.
108. The Chestres, the Sharpes, Thomas Jonys, John Seynte and John Bagod (notes 35, 17, 15, 127 and 153 respectively) sought the celebration of the Requiem on the date given with the exequies on the eve.
109. William Canynges (for the St George's altar celebration), William Pownam, Richard Erle, Walter Frampton and William Howell (notes 97, 14, 113, 33 and 30) stipulated that their exequies were to be on the date given with the Requiem on the morrow.
110. See above, note 58.
111. *A.S.C.B.*, 74.
112. See above, note 15.
113. *G.O.B.*, fos. 242–243.
114. See above, note 64. The will was dated 13 December 1430 and was proved on the Wednesday before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 Sept) 10 Henry VI (1431).
115. I assume that the two days following Easter Sunday are intended by 'Easter Week', as the preceding week would presumably have been called 'Holy Week'.
116. See above, note 50.
117. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries*, chaps. 2–4; and see my unpublished D.Phil thesis (above, note 3), 57–82, 237–91.

118. G.O.B., fo. 78.
119. It should, however, be admitted that the clerks who rang parish bells were remunerated with reasonable generosity; see above, p. 188.
120. See above, note 34.
121. P.R.O., 12 Stockton (fos. 92–92v).
122. See above, note 12.
123. And see John Leycestre's will for an example of procedure when family legatees were not executors, G.O.B., fos. 169–170.
124. *G.R.B.* i, 238–240.
125. See above, note 76.
126. G.O.B., fos. 201v–202.
127. G.O.B., fos. 194–194v.
128. P.R.O., 32 Horne (no page number).
129. B.R.O., Braikenridge Collection, no. 230.
130. These accounts are to be found in a book entitled 'The Accompts of the Canynges Chauntries' deposited in the archive of St Mary Redcliffe.
131. The accounts indicate that the church was receiving rent but the sum is indecipherable. The receipts entered on either side, however, are £6 13s. 4d. and £7 0s. 6d., which may well suggest that the Blekker property was also lucrative.
132. G.O.B., fos. 127–127v.
133. P.R.O., 9 Marche (fo. 67).
134. See above, note 13.
135. K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (1973), 57; A. Smith, 'Litigation and Politics: Sir John Fastolf's defence of his English property', in A.J. Pollard (ed), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (1984), 60.
136. See above, note 30.
137. A.S.C.B., 161.
138. A.S.C.B., 567, 571, 575.
139. See above, note 47.
140. See above, note 130.
141. See above, note 34.
142. *S.E.C.B.*, xxviii.
143. See above, note 35.
144. See above, note 37.
145. A.S. Deeds, BS. B. 15.
146. This sum would mean that the priest celebrating the Jesus Mass would be paid the (roughly appropriate) sum of 8d. per week.
147. A.S. Deeds, BS. B. 13.
148. See above, note 36.
149. Johanna Pernaunt made the arrangements for an anniversary in All Saints' in 1515, the endowment (property in Broad Street, in the parish of St Ewen's, Bristol) being held by feoffees but the rents collected and service administered by the churchwardens of All Saints'; see *G.R.B.* iii, 172–174.
150. See above, note 43.
151. C.E. Boucher, 'St Peter's Church, Bristol', *TBGAS* 32 (1909), 275–285.
152. It appears that Cachemay was acting on behalf of Longforde in establishing the priest. Longforde had presumably not lived to see the establishment of the Fraternity as a functioning corporation and had entrusted his property to Cachemay to try and ensure the proper implementation of his wishes.
153. See above, note 77.
154. Clement and Alice Bagod and Robert and Elizabeth Russell may almost certainly be identified as John and Elizabeth Bagods' parents. Clement Bagod was mayor of Bristol in 1438 and 1443; Robert Russell may very well be identified with the merchant active in Bristol in the early 15th century, see E.M. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the later Middle Ages* (2nd edn., 1967), documents 39–44, 46, 49.
155. Examination of both G.O.B. and Ricart's *Kalendar* reveals that Esterfeld was mayor in 1488 and 1495, Druex in 1497, Vaughan in 1501 and Monoux in 1582. Bagod was mayor in 1477.
156. The information contained in Ricart's *Kalendar* on the personnel of Bristol's government becomes decidedly scanty during the 1480s and for the period following.
157. Samuel Seyer, *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol and its neighbourhood* (Bristol 1821 and 1823) 2, 27–8.
158. *Ibid.*, 40–2.

159. Although the mayor of Bristol was, *ex officio*, guardian of the town's perpetual chantries (see Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe*, 76–80), it is worth pointing out that he had been specifically nominated as supervisor by a founder establishing a provision in the Bridge Chapel, see *G.R.B.* ii, 202–3.
160. See below, p. 206, note 181.
161. The accounts are in B.R.O., P/AS/ChW/1(a).
162. The accounts do specify what income was derived from individual properties in the parish's care, but it is seldom possible to collate these references with the individual endowments.
163. Thomas Fylour: G.O.B., fo. 147v; Agnes Fylour: see above, note 58.
164. A.S.C.B., 83.
165. Ibid.
166. A.S.C.B., 547.
167. Ibid., 382.
168. See above, note 37.
169. See above, note 1; and Manning, *The People's Faith*, passim.
170. The association of anniversaries with the profit of the host institution has certainly been made before but applied to more exalted echelons; see B.F. Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates in the Middle Ages* (1977), 29–36, 387–401.
171. See above, note 161.
172. Manning, *The People's Faith*, 15–16.
173. B.R.O., in 'Abstract of Ancient Deeds [collected by Latimer] relating to the parishes of Saints Nicholas and Leonard,' [hereafter cited as B.R.O., Latimer] for year 1383.
174. B.R.O., Braikenridge Collection, no. 189.
175. B.R.O., Latimer, for year 1490.
176. B.R.O., St Mary le Port Deeds D.50.
177. B.R.O., Fox Collection, no. 31.
178. The phrase used is *animadversarium meum semel in anno*.
179. It may also be noted that lists – apparently incomplete – of the perpetual anniversaries that were to be celebrated in some of Bristol's churches are contained in different parish compilations, see A.S.C.B., 997; Records of St Nicholas, 54; and in the manuscript book entitled 'The Accompts of the Canynges Chauntries 1509–1534,' following the record of general parish expenditure in the first set of legible parish accounts.
180. See above, notes 14 and 19.
181. And it may be added that if one parish stood to gain if the service in the care of another was neglected, it would undoubtedly have been the wardens' task to keep surveillance and lead the effort to assume responsibility for its discharge and endowment if either possible or necessary. Blekker's anniversary in St Mary Redcliffe provides a clear example of wardens adopting a service and its endowment, cf. note 170.
182. Cf. W.J. Sheils, 'Religion in Provincial Towns: Innovation and Tradition', in F. Heal and R. O'Day (eds), *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I* (1977), 156–7. Compare also C. Phythian-Adams, 'Ceremony and the citizen: The communal year at Coventry 1450–1550', in P. Clark and P. Slack (eds), *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500–1700* (1972), 57–85 – it is to be regretted that Phythian-Adams does not consider the commemoration of the dead in a ceremonial context, since this would have continued throughout the year and would presumably have reached its climax on All Saints' and All Souls' Days, two-thirds of the way through the six month period which, because of its lack of religious ceremonial, he calls the 'secular half'.