



of the "success stories" keep in touch, she says.

WHILE NO ONE wants to see any child in custody, she accepts that there are times when it is essential. Her task then is to try to help the child look forward to the future. "They are at a very impressionable age, which means they are impressionable in a positive way, too."

As Chaplain, Mrs Yates works closely with other staff at the centre in planning the education and pastoral care of each inmate. Several young people have sat GCSEs this summer, and Mrs Yates teaches RE. She also attends the monthly review meetings with families, monitoring each child's progress.

"I'm available for the children, whenever there is a crisis, at whatever time they need me. I am there for pastoral care. I try to build up a relationship with a child, who may come from any faith or none. I am responsible for their spiritual and emotional well-being while they are here. A lot of my work is listening."

Mrs Yates is the only chaplain at

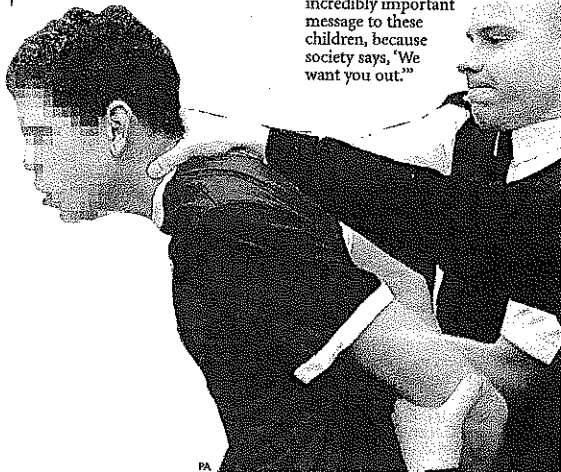
the centre. But she is trying to build up a network of voluntary chaplains to help serve the 44 children there.

Most inmates at Oakhill come from a no-faith or very loosely Christian background. A few are from other faiths, but there is a lot of interest in the services offered in the chapel. Of the inmates with no church background, some confess that they have never even seen a clerical collar before, and have no idea what it is, or what a cleric does.

"I offer an act of worship in the same way that a church would offer a family-type service. It's a fairly informal service, but I want them to get used to making a confession and receiving absolution. I make it interactive, but quite short, too; some of the children have short attention spans.

"I want it to be an early approach to Christianity. They come to the service from curiosity, just to see what is on offer.

"A lot of these children feel no one cares for them. My role is to help them understand that they have done something awful, but that doesn't stop God loving them. That is an incredibly important message to these children, because society says, 'We want you out.'"



Authority figures: above: the Revd Yvonne Yates during a service at Oakhill Secure Training Centre; right: a 16-year-old is taken away from a house in Hackney, London, in connection with the assault of a passenger on a bus

'I want them to get used to making a confession'

Teens

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ago where a highly respected judge said that crime under the age of 15 is a development issue rather than criminality. I agree with him. A lot of these children are victims: they come from chaotic backgrounds and do not have a sense of where they fit in."

But Mrs Yates also believes that society — not just the children's individual families — is failing them. Horrified by juvenile crime, communities give the knee-jerk reaction of shutting the offender away, without examining the wider community's responsibility for the child.

"I see much more now what needs to be done in the community. Working here has highlighted a society that, on the one hand, wants

these children locked away — and I understand that, but these children need a lot of support — and a society that should care about how these children got to this point."

Mrs Yates finds the low age of criminal responsibility "difficult to understand in the context of a society that says you cannot smoke, buy alcohol, vote, or get married until your teenage years".

But sentencing a child to a period of custody, she says, "can sometimes offer the opportunity to work therapeutically with the child, and removes a child from whatever negative circumstances may be influencing their behaviour. But that can only be effective for serious crime, I think. Short periods of custody, statistics show, have proved to be relatively ineffective."

She believes that for the time inmates are inside, Oakhill can provide a sense of belonging, although it is up to the child whether to try and turn his or her life around. Some manage it. Some

History BC — Before Crockford

A comprehensive database of the clergy of the Church of England from 1540 to 1835 can now be accessed online. The project directors Arthur Burns, Kenneth Fincham, and Stephen Taylor describe its uses for historians and genealogists



The Clergy of the C of E Database project directors: left to right: Dr Stephen Taylor, Dr Kenneth Fincham, and Dr Arthur Burns

"HOW MANY clergy were there in 1715?" "A vicar of my parish resigned in 1630. How do I find out where he went?" "My ancestor was a clergyman. How do I discover who ordained him, and when?"

These are the kind of questions frequently asked by those interested in the clergy database of the Church of England. They are also questions to which historians of English religion often need answers on a bigger scale.

The database was set up in October 1999 to record biographical details of all C of E clergy from 1540 to 1835. But for the era before the first regular publication of *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, first published in 1858, and its precursors from 1840, answers are elusive.

Before 1840, records of the appointment and departure of clerics omitted origins and destinations; so individual clergymen "vanish" as they move between livings. Calculat-

ing the size of the clerical profession poses even more of a challenge: contemporary estimates varied enormously, from 10,000 to 25,000 in the early 18th century.

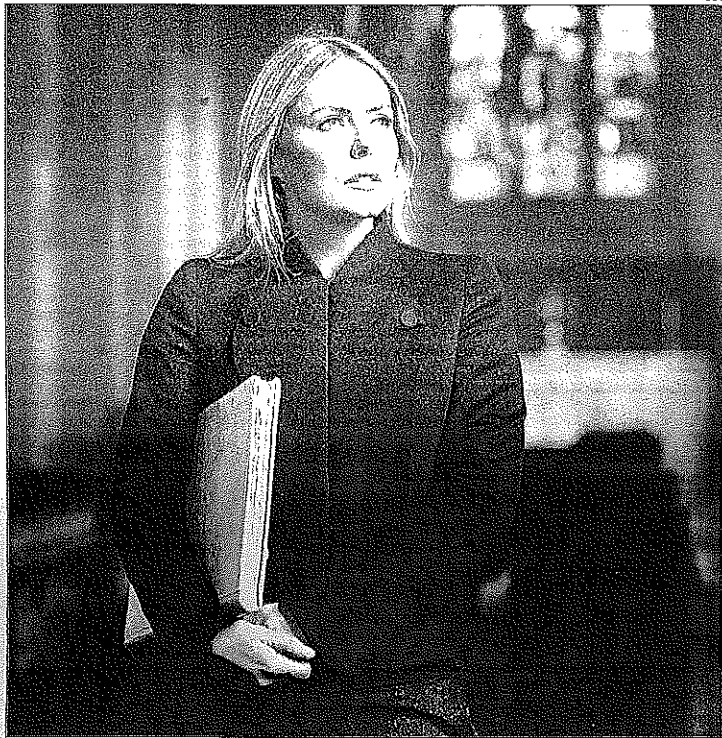
The accuracy of the database matters not only to genealogists and family historians. It is also of acute interest to professional historians — and not only those with an interest in the Church of England.

The Church was by far the largest employer of educated men between the 16th and early 19th centuries. Its influence, therefore, was enormous. The Church had, in principle, a resident cleric in all 10,000-or-so English and Welsh parishes, where, every Sunday, the whole population was expected to attend to hear him preach.

Universities were primarily clerical seminaries, and most schoolmasters were clergymen. A high proportion of the books and pamphlets published, even in the early 19th century, were written by clergymen, who were as active in fields such as science, literature, philosophy, and political and economic theory as they were in theology and morality. Knowledge of the size and composition of the clerical profes-

Continued overleaf

Trace a Reverend relative



BBC

THE DATABASE is a resource for all interested in the history of the Church and its clergy. The fact that it is available on the web makes research less demanding, both in terms of travel, and in the time taken to search through often barely legible records, which are frequently written in Latin.

The incorporation of large numbers of schoolmasters and curates sheds light on the early careers of even already famous clerics, and also provides information about the history of parishes which was often ignored by the compilers of the boards of incumbents displayed on the walls of many churches.

The website receives hits from across the globe: the international genealogical community, for example, clearly appreciates its worth, and uses its data to reconstruct life histories that are often of far more than personal interest.

In the autumn, readers will have the chance to share in one that is

Clerical quest: above: Patsy Kensit discovered more about her ancestor the Revd James Mayne, a curate in the East End of London, during the BBC programme *Who Do You Think You Are?*, to be shown on Wednesday 13 August.

close to home; for the database helped Patsy Kensit to reconstruct her family history for the BBC's genealogy series *Who Do You Think You Are?*

Another life history is recounted in the online-journal section of the website, where the Texan genealogist Sarah Reveley recounts the fascinating life of the Cumbrian cleric Samuel Reveley (1757-1809), Vicar of Crosby Ravensworth.

Reveley was unusual among the many non-graduate Cumbrians serving north-western parishes, because he had emigrated to the United States in his childhood. Returning to England for schooling, however, Samuel was marooned in exile by the outbreak of the American Revolution, in which his brother fought for the rebels.

Reveley never left Cumbria again, but remained closely involved in the affairs of his transatlantic family, reminding us that "mountain clergy" might not be the backwoodsman they at first appear.

Tales of the unexpected

THERE has been a whole host of unexpected and curious findings from this project; what follows is just a small sample.

Beginning with ordinations, it is clear that if a candidate was turned away by one bishop as unsuitable, he often went elsewhere to find a more sympathetic bishop to confer orders.

In the late 18th century, the Isle of Man attracted candidates, often from the West Indies and Ireland, who reckoned that admission was easier there than elsewhere. But Clifton Evangelicals went there, too, for ordination, since their religious views were unacceptable to their bishop in Bristol.

Episcopal ordination was banned from 1646 to 1660, as "godly" Puritans overthrew the Established Church and abolished both bishops and the Prayer Book. In fact, a handful of bishops kept on ordaining, quite illegally, a considerable number of candidates: by 1660, more than 2500 clergymen.

What is really surprising is that the most active ordainers were the Scottish and Irish bishops Tilson of Elphin, Maxwell of Kilmore, and Fulwar of Ardfer, whose names are scarcely remembered even by 17th-century ecclesiastical historians.

The education of the clergy is another interesting topic. More and more graduates were taking Holy Orders after the Reformation. Some colleges, such as Emmanuel, Cambridge, were founded for this very purpose.

But, after 1700, this trend changed, and a significant number of literates, or non-graduates, became clergymen. Moreover, they were not always stuck as curates at the bottom of the clerical ladder: those with connections, membership of a clerical dynasty (and there were plenty of those), or a supportive patron could land a comfortable benefice, or even become chaplain to the Prince of Wales. These patrons were often the Crown,

Oxford and Cambridge colleges, or local members of the gentry.

A significant number of patrons were women, sometimes acting in their own right (as did the Countess of Huntingdon), but often in combination with other, male patrons.

Women also occasionally feature among the schoolteachers licensed by the Church. The exact number will be revealed when all the licensing and visitation books have been processed.

We are also appreciating just how mobile the clerical profession was. For some periods, there are dioceses where clergy return to their localities to be ordained and take up livings. Carlisle, between 1540 and 1660, is a good illustration of this. But this seems to be the exception, not the rule, and it is not true of Carlisle itself by the end of the 18th century.

The career of the poet George Crabbe (1754-1832) is a good example. He was ordained in Norwich diocese, and after a curacy in Suffolk was benefited first in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire before becoming incumbent of Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

There were also waves of migrant clerical workers. Large numbers of Welsh ordinands ended up in Elizabethan London; while in Rochester diocese, at the beginning of the 19th century, many Llandaff ordinands were serving as curates in rich livings.

To a question such as "How many clergy were there in 1715?" it is still too early to give a definitive answer. But the early indications are that there are fewer clergymen than we had foreseen throughout the period. In 1715, the total was certainly much closer to 10,000 than 25,000.

There are many more surprising finds that could be mentioned: for the early 19th century, for example, there was an influx of ex-servicemen into the clerical profession, and a rising number of clerical suicides; perhaps there was a connection between the two.

An enormous amount has already been achieved. Some 1.5 million records of events in clergymen's careers have already been collected and uploaded. And, once linked to identifiable people and places, they are made available on the website.

At the time of writing, the "person records" of more than 90,000 individuals are publicly accessible. An upgrade, planned for the autumn, will feature a new interface, presenting the often complex data relating to each individual in a form resembling a modern CV.

THE TASK of establishing the database has been far more complex than was ever imagined. The need to fill in gaps in the archives, and to track down records for non-parochial clerics — vicars choral, royal chaplains, military and naval chaplains, and many others — has led to visits to more than 50 record offices, and the extraction of data from thousands of documents.

Identifying places named in records has been complicated by the absence of a definitive list of English and Welsh parishes and chapelries and their unions and separations; so we have had to construct our own.

There have been joys and thrills as well as tribulations. The enthusiasm and expertise of the research assist-

ants on the project has been a revelation: nearly 100 volunteers collected data across the country, testifying to lively public interest in church history, and to unexplored potential for further collaborations between university historians and those beyond the academy.

For the three of us, the moment is approaching when we can begin to contemplate writing a book on the development of the clerical profession between the Reformation and the Age of Reform.

This is an exciting prospect. No one before has attempted to write a research-based study of any single profession across three centuries, let alone one as large as the clergy. In addition, working together has forced us to recognise that the assumptions made by each of us about the Church in our own particular period of history do not necessarily translate to other periods.

www.theclergydatabase.org.uk

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sion, therefore, helps us to understand both early-modern English society and the part played by the Church within it.

ALTHOUGH the kind of questions posed at the beginning of this article are difficult to answer, this is not because relevant sources do not exist. The early-modern Church kept remarkably good records, and they have survived well. Episcopal registers give details of ordinations and clerical appointments; separate licensing books record employment of curates and schoolmasters; visitation books list clergymen summoned for inspection by higher authorities. The problem is that each of the 27 dioceses kept its own records, and they are now scattered in archives across England and Wales.

The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835 seeks to bring together these records online. Generous funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and, latterly, the British Academy has supported the collaboration over the past nine years between King's College, London, the University of Kent at Canterbury, and the University of Reading, to establish the database.

The database is continually evolving, and, as a web resource, can always be updated to take account of new information. In this sense it will never be "finished". Additions are received almost every day, as well as corrections, sometimes, from users. We also hope to be able to add material from sources such as wills and monumental inscriptions, which were initially excluded, in an effort to achieve breadth of coverage.

'Some 1.5 million records of events in clergymen's careers have already been collected and uploaded'