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**Article (Accepted version)  
(Refereed)**

**Original citation:**

Flew, Sarah (2018) *The state as landowner: neglected evidence of state funding of Anglican Church extension in London in the latter nineteenth century*. [Journal of Church and State](#), 60 (2). pp. 299-317. ISSN 0021-969X

DOI: [10.1093/jcs/csw125](https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/csw125)

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Available in LSE Research Online: November 2018

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## **The State as Landowner: Neglected Evidence of State Funding of Anglican Church Extension in London in the Latter Nineteenth Century**

Sarah Flew

The start of the nineteenth century, and particularly the twenty-year period of Anglican church reform and church extension activities between 1808 and 1828, was one of “close co-operation between Church and State.”<sup>1</sup> As Stewart Brown highlights, “The State had taken the lead in the reform movement and had invested unprecedented amounts of public money in strengthening the established Churches.”<sup>2</sup> This investment of public money was principally through two large grants of £1,000,000 in 1818 and £500,000 in 1824 for Anglican church building. These two sums, given to commemorate the recent victory at Waterloo, funded the so-called Waterloo churches and were superintended by the Church Building Commissioners.<sup>3</sup> The grants were given under the justification that it was the duty of the state to financially support the nation’s church.

The decades that followed, however, experienced a fracture in this close cooperation. In this period, the separation of church and state was vigorously debated, and a crucial aspect of this debate was the rationale and legitimacy of parliamentary funding of the church. Brown argues that the “confidence and sense of purpose that had characterized the established Churches in the 1820s evaporated; the balance of power in the parliamentary State seemed to be shifting away from supporters of the established Churches to religious Dissenters.”<sup>4</sup> In the late 1820s and early 1830s, the privileges of other denominations were enhanced with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828 and Catholic emancipation in 1832. However, as J. P. Ellens highlights, this gesture misfired: “rather than gracefully accepting the new civil privileges extended to them,” the Dissenters “began a concerted attack against the social and political disabilities under which they continued to live.”<sup>5</sup> The voluntarist movement, which was born in the wake of these new Nonconformist privileges, was centered on the principle that all forms of association should be voluntary and, specifically, that religion should not be supported by the state. As W. R. Ward summarizes, “Voluntarism might be unpalatable, but it was unavoidable” as a response to the Church of England’s attempts to finance the spiritual needs of the burgeoning population.<sup>6</sup> Correspondingly, various organizations lobbied, from the 1830s onwards, for a reduction in the privileges granted to the established church.

Consequently, the period from 1832 to 1868 witnessed the cessation of two mechanisms that financially advantaged the Church of England. In 1868, as a result of a long campaign of anti-establishment pressure from Nonconformist lobbyists, the compulsory aspect of the church rate was abolished. The Liberation Society (founded in 1844 and originally named the Anti-State Church Association) made the issue of financial privileges the central tenet of their anti-state church campaign and held, in particular, that the symbol of this unequal treatment would be the controversial church rate. The widely held objection was that the church rate was a financial charge set by Anglican churchwardens on every individual in the parish, regardless of their denomination.<sup>7</sup> Owen Chadwick highlights the level of conflict caused by this issue: “If the church and dissent came to blows as never before and never afterwards in the history of England, a main cause was the tea-cup parochial squabbles of church rate.”<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the period saw the end of large parliamentary grants to fund Anglican church building with the £500,000 grant in 1824. However, despite the increased privileges granted to other denominations, the Church of England continued until the mid-1840s to believe that there was a possibility of further state grants for Anglican church building.<sup>9</sup> In connection with this expectation, the Church of England overhauled its administration through a long series of church reforms implemented by the Ecclesiastical Commission, which was formed by Parliament in 1835.<sup>10</sup> Many in the church held the view that if it was actively seen to be overhauling its administration and finances, Parliament would be more likely to grant public money for further church extension.<sup>11</sup> This series of reforms, implemented by the Ecclesiastical Commission, rationalized the administration of the church through a reorganization of the dioceses and through a review of existing Church of England resources. The final major attempts to secure further parliamentary funding for church extension came in the 1840s with Sir Robert Inglis’s unsuccessful campaign for new parliamentary funds between 1840 and 1842.<sup>12</sup> This attempt marked the definitive end of the campaign for parliamentary funding of Anglican church extension. Occasionally

individuals continued to raise the subject, but generally the view that it was Parliament's responsibility to finance new church building for the established church was abandoned after 1842.<sup>13</sup>

This essay, however, presents significant new evidence that the state did continue to grant monies to the Church of England for church extension activities until the end of the nineteenth century. These alternative funds were given using the justification that the state—as one of London's principal landowners—had a duty to support the church and to fund religious provision for its tenants. This essay, therefore, explores a new aspect of the church-state relationship, seen through the lens of an affiliation between a provider of services and a landowner.

### **Background**

Between 1857 and 1884, the state department of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues gave three grants amounting to £35,000 to fund Anglican church building and church extension activities in the Diocese of London. These grants, theoretically given on behalf of the Crown Estate, were in effect indirect funding of church extension channelled through a state agency and required either parliamentary or Treasury approval. The discovery of these grants from the commissioners is significant, therefore, because it has generally been thought that state funding of church building ceased with the parliamentary grant of 1824. The grants sanctioned were: £10,000 awarded to the London Diocesan Church Building Society in 1857, £15,000 awarded to the Bishop of London's Fund in 1865, and a further £10,000 awarded to the Bishop of London's Fund in 1875. The commissioners' files also refer to a more modest grant of £500 given in 1871 to the Bishop of Rochester's Fund, a comparable organization for the neighboring Diocese of Rochester.<sup>14</sup> Alongside these exceptional grants given to diocesan church building societies, the commissioners routinely granted both sites and small financial sums to support the building of Anglican churches, parsonages, and schools. These grants were all justified as being but “parts of the costs and expenses of a liberal ‘management’ of the Crown Estates” as authorized by the Crown Lands Act of 1829 (10 Geo 4 cap 50).<sup>15</sup> The crucial rationale for these state-sanctioned payments for Anglican church building was that they were granted in the state's acting capacity as a landowner.

The office of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues was established in 1810, and was a result of the merger of the offices of the Surveyor General of Woods, Forests, Parks, and Chases, and the Surveyor General of the Land Revenue of the Crown, which had both existed since the seventeenth century.<sup>16</sup> This new body was responsible for the management of Crown lands, and its origins lie in the creation of the civil list. In the seventeenth century, Parliament had begun to grow concerned about the sovereign frittering away the Crown lands by bestowing estates as gifts to favorites, mistresses, and illegitimate children.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, in 1702 an act was passed to prevent the sovereign from disposing of any more of the Crown lands. In conjunction with this, the civil list had been introduced in 1698, guaranteeing King William III a fixed annuity from Parliament. Its payment was made from customs and excise duties and income from the Crown lands. The agreement was that Parliament would keep the surplus of any income from these sources but would also be responsible for making up any deficit if these sources should fall short. When King George III acceded to the throne in 1760, the mechanism behind the civil list altered significantly. From that point on, the sovereign surrendered ownership of the Crown lands to the state during the term of his or her life. This contract was then renewed by each succeeding monarch. In return for this surrender, the sovereign was granted an annual civil list payment. In his history of the Crown Estate, R. B. Pugh states that “ever since 1760 the land revenues have been looked upon as a part of the income not of the sovereign but of the state.”<sup>18</sup> In 1780, Edmund Burke proposed that the Crown lands should be sold to meet the costs of the Seven Years' War. Although this idea was rejected, it prompted a wholesale survey of the Crown Estate. This survey culminated in the creation of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues in 1810.

### **The Commissioners' Grant to the London Diocesan Church Building Society**

The first financial grant made by the commissioners to an Anglican home-mission society occurred in 1857 and consisted of £10,000 to the London Diocesan Church Building Society. Bishop Blomfield (bishop of London between 1828 and 1856) established this society only a few years earlier in 1854 as

a renewal and reconstitution of his earlier Metropolis Churches Fund (established in 1836).<sup>19</sup> The objectives of the London Diocesan Church Building Society were initially to build and to endow new churches and to supply these churches with parsonages. Under Bishop Tait (bishop of London between 1856 and 1868), it expanded its objectives to include the use of missionaries and multipurpose buildings, such as school churches.<sup>20</sup> The granting of £10,000 to the London Diocesan Church Building Society was vigorously debated in the House of Commons on August 10, 1857. The debate highlights the agitation at the time between Anglicans and Nonconformists over the privileged status of the established church. William Williams (1788-1865), the Welsh Radical MP for Lambeth, opened the debate by arguing that it was a pretense that this contribution came from the Crown:

It was stated that this Vote was a contribution on the part of the Crown. Why, it was a contribution from taxes levied on the people at large. The Crown had nothing whatever to do with it. The Crown did not even contribute any part of those taxes. He was told, however, that the Secretary to the Treasury meant to make this pretence—that the money was to be given out of the proceeds of Crown property, commonly called the Woods and Forests. Well, that property no more belonged to the Crown than it did to the hon. Gentleman himself. The Crown had surrendered that property in consideration of receiving the allowance of the Civil List, and a very good bargain the Crown made by the exchange.<sup>22</sup>

This viewpoint was reiterated by Charles Gilpin (1815-1874), Liberal MP for Northampton and a Quaker. Gilpin argued that it would be wrong to use the money from public property to benefit one religious group, stating:

The Secretary for the Treasury had stated that the Government held property for the Crown. Now, that property was not held for the Crown, but it was public property, and the hon. Gentleman went on to say that it was only proper to do with respect to that property what was done by the large landholders in London. Now, the two cases appeared to him to be entirely distinct from each other. Those landholders held their property to their own use, and were responsible to themselves alone; but the property to which the hon. Gentleman had referred was held on behalf of the nation, which contained persons of many different religious persuasions, and that being so it appeared to him to be inconsistent with the true principle of religious liberty to apply any of the money which arose from that property to the furtherance of any particular sect. Therefore, regarding the Vote as an infringement of the principles of religious liberty, he should give it his most strenuous opposition.<sup>23</sup>

Even the Anglican William Cox (1817-89), Liberal MP for Finsbury, stated that the grant showed unjustified favoritism to the Church of England. Cox also stated that he would oppose the motion:

The present Vote, on the contrary, looked very like a church rate in a different form, and though he was a member of the Established Church he should oppose it. If the Committee voted this £10,000 for churches for one sect they would make other sects pay for it. Why should not Dissenters and Roman Catholics come to Parliament for money wherewith to build churches? . . . It was said that as the Crown possessed property it ought to contribute like other landowners. But every one would admit that a Roman Catholic proprietor would have a right to contribute towards Roman Catholic places of worship alone and so of proprietors of other sects. If the Roman Catholics or the Baptists came to that House and asked for £4,000 or £5,000 for new churches, would they get it? The property belonged to the nation, for the benefit of all sects, and it could not be properly appropriated towards any one sect unless Parliament was prepared to make similar contributions towards other Churches.<sup>24</sup>

The argument for the motion contended that the proposed contribution for church building was simply the discharge of a landlord's duty. James Wilson (1805-60), Liberal MP and a Quaker, defended the payment in his position as financial secretary to the Treasury (1853-1858).<sup>25</sup> Wilson argued that the grant from the office of the Commissioners of Woods was given in the same vein as the Duke of Westminster's offer of £10,000 and the Duke of Bedford's offer of £10,000. Wilson argued:

Now, as the Executive Government was also a large, and, in fact, the largest proprietor in the Metropolis, it was thought but fitting that it should contribute £10,000 for the building of new churches, which it was to the interest not only of the inhabitants, but to the holders of property and to the public generally, should be built where there was no church accommodation. The Executive Government felt that as they were landlords it was their duty to fulfil the ordinary duties of landlords. . . . The only ground on which this Vote was asked for was, that within the Metropolis the Crown was a large owner of property, and that it was to the interest of the Crown that it should faithfully discharge the duty of a proprietor by providing for the spiritual wants of those who dwelt upon its property.<sup>26</sup>

This viewpoint was supported by Sir Francis Thornhill Baring (1796-1866), Whig MP for Portsmouth, who is reported as saying:

There had been great voluntary efforts and large subscriptions on the part of landed proprietors in London. The largest proprietor, however, was the Crown. If the hereditary revenue existed the Crown would be, no doubt, called upon for a contribution. The question was, did the compact made with the Crown by Parliament release Parliament from the obligation in this respect, which rested with the Crown? He [Sir F. Baring] believed it did not. Was property relieved from its duties and liabilities because it was in the hands of the Crown? This was a contribution on the part of the nation and the Crown, and in former times the Woods and Forests would have granted this money without coming to Parliament. The present was much the better mode, and he trusted that Parliament would enable the Woods and Forests to perform those duties which, as a great landed proprietor, the Crown could not be relieved from the duty of discharging.<sup>27</sup>

The motion was also supported by Sir John Somerset Pakington (1799-1880), Conservative MP for Droitwich.<sup>28</sup> Pakington, who personally made financial contributions both to the London Diocesan Church Building Society and to its successor, the Bishop of London's Fund, said that he would not object to further amounts being given in the future.<sup>29</sup> After much discussion, the motion to grant the London Diocesan Church Building Society £10,000 was passed with a majority of 41 (97 Ayes and 56 Noes).<sup>30</sup> The money was subsequently paid to the society in a lump sum. A week later, the Liberation Society, the main political pressure group campaigning for the abolition of the church rate, stated in its newspaper, *The Nonconformist*, that the "grant of £10,000 to the Diocesan Church Building Society was a blunder which nothing can justify."<sup>31</sup> However, the overall lack of public comment on this grant is curious given that the agitation caused by the church rate issue was so longstanding and contentious that *The Times* referred to it in February 1856 as "a civil war" raging across the whole of the kingdom.<sup>32</sup> The lack of public focus on this motion, however, obviously benefited from the fact that the abolition of the church-rate was not actively being discussed in that parliamentary session, falling within the "legislative church rate lull of 1857."<sup>33</sup>

The initiative for this grant came from the London Diocesan Church Building Society, which actively targeted the "great landed proprietors in London" in its fundraising literature.<sup>34</sup> William Rivington reported in his evidence to the House of Lord's Select Committee in 1858 that it was the evangelical Robert Grosvenor, first Baron Ebury (1801-1893), who had used his influence to persuade both Parliament and his older brother Richard Grosvenor, second Marquis of Westminster (1795-1869), to donate £10,000 to the society. Rivington and Ebury were both committee members of this society. Rivington reported, "Lord Ebury felt very strongly the necessity for supporting this Society, and he considered that the landlords of London were required to do their part towards promoting the Society, drawing as they do so large a proportion of their incomes from landed property in London."<sup>35</sup> In August 1855 the bishop of London (Bishop Blomfield) wrote to the prime minister (Viscount Palmerston) appealing for funds.<sup>36</sup> The reply from Charles Edward Trevelyan (1807-1886), assistant secretary to Her Majesty's Treasury, said that the government would vote in 1856 on the grant, having considered "the extent and value of the Crown Property in the Metropolis" in the context of promised sums from both the Duke of Bedford and the Marquis of Westminster.<sup>37</sup> The vote was, however, delayed until the subsequent year. The term of the grant approved in 1857 was that it could be applied only to areas of the diocese in which the Crown had some property. By way of example, the sum of £100 was applied from this grant in 1872 to purchase a site for a church in the parish of St. Mary,

Poplar, and £400 was applied in 1872 towards the erection of a parsonage for St. Clement's Church, Kensington.<sup>38</sup>

The timing of Palmerston's agreement to support church extension is noteworthy considering his recent abolition of Crown support of church extension through the collecting system of the royal letter. In 1853, acting then as home secretary, Palmerston had ordered that the three societies that had license to collect monies from this mechanism were to be given notice that the scheme would no longer be recommended.<sup>39</sup> Only three charities had been granted the right to collect monies under the terms of a royal letter, all of which were Anglican and high church in character: the Incorporated Church Building Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the National Society.<sup>40</sup> The practice was to collect for each of these charities in succession every three years. For example, the *British Magazine* reported in 1832 that from this method the Incorporated Church Building Society raised £41,000 in 1830, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel raised £35,000 in 1831.<sup>41</sup> A petition was sent in reply to Lord Palmerston from Bishop Blomfield, John Bird Sumner (archbishop of Canterbury), and the committee of the Incorporated Church Building Society. This petition cited past precedents of parliamentary and Crown cooperation in funding religious provision. The petition was rejected in 1855 by Sir George Grey (1799-1882), the incoming home secretary in Palmerston's newly formed Whig administration.<sup>42</sup> The high church newspaper the *Guardian* in 1855 condemned the abolition as "an unmixed evil" and clearly blamed Lord Palmerston for having been influenced by a close family member, the evangelical Lord Shaftesbury.<sup>43</sup> The practice of royal letters had been condemned by the Protestant Alliance (an evangelical interdenominational anti-Catholic political pressure group of which Shaftesbury was president) because the mechanism solely favored high church societies.<sup>44</sup> A circular produced by the Protestant Alliance stated that the withdrawal of royal letters had been "hailed by many as timely relief and a cause for thankfulness; for the royal letters had long been regarded with dislike, as favoring certain societies to the exclusion of others."<sup>45</sup> Unlike the abolition of the church rate due to Nonconformist pressure, this practice was ended by Palmerston because it showed favoritism exclusively to high church societies. In contrast, the two London diocesan societies favored by the Commissioners of Woods were both of mixed church party constitution.<sup>46</sup>

### **The Commissioners' Two Grants to the Bishop of London's Fund**

This payment to the London Diocesan Church Building Society set the precedent for the two Bishop of London's Fund grants that followed. The Bishop of London's Fund was established as a consequence to Bishop Tait's second charge of 1862, in which he commented that the spiritual destitution in London was still being exacerbated by its expanding population.<sup>47</sup> In response to Tait's charge, Charles Girdlestone (1797-1881), Rector of Kingswinford in Lincolnshire, suggested to Tait that he should specifically approach London's landowners for funds.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, Tait gathered together a large meeting of the most influential property owners and businessmen in London in April 1863, with a view to discuss the best way of addressing the "spiritual needs" of the metropolis.<sup>49</sup> The initial intention was that the fund would be a temporary institution lasting for ten years and that it would be carried out in connection with the existing machinery of the London Diocesan Church Building Society. However, such was the success of the fund that, in 1873, Bishop Jackson (bishop of London between 1868 and 1885) confirmed the Bishop of London's Fund as a permanent institution.<sup>50</sup> This society therefore eventually replaced the London Diocesan Church Building Society. The goal of the fund was to fund missionary clergy or additional curates, scripture-readers, mission women, clergymen's residences, schools, mission rooms or school churches, and to provide for the endowment of old or new districts, curacies, and the building of churches.<sup>51</sup>

As the two grants to the Bishop of London's Fund were paid in the form of smaller sums paid by annual subscription, it was not necessary for them to be granted by vote of Parliament as had been the case with the single large grant to the London Diocesan Church Building Society. Consequently, the grants received very little public comment. *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, for example, questioned the "Crown's right to make the bequest after exchanging its property for a civil list," but otherwise there was very little public criticism of the grant.<sup>52</sup> The first grant of £15,000 from the Commissioners of Woods to the Bishop of London's Fund was approved by the Treasury in April 1865.<sup>53</sup> The timing of

this grant, therefore, fell within Palmerston's second term of office as prime minister.<sup>54</sup> A Times article in May 1865 indirectly highlighted the ambiguity regarding the status of the commissioners' funds, referring to the payment both as "a contribution in the name and on the part of Her Majesty" and as "a Treasury grant."<sup>55</sup> A further sum of £10,000 was granted in 1875, with the last annual payment being made in 1884.<sup>56</sup> As before, the grant was conditioned by the requirement that the money expended must relate to areas in which the Crown had some property. It was also stipulated that the grant could not be applied to "schools, stipends of clergy, scripture readers or other subjects not within scope of department."<sup>57</sup> By way of example of how the grant was expended, several sums were applied to Christ Church, Notting Hill. In 1876-77, £800 was allocated towards the purchase of a site for this church; in 1878-79, £700 was allocated for the building of the church; and in 1884-85, £250 was given for the building of a mission building.<sup>58</sup> A memo in the commissioners' files states that 80 percent of the 1875 to 1884 grant was applied to the Crown Estates in Kensington and Victoria Park.<sup>59</sup>

### **Commissioners' Rationale for Making these Grants**

As highlighted in the House of Commons' debate of 1857, the rationale behind these grants was that the office of the Commissioners of Woods was simply discharging the Crown Estate's duty as a considerable landowner in London. In 1855, the commissioners' annual rental income for London was £130,000. By 1884 this income had risen to £207,000 per annum, and by 1898 it had risen again to £286,000 per annum.<sup>60</sup> By way of comparison, in 1899 the rental income of the Duke of Westminster from his estates in Mayfair and Belgravia was just slightly lower, at £250,000 per annum. The view of the commissioners was that the granting of such sums was part of the Crown's costs and expenses regarding the management of the localities in which they owned property.<sup>61</sup> Although the commissioners did not give any sums of money to the earlier diocesan schemes in London (the Metropolis Churches Fund and the Bethnal Green Churches Fund), they did make grants of sites to the Church Building Commissioners in the period of Blomfield's episcopate. For example, the commissioners gave a site for a church in Kensington.<sup>62</sup> The annual reports of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues contain regular references to land or money being granted nationally for the building of churches, parsonages, or schools. For example, the 1866-67 report lists the granting of several sites to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the purposes of building a parsonage in Surrey, a churchyard in Lincoln, and two churches in Buckinghamshire and London (Hackney), respectively.<sup>63</sup> Even as late as the 1880s and 1890s, occasional cases of land being granted to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were listed. For example, in the 1891-92 report, land was granted for the building of a parsonage for an incumbent minister in the Whaplode estate in Lincoln.<sup>64</sup> Other grants of money for the purposes of spiritual provision are listed in the commissioners' annual reports throughout the period, itemized in the accounts under expenditure as "Donations towards the Building, Enlargement, and Repairs of Churches and Parsonage Houses, and Subscriptions to Schools &c." In total, the commissioners granted approximately £130,000 under this description in the period from 1850 to 1900, in addition to the sixty sites granted in this period for schools, parsonages, churches, and churchyards. The financial grants peaked in the 1870s, with the largest amount of £7,066 being granted in the accounting year of 1876-77.<sup>65</sup> Occasionally, specific projects were mentioned in the annual reports in financial terms, generally in areas such as Exmoor, Sunk Island in Yorkshire, and the Forest of Dean.<sup>66</sup>

In 1885, the commissioners declined to give a further grant to the Bishop of London's Fund because they judged that they had already "been very liberal in their assistance."<sup>67</sup> Their examination of the Twenty-First Bishop of London's Fund Annual Report for the accounting year of 1884 demonstrated that the amount that the commissioners had given exceeded the amount given by any other London property owner, including the Duke of Westminster. Pencil notes on the commissioners' copy of this annual report indicate their analysis of contributions made by other wealthy individuals and the principal London property owners (up until December 31, 1884): Her Majesty the Queen had donated £3,000; the Worshipful Company of Grocers, £7,500; William Russell, eighth Duke of Bedford (1809-1872), £10,000; John Jackson, bishop of London (1811-1885), £6,000; Charles Morrison (1817-1909), £21,000;<sup>68</sup> Hugh Grosvenor, first Duke of Westminster (1825-1899), £15,050; and Richard Grosvenor, second Marquis of Westminster (1795-1869), £3,000.<sup>69</sup> The commissioners

judged, firstly, that they had donated more than any other body or individual and, secondly, that the spiritual needs of parishes in which the Crown had lands had been satisfied.<sup>70</sup> Further applications instigated by the Bishop of London's Fund, in both 1899 and 1928, were rejected on the grounds that the situation had not changed since the last application.<sup>71</sup>

### **Landowners' Support of Anglican Home Missionary Organizations**

As previously mentioned, the wealthy London property owners were specifically targeted by all of the central diocesan organizations in operation in the metropolis in the nineteenth century: consecutively, the Metropolis Churches Fund, the London Diocesan Church Building Society, and the Bishop of London's Fund. Historian W. D. Rubinstein lists the three English titled families of Westminster, Bedford, and Devonshire as having the largest income from property. All three families appear prominently in the societies' subscription lists.<sup>72</sup> The Grosvenor (Westminster) family was financially very supportive of home mission in London and sat on many Anglican committees. Richard Grosvenor, second Marquis of Westminster (1795-1869), was a committee member of the London Diocesan Church Building Society and supported its work through a donation of £10,000. Upon his death in 1869, Hugh Lupus Grosvenor (later styled first Duke of Westminster) inherited a vast estate of London property, particularly in Mayfair and Belgravia.<sup>73</sup> He was a generous supporter of home mission and his name appears in most of the subscription lists for organizations in this study. He contributed £35,050 to the Bishop of London's Fund, in contrast to the smaller sum of £4,500 to the interdenominational London City Mission.<sup>74</sup> His biography describes him as a "devout churchman" and a "model landlord," and mentions the numerous London sites that he gave freely or at a peppercorn rent for the building of churches (for example, All Saints Church in Pimlico and St. Philip's Church in Buckingham Palace Road), rectories, schools, and a public library.<sup>75</sup> Upon the first duke's death in 1899, *The Times* reported:

At his express wish the management of the estate was conducted with great generosity to all kinds of charitable and religious institutions. Freehold sites and money for the erection of buildings, for the pay of curates, and for other helpful work were freely granted, and at no time was the slightest distinction ever drawn between Churchmen and Dissenters. He was, indeed, the best of landlords—alike to all classes of his tenants and to the public at large.<sup>76</sup>

His successor, Hugh Grosvenor, second Duke of Westminster (1879-1953), also financially supported the Bishop of London's Fund, giving £6,700 up to 1912.

The support of the London Diocesan Church Building society offered by Francis Russell, seventh Duke of Bedford (1788-1861), in the form of the £10,000 grant, has already been noted.<sup>77</sup> This support was continued by his successors who donated to the Bishop of London's Fund. William Russell, eighth Duke of Bedford (1809-1872), gave the fund £10,000, and Herbrand Arthur Russell, eleventh Duke of Bedford (1858-1940), gave a further £1,000. Likewise, every generation of the dukes of Devonshire maintained their financial support of the Bishop of London's Fund in the period up until World War I: William Cavendish, seventh Duke of Devonshire (1808-1891), gave £2,800; Spencer Compton Cavendish, eighth Duke of Devonshire (1833-1908), gave £1,500; and Victor Christian William Cavendish, ninth Duke of Devonshire, had given £500 by 1912 in the form of an annual subscription of £100. Other London property owners such as the Earl of Cadogan also appear in the subscription lists: Henry Charles, fourth Earl of Cadogan (1812-1873), gave £625, and George Henry, fifth Earl of Cadogan (1840-1915), gave £1,330. The fifth earl was a Bishop of London's Fund committee member and built Holy Trinity in Sloane Square in the 1880s at a cost of £20,000. Additionally, William Henry Berkley Portman, second Viscount Portman (1829-1919), contributed £13,595 to the Bishop of London's Fund. His wealth was derived from a large rental income from the Portman Estate in central London.

The other great London property owners, in the form of the city's livery companies, were also generous supporters of Anglican church extension societies. Although livery companies were originally established in the medieval period as guilds for particular trades, by the mid-nineteenth century, they principally acted as charitable foundations dispensing the annual income from their considerable endowments. Income for the worshipful companies was calculated for the year 1879-80

to be in the region of £750,000 to £800,000, with property of a capital value of at least £15,000,000.<sup>78</sup> The companies' income came from two sources: trust income and corporate income. Trust income was income from endowments held by the livery companies with specific objects and amounted to about £200,000. For example, the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers administered a trust for the relief of the blind. Corporate income was all other income (e.g., from property rental). The Mercers Company, for example, owned a large amount of property in Covent Garden. The corporate income from such sources was used to cover all company running costs (e.g., maintenance and entertainment); the surplus, which was in the region of £150,000 per annum, was spent on "benevolent objects."<sup>79</sup> The livery companies were collectively, therefore, major property owners and dispensers of charity in the capital. Two key motives can be seen to be behind these grants to religious voluntary organizations from livery companies. The first motive was their duty as trustees of the endowed charities under their responsibility. For example, the Haberdashers' Company administered a trust that provided funds for the building or purchase of parsonages.<sup>80</sup> The second motive was their social responsibility as London property owners. In the report of the City of London Livery Companies' Commission (1884), the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers explained that their annual subscription of £105 (ten guineas) to the Bishop of London's Fund was paid out of the £5,000 to £6,000 corporate funds that this livery company set aside annually for miscellaneous charitable objects and educational grants. In respect of this subscription, the clothworkers stated that they did not "usually contribute to the building of churches or chapels except in their position as landlords."<sup>81</sup> Again, this highlights the embedded sense of social responsibility that landowners felt for their tenants.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is possible that this significant state funding of Anglican church extension has slipped under the radar of historians simply because the voluntary societies at the time had bigger battles to fight and to publicize. The church rate conflict raged on until 1868 with the passing of the Act for the Abolition of Compulsory Church Rates and, crucially, was often fought most fiercely in localized settings.<sup>82</sup> The Nonconformist described the period running up to this date as "an agitation of more than thirty years' continuance, which had caused more strife and bitterness than any agitation which has ever taken place in England."<sup>83</sup> Despite this continuous and contentious agitation between Nonconformists and Parliament over the issue of the financial privileges of the Church of England, the state department of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues made grants for church building in the Diocese of London, making it the most generous individual funder of church building in the diocese. The actions of the commissioners demonstrate that this body felt that, as one of London's largest landholders, it had an obligation to support the Church of England. Once the commissioners judged that they had discharged their duty sufficiently, the renewal of the grants to the Bishop of London's Fund stopped. Correspondingly, the lack of dispute concerning these grants could be due to localized public acceptance that the commissioners were fulfilling a legitimate and uncontroversial responsibility as a major landowner in London. These grants given by this state department highlight a different aspect of the church-state relationship. The 1818 and 1824 grants were given by Parliament to celebrate the nation's victory at Waterloo through the building of new churches to accommodate the rapidly growing population. These grants therefore reflect the state's governing responsibility, at that time, to finance religious provision through the established church. In contrast, the grants given by the office of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues were given under the justification that this state department had a duty to discharge the social duties of a landlord and that this entailed financially supporting the established church.<sup>84</sup> These grants also highlight the complex nature of the state's financial relationship with the monarchy and the ambiguous pseudo-status of bodies such as the office of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues.

1. S. J. Brown, *The National Churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland, 1801-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 91.
2. *Ibid.*
3. M. H. Port, *Six Hundred New Churches: The Church Building Commission, 1818-1856* (Reading: Spire Books, 2006), 9.
4. Brown, *National Churches*, 168.
5. J. P. Ellens, *Religious Routes to Gladstonian Liberalism: The Church Rate Conflict in England and Wales, 1832-1868* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 4. For a fuller list of grievances, see p. 36.
6. W. R. Ward, *Religion and Society in England, 1790-1850* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 7.
7. See Ellens, *Religious Routes*, 115, 125-26. Fundamentally, the payment of the church rate was viewed as being a duty and not a voluntary act. Much of the controversy from the payment of the church-rate sprang from the introduction in 1818 of statute 58 Geo. III, c. 45. This regulation provided that new district churches should raise their own church rates but that, in parallel, ratepayers in the district were also liable for church rates to the original mother parish church for the next twenty years. Consequently, most of the discontent regarding the church rate was in urban areas. See Brown, *National Churches*, 175; Ellens, *Religious Routes*, 14-15, 211-12.
8. Also see Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 3rd ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1971), 1:82.
9. J. P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion: Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867-1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 21-22.
10. The permanent body of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners sprang from the earlier 1832 Ecclesiastical Revenues Commission, which was formed to investigate church finance. See Brown, *National Churches*, 189.
11. Brown, *National Churches*, 235.
12. *Ibid.*, 235-36. *The Times* (London) also mentions petitions from Nonconformists against the proposed grant for church extension (*The Times*, June 30, 1840, 6); see R. H. Inglis, *Church Extension: Substance of a Speech Delivered in the House of Commons on Tuesday 30th June 1840* (London: J. Hatchard and Sons, 1840), 49-50, 324-25, 340.
13. In the wake of the publication of Mann's census report in 1854, George William Finch-Hatton (1791-1858), tenth Earl of Winchilsea, called for new state funds for church building. See Sir George Grey's speech in a debate on church extension in *Hansard, Commons Debates*, fifth series, 118, cc. 30-102: July 1, 1851. *Londinensis* [Pseudonymous work by William Rivington], *Our Church Extension Societies, General and Diocesan* (London: Harrison, 1855), 3.
14. The National Archives (TNA), MS CRES 35/2629, Bishop of London's Fund 1885-1928, Memo June 18, 1885; *Bath Chronicle*, January 26, 1871, 6. The Bishop of Rochester's Fund was established in 1869. William Walsh, *Progress of the Church in London during the Last Fifty Years* (London: Rivingtons, 1887), 43-44.
15. See TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Memo book of Land Revenue House Department, 95; MS CRES 35/2629, Bishop of London's Fund file 1885-1928, Appeal on behalf of the Bishop of London's Fund, January 6, 1899. This authority was expressed more clearly in the Crown Lands Act 1894 (57 & 58 Vict c. 43).
16. The name of the body of commissioners changed again in 1832 to the Commissioners of Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works, and Buildings. In 1851 it divided again to form the Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings, and the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues.
17. *The History and the Mystery of the Civil List* (London: Willing and Company, 1882), 7.
18. R. B. Pugh, *The Crown Estate: An Historical Essay* (London: Crown Estate Commissioners, 1960), 12-13.
19. *Church Work among the Masses*, Old Series III (April 1862), 28-29.
20. The school-church, first introduced in 1857, was a multipurpose building that could be used on weekdays as a school and on Sundays as a church.
21. D. T.W. Price, "Williams, William (1788-1865)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/46699>.
22. *Hansard, Commons Debates*, fifth series, 147, cc. 1316-64: August 10, 1857.
23. *Ibid.*

24. Ibid.
25. Ruth Dudley Edwards, "Wilson, James (1805–1860)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29660>.
26. Hansard, Commons Debates: August 10, 1857.
27. Ibid. First Baron Northbrook from 1866.
28. First Baron Hampton from 1874.
29. Hansard, Commons Debates: August 10, 1857.
30. Voted sums are paid from the government's general bank account "Consolidated Fund" at the Bank of England. These sums were listed in the annual "Estimates": 1856 (223(1)-VIII) Estimates, &c., civil services, 1856-7. Vote 9. Grant to London Diocesan Church Building Society. (VIII); and 1857 Session 2 (38-I-VII) Public works and buildings. Estimates, &c. civil services. For the year ending 31 March 1858. (I-VIII), Section VII "Miscellaneous, Special and Temporary Objects," 34. Surplus Revenues from the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues were paid into the Consolidated Fund. Consequently, the London Diocesan Church Building Society grant was not accounted for under the accounting description of "Donations towards the Building, Enlargement, and Repairs of Churches and Parsonage Houses, and Subscriptions to Schools &c." This vote was followed by a motion to grant a sum not exceeding £10,500 for the building of a chapel in the Rue D'Aguesseau at Paris, for the use of the British residents and visitors in that city. This motion was rejected: 47 Ayes, 135 Noes. Hansard, Commons Debates: August 10, 1857.
31. *The Nonconformist*, August 19, 1857, 641.
32. *The Times* (London), February 19, 1856, 8.
33. Ellens, *Religious Routes*, 144.
34. London Diocesan Church Building Society, *Special Appeal to the Landowners and Others Interested in the Welfare of the Metropolis* (London: n.p., 1855).
35. 1857-58 (387) (387-I) Report from the select committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the deficiency of means of spiritual instruction and places of divine worship in the metropolis, and in other populous districts in England and Wales, especially in the mining and manufacturing districts; and to consider the fittest means of meeting the difficulties of the case; and to report thereon to the House; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix, 230, 232-33.
36. Henry John Temple, third Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865), held his first term of office as prime minister between February 1855 and February 1858.
37. LMA, MS DL/A/H/054/01, London Diocesan Church Building Society, General Committee Minute Book 1854-1864, November 22, 1855; MS DL/A/H/054/02/001, London Diocesan Church Building Society, Sub-Committee Minute Book, 1855-1866, November 22, 1855.
38. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Memo book of Land Revenue House Department, list of grants.
39. Incorporated Church Building Society, *Refusal of Royal Letters to the Church Building Society* (London, 1855), 4.
40. In 1828, church briefs were abolished (9 Geo IV c. 42) because of abuses of the scheme and because of the smallness of the sums collected. Church briefs were official instructions directing collections to be made in churches or individual houses. They were replaced by royal letters. See Wyndham Antis Bewes, *Church briefs, or, Royal warrants for collections for charitable objects* (London: A. and C. Black, 1896), 1:45-46; Cornelius Walford, "Kings' Briefs: Their Purposes and History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 10 (1882): 1.
41. "Church Briefs and King's Letters," *British Magazine*, October 1832, 164-65.
42. Incorporated Church Building Society, *Refusal of Royal Letters*, 5-11.
43. *Guardian*, October 16, 1855, 377; October 24, 1855, 789. Shaftesbury was married to Palmerston's stepdaughter.
44. *The Times* (London), September 22, 1856, 7; *Guardian*, October 16, 1855, 377.
45. *Daily News*, September 23, 1856, 2.
46. Sarah Flew, "The Consolidation and Further Development of Home Mission under Bishop Tait, 1856-68," in *Philanthropy and the Funding of the Church of England, 1856-1914* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2015), 19-40.
47. Archibald Campbell Tait, *A Charge Delivered in December, 1862, to the Clergy of the Diocese of London, etc.* (London: J. Murray, 1862), 62.

48. *The Church Builder*, 1864, 65; Charles Girdlestone, *A Letter to the Right Hon. and Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London* (London: Rivingtons, 1863), 1-12.
49. *The Times* (London), April 30, 1863, 14.
50. John Jackson, *Letter from the Bishop of London on the Prospects and Future Work of the Bishop of London's Fund* (London: T. Brettell and Company, 1874), 6.
51. Archibald Campbell Tait, *The Spiritual Wants of the Metropolis and Its Suburbs. A Letter to the Laity of the Diocese of London . . . with a Statement by the Executive Committee of "The Bishop of London's Fund"* (London: Rivingtons, 1863), 1-11.
52. *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, May 13, 1865, 6.
53. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Memo Book of Land Revenue House Department, Letter to the Bishop of London, April 26, 1865; LMA, MS DL/A/K/09/02/001, Bishop of London's Fund Executive Committee Minute Book, Vol. 1 1863-66, April 28, 1865.
54. Palmerston's second term was between June 1859 and October 1865.
55. *The Times* (London), May 1, 1865, 10; May 4, 1865, 11.
56. LMA, MS DL/A/K/09/03, Bishop of London's Fund Finance Committee Minute Book, Vol. 2 1877-89, May 18, 1884.
57. TNA, MS CRES 35/2629, Bishop of London's Fund 1885-1928, Memo, June 18, 1885.
58. *Ibid.* Letter June 1885 from Bishop of London, enclosing schedule of grants made.
59. *Ibid.* Memo, June 18, 1885.
60. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Note in file July 10, 1885; Note, January 6, 1899.
61. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Letter, June 2, 1869; Note, January 6, 1899. 50), and 2 William IV. (cap. 1); being the forty-first report under the Act of the 14 & 15 Vict. (cap. 42), 103.
62. Lambeth Palace Library, MS FP Blomfield 58, fols 150-51.
63. 1867 (410) The forty-fifth report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues; in obedience to the Acts of 10 George IV. (cap. 50), and 2 William IV. (cap. 1); being the sixteenth report under the Act of the 14 & 15 Vict. (cap. 42), 51.
64. 1892 (355) The seventieth report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, in obedience to the Acts of 10 George IV. (cap. 50), and 2 William IV. (cap. 1); being the forty-first report under the Act of the 14 & 15 Vict. (cap. 42), 103.
65. 1877 (300) The fifty-fifth Report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues; in obedience to the Acts of 10 George IV. (cap. 50), and 2 William IV. (cap. 1); being the twenty-sixth Report under the Act of the 14 & 15 Vict. (cap. 42), 117. Examples include: 1850-51 (£776), 1860-61 (£2,390), 1870-71 (£5,028), 1880-81 (£3,130), 1890-91 (£1,421), 1900-01 (£1,028), and 1910-11 (£141).
66. For references to a £1,815 grant given in aid of the building of a church and parsonage for Simonsbath, parish of Exmoor, see 1856 (330) The thirty-fourth report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests and Land Revenues: in obedience to the Acts of 10 George IV. (cap. 50), and 2 William IV. (cap. 1); being the fifth report under the Act of the 14 & 15 Vict. (cap. 42.), 19, 199. The financial grants made to the London Diocesan Church Building Society and the Bishop of London's Fund are not specifically referred to in the annual reports.
67. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Note in file, July 10, 1885.
68. Charles Morrison, an independent merchant banker, is thought to have been "probably the second wealthiest man in Britain at his death" (the wealthiest was the first Duke of Westminster). In his lifetime, Morrison gave £47,600 to the Bishop of London's Fund and left an additional bequest of £10,000 to the fund in his will. Charles died unmarried, and at his death left behind an estate valued at nearly £11 million. See W. D. Rubinstein, "Morrison, Charles (1817-1909)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48071>.
69. Twenty-first Bishop of London's Fund annual report (London, 1885), filed in TNA, MS CRES 40/103.
70. TNA, MS CRES 40/103, Letter, April 24, 1885 from the Treasury.
71. *Ibid.* Note in file, January 6, 1899; Minute sheet, March 1, 1928. By 1928 the Bishop of London's Fund had been absorbed into the London Diocesan Fund (established in 1918).
72. W. D. Rubinstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain since the Industrial Revolution* (London: CroomHelm, 1981), 194.

73. F. M. L. Thompson, "Grosvenor, Hugh Lupus, first Duke of Westminster (1825–1899)," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
74. London City Mission Magazine, 759, LXV, February 1900, 45.
75. G. Huxley, Victorian Duke: The Life of Hugh Lipsius Grosvenor First Duke of Westminster (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 144-45.
76. The Times (London), December 25, 1899, 5. For a further obituary, see The Spectator, December 30, 1899, 979-80.
77. For landowner donations, see Flew, Philanthropy and the Funding, 83-87.
78. Richard Assheton Cross, "City of London Livery Companies," The Nineteenth Century 16 (1884): 47.
79. Ibid., 56-58.
80. P. H. Ditchfield, The City Companies of London and their Good Works: A Record of Their History, Charity and Treasure (London: J. M. Dent and Company, 1904), 109, 116.
81. 1884 (C. 4073) City of London Livery Companies' Commission, report and appendix. Vol. II., containing (1.) the returns of the great companies in answer to the circular of the Commissioners. (2.) Correspondence between the great companies and the Commission with reference to the returns, 808.
82. 31 & 32 Vict. C.109. For an example of a localized church-rate dispute see: Ward, Religion and Society, ch. 7.
83. Ellens, Religious Routes, 254.
84. Another example of a state department dispersing Crown funds to the Church of England at this time was the Department of the Exchequer, which administered The Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne for the Augmentation of the Maintenance of the Poor Clergy by distributing the "Queen Anne's Bounty." This fund was established by act in 1703 and acted to augment the endowments of poor benefices in order to supplement incumbent income. See G. F. A. Best, Temporal Pillars (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).