

THE
History of the Church & Manor of Wigan

IN THE
COUNTY OF LANCASTER.

BY THE HONOURABLE AND REVEREND
GEORGE T. O. BRIDGEMAN,
*Rector of Wigan, Honorary Canon of Liverpool, and
Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen.*
(AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF THE PRINCES OF SOUTH WALES," ETC.)

—
PART III.
—

PRINTED FOR THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.
1889.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.

PART III.

ON the deprivation of bishop Bridgeman a nonconformist minister was put into possession of the church and parsonage of Wigan.

JAMES BRADSHAW, the presbyterian rector who succeeded Bridgeman, entered upon the cure about 1643. He was the son of John Bradshaw, of Darcy Lever, near Bolton-le-Moors, a gentleman of good family, by Alice, daughter of Robert Lever, of Darcy Lever, his first wife.¹ Mr. John Bradshaw, the father, died in 1662,² and was succeeded at Darcy Lever Hall by his son James, the subject of this memoir.

James Bradshaw was born at Darcy Lever³ about the year 1612.⁴ Dr. Calamy informs us that his father sent his three sons to Oxford, where they were brought up to the three learned professions,—of law, divinity, and physic.⁵

The above-mentioned James Bradshaw was educated at Brazenose College, Oxford, and while rector of Wigan he lived at the

¹ Dugdale's *Visitatio of Lancashire*, Chetham Soc., vol. lxxxiv. p. 31. Arms of Bradshaw of Darcy Lever, as entered in Dugdale's *Visitatio* by Mr. James Bradshaw, 11th March, 1664: *Argent, between two bendlets, three escallops, sable.*

² *Ibid.*

³ Calamy's *Nonconformist's Memorial*, vol. i. p. 337. This James Bradshaw has often been confused with another James Bradshaw, who was born at Hacking, in the parish of Bolton, was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, and afterwards became minister of Hunsley, in the parish of Wigan, from which he was ejected after the Restoration (Calamy's *Nonconf. Mem.*, vol. ii. p. 364).

⁴ Dugdale's *Viz.*

⁵ Calamy's *Nonconf. Mem.*, vol. i. p. 337.

462 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

hall or parsonage house.¹ In 1644 he made himself notorious by encouraging the siege of Lathom House in a series of violent sermons. Preaching from Jeremiah xv. 14, he compared Lathom's seven towers to the seven heads of the beast, and the noble and courageous lady of Lathom to the scarlet whore and the whore of Babylon.²

The unhappy condition to which the inhabitants of Wigan were reduced in Bradshaw's time is graphically described in the following statement preserved in the *Civil War Tracts of Lancashire* :

“A true representation of the present sad and lamentable condition of the county of Lancaster, and particularly of the towns of Wigan, Ashton, and the parts adjacent.

The hand of God is evidently seen stretched out upon the county, chastening it with a three-corded scourge of sword, pestilence, and famine, all at once afflicting it. They have borne the heat and burden of a first and second war in an especial manner above other parts of the nation. Through them the two great bodies of the late Scotch and English armies passed, and in their very bowels was that great fighting, bloodshed, and breaking. In this county hath the plague of pestilence been raging these three years and upwards, occasioned chiefly by the wars. There is a very great scarcity and dearth of all provisions, especially of all sorts of grain, particularly that kind by which that country is most sustained, which is full six-fold the price that of late years it hath been. All trade, by which they have been much supported, is utterly decayed; it would melt any good heart to see the numerous swarms of begging poor, and the many families that pine away at home, not having faces to beg; very many now craving alms at other men's doors, who were used to give others alms at their doors;—to see paleness, nay death, appear in the cheeks of the poor, and often to hear of some found dead in their houses, or highways, for want of bread.

But particularly the towns of Wigan and Ashton, with the neighbouring parts, lying at present under the sore stroke of God in the pestilence, in one whereof are full two thousand poor who, for three months and

¹ Calamy's *Nonconf. Mem.*, vol. i. p. 337.

² *Chronicle of the First Siege of Lathom House.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 463

upwards have been restrained, no relief to be had for them in the ordinary course of law, there being none at present to act as justices of the peace; the collections in our congregations (their only supply hitherto) being generally very slack and slender, those wanting ability to help who have hearts to pity them. Most men's estates being much drained by the wars, and now almost exhausted by the present scarcity and many other burdens incumbent upon them, there is no bonds to keep in the infected hunger-starved poor, whose breaking out jeopardeth all the neighbourhood; some of them, already being at the point to perish through famine, have fetched in and eaten carrion and other unwholesome food, to the destroying of themselves and increasing of the infection; and, the more to invoke pity and mercy, it may be considered that this fatal contagion had its rise evidently from the wounded soldiers of our army left there for cure.

All which is certified to some of the reverend ministers of the city of London, by the mayor, minister, and other persons of credit, inhabitants in, or well wishers to, and well acquainted with, the town of Wigan, together with four godly and faithful ministers of Lancashire, by providence in this city at present.

Now if God shall stir up the hearts of any or more congregations in and about the city of London (the premises considered) to yield their charitable contribution to the necessities of these afflicted and distressed parts and places, it will be carefully sought after, and thankfully received by Mr. James Wainwright, Mr. Thomas Markland, Mr. James Winstanley, and Mr. John Leaver, or some of them, and faithfully disposed according to Christian discretion, by Major-General Ashton, William Ashurst, Peter Brokes, Esquires, Mr. Jolly, mayor of Wigan, together with Mr. Richard Heyricke, Mr. Charles Herle, Mr. Alexander Horrockes, and Mr. James Hyet, ministers of the gospel, or some of them.

Ambrose Jolly, Mayor	} of the town of Wigan.
James Bradshaw, Minister	
John Standish,	
Ralph Markland,	
	} Bailiffs
James Hyet,	
Richard Hollingworth,	
Isaac Ambrose,	
John Tilsley,	} Ministers of Lancashire."

This statement is dated May 24. 1649.

464 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

By virtue of an act of parliament passed on the 8th of June, 1649, entitled "An act for the providing maintenance of preaching ministers and other pious uses," commissioners were appointed in each county to report upon the state of each parish, and to forward their reports to London. The subjects on which they were to collect information were as follows, namely: "The number of parsonages, vicarages, churches, chapels, or other ecclesiastical benefices, the yearly value of each of them, the name of the incumbent, proprietor or possessor, the name of the person who supplied the cure, and what his salary was, the number of chapels belonging to each parish church, and their situation, what chapels it was advisable to detach from their parish churches and annex to other parishes, and where it was needful to erect new churches and divide parishes."

The *Lancashire* commission is dated 29th March, 1650. The inquisitions were taken before local juries of men of good standing and position, whose names are given, and before whom witnesses were brought and examined. These commissioners, who were twenty-five in number, held altogether sixteen inquisitions, three of which were taken at Manchester, six at Wigan, three at Lancaster, three at Preston, and one at Blackburn; and the High Sheriff of the county was authorized to cause "honest and lawfull men" to appear before them, "by whom the truth may be best known and inquired of."¹

The first inquisition for the hundred of West Derby was held at Wigan before *John Atherton, Richard Standish, James Ashton, Alexander Barlowe, Thomas Birch, Robert Maudisley, John Hartley* and *Peter Holte*, Esquires, and *Thomas Cubham* and *Robert Glest*, gent^l, Commissioners, and others named in the commission, on Tuesday, the 20th of June, 1650, by the oath of *Peter Kenion* of Hadocke, gent., *Richard Astley* of Tildesley, gent., *William Sorocold* of Oxford, gent., *Edward Nailor* of Bedford, gent., *Thurstan Peake* of Warrington, gent., *Henry Barrow* of

¹ *Commonwealth Church Survey* (Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, vol. i. p. x).

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 465

Burtonwood, gent., *Thomas Okell* of *Jfearnehead*, gent., *Thomas Constable* of *Lawton*, gent., *Thomas Rothwell* of *Newton*, gent., *John Robinson* of *Asheton*, gent., *Thomas Shawe* of *Culcheth*, gent., *Humphrey Platt* of *Hindley*, gent., *William Tapping* of *Pemberton*, gent., *William Yates* of *Ripton cum Glazebrooke*, gent., *William Birchall* of *Billinge*, gent., *Thomas Lyon* of *Billinge*, gent., and *Mathew Love* of *Asheton*, gent., who made their presentment with respect to the parish of *Wigan* as follows :

"Wee doe present that there is a pish church w^hin *Wigan*, and a Mansion howse w^h thappurtenances called the parsonage of *Wigan*, and certaine glebe lands thereunto belonginge, of the yearly value of thirtie pounds p anⁱ, and that the chieffe rentes, the rentes of the tennantes, the milne rentes, and the shoppe rentes are about thirty pounds p anⁱ ; and that upon the delinquency of *Doct^r Bridgman*, late bushopp of *Chester* and rector of *Wigan*, by order of the committie of plundred minist^r, *Mr. James Bradshaw*, now present incumbent, came in and supplied the cure there and is a painefull able preaching minist^r, and hath observed the cure upon the *Lordes dayes* ; and that hee having notice for observa^on of the last fast day, being the 13th of this instant *June*, did not observe the same (contrary to the act of this p^{re}sent pliam^t) ; and that hee hath enjoyed the same glebe landes and received the rents, tythes and p^{ro}ffit^s thereof, or the most pt thereof, for his salary or maintenance ; & that the tythes of the said pish are worth 417^l 10^s 8^d p anⁱ ; and that there is two chapells belonging to *Wigan* parish, the one called *Billinge* chappell and the other called *Hindley* chappell, and that the church or chapell of *Holland* did formly belong unto and was pt of the pish of *Wigan* untill of late the same was severed by ordinance of *Parliam^t* ; and that there is a rent charge issuing out of the rectory of *Wigan* to the *Cathedrall* church of *Litchfeild* of the sume of twenty pounds p anⁱ or thereabouts as wee are informed.

Wee doe present that the towne of *Haigh* is w^hin the pish of *Wigan* and the nearer syde thereof is w^hin three quart^r of a statute myle and further side thereof about two myles from the said pish church of *Wigan*, and that the inhabitantes therein have most frequently repaired to the said church and have seats and buriales therein and may with conveniency continue soe saving those howses and ten^tes that are suitable and

466 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

lying nearer to Blackerod chappell then to Wigan church; and that *Roger Bradshawe, Esq^r*, and his ancesto^rs before him, have had the tythes wthin the lordshipp of Haigh, being but halfe a towne, and paid for the same the sume of sixteene pounds a yeare, pt of the before mençoned some of fower hundred seaventeene pounds tenn shillings and eight pence for div^rs years last past, unto the rectors and incumbentes in Wigan, and to their ancesto^rs, and that hee paid the same to *Mr. Bradshawe* the p^rsent incumbente, but did pay for the same in and before Docto^r Massie's time, rector of the same pish church, the yearly sume of three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and that the said rent of sixteene pounds is the full worth thereof one yeare with another.

Wee present that the pish church of *Holland* was formly a chappell belonging to the parish church of Wigan untill by a late ordinance of pliam^t it was made a pish church, and there is neither parsonage nor vicaridge belonging unto it, only wthin the said towneshipp there is glebe land of the value of 4^s p anⁿ, in tythe corne 80^{li} p anⁿ, and in smale tythes twenty shillings p anⁿ; and *Mr. Richard Baldwin* is p^rsent incumbent there, a very able minist^r, a man of honest lyffe and conversac^on, but kept not the last fast day appoynted by act of pliam^t, and receives the profittes of the glebe lands, p^rfittes of the smale tythes and twelve pounds thirteene shillings and fower pence p anⁿ of the p^rfittes of the tithe corne, and the residue of the said tyth corn was formly received by the *Erie of Derby* but now sequestred and received by the agents for sequestrac^on; and that the said pish church of Holland is three myles distant from Wigan churche, and from Billing chappell two myles, after the rate of 320 poles to the myle, and from Duglas chappell three myles after the same rate, and fitt to be continued a pish and to have the hamell of Orrell, and soe many of the howses and teñtes wthin Billing and Winstanley as are scituate and lye nearer unto the said church of Holland then to the pish church of Wigan or church of Billing shalbe lykewyse continued as pt of the same pish of Holland.

Wee doe present that the tithe corne and smale tythes wthin *Hindley* doth belong to the rector of the pish church of Wigan and is of the yearly value of forty fyve pounds or thereabouts, and that there is a chappell lately erected and built in Hindley aforesaid upon the charges of many of the inhabitantes thereof and some of the inhabitantes wthin Abram and also some of the inhabitantes wthin Aspull; and that *Mr.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 467

Willm Willmson, an able godly and painfull minister and of good lyffe and conſaſſion, doth execute the p̄ſūte cure, and hath for his ſalarie or manteynance ſlower ſcore pounds p̄ anū payd by the rector of the piſh church of Wigan, or in default thereof the tythes of Hindley and Abram (both being one towneshipp), w^{ch} are of the yearly value of ffour ſcore pounds, pt of the before menēōned ſume of ffoute hundred ſeaventeene pounds tenn ſhillings and eight pence, as by order of the pliam^t may appeare; and that Hindley chappell afforeſaid is diſtant from the piſh church of Wigan three myles and forty poles, and two myles att the leaſt from any other chappell or church; and wee conceive Hindley chappell fit to be made a piſh church, and to have Abram annexed to it and the howſes and tenem^{ts} in Aspull hereafter menēōned (vzt) *Rob^te Hindley, Roger Hindley, Giles Edger, Gilb^t Pennington, Richard Green, Bagshaw*, the hale [Hall] of Gudlow [Gidlow] and the tenētes to the ſame, the Hale [Hall] of Bradshaw & tene^{tes} to the ſame, and theſe howſes in Ince, fit to bee annexed to Hindley church afforeſaid, vzt, *Henry Greene* and *Peet^r Willmson*, being nearer to the ſaid chappell of Hindley then to any other church or chappell whatſoever.

Wee preſent that the tyth come and ſmale tythes within *Abram* are received by *Mr. James Bradshaw*, miniſt^r att Wigan, who ſupplies the cure att Wigan afforeſaid, and is of the yearly value of twenty fyve pounds or thereabouts, pt of the before menēōned ſume of ffower hundred ſeaventeene pounds tenn ſhillings and eight pence; and from the miſt of the ſaid towne it is diſtant from the piſh church of Wigan ffower myles, and from Hindley chappell two myles and a halfe and 34 poles, from Leigh two myles and a halfe and above, from Newton three myles, and from Ashton three myles.

Wee doe preſent that there is a chappell within the towne of *Billing* w^{thin} the piſh of Wigan, that by a late ordinance of pliam^t the whole towne of *Orrell* and the one halfe of the towne of *Billing* and the ffourth pt of the towne of *Winstanley* is devyded from the piſh of Wigan afforeſaid and annexed unto the piſh of Holland, ſome pt of them lying nearer to the church of Billing then to any other church or chappell; we do conceive that the whole tythes in thoſe parts of the towneshipp affore menēōned are worth forty ſix pounds p̄ anū, pt of the before menēōned ſume of ffower hundred ſeaventeene pounds tenn ſhillings and eight pence, and they are received by *Mr. Richard Bowden*

468 *History of the Church and Mawor of Wigan.*

[Baldwin], who is minist^r att Holland; and the residue of the tythes of the townes afforesaid are worth twenty three pounds p anñ, pt of the before mençoned some of fower hundred seaventeene pounds tenn shillings and eight pence, and doth belong unto the pish church of Wigan, and that *Mr. James Bradshaw* is incumbent there and doth receive the same; and further wee say that *Mr. John Wright* doth supply the cure att the chappell of Billing and is a very honest, godly, minist^r and of good lyffe and conversaçon, but kept not the fast day appoynted by act of pliam^t, and hath for his sallary fifty pounds p anñ, paid him by *Mr. James Bradshaw*, minist^r at Wigan afforesaid, and a donatiue given by Thomas Billing unto the said chappell of forty six shillings eight pence p anñ, and likewise fower pounds p anñ, a donatiue given by the inhabitantes of Billing and Winstanley; and the said chappell is distant from Wigan fflower myles, and from Holland two myles and a halfe, and from any other church or chappell three myles. Therefore wee present Billing fitt to be made a pish, and to have those ptes of Winstanley next adioyning to them to bee annexed to the said pish of Billinge.

Wee doe present that the tythes of corn within *Ince* within the pish of Wigan belongs unto *Thomas Gerrard, Esq^r*, and now sequestred for his delinquency and received by the agents for sequestraçon for the use of the publique, and that the same tythes hath soe belonged to the said *Mr. Gerrard* and his ancestors for a long tyme, and he claimes the same by p̄scripçon, and that the same is of the yearly value of twenty pounds p anñ, out of w^{ch} tyth there issueth to *Mr. James Bradshaw*, minist^r att Wigan church, fflower pounds p anñ, being part of the said some of fflower hundred seaventeene pounds tenn shillings and eight pence, and that the smale tythes in the same towne are worth three shillings fflower pence p anñ, also received and enjoyed by the said *Mr. Bradshaw* for his owne use; and that the hamell of *Ince* is but a statute myle and a halfe from Wigan church and nearer that church then any other church or chappell, and soe fitt to bee united to the said pish of Wigan.

Wee doe also present that the tyth corne and some other smale tythes w^{thin} *Pemberton* afforesaid doe belong unto the rectory of Wigan, and are received and enjoyed by *Mr. James Bradshaw*, the p̄sent incumbent there, who supplies the cure there, and the same tythes are of the yearly

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 469

value of twenty six pounds thirteene shillings fower pence, pt of the before menõned sume of foure hundred seaventeene pounds ten shillings and eight pence; and that the said towne of Pemberton is nearer unto the said church of Wigan then any other church or chappell, and soe fit to be kept united to the said church, being not above a statute myle & a halfe distant.

Wee doe present that the towne of *Aspull* lyeth within the hundred of Salford, and is wthin the parish of Wigan, and the tythes of come is worth twenty foure pounds p anⁿ one yeare wth anoth^r, pt of the before menõned sume of 417^h 10^s 8^d, and that the smale tythes of pigge, goose, lamb and wooll are worth ten shillings p anⁿ, and that *Mr. James Bradshaw*, who supplyes the cure of Wigan, receives the proffittes of the said tythes to his owne use; and that pt of the towne is but about a statute myle from the pish church of Wigan, and soe fit to bee continued thereunto the said pish church, and not devyded, only such howses as are thought fit to bee taken to Hindley chappell or Blackerodd church w^{ch} lye nearer to them or either of them. And lastly wee doe p^{re}sent and thinke it fit, meett and requisit that all and every the se^vall churches and chappells that may be devyded from one to another or made pishes, and are before in these or any of these p^{re}sent^m menõned, shalbe pporcionable devyded and separted by mates and boundes to distinguish the p^{re}inctes and lib^{er}ties of the said pishes and chappelleries, and that such towneshippes and hamells as lye betwixt any two of the said churches and chappells shalbe devyded soe as the inhabitantes may bee members of such of them as is nearest, and not necessitated to travel further for the denifitt of godes ordinances then is requisite."

(Signed and sealed by) *Peet Kenion, Richard Astley, Thurston Peake, Will^m Sorroald, Edward Naylor, Henry Barrowe, Mathewe Lowe, Thomas Okall, Thomas Lyon, Thomas Rothwell, Thomas Constable, Adam Shawe, Humfrey Platt, Will^m Topping, William Yates, Will^m Birchall, John Robinson,* (and countersigned by) *Jo. Atherton, Tho. Birch, Rob^t Mawdesley, Peter Hall, Tho. Cubham.*^a

Notwithstanding the favourable report of him which was given by the commissioners, Bradshaw was ejected by the Independent

^a *Commonwealth Church Surveys*, p. 59.

470 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

parliament in 1653 for not observing the fast ; but was called to Macclesfield, from whence he was ejected after the Restoration in 1662.¹

He then went to reside in his own house at Darcy Lever, and obtained leave to preach for a while at Houghton chapel, in the parish of Dean, and afterwards at Bradshaw chapel, by the connivance of Mr. Bradshaw of Bradshaw Hall,² where he used to read some of the prayers, though he would not subscribe to the Act of Uniformity.³

Calamy describes him as "a man of incomparable abilities, ready elocution, solid learning, a very good preacher, a ready disputant, and every way well accomplished for the ministry." According to Calamy he died in 1683, aged 73 ;⁴ but according to a later writer⁵ his will was dated in 1684 and proved in 1686.

Mr. James Bradshaw married Elizabeth, daughter of Benjamin Childe, of Cotsbache in the county of Leicester, clerk, by whom he had a numerous issue.⁶ Several of his children were baptized, and one of them buried, at Wigan, where the following entries occur in the parish registers : 17th September, 1648, "Elizabeth daughter of Mr. James Bradshaw, parson," was christened ; she was buried on the 4th of November following. 16th September, 1649, "Elizabeth daughter of Mr. James Bradshaw, parson," was christened. 15th September, 1650, "Sarah daughter of Mr. James Bradshaw, parson," was christened. 23rd November, 1651, "John son of Mr. James Bradshaw, parson," was christened.

¹ Calamy's *Nonconformists' Memorial*, vol. i. p. 337.

² John Bradshaw, Esq., of Bradshaw Hall, the head of this wide-spread family, branches of which were settled in many places in Lancashire and Cheshire, was born 1st June, 1614. He married Margaret, daughter of John Atherton, of Atherton in the county of Lancaster, Esq., by whom he had a son John, born 1st May, 1646, and many other children (Dugdale's *Vis. of Lanc.*). He gave for his arms, *Argent, two bendlets sable.*

³ Calamy's *Nonconf. Mem.*, vol. i. p. 337.

⁴ Calamy's *Nonconf. Mem.*, vol. i. p. 337.

⁵ *Bolton Weekly Journal*, ed. by Mr. William Brimelow.

⁶ Dugdale's *Vis. of Lanc.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 471

30th January, 1652-3, "Mary daughter of Mr. James Bradshaw, minister," was christened. Besides these, his eldest children, there were, at the time of Dugdale's Visitation, in March, 1664, three other children, born after his ejection from Wigan, viz., Benjamin, Catherine, and Alice;¹ of whom Benjamin was baptized at Macclesfield on 2nd August, 1657, and Alice, on 5th June, 1659;² there was also another son, James, baptized there on 23rd December, 1660, who probably died young, as his name is not given in the Visitation pedigree. Of these children Sarah became the wife of Daniel Bayley, Esq., of Manchester, from whom descended the late Sir John Potter, thrice mayor of Manchester.³

John Bradshaw, the eldest son, carried on the line, and died in 1706. Appended to the will of his widow, Mary Bradshaw, is an endorsement containing the following bequest: "I do hereby give to my son James my father Moxon's picture, unto my daughter Sarah Howarth my mother Moxon's picture, unto my son Jeremiah Bradshaw my sonne John Bradshaw's picture, and to my daughter Elizabeth Wood my own picture."⁴ The testatrix was the daughter of John Moxon, of Manchester, borough-reeve of Manchester in 1674. James Bradshaw, of Darcy Lever, gentleman (the son of John Bradshaw), was born in 1679, and had several brothers and sisters whose names are preserved. He appears in the year 1707 to have married Elinor, the daughter of John Rigby, by whom he had a son John, and two daughters, Mary and Jane. This John Bradshaw was baptized in the Collegiate church, Manchester, 13th August, 1708. He married, at Northenden, 7th March, 1735-6, Elizabeth, third daughter of Dr. Samuel Peploe, lord bishop of Chester. He lived principally at Manchester, and very little at Darcy Lever, his house at Manchester being in Shudehill, near to the Bradshaw gates.

¹ Dugdale's *Vis. of Lanc.*

² *Earwaker's East Cheshire*, vol. ii. p. 504, note.

³ *Bolton Weekly Journal*.

⁴ *Ibid.*

472 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

He was an active justice of the peace for the county of Lancaster, and high sheriff of the county in 1753. Mr. John Bradshaw died on the 7th March, 1777, aged 69 years. He had issue one son, James Bradshaw, of Darcy Lever, born in 1737, a daughter Anne, married to Mr. Charles White, of Sale, near Manchester, in 1757, and another daughter Elizabeth, married in 1760 at the Collegiate church, Manchester, to one Radcliffe Sidebottom, a lawyer. James Bradshaw, the son, was twice married, first at Croston in May, 1768, to Anne, daughter of John Whalley, of Blackburn, who died in childbed in June, 1778. He married secondly, at the Collegiate church, Manchester, 20th December, 1780, Jane, daughter of Edward Greaves, Esquire, of Culcheth, who died at Manchester on 4th February, 1813. By her he had issue John Bradshaw, of Darcy Lever, Esq., born 30th June, 1782, who married, 27th February, 1809, at Evercreech, co. Somerset, Charlotte Mary, daughter of Samuel Smith, Esq., and died in January, 1816, from the effects of an overthrow of the mail coach at Pendleton. His wife died at Yate, in the county of Gloucester, 31st August of the following year, aged 28 years. They had issue the late James Edward Bradshaw, of Darcy Lever, and Fair oak Park, in the county of Hants, Esq., who was married on 3rd June, 1834, to Frances Lumbe, daughter of the Rev. J. W. Dugdell, rector of Kington Magna; and another son John Bradshaw, of Vicar's Hill House, near Lymington, in the county of Hants, Esq., who took the name and arms of Greaves in 1824; as also a daughter Charlotte Mary, who was born at Bath in June 1810, and died at Yate in May, 1819.¹ Mr. James Edward Bradshaw died 16th September, 1887, and was succeeded by his eldest son Charles Bradshaw, Esq., the present owner of Darcy Lever.

CHARLES HOTHAM superseded James Bradshaw as rector of Wigan in 1653. Bishop Bridgeman having died in the previous

¹ *Bolton Weekly Journal.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 473

year, the benefice was now legally void, and Hotham was probably presented by the trustees who held the patronage under his father's will. He paid his first fruits 9th May, 1653.¹ This rector was the son of Sir John Hotham, of Scarborough, in the county of York, knight, by his second wife, Anne, daughter of Ralph Rokesby, of York, Esq., secretary to the council at York. Sir John Hotham was created a baronet by James I. 4th January, 1622. He seems to have acquired the advowson of Wigan church about the year 1641. On the rupture between King Charles and the parliament, Hotham was sent down to Yorkshire by the parliament and made governor of Hull, with a special charge to prevent the removal of the large supply of arms and other military stores which were deposited there. In this difficult post he became entangled between the two parties, and, being accused of breach of trust, was seized and conveyed to London, where he was tried by court-martial at the Guildhall, and beheaded on 2nd of January, 1645,² his eldest son, Sir John Hotham, knight, having suffered execution on the previous day for the same cause. Sir John Hotham, the elder, was five times married, and at his death was succeeded by his grandson John, son of Sir John Hotham the younger.

Charles Hotham, the future rector, was educated at Cambridge, and being a fellow of Peterhouse was made proctor of the University in 1646.³ He appeared as a witness at his father's trial, but was unable to get the sentence reversed. He was married at Wigan, where the following entry occurs in the parish register: "Charles Hotham, rector of this parish church of Wigan in Lancashire, & Elizabeth Thompson, spinster, daughter of Stephen Thompson of humbleton in holderness in the county of Yorke, Esquire, were published in the parish church of Wigan three severall Lords dayes, towitt upon the 24th of August, and upon the 31th

¹ Record Society, Lancashire and Cheshire, vol. viii. p. 414.

² Tickell's *Hist. of Hull*.

³ *Le Neve's Fasti*.

474 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

of August, and also upon the 7th of September 1656, according to act of Parlm^t ; [and] were married before Duran Hotham¹ Justice of the Peace the 15th day of September 1656." By this lady he had a daughter Charletta, born on 4th May, 1659;² and another daughter Mary, born 2nd March, 1660-1,³ who was married to Michael Burton, of Holmesfield, in the parish of Dronfield and county of Derby, Esq.⁴ They had also one son Charles Hotham, who, on the death of his cousin Sir John Hotham without issue male in 1691, succeeded as third baronet,⁵ and is now represented in the male line by Sir John Hotham, fifth Baron Hotham,⁶ of Scarborough, in the county of York.

Charles II. was restored to the throne on 29th May, 1660. It appears that Charles Hotham, the then rector of Wigan, had been pronounced unorthodox on account of some book he had written, and a warrant from the crown was obtained for a presentation to the rectory of Wigan for John Burton ; but Hotham must have had some powerful friends, for on the 29th of September, 1660, a warrant was issued from Whitehall for a presentation of Charles Hotham to the rectory of Wigan, with a clause to revoke the grant made to John Burton or any other ;⁷ and on 27th October John Burton writes to Charles Whittaker, saying he has no hopes of Wigan, Mr. Hotham's trustees resolving to keep him in, notwithstanding his book, or to give it to a nominee of Hotham's.⁸

¹ Duran or Durant Hotham was his own brother. Sir John Hotham, the first baronet, had by his second wife three children, viz., Charles, William, and this Durant Hotham, who was of Lockington, in the county of York, Esq., and married Frances, daughter of Richard Remington, of Lund, Esq., by whom he had a numerous issue, though most of them died young. Durant Hotham was the author of *The Life of Jacob Behmen*. Lond. 1654. 4to.

² Wigan Parish Register.

³ *Ibid.* The entries in the register at this period are recorded as births and not as christenings.

⁴ Wotton's *Baronetage*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Arms of Hotham, *Barry of ten argent and azure, on a canton or, a Cornish chough, proper.*

⁷ Cal. Stat. Pap. (Dom. Ser.), vol. vii. No. 111.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. xix. No. 60.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 475

Mr. Charles Hotham, while rector of Wigan, had a law suit with the Rigby family concerning the possession of the old chancel in the parish church,¹ to which an unsatisfactory answer was given on Thursday, (6th or 7th) February, 13 Car. II. (1661-2). The answer is as follows:

"Whereas Charles Hotham clerk, Rector of the parish church of Wigan, hath exhibited his English Bill into this Court against Joseph Rigby, Alexander Rigby and Gabriel Rigby, the scope of the Plaintiff's Bill being to be settled in the quiet enjoyment of an enclosed place at the East end of the middle Aisle of the Parish Church of Wigan called the "Quire" or old chancel as belonging to the Rector of the said Parish church, and to have the writings and evidences concerning the same delivered unto the said plaintiff, and that such ancient witnesses who could testify the plaintiff's right to the place in question might be examined in the court *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, that such use might hereafter be made of them as need should require, unto which Bill the said defendants answered and denied the substance of the said Bill, and the said plaintiff replied thereunto; and issue being joined witnesses were examined on both sides, and the depositions being published the said cause came to be heard this day. Now upon [hearing of the] opening of the said Bill by Mr. Conyers, of counsel with the said plaintiff, and of the answers of Mr. Offley, of counsel with the said defendants, and upon hearing Sir Geoffrey Palmer Knight and Baronet, Attorney

¹ The seats on the north side of the old, lower, or parson's chancel had been claimed in bishop Bridgeman's time by Mr. Alexander Rigby, who founded his claim on a purchase his brother had made from John Low of a house and land in Aspall. The said John Low indeed had sentence at Chester for a *barrial* there, but the suit was between Godlow and Low, so that the parson not putting in his claim is not excluded thereby; and the said Low's own witness proved that there were no seats there, so that he could have none. It appeared, by many depositions, that the said place had always been used in memory of man for a chancel, and had anciently a rood loft over it, and that there were no other seats therein but half round seats on the north and south sides, and also on the west side thereof parting this chancel from the body of the church, and that in these round seats the parsons successively have sat, and their chaplains, officers and other servants, &c. (Wigan Leger, fol. 88). Subsequently to this claim of Rigby's, Rushton and Cheetham seem to have claimed these same seats in the time of bishop Bridgeman, to whom they acknowledged their error and confessed that they belonged to the parson (see page 295).

476 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

General, and others, the Court is of opinion that the matter is not properly determinable in this court by way of equity. It is therefore ordered that the defendants be dismissed without costs, and that the depositions of such witnesses as shall either be dead or not able to travel shall be made use of at any time hereafter in this or any other court as there shall be cause between the same parties, or those that shall claim under them or any of them."¹

Probably the action proceeded no further, for the Act of Uniformity was passed in that year, and Hotham, being one of those who refused to subscribe to it, was ejected from his benefice.

After his ejection he sailed to the West Indies, but subsequently returned to England.² Calamy tells us that he was an excellent scholar both in divine and human literature; a great philosopher, who loved to search into the secrets of nature, and was very fond of chemistry. In his younger days he had studied judicial astrology, but gave express orders in his will that all his papers and books relating to that art should be burned.

The known works of Charles Hotham were:

(1.) *In Philosophiam Teutonicam Manuductio, sive Determinatio de Origine Animæ Humanæ.* Lond. 1648. 8vo. Into English, by D. F. Lond. 1650. 8vo.

(2.) *Corporations Vindicated in their Fundamental Liberties, from a (sic) negative, vain, and other unjust prerogatives of their chief office, destructive of true freedom; argued first and more properly in the case of Peterham, in Cambridge, but is of general import to all the bodies incorporate throughout the whole kingdom; containing also, Extracts from the Registers and Statutes of Peterham.* 1651. 12mo.

(3.) *Petition and Argument before the Committee of Reformation of the Universities, against the Master's negative, vain, &c.* 1655. 4to.³

¹ *Memoranda of Exchequer Rolls*; Decree Book, Hilary, 13 and 14 Car. II., fo. 87.

² *Calamy's Nonconform. Mem.*, vol. ii. p. 181.

³ *Bibl. Brit.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 477

At the time of Hotham's ejection the patronage of the rectory of Wigan had passed into the hands of Sir Orlando Bridgeman, knight and baronet, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Keeper of the Great Seal.

I have stated, at page 2, on the authority of Canon Raines,¹ that the advowson of Wigan church was purchased by Sir Orlando Bridgeman from Sir Thomas Fleetwood, of Calwich, baronet, shortly after the restoration. Sir Thomas Fleetwood was indeed the heir of the Langtons, the old hereditary patrons, under the will of Sir Thomas Langton, but from information which has come into my hands since I wrote the above, I have reason to believe that, if there were any such dealings between Sir Orlando Bridgeman and Sir Thomas Fleetwood, the so-called sale will have been nothing more than a quit-claim from the latter to any reversionary rights he might have as heir of entail to Sir Thomas Langton's estates, for the advowson had previously passed away from his family.

The last Sir Thomas Langton, who died in February, 1604-5, and whose ancestors had been for centuries the patrons of Wigan church, had squandered most of his patrimony and was in great pecuniary difficulties long before he died. With respect to his dealings with the advowson of Wigan church, the following notes may throw some light upon the subject. They are taken from a *memorandum* (which I believe to be in the writing of bishop Bridgeman, or possibly that of his son Sir Orlando) purporting to be "*a note of such conveyances, assurances and other writings, as were had from John Lacy, citizen and alderman of London, concerning the manor of Cureden [Cuerden] and the rectory and parsonage of Wigan:*"

"1. An indenture of grant, dated 21st July 36 Eliz. [1594] from Sir Thomas Langton to Thomas Fleetwood Esq^r and Mr. Danyell of the parsonage of Wigan, on certain conditions.²

¹ *Nottis Cestrensis*, vol. ii. p. 246.

² Thomas Fleetwood, whose mother was a Langton, was first cousin to the last Sir Thomas Langton, and next heir in reversion by the arbitrary will of their grandfather Sir Thomas Langton, knight.

478 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

2. A bargain and sale, dated 15th February 40 Eliz. [1598], from *Sir Thomas Langton* and *Mr. Danyell* of the parsonage of *Wigan* to *John Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* and their heirs, with a memorandum that they shall dispose thereof as *John Lacy* shall appoint.

3. On the same day was a bargain and sale of *the manor of Cureden* [by *Sir Thomas Langton* and *Danyell*] to *John Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* and their heirs, with a power of redemption reserved on payment of £542 10s. on the 24th of February, 1598, to *John Lacy* [from which it may be inferred that *Sweetinge* and *Hobbes* were acting as trustees for *John Lacy*].

4. On the same day was a great indenture of covenants between *Sir Thomas Langton*, *Thomas Fleetwood*, *Richard Fleetwood*, *G. Osbaldeston*, *J. Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* to levy a fine and suffer a recovery at the first or 2nd assizes at Lancaster for that year of the *manor of Cureden* and the *parsonage of Wigan*, sealed by the baron and *Osbaldeston* alone.

5. An indenture of covenants, dated 3rd July 41 Eliz. [1599], between *Sir Thomas Langton* and *Geoffrey Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* and others of the other part whereby, after reciting the former bargain and sale of *Cureden* and stating that *Cureden* was not sufficiently conveyed according to a former indenture between *Sir Thomas Langton*, *Thomas Fleetwood*, *Richard Fleetwood*, *G. Osbaldeston*, and *John Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes*; it is covenanted that, in consideration of £560 now paid, *Sir Thomas Langton* and *G. Osbaldeston* do bargain and sell the said manor to *John Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* and their heirs, also that a sufficient recovery of the said manor and a moiety of the said parsonage of *Wigan* shall be had at the then next assizes at Lancaster, which recovery shall be to the use and recovery of *John Sweetinge* and *William Hobbes* and their heirs: provided that if the baron [Sir Thomas Langton] or *Mr. Osbaldeston* do pay *John Lacy* £560 on the 24th of February next coming in the year 1599 [1599-1600] then the baron shall re-enter and have possession &c., and, upon such payment being made, *Sweetinge* and *Hobbes* shall re-assure the manor and moiety of the said parsonage.

6. An assignment from *William Hobbes* to *John Sweetinge* of all his

* *Thomas Fleetwood's* name does not occur as party to this deed.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 479

estate right and interest in *the parsonage of Wigan*, dated 28th June, 2 Jac. [1604].

7. A release, dated 29th June 2 Jac. [1604], from *William Hobbes* to *John Sweetinge and his heirs* of the *advowson of Wigan* so that Sweetinge only shall nominate and present a clerk to *the said parsonage being then void*.

8. An indenture, dated 1st July 2 Jac. [1604], between *Sir Thomas Langton* and *John Sweetinge*, in which, after reciting the first bargain and sale made by *Sir Thomas to Sweetinge and Hobbes* and likewise the release of *Hobbes to Sweetinge and his heirs*, it was agreed that *Sir Thomas Langton* should, before All Saints then next coming, levy a fine *sur cognissance de droit &c.* at Lancaster of the *manor and advowson*, and that a common recovery should be had by *Sir Rowland Lacy, knight*, and *Anthony Peacock* against *John Sweetinge* wherein the said *Sir Thomas Langton* should come in as voucher.

9. An indenture of covenants, dated 2nd July 2 Jac. [1604], between *Sir Thomas Langton* and *John Lacy*, reciting the former bargains and sales of the manor and parsonage, whereby *Sir Thomas* covenanteth for payment of *viii^lxxx^s* at the said days and for payment of all such charges as *John Lacy* shall disburse for any assurances, and *John Lacy* covenanteth, upon payment of all these sums, to reassure the said *manor of Creden* and the *said parsonage*.

10. A recognizance of 3rd July 2 Jac. [1604] by *Sir Thomas Langton* to *John Lacy* of £1700 for performance of certain covenants in an indenture made between them of 2nd July 2 Jac. acknowledged in chancery.¹

11. A transcript of the fine levied by *Sir Thomas Langton* on the Monday next after the Feast of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin May 2 Jac. at Lancaster to *John Sweetinge* [Aug. 20, 1604].

12. A transcript of the recovery had at the same assizes at Lancaster by *Sir Rowland Lacy* and *Peacock* against *Sweetinge* who vouched *Sir Thomas Langton*.

13. A bargain and sale from *John Lacy, John Sweetinge* and *William*

¹ It is worthy of note that a letter dated from Greenwich on this same day, 3rd July, 1604, and preserved among the state papers, was written to John Lacy, citizen of London, asking him to present to the benefice of Wigan Dr. George Downname, afterwards made bishop of Derry (Dom. Series, Jac. I., vol. viii. No. 87).

480 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Hobbes to *Thomas Pearshall* and *Edmund Pearshall* of the manor of Cureden and the advowson of Wigan, dated 17th Sept. 3 Jac. [1605].

14. A counterpart of the assignment of the statutes of Walton to *Sir Richard Houghton* from *Mr. Lacy* with his covenant for saving Cureden harmless, dated 14th November 3 Jac. [1605].

15. An assignment of a recognizance, from *Mr. Lacy* to *Mr. Pearshall* acknowledged by *Sir Thomas Langton* 2nd July 2 Jac. [1604], dated 28th November 3 Jac. [1605]."

From these notes it may be inferred that in 1605 Mr. Pearshall was patron of the parsonage of Wigan.

Now Richard Fleetwood, of Calwich, the heir of the Langtons, who was created a baronet in 1611, married a daughter of John Pearshall, Pershall, or Peshall of Horsley, in the county of Stafford, created a baronet in 1612; and it is not improbable that the Pearshalls may have been acting as trustees for Fleetwood in this matter. A few years later, namely, in the year 1615, we find the King again presenting to the church of Wigan. How the patronage came into the King's hands I am unable to determine. Possibly he may have exercised the right for that turn in consequence of the last rector, Gerard Massie, having been nominated to the see of Chester, though he died before he had been consecrated. Soon afterwards, however, Sir Richard Fleetwood was undoubtedly in possession of both the manor of Cuerden and the advowson of the church of Wigan, which thus appear to have been recovered from the former purchasers or mortgagees.

Bishop Bridgeman, who entered upon his bishoprick in 1619, says, in a letter to archbishop Laud, which has been already given,² that he purchased the advowson of Wigan after he became bishop from Sir Richard Fleetwood, but that whilst he

² Sir Thomas Langton died on 20th February, 1604-5 (see p. 142, *note*), and the parsonage, which was void on 29th June, 1604, was filled on the 9th of October, 1604, by the institution of Gerard Massie, who had been presented by King James on the 17th July, 1604.

* See page 418.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 481

was drawing up his assurance for the purchase dean Murray stepped in, and by offering £10 more, secured the purchase for himself.

Sir Richard Murray, D.D., Warden of Manchester and dean of St. Burian in Cornwall, who thus became patron of the church of Wigan, was one of the needy Scottish men of good family who came into England with King James I., from whom he and his younger brother, John Murray, Earl of Annandale, received many favours. He was the sixth son of Sir Charles Murray, of Cockpool, in the county of Dumfries, and upon the death of his elder brother, Sir James Murray, without issue male, he claimed the paternal inheritance of Cockpool, and got a precept from the Court of Chancery for infesting him as nearest heir male to the said Sir James on 2nd April, 1621. In 1626 he was created a baronet of Nova Scotia by King Charles I., from whom he obtained a charter of the lands of Cockpool.¹ On 18th June, 1604, he was presented by James I. to the rectory of Bangor Monachorum, with Worthenbury and Overton-Madoc, in the county of Flint;² and on 7th March, 1609, he was appointed by the King to the Wardenship of Manchester, in which post he was highly unpopular. He was deprived of this preferment in 1635, and heavily fined for misappropriation of the college revenues. He had previously been instituted to the rectory of Stockport, in the county of Cheshire, on 5th April, 1619, and paid his first fruits thereon upon the 15th of the following month.³ Sir Richard retained the deanery of St. Burian till the time of his death, which occurred in 1636 or 1637, and as he died without legitimate issue, he was succeeded at Cockpool by his brother John, Earl of Annandale, who was served as his heir male and of entail on 29th August, 1637.⁴

¹ Douglas' *Peerage of Scotland*.

² *Raines' Rectors and Wardens of Manchester*, Chetham Society, New Series, vol. vi. p. 112.

³ *Earwaker's East Cheshire*, vol. i. p. 386, vol. ii. p. 654.

⁴ Douglas' *Peerage*.

482 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

From the following petition of John, Earl of Annandale, to the King, dated 12th April, 1638, it appears that dean Murray died a poor man. The petition recites that Richard Murray, D.D., [formerly] Warden of Manchester, and brother to the petitioner, lately deceased, was fined by the ecclesiastical commissioners £1,000, which his Majesty appointed to be paid towards the repairs of St. Paul's. Petitioner, for preserving his brother's estate, had agreed with the archbishop of Canterbury to pay the said £1,000, and had paid part and secured the remainder, whereupon his Majesty granted petitioner the said fine and extent in the names of Sir Abraham Dawes, Mungo Murray, and George Duncombe, and petitioner caused an extent to be sued out upon the estate of the said Richard Murray, but nothing was found to satisfy the fine but only the reversion of the advowson of Wigan after the death of the bishop of Chester, so that petitioner will lose his £1,000 unless his Majesty extend to him his grace. He prays that the said advowson may be secured to petitioner, or to Sir Abraham Dawes, Mungo Murray, and George Duncombe, or others whom he may appoint.¹ The petition was referred to Mr. Attorney-General Bankes, whose certificate is written at the back: "For petitioner's suit to your Majesty to secure to him the advowson of Wigan, so that your Majesty, your heirs and successors, will not by any title of prerogative dispose thereof after the avoidance of the same, I certify that the like was done by King James in the 19th year of his reign to Sir Walter Heveningham for one presentation," dated 28th April, 1638.

This petition was renewed on 26th March of the following year, 1639, when the King was pleased to grant the boon, and the attorney-general was ordered to prepare a bill for his Majesty's signature accordingly.²

On 17th April, 1639, a grant was made (at the nomination of the Earl of Annandale) to Sir Miles Fleetwood and Abraham Speckard, their heirs and assigns, of all his Majesty's title and

¹ Cal. Stat. Pap. (Dom. Ser.), vol. ccclxxxvii. 60.

² Cal. Stat. Pap. (Dom. Ser.), vol. ccccxv.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 483

interest in and to the advowson of the rectory of the church of Wigan, in the county of Lancaster, heretofore purchased by Richard Murray, deceased, in the name of Sir Miles Fleetwood and other trustees, which advowson the Earl has procured to be extended, his Majesty having formerly granted to him a fine of £1,000, imposed upon Richard Murray in the High Commission Court, and secured £1,000 by the said Earl to be paid in towards the repairs of the west end of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.¹

And in 1640 [March 26?] there is a *memorandum* by John, Earl of Annandale, touching his claim to the advowson of the rectory of Wigan: "The last year, after the King's pleasure signified for my grant [of his Majesty's interest in the rectory and church of Wigan] which then [26th March, 1639] should have been expedited, divers persons were desirous to bargain with me, and I was offered by one five years purchase for it, whereof I should have received three immediately, and the other two upon the death of the bishop [of Chester], which sum would have amounted to £5,000."²

These are the last notices I meet with concerning the sale of the advowson by John Murray, Earl of Annandale.

It was probably purchased at this time by Sir John Hotham, knight and baronet, of Scarborough, in the county of York, who is spoken of in 1641 as "the new patron."³ Sir John Hotham, as we have seen, was beheaded in January, 1644-5. I imagine that Sir John Hotham, whose eldest son predeceased him, left the advowson in trust for his son Charles Hotham, who afterwards became rector of Wigan; and it will have been from Mr. Hotham or his father's trustees that Sir Orlando Bridgeman purchased it soon after the Restoration, *i.e.*, in or about the year 1662. This conjecture is strengthened by an expression in a letter to Sir John Bridgeman from Sir William Dawes, bishop of Chester, dated 9th February, 1713, a few days before

¹ Cal. Stat. Pap. (Dom. Ser.), vol. ccccxxvii. 115.

² Cal. Stat. Pap. (Dom. Ser.), vol. ccccxxix. 6.

³ Wigan Leger, fol. 189.

484 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

he was translated to York, in which he alludes to the purchase of the living from Mr. Hotham by Sir Orlando Bridgeman.¹

I have not met with the purchase deed, but it will have been made between September, 1660, when the King assumed the right to present, and 11th May, 1662, on or about which date Sir Orlando presented Dr. George Hall, bishop of Chester, to the vacant benefice.

Sir Orlando Bridgeman (who was himself a great benefactor to the church²), bearing in mind the corrupt practices of former patrons, who turned the advowson into a means of private gain to themselves by constant sales of next presentation, and wishing to preserve the church from such abuses for the future, soon afterwards, namely, in August or September, 1663, conveyed the advowson to Gilbert, archbishop of Canterbury, George, bishop of Winchester, Humphrey, bishop of Salisbury, the said Sir Orlando Bridgeman, knight and baronet, and Francis Phelipps, or Phelps, Esq., in trust for the said Sir Orlando Bridgeman and his heirs, and to be at his and their disposal; who at his nomination presented Doctor Wilkins and Doctor Pearson successively bishops of Chester.³ In 1677, after the death of Sir Orlando, when the advowson had become vested in the said bishop of Winchester as surviving trustee, Sir John Bridgeman, baronet, son of Sir Orlando, knowing his father's pious intentions, renewed the trust; which was again, more than once, renewed in later times, and has since remained in the patronage of his family.

¹ Original letter *per* Earl of Bradford.

² Sir Orlando Bridgeman endowed the churches of Castle Bromwich and Clifton, in Warwickshire, with tithes which he had purchased, the church of Flenstall, in Cheshire, with the rectory and parochial tithes, and the church of Teddington, in Middlesex, with certain fee farm rents. He also gave the rectory and great tithes of Bolton-le-Moors, in Lancashire, which he held on lease from the bishop of Chester, to the incumbent of Bolton so long as his interest therein should last and so long as he and his heirs were allowed to present to the church; all which were confirmed by the will of his son Sir John Bridgeman, bart.

³ The original trustees of the church of Wigan must have been appointed some time between the 11th of August, 1663, when Gilbert Sheldon was elected archbishop, and the 15th of September of the same year, when Humphrey Henchman, bishop of Salisbury, was translated to the see of London.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 485

GEORGE HALL, bishop of Chester, succeeded Hotham as rector of Wigan, to which, after Hotham's ejection in 1662, he was presented by Sir Orlando Bridgeman, knight and baronet.¹

He was the son of the good Dr. Joseph Hall, first bishop of Exeter and afterwards of Norwich, by his wife Gertrude, daughter of Sir George Winniff of Bretenham.² He was born at Waltham Holy Cross in 1612, of which parish his father was then vicar;³ and admitted as a commoner of Exeter College, Oxford, in 1628, being then sixteen years of age.⁴ He took his bachelor's degree 30th April, 1631,⁵ and was elected fellow of Exeter College in 1632. After taking his master's degree on 17th December, 1633-4,⁶ he received holy orders, was collated to a prebend in Exeter cathedral 23rd December, 1639,⁷ and installed archdeacon of Cornwall 8th October, 1641, on the resignation of his brother Robert.⁸ He also held the vicarage of Menheniot, in the same county, to which he was presented by his college.⁹

In 1650 his benefices were sequestered by the usurping powers, and though he would have kept a school for his subsistence he was not allowed even that resource.¹⁰

At the Restoration he was made chaplain to King Charles II.,¹¹ installed canon of Windsor 28th July, 1660,¹² created Doctor of Divinity 2nd August,¹³ and collated on 14th August of the same year by archbishop Juxon to the archdeaconry of Canterbury,¹⁴ which he afterwards continued to hold *in commendam* with his bishopric.¹⁵ He is said to have also been rector of St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, London.¹⁶

¹ Raikes' MSS., vol. xxii.² Chalmers' *Biograph. Dic.*³ *Ibid.*⁴ *Lives of the English Bishops from the Restoration to the Revolution.* Lond. 1733.⁵ Wood's *Fasti Oxonienses*, vol. I. p. 460.⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 469.⁷ Le Neve's *Fasti.*⁸ *Ibid.*⁹ *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i. p. 13.¹⁰ Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary.*¹¹ *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i. p. 13.¹² Le Neve's *Fasti.*¹³ Wood's *Fasti Oxonienses*, vol. ii. p. 237.¹⁴ Le Neve's *Fasti.*¹⁵ *Ibid.*¹⁶ *Hist. Chester*, Whitehall, 1795.

486 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

He was consecrated bishop of Chester 11th May, 1662, and allowed to hold the rectory of Wigan *in commendam*.

On the entrance of bishop Hall upon the rectory of Wigan, the mayor and corporation revived some old claims against the rector for possession of certain manorial rights; and in February, 1662-3, the contending parties referred the matter to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, then Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, agreeing to abide by his award. The award was made in the following year, and ratified by both parties on 5th July, 1664. It was preserved amongst the charters of the borough of Wigan; and runs thus:

"Burgus de Wigan } Whereas there was about the month of february
in Com. Lanc. } which was in the year of our Lord God one
thousand six hundred sixtie and two a refferance made to the Right
Hoble the L^d Chiefe Justice Bridgeman by the Maior Aldermen and
Burgesses of Wigan for and on behalfe of themselves and their Suc-
cessors and the Right Reverend Father in God George Lord Bishop
of Chester and Parson of Wigan on the behalfe of himselfe and his
Successors Parsons of Wigan (for the apeasinge quietning and setleing
of certaine suits differences and controversies that were then or might
hreafter be dependinge between the saide Corporation and their
Successors and the said Parson of Wigan and his Successors) as
Arbitrator indifferently elected and chosen between the said pties.
And whereas the said Lord Bridgeman hath made his Award in the
premisses; And whereas alsoe the Pattrons of the saide Church of
Wigan to witt Gilb^t Lord Archbishop of Canturbury Humpherey Lord
Bishop of London George Lord Bishop of Winchester and Francis
Phillips Esq^r have under there hands and seals ratified and confermed
the saide Award to be for ever kept and observed; And the said Lord
Bishop of Chester hath in pursuans of the saide Award seald a Lease
to the said Corporation; Wee therefore the Maior Aldermen Bailifs
and Burgesses of Wigan att a Generall Meeting this day had in the
Mote hall within Wigan aforesaide having perused the saide Award
Confirmation and Lease and considered of the same doe agree that
the same shall be accepted taken and performed on our part; And
that the same by us and our successors shall be observed and kept;

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 487

And that the same reference is and was made and prosecuted by our Consents In testimony Whereof Wee have as well putt the seale of the saide Corporation as oure owne hands the fifth day of July *Ann. R. R. Caroli sãdi nunc Angl. &c. xvj. Anoy. Dni 1664.*

Which saide Award Confirmation and Lease follow in these words :

To all Christian People to whome this present writing shall come I S^r Orlando Bridgeman K^t and Bar^t Chiefe Justice of the Court of Comon Pleas send Greeting in oure L^d God Everlasting. Whereas the Right Reverend Father in God George L^d Bishop of Chester and Parson of Wigan in the county of Lanc^r on the behalfe of himselfe and his successors Parsons of Wigan aforesaid on the one part and the Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan aforesaid for themselves and there successors and the Corporation of the Borrough of Wigan on the other part have mutually agreed to stand to abide performe and fulfill such Award as I the saide S^r Orlando Bridgeman shall make concerning all differances and demands between them. Now this present writing Indented witnesseth that I the said S^r Orlando Bridgeman taking upon me the burden of the saide Award doe Arbitrate and Award between the said parties concerning the premisses as followeth :

First I the saide S^r Orlando Bridgeman doe declare that the Parson of Wigan is undoubtedly L^d of the Mannor of Wigan and that Hee and his successors as Lords of the saide Mannor may from tyme to tyme at convenient tymes keep a Court Barron at which the freeholders within the saide Mann^r ought to do there suit and service. But for that the Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan have a Court of Pleas for trying of Actions^s so that the said Court Barron will be but of little use for Administration of Justice or of advantage to the Parson of Wigan save only for fynding out and Enquiry into Chiefe rents due to the Parson and Incrochments upon the Wasts. Therefore for the Establishing a perpetuall Amity between the Parson and his successors for the tyme being And the Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan aforesaid and their successors for the tyme being I doe Award that the Parson keep his Court Barron but once in two years and not oftener And that in the Motehall in Wigan and not elsewhere. And that at the sayd Court noe

* The records of the courts of common-pleas held by the mayors of Wigan from this time forward are still extant.

488 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

pleas be held between party and party And that nether the Maior then being nor any of the Aldermen who have been Maior shall be amerced for not doeing there suit and service at the said Court but that all other Burgesses and suitors duely attend at the said Court to doe there suit and service and to enquire after and find out such persons as shall detayne there rents from the Lord of the Mannor And find oute all Incrochments and purprestures upon the streets and wasts of the said Mannor.

And I doe further Award that from henceforth there shall not be any Incrochments made or Cottages erected upon the Streets or wasts within the said Mannor withoute the leave of the Parson and Consent of the Maior of Wigan for the tyme being And that such Incrochments as have been made since the year 1640 (if any such have beene) shall be reasonably arented by the Parson and his successors if the Corporacion think fit they be continued or otherwise to be pulld downe and layd open. Nevertheless alsoe I doe further Award that the Potters of Wigan for the tyme being may dig claye in the wasts of the said Mannor as heretofore Potters of Wigan have used to doe provided the places soe digged be forthwith after the digging sufficiently amended.

Alsoe whereas by an Award made on or about the 13rd day of february in the year of our Lord God 1618 by George then Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Lancelot Lord Bishop of Ely Sir Henry Montague Chiefe Justice of the Court of King's Bench and S^r Henry Hobart Chiefe Justice of the Court of Comon Pleas between the then Parson of Wigan and the Corporacion upon a Referrance from the late King James of ever Blessed Memory the said Referreres did order that the fayr kept yearly at Wigan upon St. Luke's day and the Markett kept there every fryday weekly and the Pentice and the Court of Pleas and the Michaelmas Leet with the profits of the same should be the Corporacion's I doe accordingly hereby order and award the Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan and their successors shall for ever as in there owne right have the said fayre Markett and Courts with the profits of the same. But that they shall not sue or arrest or cause or willingly permitt to be sued or arrested any of the famyly or Meniall servants of the Parson of Wigan for the tyme being upon or by reason of any suit or Plea in any of the said Courts withoute the leave of the said Parson. And whereas the said Referreres did order that fayre which is held in Wigan on

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 489

Ascension day yearly and the Markett which is kept on Monday and the Easter Leet should be the Parson's I doe hereby order and award that the nowe Lord B^{pp} of Chester Parson of Wigan and his successors Parsons of Wigan shall for ever as in Right of the Church of Wigan have the said fayre Markett and Court Leet with the Profits of the same. But for that I conceive it will be a great means to continue peace and good will between the said Lord B^{pp} and his successors and the said Corporation of Wigan and there successors that the said Parson shall demise the said fayre Markett and Court Leet to the said Corporation; And for that the late Right Reverend Father in God John Bridgeman Lord B^{pp} of Chester and Parson of Wigan att my instance did heretofore demise the same to the said Corporation for 21 years at the yearly Rent of £3 6s. 8d. I doe hereby order and award that the said George nowe Lord Bishop of Chester shall before the 25th day of March next ensuing the date of these presents by his writing Indented demise and to ferme lett unto the Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of the said towne of Wigan the said yearly fayre weekly Markett and Court Leet and all toles Courts Piccage Stallages Profits Comodities and emoluments whatsoever to the said fayre Markett and Court Leet or to any of them belonging To hold from the makeing of the said Indenture for the tearme of 21 years thence next following under the yearly rent of five marks to be paid att Xmas and Midsummer yearly by equall portions to the said Lord B^{pp} and his successors Parsons of Wigan and that upon delivery of the said Leas to the Maior of Wigan for the tyme being the saide Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan shall cause to be delivared unto the saide Lord B^{pp} the Counterparte thereof sealed with the seale of the saide Corporation And I doe further award that upon the Expiration of the saide Lease by surrender affluxion of tyme or otherwise the Parson of Wigan for the tyme being shall att the request and at the cost and charge in the Law of the Corporation of the towne of Wigan make unto the said Corporation a newe Lease by Indenture of the premisses for the like terme of 21 years under the like reservation of the rente of five Marks yearly during the said terme And so from tyme [to tyme] for ever the Parson of Wigan for the tyme being shall upon the Expiration or Surrender of the Lease then last in being make a newe Lease by Indenture of the premisses so demised to the said Corporation of the towne of Wigan for 21 years under the like

490 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Reservation of the rente of five Marks yearly dureing the saide tearme and that upon the making of every such newe Lease the Counterparte thereof shall be delivered to the said Parson sealed with the seale of the said Corporation of the towne of Wigan.

And I doe further Award that the said Maior Baylifs and Burgesses of Wigan shall not maintayne defend or Incourage any person or persons whatsoever in the withholding any houses Lands Tenements or Hereditaments Claimed by the Parson of Wigan for the tyme being as belonging to him in Right of his Parsonage But nevertheless that the Parson for the tyme being shall use such as are or come in under Ancient tenants to the saide Parsonage or which shall not clayme or Challenge the same as their owne Inheritance with that moderation as hath been heretofore used towards Antient Church Tennants.

In wites to this my Award I the said S^r Orlando Bridgeman have hereunto set my seale this 28th day of September in the fifteenth year of our Sovereign Lord the King Charles the Second over England &c. *Anoq. Dñi 1663.*

The Confirmation } And Wee Gilbert Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Humphrey Lord B^{pp} of London George Lord B^{pp} of Winchester and Francis Phillips Esq^r Patrons (together with S^r Orlando Bridgeman in the Award hereunto añexed mençoned) of the Church of Wigan haveing perused the said Award doe hereby as much as in us lies Ratifye and Confirme the same to be for ever kept and observed as tending to the preservation of Unity and peace between the Parson of Wigan and his successors and the Corporation of the towne of Wigan and there successors. In wittness whereof Wee have hereunto sett our hands and seales the day of in the sixteenth of King Charles the second *Anoq Dni 1664.*¹

The Lease } This Indenture made the four and twentieth day of March in the sixteenth yeare of the Raign of our Gracious Sovereagne Lord Charles the Second by the Grace of God of England Scotland France

¹ The text is taken from a copy of the award preserved among the Family Evidences at Weston. The original was in existence, and preserved amongst the Wigan borough records in 1882 when it was copied by Mr. David Sinclair, and printed in his History of Wigan, vol. ii. p. 102; but it cannot now be found, though an exhaustive search for it has been made by the courtesy of Ralph Darlington, Esq., the present Town Clerk of Wigan. The date of the confirmation is left blank.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 491

and Ireland King Defender of the Faith &c. Between the R^t Revernd Father in God George Lord Bisp. of Chester and Parson of Wigan in the County of Lancaster upon the One part And W^m Daniell Esq^r Mayor and the Bayliffs and Burgesses of the said Town of Wigan upon the other part Witnesseth that the said George Lord Bisp. of Chester and Parson of Wigan as well for and in performance of an award made by Sir Orlando Bridgeman Kt. and Barr^t Chiefe Justice of his Majesty's Court of Common pleas at Westminster for the settling of peace and Unity Between the said Lord Bishop of Chester and his successors Parsons of Wigan and the said Mayor Bayliffs and Burgesses of Wigan and their Successors bearing date the 28th day of September last past before the date hereof as also for and in Consideration of the rent hereinafter Reserved hath demised granted Sett and to ferme-letten and by these presents doth Demise grant Sett and to ferme-lett unto the said Mayor Bayliffs and Burgesses and their Successors all that the faire being the sumer faire held in the Town of Wigan and all that Markett held each Munday Weekley within the said Town of Wigan And all that Court Leet or View of Frankpledge of all Ressiants and Inhabitants w^hin the said Town of Wigan called the Easter Leet And all Courts Tolls piecages Stallages profits Commodities Emolluments whatsoever At the said faire Markett and Court Leet or any of them belonging Incident or apertaining or to or wth the same had Rec^d or Injoyd as part parcell of or belonging to the same To have and to Hold the said faire Weekly Markett and Court Leet and all and singular other the premisses unto the said Mayor Bayliffs and Burgesses and there Successors from the day of the date hereof for and dureing all the tyme terme and space of 21 years then next following and fully to be Compleat and Ended Yielding and paying therefor yearly dureing the said Terme unto the said George Lord Bishop of Chester Parson of Wigan and his successors parsons of Wigan the Anuall or yearely rent of ffive Marks of good and lawfull money of England at two feast days or tymes in the yeare that is to say at the feast of the Nativity of S^t John Baptist and the Nativity of our Lord God by even and equall proporions for all manner of Rents duties and Services due or to be due for the premisses dureing the said Terme. In Witness whereof the parties first above named to these presents Indentures Interchangeably their hands and Seales have sett the day and yeare first above written

492 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

James Daniell, Mayor	James Forde
James Mullyneux	Robt. Langshaw
Nic. Pennington	Tho. Houghton
Robt. Baron	Myles Turner
William Glover	Ambrose Jollye
Ra. Markland	Gilbert Barrow
Math. Markland	John Anderton
Jo. Laithwaite	Edward Bolton
Ja. Scott	Ralph Urmston, his Q mark
Will. Laithwait	Gilbert Deane, his mark
Edward Markland	Humphrey Leigh, his H mark
Richd. Cason, his mark	James Bancks
W. Bancks	Robt. Bibby, his R mark
Robt. Letherbarrow	E. Laithwaite, his A mark
Robt. Winstanley	James Rigby
Willm. Briggs	Ralph Deane, his R mark
Will. Langshaw	Thomas Scott
Robt. Markland	Thomas forde
John Wakfield	Thomas Burgess, his B mark
Edwd. Baron	Carard Ford
Will. Linney	Lawrence Anderton
Tho. Marsden	Oliver Whalley
Alex. Green	Tho. Parr, his O mark
Ra. Holme	Alex. Forth, Pewt ^r , his T mark
William Forth	Gilbert Langshaw
Gilbert Forde	Gilbert Glover
Christopher Sumner	John fforde
Willm. Baldwin	Richard Scott, his RS mark
Willm. Markland	James Browne
Robt. Pennington	James Hollinshed
Ed. Mullineux	Roger Laithwaite, his R mark
Seth Mason	Peter Heigham
Jeffrey Scott	James Marsden
Robt. Murrey	Charles Bancks, the B mark
Willm. Cookson, his W mark	Thomas Barrow
Willm. Foster, Br. his mark	Alexander fforde, Barber, AF his mark
Willm. Deane	Thomas Greene, his mark

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 491

Miles Seddon	Thomas Butler
James Letherbarrow, his I. mark	Robt. Leatherbarrow, his RL mark
Roger Scott	Thomas Tarleton
Adam Bancks	William Marsden
George Brown	Richard Rylands, his A mark
George Baldwin sen.	Hugh Forde
William Ireland	Robt. Forde jun.
Hugh Moulding, his H mark	Raphe Langshaw
James Langshaw	James Forde
Thomas Bullock	Charles Bancks sen., his CD mark
William Foster, Butcher, his P mark	Raphe Wakefield
James Astley	Gilbert Baldwin younger
F. A. Prescott	Ralph Tarleton, his R mark
Gilbert Green, his X mark	William Greene."

By this award of Sir Orlando Bridgeman new privileges were granted to the corporation in addition to those which they had acquired by the award of the King's referees in 1618; for instance, the rector's Courts Baron were restricted to one in two years, and neither the mayor nor those aldermen who had held the office of mayor could be amerced for non-attendance at them; the Easter Leet, reserved to the rector by the last award, together with the rector's fair at Ascension-tide and his weekly market on Mondays, were directed to be leased to the corporation from time to time at a fixed rent; and his full control over the wastes and streets, which enabled him to assess the occupiers of encroachments at his Courts Baron as tenants at will, was so far modified as to allow the corporation the alternative of pulling them down if they pleased. These were serious curtailments of the rector's manorial rights.

The following extract from the diary of Roger Lowe,¹ of Ashton in Makerfield, under date of February 5, 1663-4, seems

¹ Diary of Roger Lowe of Ashton in Makerfield, 1663-1678; reprinted from the *Leygh Chronicle*, 1877; the original *MSS.* being then in the possession of the late Mr. John Leyland, of Hindley. Roger Lowe was apprentice to a Leygh tradesman, for whom he managed a shop in Ashton in Makerfield.

494 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

to show that clandestine marriages were not very difficult of accomplishment in the parish of Wigan in those days :

“ Before day my fellow aprntice John Chadocke cald me up with Will Parkinson John Hindley and others. He was goeing to be married and had stolne his love away from Mr. Whiteheads and my Mr. gave assent I should goe with them. I gate a horse from Will Sixsmith and we went altogether to Billing Chapell and stayd att Humphrey Cowleys till 2 came againe from fetching Mr. Bispham. When they came they brought word we must meet him at Holland at one Thomas Prescott. We tooke horse, came thuthr, got the ceremonie overpast and dined. I was sent afore to Wiggan to buy 7 yards ribbon, and they came into Wiggan we each of us had a yard of ribbon of 12^d p yard and so rid through towne. I saw them through towne and so pted. I was all this while in a sad heart.”

The oldest book of the Wigan churchwardens' accounts begins with 1651 and ends with 1700. At this period the most frequent entries in the accounts are payments for the destruction of vermin. Fox's heads were paid for at 1s. *per* head and hedgehogs at 2*d*. There are also payments for powder and shot to kill shepsters (starlings) about the church. In the accounts for 1665, passed at the vestry meeting on Tuesday in Easter week, 1666, there are items for payment of the bell ringers on 6th June “ upon the first news of y^e sea victory obtayned against the Hollanders,” and another peal was afterwards rung upon confirmation of the good news. These were loyal days, and in this and subsequent years there are items of payments to the bell ringers for ringing on the 29th of May, which was the King's birthday and the day of his return. There is also an item of 6s. 8*d*. in 1665 “ for ringing upon a thanksgiving day being July 4,” and an item of 10s. to the bell ringers for ringing on 5th November, as also 5*d*. for a lb. of candles for them. The bells at this time possessed also a set of chimes, towards the repairs of which there were frequent payments made. In the year 1667 there are payments of 4*d*. for setting up a frame over the churchwardens' seats, 3s. 2*d*. to Richard Brocke by order of

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 495

Mr. Major and other gentlemen of the parish for writing the catalogue of the benefactors of Wigan, 1*s.* 6*d.* for removing organ loft timber out of the bishop's chancel (which would seem to imply that the organ had been previously destroyed, probably during the period of the usurpation), no less than £29. 5*s.* 2*d.* to James Browne for lead work and soder on 23rd December, 7*s.* 6*d.* for slates and slating the roof over the bells and moss and mossaing, and a payment for carrying forms to and fro for the communion at Easter.¹

In the following year, 1668, a payment of 6*s.* 8*d.* occurs for "a commission to sweare church churchwardens and siedsmen." This is the first mention I meet with of sidesmen or synodsmen in Wigan church.

Bishop Hall died on 23rd August, 1668. The cause of his death was a wound inflicted by a knife, which happened to be in his pocket when he fell in his garden at Wigan.² He was buried at Wigan on the following day,³ in the chancel of the parish church, within the altar rails, where a black marble gravestone was laid over him, with this inscription:⁴

— P.M.S.

*Ejus repōstus pulvere in sacro cinis
Expectat istic ultimæ sonum tubæ,
Mendace qui ne falleret titulo lapis
Solum hoc Sepulchro jussit incidi suo.*

GEORGIUS HALL S. TH. PR. ECCLESIAE DEI SERVUS
INUTILIS, SED CORDATUS, D. JOSEPHI HALL PRÆSULIS

¹ This would seem to imply that the Holy Table, which had been removed during the usurpation from the east end (where it had been placed altar-wise in bishop Bridgeman's time) and set up in the body of the chancel east and west, still retained this position in bishop Hall's time, and that the people then communicated in a sitting posture. Judging by the entries in the churchwardens' accounts for bread and wine, and for carrying forms, for the communion in 1667, the Holy Sacrament was administered but six times in the year.

² Chalmers' *Biograph. Dic.*

³ Wigan Parish Register.

⁴ This gravestone is now fixed against the North wall of the North chancel aisle.

496 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

PIENTISSIMI PRIMO EXONIENSIS DEIN NORVICENCIS
 SCRIPTIS SEMPER VICTURI FILIUS, IMO UMBRA POTIUS,
 SEX INTER SEPTEN'Q: ANNOS SEDIT, NON MERUIT,
 CESTRIÆ EPISCOPUS DENATUS ÆTATIS SUÆ ANNO LV.
 CHRISTI VERO MDCLXVIII.

*Mixare, Lector, Præsulis Modestiam
 Aliunde quæras cetera.*

A copy of this inscription is also put up in Chester cathedral. His burial is thus recorded in the Wigan parish church register 24th August, 1668: "The Right Reverend Father in God George Ld. Bp of Chester & Rector of Wigan." His wife did not long survive him, and her burial at Wigan is thus recorded in the following year, 1668-9: "13th March, Gertrude widow of the Right Reverend Father in God George Ld. Bp of Chester & Rector of Wigan." She was the sister of Sir Amos Meredith, of Ashley, in Cheshire.¹ Bishop George Hall left no issue. On an old tablet containing the names of the benefactors to the Wigan charities, which was formerly fixed against the north wall of the parish church, but has now disappeared, George Lord Bishop of Chester and Gertrude his wife were mentioned as having each given £20 to the poor of Wigan.² By his will he bequeathed to Exeter college, after the death of his wife, his golden cup, and all his estate in land at Trethewen, at St. Germans in Cornwall, to be employed by the rector and fellows to the best advantage of the college.³

The published Works of George Hall, bishop of Chester, as they are given in the *Bibliotheca Britannica*, were as follows:

(1) *God's appearing for the Tribe of Levi*; a Sermon, on Numb. xvii. 8. Lond. 1655. 4to.

¹ *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i. p. 13.

² Rawlinson's MSS. at the Bodleian Library, 420^b, p. 20.

³ Salmon's *Lives of the English Bishops from the Restoration to the Revolution*. Bishop George Hall's arms, as they are given on his monument in Chester cathedral, were: *Sable three talbots' heads erased argent, langued gules.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 497

(2) *The Triumphs of Rome over despised Protestantcy.* Lond. 1665, 1667. 8vo. Anon.

(3) A fast Sermon, before the Lords, on *The Plague*, on Psalm vii. 9. 1666. 4to.

JOHN WILKINS, S.T.P., succeeded bishop Hall as rector of Wigan and bishop of Chester, to which office he was consecrated on 15th November, 1668, by the bishops of Durham, Ely, and Sarum.¹

He was the son of Mr. Walter Wilkins, citizen and goldsmith of Oxford, and was born, in 1614, at Fawsley, near Daventry, in the county of Northampton, in the house of his mother's father, Mr. John Dod, known as the Decalogist from a celebrated exposition which he wrote on the Ten Commandments. Wilkins was brought up at Oxford, where he was taught Latin and Greek by Mr. Edward Sylvester, a teacher of much reputation, who kept a private school in the parish of All Saints in that city; and at thirteen years of age he entered as a student of New Inn Hall in 1627. He made no long stay there, however, but was shortly after removed to Magdalen Hall, where he was placed under the tuition of Mr. John Tombes, a noted Anabaptist. From that college he took his degree as bachelor of arts on 20th October, 1631;² and having proceeded to his master's degree on 11th June, 1634,³ he was ordained to holy orders.

His first ecclesiastical preferment was the vicarage of Fawsley, his native parish, to which he was presented by Richard Knightley, of Preston Capes, Esq., and instituted on the 2nd of June, 1637,⁴ at which time he must have been very young for such a charge. He retained it but a short time, and was succeeded as vicar by his maternal grandfather Mr. Dod.⁵ Wilkins probably resigned the benefice on becoming chaplain to William, Viscount

¹ Stubbs' *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*.

² Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. i. p. 460.

³ Baker's *Northamptonshire*, vol. i. p. 388.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

⁵ *Ibid.*

498 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Say and Sele. He afterwards became chaplain to Charles, Count Palatine of the Rhine and Prince Elector of the Empire, with whom he continued for some time. To this last patron his skill in mathematics is said to have been a great recommendation.

Wilkins had early addicted himself to mathematics and scientific studies, and while resident in London as a chaplain he was extremely active in promoting those scientific meetings which ultimately led to the foundation of the Royal Society. His first work appeared in 1638, when he was barely twenty-four years of age, under the sensational title of *Discovery of a New World*.

Upon the breaking out of the Civil War Wilkins professed himself a Presbyterian, adhered to the parliament and took the solemn league and covenant. He was afterwards made warden of Wadham College, Oxford, by the committee of parliament appointed for reforming the university; and being created bachelor of divinity on the 12th of April, 1648,¹ he was put into possession of his wardenship on the following day.²

Next year he was created doctor of divinity on 18th December, 1649,³ and about that time took the Independent Test, *the Engagement*, then enjoined by the powers in being.⁴

In the year 1652, when Oliver Cromwell was chancellor of the university of Oxford, Cromwell, being then in Scotland and "sensible how troublesome it was for the academicians to apply themselves to him about their concerns," by deed of 16th October commissioned Dr. John Owen, dean of Christchurch, Dr. John Wilkins, warden of Wadham College, Dr. Jonathan Goddard, warden of Merton College, Thomas Goodwin, president of Magdalen College, and Peter French, prebend of Christ church, or any three or more of them, to take into their consideration all and every matter of dispensation, grant, or confirmation whatsoever, which required his consent as chancellor of this university.

¹ Wood's *Fasti Oxonienses*, vol. ii. p. 113. ² Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary*.

³ Wood's *Fasti*, vol. ii. p. 157; Chalmers' *Biogr. Dic.*

⁴ Salmon's *Lives of the English Bishops from the Restoration to the Revolution*.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 499

At the same time he delegated his power of hearing and determining college differences to the vice-chancellor and heads of houses for six months.¹

This was probably the happiest period of Wilkins's life, and that in which he was most in his natural element. He now had leisure for the pursuit of his favourite studies, while his wealth and position as warden of Wadham afforded him the means and opportunity of entertaining his scientific friends, and shewing that hospitality for which he was famous.

John Evelyn, Esq. (author of *Sylva*), one of his greatest friends and admirers, gives in his *Diary*² an interesting account of a visit to Oxford for a few days in 1654, in which Wilkins's name occupies a prominent place. On 10th of July, he writes, "I supp'd at a magnificent entertainment in Wadham Hall, invited by my deare and excellent friend Dr. Wilkins the warden." And on the 13th of the same month, shortly before his departure from Oxford, he says: "We all din'd at that most obliging and universally curious Dr. Wilkins at Wadham College. He was the first who shewed to me the transparent apiaries, which he had built like castles and palaces, and so ordered them one upon another as to take the hony without destroying the bees. These were adorn'd with a variety of dials, little statues, vanes, &c. And he was so abundantly civil, as, finding me pleas'd with them, to present me with one of y^e hives which he had empty, and which I afterwards had in my garden at Sayes Court, where it continued many years, and which his majesty came on purpose to see and contemplate with much satisfaction. He had also contriv'd an hollow statue which gave a voice and utter'd words, by a long conceal'd pipe that went to its mouth, whilst one speaks through it at a good distance. He had above in his lodgings and gallery variety of shadows, dyals, perspectives and many other artificials, mathematical and magical curiosities, a way-wiser, a thermometer, a

¹ *Wool's Fast Chronology*, vol. ii. p. 169.

² *Evelyn's Diary*, vol. i. p. 276.

500 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

monstrous magnet, conic and other sections, a ballance on a demicircle, most of them [being inventions] of his owne and [of] that prodigious young scholar Mr. Chr. Wren,¹ who presented me with a piece of white marble, which he had stain'd with a lively red, very deepe, as beautiful as if it had been natural."

One who knew Wilkins well speaks of him about this time as being "a learned man and a lover of such; he was of a comely aspect and gentlemanlike behaviour; he had been bred in the court, and was also a piece of a traveller, having twice seen the Prince of Orange's court at the Hague, in his journey to and from Heidelburgh, whither he went to wait upon the Prince Elector Palatine, whose chaplain he was in England. He had nothing of bigotry, unmannerliness, or censoriousness, which then were in the *senith* amongst some of the heads and fellows of Colleges in Oxford. For which reason many country gentlemen of all persuasions, but especially those then stiled Cavaliers and malignants for adhering to the king and the church, sent their sons to that College, that they might be under his government."²

Evelyn's next mention of Wilkins is early in the year 1656. This was the time when the church of England was subjected to her lowest degradation. On the previous Christmas-day his diary contains the following entry: "There was no notice taken of Christmas day in churches. I went to London where Dr. Wild preached the funeral sermon of Preaching, this being the last day, after which Cromwell's proclamation was to take place, that none of the church of England should dare either to preach or to administer the Sacraments, teach schools, &c., on paine of imprisonment or exile. So this was the mournfullest day that in my life I had scene, or the church of England herselfe, since

¹ This was Sir Christopher Wren, the great architect, who was born in 1631, and entered Wadham College in 1646 with a view of placing himself under Wilkins.

² *Life of Seth, Bishop of Salisbury, with a brief account of Bishop Wilkins and others*, by Dr. Walter Pope, F. R. S., pp. 27, 28; printed at London for William Keblewhite, 1697.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 501

y^e Reformation, to the great rejoicing of Papists and Presbyterians. . . . The Lord Jesus pity our distressed church, and bring back the captivity of Sion!" On the 10th of February following he says: "I heard Dr. Wilkins preach before y^e Lord Mayor in St. Pauls, shewing how obedience was preferable to sacrifice. He was a most obliging person, who had married the Protector's sister, and took great pains to preserve the universities from the ignorant sacrilegious commanders and souldiers, who would faine have demolish'd all places and persons that pretended to learning."¹ Evelyn tells us, in a note to his Diary, that this sermon was preached from 2 Cor. xiii. 9, and shewed that "however persecution dealt with the ministers of God's Word, they were still to pray for the flocke, and wish their perfection, as it was for the flocke to pray for and assist their pastors, by the example of St. Paul."

It must have therefore been early in the year 1656 that Dr. Wilkins married Robina, the widow of Dr. Peter French, late canon of Christ church (who had died in June of the previous year), and sister of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. This marriage being contrary to the statutes of the college, which prohibit the warden from marrying, he procured a dispensation from Oliver Cromwell to enable him to retain the wardenship.²

In 1658-9, after the death of Oliver, he was by Richard Cromwell made master of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was admitted to a doctor's degree on 18th March of that year;³ but, as he had no other title to the mastership than the presentation of his said nephew (who had been proclaimed Protector in September, 1658, and resigned in May, 1659), he was ejected at the Restoration, and succeeded by Dr. Henry Ferne, whose patent was dated 29th June, 1660.⁴ He had resigned the wardenship of Wadham in 1659, to which his successor was appointed on 5th September of that year.⁵

¹ Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. iii. p. 967.

² Le Neve's *Facts*.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 968, note.

502 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Dr. Wilkins, however, had the good fortune to possess many excellent friends of staunch church principles and unquestionable loyalty, so that at the Restoration he suffered less than the generality of those who had adopted the Presbyterian religion during the usurpation. Consistency to a losing cause was certainly not one of his characteristic qualities. He subscribed to the Act of Uniformity, was admitted to the prebend of South Newbald, in York cathedral, 11th August, 1660,¹ and a few days later, namely, on the 31st of August in the same year, he was installed dean of Ripon.² He was made preacher to the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn in 1660-1;³ and seems to have found a friend at this time in Lord Berkeley, who presented him to the rectory of Cranford, in Middlesex, to which he was instituted on 10th December, 1660, as successor to Dr. Thomas Fuller.⁴ This last he vacated in 1662,⁵ when he was presented by the King to the vicarage of St. Lawrence, Jewry, in London, on the promotion of Dr. Seth Ward, who was consecrated bishop of Exeter in July of that year.

Dr. Walter Pope, uterine brother of Wilkins, who ought to have been well informed, exaggerates in saying that when this presentation was procured for him by his friend bishop Ward he was at that time wholly destitute of employment and preferment,⁶ for he was certainly then in possession of the deanery of Ripon as well as the rectory of Cranford. We are not surprised to hear that he was "out of favour both at Whitehall and Lambeth," and that archbishop Sheldon, who disposed of most of the ecclesiastical preferments in the gift of the crown, was much prejudiced against him, and opposed his promotion. But when bishop Seth

¹ Le Neve's *Fasti*.

² *Gray's Inn, its History and Associations*, by William Ralph Douthwaite, Librarian, 1886, p. 156 (confirmed as to the year by F. D. Wise, Esq., Ripon Diocesan Registrar).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. ii. p. 506, note.

⁵ Lyson's *Fenicians of London*, vol. v. p. 28.

⁶ Pope's *Life of Seth, Bishop of Salisbury*, p. 53.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 503

Ward afterwards introduced him to the archbishop, the latter received him well, acknowledged that his prejudice had been unjust, and said that if he had known him sooner, he would have been sooner preferred.¹

He was one of the founders of the Royal Society, which was formally started in December, 1660, was chosen of their council, and proved one of their most eminent members.²

Change of circumstances does not seem to have affected his habits or his love for scientific pursuits, for Evelyn thus alludes to him in his Diary for July, 1665: "I call'd at Durdans, where I found Dr. Wilkins, Sir Wm. Petty, and Mr. Hooke, contriving chariots, new rigging for ships, a wheel for one to run races in, and other mechanical inventions; perhaps three such persons together were not to be found elsewhere."³

In the following year Wilkins met with a heavy misfortune and irreparable loss; for at the great fire of London, which broke out in the night of the 2nd of September, 1666, he not only lost his books, which were of considerable value, but, as Dr. Pope informs us, "the insatiable and devouring flames consumed and reduced to ashes all his household-stuff, his house and parsonage."⁴ In this year he became rector of Polebrook, in the county of Northampton,⁵ of which the bishop of Peterborough was the patron.

On 26th March, 1667, he was admitted to the prebend of Chamberlain-wood, in St. Paul's cathedral,⁶ and on 1st July of the same year to a stall in Exeter cathedral, as also to the precentorship in the same cathedral, to which he was collated on 1st July and installed on 11th July, 1667.⁷

He became bishop of Chester and rector of Wigan in 1668, being consecrated bishop at Ely House, Holborn, on the 15th

¹ Pope's *Life of Seth, bishop of Salisbury*, p. 54.

² Birch's *History of the Royal Society*.

³ Diary, vol. i. p. 380.

⁴ *Life of Bishop Seth Ward*, p. 52.

⁵ Baker's *Northamptonshire*, vol. i. p. 395. *Deane's Grey's Inn*, p. 156.

⁶ Le Neve's *Fo. ti.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

504 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

of November, when Dr. John Tillotson (afterwards archbishop of Canterbury), who had married Wilkins' stepdaughter, Elizabeth French, preached the consecration sermon. Evelyn, who had been invited to witness the ceremony, says that they afterwards went to a sumptuous dinner in the hall of Ely House, "where were the Duke of Buckingham, Judges, Secretaries of State, Lord Keeper [Bridgeman], council, noblemen, and innumerable other company, who were honourers of this incomparable man, *universally beloved by all who knew him.*"¹ Burnet and à Wood both inform us that he obtained this bishopric by the interest of the notorious George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, which did not raise him in public estimation. He was presented to the rectory of Wigan by Sir Orlando Bridgeman, knight and baronet, who was then Lord Keeper of the Great Seal,² or rather by the trustees on his nomination.

His conduct in the House of Lords, after he had been made bishop, proves that he was not wanting in strength of character, and had the courage of his opinions; for Burnet informs us that when the Act for the putting down of Conventicles was brought forward in that house Wilkins argued long against it. The King was much for having it pass, not that he intended to put it into execution, but he wished to have the nonconformists at his mercy, and to force them to concur in the design for a general toleration. He therefore begged Wilkins not to oppose it; who answered that he thought it an ill thing both in conscience and policy; therefore, both as an Englishman and as a bishop, he was bound to oppose it. Charles then desired him not to come to the house while it depended; but he said, by the law and constitution of England, and by his Majesty's favour, he had a right to debate and vote; and he was neither afraid nor ashamed to own his opinion in that matter, and to act

¹ Evelyn's *Diary*, vol. i. p. 416.

² *Life of Adam Martindale*, ed. for the Chetham Society by Rev. Richard Parkinson (being vol. iv.), p. 196, editor's note.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 505

pursuant to it. And Burnet adds that the King was not offended by his freedom.¹

Though Wilkins was lenient towards the nonconformists, whom he tried by gentle means to win over to the church, he did not neglect to admonish those of them who in contravention of the act of parliament continued their preaching. Adam Martindale, in his Diary, says: "It is true my great friend the bishop of Chester sent out his *significavit* against me and" others; "but that against me, through the civility of Dr. Howarth, was a little delayed, and shortly after it died with its author, the bishop."² Martindale also informs us that bishop Wilkins observing what a great company of drunken ministers there was in his diocese, and especially near Wigan, his then residence, was resolved to turn such out, or at the least to suspend them *ad officio*, and to fill the places with better men; and having a good opinion of some of us, that he took to be moderate Nonconformists, he proposed terms to us, to which we returned a thankful answer, shewing our willingness to comply in any thing that would not cross our principles, and instancing, in particular, what we could do."³ But this also seems to have come to nothing through the death of the bishop.

Wilkins did not live long to enjoy his preferment, for he died of a painful disease at Dr. Tillotson's house in Chancery Lane on the 19th of November, 1672,⁴ so that he only held the rectory of

¹ *Burnet's History of his Own Time*, vol. i. p. 272.

² *Life of Adam Martindale*, edited by the Rev. Richard Parkinson for the Chetham Society (vol. iv.), p. 193.

³ *Life of Adam Martindale*, p. 196.

⁴ The editor of Wood's *Atkema* gives the following extract from a letter of Jo. Brooke to Dr. Martin Lister, dated December 14, 1672, preserved in the collection presented to the Museum at Oxford, by Dr. John Fosterhill, of London:—"Since my last, the death of that excellent prelate (the late bishop of Chester) has been not a little lamented, whose distemper was mistaken; who died of a stoppage of urin, but not caused by the stone (as was imagined). Mr. Wray guessed the nearest; but he forebore all diuretical things, which (as they apprehended since) had been the most effectual (in all humane reason) for his recovery. He left £400 to the Royal Society, £200 to Waltham College: and 'tis said, not above £ or 900 to his lady; Dr. Tillotson

506 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Wigan for four years. He was buried in the chancel of St. Lawrence, Jewry, on 12th of December, without any memorial ;† and his funeral sermon was preached by Dr. William Lloyd, then dean of Bangor, and afterwards bishop of St. Asaph.

Bishop Wilkins was in doctrine a distinct and professed Calvinist, though free from the bitter and cynical spirit usual with those holding Calvinistic views. He was naturally popular with the nonconformists, whom, as a bishop, he ever treated with leniency, and for whose interests he had done much. Newcome, in his Diary, 22nd November, 1672, notices that he “received the sad newes of the death of the learned, worthy, pious, and peaceable Bishop of Chester, Dr. John Wilkins.”

“Wilkins,” says Chalmers, “had two characteristics, neither of which was calculated to make him generally admired ; first, he avowed moderation, and was kindly affected towards dissenters, for a comprehension of whom he openly and earnestly contended ; secondly, he thought it right and reasonable to submit himself to the powers in being, be those powers who they would, or let them be established how they would. And this making him as ready to swear allegiance to Charles II., after he was restored to the crown, as to the usurpers while they prevailed, he was charged with being various and unsteady in his principles, with having no principles at all, with Hobbism, and everything that is bad. Yet the greatest and best qualities are ascribed to him, if not unanimously, at least by many eminent and good men.”² Dr. Tillotson says of him “I think I may truly say that there are, or have been, very few in this age and nation so well known and so greatly

is his executor ; he seemed not to be much surprized at the news of [his] death, but said he was prepared for the great experiment. On Thursday last he was interred, and Dr. Lloyd preached the funeral sermon. Tho' it proved a very wet day yet his corps were very honourably attended ; I believe there were above 40 coaches with six horses ; besides a great number of others.” Birch, in his *History of the Royal Society*, vol. iii. p. 68, gives £200 as the sum left by Wilkins to the Royal Society.

¹ *History of Chester*, printed by Egerton, Whitehall, London, 1793.

² Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary*.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 507

esteemed and favoured by so many persons of high rank and quality and of singular worth and eminence in all the learned professions."¹

Burnet, in his *Life of Sir Matthew Hale*, declares of Wilkins that "he was a man of as great a mind, as true a judgement, as eminent virtues, and of as good a soul, as any he ever knew." And in his *History of his Own Time* he says that, though "he married Cromwell's sister, yet he made no other use of that alliance but to do good offices, and to cover the University of Oxford from the sourness of Owen and Goodwin. At Cambridge he joined with those who studied to propagat better thoughts, to take men off from being in parties, or from narrow notions, from superstitious conceits, and fierceness about opinions. He was also a great preserver and promoter of experimental philosophy, which was then a new thing, and much looked after. He was naturally ambitious, but was the wisest clergyman I ever knew. He was a lover of mankind and had a delight in doing good."²

Anthony à Wood also gives him a high character, saying that "he was a person endowed with rare gifts; he was a noted theologian and preacher, a curious critic in several matters, an excellent mathematician and experimenter, and one as well seen in mechanisms and new philosophy, of which he was a great promoter, as any man of his time. He also highly advanced the study and perfection of astronomy, both at Oxford while he was warden of Wadham College, and at London while he was fellow of the Royal Society; and I cannot say that there was anything deficient in him, but a constant mind and settled principles."³

Now though Tillotson, as being nearly connected with him by marriage, might possibly be suspected of partiality, and Burnet, whose estimate of character was wont to be somewhat biased

¹ Preface to some sermons preached by bishop Wilkins, and published in 1682.

² *History of his Own Time*, vol. i. p. 187

³ *Athenæ*, vol. iii. p. 968

508 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

by his own theological views, might also be supposed to have favoured him, the testimony of Anthony à Wood is not open to suspicion ; and no one can refuse credit to Dr. William Lloyd, whose orthodoxy was as unquestionable as his sincerity. I shall therefore conclude my notice of Wilkins by quoting from the sermon which Dr. Lloyd preached after his funeral at Guildhall chapel, on Thursday, the 12th December, 1672. He speaks of him as a “man in whom his friends had experience of much good, and had hopes of much more ; not so much for his greatness or power, as, abstracting from these, for what they found in himself, which was a great and manifold blessing to all that lived within his conversation. He was a Father, a Counsellor, a Comforter, a Helper, a sure Friend : He was all they could wish in every relation. He had an understanding that extended to all parts of useful learning and knowledge ; a will always disposed to great, and publick, and generous things. He had a natural aversion from all idle speculations, and from the eager pursuit of small and frivolous designs. In great matters he judged so well that he was not usually surprised with events. He pursued his intentions with such equalness of mind, that he was never carried beyond the calmness of his natural temper, except through his zeal for publick good, or where his friend was concerned. In his studies he was indefatigable and would have worn himself out, if he had not been relieved with multiplicity of business. As for his preaching, it was sometimes famous near this place, though he sought rather the profit than the praise of his hearers. He spoke solid truth, with as little shew of art as possible. He exprest all things in their true and natural colours ; with that aptness and plainness of speech that shewed he had no design upon his hearers. He applied himself rather to their understanding than affections. He saw so much of the beauty of goodness himself that he thought the bare shewing of it was enough to make all wise men, as it did him, to be in love with it. In his writings he was judicious and plain, like one that valued not the circumstances

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 509

so much as the substance : and he shewed it on whatever argument he undertook ; sometimes beating out new untravell'd ways, sometimes repairing those that had been beaten already : no subject he handled but I dare say is the better for him ; and will be the easier for them that come after him. If in these he went sometimes beyond his profession, it was in following the design of it, to make men wiser and better, which I think is the business of universal knowledge : And this he promoted with much zeal and sincerity, in hope of the great benefit that may accrue to mankind. It was his aim, as in all things, so especially in that which, I conceive, is more censured than understood ; I mean in the design of the Royal Society. He joined himself to it with no other end but to promote modern knowledge, without any contempt or lessening of those great men in former times." In speaking of his graces, he says : " his prudence was great ; I think it seldom failed in anything to which he applied himself : and yet he wanted that part which some hold to be essential ; he so wanted dissimulation that he had rather too much openness of heart. It was sincerity indeed that was natural to him ; he so abhorred a lie that he was not at all for shew ; he could not put on anything that look't like it. And presuming the same of other men, through excess of benignity, he would be sometimes deceived, in believing they were what they seem'd to be, and what he knew they ought to have been. His greatness of mind was known to all that knew anything of him. He neither eagerly sought any dignity, nor declined any capacity of doing good. He look'd down upon wealth, as much as others admire it. He knew the use of an estate, but did not covet it. What he yearly received of the church he bestowed in its service. As for his temporal estate, being secured against want, he sought no further, he set up his rest ; I have heard him say often, *I will be no richer* ; and I think he was as good as his word. . . . His discourse was commonly of useful things ; it never caused trouble or weariness of the hearer. Yet he would venture to displease one for his good ; and indeed he was the man that

510 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

ever I knew for that most needful and least practised point of friendship. He would not spare to give seasonable reproof, and wholesome advise, when he saw occasion. I never knew any that would do it so freely, and that knew how to manage that freedom of speech so inoffensively. It was his way of friendship not so much to oblige even as to do good. He did this not slightly and superficially but like one that made it his business. He durst do for his friend anything that was honest and no more. He would undertake nothing but what well became him, and then he was unwearied till he had effected it. As he concerned himself for his friend in all other respects, so especially in that which went nearest to him of all earthly concerns. He would not suffer any blot to be thrown, or to lie upon, his friend's good name or his memory. And that office I am obliged to requite, in giving some account of that which has been spoken by some to his disadvantage. I shall neglect, as he did so, any frivolous reports; but that which seems to have any weight in it, as far as I have observed, is that he had not that zeal for the church that they would seem to have that object this: he seemed to look upon dissenters with too much favour to their persons and ways. As to the persons, no doubt that goodness of nature, those true Christian principles, which made him willing to think well of all men and to do good, or at least no hurt to any, might and ought to extend itself to them among others. But besides he was inclined to it by his education under his grandfather, Mr. Dod, a truly pious and learned man, who yet was a dissenter in some things," but "when some thought their dissents ground enough for a war, he declared himself against it and confirmed others in their allegiance; he professed to the last a just hatred of that horrid rebellion. Now his [Wilkins's] relation to this man, and conversation with those of his principles, might incline him to hope the like of others of that way. . . . As for himself he was so far from approving their ways that in the worst of times, when one here present bewailed to him the calamities of the church, and declared his

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 511

obedience even then to the laws of it, he encouraged him in it, he desired his friendship, and protected both him and many others, by an interest that he had gained and made use of chiefly for such purposes. How he demeaned himself then is known to both universities, where he governed with praise, and left a very grateful remembrance behind him. How in the next times since, I cannot speak in a better place. And when I have named this city, and the two universities, I think he could not be placed in a better light in this nation. There were enough that could judge, and he did not use to disguise himself; I appeal to you that conversed with him in those days, what zeal he hath express for the Faith and for the unity of the church; how he stood up in defence of the order and government; how he hath asserted the Liturgy, and the rites of it; he conformed himself to every thing that was commanded. Beyond which for any man to be vehement in little and unnecessary things, whether for or against them, he could not but dislike; and, as his free manner was, he hath oft been heard to call it Fanaticalness. How this might be represented I know not, or how his design of comprehension might be understood; Sure I am that since he came into the government of the church, to which he was called in his absence, he so well became the order, that it out-did the expectation of all that did not very well know him. He filled his place with a goodness answerable to the rest of his life; and with a prudence above it, considering the two extremes which were no where so much as in his Diocess. Though he was, as before, very tender to those that differed from him, yet he was, as before, exactly conformable himself, and brought others to conformity,—some eminent men in his Diocess. He endeavoured to bring in all that came within his reach, and might have had great success if God had pleased to continue him. But having given full proof of his intentions and desires, it pleased God to reserve the fruit for other hands, from which we have great cause to expect much good to the church.”¹

¹ Sermon preached by William Lloyd, D.D., dean of Bangor, and one of his

512 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

During Wilkins's tenure of the rectory of Wigan, a handsome set of communion plate was provided for the church. There is an item of £11 18s. allowed in the churchwardens accounts for the year 1670 for "2 silver communion cuppes and cover," to replace old pewter vessels. The baser metal seems to have been allowed to serve for the rest, for 19s. 6d. is charged in the following year as the cost of "two great flagons;"¹ in which year there is also a charge of 6s. for the taking up of four bells.

Wilkins's works are ingenious and learned, and many of them curious and entertaining. Being a distinguished preacher, he is said to have been one of the most successful examples of the new homylectic style which arose in the church of England after the Reformation. But he had anticipated that epoch in the history of English pulpits by a publication of his views on preaching, as early as 1646, in a work which went through several editions, entitled "Ecclesiastes or a Discourse on preaching." Indeed on most of the subjects which engaged his truly original and suggestive mind he was much in advance of his own age, and there are thoughts in his "Discourse on Natural Religion" which anticipated the masterly argument of bishop Butler's *Analogy*.²

Bishop Wilkins' works, as given in the *Bibliotheca Britannica*, are :

(1) *Discovery of a New World, or a discourse tending to prove that it is probable there may be another habitable world in the Moon.* 1638. 8vo. Part 1st. Lon. 1640. 8vo. Anon. Lond. 1684. 8vo.

(2) *Discourse concerning a New Planet ; tending to prove that*

Majesty's chaplains in ordinary, printed for Charles Browne (London), 1694; and bound up with an edition, printed in 1693, of Wilkins' *Principles and Duties of Natural Religion*. Bishop Wilkins bore for his arms: *argent, on a pale engrailed, coliced plain sable, three martlets, or* (*Harl. MS. 1441*), quoted in *The Blazon of Episcopacy* by the Rev. W. K. Biland Bedford).

¹ These accounts were passed for the previous year on the 25th of April, 1671. At this meeting John Rawler, curate, signs his name under that of Myles Turner Major.

² *Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 513

it is probable our Earth in one of the Planets. 1640. Lond. 1684. 8vo.

(3) *Mercury, or the secret and swift Messenger; shewing how a man may, with privacy and speed, communicate his Thoughts to a Friend at any distance.* 1641. 8vo. Lond. 1694. 8vo.

(4) *Ecclesiastes; or a Discourse of the Gift of Preaching, as it falls under the rules of Art.* 1646. Ninth edition. 1718. 8vo.

(5) *Mathematical Magic; or the wonders that may be performed by Mathematical Geometry.* Lond. 1648. 8vo.

(6) *Discourse concerning the Beauty of Providence in all the rugged passages of it.* Lond. 1649. 8vo.

(7) *Discourse concerning the Gift of Prayer; shewing what it is, wherein it consists, and how far it is attainable by industry, &c.* Lond. 1653. 8vo. In French, by Mr. Montague. 1665.

(8) *An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language; with an Alphabetical Dictionary.* Lond. 1668. fo.

(9) Sermons on Prov. iii. 16, 17. Lond. 1669. 4to.

(10) Sermons on Eccles. xii. 14. Lond. 1671. 4to.

(11) Sermons on Psal. iii. 4. Lond. 1673. 4to.

(12) Sermons preached on several occasions. 1675.

(13) *Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion.* 1675. Lond. 1678. 8vo.

(14) *Three Sermons; with a Discourse on the Beauty of Providence.* 1677. 12mo.

(15) XV Sermons preached on several occasions. 1682. 8vo.

(16) Sermons on several occasions. Lond. 1701. 8vo.

(17) *The Mathematical and Philosophical Works of the Right Reverend John Wilkins; with his Life.* 1708. 8vo.

JOHN PEARSON, D.D., who succeeded Wilkins as bishop of Chester and rector of Wigan, had, like his predecessor, a special license to hold the rectory of Wigan *in commendam* with his bishopric. He was born 28th February, 1612-13, and baptized 14th March, at Great Snoring, in Norfolk, of which place his father, Robert Pearson, archdeacon of Suffolk, was then rector.

514 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

His mother was Joanna, daughter of Dr. Richard Vaughan, successively bishop of Bangor, Chester, and London, a prelate of great piety and worth¹. John Pearson was the eldest of a family of nine children, all born at Snoring.

"He had completed his tenth year when he left the paternal roof in May, 1623, for Eton College; where he continued till 1631. He was then admitted, on the 10th of June, at Queen's College, Cambridge, where his father had been educated; but within a year, namely, in April, 1632, he was elected scholar of King's College. He was made fellow [of King's] in 1634, proceeded B.A. in 1635, and M.A. in 1639, in which year he entered into holy orders."²

"There are many stories of him in this college," says Churton, quoting from the *MSS.* of Cole, who was himself a fellow of King's; "one of which is that some one of his acquaintance, seeing him still at Eton a long while after he had left it, spoke to him in this manner: 'So, John! what here still? To my knowledge you have been the best scholar in the school these ten years.' Certain it is, that such was his propensity to books and knowledge while a school boy, that all the money he could get went for the first, and all the time out of school to the improvement of the last: nay he hardly allowed himself time for natural rest: for when the prepositor at ten o'clock at night saw that all the candles, according to rule, were put out in the long chamber or dormitory, he would contrive to light up his within an hour or two after, when all the boys were asleep; and by this means, I have heard it affirmed that before he left Eton to come here, he had read most of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church."³

"It is not perhaps very probable," continues Churton, "that a

¹ Churton's Memoir of bishop Pearson, prefixed to his edition of *Pearson's Minor Theological Works*, Oxford, 1644. The archdeacon's memoir contains nearly all the information to be found about the good bishop Pearson; and since my account is for the most part taken from him, I have thought it advisable to make use of his own language in giving it.

² *Ibid.*

³ Cole's *MSS.*, vol. i, p. 165.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 515

boy at school should have done quite so much as is here affirmed; but it is easily to be supposed that the vigorous and deep mind of Pearson grew early accustomed to lore beyond the ordinary study of schoolboys. And the perfect training of his memory in the writings of the Fathers, guiding him, in his exposition of the Creed and other works, not only to apposite quotations on every doctrinal point, but perhaps to the most apposite which his authors contain, is in itself an evidence of the zeal his youth had shewn in acquiring that perfect skill. His grateful remembrance of Eton is expressed in a passage of the *Vindiciæ Ignatiæ* with something of the tone of a man who is conscious that he had not wasted the years of boyhood."

"Our famous Dr. Pearson," says Allen, "was a very hard student at college; and finding that the fireside diverted the intention of his thoughts and dulled his spirits he avoided coming near it as much as possible, contented to sit close to his books, with a blanket thrown over his shoulders." ¹

He was soon noticed, says Churton, among the Cambridge Muses of his day; and the strict classical propriety of his verse contrasts strikingly with the hyperbolical conceits of the time. The following verses, which were composed at the close of the year 1632, in his second academical year, on the recovery of King Charles I. from the smallpox, give proof alike of his loyalty and his poetical powers:

"SOTERIA AD REGEM

*Ecce novus nostras venit natalis ad aures,
Carole magne, tuus; nec enim quis computet annos.
Transmissos. Nasci populo commune; renasci
Taliter, inque novus semper revirescere soles,
Non nisi Regis erat, qui plurima cura Deorum est,
Et quem perpetuis sustentat Jupiter astris.
Quis tibi tunc animus, morbo circumdatus isto
Aulisti Regum cum funera dira duorum?
Funera non terra motu, non illa cometa*

¹ MS. at Eton, quoted by Churton.

516 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

*Præmonstranda satis, rapidi licet ætheris omnes
 Unum confertim igniculi glomerentur in astrum.
 O quam terrarum tunc Mars, jam, credo Deorum,
 Spectandus rutulis cecidit Gustavus in armis !
 O quam, sideribus quamvis prius ortus iniquis,
 Magnus siderios fugit Fredericus in orbes !
 Cum tales animas ad sides ire beatas
 Vidisti, poteras contemnere, Carole, lucem,
 Et mortem sperare lubens ; ut scilicet illis
 Usus epistathmis, qui lata per atria cæli
 Exquirant, quæ mox te suit habitura Deorum
 Concilia ; an superi meliori Ixionis orbe,
 Aut Ariadne cingantur vestra corona
 Tempora, seu malis habitare ubi lactea cæli
 Semita nocturnis fulget præstantior astris.
 Jupiter at nondum statuebat Principe tanto
 Imperium spoliare tuum, sed candida fatis
 Et meliora tuæ tradebat stamina vitæ :
 Ut qui jam morbo langueres, clarior inde
 Hunc populum regeres, æternaque sceptrâ teneres.
 Haud secus in liquidas dilapsus Tethyos ulnas,
 Obnubit nostrum densa caligine cælum ;
 Protinus Eoum Phæbus revolutus in ortum,
 Illustrat patulum radiis melioribus orbem.*

*Jo. Pearson, Coll. Regal.*¹

“On the death of his father, in 1639, Pearson seems to have inherited certain lands, mentioned in his will, situated at Snoring and Downham ; and the income derived from this source may have preserved him, during the troubled period now impending, from those extreme privations suffered by many of the loyal clergy. About the same time he was collated by Dr. John Davenant, bishop of Salisbury, to the prebend of Netherhaven in that cathedral ;² a preferment which, no doubt, he owed to that prelate's regard for his father ; Davenant having been with him a

¹ *Anthologia Cantabrigiænsis in Exanthemata Regia.*

² This preferment is not recorded in Le Neve's *Fasti*.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 517

fellow of Queen's, over which college he presided as master before his elevation to the see of Salisbury. Within a few months after he had attained this preferment he resigned his fellowship, but continued to reside at King's as a fellow-commoner." ¹ The fact of his resignation of the fellowship, which has been questioned, appears by the following document in his own handwriting which is preserved in the library of King's College: ²

" August 2, 1640.

Be it knowne to the Provost and Fellows of King's College in Cambridge and all whome it may concerne, that I, John Pearson, nowe Fellow of the same College, being canonically possess of a Prebend belonging to the Church of Salisbury, doe most willingly resigne my Fellowship, with all the right and interest which I have in the same King's College. In testimony whereof I sett my name.

JOHN PEARSON.

Witnesse

HENRY VINTENER.

CHARLES MASON."

" In the meantime, in the month of June the same year, he had been appointed chaplain to Sir John Finch, Baron Finch of Fordwich, and lord keeper of the great seal. Collier says that he 'officiated in the lord keeper's family'—a phrase which would imply that he resided some short time with him as domestic chaplain. This perhaps is not improbable in an age when the office was something more than nominal; but it is certain that the lord keeper, shortly after the date of Pearson's appointment, was attending the King on his unfortunate expedition towards Scotland, or advising him at the subsequent difficult treaty of Ripon. If his chaplain resided at all with him it was probably after first receiving his appointment, and before his patron's departure for the north, as the instrument of resignation just recited shows that in the beginning of August Pearson was again at Cambridge. After the King's return and the assembling of the Long Parliament in November, the impeachment of Strafford

¹ *Charter's Member*, pp. xxi, xxii.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

518 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

was soon followed by that of Finch and other of the King's ministers, and before the end of December the lord keeper had fled out of England, and was living in exile at Hague.

"There is an erroneous statement," says Churton, "in most of the Biographical Dictionaries, followed by Allen and Cole, that in this month of December, 1640, Pearson was presented by Finch to the rectory of Thorington in Suffolk. The living of Thorington does not appear to have been at any time in the patronage of the crown, or of the family of the lord keeper; and at the date assigned it is very doubtful whether this unfortunate minister had it any longer in his power to bestow any kind of preferment on his friends. The records in the episcopal registry at Norwich prove that the presentation to Thorington took place two months earlier, on the 27th of October."¹ The patron was Henry Coke, Esq., of Thorington, one of the sons of the great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke.

"In the troubled times which now came on, it would seem that Pearson found little quiet at Thorington. He retained the curate, John Freeman, whom he found there engaged by his predecessor, and was probably himself resident for some portion of the year at Cambridge."²

In 1640 for a while, after resigning his Fellowship; and again in May, 1643, we find him at King's, residing as a fellow-commoner.³

In the year 1643, previous to the meeting of the Westminster Assembly, he preached before the University a very remarkable

¹ The following notes are taken from the Norwich register:—"1640, October 27. John Pearson. 1646, March 31. John Chunn, by *death* of John Pearson, on the presentation of Henry Coke, Esquire." Thence it might be supposed that the rector of Thorington was another person than the subject of this memoir. But there is a passage in Bishop Pearson's tract entitled "No Necessity of Reformation" (vol. ii. p. 198), which speaks of Sir Edward Coke and his sons in terms implying that he was under some obligation to them, as in reference to a publicly known fact; and this, combined with the testimony of all the biographies that he was presented to Thorington in that year, makes it most probable that there is an error in the record which speaks of the next incumbent as succeeding on his [Pearson's] *death* (Churton's *Memoir*).

² Churton's *Memoir*, p. xxiii.

³ *Ess. inj.*, Rev. E. Dyer Green, vicar of Bromborough.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 519

sermon, in which he demonstrated his loyalty to Church and King and denounced the cruel policy of the Puritans in forbidding the use of the Book of Common Prayer, which had received the approbation of even such ultra-protestants as Calvin.

It is uncertain how long he remained at Cambridge after this, but it must have soon become too hot for men of his views. We next hear of him with the last remnant of King Charles's followers in the West in 1645, acting as chaplain to the forces under Lord Goring at Exeter.

After the dispersion of this last hope Pearson withdrew to London, the best hiding place in the kingdom for persons in political danger. Here he is said to have been for a time chaplain to Sir Robert Coke, the eldest son of Sir Edward Coke, and subsequently to George Lord Berkeley, the father, and to his son of the same name and title, who was afterwards created Earl of Berkeley by King Charles II., and who was connected by marriage with the Cokes.¹ All these, his patrons, appear, says Churton, to have been among the moderate men of the popular party; and "it was fortunate for Pearson that he had friends at such a time among the moderate men, who, though they do not occupy so high a niche in the temple of memory for the part they played in the great state-game, were charitably occupied in private in mitigating the sorrows and losses of the unfortunate. Such appears to have been the elder Lord Berkeley, by whom, if Allen's account is true, both Pearson and many other suffering loyalists were bountifully relieved."² There is no charge of inconsistency which has been made against this period of Pearson's life: on the contrary, if we are right in supposing him, agreeably to the account in the biographies, to have been once rector of Thorington, his conduct was marked by the strictest principle. His successor was appointed on the last day of March, 1646; consequently he must have resigned it sometime previously. The state of the associated counties, as they were called, was such as to offer no asylum for a royalist

¹ Churton's *Memorie*, p. xxiv.

² *Allen MS.*, quoted by Churton.

520 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

for some years before ; and now the ruin of the King's affairs in the West, and the final defeat of Lord Astley on the 22nd of March, had rendered it impossible for any incumbent to keep his living on any other terms than by taking the Covenant. There is little room to doubt that his determination not to show such compliance was the motive for his resignation. The entire destruction of the cathedral chapters was not effected by the enemies of the church till the bill for that purpose was passed by the House of Commons in April, 1649. But as the different cathedral towns fell into the hands of the parliament, the cathedral clergy were most of them plundered and expelled at an early period of the war, and their estates confiscated, in compliance with the object of the committee of sequestration formed in September, 1642. As Salisbury was never a defensible place it was one of the first to suffer ; and it is not likely that Pearson could have received more than a year's income from his stall [there] before it was effectually lost.

At this period of his life, therefore, beginning from the year 1646, he seems to have formed the resolution, to which he adhered, of living in London, on such means as his small patrimony in Norfolk still afforded him, or the patrons whom he served as chaplain might have supplied. That he had means of his own appears most probable ; for there is no intimation in his writings, or other memorials, that he was ever in a state of extreme poverty or dependence upon the bounty of others, and at this time funds were not wanting to maintain his two younger brothers who were at school at Eton, nor, as far as appears, for other branches of his father's family. His resolve was to sit close to the chimney while the house was smoking. . . . This seems to have been the occasion of his gaining the name and reputation of a *moderate* divine from some of his time ; not that his principles were ever concealed or rendered doubtful by his conduct, but that he was content, when the wars were ended and the stake was lost, 'to take joyfully the spoiling of his goods,' and practise the difficult lesson of adversity. He now

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 521

began to devote himself anew to those studies, which, under a good Providence, were calculated to maintain the struggle of endangered truth, and to prepare new safeguards for the Catholic faith in the midst of that perilous strife of tongues." ¹

One of the heavy trials which the suffering clergy at this period had to bear was the falling off of some of the friends of their youth, and fellow students at the University, to the Romish faith. One of the most able of these was Hugh Paulin de Cressy, sometime fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and afterwards canon of Windsor and dean of Leighlin in Ireland, a man of considerable learning and talents, who withdrew from the troubles of his country and made at Rome, in 1646, a public profession of his conversion to the Creed of Trent. In the following year his famous *Exomologesis, or Faithful Narrative of the Motives of his Conversion*, was published at Paris.

"Pearson's first controversial essay was a notice of this book, in a short argumentative preface which he prefixed to Lord Falkland's discourse on the *Infallibility of the Church of Rome*; in which he takes notice of some singular admissions of Cressy's on the subject of this infallibility." ² "In 1649 he published an answer to a minor assailant of catholic practice from among the sectaries, in a short tract entitled *Christ's Birth not Mistimed*, in refutation of an attempt which had just been made to throw discredit on the calculation by which the church keeps the day of our Lord's Nativity on the 25th of December." ³

"The next memorable circumstance in Pearson's life is the engagement which he made with the parishioners of St. Clement's, Eastcheap, to undertake the office of preacher in their parish church. It has been made a question whether, to hold this appointment, he complied in any way with the times. The supposition that he did so seems to have arisen from a mistake as to the office itself. He was not *rector* of St. Clement's, or *minister*, as the style then ran, but *preacher*, or

¹ Cherton's *Memoir*, pp. 22vi, 22vii.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

522 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

lecturer. The lawful rector of St. Clement's during the whole period of the usurpation was Benjamin Stone, a chaplain of bishop Juxon's, who was also prebendary of St. Paul's and rector of St. Mary Abchurch, a man who incurred a bitter persecution at the hands of the parliament, was very early voted unfit to hold any ecclesiastical benefice, and suffered a long imprisonment without being brought to trial. He lived to be restored after the return of the royal family. The intruder in his room at St. Mary Abchurch was one John Kitchin,"¹ who, with about sixty other presbyterian ministers of London and the suburbs, subscribed to the *Seasonable Exhortation* of 1660; but there is no record of any rector occupying his place at St. Clement's. At a vestry meeting the 18th of August, 1654, in the vestry house of St. Clement's, Eastcheape, it was recorded that "whereas it was declared that Mr. *Pearson*, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Hardy, ministers, would preach a lecturer sermon weckly in the parish church of St. Clement, Eastcheape, it was freely consented unto by the persons then present, and that the churchwardens should find candles and other necessaries for the said lecturer upon account of the parish."² Those who wished to appoint lecturers of this school found a pretext for doing so under an ordinance of parliament passed in September, 1641, for a very different purpose, namely, that of admitting puritanical and nonconforming preachers in opposition to archbishop Laud, who had closed the door against nonconformists. Several churches, left without their lawful pastors, were supplied at this time with preachers or lecturers who were known to be friends of the exiled royal family and the deprived bishops.

It appears from Evelyn's diary that Pearson took a lively interest in the success of the *Biblia Polyglotta* at this period, which was afterwards completed by Dr. Brian Walton, bishop of Chester, though it does not appear that Pearson had any literary

¹ Churton's *Memoir*.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxx. note. *Ex inf.* Rev. W. Johnson, rector of St. Clement's.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 523

share in the work.¹ In 1655 he published his *Prolegomena in Hieroclem*, which was prefixed to the *Opuscula* of that author edited by Meric Casaubon. Pearson speaks of him in this essay as one of his most valued friends. "The essay itself is a singular proof of the many strange untrodden paths of learning which Pearson himself had explored, and, with much curious illustrative criticism, combines some notice of the last efforts of Gentile philosophy against the religion of the cross."²

"It was two years after this that we find Pearson engaged, with his friend Peter Gunning, in a conference with two Roman Catholics whom he met in London, on the question whether the Church of England or that of Rome at the period of the Reformation was guilty of schism. The conference was prolonged by several adjournments during the months of May, June, and July, 1657, and then virtually abandoned, though some negotiations for a renewal of it were kept up for some time afterwards with Gunning."³ In the course of the next year one of the Roman Catholic disputants (believed to be Tyrwhitt) published a garbled account of the controversy, which was printed in France under the title of *Schisme Unmaskt*, in which many of the arguments of the Anglican disputants were suppressed and their objections unanswered.⁴

In 1658 Pearson printed the sermon entitled *The Patriarchal Funeral*, preached in the private chapel of Lord Berkeley on the death of his father.

It was in 1659 that "he published the first edition of his *Exposition of the Creed*, being the substance of a series of sermons or lectures preached at St. Clement's, 'the most perfect theological work,' as Alexander Knox well characterises it, 'that has ever come from an English pen.' To say more of it than to repeat this, which is indeed the common sentence of approval it has received from the church ever since it first appeared, is altogether unnecessary. It has remained without an effort

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. xxxiii.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxxiv.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

524 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

made to amend or supersede it. It has been continually reprinted as the storehouse and armoury of the well furnished theological student; repeatedly abridged by judicious and learned clergymen, to extend its use as a manual of Christian education; and it was at an early period translated into Latin by a German scholar, Simon T. Arnold, whose version has been once or oftener reprinted abroad." ¹

"In this same year Pearson wrote a preface to Dr. David Stokes's *Paraphractical Explication of the Minor Prophets*, an unpretending work of considerable merit. He wrote also a preface to the *Remains of the learned and ever-memorable John Hales*, for whom he evidently retained a strong personal regard." ²

"The noble collection of the *Critici Sacri* alone remains to be mentioned as forming a portion of Pearson's literary labours at this period. The date of the publication is 1660; but as it was for several years previously in preparation, it naturally belongs to the period before the restoration of the royal family. To this work Pearson largely contributed, and the selection of commentators, as well as the collection of tracts in the two last volumes, were probably directed by him." ³

At this period Pearson found favour with General Monk, who would have admitted him to preach at St. James' Chapel, but that he was prevented by Calamy, to whom he had given a promise that none should preach before him but presbyterians or such as Calamy recommended. ⁴

A little later in the same year we find Pearson engaged in controversy with a remarkable presbyterian leader, Dr. Cornelius Burges, who had published a pamphlet entitled *No Sacrilege or Sin to alienate or purchase Cathedral Lands*, and, wishing to prevent the restoration of the Prayer Book, he had also put forth his *Reasons shewing the Necessity of Reformation of the public Doctrine, Worship, Rites and Ceremonies, Church government, and Discipline*; in answer to which Pearson wrote two

¹ Churton's *Memoir*.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xii, xlii.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 525

tracts shewing that there was *No necessity of Reformation of the Public Doctrine of the Church of England.* These, observes Churton, which were "written under all the provocation which the character and style of his opponent could occasion, are a model for Christian controversy."¹

After the Restoration, in or about June, 1660, Richard Ball and John Pearson petitioned the crown for a *mandamus* that they might take their degrees of D.D., from which they had been prevented because they could not submit to late irregularities.²

"On 17th August, the sequestered rector having now returned to St. Clement's, bishop Juxon collated Pearson to the neighbouring rectory of St. Christopher's, which had been for three years vacant."³ On the 27th of the same month he received from bishop Wrenn an appointment to the fifth prebend in Ely Cathedral, which he afterwards exchanged for the first, on the death of his friend, the loyal sufferer, Mr. Stephen Hall, of Jesus College, Cambridge.⁴ On 26th of September of the same year, "the venerable and religious Brian Duppa conferred upon him a still more eminent mark of his esteem and confidence, in selecting him, immediately on his own nomination to the see of Winchester, for his archdeacon of Surrey. This dignity he held subsequently under Duppa's successor, bishop Morley; indeed he does not appear to have vacated it till his death."⁵

"We learn from the dedication to the *Exposition of the Creed* that the parish church of St. Clement's was rebuilt by the parishioners, or was in the process of rebuilding, shortly before the Restoration."⁶ At this time his lectures must have ceased, and he seems to have been residing on the Surrey side of the Thames, as we find him, before his appointment as archdeacon, joining with other of the Surrey clergy in a congratulatory address from the rectors, vicars, and curates of that county, on the 10th of August, to the King at Whitehall.⁷ This, says

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. xliii.² *Cal. Stat. Pap. Dom. Ser.*, vol. ix. No. 118.³ Churton's *Memoir*, p. xlv.⁴ *Ibid.*⁵ *Ibid.*⁶ *Ibid.*⁷ *Ibid.*

526 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Churton, is the earliest document to which we find his name appended with the title of D.D. "A grace had passed the senate for his admission to this degree on the 29th of June; and he was probably admitted on the usual day of commencement, Tuesday, July 3. The industry of Mr. Stones, the scribe of the Brasenose MSS., has preserved a copy from his own autograph of his speech to the Vice-Chancellor on this interesting occasion. It is a lively record of the feelings with which he returned, as from a long banishment, to the classic shades, where he had passed some happy years before the civil discords drove him away. . . . His name, followed by that of his friend Gunning, stands first in the list of seventy-one doctors in theology who at this period were created by royal mandate. . . . He was about the same time appointed one of the King's chaplains in ordinary, and before the termination of the year, on the 30th of November (1660), he received, from bishop Wrenn, the patron, a further preferment to the mastership of Jesus College, vacant by the advancement of Dr. Richard Sterne to the see of Carlisle. To this office he was instituted on the 5th of December following; and as it was the kind of post for which his learning and character had eminently qualified him, it is much to the honour of the aged confessor that he made choice of such a man as Pearson to fill it, one 'whose extensive knowledge, personal integrity, and prudence would be,' as the letter of institution runs, 'a model to the whole society.' Though his tenure of this presidency was of short duration he did not quit it without shewing himself a benefactor to the college 'by contributing a sum from his own purse to adorn the chapel.'"¹

"On February 19, 1661, we find the name of Pearson among the Lent preachers at Court, associated with Sheldon, Fell, Morley, Hacket, and other eminent churchmen of the time."² And three months later Evelyn speaks of him as one of the

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, pp. xlvi.-xlviii.

² Churton, quoting from Kennet, p. 368.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 527

posers at the annual examination of the Westminster scholars. In the spring and summer of this year, 1661, we find him busily engaged in London as one of those selected to act as representatives, in the Savoy Conference, of such of the bishops as should be hindered by age or infirmity, or charge of other duties, from constantly attending at the meetings. In this conference he seems to have taken part from the commencement of the proceedings; but we have no account of his individual share in them, except during the written disputation of the last few days."¹ It speaks well for his courtesy and forbearance in this controversy with the presbyterians, that of all the phalanx of episcopal divines, Pearson, though one of their strongest opponents, was the only one of whom Baxter speaks with entire respect: "Dr. Pierson and Dr. Gunning did all their work, but with great difference in the manner. Dr. Pierson was their true logician and disputant; without whom, as far as I could discern, we should have had nothing from them but Dr. Gunning's passionate invectives, mixed with some argumentations. He disputed accurately, soberly, and calmly, being but once in any passion, breeding in us a great respect for him, and a persuasion that if he had been independent he would have been for peace, and that if it were in his power it would have gone well. He was the strength and honour of that cause, which we doubted whether he heartily maintained." The insinuations contained in the last clause were altogether groundless. "Baxter," says Churton, "probably penned this before the appearance of the *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*; and perhaps it shews no more than a wish to persuade himself that his most learned opponent was one who desired more liberty than the church allowed, a wish to grace his own cause as far as possible with such a name: but the surmise is contradicted by the whole tenor of Pearson's life, by the character of his friends, by all his writings, and not least by some of those which are now first made public."²

¹ Churton's *Memoir*.² *Ibid.*, p. liv.

528 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Pearson sat as a member of Convocation which met on 8th May, 1661; "when he was chosen, with John Earle, to superintend a version into Latin of the amended Book of Common Prayer, for which his excellent Latin style eminently qualified him. . . . Dr. D'Oyly, in his life of Archbishop Sancroft, has published an important extract made by that prelate from the journal of the Lower House, which is now lost; from which we learn that Pearson was one of eight members of that house who were employed in drawing up the service for the twenty-ninth of May, and one of the six who were to prepare the prayer for the High Court of Parliament; and when they met again in the winter, he was one of three to whom the revision of all the additions and amendments was committed, in order to its being received and subscribed to by the members of both houses; which was done on the 20th of December, 1661. Thus far we learn from the journals; and the absence of all private memoirs is only a proof of the happy unanimity which now governed their proceedings. Pearson's name appears again in the journals of the Upper House in reference to a subject comparatively of minor importance, but of some concern to the interests of learning, a proposal to prepare one general Latin and Greek grammar to be used in all the schools of England; which proposal was occasionally under discussion in the sessions of 1663 and 1664. Pearson presented such a grammar to the Upper House on the 4th of May, 1664, when it was referred to a committee of seven bishops; but from that time no further notice of it occurs, and after that date very little synodical business was done." ¹

In the meantime other changes had been taking place in Pearson's career. In June, 1661, when Gunning was appointed Regius Professor of Theology at Cambridge, Pearson succeeded to the Margaret Professorship, upon which he resigned his stall at Salisbury and his London benefice; and these two learned

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, pp. lv. lvi.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 529

friends continued for several years with great unanimity to discharge their concurrent duties. This appointment is of more importance in Pearson's life, as it was this which led to his composing a considerable portion of his minor theological works,—that series of lectures "*de Deo et attributis*," which were delivered soon after he became Margaret Professor.¹

On the 14th of April, 1662, Pearson was made Master of Trinity College, as successor to Ferne;² an appointment for which he was probably selected by the discernment of Clarendon, who was present at Cambridge when he delivered his inaugural oration as Lady Margaret's professor. He held this important post for nearly eleven years.³

There is a remarkable letter preserved in the muniment room of Trinity College, written by John Paine, M.A., a graduate of that society, who took his degrees after the Revolution, "describing an interesting interview which the writer had enjoyed with an old Dr. Creighton, who was elected fellow under Wilkins, the year before the Restoration, and appears to have been continually resident while Pearson presided. Paine describes the old man, who communicated to him all his recollections of Trinity, as then merry and well at the age of eighty-eight; so that the letter, which is without date or name of the writer, was probably written not earlier than the year 1720. Creighton spoke of Wilkins with much respect, particularly relating a story which is confirmed to some extent by Evelyn, that he diverted Cromwell from a design he once entertained of breaking up the Universities. But his warmest *encomium* was reserved for the mention of the name of Pearson, 'whom,' he said, 'it was a disparagement to call Doctor, it should rather be, the great Pearson.' His abundant civility and condescension to the fellows, his abstinent and simple mode of living, and concession of what he might have claimed

¹ Churton's *Memoir*.

² In the modern glass windows of Trinity College Chapel, his figure is given amongst other Masters and benefactors of the college.

³ Churton's *Memoir*.

530 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

from the common stock, were all in turn recorded to his praise ; and the relater sometimes stopped in his narration to speak of his college residence as the happiest time of his life."¹ In this letter a casual mention is made of Pearson's wife ; and this is the only intimation that has reached us of his ever being married. Creighton told the writer that he had heard the fellows ask him whether he wanted anything in his lodge, table linen, or the like ; "No," saith the good man, "I think not ; this I have will serve yet." "And though pressed by his wife to have new, especially as it was offered him, he would refuse it while the old was fit for use. He was very well contented with what the college allowed him ; which he [Creighton] very well remembers to have been 16s. per week at the butcher's shop."² The Mastership was then reckoned at £500 per annum. "The entries in the Conclusion-book of the college, which is a register of the business transacted at the meetings of the Master and seniors, are also such as seem to mark the benignant rule of Pearson ; as there are several notices of aid granted to poor incumbents, abatements to tenants under any casualty of the season, and a remission of part of the sentence passed on a refractory student, who had derived a moral lesson from a fit of sickness. It does not appear that any intestine division or disorder arose while he was Master ; and there can be no doubt that, while he was happy enough to serve the interests of learning without distraction, he was promoting in Cambridge the good social principles recommended with persuasive eloquence by Clarendon, in one of his speeches, in restoring the nation to its old good humour, and its old good nature."³

There is, however, in the Conclusion-book, a record of another kind, which shews that the Master and fellows were not disposed to allow their just and legal rights to be tampered with by any one. The record is as follows :

"July 4, 1664. Agreed by the Master and Seniors that whereas they have received a letter from his Majesty, signifying his

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, pp. lxiv, lxv.

² *Ibid.*, appendix d. p. cxvi.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. lxv, lxvi.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 531

will and pleasure that they should present Mr. Barton to the rectory of Orwell, there be a petition drawn up to let his Majesty understand that the rectory of Orwell was bestowed according to statute upon Dr. Chamberlaine before the reception of his Majesty's letter. [Signed] John Pearson."¹

The petition was sent to the King accordingly, and doubtless produced its effect, as no further notice of the matter occurs.

When the plague broke out in Cambridge, in 1665, and at intervals for two or three years afterwards, and the students were sent down on the first appearance of danger, Pearson remained at his post.²

"During the chief portion of his presidency at Trinity College we find him occasionally fulfilling offices of trust and aiding the public charges of the University. In 1667 he was appointed, with Fleetwood, provost of King's, afterwards bishop of Worcester, Sparrow the ritualist, Master of Queen's, afterwards bishop of Exeter and Norwich, and Brady, Master of Caius, one of the syndics for laying out the legacy of Tobias Rustat to the University." Rustat left a sum of £1000, which was placed in Pearson's hands, and judiciously laid out by him in the purchase of land, from which a revenue of £200 *per annum* is now secured to the public library.³ Towards the rebuilding of St. Paul's, after the fire in 1666, Pearson contributed £250, being the amount of half his yearly income as Master of Trinity.⁴ Not long after the institution of the Royal Society he became one of its members, being admitted a fellow in 1667, but he seems to have shared little in its proceedings, though he did not share in that unreasonable jealousy of this foundation which was entertained by so many members of the two universities.

In the same year, on 7th of May, 1667, he preached a short but eloquent funeral oration over his friend the good bishop Wrenn.⁵

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxvii.

⁴ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*, p. lxviii.

⁵ *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

532 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

"The latest remarkable entry in the college Conclusion-book, under the Mastership of Pearson, is one of Dec. 21, 1671, by which it is agreed by the Master and seniors that Dr. Barrow be chosen college preacher;" and it was here in the college chapel that Barrow's perfect theological discourses were delivered.¹

To mention Pearson's own contributions to literature and the church during this important period of his life, there appeared in 1664 a folio edition of *Diogenes Laertius*, to which he wrote a short preface and dedication of the work to King Charles II.

"In 1665, he prefixed a beautiful critical essay to a Cambridge edition of the Septuagint, which is chiefly a defence of the old translators against some of the censures of St. Jerome."²

Churton preserves a highly interesting correspondence of Pearson's with a "a person of quality" in 1668, testifying to his belief that promiscuous ordinations are destructive to the honour and safety of the church of England, if they should be allowed in it.

*A person of quality, a member of the Church of England,
to a moderate divine.*

"Sir, Give me leave to let you understand that I am by a real and unfeigned profession a true son of the church of England, one whom God hath blessed with a competent family, of whose eternal welfare I am equally solicitous. We are seated with many neighbours of the same judgment and desire of future happiness in a country parish with an orthodox and able minister, whose age and infirmity seem to foretell we shall scarce enjoy him another winter. Now, Sir, the various discourses and contrivances in this present juncture, together with the known inclination of our patron, threaten us with a pastor as next incumbent, who is not a pastor canonically ordained, but hath received something which he calls ordination, either after a classical or congregational way. In this case I apply myself to

¹ Churton's *Memoirs*.

² *Ibid.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 533

you, who are rendered a moderate divine, desirous to know whether your moderation hath induced you to promote or comply with that which seems to us a great confusion ; and to declare how you can answer it to that church of which you are also a member, and what satisfaction you can give to our consciences, who are like to be cast into such a condition.”

Answer.

“ Sir, I cannot take any delight as to the differences in matters of religion, but in the composure of them only : and if I can understand myself, nothing can ever alter that temper, by which I have been so long inclined to a due enlargement and indulgence for such as are ready to afford a rational compliance. But I hope that no such facility of nature or opinion shall ever reduce me to that weakness, as to betray the great and everlasting concerns of the church, or to give over the indispensable duty of endeavouring that unity which is necessary to its conservation. That the order of the ministry is necessary to the continuation of the Gospel according to the promises of Christ, as it was to the first plantation of it according to His institution, is a doctrine indubitable, That this ministry is derived by a succession and constant propagation, and that the unity and peace of the Church of Christ are to be conserved by a due and legitimate ordination, no man who considereth the practice of the apostles, and ecclesiastical history can ever doubt. This way of ordination, having continued so many ages one and the same, could never be considerably altered without some great commotions and dissensions in the Church, and the manifest breach of union and communion in that body, whomsoever we judge guilty of the breach of that union, which is not necessary now to dispute. And as the first introduction of different ordinations caused a standing and settled opposition, precluding all ways of reconciliation, so they cannot be brought into any one Church, but they must make such a division and disparity in the administrations as will amount to no less than a schism. However, in the peculiar and happy condition of our Church, these promiscuous ordinations, if at all

534 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

allowed by it, are most destructive to that which is the safety and honour of it. We have the greatest felicity which could happen to a reformation, as being regular and authoritative, that we have so taken away the many mistakes and errors, which had been introduced by a long ignorance and usurpation, as to retain a perfect compliance with the ancient Church, and therefore we can boldly and truly affirm, we are the same with the primitive christians, even those of Rome : and while we hold and maintain our ordinations legitimate, we speak the same language with the most glorious fathers, martyrs, and saints of those happy and pious times. But if we once admit a diversity in our ordinations, we have lost the honour of succession, we have cast away our weapons of defence ; we have betrayed our own cause, and laid ourselves open to the common enemy of all protestants, and we shall at last inevitably fall into the Socinian doctrine, to deny all necessity or use of any mission or ordination. Again, though our discipline be much weakened, and the good effects thereof obstructed by many scruples and oppositions raised against it, yet they can be no just imputation to that wholesome institution, it being sufficiently known from whence those obstructions proceed. But if all sorts of ordination be any way established by sufficient authority, if what is so earnestly desired be indulged, ' that a man once ordained any way be still held and retained for a labourer in the harvest,' the most legitimate process in ecclesiastical affairs will become ineffectual and irrational : many necessary articles of inquiry, founded upon the greatest justice and authority, will be put off with such unblamable refusals, and answered with so much reason and equity, that his majesty's ecclesiastical laws can be with no conscience put in execution, when they which are to be prosecuted as delinquents according to law, must be pronounced the most innocent in the opinion and conscience of the administrators of the same law. What an uncomfortable and discouraging confusion is this, whereby presentments shall be made of those persons who are conscientiously conformable to the doctrine and orders of the Church, for actions

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 535

or omissions proceeding solely out of that conscience and conformity; and they who factiously or erroneously dissent from that doctrine and order, shall avoid their own and promote the presentment of others, and in this error or faction shall be protected and encouraged by a superinduced authority! Thus by promiscuous ordinations the doctrine of the Church will be rendered indefensible and the discipline impracticable. Although these evil consequences be of great moment in the general, and threaten our Bethel with the notion of a Babel, yet because most men are more apprehensive of particular mischiefs, and stronger moved with personal inconveniences, I shall more earnestly apply myself to that condition which you have represented in reference to yourself, your family, and neighbours of the same persuasion, and even this consideration will be of great latitude and concernment, because it is not confined to you alone, but all of the same judgment will be subject to the same unsettlement, and be under the same fears and discouragement. If a person only qualified by a congregational mission should be set over you authoritatively as your lawful pastor, to whose ministerial acts it is expected you should apply yourself in all public matters of religion; you being of a constant persuasion that the validity of such acts hath a necessary relation to the legitimacy of ministry, and of as certain an opinion that such a mission cannot amount to a legitimate ordination, I cannot see what comfort you [can] take in any compliance with such administrations. Nay further, if a person be said to have obtained orders after the Presbyterian way in the late times, when he might have received them from a bishop, and since the happy restitution of public order in the Church, where many of his brethren have submitted, still obstinately refuses to receive ordination after the established way of the Church of England; in this case if you doubt whether his ordination be valid, or conclude it null, I confess I know no argument to convince you or to incline you to another persuasion. But then I cannot but lament your unquiet and sad condition, accidentally cast upon you for reasons which I take no delight

536 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

to consider; and through the short expression in your letter I can easily perceive what thoughts and apprehensions may press and discourage you. For as you render yourself a son of our Church, I conceive you are one who values the liturgy, thinking it your duty to give God that service, and taking much comfort in the ancient and regular devotion expressed in those public prayers; which being a mixed office and having been so ever since the apostolical times, wherein the priest or presbyter, and the people, jointly and interchangeably concur, and the rubric directing what words belong to the priest, and can properly in the sense intended (sometimes at least), be used by no other; I confess you cannot but abate of the devotion and comfort of your prayers, when you think the person appointed to read them is no priest or presbyter. As for the administration of the sacrament of Baptism, you cannot regularly but desire to have your children baptized, and received into the congregation of Christ's Church in that solemn manner, and by such a person as is appointed by the same church to receive them; and though in case of necessity this office may be dispensed with in baptizing, for the benefit of the infant, yet it will be very hard to create any other necessity than what arises on the infant's part, or to make use of that irregularity when there is no necessity, which is only indulged to necessity. But as to the other sacrament, the supper of the Lord, your case is far worse. For to that you are often invited, nay obliged to receive it thrice a year; and I doubt not but [you] earnestly desire frequently to participate of the body and blood of your Saviour, whereas, if you be resolved that your pastor established is not a priest or presbyter, and consequently hath no power to consecrate the elements, or render them sacramental, I cannot see how you can follow him to the holy table, or with what comfort or conscience you can bring your family, or concur with your neighbours, to receive the elements from his hands. And yet abstaining from the sacrament, you are thereby deprived of the spiritual strength and comfort which you desire, and have cause to expect; and are moreover betrayed to the censures of

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 537

the Church, in compliance to whose doctrine you are rendered disobedient to her commands. Lastly, the unfeigned exercise of religion is undoubtedly, as never more necessary, so never so comfortable as upon the bed of our sickness, especially upon the approach of death: wherefore the Church hath taken great care that the minister shall attend, and how he shall behave himself in the visitation of the sick, for their comfort and advantage. This comfort I confess must be taken from you, who are of that persuasion concerning your pastor; for if upon the apprehension of your latter end you feel your conscience troubled, and being observant of the method prescribed, desire to make a special confession, and receive the benefit of absolution; to which end the priest is ordered to use these words, 'By the authority of Christ committed to me, I absolve thee of all thy sins: ' you will never acquiesce in the absolution, where you acknowledge no commission, nor can you expect any efficacy; which dependeth upon the authority. These and the like I look upon not as formal objections or cavils, but as real and severe complaints raised upon sober and religious grounds, matter for Christian zeal rather than moderation. And therefore I cannot persuade myself that any person endued with any kindness or care of the religion settled in this nation, can ever contrive or assent unto so great a discouragement to the conscientious professors of it, and confusion in the management and administration."¹

The great work, however, which was the employment of Pearson's leisure hours during the period of his Mastership of Trinity was the "*Vindiciæ Epistolarum S. Ignatii*," which appeared in 1672, the last year of his residence at Cambridge, with a dedication to archbishop Sheldon. This elaborate vindication of the writings of St. Ignatius, fully established their authenticity against the attacks of Daillé and other foreign protestants, who wished to throw a doubt upon them as bearing such strong evidence to the existence of the three orders of the ministry in the Christian Church from the beginning. "As far

¹ Minor Theological works of John Pearson, D.D., collected by Edward Churton, M.A., vol. ii. p. 231.

538 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

as regarded the controversy in England, it certainly altered the position of the party which had from the time of the troubles at Frankfort asserted the divine right of the Geneva discipline. 'The vindication of St. Ignatius,' said Thomas Long, 'hath struck Mr. Baxter's and others' discourses against episcopacy to the very heart, so that none need to strike again.'¹ The old oracles of non-conformity were no longer regarded as inspired; there was no longer any trust reposed in them, the memory of Blondel and Daillé, though they were men such as that cause has scarcely nourished since, survives chiefly in the reputation given them by Pearson. The most eminent scholars of the Gallic and other churches in communion with Rome have done justice to the character of this admirable piece of theological criticism. In his own country, from the time of Bull, who bestowed a little of his notice upon the cavillers who then appeared, it has been ever regarded as one of the best public bulwarks of an ecclesiastical state, and it will remain to all time, as long as sacred learning is needful for us, closely linked with the name of the holy martyr whose relics it defends."²

Early in the year following this publication, Pearson was raised to the episcopate.

His connection with the parish of Wigan begins at this time; and previous to his consecration the King's commands to sanction his holding this rectory *in commendam* were given to the archbishop in the following words:

"Charles R. Our will and pleasure is, that you forthwith grant your license and dispensation to the right rev^d Father in God, John Lord Bishop of Chester, to hold the *rectory of Wiggin* in the county of Lancaster and diocess of Chester, and the *arch-deacoury of Surry*, with the said bishoprick of Chester. For which this shall be your warrant. Given at our court at Whitehall the 15th of January in the 24th year of our reigne, 1672-3.

By his Ma^{ty} commaunde
Arlington."³

¹ Review of Baxter's Life, p. 117.

² Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxxx.

³ *Lancashire and Cheshire Local Gleatings*, vol. i. p. 264.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 539

Directed to "the most rev. Father in God Gilbert, Lord archbishop of Canterbury."

Archbishop Sterne's commission for his consecration, dated the 18th of January, 1672-3, was directed to archbishop Sheldon and five other bishops of the southern province, and gave them license to ordain him bishop in any church, chapel, or consecrated place. In pursuance of which commission he was consecrated in the archiepiscopal chapel at Lambeth, on Quinquagesima Sunday, 9th February, 1672-3, together with Dr. Peter Mews, who was at the same time appointed bishop of Bath and Wells, the bishops who assisted Sheldon at the two consecrations being Humphrey (Henchman) of London, John (Dolben) of Rochester, Ant. (Sparrow) of Exeter, Isaac (Barrow) of St. Asaph, Peter (Gunning) of Chichester, Nathaniel (Lord Crew) of Oxford, and John (Pritchard) of Gloucester.¹

Pearson's preferment appears to have been due to the representations of archbishop Sheldon, as we may gather from his letter to the same archbishop, preserved among the Sheldon Papers in the Bodleian Library :

" May it please your Grace

I understand by your grace's letter that his majesty is pleased most graciously to give mee the bishoprick of Chester, and to suffer mee to keepe the archdeaconry of Surry *in commendam* with it ; and I hope I shall never be so wretchedly unthankfull as to forget his majesty's favours. In the meane time I must gratefully acknowledge the greatnesse of your grace's undeserved kindnesse in enclining his majesty to that good opinion of mee, and interesting yourselfe in the affaires and for the good of him who has never yet bin so happy or just as to be in the least serviceable to you. I have appointed my nephew Charles Wren to passe the scales, at present being detained for some dayes by the pressing businesse of our college audit ; but after that shall

¹ Churton's *Memoir*. Stubbs' *Registrum sacrum Anglicanum*.

540 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

be ready to attend, and howsoever to follow your grace's commands or directions, being most desirous to expresse the sense which I have of your favours, as best becometh

your grace's

Most dutifull and most

Trin. Coll. Dec. 2. 1672.

Obedient servant

John Pearson ²¹

To the Most Reverend Father in God, Gilbert

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

The diocese of Chester together with the rectory of Wigan remained in Pearson's hands for more than thirteen years. During this period he is said to have resided some part of the summer at Wigan, where he employed three curates, two being preachers and the third a reader in deacon's orders.² There were three chapelries in the parish of Wigan at that time, those of Hindley, Billinge and Upholland, of which the two last were partially maintained by the rector. Of bishop Pearson's curates at Wigan the only names I meet with are those of Samuel Shawe, who signs his name (with James fforde, mayor, Roger Bradshaigh, and others) at a vestry meeting to pass the churchwardens' accounts on 28th March, 1676, and James Peake, who signs his name on a similar occasion on 21st April, 1685, and again on 7th May, 1686. Peake was preferred by Pearson to the vicarage of Bowdon in Cheshire soon afterwards, but continued to hold the cure of Wigan until he was discharged from it by bishop Cartwright at Christmas, 1686-7. He was deprived of Bowdon in 1689-90 for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, holding James II. to be still his rightful sovereign. Peake, the non-juror, was still living in February, 1711, when he is styled "late vicar of Bowdon."³ Mr. Callis, mentioned in bishop Cartwright's diary, may have been another of Pearson's curates, and Mr. Turner was probably the reader.

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, appendix b. p. cxix.

² Bishop Cartwright's *Diary*, pp. 16, 17.

³ *M.S.* note to Editor's copy of Helsby's *Ommerod's Cheshire*, vol. i. p. 319.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 541

Bishop Pearson held his primary visitation in 1674. Arch-deacon Churton in his memoir gives a full copy of the Articles of Inquiry which he issued at that time,¹ as follows :

The tenour of the oath to be tendered to the churchwardens and sidesmen :

"You shall swear diligently to inquire and true presentment make of all defaults and offences against the laws ecclesiastical of this realm. In which you are to take direction from these articles. And that you will not present any person out of malice or ill-will, nor spare any out of fear or favour. So help you God."

(Then follows) "*the Articles of Inquiry within the Diocese of Chester.*

TIT. I.

CONCERNING CHURCHES OR CHAPELS WITH THE ORNAMENTS,

FURNITURE, AND POSSESSIONS BELONGING TO THEM.

1. Is the fabric of your church (or chapel), with all things appertaining to it, kept in good repair within and without, in such order and decency as becometh the house of God ?

2. Is there in the church (or chapel) a font of stone standing in the usual ancient place, with a cover to it, for the administration of baptism ? Is there also a convenient communion table, with a fair carpet of silk, or other decent stuff, in the time of divine service, and with a fair linen cloth at the time of administering the sacrament ? What cup, chalice, patin, or flagons have you, belonging to that service ?

3. Have you in your church or chapel a convenient seat for the minister to read divine service in ? and a pulpit with a decent cloth or cushion for the same ?

4. Have you a large folio Bible of the last translation, with two books of Common Prayer well bound, one for the minister, the

¹ Articles of Inquiry concerning matters ecclesiastical within the diocese of Chester, in the primary episcopal visitation of the Right Reverend Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Chester, A. D. 1674. London: Printed by John Williams, Junr., MDCLXXIV. (As given in Churton's *Memoir*, appendix f, p. cxx).

542 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

other for the clerk? Have you the book of Homilies set forth by authority, the book of Canons, and the Table of degrees prohibited in marriage?

5. Have you a register book of parchment for all who are christened, married or buried in the parish? Does your minister every Lord's day in the presence of your churchwardens set down the names of parties, with the day, month, and year of each christening, marriage, or burial? Is the transcript thereof every year within one month after the twenty-fifth day of March carried into the bishop's registry?

6. Have you a paper book in which the names of strangers who preach or officiate in the church (or chapel) are set down, and another book for the churchwarden's accounts?

7. Have you a fair surplice for the minister to wear at the public ministration, provided at the charge of the parish?

8. Have you a chest with three locks and keys to keep the books and ornaments of the church? Have you a bier with a black hearse cloth for the burial of the dead?

9. Is the churchyard sufficiently fenced with walls, pales, or rails, and decently kept from all annoyance or incroachments? Are the trees therein preserved?

10. Is the mansion house of your minister, with all houses thereto belonging, kept in good repair? Have any of them been pulled down or defaced? Have any incroached upon the land thereto belonging, or felled the trees thereon growing?

11. Have you a perfect terrier of all glebe lands, gardens, orchards, and tenements, belonging to your parsonage or vicarage; as also an account of such pensions, rates, tythes and portions of tythes, or other yearly profits (either within or without the parish) as belong thereunto? Have any of the same been withheld from your minister? and by whom, as you know or have heard?

12. Have any of the ancient glebe lands belonging to your parsonage or vicarage been taken away, or exchanged for other without the free consent of the incumbent and license from the

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 543

ordinary? Have any inclosures been made in your parish to the detriment of the church, by the decay of tillage, and the converting arable land into pasture? By whom hath the same been made? and how many years since? and how much is your parsonage or vicarage damnified thereby in the yearly value thereof; as you know, believe, or have heard?

13. Have any new pews or seats been erected in your chancel, or in the body of the church (or chapel), without leave of the ordinary?

TIT. II.

CONCERNING MINISTERS.

1. Is your minister, curate, or lecturer episcopally ordained?

2. Hath he been licensed to preach by the Bishop or either of the Universities?

3. Is he defamed or suspected to have obtained his orders or benefice by any simoniacal compact?

4. Doth your minister diligently read divine service, and preach every Lord's day in the church, unless hindered by sickness or reasonable absence? And in such cases doth he procure some lawful minister to read prayers, to preach, and perform other ministerial duties?

5. Doth your minister in the morning and evening service, in the administration of the sacraments, and in performing other religious offices appointed by the Church of England, use the respective forms in the Book of Common Prayer, together with all those rites and ceremonies which are enjoined in this church? And does he make use of the surplice when he reads divine service, or administers the sacrament?

6. Does your minister diligently catechise the youth of his parish? Doth he prepare and procure them (as occasion is offered) to come and be confirmed by the bishop? And doth he endeavour to reclaim all popish recusants, and all sectaries in your parish, to the true religion and worship of God, as it is established by law?

544 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

7. Is your minister a man of sober, unblameable, and exemplary life? Is he grave, modest, and regular in his outward demeanor and apparel, according to the constitutions of the church? or is his carriage, conversation, or company in any kind whatsoever, disorderly, or scandalous, and unbeseeming his calling and charge?

8. Is your minister ready to visit the sick, and to baptize infants in danger of death, being so desired? Is any infant or more aged person in the parish yet unbaptized by his default? Doth he duly administer the blessed sacrament of the Lord's supper three times every year at the least, whereof Easter to be one? Doth he baptize with sureties?

9. Doth your minister marry any persons at uncanonical hours, not between eight and twelve, or in private, or such as are under age, not having the consent of their parents and guardians? Doth he marry any either without banns first published three Sundays or holy-days in the church or without license so to do; or with the license of any other than the Archbishop, Bishop of this Diocese or his chancellor?

10. Doth your minister duly bid and observe holy-days and fasting days as is appointed? and doth he then use the forms of prayer prescribed by the church? Hath he taken upon him to appoint any private fasts or religious exercise without lawful authority? Doth he or any other minister or lay person in your parish hold any unlawful conventicles or meetings under pretence of any exercise of religion?

11. Is your minister constantly resident among you? Hath he a curate conforming to assist him in his absence or presence? Doth he carry himself in all things as an able and discreet minister, and conformable to the Church of England? Doth he serve any more cures besides that of your parish on the same day? What is the name of your curate, and what yearly stipend doth your minister allow him?

12. Is there in your parish any lecturer; what is his name? Doth he read divine service before his lecture, as by law is

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 545

required? And is he conformable to the discipline of the church of England?

TIT. III.

CONCERNING PARISHIONERS.

1. Are there any in your parish reputed heretics or schismatics refusing communion with the Church of England? Any impugners of the religion established, of his majesty's supremacy, or of any of the laws, rites and ceremonies ecclesiastical? Have any spoken or declared anything in derogation, or to the depraving of God's worship in the Church of England, and administration of the sacraments, rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer as it is now established by law?

2. Are there any in your parish, who lie under a common fame, or vehement suspicion of adultery, fornication or incest? Are there any common drunkards, blasphemers of God's holy name and word?

3. Are there any excommunicate persons, or any who countenance or keep company with them?

4. Do any of your parish profane the Lord's day by neglecting public holy duties, or by doing the works of their ordinary calling, or using unlawful recreations, or permitting their children or servants so to do? Do they duly observe other holy-days, festivals and fasts appointed by authority?

5. Do all those who inhabit in your parish duly resort to your church (or chapel) and continue there in divine service, sermon and other holy duties, with that reverence, order and decency as befits devout christians? or have any occasioned riot, clamour, or fighting in the church at any time? Are there any recusant papists or sectaries in your parish? Do they or any of them keep any schoolmaster in their house, which cometh not to church to hear divine service, and receive holy communion?

6. Are there any in your parish who refuse to have their infant

546 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

children baptized by your minister? or do they keep them unbaptized any longer than the church allows? And what infants, or more aged persons are there in your parish unbaptized?

7. Do all householders duly send their children, apprentices, and servants to be catechised? And do they take care (when occasion is offered) they should be confirmed by the bishop?

8. Is there any person in your parish being sixteen years of age who refuseth to receive the blessed sacrament of the Lord's Supper at least three times every year, whereof Easter to be one? And do all receive this sacred mystery with that outward gesture of humility and reverence as becomes them, meekly kneeling upon their knees?

9. Are there any in your parish who are known or suspected to be unlawfully married, contrary to the laws of God and this church? Are there any, who being lawfully married and never divorced, do yet live asunder? or any who being lawfully divorced, do live together again? or being separated for adultery, have afterwards married with any other, during the life of their first consort?

10. Are there any married women in your parish, who after safe delivery from childbirth neglect to make their humble and public thanksgiving to God, decently apparelled, according to the appointment of the church? or refuse to pay the offerings according to custom?

11. Are there any of your parish who refuse to pay their Easter offerings and their duties to your minister? or to pay the rates assessed on them, for the repair and provisions of the church?

12. Do you know, or have you heard of any patron or person in your parish who having the gift of any ecclesiastical benefice, hath made gain thereby upon any bargain, either for money, pension, lease, reserve of tithes, or glebe, or other simoniacal contract whatsoever?

13. Do any among you refuse to bury their dead according to the rites of the Church of England? Are there any wills of deceased persons unproved, or goods not administered? Do

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 547

you know of any legacies given to your church, not yet received by you, or detained from you, or not applied to the use appointed?

TIT. IV.

CONCERNING THE OFFICES BELONGING TO THE CHURCH.

1. Are the churchwardens of your parish yearly chosen according to law? And are there sidemen appointed to assist them for the due ordering of the church?

2. Have the former and last churchwardens given up their accounts to those that succeeded them, together with all monies and other things belonging to your church (or chapel)?

3. Have you a parish clerk aged one and twenty years at least, who is of sober life, and good report? Is he chosen by your minister, and approved by the parish; and is he able for reading, writing, and singing as a clerk? Are his wages duly paid him?

4. Doth he or your sexton take care of your church, to keep it locked and clean, to open the doors, and to ring the bells in due time to call the inhabitants to the worship of God? Also to admonish them by tolling a passing bell for any that are dying, thereby to meditate of their own death, and to commend the other's weak condition to the mercy of God?

TIT. V.

CONCERNING ALMSHOUSES, SCHOOLS, AND SCHOOLMASTERS,
PHYSICIANS, CHIRURGEONS, AND MIDWIVES.

1. Is there any hospital, almshouse, or free school founded in your parish not being of the King's foundation? Are they so governed and ordered in the use and revenue as the founders appointed, according to set ordinances and statutes which have been made concerning the same?

2. Doth any man keep a public or private school in your parish? Is he or they licensed and allowed thereunto by the Bishop? Is he of sober, religious and exemplary conversation?

548 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Doth he instruct his scholars in the catechism and religion of the Church of England? Is there any woman that taketh upon her to instruct and educate young maidens? Doth she resort duly, and bring with her to divine service, upon the Lord's day and holy-days, all such young maidens as are committed to her care?

3. Do any in your parish practise physic, chirurgerie, or mid-wifery, without license from the ordinary?

The ministers of every parish may join in presentments with the churchwardens and sidemen, and if they will not present, then the ministers themselves (being the persons that have the chief care of the suppressing of sin and impiety in their parishes) may present the crimes aforesaid, and such things as shall want due reformation.

The ministers of every parish are desired to give in the names of such of the younger sort, in their several parishes, as they judge fit to receive confirmation from the Bishop."

Though Pearson went up to London, and took his seat in the House of Lords, he appears to have taken little part in the parliamentary debates. He occasionally preached at Whitehall; but there is only one of his sermons extant preached after his elevation to the Episcopate, which was delivered at Westminster Abbey, on the 5th of November, 1673, when he took for his text Psalm cvi. 4, and based a good argument upon it for the observance of such providential deliverances as that which was so long commemorated on the 5th of November.

"The close of this sermon," observes Churton, "expressed with the eloquence of a man, with whom loyalty is not a passion but a principle, sufficiently intimates his sense of the dangers from the two factions which were then striving for the mastery."¹

"The last particular notice of Pearson's visits to the metropolis is a passage in Baxter's Life, repeated by Calamy, and referred to by Birch, as the matter is one in which Tillotson was also concerned. It was one of the schemes of the time for the comprehension of nonconformists. It would seem that Stillingfleet

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxxviii.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 549

and Tillotson were requested by bishop Morley and bishop Ward to arrange a meeting with Baxter, Manton, Bates, and Poole, to treat of an act of reconciliation with them, and that some members of Lord Danby's ministry had encouraged them to do it. Baxter's reception of the overture was unpromising. However, as he spoke with respect of the two doctors themselves, the treaty went on and several meetings took place, where a bill was prepared, which (though it was not what Baxter could have wished, if he might have his choice) proposed to leave indifferent, and therefore virtually to abolish the three ceremonies, to allow of a set of teachers who should be left to their own exercises at all other times in churches, if they complied so far as to use the Liturgy twice a year ; and to oblige the bishops to grant licenses to all persons who had previously been ordained by parochial pastors to officiate in any congregation to which they should be lawfully called. And for securing concord, 'no one was to be put to declare his judgment, whether this written license, or that which he had before received, should be taken for his ordination; but each party should be left to judge as they saw cause.'"¹

If Baxter is to be believed, Stillingfleet and Tillotson agreed with the nonconformists to conceal the nature of these proposals from bishop Morley, who had sent them on their task while he was out of town ; and to desire bishop Ward and bishop Pearson in the meantime to meet the other party, to hear what they had agreed upon, and to keep the matter secret. It is not very clear that Pearson was ever consulted by them, but it is probable that Ward communicated to him the nature of the overture. We know what were Pearson's views on this subject, from his "letter to a person of quality" in 1668, which has been already given ; and therefore we may be sure that he would not have given his sanction to such an agreement. However, the scheme fell through ; for as soon as it was known "how far we had gone" says Baxter, "there was a full end of all the treaty."

¹ Churton's *Memoir*.

550 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

The records of Pearson's episcopate at Chester are kept in two different books; The Institution-Book, under the care of the Registrar, and The Act-Book of the Diocesan Chancellors.

It has been stated that bishop Pearson held his first visitation of his diocese in 1674, when he printed a set of articles of enquiry concerning matters ecclesiastical to be answered by the churchwardens. "In the next year he issued a set of Injunctions to be observed by the dean and prebendaries and other members of the cathedral. These were in part a fresh sanction to some Injunctions given before the civil war by Bishop Bridgeman They strictly enjoin regularity and residence on the principal cathedral clergy, the appointment of well-selected preachers, who can discharge that duty 'to the benefit of the hearers, and the honour of the Church'; and, as might be expected from Bishop Pearson, are very particular in directions relating to the efficiency of 'the service of God in the choir.'¹ They also require a particular care of the cathedral school; and lay down some rules for the prevention and detection of simony in disposing of the cathedral preferment."²

"The bishop again visited his diocese in 1677, when the visitation sermon was preached at Chester by Dr. James Arderne, one of the King's chaplains, afterwards dean of Chester; but it appears from the first words of his will, written at the beginning of the following year, that he now began to feel symptoms of his bodily infirmity."³ The records at Chester, kept at this period by Bishop Wilkins's relative, Dr. Walter Pope, contain no regular notices of these visitations; but we learn, from another source of information, that this was Pearson's last visitation.⁴ He held none in 1680, and in 1683 the ordinary's office was superseded by Archbishop Dolben's holding a visitation of the whole province.⁵

¹ Bishop Pearson's Act-Book, Chester, p. 74.

² Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxxxvi.

³ Bishop Stratford's letter to the archbishop of York, 19 January, 1690-1.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxxxvii.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 551

We have said that Pearson made his residence partly at Wigan, where his presence will have had a salutary effect in stimulating the energy of the parish officers, and keeping the church property in a state of efficiency. There is some reason to suppose that the old stone gate posts of the former entrance to Wigan Hall, surmounted by round balls, which are still standing within the pleasure grounds, were built by him. There was formerly a date upon the Western post, of which the two last figures, 76, only are legible. The grounds have lately been extended further into the town by about 68 feet, and a new gate-house built.

We may make a fair estimate of the furniture and ornaments belonging to Wigan church at that period from a schedule drawn up by the churchwardens in bishop Hall's time about ten years before, and entered at the end of the first book of churchwardens' accounts :

"A schedule of church goods left the 9th of Aprill 1667 by Ri: Brocke and Thomas Nailior church wardens.

Imp^{ms} 2 great Bibles, 4 Coiñon prayer bookes, 1 booke of Homilies, 1 booke called Juell & Hardin, 1 booke of canons, 1 booke 39 articles, 2 Register bookes, 1 table of degrees, 1 order of penance, 1 pulpit cloth, 1 Cushion, 2 Surplices, 1 table cloth, 1 napkin, 2 flagins; 2 plates, 2 trenchers, 1 greene carpete cloth for coiñunion table, 1 blacke cloth for funerals, 1 Houre glasse, 1 great chest to lay church goods in, 2 short Lathers [ladders], 1 Lather of about 28 pins at psonage broken, 2 Collecting boxes, 1 Act for Uniformitie of prayers, Articles and Bond for the Clocke, A deed for the purchase of the place for reeling deske, 1 hammer, 1 paire of pincers, 2 keyes for serving the bells, 3 Beares, 2 Covers for them.

Ri: Brocke }
Tho: Nailior }

Aprill the 2 1668

. . . . ed to William foster Crisifor Pinington now Church for this yeare these goods above mentioned James foster James Browne."

It appears that there had been a renewal of church furniture and ornaments in the year 1661, after the Restoration, as well as

552 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

a general repairing of the fabric of the church. The churchwardens' account book shews payments in that year of 8s. "to Mr. Hotham for a comon prayer book," 1s. 6d. "to Mr. Maior for a booke of canones," 9s. 8d. "for a comon prayer book for the clerk's use," £5 "to Deyne [the Dean ?] of Chester for the Church Bible;" 6s. 6d. "for a loade of slate;" £3 "for white lyming the church" and 7s. "for lyme;" £2 14s. 6d. "for glazing;" 8s. 2d. "to Robert Pemberton for mending leads, besides payments of 3s. and 1s. 8d. "for sodering &c.," and 16s. 6d. "to Will: Browne for a sheet of lead"; 5s. "for mending the chymes and dressing of bell loft;" 7s. "to Roger Keersley for mending steeple rooffe," £3 16s. 3d "to Mr. Jolly for cloeth for the comunion table serples [covering] and napkin with threed," 9s. "to Mrs. Rebeckah Rigbie for making the table cloeth serples and napkin;" 2s. "for mending of the clock;" 10s. "for ringing the 5th of November;" 5s. 8d. "for 2 plates for the comunion table in exchange of the chrisning bason," 6s. 6d. "for a two quart flagin for the comunion, and many payments for the church bells and apparatus." In the following year there had also been payments of 4d. "for two trenchers for the comunion," 8s. 6d. for (another) "newe comon prayer booke for the clarke," 2s. "for two books of Articles for Holland & Billinge," 1s. "for a book of uniformitie," £1 2s. 9d. "for a carpent cloth for the comunion table," 7s. 8d. "for mending pulpit doore and painting of the pulpit," and 6d. "for setting hookes & tape to the pulpit cloth." There were also heavy payments for the bells this year, amounting to £28 3s. 6d., including £4 4s. 6d. for ierne (iron) work about the bells, £11 "for hanging the bells," and £5 9s. 6d. to Jephraie Scott for casting the bell stpes and overweight.

There is no mention made in the schedule above given of either the clock or the bells, but there were certainly five bells at the parish church in 1668, one of which was usually called the Katherine bell.¹ One of the Parish church bells, which had been

¹ The first ring of bells that was completed in England was at *Croyland Abbey* in the tenth century; for *Turketule*, Abbot of Croyland, having caused a bell of prodigious

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 553

cracked, was recast in 1677. It is recorded in the churchwardens' account book that "one broken bell weighing cleaven hundred three score and five pounds" was delivered by John Baldwine and William Birchall (the churchwardens) unto William Scott, together with eight old bell steps "weighing seaven score and eight pounds." And the first items in the disbursements of the same year are :

"Paid unto William Scott for kesting (casting) the first bell £10 10s. 1st unto William Scott for overweight of the newe bell being six score and nineteene pounds at 1^s y^e pound £6 19s. 1st William Scott for kesting the bell steps and overweight £4 2s. *It* spent at the agreement for kesting of the newe bell 2^s 6^d. *It* spent of the workmen at y^e kesting of y^e bell 3^s 6^d. *It* spent of y^e weighing of y^e newe bell 2^s 6^d." So that the recasting of the first bell in 1677 cost the parish £21 19s. 6^d., besides the value of the old metal.

"In 1679 the chancellor's Act-book bears record to the patient benevolence with which bishop Pearson listened during a long summer's day, at Wigan, to the statement of a difficult parochial dispute about a stock of cows, which some well-meaning benefactor had bequeathed to a village community in Cheshire. After a full hearing of the cause, the vindicator of St. Ignatius did not disdain to employ his pen in writing down some good business-like rules for the prevention of future disputes, and the use and improvement of the stock ; and to give the arbitration more authority it was agreed to have it enrolled at Chester. The same book contains a notice of his leniency, in moderating the annual payment from a poor incumbent for the rebuilding of his parsonage, which is stated to have been burnt or destroyed by order of Prince Rupert, for the King's service in the late wars."¹

largeness to be made, which he called *Guthlac* ; *Egel* succeeding him, did about the year 976 add two large ones, called *Bartholomew* and *Bertin*, and also two mean ones, called *Turkisle* and *Tolwin*, and also two little ones called *Feqa* and *Beqa*, being seven, which being made of proportionable sizes, made together a most delightful harmony not to be equalled in the whole kingdom (*Dictionarium Britannicum*, by N. Bailey).

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. lxxvii.

554 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

In the year 1682, a useful addition to the parish church of Wigan was made by the acquisition of a vestry. On 10th of October of that year Richard Legh of Lyme, Esq., who owned the chapel adjacent to the northside of the chancel, then described as an ancient chapel in the parish church of Wigan, of which he was possessed as lord of the manor of Norley *alias* North Legh in the parish of Wigan, gave the same to John Lord bishop of Chester, rector of Wigan, John Keelinge of Wigan, gent., and William Blackburne of Blackeley-hurst, in the parish of Wigan aforesaid, gent., churchwardens, to be used as a vestry. The indenture witnesseth that the church being then destitute and in want of a vestry, the said chapel was made over for that purpose to the said rector and churchwardens and their successors for ever, in consideration of liberty, license, and authority, granted by the said rector and churchwardens, with the consent of the parishioners, to the said Richard Legh, his heirs and assigns to build, erect, set up and repair one decent and convenient gallery or loft in the said parish church, "between the greate north pillar of the said church and the wall that stands between the Bell free arch and the upper arch of the chapell belonging to Ince, for him the said Richard Legh, his heires, and assignes, to sitt stand and kneele in to hear divine service and sermons."† The signature of the bishop is witnessed by Richard Wroe, John Allen, Theo. Pearson, Robt. Callys, and John Thane; and those of John Keelinge and William Blackburne by Richard Wroe, Edward Herle, John Haisted, Edw. Holt, Rog. Bolton, and Thomas Banks.

It would appear that the Leigh chapel had been for some time disused, and was gradually falling into decay. There is an *item* of 10s. charged to the parish in the churchwardens' accounts of 1655-6 for "making up Sir Peter Lees' chansell"; and in 1660 a shilling is charged for going twice to Mr. Leigh about his chancel. These journeys were probably made in order to remonstrate with him about keeping it in decent repair. There is an

† Deed enrolled in the Diocesan Registry, Chester.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 555

item of £4 4s. 6d. in 1683, after the said chancell was transferred to the parishioners, paid to John Low, Hugh Laithwaite and others for work done in the vestry, and 3s. 2d. paid to Thomas Barton for a lock and key, &c., for the vestry door. In this year there was also a payment of £1 8s. 6d. made to Richard Ince for the "Communion Table and altering the pews;" and a sum of £3 17s. to Mathew Taylor for making and finishing the church wall between Richard Mort's house and Jonathan Bullock's house, besides sundry payments for stone, and carriage of the same.

In the accounts for the year 1685-6 there is an item of 1s. paid to Richard Mort "for a dosen of ale that day wich Monmouth was taken for the ringers" by order of the Mayor. The Mayor at that time was R. Bradshaigh¹

It is probable that Pearson had used his influence to get his church at Wigan restored, but did not live to see it accomplished. During the last year of his life, and within a few months of his death, there was a meeting of the parishioners held on 7th May, 1686 to consider this matter, which is thus entered into the vestry book :

"The seventh day of May Anno dñi. 1686. A generall meeting of the gentlemen and inhabitants of the parish of Wigan in the County of Lancaster touching the ellection of church warden and to consider of *Leyes for repaire of the said parish church.* Itt is agreed (that whereas Mr. Edward Holt was in Easter weeke last elected church warden for the said parish and since y^t time Mr. Henry Orret was elected in y^e steed of the said Mr. Holt) that the said Mr. Henry Orret shall stand and be church-warden for the said parish for this yeare, and that the said second election shall not hereafter bee drawne into president. (Signed) James Peake, curate, R. Bradshaigh, Wm. Banckes, Hugh Molyneux, Henry Browne, Ra. Culcheth, Richard Lowe, William Renicars, Hen. Watkinson."

They do not appear to have proceeded to the consideration of

¹ Sir Roger Bradshaigh, of Haigh, knighted 12 Car. II. and created a baronet 31 Car. II. He died 31st March, 1684.

556 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the leyes at this meeting. John Foster and Henry Orrett, the churchwardens, in their accounts for the following year acknowledge the receipt from the Bailiffs of Wigan and several constables within the parish of Wigan, of £42, being four church leyes allowed them; but this was not much more than they usually received, and there does not appear to have been any unusual outlay for repairs of the church except an item of £17 for lead work at the church, and a few other insignificant items.

There are but few imperfect notices, to be gleaned from the Chester Act-books, of the episcopal acts of bishop Pearson.

"During his whole episcopate he continued to employ the hours that could be spared from public duties in the service of sacred learning. The fruit of those labours, by which he resisted the encroachments of age, was displayed in his lifetime by the appearance of the '*Annales Cypriani*,' prefixed to Bishop Fell's excellent edition of Cyprian, published at Oxford in 1682, and reprinted a few years later at Amsterdam; and after his death by the two Dissertations on the Succession and Times of the first bishops of Rome, which formed the principal part of the *Opera Posthuma* edited by Dodwell. The Annals of St. Cyprian, like his other works, have continued to maintain the high respect which on their first appearance awaited them. There is the same untiring research, sifting of historical testimonies, and well weighed decision of disputed points, which we admire in the '*Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*.' A Leipsic scholar at the close of the last century, who praiseworthy attempted to revive the studies of ecclesiastical antiquity, while the world was neglecting them, could find no better way of offering to the student an historical and literary view of the life of Cyprian than by abridging Bp Pearson's Annals, 'which have ever been,' he says, 'and ever will be, esteemed among the learned as of the highest value.'¹ Bishop Pearson's peculiar excellence as a scholar lay in his abundant store of information from his extensive reading, and the judgment

¹ *Schönemann, Biblioth. Patr. Lat.*, vol. i. p. 78. Leipsic, 1792.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 557

which he had ever ready to bring to bear upon it, so as to distinguish always what was apposite by way of proof and illustration . . . The two Dissertations on the succession of the Roman bishops were evidently among the latest occupations of his pen ; and probably he was prevented, by the failure of his mind and memory in the last stage of his useful and honourable life, from supplying those few portions which are left unfinished."¹

There seems to be a prevailing impression that Pearson was in a state of imbecility for several years before he died. Burnet says that "he became a child some years before his death." But this expression is inaccurate, at least as to the length of the term of his grievous affliction, if it were intended to apply to anything besides bodily weakness. He was able to exercise his office in ordaining priests and deacons so late as 21st December, 1684 ; "so that it is not to be supposed that he was then suffering from anything more than that infirmity of body, of which he speaks in words penned by his own hand in the preamble of his Will six or seven years earlier . . . The truth probably is, that this last affliction came upon him in its first approach a little before June 18, 1685, when he directed the codicil to be added to His Will which is not written, as the Will itself is, in his own hand, the seizure having, as it seems, disabled him from using it. The tenor of that codicil, however, is such as to shew that it could not have been made by one whose mental faculties were then impaired."²

The last private record of his life is one which is given by bishop Kennett, on the report of Henry Dodwell, who edited his *Dissertations on the Succession of the Roman bishops* :

"He had before his death his understanding very much impaired, his senses in a manner gone. I well remember that Mr. Henry Dodwell, his great friend and fellow-labourer, once told me at his house within my parish of Shottesbrooke, Berks, that in his way to or from Ireland, he called to wait on the Bishop at his palace in Chester, and got into the library, and asked to see the Bishop. After much importunity, the

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, pp. lxxxviii, lxxxix.

² *Ibid.*

558 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Bishop was led in by an old woman, his nurse, and, taking no notice of Mr. Dodwell, he looked round upon the books, held out his hands, and cried, 'O sad, whose books are all these?' At which, said Mr. Dodwell, I was so surprised and so ashamed, that I went away without hearing another word from him."¹

The time of this visit "was probably after the middle of June, 1685; from which date (as it would seem) of a second paralytic seizure he remained under some decay of mind as well as body till July, 16, 1686, when he was released by death at Chester. His last episcopal act of institution is dated Sept. 3, 1685;² but it was in the following April that he appointed his chaplain Allen archdeacon of Chester."³

"It is a remarkable and not very creditable fact," as the late Dean Howson observes, "that for a long period, not only was there no monument whatever of bishop Pearson in Chester Cathedral, but even the spot of his sepulture was unknown. It was a tradition that he was buried at the East End of the choir: and this tradition was verified in 1844, during the preparations of the restorative work which was begun at that time. A coffin was found [within the altar rails] with a mitre and the initials S.P.; but both these initials and the large stature of the bishop there interred proved that he was Samuel Peploe."⁴ Another leaden coffin was found beneath, containing the body of Bishop Pearson wrapped in many folds of linen, which was uncovered in the presence of the late Canon Blomfield. It bore the inscription "J.P. Ep^{us}." The coffin of Bishop Peploe was placed over it in 1752. The remains were then replaced in the same spot, only deeper in the ground. Here they rested until their removal in 1860, when they were placed within the monument now standing in the north transept. This monument was originated by the Rev. E. Dyer

¹ Brit. Mus. *Lansdowne MS. G. 87*; quoted by Churton.

² The subsequent institutions, from Oct. 24, 1685, to June 28, 1686, appear to have been given by Dr. Wainwright, chancellor of the Diocese and the bishop's vicar general in spirituals.

³ Churton's *Memoir*.

⁴ *Handbook to Chester Cathedral*, by J. S. Howson, D.D., Dean. Chester (1882).

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 559

Green, the present rector of Bromborough, then curate of St. Oswald's. On entering the Diocese he had observed the absence of a memorial to the Bishop, and resolved to endeavour the erection of one. When, therefore, in February, 1859, he told the Bishop and Dean of his intentions, his proposal was accepted, and, with the aid of an influential committee, Mr. Green entered on the work, visiting both Universities to obtain support. The effort was successful, and ultimated in a magnificent monument designed by Mr. (now Sir) Arthur W. Blomfield, nephew of a former bishop of Chester. The recumbent effigy itself is a good likeness of the Bishop, while round the sides of the tomb are inserted carved heads of the twelve apostles, with sentences from the creed. The rich canopy and metal work are by Skidmore, of Coventry. Amongst the first subscribers to the design were Sir H. J. Gunning, the late rector of Wigan, and Mr. Keble, author of the *Christian Year*.

Burnet speaks of Pearson as "a judicious and grave preacher, more instructive than effective." This is the opinion of a young man on an old man; but it seems to prove that Burnet had heard him, and that, as we might judge from Evelyn and other sources, he was accustomed all his life to preach not very infrequently. "He was," says Burnet "a man of a spotless life, and of an excellent temper. He was not active in his diocese, but too remiss and easy in his episcopal functions; and was a much better divine than a bishop."¹ Such was Burnet's opinion, but the charge of remissness and activity is not borne out by facts. He was certainly wise in the choice of those whom he preferred. And the simple testimony of Laurence Echard, a less partial historian of the time is probably nearer the truth, who says that "he filled the bisbopric of Chester with great honour and reputation;" and that while he was corresponding with Bull, Bernard, and other learned scholars of a younger generation at a distance, he did not neglect the due administration of his episcopal trust,

¹ Hist. of his own Time, vol. i. pp. 694, 695.

560 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

while he admitted deserving clergymen to places of confidence, and intrusted the offices of dignity and authority in the diocese to those who were best qualified to discharge them.¹ His heavy literary labour, and latterly his bodily infirmities, must have in some measure interfered with his active bodily pursuits. However, Burnet has pronounced him to be "in all respects the greatest divine of his age," and Dr. Bentley is said to have declared that "his very dross was gold."

The late dean Burgon records, on the authority of the late bishop Jacobson, that there is a copy of Hesychius's *Lexicon* in the library of Chester Cathedral, on the title page of which Pearson has written, *Hesychiū integrū primo perlegi MDCLV. Iterum MDCLXVII. Mart. xxvi.*, shewing that he had read it through twice.²

Bishop Pearson bore for his arms; *argent, a chevron erminois between three leaves vert.*³

His will, as given by Churton, runs as follows :

"In the name of GOD, Amen, the second of January, in the yeere of our Lord, 1677. I, *John Pearson*, Bishop of Chester, being infirme, but in perfect memory, blessed be God! doe make, ordaine, and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following.

Imprimis I resigne my soul into the hands of my blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ, and my body to the earth, to be buried where and how my executors shall thinke fitt. *Item*, I give and bequeath all my lands and tenements of what tenure soever lying and being in or about the town of Great Snoring, in the county of Norfolk, to my loving brother *Theophilus Pearson* and to his heirs for ever, willing and requiring him, his heires, executors, administrators, and assignes, to allow and pay yeerly fifty pounds for the maintenance of my brother *Robert Pearson* during his life. *Item*, I give to each of my sisters, which shall be alive

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, vol. i. p. xvi.

² Burgon's "12 good men" vol. ii. p. 277.

³ Blazon of Episcopacy.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 561

after my decease twenty pounds, and to my neece *Wren*, and my neece *Dove*, to each a ring of ten pound price. *Item*, I give to my servant *William Jenning* over and above all wages due unto him at my death fifty pounds, together with all my wearing apparel of what kinde soever; and to every servant who shall have served me seven years, one whole yeere's wages, over and above all wages due to them; and to all my other servants one half yeere's wages. And lastly, I doe make, constitute and appoint my said loving brother *Theophilus Pearson*, and my nephew *Robert Callys*, executors of this my last will and testament written with mine own hande. In witness whereof I have sett my hand and seale this second day of January in the yeere of our Lord 1677.

John Cestriensis. ss. [Signed and sealed] in the presence of the testator and of us—*Rich. Wroe, Nath. Rashleygh, Will. Wilson, John Hulton.*"

(Thus far in his own hand; the codicil in another hand.)

"June the 18th, 1685.

The said John Lord Bishop of Chester, did then declare in the presence of us whose names are underwritten, that it was his will and desire that his nephew *John Thane* should have an hundred pounds, and that this his desire should be annexed as a codicil to his will.

He did also further declare in the presence of the said witnesses, that it was his will and desire that twenty pounds should be given to the poor of the parish of St. Oswald's in the city of Chester, and twenty pounds to the poor of the parish of Great Snoring in Norfolk. Witnesses. *John Allen, Robert Callys, William Jennings.*"

Proved before *Sir Thomas Exton*, knight, LL.D. Surrogate &c, Sept. 25, 1686, on the oaths of *Theophilus Pearson*, the brother, and *Robert Callys*, the nephew of the deceased.

Bishop Pearson appears to have had no children of his own. *Theophilus Pearson*, whom he made his heir, was his next brother. There is no record of the baptism of *Theophilus* at Great Snoring. He was sometime resident at Downham-Market, in Norfolk;

562 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

where his burial is recorded 5th March, 1696.¹ Robert Pearson, the next brother, who is also mentioned in the will, was baptized at Great Snoring 29th January, 1624-5.² Of the other relatives mentioned in the will, one of his nieces was probably the wife of Dr. Henry Dove, and the other the wife of Charles Wren, son or grandson of bishop Wren.³ Pearson had four sisters, Joanna, Margaret, Anne, and Rachel, one of whom was probably the mother of Robert Callys, and another was the mother of John Thane, who was promoted by his uncle to a stall in Chester Cathedral, and afterwards became archdeacon of Chester. His (Thane's) father was a physician at Lynne in Norfolk. Archdeacon Thane succeeded to most of bishop Pearson's books and papers, and became the editor of his posthumous chronological works. Robert Callys may perhaps have been the same with Mr. Callis a clergyman, and seemingly one of Pearson's curates at Wigan at the time of his death, who is mentioned by bishop Cartwright, in his Diary, as having come to meet him with the other curates on his first arrival at Wigan in 1686, and afterwards as one of his guests at the palace, Chester. Churton informs us that Robert Callys was Pearson's official secretary, and resided at Chester.

Bishop Pearson had also two younger brothers who predeceased him, viz., Richard and Martin; of whom Richard Pearson was educated at Eton; elected to King's College in 1646, of which society he continued fellow till his death; appointed keeper to the royal library of Charles II. in 1662; and sometime professor of civil law at Gresham College. He took his degree of D.C.L. in 1669, and died at Cambridge, 5th August, 1670. "He was a most excellent scholar," says Wood, who was personally acquainted with him, "a most admired Grecian, and a great traveller." Wood mentions a report that he died a Roman Catholic.

Martin Pearson, the other brother, was baptized at Great Snoring, 5th July, 1630; he was educated at Eton, and admitted

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, pp. xv, xvi.

² *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

³ *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 563

scholar of King's College, 26th August, 1648. He died of the small-pox while at college, 8th March, 1650, and was buried within the college chapel, leaving behind him the reputation of a youth of good parts and promise.¹

It remains to give a list of bishop Pearson's literary works, which is taken from archdeacon Churton's *Memoir* :

1. A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge at St. Mary's, on St. Luke xi. 2. f. A.D. 1643.
2. Christ's Birth not mistimed. Lond. 1649.
3. Preface to Lord Falkland's Treatises. Lond. 1651. Perhaps earlier.
4. Prolegomena in Hieroclem. Lond. 1655.
5. Papers on Schism Unmasked. Publ. at Paris, 1658.
6. The Patriarchal Funeral. A sermon on the death of George, Lord Berkeley. Lond. 1658.
7. Preface to Stokes's Explication of the Minor Prophets. Lond. 1659.
8. Preface to Hale's Remains. Lond. 1659.
9. Exposition of the Apostles' Creed. First printed Lond. 1659.
10. No Necessity of Reformation of the Public Doctrine of the Church of England. Lond. 1660.
11. Answer to Dr. Burges. Lond. 1660.
12. Præfatio ad Criticos Sacros. Lond. 1660.
13. Dedicatio et Præfatio ad Diog. Laertium Menagii. Lond. 1664.
14. Præfatio Parcænetica ad Vet. Testamentum. Cantabr. 1665.
15. Oratio ad Exsequias Matthæi Wrenn. Episc. Eliensis. 1667. Lansd. MSS.
16. Letter against Promiscuous Ordinations. Lond. 1668.
17. Lectiones de Deo et Attributis. Ab. A.D. 1661. MSS. Coll. Æn. Nas.

¹ Churton's *Memoir*, p. xvi.

554 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

In the year 1682, a useful addition to the parish church of Wigan was made by the acquisition of a vestry. On 10th of October of that year Richard Legh of Lyme, Esq., who owned the chapel adjacent to the northside of the chancel, then described as an ancient chapel in the parish church of Wigan, of which he was possessed as lord of the manor of Norley *alias* North Legh in the parish of Wigan, gave the same to John Lord bishop of Chester, rector of Wigan, John Keelinge of Wigan, gent., and William Blackburne of Blackeley-hurst, in the parish of Wigan aforesaid, gent., churchwardens, to be used as a vestry. The indenture witnesseth that the church being then destitute and in want of a vestry, the said chapel was made over for that purpose to the said rector and churchwardens and their successors for ever, in consideration of liberty, license, and authority, granted by the said rector and churchwardens, with the consent of the parishioners, to the said Richard Legh, his heirs and assigns to build, erect, set up and repair one decent and convenient gallery or loft in the said parish church, "between the greate north pillar of the said church and the wall that stands between the Bell free arch and the upper arch of the chapell belonging to Ince, for him the said Richard Legh, his heires, and assigns, to sitt stand and kneele in to hear divine service and sermons."¹ The signature of the bishop is witnessed by Richard Wroe, John Allen, Theo. Pearson, Robt. Callys, and John Thane; and those of John Keelinge and William Blackburne by Richard Wroe, Edward Herle, John Halsted, Edw. Holt, Rog. Bolton, and Thomas Banks.

It would appear that the Leigh chapel had been for some time disused, and was gradually falling into decay. There is an *item* of 10s. charged to the parish in the churchwardens' accounts of 1655-6 for "making up Sir Peter Lees' chansell"; and in 1660 a shilling is charged for going twice to Mr. Leigh about his chancell. These journeys were probably made in order to remonstrate with him about keeping it in decent repair. There is an

¹ Deed enrolled in the Diocesan Registry, Chester.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 555

item of £4 4s. 6d. in 1683, after the said chancell was transferred to the parishioners, paid to John Low, Hugh Laithwaite and others for work done in the vestry, and 3s. 2d. paid to Thomas Barton for a lock and key, &c., for the vestry door. In this year there was also a payment of £1 8s. 6d. made to Richard Ince for the "Communion Table and altering the pews;" and a sum of £3 17s. to Mathew Taylor for making and finishing the church wall between Richard Mort's house and Jonathan Bullock's house, besides sundry payments for stone, and carriage of the same.

In the accounts for the year 1685-6 there is an item of 1s. paid to Richard Mort "for a dosen of ale that day wich Monmouth was taken for the ringers" by order of the Mayor. The Mayor at that time was R. Bradshaigh¹

It is probable that Pearson had used his influence to get his church at Wigan restored, but did not live to see it accomplished. During the last year of his life, and within a few months of his death, there was a meeting of the parishioners held on 7th May, 1686 to consider this matter, which is thus entered into the vestry book :

"The seventh day of May Anno dñi. 1686. A generall meeting of the gentlemen and inhabitants of the parish of Wigan in the County of Lancaster touching the election of church warden and to consider of *Leyes for repaire of the said parish church.* Itt is agreed (that whereas Mr. Edward Holt was in Easter weeke last elected church warden for the said parish and since y^e time Mr. Henry Orret was elected in y^e steed of the said Mr. Holt) that the said Mr. Henry Orret shall stand and be church-warden for the said parish for this yeare, and that the said second election shall not hereafter bee drawne into president. (Signed) James Peake, curate, R. Bradshaigh, Wm. Banckes, Hugh Molyneux, Henry Browne, Ra. Culcheth, Richard Lowe, William Renicars, Hen. Watkinson."

They do not appear to have proceeded to the consideration of

¹ Sir Roger Bradshaigh, of Haigh, knighted 12 Car. II. and created a baronet 31 Car. II. He died 31st March, 1684.

566 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

have been, of all the Anglican divines, the one who "had the largest share of his good graces." Consequently very soon after his accession to the throne as James II. Cartwright was nominated to the see of Chester in succession to bishop Pearson. His appointment was very unpopular; so much so that an ineffectual attempt was made to prevent his consecration. He was duly consecrated, however, at Lambeth, on 17th October, 1686, by Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, Crewe, bishop of Durham, Lloyd, bishop of Norwich, Turner, bishop of Ely, and Spratt, bishop of Rochester, together with John Lloyd, bishop of St. Davids, and Samuel Parker, bishop of Oxford.¹

At the consecration the archbishop tripped and fell during the administration of the Holy Communion, which was held by some to be an evil omen.² Cartwright was allowed to hold the rectory of Wigan and the vicarage of Barking *in commendam* with his bishopric.

The King's letter to the archbishop of Canterbury to that effect was dated before his consecration :

" James R.

Our will and pleasure is, that you grant your Dispensation to the Right Reverend Father in God Thomas Lord Bishop Elect of Chester to hold the Rectory of Wigan in our County of Lancaster and the Diocese of Chester and the Vicaridge of Barking in our County of Essex and the Diocese of London *in commendam* together with the Bishoprick of Chester, with all the Rights Profits and Advantages thereunto belonging. And for so doing this shall be your Warrant. Given at our Court at Windsor the 29th day of September 1686 in the Second year of Our Reigne.

By his Maities command

Sunderland."³

Bishop Cartwright thus describes his appointment to the bishopric in the first words of his own *Diary*.⁴

¹ Le Neve's *Facts; Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum.*

² *Dic. Nat. Biogr.*

³ Local Gleanings relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, vol. 1. p. 264.

⁴ *Diary* of Dr. Thomas Cartwright, bishop of Chester, commencing at the time of

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 567

“August 11. King James the Second, my most gracious master, called me aside in his bed chamber at Windsor this morning, and promised me the Bishoprick of Chester, and he published the same in the Cabinet Council on Sunday the 22nd of August; and declared Dr. Samuel Parker at the same time to be Bishop of Oxon, and we kissed the King's, Queen's, and Princess Anne of Denmark's hands that night at Windsor.”

The bishop left London in the following November to take possession of his bishopric and his benefice of Wigan. On riding from Ripon, where he previously repaired in order to take leave of his friends in that neighbourhood, he passed through Bolton on the 26th, “where,” he says, “the vicar, Mr. Lever, and others, met me and accompanied me over the moors to the Ferry's inn at the 4 Cards in Hilton, where my son John, and *Mr. Callis, Mr. Peake, and Mr. Turner*, curates of Wigan, met me.” [Nov.] “27. I came to Wigan before noon, was met 3 miles off by the mayor and aldermen, and several neighbouring gentlemen; and on my entrance into town was saluted with an elegant speech in Latin, and as well delivered, by *Mr. Shaw* the schoolmaster; after which having visited the parsonage house, to which they accompanied me, and sealed a mandate to *Mr. Peake* to induct me, I returned to the church, was inducted, and heard morning prayer, after dined with some of my brethren of the clergy, was presented¹ and visited by the mayor and aldermen, Mr. Standish, Sir William Gerard,² and several other gentlemen, then went to evening prayers in my own chapel. I granted, or confirmed what my predecessor had done under hand and seal, to John Laithwaite, the sexton's place of Wigan, *quamdiu se bene gesserit.*” [Nov.] “28. I preached at Wigan, and read the prayers and

his elevation to that see, August, 1686, and terminating with the Visitation of St. Mary Magdalene College, Oxford, October, 1687; edited by the Rev. Joseph Hunter for the Camden Society, 1843.

¹ What is to be understood by “presented” will appear in the notice of what passed on the 2nd of December, when the bishop arrived at Chester.

² The fourth baronet.

568 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

thirty-nine articles, and my son John preached there also in the afternoon. Was presented by several of the mayor, aldermen, &c., and recorder, who dined with me; and their wives waited on mine at night." [November] "29. I went from Wigan towards Chester, accompanied by the mayor and aldermen, and my brethren of the clergy, and lodged at Frodsham; from whence I was conducted, 30 Nov., by the high sheriff and governor, and a great train of the gentry on horseback, and ten coaches, into the city, the guards drawn up from the gates to the palace, and was visited by most of the gentlemen and ladies about the city. December 1. I was sung into the cathedral by the choir in procession, and enthroned by Mr. Dean,¹ and sung back into the palace after prayers. The warden of Manchester and three other clergymen dined with me and Mr. Brookes; and I made a visit to the governor of the Castle, with Sir John Arderne and Mr. Dean, in the evening. 2. After prayers and sitting in the consistory, Sir Rowland Stanley, his brother Francis, Mr. Egerton, Sir Philip Egerton, and Mr. Cholmley, and ten other gentlemen, dined with me; and after dinner the mayor and aldermen brought me a present of 8 sugar loaves, 1 dozen of canary, 1 doz. of white wine, and 2 of claret, and were merry with me till 7 at night, and many ladies visited my wife."² On the 5th December (being Sunday), he "had Mr. Callis and his family, Mr. Peake and his wife to dinner." On the next day he wrote to his cousin Peter Whalley of making his cousin Peter Haddon curate of Wigan at £40 *per an.*, and the perquisites of a reader; and discharged Mr. Peake from attending the cure any longer than till Christmas, because he is vicar of Bowden.³ On 13th January, 1686-7, Mr. Herle came from Wigan and desired the bishop's leave for Mr. Leigh to build a gallery in Wigan church according to the grant made by his (Cartwright's) predecessor (bishop Pearson) to which he gave his consent.⁴ On 21st March, 1686-7 he records: "Mr. Shaw and Mr. John Sumpner supped with me, and I gave Mr.

¹ Dr. James Arderne, installed July, 1682; died 18 August, 1691.

² Cartwright's *Diary*, pp. 14, 15.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 569

Sumpner a license to be schoolmaster at Wigan, upon the feoffees' presentation."¹

It appears from his *Diary* that he used much hospitality in his palace at Chester, and frequently entertained the neighbouring gentry, whom he also visited in their houses. On 28th April, 1687, he started on his journey to attend parliament in London, where he remained until after its dissolution in July. He paid many visits on his way to London, and among others to his Wigan patron; on March 29th he writes: "We went to Sir John Bridgeman's² to dinner, where we met his son Lloyd,³ and were very nobly entertained; from thence we went to Litchfield, where we met my aunt Haddon,⁴ my cousin Stafford, honest Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. Holliland, his son-in-law, and my brother Knightley's man, with a kind invitation to Charleton. We supped with the bishop of Litchfield, and lodged at the Star."⁵ The next day he went to Charleton, which seems to have been the residence of his brother Knightley.⁶

Bishop Cartwright arrived in London just four days after the publication of the famous "Declaration for liberty of conscience" in the *Gazette*.⁷

¹ Cartwright's *Diary* p. 39.

² Sir John Bridgeman, 2nd baronet, of Castle Bromwich, near Birmingham, son of the Lord Keeper Sir Orlando Bridgeman, and practically the patron of Wigan church.

³ Robert Lloyd, of Aston, co. Salop, Esq., married Mary eldest daughter of Sir John Bridgeman, by whom he had an only son Robert Lloyd, of Aston, Esq., who died unmarried in 1734.

⁴ In the course of this journey, chiefly in Northamptonshire, and afterwards in London, he speaks of meeting many relatives, whom I am unable to identify. They were perhaps related to him through one of his wives. His aunt Haddon was probably the mother of his cousin Peter Haddon, whom he seems to have made his curate at Wigan a few months before. She may have been the same with Katherine Haddon (late wife of Richard Haddon), who was buried in Sutton church, co. Northampton, in 1698 (*Baker's Northamptonshire*).

⁵ *Diary*, p. 41.

⁶ "Brother Knightley" was probably the Rev. Richard Knightley, rector of Charwelton or Charleton, co. Northampton, from 1663 to 1695, who was also rector of Byfield and prebendary of Durham (*Baker's Northamptonshire*, vol. i. p. 299).

⁷ *Dic. Nat. Biogr.*

570 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

The entries in his *Diary* at this time shew that he was constantly in communication with the Roman Catholic bishop Lambourne and fathers Ellis and Petre, and there is but little doubt that he was involved in the plot for establishing the Roman Supremacy. He strongly upheld King James's policy throughout, and used his utmost endeavours to obtain addresses thanking the King for the promises contained in the declaration of protecting the Church of England. His letter to the mayor of Wigan in this behalf is preserved in the British Museum.¹ It runs as follows:

"Mr. Mayor,

May 31, 1687, London.

I, finding that the King expects addresses from the several Corporations in the Kingdom, as well as from the clergy, and that he graciously accepts them, thought myself obliged to give you notice of it; and have accordingly sent you a form, which you may either subscribe or alter more to your own minds; not doubting but that you and the rest of your brethren, who have formerly been so eminent for your loyalty, will readily embrace this occasion of expressing your duty to God and the King, by which you will shew yourselves true sons of the Church of England, and oblige

Your affectionate friend to serve you,

THO. CESTRIENSIS."

The town of Wigan responded to his invitation, and on 15th June he records in his *Diary* that he received the Wigan address,² which he carried to Windsor, and delivered to the King on the 18th. "His Majesty received it very graciously, and gave great commendations of the constant loyalty of the Church of England, and renewed his promises of protecting it."³

Bishop Cartwright returned to his diocese in July 1687, having left London on the 17th. He tells us that he again dined with Sir John Bridgeman on his return journey. On the 26th July: "I went from Coventry to Castle Bromage, where I was kindly entertained by Sir John Bridgman, and went from thence to the Four Crosses, a dear inn."⁴ On the 8th of August he says: "I

¹ Add. MSS., art. 37. 4164.

² *Diary*, p. 61.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Diary*, p. 68.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 571

went from Chester to Wigan; dined with Mr. Shaw at Warrington, carried Mr. Massey along with me, and supped at Wigan." Next day "the Lord Molineux sent me a fat buck to Wigan; I dined there with Mr. Mayor and the Recorder; went to the church to prayers. After dinner called at Mr. Stanley's, and went to the Anchor at Preston."¹ He breakfasted at Wigan on his way back to Chester on the 16th, and this was probably the last time he ever came to Wigan. King James II. paid the bishop a visit at Chester on the 27th of August, and remained there till the 30th. The bishop says: "I met him at the palace gates, attended by the dean and prebends, and about forty more of the clergy, and afterwards introduced them to kiss his hand, Mr. Dean making an excellent speech to him. Then his Majesty went and viewed the choir; after that the castle, to which he walked on foot, and then returned to supper, and I waited at his cushion till I saw him in bed."² On the 28th he says; "I was at his Majesty's levee; from whence, at nine o'clock I attended him to the choir, where he healed 350 persons." On the day of his departure he again healed 450 people in the choir of the Cathedral. Among these there appear to have been some Wiganers, for in the churchwardens' account book there was until lately the following entry: "1687. August 26. An account of certificates given to persons within this town and parish of Wigan to be touched for the King's Evil by King James the second att Chester city."—Here followed the names of twenty-one persons,—men, women, and children.³

The Wigan churchwardens' account book shews a payment for

¹ *Diary*, p. 70. Mr. Robert Forde appears to have been the Mayor of Wigan at this time.

² *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³ *History of Wigan*, by David Sinclair, vol. ii. p. 156; printed at Wigan in 1883. Mr. Sinclair by mistake quotes from the parish register. He tells me, however, that the book from which he copied the entry was the churchwardens' account book. It is not now to be found in either register or churchwardens' book, but there appears to have been a leaf extracted from the latter at this date, and we fear it must have been stolen by some evil-disposed person while searching the books at the vestry.

572 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

ringing the bells on the King's birthday (15th October) this year by order of the mayor.¹ In that month "Cartwright's services were called into active employment in support of the King's policy. James, by an illegal act of his supremacy, had established the court of high commission for ecclesiastical causes, which had been specially forbidden by two acts of parliament. Sancroft had been named a commissioner, but had refused to act, and on 17 October, 1687, Cartwright was put in his place. The famous quarrel between the King and Magdalen College, Oxford (the fellows of which had refused to elect as president the King's nominee, but had elected one of their own body, Dr. Hough), was then in full progress. Cartwright, together with C. J. Wright and Baron Jenner, was sent on a special commission to Oxford, to bring the fellows to order. The commissioners reached Oxford on 20th October, and next day Cartwright summoned the fellows before him and made them a set speech, telling them that they had sinned against their own souls by their disobedience to so beneficent a monarch, and bidding them at once submit to his will. Dr. Hough was then called and told that his election was void, and ordered to quit his lodgings. He appealed formally to the courts of law. Parker, bishop of Oxford, the King's nominee,

¹ In December of that year there was a payment shewn in the churchwardens' accounts of 8*d.* "for a booke to be red concerning the Queen," which was probably a prayer for the birth of a son to succeed to the throne. Subsequently there was a payment of 5*s.* "for ringeing on thanksgiving day for the Queene," which was probably the result of a proclamation that the Queen was *enccinte*. Prince James Francis Edward was born 10th June, 1688, and in that month the churchwardens charge the parish 8*d.* "for a Prayer booke for *supposed* P: of Wales." The wording of this last entry clearly refers to a calumnious report circulated at the time, that the King had imposed on the world a supposititious child for the sake of depriving his daughter, the Princess of Orange, of the right of succession. This entry seems to imply that the parishioners of Wigan were not in accord with the views of their rector. This is also shewn by an entry of 10*s.* "to the ringers that day newse came the bishops were freed;" that is the seven bishops who had been imprisoned by the King for protesting against the publication of the Declaration of Indulgence, which they considered to be illegal. They were acquitted by the jury who tried them on 29th June, amid the acclamations of the people.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 573

was then installed by proxy, and the fellows were ordered to accept him. As almost the whole of them refused to do this, the commissioners were obliged to visit Oxford a second time (15th November). Cartwright again made a speech asserting that the King was *Supreme Ordinary*, and that his power over-rode all laws and statutes. The fellows, however, were still contumacious, and all, with the exception of three, were expelled. On 10th of December, they were pronounced by the commissioners sitting at Whitehall to be incapable of all preferment.

Cartwright was probably one of those who advised King James to order the clergy to read the declaration for liberty of conscience in their churches, an order which led to such momentous consequences. When the order was published and the bishops were consulting as to their line of action, we find from Lord Clarendon's *Diary* that they suspected Cartwright, and would not speak before him. He was so ignorant of their intentions that he appears to have told King James, when the bishops came with their remonstrance, that they only wished to protest against having duties thrown upon them which properly belonged to their chancellors. In consequence of this they were readily received by the King. When the clergy generally refused to read the declaration, the bishop of Chester by vigorous exertions obtained an address from about thirty clergy in his diocese censuring the conduct of the seven bishops, and expressing their loyal acquiescence in the King's policy. Cartwright and the ecclesiastical commissioners also made an attempt to censure the clergy who had refused to obey, and (13 July, 1688) made an order calling for returns of those who had read, and those who had refused to read, the declaration. No returns being forthcoming they repeated their order (16 August), but the storm of popular indignation soon swept them away, one of the King's first acts of concession being to abolish the illegal court. Cartwright was present when the King summoned the bishops to declare that they had not visited the Prince of Orange.

After the flight of the King, the unpopularity of the bishop of Chester was so great that he did not dare to remain in England.

574 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Some time in December, 1688, he followed his master to St. Germain, where he was allowed to read the English liturgy to the few protestants who had rallied round the deposed monarch. On the death of Seth Ward, bishop of Salisbury, James nominated Cartwright to this see, a promotion which, it need not be said, never took effect. Cartwright accompanied James to Ireland, landing there 12 March, 1689. On Palm Sunday, 24 March, he went to Dublin with James, and on Easter day was present at the services in Christ church cathedral. Soon after his arrival in Dublin, Cartwright was attacked by dysentery, of which he died on 15th April, 1689. The greatest efforts were made on his death bed to convert him to the Romish faith, but without success. Though such a strong supporter of the Romanists, he seems to have never been shaken in his own views.¹ On the day after his death, "his body was carried early in the morning from the house where he died to that of the bishop of Meath, which was near, where several rooms were hung with black; and that where the body lay was furnished with many lights in sconces, and eight large tapers on stands about the body, which was covered with a fair velvet pall. In the afternoon all the nobility, clergy, judges and gentry, of both religions, that were in the town, among whom were the Earl of Powis and the lord chancellor, came thither: and about six in the evening his body was carried in a velvet hearse drawn by six horses cloathed in black, and attended by the king-at-arms, the aforesaid company in near 30 coaches, and a multitude of common people, to Christ Church in Dublin, where the sub-dean and choir met the body at the church door and sung it into the choir, which was very much crowded. The service was solemnly performed with several anthems, and the body afterwards interr'd in the north-east end of the choir, by the bishop of Meath in his episcopal habit."²

The costs incurred at the church for the funeral of bishop Cartwright were paid by King James II. The following is a copy of

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography.*

² *Wood's Athens.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 575

the bill, which is taken from the original, bound up amongst bishop Dopping's correspondence, in two volumes, in the public library at Armagh, and sent to me by the Rev. W. Reynell.

"funeral charges at the church for the interm^t of the late
Bisshop of Chester.

To the Deane for the Pall

For breaking the ground } to the Deane
 } to the Economy

for attendance to the 12 vicars 10s. each	06.	00.	00
to the deanes Vicar for reading Prayers & burying	01.	00.	00
to the boys for attendance	00.	10.	00
to the Organist	00.	10.	00
to the Master of the Song	00.	10.	00
to the Organ blower	00.	02.	06
	<hr/>		
	08.	12.	6
To the Verger & sexton	1.	02.	6
for ringing the bells & making the grave		10.	0
	<hr/>		
	1.	12.	6

Tot. 10. 5

Mem. that Duke Powis^d for the Coffin & procured Sir Richard Carney's discharge for 10 pound.

A. M.¹

Bishop Cartwright was three times married, but there is some confusion about the names of his wives. According to the funeral certificate at Dublin,² which was certified by "Edward West of Dublin near Relacon of the defunct," his first wife was "Elizabeth^a of Robert White, Esq., of Barton in com. Essex, by whom

¹ These initials stand for Anthony Milensis, *i.e.*, Anthony Dopping, bishop of Meath. Sir Richard Carney was Ulster king-of-arms. Duke Powis was William Herbert, 3rd Baron Powis, of Powis Castle, created by James II. Earl and Marquis of Powis. He attached himself to the fortunes of his royal master James II., by whom he was further advanced to the dukedom of Powis, but this title was never recognized in England.

² Funeral Certificate, U. O., Dublin Castle, vol. 300. p. 195.

576 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

he had issue (amongst others) John Cartwright (eldest) son who mar^d . . . da^r of y^e Lord Leicester.¹ The s^d L^d B^p had to his 2nd wife . . . da^r of . . . by whome he had left issue. He took to his 3rd wife Sarah da^r of . . . by whome he had noe issue." But that this certificate was inaccurate would appear from a letter to Sir Bernard Burke, written from the Herald's College, London, 18th June, 1863, and signed Geo. Harrison, Windsor Herald, in which it is stated that bishop Cartwright's first wife was named Mary, by whom he had issue two sons and two daughters, and that she was buried at Barking, 3rd December, 1661. His 2nd wife was Sarah, daughter of Henry Wight, of Barking, in Essex, to whom he was married there, 27th May, 1662, and by whom he had five sons and three daughters. His 3rd wife was Frances, sister of Thomas Barnard, whom he married in 1684.²

There is a copy of bishop Cartwright's seal appended to his funeral certificate. It bears for the see of Chester, *gules 3 mitres or*, and for Cartwright, *ermine a fesse between 3 canon balls sable fired proper*. These are the bearings of Cartwright of Aynho, in Northamptonshire, but the bishop's relationship to the Cartwrights of Aynho is obscure. The legend on the seal runs thus: *Sigillum Thomæ Cartwright Episcopi Cestriensis, 1686*. His will, which was dated 1st September, 1688, was proved 12th June, 1689. In his *Diary*, bishop Cartwright mentions besides his eldest son John, five other sons, Richard, Gervas, Charles, Thomas, Henry, and two daughters, Alicia and Sarah. He also mentions his father [in law] Wright, his brothers [in law] Knightley, Milner,³ Pemberton, Stow, and Barnard, his sister Barnard,

¹ This was probably Anne, daughter of Robert Sydney, 4th Earl of Leicester, K. B. (see *Perage of England, or an Historical and Genealogical Account of the Present Nobility*; printed by G. F. for Abel Roper and Arthur Collins, at the Black-boy in Fleet street, 1709, in which the said Anne, one of the eight daughters of the said Earl of Leicester, is said to have married *Cart.*, a divine).

² *Ex. inf.* Rev. W. Reynell. This letter has been inserted in the volume of Funeral Certificates in Ulster's office, Dublin Castle, vol. xiv. p. 285, by Sir Bernard Burke, by whose permission it was copied by Mr. Reynell in 1830.

³ Dr. Milner, vicar of Leeds.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 577

his Aunt Haddon, and his cousins Peter Whalley, Haddon, St. Ives, Gardiner, Fletcher, Backwell, Mason, Welsh and Wiseman.

Bishop Burnet sums up the character of bishop Cartwright in these words: "He was a man of good capacity, and had made some progress in learning. He was ambitious and servile, cruel and boisterous: and by the great liberties he allowed himself, he fell under much scandal of the worst sort. He had set himself long to raise the King's authority above law; which, he said, was only a method of government to which Kings might submit as they pleased; but their authority was from God, absolute and superior to law, which they might exert, as oft as they found it necessary for the ends of government. So he was looked on as a man that would more effectually advance the design of popery than if he should turn over to it. And indeed, bad as he was, he never made that step, even in the most desperate state of his affairs."¹

There is an original portrait of bishop Cartwright, painted by G. Soest, which is now (1889) in the possession of the Rev. F. O. White, of 43, Arundel Square, Barnsbury. It has been engraved by J. Becket. There is another portrait of him at Queen's College, Oxford.

The works of bishop Cartwright now extant, as given by Anthony à Wood, are several sermons, as (1) *God's arraignment of Adam*, on Gen. iii. 9. Lond. 1659, 4to. (2) *Sermon before the King at Whitehall*, on Jude 22, 23. Lond. 1676, 4to. [Bodl. 4to D. 42 Th.] (3) *Sermon in the Cathedral church of St. Peter in York, before the judges of Assize*, on Judges xvii. 16. Lond. 1677, 4to. (4) *Sermon preached at Holyrood House*, 30 Jan., 1681, before her highness the Lady Anne, on Acts vii. 60. Edinb. & Lond. 1682, 4to. The author was then with James, Duke of York, who, with his consort and the Lady Anne his daughter, were retired to that place upon the command of his majesty to put a stop to the fury of the faction then driving on their designs

¹ Burnet's *History of his Own Time*, vol. i. pp. 695, 696, ed. of 1724.

578 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

upon the prosecution of the popish plot. (5) *Sermon preached to the gentlemen of Yorkshire at Bow Church.* Lond., 24 June, 1684, on Prov. xxiv. 21, 22. Lond. 1684, 4to. (6) *Sermon preached upon the anniversary solemnity of the happy inauguration of K. James II. in the Collegiat church of Rippon,* 6 Feb., 1685, on 1 Kings viii. 66. Lond. 1686, 4to. [Bodl. C. 17. 6. Luic.] There is also extant (7) *a sermon* on 2 Chron. vii. 9, 10, and (8) *a speech* under his name *spoken to the Society of Magdalen College,* 16 Nov., 1687. In addition to these there are given in the Biblio. Brit., *a sermon on the Danger of Riches,* from Matt. xix. 24. 1662, 4to; and *an answer to a Minister of the Church of England, to a seasonable and important Question about Religion, &c.* Lond. 1687, fol., anon., but ascribed to him.

I have also in my possession in *MS.*, "A sermon preacht before his Maiesty by Tho. Cartwright, D.D., one of his Maiesties Chaplains in Ordinary" on 1 Cor. xvi. 14, and dedicated "To the Right Honourable and truly Noble Richard Lord Vaughan, Earl of Carbery Lord President of Wales and one of his Maiesty's most Honourable Privy Counsell." This *MS.* was bought at the sale of the late Mr. J. E. Bailey's books at Manchester, in 1889. It was probably preached in 1685 or 1686.

The church of Wigan was practically void from December, 1688, when Cartwright left the country, till September, 1689, during which time the parish was left in charge of Peter Haddon, the curate, whose name occurs in the vestry book (or churchwardens' account book) until April, 1691, towards the close of which year he was instituted to the vicarage of Bolton-le-Moors.

NICHOLAS STRATFORD, who succeeded Cartwright as bishop of Chester and rector of Wigan in 1689, was born at Hemel-Hempsted, in Hertfordshire, and baptized there 8th September, 1633. According to Anthony à Wood he was the son of

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 579

Nicholas Stratford, draper,¹ and Anne his wife. He was admitted scholar of Trinity College, Oxford, 17th June, 1650,² took his B.A. degree 25th January, 1653, his M.A. degree in 1656, and was elected fellow of his college in the same year.³ Having taken holy orders, he became, according to à Wood, "a noted preacher." He afterwards married a relative of Dr. John Dolben, who became bishop of Rochester in 1666, and by his interest was made warden of Manchester College in the following year. According to the Register of the Collegiate Church, "on the 29 Aug., 1667, Nicholas Stratford, B.D., was instituted Warden of Christ Church College, Manchester, and at the same time did take the oath according to the statutes."⁴ He had become B.D. on 29th November, 1664.⁵

On the 14th of December, shortly after he was made warden, he exchanged the warden's house with Mr. Birch, one of the fellows, in order that he might reside near to the Collegiate Church.⁶

In the year 1667, owing to a variety of opinions prevailing on the subject, he and his chapter decided that the warden had power to grant the use of the pulpit to any clergyman, and in the warden's absence the permission of the senior fellow in residence was to be first obtained.

On the 10th of February, 1667-8, he undertook, almost as a voluntary act, to provide "man, horse, and arms," for the king's service, and induced the chapter to allow £10 a year for the same purpose. At the same time he advocated, with remarkable moderation, a point of church order which had not been observed during the late rebellion, but which he succeeded in restoring.

¹ Wood's *Athens*. According to Le Neve the bishop's father was a shoemaker. (*Memoranda in Heraldry*, see *Herald and Genealogist*, vol. iii. p. 264); probably the two trades were united in him.

² *Rectors of Manchester and Wardens of the Collegiate Church of that Town*, by the late Rev. F. R. Raines, vol. ii. p. 139. (Chetham Soc., New Series, vol. vi.)

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

580 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

At the Holy Eucharist the elements had been administered to the communicants in the choir, but not kneeling before the altar, and he induced the chapter to relax the old order, and the parishioners to assent to the new, that "all communicants for the future should come up to the Rails to receive the Holy Sacrament."

In the time of warden Herrick, the surplice had been disused in the church, but warden Stratford and the chapter ordered (29 April, 1668) that the chaplains for the future should perform "all services at churchings, christenings, weddings and burials, in their *surplices*." Again, the antiphonal mode of singing, and the old chanting so long disused in the choir, was carefully restored by him, and he did much to improve the music of the church.¹

He was also instrumental in promoting the observance of the three political occasional services in the Prayer Book (which have lately been withdrawn by the authority of parliament in 1858), and it was ordered by the chapter, at his instigation, that the 30th January, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, the 29th May, and the 5th November should be yearly supplied with preaching in the Collegiate Church; if the warden preached, he was to receive 20s. for each sermon, if any of the fellows, he was to receive 15s., and if one of the chaplains, 10s.²

In the year 1668 the several incumbents of the parish of Manchester were summoned by him, in a friendly spirit, to appear in the Chapter House, and although it seems rather an episcopal than a decanal act, he required and enjoined them to attend strictly to their cures, to take due care of their register books, to render an account of their fees, and to pay due and becoming submission to their mother church of Manchester; also to attend to the rubrics of the Prayer Book, which had been greatly

¹ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. pp. 141, 142 (from Coll. Reg.).

² *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. pp. 143, 144. It would seem as if this order was not strictly observed, as regarded preaching, or had fallen into disuse after Stratford's resignation, for on 28th October, 1675, the same order was renewed and the sermons required to be preached, especially that on the 5th of November.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 581

violated and disregarded. He felt the importance of the residence of the clergy on their benefices, and not only resided himself, but on the 20th of May, 1668, as also on the 19th of September, 1677, he made arrangements to "increase the patrimony" and "enforce the residence" of the fellows "by providing houses for them."¹

As "*Nich. Stratford, cleric. Guardian. Eccl'ia Colleg. Mancun.*" he personally answered the call at the bishop's visitation on the 21st of March, 1669.²

As Nicholas Stratford, clerk, S.T.B., he was admitted to the prebend of Leicester St. Margaret in Lincoln Cathedral, to which he was collated on 26th March, and instituted on 7th April, 1670,³ and in 1671 he became sinecure rector of Llansantffraid-yn-Mechain.⁴

Whilst at Manchester, he was exceedingly popular with the chapter of the college, and there are several instances recorded of the liberality and good feeling of the fellows towards him. He was always considerate towards the chaplains, whose incomes were small, and several times improved and augmented their stipends without any obligation to do so.⁵

He was a good administrator of the college, of business views and practical habits, and always endeavoured to improve the constitution of the chapter and promote its usefulness. With neighbours he availed himself of his means to benefit his parishioners, and his own charities appear to have been large, as it is recorded by one of his contemporaries that "he was very laborious, and extraordinarily charitable, affable and humble in his place, and generally beloved."⁶ It is also said that "his compassionate

¹ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 142.

² *Ibid.*, from Bishop's Visitation Call. (*MS.* in *cur. Ep. Ebor.*)

³ Wood's *Athena*; and Le Neve's *Fasti* (in Duffus Hardy's edition of which he is erroneously styled S.T.P., having not then taken his doctor's degree.)

⁴ *History of St. Asaph*, by Rev. D. R. Thomas, p. 243.

⁵ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. pp. 141, 142.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143 (from Assheton's *MS.*).

582 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

heart and liberal hand led others to practice the duty of almsgiving; and several substantial memorials of his benevolent exhortations still remain as a blessing to the indigent" of the parish of Manchester.¹

In his time party spirit ran high in Manchester, which made his dignity there very irksome to him. The violence of the presbyterians and their opposition to the church was unbounded, and the mild and tolerant warden at length found it conducive to his peace to resign his wardenship. During his time also a dispute arose between the collegiate chapter and the Trafford family, respecting the tithes of Stretford, which were withheld from the college in an unwarrantable manner, and the warden firmly and judiciously resisted the encroachment. An appeal to a jury of the county determined the dispute in favour of the college.²

On 9th July, 1673, Stratford took his degree at Oxford as Doctor of Divinity, being a compounder;³ and in the same year he was made chaplain in ordinary to the King,⁴ having formerly been chaplain to bishop Pearson,⁵ whom he eventually succeeded at Chester.

In the following year, on the promotion of Dr. Humphrey Lloyd to the bishopric of Bangor, Dr. Nicholas Stratford was made dean of St. Asaph, on 11th May, 1674.⁶

In 1683 he was appointed to the vicarage of St. Mary, Aldermanbury, London, on the nomination of the parishioners, by whom he appears to have been highly esteemed.⁷

It was in the following year, 1684, that he resigned his charge of Manchester College.⁸

Dr. Stratford "shewed remarkable forbearance towards those

¹ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 140.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 139 (from Oxford Grad.).

⁴ *History of St. Asaph*, p. 243.

⁵ *Churton's Memoir of Pearson*, p. xcvi.

⁶ *Le Neve's Fasti*.

⁷ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii pp. 139, 140.

⁸ *Hibbert's History of the College and Collegiate Church, Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 19.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 583

who resisted the doctrines and discipline of the English church, although himself a firm supporter of both; but as Keble says: "the supposed tone of his theology may be conjectured by the fact that his name appears among the Prelates selected (in 1689) to revise the liturgy with a view to the comprehension of presbyterians.¹ His object was conciliation and comprehension."² It is recorded of him that he never admonished or reproved others but in the spirit of meekness and conciliation; and the gentle and truly Christian tone which runs through his *Dissuasive against Revenge*, addressed to the conflicting religious parties in Manchester, on his leaving the parish, bears testimony to the truth of this statement. He maintained his theory, however, of the "Divine right of Kings against the view of the dissenters, many of whom were at that time hostile to the reigning sovereign, and at the same time he advocated an exact adherence on the part of churchmen to the rubrical directions."³

Dr. Stratford became bishop of Chester and rector of Wigan in 1689, being included, as Cartwright's successor, in King William's first nomination of bishops, from which it is clear that he was opposed to the chief claim of the Stuarts, and he so continued.⁴

He was consecrated at Fulham on the 15th September of that year,⁵ and being presented to the rectory of Wigan by Sir Orlando Bridgeman's trustees, he was allowed to hold it *in commendam*, as his predecessors had done.

It would appear from the following letter, which Stratford addressed to the archbishop of York⁶ about a year after his consecration, that the preceding bishops of Chester had held no visitations in their diocese for the last thirteen years, that is, since bishop Pearson's second visitation in 1677:

¹ *Life of Bishop Wilson*, pt. i, p. 41.

² *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii, p. 141.

³ *Ibid.* ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵ *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*

⁶ Archbishop Thomas Lamplugh, who died at Bishop Cleeve, 5th May, 1691, *ætat.* 70.

584 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

“ May it please y^r Grace,

I thankfully acknowledge y^r condescension in returning an answer to my last letter. I humbly crave leave to trouble y^e grace but this once more. Whether y^r Grace intends a metropolitical visitation this year, I know not; I fear you are not in so good state of health (wch I heartily pray for) as to visit in y^r own person, my humble request therefore to your Grace is, y^t you will be pleas'd to give me leave to visit this year. That I may not seem impertinent in this Request, I humbly offer to y^r Grace's consideration, y^t for thirteen years last past (as my Chancellor tells me), no visitation has been made by any bishop of this diocese; that by reason of this long neglect many things are scandalously amisse, and very much need correction; y^t I have endeavour'd to gett y^e best information I can of what is amisse, and if y^r Grace permitt me to visit I shall by God's assistance endeavour to y^e utmost of my power to reform and correct all disorders.

I hope y^r Grace's Officers will have no just reason to complain, because their fees will only be deferr'd till y^e next year, wch they can't think hard if they consider, how much money they have had in six months space out of this Diocese (as appears by y^e Paper enclos'd, subscrib'd by my Chancellor). However I shall humbly acquiesce in y^r Grace's judgement and pleasure, and if you judge it not fitt to give me this liberty it will be a satisfaction to my own mind y^t I have discharg'd my duty in requesting it.

I formerly signified to y^r Grace, y^t y^r Mandate for y^e election of Proctors for y^e Convocation came too late to my hands (I being then attending upon y^e Parliament) y^t I could not send a Commission to Richmond before y^e time appointed for y^e Election was pass'd; if therefore y^r Grace will be pleased to issue forth another mandate for y^e choice of a Person to serve for y^e Archdeaconry of Richmond I will take care to see it executed in due time. I earnestly beg y^r Grace's blessing.

I am sincerely,

y^r Grace's humble and obedient servt.

Chester, Jan. 19, 1690.

N. CESTRIENS.²¹

The spirit of the Wiganers in bishop Stratford's time was entirely with William and Mary, and we find frequent signs of

¹ Sinclair's *Hist. Wigan*, vol. ii. pp. 165, 166.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 585

rejoicing among them over William's successes. In 1690 there were payments to the bell-ringers for ringing when news came of the King's safe arrival in Ireland, and when the news arrived of the taking of Dublin. In the following year, 1691-2, there were similar payments "when Ireland was reduced," "when news came that Limbrike [Limerick] was surrendered," "for ringing on the thanksgiving day for K William's returne," and again, "for rejoicing for King William's victory." In 1692 there was an entry in the churchwardens' book of 11s. paid "at the rejoysing for the victory at say to the King." This last will have been the naval victory over the French at the battle of La Hogue in May of that year. These were good days for the bell-ringers.

Mr. Sinclair tells us that about this time there was a gallery erected in the church, for which a licence was obtained from bishop Stratford, on the petition of the Mayor, Recorder, Curate, and Churchwardens, and that the work was done by one Adam Cooper, architect, in 1692.¹ This was not the first gallery which had been placed in the church, for there had been one put up in 1680 in bishop Pearson's time, of which mention will be made hereafter.

The churchwardens' account books make no mention of bishop Stratford. His curates, when he first became rector of Wigan, were Peter Haddon (curate to the late rector), whose name does not occur in the books later than 14th April, 1691; after which Richard White appears as curate on 29th March, 1692, and 18th April, 1693. John Jackson's² name first occurs as curate, 28th November, 1693, and that of Zachary Taylor³ in September, 1694.

¹ Sinclair's *Hist. Wigan*, vol. ii, p. 168.

² John Jackson was for some years rector at Wigan.

³ Zachariah or Zachary Taylor, who seems to have entered upon the curacy in or about 1694, was the son of the Rev. Zachariah Taylor, who became rector of Grappenhall, in Cheshire, about 1649, and of Gorton, in Lancashire, in 1651, and who, during the usurpation, became for a short time Head Master of the Free Grammar School at Bolton-le-Moors in 1653. He was afterwards Master of Kirkham. Zachariah Taylor, the younger, was born at Bolton, 20th April, 1653 (see article on

586 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

In the year 1694 a sum of £1 19s. 6d. was expended by the parishioners on a surplice for Billinge chapel, and 9s. for two new flagons and two cups for the communicants at Billinge.

"Lancashire Levite," by Mr. James C. Scholes, in the *Bolton Weekly Journal* of December 5, 1855). He became vicar of Ormskirk 9th March, 1679, on the presentation of the Earl of Derby, but resigned it in 1693 (his successor being instituted 12th April of that year); and, having become curate to bishop Stratford at Wigan, about 1694, he was presented 10th December, 1695, by King William III., to the rectory of Croston, on "the recommendation of certain commissioners appointed by the King to dispose of ecclesiastical promotion in his absence from England." (*Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. ii. p. 354.) He probably owed his preferment to the suggestion of bishop Stratford. Notwithstanding his acceptance of this benefice, however, Mr. Zachary Taylor remained at Wigan as curate. He was also one of the King's preachers for the county of Lancaster in 1697. He married Barbara, daughter of Sir Edward Stanley, of Bickerstaffe, Bart. (*Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. ii. p. 419). Canon Raines is in error in saying that he died in 1703 (*Not. Cestr.* vol. ii. p. 375). He vacated the rectory of Croston, indeed, in December, 1703, but according to Baines this was for simony; his successor, William Pilkington, was instituted 28th December, 1703. But Mr. Taylor was still living, as appears by his own signature to a receipt for a quarter's stipend as curate at Wigan, on 6th July, 1704, which occurs in the account book of bishop Stratford's steward. Mr. Zachary Taylor had several children born whilst he was at Wigan. "Barbara, daughter of Zacarie Taylor, curate," was baptized there, 30th September, 1694; "Edward, son of Zacaria Taylor," 16th July, 1696; "Abigail, daughter of Rev. Zac. Taylor, curat. de Wigan," January 3, 1697-8; "Orlando, son of Mr. Zac'ry Taylor, curate," 12th August, 1699 (he was buried at Wigan, 1st of October following); "Zac'ry, son of Zac'ry Taylor, minister of God's Word," was baptized 18th December, 1701; and "Dorothy, daughter of y^e Rev. Zac'ry Taylor at the parsonage," 23rd February, 1702-3.

Mr. Zacharie Taylor was a man of some mark, and several of his works are still extant. There is a sermon by him, entitled "*The Death of the Righteous, or the Discriminating Circumstances that favour the Departure of a Pious Soul*," delivered at Wigan, 18th April, 1695, at the obsequies of the Honourable and virtuous Lady Elizabeth, the Relict of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, of Halgh, Knight and Baronet. By Zach. Taylor, A. M., and curate there of the Right Reverend Nicholas, Lord Bishop of Chester. In the Savoy: printed by E. Jones, for Sam. Lowndes, over against Exeter-Change in the Strand. 1695." *Small quarto*. There is a copy of this rare sermon in the Chetham Library, Manchester. In the following year he printed a remarkable Tract, entitled "*The Devil turn'd Casuist; or the Cheats of Rome Laid Open, in the Exorcism of a Despairing Devil, at the house of Thomas Pennington, in Orrol, in the Parish of Wigan, and County of Lancaster*." By Zachary Taylor, M. A., Chaplain to the Right Reverend Father in God, Nicholas Lord Bishop of Chester and Rector of Wigan. *Spectatum admissi. Risum tenentis*. London: Printed for E. Whitlock,

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 587

In the year 1694 the fourth bell was taken down from the steeple and carried to the house of Mr. William Scott to be re-cast. Mr. Scott was paid £20 for casting it and £11 7s. for additional metal amounting to eleven score and seven pounds. It was taken up in June of the following year, 1695.

Bishop Stratford occasionally resided in Wigan, where he

near Statnoer's Hall, MDCXCVI." *Small quarto.* There is a copy of this rare work in the Bodleian Library, and another in possession of J. P. Karwaker, Esq., the historian of East Cheshire, in which last there is written on the fly leaf opposite the title page the following statement: "We whose names are subscribed were present when Mr. Taylor read the matters of Fact contained in this Narrative, to some of the chief of the Persons (whom he had called together for that purpose) who were present at the Exorcism, and from whom he had received the Account of it, who before us attested the Truth of it. Witness our Hands, William Birchall, Curate of Upholland, in the parish of Wigan, Jo. Jackson, Reader at Wigan." In the Dedication addressed to the bishop of Chester, Zachary Taylor says "Another inducement to me was the scenes being acted in your Lordship's Parish, and the great Trust you have been pleased to commit to me there, doth require that I should be Accountable to your Lordship for all Affairs of such a nature as this is, as you are the Rector of the Parish as well as the Ordinary of the Diocess." In 1697 he printed another pamphlet, entitled "*The Surrey Impostor; being an Answer to a late Fanatical Pamphlet entitled the Surrey Demoniac.* By Zach. Taylor, A.M., and one of the King's Preachers for the County Palatine of Lancaster. London: printed for John Jones, at the Dolphin and Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard; and Ephraim Johnson, Bookseller in Manchester, MDCXCVII." *Small quarto.* The pamphlet to which this was an answer, was "*The Surrey Demoniac, or an account of Satan's strong and dreadful workings in and about the Body of Richard Dugdale of Surrey near Whalley in Lancashire, and how he was dispossess by God's blessing on the Fastings and Prayers of divers Ministers and People.* The Matter of Fact attested by the oaths of several credible Persons before some of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in the said County. London, 1697." Mr. Zachary Taylor's Answer to the above was followed by "*A Vindication of the Surrey Demoniac as no Impostor, or a Reply to a certain pamphlet Publish'd by Mr. Zach. Taylor, call'd the Surrey Impostor:* London, 1698;" and another pamphlet called "*The Lancashire Levies rebuk'd, or a Vindication of the Dissenters from Popery, Superstition, Ignorance and Knavery, unjustly charged on them by Mr. Zach. Taylor.* London, 1698." Upon which Mr. Zachary Taylor wrote another pamphlet, entitled "*Popery, Superstition, Ignorance, and Knavery very unjustly by a letter in general pretend'd, but as far as was charg'd very fully prov'd upon the Dissenters that were concern'd in the Surrey Impostor.* By Zach. Taylor. London: printed for John Jones at the Dolphin and Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1698." *Small quarto.* This was followed again by two or three other Tracts on the same subject, forming together a series known as the Surrey Demoniac Tracts.

588 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

rebuilt the manor or parsonage house in 1695. Most of the old hall, which was taken down by the present rector and replaced by a more commodious one in 1875, was probably of Stratford's building, though it had been more than once altered, or added to, by later rectors. There was, however, a portion of an older house left standing in Stratford's time, for there is an entry in his steward's accounts for 1703, which speaks of work done "at the backside of the house, that is by the *ould parlour* chimney." Bishop Stratford's building was a solid but unpretending edifice with no good architectural features. The date of its completion is preserved on a carved stone with his monogram, N.C. 1695, upon it, which was let into the wall of the front of the house facing the hall gate. This stone has now (1889) been removed to the wall at the back of the offices, and placed by the side of another bearing the arms of Dr. Roger Bridgeman, a later rector.

An interesting description of the town of Wigan, as it was about the year 1695, is given by Dr. Kuerden in a *Lancashire Itinerary* preserved amongst his *MSS.* In his account of the post road from Warrington to Wigan, after entering the old parish of Wigan from Ashton, he says: "You pass by a fair Gate with round Balls leading to the Hall of Hawkly very near the Road, which belongeth to the antient Family of the Molineux's of Hawkly. Then leaving on the right a Quarry you pass over a place call'd Goose Green, leaving on the right two fair brick Houses, then over a Bridge or through a Ford or Rivulet called Smithy Brook, from an adjacent Smithy. Having pass'd the Brook you presently leave on the left another sidling Road leading towards Holland, and on the right a fair built house call'd Lea Hall. Then passing on northward half a mile, you leave on the left the transverse public Road from Ormskirk to Wigan, and turning eastward pass over the Dugles Water, at a fair Stone Bridge of 2 arches call'd Adam Bridge, half a mile from Wigan,¹ then over a flat Bridge call'd Pool Bridge, from a

¹ This is the entrance of the manor of Wigan.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 589

pool of water close by it. After this you enter into Wigan, and passing the Wallgate Bars you go by the Town Hall, under which is a Meal House, and leave on your right a fair built house belonging to Mr. Tatles, and on the left the Church and a street call'd Hallgate, at the end whereof stands a sumptuous building call'd the Parsonage, and beyond the further end of that street another fair Hall, an antient Seat belonging to the Marklands, antient aldermen of this Burrough. Having pass'd the Market place on the right is the Millgate, where comes in the other road from Winquic [Winwick] to Wigan." The description is continued in the account of the post road from Wigan to Preston. "Having pass'd the Standishgate Bars about a quarter of a mile, a little below a place called Mab Cross, on the right hand you pass a Lane called Wild Lane End, leading towards Haigh Park, having [first] passed the monument erected by Captain Alex. Rigby, sometime High Sheriff of Lancashire, Mayor and Alderman of Wigan, and Governor of Chester Castle, in memory of his Colonel, Sr Thomas Tildesley, who was there slain with Lord Witherington and many others by Colonel L[ilburne's] Regiment of Horse." The remainder of Wigan is described in the alternative road from Warrington and Winwick to Wigan. "At Winquic, 2 miles from Warrington, leaving the church on the left hand, half a mile from thence you leave a fair built house formerly belonging to Charles Herle, parson of Winquic before Dr. Sherlock and Dr. Finch, the present Incumbent thereof.¹ You leave Lowton township, passing over Lowton Cop, leaving Byrom not far on the right, and the new church being a parochial Chapel to Winquic passing through Penington, leaving the Hall at Abram [in the parish of Wigan] formerly belonging to the Hiltons, and upon the right an antient seat of a younger branch of Culbeths, and on the left the Hall of Bamforland formerly belonging to the Ashtons, and at present to a younger branch of the

¹ Honourable and Rev. Henry Finch, whose elder brother Edward afterwards became rector of Wigan; he was rector of Winwick from 1692 to 1725, when he resigned it; and dean of York from 1702 till his death in 1728.

590 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Gerards. Passing over a fair Stone Bridge into Hindley you leave not far off on your right an antient Hall call'd the Low, the Manor House belonging to the antient family of the Langtons, a second branch of the Langtons once Barons of Newton; from thence passing into Ince you leave upon the right a fair built Hall within a Mote now belonging to the antient Gerards of Ince, and not far from it another stately Hall belonging to the younger issue of the antient Inces of Ince. And shortly after having pass'd Amersogh upon the right hand a fair built hall call'd the New Hall belonging to Captain Gerard, a younger branch of the Gerards of Ince, and soon after on the right hand a fair Hall antiently given to Cokersand Abby, but since the Dissolution to the Browns of Ince, a brother to them at Brinsop in Westhaughton, and a little more east of it stands the Kirkleys, of a long time belonging to the Hoghton's of Kirkleys, and on this side both an antient seat call'd Peel Ditch, so call'd being a Peel or place fenced with a Mote, as most places so fenc'd were called Peels. Passing Cliveden brook into the Liberties of Wigan, half a mile from the Town, you next enter the street call'd Scoles, from *Scala*, Scale, and after this the Miln Gate over the Dugles by a Bridge of two arches. This part of Wigan is said to be within Makerfield, and a rent is yearly paid for respiting their appearance at the Baron's Court at Newton. Passing the Miln Bridge on the left hand are two spacious new built houses, one belonging to Bailiff Heys, and the other to the late Alderman Rob. Forth, and without the Bars a fair built House lately styl'd a College with Officers of Learning belonging to it, but since violently put down, and the ruins thereof yet remaining, but neither Romanist Master nor scholars left. Entering the Miln Gate street thro' the Bars are divers stately Houses on the right, the first belonging to Mr. Alderman Leatherbarrow, the 2nd to Alderman Ford, the 3rd to Dr. Ratelif. Passing into the Standish Gate is a fair House built by Mr. Case, and having enter'd Standish Gate on the left hand a sumptuous House belonging to the late Justice Entwisel, and over against it a

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 591

spacious and neat built House by Mr. Alderman Baldwin. On the right hand the Wheatsheaf belonging to Mr. Pennington, Mr. Alderman Jolly's, Alderm. Banks, Lawyer Morts, a most learned and conscientious peace maker of Law Differences without any Fee taking, Colonel Daniels, and on the left hand Mr. Bailiff Marten's, Mr. Bailiff Legh's, Mr. Alderman Joliffe's, new and fair built Houses; but below the channel on the right is a most spacious House new built by the aforesd. Alderman Baldwin. And above the Channel the Hall of Orrul now belonging to Mr. Alderman Herle, and on the left Mrs. Turner's the present residence of Mr. Langton of Low, Lord of Hindley. In this town are four open streets, a large Market place, with the old Town Hall, the Common prison and Butcher's shops under it. A spacious church well adorn'd with Monuments, and is remarkable for the Steeple standing near the West [East?] End, which was occasion'd by the re-edifying of the church which was drawn back more westerly, and the old steeple left standing where it did." *

This theory of Dr. Kuerden's with respect to the rebuilding of the church on a different site has probably no foundation in fact, and certainly needs confirmation from other sources of information.

About this time there seems to have been an intention of placing an organ in the church, for "On 7th of August, 1696, itt is ordered att a generall meeting of the towne and parish of Wigan that upon the erecting of organs in the said church the annual allowance of two leys amounting to the sume of one and twentie pounds bee given and paid to a capable Organer." The parishioners present who signed their names at this meeting were Gererd fford, Mayor, R. Bradshaigh, Tho. Bankes, William Molyneux, Hugh Jolly, Rob. Markland, Hu. Holme, Lawr. Anderton, John Radcliffe, Hen. Orrett, Richard Lowe, John

* *Local Gleanings* relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, ed. by J. E. Entwaker, reprinted from the *Manchester Courier*, revised and corrected, vol. 1, pp. 209, 210, 212 and 214.

592 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Prescott, John Curghey, Richard Heyes his marke, together with Wm. Browne and Rich. Arrowsmith, churchwardens. George Browne also gives his consent." But this intention does not appear to have been carried out at that time or for many years afterwards.

On the 16th of January, 1697-8, bishop Stratford assisted Sharpe, archbishop of York, at the Savoy chapel, in consecrating to the see of Sodor and Man the good bishop Thomas Wilson, whom he had known as a pupil at the King's school in Chester, and afterwards ordained priest.¹

In this year a controversy concerning the possession of Hindley chapel was definitely settled. It appears that the inhabitants of Hindley had built a chapel there in 1641, for which a site was given by George Green, of Hindley, gent., with the consent and approval of Dr. John Bridgeman, then rector of Wigan. This chapel, like all other places of worship, fell into the hands of the dissenters during the usurpation. After the restoration of Charles II. it was endowed with several benefactions and legacies for the use and maintenance of an orthodox and lawful minister to serve there. But the trustees of the chapel were divided in their religious views, some being orthodox members of the church and some nonconformists, so that it became a question which should hold it, and it was in great danger of being lost to the church, until bishop Stratford came forward and prosecuted the matter in behalf of the church in the court of the Duchy of Lancaster, where he obtained a decree in favour of the church; whereupon the feoffees of the chapel made petition to the bishop to have it consecrated. It was accordingly consecrated on Wednesday, the feast of All Saints, 1st November, 1698, together with the churchyard as a burial place.² There is an entry in the Wigan churchwardens' account book for that year of £2 18s. paid to Mrs. Peak for 11 yards of bagg-holland for a surplus for

¹ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 144; *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*.

² *Memorials of Hindley*, by John Leyland of the Grange, 1878, p. 25.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 593

Hindley Chappel at 4s. 8d. per yard, and for making it. From this time forward Hindley chapel was reckoned as one of the chapels of ease to Wigan parish church, and wine for the holy communion, &c., were provided for it by the parish of Wigan as for those at Holland and Billinge.

An extract from the London *Gazette* [of June 10 to 13, 1700], given in the Local Gleanings relating to Lancashire and Cheshire,¹ throws a light upon the sporting amusements of the Wiganers at the close of the 17th century: "A Plate of £10 value will be run for by Footmen on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, at Wigan, in Lancashire, the usual 3 miles course there; all Persons may run that enter their names with the Bayliffs there by the First of the said month, and that pays down 5s. On the 7th a Plate of 50s. value will be run for there, excluding such as run for the first Plate. And on the 8th a Plate of £5 value will be run for there, and any Persons to put in without paying anything to this or the foregoing Plate (except the winner of the first Plate), providing they enter their names as abovesaid.

There is in Lord Bradford's possession an account book for one year of Thomas Rigby, bishop Stratford's steward at Wigan, from 30th August, 1703, to 2nd August, 1704; from which we learn that the bishop was residing at Wigan from 11th June, 1703, till the 21st March of the following year. On 10th September, 1703, there was a payment of £1 8s. 9d. for dressing my Lord's chansell, and 19s. 6d. to Charles Banckes, plumber, for work at the top of the same; on the 18th September, 3s. 4d. to Alexander and Robert ffoster "for dressing the currant to bring the water to the moate" two days, and two days ditching betwixt the bull hey and the mesnes; on 4th October £15 to the reverend Zachary Taylor for one quarter's salary. This was an unusually liberal stipend for a curate in those days. Besides this Mr. Zachary Taylor seems to have lived at the parsonage house, and he held of the bishop two fields, and an acre in the

¹ Vol. i. p. 176.

594 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

parson's meadow, for which land, however, he paid a rent. At the same time there were payments of £2 10s. to the reverend Mr. Johnson, his Michaelmas quarterage; 6s. to Mrs. Hoult the school mistress for teaching six poor children, being her quarter's salary to Michaelmas last; and 6s. to Mrs. Whiteside for the like; £6 5s. to the reverend Mr. William Birchall, the minister of Holland, his Michaelmas quarterage for officiating at Holland church; and on 22nd October, £1 10s. to the reverend Mr. Sedgwick for officiating at Billinge chapel betwixt the 1st of August and the 1st of November next coming. It is probable that the reverend Edward Sedgwick entered upon his cure at Billinge at that date, for afterwards he receives his quarter's salary at the usual quarter days with Mr. Taylor, Mr. Johnson and the others.

In the same book the corn tithes of the parish of Wigan are shewn to have been farmed in the year 1703, at the following rents: To S^r Roger Bradshaigh, Bart. [the township of Haigh ?] £24. Aspull corne, £31, Easter due *was* £3 15s., but *now* £2 15s., Total £33 15s. Hindley corne tith £43, Hindley Easter dues £5, Total £48. Abram Corne £31, the small tith £2 10s., Total £33 10s. Ince by Esq^r Gerard £4. Winstanley by Esq^r Bankes £16. Pemberton tith corne £37. Chapell-end of Billing £19. Uper-end of Billing £18. Orrel to Mr. Barton and James Chadock £20 2s. 6d. Holland and Daulton £12 13s. 4d. Wigan in my Lords hands comes to cleare the sume of £26 8s. Total £292 8s. 10d.

The Easter Roul for 1703 comes to.....	£27 8 10½
Chiefe Rent Roul, Midsummer, 1703.....	£22 17 3
Chief Rent Roul, Christmas, 1703.....	£22 17 3
Tith Hay Money, Christmas, 1703.....	£2 10 10¼
	<hr/>
Total.....	£75 14 3

An account of y^e meadowing and all other parts of the glave [glebe] Land accöpting the pastures, &c.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 595

The meadowing as sett

The Digg lach accer to Mr. Johnathan Walton and Mr. Hoult.....	£2	15	0
The Brige accer being the first accer to Raph Bale and Olliver Ashhurst	2	6	0
3 rd & 4 th accer to Mr. James Rigby at.....	4	11	0
the 5 th acēr to y ^e Revd. Mr. Taylor.....	2	6	0
7 th to Widow Houghton of Scols.....	1	3	0
and James Couley	1	3	0
8 th to Roger Rogerson and Jo ⁿ Hodgson y ^e crier.....	2	6	0
9 th to Thomas Blackhurst daughter and Edward Blackhurst	2	6	0
2 ^d & y ^e 6 th to myselfe [Thomas Rigby].....	4	12	0
the odd measure sett for	0	15	0
That which the Reverend Mr. Taylor houlds...	10	0	0
That which John Kearsley houlds.....	1	5	0
Thomas Rigby houlds the Bull hey at	5	10	0
The Croft y ^t Tho. Rigby houlds at.....	1	0	0
The arrears and all the glave Land comes to the sume of	£128	11	4 [sic]

[Thus] the arrears and all the glave Land [comes to] £128 11s. 4d.; corn tithes £292 8s. 10d.; chief rent, tith hay and Easter Dues comes to £75 14s. 3d.; Receipts totall £496 14s. 5d.

There is another entry in the steward's account book in 1704, which is interesting as shewing that the bishop's house was still protected by a moat and drawbridge: "July y^e 6th p^l to Peter Leland for irne [iron] work for y^e Draw Bridge," &c. 1s. 4d.

There is an item in the Wigan churchwardens' accounts for that year, 1704, for repairing "the stone styell [stile] leading out of the church yard into the Walgate," and another for "amending the silke hoods that goes over the surples." †

† This is the first mention I meet with in the churchwardens' accounts of silk hoods among the vestments of the clergy.

596 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Bishop Stratford was made one of the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty in the first charter dated 3rd November, 3 Anne (1704).

In the following year, 1705, we find mention in the churchwardens' accounts of a census of "papists" being taken within the parish of Wigan by order of the bishop. In this year Mr. Baldwin occurs as curate at Upholland, and 26th March, 1706, Thomas Johnson as curate at Wigan.

In 1706 bishop Stratford founded the Blue Coat Hospital in Chester, for the maintenance, instruction, and apprenticeship of thirty-five poor boys of that city.¹

He died in London on 12th February, 1706-7, at his lodging in Westminster, by the old Palace yard,² much beloved, and deeply lamented by his diocese, aged 74 years, and was buried on the 20th³ in his cathedral church at Chester, where there is a monument to his memory, with a long latin inscription by his only surviving son, Dr. William Stratford, in the following terms :

NICHOLAUS STRATFORD S.T.P.

Natus apud HEMSTEAD in com. Hartf. Anno	1633
Factus est	
Coll. S. Sæ Trinitatis OXON Socius	1566
Collegii Christi apud MANCUNIAM in Com. Lanc. Gardianus	1667
Sanctæ Margarietæ LEICESTRIÆ in Eccl. LINCOLN Præbendarius	1670
Ecclesiæ ASAPHIENSIS Decanus	1673
In Ecclesia de ALDERMANBURY Lond. Concionator	1683
Eccl. de WIGAN Rector, & CESTRIA EPISCOPUS	1689
Mortuus 12 ^o die Feb.	1706-7

Ex vitâ per 18 annos Hic sanctissimè institutâ
Memoriam suam reliquit omni Marmore perenniorem.

¹ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 145.

² *Topographer and Genealogist*, vol. iii. p. 264.

³ *Wigan Parish Register*, wherein, however, it is erroneously stated that he died on the 20th February.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 597

Reformatam fidem
Eruditis contra Pontificios scriptis strenuè asseruit,
Ecclesiæ Defensor prius quam Pater.
Illorum, quos adeptus est Honorum, nullos ambiit;
Nonnullos sponte deposuit.
Divitiarum adeo erat non cupidus,
Ut post 40 annos inter Dignitates Ecclesiasticas exactos,
Rem sibi relictam non solùm non auxerit,
Sed in tuendis Ecclesiæ ipsi creditæ juribus,
Eam libentissimè imminuerit.
Morum simplicitate, caritate in omnes, Pietate in Deum
Erat planè Primævâ.
Episcopale munus eâ fide administravit,
Ut qui Ordinem non agnoscerent,
Virum faterentur esse reverâ Apostolicum.
Laboribus magis quam Annis fractus occubuit;
A Christo, cui soli serviebat,
Promissum Dispensatori fido præmium laturus.
GULIELMUS STRATFORD S.T.P. Filius unicus,
Archidiaconus Richmondæ Ædis Christi apud Oxon Canonicus,
Optimo Parenti
P. †

"The Bishop," says Canon Raines, "was a man of primitive and simple habits, and generally adapted his conversation to his society, speaking to the poor and illiterate in their own phraseology. . . . He was indifferent to the acquisition of wealth, and although long and well beneficed, he did not increase his family estate. . . . It is not too much to say that he lived a life of faith, holiness, and charity, and having adorned the religion which he professed, was sustained by its hopes and consolations

† Le Neve's *Monumenta Anglicana*, vol. iv, p. 109; from *MS. a Richardo Rawlinson, M.A.* è Coll. Di. Joh. Bapt. Oxon. and R.S.S.

598 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

in his last and greatest need. In a short notice of him, lately published,¹ it is said that he was a learned and good man, a frequent preacher, zealous in the pulpit, exemplary out of it, and a workman that need not be ashamed."²

Another writer says of him, his "constant residence in this diocese [Chester] will render his memory precious to posterity."³

Chalmers informs us that he was one of the first and most zealous promoters of the Societies established in the beginning of last century for the "Reformation of manners." In the "Memoirs of Matthew Henry," we read that "this good work was first set on foot in the city of Chester by those of the established church: they were happy in a bishop and dean that had the interests of practical religion very much at heart, Dr. Stratford and Dr. Fog, men of great learning and true piety, both excellent preachers, and greatly grieved at the open and scandalous wickedness that abounded in that city and everywhere throughout the nation." It appears that a monthly lecture was established at the cathedral for this purpose, and the bishop preached the first sermon.⁴

As to his political and religious views, he published several pamphlets against the pretensions of the Church of Rome; and his strong opposition to the encroachments of popery, and to the general proceedings of James II, led him to promote and to confirm the accession of William and Mary, and to advocate the Revolution principles of 1688.⁵

"The bishop had issue: 1 Katherine, baptized May 4, 1669, at Manchester; 2 John Stratford, buried at Manchester, March 21, 1669-70; 3 William Stratford, baptized September 4, 1671, at Manchester, of Christ Church, Oxon., B.A. May 12, 1692, M.A. March 13, 1694, B.D. July 8, 1703, D.D. July 7, 1705,

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, May 31, 1854, *Rosierucian Paper*.

² *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 145.

³ *Hist. of Chester*. London: Egerton, Whitehall. 1793.

⁴ Chalmers' *Biogr. Dic.* (quoting from Ath. Ox., Tong's *Life of Matthew Henry*, pp. 243, 246-7, and Nicholson's *Letters*, vol. i. p. 170).

⁵ *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 143.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 599

Archdeacon of Richmond 10 September, 1703. Canon of Christ Church November, 1703. He died in the year 1728, unmarried, and bequeathed a portion of his books to the Chetham Library, Manchester, and left his large fortune in the hands of trustees for the augmentation of poor livings, in conjunction with Queen Anne's Bounty, and for other pious uses. He also bequeathed several *M.S.* volumes of State Papers to the British Museum.

4 Grace Stratford, second daughter, baptized at Manchester, July 8, 1675, married Edmund Entwistle, youngest son of John Entwistle, of Foxholes, Esq. He was born at Ormskirk 14 and baptized there 29 April, 1659-60. Afterwards of Brasenose Coll. Oxon., M.A. 1682, B.D. and D.D. 1693. In 1691 he was presented to the rectory of Barrow by Lord Rivers; and he was collated to the archdeaconry of Chester 30 April, 1695. He died 15 September, 1707, in his 47th year. By his wife, Grace Stratford, he had issue: Edmund, who died unmarried; Jane Entwistle, buried September 2, 1772, in her 77th year, in the Cathedral [of Chester]; Katherine Entwistle, buried December 14, 1773, in her 77th year, in the [same] Cathedral. The Archdeacon married secondly Priscilla, daughter of Sir Thomas Bunbury of Stanny, Bart., and had two sons, Thomas who died unmarried in 1772, and Henry, who died 25 January, 1784, and was buried in the Cathedral, Chester, unmarried.

There is a fine portrait of bishop Stratford at Foxholes, which, with the bishop's sermons, papers, and some of his books, were bequeathed to the Entwistle family by Henry Entwistle, Esq., of Chester, in 1784. The bishop is seated in a chair in his episcopal robes. He wears over his own hair a black velvet priest's cap. The expression is benevolent, intelligent, and acute. The thin compressed lips indicate greater decision than he appears to have possessed. He seems to have been a slender-built man, and about 60 years of age when the portrait was painted. An engraving of the portrait, by Thomson, appeared in Dr. Hibbert-Ware's History.*

* *Wardens of Manchester*, vol. ii. pp. 145, 146.

600 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Bishop Stratford's arms were: *gules, a fesse humette between three tressels argent* (as given in Dale's Catalogue of English Nobility, and on a seal communicated to Mr. Bedford by William Langton, Esq.) the tressels are coloured *or* on the tablet in Chester Cathedral. ¹

Bishop Stratford's published works are thus given by Canon Raines in his "Wardens of Manchester":

1. *A Sermon preached at Chester Assizes, 20 Sept., 1681.* By Mr. Stratford, D.D. and Dean of St. Asaph. Dedicated to Bishop Pearson, at whose desire it was printed. Text, *Acts xxiv. 25.* London. 4to.

2. *A Sermon before the King at Whitehall, on Christmas day, 1682, on Romans viii. 3.* London, 1683. 4to.

3. *A Dissuasive from Revenge.* A Discourse on *Romans xii. 17.* By Nicholas Stratford, D.D., Dean of St. Asaph. London, 1684. 8vo. Dedicated to "my worthy and beloved friends the Inhabitants of Manchester and Salford."

4. *Discourse concerning the necessity of Reformation with respect to the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome.* 1st pt. 1685. 4to. *Anon.* 2nd ed., 1686. Reprinted in Gibson's *Preservative.*

5. *The Necessity of Reformation,* 2nd pt. *Anon.* 1686. 4to.

6. *The Necessity of Reformation,* 3rd pt. By Nicholas Stratford, D.D. 1686. 4to. Mr. Jones calls this "an imaginary third part, as there is no evidence that it ever existed." (See *Chetham Popery Tracts*, pt. i. pp. 203-4, ed. by Tho. Jones, Esq., B.A., F.S.A.)

7. *The People's right to read the Holy Scriptures asserted.* In answer to the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th chapters of the 2nd part of the *Popish Representer.* 1687. 4to.

8. *The Lay-Christian's obligation to read the Holy Scriptures.* London, 1687. 4to.

¹ Blazon of Episcopacy. In Dallaway's *MS.* in Lib. Trin. Coll. Oxon., they are given as *paly of eight argent and auree, a lion rampant gules.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 601

9. *Examination of Bellarmine's 14th Note concerning the unhappy End of the Church's Enemies.* Anon. in *The Notes of the Church.* London, 1688. 4to.

10. *Discourse of the Pope's Supremacy,* part 1. In answer to Thomas Godden, D.D. 1688. 4to.

11. *A Charge to his Clergy* at his primary Visitation of the Diocese of Chester. London, 1692. 4to.

12. *Of Reverence due to God in Public Worship.* Preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, 25 March, 1694. *Eccles.* v. 1. 4to.

Bishop Stratford was the last of the series of bishops of Chester who held the rectory of Wigan *in commendam*. After his death the see was vacant for nearly a whole year, until Sir William Dawes, baronet, Master of St. Catherine Hall, Cambridge, was consecrated 8th February, 1707-8.

The next rector of Wigan was the Honourable EDWARD FINCH, fifth son of Heneage Finch, first Earl of Nottingham, and brother of Daniel, second Earl of Nottingham and sixth Earl of Winchelsea. He was at this time a prebendary of York, to which he had been appointed 26th April, 1704, his younger brother, Henry Finch, being then dean of York. There is no record at Chester of his institution to the rectory of Wigan. He was probably admitted by the archbishop of York in February or March, 1706-7, during the voidance of the see of Chester, the patrons at that time being Sir John Bridgeman, baronet, Henry, bishop of London, William, Lord Digby, John Bridgeman and Orlando Bridgeman, Esquires.

In the first two years of his incumbency, there were some considerable sums expended on the repairs of the parish church, for which certain leys were voted by the parishioners, and in the year 1707 a new font was put up there. On 15th April, 1707, George Bowyer's name first appears in the account books as curate of Wigan. The rector Finch's name first occurs there on 6th April, 1708. At a vestry meeting on that day, the

602 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

rector appointed Mr. William Holland, of Wigan, gent., his churchwarden for the ensuing year, and the parishioners chose Mr. William Taylor, of Hindley, for theirs. A set of sixteen sidesmen, or questmen, were also chosen, five for Wigan, and one for each of the townships of Haigh, Aspull, Hindley, Abram, Ince, Pemberton, Winstanley, Billinge, Orrell, Holland and Dalton.

The cost of wine for the holy communion in the year 1708-9 amounted to £16 12s. 6d., viz.: for Wigan, £12 8s. 6d., for Holland, the usual allowance of 18 quarts, £1 16s., for Billinge, 12 quarts, £1 4s., and for Hindley, 12 quarts, £1 4s. This was about the average quantity consumed in each year, but the whole is usually lumped together in one sum in the accounts. A sum of £9 16s. 8d. was expended in repairing the vestry in October, 1708. In this year the rector Finch had a copy made of bishop Bridgeman's Wigan Leger, which attested copy is still in possession of the rector of Wigan, and full of valuable information. It is unfortunate that the original was not also preserved.¹ Judging from the extent to which Mr. Finch got his own way with his parishioners, he must have been a man of considerable energy and power. A dispute had arisen as to the right of nominating a curate to serve the chapelry of Hindley, which had not been fully determined in bishop Stratford's time. But it was now amicably settled between rector Finch and the trustees of the chapel; as we learn from the following letter addressed to the bishop of Chester, and preserved in the continuation of bishop Bridgeman's Wigan Leger.²

Octr. 30, 1708.

My Lord,

Since we had the Honour to lay before your Lo^p our pretensions for nominating a curate to Hindley Chappel, we whose names are subscribed (being the greater part of those who pretended to the same) having, by several of our neighbours who were to transact this affair for us, waited on the Hon^{ble} and Rev^d Mr. Finch, Rector of Wigan, and come to a perfect understanding with him upon the whole matter, do for ever forego

¹ *Ibid* ante, pp. 204, 205, *note*.

² Supplementary entry, fol. 35r.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 603

all our pretensions and recede from all claim and Title to the nomination of a minister to the said chappel of Hindley, and shall not oppose this or any Rector of Wigan in appointing a curate to the same, but beg leave to withdraw the *curat* which was entered on our behalf and your L^o to licence a minister whom the Rector of Wigan shall nominate and send. Ro^s Hindley, P. Worthington, Joⁿ Prescott, John Ranicars, Jonathan Thomasson, J. H. (John Hart his letters), John Chadock, Thomas Cheetham, Gd. Hindley, Will. Smallshaw.

We also the Feoffees, whose names are underwritten, do likewise beg leave at the same time hereby to recede from and disclaim all pretensions to the nomination of a curate at Hindley chappel, which have ever been made either by ourselves or Prædecessors. P. Worthington, Joⁿ Prescott, John Ranicars, Jonathan Thomasson, J. H. (John Hart his letters), Joh. Chadock, Thomas Cheetham.

(This letter is endorsed as follows :)

Memorandum.—That I, Sam: Lever, clerk, on Sunday, Oct. ult^o 1708, did give notice in the Reading-Desk of the Chappel of Hindley in the Parish of Wigan to the Congregation to y^e Persons mett there, that the Persons who were desirous to expresse their consent to the Agreement made betwixt the Reverend and Honorable Mr. Finch, Rector of Wigan, and some of the Feoffees and Principal Inhabitants of Hindley aforesaid should come to y^e Co^mmunion-Table and sign the said Agreement, That the Persons whose names are underwritten, did come and sign accordingly (being Inhabitants having seats and other Persons then present who had formerly pretended a Right and laid a claim to the Nomination of a minister there). As witness my hand this 5th day of November, 1708.

Sam. Lever, A.M.

Samuell Hilton, Henry Molyneux, Will.	Signed by Mr. Lever,
Taylor, Rich. Hindley, John Ashurst,	in the Presence of us
Henry Sale, Margaret Hilton, Jo ⁿ Morris,	Henry Finch,
Jonathan Whalley, James Smith, James Hilton,	Edw: Alanson.
Oliver Rigbie, James Hilton, Matthew Smith,	
Ellin Houghton, Rowland Meadow, John Turton,	
Peter Smith, James Green, Ralph Rigby,	
Tho. Baxter, Edw. Crosse, John Bibby, Alex ^r Cawsey,	
John Hay, Thomas Johnson, Henry Smith, William Pemberton.	

604 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Signed by the Inhabitants and Feoffees of Hindley chappel y^e day and year above,

In the presence of us,
Henry Finch, Edw. Alanson, John Wilkinson.

The two following letters from the bishop of Chester with reference to the above, are inserted in the next page of the same Leger :

No. 1. Kensington, Nov. y^e 6,

Sr. 1708.

I do most heartily rejoyce at the agreement, w^{ch} you have made with your Parishioners, touching the Nomination to Hindley Chappel. I desir'd nothing more than that it might be vested in the Rector of Wigan: as the surest way to preserve the peace, and keep up the Authority of the Church; and therefore you may depend upon my readiness to do anything in my power towards the perfecting and confirming this agreement. I likewise highly approve your prudence in naming Mr. Lever for this turn, w^o, I can plainly perceive, is a very acceptable man to the Inhabitants.

I very willingly consent that the Instrument of this agreement be registered in the Register at Chester, and shall take care to have the Instrument itself safely lay'd up there likewise. And I would be as willing to signify, in my licence to Mr. Lever, the ground, or Nomination, upon w^{ch} I licence him: but that, I think, is not usual: and besides, I believe it will be more effectual to enter his licence in the Register immediately after the Instrument of Agreement, as granted by me in Pursuance of that. Pardon the many blots, w^{ch} come from great hast. My most humble service to y^r good Lady and Brother. I am, Sr,

y^r Assured friende and affectn^t Brother,

W. CESTRIENS.

No. 2. Kensington, Nov. y^e 18th, 1708.

Honrd Sr.

The opening of the Parliament, on Tuesday, hinder'd me from writing to you by that days Post, as I should otherwise have done. I approve of what you offer about having Mr. Lever's Testimony put to the names on the second leaf: and do here send you back the letter of the Feoffees

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 605

and Inhabitants to me, in order to have it so done; and I have written on the back of it, to Mr. Prescott, to enter it into my Register-book. At present, my thoughts, as to the clause w^{ch} you purpose to be inserted into my License of Mr. Lever, are, that it is needless: but I will consider more of it, as I shall have time enough to do before I can grant him a License: w^{ch} will hardly be before I come down to Chester. I beg my humble service to Mrs. Finch and y^r Brother, and am

S^r, y^r affectionate Brother and faithfull serv^t,

W. CESTRIENS.

In the following year a more serious dispute arose between the rector and some of his wealthier parishioners with respect to the re-introduction of an organ in the parish church and the space it should occupy there; and it is highly probable that the litigation and the unkindly feeling which this quarrel engendered was the cause of Finch's resignation a few years afterwards.

It appears that one Richard Welles, who died in December, 1707, had made provision by his will for the building of a new organ to be placed in the parish church. This was a matter which had long been in contemplation by the parishioners, as appears by an entry in the churchwardens' account book in 1696. But organs were then considered as dangerous innovations upon the protestant sentiments of the day, and the acceptance of Mr. Welles's liberal bequest met with considerable opposition. The opposition was all the more violent from the fact that the position in which it was proposed to set up the new organ, in or near to the arch which divided the nave from the chancel, and which had formerly been occupied by the old one previous to its destruction in Cromwell's time, had subsequently been appropriated by the Mayor and Corporation for their own gallery, from which they were very unwilling to move. The rector and churchwardens, however, in accordance with the wording of the faculty under which the gallery had been erected, proceeded to pull it down in order to make way for the organ. This gave great offence to several, and the Corporation, headed by Sir Roger

606 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Bradshaigh, indited the workmen who were engaged to carry on the work.

It will have been in connection with this work that on 6th November the parish paid £2 5s., being "the half of a New Beam laid up between the old chancell and the body of the church," and 12s. towards the "expense for many hands to assist to lay it up." The other half of the expense will have been defrayed by the rector as owner of the chancel.

On 3rd February, 1709-10, the following resolution was passed at a vestry meeting: "It is this day agreed and order'd at a Parish meeting y^t the thanks of this parish be returned to y^e Hon^{ble} and Rev^d Mr. Edward Finch our Rector, for y^e great trouble he hath undergone and the favour he has shew^d us in endeavouring to procure a good organ for our Church, and the Preparations he hath already made to set it up in a proper Place. We are very sorry y^t some p^rsons have us^d their endeavours to obstruct soe good a work, and given him soe much groundless trouble by inditing y^e workmen he employed, and making use of many names in our Parish, pretending y^e greater p^t of it to be of y^e same opinion, for a foundation for instituteing a suit in y^e B^{ps} Court to put a stop to this work: and we doe hereby disclaime every such act and deed, and heartily entreat our s^d Rector to continue his kindness to us to cause this organ (left us by the will of Mr. Wells) to be set up as soon as may be. And we also agree y^t this Order be fairly enter'd in our Parish Book, there to remain as a Testimony of our earnest desires to have y^e worship of God p^rform'd in our Church wth all due decency, and for a gratefull memory of our obligations to our Hon^{ble} Rector for y^e great trouble and charge he hath undergone to promote y^e compleating and setting up this organ." The resolution was signed by 327 of the parishioners in vestry assembled, concluding with William Holland and William Taylor, churchwardens.

The rector next acquired a Faculty from the bishop's Vicar General to appropriate the rents of the west end gallery for the purpose of raising a salary for the Organist. The Faculty runs as follows:—

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 607

"To all christian People to whom these presents shall come. Thomas Wainwright, Doctor of Laws, Vicar Generall and Official Principall to the Right Reverend Father in God William by Divine permission Lord Bishop of Chester, sendeth greeting. Whereas, upon certificate made to us by the Rector and Churchwardens, and severall of the Parishioners of the Parish of Wigan, in the county of Lancaster and Dioces of Chester, That upon application and desire of severall of the parishioners of the said parish made to the late Right Reverend Father in God, Nicolas Lord Bishop of Chester, then also Rector of the said church, A certain gallery was erected with his Lordships approbation at the West end of the said church (which takes up the space of one Arch, betwixt the West-End Wall and the two first pillars in the middle Isle or Nave of the Church, whose Front from North to South betwixt the two pillars is in length nineteen foot & a half, or thereabouts, and whose breadth or depth is the whole space reaching from the said Front to the West-End wall or window, and contains in it eleven seates in number, with a passage between them, and a landing place at the head of the stairs leading up to it) at the free charge or contributions of the said parishioners, That the said gallery and seates were built and design'd for the use onely of such persons within the said parish as had and should attain to some competent skill in singing, To the end that by their sitting together, they might the more easily perform their severall parts in singing psalmes and keep in tune to each other, But that since the said gallery was erected, Richard Welles, late of Wigan, aforesaid, gentⁿ deceas'd (among other pious legacies^s), gave the sume of Two hundred pounds to

* It appears that Mr. Richard Welles, by his will dated 22nd August, 1707, with divers other legacies and benefactions to the poor of Wigan and others, left a sum of £100, the improvement (or interest) of which was to be paid yearly to the Reader of public prayers in the parish of Wigan, and the like sums to each of the several curates of the respective chapels of Hindley, Billinge and Rainford, and their successors for ever, and thereby ordered the said several sums to be paid or secured within one year after his death. The remainder of his estate he left to Margery Leatherbarrow (his deceased wife's sister), whom he made his sole executrix. The said

608 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

be laid out upon an organ for the said church : which organ the present Rector hath got made now ready to be set up, and the said

Margery Leatherbarrow proved the will and possessed herself of all the Testator's real and personal estate. She soon afterwards married *George Bowyer*, Clerk, which George Bowyer and his wife, instead of paying the principal sums so devised, paid only the interest thereof from year to year till the year 1717, when the said Margery died. Her estate came into the possession of her husband, George Bowyer, who neglected to pay the said legacies during his life, and died 16th March, 1740, leaving his brother, Thomas Bowyer, clerk, his executor, against whom proceedings were taken in the Chancery Court of the Duchy of Lancaster to recover the said several sums of money, at the relation of *Thomas Edge*, clerk, curate of the Parish church of Wigan, *Samuel Lever*, clerk, curate of the chapel of Hindley in the said parish, *Humphrey Walley*, clerk, curate of the chapel of Billinge in the said parish, and others. The cause being heard 3rd September, 1741, the Vice-chancellor, the Right Worshipful Thomas Henry Ashurst, made the following orders with respect to the before-mentioned legacies : " As to the said £100 left by the said Richard Welles to the Reader of Public Prayers in the Parish Church of Wigan aforesaid, the same to be paid to James Heartley and William Finch (churchwardens) to such uses as are mentioned in the will of the said Richard Welles, and by them and the churchwardens their successors for the time being to be placed out upon proper security by the consent and approbation of the Rector of Wigan and Reader of Public Prayers in the parish church of Wigan and their successors for the time being, the yearly interest thereof to be paid and applied according to the direction of the said will. And as to the £100 left for Hindley Chapel, the same to be paid to John Walmesley of Wigan, Esq., Alexander Leigh, of the same place, gentleman, Henry Hampson of Westleigh, in the same county, gentleman, Jonathan Thomason, Henry Smith, Thomas Needham, and John Southworth, all of Hindley aforesaid, and Hugh Stirrup of Lawton, in the said county, yeoman, present trustees of Hindley Chapel, to be by them and their successors, Trustees of the said chapel, put out on proper security by the consent of the curate of the said chapel for the time being, the produce thereof to be yearly applied by them according to the direction of the said will. And as to the £100 left to Billinge Chapel to be paid to Robert Bankes of Winstanley, in the (county of Lancaster), Esq., to be placed out at interest on proper security by him and his heirs with the consent of the curate of the said Chapel of Billinge for the time being, the interest thereof to be applied yearly, according to the directions of the said will . . . and the defendant, Thomas Bowyer, is hereby and by the authority of this court to be indemnified in paying the several sums above-mentioned pursuant to this decree, and all parties to have their costs out of the interest of the several sums above-mentioned, and now due and hereafter to become due."

(Deeds relating to Hindley and other places near Wigan ; reprinted from " Local Gleanings " in the *Manchester Courier*, 1878, p. 37.)

With respect to the above-mentioned legacy of £100 left by Richard Welles to be placed out at interest, and the interest thereof to be annually paid to the Reader of the

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 609

present Rector, with the help of other persons who will voluntarily contribute to the same, is willing at his own charge to build the Organ Loft, and see the Organ finish'd and set up where the former Organ stood before it was destroyed in the late time of Rebellion Sacrilege and confusion, which work, when perfected, will be able to keep those that sing so much better in tune that it will be no longer needfull for them to sit together, and upon this account will be a work of great use and ornament, and add much decency and solemnity in the worship of God. With desire therefore that the said gallery and seates therein might be assign'd and confirm'd to the Rector of Wigan for the time being, to the end that he may appoint and dispose of the seates in the said gallery to persons who will oblige themselves to pay for the same such rent as shall be agreed upon towards raising a salary for an organist, and to the sole use and advantage of the organist of the said organ for the time being. Wee judicially Proceeding, did emitt a general proces or proclamation, and cause the same to be publish'd in time of Divine Service within the said Parish Church of Wigan, on Sunday the 19th day of February last, against all persons in generall haveing or p'tending to have any Right, Title, or Interest in the before describ'd gallery, to appear before us our lawful surrogate or other Judge competent in that behalf in the Consistory Court within the Cathedral Church of Chester, upon Thursday the 23rd of February aforesaid, at the usuall hours of hearing causes there, and shew just cause or Reason (if they could) why the said gallery shou'd not be assign'd and confirm'd to the Rector of the Parish Church of Wigan for the time being for the purpose abovesaid, at the instance or

Public Prayers In the Parish Church of Wigan and his successors, there is a *memorandum* in the Wigan Vestry Book of 24th April, 1753, that the said sum was paid on 15th May, 1752, to the Rev. Shirley Cotes, clerk, Rector of Wigan, by William Gerard, Esq., into whose hands it had been paid, as one of the Overseers of the Poor of Wigan, by the executor of George Bowyer, clerk, deceased. And on 13th February, 1777, the Rev. Guy Fairfax, rector of Wigan, acknowledges the receipt of the said £100 from John Cotes, Esq., son and executor of the Rev. Shirley Cotes, late rector of Wigan; after which there is no more notice of this legacy to be found.

610 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

promotion of the Reverend and Honourable Edward Finch, clerk, A.M., the present Rector of the same Intimating to all and every of the said persons That if they neglected to appear at the time and in the place aforesaid to shew just cause to the contrary, We our lawful surrogate or other Judge competent, would proceed to decree the said gallery and seates therein to be assign'd and confirm'd to the said Rector for the time being for the purpose aforesaid, Their absence or contumacy in any wise notwithstanding. And whereas upon Return of the said generall proces and præconization of all persons aforesaid thrice judicially made (no person appearing) We did in paine of their absence or contumacy, at the Petition of the Proctor of the said Party pro-movent, Decree the said gallery and seates therein to be assign'd and confirm'd to the Rector of the said Parish Church of Wigan for the time being, to and for the purpose hereafter mentioned as by our Act of Court the ninth day of March current (reference thereunto being had) may appear. Know ye Therefore That Wee The Said Vicar Generall do by these presents assign and confirm the said before described gallery and seates therein to the Rector of the said parish church of Wigan for the time being, to the end that he may allot or dispose of the said seates to and for the uses of standing, sitting, kneeling, and hearing Divine Service and sermons therein To such parishioners or inhabitants of the parish of Wigan who will oblige themselves to pay for the same such rent as shall be agreed upon towards raising of a salary for an organist, and to the sole use benefitt and advantage of the organist for the time being to an organ, when and where it shall by due authority be erected or sett up in the said church (the Jurisdiction of the Ordinary alwaies Reserv'd); And because a staircase is not (as we are informed) yet built to lead up to the said gallery as it was intended to be, Wee do also by these presents give and grant free Leave and Liberty to the said Rector to build or cause a convenient staircase (as intended) to be built to the same. In Testimony whereof Wee have caused these our letters Testimonial to be made and given under the seale of our

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 611

office the thirteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord God according to the Computation of the Church of England one thousand seven hundred and nine." †

The matter did not end here, however, nor was the organ placed in the church during rector Finch's time. It was not till some two years later that the controversy was determined in favour of the rector and churchwardens, as appears by the following faculty issued by the bishop himself :

"Wigan Facultas ad Erigend^m Tabulatum pro Organis in eccl^{ia} praed^a.

To all Christian people to whom these presents shall come, William by divine permission Lord Bishop of Chester sendeth greeting. Whereas it appears to us by allegaçons proofs and Testimonials made and admitted, on the behalf of the Hon^{ble} and Reverend Edward Finch, clerk, Rector, and William Holland and William Taylor, churchwardens, of Wigan, in the County of Lancaster and Diocese of Chester (in a certain cause or busenes of taking down or demolishing certain seats or a gallery within the church and chancel of Wigan aforesaid, p^tended to belong to the Mayor and Aldermen of Wigan aforesaid, and the erection of an Organ there, or in some other part of the said church), instituted in our Consistory Court of Chester, appeal'd to the Metropolitan Court of York, and from thence appeal'd to discussed and finally determin'd in the High Court of Delegates promoted by Ralph Banks, gent., Syndic of y^e Mayor, Bailiffs, and Burgesses of the Burrough of Wigan aforesaid, St Roger Bradshaigh, Bar., Richard Winstanley and William Glasebrooke, plaintiffs on the one part, against the said Hon^{ble} and Reverend Edward Finch, William Holland and William Taylor Defts on the other part, That an Organ was formerly set in a Gallery or Loft built between the two Hollow pillars which divide the new and old chancell of the said church, That the said Organ and Loft were taken down and demolish'd, in the time of the late Rebellion, That in the year of our Lord, 1680, a Gallery with

† From the original in the Diocesan Registry.

612 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

seats was erected, for the use of the Mayor and Aldermen of the said Burrough, by the License, permission, and consent of the Right Reverend Father in God, John, then Lord Bishop of Chester and Rector of Wigan, to continue only till such time as the parishioners should think fit to promote so good a work as the building or restoring an Organ there. That the said parishioners, at a vestry or parish meeting, by a very great majority, have express'd their approbation and earnest desire that an Organ may be restor'd and erected in or near the place where the said former Organ stood. That the takeing down the Arch and Wall betwixt the said two Hollow Pillars will not be any disadvantage to, or diminution of, the strength of the said Pillars or Fabrick of the said Church. And lastly that the Judges of the said Court of Delegates, have by their Sentence dismiss the said Cause or Busienes, and condemned the said plaintiffs in one Hundred pounds for costs, payable to the said Def^{ts}. Now know yee that Wee the said Bishop, willing to promote so generous and so pious a work at the desire of the said Hon^{ble} and Reverend Edward Finch, Rector of Wigan, do hereby give our License Leave and Authority to the said Edward, to take down the said Arch and wall betwixt the said two hollow pillars, which divide the new and old chancel of the said church, and there to build a Gallery or Organ Loft, and in the same Loft to set up an Organ in or near the place where the said Organ stood as aforesaid, for the more laudable and solemn direction and performance of Psalmody in the worship of God in the said church, and to the use of the Parishioners of the said Parish. In witness whereof, wee have caus'd the seal of the Office of our Vicar General to be put to the p'sents Given at Chester the Twenty-fifth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and twelve, in the fifth year of our consecration. Henricus Prescott Reg^{us} Dep^{us}.¹

On 9th June, 1710, twelve church leys were voted by the parish, amounting to about £126, to be levied on the owners and

¹ Chester Diocesan Register.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 613

Inheritors of goods, chattels, lands, and tenements within the parish "for and towards the repair of the top of the steeple and white washing and repairing of the said Parish Church." It does not appear, however, that more than about £70 or £80 was expended upon the steeple and spires in that year, the remainder of the money being used for the ordinary expenses of the church or handed over to the churchwardens for the ensuing year.

The Reverend John Lowe, reader of Wigan, was buried at Wigan 20th September, 1711.¹

It appears from a letter of Sir William Dawes, Lord bishop of Chester, to Sir John Bridgeman, baronet, of 9th February, 1713-4, that the Honourable and Reverend Edward Finch resigned the rectory of Wigan on the 25th of November, 1713, and that the bishop signed his letter of acceptance on 1st December following.

Mr. Edward Finch married Mary, daughter of . . . Stanley. He was married before he came to Wigan; but he does not appear to have had any children. There is no mention of any in the Wigan parish registers; nor is there any notice of his children in Collins's *Peerage*. On resigning the rectory at Wigan he probably retired to his canonry at York, where he died in February, 1737-8, and lies buried in the cathedral. The extreme care which he took in transcribing bishop Bridgeman's *Wigan Leger*, so as to ensure accuracy in the most trifling particulars, may perhaps afford some indication to his character. His arms were: *argent, a chevron between three griffins passant wings endorsed sable.*

The bishop seems to have been under an impression, at the time of Finch's resignation, that the rectory of Wigan was held in some way by Sir Orlando Bridgeman's trustees in trust for the bishop of Chester. He expressed himself willing to accept the nomination of Sir John Bridgeman and the other trustees, but as a matter of duty towards his bishopric, he wished to be first satisfied on this point; as to which sufficient proof appears to have been given.

¹ Wigan Parochial Register.

614 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

SAMUEL ALDERSEY, who was presented to the rectory of Wigan by Sir John Bridgeman, baronet, and his co-trustees, was instituted 30th April, 1714.¹ He was the second son, and eventual heir of Thomas Aldersey, of Aldersey and Spurstow, in the county of Chester, Esq. He was born at Chester, 4th December, 1673,² and in October, 1702, was curate of Hargrave in Cheshire.

Soon after he became rector of Wigan he came into collision with the corporation touching the manorial rights. It appears that ever since the award between the rector and the corporation by Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, dated 28th September, 1663, the Mayor, Bailiffs, and Burgesses of Wigan had held from the rectors the Easter Lect, the Ascension Fair, and the Monday Market, on leases of 21 years, which were determinable, however, on the voidance of the benefice. After the resignation of Mr. Finch, and before any lease had been granted by Mr. Aldersey, the corporation proceeded to hold the Easter Lect, and took the tolls at the Ascension Fair in the year 1714. This was resented by Mr. Aldersey, who refused to renew the lease unless the corporation would acknowledge their mistake by a deed under their common seal. This they accordingly did by an instrument dated 14th December, 1714, acknowledging that they claimed no right other than under the aforesaid leases; after which Mr. Aldersey granted them a lease for 21 years, which was renewed by him on 14th December, 1735.

Mr. Aldersey's name first occurs in the Wigan vestry book at a meeting held 8th August, 1714, when the following resolutions were passed, shewing that the new organ was now brought into use in Wigan church (probably for the first time since the usurpation) in the performance of divine service: "It is this day order'd and agreed at a Vestry Meeting (Notice first given) That an order made the 7th of August, 1696, is hereby Ratified and

¹ Endorsement on Presentation in Diocesan Registry.

² Hulsby's Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. ii. p. 740.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 615

Confirm'd, That two Leys amounting to the s^m of one and twenty pounds be allowed, viz., twenty pounds for a capable Organist, and twenty shillings for a Bellows Blower, and in consideration of the above'd sums the sd Organist and Blower shall be oblidge'd to attend Divine Service on all Sundays and Holy days thr'out the year, and it is further agreed that the Rev^d the Rector, Mr. Aldersey, shall have the Nomination of the sd Organist during his Incumbency.

And it is further order'd that the profitts of the seats of the Western Gallery shall be applyed to James Winstanley and Matthew Scott untill such time as they be reimburs'd their remaining charges of . . . sd gallery, and it is further order'd y^t the Letting, Setting, and Receiving shall be managed p James Finch, Parish Clerk, and that he shall be allowed 10s. p^a ann. for his trouble. And it is further order'd y^t when the sd J^{ns} Winstanley and Matthew Scott's just demands are satisfied, the ensuing profitts of the sd gallery shall be for the use and repair of the organ." [Signed by] "Sam^l Aldersey, Rect^r," and many others.

Mr. Betts (the first organist) received a payment of £8 on 8th September, 1714, for playing upon the organ; but he did not long retain the post, for in the following March Mr. Alan or Alen received a full half-year's salary as organist.

On 21st September, 1714, there is an entry in the churchwardens' accounts of a small payment to the ringers at the King's [George I.] landing, and on 29th October a larger fee for ringing at the time of the King's coronation, and the birth of the Prince.

Mr. Aldersey's sixth son and eventual heir, Samuel Aldersey, was christened at Wigan 9th December, 1714. *

The following entries in the churchwardens' accounts in November, 1715, would seem to imply that such of the army of the Chevalier St. George as were brought to Wigan after the general surrender at Preston on the 14th of November, were lodged in the church.

* Wigan Parish Register.

616 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

“Spent upon assistance for to remove the Church goods when the Rebels was brought into the Church	s.	d.
the Church	1	0
P ^d the Centuary [sentry] for Garding the Organs	4	0
P ^d to 7 men for Clenesing the Church w ^o the Reb ^{ls} went out.....	11	6
P ^d for Beesoms Canell Candles Sand and Mopps	2	5
P ^d to 3 men and 9 women 1 day and a half clenesing and Washing and Scouring	12	9”

Of the forty-nine prisoners who were convicted in Lancashire, of whom forty-seven suffered the penalty of death, five were hanged at Wigan. ¹

From several entries in the Wigan Leger it appears that the houses originally built on the waste were still held of the rector in Aldersey's time by tenants at will. Mr. Aldersey records on Jan. 4th, 1715[-6]: "This day came to me Charles Houghton and desired I would bestow upon him that house standing at the end of y^e Scoles, in which his mother, Elizabeth Houghton, lived and died; and he disclaims any right or title it; and acknowledges himself to be tenant at will to y^e rector of Wigan as Lord of y^e Manor. To which I consent, and do this day admit him tenant during pleasure: he promising to keep y^e house in good repair, and not to harbour any pedlars, or such like vagabonds." [Signed] "Sam^l Aldersey, Charles Houghton; witness, Ra: Bancks, William Seddon."

"June 27, 1716. This day came to me Margery Dean, wid., and desired she might be admitted Tenant at will to that house in y^e lane near y^e pound,² in which her late Husband, Peter Dean, liv'd and died, and she disclaims any right or title to it, but declares she holds it by y^e sole will and pleasure of y^e Rector

¹ Baines' *Lancashire*, vol. ii. p. 67.

² Supposing the pound or pinfold to have always been where it stood in 1864, just inside the wall of the back yard of the Hall grounds, at the south-west corner adjoining the Mesnes, any houses that may ever have existed in the lane leading to the back entrance of the Hall, and to the Mesnes, had entirely disappeared before that date.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 617

of Wigan as Lord of y^e Manor of Wigan, to which I consent, and do this day admit her tenant at will, she keeping y^e sd house in good repair." [Signed] "Sam^l Aldersey, Margery Dean X her mark ; witness, Ra: Bancks, Sam^l Rowland."

"Sept. 29, 1716. Henry Greenhaugh having built a shippen or Cow house consisting of two bays of building, on y^e comon comonly call'd y^e school comon, adjoining or near to a croft of James Banks, desires to be admitted tennant at will to y^e Rector of Wigan as Lord of y^e Manor, to which I consent, he paying such reasonable rent as y^e Rector for the time being shall impose." [Signed] "Sam^l Aldersey, Henry Greenhough; witnes, Ra: Bancks, Geo. Valentine."

We have an incidental notice of a confirmation being held in the church in September, 1716, when the churchwardens make a small charge for money paid to John Pennington for giving notice twice to the persons that were to be confirmed by the bishop to come in time.

In the year 1716-7 the west and south doors of the church were repaired or renewed, as appears by the following entries in the churchwardens' accounts: "Paid to Thomas Green for wood and workmanship for the west doors as *per* his Bill appears £4 4s. 11d. Spent on the workmen and assistance on hanging the chur. doors 2s. 6d. Paid him more for wood and workmanship for the south doors as *per* his bill £4 16s. 2d." There was a further payment to Wm. Asscroft, mason, for new stone thresholds for the west and south doors; and a payment of £5 16s. to Jonath. In^oson for iron work for the south doors and two locks and scushions.

In the same year there was "a silver callice [chalice] for private sacraments" provided at a cost of £1 4s. 6d.; and a dog whip for 1s.

On "August 9th, 1717, It is this day order'd and agreed at a Parish meeting in the Parish Church of Wigan of the gentlemen and other inhabitants of this Parish, notice first given, that twelve church Leyes amounting to the sum of a hundred and twenty

618 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

six pound or thereabouts should be forthwith levied and gathered on the owners and Inheritors of Lands, Goods, and Chattels within the said Parish for and towards the repairs of the sd Parish Church, wch sd sum when collected to be paid into the hands of Mr. Jno. Rigby and Mr. Jerimiah Taylor, churchwardens, and to be by them p^d and disburst for the uses afores^d and other necessarys belonging to the s^d Church; and it is further agreed the Little Bell call'd the Catherine Bell y^t is now Broke should be cast anew and made for Tribble Tunable to the rest of the five Bells, and when cast the s^d six Bells to be hang'd anew, and the above-mençioned sum when collected should be apply^d to the uses afores^d." [Signed] "Henry Mason, Major," and twelve others.

The family of Scott who had the work of bell-casting in Wigan for more than one generation seem to have passed away, and the new bell was cast by Ralph Ashton, bell founder, at a cost of £49 7s. 6d., including the cost of the new metal which exceeded the weight of the old metal to which it was added. It was probably to bring the third bell into tune with the others that Thomas Walker, Jonathan Johnson, and others, were paid 6s. 6d. for cutting the third bell. The bell floor was replanked this year; and Mr. Allen, the former organist, was succeeded by Mr. James Parrin, who occupied the post for many years, and retained it till his death in April, 1770.

Mr. Henry Prescott (Vicar General and Official Principal), in a letter to bishop Gastrell, then at Oxford, dated November 9th, 1717, says: "Ever since Mr. Finch took down the gallery in the church of Wigan, where the Corporation sate together, they have sate promiscuously, or absented themselves from the church. Mr. Shackerley, however, has now generously offered to build or buy a proper seat for them. (It is built with oak all finisht, and will hold 80 persons—*note*). A gallery, erected by voluntary contributions, at the West End, and confirmed in Trust to the Rector, for the use of the Organ, viz., for the Repair or Beautifying of it (a salary of £30 *per annum* being otherwise settled

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 619

on the Organist) is the place fixed upon. I staid at Wigan several days after the Visitation ended, on this affair, Sir Roger Braidshaigh soliciting the matter on y^e behalf of Mr. Shackerley and the Corporation. The gallery when set to persons who wanted seats, made uncertain Rates, sometimes £5, sometimes £6, and at others but £4 *per an.* Therefore the sum of £100 was demanded by Mr. Aldersey, or in his behalf, of Mr. Shackerley, for it, for hee delights to have it his own gift, and to have no contributor to y^e Beneficence. He yet hesitates at y^e same and thinks it too high. If the matter proceed, part of the money will build a sufficient gallery, with seats on the north side for the meaner sort who wants seats, which, with y^e rest of y^e money, is to be converted as above to y^e use of y^e Organ. And this will be a means to reduce the Corporation to a good Temper, and perhaps to make Mr. Shackerley a Representative to it. I am sorry that so good an act should, in the end be made to originate in so questionable a motive." ¹ "Peter Shackerley, Esq., alderman of Wigan, and formerly representative of the same in Parliament," accordingly obtained a faculty for the acquirement of this gallery "for the use of the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, Bailiffs and other officers of the Corporation of Wigan upon Sundays and Holy-days" on 15th August, 1718; and the rector gave up his right to it in consideration of the said Peter Shakerley having undertaken to lay out a competent sum of money for a better and more certain fund towards the maintenance of an organist. Peter Shakerley was returned member for the Borough of Wigan, with Sir Richard Standish, 10th March, 1689-90, and again with Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Bart., 7th November, 1695; but not afterwards.

About two months before, on 26th June, 1718, William Brown, glazier, of Wigan, obtained a faculty from Thomas Wainwright, Vicar General and Official Principal of Francis [Gastrell] Lord bishop of Chester, to erect a gallery, with seats therein, over the

¹ Scraps relating to the History of Wigan, reprinted from the *Wigan Examiner*, New Series, No. 3, p. 4.

620 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

north isle and under the fifth arch on the north side of the church of Wigan, in length from north to south 19 feet, and in breadth from east to west 15 feet or thereabouts, with a convenient staircase leading thereto, and to reserve to himself such as he shall require for himself and his family, and appropriate the rest as with the approbation of the rector shall seem most expedient. ¹

At the annual vestry meeting on 15th April, 1718, a sum of £126 was voted by the parishioners for flagging the three isles of the church and making a new clock (or repairing of the old one); both of which works were accomplished in the course of the ensuing year. There was also a payment made that year for gilding the sun dial over the church porch, and a payment for "repairing the curtains at the altar."

On 17th January, 1718-9, Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Bart., obtained a faculty to build up his chancel or oratory (then ruinous), situate at the south east end of the parish church, adjoining the rector's upper chancel northwards, containing one and thirty feet in length and twenty in breadth or thereabouts, and also to take down a gallery on the south side of the nave filling the whole uppermost arch on the same side, and three seats or pews under the said gallery adjoining the partition wall, between the said south side of the nave and the said chancel or oratory eastwards, and also a seat commonly said to belong to Edward Langton of Low, Esq., westwards, to finish the said chancel or oratory with an entrance or door at the east end thereof, to take down the partition walls between it and the rector's said upper chancel northwards, and the east end of the said south side of the nave westwards, to raise or advance the said gallery to an equal and uniform height with the great south gallery, and to lay timber in the south wall whercon to raise or advance the same, to build convenient seats therein and a staircase up to the same, to alter and dispose of the said three seats or pews under the said gallery in such decent form and manner as he should judge fit, and

¹ Chester Diocesan Register.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 621

also to erect or build one other convenient seat where the first landing place of the present stairs is, in case he should think fit to turn the descent another way.¹ This work was evidently accomplished, for in 1719-20 there is a charge of 4s. in the churchwardens' accounts for "making the church clean w^o Sir Roger Bradsh's chapell walls was taken down."

On 28th November, 1720, John Baldwin also obtained a faculty to erect seats in the church.²

On 1st August, 1721, Theophilus Ward and Elizabeth his wife were accepted by the rector as tenants at will of that cottage in Wigan Lane, near the long well, formerly called Moss's cottage.

In 1722-3 there is an outlay charged in the parish accounts of £22 18s. 6d. for gilding the organ in the church.

On 15th March, 1726-7, Peter Orrell desires to be admitted as tenant at will to that cottage in Whelley Lane, the high-most house in the said lane, in which William Seddon lately lived. He disclaimed all right and title to it save what he hath from the rector as Lord of the Manor, agrees to pay such reasonable rent as the rector for the time being shall impose, to keep the cottage in good repair, and not to harbour any vagrants or vagabonds, and he is accepted accordingly.

At a parish meeting held 2nd June, 1732, it was agreed that the bells should be recast to the number of eight; and they were accordingly recast by Mr. Rudhall of Gloucester, whose account for recasting them is as follows :

"The weight of the old Bells was as follows :				Weight of the new Bells as under :			
	c	q	lb		c	q	lb
1 st Bell	10	1	12	1 st Bell	7	2	26
2 nd Bell	11	2	25	2 nd Bell	8	1	2
3 rd Bell	12	2	21	3 rd Bell	9	0	11
4 th Bell	17	1	13	4 th Bell	11	2	13
5 th Bell	22	2	25	5 th Bell	14	0	8

¹ Chester Diocesan Register.² *Ibid.*

622 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

	c.	q.	lb.		c.	q.	lb.
6 th Bell.....	25	3	22	6 th Bell.....	16	0	27
				7 th Bell.....	21	2	27
	100	3	6	8 th Bell.....	29	2	14
New Mettall } added to the } 8 new Bells }	17	2	10				
	118	1	16		118	1	16

	£	s.	d.
17 ^c 29 10 ^{lb} of new Mettall at 12 ^d <i>per</i> lb. comes to	98	10	0
Casting 100 ^c 3 ^q 6 ^{lb} of old mettall at £1 3s. 6d.			
<i>per</i> c. comes to	118	8	10
The Little Bell weighs 69 1/4 ^{lb} at 12 ^d p lb. comes to	3	9	6
Clapper to the Little Bell and fitting it	0	2	6
For 8 new clappers to the 8 new Bells weighing			
2 ^c 1 ^q 7 1/2 ^{lb} at 6 ^d p lb. comes to	6	9	9
For 8 Baldrings, 3 of them being double stapled	1	1	6
	£228	2	1 ["]

This sum was paid to Mr. Rudhall in the year 1723; but this did not cover the whole expense, for the following items also appear in the churchwardens' accounts for 1732, for money disbursed on account of the new bells:

P ^d John Bury for carriage of 9 headstocks for the bells from Manchest ^r	0	9	0
P ^d him for carriage of the little bell.....	0	1	0
P ^d him for Car. of Mr. Wrigleys Tegles [Tackles?] Ropes & oth ^r materials from and Back againe to Manchest ^r	0	5	0
P ^d Ralph Baldwin for a Tree	6	0	0
P ^d Mr. Curghey for Timber p bill	25	0	0
P ^d W ^m Fleetwood for timber p bill	10	0	0
P ^d Rich ^d ffell for 93 foot of Deals 3 1/4 p foot.....	1	5	3
P ^d Alderman Markland for Boards p bill	2	2	2

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 623

	£	s.	d.
P ^d Robert Banckes Esq. for an Ash tree	0	6	6
P ^d for Danzick Oack at Warrington & Carriage p bill	3	3	0
P ^d Mr. Wrigley for headstocks... 3 2 1			
P ^d for carriage of the Little Bell from Salop..... 0 3 3½	33	5	4½
P ^d him for hanging the 8 new Bells 30 0 0			
P ^d Mr. Wrigley for hanging the small Bell.....	0	5	0
P ^d Mr. Curghey & Henry Seddon for carting Timber from Wood each £1 4 0.....	2	8	0
P ^d Mr. Curghey for od carriage p bill.....	0	8	6
P ^d in expences in going to Salop with the old Bells and bringing back the new ones as appears p a bill of particulars.....	20	1	0
P ^d Mr. Curghey & partner Ra. Jolly & partner W ^m Chadwick & partner W ^m Bridghouse & partner for going and bringing back the Bells from Salop	16	0	0
P ^d Alderman Browne for casting y ^e 16 new Bell steps & 8 Bushes for the 8 Rowlers as appears p bill.....	3	1	6
P ^d Widdow Mollineux for 50 ^{lb} weight of <i>Lignum vite</i> wood for the 8 Rowlers.....	0	7	6
P ^d John Langshaw for turning and bushing the 8 Rowlers	0	8	0
P ^d for attending the new Bells 2 nights 2 men each night	0	4	0
P ^d for 3 Hassills for to cover the headstocks.....	0	3	0
P ^d for Letters from Mr. Rudall p bill	0	3	5
P ^d for leading the Bark	0	0	8
P ^d James Bibby for nailes p bill	0	10	6
P ^d Jonathan Johnson p bill.....	14	9	0
P ^d Michael Moss p bill.....	0	19	2
P ^d Ric ^d ffell for work p 3 bills.....	4	10	4

624 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
P ^d Edward Glazbrook p bill.....	0	18	2
P ^d Mr. Bridge for cleaning & putting new springs & Jacks & hammers & quarters to the clock...	1	2	6
P ^d Mr. Leigh for drawing articles & stamps when the agreem ^t was made with Mr. Rudhall.....	0	14	11
P ^d for drink that Mr. Wrigley and his men had when they workt at the Bells and fframes as appears p receipts.....	3	11	5
Sp ^t on Manchest ^r Preston Bolton Dean Leigh Liverpool & other ringers when they came to ring the new Bells.....	1	15	0
Paid for drink & laid out of pockett at makeing contracts & Bargaines with carters and other workmen and also at weighing the bells & loading and unloading the bells & goeing for & bringing back y ^e weigh beame to S ^r Thomas Standish & charges in goeing to Warrington to buy plancks & charges on the carters & men y ^e night before the bells were sent away also the night that they brought in the new bells.....	6	10	9
	<hr/>		
	£161	3	1½
For the churchwardens 2 Horses to Salop allowd <i>per</i> the gentlemen in generall.....	0	12	0
P ^d the sextons p bill	2	11	10
	<hr/>		
	£164	6	11½

From the above statement in the churchwardens' accounts it might have been inferred that the new bells were cast at Shrewsbury; but they were in fact cast at Gloucester by Abraham Rudhall, as appears by the inscriptions on the bells. There are eight bells and a ting tang. These were re-hung in 1876, and the tenor bell, which had been cracked, was recast in that year by J. Taylor of Loughborough, in the time of the present rector.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 625

The weight of the new tenor being about 28 cwt. The inscriptions, on all but the new tenor, are engraved in capital letters on the crown of the bells.

1. (Treble) Fear God: Honour the King. A.R. 1732.
2. Peace and good Neighbourhood. A.R. 1732.
3. Prosperity to the Church of England. A.R. 1732.
4. Prosperity to this Town and Parish. A.R. 1732.
5. We were all cast at Gloucester by Abr. Rudhall. A.R. 1732.
6. James Laland and Thomas Lowe, Churchwardens. A.R. 1732.
7. Samuel Aldersey, Rector. A.R. 1732.

The 8th bell has on one side the sacred monogram I.H.S., and on the other,

I To the Church the living call
And to the grave do summon all.

On the Ting Tang Bell—Come away, make no delay. A.R. 1732.

The quarters strike on the first and fourth bells; the hours on the tenor.

The board in the belfry contains the record of the first peal of grandsire triples known to have been rung by Wigan ringers. This feat was accomplished in 1879.

In the year 1757 there is an entry in the churchwardens' accounts of 7s. for a hat and silver lace for Wm. Eccersall.

In the year 1738-9 the church tower was repaired. Amongst other payments for the same, £11 was paid to Michael Wood for "pointing the steeple," and £3 15s. for "chipping the stone of the upper part of the steeple." Andrew Latham was also paid £9 18s. 5d. for stone for the steeple pillars, and for dressing and setting the same.

In 1739-40 Mr. Marsh was paid £4 16s. for painting a new deal pulpit, reading desk, sound board, and gilding the reading desk.

The last time rector Aldersey's name occurs in the parish registers as taking duty in the church was in the performance of

626 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

a marriage service on 2nd August, 1740. On the same day he signed his name to a *memorandum* in the Wigan Leger to the effect that he had admitted Mr. Curghey of Swindley as tenant at will to the cottage in Wigan Lane, near the long well, formerly called Moss's cottage.

The Rev. Samuel Aldersey, rector of Wigan, died 16th April, and was buried at Wigan 20th April, 1741.

He had succeeded his elder brother Robert Aldersey, Esq., in the estates of Aldersey and Spurstow in the county of Cheshire, 30th January, 1730, but continued to reside at Wigan till his death. He married Henrietta, daughter of Henry Bridgeman, D.D., dean of Chester and bishop of Sodor and Man; by whom he had a large family, viz., 1. Thomas Aldersey, baptized at Bunbury 5th August, 1703, who died in his infancy. 2. Thomas Aldersey, M.D., baptized at Bunbury 5th August, 1704; married Mary, eldest daughter and coheirress of Cornelius Hignett of Darland and Ashton, Esq., but died without issue in 1743 at Wigan. 3. John Aldersey, baptized at Bunbury 21st November, 1705, who died without issue. 4. Robert Aldersey, baptized at Tarporley 24th May, 1709, who died without issue. 5. Henry Aldersey, born at Bunbury 1710, who died unmarried. 6. Samuel Aldersey, baptized at Wigan 9th December, 1714, who succeeded his father in the family estates. 7. Orlando Aldersey, born 29th November and baptized at Wigan 8th December, 1715, who died young, and was buried at Wigan 7th January, 1725-6. 8. Bridgeman Aldersey, baptized at Wigan 5th February, 1616-7, who married Nancy, daughter of Foote Gower, M.D., and had issue Maria, who married and died in Liverpool, leaving a daughter Isabella. 9. Randal Aldersey, baptized at Wigan 14th December, 1720, who died an infant, and was buried at Wigan 3rd May, 1721. 10. Henry Aldersey, baptized at Wigan 7th September, 1723. The daughters were: 1. Anne, baptized at Bunbury 8th November, 1706; married 1st, at Wigan, 15th June, 1725, to Mr. Humphrey Kynaston of Chester, by whom she had issue John Kynaston, clerk, M.A., Fellow of Brazenose College,

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 627

Oxford, who died at Wigan, and was buried there 26th May, 1783, aged 54; and 2ndly to . . . Holt, Esq. 2. Elizabeth, born 4th January, 1707, who was married at Wigan in February, 1722-3, to the Rev. Ralph Markham, A.M., rector of Tarporley. 3. Jane, married at Wigan 22nd December, 1730, to Mr. Thomas Lancaster of Warrington. 4. Margaret, wife of . . . Hesketh, had a son who died unmarried. 5. Mary, who was buried at Wigan 20th January, 1717-8, unmarried. 6. Henrietta, baptized at Wigan 31st July, 1718, who died in her infancy, and was buried at Wigan 1st May, 1719.

The Rev. Samuel Aldersey, junior, the 6th son, succeeded to his father, the late rector of Wigan, at Aldersey, and carried on the line. He was entered of Christ Church College, Oxford, 29th November, 1731, aged 17. By his first wife Margaret, daughter and coheirress of Cornelius Hignett of Darland and Ashton, Esq., who died in January, 1783, he had issue among others, a son Samuel Aldersey, who eventually succeeded to the family estates, whose grandson, Thomas Aldersey, is now of Aldersey and Spurstow, Esq. His arms are *Gules, on a bend engrailed argent between three cinquefoils or, 3 leopards' heads carbossed vert.*

There is a portrait at Aldersey Hall of the Rev. Samuel Aldersey, rector of Wigan, in the 60th year of his age, painted by James Fellows, 1733.

From the parish registers and vestry books, it appears that George Bowyer was curate at Wigan parish church when Mr. Aldersey became rector. His name last appears in the books 2nd September, 1715. The name of John Baldwin first appears in April of the same year, and afterwards continually at all the vestry meetings till April, 1720, and from the position it occupies he was probably curate, though he does not sign himself so. Thomas Eden appears as curate 28th January, 1721-2, up to 29th June, 1722. On 27th March, 1722, the name of John Baldwin, junr, occurs at the vestry meeting; on 16th April of the following year the same name and handwriting occur as John Baldwin, *curate*, and he seems to have remained at Wigan as

628 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

curate till after Mr. Aldersey's death, together with Thomas Edge, who first occurs as curate 4th September, 1739. Samuel Lever continued to hold the curacy at Hindley during all Mr. Aldersey's time, and frequently occurs at the Wigan vestry meetings.

ROGER BRIDGEMAN, who succeeded Aldersey, was presented 1st,¹ and admitted 12th,² May, 1741. There is no record of his institution in the Diocesan Registers.

He was the second surviving son of Sir John Bridgeman, third baronet, of Castle Bromwich, in the county of Warwick, by Ursula, daughter and sole heiress of Roger Matthews of Blodwell, in the county of Salop, Esq. Born at his mother's house, Blodwell Hall, on Sunday, 20th October, 1700, he was privately baptized the same day, and afterwards, on Tuesday, 29th of the same month, brought to Blodwell church to be received by Mr. Humphreys, the vicar.³ He was entered at Oriel College, Oxford, 4th July, 1718, being then 17 years of age; was made B.A. in 1722, and M.A. 20th March, 1724-5.⁴ He afterwards became Fellow of Oriel, and was made D.D. in 1736.⁵ He was ordained deacon on Sunday, 30th May, 1725, by John [Potter], bishop of Oxford, in the church of St. Mary the Virgin, at Oxford, under letters dimissary from the bishop of Lichfield, in whose diocese he seems to have had a title given him by a certain Dr. Archer.⁶

In April of that year, his father, Sir John Bridgeman, wrote to inform him that Lord Cholmondeley⁷ had reserved a chaplain's place for him.

¹ Chester Diocesan Register.

² Family Evidences.

³ Sir John Bridgeman's Family Bible.

⁴ Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Family Evidences.

⁷ George, third Earl of Cholmondeley, who had then lately succeeded his brother Hugh, second Earl, was a near relative of Sir John Bridgeman, being his first cousin on the mother's side.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 629

Roger Bridgeman became rector of Plemstall,¹ in Cheshire, in or before the month of October, 1727, which had become vacant by the death of Mr. Webster; and on 18th December of the same year he was appointed minister of Castle Bromwich chapel,² in the county of Warwick, both of which were then donatives in the gift of Sir John Bridgeman.

The bishop's jurisdiction over the rector of Plemstall was questioned by the rector, who claimed freedom from his controul as Ordinary, and declined to attend the visitations, or to pay any fees.

In December, 1729, Roger Bridgeman received a letter from Mrs. Katherine Bridgeman, relict of his uncle Orlando Bridgeman, Esq., informing him that the vicarage of Clifton,³ in Warwickshire, was then vacant, by the death of Mr. Basset, and offering to present him to it, if he will accept it, to be held with his other benefices.

In the year 1737, on the death of Thomas Morrall, vicar of Bolton-le-Moors, in the county of Lancaster, Roger Bridgeman, then Doctor in Divinity, was nominated by Sir John Bridgeman to the vicarage. The rectory and tithes of Bolton, which belonged to the bishop of Chester, had been let in December,

¹ The church of Plemstall, or Plemstall, was originally a rectory in the gift of the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul at Shrewsbury. It subsequently became the property of the College of St. John in Chester, which had licence from the bishop to appropriate the rectory in 1393, after which it was served by a vicar with a pension of 40 marks. After the dissolution the appropriated rectory fell into the hands of the Marburies in 1591, from whom it was purchased by bishop Bridgeman in May, 1629. The bishop's grandson Sir John Bridgeman, bart., by his will devised the rectory and tithes of the parish of Plemstall to be for ever enjoyed by such person as shall officiate in the church therein by appointment of his (Sir John Bridgeman's) heirs male for the time being. The advowson has recently been sold by the present Earl of Bradford, in the year 1880, to the Rev. R. H. Lowe, of Birkenhead.

² The chapel of Castle Bromwich was similarly endowed by Sir John Bridgeman with the tithes of the township of Castle Bromwich.

³ The manor and advowson of Clifton had been settled upon his younger son, Orlando Bridgeman, Esq., by Sir John Bridgeman, baronet (the first of that name), who had endowed the vicarage with a portion of the tithes. The estate afterwards passed by the will of the said Katherine Bridgeman to the Rev. Roger Bridgeman.

630 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

1670, by John [Pearson] then bishop, on a lease of lives, to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, knight and baronet, and John Bridgeman of Castle Bromwich, Esq., his son and heir apparent, by the name of the rectory and parsonage of Bolton in the Moores in the county of Lancaster, and other things known by the name of the prebend of Bolton in the cathedral church of Lichfield annexed to the archdeaconry of Chester. The Lessees undertook to pay an annual sum of £26 to the bishop, to provide a maintenance for the vicar, and to save the bishop and his successors harmless from all rents, pensions, tenths, taxes, and other impositions whatsoever, which shall be due or payable for or by reason of the said rectory or premises to the King's Majesty, to the vicar of Bolton, to the church at Lichfield or to any other person, and the demise was made upon trust that when, and so long, and as often as, the said vicar of Bolton shall be vicar thereof at the nomination or presentation of the said Sir Orlando Bridgeman or his heirs that the whole benefit and profit of the said prebend, rectory, parsonage and premises hereby demised, the rents, annuities, pensions, and other necessary reprisals thereout issuing, and a yearly sum of £20 for a schoolmaster at Wigland only deducted and accepted, shall yearly go and be to the use and benefit of such vicar for the time being, but in case any person shall be vicar of Bolton who shall not be vicar thereof at the nomination or presentation of the said Sir Orlando Bridgeman or his heirs, that then the profit and benefit of the said prebend, &c., shall be for the use and benefit of such other person or persons who shall be nominated in that behalf by the said Sir Orlando Bridgeman or his heirs, and shall be licensed by the Lord Bishop of Chester for the time being to preach and officiate in the said church.* The bishops, however, appear to have generally retained the appointment of the vicars of Bolton in their own hands, notwithstanding the words of the demise, and Roger Bridgeman would seem to have been the only one ever nominated by Sir Orlando Bridgeman or his heirs. On this occasion there seems

* Family Evidences.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 631

to have been a dispute between the bishop [Samuel Peploe] and Dr. Bridgeman with respect to the position he should hold there, as to the duties he was to perform, and as to the necessity of his being licensed by the bishop to his cure.¹ The result was that Dr. Bridgeman remained unlicensed, and the bishop licensed Mr. Thomas Whitehead to the vicarage on 23rd November, 1737.² Dr. Bridgeman, however, retained the tithes and profits of the rectory during his life, the pension to Lichfield cathedral and other charges on the rectory being paid by him.³

He was residing chiefly at Castle Bromwich during this period, and occasionally on his fellowship at Oriel College. His position at Plemstall was still unsettled. In August, 1733, Mr. Roberts, the bishop's registrar, complains that Mr. Bridgeman had taken no notice of the episcopal visitations or paid any visitation fees;⁴ and on 26th December, 1738, the bishop writes him a letter from Chester, in which he says, with reference to a proposed debate to be held concerning affairs at Plemstall: "I shall be exceeding glad to have it done wth regard to truth wth temper and wthout prejudice. In order to this I think it is absolutely necessary y^t you state y^r case, and be particular in y^r claim, and let me know w^h you found it upon. I do not mean anything of y^r right to appropriate the rectory: that I take to be out of the question: but I mean y^r claim wth respect to the ordinary jurisdiction. When you are pleased to give me such acc^t I will either tell you why I disapprove, or will submit. When this is done I will then be glad to be inform'd by w^h law, or usage, y^r is right, you are pleas'd to exercise y^r function in Lancashire, wthout the privity, or consent of the Diocesan: and particularly in Bolton parish. I do not mention this out of any resentment for the wrong application of the profits of the rectory, as I apprehend [your right to these] plainly from the lease, but for the sake of y^r good order and discipline w^{ch} should be in the chl; w^{ch} of laws require

¹ Family Evidences.² Family Evidences.³ *Bishop's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 60.⁴ *Ant. 3, 1733*, lxxv.

632 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

and w^{ch} every clergyman has in the most solemn manner oblig'd himself to promote.

I am, Rev^d Sr, y^r very humble serv^t,
SAML. CESTRIENS." †

Dr. Bridgeman probably satisfied the bishop with respect to his position at Plemstall, as the benefice has been held as a peculiar ever since that time.

When Dr. Roger Bridgeman entered upon the rectory of Wigan, Edward Holt, Esq., the then mayor, together with the bailiffs and several of the aldermen and burgesses, applied to him to grant them a new lease of the Easter Leet, Ascension Fair, and Monday market, whereupon he asked time for consideration, and afterwards told them that he was not willing to grant the same, but that he proposed to hold them in his own hands. This caused a law suit between the rector and the corporation, who denied that the rector had any right to the said leet, fair, or markets, or that his predecessors had ever held them, but asserted that they had been held from time immemorial by the corporation to whom they belonged. The suit, which commenced in or about the year 1743, lasted for many years, and was still pending in April, 1750, a few months before Dr. Bridgeman's death; the result appears to have been that the fair and markets remained in the rector's hands, but the court leets were never afterwards held by them.

There is an entry, in the Wigan vestry book, of 16th April, 1745, which is characteristic of the habits of the times in the reign of King George II.: "It is order'd that no presents of any wine shou'd be made to the Rect^r for the time being nor to any other person whatsoever, except two Bottles of wine at the several Feasts of Easter, Witsütide, & Christmas, to the Curate for the time being; and it is further order'd that no money shall be expended or laid out in entertaining of any clergymen who shall for the future officiate or do any duty hereafter here." Mr. Thomas Edge, who had been curate in Mr. Aldersey's time, was

† Samuel Pople, S.T.P., bishop of Chester, consecrated at St. Margaret's, Westminster, 12th April, 1726; died 21st February, 1751-2.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 633

then curate. He retained the curacy during the whole of Dr. Bridgeman's time and for some years afterwards. The above order, made in 1745, with respect to the restriction of the customary presents of wine, &c., was cancelled at a vestry meeting on 21st April, 1747, and "set void so far as concerns the Rector and Curate and any strange parson, that is to say the Rect^r & Curate shal have as usual such quantitys of wine as was customary before the s^d order was made, both in relation to them or any strange parson." The customary expenditure upon any stranger who came to preach was 2s.

When Prince Charles Edward, the young Chevalier, advanced into England with his army of Scotch Highlanders in 1745, and was forced to retire before the Duke of Cumberland, they passed through Wigan on their retreat on the 11th or 12th of December, and doubtless left marks of their progress behind them. Dr. Bridgeman was absent from Wigan at that time, being probably at Castle Bromwich, where he sometimes resided. On his return to Wigan, Sir John Bridgeman, in a letter of 5th February, 1745-6, expresses a doubt that he will not have found his affairs either at his church or rectory house in the order he left them, and heartily wishes he may never have such visitors again. The Wigan churchwardens account for an expenditure of 3s. on the ringers when the Duke of Cumberland came. The Duke became at this time the great popular hero of the day. A sum of 10s., and 8s. for ale, was paid to the ringers at Wigan for ringing on his birthday [15th April], and a similar payment was made to them "when the compleat victory was gained over the Scots."

Hoods for the clergy were paid for by the parish in those days. In 1746 there was a payment of £2 4s. 3d. "for the Hudd for the Rev^d D^r Bridgeman." A doctor's hood will have been an expensive one. The hood provided for Mr. Cawley, the curate in 1749-50, cost but 18s. 6d.

In July, 1747, upon the death of his father, Sir John Bridgeman, bart., Dr. Roger Bridgeman succeeded to the small estate of Clifton upon Dunsmore, in the county of Warwick, which had formerly belonged to his uncle, Orlando Bridgeman, Esq.

634 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

The Rev. Roger Bridgeman, D.D., rector of Wigan, died unmarried, at 'Talk o' th' Hill, sometime between the 14th and 17th, and was buried at Wigan on the 20th, of June, 1750, when his estate at Clifton passed to his nephew, George Bridgeman, second son of his brother Sir Orlando Bridgeman, bart.

There is in the north-west wall of that part of the offices at Wigan Hall which is now the kitchen and scullery, a shield containing Dr. Bridgeman's arms, *sable, ten plates four three two and one, on a chief argent a lion passant ermines, with a crescent for a mark of cadency.* This must have been removed to its present position from some other part of the house, probably the north-east end of the old building, for the present kitchen and scullery are believed to have been built by the late rector, Sir H. Gunning, to connect the laundry and brewhouse with the dwelling house. The shield has evidently been re-painted with the wrong colours.

Dr. Bridgeman's curates were the Rev. Thomas Edge, who held the cure from 5th April, 1743, to March, 1748; and from April, 1748, the Revd. Robert Cawley. The curates at Billinge in his time were Rev. Humphrey Walley up to 1749, and on 3rd April of that year Dr. Bridgeman nominated the Rev. Edward Parr of Rainford to the chapelry of Billinge, vacant by the death of Humphrey Walley. At Upholland the Rev. [W. Simon] Warren, curate, was dead before 29th June, 1746; on 7th June, 1747, the Rev. James Miller received from Dr. Bridgeman a year's stipend of £20 for serving the cure; and on 7th August, 1747, Mr. Thomas Rainford writes to Dr. Bridgeman from Wigan, saying: "Mr. Baldwin has got to Holland, and I believe will please the people very well." The Rev. John Baldwin was probably appointed to the cure on 12th July, 1747, for he received from the rector on 13th July, 1748, a stipend of £20 for officiating at the parochial chapelry of Upholland for the year ending 12th July. The Rev. John Baldwin and Mrs. Jane Finch were married at Wigan by Mr. Edge, curate, 4th February, 1751. The Rev. Samuel Lever was still curate at Hindley at the time of Dr. Bridgeman's death.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 635

SHIRLEY COTES, who succeeded Roger Bridgeman as rector, was presented by William, Lord Digby, the only surviving trustee. The presentation is dated 3rd July, 1750, but there is no record of his institution.

He was entered at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, as the son of John Cotes, of Lichfield, co. Stafford, Esq., 23rd October, 1730, being then 16 years of age. He took his degree as B.A. in 1734, and as M.A. in 1737. He was a younger son of John Cotes, of Cotes, in the county of Stafford, and Woodcote, in the county of Salop, Esq. (to which properties he eventually succeeded), by his wife Lady Dorothy Shirley, daughter of Robert, Earl Ferrers. On 26th October, 1767, he was described as of Walton, in the county of Derby, clerk (of which parish he may perhaps have also been rector), when his son John was matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford, who was then 17 years of age.

The first entry of any interest in the churchwardens' accounts during the incumbency of Mr. Cotes, was the record of a vestry meeting 1st September, 1752, when the bill of Mr. Parrin, the organist, of £20 for repairing and cleaning the organ was allowed.

In 1753 there was a sum of about £50 expended on repairs of the church. At a general meeting of the parishioners (being the Easter vestry meeting) 16th April, 1754, "it is ordered that a flag walk of 4 foot Broad be laid from the Wallgate church yard gate to the Broad walk near the gate leading to the Market Street being the road leading from the Wallgate to the Vestry Door, and that a Door sted near the North West Corner of the church be wall'd up with Brick or Stone;" which was done in the course of that year. On 7th June, 1754, there was a payment of 12s. 5d. made "for brick setting and flaging &c. on opening y^e passage from the North Isle into the chancell." On 16th December of the same year William Wigan was paid £1 11s. 6d. for stone, and building a wall adjoining the church little house.¹

¹ Mention of this church little house occurs in the account books of an earlier date. It was probably what is now called the hearse house adjoining the churchyard. This building, since its discontinuance as a hearse house, has been occupied by the rector, as his freehold, who lets it, and by which it is now kept in repair.

636 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

In April, 1755, notice was given of a "Dean Rural's court," after which similar notices frequently occur, together with notices of bishops' and chancellors' courts. In this year a new clock was provided by the parish at a cost of £30, besides £2 12s. 6d. "for painting and gilding the Dial Board, &c." Mr. Parrin, the organist, had £10 allowed him again in December, 1758, for tuning the organ, and £8 in 1763.

Mr. Parrin, the old organist, died in 1770, and at the Easter vestry meeting on 17th of that year, the rector was requested to make an appointment to the vacant post. Mr. John Langshaw was first appointed, and, probably at the instigation of the new organist, the organ seems to have been thoroughly cleaned and repaired. Mr. William Ollerhead and Mr. James Eckersley, the churchwardens of 1770, accounted for eight church leys granted on 29th August, 1770, amounting to £81, which was paid over by them to Messrs. Byfield and Green for repairing the old organ, making new bellows, keys and movements, new working the sound boards, making new purses, springs, &c. On 12th July, 1771, two leys were granted for gilding the organ, but these two leys were never collected. There was an additional payment made in 1771 to Edward Bradshaw, and another of about £20, for carriage of the organ and putting it up.

Mr. Langshaw had been succeeded by Mr. Barker as organist in 1772. He was appointed by the rector, and his nomination ratified and confirmed at the ensuing vestry meeting.

Mr. Cotes presided at a Wigan vestry meeting on 13th April, 1773. He was probably non-resident during the last two years of his life, during which his curate, the Rev. Stephen Ellis, seems to have acted for him.

At a meeting of the parishioners on 4th August, 1773, it was agreed that the roof of the church should be repaired as follows: "A course of Ashler of fourteen inches thick, and one hundred sixty-six feet long on both sides the roof, with ten corbel stones in the centre between the beames, and to be beaded throughout, three beam ends to be supported with new oak timber in manner

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 637

as the others are done. A new heart of oak beam across the roof at the west end, and the old one took out, of the dimensions of fourteen inches deep and twelve inches broad. The beam ends to be screwed, bolted and strapped with iron in the same manner with those already done. The lead of the roof to be turned upwards, afterwards laid down again and soldered, and repaired where necessary, and flasketed, in the same manner with the other already done."

The Rev. Shirley Cotes died 11th December, at his seat at Woodcote,¹ in Shropshire, where he was buried 15th December, 1775.²

He married Elizabeth, daughter of Francis Chambre, of Petton, in the county of Salop, Esq., by whom he had several children, of whom James was baptized at Wigan, 5th April, 1752; Thomas was baptized there 22nd May, 1755; he was entered at Brasenose College, Oxford, 8th April, 1772, aged 16, was vicar of Stanwell, Middlesex, in 1783,³ rector of Weston-under-Lizard, in the county of Stafford, in 1790, and was buried at Woodcote, 29th January, 1801, aged 45;⁴ a daughter, Elizabeth, was buried at Wigan, 18th August, 1753; a son, Shirley Cotes, was buried at Wigan, 26th August, 1757; another son, Shirley Cotes, was baptized at Wigan, 1st September, 1758, and buried there 29th April, 1760; and another son, Washington Cotes, was baptized at Wigan, 27th October, 1759.

Mr. Shirley Cotes was succeeded at Woodcote and his other family estates by his eldest son, John Cotes, of Woodcote, Esq., who will have been born shortly before he came to Wigan, and who represented the borough of Wigan in parliament from 1782 to 1802. He married first, Lucy, daughter of William, first Viscount Courtenay, by whom he had two daughters who both died unmarried, and zudly, Maria, daughter of George Harry, Earl of Stamford and Warrington, by whom he had, with several daughters, two sons, viz., John, who succeeded to the estates, and Charles

¹ Note in churchwarden's account book.

² *Alumni Oxonienses.*

³ Sheriff Hales Parochial Register.

⁴ Sheriff Hales Register.

638 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Grey, vicar of Stanton St. Quintin, in the county of Wilts, who married and left issue two sons and two daughters. The eldest son, John Cotes, late of Woodcote, Esq., married Lady Louisa Harriet Jenkinson, daughter and coheir of Charles Cecil Cope, third Earl of Liverpool, and died in 1874, leaving, with several daughters, two surviving sons, Charles Cecil Cotes, now of Woodcote, Esq., and Charles James Cotes, of Pitchford, in the county of Salop, late Lieut.-Col. of the Grenadier Guards.

The arms of Cotes of Woodcote are *Quarterly 1st and 4th ermine, 2nd and 3rd paly of six or and gules.*

GUY FAIRFAX was instituted to the rectory of Wigan 30th January, 1775-6,¹ on the presentation of Sir Henry Bridgeman, bart., and inducted on 27th February following.² He was a younger son of Thomas Fairfax of Newton Kyme, in the county of York, Esq., by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of John Simpson of Renishaw, in the county of Derby, and Babworth, in the county of Notts., Esq. He was born at Newton Kyme, 29th July, 1735, was entered at Christ Church, Oxford, 3rd April, 1753, being then 17 years of age, took his degree of B.A. in 1757 and that of M.A. in 1759.³ He was curate of Bilbrough, co. York, in 1760.⁴ Mr. Guy Fairfax was a near relation to Sir Henry Bridgeman, the patron of Wigan church, being his wife's first cousin.

The following *memorandum* occurs in the Wigan Leger during the incumbency of Mr. Fairfax :

"On the 12th of April, 1779, when the Reverend Guy Fairfax was Rector of Wigan, several persons, viz. the late Mrs. Joanna Holt and Mr. Joseph Cowling who lived in the Standishgate in Wigan and had doors out of their respective Gardens behind their said respective Dwelling-houses in the said Standishgate street into the land called 'the Mesnes,' which is a part of the Glebe Land

¹ Chester Diocesan Registry.

² *Alumni Oxonienses.*

³ *Memorandum in Wigan Vestry Book.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 639

belonging to the Wigan Rectory, made out and signed acknowledgments stating that such doors were upon sufferance only and not of right, and on the same day in the same year another person, viz. one Richard Ball late of Wigan Glazier, who had a gate from a field which he occupied called Mr. . . . field into what is called the High Mesnes, other part of the Glebe Land belonging to the Rectory, also made and signed an acknowledgment that such gate was upon sufferance only, but the said Mr. Ball who made this acknowledgment was as appears from the said acknowledgment the Tenant only and not the owner of the field."

The new chapel of St. George's, Wigan, was consecrated 21st September, 1781.

At a vestry meeting held 29th March, 1785, it was ordered and agreed that from this time the sexton shall be allowed twenty shillings for ringing the prayer bell twice every day on the week days, the clerk five shillings for the like purpose on holidays. This seems to imply that daily matins and evensong were said in Wigan church at that time, and the holy days observed.

On the same day there is entered in the vestry book an acknowledgment from the churchwardens that it is on sufferance only that any corpse is placed in the chancel of the rector of Wigan, or in that of the Bradshaigh family in Wigan church.

At a vestry meeting, 13th April, 1786, the old church clock was pronounced to be worn out, and, after several adjournments, it was agreed, on Sunday, 3rd September of that year, "that a good new clock with four faces to go eight days should be placed in the Tower of the Church in lieu of the present old clock." After some further delay it was agreed on 11th May, 1788, to accept an estimate of £171 10s. from Peter Fiernley for a new clock, out of which he was to allow £8 for the old one, and to uphold the new clock for seven years, except cleaning.

Mr. Fairfax resigned the rectory of Wigan in 1790, having been instituted, some time in the course of the previous year, to

640 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the rectory of Newton Kyme, where he rebuilt the rectory house. He died while performing the service in church there on 7th September, 1794.¹ He married Henrietta Catherine, daughter of the Rev. John Kearney, D.D., by Henrietta his wife, daughter of the Hon. and Rev. Henry Brydges, brother of James, Duke of Chandos. By her he had issue—1. Guy Simpson Fairfax, born 21st April, and baptized at Wigan 22nd May, 1781,² who matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, 24th October, 1798, where he took his B.A. degree in 1803, his M.A. in 1807, and died at Newton Kyme, 4th January, 1819;³ 2. Robert Fairfax, born 14th May, and baptized at Wigan 17th June, 1782,⁴ who died without issue;⁵ and a daughter Henrietta Catherine, born 15th April, and baptized at Wigan 23rd May, 1787,⁶ who was married to Joseph Chamberlayne, Esq., of Mangersbury, in the county of Gloucester.⁷

The arms of Fairfax of Newton Kyme are, *Argent, three bars gemelles gules, surmounted by a lion rampant sable, crowned or.*

GEORGE BRIDGEMAN, the next rector, was instituted 30th July, 1790. He was the fourth son of Sir Henry Bridgeman, baronet, who was created Baron Bradford of Bradford, in the county of Salop, in 1794. Mr. George Bridgeman was born in St. James's Square, 11th August, 1765. He went up to Cambridge about the year 1784, where he took his degree as bachelor of arts in 1787 and as master of arts in 1790.

He was admitted to the rectory of Weston-under-Lizard, in the county of Stafford, 1st March, 1801; and was also rector of Plemstall, in the county of Chester.

According to a *memorandum* in his own handwriting, Mr. George Bridgeman took possession of the living of Wigan 1st August, 1790. He complains that he found the rectory house in a very ruinous and decayed state, and quite unfit for the

¹ *Alumni Oxonienses.* Foster's *Yorkshire Pedigrees.*

² Wigan parish Register.

⁴ Wigan parish Register.

⁶ Wigan parish Register.

³ Foster's *Yorkshire Pedigrees.*

⁵ Foster's *Yorkshire Pedigrees.*

⁷ Foster's *Yorkshire Pedigrees.*

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 641

reception of his family, and says that it took him twelve years to bring it into an efficient state.

At vestry meeting held at Wigan on 3rd August, 1796, pursuant to notice given, it was resolved that it was highly necessary to enlarge the burial ground, that the churchwardens should be empowered to purchase from the devisees of the late Mr. James Latham a parcel of land lying on the north-west side of the parish church for this purpose, at a price they had agreed to accept, and that a rate should be laid forthwith to defray the expense of the purchase, consecration, and all other incidental expenses. It was also resolved at the same meeting that the purchase money arising from the sale of breadths of burial ground not appropriated for the burial of paupers should be received by the wardens for the time being and brought to the credit of their annual accounts with the parish. The burial ground was consecrated in the same year.

During the first four years of his incumbency, from 1790 to 1794, the great tithes were let to various persons. In 1794 they were let on a lease of seven years, to expire at Christmas, 1801. At the time of making the agreement the average price of corn for three years previously was taken, when corn was very low. The next year corn rose considerably, and continued high till the year 1798, when it reached the exorbitant price of £1 5s. *per* bushel, and oatmeal £5 5s. *per* load. At this price corn remained till the year 1801, when a plentiful harvest put an end to the pretended famine.¹

The terms on which the tithes of the several townships were let were as follows:—

The township of Abram	£85
" " Hindley	47
" " Aspull	45
" " Pemberton	60
" " Billinge Upper End	66

¹ Wigan Leger.

642 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

The township of Billinge Chapel End	75
" " Wigan	22
Winstanley and Haigh were not let during the above lease, but produced about £160 <i>per annum</i>	160
The township of Orrell	50
	<u>£610</u>

In the following year, 1802, the tithes were valued by two competent persons, and offered to the farmers at their separate valuations, which they all accepted, and paid their respective shares on the first Monday after Christmas, which is the day usually appointed for payment: wheat that year being 10s. 6d. *per* bushel, and oatmeal £1 14s. *per* load.

The receipts were as follows:—

The township of Abram	£221	9	0
" " Hindley	190	10	0
" " Aspull.....	119	15	0
" " Billinge Chapel End	134	8	0
" " Billinge Upper End,	111	8	0
" " Pemberton.....	179	13	0
" " Orrail or Orrill	50	0	0
" " Haigh.....	107	4	0
" " Winstanly	132	1	0
" " Wigan was gathered in kind, worth.....	60	0	0
	<u>£1306</u>	8	0

On May 30, 1802, the toll of the rector's fair, which begins on Holy Thursday, was let to William Mercer for and during the time the fair is held. He, the said Mercer, is to collect and receive all tolls for cattle, horses, pigs, corn and meal, and all standings that belong to the corporation whatsoever for the space of three days; he is also to collect all the tolls of the Monday markets, and pay yearly six pounds.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 643

The same day was let to the said William Mercer the tithe pigs within the township of Wigan, to be by him collected and received, for which he agreed to pay the yearly sum of seven pounds seven shillings.

These statistics are entered by Mr. Bridgeman in the Wigan Leger, where the following *memoranda* also occur:—

“Application being made to me by William Dicconson of Wrightington Esquire’s agent to grant him, William Dicconson, leave to pull down my cottage which stood upon the waste in Wigan Lane, nearly opposite the reservoir for holding water to supply the town, in order that there might be a coal pit sunk for the use of Langshaw, Hargreaves, and Company, coal merchants; which I accordingly agreed to, he, the said William Dicconson, his heirs and assigns, consenting to pay yearly and for ever the sum of two pounds twelve shillings and threepence, as will appear by my chief rent book.”

1803. “A custom long prevailed in the Parish of Wigan for the several chapels to solemnize marriages indiscriminately without any consideration for the natural and exclusive claims of the Mother Church, which custom I conceived to be irregular; in consequence, in the year 1803 I applied to the then Chancellor of the Diocese (Mr. Briggs), who in his reply agreed with me in opinion that the ministers appointed to these several chapels could not extend their jurisdiction beyond the limits of their respective chapelries, and consequently had no right to solemnize marriages except where one or both of the parties lived within the district of the particular chapel where the service is required to be performed: that the jurisdiction of the rector, on the contrary, evidently extends over the whole Parish, and therefore that the Mother Church has the exclusive privilege of receiving such parties indiscriminately. For further satisfaction as to the validity of this claim *vide* Stat. 1st Geo. I. chap. 10. sec. 5.”

From 1803 to 1806 there was very little difference in the price of corn or the value of the tithes received,

644 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

In 1805 the salary of each of the curates was advanced from £62 10s. *per annum* to £100.

" 1806. In the spring of this year, in order to obtain a true knowledge of what coal or canal lies under the glebe, I caused two holes to be bored. The metal of both borings being the same, it will only be necessary to describe the one, which is as follows, viz. :—

	Yds.	ft.	in.		Yds.	ft.	in.
Sand and marl	7	0	0	Hard Stone	0	0	11
White Flag.....	1	0	3	White Flag	2	0	4
Rock	0	0	9	Hard Stone	0	1	6
Liñ and wool.....	2	2	3	Dun Flag	2	2	8
Dun Flag	3	2	1	Black Bass.....	3	1	10
Rock	0	1	0	Chitter	0	1	8
Liñ and wool.....	0	2	2	Dun Bass	0	1	1
Rock	9	1	3	Metal.....	0	1	0
Black Bass.....	0	1	6	Black Bass.....	3	2	4
Dunn Flag.....	5	2	7	Coal	0	1	6
Black Bass.....	1	0	4	Warran'd Earth.....	0	2	0
Coal	0	2	8	Chitter	1	0	11
Warran'd Earth.....	0	1	0	Rock and metal.....	3	2	0
Rock	1	0	10	White Flag	2	2	0
Liñ and wool.....	3	0	4	Black Bass.....	1	1	3
Dun Flag	1	1	7	Canal coal	1	0	4
Chitter	0	1	4				
Rock and metal.....	0	1	6	Total depth of } 68	1	0	
Burr	0	0	10	the hole..... }			
White Flag	1	1	5				

From the particular statement of the above metals the canal will be found at sixty-seven yards and eleven inches deep upon the crop (that is to say, bearing a due west point from the Rectory House, and at the farthest extremity of the glebe north and east of the Rectory House). The canal lies one hundred and twenty yards upon the deep, and a full yard thick. The boring of the

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 645

before-mentioned two depths cost me sixty-six pounds. I mention this for the information of those that may follow me, in case I may not set or farm set the before mentioned mine during my Incumbency. The value of canal is at this time about three hundred pounds *per acre*." ¹

1807. "I do not find in any of the preceding pages of this Book [Bishop Bridgeman's Wigan Leger] the custom of Mortuaries explained nor the mode of collecting them : (viz.) When the Master of a House within the Borough of Wigan dies and is at the time of his decease possessed of £40 in money or personalties, then it is lawful that his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns do pay or cause to be paid to the rector of Wigan ten shillings, and in case the wife should die the following day, then her heirs, exors, admors, or assigns are alike bound to pay another ten shillings ; but had the wife died first there would have been no claim for a mortuary for her, because she was not, during her husband's life, supposed to be the head of the house."

The pulpit furniture in Wigan church was given by the Hon. and Rev. George Bridgeman in the year 1807, at a cost of £44 17s. 3d.

With respect to the tithes he states : " The corn in this parish is bound up in sheaves. Eight sheaves set up together make one shock, and every tenth shock is the rector's property, and if under the number of ten shocks the rector had none. The practice was so common on small farms to have eight or nine shocks in each field bound up in large sheaves (the farmers called it binding the titheman out), to put a stop to this I now take every tenth sheaf where small quantities of corn are grown. Beans and peas which were hoed in rows or drills were not tithed. The practice of hoed husbandry for beans improved every year. In 1808 I was advised to value hoed crops, and the farmers paid the valuation. In the year 1809 I took them in

¹ The canal was for the most part worked in Mr. Bridgeman's time.

646 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

kind, the same as corn. Fitches were not tithed at all in this parish until the year 1808, and since that time all are tithed except what are eaten with cattle in their green state before the 12th day of the month of August in each year. The practice in this parish was so common for corn growers to claim waste land corn exempt from tithe that in the year 1809 I was advised to make them pay an acknowledgment, or to take it in kind, which is done to profit and will much advance the yearly income."

"On 3rd January, 1808, Mr. John Lyon, who then lived at a house in Standishgate formerly called the Porch House, next on the north-east side to the house where the late Dr. Cowling lived, signed an acknowledgment that the Door out of his (Mr. Lyon's) garden into the Mesnes was upon sufferance, for which he by the said acknowledgment agreed to pay a chief rent of sixpence yearly during the time he should own the premises."

"In the year 1810 Mr. Andrews inclosed the old river Douglas near to the Bridge opposite to the Parson's meadow, which so much washed the soil of the meadow away that I was advised to build a wall, costing £38, which has prevented the water doing any further damage."

"In the year 1810 the lead of the roof of the chancel of Wigan Church was stripped, and the timber examined and found to be perfectly sound. The timber beams lie 13 inches in the wall at each end. In the same year the whole of the church and the chancel walls were examined by an experienced architect from Chester, of the name of Thomas Harrison, and no appearance of any danger, but all in good and safe condition."

In 1812 the parsonage house belonging to the chapelry of Hindley being insufficient for the accommodation of a resident minister, and it being the general wish of the inhabitants that the curate should live among them, a comfortable and appropriate house was built by the rector and several of the principal landholders and others, with aid from the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty.

"There not being any good drawing room in the Parsonage

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 647

House at Wigan, I in the beginning of the year 1813 converted two bed chambers into a drawing room of the dimensions of 36 feet by 19 feet, and having three large sash windows looking towards the south-west. This alteration, exclusive of the old materials, cost me £236."

"On a Sabbath day in the year 1813, during Divine service, some plaister fell from the roof of the Parish Church of Wigan and gave so much alarm that Divine service was discontinued." The rector therefore had the chancel walls and roof re-examined by an architect, who again pronounced them to be in a state of safety, but for the greater satisfaction of the congregation he had the walls secured with iron bars and the chancel newly roofed with oaken timber and covered with lead."

The following *memorandum* is entered in the Leger without date, but apparently about the year 1814 :—"The Reverend John Vause, formerly of Wigan and afterwards of Liverpool, and James Alexander Hodson, of Upholland Grove, Esquire, who owned the lands on each side of part of Gidlow Lane, within Wigan, claimed the soil and freehold of the said Lane as far as their lands extended, and also the waste land lying within and on the side of the same lane, because under this lane and the said waste land in it there was some coal, they alleging that the same lane was a mere private way and occupation road, which had as far as their lands extended formerly been taken out of their lands to neighbouring farms, and was not a Public Highway. I, however, as Lord of the Manor of Wigan and of the waste land within the said Manor, objected to their claim, and I claimed, as such Lord of the said Manor, the soil and freehold of the said lane and waste land within the same, alledging that the said land was not a mere private way, as contended by said Vause and Hodson, but was a Public Highway, and that it had always been claimed and used as such by the family residing at Standish Hall whenever they thought fit to use it, and this allegation was confirmed by Mr. Strickland Standish, to whom I applied for information on this subject. I moreover alleged, as

648 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the truth was and is, that certain chief rents were payable and actually paid to me annually as Lord of the said Manor and waste land within the same for divers incroachments which had been in former and ancient times made upon the waste in Gidlow Lane. Said Vause and Hodson, finding on enquiry these my allegations to be true, abandoned their claims to the soil of the said lane and waste land within it and along the sides thereof."

With respect to the tithes of Upholland and Dalton, which had been taken from the rectors of Wigan by the Earl of Derby, the tithes of Upholland were sold by Edward, Earl of Derby, to John Morris and William Morris, 25th December, 1782. John Morris's moiety was mortgaged, 1st and 2nd September, 1788, to Sarah Blackburne to secure £2,200 and interest, and further mortgaged 17th August, 1789, to John Wilkinson to secure £1,000 and interest. They were sold 10th and 11th May, 1793, by Morris, Blackburne, and Wilkinson to the Rev. Thomas Holme, of Upholland, clerk, and by his executors, 27th August, 1806, to William Morris for £3,600. And whereas they were described in Lord Derby's conveyance to Morris in 1782 as "the tithes and tenths of corn and grain in Upholland," they are described in the conveyance of John Morris's moiety of the same tithes to the Rev. Thomas Holme in 1793 as "an undivided moiety of and in all those the said tithes and tenths of corn and grain and *hay*," and in the agreement for sale of the said Thomas Holmes's moiety as "a moiety of *all the great tithes* of the township of Upholland." "Thus the incroachments upon the rights and revenues of the church appear to have been from time to time proceeded in: First the Earls of Derby set up a most unjustifiable claim to the *corn tithe* and afterwards sell the same corn tithe for a large sum of money, and the persons claiming under such purchase very soon set up other pretended rights (and endeavour still further to invade and despoil the church), first by making a groundless and unjust claim to *Hay* tithe and afterwards to *all the great tithes* of the township of

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 649

Upholland. On my own account, and still more on behalf of my successors and the church, I am determined to resist all such unjust invasions of the rights and property of my church."

"The conveyance to Mr. Prescott [of the tithe of Dalton] is similar to Mr. Morris's conveyance. . . . Not content with holding the said corn tithes [as thus conveyed to them], Mr. Morris and Mr. Prescott were desirous of going a little further, and altho' the conveyance to them respectively from the Earl of Derby are of the corn tithes only they set up a claim to the tithe of *potatoes*. Upon this my agent, William Wiswall, in the year 1818 immediately gave notice to the occupiers of land in Upholland and Dalton who had planted any potatoes to set out the tithe of their potatoes in kind or to pay to me a pecuniary compensation for such tithe according to the valuation which my said agent should put upon it. Mr. Morris and Mr. Prescott did not persist in claiming the tithe of potatoes grown in Upholland and Dalton, but entirely abandoned that claim, and they themselves, and most of the other farmers in the same townships who planted potatoes, actually paid to my said agent, according to his valuation, a composition in money for the tithe of the potatoes which they respectively had grown in that year. No tithe of potatoes was actually set out, nor was any collected in kind. The above step was taken to convince Mr. Morris and Mr. Prescott that they had not any right to such tithe of potatoes nor any other right than such as is before described to the said corn tithes, and that the tithe of potatoes (and of right and in justice all other tithes whatsoever) belonged to the rector of Wigan for the time being, and not to any other person. I now annually receive a pecuniary compensation in lieu of potatoe tithe throughout the whole of the parish of Wigan, the amount of such pecuniary compensation being ascertained and fixed yearly by my steward and agent. I was obliged to resort to legal measures before I obtained the tithe of potatoes. In the year 1825 I brought an action in the Court of Exchequer at Westminster against John Brown of Upholland, farmer, for not having set out

650 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the tithe of his crops of potatoes grown by him in Upholland in the years 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, and 1824. I did not proceed in this action for some time, being loath to put Brown to expence, and hoping he would think more wisely on the subject and save himself from heavy expences by paying the amount of my just claim upon him for potatoe tithe. Brown, instead of profiting by my forbearance, and whilst the said action was pending, gathered the whole of his potato crop in 1825 and did not set out the tithe thereof, nor did he pay, or offer to pay, the reasonable value set up [as] the tithe thereof by my steward and agent. I therefore preferred my complaint against him for the subtraction of his potato tithe in 1825 to a Magistrate, pursuant to the statute 7th and 8th Wm. chap. 6, and 53rd Geo. 3, chap. 127, and caused him (Brown) to be summoned before two Magistrates, before whom he appeared, and was by the same Magistrates ordered and adjudged to pay to me £7 10s., being the value set by my agent on the same potato-tithe in 1825. Against this order John Brown appealed to the then next Quarter Sessions held by adjournment at Kirkdale, near Liverpool, on the 31st July, 1826, and at such Quarter Sessions the said appeal was heard and determined and the order confirmed, and John Brown then paid to my agent, James Smith, the said sum of £7 10s., the sum he had been ordered and adjudged to pay by the Magistrates who heard and decided my complaint against him. John Brown still obstinately refused to pay the tithe of his crops of potatoes for the non-payment of which the said action in the Exchequer had been brought against him. I was therefore under the necessity of taking the cause to trial, but before the cause was called for trial in the court at the Lancaster August Assizes, 1827, John Brown consented and submitted to a verdict being taken and entered against him for the amount I demanded of him and costs, and such amount with costs was afterwards paid by him to my solicitor, Mr. Edward Scott, for my use and benefit."

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 651

The following Terrier of the glebe lands, &c., of Wigan is preserved at Chester in the diocesan Registry:—

“A Terrier of the Buildings, Glebe lands, Tithes, and other rights belonging to the parsonage of Wigan, in the county of Lancaster and Diocese of Chester, and also an account of the plate, Fixtures, Ornaments, Implements, and Utensils which belong to the parish of Wigan aforesaid, made in the month of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, in obedience to a direction for that purpose previously given by the Right Reverend Father in God, George Henry, Lord Bishop of the said Diocese.

Imprimis—One ancient Mansion or Dwelling-house, the habitation of the Rector, with court, pleasure-grounds, plantations, shrubberies, and Garden surrounding the same, and with out-buildings and Farm yard lying contiguous and belonging thereunto, all now in the actual occupation of the Honorable and Reverend George Bridgeman, the Incumbent Rector of the said parsonage. The site of the said dwelling-house, court, pleasure grounds, plantations, shrubberies, Garden, outbuildings, and Farm yard contains by common estimation one acre and three roods of the large measure of eight yards to the perch, or thereabouts, be the same more or less. The said Mansion or Dwelling-house was, when the present Rector came to reside there, a very ancient and irregular Building composed of Bricks and Slate, but has been by him considerably improved, and that at no small expence to himself. One part thereof stands from East to West, and is fifty-seven feet four inches along the south wall or front thereof, and in breadth at the East end thereof nineteen feet and seven inches. The other part thereof is in length from South to North seventy-seven feet, and in breadth at the North end thereof thirty-three feet, all outside measure. Detached from the said dwelling-house, but near the same at the Northerly end thereof, are a Laundry and a Brewhouse, each of them being five yards in length and five yards in breadth, with a Room over the Laundry but no Room over the Brewhouse. A Dairy and a

652 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Larder (but not any Room over) five yards in length and three yards in breadth; an office and a shoe-house four yards in length and two yards and a half in breadth, with a Bedroom over each of them. A little farther, detached from the said dwelling-house, and more towards the North, are other Buildings which belong to the said dwelling-house, and consist of a pigeon-house three yards in length and three yards in breadth, A Barn nineteen yards in length and seven yards in breadth, A Coach-house and a Granary each seven yards in length and five yards in breadth, A Shippon five yards in length and three yards in breadth, A Stable with Hay-loft over, seven yards in length and six yards in breadth, A Saddle-house five yards in length and four yards in breadth, A Chip-house five yards in length and four yards in breadth: and three pig cotes, which taken altogether are five yards in length and two yards in breadth.

Item—Several closes of land lying together and contiguous to the said dwelling-house, and called the Barley field, the large meadow, the Bull hey, and the Mesnes, the last of which was heretofore in several closes, but is now in one close only. These closes of land contain respectively by common estimation the respective quantities of land hereinafter mentioned—that is to say, the Barley field one acre and a half, the large meadow three acres and a quarter, the Bull hey three acres, and the Mesnes sixteen acres of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and are all in the actual occupation of the said Rector.

Item—One piece of land abutting on the Easterly side thereof to premises belonging or reputed to belong to William Lamb, Dr. Cowling, Robert Holt, Esquire, William Lea, and James Thompson respectively, which said piece of land the subject of this *item* was heretofore parcel of, but has been lately inclosed and separated from the other part of, the said close called the Mesnes, and contains by common estimation one rood of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, is now used as a Garden, and in the occupation of John Lyon as tenant thereof to the said Rector.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 653

Item—One other piece of land now used as a Garden, and in the occupation of Mr. John Leech as tenant thereof to the said Rector, which same piece of land was also heretofore parcel of, but is now inclosed and separated from the other part of, the said close called the Mesnes, and contains by common estimation twenty perches of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and abuts on the Easterly side thereof to land belonging or reputed to belong to the heirs of John Pearson, deceased, and on the Southerly, Westerly, and Northerly sides thereof to other parts of the Glebe belonging to the said Parsonage.

Item—One other piece of land now also used as a Garden, and in the occupation of Richard Boardman as tenant thereof to the said Rector, which same piece of land was also heretofore parcel of, but is now inclosed and separated from the other part of, the said close called the Mesnes, and contains by common estimation one acre of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and abuts on the Easterly side thereof to land belonging to the heirs of the late Reverend Doctor Baldwin, on the South-westerly side thereof to a certain street called the Hallgate Street in Wigan aforesaid, and on the Westerly and Northerly sides thereof to other parts of the said Glebe.

Item—One other small piece of land now also used as a Garden, and in the occupation of Misses Bullock as tenants thereof to the said Rector, which same piece of land was also heretofore parcel of the said close called the Mesnes, and contains by common estimation ten perches of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and abuts on the Easterly side thereof to land belonging to or reputed to belong to the heirs of the said late John Pearson, and on the other sides thereof to other parts of the said Glebe.

All which before mentioned premises lie within a Ring fence, and abut on the Southerly side thereof to the King's highway leading from the Town of Wigan aforesaid to a place within Wigan aforesaid called Frog lane, on the Westerly side thereof

654 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

to land belonging or reputed to belong to James Alexander Hodson, Esquire, on the Northerly side thereof to lands belonging or reputed to belong to Misses Kenyon and the heirs of the late Thomas Eccleston, Esquire, and on the Easterly side thereof to lands belonging or reputed to belong to William Lamb, to Dr. Cowling, to Robert Holt, Esquire, to William Lea, to James Thompson, to the heirs of the late John Pearson, and to the heirs of the late Reverend Doctor Baldwin.

Item—One other close of land called the parson's meadow, being within the Township of Wigan aforesaid, but at the distance of about half a mile from the said dwelling-house, in the Road from Wigan to a place in Pemberton called Smithy Brook, to which place there is a footway through the same close, which said close the subject of this *item* contains by common estimation nine acres of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and abuts on the Southerly side thereof to land belonging or reputed to belong to John Hodson, Esquire, on the Westerly side to lands belonging or reputed to belong to the heirs of the late Doctor Baldwin, and on the Northerly side thereof to the River Douglas, *alias* Asland, and is now in the occupation of Christopher Irving as tenant thereof to the said Rector.

Item—One other close of land called the Dig Leach, lying contiguous to the close mentioned in the last preceding *item*, which said close of land the subject of this *item* contains by common estimation three Roods of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and is bounded on the Northerly and South-casterly sides thereof by a certain Brook called Poolstock Brook, and on the Westerly side thereof partly by land belonging or reputed to belong to the said John Hodson and partly by the before-mentioned close called the parson's meadow, and is now in the occupation of Strettell Chadwick as tenant thereof to the said Rector, and has a right of road to it through the estate of the late Mr. Elias Chadwick at Poolstock.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 655

All which said lands and premises contain in the whole thirty-six acres two Roods and thirty perches of land of the measure aforesaid, or thereabouts, and are situate within the Lordship and Manor of Wigan aforesaid, of which the pastor or Rector for the time being of the said parsonage is Lord.

The right of nomination to the respective chapels of Hindley, Billinge, and Upholland, within the parish of Wigan, and also to the chapel of St. George, within the Town of Wigan aforesaid, belongs to the parson of Wigan for the time being, but he pays yearly to the minister of Upholland aforesaid twenty pounds, and to the minister of Billinge aforesaid six pounds.

The parish of Wigan consists of the following Townships, viz, Wigan, Haigh, Aspull, Hindley, Abram, Ince, Pemberton, Winstanley, Billinge, Orrell, Upholland, and Dalton, and all the Rectorial Tithes are due to the parson or Rector throughout the parish, except that the corn Tithe of the three several Townships of Ince, Upholland, and Dalton is not now, nor has been for a great many years past, collected by, or on behalf of, the parson or Rector of Wigan aforesaid, but for many years past, and long before the Incumbency of the present parson or Rector, and also during the whole of such Incumbency, has been and is now collected by or on behalf of certain Lay persons who claim to be the owners thereof. How the corn tithes of the said three Townships of Ince, Upholland, and Dalton came to be severed from and lost, as they at present are and as they are likely to be in future, to the said parsonage or Rectory of Wigan, the present Incumbent has not any certain information, but from some entries and memorandums found by him to have been made in the Books of his predecessors he verily believes that the same have been unjustly taken, and are now unjustly withheld from the said parsonage. As a *modus* for or in lieu of the corn Tithe of Ince aforesaid a sum of four pounds is payable yearly on the first day of November to the parson of Wigan aforesaid by the person who claims to be the Lay Impropriator of the same Tithe; and as a *modus* for or in lieu of the corn Tithe of both of

656 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the said Townships of Upholland and Dalton a sum of twelve pounds thirteen shillings and seven pence is payable yearly on the same day to the parson of Wigan aforesaid by the persons who claim to be lay Impropriators of the same Tithe ; and the sum of twelve pounds thirteen shillings and seven pence is, as the Rector has been informed and believes, paid in the proportions following—that is to say, eight pounds eight shillings and eleven pence by the person who claims to be the Lay Impropriator of the corn Tithe of Upholland, and the sum of four pounds four shillings and five pence, residue thereof, by the person who claims to be the lay Impropriator of the Corn Tithe of Dalton.

Belonging to the said parish are, first, the parish church, the middle chancel of which is repaired by the Rector for the time being, the South Chancel by the owners for the time being of the Haigh Estate, now belonging to the Earl of Balcarres and his family, the Chancel called Gerard's Chancel is repaired by Charles Walmesley, Esquire, of Westwood House, within Ince aforesaid, as a descendant of the Gerards family, and all the rest of the said parish church is repaired by the parishioners. The clerk and sexton are appointed by the Rector and paid by the parishioners. Within the said Church, and belonging to the said parish, are a pulpit, a reading desk, and a clerk's desk, the Lord's prayer the Creed and the ten commandments, a Table of Degrees, and the King's arms. Belonging to the pulpit are two cushions of the gift of the present Rector, one of crimson velvet and the other of plain cloth, and two ornamental hangings, also of the gift of the present Rector, one of crimson velvet and the other of plain cloth ; belonging to the Curate's and the Clerk's desks respectively are also cushions and ornamental hangings, to the Curate's desk two large Bibles and two large Books of Common prayer, and to the Clerk's desk one large Book of Common prayer, which last mentioned Book is the gift of the present Rector. Within the said Church, and belonging to the said parish, are also one Communion Table with three coverings for the same,

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 657

one of common velvet, another of plain cloth, and a third of white linen. There are also for the Communion Service two large Books of Common prayer and two velvet cushions on which to place them; two silver Flaggons, the gift of Richard Welles, gentleman; two silver Patens, the gift of the same gentleman; two silver Chalices and Stands, Donor unknown; two silver collecting plates, the gift of Grace Brown, widow; and there are also for common collections in the church twelve pewter plates; there are also a communion carpet and a vestry carpet, and in the vestry of the said church are two large Chests and a large Table, a small Table, a surplice cupboard, a cupboard for Wine, and a sofa; there are six surplices—viz., three of a finer kind for Sundays and three of a coarser kind for other days.

In the said vestry are also the following Registers, viz. :—

Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials from 1664 to 1721, inclusive.*

Register of Baptisms from 1st January, 1721-2, to 25th March, 1754.

Register of Baptisms from 25th March, 1754, to end of December, 1778.

Register of Baptisms from 1st January, 1779, to end of April, 1799.

Register of Baptisms from 1st of May, 1799, to end of December, 1812.

Register of Baptisms from 1st of January, 1813, to the present time.

Register of Marriages from 25th of March, 1754, to end of June, 1775.

Register of Marriages from 1st of July, 1775, to end of December, 1789.

Register of Marriages from 1st of January, 1790, to August, 1803.

* Since this terrier was made an earlier parish Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, from 1580 to 1663, has been recovered by the present rector, Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, who has had it bound and restored to the church.

658 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Register of Marriages from August, 1803, to end of December, 1812.

Register of Marriages from 1st of January, 1813, to the present time.

Register of Burials from 25th March, 1754, to end of December, 1778.

Register of Burials from 1st of January, 1779, to June, 1809.

Do. do. from June, 1809, to end of December, 1812.

Do. do. from 1st January, 1813, to the present time.

And Burns' Ecclesiastical Law in four volumes. In the steeple of the said parish Church, and belonging to the said parish, are a Church Clock and Eight Bells, with their frames, besides a small Bell called the Ting Tang. There are also belonging to the said parish two Hearses, two Hearse Cloaks, four Biers, and two Bier Cloths.

George Bridgeman, Rector of Wigan.

Ja^s. Tennant, Jno. Hodson Kearsley, Churchwardens."

Shortly before the rector's death the chapel of St. John at Pemberton was built. It was consecrated on 26th September, 1832, having been previously opened for Divine Service on the 5th August of that year as a chapel of ease to the mother church.

Mr. George Bridgeman died 27th October, 1832, and was buried at Weston-under-Lizard.

He married, first, Lucy Isabella Boyle, daughter of Edmund, seventh Earl of Cork, and, secondly, Charlotte Louisa, daughter of William Poyntz of Midgham House, in the county of Berks, Esq., who died at Hampton Court, 26th January, 1840. By his second wife he had no issue, but by his first wife, Lady Lucy Boyle, he had issue three sons—1. Edmund Henry Bridgeman, born 15th September, 1796, who died in his infancy; 2. Edmund Henry Bridgeman, only surviving son, born 5th November, 1797; he was a Colonel in the army, and died 23rd April, 1841, at Beyrout, in Syria, where he commanded the British detachment, having married, 18th January, 1837, Harriet Elizabeth Frances,

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 659

daughter of Henry Harvey Aston, Esq., by whom he had no issue; 3. George Greswold Bridgeman, born 2nd June, 1801, who died in his infancy; and four daughters—1. Elizabeth Isabella, born 17th April, 1793, wife of the Rev. Egerton Arden Bagot of Pipe Hayes, in the county of Warwick, who died without issue in 1824; 2. Ann Charlotte, born 3rd June, 1794, wife of Charles Shirley, Esq., who also died without issue, in 1858; Lucy Elizabeth, born 14th September, 1799, who died young; and Lucy (twin with George Greswold), born 2nd June, 1801, who died young.

There is a picture of Mr. George Bridgeman by Constable at Weston Hall, in possession of the Earl of Bradford.

HENRY JOHN GUNNING, who succeeded the Hon. George Bridgeman, was presented by George Augustus Frederick Henry, Earl of Bradford, 17th December, 1832, and instituted to the rectory of Wigan 4th January, 1833.¹

He was the third son of Sir George William Gunning, baronet, of Eltham in the county of Kent and Horton in the county of Northampton, by Elizabeth, daughter of Henry, Lord Bradford. Born on 17th December, 1797, he eventually succeeded his brother, Sir Robert, as fourth baronet. He matriculated at Baliol College, Oxford, 8th May, 1816, became B.A. in 1820, and M.A. in 1822. He was ordained deacon by the bishop of Peterborough 23rd December, 1821, and priest by the bishop of Lincoln 13th January, 1822. He held the curacy of Buckden, in the county of Huntingdon, for a short time, and was instituted to the rectory of Knockin, in the county of Salop, 18th April, 1822, which he resigned in 1825; after which he held the perpetual curacy of Horton from 1826 to 1833, when he became rector of Wigan.

Many important changes were made during Mr. Gunning's incumbency in the condition of the parish and the *status* of the

¹ Chester Diocesan Register.

660 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

rector. Several chapels of ease were built, which afterwards had districts assigned to them and became district chapelries.

The chapel of St. David's, at Haigh, was consecrated 28th November, 1833.¹ A district, consisting of the townships of Haigh and Aspull, was assigned to it by order in council, 1st February, 1838.²

The chapel of St. John, Pemberton, which had been consecrated in 1832, had also a district assigned to it on 1st February, 1838,³ consisting of the township of Pemberton and half the township of Orrell.

The chapel of St. John, Abram, was consecrated 9th June, 1838,⁴ and had a district assigned to it 3rd April, 1843, consisting of the township of Abram; on which same day a district was also assigned to the chapel of St. George, Wigan.

The chapel of St. Catherine, Scholes, Wigan, was consecrated by John Bird, bishop of Chester, 6th June, 1841,⁵ with a burial ground attached, and had a district assigned to it by order in council 3rd April, 1843, consisting of a portion of the township of Wigan, together with the township of Ince.

Mr. Gunning, with the consent of the patron and the bishop of the diocese, obtained an act of parliament (which received the royal assent 30th June, 1837), to enable the rector of Wigan to work the coal ungoten under the glebe by granting mining leases, to mortgage the mines to the extent of £2,000 for repairing the rectory house, and to grant building leases for terms not exceeding 99 years. Under this act a considerable portion of the coal was gotten, but no building leases were granted during Sir H. Gunning's incumbency.

The tithes of the parish of Wigan were commuted at this period in accordance with the act of 6 and 7 Will. iv. cap. 71.

The several agreements for the different townships were made on the following dates, and afterwards confirmed by the tithe

¹ Deed of Consecration.

² *London Gazette*.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Deed of Consecration, *ex inf.* Rev. H. Linton, vicar of Abram.

⁵ *Ibid.* *ex inf.* Rev. E. A. Dury, vicar of St. Catherine's.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 661

commissioners :—For the township of Haigh, on 22nd September, 1838 ; for the township of Orrell, 24th September, 1838 ; for the townships of Billinge Chapel End and Billinge Higher End, 4th October, 1838 ; for the township of Winstanley, 31st October, 1838 ; for the township of Wigan, 14th February, 1839 ; for the township of Abram, 21st February, 1839 ; for those of Hindley and Dalton, 28th February, 1839 ; for those of Aspull and Ince-in-Makerfield, 27th June, 1839 ; for the township of Pemberton, 4th July, 1844 ; and for the township of Upholland, 1st August, 1844.

Towards the close of the year 1844 it became evident that the church was in need of extensive repairs. A vestry meeting was held 26th December of that year, to take into consideration the report of Messrs. Sharp and Paley, architects, of Lancaster, who had pronounced it to be in a state of dilapidation as to many parts, and to determine what steps should be taken in the matter. The work of restoration, however, was postponed from time to time, and it was not until the year 1849 that it was vigorously taken up by the parishioners. In the meantime the chancel was taken down in 1845 and restored by the rector. The Bradshaigh chapel was also rebuilt at the same time. These were both completed in 1847 ; and at a vestry meeting held on 9th August, 1849, it was resolved to proceed with the work of general restoration, and to borrow from the Public Loan Commissioners, under the provisions of the Act 5 Geo. IV. cap. xxxvi., a sum necessary for its completion. The consent of the bishop and the rector being given, application was accordingly made to the commissioners, who granted the loan. By indenture of 17th September, 1849, the sum of £4,540 was advanced by the commissioners, on the security of the parochial rates, to the churchwardens of Wigan and the overseers of the several townships in the parish of Wigan, who agreed to repay the money, with interest, by annual instalments in the course of twenty years ;¹ and the work of restoration was at once proceeded with.

¹ Unfortunately the fulfilment of this contract was prevented by the passing of

662 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

With the exception of the tower, the turret staircases on either side of the chancel arch, and the Gerard or Walmesley chapel, the church was almost entirely rebuilt, from the designs of Messrs. Sharp and Pacey, and the restored church was re-consecrated 3rd August, 1850.

sundry acts of parliament and orders in council, over which the churchwardens of Wigan had no control, and which interfered with and contracted their powers. The rates were laid and the annual instalments duly paid up to 17th September, 1853; after which the churchwardens were no longer able to collect a general rate from the whole parish, for the ancient parish had now become divided, by recent acts of parliament, into several ecclesiastical districts with churchwardens of their own, and the inhabitants of some of the new districts disputed their liability to pay rates for the mother church; so that at a general meeting of the inhabitants and occupiers of the whole parish on 30th July, 1854, the rate was refused by the majority. The churchwardens of the parish church at once put themselves into communication with the commissioners, with whom they held a long-continued intermittent correspondence extending over several years, in which they asked their assistance to enforce the rates through the proper parties, offering, with the full approval of their vestry, to collect and pay their own share of the instalments, which were in fact collected for some years afterwards, but the commissioners refused to receive a part without the whole, or to take any action in the matter themselves. Thus many years passed, during which the Abolition of Compulsory Church-rates Bill was enacted, and other complications arose; and it was not until 1867, when the twenty years allowed for repayment on the security of the rates had nearly expired, that the commissioners took any measures to recover the debt. They then applied to the Queen's Bench for a *mandamus* to enforce payment of the year's instalment due in 1854, with interest to date. The case was argued several times before the judges, when the churchwardens, by their counsel, acknowledged their debt, and expressed their willingness to receive a *mandamus*, but the question was as to whom it should be directed. It was at length issued in 1871 against the churchwardens of Wigan and the overseers of the several townships, and the case was again heard in the Court of Queen's Bench in 1872, after which it was by mutual consent referred by appeal to the Court of Exchequer, where it was heard on 26th November, 1873, before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, Mr. Baron Bramwell, Mr. Justice Keating, Mr. Baron Cleasby, Mr. Justice Grove, Mr. Justice Denman, and Mr. Baron Pollock. The judges, taking into consideration the length of time that had elapsed through the inaction of the Public Loan Commissioners, and the injustice that would be done to the present inhabitants if they should have to pay a debt incurred by others, who ought to have paid it many years ago (and doubtless also taking into consideration the many difficulties and complications which had been brought about by subsequent acts of parliament), by their judgment, delivered by Lord Chief Justice Coleridge 10th February, 1874, reversed the judgment of the court below and quashed the *mandamus*, so that the commissioners have never recovered their debt.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 663

At a vestry meeting, 7th October, 1850, it was agreed that additional land for a burial ground was necessary, and it was resolved that the sum of £2,000, to be defrayed by a church rate, should be allowed for the purchase of certain properties shewn in a plan then produced to the meeting; that a further sum of £100 should be allowed for the estimated cost of enclosure, and £50 for consecration fees and law expenses, to be defrayed in like manner by a church rate; and the churchwardens were "empowered to apply to Her Majesty's Commissioners for Building New Churches for their assistance in carrying the above-named objects into effect under the 26th section of the 3rd Geo. IV. cap. 72, and to borrow from the commissioners the whole of the money required for the purpose aforesaid."

The chapel of St. Thomas, Wigan, was consecrated 1st October, 1851, to which a district was assigned by order in council dated 11th February, 1852, under the provisions of 59 Geo. III. cap. 134, sec. 16, 2 and 3 Vic. cap. 49, sec. 3, and any other powers vested in the Church Building Commissioners by the Church Building Acts, by which it became a "district chapelry." The patronage is vested in the rector.

By an order in council of 29th March, 1854, burials were ordered to be discontinued from and after 1st January, 1855, in the churchyards of the parish church of All Saints and St. Catherine's, Wigan, and in the burial grounds of the Independent Chapel (Standishgate), the Presbyterian Chapel (Chapel Lane), St. Mary's Roman Catholic Chapel, and in Lord Street Chapel. By an order in council of 26th June, 1855, the time was extended to 1st January, 1856, and the burial ground of St. John's Roman Catholic Chapel was included in the order. By further orders in council the time was extended to 1st June and 1st September, 1856; and finally, by an order in council of 4th November, 1857, the use of vaults and brick graves were allowed in the Wigan churchyards and burial grounds for burial of the husband, wife, parents, and children of persons already interred therein.

664 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

The following agreement for the conveyance of the manorial rights by the rector of Wigan to the Mayor and Corporation of Wigan was made by Mr. Gunning before he resigned the benefice :—

Endorsed 9th July, 1860.

The Earl of Bradford, the Rev. H. J. Gunning,
and

The Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Wigan.
Agreement.

“Articles of agreement made the ninth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty, Between the Right Honorable George Augustus Frederick Henry, Earl of Bradford, of the first part, the Reverend Henry John Gunning, clerk, of the second part, and the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Wigan, in the county Palatine of Lancaster, as the Local Board of Health of the said Borough and District of Wigan aforesaid (hereinafter called the Corporation), of the third part. Whereas the said Earl is the patron and the said Henry John Gunning is the Rector of the Rectory and Parish Church of the Parish of Wigan, in the said county Palatine, and the said Henry John Gunning, as such Rector, is the Lord of the Manor of Wigan aforesaid: And whereas the Rector of Wigan as such Lord claims to be entitled to the Market called the Monday's Market and the Fair called the Summer Fair, respectively held in Wigan, and to the rents, tolls, pickage, and stallage in respect thereof respectively, and also to divers other tolls, pickage, and stallage within the said Borough, And also to divers chief or quit rents and to manorial rights in divers slips of waste lying unenclosed, open, and adjoining to certain ancient highways and streets in the said Borough, and in divers mines of coal and cannel under those slips of waste, ancient highways, and streets: And whereas there have at divers times heretofore been differences between the Rector as such Lord and the Corporation with respect to the Monday's Market, the Summer Fair, and the rents, tolls, pickage, and stallage so claimed, and

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 665

the differences have at times been temporarily settled by the Rector as such Lord granting and the Corporation accepting a Lease of the same : And whereas the last lease thereof to the Corporation, dated the twelfth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and forty-nine, between the said Henry John Gunning of the one part and the Corporation of the other part, was for a term of seven years, which expired on the thirteenth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and there is not at present any lease of the rents, tolls, pickage, and stallage so claimed, save that the rents, tolls, pickage, and stallage in respect of the said Market and Fair are now held and taken by James Willcock as tenant thereof for one year from the tenth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine, if the said Henry John Gunning shall so long continue Rector of the said Parish and Lord of the said Manor, at the rent of ninety-five pounds, payable quarterly, by virtue of an agreement in writing dated on or about the last-mentioned day : And whereas the Corporation, in their capacity of Local Board of Health for the Borough and District of Wigan, are the promoters of a Bill now pending in Parliament intituled "A Bill for enabling the Local Board of Health for the Borough of Wigan to abandon a portion of their water works, and to construct and maintain other water works, and for other purposes," whereby they proposed to maintain [obtain?] authority for the Local Board to purchase compulsorily the Market, Fairs, Rents, tolls, pickage, stallage, and other property and rights of the Rector, as such Rector and Lord of the Manor, hereby agreed to be sold and purchased : And whereas the said Earl and the said Henry John Gunning having expressed their intention of opposing the pending Bill, the parties hereto, being anxious to put an end to all further litigation, have determined to enter into and execute these presents by way of agreement, as hereinafter appearing : Now therefore these presents witness that each of them, the said Earl as such patron as aforesaid, and the said Henry John Gunning as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid (with

666 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

the consent of the said Earl as such Patron aforesaid, testified by his execution hereof) Doth hereby severally agree with the Corporation, and the Corporation, as such Local Board as aforesaid, do hereby agree with the said Earl and the said Henry John Gunning as such Rector and Lord of the said Manor as aforesaid, and each of them as follows, that is to say :

Article 1. The Corporation will use their best endeavours to procure the amendment of the pending Bill so that it shall not contain any compulsory power for the purchase of any of the property or rights of the Rector and Lord of the Manor. But if the pending Bill shall be passed into a law with any such compulsory power of purchase, then the same shall not be exercised.

Article 2. The Corporation will use their utmost reasonable endeavours to procure the enactment in the pending Bill of provisions proper and sufficient for authorizing the specific performance of this agreement.

Article 3. If the pending Bill be passed into a law and authorize the Rector, as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid, to sell and convey, and the Local Board to purchase and take a conveyance of the Market, Fair, rents, tolls, pickage, stallage, and manorial rights, and property hereinafter specified, then the said Henry John Gunning, as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid, will sell and convey, and the Corporation in their capacity of Local Board will purchase and take a conveyance of :

First. All those the Mondays' Market and the Summer Fair respectively, and all other Markets and Fairs belonging to the Rector, as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid, now held or which of right might be held within the said Borough of Wigan, and all property, rights, and interests of the Rector, as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid, in and to the same Markets and Fairs respectively, and in and to all rents, tolls, pickage, and stallage payable in respect thereof respectively, subject nevertheless to such tenancy by the same James Willcock as aforesaid.

And secondly. All the estate, right, title, and interest of the Rector, as Rector and Lord of the Manor of Wigan, in and to

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 667

all those the sums payable or claimed to be payable to the Rector, as such Rector and Lord as aforesaid, and commonly called Chief Rents, and amounting in the whole to the yearly sum of Forty-five pounds three shillings and fourpence¹ or thereabouts, and which are specified in the schedule hereto and all arrears (if any) thereof.

And thirdly. All the estate, right, title, and interest (if any) of the Rector, as Rector and Lord of the Manor of Wigan aforesaid, in and to the land and hereditament called Bottling Wood, and in and to all lands and hereditaments now or heretofore Waste of the Manor of Wigan (not being comprised in the schedule to an act made and passed in the seventh year of His late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled "An act to enable the Rector of the Parish of Wigan, in the county Palatine of Lancaster, to grant leases of the mines and building leases and conveyances in fee, subject to ground rents of the glebe lands belonging to the said Rectory and for other purposes," or lands purchased or acquired under or in pursuance of the same act) lying between the carriage ways of the ancient highways and ancient streets within the Manor and Borough of Wigan and the houses, and the houses, buildings, and enclosed lands on each or either side of those ancient highways and ancient streets respectively, and in and to all mines and minerals in and under the same lands and hereditaments respectively, and in and to all other uncultivated lands (if any) now being waste of the Manor, and in and to all mines and minerals in and under the same waste lands, subject nevertheless to all sales and leases and agreements for sales and leases by the said Henry John Gunning affecting the premises firstly, secondly, and thirdly described or any of them, or any part thereof respectively, and all such rents (if any) as are now in arrears and due to the Rector, as such Lord, in respect of such mines and minerals respectively. It being hereby understood and agreed that the Rector for the time being, as such Rector

¹ According to the annexed schedule the sum of the chief rents only amounts to £44 2s. 1d.

668 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

or Lord, shall not hereafter exercise or enjoy any rights as Lord of the Manor, but nothing herein contained shall in anything abridge or interfere with any rights or property being of the nature of ecclesiastical rights or dues, or such hereditaments or rights as are usually enjoyed by Incumbents of Church livings, but not to create any new rights.

Article 4. The sale and purchase shall be made on the following terms and conditions, that is to say :

First, The purchase money for the premises first described in Article 3 shall be Two thousand pounds.

Secondly, The purchase money for the premises secondly and thirdly described in Article 3 shall be eight hundred pounds.

Thirdly, The sale and purchase shall be completed at the expiration of two calendar months after the passing of the pending Bill.

Fourthly, The Local Board shall be entitled to the receipt and enjoyment of the purchased premises from and after the time of the actual completion of the purchase, all outgoings in respect of the purchased premises or a due proportion thereof up to that time being discharged by the Rector and the Lord of the Manor, who shall be entitled to the receipt and enjoyment of the said Chief Rents and of the Rents and income of such parts of the purchased premises as are in the tenure of the said James Willcock, or a due proportion thereof up to the time of completion.

Fifthly, The Vendor shall not be bound to produce any title or evidence of title to the purchased premises first described in Article three other than the Leases of the same granted by the said Henry John Gunning to the said Corporation or the counterparts of the same.

Sixthly, The Vendor shall not be bound to produce any title or evidence of title to the purchased premises secondly and thirdly described in Article three other than a statutory Declaration of the receipts of such of the Chief or Quit Rents as have been received for twenty years before the time of the completion of the purchase or as the case may be from the commencement

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 669

thereof within the twenty years, and such agreements for sale and leases of the mines granted or entered into by the said Henry John Gunning or counterparts thereof, or other documents relating thereto as are now in his custody or power and shall not be bound to identify any of the hereditaments in respect of which the Chief or Quit Rents are payable.

Seventhly, The sale and purchase shall be made and completed in accordance with the provisions of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, but the Board shall not be bound or called upon to pay any expenses for the investment or re-investment of the said purchase money, except such expenses as shall be incurred in the first instance only in investing the said moneys in the public Stocks or Funds. On the faith of this agreement being in all respects specifically performed and observed by and on the part of the said Corporation, the said Earl, and the said Henry John Gunning respectively, will not directly or materially offer or sanction any further opposition to the pending Bill save only so far as may be requisite for full effect being given to this agreement. In Witness whereof the parties hereto of the first and second part have hereunto set their hands and seals, and the party hereto of the third part hath affixed its corporate seal, the day and year first above written.

THE SCHEDULE ABOVE REFERRED TO.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1 Ainscough, James...	0	2	0	12 Duckworth, Lewis...	0	1	6
2 Atherton, James ..	0	1	0	13 Brindle, Ralph	0	1	2
3 Alston and Bradshaw	1	12	3	14 Crawford and Bal-			
4 Baldwin, Leighton...	0	1	0	carres, Earl of...	3	12	6
5 Bolton, Ralph	0	2	2½	15 Churchwardens	0	1	0
6 Bolton, Mr.	0	1	7	16 Caroling [Cowling?]	0	2	5
7 Brown, Miss	0	0	8	17 Cox, Jervis	0	2	0
8 Bolton, James	0	3	6	18 Cook, Thomas	0	1	0
9 Byrom, Thomas ...	0	7	4	19 Coates, James	0	6	0
10 Brown, David	0	1	6	20 Chadwick, William	0	7	0
11 Brown, James (late)	0	2	0½	21 Caldwell, John	0	0	6

670 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
22 Canal Company.....	6	14	8	54 Lyon, Thomas	0	10	10½
23 Dawber, John	0	5	0	55 Lea, William	0	3	6
24 Robinson and Com- pany	0	5	0	56 Lea, Mrs.	0	4	2
25 Robinson and Com- pany	0	0	8	57 Lea, Miss Ellen.....	0	1	3
26 Daglish, John (late) 2	0	0	6	58 Morris, John (Robin- son & Co.).....	1	11	0
27 Eccles, Richard.....	1	0	0	59 Marsden, Reverend Thomas	0	0	9
28 Fairhurst, James ...	0	0	10½	60 Morris, John (Robin- son & Co.).....	0	7	6
29 Fairhurst, John.....	0	1	0	61 Marshall, Rev. W....	0	1	4
30 Female Society	0	1	9	62 McNeile, David.....	0	3	6
31 Gaskell, Henry L....	0	10	7	63 Newsham, Mrs.	0	6	0
32 Gaskell, Henry L....	0	6	8	64 Nuttalls, Executors of	0	16	4½
33 Gaskell, Henry L....	0	4	8	65 Overseers of Wigan	0	0	8
34 Gaskell, Henry L....	0	4	8	66 Procter, William ...	0	1	0
35 Gregson, John	0	1	6	67 Park, William & Co.	2	5	0
36 Green, Edward	0	1	0	68 Powell, Rev. B.....	0	0	4½
37 Heaton, Thomas ...	0	0	10	69 Powell, Rev. B.....	0	13	7½
38 Holmes, Richard (late)	0	5	10	70 Robinson and Com- pany	0	2	1½
39 Hurst, Robert	0	0	10	71 Jackson, James.....	0	1	4½
40 Hern, Arthur.....	0	8	4½	72 Rylands, executors of	1	5	8
41 Hopwood, R. & W.	0	1	0	73 Sixsmith's charity...	0	2	6
42 Hodges, John Foden Esq.	0	4	7	74 Scott, Edward	0	0	6
43 Hodges, John Foden Esq. (R. Boltons)	0	1	4½	75 Stephenson, John...	0	1	0
44 Hammersley, John...	0	0	6	76 Stanley, Thomas ...	0	5	0
45 Hammersley, Ralph	0	1	10	77 Smith, Miss	0	0	7½
46 Holr, Edward Esq.	1	7	4	78 Stephenson, John...	0	4	9
47 Holding, Charles ...	0	1	3	79 Tasbrook, George...	1	5	0
48 Lyon, John	0	4	0	80 Topping, Richard...	0	1	0
49 Kingsdown, Lord ...	0	1	9	81 Talbot, Margaret ...	0	0	10½
50 Kingsdown, Lord ...	0	2	6	82 Taylor, Thomas.....	2	5	0
51 Lowe, Thomas	0	1	0	83 Woodcock, Henry...	0	2	6
52 Livesey, Miss.....	0	1	0	84 Woods, John.....	0	6	9
53 Lord, John.....	1	2	0	85 Worthington, Mrs....	0	0	4
				86 Wells, Thomas	0	0	4

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 671

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
87 Waddington, Robert	0	0	4	92 Walmesley, John ...	3	11	6
88 Wejura, Miss.....	0	4	7½	93 Woods, Henry	0	14	0
89 Treasurer of Turn- pike Road	0	1	0	94 Woods, Henry	1	0	6
90 Wright, Charles.....	0	2	10½	95 Woods, Henry	0	10	0
91 Wood, James.....	0	1	3½	96 Hindley, Abel	0	1	0
				97 Lord, John.....	0	8	0

Signed sealed and delivered
by the before named Earl of Bradford, BRADFORD.
in the presence of

John Shaw, 8, Berners St., Solr.

Signed sealed and delivered by the HENRY J. GUNNING,
before named Henry John Gunning,
in the presence of

G. W. Gunning,
46, Park Street,
Grosvenor Square,
London.

The Wigan Water-works Act, giving powers to the Wigan Local Board of Health, was passed 6th August, 1860, and the conveyance was signed by Mr. Gunning, 2nd September, 1861. As the Earl of Bradford, the patron, was then too ill to execute the deed, an undertaking was given, 20th May, 1862, by his son and heir apparent Orlando George Charles, Viscount Newport, that, in the event of his father's decease without executing the deed, and his own succession to the estate, he would ratify and confirm the deed of the rector.

In 1863 the ecclesiastical district of St. James, Wigan, was constituted out of those of St. Thomas, Wigan, and St. John, Pemberton, by order in council, under 6 and 7 Vic. cap. 17, sec. 15, and gazetted 1st May of that year.

From the proceeds of the nine rents reserved to the Wigan rectory glebe estate, Mr. Gunning purchased in 1847 a messuage with out-buildings and lands called Seed Lee Farm, in Walton-le-Dale, in the county of Lancaster, containing after statute

672 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

measure 28 acres 3 roods and 7 perches. On 6th June, 1851, he purchased the Orrell Mount Cottage estate in the township of Orrell and parish of Wigan, containing after like measure 24 acres 2 roods and 3 perches. On 29th June, 1850, he purchased from Mr. John Leyland a field in Wigan, near to the rectory house, called Hallgate Croft, containing after like measure 1 acre and 9 perches; and on 29th August, 1856, he purchased the West Farndon estate in the parish of Woodford and county of Northampton, containing after like measure 87 acres 3 roods and 23 perches: all which are now part of the Wigan rectory estate.

The patronage of the several chapels of St. David Haigh, St. John Pemberton, St. John Abram, St. Catherine Wigan, and St. Thomas Wigan, was vested in the rector, as that of St. George Wigan had previously been.

During Mr. Gunning's incumbency the following permanent charges towards the endowment of the daughter churches were made upon the income of the benefice, in addition to the older charges of £16 paid annually to the Cathedral of Lichfield, £6 to the incumbent of Billinge, and £20 to the incumbent of Upholland, viz. £50 to the incumbent of Pemberton, £50 to the curate of St. Catherine, £50 to the curate of St. Thomas, and £30 to the curate of Abram.

Mr. Gunning succeeded to his baronetage 22nd September, 1862. As Sir Henry John Gunning, bart., he resigned the rectory of Wigan in 1864. His resignation is dated 16th February, and the bishop's acceptance 19th February, 1864.* He died at Aldwinckle, in the county of Northampton, 30th June, 1885, and was buried at Horton, 5th July. He married, first, 27th February, 1827, Mary Catherine, daughter of William Ralph Cartwright, of Aynho, in the county of Northampton, Esq., who died 25th May, 1877, and by whom he had issue an only son, George William, born 10th August, 1828, who succeeded him as fifth baronet. Sir Henry married secondly, 23rd October, 1879,

* Diocesan register.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 673

Mary, daughter of the Rev. the Hon. William Henry Spencer, younger son of the first Baron Churchill, who survives him.

Sir H. J. Gunning bore for his arms: *gules, on a fesse ermineois between three doves argent as many crosses formée per pale of the first and azure.*

The Honourable GEORGE THOMAS ORLANDO BRIDGEMAN, M.A., second son of George A. F. II., Earl of Bradford, and Georgina Elizabeth his wife, daughter of Sir Thomas Moncreiffe, of Moncreiffe, in the county of Perth, baronet, was instituted to the rectory of Wigan on 17th October, 1864, at Chester, by the Right Reverend John (Graham), lord bishop of Chester, having been collated thereto by the said lord bishop, to whom the donation belonged for this turn by reason of lapse. He was inducted to the real and actual possession of the rectory and parish church of Wigan on 22nd October, 1864, by the Rev. Howard St. George, incumbent of Billinge, and read himself in on Sunday, the 23rd of the same month.

He was born at Castle Bromwich, in the county of Warwick, 21st August, 1823, educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was admitted 19th May, 1842, and took his degree as Master of Arts in March, 1845.

After spending about two years in foreign travel, and studying theology for a year at the Theological College at Wells, in the county of Somerset, he was ordained deacon by George (Murray), bishop of Rochester, in the chapel called archbishop Tennyson's chapel, in the parish of St. James, Westminster, on 21st December, 1849, his title to holy orders being a domestic chaplaincy to the Earl of Bradford, to which he was nominated 14th November, 1849. Immediately after his ordination he served for a short time the cure of Southfleet, in Kent, of which the Rev. George Murray was then rector. He subsequently moved, with the bishop's letters of introduction, into the diocese of Manchester, and held the cure of Bolton-le-Moors, in the county of Lancaster, to which he was licensed by the bishop, 19th March, 1850.

674 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Whilst there he was presented by John George Weld, Lord Forester, to the rectory of Willey, with the perpetual curacy of Barrow annexed, both in the county of Salop, void by the death of the Rev. William Bates, clerk, the last incumbent. After being ordained priest by Renn Dickson (Hampden), bishop of Hereford, on 26th May, 1850, at Hereford, he was instituted to these united benefices on the same day.

On 25th June, 1850, he was married to Emily Mary, daughter of the Honourable Richard (Bagot), bishop of Bath and Wells, by whom (who died 13th December, 1853), he has two sons and one daughter, viz., Ernest Richard Orlando Bridgeman, now (1889) rector of Blymhill; Charles George Orlando Bridgeman, Barrister-at-law, of Lincoln's Inn, who married, 26th July, 1888, Sidney, daughter of General Henry Lynedoch Gardiner, C.B.; and Harriet Georgina Isabel Bridgeman, married at Wigan, 22nd April, 1879, to Douglas Stuart Murray, now (1889) rector of Blithfield, in the county of Stafford.

Mr. Bridgeman's next preferment was the rectory of Blymhill, in the county of Stafford, void by the resignation of the Rev. John Horatio Dickenson, clerk, the last incumbent, to which he was presented by George A. F. H., Earl of Bradford, and instituted by John (Lonsdale), bishop of Lichfield, 25th November, 1853. On 20th April, 1863, he was appointed, by the same bishop of Lichfield, rural dean of Brewood, which then comprised the parishes of Blymhill, Bishop's Wood, Brewood, Bushbury, Cod-sall, Coven, Shareshill, Sheriff Hales, and Weston-under-Lizard.

From Blymhill he removed to Wigan as above stated, and on 29th November, 1865, he was appointed, by William (Jacobson), bishop of Chester, rural dean of Wigan, comprising the ancient parish of Wigan; which appointment was renewed by the bishop of Liverpool, 14th July, 1880, after the creation of the new diocese.

On 26th March, 1868, he was appointed honorary chaplain to H.M. the Queen, to which he was admitted on 2nd May following; and was made chaplain in ordinary to H.M. 23rd December, 1872.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 675

In the meantime he was collated by the bishop of Chester to an honorary canonry in Chester Cathedral on 11th March, 1872, to which he was installed on the same day, together with the Rev. John Stewart, rector of West Derby; and from which he was transferred to Liverpool, 18th October, 1880, after the creation of the new diocese.

On 28th October, 1879, he was appointed acting chaplain to the 4th A.B. Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, which is chiefly composed of Wigan men.

Before the late rector, Sir Henry Gunning, Bart., resigned, there were nine chapels of ease in the parish of Wigan, viz., Upholland, Billinge, Hindley All Saints, St. George's Wigan, Pemberton, Haigh, Abram, St. Thomas's Wigan, and St. Catherine's Wigan; six of which had ecclesiastical districts assigned to them out of the old parish. The township of Ince had also been taken out of the district of St. Catherine and formed into a Peel parish with a church of its own, which was consecrated 17th March, 1864; the district having been previously formed by order in council 4th November, 1863, and the patronage vested in Simeon's trustees. Another ecclesiastical district—that of St. James, Wigan—had been formed out of the districts of St. Thomas and Pemberton, though the church was not yet built.

The parochial chapelry of All Saints, Hindley, seems to have been at one time recognised by the ecclesiastical commissioners as a parish by convention, for the district assigned by them to the new church of St. Peter, Hindley, in 1866, was taken out of the existing parish or parochial chapelry of Hindley without reference to the rector or the mother church of Wigan; but a district was afterwards assigned to the parish of All Saints, Hindley by order in council 29th June, 1878. Upholland and Billinge, however, though of older standing, were not recognised by them as such, and when a district was assigned to the new church of Dalton, which had long been reckoned as part of Upholland, it was formed from the mother church of Wigan; since which time, by the advice of the present rector, the incumbents of

676 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

Upholland and Billinge have applied for, and obtained, ecclesiastical districts from the old parish of Wigan, which were assigned by order in council 30th November, 1882

The formation of these districts in the late rector's time did not at first interfere with the jurisdiction of the rector, who possessed the cure of souls over the whole parish.¹ The surplice fees paid in the several chapels of ease, however, though never formally made over by the rector, were allowed to be retained by the several perpetual curates who received them; and so when the act of parliament, 19th and 20th Vict., commonly known as Lord Blandford's act, was passed in 1856, which made into new parishes all those ecclesiastical districts the incumbents of which were entitled to receive the entire surplice fees, the perpetual curates claimed the sole right of marrying those who lived within their respective districts.

Though it was not apparently the intention of the act to interfere with existing rights, the late rector gave way to them in this matter, and from that time declined to marry any but those who resided within the untouched portion of the old parish, which still extended in one direction to the ancient boundary adjoining the parish of Standish, while it was cut off by the district of St. Thomas on the other side close to the very churchyard of the parish church.

On the voidance of the rectory by the resignation of Sir Henry J. Gunning, Bart., in 1863, these ecclesiastical districts or parochial chapelries unquestionably became *new parishes* under Lord Blandford's act. At this time the churchyard had been closed for burials, and a cemetery provided for the burial of the inhabitants of the township of Wigan, to which the rights of the clergy having burial grounds within the township were transferred. The mother church of All Saints and the new church of St. Catherine

¹ In Mr. George Bridgeman's time, who preceded Sir Henry Gunning, there was a horse always kept saddled in the rector's stable night and day, ready for the use of the clergy of the parish church to visit the sick and dying wherever they might be summoned throughout the whole parish.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 677

only had burial grounds within the township, and therefore the incumbents of those two churches performed the funeral services in the consecrated portion of the cemetery over members of the church of England. In 1864, however, the incumbent of St. Thomas, which church neither had, nor was intended to have, a churchyard of its own, claimed the right of burying his own parishioners in the cemetery and receiving the fees. This was disputed by the rector, under the advice of Sir George Honeyburne, Q.C. (who was largely instrumental in drawing out the *Burial Acts*), who gave it as his opinion that "assuming that no Burial Board had been appointed for the Ecclesiastical District of St. Thomas, the incumbent of that church was not entitled to interfere with the rector's emoluments in respect of interments in Wigan cemetery." When Mr. Cronshaw, the vicar of St. Thomas, saw the opinion of Sir G. Honeyburne, together with the case submitted to him, he withdrew his claim for a time, but subsequently renewed it, and the case was eventually tried in the Court of the Queen's Bench (*Cronshaw v. the Wigan Burial Board*), in 1872, when judgment was given in favour of Mr. Cronshaw, the incumbent of St. Thomas.¹

This judgment was confirmed by the Court of Error, consisting of the Lord Chief Baron, Mr. Baron Martin, Mr. Justice Keating, Mr. Baron Pigott, Mr. Justice Brett, Mr. Baron Cleasby, and Mr. Justice Grove, on 4th February, 1873. From this time forward the incumbents of all those daughter churches within the township of Wigan whose position was the same as that of the incumbent of St. Thomas have exercised their functions at the cemetery, and received the fees for the burial of their own parishioners.

The church of St. James, Wigan, which had been constituted a new parish, under 6 and 7 Vic. c. 37, s. 15 (Church Endowment Act 1843)² in 1863, was consecrated 15th September, 1866,

¹ In the only similar case which had been tried before—that of *C. P. Day (clerk) v. Peacock*; *Cobb (clerk) v. same*; *Binder (clerk) v. same*, reported in the *Weekly Reporter*, vol. xiii.—judgment was given in favour of the mother church.

² See *London Gazette*, May 1, 1863.

678 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

having been built and endowed by Nathaniel Eckersley, Esq., in whom the patronage is vested.

The church of St. Peter, Hindley, the foundation stone of which was laid 19th October, 1863, was consecrated 15th October, 1866, and the patronage vested in trustees. A district was assigned to it by order in council 8th November, 1866. Neither of these two churches took anything from the old parish church of Wigan, or relieved the rector of any parochial duties.

When Mr. Bridgeman succeeded as rector of Wigan, the old Hall or rectory house, on which a considerable sum had been expended by the late rector, was found to be so much shaken and dilapidated by the working of the coal under the glebe that it was pronounced to be beyond efficient repair, and was therefore condemned to be pulled down. A portion of the glebe was at this time required by the corporation of Wigan for a new market place and a public park or recreation ground. He therefore got a private act of parliament passed, with the consent of the patron and the bishop, known as "the Wigan Rectory Glebe Act, 1871," which received the Queen's assent 14th August, 34 and 35 Victoria, 1871, by which he obtained power to borrow money on the security of the mine rents to rebuild the house, to part with a portion of the glebe for the above-mentioned purposes, and to grant building leases on long terms of 999 years.

On Mr. Bridgeman's application the Court of Chancery sanctioned the expenditure of £9,249 8s. 9d. upon the house, to be raised on the security of the mine rents, as also £1,275 8s. 8d. upon the gate-house or entrance gate and lodge, and £1,214 9s. upon a permanent fence or wall to enclose the grounds and lands held in demesne adjacent to the Hall against the two new streets called New Market Street and Parson's Walk. The old Hall, with the exception of the offices, was taken down, and a new house, after the designs of Mr. George Edmund Street, architect, was built, and completed in 1875, at an expense considerably exceeding the sum allowed by the Court of Chancery, of which the extra portion was paid by the rector himself.

History of the Church and Manor of Wigan. 679

A plot of land containing seven thousand one hundred and ninety superficial square yards was made over to the corporation of Wigan, as the Local Board of Health for the district of Wigan, for the purpose of forming part of the site of a market place for the Borough of Wigan, and another plot of land containing fifteen statute acres, two roods, and four perches, taken out of "the Mesnes," was also made over to them for the purpose of forming "a pleasure ground or place of public resort or recreation" for the people of Wigan, to be called "the Mesnes Park," and a new site for the Grammar School. For this land the corporation paid a mere nominal sum of money, which would have been barely sufficient to cover the cost of making a good wall to fence off the glebe land left open and exposed to trespass by the transfer; the sum of £2,000 being the price offered for it by the corporation, and accepted by the rector at the request of the patron, who wished to confer a benefit on the town. The corporation, however, undertook to make the roads adjacent to the market place and the park, thus throwing open plots for building on the glebe land without any further expense to the rector. The two several plots above mentioned were conveyed to the corporation for those purposes only which were specified in the agreement and subject to re-entry by the rector if they should be used for any other purpose whatsoever.

Under an agreement between the rector and corporation, annexed as a schedule to "*An act for empowering the Corporation of Wigan to make sewerage works for utilization or treatment of sewage and to make new streets and improvements of streets and to acquire the undertaking of the Wigan Gas Company and for other purposes,*" which received the Royal Assent 16th July, 1874, the street called Frog Lane, lying south of Wigan Hall, was widened by the corporation and removed further from the Hall, the rector giving the additional land required for the purpose. At the same time the corporation obtained power to make a road from the Wallgate to Dorning Street, cutting through the lower portion of the land last added to the churchyard for

.680 *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan.*

an additional burial ground, which land had been scarcely ever used for burials, and had since been closed by an order in council. The rector consented to the making of this road, seeing the urgent necessity there was for it, but declined to accept any payment for it, merely stipulating that none of the soil should be removed from the churchyard.

The ecclesiastical district of St. Andrew, Wigan, was formed, by order in council, out of the parish of Wigan and the new parish of Pemberton, and gazetted 24th March, 1871. It was originally endowed with £50 a year by the rector, who also raised by subscription an additional sum of £1,500 to meet a similar sum given by the ecclesiastical commissioners, making the income up to £150 a year. The patronage is vested in the rector, who has subsequently added £7 10s. a year to the endowment. The church was consecrated by the bishop of Liverpool, 31st July, 1882. Marsh Green, or the portion of the district which was taken out of Pemberton, has since been restored to that parish by order in council, 17th May, 1882, and the whole district of St. Andrew is now situated in the township of Wigan.

The church of St. Michael and All Angels, Dalton—originally formed out of the old tithe barn, and endowed by John Prescott of Dalton Grange, Esq., the owner of the great tithes of the township of Dalton, in whom the patronage is vested—was consecrated 16th March, 1872,¹ for which a district had already been formed. It has since been rebuilt near the former site, and consecrated 29th September, 1877. The township of Dalton taken out of the old parish of Wigan, had been assigned to it as the ecclesiastical district, and gazetted 29th November, 1870.² There is no glebe house belonging to it, but a house has been provided for the use of the incumbent by the Earl of Lathom, who gives him the use of it rent free.

The church of St. Michael and All Angels, Wigan, was built

¹ *Wigan Observer*, Sept. 1877.

² *Ex. inf.* Rev. J. Crofts, incumbent of Dalton.