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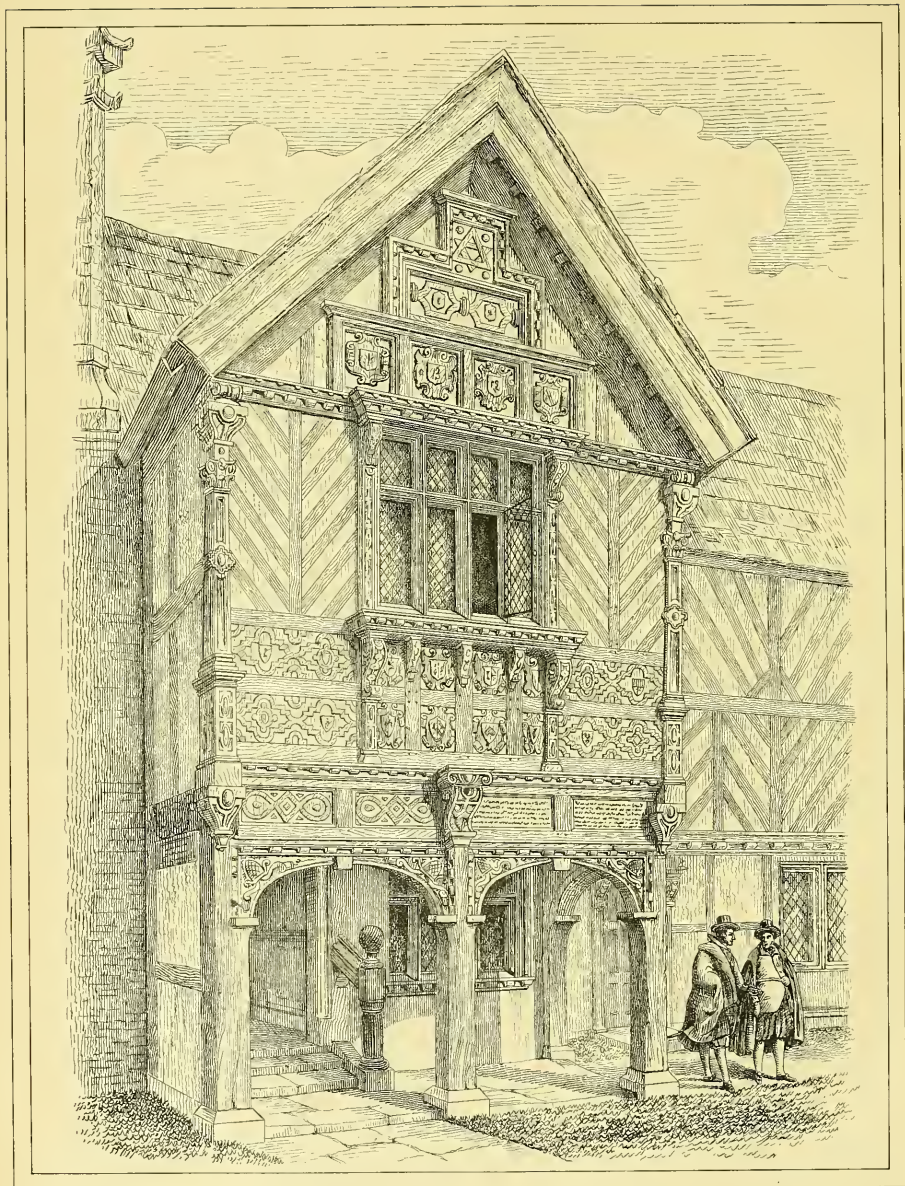






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PORCH OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
TOWN AND PARISH  
OF  
NANTWICH,  
OR  
WICH-MALBAK,  
IN THE  
COUNTY PALATINE OF CHESTER.

BY  
JAMES HALL, WILLASTON, NANTWICH.

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"Thus times do shift; each thing his turne does hold;  
New things succeed as former things grow old."—(*Robert Herrick.*)

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May 7, 1884

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TO  
GEORGE FORTESCUE WILBRAHAM, ESQUIRE,  
OF DELAMERE HOUSE, CHESHIRE,  
AND TO THE  
MEMORY OF HIS ANCESTORS,  
WHO WERE LONG RESIDENT IN THE TOWN OF  
NANTWICH,  
AND WERE THE NEVER-FAILING GUARDIANS OF ITS  
RIGHTS IN BY-GONE DAYS,  
THIS VOLUME  
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

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## PREFACE.



ONE has well observed that “the past is in itself a treasure; and the same feeling which leads us back to the recollection of infancy carries us still further along the mighty waste of time.” In these pages an attempt is made to trace the history of Nantwich, an ancient market town in Cheshire, from the time of the taking of the Domesday Survey to the present year; bridging over that interval of more than eight centuries with a series of local events in chronological sequence, and linking the present with the past by re-peopling the town with inhabitants of by-gone days. This self-imposed

task has entailed no small labour; for, as Sterne has said, “when a man sits down to write a history, though it be but the history of Jack Hickathrift or Tom Thumb, he knows no more than his heels what lets and hindrances he is to meet with in his way, or what a dance he may be led by one excursion or another, before all is over . . . . He will, moreover, have various accounts to reconcile; anecdotes to pick up; inscriptions to make out; stories to weave in; traditions to sift; personages to call upon; panegyrics to paste up at this door; pasquinades at that . . . . To sum up all; there are archives at every stage to be looked into, and rolls, records, documents, and endless genealogies, which justice ever and anon calls him back to stay the reading of—in short, there is no end of it.”

Of former histories, the first, published anonymously in 1774 (see page 381), was written by a native townsman, the Rev. Joseph Partridge. It was re-printed, with some omissions, in 1778 in Poole's so-called History of Cheshire, vol. ii. pp. 573-629. A second history of the town, which was little more than an enlarged and better arranged edition of the former work, was undertaken by Mr. John Weld Platt in 1818, who, however, omits to mention the existence of the earlier history from which he borrowed very freely without acknowledgment. The brothers Lysons, in 1810, and Dr. George Ormerod, in 1819, in their valuable County Histories, added very considerably to what had previously been written relating to Nantwich; and in the new edition of the latter work, much has again been added from the Cheshire Records. Of later writers, who have contributed in a less degree to the knowledge of the history of this locality, may be mentioned Miss Julia Tomkinson (afterwards Lady Rich), the authoress, in 1851, of “*Historical Facts of Nantwich and its neighbourhood*,” and Miss Elizabeth Johnson, of Nantwich, who wrote a short sketch entitled “*History of Nantwich and its neighbourhood*,” which appeared in “*Johnsons' Nantwich and Crewe Monthly Illustrated Journal*” from June to Dec. 1868.

The increasing interest that is now taken in the subject of local history has induced me to give the general public a more detailed account of the town than has before been attempted. Parochial history has come to be regarded as an integral part of the history of the country—a history of the English people in miniature: and thus particulars, which local historians formerly regarded as of little moment, are now considered too important to be omitted in a work professing to be a history of a Parish. To the thoughtful mind, for example, the simple record of a baptism, a marriage, or a burial, is not a mere commonplace matter undeserving of notice. Did not our forefathers receive the name they bore throughout life in baptism, when in infancy they were carried to the old Church? Did they not enter the bonds of matrimony there, when they gallantly stepped along its aisle? And, when the part they had played in life was all over, were they not again brought there to receive the last offices that could be paid them, as they were buried within the precincts of the Church or its graveyard?

Like other towns, Nantwich has had a chequered history. Calamities of fire, sword, pestilence and famine have overtaken the inhabitants: and the town has had its times of prosperity and distress. It is believed that particulars relating to these things, and to the men who made the town what it was in times past, will be read with interest. In order thus to make this work as complete and accurate as possible, personal search has been made amongst the various classes of records now preserved at the Record Office, London: and amongst historical MSS., old books, pamphlets, &c., in the great Public Libraries, and in private hands: resulting in the obtaining of much additional information both unsuspected and unknown to the present generation. It should be understood that my object has been to select facts rather than to adorn them: and if I have contributed to the knowledge of the past, my purpose will have been answered. Still it will ever be a matter of regret to me that this history has not been told with greater literary skill: but I trust that accuracy of detail may atone for defects in style and faults of expression.

In various parts of the volume I have acknowledged my indebtedness for information communicated by numerous correspondents: and I further desire here to express my grateful thanks to those who have rendered me assistance; namely:—

To GEORGE FORTESCUE WILBRAHAM, Esq., of Delamere, for placing at my disposal the MS. collections of his ancestors; without which no detailed account of the town from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries could have been given; and, particularly, for permission to transcribe from the unique family memorial (called in this book the Wilbraham MS. Journal) which contains not only the genealogy of the Wilbraham family, but many incidental entries of local families and notices of passing events, not to be found elsewhere.

To WILBRAHAM SPENCER TOLLEMACHE, Esq., J.P., of Dorfold Hall, for the loan of an old MS. Pedigree Book, and other books in his library; also to his brother, the RIGHT HONORABLE JOHN, LORD TOLLEMACHE of Helmingham, and the HONORABLE LADY MARY EGBERTON, for their incidental introductions which procured for me admission to the library of REGINALD CHORMONDELEY, Esq., of Conover Hall, who kindly allowed me to take a full copy of a MS. account of the Civil War, written in 1651, by Thomas Malbon, of Nantwich, and preserved there amongst the Cowper MSS.; that account, as I have explained elsewhere, being the original source from which Mr. Edward Burghall

obtained his information of the Civil War, which was afterwards printed under the title of "*Providence Improved.*"

To the REV. FOSTER GREY BLACKBURNE, M.A., Rector of Nantwich, for his courtesy in allowing me to examine the Parish Registers; and for placing other documents in his possession under my notice.

To the REV. ROBERT SCARR REDFERN, Vicar of Acton; the REV. HENRY COLLISON, late Rector of Wistaston; and the REV. RICHARD DANDY, Vicar of Wybunbury, for their kindness in allowing me to search the Registers and other records of those Parishes.

To JOHN PARSONS EARWAKER, ESQ., M.A., F.S.A., author of "*East Cheshire,*" &c., for the interest he has always manifested in the progress and success of this work; for the loan of several rare books, pamphlets, original MSS., transcripts of documents, register extracts, &c., without whose aid much valuable information contained in these pages could not have appeared.

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To JOHN BELLAMY MINSHULL, ESQ., of London, for many particulars relating to the Minshulls of this town and its neighbourhood; and for the translation (by an unknown scholar) of the curious Latin inscription on pages 322-3.

To MISS THOMASIN E. SHARPE, of Kensington, for the benefit of her researches respecting the genealogy of the Goldsmith and Minshull families.

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To SIR WILLIAM BOWMAN, BART., of Dorking, Surrey, for particulars relating to his family.

To the representatives of the late HENRY BOWMAN, ESQ., his brother, and to J. S. CROWTHER, ESQ., for their kind permission to re-produce the N.E. and S.W. views of the Church, and the Plate of the Bosses in the Chancel groining, from their handsome work, "*The Churches of the Middle Ages.*"

To THOMAS BOWER, ESQ., Architect, for the excellent Plan of the Church, which has been drawn specially for this work.

To a friend, MR. E. E. MINTON, for the drawings of the illustrations on pages 110, 194, and 265.

And, lastly, I would thank my Subscribers, without whose generous support this history could not have appeared; to whom also an apology is due for the unavoidable

delay that has occurred since the first announcement of the work more than two years ago; and for the omission of the promised map of the Parish indicating the fields and field-names. It was afterwards found that such a map would of necessity be so small as to be practically useless. The sheet maps of the Government Survey, however, are easily obtainable, and will supply the deficiency.

The first illustrated book printed at Nantwich, issued from the press of Mr. Edmund Snelson in the year 1787. It was entitled "*A Topographical Survey of the Counties of Stafford, Chester and Lancaster, containing A new engraved Map of each County \* \* \* \* together with elegant Engravings of the Arms of the Nobility and Gentry,*" &c., by William Tunnicliffe. Those of my readers who happen to possess a copy of that work, will be able to judge of the improvement in local typography that has taken place since that date. A meed of praise is therefore due to the printer, Mr. Thomas Johnson; and to his foreman, Mr. Jervis, who has spared no pains to make the volume as attractive as possible.

In conclusion, I would adopt the words of old Geoffrey Whitney, (the celebrated Emblem writer in the time of Queen Elizabeth,) who was a native of the adjoining parish of Acton, and say to the general reader—

*"Peruse with heede, then frendlie iudge, and blaming rashe refraine;  
So maist thou reade vnto thy good, and shalt requite my paine."*

JAMES HALL.

WILLASTON, NEAR NANTWICH,

December 10th, 1883.



# HISTORY

OF THE

## TOWN AND PARISH OF NANTWICH.

---

### Introduction.

---



NANTWICH is the name of an ancient Market-town, a Parish, a Poor Law Union, a Rural Deanery, and a Hundred in the south of Cheshire. The Parish includes the Townships of Nantwich, Alvaston, Woolstanwood, and part of Willaston. Leighton, formerly included in Nantwich Parish, became in 1840 a new ecclesiastical district, under the name of Leightoncum-Minshull-Vernon, in the parish of Middlewich.

Nantwich is bounded by the parishes of Acton, Church Minshull, Church Copenhall, Wistaston and Wybunbury. The adjacent townships are Baddington, Edleston, Acton, Henhull, Worleston, Leighton, Copenhall, Wistaston, Willaston, Stapeley, Austerson and Bartherton.

Situated about the centre of the Hundred, old writers locate Nantwich on the "Great and Direct Road from London to Holyhead," one hundred and sixty-nine miles from "Hick's Hall,"\* and twenty miles from Chester. Since the introduction of iron roads, the situation of Nantwich must be referred to the modern and rival town of Crewe; from which railway centre it is about four miles distant on the Crewe and Shrewsbury branch of the London and North Western Railway System.

\* "*Hick's Hall*," or the Sessions' House, was situated in St. John Street, Clerkenwell, London.

As its name implies, Nantwich is situated in a valley, through which the Weaver, here an inconsiderable stream, flows, dividing the town into two parts. Drayton, in his "Polyolbion," c. 1612, calls the Weaver the "*wizard river*," and, as the valley has always been famous for its numerous salt-springs, it is still commonly believed that a subterranean brine-stream follows the course of the river.

In 1819 the town was described as follows:—\*

"A very large proportion of the buildings in the town of Nantwich are timber and plaister, with large bay windows and projecting stories. This kind of architecture gives an air of gloom when introduced in masses in the narrow streets of a crowded town, and when in the lapse of time such buildings fall into the hands of the lower orders, their exterior becomes necessarily ragged and unsightly. There are, however, many respectable modern mansions of the more opulent inhabitants, in various streets of Nantwich; and in its outskirts, and more open parts, where the ancient timber buildings have trees and gardens around them, they assume an air which is pleasing and picturesque, as well as venerable."

So wrote Dr. Ormerod; and in some respects the same description still applies. The greatest town improvement of this century, effectually dispersing the "gloom" of High Town, was the removal of the "Old Market Hall" in 1868, and the block of houses and shops, in 1872, that stood on what is now called "The Square." Still, however, a few quaint timbered houses,† with low, thatched roofs and small lead-latticed windows having hanging shutters, stand in an in-and-out fashion, as if with studied irregularity along the boulder-paved, narrow, and tortuous thoroughfares. At intervals are structures of Elizabethan age, timbered mansions with high peaked gables and overhanging roofs, beside substantial red brick houses with red tiled roofs, and high walled gardens; while the Cathedral-like Church, with its tree adorned graveyard, forms the centre round which the town is gathered. It is only within the last thirty years that the existing modern fronts have put a new face on the ancient gables of High Town, (and it is to be regretted that so few attempts have been made to reproduce the Elizabethan style so characteristic of Nantwich), but there, behind, are the old oak beams of houses jammed together, as if land had always been scarce and dear, with curious shaped rooms over low, narrow passages that lead to courtyards, where the eye beholds chimneys and roofs oddshaped and crowded. Perhaps some of the oldest houses are to be found in Welsh Row and Wood Street, since the fire of 1583 did not extend its ravages to that part of the town; and it is noticeable that many of the old beams exhibit notches, mortices, &c., as if they had served some anterior purpose. Old barns, peasants' cottages and farm houses in the neighbourhood furnish the same evidence. A few "ragged and unsightly" buildings linger to tell of "forgotten years,"

"Whose walls with wrinkles frown;  
And people say, who pass that way,  
'Twere well the house were down."

While in the outskirts of the town long rows of regularly built houses, with garden plots attached, have become the homes of an increased population.

\* Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, Vol. iii. Old Edit. p. 229; New Edit. p. 436.

† Many old timbered houses have disappeared within the last few years. A long range of old property forms the subject of the plate entitled "Hospital Street," page 52; and a singular feature in some old houses, which I have not observed elsewhere, is that of having windows close to doorways. See examples in the illustrations on pages 353 and 430.



The population of Nantwich Parish, according to the Government returns, is here appended.

POPULATION TABLE.

Date of Census.	Township of Leighton.		Township of Woolstanwood.		Township of Alvaston.		Township of Nantwich-Willaston.		Township of Nantwich.		Total Population of Nantwich Parish.
	Houses.	Popul'n.	Houses.	Popul'n.	Houses.	Popul'n.	Houses.	Popul'n.	Houses.	Popul'n.	
1801	39	200	7	40	3	11	...	*	824	3463	3714
1811	29	156	7	48	4	33	...	†	873	3999	4236
1821	31	270	9	65	6	37	...	‡	985	4661	5033
1831	48	261	9	70	6	41	29	122	952	4886	5380
1841	...	§	9	64	4	40	22	91	1045	5489	5684
1851	...	...	9	65	7	37	33	147	1120	5579	5828
1861	...	...	11	65	7	28	51	228	1189	6225	6546
1871	...	...	15	75	6	23	53	222	1328	6673	6993
1881	...	...	20	117	11	57	66	333	1629	7496	8003

The numbers given above from the Census of 1881, are divided into males and females as follows:—

Parish of Nantwich.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Nantwich Town ...	3508	3766	7274
Nantwich Workhouse ...	142	80	222
Woolstanwood ...	59	58	117
Alvaston ...	23	34	57
Nantwich-Willaston ...	173	160	333
	<u>3905</u>	<u>4098</u>	<u>8003</u>

In the absence of records of the numbering of the people prior to this century, it is difficult to ascertain, even approximately, the population of towns in remote times. King William III adopted a curious mode of reckoning the population, and one that was practised for many years, viz.: by a diocesan inquiry into the comparative strength of religious sects. Thus Bishop Gastrell, in his "*Notitia Cestriensis*," in 1722, gives the following statistics relating to Nantwich:—

Total number of Families	770	
Papists ...	5	} 293—Number of Nonconformist families.
Presbyterians	9	
Presbyterians	157	
Anabaptists...	109	
Quakers ...	13	

Probably, at that time, the population of Nantwich did not exceed 3,000.

\* No return of Willaston in 1801.

† In 1811 the whole of Willaston had 35 houses and 214 inhabitants, but the return is included in Wyburnbury Parish.

‡ In 1821 Willaston had 41 Houses and 209 inhabitants, included in Wyburnbury.

§ Leighton, which has been separated from Nantwich Parish since 1840, had in 1841, 237 inhabitants; in 1851, 190; in 1861, 217; in 1871, 241; and in 1881, 172.

Mr. Blome, who made a tour through Cheshire in 1673, describes Nantwich as “*the greatest and fairest built Town (next to Chester) in the Shire,*” and “*a place well inhabited and frequented,*” (Britannia, p. 136.) These statements may be regarded as correct, without at all implying a large population. In Charles II reign, Chester probably did not exceed ten thousand, and Nantwich not more than two or three thousand. (See Macaulay’s History, Chap. III.)

But Mr. Partridge’s statement, a hundred years after, that Nantwich was then (1774) “*the largest town in the County, Chester excepted,*” (History of Nantwich, p. 6) is, however, open to doubt; for while Nantwich had long been declining in importance as a salt-town, the towns in the Mid-Cheshire salt-field were fast growing; Stockport and Congleton had become manufacturing towns; and as early as 1756 Mr. Charles Roe had erected a silk-mill at Macclesfield.

A greater blunder occurs on page 28 of the same history, where Mr. Partridge accepts the fanciful tradition that, previous to the great fire in 1583, Nantwich had been much larger, and had “*extended into the parish of Acton.*” It is easy to show this is mere conjecture. Welsh Row Head (*i.e.* the end of the street,) Street-end Field, (on the east side of Marsh Lane, and now built upon) are names that prove the town did not extend into Acton parish, but, on the contrary, was confined within a smaller area than the limits of Nantwich in more recent times. A comparison of the number of Baptisms and Burials recorded in ten years preceding the Great Fire, and in the first decade of the present century, also shows the town to have been much smaller in the sixteenth century.

From 1573 to 1582, the total number of Baptisms was 528, and Burials 302.

From 1801 to 1810,        ,,        ,,        ,,        1402,        ,,        750.

Taking the mean population between 1801 and 1811 to be 4000, Nantwich could not possibly have had more than 2000 inhabitants in the time of Queen Elizabeth. The most conclusive evidence on this point, however, is the following extract from the “*Chantry Roll,*” now preserved at the Record Office, and dated 1 & 2 Edw. VI. [1548].

“*M<sup>d</sup>. The said towne of Nantwiche is a graet towne and hath Ml. viijc. [1,800] hoslyng people wthin the same.*”

Some of the field-names in the township are of great antiquity; whilst the mention of the principal streets in early deeds prove the plan of the town to have been the same for several centuries.

#### EARLY DEEDS RELATING TO THE TOWN.

(1) “Know all present &c. That we Sir [*Dns*] Warin de Vernon and Auda Malbanc my wife have granted &c. to Sir [*Dno*] Tho. de Samford 20 messuages and 3 salt-houses with liberty of toll of salt situate in Wich Malbank in length between that street called *frog rowwe* and a certain cistern called *Mustel siche*\* and in breadth between the wich-house of Robert Praers of Badelegh and a certain lane leading to the said street &c. Witnesses Warin de Hanywell, Richard his brother, Richard le Clerik, and others.” (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 111).

\* “*Mustel siche,*” or Middle styche, as Partridge calls it, existed as the name of a lane a hundred years ago. It was probably the lane leading from the Savings’ Bank to the river; and may have been the site of the *moat* or “cistern” that formed the boundary of the salt-works in Norman times as mentioned in Domesday Book.

(2) "Ralph de Vernon grants to John de Wetenhale all his lands in Acton near Wich Malbank and all his share of the mill called *Frogge Mulne* &c.

Witnesses, Hugh de Venables, Richard de Mascy, William de Brereton, Knights, Robert de Brescy then sheriff of Chester" &c. (Chesh. Recog. Rolls).

The above charters are undated, as was usual in deeds prior to 1300; but from the mention of Warin de Vernon, who was the second husband of Auda the daughter of William third Baron of Wich Malbank, the former grant must have been made before the year 1200; and the latter probably subsequent to that date. The mill, which is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as belonging to Edwin Earl of Mercia in the time of Edward the Confessor, was turned by water that flowed through fields called *Frog-greaves* (now part of Dorfold Park) and thence to Nantwich along the *Frog Row*, and so on into the Weaver. *Frog-channel* continued to be an open water-course until converted into a culvert in the year 1866; but the ancient name of the street was changed to *Welsh Row* (*i.e.* the road leading to Wales) in the latter part of the sixteenth century, when the direct road to Wales became of greater importance as a thoroughfare, and was more frequented by travellers.

(3) *Inquisition of Right of Way from Henhull to Nantwich.* Dated 6 Sept. 2 Edw. VI. [1549]. "William Wettenhall. From a certain pasture of the said William Wettenhall called Doche Croft and Doche Croft Meadow in Henhull, by a certain butt called *Way-butt* to a certain lane called *Sparbacon lane*\* and thence to a street in Nantwich called *Frogstreet*. The jurors named in the Inquisition say that the said William Wettenhall and his tenants of the said pastures ought to have the road before described." (Chesh. Inquis.)

(4) "Dorothea formerly wife of Richard Egerton, Knight, died 3 Dec. 1549 seised of lands in *Rydley fyld*, *Masons Yords* [now called Love Lane] and near *the head of Frogge Rowe* in Wich Malbank." (Chesh. Inquis.)

(5) "Margaret Mainewaring widow demised to John Wicksted a messuage in "*Weals*" [Wales or Welsh] *Rowe*, to hold for the term of three lives rendering 10 sh. per ann. Dated 16 July 35 Eliz." [1593]. (*Harl. MSS.* 2077, f. 39. o).

This street is invariably called *Welsh* or *Welch Row*, never *Frog Row*, in the Parish Registers, the first mention being as follows:—

"1608. Ang. 12. Richd. sonne of Richard Price of *Welcherow*." [Baptised].

(6) "Know &c. that I Richard de Heuster of Wich Malbank have given &c. to Richard de Leftwich and Agnes his wife all that messuage &c. in *ospithrostreet*† &c. Witnesses, Richard de fulshurst Junr., Robert le Maisterson, Ralph Perkyne, Walter de Bromley, and William de Helde. Dated at Wich Malbank 1340." (*Harl. MSS.* 2074, p. 221).

(7) "Charter of David Cradoc Knight granting to Richard de Godwynslegh land in *hospitall streete* for the payment of 20 sh. Date 1371." (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 113. h.)

Hospital Street was no doubt named from St. Nicholas Hospital, a religious house that stood in this street for about four hundred and fifty years, *i.e.* from Norman times to the Reformation. It is frequently written in the Registers, "*Aspell*" and "*Hospell*" street, words that still represent the local pronunciation.

\* "*Sparbacon Lane*," so called in 1774, (Partridge) has since been called *Cross Wood Street*.

† - † Another curious spelling of a local name about this time is *Shyvardes-brugge* for Shrewbridge, in an Inquisition dated 1348-9. (See Annals, page 82).

(8) "I John Wilbor have given to Richard Wilbor one place of land in Wich Malbank in breadth between the land of Roger Cradock and the land of Tho. Praers [?] and in length between the *high street* and the *Castle Hall*. Witnesses, Richard de ffouleshurst then sheriff of Chester, &c. Dated 1321." (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 114.)

(9) "Pardon to William de Brescy for acquiring to himself and his heirs one messuage called *Chastelyord* in Wich Malbank from John Lovel. Dated 19 Sept. 1341." (*Chesh. Recog. Rolls*.)

(10) "We Richard le Cooke of Beeston and Rose my Wife grant to John de Cholmundeleg and Ann his wife two places of land in Wich Malbank in "*le Tenchersfeild*" which are called *flowerscroft* &c. Witnesses, Richard de ffouleshurst then sheriff of Chester, &c. Dated 1325." (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 115.)

In the same MSS., and on the same page, are deeds in which the following local names occur:—"land called *Tinkersfeild*" in 1361; "houses in *le Bene Streate*" in 1336; and "*Meelstrecte* dated 29 Edw. 3. 1355." Beam Street is the street leading to Beam Heath, which in Norman times bore the name of *Creche*. Mention is made of Nantwich mill in an original Charter at Keele, Staffordshire, about the year 1228, in which

(11) "Philippa Mauban grants to Letisce [Letitia] wife of Peter de Stapeley land against the *mill of Wichomauben*: Witnesses Hugh Decino de Wichomauben, Richard de Sandeford, Hugh de Beveresford" &c. (*Ormerod's Cheshire*, New Edit., Vol. III. p. 495.)

(12) "John de Wettenhall demised to Thomas de Edgley *the Inn of ye Swanne* and three shoppes in *Churchlone* for 10 years yielding four marks [*£2 13s. 4d.*] and 8s. 4d. yearly &c. Dated 1424." (*Harl. MSS.* 1969, f. 115.)

Of the following names, which often occur in the fifteenth century, only one—*Monks' Lane*—survives to the present time, viz.: *Flesshemonger Lane*, occurring in the Inquisition *post mortem* of John Lovell, Kt., dated 1414; "*Loithburne*" (once an open channel in Beam Street) in 1452; "a meadow formerly called the *Monkes orchard*" in 1453; "*Ratonrowe*" in 1483, and as late as 17 Hen. VIII. [1525-6]. "*Bayartesholt*" or "*Baywards hold*" in 1468; "*Monkslone*" in 1470; and "*Peters Lane*" in 1482. (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 136-9.)

*Great and Little Wood Street* and *Snow Hill* were common names for the localities of the salt-houses in the same century. *Wyche-house Bank* is a modern name.

*Waterlode*, that is, the road leading to the fordable part of the river, was the lane where the great fire of 1583 began, which destroyed, amongst other streets, *Swine Market*, the *Beast Market* (the west end of Beam Street) and *Love Lane*, afterwards named *Corn Market*, and now *Oat Market*. These, from their central positions, must have been very old streets; but the earliest mention of the Corn Market with its necessary "*Inn*," still bearing the same sign, occurs in an Inquisition *post mortem*, dated 4 Sep. 2 Jac. I. [1605] as follows:— (*translated*)

"Geffrey Mynshull gent. died 26 Dec. last past [1603] leaving Edward Mynshull his son and heir aged 40 years, and upwards. He died seised of a messuage and shop in Nantwich in the *Hightown*; i cottage & stable, i garden and part of a garden in N. by *Mounkes Lane* there; 2 other messuages & 2 gardens there in a street called the *Welch Row*; a salt-house of 12 leads in *Little Wood Street*; 6 acres of land, 6 of meadow, called the *Pear-tree field* and *Pear-tree Meadow* in Nantwich; an annual rent of 12 sh. issuing of a messuage of Nicholas Goldsmith in the *Hospell St.* there; another annual rent of 6 sh. issuing out of another messuage or burgage being called the *Sign of the Cock* lying near the *Corn Markett*, then the inheritance of Thos. Bromley gent." &c. [*Lands in Wistaston, &c.*]

Between Snow Hill and *Wall-lane*, i.e. the lane leading to *Wall-field*, is *Cart-lake*, which formerly contained a cesspool known as the *cuckstool-bit*, for the discipline of the "thewe" [cuckingstool] and "tumbrel" [cart]; which in former days, must frequently have been in requisition so as to have given rise to the local proverb—"Scold like a wych waller." With the improvement of the manners of the inhabitants, that engine of punishment disappeared, and the proverb became obsolete, but the name of the lane still survives.

*Pillory Street*\* is suggestive of another kind of punishment in days long ago. According to the tradition of the town, James Kirkham, for a rape, was the last person to be pilloried, not, however, in this street, but in the High Town, early in the present century. *Barker Street*, from an old Latin word, *Barcaria* a tan-house, was most likely so called from the tannery that belonged to the Comberbach family during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. *Pepper Street*, a name of doubtful etymology, is also found at Chester, Middlewich, and in other places in the County.† These three street names are mentioned in the Inquisitions *post mortem* of Thomas Minshull, and Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, Knight, dated 1604 and 1605.

Some of the field names, too, are of a most interesting character. On the eastern side of the township is the *Barony*, formerly the waste of the lord of the town. In this waste, now largely built over, are two enclosures called *Clonners fields*, a name indicating the features of the place, namely—land surrounded by bog or water; which was the actual fact not many years ago. To the south, at Shrewbridge, are *Salt Lake* and *Salt Meadow*, suggesting the presence of brine-springs. The *Mill-field* is mentioned by John Gerard in 1597 as the *Milne-eye*, that is, *island*; a tacit allusion to the antiquity of the existing mill-weir. *St. Ann's Croft*, behind the tannery at Welsh Row Head, was no doubt land belonging to the ancient Oratory that stood on the *Wich* [now *Welsh*] Bridge in pre-Reformation times. But the names that carry with them the greatest antiquity are to be found on the north side of the town, viz.: *Wall-field*, *Dunnillow-field*, and *Windy Harbour*. *Windy* or *Cold-Harbour* is a common name found on all the main lines of Roman Roads, signifying resting or sheltering places. *Dunnillow* is a Saxon word meaning "hill-fort-mound;" and *Wall-field*, from the Latin "*vallum*, a stockade," is clearly indicative of Roman occupation. These are situated exactly in the line of the Roman way (the 2nd Iter of Antoninús) running north and south from CONDATE (now supposed by some to have been near Warrington) to URICONIUM (Wroxeter); traces of which occur on the Government Survey Map under the names of Holford Street and King Street to Middlewich, and thence in direction of Nantwich to within two miles of the town. *Causeway Meadow*, an oblong field on the boundary of the township on the west side of the river, and *Cawsey Croft* in the adjacent township of Henhull, together with the aforesaid *Wall-field*, are all in the same straight line with the *Watfield Pavement* in Wardle, which is known to have been part of the great Roman Way (VIA DEVANA) that connected Chester (DEVA) with Leicester (RATÆ.)

Both Partridge and Pennant suppose Nantwich existed as a salt-town in Roman times,‡ and the conjecture is not undeserving of credit, from the fact of the intersection of these

\* "*Pillory-streets*" occurs in the Exchequer Records, Ministers' Accounts 3 & 4 Edw. VI. [1550]. Record Soc. Publ. Vol. vii. p. 111.

† In one instance it occurs in this County, near Stockport, as the name of part of a Roman Road. *Pepper Street*, and "*Pepper Street Moss*," in Hunsterson, are names frequently mentioned in Wyubunbury Parish Registers.

‡ Partridge's Hist. Nantwich, p. 4; and Pennant's "Tour from Chester to London," 1782 p. 27-8.

roads at *Wall-field*, in close proximity to the ancient Brine-pit; and the discovery of a few interesting remains. In 1667 Lord Brereton related to the Royal Society, "that upon digging a salt-pit near the Weaver, (between Nantwich and Northwich, the exact place not being given) at two yards deep he found a pavement and some Roman coins."\* Mr. James Pick, of Nantwich, has twelve Roman copper coins that were found many years ago in Marsh Lane. Fifteen other coins found in a hard lump of earth when alterations were being made in the *Wall-Lane* tanyard in or about 1849, which are helmet headed, and have been identified as belonging to various Roman Emperors, were in the possession of the late Mr. Charles Laxton, of Nantwich.

Mr. Webb, in his description of the town, written in 1621, (see King's "*Vale Royal of England*") speaks of it as existing anterior to Roman times, stating that "the Britons called the town HELLATH-WEN,† the white pit." Little or nothing, however is known of Cheshire in the Keltic period of history; but the etymology of the name Nantwich proves that the Weaver‡ valley was once inhabited by the ancient race of people now dwelling in the secluded valleys of North Wales.

NANT-WICH is a Keltic-Teutonic word; the former syllable alluding to its situation in a *river valley*; and the latter having reference to *salt*, for the manufacture of which the town was in ancient times famous. "*Nant*" is common as a prefix in place-names in Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany; but philologists are not agreed as to the derivation of "*Wich*" as applied to the inland salt-towns, collectively called the *Wiches*. "*Wich*," a word found in all the Teutonic dialects,§ is said to mean, primarily, "a village" or "dwelling place," being synonymous with the Latin *vicius*, the Greek *oikos*, the Sanskrit *vesa*, from *vas* to inhabit. The Rev. Isaac Taylor (*Words and Places*, p. 169) suggests that the *Wiches* derive their name from the Norse "*wic*, a bay;" and not from the Anglo-Saxon "*wic*, a village;" and argues that the Northmen or Vikings (*creekers*) visited certain bays or creeks (*vigs*) and there obtained salt from sea-water. Whilst that might account for the names of places on the coast-line, where it is presumed salt was obtained in shallow *wiches* or bays by solar and artificial evaporation; it entirely fails to prove that the Northmen gave the name of *Wich* to inland salt-towns, inasmuch as it is recorded as early as 716, or seventy years before they first commenced their ravages on our coasts, that "Æthelbald of Mercia granted certain salt-works near the river Salwarpe at *Lootwic* in Worcestershire in exchange however, for others to the north of the river; and "in the same year he granted a hide of land in *Saltwyeh vico emptorio salis*, to Evesham."|| Although no mention of the Cheshire *Wiches* has occurred in any record prior to 1086, it may be inferred that the name *Wich* applied to the salt-towns in this county, as elsewhere,

\* Earwaker's "Local Gleanings," 4to Series, vol. i. p. 40.

† The Welsh name for salt is *hel*, and for a salt-pit, *heledd*. *Wen* or *Gwyn*, signifies white.

‡ *Weaver* is a Keltic river-name, found elsewhere, in *Weir* and *Ure*.

§ The various forms and meanings of this word are thus given in Charnock's Local "Etymology," p. 296.

Saxon:	{	Anglo-Saxon, <i>wic</i> , <i>wye</i> ,	} a village, dwelling-place, habitation, street, monastery, convent, castle, camp, station.
	{	Frieslandic, <i>wic</i> ,	
	{	Old German, <i>wick</i> , <i>wik</i> , <i>weich</i> ,	
Norse:	{	Danish <i>wyk</i> , <i>wig</i> ,	a ford.
	{	Swedish, <i>wik</i> ,	a cove, or creek.
	{	Icelandic, <i>wik</i> ,	a little bay.

|| Kemble's "*Saxons in England*," Vol. ii., p. 70, quoting *Cod. Dipl.* Nos. 67 and 68. The name *Saltwyeh* is a curious combination.

was of Saxon and not Danish origin, especially when it is remembered that the names of surrounding townships invariably indicate Saxon and not Danish occupation.

In "*Notes and Queries*" (1874, vol. ii.) will be found a series of articles on the derivation of this word. Among the many etymologies there adduced is the Low German word "wīck or wicca," from a Teutonic root "wih or wyc" found in every dialect, meaning *sacred, devoted*. Pennant speaks of the superstitious reverence for salt-springs amongst the Saxons; and thinks the old custom of *Blessing the Brine* as practised at Nantwich in the eighteenth century, may have originated in their sacred rites. Kemble, too, remarks (Saxons in England, vol. ii. p. 72) that "the pagan Germans considered the salt-springs holy; and waged wars of extermination for their possession; and it is not improbable that they may generally have belonged to the exclusive property of the priesthood; and upon the introduction of Christianity these rights would naturally pass into the hands of the King."

The rights of royalty and the severe laws against crime, as recorded in Domesday Book, (see next chapter) seem to favor the theory here advanced accounting for the origin of the name *Wich* as applied to all salt-towns. Though commonly called Nant'-wich, local pronunciation places the accent on the *second* syllable, which is also pronounced in two ways; Nant-wich', and Nant-wich'. Without deciding which of these is the correct pronunciation, it may here be observed that the Domesday Book gives to all the salt-towns, both in Cheshire and Worcestershire, the longer name of *wich* or *wiche*; and not the shorter form of *wic* or *wik* as in other place-names in the same record. Thus it would appear that it is not a modern affectation of speech to say Nant-wiché.

The name of the town is found spelled in various ways. Nantwich, in Cheshire, and Droitwich, in Worcestershire, are alike simply called *Wiche*, in the Domesday Survey; no doubt, by way of pre-eminence in their several districts, each county having its Middlewich and Northwich, &c. From the time of the Norman Conquest through the period embraced by the "Cheshire Records," the town is very frequently called in legal record *Wicus-Malbanus*, *Wich-Malbank*, or *Malbanewic*, a name given in honor of the Baronial family of Malbank. But it must not be supposed that the *people* called the town by those names; or that the present name, which is as old as the English language, was, after having been lost for several centuries, revived again in recent times. For occasionally even amongst documentary rolls, the ancient name occurs, e.g. in the Calendar of Fines No. 3. 13 Edw. I. [1284] &c., which is quoted on a subsequent page.

The final "e," which is often added, denotes the long vowel sound of "i," for which sometimes a "y" is substituted, thus:—*Nant-wyche*. The alteration of the first syllable to "*Nampt*," which appears to have taken place in the sixteenth century and to have become common in the two following centuries, can only be considered as a gross mis-spelling of the word.





## The Saxon and Norman Periods.



THE earliest account of Nantwich, relating to the laws, customs, and values of the salt-works in late Saxon times and after the Conquest, is contained in the Domesday Survey of 1086. That account, which is very full and interesting, is as follows: (translated)—\*

In King *Edward's* time there was a WICH in WARMUNDESTROU [Nantwich] hundred, in which there was a well for making salt, and

between the King and *Earl Edwin* there were 8 salt-houses, so divided that of all their issues and rents the King

had 2 parts and the Earl the third. But besides these, the Earl had one salt-house adjoining his manor of ACTON, which was his own. From this salt-house the Earl had sufficient salt for his house throughout the year. But if he sold any from thence, the King had twopence, and the Earl a third penny, for the toll.

In the same WICH many men from the country had salt-houses, of which this was the custom:—From our *Lord's Ascension* [Holy Thursday] to *Martinmas*, [Nov. 11th] any one having a salt-house might carry home salt for his own house. But if he sold any of it either there, or elsewhere in the county of CHESTER, he paid toll to the King and the Earl.

Whoever after *Martinmas* carried away salt from any salt-house except the Earl's, under his custom aforesaid, paid toll, whether the salt was his own or purchased.

These aforesaid 8 salt-houses of the King and the Earl, in every week that salt was boiled or they were used on a Friday, rendered 16 boillings of salt, of which 15 made a horse-load. From our *Lord's Ascension* to *Martinmas*, the salt-houses of the other men did not give these

Friday's boillings. But from *Martinmas*

to our *Lord's Ascension*, these boillings were given according to custom,

\* Taken from the "Domesday Book of Cheshire and Lancashire," extended and translated by William Beamont, Esq., of Orford Hall; pub. Chester, 1863, pp. 64-7.



as from the salt-houses of the King and the Earl.

All these salt-houses, both of the lord and other people, were surrounded on one part by a certain river, and on the other by a ditch.

Whosoever committed a forfeiture within these bounds might make amends, either by the payment of 2 shillings, or by 30 boilings of salt, except in the case of homicide, or of a theft, for which the thief was adjudged to die. These last, if done here, were dealt with as in the rest of the shire.

If out of the prescribed circuit of the salt-houses, any person within the county withheld the toll, and was convicted thereof, he brought it back and was fined 40 shillings, if a free man; or, if not free, 4 shillings.

But if he carried the toll into another shire, where it was demanded, the fine was the same.

In King *Edward's* time, this WICH with all pleas in the same hundred rendered 21 £ in farm. When *Earl Hugh* received it, except only one salt-house it was waste.

WILLIAM MALBEDENG now holds of the Earl the same WICH, with all the customs thereto belonging, and all the same hundred, which is rated at 40 shillings, of which 30 shillings are put on the land of the same WILLIAM, and 10 shillings on the land of the Bishop, and the lands of RICHARD and GILBERT which they have in the same hundred, and the WICH is let to farm at 10 £.

\* \* \* \* \*

From these two WICHES [Nantwich and Middlewich], whoever carried away bought salt in a wain, drawn by four oxen or more, paid 4<sup>d</sup>. for the toll; but if by two oxen, 2<sup>d</sup>. if the salt were 2 horse-loads.

A man from another hundred gave 2<sup>d</sup>. for a horse-load.

But a man of the same hundred gave only a half-penny for a horse-load.

Whoever loaded his wain so that the axle broke within a league of either WICH, gave 2 shillings to the King's or the Earl's officer, if he were overtaken within the league.

In like manner, he who loaded his horse, so as to break its back,

gave 2 shillings if overtaken within the league, but nothing if overtaken beyond it.

Whoever made two horse-loads of salt out of one was fined 40 shillings if the officer overtook him. If he was not found, nothing was to be exacted from any other [*than the actual offender.*] Men on foot from another hundred buying salt, paid 2<sup>d</sup>. for 8 men's loads.

Men of the same hundred paid 1<sup>d</sup>. for the same number of such loads."

From the above it appears that when Edward the Confessor ruled this land, Wich, or Nantwich, was the chief salt-town in Cheshire, and was farmed out at £21 per annum, the rent of Middlewich and Northwich being each £8 per annum.

The salt-houses, of which the total number is not given, were supplied with brine from "*a well,*" and were enclosed in an area that was defended on one side by a moat, and on the other by the Weaver.\* They were divided between the King, Earl Edwin,

\* "It was the only wich so defended, and the only one which Hugh Lupus did not retain as parcel of the demesne of the Earldom."—(Dr. Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. iii. 422 New Edit.) Also compare p. 4 note.

and certain thanes or freemen resident in the neighbourhood. There was a court where justice was administered; and the internal peace and prosperity of the town was regulated by special criminal laws and trade customs. Civil injuries and criminal offences were atoned for by the payment of pecuniary fines. A fixed sum of two shillings (an amount incidentally mentioned in the same record as the value of an ox) or thirty boilings of salt was demanded in restitution to the guild-brethren, for all crimes committed within the town, except those of *homicide* and *theft*; for the former of which, the murderer forfeited all his goods, and, being expelled from the town, became a lawless outcast: while for the latter, which was regarded the more heinous sin, the thief, who, in Chester and South Lancashire, might atone for his offence by a fine of forty shillings, was here to die. Elsewhere, e.g. in the Rhuddlan boroughs,\* offenders were fined twelve pence for all crimes, except homicide, theft, and heinfare (*i.e.* enticing away another's slave;) and, perhaps, the severer penalties in Nantwich may be accounted for by the superstitious idea alluded to by Pennant,† Kemble, and other writers, *viz.*: “*the peculiar sanctity of salt-springs.*”

The very heavy fines attached to the neglect of paying toll-dues, and especially that bye-law which states that the fine could *only* be recovered from the actual offender, who must first of all be caught, prove how very jealously the trade of the town must have been guarded by active and vigilant officers. It is noticeable in all ancient Town Charters granting privileges to burgesses in other parts of the county, such as exemption from tolls at markets and fairs, that exception is always made in the case of *toll of salt in the Wiches*. Such a privilege, indeed, could not be claimed by the freemen proprietors of salt-houses, nor even by the Earl himself, except for salt made only for their own consumption. Toll of salt belonged to the King and Earl, who had “*twopence*” and every “*third penny*” respectively; *i.e.* the salt-maker received two-fifths of the profits, the King two-fifths, and the Earl the remaining one-fifth. A privilege belonged to the inhabitants of *Warmundestrou*; *viz.*: the purchasing of salt at one fourth the price paid by people beyond the bounds of the hundred; and I am inclined to believe that the local customs of the salt-trade in Saxon times above-mentioned account for the ancient name of the Hundred—*Warmundestrou*—which according to Sir Peter Leycester was lost about the time of Edward III. The name is certainly of Saxon origin. “*War*” is the word “*ware*,” meaning ‘fixed price,’ or ‘equivalent value;’ a word still used in the northern dialects in the sense of *spending*, and also found in the common word *ware-house*. “*Mund*” literally meant ‘the hand,’ or ‘holding out the hand to;’ and then, secondarily, a token of protection.‡ “*Strou*” or “*strow*” signifies ‘a district.’ Thus, according to this derivation, *Warmundestrou* would be the *district of protected prices* in the salt-trade.

Mr. Beaumont thinks the custom of rendering Friday's boilings to have been of the nature of a tithe to the Church; but, if so, it does not appear clear why the freemen should have been exempted from payment for six months of the year, while the tenants of the King and Earl were required to give sixteen boilings of salt every week. Remembering that Domesday makes no mention of a church in Nantwich, this ‘custom’ seems

\* Domesday Book, page 73.

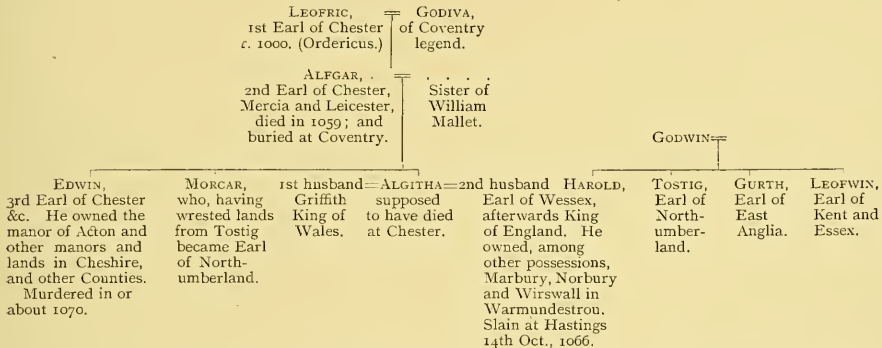
† “*Tour from Chester to London*,” page 30, Edit. 1782.

‡ The same root occurs in four other Cheshire names in Domesday Book; *viz.*: *Chelmundestune* (Cholmondeston), *Cepmundwiche* (near Peover), *Calmundelei* (Cholmondeley), and *Wimundisham* (Wincham)

rather to have been gathered as a rent or perquisite by the officer of the King and Earl, than as tithes by the parish priest.

The two Earls were *Edwin*, the third and last of the Saxon Earls of Chester, and *Hugh Lupus*, the first Norman Earl of the Palatinate: and as Nantwich suffered in the struggles that brought about that change, it will be necessary to say something about that crisis of English history.

On the death of Edward the Confessor, the strength of Saxon England was sapped by the feuds and plots of two rival families—the sons of Godwin and the house of Alfgar—given in the following pedigree:—



While these claimants for the crown were contending for the supremacy, William, Count of Normandy, invaded England, and, after the battle of Hastings, was first elected King by the populace of London, and then crowned by Stigand, the Archbishop, at Westminster, Christmas 1066. After this, Edwin and Morcar supported the claims of Edgar Atheling, but the King's march through central England reduced both Earls to submission, and peace was made with the Conqueror at Berkhamstead. Sir Peter Leycester records, on the authority of Ordericus, that Earl Edwin, "fearing to be imprisoned, conveyed himself secretly from the court of William the Conqueror, and rebelled against him: and unable to withstand, he intended to have gone to Malcolm then King of Scotland; but being betrayed by his own men, was slain by the way."\* Another account given by Webb, who cites Hoveden, says, "In 1067 the Conqueror sailing into Normandy, carried this Earl and other nobles with him over the sea, not daring to trust such dangerous friends in a late acquired dominion. In 1071 the King desirous to put them in closer custody, which being perceived, they secretly stole from court; and among the rest Earl Edwin made his way to Scotland, but was slain by his own companions in his journey thitherwards."†

The people of the north, however, only sullenly acquiesced in the change of dynasty, waiting a convenient time for revolt. An opportunity was afforded in 1069, when Sweyn, King of Denmark, with mercenaries from northern Europe, came to contest the crown.

\* Ormerod's Cheshire (New Edit.) Vol. I. p. 9.

† Ormerod's Cheshire (New Edit.) Vol. I. p. 166.

His fleet arrived in the Humber; York was besieged, and the Norman garrison there, to the number of 3000, massacred. The same year "Anno Christi 1069 the Cheshire men and the Welsh besieged Shrewsbury."\* King William received the news of invasion, massacre, and rebellion, while hunting in Dean Forest, and in an outburst of wrath, swore he would be avenged. The Danish fleet was bribed to withdraw. The King, "stark as death to those who crossed him," wasted the north country as he went with fire and sword, as far as the Tees, till his hand was "as winter on the field." An old writer says:—†

"William turned ageyn and held that he had suorn  
Alle mad he wasteyn, pastur, medow, and korn,  
And slough bothe fader and sonne, women lete thei gon,  
Hors and hondes thei etc; oneth is skaped non."

From the frequent mention of the term "waste" in the Domesday account of Cheshire, it would appear that the devastation in this county was scarcely less cruel and complete than in Yorkshire. In this terrible march, an opposing force made ineffectual resistance at Nantwich; for according to a deposition taken at Wych-Malbank, 1st October, 1386, at an inquiry in the Scópe and Grosvenor Suit of Arms, it was stated that "a Saxon thane, named Hame was killed at the battle of Nampwich."‡ The town suffered almost total destruction; or, to repeat the forcible words of Domesday, "*When Earl Hugh received it [Wich,] except one salt-house, it was WASTE.*"

The King's victorious march through Cheshire resulted in the abolition of the Mercian Earldom, and the establishment of a new Earldom of Chester. Raised to a Palatine county, Cheshire became *de facto* a Kingdom in itself, having its own court and parliament of temporal and spiritual barons, courts of justice, legal and military officers, &c. The whole county and part of North Wales was granted by the King§ to Hugh Lupus, who held his earldom by the possession of the sword of St. Edward, called *Curtein*, just as the King held the country by his Crown. Hugh Lupus in like manner granted the lands of the Saxon thanes who had either been slain or ejected, to certain Norman soldiers, whom he created Barons; the Bishop's lands only being excepted in the general confiscation. In this distribution of lands William Malbedeng or Malbank, under the title of Baron of Wich-Malbank, received "*Wich [Nantwich] with all the customs thereto belonging,*"—its salt-works, court, &c.,—"and all the hundred" of Warmundestrou, except *Wimeberie* [Wybunbury] which belonged to the Bishop: "*Aldelime*" [Audlem] and "*Cren*" [Crewe,] which were granted to Richard de Vernon Baron of Shipbrook; "*Blachenhale*" [Blakenhall,] granted to Gilbert Venator, Baron of Kinderton; and "*Eleaciev*" [Alsager] which Hugh Lupus retained as parcel of the demesne of the Earldom. Warmundestrou was *taxed*

\* Ordericus.

† Peter Langtoft, by Robert of Brunne, Hearne's Edit.

‡ Ormerod's Cheshire (New Edit.) Vol. III. p. 144.

§ Cheshire was granted in the first instance to Gherbod, a noble Fleming, the son of Matilda dau. of Count of Flanders, who on the death of her husband married William the Conqueror. Gherbod, however, was obliged to return to his native land to defend his possessions there; and, being imprisoned, had to surrender his newly acquired honors in England."

(probably for the payment of the *mise* on the accession of every new Earl,) in the following fixed sums:—

The lands of William Malbedeng,	...	...	30 shillings.
The lands of the Bishop; Richard; and Gilbert	...	...	10 do.
Total	...	...	<u>40 shillings.</u>

In 1086 the rental of Nantwich amounted to £10; so that the town was again rising in importance and wealth.

There is no mention in Domesday of a church in Warmundestrou; but it is believed that one existed at *Acton*, where two priests occur as farmers of land; another at *Wybunbury* and another at *Barthomley*, each having one priest. If these were all the churches in the hundred, the religious advantages in this district must have been similar to what now prevails in the 'far west' of America, or thinly peopled parts of Australia. Nantwich was included in Acton parish, and Dr. Ormerod supposes one of the Acton priests officiated here and in the more distant parts of the curé. After the year 1000 there was great lethargy through all Christendom arising from the belief that the Millenium had passed, and the world was soon to come to an end; but towards the end of the eleventh century, a religious revival broke out, chiefly through the zealous preaching of Cistercian monks, who were welcomed to England by high and low. Hence the Norman Barons of Wich-Malbank, impressed with the new ideas of these reformers, made grants of land, salt-houses, &c., for the erection and maintenance of Abbeys and Convents for this order, thus providing better religious teaching in one of the "dark places of the earth;" and very probably William Malbedeng built the first *Chapel* of Nantwich, which is mentioned in his son's Charter, dated c. 1130.

The following townships in the immediate neighbourhood,—Austerson, Baddington, Coole-pilate, Henhull, Alvaston, Leighton and Woolstanwood,—do not occur in Domesday; being perhaps included in the vill of Acton, which was by far the greatest and most important manor in the hundred; containing as it did, the "*lord's hall*" with its court, (possibly on or near the site of Dorfold Hall;) a "*corn-mill*;" "*thirty-three carucates of land*" out of a total of 110 for the whole hundred, or *three-tenths* of all the arable land in Warmundestrou; a "*wood*," nine miles long and a mile and a half broad, in which there was an "*aery of hawks*," preserved, no doubt, for falconry.

William Malbedeng was grantee of other lands in the Palatinate; and a complete list of the dependencies of his Barony, with their values in 1086, as given in Domesday Book, is here appended.

In DUDESTAN [BROXTON] HUNDRED.				s. d.	
Tatenale [Tattenhall]	. . . . .	26	0	Landechene [Landican]	. . . . . 40 0
Colborne [Golborne Belleau]	. . . . .	6	0	Optone [Upton (Overchurch)]	. . . . . 20 0
In RISETON [EDDISBURY] HUNDRED.					
Ulvre [Over (Borough)]	. . . . .	10	0	Tuigvelle [Thingwall]	. . . . . 5 0
In WILAVESTON [WIRRAL] HUNDRED.					
Wivrevene [Wervin]	. . . . .	4	0	Chenoterie [Knocorum]	. . . . . 10 0
Pol [Poole (Over)]	. . . . .	4	0	In MILDESTVIC [NORTHWICH] HUNDRED.	
Sahale [Saughall (little)] with a fishery	. . . . .	45	0	Eteshale [Hassall]	. . . . . 10 0
				Mainessele [Minshull Vernon]	. . . . . 4 0
				Maneshale [Church Minshull]	. . . . . 8 0
				Sprostune [Sproston]	. . . . . 4 0

IN WARMUNDESTROU [NANTWICH] HUNDRED.		s. d.	
Actune [Acton] . . . . .	6 0	Titesle [Titley] . . . . .	5 0
Estune [Hurleston?] . . . . .	5 0	Steples [Stapeley] . . . . .	6 0
Wilavestone [Willaston] . . . . .	2 0	Wistetestune [Wistaston] . . . . .	10 0
Warenerberie [Wrenbury] . . . . .	5 0	Brunhala [Broomhall] . . . . .	2 0
Cerletune [Chorlton] . . . . .	2 0	Pol [Poole by Nantwich] . . . . .	8 0
Mereberie [Marbury] } . . . . .	10 0	Tereth [Frith in Wrenbury?] . . . . .	5 0
Norberie [Norbury] } . . . . .		Cerlere [Chorley by Nantwich] . . . . .	3 0
Wireswelle [Wirswall] } . . . . .	10 0	Bedelei [Baddiley] . . . . .	5 0
Walcretune [Walgherton] . . . . .		5 0	Stanleu [Stanley in Weston] . . . . .
Santune [Shavington] . . . . .	3 0	Copehale [Church Coppenhall] . . . . .	12 0
Burtune [Buerton] } . . . . .	10 0	Pol [Poole by Nantwich] . . . . .	3 0
Haretone [Hatherton] } . . . . .		Estone [Aston in Mondrem] . . . . .	3 0
Wistanestune [Wistanston] . . . . .	10 0	Chelmundestone [Cholmondeston] . . . . .	6 0
Berchesford [Basford] . . . . .	5 0	Wich [Nantwich] . . . . .	£10 0 0
Berdeltune [Bartherton] . . . . .	3 0	IN ANTICROS HUNDRED [FLINTSHIRE.]	
Werelestune [Worleston] . . . . .	8 0	Claitone* [Clayton] . . . . .	10 0
Bertemeleu [Barthomley] . . . . .	20 0	Wepre* [Wepre] . . . . .	10 0
Essetune [Edleston?] . . . . .	10 0	Total value . . . . .	
Wivelesde [Dodcot-cum-Wilkesley] . . . . .	5 0	£29 15 0	

It cannot be positively stated whether the Malbank family resided in the town, or at the "lord's hall" in Acton. Mr. Platt† speaks of the "ancient grandeur of the castle erected at Nantwich by William Malbank, the first Baron;" and says it was "square, surmounted at each angle with turrets. The outer walls were defended by a moat of considerable breadth, passable only by a draw-bridge." This account, however, is purely fictitious, and therefore of no historical importance. The earliest mention of Nantwich Castle occurs in an *Inquisition*, dated 1288 (see next chapter,) or more than two hundred years after William Malbank became first Baron of Wich-Malbank. Occasionally in the Cheshire records during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Castle is mentioned, (see page 6,) but nothing further is known of it, beyond the fact that its site is preserved in the name of Castle Street.

\* Probably the reward for his services in the Welsh campaign that resulted in the addition of Flintshire and part of Denbigh to the Earldom of Chester.

† History of Nantwich, 1818, p. 73.





## The Norman Barons.

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As has been stated, Nantwich was created the head of a Barony about the year 1070. Three Barons in succession, members of the Norman family of Malbank, were the sole proprietors of lands, woods, salt-houses, &c., here, and held their possessions *in capite* (i.e. directly) from the Earl of Chester.

### WILLIAM MALBEDENG OR MALBANK, FIRST BARON OF WICH-MALBANK.

All that is now known of this Baron is that he was a benefactor to certain Religious houses. In Nantwich he appears to have founded the Hospital of St. Nicholas "in the eighteenth year of William the Conqueror"\* [1083-4]; and it is highly probable that he built the Chapel (or Church) of Nantwich, which his son afterwards gave to Combermere Abbey. He is said to have contributed to the building of the Nave of Westminster Abbey, and to have had his arms emblazoned there.† In or about 1093, and most likely towards the close of his life, he granted the following possessions to the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester.

"Witeby, ("Witchbiam") the third of Wepre, the Church and tithes of Tattenhall, *one salt work in Wich and two bovates of land*, and the tithes of Salghall ("Salchale") and Claitone ("Claitona") and Yroduc ("Yraduc.")

These being witnesses, the Countess of Chester, Richard Banaster, Hugh son of Osborn, Bigod le Loges, Richard Pincerna"‡ [the butler] &c.

Neither the date of his death nor the place of burial, is recorded; but he left a widow, Adelia, who was surviving about 1130, and a son, Hugh, who succeeded him.

\* Cheshire Recognizance Rolls, 8 & 9 Hen. IV.

† Dr. Ormerod's "Cheshire," old Edition, vol. III, p. 441. The arms assigned to this Baron were, "Quarterly, Or and Gules, a bendlet Sable;" and were afterwards used as the Arms of the town.

‡ From a Confirmation Charter of Chester Abbey cited by Sir Peter Leycester, in Latin, in Dr. Ormerod's "Cheshire," new Edit. vol. I. p. 13.

HUGH MALBANK,  
SECOND BARON OF WICH-MALBANK.

Hugh Malbank, son of William and Adelia, occurs as a witness to Earl Richard's Confirmation Charter to Chester Abbey in 1109, at which time his father was most likely dead; and, again as witness to Earl Randle's Charter to the same Abbey before the year 1128. He is, however, chiefly remarkable as the founder of COMBERMERE ABBEY, at a time when monachism was fairly established in England; and his Charter is not only a curious instance of such a deed, commencing, as it does, with an avowal of the donor's religious faith, and concluding with the Bishop's anathema, supposed to render the deed sacred and inviolate; but is particularly interesting from being the earliest deed relating to the town. The original Charter, undated, as was usual in deeds prior to 1300, does not exist; but a printed copy, in Latin, taken from the Cotton MSS. Faustina B. viii. 124., will be found in Dugdale's "Monasticon" (vol. v. p. 323, folio Edit. 1830.) The following translation is given in Webb's "*Itinerary of Nantwich Hundred*," (c. 1621.)

FOUNDATION CHARTER OF COMBERMERE ABBEY.

"In the name of the holy and inseparable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, I, Hugh Malbank, of one part, applauding the promise of the Lord, by which he saith to his elect, "what you have done to these little ones, you have done to me; enter ye into the kingdom of heaven prepared for you from the beginning of the world;" on the other side fearing the threatening whereby he says to the wicked, "what ye have not done to one of my little ones, ye have not done to me, go ye into everlasting fire,"—Therefore, I, oftentimes revolving in my mind this godly precept, in which he saith, "Make unto you friends of the Mammon of iniquity that they may inherit the holy tabernacle," I oftentimes revolving with myself these other precepts of our Saviour; and considering the change of all temporal things, the misery, and the shortness of human life, I am wholly resolved to change all worldly things, and the vanities of this age, for the love of God, and to exchange shadows for realities; and to those who have given themselves wholly to the divine service, to them I have bestowed this donation.

In the beginning, I give and grant to my Maker, with a sincere heart, by the counsel and consent of my lord *Ranulph*, Earl of Chester, and lord *Roger* [de Clinton] Bishop of Chester, holiest of men, and *William* my son and heir, for the health of me and my wife *Petronilla* and my *children* and all my friends, for the redemption of our souls, I say I give humbly and devoutly to the Lord God, omnipotent, the place and site which is called *Combermere*, to the founding and erecting of a certain abbey of the monks of Saint Benedict, in honour of the most blessed and most glorious Virgin Mary, and the mother of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and St. Michael the Archangel, the wood, the plain, the waters, the water-courses, the fishings, the meadows, the pastures, the feedings, with all other their appurtenances, and with all other their commodities, and all things which are there, or may be made there, as well under the earth as above, for ever; to wit, between these bounds:—\*

\* \* \* \* \*

"All these metes and bounds, as well on the said place of Combermere, as of the said manor of Wilksley ["Winclestone,"] I, *Hugh Malbank*, with my wife *Petronilla*, and *William* my son, and many others, have perambulated and compassed, and have freely given to the said abbey of Combermere,

\* The bounds, which are specified, need not be given here, as they refer to lands in Wilksley and the immediate neighbourhood, but it is worthy of remark that some of the names may still be identified.



and to the monks there serving God, and to their successors, all things being within the said metes and bounds, with all their appurtenances, without reserving anything temporal to me, my heirs or assigns, for ever; and let them make of the wood and plain whatsoever they please; and inclose, assart,\* and assess whensoever they please.

Also I give to the same monks common of pasture for all their cattle in all my woods and pastures of Cheshire, and besides that they may take wood to burn, and timber to build, as well without as within that abbey, at their pleasure, in all my woods as freely as I to my own use, except my forest of Couhull. [Coole.]

And I also grant unto the same monks, the *fourth part of the town of Wich, and the tithe of my salt, and of the salt-pits that are mine, and (of those) that belong to others, and of my money, and the salt of the Blessed Virgin, and salt on Friday, and salt for the abbot's table* as freely as I have at my board. And let them have their Court distinct from their townsmen, or from their tenants, and assize of bread and ale, and of all kinds of measures, and toll, and blodwit, and amerciaments, and all manner of fines of all sorts of trespasses of all their tenants and men, as freely as I have to my own proper use.

Likewise I grant unto the same monks, and to all *burgesses or tenants of the same town, common of pasture in all woods and pastures, meadows, moors* ["moris,"] *marshes, heaths* ["brueries,"] *and fields belonging to the said town, and through all "Ranesmore"* [Ravensmoor] *and the wood of Creche, [in Alvaston,] without molestation of any.* And if it happen that any of their burgesses, tenants or men, be impleaded in my Court for any trespass, I will and grant for me and my heirs or my assigns that my aforesaid monks have the amerciaments and fines without molestation or contradiction of me or of my heirs or assigns whatsoever.

I give also to the same monks a *plough land* ["unam carucam"] in the town of Acton, with the *church of the same town, and the chapel* ["capellam"] *of Wike Malb . . ."* [Wich Malbank] *with all their appurtenances.*

I grant likewise to the same monks and their successors free passage through all my lands everywhere, with free ingress and egress, to take whatever they want, as often and whenever they please. And let them have all and singular the premises, in free, pure, and perpetual alms, as freely and absolutely from all secular exaction and worldly service, with as ample freedom and peace as any alms may be enjoyed, and we may never challenge or exact anything but only spiritual benefit and prayer.

Therefore, of my good will, I grant that my lord Ranulph, Earl of Chester, be principal founder and defender of the said Abbey and of the monks there serving God, and that his heirs after him share in all good things, which may be there, for ever.

The witnesses of this establishment and grant are these:—*My lord Ranulph, Earl of Chester,† Roger, Bishop of Chester,† Aldelia, my mother, Petronilla my wife, William my son, William Abbot of Chester, Robert a chaplain, William son of Ralph, Archibald,* and many others who both saw and heard.

And I, Roger, Bishop of Chester, at the pious request of lord [domini] Hugh Malbank, and other nobles, in perpetual memory hereof, and that his present gift and grant may for ever stand in force, in presence of Ranulph, Earl of Chester, and other nobles at Chester, have affixed thereto the seal of my bishopric.

And therefore, if any shall any ways violate, diminish, or wilfully hinder this alms, gift, and grant, let him have the curse of God, and the blessed Virgin, and saint Michael the archangel, to whom in special manner all these things are granted, together with my own [curse,] unless he be repentant of his misdeed. Be it so! Be it so! Amen."

\* "Assart;" i.e. to bring forest land into cultivation by grubbing up the roots, &c.

† Either Ranulph I, Earl of Chester from 1120 to 1128, or Ranulph II, Earl of Chester from 1128 to 1153. Roger de Clinton was Bishop of Chester from 1119 to 1149.

These dates approximately fix the date of Hugh Malbank's Charter; which is generally said to be c. 1130.

The witnesses to this charter prove it to have been a very important deed. Concerning the order of these witnesses, Dr. Ormerod remarks, "the Earl, as sovereign Prince, signs before the Diocesan, and the family of the donor have precedence of the other clergy." The gorgeous pageantry, consisting of the Baron, his lady, his heir, his retainers, and many local gentry, perambulating the bounds of the future lands of the Monastery, would be a memorable event and an imposing spectacle to the Wich men of that age. The "*forest of Couhull*,"\* excepted in this grant of lands and privileges, was reserved, according to Norman fashion, for the chase. It would be at that time, a district not necessarily planted all over with trees, but "afforested," i.e. subject to forest law. In later times it became an extensive wood, furnishing the "wich-wood" for the salt-works. The mention of the "*Chapel of Wich-Malbank*," and the tithes belonging thereto particularly defined as "*salt of the Blessed Virgin*," &c. point to the dedication of the first church in the town, and the express terms of the charter prove it to have become, henceforth, a dependency of the Abbey. Fosbroke, speaking of such churches and chapels, says, "If the benefice was given to the table of the monks, and not so appropriated in the common form, but granted by way of union in full right, it was served by a *temporary curate* belonging to their own house, and sent out as occasion required."† This liberty of not appointing a perpetual vicar accounts for the absence in the Lichfield Registers of recorded institutions of clergymen to Nantwich Church in pre-Reformation times.

## The Abbot's Fee.

By the above Charter, the lands therein mentioned, including "*the fourth part of the town of Wich*," became for ever severed from the Barony of Wich-Malbank, and were afterwards known as the ABBOT'S FEE, within the limits of which, the Abbot claimed all rents and services, the tenants being obliged to plead in his courts, whilst with him alone rested the power of amerciamient or punishment. In the two great Ecclesiastical Valuations, the former taken 160 years after the founding of Combermere Abbey, and the latter above 400 years after, the revenues of the Abbot's Fee in Nantwich are given as follows:—

I. ECCLESIASTICAL TAXATION OF POPE NICHOLAS IV. (c. 1291)‡

(Translation):—"Item. Combermere Abbey has rents in Wych Mauban, per ann. £5 os. od."

II. VALOR ECCLESIASTICUS 26 HEN. VIII. [1535.]

"Rents and Profits in Wich Malbank, per ann. £14 14s. 5d."

This fee, with its court attached, passed after the suppression of Combermere Abbey, to the Wilbrahams of Woodhey, but the exact date of the transfer has not occurred. The following record of this court-leet is from an original paper *pencs me*:—

[Translated.] "*Abbot's Fee*. On the petition of the Bailiff of the same, concerning the goods and chattels of *Christopher Smith* to be made to forfeit 39s. 11½d. which *John Bromley* in this Court recovers against him in a plea of transgression &c. By this court he is fined 1s. 6d. &c. at Wich Malbank, the 25th day of October, Ano. Dni. 1649. By *Joseph Harefinch* seneschal of the same."

\* Probably "*Coole Pilate*," a township on the south of Nantwich.

† "*British Monachism*," p. 269. T. D. Fosbroke, London, 1843.

‡ Pope Nicholas IV granted the tenths of all ecclesiastical benefices to the King for six years towards defraying the expenses of an expedition to the Holy Land; and that the full value might be collected, a new taxation by the King's precept was begun in 1288 and finished in 1291 by the Bishop of Lincoln (Oliver Sutton) and the Bishop of Winchester (John de Pontiera.)

In 1666, according to *Harl. MSS.* 2010. f. 21., the Abbot's Fee in Nantwich belonged to Sir Thos. Wilbraham, Bart., of Woodhey; and on another page of the same vol. occurs the following—

“LIST OF FREEHOLDERS IN THE ABBOTS FEE IN NAMPTWICH.  
BELONGING TO SIR THO: WILBRAM. 1674.”

PHILIP CHETWOOD of O[a]kley.	JO: TENCH, mercer.
ROGR WILBRAM of Townsend.	RICH: GILL.
THOMAS MAISTERSON.	WILL: CAPPER, vint[ne]r.
THO: WIXSTED.	JO: PRATCHETT JUN <sup>r</sup> .
THO: SEGRAVE.	ROGR: VAUGHAN.
JO: BRERETON, pson. [parson]	GABRILL HODGSON.
RICH: WRIGHT of the Stone in namptwch.	ROB: TYMMIS.
ROBT: WRIGHT.	

After the death of Sir Thomas Wilbraham, in 1692, these lands with other Cheshire estates passed in marriage with Grace Wilbraham, his daughter, to Lionel Talmash [Tollemache] second Earl of Dysart; and so descended to John Tollemache, Esq. in 1837, who was created Lord Tollemache of Helmingham, co. Suffolk, in 1876, and who is now proprietor of what remains of these Abbey lands in the town, which appear to have been situated on the north and east sides of the church. The court, which was held in 1819, as stated by Dr. Ormerod on the information of Henry Tomkinson, Esq., as agent of Lord Dysart, has long since been discontinued, but the name *Monk's Lane* has survived through the vicissitudes of centuries.

WILLIAM MALBANK,  
THIRD BARON OF WICH-MALBANK.

William Malbank, son and heir of Hugh Malbank and Petronilla, succeeded his father, and was the last of the Norman Barons of Wich-Malbank in the male line. In the additional MSS. Brit. Mus. No. 6032, p. 94, is a charter of this Baron, granting a salt-pit [i.e. a wich-house] in Wich-Malbank to the Monastery of Wenlock, co. Salop, witnessed by Robert, Abbot of Chester, &c., who was probably *Robert Fitz-Nigel*, fourth Abbot of St. Werburgh, Chester, from 1157 to 1174. According to the *Quo Warranto* 15 Hen. VII [1500,] contained in *Harl. MSS.* 2115 f. 168, Wenlock Abbey still claimed “a salt-work of 8 leads, in Nantwich, free from all tolls and customs;” but no mention of it is made in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535.

William Malbank confirmed his father's charter to Combermere Abbey, adding other donations and privileges thereto. This confirmation charter is printed in Dr. Ormerod's “Cheshire,” (iii. p. 418 New Edit.) from *Harl. MSS.* 3868. 12. of which the following is a translation:—

“In the name of the Holy Trinity, I, William Maubanc, being not unmindful of the mercies of God, . . . concede and confirm to my maker, the Lord God Almighty, to Saint Mary, and Saint Michael the Archangel, to all saints and to the monks of Combermere, in smaller alms and whatever my father gave and conceded to them. I grant and confirm freely, peaceably, and honorably, and from all secular exaction, . . . the site of the Abbey and Church of Combermere; also four carucates of land in *Wilkesle* [Wilkesley] and whatever belongs to that manor; and all fields, pastures, water-courses, roads and foot-paths [“semitis”] in the plain and wood of the said Combermere; and what they shall

make in wood and plain, and whatever they shall demand, enclose, or assess, let them have all which may be there, or shall be made there, for ever, besides all deer and boars. I also give and grant fully to them and their successors common of pasture in all my woods and pastures at Stone with their appurtenances, except in my forest of "*Chouhyl*" [Coole]: Also, (I give) title of my salt and of my manor of Wych, and a tenth of the corrody\* of my house. Moreover, I give and grant to the foresaid monks the patronage of the Churches of *Aton*, *Sandon*, *Alstanfeld* with a *chapel*: also, a land in the manor of *Dycheley*; and the mill of *Checkyleye* with all the fishings, and all their appurtenances in free, pure, and perpetual alms.

The witnesses to these donations and grants are these:—*Arch[ibald] son of William, William, the chaplain, son of . . . . . Robert le Praers, Reginald son of Arch[ibald] of Malbank, Adam de Audcleye, William de Arcei, Adam Wachuset, Robert son of William, Hugh de Draycote, Roger de Henhull, William son of Hunfredi, Richard de Avesci, Clemens, clerk, and many others.*"

No other mention of William Malbank has occurred.† He appears to have lived in the reigns of Stephen and Henry II; and no doubt served in the civil war on the side of the Empress Maud, whose cause Earl Randle II had espoused. The Earl proved a formidable enemy to the King at Lincoln on Candlemas day [Feb. 2nd.] 1141; but subsequently suffered imprisonment; and during his long absence from the Earldom, the "whole county was laid waste" by the Welsh. Successful resistance to this invasion was made at Nantwich, according to a line in *Harl. MSS.* 2155 p. 59, inserted by Dugdale from a MS. Chronicle in Bibl. Bodl. K. 84, as follows—"sed apud Wycum Malbanum intercepti sunt." In Lysons' "Cheshire," two dates are given for this battle, viz.: 1146, and about 1150; and the same authors state on the authority of Dugdale's "*Monasticon*," that "in 1133 the town [of Nantwich] was laid waste by the Welsh."‡ Perhaps these dates all refer to the same event, which may have happened about the same time that the city of Chester was burnt, namely, 11th Kal. Junii [21 June] 1140. (Chronicle of St. Werburgh.)§

William Malbank married Andilicia; and died probably in the early part of the reign of Henry II, leaving three daughters and coheiresses, *Philippa, Elcanor, and Auda*, between whom the Barony of Wich-Malbank was divided, as proved by an *Inquisition*, taken at Chester on Tuesday next after the feast of the Ascension [May 15,] in the 16 Edw. I. [1288] before Reginald Gray, then Justice of Chester,|| in time of the war in Wales, in order to show what services were due to the King at that time. A copy of this *Inquisition* in Latin is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 2115 f. 135, of which the following is a translation, reciting that:—

"Dns. [Lord] William Malbank formerly held the whole Barony of Wich-Malbank; and because he died without male heirs, the Barony was divided amongst [three] daughters in the following manner.

The first daughter [Philippa] had a *third part of Wich-Malbank with the Castle of the same*, excepting those lands which the same William gave before to the Abbey of Combermere; a *third part* of the

\* A sum of money or amount of provisions granted for the maintenance of one of the Abbot's servants or dependants; perhaps for the officiating priest for the time being at the chapel of Nantwich.

† In Dodsworth MSS. vol. xxxi. f. 148. (Bodl. Lib.) is an abstract of an undated Charter, in which, *William Malbank* gives a salt-house in Wich-Malbank to *Robert le Praers*. These being witnesses, "Nicholas son of William, Reginald son of Herchenbald his steward ["dapifero,"] Henry de Crewe, Roger son of Odenot [Woodnoth,] Adam son of Liulph of Aldithley, Alured of Cambray, Roger his son, Adam Wachuset, Peter Morbur' [y], Richard le Praers." The impression upon the seal is a Knight on horseback.

‡ Lysons' "Cheshire," pp. 304 and 699.

§ Ormerod's "Cheshire," vol. I. pp. 147 and 230. New Edit.

|| Reginald de Grey was Justice of Chester from 1282 to 1300.

manors of *Newhall, Aston-juxta-Hurleston, Acton* and *Haslington* in demesne; a third part of *Cowell* [Coole] and *Woolstanwood*: She had also the homage and services of the following lordships and vills, namely, *Bartumleghe, Cruc, Leghton, Aston in Mondrem, Cholmeston, Stoke, Lan[di]can*: two parts of *Tranmoll, Buyrton, Aluaston, Church Mynshull, Wistaston, Rope, Willaston, Wytpull*, [White Poole,] *Norbury, Wirswall, Row Shotwick and Thingwall*.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The second daughter [Eleanor] had a *third part of Wich-Malbank*, excepting the lands conceded to the Abbey of Combermere; a third part of *Cowell* [Coole] and *Woolstanwoode*; and two parts of the manors of *Newhall, Aston-juxta-Mondrem*, and *Hurleston* and *Acton* in demesne: Also, she had the homage and services of the lordships and vills undermentioned, namely, of *Becheton, Hassal, Worlaston, Wrenbury, Chorle, Backford, Monks-Coppenhall, Over-Bebbington*; two parts of *Barneston, Badington, Broomhall, Soude, Alstanton, Bartherton, Chorlton, Tverton*; and a moiety of *Wordhull*, the same, with all services are now [1288] in the hands of James Audlegh: And it is known that Hatherton is in the hundred of Wich-Malbank, but in which division of the Barony it has passed is not known. Also, *Blakenhall, Chatkeley, Dudington, Briddesmere, Hunsterton* and *Lee*, are not in this Barony, but of the Barony of Shipbrook and Kinderton.”

“The third daughter [Auda] had a *third part of Wich-Malbank*, excepting the lands conceded to the Abbey of Combermere; a third part of *Cowell* [Coole] and *Woolstanwood*; one part of the manors of *Hurleston* and *Acton*: and two parts of *Haslington* in demesne: she had also the homage and services of the lordships and vills of *Audlim, Hankelowe, Titenlegh, Marbury, Staplegh, Badelegh, Fadlegh, Burlond, Edlaston, Barrettspoule, Weston, Wydinbury, Hough, Saunton* [Shavington,] *Walkerton, Church-Copenhall, Henhull, Alsager*; a third part of *Cherlton* and *Wightreson* [Wistason] and *Pensby*.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mem<sup>d</sup>: That the aforesaid Barony is held of our lord the King [Edw. I.] as Earl of Chester, in capite.”

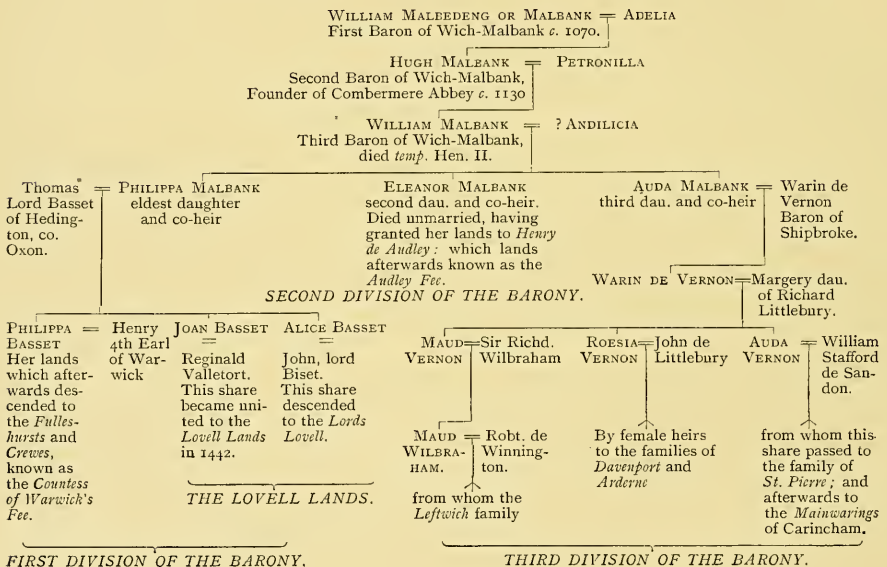
Whilst the Earldom of Chester has descended in regular succession for more than eight centuries, first through a period of about 180 years by seven successive local Earls, and since the year 1254 without interruption by Royal Earls down to the present time; H.R.H. Albert Edward Prince of Wales now holding the dignity which is still inalienable and indivisible; the descent of the Cheshire Baronies, on the contrary, have had a more chequered and intricate history; and none of them more so than the Barony of Wich-Malbank. After the death of the second William Malbank, the Barony fell into abeyance between three coparceners already mentioned, and throughout the later history, instead of a quiet succession from father to son, it exhibits a constant dependence on the rights of female inheritance; and in this manner the town of Wich-Malbank and the lands of the Hundred became vested in various families. In tracing the descent of the Manor, and the divided interests, rights, customs, &c. claimed, we shall find parts of the Manor were sometimes transferred in an arbitrary manner, and other parts were at times confiscated to the Crown and let to farm. The chief divisions were:—

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. The Abbot's Fee (already noticed.)           |                                  |
| 2. The Countess of Warwick's Fee ... ..         | } First Division of the Barony.  |
| 3. The Lovell Lands ... ..                      |                                  |
| 4. The Audley Fee ... ..                        | } Second Division of the Barony. |
| 5. Two Moieties, which in course of time became |                                  |
| much subdivided ... ..                          | } Third Division of the Barony.  |

In modern times these lands and manorial rights have been held as follows:—The *Abbot's Fee*, by the *Wilbrahams* of Woodhey; the *Countess of Warwick's Fee* by the *Creves* of Crewe Hall; and the greater part of the remaining lands by the *Cholmondeleys* of Cholmondeley, some of whom have been styled BARONS OF NANTWICH.

The subjoined pedigree exhibits at one view the early descent of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, which will be more fully detailed in the following chapter.

## The Malbank Family.





FIRST DIVISION OF THE BARONY.

I. The Countess of Warwick's Fee.



PHILIPPA, eldest daughter and co-heir of William the last Norman Baron of Wich Malbank, married THOMAS, LORD BASSET, of Hedington, co. Oxon, who obtained the wardship\* and marriage† of Henry de Newburgh, son and heir of Walleran, fourth Earl of Warwick who had died in 1205. When the young Earl came of age in 1212, he was certified to hold no less than 107 Knights' fees of the King *in capite*. To this princely Earl, Lord Basset gave his daughter *Philippa Basset* in marriage; and by this alliance the Castle‡ of Wich-Malbank and certain lands in Nantwich Hundred, being one third of her mother's share of the Barony already mentioned, became added to the Earl's already extensive possessions. Henry, Earl of Warwick, died 13 Hen. III. [1229], and on the death of his widow (the Countess Philippa) without issue, her share of the Barony, known afterwards as the *Countess of Warwick's Fee*, reverted to the Earl of Chester [Ranulph III], and appears to have remained merged in the Earldom until the 22 June 6 Edw. I [1278], when it passed by royal grant to RANDLE DE MERTON, who re-granted the same to SIR RANDLE PRAERS on the 25th August in the same year.§

The date of Sir Randle Praers' death is not known, but he was succeeded by his son *Richard Praers*.

\* "Wardship," i.e. the custody of the body and lands of an heir during his minority.

† "Marriage," i.e. the guardian had the power of finding a suitable match to his "ward," which, if refused, the "ward" was subject to certain penalties. Lord Basset, no doubt, paid a large sum for the wardship of so rich an heir as the Earl of Warwick.

‡ Inquisition 16 Edw. I. in *Harl. MSS.* 2115, f. 135.

§ *Harl. MSS.* 2115, f. 186.

RICHARD PRAERS obtained the farm of the sheriffdom of Flint, the pleas and perquisites of the Courts and fairs of the towns of Flint and Ewlowe, the forest of Ewlowe, the pasturage of Bokelegh and the sea coal there for £29 per ann.\* He appears to have died before 2nd Oct., 1335, when it was found he was £23 17s. 5½d. in arrears; and on 24th Dec. 1335 his son and heir, *Thomas*, paid his relief, having succeeded to his father's estates.†

THOMAS PRAERS appears to have lived at Barthomley; and, by licence from Edward the Black Prince, as Earl of Chester, dated 12th Nov. 1338, to have alienated, for the term of his life, the greater part of his lands, including the Countess of Warwick's Fee, to a neighbour, John Gryffyn of Bartherton, under the nominal tenure of one rose yearly, with remainder to the heirs of the said Thomas Praers.‡ No doubt he would be regarded as a very eccentric gentleman: for by this strange transaction Thomas Praers forfeited his property to the injury of his family and his own loss while he lived. On examination, however, he was found to be of sane mind, and capable of, managing his own affairs, as proved by the following Certificate from the Black Prince: (*translated*)—§

“Edward eldest son of the noble King of England and of France, Prince of Wales Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester to all those who shall see or hear these letters greeting: Forasmuch as we have been given to understand that *Thomas de Prayers* of Bertonlegh [Barthomley] in our County of Chester was a natural born fool and in his foolishness hath aliened and granted a part of his lands to the great damage of himself and ourselves wherefore we caused him to come before us to be examined and we caused him to be examined by the members of our council and others learned in the law, and upon such examination it was found that he is a man of sound memory and as such is sufficiently able to govern himself and his lands in a proper manner of which we are informed by those who have examined into it.

In witness whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Given under our privy Seal || at our manor of Kensyngton the xvj day of May in the 17th year of our most dear father King over England and the 5th of his reign over France.” [1344.]

By his wife Margaret, Thomas Praers had an only daughter and heiress *Elizabeth*, whose wardship and marriage he granted to Alan Cheyne [? of Willaston, nr. Nantwich] on 26 Sept. 1349. Probably on that day he died; as his *Inquisition post mortem*¶ was taken only four days after; of which the following is an abstract: (*translated*)—

“*Inquisition p. m.* taken before Sir Hugh de Hopewas Eschaetor of Chester at Wich-Malbank on Wednesday in the morrow of St. Michael [30 Sept.] 23 Edw. III. [1349]. The Jurors say on their oaths that *Thomas de Praers* of Bertumleigh died seised as of right and in his demesne as of fee of two parts of the manor of Bertumleigh with appurtenances and of the advowson of the Church of Bertumleigh, which same two parts are held of the Earl in capite; also one carucate of land which was worth 40 sh., and now is worth 13¼; also, two acres of meadow worth 2/- per ann. also, from rents of tenants who used to pay £16 per ann., but now only 100/- per ann.; also two parts of a water-mill formerly rented at 53¼, and now only at 13¼ which tenants are dead; also the manor of Crewe; they say the site of the manor is worth nothing beyond reprisal and support of the house; also in the same two carucates

\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ The original Certificate in Norman French is printed (with the contractions extended) in *Arch. Journal* 1857, vol. xiv. p. 349-350. I am indebted to Wm. Beamont, Esq., for the above translation.

|| A woodcut of the seal appended to the original document is given in the same vol. on p. 351.

¶ Pub. Record Office.



of land formerly worth £4 per ann., now only 26/8; also three acres of meadow valued at 3/- per ann., a water-mill formerly worth 40/- per ann., now only 10/-, pastures in three places formerly worth 40/- now worth 13/4.

Also, the vill of Landecan with the advowson of the Church at Wodechurch which vill was worth £8 per ann., and is now worth only 60/- in which the tenants are dead. Also, he died seised of two parts of the *Serjeancy of the fee of the Countess of Warwick* for which he paid into the Exchequer at Chester 8s. 11d. per ann.; and they used to be worth besides the said payment 11/4, and are now worth only 6/8. The said *Thomas* held all the said manors with appurtenances and advowsons aforesaid of the Earl of Chester in capite by the service of 2½ Knights fees, &c. Also they say he has from perquisites of the Court and pleas 3/4 per ann. Also, they say that *Elizabeth* daughter of the said *Thomas* is his next heir and of the age of 11 years and more." &c.

These estates, which had so depreciated in value in the lifetime of *Thomas Praers*, eventually came to the heiress *Elizabeth*, who brought the same in marriage to *Sir Robert Fouleshurst Kt.*

SIR ROBERT FOULESHURST KT. the next successor to the Countess of Warwick's Fee, is said to have been, and most likely was, one of Lord Audley's esquires of Poictiers fame. He survived his wife; but died Nov. 16th or 17th, 1389, and was buried in Barthomley Church, where a monumental tomb, having a recumbent figure of the Knight in armour, with mail gorget, conical helmet and collar of SS, although much mutilated, is still to be seen. His Inquisition post mortem is as follows: \* (*translated*)—

*Inq. p. m.* taken before Adam de Kyngeslegh Eschaetor at Wich Malbank on the Sabbath next after the feast of St. Katherine the virgin [25 Nov.] 13 Ric. II. [1389] &c. The Jurors say that *Robert de ffouleshurst* of Crue died seized for the term of his life by the law of England of the manors of Crue Bertumlegh and Landecan in Wyrhale &c. together with the advowsons of the Churches of Bertumlegh and Woodchurch after the death of *Elizabeth* daughter and heir of *Thomas de Praers* of Bertumlegh formerly wife of the said *Robert* who died seized in his demesne as of fee of the Manors and Advowsons aforesaid held of the Earl of Chester *in capite* by Knight service and by the service of 13/4 by a certain rent called Chamber rent paid per ann. into the treasury at Chester at the feast of the Nativity and St. John the Baptist [June 24]. Also, they say that the Manor of Crue is worth £10; and Bertumlegh 20 marcs [£13 6s. 8d.]; and Landecan 100 sh. Also, the tithes of corn &c. of the said churches are worth £20 per ann. Also, messuages in Badynton and Wich Malbank worth 40 sh. per ann. Also, they say that *Thomas* son of the said *Robert* and *Elizabeth* is son and heir, and of the age of 23 years and more on Tuesday in the feast of St. Edmund the Bishop [Nov. 16 or 17] last past on which day the said *Robert* died." &c.

SIR THOMAS FOULESHURST KT. who thus succeeded, occurs as a Commissioner of Array for Nantwich Hundred, having been appointed on the 11th Oct. 4 Hen. IV. [1402] prior to the rebellion of the Percies. He probably served on the side of the King at the battle of Shrewsbury on 21st July, 1403; and dying in the same year left a son and heir, *Thomas*, then under age; and a widow, *Joan*, who obtained the wardship and marriage of her son for the sum of 400 marks. [£266 13s. 4d].†

THOMAS FOULESHURST obtained possession of his father's estates on the 9th Feb. 5 Hen. V. [1418]; his proof of age having been taken at Wich-Malbank on Wednesday on

\* Public Record Office. Although the Countess of Warwick's Fee is not mentioned by name in this Inquisition, it is clear that it descended together with the other property, rights, &c. to *Sir Robert Fouleshurst jure uxoris*, the heiress of *Thomas de Praers*.

† Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

the morrow of the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul [25. Jan.] previous\* He married Cicely, daughter of Ranulph Maynwaring of Peover, and "died on the Vigil of the Nativity of John the Baptist [June 24] 1439; leaving Robert his son his next heir and of the age of 20 on the feast of SS. Lucian Maxian and Julian [Oct. 17] in the same year;" having died seized *inter alia* "of the serjeanty of the *fee* of the Countess of Warwick for which he rendered 13s. 4d. yearly" &c. (*Inq. p. m.*)

SIR ROBERT FOULESHURST, Knight, as he afterwards became, succeeded to the estates of his father after his proof of age had been taken at Wich-Malbank on Wednesday next before the Purification of the Blessed Virgin [Feb. 2] 18 Hen. VI. [1439-40]. He obtained another share (a 36th part) of the barony of Wich-Malbank by his marriage with Joan Whelok, daughter of Eleanor, the wife of Richard Whelok, and heiress of Sir Richard Vernon of Shipbrook, Kt., after the death of her mother in 1474.† He held several important appointments; viz.: the office of Bailiff and Beadle of Nantwich Hundred, which was leased to him on 22 Jan. 1444-5, for seven years at £7 3s. 4d. per ann., and afterwards for a further term of ten years. He was Eschaetor of the county during pleasure in 1460; was Knighted in 1461; was one of the Collectors of Subsidies in 1463 and 1474; and one of the Commissioners of Array in the years 1480, 1481 and 1484.† According to his *Inquisition post mortem* he

"died on Monday next before the feast of St. Nicholas the Bishop [Dec. 6] last past [1498] leaving *Thomas Fouleshurst* his son and heir aged 52 years on the day of St. Cedde the Bishop [Jan. 7 or March 2] also last past [1497-8]. He died seised [*inter alia*] of the office of the *Serjeant of the fee* of the Countess of Warwick; a 36th part of the Barony of Wich Malbank; 20 messuages burgages and cottages with gardens adjoining in Nantwich and 24 acres of land 2 salt-houses and £20 annual rent issuing out of lands &c. there." &c.

THOMAS FOULESHURST, ESQ., who was in London at the time of his father's death, succeeded but died the same year. He had been appointed Constable of Chester Castle on 4 June, 1483. His *Inquisition p. m.*, which is much torn and obliterated, states that he died seised of the same property as his father held, and that his son *Robert* was his heir. His widow *Anna* survived until 1524, her *Inq. p. m.* being taken on 18 June 16 Hen. VIII. [1524].‡

ROBERT FOULESHURST, ESQ., the next inheritor of these estates pleaded in 15 Hen. VII [1500] to a writ of *quo warranto*, at Chester, before Thomas Keble and John Mordant serjeants at law, Itinerant Justices, relative to his *Serjeanty of the Countess of Warwick's Fee within and without the town of Wich Malbank*, on payment of 13/4 per ann. claiming also the "liberty of buying and selling all kinds of merchandise in Nantwich, and the tolls of stallage of all merchandise, assize of bread and ale" &c.§ He was appointed collector of a Subsidy in Nantwich Hundred 17 Hen. VII [1502]; and made esquire of the body to King Henry VIII, as Earl of Chester. He held the office of seneschal [steward] of the town and lordship of Wich-Malbank from 14 Jan 4 Hen. VIII. || [1512-13] and a few

\* Record Office.

† Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

‡ Both of these Inquisitions are still preserved at the Record Office.

§ *Harl. MSS.* 2022 f. 16/22 and 2115 p. 186; also Doddsworth MSS. xxxi. f. 144.

|| Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

months after, on 9 Sept. 1513, was slain at Flodden-field, leaving two sons, *Edward* and *Thomas*, both minors, the former being "aged 18 years in the feast of the Ascension of our Lord last past" [1519]. (*Inq. p. m.*)

EDWARD FOULESHURST, Esq., who succeeded, was grantee for life of his father's office of seneschal of Nantwich. His wardship, marriage, and custody of inheritance were granted to Sir William Brereton. His proof of age was taken at Wich-Malbank on Thursday next after the feast of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary [25 March] 1521, before Ralph Egerton Kt. Eschaetor; livery of his lands being obtained on the 25th Oct. in the same year. He married Catherine the daughter of Sir Will. Brereton; but being an idiot, an *Inquisition on a Commission of Lunacy* was taken, 13 Hen. VIII [1521-2] by which his lands descended to the next heir at law, viz. his brother, *Thomas Fouleshurst*.\*

SIR THOMAS FOULESHURST, Kt., by special writ, had livery of his brother's lands, without proof of age, on 18 April, 1525. In the previous year (25 Sept. 1524) being then "*groom of the chamber*," he obtained the stewardship of the lordship of the town of Wich-Malbank for life.† He became Sheriff of the county in 1528; and ten years later framed a Code of Regulations for the government of the town of Nantwich, which have been preserved among the Wilbraham MSS., and are here printed for the first time.

*INJUNCTIONS & ORDINANCES, ordained, provided, and determined for the Common-wealth of Wich-Malbank by Sr. THOMAS FOULESHURST Knight Stewarde of the same Towne by the assent & consent of the Burgesses & Freeholders of y<sup>e</sup> said Towne at the great Court there holden the Munday next after the feast of St. John of Beverley [7 May] in the thirtieth yeare of the raigne of our Soueraigne Lorde Kinge Henrie the eight. [1538]*

1. First it is ordered by the stewarde by the assent & consent of the great enquest that noe Baker shall make any sale bread but such as shall beare weight assysed and ordayned for the same, and that it be made lawfull and wholesome for mans body under the payne of forfeiting of the same bread soe oft as they shalbe taken with the same, and alsoo that noe Baker shall putt any butter in any sale cakes under ye paine of forfeiting for every time soe doing—12d.
2. Alsoe it is ordered that noe bruer shall putt anie esties hopps lee or salt in their Ale from henceforth and that they shall sell yeir [their] Ale but after ij<sup>d</sup> [2d.] a gallone of the best under ye shot flagon.‡ and after a halfpennie a quart shall of the best; and of the second Ale, called pennie Ale after a halfpennie a pottle§ under the paine of forfeiting—ix<sup>s</sup> [9s.] soe often and for everie tyme as they be taken doing the contrary as well w<sup>th</sup>in the Libertye as w<sup>th</sup>out.
3. Alsoe it is ordered that all ffishers and other manner of vituelers that bring any vittaille to the town to sell, shall bring all their vittaille into the open markett, and that they sell no such vittaille in noe place but in the open markett under the payne of forfeiting the same vittailles.
4. Alsoe it is ordered that no manner of person nor p<sup>r</sup>sons shall forstall|| nor buy anie manner of vittailles coming to this Towne before it come to the open markett under the payne for every time soe doing to forfeitt—iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3/4].

\* Record Office.

† Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

‡ "*Shot-flagon*," i.e. The flagon which the Host gave to his guests if they drank above a shilling.

§ *Pottle* is an old word for two quarts.

|| "*Forstall*," i.e. monopolize. The necessaries of life were first to be brought into the public market, so that anyone, who bought or bargained for corn &c. before it was brought into the market, came under the lash of the law.

5. Alsoe it is ordered that all and every p'son or p'sons being inhabited within this p'ishe [parish] shall yearly be cessed by the Steward or his deputyes and the freeholders being sworne on the great enquest [court] what every of them shall pay towards the suppartation and maintenance of the Church within the Towne.
6. Alsoe it is ordered that the said freeholders wth ye wardens of the Church shall see that all the gilte prests [guild priests] shall observe and keepe all such ordinances as be expressed in a certaine booke here afore made and sealed with the Common Seale bearing date the x<sup>th</sup> of August in the xij [12] yeare of the Raigne of our soueraigne lord King Henrie the eight. [1520].
7. Alsoe it is ordered that the said freeholders and ye wardens shall cause the Clerke and other Ministers of the Church to do their offices according to their duties, and also that they shall see a redresse and reformation for the misordered people as well within the Chancell as within the Church.

The "*Injunctions*" relating to Ecclesiastical affairs are particularly interesting. Allusion is here made both to habitual neglect of religious observances and want of decorum in the priests who officiated at Nantwich Church, proving that corrupt practices prevailed here and at Combermere as in Abbey Churches and Monasteries generally throughout the Kingdom. In 1524 the Pope had issued a bull empowering Wolsey to visit religious houses and punish all violations of discipline; and ultimately these disorders were made the pretext for the suppression of the Monasteries, by which King Henry VIII replenished his exhausted coffers. In anticipation of the dissolution of Combermere Abbey, which took place shortly after the date of these "*Injunctions*," (viz.: on 27 July, 1538), provision is made in No. 5 for the future maintenance of the Clergy at Nantwich, by an annual assessment of the whole town; and thus it was that in later times the parishioners claimed the right to elect and appoint their own minister.

Reference is made in No. 8 to the severe penal laws against wandering beggars, who, being thrown upon their own resources after the suppression of religious houses, took to plunder and became a terror to the country.

The existence of *Gilds* or religious fraternities somewhat resembling modern friendly societies, is adverted to in Nos. 6 and 20. No records, however, exist to throw light on the local customs of these ancient orders. On another page will be found a deed dated 1461 relating to the Gild. In Webb's "*Itinerary*" it is distinctly stated that the Grammar School in the Churchyard was formerly the Gild Hall. (See also *Harl. MSS.* 2074 f. 166.a. According to a Statute in the reign of Hen. VIII the rents, profits, &c. of all Gilds, together with all Monasteries, &c., became confiscated to the Crown; the same Act of Parliament authorising the commissioners to assign the lands and property towards endowing "Grammar Schools or such other godly intents and purposes as the same Commissioners or two of them should appoint." In the Chantry Roll for Nantwich, the establishment of a Grammar School is recommended, and Messrs. John and Thomas Thrush, woolpackers, of London, the founders of the School, probably purchased the Gild-hall from the Crown.

The remaining Orders of Sir Thomas Fulleshurst are as follows:—

8. Alsoe it is ordered that the Steward the Bayliffe ye Constables and the freeholders of the great enquest shall examine all vagabonds\* and suspitious psons comeing or resorting to this Towne and all other now here abidinge and them to correct and punnishe according to the Kings statutes provided for the same vppon payne of euery of the sayd Steward the Bayliffe the Constables and the freeholders for to

\* "*Vagabonds*," i.e. wandering beggars; vagrants, or tramps as they are now called.

forfeitt for euey tyme denyinge to doe the same haueing sufficient monition—vjs. viijd. [6, 8] and also to punishe all manner of psons comitting briberie and petty larceny within this towne according to the Kings Statutes ordained for the same.

9. Alsoe it is ordered that noe manner of pson wthin this towne shall resett nor suffer mens children, servants, or light p'sons to be wthin their houses at drinkeing or gameinge at ten of the clocke in the night nor after supper uppon payne for euey tyme for doing to forfeit—iijs. liijd. [3/4].
10. Alsoe it is ordered that all manner of Artificers and craftsmen resorting or coming to this towne shall be appoynted where they shall stand to sell their wares by the officers of the Towne, that is to witt, all drapers that be forreiners except them that sell whole sale to sell noe cloath within the Towne but in the *Booth hall*\* uppon the markett daie; and all shoemakers turners . . . . . potters and Ironmongers to stand in the *Pillorie Strate*, and all they that sell parsnips turneps onyons and garlicke to stand aboute the *Bete bridge*,† or else at home at their owne houses under the payne of forfeiting for for euey tyme—xijd. [12d.]
11. Alsoe it is ordered that noe waynes [wagons] nor carte shall come through the markett places wth anie manner of wood after nine of the clocke in the aforenoone upon the markett daie under ye paine to forfeit for euey tyme—xijd. [12d.]
12. Alsoe it is ordered that there shall noe waller buy anie sale loades of wood betwixt the ffeast of Easter and the ffeast of St. Michael under the payne of forfeiting for euey tyme soe doing—xijd. [12d.]
13. Alsoe it is ordered that noe manner of psons shall buy nor sell any manner of graine with other *hoop* nor *strike* but such as shall be sealed with the seale; the wch seale shall be showed by the Bayliffe, and knowne in the Markett, under the payne of euey tyme soe offending to forfeit—xijd. [12d.]
14. Alsoe it is ordered that noe manner of p'son shall lay any manner of mucke at the *Water load*, the *Milne load*, nor between the Whitch [*sic*] house of John Crockett and Richard Ince his garden; nor in any manner of place neere nor within the *Kings streets* in ye Towne, nor alsoe that noe manner of pson nor psons shall caste any mucke, straw nor rushes in the *channell* wthin the *welchrowe* und<sup>r</sup> the payne for euey tyme soe doing—xijd. [12d.]; and alsoo that fathers and Mrs [mothers] of euey pson soe doing shall pay the mercem<sup>t</sup>. [fine] for the same: And alsoo that noe pson nor psons shall cast any witch-house muck or clodds upon noe witch-house ground, nor in noe other place but in *warver* under ye payne for euey tyme soe doinge to forfeit—xijd. [12d.]
15. Also it is ordered that there shall be a *swineheard* in this towne and that noe manner of pson nor psons of this inhabitaunce shall haue any swine going abroad within this Towne, but such as shall be putt into the custody of the syd. [said] swineheard under ye payne to forfeit for euey swine soe going abroad—ij<sup>s</sup>. [2-]; and that the sayd swineheard shall haue for euey swine that he shall be charged with, that is twelue monethes and aboue, euerie yeare 2<sup>d</sup>. for a swine; and for eu'y [every] pigge that is weaned 1<sup>d</sup>.; and that noe man shall putt anie swine before the said swineheard but such as shall be made lawfull for rooting, under the payne of eu'y [every] swine vj<sup>d</sup>. [6d.]; and that the sayd swineheard shall haue a home and that euey daie betwixt Easter and Michaelmas betweene the hours of seaven of the clock & eight before noone, hee to goe into the *Beame Streete*, and soe throughe streetes unto ye *well*‡ in the *welch rowe* neere the tenement now in the holding of Raphe Bebington, and from thence through

\* Although Leland's "Itinerary" states, "It [i.e. Nantwich] is no market," there is clear evidence that Nantwich was, and had long been a market town, before the 16th century. Leland, as a topographer rather than historian, described the town as he then found it; and possibly the market may have sustained a temporary check in 1535, from the serious and frequent visitations of the plague, called "Sweating Sickness."

† *Bete Bridge* was in Pillory Street, (see Account of the fire, in 1583.)

‡ "Ye well in welch rowe." It stood opposite *White Hall*. From the way in which this is mentioned, it may be implied that this well was at the extremity, or near the end, of the town.

the *high towne*, and soe through *hospitall streete*, and as he goeth through euery streete continuallie to blow his home, for the intent that euery pson haueing any swine may put them before the sayd swineheard; and from Michaellmas to Easter betweene the howers of eight of the clocke and nine before noone, for to use in like manner, and that the said swineheard shall euerie daye betwixt Easter and Michellmas driue and keepe all such swine as hee shall be charged with betweene the toppe of *creache* [Beam Heath] and the *crooked Brooke*, and after Michellmas until Easter to keepe the sayd swine uppon the heath in such place as the sayd swineheard shall think convenient.

16. Alsoe it is ordered that there shall be a Comon Pinfolde made neere to the *Court hall* there as it hath bin in tymes past, & also a greate payre of *Stockes*, for to be made and sett in the *high towne*, and that euerie pson of this inhabitance shall be cessed by ye Officers & the freeholders of the great enquest what euerie of y<sup>m</sup> [them] shall pay for any thing that shall chance or fall necessary as well to serue our soueraigne Lorde the Kinge as for all other things concerneing the Comonwealth of this Towne.
17. Alsoe it is ordered that the Steward or his deputy and the Bayliffe, and the freeholders of the great enquest shall assemble themselves, and meete together within the *Court-hall* & there to commune of all things that shall be necessarie for ye comonwealth of this Towne at all tymes hereafter, haueing sufficient monition from or by the Steward or his deputy of the daye and hower of their assembly and meeting together to them giuen by the Bayliffe under the payne of euery p'son failing soe to doe for euery time—iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3/4].
18. Alsoe it is ordered that noe man from henceforth shall weare any vnlawful weapon swithin this Towne, as Billes,\* glaives, polaxes, morrispicks, and such other, vnder the payne of forfeiting the sayd weapons and to be punished accordinge to ye Kinges Statutes made for the same.
19. Alsoe it is ordered that all manner of p'sons haueing ye occupation of three dozen leads [lead pans] shall haue but a monethes wood wthin the Towne ouer the old yeare; and all other haueing less occupation than three dozen leads, to haue after the rate of three leads, vnder the paine of euery weekes wood ouer and aboue to forfeit—vijs. viij<sup>d</sup>. [6/8]: and yearely the Rulers for their tyme being to make search for the same, and they uppon their oathes to present all such offenders, and this act to take effect from the feast of Penticost wch shall be in the yeare of oure Lord god 1539 [viz. : on 25 May.]
20. Alsoe it is ordered that all such p'son or p'sons as be in noe gilde within this Church that they nor none of their children shall haue at their decease and their bringing home† none of ye ornaments of the Church: nor no more of the bells to be rungen for them but the third Bell: that there be from henceforth noe passing peale here rungen vnder the payne the Clarke to forfeit iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3/4].
21. Alsoe it is ordered that noe manner of p'son or p'sons shall for henceforth. lay any flax nor heme in *Weaver* betweene ye *Wiche-bridge* and the further side of *Ridley feild* vnder the payne to forfeit for euery tyme—xij<sup>d</sup>. [12d.]
22. Alsoe it is ordered that if it shall chance hereafter variance or strife to be betweene any pson of this inhabitance for ye occupation of walling of anie witch-house or leads wthin this Towne and that both p'ties [parties] doe pretend title or interest to the same occupation soe that the Rulers of the Walling for that tyme being may nor cannot determine nor discusse whether partie ought of right to haue the sayd occupation according to the customes of this towne that the sayd Rulers shall permitt and suffer the pty. [party] ye wch hath peaceably had the occupation of the said witch-house or leads by the space of three yeares for to occupie for the same, and the other partie thereof to be discharged vntil such tyme that the matter be determined according to the Kinges lawes, or vnto such tyme that the pties. [parties].

\* Bill: i.e. an edged tool for lopping trees or dubbing hedges. Glaive: i.e. a long sword or bill. Pole-axe: i.e. an axe, having a long stale or handle.

† "Bringing home;" an old-fashioned but very beautiful expression, meaning *burial*.

- shall be agreed for the same, and that noe p'son or p'sons being soe discharged shall from henceforth vexe nor trouble the sayd Rulers nor none of them by noe maner processe procured or obtained from anie other Courte for the same under the payne to forfeitt for euery tyme soe doing xls. [40/-].
23. Alsoe it is ordered by the great enquest and by the advice and consent of the Steward and the Kinges Lyeutenant [Lieutenant] Justice agreed that if any statute or ordinance heretofore or now at this tyme made or hereafter to be made, shall at any time hereafter be found hurtfull or preiudiciall to the comonwealth of any occupation the wch shall thinke therein to be oppressed or grieved by any of the sayd statutes or ordinances, shall by the advice and consent of the others of the sayd sort or occupation make a bill of their griefes, and at ye next greate Courte after here holden the same bill present to ye Steward, whereupon the Stewarde shall cause the sayd two psons to be sworne that the said bill and all such evidence as they shall giue uppon the same shall be good and true and the meaning thereof for the comonwealth and not for the proper wealth of themselves, and then the same bill to be delivered to ye ffreholders of the great enquest the wch bill shall be examined and by good deliberacon by the great enquest pondered and then the same to be redressed and ordered as the sayd enquest shall upon their oathes thinke most necessarie and conveyent according to their charges.
24. Alsoe it is ordered that all such statutes and ordinances as haue bin made before this time for the Comonwealth of this Towne the wch be not mentioned in this booke and not revoked nor repelled shall be observed and kepte according to the true intent and meaning of ye same, and that noe p'son or p'sons of this inhabiance doe breake nor offend the same statutes and ordinances, under the payne to forfeit euerie tyme soe doing—iijs. iiijd. [3/4] ouer and beside such paynes and punishment as been cessed for the same.
25. Alsoe it is ordered that in case any of the ffreholders which now be or hereafter shall be sworne on the great enquest doe at any tyme hereafter breake anie of these statutes or ordinances before or now at this time made, or any other hereafter that shall be made for the good order and wealth of this sayd towne, haueing lawfull monition for the same, that euerie of the sayd ffreholders shall forfeit for euery time soe doing double the paynes and mercements cessed or ordained for ye same; and that none of the sayd paynes being presented and found be forfeited shall from henceforth be minished nor made lesse by anie fearers of these Courtes nor otherwise, but that all the whole thereof shall be leyved by the Bayliffe, or his deputy, to the use and behalfe of the Kinge, and the Barons of this Towne. Provided alwaies that ye ffreholders wch shall be at any Courte or Courts hereafter sworne uppon ye great enquest shall haue full power and authoritie for to change alter or breake any statute or ordinance here before or now at this time made, or any other hereafter to be made the wch shall happen hereafter to be preiudiciall or hurtfull to the good order or Comonwealth of the Towne, or to the Inhabitants of the same soe that the sayd thinge be done by the consent and agreement of the Steward, and ye whole enquest upon their oathes at a greate Courte here holden with good intention for ye redressing or reformacon of the same.
26. Alsoe it is ordered that there shall noe carryers of salt that buy their salt in other places, shall not sell their malt\* here under the payne of euerie time soe offending to forfeitt—xxs. [20/-].
27. Alsoe it is ordered that noe man swap quarter-wood under ye paine for euery time soe offending xijd. [12d.]; and that there shall be noe swapping of salte for noe manner of Chaffer [i.e. wares] under the payne for euerie time xijd. [12d.]
28. Alsoe it is ordered that all Butchers shall deny noe man a pennie worth of flesh nor a ob. [halfpenny worth] of flesh, and that the sayd Butchers shall from henceforth blow noe flesh under the payne of

\* Webb, in his "Itinerary," one hundred years after, says—the salt-trade was "chiefly done in exchange of the best malt that the shires towards the Champion [plain] do send in barter for it."

xijd. [12d.]; and that no man shall wall [i.e. make salt] for mending the pavement betwixte *Bartons crosse*\* and the *wiche Bridge*, without he putt in suertye by obligacon betwixte this and the taile of the Courte, and that noe man leaue emptie waynes in the high streetes except a lawfull cause; under the payne for every tyme soe offending xijd. [12d.]”

[END OF SIR THOMAS FOULESHURST'S TOWN ORDERS.]

Sir Thomas Fouleshurst lived to the last year of Queen Mary, his death and burial being recorded by Richard Wilbraham, of Nantwich, in his MS. Journal thus:—

“Thomas fulleshurst Knight dyed on Sunday beinge xxvi day of September Ao. 1558. And was buryed in Bartomley Churche.”

His Inquisition *post mortem* is not to be found at the Record Office; but he was succeeded by his son Robert, with whom began the decay of this ancient family.

ROBERT FOULESHURST, of Crue, Esq., who married Bridget, daughter of Sir Thomas Smith of Hough, Kt.,† succeeded to his father's estates, which he was compelled to alienate, as tradition says, through extravagance. Little more than four years after his father's death, he sold to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley of Cholmondeley, Kt., property in Nantwich for the sum of £107 14s. 10d., thus described in the “Indenture made 20th Jan. 4 Queen Elizabeth [1561-2],

“One messuage or Cottage & garden now in occupacon of *John Walhall* of the yrely rent of 4/10: one annual rent of 14/- goinge out of the lands late of *Wm. Churche* deceased: one annual rent of 2/- goinge out of the lands and tents. [tenements] of *John Hill* and *Joan Hill* widow: one annual rent of 6/8 out of the lands and tents. of *John Bromley* gent., now in the Occupacon of *Oliver Manwaringe*, one annual rent of 10/- out of ye lands & tents. of *Roger Crockett* and *Alice Crockett* widow: one annual rent of 10/- out of the lands & tents. of the *earle of Derby*: one annual rent of 10/- out of lands and tents. of *Wm. Bromley* gent: one other annual rent of 10/- out of the lands and tents. of *Henry Mainwaringe Esqr.*, now in the Occupacon of *Humphrey Mainwaringe*: one annual rent of 14/- out of one mess. now or late of *Tho: Gibbons* lyinge in the highe towne: one annual rent of 10/8 out of the lands tents. & heriditams. of *Roger Maisterson* gent: one other annual rent of ijs. [2/-] out of the lands and tents. of the sd. *Rogr M<sup>r</sup>son* [Maisterson]: one other annual rent of 12d. out of lands &c. of the same *Rogr.*: one other annual rent of 6/8 out of the lands, tents. & heriditams. of *Rogr Wright*. And alsoe one other annual rent of 9/- out of one mess. and one garden in the *wiche-forest* now in the occupacon of *Randle Soutley* and late in the tenure or occupacon of *Raph Sturpo* deced.” [deceased.]

The Indenture, which is given in full in *Harl. MSS.* 2099. f. 486/118, is signed and sealed by “Robert ffuleshurst;” and witnessed by “Gregorye ffuleshurst” and others.

Robert Fouleshurst, who still held his 36th share of the Barony of Wich-Malbank consisting of “one messuage, 200 acres of land and 3/4 rent in Wich-Malbank, Crue, Haslington, Stoke, Cholmeston, Whitpoole, Barretspoole, Aston, Leighton and Landecan, and the *Serjeancy of the Countess of Warwick's Fee, and of the Audley Fee,*” was afterwards under the necessity of raising money on these possessions and rights, resulting in dishonorable transactions on the part of Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, who, it appears, designedly intended to take an unfair advantage of Mr. Fouleshurst's pressing need.‡ On the 20th May, 17 Eliz. [1575] Robert Fouleshurst sold and conveyed his share of the Barony to

\* “*Bartons Crosse*,” now simply called “*the Cross*,” is in Stapeley township.

† *Cheshire Wills*, part 3, vol. liv. p. 46. Chet. Soc. Pub.

‡ Information by Mr. E. W. Jones, from his father's (the late T. W. Jones, Esq., Solicitor, Nantwich) papers.



Sir Hugh Cholmondeley in consideration of the sum of £56 10s. od., and on 20th Aug. in the same year, Mr. Fouleshurst mortgaged his Fees with other freeholds to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley for securing £420 and interest; a very unusual proviso having been introduced in the mortgage, (which ended in its destruction as will hereafter be seen) restraining Mr. Fouleshurst from redeeming the premises he had mortgaged to Sir Hugh, who, to make his security as he supposed doubly safe, required Mr. Fouleshurst to levy a fine to him of the mortgaged Estates; which he accordingly did on the 20th February 18 Eliz. [1575-6]; and so soon as Sir Hugh's security was, as he thought completed, he entered into the possession of the property comprised therein, and held the usual Court for the fee as Lord thereof, as Mr. Fouleshurst and his ancestors had before done. Sir Christopher Hatton, Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth, having in 1581, purchased from Mr. Fouleshurst large estates, including these supposed to be irredeemably mortgaged to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, and being advised that Sir Hugh's mortgage could not stand, he impeached it by a suit instituted for that purpose in the Court of Exchequer at Chester in the year 1582, and the cause coming on to be heard before the Chamberlain, assisted by Sir George Bromley and Sir Henry Townshend, Justices of Cheshire, on the 10th April 25 Eliz. [1583] those learned Judges held Sir Hugh Cholmondeley's mortgage void, and by their decree ordered him to deliver up the same and likewise possession of the premises comprised therein, and execute a re-conveyance of the latter to Sir Christopher Hatton, which order Sir Hugh rather reluctantly complied with in the same year. An exemplification of this decree that the *Serjeantships of the Countess of Warwick's Fee and of the Audley Fee* had been assured to Sir Christopher Hatton Kt. was taken on 8th April, 1593.—(*Chesh. Recog. Rolls.*) William Smith, a contemporary writer, also says\* "Mr. Fouleshurst, of Crew, had rule of the town; and after him, sir Hugh Cholmley; and now, [c. 1600] lastly, sir Christopher Hatton."

Robert Fouleshurst of Crewe, Esq., died on the 3rd Jan. 1599, [*Wilb. MS. Journal*] leaving a son *Thomas Fouleshurst*,† of Coppenthal, who occurs in the Recognizance Rolls in an indenture of sale of a messuage in Church Coppenthal to Sir Richard Wilbraham, of Woodhey, dated 6th June, 1617; this property possibly being the last possession of the last heir of the ancient family of Fouleshurst.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, KNIGHT, Lord Chancellor of England, who thus became manorial lord of the Countess of Warwick's Fee, dying a bachelor in 1591, left his estates to his nephew, SIR WILLIAM HATTON (*alias* NEWPORT) who died without male issue in the 39 Eliz. [1596-7]; his possessions being divided between joint-heirs, namely:—SIR EDWARD COKE,‡ Knight, Lord Chief Justice, who inherited a portion in right of his second wife, the Lady Elizabeth Hatton, widow of Sir William Hatton; and also SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, K.B., half-cousin to Sir William Hatton. From these joint-heirs, the Countess of Warwick's Fee and other estates in Cheshire, (Crewe, Barthomley, Haslington, &c.) were purchased by Ranulphe Crewe, Esq.,§ in the year 1608.

\* King's "*Vale Royal*," printed in Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. i. p. 137, new Edit.

† Thomas Fouleshurst appears to have been living at the Hall of Shaw, in Coppenthal, about the year 1621, when Mr. Webb wrote his *Itinerary of Nantwich Hundred*. (See King's "*Vale Royal*.")

‡ Sir Edward Coke was lord of this Fee in 1606-7, when the dispute was pending relating to the election of parish clerk in this town. (See *Annals* under that date.) Sir Ranulphe Crewe was one of the Executors of Sir Edward's Will. (*Cal. State Papers.*)

§ "I gave Sir Christopher Hatton £500 and his brother Sir Robert £100. The whole in gold being after my purchase passed. This I did out of respect to him altogether, for that he was unwilling to sell but to me." (Mem. in the handwriting of Sir Ran. Crewe.)

SIR RANULPHE CREWE, of Crewe, Knight, the purchaser of the Countess of Warwick's Fee, was the second son of John Crewe, gent., of Hospital Street, Nantwich, by his wife Alice, the daughter of Humphrey Mainwaring, of Nantwich. The well-known couplet says:-

"Sir Randle Crewe, the Lord of this [Crewe] Manor  
Was born at Nantwich, the son of a Tanner."

Statements at variance with each other have been made respecting his father. The Rev. Edward Hinchliffe\* doubts whether he was a tanner or not; another biographer† states that he was "under the pressure of reduced means at the time of his son's birth;" whilst a third writer says that the *father* of John Crewe was a tanner; and that John Crewe himself was locally known by the cognomen of "Golden Roger."‡ Nothing has occurred to prove the truthfulness of the rhyme, or to show which of the foregoing statements is the correct one; but it seems very improbable that a needy tradesman could have brought up his two sons, Ranulph and Thomas, to the highest department of the profession of the law. John Crewe's residence still exists as one of the principal houses in the town, and has old heraldic glass *in situ* which is described in the next chapter. (See St. Nicholas' Hospital.)

Ranulphe Crewe was baptized on 10th Jan., 1558.\* Of his early life nothing is now known; but on the 24th Oct., 1597, he was elected M.P. for Brackley, co. Northampton. In the following year his father died and was buried at Nantwich.

"1598 Dec. 20. John Crewe of the Aspell Street, Gent." [Bar. Reg.]

Having been a student at Lincoln's Inn, he was called to the bar in 1603. In 1608, as previously stated, he purchased the estates, fees, manorial rights, &c., which had passed away from his ancestors about three hundred years before; and which have been traced during that interim through the families of Praers and Fouleshursts. Together with Sir William Brereton, Kt., he is said to have been returned as M.P. for his native county in 1614.§ On the opening of Parliament he was elected Speaker of the House of Commons, and on the 8th June in the same year he was Knighted. Mr. Barlow, speaking of the advancement of Sir Ranulphe to dignity and honor, and relying on the supposed accuracy of Lord Campbell's "*Lives of the Chief Justices*," is guilty of several anachronisms, thus making him young for one purpose and old for another. He says "Ranulphe Crewe was elected one of the representatives of his native county when a *young man* in 1614," although he must have been 56 years of age at that time; that he purchased the manor of Crewe "in his *declining years*;" although the purchase was made six years before he became a county member; and pictures "the quiet old gentleman," his father, dreaming away his existence at Nantwich in pleasant fancies of the progressive advancement of his two talented sons, many years after John Crewe, Gent., was entombed in the Church, and probably after his monument was set up.

Sir Ranulphe Crewe next took the degree of Serjeant-at-law in 1614; and soon afterwards became the King's Serjeant.¶ He was Attorney-General in 1623; and, on the

\* History of Barthomley, 1856, p. 221.

† Mr. T. W. Barlow in his "Cheshire; its Historical and Literary Associations." 1852. p. 43.

‡ Pennant's "Tour from Chester to London," 2nd Edit. 1811. p. 43-4.

§ Though it is commonly stated that he was elected M.P. for *Cheshire*, it is not absolutely certain that he represented his *native county*, as the Parl. returns for 1614 are now lost.

¶ In 1616 Justice Winch and *Serjeant Crew* were in disgrace for hanging supposed witches at Leicester, when the King, whilst there, found out the imposture of the boy said to be bewitched. (*Cal. Stat. Pap. Dom. Series, Jas. I. vol. 88; dated Oct. 12, 1616.*)

resignation of Sir James Ley, succeeded as Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench on the 26th Jan. 1625; but he was displaced in the following year, the judicial office being then tenable at the King's pleasure. Fuller, in his "*Worthies*," says:—

"King Charles' occasions calling for speedy supplies of money, some great ones adjudged it unsafe to venture on a Parliament; for fear, in those distempered times, the physic would side with the disease, and put the King to furnish his necessities by way of loan. Sir Randal, being demanded his judgment of the design, and the consequences thereof (the imprisoning of recusants to pay it) openly manifested his dislike of such preter-legal courses; and thereupon 9 Nov. 1626, was commanded to forbear his sitting in the Court; and the next day, by writ, discharged from his office."

Thus deprived, Sir Ranulphe afterwards lived in retirement at his town-house, near Westminster Abbey; but often visited his noble mansion of Crewe Hall, the first stone of which was laid on the 3rd April, 1615;\* the mansion not being finally completed until 1636. On the 3rd March, 1631, Sir Ranulph obtained a perpetual lease of the Easter Roll of Nantwich; and in 1633 his right to the Countess of Warwick's Fee was disputed by Robert, viscount Cholmondeley, in the Court of Exchequer at Chester, but without success; Sir Ranulphe's right to the serjeancy of these fees in the Manor of Nantwich being upheld by a decree dated 30th April in that year, and subsequently confirmed by Royal letters patent by King Charles I.—(*Chesh. Recog. Rolls.*)

The following account of the manner of life and hospitality of Sir Ranulphe Crewe in his last days well describes the manners of country squires rather more than two hundred years ago, and is too interesting to be omitted.†

"Sir Ranulphe, when far advanced in years, was accustomed to take much equestrian exercise over his Crewe and Barthomley demesnes, on his piebald gelding, accompanied by his two sons, Sir Clippeby and John, on their gray and bay nags. He frequently paid visits to the neighbouring gentry, amongst whom were, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Richard Lea, Sir Richard Wilbraham, and Sir Randle Mainwaring, at those once fine, but long since decayed seats, called Hough and Lea, in Wybunbury, and Woodhey and Baddiley in Acton; where he was welcomed by his hosts, and according to the fashion of the age, attended by retinues of chamberlains, grooms in waiting, ushers of the hall, and their several deputies. Although Sir Ranulphe kept sumptuous tables, he was himself contented with very plain fare. His generosity to the poor was most extensive; and the higher classes, when in adversity, likewise shared his bounty, often receiving from him very liberal pecuniary presents. He regularly gave alms to the poor of his native Street.‡ He was eminent as a lawyer, skilled in architecture, and devoted to archæological pursuits. He was the preserver at Crewe of a transcript of Smith's valuable Cheshire Collections, which formed the basis of King's "*Vale Royal*," and to his grandson Ranulphe the credit is due of having promoted the publication of that work." (*Hist. Barthomley*, pp. 364, 368).

\* Wilb. MS. Journal. It is worthy of note that Dorfold Hall was built about the same time. These noble manor houses indicate the great change that had taken place in the reigns of Jas. I. and Elizabeth, when the family assembled in "*withdrawing rooms*" and "*parlours*," leaving the servants to the "*halls*," where in mediæval times the lord used to meet his retainers and hold his feasts.

† This account is from the pen of the late T. W. Jones, Esq., of Nantwich, who contributed much valuable information relating to the Crewe family that has already appeared in the *History of Barthomley*.

‡ Sir Thos. Crewe (younger brother of Sir Ranulphe) of Steane, Kt., co. Northampton, also distinguished himself as a lawyer and politician; sat in several parliaments; became Speaker in the House of Commons, and died on the 1st Feb. 1633; leaving by his will "the rents and profit of land in Buglawton to be for ever employed either to erect and maintain an hospital of some poor in the *Hospital Street*, or to be put in stock in all or part to keep the poor of *that street* in work, or to be distributed yearly among the poor of *that street*, with some allowance to the preacher." (*See Charities.*)

Crewe Hall sustained two sieges during the Civil War, on 27th Dec. 1643, and 4th Feb. 1643-4 (see *postea*): and before the war was over in this county Sir Ranulph Crewe died. Concerning his death and burial Thomas Malbon, of Nantwich, writes as follows:—\*

“Sr Randull Crewe, Knighte, A greate Councillor, wch had byn Lorde Cheefe Justice of the Kinges Benche, a Religious good man and ferme for the p[ar]liamt and a man of fayre possessions bothe in Cheshire & many other places: And whereof his owne Charges found & maynteyned in Cheshire (for Servys of the p[ar]liamt) duringe all the tyme of the late warres vntill his Death, Tenne Soldyers & Twoe Horse & men bravely furnished, Dep[ar]ted this lyfe att his howse in westm[inste]r the xiiijth daye of January 1645[-6] Beinge then of the Age of flourescore and eighte yeres, or thereabouts: And afterwards his bodie was broughte downe into Cheshire & entombd att Barthomley (whereof hee was Patron) in a fayre vaulte (wch hee had made) the fyfte of June 1646 about Seyven a Clocke in thafter noone (beinge ffrydaye) without either Sermon or any Solemnitie.”†

Sir Ranulph Crewe was twice married; first to Juliana, daughter and co-heiress of John Clippesby, of Clippesby, co. Norfolk, Esq., by whom he had three children; (1) Sir Clippesby Crewe, of Crewe, Kt., who succeeded to the Countess of Warwick's Fee, and other estates in Cheshire, &c.; (2) John Crewe, of Utkinton, Esq.; and (3) Juliana. He married secondly Juliana, daughter of Edward Fusey, of London, and widow of Sir Thos. Hesketh, Kt., by whom he had no children.

The descent of the Countess of Warwick's Fee from the middle of the seventeenth century is, briefly, as follows:—‡

SIR CLIPPESBY CREWE, of Crewe, Kt. succeeded his father Sir Ranulph Crewe, and, dying at London, was buried in Westminster Abbey on the 3rd Feb. 1648-9, leaving as his son and heir

JOHN CREWE, of Crewe, Esq., who was also buried in Westminster Abbey on 22nd Feb. 1683-4, and who left as his heir, a grandson, *John Offley*, then about three years of age, who assumed the name and arms of Crewe.

JOHN CREWE (*alias* Offley) of Crewe, Esq., who thus succeeded his grandfather, died on the 25th Aug. 1749. His son and heir was

JOHN CREWE, of Crewe, Esq., who enjoyed the estates scarcely four years, and died on the 18th Sept. 1752; leaving a son and heir, *John*, then only ten years of age.

JOHN CREWE, of Crewe, Esq., the next successor, was created BARON CREWE, on the 25th Feb. 1806; and died on the 28th April, 1829, aged 86; and was interred at Barthomley.

THE RIGHT HON. JOHN, second LORD CREWE, of Crewe, succeeded his father, and died on the 4th Dec. 1835, aged 65. He was buried at Barthomley, and was succeeded by his son,

THE RIGHT HON. HUNGERFORD, LORD CREWE, in whose lifetime the manorial rights attached to the Countess of Warwick's Fee have fallen into extreme decay.

\* The Malbon MS., preserved at Conover Hall, Salop.

† The entry in Barthomley Register is as follows:—

“A. D. 1646. Sir Ranulph Crewe of Crewe, Knight, buried the fifth day of June. Mortuus est 13 Jan. 1645[-6].”

‡ For Biographical particulars relating to the later *Crewes* the reader is referred to the History of Barthomley.

From this descent it is clear that the Countess of Warwick's Fee, which has passed through successive generations of Praers, Fouleshursts or Fulleshursts, and Crewes, has remained severed from the Barony of Wich-Malbank for more than six hundred years; and was not re-united thereto by Sir Hugh Cholmondeley in the sixteenth century as stated in the new edition of Ormerod's History of Cheshire. The manorial rights attached to this fee are now no longer claimed by Lord Crewe. The Court was abolished about 1840; the toll of corn was relinquished in favour of the Local Board about 1866; and toll of brine was paid by Mr. Townley, the last salt manufacturer, until 1856. The right of appointing the bellman was passed to the Local Board in February, 1872. The last bellman appointed by Lord Cr e was Mr. Robert Harding, who, strange to say, was incapacitated from "crying" through impediment of speech, and who, rather than resign an office that had been held by his forefathers for more than a century,\* was obliged to employ a deputy, whilst he himself discharged the duties of Bill-sticker, an office associated with that of Town-crier.

A very curious custom, commonly observed in the north of England and in Scotland in the eighteenth century, and known by the name of *lating* (i.e. inviting), was practised by the town-crier of Nantwich in the previous century as noticed by John Ray in his "*Itineraries*," under date Wednesday, 24th May, 1662, as follows:—†

"At Nantwich they have a Custom like that in Scotland; when anyone is dead, a Bellman goeth about the streets the Morning that the dead Person is to be buried tinkling a Bell he has in his Hand, and now and then makes a Stand and invites the People to come to the Funeral at such an Hour."

The lord of this fee also claimed the right of nominating the parish clerk, an office that has recently fallen into disuse, the last lay clerk being Mr. John Cooper. The Rector now appoints a clerk in holy orders. In former times parish clerks were required to be able to sing the Psalms of David and to write; the latter qualification being necessary as they were for many years the recorders of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials of past generations, and the custodians of the Parish books. A list of their names as mentioned in the Registers may not be uninteresting.

#### LIST OF PARISH CLERKS.

THOMAS BULLEYNE,	signs the Register in 34 Hen. VIII. 1542.
. . . . . BROOKE,	nominated by Mr. Fulleshurst.
THOMAS BULLEN,	1586—1606. Buried at N. 7 Oct. 1606.
JOHN PEARSON,	nominated by Sir Edwd. Coke, Kt., and displaced shortly afterwards by the Parishioners.
THOMAS CLOWES,	1607—1639. Chosen by the Parishioners. He gave the present Communion Table. Buried 3 April 1639.
JOHN HUSSIE	1639—1660, nominated by Sr. Ranulph Crewe Kt. Buried 2 Nov. 1660.
SAMUEL HUSSIE	1660—1685. Buried 22 Oct. 1685.
SAMUEL HUSSIE	1685—1729. Buried 10 Sept. 1729.
THOMAS SHENTON	1729—1736. Buried at Acton 19 Dec. 1736.
RICHARD YOXALL	1736—1762. Buried 29 May 1763.
THOMAS OULTON	1762—1767. Buried at Acton 23rd May, 1767.
THOMAS CHILD	1767—1782. Buried 21 Dec. 1782.
THOMAS CARTWRIGHT	1782—1806. Buried 17 Feb. 1806. Aged 69.

\* The *Harding* family held the bellmanship of the town from 1736 to 1872; that is, for 136 years. Another family appears to have held the office from 1586 to 1689, that is, 103 years, according to the following extracts from the Burial Register.

"Homfrey Wilbram, bellman, buried 29 June 1586."  
 "Nicholas Clowes, Bellman, a verie old man, buried 7 May, 1617."  
 "William Clowes, the bellman, 9 Oct. 1638."  
 "Alexander Clowes, bellman, 28 Nov. 1666."

"Nicholas Clowes, Bellman, 10 Jan. 1672-3."  
 "William Clowes, Belman, 19 March 1689-90."  
 "John Hussey, the bellman 21 April 1736".  
 "John Harding, Bellman, 1 April 1767."  
 "John Harding, Bellman, 9 Dec. 1791." &c., &c.

† "*Life of John Ray*," by Dr. Derham, Edited by Lankester for the Ray Society, 1846. Appendix p. 165. Brand speaks of the same custom at Hexham, co. Northumberland, in 1777; and at Linlithgow as late as 1796. (See "*Popular Antiq. of Grt. Britain*," by W. C. Hazlitt, vol. ii. pp. 163 and 174.)

## II. The Lovell Lands.



THESE lands, together with the advowson of the Chapel of St. Nicholas, in Nantwich, and the right of holding annually a three days' fair at Bartholmide, came into the possession of the Lovell family about the year 1350, and remained in that family for nearly a century and a half. Originally this part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank was divided between the two sisters of Philippa Basset, the Countess of Warwick, viz.:—*Joan Basset* and *Alice Basset* both of whom did homage for their fathers' lands in 4 Hen. III. [1219-20].\*

I.—*JOAN BASSET* married *Reginald Valletort*, and the descent of her lands, which cannot be very clearly traced, is remarkable for the numerous instances of failures in male issue; these lands having, in the course of 170 years, passed by successive heiresses into the families of *SANDFORD*, *MAUTRAVERS*, *WARRENE*, *CHEYNE* or *CHANU*, and *BROWNING*.†

*JOHN BROWNING* obtained livery of the same on 25th Dec. 1392; and his grandson, *WILLIAM BROWNING* of Melbury, co. Dorset, Esq., gave his share (a sixth part) of the Barony of Wich-Malbank in exchange for lands in Wiltshire to *Sir William Lovell*, Kt.‡ A copy of King Hen. VI. charter granting *William Browning*, on payment of five marks, [£3 6s. 8d.], licence to convey these lands to *Sir William Lovell*, is dated 13th Feb. 21 Hen. VI. [1442-3];§ and thus his share became united with the one next treated of.

II.—*ALICE BASSET* is said to have had three daughters; *Ela*, who married *John Wotton*, and had her portion in Worcestershire, but no share of the Cheshire estates; *Margaret*, who married *John de Ripariis* [Rivers]; and *Isabel* married to *Hugh de Plessetis*, who is said to have been the son of *John de Plessetis* Earl of Warwick.—(*Harl. MSS.* 2038.) These statements are given on the authority of an old local antiquary, *John Woodnoth*, of Shavington, in the neighbouring parish of Wybunbury, who died in 1637, leaving behind him many Cheshire pedigrees drawn up from ancient documents, and other collections, which are now preserved in the British Museum and the Bodleian Libraries. *Philip de Plessetis*, in 14 Edward I. [1285-6];|| and *John de Ripariis*, about the same time, by an undated charter here given, conveyed their estates, parcel of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, to *Robert Burnell*, Bishop of Bath and Wells. An abstract of the Rivers' Charter, in Latin, is preserved at the Bodleian Library, of which the following is a translation:—¶

\* *Dr. Ormerod* states this on the authority of a *Fine Roll* of that date discovered by *Vincent*. This *Fine* is not now to be found at the Record office.

† *Harl. MS.* 2038. f. 137.

‡ Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

§ Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 6032. f. 43. b.

|| *Harl. MSS.* 1967. f. 120. a. c.

¶ *Dodsworth MSS.* vol. xxxix. f. 151. b.

"To all present and to come, Know that I, *John de Rivers* [Ripariis,] lord of Aungre have given, conceded, and by this my charter have confirmed to the Venerable father in Christ Lord R[obert], by the grace of God Bishop of Bath and Wells my manor of Wychemalbanc with the advowson of the church [*ecclesie*] of the same, being one Knight's fee and all their appurtenances without retention whatever: To have and to hold *in capite* from the lord of that fee freely and quietly in fee, and to his heirs for ever, by doing all customary services to the lord of the fee *in capite* and rendering to me and my heirs annually at Easter one penny for all services to me and my heirs or assigns belonging. And I the aforesaid John &c. will warrant for ever against all men and women."

These being witnesses." &c. [Names not given.]

Some explanation is here necessary; for on the authority of this deed attempts are now being made to prove that Bishop Burnell was Lord of the town of Nantwich and founder of the present parish Church; implying thereby that the Church is dedicated to St. Nicholas, and that it was an ancient Rectory in the gift of that eminent prelate, and afterwards of the Lovell family. All this is a fictitious theory that receives no confirmation in any record. The term "*manor*" here used, cannot possibly refer to the whole lordship of the town; for the *Abbot's Fee*, which included the Church or Chapel of the town, is mentioned about the same time in the Inquisition 16 Edw. I.\* [1288] as *separate* and *distinct* from the Barony of Wich-Malbank. It has been suggested that the Abbey may have alienated the Church lands in Nantwich; but the clear evidence of the Inquisition proves the falsity of the supposition. The Bishop's "*manor*" or share of the Barony was situated *chiefly* in Newhall and Coppenhall as will be seen in the rentals on a subsequent page. Adam, the Abbot of Combermere in and before 1296, by deed, quitclaimed all lands, tenements, woods, &c., belonging to the convent in Copenhale, to Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, for exchange of Greenfordhey and payment of £213 6s. 8d. to relieve the necessities of the house at Combermere;† but no such deed has occurred of the Abbey relinquishing Church lands in Nantwich until compelled to do so at the final dissolution of that Monastery; hence it is most likely that the word "*ecclesia*," is a clerical error for "*capelle*;" the reference being, not to the Church or Chapel of Nantwich, but, as will presently be seen, to the Chapel of St. Nicholas Hospital, in Nantwich, which was situated outside the pale of the Abbey lands in this town.

BISHOP BURNELL, the grantee of manorial lands in Wich-Malbank and the neighbourhood, was Lord Chancellor to King Edward I, and a Bishop of high standing among the clergy of his day; for, on the promotion of Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Cardinal's chair, "the monks of Canterbury demanded Lord Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, the King's Chancellor, as their Archbishop; which demand, however, was quashed by the supreme pontiff; and brother John of Peckham, one of the order of Minor Brothers, a man of the most perfect learning, was appointed by the Roman Court to be the shepherd of the Church of Christ at Canterbury 1278."‡ The year before, on 2nd Aug. 1277, Bishop Burnell was present at the laying of the foundation stones of Vale Royal Abbey, Cheshire, and celebrated high mass on that occasion.§ No doubt he attended the King

\* See pp. 22-3; and *cf.* Foundation Charter of Combermere Abbey, p. 19

† *Williamson's Fines*, quoted in Ormerod's Cheshire, New Edit. III. 403.

‡ Matthew of Westminster's Chron. Vol. II. p. 472. (Bohn's Edit.)

§ "Ormerod," New Edit. Vol. II. p. 147.

on his Welsh campaign, for at Aberconwey [Conway] on the 19th May, 1283, he obtained the privilege of a chartered fair at Nantwich.

"The King concedes to the Venerable father *Robert Bishop of Bath and Wells* that he and his heirs for ever shall have a fair at his manor of Wich Malbank in the county of Chester every year for three days duration namely, on the vigil, on the day, and on the morrow of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, [23, 24 and 25 Aug.] &c. Dated 19 May 11th Edw. I. [1283]. These being witnesses: Edward [Burnell] his brother, Henry de Lacy Earl of Lincoln,\* Roger le Bygod, Earl of Norfolk and Marshall of England, Robert de Brus Earl of Warwick,† Richard de Brus, Robert son of John and others."

The above is translated from a copy of the charter in *Harl. MSS.* 2074 p. 202; and on the same page is an extract from a Patent Roll as follows: (*translated*)—

"In the year 15 Edw. I. [1286-7] the King concedes to *Robert Bishop of Bath and Wells* that he and his heirs for ever shall have free warren in all his demesne lands in Wich Malbank and Copenhall in the county of Chester, so that no one &c. These being witnesses Henry de Lacy Earl of Lincoln, Ottone de Grandison, John son of St. John and others."

Bishop Burnell was presented by Simon, Abbot of St. Werburgh, Chester, to the Rectory of Astbury in this county, before the year 1289.‡ Being on a journey to Scotland, whither he was sent to demand the surrender of that country to King Edward I, he died at Berwick on 25th Oct. 1292; and was buried in Wells Cathedral; his possessions here descending to his brother *Edward*, son of Sir Phillip Burnell, Baron of Malpas, who had died 15 Edw. I. [1286-7].—(*Harl. MSS.* 2038 f. 136 g.)

EDWARD, LORD BURNELL, who succeeded through survivorship, held his share of the Barony until 9 Edw. II.§ [1315-16], when he died without issue, his lands descending to his sister Matilda, then wife of John de Hanlow, Kt., and afterwards of John Lovell, Kt. (*Harl MSS.* 2038 f. 136 g.)

JOHN DE HANLOW, KT., paid his *relief*|| of £10 for his lands described as "two knights' fees" formerly held by Edward Burnell, in 1316,¶ and was still living on 2nd Dec. 1330, when he presented to the Hospital of St. Nicholas, in Nantwich. His death took place not long after, for in 1341

SIR JOHN LOVELL, KT., the second husband of the said Matilda, had alienated without licence a messuage and garden in Wich-Malbank, called "*Chastelyord*," to William de Brescy, who on the 19th September in that year had obtained pardon for the same.¶ Sir John Lovell died before 1350, leaving two sons of the *same name*, John, both under age. The elder died about the age of twenty, in the year 1362, the younger being of the age of sixteen when his brother's Inquisition *post mortem* was taken.

\* Henry de Lacy, who held the high title of Earl of Lincoln, was of Cheshire origin, and was the 10th Baron of Halton in this county from 1258 until his death on 5th Feb. 1310. (See Beamont's "*History of Halton*," p. 33.)

† ? Robert, son of William de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.

‡ Ormerod's "Cheshire," New Edit. Vol. iii. p. 26.

§ Alina, widow of Edw. Burnell, in 1315 and 1316 entered actions against John and Roger Brescy, Thos. Cradok, William de Pull, Roger de Bulkyleg, &c., claiming dower for lands in Wich-Malbank, in all for 2 parts of 64 acres of lands, besides 8½ acres, 10 acres of wood, 2 acres of meadow, the Serjeancy and Bedelary of Wich-Malbank, &c. (*Plea Rolls*.)

|| "*Relief*," i.e. a fine "due for taking up the estate, which had lapsed or fallen in by the death of the last tenant.

¶ Recognizance Rolls—Cheshire Records. In Acton Burnell Church, Salop, is a brass and effigy to Sir John de Hanlow, who married the heiress of the Burnells.



A copy of an Indenture of this Inquisition is given in *Harl. MSS.* 2038 f. 137, of which the following is a translation.

"To Edward,\* son of the illustrious King of England, Prince of Wales, duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester, Adam de Kingesley Escheator of Chester sends greeting. Forasmuch as *John son of John Lovell Kt.* who held of us *in capite* on the day of his death &c. as witnessed by Bartholomew de Burghesse our Justiciary of Chester on the first day of April in the 36th year of the King our father [1363] by virtue of our letters an Inquisition was taken at Wich Malbank on the Sabbath day next after the feast of Easter [April 2] in the year aforesaid, by the oaths of Richard de ffuleshurst, Robert de Maisterson, Richard de Parker, Roger de Cholmundelegh, William de Wettenhall of Cholmundeston, Roger de Brescy of Morefield [Willaston] John de Rope, Robert de Wyllaston, Ralph de Shagh, John Brescy, William de Bromlegh and Hugh of Blakenhall, Jurors, who say on their oaths that the aforesaid John, son of John, on the day of his death died seised in his demesne as of fee of a sixth part of the Barony of Wich Malbank held of our Lord the Earl of Chester *in capite*, and that quantity of the fee of the barony is of the total value of £20 per annum; and that on the day aforesaid John, brother of the said John son of John, is his heir of the age of 16 years on the day in which the same John his brother died, namely about the feast of St. Michael, in the year aforesaid of the King." [i.e. about 29 Sept. 1362].

Consistent with this Inquisition, the Bishop of Lichfield presented a priest to St. Nicholas' Hospital in 1364, "*through lapse*;" and in the following year, before the heir had attained his majority, the next presentation to the vacant Hospital was made by Sir Edmund Everard Knight, the legal representative, and probably guardian of the heir.

SIR JOHN LOVELL, of Tichmersh, co. Northampton, Kt., afterwards Knight of the Garter, would obtain possession of his lands about 1367. He took the title of Lord Lovell and Holland about 1373 on his marriage with Maude de Holland, sole heiress of Robert de Holland; and by his marriage added the manors of Mottram, Tintwistle and Longden-dale in Cheshire, to his extensive possessions in the counties of Dorset, Somerset, Oxford, and Northampton. He did service in the French wars in 1368, 1374 and 1375; and on the 8th Aug. 1394, was appointed by the King, to take for the King's voyage, (probably to Ireland,) such ships and seamen as he should find fit in the ports of Chester, Lancaster and North Wales.† In his will dated at Wardour Castle, co. Wilts, 25th July 1408, and proved 12th Sept. in the same year, he bequeaths "his body to be buried in the Church of the Hospital of St. John at Brackley, co. Northampton," and leaves "a vestment of black adorned with stars of gold, and certain copes to the said hospital."‡

His *Inquisition post mortem* as far as relates to Nantwich, taken at Wich-Malbank in Sept., 1408, before Richard de Manley Escheator, finds that "he died seized in his demesne, as of fee, of a sixth part of the barony of Wich Malbanc, with the advowson of the Chapel of St. Nicholas, with appurtenances, to wit, [the following] free rents from lands and tenements; viz.:—

<i>In Nantwich.</i>	£	s.	d.
The heirs of William de Praers . . . . .	0	12	0
Robert Brett . . . . .	0	0	6
William de Fouleshurst, for two places of land . . . . .	0	1	6

\* Edward the Black Prince, who had the wardship of John Lovell, the elder heir.

† Recognizance Rolls—Cheshire Records.

‡ Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, Vol. II. p. 113, where will be found an account of this family and their lands in the parish of Mottram.

	£	s.	d.
Nicholas Colfox, Kt. . . . .	0	2	0
Thomas de Fouleshurst . . . . .	0	4	0
John de Brescy . . . . .	1	lb	cinnamon
Richard de Rooper & John Muryell . . . . .	0	10	0
Thomas le Maisterson, Henry Bryan, William le Fysshier, Elisot de Wetenhale Richard de Cholmondeley. . . . .	8	19	0
<i>In Newhall</i> [from 38 tenants all named] . . . . .	13	8	0
<i>In Wolstanwood</i> from Thomas de Bulkylegh for 150 acres of land . . . . .	5	0	0
<i>In</i> [? <i>Monks'</i> ] <i>Copenhall</i> [from 8 tenants] . . . . .	7	10	3
<i>In</i> [? <i>Church</i> ] <i>Copenhall</i> [from 10 tenants] . . . . .	8	8	6
Total annual Rental	£44	15	9

The Inquisition further states that he died on 10th Sept. last past, [1408] and that *John Lovell*, Chevalier, was his son and next heir, then of the age of 30 years and more.

SIR JOHN LOVELL, KT., who thus succeeded, died on or about the 19th Oct., 1414, his *Inquisition post mortem*, which is now defaced and almost obliterated, being taken on the following 6th Nov. finds his son and heir, *William Lovell* to be under age in the feast of Epiphany last past.

“He died seised of two parts of  $\frac{1}{4}$ th part of the Barony of Nantwich with the advowson of the Chapel of St. Nicholas: a clear rent of . . . shillings out of a tenement of the late William de Praers in Nantwich . . . &c. “4s. issuing out of a piece of land held by Thomas de Fouleshurst of *Fleshmonger lane* in Nantwich” &c. His widow, Eleanor, the daughter of William Lord Zouch of St. Maur, held part of these lands in dower, viz. :— “30 acres of land and 10 acres of meadow and  $\frac{3}{4}$  rent in Wich Malbank and Copenhall, value £4 1s. 0d.; 40 acres of land and 12 acres of meadow and  $\frac{3}{4}$  rent in Newhall and Wolstanwood, value £6 5s. 6d.;

until the day of her death, which was “Monday next after the feast of St. Gregory the Pope [13 Jan.] last past” [1434] when they reverted to her son Sir William Lovell Kt.

SIR WILLIAM LOVELL KT. had livery of the lands of his father and grandmother Maud by writ dated 12th June, 1434, being then about twenty-three years of age. From that time to the year 1444 he was summoned to Parliament; after which, special exemption from serving in Parliament for the rest of his life was granted in consideration of his eminent services in foreign parts during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI. On the 13th Feb. 1442-3, he obtained by an exchange of lands from *William Browning* of Melbury, co. Dorset, an additional sixth part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank,\* which had descended from Joan, wife of Reginald Valletort, the sister of the Countess of Warwick and Alice Basset, as already mentioned. Sir William Lovell married Alice, one of the co-heiresses of Sir John Deincourt Kt., with whom he had large estates in Oxfordshire, Lincolnshire, &c. He died on 13th June, 1455, desiring by his will dated 18th March, 1454-5, to be buried “at the Grey Friars Oxenford” &c.

His Inquisition post mortem is as follows: (*translated*)—

“*Inq. p. m.* taken at Acton on the 4th Aug. 33 Henry VI [1455] before Ralph de Legh Escheator, by the oaths of Richard Spurstowe, Hugh Wettenhall, William Ree (?) Randle Wetenhale, Hugh

\* Recognizance Rolls—Cheshire Records. Also, *cf.* p. 40.

Multon, John Cheswys, Richard Hankylowe, David Swanwyk, William Dod, John Fyton, William Whytney and Thomas Olton, Jurors, who say that Sir William Lovell Kt., died seized in his demesne as of fee, of a sixth part of the barony of Wich-Malbank with the advowson of the Church of St. Nicholas of Wich-Malbank, held of the Earl of Chester, *in capite*, by Knight's service, and of the yearly value of £24 6s. 8d.; also of one other sixth part of the aforesaid barony, formerly of William Brounyng, held of the Earl of Chester, as above, and of the yearly value of £6 13s. 4d.; &c.; and that the said William Lovell, by the name of William, Lord of Lovell, Burnell, and Holland, granted [30th Sept. 1441] to Bartholomew Ardem, an annual rent of £13 6s. 8d., to be received of the issues and profits of the said William's lands in Wich-Malbank, Munkescopenhall, Wildeheth [Willaston] and Newhall; that the said William Lovell died on the 13 June last past [1455] and that John Lovell, Kt., was his son and heir, and of the age of 22 years on the morrow of Easter last past.\*

SIR JOHN LOVELL, Kt., who thus inherited a third part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, died on the 14th Jan., 1464-5, leaving as his heir *Francis*, then only seven years of age; his Inquisition being taken on Wednesday next before the Feast of St. John before the Latin gate [May 6] in the year 1465. In the same year, his widow Joan, who had granted these lands, with the advowson of St. Nicholas Hospital, without licence, to Thomas Acton, Thomas Maisteron, and Thomas Lewes, obtained pardon for her illegal act, which made it necessary to obtain a writ of "*ouster le main*,"\* dated 31st July, 1465, or delivery of these lands† to the heir, or rather his guardian, the Hon. Sir Richard, Earl of Warwick and Sarum, lord of Bergevenny, who presented to the Hospital at Nantwich in 1468.‡

FRANCIS LORD LOVELL obtained livery of his lands on the 28th Feb. 1477-8, being probably about twenty-three years old. He espoused the cause of the House of York, and suffered for his loyalty. He went to Scotland in the retinue of the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III, who, on 4th Jan. 1483, created him Viscount, and soon afterwards Knight of the Garter, Chamberlain of the Household, and Chief Butler of England. He fought on the side of the King at Bosworth Field, on 22nd Aug. 1485; but escaped, and fled for sanctuary to St. John's at Colchester, and thence to Sir Thomas Broughton's in Lancashire. After hiding there for some months he escaped to Flanders, where he joined Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy (sister to Edward IV), by whom he was sent, with John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, and a body of two thousand veteran Germans, to join Lambert Simnell, the pretended Duke of York. The invasion of England being resolved on they landed in Lancashire, and advanced as far as Stoke, near Newark, where they were defeated 16th June, 1487.

Lord Bacon says,§ "there went a report, that Lord Lovell fled and swam over Trent on horseback, but could not recover the farther side by reason of the steepness of the bank, and so was drowned in the river. But another report leaves him not there, but that he lived long after in a cave or vault." Hume and Lingard both state that Lord Lovell escaped from the field, and the latter historian says—"towards the close of the seventeenth

\* "*Ouster le main*," i.e. literally "to take off the hand."

† In 1475-6, March 12, Thomas Fulleshurst was appointed steward and receiver of these manors and lordships. (Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.)

‡ *Johanna or Joan* the widow of Sir John Lovell Kt. "died on Thursday next after the feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle [Aug. 24] 8 Edw. IV [1469] leaving Francis Lovell her son and heir aged 15 years on the day of the taking of this Inquisition. She died seized (in dower) of a sixth part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank with the advowson of St. Nicholas Chapel in Nantwich, and another sixth part of the same Barony." *Inquisition p. m.*

§ Bacon's *History of Henry VII.* p. 333. Bohn's Edit.

century, at his seat at Minster Lovell, in Oxfordshire, was accidentally discovered a chamber under the ground, in which was the skeleton of a man seated in a chair, with his head reclining on a table. Hence it is supposed that the fugitive had found an asylum in this subterranean chamber, where he was perhaps starved to death through neglect." This discovery is mentioned in Gough's additions to Camden's "*Britannia*," thus: "In pulling down the house of Minster Lovell in Oxfordshire, there was found in a vault the body of a man, in rich clothes, seated in a chair, with a table and mass book before him. The body was entire when found, but upon admission of the air, it soon fell to dust."\*

In consequence of his high treason, Francis Lord Lovell's lands became forfeitted to the Crown, according to the following Inquisition: (*translated*)—

"*Inquisition* taken at Chester in the Hall of Pleas there, before Thomas Wolton, Kt., Escheator, on Thursday next after the feast of St. Hillary [13 Jan.] in the 3 Henry VII [1488], by the oaths of John Hockenull, John Mynshull, Thomas . . . . ., John Myles (?), Richard Legh of Adlington, Robert Corbet, John Brooke of Leighton, Thomas Peche [? or Touchet], Thomas Hull of Eyton, John Legh of Hawardyn, Thomas Wetenhall of Cholmondeston, Geoffrey . . . . ., and Thomas Lee, Jurors, who say on their oaths that Francis Lovell, formerly Lord Lovell, was seized in his demesne as of fee, on the 7th November, 1487, the day on which he was attained of High Treason in Parliament held at Westminster, the manor and lordship of Longendale &c. Also of a sixth part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank with the advowson of the Chapel of St. Nicholas in the same Wich, and also the advowson of a third part of another Chapel of St. Lawrence there, the which sixth part, and advowsons aforesaid were held of the King, as Earl of Chester, and all pleas and plaints, the same being worth £24 6s. 8d. Also, the aforesaid Jurors say that the said Francis died seized in his demesne as of fee, on the 7th November, of another sixth part of the said Barony, which was formerly William Browning's, and held the same of the King, as Earl of Chester, worth £6 13s. 4d.

Also, a third part of the manor of Monkescopenhall which he held of the King, as Earl of Chester, worth 47 shillings. And they say that Sir William Stanley Kt., Chamberlain of Chester has seized the same into his hands, but by what title the Jury are ignorant."

These lands &c. were granted by King Henry VII, in 1489,† to SIR WILLIAM STANLEY, of Holt, Knight, Chamberlain of Chester, and Judge of North Wales, who had received high favours from the Crown after the Battle of Bosworth Field, where he treacherously deserted King Richard at the most critical time of the fight, and set the crown on Henry's head after rescuing him from imminent peril. Lord Bacon says,—“he was the richest subject for value in the kingdom, there being found in his castle of Holt 40,000 marks in ready money and plate, besides jewels, household stuffs, stock upon his ground and other personal estate, exceeding great. And for revenue in land and fee it was £3000 a year of old rent, a great matter in those times. Yet, nevertheless, blown up with the conceit of his merit, he did not think he had received good measure from the King, as he expected; and his ambition was so exorbitant and unbounded, as he became suitor to the King for the Earldom of Chester.”‡

His fall soon came. On the surrender of Sir Robert Clifford in 1494, Sir William

\* An elegant romance entitled "*The Old English Baron*," written by Miss Clara Reeve, of Ipswich, in 1777, is based on the mysterious disappearance of Lord Lovell of Minster Lovell; but the details of the story do not coincide with the true history of the family.

The Arms of the Lovells were—Barry nebulé of six Or and Gules. (Dorfold MS. Pedigree Bk. fol. 117.)

† *Havl. MSS.* 1967 f. 1186.

‡ Bacon's Henry VII. p. 400 and 402. (Bohn's Edit.)

Stanley, then Chief Chamberlain, Privy Councillor, and Knight of the Garter, was accused of favouring the designs of Perkin Warbeck, and imprisoned in the Tower, and eventually, on 16th Feb. 1495, he was executed on Tower Hill, all his estates having been confiscated.\*

From the list of Masters of St. Nicholas Hospital it is clear that the advowson of the Hospital belonged henceforth to the Crown, until its final dissolution in 1 Edw. VI [1547]. The Lovell lands were not granted away until 1530; and during that interim of thirty-five years, stewards were appointed by the Crown, who received the rents, and nominated the Bailiffs of Nantwich. Thus Ralph Egerton, of Ridley Hall, afterwards Standard bearer to King Henry VIII, and Treasurer of the Household of the lady Princess his daughter, was appointed Steward and receiver of all lands lately belonging to Sir William Stanley, in Chester and Flint, by deed dated at Greenwich 21st May 1 Hen. VIII [1509]; and James Button, yeoman of the Crown, was appointed Bailiff of Nantwich, by deed dated at Greenwich 29th May 2 Hen. VIII [1510].† In *Harl. MSS.* 2039 f. 44 b., Richard Maisteron occurs as Steward and receiver of these Crown lands in 1525-6, of which the following is the Rental.

<i>Nantwich.</i>	£	s.	d.
The heirs of William Praers . . . . .	0	12	0
The heirs of Nich: Colfox . . . . .	0	2	0
The heirs of Will: ffouleshurst . . . . .	0	1	6
William Brescy . . . . .	0	0	6
Jo: Meverell & Jo: Rope . . . . .	0	0	9
The heirs of Thos: ffouleshurst, 1rb cummin . . . . .	0	4	0
Jo: Kingsley . . . . .	0	2	0
Jo: son of John de Wetnall . . . . .	0	6	8
Will: Leeke . . . . .	0	4	0
Rich: Spencer . . . . .	0	6	8
Hug' Madye . . . . .	0	1	0
Tho: Brunley . . . . .	0	1	0
Rich: Maisteron [Steward] . . . . .	2	0	0
Tho: Brayn . . . . .	1	1	0
Ric: Moreton . . . . .	0	16	0
Jo: Kingesley . . . . .	1	0	0
Nich: Hengster . . . . .	0	16	8
Rich: Fletcher . . . . .	0	13	4
Tho: Taylor . . . . .	0	10	0
Ric: de Vernon . . . . .	0	10	0
Jo: son of Tho: Wettall . . . . .	0	10	0
Rog: preers . . . . .	0	5	0
Jo: Kingsley for part of the mill . . . . .	0	13	4

Total—£10 18 5

\* Sir William Stanley Kt. built Ridley Hall, "the fairest gentleman's howse of al Chestreshyre," the gateway of which still exists.

† *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Hen. VIII. Vol. 1. Nos. 131 and 1086.*  
James Button, who succeeded his father Richard Button, in the office of Bailiff for the Lovell Lands in Nantwich, was in 7 Hen. VIII [1515-16], sued by Alicia Maisteron, for the recovery of 3 messuages in Wich-Malbank. (*Plea Rolls.*)

	£	s.	d.
In <i>Baretspull</i> —Thos Moulton . . . . .	0	9	0
In <i>Wolstanwood</i> —The heirs of Thos: Bulkeley, and 6 other tenants	7	18	6
In <i>Acton</i> —7 tenants . . . . .	2	2	6
In <i>Newhall</i> —17 tenants . . . . .	3	5	0
In [ <i>Church</i> ] <i>Copenhall</i> —13 tenants . . . . .	13	3	3½
In <i>Monks Copenhall</i> —13 tenants . . . . .	11	16	1

On 23rd June 22 Hen. VIII [1530] the King granted by Letters Patent to SIR JOHN GAGE, vice-Chamberlain of the King's Chamber, the lordship and town of Nantwich, and the manors and lordship of Cow-lane, Weston Wood, *alias* Ulston Wood and Acton, lately belonging to Sir William Stanley, attainted *temp.* Hen. VII;\* which grant was surrendered through invalidity in favour of SIR ANTHONY BROWNE, Knight of the Body, and Alice, his wife, by another deed of the same date, to be held *in capite* by the service of one Knight's fee.†

In 37 Hen. VIII [1545-6] the King grants to SIR WILLIAM PAGET, Knight, "all that our manor of Nantwich &c. with all its privileges largely enumerated; and on 22 Octb. 1550 LORD PAGET of Beaudesart, sells the said barony, described as the manor of Nantwyche, with 40 messuages, 3 mills, 2740 acres, and £23 rent there and in Acton, Copenhall, Newhall, Aston, Cowlane, and Owstenwood, to ROLAND HILL, first protestant Lord Mayor of London, and to Thomas Legh of the same, merchant."‡ This sale appears to have been afterwards rendered void, for on 11th March 1 Mary [1553] William Lord Paget, K.G., of Beaudesart, in consideration of his faithful services, grants to his servant ROBERT FLETCHER, all his rights in the Barony of Wich-Malbank, viz. :—one third which was the property of the lords Lovell, and other two parts of a third, which belonged to Lord Audley. (*Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 119 b.)

On 26th April 3 and 4 Phil. and Mary [1556] Robert Fletcher, in consideration of £100 sells the same to SIR HUGH CHOLMONDELEY. (*Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 119 c.)

Before treating of the second Division of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, it may be well to speak of the two pre-Reformation Religious Houses and Chapels mentioned in the foregoing Inquisitions.

## St. Nicholas Hospital. §

ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL, where *hospitality* was dispensed to travellers, and alms distributed to the needy poor, was situated in the street still called *Hospital Street*. Founded by the first Norman Baron of Wich-Malbank, this religious house continued for nearly 500 years. During the last 200 years of its existence, institutions of Chaplains or Masters to the Hospital are recorded in the Bishops' Registers at Lichfield. To the list of Chaplains

\* Calendar of State Papers, Hen. VIII Vol. 4, part III p. 2920.

† Recognizance Rolls—Cheshire Records.

‡ *Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 118 119; and Recognizance Rolls.

§ It is singular that neither Partridge nor Platt mention this Hospital. A salt-house belonging to the Hospital is mentioned in a deed in *Harl. MSS.* 2077 f. 39 b. as follows:—"Thomas son of Richard Taylor deceased of Wich-Malbank gave to Roger Mainwaring a salt-house of 6 leads in Nantwich, lying in length between the road called le Wood Street on the south part, and the land of Roger Praers on the west part, and in breadth between the salt-house belonging to St. Nicholas Hospital, on the east side; and the salt-house of the Blessed Virgin on the north side &c. These being witnesses, John Leech &c. Dated 11th Hen. VII." [1495-6].

which first appeared in Dr. Ormerod's "*Cheshire*," (vol. iii. p. 238, old Edit. 1819), and which has recently been corrected in the new edition of that History, the names of two Chaplains of earlier date, and other interesting particulars relating to the Hospital, are here printed for the first time.

*The CHAPLAINS or MASTERS of the HOSPITAL and FREE CHAPEL  
of the BLESSED NICHOLAS of WICH-MALBANK.*

DNO. [Sir] JOHN, chaplain of St. Nicholas Hospital, 44 Hen. III [1259].

His name occurs as witness to a deed of that date among the Wettenhall Charters in *Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 113.

WILLIAM DE LA BACH Keeper, 3 Edw. II [1309-10].

He is mentioned in the following extract of an *Inquisition* from the Woodnoth Collections in *Dodsworth MSS.* xxxi. f. 144. (Bodleian Lib.) (*Translation*)—

*Inquisition* taken anno 10 Edw. II [1316-7]. The Jurors say that a certain Ralph Sarazin gave to God, and St. Nicholas, to the Prior and brethren of the Hospital aforesaid a certain salt house in Wich Malbank in pure and perpetual alms, which same salt-house belonged to *William de la Bach* formerly keeper of the said Hospital who in the 3 Edw. II conceded the same to Hugh ffouleshurst, by the payment to him and his successors Keepers of the Hospital of 13s. 4d. per annum."

DNI. [Sir] ROBERT DE MARCHOMLEGH, admitted, in or before 1330.

ALEXANDER LE BLOUNT, clerk, admitted, "*iiiij non' Decembr'*" [2 Dec.] 1330. Presented by Sir John de Hanlowe, Knight, on the death of Robert de Marchomlegh, the last rector.

THOMAS CORBET, master, admitted before or in the year 1350.

ROGER DE ALLERTON, clerk, admitted "*v Idus Maij*" [11th May] 1350. Presented by Edward (the Black Prince) eldest son of the King, as Earl of Chester, by reason of the custody of the son and heir of Sir John Lovell, Kt. deceased, vacated by the death of Master Thomas Corbet the last Chaplain of the chantry or chapel of St. Nicholas of Wychmalbank.

JOHN DE NEWENHAM, chaplain, admitted "*xij Kln. Aug.*" [12 Aug.] 1354. Presented by Edward, son of the King, &c., by reason of the minority of John Lovell; after the resignation of Roger de Allerton, the last Chaplain.

NICHOLAS RIVELL, priest, admitted, "*xij Kln. Marcii*" [21 March] 1364. Presented by the Bishop (of Lichfield) through lapse, (i.e. by the change of ownership in the advowson, through the death of the elder John Lovell on or about 29th Sept. 1362) by the vacation in the Hospital or Chapel of St. Nicholas of Nantwyck.

ROGER, son of WILLIAM OF BLACKHURST,\* admitted "*iiij Kln. Oct.*" [30th Oct.] 1365. Presented by Edmund Everard, Knight, attorney-general of John Lovell of Tichemersh; on the vacancy of the free chapell of the blessed Nicholas of Wych Malbank.

JOHN OF ORMESHENED, priest, admitted 20 April, 1374. Presented by Sir John Lovell, Knight, lord of Tichemersh, on the resignation of "*dni*" [sir] Roger of Blackhurst, 19 April.

\* *Blackhurst* is the name of a hamlet in Baddiley parish, which was the seat of the ancient family of *Praers*.

“Dns.” [Sir] JOHN OF WODEHOUSE, clerk, admitted 8 Decr. 1376. Presented by Sir John Lovell, Knight, through the resignation of John of Ormeshened, the last Keeper, on the 27th day of November last.

THOMAS HYNE,\* priest, admitted 31 Octr. 1395. Presented by the noble Lord John, Lord Lovell, and of Holland, after the death of Sir John Wodehouse, dean of S. Johns Chester, last rector, in the month of August last past.

MASTER ALAN of Newark, clerk, admitted 27 March, 1396. Presented by the noble Lord John, Lord of Lovell and Holland, through the resignation of Sir Thomas Hyne, the last Keeper or Master.

RANDLE OF BRUYN, clerk, admitted . . . . . 1425. Presented by the rev. father Lord William, by the grace of God Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, through lapse, (during the minority of Sir William Lovell Knt.)

The cause of the vacancy is not recorded.

MASTER THOMAS HEYWODE, admitted in or before 1460.

There is no mention of the name of the patron, nor the cause of the vacancy in the Bishop's Register.

“Dno” [Sir] THOMAS FRISTON, chaplain, admitted 15 Nov. 1460. He succeeded after the death of Master Thomas Heywode, the last Master or Keeper.

RANDLE EGERTON, clerk, admitted 21 Octobr. 1468. Presented by the Honble. Sir Richard Earl of Warwick and Sarum, lord of Bergavenny, in place of Lord Lovell by reason of his minority of age; the vacancy occurring through the resignation of Thomas fryston last Master or Keeper of the Hospital or Chapel.

RICHARD EGERTON, clerk, admitted 28 May 1477. Presented by the most excellent Prince Edward [afterwards Edward V.] eldest son of the King, as Earl of Chester, (Francis Lord Lovell, not having obtained full possession of his lands until nine months after that date, viz.: on 28 Feb. 1477-8,) after the resignation of Randle Egerton the last Master &c.

THOMAS BLYTHE, clerk, admitted 4 Feb. 1506. This presentation is entered in the Bishop's Register at Chester as well as at Lichfield; the entry in the Chester Presentation Book being as follows: (*translated*)—

“To the Hospital or free Chapel of St. Nicholas in Wich-Malbank, vacant by the resignation of Sir Richard Egerton, Thomas Blythe, clerk, was presented by the most excellent Lord Prince [Henry, son of] Henry [VII] by the grace of God King of England and France true patron of the said Hospital; and was admitted and instituted to the same by the Revd. Father in Christ and God, Geoffrey, Lord Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield; and was inducted by Robert Cliffe, the Bishop's official, and John Veysy LL.D., Archdeacon of Chester on the 6th March 1506.

MASTER WILLIAM GWYN, clerk, admitted 11 Decr. 1531. Presented by the most excellent Prince in Christ and God now Lord King Henry eighth; on the death of Thomas Blythe last incumbent.

\* *Thomas Hyne* was presented by the same patron to the living of Leigh, in Lancashire. (Ormerod's “Cheshire,” New Edit. vol. iii. p. 449.)



During his incumbency the Ecclesiastical Valuation 26 Hen. VIII. [1535] was taken, and the following return made.

“*FREE CHAPEL OF ST. NICHOLAS.*”

“—— Gwynne, master of the same. Value of lands and tenements belonging to the said Hospital per annum £6 11s. 4d. Tithes 13s. 1¾d.”

MASTER WILLIAM HILL LL.B, admitted “nono die Aprilis” [9 April] 1541. Presented by the most Excellent and Puissant Prince in Christ, Lord Henry the eighth; on the death of Master William Gwyn last Master or Keeper.

In the first year of the following reign [Edw. VI] the Hospital was dissolved, and like others, no doubt demolished. William Hill, the last Master, retired on a pension of C<sup>sh</sup>. [£5] per ann.; which continued to be paid to him until 12th Oct. 4 Eliz. [1561].\*

The *Chantry Roll*, dated 1548, gives the following particulars at the dissolution of the Hospital.

“*THE FFREE CHANTRY OF SAINT NICHOLAS WITHIN THE SAYD TOWN* [Nantwich.]

*Incumbent.* Wyllm. Hyll of the age of 1: [50] yeres. *The yerly valewe.* vijli. xs. [£7 10s. od.]  
*Plate and Jewells.* None. *Goods and Ornaments.* None. *Lead & Bells.* None.

Shortly before the dissolution of the Hospital, and probably in anticipation of the threatened change, William Hill, “clerk,” by an Indenture dated 3rd Nov. 1542, leased to *Raphe Wilbraham* of Nantwich for the term of twenty-one years at an annual rent of £6 11s. 4d.,—

“all that hys *ffree Chappell or Hospitall* with all houses, messuages, tenements, lands, tythes, leadds salt wallings emoluments &c. thereto belonging” &c.†

This lease was however annulled when the dissolution came in 1548; and in the following year King Edward VI granted to *Thomas Bromley* of Nantwich, and his heirs for ever, in consideration of the sum of £435 16s. 8d. paid by him into the Crown Treasury, the following Chantry lands:—‡

[1] “The Chantry House in Bunbury formerly the residence of two Chantry priests of Sir Raphe Egerton’s Chantry Chapel in the parish Church of Bunbury, co. Chester, together with the following lands in Wistaston &c. parcel of the possessions of the said Chantry a messuage or tenement with mill, orchard, gardens, meadows, and common of pasture in the occupation of Richard Orton; a house with garden orchard &c. in the occupation of Henry Nayler; a house &c. in the occupation of John Bykerton; a Cottage in the occupation of Thomas Lucas (all in Wistaston co. Chester); and also lands in Tiverton, Whicksall, co. Salop, and Threpedwood in co. Flint; of the total value of £12 15s. 4d.;

[2] Also a House and manse [“*mansionem*”] formerly called the *Chapel of St. Nicholas* in the parish of Nantwyche, with its orchard. one close adjoining containing by estimation about 2 acres, and a croft containing . . . . acres, and one wiche house of 12 leads; also the site or vacant land of a wiche house of 6 leads; of the total annual value of £6 11s. 4d.

Dated at Westminster 11th Nov. 2 Edw. VI.” [1549].

\* Mr. Earwaker’s transcripts of West Hall (Chesh.) Papers, relating to Chantry Priests and their Pensions, between the years 1560—1568.

† From an authorized copy of the Lease now preserved at Nantwich Rectory.

‡ The original parchment deed in Latin, which is very lengthy, and still has the King’s seal attached, is now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere.

Through the lapse of the Parish Register before 1572, it is not known when Thomas Bromley died; but he left a daughter and heiress, Emlyn, who was married to Alexander Newton of Newton, in Mottram, co. Chester; whose will (proved 26th July, 1557) and that of his son George Newton (proved 19th April, 1580,) have been printed by the Chetham Society. (Vols. xxxiii and liv.)

These lands are also traceable in an Indenture dated 13th Sept. 1637, which states they were sold by Sir Richard Newport, Knight, to Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., of Nantwich, for £380, viz.:—\*

“One Messuage, Tenement, or Hospitall in Wiche aforesaid known by the name of *the Hospitall*.  
One cottage in Wiche wherein John Maddocks then dwelled: one other cottage in Wiche, (then divided into two) wherein Marion Critchley did theretofore inhabit.  
One pasture or Croft in Wiche, called *the Hospital Croft*.  
One Croft in Wiche called St. Anne Croft, alias Froggreave (except nine butts in the West end of the same Croft, being the Inheritance of Roger Wilbraham of Dorfold Esq.)  
One *wiche house of 12 leads* with its Appurts, in Great Wood Street.  
The *site or ground of one other Wiche house of 6 leads* lying in pepper Street [near the Bridge (see Partridge’s Hist. p. 8)]. All manner of hereditaments &c. Wood-rooms, Bryne Wallings, making of salt, Tythes, profits &c. then in the tenure of John Thrush.  
All that *parcel of the yard belonging to the said Hospital whereupon new Almshouses were then lately built.*”

The Almshouses here referred to are Sir Edmund Wright’s, who conveyed the same by deed of gift to Trustees on 30th Aug. 1638. *Hospital Croft*† is probably the same as *Almshouse Meadow* (see map); and though the Hospital is not here mentioned by name, there is no doubt that St. Nicholas Hospital is intended, as proved by the Rent Roll of Roger, the son of Thomas Wilbraham, Esq. of Nantwich, dated 1659, which gives *inter alia*:—

	Annual Rent.
	£ s. d.
“Roger Bickerton for 2 cottages & an orchard <i>part of St. Nicholas Hospital in Nantwich</i> . . . . .	2 13 4
William Pratchett for 2 cottages built upon a <i>six leads ground heretofore belonging to St. Nich. Hosp.</i> . . . . .	2 0 0
18 leads Wallinge & <i>tythes pertaining to St. Nicholas hospitall after my father in law’s death; Val. p. ann.</i> . . . . .	15 0 0
Jo: Bromhall for <i>ye 2 Froggreaves</i> . . . . .	10 0 0
Tho: Richardson for <i>St. Annes Croft †</i> . . . . .	3 0 0
The <i>Hospitall Croft</i> usually set for . . . . .	12 0 0
William Jackson, Tanner, for <i>ye Hospitall howse</i> . . . . .	4 0 0

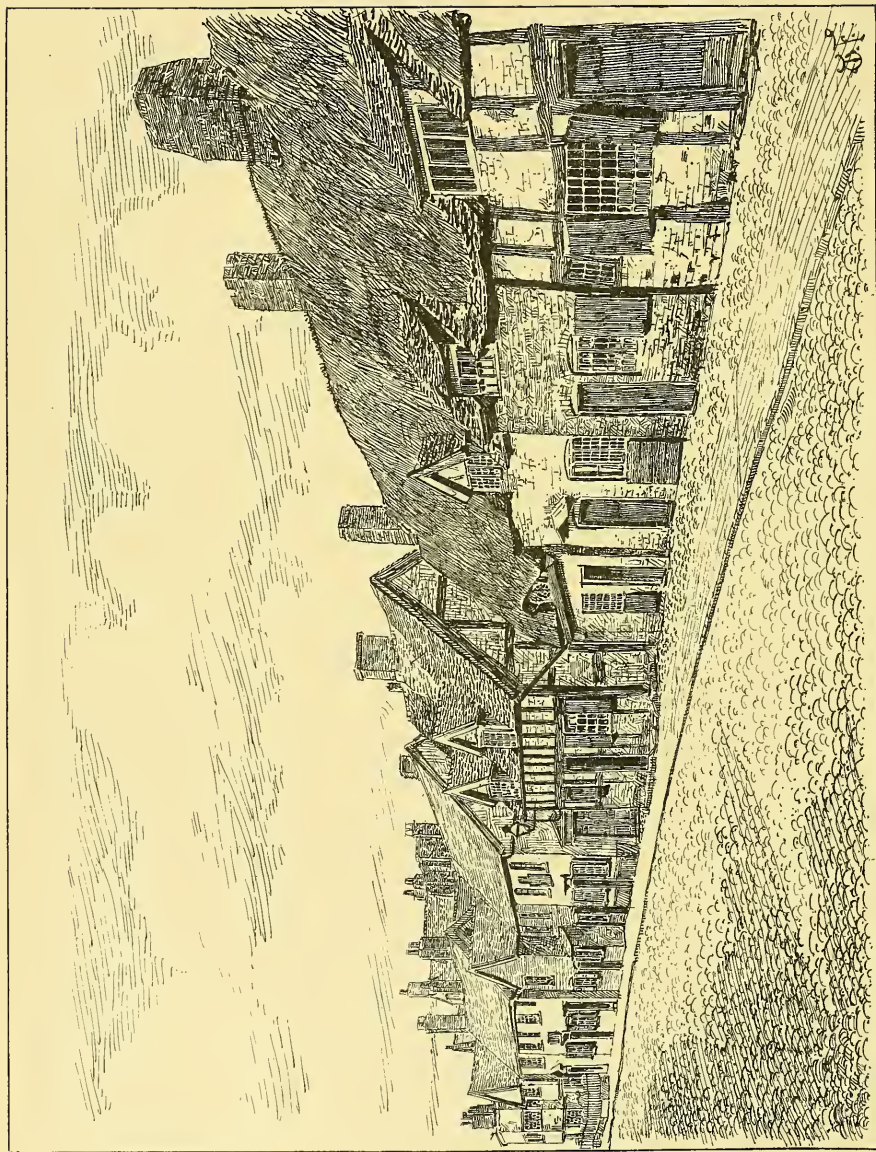
It may be presumed that “*ye Hospitall howse*” occupied by a tanner in 1659, was in the previous century the identical residence of John Crewe, of Hospital Street, Gent, who is said also to have been a *tanner*, and who was the father of Sir Ranulph Crewe, Kt. The house of John Crewe is unmistakeably identified by old heraldic glass still existing in the three lead latticed windows of the upper over-hanging story, namely:—

\* An authorized copy of the original Indenture in the “Office of Land Revenue Records” is now preserved at Nantwich Rectory.

† This meadow has no connection whatever with Sir Edmund Wright’s Almshouses; and never has been connected with that foundation.

‡ Roger Wilbraham of Nantwich paid an annual rent of 10s. to his father-in-law, Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Esq. for “9 butts in St. Annes Croft.” (Rent Roll.)





HOSPITAL STREET, NANTWICH.

W. & A. R. B. & Co. Litho. London.

Window over the Entrance:—

A shield Azure, a lion rampant Argent. (*Crewe.*)

In the Window on either side:—

A shield Quarterly. *First and fourth*, Argent, two bars Or. (*Mainwaring.*) *Second* (the glass of which is wanting in the west window) *and third*, Azure, three garbs Or. (*?Blundeville*)\* surmounted by a crest; An Ass's head proper, issuing from a ducal coronet (*Mainwaring.*)

John Crewe, Gent., married Alice daughter of Humphrey Mainwaring of Nantwich, and died in 1598 (see Monuments.) This house belonged to the Goldsmith family in the early part of the eighteenth century; and in the latter part of the same century to the Caldwell family, whose representatives now reside at Lindley Hall, near Talk-o'th-Hill, co. Staff. After the death of James Caldwell, Esq., who was buried on 15th July, 1791, it was for many years the residence of his son-in-law Joseph Skerrett, Esq., who died there on the 18th Jan. 1832.† The present proprietor and occupier is Thomas Bower, Esq., Architect, who has recently taken down the old chimney stack, and gate-posts with balls on, at the east end of the house, and erected thereon new offices. When making these alterations some remarkable stone remains were discovered in digging the foundations. They are now to be seen in the garden behind; and Mr. Bower is of opinion that they have been the capital and base of a Norman doorway. Here then is evidence, which, taken in connection with the foregoing statements, and the fact that Hospitals were usually situated at the entrance to towns, goes a long way to prove, if it does not absolutely determine, that this house, at Hospital Street end, is the exact site of the ancient Hospital and Chapel of St. Nicholas.

## St. Lawrence Hospital.

Of this Hospital very little is known. In *Harl. MSS.* 2074 f. 166 a, it is styled a hospital “*for leazours*,” that is, a Lazar-house, or hospital for lepers. Mr. Partridge says, (*Hist. of Nantwich*, p. 13) it is termed in several deeds “*Domus Leprosorum*,” and that, according to the tradition of the town, it stood on or near the site of a “Malt-house,” then (1774) occupied by Mr. James Bayley, (still standing, but now disused) very near the Almshouses at Welsh Row Head. The same writer contends for the existence of a *Priory* in close proximity to the Hospital; but no mention of any such foundation is to be found in any authentic record. St. Lawrence Hospital, as will presently be seen, was connected with the Abbey of Combermere; and the superior of the Hospital may have been the prior of the Abbey; i.e. the monastic officer next below the Abbot. The earliest mention of the Hospital occurs in an *Inquisition* taken at Minshull before Thomas le Yong, Eschaetor in 28 Edw. III [1354-5]; as follows:‡ (*translated*)—

\* Why the arms of Randle III (Blundeville) Earl of Chester, are here introduced, I do not know.

† “1775. June 14. Joseph Skerratt Upholsterer & Margaret Caldwell.” (Nant. Marriage Registers.) A large tombstone enclosed with iron railings in the Churchyard is thus inscribed: “To the memory of James Caldwell a native of Scotland but long resident in this Town who died in July 1791; and of Hannah his wife who died in July 1794. Also of their daughters Margaret Skerrett who died 12 March 1805 Aged 54. Ann Caldwell who died 6 February 1826 Aged 68. Elizabeth Caldwell, who died 10 January 1842 Aged 76, Also Joseph Skerrett the husband of Margaret Skerrett who died 18 January 1832 Aged 87.”

‡ Erdswick Collections in *Harl. MSS.* 506 p. 13; and also in No. 2077 f. 98 n.

"The aforesaid Jurors say that (the Abbey of Combermere) is possessed of the Hospital of St. Lawrence at Wich Malbank : in which there ought to be one chaplain to sing divine service every day ; and in which there ought to be three beds for the reception of poor sick people where they shall remain until they shall have recovered health ; and that a certain service has been withheld for four years now elapsed ; and it is now valued at 20 shillings per annum."

Combermere still maintained its claim on the Hospital in the 14 Henry VII [1498-9], when, according to the Rentals of Abbey Lands in Nantwich, (*Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 19) the name of "*John ffowler*" occurs as "*chaplain of the ffree chapel of St. Lawrence in Nantwich.*" Francis Lord Lovell, on his attainder in 1488, was found possessed of one third of the advowson of the Hospital.

The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1525, returns as follows:—

*FREE CHAPEL OF ST. LAWRENCE.*

"Doctor Incent' master of the same. The said Chapel is worth £4 per ann. from lands and tenements' belonging to the same. And there is paid to the Barons of Wich Malbank for toll of salt 4 shillings. So that there remains clear, 76 shillings. Also the tithes amount to 7s. 7¼d."

From the Survey of the Deanery of Wich-Malbank in 1541-2, (*Harl. MSS.* 2071) the amount of first-fruits claimed by Henry VIII was 6s. 10¼d.

The *Chantry Roll* dated 1548, at the dissolution of the Hospital and its Chapel, returns as follows:—

*"THE FFREE CHANTRY OF ST. LAWRENCE AND ST. JAMES WITHIN THE SAYD TOWNE OF NANTWICH.*

*Incumbent.* Rychard Wryght of the age of viij yeres. [so in the original, but most likely an error].

*Yerely valewe:* lxxvjs. [76 shillings].

*Plate & Jewells:* none.

*Goods & Ornaments:* none.

*Leade:* none.

*Bells:* valewed ijs. [2 shillings].

*Richard Wright*, the last incumbent, received an annual pension of £3 8s. 4d. as late as 1562 ; and appears to have purchased the lands and to have lived until 1585. According to his *Inquisition post mortem* he died seised of, (*inter alia*), "*the tythes of the formerly dissolved free Chapel of St. Lawrence,*"\* "*a pasture called Chapel croft, and half of another pasture called the Chapel-field adjacent, lying in Acton.*"

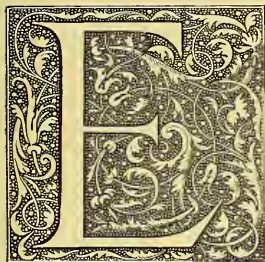
Thus in pre-Reformation times St. Lawrence Hospital, or Leper House, stood on the road-side at the western entrance to Nantwich, a refuge for poor emaciated creatures suffering from cutaneous diseases so common in past ages, when the poor lived in squalor and filth, were badly clothed and worse fed ; while St. Nicholas Hospital or Bede House, for the reception of indigent persons and poor wayfarers, stood at the opposite end of the town. It is worthy of remark that history has here repeated itself in modern times : for Sir Roger Wilbraham, in 1613, and Sir Edmund Wright, in 1638, each founded Alms-houses, on or near the respective sites of those ancient Religious Houses.

\* These small tythes were eventually conveyed by an Indenture dated 1st May, 1639, to the Minister of Nantwich Church and his successors, by *Margaret Woodnoth* and *Elizabeth Davenport*, the daughters and co-heiresses of Richard Wright, the son of Richard Wright, who was probably the last incumbent of the Hospital. (See *Wright Pedigree*.)



SECOND DIVISION OF THE BARONY.

The Audley Fee.



LEANOR MALBANK, second daughter and co-heiress of William the third Norman Baron of Wich-Malbank, died unmarried, having in her life-time granted her share of the Barony to HENRY DE ALDITHLEY OR AUDLEY, for the sum of 100 marks of silver and the gift of a palfrey, subject to the annual payment of 40 shillings. The charter granting these lands is among the Erdswick Collections in the *Harl. MSS.* 506; of which the following is a translation:—

“To all present and to come, know, that I, Eleanor Malbank of my own lawful right have given, and by this my present charter have confirmed to *Henry de Aldithley* and his heirs, for his homage and service all that land which I have had within the borders of Cheshire, with all their appurtenances and liberties and all fee service &c. \* \* \* \* to have and to hold of me and my heirs, them and their heirs, freely and quietly for ever &c. rendering for the same to me and my heirs, them and their heirs, for all secular service and exaction 40 shillings sterling annually, at the two terms, viz. : 20/- at the feast of St. Michael and 20/- at the feast of St. Mary, annually, for safe foreign service [*salvo forinseco servicio*]. For this donation and concession Henry before gave me 100 marks of silver, and one palfrey. And I, Eleanor Malbank &c. [give general warranty].

“These being Witnesses: Philipp de Orreby Justice: of Chester, Hugh Despencer, Thomas Despencer, Roger de Montalt, Warin de Vernon, & others.”

Of these witnesses, the first, Philip de Orreby, was Justiciary of Chester from 1209 to 1228; so that the Charter must date back to the early part of the reign of Henry III; whilst the others were among the greatest landowners of the Palatinate. The Despenchers were feudal lords of Stockport, Roger de Montalt was Baron of Montalt and High Steward of the County, Warin de Vernon was Baron of Shipbroke, and had married Auda, the sister of the grantress Eleanor. Although the Earl's name does not occur in connection

with this large grant of lands, it appears to have been necessary that this deed should be ratified, and accordingly, shortly afterwards, Ranulph, Earl of Chester, confirmed it by a Charter, which was also witnessed by Philip de Orreby, the Justiciary. This Charter affords an instance of the simple process of transfer of land in those times. A few inches of parchment, worded in the above general terms, attested in the presence of numerous local gentry, and having the seal of the grantress attached, gave to *Henry de Aldithley* sufficient title to thousands of acres!

Henry Audley married Bertred daughter of Ralph de Mainwaring by his wife Amicia;\* and, probably, he resided at his castle of Newhall, a few miles from Nantwich, which is traditionally said to have stood in a field called "the three butts" near Sheppenhall.† His successors, however, who are well known in history for their military exploits during the Edwardian wars, and for their pilgrimages to the Holy Land, had their chief seat at Helegh, in Staffordshire.

According to the Inquisition 16 Edw. I [1288] already given on p. 23, the Audley Fee was at that time found to be held by JAMES AUDLEGH, who may possibly have been the son, or grandson, of Henry de Aldithley. The next in descent appears to have been SIR NICHOLAS DE AUDLEY, who married Joan de Lacy, Countess of Lincoln, and widow of Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln and Baron of Halton, co. Chester.‡ This fee was afterwards held in succession by his son, *Sir James Audley*, and his grandson, *Sir Nicholas Audley*.§

SIR JAME AUDLEY, of Helegh, Knight, the famous hero of Poitiers, whose exploits are so romantically described in the pages of Froissart's Chronicles, alienated part of his Cheshire lands, in 1336-7, including "one third part of the manor of Wich-Malbank," to Walter, parson of the Church of Newport, probably for the purpose of joining the expedition to the French wars; he however, obtained re-eneffment and pardon for this alienation on 15th Dec. 1353.|| His Inquisition *post mortem* taken on the 18th May, 9 Rich. II [1386] finds "that he died siezed of (*inter alia*) "a third part of the Barony of Nantwich," held in *capite* of the Earl of Chester, yearly value £50; &c., and that Nicholas de Audlegh Kt., was his son and heir, and 50 years of age on the 1st April last, on which day the said *James* died."

SIR NICHOLAS AUDLEY, OF HELEGH, KT., the next in succession, is stated to have "died on Saturday, the feast of St. Mary Magdalen [22 July]¶ in the year 1391, siezed of, *inter alia*, one third part of the lordship of the town of Nantwich, held in *capite* of the King as Earl of Chester, by service of a third part of the Barony."\*\* Though married, he died childless, in consequence of which his lands in Nantwich and elsewhere were divided as follows:—one third part to each of his two sisters, *Margaret*, wife of Roger Hillary, Kt., and *Joan*, wife of John Tochet, which two parts became re-united in the Tochet family after the death of *Margaret* in 1411. The remaining third part passed to the *Fitzwarines*,

\* Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. iii. p. 390. New Edit.

† *Ibid.*, p. 905. Leland says, (c. 1535) "There was a place of the lord Audleys in Cestreshyre, betwix Cumbremere and Nantwiche, caullid Newhaull Tower. It is now doune. There be motes and fair water." (*Itineraries*, vol. vii. p. 31).

‡ Chesh. Recog. Rolls. Henry de Lacy, who was Constable of Chester, and custos of England, died at London, and was buried at St. Paul's in 1310.

§ It is so stated in an *Inq. per B. de certior.* 16 Ric. II. [1392-3].

|| Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

¶ Another record gives 9th Nov. as the day of his death. (Chesh. Recog. Rolls).

\*\* *Inquisition post mortem* 16 Ric. II [1392].



as descendants of a younger branch of the Audley family, and continued severed from the rest of the Audley Fee until it was sold, "*with all rights in Wich-Malbank*" &c. to SIR ROBERT CHOLMONDELEY, BART., for £100, on the 24th Nov. 22 Jac. I [1624], by William, Earl of Bath as representative of the Bouchiers Lords Fitzwarine. (*Harl MSS.* 1967 f. 119 d.)

SIR JOHN TOCHET, KT., LORD OF AUDLEY, succeeded his great uncle Sir Nicholas Audley. Mention is made of his departure to Aquitaine in the train of John, Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster, in 1394. By his Inquisition *post mortem* he is found to have "died seized in his demesne as of fee *of a third part of a third part of the Barony of Wich Malbank*, held *in capite* of the Earl of Chester, yearly value £20 &c., on the Friday next before the feast of the Nativity" [25 Dec.] in the year 1408, and "James, son of the said John was his heir, and of the age of 12 years on the said Friday."

JAMES TOCHET, LORD AUDLEY, during his minority was committed to the custody of Henry Barton, citizen of London. His proof of age being taken on the 4th Jan. 1420-1, livery of his lands, including the part of the Barony held by Margaret, wife of Roger Hillary, Kt., was obtained on the 21st of the same month. Like several of his ancestors, this Lord Audley was a warrior. He fell in battle at Bloreheath, in Staffordshire, on St. Tecla's Day, Sunday, 23rd Sept. 1459, having been appointed to the command of the Lancastrian army, which was defeated with dreadful slaughter by Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.

His Inquisition *post mortem* is not to be found at the Record Office, but he was succeeded by his son and heir, John Tochet, Kt.

SIR JOHN TOCHET, KT., LORD OF AUDLEY, who thus succeeded, "died on Sunday next before the feast of St. Michael the Archangel [29 Sept.] last past [1490] leaving Sir James Tochet Kt., his son and heir, of the age of 26 years and upwards."

"He died seized of two parts of the Barony, Manor, and Lordship of Nantwich; two parts of the manor of Newhall parcel of the same Barony, with all the homage, suit, rents and services of all the freehold and customary tenants to the said two parts of a third part of the said Barony, Manor, Lordship, belonging, allotted, and assigned, in Nantwich aforesaid, and in Fouleshurst,\* Badynton, [Baddington], Bromehall, Bertherton, Weston, Chorleton, Saltersiche,† [in Nantwich-Willaston] Stapeley, Blakenhall, Wrenbury, Smallwode, Becheton, Hassall, Monks Copenhall, Worleston, Wodecote, Chorley, Aston, Newhall, Chester, Tiverton, and Acton, together with the mills, suits, Courts, and Tolls, to the said two parts of the said Barony, Manor, and Lordship belonging: 6 Messuages, 70 acres of land, 5 acres of meadow, 6 acres of pasturage, 2 acres of moor, 2 acres of marsh and services and rent of 2 barbed arrows in Wirswall; the manor of Buglawton;‡ the manor of Tattenhall; and the advowson of the Church of Middlewich." (*Inquisition post mortem.*)

SIR JAMES TOCHET, KT., LORD OF AUDLEY, who obtained livery of his father's lands on 3rd Nov. 1490, was the last of the family that had manorial property and rights in Nantwich. Within seven years after, these were forfeited to the Crown, by the attainder of Sir James, who had joined the Cornish Rising in 1497, and had thereby been guilty of the worst of all crimes—high treason. Lord Bacon says, concerning this insurrection,

\* There is no township now known as Fouleshurst; but a farm house, still called Fulleshurst Hall, is in Edlaston township, near Nantwich.

† A field lying between Millstone Lane and Crewe Road, is named *Saltersiche*, in the Nantwich Survey of 1794.

‡ Buglawton is now part of Congleton.

“They [the Cornish] marched to Wells, where the Lord Audley, with whom their leaders had before some secret intelligence, a nobleman of an ancient family, but unquiet and popular, and aspiring to ruin, came in to them, and was by them, with great gladness and cries of joy, accepted as their general; they being now proud that they were led by a nobleman. The Lord Audley led them on from Wells to Salisbury and from Salisbury to Winchester. Thence the foolish people, who in effect, led their leaders, had a mind to be led into Kent, . . . . and encamped upon Blackheath, threatening either to bid battle to the King, . . . . or to take London within his view.” The battle was fought on Saturday, 22nd June, 1497, but the rebels “being ill armed, and ill led, and without horse or artillery, they were with no great difficulty cut in pieces and put to flight.” Lord Audley was taken prisoner, and led from Newgate to Tower-Hill, “in a paper coat painted with his own arms; the arms reversed, the coat torn, and he at Tower-Hill beheaded,” on 28th June, 1497, being the third contemporary manorial lord of Nantwich that had been traitorous to King Henry VII.

It is not known when nor in what manner these lands were regranted by the Crown; one portion appears to have become united with the Lovell lands, and was finally sold by Robert Fletcher to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley in 1556 (see *postea*); while another part was obtained by the Fouleshurst family,\* which in 1666, according to *Harl. MSS.* 2010, f. 21, was “held by *Mr. Crewe, of Crewe*, and so must have become united with the Countess of Warwick’s Fee in the Crewe family.

\* Edward Fuleshurst, in 1521, held “lands in Sonde [Sound] and Coule of the Lord of Audley, in socage, yearly value £4 9s.; and lands in Wich Malbank, of the Lord of Audley and the Lord Fitzwarin, in socage, yearly value £16 17s. od.” (Cheshire Recog. Rolls).





### THIRD DIVISION OF THE BARONY.



T remains to speak of the share of the Barony that fell to the third co-heiress of William, the last Norman Baron of Wich-Malbank, namely, to *AUDA*, who married *Warin de Vernon*, Baron of Shipbroke. The descent of this share is, however, confusing and unsatisfactory; and to trace in detail, and clear up the difficulties of the ramifications of these lands through many families of County gentry, is a task sufficient to discourage the most assiduous antiquary, even "Old Mortality" himself.

The following brief summary will supply all necessary information on the subject.

After the death of *WARIN*, son of *Warin de Vernon* above-mentioned, this third part of the Barony was divided into two moieties.

I. One *Moiety* is traceable in the Cheshire Records through the second line of the *VERNONS*, Barons of Shipbroke, to the great family of *SAVAGE* of Clifton, near Frodsham. By a fine levied at Chester on Tuesday next after the feast of St. James the Apostle [July 25] 19 Edw. II, 1325, *RICHARD VERNON* granted to his near relative *RALPH VERNON*, *inter alia*, "a sixth part of the manor of Nantwich;" which descended by direct line to *SIR RICHARD VERNON, KT.*, who died on 3rd Sept. 1419, leaving *JAMES VERNON* his kinsman heir to part of his estates, who married *Alice Savage*;\* and who, on the 8th July, 1425, granted to trustees "two parts of a sixth of the Manor of Nantwich," for *JOHN SAVAGE, KT.*, who had livery of the same on 21st April, 1474, after the death of *Eleanor*, the wife of *Richard Wheelock* and heiress of *Sir Richard Vernon*;† at which time *Sir Robert Fulleshurst, Kt.*, obtained the other part of the sixth of the manor of Nantwich, which thus became incorporated with the Countess of Warwick's Fee, as stated on page 28.

*SIR JOHN SAVAGE, KT.*, of Clifton, near Frodsham, who married *Catherine*, daughter of *Thomas Stanley*, afterwards *Lord Stanley*, "died in the feast of St. Cecilia the Virgin

\* This marriage explains how the Arms of *Vernon* and *Malbank* came to be used in the 13 quarterings of the Arms of *Sir Thomas Savage, Kt.*, once painted on the walls of *Macclesfield Church*, as given by *Mr. Earwaker* in his "*East Cheshire*," Vol. II p. 492.

† Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

[22 Nov.] last past [1495], seized of," *inter alia*, "a sixth part of the manor of Nantwich and of the perquisites of the Court, stalls, markets and fairs within the township of Nantwich, leaving *John Savage Esq.* his grandson his heir." (*Inquis. p. m.* 11th Hen. VII.)

To the memory of Sir John Savage and his lady Catherine, was erected a fine alabaster monument with their effigies, now standing on the south side of the chancel of Macclesfield Church.\*

SIR JOHN SAVAGE, KT., the next successor died on the 2nd March, 1527, and to his memory an effigy still remains in the Savage Chapel of Macclesfield Church.† His Inquisition *post mortem*, states that he died seized of (as far as relates to Nantwich)—

"A sixth part of the manor of Wich Malbank, a sixth part of the issues and profits of the water-mills there,‡ and a sixth part of the pleas and perquisites of the courts &c. of the town of Wich Malbank, held of the Earl of Chester, *in capite*, by the 30th part of a Knight's fee; yearly value 20 shillings; and that John his son and heir was of the age of 34 years and more."

SIR JOHN SAVAGE, KT., who thus succeeded, died on 26th July, 1528, and was buried in the Savage Chapel, Macclesfield, where a handsome tomb, with effigies of Sir John and his lady, still exists to their memory.§ His son and heir, SIR JOHN SAVAGE, KT., sold his share of the manor of Nantwich to *Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, Kt.*, on 3rd Jan. 17 Eliz. [1574-5]. (*Harl. MSS.* 2038 f. 119 b.)

II. The other *Moiety* became subdivided among the three co-heiresses of the second Warin Vernon, named *Maud*, *Roesia*, and *Auda*.

[A]. MAUD, wife of Sir Richard Wilbraham, had issue Maude wife of *Robert de Winnington*, who was the ancestor of the LEFTWICH family. In 1407 ROBERT DE LEFTWICH died seized of a thirty-sixth part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, held of the Earl of Chester by barony,|| consisting of "2 messuages and 1 salt-pit, in Wich-Malbank, yearly value 14s. 8d.; a parcel of land in Acton, and one messuage in Hurdelestone, yearly value 6s. 4d." This thirty-sixth part was sold by RALPH LEFTWICH to *Sir Hugh Cholmondeley*, in the 17 Eliz. [1574-5], and confirmed to him by a fine in the following year.¶

[B]. ROESIA, the second co-heiress, married *John de Littlebury*, who sold this part of the Barony to JOHN DE WETTENHALL. After the death of SIR JOHN DE WETENHALE, KT., (before 1400) it was divided between his two daughters, *Margery* and *Ellen*.

I. MARGERY brought her share in marriage to *Geoffrey de Bromhale*, whose daughter, *Alice*, married *John de Davenport*, the ancestor of the DAVENPORTS of Bramhall Hall, near Stockport. The Inquisition *p. m.* of the said Margery, taken in 1433, sets forth that she was

"seized in her demesne, as of fee, of an 18th part of the barony of Wich Malbank, and of 14 burgages, 2 tofts, 30 acres of land, 1½ acres of meadow, and 1 salt-pit of 12 leads, in the town of Wich Malbank, of the yearly value of 40 shillings; of 43s. 8d. rent in the same town issuing out of tenements held by *John Wright, John Walker, Thomas Daukynsone, John Hildiche, Hugh Hunt, John Brothersone,*

\* An engraving of this monument is given in Mr. Earwaker's "*East Cheshire*," vol. ii, opposite page 493. Interesting accounts of the Savage family will be found in that History; and also in Mr. Beamont's History of Frodsham.

† An engraving of the monument is given in "*East Cheshire*," vol. ii, p. 491.

‡ This *Inq.* was traversed as far as regards the possession "of a sixth part of a water-mill at Wich Malbon on the water of *Weaver*;" which it appears Sir John gave to his cousin *John Davenport*. (See Cheshire Plea Rolls, 23 Hen. VIII.)

§ An engraving of this monument is given in "*East Cheshire*," vol. ii, p. 495.

|| *Inquisitio de melius inquirendo*, dated 26th Oct. 1409. Pub. Record Office.

¶ *Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 119 b. i.

*Henry de Wetenhale, Robert Alva, Roger Oteworth, John Willborn and William de Fouleshurst*; of 5 shillings rent issuing out of the manor of *Derfold*, [Dorfold]; &c., of an 18th part of the court baron in the said town of Wich Malbank, together with an 18th part of the tolls of the same town, yearly value 20 shillings; 18th part of the tolls of salt and of 2 mills in the same town, yearly value 10 shillings; with an 18th part of 300 acres of pasture and waste, in the town of Wich Malbank, yearly value 12d.: all which said lands and rents formed the said 18th part of the barony aforesaid, held of the Earl of Chester, *in capite*, and of the yearly value of £6 3s. 2d." &c.

This share of the barony remained in the Davenport family until WILLIAM DAVENPORT,\* of Bramhall, Kt., and WILLIAM his son and heir apparent, sold their interest in Wich-Malbank on 20th Jan. in 22 Jac. I. [1625-6] to *Sir Robert Cholmondeley* for £100. (*Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 119 d.)

2. ELLEN, the other co-heiress, married *Henry de Arderne*. This share, called a thirty-sixth part of the barony, and valued in 9 Hen. IV [1407-8] at £20, consisted of the manor of Acton and demesne of Dorfold, but did not embrace any manorial rights in Nantwich.

[C]. AUDA, the third co-heiress, married *William Stafford*, "from whom, or whose descendant of the same name," says Dr. Ormerod, "this last share passed by purchase to JOHN ST. PIERRE.† This portion, described as an eighteenth part, was certainly held by the Pierre family as late as 36 and 37 Hen. VI [1458-9], and after many vicissitudes became vested before the 3 Hen. VII [1487-8] in the MAINWARINGS of Carincham; until the 13th Jan. 17 Eliz. [1574-5] when it was sold by RANDLE MAINWARING to *Sir Hugh Cholmondeley*. (*Harl. MSS.* 2038 f. 144.)

The proportional shares of the privileges claimed by the various lords of Wich-Malbank in the town during the reigns of Henry VI and Henry VII, are clearly shown in the following tables:—

*BAILIFF'S ACCOUNTS OF WICH-MALBANK.* 36 & 37 Hen. VI.‡

"Upon the view of the Accounts at Wich Malbanke for one whole year, beginning at the feast of St Michael, a° 36 Hen. VI. [1457].

	s.	d.		
The Ld. Audeley . . . . .	53	4	}	. . . . . £4
The Ld. Fitzwarin . . . . .	26	8		
The Lds. Lovell & Browning . . . . .			}	. . . . . £4
Vernon wth ye Dower . . . . .	£2	0 0		
St. Pere . . . . .	13	4	}	. . . . . £4
Fulleshurst & Leftwich . . . . .	13	4		
Wetenhall & Davenport . . . . .	13	4		
"The whole sum of the estreits & p'quisites of ye court for ye said whole year was . . . . .			}	. . . . . £12

\* According to the *Inquisition p. m.* of Sir William Davenport, of Bramhall, Kt., the grandfather of this Sir William, taken 11th Oct. 19 Eliz. [1577], the said Sir William died seised "of the 20th part of the manor of Wich Malban, and messuages, lands, and rents in Wich Malban, held of the Queen as Countess of Chester, and are worth £23 13s. 10d. per annum." (*Earwaker's "East Cheshire,"* vol. I p. 428.)

† By *Inquisition p. m.* 28 Edw. I [1300], URIAN DE ST. PIERRE, died seised, *inter alia*, of an 18th part of the barony of Wich Malbank, and 2 salt pits there. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. II p. 603, New Edit.

‡ Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 6032, f. 61-2, p. 124-5.

“*Wich Malbank.* The Accompts there of Nicolas Hewster & John Leech Baylifes there from the feast of St. Michael in ye 37 of Hen. VI. for one whole year after all charges and decayed rent discharged . . . . . £14 10 6

[of which] The Ld. Audley [claimed] . . . . . £3 4 6 ob. } . . . . . £4 16 9 ob.

The Ld. Fitzwaren . . . . . £1 12 3 qr. } . . . . . £4 16 10

The part for ye Lord Lovel for himself & Browning’s [part] . . . . . } . . . . . £4 16 10

The parte of Vernon with ye Dower . . . . . 48 6 } . . . . . } . . . . . £4 16 10 ob.

The pte. of St. Pere . . . . . 16 1 ob. } . . . . . } . . . . . £4 16 10 ob.

Davenport & Wetenhall . . . . . 16 1 ob. } . . . . . } . . . . . £4 16 10 ob.

Fulleshurst & Leftwich . . . . . 16 1 ob. } . . . . . } . . . . . £4 16 10 ob.

The following table, given in *Harl. MSS.* 2038 f. 134, shows the proportional shares of the Barony of Wich-Malbank before the attainder of Lord Lovell 3 Hen. VII. [1487-8].

The whole Barony of Wich Malbank is divided in 36 parts.

Lord Lovell has . . . . .	12 parts, namely one third of the Barony.
Lord Audley has 8 parts . . . . .	} . . . . . 12 parts, which make one third of the Barony.
Lord Fitzwarine has 4 parts . . . . .	
John Savage Kt has 6 parts . . . . .	
Will. Davenport Kt. has 2 parts . . . . .	} . . . . . 12 parts, which make one third of the Barony.
Hen. Mainwaring Esq. has 2 parts . . . . .	
Robt. Fouleshurst Esq. has 1 part . . . . .	
Raphe Leftwich Esq. has 1 part . . . . .	

“For prouve [proof] of this deuision Rafe Egerton Esq., doth pay a fee farm rent forth of his mills in Namptwich to euery of the p’tners p’portionable to his p’t. [part], and the balyes [bailliffs] of namptwicche did in tymes past account for fines amersments & tolles and other casualtyes p’portionable to his divysion as by the same accompt may appeere.”

*A COPIE of ye RENTALL, without date [but c. 1525] of RENT paid out of ye MILNES of NAMPTWICH to ye KING & LORDES [of Wich-Malbank].\**

	s.	d.	s.	d.	
To ye King . . . . .			13	4	Wm. Church p[er] p’chase.
The Ld. Audeley . . . . .	3	4	}	5	o Egerton Ld. Chamb’ln p[er] p’chase.
The Ld. Fitzwarin . . . . .	1	8			
Thomas Fulhurst . 5d. } . . . . .	10d.	}	2	6	} . . . . . 5 o
Rich: Leftwich. . 5d. } . . . . .					
Davenport with Wetenhall . . . . .	10d.	}	}	}	
Randle Mainwaring . . . . .	10d.				
Sr. John Savage Kt. . . . .			2	6	

“It is said that Sr. Will. Hanley, Kt., did erect a milne by graunt from ye King & the Barons, the King then having Lovels 3rd part by Attaynder; which Hanley had an attachment & watercourse from Sr. John Bromley, Kt. and it seemeth that by the attaynder of Stanley ye King had 8s. 4d. yearly over & above 5 shillings which came to him by the attaynder of Lovell.”

\* Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 6032, f. 61-2, p. 124-5.

## The Baron's Fee.\*



It has been shown in the foregoing pages, the Barony of Wich-Malbank, with the exception of the *Abbot's Fee*, and *Countess of Warwick's Fee*, became united in the Cholmondeley family by various purchases in the years 1556, 1575 and 1625.

SIR HUGH CHOLMONDELEY, KT., died, at the age of 83, on 16th Jan. 39 Eliz. [1596-7]; and his Inquisition *post mortem* taken in the same year,

"finds that he died seized," *inter alia*, "of 19/20ths of the manor or barony of Wich Malbank, alias Namptwiche, with all its rights, which are largely enumerated, and various lands and messuages therein, including '*Le Booth Hall*,' or '*Le Court Howse*,' and another tenement called '*Escheator's Halle*;' those parts of the barony formerly the Lovell lands, and Audley Fee, being held *in capite* from the Queen as of her crown of England, by the service of a 20th part of one Knight's fee; and the rest held by the service of a 10th part of a Knight's fee from the said Queen as Countess of Chester, value per annum 40 marks. [£26 13s. 4d.]; and that Sir Hugh Cholmondeley Kt., was his son and heir, and of the age of 46 years."

SIR HUGH CHOLMONDELEY, KT., who succeeded, married the celebrated Mary Holford, whom King James called the "*Bold Ladie of Cheshire*." He died at Cholmondeley on 23rd July 43 Eliz. [1601]; leaving Robert Cholmondeley, "his son and heir, of the age of 19 years, on the 16th June last past." [1601].

Two Inquisitions *post mortem* were taken after Sir Hugh's death, by which it was found that he died seized of, *inter alia* :—

"Nineteen parts [i.e. 19/20ths] of the manor or Barony of Nantwich with all and singular rents, reversions, services, fairs, markets, stallage, tolls, fees, Knight wards, marriages, escheats, reliefs, heriots, courts leet, view of frankpledge, profits and perquisites, amerciements, goods and chattels, waifs, estrays, liberties, franchises, privileges and other profits and hereditaments whatsoever of the said 19 parts of the said manor or Barony of Nantwich; a messuage called the *Booth Hall*† otherwise the *Court-house* in Nantwich; a capital messuage and tenement in the same place called the *Escheator's Hall*;‡ 7 other messuages; 8 cottages; 12 gardens and 9 court-yards there; a certain place of land there called the *Taintree yard*§ containing by estimation 2 roods of land therein; another place of land there in *Pillory Street* containing by estimation 2 roods of land, with 2 barns erected; another place of land called the *Donghill place*, containing by estimation 4 roods of land; another parcel of land there in *Barkers' Street* containing by estimation 2 roods of land; 13 messuages or salt-houses there, called wiche-houses, containing in all 78 leads; and £20 9s. 10d. clear rent there."

\* So called in *Harl. MSS.* 2010 f. 21, in a list of the Lords of the several Fees of Nantwich, dated 1666.

† *Booth Hall*, or *Court House*, afterwards called the Market Hall, stood in the High Street, which continued to be the market place until 1868.

‡ *Escheator's Hall* was situated in Beam Street.

§ *Taintree Yard*. In a Rate Book, *penes* G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., dated 1691, mention is made in Beam Street of "Mr. Broomhall's, ho[use]; Mill; Meadow & *Tentry* garden."

In the second Inquisition taken 3 Jac. I. [1605-6] it is stated that certain premises in *Barker Street* and *Masons Yards* which had belonged to the *Griffins* of *Bartherton*, were escheated to Sir Hugh when George Griffin died at *Stapeley* on the 9th May 43 Eliz. [1601] without heirs of his body, he being a bastard.

What follows relating to the *Cholmondeley* descent is, in substance, the same as that given by Dr. Ormerod in 1816. Unfortunately, no opportunity has occurred for examining the deeds and documents preserved in the muniment chest at *Cholmondeley*; where, doubtless, much information relating to the family, as well as to *Nantwich* and its neighbourhood, might be obtained that would be valuable to the local historian.

SIR ROBERT CHOLMONDELEY was created *Bart.* on 29th June, 1611; *Viscount Cholmondeley* of *Kellis* in *Ireland*, in 1628; and *Baron*, by the title of LORD CHOLMONDELEY OF WICH-MALBANK in 1645, the last honour being conferred on him by Letters patent for his services as a zealous royalist in the Civil War. He afterwards compounded for his estates, by paying the enormous sum of £7742, and retired to *Bickley Hall* where he spent the residue of his days. He died without lawful issue on 8th Oct. 1659, and from some disputes relative to the defraying of the expenses of his funeral, by the heirs of his real and personal property, his body was left uninterred for the space of one year, when, on 8th Oct. 1660, it was carried to the family vault in *Malpas Church* in great pomp. He was succeeded by his nephew of the same name.

ROBERT VISCOUNT CHOLMONDELEY, of *Kellis*, of whom little is known, died in 1681 and was succeeded by his eldest son Hugh.

HUGH VISCOUNT CHOLMONDELEY, was created *Lord Cholmondeley of Nantwich* on 10th April, 1689, with limitation to his brother George, as a reward for his opposition to the unconstitutional conduct of James II. By patent 27th Dec. 1706, he was created *Viscount Malpas* and *Earl of Cholmondeley*, with the same limitation as in his former title. He was displaced from several important public offices and trusts in 1713, but restored on the accession of George I. He died unmarried 18th Jan., and was buried at *Malpas* Feb. 30th, 1724-5.

GEORGE, second EARL OF CHOLMONDELEY, *Baron of Nantwich*, &c. succeeded to the title and estates of his brother Earl Hugh. Educated at *Christ Church, Oxford*, he entered the army, and was made cornet of horse in 1685; and groom of the bed-chamber on King William's accession. At the battle of the *Boyne* he commanded the horse grenadier guards; and particularly distinguished himself at the battle of *Steenkirk* in Aug. 1692. In the first year of Queen Anne, he was raised to be Major-general of her Majesty's forces, and Governor of the forts of *Tilbury* and *Gravesend*, and held these posts after the accession of George I. On 15th Feb. 1714-5, he was constituted Captain and Colonel of the 3rd troop of horse-guards; on 15th March, created an Irish Peer; the following year, 2nd July, 1716, being advanced to an English Peerage, by the title of *Baron of Newburgh* in *Anglesea*. In 1724 he was appointed Lord-lieutenant of the co. and City of *Chester*, and *Custos rotulorum* of the said county, and also Lord-lieutenant of the six counties of North Wales. In 1725 he was made Governor of *Kingston-upon-Hull*, which at that time was a sinecure worth about £600 per annum: and in 1732 George I. made him General of the Horse, and Governor of the island of *Guernsey*. He died at *Whitehall* on the 7th May, and on the 17th May, 1733, was buried at *Malpas*; leaving his son George his successor.



GEORGE, THIRD EARL OF CHOLMONDELEY, *Baron of Nantwich*, &c., was born 2nd Jan. 1702-3; and previous to his succession to his father's title, had been M.P. in two parliaments, being elected for East Loe in 1724, and for Windsor in 1727. Like his father, he was high in honour at Court; and on the accession of George II, was constituted one of the Commissioners of the Admiralty, and Governor of Chester. He succeeded his father as Lord-lieutenant of the County, and *Custos rotulorum*: and Chamberlain of the County; and subsequently held, among other offices of honour and public trust, the Vice-admiralship of Cheshire; the Governorship of Chester Castle; the stewardship of the royal manor of Sheene, and was one of his Majesty's privy council.

He died on 10th June, and was buried on 21st June, 1770, at Malpas. His successor being his grandson, George James Cholmondeley.

GEORGE JAMES, FIRST MARQUIS OF CHOLMONDELEY and EARL OF ROCK SAVAGE, who was elevated to that rank of the Peerage on 22nd Nov. 1815; Baron of Nantwich, &c., succeeded his grandfather; his father, George, lord viscount Malpas, having died in 1764. He was born 30th April, 1749; and succeeded as Lord-lieutenant and *Custos rotulorum* of co. of Chester, and Governor of Chester Castle. He was appointed his Majesty's envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the court of Berlin 14th June, 1782; and in the following year was sworn a privy-counsellor. On the death of Horace, Earl of Orford, he succeeded to the ancient Walpole Estates in Norfolk and elsewhere; was Chamberlain and Vice-Admiral of Cheshire, and Lord steward of the royal household, &c. He died on 10th April, 1827, and was succeeded by his two sons in succession; first by *George James Horatio*, and then by *William Henry*, the present Marquis.

GEORGE JAMES HORATIO, EARL OF ROCK SAVAGE, and after his father's death, *Second Marquis of Cholmondeley and Baron of Nantwich*, was born on 17th Jan. 1792. He was joint-hereditary great Chamberlain of England; and died, without issue, at Cholmondeley Castle on 8th May, 1870, and was buried at Malpas on the 15th day of the same month. He was the last possessor of the Barony of Nantwich, with its ancient privileges, &c.

By an Indenture dated 14th Feb. 1862, "all MARKETS and FAIRS held within and for the town of Nantwich, and all rents, tolls, pickname, stallage and other dues, franchises, customs, privileges, profits, easements, rights and appurtenances, belonging &c. to the said markets and fairs," were relinquished by the Marquis in favour of the Nantwich Local Board.

In 1869 the BARONY, a waste piece of land which had until then been retained as part of the ancient feudal barony, by the possession of which the Barons Cholmondeley claimed the right of holding annually a Court Leet and Baron for the town, was enclosed by order of the Enclosure Commissioners, who allotted it in the following manner:—

A. R. P.

- 2 0 2 to Lord Cholmondeley in satisfaction of his rights as Lord of the Manor.  
 8 0 0 as a Public Recreation Ground; vested in the Churchwardens and Overseers.  
 9 0 22 as a Public Park, vested in seven trustees, viz.:—the Rt. Hon. Lord Tollemache; Wilbraham S. Tollemache, Esq., of Dorfold; E. D. Broughton, Esq., of Wistaston; Mr. Hignett, of Cholmondeley; and Messrs. Leonard Gilbert, Samuel Harlock, and Thomas Bowker, of Nantwich.  
 2 1 0 as a site for a proposed Smithfield, Cattle Market, and Sheep Market; vested in the Nantwich Local Board.

The remainder being sold in building lots to pay the expenses of enclosure.

The Courts Leet and Baron were abolished about thirty years ago when County Courts were established by Act of Parliament. Copies of a few of the Court Leet Rolls, affording evidence of the powers possessed by the Barons in former times, and throwing much light on the history of the town, are fortunately preserved in the Wilbraham MSS. It will be interesting to show from these and other records, what was the extent of the privileges of this local jurisdiction; what town officers were required, what their duties were, together with other customs and usages belonging thereto, which have now for ever passed away.

In the 15 Hen. VII. [1500] the lords of Wich-Malbank were required by writ from Prince Arthur, as Earl of Chester, to show "*quo warranto*," (i.e. by what title) they claimed for themselves and their heirs manorial franchises and privileges in the town; and, as Sir William Stanley and Lord Audley had recently been attainted, the following six lords only appeared to answer the summons; namely:—John Bouchier Lord Fitz-Warine; John Savage, of Clifton, Knight; William Davenport, of Bramhall, Esq.; Robert Fouleshurst, of Crewe, Esq.; Randle Mainwaring, of Carincham, Esq.; Richard Leftwich, of Leftwich, Esq.

Copies of the pleas put forward in this inquiry will be found in *Harl. MSS.* 2115 f. 168, 172 and 186; but they are too long to be given here. The liberties claimed and allowed were—

1. View of frank-pledge with its appurtenances, with respect to all residents therein, twice in the year.
2. A Hundred Court, with its appurtenances, to be held from 15 to 15 days.
3. Waif,\* stray,† gallows,‡ tumbrel, and thewe, with manorial rights in the vill of Wich-Malbank.
4. A yearly fair on the feast of St. Bartholomew and four following days.§
5. A market weekly on Saturday, with the appurtenances of fair and market, and 4d. toll from every horse or beast of burthen sold therein; picage|| and stallage¶ in the market and fair; 2d. from every cart-load of leather; and 1d. for every bundle of leather sold therein, or exposed to sale.
6. Pelfe\*\* in the same manor.

In explanation of the "*appurtenances*" of their *view of frank-pledge* the said lords of Wich-Malbank claimed the usual privileges of a Court Leet for any manor, viz. :—"assize of bread and beer; cognizance of effusion of blood; punishment of butchers and fishermen selling tainted flesh or fish; punishment of bakers by the *pillory*, victuallers or inn-holders [*pandoxatores*] by the *tumbrel*, and scolds by the *thewe* [or *cucking-stool*]; with all fines and amerciaments of the same.

\* "*Waif*;" i.e. any goods waived (or left) by a felon, within the manor, became the property of the lord of the manor.

† "*Strays*;" i.e. animals straying into the manor, might be detained, and if after proclamation they were not claimed by the owners within a year and a day, they then belonged to the lord of the manor.

‡ *Gallows*; i.e. the right of hanging a convicted felon within the manor.

§ This annual fair is now held on *one day* in the year; namely, on the 4th September.

|| "*Picage*;" i.e. the erection of a "*scabellum*" [low bench or form] to expose merchandise on.

¶ "*Stallage*;" i.e. the right of erecting stalls.

\*\* "*Pelfe*;" i.e. the right of appropriating the goods of any robber taken within the manor.

## The Manorial Courts.

The *Court Lect* with its *view of frank-pledge*, was superior to all other local courts, inasmuch as it could inquire into all offences against the King and country. "It had the power to present by jury all crimes whatsoever that happened within its jurisdiction; and not only to present but also to punish all trivial misdemeanours; as all trivial debts were recovered in the *Court Baron*; justice in these minuter matters of both kinds being brought to the doors of every man by our ancient constitution. The objects of its jurisdiction were very numerous; being such as affected the public weal or good government of the town, from common nuisances and other material offences against the King's peace and public trade, down to eaves-dropping, waifs, and irregularities in public commons.\*

The *view of frank-pledge* was the survival of an ancient Saxon law, by which every freeman gave a pledge for his good behaviour to his King and country. Upon an offence being committed by a person, his *sureties* were obliged either to surrender him or pay a fine for his misdeeds.

The *Court Baron* was incident to every manor, and in ancient times sat at Nantwich from fifteen to fifteen days,—that is, allowing an interim of a fortnight and a day between each sitting. The business of this Court was to record transfers or surrenders of land, and receive heriots, duties and customs; (cases that were decided by the lord or his Steward as sole judge); or to take cognizance of trespasses, debts, slanders, &c., where the damage did not exceed forty shillings; (these latter cases being tried by a local jury of freeholders).

The *Court Lect* met twice in the year at Nantwich, within three weeks after Lady-day and Michaelmas, when all persons above twelve years of age and under sixty, resident within the jurisdiction for a year and a day, were obliged to render suit and service, i.e. to attend in person and answer to their names. The place of meeting in the sixteenth century would be the "*Court Howse*," (page 63). In recent times the Court met in an old building in the Lamb Inn Yard, now used as the Masonic Lodge Room; and in the Assembly Room of the Crown Inn.

The Court was presided over by the Steward of the lord, who was usually a barrister, the last being the late Richard Edleston, Esq. of Nantwich. The following was the "order of the Court." Six days notice having been given, on the meeting of the Court, the *Bailiff* opened with the proclamation—

'*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!* [i.e. Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye!]

'All manner of persons who owe suit and service at this Court let them draw near and answer to their names, or send their essoignes.' [excuse]

The names were then read over, and fines imposed in case of non-attendance. Then the *Bailiff* announced—

'*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!*

'All manner of persons who have any more to do at this court let them come forth, and they shall be heard, otherwise they and all others may depart hence, and give their attendances at the adjourned court.'

\* See "*Commentaries on Laws of England*," by H. J. Stephen, vol. iv. p. 340. 1845 Edit.

Then a Jury was empanelled, and the following oath administered to each one:—

“You shall inquire and true presentment make of all such things as shall be given in charge, or come to your knowledge, touching this present service. The King’s Counsel, your own, and your fellows, you shall well and truly keep; you shall present no one through hatred or malice; nor conceal anything through love or affection; but in all things, you shall well and truly present as the same shall come to your knowledge. So help you God!”

The Jury first fixed the fines on all non-attenders at court; they then received the reports of the various town officers, for the past half-year, inflicting a fine on such as neglected their duty. The submitted reports having been investigated and verdicts given, the concluding business was to elect the following town officers for the ensuing year, viz.:—

1.—*Rulers of Walling*; or Inspectors of the *salt-works*, who appear to have been annually elected until the beginning of the eighteenth century.\*

2.—*Heath-keepers*; who reported concerning the ancient common called *Beam Heath*.

3.—*Leave-lookers*; or Market Inspectors, who examined all weights and measures, seized unwholesome meat and fish; and looked after the customs and tolls.

4.—*Ale-tasters*; officers appointed by every court-leet to see that bakers made good bread, and brewers strong drink.†

5.—*Fire-lookers*; who reported defective chimnies, &c., and inspected buildings with the view of preventing, as far as possible, destruction of property by fire.

6.—*Channel-lookers* or public scavengers; whose duty it was to see that the inhabitants cleaned their parts of the streets in front of their own houses, shops, buildings, &c., and that wells, drains, &c. were cleansed. Mr. Platt, writing in 1819, makes the following remark concerning these town officers:—“If I may form my opinion from the state of the streets, either the office must be abolished or the officers defunct;” and those who remember Nantwich forty or fifty years ago, bear testimony to the extreme filthy state of the town, when heaps of ashes, manure, &c., and pools of stagnant filthiness, were suffered to remain undisturbed in the principal thoroughfares of the town. At a depth varying from a yard to six or eight feet below the present level of the streets, is to be found a lower pavement of blackened beams of wood, which, together with the overlying strata of black mould, are popularly believed to be the *debris* of the great fire of 1583; but, it seems more reasonable to suppose, and much easier to believe, that the old pavements have been buried by accumulations of modern times, rather than by the embers and ashes of a burnt town above three hundred years ago.

7.—*Constables*; who, having been previously recommended by the Vestry, were appointed by this Court, on their taking the *oath to serve the King and the Lord of the Manor*. In point of power, they were the superior officers of the town; and, like the others, were unpaid officers. It was their duty to detect crime, arrest offenders, and maintain public order. The last of the Parish Constables were *Mr. John Prince* and *Mr. . . . Pritchard*. The latter person was the first petty Constable for the township of Nantwich, acting under the first Special High Constable for the Hundred of Nantwich, *Mr. Becket*; both being appointed under Sir Robert Peel’s County Constabulary Act.

\* See Account of the Salt-works, where their duties are more fully explained.

† The Parish Register records the burial of an “Ale-taster” during his year of office:—

“1758 June 13, John Savonry, ale-officer” [Buried].

8.—*The Bailiff, or "Bedell,"* as he is sometimes called in ancient records, "was the supreme officer of the town, in reputation, and had the like respect paid him that was usually given to bailiffs of legal corporations. He was annually chosen [with the other officers] at the Court-leet after *Michaelmas*, with the consent of the Lord of the Leet, and while he had the Lord's consent and countenance he was a useful officer to the town; but, upon some displeasure taken by the Lord Cholmondeley, his election was suspended and never since renewed." (Partridge's *Hist. Nantwich*, p. 18). The same writer also says, (p. 9 *ibid.*) that Earl Cholmondeley has "*the privilege of a jail, and appointing the keeper who is generally the Bailiff to the Court Baron.*"

In the Parish Registers frequent mention is made of the town Bailiffs; but the earliest "gaoler" in those records, occurs as follows:—

"1739 July 30, John, son of William Hopwood, *Gaoler*" [Baptized].

The last Bailiff and Gaoler whose duty it was to serve summonses for debts, and attend the Court to swear the same had been duly served, &c., was the late *Mr. James Topham*, who was appointed by the following deed:—\*

"Know all men by these Presents That I the Most Noble George James Marquis Cholmondeley, Viscount Malpas, and Baron of Wich-Malbank otherwise Malbanewic otherwise Nantwich in the county of Chester Have made constituted and appointed and by these presents Do make constitute and appoint James Topham of Nantwich in the said county Plumber and Glazier Serjeant at Mace of the Court of our Lord the King for the Hundred of Wich-Malbank otherwise Malbanewic otherwise Nantwich in the said county of Chester And also of the Courts Leet and Courts Baron with view of Frankpledge for the same Hundred and likewise serjeant at Mace of the Court Leet and Court Baron with view of Frankpledge for my Manor or Barony of Wich-Malbank otherwise Malbanewic &c. and to do and execute all things belonging to the office of serjeant at Mace of the said Courts respectively. And also *Gaoler* or Keeper of the *Gaol* or *Prison* for the same Hundred and Barony and each of them during my will and Pleasure.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set and put my hand and seal this 29th day of Sept. in the year of our Lord 1825."

Signed sealed and delivered  
(being first duly stamped) by  
the abovenamed Marquis in  
the presence of

William Jones.

Cholmondeley



This *Mr. Topham*,† who resided at the *Gaol House* in Pillory Street, where his daughter still lives, was also the last collector of the Cholmondeley Tolls, which at that time were let for £12 per annum; he held office until the late Marquis yielded the tolls into the hands of the Local Board, in 1862; after which, by agreement dated 21st July, 1866, he received as compensation, a life annuity from the town of £40 per ann.

On Fair days it was customary for *Mr. Topham* to announce at the Stocks in High Town, between the hours of twelve and one o'clock, the following proclamation:—‡

\* From the original deed now in the possession of Miss Topham, of the *Gaol House*, Nantwich.

† *Mr. James Topham* died 15th Dec. 1869, aged 86.

‡ From an original paper in the possession of Miss Topham.

*"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!*

"The Most Noble George Horatio Marquis Cholmondeley Viscount Malpas and Baron of Nantwich, in Her Majesty's name doth strictly charge and command all manner of persons who shall resort to this Fair not to hold any unlawful assembly or commit any affray or bloodshed within the limits of this town, during the continuance thereof, upon pain of imprisonment, or other punishment by fine, for disturbing the peace,

*And further*, that no person whatsoever presume to wear or carry any manner of Bills, Halberts, or other unlawful weapons, upon pain of fine or imprisonment, except such as attend the Steward and Bailiff of this Fair:

*And* all persons who shall buy any cattle, pewter, brass, iron or other ware above the price of twelve pence, are enjoined not to conceal the same, or convey them out of the Town, until they be lawfully tolled for.

*And notice* is hereby given that the Fair for Horses is to be kept in the usual place, and if any controversy arise between Buyer and Seller, the person aggrieved may resort to the Steward, who will hear and determine the difference according to equity and justice.

*And further*, all persons coming to this Fair may stay or depart without molestation provided they demean themselves orderly and civilly. But all Rogues, Vagabonds, and other idle or suspicious persons upon this proclamation made, are immediately ordered to leave the Town upon pain of imprisonment."

"God save the Queen, and the Most Noble George Horatio the Marquis of Cholmondeley."

The following extracts from the Court Rolls of the town, are here given from the Wilbraham MS. collection preserved at Delamere.

## Court Rolls. Barony of Wich-Malbank.

*"Paines and bylawes laid downe & imposed by the Grand Jurye at a Lect\* houlden for the Barons of Namptwiche the 27<sup>o</sup> Apr: Anno R.[egno] Re[gina] Elizab: Angliæ nunc &c. 34<sup>to</sup>. [1592].*

*"Donghills.* We doe ordaine that every perso[n] within the Fee of this Court doe remoue their donghills that lye within any of the streets of this Court of Namptwiche, or within 8 yords [yards] of any street or lane of and within the same towne on this side the feast of St. John Baptist [June 24] next ensuing; and not to vse them for muckhills hereaft<sup>r</sup> to th' annoyance of the Inhabitants, or for matt<sup>r</sup> that may breed infec<sup>o</sup>n, vpon paine of every one that maketh defalt herein to forfait—39s. 11d.

*Sweyne It<sup>m</sup>.* that noe inhabitant within this Fee shall set or keepe any swynestyre or Privee Styes: within 8 yards of any the streetes or lanes vpo paine of 39s. 11d. to be forfeitted Privies, if aft<sup>r</sup> Midsom'. day [24 June] next any such be found to stand so erected.

*Water- It<sup>m</sup>.* we doe paine Rich: Chest<sup>r</sup> yt he shall not hereaft<sup>r</sup> stop a watercourse or ditch course adioyning to the Beame street vpo[n] paine of xx<sup>s</sup>. [20s.]

\* *Lect* signifies *Law-Day*.

*Wm. Tench Itm.* The Jurie doe p<sup>r</sup>sent y<sup>t</sup> W<sup>m</sup>. Tench of the Bridgend hath not forfeited the *his Porch.* paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. [39s. 11½d.] heretofore imposed vpon him for y<sup>t</sup> he hath remoued his Porch and railes adioyning to the high street, according as he was pained heretofore. And a paine is further now layd y<sup>t</sup> ye s<sup>d</sup> W<sup>m</sup>. Tench shall remoue the same Porche & rayles before Midsom'. next upon the like paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. [39s. 11½d.]

*Shoppes.* We doe amerce [fine] John Crew of Cholmest<sup>n</sup> for y<sup>t</sup> he hath not remoued soe much of his shops at the Bridgend as doth stand vpo the high street in 6<sup>s</sup>. 8<sup>d</sup>. & we doe paine him to remoue y<sup>t</sup> incrochem<sup>t</sup> before Midsom'. next vpon paine of xxxix<sup>s</sup>. xj<sup>d</sup>. ob. [39s. 11½d.]

*Ashes. Itm.* we doe p<sup>r</sup>sent y<sup>t</sup> John Cowper & Ric: Smith haue forfeited eyther of them the seueral sume of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. for carying forth of Ashes out of this Towne for the making of glasse contrary to the paine of the Court heretofore made 32<sup>o</sup> Eliz<sup>th</sup> [1590], and we confirme the same ordinance of the Court therein heretofore made to be continued and stand in effect hereaft<sup>r</sup> ag<sup>st</sup> euery perso. y<sup>t</sup> shall offend therein *sub pœna p<sup>r</sup>dict.* [under the penalty aforesaid].

*Rand[le]:* Authority is given by this Inquest vnto the now Rulers of the Walling of this *Horton:* Towne of Namptwich y<sup>t</sup> they forthwith stop Randle Horto<sup>n</sup> for the walling of *Pauements.* the 3 leads appointed vnto him heretofore by this court, towards the charges of his part of repairing the Pauement<sup>s</sup> w<sup>th</sup>in the s<sup>d</sup> Towne now by his defalt in ruine and decay, except the s<sup>d</sup> Ran: Horto<sup>n</sup> doe then enter into Bond w<sup>th</sup> some sufficient sureties in the sume of 5 markes [£3 6s. 8d.] vnto the said Rulers & Steward of this Court speedilie to repaire his pt. of the s<sup>d</sup> Pauem<sup>t</sup>. And soe fro<sup>m</sup> tyme to tyme to keepe the same repaired & amended accordinglie.

*Bowles.* A paine is laid y<sup>t</sup> noe perso<sup>n</sup> shall hereaft<sup>r</sup> cast or throwe Bowles within anie the streetes of the Towne vpo<sup>n</sup> paine to forfeit for euery such offence xx<sup>s</sup>. [20s.]

*Bandoggs. Itm.* y<sup>t</sup> noe perso<sup>n</sup> shall suffer any Bandoggs to goe at liberty within this Towne not being strait mused vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of xx<sup>s</sup>. [20s.]

*Swyne. Itm.* yt none of ye Inhabitants of this Towne shall suffer their swyne to goe at liberty abroad in the streets of this Towne vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of 3<sup>s</sup>. 4<sup>d</sup>.

*Belman Fishboords* It is ordered & agreed by the whole homagers of this Court that euery Belman of this Towne shall euery tyme hereaft<sup>r</sup> when he placeth fishboords in the s<sup>d</sup> Towne, at the same tyme place and sett Rindges & Tubbs vnder the s<sup>d</sup> fishboords for the receauing of the Garbage of the fish, then to be sould & shall not suffer the Garbage thereof to be cast or thrown downe vpo the Pauement<sup>s</sup>, nor the said fishboords to be washed or scoured vpo<sup>n</sup> the Pauements vpo<sup>n</sup> paine y<sup>t</sup> the Belman shall forfeit for euery day wherein any defalt shalbe made iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.] And for the better putting in executio<sup>n</sup> of this Ordinance, *Tho: Church,* mercer, is auctorised to be Ouerseer herein & to p<sup>r</sup>sent every defalt.

*Donghills. Itm.* y<sup>t</sup> Tho: Minshull mercer, Geoffrey Minshul and Hugh Mainwaring shall before Midsummer next remoue & carry away their seueral middinges or donghills adioyning to the Church wall vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of xij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [13s. 4d.]

*Lamporne.* *Item.* y<sup>t</sup> all the occupier of the lands w<sup>th</sup>in this Fee betweene the *schoole howse* & the water of Weeuer shall before Whitsontyde next scoure the comon cesterne called *Lamporne* in euery place needfull to be scoured vpon or anende [belonging to] their seuerall lands vpo<sup>n</sup> paine to forfeite for euery default xij<sup>d</sup>. [12d.]

*Styes.* *Item.* y<sup>t</sup> W<sup>m</sup>. Garnet and the wid[ow] Ince doe before Midsommer day next remouoe their styes standing neere vnto *Misselsuch*\* [Middle Styche] & not to place them again w<sup>th</sup>in 8 yards of the Cesterne, vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of vjs. viij<sup>d</sup>. [6s. 8d.]

*Cucking Stolec.* *Item.* we p<sup>re</sup>sent y<sup>t</sup> we want a Cuckingstoole & we request y<sup>t</sup> S<sup>r</sup> Hugh Cholmeley, Knight, Baron of this Towne of Namptwich would in some convenient tyme cause a Cuckingstoole to be made & erected.

*Note:* y<sup>t</sup> the Cuckingstoole† & a fine new Cage‡ were both made and set vp at the proper costs of the s<sup>d</sup> S<sup>r</sup>. H. Cholmeley.

*Wich-houses* It is ordered by this inquest y<sup>t</sup> euery one of them y<sup>t</sup> haue decayed wich decayed. howses doe before Midsom day next sufficientlie repaire them vpo paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. Or els from henceforth not to wall in the same so decayed.

*Item.* We lay a paine y<sup>t</sup> Rog<sup>r</sup> Leigh, Butcher, shall not from henceforth enclose a comon Lane adioyning to the Boothe Hall vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>.

*Concordat cum papirys Cur' et exat' per T. Burroughes.*

*PAINES laid for the better ordering of the TOWNE of NAMPTWICH at the Great COURT 23<sup>o</sup> Oct. 1592.*

LAW: WRIGHT gen. *elect Ball vill*: [Bailiff elect for the Town].

WILLMS: TENCH et RICH: COLCLOUGHE . . . . . Const[abl]es.

RAND: MAINWARING, )

RICH: WIXSTED. )

THOS: CHURCH. )

ED: HEYES. )

JASPER RUTTER. )

ROBTUS SPARK. )

RICUS HEUSTER. )

WMS: WIXSTEED. )

*gubernat<sup>es</sup>. salinar<sup>m</sup>.* [Rulers of Walling].

*custod. comie. de Crech.* [Heath-Keepers.]

*Orders for the Heath.* *Item.* where[as] the Jurie is giuen to vnderstand as well by Informacon of others, as also by their owne knowledges, y<sup>t</sup> diuers deceits & cuning pra<sup>ct</sup>ices are vsed vpo the marking day of Cattel that are to be put vpo the heath whereby the whole layes y<sup>t</sup> otherwise would be entered & p<sup>re</sup>fered [preferred] to be marked vnto the Heath Keepers are so seuered & deuided, to th' intent to defraud the whole lay for some smaller s<sup>u</sup>me, then the same coming wholly together wold amount vnto, not

\* Middle Styche occurs as the name of a lane adjacent to Welsh (or rather Frog) Row, in very ancient deeds. (See page 4.) The "Cesterne" was probably the *open channel* that ran down Welsh Row to the river.

† The "Cuckingstoole" was placed in "Cart-lake."

‡ The "Cage" stood in High Town; near the site of the old Market Hall,



only to the great trouble of the Heath Keepers to foresee such deceitfull dealing, but also to the hindrance of this Towne; for preventing whereof, It is ordered by the Jurors of this Court for a law hereaft<sup>r</sup> to be continued. That it shalbe lawfull to the said Heath Keepers appointed for this year, as also for all other heath-keepers that shalbe hereaft<sup>r</sup> to take for euery Beast, aft<sup>r</sup> the proportion of the full lay the 3<sup>d</sup>. part of the same laye: And for euery horse the halfe laye, any former law to the contrary notwithstanding.

*It<sup>m</sup>.* for good considerations moouing this Jurye it is ordered & enacted for a law hereaft<sup>r</sup> to be continued, That the vnder Heath-keepers for y<sup>e</sup> yeare being, shall not haue any allowance of horse or horsegrasse vpon the heath otherwise the<sup>m</sup> vpon the marking day, & then paying for the same according to the p'portio'. of the Layes. And y<sup>t</sup> for all trespasses vpon the heath they shall haue their allowance as before they haue had. And y<sup>t</sup> the head Heath-keepers shall not dispenche with th' impounding of any Cattell by the underkeepers impounded to take away their benefitt fro<sup>m</sup> them; Yet notwithstanding y<sup>t</sup> the s<sup>d</sup> head heath-keepers shall haue therein an ouersight that the trespassers shall not be used w<sup>th</sup> extortion, but y<sup>t</sup> they shall pay for such trespasses as by law may be stood vpon & iustified, & y<sup>t</sup> the fees for the vnder heath-keepers shalbe vj<sup>s</sup>. viij<sup>d</sup>. [6s. 8d.] a peece: & not more according as it was in auncient tyme.

*Orders for It<sup>m</sup>.* it is ordered & agreed by the full consent of this Jurye that it shalbe law-  
*Walling.* full at all tymes hereaft<sup>r</sup> for the Rulers of the Walling for the tyme being in euery yeare to examine by oath by them to be ministred to eu'y [euery] such persons as fro<sup>m</sup> tyme to tyme they shall thinke convenient to be examined vpo<sup>n</sup> any matter y<sup>t</sup> shall tend vnto the breache of any custome, ordinance, paine or Bylaw heretofore made or hereafter to be made, touching the ruling of Walling. And y<sup>t</sup> therevpo<sup>n</sup> the s<sup>d</sup> Rulers shall at euery Leet and view of Frankpledge comonly called the great Court, w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe held the one after Easter, the other after Michaelmas, p<sup>r</sup>sent all such misdemeanors & offences w<sup>th</sup> the offenders as the s<sup>d</sup> Rulers shall find offensive ag<sup>st</sup> any of the Customes, ordinances and paines touching the s<sup>d</sup> walling, & deliuer the same in writing upon their oathes at the end of their office vnto the Jurors & homagers of euery the s<sup>d</sup> Courts, to the end, the Jurors may find & present the same in their verdict accordinglie.

*Bryne-pit.* *It<sup>m</sup>.* it is ordered by the said Jurye y<sup>t</sup> the Rulers of the Walling for this yeare being shall haue authoritye to make a lay of ij<sup>d</sup>. [2d.] euery six leads, to be bestowed vpo<sup>n</sup> the repaire of such decayes as be about the *Bryne-pitt* & the water-workes thereof.

*Stryke.* *It<sup>m</sup>.* it is agreed that the leaue lookers or one of them shall euery kinding [heating of the salt-pans] goe about w<sup>th</sup> the stryke and measure their owne; & euery Occupiers salt to try whether the same be made sufficient or not, & to p<sup>r</sup>sent the offenders therein at the next gr<sup>t</sup> Court. And if the s<sup>d</sup> *Leaue-lookers* shall make default herein to forfaitte for euery such offence the sume of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

*Exchanging It<sup>m</sup>.* it is ordered y<sup>t</sup> noe Occupier of walling w<sup>th</sup>in this Towne shall from  
*of Salt.* henceforth after the publishing of this Order buy, exchange, obtaine, or ingrosse [i.e. forestall, or monopolise] into their hands any salt of any person to sell or exchange the same againe vpon paine of euery *Barrowe* of Salt so bought, exchanged, obtained, or ingrossed, to forfaitte iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

*New orders* *It<sup>m</sup>*. where[as] this Jurye haue vnderstanding y<sup>t</sup> there are not sufficient wallers, for *Walling*. laborors, & makers of salt w<sup>th</sup>in this Towne, wherevpo<sup>n</sup> the owners and occupiers of the same walling are inforced (the most of them) to retaine & hire for the making of salt such as they can gett, although not sufficient for y<sup>t</sup> purpose. By reason whereof the salt is not onely made bad to the great p<sup>r</sup>uidice of the Masters of the same, & of the carriers thereof; But also the s<sup>d</sup> Masters are inforced to giue such vnreasonable wages vnto the s<sup>d</sup> wallers and other the labourors in y<sup>t</sup> trade as heretofore hath not bene accustomed. And also in consideracon of the s<sup>d</sup> wallers & other the labourors in y<sup>t</sup> trade are growne so head strong and disobedient y<sup>t</sup> neither their Masters lawfull comandm<sup>ts</sup>. nor ordinances of the Court heretofore made & p<sup>r</sup>vided for remedying of diuers disorders & misdemeanors touching the same trade, are very little or slenderly regarded amongst them. For remedying of all w<sup>ch</sup> inconueniences, & to th<sup>e</sup> end y<sup>t</sup> the making of salt may from henceforth be the better made by good and sufficient workfolkes; It is therefore by the full consent of this Jurye, ordered, That the now Rulers of the walling or also all others y<sup>t</sup> shall succeed them shall haue full power to seuer [sever] and deuide the walling within the Town to be walled in manner & forme following—

That is to say, One kinding on the one syde of the water and another kinding on the other syde;

And soe to keepe the course of walling according to euery mans right of occupation as the Rulers shall appoint the same:

And that the said now Rulers vpo<sup>n</sup> the kinding next after the 16<sup>th</sup> Novembr next coming [1593] shall cause (after lott cast w<sup>ch</sup> syde shall begin) that side of the water then first to wall as the s<sup>d</sup> Lott shall fall out.

And to th<sup>e</sup> end y<sup>t</sup> this ordinance may be the better obayed, & put in execution by the s<sup>d</sup> Rulers, It is ordered likewise by the s<sup>d</sup> Jurye;—

That if any pso<sup>n</sup> shall at any tyme hereafter goe about or vndertake to kind or wall by them selves of their owne heads, contrary to the Rulers appointm<sup>t</sup> in this behalf, That then it shalbe lawfull for the s<sup>d</sup> Rulers not onely to stop & let [i.e. hinder] them, But also y<sup>t</sup> euery such generall offender shall forfeite for euery such seuell [several] offence the some of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. [39s. 11½d.]

*Pauements*. *It<sup>m</sup>*. it is ordered that Tho: Bullin, Peetr Witherhead, & Eldred Bebington shall before the next great Court raise up their Pauements before their howses in the Church lane equall w<sup>th</sup> the Paument of the howses wherein Raph Buckley & the widdowe Browne doe dwell; soe y<sup>t</sup> the water may runne into the Lamporne, vpo. paine of x<sup>s</sup>. [10s.] for each of them y<sup>t</sup> shall make default.

*Butts*. *It<sup>m</sup>*. we doe p<sup>r</sup>sent o<sup>r</sup> *Butts* are in decay and pray for repairing of the same & authoritie is giuen vnto the head heath-keepers for this yeare, & for all other that shall succeed them in that office fro<sup>m</sup> tyme to tyme to repayre the same, & to be allowed the charges thereof vpon their account to the Jurors of this Court.

<i>Town</i>	THO: YARDLEY	} <i>Gustator kinsie</i> .	HENR: WIXSTEED	} <i>Supuisor ignis &amp;c.</i>
<i>Officers</i> .	ROG: BICKER:		} [Ale-tasters].	
	ROB: SAVAGE	} <i>Supuisor modij</i> .	GILB <sup>t</sup> WOLLAM	} <i>Supuisor font, vill. et canell.</i>
	RIC: CREWE		} [Leave-lookers].	

*Nota q<sup>d</sup> [quod] apud magnam cur.<sup>7</sup> tent. ibm. die Lune viz: vii<sup>o</sup> die Maij 1593, nulla pænæ posit. fuer'. per Jurat'. 35<sup>o</sup> Eliz.:*

(Translation)—*Note:* That at the same great Court held on Monday the 7th day of May 35 Eliz. 1593 no paines had been imposed by the Jury.

*PAYNES layd downe at the great LEET in NAMPTWICH holden 22<sup>o</sup> Octr:*

*Ano<sup>o</sup>: R: Regnæ. Eliz. 35<sup>o</sup> [1593].*

A paine is laid downe that John Brett, wid[ow] Duckowes, & Tho: Palins wife nor any other shall gather any colecroome [? wood ashes] to make any ashes, vpon paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

*Itm.* y<sup>t</sup> noe occupier of walling within the Towne, nor noe waller vnder them shall suffer any ashes to goe out of their wich howses, vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

*Itm.* where[as] Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark gent. was nominated & elected by the Jurors of the great inquest in this Town holden 23<sup>o</sup> Octr. Anno 1592, to be one of the head heath keepers of the Heath, and Commons belonginge to the s<sup>d</sup> Towne, and at this Court should haue made his account of such sumes of money as he hath receaued by reason of his s<sup>d</sup> late office, & to haue made paym<sup>t</sup> thereof vnto this Inquest, according to the usage of the s<sup>d</sup> Court heretofore, which thing the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark hath not done, although however requested by the Jurye of this Court therevnto, but doth detaine the money receaued in his hands: Therefore the Jurors doe amercye [fine] the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark for his default to the sume of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob. [39s. 11½d.]

And we doe further paine the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark that before the 7<sup>th</sup> of Novemb<sup>r</sup> next he doe pay vnto the hands of Jasper Rutter, W<sup>m</sup>. Wixsteed & Ric: Kinshaw or to some one of them, all such sumes of money as the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> hath receaued by reason of his s<sup>d</sup> late office of Heath-keeper.

And that he the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark shall before that tyme repaire unto the Steward of this Court for the tyme being, & take his corporall oath before him, y<sup>t</sup> he shall fully satisfie & paye vnto the s<sup>d</sup> Jasper Rutter, W<sup>m</sup>. Wixsteed & Ric: Kinshawe or to one of them, all such sumes of money as he the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> hath receaued vpon paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

And authoritye is giuen by the s<sup>d</sup> Jurye to the s<sup>d</sup> Jasper Rutter, W<sup>m</sup>. Wixsteed & Ric: Kinshaw, or any 2 of them to allowe vnto the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark vpo<sup>n</sup> the payment of the s<sup>d</sup> sumes, such sume of money as the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> at that tyme of his payment shall demand allowance of, according as the s<sup>d</sup> Jasp<sup>r</sup>, W<sup>m</sup>, & Richard, or any 2 of them shall think meet to be allowed, and not otherwise.

*Itm.* we doe amercye the s<sup>d</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Spark and Robert Wilkes being Supervisors of the high waies within the boundes of this Towne: for that they came not to yield their accounts of their s<sup>d</sup> late office at the great Court holden about a yeare now last past, according as they ought to haue done, by a former usage in this Court, in the sume of x<sup>s</sup>. [10s.] seuerally.

*Itm.* where[as] Tho: Bagnall and others haue found themselves greived & annoyed by

a Privee of John Seckersons adioyning to Tho: Bagnall, who prayed the Jurye to viewe the same, The Jurors of this Court haue therevpo<sup>n</sup> viewed the same and find it to be very noysome [nasty], And therefore doe appoint the s<sup>d</sup> John Seckerson to remooue the s<sup>d</sup> Privee before Christmas next, or otherwise fro<sup>m</sup> tyme to tyme soe to cleanse it & keep it, as it doe not henceforth annoy his neighbours about him, upo<sup>n</sup> paine to forfaita 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

Names of the Jury at the said Court.

RICH: M <sup>RS</sup> ON [Maisteron] <i>gent.</i>	RICUS ROBINSON.
GAB[RIEL] WETTNALL, <i>gent.</i>	WMUS: WIXSTEED.
JASPE <sup>R</sup> RUTTER, <i>gent.</i>	RICUS: BAGNALL.
JOHES: MAINWARING, <i>gent.</i>	HEN: MAISTERO <sup>N</sup> .
GALFR: MINSHULL, <i>gent.</i>	ARTHUR MINSHULL.
WMUS: CHURCH, <i>merc.</i>	JO[HN] ALVASTON.
THOS: CHURCH, <i>merc.</i>	ALANUS WRIGHT.
JOHES: MINSHULL, <i>merc.</i>	RIC: KINSHAWE.
RICUS: WIXSTEED	WM. TENCH SEN <sup>R</sup> .

*It<sup>m</sup>.* a paine y<sup>t</sup> noe person hereafter fro<sup>m</sup> the tyme of publishing this order doe stop the passage of the Queens high way leading fro<sup>m</sup> the high towne to the Castle-lane, and vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

The aforesaid Jurors say that Ferdinand Earl of Derby is free within the Jurisdiction of this Court and ought to carve for the Court; and others say that the said Earl ought to dine with the Jurors at the next great Court.

WILLIAM CHURCH, mercer, *Ballius*. [Bailiff].

NICHUS: GOLDSMITH	} <i>Constables.</i>	JASPER RUTTER	} <i>Custodie co'ite.</i>
ROG: BICKERTON		WM. WICKSTEED	
THO: WILKES	} <i>Gubernator</i>	THO: ROBINSON	} [Heath-keepers].
RIC: ROBINSON		RIC: KINSHAW	
MATT: WRIGHT	} [Rulers of Walling].	WMUS. TENCH SEN <sup>R</sup> .	} <i>Gustator Kinsie.</i>
HEN: M <sup>RS</sup> ON		WMUS. INCE	
JOHES: ALVASTO <sup>N</sup>	} <i>Supuiss<sup>rs</sup>.</i>	ROBTUS: SAVAGE	} <i>Supuiss<sup>rs</sup>. ignis. &amp;c.</i>
RADUS: CROCKET		[Leave-lookers.]	
		HEN: WIXSTEED	} <i>Supuis font vill. et canell.</i>
		ROGER MEYKIN	

Concerning the following Orders of the Court Leet without date, but apparently in 1594 or thereabouts, Mr. Wilbraham wrote:—

“Theis last notes I had forth of some Papers vnder my Cos<sup>n</sup> [cousin] Ric: Cluttons hand.”

“That the assessment made for the repaying of *Shrewbridge lane* shalbe ordered & p<sup>d</sup> [paid] vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of xx<sup>s</sup>. to be exacted & the Fynes by entreaty of the Jury to be employed to the amending of that work, and the surplusage to the highwaies within the Towne.

*Item.* y<sup>t</sup> a six leads shalbe occupied for 3 yeares fro<sup>m</sup> the next making meet towards the repairing of the said lane, and that the collectors shall sett and receiue the rents thereof and account vpo. their oathes before the Jury at the great Court. And if any surplusage be, the same to be employed towards the rēpacons. [repairings] of the *March lane*.

*Item.* that John Alvaston shall haue the 9 dayes of the Pauem<sup>t</sup>. Walling w<sup>ch</sup> are behind vpo. Randle Hortons head. And shall fro<sup>m</sup> the next making meet, haue nyne leads walling dureing his life, and shall put into repaire the pauem<sup>ts</sup> & wayes, & maintaine them in sufficient rep<sup>r</sup>ations. And if vpo. survay of the Grand Jury in any leet of this towne there shalbe any defect of repacon. & not reformed vpo<sup>n</sup> p<sup>r</sup>em<sup>o</sup>nition then his estate therein to cease. And yet he to haue the Pauem<sup>ts</sup> in repacon.

*Item.* y<sup>t</sup> euery occupier of Walling in this Towne shall bring in writing to the Rulers a note of all such walling as he will wall for, at or before the 3<sup>rd</sup> kinding in euery half y<sup>r</sup>.; & whose inheritance the s<sup>d</sup> walling is, or at the least who is immediate Landlord to the s<sup>d</sup> occupier of the same walling vpon paine euery one making defalt to forfait xx<sup>s</sup>. [20s.]

And not to be allowed by the Rulers to wall any thing for that half yeares occupation, vntil it shalbe ordered & found due to him by the Jury at the great Court the next following. And if any perso<sup>n</sup> making such defalt shall by strong hand attempt to wall ag<sup>st</sup> the Rulers permission before it be found & permitted by the grand Jury, then euery one soe offending shall forfait for euery kinding soe walled 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

*Item.* that euery perso<sup>n</sup> that shall bring in any more walling then [than] they truely hold, and are to wall for, shall forfait for euery such offence 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

*Item.* To confirme the orders found for or [our] customes recyting the names of the Jurye & to order that it may be engrossed & sealed w<sup>th</sup> the Towne seale, and deliuered to the Rulers to be deliuered ouer for euery tyme to their successors: And y<sup>t</sup> theis paines and a paine enabling the Rulers to sweare, made 23<sup>o</sup> Oct. 34<sup>o</sup> Eliz: [1592] shalbe engrossed therevnto to th<sup>e</sup> end they may be better put in executio<sup>n</sup>.

*Item.* y<sup>t</sup> noe perso<sup>ns</sup> shall wall that are not buyers of wood, & payers of workfolkes wages, & wall truely to wyn or to loose without collusion [i.e. deceit] vpo<sup>n</sup> payne of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

*Item.* y<sup>t</sup> no occupier of walling or other perso<sup>n</sup> w<sup>th</sup>in this Towne shall sell any wich howse wood after it shalbe brought into this Towne, vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of 39<sup>s</sup>. 11<sup>d</sup>. ob.

*Item.* y<sup>t</sup> euery of the occupiers of walling shall before Midsom<sup>r</sup> next p<sup>r</sup>vide a ladder of xvj [16] pins at the least to be at the wich-house wherein they shall wall and keep them at their wich howses in the walling weekes, vpo<sup>n</sup> paine of 3<sup>s</sup>. 4<sup>d</sup>. And that noe perso<sup>n</sup> shall without lycence of the owner take away any of the s<sup>d</sup> ladders vnles it be in tyme of fier, vpon paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

*Sweeping* *Item.* that euery perso<sup>n</sup> y<sup>t</sup> shall sweep any muck together in the streets shall *the Streets.* get the same away before the next Saturday morning vpon paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

And that euery inhabitant being a householder in the high Towne shall cause the pauements ag<sup>st</sup> their seuerall howses unto the middest of the Pauement to be made clean & swept weeklye before euery Saturday morning & the muck to be carried away, vpon paine of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

## Night Watchmen.

Beside the public officers already mentioned, there was formerly a band of *Night Watchmen* who were not amenable to any manorial court, but were chosen from amongst trustworthy townsmen by a "Watching Committee" of influential tradesmen, and paid ten shillings each a week, from a fund raised by subscription for that purpose. They are traceable in the Registers only as far back as the early part of last century; the first mentions being as follows:—

"1735 May 4. Charles Harding, *Watchman*." [Buried].

"1740 April 9. Mary, dau. of William Siddals, *Watchman*." [Baptised].

"1747 May 15: Jane, wife of Thomas Taylor, *Night Bellman*" [Buried].

"1758 Sep: 16: Thomas Taylor, *Night Bellman*, a pauper." [Buried].

Until about 1832 six watchmen nightly walked their lonely rounds from 10 p.m to 5 a.m., carrying with them a spring rattle, (or *bell* in former days) a bludgeon, and lantern, crying in more or less musical tones, as they tramped along the dark streets, the hour of the night and state of the weather. The last band of Watchmen, or "Charlies," were Rondull Strong\* (or Strung as he was called), Robert Astles, William Green, Peter Bolis,† John Basford, and John Sutton. All these were under a Captain, or Chief, Mr. John Prince, of Wall Lane, who had been a soldier in the French Wars; and was one of the last two Constables already mentioned (page 68).

In the lower room of the Old Grammar School in the Churchyard, which was then the storehouse of oil, lamps, &c. Captain Prince met his men, set their rounds, giving necessary instructions to each for the night; and at the week end was their paymaster. When the police came, and gas was introduced into the town, the band of watchmen was finally dispensed with; with the exception of *John Sutton*, who continued to be sole night-watchman for High Town, until Christmas 1868, when he was incapacitated by infirmity, and after a protracted illness died Christmas 1870, having been watchman over fifty years. He was a well-known "character" in the town. It was his practice nightly to watch the shops of those tradesmen who gave him a small pittance, (rod. usually) fortnightly, to try their doors; and plaintively cry "*parst ten, and a fine starry night;*" or otherwise, as the time and weather might be. After which he might have been found in some corner or passage of High Street, muffled up in a top-coat, his eyes peering from under an old wide-awake hat, his hands encased in big gloves, and having fixed to his belt a bulls-eye lantern. In these retreats he was always ready to relate how many years it was since he had been in bed at night, or tell of the robberies he had prevented, and his once clever capture of a gang of thieves in Wall Lane; to offer a pinch of snuff, or slyly insinuate that he knew a place where they were brewing. For many years he had been called "Old Jack Sutton," though he was only 67 years of age at his death.

\* His proper name was *Armstrong*,—a name of frequent occurrence in the Registers; sometimes written "*Strongitharnes*," and "*Strongarm*."

† The last survivor is Peter Bolis, who now (1883) lives in one of the Almshouses in Love Lane.

## THE PRIVILEGE OF NON-JURORS.

## The Town Charter.

On the 18th March, 10 Eliz. [1567-8], a Charter confirming an ancient privilege that had been claimed by the townspeople for upwards of two hundred and fifty years, was obtained from the Queen, on the petition of *Roger Maisteron*, *Roger Walthall*, *John Leche*, *Thomas Clutton*, and others, gentlemen of Nantwich. This Confirmation Charter, which is too long and tedious in legal phraseology to be given in full, declared that—\*

“The Burgesses of Wich Malbank were entitled not to be put upon any assize, juries, recognizances, or inquests whatever with strangers concerning lands and tenements lying out of the vill of Wich Malbank or its liberty; or concerning any trespasses, contracts or agreements made and happening out of the same; &c. That the men of Wich Malbank were entitled to this privilege as proved by an Inquisition taken at Chester on Tuesday next after the feast of St. Gregory the Pope [March 12], in the 13 Edward II [1319-20] and had then had that privilege time out of mind.” &c.

It was enrolled in the Court of Exchequer at Chester on the 23rd Aug. 1568;† signed by Sir John Throckmorton, Knight, then Chief Justice of Chester and Flint. This privilege of non-jurors was, nevertheless, repeatedly called in question by the legal authorities at Chester; but, was as strenuously resented and upheld by the people of the town. The Wilbraham family appear to have always exerted themselves in maintaining this town right; and thus they have left on record‡ that the Town Charter was confirmed at the Assizes held in the Common Hall at Chester on

Monday 4 July 6 Jac. I. [1609]	before Rich: Lewkenor Knt.	Chief Justice.
	before Henry Townshend Esqr.	do.
Monday 23 Sept. 20 Jac. I. [1623]	before James Whitelock Knt.	do.
	before Marmaduke Lloyd Knt.	do.
1654	before John Bradshaw	do.
1664-5	before Sir Job Charlton Knt.	do.
Aug: 1680	before Sir George Jeffries Knt.	do.
25 March: 1718	before Spencer Cowper Esqre.	do.

Dr. Ormerod stated from the Copy of Enrolments and Allowances that it was confirmed ten times before 8 Will. III. [1695-6]; and since that time by every succeeding Chief Justice. In 1762 the privilege was again challenged, rousing the watchful jealousy of “near sixty of the principal freeholders and inhabitants, who unanimously resolved to spare no expense in defending their common right.§ For rather more than a century after that date, the town enjoyed its privilege undisputed, until this antiquated plea was at last annulled and rendered invalid by Act of Parliament in 1873.

\* A copy of the Charter in Latin is preserved amongst the Wilb. MSS.

† Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

‡ Wilbraham MSS. Collections at Delamere.

§ Partridge's Hist. Nantwich, p. 22.



## Historical Annals.



WICH, or Nantwich, although not mentioned in the Saxon Chronicle, must have been an important place in Saxon times. Its importance at the close of the Saxon æra, is seen in the account given by King William's Commissioners in the great national survey, called Domesday Book, (p. 10, 11); an account that is only exceeded in length and interest in this county, by the description in the same record, of the City of Chester.

Three important events connected with Nantwich in Norman times have been noticed in the preceding pages;—the battle in 1069 resulting in the destruction of the ancient Saxon town; the grant of lands to the then newly founded Abbey of Combermere, about 1130; and another sanguinary battle in which the Welsh were defeated in or about 1140. For a period of 167 years, i.e. from 1070 to 1237, during which Cheshire had been governed by local hereditary Earls, the Welsh had been kept in check; but after the death of the last of these Earls (John Scot) in 1237, the history of this county consists of a recital of reciprocal inroads and injuries by Welsh and English, with stories of crimes, usurpations, and massacres. In 1244, says Matthew Paris,\* “the Welsh being exceedingly alarmed, lest when the King had made peace with the King of Scotland, he might attack them in a hostile manner with his whole army, kept quiet, and, like hares, lay hid in peace. But when the Welsh understood that the King had returned to the peaceful delights of Westminster, forgetful of the injuries which had been inflicted on himself and his people, like bees who swarm out of their hives, they came forth from their lurking-places, devoting themselves in no slack manner to pillage, conflagration, and massacre, and shamefully routing the English, though not without considerable loss on their own part.” The same old chronicler states,† that in the following year, [1245] about the time of the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist [June 24], the King caused all who owed him military service to be warned to follow him on a hostile expedition against Wales; and soon after, when he was about to set out, he very courteously requested the sanction of the citizens of London, who were

\* Matthew of Westminster's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 234.

† *Ibid.* p. 243.



convened in St. Paul's, and humbly requested the prayers of the clergy." This expedition appears to have returned inglorious. The King, unable to cope with the brave Llewellyn, depopulated the border, causing thereby a dreadful famine, and, retreating into Cheshire, he destroyed the salt-pits of Nantwich and the other Wiches, in order further to distress his enemies. During the long and feeble reign of Henry III, a murderous warfare was kept up between the Welsh and Lord James de Audley, who held a third part of the Barony of Wich-Malbank, and "who, on his return from Germany, found his lands, goods, and castles burnt or desolated. A savage system of retaliation was instantly commenced, and the whole border was reduced to an uninhabitable desert; the inhabitants were cut off by the sword, the castles and houses burnt, the woods felled, and the cattle destroyed by famine."\* It was not until the year 1282 that Wales was subjugated by the terrible and victorious march of Edward I; and, in that year, the King being at Nantwich, granted protection to several persons that their corn and other provisions should not be seized on account of the approach of the Welsh army.†

On 11th May, 1283, Edward I. granted to Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, a three days' fair at Nantwich, to be held annually at Bartholtide, on 23rd, 24th and 25th Aug. (See page 42). No doubt this chartered fair would tend to raise the town again into importance, after the reverses in the previous King's reign; and possibly it may first have been held in the churchyard, until fairs were prohibited from being held in churchyards by the statute of Westminster 13 Edw. I. [1284-5].

Still known as the *Old Fair, Great Fair*, or more commonly as *September Fair*, it has continued to be held annually for six hundred years;—at Bartholtide until the alteration of the English Calendar by stat. 24 Geo. II. c. 23 [1752]; and on the 4th of September, being eleven days after, since the year 1753.‡ No fair was held in 1631 on account of the plague; and again by prohibitory notice in 1849 owing to the visitation of Cholera, (see *postea*). The right of collecting toll on all merchandise at this fair passed with the Lovell lands to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley in 1556, and by his descendant, the late Marquis, was granted to the Nantwich Local Board in 1862. In former times vendors, in order to attract buyers, were accompanied by jugglers, minstrels and buffoons; hence this fair became the great pleasure fair of the year, and often the scene of riot and dissipation. Two instances of clowns or mountebanks, who, no doubt, had often addressed and amused the gaping crowd in their *ad captandum* way, are mentioned in the Burial Register:—

"1604 Sep. 22. Laurence Swettnam, capper, a merry man." [i.e. the funny man or clown of the fair].

"1742 Dec. 29. Benjamin Gonnins, a merry-andrew."

Formerly the fun of the fair consisted in bull, bear, and badger-baitings; cock-fighting; sack-racing; bolting hot porridge or dumplings (barm-balls, or *barm-baws*, as Nantwich people called them); swarming greasy poles, grinning through horse-collars, &c.; "but all these charms (!) are fled."

\* Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. I. Introduction p. xxxi. (old Edit.) p. lvi. (new Edit.) Twenty years after, on the Sunday following the battle of Evesham in 1265, the Lord James de Audley, and Urian de St. Pierre, seized the Castle of Beeston, and laid siege to Chester, which after a defence of ten weeks surrendered to Prince (afterwards King) Edward, thus terminating the Barons' War in this county.

† Lysons' Cheshire, p. 699, quoting *Rot. Wall.* 10 Ed. I.

‡ This fair, which was originally granted for *three* days, was held for *four* days in the year 1500, (page 66); and has since that time been reduced to *one* day.

In the years 1285 and 1307 lands in Alvaston, then known as the wood of *Creche*, which one hundred and fifty years before had been granted to the townsmen of Nantwich and monks of Combermere as common land, by Hugh, second Baron of Wich-Malbank, and which in the meantime had become the waste of the lords of Alvaston, were again secured to the town by certain deeds. From that time down to the commencement of the present century, officers were annually elected by the Court Leet to see that the common domain was equitably enjoyed. Two Acts of Parliament have since been obtained by which the cultivation of this waste land has been extended and improved, resulting in an increased benefit to the town. (See Alvaston township).

On the 2nd July, 1310, King Edward II, being on his journey to London, came from Chester to Nantwich. He was again in Chester on the 31st July, 1319, and in November of that year visited the Religious houses of Norton and Vale Royal;\* on which occasion he may possibly have paid a visit to Combermere Abbey and Nantwich, though no chronicler has recorded the fact.

During the reign of Edw. III, on three different occasions, neighbouring gentlemen sought the privilege of altering certain roads in their manors near Nantwich; and at courts held before the Escheator and a local jury sworn to inquire whether if the claim were granted, it would interfere with any vested right, or be to the detriment of the crown or any subject, the following Inquisitions were taken. (Plea Rolls, Cheshire Records).

[I]. "4 Edw. III. [1330-1]. *Inquisitio ad quod damnum* finding that it was not to the damage of the King, &c., that *Peter de Stapelegh* should close a way 220 perches long and 40 feet wide leading from Holebek towards Wich-Malbank, near Ambaldeside, on the east part of his manor of Stapelegh, so that he made another way 200 perches long and 40 feet wide on the west side of his said manor."†

[II]. "8 Edw. III. [1334-5] Inquisition, finding that it was not to the damage &c. that *William de Wystaston* should divert a way, nine perches in length. . . . leading under the park of the said William from Monkesopenhale towards Wych Malbank, and hold the said way to himself and his heirs, provided that he made another way in lieu of the one so diverted."

[III]. "22 Edw. III [1348-9]. Inquisition, finding that it was not to the damage, &c., that *Matthew de Foulshurst* should appropriate a lane leading from the metes of Edlaston to the rivulet of the mill of Shyardes-brugge [Shrew-bridge], to the enlargement of his manor of Newbold; that the said lane contained 46 perches in length and one perch in width; and that the way to be constructed by the said Matthew in lieu of the said lane would contain 40 perches in length and one perch in width."‡

In 1339-40, Nicholas the *Catchpole*, i.e. the collector of manorial dues in the town, occurs on the Plea Rolls in litigations respecting property in and near Nantwich.

About this time commenced that period of English history known as the "days of chivalry," or the hundred years' war with France, when, if Froissart is to be believed, in Englishmen were united true nobility of character and tenderness of feeling with military valour and physical strength. A few local records during that long and fatal war, which, robbed of its romance, "drained the strength and corrupted the temper of the English people," have a curious bearing on those times, commonly known as the "Dark Ages."

\* W. Beamont's "*History of Halton*," p. 39-40.

† ? Whether the "London Road" through Stapeley, which is still on the west side of Stapeley Hall, is the road here mentioned.

‡ In a field opposite Shrewbridge is a mound and moat. ? Whether this is the site of the manor-house of Newbold.

In 1347 a pardon was granted to Thomas, son of John Noteman, of the Hospital of Stanthorn, for the death of *William de Chastel* "prehour" of *Wich-Malbank*, at the request of John de Beauchamp, Knight, son of the Earl of Warwick, who had the honour to carry the royal standard at the battle of Cressy, was captain of Calais, and held other high offices.\*

On the 3rd July, 1360, a pardon was granted to Richard Brom of Northenden, for the death of *John Blake of Nantwich*, the said Richard having served the prince in his last journey to France in the train of James de Audelegh, the hero of Poitiers.\*

On the 12th Dec. 45 Edw. III. [1371] protection was granted by Edward the Black Prince, as Earl of Chester, to *William Barbour, of Wich-Malbank*, on his going to Calais on the King's service, in the retinue of Nicholas de Tamworth, captain of the said town of Calais.†

On the 20th July, 46 Edw. III. [1372] protection was granted by Prince Edward, Earl of Chester, to *Richard de Henchull, of Wich-Malbank*, on his going to North Wales on the Earl's service; probably for the defence of the Castle of Beaumaris.†

On the 12th June 5 Rich. II. [1382] protection was granted to *Sir David Cradok, Knight*, Mayor of the city of Bordeaux, on his going to Gascony on the King's service.†

Gascony, as part of the Duchy of Aquitaine, had become a possession of the English crown in 1360 by the treaty of Bretigny; and in the same year, or soon after, this mayoralty had been conferred as a reward for military services. Sir David Cradock appears to have been the son of Nicholas Cradock, of Nantwich, (*Harl. MSS.* 506 p. 124) who was living in the 3 Edw. II. [1309-10]. His position and wealth obtained for him, in Feb. 1376-7, from Prince Richard, as Earl of Chester, the wardship, marriage and custody of the lands of John son of John de Oulton, "who was born at Erdeswick and baptized in the church of Churchmunshull;" to whom, of course, Sir David ultimately gave as the most suitable match, his own daughter Pelerine. The heir came of age in 1391, at which time his guardian and father-in-law was dead; for it is stated in the "*de etate probanda*" (proof of age) of John de Oulton, that his lands were then in the custody of the executors of David Cradock, Kt., Peter and John de Legh.\* On the next page of *Harl. MSS.* 506, is a charter, of which the following is an abstract, proving that Sir David was still living in 1384.

"I John Woodchouse Chancellor of Chester and Nicholas Wildebor chaplain have granted &c. to *David Cradoc Knight*, and Ireland his wife certain lands and tenements in Wich Malbank, and lands &c. within and without the county of Chester; and after their deaths, to *Richard Cradock* son of the said David and his male heirs; falling which to revert to *Roger Cradoc*, brother of the said Richard, and his male heirs &c. Dated at Wich Malbank on the day of the Invention of the Holy Cross [May 3] in the 7 Ric. II. [1384]. These being witnesses:—Hugh Venables, Sheriff of Cheshire; Ralph Vernon, Robert Fouleshurst Knight, William de Praers, William de Bromlegh, Nicholas Colfox, and others."

Of the two sons mentioned in this deed, only Richard occurs in the Cheshire Records. Like his father, he was a soldier and a Knight; and on his departure to Gascony in 1391, licence was obtained for *Thomas Maistresson*, of Nantwich to act as his attorney. Sir Richard Cradock, Kt. occurs for the last time in July and Aug. 1397, in connection with

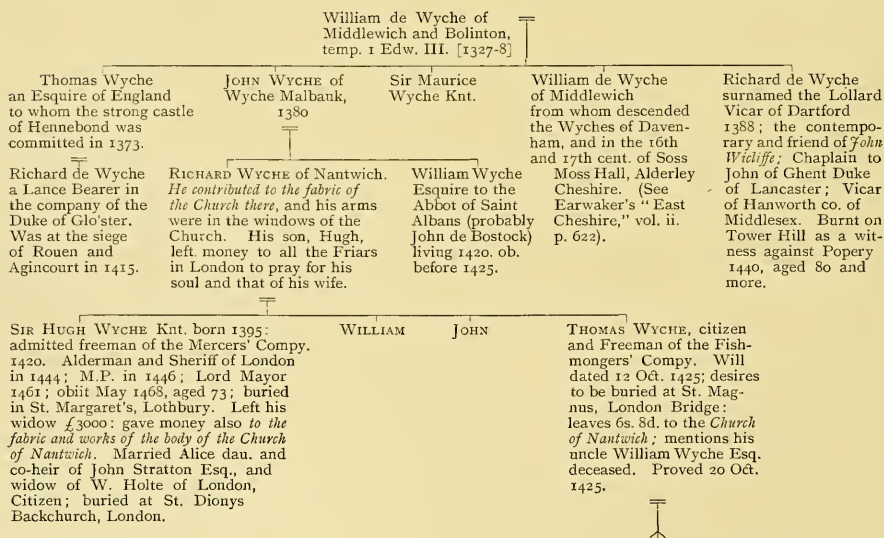
\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

† Chesh. Plea Rolls.

Sir William Bagot, Kt., as joint grantee of the custody of the same manor of Erdeswyk, then of the yearly value of £20, and of other lands, during the minority of the three daughters of John de Oulton, who had died on the 9th Oct. 1396.\* To the memory of Sir David Cradock, Kt., a tomb was placed in the south transept of the present Nantwich Church.†

Contemporary with Sir David Cradock lived John Wyche of Wich-Malbank, whose ancestors had long been connected with Bollington and Middlewich. This family has hitherto almost escaped the notice of Cheshire historians, although Richard de Wyche, Bishop of Chichester, who died on 3rd April, 1253, was canonized by Pope Urban IV in 1261, and was the only Romish saint of Cheshire birth; and another Richard de Wyche, brother of the above John Wyche, became a witness against Popery and suffered as a *Martyr* in the Lollard persecution. The following descent of the Wyche family of Nantwich, which is specially interesting as containing allusions to the building of Nantwich Church, is taken from a long pedigree in Hoare's Hist. of Wiltshire, vol. iv. & v. p. 35.

## Wyche of Wich-Malbank.



1384. On Nov. 11th, William Colfox (probably of Nantwich) was appointed to the office of *Bedelary* [or *Bailiff*] of the Hundred of Nantwich, which he held by lease for three years at £12 per annum.\*

\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

† See Ancient Monuments; and History of the Church, &c., for other notices of this family.

1385-6. On Feb. 28th, Robert Daniel, of Rydelegh, Henry Brayn, [? of Aston-in-Mondrum] and Richard de Cholmundelegh, were appointed Commissioners to arrest all disturbers of the peace in the hundred of Nantwich, the King having heard of great terror and disturbance caused by bands of armed men there.\*

1386—1389. Between these years the celebrated Scrope and Grosvenor Suit of Arms was exciting the counties of Cheshire and Lancashire. Never, on any trial, were so many distinguished witnesses of every rank, from the sovereign Prince down to country gentlemen, examined: the point at issue being to prove whether *Sir Richard le Scrope* or *Sir Robert le Grosvenor* had the better right to bear a blue shield having a gold band across it diagonally from left to right. An examination of witnesses took place at Nantwich on 1st Oct. 1386, and again on the 6th May, 1388. It was at the first of these examinations, that John de Holford, one of the Grosvenor witnesses, deposed on oath, that at the time of the Conquest Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, granted to Gilbert le Grosvenor a part of the manors of one of the Saxon Thanes named Hame, who had been killed at the battle of Nantwich.†

After three years' litigation, this chivalrous suit was decided in favour of Sir Richard le Scrope; but that Sir Robert le Grosvenor should bear the same Arms with a silver border. Sir Robert, however, being dissatisfied, appealed to the King, who, by his commissioners, finally decided concurrent with the former judgment; but granted Sir Robert the privilege to bear a golden sheaf instead of a golden band, as being descended from the ancient Earls of Chester; which latter Arms he accordingly adopted, and the same have ever since been borne by the noble house of Eaton.

In 1386, when Richard II had nearly attained the full age which entitled him to govern by his own authority, parliament sanctioned the transference of sovereign power to the ambitious Duke of Gloucester, who, in 1387, upon pretence of removing the King's favourites, but in reality to carry out his design of still holding the King (his nephew) in subjection, assembled an army, which met the King's forces, commanded by Thomas Molyneux, Constable of Chester Castle, at Radcot Bridge in Oxfordshire. The King's army was defeated, and the gallant leader of the Cheshire men was slain. Under date 20th Dec. 1398 occurs a list of men in Nantwich Hundred amongst whom was distributed the sum of £183 8s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. "as part of the 4000 marks [£2666 13s. 4d.] sent by the King out of his treasury at Westminster for the relief of those of Chester who suffered at Redcotebrugge" [Radcot Bridge]. Foremost of those who thus survived the defeat and were rewarded, comes Sir Richard Vernon, Baron of Shipbroke, who afterwards died in the same King's cause, being taken prisoner at Shrewsbury and beheaded in 1403. The names are as follows:—\*

[SIR] "RICHARD LE VERNON,	RICHARD LE ROPE,	THOMAS LE VERNON,
DAVID LE SEINTPIERRE,	THOMAS DEL HETH,	JAMES LE VERNON,
JOHN DE KELSHALL,	THOMAS LE PRAERS,	NICHOLAS WILLESONE,
ROGER ALKOC,	JOHN DEL CASTELL,	JOHN DE BUYRTON,
JOHN LE EYRE,	JOHN LE CROUTH,	THOMAS DE SONDBACH,
ROGER LE WODEWER,	JOHN DE ERDELEGH,	ROGER DE STAPELEY.

\* Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

† Dr. Ormerod quotes this deposition, in Norman French, in *Hist. of Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 82 old Edit.; p. 144 new Edit.

1388. Oct. 16th, ROBERT, the Abbot of Combermere, appointed *Justice of Eyre*, for the towns of Middlewich and Nantwich;\* that is, he was made an *Itinerant Justice*, and went from place to place to hold Courts and try criminals. He was not, however, the first Abbot, who, in addition to his power as the greatest ecclesiastic in this part of the county, exercised high legal authority; for, in Norman times, the Abbot of Combermere, together with the Baron of Wich-Malbank, had jurisdiction in Nantwich Hundred, even in cases of capital felony.†

1390-1. Feb. 13th, Thomas le Maisterson, of Nantwich, appointed Escheator of the county, by the King, who, on 29th Oct. 1391, also made him Attorney-general of the county.‡

1392. Aug. 2nd, Commissioners were appointed in the different Hundreds of Cheshire to arrest all disturbers of the peace, great complaints having reached the King of evil doings in Cheshire. The Commissioners for Nantwich Hundred were Ralph de Vernon, Kt. [of Haslington] and William de Praers [of Baddiley].‡

1396. Oct. 4th, John Bateson, late *Catchpol* of Nantwich, being in arrears to the King for 13s. 10d., enters into a recognizance for payment of the same.‡

1397—1398. On 27th Jan. 1397-8, King Richard assembled his Parliament at Shrewsbury, where an act was passed raising the county of Cheshire to a Principality, the King styling himself Prince of Chester; and in the following year, when he had become unpopular elsewhere, he visited his Principality for the purpose of raising an army of two thousand archers. In Aug. 1398 the King stayed at Nantwich on this journey, for on the 31st of the same month Robert Parys,§ Chamberlain of Chester, had delivered to him, “by John Cranmere yeoman of the King’s wardrobe,” &c., *inter alia*,—“two carpets of red tapestry and a green mattress, being part of the Royal bed furniture which had been left behind at Nantwich.”†

On Nov. 18th of the same year, “the King granted to John Norley, Chamberlain, [“*garcio Camere nostre*”], and Richard Letfote, the goods and chattels of Richard de Pulle [Poole] who was convicted of the death of a woman at Nantwich; the said John and Richard to answer for all the value of the same beyond £4.”‡

Under date 5th Jan. 1398[-9] occurs the first mention of the TOWN BRIDGE, when licence was granted by the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town of Nantwich, to have divine service celebrated in “*St. Ann’s Chapel upon the Bridge in the said town.*”|| It occurs again in John de Kyngeslegh’s Rental dated 17 Hen. VI. [1438-9], as follows:—

“Four shops which he formerly had *upon the Bridge with the Chapel*. &c. value 40 sh.”

Partridge, in his history (page 11), says, that the street Welsh Row was anciently called “*St. Anne’s and St. Anne’s parish* ;” but, from what follows, it is clear that writer did not know that St. Ann’s Chapel stood on the bridge. No doubt in that oratory, a priest, on the payment of money, offered up prayers for the safety of wayfarers passing

\* Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

† Ormerod’s *Cheshire*, vol. i. lv. new Edit.

‡ Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

§ The Chamberlain of Chester presided at the Court of Exchequer there.

|| Ormerod’s *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 450, new Edit., quoting the Lichfield Registers.

over the bridge, as in similar bridge-chapels at Congleton and Stockport in pre-Reformation times. In early times the Bridge, which was built of wood, was maintained and repaired by the town, (see Annals, 1633—1637); but in 1652 it was made a County Bridge; and in 1664 was first built of stone; that bridge being superseded by the present structure in 1803. Though formerly known as the *Wich Bridge*, it is now called, in the Government Survey Maps, the *Welsh Bridge*.

On 21st August, 1399, King Richard II, then the prisoner of Henry Bolinbroke, being on his journey from Flint Castle to London, came again from Chester to Nantwich; the next day he travelled to Newcastle-under-Lyme; to Lichfield on the 24th, and Northampton on the 29th, where he granted a patent of the priory of Derehurst to one *Master Richard Wyche*, (perhaps of Nantwich; but no doubt belonging to the local family of that name); arriving in London on the 2nd September, where he was deposed on the 29th of the same month.

The transfer of the crown to Henry Bolinbroke as King Henry IV on 30th September, 1399, produced great fear and anxiety amongst Cheshire people on account of their former adherence to the deposed King, and from the fact that lawless bands of armed men had committed great robberies and murders in the adjacent counties of Salop, Stafford and Derby. But one of the first acts of King Henry was the granting of a general pardon to his subjects in this county. By commission dated 23rd January, 1399—1400, the following Justices of Peace for Nantwich Hundred, namely:—"John de Delves, Richard le Vernon, Thomas de Fouldeshurst of Edlleston, Thomas le Maistresson [of Nantwich], Richard le Mascy del Hogh [of Hough], William de Beeston, William de Crue, of Sond; Thomas Malbon, Thomas Daukynson, Richard son of Roger de Cholmondeley, Hugh del Malpas, David le Seintpere, John de Kyngeslegh, Richard de Roope and David le Crue of Pulcroft,—were to make proclamation of pardon to all those who had through fear joined the rebels, on their returning to their homes; and, also that poor people should not be frightened."\* Amongst those who were excepted in this general act of pardon occur William Coke, chaplain of Wich-Malbank, Roger de Salghall, vicar of Acton; the latter being required in July, 1400, to find sureties in the very large sum of 200 marks [£133 6s. 8d.] for his own good conduct and that of his Chaplain.†

In the early years of Henry IV Cheshire was connected with the Percy rebellion, and the Welsh revolt. Owen Glendower, who claimed to be the rightful Prince of Wales, was at war with the usurper Henry IV at that time; and though not a confederate with Hotspur, he appears to have aided the Cheshire men who still cherished the memory of the deposed King. Hence "Prince Henry" [that is, Prince of Chester, and King of England] ordered John de Kingslegh and Richard de Bromley to "seize all cattle within the hundred of Nantwich which had been bought of the rebels [the Welsh] contrary to proclamation against buying cattle of the Rebels." (*Chesh. Recog. Rolls*, dated June 1403).

On St. Kenelm's day [17 July] 1403, Hotspur, who had proclaimed the late King to be still alive at Chester Castle, summoned a muster of Cheshire men at Sandivay, near Delamere Forest;‡ and from thence marched southwards through Nantwich, where he plundered and destroyed the house of Thomas Maisterson Esquire,§ (who no doubt was then

\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

† Lyson's *Cheshire*, p. 834, quoting Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. IV.

‡ *Traison et mort. Rich. II.* p. 285; also, *Harl. MSS.* 1989 f. 381.

§ See *postea*.

at Lichfield with King Henry's army);\* and thence by Whitchurch and Prees to Shrewsbury, where, on 21st July, 1403, was fought one of the most dreadful of English battles.

It was long before the Marches of Wales were at peace. On the 24th Jan. 1403-4, *Richard de Bromley*, *John de Kyngesley*, *Thomas le Maisterstone*, *Richard le Masey del Hogh*, *Richard Rope*, *David de Crue* of Pulcroft, *Richard de Wybunbury* and *Hugh del Malpas* were appointed by King Henry IV to hold inquiries in Nantwich Hundred "touching those who spread false rumours to the disquiet of the people of the county of Chester, and the disturbance of the peace there; and also to array all the fencible men of the said hundred."†

Meanwhile a rebellion had broken out in the north; and in 6 Hen. IV [1404-5], *John Kingsley* of Nantwich, was required to find 12 bowmen; and *Richard de Minshull* 4 bowmen. (*Harl. MSS.* 1988 f. 135).

On the 18th June, 1406, *Thomas Maisterston Esq.*, of Nantwich, and others "were ordered to conduct a number of men at arms and archers (viz. 4 lances and 40 bowmen) of the hundred of Nantwich to the Marches of Wales in the hundred of Broxton, there to remain for the defence of the county against the [Welsh] rebels."§

On Tuesday next after the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle [Nov. 30] 10 Hen IV [1408] *Nicholas Parker*, of Coppenhall, who held lands in Coppenhall and Nantwich, was outlawed for the death of *Thomas Malbon*, (? of Bradley); and by Inquisition taken on Thursday in the second week of Lent, his lands were forfeited to the Crown.‡

War with France having been declared by Henry V, in 1415, the Sheriff of the county was called upon to muster all Knights, Esquires and yeomen, at Newcastle-under-Lyme, thence to proceed to France; *John Fox* is the only name preserved in the Cheshire records of a townsman of Nantwich that embarked in that expedition. Three years afterwards, on 30th June, 1418, *Robert Dawson* of Nantwich obtained protection on his going to France in the King's service; and in March, 1421-2, *Thomas Sherman*, of Nantwich, went thither in the retinue of Queen Catherine.†

Perhaps the most remarkable man in Nantwich during these eventful war times, was *THOMAS MAISTERSON*, ESQUIRE, already mentioned in the preceding pages. Born as early, if not before the year of Cressy [1346]; in his youth he must have heard of the Poitiers heroes, Sir James de Audlegh of Helegh, Kt., Sir Robert de Fouleshurst of Crewe, Kt., and Sir Richard de Delves of Delves Hall, Kt. He would remember Sir John de Kelts Kt. purchasing the Doddington estate from the Brescy family in 1351-2; and in 1364, obtaining "*license to fortify and kernellate his mansion at Doddington with stone, chalk, and wood.*"† As a young man, he was present at the battle of Navarette in 1367, with the mighty Cheshire giant Sir Hugh Calveley, who, twenty years afterwards, returned to

\* Perhaps it was for this loyal service that *Thomas Maisterston Esq.* obtained exemption from serving on juries in 5 Hen. IV. [1403-4]. (See *Plea Rolls of Cheshire*).

† *Cheshire Plea Rolls*.

‡ *Cheshire Recognizance Rolls*.

§ The military force of England was divided into (1) Feudal troops and (2) the "*posse comitatus*." The former consisted of the tenants *in capite*; that is, those holding immediately from the King the quantity of land called a *Knight's Fee*. Every such person was bound to hold himself in readiness, with horse and arms, to serve the King in war, at home or abroad, at his own expense, for a stated time (generally 40 days in a year). This service accomplished, he was at liberty to return home; if, however, he continued in the army, he received pay from the King. These tenants granted to under-tenants lands, liable to the same conditions. The *posse comitatus* included every freeman, between the ages of 15 and 60, for the preservation of peace in England, under the command of the sheriff, and to defend the country in time of invasion. They were not called out for foreign service. Thus, the troops raised in the county in 1406 were the *posse comitatus*; while the muster in 1415 consisted of the feudal troops of Cheshire.



England and rebuilt Bunbury Church. He was still living when John Bromley, of Baddington Hall, so heroically recovered the British Standard at Corbie in 1415, just before the battle of Agincourt, as related by Hollinshead; and perhaps witnessed the burials of the same John Bromley in 1419, and his young esquire Walter de Audlegh, in July, 1420, in Acton churchyard. The following interesting memoir written by his descendant Lawrence Maisterston in 1611, from "evidences & other writings of Richard Maisterston Esqr.," of Nantwich, his elder brother, is taken from *Harl MSS.* 2119 f. 43.

"Thomas Maisterston son to Robert was a man of long life: He married Katherine Dutton of Halton: He served Edward III in his French Wars, went into Spain with Edwd. the Black Prince in that honorable Journey wch he made for the restoringe of Peter K. of Castill unto his Kingdome: He fought in the vangard with Jo: of Gaunt duke of Lancaster against the French, where sir Bertram de Cleaquin constable of France, and the marshall Dandreben were, which part of the army was in the cruelst fight, not wth standinge, that Henry the Bastard, that usurped, restored and stayed his men thrise that day when they were at poynt to fly: for the great valor of the sayd Tho: shewed that day, upon ther return to Burdeux, the duke of Lancaster did wyn the sayd Thomas to his service, and by Indenture interchangeably did bind him to serve him in the warrs, upon honourable termes & honourable conditions and to pay him yearly the sum of xli. [£10] p. ann., out of his receipts of his honor of Halton, as by sayd Indenture may appeare.

"Upon their returne from Spaine he made his account wth the Constable of Bordeux & it was found that the Prince was behind wth him for his pay for himselph, his men at armes, & archers, the some of 2738 fortz of Gwan gold wch sayd money he could neuer be payd, although the Prince apoynted his recevors in Cheshire, John Sonde & Jo: Allen, to make payment thereof unto him.

"After [this] in the tyme of K. R. II. [1391] he was made Eschaetor of Cheshire, and anone [again] he went into Spaine wth Jo: of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who went wth great forces thither to take possession of Castill & Leon, in right of his wife Constance, dau. & heyre to peter King of Castill, wch journey had no great good successe by reason of our mens sicknesse contynuinge in that hott country." &c.

"This Tho: Maisterston was written very kindly vnto by ether K. R. II or H. IV., as I take it for carringe of himselph so well."

"When some of the Countys [Counts or Earls] of Huntingeton, Salisbury together wth the Lord Spencer & others did stir vpp rebellion he is desyred by the Kinge to make opposition against all their p'ceedings & he will be redy to assist him wth all his power.

"A letter likewise from K. R. II. to Sr. Rafe Vernon, Sr. John Griffin, Sr. Robt le ffouleshurst de Edleston, Wm de Praers de Baddeley, Willim Bromley de Batington, Thomas Maisterston, and on[e] Rich: de Crew Commandinge & Authorizinge them to call to gether all maner of psons in the hundred of Nantwich, wch by a day named, from the age of 16 to 60 to arme all their owne people to resist the enemy.

"This man receued also frendly lres. from Hen: Duke of Lanc. & Earle of Darby after called H. IV. desiringe him to be redy wth all his people by a day when he should be aduertized by his next lres: [letters] etc.

"He was with K. H. IV. at Shrewsbury field against the Percys, where he fought right valiantly wch caused his house to be spoyled and all his goods carried away by the sayd percys seruants:\* for wch afterward he was a petitioner to the K. H. IV. Lastly he receued his pension of xli p: ann: of

\* *Servants*, is here synonymous, perhaps, with *friends*; or *favorers* of the cause of the Percies; and accepting this old meaning of the word, the natural inference is, that the house of Thomas Maisterston in Nantwich was plundered and destroyed by Hotspur's forces in their march towards Shrewsbury.

[i.e. from] K: H: V of whom he was greatly esteemed for the service done to his father & grandfather.

“He lived in the last year of H. V. [1422] so as I conceave he was liueing in the beginnige of H. VI. his raigne . . . . .”

“Of all the Maistersons before, I find him to be of the greatest note and account & the best servitor. Moreover he is called Esqr. by those great princes; and one Nicolas Maisterson & Richard his brother, & Richard his sonne were all called Esquiers in Auntient deeds, and Thomas sonne to Richard.”

On the 8th April, 1427, *Richard de Werburton*, sheriff of Chester, *John Starkey*, under-sheriff, *John de Wetenhale* of Nantwich, Escheator of Cheshire, *Thomas de Eggesley* and *John Hancockson*, bailiffs of Nantwich Hundred, *John de Wetenhale* of Cholmundeston and *Richard de Golburn* of Henhull, coroners of Nantwich Hundred, had orders to arrest the following persons as disturbers of the peace:—Robert, son of Richard de Cholmundeley; John le Smith, of Hurdleston; Richard de Alvaston, Thomas le Taillor, both of the same place; and John ap Atha, of Acton; and many others in the neighbourhood.\*

Not only was the fifteenth century a period of civil war and rebellion, but there is ample evidence that it was a quarrelsome age; when the lower orders, and the better sort of people too, were often bound in heavy sums to keep the peace with their neighbours. Persons who had grievances, usually had recourse to arms first, and to law afterwards. From their tenants, their relatives, or their neighbours, they formed armed bands; and tried to settle disputes about lands, or vindicate personal wrongs, by a very free use of sword, pike and bow. Like other places, Nantwich was, at times, the scene of such riotous proceedings; and an instance has occurred as late as 1572, which will be found fully described on a subsequent page.

The following record, which is only one out of many contained in the Recognizance Rolls, seems to relate to a serious disturbance of this kind that had taken place at Nantwich or in its vicinity.†

Feb. 26th, 1432-3, Randal le Mainwaring, John son of John de Wetenhale, Richard de Whelok, and Randle de Wetenhall of Wich-Malbank, enter into a recog. for £100 to the King that the following persons, (most of whom appear to be of Nantwich and its neighbourhood) keep the peace towards Thomas del Shagh, and Isabel his wife, William Harrisone and Margaret his wife, Hugh Baker and Mary his wife, John Cutler and Agnes his wife,—viz. :—‡

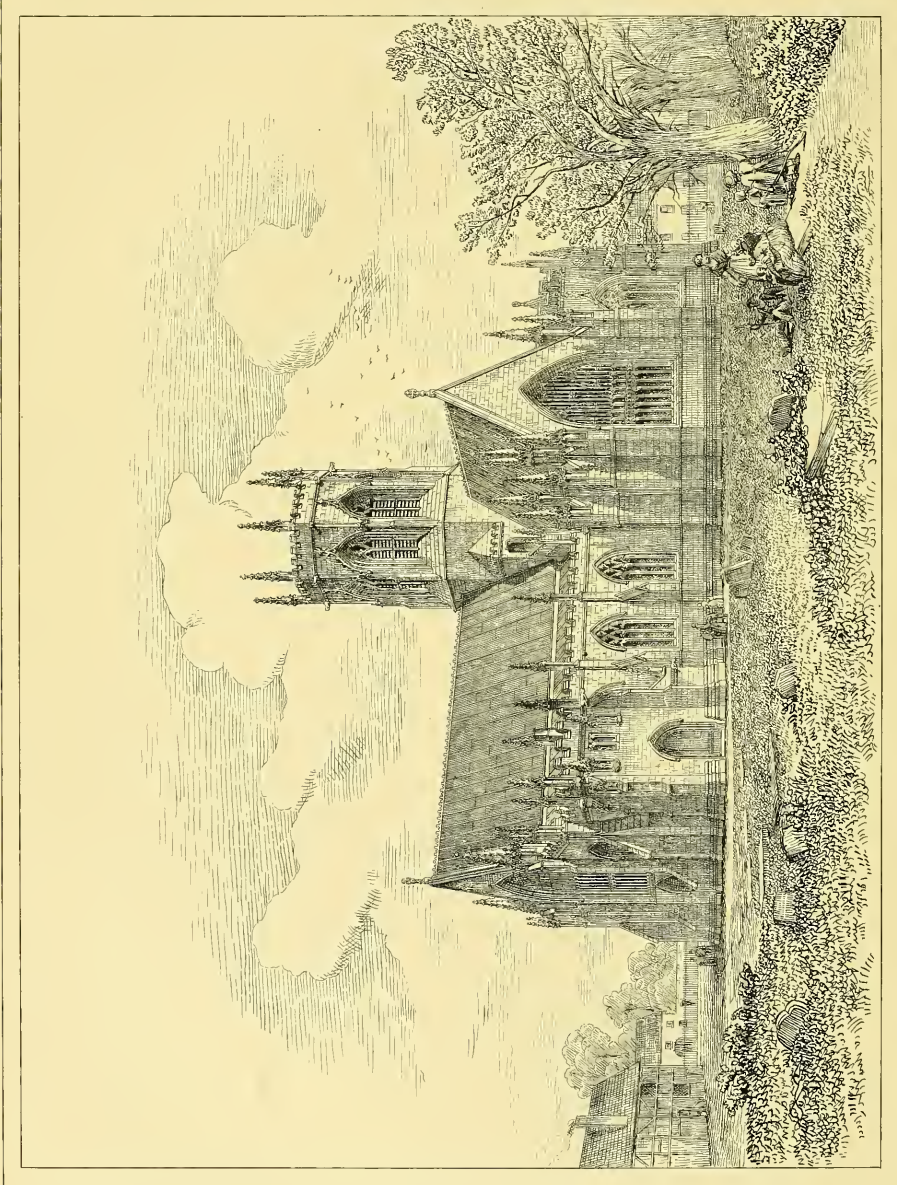
Nicholas de Davenport, gentleman.	Thomas de Wetenhale .. .. yoman.
Ralph de Macclesfield, do.	Ralph de Wetenhall .. .. do.
John de Wetenhall, of Wich-Malbank, gentleman.	John de Wetenhall .. .. do.
Thomas de Wetenhale, of Alpraham do.	Henry de Wetenhall .. .. do.
John de Wetenhale, of Cholmundeston do.	John son of Tho: Wetenhall .. .. do.
Hugh, son of the said John de Wetenhale.	Thomas de Wetenhall of Alpraham .. do.
Ralph, brother of said Hugh Wetenhall.	Randle de Wetenhall .. .. do.
Thomas Chanu .. .. do.	William Brett .. .. do.
Adam de Dutton .. .. yoman.	Randal de Merton .. .. do.
Hugh de Alcock .. .. do.	Thomas de Multon .. .. do.
John de Stanyhurst .. .. do.	Hugh de Multon .. .. do.
Roger de Buren .. .. do.	Thomas Shermou .. .. do.

\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls

† See other instances in 37th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Pub. Records.

‡ Chesh. Recog. Rolls.





Whitman & Eastlake, Engravers

NANTWICH CHURCH, S. W. VIEW.

John de Pull .. ..	knave.	Richard Bothe .. ..	fletcher.
John Thornyclyff .. ..	do.	Robert Alva .. ..	clerk.
Thomas Whembrugge .. ..	wevere.	William de Hatton .. ..	wright.
Thomas Wevere .. ..	do.	Richard Spencer .. ..	do.
Nicholas Henster .. ..	waller.	John Foster .. ..	milleward.
Hugh de Cholmyley .. ..	do.	John Organere .. ..	caryor.
William Alva .. ..	do.	John Hadd .. ..	mustardman.
John Chobbam .. ..	do.	Thomas Baxster .. ..	baxster.

"1434. Aug. 2nd. Warrant to the Sheriff of Chester [Hugh de Dutton of Hatton] to receive *Thomas Shaw*, of Nantwich, *mason*, (who had been confined in the inner bailiwick of Chester Castle for more than two years and a half) and to produce him on the morrow of the Purification of St. Mary [2 Feb.] before the King, wheresoever he might be."\*

What the misdemeanour was that had brought about this long term of imprisonment is not recorded; but the passing notice of a *mason*, whose name also occurs on the Plea Rolls ten years earlier in connection with a grant of his lands in Middlewich, points, probably, to the time of the building of the Kingsley Chantry Chapel and the completion of Nantwich Church.

One of the principal residents in Nantwich at that time, was John Kingsley, Esq., who seems to have settled here from Kingsley, in Frodsham parish, about the year 1400; and to have acquired considerable property here and in eight adjacent townships. His name is often mentioned in the Cheshire Records between the years 1414 and 1441, in various "suits," and on several "commissions;" as the guardian of certain heirs under age, and as the Escheator for the county. After the death of his wife, Petronilla, daughter of Thomas Swettenham, of Carincham, on the feast of Epiphany [Jan. 6] in 7 Hen VI. [1428-9], he appears to have disposed of his Nantwich residence and other property in and near the town; according to the following copy of a deed in *Harl. MSS.* 2119 f. 26 d. (*translated*)—

"Know &c. that I John de Kingsley Esq. have given &c. to Randulph le Maynwareing the elder [of Peover], Ranulph le Maynwareing the younger [of Carincham, his son], John son of John de Wettenhale of Wich Malbank, John de Wettenhale of Cholmundeston, William de Wettenhale of London, grocer, Hughe de Wettenhale and John son of Thomas de Wettenhale of Wich Malbank their heirs and assigns, all my capital house in which I inhabit with all its appurtenances in Wich Malbank, and also all my burgages, messuages, lands &c. in the vills of Wich Malbank, Horepulle and Whitepulle with all their appurtenances in the hundred of Wich Malbank called one 18th part of the barony of Wich Malbank, to have and to hold &c.

These being witnesses Peter de Dutton, John Sneyd, Laurence Wareyn, John Maynwareing, Laurence Fitton, John de Carrington, John Honford Kt., Thomas de Wylbram, John Maisterson, Richard Maisterson, Thomas Chanu, Thomas de Multon and others.

Dated on Monday next before the feast of All Saints [1 Nov.] in 10 Hen. VI." [1431].†

In the same year, on 10th Aug. 1431, an Inquisition was taken at Chester Castle, before John de Bruyn, Escheator, and William de Bulkyley of Ayton, one of the King's Commissioners, finding that *John Kyngesley*, of Wich-Malbank, Esq., had, on the 8th Feb. 1417-8, obtained and entered into the possession of Stoke manor, near Hurdelston,

\* Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

† This Charter is alluded to, but not quoted, in Ormerod's "Cheshire," new Edit. vol. iii. p. 78. Mr. Helsby states that the original "is, or was, in the possession of a well known dealer in such documents,—Mr. James Coleman, formerly of 22 High Street, Bloomsbury. cf. page 61. The Mainwareing share of Nantwich Barony.

after the death of Robert de Stoke who had died seized of the same on the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle [30th Nov.] 2 Hen. V. [1415]; but by what title he held the said manor the jurors were altogether ignorant.\* Record does not say whether John Kingsley, in whose life-time the above Inquisition was taken, satisfactorily proved the legality of his claim.

A Rent Roll, which has recently been printed by Mr. Helsby, seems to imply that John Kingsley, Esq. retained a life interest issuing out of the lands &c. that he had granted away by charter a few years before. It is here given (*translated*) because of the mention of local field names, most of which still retain the same names.

RENT ROLL OF JOHN KINGSLEY. 17 Hen. VI. [1438-9].

	s.	d.
<i>Rents formerly of William de ffouleshurst.</i>		
A free rent of a place formerly in the tenure of John Wetenhall &c. . . . .	30	0
<i>Rents called Saint Pierre land in Wich Malbank.</i>		
From John son of John de Wetenhall a free rent for Godwynsley Croft, &c. . . . .	0	9
„ Henry Wetenhall for lands in the Wyche field &c. . . . .	5	0
„ John Wetenhall for croft and right of way in Edlaston &c. . . . .	0	12
„ Henry Wetenhall for lands in le Bromehull &c. [perhaps the same as now called “The Brownhills.”] . . . . .	3	0
„ John Wetenhall for a garden &c. . . . .	0	16
„ A garden near the house of John Wetenhall of Hospetylstrete . . . . .	0	12
<i>Lands formerly of Elene mere in Wich Malbank.</i>		
From John Wetenhall and Ralph Wyldbor for a meadow called <i>the Baronsmedewe</i> per ann. . . . .	6	0
„ Il. Walshmon for i Croft formerly in the tenure of Ranulph de Wetenhall per ann.	12	0
„ Thomas Wetenhale and William Da for Rydley-fylde per ann. . . . .	26	8
„ John son of John Wetenhall for 2 Crofts which had been Robert Chomleghe’s near <i>Tynker’s Crofts</i> per ann. . . . .	12	0

Beyond the fact that he did service in the wars in France and Normandy, little else is recorded of John Kingsley. He is believed to have died about the year 1441; but the time and place of his death is not known; as his Inquisition *post mortem* is not to be found. There is no evidence to prove that any other person of note of the name of Kingsley was ever connected with Nantwich; and hence it may be presumed that John Kingsley Esq. was the Founder of the Kingsley Chantry in Nantwich Church; which in the sixteenth century had a window decoration to the memory of “——— *Kingsley and Margaret Bromley his wife.*” Mr. Helsby, however, receives this with suspicion; doubting whether John Kingsley Esq. married a second time; and suggesting, without adducing any very cogent reasons for doing so, that the heraldic glass represented an alliance between one of the Wetenhalls of Nantwich, who assumed the arms and name of Kingsley, and Margaret Bromley of Baddington.†

It is very remarkable that the name *Kingsley* has been handed down to the present time, in the name *Kingsley-field*, situated immediately adjacent to property on the site of which, in former times, stood an important “mansion,” called the “*Porch-House,*” adjoining

\* *Inq. per B. de intrusio.* Pub. Record Office.

† *cf.* Ormerod’s *Cheshire*, vol. ii. p. 89, *note*; vol. iii. p. 448, *note*. New Edit.

*Fulshurst* (now Red Lion) Lane, which house was sometime the inheritance of *Henry Wettenhall*, of Darfold, in the time of Edward IV;”\* and it is not unlikely that that house may have been the identical residence of John Kingsley, Esq.

1437. Under this date occurs the will of Randle Wettenhall, (probably the same as Ranulph de Wettenhall mentioned in the Kingsley Rent Roll) which is interesting as being the earliest known will of a Nantwich townsman. It was copied into *Harl. MSS.* 2022, f. 66/61 from the original “in the possession of Mr. Thomas Wettenhall of Nantwich Ano. 1691;” and is as follows: (*translated*)—

“20 Oct. 1437. In the name of God Amen. I, Randle Wettenhall of sound mind and perfect memory do make my will &c. I commend my soul to Almighty God, and the blessed Mary, and all the saints; and my body to be buried in the churchyard of the Church of Wich Malbank, on the north part near the chancel of the said Church.

Item. I give my best animal by way of principal.†

Item. In wax to be burned around my body, and on the anniversary days of my death and burial £10 in wax

Item. To my servant Agnes, 1 bed; namely, a coverlet, one piece of fine linen and two pillows.

Item. To Robert Sonkey, chaplain, 2 shillings.

Item. To a certain chaplain in the church at Wich Malbank for celebrating [mass] 1 shilling.

Item. To John Barr, clerk, 1 shilling.

Item. To the fabric of the said Church a great “*ollam*.”‡

Item. I give and concede to John Wettenhall my son, after my decease all those lands and tenements my rents and services with appurtenances which Richard Eske, briner, and Bignalens sometime held in Coole. . . . .

I give and concede to the said John my son, after the decease of Ellen my wife, all my lands and tenements rents and services with appurtenances which I have in the county of Chester or elsewhere, and all the rest of my goods not before bequeathed.

I give and bequeath these to Ellen my wife that she may carry out this my will, well and faithfully.

I constitute and ordain William parradise, chaplain, and John Wettenhall my son, my legal and true executors.

In witness whereof &c. Dated at Wich Malbank on the day and in the year aforesaid.”

*Probate.*

“In the name of God &c. The present will was proved before us in the deanery of Wich Malbank on Thursday in the feast of St. Marcellus the martyr [Jan. 16] in the Church of the said Wich Malbank, in the year 1437-8 &c.”

It is difficult to say who Randle Wettenhall was. Mr. Helsby§ places him in the ancient Wettenhall pedigree, as the son of John de Wettenhall, who was living in the 10 Rich. II [1386-7]; and the younger brother of John de Wettenhall of Wich-Malbank, who was

\* Partridge's *Hist. of Nantwich*, 1774, p. 34. The *Porch-House* is mentioned as follows, in the Parish Registers.

“1600. May 2. Edward Massye, Gent., & Margaret Wright of *porche*.” [Married].

“1607. Sep. 15. Margaret, dau. of Roger Wright of *the porche*.” [Baptised].

“1609. May 29. Alice Wright, widow of *the porche*.” [Buried].

† That is, the *corse present or mortuary*; being the best horse or cow which would be led before the corpse at the funeral; and would belong most likely to the Abbot of Combermere as a recompense for his personal tithes and offerings then, and soon after, falling due.

‡ “*Ollam*,”—probably some sacred vessel used in the service of the mass. ? whether used at the altar in the Kingsley Chantry Chapel.

§ Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 479, New Edit.

Escheator of Cheshire from 1422 to 1428; but he makes no mention of this will, nor of John Wetenhall, the son of the testator. From the Kingsley Rent Roll, it is clear there were two John Wetenhalls living in Nantwich in 1438; but as the *Inq. p. m.* of Randle Wetenhall is not now preserved at the Record Office, it cannot be determined which of the two resided at the house in "*Hospetylstrete.*" The extraordinarily large sum left as *cerage money*, and the gift of *bed-furniture*\* to a faithful servant, unmistakably prove Randle Wetenhall to have been a man of wealth.

Respecting his burial place, it is stated in *Harl. MSS.* 2151 p. 96, from Church notes taken in the latter part of the seventeenth century, that in the "Churchyard, on the outside the chancell, on the north side, is cut in stone about a yard fro. the ground, this coate,"—namely, a shield bearing a cross engrailed, which was the Wetenhall coat of arms.

William Smith, in his "Description of the County Palatine of Chester" (*temp.* Eliz. c. 1600), says—"The most part of this towne (Nantwich) was miserably consumed with fire in July anno 1438." No further particulars of this conflagration are to be found. The town seems to have been speedily rebuilt, and the salt-trade resuscitated; for on 1st July, in the following year, Sir Richard Hangford, Kt., was proved to have died seized, *inter alia*, of 2 salt-pits [i.e. houses] in Wich-Malbank, held of the Earl of Chester, *in capite*, and valued at 10s. per ann.†

Between the years 1443 and 1463 the name of John Maisteron of Nantwich occurs on no less than thirty Recognizance Rolls, in which he is bound in the large sum of £100, to keep the peace with John son of John de Wetenhall, and Thomas Maisteron his kinsman. Long before the settlement of this prolonged personal quarrel, a serious riot had broken out in the neighbourhood, and on 18th Oct. 1445, the following gentlemen were appointed commissioners to arrest all disturbers of the peace in the hundred of Wich-Malbank, viz. :—‡

JOHN MAINWARING KT.	JOHN SON OF JOHN WETENHALL.
RANDLE MAINWARING, SENIOR.	RICHARD MAISTERON.
RALPH DE EGERTON.	THOMAS MAISTERON.
ROBERT FOULESHURST.	THOMAS DAWESON.
JOHN BROMLEY.	ROGER PRAERS.
JOHN ROOPE, ARMIGER. [ESQ.]	RALPH DAKVN.
RALPH MAYNWARING, JUNIOR.	RICHARD WILDBORE.
THOMAS DE WILBERHAM,	JOHN WETENHALE.

The year 1459 is memorable for the renewal of the Civil War, called the Wars of the Roses, after the hollow reconciliation of the two factions in the previous year. Richard

\* An old local antiquary says :—"There are olde men yet dwelling in the village where I remaine, which have noted three things to be marvellously altered in Englande within their sound remembrance. One is, the multitude of chimnies lately erected; whereas, in their younger days there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish townes of the realme, (the religious houses and manour places of their lordes always excepted, and peradventure some great personages), but each one made his fire against a tere-dosse in the hall where he dined and dressed his meate."

† The second is, the great amendement of lodging; for sayd they, our fathers, and we ourselves, have lyen full oft upon straw pallettes, covered onely with a sheete under coverlettes, made of dogswain or hop-harlots, and a good round logge under their heads insteade of a bolster. If it were so that our fathers, or the good man of the house, had a mattress or flock-bed, and thereto a sacke of chafe to rest hys head upon, he thought himself as well lodged as the lord of the towne, so well were they contented. Pillowes, sayde they, were thoughte meete onely for women in childbed. As for servants if they had any sheete above them it was well: for seldom had they any under their carcasse [body] to keep them from the pricking straws that ran oft thorow the canvass, and raced their hardened hides [skins].

‡ The third thinge they tell of is the exchange of treene platters into pewter, and woode spoones into silver or tin." &c.—(Hollinshed's *Chronicles of England*, cap. 10, describing the manners of the people in the 16th century).

† Cheshire Inquisitions,

‡ Chesh. Recog. Rolls



Neville, Earl of Salisbury, marching from Yorkshire to join the forces of the Duke of York at Ludlow, was intercepted in his progress at Bloreheath, near Market Drayton, by John Lord Audley (one of the lords of Wich-Malbank) with an army of ten thousand men raised chiefly in Cheshire and Shropshire, who bore the badge of a "white swan," said to have been given them by Queen Margaret. A savage battle ensued on Sunday, 23rd Sep. 1459. The veteran Earl, though fighting against great odds, obtained the victory by first feigning a retreat and then skilfully veering round to attack the Lancastrian army that had left their vantage ground. In the fight, so disastrous to many noble families of Cheshire, Lord Audley and 2400 of his army were slain.\*

In 1461 Sir Hugh Wyche, Kt., a mercer of London, but a native of Nantwich, (p. 84) fulfilled the important office and high dignity of Lord Mayor of that City.†

The few events in the County Records relating to Nantwich in the latter half of the fifteenth century, speak of the disturbed state of the country consequent upon the Wars of the Roses.

On the 18th March, 1476-7, a general pardon was granted to the following men of Wich-Malbank—"Roger Daikus or Dilkes, butcher; James Dod; William Drake, taylor; Roger Fazacreley; Thomas Willey, yeoman; and Ralph Hassall, Gent."‡

In 1480 the *fosse comitatus* was again called out, by John Bromley, Robert Fouleshurst, Kt., and Laurence Roope, Esq., who on Nov. 18th were appointed "commissioners to array the fencible men of the hundred, between the ages of 16 and 60, before Christmas following, and to command the same to be in readiness, in warlike array, to attend the Earl of Chester, upon three days notice." That some insurrection had actually taken place, may be inferred from the fact, that the same gentlemen, together with Hugh Eggerton, of Wrynehill, John Maynwaring, and Ralph Delves, were commissioned on 26th Sept. 1481, to arrest all outlaws in the Hundred of Nantwich. It was not until after 15th Dec. 1484 that quiet was again enjoyed in the county.‡

The next time the home troops were called out was on the 10th April, 1497, when "Sir Richard Pole, Kt., Ralph Delves, Esq., John Minshull, William Wilbraham, Thomas Starkey of Wrenbury, Thomas Bromley of Wich-Malbank, Roger Maynwaring, and Ralph Birkenhead, were commanded to array the fencible men of the hundred of Nantwich, before the 1st of May following," on account of the Cornish Rising in that year, headed by James Lord Audley, one of the lords of Wich-Malbank. The defeat of the insurgents at Blackheath, near London, on the 22nd June, and the execution of Lord Audley on the 28th of the same month, probably rendered the march of Cheshire troops to the capital unnecessary. This was the last of the three rebellions in Hen. VII reign, in each of which, as has been already remarked, one of the lords of Wich-Malbank had taken a leading part, and suffered for their treason; namely, Lord Lovell in the Simnel insurrection of 1487; Sir William Stanley in the cause of Perkin Warbeck, in 1495; and within two years after, Lord Audley in the Cornish Rising.

\* On the battle-field a monument, called the *Audley Cross*, was afterwards erected, which "was repaired in 1765 at the charge of the Lord of the Manor, Charles Boothby Skrymsher."—(Inscription on the Cross).

† Orridge's "Citizens of London and their Rulers."

‡ Chesh. Recog. Rolls.

In the 15 Hen. VII. [1500] the Lords of Wich-Malbank were required by a writ of "quo warranto" to show by what title they held privileges of fair, market, courts, &c. in Nantwich, and, as previously stated, they had their claims allowed (see page 66). King Henry and his successor frequently adopted this course of extorting money from their subjects to replenish the royal coffers; for, on the issue of a *quo warranto* writ, if the lord and burgesses of a town failed to prove their right to hold fairs, markets, &c., those rights with their profits, as in the case of heirless property, reverted to the Crown.

According to Plea Rolls, dated 23 Hen. VII. [1507-8] *Henry Sparke* of Wich-Malbank obtained exemption from serving on Juries. This is the first mention of a family of some note that continued to reside in the town for about a century after this date. By the following deed, preserved among the Wilbraham MSS., Henry Sparke granted in perpetuity to Nantwich Church, for the benefit of the minister, a certain *walling-land* in the town. The deed is as follows: (*translated*)—

"Know all present and to come, that I, Henry Sparke of Wich Malbank have given, conceded, and by this my present charter indented have confirmed to *Nicolas Harwar*, chaplain, Gilbert Walthall, Roger Brooke and Roger Sparke, a wiche-house of six leads lying in Wich-Malbank aforesaid between the land of the Abbot of the Monastery of the Blessed Mary of Combermere on the west part, and the land of William Eggerton on the east part, and the land of the Priors of the Monastery of Saint Thomas the Martyr near Stafford\* on the north part; and the King's High Street upon the south part; To have and to hold in trust &c. to them their heirs and assigns for ever, first I will that my said feoffees of trust shall suffer me and Elizabeth my wife to occupy the said wiche-house of six leads with the appurtenances during our lives natural and to the longer liver of us to our moste advantage: and after our decease I will that my said feoffees of trust and their heirs shall suffer the wardens of the Church of Wich Malbank for the time being to occupy and to take the advantage of the said wiche-house &c. to the use profit and behoof of the said Church to the sustentation and maintaining of God's service therein for ever.

I have made and constituted my beloved in Christ, John Leche of Wich Malbank my true and legal attorney, &c. In testimony whereof &c. I have affixed my seal.

These being witnesses, *Thomas Maisterson, Thomas Chetwode, Robert Harwar, Thomas Willey Richard Taylor* and others.

Dated at Wich Malbank the 14 June in the 7 Hen. VIII [1515].

Two hundred years after, this property is described in the will of *Richard Horton*, Innholder of the Lamb Inn, Nantwich, (dated 1st Feb. 1714, and proved at Chester 10th Oct. 1715) as "one message or burgage with its appurtenances situate and being near the *bridge* in Nantwich, in possession or occupation of Robert Lynne belonging to the Minister of Nantwich for the time being under the payment of the yearly rent of *Ten Shillings*." In Bishop Gastrell's valuation of the living of Nantwich in 1722† it occurs again:—

"House given by Mr. Sparke . . . . . £0 10s. od. per ann."

One branch of the Spark family left Nantwich, and settled in the parish of Plymton St. Maurice, near Plymouth, co. Devon; where they continued to reside until the end of

\* The property belonging to the Priory of St. Thomas near Stafford is described in *Valor Ecclesiasticus* 26 Hen. VIII [1535] as, Two salt-houses, valued at £2 13s. 4d. per annum.

† *Notitia Cestriensis*, p. 222. Edit. 1845.

the seventeenth century, according to the following inscriptions on a flat stone in the aisle of that Church:—

“John Sparke from Nantwich, Cheshire, buried here 11 July 1566.

“John his son, 14 Jan. 1597.

“John his grandfather [?] 1630.

“Nicholas, his son, aged 107, at Plympton St. Mary 1700.

“John, his son, at Plympton St. Mary, 1694.”

Returning to the year 1515, on the 15th September, George, Earl of Shrewsbury wrote to Wolsey, then Prime Minister and Lord Chancellor of England, beseeching “that *Thomas Wilbraham* of Wich Malbank, may be called before the Council for a cruel murder done upon *Randolph More* of the same town;” and further acquainting him “that the murderer is supported by the gentlemen of the county, and that More is to be indicted for his own death: his widow sues for redress;” and the said More “did the King good service in his last voyage beyond the sea, then being in the Earl’s company.”\*

In 1525 a dispute between *Thomas Smythe* and *Robert Crocket* of Wich Malbank, concerning the claim of the former to a right of way through a field belonging to the said Robert Crocket, was decided by an Inquisition, of which the following is an abstract: (*translated*)—†

Inquisition taken at Wich Malbank on Wednesday in the feast of St. Lucy the Virgin [Dec. 13] in 17 Hen. VIII [1525] before George Helsby Knt. &c. by the oaths of Richard Hassall of Honkelow, Richard Rope, senr, Hugh Wetenhall of Cholmeston, John Chenue of Wixsterston [Willaston], Thomas Cranage, Ralph Malbon, of Hatherton, Thomas Cheswis, Richard Kerdiff Junr., Ralph Grest, John Ithell, Hugh Aston of Aston, and John Hassall, Jurors, who say upon their oaths that to *Thomas Smythe* there ought to be a certain way diverging from Wich Malbank, as far as a certain pasture and meadow of his lying in Wistaston *alias* Willaston, namely, beginning at Wich Malbank and leading to another King’s high-way that leads to Wistaston Church, and as far as a certain field of *Robert Crocket*’s of Wich Malbank, and then entering into a certain broken part called a gap, continually in width three perches from the west to the south part of the same field, and leading and passing through a ditch &c. &c. In testimony whereof &c.

On the 1st Aug. 1526, *Richard Verney* obtained the grant for life, of the offices of the two bailiffs in the town of Wich-Malbank.‡ By Act of Parliament 27 Hen. VIII [1535-6] Justices of the peace were appointed in Cheshire and Flint, in order that common justice might be better administered;§ *Richard Hassall* of Hankylow, being the first J.P. for Nantwich. He had been made serjeant-at-law for Chester on 18th May, 3 Hen. VIII [1511]; and on 22nd Oct. 32 Hen. VIII [1540] was made vice-Justice of Chester.||

In 1538 new orders for the better government of the town were drawn up by Sir Thomas Fouleshurst, Knight, and sanctioned by the Court Leet. (pp. 29-34).

When the privileges of the Palatinate were abridged by Henry VIII, the inhabitants of Cheshire petitioned the King that they might send Knights and burgesses to Parliament; in consequence of which an Act was passed in 1542 that two Knights should be returned for the County, and two burgesses for the city of Chester; and for this new privilege a

\* Calend. State Papers, Dom. Series, 1515-18, Vol. ii., No. 911.

† Chesh. Inquis. Pub. Record Office. ‡ Recog. Rolls (Chesh. Records).

§ Lysons’ Cheshire, p. 302. || Officers’ List (Chesh. Records).

Subsidy appears to have been levied on the County, in 1545.

The following extract from the *Subsidy Roll* for Nantwich Hundred gives the names of the chief inhabitants of the town at that time, the value of their property, and the amount of the King's tax.

*SUBSIDY ROLL.\**

*"Hundred of Nantwich in the Co<sup>v</sup> of Chester the acct<sup>d</sup> of the Collection of the Subsidy levied in the parliam<sup>t</sup> held at Westminster 37<sup>th</sup> year of the King's Reign, from the Residents in that Hundred for the use of the King."* [1545].

SIR RANDLE MAYNWARING KNT. one of the Commissioners of the Hundred of Nantwich for lands and tenements tax<sup>d</sup> at an annual value of £30 . . . . . £8  
 SIR HENRY DELVES KNT., another of the Commissioners of the Hundred of Nantwich for lands and tenements valued at £20 . . . . . £3  
 RICHARD HASSALL, another of the Commissioners for property valued at £16 . . . . . 16s. od.

*NANTWICH.*

		s.	d.			s.	d.
Thos. Maisteron for property worth	£18 ...	18	0	Robert Pyckeryng for property worth	£7 ...	4	8
John Twemloe	" £5 ...	3	4	Henry Wixsted	" £8 ...	5	4
Roger Bromall	" £5 ...	3	4	Gylbert Wylliams	" £5 ...	3	4
William fleytcher	" £7 ...	4	8	Margaret Leche, widow	" £5 ...	3	4
Thomas Bickerton	" £5 ...	3	4	Margaret Sparke, widow	" £5 ...	3	4
Richard Maisteron	" £5 ...	3	4	Margaret Broke	" £5 ...	3	4
Humphry Wright	" £8 ...	5	4	Elizabeth Shuryngton, widow	" £5 ...	3	4
Margaret Sadler, widow	" £5 ...	3	4	Roger Broke	" £7 ...	4	8
Richard Bebynton	" £5 ...	3	4	William Bromley	" £11 ...	11	0
Humphrey Maynwarding	" £7 ...	4	8	Richard Robinson	" £10 ...	10	0
Robert Graye	" £5 ...	3	4	John Ancors	" £8 ...	5	4
Ralph Mynshull	" £5 ...	3	4	Thomas Gegge	" £5 ...	3	4
Joan Harwar, widow	" £5 ...	3	4	Oliver Maynwarding	" £9 ...	11	0
Edward Mynshull, mercer	" £10 ...	10	0	John Wright	" £8 ...	5	4
Roger Wright, junior	" £5 ...	3	4	Nicholas Drake	" £8 ...	5	4
Roger Wright, senior	" £8 ...	5	4	Ralph Olton	" £8 ...	5	4
Edmund Wright	" £5 ...	3	4	Katherine Maisteron, widow	" £8 ...	5	4
John Alexander	" £10 ...	10	0	John True	" £5 ...	3	4
Henry Wright	" £8 ...	5	4	John Blackesha	" £12 ...	12	0
Richard Wright	" £9 ...	6	0	John Leche	" £12 ...	12	0
Edward Mynshull sent.	" £8 ...	5	4	John Weston	" £5 ...	3	4
John Seckerston senr.	" £10 ...	10	0	John Parker	" £7 ...	4	8
William Tenche	" £10 ...	10	0	Richard Wright	" £5 ...	3	4
Edward Tenche	" £5 ...	3	4	Roger Sparke	" £5 ...	3	4
Ralph Wilbraham	" £8 ...	5	4	Nicholas Goldsmyth	" £5 ...	4	0
William Wettenhall	" £8 ...	5	4	Robert Goodyere	" £5 ...	3	4
Ralph Bebynton	" £6 ...	4	0	Gilbert Walthall	" £18 ...	18	0
William Kente	" £7 ...	4	8	Edmund Taillor	" £7 ...	4	8
Henry Bickerton	" £7 ...	4	8				

\* From a parchment Roll, being either a contemporaneous copy or else the original roll, now in the possession of J. Bellamy Minshull, Esq., of London.

Then follows the list of persons taxed in the various townships of the Hundred, and at the end—

“Total of the whole Subsidy £88 5s. 3d.”

“Names of those elected to receive the money & to make payment into the Treasury at Westminster”

“*John Bryne, Armiger.* [Esquire]

“*John Mynshull, Armiger.* [Esquire]

“List. Extracts delivered by the Commissioners to *John Bryne & John Mynshull* collectors to the s<sup>d</sup> Commission &c. to receive payments from *W<sup>m</sup>. Bromley* of Norbury, *John Breyn* of Aston, *Thomas Titley* of Pole, & *Richard Wilbraham* of Bryndeley sub-collectors.”

In 1551 England was visited for the last time with the dreadful plague known as the *Sweating Sickness*; which had appeared in the years 1485, 1506, 1517 and 1528. As the earliest recorded burial in the parish registers only dates back to 1572, it is impossible to say to what extent Nantwich suffered from the “*posting sweat*,” as it was also called, “that posted from towne to towne throughe England.” The pestilence of 1551 is said to have first manifested itself at Shrewsbury on the 16th April, and in a few days 960 died there.\* Edmund Gee, Mayor of Chester, was a victim during his year of office—1550-1. In the month of June, 1551, at Marbury village a few miles south of Nantwich, the register records the burials of sixteen persons who “*dyed of ye sweating sicknes as y<sup>t</sup> seemeth.*” So serious and widespread had it become, that on the 18th July, 1551, the Bishops of the land were desired “to exhort the people to a diligent attendance at Common Prayer, and so to avert the displeasure of Almighty God having visited the realm with the extreme plague of sudden death.”†

In or about the month of January, 1559-60, *Sir Laurence Smith* Kt., *Sir Ralph Eggerton* Kt., *Robert Corbet* Esquire, and *John Mynshull* Esquire, were appointed collectors of a *mize* in Nantwich Hundred,‡ which became due to Queen Elizabeth, after the death of the late Queen Mary. It was an ancient custom, that lingered long after this date, for the county of Chester to raise in the course of three years the sum of 3000 marks [£2000] as a present to every rightful owner of the Earldom; levied by a rate or tax, called, in Cheshire, a *mize*; which in Nantwich town, amounted to £3 11s. 6d. for each year.

On the 18th March, 1567-8, at the instance of *Roger Maisterson*, *Roger Walthall*, *John Leche* and *Thomas Clutton*, burgesses of Nantwich, the Town Charter confirming the privilege of exemption to the burgesses of the town from serving on juries out of the town, was granted by Queen Elizabeth (see page 79).

*Thomas Mynshull*, mercer of Nantwich, in his *Book of Accounts* &c., now in the possession of George F. Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere, makes the following memorandum:—

“Roger crowckett of the crowne, inhowlder, was sleayne the sixth of December in the welche roe in the fiftithe yeare of the reane of our quaine Elizabeth.” [1572].

The following detailed account of the murder is here given on the authority of another MS. in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., entitled “*Examinations touchinge the death*

\* Chambers's Encyclop. vol. ix. p. 235; and Book of Days I. p. 518-9.

† Calendar of State Papers 1547-80.

‡ Cheshire Recog. Rolls.

of *Roger Croket, of Namptwiche, in the countie of Chester, Gent.*," consisting of sixty folios, and containing the depositions of 116 persons in answer to no less than 214 interrogatories at a Privy Sessions held at Nantwich shortly after the 22nd December, 1572, on which day the Coroner's Inquest had been held in the Parish Church.

The affray, which resulted in the death of this gentleman, appears to have been the outcome of a quarrel of long standing between the families of Hassall and Croket. Richard Hassall, of Welsh Row, Gent., and his father before him, held a lease of *Ridley-field*; and before the expiration of his tenancy, Roger Croket, by purchase from the landlord, Mr. Edward Leighe, of Leicestershire, obtained the next lease, thereby giving offence to the then tenant. Much ill-feeling was manifested between the two parties, and, each having his own friends and supporters, great jealousy and excitement prevailed among the townspeople. Early on the morning of Wednesday, the 19th December, Roger Croket took possession of the field; and soon after his friend, Thomas Wetenhall, Gent., was assaulted in the fields near Townsend, by Thomas Wilson. About 8 a.m. Roger Wetenhall, Gent., brother of Thomas, was walking from the "*Crown*" towards his house in Welsh Row, when he was attacked by Richard Hassall, Gent., armed with a pike-staff and a dagger, in *Little Wood Street*, and pursued to the further end of *Wood Street*, where he received serious injury. Meanwhile many people had congregated, armed with staves, &c. One brandished a "fire-shovel," another a "dubbing-hook;" and as Roger Croket was pushing his way through the crowd with a pike-staff, towards his friend Wetenhall, he received a blow on the head, which one witness (Rondell Lytler) said "would have stryken down Brayne's Bull yf he had been among them;" the force of which felled him to the ground. Immediately after, Mr. Richard Wilbraham, of Welsh Row, Gent., came upon the scene at "Wood Street end near the Channel."

Several witnesses describe Mr. Wilbraham hurrying to the *mêlée* "straight from his chamber, without shoes or slyppers, holding his hose with one hand, and carrying a staff in the other; his doublet being untrussed," and having "on a red petticoat with a white fur hanging out behind, and a black cap on his head."

It is clear from the depositions that Mr. Wilbraham's arrival at once put an end to the affray, and so prevented further mischief. Calling to his brother-in-law, the said Richard Hassall, who was at some distance from the place where the unfortunate Croket lay, Mr. Wilbraham led Mr. Hassall home, and the crowd dispersed. Roger Croket died about twelve hours after; and on the following day *Sir Lawrence Smith*, of Hough, Knt., issued a warrant to the deputy Steward of the town (*Thos. Clutton*), the Bailiffe (*Rondall Alveston*), and to the Constables (*John Wixsted* and *John Brett*) to apprehend the murderer, no name, however, being given; thereupon the friends of the deceased supplied the names of Richard Wilbraham, and Richard Hassall, Gents., Thomas Wilson, Edmund Crewe, and divers others, who appear to have been arrested; and in order to make good their charge, they endeavoured, in a very strange manner, to prove that Roger Croket had died, not from *one* blow, but from many wounds. To this end, a painter (*John Hunter*) was employed to make a picture of the corpse, showing the wounds of which it was alleged R. C. had died. The naked body was also publicly exposed in the street; and "during the height of the markt" on the following Saturday. At three o'clock on that day, the corpse was carried thence on a bier into the Church, to the Inquest, followed by the

noisy, gazing crowd, which by the Coroner's (*John Minshull Esq.*) order was expelled therefrom by the Constables, who during the inquiry, guarded the Church door. The verdict of the Jury was that Roger Croket had died from *one* blow on the head; and *Randle Goldsmith* (foreman of the Jury), *Richard Edgeley* (the Coroner's clerk) and others deposed to the same in the succeeding trial at the Sessions. The decisions of both Inquest and Sessions inquiries being unsatisfactory to the friends of the deceased, an appeal was made to the Court of Assize at Chester, and Richard Wilbraham, Richard Hassall, and others were arraigned, but were finally acquitted by the Jury who were fully satisfied that the prosecution was malicious.\*

A list of witnesses in the trial at Nantwich is here appended, forming an interesting calendar of local names chiefly of the lower orders; many of which names continue to the present time; and when taken in connection with another list of resident Gentlemen and Freeholders, dated only seven years after, (1579) the reader will have the names of more than one hundred families, representing perhaps, not less than half the population of the town three hundred years ago.

*LIST OF DEPONENTS' NAMES AT NANTWICH SESSIONS TRIAL, 1572.*

Thomas Wetenhall of Namptwiche of the age of liij [53] years.	Jone Jackson, wife to William Jackson.
Roger Wetenhall of Namptwiche of the age of xlvij [47] years.	Willm. Sparke, a farm servant of Roger Brown of Chorley Edmond Sparrowe, a weaver.
Thomas Palyn, servant to Roger Crocket of the Crown Inn.	Thomas Clerke, servant of Mr. Edward Leighe of Leicestershire.
Nicolas Maisterston, a "corvisor," or shoemaker.	John Wixsted, constable of Nantwich.
Bridgett Croket, widow of Roger Croket.	John Brett, constable of Nantwich.
Hugh Lowe, a cleaver of wood at John Gibbons wyche-house.	Ciceley Mainwaringe, lived in the country and was natural sister to the mother of Roger Croket.
Marget Wryght.	Thomas Shenton the elder.
Jane Daniell, a waller under Roger Wetenhall.	Thomas Shenton the younger.
Richard Wryght, <i>alias</i> Kendall, a "clayman." He was repairing a wiche-house of Thos. Clutton's when the fray began.	Richard Smythe.
Humphrey Manwaringe, "at the schoole at the schoole-house besydes the church."	Edward Starkey, a servant of Mr. R. Hassall's.
Margery Wryght.	Cicely Huxley, a maidservant of Hassall's; she was spinning at her wheel in the hall of Mr. H.'s House, and "looking through the glasse wyndowe, saw the people runne in the streete."
John Lovett, who dwelt by Acton Church, and came that day to N. to buy a bushel of malt and had it ground at Thomas Wetenhall's "mylne."	Margett Hare, another maidservant of Hassall's.
William Kelsall.	William floxley, tenant of Roger Croket
Randall Alvaston, a "deputie bayliffe." He was buried 18th Nov. 1593. (Par. Reg.)	John Key
Richard Horobyn, a servant at the Crown.	Robte. florest
Ma'get Turner.	Johan Shyre.
Reynold Jackson, who was "in his own wiche-house, next to Wood Streate lane end, and the contrary end to where the fray begann."	John Hill, servant of Hassall.
William Jackson, of Little Wood Street, son of Reynold Jackson.	William Greene, of Minshull Vernon, a husbandman, of the age of 60 years.
	Thomas Bressy.
	John Houyet (? Hewitt) "taylor of Wich-Malbank, aged 58 yeares."
	Margett Blackshawe, of the Welshe Row, aged 30 years.
	John Gryffyn, butcher of N. aged 37 years.
	Randull Lytler, "of Monks Copnall."

\* This trial at Chester is adverted to by Roger Wilbraham, of Nantwich, Esq., in his Journal. See Annals under date 1670.

John Hunter, of Namptwiche, painter.  
 Richard Horbott, of little Acton.  
 Thomas Dodd, of N. shoemaker.  
 Thomas Halmarke, of the parish of Acton.  
 Olyu' [Oliver] Brooke, of N. servant at the Crown.  
 William Jackson, "of lyttle Acton."  
 John Lowe, "Vycar of Acton."  
 Agnes Clare, of N. servant at the Crown.  
 Ales Gerrerd, "wydowe of Namptwiche."  
 Raphe Hulse, "of Wystemon."  
 John Sparrowe, of N. brother to Edmund Sparrowe.  
 George Haryson, of the parish of Acton.  
 Roger Lowe, of Nantwich.  
 Thomas Shenton, of Nantwich.  
 Robte. Goodier, described as a "dealer for Croket."  
 Ales Sparrowe.  
 John Gryffyn, Gent., of Bartherton.  
 Richard Gryffyn, Gent., of Bartherton. (probably son of  
 John G.)  
 Thomas Hurleston.  
 Henry Wryght.  
 John Wryght.  
 Raphe Ince, butcher.  
 Ales Greenold.  
 Joan Hall.  
 Roger Parker.  
 Margery Parker, a waller, working in Rich. Robinson's  
 wiche-house.  
 Oliv'. [Oliver] Parker.  
 Ellen Ince, wife to Raphe Ince.  
 Anne Ankers, servant at the Crown.  
 Roger Hocknell.  
 Margery Shenton.  
 Margaret Smythe.  
 Roger Brooke.  
 Gilbert Clare.  
 Roberte Cheney.  
 Richard Chetwood.  
 John Parker.  
 Thomas Barton.  
 Isabell Barton.  
 John Ankers, brother to Anne Ankers.  
 Agnes Clare.  
 John Gibbons.

Roberte Pickeringe. He deposed that he came with Mr.  
 R. Wilbraham to the fray after Roger Croket was  
 wounded.  
 Marian Wixsted.  
 John Gorste, of Wood Street, into whose house Roger  
 Croket was carried.  
 Nicholas Reade, a blacksmith in Wood St., aged 26.  
 Richard Cally.  
 Marget Ryder, wife to Humphrey Ryder.  
 Jone Hulse, aunt to Croket, and sister to Hassall.  
 Cicely Crewe.  
 Marget Crewe, "widowe."  
 Mawde Leyecester.  
 Richard Aston.  
 Ellen Turner.  
 Ales Huxley, a girl who was "sent of an arrond by her  
 father."  
 Jane Gardener.  
 Marget Buckley, servant to Mr. R. Wilbraham; she "was  
 spinning in the kitchen when the fray began."  
 Ales Whorall, a waller, who was going to the wiche-house  
 Marg'et Bickerton, of Wood Street.  
 Jone Blymston, servant to Margaret Bickerton.  
 Ales Platt.  
 Katheryn Horobyn, sister to Margt. Hall, the wife of  
 Thos. Hall.  
 Margery Crewe, "lived in the house next saving to Rich.  
 Hassall."  
 Richard Crewe, "yeoman, of the Brydye end," who was  
 called to be on the inquest, but because of his name  
 was set asyde," being probably related to Edmund  
 Crewe, whom several witnesses deposed to having  
 given R. C. "the great blow."  
 John Mynshull Esqre. (Coroner) "came to N. and vewed  
 the body" of R. C.  
 John Prestland.  
 Richard Edgeley, "clerk to the Coroner."  
 Richard Hulse.  
 Thomas Cartwright.  
 Thomas Bryndley.  
 Richard Rodes.  
 John Browne.  
 Thomas Venables.

"MEMORAND. that *Randull Goldsmith* and xv mōe. [15 more] beinge of the Coron's  
 enqueste appeared before vs the comission<sup>rs</sup>. this day bringinge with them the  
 Counter payne of theire v<sup>d</sup>icte w<sup>ch</sup> they gave up to the Coron'. for the vewe of  
 the body of Rog<sup>r</sup> Croket, and they affirme they saw noe mōe [more] strokes uppon  
 his body then ys mencioned in the said v<sup>d</sup>icte, whereof they have delivered us a  
 copy signed w<sup>th</sup> their handes."



*LIST OF GENTLEMEN AND FREEHOLDERS RESIDENT IN  
NANTWICH. 1579.\**

ROGER MAISTERSON, GENT.	LAURENCE WRIGHT.
ROGER WALTHALL, GENT.	JASPER RUTTER, GENT.
THOMAS CLUTTON, GENT.	RICHARD GODIER.
RICHARD HASSALL, GENT.	JOHN CREW.
WILLIAM BROMLEY, GENT.	RICHARD CHURCH.
RICHARD MAISTERSON, GENT.	JEFFREY MINSHULL.
JOHN LEECH, GENT.	THOMAS MAINWARINGE.
RICHARD WILBRAHAM, GENT.	JOHN MAINWARINGE, MAIOR.
ROGER MAINWARING, GENT.	JOHN MAINWARINGE, MINOR.
ROBERT CROCKETT, GENT.	JOHN MAINWARINGE, MINIMUS.
THOMAS WETENHALL, GENT.	JAMES BULLEN.
HUMPHREY MAINWARING, GENT.	JOHN SECASTON.
HENRY WRIGHT, SENIOR.	JOHN TENCH.
HENRY WRIGHT, JUNIOR.	RICHARD ROBINSON.
RICHARD WRIGHT.	RICHARD WIXTED.
THOMAS WRIGHT.	WILLIAM TENCH.
REGINOLD WRIGHT.	THOMAS CHURCH.

Richard Wilbraham, in his MS. Journal, has the following memoranda relating to a serious flood, and the building of his family mansion, called Townsend.

*“Mem.* The 26th day of November 1574 & Ao. [in the year] of the reigne Eliz. 17th. there rose a fludd upon Wever that drowned in the towne of Namptwich 40 dwellinge howses in the Welshe Rowe & 24 wiche-howses so that all of theym were aboute a yarde deepe w[ith] water in them. Weever came up to the brydge.”

*“Mem.* That the byldyng of my howse dyd begyne in februarie Ao. 1575.”

*“That my ffirst comyng to Dwelle in my howse was in the vjth daye of August 1580.”*

\* This List, entitled “The names of all and singular Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen and Freeholders in Com. Cestria, for Nantwich Hundred, temp. Eliz. 1579,” is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 1988, f. 121-2. (Brit. Mus.)



## The Great Fire.



ON the night of Tuesday, the 10th December, 1583, the greater part of the town was destroyed by fire. According to the earliest printed account of the catastrophe, the outbreak originated "*through negligence of undiscrēt persons brewing;*"\* and this fully agrees with a Memorandum by Allen Wright, written in the earliest volume of the Parish Registers, which was afterwards copied in red ink into the first parchment Register, by Hugh Price, who subscribed his *own*, instead of the author's, name. The Mem., which has been printed many times, but not always correctly, is as follows:—

"The X day of this Monnth [Dec.] chaunced a most tereble and vehement fyre beginige at the water lood† about vi of the clocke at night, in a Kitchen by Bruinge, the winde being very boysterous, increased ye said fyre, which very vehemently wasted and consumed (in the space of 15 houres) 600 bayes of buildinges, and could not be stayed nether by labour nor pollitye, which I thought good to comend unto the posterety as a favorable punishment of th' almightye in destroyinge the buildins and goods only, but sparing the lyves of many people (wch considering ye time space and perell) were in great jopardy yet by gods mercey, but only two persons that pereshed by fyre."

"ALEN WRIGHTE whoe ssawe the saide  
fire and wrotte this."

From this account, it may be inferred that the high wind would not only fan the flames and carry them along the thatched roofs with great rapidity; but the thousand sparks and fire-flakes shot into the air as the old oak houses one after another fell in, would be driven onward as *avant-courrieres* of destruction; while the inhabitants, terror-stricken with the suddenness and seriousness of the conflagration, must have rushed wildly in all directions to escape the roaring furnaces of the streets on that December night. On the following day, all that remained of the town on the east side of the river was the Church, the Grammar School, the Corn-mill, and a few residences in the less crowded parts of the town, at the ends of Beam Street, Hospital Street and Pillory Street, as stated in the following detailed account by Richard Wilbraham, in his MS. Journal, which though written three hundred years ago, is here printed for the first time.

"*Mem.* That the xth of December A<sup>o</sup>. Dni. 1583 & in the xxvj yere of the reigne of o<sup>r</sup> soueragne ladye Elizabeth about v of the clocke in the eveninge there began by godds sufferance such a ffyer in this towne of namptwiche in A howse of Jo[h]n Crewe joyning to the water loode wch howse was in the tenure of Nycolas Browne. And first beganne in his Kytchen: And by reason of an extreme greate westerlye wynde ytt speedelye burned up to the hie town: And soe burned most extremeley all that nyghte tyll ytt was upon the other Day aboute viij [8] of the clocke in the morninge most grevus & lamentable & ffearfull to beholde in wch tyme there was consumed by the same ffyce All the buyldings in the hyghe towne upon bothe sydes from the seyde howse wherein yt began joyning to the wather

\* Stowe's *Annals*. Edit. 1592. p. 1189.

† *Water-loode* is the way leading from the High Street to the Weaver, just above the Town Bridge.

lode up to the pillore strete : & all the pillore strete upon boothe sydes tyll yt came to the beete brydge except one howse wherein Robt. Goddier dwelled : all the hospell strete vpon both sydes past the myddest thereof & dyd staye at the howse of Thoms. wryghte upon ye south syde of the strete : And at another howse\* of Mr. Wylbrahms. of Woodehey wherein Randull Maynewaring dwelled upon ye north syde : yt burned all the church lane Downe ffrom the seyd hospell strete to the churche yarde on bothe sydes and all howses rownd about the same churchyarde : And from the churche yarde yt burned a stretet leding to the beast markt‡ in the beame strete on bothe sydes : yt burned more the south syde of the same beame strete from a cesterne called lothburne draine§ to the snow hyll wth a strete leding called love lane|| on both sydes wch strete ledyth from the hie towne to the beame strete : And in this crewell fier there was left no manner of tymber bylding stick or block of Any howse in all these streetes & compasse thereof named except one peece of a wall of the howse wherein ytt began, wch peece of the same wall standing till the day ffollowing in the afor noon As women were carrying water from weever yt fell downe & kyllid a woman carrying of water whoe was wyffe of Thoms. lovatt.¶ After all the tymber of these howses were cleane consumed yea the verre stonne of chymneys burnt & fell in peces & nothing left butt the brycke chymneys standing in a straung post. [position] yett the flyer burned in the heapes of fier cooles in tymber & sylle [cellars] under the yerth [earth] that the people contynewed carrying of water by the space of ii or iii dayes after for Daunger of burning the rest of the hospell strete & mylne strete the wynde contynewed soe greate : And in the first nyghte the churche stode in soe greate daungt by reason of sparkes & filames of fyre cast upon the leade thereof that the people dyde ffear greatly yt wolde have been burned : but god dyd prserve ytt whose name be prayed to whom I pray to Give us his Grace of repentance & to be warned by this generall admonycon & soe to Amende or lyves from the hiest to the lowest for ffear of his further punyshment. Amen.

The numbre of the howses wch were burned that nighte were one hundred and ffiftie wth all shoppes kytchens stables & other howses of office belonging : And aboute xxxtie shoppes of severall p'sons. as dwelled in other places of the towne : ij [2] howse mylles : ij [2] barnes : many swyne styres & swyne in them : ij [2] women burned in their howses,\* mooste lamentable to thinke of : there were amongst these seyde howses vij [7] of them Innes for loging & very ffayre : viz. the ship, wherein dwelled one Seckerston : the cocke, Jo<sup>n</sup> Walker, but Mr. Willm. Bromleys landes [i.e. landlord or owner] : the bell, Richard Wryghte : the Crowne, Robt. Crockett : the harts horne Jo<sup>n</sup> Maynewaring : the swanne Ric. Gryffyn but Jo<sup>n</sup> Wydenburyes his lande [i.e. landlord] : the beyr, Jo<sup>n</sup> Seckerston, who having in his stable iiiij<sup>r</sup> [4] great beyres of his dyd lose theym out in the beginning to the streete : whereoff the women were soe affrayed they durst nott carrye water onlesse the[y] were accompanied wth men havynge wepons to Deffende theym ffrom the same beyres : & much goodes were brought out off the howses & more stollen & moste burned in the howses.

This fire was not all quenched in the space of xxtie dayes after yt first begann but burned in the yerth & in sell[ers] of the howses wch lay in the yerth : & The quenes most excellent ma'tie beinge enforced by the godly prchr [preacher] Mr. Alexander Nowell\* of the foresayde burnynge of this towne And thereby moved wth greate pyttie of her highness charitable benevolence she gave towards the re-ediffying off the

\* Probably the house now known as "Sweet-briar Hall." † Pepper Street.

‡ Beast Market in Beam Street between Pepper Street end and Swine Market.

§ Now a culvert passing under the Shakespeare Inn.

|| Now Oat Market. (See Partridge's Hist. of Nantwich, p. 8).

¶ She was buried on the same day according to the Burial Register—

"1583 Dec. 11th. Ann, wife of Thos. Lovatt, Kild with the fall of a wall."

\* They were probably the following given in the Burial Register—

"1583 Dec. 12. Margery Daughter of Rondull Duckworth."

" " " Alis Blagge widow."

\* \* Alexander Nowell was Dean of St. Paul's, London.

same towne a thousande poundes of money :\* And moreover Dyrected her gracious lrés. [letters] to ye lorde Mayor & Aldermen of the Cittie of london for their charitable benevolence wherupon there was collected in all the wards of london & gyven ffreye vijli [£700]; and moreover her highness commanded her Honorable Councillors in her name to Direct & sende out lrés. to almost all the byshoppes in Englande for collec[tions] in their seu'all provinces & Dioces : wth lyke lrés. to most of the best Cities & townes in Englande, and the mooste p[ar]te of the sheryffes in England for colleccons in the same Citties townes and shires towards the re-ediffyinge the same Towne. Whereupon great sumes were gathered & pres<sup>d</sup> [presented] but certaintie butt fewe dyd knowe who were the Doers : but the like charytable benevolence hath nott been seen & herde : God saffe our gracious quene Elizabeth."

Another singular circumstance is related by Thomas Mynshull, mercer, of Nantwich, (whose shop, house, furniture, and kitchen were totally destroyed), in these words—†

"1583. I and my cowssen mathewe wright beinge the same yeare constabes goot [got] the Day byfoore hit was brownd [burned] xvij [17] cartes loeed [cart-loads] wth mvnision [ammunition] our of our towne : presed [praised] be the Lorde."

The following Letter, addressed by the Lords of the Council to William Chadderton, Lord Bishop of Chester, for a collection in his diocese, shows how these "*Briefs*" were issued. It has recently been printed in the "*Cheshire Sheaf*," No. 934; and in a similar "Letter of the Justices of Peace to the High Constables of the franchises of Bury St. Edmunds about their collecting the charity of well disposed people towards the losses of the inhabitants of Nantwich by the Great fire," contained in *Harl. MSS.* 368, p. 126, and dated 27th March, 1584; it is also stated that 800 houses were consumed; a number, no doubt, much over-estimated.

The Letter is as follows :—

"After oure verie hartie comendations

Whereas, by misadventure of fyre [which] happened within the towne of Nauntwiche in the countie of Chester upon the x day of December last, there was burnt and consumed (as we have bene verie credible enformed from our verie good lord therle of Derbie & others of good credit) to the number of DCCC. [800] houses, with the most part of the goods & househoulede stuffe of the inhabitants to a verie great valed, wherbie a great number of the sayd inhabitants, beinge men of good wealth, are, with their wives, children & families, utterlie spoyled and undone; and the towne become desolate, which of late was not onlie of good wealth & trade by reason of [its] situation; but alsoe of good importaunce for the service of her majestie & the realme (beinge a th'oughe-fare, lyinge convenient, for the receipt of souldiers, carrages, [i.e. baggage] and munition to be sent unto the realme of Ireland).

The queens maiestie there fore, of her gracious disposition, having her self [given] towards the relief of the said inhabitants a good valed: hopinge that her lovinge subiects will also have consideration of the lamentable estate of those poore afflicted inhabitants, as they would desire relief of other, upon the like visitation from Gods hands:

To that ende it hath pleased her majestie to com'and us most earnestlie, in her name, to recommende the same unto your lordship, and to require you, not onlie by your owne good example in contributinge in some reasonable manner, but by dealinge effectualye with your clergie to yeild there devotion the more largelie, to farther soe charitable and necessarie a purpose; and that you appoint some men of good credit and reputation to collect the said contribution and devotion, & send the same to the citie of Chester, there to be delivered to the handes of the maior of the same citie [Robert Brerewood] and Christopher Goodman preacher, together with your letters, mentioning the summes collected and sent; and further [to] advertise us by youre letters therof.

Wherein we praye you to cause all convenient expedition to be used, in respect of the present necessitie of the people: so as therbie they maie be speidelic relieved, and her maiestie occasioned to accept well of youre doings therein.

\* The statements of Partridge that "the damage was computed at 30,000 pounds," and that the Queen gave "2,000 pounds and a grant of a considerable quantity of timber out of the royal forest of Delamere," (*Hist. Nantwich*, p. 28-9), probably rest on no better authority than the tradition of the town.

† Minshull Accounts in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

And soe, trustinge that this shall surffice, we bid yow farewell. From Westminster, the xi of March 1583-4.

Your lordships verie loving frends  
 T. Bromley, canc. [Chancellor] Fra. Knolles  
 W. Burghley James Crofte  
 E. Lincolne Chr. Hatton  
 R. Lecester Fra. Walsingham  
 H. Haward Wal. Mildmay.  
 John Hunsdon

To oure verie good lord, the  
 lord Bishop of Chester."

Four Collectors for the diocese of Chester appear to have been appointed by the Bishop, two of whom are mentioned by name in Webb's "*Itinerary*" (c. 1625) viz.:—*Sir Hugh Cholmondeley Kt.*, (probably the son and heir of Sir Hugh who had purchased so much of the Barony of Wich-Malbank) and *Mr. John Maisteron*, of Nantwich, whose burial is thus recorded in the Parish Registers—

"1586 Dec. 23. Mr. John Maisteron on[e] of the 4 comissioners for colector."

Of the amount collected in this county, however, no particulars are known; but the following sums from various cities, towns, parishes, municipal bodies, &c. are to be found in a volume of the Calendar of State Papers.

	£	s.	d.
"1584 May 2. The Mayor and citizens of <i>Chichester</i> to the Council" (at London) .. .. .	5	0	0
" " 4. The Mayor and Jurats of <i>Sandwich</i> .. .. .	13	1	6
" " 5. Wm. Furnesse, Mayor, and the Aldermen of <i>Oxford</i> * &c. have collected and sent to Mr. Tho. Aldersey and Tho. Brasey, merchants & citizens of London† .. .. .	10	0	0
" " 12. Richard Goddarde, Mayor, and the Aldermen of <i>Southampton</i> to the Council Have sent to Tho. Aldersey and Tho. Brasey, of London, &c. .. .. .	5	18	9
" " 20. The Bailiffs and Citizens of <i>Lichfield</i> , &c. .. .. .	6	0	7
" " 31. <i>Christchurch, Oxford</i> . Dr. Tho. Thornton informed the Council, that he had sent up the money collected in the <i>University of Oxford</i> for the relief of the town of Namptwich, and is sorry the state of the University did not enable them to give more &c. .. .. .	24	12	8
" June 28. Bishop Scorey, informs the council, he "has dealt effectually with the clergy of <i>Hoveford</i> , and collected and sent up £28 18s. from them for the relief of Namptwich, and £5 of his own benevolence. Many of the Clergy, however, "did use themselves very contemptuouslie." .. .. .	33	18	0
" July 2. Anthony Collie, sheriff, Kenelme Digby, and others, Justices of the <i>county of Rutland</i> , inform the Council, they have collected and sent up the sum of £8 for the relief of Namptwich, and begging the acceptance of the same as from the smallest shire in England .. .. .	8	0	0

\* The following extracts from the Council books of the Corporation of Oxford show how the Orders for the Collection were carried out in that city, and how this sum was realized.

"26 Elizabeth, Apl. 13. ffor Namptwiche."

"Hit is agreed at this Counsell that collection shalbe made of all the comons of thys Cytie towards the reliefe of the town of Namptwiche in the countie of Chester by reason of the fire that happened there on the xth of December 1583, in manner and forme followinge. That is to saye in everie parische collectors appoynted" &c. The amounts are as follows—

St. Aldates parishe	vijjs. xd.	St. Thomas parishe	vjs.
St. Martins parishe	vijjs. id.	St. Mychaells parishe	ijjs. xjd.
St. Maries parishe	xjs. vjd.	All Sayntes parishe	xss.
St. Peters in the East	vjs. xd.	St. Peters in the Baylie	ijijs. xd. ob.
Magdalene parishe	vs. iiijd.	St. Ebbes parishe	ijjs. xjd.
St. Gyles parishe	xixd.	Holliwel	ijs. xd.

"26 Elizabeth, 27 April. ffor Namptwiche.

"Hit is agreed at this counsaile that the thertene shall paye towards the collecon, for Namptwiche everie one ij s. everie Bayliffe xvjd. everie Chamberlen xjd. everie of the comon counsaile viijd. and what shall want of the somme of tenne punds in all shalbe payed and layed forthe owt of the comon treasure of this Cytie." (Local Gleanings; 1st Series, Vol. II. p. 5).

† Thomas Aldersey and Thomas Brassey belonged to Cheshire families of those names,

	£	s.	d.
1584. July 17. John Wolton, Bishop of Exeter, informs Sir F. Walsyngham that he has collected the sum of £20 16s. 7d. within the diocese of Exeter &c. Is sorry he could not collect more as the clergy had to contribute in a similar way for relief of Sampford Peverell in Devon, lately burnt .. .. .	20	16	7
„ Aug. 24. The Sheriffs and Justices of Peace in Gloucestershire &c. .. .. .	56	6	0
„ Oct. 10. Sir William Courtenay and others, Justices of Devonshire, &c. .. .. .	35	0	0
„ Oct. 17. Sir Ric. Greynville informs Walsingham, that he sends a further sum of £20 for the relief of Nantwich;” and that “the County generally complain of the great burthens laid upon them.” .. .. .	20	0	0

Some idea of the national sympathy manifested for the distressed inhabitants, and the trouble taken that charity should meet this distress, may be formed from the fact that it was nearly two years after the fire, before the collection was finally closed, as proved by the following State Paper—

“1585. Nov. 13. Brief declaration of the total amount of money collected in the several counties throughout the realm, for the re-edifying of the town of Nantwich lately consumed by casualty of fire: delivered into the hands of Thomas Aldersey and Tho. Brasey, merchants of London, and to the Mayor of Chester [Edmund Gamull] and Mr. Goodman the preacher [Rector of St. Bridget’s, Chester, &c.,] including the Queen’s most liberable gift of £1,000: amounting in the whole to the sum of £3224 6s. 9½d.”

Mr. Thomas Mynshull, mercer, of Nantwich, who states in his “Accounts” that he commenced business in the year 1572, makes the following curious entries relative to the rebuilding of his house and shop near “*the twerling gate*,” “*in Pepper Street*;” and the actual sum received from Mr. John Maisteron in compensation for his loss.

“pead Jhon gambole of bewrtone [Buerton] after that these towe howses weare brownte for the tember fraimes and bringinge home & rearinge” .. .. .	xxxvjl.	—£36
“pead for the finishinge of bothe these howses by a Just a cownt set Downe .. .. .	xxxli.	—£30
“lead owte one howsell [household] fornetwre as silling [? shelves] bedstedes, stowles [stools] bowrdes [tables] and silde cheres [chairs] .. .. .	ixli.	—£9
“pead owen a morre, carpenter, for the buldinge and for finishinge of my stabell and cloes howse..	xiiiijli.	—£14
“pead for platte [plate] a s’ver [silver] salte, and xij [12] postell spownes, a Drinking can and foore [4] spownes .. .. .	xvijli.	—£18
Total ..	£	108
“that mr Jhon mestersone gave me towards my buldinges .. .. .	liijli. vjs. 3d.	—£53 6s. 8d.

The town was speedily rebuilt on the lines of its former streets. Camden, Smith, and Webb, topographical writers between the years 1586 and 1625, all speak in praise of the new-built town; and some of the houses with their quaintly figured gables, remain to this day; but many, during the present century, have been either defaced or demolished, and what is even worse, no artist has left to posterity any illustration of the streets of this once picturesque town. A house\* in High-town, now in the occupation of Mr. Sandford, grocer, and which has been a grocer’s shop at least for a century back, commemorates the rebuilding of Nantwich by the following inscription on a board in Roman capitals:—

\* This house narrowly escaped destruction by fire early in the morning of Thursday, 16th Nov. 1882; when the adjoining premises, occupied by Mr. John Walley, draper, were burnt down.

GOD GRANTE OVR RYAL QVEEN  
 IN ENGLAND LONGE TO RAIGN  
 FOR SHE HATH PVT HER HELPING  
 HAND TO BILD THIS TOWNE AGAIN  
 THOMAS CLEESE MADE THIS WORKE  
 THE YEARE OF OVRE LORDE  
 GOD. 1584.

When the block of houses and shops in Hightown were taken down (Christmas, 1872), another curious inscription, probably of the same date, deeply carved in oak, and which had long been hidden behind successive coats of plaster, was discovered. It ran thus—

“A BEWTFIVL FACE IS A DVMBE PRAIS FAIRE WOMÊ[N]  
 BE DAVNGEROVS MARKES FOR YONG MENS EYES  
 CHOOSE NOT THY WIFE BY HIR BEWTY BVT BY HIR HONESTY.” [i.e. chastity].

With a view to the prevention as far as possible of a conflagration so wide-spread and calamitous, water-works appear to have been at once erected on the Weaver on the north side of the Corn Mills; and wood water-mains, (simply trunks of alder trees hollowed out, and tapered at one end to fit one into the other), were laid along the principal streets, having at intervals a hole for fire-plug connections. A line in the Burial Register records the name of the person who designed and carried out this scheme.

“1638 Sept. 13. William Sands, *Mr.* [Master] & *devisor* of the water workes.” [Buried].

Occasionally portions of these mains are unearthed in almost as sound a condition as when they were first laid down; but the works on the Weaver, which, by means of a wheel, raised the water from the river and supplied the mains, were themselves destroyed by fire, together with Messrs. Eddleston & Co.’s Cotton works, in the year 1799, and never afterwards rebuilt; the site being now occupied by gardens.

News of the sad calamity described in the foregoing pages reached GEOFFREY WHYTNEY, a native of Coole Pilate, near Nantwich, who, at the time, was probably living at Leyden, in Holland. The following quaint lines taken from the second part of his “*Choice of Emblemes*,” published in 1586, may fitly close this account of an event that forms so important a crisis in the history of the town.

“*Unica semper avis* [The bird always alone]

To my countrimen of the Namptwiche in Cheshire.”

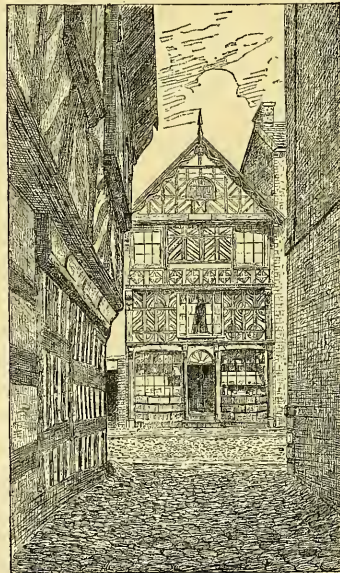
*Device: a Phœnix rising out of its own ashes.*

“THE Phœnix rare, with fethers fresh of hewe,  
 ARABIAS righte, and sacred to the Sonne:  
 Whome, other birdes with wonder seeme to weve,  
 Dothe liue vntill a thousande yeares bee ronne:  
 Then makes a pile: which, when with Sonne it burnes  
 Shee flies therein, and so to ashes turnes.

Whereof, behoulde, an other Phoenix rare,  
 With speede dothe rise most beautifull and faire:  
 And thoughe for truthe, this manie doe declare,  
 Yet thereunto, I meane not for to sweare,  
 Although I knowe that Aucthors witnes true  
 What here I write, bothe of the oulde, and newe.

Which when I wayed, the newe, and eke the oulde,  
 I thought vppon youre towne destroyed with fire:  
 And did in minde, the newe NAMPWICHE behoulde,  
 A spectacle for anie mans desire:  
 Whose buildinges braue, where cinders weare but late,  
 Did represente (me thought) the Phoenix fate.

And as the oulde, was manie hundreth yeares  
 A towne of fame, before it felt that crosse:  
 Euen soe, (I hope) this WICHE, that nowe appeares,  
 A Phoenix age shall laste, and knowe no losse:  
 Which God vouchsafe, who make you thankfull, all:  
 That see this rise, and sawe the other fall."



OLD HOUSES.



## Historical Annals.—(Continued.)



ESIDES the evils of pestilence and fire, Nantwich has had its share of suffering in times of famine. In these days of free trade and cheap food, it is difficult to realize the amount of distress amongst the inhabitants of small towns in former times, when food was at famine prices. Before the passing of the Inclosure Act in 1836, and the more recent changes effected by the Inclosure Commissioners, towns and villages had their heaths, mosses, wide, open lanes, and waste lands; and although the principal farms have existed as such for hundreds of years, yet, it was formerly thought that light land was scarcely capable of cultivation; arable land being always stiff clay land. Consequently, in wet seasons, the grain crops suffered severely, and bad harvests brought local distress; for communication was bad, and food could seldom be brought from distant places in large quantities. A few particulars are here given of times of great scarcity in 1585 and 1597.

1585. "This last year began a greate Derthe of corn in England wch contynewed all that yeare following beyng 1586; in wch Derthe corne was solde in this towne of Namptwiche as followeth, viz.—Wheat, at xxxv<sup>sh</sup>. the bushell or thereabouts; Rye, at xxviijs<sup>sh</sup>. the bushell or thereabouts; Barlye, at xx<sup>sh</sup>. or more; Otes, at viij or ix<sup>sh</sup>. the bushell; and at harvest 1587 ytt fell in the price greatlye. Wheat came to xs. : Rye to vjsh. : and barley to vsh. or lytle more." (*Wilb. MSS. Journal*).\*

1586. "This yeare passed the towne of namptwiche and dyvers other townes were vissited with a kind of frenzy or madd Ague of which Disease ther dyed the yeare aforesayd about seven score and odd persons in this towne." (*Parish Register*).

Only 138 burials are recorded; of which 98 occur from May to September; the greatest number, 30, being in the month of August. The Burial Register also mentions the following untimely deaths:—

- "1587 April 12. Lawrence Woolley, slain with a goon."
- "1588 Oct. 11. Wm. Gibbons kild by a fall of a rouche of wood."
- "1588-9 Jan. 28. James Vernonn slain by William Louart."

With patriotic pride the parish Clerk made the following memorandum in the Register, concerning the memorable year of 1588.

"This yeare passed the Spaniards with a great navye of shippes and a great multitudine of men Intended to have invaded this Realme : against whome our queene provided a great power both by land and by sea: the land souldiers camped at a place called tilbery; but our englishe navy fought very valliantly with the Spaniards, betwixt callais and dover, wher the Spaniard had a great ouerthrow and many of them slayn and taken prisoners, and finally the rest of ther shippes by tempest were Dispersed and sunken, soe that fewe or non returned to bring K. phillipe newes of ther Adventure."

\* This scarcity of corn was so severely felt in Gloucestershire, that the people "were driven to the last extremity by famine, and forced to feed their children with cats, dogs, and roots of nettles." (*Calend. of State Papers*, Vol. 188; dated 30th April, 1586).

Other local patriots occur among "*The Names of the Nobility, Gentry and others who contributed to the Defence of this Country at the time of the Spanish Invasion in 1588,*"\* as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
"THOMAS WILBRAM, of Woodhey ... ..	25	0	0
HENRIE DELVES, of Doddington, Armiger [Esq.] 24 Marcii ...	25	0	0
RICHARD COTTON, of Combermere, Armiger 17 Marcii ...	25	0	0
THOMAS VERNON, of Haslington, Armiger 13 Marcii ...	25	0	0
ROGER MANWERING, of Nantwich, 17 Marcii ...	25	0	0
RICHARD WILBRAM, of Nantwich, eodem die ...	25	0	0
RICHARD CHURCH, of Nantwich, eodem ...	25	0	0
GEFFRIE MINSHALL, of Nantwich, [mercier] eodem ...	25	0	0

In 1591 there died in the town a centenarian—

"1591 Sep. 30. Richd. Lewes, a 100 yeares old."—(Burial Reg.)

"1596. Aug. 22. George fallowes late come from Cales [Cadiz] in Spaine" [buried]. (Par. Reg.)

"This year the Right honourable Robt. Deuorax Earle of Essex accompanied with a great Army of men, & a great navy of ships put to seas in the later end of Aprill, and the xx<sup>o</sup> day of June the[y] landed at a Noble mart towne in Spayne called Cales [Cadiz] wch beinge by our navy valliantly assayed, was as coragiously defended by the Spaniards, both by lande and seas, by reason thereof the fight indured very fearce and hott the space of 4 houres, yet in the end the spaniards had the foyle, ther best ships taken, and many of the rest sonnke, and chased out of the harborow.

finallie the noble Generall landed his men, repulst 800 horsemen upon land and tooke the towne with the spoyle thereof, and burnt it, only 2000 women he sent away very honorably, wth ther goods and lyves, also at his returne he took the towne of Faro in portugall, but out of those hott countryes they brought home a kinde of flixe which spread ouer all England, whereof followed a great Death of people in many places, and in this towne of Nantwiche, also, the first wch dyed in this towne of the same flixe was the before remembred George fallowes."—(Par. Reg.)

The number of registered burials in 1596 is 165: the greatest mortality being in these months—December 40; Jan. 49; Feb. 21; and March 18.

The year 1597 was one of great scarcity of provisions.

"This year was a great Dearth of corne and other vittuls Generally throughout this Lande, for wheat was sould at foure marks [£2 13s. 4d.] the Bushell: Rye at forty-foure shillings ye bushell: barley at twenty-eight shillings ye Bushell; pease and beanes at thirty-tow shillings; and mault at forty shillings. Ale was sowlde at 4<sup>d</sup>. the quart, the scaresety was soe great that many poore people were a ffamished, and soundrey of good account were utterly impouerished."—(Par. Reg.)†

Richard Wilbraham mentions similar prices in his Journal, and says the famine "punyshede all degrees, especially the pore householders, soe that greate syckness by ffamyne ensued & many poore dyed‡ thereoff: & yff greate store of wheate & rye especially had nott been brought to london & other haven towns from Denmarke & holland &c. where there was this year greate plenty (by god his merceyfull provydence) yt ys lyke wee had ffelt & hadde a greate mortalitye."

\* Originally printed in 1798, and reprinted in "Local Gleanings" 1st Series, Vol. II p. 228-9.

† This extract was printed in Gent. Mag. for Jan. 1801, with the following note—

"N.B.—The wages of artisans at this time was 7<sup>d</sup>. for day."

‡ The burial Reg. records 92 in the year; or more than double the average mortality of other years; amongst whom is mentioned, "George Clowes of the age of 100 yeares, 10 April, 1597."

Another native of Nantwich, the celebrated *John Gerard*, in his "Herbal" (page 63) alludes to the great importation of Rye from "Germanie and Polonia," "in the year 1596 and at other times, when there was a generall want of bread corne, by reason of the abundance of raine that fell the yeere before, whereby great penurie insued, as well of cattell, and all other victualls, as of all manner of graine."

Thomas Mynshull, mercer, of Nantwich, in his "Accounts" for the year 1597, says:—

"The genes [gains] of my shop this Deare yeare did a mownt vnto by my a cowntes just i <sup>o</sup> li	..	£100
"The genes [gains] of my shop this yeare by resone I bowght soe lettell wares and the greatt Darthe weh all was lesser by"	.. .. .	.. iijxx li. .. £60
"All the gene of my shop was spent but v <sup>li</sup> . [£5] by resone of the Darthe and great charges I lived at and givinge a wey to the powre, for corne was at such a verie fearefull prise.		

Wheat the bowshell at 43 <sup>sh</sup> . to 45 <sup>sh</sup> .	Owtes the bowshell at 20 <sup>sh</sup> .
Rie " " " 42 <sup>sh</sup> .	benes " " " 24 <sup>sh</sup> .
Malte " " " 35 <sup>sh</sup> .	pease " " " 27 <sup>sh</sup> .
Barle[y] " " " 30 <sup>sh</sup> .	

In 1603 the Parish Clerk paid the following tribute to the memory of the great Queen, whom, doubtless, all Nantwich would mourn.

1603. March. "The 24th daye of this Mounth Died the most noble & Renowned christianne Quene Elizabeth, our most gracyous governour, when she had reigned 44 yeares and more. And the same daye was K. James of Scotland with a generall good likinge of all English men proclaymed K. & supream Governour of England ffrance & Ireland & he was crowned together with the Queene the 25 of July next followinge at Westminster, whose happie raignes god longe continuē."

In 1604 the town was visited by that terrible epidemic—THE PLAGUE. The Wilbraham MS. Journal says:—"yt uppon St. Peters Day [June 29] 1604 there began a great plague in this Towne of Namptwiche, w<sup>ch</sup> continued about six monthes, whereof there died in that space about 500 people, and soe by Gods merciffull providence the plague ceased."

The Parish Register gives a more explicit account:—

"1604. July. This yeare together with the former yeare & the yeare followinge this Realme of England was vissited with a contagious plauge generally: whercof many thousands in London, and other Townes & Cities dyed of the same. The said plauge begane in our Towne of Namptwich about the 24th of June 1604, being brough[<sup>t</sup>] out of Chester and here dispersed diversly, soe yt presently our Market was spoyled, the town abandoned of all the wealthy inhabitants: who fledd for refuge into diuers places of the country adioyninge. But of those which remained at home ther Dyed from the 12th June till the 2nd of March followinge about the number of 430 persons of all deseases. Now seeing god in mercy hath withdrawn his punishinge hand, & hath quenched the spark of contagious infection among us. God graunt that we by Repentaunce may prevent further punishment & that the remembrance of this plauge past, may remain in our hearts for that purpose for ever. Amen."

No Marriage register was kept in 1604; the Baptisms are wanting from Aug. 12th to the 10th March following; and only 366 burials, of which none are expressly said to have died of this horrible disease, are recorded. The clerk has noticed this irregularity in keeping the Parish Books, accounting for it "by reason of the plauge which hinder'd the good proceedinge of the Register for that yeare."

The number of Burials entered is—

1604. April 4	Aug. 103	Dec. 11	} Total ... 366
May 7	Sep. 96	Jan. 3	
June 2	Oct. 45	Feb. 4	
July 64	Nov. 25	March 2	

The following extracts illustrate how whole families were cut off.

" 1604. July 2. Dorothy wiffe of Richard Crocket.	July 18. Jasper Rutter gent.
" 2. The Crown mayde.	" 18. Urselo wife of Jasper Rutter gent.
" 2. Ann Sutton.	Aug. 5. Raphe Crockett of the Welche Rowe.
" 5. Mrs. Ellen Bromley, widdow.	" 7. Ann Poole keeper at the Crowne.
" 14. Henry sonne of Hugh Manwaringe gent. [of the Crown Inn].	" 11. Ellen Lowe servant to Mrs. Crockett
" " Rodger Wright, mercer.	" 12. Ann daught. of Thomas Goulborne.
" " John Rutter, gent.	" 13. Thomas Goulbourne, Taylor.
" " Hugh, sonne of Hugh Manwaringe, gent.	" " John son of Thomas Goulbourne.
" " Prudence, dau. of Hugh Manwaringe, gent.	" 14. Elizabeth Coden, Mrs. Crocketts servant.
" 15. Roger, son of Hugh Manwaringe, gent.	Oct. 30. William Houlford Minister [of Nantwich Parish] Dyed.
" " Jane, daughter of Hugh Manwaringe, gent.	Nov. 6. Ann wife of Mr. Houlford, minister."
" " William, son of Hugh Manwaringe, gent.	

To meet the distress a county rate, amounting to "halfe the whole pay<sup>mt</sup> of the myze," appears to have been levied; and *Harl. MSS.* 2090 f. 18-20 contain "various sums of money collected in Macclesfield Hundred &c. by order of Sessions holden at Chester 10 Oct. 1604, towards the relief of the townes of Namptwiche and Northwyche, infected with the Plague." The Constables of the Hundreds, who collected the rate, paid the monies to appointed receivers and presented their accounts to the magistrates, who paid over the sums for the purpose intended at different times. Thus about Aug. 1605 the following sums were disbursed from Macclesfield Hundred, (52<sup>sh.</sup> 11<sup>d.</sup> then remaining to be collected)—

"*Imp<sup>br.</sup>* to m<sup>r</sup> Delues his man for the Namptwich vjli. [£6].

"*Item.* deliuered to Sr Urian Leigh wch was lykewise pd vnto m<sup>r</sup> Delues his man vli. [£5].

The plague appears to have been particularly fatal for five months, making its greatest ravages in Aug. and Sept., as also in other years elsewhere, not only in England but throughout Europe. For months after the town was freed from the infection, all persons leaving the town were required to produce certificates of removal. Thus—\*

"Richard Maisteron and 13 other residents bailiffs and constables of Nantwich to the Justices of the Peace gentry & inhabitants of Manchester."

"Being required to certify our knowledge touching the behaviour of John Warrant, Henry Brooke, Ellen Foulke and Cicely Smith, late of this town, and now in Manchester, while the sickness remained here, we certify that in the last visitation, they were severally visited with the sickness, and that during that time they demeaned themselves orderly, without doing anything that might breed any danger or infection to their neighbours." [Dated] "Nantwich 31 July 1605."

Chester suffered severely from the Plague for several years in succession; and in 1605, in consequence of this visitation, the Court of Exchequer was removed to Tarvin; and the COUNTY ASSIZES were held at Nantwich, Sir Richard Lewkenor and Henry Townesend being Chief Justices, and Richard Broughton, vice-justice, at the time.

\* Calendar of State Papers, Addenda Jac. 1, vol. xxxviii p. 478. (1580—1625).

A severe winter is noted in the Parish Register as follows:—

“In this year 1607 was an extreame great frost which began about St. Andrews Day [30 Nov.] before Christyde, and continued till the first week of Lent following, which was about ix weekes. The extremity whereof caused great scarcity of water for Cattell soe that many dyed in sundry places of this land. Tames at London was frozen 5 foote thick. The same forced many suche as were deseased to yeald to nature; especially ould people. The Lord in mercy soften our frozen hearts as we may better imbrace the word of god, and be freed from the lyke punishements.’—(*Par. Reg.*)

Amongst the old people that died was—

“Jan. 25. *John Weston of Aspell Streete, a man of an 103 yeares ould.*”—(*Bur. Reg.*)

During the years 1607 and 1608 Nantwich, like other towns about that time, manifested opposition to the newly imposed Canon 91; [1 Jac. I. (1603)] which transferred the power of electing Parish Clerks from the Vestry to the Clergy; thus making the office an ecclesiastical instead of a secular one. After the death of *John Bullen*, clerk of Nantwich in Oct. 1606, in accordance with the new Canon, Sir Edward Coke, Kt., as lord of the Countess of Warwick's Fee, nominated *Mr. John Pearson*, master of the Grammar School, who was in holy orders, to the Clerkship; and, the consent of the Bishop having been obtained, he was duly installed by Mr. John Bradwall, Minister of Nantwich Church. Mr. Thomas Maynwarding and other parishioners, refusing to submit to the innovation, forcibly ejected Pearson, and selected in his place *Thomas Clowes*, a native townsman, and a layman; and for that act they were cited to appear before the Ecclesiastical Court. In the end, *Clowes* was suffered to retain the Clerkship; but the following documents\* afford evidence of the excited state of the town; and will be read with interest inasmuch as both Archbishops were appealed to while the dispute was pending.

#### DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE CLERKSHIP OF NANTWICH.

[I]

“Sr. Chre[r]. [Christopher] Hatton, Knight late Lo: Chancellor of England being seised in fee (by purchase from Mr. fullshurst) of the franchise or liberty in the Towne of Namptwch called the Countesse of Warwick's fee, wherevnto certaine Court Lects, the Bellmanship of the Towne, the Tolles of the Corne Markett and *nominacon. of the Clarke of the Churche* did time out of mind belong, Did about Twenty yeares synce [i.e. about the year 1586] grant the sayd Clerkshipp vnder his hand and seale to one *Thomas Bulleyne*† whoe enoyed the place during his life and died in November [*sic.* for October] was twelue moneth.” [i.e. a year ago last Oct. or Nov.]

“After the death of Bulleyne the former grant being sent vp to my Lo: Cooke‡ [Coke, Lord Chief Justice] by some of the Townesmen whoe then desired a newe grant thearof from his Lo[rds]hip, his Lo: afterwards granted the place vnder his hand and seale to John Pearson schoole-master there during his life in like sort as Sr Chre[r] Hatton had done.”

“My Lo: Cooke afterwards acquaynting the Lo: Bishop of Chester wth this grant the Lo: Bishop gaue his assent thearvnto vpon knowledge of the p'ties [party's] sufficiency for the place. And likewise

\* Original papers *penes me.*

† The Parish Registers record,—

“1586 Thomas Bullen & Elenor Tenche, dau. of John Tenche, dyer [were married] Jan. 17th.”

“1587 July 25. James son of Thomas Bullen, Clarke, and Ellen his wife.” [Bapt.]

“1606 Oct. 7. Thomas Bullen, Clearke.” [Buried.]

‡ Sir Edward Coke, Kt. had married for his second wife Lady Elizabeth Hatton, the grand-daughter of Queen Elizabeth's High Treasurer, Lord Burleigh, and widow of Sir William Hatton, *alias* Newport, Lord Chancellor Hatton's nephew and heir.

*John Bradwell* the Curate of the Church there vpon Chrms. day after, at the time of diuine service did assent to the grant and did then publiqly nominate the sayd Pearson to be Clarke according to the late Canons, who then tooke his place and enjoyed it twoe or three moneths together."

"Afterwards some of the Townsmen encouraged the rest to displace Pearson wch they violently did, and put one *Clowes* in his place whearvpon Pearson complained to the Lo: Bishop of Chester and other the Comission's there for causes Ecclesiasticall and by there [their] order was restored to the possession vntill he were evicted by due Corse of lawe."

"Afterwards during the Lo: Archbbp. [Archbishop] of Yorke visitacon. some of the Townsmen were petitioners to his grace on the behalfe of *Clowes*, not acquaynting his grace w<sup>th</sup> my Lo: Cooks grant to Pearson, the Lo: Bishops and Curats assent thearvnto, nor the order of the high Comission[er]s; whearvpon his grace sent some direccions. [directions] to the Curate that Clowes should enjoy the place. But his grace being since informed of the former p<sup>re</sup>cedings hath by his P<sup>re</sup>s. [letters] reserved the cause to the high Comissioners before whome it first depended. And now some of the Townsmen goe about to intitule the Kings matie [majesty] to the Clarkship in the right of the p<sup>ro</sup>sonage [parsonage] Albeit his highness hath made a lease thearof to others\* and that the Curate hath placed Pearson according to the Canons."

[II.]

*A Letter addressed to Toby Matthew, Archbishop of York, by Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, relating to the Clarkship of Nantwich, with particulars inclosed.*

"*Salm. in Chro.* My verye good Lo: I haue bene moved by my loving kynd ffriend Sr. Chr<sup>er</sup>. Hatton to comend unto your Grace the consyderation of the inclosed, and to intreate you that one Pearson thearin mentioned hath bene lawfullye hearetofore admitted to be Clarke of the parische Church of Namptwich maye still continue in that place vntill he shalbe by lawe evicted; or that your Grace wilbe pleased to remitt the cause by your letters to the Lo: Bishop of Chester and the rest of the Comissioners, before whom the same is alreadye depending, their to be ordered as in their Judgments shalbe found meet.

The gentleman I doe very well affect, and wilbe redye to assist him by all good meanes in any his honest and lawfull Causes. And I heartelye desyre your Grace, that for my sake the rather you will be pleased to satisfye his request in the primiss [premises] I will acknowledge your Graces kindnes thearin thankfully and requite you as your occasions shall require. And so with my hartye comendacons I Comit your Grace vnto the tuition of Almighty god. At Lambeth the x<sup>th</sup> of December 1608."

"Your Gr[ac]e verye loving ffriend

"and brother

R. Cant"[erbury].

*"A Copie of the breife inclosed in my lo: of Cant: his letter. The state of the Cause Concerning the Clearkship of Namptwiche."*

"1. That Sr. Xpofer. [Christopher] Hatton, Knight, late lo: Chancellor of England, havinge the Inherytance of a certayne libertye or franchises in the towne of Namptwich, in the Countye of Chester, Called the Countesse of Warwicke ffee, wherervnto the noiacon. [nomination] of the Clarke of the parische Church, and the tolle of the Corne markett there & amongst other things are incident, and did tyme out of mynd belonge. vpon the death of the former Clarke who was placed by those from whom he purchased the sayd ffranchises. The sayd lo: Chancellor did graunt the sayd Clarkshipp by patent vnder his hand and seale to one Thomas Ballen, who quyetye enjoyed the same during his life: and receaued the fees and profits thereof for Dyvers yeares together and vntill his death."

\* The allusion here is to the lease of the Easter Roll; which was afterwards purchased by Sir Ranulph Crewe on the 13th March, 1631.

2. That aboute a yere synce after the death of Bullen, the Inheritance of the sayd libertye belonging to Sr. Xpofer Hatton Knight who is nowe livinge, And Sr. Edward Cooke Knight, nowe lo: Cheefe Justice of the Comon plees having the present interest thereof The sayd Sr. Edward Cooke gaunted the sayd Clarkship to one John Pearson who had bene schoolemaister in the sayd Towne and had lived there these 14 or 15 yeres last past with good commendations both for his sufficiency and honest Cariadge.
3. That my lo: cheefe Justice his graunt being made knowne to the Reverend ffather in God the lo: Bishop of Chester that nowe is, And also to John Bradwall Curate of the sayd Church, the [they] did both giue their absolute assents and allowances, of the sayd Pearson to be Clearke, and the sayd Curate openly published and made knowne the same in the said Church at the tyme of diuine Service vpon Christmas daye last past.
4. That Pearson Therevpon entered into the place and enjoyed the same w<sup>th</sup> the consents and good lykinge of the better sorte of the sayd parishoners. But the sayd towne having no maiestrate or other ordinaire meanes of govermente, dyvers of the parishoners weare afterwards incited by one Thomas Maynwayringe fforycble to displace the sayd Pearson, and to place in his roome one Clowes a weauer, which the [they] did accordinglye aboute Maye last past, vpon pretence that he had more skill in singinge than Pearson had; have [ing] first p<sup>s</sup>waded the sayd Curate by threatinge him to abridge his stipent [stipend], which he had of the towne to revoke his former nomination of Pearson to be Clearke.
5. That the sayd Maynwayringe and other of his Complices being thervpon called before the Bishop of Chester and other his maiestyes Comissioners for causes Excecliaisticall within the said dyoces. The sayd Pearson was by order of the Comissioners installed in possession vntyll the Cause was finally heard and ordred. Whervpon the sayd Maynwayring and some others lately preferred a Petition to my lo: Grace of Yorke during his visitation. And hath there vpon obtayned his Grace his drection [i.e. his Grace's drection] to the Curate that Clowes shall quyetye enioye the place his Grace being not enforced of the former possession of the sayd Pearson, the assents of the sayde lo: Bishop, and Curate, nor of the righte and tytyle of the lord Cheefe Justice and Sr. Xpofer. Hatton, nor in what contemptuous manner the favorytts of the sayd Clowes have opposed them selves against the same, nor what vndecent and reprochfull speaches the [they] have used to disgrace the sayd tytyle which will in particulars be proved.” \*

## [III.]

The following document, though undated, possibly relates to the year 1629, when the next appointment of Clerk had to be made after the death of Thomas Clowes, by Sir Ranulph Crewe, in whose handwriting it is endorsed on the back as follows:—

*“Clarkship of Namptwiche: to this Clarkshipp my title is vndoubtedly good & I wyll mantayne itt.”*

“A clarkship of a parish may belonge to a seignory ffee or mannor, & the guift thereof may be in the Lord of that ffee or mannor for w<sup>ch</sup> I have Mr lloyd his opinion when he was Attorney generall vnder his hand, & this is amongst other thynges in a black boxe in one of the waynscott boxes in my evidence howse, wherein be writings co<sup>c</sup>cerning the Cowntes ffee. There is also their [there], a pattent fro. Syr. Chr. Hatton Lord of the Cowntes ffee to Bulleyn, & another to Pierson, w<sup>ch</sup> was opposed by the towne of Nampt wyche to the Archbbysshopp of York, when his grace was no way informed of the title one the other pd. [possessed]. besides the matter betw[<sup>i</sup>]xt Clowes & Pierson was ended by the arbitrement of Mr. Leversage, & Pierson had money to relinquish his title.

When Brook was chosen Clarke, Mr. Maysterson & Mr. Walthall went to Crewe to Mr. ffowleshurst & obtayned by theyr sute the Clarkshipp for Brook, this was tould me by ould Yardley a servant. so Mr. ffowleshurst tould me thus much when he lived. ould Syr Hue Chomley heavyng [having] the Cowntes ffee morgaged vnto him, dyd afterwards reconvey the same to Syr Chr. Hatton, & leyved a ffine of the ffee: & dyd graunt the Clarkshipp & belmanshipp to Syr Chr. Hatton, by p<sup>t</sup>icular names so

\* The Parish Registers record as follows:—

“1607 Thomas Clowes Clarke entereth.”  
 “1620 May 21. John Pearson Schoolemaister.” [Buried].  
 “1639 April 3. Thomas Clowes the parrishe Clarke.” [Buried].

The present Altar Table in the Church was the gift of this clerk.

as the ffine & deede make itt without question. Bulleyn enjoying itt dyvers yeares after the ffine.

Thus stands my title to the Clarkshipp: the ffine & deede be in the boxe where the writeinges of the Cowntes ffee be. So as I hould the disposition of the Clarkshipp to belonge clearely to me, & shalbe most unwilling to be att a controversy wth my kinsemen\* & frend there about itt: but I shalbe excused to mantayne my right yf itt be opposed, & that I shall not fayl to do."

1607. Oct. 22. On this date an Inquisition of Right of Way† was taken at Nantwich. A full translation of the original Latin record is here given, mainly on account of the local names of places and persons mentioned therein.

"Inquisition indented taken at Wich Malbank co. Chester, on 22 Oct. 1607, before Sir John Savage, Kt., Sheriff of Cheshire, by virtue of a certain writ of our lord the King, concerning a certain way, under the seal of the County Palatine of Chester, to the same Sheriff directed and to this Inquisition attached, upon the oaths of *William Dod*, *William Salmon*, *William Pratchett*, *John Scott*, *Thomas Smith*, *John Hollins*, *Hugh Brome*, *John Whylocke*, *Hugh Furnivall*, *William Shaw*, *Richard Shaw*, and *Robert Burke*, gentlemen, *Jurors*, good and lawful men of the County aforesaid, who, on their oaths, say that a certain reasonable high-way ought to be from Wich Malbank, in the aforesaid writ mentioned, as far as an Enclosure or parcell of land in *Edlaston*, in the said County, called *Evetts Croft*, in the said writ mentioned; by and through a certain land of the King commonly called *Surewbrige-lane*, in Wich-Malbank aforesaid; and by and through a certain River called the *Wever*; and by and through a certain other King's highway called *Badington lane*, in Badington, in the county aforesaid; and by and through a certain "assart"‡ called the "*Intack*," lying between the same King's highway and the land of *Robert Cholmondeley Esqr.*, and now in the tenure or occupation of Joan Baker, widow, in Badington aforesaid; and by and through the same lands, in the tenure of the said Joan Baker; and by and through certain other lands of the said Robt. Cholmondeley esq., called *Walkeley*, in Badington aforesaid, in the tenure or occupation of *Anthony Wright*, of Wich-Malbank, gent. or his assigns; and by and through a certain rivulet, called *Newbold brook* as far as the aforesaid enclosure called *Evetts croft*, and so from thence back to the town of *Wich-Malbank*; as well for the passage of *Roger Wright* gentleman, his tenants and servants, as for his beasts, carts and carriages &c. Which said reasonable way I, the Sheriff, by the verdict of the Jury &c. find to be of the breadth of 12 feet, and of the length of 20 perches [?] between the places aforesaid; and also I have caused to be set certain metes, bounds, and divisions faithfully marked out, and assigned to the same *Roger*, in execution of the aforesaid writ.

In testimony whereof to two parts of this Inquisition the Jurors have set their seals, the day and year aforesaid.

JOHN SAVAGE, Knight."

Mr. Partridge (*Hist. Nantwich*, p. 12) writing in 1774, says: "A public clocke called *St. Anne's*, which continued till a few years ago, was fixed up on a dwelling in the middle of this street [Welsh Row]; which, by a recent alteration in the buildings there, hath been taken away. This clock was probably erected at the expense of the worthy family of the Wilbrahams of Towns-end, the Bell being inscribed with their name." What became of the bell afterwards is not known; but its origin, and purpose, are fully explained in the following extract from the Wilb. MS. Journal.

\* Mr. Thomas Maynwarding; see Maynwarding Pedigree.

† The original is preserved at the Record Office.

‡ "*Assart*;" that is, land then or lately brought into cultivation.



"*Mem.* 17 May 1608. I bought of Henry Oldfield of Nottingham, Bellfounder,\* one Bell weighing foure score & two pound; & paid him for it by *Raph Jackson & Lawrence Steeven* the sum of iijli. vjs. viijd. [ $\mathcal{L}$  3 6s. 8d.]; ouer and besides ijs. vjd. [2s. 6d.] payd for the carriage of the said Bell from Nottingham to Congleton where I received it; wch Bell remaineth in the howse of the said Lawrence Steeven for the use of a clocke there, & remayneth still properly myne owne. Also I have given lead to make two Peazes [i.e. clock-weights] wch weigh about 40 pound & my will is y<sup>t</sup> the said Bell & peazes shall remaine to the freehold of the same howse as the inheritance thereof, & to be for the use of a clocke there & the benefit of neighbours. The charge for the rest of the clocke is to be performed & maintained by the well disposed neighbours of the same street.

[signed] RICHARD WILBRAHAM."

Richard Wilbraham also states (*ibidem*)—

"That the Great Bell of this town of N. being new Cast the 17th day of Nov. in the year of our Lord 1608, and being of the weight of 2300 lbs. [i.e. 20 cwt. 60 lbs.], was cast at *Congleton* by *George Lee*; the Churchwardens for that yeare being *Edw<sup>d</sup>. Massey & John Thrush*, whose names were set upon the Bell & this verse & these letters.

*Hæc campana sacra fiat trinitate beata.*

C
R G
G
T C

In the following year the *fourth bell*† was re-cast, probably at the same foundry; and extensive repairs in the tower of the Church were carried out, as mentioned in the Parish Register.

"In the tow former yeares, namely in anno 1608 & in anno 1609 the Great Bell was new cast: and the fourth bell: Also the timber worke of the roufe of the steeple, wethercock poole, and the tow floures [two floors] in the steeple were new made."

JOHN THRUSH, gent. }  
EDWARD MASSEY, gent. } beinge churchwardens.

In 1611 the Grammar School, in the Churchyard, was enlarged by Randle Kent, the Master, at his own cost.‡

Thomas Wilbraham, of Townsend, Richard Mynshull, mercer, and the Registrar of Nantwich, all mention the occurrence of an earthquake; the account in the Register, being the most characteristic, is here given:—

"This same yeare on the 18 day of March 1612[-13] chanced a terrible earthquake between 7 and 8 of the clocke in the forenoone wch came with a most fearfull noyse and horrible shakeinge, the space of 3 minutes, wch is noe doubt a sure signe that the cominge of Christ is at hand, & even at the Dores."

The first Almshouses, built at Welsh Row Head, were founded, in 1613, by *Sir Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Kt.*, second son of Richard Wilbraham of Townsend, who has been frequently mentioned in the previous pages.

\* Henry Oldfield, bell-founder, is believed to have been a native of Cheshire; he married for his first wife, Mary, daughter of Richard Spencer, of Congleton, Gent. (See *Earwaker's Local Gleanings Magazine*, pp. 109 and 197-8).

† "The lay for the reparacon of the bell frames in Namptwch ano. 1607, 1608, was 16 myzes, taxed after viijs. y<sup>e</sup> pound." (Bishop Bridgeman's Accounts in MS.)

‡ See Account of the Grammar School, *postea*.

While these sheets were passing through the press, the long lost Parliamentary Roll for 1614, alluded to on page 36 *note*, was also being printed in the Palatine Note Book, vol. iii. (June, 1883), from a copy recently discovered in the Library of the Duke of Manchester at Kimbolton. It now appears that Ranulphe Crewe was *not* elected M.P. for his *native county* in the Parliament that met on the 5th of April, 1614, as stated by Foss, (*Lives of the Judges*), and other biographers; but that he was returned as one of the members for *Saltash*, in Cornwall. That Parliament was hastily dissolved on the 7th of June in the same year; and Ranulphe Crewe was Knighted on the following day.

A memorandum in the Parish Register states:—

"This yeare last past, 1615, the church floore and all the Iles theirof weare raised with sand a full half yarde at the least.\* The walles of the Church new whited and the sentences of Scripture new written theiropon."

"RICHARD GOULDSMITH	}	Churchwardens."
"RICHARD HARWAR		

The following list of shocking deaths is taken from the Burial Register:—

- "1607 Nov. 19 Ellen, dau. of John Dutton drowned in Weever."
- "1609 Dec. 22 Ann Steven, widow, drowned in Weever."
- "1610 Dec. 26 Homfrey Sare, dyed of a fall."
- "1611 Nov. 13 Willm. Turner, servant to Will. Yonge, sadler, poysoned himself."
- "1612 July 7. Robert Ince slayn by a creuell surgeon with a knife."
- "1612 Aug. 1. George, Ostler of the Bell, drowned in the Weever."
- "1613 June 9. William Dudley, was slayne."
- "1613 Nov. 2. Jane, dau. of Edward Diggens, dyed by fyer."
- "1613-14 Jan. 24. Richard Ffisher, slain with a miln hook."
- "1613 Feb. 5. Edmund Downes slayne with a pice at Badeley."
- "1614 Aug. 7. John, son of William Moore, slayne by a fall."
- "1616 July 28. Ffrancis Gresty, Carpenter, was slayn by his man."
- "1618 May 9. William Crewe of Burland was slaine the 7th of Maye by Thomas Walthall, sadler, of this towne, and was buried at Aeton the 9th."
- "1618 Aug. 16. Thomas Hunt by the falling of a house was slaine at a rearinge and buried."
- "1618 Oct. 11. Thomas Sargeant was slaine at Avdglem [Audlem] by strving, the Kings prosses."†
- "1618 Oct. 13. Ellin daughter of William Whitworth was drowned and buried."
- "1618-19 Feb. 13. Thomas sone of Robert Bookeley, Taylor, was slaine by Anthony Wright the 11th of februarie and was buried the 13th."
- "1618-19 Feb. 19. Ann, wife of John Holford, which did strangle herself."
- "1619 Dec. 18. Richard, son of Richard Lytler, being drowned in the garden in the well."
- "1620-1 March 3. Henry Brammall was slaine with the fall of a gayt,"
- "1622 May 27. John sonne of James Blythe was slaine the 6th Aprill by Willm. Savage & buried the 27th May."
- "1622-3 March 10. Raphé sonne of Edward Breame, being drowned."
- "1623 June 6. George Huxley found in Baderton wood dead, & buried the 6th."
- "1624 April 7. William son of Elizabeth Bookeley, stroke with an axe."
- "1624 June 15. John Goldsmith bathing in the Weever the 13th day was drowned."
- "1624-5 Jan. 18. Henry Morrey was slaine by the falling of a tree into a saw-pit."

It is remarkable that the Parish Clerk has left no memorandum of the Royal visit in 1617. According to the Whitegate Register, "the 21st day of Auguste, being Thursdays, King James came to Vale Royall and there kept his court untill Mondaye after." Here,

\* See List of Charities.

† This is the correct reading but the meaning is obscure.

says William Webb, (*Itinerary of Eddisbury Hundred*) "he solaced himself and took pleasing contentment in his disports in the forest;" and, having visited Chester on Saturday, Aug. 23rd, and Knighted the forester of Delamere, Sir John Done, who lived "in a delicate house on the highest hill;" on the following Monday, the King left Vale Royal for Nantwich. Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., in his MS. Journal, says:—

"*Mem.*: That upon the 25th of August 1617 King James at his returne forth of Scotland came to this Towne of Namptwich, and lay one night at my howse: at the same tyme there were with him the Duke of Lenox L<sup>d</sup>. Steward of the Kings Household, the Duke of Buckingham master of the horse, the Earle of Pembroke L<sup>d</sup>. Chamberlain of the K. household, and diuers other Lords and Knights. Upon the 26th day he went to the Church, where Doctor Dod preached before him, who shortly after was sworne his Chaplaine. At his returne from Church he went to see the Bryne pitt, and aft<sup>r</sup> diner went to Bromley, to my L<sup>d</sup>. Gerards howse." [in Staffordshire].

The account of this visit, by Mr. Webb,\* (who states that the King visited the Brine-pit on the 25th instead of the 26th day) is as follows:—"His majesty was likewise pleased to appoint a sermon to be preached before him in the church, and of his princely graciousness to stay while an oration† was pronounced by one of the scholars of the [Grammar] school; which sermon was then performed by a divine of our own country [i.e. of Cheshire] both by birth and dwelling, *Mr. Thomas Dodd*,‡ archdeacon of Richmond, and to which his majesty gave so great attention, and with the same was so affected, as it pleased his highness to grace the preacher with his princely and free election of him into the number of one of his chaplains in ordinary; which, for the honour of our country, and for an addition to the worth of this our eloquent and sweet preacher, I thought fit here to record." . . . "It pleased him [the King] to walk so far as to the brine-seth, and with his eye to behold the manner of the well, and to observe the labours of the briners (so they call the drawers of the brine), whose work it is to fetch it up in leather buckets fastened to ropes, and empty it into the troughs, which troughs convey it into the wich-houses: at which work those briners spend the coldest day in frost and snow, without any cloathing more than a shirt, with great chearfulness. And after his Majestys gracious enquiry among the poor drawers, of many things touching the nature of the same brine, and how they proceeded to convert it into salt, most princely rewarding them with his own hand, his majesty returned to the court;" [at Townsend house, in Welsh Row]. "In the afternoon of the same day, after dinner, having knighted Sir Hugh Wrottesley, King James proceeded on his way to Gerards Bromley [in Staffordshire] and at his taking leave, on the confines of Cheshire, of John Davenport of Davenport, the high sheriff, who had attended his majesty through the county, the King bestowed upon him the degree of knighthood and graced him with a pleasant princely farewell,—*You shall carry me this token*

\* Webb's "*Itinerary of Nantwich Hundred*," in King's "*Vale Royal*."

† The oration has not been preserved. It would probably be written for the occasion by the then aged master *Randle Kent*; and no doubt would be an elaborate eulogium on the Monarch, perhaps as flattering as the one delivered by Master *Thos. Read*, in Latin, on 3rd Sept. 1617, when the King visited Warwick. (See *Cooke's Guide to Warwickshire*, p. 175-180, Fourth Edition.)

‡ *Thomas Dodd D.D.* was of the family of the Dods of Shocklach, near Malpas; being nephew of John Dod, commonly called the *Decalogist*. He was baptized at Shocklach, 4th Dec. 1576. At the time of the King's visit to Cheshire, he was Rector of Astbury and prebend of Chester. In addition to these preferments and the royal chaplaincy, he subsequently held the Lower Mediety of the Rectory of Malpas (1623), the Archdeaconry of Richmond (c. 1625), and the Deanery of Ripon (c. 1634); and was buried at Malpas, 10th Feb. 1647-8.

to your wife,'—graciously so meant by his Majesty, but the gentlewoman\* having indeed before that attained to a better ladyship, being gone to her Lord and Saviour in Heaven."

Tradition says that the King was expected to have stayed at the then newly erected Dorfold Hall; the present drawing room, and adjoining chamber, still called King James' Room, having been specially prepared for his Majesty's visit. No doubt the Church, which had been recently "beautified;" the comparatively new built town, and the Wilbraham Mansion, would present a very gay appearance before the illustrious visitors; and it is almost a wonder that Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., was not included amongst the 120 knights dubbed by the King on that very costly journey.

In the following year general excitement in the country was caused by the appearance of a comet. According to the superstition of those times—

"Comets we see by night, whose shagg'd portents  
Foretell the comming of some dire events."§

such as pestilence, famine, war, or change of Kingdom; and thus, with dread forebodings, were penned the following lines in the Burial Register:—

"This year last past, 1618, in the month of Novembre many times their appeared eastward a  
Blazing Starr, betokenninge godds judgements towards us for Sine. the lorde in mercye be mercifull  
unto us."

In the early part of 1623 there was great scarcity of corn all over England, through the bad harvests of two previous years. At such times farmers often became *ingrossers* (i.e. buyers up of growing corn) and *regrators* (i.e. buyers up of corn in the market) for the purpose of stowing it away. By a proclamation of the King for preventing the dearth of grain, Justices of the Peace were required to furnish certificates of the quantities of corn in their hundreds: and oblige persons to take their corn to the market town; to attend the markets themselves and see the poor supplied first, for two hours, at a lower price; to suppress all unnecessary ale-houses, and to limit the sale of barley for making malt. Thus on or about 31st March, 1623, the Justices of Nantwich Hundred reported to Sir Thos. Smith, High Sheriff of the County, that they "*find very little surplus of corn; but have ordered what there is to be brought weekly to market, and attended to other points of instruction.*"†

The year 1625 must have been a plentiful year, if the following prices of provisions in the neighbourhood are correct:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.				
A wether sheep	...	...	13	4	Malt per bushel	...	...	4	0
A flich of bacon	...	...	8	0	Oatmeal per peck	...	...	1	0
A sucking pig	...	...	1	0	Salt per barrow	...	...	1	8
A calf's head	...	...	0	8	Wheat per measure	...	...	3	8
A Turkey	...	...	1	4	Rye	...	...	2	8
A Goose	...	...	1	1	Barley	...	...	2	6
A couple of Ducks	...	...	0	7	Oats	...	...	2	0
Do. chickens	...	...	0	6	Pease	...	...	2	8
Do. rabbits	...	...	0	10	A pound of butter	...	...	0	3
A Neats tongue	...	...	0	6	Ale per quart	...	...	0	2

\* This lady was Elizabeth, dau. of Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., Recorder of London, and Attorney of the Court of Wards. She had been buried at Swettenham four years before, on 8th Aug. 1613. Sir John Davenport Kt., the widower, died in 1625, and was buried at Swettenham, aged 76.

† Calendar State Papers, Dom. Series, Jas. I vol. cxi.

‡ See Hinchliffe's "Barthomley," p. 351.

§ Robt. Herrick's "Farewell to Sach."

Towards the end of King James' reign, (i.e. about 1622 or 1623), Mr. William Webb thus quaintly describes the town in his "ITINERARY,"—(King's *Vale Royal*).

"Whatsoever hath been the causes or howsoever the inhabitants there have had their invancement, sure I am, there can hardly be found a town meerly uplandish, as we term it, neither traded into by waters, nor enriched by any special trades or manufactures, that hath such a knot of wealthy and landed men in so small a compass, there being within the same thirty or more, that are usually assessed in the King's majestys subsidies to pay for lands; and the greatest part of them gentlemen that pay with none of the meanest ranks."

"The buildings within the same town are very fair and neat, and every street adorned with some special mansions of gentlemen of good worth; the middle and principal parts of the town being all new buildings." &c. . . . .

"It may be not amiss . . . . to note one lustre of that town; that into the five entrances into the same, which way soever you come, your eye is entertained with a fair gentlemanly house at the end or entry of the first street every way; as, namely, that which is called the Welsh Row, with that of *Mr. Wilbrahams*; that of Beam Street, where they hold yet weekly great markets of cattle, with a fine house of the *Maincarings*, and now belonging to the right worshipful and worthy ingenious knight *Sir Dudley Norton*, secretary to his majesty's council in Ireland;\* that of the Hospital Street, with a fair timber-house of *Mr. Randol Church*, a gentleman of singular integrity; that of the Pillory Street, with a very ancient house of the worshiptul race of the *Mastersons*; and the Barkers-street or Mills-street with a very fine brick house of *Mr. Wrights*; to say nothing of a great number of very fair houses and neat buildings dispersed here and there throughout the middle part of the town."

The subsequent history of these five principal houses is, briefly, as follows:—

TOWNSEND HOUSE continued to be the residence of the Wilbraham family for two centuries, that is, from 1580 till 1780. In 1810 Messrs. Lysons† described the house as being in a state of dilapidation, and Dr. Ormerod, judging from the small portion standing in 1819, says,‡ "It appears from these remains to have been a lofty and spacious edifice of brick, with large bay windows, surrounded with numerous outbuildings of timber and plaister; and gardens with high walls of brick, ornamented with stone carvings of armorial bearings, and grotesque devices." The house and its extensive garden adjoining were sold by George Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere. In and previous to the year 1824 the house had been reduced and converted into a brewery, and in that year was occupied by Messrs. George Brooke, and Quain, Brewers; and after having been so used for many years, it was at length, about the year 1855, purchased by a firm of Quakers, Messrs. George Harlock & Co., who turned it into a clothing factory and built a new house, still the residence of the head of that firm.

The *Garden* belonging thereto passed through several hands,—Mr. Henry Tomlinson (lawyer), Mr. T. W. Kirkbride (brewer), and John Eyton, Esq. (banker), who in 1850 sold it to the County; and ten years after a handsome structure was raised thereon for the accommodation of the Magistrates' offices connected with the Police Establishment, and for the detention of offenders previous to committal to prison. A stone gateway, with the original ornaments (carved lionesses) which formerly stood in this garden, now adorns the

\* Sir Dudley Norton was sent to Ireland as Secretary in May, 1615.

† Lysons' "Cheshire," p. 710.

‡ Dr. Ormerod's *Hist. of Cheshire*, Vol. III, p. 441 New Edit. No drawing or engraving of this house is known to exist.

grounds of Dorfold Hall, having been purchased many years ago by Wilbraham S. Tollemache, Esq., who has since added thereto busts of King James and his Consort.

The BEAM STREET-END MANSION, which Sir Dudley Norton had held *jure uxoris* since his marriage, in 1591, with Margaret, dau. of Thomas Maisterson, and widow of Roger Mainwaring, passed after the death of "Lady Margaret Norton" in 1644 to the family of Dodd of Edge,\* of whom it was purchased by Robert Wright, who was possessor of it in 1666. (*Harl. MSS.* 2010). It afterwards, in 1677, became the *House of Correction*; and was ultimately purchased by John, first Lord Crewe, who, in 1767, pulled it down and built the present *Almshouses* on the site.

The HOSPITAL STREET-END MANSION was erected in 1577 by Richard Church, father of Randol Church, mentioned by Mr. Webb. It is in an excellent state of preservation, and belongs to A. W. Radford-Norcup, Esq., of Betton Hall, near Tunstall, Salop, who is the present representative of the Church family. Originally it was moated. A portion of the moat is still traceable while another part has become a culvert drain forming part of the parish boundary. It has carved work and wainscotting; and intersecting triangles form the ornament of every panel in one of the rooms. The window over the porch seems to be the only original one; but, below two other windows, are still to be seen the following inscriptions in old English characters:—

(1) "**Rycharde Churche and Margerye Churche, his wyfe, Mai iiii.**"

"**Thomas clease made this worke anno dni. mcccclxxvii.  
in the xviii yere of the reane of our noble queene elizabeth.**"

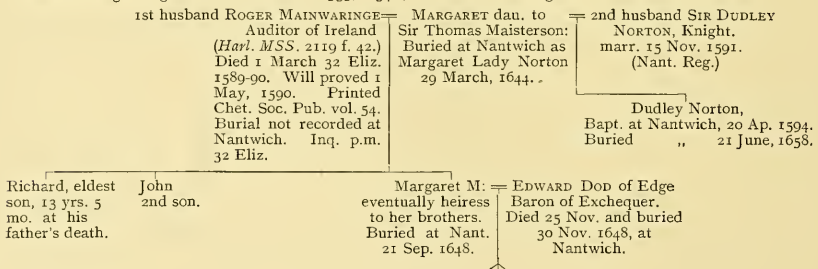
(2) "**The roote of Wysedom is to Feare God, & the branch thereof shall  
too endure.**"

Another inscription inside an old cupboard reads thus:—

"**BLESSED ART THOV THAT FEARES AND WALKEST IN HIS WAYES  
FOR THOV SHALTE EATE AND HAPPIE ARTE.**"

The last of the Church family to reside at this "*Mansion*," was *Mr. Sabboth Church*, who lived there in 1691, according to a Rate Book of that date. He was elected a Wright's Trustee in 1702; and was buried at Nantwich 3rd May, 1717. (Par. Reg.) In 1792, Mr. John Latham occupied this house; and for many years in the early part of this

\* The following Pedigree from *Harl. MSS.* 1535, f. 340; and the Parish Registers illustrates this descent.



century it was tenanted by Mr. John Berks, tanner; who was succeeded by Mr. James Latham. From 1848 to 1858 it was the residence T. W. Jones, Esq., attorney-at-law; and for ten years after, it was untenanted; and a neighbouring cowkeeper was allowed to use the parlour as a granary and storehouse for hay, &c. In 1869 it became a ladies' boarding school (Mrs. Rhodes'), and as such continues to the present time.

The *PILLORY STREET-END MANSION*, although "a very ancient house" in 1622, remained until the end of last century. (Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 710). Thomas Maisterson, Esq., who was buried in Nantwich Chancel on the 9th March, 1768, appears to have been the last of that ancient family to reside there. It was purchased by Ralph Cappur, Cheesefactor. His son George Cappur, Cheesefactor, took it down and built on the same site the present house, which descended to his son, George Cappur, also a Cheesefactor, who, about the year 1850, sold it to John Withinshaw, Esq., of this town, the present residential owner.

The "very fine brick house of Mr. Wright's" in 1622, and the brick and stone house, now called "*The Elms*," in Mill Street, with its lofty and spacious wainscotted rooms, fine staircase, &c., if not identical, occupy the same site. This property appears to have been renovated, and perhaps largely rebuilt in the latter part of last century. Mr. Samuel Acton, of whom more will be said in other parts of this work, lived here in 1691;\* and for many years in the following century it was the residence of William Penlington, Esq., M.D., who belonged to a respectable family of that name in Sandbach parish. William Penlington married Joan, one of the co-heiresses of Richard Lowndes, Esq., of Hassall. Their burials are thus recorded:—

"1769 Sept. 8. Joan, wife of William Penlington Gent. Nantwich, buried at Sandbach." (Sandbach and Nantwich Registers).

"1782 Jan. 22. William Penlington Esq. of Rodé, Buried." (Sandbach Register).

The Penlington family appear to have been connected with this neighbourhood many years earlier, according to the following entries in the Burial Register at Acton.

"1714 June 4. George Penlington de Sandbach."

"1721-2 March 24. Janna Penlington de Sandbach, widow."

The house in Mill Street was the residence of Samuel Hodgson, Esq., wine merchant, who died 16th Sept. 1807;‡ and for many years, of the Misses Bennion; it then became the District Bank; and, after having been unoccupied for several years, was purchased for a residence by Mr. Samuel Hobson, shoe manufacturer, of this town.

Mr. Webb's description of the town in 1622 concludes as follows:—

"Here are also fair and profitable mills for the service and use of the town, which are the inheritance of sir Richard Egerton, Knight. . . . ."

"A strong timber bridge over the stream of the Weever is maintained by the town, which requires no little care and cost, by reason of the monstrous carriages of the wood in carts which is brought thither for the boiling of their salt. I might speak of some charitable gifts that have been by well disposed persons given or bequeathed to charitable uses, whereof to make mention, I fear it would be rather to question their neglect, than to commend the inhabitants that perform not, for ought I know, the care that should be taken in that behalf; only the *School* which was founded there by Mr. John Thrush, and Mr. Thomas Thrush, of London, wool-packers, is well and sufficiently upheld and maintained, to the

\* Rate Book *penes* G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

‡ See Monument in Lady Chapel.

furtherance of teaching the children of the poor and others; and an ancient and grave school-master of very near fifty years continuance, *Mr. Randal Kent*, yet teacher there,\* with a learned assistant, a master of arts of Queens college in Oxon., whose name is *Mr. Shenton*, of laudable pains and industry.

To which I must not omit to add the late charitable erection of an alms-house for six poor aged men, which sir Roger Wilbraham, Knight, master of the requests to his majesty (King James) at the town's end, there new built for the said six persons, to be chosen out of Nantwich and of Acton parish: allowing them each one, an handsome lodging, a little garden, and five merks [ $\pounds 3$  6s. 8d.] per annum towards their relief in the latter end of their old age."

1626. Party spirit ran high in January 1626 during the exciting election for County members to serve in the second Parliament of Charles I; which, like its predecessor, was resolved on diminishing the King's prerogative in the matter of obtaining supplies. The Wilb. MS. Journal records:—

"*Mem.* That the 30 Jan. 1625[-6] there was much syding betwixt the Gentlemen of the shire about elect[ing] Knights of the Parl.; Sr Ri: Gr: [Sir Richard Grosvenor, of Eaton, Kt. and Bart.] and Mr. Dani: [Peter Danyell, of Over Tabley, Esq.] were chose."

In the same week, on the 26th Jan. 1625[-6], Sir Ranulphe Crewe, Kt., became Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench; from which high office he was deprived on the 9th Nov. 1626. (See page 37).

Between the years 1626 and 1630 important alterations and repairs to the Church were carried out, according to the following memoranda in the Burial Register:—

"*Memd.* That in December last [1626] the grate orrell [gallery] over the great church doore was reared and the third day of November 1627 the same was fynished.† *Thomas Malbon* gent. & *Richard Harwar*, Apothecary, Church Wardens both those yeares."

"1629. This yeare there was a bane‡ laid throughout the whole parishe after the rate of a noble [6s. 8d.] the pound for the repacon. [repairing] of the churche, wherewth was very much good worke done aboute the saide churche and chauncell oles [aisles] namely: in the lead ou' [over] both church & chauncell, in crampinge [carving] of most pte. [part] of the great pynnacles of the steeple, and ou' [over] the church & chauncell: and lykewise in the crampinge of the bosse stones in the Arches ou' [over] the North Ile: and in glassinge of the wyndowes about the churche and chauncell, and in diuers other necessarie workes as may att large appeare by the churchwardens accompts for this yeare."§

"1630. *Memd.* That theise are to testifie unto all succeeding Churchwardens and all other persons whomsoever, That wee *Edward Church* & *Thomas Walthall*, gents. Churchwardens of the parishe of Nantwyche for this past yeare Did allow and graunt unto *Matthew Mainwaringe* the elder, of the same Towne, gent., full libertie and lycence to erect and sett upp one Pewe or little orrell on his face or front-syde of the Archpillor (upon the south syde of the churche) whereon upon the back syde the clocke now standeth, wth a paire of stayres upon the south syde thereof to goo into the same pewe. Upon condicon. [condition] whereas y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>s</sup> an obscure and empte place. That the said Mathew

\* This statement approximately fixes the date of the "*Itinerary*," for Mr. Kent died in 1623-4; his burial is recorded thus:—"1623 Jan. 20. *Mr. Randle Kent*, an ancient schoolemaister." (Reg.)

† On the panels of this gallery were painted fifteen shields of Arms properly blazoned; namely, those of the seven ancient Earls of Chester, and the eight Norman Barons of Hugh Lupus. The gallery was removed at the "restoration" of the Church in 1855; and "*Four panels with Coats of Arms from the front gallery of Nantwich Church*," were sold, together with other lots of antique oak, for  $\pounds 15$  ros., on the 27th April, 1880, at a sale of the goods of Mr. John Jones, of Alkington, near Whitchurch, Salop.

‡ *Bane*; i.e. *bann*, or public proclamation, by which this parish rate was commanded.

§ No Churchwardens' Accounts are now to be found.



Mainwaring (wanting a convenient place to sit in) should at and upon his owne pp. [proper] coste and charges erect and build the said pewe and stayres in such sorte and forme, as the same shall and may beautifie and bee an ornament to the saide church. And suitable to the other pewe or orrell sett upp on the other syde by the saide churchwardens at their owne charges. Now whereas the said Mathew Mainwaringe hath accordingle to the greate lykinge of all the inhabitants of the said towne and the said churchwardens at his onely great and extraordinarie cost and charge erected and sett upp the said pewe or orrell with the stayres thereof, and thereby very much adorned and Beautified the said church, and fully performed and accomplished the condicon. afore expressed. Wee therefore, the said Churchwardens by the full assent consent and approbacon. of the gentlemen and other the inhabitants of the said Towne Have and doe give graunt assigne and confirme the said pewe or orrell with the stayres thereof unto the said Mathew Mainwaring & his heires and to their onely use for ever.\*

In witness whereof wee the said C.W. &c.\*

The following names of property owners in Nantwich occur in the Subsidy Roll for Nantwich Hundred that was collected on the 6th May, 3 Chas. I. [1627];† namely:—

## NAMPTWICH.

DUDLEUS NORTON miles [Knight] in terr. [in lands]	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
JOHES. MAINWARINGE gen. in terr.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
THOMAS WILBRAHAM ar. [esq.] in terr.	...	...	iiij <sup>li</sup> .	...	xvj <sup>s</sup> .
THOMAS MAISTERSON ar. in terr.	...	...	iiij <sup>li</sup> .	...	xij <sup>s</sup> .
HUGO HASSALL ar. in terr.	...	...	xl <sup>s</sup> .	...	viiij <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. CLUTTON gen. in terr.	...	...	xl <sup>s</sup> .	...	viiij <sup>s</sup> .
JOHES. MINSHALL gen. in terr.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
ROGERUS WRIGHTE gen. in terr.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. CHURCH gen. in terr.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
EDRUS. CHURCH gen. in ter.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. WHICKSTEAD gen. in ter.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
MARIA BROWNE vid. in terr.	...	...	xxx <sup>s</sup> .	...	vj <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. MINSHALL gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
THOMAS MALBON gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
THOMAS MAINWARINGE gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
MATHEW MAINWARINGE gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
EDRUS. HEYES gen. in ter.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
RANUS. MINSHALL gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
WILMUS. WETTENHALL gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
WILMUS. MAINWARINGE gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
KATHERINE WRIGHTE vid. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
THOMAS CLAYTON gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. WILKES in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
LEONARD SPENCER gen. in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
RICUS. GOULDSMITH in terr.	...	...	xx <sup>s</sup> .	...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .

\* These two curious pews, with panelled backs, that were sometimes said to resemble four-post beds, were last tenanted by the late Michael Bott Esq. (the Churchwardens' Pew of 1630) and the late Dr. Brady (Mr. Manwaring's Pew in 1630, on the south side of the tower arch). Some carvings from Mr. Bott's Pew were bought at Mr. Jones' sale, beforementioned, for £3 17s. 6d.

† This list of names is from a contemporary copy of the Subsidy Roll in the possession of J. P. Earwaker Esq. F.S.A.

THOMAS BURROUGHES in terr. ... ..	xx <sup>s</sup> ...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
WILMUS. LEA in terr. ... ..	xx <sup>s</sup> ...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
ROBTUS. BROMHALL in terr. ... ..	xx <sup>s</sup> ...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
JACOBUS BULLEN in terr. ... ..	xx <sup>s</sup> ...	iiij <sup>s</sup> .
JOHES. WINSEY in bonis [in goods] ... ..	iiij <sup>li</sup> ...	viijs.
RICUS. ARCOLD in bonis ... ..	iiij <sup>li</sup> ...	viijs.
THOMAS ARCOLD in bonis ... ..	iiij <sup>li</sup> ...	viijs.
WILMUS. JUDSON in bonis ... ..	iiij <sup>li</sup> ...	viijs.
JOHES. STOCKTON recusant [t] [a Roman Catholic] ... ..	o ...	viijd.

In Richard Mynshull's Accounts occurs the following notice of a frolicsome wind:—"That the iv of Aprill 1627 beinge Tuesday there was a strainge whirlwynde that tooke up linan cloeths that lay upon the hedges one [on] the back of pepper streete, and caried up in the aire full 10 score off upon aple trees and plum trees one [on] the back of the beame streete;" and Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., in his Journal, states there was "a violent wind upon Tuesday 4 Nov. 1628."

The Registers contain the following memoranda:—

"*Mem.* That this past yeare, 1628, there were two great fasts comanded to be kept by the King Char: proclamacon. solemnly and generally throughout this kingdome, with fastings and prayers according to the same proclamacons. The first of them was kept upon the 21st day of April last aforewritten [1627]; and the later upon the 20th day of this instant March." [1627-8].

"1629 June: *Mem<sup>d</sup>.* That this yeare upon Wensday att night being the 10th of this month there happened an exceeding great frost wch did great earm [harm] to frute and come especially to rye in lowe valleys and playne grounde and destroyed fearme [?] in diurs [divers] places."

"*Mem<sup>d</sup>.* That upon Thursday being the 29th of October in this yeare [1629], about 12 of the clocke in the night their happened a great and sodden fire in the house of one *Thomas Jackson*\* in Welche Row, beginninge in a chamber ou' [over] *Mr. Wettenhall's* gates and lastinge for the space of almost two howers consuminge the roofes of three bayes of buildings and more. How the fyre began it is uncertaine, but thought to be through the carelesness and neglegence of some wretchles p'sone. [person] dwellinge and inhabitinge in the saide house of the said Thomas Jackson by a candle: wch fyre although it were very furious and raginge yett by the providence of allmightie god and very many ready and willinge people wch despatlie [desperately] venturrd for the quenchinge thereof (blessed bee god) the same was staydd without further losse."

Mr. Wettenhall's house, now called "*White Hall*," appears to have been approached from the Welsh Row by the *gateway* under one of the chambers of Thomas Jackson's house, where the fire began. The front of the house, facing the south, would overlook Ridley Field, which was formerly part of the Wettenhall lands in this town.

An entry in the Burial Register states:—

1629 Dec. 7: John Cartwright anould man drowned in the channel [Welsh Row] between the Wich Bridge and Lawrence Wilkes house."

In the year 1630 Margaret Slade, widow of John Slade, of Poole, gent., left a charity to sixty poor householders in Nantwich, which has been annually distributed ever since.

\* This *Thomas Jackson* occurs again in the Register as a "*fur-dresser*," and most likely was both tenant and workman of Mr. Gabriell Wettenhall, who had a tannery in the town.

"1631. This yeare the 30th of July being Saturday was terrible Thunder & lightning, whereby much hurt was done in many places. In Warton a windmill was torne in pieces. On Houghton Mosse 23 sheep were killed with the thunderbolt, and in many other places much hurt was done. With this kind of thunder, came a strange kind of Hail, & namely in Nantwich where the like hath not been seen. This yeare the plague was dangerouslie dispersed in many parts of the kingdom, as in London, Yorke, Yorkshire, Lancashire, & especially in Preston, where it raged so that the town was almost depopulated, and eern rotted upon the ground, for want of reapers: It was also in Shrewsbury, Wrexham & many other parts of Wales, but Cheshire was graciously preserved, where were many public fasts kept, for the turning away of Gods hand.\*"

The following Proclamation of Robt. Viscount Cholmondeley, from an original paper (*pencs me*) indicates what precautions were taken to prevent, if possible, the extension of the plague again to Nantwich.

"Whereas accordinge to aunyente vse and custome a faire for the towne of Wich Malbanke hath there bin holden and kepte vpon the feaste daye of Ste. Bartholomewe the Apostle yerelie, and sythence [since] yt hath pleased God at this p'nte. [present] to visite wth the fearefull & contagious disease of the plange diu<sup>rs</sup> p'ts. & pls. in the neighboringe Shires Countyes & townes adioynnge to this Countie of Chester out of the wch plac<sup>s</sup>. dyu<sup>s</sup>. [divers] chapmen tradesmen artificas<sup>s</sup> drou<sup>s</sup>. [drovers] pedlers and others have vsuallie resorted to the said faire. And for asmuch as y<sup>t</sup> is alsoe feared that some pts. in this Countie of Chester is alreadye infected wth the said disease, And to th'ende that all meanes maye be vsed to p'vente the dang<sup>r</sup> of infection from the said towne of Wiche Malbanke and the townes & plac<sup>s</sup> adiacente wch the greate concourse of people to the said faire maye be likelie to endang<sup>r</sup>, It is therefore thot [thought] fit by the right Honble Robte. Viscounte Cholmondeley, Baron of the said towne of Wiche Malbanke & Lorde of the said faire, In his Mats [Majesty's] name to Commande appoynte & give notice to all man. [manner] of p'sons. florrens. [foreigners] strang<sup>s</sup> and others that lye in anye remote shires Counties or townes, or in or neere to any place infected that they and ev'y [every] of them abstaine & forbear to come vnto the said towne and faire for the space of fyve dayes, to wytt the faire daye and foure dayes nexte after. And that noe clothier, drap<sup>r</sup>, vphoulster, Brazier, pewterer, pedler, or other chapman or chapmen whatsoeu' doe either in p'son. resorte or to sende or conveye any man. [manner] of wares or merchandizē to the said faire from any place or plac<sup>s</sup> before p'hibited, But onelic suche as the Warders & Watchers for the said dayes shall accordinge to their charge & vpon their voluntary oathes, thinke fitt to receyve into the said towne. And that this maye be a sufficiente warnyng to all man. [manner] of p'sons. to obs'v. this p'hibicon. vpon payne & penaltye that maye insue thereon."

"Dated at Chomeley this xiii<sup>th</sup> daye of Auguste in the seyventh yere of his Mats<sup>s</sup> reigne of Englande Scotlande ffrnce & Irelande 1631.

"God save the Kinge and the Lorde Viscounte cholmeley"

"*The man.* [manner] of the p'clamacon. Jhn. Offley deputye Stewarde, Willm. Lea Baylyfe to the sd. I.o. [lord]; Randle Croxton another baylyf to the sd. lo.; Tho: venables baylyf of the Corte [i.e. Court Leet] and dyu<sup>s</sup> other<sup>s</sup> the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 1631, being xi dayes before the faire, came into the open m'kett [market] when y<sup>t</sup> was at the highest. Venables made a solemne "*eyes, eyes;*" sure on against [it] was done, iohn offley did read the p'clamacon. & venables p'nounced y<sup>t</sup> with an audyble & publique voyce; then they walked all together to the cage<sup>†</sup> where they did the Like; & after fixed the p'clamacon. wth some neales [nails] vpon the cage poaste, where y<sup>t</sup> stooode for the space of iiij or fyve howers."

\* Burghall's "*Diary*," Cole MSS. Brit. Mus. † The Cage was situated in the Market-place in High Town.

According to *Calend. State Papers*, dated 30th June, 1631, special measures were adopted for the relief of the poor in the Hundred of Nantwich; and in the next year the principal property owners in the town signed an Agreement, which was entered in the Burial Register as follows:—

“*Mem<sup>d</sup>*. It is covenanted, p<sup>r</sup>omised and agreed by us the gentlemen and others the inhabitants of this Towne whose names are subscribed. That by reason our Towne is greatly op[p]ressed w<sup>th</sup> Inmates and Strangers continually coming to reside amongst us, w<sup>th</sup>out any restraynt, in regard whereof our owne poore cannot so wel be reseued [received] as otherwise they might. That from henceforward, wee will not sett or lett any of our howses or cottages to strangers dwellinge out of our Towne, excepte they shall be such as shal be able to secure the Towne, by bond to the Church wardens, [as Overseers of the Poor] for the tyme beinge, from any charge that they or their ffamilies might draw upon ytt.

Witness our hands the thirteenth daie of November in the seventh yeare of the raigne of our gracious soutraigne Lo: Kinge Charles and in the yeare of our Lo: god 1632.”

THO: WILERAHAM.	JOHN DELUES.	JOHN BERKBET.
ALEXANDER WALTHALL.	RICHARD WICKSTED.	MARY BROWNE.
THO: MAYNWARING.	RAPHE WODNOTHE.	THOMAS WRIGHT.
RAN: CHURCHE.	JOHN JUDSON.	WM. MAYNWARING.
MAT: MASINBARING.*	RANDALL HAMPTON.	THO: BURROUGHS.
RIC: MINSHULL.	THOMAS MYLES.	WILL: GRASTON.
	THOMAS SPAROWE.	

In 1633 an important Episcopal Visitation, by the authority of Dr. Neile, who had become Archbishop of York in the previous year, was held at Nantwich, presided over by William Easdaile (or Easdall) LL.D.; Henry Wickham, D.D., (who held Yorkshire preferments and obtained notoriety as Commissioners for causes Ecclesiastical in the extraordinary litigation between Peter Smart and the Puritans against the Chapter of Durham); and Dr. Cosin, the Archbishop's Chaplain, and Archdeacon of the East Riding, Yorkshire; and afterwards Bishop of Durham until his death in 1672. The Parish Register records as follows:—

“1633. That Doctr Nayle, being Archbushoppe of Yorke, and houldinge his visitation this yeare, by Doctr Isdale, as principall visittor, Doctr Wycum, & Doctr Cossens, his assistante, they gave straitte commandment to the Churchwardens, That the Pulpitt, the ministers seat, and clarkes seat, should be removed to the pillor, where they now stand, and alsoe that all the Pewes in the Churche should be made uniforme w<sup>ch</sup> was Done accordingly, by virtue of a Commission from the said Archbushoppe w<sup>th</sup> confirmacon. thereof. And the Church new whitted & very much beautified w<sup>th</sup> payntings and many sentences of holy scripture.”

This removal of the Pulpit to the place it afterwards occupied for 222 years, was the cause of litigation between Geoffrey Mynshull of Stoke, gent., (Utter Barrister of Grays Inn, and author of the, now, extremely scarce book “*Essays and Characters of a Prison and Prisoners*,” 1618), and the Churchwardens, in the Ecclesiastical Court at Chester. The Mem. recording the settlement of the dispute, is unfortunately, the last of the series of events furnished by the Parish Registers.

\* This is one of the many ways of spelling the name of Mainwaring. Sir William Dugdale enumerated 131 different ways in which that surname occurs in ancient and modern deeds.

1634. *Decimo die Novembr.* [10th Nov.] *M<sup>d</sup>*. That whereas there was a suite depending in the Lo: Bushoppes Court of Chester att Chester Betweene Jeffrey Mynshull Esq<sup>r</sup>. plt: and Robte: Wilkes & Robte: Martyn Churchwardens this present year concerning the right & tytle of Inheritance wch the said Jeffrey claymeth unto a buriall place wthin the p<sup>i</sup>sh Church of Namptwich, and that his Ancestors (as hee alleadereth)\* have heretofore bine buried crosse upp vnto the East syde of the greate Pillor standinge on the North syde of the Church wherevnto the Pulpitt is nowe fixed, and soe vnder the ministers seate wherein hee readeth divine service, And under pte. [part] of the clarks seate & the weddinge or churchinge seate therevnto annexed. And from the said seate or places eastwards in length towards the seate late of Roger Crocketts deceased & nowe the seat of Edward Heyes the elder gent., by the space of three score yeares or thereabouts. All wch hee affirmeth to prove by the testimony of sufficient witnesses. Wherevpon att A publique assembly vpon the tenth day of November this p<sup>i</sup>nte. yeare of our lord god 1634 of the gents. & others concerninge the same buryall place. It there was and is fully concluded, condiscended and agreed vpon by & betweene the said Jeffrey Minshull vpon th'one pte. And John Saringe preacher of gods word att Namptwch aforesaid, the said Churchwardens, gent. & p[ar]ishoners of the said p<sup>i</sup>she. on th'other pte. That there shalbe noe further p<sup>r</sup>ceedinge in the said suite betwixt the said p<sup>i</sup>ties. concerninge the said buriall place. And that the said Jeffrey his heires executors administrators & assignes & eu'y [every] of them shall not hereafter clayme or haue any right, tytle or interest of buriall vnder the said Pulpett & ministers seate, But shall for eu' [ever] hereafter bee excluded & debarred from the same: And that they and eu'e of them for eu' hereafter shall or may haue free lib<sup>t</sup>ie & accesse, as in prim' [former] tymes to bury their dead without intervpon. wthin pte. of the said clarks seat weddinge or churchinge seate, and soe in length Eastwards towards the seate of the said Edward Heyes. And that upon the takinge or removinge of the said seate, the said Jeffrey Mynshull his heires & successors shall well & sufficiently att his & their owne coste & charges erect & sett upp the said seate againe wthin the space of twoe dayes next ensuinge after any such buriall there. In witness whereof to this present agreem<sup>t</sup>. wee the said minister, Jeffrey Minshull & Churchwardens haue subscribed oure names the day and yeare abouewritten."

The following List of Pews in Nantwich Church, 1633, is from a "True copy" [on Parchment] "from the original in the Lord Bishop of Chester's Registry faithfully made and collated by William Wilson Public Notary," now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham Esq. This document, which furnishes another interesting list of contemporary names, is headed as follows:—

*"A SCHEDULE containing the names of the severall Inhabitants and p[ar]ishoners of the parrish of Namptwich of the diocese of Chester and province of Yorke to whom Stalls or pewes are assigned and allotted in the same Church and the severall stalls or pewes soe to them allotted by vertue of a Comission and an Order or Act made on that behalfe made and graunted By the Right Wor<sup>ll</sup>. William Easdall Doctor of Lawes Vicar gen'all [general] and officiall principall to the most Reverend ffather in God Richard by the providence of God Lord Archbishop of Yorke primate of England and Metropolitan to whom all and all manner of Jurisdic<sup>i</sup>on Spirituall and Ecclia<sup>i</sup>call within the dioces of Chester and province of York aforesaid which otherwise did belonge to the Lorde Bishop of Chester dureing the continuance of his Graces Metropolitanall Visitation late depending was notoriously known to appertaine as followeth, viz. :—*

\* "Alleadereth," that is, alleges.

- Imprimis*, the first Seate or pew from the Cross Ile or Alley is assigned and allotted unto Maister Thomas Maisteron.
- It'm. the next Collaterall Stall or pew to that is assigned-and allotted unto m<sup>r</sup>. Thomas Wilbraham.
- It'm. The first stall or pew in length on the other side of the Crosse Ile or Alley Collaterally is assigned and allotted unto m<sup>r</sup>. Alexander Walthall.
- It'm. the second stall or pew which is next behind Mr. Thos. Wilbrahams is assigned and allotted unto Mr. Hugh Hassall.
- It'm. the first second and third Stalles or pews with length opposite to the pulpitt is assigned and allotted unto { Mr. Thomas Maisteron, Mr. Thomas Wilbraham, Mr. Hugh Hassall, aforesaid for their wives respectively.
- It'm. One Pewe seate or Stall now in the possession of Mr. Geffrey Minshall built on high and affixed to one Capitall pillar w<sup>th</sup> th'appurtenances is assigned and allotted unto Mr. Geffery Minshall.
- It'm. One Pewe seate or Stall now in the possession of Mr. Mathew Manwareing built on high and fixed to to the other Capitall pillar w<sup>th</sup> th'appurtences is assigned and allotted unto Mr. Mathew Manwareing.

*In the middle Range on y<sup>e</sup> South side.*

- Imprimis* the first stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto Mr. [Richard] Whickstead.
- Item. the second do. " " Raph Lat [ham?]
- Item. the third do. " " Robert [Parker?]
- Item. the fourth do. " " . . . . [Clutton?]
- Item. the fifth do. " " [Richard Wright?]
- Item. the sixth do. " " [. . . . Wilkes?]

The parchment is here much worn and the names almost entirely obliterated.

*[In the mid]dle Range on the North side.*

- Imprimis* the fourth stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto Sabboth Church.
- It'm. the fifth do. " " Mr. Henery Delues.
- It'm. the nynth do. " " Edward Church.
- It'm. the Eleaventh do. " " Mr. John Delues.
- It'm. the Twelfth do. " " Robert Wilkes.
- It'm. the Thirteenth do. " " John Winsye.
- It'm. the fflowerteenth do. " " Thomas Sparrow.
- It'm. the fifteenth do. " " [Roger] Howrobin.
- It'm. the eighteenth do. " " John Wright.
- It'm. the nineteenth do. " " Edward Massey.
- It'm. the Twentiyth do. " " Margaret Comerbach & Thomas C. her son.

*In the South side of the Great Ile or Alley.*

<i>Imprimis</i> the sixth stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto	Cicily Maisteron.
It'm. the seaventh do.	Thomas Burroughes.
It'm. the eighth do.	Robert Bromhall.
It'm. the ninth do.	John Wixsted & John Browne
It'm. the Tenth do.	Sabbath Church.
It'm. the fowerteenth do.	Mr. Richard Clutton, the younger
It'm. the nineteenth do.	Mr. Roger Wright.
<small>Which said stall is adioyneing to the pillar.</small>	
Itm. the six & twentieth do.	John Sare.
<small>Being under the clockhouse.</small>	
It'm. the nine & twentieth do.	Mr. Richard Minshall.

*In the South syde Ile.*

<i>Imprimis</i> the first stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto	Edward ffrith.
Item. the third do.	Thomas Alsager.
Item. the fowertth do.	John Jenings.
Item. the ffifth do.	Thomas Noden.
Item. the sixth do.	[Geffrey?] Minshall.
Item. the nynth do.	John Maddocke.
Item. the tenth do.	Richard Rockett [Pratchett?]
Item. the eleaventh do.	Arthur Mainewareing.
Item. the thirteenth do.	William Barnes.
Item. the ffifteenth do.	Edward Massey.
Item. the eighteenth do.	Thomas Bickerton.
Item. the twentieth do.	Richard Venables the younger
Item. the one & twentieth do.	John Becket.
Item. the fower & twentieth do.	Edward Brayne.
Item. the five & twentieth do.	Roger Wright, glasier.

*In the South Side of the North Ile or Alley.*

<i>Imprimis</i> the first stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto	John Tench.
Item. the second do.	George Mainewaring.
Item. the fowertth do.	Mr. Henery Maisteron.
Item. the eighth do.	Henery Briscoe.
Item. the ninth do.	Mr. Roger Wright.

*In the north side of the Great Ile or Alley.*

<i>Imprimis</i> the sixte stall or pew is allotted and assigned unto	James Bullin.
Item. the seaventh do.	Thomas Bickerton.

*In the Old Ile.*

<i>Imprimis</i> the tenth seat or stall is allotted and assigned unto	Mr. Lawrence Wright.
Item. the eleaventh do.	Mr. Thomas Church.
Item. the twelfth do.	Mr. Richard Minshall.
Item. the fflowerteenth do.	Mr. Henery Delues.
Item. the sixteenth do.	Mr. Richard Church.
Item. the eighteenth do.	Mr. Edward Heyes.
Item. the two & twentieth do.	Robert Bromhall.

*In the North syde Ile.*

<i>Imprimis</i>	the first seat	or pew	is allotted	and assigned	unto	Gilbert ffourins.
Item.	the second	do.	„	„		William Moore.
Item.	the fyfth	do.	„	„		George ffletcher.
It'm.	the syxt	do.	„	„		Jane Mainwareing.
Item.	the eighth	do.	„	„		John Watson.
Item.	the ninth	do.	„	„		Henery Whicksted.
Item.	the tenth	do.	„	„		Raph Bostock.
Item.	the twelfth	do.	„	„		Thomas Masseye.
Item.	the Thirteenth	do.	„	„		Randle Babbington.
Item.	y <sup>e</sup> ffoureteenth	do.	„	„		Edward Braine.
Item.	the sixteenth	do.	„	„		Richard Wilkes.
It'm.	the eighteenth	do.	„	„		William Edgeley.
Item.	the twentieth	do.	„	„		Mr. Hugh Allen.

*In the North side of the South Ile or Alley.*

<i>Imprimis</i>	the sixth stall	or pew	is allotted	and assigned	unto	Mr. Richard Clutton the elder.
Item.	the tenth	do.	„	„		Mr. William Wettball.
Item.	the seaventh	do.	„	„		Roger Cumberbach.
Item.	the eighteenth	do.	„	„		Eldrid Maddock.
Item.	the nineteenth	do.	„	„		Richard Venables.

“Moreover by the appoyntment and direction of Authority aforesaid the pulpitt is placed and now sett adioyning to the first pillar on the North side of the said Church and the Ministers Deske is next before the said pulpit, the Clarkes seat next before the Ministers Deske and the wedding pew immediately before the said Clarkes seat. And alsoe the Stall pew or Seat where the Minister heretofore used to sitt is now allotted and assigned unto *mr* *Saringe* as Clarke or Curate or Minister of the said Church of Nantpwich.”

Thomas Wilbraham, (MS. Journal) records a shock of earthquake, a hard winter, a drought, a flood, and an epidemic, that followed in successive years; as follows:—

“*Mem*: An earthquake aboute 4 in the morn. 1 Jan. 1634-5. And in the next month fell an exceeding great snow, such as noe man then living could remember, wherein many perished. The whole winter fro.[m] the later end of Michaelmas term was very cold w<sup>th</sup> frosts and snowe. But untill then faire summerlike weather & the wayes very faire”. . . . “The beginnige of this yeare fro. March till July [in 1635] was noe rayne at all: but very hot weather w<sup>ch</sup> burnt up the grass in most fields, & pvented many from sowing barley, & much that was sown came not up.” . . .

“5 Nov. 1636. The River Weever was so high yt the water touched the planks of the wych bridge, & broke down the Jarrels, & did run with a swift current thorough my cos. Hassalls gates.”

The year before, at the Spring Assizes at Chester, the following order was made by the Justices, Sir John Bridgman and Sir Marmaduke Lloyd:—

\* In Sir William Brereton's "Travels," (in Scotland and Ireland, 1635) pp. 76-7, allusion is made to the severe winter of 1634, and the intensely hot summer of 1635. He says, amongst other remarks, "At Falkirk, in Scotland, many perished in their houses for want of relief, and many houses were buried in the snow, and could not be found but by the smoke of the chimneys." . . . "No rain to speak of had fallen since the winter of 1634 but in the end of July was much dropping weather."



" 30th March 1635.

The Inhabitants of y<sup>e</sup> Towne of Nantwich are ordered to repayre and amende their Bridge, & to make y<sup>e</sup> same sufficient for Carts & Horses at all Seasons, upon paine of y<sup>e</sup> forfeiture of £100. And y<sup>e</sup> Justices of p[ea]ce for y<sup>e</sup> hundred are ordered to make Report to his Ma<sup>ties</sup> Justices of Assize.

Jo: Bridgman  
Marmaduke Lloyd."

The above order was not immediately carried out, notwithstanding the threatened fine. But what the Judges' Order could not do, was effectually done by the flood of 5th Nov. 1636; and the Bridge was obliged to be rebuilt in the following year.

"*Mem.* 1637. That this summer the wych bridge was new built of tymbre to y<sup>e</sup> discredit of the undertakers and overseers thereof." . . . . .

"*Mem.* And this year [1638] many died in our Towne of a contagious Ague."\* (Wilb. MS. Journal.)  
Greater evils than these, however, soon befel the town and the whole kingdom,

"When hard words, jealousies, and fears,  
Set folks together by the ears,  
And made them fight."

In 1637 the celebrated Puritan barrister, Mr. Prynne, probably passed through Nantwich, on his way to Caernarvon Castle, where he was imprisoned, having been condemned by the Star-chamber Court as a libeller to be put from the bar, to stand in the pillory in two places, Westminster and Cheapside; to lose both his ears, one in each place; to pay £5000 to the King, and to be imprisoned during life. In the same year a petition had been sent from Nantwich respecting the then newly imposed *ship-money tax*, complaining that it had not been equitably assessed. Among the Calend. State Papers Chas. I. 1637-8, vol. 380, is a letter dated Jan. 29, 1637-8, by Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal, Sheriff of Cheshire to the Council, on the subject.

"By letters of 29 Nov. last, you sent me a petition of the town of Nantwich, whereby they complained to be overcharged for their *ship-money*. Those letters came not to my hands till 28 Dec. last, when I had settled a proceeding in the service. Since then I have weighed the justice of their complaint, and find that that town is a great market town, and reputed the wealthiest part of the county. This, with other privileges they enjoy, moves me to conceive they are but proportionately rated with the rest of the shire; and more especially because my last predecessor, Sir Thos. Delves [of Doddington], a near neighbour to their town, an ancient justice of the peace of their hundred, and better knowing their estates than myself, set the same assessment which is now upon them."

1637-8. Almshouses erected and endowed by Sir Edmund Wright, Kt., Alderman of London. (See Charities).

The Wilb. MS. Journal furnishes the following information:†—

"Thos. Wilb. being sworne servant to Kg. Chas. ‡ had summons by the Ld. Chamb. of the Household to attend his Ma<sup>tie</sup> in his Royal Journey into Scotland: coming to York where the Court was, in such equipage as befitted his place."

\* The year 1638 was one of great mortality, as proved by the Registers. The number of burials in 1637, was 74; in 1638,—171; in 1639,—107.

† This entry is in the handwriting of Roger Wilbraham, who handed down the records of the family for the next fifty years,—that is, from 1639—1690.

‡ "I was sworne servant to Kg. Charles in the place of an Esquier of his body 1 Nov. 1628." (Thos. Wilb. MS. Journal.)

The original summons, which is still preserved at Delamere, is as follows:—

"After our hearty Commendacons. Whereas it hath pleased the Kings most Excellent Maty to undertake a Royall Journey into the North, and therein to be attended upon by all his sworne Servants of w<sup>ch</sup> number yo<sup>r</sup>selfe beinge one I hane thought fitt to signify unto you his Mats Royall pleasure yt you be ready within one Moneth after y<sup>e</sup> date hereof, wheresoever His Maty shall then be with a Horse and Russett Armes for yo<sup>r</sup>selfe, with guilded Nails or Studds as a Curassier, and White Armes as a Hargobusier, for yo<sup>r</sup> Seruant or Seruants yt you shall bringe alonge with you in befittinge equipage there to act and doe such duties & seruices as shalbe required of yo<sup>u</sup> Which not doubting but you will carefully performe as alsoe giue me a speedy Account hereof I rest "

"Yorke this 22nd

"of Aprill 1639.

"Yo<sup>r</sup> very loving friend

"P————(?)

The Journal continues:—"He was sworn a Gent. of the hon<sup>ble</sup> privy Chamber extraordinary, dated 23 April 1639. He attended his Royal Master to Edinburg where a peace was concluded, whereupon His Maj<sup>tie</sup> retired into England, and Tho. Wilb. returned by Carlisle & came to his house in Nantwich 6 July 1639."

"The year following Thos. W[ilbraham] entertained the Earl of Strafford then Lt. Lieut. of Ireland & his Retinue, viz.: his son y<sup>e</sup> Lord Raby, Sr Toby Mathew, Sr Philip Mainwaring, then Sect. to his lordship & some others of quality in their way to London. Which so great a minister of State might have had opportunity to have requited, if his Destiny, rather than Desert, had not hurried him to the block. [12 May, 1641]. This entertainm<sup>t</sup> was in April 1640."

On this occasion the Earl of Strafford, (before Sir Thomas Wentworth, Lord Deputy of Ireland), was returning from Ireland; where in fourteen days he had procured four subsidies from the Irish Commons and raise a force of eight thousand men to take part in the attack on the Scots. The shortness of the visit may be accounted for by the hurry of the Earl, flushed with his successful statecraft, to be in time for the opening of the "Short" Parliament on 13th April, 1640.

On 18th July, 1640, "a public fast was solemnized thro' the land by the King's proclamation, for the turning away of the plague then begun in London, and the preventing the sword and other judgments hovering over our heads." (Burghall's *Diary*).





## The Great Civil War and Commonwealth Period.



WHEN war was inevitable, a “*Remonstrance*” or “*Declaration*” was circulated through the towns and villages of Cheshire, in order to ascertain by the signatures of the inhabitants those who would take the side of the “*King and Parliament*” in opposition to the Royalist cause. Several Declarations were issued by the Parliament in the months of March and May, 1642;\* and, while public opinion was being thus tested throughout the country, the “*Gentrie and Commons of Cheshire*” sent a “*patheticall Petition*” to the King imploring his return to his Parliament.† The Remonstrance, which is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 2107, is as follows:—

“*A REMONSTRANCE or DECLARACON. of vs the INHABITANTS of the COUNTIE PALLATINE of CHESTER whose names are subscribed and of manie more.*”

“Wee most humble declare and remonstrate that we owe o<sup>r</sup> lawes, liberties, o<sup>r</sup>selves and what els we can yet stile ours (next to Gods infinite mercies) to the goodnes of his Matie and to the great care and indefatigable paines of the Honble Parliamt. To the one for discovering the varietie of oppressions that had almost overwhelmed vs and for p<sup>r</sup>paring and advising apt remedies. To the other for crowning these wholsome counsellis with a blessed fiat: Wherein the joynt acts of a good King and a faithfull counsell have so apparentlie concurred to the generall good that we cannot but looke upon all such as unworthie of future happines who doe admitt for currant that dangerous and disloyall distinction (which rings too loud in o<sup>r</sup> eares), videlt., *For the King or For the Parliament.* Our loyall affections and judgments will not permitt us to stile them true Patriotts and lovers of their countrie that are not cordially affected to o<sup>r</sup> gracious Sovereigne, nor them good subjects that disaffect Parliamts.: the King and Parliamt being like Hippocrates twynnes, they must laugh and crie, live and die, together: And both of them are so rooted in o<sup>r</sup> loyall hearts that we cannot disjoynt them.

\* See a scarce pamphlet entitled “*Jehovah-jireh,*” by John Vicars, p. 91-2: printed 1641-2.

† *Ibid.*

Wherefore we declare that according to our allegiance and our solemn Protestation (our voves beeing in heaven) we are resolved to spend our lives and fortunes in the service and defence of both, in maintenance of his Maties most royall and sacred person, hono<sup>r</sup> and prerogative, & in the preservation of the Parliam<sup>t</sup>. and just privelidge thereof and of our true and undoubted religion, lawes, properties and liberties which are deposited for our use and availe in that great and wise councill. Wee beeing confident that neither King nor subject, nor religion nor libertie can comfortable survive the ruyn and destruction of that great body. And we further professe ourselves enemies to all those who ever they be that shall be found Agents in making our wounds deeper by fostering and fomenting the unfortunat mistakes and fearful jealousies betwixt head and body, his Matie and the Parliam<sup>t</sup>, and wch continuing at this distance threatens not only the dissolution of the fabrick of this blessed government, but also the losse of all his Maties kingdomes & dominiones."

Two lists of signatures are appended to the above "Remonstrance;" the first endorsed "Poole, Nantwich and other pt<sup>s</sup> [parts] their subscrip<sup>con</sup>. of y<sup>e</sup> declaracon. July 1642," gives the following sixty-three names of persons, most of whom appear to have belonged to Nantwich.

ALEXANDER ELCOCKE [of Poole]	JOHN SHENTON	WILLIAM CAPPER
ANDR: BOWRY, Curat.	RICHARD WRIGHT	THOMAS WHITTAKERS
WM. GEWEOR [GOORE] ministr <sup>r</sup> *	GABRIEL WETTENHALL	ROGER WRIGHT
JOHN CARTWRIGHT	JOHN REYNOLDS	HENRIE WRIGHT
THOMAS VRSCRATE [Urscrate]	JOHN MAINWARING	ROBERT JOHNSON
RANDULL CROXTON	RICHARD CAYALES	THOMAS PENKAMANE
RANDLE GRAFTON	JOHN TOMSON	GEORGE WHITTICKERS
LAWRENCE FLETCHER	RANDULPHE SACKERSON	JAMES CROXTON
RAPH LEFTWICH	WILLIAM JACKSON	JOHN DOLMAN§
ARTHUR EDGLEY	MARC FOLINEUX ‡	RICHARD PATRICKE
THO: STEELE†	WILLIAM ALCOCKE	RICHARD KORKETT
THO: WILSON	HENRY TRICKETT	LAWRENCE DAVIES
WILL: MOULTON	WILLIAM DAWSON	JOHN DAVIES
JNO: CREWE	WILLIAM TRICKETT	THOMAS TENCH
ELDRID MADDOCK	RICHARD EACHIS	GILBERT JOHNSTON [?]
RICHARD WOODKEN	JOHN BARKER	NEHEMIAH POTTE
THOMAS PROUDMAN	WILLIAM WHEELER	ROBERT FEARINGTON
ROBERT PARKER	RICHARD WILBRAHAM	ROBERT MOTTERSHERD
THOMAS WRIGHT	THOMAS MYLES	ROGER MADELEY
WILLIAM POTT	JOHN PREICE	JOHN OULTON
JOHN SLADE	JEFFREY MASSIE	THOMAS POTS

The second list, consisting of the "Justices of Peace and Gentlemen" in this neighbourhood who signed the "Remonstrance;" contains the following names:—

\* This clergyman's name occurs three times in Nantwich Register of Baptisms—

"1633 Jan. 9. Margaret dau. of Mr. Willm. Goore Minister."

"1636 June 7. Hannah dau. of William Goore clerke."

"1638 Sep. 16. Sarah daughter of Mr. William Govar."

† ? Whether afterwards Governor of Beeston Castle.

‡ Afterwards one of the Collectors for Nantwich.

§ Master of the Grammar School at Nantwich.

RIC: WILBRAHAM [of Woodhey]	EDWARD MYNSHULL	ROBERT WICKSTED
THOMAS DELUES*	ROGER WRIGHT	WILLM. GLEGG
JOHN MAINWARING	GEFF: MYNSHULL	SAB: CHURCH
JO: CREWE	ROGR WILBRAHAM [of Dorfold]	JOHN DELUES
HU: WILBRAHAM	RICHARD WICKSTED	THO: BURROUGHS
GEO: MAINWARING	WILLIAM LEVERSAGE	EDW: HAYES
ROBERT HINTON	RIC: LEICESTER	RIC: CHETWOODE
LAWRENCE WILKES	THOMAS MALBONE 1642	GEORGE STARKEY
THO: WALTHALL	WILLIAM ANDERTON, clrcus. [clerk]	RANDALL HAMPTON
	THOS: MAYALBARING [Mainwaring]	

The above Lists represent the local gentry and tenants who favoured the Parliament side in the great struggle. Of those on the King's side, may be mentioned THOMAS WILBRAHAM of Townsend, RANDULL CHURCH of Hospital Street, THOMAS MAISTERSON of Pillory Street, LADY MARGARET NORTON of Beam Street, ALEXANDER WALTHALL of Wistaston, WILLIAM ALLEN, Gentleman, MR. SARING, the Minister at Nantwich Church, &c., and the following three persons, WILLIAM LEVERSAGE, RICHARD WICKSTEAD, and HUGH WILBRAHAM, who, occurring in the above list, seem to have changed their opinions; all of whom (except *Thomas Wilbraham* who left the town and died in 1643) occur in the list of "*Delinquents*" on a subsequent page.

Of the second list of signatures, perhaps the most remarkable name (which, in the original, is underlined and dated 1642), is that of *Thomas Malbon*, of Nantwich, a gentleman in the legal profession, who left, in his own handwriting, an interesting and detailed account of the Civil War in Cheshire and the adjacent Counties, dated 1651; and now preserved in the Library of Reginald Cholmondeley, Esq., of Condover Hall, Salop.† In an article contributed to the Palatine Note Book, I have adduced arguments in proof of the genuineness and authenticity of that MS., which need not be here repeated; and have also shown that the oft-quoted "*Diary*" of Edward Burghall, Vicar of Acton, entitled "*Providence Improved*," (dated 1663), was, as far as it relates to the Civil War, wholly obtained from the account previously written by Thomas Malbon.‡ By comparing the extracts from the Malbon MS. here printed for the first time, with the Cole MS. of Burghall's "*Diary*" in the British Museum, and the abridged and altered version of the latter MS. printed in 1778;§ it will be seen that Burghall must have had access to the Malbon MS., which he appears to have used in illustration of his peculiar views of the Divine Providence; adopting the phraseology, but frequently transposing the words, of Malbon; and, in his reproduction, omitting much of the original account, that is of importance and interest.

Making allowance for the strong party colouring pervading this account, the statements here recorded, which, in many instances, can be corroborated from Parish Registers,

\* Sir Thomas Delves, the son of Sir Henry Delves, of Doddington, Bart.

† By the courtesy of Reginald Cholmondeley, Esq., in Feb. 1882, I was allowed to make a complete transcript of the original MS., the existence of which has hitherto been unknown to local historians; I hope on a future occasion to publish it in its entirety, with explanatory notes.

‡ "*Palatine Note Book*," edited by J. E. Bailey, F.S.A., Manchester, vol. ii. pp. 133-137. (1882).

§ Poole's "*History of Cheshire*," vol. ii. pp. 893-948. Edit. 1778.

contemporary pamphlets, letters, and other documents, contain a mass of information concerning local families and events, collected by an eye-witness, who, at the time, held office as one of the Committee of Sequestrators; and therefore must have been well acquainted with what was transpiring in this neighbourhood. Thomas Malbon's Account is much too long to be given in its entirety; but all that relates to Nantwich and its garrison is here given, exactly as in the original, retaining the curious spelling as affording an indication of the local pronunciation of persons of respectability at that time.

The opening paragraphs of the MS. clearly show what were the first beginnings of the "troubles" in this part of the Country. Chester at once declared for the King; but Nantwich, the next important place in the County, held with the Parliament. Some of the most influential gentlemen in the neighbourhood, viz.: Sir Richard Wilbraham, of Woodhey, Bart., Sir Thomas Delves, of Doddington, Bart., and Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Esq., together with "Mr. Mainwaring of Peover," were taken prisoners, perhaps to overawe others who were not loyal. All attempts, however, to secure Nantwich for the King, proved unsuccessful; and throughout the struggle the town maintained its opposition to the Royalist cause.

#### THOMAS MALBON'S CIVIL-WAR ACCOUNT.

*"A breefe & true Relacon. of all suche passages & things as happened & weire donne in and aboute NAMPTWICH in the Countie of CHESTER & in other plac' [es] of the same Countie. Together w<sup>th</sup> some other things in other COUNTIES (not farr distant) acted & donne by some of the Com'anders officers & Soldiers of the said Towne of NAMPTWICHE (after the same was made a GARRISON for KINGE & PARLIAMT,) scythens [since] the x<sup>th</sup> of August 1642. See trulie as the wryter hereof cold [could] come by the knowledge of the same, viz. :—"*

*Commissioners of  
Arrey & Com'issioners  
for the Mylicia.*

"Uppon or about the Eleaventh of August 1642 St. will'm. Brereton, & the Deputie Liefente for the said Countie of Chester (beinge Com'issioners for the Mylicia) w<sup>th</sup> some Considerable strength for the setlinge of the Mylicia, as was intended (on the Parliam<sup>ts</sup> behalfe) came to Namptwiche. And the Commisioners of Arraye, on the Kings behalfe (hereinge thereof) came the same daye vnto Ravensmore, a myle from the said Towne, (w<sup>th</sup> purpose to hinder theire p'ceedinge), Having wavered [*i.e.* waited] for many Township men both of Namptwiche Hundred, Broxton Hundred & other plac[e]s w<sup>th</sup> speciall com'andem<sup>t</sup> to come furnished w<sup>th</sup> Armes matches powder & Bullets: But to what purpose or intente the Countrey men weire most of them altogether Ignorant. But by mediacon. & meanes made vnto both p'ties (by some gents\* w<sup>ch</sup> desyred Peace) nothings was donne att that tyme; But agreed on both sides & soe p'mised [promised], That the People & Com'issioners in bothe p'ties. shold dpte. [departe] home agayne peaceablie, and the Comissioners of Arraye nor them on theire side, not to come to the Towne that day. Yett neu'thelesse the said Com'issioners of Arraye w<sup>th</sup> a greate company (contrary to theire p'mise and agreem<sup>t</sup>) hearinge that the

\* According to Burghall's "*Previdience Improved*," these gentlemen were "*Mr. [Roger] Wilbraham of Darfold,*" and "*Mr. Werden of Chester.*"

said Sr will'm. Brereton & the deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup> & their company, weire disperced & gonne awaye, (accordinge as the same was agreed) Came in a bravado w<sup>th</sup> greate showtinge & rejoycinge into the said Towne, and their stayed a certyn ty[me] spendinge their money and drinkinge merrilie w<sup>th</sup>out offring any of . . . . \* [? offence] vnto the Towne & in the Evenyng depected. peaceable awaye."

*Lord Grandisons  
comynge to  
Namptwiche.*

"Afterwards vpon wednesdaye the xxg<sup>th</sup> of September 1642 beinge . . . . [Michaelmas] daye The said Towne of Namptwiche, beinge firme for the P.[arliament] standinge in opposicon agaynst the Com<sup>rs</sup>issioner<sup>s</sup> of Arraye, having . . . . [? but] smale p<sup>o</sup>vision of Armes & Am<sup>u</sup>nycon and a little ayded by the C . . . . [? common] people neere adioynynge & haveing began to make some . . . . [barricades at the] streete ends for their owne saufeties, was assaulted . . . . [by the royalists] beinge under the Com<sup>and</sup> of the Lord Grandison,† . . . . Lord Cholmondeley, Hughe Calveley, Esqre, Heighe Sher.[riff] . . of the said countie of Chester and about xij Troups of Trowpe<sup>rs</sup> & Dragoneers amountinge in all to xj hundred horse or more & many other gent., Came vnto the said Towne, to the Aspell Streete End, (where the Chayne was drawn ouer the street ende) & some fewe of the said Towne w<sup>th</sup> musketts & other weapons weire placed their sufficient for a tyme to haue opposed them & kepte them furthe. But consideringe that then The Kinge being att Shrowesbury w<sup>th</sup> great forces And by reason of the feare [*i.e.* fair] speeches & p<sup>o</sup>mises [promises] of the said Lorde not to Wronge the said Towne noe [nor] doe them any harme, The Chayne was withdrawn [&] the said Lorde, Sheryff & whole Army, peaceable vpon their said p<sup>o</sup>mises, entered the said Towne. But p<sup>o</sup>sentlie vpon their entrance (contrary to their words and p<sup>o</sup>misses) they disarmed eu<sup>y</sup> [every] man and tooke all their Armes & Armor from them & all that colde bee found in eu<sup>y</sup> howse, threatninge that whoesou<sup>r</sup>[er] had any Arms & did not bringe them In, shold bee plundered. And seu<sup>al</sup>l dayes followinge the[y] yssued furthe (many of them) And took all the Armes from Woodhey, dodington, Haslington, Baddeley and many other places. And plundered many Countrey howses & tooke many horses. And after they had had free quarter in Namptwiche vntill Mondaye then nexte followinge. They depected. away w<sup>th</sup> all they had gotten from thence, and wente to the Kinge and Prince to Shrowesbury. But the Kinge & Prince beinge att that instant att Chester & havinge intelligence of their cominge to Shrowesbury wente thither to them."

*Earle of Derbies  
cominge into  
Cheshire.*

"About the begynynge of December 1642 The *Earle of Darbie*‡ (beinge on the Kings p<sup>o</sup>tie.) assisted w<sup>th</sup> some men and horse, (w<sup>th</sup> the *Lord Cholmondeley*) entered Cheshire intendinge to haue plundered m<sup>r</sup> maynwaring<sup>s</sup>§ of Caryncham & some other of the Deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup>, Commission<sup>rs</sup> for the milicia, & to haue seized vpon some Parliam<sup>t</sup> Carryages w<sup>ch</sup> weire cominge into Cheshire, (but

\* At the bottom of the first page of the original, the MS. is slightly torn; and thus a few words, indicated by the dotted lines, cannot be seen, but it is easy to supply these deficiencies. With this exception the MS. is in excellent preservation.

† Lord Grandison, Lieut.-General of the 6th Regt. for the King, was William Villiers, viscount Grandison in the peerage of Ireland, son and heir of Sir Edward Villiers, President of Munster, and brother to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. He died at Oxford on the 29th Sept. 1643, from wounds received at the siege of Bristol on the 26th July in the same year. His daughter, the celebrated Barbara Villiers, afterwards Duchess of Cleveland, erected a stately monument to his memory in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. (Army Lists, Edwd. Peacock, F.S.A., 1863, p. 13).

‡ James Stanley, seventh Earl of Derby, K.G. and K.B., Lord-lieutenant and General of Lancashire, who was beheaded at Bolton, 15 Oct. 1651.

§ Colonel Edward Mainwaring, of Kirmincham Hall, Cheshire.

they miste [missed] of their purposes); for *Mr Maynwaringe* & the rest having intelligence thereof raised the Countrey, w<sup>ch</sup> the Kings p<sup>te</sup>. p<sup>ce</sup>aving fledd; The *Lord of Darbie* by backe wayes into Lancashire, w<sup>th</sup> his company beinge about twoe hundred. But xxiiiij of the said *Lord Cholm[onde]leys* men & horse, comynge to Northwiche, were taken there, their Armes & horses beinge taken from them, & their men sente home on foote.

*Colonell Leigh*\* of Adlington (on the Kings p<sup>te</sup>.) w<sup>th</sup> a considerable force p<sup>se</sup>ntlie afterwards entered Macclesfield in the said countie of Chester. But the said Mr. Maynwarynge w<sup>th</sup> assistance of the Countrey did dryve him thence, & hee, disgyssed in a Soldy<sup>ers</sup> habit, escaped; But his Drummer & more of those of his soldyers were their slayne . . . . . afterwards Manchester forces comynge In to Mr. . . . . .  
[? Maynwaringe's] Ayde & hee growinge stronge to the Nu<sup>ber</sup> of . . . . . fyve thousand horse and foote. The Com<sup>issione</sup>s of Array hearinge thereof All fledd w<sup>th</sup> their goods, some into Chester Citie, some into Shrovesbury, some one waye & some another; And soe alsoe did all Parsons, viccars & other<sup>s</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> took p<sup>te</sup>. w<sup>th</sup> the Array p<sup>tie</sup>.; not one cold bee mett w<sup>th</sup>all. The said Mr. Maynwaringe did take (w<sup>th</sup> his company) from Colonell Leighes howse, Armes for one hundred & twentie men: And from Wrynehill Hall, old Armes for as many.

*Maynwaringe*  
*his forces comynge to*  
*Namptwiche.*

“Vpon the x<sup>th</sup> of December 1642, & begynnyng of the nexte weeke after, a great p<sup>te</sup>. of the said *Mr. Maynwaringes* force & a brave troupe of Manchester horse & men, came all to Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> Captyns Lieftents, and Com<sup>and</sup>ers, bringing w<sup>th</sup> them Three smale peeces of Ordnance, well mounted, w<sup>ch</sup> were placed att seu<sup>all</sup> streete ends there. And the Captyns & Souldy<sup>ers</sup>, to the nu<sup>ber</sup> of one thowsand trayned eu<sup>y</sup> daye, and behaved them selves very well & honestlie, payinge in all their quarter<sup>s</sup> what the[y] boughte or agreede for.”

War having been declared between the King and the Parliament, and the Cheshire gentry, with their tenants, being divided in their political opinions, an attempt was made to avert the evils of war in this county by a Convention at Bunbury; where it was agreed that Cheshire should be neutral; and take no part whatever in the threatened struggle. A Civil War Tract (*Cheth. Soc. Publ.* vol. ii. p. 334) alludes to this proposed neutrality, as “*Cheshire's faintheartedness.*” The Articles of the Agreement were, however, soon broken; and, the “inveteracy of local feeling and bitterness of religious animosity” between opposite parties, were maintained as keenly in this county as in other parts of the kingdom.

Malbon says:—

*Peace*  
*concluded.* “The Com<sup>issione</sup>s of Arraye, viz., *Earle Ryvers*;† & his brother, *mr Thomas Savage*; *Lord viscounte Kilmorey*;‡ *Lord Cholmondeley*; and the rest w<sup>ch</sup> were fledd to Chester, Reased [raised] all their force together to Chester w<sup>th</sup> many Horse & foote from all their frends & tenants in Shropshire, Cheshire, & Wales, w<sup>th</sup> many threatnyng speeches to dryve them awaye from Namptwiche; But the[y] fortified them selves in Chester Citie, and durst not sturr furthe; And att lengthe, they havinge intelligence that greater Ayde wold come to them att Namptwiche,

\* Colonel Thomas Leigh, of Adlington, Cheshire.

† John Viscount Savage, of Rock Savage, created Earl Rivers by Charles I.

‡ Robert Needham, second Viscount Kilmorey, of Shavington, co. Salop.



and suspectinge that Chester wold be assaulted, They offered p'lye. & mocens.(?) [parley and motions] of Peace w<sup>ch</sup> the gent. att Namptwiche consented vnto. There were no<sup>i</sup>ated [nominated] for the Com<sup>'</sup>ission<sup>rs</sup> of Array on their p<sup>tie.</sup>, The Lord Kilmorey & m<sup>r</sup> Bridgeman: and on the other p<sup>tie.</sup>, The for[e]said m<sup>r</sup> Maynwaringe and m<sup>r</sup> Marbury of Marbury; And the place appointed was att Bunbury, in the said Countie of Chester; the xxiiij<sup>th</sup> of December 1642, where the p<sup>ties.</sup> nominated did meete the same daye, and made an agreem<sup>t</sup> as followeth, viz. :—

*"An AGREEMT made att BUNBURY in the COUNTIE of CHESTER for pacificacon. and scelling the PEACE of the COUNTIE by vs whose names are subscrib'd authorized their vnto, by the LORDS and gents COMMISSIONERS of ARRAY & DEPUTIE LIEFTENTS in the said COUNTIE."*

*Imprimis* ytt ys agreed that there bee an absolute cessacon of Armes from henceforthe w<sup>th</sup>in this Countie, & noe Armes to bee taken vp to offend one & other, but by Consente bothe of the Kinge and twoe howses of p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>t</sup> vnless ytt bee to resist force broughte into this Countie.

2.—That all (but two hundred of either side) shalbe disbanded tomorrow beinge Saturdaye, and on Mondaye all on both sides, bothe horse and ffoote.

3.—That all p<sup>rs</sup>on<sup>ts</sup> on bothe sides bee enlarged As for m<sup>r</sup> Moreton whoe ys now p<sup>'</sup>son<sup>t</sup> att Manchester (the gent. appoynted Deputie Lieftent<sup>s</sup>) doe declare that hee was taken w<sup>th</sup>out their privitie or encouragem<sup>t</sup> by some Trowpe<sup>rs</sup> of Manchester vpon a pryvatt quarrell for takinge powder & other goods belonginge to one of Manchester; yett they will use their utmost endeaver to p<sup>'</sup>cure his enlargem<sup>t</sup>, & desyer that the lyke endeav<sup>rs</sup> bee vsed by the Lords & other<sup>s</sup> Com<sup>'</sup>ission<sup>rs</sup> of Arraye for the enlarginge of m<sup>r</sup> Danyell of Daresbury.

4.—That the fortificacons. att Chester, Namptwiche, Stockporte, Knottesforde, & Northwiche, or any other Towne in Cheshire, (latelie made by either p<sup>'</sup>tie.) bee p<sup>'</sup>sentlie demollished.

5.—That all goods and Armes taken on bothe sides (nowe remaynyng in the Countie in specie) bee furthw<sup>th</sup> restored, and for all other<sup>s</sup> that are taken furthe of the Countie, ytt ys p<sup>'</sup>mised on bothe p<sup>ts.</sup> that sythens [since] the b<sup>'</sup>nefit of the pacificacon redounds to the whole Countie That they will vse their vtmost endeav<sup>rs</sup> for a joynte contrybucon of the Countie towards satisfaction of the owners.

6.—That the Lords and gents. Com<sup>'</sup>ission<sup>rs</sup> of Array before the viij<sup>th</sup> daye of Januarye nexte will p<sup>'</sup>cure [procure] from his Matie a letter, thereby declaringe, That inregard a peace ys made in the Countie, Hee will sende noe forces into this Countie, And yf any other p<sup>'</sup>son shall contrary to suche declaracon bringe forces into this Countie (passinge for forces w<sup>th</sup>out doinge any hostile acte onelic excepted) The said Lords & gents. will Joyne to resiste them. And yf any forces (w<sup>th</sup>out the consent bothe of the Kinge & bothe howses of Parliam<sup>t</sup>) shall come into this Countie (the passage forces w<sup>th</sup>out doinge any hostile Acte onelic excepted) The said gents (nomynated Deputie Lieftent<sup>s</sup>) will resist them & vse their vtmost endeav<sup>rs</sup> therein.

7.—Inregard (that by the blessinge of God) there ys lyke to bee a peace w<sup>th</sup>in the Countie (yf this agreementt bee observed) ytt ys agreed that the Com<sup>'</sup>ission<sup>rs</sup> of Array shall not any further putt the Com<sup>'</sup>ission of Arraye in execucon, nor the gent no<sup>i</sup>ated Deputie Lieftent<sup>s</sup> the ordynance of the Milicia, or exeute their Com<sup>'</sup>ission.

8.—Lastlie all the said p<sup>ties.</sup> doe agree and p<sup>'</sup>myse cyche [each] to other in the worde of a Gent. and as they desyer to prosper, That aswell they them selves, as alsoe all their frends, tenants, servants and all other (in whome they haue any Interest) shall as muche as in them lyes, p<sup>'</sup>forme this agreem<sup>t</sup>. And ytt ys further desyred that all the said p<sup>ties.</sup> Joyne in a peticon. vnto his Matie & bothe howses of p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>t</sup> for puttinge an ende to the great distracons and misery fallen vpon this kingdom, by makinge a speedy

peace. And ytt is agreed that Sr George Bouthe & all others w<sup>th</sup> in this Countie, whoe haue appeared either as Com'issioners of Array or as Deputie Liefent<sup>s</sup> by reason of the ordinance of Parliam<sup>t</sup> shall (with all conymente speede) subscribe this Agreem<sup>t</sup>. \*

The makers of this Agreem <sup>t</sup>	{	My Lord of Kilmorrey
for the Com'issioners of Arraye		Orlando Bridgeman Esq.
for the Liefent <sup>s</sup> . . . . .	{	Mr. [Henry] Maynwaringe of Caryncham
		Mr. Marbury of Marbury.

The next daye afterwards (being Christmas Eve) All the Companies on bothe sides weire disbanded. The tyme the forsaid M<sup>r</sup> Maynwaringe & the forsaid company contynued in Namptwiche was iust a fortnighte. But this Peace did not longe contynue, but did breake on the Com'issioners of Arrayes side, in that the fortificacons att Chester weire not throwne downe & the said Com'issioners contynued still in Chester encreasinge their forces & renewinge them daylie."

*Will[ia]m Brereton  
comynge to  
Namptwiche.*

" Vpon Saturday the xxvij<sup>th</sup> of January then nexte following 1642-[3] Sr will<sup>m</sup>. Brereton Baronett (Colonell and Com'ander in Chiefe of the p'liam<sup>t</sup> forces in these ptes.) Comynge towards Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> reasonable good strength to releave the said Towne (beinge in greate danger to bee plundered & destroyed by the Kinges Armye and Com'issioners of Arraye) in this Countie (contrary to theire p'mises & agree<sup>m</sup>t as aforesaid) Sr Thomas Aston w<sup>th</sup> about fyve hundred horse of the Kinges forces lyinge in wayte for the said Sr will<sup>m</sup>., and meetinge w<sup>th</sup> him & all his carryedges & forces hee had neere the end of the Aspell streete att Namptwiche betwixt & Cheerbrooke (beinge more in nu'ber than the said Sr will<sup>m</sup>.) aboute four a Clocke in the afternoone The[y] joyned Battell, w<sup>ch</sup> contynued very sore, & doubtfull on bothe sides, vntill about seyven a Clocke in the Nighte ytt beinge soe darke they cold not see one the other. But Sr will<sup>m</sup>. havinge a case of Drakes vpon Carryage readie charged, discharged the same vpon the Kinges ptie., w<sup>ch</sup> did some execucon. & soe affrighted them, that they weire all scattered & quyte Rowted; And tooke p'soners Captyn Chom'ley, (a base sonne of the Lord Chom'ley) Captyn Bridgeman, & of officers & Soldiers about one hundred; And three score horse or aboue; w<sup>th</sup> many Armes, Cloakbages, and pillage (as was thought) to the value of one thousand pounds; many wounded; & some men & horse slayn; the certyn nu'ber (beinge a very darke Nighte) cold neu' [never] bee certynlie knowne. Sr will<sup>m</sup>. Brereton lost a Liefent, & one Vernon, † and William Brereton, (beinge twoe com'on Soldyers); had many wounded (thoughe neither mortaly nor meamed [maimed]). And soe (God gyvinge him the victory) about viij a Clocke in the Nighte hee entered the Towne, w<sup>th</sup> great reioycinge of the inhabitaunce thereof, & the saufety of the same whoe gave & ascrybed all prayse & Glory vnto God for his greate mercyes towards theim (w<sup>th</sup> his p'soners & pillage).

\* This "Agreement" for maintaining a neutrality is also preserved, in the same words, in *Harl. MSS.* 2135, p. 83. and endorsed on the back "worth nothing." The Parliament, being determined to resist the King, issued, early in Jan. 1642-3, definite "Instructions" to Sir William Brereton, Bart. of Handforth, Cheshire, as one of the Deputy Lieutenants of the County; by which he at once became commander of the Parliamentary forces in this County. The "Instructions," which are too lengthy to be given here, will be found in "*Local Gleanings for Lanc. & Chesh.*" 1st Series, vol. I. pp. 28 & 31.

† Sir Thomas Aston, of Aston, Cheshire, Bart., a brave but unfortunate general, died at Stafford, from wounds received there, on 24th March, 1645.

‡ The Parish Register records the burial of these two soldiers, viz.:—  
"1642-3. Jan. 30. Joseph Banbery, a Lieutenant."  
" " " Edward Varnam, a soldier."

*Captyns w<sup>th</sup>  
Companyes cominge  
to Namptwiche.*

“On Sonda the Towne was quyett, And vpon Mondaye the xxx<sup>th</sup> of January 1642, The foresaid m<sup>r</sup> Maynwaringe & other greate forces bravely Armed, came in Ayde of the Towne to S<sup>r</sup> will<sup>m</sup>. Brereton; And the nexte weeke followinge come vnto him alsoe to Namptwiche Captyn Duckenfield,\* Captyn Hyde,† Captyn Marbury, & many other Captyns, and Com<sup>’</sup>ander<sup>s</sup> w<sup>th</sup> a good nu<sup>’</sup>ber bothe of horse and foote; And lykeyse came to them, all or most of the gent. (well affected to the Parliam<sup>t</sup>) lyvinge in the Countrey, to the nu<sup>’</sup>ber of twoe thowsand; w<sup>ch</sup> many tymes yssued furthe & broughte In p<sup>r</sup>vision, & great store of prysoner<sup>s</sup>.”

Sir William Brereton described this battle in a letter which was first printed in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries for 1855, from the original,‡ by James Wallis Pycroft, F.S.A., who, however, mistakes the event to which the letter relates, for the second battle of Nantwich fought in January of the following year. The letter, which was written a week after the event described, is as follows:—

“Sir,

“Theis lines may convey unto you the relation of our late encounter§ with Sir Tho. Aston’s forces upon Saturday last [28 Jan. 1642-3] about six of the clocke at night, at which time Sir Thomas, who had observed our motions since his cominge out of Readinge, as did appeare by letters found with some of his troopers (our prisoners), who did also acknowledge that hee did waite and observe untill he might assault us, which it seemes was reserved for my welcome into Cheshire and to Namptwich, whither I sent my seriant maieor [Serjeant-major] Lothian and Capt. Bromhall with about fiftie dragooners upon fryday night, who possessed themselves of the towne about seavon of the clocke on Saturday morninge, and were assaulted by 300 horse of Sr. Tho. Aston’s about five of the clocke in the eveninge at 3 or 4 passages at one and the same time, where they were bravely resisted and repulsed, and one of their men and horse slaine. They did retreat about one mile, and did there make a stand, and layd an ambusment (their horse being lined with their new raysed Shropshire dragooners), whose light matches were our onely guides and directions how to take our aimes at the enimie, of whom we rec<sup>d</sup> intelligence by many countrymen, that they did lurke for us in a place of advantage, notwithstandinge which wee were constrained by force to make way thorow them to the relief of the towne; which (as was conceived) could not make defenc one houre longer (the towne so much asserting neutrality and to maintaine the late accommodation); and our men being deeply engaged, and as wee feared in danger to bee opposed by multitudes of the enimie, whom wee first charged, and that so feirsely and successfully (the Lord assisting, to whom bee the whole glorie ascribed), that their dragooners, which were under *Sir Vincent Corbett*, were presently disordered, and many of them ran away without ever giving fier.

The most eminent comanders amongst them were not much more fortunate. *Sir Tho. Aston*, as it is sayd, was a prisoner, his horse being slayne and him selfe constrained to fly away many miles on foote, and some say hee hath a bullet in his buttocke, and was not attended with more than eight or ten men, when he came to Whitchurch; *Sir Vincent Corbet* (who, they say, was also a prisoner, but both of them unknown to us in the darke) did make an escape on foote Ore [Over] which is full five miles, both of them conceaving their arms a burthen, which they threw away. After our dragooners had given the first charge, and that wee

\* Robert Duckenfield, of Duckenfield, Esq. For a biography of this celebrated Lieutenant-colonel, see Earwaker’s *East Cheshire*, vol. ii, p. 13-14.

† Edward Hyde, of Hyde, Cheshire, Esq., who died in 1669.

‡ The original letter is among Bishop Tanners MSS. Bodl. Lib. Oxford. 62. 2. f. 537.

§ This battle, which was the first victory achieved by Sir William Brereton, is mentioned in Josiah Rycroft’s “*Survey of Englands Champions*,” (1647); in John Vicars’ “*England’s Worthies*,” (1647); and in “*Cheshire’s Successes*,” London, 25 March, 1642-3, which was reprinted in 1819 by Dr. Ormerod, *Hist. Chesh.* vol. 1, p. xxxvi. (Old Edition).

had seconded them, there being no other horse but myne owne trooupe (Capt. Edward's trooupe being in the reare guarding our wagons, where they performed good service), and wee being in a lane, compassed with hedges on both sides, and they in the feild within a few yards of us, wee were upon a sudden soe intermingled in such confusednes as, if the Lord had not stricken them with terror and amazement, it had fared much worse with us, our forces being devided, some in the towne before and others guarding our wagons; but their courage departed from them, the Lord delivered them into our hands, to whom I desire the whole honour and glorie may be attributed for whom alone it belongs. This successe being farr beyond what could be expected from us (who were at that time much disproportionable in number, and much tired by 2 or 3 longe and foule dangerous marches from Derby to Leeke, and thence to Congleton, and not any one of the country [*i.e.* Cheshire] trooupes of horse being joyned with us who came from Derby), so soon as I received the instructions from the Parliament, and hearing at Leeke of their intention to surprize this towne, we were constraigned to hasten thither, and to march alone with the forces I brought from London, our Cheshire trooupes not being in readinesse to accompany and assist us, whose absence the Lord was pleased to supply by his immediate assistance, for whilst wee were in this confusion intermingled in the darke, they having possessed themselves of our word, which was "Christ," it was with much difficultie that wee could distinguish their men from ours, but that the Lord was pleased therein to direct wonderfully. Wee tooke then prisoners and still possess the *lord Cholmondeley his sonne* (who some say was to bee *Sir Tho. Aston's* leivetenent colonell), *Capt. Bridgman*, and divers others of their officers and commanders. Wee have very neere 100 prisoners and the greatest parte of *Sir Tho. Aston's* owne trooupe, who are well armed and well furnished and handsome men. Almost all our souldiers got good pillage, not only very good and rich garments, but some of them 40<sup>li</sup>. [£40] in gold, some 50, and others had much more. Loste few of my trooupe and Alderman Edward's trooupe without prisoners, some of them being possessed of one, some of 2, some of 3 or more prisoners and their horses: but many of their armes were thrown away and lost; which the country people found and gathered up the next morning. The horse and so many of their armes as could be found I did cause to be seized upon for the publike service: but by reason [of] *Capt. Goldegayes* company of dragooners leavunge their horses at large, being constraigned suddenly to charge on foote in the lane, we are constraigned cut of their horses to recrate that trooupe, many of which horses wee recovered; but divers of them were carried away with the streame of their horses when they fled in much disorder and distraction, some of them calling out, '*Away, away, wee shall bee all slayne!*' many of them beinge slayne, many others miserably slasht and wounded, and some as wee heare dead by the way. Indeed when wee came into towne, wee wanted the leivetenent collonell, *Capt. Goldegay*, and all my servants, and one of the quarter-masters; the most whereof it pleased God to restore unto us the next day. There was slaine on our side, upon the ground, *Capt. Gouldegay his leivetenant*, and *Corporall Best*, one of my corporalls, and some others wounded, since dead. *Capt. Goldegay* and *Capt. Lea* are wounded, but not mortally I hope, and so are divers of our souldiers. Another of my corporalls, *Appletree*, is sore wounded. All my servants and those were scattered the first night, and came not unto mee until the next morning. I alone have sustayned the greatest losse: all my corporalls are slayne or dangerously wounded, and a[1] of my best horses which were led are taken and detayned. *The towne begins to comply with us, though they were exceeding starke and backward, and wee are fortifying the towne, and preparing to put the instructions in execution.* The Commissioners of Aray fortifie at Chester, and draw in the inhabitants of Salop and Welchmen. But I do not doubt, by God's assistance, but this countie will approve themselves well affected: and it shalbe the duty of my care to improve my utmost endeavour to do you service; the Parliament, and in particular to approve myselfe.

Your most faithfull servant,

WILL. BRERETON."

[Endorsed] "Mr. Brereton Feb. 4. 1642-3."

When the County gentlemen mentioned on page 145 with their companies rallied round Sir William Brereton, Nantwich became a garrison town for the Parliament. He further increased his army by issuing warrants to summon all between sixteen and sixty years of age to meet at a general muster at Tarporley and Frodsham on the 21st Feb. 1642-3. An interruption occurring at *Tilstone-heath*, near the former town, where opposing forces were entrenched, a skirmish ensued; "but," says Malbon, "in the end, bothe sides retreated; the one ptie. to Chester, and the other to Namptwiche, where they continued that weeke vntill they had fortifyed all the Towne round aboute w<sup>th</sup> stronge Trenches & mudwalls of Clodds & Earthe."\*

On Monday, the 13th March, 1642-3, Sir William Brereton stormed the town of Middlewich, where Sir Thomas Aston again sustained a complete defeat, with great loss of men and arms. Many prisoners were brought to Nantwich, and "vpon Wednesdaye nexte after was a very solemne daye of thankesgyvinge held att Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> preachinge, prayers & Ringinge of Bells."—*Malbon*.

Having related particulars of the battles at Salt-heath near Stafford, and Stockten-heath near Warrington, the Malbon MS. says—

*Prisoners removed to Manchester.* "Vpon Loe [Low] Sondaye att Nigte, about midnigte, was p'sone<sup>rs</sup> removed from Namptwiche, & sente to Manchester, (w<sup>ch</sup> Colonell Brereton had longe kepte theire) viz: *Sr Edward Mosley*,† *Colonell Ellys*, *Maior Gilmore*, *Captyn Cholmley*, *Captyn Massie*, *Captyn Hurleston*, *Captyn Fohnes*, *Captyn Eaon*, *Captyn Horton*, & *Captyn Morriss*, whoe weire garded thither w<sup>th</sup> twoe Companyes of Dragoners & theire saufelie deliv'ed."

*Captyn Massie plu'dred.* "Vpon the x<sup>th</sup> of April 1643 The Kinges ptie., w<sup>ch</sup> lay in Whitchurch, yssued furthe and plu'dred *Captyn Massie*, of Moshowse, [near Audlem] & tooke away from him Three score head of Cattell, & some of his howshold goods, & horses from many other<sup>s</sup>: the newes thereof beinge broughte to Namptwiche, some companyes, beinge speedylie readie, marched towards Whitchurche, thinkinge to haue mett them before they had gotten into the Towne, but they came halfe an hower to[o] late: Yett notwithstandinge, the[y] mett w<sup>th</sup> some of theire company; slewe three of them, tooke xij Oxen, some Armes, w<sup>ch</sup> they had thrown awaye in theire flight, & xv p'sone<sup>rs</sup> whereof yonge m<sup>r</sup> Bulkeley of Buntingsdall was one."

*Battell at Burlledam.* "The nexte daye afterwards Intelligence was broughte to Namptwiche that Whitchurch forces (beinge very stronge) entended w<sup>th</sup> theire Carts to fetche all the goods that *Captyn Massie*‡ had; where vpon the[y] Reased almost all the forces in Namptwiche, bothe horse & foote, to the nu'ber of one thousand or more, And marched towards Whitchurch. Att Buledam, they mett the Kinges ptie., But after a shorte skirmishe they fled back towards Whitchurche, yett not

\* Mr. Partridge says (Hist. of Nantwich, p. 74), the earthworks cost in constructing £335 8s. 7d.; and that some remains of them existed when he wrote (1774). I have found no proof of the former statement; and the latter seems improbable when it is remembered that the complete removal of all fortifications, after the War was over, was everywhere carried out according to the letter of the law; so that all might be forgotten as soon as possible by succeeding generations. The oldest native townspeople, that I have conversed with, have been unable to point out the site of the earthworks.

† Sir Edward Moseley, Bart., of Rolleston, co. Stafford, and Houghs-end in Lancashire, and manorial lord of Manchester, who was taken prisoner at Middlewich.

‡ Captain William Massie of Denfield and Audlem, who died 1668.

soe speedylie, but fyve of them were slayne, & some p'sone<sup>rs</sup> of them taken, w<sup>th</sup>out losse or hurte of any; onelie the[y] tooke three of our men p'sone<sup>rs</sup>, viz: *John Abnett, Thomas Parker, & Captyn Croxtons man* & horse, w<sup>ch</sup> the[y] carryed w<sup>th</sup> them to Whitchurche; And the nexte daye after the[y] sente them to Shrowesbury. And the Namptwiche forces returned home in saufetie, havinge preserved Captyn Massie from any further plu'dringe att that tyme."

*Sr Richard  
Wilbraham  
deceased.*

"Vppon Mondaye in Easter weeke the third of Aprill 1643 *Sr Richard Wilbraham*, of Woodhey, Knight, and Baronett, a verie worthie gent., and a good Justice of the Peace, & p'vidente for his Country, beinge kepte p'soner by the Kinge, eu' [ever] scythens his Maties first comyng to Chester Citie; first in Chester, & afterwards to Shrowesbury, where hee ended his Lyfe: And towards the later ende of the same weeke, was broughte to Acton Church (a myle from Namptwiche) where hee was p'vatlie Buried.\* (the occasion of his ymprsonm<sup>t</sup> was neu' [never] certynlie revayled)."

*An Alaram on  
Chester.*

"The nexte weeke after Easter most of the Captyns, office<sup>rs</sup>, trowp<sup>rs</sup> and Dragon<sup>rs</sup> marched from Namptwiche vp & downe to p'serve the Country from plu'dringe; and on Saturday in the same weeke, The[y] faced the Citie of Chester, came to Boughton & killed one of the Citie garde And gave a stronge Alaram vpon the Citie; they of the Citie tooke one of the Namptwiche soldyers p'soner & noe more donne att that tyme: But the daye followinge beinge Sundaye & on Monday nexte after, they all marched backe to Namptwiche agayne."

*Battell att  
Cholmley howse.*

"Vpon Tuesday mornynge, att Springe of daye, the xj of April 1643, most of Namptwiche forces marched to Cholmeley howse (a garrison kepte by the Kinges ptie.) beinge enformed that foure hundred of them there weire in that garrison. And comyng neere to the Howse they found them ready a waytinge there comyng; whoe yssued furthe; & there was for the p'sente a fierce & crevell battell: But after a whyle the Namptwiche forces havinge slayne & wounded many of them, did dryve them into the howse & planted there Drakes about the garden and w<sup>th</sup> them and the muskett shott, discharginge att the howse did muche harme, soe as they hard [heard] a greate crye in the howse. But after some shott on bothe sides, & Namptwiche forces, seeinge the advantage that they in the howse had of them, They w<sup>th</sup>drewe of[f] from the howse & marched backe agayne to Namptwiche, havinge [?] leaving] many of them wounded; there was Slayne of that side Seriant maior Lestead [?] his seriant and one Wade a Com'on Soldyer w<sup>ch</sup> they broughte alyve to Namptwiche but hee died p'sentlie afterwards. And about three score of the Kinges ptie. horses. But the Bodie of the Lieften<sup>t</sup> they cold not fetche awaye, but lefte the same behinde them; ytt was reported that there weire fyftie & twoe slayne of them in and aboute the howse."†

\* The early Registers at Acton have been lost; the earliest vol. now existing commences 30th Oct. 1653; so that the exact date of his burial cannot be given. King Charles first came to Chester on the 23rd Sept. 1642; and went thence to Shrewsbury; taking with him "Sir Richard Wilbraham, Sir Thomas Delves, Mr. Mainwaring of Peover, and Mr. Wilbraham of Deerfold."—(Burghall's Diary, Cole MSS. Brit. Mus.)

† Nantwich Burial Register records:—"April 19 1643. John Wade, soldier.  
" " William Douglas, sergant.  
" " Robert Hay, Letutenant."

Malpas Burial Register records:—"April 22. 1643. 2 Soldiers slain att Cholmondeley.  
May 11. " A soldier that died att Cholmondeley."

*Prisoners removed* “The same Tuesdaye in the Nighte weire sente p<sup>r</sup>soners to bee kepte att the Hall of Crewe, viz: *S<sup>r</sup> Edward Mosley, & Maior Gilmore*, (weh had byn sent backe from Manchester) *m<sup>r</sup> Dudley Norton*, and *m<sup>r</sup> Saringe* (the Towne minister) And vpon Wednesday weire apprehended & sente p<sup>r</sup>soners to Dodington Hall, *Edward Olton, Roger Wright, John Wilkes, Will<sup>m</sup>. Barnes, John Leigh, Edward Hitchenon* & some others for that they weire held to bee malignants & suspected to have betrayed the designe vnto Cholmley the Nighte before. But vpon frydaye nexte after Edward Olton and John Wilkes weire deliue<sup>d</sup> & sente home; And vpon the same daye att Nighte Maior Gilmore, m<sup>r</sup> Norton, and m<sup>r</sup> Saringe were removed from Crewe Hall & carryed to Stockporte & S<sup>r</sup> Edward remayned att Crewe.”

During the next six months the royalist forces in Shropshire under Arthur, Lord Capel, harassed the garrison of Nantwich; and obtained at different times great plunder of cattle and provisions from farm-houses and mansions in the neighbourhood. On three occasions they advanced close to the lines of the town; but were repulsed. After the first of these attacks, Sir William Brereton retaliated by a successful assault on the royalist garrison at Whitchurch on 30th May, 1643. Foraging parties from Nantwich at various times obtained great booty; but on one occasion, a company under Captain Bulkeley was surprised and defeated by Lord Capel with great loss on the 20th June, 1643. Details of these military exploits are chronicled by Malbon, as follows:—

*Lord Capell\* & others; his firste comynge.* “On the xxth of Aprill 1643 Colonell Brereton's horse beinge furthe of [the] Towne: The kinges forces came from Whitchurch & Cholmley even wthin sighte of the Towne, And tooke from Derfold, litle Acton, Ravensmore & Sound, & all the Countrey thereabouts, all the Kynce & yonge beasts they cold fynd, to a very greate nu<sup>b</sup>er; and from the elder *will<sup>m</sup>. Jackson*, & many others, all or most of their howshold goods, takinge them all awaye; & alsoe the[y] tooke, att litle Acton, *Richard Edgley* of the Hall of More, p<sup>r</sup>son<sup>r</sup>. The ffoote Companies in the Towne, (beinge onelie lefte to tend the Towne) for feare lest the Towne had byn taken, Durst not yssue furthe to Rescøwe any thinge from theim. The nu<sup>b</sup>er of them beinge in horse (att least) fyve hundred, beside ffoote Companies (the nu<sup>b</sup>er not knowne certynlie).”

*Alarams 2 dayes.* “On Tuesdaye the . . . [? 25] daye of Aprill 1643 An Alaram was beaten vp in Towne of Namptwiche & most of the forces yssued furthe, but did neither meete or heere of the Kinges ptie., And vpon Wednesday (beinge the exercise day) Another Alaram was beaten, & Bells Ronge backwards, and almost all the forces in the Towne yssued furthe; & did heere that the Kinges ptie. had taken about xx<sup>tie</sup> Kynce and yonge beasts from *Thomas Litter*, dwellinge neere Ravensmore, & had sent furthe two of their Trowpes to warne Carts for Carryage awaye of Haye from Baddeley; But those twoe weire taken w<sup>th</sup> their horses & Armes, & alsoe a ffoote Boye belonginge to *m<sup>r</sup> Thomas Walley* of Cholmley, & broughte in p<sup>r</sup>soners; & the rest

\* Arthur Lord Capell was the only son of Sir Henry Capell; and was M.P. for his native County of Hertford in the Long Parliament. He was created Baron Capell of Hasham, 6th Aug. 1641; and having been taken prisoner, was ultimately beheaded, together with the Duke of Hamilton, and Earl Holland, in the Palace Yard at Westminster on 9th March, 1648-9. His arms were, *Gules, a lion rampant between three crosslets fitchée, Or.* In allusion to which, after his death, this distich became current:—

“Our Lion-like Capel undaunted stood  
Beset with crosses in a sea of blood.”

fledd & one of them slayne. And the same daye, Sr Edward Mosley was broughte p'son<sup>r</sup> backe agayne to Namptwiche."

Broughte [prisoners]  
from  
Whitchurch. "On Saturdayer att Night in Maye 1643, some horse & foote did march furthe of Towne towards witchurche, And neere that Towne they tooke Captyn Morris, A Leften<sup>t</sup> & a quarter m<sup>r</sup> [master] & about iiij Com'on Soldyers & broughte them p'son<sup>rs</sup> to Namptwiche; And alsoe three score Kyne and yonge Beasts, And the same att Night Colonell Brereton w<sup>th</sup> his horse returned to Namptwiche."

Drayton  
Battell. "On Thursdayer att Nighte in Maye 1643, some horse & foote aboute Midnighte marched furthe of the Towne towards Drayton (where Sr Vincett Corbett & aboute three hundred Cavalier<sup>s</sup> horse & foote laye, begynnyng to make some workes (for their saufetie) aboute the Towne: But a litle after Sonne Rysinge Namptwiche forces comyng thether, on the sudden (before they weire furthe of their Bedds), entered the Towne the[y] havinge neither garde nor scouts abroad, but secure (as they thoughte); And killed nyne of them, tooke many p'sone<sup>rs</sup>, horse & Armes; Soe that all or most of Namptwiche foote Soldyers weire horsed home; & many of them had 2, 3, or 4 musketts & Karbines a peece; Beside app'ell [apparel] & other goods of theirs. And alsoe three Ensignes, foure Drumes & other weppons. But Sr Vyncett fled in his shirte & wascot leaving his app'ell. behind him, w<sup>ch</sup> Captyn Whitney had w<sup>th</sup> his money & many letters in his Pockett. Captyn Kynnaston & Captyn Sandford weire their Slayne, beinge Cavaliers: Namptwiche forces did noe wronge nor harme to the Towne, but onelie threwe downe their workes, after the Cavalier<sup>s</sup> weire all fledd & slayne, & taken p'son<sup>rs</sup>; & then returned back to Namptwiche in saufetie w<sup>th</sup>out losse of any man, savinge some fewe Com'on soldyer<sup>s</sup> about three or foure w<sup>ch</sup> weire hurte in the streetes w<sup>th</sup> shotts furthe of wyndowes."

\* \* \* \* \*  
Lord Capell  
comynge agaynst  
Namptwich. "On Wednesdayer in the Evenyng the xvij<sup>th</sup> of Maye 1643, The Lorde Capell w<sup>th</sup> a greate Company of Cavalier<sup>s</sup> bothe of Whitchurch and Shropshire & other places to the nu<sup>m</sup>ber of xv hundred or more (as was supposed), came agaynst Namptwiche (almost to the Aspell Streete end) & shott at the town: & they in the Towne lykewise att them (havinge notice by the Scouts of their approche, & beinge well p'ydyed to haue bidden them welcome); slewe three of them & wounded other some of them; where they contynuyng, indeavoring to plante foure peeces of ordnance (w<sup>ch</sup> they broughte with them) about Malpas-field But fynding all the groundes thereabouts to[o] heighe over the Towne, (not fitting their purpose) And the Towne Gunner throwinge wyld fier Balls a mongest them (beinge not able to stayer) betwixt on[e] & twoe a Clocke on Thursdayer mornynge, the[y] marched backe to Whitchurche w<sup>th</sup> greate disgrace, havinge p'formed nothinge nor soe much as hurte one man: onelie the[y] killed a calfe of m<sup>r</sup> Thomas Maynwarings, w<sup>ch</sup> they lefte behind them, & brooke some. Barnes for Hayer; Wherevpon there was a Ryme made on them, viz.:

The Lord Capell w<sup>th</sup> a thousand & a halfe  
Came to Bartons Crosse\* & there they killd a Calfe:  
And stayinge there vntill the breake of Daye,  
The[y] tooke their heeles & fast the[y] fled away.

\* "Bartons Cross," now simply called "The Cross," is in Stapeley township, on the east side of Nantwich.



Att that tyme Colonell Brereton & all the horse were att Stafford from whence w<sup>th</sup> his horse hee returned to Namptwich on ffryday evenynge.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Thomas Malbon, having related how Warrington was surrendered into the hands of Sir George Booth, the lord of that town, continues his narrative as follows:—

*Whitchurch  
taken.*

“The xxix<sup>th</sup> of Maye beinge Mondaye aboute xj or xij a Clocke in the Nyghte, Colonell Brereton, w<sup>th</sup> the horse & almost all the foote in Namptwiche together w<sup>th</sup> all the Townesmen (exceptinge some fewe to garde the Towne) marched towards Whitchurch And came tethere aboute thre a Clocke on Tuesdaye mornynge, whoe sett vpon the Towne & the[y] did Resist them w<sup>th</sup> all their power, bothe horse & foote (beinge in the Towne as was supposed) about vj or vij hundred: The Namptwiche foote soldyer<sup>s</sup> ffyringe very fearecely vpon theym, and they in the Towne did the lyke, maynteynyng theirowkes & Towne very bravely: But ytt pleased God, after twoe howers fighte, very galantlie on bothe sides, that Namptwiche forces (w<sup>ch</sup> weire about Eyght hundred) killed some of the Gunne<sup>rs</sup> and other<sup>s</sup> at their workes neere the Claye pitts, dryying the Townesmen from their workes, & entered the Towne, w<sup>th</sup> losse of one man onelie slayne outrighte twoe or three sore wounded w<sup>ch</sup> dyed afterwards. And beinge in the Northe pte. of the Towne (many other Streets beinge not entered but lyinge open) Their horse & many of the townesmen & Soldyer<sup>s</sup> fledd. But there was taken about xx<sup>tie</sup> p<sup>erson</sup><sup>s</sup>; one very fayre foote Collo<sup>rs</sup>; foure good peeces of Ordnance; very many Armes; and much money & brave app<sup>ell</sup>. of the Lord Capells & other gent. Twoe Covered waggons, powder, Bullets, matches, & goods of the Soldyer<sup>s</sup> greate store, many Drumms, one Trumpett & many horses; the Soldyers havinge most of the pillage: Soe that there weire scarce any Soldyer<sup>r</sup>, but hee returned backe either horsed, or well laden w<sup>th</sup> pillage, or both; onelie taking them; not doinge the Towne any harme; And about iij a Clocke the same daye in the afternoone, They returned all backe agayne vnto Namptwiche, leauinge much Cheese, goods & Am<sup>un</sup>yon behind them onelie for want of Cartes and carryage: w<sup>ch</sup> vpon ffryday nexte after weire fetched thence, & broughte to Namptwiche; beinge waggons & Cartes Loades of Cheese, Bacon, Malte, Wheate, Corne, Armes, & goods, foureene loads, w<sup>ch</sup> came all saufe w<sup>th</sup>out any opposicon [opposition], takinge noe mans goods but onelie the Cavaliers.”

*Bootes taken  
from Shocklage &  
thereabouts.*

“On Monday the xij<sup>th</sup> of June 1643 some companyes of Dragoner<sup>s</sup> marched furthe towards the Holte (beinge then the fayre daye theire) And in farne [Farn] gave them an Alaram, w<sup>ch</sup> affrighted them sore: But they bended their course towards Shocklage in w<sup>ch</sup> pte. the[y] tooke fourescore and eighteene good Oxen & Cattell: And many horses & att Nighte returned w<sup>th</sup> them all saufe to Namptwiche.”

*Mr. Leeches howse  
& Company of  
Aray taken.*

“On Saturdaye the x<sup>th</sup> of June 1643 some Companyes marched furthe to Carden & sett vpon m<sup>r</sup> Leeches howse, (a Com<sup>ission</sup><sup>r</sup> of Arraye) whoe did oppose them; But in the end they gott the howse; apprehended him; broughte him w<sup>th</sup> them p<sup>erson</sup><sup>r</sup>; plu<sup>d</sup>red his howse; Kild a servant maid w<sup>th</sup> shootinge att the howse, & broughte w<sup>th</sup> him, some other<sup>s</sup>, and some horses alsoe to Namptwiche.”

*Ammunicon*           “Upon Tuesday the xiiij of June Colonell Brereton havinge byn att  
*broughte to*           Liverpoole, for vnlodinge of a Ship, w<sup>ch</sup> was come thether from London  
*Namptwiche.*       w<sup>th</sup> his greate ordnance & Am'unycon. came w<sup>th</sup> his troupe of horse to  
Namptwiche & broughte with him *Doctor Byrom*\* p'soner, & vj Loads of his owne  
Am'unicon. in saufetie beinge accompanied w<sup>th</sup> many brave Captyns & com'anders.”

*Mr. Bostock*           “On Saturday the xvij of June 1643 *John Bostock* of Tatnull [Tattenhall]  
*did penance*           Esqr., Learned in the Lawes, Clerke vnto the Councell of warr at Nampt-  
*at the Cage.*       wiche beinge taken w<sup>th</sup> the Acte of Adultery w<sup>th</sup> one Alice Chetwood in  
the vicarage howse in Namptwiche, vpon the Sabothe daye att tyme of Dyvyne servis  
(where hee then lyved) was by Judgm<sup>t</sup> of the same Councell adjudged to stand in the  
markett place, vpon the markett daye, (beinge Saturdaye) duringe most pte. of that daye  
w<sup>th</sup> papers vpon his Brest (signifyng his offence) w<sup>ch</sup> was executed accordnglie w<sup>th</sup> his  
w—e standinge by him.”

*The evill marche*       “Upon Tuesday the xx<sup>th</sup> of June 1643 Colonell Brereton's troupe, *Captyn*  
*to Hanmer*           *Bulkeley* & many othe<sup>r</sup> troupe<sup>rs</sup> & Dragone<sup>rs</sup> marched furthe of Namptwiche  
                          behynd whitchurch to Hanmyre [Hanmer] & further, (for what entente  
was not certynlie Knowne), where they were sett vpon by the Lord Capell, & Welshe  
forces, (whoe had laid an ambush for them), who dispersed and scattered all the same  
Namptwich forces, beinge to[o] stronge for them. Soe that many of them were taken  
p'sone<sup>rs</sup>, some slayne,† many of them wounded, (althoughe some of the Kinges ptie. weire  
slayne and speciallie some of there Com'anders of greate sorte): w<sup>ch</sup> was the worst days  
worke that ever Namptwiche forces had from the Begynnyng. Att w<sup>ch</sup> tyme the[y] had the  
*Lieftn<sup>t</sup> Colonell & Captyn Sankie*, Captyn of Colonell Brereton's horse taken p'sone<sup>rs</sup> but  
noe more Com'anders.”

*Chester.*           “On Mondaye Eveninge xvij<sup>th</sup> of Julye 1643 Colonell Brereton w<sup>th</sup> almost  
all the forces in Namptwiche bothe horse and foote (exceptinge Captyn  
Massye and y<sup>e</sup> trayned bands of Namptwiche Hundred) Together w<sup>th</sup> all  
the forces in the Countie (on the pliam<sup>t</sup> ptie.) And some furthe of Stafford & Manchester  
marched towards Chester Citie att that Nighte intendinge to haue entered there outworks  
before they had byn awarr and soe donne; yf a messenger w<sup>ch</sup> was sente with letter<sup>s</sup> from  
old *nr<sup>e</sup> walthall or his wyfe*, had not given notice to the Citie, w<sup>ch</sup> was not aboute twee  
howers before the forces came thether. But vpon that notice the forces in the Citie weire  
p'sentlie Ready & did vehementlye oppose the said Namptwiche forces, havinge made  
exceedinge stronge workes & mounted fourtie peeces of ordnance on the Castle, & other  
there workes, that noe good could be donne: (althoughe the[y] laye about ytt on the  
Lande side vntill Thursdaye mornynge, shooting & discharginge there musketts & some  
ordnance w<sup>ch</sup> was broughte thether (on bothe pties.) & some slayne on bothe sides And  
p'ceyvinge the[y] weire not then lykely to doe any good for wyunnyng of the Citie, (but  
by a longe siege) & hearinge that the Lord Capell had drawen greate companies furthe

\* ? Doctor John Byrom of Salford who eventually was one of the prominent characters in the rejoicings at Manchester at the Restoration.

† In Phillip's *Civil War in Wales*, vol. i, p. 161, it is related that “in the breeches of one of the Nantwich prisoners was found the surplice of Hanmer Church.” About twenty years ago, the body of, perhaps, one of the slain was found outside Hanmer, lying across a ditch, only covered with a few inches of soil as if hastily buried. There were buttons and other evidences of its being the body of a soldier two hundred years ago.—(Information by the Rev. M. H. Lee, Vicar of Hanmer).

of Shrovesbury & Reased the Trayned bands in Shropshire, & being advanced towards Chester as far as to Orton Maddocke, Colonell Brereton reased his seige & marched backe to Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> his ordnance Carryage and all in saufety, havinge lost onely twoe com'on Soldy<sup>er</sup>s & foure other wounded, but not mortaly. The reporte was afterwards that there was slayne in the Citie xv whereof on[e] was a woman & the other a Childe."

\* \* \* \* \*

Lord Capell came w<sup>th</sup> a great force to the nu'ber of three thowsand came to Ravensmore, appearing att the firste not aboue twoe or three Troupes of horse, Colonell Brereton beinge then at Stafford. The Soldyers & some Townesmen yssued furthe of Namptwiche p'ceyvinge their nu'ber soe fewe, w<sup>th</sup> good store of horse wch when the Enemy p'ceaved they broughte vp more of their horse, (beinge readie in Baddington Lane) & advanced towards Namptwiche forces. So they p'sentlie fyred on bothe sides. But the Kinges ptie. still increasinge the Towne forces retreated homewards, w<sup>th</sup>out much harme onelie *Lieftent Ashley\** was, by mischance, slayne by one of his fellowes, & *Dicke Massie & one other Com'on Soldyer* weire slayne w<sup>th</sup> a Cannon Bullett from the Enemy. That nighte the Kinges ptie. w<sup>th</sup> many loades of Carryage & foure greate peeces of ordnance laye quyetelie vpon Ravensmore. And the same Nighte & the daye followinge the Soldy<sup>er</sup>s in the Towne fyred & burned all *w<sup>th</sup> walthall's* outbyldings on the Heath-side, fyryng the Hall, w<sup>ch</sup> receyved some harme, but was not burned downe; & alsoe the[y] burned *Thomas Cu'[n]berbach's* howse, & Stable, widowe *Podmores* howse & Stable, *Marchants Barne*, All the coates [cottages] on the Heath next towards the Towne: *Roger Wrights Barne*, *Thomas Burrowes Barne*, *Saboth Churches Barne*, *John Yardleys Barne*, *Massie & Bromhalls* howses at *NEWE TOWNE*: and they caused *Richard Wicksteeds Barne* & all the Coates & dwellinge howses on Acton pavem<sup>t</sup> to bee pulled downe for feare lest the Enemy sholde bee sheltred there; Upon ffryday mornynge about Sixe a Clocke, they assaulted the Towne on the southe side, betwixte *Marche Lane & Weeuer*; (beinge a very thicke darke mist, fitt for their purpose); And beinge very neere the works before the[y] weire Seene of any of the Townesmen, ffyred very vehementlie: & plaid w<sup>th</sup> their Cannons agaynst the Towne very muche; as fast as ever they cold discharge; but (thanks bee to God) did noe harme att all, neither slewe nor wounded any; but onelie one hurte in the side of his Necke, w<sup>ch</sup> was not mortall), And they receyved the lyke from the Towne, bothe w<sup>th</sup> musketts & ordnance; and soe contynued on bothe sides vntill betwixt ix & x a Clocke in the affore noone. The mist beinge then gonne & the Sonne shynynge fayre, and the Kinges forces p'ceyvinge them selves neere[r] the works, then [than] they ymaged, & p'ceyvinge the great daunger [they] weire In, fledd as fast as they cold; But not soe fast but the ordnance and muskett shott, did overtake them, in suche man'[ner] as about xl<sup>tie</sup> [40] of them weire slayne, & xvj [16]

\* Nantwich Register records the burials of these three soldiers:—

" 1643 Aug. 5. Edward Ashley Lieutenant."  
 " " " Richard Massey, trouper."  
 " " " Allen Swanick, trouper."

sore wounded, (as was credeblic reported); & some of theim of good sorte, whose names cold not bee Knowne; & theire upon they beinge fledd & gonne for the rest of that daye and the Nighte followinge the Towne was in quyett. Although about midnight An idell Alaram (gyven by the watch) by reason of sparks of fyer w<sup>ch</sup> they sawe p'ceedinge from seu'all [several] howses & Barnes w<sup>ch</sup> weire burned the daye before; thinking they had byn lighte matches of the Enmyes. Many companies bothe Horse and foote, (hereing of the beseiging of the said Towne), came furthe of Lancashire & Staffordshire to theire *Ayde come to* Ayde; And vij score Dragone<sup>rs</sup> came from the Morelands in Staffordshire; *Namptwiche.* soe farr as Haslington on Saturdaye the v<sup>th</sup> of Auguste in Ayde of the said Towne; where they did quarter them selves that Nighte; beinge w<sup>th</sup>in fyve myles of the said Towne & hearinge the Enmye was fledd the[y] returned back agayne to theire owne homes."

Other reinforcements from Wales, under Sir Thomas Middleton, of Chirk, an able and active parliamentary general, came to Nantwich and strengthened the garrison. In after years, when the Parliament held the reins of government, Sir Thomas Middleton, finding he had helped to establish a more intolerable tyranny than that which he had formerly opposed, changed his opinions, and, in 1659 took up arms in connection with Sir George Booth, in order to restore the ancient constitution.\* He is mentioned in "*The Mystery of the Good Old Cause*," in 1660, as "Sir Thomas Middleton, major-general for Denbigh, and five other counties, who hath manifested his loyalty to his Prince, and is a true patriot of his country." Though not loyal to King Charles I, his patriotism was none the less, when Malbon wrote:—

*Thomas Middleton* "Upon Saturdaye mornynge aboute Noone Colonell Brereton came w<sup>th</sup> *cominge to* some fforces to Namptwiche beinge the xix of August 1643; And about viij *Namptwiche* a Clocke att Nighte *Sr Thomas Middleton* w<sup>th</sup> greate forces, Seyvon [seven] *19 Aug. 1643.* greate peeces of ordnance, some cases of Drakes, and aboute furtie Carryage of Armes and Ammunycon came alsoe to Namptwiche where hee contynued for a certyn space."

*Dirtwiches* "On Mondaye the xxviij of August aforsaid *Captyn Croxton* & *Captyn* *the workes* *Venables* † Companies (w<sup>th</sup> other w<sup>ch</sup> laye in garryson att Cholmley) marched *destroyed.* to bothe Townes of Dirtwiches, § beinge places where Salte was made w<sup>ch</sup> the Kinges side had; And there they defaced cutt in peeces & spoyled all theire workes, pumps, and Salte pitts & broughte some of theire Pannes to Namptw<sup>ch</sup>; whereby all their Salte makinge was spoyled, w<sup>ch</sup> found the Kinges armye att Shrowesbury, Wales, & many of theire quarte<sup>rs</sup>, Salte. The Lord Caple [Capell] havinge before made p'clamacon that non shold fetche any Salte from Namptwiche." \* \* \* \* \*

*The whole Army* "Vpon the xiiij of September 1643 a greate pte. of the p'liamt Army *removed to Wem.* Marched furthe of Namptwiche in the afternoone & were quatered in Blakenall, Checkley, Dodington & the Townes thereabouts. And vpon ffridaye the nexte

\* Pennants Tour in Wales, vol. i. p. 364. Edit. 1810.

† Captain or Colonell Thomas Croxton of Ravenscroft, co. Cheshire.

‡ Captain Venables, afterwards Governor of Chester; he was sent by Cromwell as General of the Forces, together with Admiral Penn, against Hispaniola and Jamaica.—("Civil War Tracts," p. 354. Chet. Soc. Pub. vol. ii.)

§ *Dirtwich*, or *Foulwich*, in Broxton Hundred.

daye after Colonell Brereton, Sr Thomas Middleton & all the rest of the Army (excepte the trayned band of Namptw<sup>ch</sup> Hundred & some Soldy<sup>ers</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> laye in garrison att Cholmley) marched furthe of Towne, w<sup>th</sup> all Sr Thomas Middletons ordnance & drakes vnto whome all the rest (quartred furthe of Towne before) resorted. And the nexte Nighte The[y] quartred att Drayton & in all the Townes & villages thereabouts keepinge their Randevous theire vntill Tuesdaye nexte followinge. And then sending furthe their warrants they called In all that Countrey thereabouts to a Gen'all Muster & contynued att Drayton vntill frydaye the xxij of Septemb[er] nexte followinge. And then all the whole Armye marched thence to Wem and fortified that Towne, quartring their Army in all the Townes & places nexte adioynynge."

\* \* \* \* \*

While the parliamentary forces were being concentrated at Wem with a view to an early attack on Shrewsbury, Lord Capell again marched against Nantwich. The trainbands bravely defended the town on Monday, the 16th Oct. 1643; and early the following morning Lord Capell retreated on the approach of Colonel Brereton and Sir Thomas Middleton, who entered the town a few hours after, as told by Malbon, as follows:—

*Lord Capell  
marching to  
Nemptwiche.*

"On Saturdaye the xiiij<sup>th</sup> of October 1643 Intelligence was sente to Namptwiche that the Lord Capell w<sup>th</sup> very greate forces to the nu'ber of three thowsand and more, vij score Carryages, three greate peeces of Ordnance & a Morter peece weire agayne comynge agaynst the Towne. The Townesmen especially the howsholder<sup>rs</sup> & many other<sup>rs</sup> besides the Gardes, (w<sup>ch</sup> weire doubled) did watche all Nighte. But hard [heard] noe more of them; but that they weire quartred att Whitchurch, Combermeire, Marburye, Norbury, Burleydam & the places thereabouts. Vpon Sondaye mornynge there was an Alaram in Towne, w<sup>ch</sup> did mucche affrighte them (but w<sup>th</sup>out cause). On Sondaye Nighte a greate Garde was sett in Towne but all was quytt; But on Mondaye the xvij<sup>th</sup> of OOctober 1643 about one a Clocke in thafter noone the said Lord was advanced to Acton w<sup>th</sup> all their Army, Carryages, before any intelligence came to Towne: Then some Dragone<sup>rs</sup> & twoe foote companyes yssued furthe of Towne towards them att Acton, & fyred upon them, & did dryve them into Acton Church, w<sup>ch</sup> some of them tooke for saufeguard, but many of the rest tooke Derfold Howse. But by reason the Enmy had taken those two stronge holds, The townesmen retreated into the Towne fyred att them, as the[y] sawe occasion, over the walles. The Enmy dispersed them selves into the fields, & downe Henhull Lane to Beamebridge, contynuallie shootinge att the Towne w<sup>th</sup> their musketts, to smale purpose; but came not neere the walles; w<sup>ch</sup> the Townesmen p<sup>ce</sup>eyvinge, some well spirited men of the Towne, vpon their owne accorde, w<sup>th</sup>out any com'and, leaped over the walles w<sup>th</sup> their musketts well charged, & Ran disorderlie towards them; fyinge vpon them, & the Enmy the lyke on them agayne all one afternoone; vntill almost Nighte, that the Enmy bothe horse & foote fled, some of them beinge slayne & aboute sixe or eighte of them taken p<sup>er</sup>son<sup>rs</sup>, & soe for that tyme all [was] quytt on bothe sides. That Nighte all the Townesmen, & Countrey men w<sup>ch</sup> come In to Ayde the Towne, beinge greate Company bothe of men & horse, Did all watch att the Walles; (the Enmy beinge then att Acton & Derfold); They expectynge howerlie

to bee assaulted by the Enmy, & that they wold fall upon the Towne: but vpon Tuesdaye mornynge, when a greate assault was expected to haue byn made by the Enmy, worde was broughte to the Towne that the Enmy, (very manfullie), weire all fledd & gone away about midnight; w<sup>ch</sup> was att the first not credited; but p<sup>ved</sup> trewe: About vij a Clocke on Tuesdaye mornynge Colonell Brereton, Sr Thomas Middleton, & Colonell Greaves, w<sup>th</sup> almost all theire Armes marched to Namptwiche, (exceptinge a Considerable nu<sup>ber</sup> lefte behind theire att Wem, for sauegarde thereof,) to haue releued and Ayde the Towne (not hearinge of the Enmyes dep<sup>ture</sup>) And beinge come thether & the Enmy fled they sente after them some forces whoe tooke about fourtie of the meane<sup>r</sup> sorte of the Enmyes p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup> the best weire fledd, whiche was all the Enmy then lost, savinge three slayne att Acton; And soe (by Gods mercy) the Towne was then p<sup>r</sup>served w<sup>th</sup>out losse of any one, savinge two shott in the Armes, thoughe not muche the worse."

\* \* \* \* \*

Another account of this assault is contained in a small quarto tract of 6 pp., entitled "*Shropshires Misery and Mercie manifested in the defeat given to the Lord Capels . . . Armie by the Forces of Cheshire and Shropshire*" . . . London, Nov. 8, 1643;" as follows:—

"That when they [*i.e.* the Lord Capell's forces from Shrewsbury &c.] all came against *Namptwich* upon Monday *October 16* [1643] they were so confident of surprizing the same as that the Lord Capel (as it is reported) returned backe all the *Chester* horse, which were tendered unto him and coming to his assistance, returning this answer, that he had strength sufficient to take *Namptwich*, to which end he did speedily (& that before notice was given of his aproach) seize upon and possesse himselfe of *Acton Church* and *Dartford* [Dorfold] house, and attempted to force theire passage by the way of Beame-bridge, but by the valour of those few men who were left in the Town they were repulsed from passing the water, not without the losse of divers of theire men: Foure whereof were found dead in the ditch: those that attempted to undermine the walls in the darknesse of the night were taken prisoners, and this night, and the next morning there were nere forty prisoners taken, besides many horses and Armes, and many of their men run away: And upon the newes of our aproach to their reliefe, they sent away their cariages, and marched after them with speed towards *Wem*."

"This was the fifth time they did come before and attempt this poore Town of *Namptwich*, which the Lord hath miraculously preserved and defended, and returned them allwayes backe with shame and dishonour."

Malbon next relates how Lord Capell, being repulsed at Wem, and pursued by Col. Brereton, retreated to Shrewsbury. Col. Brereton, having put the town of Whitchurch "to CCC<sup>li</sup>. [£300] ransome, beinge a Cavalier place, to save ytt from plu<sup>d</sup>ring," came to Nantwich; and the next day a few horse soldiers going from Nantwich towards Chester, "came to Andford [Aldford] where they tooke *Captyn Davenport*, w<sup>ch</sup> had broken p<sup>r</sup>son [prison] att Namptwiche, *Captyn Lieften<sup>t</sup> Harte*,† *Cornet Leighe*, *Cornet Maynwaringe*, *Cornet Healey*, *Ensigne Thornycrofte*, a quarter maister, a Surgeon, yonge M<sup>r</sup> *Tannatt* of Broxton, *Captyn Leigh*, or his Lieftent wounded, but not taken, some soldy<sup>e</sup>s slayne & dyvers com<sup>on</sup>

\* A copy of this scarce tract is in the possession of J. P. Earwaker, F.S.A., to whom I am indebted for the above extract.

† "Henry Hearte, Leinetenant," was buried at Nantwich on 16 March, 1644-5.—(Par. Reg.)

*Sr' soners att  
Churton &  
Andford [Aldford]* Soldyets taken p<sup>r</sup>soners vpon frydaye the xx<sup>th</sup> of October 1643. Vpon Saturday the xxi<sup>st</sup> of October, They were all broughte p<sup>r</sup>soners to Namptwiche, whither the Reste of the Army returned, non[e] of Namptwiche forces neither slayne nor wounded, savinge one *Bulkeley* a com'on Soldyete, w<sup>ch</sup> was taken plu'dring in Andford [Aldford] p<sup>r</sup>soner by the Enemy by reason hee did not marche away w<sup>th</sup> his followers."

*Sr Edward  
Broughton & his 2  
Sonnets p<sup>r</sup>soners.* "On Mondaye morninge the xxij of October some of Sr Thomas Midletons troupe, w<sup>th</sup> some other of the Companies in Namptwiche marched furthe of Towne into Wales & broughte in Sr Edward Broughton & twoe of his sonnets p<sup>r</sup>soners to Namptwiche from their owne howse."

*Holte taken  
firste tyme.* "On Tuesday the vij of November Colonell Brereton & Sr Thomas midleton w<sup>th</sup> their Companies bothe horse & foote marched forthe of Namptwiche agayn towards Wales. The firste Nighte they quartred att woodhey, Ridley, & thereabouts: on Wednesdaye the viij<sup>th</sup> of November 1643, they marched forward & quartred att Barton-on-the-hill, Stretton, & the Countrey thereabouts, where they had Alaram gyven them by the Kinges ptie. at Holte; but they drave them backe, & slewe some of them w<sup>th</sup>out any losse. And vpon Thursdaye, Lancashire forces came & Joyned w<sup>th</sup> the p<sup>r</sup>liamt forces & marched altogether to Holte & ymedyatelie fell vpon the same. And by one a Clocke in thafter noone (throughe a pollicie) wonn the Brydge & (by gods assistance) a litle after, the Towne; w<sup>th</sup>out losse of any man; Although the Kinges forces weire in horse supposed to bee about one Thowsand, & their foote vij hundred, yett notw<sup>th</sup>standinge they all fledd; And oure foote followinge them in p<sup>r</sup>suite, fell upon their Arere of horse, & tooke *Captyn Preece*, *Captyn Johnes*, & *Lieutenant Salusbury* p<sup>r</sup>soners, w<sup>ch</sup> weire sente to Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> many other<sup>s</sup> taken p<sup>r</sup>soners, & Some of them slayne, & the Rest rowted & scattred."

*Harden [i.e.  
Hawarden Castle]  
taken.* "On Thursdaye Nighte, after they had taken Holte & left a considerable ptie theire, They marched to wrixam [Wrexham]; where they weire well entertayned, & quartred theire that Nighte; And the nexte daye marcheinge furthe into Wales tooke Harden Castle, & putt therein a Garrison; And, contynueing in Wales, the gentry & Com'onaltie submitted thein selves & Joyned w<sup>th</sup> them, soe that the Army was greatlye increased; where for a tyme the[y] remayned."

The movements of Lord Capell, though often unsuccessful, had been troublesome to Sir William Brereton, and gave time for the Royalists to strengthen Chester. Thither now the Parliament army had marched, and, occupying the Castles of Beeston, Holte, and Hawarden, purposed weakening the City, by cutting off all communication and supplies. But the arrival of troops in the estuary of the Dee towards the end of November, 1643, sent from Dublin by the Marquis of Ormond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in aid of King Charles, caused Sir William Brereton hastily to withdraw from Wales and retreat to Nantwich; and from that time the war assumed a more serious aspect. The Irish Army, as it was called, though both soldiers and officers were native Englishmen, carried terror with them from the time of their landing: and thus reinforced, Lord Byron advanced from Chester, of which he was Governor, against Nantwich. Hawarden Castle, Beeston

Castle, and Crewe Hall, surrendered in succession, and in an engagement near Middlewich the Parliament forces were defeated with great slaughter. So rapid was this march that before Christmas Nantwich was environed by the Royalist Army. Several determined attacks on the garrison were, however, gallantly resisted by the town soldiers, and after a siege of about seven weeks, Lord Byron sustained a complete overthrow at Acton, on 25th Jan. 1643-4, from the united forces of Sir William Brereton and Sir Thomas Fairfax, and fled back in haste to Chester.

The Malbon MS. relates these events with great minuteness of detail, as follows:—

*Parliament forces returned further of Wales.* “Colonell Brereton & the reste of the P’liamt forces remaynyng in Wales where they p’[ro]spered well (havinge many gent. & other<sup>s</sup> resortinge vnto them) But havinge intelligence that greate forces weire come from Ireland & landed in Wales to the nu’ber of twoe thowsand & fyve hundred; They all marched backe agayne to Holte; and on fryday the xxiiij<sup>th</sup> of November sente their Ordnance backe to Namptwiche; And vpon Saturday they all marched, some to Namptwiche, other some to Northwiche, & Lancashire men into Lancashire w<sup>th</sup> all their Carryage w<sup>thout</sup> either fighte or battell w<sup>th</sup> the Enymy, leavinge Harden Castle vnrelieved; wherein was Mr Ince a faythfull Mynister & firme for the p’liamt, and about one hundred and twentie Soldyers in greate daunger to haue byn destroyed, & lykewise many other frends, gent., & other<sup>s</sup> in Wales, w<sup>ch</sup> had byn aydinge vnto them, lefte all to the mercy of the bloody Irish Rebels. But the faulte was in Lancashire Soldy<sup>ers</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> wold not staye.”\*

*Harden Castle deliu’ed to the Kinge.* “Vpon or about the third of December 1643 Harden Castle was deliu’ed vp to the Kinges ptie. in Chester upon composi’con, viz.: That the [y] shold dep’tie. w<sup>th</sup> one Color flyinge, & the other Rowled vp, w<sup>th</sup> halfe of their Armes, & some Truncks & goods; w<sup>ch</sup> was p’formed. But some of them w<sup>ch</sup> came furthe of the Castle, in their retorne homewards towards Wrixam [Wrexham] weire cruelly vsed by some Welshmen, whoe did beate & wound some of them, slewe other some, & tooke the Wates[?] & Clothes from other some. But the fyfte of December, the foresaid Mr Ince, and some of the Soldy<sup>ers</sup>, came saufe to Namptwiche. On Saturdaye mornynge the ix<sup>th</sup> of December 1643, vj of the Irishe Soldy<sup>ers</sup> did over Run<sup>t</sup> them from Chester, & come to Namptwiche w<sup>th</sup> their Armes, where they weire entertayned.”

*Beeston Castle deliu’ed to the Kinge.* “On Wednesday morninge the xiiij<sup>th</sup> of December 1643, a litle before Daye, and after the Moon was sett, Captyn Sandford w<sup>th</sup> viij of his fyerlocks, (beinge in the Kinges ptie.) gott into the vpper warde of Beeston Castle, by a byeway, through treachery, as was supposed. For a litle after hee was entred, Thomas Steele, then gou’nor of the said Castle, after a shorte ply. [parley] betwixt them, Receyved Sandford into his Lodginge in the Lower warde, (beinge a very stronge hold), where they Dyned together, & much Beere was sente up into the heigher warde, by the said Steele vnto Sandfords Soldy<sup>ers</sup>; And, after dyn<sup>r</sup>, an Agreeem<sup>t</sup> was made betwixt them, That Steele shold deliu<sup>r</sup> vpp the Castle w<sup>th</sup> all am’unycon, goods, p’vision, & what els,

\* A Tract entitled “*Perfect Diurnall*” No. 21, p. 164, Dec. 18, 1643, quoted in “*Civil War Tracts*,” (Chet Soc Pub.) p. 152, says—“The Manchester men are returned home to divert General Kinges design either against Manchester or into Cheshire.”

† That is, six soldiers deserted the Irish Army, and were welcomed at Nantwich.



presentlie to the said Captyn Sandford: hee & his Soldy<sup>ers</sup> beinge about three score to dpte. away, onelie w<sup>th</sup> theire Colo<sup>rs</sup> & Armes; w<sup>ch</sup> was wickedly & treacherouslie p<sup>er</sup>formed by the said Captyn Steele. And the same daye att Nighte, they all came to Namptwiche, where the said Steele was presentlie ymprissoned, & Kepte close for feare the soldy<sup>ers</sup> in the Towne, (w<sup>ch</sup> did Rise in greate multitudes) wolde haue killed him. There was in the said Castle muche wealth, & goods of gent. & other neighbour<sup>s</sup>, broughte thether for safuety to a greate value, w<sup>ch</sup> the Enymy had, beside halfe a yeres p<sup>ro</sup>vision, att the leaste."

*A Skrimage  
att Burford.*

"The same daye att Nighte, & almost eu'y Night afterwards & eu'y daye the Kinges ptie. gave Alarms vpon the Towne vntill Sondaye nexte afterwards.

On Sondaye mornynge, att Sermon tyme, The Kinges ptie. was advauncing towards the Towne & gaue them an Alaram. The Captyns wente from Church & drewe all theire Soldy<sup>ers</sup> together, w<sup>th</sup> *Seriant maior Lothian*: And some of the horse advanced to Burfoote [Burford] neere Acton, where the Kinges ptie. was; & fallinge vpon some of theire horse (before the foote cold bee drawne together) some of the Kinges ptie. weire slayne, other some wounded, and some horse & men taken p<sup>er</sup>son<sup>er</sup>s (not w<sup>th</sup>out losse on the other side); And the said Seriant maior Lothian was taken p<sup>er</sup>son<sup>er</sup> by them before the foote companyes cold come from the Towne unto them, (althoughe they made a greate speed). But they weire fledd, soe that the foote Soldy<sup>ers</sup> had noe sight of them. But on the same Sonday att Nighte they gave the Towne another Alaram, Soe that from the tyme the Castle was lost, vntill that tyme, the Towne was neu' [never] in quyett; neither did they goe to Bed either daye or nighte."

*The beginnynge  
of the greate siege  
agaynst  
Namptwiche.*

"The Kinges forces advanced towards the Towne of Namptwiche vnto Stoke, Hurleston, Brynley, Wrenbury and all the Countrey thereabouts, Robbinge, Plu'dring, & takinge eu'y mans goods, all the next weeke after: vntill ffrydaye the xxij<sup>th</sup> of December 1643: Vpon w<sup>ch</sup> daye they passed ou' [over] the River of Weever to Aldelem, Hankelow, Buerton, Hatherton, Blakenhall, Wibunbury & all the reste of the Townes thereabouts. And vpon Saturday the[y] marched to Barthomley, gyyvinge an Alaram vpon the Hall of Crewe, wherein Colonell Brereton had placed a Garrison for the Parliam<sup>t</sup>."

*Barthomley  
Churche.*

"The Kinges ptie. comynge to Barthomley Church, did sett upon the same; wherein about xx<sup>tie</sup> Neighbours where gonne for theire saufegarde. But *maior Connaught*, maior to *Colonell Sneyde*, (whom they in the Church did take for the *Lord Brereton*),\* w<sup>th</sup> his forces by wyelcome entred the Church. The people w<sup>th</sup>in gatt up into the Steeple; But the Enymy burnynge formes, pewes, Rushes, & the lyke, did smother them in the Steeple that they weire Enforced to call for quarter, & yelde them selves; w<sup>ch</sup> was graunted them by the said Connaught; But when hee had them in his power, hee caused them all to be stripped starke Naked; And moste barborouslie & contr'y. [contrary] to the Lawes of Armes, murdered, stabbed and cutt

\* "*Lord Brereton*." This was William, second Lord Brereton, of Brereton Hall, Cheshire, a distinguished Royalist serving in Lord Byron's army. He was taken prisoner with his wife and son, at Bidduph Hall, co. Stafford, on 20 Feb. 1643-4; and suffered sequestration of his estates, compounding for them at the excessive price of £1738 18s. He was buried at Brereton, 21st April, 1664, and four of his daughters afterwards resided in Hospital Street, Nantwich, and were buried in the south transept of Nantwich Church. (See *postea*).

the Throats of xij of them;\* viz: *mr John fowler* (Scholem<sup>r</sup>), *Henry fowler*, *mr Thomas Eleocke*, *James Boughey*, *Randall Hassall*, *Richard Steele*, & *Richard Steele*, [*bis.*] *Will<sup>m</sup>. Steele*, *George Burrowes*, *Thomas Hollins*, *James Butler*, & *Richard Cawell*; & wounded all the reste, leavinge many of them for Dead. And on Christmas daye, and St<sup>e</sup>. Stevens Daye, the[*y*] Contynued plu'dringe & destroyinge all Barthomley, Crewe, Haslington, & the places adiacent takinge all their goods, victualls, Clothes, and stripped many, bothe men & women almost naked. And vpon Christmas daye 1643, towards Nighte, a nother pte. of the Kinges forces, marched to Sandbach, most crewelly plu'dring & spoylinge eu'yone."

*Battell in  
Bouth Lane.*

"On St<sup>e</sup>. Stephens daye [26 Dec.] 1643. The Namptwiche Army, (savinge those lefte to tend the Towne) beinge att or about Middlewiche & Hulmes Chappell, marched towards Sandbach; & in Bouth Lane, neere Middlewiche, mett the Kinges forces; where there was a greate Battell; but the Parliamt<sup>t</sup> side, beinge as ytt seemed not stronge enough, Retyled backe to Middlewiche; and the Kinges pte. in p'suite after them, dtd dryve them awaye, where they lefte their Magazen, & many slayne & wounded on bothe sides; ytt was reported that the pliam<sup>t</sup> pte. slayne & taken p<sup>r</sup>soners<sup>s</sup> weire aboute twoe hundred. But what the Kinges pte. loste was neu<sup>t</sup> [er] knowne."†

*Hall of Crewe  
yelded to the  
Enymy.*

"A Garrison [being] putt into the Hall of Crewe for the p<sup>r</sup>liamt<sup>t</sup> pte., The Kinges forces laid greate Seige agaynst the same howse; And on St. Johns Daye [Dec. 27], in Christmas 1643, they in the howse, slewe from the howse about three score of the Kinges pte., & wounded many; But the Kinges forces encreasinge to a very greate nu<sup>m</sup>ber, And Namptwiche not able to releave them, & they in the howse wantinge bothe victualls and Amunycon, vpon Innocents daye [Dec. 28] att Nighte, not able to houlde out any longer, & p<sup>r</sup>ceyvinge noe Aide comyng to them, (althoughe as valiant Soldy<sup>e</sup>rs as any weire) weire enforced to yeld upp the howse & them selves p<sup>r</sup>soners<sup>s</sup> to the Kinges pte.; haveinge quarter gyven them; And beinge in their custodie (to the nu<sup>m</sup>ber of one hundred or more) weire all putt p<sup>r</sup>soners<sup>s</sup> into the Stable, & afterwards putt into Betley Churche."

*Enymy beseiged  
the Towne Round.*

"On Saturday Nighte, the xxx<sup>th</sup> of December, about foure hundred of the Kinges forces came backe ou<sup>r</sup> [er] the water to Wrenbury, & the places thereabouts; & in short tyme beseiged the Towne Round on that side; & another pte. of them were att Wistaston, Willaston & the rest of the Townes [townships] on another side."

*Derfold and  
Acton Church.*

"Upon Tuesday, the second of January 1643[-4] They entred into Derfold howse, w<sup>th</sup>out resistance; soe that those in the Towne weire enforced to tende the Wal[*l*]es bothe daye & Night. But Acton Churche

\* Although Mr. Hinchliffe (*Hist. of Barthomley*, p. 41-2) attempts to cast suspicion on the accuracy of this account; it is remarkable that *Lord Byron*, in a letter to the Marquis of Newcastle, dated 26th Dec. 1643, avowed and defended the massacre: saying, "*The Rebels had possessed themselves of a Church at Bartumley, but wee presently beat them forth of it, and put them all to the sword, which I find to be the best way to proceed with their kind of people, for mercy to them is cruelty*"—(*Civil War Tracts*, p. 154). To the same effect it is said in "*Certaine Informations*," No. 52, p. 409, Jan. 15, 1644. "*We also hear that those Irish have heaved a godly minister in pieces, and so have begun a new Irish massacre in England;*" alluding to this Schoolmaster, probably in holy orders, and the son of Richard Fowler, then Rector of Barthomley.

† The forces here overpowered and routed by Lord Byron, were "a part of Colonel Ashtons (of Penketh, co. Lanc.) regement from Lancashire, going to assist Sir William Brecon."—*Perfect Diurnal*, No. 25, p. 199, (quoted in *Civil War Tracts*, p. 153).

was Kepte w<sup>th</sup> a reasonable force by *Captyn Sadler*, sente furthe of Towne who did defend ytt very manfullie agaynst many assaults & Cannon shotts made by the Kinges ptie. ffrom the Churche, the p'liam<sup>t</sup> ptie. Killed the Canoneire & twoe more of them; And alsoe the widowe Parson dwellinge neere the Churche & fyve of them in hir howse weire alsoe slayne w<sup>th</sup> shott from the Churche."

*Dodington Hall.* "The fourth of January, 1643[-4] the Kinges Army beseiged Dodington Hall, wherein was *Captyn Harwar* for the p'liam, w<sup>th</sup> about one hundred men well Armed & p'vision and Magazen sufficiente for a fortnight; yett the same was deliu'ed to the Kinges ptie. w<sup>th</sup> all the Armes, amunyon, & p'vision in the Howse, w<sup>th</sup>out any greate resistance; And the said Captyn, & all his Company departed. [departed] awaye, onelie w<sup>th</sup> their app'ell.; & went to Wem, not beinge suffred to come to Namptwiche."<sup>\*</sup>

*Comynge of the Enymy.* "The Towne beinge Nighte & Daye offred to bee assaulted by the Kinges forces, and contynuall allaroms gyven all that weeke; On Saturday, the vj<sup>th</sup> [?] of January 1643[-4], some forces yssued furthe of Towne, & fetched into the Towne, syven [seven] of the Kinges carryages laden w<sup>th</sup> goods & p'vision, & most of them drawn w<sup>th</sup> good Oxen; w<sup>ch</sup> soe raged them, That they presntlie wente & burned *Thomas Evansons* howse & Barne, *Saboth Churches* Lodge, & many stacks of haye, & some other Lodges lykewyse."

*Ann Davenportes Slayne.* "The Kinges forces, havinge compassed the Towne Round, contynued their allaroms agaynst the Towne bothe daye & Nighte; and on Wednesdaye Night [10 Jan.] they, havinge planted a greate peece of Ordnance neere Derfold Howse, did, about xj a Clock in the Night, shoote & discharge many glead [*i.e.* hot] Redd Bullets into the Towne; whereof one of them did light in a hovell of Kidds of *mr Thomas Wilbrahams*,† att the upper ende of Welshe Rowe towards Derfold, and sett the same on fyer; but throughe gods mercye, & help of many woemen carryinge water & takeinge greate paynes (for the men durst not remove from the Wales [walls]) did quenche the same; litle harme beinge done. But they sceinge the fyer, shott very fast w<sup>th</sup> their Canons att the fyer,‡ intendinge to Kill those w<sup>ch</sup> came to quenche the same, and did kyll a daughter of one John Davenport§ w<sup>th</sup> a Canon Bullett; w<sup>ch</sup> was the first that was either slayne or wounded in the Towne, from the first beygynnyng of the seige."

\* This assault and the other victories of Lord Byron above mentioned are also given in a curious and scarce pamphlet entitled "MAGNALIA DEI: a Relation of some of the many Remarkable Passages in Cheshire, Before the Siege of Namptwich, during the Continuance of it; And at the happy raising of it by the victorious Gentlemen *Sir Tho. Fairfax* and *Sir William Brereton*. London: Printed for *Robert Bostock*, dwelling at the Signe of the Kinges Head in Pauls Church-yard. 1644."

† The Account of the siege of Nantwich contained in the Rev. J. Partridge's "History of Nantwich," is taken from this pamphlet.

‡ *Mr. Thomas Wilbraham* of Townsend, Nantwich, had died in Sussex on 18th Oct. 1643, but his son *Roger Wilbraham*, many years after, thus alluded to this circumstance in his "Journal"—"The Christmas after my father's death (A<sup>o</sup> 1643) the Towne being then a Garrison for the Parliam<sup>t</sup> was closely besieged by the Irish Army, who made severall shott, which endangered the firing of House at y<sup>e</sup> Townsend; where I then lay senseless of y<sup>e</sup> Danger we were in, under a sore fever," &c.

§ This cannonade on the 10th January, 1643-4, followed Col. Geo. Booth's refusal to yield up the town after Lord Byron had sent a peremptory summons to surrender. The Summons was first printed in the tract "*Magnalia Dei*."

¶ The Parish Register records the burial of this young woman; but gives the name as *Margery*—

"1643-4. Jan. 10. Margery Dau, of John Davenport."

“ On fryday mornynge, the xij<sup>th</sup> of January 1643[-4], many of the Kinges forces beinge in and about *Geffrey Minshulls* howse & Barne, & att *Thomas Duttons* howse, neere vnto the Towne, some fewe yssued furthe of the Towne, & fyred M<sup>r</sup> Minshulls Barne, & twoe Coates of Duttons, w<sup>ch</sup> weire burned downe to the grounde; & tooke twoe p<sup>r</sup>soners, & killed ix or x (as was reported) & broughte in a woman p<sup>r</sup>son<sup>r</sup> alsoe, w<sup>ch</sup> had xx<sup>tie</sup> halfe crowne peices in hir pockett, w<sup>th</sup>out losse of any man, savinge twoe w<sup>ch</sup> were a litle hurte.”

“ The seige thus contynnyng & the Towne neu’ [never] in quyett scythens [since] the losse of Beeston Castle, beinge wholie Surrounded by the Kinges ptie., Soe that the Markett was lost, & non durst come to Towne to bringe either any p<sup>v</sup>ision or fuell, nor fetch any Salte; nor any yssue forth or come In; yett (blessed be god) there was not for the p<sup>r</sup>sent any want of any needfull thinge, althrough the officer<sup>s</sup> & Soulder<sup>s</sup> in Towne, beside townesfolke, weire many.”

Throughout the siege, the garrison of Nantwich was under the command of Colonel George Booth, the grandson and heir apparent of Sir George Booth, Bart., Lord of Dunham Massey and Warrington, who, though nearly eighty years of age, acted as one of the deputy-lieutenants at the commencement of the War. The Colonel, who so gallantly defended the town, fifteen years after came with forces to Nantwich as Sir George Booth, then the prominent supporter of Charles II, (see *postea*), and ultimately became the first Lord Delamere.

The cannonade of the 10th Jan. having failed, Lord Byron\* despatched a second summons, dated 16th Jan.; which together with the spirited reply of Colonel Booth, are here given as they were first printed in “*Magnalia Dei*,” (1644); as follows:—

“*To the Inhabitants and Commanders of the Towne of Namptwich.*”

“Whereas I am certainly enformed as well by divers of the Souldiers who are now my prisoners, as by severall other creditable persons, that you are not only in a desperate condition, but that the late Summons I sent to the Towne hath been suppressed and concealed from the Inhabitants thereof, and they most grossely abused, by being told that no mercie was intended to be shewed by this Armie to the Towne, but that both man, woman, and child should bee put to the sword; I have therefore thought fit once more to send unto you, that the minds of the people with you, may be dispossessed of that false and wicked slander, which hath been cast upon this Armie: And I doe charge you (as you will answer Almighty God for the lives of those persons, who shall perish by your perfidious dealings with them) that you impart and publish the said Summons I sent to the people with you; and that you yeeld up the Towne of Namptwich into my hands, for his Majesties use, and submit yourselves to his Majesties mercie, which I am willing to offer unto you. Though I am confident, that neither of yourselves, nor by any aid that can come unto you, there is any possibilitie for you to escape the hands of this Armie. If you please to send two gentlemen of qualitie to me, the one a Commander, the other a Townes-man, whereby you may receive better satisfaction, I shall give safe conduct and hostage for their returne.

I doe expect a present answer from you,

JOHN BYRON.”

“Jan. 16, 1643”[-4].

\* John, first Lord Byron, who, after his defeat at Nantwich in the following week, became the royalist Governor of Chester, had been raised to the Peerage by the title of Baron of Rochdale, on 24th Oct. 1643.

[*Reply of Colonel George Booth to Lord Byron's Summons.*"]

"We have received your last Summons, and do returne this answer; that wee never reported, or caused to be reported, that your Lordship, or the Armie intended any such crueltie; wee thinking it impossible for Gentlemen and Souldiers so much to forget humanitie: and if any have informed you otherwise, it is their owne conceit, and no realitie. Concerning the publishing of your former Summons, it was publicly read amongst the Souldiers and Townes-Men, as your Trumpetter can witness; and since that time multitudes of coppies of it have been dispersed among the Townes-Men and others; and from none hath it been concealed and detained. For the delieverie of this towne, Wee may not with our consciences, credits, or reputations, betray that trust reposed in us, for maintaining and defending this towne, as long as any enemy shall appear to offend it. Though we be termed Traytours and Hypocrites, yet we hope and are confident, God will evidence and make knowne to the world in his due time (though for the present we should suffer) our zeale for his Glorie, our unfained and unspotted loyaltie towards his Majestie and sinceritie in all our professions.

GEORGE BOOTH."

On the 18th Jan. a more determined attack on the town was made; but Lord Byron was repulsed with the loss of some of his best generals; as related by Malbon.

"On Tuesday, the xvij<sup>th</sup> of January 1643[-4] some of many Companies in Towne, yssue furthe att the Scownce\* on *w<sup>th</sup> Tho: Maynwaringes* backside towards *vid.* [widow] *Bronchalls* Barne, where the Kinges forces weire; & att the end theireof, had made some walles & works for their p<sup>r</sup>servacon; But the Townesmen quyettelie entered the same, & drove them awaye; & found some of their clothes; their killed some of them, & broughte in some Armes & Ammunycon, w<sup>th</sup> loss onelie of one *Blackshawe*† (a good Soldy<sup>er</sup>) whoe ventered too farr. Vpon Wednesday, the xvij<sup>th</sup> of January, The Kinges ptie. shott very muche agaynst the Towne, and discharged their Canons foure score & sixteene tymes, (as was noted by some), but did neither execution nor harme att all. But upon Thursdaye mornynge, directlie att Break of Daye, The Kinges forces did very fiercely assaulte the towne on eu<sup>y</sup> side; But the Towne defended them selves, beinge then ready att the Wal[l]es, very valiantlie & resolutelie to Dye, Rather then [than] loose the Towne: where there was for the space of an hower & somethinge more, very good servys p<sup>r</sup>formed on bothe sides. But then the Kinges forces fledd when ytt was fayre daylighte, noe faster than their legges could carry them: Leavinge behind them their Skalinge Ladders, & many wood Kidds, w<sup>ch</sup> they had broughte w<sup>th</sup> them, & some of their Armes; And about one hundred dead Bodies, w<sup>ch</sup> they cold not take w<sup>th</sup> them, (for hast[e]) & many wounded. *Captyn Sandford*‡ was slayne behind the mounte on *Richard Wicksteeds* backside; and a gent., one of his fyerlocks, & taken there over the Wal[l]es the gent. was taken alive, but dyed the same daye; & some other of their Com<sup>r</sup>anders weire alsoe slayne,

\* "Scownce," or *Sconce*; i.e. fort, or mound.

† "1643-4. Jan. 19. Hugh Blackshaw, soldier."—(Nantwich Burial Reg.) And on the same day, "*Richard Barker, Robert Woodcock, Richard Hough, and John Warburton, soldiers.*" (*Ibid.*)

‡ Captain Thomas Sandford was the second son of Robert Sandford of Sandford co. Salop. It is said that he and some others killed before Nantwich, were removed to Chester and Buried in the Cathedral—(*Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 417). It is also stated in Edmund Ludlow's *Memoirs*, Edit. 1698, Vol. 1, p. 77, that Captain Sandford's assault was made "whilst the works were but slenderly defended; the Guard consisting for the most part of Townesmen, who were then gone to dinner. But it so happened, that a boy of the age of 15 firing a musquett from the Town, shot him dead in the place, which discouraged his souldiers from any further attempt."—(*Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 527).

whose names could not be learned.\* But the Towne Soldy<sup>ers</sup> had the pillage & Armes of them all. Their weire slayne of the Townesmen *John Beckett*, *Robt Goldsmith*, butcher, & *John Warren*,† w<sup>ch</sup> dyed afterwards; and three com'on Soldy<sup>ers</sup> wounded."

*The firste greate  
assaulte on  
Nantwiche  
xviij of January  
1643[-4].  
Captyn Sandford  
Slayne.*

"Their was found in Captyn Sandfords pocketts, when hee was stripped, (this Sandford was Captyn of fyerlocks, & the same man w<sup>ch</sup> entered firste into Beeston Castle, when Captyn Steele deliue'd the same); The manner of the designe for the said assaulte sente from *Colonell Richard Gibson* in mann'. [manner] following; viz.:—"Ma<sup>ior</sup> *Harwar* w<sup>th</sup> the regiment vnder his Com'and, & the fyer locks, w<sup>th</sup> the Scaling Ladders, They and all the Dragoneers, Armed w<sup>th</sup> fyer-locks, or Snaphanches, to fall on first soe neere vnto the fall of the Ryver, on this [Acton] side of the Water as may bee; on the lefte hande of the Bulworkes; Then to be second[ed] with a hundred musketteers; Then a stronge bodie of pikes; then a reserve of musketteers; & let the Soldi<sup>ers</sup> carry as many faggotts as they can; This to bee att fyve a Clocke in the mornynge Upon discharge of a peece of Ordnance: and to fall on the Wall, att discharge of some peece of ordnance: January xvij 1643. Word. *God and a good Cause.*"

There was alsoe found in Captyn Sandfords pocketts a letter written in these words; viz.:—

"To the officers Souldy<sup>ers</sup> & Gentlemen in Nantwiche these:—

Gent.

let these resolve yo<sup>r</sup> Jelousies, concerninge our Religion. I vowe by the faythe of a Christian, I knowe not one Papist in our Army. And, as I am a gent., we are not Irishe, but trewe borne English, & Reall p<sup>tes</sup>tants. alsoe, Porne & Bredd. Praye you mistake us not, but receyve vs into your fayre esteeme. And knowe wee intend Royallie [loyalty] towards his Matie & wilbe noe other then faythfull in his servys.

Thus gent belceve from yo<sup>r</sup>s

THOMAS SANDFORD."

There was alsoe found upon him another letter dated the xv<sup>th</sup> of January 1643, viz:

"Gent.

Your Drum can informe you, Acton Church, y<sup>s</sup> noe more a p<sup>rs</sup>on; but now free for honest men to doe their dovocon. therein. Therefore bee p<sup>ts</sup>waded from your Incredulitie, & Resolve God will not forsake his Anoynted. Lett not your zeale in a badd cause Dazell yo<sup>r</sup> Eyes any longer, but wype away your vayne conceits, that haue too longe led you into Blynde error. Louth am I to vndertake the trouble of p<sup>ts</sup>wadinge you into obedyence, because your erronyous opynions doe vyolentlie oppose reason amonge you. But ever (yf you love your Towne) accepte of quarter, & yf you regarde your lyves, worke yo<sup>r</sup> saufetie by yelding yo<sup>r</sup> Towne to the Lord Byron for his Maties use: yow now see my battery y<sup>s</sup> fixte, from whence fyer shall Eternallie visit you, day and Nighte, to the terror of your old and females & confusion‡ of your Thatche howses. Beleeve me gent I haue laud by any form<sup>r</sup> delays and am nowe resolved to batter burne and storme you. Doe not wonder that I wryte unto you (havinge officer<sup>s</sup> in Cheefe about mee) tis onelie

\* Mr. Partridge speaks of the "activity of the Town's Women, headed by a heroine of the name of Brett who defended the works with the utmost bravery and did great execution on the 18th Jan. when the desperate assault was given by pouring hot brine upon the assailants, one of whom gaining the wall, too prematurely cry'd out *the town is our own.*" As this episode is not mentioned in any contemporary account, the truth of the story probably has no better foundation than the tradition of the town.

† None of these names occur in the Burial Register at this time.

‡ "Confusion" is written "consumption" in the Cole MS, Brit Mus.

to advyse (because I haue some frends amongst you whose saufety I wish,) That you accepte of my Lord Byrons condicions. Hee ys gracyous and will charitablie consider of you.

Accepte of these as a somons that you furth<sup>wth</sup> surrender youre Towne and by that testimonie of your fidelitie & fealtie to his Matie you maye obteyne favour. My fyer locks (you know) have done strange feates bothe by Nigte and by Daye, and howerlie we will not fayle in our prvatt visitts of you You have not yett receyved any Allarams wherefore expecte suddenly to here [hear] from

Thomas Sandford, Captyn of fyerlocks.

ffrom my battery and approaches before  
your Welshe Roe the xv<sup>th</sup> of January 1643."

"The Towne contynuyng still beseiged all round on eu'y side; Although<sup>e</sup> *The Assaulte.* ytt was supposed, the[y] had slayne & wounded on their side, & that did over Runn<sup>\*</sup> them, A thowsand† att the leaste, att that assaulte; Soe that noe Markett was Kepte, nor any p'vision, or fewell broughte to the Towne; & many Cattell Kepte w<sup>th</sup>in the wales, [walls] for feare of plu'dringe, & neither haye nor straye [straw] cold bee had for them, Inregard of the greate store of horse, for s'vice Kepte in the Towne; Soe that things began to bee scarce bothe for man & horse; yett ytt pleased God, vpon thawinge of a greate Snowe, (w<sup>ch</sup> then was) That the Reeveer Weeever began to Ryse, And the Kinges pte. being afrayde that the water wold take down a platt they made for their passage over the Reeveer, a little below Beambridge, for their free passage to releve one the other, (for Beamebridge beinge a fayre Stonne Bridge, almost but newly made, was a greate pte. of ytt beaten downe;) On the xxiii<sup>j</sup> of January 1643[-4], They conveyed over the Reeveer all their Ordnance & Carryages, & most pte. of their horse & ffoote towards Acton Churche."

"On Thursday [*sic* for Wednesday] the xx<sup>4</sup><sup>th</sup> of January 1643[-4], The *Weeever* Ryver was Reessed soe heighe that their platt was carryed downe, & they [*River*] by noe meanes cold passe the Reeveer, the on[e] to the other; w<sup>ch</sup> the Townesmen p'ceyving, tooke advantage of the same, yssuyng furthe vnto the<sup>r</sup> workes, rounde about that side of the Reeveer towards *Beameheathe*, dryving all them their awaye; & did level and throwe downe all their works and broughte in much Haye and fewell: And for feare lest they (vpon fall of the water) should haue returned agayne, The[y] fyled a very fayre newe howse of *mr Jeffrey Mynshulls*, the Barne, Stable, & all buyldings belonginge to the same; and also another greate Barne of his on the Heath side neere *Milston lane*;‡ And lykewyse they, & the Kinges side burned *will<sup>m</sup>. Brownes* Barne; *James*

\* *Over-run*, i.e. to desert, or run away.

† The Royalist losses on the 18th Jan. 1643-4, though perhaps here much exaggerated, were very serious; as appears from particulars in "*Magnalia Dei*," viz.:—Lord Byron attempted "to gain the towne by a sudden and violent assault upon five severall places of the towne at once; and this was done an houre before day, upon notice given to one another by a shot of one of their Ordnance; the 18th of Januarie, which was a costly assaulte; for they left dead at the *wall lane-end*, Lieutenant-Colonell Bolton, One Captain, many Officers, and the prime of their soldiers of the Red Regiment: many they cast there into the river, and carried many off dead and wounded. At *Wicksteads Sconce* [near the "Nursery" on the north side of Welsh Row] was slaine Captain Sandford and his Lieutenant, and some few soldiers besides left, and many carried off slaine and wounded. At *Pillory Street-end*, left dead behind, one Captain, two Lieutenants, two Ensignes, seventeen Souldiers of the Green Regiment, and carried off 60 slaine and wounded thence. At the back of *Mr. Maynwaringes* [? Hospital Street] were left slaine two Lieutenants and thirteen Souldiers, and many dead and wounded carried off. At the Sconce near the Lady Nortons [Beam Street-end] was left slaine one Captain and 15 Souldiers, besides what was carried off. There are with us of them deadly wounded Officers and Souldiers 18. One of their own party reports they lost in the assault 300 men: but we now understand they lost and had wounded 500 men."

‡ *Millstone Lane* is still so called.

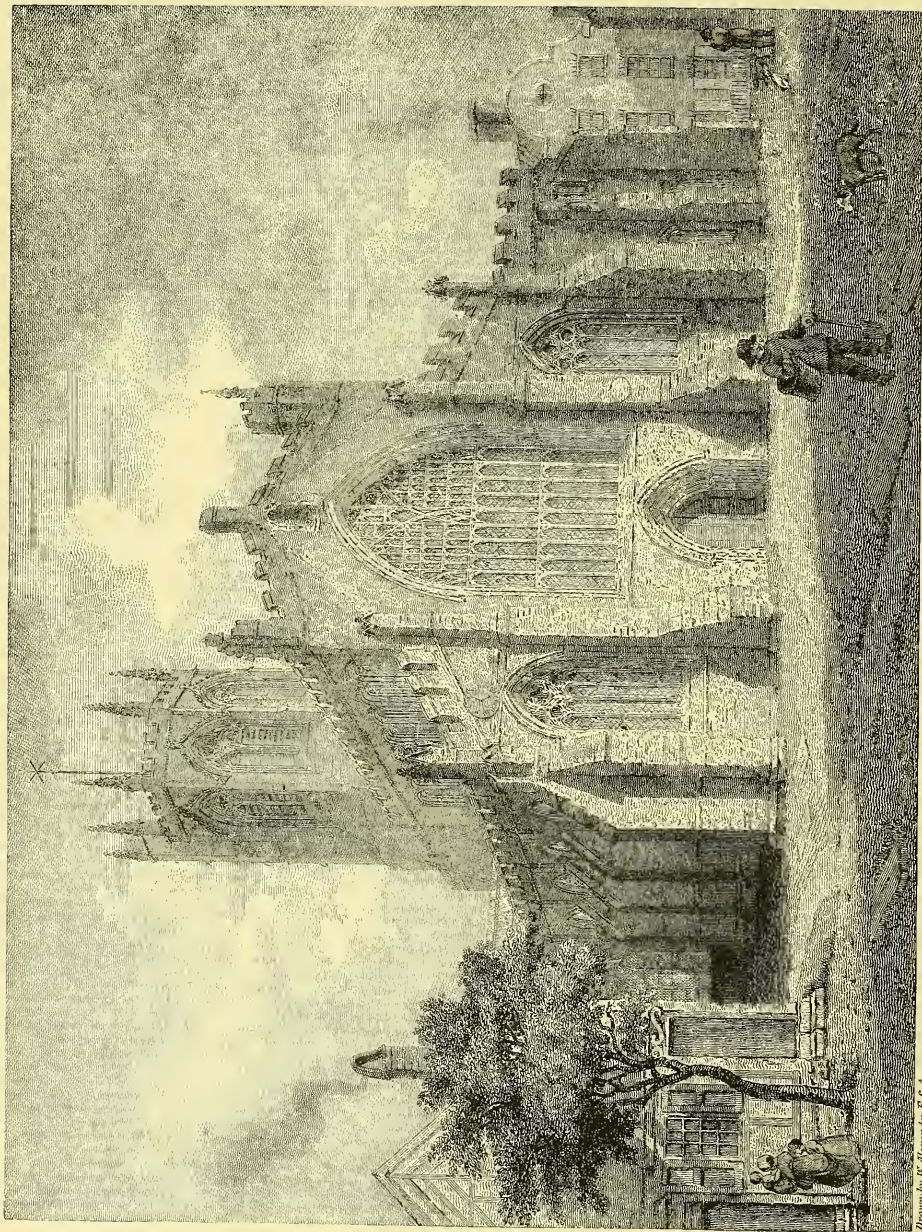
*Bullens Barne; John Wrights Barne; Margaret Lathams Barne; & Margery Ellocks Barne; & a Lodge w<sup>ch</sup> was Doctor Harwars; And other Coates [cottages] all downe to the ground; Bee [by] reason they weire places wherein the Kinges ptie. had harboured, & mighte a donne agayne, when they had gotten over the Reeve; And donne greate harme to the Towne, as they had donne before; (standinge all neere to the Towne)."*

*The Siege of the* "The same daye, beinge the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1643[-4] *Gen'all ffearfax*  
*25th of January* [Fairfax] *Colonell Brereton*, & many other Colonells & Com'ander<sup>s</sup> w<sup>th</sup> there  
 1643[-4]. owne & Lancashire forces, to the nu<sup>'</sup>ber of three thowsand fyve hundred & fyfte horse, & three thowsand foote marched all towards Namptwiche to remove the seige, (unknowne to the Towne); And comynge to Dalameyre forrest, met some of the Kinges forces, w<sup>th</sup> whome they fought, & killed some of them, & tooke fortie p<sup>'</sup>son<sup>'</sup>s: And restinge them selves that Nighte at *Tilston*, & on *Tilston Heathe*, (havinge but simple quarter), nexte daye the[y] marched towards Namptwiche; (beinge about fyve myles thence); But beinge intercepted att *Barbridge*, w<sup>th</sup> more of the Kinges ptie. they fell vpon them; killed some & tooke thirtie p<sup>'</sup>soner<sup>'</sup>s: And vpon Thursdaye, the xxv<sup>th</sup> of January 1643[-4], drawinge to *Hurleston*, (twoe myles from the Towne) The[y] weire a warr [aware] of the whole bodie of the Kinges Army att Acton advancinge towards them. There the Battell began, betwixt them, very fiercely; (about halfe an hower past three in thafter noone), equall on bothe sides; But before fyve a Clocke, many of the Soldyer<sup>'</sup>s of the Trayned bands yssued furthe of Towne, and fallinge vpon the Arreare of the Kinges ptie., They all fledd & weire vtterlie Rowted, (through Gods assistance). Their weire taken p<sup>'</sup>soner<sup>'</sup>s, *Sr Michell Erneley, Sr ffrances Butler, Colonell Gibson, Colonell Warren, Col. ffitewood* and many Captyns, Lieften<sup>'</sup>s, Corporalls, office<sup>'</sup>s; and Com'on Soldyer<sup>'</sup>s; to the nu<sup>'</sup>ber of xvj hundred or thereabouts: One greate Brasse Ordnance; ffoure other smaler peeces of ordnance; & all their Carryage, magazen, & p<sup>'</sup>vision; and alsoe all the money & treasure, w<sup>ch</sup> they had plu<sup>'</sup>dred & gotten (during all the tyme the seige lay agaynst the Towne, w<sup>ch</sup> was about Seaven weekes), vp and downe all the Country & marche in Staffordshire about Betley, & the neerer ptie. of that Countie adioynynge to Cheshire; w<sup>ch</sup> was broughte into the Towne; (althoughe some of the Soldyer<sup>'</sup>s gott some of the money vnknowne to the Cheefe Com'anders); But yf Daylighte had not fayled, there had but fewe of them escaped: the Nighte beinge very darke, the Kinges ptie. cold not be pursued; (as was intended); But the fighte beinge ended, many of the p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>'</sup>t forces, bett good fyer, & contynued in the *Lady field* att Acton Church all Nighte. That ptie. of the Kinges side w<sup>ch</sup> had taken Acton Church and Derfold Howse, called for Quarter, w<sup>ch</sup> was graunted. Their was slayne\* of them about forty; & on the other side but three; nor but fewe wounded; And thus (through Gods mercy & assistance,) the Seige was Reased; & the Towne prserued from a most bloody malicious Enymy. All the Com'on sorte of the p<sup>'</sup>soner<sup>'</sup>s, to the nu<sup>'</sup>ber of fyfteene hundred & more, weire putt into the Church at Namptwiche; where they contynued ffryday, Saturday & Sondaye; (mayntayned by the Towne); And then many of them tooke vp Armes for the p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>'</sup>t, And weire listed vnder Seu'all Captyns; and all the wounded weire putt furthe of Towne, w<sup>ch</sup> weire able to goe, and some of

\* The slain are supposed to have been buried in a field known as *Dead-men's Field*, not far from Acton Church.







Drawn by W. Alcock, F.S.A.

NANTWICH CHURCH, N.W. VIEW.  
(Fac-simile of engraving in Lysons' *Cheshire*.)

Engraved by L. J. P. S.

them dyed.\* Their weire amongst them about CXX<sup>tie</sup> [120] weomen taken alsoe, w<sup>ch</sup> weire putt furthe of Towne; onelie some poore weomen in the Towne, tooke the best of their Clothes from them, w<sup>ch</sup> they had gotten by plu'der.

*Noe Servys nor Sermon in the Church.* "On Sunday, the xxvij of January 1643[-4] Inregarde the p<sup>r</sup>soners weire in the Church, their cold bee noe Servys; (having but one Church in the Towne;) but prayer<sup>s</sup> & Preaching weire att m<sup>r</sup> Thomas Wilbrahams Howse; m<sup>r</sup> Hugh Hassalls the Crowne Gallery; & the Ladie Nortons bothe forenoone & afternoone."†

*P<sup>r</sup>soners taken at the Reasing of the Seige.* "The names & nu'ber of p<sup>r</sup>soners of note, taken att Reasing the Seige, as appered by a Liste, weire Maior Gen<sup>l</sup> Gibson, Sr ffrancis fletewood, Sr Michell Erneley, Sr ffrancis Butler, Sr Rauffe Done, Colonell Warren, Colonell Gibbes and maior Hammon [d], foureteene Captyns; thirtie Lieften<sup>s</sup>; sixe & twentie Ensignes; two Cornetts; two Quarter maisters; fourtie seriants; threescore & three Corporalls; twentie gent. of Companies; ffourtie Drumers; twentie Carryages; Sixe peeces of Ordnance; a hundred & twentie weomen; And fyfteene hundred Com'on Soldyrs."

*The names of Com'anders w<sup>ch</sup> reased the Seige.* "The names of the cheefe Com'anders w<sup>ch</sup> came in Ayde of the Towne to rease the Seige viz: Sr Thomas fferfax, Gen<sup>l</sup>; Sir Will<sup>m</sup>. ffearefax, his Kinsman; Colonell Brereton; Colonell Maynwaringe; Colonell Duckenfeild; Colonell Bouth; Colonell Brighte; Colonell Allen, Colonell Lambert, Maior Copley, maior Morgan; maior Spencer; & many others of Note. Lancashire Com'anders Colonell Holland, † Colonell Ashion, § Colonell John Bouth, || Sir Thomas Malevery, Sr will<sup>m</sup>. Constable, & Colonell Rigbies ¶ Reigm<sup>t</sup> conteyninge in nu'ber in all about Seyven Thowsand."

*The markett began agayne.* "Upon the nexte Saturdaye after the Seige was reased there was a greate markett in Towne began agayne. And plenty of all needfull things att Reasonable Rates, w<sup>th</sup> greate rejoyceing & praysinge God for the same."

*Daye of Thanksgivinge,* "On Wednesdaye, the laste of January 1643[-4], A solemne daye of thanksgyvinge was held at Namptwiche, in the same places where Servys & Sermons weire the Sabothe before."

*Nantwiche Church cleansed.* "And vpon Thursdaye, the firste of ffebruary 1643[-4], The Church was freed from all the p<sup>r</sup>soners w<sup>ch</sup> had byn there; from pollucon. & beastliness com<sup>l</sup>itted by them; & all the Mattes & bosses were burned; & all the pewes

\* Only four soldiers are recorded in the Burial Register, in the three days following the great battle, viz.:-

"1643-4 Jan. 26. John Holland sergant.  
" " 27. William Eckerson [and] Isack Cheetum, Soldiers.  
" " 28. Thomas Brookes Lieutenante.

† These houses were:-

1.—Townsend in Welsh Row.  
2.—The Crown Inn, in High Street: the "gallery" being the whole of the top story, which had a continued range of windows from end to end until alterations were made about Christmas, 1871.  
3.—The Hall at Beam Streed-end, on the site of the Crewe Almshouses.

‡ Colonel Richard Holland, of Heaton, in Prestwich, Governor of Manchester.

§ Major-general Ralph Ashton, or Assheton, of Middleton, M.P. for Lancashire.

|| Colonel John Booth, of Woodford, Cheshire, a younger son of Sir George Booth of Dunham, the elder; afterwards Knighted.

¶ Col. Alexander Rigby, M.P. for Wigan, Lancashire.

& seates made clayne & washed;\* And on Sondaie, the fourthe of ffebruary 1643[-4], prayer<sup>s</sup> & preachinge began publicly agayne in the saide Churche.”

Colonell Breverton  
leaveth for London      “On the Seconde of ffebruary 1643[-4], Colonell Breverton sett forwards towards London to the P<sup>l</sup>iam<sup>t</sup>. But returned not to Namptwiche agayne vntill midsom<sup>t</sup> nexte afterwards.”

The signal overthrow of the Irish Army and Chester forces at Nantwich, according to Clarendon, was very disastrous to the Royal cause. He remarks, “It cannot be denied the reducing of that place at that time would have been of unspeakable importance to the King’s affairs, there being between that and Carlisle no one town of moment (*Manchester* only excepted) against the King: and those two populous counties of Cheshire and Lancashire (if they had been united against the Parliament) would have been a strong bulwark against the Scots.”† An official account of this important victory by Sir Thos. Fairfax was dispatched to the Earl of Essex, who presented it in Parliament on Feb. 1st.; and on the following day the House of Commons ordered,—“That on the next Lord’s Day [Feb. 4] following, publique thanks should be rendered unto Almighty God for the forementioned victory of Sir William Breverton against the English-Irish; and that a Copy of the said Order, with the names of the chiefe Commanders and Officers which were taken and slaine of the enemies in that defeat should be read by the Ministers of the severall congregations in and about the City of London and Westminster. And the names of such Ministers who should refuse to publish the said Order should be returned unto the Parliament, which was performed accordingly.”‡

Sir Thomas Fairfax’s despatch, which was first printed in “*Magnalia Dei*,” together with two other printed lists of the prisoners taken at Aeton Church on 25th Jan. 1643-4, from a vol. of single sheet pamphlets preserved in the British Museum, are here given as follows:—

*SIR THOS. FAIRFAX’S LETTER TO THE EARL OF ESSEX.*

“May it please your Excellencie,”

“I Desire your pardon, that I haue not given your Excellencie an account before this of the great mercie God hath shewed us in giving us a happy Victory over the Irish Army, to a totall ruine of their foot, and purchase of their chiefe Commanders.

Upon the 21 Jan. I marcht from Manchester towards Namptwich to relieve that Towne, with 2,500 foot, and twenty-eight troops of Horse; the Enemies Forces were above 3,000 foot, and 1,800 horse: The first encounter we had were with a Party of theirs upon the Forrest of Delamore, where about thirty were taken Prisoners; About six miles further they maintained a Passage against us with about 200 men; I caused some Foot and Dragoones to bee drawn out to force it, which, by Gods assistance they did in halfe an houres space, and there took a Major and some prisoners; Having advanced some two miles further,

\* A charge of 5s. was put down in the “Church Book” (now unfortunately lost) “for pitch to purify the place on their departure.” *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 673.

† Clarendon’s *History of the Rebellion*, Vol. iv, p. 427. Edit 1826.

‡ See a Vol. of Weekly Pamphlets in Brit. Mus. entitled:—“*C. R. Mercurius Civicus*: London’s Intelligencer or Truth related from thence to the whole Kingdome to prevent mis-information.” No. 4/37. From Thursday, Feb. 1 to Thursday, Feb. 8, 1643[-4].”

we found a good Body of them planted about Acton Church, a mile from Namptwich; We drew up within Cannon shot, which sometimes played upon us, but without hurt, God be thanked; Wee there understood that the Lord Byron, who had besieged the Towne on both sides of the River, was prevented by the overflowing of the water, from joyning with that part at Acton Church: but heard that he was taking a compass to get over the River to joyne with it; we resolved to fall upon that party at the Church, before he should get up to it; but staying to bring up our Rere and Carriages, we gave him time to obtain that hee sought for.\* Then wee resolved to make way with Pioneers through the Hedges, and then to march to the Town to relieve it; and to adde some more Force to ourselves to enable better to fight with them; but being a little advanced on our march, they told mee the Enemy was close upon the Rere, so facing about two Regiments, being *Colonel Hollands*, and *Colonel Boother*,† I marcht not farre before wee came to bee engaged with the greatest Party of their Army; Then the other part presently afterwards assaulted our Front; there *Sir William Brereton* and *Colonel Ashton* did very good service, and so did *Colonell Lambert* and *Major Copley* with the Horse. They were once in great danger, but that they being next to the Towne were assisted by forces which came to their succour in due time; Wee in the other Wing, were in as great distress, but that the horse commanded by *Sir William Fairfax*, did expose themselves to great dangers to encourage the foot, though capable of little service in those narrow Lanes; yet it pleased God, after two houres fight they were forced by both Wings to retreat to the Church, where they were caught as in a Trap. A List of what we took, I have here sent your Excellency." &c.

Your Excellencies most humble servant

THO. FAIRFAX."

Namptwich 29 Jan. 1643[-4].

"A List of the Prisoners [Sir Thos. Fairfax's List] taken at Acton Church January 25, 1643[-4] near Namptwich."

(Printed in "Magnalia Dei," in 1644.)

"A Catalogue of all the Names of the Prisoners taken at the raising of the Siege at Namptwich, by that valiant Commander, Sr. Thomas Fairfaxe, &c., being a true Copy of the List presented to his Excellency & by his Excellency presented to both Houses of Parliament the first of February 1643" [-4].

(Single Pamphlets Brit. Mus. No. 669. f. 8/46. pag. 105. Printed for Edward Husbands, Feb. 1, 1643[-4].)

"Extraordinary News from Colonell John Barker, Governour of Coventry to a merchant of London, shewing how Sir William Brereton hath raised the siege from Namptwich in Cheshire. Prisoners taken" &c.

[Dated] "Janur. 30, 1643" [-4]. (Single Pamphlets, Brit. Mus. No. 669, page 104. Printed according to Order, London: by E. G. for John Rothwell, 1643-4.)

Major General Gibson  
Colonels Sir Michael Enrley  
,, Sir Richard Fleetwood  
,, George Monk‡  
,, . . . . Warren  
Lientenant-colonel, Sir Francis Butler  
,, Gibbs  
Major Hammond

Sergeant Major Generall Gibs  
Sir Michael Earnely  
Sir Richard Fleetwood  
Colonell Monk  
Colonell Warren  
Sir Francis Boteler  
Lientenant-colonel Gibbs  
Maior Hammond

Sergeant-major-generall Gibson  
Sir Michael Earnly, Col.  
Sir Richard Fleetwood, Col.  
Colonell Monks  
Colonell Warren  
Sir Francis Butler, lientenant-colonel  
Lientenant-colonel Gibbs  
Major Hamond

\* Partridge in his History (p. 72) and Platt (p. 109) both relying on the account of the battle by Lord Clarendon, state that Lord Byron had not been able to concentrate his forces at Acton; and in the previous account Malbon says, part of the Royalist forces had effected the passage of the river after the thaw set in; but the rest were prevented by the rapid rise of the flood.

† Col. John Booth, (p. 167) uncle to Col. George Booth, Governor of Nantwich. For interesting particulars relating to both Colonels, see Beaumont's "Annals of the Lords of Warrington," pp. 80-90.

‡ Col. George Monk, born in Devonshire, 6 Dec. 1608, had served in the army in Spain, and in the Netherlands; and had been Governor of Dublin. He was still a prisoner at Nantwich on 7th April, 1644, (*Ches. Sheaf*, Vol. II. p. 39); but was afterwards removed to the Tower of London. Being liberated, he became servant of the Commonwealth; but after Cromwell's death, he exerted himself for Charles II, who created him Duke of Albermarle. He died 3rd Jan. 1670, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Captains:—Atkins	Captains:—Atkins	14 Captains:—Atkins
„ Sydenham	„ Sydenham	„ Liddington
„ Finch	„ Finch	„ Tinch
„ Disney	„ Disney	„ Disney
„ Fisher	„ Fisher	„ Fisher
„ Cooke	„ Cooke	„ Cooke
„ Ward	„ Ward	„ Ward
„ Dean	„ Deane	„ Deane
„ Lucas	„ Incasse	„ Incas
„ Litcole	„ Lydcot	„ Ledcote
„ Betts	„ Bets	„ Deetes
„ Spotswood	„ Spotwood	„ Shotterwood
„ Bambridge	„ Banbridge	„ Bawbridge
„ Willier	„ Willier	„ Willis
Lieutenants Long	Lieutenants Long	19 Lieutenants Long
„ Norton	„ Norton	„ Norton
„ Roc	„ Roe	„ Rowe
„ Pawlet	„ Pawlet	„ Pawlett
„ Goodwin	„ Goodwyn	„ Goodwin
„ Liverson	„ Liverson	„ Kinerstone
„ Duddleston	„ Duddleston	„ Dulaton
„ Pate	„ Pate	„ Pate
„ Morgell	„ Morgall	„ Morgell
„ Lestrangle	„ Strange	„ Strange
„ Shipworth	„ Skipworth	„ Shipworth
„ Ankers	„ Ankers	„ Ancars
„ Billingsley	„ Billingsley	„ Billingley
„ Castilion	„ Castilian	„ Custelion
„ Milner	„ Milliner	„ Milliner
„ Bradshaw	„ Bradshaw	„ Bradshaw
„ Walden	[omitted]	[omitted]
„ Lyons	„ Lyons	„ Lionnes
„ Poulden	„ Foulden	„ Goulden
„ Smith	„ Smith	„ Smith
Ensignes:—Brown	Ensignes:—Brown	26 Ensignes:—Brown
„ Brereton	„ Brereton	„ Brewreton
„ Bach	„ Bach	„ Batch
„ Fines	„ Fynes	„ Ihnes
„ Wright	„ Wright	„ Wright
„ Davis	„ Daniell	„ Dampell
„ Toothwood	„ Toothwood	„ Southwood
„ Addisse	„ Addis	„ Addise
„ Smith	[omitted]	„ Smith
„ Mahoone	„ Naliam	„ Vahan
„ Rise	„ Keyes	„ Reise
„ Dendsworth	„ Dondsworth	„ Doreworth
„ Mnsgrave	„ Mnsgrave	„ Musgrave
„ Pemicock	„ Pemy-cock	„ Pennycocks
„ Dunsterfield	„ Damsterfield	„ Dunstermile
„ Elliar	„ Elliar	„ Elliard
„ Eiclash	„ Iclasse	„ Itlack
„ Phillips	„ Phillips	„ Phillips
„ Heard	„ Heard	„ Hewde
„ Thomas	„ Thomas	„ Thomas
„ Morgan	„ Morgan	„ Morgan
„ Lewis	„ Lewes	„ Lewes

Ensigns :—Godschue	Ensigns :—Godschue	Ensigns :—Goodfellow
„ Busby	„ Busby	„ Busby
„ Terringham	„ Tiringham	„ Terringham
„ Wither	„ Wither	„ Withers
Cornets: Lee	Cornets: George Lee of Hylest and one	[omitted]
„ Carpenter	Carpenter	[omitted]
Quarter-Masters: Lee	Quarter Master Lee	[omitted]
„ Petty	„ Petty	[omitted]
Sir Ralph Done also taken	Sir Ralph Dove is also taken	[omitted]
Mastr. Shurlock* chaplain to a Regiment	Mr. Shimlock, Captaine Lieutenant to a Reigment.	[omitted]
Gentlemen of Companies .... 20	Gentlemen of Companies ..... 20	Gentlemen of Companies .... 20
Serjeants ..... 41	Sergeants ..... 41	Serjeants ..... 41
Drums ..... 40	Drums ..... 40	Drummers ..... 40
Corporals ..... 63	Corporals ..... 61	Corporals ..... 63
Canoneers ..... 4	Canoneers ..... 4	[omitted]
Colours ..... 22	[omitted]	[omitted]
Women (many whereof had long knives ..... 120	Women (many whereof had long knives) ..... 120	Women with long knives .... 120
Common Souldiers ..... 1500	Common Souldiers ..... 1700	Common Souldiers ..... 1700
Ordnances (five of brasse) .... 6	Ordnance ..... 6 peeces	Ordnances ..... 6 Peeces
Carriages ..... 20	Carriages ..... 20	Carriages ..... 20
Divers Wagons. Rich plunder. [omitted]	Divers of the Wagons. Rich plunder [omitted]	[omitted]
[omitted]	[omitted]	Priests ..... 40
Slain: Lieutenant Coll. Vane in the fight [25th Jan.]	Slain: Lieutenant Colonel Van, and many common Souldiers, some affirm 200 on the Right Wing, besides the Left wing.	Horse ..... 120
Lieutenant Colonel Boulton in the assault before the Town [on 18th Jan.]	There was slaine at the siege [on 18th Jan.] Lieutenant Colonel Boughton, and four Captains, amongst whom Samford [Sandford.]	[omitted]
[omitted]	The Enemy shot 80 or 100 fiery hot Bullets into the Town, but none did execution, but one in a stack of wood."	[omitted]

This victory was the crisis of the war in Cheshire. Henceforward the Parliament maintained the ascendancy. CREWE HALL was re-taken on the 5th Feb.; and DODDINGTON HALL two days after. CHOLMONDELEY CASTLE surrendered on the 8th July, 1644; and BEESTON CASTLE, after nearly a year's siege, on the 15th Nov. 1645; the King having been the sad eye-witness of his ruined hopes at *Rowton Moor* on the 24th Sept. in the same year. In the meantime rigorous measures had been adopted by the Parliament to maintain the war. Committees of "*Sequestrators*" were formed for the purpose of fining all who still retained their Royalist opinions, or who refused to subscribe to the "*Covenant*" for Presbyterian uniformity. The estates of wealthy "*Delinquents*" were seized by them, and the rents were regularly collected by appointed officials in each district,

\* Richard Sherlock, afterwards D.D., and Rector of Winwick, co. Lancashire, from 1660 till his death in 1689. He was born 11th Nov. 1612, at Oxtou, in Wirrall, Cheshire. (See Anthony á Wood, Vol. IV, p. 259-261).

who accounted for their monies, &c. to the Council of War. Poorer people atoned for their "*delinquency*" by suffering imprisonment and the loss of their household goods, which were valued and sold by auction for the "*publique use*." In *Harl. MS.* 2166, are preserved many pages of Sequestrators Accounts, Lists of Delinquents, Inventories, &c. for Nantwich Hundred, from which the following extracts are taken chiefly relating to the town.

"*A catalogue of the names of every & severall delinquents in the division & alotment of Marc Folineux, one of the Collectors for Nantw<sup>th</sup> hundred as ffolloweth.*"

LORD CHOLMLEY; sequestrated in the year 1643. The total Half-year's Rents for				£	s.	d.
houses,* gardens, chief rents in Nantwich, Alvaston, Woolstan wood, Leighton,				...	37	10 5
Willaston, Wistaston in 1644, occupying five pages of accounts ... ..						(Half-yearly rent).
MR. MASTERSON, Total half-year's Rents for 1644, for property in High-town, Welsh Row, Beam Street, Mill Street, &c., and the following lands in Nantwich, (which appear to have extended from Pillory Street to Shrewbridge, including what is now the Shrewbridge Hall Estate).				£	s.	d.
The Horse Croft	3 Acres, prized to per Annum	.....	2	00	00	(Half-yearly rent)
Shors field	10 " " " " "	.....	6	13	04	
Bricke field	12 " " " " "	.....	6	00	00	(Half-yearly rent)
Greene field	16 " " " " "	.....	8	00	00	
Oxe Pasture	18 " " " " "	.....	9	00	00	14 0 0
Longe Meadow	7 " " " " "	.....	4	11	00	
Calues Croft	6 " " " " "	.....	3	00	00	(Rental of walling) for 1644.
Grastons Croft	1 " " " " "	.....	1	00	00	
Milne Meadow	2½ " " " " "	.....	1	12	06	
Cros field	10 " " " " "	.....	6	13	04	
Bathing Meadow	6 " " " " "	.....	3	18	00	

The late MR. ALEXANDER WALTHALL† of Wistaston. His estate in Nantwich consisting chiefly of *Walling-land* and salt-houses. His cottages "were ordered for the maintenance of the soldiers." The yearly sum claimed in 1645 was ... ..

JOHN BICKERTON, land and personal property in Nantwich; per ann.	...	...	...	...	£23	6 4
EARL RIVERS, House property in Nantwich	"	...	...	...	£2	16 8
MR. BAVINE, rents and walling in Nantwich	"	...	...	...	£34	10 10
MR. FOWLER, walling rents in Nantwich	"	...	...	...	£4	0 0
SIR THOMAS WILERAHAM of Woodhey.						
Rents in Nantwich in 1644 half-yearly	...	...	...	...	£59	13 2
Walling in Nantwich " "	...	...	...	...	£30	13 4
MR. RICHARD WIXSTED Junr. Houses and land per annum	...	...	...	...	£12	16 8
The late LADY NORTON now <i>Mr. Thos. Dodd</i> .						
Rents of Houses &c. in 1644 per annum	...	...	...	...	£25	2 0
" Lands " "	...	...	...	...	£42	6 8

\* Among the houses in Nantwich, are mentioned:—

"*Beame Street Hall*," made into a Prison, and occupied by Richard Acton.  
 "*The Porche house*" in Welsh Row, the residence of Roger Wright.

† Alexander Walthall, Esq., of Wistaston, was buried at Wistaston, 1st March, 1645-6.—(Wist. Reg.) An Inventory of his household goods, cattle, &c., as sold at Nantwich "for the use of the Publique" will be found in *Harl. MSS.* 2166 f. 28/33, occupying several pages, and amounting to £48 oos. 04d.



Amongst the lands occur:—

	£	s.	d.
Bolywall field* valued at per annum .....	5	0	0
Marchefield bank† „ .....	8	0	0
Three parcells of land in the occupation of Mr. Thos Dodd, within the walls valued at per annum .....	8	0	0
The Hall (Beam St. End) valued at per annum .....	10	18	4
Orchard and Yards „ „ .....	0	10	0
The late MR. HUGH WILBRAHAM, for the year 1644 ... ..	£7	18	0
MR. WEEVER, for rents for whole year 1644 ... ..	£3	0	0
SR. JOHN PERSALL „ „ „ ... ..	£22	15	10
MR. BROMLEY of Bagington, half-yearly rents, 1644 ... ..	£17	17	10

Among the *Inventories* preserved, is that of the Town Minister, who, in the words of Jeremy Taylor, a contemporary divine, might have said “I am fallen into the hands of publicans and sequestrators and they have taken all from me.”

“A TRUE INVENTORY of the goods late Mr. SARINGE a delinquent late minister of NAMPTWICH for his delinquency was imprisoned & voted a delinquent by the Sequestrators the wiche [sic] Goods were seized on by the Sequestrators & Collectors & aprised by the aprisors for namptwich hundred.” [Also] “A true Account of the Goods late Mr. SARINGE as they were sold for the use of the Publique by the Collector & apprisor for namptwiche hundred in the Publique store house of the garrison, as ffoloweth.”—

	Prized at,			Sold for.			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Imprimis One Longe table .....	00	15	00	..	00	18	00
Item One Paire of tounges .....	00	00	04	..	00	00	04
Item One old Paire of bellowes .....	00	00	10	..	00	00	10
Item One litle table .....	00	03	04	..	00	03	04
Item One Throne chiere .....	00	01	00	..	00	01	00
Item One chamber Pott .....	00	00	08	..	00	00	08
Item two Lethren stools .....	00	02	00	..	00	02	00
Item one litle lethren chiere .....	00	02	00	..	00	02	00
Item one High bedsted with testrum of stofe .....	00	13	04	..	00	13	04
Item one litle table .....	00	04	00	..	00	04	00
Item one Joint coupbord .....	00	10	00	..	00	10	00
Item one Joint Coupbord with a box in it .....	00	12	00	..	00	12	00
Item one close Stool & one old Panne .....	00	03	04	..	00	03	04
Item one Bedsted with a testrum of stofe .....	00	08	00	..	00	08	00
Item one truckle bedsted .....	00	03	00	..	00	03	00
Item one old flocks bed .....	00	06	08	..	00	06	08
Item one litle Plaine Bedsted .....	00	04	08	..	00	04	08
Item one old fringe [frying] Pane .....	00	00	06	..	00	00	06
Item one clos [clothes] tubb (i.e. a wash-tub) .....	00	05	00	..	00	05	00
Item one churne .....	00	01	04	..	00	01	04
Item one Saltinge Bassin & one Cheese bord .....	00	01	04	..	00	01	04
Item one litle Bruinge [brewing] Tressell .....	00	00	04	..	00	00	04

“ Total aprisement is . . . . . £04 18 08

[Signed] “ Marc Folineux Collector.”

“ The totall some of the sayell is . . . . . £05 01 08

\* Most likely a field adjacent to *Buly-wall Well*, in Birchin Lane, Willaston.

† *Marsh-field Bank*, in Woolstanwood.

"The *total Receipts* of all the Rents belonging to the severall delinquents before mentioned, which were received in monies & in delinquents goods for the use of the Publique since the 29th August 1644 untill the eleventh of November 1646 by Marc Folineux Collector, Doth mount vnto the some of" ... .. £573 00 04

"The *total Receipts* of all the foresayd Rents Receued by order of Havage for the vse of the Publique by the sayd Collector since the 29th of August 1644 untill the eleventh of Novembre 1646 mounts vnto the some of ... .. £306 19 07  
The totall some of the Rents arrear & unpayd, (same dates) ... .. [no sum given]

The *totall disbursement* of all these Seuerall Rents & Goods late belonging to delinquents which were disboursed to the treasurer & to diuers other Persons by Seuerall Orders for the vse of the Publique, by the foresayd Collector, since the 29 August 1644 untill the eleventh of Nov. 1646 mounts &c. ... .. £580 02 08

Disbursed of this Accompt more than Receued which is to be charged upon the next Accompts, the some of ... .. £07 02 04

The totall sum remaininge due to mee, settinge all the overplus Receipts of the last Accompts & the sayle of the goods of John Patricke, which is ten shillings ten pence ... .. £05 18 03  
besides the Collectors fees since the 11th Nov. 1646: till the 1st Feb. 1647 ... .. [no sum given]

The particulars of payments from the Rents &c. of Mark Folineux's district are contained in eight pages of closely written manuscript, and are much too long to be given here: the following selected items will sufficiently illustrate how the public monies were expended.

	£	s.	d.
1644. Sept. 26 Payd to Mr. James Croxton treasurer for the vse of the Publique ... ..	2	0	0
Nov. 2 Payd do. do. do. ... ..	11	16	8
Aug. 30 Payd to the Collector Marc Folineux ... ..	0	2	6
[A long note here states that 2/6 was the usual sum per day for horse and man, for services of the Collector in valuing goods, &c. Similar payments occur repeatedly].			
1644. Oct. 22 Payd to Collector M. F. for one days service in assistinge Tho. Wilson Collector in his division, in the saysure [seizure] of the Estate of <i>Mr. Cotton</i> of Combermere, a delinquent ... ..	0	2	6
Nov. 14. Comitie to repayre the Sentrye houses which were decayed in the Garrison of Namptwch ... ..	2	10	0
1644-5 Jan. 17. Payd to Henry Hayes by Order from Sequestrators for monie that hee had layed out for the maintenance of the Almes-men [at Welsh Row Head] wich are maintained out of Sr Tho. Wilbrms. Estate ... ..	5	10	0
Jan. 28 Payd to Will'm. Baerns by Order from Sr Will'm. Brereton Comander in Chiefe for the quartringe of the sayd Sr Will'm. Brereton's men servants ... ..	0	5	0
Jan. 30 Payd to Mr. Robt. Lunt Comisary for the Garison in Cheese wich was receued for delinquents Rents ... ..	1	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Feb. 15. Payd to M. F. for two dayes service in going in the Countrey by Warrant from the Consell of Warr to Gather Provision to it Cheese & Come for the Reliefe of the leagres & armes that are before biston [Beeston] Castell & Chester wich provision was delivered to the Comisarie	...	...	...
	0	5	0
Mar. 10. Payd to eayth [eight] of Capt. Houlse's Soldiers that assisted me in the seyzure of the goods late of Peerce Dod, wich goods were in Mr. Mathew Mainwarings house, and the said Mr. Mainwaring Refused to deliuer the sd goods for the vse of the Publique; therefore the Sequestrators hired the sayd soldiers to take the sd goods & bring them to the store-howse	...	...	...
	0	2	0
1645 April 5 Payd to Willm Becket Comissary the some of eayth [eight] shillings & two pens, wich was to pay the thrashers that thrashed the corne late John Bickerton, a delinquent	...	...	...
	0	8	2
April 12. Payd the Belman of giuinge warninge through the towne concerninge trespasses done by Catell on Mr. Mastersons fielde [which had been staked out by soldiers four days previous]	..	...	...
	0	0	2
July 24. Payd to Rich. Hickock by Order from the Sequestrators for the discharge of tickets for the quartering of soldiers hee being a poore man & not able to forbaire [?]	...	...	...
	1	5	0
July 29 Payd to Philip Moulton, Carpenter, by Order from Collonall Croxton Goueno <sup>r</sup> of Namptwich for ourke [work] done by him for the Garrison	..	...	...
	0	5	2
Sep. 29. Payd John Tenche Showemaker by Order from the Sequestrators, &c. for boots & showes &c.	...	...	...
	3	3	6
Oct. 2. Payd to Lady Leigh by order from the Consell of Warr & deputie leftenents in pt of 50 <sup>li</sup> . [£50] p <sup>r</sup> ann <sup>m</sup> allowed her by the sayd Consell beinge for Capt <sup>n</sup> Cheswis arrers her husband & [who] was slayn in the Parliaments service	..	...	...
	2	0	0
1645-6 Jan. 2 Payd Mr. Bradshaw Receuer of the Kings Rents for the hole yeares <i>Rent of the fee farme for the Court of Namptwich</i> payable by the Estate of the Lord Chomlie &c.	9	0	0
Jan. 15. Payd Raph Leftwich & Rich Weild aprisors for Namptwich hundred for one dayes service in assistinge mee to seize & aprise a Cowe wich was for a Heriott due to the Publique by the death of Mr. Tho. Walthall tenant to Mr. Bromlie of Bagington, a delinquent &c.	...	...	...
	00	4	0
1646. April 28. Payd Mr. Bradshaw Receuer of the Kings Rents; for the Rent of a <i>tenth of the water mils of namptwich</i> wich mils the Publique doth inioye, for three whole yeares 1643-4-5, beinge 5/- p <sup>r</sup> ann <sup>m</sup>	...	...	...
	0	15	0
July 25. Payd to John Pratchett a Poore Almshouse-man by Order &c. for the rent of his Almshouse,* to be used for a Sentry or gard-house for the vse of the Garison	...	...	...
	0	2	0
July 25. Payd Widow Hanwaye & Jean Fowses for winnowinge the corne that was pte. of the Goodes late of Mr. Alexander Walthall Senr [Wistaston Hall] a delinquent	...	...	...
	0	7	1
July 25. Payd to Willm. Fowses & John Vaughann labourers for 12 days service &c. in thrashinge the foresayd Corne &c.	...	...	...
	1	0	0
[Several payments of 5/- for a man with his team, drawing the goods of Mr. A. Walthall from Wistaston to Nantwich].			

\* This must have been Welsh Row Head Almshouse: as John Pratchett's name does not occur in the list of Wright's Inmates preserved in the earliest volume of the Treasurers' Accounts.

	£	s.	d.
1646. July 24. Payd to John Bramall & Rich. Hussey, watchmen, by Order from Colonel Croxton, the quantity of soe much barley as mounted to the value of £02 06s. 08d., being in pte. of their pay due to them for watching prisoners at the Common Prison at Namptwch .. ... .. .	2	6	8
Oct. 12. Payd to Rogr Butler by Order &c. for Executinge the office of the Clarke of the Marquett [market] in Namptwch ... .. .	1	18	0
Oct. 14. Payd to Tho. Bickerton by Order &c. for haye that was taken from him for the vse of the publique, in the time of distresse, & he being a very poore man & not able to forbear it ... .. .	0	12	0
Nov. 21. Payd to Margaret Jonson late seruant to Mr. Alexandre Walthall Senr a a delinquent, there dwellinge with him at his daeth [death] for part of a yeares wages ...	0	14	0
June 16. Payd to the Pauer [paver] & to other ourkemen [workmen] & labourers, by Order from the Sequestrators, for the Repayinge of a Comon-waye in namptwch Comonly called the <i>moncks-layne</i> wich was spoyled by the trope horses when att sundrey times they were drawn to Exersise, the way beinge unpassable &c. ... .. .	1	10	0

Nantwich continued to be the head-quarters of Sir William Brereton, the great Parliamentary General for Cheshire, and the adjacent Counties until the end of the War. After the surrender of the Halls of Crewe, Doddington, and Cholmondeley, there was no more fighting in the immediate vicinity of the town. The inhabitants were, however, alarmed more than once by news of the near approach of Prince Rupert's Army; from time to time, troops, arms, ammunition, and prisoners were sent to, or conveyed from the town; at Church, thanksgiving and humiliation days were kept, as occasion required; the populace were sometimes the eye-witnesses of military executions; and for several days they were disturbed by a serious riot amongst the town soldiery. Particulars relating to these local matters are told by Malbon as follows:—

"On Monday the xxix of January 1643-4, *Thomas Steele* (late badd  
*Thomas Steele* governor of Beeston Castle) whoe before had Judgem<sup>t</sup> do dye by a Councell  
*Executed.* of warr, was shott in the Tynkers Crofts att Namptwiche, behind the  
 Church Leanyge his Backe to the Crosse wall there (after a very longe confession and  
 repentance of his Synnes made) By twoe Com'on Soldy<sup>ers</sup>; the one shott him in the  
 Belly, & the other in his Throate; whoe was p<sup>r</sup>sentlie carryed awaye, beinge laid in a  
 coffyn standinge on the grounde by him, broughte into the Churche Yarde & buried  
 ymedyatlie neare the Rowe of Gravestones on the Northe side of the heighe Chauncell."\*

\* The Rev. Henry Newcome in his *Autobiography* (Chet. Soc. Pub. p. 95) speaking at large of Steele's "confession," says, "At his death he disclaimed all treachery." He is said to have been the third son of Thomas Steele of Weston, co. Chester; (Ormerod, New Edit. Vol. III. p. 98), and the family name is still found in the neighbourhood of Barthomley. His burial is recorded as follows:—"1643[-4] Jan. 29. Captaine Steele Shott."—(*Nant. Bur. Reg.*)

Interesting particulars relating to the Steele family are given in Hinchliffe's "*Barthomley*," pp. 352-3; Earwaker's "*Local Gleanings Magazine*," pp. 322-336; and in Dr. Howard's "*Miscellaneous Genealogica*." The marriage of a *Thomas Steele*, but whether the unfortunate captain or not is uncertain, occurs in Nantwich Par. Reg., thus:—

"1629. Sep. 5. Thomas Steele and Jane furnyvall."

*Crewe Hall  
given up.*

“On Mondaye the fyfte of february 1643[-4], Namptwiche forces havinge beseiged Crewe Hall, (kepte by the Kinges ptie.) from Thursdaye before, thoughte att a farr distance, Began to assaulte the Howse, w<sup>ch</sup> when Captyn ffisher p<sup>ce</sup>yved, whoe kept it for the Kinges vse, desyred a ply. [parley]; w<sup>ch</sup> was yelded vnto; And then ytt was agreed, That hee & theim theirein shold all p<sup>re</sup>sentlie depte. awaye & yeld up the howse, leavinge theire Armes behind them; w<sup>ch</sup> they did, beinge in nu<sup>ber</sup> (w<sup>th</sup> those w<sup>ch</sup> weire wounded) one hundred & twentie & many of them came the same daye to Namptwiche, where they were ent[er]teyned. But the Captyn had carried him selfe soe baselie towards the Neighbourhood thereabout that the Countrey people wold have killed him when hee was come furthe had hee not byn p<sup>re</sup>served by those to whom hee had yelded vp the howse.”

*Dodington  
surrendered.*

“Upon Wednesdaye the vij<sup>th</sup> of february 1643[-4], Dodington Hall, beinge alsoe kepte by the Kinges ptie., was alsoe assaulted by Namptw<sup>ch</sup> forces, & upon some Shott w<sup>th</sup> theire greate ordnance, w<sup>ch</sup> they had broughte w<sup>th</sup> them, w<sup>ch</sup> the Captyn in the Howse p<sup>ce</sup>yving, & knowinge theire was noe hope of any Ayde, lykewyse desyred a plie. [parley], w<sup>ch</sup> was condescended vnto; The Agreemt was that the howse sholde bee deliu<sup>ed</sup> vp, & the Souldy<sup>ers</sup> & wounded shoulde depte. awaye w<sup>th</sup> fourtie of theire Armes; whereof the greatest pte. of them w<sup>th</sup> theire Armes came to Namptwiche, where they were ent[er]tayned: The nu<sup>ber</sup> in all beinge about . . . . . The[y] left behind them almost twoe hundred Armes, And good store of victualls, powder, matches & Bullets.”

*Thankesgivinge &  
Humiliacon Dayes.*

“On Tuesdaye the xiiij<sup>th</sup> of february 1643[-4], A solemne daye of thankes-gyvinge was held in Namptwiche & att Acton. And vpon Thursdaye after a daye of humyliancon.”

*A gibbett erected  
att Namptwiche.*

“Upon Shrove Tuesdaye, the fyfth of Marche, 1643[-4], A Gibbett was sett vp in Namptwiche; whereupon was executed the same daye, (beinge adiudged by the Councill of warr) one *Browne*, a Com<sup>on</sup> Soldy<sup>er</sup>, for wilfullye killinge, one *Alflecte*\* a Comon Soldy<sup>er</sup> in the Streete, when hee was drunke; not knowinge what hee had done, when hee was sober, as hee said & confessed on the Ladder.”

*An Alarom  
on Namptwiche.*

“On the xvij<sup>th</sup> of Marche 1643[-4], about one a Clocke after Midnight, *Colonell marrowe*, w<sup>th</sup> his horse, gave an alarom on the Towne, & drave awaye many Cattell w<sup>ch</sup> was the first allarom gyven to the Towne scythens the seige was reased.”†

*A fast att  
Namptwiche.*

“On Wednesdaye the xxix<sup>th</sup> of Marche 1644 was a solemne fast held att Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> prayer & preachinge most of the daye.”

*Alaroms.*

“On Wednesday mornyng in Easter weeke 1644, about three a Clocke in the mornyng, An Alarom was beaten vp in the Towne of Namptwiche vpon a Reporte

\* The Parish Register records the burial of “*Richard Aghit, soldier*,” on the 4th March, being the day before this military execution. He may have been identical with the unfortunate “*Alflecte*.”

† Burghall adds, “This Colonell Marrow, who was a great plunderer, took off all my goods, and drove me from my house [at Bunbury] and having a call to preach at Haslington, May 1, 1644, I tarried there two years, upon thirty-four pounds a year.”—(*Providence Improved*).

*Colonell Marrow*, a distinguished royalist, died at Chester on the 19th Aug. 1644, from wounds received the day before in a skirmish at Sandiway, co. Chester.—(Malbon MS.)

broughte that the Kinges forces [Prince Rupert being at Shrewsbury] weire seene vpon Ravensmoore. But the scoutes Rydinge furthe sawe non; Soe all was p<sup>r</sup>sentlie quyett. On the seyventh of Maye 1644, There was another Allarom aboute twoe a Clocke in the Mornynge (w<sup>th</sup>out cause).<sup>3</sup>

“Upon Thursdaye the viij<sup>th</sup> of Maye 1644, *Captyn Cheswys*, with a fewe horse, yssued furthe of Towne And neere Cholm<sup>'</sup>ley Hall Hee tooke *Captyn Stanley att Cholm<sup>'</sup>ley Castle.* fyve men and horse w<sup>th</sup> their Armes, and slewe one, w<sup>ch</sup> fyve hee broughte p<sup>r</sup>sone<sup>rs</sup> to Namptwiche, And the same daye att Nighte *Captyn Stanley* w<sup>th</sup> his horse & most of the horse in Towne, w<sup>th</sup> many foote Companyes marched forth to Cholm<sup>'</sup>ley (Beinge then Garrisoned by the Kinges ptie.) & their gaue them an Allarom & Som'ond [summoned] the Howse. But they w<sup>th</sup>in wold gyve them noe answeere; whereuppon they gave three volyes of shott agaynste the Howse. But they w<sup>th</sup>in did shoote very litle. Soe when the[y] sawe the[y] cold not enter the howse, The[y] broughte alonge w<sup>th</sup> them a hundred Sheepe, some Lambes, and some goods, w<sup>ch</sup> they found in an out howse there, for they in the howse had all their horse in the Hall; And soe returned in the mornynge all backe & saufe to Namptwiche.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“On Sondag[e] [7<sup>th</sup> July 1644] they [*i.e.* Nantwich forces]\* marched towards Cholm<sup>'</sup>ley Howse in the Evenynge w<sup>th</sup> three or foure peeces of Ordnance, & iij cases of Drakes where the two voluntier Companyes from Namptwiche, w<sup>th</sup> their two Captyns, & other of the offic<sup>ers</sup>, *Captyn George Malbon*,† and *Captyn Thomas Malbon*,† gardinge the greate Brasse peece of ordnance did meete them. The Mondaye mornynge towards sprynge of daye the[y] had planted their ordnance (the greatest of them) w<sup>th</sup>in Pistoll Shott of the Howse: And about three or foure of the Clocke in the mornynge, after they had Som'ond the Howse, The[y] playd vpon ytt w<sup>th</sup> their ordnance & shott ytt many tymes throwe, (beinge a tymber howse). They in the Howse, w<sup>th</sup> their Musketts, did shoot very fast att them & about fyve a Clocke in the mornynge the[y] killed one *Rauffe Mylton*, a seriante vnder maior Croxton. But the p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>t</sup> forces playenge on the howse w<sup>th</sup> their ordnance & smale shott contynuallie, did beate them furthe of the Howse to their workes, where they did shoote & maynteyne the servys (beinge but a fewe in nu<sup>'</sup>ber) very bravelie; & killed maior *Pynkney*, a brave com<sup>'</sup>ander, and about foure or fyve more‡ of the p<sup>'</sup>liam<sup>t</sup> side. But the same daye, beinge the eighte of Julye 1644, they att the Howse, p<sup>'</sup>ceyvinge they weire not able to stand out, about on[e] a Clocke in thafter noone, havinge a fierce assaulte made vpon them, called for Quarter; w<sup>ch</sup> was Graunted; and *Captyn Horton* (Captyn of the Howse) lett downe

\* Under Basil Fielding, Earl of Denbigh, Sir Thos. Middleton, Col. George Booth, and Col. Maynwarding.

† Burghall gives these names as *Malton*; (*Brit. Mus. MS.* and Poole's printed version of *Burghall's Diary*), but they were, in reality, the two sons of *Thomas Malbon*, the author of the Civil War Account; who mentions that they also successfully attacked *Dirtwich*, in this county, on the 12<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1644. *George Malbon* had a Major's Commission from the Council of State in 1650; and *Thomas Malbon* occurs as Captain of a Cheshire troop in the same year.

‡ According to the Parish Register, eight soldiers were buried at Nantwich on the 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1644; amongst them are mentioned *Major Pinkney*, and *Serjeant Milton*; and probably the others were slain at Cholmondeley and brought to Nantwich for interment. Their names are:—*Richard Bound*, soldier; *Thomas Brassill*, sergant; *Robert Hool*, soldier; *William Davenport*, soldier; *John fearnough*, soldier; *Raphe Milton*, Sergant; *Raphe Meare*, soldier; *Eswell Pinky*, Mager.”

the drawe Bridge; opened the Gates; and the Lord of Denbigh, Colonell Bouthe, & the reste of their officers, & some of their Soldy<sup>er</sup>s entred the Howse; where they tooke Captyn Horton, & the reste in the Howse p<sup>r</sup>son<sup>er</sup>s, beinge in n<sup>u</sup>ber about three score and sixe, w<sup>th</sup> all their Armes & p<sup>r</sup>vision, leaving the goods in the Howse a praye for the Soldy<sup>er</sup>s, whoe pillaged the same. And then leaving *Captyn Lownes* w<sup>th</sup> his Soldy<sup>er</sup>s in the Howse, they all marched w<sup>th</sup> their pryson<sup>er</sup>s, Ordnance, & Carryages to Namptwiche that Nighte. Non in the howse of the Kinges side was either slayn or hurte. The nexte daye afterwards, beinge Tuesdaye, att Namptwiche was kepte a soleme daye of thankesyvinge.”

\* \* \* \* \*

*Armes sente to Namptwiche.* “On Saturdaye the xx<sup>th</sup> of July 1644 Colonell Brereton did send fyve hundred and fyftie Armes to Namptwiche. And a litle afterwards returned thether himselfe.”

*Parker executed.* “Upon Saturdaye, the x<sup>th</sup> of August 1644, one *Parker*, a troop[er] vnder *Sr Thomas mydleton*, was adiudged to dye by a Councell of warr in Namptwiche, for the wilfull kyllinge *nr Randull Smythe* & on[e] . . . . . *Browne* in haslington; & wounded many other<sup>s</sup>, beinge either madd or drunke. And on Tuesdaye nexte followinge he was executed att Namptwiche; and afterwards hanged in cheynes on Haslington Heath, neere vnto the place where hee com<sup>it</sup>ted the murders.”

*Tarvyn made a Garrison Markett Towne.* “On fryday the xxx<sup>th</sup> of August 1644, All the forces att Namptwich, excepte maior Croxtons & the Towne companies, marched furthe to Middlewiche, where the[y] quartred that Nighte; And the nexte daye to Northwiche, & greate Budworthe, & then to *Tarvyn*, w<sup>ch</sup> the[y] fortified w<sup>th</sup> stronge workes; made ytt a Markett Towne, & therein putt a Garrison; And another garrison att *Huxley Hall*, & another att *Olton Hall* neer litle Budworthe.”

*Executions att Namptwiche.* “On Mondaye the xxij of September Colonell Brereton, w<sup>th</sup> many of his company returned backe [after taking Montgomery] to Namptwiche.”  
\* \* \* \* \* “On the xxvj of September 1644 Their weire foure Soldy<sup>er</sup>s hanged att Namptwiche, beinge soe adiudged by the Councell of Warr, for Runnyng from their Cullo<sup>s</sup> [colours] to the Enymy, w<sup>ch</sup> weire taken att Mountgom<sup>r</sup>y, viz: *Will<sup>m</sup>. Walley*, *Richard Hollenworth*, *Will<sup>m</sup>. Strongitharm*, and *Will<sup>m</sup>. Poole*.”

\* \* \* \* \*

*Captyn George Beckett dyed.* “On Sundaye the xvij<sup>th</sup> of November 1644 *Captyn George Beckett*, beinge wounded twoe monthes before att Shocklage, dyed att Namptwiche. And was seemlye buried the nexte daye in the Heighe Chauncell, neere the Communyon Table.”\*

\* This Burial is not recorded in the Registers; but there was formerly “a stone in the middle of the Chancell” inscribed “*Captaine George Becket, son of George B. of Soo. [? Sound] yecman, burd. Nov. 18, 1644.*”—(*Harl. MSS.* 2151).

Twoe *Irishe*  
*hanged.* "On ffrydaye, the xvij<sup>th</sup> of January 1644[-5] Twoe native *Irishe* borne,  
viz: *Derby Covan & Mortoughe Colane*, w<sup>ch</sup> weire taken p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup> att Andforde  
[Aldford] when Colonell Brookes troupes weire some of them taken in  
theire quarter<sup>s</sup> by theim of Chester, were tryed by the Councell of Warr, & hanged att  
Namptwiche accordinge to an ordinance of Parliamt.:"

A *daye of*  
*Thankesgyvinge.* "On Thursday the xxij of January 1644[-5], There was held att  
Namptwiche A Solem daye of thankesgyvinge for deliu'inge the Towne  
when ytt was besieged & assaulted, that tyme twelve monthes, & for all  
other of Gods greate blessings, p<sup>r</sup>servacons & favours towards the said Towne.\* The  
same daye att Nighte Reporte came to the Towne that the Kinges ptie., beinge foure  
hundred horse w<sup>th</sup> muskettier<sup>s</sup> behind them weire come to Whitchurche. Whereupon the  
Townesmen & Soldiers weire all com'anded to stande vpon theire Garde, for preservacon  
of the Towne of Namptwiche."

*Hawkyns* *shott*  
*att Namptwiche.* "On ffrydaye, the xxiiij<sup>th</sup> of January 1644[-5], *Lieften<sup>t</sup> Hawkyns*, als.  
*Huggyn*, was adiudged by the Councell of Warr to Dye for that hee was an  
*Irishe* man; had taken the Covenante, p<sup>r</sup>ved for the p<sup>r</sup>liamt and afterwards went to the  
Kinges ptie.; he was shott at the Chauncell ende in Namptwiche."

*Persons in*  
*Shrowesbury*  
*broughte to*  
*Namptwiche.* "On Saturday the first of Marche 1644[-5] *Baronett Lea, Sr Richard*  
*Lowsen, Sr John Weild* sen<sup>r</sup> & Jun<sup>r</sup>., *Doctor Lewyn, Doctor ffowler, Doctor*  
*Arneweaye, Herbert Vaughan, Edward Kynnaston, ffancis Sandford,*† *ffancis*  
*Thomas, & Thomas Owen* esqrs.; *Edward Owen, Lieuten<sup>t</sup> Colonell, Captyn*  
*Stanley, ffancis Smythe, gents.; Thomas Johnes, Esq.; Captyn Ranesford, Alderman Gibbons,*  
*Captyn Yonge & Sr Thomas Whitmore* weire sente to Namptwiche p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup> from Shrowesbury.  
And vpon the viij<sup>th</sup> of Marche 1644[-5] weire sente to Namptwiche after them, p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup>,  
*Captyn Lucas, Maior Ranger, Captyn Cressye, Captyn Harrison, m<sup>r</sup> Turner, Captyn Betts, Sr*  
*John Peshall, Sr Nicolas Byron, Captyn Edward Leighton, Captyn Talbott, Captyn Pontesbury*  
*Owen, m<sup>r</sup> Spurstowe, Lieften<sup>t</sup> Thomas Owen, m<sup>r</sup> Robte. Sandford, m<sup>r</sup> Trewyns, Thomas Betton,*  
*maior Littleton, and m<sup>r</sup> Richard Otley, All in nu'ber xxxviiij."*

*Prisoners*  
*removed.* "On Saturdaye the xv<sup>th</sup> of Marche 1644[-5], some of these p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup>  
weire removed from Namptwiche to Manchester; And the nexte day after  
(beinge Sondaye) some of them more weire removed to Eccleshall Castle."

\* Partridge says, (Hist. Nantwich, 1774, p. 74) "In commemoration of the raising of the siege, which happened on St. Paul's Day [25 Jan.] 1643-4, upon every anniversary of it, till of late, the inhabitants wore sprigs of *Holly* in their hats in token of victory: and the day itself upon that account was called *Holly-Holy-Day*."

† *Francis Sandford*, brother to Capt. Thomas Sandford who had been slain on the 18th Jan. 1644, (p. 164), was a prisoner on parole at Nantwich in May, 1645, when Sir William Brereton granted him leave of absence for ten days to visit his native home at Sandford. His "*pass*" has recently been printed in the "*Cheshire Sheaf*," No, 719, from the original document still preserved at Sandford, as follows:—

"These are to desire and require all those whome it may concerne to suffer the bearer hereof, *Mr. ffrauncis Sandford*, to pass their seu'all Scouts and Courts of Guard from this Garrison of Namptwich to Sandford in Shropshire, and back againe w<sup>th</sup>in ten daies after the date hereof.

Given under my hand at Nantwich, 12th of May, 1645.

WILL. BRERETON."

To all officers and souldiers in  
service for Kinge and Parliamt."

[Countersigned on back] "John Gobbett,  
Will. Alexander."



*Irishmen  
hanged.*

“On Wednesday, the xj<sup>th</sup> of June 1645, Many of the p<sup>r</sup>soners sente from Taryvn, about fourteene or fyfteene in nu<sup>m</sup>ber, weire tryed att Namptwich by the Councell of warr, whereof three of them weire adiudged to Dye, being Native Irishe; And the same day in the afternoone they weire all three hanged, (By the ordinance of p<sup>r</sup>liamt.)”

*Colonell Brereton  
going to the  
p<sup>r</sup>liamt.*

“On ffryday the xij<sup>th</sup> of June 1645 Colonell Brereton wente from Namptwiche towards London, beinge called vp to the p<sup>r</sup>liamt., & beinge one of the Knights for Cheshire;\* But stayinge a whyle in Stafford towne, he sente vp *Captyn Stones*, (then Govenor of Stafford) w<sup>th</sup> but a smale Troope of horse; whoe in his Journey mett w<sup>th</sup> some of the Kinges forces & fallinge on them tooke fyfteen of them p<sup>r</sup>soners & sixe hundred poundes in money. (some reporte viij hundred poundes.”

*Three executed.*

On Saturday xxj<sup>st</sup> of June 1645 Three Native Irishe weire executed att Namptwiche.”

“You heard before howe Beeston Castle was unwyslye deliue<sup>d</sup> vp to Captyn Sandford for the Kinges vse by Captyn Steele then Govenor thereof for the p<sup>r</sup>liamt, vpon or about the xij<sup>th</sup> of December 1643; w<sup>ch</sup> was held by the Kinges pte. vntill *Beeston Castle deliue<sup>d</sup>.* Sondag the xv<sup>th</sup> of November 1643; And then *Captyn Vallatt*, Govenor thereof, after almost a twelve monthes seige, w<sup>th</sup> aboute fyfthe sixe in his Company, beinge broughte into greate wante of victuals; havinge not any food in the Castle (but onelie water), not for to haue maynteyned them twee dayes, & seeinge the same blockt vp, and Chester alsoe beinge w<sup>th</sup>out hope to bee relieved; vpon a plye. [parley] w<sup>th</sup> Colonell Brereton, & an agreem<sup>t</sup> betwixte them was concluded, That they w<sup>th</sup> all there Armes, Colo<sup>r</sup>s flyinge, Drumes beatinge, & twee Carte loades of goods, shold instantlie depte. awaye, & deliue<sup>r</sup> vp the Castle to the said Colonell Brereton; w<sup>ch</sup> was the same daye p<sup>r</sup>formed. And when a Considerable force was putt into the Castle by the said Colonell, The said *vallatt* w<sup>th</sup> his Soldiers havinge a Conveye w<sup>th</sup> them was broughte vnto Denbighe, whether hee had a desyre to goe: But twentie of *vallants* [*sic.*] Soldiers, when they weire come furthe of the Castle, Laide downe there Armes, & eu<sup>y</sup> of them desyred that they might have lycence to goe to there homes, w<sup>ch</sup> was graunted. There was neither meate, Ale, nor Beere, found in the Castle, save onelie a peece of a Turkey pye, Twee Biskettes, a lyve Peacock & a peahen.”

*Beeston Castle  
defaced.*

“Chester beinge deliue<sup>d</sup> vp aboute the third of ffebruary 1645[-6], p<sup>r</sup>sentlie afterwards command was gyven & warrants sente to the seu<sup>al</sup> p<sup>r</sup>ishes of Bunbury, Tarporley, Wrenbury, & Acton, & some other places & Townshippes, nearest adioyning ffor the pullinge downe, and vtter defacinge of Beeston Castle, w<sup>ch</sup> before Whitsunweeke 1646 was p<sup>r</sup>formed. Onelie the Gatehouse in the lower warde, & pte. of some Towers in the heigher warde, weire lefte standinge, w<sup>ch</sup> scythens

\* This was the Long Parliament that sat from 3rd Nov. 1640, to 20th April, 1653. Sir William Brereton, first Baronet of Handforth, co. Chester, also sat in two other Parliaments during the reign of Charles I, viz.: in the Parliamt. 17th March, 1627-8, to 10th March, 1628-9 (3 Car. I); and that of 13th April, 1640, to 6th May, 1640 (16 Car. I) He was created a Baronet by Charles I, on the 10th March, 1626-7, at the age of 22; his “*Travels into Holland and the seventeen provinces*” in 1634; and “*through Scotland & Ireland*” in 1635, have been published by the Chetham Soc. He received grants of money and lands for his services to the Parliament, including the archiepiscopal palace of Croydon, where he occasionally resided, and where, on the 7th April, 1661, he died. For a biographical account of Sir William Brereton, see Earwaker’s “*East Cheshire*,” vol. I, pp. 255-9.

are pulled downe & utterlie defaced. This Castle was buylded, as appeareth by Auncient Manuscripts in *A<sup>o</sup>. dni. 1220*, by Earle Randall, the third Earle of Chester."

"Upon Tuesdaye the xiiij<sup>th</sup> of July 1646 A great Mutynye was made in Namptwicke by some of the Rude & unseemlie sorte of the Towne Souldyers to the nu<sup>b</sup>ber of iij hundred or thereabouts; w<sup>th</sup>out either com<sup>and</sup> or Ayde of their Captyns or head office<sup>s</sup>, beinge all in Armes & forcinge many honest Townesmen to Joyn w<sup>th</sup> them; did by vyolence drawe some of the Committee of Sequestracions for Namptwicke hundred (beinge in peaceable man<sup>r</sup> executinge their office for the State) furthe of the office where all their Books & records weire, & fetched other some of them (and one of the Collecto<sup>rs</sup>) furthe of seu'all howses, where they weire att Dynner, And putt them all in the Com<sup>on</sup> Pryson in Namptwicke amongst Cavalie<sup>rs</sup>, Theeves, & horse stealers (w<sup>ch</sup> weire then their) havinge byn the Com<sup>on</sup> p<sup>er</sup>son from the firste makinge the Towne a garrison for thowsands of Lothesome, Lowsy, wounded & maymed Souldyer<sup>s</sup>, where many of them had Dyed, & noe outlett for them to doe their needs In: but onelie the p<sup>er</sup>son howse, w<sup>ch</sup> was soe filthie & stinkinge that ytt was Gods mercy that they cold endure ytt. Neither wold they allowe them to haue either meate or Drinke, nor quarter in any other howse or place; althoughe ytt was desyred bothe by the heighe Sherryff of the Countie, & many of the Deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup> & Justices of the Peace beinge then in Towne: (sittinge their q<sup>ter</sup>. [Quarter] Sessions): But not able to medle w<sup>th</sup> suche a Rude multitude on the sudden vnlesse they should haue raised the Countrey, or called In the Trayned bands, w<sup>ch</sup> wolde haue bredd a greater mischeefe: Neither wolde they willinglie haue allowed them stooles or quyssions [cushions] to reste on: But onelie the flower [floor] or bare bordes for the space of twoe dayes and a halfe & twoe Nights; abusinge them in wordes, callinge them Rounde headed Rouges [rogues]; abusinge their wyves, children & servants by the names of whores, & all evell wordes the[y] colde devyse; not sufferinge them to bringe them any sustenance, but what was p<sup>er</sup>vatlie conveyed vnto them back wayes, throwe holes of the Prysens; neither wolde they suffer them to goe furthe for doinge of their needs duringe the whole space of fyfthe foure howers (Layinge nothinge to their charge) but alledged that their wages was p<sup>er</sup>te. vnpaid: Althoughe they knewe that the same Com<sup>it</sup>tee never paid them, nor noe other Souldyer<sup>s</sup> any; neither had they any warrant to pay them any: ffor they receyved their paye alwayes from the Treasurer, By warrant from the Deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup>. But as some of them said, They wolde Beate Jacke for Gill; yett they wold not deliu[er] them furthe, vntill Colonell Lothian & some other gents. had vndertaken for their paye. The hon<sup>ble</sup> lower Howse of Com<sup>ons</sup> beinge made acqynted w<sup>th</sup> that greate abuse vsed vnto the said Com<sup>it</sup>tee, did appoynte a Com<sup>it</sup>tee to examen the buysiness, And sente downe orde<sup>rs</sup> to the Deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup> of the Countie of Chester; Both to examen witnesses and certefie: But they did neither: by reason they weire either in some faulte for not beinge more carefull to see the Souldyer<sup>s</sup> paid; or els beinge much tro<sup>ub</sup>led w<sup>th</sup> the Busines of the Countrey. But the said Com<sup>it</sup>tee had never any satisfac<sup>on</sup> for the same."

*Namptwicke  
garrison sold<sup>r</sup> [iers]  
disbanded.*

"On the xv<sup>th</sup> day of January 1646[-7] Namptwicke Towne was disgarri-  
soned; & all the paye from Captyns, office<sup>s</sup> & Souldyer<sup>s</sup> taken from them:  
& they all discharged by the Deputie Lieften<sup>ts</sup> of Cheshire by order from  
the p<sup>er</sup>liamt, w<sup>ch</sup> tooke effecte in february nexte after."

With this extract from Thomas Malbon's very quaint and interesting MS., the Civil War troubles, of which Nantwich had had a full share, may be said to end. Some time after, a complete list of all the "*Delinquents*" in Nantwich Hundred was drawn up, stating how and when certain persons had already been discharged from sequestration, and showing why others were still under arrest. This official list consisting of one hundred and two names signed by three sequestrators, appears to have been very carefully made out. It is contained in *Harl. MSS.* 2128; and is here printed in full, as follows:—

*"A true & p'ticular note of all the delinquents sequestered w<sup>ch</sup> have any Lands or estate in Nantw<sup>ch</sup> hundred either lying in the hundred or furthe of the hundred & also what orders wee haue receyved w<sup>th</sup> the dates thereof for suspending of their Sequestrac'ons and whoe standeth still under Sequestrac'on & lykewise whoe are discharged from Sequestrac'on & p'doned whose estate Recall or P'sonall are not worthe two hundred pounds w<sup>ch</sup> have taken the Negative oathe & Covenant accordinge to the Resolve of the 8th of December 1646, As followeth undr."*

JOHN EARLE RYVERS,<sup>(a)</sup> wee have not as yett, any order concernynge him.

ROBERT VISCOUNT CHOLM[ONDE]LEY :<sup>(a)</sup> By order from Goldsmys Hall, Dat. the 3 of Decemb. 1646 his sequestracon ys suspended & his Rente ordered him from the x<sup>th</sup> of Sept. before upon Oxford Articles &c.

ROBERT VISCOUNT KILMOREY :<sup>(b)</sup> By order from Goldsmys Hall of the 22 April 1647, his Sequestrac'on was suspended & upon Oxford articles to receive his Rents from the xij of August before.

SR THOMAS WILBRAHAM [of Woodhey] BARONET<sup>(c)</sup> was sequestered in 1644, & by order from Goldsmys Hall dat. 20 Junii 1646 his sequestrac'on suspended.

SR THOMAS ASTON, BARONETT; An order from the honble Com'ttee of Lords & Com'ons for the depositinge of the Rents in the tents [tenants] hands, dat. 18 Sept. 1646. An other order of 16 of Dec. 1646 for taking the Sequestrac'ons of [f] &c.<sup>(d)</sup>

SR THOMAS SMYTH, [of Hatherton] KNIGHT,<sup>(e)</sup> & THO. SMYTH ESQ., his sonne & heire; sequestered in Chester. By order from Goldsmys Hall of 26 January 1646[-7] their sequestrac'ons were suspended.

SR THOMAS DELVES<sup>(f)</sup> [of Doddington] *Knight & Baronett*: By order from Goldsmys hall dat. Oct. 20 1646, his sequestrac'on was suspended.

SR HUGH CALVELEY,<sup>(g)</sup> Knight, wee have receyved noe order concernynge him.

ALEXANDER WALTHALL,<sup>(h)</sup> [of Wistaston] senr. Ar. [Esq.] dead & the lands descended to his sonne; were - by conveyance & adidged [?] adjudged] good by Mr. Bradshaw vnder his hand dat. 12 Maie 1646, & confirmed by Sr Willm Brereton, Mr. Henry Brooke & Mr. John Leighe under their hands.

JAMES POOLE [?] of Poole Hall, Wirral] Ar<sup>r</sup> [Esq.], a papist.

THOMAS POOLE, gen.[t], a papist.

\* The amounts of fines here given in the notes are taken from "*A Catalogue of the Lords, Knights and Gentlemen, that Compounded for their Estates.*" Printed for Thomas Dring 1655 London: and Chester: Re-printed by Roger Adams 1733." Earl Rivers, who was a County Magistrate, was driven from the Bench by order of Parliament on 1st Oct. 1646, and fined £1,110. He died 10th Oct. 1654, at Frodsham Castle.

(a) Fined £7,742.

(d) Sir Thos. Aston had died on 24th March, 1645-6.

(b) Fined £2,306 with £120 per ann. settled on the Ministry. (e) Fined £2,150, with £110 per ann. settled.

(c) Fined £2,500. (f) Fined £1,484 10s. (g) Fined £1,455. (h) Fined £164. He died in Feb. 1645-6.

DOROTHY POOLE, vid. [widow], a papist.

JOHN MYNSHULL<sup>(i)</sup> [of Vale Royal] Esqr.; By order from Goldsmys Hall of the 21 Nov. 1646, his sequestrac'on was suspended.

THOMAS MYNSHULL [? of Erdswick] Esqr., hee remayneth still under sequestrac'on: but the trustees have the lands ordered there by an order from the hon<sup>ble</sup> Com'ittee of Lords and Com'ons, dat. xiiij July 1647.

WILL<sup>[IA]</sup>M HASSALL [of Hassall] Esq. deceased: But his mother & his wyfe have all his lands by Conveyaunce for their lyves made long scythens [since].

RICHARD GRYFFYN<sup>(j)</sup> [of Bartherton] Esq. hath Compounded; but his order ys not come downe as yett; But onelie an order from Goldsmys Hall dat. 9 Feb. 1647 not to lett his lands. But the 4th of March 1647[-8] wee did receyve another from Goldsmys Hall for suspendinge of his ffathers sequestrac'on.

HUGH WILERAHAM<sup>(k)</sup> [of Draketon] Esqr.: An order from Goldsmiths Hall dat x Nov. 1646. for depositing his Rents in the tent<sup>s</sup> [tenants] hands from the first of Oct. last upon Oxford articles &c. And another order dat. 25 ffeb. 1646[-7] for suspending his sequestrac'on.

RICHARD GREENE<sup>(l)</sup> [? of St. Martins in the Fields] Esq.; noe order concernynge him.

JONATHAN WOODNOH<sup>(m)</sup> [of Shavington] Esq.; noe order concernynge him.

PEERS DOD, gent.,<sup>(n)</sup> noe order concernynge him.

RICHARD WICKSTEED<sup>(o)</sup> [of Nantwich] Junr.; his sequestrac'on suspended by order from Goldsmys Hall, dat. 15 Aug. 1646.

JOHN WILSON<sup>(p)</sup> [of Chester] noe orders concernynge him.

Parson [THOMAS] FOWLER,<sup>(q)</sup> of Whitchurch, [Salop]: noe order &c.

Parson [FRANCIS] ROWLEY of Coppenhall; noe order &c.

THOMAS POOLE, a papist; noe order &c.

THOMAS WICKSTEAD,<sup>(r)</sup> [of Hampton, Cheshire, yeoman], a papist; noe order &c.

GEORGE BICKERTON<sup>(s)</sup> [of Horse Hall, Cheshire]; noe order &c.

GEORGE PARSON, a papist; nothinge in oure hundred.

THOMAS BREYNE [? of Acton parish], a papist: noe order &c

WILLIAM HINTON<sup>(t)</sup> [of Burton, Cheshire, gent.]; noe order &c.

ROBERT GRYFFYTH, discharged beinge under the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>. [£200].

HENRY GRYFFYTH, under the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>. [£200].

MR. [WILLIAM] BROMLEY of Baginton<sup>(u)</sup> [Warwickshire] sequestered att Coventree. An order from Goldsmys Hall dat 25 Jan. 1646[-7] for suspending of his Sequestrac'on.

MR. [THOMAS] BROMLEY<sup>(v)</sup> of Hampton post, [Cheshire]; sequestered in Broxton Hundred & suspended by order from Goldsmys Hall dat. 20 Aug. 1646.

MR. [RALPH] SNEYDE<sup>(w)</sup> of Keele [Staff. Esq.]; noe order concernynge him.

(i) Fined £740.

(j) Fined £50.

(k) Fined £362.

(l) Fined £463 10s.

(m) Fined £400.

(n) His household'goods sold at Nantwich for £24 10s. 2d. Inventory in *Hartl. MSS.* 2166.

(o) Fined £210.

(p) Fined £142 10s.

(q) Fined £130.

(r) Fined £56.

(s) Fined £55 10s.

(t) Fined £90.

(u) Fined £424.

(v) Fined £320.

(w) Fined £1000, with £100 per ann. settled on the Ministry.

- MR. LAWTON<sup>(x)</sup> of Lawton; sequestrac'on suspended by order from Goldsmys Hall, Dat. Sept. 1646.
- MR. RANDULL EGERTON,<sup>(y)</sup> of Betley, [Staff.]: noe order &c.
- WILLIAM LORD BRERETON<sup>(z)</sup> [of Brereton]: Rents deposited in his tents [tenants] hands by order from G. H. dat, 19 June 1647.
- ROBERT ELCOCKE<sup>(a)</sup> [of Acton, nr. Nantwich]: By order from G. H. dat. 16 Maii 1646, his sequestrac'on suspended.
- THOMAS HALM[AR]KE; paup[er]; under the value &c.
- JOHN PAGE; noe order concernynge him: (being a paup<sup>r</sup>) but discharged beinge under the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>.
- RANDULL GRYFFYTH; noe order concernynge him.
- CAPT. RICHARD WALTHALL<sup>(b)</sup> [of Wistaston]: noe order &c.
- JOHN POWNALL: noe order &c.
- MR. [JOHN] SARINGE<sup>(c)</sup> mynister, [of Nantwich]: noe order &c.
- JOHN BARNETT; noe order &c.
- HENRY VERNON<sup>(d)</sup> [of Haslington] Esq. was sequestered (to our remembrance) about March 1644: & suspended at G. H. by order of the 9th of December 1645.
- WILLIAM ALLEN<sup>(e)</sup> [of Baddiley, Cheshire] gent., was sequestered in A<sup>o</sup> . . . & by order from G. H. date 2 Junii 1646 sequestracon suspended.
- MRS. COTTON vid. [widow of Thomas Cotton Esq. of Combermere; being Elizabeth dau. of Sir George Calveley, Kt.] discharged by order from the Com'ittee of Lords & Com'ons dated 26 June 1646, & Restituc'on to bee made her.
- THOMAS MAISTERSON<sup>(f)</sup> [of Nantwich] Esq., was sequestered in 1644; hath made his composic'on & sente up his money & 4 Marcii last hee did shew vs an order for suspending his sequestrac'on.
- RAUFFE CARDIFF: noe order &c.
- WILLIAM IRISH; noe order &c.
- ROBERT CROSBIE; discharged, being under the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>.
- JOHN FYTHIAN, paup<sup>r</sup>: under the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>.
- EDWARD HASSALL;<sup>(g)</sup> fledd & gonne; & whether lyvinge or dead wee knowe not, but hathe very litle to mayntayne all his children.
- RAUFE HORTON<sup>(h)</sup> [of Coole Pilate] gent. His sequestrac'on suspended by order from G. H. dat. xxxj Julii 1646.
- ROBERT HORTON<sup>(i)</sup> [of Coole Pilate] gent: fledd & gonne beinge urged to take the Negative othe: but hathe nothinge that wee knowe of.
- WILLIAM LEVERPAGE [of Wybunbury Parish] Esq.: his sequestrac'on suspended by order from G. H. dat. 14 Aug. 1646.
- CAPTYN JOHNES<sup>(j)</sup>: noe order &c.
- THOMAS WEEVER: p[ar]doned beinge vnder the value of CCl<sup>i</sup>.
- CHARLES WALLEY<sup>(k)</sup> [of Chester] gent.; his sequestrac'on suspended by order from Goldsmys Hall dat. 24 Julii 1646.

(x) Fined £680.

(y) Fined £1,511.

(z) Fined £1,738 18s.

(a) Fined £18.

(b) Grandson of Alexander Walthall, senr. before-mentioned. Perhaps he was not fined, as the family goods had been sold, and his father's purse drained.

(c) Mr. Saring's goods sold, see p. 173.

(d) Fined £500.

(e) Fined £90.

(f) Fined [?] £630.

(g) According to *Harl. MSS.* 2166, his household goods sold at Nantwich for £28 14s. 5d. On another page, a note states that the goods were delivered to Thos. Steele of Leighton "to and for the keeping of Edward Hassalls three little children," on account of the death of their mother at the same time as the goods were seized.

(h) Fined £128.

(i) Fined £10.

(j) ? whether the same as "John Jones of Namptwich, gent.," who was fined "£25."

(k) Fined £268 10s.

WILLIAM BY[R]OM; under the value p'dce. [aforesaid].

THOMAS CALCOTT<sup>(l)</sup> gent.; his sequestrac'on suspended by order of the Com'ttee of Lords & Com'ons; dat. 14 July 1647.

JOHN PATRICKE, under the value p'dce.

MR. ROBERT WEEVER dead & his wyfe hath all his lands in Joynture by good convayance.

EDWARD DODD<sup>(m)</sup> [of Edge] Esq. sequestered in Broxton hundred & a moietie of the Lady Nortons lands compounded for by his sonne and another part for his daughter.

THOMAS WARBURTON, dead & his wyfe pardoned beinge under the value &c.

GEORGE COTTON<sup>(n)</sup> of [Combermere] Esq. sequestered in A<sup>o</sup> 1644: suspended by order from G. H. dat. 6 Marcii 1645[-6].

JOHN BICKERTON, p[ar]doned, under the value &c.

HATTON WEAVER, p[ar]doned &c

THOMAS HOLLAND, pauper, p[ar]doned &c.

JOHN SHERSHAWE, paupr, pardoned &c.

BOBERT LATHOME; noe order &c.

MR. KELSALL, viccar of Audley; noe order; nor any lands in our hundred.

MR. JOHN KELSALL<sup>(o)</sup> mynister; noe order: nor any lands in our hundred.

MR. [RANDLE] SILLITOE<sup>(f)</sup> mynister [of Church Lawton]; noe order: nor any lands in our hundred.

THOMAS ROWLEY, nothing in our hundred.

WILLIAM KELSALL, voted the 8th March 1644[-5]: noe lands in our hundred.

CHRISTOPHER HOLFORD, about the same tyme, vnder the value pdce.

MR. [LAWRENCE] NEWTON mynister [of Church Minshull] about the same tyme, under value.

RANDULL MYNSHULL, about the same tyme, under value pdce.

THOMAS WALLEs, about the same tyme: noe order &c.

THOMAS HILDITCH, about the same tyme: noe order &c.

THOMAS SIDWAY; 27 March 1645; & taken of[f] by order from G. H. dated 27 March 1646.

RANDULL CHURCH [? of Nantwich] gent. 12 Junii 1645: nothing in our hundred.

JOHN MALKYN, 19 July 1645, noe order; but a poore man & lyveth by Alsellinge [Ale-selling].

RANDLE HALLM[AR]KE: 7 Oct. 1645: a poore alseller: p'doned being under &c.

RICHARD DUNNINGE; the same day; noe order: but lyveth by Aleselling.

THOMAS DAVIS; 4 Nov. 1645: noe order &c.

MR. RICHARD WILSON<sup>(g)</sup> mynister . . . . . 27 Jan. 1645[-6] noe order &c.

MR. JOHN BRESSIE<sup>(r)</sup> 19 Maii 1646; dead & his meanes in our hundred belongeth to his mother.

JANE WAGGE vid. [widow]: 5 of Sept. 1646; p'doned being under value.

RICHARD HEATH sequestered in Broxton Hundred, noe order &c.

CHARLES WICKSTEED: 20th Aug. 1647: hath nothinge.

RICHARD WILKES *jur.*; 7th October 1647: noe order.

JOHN NORRIS<sup>(s)</sup> sen<sup>r</sup>. of Bolton was sequestered att Manchester, the 27 March 1645; whoe had some monie oweinge him in Namptwiche wch ys receyved & accompted for.

(l) ? whether the same as John Caldecott, of Bickley  
Gent. (Cheshire) who was fined £9.

(m) Fined £93 6s. 8d.

(n) Fined £666 13s. 4d.

(o) ? whether the same as John Kelsall of Trafford,  
gent., who was fined £236.

(f) Fined £8 10s.

(g) ? whether Richard Wilson of Chester, gent., who  
was fined £22.

(r) Bressie or Brassey of Willaston.

(s) Fined £50.

MR. THOMAS CHOLM[ONDELEY]<sup>(t)</sup> being sequestered in . . . . [Broxton] hundred having some small Rents in oure hundred did bring vs an order from Goldsmyths Hall dated quinto Nov. 1646, for depositing the Rents in ye tents [tenants] hands & from the xth of Sept. last having the benefit of Oxford Articles: & his Order for suspending of his Sequestrac'on ys dat. 7 Decem. 1646.

SR JOHN PE[R]SHALL [of Checkley] *Bart* was discharged from his Sequestrac'on by the Com'ittee of the Lords & Com'ons by Order dat. 3 Marcii 1646[-7] His grandfather<sup>(u)</sup> being Sequestered by the Com'ittee of Stafford.

MR. THO. DOD [of Nantwich]: order from G. H. dat. x Oct. 1645; for allowinge him halfe of the Lady Nortons lands.

MR. BOVELL order from G. H. dat. 2 Junii 1646 for suspending of his Sequestrac'on.

MR. STANLEY BURROWES<sup>(v)</sup> [of Bickley] his order from G. H. dated 18 Sept. 1646: do.

MR. JOHN KING<sup>(w)</sup> [of Cholmondeley] gent: Order from G. H. dated 7 Dec. 1646, for the suspending of his Sequestrac'on."

[Signed by three Sequestrators] "THOMAS HARWAR  
"ROBERT WILKES  
"THOMAS MALBONE."

Resuming the local events in the Malbon MS.:-

*A greate ffyer  
in Namptwiche.*

"The xxij of Marche 1646 [-7] beinge Mondaye, a litle after Nyne a Clock in the Nighte, there happened a greate and terrible ffyer in Namptwiche, throwe the Negligence of the Ostler in Swan Stable, wth a Candle, wch in three howers did consume & burne a greate p[ar]te of the same Stable, The Blacke Lyon Stable, & pte. of the Lambe Stable, beinge all neire together, wth muche of the Haye, Strawe, & materialls therein, togeither wth pte. of the Swan Howse, and pte. of *Willm. Pratchetts* Kitchen, & pte. of some other buyldinges, Beside many thatched howses neerest adioyninge weire vncovered, as vidowe *Arcalls* Kitchen, *Henrye Hoyase* [?] howse, beinge newly thatched, and pte. of *m<sup>r</sup> Walthalls* horse Mylne; To the greate losse and damage of the Owne<sup>rs</sup>. But ytt pleased God, there was but smale wynde, & good helpe by reason of many Soldiers quartered in the Towne that Nighte, wch tooke greate paynes, or else the ffyer begynnyng in the very harte of the towne, & water scarce, the whole Towne had byn in greate danger of burnynge."

*Another ffyer  
att Namptwiche.*

"The xij of August 1647, Another greate ffyer, beinge in the Welsh Roe in Namptwiche, on the outside of the dwelling howse of widowe *Bebbington*, beinge a thatched howse, betwixte xj & xij of the Clocke in the daye, wch hapened by Shootinge att a Crowe on the said howse, wth a Birdinge peece, Kyndinge\* in the Thatche, burned exceedinglye, & fyred *Michell Davenports* howse, beinge nexte adioynynge, wch howses, by reason of a greate helpe weire quicklie uncovered, & bothe had harme by the ffyer; but *Davenports* howse had the greater harme; and also *Davenports*

(t) Fined £2 10s.

(v) Fined £298 3s.

(u) The grandfather probably being Sir William Pershall, *Recusant*, [i.e. papist] who was fined £604 15s.

(w) Fined £50.

\* "*Kinding*," i.e. lighting, or igniting; a word still commonly used.

fyred *John Prees* howse, beinge nexte adioyninge, w<sup>ch</sup> spoyled a greate pte. of one Baye,\* and Began to enter on *Reginald Kynseyes* howse; But ytt pleased God, that the same hap'ninge in the Daye and the Towne reased, & greate helpe came, or els the whole streete, especiallie that side, had byn burned. And about a moneth before All the roofe of a Wichehouse of *mr wilbrams & Dorothy Brown* was burned as they weire wallinge & makeinge Salte, w<sup>ch</sup> yf ytt had happ'ned in the Nighte might haue endangered a great pte. of the Towne."

*Plague att  
Wistaston.*

"The Plague began in Wistaston, beinge a litle p'ishe of one Towneshipp, not twoe myles from Namptwiche, a litle after midsom<sup>r</sup> 1647, & conty'ued about Nyne weekes; in w<sup>ch</sup> space theire dyed xxvj p'sons.† The same began in the howse of widowe *Scott*, a Bleacher of Clothes."‡

Malbon, describing the overthrow of the Scotch Army at Preston on the 17th Aug. 1648, by General Cromwell, says:—

"Theire weire broughte p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup> to Namptwiche, p'sons of accompt, viz.: *Earle Traquerne* [Traquaire], *Lord Cornegy*, *Lord Lumton*, *Lord Ramsay*, *Sr James Lasly* [Leslie], *Sr Nicholas maismath*; four maiors; twelve Captyns; eleaven Liefent<sup>s</sup>; three Ensigns; three Cornetts; one quarter<sup>mr</sup>; fyve ministers; fyfteene gent. of quallitie, & aboute one thousand Com'on Soldier<sup>s</sup>. They were almost all of them a fortnighte in Towne; The greate men & better sorte of them weire well quartered in Innes, & other sufficient howses, & the Com'on Soldye<sup>r</sup>s weire kepte in the Churche."

*Prisoners  
Removed.*

"On Tuesday the fyfte of September 1648 the Noblemen weire removed to Warwick Castle; But the weeke before all the Com'on sorte in the Churche, weire sent abroad to seu'all Townshipp in the Countrey, w<sup>ch</sup> vsed to sett furthe the Trayned bannds;§ eu'y townshipp had double the p<sup>r</sup>soner<sup>s</sup> to quarter to the nu'ber of the trayned bands. The Mynisters, Captyns, and other officers quartered in the Towne for a long tyme afterwards."

"King Charles Behedded neere the Banquettinge House att Whitehall, London, on Tuesday the xxx<sup>th</sup> of January 1648"[-9].

After the great tragedy was enacted which astounded the whole nation, and which is thus simply mentioned, without note or comment in the Malbon MS., Parliament nominated an executive of extreme members, thirty-eight in number, to administer the affairs of the government, and everyone was required "to be true and faithful to the *Commonwealth* as then established without a King or House of Lords." Great political changes brought about the "Reign of Terror;" when the country was divided into military governments,

\* "*Bay*;" an architectural term; applied to houses, it appears to have meant the sections into which they were divided by the principal beams supporting the gables. The expression is used in the memorandum relating to the Great Fire by the Parish Clerk; (see p. 104). Farmers still speak of a *hay-bay*, or *corn-bay*, meaning that *part* of the out-buildings, where hay or corn is stored.

† No burials are recorded at Wistaston in this year; the parish register there having been very irregularly kept from 1646 to 1652.

‡ Bleaching and Dyeing was a trade carried on at Wistaston until not many years ago. The *Dye-house* beside the stream in the valley near the Hall, was occupied for several generations by the family of *Boote*.

§ In the 17th century the only standing army recognized by law was the rustic soldiery raised in every town and village, known as the *Trainbands*, or the *Militia*; which met for drill once a month; was officered by a local gentleman; and was called up once a year for drill and inspection at some pre-arranged meeting place for the surrounding district.



each with a major-general at its head, who exercised arbitrary power, arrested suspected royalists, and condemned many to death for treason against the Commonwealth; and among the rest a townsman named *John Sare*, as will be noticed presently.

Burghall, in his "*Providence Improved*," (Cole MS. Brit. Mus.) relates concerning the spring of 1651, "there was great drought in March, April, May and June; but upon seeking God by prayer and fasting we had supply of raine in due time."\*

Among the Wilb. MSS. preserved at Delamere is the following Order relating to the paving of Marsh Lane in 1651:—

"*The g<sup>n</sup>rrll. [general] Sessions of y<sup>e</sup> Peace for y<sup>e</sup> Keepers of y<sup>e</sup> Liberty of England by aut[h]ority of Parliament held at Nantwich y<sup>e</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> day of July 1651; Before THO. MAINWARING, HEN. BIRKENHEAD, THO. CROXSON, HEN. BRADSHAW & GILBERT GERRARD, Esqrs., Justices of y<sup>e</sup> Peace, within y<sup>e</sup> County &c.*

"Upon y<sup>e</sup> Humble Petition of Diners Gentl. and other y<sup>e</sup> Inhabitants of Nantwich and other adjacent townes, That whereas y<sup>e</sup> Lane lyeing betwene Nantwich and Ravensmoore called y<sup>e</sup> *Marsh-Lane*, beinge a very great Roade from Shrewesbury, Welshpoole, Whitchurch, and from diuers parts of Wales to Nantwich and other pts. of this Countrey, wch said lane all y<sup>e</sup> winter season is altogether unpassable, so yt y<sup>e</sup> Countrey people thereabout are either p<sup>r</sup>vented from cominge to their usuall Market or necessitated to go a farr greater way about ouer y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Moore and through many difficulties alsoe. And seeing this Benche is informed that y<sup>e</sup> said Lane can noe other way be made passable but by *rayseing a cawseye, and making a pavem<sup>t</sup>*, throughout y<sup>e</sup> same, y<sup>e</sup> charge whereof will amount to a farre greater s<sup>m</sup>e than possibly can be dispended by the Inhabitants of those Townes wherein y<sup>e</sup> said Lane lyes; without y<sup>e</sup> totall ruine of their Estates, being a very few & alsoe poore Inhabitants, and being a worke of such extreame necessity. It is therefore thought fit & ordered by this Court that foure payments of a Mize shall be leyved upon Nantwch, and y<sup>e</sup> Fees thereof. Three payments of Mize upon y<sup>e</sup> Townships of Baddeley, little Acton, Edlaston, Sound, Brumhall, Wrenbury firyth, Smeton-wood, Dodcot cu' Wilkesly, Norbury, Marbury cu' Coyesly, & Wirswall, (all wch said Townes being likely to have a more frequent & beneficial use of y<sup>e</sup> said Lane when repayed) & upon y<sup>e</sup> residue of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Hundred of Nantwch two payments of a Mize for & towards y<sup>e</sup> makinge of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> *Cawseye & Pavements*. And for yt end, y<sup>e</sup> head Constables of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Hundred are hereby required forthwith to issue forth their warrants to all y<sup>e</sup> petty Constables within their severall Divisions thereby strictly com<sup>r</sup>anding eury of them im<sup>e</sup>diately to collect & gather by distresse or otherwise y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> seuerall payments imposed on y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Townships as aforesaid. And y<sup>e</sup> money soe by them gathered to pay unto y<sup>e</sup> said head Constables, soe as they may not fayle to pay over y<sup>e</sup> same unto ROGR WILBRAHAM of Nantwch Esqr., GABRIEL WETTENHALL, JOHN DELVES, ROBT. WILKES, & THO. NODEN, Gents, all of Nantwch afores<sup>d</sup> at or before the 23rd August next ensuing, which said Gentlemen are by this Court nominated and appointed Overseers of y<sup>e</sup> said worke, and hereby desired to act and direct therein for y<sup>e</sup> setting forward of y<sup>e</sup> said worke as to them shall seeme fit. And alsoe to receive y<sup>e</sup> money collected, and to pay all such workemen as are employed therein, as occasion shall require. And after y<sup>e</sup> said Lane is soe sufficiently repayed then it is from time to time soe sufficiently to be kepte in good repaire by y<sup>e</sup> Townes only which heretofore haue accustomedly repaired y<sup>e</sup> same."

"HUMPH, MILTON *Dep. Cler. Pace.*"

\* A reference to one of the fast days about this time, when "divers ministers prayed and preached," and amongst the rest "Mr. Burghall," then Vicar of Acton, will be found in the "*Life of Lieutenant Illidge*," of Nantwich; a book said to have been written by the Rev. Matthew Henry in 1710. (Edit 1836, p. 10).

Malbon records that Charles II, then the uncrowned King, with his army passed through Nantwich on his way to Worcester, as follows:—

“The Scotts forces w<sup>th</sup> their Kinge weire in Namptwiche on Monday the xvii<sup>th</sup> of August 1651, but did not much harme; onelie tooke Armes & Cheese; and the nexte daye afterwards marched awaye. And after they had Garrisoned Worcester, the Parliamt forces, com'anded by Lord Gen'all Cromwell stormed the same & quyte Rowted the Enymy, the third daye of September 1651. And Cheshire forces came home agayne on Tuesday ix<sup>th</sup> of September 1651.”\*

A letter had been sent to the Magistrates, Constables and inhabitants of Nantwich requiring in his Majesty's name the payment of £3000 before five o'clock the following morning, for furnishing shoes and other necessaries for the Army.—(*Calendar of State Papers*). Roger Willbraham, of Townsend, in his Family Journal, noticing the arrival of “the forelorn of the Scotch Army,” says, they “were incensed to find so few in Towne;” and then modestly adds, “It is known who was chiefly instrumental to save y<sup>e</sup> Towne from plunder.”

The Earl of Derby having been taken prisoner at “Sandford Bridge in Shropshire,”† was taken to Chester, “where,” says Malbon, “by a Councell of Warr hee & Sr Tymothy ffetherston, & Captyn Benbowe, weire all tried & had Judgmt. to dye on Wednesday the first of October 1651, viz.: the said Earle to bee beheaded att Bolton in Lancashire that day fortnight; afterwards Captyn Benbowe to bee shott att Shrowsbury the same daye; & Sr Tymothy to bee beheaded att Chester that daye three weekes, w<sup>ch</sup> was all p'formed accordinglie.”

“The nexte weeke afterwards John Saer, John Benbowe, & some others weire alsoe tryed by a Councell of Warr att Chester & weire adjudged to dye. John Saer was hanged vpon the Comon Gallowes att Chester on Tuesdaye the ffourth of November; where some more weire hanged for seu'all offences the same daye beinge condemned att the assizes att Chester held on the weeke before.”

The trial of John Sare, (*Saer*, or *Sayer*, as his name is variously spelled), is alluded to in *Mercurius Politicus* (No. 71 p. 1137 dated Oct. 9th-16th, 1651) in a note of “news from Chester,” as follows:—

“The Court Martiall sate here again on Wednesday last and have sentenced long John Sayers of Namptwich, one of the biggest Fellows in the Nation to be executed at Boughton.”

A broadside giving his “last dying speech” on the scaffold, in which he avowed his loyalty to the King, has recently been printed in Earwaker's “*Local Gleanings*,” (1st Series, vol. ii, p. 79-81), commencing as follows:—

\* The Parish Register records the burial of a soldier—

† 1651. Aug. 22. Richard Royston, a soldier in the Scotch Army.”

† James, Earl Derby, together with the Earl of Lauderdale, and Sinclair, were taken prisoners by Capt. Oliver Edge, a Lancashire man. The story is told in the *Memoirs of Capt. Hodson, of Coley*, who was present on the occasion, and who fixes the place on “the road about half a mile south of Nantwich.” This would be in Cheshire; and though there is a place called Sandford Bridge in Cheshire, about 4 miles south of Nantwich, I am inclined to think Malbon would not be likely to have made a geographical error in the name of the county; and that Capt. Hodson, who probably was not so well acquainted with the neighbourhood, was wrong in fixing the situation of Sandford Bridge so near to Nantwich.

"The chief heads of *Mr. John Saers*<sup>3</sup> speech, and other passages at the time of his execution at West-Chester; he being the portliest man the three Kingdomes afforded, whose Coffin was two yards and a halfe in lengthe, yet too short to containe his Corps; he suffered the 20th day of October 1651."<sup>†</sup>

Roger Wilbraham (*MS. Journal*) notices an almost total eclipse of the sun.

"The most memorable eclipse of the Sunne that hath been knowne w<sup>th</sup> us was 29 Mar. 1652, which lasted 2 hrs. 45 min., betwixt 8 & 11 of ye clocke in the morning. It proved to be a clear calm day, so that in a Basin of water set for ye purpose I sensibly perceived how the darknesse increased & how it wrought off."<sup>‡</sup>

"On Sondaye the xx<sup>th</sup> of June 1652, The p'ishone<sup>rs</sup> of Lawton beinge in the Church in thafter noone, he[a]reing Gods worde, A greate storme comynge w<sup>th</sup> wynde thunder & Lightninge The thunder bolte & Lightninge or what els, pleased God, entred in att one of the Steeple wyndoes; brooke the Greate Bell wheele; did much harme in the Steeple breakinge the Roofes & floores & came downe amongst the People & killed eleaven dead, viz.: a sonne of John Pursels, Will'm. Beeche of Audley p'ishe. [a webster]; Will'm. Mearham [collier] of the same p'ishe., Thomas Poole, of Road, [Rode] Blacksmith; John Hughton, servant to widowe Hancockke of Road; Will'm. Brereton, s'vant to John Stonyer; Peter Capper, s'vant to Richard Merry; John Parker [a beggar lad]; ffrancis Lowe, Carpenter; John Hall [blacksmith]; John Pursell, Carpenter;§ Besides to the nu'ber of xij more or thereabouts stricken, & sore astonysed, not killed; But not any of them had any wounds nor harme to bee seene; onelie some of them weire blacke in some pte. of theire Bodies."—(*Malbon*).

"The xx<sup>th</sup> of Aprill 1653, beinge wednesdaye, the *Lord Gen'all Cromwell*; *maior Gen'all Harrison*|| & other<sup>rs</sup> of the office<sup>rs</sup> of the Army, havinge a greate Company of ffyer-Locks neer them, Came into the Parliament howse, the Parliamt sittinge, And then & theire told them of the[i]r evell carryage in the publike buysiness, & greate wast & expence of Treasure. And tooke the Speaker furthe of the Cheere & putt him furthe of the howse; tooke the Mace & suche Wrytinges as weire then in the howse & then all the rest of the Howse arrose & wente theire wayes & the Lord Gen'all locked the doore, putt the keye in his Pockett, And after wente to Whitehall and discharged the Councill of State."

\* The following mentions of the *Sare* family, inn-keepers in Nantwich, occur in the Parish Register:—

"1605 April 16. John Sare, Inkeper." [Buried].  
 1605 Oct. 20. John son of John Sare, of the blak Leopard." [Bapt.]  
 1638 July 8. Eliz. dau. of John Saer, of the Black Lyon." [Buried].  
 1638 Dec. 4. Jane, wief of John Sare, of the Crowne." [Buried].  
 1641 Sep. 5. Rich. son of Little John Saer." [Bapt.]  
 1643 Oct. 15. Rich. son of John Saer of the black Lyon." [Buried].

† There is a discrepancy in the date of Sare's execution from Malbon's account, which may possibly be wrong.

‡ The Parish Register of Brignall, in Yorkshire, records:—"1652 Mar. 29. *The darke Mondaye*, the sunn being eclipsed 10 in 12—that is ten parts in twelve darkened, so that the day seemed as twilight."—(*Burn's Parish Registers*, p. 192-3).

§ This last name is wrong. It should have been "Antony a Yorkshire lad, a collier," as appears in a list of killed, and description of the catastrophe by Randall Sillito, the Rector of the Church; with which, with this exception, Malbon's list of names fully agrees. (See *Earwaker's Local Gleanings Magazine*, p. 15-18).

|| In *Platt's History of Nantwich*, p. 84; and in Ormerod's *Cheshire*, New. Edit. vol. iii, p. 437, Major-General Thomas Harrison, the regicide, and "one of the five who appointed the time and place for the King's execution," is stated to have been born at Nantwich. This, however, is not correct; the name of Harrison is very rarely met with in the Parish Registers; and, after a careful search, I failed to find his name in those records. He is said to have been the son of a butcher in or near Newcastle-under-Lyme.—(*Peacock's Army Lists*, p. 33-4).

It has been stated that during the Commonwealth more than ninety-six and a half millions were raised by Parliament from such sources as the sale of Crown lands in England and Ireland, Sequestrations of, and Compositions for Estates, Postage, Wine Licences, Duties, Excises, &c.\* Hence in the Calendar of State Papers, under date 2nd Nov. 1652, occurs the name of *James Smith*, of Nantwich, farmer of the Excise for the City and County of Chester of all exciseable Commodities, salt, soap, hats, and tobacco pipes excepted; who renewed his lease, which expired on the 25th December, for nine months longer for £1000; being an advance of £108 6s. 8d. per quarter.

By Act of Parliament passed on 24th Aug. 1653, all marriages after the 29th of that month were to be performed before a magistrate; the banns having first been published on three several Lord's days in Church after the morning service, or (at the option of the parties) in the market place on three several market days, between the hours of eleven and two. Certificates of the "publications" having been produced and examined before a local magistrate, the man to be married, taking the woman by the hand, pronounced these words:—†

"I, A.B., do here, in the presence of God, the searcher of all hearts, take thee, C.D. for my wedded wife; and do also in the presence of God, and before these witnesses, promise to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband."

Then the woman, in like manner, promised to be "a loving, faithful, and obedient wife;" after which, the magistrate declared them man and wife; "no ring, no blessing, no religious ceremony being considered necessary." The first of these *Civil Marriages* at Nantwich took place on 16th Jan. 1653-4, and the last on 16th Nov. 1656; the total number registered being seventy-one. In no case does the name of a magistrate occur as in some parish registers; but according to a Memorandum on the first page of the then new Register Books, the appointed Registrar for the parish was *Mr. Edward Hayes*. The following extracts show how these marriages were recorded, the most important entry being the marriage of *Roger Wilbraham, of Townesend, Esqre.*

1653-4. "William Jackson & Sarah Bebington, after publication three several market days in Namptwich Market, were married the 16th January."

1654. "Capt. Robt. Wright & Mrs. Anne Wilkes, after publication three several market days in Namptwich Market, were married the 26th June."

1656. "Roger Wilbraham, Esq. & Mrs. Alice Wilbraham after pub. three severall Saboth days at Church, were married the 17th April."

1656. "Wilm. Clowes & Mary Comerbach, after publication three several market days in Namptwich Market, were married the 16th November."

"1655. A litle before Bartholomewe Daye 1655 was the greatest floodes by reason of a boundance of Rayne, as noe man lyvinge had seen the lyke. Weever did tutche the bottom of Namptwch Bridge, drowned all *Mislesiche* & the lower ende of welsh Roe; and the Reeve Ranne throwe *m<sup>r</sup> Hassalls* gates a full Mylne water & drowned the streete vnto the Poste att *Kendalls* doore, & did very muche harme in drowninge many wiche howses & especially in many water works betwixte the Mylnes & Bryne pitt. But in Northwiche where Weever & Done did meete ytt did farr more harme."—(*Malbon MS.*)

\* See Fellowes' "*Historical Sketches*," Appendix p. lxxv, where the total amounts under different heads are given.

† See an interesting article on "Marriages during the Commonwealth Period," in Mr. Earwaker's *Local Gleanings Magazine*, pp. 190 & 309.

The above account is followed by a notice of repairs at the Brine Pit at Nantwich during the summer months of 1656, at a cost of £300. This memorandum, which is given in the chapter on the Salt-trade, is the last paragraph in the Malbon MS.

Roger Wilbraham (*MS. 740r.*) records two remarkable deaths: the one of local interest, and the other of national importance, as follows:—

“My uncle Mr. Raphe Wilbraham, my Fathers youngest Brother dyed at Peele House in Tarvin Parish (which belonged then to my Father-in-law) upon the eve of St. Bartholom[ew] *anno* 1657. A right charitable good Man: Who (as is said of Cornelius) gave much Almes; and by his last Will & Testament Bequeathed his whole substance (which was considerable) to the poor; Whereof I procured a share for this Towne of N. The residue was put into ye hands of ye Ch[urch]wardens of neighbouring Parishes to remain in Stock for their Poor.”

“O.[liver] C.[romwell] { Terror Ang. Sco. et Hib. } 3 Sept. 1658.”  
 { obiit et abiit suo loco. }

In 1659 the restoration of the monarchy was generally desired, for the country was wearied with the war; and the Commonwealth had become a tyranny. It was arranged that the Royalists in each County on a certain day should rise and assert the claims of Charles; but when the time came, Sir George Booth, in Cheshire, and Sir Thos. Middleton, in North Wales, were the only generals who attempted to carry out this design. Sir George Booth seized the City of Chester, but failed to take the Castle, which was defended by Colonel Croxton; and on the 19th Aug. 1659, about nineteen days after the “Rising” first commenced, Sir George was defeated and his army scattered at Winnington Bridge, near Northwich, by General Lambert. The country people called it not the “*Cheshire Rising*,” but the “*Cheshire Race*.”† Both armies passed through Nantwich, and both Generals were entertained at Townsend House, by Roger Wilbraham, who writes concerning these visits, as follows:—

“1659 Aug. 11th. Sir Geo. Booth (afterwards Lord Delamere) being then in arms to restore Kg. Charl. 2<sup>nd</sup>, tooke up his Quarters at my H[owse] for one night. The Monday following [Aug. 15] Maj. Genl. Lambert, who was sent with forces to suppress the rising in Cheshire and Lancashire took up his Quarters at my house, wch was filled with officers, & were the more straitened my w[ife] lying in at that time of her 3<sup>rd</sup> child. After three nights stay to refresh his men, he marched towards Northwich, and met Sir G. Booth's forces upon the skirt of the forest of Delamere, which were easily dispersed, wanting arms, ammunition, and experienced officers to lead them, 19 Aug. 1659.

G. F. Wilbraham Esq. has another interesting family paper relating to Genl. Lambert's visit to Townsend,—

“Monday the 15th. of Aug. 1659.

“General Lambert with his Armie consisting of 5,000 men horse and foot, came to Nantwch. & staid therein till Thursday ye 18 of August. The *Generall*, *Adjutant Generall Nalthrop*, *Colonell Swallow*, one *Lister* brother in law to the *Generall*, and one *Friar*, Chaplain to ye *Generall* & their servants & horses quartered at my house. At meals there was for ye most part as many as ye table would hold, viz: *Col. Briscoe*, *Col. Ashley*, *Major Craed*, & others of ye principall officers, all upon free Quarter, for which ye Genl. gave to my servants 24<sup>s</sup>. They went hence ye same day of ye same month in wch ye Scotch Army came hither 8 years before.”

\* See Church Monuments; and List of Charities.

† See Philip Henry's “*Diaries*,” p. 69.

The great army of the Commonwealth was soon after disbanded. "The Winter after," says the same writer, "afforded little else but distractions, and these counties were full of discontented soldiers. The year following [1660] was Englands Jubilee, when K. Charles 2nd was restored an<sup>o</sup> Reg. xii; after so many years exile, after the martyrdom of his Father by those bloody Regicides who killed & tooke possession of the Kingdom, until he came at last whose right it was. His Majesties return & Restoration, for the more solemnity was contrived to his Birthday, 29 May, *an.* 1660. The solemnity was made what it was when King David was brought from Mahanaim to Jerusalem."—(*Wilb. MS. Journal.*)



THE CROWN INN.



## Annals since the Restoration.



PERHAPS few towns in England had greater cause to be thankful for the Restoration of the Monarchy than Nantwich; and here, in commemoration of King Charles' Coronation-day, (St. George's Day, the 23rd April, 1661), that day of universal rejoicing, a curiously constructed Dial was placed on the west front of the Parish Church. The Dial, which had already disappeared in 1818,\* was thus described by Partridge in 1774;†—"Its form is orbicular, and within the

orb at the top is a sun rayonant, from which depends a label with this inscription—

SOLEM QUIS DICERE FALSUM AUDEAT,‡

and in the border round the top, another, to wit,—

DOMINO PRO PACE POPVLO SVO PARTA.‡§

The latter inscription was a chronogram; the Roman capitals (MDCLVVI) being intended for the year of the coronation of King Charles, to which event this quaint conceit referred.

An interesting record occurs in the Calendar of State Papers, dated June (?) 1660, stating that *James Hickes*, who had been Clerk in the Post Office at Nantwich since 1637, (and who had, no doubt, seen great changes under the Commonwealth, when the practice of farming the Post Office revenues was adopted), was still retained "for continuance of employment in the said office, and of his accustomed salaries;" the "road now [1660] bringing in £4000 a year."

Still earlier mentions of the Post Office occur in the Parish Registers:

"1621. Mar. 13. Thomas Cheshire, a letter bearer." [Buried].

"1622. Ap. 12. Mr. Roger Mainwaring Post Maister." [Buried].

"1635. Feb. 19. Elizabeth, wife of Mathew Alvaston, foote-post." [buried].

\* Platt's History of Nantwich, p. 64.

† Partridge's History of Nantwich, p. 41.

‡ Translated: Who dares to say the sun is wrong?

§ Translated: To the Lord for peace obtained for his people.

In 1663 the Town Bridge was first built of stone, mainly through the exertions of Roger Wilbraham, Esq., who writes:—

“Our Town Bridge wch was of timber, being in decay, I obtained of the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions held here in July 1663, that we might have a substantial Stone Bridge. It being referred to me by the Bench to contract with some sufficient workman, I agreed with *Tim Adams*, Mason, to build the bridge, as it now is, for which he had £90 of the County, & the Materials of the Old Bridge.

My little boy, a Twin of 2 years old, was the first corpse that was carried over the new Bridge the begins of July 1664.”\*

At the last Herald's Visitation of the County Palatine of Chester by William Dugdale, Esq., Norroy King of Arms, dated 3rd Sept. 1663, and 6th July, 1664, the following persons, belonging to Nantwich, occur in the list of “*disclaimers of Gentility*” for Nantwich Hundred, numbering in all sixty-six. These were branded “*no gentlemen*,” and had no right to bear arms because they failed to appear before the Herald to prove their claim, and pay the required fees. Their names were:—†

GEORGE HENSHAW,	ROGER COMBERBACH,	THOMAS BROMHALL,
THOMAS LANGLEY,	JOHN WICKSTED,	THOMAS WRIGHT,
RANDLE CHURCH,	THOMAS BULLEN,	JOHN ACTON.
JOHN DELVES, natural son of Sir Thomas Delves, Bart.		
WILLIAM MEAKIN, save his right as Attorney-at-law to use the title of Esquire.		

Of those who, attending to the summons of William Dugdale, Esq., appeared before him and had their claims to gentility allowed, occur the names of ROGER WILBRAHAM, ESQ., and THOMAS MAISTERSON, ESQ., of this town.

At this time, owing to the general want of small change, tradesmen and shopkeepers here, as elsewhere, issued unauthorized copper tokens of the value of the penny and half-penny, which were payable at their respective places of business, until they were declared illegal by Act of Parliament passed on the 16th Aug. 1672; when Charles II half-pence and farthings were made current. The following list of eight Nantwich Tokens has recently been printed,‡ to which I have been able to add three others.

1. *Obverse*. RICHARD. BICKERTON. IN. NAMPTWICH. [In four lines].

*Reverse*. HIS. HALF. PENY. R. B. 1666. [In four lines].

Richard Bickerton was a brewer by trade, and died in 1669.

2. *Obv.* THOMAS. BROMHALL. IN. NAMPTWICH. [In four lines].

*Rev.* HIS. HALFE. PENY. 1665. T. E. B. [In four lines].

Thomas Bromhall, mercer, according to a Rate Book for 1691, appears to have lived at the corner of High Town, where Hospital Street and Pillory Street diverge, at that time called “*Pye Corner*,” and now occupied by Mr. P. H. Chesters. Thomas Bromhall was buried on 31st Jan. 1700-1.—(*Par. Reg.*)

3. *Obv.* *William Crossley his halfe Penny.* [In four lines].

*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. 1666, [device] A Ship.

\* The burial Register records:—“1664. July 2. Roger, son of Roger Wilbraham, Esq.”

† The list is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 2142. f. 168, (Brit. Mus.); and in *Ashmolean MSS.* 857, f. 250-1. (Bodl. Lib.)

‡ Mr. Earwaker's “*Local Gleanings Magazine*,” p. 287.



4. *Obv.* DANIEL JACKSON. [device] The Mercers' Arms. (octagonal).  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. [in the centre] HIS 1<sup>d</sup>. 1669.
5. *Obv.* THOMAS JACKSON. [device in centre] The Ironmongers' Arms.  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. 1666. [in the centre] HIS. HALF. PENY.
6. *Obv.* ELIZABETH PRICE. IN. [device in centre] The Arms of the Price family,  
*viz.* : a chevron embattled between three spear-heads.  
*Rev.* NAMPTWICH. 1666. [in centre] HER. HALF. PENY.

The *Prices* had been resident tradesmen in the town for at least a century previous to 1666. A Mrs. Elizabeth Price, probably the same as mentioned above, and the last of the family, was buried at Nantwich on the 27th Feb. 1691-2.—(*Par. Reg.*)

7. *Obv.* JOHN TENCH. 1666. [in the centre] I. M. T.  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. [in the centre] HIS. HALF. PENY.

John Tench was a tanner. The middle initial letter stands for the christian name of his wife, Mary. He married "*Mrs. Mary Denock, after publication thre severall markt days in Namptwich Markett,*" on the 6th March 1653-4; and was buried at Nantwich on the 14th Nov. 1675—(*Par. Reg.*) The Tench family were respectable residents here as early as 1545 (see p. 98), and occur in the Registers as "dyers," "tanners," "mercurs," "gentlemen," &c. The last mentions of the family are as follows:—

"John Tench Attorney buried in the Church 5 Feb. 1756."

"Miss Mary Tench [buried] 2 Dec. 1780."

"Thomas Tench [buried] 5 May, 1783."

8. *Obv.* JAMES WILSON. 1666. [in the centre] HIS. HALF. PENY.  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. [in the centre] I. A. W.

James Wilson, silk-stocking weaver, was buried on the 19th Dec. 1699.—(*Par. Reg.*) The initial A stands for his wife's christian name.

Besides the above Nantwich tokens, I have two others in my possession which have not hitherto been described.

9. *Obv.* William Cappur his halfe Penny. [In four lines].  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICH. 1666. [device in centre] A Ship.

Possibly William Cappur kept the "Ship" Inn. The family continued to reside in the town until about thirty or forty years ago. The following extracts from the Parish Register will be of interest.

"1726 Aug. 4. Jacob, son of Raph Cappur Inholder." [Bapt.]

"1753 Sep. 16. James, son of Ralph Cappur, Cheesefactor." [Bapt.]

"1780 Aug. 17. George Cappur, Cheesefactor, & Lydia Maddocks [married] by Lycence."

"1785 Nov. 27. George, son of George Cappur, Cheesefactor, & Lydia his wife." [Bapt.]

"1790 Oct. 19. Ralph, son of George Cappur, Cheesefactor, & Lydia his wife, born."

10. *Obv.* GEORGE B . . . [in the centre] The Mercers' Arms.  
*Rev.* IN. NAMPTWICHE. . . . [in the centre] G. B. I. E.

The edge of this token, being worn away, the *surname* and *date* cannot be deciphered.

11. *Obv.* JOHN TENCH. IN. [in the centre] a Shield with half figure of a female.  
*Rev.* NAMPTWICH. 1665. [in the centre] I. M. T.

This coin, which is apparently a farthing token, is in the possession of Mr. Bowers, of Broad Lane, Nantwich, and is in an excellent state of preservation.

Lord Ossory, travelling from Oxford to Dublin, passed through Nantwich with his retinue, on the 10th Feb. 1667; and here an incident occurred which provoked some merriment in the town. "At Nantwich they met the noble Captain Baker, with the badge of his office at his breast: he caused much amusement because he had bought a new cap of beaten black satin, to ride *bareheaded* before my lord 10 miles of the way."\*

"Our Great Bell in Nantwich, being above 2000<sup>li</sup>. [*i.e.* about a ton] in weight, chanced to be cracked, and was cast anew at Wellington, in Shropshire, by one Clitheroe. *Robert Parker, Merce<sup>r</sup> & Jo[hn] Dean*, Barber, Churchwardens an<sup>o</sup> 1669, w<sup>ch</sup> cost the parish near £30."†

In 1670 Roger Wilbraham, of Townsend House, Esq., was made Sheriff of the County; and, concerning the Spring Assizes held at Chester, 11th April, 1670, before Sir Job Charlton, Chief Justice, he writes as follows:—

"It came to my thoughts sitting in ye chair, that two worthy gent<sup>n</sup> and of good repute in their time had been arraigned at ye same Barr near upon C [100] years before upon an Appeal brought by the widow of R. Cr. [Roger Crockett] for ye supposed murd<sup>r</sup> of her Husband, who chanced to be slain in a fray at N.[antwich]‡. . . . ye Jury at Chester, finding ye Prosecution was evidently malicious [were moved] to acquit ye s<sup>d</sup> Gentlemen [Richard Wilbraham and Richard Hassall] whose innocence, w<sup>ch</sup> in a while after, was remarkably cleared by ye confession of that same dangerous witness which his guilty conscience extorted from him, where himself for Theft came to be arraigned at Chester, and was found guilty of ye Felony for which he was arraigned: and expecting to have suffered for his offence, being (as he s<sup>d</sup>) pricked in conscience, he confessed to an eminent Divine Mr. Goodm[an of Chester] that he was suborned by his Mistr[ess] & induced by her large promises to endanger the lives of ye s<sup>d</sup> R. W. & R. H., by a false oath, to gratify his s<sup>d</sup> Mistr[ess] whose importunity had wrought to persist in what he had sworn falsely & against his knowledge before ye Coroner, which shewes the temper of ye wretched woman whose malice would have made those innocent Gentlemen a sacrifice: or otherwise she meant to serve her Avarice of them whom she falsely accused, & upon that score the rather chose to prosecute them by *Appeal* than by *Indictment*. But missing of her aime, & fearing they might prosecute her, she left ye Country and was never heard of after. And ye said R. W. lived prosperous many years after to see their end that had conspired his. And that a descendant of the same family after C [100] years should come to possess ye Chair so near unto ye Barr where his Ancestor had his Tryal, this coming seasonably to mind, it did very much raise & affect his Thoughts, who had ye whole story by Tradition, having likewise seen an Authentic Registr of those proceedings. Hæc olim meminisse &c."

"Mr. Randle Shenton's house, kill & Barnes were burnt at noon-day [15 July, 1672] near Nantwyeh, through the carelessness of servants drying Hemp upon ye Kyll. Hee was then at Coventry & saith about 1 a clock yt morning hee arose affrighted with a light shining in at window, w<sup>ch</sup> was a star extra-ordinary, supposing ye Town had been on fire, & that meeting one of his neighb. in his way homewards, one of his first qu. was, in my house safe from fire. His loss is generally computed to neer 400<sup>lb</sup>. [£] in building, goods, malt, chees, tow, &c."—("Diaries of Philip Henry M.A." p. 254).

\* Calendar of State Papers, 1666-7, vol. CXCI.

† Roger Wilbraham's MS. Journal.

‡ Cf. pages 99-101.

In 1676 the Widows' Almshouses in Welsh Row were founded by Roger Wilbraham; and mainly by his recommendation, in the following year, a House of Correction and Workhouse at Beam Street-end were established.\*

On the night of the 2nd Jan. 1679, Townsend House was entered by burglars. In a long Memorandum, Roger Wilbraham says, they took "ye plate we had in use, 7 Buttery linen, a coat of my sons, some of ye servants clothes &c. By what they eat & drank we guessed they could not be fewer than 5 or 6 in company. That which made them ye bolder & us insensible of ye disturbance was that it chanced to be a rugged [boisterous] night but not dark. I made all ye inquiry I could. Sent ye marks of ye plate I lost to all ye market Townes within 20 miles round us, but could make no discovery."

The years 1680 and 1681 were years of great mortality, the Registers recording 110 and 104 burials respectively. "The small pox being rife in the Town in 1681, I thought it not safe," says Roger Wilbraham, "to adventure Stephen my young<sup>r</sup> son to goe any longer to ye Towne Schoole."

"The Duke of Monmouth came to this Towne 9<sup>th</sup>. Sep. 1682,† honourably attended: dined with his train of attendants at ye *Crowne*; and went hence after dinner to Peele; thence to the Horse race of his own appointing at Wallasey; which as appeared after was not well resented at Court, having notice of his popular reception in these parts."

Roger Wilbraham, who here alludes to the "Protestant Duke," as he was called, says later on concerning the rebellion of 1685, "Amongst others in this county that were suspected of disloyalty the L<sup>d</sup> Brandon eldest son of ye Earl of Macclesfield & Hen[ry] L<sup>d</sup> Delamere [eldest son of Sir George Booth, afterwards first Lord Delamere], were impeached of H. T. [High Treason]. The former was found guilty by a Middlesex Jury, but after some time had his pardon. The latter had his trial at Westm<sup>r</sup> Hall, & was happily acquitted by his Peers, the K.[ing] & Q.[ueen] being present which was January [14<sup>th</sup>] 1685[-6]. Both kissed King Jas. hand at Chester in Aug. 1687."

The Wilbraham MS. Journal contains the following memorandum:—

"1683. It happened that the Beame over the Pulpit in our Ch[urch], (of which we had no suspicion) fell point blank into ye pulpit, which had it happened but half an hour sooner, would have been a startling sight to us that met that morninge to joine in Prayer. To see a Beame of that length carried in our sight from one side to the other side of ye Church—For so it was, that the end of the Beam w<sup>ch</sup> rested upon the south wall was wholly perished, ye end over ye pulpit was sound, & fast mortised into ye wall plate, & so drew the beam to ye opposite side, w<sup>ch</sup> we conceived might hang for a space perpendicular over the pulpit, till the weight of the beam wrested the tenon out of ye mortis in ye wall plate: & then dropt end-wise, shivered the cover of the pulpit to pieces, struck through ye bottom of ye pulpit a foot into ye ground: And stood not upright, but something inclining, as if God had purposely sent this dumb messenger to preach Repentance to a stupid Auditory. It chanced that Sr Tho. Wilb[raham of Woodhey] came that afternoon to Towne. I had the favor of his company, to

\* Cf. the "*Towne Concernes*;" and for the subsequent history of these institutions, under date 1767, &c.

† The celebrated Philip Henry made the following entry in his Diary:—"1682. Sep. 9. D. of Monm. past through Nantw[ich] tow[ards] Chest<sup>r</sup>.—some applauding others vilifying—*studia in contraria vulgus*."—(*Diaries of Philip Henry, M.A.*, p. 317).

see this Dumbe show : And took the boldness to tell him, that unless he pleased to befriende us with a Tree out of *Woodhay Bache*, for Love or Money, we should be at a losse : who very freely gave us a Tree y<sup>t</sup> made the beam which carries his cognizance [coat of arms] as 'twas meet it should.

This further advantage we had by this accident, that it gave us occasion to suspect the other Beames, & upon search we found most of them deficient, & took that opportunity to strengthen them where need was."

This accident, the exact date of which is not given,\* appears to have led to extensive repairs to the roofs of the Church, spreading over several years, the cost of which was defrayed by Church rates, and private liberality. In the absence of "*Churchwardens' Accounts*," the following entries taken from Roger Wilbraham's Pocket Almanacks for 1689, 1698, and 1700, will be of interest.

1689. "One of ye middle Beames wch was given by my Ancestor (as I suppose by ye Coat thereon, when ye Roofe [i.e. the Clerestory] of our Church in Nantwch was raised) being now much decayed & ready to fall, was taken down.† To supply which I procured another out of Woodhay Bache (whereon is my Coat of Armes, as I now quarter it), wch cost me 2 Ginneys, which I paid to the then Ch. Wardens *Wm. Hale* & *Tho. Twisse*, Ano. dni. 1689, Sept. 25."

"The next beam was given by ye Lord Cholmondeley."

1698. "Oct. 6. To *Mr. Wright* & *Mr. Audley* Ch. Wardens, A Lay of ye whole Old Rent for repairing ye Roofe of ye South Ile [i.e. Transept] of ye Church, £3 9s. 4d."

Above the tower arch in the South Transept is still to be seen a board, inscribed "*John Clowes Workeman 1698*;" and another, fixed to one of the cross beams, says,—"*This Roofe was Repaired and three new Beames put vp when Benjamin Wright & Geo. Audley were Wardens 1698*." In the North Transept also, is a board inscribed "*This Roofe was repaired and three new Beames put vp when John Comberbach and John Church were wardins. John Clowes workeman 1699*."

Roger Wilbraham, in one of his pocket books, made the following entry :—

"1700 March 13. Pd. to John Church & his p'tner [John Church & John Denton, Churchwardens] a Lay of ye whole Old Rent for glazing & pointing ye Church & Steeple £3 9s. 4d."

In 1687 the notorious sycophant Bishop of Chester, Dr. T. Cartwright, made a short stay at Nantwich on his journey to London, where he arrived on the 7th April. He says in his Diary :—‡

"March 28. We went from the Colonel's [i.e. Colonel Whitley of Chester] to Nantwich, where we dined at the post house [the "Crown"] with *Mr. Stringer* [the minister], *Mr. Mainwaring*, *Mr. Wilburham*, the churchwardens [*Thomas Stringer* and *Richard Peever*] and two officers, and from thence we went that night to Stone." &c.

\* The Rev. Philip Henry, in his Diary for 1684, under date Jan. 1st, says, "I heard that a month since one of ye mayn Beames of ye Roof of Nantwch church falling, beat ye Pulpit & desk all to peices, not past half an hour after the Min<sup>r</sup> Mr. Stringer & ye congregation were gone out from morning prayr on a Tuesday."—"*Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry, M.A.*" p. 322.

† Exactly one hundred years after, the roof of the Clerestory was again in a dangerous state of decay. (See under date 1789).

‡ Dr. Cartwright's Diary, p. 40. (Cam. Soc. Pub. 1843).

In 1689 the Parish Register records the burials of ten soldiers, who perhaps died of some infectious disease, during the months of June, July and August.\* JAMES, aided by Louis XIV, had landed in Ireland on 12th March; and probably these ten soldiers had belonged to the *Duc de Schomberg's* army which landed near Donaghadee on 12th August, to oppose the deposed King's invasion. On Friday night, 6th June, 1690, King William III, being on his journey to Ireland before the Battle of the Boyne, slept at Combermere Abbey, and set out next day [probably passing through Nantwich] for Hoyleake, where he embarked for Ireland.†

"1690. Oct. 7th. About 7 of ye clock in ye morning there happened the most sensible [*i.e.* perceptible] earthquake that I have known wch overthrew the topp of my Hall Chymney, and endamaged others in the Town. There was about 6 weekes before a much gentler Earth Quake. God grant us to make use of these shakings to sitt looser to ye world."

Roger Wilbraham, who wrote the above memorandum, also gives six long paragraphs (here abbreviated) as instances of God's Judgments during sixteen years on persons "*who being over wicked came to an untimely end.*"

"*Robert Salmon*, a day labourer, having got drunk at an alehouse near the Bridge fell into the river at the Bridge & was drowned." [Buried 9 Oct. 1677].

"*Megg Blagg*, being drunk, was burnt to death, in her own Kitchen." [Buried 5 March, 1677-8].

"*Robert Brooke*,‡ carpenter, drunkard and profane Swearer, who was struck dead in a wood after felling a Birch tree on Whitsun-eve." [Buried 1 June, 1680].

"*Widow Maddu*, a Dyer, going home late at night full of drink, thinking to have gone over ye *wooden Bridge* [the Little Bridge across the channel] at ye lower end of Welsh Row, she missed the Bridge, & falling into ye Channell, was carried by the stream [there had been much rain previously] into ye River and was *doubly drowned.*" [Buried 15 Jan. 1682-3].

"*T. Wood*, a webster, who lived with his daughter that sold Ale at a Howse near ye River side in Mill St., went in open day to ye *flood gates*, we call them wch receives ye wast waters above ye mills: there he putt off his cloathes & left them upon the Bank & jumpt into ye water where it was deepest & drowned himself." [Buried 16 May 1683].

"*Widow Savage*, a Taylor, being drunk and going from the Almshouses at Welsh Row Head, by the fields behind Townsend, towards her own home was drowned "in a lake near my Orchard wall at ye gate entering into ye *Lyon Lane*, wch was not above ankle deep." [Buried 15 April 1689].

"*Cicely Eaton*, hearing of a Christening at *Beam Bridge*, thither she went & having got more drink to her share than she could carry home, sett her down upon ye Battlements of the Bridge & fell backwards into ye River." [Buried 5 Oct. 1694].

\* The Burial Register gives their names as follows:—

"1689 June 12 William Wilmott, a souldier.  
 .. 16 Robert Lightborne, a souldier.  
 .. 18 William Wright, a souldier.  
 .. 18 James Powell, a souldier.  
 .. 28 John Briscoe, a souldier.

June 28 James Phillips, a souldier.  
 July 6 \_\_\_\_\_, a souldier.  
 .. 23 Robert Cole, a souldier.  
 .. 25 \_\_\_\_\_, a souldier.  
 Aug. 26 \_\_\_\_\_, a souldier."

† Memoirs and Correspondence of Field Marshall Viscount Combermere, pub. 1866.

‡ "1680 May 30. One Brookes of Nantwyth aged about 55, a sawyr, a loose p'son, went with others on this day being Sabb. day in the afternoon to Chorley hay to steal a pole for a *May-pole*, having agreed with a fiddler to attend ye setting of it up next day; After hee had given a few strokes with an Axe, towards ye falling of it, it pleas'd God, hee was struck down himsf & dy'd immediately without speaking one word in ye very same place."—(*Diaries of Phillip Henry, M.A.*, p. 288).

Another list of untimely deaths is here appended, taken from the Burial Register:—

- "1634. Sep. 27. John Chell drowned in a well.  
 1634-5. March 5. John sonne of Richd. Podmore, being choaked with bread & butter."  
 1640. May 15. Zacharie Gill found drowned in Weener."  
 1646. June 1. William Allat drowned at Shrobridge.  
 1648-9. Feb. 7. Randle Twis, faling of [f] a cart Broke his neck.  
 1649. May 2. Richard Hall cutt his own throte.  
 1649. Oct. 31. John, son of John Wright, glover, was drowned.  
 1651. Nov. 27. Edward Rogers, drowned in the Towne well.  
 1655. March 26. William Maddock, Milner, drowned.  
 1658. Jan. 22. Raphe Pratchett hanged himself.  
 1660. April 30. Anne Simcock killed with a cart.  
 1663. March 30. John Wilbraham slayne.  
 1663. March 31. John Myddleton poysoned himself.  
 1664. May 7. Abraham, son of Richard Gill drowned in a well.  
 1665. Dec. 19. Thomas Weaver, buried at Acton, who dyed suddenly.  
 1667. Oct. 7. Elizabeth, wife of francis fletee slayne by her husband.  
 1668-9. Jan. 20. Roger Bartley died suddenly.  
 1670. May 28. James son of Thomas Burroughs, drowned.  
 1673. Oct. 29. Katherine Minshull who was drowned in the Weever.  
 1677. June 13. John, son of Richard Barker, mercer, was drowned.  
 1678. July 22. Mary, Wife of Thos. Briscoe, poysoned herself.  
 1678. Sept. 10. William, son of John Bromley, junr., was drowned in a swine-tubb.  
 1679. May 30. Thos. son of John Hall, with a cart [killed].  
 1680. Dec. 2. Catherine Bankes dyed suddenly.  
 1680. Dec. 3. Jane Crockett scalded in a turnell of worte.  
 1682-3. Feb. 3. Thomas Price hanged himself.  
 1684. Dec. 9. Thomas Whittingham dyed suddenly.  
 1685. April 5. Thomas Simcock dyed suddenly.  
 1685. July 22. John, sonne of John Evans, scalded in a salt-pan.  
 1685. Nov. 29. Peter Houlse, Drowned.  
 1686. July 28. John Moyle Drowned.  
 1688. June 7. John Emmerly Drowned.  
 1691. May 22. Margaret dau. of Thomas Sefton, drowned.  
 1693-4. Feb. 27. John Leake killed with a fall off a ladder.  
 1700-1. Jan. 8. Thomas Beech labourer, killed with a wagon.  
 1701. July 4. Margaret Gardner, scalded with brine.  
 1701. July 17. Jonathan Richards, a boy, drowned.  
 1702. March 29. John son of Stephen Morriss kill'd by his brother, about 10 years of age, with a gun.  
 1703-4. Feb. 4. Henry Rutter, Attorney, killed by a fall of a horse.\*  
 1703-4. Feb. 11. Richard, son of Thomas Wilkes yeoman, killed with drinking brandy.\*  
 1703-4. Feb. 21. Thomas fiurnivall, mercer, buried at Sandbach, died suddenly.\*  
 1704. June 11. Ambrose Pickerin, Barber, Drowned.  
 1707. July 7. Thomas Wickstead, Gent., killed by a fall of a horse.  
 1707-8. March 2. Sarah dau. of Roger Leather, Glovr, Drowned.  
 1708. Nov. 8. Martin Cain a soldier stab'd & killed by his Serjeant.  
 1708-9. Jan. 4. William Hayles, shoemaker, dyed suddenly.

\* These three sudden deaths are mentioned in the Life of Lieut. Richard Illidge, of Nantwich and Cheerbrook, and are entered in the Burial Register *seriatim*.

The Annals of the Town during the latter half of the seventeenth century are here supplemented by a very interesting memorial, entitled "*The Towne Concernes*," written in the year 1682, by Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Townsend House, who was then in the sixtieth year of his age. It is preserved amongst the Wilbraham MS. collections at Delamere; and is contained in the fly sheets of a pocket Almanac, dated 1673; on the inside cover of which is written, in the same small, neat hand-writing, "This was my son Toms Almanack, who to my gr.[eat] grieve died 8<sup>o</sup> September 1675, *ætat.* 18; His d.[eath] Mother died that day 12 mon. after, 8 Septr. 1676, *ætat.* 47." In this account Roger Wilbraham reviews, with characteristic naïvete of style, several important changes and events that had taken place in the town during his life-time; events and changes with which he had been directly concerned. The use of certain colloquial expressions that are familiar sayings at the present day, is worthy of the reader's notice; and, although some of the events have already been mentioned in chronological sequence in the previous pages, it has been thought best, notwithstanding the repetition, to give these reminiscences exactly as they were written, two hundred years ago, without alteration or abridgment.

"THE TOWNE CONCERNES."

"The Towne hath 2 especiall Priveledges w<sup>ch</sup> have bin upheld by such necessary Bylaws as have bin made by Juries from time to time in y<sup>e</sup> Court Leet held for y<sup>e</sup> Barons of Wich Malbank, *als.* Nantwich.

The one of these Priveledges is y<sup>e</sup> *Salt-spring* which is of great Antiquity, as appears by Domesday Book. The other priveledge is y<sup>e</sup> Benefit that is & may be made by the improvem<sup>t</sup> of a large plott of Land, adioning to y<sup>e</sup> Towne which wee call y<sup>e</sup> *Beam Heath*, y<sup>e</sup> property whereof together w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> possession hath bin in y<sup>e</sup> Inhabitants of Nantw<sup>ch</sup> for above 400 yeares, by conveyance from *Bressey* in y<sup>e</sup> time of K. Hen. 3.\* Which said priveledges while they held y<sup>m</sup> [them] to their Customes were very beneficiall & helpfull to y<sup>e</sup> Towne. But Matters of p<sup>'</sup>fit [profit] being subject to Usurpation, neith<sup>r</sup> of these Priveledges yeeld that profit to y<sup>e</sup> Towne that they did heretofore: & chiefly through y<sup>e</sup> remisnes & neglect of Officers intrusted to manage these Concernes.

The ancient Way of making Salt w<sup>th</sup> us, was in Lead Pans, whereof every Wich H[ouse] had six of equal gage: & in those they boyled their Salt with Wood cloven & fitted for y<sup>e</sup> purpose, every Wich H. in its turn, or *kale*, (as wee phrase it,) by direction of y<sup>e</sup> *Rulers of Walling*, who are sworne to deale iustly & uprightly between y<sup>e</sup> Owner & Occupier, & to see, that none take benefit of y<sup>e</sup> occupation, but the Inhabitants, & that no Occupier exceed his stinted time & Gage. This was y<sup>e</sup> Way & usage of making salt in this Towne till the vi<sup>th</sup> yeare of King Charles I [1632]. And then it was that some fancifull persons, thought it would be more for their profit to boyle their Salt in *Iron Pannes* (of equall Gage with the six Leads) with *Pitte-coale*, pretending y<sup>t</sup> Wood grew scarce, & y<sup>t</sup> therefore it concerned them (while y<sup>e</sup> Law allowed them to make y<sup>e</sup> best of their owne) to make their com<sup>'</sup>odity at as light charge, as they could: which was their Plea at y<sup>e</sup> Councell Bord, & they carried it for y<sup>e</sup> Projectors, against all y<sup>e</sup> reasons & allegations of

\* See under Alveston Township, where full translations of this and other ancient deeds relating to the Heath are given.

y<sup>e</sup> much greater & more substantiall pt. of Inhabitants, who opposed this project foreseeing the detriment & disadvantage that would inevitably ensue thereupon both to y<sup>e</sup> Towne & Countrey.\*

For since then we find by sad experience that y<sup>e</sup> salt y<sup>t</sup> is made with coale is nothing so good; y<sup>e</sup> Trade much slacker; y<sup>e</sup> Woods w<sup>ch</sup> were preserved to serve the Salt-works are now cut downe & destroyed to make worse Iron then wee had then from beyond the seas; & the Coale Mines, which sholde serve y<sup>e</sup> Countrey, are much exhausted by what is spent here, & elsewhere for making of salt. All which inconveniences my Father and others concerned, endeavoured to have prevented, but were over-ruled has hath bin declared.

And the Natives will reape but little p<sup>'</sup>fit from y<sup>e</sup> Heath If Strangers after they have dwelt a yeare in y<sup>e</sup> Towne are permitted to put their cattle to the Heath, who (as it is said) pay not one penny to y<sup>e</sup> reliefe of y<sup>e</sup> poore. A great Abuse this is & a Reproach to y<sup>e</sup> Towne."

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"A Memoriall of y<sup>e</sup> Concernes of y<sup>e</sup> Towne since Xmas an<sup>o</sup> 1649"

"After my elder Brothers decease, who died 19 Decem. 1649, I was invited by some, y<sup>t</sup> thought their yeeres & experience in the Towne Affaires would have swayed me as they listed, to appear & interest myself as occasion might be in their publique Meetings: Which I did, & found that their Meetings most what consisted of Strangers, who fled hither for shelter when y<sup>e</sup> Town was a Garrison, & having bin Under Marshalls, Com<sup>'</sup>issaries, Quarter-Masters &c., in the late Warr, had a Mind to be Quarter Masters still, & controllers of other Mens Purses: For it was then in y<sup>e</sup> power of half a dozen of y<sup>m</sup> [them] who had no concerne in Towne save a rented H.[ouse], (for which it may be y<sup>e</sup> Landlord paid the Taxes,) with y<sup>e</sup> assistance of as many poor Trades-Men in Towne who paid not a pen'y to Church or Poor, to give away as pleased themselves, (while others neglected to move) to y<sup>e</sup> Church Officers & Constables when they demanded it, a whole old Rent, or more, when the halfe perhaps, or 2 parts at most would have sufficed.

Whereupon the more consciencious officers, to whom such a Lay was granted, trobled themselves no furth<sup>r</sup> but to collect their Due of those y<sup>t</sup> were best able & willing to pay, & y<sup>e</sup> residue of y<sup>e</sup> Lay granted them, they never concerned themselves to collect. And when such a Lay was granted to other officers, (to whom all was Fish y<sup>t</sup> came to y<sup>r</sup> Nett,) they having a Grant of more than their due Disbursements, made no Bones to pocket up y<sup>e</sup> over-plus. When this was perceived, & that y<sup>e</sup> remisnes of y<sup>e</sup> Gentlemen, & more Substantiall Inhabitants was that which imboldened Strangers & Mechanicks to rule all at their pleasure, I did associate myself w<sup>th</sup> some of y<sup>e</sup> best rank, whom I took to be most true

\* The great change here alluded to, appears to have been forced on the town, in spite of ancient customs, by the establishing of rival works higher up the Weaver, as related by William Webb (King's *Vale Royal*) about 1621. He says: "Austerson hath had goodly woods, that hath been the chief store-house and nursery of that fewel they call *Wich-wood*; (oak and hazel) which being of twenty years growth, or thereabouts, is most fit for that service; and hath been usually fallen by yearly falls, as they call them, and sold to the town of Nantwich, for the boiling of their salt. Sir Robert Needham hath, in this age of ours found out by the side of Weaver, at Baddington, a seth or pit of that brine, whereof they make great plenty of very good white salt; as also, upon the bank on the other side, in the lordship of *Hatherton*, in the lands of Sir Thomas Smith. In both which they have taken a more profitable way of boiling their salt in *pans of iron*, to which the *pit-coals*, which are their ordinary fewel of that country; and whereof there is great abundance not far off, in the confines between the two counties of Chester and Stafford, is found a cheaper and more compendious way than that of boiling in pans of lead with fewel only of wood, used in all the Wiches."



hearted, (having experienced some y<sup>t</sup> spoke fair to be otherwise) we resolved to put our Oare into y<sup>e</sup> Boat with them y<sup>t</sup> then ruled all; & to have a little more Inspection into Officers Accounts, & to proportion our Lay to their Disbursm<sup>ts</sup>, not to their Demands, when we found them unreasonable. And those that are sensible what sumes have bin spared since this course was taken, have reason to take their diligence in good part, who have attended all publike Mectings, to save their owne, & their Purses.

When the prophanation of y<sup>e</sup> Sabbath was more penal\* then now it is, It is well known, that care was taken to Choose Church Officers yeerly as made it their Business to suppress all disorders that trenched upon y<sup>e</sup> Sabbath, & through Gods Blessing upon their eart [heart] things were reduced to that passe, y<sup>t</sup> I think there was scarce a Markt Town within many Miles, where there was better Order, & more due observacon of y<sup>e</sup> Sabbath. And I myselfe have imputed our deliverance from y<sup>e</sup> plague w<sup>ch</sup> did often threaten us from o<sup>r</sup> Neighbour Townes to Gods gracious acceptance of our zeale to his service and publike worshipp.

My endeavours have not bin wanting to have suppressed y<sup>e</sup> supernumerary Ale-Houses in this Towne. And when consideration was had of this matter by encouragement of y<sup>e</sup> Justices of Assize an<sup>o</sup> 1655, one halfe of them were thought sufficient, and y<sup>e</sup> groundes wee went upon were to continue those, & those onely,—

1. That kepte good Order.
2. Those that had fitt Houses & accomodations for Travellers & quartering of soldiers.
3. Those were thought fittest to be continued who had no Trades nor other way of Livelihood; & holding this course without respect of persons, or ill will to any, the number came to be lessened by one halfe. But importunity prevailed with y<sup>e</sup> Justices of P., to re-admit most of those that were thus laid aside as unfitt: Whereof complaint being made to y<sup>e</sup> Judges of Assize, they ordered y<sup>e</sup> Justices of P. to see to the effectual suppressing of unnecessary Ale-houses. Whereupon y<sup>e</sup> same thing was re-attempted in this T[own]. And yett all this availed not, nor I believe ever will, to suppress them.

Ano. 1651. The fortnights Collection in y<sup>e</sup> Church was found insufficient to relieve the poor, by reason that many and some of y<sup>e</sup> better Quality in Towne, did frequently absent themselves those Sabbaths y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> fortnights Collection was: Whereupon I prevailed that there might be an anuall Assessm<sup>t</sup> made throughout the Parish, & that to be confirmed by y<sup>e</sup> Justices of P. the one moiety to be collected by y<sup>e</sup> Ov<sup>r</sup>seers of y<sup>e</sup> Poor [*i.e.* Church-wardens] presently after their entrance upon their office; & the other moiety at Michaelmas after; that so they might have wherew<sup>th</sup> to relieve y<sup>e</sup> poor monthly. Which Assessm<sup>t</sup> did almost double y<sup>e</sup> Fortnightly Collection, & not above halfe a dozen were Assessed more then [than] what they voluntarily pd. before. This course began 1651 & continues to this day with little regret.

Ano. 1655. Upon occasion of Major Generall Fleetwood (who was the then Protector Cr[omwell's] son in Law) his passing through this Towne out of Ireland, he was importuned by a Faction party in Town, who knew his Temp[er], to interpose his Authority, y<sup>t</sup> one *Haydock* who was their Chaplaine, might be admitted as an assistant to *Mr. Jackson*,

\* In 1580, by Statute of Parliament, a fine of £20 per month was inflicted for not attending Church; and on the 8th March, 1604, licence was granted to John Talbot to be absent from Church, on paying £20 per month. (See *Calendar of State Papers*, under those dates).

or *Ministr*, to preach one pt. of y<sup>e</sup> Lord's Day, or else a Lecture once a Week: Which was propounded by the Major Gen<sup>l</sup> to my selfe & some few of y<sup>e</sup> Towne, who came to wait upon him at his Quarters, knowing nothing of the Matter, with ample promises of civilities to Mee & large Priveledges which he woulde procure for y<sup>e</sup> Towne, if I wolde effect his desire in this. Which I excused as well as I knew how upon such a Surprise. And when they thought to bring in y<sup>e</sup> same Haydock by strong hand, I improved my interest y<sup>e</sup> most I could to discountenance him: Who finding y<sup>e</sup> Towne generally bent to mischieve rather then [than] to hear him, he desisted and quickly after quitted y<sup>e</sup> place, & as a congregational Pastor, is by degrees become a Romish Priest, as I am informed.

The Inhabitants of Nantw<sup>ch</sup> by an ancient Charter exemplied under y<sup>e</sup> Seale of y<sup>e</sup> County Palatine, which is in my Custody, have bin exempted time out of mind from being impan'elled upon Juries with Foreigners at Assizes & Sessions held for this County: which priveledge was ill resented by y<sup>e</sup> Justices of Peace. Whereupon on behalfe of y<sup>e</sup> Towne, I made applications to *Judge Bradsh[aw]* late Chief Justice of Chester, & obtained his allowance of y<sup>e</sup> said Charter in open Court *Ano.* 1654. And since then I obtained y<sup>e</sup> like allowance of *Sr Job Charlton* Ch. Justice of Chester, *an<sup>o</sup>* 15<sup>o</sup> Car. [1664-5]. And since then prevailed with *Sr Geo: Jeffreys* our present Chief Justice 32<sup>o</sup> Car. 2 [1680] to do the same. Whereby or priveledge is established, notwithstanding y<sup>e</sup> endeavours of those y<sup>t</sup> gruded us this Priveledge, to have suppressed it.\*

*Ano.* 1659. There was a project y<sup>t</sup> had many Abettors of in'ovating & utter overthrowing or Customes of Walling, & of introduceing 2 great Panes [Pans] into every Wich-House, that sholde have made a doble proportion of salt, for y<sup>e</sup> sole Benefit of y<sup>e</sup> occupiers, without any increase of rent, or colour of advantage to y<sup>e</sup> Lords & Owners of Walling, with design also of thrusting out y<sup>e</sup> poorer sort of occupiers, who were not of ability to be at y<sup>e</sup> charge of altering their Works, & furnishing their Wich-H[ouse] with so costly Pans. This was strongly attempted by Divers of y<sup>e</sup> abler Occupiers of Walling, who minded their private advantage, more then [than] y<sup>e</sup> publick good: which upon y<sup>t</sup> account I opposed, & having 2 of y<sup>e</sup> Rulers on or part, w<sup>th</sup> much adoe, & much ill will, we p<sup>r</sup>vented for that time. But through con'ivance of y<sup>e</sup> Rulers from time to time, who are alwaies Occupiers of Walling y<sup>e</sup> Pannes are more and more enlarged to y<sup>e</sup> prejudice & detriment of all that are Owners, & not Occupiers of Walling: which it is found by experience doth not advance the Trade, & it is feared will in time (by Gods just judgm<sup>t</sup>) come to be nothing worth, which hath bin y<sup>e</sup> Rise & enriching of most families in Town.† *R. W. [? Robert Wilkes]* One that was a chief promoter of y<sup>e</sup> great Pans, soon after designed to have invaded another of the greatest priveledges belonging to y<sup>e</sup> Town by attempting to sink a Marle-pitt upon y<sup>e</sup> *Beam-Heath*, near to a Field of his, out of which he designed to marle the said Field, without consent (indeed in defiance) of y<sup>e</sup> Towne: which endangered a Mutiny: whereupon the Town met & resolved to oppose him, to prevent others from attempting y<sup>e</sup> like, whereupon he desisted. And this project had no better successe than y<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> great Panes, and himselfe got neither credit, nor profit by either.

\* See also page 79. † Half a century elapsed after 1659 before the ancient Salt Customs were finally abolished; perhaps Roger Wilbraham saw those changes looming in the future when he penned these words.

Some years after this, y<sup>e</sup> last L<sup>d</sup>. Cholm[ondeley] or his Agents for him, under pre-  
tence that Strangers of late years had abused us by counterfeiting o<sup>r</sup> Heath Mark: and that  
my L<sup>d</sup>. hearing of it had in Kindnesse sent us his own peculiar Mark, which we might see was  
not so easy to counterfeit as ours, and that it should bee at our Service, if wee pleased to use  
it instead of o<sup>r</sup> owne, which Mark was tendered us in y<sup>e</sup> Church at a publique Meeting  
appointed by his Steward Mr. Ad—; who, to induce us to accept his Lorst<sup>s</sup> profer, told  
us, that He being L<sup>d</sup>. of y<sup>e</sup> Towne, his Mark must needs be most proper for us, and  
more safe, being not so easily counterfeited. To which after some silence, answer was  
made: That we could not com'and another Mark with that freedom y<sup>t</sup> wee might doe  
our owne. That our Mark was so well knowne that if a Horse or other Beast shold  
stray off y<sup>e</sup> Heath, y<sup>e</sup> Owner might more boldly challenge his Goods having y<sup>t</sup> Mark then  
[than] be put to contend with his Lordsp: We owned his Lordsh<sup>p</sup> to be L<sup>d</sup>. of y<sup>e</sup> greatest  
pt. of y<sup>e</sup> Towne, but to have nothing to do with the *Heath*, which is not within y<sup>e</sup> Barony.  
So that upon all accounts we hold it best, for us to stick to our old Mark, & that if it  
had bin counterfeited, it behoved us to look y<sup>e</sup> better to it for time to come. Whereupon  
this matter fell, & since then we have heard no more of it.

*Ano*. 1663. Finding the Poor to increase by the dayly recourse of Strangers who stole  
in upon us, I procured a Survey to be taken, and presented a List of them (being then  
in number 782) to the Justices of P. at y<sup>e</sup> Quarter Sessions held in this Towne 7 July  
1663. At which Sessions, a Lay Mize was charged upon y<sup>e</sup> County, for y<sup>e</sup> case of Market  
Townes, & other places that were found to be overcharged with poor. And of that there  
was 50<sup>li</sup>. [£50] allotted to this Towne by my procurem<sup>t</sup>, & since then thrice 50<sup>li</sup>. at so  
many payments, whereof I had the disposeall, by order of y<sup>e</sup> Justices, for putting forth  
Orphans & other poor Children Apprentice, & other charitable uses; which hath exceedingly  
eased the Towne, as may appear by the Securities which I have in my hands, to  
Witnesse for mee what my care hath bin to put that Money to the furthest, to ease the  
Towne of those yonglings that eate up y<sup>e</sup> Breade that sholde have sustained y<sup>e</sup> Aged Poor.

I likewise procured for the Towne a considerable Sume [sum], parcell of my Uncle  
Mr. Raphe Wilbrahams estate, who left his whole estate reall & personal to y<sup>e</sup> Poor  
indefinitely & without discriminacon:\* at y<sup>e</sup> disposeall of his executors, of whom I obtained  
£400 for y<sup>e</sup> Poor of Nant<sup>wch</sup>, y<sup>e</sup> designe whereof was to set y<sup>e</sup> poor on work. But having  
no *House of Correction* or *Work House*† at that time, nor of many yeers after in this Towne,  
the Interest of y<sup>e</sup> Money as it came to my hands hath bin faithfully distributed to y<sup>e</sup> Sick,  
aged, & most indigent poor from time to time as appears by y<sup>e</sup> Notes in My Custody,  
which will sufficiently evidence that I have bin a Friend to y<sup>e</sup> Towne & no bad Steward  
for y<sup>e</sup> Poor.

I also obtained other 50<sup>li</sup>. out of my said Uncles estate in recompence of y<sup>e</sup> Annuity  
of x<sup>li</sup>. [£10] which for several yeeres was p<sup>d</sup>. to *Mr. Edw. Hayes* out of y<sup>e</sup> profits of y<sup>e</sup>  
400£ allotted to this Towne. Which 50£ being left to my dispose, I designe for y<sup>e</sup> Town-  
Schoole [Grammar School] for y<sup>e</sup> teaching of so many children (whose parents are not of  
ability to keep them to Schoole) as the interest of y<sup>e</sup> 50£ will amount unto.

\* See page 193.

† By Act of Parliament 43 Eliz. 1601, town authorities were required to afford relief to the  
impotent; see to the apprenticing of poor children; and provide work for the able-bodied by means of a convenient stock  
of flax, hemp, wool, thread, &c. No Work-house for that purpose was provided at Nantwich until 1677. Roger  
Wilbraham drew up another Poor List in Jan. 1683; when the number was reduced to 281.

Our Towne Bridge over the River as appears by Sundry Orders of y<sup>e</sup> Justices at Chester hath bin repaired & maintained at y<sup>e</sup> Town charge, & upon that consideracon we were alwaies exempted from contributing to y<sup>e</sup> charge of repairing y<sup>e</sup> County Bridges untill y<sup>e</sup> year 1652, that the then Justices of P. repined at our not contributing to other Bridges: And thereupon against our Will ordered ours to be a County Bridge,\* & us to contribute with the County to all the County Bridges. After his Maj<sup>ties</sup> Restauration, when y<sup>e</sup> known Lawes came to be in force again, Some of us began to think y<sup>e</sup> Countrey might haply put it upon us to maintain o<sup>r</sup> owne Bridge at our charge, after 12 yeeres contribucon to y<sup>e</sup> County Bridges. Whereupon to put y<sup>e</sup> matt<sup>r</sup> out of doubt, we caused our Bridge to be presented at the Quarter Sessions in Town an<sup>o</sup>. 1663, to be in decay. Whereby y<sup>e</sup> County might be put to prove [proof], Whether it did belong to us, or them to repair: And for lack of defense on their part, it was established a County Bridge. And wee had Ninety Pounds by Order of y<sup>e</sup> Justices to make it a substantiall Bridge of Stone, & xx Marks [£13 6s. 8d.] afterwards to pave y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Bridge; and so many yards at either end thereof. The overseers were of my nomination to y<sup>e</sup> Justices, & y<sup>e</sup> Work was completed the year after by *Tim Adams*, Mason, who had y<sup>e</sup> Materials of y<sup>e</sup> Old Bridge by Bargaine, & y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> 90<sup>l</sup> allotted us as afores<sup>d</sup>.†

The Plague being so hot in London & other places, an<sup>o</sup> 1665, that never was the like: It concerned us (y<sup>e</sup> Towne being a Throughfare) to use all possible diligence to prevent the Infection that might come by Passengers: & God knowes wee were in dayly Feare, & under dreadful expectation of y<sup>e</sup> arrow that walkes in darkness being shot amongst us. But through mercy (For not unto us, but to his Name y<sup>t</sup> kept us, be y<sup>e</sup> praise,) we escaped it. I cannot say that I was more Active then [than] others: But am sensible that I was as much concerned, & as great a sharer in y<sup>e</sup> Deliverance as any Person in Towne, & have the more reason to remember it with Thankfulness.

From that time that y<sup>e</sup> Towne was in such p<sup>ill</sup> [peril] to y<sup>e</sup> yeer 1675, (which was much imbittered to mee by y<sup>e</sup> Losse of my 2 eldest sons, who were both hopefull & deservedly dear to me, & were snatched from mee within y<sup>e</sup> compasse of 4 Months;) I had fewe opportunities of doing y<sup>e</sup> Towne any considerable service. This year 1675 being a yeare of scarcity, I was so much the more concerned for y<sup>e</sup> Poore. But of that I shall say no more, Being in matters of this nature, the Left hand is not to know w<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Right hand doth.

Ano. 1676. Soone after y<sup>e</sup> death of my D.[ear] W.[ife] who left this Life & Mee disconsolate that day Twelve months that my Eldest son died, It was much upon my Spirit to do something extraordinary for y<sup>e</sup> Poor. And y<sup>e</sup> Legacy w<sup>ch</sup> my W.[ife] left in newe Halfe crowne pieces and new shillings to be distributed to poor Widowes in our owne Street, was that (perhaps) which gave mee the first hint to make some more lasting provision for poor and aged Widowes; & straight it came into my thoughts that I had 3 Well built houses under a Roofe at y<sup>e</sup> lower end of y<sup>e</sup> same street, w<sup>ch</sup> w<sup>th</sup> little adoe would soon be converted to an *Almes House* for six poor Widdowes; each House having

\* This Order was made at the General Sessions at Middlewich on 27th April, 1652, before Henry Brooke, Tho. Stanley, Tho. Mainwaring, Esqrs., and other Justices of the Peace. The order, which is signed by Humphrey Milton, Deputy Clerk of the Peace, states that the "Wiche Bridge lying ouer y<sup>e</sup> Weaner is y<sup>e</sup> greatest & most frequented Road within this County."—(Wilb. MS. Coll.)

† Cf. page 196.

convenient Apartments for 2 persons, who by co-habiting together might mutually succour & solace each other: & thereupon instantly I went & warned y<sup>e</sup> Tenants of those Houses to provide themselves Dwellings elsewhere betwixt & Christmas, not discovering anything of my purpose: Which accordingly they did; & as my strength would permit, made it my Busines to repaire & furnish y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Houses for y<sup>e</sup> purpose: & indowed y<sup>e</sup> same with Lands of inheritance to y<sup>e</sup> value of Forty Marks [£26 13s. 4d.] yeerly, for y<sup>e</sup> Perpetuall maintenance & sustentation of six poor aged Widdowes, to be chosen out of this Towne by me & my heires: & having pitched upon six whom I thought fittest to prefer to this my Charity, I provided them Gownes, wherein they went orderly to Church y<sup>e</sup> day after their admittance being o<sup>r</sup> Lady Day 1677, which y<sup>t</sup> yeer fell out to be y<sup>e</sup> Sabbath Day, & had y<sup>e</sup> Almes Women to Din'er that day, that I might have opportunity to Blesse God with them, & to begg his Blessing upon that which he put into my Heart to do for y<sup>e</sup> Poor, sith it hath pleased him to favour mee so far as to let me see it effected to my Hearts content.

Many of the poore amongst us through a habit of idleness growing insolent for lack of a House of Correction at hand, & others as clamorous for maintenance, who had no list to work, & yet made it their Plea to y<sup>e</sup> Justice, that they coulde not have worke to earn a livelihood; Wee made urgent application to y<sup>e</sup> Justices of P. at y<sup>e</sup> Quarter Sessions held in this Towne July 1677, & obtained an order for a House of Correction & Work H.[ouse] forthwith to be sett up in this Town;\* (w<sup>ch</sup> was a thing y<sup>t</sup> had bin long wished) and a Lay was granted for raising so much money through y<sup>e</sup> County as sufficed to p'chase a fair Brick House, outhouses, &c., at y<sup>e</sup> further end of y<sup>e</sup> Beam Street, which by y<sup>e</sup> care of y<sup>e</sup> Treasurers *Mr. Thos. Wicksted* & *Mr. Rich. Seyoill* is now put into good repaire.† And thereupon to set y<sup>e</sup> poor of y<sup>e</sup> Towne on work, I delivered 200<sup>li</sup>. [£200] of the 400<sup>li</sup>. [£400] which by my procurem<sup>t</sup> was allotted to this Towne out of my uncle *Mr. Raphe Wilbraham* his estate, For w<sup>ch</sup> 200£ I have a Receipt under the hands & seales of y<sup>e</sup> Treasurers before named, & their Assumpsit to imploy y<sup>e</sup> same for setting y<sup>e</sup> Poor of y<sup>e</sup> Towne on Work: which if duely inspected will be sundry waies helpfull and beneficiall to y<sup>e</sup> Towne, care being Taken, to secure it, y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Money be not lost.

After y<sup>e</sup> death of *Mr. Jackson* our Minister, who died y<sup>e</sup> begin'ing of winter an<sup>o</sup> 1677, when *Mr. Crewe* assumed a right of presentation to y<sup>e</sup> Curateship of Nantwich, & would impose upon us against our consent; I laboured what in mee lay by Letters & other applications to y<sup>e</sup> Bishop, being at that time unable to travell or stir much in y<sup>e</sup> Busines, to have prevented *Mr. Crewes* imposing upon us; & would have given out of my owne Purse as much as the Profits of y<sup>e</sup> Easter Roll (under w<sup>ch</sup> *Mr. Cr.[ewe]* claims a right of Advowson) cost his Grandf[ather] *S<sup>r</sup> Rand[ulph] Crew*, which as I have heard was 100 Marks [£66 13s. 4d.] & if it would be accepted I would give 100<sup>li</sup>. [£100] gladly, that y<sup>e</sup> Towne might have the nomination of their owne Minister, to which oure Counsell tells us we have a good right by prescription; if y<sup>e</sup> Bishop would have heard what we had to say for ourselves; But the Bishop being at London, this Busines was transacted there

\* This was not a Workhouse in the modern sense of the term; but a place where work was provided for the able-bodied poor, who lived at their own homes and received relief there. The House of Correction was a prison for idle vagabonds; or paupers, who, being able, refused to work. (See Annals, 1767).

† The MS. Journal states that "£20 salary was granted us for y<sup>e</sup> Master, & I [Rog. Wilb.] had the favor of nominating the first Mr. to the Bench, w<sup>ch</sup> was Cap. M."

to or disadvantage & disappointment, by ye restless endeavours of *Mr. Str.[inger]*\* in compliance with *Mr. Crew*, & under his Title (such as it is) to thruste himselfe upon us; which he did to ye dissatisfaction of ye whole Body of ye Towne & parish. I wish it may turne to his & our good in Conclusion: which is more than at present I have in prospect, considering his temper, and that he hath so much disoblighd ye whole Towne, that it will be hard for him to recover ye Love he hath lost amongst us.

Three things more I have endeavoured of very great concern<sup>t</sup> to ye Towne, which, I would gladly have accomplished.

One is, The inclosing of a considerable part of ye *Beam Heath*, which may well be spared for a settled maintenance for ye Minister, & schoole [Free Grammar School] & something in certainty for ye Poore yeerly, to ease ye Towne. This hath bin obstructed by ye *Lords of Alvasion*, who have a peculiar interest in the Com'on, which renders them little, & no possibility of improving their interest, & yet will not assent to ye inclosing of any part of ye s<sup>d</sup> com'ons having as much or more allowed them then [than] they do or can make of their priveledge.

Another Mischiefe to ye Towne is: ye Liberty that Owners of Cottages in Town take to admitt Strangers & Inmates into such Cottages, without regard of securing the Towne. [*i.e.* from becoming chargeable as paupers to the town]. I myselve have undertaken to be responsible for my Tenants, if any of them sholde become burdensome: others promise faire, but performe nothing. Notwithstanding we have a good order made by *Sr Thos. Milward* late Justice of Chester to redresse this, which Order was procured by my father & other Gentlemen of ye Towne in his time: [*viz.*: in 1632, see page 130] Which Order might easily be revived, but y<sup>t</sup> selve prevailes too much with ye generality of Men.

A third Mischiefe is:—That wee cannot agree of ye old Rents in Towne, there beinge severall Books of ye old Rents made at severall times, which amount to ye same s<sup>u</sup>me in ye whole, but differ in particulars, & every man being willing to pay by that Book y<sup>t</sup> eases him most, or Assessments when they come to be collected fall short of the S<sup>u</sup>me intended: Which ye Officers of late yeeres perceiving, when they come to be re-imbursed require a greater Lay than needs, to ye end it may satisfy them: & so both Poor & Rich that are willing to pay their Laies, pay constantly above their share, & others w<sup>t</sup> [what] they list. I myselve have oft times, when this abuse hath bin complained of at our Meetings, undertaken to pay by any one Book, so that might be establisht. But when that comes to be done, one or other is absent of those who have no leasure to meet, when it is not for their profit.

For ten yeeres from ye time that I had a concerne in Towne, & took upon me to interest myselve in their concernes, I ever found the people tractable & governable, beyond what might be expected from a people that had ye Raines in their owne hands, till those unhappy differences before spoken of which happened a<sup>o</sup> 1659, were sett on foot; & from that time those that could not have their Will then, declined our Meetings in ye Church & gave leaue to those that wolde to take ye troble of managing ye Towne concernes, whilst they themselves minded their owne; yet did not this discourage mee to appeare at all Meetings; Where I ever spake my Mind freely, which if it tended to ease the

\* The Wilb. MS. Journal, alluding to the death of Mr. Jackson, who had been Minister of Nantwich for thirty years, says, "In compliance with Mr. Crew's pretensions, another lesse deserving was thrust upon us, that was born among us *G. Str.[inger]*."

Towne it was well accepted; if it were matter of charge, it was taken in good part; being it was knowne to all I was to bear a considerable share my selfe. And if those whom I have faithfully served for so many yeeres, will not Witness this for mee, I have this Witness in my selfe, that I have done it, and not served my selfe of Them.

Remember mee, O my God, for Good.

I have not left this in Writing to tell the World what I have done, But to minde [remind] my sonne of what Strephon told his companions on his death Bed.

“The pleasures w<sup>ch</sup> from virtuous Deeds we have  
Procure ye Sweetest slumbers in the Grave.”

Whither I am hastening, and having lived to see many changes, am the more concerned (for ye short time I have to live) to prepare and wait for my appointed change.”

“*Sic ò sic juvat vivere, sic perire.*”

[Dated] “Feb. 2nd 1682.”

After the death of Roger Wilbraham, Esq., at Townsend, on the 5th March, 1707-8, his son, Randle Wilbraham, Esq. of Rode, removed to Nantwich, and became the head of the house and historian of the family. He mentions two great changes, one of local interest, and the other of a general character, that are noteworthy. The Ancient Customs of Walling, which had become too antiquated for the times, passed away, (see Account of the Salt Trade, *postea*;) and the simple manners of country gentlemen were relinquished for a more fashionable life. Randle Wilbraham, speaking of the death of his father-in-law in the family Journal, says:—

“Feb. 3. 1709[10] Dyed sr Richd. Brooke of Norton, Bart., an honest friendly Gentleman, whose hospitality justly gained him the prayers of the Poor & Applause of the Rich: *att a tyme when that good and Ancient way of House-keeping was decay'd to bring in new & more pernicious ffashions.* Tom Hide, son of Edward Hide, of Norbury, Esq., Kinsman & companion to Sr Richard, was so affected with the loss of soe kind a ffrend, that himself survived but a few hours.”

In the seventeenth century few gentlemen made journeys to London, or any other expensive journey, but upon important business, and their wives never; by which providence they enjoyed and improved their estates in the country, and kept good hospitality in their house, brought up their children well, and were beloved by their neighbours.\* But in the reign of Queen Anne, as travelling became easier, and literature was more disseminated, country gentlemen paid less attention to local matters; and, adopting the new manners of Society, frequently left their country residences to enjoy the luxuries and gaities of Town life.

Randle Wilbraham (*MS. Journal*) writes as follows:—

“May 1709 Thos. Wettenhall Esq., my kinsman & neighbour dyd [died] of a Feavour.† A sober gentleman, a good Majestrate, and very useful in his place. I promised myself great satisfaction in his conversation by my removall from Rode to Namptwich, but instead thereof I succeeded in his troublesome office.” [viz.: as Magistrate]. . . . “att ye desire of H. Earle of Cholmondeley.”

\* See Lord Clarendon's Life, quoted in Disraeli's “*Curiosities of Literature*,” p. 253, (Edit. 1867).

† Thos. Wettenhall Esq. was buried, without memorial, at Nantwich on the 19th May, 1709. (*Par. Reg.*)

"April 7. 1711. Severall younge men & women took a Boat from ye Mill at N: and rowed up the river: but soe carelessly & unskillfully (the water being high) that the stream drew ye Boat under the Bridge at ye Flood-gates: & the apprehension of so imminent danger made them leap out of the boat, whereby three persons perished: the rest were saved."

Feb. 16. 1711. [12] Mem<sup>d</sup>.: Five daughters of William late L<sup>d</sup> Brereton living in this Towne at Mr. Goldsmith's house in Hospital Street. The youngest Frances dyed there. And Mr. Peak late Vicar of Bowden came to mee from the other ladies her sisters to desire shée might bee interred in my Burial [place] to w<sup>ch</sup> I consented & appointed the place, viz: att the head of Sr David Cradock's monumt,"

Some explanation is necessary to give interest to this last memorandum.

"*Mr. Goldsmith's house*," has been already alluded to in these pages as the probable site of St. Nicholas Hospital (p. 52-3). It is mentioned in the will (dated 25th March, 1684) of John Goldsmith, Gent., as follows:—"As I am unable to assure to my said wife [Anne] the use of my dwelling-house in Nantwich, as I had before promised, owing to its being settled on my son John, I further leave her, should my son refuse to let her inhabit the said house with him, the sum of £40, but if my son John sh<sup>d</sup>. kindly permit my said wife, *Anne Goldsmith*, and Elizabeth Weston, my grand-daughter, to *dyett with him* without requiring from them more than £16 per annum during my said wife's widowhood, then the £40 not to be payable to her."† According to a Nantwich Rate Book for 1691, *John Goldsmith* is assessed for the house, and *Madam Anne Goldsmith*, his step-mother, for her personal estate, proving that at that time she did "*dyett with him*." By her own will in 1701, she leaves £20 for her step-son "to defend his right to his house, wherein he now lives," in case my grandson, "does not give my said [step-]son Gouldsmyth a discharge or release from any claim he may hereafter lay" to it. John Goldsmith also mentions (Will, 1684) his "*niece Mrs. Anne Brereton*," who was one of the "*five daughters of William late [2nd] Lord Brereton*."

The Goldsmiths became connected with the noble family of Brereton, of Brereton, in this county, by second marriages, and thus the relationship between the two families was only distant.

*Anne Goldsmith*, the second wife of John Goldsmith, Gent.,‡ was the daughter of Sir Thomas Smith, of Hough, who had been Mayor of Chester in 1622, and Sheriff of the county in 1623. Her sister *Mary Smith* married George Cotton, son of Thomas Cotton of Combermere; and was re-married to Sir Robert Holt, of Aston, near Birmingham, whose first wife was Jane, the sister of William, second Lord Brereton.§ Although it may appear strange that John Goldsmith should have described Mrs. Anne Brereton as his "*niece*;" it is very remarkable that an acquaintance was long continued between these two families.

\* The Parish Register records the burial of two persons; the *third* no doubt being buried elsewhere:—

"1711. April 9th. John Judson and his daughter Sarah, drowned."

† Additions and Corrections for "*A Royal Descent and other Pedigrees and Memorials*," by Miss Thomasine E. Sharpe, p. 33, (Privately printed, only 40 copies. 1881).

The Parish Register records the burial of the testator as follows:—

"1684. April 24. John Gouldsmyth, Gent."

‡ This marriage is recorded in the Parish Register thus:—

"1666. May 24. John Goldsmith, Gent. and Mrs. Anne Smith."

§ Cf. Brereton and Smith Pedigrees in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, (New Edit.) vol. iii. pp. 89 and 503; and the Goldsmith pedigree in the Chapter on Family History *postea*.



*William, second Lord Brereton*, who was a heavy sufferer during the Civil War, (pp. 159, *n.*, and 185), at his death, left four sons and six daughters. All the daughters, except one, Margaret, died unmarried; and of these, four were interred in the Wilbraham burial place, which occupied an area of 16 sq. ft. in the South Transept of Nantwich Church; the fifth being *the Honble. Elizabeth Brereton*, who was buried at Brereton on the 6th April, 1723. The Parish Register thus records the burials of these aged maiden ladies:—

"1711-2. Feb. 16. Honble. M<sup>rs</sup>. Frances Brereton, Spinster."

"1716. Dec. 1. Honble. M<sup>rs</sup>. Mary Brereton, Spinster."

"1718-9. Jan. 4. Honble. M<sup>rs</sup>. Anne Brereton, Spinster."

"1720. May 14. Honble. M<sup>rs</sup>. Jane Brereton, Spinster."

The *Rev. John Peake*, late Vicar of Bowden (1689-90) had been deprived of his living as a Non-Juror, for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to King William III.

Resuming the extracts from *Randle Wilbraham's Journal*:—

"Sept. 17th 1713. The five Bells belonging to the Church of N. were taken down, in order to cast into six by *Abram Rudhall*.\*"

"Oct. 6th 1713. About 6 at night a foine [*fine, i.e. great*] fire broke out on y<sup>e</sup> Top of a Rick of Oates adjoining to a Barne of *Mr. John Comberbach* in Pillory St., w<sup>ch</sup> in short time consumed y<sup>e</sup> sd. Barne & most of y<sup>e</sup> Corne therein: (as the providence of God ordered) it was a calm night: and tho' a Thatcht house stood within 5 foot of it, yet it was p<sup>rs</sup>erved, and no further harme ensued."

"The summer of 1714 was a great Drought which did much accelerate corne Harvest: that there was Barley cut before Midsummer, & I bought in the markt at N. new barley for use July 17 of the same year."

"On Monday Ap. 5, 1714, Began the first Assizes in the year of my Shevalry [*Shrievalty*] wher[e] *Sr Joseph Jekyll Kt.* sate sole Justice, & there being not much business the Judge went out of Chester on Fryday, & gave mee a Dismission leaving my Deputy *Mr. Kent* to attend the Recorder of Chester† who hee had constituted his to call the Court that Day & the next."

"K[in]g George proclaimed in Nantwich on Wednesday y<sup>e</sup> 4 Aug. 1714."

"Sep. 20 1714. The later Assizes in the year of my Sheriffry commenct: att which both Justices were present. I was much out of Order all the Time: but was much comforted to think it was the last. The Judges went out on Fryday y<sup>e</sup> 24th & I returned home leaving my undersheriff with some men to attend the Judges Deputy."

It was the usual custom then, and for more than a century after, for the High Sheriff of the County to make a grand state entry into Chester to meet the Judges; and thus, *Randle Wilbraham, Esq.*, arrayed in a costly dress and fashionable wig, and bearing in his hand a "white wand" (the badge of his office) rode from Nantwich to Chester in the state carriage drawn by richly caparisoned horses led by a liveried postillion, with a long procession of gentry, tenantry, javelin men, a running footman, servants &c., amid the clanging of bells in all the parish Churches along the road and at Chester. Of course, all this entailed considerable personal expense, which was further increased by

\* The *Rudhalls* of Gloucester were noted bell founders there for about a century, and were succeeded in or about 1774 by the name of *Mears*.

† The Recorder of Chester at this time was also a native of Nantwich,—*Mr. Roger Comberbach*, whose son, *Roger Comberbach LL.B.* was Prothonotary of the Palatinate of Chester.



	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Expence att the Glashouse .. .. .	00	11	06				
To Mr. Hughes his General Bill for my entertainment & Horses .. .. .	48	12	06	53	00	00	
To Mr. Hughes his Servants, att the Inne .. .. .	01	10	00	01	10	00	
To Mr. Williams my Chaplain ye first Assizes 2 Jacobus' .. .. .	02	11	06	—	—	—	
To Mr. Gibbons [Rector of Nantwich] my Chaplaine the latter Assizes .. .. .				02	11	00	
To my Footman [?] the running footman] Philipp Nettles .. .. .	00	05	00	00	05	00	
To Joseph Davie for his pains & attendance .. .. .	01	01	06	01	00	00	
To Hamnett Oxon for Carriage of my Clothes to & frō Chester .. .. .	00	11	00	—	—	—	
For Carriage of two Boxes from London .. .. .	00	11	06	—	—	—	
For a Sword for my Groom .. .. .	00	05	00	—	—	—	
To Mr. Bennetts Wine Cooper .. .. .	00	05	00	—	—	—	
To Faringtons Men [tailors in Nantwich] for Beverage [ <i>i.e.</i> Beer-money] .. .. .	00	02	06	—	—	—	
To the Cook att Chester .. .. .	01	00	00	—	—	—	
To Tilcock the Sadler his Bill .. .. .	01	07	10	—	—	—	
To Hayles [of Nantwich] the Shoemaker .. .. .	01	10	00	—	—	—	
pd. to my son Randle for things bought for me at London .. .. .	32	01	03	—	—	—	
More to him for cloths &c. for my son Roger .. .. .	18	02	09	—	—	—	
Expence att proclaiming King George att Chester .. .. .	01	10	00	—	—	—	
for a New Gray Cloth Coat .. .. .	03	00	00	—	—	—	
Occasional expences not before specify'd .. .. .	—	—	—	01	02	00	
[Total] .. .. .				£384	08	06	
This Doubly charged .. .. .				4	10	00	
				£379	18	06	
Recd back for the profitts of the County Court .. .. .	55	00	00				
The Sheriffs Fee allowed on passing his Account .. .. .	20	00	00				
A present of Wine from Clutton Wright esq .. .. .	01	00	00				
A buck from H. Legh of High Legh, Esq. att the first Assizes .. .. .	02	00	00				
A present of Wine from Mr. Bromhall .. .. .	00	18	00				
A present of Wine and Sturgeon from the undersheriff .. .. .	03	00	00				
	£81	18	00				
Sep. 28 1716. Mr. Grantham, to whom I did lett the profitts of the County Court complaining much that his Bargaine was hard, I returned to him 5 <sup>li</sup> web must be added to my charge .. .. .				..	05	00	00
So that ye Whole Charge amounts to .. .. .				..	£303	00	06

Amongst "the names of Roman Catholics, Non-jurors, and others who refus'd to take Oaths to his late Majesty King George I," in 1715,\* two persons are mentioned in this locality, namely:—"Lawrence Hill, of Nantwich, Yeoman," whose property was valued at £4 2s. od.; and "Anne Chesceyss" [or *Cheswiss*, as now pronounced] "of Spurstow, spinster."

The Wilb. MS. Journal next records as follows:—

"April 9, 1716. By reason of the great number of Scots & others taken att Preston (upon an Insurrection made on behalf of Jas. son of Jas. II. ag<sup>st</sup> Geo. D<sup>k</sup> of Hanover, then reigning Kg. of Grt. Brit.) & detained in prison in ye Shire Hall att Chester. The Assizes usually held there was by adjournment att Nantwich before *Sr Joseph Jekyll* & *Edw<sup>d</sup>. Jeffries Esqrs. alias Winnington*. The said Judges taking up their lodgings att my howse."

"Sept<sup>r</sup>. 24<sup>th</sup> 1716. Assizes held as before and the Judges lay att my howse."

\* This list was first printed in 1745, and reprinted for John Russell Smith in 1862.

The County Assizes had been held at Nantwich on a former occasion, 112 years before, owing to the plague at Chester in 1604; and the unhealthy state of the Castle was the cause of the removal of both Assizes to Nantwich in 1716. According to the Cowper MS. the winter of 1715 was "very severe, and the snow lay a yard deep in the roads. Many of the prisoners (among whom was Lord Charles Murray the son of the Duke of Athol & several gentlemen besides a great number of privates) died in the Castle by the severity of the Season: many were carried off by a malignant fever, and most of the survivors were transported to the plantations in America."\*

"March 25. 1718. I [Randle Wilbraham] got the Town Charter signed by SPENCER COWPER ESQ., who succeeded Jekyll at Chester Assizes."

"Decr 4<sup>th</sup> 1723 was first held a Faire† in this Towne pursuant to a Patent newly granted to H[ugh] Earl of Cholmondeley."

"The next day [5 Dec. 1723] there happened a fire in a house‡ late Madews, next door to the Ship ale-house; wh[ic]h threatened much damage to the Towne; but by God's blessing our endeavours, the same was extinguishd without further harme than y<sup>e</sup> burning down most part of y<sup>e</sup> house where it began, & some small detriment to y<sup>e</sup> next. *Laus Deo.*"

"On Munday Jan. 18, 1724[-5]. Dyed the Rt. Hon<sup>ble</sup> Hugh Earle of Cholmondeley & was succeeded in his Hon<sup>rs</sup> by his Brother George; tho[ugh] a good part of the estate was before settled upon George his sd Brothers son on his marriage with Mary sole Daughter of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Robert Walpole Esqr."

"1727. *Mem'd.* that about the later end of June after a long fit of Wett weather succeeded by a sudden Heat & Drought, a Distemper more epidemical than has been known in y<sup>e</sup> memory of Man Began to show its Malignity on the sea coasts of Lancashire, & in short time spread itself into this & the neighbouring Countys & almost all over England. It sometimes seiz'd with violent symptoms of a putrid Feavour; other while with intermissions, which grew shorter; till the Feavour was continuall, & tho[ugh] it might bee computed that not aboue one in Ten dyed, yet those who escaped, did it with great Difficulty after 5 or six weekes illness: and at last generally ended in a Quotidian, Tertian, or Quartan Ague, with much dissipation of spirits, & prostration of strength: what was peculiar & observable in this disease was, that it was most frequent among servants, Labour<sup>rs</sup> & people of meane condition, & rag'd more in Proportion in Country Villages§ than in Populous Citys & Market Towns; & therein was usually observed to affect the outskirts worse than y<sup>e</sup> more inward parts. In the cure the following Method was found most successfull. If it seiz'd violently at the first, then bleeding was found usefull. If it did intrmit at first, Bleeding was omitted, & vesicatorys [blisters] were rais'd in proper places, to draw off y<sup>e</sup> humour from y<sup>e</sup> nerues; which were much affected: where there was Intermissions the Bark [Peruvian] had not its usual effect, & then recourse was had to salt of wormwood & juice of Lemons, mixt with snake root & other warm & nervous medicines, administered with y<sup>e</sup> Bark.

As to my owne family, My sons Roger & Tom, being gone to Offerton were seiz'd with it there. But by Gods blessing & the care of Dr. Jackson of Manchester, after six weeks they return'd without any remaining ill symptoms. At home the Cook & Foot-boy, were by seuerall Relapses ill & weak aboue two months: but hitherto *though scarce any house in the neighbourhood has escaped* yet it has made noe further progress among my Domesticks. *Laus Deo. Amen.*"

\* Quoted by Dr. Ormerod *Hist. Chesh.* vol. I. p. 248. (New Edit.)

† This fair, commonly called *Dirty Fair*, is still held.

‡ Though not mentioned in the Memorandum, there appears to have been loss of life at this fire, according to the following line in the Burial Register:—"1723. Dec. 7. Philipp Cooper, Burnt to Death."

§ Thus in the adjoining parish of Wyubunbury, which about this time had an average death rate of about 50 annually, the Register records 121, 136, and 102 burials for the years 1728, 1729, and 1730 respectively.

“Dec. 4. 1728. Having in the year before Giuen a short Account of a Distemper then reigning in this Country, I was in hopes I might haue dismist that subject, but find occasion to repeat the like remark in this present year 1728. About Midsum'er, the same Feavour re-kindled with the same malignity or greater than before: Many dyed of it, & those who escap'd Death fell into Agues Quartan, Tertian, Quotidians & some of Anomalous kind. About y<sup>e</sup> middle of October y<sup>e</sup> Feavour grew less frequent; but y<sup>e</sup> Ague more Epidemical. This Town & the neighbourhood thereof felt it more seuerly, than the year before: & p<sup>t</sup>icularly my ffamily. My Wife, my Gr<sup>son</sup> Dick, my daughter Mary, y<sup>e</sup> Cook, Chambermaid, my Wiues [Wife's] Maid, my Groom, Tho. Huxley,\* & my son Harry were attack'd by it. Where the Quinquina [Bark] was taken in great Quantitys; & for a long space of Time, it seldom return'd: but where it was taken in such Quantity only as heretofore had been thought sufficient, it return'd with much seuerity, & y<sup>e</sup> Patients were forct to repeat it to 4, 5, or 6 ounces. What the Spring may produce God only knows. But if the distemper continues w<sup>ch</sup> deprives poor People of getting their bread by their labour; & that the Crops of corne proue noe better than they haue done for the last two yeares: the Case will be deplorate.”

The above account is the last of the local events contained in the Wilbraham MS. Journal; and it will now be seen how much of interest relating to Nantwich would have been lost to posterity, but for the memoranda left on record by the four successive Mr. Wilbrahams of this town, during a period extending over more than a century and a half. Although there is no special reference in the Parish Register to these yeares of great Mortality, the number of burials during those yeares furnish ample proof of an unusually large death-rate. In 1727 are registered 154 burials, of which 91 occur during the six months from August to January. In 1728 there were no less than 209 burials, chiefly of young people, “paupers,” and “widows;” 51 being recorded in the month of January 1728-9. In the following year the number of burials is 117, and in 1730, 110; and it was not until 1731 that the death-rate of the parish decreased to a normal average of 66.

On the 31st May, 1727, Chancellor Gastrell granted a Faculty to William Maisterston and six other gentlemen of the town to build a South Gallery in Nantwich Church, which, in after yeares, became the place where the principal families of the town sat at Church, untill its removal in 1855. It contained six front pews (two under each arch); and twelve back pews in two rows, separated from the front pews by an aisle. Some idea of the cost of this Gallery may be arrived at from the following receipt, and particulars on a plan of the gallery, preserved at Delamere. (Wilb. MS. Coll.)

1729-30. “Jan. 3. “Rec <sup>d</sup> From Randle Wilbraham Esq. Twenty four pounds and ten shillings for three seats in the New South Gallery in the Parish Church of Nantwich: that is to say, £14 10s. od. for the third front seat from the East End: £6 os. od. for the seat next behind it, No. 10: and for the next behind that, No. 15, £4: Being reasonable Rates proportioned to the whole charge expended in erecting the s <sup>d</sup> Gallery, and assessed and agreed unto by us Commoners appointed to build the s <sup>d</sup> Gallery... .. Wm. Maisterston, John Bromhall, Ran. Wilbraham, John Wixsted, Thos. Williams, Geo. Audley, Matt. Gleave.”	}	£    s.    d. 24   10   0
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\* Randle Wilbraham records his death as follows:—“Aprill the 30th 1729 Dyed my faithfull & Diligent servt, Thomas Huxley of an Acute Feavour: who is the first servt who dyed out of my Howse, tho' I haue been an Housekepr 40 yeares, & haue seldom had less numb<sup>r</sup> than eight at a Time & sometimes more.” His burial is entered at Wyburnury as follows:—“1729 May 2. Mr. Thomas Huxley, Steward to Randle Wilbraham of Nantwich, Esq.”  
 “On the 21st June 1730 Randle Brereton, a servant to Randle Wilbraham Esq.” was buried at Nantwich. (*Par. Reg.*)

The Plan gives the following information respecting the *front pews* :—

		Ft. In.					
JNO. BROMHALL ESQ.	... }	under eastern	{ 6 10	...	£14 5 0	} Total	£ s. d. 80 0 0
WM. MAISTERSON ESQ.	... }	Arch	{ 8 0½	..	£14 5 0		
RAN. WILBRAHAM ESQ.	... }	under the	{ 8 3	...	£14 10 0		
MR. THOS. WILLIAMS	... }	middle arch	{ 8 3½	..	£14 5 0		
MR. GEO. AUDLEY	... }	under the	{ 8 6	...	£11 10 0		
MR. JNO. WIXSTED	... }	west Arch.	{ 8 4½	...	£11 5 0		

In August 1729 *Horse-races* were first inaugurated at Nantwich. They continued to be held annually for two or three days at the end of June, or beginning of July, on Beam Heath, for about a century. They were mainly upheld and patronized by County Gentlemen, who kept valuable studs of highly bred horses; and who, on the race days, resorted to the Cock-pit at the *Griffin Inn*\* in the morning; saw the horses run on the Course in the afternoon; and went at night to the Play at the *Crown Assembly Room*, or at the *Old Barn*† at Hospital Street-end, until the *Play-House* was built‡ in Dog Lane, early in the present century by Charles Mare, Esq., of the Manor House, in Beam Street. In 1820 Mytton's§ “Mandeville” won the gold cup at Nantwich; and in 1822 the “sixty-five guineas,” on the same course; but the old turf-loving sport of the gentry was then fast declining. A few years after Mr. Mytton's career as a sportsman had ended; and meanwhile, in 1824, Mr. Benjamin White, shoe manufacturer, and Mr. Davies, salt manufacturer, rented the Race-course, and ploughed it up; and although races were run afterwards on the ‘*Ley Ground*,’ and, for a few years on the ‘*Ox Pastures*,’ having lost their former popularity they were soon altogether discontinued. In like manner after the death of Charles Mare, Esq.,|| the patron of the Theatre, the Messrs. Stanton, with their talented “Company of Comedians,” which had so long visited Nantwich and other towns in Cheshire and the adjacent counties, now failed to ‘draw a house;’ and so the Theatre was closed, and, in 1840, partly pulled down. The gallery of the Play-house was converted into the present Odd Fellows' Lodge Room; and a row of cottages was built on the site of the pit, stage, and green-room. The following mentions in the Parish Register of a resident jockey, dancing-masters, and ‘men of the sock and buskin,’ associated as they were with the gaieties and amusements of the town in former days, will be of interest.

“1738. Dec. 15. Thos. s. of Henry Johnson, Dancing Master.” [Bapt. Reg.]

“1743. Aug. 25. Wm. s. of John Wheeler, Comedian.” [Bur. Reg.]

“1745. Sep. 12. Catherine wife of John Doncaster, Jockey.” [Bur. Reg.]

“1750. Aug. 22. Ann, dau. of Wm. Quelch, a player.” [Bur. Reg.]

“1750-1. Feb. 17. John Doncaster, Jockey.” [Bur. Reg.]

“1761. July 23. Eliz. d. of James Bath, a Player.” [Bapt. Reg.]

\* The “*Griffin Inn*,” one of the oldest houses in High Town, is now occupied by Mr. E. H. Rhodes.

† This picturesque “*Old Barn*” of wood and thatch, which was a very commodious building, was pulled down in or about April, 1883.

‡ About the same time an adjacent Inn changed its name from the “*Elephant and Castle*” to that of the *Shakespeare Tavern*.

§ This was the celebrated Jack Mytton, of Halston, Esq., whose son of the same name was for many years a land agent for Lord Kilmorey, and died a few years ago at his residence near Nantwich.

|| Charles Mare, (the son of Matthew Mare, Esq. of the Broomlands, in Hatherton, a retired potter who died in 1814.) was a ship-builder in Liverpool, and failed in the large sum of £500,000. He died at Nantwich on the 8th March, 1838, aged 51, and was buried at Wyburnbury.

- "1767. Jan. 27. Robert Endas s. of Saml. Stanton, Player." [Bapt. Reg.]  
 "1782. Sep. 25. Mary dau. of George Fairburn, comedian, & Margaret his wife Recd." [Bapt. Reg.]  
 "1797. Aug. 22. Samuel Stanton, Gent. Buried."\* [Bur. Reg.]  
 "1809. Mar. 22. George Stanton, Comedian." [Bur. Reg.]  
 "1812. July 12. Emilia dr. of Charles Stanton, comedian, & Sarah." [Bapt. Reg.]

Two gravestones on the north side of the Churchyard were placed to the memory of two of Mr. Stanton's company of theatricals, and inscribed as follows:—

- "James Smith, Comedian, who died Aug. 8, 1828. Aged 50."  
 "Henry Wood,† Comedian, who died Jan. 26, 1836. Aged 55."

On the 19th April, 1731, the Rev. Thos. Brooke, Rector, preached a special sermon in the Parish Church, on the occasion of a *Spring Flower Show* held in the town.

In the same year, (Oct. 15th) a Vestry Meeting decided

"That there shall be an altar-piece made and erected with Ten Commandments Lord's Prayer and Creed wrote upon the same, suitable for the Chancell. And the Churchwardens shall collect and pay at the parish Charge what cannot be gathered by subscriptions for the same."‡

This order was duly carried out by filling up with stone more than half of the East Window, as shown in the East view of Nantwich Church in Lysons' "Cheshire." Forty years after, Mr. Partridge wrote—"The Altar-piece is a work of handsome modern architecture executed by that ingenious architect *Mr. William Yoxall* of this town, lately deceased."§—(*Hist. Nant.* p. 25). It was removed when Lord Crewe restored the Chancel; but an external disfigurement to the Church, viz.: the Rectory House, described by that writer as "a genteel brick fabrick built by Dr. Brooke, Dean of Chester, and Rector of Nantwich, towards which in consideration of his great merit and affectionate regard borne him, his parishioners largely contributed;"—(*ibid.* p. 42) and designed most likely by the same architect, continues to the present time.

Important alterations, too, were made in the Churchyard between 1735 and 1739, according to the Minutes of the Vestry Book, as follows:—

- "1735-6. Feb. 4. Agreed "there shod be a handsome flag'd rode from the dean's [Dr. Brooke] garden to the Chancell Door."  
 "1736. Aug. 1. Agreed "there shall be a flagg road made between ye Light [lich]-gates [Iron gates opposite Pepper Street] on ye North side ye Church to ye West Door, two yards Broad, to be done wth white flags from Kelsall Hill."  
 "1737. July 31. "to get sand to level and regulate the churchyard, & repair pavements."  
 "1738. Sept. 28. to make a pavement from the Turnstile leading to the Market House [in High Town] to

\* See Church Monuments in the North transept of the Church.

† Henry Wood died in Church Lane in great poverty; and left two daughters, one of whom survived till 1876, gaining a livelihood in Nantwich as a teacher of music and dancing.

‡ This extract, and others given on subsequent pages, are taken from the "*Town Vestry Book*," a paper book, in parchment backs, containing the minutes of parish Meetings, &c., from the 15th Oct. 1731 to the 15th June 1777. This volume, which is minus pages 1 and 2, is now preserved at the Rectory House. It is stated on p. 51, that there were three earlier volumes of the *Church Vestry Book*, commencing in the years 1619, 1706 and 1717 respectively; all of which are now unfortunately lost. Roger Wilbraham, Esq., states that he had caused a note of all deeds relating to the Town in his possession to be entered into the Church Book; so that should any, or all, of these earlier volumes be still in existence, it would be a graceful act on the part of the owner to restore them to the Town, and the safe custody of the Rector of the Parish.

§ I have an excellent engraving of Crewe Hall drawn by this Architect in 1742. His burial is recorded thus:—  
 "1770 June 6. Mr. William Yoxall." (Par. Reg.)

the West Door of the Church; also, the churchyard to be raised and levelled where necessary.”  
 “1739. July 8. To erect Piers and Iron Gates at the end of the *Church Lane* entering the church-yard.”

On Saturday, the 14th May, 1737, “about six in the evening the Sessions and Market House at Namptwich fell down, by which nine persons were killed. The building had been erected but sixteen years and six months before. At a Quarter Sessions it gave evident signs that it would soon tumble.”—(*Gent. Mag.* 1737, p. 314).

Towards the erection of this Market Hall, with a Sessions Room above, in 1720, George Frederick, Prince of Wales, Earl of Chester, &c., (afterwards King George II.) gave £600; and a full figure of the Prince, carved in gritstone, ornamented the South side of the building. When the disaster occurred the statue was broken across the middle; but the upper part of the effigy may still be seen in the garden of Burland Hall, in Acton parish, standing on a rockery overshadowed by yews; where it is locally known as the “King of Burland.” The throng of the market would, doubtless, be over before the accident happened, or there must surely have been greater loss of life; but Partridge says, “many were terribly bruised and hurt.” The Register records the following burials; others, being probably country people, would be interred in their own parish graveyards, as, for example, *James Burscoe*, of Stapeley, in Wybunbury churchyard.

- “1737. May 15th. Mary Ickin, a Pauper, kill'd by the Market house falling in this Town, the 14th, buried the 15th.”  
 “ „ „ 16th. Patient, Daughter of Jane Smith, kill'd at the same time and place.”  
 “ „ „ Catherine, Wife of Thos. fletcher, Taylor, kill'd at the same time and place, And Sarah Hewitt Wid.”  
 “ „ „ James Burscoe, of Stapeley, yeoman, kill'd by the fall of the Market House in Namptwich where many more lost their lives.”—(Wybunbury Burial Reg.)

This public Hall was rebuilt: but in no better manner than its predecessor; for, in or about the year 1759, “while the Justices were holding their Sessions, a sudden crash so greatly alarmed the court that in the hurry and confusion of getting down, many people, expecting the whole fabric to fall every moment, were much hurt.”—(Partridge’s *Hist. Nant.* p. 82-3). In consequence of these accidents and alarms, the Quarter Sessions were removed from Nantwich to Knutsford, in the year 1760, and the upper room was taken down, the lower part of the building being retained as the market place for those who attended with baskets of butter, eggs, poultry, and provisions. This Market Hall, which met with the requirements of the town until 1868, was a low building in the High Town, opposite Castle Street. Its roof was supported by brickwork on semicircular arches that rested on nine granite columns; the only ornament being a plume of feathers (the badge of the Prince of Wales) on the cornice above the central pillar on the south side.

“On June the 8th 1737, between 5 & 6 o'clock in the afternoon, a dreadful fire broke out in the salt-house going over y<sup>e</sup> bridge, which was burnt down to the ground with 5 more houses: the fire was so fierce, and the wind so high, that the wind blew up y<sup>e</sup> sparks on the other side the street, but by the great number of hands, and by the having water so near at hand, and in such great plenty, by constantly pouring the water on the houses they prevented its spreading, tho' the damage done is very considerable.”\*

\* From Steel’s Collections for Cheshire, c. 1750-60.—(*Gough Coll. Bodl. Lib.*)



A meeting, called by the Churchwardens and Constables, was held in the Parish Church on the 17th July, 1737, when it was agreed by the gentlemen and freeholders of the town, "that the Churchwardens & Constables should erect an Engine House at the end of Mr. Cappur's [the Lamb Inn] Stable; viz. the end next the Church Yard, and to purchase an Engine and other implements proper for extinguishing of fire." A rate was levied for the purpose on 28th August; but it was not until 1740 that an Engine was purchased; and not until the 9th Nov. 1746, that "it was agreed to buy 2 doz. Leather buckets for extinguishing fires at 5s. 6d. a piece, plain without painting."—(Town Vestry Book).

This Engine-house, which stood opposite the Rectory, was taken down in 1853, when Lord Crewe built another in Pillory Street, nearly opposite the "Gaul-house," on land given by the Marquis of Cholmondeley; and that, too, was taken down when the present Engine-house in Market Street was built in 1869.

On page 202 mention is made of a person being drowned in the *Town Well* in 1651; and for many years after that date the inhabitants obtained their supply from *open draw-wells* in various streets of the town. In the "*Town Book*" it is recorded that—

"At a Vestry held at the "George," the 3rd Feb. 1737-8, It was agreed that the *Draw well in Hospital Street* should have a pump fixed in it; and the pump in the *Beam Street* should be repaired; and likewise the pump in the *Pillory Street* be repaired at the Town Charge by the present Constables, Thomas Massie & Joseph Onions."

"At a Vestry in the Parish Church held 11th [?] March 1752, It was agreed that *the Well in the Welsh Row, which has some time since had a pump put into it*, shall be repaired now and henceforward at the charge of the Town; and the expense of putting the said pump down shall be likewise paid by the Constables of the said Town."

Alterations in the Churchyard of a very permanent character were made by order of the Vestry in 1738 and 1739, as appears by the following minutes:—

"At a Vestry held at the Crown and Sceptre, [now called The Crown Hotel] on the 28th Sept. 1738 it was agreed that Jos. Jackson, and Richd. Cartwright Church-wardens make a pavement from the Turnstile leading to the Market House to the West Door of the Church; like that from the Iron Gates leading into Pepper Street to the West Door. Also, the Churchyard to be raised and levelled where necessary."

"At a Vestry on the 8th June 1739, Richd. Cartwright and Samuel Higgenson, Churchwardens," were ordered to "erect Piers and Iron Gates at the end of the Church Lane, entering the Church Yard."—(*Town Vestry Book*).

To remedy evils in the management of public business by the Town Officers, *new Rules and Orders* were drawn up and signed by the following leading Gentlemen on the 25th Nov. 1734; but it was not until the 4th Jan. 1738-9, after much opposition, that the Rules in an amended form, (here given) were finally agreed to. The list of names is as follows:—

ROGER WILBRAHAM ESQ.	GEO. AUDLEY.	RICHARD CHURCH.
WM. MAISTERSON ESQ. J.P.	THO. WICKSTED.	HENRY HAYES.
EDWARD WETTENHALL ESQ.	THO. MARSHALL.	STEPHEN HASSALL.
JOHN WICKSTED.	THO. WILLIAMS.	THOMAS SWETTNAM.
JOHN MASEREY.	A. WOODWORTH.	JOHN MASTERSON.
CLUTTON WRIGHT.	THOMAS READE.	JOHN JOHNSON.

## TOWN RULES AND ORDERS. 1738.

*Officers in General.*

"I. That no Person shall upon pretence of serving any Office within the Town & parish aforesaid retain or deduct his proportion of any public tax, it being a Duty which the Law binds upon him when thereunto nominated and elected."

"II. That no Levy for the said Town or parish shall be granted at any meeting Unless three at least of the Freeholders in the said Town or parish shall be present thereat: Nor any bargain made for any publick work above the Rate of twenty shillings unless notice be given in the Church, and such a Meeting be held as aforesaid."

"III. That all officers receiving any Books for the collecting any tax shall at the Expiration of their Office deliver up their Books, and charge themselves with the whole Assessment and return A Schedule of the names of all such persons as refuse or neglect to pay, and the reason why such could not be collected that further proceedings may be had thereon as the case requires."

"IV. That no Beverage shall be given by any Officer of this Town or parish, or allowed upon his Account in any publick work whatsoever."

*Church-wardens.*

"That no further sum than two pounds ten shillings be charged or allowed for their expences at the Visitations: that they allow no more than 8s. per Diem to the Ringers, nor expend any greater sum than 2s. of the Parish money for the refreshment of any Strange Minister."

*Constables.*

I. "That they expend none of the Town's money on Days, or pretended Days of publick Rejoycing, but on Days hereafter named; and then only 10s. each day; To witt:

The 20th Day of January, being the Prince of Wales' Birthday;

The 29th Day of May, the Restoration;

The 11th Day of June, his Majesty's [Geo. II.] Accession;

The 30th Day October, his Majesty's Birth-day;

The 5th Day of November, the Deliverance from the Papist Plott."

II. "That they give none of the Town's Money to those that come with permitt passes, or those Men that carry the Hallberds [Halberds] at Fairs."

III. "That they pay to each Constable on the other Libertys in Town 2s. for Serving the Office and such sums as they shall pay down and expend in Repairs of their Stocks, and other Necessary Disbursements [*sic*] and expence, in the Execution of their Office, and shall be allowed the same in their Accompts."

*Overseers of the Poor.*

"That the Overseers appear the first Monday in every Month by ten a clock at the Poor-House, and there give in their Accompts and take Directions how to proceed in their Distributions."

Eight years after, on the 29th Jan. 1746, it was decided that the following gentlemen "compose the Monthly Vestry for the Managem<sup>t</sup> of the Publick Business of the s<sup>d</sup> Township of Nantwich; to meet at the schoolhouse [in the Church-yard] at Eleven o'clock in the forenoon upon the first Monday in every Month, to enquire into the Proceedings of the respective officers of the s<sup>d</sup> Township, & the Publick Business thereof, And to give such Orders and Directions relating thereto as shall be found necessary for the benefit and Advantage of the Inhabitants."

ROGER WILBRAHAM ESQ.	MR. THOMAS PRATCHITT	MR. THOS. MASSIE
THOMAS MAISTERSON ESQ.	MR. AND <sup>rw</sup> . WOODWORTH	MR. JOSEPH SKERRETT
EDWARD WETENHALL ESQ.	MR. RICHARD YOXALL	MR. ROBERT TAYLOR
MR. WM WATKISS	MR. THOS: YOXALL	MR. HENRY HAYES
MR. [GEO:] AUDLEY the elder	MR. JOHN OULTON	MR. TOMKINSON
MR. JONATHAN HALL	MR. THOMAS WALLEY	MR. AUDLEY the younger
MR. THOMAS WICKSTED	MR. RICH <sup>d</sup> . CHURCH	MR. GEO: GIBBONS
MR. RICHARD LEVERSAGE	MR. WM. COOKE	MR. JOSEPH ONIONS

This Committee of local legislators was annually re-elected. On the 28th May, 1746, they exempted *John Dawson* from holding any Town Office, on the condition of his "paying to the Overseers of the Poor the sum of 8 guineas to be employed in putting out 2 or more boys to be apprentices;" and on 27th Nov. 1748 *Mr. Plant Maddocks*, a lawyer, claimed similar exemption on the payment of 10 guineas to be employed for the use of the Town."

Serious robberies in the town, probably, made it necessary for the Vestry to pass the following "Order relating to Thieves," on March 26th, 1744.

"That every Inhabitant of the said Town receiving stolen goods knowingly or who shall at any time hereafter take in any Inmate and Harbour or wilfully permit or suffer any Thief, Robber, Pickpocket, Rogue, Vagrant Vagabond or Sturdy Beggar to lodge in his, her or their dwelling-house, cottage, barn, stable or other out-building within the said Town contrary to the Laws in being, or any of them, then every Inhabitant so offending shall for every such offence or misdemeanour be prosecuted at the Publick charge of the said Parish. And that the Constables shall carry on such Prosecution &c. with the utmost Rigour and be allowed in their accounts all reasonable charges and expences thereof."

At the same meeting the following resolution was entered:—

"It appearing that the present *Beadle* of the Town, *John Shuffelbotham*, hath not only been remiss and negligent in the execution of his Office, but hath absolutely refused to execute the same when thereunto required, It was therefore agreed and ordered that he be, and accordingly he is, discharged from the said office, And that *Henry Buckley* shall succeed him and enter upon the said office immediately and that the *Constables* of the said Town shall pay him the usual salary as hath been heretofore allowed for executing the same."—(*Town Vestry Book*).

Another extract is here given from the same book relating to the *Town Constables*.

"At a Vestry held at the Poor House [in Queen Street] on the 10 Feb. 1747-8, it is agreed, That for the future the 13s. 4d. a piece usually paid to the Constables of the Barons Fee, & the 2s. a piece usually paid to the sub-Constables of particular districts within the township of Nantwich, for the serving their offices, shall not be paid or allowed (it being deemed their Duty to serve their offices *gratis*.)

And that there shall be nothing allowed for *Bonafires* for the future upon any Account.

And it is likewise agreed that the <sup>s</sup>d Constables from henceforth shall not have any Lay [Rate] Granted them; but shall be reimbursed their reasonable charges by the Overseers of the Poor for the time being at their Quarterly payments."

Two centenarians, who were brothers, died in this town in February 1748, as noticed in Steel's MS. Collections for Cheshire, c. 1750-60.\*

"In February 1747-8 died at Nantwich two brothers of the name of Stockton, the one in the 102nd and the other (who left a buxome young widow) in the 101st year of his age."

\* This MS. is preserved amongst the Gough MSS. in the Bodleian Library.

One of them was buried at Acton, and the other at Wyburnbury: the burial at the latter place, however, is not recorded; but both are mentioned, with slight differences as to age, in the Acton Register, which, within nine months after, has another remarkable entry, here given:—

"1747 [-8] Edward Stockton of Hurleston (was aged) 105 buried 16th Feb.

His brother buried at Wyburnbury the same week, aged 103."

"Mr. Davis, Denbigh, a passenger from London died in the Stage Waggon by Darfold Gates. Buried Nov. 6th 1748."

About the middle of the eighteenth century this country was visited by a *Cattle Plague*, which called forth the attention of Parliament. By the Act, 20 Geo. II. c. 5 [1746-7] entitled, "An Act to enable his Majesty to make rules, orders, and regulations more effectually to prevent the spreading of the distemper which now rages among the horned cattle in this kingdom"; it is provided that the regulations therein contained be read in all Churches after prayers on the first Sunday after their receipt, and every month while in force. The plague was of long continuance and widespread. It was enacted that after May 1750, no beasts should be sold unless with an attested copy of a certificate from a Justice of Peace, proving that such beasts had already been in possession of the owner for at least fifty days; failing to comply with that restriction, the seller was subjected to a penalty of £10. All Cattle Fairs were prohibited being held at Chester, by order dated 18th June 1750, until further notice. The distemper was particularly fatal in Barthomley, Wyburnbury, and other parishes in this neighbourhood in the months of January, March, and April, 1749; and in the Spring months of 1751 and 1752.\*

Under date the 9th Dec. 1753, the *Town Book* says it was agreed "That the Room on the north side of the Chancell shall be forthwith fitted up in a proper manner as a Vestry Room for the use of the Parish." It was customary then for Parish business to be conducted in the Church after the Sunday morning service; or more frequently at one of the principal ale-houses in the town. Partridge has the following remark on Vestry meetings, which may here be quoted. "After a long time lying neglected, it [the Vestry] was put into decent repair; [probably in 1753 as above stated] the mutability of time, however, has occasioned it to be again neglected and disused; at present [in 1774] the parochial business commonly transacted at Vestry Meetings is done at the north end of the broad ile."† [*i.e.* in the Lady Chapel].

A Church Rate was granted by the Vestry on 27th March, 1757, of a "whole old Rent," to defray the Churchwardens' (John Walker and Richard Taylor) "Charges and and Disbursements hitherto expended, & also towards enabling them to *rebuild the Battlements & repair the Breaches lately made in the North side of the Church.*"—(Town Book.) This damage was the result of a violent storm, which did still greater injury to Acton Church, as recorded in the Register there:—

"*Memorandum.* On Tuesday March 15th 1757.

Abt noon, the upper Part of the Steeple, was by the excessive violence of the Wind or Tempest, suddenly blown down, & falling upon ye roof of ye Church broke it entirely, and destroyed most of the Pews and a Gallery erected therein at the West End.

\* See Hinchliffe's "*History of Barthomley*," p. 351.

† Partridge's *History of Nantwich*, p. 25. The Vestry has again been used for Town's Meetings during the present century; but all parish business has for some years been conducted at the Church House opposite the Rectory.

The estimate of damage given in  
 To obtain a Brief was 1,160 & upwards  
 but exceeded by £ 600 at least

1,760 pounds.

Height of New Tower from Church Flagg Floor to the highest part of Battlement, 28 yards  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches."

Parish Books frequently give curious information concerning the management of the pauper class and the law of settlement in the eighteenth century. Overseers were diligently to enquire what persons in the parish had not gained a legal settlement, and who were liable by law to be removed to their own parishes; and to remove them. All Overseers being remiss in their official duties, might be prosecuted at the public charge. The Town Book records:—

"At a Vestry held in the Parish Church of Nantwich upon Sunday the 2nd Oct. 1757 it is unanimously agreed, That the present Overseers of the Poor of the Township of Nantwich, *William Sprout* and *John Eaton*, shall forthwith make a full enquiry into the measures taken by *John ffenna* & several other Inhabitants of the township of Wardle in procuring a marriage to be solemnized between *Thomas Cleas*, a poor Almesman, in the township of Nantwich, & *Ann Bickerton*, otherwise *Gilbert*, a pauper, belonging to the s<sup>d</sup> township of Wardle. And which said Marriage has been represented to have been unduly accomplished by the s<sup>d</sup> *John ffenna* &c. in order to gain the s<sup>d</sup> *Ann* a Settlem<sup>t</sup> in the s<sup>d</sup> township of Nantwich & to charge the Inhabitants of the s<sup>d</sup> township of Nantwich with her maintenance. And it is further agreed & ordered, That the s<sup>d</sup> *William Sprout* & *John Eaton* as Overseers, shall apply for an Information against the persons who shall appear to have been concerned in procuring such undue marriage & take such other methods & proceedings as they shall be advised in order to punish the offenders & to obtain a suitable satisfaction."

On the 23rd March, 1759, a cheesefactor named *John Stevenson*, of *Bickerton*, co. Chester, was committed to Chester Castle for shooting *Mr. Francis Elcock*, Attorney-at-law, of Nantwich. The affair was as follows:—*Stevenson*, being apprehensive of an arrest from some of his creditors, shut himself up at home, and to deter anyone from attempting to seize him, kept fire-arms by him. Nevertheless, a person, who had but one arm, got admittance by stratagem, and served him with a writ; but as soon as *Stevenson* knew the business, he took up a pistol, and presenting it, the bailiff ran out of the room. *Mr. Elcock* then went to the house; and threatened to burst open the door. *Stevenson* thereupon fired through the door, and wounded *Mr. Elcock* so terribly that he died the next day.\* This led to a very remarkable trial, lasting several hours, on Friday, the 27th April, 1759, at Chester Assizes. The Jury found the fact as laid in the indictment; but brought in their verdict *special* in regard to the legality of the arrest; the Sheriff having, according to custom, signed his warrant for the apprehension of *Stevenson*, leaving a blank therein for the names of the special bailiffs, which were afterwards (but *before the arrest*) inserted by *Mr. . . . Elcock*, a relative of the deceased, one of whom arrested the said *Stevenson*. This special point of law was argued before the Honble. Justice *Noel*, and *Taylor White*, Esq., Justices of Chester; who took time to deliver their opinion. Justice *Noel* then, in a learned and pathetic speech, supported by adjudged cases, declared

\* Acton Parish Register thus records his burial:—

"1759. March 24. Francis Elcock, killed by Stevenson a Bankrupt Cheese Factor [in] Cholmondeley."

his opinion, that the prisoner's crime, found by the special verdict, could amount at most to Manslaughter only; whereupon the prisoner was burnt in the hand, and discharged from the indictment for murder.\*

1760. The Court of Quarter Sessions, which had from time immemorial been held about Midsummer, was removed to Knutsford, as before mentioned.

"On Thursday 18 Sept. 1760, a foot-match between a gentleman of Cheshire and a gentleman of Staffordshire, 200 yards for 200 guineas, was decided on Beam Heath, when Cheshire proved victorious."†

"1764. Oct. 18. Benjamin Bourne, exciseman, [buried] who first cut his throat and afterwards fell into a pitt and was drowned. The Coroner's Inquest brought in their verdict Lunacy."—(*Parish Register*).

"1765. Sep. 30th. At Namptwich, Mr. Samuel Jackson, had this year, a crop of oats, of about 8 statute acres, which were 6 feet high and upwards. It is supposed, that almost every grain produced 11 or 12 stems, and that most of the stems produced about 280 grains, the razoms or ears being covered 18 inches long; and though it is common for one chaff to contain two grains, it is very remarkable that, in this crop, one chaff frequently contained three, the least of which had a good kernel in it. Upon threshing and winnowing a thrave or 24 sheaves, the produce was 7 measures [each of 45 or 50lbs.] of fine marketable corn, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a measure of light corn, 36 quarts to the measure. The above were Dutch Oats, and had been sown but once in this kingdom."‡

In the same year, 22nd Oct., a Faculty was granted by Bishop Peplow to William Watkis, gent., of Welsh Row, Nantwich, to build a second North Gallery, eastward, in Nantwich Church.§

1765. No Burials are recorded for the month of March, a wide space being left in the Register to indicate that fact. The following year, however, was one of great mortality in the spring and summer months. The total number of burials in 1765 was 71; in 1766, the numbers were as follows:—

Jan.— 9	April—20	July—40	Oct.— 7	} .. 203 Total.
Feb.— 7	May— 37	Aug.—13	Nov.—5	
March—12	June—31	Sep.—19	Dec.— 3	

In 1767 the *House of Correction and Workhouse*, at Beam Street end, were converted into seven Almshouses by John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq. The first Workhouse or *Poor-House*, under the Act 9 Geo. I c. 7 [1723], which enabled Overseers to purchase or hire a house or houses to lodge the poor, had been provided prior to 1748, by appropriating several houses in Queen Street for that purpose. Heretofore the poor had received town relief at their own homes; but, now, the pauper class must inhabit the building set apart for them. This Poor-house fulfilled the wants of the town until 1780, when a new *Poor-House* or *Workhouse* was built on the Barony. (See next page.)

\* This remarkable trial was privately printed with the following title:—"The Trial at large of John Stevenson, [&c.] at Chester Assizes, on Friday 27th April 1759 [&c.] Taken by Mr. Ralph Carter, of Nantwich. Printed for John Wilkie, at the Bible, St. Paul's Churchyard, price One Shilling."

† Newspaper Scrap Book in possession of J. P. Earwaker, Esq.

‡ *Annual Register* for 1765, p. 129; and *London Chron.* 1765, p. 256.

§ "*Chesh. Sheaf.*" Vol. II, No. 1351.

The earliest mentions of the parish poor-house in the Registers are:—

"1748. Oct. 21. Wm. Hindley, Governor of the Poor-House." [Buried].

"1755. Jan. 25. Sarah, dau. of John Kenyon, Governor of the Poor House." [Buried].

"1757. June 7. Eliz. Wareham, widow & pauper out of the Workhouse." [Buried].

The London "*Chronicle*" for 6th Oct. 1767 relates the following outrage by a lunatic at Nantwich.

"1767. Sep. 23. Saturday se'nnight a person of this town, being disordered in his senses, became so outrageous, that two neighbours were called in to give their assistance, who pursued him upstairs. Before they could catch him, he rushed into a chamber, and shut the door. Then they broke the door: when unhappily for one of them, his throat was cut by the madman, who, unknown to anyone had a razor in his hand, concealed in a handkerchief. He was at last secured. The wounded man languished till Monday, when he died."

Another minute in the Town Book, in the handwriting of the Rector, the Rev. John Smith, mentions projected alterations in the Church, that were most likely carried out.

"At a Vestry held this Day, 7th Jan. 1770, in the Parish Church of Nantwich, it is agreed that the Church Wardens shall (as soon as may be) lay before the Gentlemen of this Town estimates for erecting a New Door at the West End of the Church; & it is likewise agreed that the Rector of Nantwich, for the time being shall have the use of the new erected Pew, in place where the Old Clock stood in lieu of a Pew in the South Gallery now belonging to the Rectory, which Pew is to be disposed of for the Benefit of the Parishioners of the said Parish."

[Signed] JOHN SMITH, Rector.  
PLANT MADDOCKS.

WILLIAM WATKIS.  
WILLM. HENNETT.  
GEO. GARNETT.

G. AUDLEY.  
WM. GREENWOLLERS.

Tennis-ball playing in the Churchyard had resulted in so much damage to the Church windows, that coercive measures were taken by the Vestry in 1776 and 1777, not only to put a stop to "Ball-playing" but "to prevent Gaming of all sorts in the Churchyard, whereby much Profaneness and many Indecencies & evil consequences have arisen." Parish prosecutions of offenders, however, failed to prevent this desecration; and in the memory of people still living, the churchyard continued to be the public playground of the town. More effectual means were adopted about fifty years ago, when Mr. Foster, an ironmaster in South Staffordshire, and a native of this town, (see under ALVASTON, *postea*) enclosed the north side of the Churchyard with iron railings.

1779. April 6. The Rev. John Wesley preached in Barker Street Chapel, which had been hired for worship, by the first band of his followers in this town, two years before. He preached there a second time on the 17th May, 1781.—(Wesley's "*Journal*.")

The Chester and Nantwich Canal, which had been in course of construction from May 4th, 1771, was finished at a cost of £80,000, and opened in August 1779; but, unfortunately, was not brought into the town.

In 1779 and 1780 a new *Work-House* was erected on the Barony, on land given by the Marquis of Cholmondeley. Beside the sum of £450 from the funds of certain Charities, which was invested for its erection, the following local gentlemen and tradesmen were shareholders.

SIR ROBERT SALUSBURY COTTON, Bart. of Combermere.	WILLIAM SPROUT Junr. [ <i>Linen Draper</i> ]
GEORGE WILBRAHAM, Esq. of Delamere.	JOSEPH SKERRETT [ <i>Upholsterer &amp; Auctioneer</i> ]
JAMES TOMKINSON Junr.	THOMAS JACKSON
WILLIAM YOXALL [ <i>Attorney</i> ]	WILLIAM WATKISS [ <i>Attorney</i> ]
GEORGE GARNETT [ <i>Cheesefactor</i> ]	HENRY TOMKINSON [ <i>Attorney</i> ]
RICHARD WICKSTED [ <i>Surgeon</i> ]	ROBERT TAYLOR [ <i>Tanner</i> ]
GEORGE CAPPUR [ <i>Cheesefactor</i> ]	CHARLES BATE [ <i>Attorney</i> ]
JAMES CALDWALL [ <i>Linendrapery</i> ]	BENJAMIN HEWITT 4 shares [ <i>Shoe manufacturer, afterwards a Banker</i> ]
WILLIAM PHILLIPS [ <i>of the King's Arms Inn, High Street</i> ]	ROBERT TAYLOR [ <i>Junr. Tanner</i> ]
GEORGE PAYNE [ <i>Gent. of Hospital Street</i> ]	SAMUEL HODGSON 2 shares [ <i>Wine Merchant</i> ]
WILLIAM FOSTER [ <i>Mercer ?</i> ]	JOHN TOMLINSON
JOHN EDDOWES [ <i>Grocer</i> ]	[Rev.] JOHN KENT [ <i>Grammar Schoolmaster</i> ]
JOSEPH JACKSON [ <i>Malster</i> ]	PETER BAYLEY [ <i>Attorney</i> ]
CHARLES GIBBONS [ <i>Attorney</i> ]	RICHARD LEVERSAGE 2 shares [ <i>Ironmonger</i> ]
THOMAS MASSIE 2 shares [ <i>Chandler</i> ]	JAMES FOSTER [ <i>Stay maker</i> ]
	SAMUEL BARROW [Esq. J.P.]*

The New Work-house was opened in June, 1780, the Governor being Mr. Charles Shrimpton;† and the first burial of an inmate, recorded in the Parish Register in red ink, is as follows:—

“1781. Sept. 25. *William Pemberton, The first Interd. from the new Poor-house.*”

John Howard, the Philanthropist, in his “*Accounts of Lazaratos*” &c. (pub. 1789, p. 209) gives an interesting report of the Debtor's Prison, Town Gaol, and Workhouse, on his visit to Nantwich, Aug. 1st, 1788.

“*Nantwich Prison for Debtors.* No alteration. 1788 Aug. 1. No prisoners.

“*Nantwich Town Gaol.* No alteration. The two damp dungeons still used.

No allowance 1788 Aug. 1 Prisoners 2.”

“The *Work-house* at Nantwich was erected in 1779, on the common, and about 11½ acres of land enclosed, for which 2/6 a year is paid to the lord of the manor. The house is visited weekly by the gentlemen of the town in rotation. It was clean, and great attention seems to be paid to the inhabitants. The rooms are too low, and the upper parts of the windows too far from the ceilings. Five shillings a month is allowed for *tobacco and snuff*, yet the use of *tea*, though purchased with their own money, is ordered to be punished by confinement in the dungeon. Aug. 1 1788 there were eleven men, sixteen women, ten boys, seven girls.” [Total, 44 persons].

Another story was added, and other alterations and additions were carried out by the first Board of Guardians, under the Poor Law Act that constituted it Nantwich Union Workhouse, 1835; and exactly one hundred years after its first erection, the very handsome “*Childrens' Home*” was built by Mr. Madeley, of Nantwich, from designs by J. A. Davenport, Esq., Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector, of Nantwich. On the 3rd April, 1881, according to the Census returns for that day, the population of the Workhouse was—142 males, and 80 females; total 222.

\* This list is taken from an Overseers' Book now in the possession of Mr. Johnson, Oat Market, Nantwich; to which I have added the trades and professions from Directories, printed in *Chester Guide* of 1782 and 1789.

† His Burial Register is as follows:—

“1806 April 4. Charles Shrimpton aged 81 Governor of the Poor-house.”



In 1780 George Wilbraham, Esq., of Townsend, built in the Welsh Row, and almost exactly opposite his residence (which he shortly after quitted) four parallel rows of wooden shops or stalls named the *York Buildings*,\* for the convenience of holding a Cloth Fair. For many years previous travelling cloth-merchants, linen-drapers, &c. had visited the town at the Great Fair, and at Christmas Rag Fair; their wares having heretofore been exposed on stalls in the streets. Mention is made of one of these merchants in the Baptism Register, thus:—

"1765. Feb. 28, Thos. son of Thos. Stubbs Rag Fair merchant."

The rents collected from the merchants for stallage on the 4th Sept. 1783, being the day of the third annual Cloth Fair, amounted to £34 15s. 9d., according to the accounts of Mr. Audley, agent for George Wilbraham, Esq., in a Memorandum Book now in the possession of W. Holland Blades, Esq., of Stapeley; from which the following extracts, giving some particulars of the cost of erecting York Buildings, and incidental entries of the prices of articles of food, wages, &c., now exactly a hundred years ago are taken.

	£	s.	d.
1783 Ap. 1. pd. for a Quire of paper .. .. .	..	..	..
" 5. pd. Ch. Wild for hanging Miss Reeves pew .. .. .	..	..	0 17 0
" 5. pd. for a Hind Qr. of Veal, 22 lbs. at 3d. .. .. .	..	..	0 5 6
" 5. pd. " Breast of Veal .. .. .	..	..	0 1 1
" 5. pd. " Small Round of Beef at 4½d.; Beef Stakes iid. .. .. .	..	..	0 5 3
" 5. Allowed in Mr. Penlingtons Bill for Polleys Hat from London .. .. .	..	..	1 6 0
" 5. pd. Mr. Wilbrahams Bill in full to Mr. Dutton for Locks, Hinges, Nails, &c. [for York Buildings] .. .. .	..	..	15 1 0
" 9. To inform Mr. Wilbraham respecting an encroachment of York Buildings Wall .. .. .			
" 9. To speak to Mr. Wilbraham about Buildg. a proper place for carrying on the Cotton Weaving Business .. .. .			
" 12. Recd. from Mr. Ratcliffe 2 yrs. and a half Rent for a Pew due 25th March last .. .. .	..	..	2 5 0
" 12. Recd. from Ch. Walker for 2 sittings .. .. .	..	..	0 3 0
" 12. Pd. Ch. Walker for his Cart 17 days and a half .. .. .	..	..	0 17 6
" 12. pd. for a Loyn of Veal, my own calf, 9 lb .. .. .	..	..	0 2 3
" 12. pd. for a Beef Stake .. .. .	..	..	0 0 3
" 12. pd. for a Qr. of Lamb for John 7 lb .. .. .	..	..	0 3 0
" 19. pd. Johnson Lime man, for a load of Lime had in Feb. last, weight 22 cwt. 1 qr. at 1s. 4d. per cwt. .. .. .	..	..	1 9 8
" 26. pd. Perrin for a Loyn of Veal at 2d. .. .. .	..	..	0 1 4
" 26. Mr. Fox a Bill for Mr. Wilbraham for Lead Gutters at York Buildings. .. .. .	..	..	5 10 4
" 26. pd. Wm. Parsons for 5 days .. .. .	..	..	0 5 0
" 26. pd. Sandbach Carrier for putting up paper &c. abt. the Fair in York Buildings .. .. .	..	..	[sum not given]
May 17. pd. Ch. Thos. 5 days for Mr. Wilbraham .. .. .	..	..	0 5 10
" 17. pd. Thos. Minshull Bricklayer, 5 days, 15s. 10d.; Grains 2d. .. .. .	..	..	0 16 0
" 17. pd. Stretles 1 Day Gardiner .. .. .	..	..	0 1 4
" 17. pd. Chimney Sweeper for sweeping house and Parlour Chimney .. .. .	..	..	0 0 9
" 17. pd. Ch. Thos. for 8 young Ducks & old one .. .. .	..	..	0 2 6
" 17. pd. John Weever for a Suit of Cloathes .. .. .	..	..	0 9 0
" 24. pd. Coman for Advertizmts. for York Buildings .. .. .	..	..	0 5 0
" 24. pd. for flour for Batch, at 12½lbs. for 1s. .. .. .	..	..	0 3 0
" 24. pd. for a couple of green geese .. .. .	..	..	0 2 0
June 14. pd. Qr. of Lamb 8½ lbs. at 4d. .. .. .	..	..	0 2 8
" 14. pd. Beef 8 lb. at 4d. .. .. .	..	..	0 2 8

\* On the site of York Buildings has since been erected the Primitive Methodist Chapel, in Welsh Row.

		£	s.	d.											
June 21.	pd. Almswimmin	£5	5s.	od.	..	..	6	15	0						
..	21. pd. Mr. Pass for a pr of Apple pots for Mr. Wilbraham	..	..	..	..	..	0	11	9						
..	21. pd. for my own Calves head, Feet, liver &c.	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	0						
..	21. pd. for Qr. of Calf for Mr. Wilbraham	36	lbs.	at 3½d.	..	..	0	10	6						
..	21. pd. Mulliner for a load of Malt	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	0						
..	28. pd. peas ½ a peck, 6d., potatoes 3 lbs. at 1½d.	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	10½						
..	28. pd. Magee, his Ballance for Slates at York Buildings	..	..	..	..	..	6	0	0						
July 12.	pd. Lightfoot for a Stone Cistern	7s.	od.	; a Harthstone	1s.	..	0	8	0						
..	26. pd. Leg of Mutton from Shenton	7	lbs.	..	..	..	0	2	4						
..	26. Oak troughs: Iron work to Do. for two Center Roofs for York Buildings	12	9	0	..	..	..	..	..						
..	26. 2 pair Gates of Dressing Posts	..	..	..	..	..	3	13	4						
..	26. Joiner for making 10 doz. of Tressels	..	..	..	..	..	1	0	0						
Aug. 9.	pd. Beef	11	lbs.	3s.	od.	; Veal	25	lbs.	at 3¼d., 6s.	9d.	..	..	0	9	9
..	9. pd. Jno. Blakeman, Sawyer, for Sawing 1 day and ¾ at 1s. 4d.	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	4						

1781. July 8. Dr. William Wrench, Surgeon, of Nantwich,\* restored a boy who had been drowned in the Canal. For his successful treatment he was presented with a silver medal by the Royal Humane Society, which had been established only a few years before. The medal is now in the possession of W. Holland Blades, Esq., and represents—  
*Reverse*.—*A wreath*; within, this inscription: “Dr. Wm. Wrench restored G: Farrington July 8, 1781:” round the edge, “*Hoc pretium sive servato tulit*” (*i.e.* He has obtained this reward for saving the life of a citizen).

*Obverse*.—The motto, “*Lateat scintillula forsan*” (*i.e.* perhaps, a little spark may yet lie hid); the figure of a naked boy blowing the spark of a torch into a flame. “*Soc: Lond: in resucitat: inter mortuorum instit: MDCCLXXIV.*” (*i.e.* Society established in London for the recovery of those in a state of suspended animation. 1774).

1786. The following remarkable instances of mortality in one family within a week, occurred at Nantwich:—“On the 23 Aug. died Mrs. [Hannah] Maddocks [*née* Hassall] relict of the late Mr. Plant Maddocks. On the following day died Mr. John Hassall [Joiner] brother to the above lady. And on the 27th (only three days after) died Mrs. [Elizabeth] Hassall, relict of the said Mr. John Hassall.” The Parish Register corroborates the above Newspaper extract; their burials following *seriatim*, on Aug. 29th, 30th, and Sept. 2nd.

1788. On Friday night, the 30th May[?], “One of the most dreadful thunderstorms ever remembered in England was felt at Chester, Frodsham, Nantwich, Stockport, and other parts of the County. This storm was, however, but of short duration, and went off with a plentiful shower of hailstones, as large as small gooseberries.” &c. (Newspaper extract).

\* Dr. William Wrench, who resided in a curious old house that stood on the site of the present District Bank, was the son of Richard Wrench, Surgeon, of Nantwich, who was descended from an old family of that name in Davenham Parish, Cheshire.

RICHARD WRENCH died at the age of 85, and was buried at Nantwich on the 27th Nov. 1806. He had married Elizabeth, widow of Mr. Richard Rockett, of Hough, *née* Birch, and grand-daughter of Stephen Wilbraham of Nantwich, on 28th Sept. 1750. She died at the age of 78, and was buried at Nantwich on 2nd Aug. 1800. Their issue was *William, John*, (who was an apothecary in Wybunbury parish, and married Margaret Oulton on 18th Oct. 1781) and two daughters, *Mary*, and *Ann*.

DR. WILLIAM WRENCH was baptized on the 14th July 1751 and was buried at Nantwich on the 13th July 1821. He was twice married; first to Ann, daughter of William Penlington, Esq., of Mill St., Nantwich, on 8th Feb. 1776, by whom he had two daughters, *Anne* and *Mary*; and secondly to Mary Harris of Hospital St., Nantwich on 20th Nov. 1785, by whom also he had two daughters, *Margaret*, and *Catherine*. Catherine Wrench was married on the 26th July. 1821 to Thos. Young of St. Pancras, Lieut. in the 33rd Regiment of Second Foot; whose daughter, Anne Wrench Young, the wife of W. Holland Blades, Esq., died on the 22nd March, 1879.

Among the *Additional Charters* in the British Museum is preserved a *Church Brief*, which describes the deplorable and ruinous state of Nantwich Church in 1789, as follows:

"A very ancient structure become so ruinous that the Inhabit<sup>ts</sup>. cannot with safety assemble therein to attend divine service, the whole Roofs of the Nave of the Church are in such a state of decay that they are prevented from falling only by transverse Beams of timber laid across the centre Isle over the Roof and principal Beams of the Roof, stayed to the transverse Beams by Bars of Iron to prevent the Roof from falling. That great part of the Walls and Battlements are fallen down and the other part in a state of great decay. The buttresses which support the side Walls, are from length of time much decayed, and have in part fallen down, and some other parts are very near in the same state, by which decay very considerable settlements appear in the quadrantal or supporting Arches of the side Isles. Part of the floors and covered ways and staircases of the Steeple is decayed and must inevitably be repaired at a great expence. The Stone Work of the Windows is so much decayed that some parts have fallen down, and others must be taken down and made new."

With the above report, an estimate for the necessary repairs by *Messrs James Cheney and Thomas Cartwright*, (two local builders), amounting to £1,283 12s. od. was presented by the inhabitants of the "*Parish and Chapelry of Nantwich*" at the General Quarter Sessions; where application was made for licence by King's Letters Patent for a *Brief* granting a collection throughout England, the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the counties of Flint, Denbigh, and Radnor, according to Act of Parliament 4 Queen Anne, for the purpose of restoring the Church; the inhabitants, as was stated, being unable to raise the required sum. The Brief is dated at Westminster, the 30th July 29 Geo. III. [1789]; and the following persons were appointed receivers of the Charity or Collection.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL OF CHOLMONDELEY	SAMUEL BARROW, ESQRE.
THE HON. WILBRAHAM TOLLEMACHE.	PETER WALTHALL, ESQRE.
SIR ROBERT SALUSBURY COTTON, Bart.	JAMES TOMKINSON, ESQRE.
SIR JOHN CHETWODE, Bart.	THOMAS WETTENHALL, ESQRE.
JOHN CREWE, ESQRE.	WILLIAM STEVENSON, GENT.
GEORGE WILBRAHAM, ESQRE.	WILLIAM HILDITCH, GENT.

And the Ministers and Churchwardens of the Parish.

The Roof was completed in the following month according to the following entry in Burial Register.

"1789. Aug. 26. *Thos. Gyles, grocer.* N.B. *The first corpse y<sup>t</sup> was bro<sup>t</sup>. for Interment under y<sup>e</sup> new Roof of y<sup>e</sup> Church."*

W. Cowdroy's "*Chester Guide*" for 1789, has the following interesting paragraph relating to Nantwich, on page 82.

"It is a pity, but that the same gentlemen and principal tradesmen who exerted themselves in erecting the work-house before mentioned for the relief and comfort of the poor, and who have this year also set on foot a liberal subscription for a new roof, on the nave or body of their antient and venerable Church, . . . would once more immortalize themselves, for the credit of the town, and the health of the inhabitants, by removing the *slaughter-houses* and *shambles* from their present situation, being now a *real nuisance* in the centre of the town. If the slaughter-houses were situated below the bridge, and the spot of ground, called *Snow-hill*, was allotted and formed into a square, sufficient to contain the Shambles, fish-market and green market, there would be more convenience, as well as decency. These reforms would greatly contribute to the purity of the air, and healthfulness of the people; for bad air is next to bad water, a frequent cause of sickness, particularly of the putrid kind."

Following this suggestion, a Company was formed called the "*Union Society*," and new shambles were built, as told in Adam's "*Weekly Courant*" for Tuesday, 17th Jan. 1792.

"The new shambles, upon a quadrangular plan, surrounded with covered passages for purchasers, erected near the Corn-Market in Nantwich, was opened on Saturday last [Jan. 14th] and very justly met with the commendation of the magistrates, and the inhabitants of that town. This very laudable undertaking has been carried out at the expense of the Union Society in Nantwich, and there is no doubt but the tenants of those sale shops will meet with every encouragement from the inhabitants and neighbouring gentry, as this improvement will cause the long-accustomed nuisances of having butchers' standings and benches in the open streets to be removed."

"At Nantwich market on Saturday [Jan. 14] the average price of wheat was 5s. 0½d., barley 3s. 10½d., and oats 2s. 8¾d. per bushel Winchester measure."

The "*Union Inn*," built by the same "Society," in the summer of the same year, was advertised as "A Large, new, handsome, Sashed House, three stories high, cellared under, with gateway, &c., very advantageously situated in the centre of the High Town, and near the new erected Shambles, to be Let; very suitable for a public house;"—(Chest. Chronicle for 7 Sept. 1792). It was first tenanted by *Mr. John Lightfoot*, and soon became a busy Coaching House; but neither the enterprise of the Union Society nor the newspaper article could persuade the butchers to use the new Shambles. They even continued to stand in the streets for some time after the opening of the *New Market Hall* in 1868; and as foot-pavements were then unknown in the town, people had to jostle their way through the crowd, on market and fair days, with great inconvenience, and often not without danger from cattle, and other varieties of street locomotion. The butchers, however, were at last shamed out of their opposition and prejudice, and the "*long-accustomed nuisance*" ceased about seventy-seven years after the erection of the *Shambles*, which were, consequently, used for another purpose, and acquired another name. About 1782 *George Wilbraham, Esq.* left the town, and subsequently disposed of most of his Nantwich property; and so the Cloth fair was removed to the "*Shambles*" in the Union Inn yard. Many years after, an upper row of shops with a gallery was added for their accommodation, and ever since they have borne the name of "*Yorkshire Buildings*." The annual cloth fair at Christmas time, which usually lasted about six weeks until the "*New Market*,"\* continued to be a busy scene until about the year 1840, when these travelling tradesmen ceased to visit this and other towns in the county; a change that was gradually brought about by a variety of circumstances. Resident tradesmen, some of whom came originally as travelling tradesmen, and had settled here, began to regard the cloth fair at the busiest time of the year, with jealousy and envy. Country servants, and the poorer inhabitants of the town, who had been the chief purchasers at the cloth fair, began to improve the style of their dress, and smock frocks, linsey petticoats, and cheap shoddy were in less demand; and as they received advanced wages payable at different times, and not all at Christmas as heretofore, farm servants were better enabled to do business with the tradesmen of the town.

It is not my intention to attempt an exhaustive account of the changes and improvements that have taken place in this country town during the present century. To do so

\* *i.e.* On the Saturday after Candlemas Day, (Feb. 2.)

would extend these annals to a wearisome length. Still it will be necessary to allude to some of the principal changes, and chronicle a few events of local interest, taken from the Parish Registers, old newspapers, Directories, and Guide Books, and from what the poet Wordsworth has called "*oral records.*"

The transmission of goods along the main road between Chester and London, was formerly effected by *Wakeman's Waggon*, with wheels nearly a yard broad, and drawn by a team of nine horses: a fact very suggestive of the then bad state of the turnpike roads. *Mail-Coaches*, and vehicles that were dignified by the name of "*Machines,*" also regularly passed through the town. Two Chester Guide Books, dated 1782 and 1789, give the following information:—

1782. "The London Post comes in [to Chester] by the *Nantwich* Road, early on Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday mornings; goes out on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, at half past eleven in the morning."

1782. "The London Post comes in [to Chester] by the *Nantwich* Road, early on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings; goes out on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, at ten at night."

1782. "The *Machines* go [from Chester to London] by the *Nantwich* Road, in Summer time, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights, and perform in two days. *Fare*, £1 11s. 6d. In Winter time on Monday and Thursday nights, and perform in two days and a half. *Fare*, £1 11s. 6d."

1789. "The New and Elegant [Coach] Royal Chester, in 36 hours, by way of *Nantwich*, Lichfield and Northampton, to London; every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings at seven. *Fare*, inside, £2 2s. od.; outside, £1 1s. od."

1789. "The London Waggons go out from Mr. Wakeman's, the Wool-hall, Northgate Street, [Chester] every Wednesday and Friday mornings, at four o'clock, and Saturday evening at six: return Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, at noon. Perform in six days."

Some years after two coaches commenced running from Nantwich to Manchester on alternate days, the fare being eight shillings; the shoemakers, who could not afford to pay for this luxury, either sent their parcels of shoes by the Carrier's cart, or carried them on their backs as they travelled on foot to attend Shudehill market.

In 1792, at the corner of Church Lane lived John Groucott, a *spinning-wheel maker*; employed by people in the town and neighbourhood who, for many years after that date, continued to wear home-spun apparel. Farmers came to market on their working horses with long fetlocks; their wives being commonly seated behind them on pillions; from which they alighted by means of the horse-block, then a necessary appendage to an inn.\*

Most of the cottages,—timbered houses with thatched roofs,—were inconveniently low; and were entered, generally, by descending one or two steps, to the ground floor, which was often laid below the level of the street. According to a Survey of the town in 1792, stables, barns, and maltkilns, stood in close juxta-position with dwelling houses, in the lines of the streets that branched from the centre of the town. A few shops in High Town were then mere open stalls, with hanging shutters; the rest had windows with small panes of glass; the dark and crowded interiors being very different from the orderly arrangement and ample dimensions of shops at the present time. There were then no decorated shop fronts, but over the door of a draper's establishment, for example,

\* A *horse-block* is represented in the illustration of the Wilbraham Almshouses, in Welsh Row.

would hang a linsey petticoat, or a smock frock, which, stretched on a pole passing through each sleeve, resembled very much a boat's square sail.

Of the principal houses in High Town, the one already mentioned as the "Griffin Inn," (p. 218) affords an interesting specimen. The old builders seem to have designed business houses much on the same plan as cottages; making the gable end to face the street; and carrying a great extent of premises behind,—room after room, with several staircases; thus rendering the inner rooms of these long, narrow houses somewhat dark and dismal.

At the "Crown" and "Lamb" Inns were kept post-boys and post-horses; but beside these necessary inns, were many ale-houses. Old people say, that from the west end of Beam Street, in a short distance, could once be counted no less than sixteen ale-houses! But if those days were merrier than now, they were certainly not more peaceable.

Sports and pastimes were of a noisy and rough character. Partridge alludes to a spirit of rivalry and strife, and perhaps animosity between the young people of the town who lived on opposite sides of the river. (*Hist. Nant.* p. 10). Many people now living remember the practice of bull-baiting at the Union, the Market Hall, opposite the Wilbraham's Arms, at Cartlake, or on the Barony. After the Griffin Inn was closed, the *Cock-pit*, for the convenience of the "royal sport," was removed to the Pigeons in Welsh Row; and was resorted to at Easter and Whitsuntide; the cock-breeders and trainers living in a dingy court, then called Bowker's Yard in Wall Lane. *Billy Boff* of Beam Street kept a badger and a bear, and frequented all the wakes and fairs in the neighbourhood; as also did *Thomas Hayes*, of Hospital Street, who, though a weaver by trade, was more celebrated as a *bag-race runner*.

Nantwich has long been famous as a sporting-town; and the probability is that if the following contest, (the account of which is taken from an old newspaper) had been generally known beforehand, the event would have been quite sufficient to have brought labour almost to a standstill; as, indeed, a coursing day, a pigeon race, or a trotting match has done in times more recent.

1800. "On the 6th March a singular and well contested race was run over Beam Heath, near Nantwich, between Mr. Barrowcliff, who rode his Welsh horse, "Punch," twice round the race-course, two miles, and Mr. Yardley, who ran on foot, with his hands tied on his back once round the course. The race was won by Mr. Barrowcliff beating Mr. Yardley not more than four yards, and was performed in 5 min. and 56 seconds. Mr. Barrowcliff is six feet two inches high, and his horse is 17 years of age; and only 13 hands one inch in height."

1801. Two notorious burglars, named *Clare* and *Gee*, who lived at Ravensmoor, near Nantwich, and who had committed several depredations in the town and neighbourhood, were apprehended and taken to the Gaol-House in Pillory Street, and afterwards to Chester, where they were convicted at the Spring Assizes; *Gee* (Clare's nephew) being transported for life, and *Clare*, condemned to be hanged with two other robbers, Thomson and Morgan, on Gallows-hill beside the river Dee, at Boughton. Just as the cart, which brought the three malefactors to execution, was being turned opposite the gallows, Clare gave a sudden spring, and by jumping and rolling reached the precipitous bank of the Dee, threw himself into the river, and sinking through the weight of his irons, was drowned. Jack Ketch was determined to fulfil his official duty; and the other criminals were kept in awful

suspense until the body of the drowned man was recovered. After the triple execution, as the bodies were conveyed to Chester Gaol for interment, attended by a noisy crowd, the cart was upset by its drunken driver opposite St. Michael's Church. This execution and its disgraceful scenes, being the last at Boughton, took place on 9th May, 1801.\*

"1802. March 16th & 17th. A main of cocks of 13 main and 12 bye-battles was fought at Nantwich, between Sir Robert Leighton and Sir Thomas Mostyn, Barts., which was won by the former, one ahead in the main; the byes were equal."†

In 1803 part of Beam Heath was enclosed pursuant to Act of Parliament (43 Geo. III cap. 123), and in opposition to a few persons who, at that time received the only benefit of Common right, and who excited the poor of the town to rebel. Fences were wilfully destroyed by them; and at last a body of soldiers was sent from Chester; and some of the rioters were captured, tried at Chester, and imprisoned.

Owing to the threatened and expected invasion of England by Buonaparte in 1803, great preparations were made for war; and here as elsewhere, every man between the ages of fifteen and sixty, was compelled to learn the use of arms. At Nantwich, Sunday was the day appointed for military drill; the exercise ground being a field near the Common, afterwards called *Volunteers' Field*; a name still existing in *Volunteers' Row*. Here

"Striplings, all in bright attire  
And graced with shining weapons, weekly marched  
From this [green] valley, to a central spot  
Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice  
Of the surrounding district, they might learn  
The rudiments of war."

The names of the officers of the Nantwich Volunteers, which was the largest company in the county at this time, Chester excepted, were as follows.‡

*Colonel*—John Crewe, Esq. of Crewe. 1st Dec. 1803.

*Major*—Robert Salusbury Cotton Bart. 5 Sep. 1803.

*Captains*—James Bayley, William Sprout, Thomas Garnet, Peter Bayley, William Harwood Folliott, James Tomkinson. 5 Sep. 1803.

*Lieutenants*—Benjamin Rodenhurst, Richard Leversage, John Pratchett, John Jasper Garnett, Peter Sprout, William Kent. 5 Sep. 1803.

*Ensign*—John Needham Cliff, William Sutton, William Martin, William Lowe, Robert Holland. 5 Sep. 1803.

*Adjutant*—Peter Wetenhall. 18 Oct. 1803.

*Quarter-Master*—John Pratchett.

*Surgeon*—William Kent.

Infantry. Six companies; 420 men.

Nantwich Volunteers were accustomed to "Camp out" at Newport, Salop. The Chester Chronicle of 22nd June, 1804 says:—

"Tuesday June 19th the Nantwich Loyal Volunteers marched into that town, on their return from Newport, where they have been on permanent service for 21 days."

\* Hemingway's *Hist. Chester*, vol. II, p. 297; and *Cheshire Sheaf*, vol. I, p. 198.

† Chesh. Sheaf, No. 1485. Cock-fighting was practised in Nantwich after the year 1825.

‡ Local Gleanings, 4to series, vol. II, p. 222.

During the Napoleonic wars, Ballotting Serjeants were busy at the "Crown Inn," where, sometimes, large sums (seventy or eighty guineas) were paid as redemption money for respectable men who were "drawn" to go for soldiers. Recruiting Serjeants also paraded the town on market-days, at fairs, races, &c., to the strains of drum and fife, enticing youths to enlist into His Majesty's Militia Force, their head-quarters being the "Star" Inn, (*now* "Royal Oak") in Beam Street; one room of which was long known as the *Soldiers' Parlour*, where many a country yokel was "trepanned," and afterwards suffered "the smart;" that is, he was cajoled into accepting the enlisting shilling; after which his freedom could only be purchased within four days, on payment of a guinea. The rendezvous of ballotted men this district was Chester, whence they were sent to Plymouth where the Militia recruits were under training, and thence to the Seat of War.

An amusing incident in connection with a soldier's wedding at Nantwich is thus told in the Chester "Chronicle," dated Friday, Dec. 7th, 1804.

"Monday last [Dec. 3] at Nantwich, Mr. Scholfield, sergeant of the Army of Reserve, to Miss Betty Hallwood [? Hollowood] of Beam Bridge. This marriage being against the consent of the lady's friends, the brother of the bride actually stript to fight the parson in the church for marrying them, who was obliged to procure constables to keep the peace during the nuptial ceremony; after which the bride was borne off in triumph by the bridegroom under one arm, and a corporal of the same regiment under the other, to the no small gratification of a large concourse of spectators."

In 1803 the present balustraded stone Bridge (now called the Welsh Bridge on the Government Survey Map) of one arch, was built by Mr. William Lightfoot, mason, of Snow-hill, in this town. The former stone bridge had existed 140 years. (See pp. 196 and 208).

1804. Nantwich Races were held this year on Wednesday and the two following days, the 11th, 12th and 13th of July.

1805. The following advertisement appeared in the Chester "Chronicle" of Friday, March 22nd, 1805

"The old customary *Salt-Ley* will be opened on Tuesday the 23rd of April next. Terms &c.  
 The ley of a horse for the first four weeks at 10s. 6d. per week ... .. £2 2s. 0d.  
 Ditto for the second four weeks from 21st of May at 8/- per week ... .. £1 12s. 0d.  
 Horses may continue for a month longer after the first ley, at eight shillings per week (with due notice).  
 Half-price to be paid when the leys are engaged, and the remainder before turning in.  
 The established credit of the Salt-ley makes it unnecessary to say more, than that the greatest care will be taken, and strict attention observed.

Apply to Edward Bellis, Salt-Ley, Nantwich, Cheshire.

Nantwich, 3d Month, 18th, 1805."

The "*Salt-Ley*," or "*Heating-horse Meadow*" is the field between Wall Lane and the River. Such were the properties of the grass, that it was commonly said horses were either killed or cured by eating it. The field was at last overstocked in the dry summer of 1826, and some of the horses, to use a homely phrase, were "*clemmed*;" and so, like the Quaker's dog, the field got a bad name, and has never since regained its former notoriety. Possibly the dry season may have killed some of the indigenous grasses in this once far-famed field.



1808. On Saturday, the 12th November, the firm of *Broughton, Sprout and Garnett* opened a new Bank, in High Town, in premises next to the Griffin Inn. Tokens issued there were thus inscribed:—

*Obv.* The Arms of the Town, surrounded by "NANTWICH TOKEN VALUE ONE SHILLING."  
*rev.* In the centre, "AT THE OLD BANK," surrounded by "ONE POUND NOTE FOR 20 TOKENS."—(Platt's *Nantwich*, p. 77).

Though called the *Old Bank*, it was not the *first* Bank in the town. Some years before, Benjamin Hewitt, a wealthy Shoe-merchant, had started one in Hospital Street at the house now occupied by S. H. Munro, Esq. M.D. Mr. Hewitt died aged sixty-four, on 8th Oct. 1808; and his bank, which was afterwards managed by his son, failed in Feb. 1816. The proprietors of the Bank in High Street were Charles Delves Broughton Esq., of Almington Hall, co. Staffordshire, William Sprout Esq.,\* of Nantwich, John Garnett Esq., of Nantwich, who took another partner, William Sutton Esq., a proprietor of salt-works at Lawton, who died at Shardlow, near Derby, aged eighty-five, in Feb. 1814. This bank failed, when there was a general commercial depression, on 13th Feb. 1826.

On Sunday, 13th Nov. 1808, the Wesleyan Chapel, which had been built at a cost of £3,300, was first opened; the services at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. being conducted by the Rev. John Gaulter, preacher, a native of Cheshire, who became president of the Wesleyan Conference in 1817.

On Wednesday, the 25th Oct. 1809 was celebrated with demonstrations of loyalty the jubilee of His Majesty King George III. In the evening of the same day a new Organ, built by Mr. Grey, of London, at a cost of £1000, (Platt's *Hist. Nantwich*, p. 31) and placed in a gallery under the tower of the Church, was first publicly played, and a selection of Sacred music performed, the soloists being "Miss Travis, Mr. Miller, Mr. Jones and Mr. Keefe." The Sermon was preached by the Rev. James Cotton, cousin to Lord Combermere.—(*Nantwich Parish Magazine*, Aug. 1875).

1810. James Boston, of this town, commenced running a Coach between Nantwich and Chester, once a week, leaving the "Three Pigeons" at Nantwich for the first time on 17th April, 1810, at 8 a.m.; and returning from "The Blossoms," Chester, on the following day at 3 p.m. (Chester "*Herald*.")

1811. A lawsuit relating to the Mills at Nantwich and Bartherton between Sir Thomas Broughton, of Doddington, Bart., and Messrs. Michael Bott & Co., after pending several years, and occupying two days in Court in 1810, was finally decided at Chester Assizes in Sept. 1811 in favor of Messrs. Bott & Co. (Chester "*Chronicle*" 13 Sep. 1811).

When corn and provisions were at famine prices, a public meeting to consider the propriety of petitioning Parliament against the proposed alteration in the laws relating to the importation of Corn, was held on 31st May, 1813; Michael Bott, Esq., being Chairman. The following resolutions, advocating Free Trade principles, were adopted:—

"1.—That a Bill, now before Parliament, is highly prejudicial to the interests of the Manufacturers of this Empire, & what is of the most vital importance, they cannot rival other markets, if the prices of the necessaries of life are not brought nearer to those of other countries.

\* A portrait in oil of Wm. Sprout may be seen at the Savings' Bank, in Welsh Row.

2.—That we think there is no necessity for any duty on importation to increase or regulate the price of corn, & therefore for the welfare of the Community at large, petitions ought to be presented to both Houses of Parliament praying that no duty be imposed on Corn & Grain, to be imported into this Country, but that as well the importation as the exportation of Corn, be free from any duty whatever.”

*Samuel Platt*, servant, killed by the wheel of a Wagon being drawn over his head in Nantwich. Buried 7 May 1813—  
(*Par. Reg.*)

*Thomas Gayter*, wheelwright, found suffocated and drowned in the water of a lime-pit, in Nantwich. Buried 6 June 1813.—(*Par. Reg.*)

On 17th May, 1814, SIR STAPLETON COTTON, the renowned hero of the Peninsular War, was raised to the Peerage, by the title of BARON COMBERMERE. The return of his lordship to Combermere Abbey was marked by great rejoicings in the neighbourhood. At Wrenbury, on the 29th May, four sheep were roasted on the village green, and three barrels of stout Cheshire ale provided for the feast, at which about two hundred sat down. His lordship was chaired and carried by four tenants, colours flying, and the band playing God save the King, amid loud huzzas. After the dance, in which his lordship led off with Miss Harding, the whole village in the evening, was illuminated; and thus ended that day of village festivities. On Wednesday, 20th July, Nantwich had its demonstration in honour of Lord Combermere, when a grand dinner was given at the Assembly Room, furnished by William Holyoak,\* of the Crown Inn. His Lordship, in the full dress of a Lieutenant General, decorated with military orders, was received by the gentlemen of the town at Newtown, and conducted to an “Antique triumphal Car,” adorned with ribbands and drawn by men. The procession, consisting of trumpeters, constables, and gentlemen on horseback, the Lodge of Freemasons (of which his Lordship had held the highest office), and members of different Clubs, passed through the principal streets, which everywhere displayed flags and festoons of evergreens. At the Market-Hall, in the centre of the town, the Freemasons having arranged themselves in a circle, Brother Fawcett (one of Mr. Stanton’s Company of Comedians) presented an address to his Lordship, who descended from the car, to express his appreciation of this honour. From thence, the procession moved under a triumphal arch of laurel, surmounted with a crown and G.R., to the entertainment provided at the Crown Inn. At night the whole town was illuminated; the west window of the Church was lit up with a transparency by Mr. Robertson, of Faith, Hope, and Charity; the houses of Messrs. Hewitt, (Banker); Berks, (Tanner); Broughton & Co.’s Bank; Bott & Co.’s Factory; Edleston, and Elwood’s Office, (Attorneys); Walton, (Auctioneer); Tomlinson; Washington Cliffe; Wrench, (Surgeon); Gardner, (Surgeon); Johnson, (Chemist); Owens, (The Lamb); Leversage, (Ironmonger); Cappur, (Cheesefactor); and Sprout, (Banker); were ornamented with various designs in variegated lamps, very fully described in the Chester “*Chronicle*,” 22nd July, which devotes an unusually large space to an account of this Thanksgiving-day at Nantwich; that was only surpassed by the remarkable reception accorded to Lords Combermere and Hill, on the 15th of August in the same year, at the ancient city of Chester.

\* William Holyoak afterwards became Governor of Nantwich Workhouse, and died in that office. A gravestone to his memory in the Churchyard, on the south side of the Church, is inscribed:—“Sacred | to the Memory | of | William Holyoak | who departed this Life | July 12, 1828, Aged 76 Years. | Also | Elizabeth Wife of | William Holyoak | who died November 15th 1830 | Aged 80 Years. |”

He was the uncle of George Jacob Holyoak, the free-thinker, a native of Birmingham, who for some years conducted a paper called “The Reasoner;” and is now (1883) living in London.

The year 1814 is generally memorable for the long continued "great frost" and heavy fall of snow, which broke up in the month of February, followed by a remarkably hot summer; the hottest days being from the 21st to the 28th of July, both inclusive.

"Edward Lowe, son of Willm. & Eliz. Lowe was killed by the overturning of a Coach, and buried 10 Aug. 1816. Aged 13."—(*Par. Reg.*)

On 27th Dec. 1820, the Duke of Wellington, being the guest of his friend and companion in arms Lord Combermere, passed through Nantwich, *en route* to Chester, where honour was done to the hero of Waterloo. (*Hemingway's Hist. Chester*, vol. II. p. 268-9).

In 1821 an Act of Parliament was obtained entitling householders in Nantwich to participate in the profits of Beam Heath.

The coronation-day of George IV, 19th July, 1821, was celebrated in this town with lively demonstrations of loyalty, as the yeomanry and volunteers, headed by bands of music, paraded the streets. (*Macclesfield and Cheshire Advertiser*, 28 July, 1821).

Joseph Sherratt, who was drowned in the Weaver on the 23rd December, 1821, at Shrewbridge, in attempting to guide the Salop Coach of Messrs. Farrar and Cooke, through a deep flood, was buried on 10th Feb. 1822; (*Par. Reg.*) his body having been in the river nearly seven weeks.

In 1824 was established the Nantwich Auxiliary of the Bible Society. It originated with several benevolent ladies who, for five years previous, had associated themselves for the purpose of disseminating copies of the Scriptures and Psalter. (First printed Report of the Society, dated 1825). The Twenty-ninth Report (dated 1853) records that to William Smith, Esq., of Stapely, "more than to any one individual, are to be ascribed the formation and continued prosperity of this Auxiliary, and several of its Branch Associations." The first list of officers was as follows:—

*President.*

Right Hon. Earl of Rocksavage [afterwards (1828) Marquis of Cholmondeley].

*Vice-Presidents.*

Rev. R. Hill, of Hough.	George Wilbraham Esq., of Delamere.
Rev. W. Garnett, of Tilston.	E. Davenport Esq., of Calveley.
Sir John Chetwode, Bart., of Oakley.	James Caldwell, Esq., of Lindley Wood.
John Harding, Esq., of Wrenbury.	Michael Bott, Esq., of Nantwich.
Charles Clarke, Esq., of Cholmondeley.	

To which in 1826 were added the names of John Dudley, Esq., of Wharton Lodge; Rev. Thomas Brooke, Rector of Wistaston; and in 1829, the names of George Tollett, Esq., of Betley; Rev. James Campbell, of Tilston; John Jervis Tollemache, Esq., of Tilston Lodge [now Lord Tollemache].

The first Committee was:—

Mr. John Downes.	Mr. George Jackson.	Mr. Benjamin White.
Mr. Robert Parker.	Mr. Thomas Nixon.	Mr. Richard Stretch.
Mr. William Pearce.	Mr. John Barker.	Mr. Robert Adams.
Mr. Ralph Capper.	Mr. Thomas Bostock.	Mr. Thomas Wilson.
Mr. John Withenshaw.	Mr. Edward Jones.	Mr. Joseph Nixon.

Mr. William Jervis.	Mr. John Eardley.	Mr. Richard Vernon.
Mr. Robert Harrison.	Mr. John Barker.	Mr. William Wordley.
Mr. George Moores.	Mr. James Plevin.	Mr. Thomas Deriemer.

*Treasurer*—John Jasper Garnett, Esq.

*Secretaries.*

Rev. G. Vawdrey, Vicar of Wrenbury.	William Smith, Esq.,* of Stapeley.
Rev. B. Senior.	Croudstan Tunstall, of Alvaston.

The first balance sheet, dated 1st Sept. 1825, showed an income from subscriptions, donations, &c. of £264 10s. 6d.; and an expenditure of £248 19s. 3d. The first meeting was held at the Old Brewery, now Harlock's Clothing Factory, on the site of the Townsend House. Succeeding annual meetings were held at the Theatre until 1829; at the Wesleyan Chapel until 1839; at the National School until 1859; and since then at the Town Hall. Some idea of the work of the Society in its early years may be gathered from the fact that for the first fifteen years of its existence the average amount of subscriptions in Nantwich *alone*, was £110 per ann. The sixth Report (1830) states that in Nantwich a hundred and ninety families had been found destitute of a copy of the Scriptures; and in that year the Society had purchased Bibles and Testaments to the amount of £241.†

1826. John Edgeley, who was accidentally suffocated and smothered in a ditch of water by a horse, which he was riding, falling upon him therein, was buried 6 July 1826. Aged 47.—(*Par. Reg.*)

William Taylor, who was accidentally drowned in the Chester and Ellesmere Canal in the township of Hurleston, was buried at N. 31 Aug. 1826, aged 66.—(*Par. Reg.*)

John Burgess was found suffocated and drowned lying in a ditch of water by the side of the road in Hurleston on the 23rd day of December. Burd. 26 Dec. 1826. Aged 49.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1827. John Billington was accidentally scalded to death on 11th Sept. and Buried 14th Sept. 1827. Aged 5.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1828. Mary Vernon, not being of sound mind, memory & understanding, but lunatic & distracted, drowned herself in the river Weaver at Nantwich. Buried 10 July 1828. Age 22.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Mary, wife of John Turner, being of unsound mind &c. did drown herself in a pit of water on Beam Heath, in this parish. Buried 11 Aug. 1828. Aged 55.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Mary, wife of John Bebbington, accidentally burnt to death. Buried 27 Aug. 1828. Aged 53.—(*Par. Reg.*)

On 17th Dec. 1828, a number of Nantwich shoemakers and others of the town and neighbourhood were implicated in a great poaching affray on the Darnhall estate, causing much excitement in the town. One of the number, Burrows, peached; and the ringleaders were apprehended and imprisoned in the "Round House" on Snow Hill. They were tried at Chester; six or seven were sentenced to fourteen years' transportation, and the rest to short terms of imprisonment. Through a technical flaw in the indictment, the same not specifying whether the offence was committed after twelve at noon, or twelve at night,—a discovery made by the astute lawyer, T. W. Jones, Esq., of Hough,—they were liberated after some months' imprisonment on board the "Justicia" convict hulk at Woolwich. At the time of their apprehension, public feeling was so strong in their favour, that serious riots took place every time they were brought before the local magistrates; and eventually a detachment of soldiers was sent from Chester. While the prisoners were

\* William Smith, Esq., was Secretary for ten years, and Treasurer for eighteen years, until his death in 1853; when he was succeeded by Thomas Cawley, Esq., who continues to act as Treasurer for the Society.

† Samuel Harlock, Esq. has in his possession an almost complete set of the printed Reports of this Society, which has now existed above half a century; from which the above information is obtained.

being conveyed away, chained together in carts and waggons, a scuffle took place in Marsh Lane. Major Tomkinson of Dorfold read the Riot Act; and the rioters, after a few blows from the butt end of the guns, were soon dispersed; some of them being afterwards imprisoned for aiding and abetting the escape of the poachers. Mr. George Williamson, one of the released convicts, afterwards became a useful and respected townsman. "His death, (on 25th Aug. 1868) seems to have been felt as a public loss, and his remains were attended to the grave by a great number of sorrowing friends, including the children and teachers of the Nantwich Primitive Methodist Sunday School, who wished to sing a hymn at the grave, but were not allowed to do so by the Rector;"\* a circumstance that produced great animosity between Churchmen and Dissenters, and eventually, in 1875, resulted in the formation of a Nonconformist Cemetery.

1829. Shrewbridge Hall built by Mr. Michael Bott.

As several inaccuracies occur in a note on Shrewbridge Hall by Mr. Helsby, (*Ormerod's Cheshire*, new edit. vol. III p. 440), it will not be uninteresting here to give the true history of the estate from private papers and legal documents.

The present estate was formed by Mr. Isaac Horton, Currier, of Hospital Street, Nantwich; who, between the years 1780 and 1790, purchased lands amounting altogether to nearly eighty acres, from the Maistersons, Peter Walthall Esq., Messrs. Briscoe, and Perrin. About that time and for some years after, Shrewbridge farm was rented by Mr. Michael Bott, of the firm of Birch, Bower, and Bott, for supplying the apprentices engaged at the Cotton Factory with bread, butter, cheese, milk, vegetables, &c. Mr. Horton died intestate in April, 1803, leaving an only daughter, Mary Horton, sole heiress, to whom administration of her father's property was granted by the Chancellor of Chester on 20th Sept. 1803. Mary Horton was married at Liverpool\* on 14th Oct. 1805 to Mr. Michael Bott, having two days previous (12th Oct.) made a marriage settlement of the estate in favour of the issue of that marriage. Mrs. Bott died in 1822, and was buried at Wybunbury on the 23rd April of that year; and, in consequence of the children of this marriage dying in infancy, another agreement was made shortly before her death, dated 4th April, 1822, by which the ultimate limitations of settlement were to Mr. Michael Bott his heirs and assigns for ever, in fee simple. The final agreement was made in the Lord the King's Court of Chester, in the Common Hall of Pleas, on 10th April, 1822, before the Hon. Chas. Warren, Justice of Chester, and the Hon. Samuel Marshall, serjeant-at-law, when Mr. and Mrs. Bott levied a fine to one Peter Taylor of the estate at Shrewbridge, by the description of "1 Messuage, 1 Barn, 3 Stables, 2 Shippons, 2 gardens, 1 orchard, 20 acres of land, 30 acres of meadow, 50 acres of pasture, common of pasture for all cattle and common of turbary with the appurtenances in Nantwich."

Mr. Bott married secondly Miss Williamson of Chester, in 1828, by whom he had four sons, John, Thomas, Charles, and Philip, who all survived their father. In 1829 Mr. Bott pulled down the old farm-house, and on its site built a handsome mansion of white stone, (for many years locally known as Bott's Hall), surrounded it with ornamental pleasure grounds at a cost of about £10,000; and further increased the estate by various

\* Johnson's "*Nantwich and Crewe Monthly Illustrated Journal*;" a Local Magazine commenced in June, 1868, and finished December, 1868.

† "*Chester Chronicle*" for 18th Oct. 1805. The marriage is also entered at Nantwich on 14th Oct. 1805.

purchases to 108 acres. There he resided, giving the strictest attention to the management of his estate, until his death, which took place on the 29th Dec. 1846. He was buried at Wybunbury, on 7th Jan. following; and by his will dated 24th Dec. 1844, proved at Chester 8th April, 1847, and sworn under £14,000, his property was to remain in the hands of trustees until his youngest son attained the age of twenty-one years, when it was to be sold and divided amongst his sons; legacies also being left to certain relations and other legatees.

After the death of Mr. Bott, the estate was claimed by Mr. Richard Horton, shoe manufacturer, of Nantwich, as heir-at-law of his great-great-uncle Mr. Isaac Horton, the father of the first Mrs. Bott. An ejectment suit was tried at Chester Assizes on 5th Aug. 1857, in the Exchequer of Pleas before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn; but at once quashed when the defendants, Messrs. Philip and Charles Bott, produced the legal settlements, which had been persistently withheld from the plaintiff, who, therefore, was led to expend several hundred pounds in order to satisfy himself and his relations of this barring claim.

The Hall and estate were purchased in 1878 by J. M. Bennett, Esq., of Manchester, for £15,000; who endeavoured, but failed, to sell it to a Company, for converting the Hall into a Sanatorium with Brine Baths, which scheme finally collapsed in Sept. 1880.

Great distress was felt amongst the labouring classes in the winter of 1830;\* and in the early part of February, a committee headed by the Rector (Rev. H. R. Gretton) collected in the town for the relief of the poor subscriptions amounting to above £120.

In the same month George Edwards, who was one of an organized gang of horse-stealers that had frequently visited this neighbourhood, was committed to Chester Castle, by the magistrates; no less than five charges for this offence having been preferred against him.

On Tuesday, 9th Feb. 1830, Mrs. Elizabeth Woolsey drowned herself in a watercourse which runs into the Weaver. The verdict before Faithful Thomas Esq., Coroner, on the next day was lunacy. (*Chester Chronicle*).

Another Inquest was held on 16th Feb. 1830, on Mr. John Cooke, aged 88, who, the day before, had been drowned in the Weaver. The deceased was nearly blind, and it was supposed he had left home early, according to his usual custom, and missing his way, walked into the river at a dangerous and unprotected place near the Bridge.

On Saturday, 28th Aug. 1830, Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Shaw, mercer, of High-town, died under very painful circumstances. On the Thursday previous she had boiled a leg of mutton in a saucepan, that had a few days before been used to boil arsenic for the purpose of destroying rats. Having prepared dinner, Mrs. Shaw sent some of the broth to a young man who was sick, and partook of some herself. The Rev. John Hughes, Wesleyan Minister, was invited to dinner; and he and Mr. Shaw were in the act of eating some of the broth, when Mrs. Shaw was taken suddenly ill, and as the use previously made of the saucepan recurred to her mind, she desired them to eat no more. The young man, minister, and husband narrowly escaped being poisoned; but medical assistance having failed, the wife died.—(*Chester Chronicle*, 3 Sept.) She was buried in the churchyard on the north side of the Chancel, where a flat stone exists to her memory.

\* There had been several years of trade depression, in which Bank failures were common, throughout the country; these bad years were followed by strikes in the Cotton districts in 1830.

Tuesday, 26th Oct. 1830. Demonstration with procession, and grand Dinner to Lord Combermere at the Crown Assembly Room, Nantwich, previous to his departure for parliamentary duties in London.—(*Ibid.*)

Wednesday, 8th Dec. 1830. The Nantwich branch Bank of the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Company, opened in Barker Street, under the direction of Messrs. Robert Harrison, William Smith, of Stapeley, and Croudson Tunstall, of Alvaston.—(*Ibid.*)

1831. In this year the Liverpool and Birmingham Junction Canal which crosses the western extremity of Nantwich township, was in process of construction.

George Foxley, an idiot, of the extraordinary age of 105 years, was Buried at Nantwich on 12 Sep. 1831.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1832. This year is remarkable for the erection of Gas Works by a company of local gentlemen; and for the outbreak of Cholera, which was confined almost entirely to Wych-house Bank and the two Wood Streets. (Dr. Williamson's Report in *Board of Health Report*, 1850, p. 11).

The Parish Register records:—

"Samuel Latham, the younger, of Wych-House Bank, The first Corpse dead of Cholera. Buried 11 Sept. 1832. Aged 23.

In the same month there were eight Cholera interments; five from Wood Street, one from Wych-House Bank, one from Welsh Row, and one from Newtown.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Frances daughter of George and Sarah Bowker, who was accidentally killed, by the wheel of a Chaise, in the gateway of the Crown Inn, was Buried 9 Sep. 1832. Aged 6.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1834. The Gas Works became the property of ten shareholders, and has continued to belong to a private Company to the present time.

In September of this year was formed the first Temperance Society in this town.

The Register records as follows:—

"William Orme did strangle himself. Age 86. Buried 3 Jan. 1834.

John son of Joseph Latham, accidentally killed by the falling of a wall at the Old Brewery. Age 10. Buried 7th March 1834.

Hannah, Widow of Saml. Kirk, cut her own throat on 5 Aug. 1834.

Jane, wife of Thos. Serjeant, Butcher, drowned herself in a water-tub; Buried 9 Nov. 1834.

Richard Steele, butcher, who was accidentally killed, by a blow on the hinder part of his head from the sail of a windmill [near Mounf Pleasant, in Windmill Lane, now called *Crew Road*]. Buried 18 Jan. 1835. Aged 72.

Samuel, son of John Green, who was drowned whilst Bathing in the Weaver, Buried 10 June, 1835. Aged 10.

Elizabeth, Wife of William Burgess, died by the visitation of God, Buried 11 Dec. 1835. Aged 50."

William Farnworth, aged 67, died in an apoplectic fit 18 Nov. 1835.—(*Chester Chronicle*, 27 Nov.)

The Workhouse of the Barony was enlarged in the year 1835, and surrounding parishes and townships formed into the Nantwich "*Union*;" the management of paupers and vagrants being taken away from "Overseers" and given to the first elected "*Board of Guardians*," pursuant to the "Poor Law Amendment Act" of 1834. (4 & 5 Will. IV. c. 76).

The ancient custom of ringing the Pan-cake, or Guttit Bell on Shrove Tuesday ceased in or about the year 1836.

James Bromhall, joiner, who was accidentally crushed to death, was buried 1 April 1836, Aged 66.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Joseph Tinsley, who was accidentally killed by being thrown off a pony and being dragged in the stirrup leather, was buried 20 Oct. 1836. Aged 14.—(*Par. Reg.*)

In 1837 the National Schools were built on land given by the Marquis of Cholmondeley.

On 10th Aug. 1837, the High Sheriff, Charles Peter Shakerley Esq. of Somerford Hall, declared at Chester, Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, Bart., and George Wilbraham Esq., duly elected Members of Parliament for the Southern Division of the County, for the first Parliament of Queen Victoria. The returns of the Poll were as follows:—

EGERTON ( <i>Conservative</i> )	...	...	...	3136
WILBRAHAM ( <i>Liberal</i> )	...	...	...	3032
EDWIN CORBETT, of Darnhall ( <i>Conservative</i> )	..			2646

The Register of electors numbered 7084. Plumpers for Wilbraham 2551; for Egerton 176; for Corbett 29. The polling days were the 7th and 8th Aug., and at Nantwich the numbers were, according to the printed Poll Book, as follows:—

WILBRAHAM	...	...	...	849
EGERTON...	...	...	...	511
CORBETT ...	...	...	...	421

Unpopular among the lower orders since the events of 1825, and terrified when a wag brandished a pheasant on a pole before his eyes, Mr. Corbett, the Darnhall squire, hastily left the polling-booth at the Market Hall, and reaching the river, made his escape from the noisy crowd, by jumping in and wading through it. In the Welsh Row, a country voter was killed, by falling headlong from the top of a coach as it was being carelessly driven past the Black Lion Inn.

1838. John Cawley, aged 30, being lunatic drowned himself in the Weaver. Buried 4 June 1838.—(*Par. Reg.*)

William Lockett, aged 69, being lunatic, hung himself in his workshop. Buried 28 Oct. 1838.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1839. Thomas Davies, aged 17, who was feloniously killed by Joseph Skerratt, was buried 24 Jan. 1839.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1840. Typhus fever of a very malignant kind considerably increased the mortality of the town; in the Union Workhouse there were no less than fifty-six cases at one time.—(Dr. Williamson's Report in *Board of Health Report*, 1850, p. 11).

In this year the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Welsh Row; and the Wesleyan Day and Sunday Schools were built; and the Potato disease made its first appearance.\*

1841. At the general election for members of Parliament in this year, GEORGE WILBRAHAM, ESQ., who advocated the fixed corn duty, was thrown out, and from that time retired from Parliamentary duties. The successful candidates were:—

SIR PHILIP DE MALPAS GREY EGERTON, BART. ( <i>Cons.</i> )	...	...	...	3110
JOHN TOLLEMACHE, ESQ. ( <i>Cons.</i> )	...	...	...	3034

George Wilbraham Esq. polled 2365 votes; the Register numbering 6972. There was no contested election in this Division of the county from Aug. 1841 until April, 1880.

\* The late Richard C. Edleston, Esq., Attorney, of Nantwich, who died in 1871, devoted his attention for several years to the study of this disease, with great success; and "in Cheshire," says Mr. Salisbury (*Border Counties' Worthies*) "his name will be remembered with respect, for the efforts he made during the potato famine to prevent the spread of that terrible infliction." His invention for the better culture of the potato may be briefly stated as follows:—Whole potatoes, carefully selected, were planted at unusually wide distances apart. After the tops appeared, they were earthed up in mounds with a spade; and when grown about a foot high, the stems were carefully divided, and soil added to the top of the mound. Hence the stems, instead of growing erect, inclined downwards on the sides of the mound. By this means it was found that the disease (which usually came in August) was prevented passing down the stem to the tubercous roots. This new method of culture was not generally adopted on account of the extra cost of labour; but the few farmers who tried the experiment, were satisfied with the results; for not only was the disease prevented, but the crop was greatly increased. Mr. Edleston also professed to have discovered a prevention for the pleura; and, some say, for the foot and mouth distemper in horned cattle; but these secrets, unfortunately, were never divulged. He was the son of Richard Edleston, Esq., Attorney, of this town; and was baptized at Nantwich on the 20th Sept. 1816. He was a well-known supporter of field sports, and an authority on all matters connected with coursing; possessing, himself, some of the best greyhounds in the country.



William Robinson, Master of the Free Grammar School, hanged himself in the Schoolroom, and was buried on the north side of the Churchyard, 1 July, 1841. Aged 32.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Thomas Kettle, timber drawer, committed suicide, and was buried 16 July 1841. Aged 36.—(*Par. Reg.*)

1843. On Whit-Sunday a fire occurred in Hospital Street, which totally consumed a row of thatched cottages opposite the Wesleyan Chapel, and damaged the Wesleyan Schools.

1846. The Savings' Bank built in Welsh Row; and the Mechanics' Institute established in High Town, which latter had a short-lived existence. Typhus fever again visited the town, and prevailed for nine months. (Dr. Williamson's Report). This year was a general failure in the potato crop throughout the county.

1848. Salt-baths, which had been commenced but a short period before on the Snow-Hill, were removed; and the old "*Round House*" (prison) in close proximity was taken down, and a Police Office erected on its site. The last criminal detained in the "*Round House*" (which notwithstanding its name, was a rectangular building), was *Mary Gallop*, for poisoning her father at Crewe. She was hanged at Chester in 1844. In the new Prison on the site, the first and only murderer confined prior to her trial at Chester, was Sarah Featherstone, for the murder of her child. She was condemned to be executed; but respite was granted, and she was imprisoned for life.

## The Cholera.

In June, 1849, the plague of Asiatic Cholera visited the town, and in the short space of fourteen weeks nearly 1000 cases were reported out of a population of about 6000; resulting in about 180 deaths. All the inhabitants were more or less affected by the peculiar atmospheric cause of cholera; but the epidemic appeared in its severest forms near the river, in the localities of the Wood Streets, Gas Alley, Wych-House Bank, Mill Street, and also in Hospital Street; and chiefly among the lower classes, although it was remarkable that the Irish population, who were generally attacked by typhus in 1846, escaped, comparatively speaking, from this horrible disease. Many people fled from the plague-stricken town, and trade came almost to a standstill. No markets were held; and no fair in September; even country milk-sellers refused to come to the town, and grass grew in the streets. Funerals took place daily, and at all hours; and, as it was deemed necessary to bury the dead as soon as possible, alarming reports were circulated that some had been buried alive. Thirty-seven deaths occurred in the week ending the 10th July. On the 14th inst. a house to house visitation was commenced and continued until the contagion died out, by a committee consisting of the Rector, Dr. Williamson, Mr. Thomas Johnson and others, who with praiseworthy zeal, were untiring and heroic in their attentions to the distressed and afflicted poor. When the epidemic was at its height, sufficient grave-room for the dead could not be found in the ancient Churchyard. In this exigency, a parcel of land on the Barony called *Finger-post-field*, belonging to the Workhouse, was purchased for £400 raised by public subscription; and on the 20th July, 1849, licence was granted by the Bishop for the burial of the dead; Episcopal Consecration being deferred until the 19th July in the following year.

Two consecutive entries in the Parish Register, will be of interest; the former giving the name of the last person buried in the Churchyard, and the latter recording the first interment (a Cholera victim) in the new Burial Ground, which has ever since been the Parish Cemetery. The names are:—

"Joseph Clarke, of Mill Street, aged 41 years; buried 20 July 1849 by W. A. Stevenson (Curate)."

"James Chesters, of Snow Hill, aged 60 years, buried 21 July 1849, by A. F. Chater (Rector)."

To the names of those ascertained to have died of Cholera Morbus the Rector has added in the margin of the Register a capital C; the earliest victims being as follows:—

"William son of Jno. & Ellen Edwards, of Wood St. aged 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  yrs. Buried 23 June 1849.

Thomas son of Jno. & Ellen Edwards, of Wood St. aged 3 yrs. 8 mos. " " " "

James Ankers, of Wych House Bank, aged 50 years " 27 " "

Sarah, dau. of Saml. & Sarah Bullock, of Welsh Row, aged 11 months " 28 " "

Elizabeth, wife of John Trickett, of Wood Street, aged 27 yrs. " " " "

Jane, dau. of Thos & Eliz. Singleton of Mill Stone Lane, aged 11 yrs. " 2 July "

James, son of Will. & Abigail Gilbert of do. do. aged 7 yrs. " " " "

The following numbers taken from the Register show the mortality in this town from the 1st June to 31st Dec. 1849.

From 1 June to 23 June	...	7	} Buried in the Churchyard.
" 24 June to 30 June	...	18	
" 1 July to 20 July	...	81	
" 21 July to 31 July	...	47	
" 1 Aug. to 31 Aug.	...	33	} Buried in the Cemetery.
" 1 Sep. to 30 Sep.	...	24	
" 1 Oct. to 31 Oct.	...	16	
" 1 Nov. to 30 Nov.	...	11	
" 1 Dec. to 31 Dec.	...	12	
Total	...	<u>249</u>	

As the plague abated, many suggestions were made by the local medical faculty for purifying the air and disinfecting the houses. It was thought at one time, that the firing of cannon in the streets would sufficiently disturb the atmosphere; but it was finally decided that a cup of vitriol should be distributed to every house, and at a given signal, namely, the ringing of the Church Bell, every householder was ordered to fumigate the house with closed doors; and this plan seemed to have the desired effect. In August, when the half-deserted town presented a most melancholy appearance, and the greatest distress prevailed amongst the poor, the noblemen and gentry of the neighbourhood raised a fund and placed it at the disposal of the Rector, who distributed therewith a liberal supply of nutritious food, and rendered assistance to the various benefit clubs, most of which were at that time in a state of insolvency.

The terrible calamity above described, of which, strange to say, no memorial stone exists in the Cemetery, may be regarded as the greatest crisis in the history of the town in modern times; for since the cholera visitation a spirit of improvement and progress have been infused into the inhabitants which cannot be traced in times prior to that event. The immediate outcome was the improvement of the sanitary condition of the town, and provision for a better water supply from Baddiley Mere, by a newly constituted Local

Board of Health. During the intervening thirty years great liberality and local efforts have been manifested in the restoration of the ancient Parish Church, and beautifying of the Churchyard; the erection of a commodious, though not handsome, Town Hall, and Market Hall, and the removal of old property in the centre of the town. The opening of Railway communication with the manufacturing districts giving rise to increased trade; the introduction of machinery into the shoe and tailoring industries; the laying down of footpaths in the streets, the erection of several important public buildings, and better built houses; all these things have tended to raise the town to greater importance at the present time than in past ages. Of these and minor events still fresh in the memory of the present generation, a brief notice will next be given, thus bringing to a close this already long chapter of Annals.

1850. On 29th Sept. the following nine gentlemen were elected as members of the first Local Board of Health in this town, namely:—

REV. A. F. CHATER, Rector.	MR. EDWARD HARRISON.
MR. JOHN BARKER, Currier.	MR. JOHN SMITH, Draper.
MR. JAMES HOWARD, Gentleman.	MR. WILLIAM JOHNSON, Tailor.
MR. WILLIAM BOTT.	MR. WILLIAM FOWLES, Auctioneer (Clerk
MR. GEORGE LATHAM, Architect.	<i>pro. tem.</i> )

The first meeting was held at the Rectory, on 4th Dec. 1850; when the Rector was unanimously voted chairman. MR. JAMES BROADHURST being appointed Clerk, at £20 per ann.; and MR. THOMAS JOHNSON to the combined offices of Inspector of Nuisances and Rate Collector at £25 per ann. Subsequent meetings were held at the Registry Office, Hospital Street.

1851. Road made across the Barony.

1852. The Unitarian Chapel renovated at a cost of £300.

1853. The old Engine House, in the corner of the Churchyard opposite the Rectory taken down; and a new one built by Lord Crewe in Pillory Street, on land given by the Marquis of Cholmondeley. (*Cf.* p. 221.)

1854-5. The town drained by General Lee Esq. C.E.

1855. St. Anne's Catholic Chapel built; and the Restoration of the Parish Church commenced by G. G. Scott, Esq.; the Churchyard being finally closed by Order in Council, although no interments had taken place since 1849.

1856. The last salt-work of three pans finally closed.

1858. Shoemakers' Strike against the introduction of machine-made tops. Wesleyan Chapel enlarged and improved at a cost of £400. The Ebenezer Chapel built at a cost of £1100, on the site of the old "Tabernacle."

On 1st Sept. the Crewe and Shrewsbury Railway was opened for traffic; and on the 13th of the same month the newly built Town Hall and Corn Exchange, which cost over £2,500, was opened; the day being kept as a festival. The streets were decorated with mottoes and evergreens; and a high class concert was given, at which, amongst other artistes, Miss Clara Novello sang.

1859. A Poultry and Dog Show was held this year; and has since been annually

held on or about New Market, in the month of February. In May Mr. Leonard Gilbert,\* a native of this town, introduced the first Sewing Machines into his Shoe-factory.

Oct. 16th, Mr. Deriemer, a respectable inhabitant, died in the Parish Church during divine service.

1860. The old Grammar School demolished; and the New Grammar School built.

1862. Nantwich Cotton Mill closed during the Cotton Famine; but re-opened about two years after (in the spring of 1864) by a Cotton Spinning Co.

1863. March 10th. Demonstration celebrating the marriage of H.R.H. Albert Prince of Wales. The very dry summer of this year was followed by a winter remarkably mild. Green peas were gathered out of gardens at the end of November; and roses were in bud and bloom on Christmas day.

On the 6th Oct. 1863, a shock of earthquake was felt in this neighbourhood and in many other parts of England. The Rev. W. F. Shaw, curate of Acton, near Nantwich, described it as follows:—

“Between half-past three and four o'clock [a.m.] we were aroused by the smart shock of an earthquake. It shook the windows and bedsteads violently, and lasted, I should suppose, for nearly a minute. The sensation produced, I can compare to nothing better than a huge giant taking the opposite posts of the bed and shaking them violently.”†

On Monday, the 19th Oct. 1863, the Railway between Nantwich and Market Drayton was opened; and in the same year was commenced a Festival of the united Choirs of Nantwich, Malpas and Middlewich Parishes, which continues to be held annually.

1864. The Manchester and Liverpool District Bank was in course of erection; the architect being Alfred Waterhouse, Esq., of Manchester; the contractor, Mr. Richard Beckett, of Hartford; and the sub-contractor, Mr. Thomas Bowker, of Nantwich. It was opened on the 2nd June, 1866.

1865-6. The ancient Frog Channel, from Welsh Row Head to the second Wood Street, converted into a culvert.

The pestilence amongst cattle, known as the *Rinderpest*, broke out in the summer of 1865, and continued its ravages in this neighbourhood until the following summer. The plague swept across the county (beginning, it is believed, in Dodcot-cum-Wilkesley,) with terrible severity.

1866. A day of Humiliation was held at Nantwich, on Wednesday, 28th Feb. The Rector preached from *Hab.* iii. 17 18; and a collection was made for the farmers who had lost cattle by the Plague. In this year, the Churchyard was improved by the planting of trees and ornamental shrubs, mainly through the liberality of James Broadhurst, Esq., and F. W. Hobson, Esq.

\* This gentleman, to whose enterprise and ability the prosperity of the shoe-trade in this town is mainly due, was elected Mayor of the City of Chester in the year 1878.

† *Nantwich Guardian* for 10th Oct. 1863; which also contains the following description of the same occurrence from the pen of the late Charles Dickens. “I was awakened by a violent swaying of my bed from side to side, accompanied by a singular heaving motion. It was exactly as if some great beast had been crouching asleep under the bedstead, and were now shaking itself and trying to rise.”

The *Cheshire Sheaf* records similar shocks of earthquakes felt in this county on the following dates; viz. 14th Sept. 1777; 10th Nov. 1795; (vol. I. pp. 289; 324); 1st June 1801; 11th Jan. 1878. (vol. II. p. 1; 233).

1867. A public park formed on the Barony, and planted with shrubs at considerable expense. The scheme, which was unpopular at the time, has since proved a complete failure.\*

1868. The present Market Hall erected; and a new thoroughfare constructed called Market Street. The Hall, which was built on land given by John Tollemache, Esq., M.P., at a cost of about £2000, was opened without any demonstration whatever on the 30th July; the Old Market Hall in High Town being shortly afterwards taken down.

On the following day (Friday, 31st July), a few minutes before two in the afternoon, a serious fire broke out on Snow Hill. Some sparks from James O'Neil's smithy having ignited the thatched roof of a neighbouring stable, (the wind blowing freely at the time), the burning thatch was carried across the street, and in about half an hour, the fire spread from Snow Hill along the Swine Market as far as Mr. Carrington's shop at the corner of High Street. Owing to scarcity of water after a long dry season, and an inadequate supply from Baddiley Mere, great alarm was felt at the rapid progress of the fire. After some delay the town water was obtained and the fire engine vigorously worked. Six houses, four stables, and a blacksmith's shop were totally destroyed; and five houses were unroofed or otherwise injured. This disaster led to the immediate formation of the Nantwich Volunteer Fire Brigade.

The Town Hall, the greater part of which had been taken down on account of the insecure foundations, and re-built at a cost exceeding £1050, was re-opened on 11th Aug. in the same year.†

1870. Almshouses at Welsh Row Head re-built by John Tollemache, Esq., M.P.

1871. Church Infant School built in Market Street.

1872. By Act of Parliament, the ancient privilege of Jurors claimed by the inhabitants of the town, became null and void.

Messrs. Harding and Co.'s Clothing Factory on the Barony commenced working in June.

In December the block of old houses and shops, situated in High Town, were taken down, thus greatly improving the centre of the town.

1873. The Baptist Chapel in Market Street built. The opening services were conducted by the Revs. J. Clifford, M.A., and Dr. Jabez Burns, two celebrated London preachers who took great interest in the re-establishing of the Baptist cause in this town.

1874. The Cotton-mill again became a Corn-mill as in ancient times.

A new band of teetotal advocates, called the Independent Order of Good Templars, purchased the old Baptist Chapel in Barker Street, for a Good Templars' Hall.

A second Church Day School built in second Wood Street.

1875. Early in this year an attempt was made to form a Public Cemetery under the management of a Burial Board. The vote of the Vestry on 3rd Feb. decided in favour

\* The so-called "Park," having long been in a sadly neglected state, and is now (1883) likely to be transferred to the Local Board of the town; and another scheme is under consideration for carrying out the original intention of providing a park and recreation ground, which promises to be a success.

† It is proposed to further improve the Town Hall, which has this year (1883) been transferred by the Trustees to the Local Board.

of the proposed scheme by a majority of 18 out of 80 present; but a poll of the town being demanded, an adverse vote was given on the 8th Feb., by a majority of 82 out of 918 votes; whereupon the leading Nonconformists, who had already formed themselves into a Company, and purchased land in Willaston, carried out their own project, and in November was opened the *Nantwich General Cemetery*.

Another project, which was being discussed at the same time, met with a similar fate. It was proposed by certain gentlemen, strangers to the town, to make Nantwich a Brine pumping station, and convey the brine by pipes to Ellesmere Port, there to be manufactured into salt; but the scheme, being unpopular in the town, and meeting with great opposition from the neighbouring gentry, was abandoned in May of this year.

On Wednesday, 28th July, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, of London, preached two sermons in the Market Hall to the largest audiences, perhaps, ever assembled for religious purposes in this town.

In August, died Mr. Thomas Hassall, Almsman (Beam Street Almshouses) a native of this town, having completed the hundredth year of his age.

In the same year the Independent and Unitarian Chapels were renovated, and an Organ added to each; the Co-operative Society was formed in June; and the Liberal Club opened in a house in Pepper Street in November.

1876. Combermere Abbey narrowly escaped destruction by fire in February.

On 30th March, Mr. Jackson, of Mill Street, formerly manager of the Cotton Mill for many years, was buried in a vault in the Independent Chapel yard.

The Wesleyan Chapel enlarged, at a cost exceeding £2000; and the Midland Bank erected on the site of former banking premises.

1877. On 6th Sept. the Friendly Societies of the town held a Demonstration to celebrate the centenary of the "Friendly Knot" Society.

Oct. 14th. A severe storm of wind damaged some of the pinnacles of the Church; roofs and chimneys of houses, &c., and uprooted many fine trees at Dorfold, Shrewbridge and in the neighbourhood.

1878. Feb. 28th to March 2nd was held a Grand Bazaar in the Town Hall, in aid of the Restoration of the Porch and West Front of the Church, realizing more than £1000.

In July and August the Church Bells were quartered and re-fixed.

In the latter month, F. E. Massey, Esq., of Alvaston Grove, served an injunction against the Local Board for polluting the River Weaver.

On the 12th Sept. was an imposing Masonic Demonstration.

1879. Great distress amongst the poor was felt during the severe frost of January and February. The hard winter was followed by a cold spring and wet summer. There was a heavy fall of snow on May-day. Plum trees were not in blossom until after the 12th May; and farmers could not turn out their cattle according to custom on that day, owing to the scarcity of grass.

April 5th. William Sherratt, of Willaston Terrace, murdered his wife by strangulation. He was condemned, with recommendation to mercy at Chester Assizes; his sentence being eventually commuted to imprisonment for life.

A Cocoa House in Pillory Street ("*The Three Cups*") opened on 26th December.

1880. On 27th Jan. Miss Janet Ramsay, of Dysart Buildings, was buried in a vault in the Independent Chapel yard.

April 8th. Polling day at the General Election; being the first contested Election since 1841 in this Division of the County. The town was in a disturbed state.

Early in March the impending lawsuit relating to the pollution of the river Weaver in the case of Massey *v.* Nantwich Local Board, was settled by an arrangement between the plaintiff and defendants.

The Children's Home built in connection with the Union Workhouse.

1881. The first interment in the Parish Cemetery under the recent Burials Act took place on Friday, 4th Jan., when the Rev. F. Moon, Independent Minister, conducted the ceremony at the funeral of Emma, wife of Mr. J. F. Crompton, and daughter of Mr. Charles Laxton, of this town.

At the by-Election, after the death of Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, Bart., M.P., Henry J. Tollemache, Esq. was returned in the Conservative interest; the polling-day being 22nd April.

Michael McKale, of Spring Gardens, climbing a tall elm tree at Hospital Street end, in search of young rooks, between one and two o'clock on Sunday morning, 22nd May, fell, as was supposed, eighty or ninety feet, and was found at six o'clock insensible. He died two days after.

Brine discovered at a depth of thirty feet at Parkfield, Nantwich, on 16th Sept.

Dec. 1. The Peoples' Hall opened; and in the same month the Conservative Club House, a very handsome building, was inaugurated by a Bazaar, which was opened on 16th Dec. by the Right Hon. Lord Combermere.

1882. The forty-sixth Annual Cheshire Agricultural Show held on the 31st August in Dorfold Park.

Mr. Charles Laxton, who had been Special High Constable for Nantwich Hundred from Feb. 1841 until 1857; and Superintendent of the Police for Nantwich Division (under the Constabulary Act) from 1857 to 29th Sept. 1874, when he retired through failing health; died on the 29th Sept. 1882. He had been one of the principal founders of the Nantwich Volunteer Fire Brigade in 1868, and held the post of Captain until 1879. A Fireman's funeral was accorded to him, which was witnessed by a large concourse of people.

A monthly Cheese Fair commenced on the 9th Nov.

Mrs. Cooper, of Hospital Street, accidentally killed in the hunting field on the 29th December.

1883. On May-day the newly erected Brine and Medicinal Baths, on Snow Hill, were publicly inaugurated in the presence of about two hundred and fifty spectators, by Henry J. Tollemache, Esq. M.P., of Dorfold Hall. It is not a little singular that nearly two hundred years ago Nantwich followed Droitwich in abolishing the ancient salt customs; and in this present year of grace, by establishing saline Baths, Nantwich has again followed in the wake of Droitwich, where similar baths were opened on the 1st Jan. 1876. It may also be pointed out that if the opening ceremony had been arranged to have taken place but two days later, it would then have corresponded exactly, in time and place, with the annual Ascension-day Festival of olden times.



# TRADES OF THE TOWN.

## The Salt Manufacture.



EVERYONE admits that the rise of Nantwich was due to the presence of its BRINE SPRING; which, according to Mr. Partridge, has long been called the "*Old Biot.*" Nowhere, however, in any ancient deed or record that has come under my notice, has this local name occurred; nor can it be stated with any degree of certainty how long the Brine Pit has been in existence. Although most Cheshire writers contend that the Romans were acquainted with the Salt-springs in this county; stronger evidence is yet required before it can be positively asserted that Nantwich, and the other Wiches, really existed at so distant a period of history. If the convergence of roads (see p. 8) implies the existence of a small Roman station, (which, it must be remembered, is not mentioned in the Roman "*Itineras,*") it still remains to be shown to what century we are to look for the founding of the Salt-towns of Cheshire; for the Roman occupation of Britain embraces a period of 450 years; a period equal to the interim that has elapsed since the commencement of the Wars of the Roses. About 650 years after the Romans left Britain, occurs the *first* mention of the Brine Pit at Nantwich. In late Saxon times the salt-spring and salt-houses here belonged to the Earls of Chester, and certain thanes (the King claiming rights of royalty); and in Norman times to the Baronial family of Malbank;\* but after the death of William, third Baron of Wich-Malbank, the wich-houses, brine-pit, right of toll, &c., descended with the divisions and sub-divisions of the Barony to various manorial lords, and eventually to principal families in the town and county. Some of the wiche-houses, or "*bullaries,*" as they are often called in old deeds, were granted to Religious Houses. Besides the grants of salt-houses by the Barons of Wich-Malbank to the Abbeyes of St.

\* See Account of the Salt Laws &c., in Domesday Survey, on pp. 10-12.



Werburgh and Combermere early in the twelfth century; the religious houses in the town; the Hospital of St. John,\* and St. Mary's Nunnery at Chester; the Monasteries of Wenlock and Lilleshall in Salop; and the Priory of St. Thomas at Stafford; all derived emoluments from the Salt-houses in Nantwich in pre-Reformation times. From the Register of Bishop Norbury, it appears that in 1326 the people of "Wychmanbury" (probably a miss-spelling of Wych Malbank) were liable to furnish salt for the Bishop's table; and being at that time very remiss, were to be threatened with excommunication.†

In feudal times tenant farmers were required to render a service called "*salicher*," or carrying of salt from the nearest Wich. Few particulars relating to the manufacture of salt in Nantwich are known, from the year 1245, when King Henry III ordered a temporary stoppage of the works, until the Tudor period of history; when the revenues appear to have increased to many times the value recorded in Domesday Book. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries some of the wiche-houses in this town reverted to the Crown, and were afterwards sold to local families. Two such sales, *temp. Eliz.*, showing the value of salt-houses three hundred years ago, are here given from the *Cal. State Papers*. (Domestic Series, vol. ccxxxiii):—

"1590. July 12. Purchase by Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Esq., of *three wiche-houses and a half*, in Namptwich, of the yearly value of £4 13s. 4d. at the price of £136 6s. 8d.

1590. Oct. 10. Purchase by Richard Sawyer of *one wiche-house* in Namptwich of the yearly value of 33s. 4d., for which he payeth £66 13s. 4d."

The Messrs. Lysons (quoting *Rymeri Fœdera* vol. x. p. 761) say, the art of making salt was imperfectly understood in the fifteenth century; and King Henry VI invited *John de Sheidam*, of Zealand, with sixty persons in his company, to come to England "to instruct his subjects in the improved method of making salt." A hundred years later, so inadequate was the supply of salt, and so imperfect the method of obtaining it from brine, that between the years 1563 and 1580 many salt-works were established at Blyth, Hull, Boston, Lynn, St. Bees, and other coast towns, by Dutchmen, who obtained patents from Queen Elizabeth granting the exclusive privilege of manufacture by a new method, called "*making salt upon salt*," (*Cal. of State Papers*); a method, explained by Mr. T. Lowndes, in his "*Brine-salt Improved*" (Edit. 1746, p. 14) as follows:—"The Dutch, in purifying their Salt, always blend with the French Bay Salt, a great quantity of Spanish and other Mediterranean salts; this process is frequently called *making salt upon salt*."

A century later still, the salt of the Wiches was of very inferior character. Lord Macaulay, describing the mineral wealth of this country in 1685, says,‡ "The salt which was obtained by a rude process from brine-pits was held in no high estimation. The pans in which the manufacture was carried on exhaled a sulphurous stench, and when the evaporation was complete the substance which was left was scarcely fit to be used with food. Physicians attributed the scorbutic and pulmonary complaints which were common

\* In the "*Palatine Note Book*," vol. ii. p. 273, mention is made of a Latin Charter on vellum still extant; "being a Grant of some Saltworks called '*Saynt Mary Wychehous*,' near the '*Nunne Wychehous*,' the *Wode-strete*, the land of John Lenell & the *Salt Works* of Randolph Scholehall, Chaplain of the Blessed Mary in the College of St. John, Chester," to Richard Keffes Chaplain. Given at Wich Malbank by Willm. Sawrdyn & Cecilia his wife on the Monday before the feast of St. Martin [11 Nov.] 6 Hen. V." [1419]. Seal attached.

† From the Lichfield Registers, vol. 1322-1358, obligingly communicated by J. P. Earwaker, F.S.A.

‡ *History of England*, vol. I. p. 155 (Longman's Edit. 1871) quoting various Nos. of *Philosophical Transactions* 1669-1684.

among the English to this unwholesome condiment. It was therefore seldom used by the upper and middle classes, and there was a regular and considerable importation from France."

Half a century later still, and seventy years after the discovery of Rock Salt at Marbury, near Northwich, the Government returns of imported salt, for seven years ending Lady Day 1743, (the greater part of which was the celebrated Bay-salt of France, obtained by natural evaporation in the neighbourhood of Rochelle), averaged no less than 106,000 Bushells each 84 lbs., or nearly 4,000 tons per annum.\*

It will not be necessary to trace the history of the manufacture any further, as Nantwich has had no share in the great development of the salt-trade of Cheshire in modern times. As will presently be seen, the greatest obstacles to improvement were the restrictions of custom limiting the production to certain fixed quantities that might be considered large in ancient times, but which, judged by modern standard, appear insignificantly small.

Leland, who visited Cheshire a few years before the suppression of the Monasteries, thus describes the salt-towns in his "*Itinerary*," (Edit. 1769, vol. v. fol. 82)—

"NORTHWICH is a prati Market Towne, but fowle [*i.e.* dirty] and by the Salters† Houses be great stakkes of smaull clovyn woode, to seethe the salt water that thei make white salt of. The salt water Pitte is hard by the Brinke of Dane river, the wich, within a good But shott, runnith into Wyver.

Ther be ii [two] Salt Springges at MIDDLEWICH, that stonidith, as I remembre, upon Dane river; and *one* at NANTWICH, the wich yeldith more salt Water than the other iii [three]. Wherefore ther be at Nantwich a iii hunderith salters.† [*i.e.* three hundred persons engaged in making salt].

The Pittes be so set abowte with Canales [wooden pipes, or channels] that the salte Water is facily derivid [easily distributed] to every Mannes Howse.

And at the Nantwiche very many Canales go over Wyver River, for the Commoditie [convenience] of deriving the water to the Salters Troughes. [technically called *ships*, (*see postea*).]

They seethe the Salt in Furnesses of Lede [lead], and lade out the Salt, some in cases of wicker, thorough the wich, the water voydith, and the salt remaynith.

A mile from Cumbremere Abbay, in time of mind, sank a Pease of a Hille having Trees on hit; and after in that Pitte sprang salte water; and the Abbate ther began to make salt: but the Menne of the Wichis compond with the Abbay that ther should be no salt made. The Pitte yet hath salt water, but much Filth is faullen into hit."

The next account of the salt-manufacture, written about the year 1580, (but not published until 1656) is that by WILLIAM SMITH, a native of Old Haugh, in the parish of Warmincham; who was educated at Oxford, and became Rouge Dragon Pursuivant in the College of Arms. The learned CAMDEN, who is said to have been a compiler rather than an original observer, appears to have been indebted to William Smith for the description of Nantwich salt-works, which he printed about the year 1590, in his "*Britannia*;" and hence it is doubtful whether Camden ever visited Nantwich, although it is very likely

\* Mr. Lowndes' "*Brine-Salt Improved*," p. 36.

† It is clear that *salters* means *wallers*; who were chiefly women; the termination *er* being the Old English feminine. Some, mistaking salters for *salt-works*, have assumed that Nantwich salt-trade was in its greatest activity in Henry VIII reign; and that since that time the trade has gradually declined in importance. Platt (*Hist. Nantwich*, p. 78) absurdly states that there were 220 works in Nantwich in Elizabeth's reign, all of which were destroyed by the fire of 1583, except *one*.

that he was personally acquainted with the Cheshire antiquary and official of Herald's College. Both accounts, which greatly resemble each other, are here given as follows:—

*SMITH'S ACCOUNT.* c. 1580.

(Printed in King's *Vale Royal.* 1656.)

“Nantwich is accounted the greatest town in Cheshire, next to Chester, and standeth upon the river Weever. \* \* \* Here at this town is great store of white salt made: it hath one salt-spring (which they call a brine-pit) standing hard upon the river Weever; from whence they carry the brine to the wich-houses, saying such houses as stand on the further side of the river. Within the said houses are great barrels set deep into the earth, which are all filled with salt-water; and then when the bell ringeth, they begin to make fire under the leads; every house hath six leads, wherein they see the said salt-water; and as it seethes, the wallers (which are commonly women) do, with a wooden rake, gather the salt from the bottom, which they put into a long basket of wicker, which they call a salt-barrow; and so the water voideth, and the salt remaineth.”

*CAMDEN'S ACCOUNT.* c. 1590.

(Gough's Edit. 1806, of Camden's "*Britannia*," vol. iii, p. 43).

“Wever runs by Nantwich not far from Middlewich to Norwich [Northwich]. These are famous salt-wiches or pits, where the brine, or salt-water, is drawn out of pits, and not poured upon burning wood as the antient Gauls and Germans used to do, but boiled over the fire to extract the salt. I have no doubts but the Romans were acquainted with these pits and that they laid a salt-duty thereon. For from Middlewich to Nor[th]wich runs a noble road, raised with gravel to such a height as easily to be known for a Roman work: gravel being very scarce all over these parts, and therefore now carried from this road to private houses.

Nantwich is accounted the largest and best built town in the county. It has one brine-pit about 14 feet from the river; out of which the brine is conveyed in wooden troughs into houses; where are several casks fixed in the ground, which they fill with this salt water, and on ringing of a bell, the fire is lighted under leaden kettles of which there are six in each house, and the water boiled; and women called Wallers, with little wooden rakes draw up the salt from the bottom; and put it into baskets out of which the water drains, and the salt settles.”

No doubt during the vicissitudes of five centuries the penal laws, privileges, and customs recorded in Domesday Book had passed away; but that the same feudal servility existed in the sixteenth century, will be seen in the following code of regulations, dated 1563, which are said to have then been observed “during the tyme whereof the memorie of man is not to the contrary.” These “*Customes*” prove that the Rulers of Walling (always four in number) as curators of the Brine-pit, inspectors of the wich-houses, and watchful guardians of the Lords of Walling land, had almost unlimited authority over the work-people; and kept up a spy-system, that not only for long years prevented any innovation, but was productive of frequent discontent as evidenced in the few extracts already given from the Court Leet Rolls (see pp. 72-77). Only a small proportion of the pans were worked at a time; each wich-house having to wait its turn for its proper supply of brine; hence there would be no liberty of action amongst the wallers and briners, and there could be no incentive to industry; for, if any one attempted to produce more salt than custom allowed, he was in danger of having his wich-house forcibly pulled down and his lead pans destroyed by the Rulers, and by them he would be charged at the next

Court Leet with obtaining by fraud the Lord's Brine.

These "*Customes*," which are preserved amongst the Wilbraham MSS., afford interesting information relating to the Manufacture of salt three hundred years ago, that will be quite new to the present generation.

#### ANCIENT SALT LAWS AND CUSTOMS.

"The *CUSTOMES OF WALLING* and making of Salt in Wich Malbanke, in the Countie of Chester, which haue bin had and used during the tyme whereof the memorie of man is not to the contrary; with the number of the wich-houses or salt houses in the sayd Wiche, presented at the Court houlden at the Wiche aforesaide the xij<sup>th</sup> day of October in the fite yeare of the Raigne of oure Soueraigne Ladie Elizabeth [1563] by the grace of god Queene of England, ffiance, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c.; before SR HUGH CHOLMLEY, KNIGHT, Stewarde of the Wiche aforesaid; by the oathes of Roger Maisterson, Roger Walthall, Roger Wettenhall the elder, John Leigh, Humfrey Mainwaring, Oliver Mainwaring, John Maisterson, John Rutter, Jeffray Minshall, Thomas Manwaring, Reginold Wright, Roger Crockett, Roger Harwar, and Richard Church.

1.—First the said Jurie upon their oathes say that there is and of right ought to be *two hundred and sixteene wiche-houses\** in the said Wiche, and noe more, euerie of them being a house of sixe leades.

2.—*Item*. they say that euerie of the said houses haue and of right ought to haue yearly for eurie of the said wich-houses twelue daies walling; that is to say, sixe daies of the newe yeare, and sixe daies of the Barons weekes,† and to be free at the brine-pitt or sethe for bryne to serue [serve] the occupation and walling of twelue daies.

3.—*Item*. they saie that by the said Custome noe p'son. [person] nor p'sons. shall or may wall or make anie salt, or haue the occupacon. of anie of the saide walling, vnles hee or they shall presentlie haue dwelled and inhabited the saide Towne by the space of one whole yeere then last past, and that noe forreiner dwelling out of the libertyes and boundes of this Towne shall haue anie occupacon. of walling w<sup>th</sup>in the Towne.

4.—*Item*. that none of the said inhabitants shall wall or haue the occupa'con. of anie more walling in the said Towne other then [than] as insueth: that is to saie, noe manner of married man about three dozen of leads, that is to saie, the walling belonging to sixe wich-houses: noe widdowe woman or single p'son being a batchler wch is not and hath not been married as aforesaid, or anie other p'son. or p'sons. haucing anie handcraft or occupation within the said Towne about the number of eighteene leades walling.

\* This expression is not synonymous with *salt-works*, as has often been erroneously stated. An explanation will be found on another page in this chapter.

† The occupation of a wich-house was reckoned from year to year; not however for twelve months, but for a period fixed by the Manorial Court, and entered on parchment deeds from time to time. An original deed of this kind, dated 24th March, 1579-80, witnessed by Sir Hugh Cholmley, Knight, Steward of Nantwich, and twenty-six of the inhabitants, and having the Town Seal appended, is now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq. This deed states that from the 17th June, 1573, to the 20th June, 1576, was a "*full terme of foure yeares for the occupation and mahynge of salt,*" the several years being dated as follows:—

<i>The Baron's Weeks began.</i>		<i>The New Year began.</i>	<i>Names of the Rulers.</i>
1st year	17th June, 1573.	11th October, 1573.	{ Reynold Wright.
			{ Richard Robinson.
			{ Richard Maddocke.
			{ John Moyle.
			{ do.
2nd year	14th April, 1574.	8th September, 1574.	{ Thomas Wright.
			{ John Tenche.
			{ Richard Wycksted.
			{ Richard Crewe.
			{ Humphrey Itell.
			{ Hugh Mynshull.
			{ Robert Goldsmith.
			{ Robert Lytlor.
3rd year	9th February, 1574-5.	24th June, 1575.	
4th year	10th October, 1575. 29th June, 1576.	25th January, 1575-6.	

5.—*Item*. that noe psons. dwelling in one house in the said Towne shall by anie manner of waies or meanes wall or haue the occupa'con of anie more walling at the most then [than] three dozen leads walling as be foresaide except all occupyers being tabled\* with others being occupyers; and that noe childe dwelinge with his or her father, the father lineing, being vnder the age of twentie yeares shall haue or be suffred to haue or occupie anie of the said walling.

6.—*Item*. the said Jurie doth saie and p'sent that once euerie yeere, that is to saie, at the Great Court yearely holden after the feast of St. Michell th' archangell, the Jurie at the same Court sworne uppon their oathes shall nominate and appoynt fower of the honest and skillfullest occupiers of the said walling to be RULERS, and ouer-seers of the said walling for that yeere; wch said Rulers being sworne before the STEWARD shall haue, and at all tymes haue had full power and authoritie to rule and order the saide walling as before-saide, and as hereafter is and shall be declared; viz. that euerie the said occupiers walling for a single house, (that is to witt, for eighteene leades or lesse), shall wall but single, therefore walling the first weeke shall stand and not wall ye later [latter] for that eighteene leads.

7.—*Item*. anie pson. walling† for a double house, that is to saie, for xxj leads or aboue unto three dozen, shall wall double according to the number of his leades aboue xvij leads; that is, xxj leads to wall once double; xxiiij leads twice double; xxvij leads thrice double; xxx leads fower times double; xxxiiij five times double; and three dozen leads sixe times double.

8.—*Item*. they saie that the sayd Rulers soe sworne haue, and haue had as before-saide authoritie from time to time, at euerie Kinding‡ to enter into euerie of the sayd wich-houses, and to search and foresee that none of the sayd inhabitants walling as before-saide shall occupie or wall but orderlye as before sayde; and if anie of the said inhabitants shall attempt to doe ye contrary, then the said Rulers haue and shall haue full authoritie & power to stopp and sett euerie of them by breaking down the wiche-houses, dores, or walls, or by strieking or knocking or puttinge downe of the same leads or otherwise at the discretion of ye said Rulers for reformation of the said disorder or misdemeanour of walling; and if anie of the said wallers or occupiers of walling in the saide Towne resist or lett [hinder] the said Rulers to rule as in this rolle is Contayned, to forfeitt to the Barons of ye saide Towne for euerie such offence or disorder the summe of xls. [40/-] bating one halfpennie; and further that the said Rulers shall and may lawfully call and take the whole officers and inhabitants of the sayd Towne, or as manie of them as be neere and will come to aid and assist them to enter into the wich-house as aforesaid and stopp and lett [hinder] the sayd disorder or misrule in walling; or if they or anie of them soe called and reasonable required therevnto, refuse to aid and assist the said Rulers as before-said, to forfeitt likewise the summe of ... vjs viij<sup>d</sup> [6/8].

9.—*Item*. the sayd Jurie say and p'sent that the custome aforesaide is, and the tyme whereof the memorie of man is not to the contrarie, hath bin that all and euerie pson. and psons. whatsoever[er] that they themselues, or anie his or their antecessor or antecessors, p'decessor, or p'decessors, whose right interest or estate he or they then haue, wch haue had, or hereafter shall fortune to haue, the possession or occupacon. of anie of the said wiche-houses or walling by the space of three yeares then last past, if he or they will find sufficient suertes to the said Rulers of the two honest psons. wth<sup>in</sup> the sayd Towne by obliga'con in the summe of xlii. [£40] to save and keepe them, the sayd Rulers, harmeles against euerie other pson. or psons. then claymeing the said walling, that then uppon such suertes soe found, the sayd Rulers shall prmit and suffer ye sayd pte. [party] soe fynding suertes, to haue and occupie the saide wallinge soe claimed untill the said matter betwix the said ptes. [parties] shall be ordered by due course of the lawe or order taken in some of the King or Queenes Maties. Court or Courtes, or otherwise agreed upon the said ptes:§ and if the

\* "Tabled;" i.e. living at the same table; and so synonymous with lodger, who boarded in the same house.

† "Walling" signifies boiling.

‡ "Kinding;" i.e. kindling, or lighting of the fire.

§ The meaning appears to be:—that in cases of dispute in the ownership or occupation of wiche-houses, any person who had been in possession for three years immediately preceding, was to be allowed to occupy until the case was decided in a Court of Law, on the condition of his entering into a bond of £40 to the Rulers of Walling. Otherwise, he was liable to immediate ejection by the Rulers.

said ptie. haueing ye possession by the space of three yeares, as before saide, refuse to fynde suertes as beforesaid, then if the other ptie. will and doe fynde like suertes as beforesaid, that then the saide Rulers shall likewise p'mitt & suffer the saide ptie. soe fynding suertes to occupye and enjoy the said walling as before sayde : and if neither of the saide pties. haue been in possession or occupacon. of ye said walling soe then in variance by the space of three yeares then last past, and both or either of them will fynde suertes as before, or if neither of them will fynde such suertes, that then and in all such cases the saide Rulers shall stopp and lett [hinder] eu'ie [every] of the sayd pties. soe pretending title untill they shall haue tried their righte as beforesayd ; and if the one of them will fynde suertes as beforesaid, and the other refuse soe to doe, that then the said Rulers shall p'mitt & suffer the said ptie. soe fynding suertes, as before sayd, to haue the occupac'on of the said walling then in variance, untill the sayd matter be determined as beforesaide.

10.—*Item.* the sayd Jurie p'sent that the saide custome is that euerie pson. & psons. whatsoever wch haue or of right ought to haue anie rent or rents whatsoever [er] going out of euerie the saide wiche-houses or walling ; and that if the walling belonging to the said wiche-house or wiche-houses be walled in anie other place in the saide Towne ; that then he or they that ought to haue any such rent or rents, shall and may from time to time, enter into anie of the saide wiche-houses, where the said walling shall fortune [happen] soe to be walled, and there to distraine for the said rent or rents, soe being due for the walling there walled, as beforesaid ; as well as if the said distresse had fortun'd to bee founde upon the saide landes, out of which the said rent is or shalbe going.

11.—*Item.* the said Jurie p'sent that the custom is and allwaies hath bin, that it shalbe lawfull for euerie pson. and psons. beinge occupiers from time to time, to make new and amende the *theets* [channels] wherein the bryne runneth in all such places betweene ye bryne-pitt and the wich-house, as hath bin used and accustomed of auncient time : and that euerie pson. and psons. and their briners [drawers of brine] shall and may lawfullie at all times haue free ingate and outgate & passage to and fro the said theetes, upon whose grounde soeuer they lye, to follow their brine, and to amende and repaire their said theetes accordinglie without anie contradiction of the said owners of such ground where anie such theetes do lie."

#### THE RULERS' OATH.

"You shall well and truely execute & serve ye Office yt shall appertaine to ye Rulers of Walling for this yeer next coming : you shall endeavor yorselves to ye uttermost of yor Witts, cunning, & knowledge, to sett [let] forth ye occupation of walling to ye most profit, behoof & advantage of ye Occupiers of ye same, & for ye com'onwealth of ye Towne. And that noe pson. or psons. shall wall for himself above 3 dozen leads to yor knowledge : nor anie Man for them being suspected without swearing : And yt Crafts-men [tradesmen], Widdowes, & Yong Men shall not Wall above 18 leads to yor knowledge, & according to ye former Customes heretofore made : And yt you nor any of you shall wall ye oftener for yor owne profit or advantage to ye hurt of yor neighbours, but fervently and iustly shall use the said office for ye best com'on-wealth of ye said Occupiers. And also you shall delay no time in setting [jetting] forth ye occupation whereby yorselves may haue advantage & yor neighbors disadvantage, but at all times see yt the same occupation may proceed truely & iustly, according to ye auncient Customes of Walling within ye said Towne, and for ye most com'onwealth of ye Lords and occupiers without any manner of delay or detracting of Time dureing ye said Office. And if there be any suspected psons. that say they wall for themselves, and you think they wall for other Men, you shall sweare them or informe the Stewarde to take their oathes upon a book, that the profit, behoof, use and advantage shall come clearly without fraud, covin, [*i.e.* to quiet by flattery] or any other manner of deceit whatsoever to themselves.

These points and all other that appertaine to yor Office, you shall, will, and truely keepe to ye uttermost of yor power & skill, So help you God &c."

Other Regulations, orders, &c. have already been given in the "Injunctions" of 1535, and in the Court Leet Rolls (see *Manorial History*). The first great change in the manufacture took place in 1632, when small *iron-pans* were substituted for lead-pans, of the same size and guage,\* each being about a square yard in area; and the use of *coal* instead of wood (see pp. 203 and 206).

On 26th Aug. 1617, the salt-works were visited by Royalty, as told by Webb, (see *Annals*, p. 121). From that description it may be inferred that little alteration had taken place in the *Brine-Pit*, which appears to have then flowed as a natural spring; out of which the *briners*, or drawers of brine, (*men*), lifted the salt-water with buckets. A considerable sum of money was expended in improving the Pit in 1656, according to the *Malbon MS.*, which says:—

"On or aboute the xvii<sup>th</sup> daye of June 1656 greate works att the Brine pitt weire began & continued vntill the 9<sup>th</sup> of September nexte followinge, wth outany int<sup>r</sup>mission, Savinge the fayre weeke, wch cost about CCC<sup>li</sup>. [£300]."

"*Thomas Malbon Junr.*, *Thomas Sparrowe*, & *John Watson* beinge the Rulers: *William Thrush* another Ruler (but then dead)."

Whatever those improvements were, the pit does not seem to have been deepened to any great extent, for in 1669 Dr. William Jackson described it as follows:—

"In Nantwich the pit is full seven yards [deep] from the footing about the pit, which is guessed to be the natural height of the ground, though the bank [Snow Hill] be six foot higher accidentally raised by rubbish of long making salt, or *walling* as they call it. In two places within our township the springs break up so in the meadows as to fret away not only the grass, but part of the earth, which lies like a breach at least half a foot or more lower than the turf of the meadow and has a salt liquor oozing as it were out of the mud, but very gently." (Phil. Trans. vol. iv. p. 1060; dated 15 Nov. 1669).

These natural salt-springs are still to be seen in precisely the same condition, the one near Beam Bridge, the other near Shrewbridge. Snow Hill, and Water-load, on the east side of the Weaver, and the Wood Streets and Wych-House Bank on the opposite side of the river, were the localities of Wich-Houses in former times. Several accounts of the manufacture of salt in the latter half of the seventeenth century are preserved. The remarks of Roger Wilbraham (see "*Towne Concernes*") on the Walling Customs in 1659, which he lived to see abolished, must now be read *cum grano salis*. Dr. Jackson gave details in 1670 in *Philos. Trans.* Nos. 53-4; and John Ray, the naturalist, in 1691, left an account, which has recently (1874) been reprinted by the English Dialect Society. But the most interesting account of all, which is given below, is from a MS. at Macclesfield, by Thomas Branckner, M.A., Grammar School Master there, who, in 1675, was sent by the Trustees of the School to Nantwich to enquire concerning the wiche-houses belonging to that school situated in Wood Street, Nantwich.† In his report to the Trustees he gave the following description of the salt-works in this town.‡

\* Lead-pans, found at Northwich many years ago, are preserved in the Museum at Warrington; the dimensions being 3½ ft. x 2½ ft. x 6 inches; and weighing 2 cwt. 1 qr. 18 lbs. A modern salt-pan of ordinary size has an area of 1500 square feet. *Iron-pans* had been used at South Shields in salt-making as early as 1489. See *Surtees' Durham* vol. ii. p. 95; and Sir Will. Brereton's *Travels*, Chet. Soc. Pub. vol. i. pp. 86-9.

† The present Wood Street school occupies part of the site of the Walling Land once belonging to the Macclesfield Grammar School.

‡ For this account I am indebted to the kindness of J. P. Earwaker, Esq., F.S.A.

“*Considerations about y<sup>e</sup> SALT WORKS at NAMPTWICHE belonging to y<sup>e</sup> SCHOLE of MACCLESFELD. 1675.*”

“June 10th, 1675. I went with Mr. Normandsel to Namptwich about the wallings of salt that belong to Macclesfeld Schole out of the Brine-pit in that Town. And the Information which there I had about that business as far as I could learn was this:—

In Namptwich there is only one large Brine-pit out of which salt is made by many persons each according to their respective concern.

The brine they say was once in one man’s possession, but in process of time and compact it is now the partial right of a great many; and now some have one dozen, others two, others 3, and one I hear hath 17 dozen; that is, walls 17 times while he that hath but 1 dozen walls once.

A Walling is boyling of salt for 26 hours, which in that place is called one days walling; 2 hours being allowed supernumerary to 24 for cleansing ye work, as they call it.

Four of these days walling is called a *kinding* or kindling; that is 104 hours; and so long the fire continues when once it is kindled in any wiche house (or house allotted for boiling of salt).

By reason of the several interests in y<sup>e</sup> same brine there are above 20 wiche houses, and all y<sup>e</sup> owners have a part of y<sup>e</sup> common brine, yea there are some that have right to y<sup>e</sup> brine whose houses are now fallen down, and they boil their salt in houses elsewhere borrowed or hired.

There be troughs to convey each mans brine from y<sup>e</sup> common pit whither he pleases for his use & every man knows his own troughs.

Macclesfeld Schole hath 3 dozen days walling but, but [*i.e.* only] one house, which was once thought sufficiently employed by 1 dozen wallings, the other two houses are down: yet will it quit nobodys cost to erect new ones, because by y<sup>e</sup> decay of the salt trade such houses must needs ly [*lie*] still frequently so long, as soon to fall to decay again.

All owners of Brine contribute to maintaining the common pit, for cleansing it, and repairing y<sup>e</sup> walls and timber, &c.

And because all ye owners had their title from one, they are now a society or corporation; and have lawes to preserve y<sup>e</sup> community & each man’s proportional propriety.

Hence it follows, that no man must wall beyond his proportion that, within ye same compass, as he that is greatest hath walled his, he also that is meanest may wall his also.\*

And to this end there be at every Michaelmas Court Leet, 4 Rulers chosen who are sworn to their office for one year. These Rulers are—

- 1.—To estimate the price and vent [*sale*] of Salt, and
- 2.—To allot the time of every man’s walling according to proportion, and to see that none of y<sup>e</sup> houses be left so unemployed that they decay for want of use.
- 3.—To be present (one or more of them) at y<sup>e</sup> beginning and end of every fire that is kindled in any wiche house, to see and be able to make oath of it that their kindings began and ended according to right.

\* John Ray says (*l.* 1691):—“The lords of the pit appoint how much shall be boiled as they see occasion, *that the trade be not clogged.*”

“When there is occasion for salt to be made, the Rulers cause a cryer to make proclamation, that so all parties concerned may put to their fires at the same time; and so when they shall cease at a determinate hour, at which they must give over; else they cause their salt to be marred by casting dirt into it or the like.”



4.—To keep an exact account of every days walling in each house throughout their year, and also to record in what house and for how many dayes any man borrowed or hired his walling. And to register y<sup>e</sup> names of y<sup>e</sup> chiefe workman in each kindling and under whom he wrought.

5.—To make taxes that concern ye charge of ye wich-houses and brine-pit.

Other officers they have but y<sup>e</sup> particulars I have not met withall. These Rulers order that account which they call their *Making Meet*; that is, according to rise or fall of salt, so they may all of them wall sooner or later their whole course. Of this, the Rulers, as was said, are judges; and they order that in such or such a time all the proprietors shall have all their wallings according to *kale* (or call).

And because in this *making meet* perhaps the time may be (by reason of ill trade) so long as that those that have but small interest would not have sufficient employment for their houses, therefore the Rulers have power to debar any man from walling all his whole number in his own wiche-house, that soe he may sell it, or set [*i.e.* let] it to be done in some other house, that all ye houses may be preserved.

As for instance, the Schole of Macclesfeld hath right to 36 days walling in one making meet. Yet if ye Rulers see cause they will order that we shall not wall our whole 36 in our house, but only 24, 28, or 32 as the trade is; and the rest of ye wallings we must be obliged to take in some other house for ye common good. For the brine is ye same whither so ever it be carryed; the charge of *Pumping*\* (which each proprietor bears for himselfe) is ye same: and the charge of setting up ovens and pans &c. is ye same in all; for it must be renewed every kindling.

This *Making meet* was, when trade was quick, every halfe year; and the former halfe year, or *first making meet*, they call the *new year*; the later halfe year, or making meet, they called the *Barons weeks* (of Malbank, I suppose, whose ye brine once entirely was). But now by reason of the many other pits of brine in Cheshire, these times of *Making meet* are not within 12 or 18 or 21 months, and it is reasonably feared that they will shortly be extended to 24 months.

The whole number of wallings in ye Rulers books is accounted by 6, or half-dozens; and belonging to ye whole pit there be in one making meet 216 halfe dozens, of which Macclesfeld schole hath 6. And yet by some accidents or other, they may not all be walled out in any *one making meet*.

Each wiche house hath 2 *ovens*, a *ship*, a *chamber*, or *store*, and 2 *iron pans*. All ye pans in ye town are to be of one assize, for dimension and depth.

The *Pans* are to boil ye brine in. The *Ovens* are furnace holes, or fire places to make fire under the pans and are furnished with *bearers* and *crosse bars* all of iron to make ye coal fire on, so as it may have vent for ye ashes to fall through, as is easy to conceive.

The fire that is made in ye ovens is carryed back into another room through two stone pipes, at ye end of which rises ye chimney that vents ye smoak of both, and this back room is called ye *chamber* or *store*, because there they set ye wet salt to dry in their *barrows*.

\* This is the earliest mention of brine being raised out of the Pit by *Pumping*.

*Barrows* are made of rods or splints, in shape like a very long eggshell open at one end; they contain 2 measures, [*i.e.* 2 bushels, or 112 lbs.] The 2 pans in each wiche-house make of these *barrows* 7 each 5 hours.

The *ship* is a long and deep trough that runs along ye side of ye wiche-house within; to hold brine brought thither by ye troughs without; and they are made so large as to hold brine for 4 days walling, or one kindling.

Out of these *ships* at each 5 hours end, they fill their pans, and as soon as ever ye water is in ye pans they prepare their white of eggs and blood &c. to cleanse ye brine; for it brings off a dirty scum, all to one corner of ye pan. This they take off and put it into a trough hard by for that purpose, till they can have time to carry it out; and this is ye chiefe part of their muck or manure as they call it; which as it is blended with all sorts of sweepings and cleansings of the wiche-house, else is sold for 10<sup>d.</sup> 11<sup>d.</sup> 12<sup>d.</sup> and sometimes more by the cart load.

The *Barrows* of dry salt are sold now for 15<sup>d.</sup> or 16<sup>d.</sup> the barrow."

[END OF MR. BRANCKNER'S ACCOUNT.]

In addition to the above details, other particulars of the process of manufacture, by Dr. William Jackson, about the year 1670, are given in "*Philosophical Transactions*" Nos. 53 and 54, as follows:—

"The pit at Nantwich is seven yards deep; but the general depth is not above four. It yields one pound [lb] of salt for 6 lbs. of brine. The pans in which the salt is boiled are set on iron bars, and closed up on all sides with clay and bricks. After filling them, they put into the brine, a mixture of brine and cows' or sheeps' blood, two quarts into a pan of 360 quarts. This occasions a scum, which they take off, and continue the fire as quick as possible till half the brine be wasted. They then replenish it, adding a mixture of whites of eggs and brine. When the scum of this is removed, and part of the brine wasted, they throw in a quarter of a pint of strong ale; slackening their fire and lading in what is called *leach brine*, which is such as runs from the salt when it is taken up before it hardens. After all this is in, they boil it gently till a thin crust rises, which is the first appearance of the salt. This sinking, the brine gathers into corns at the bottom of the pans, and they take it out with their *loots* or *wooden rakes*, long square boards with handles, and put into *barrows*, or pyramidal wicker baskets; which, after the leach brine is drained out, they remove into their hot-house to dry."

On the 24th Feb. 1691, an assessment of 6½d. in the £ upon all estates, both real and personal, within the township of Nantwich, was made pursuant to Act of Parliament for the collecting of the sum of £48 12s. 4d., being the quarterly payment of the Royal Aid, towards carrying on a vigorous war against France. There were at that time, according to Ray, about *fifty* wiche-houses, which, together with the other houses in the town, were assessed in their due proportions. But besides these, is particularized the assessment of the *Walling*, calculated on the customary 216 vessels of brine supplied to the wiche-houses, namely, 18 dozens (18 × 12 = 216) at 6½d. per doz., amounting to £2 18s. 6d.; "Maxfield [Macclesfield] walling excepted."\*

\* From the Rate Book, *penes*, G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

Shortly after, the ancient customs of walling, which had become too antiquated, were discontinued and the Lords of Walling overthrown; brine was no longer supplied to the wiche-houses in fixed quantities at stated intervals, but the pit and works were simply let to tenants at certain rentals without restrictions as to working.\*

How this came about, is told by Randle Wilbraham in the Wilb. MS. collections, as follows:—

*ANCIENT CUSTOMS ABOLISHED.*

"The beginning of June 1696, SAMUEL ACTON of Nampton, Tobacconist, began to sink a Brine Pitt, in the Woodroom belonging to a wich-house, wch hee had purchased of one Braine; wch did much alarme the Ancient Proprietors or Lords of Walling; and the Rulers threatening to disturb this Innovator, Hee apply'd to the H[igh] C[ourt] of Chancery: & from thence obtained an Injunction to Quiet the possession of his new Brine pitt; wch being finish & Brine found therein; hee began to make Salt Nov. 13th 1696.

The Proprietors† on the other hand, prayd upon their Answer that the Injunction might bee dissolved, upon severall allegations, and upon a hearing the Lord Keeper Somers ordered that these four severall issues should bee Tryde att common Law in *Cur. Ban. Reg.* [the Court of King's Bench], viz. :—

I.—*Whether there bee such a plott of Lande call'd Walling Land.*

II.—*Whether Mr. Actons Brine pitt bee within the compasse of the Walling land.*

III.—*Whether there bee any Ancient Customes to restraine the use of the brine springs flowing in the said Walling Land.*

IV.—*Whether Mr. Acton by drawing Brine out of his new Pit, did diminish the Brine of the old Pit, & to what degree."*

Upon the Tryall most of the issues were found for the Proprietors, except the second; wch being the ground of their complaint, the injunction was not like to bee dissolved; without that was prov'd: and therefore, presuming that they had hard measure from the Jury; and their cause not sett in a true light; they mov'd for a new Tryall, and a view [*i.e.* inspection of the land], & obtained an Order for it; and therein prevailed in every One of the issues, upon full proof and evidence.

But the record being returned into the Ct. of Chancery, the Proprietors found a new Lord Keepr upon that Bench. The seale being taken from the Ld. Somers,‡ and given to Sir Nathan Wright serjeant at Law, who having been of Mr. Actons councill in his cause, was forward to take umbrage att any thing, that might assist & favour his Client, who having got some Affidavits drawne, that the Jurye were treated with Wine; and that the Gentlemen who came down upon the view were influent by our Councill; wch attended them upon their sd. view; (The fact in truth was only this, One of the Jurye drinking noe malt liquor,

\* Droitwich, in Worcestershire, had a few years before taken the initiative by overthrowing similar trade customs there as recorded in the Holt and Gregson MSS. (vol. xix, p. 140, Liverpool Free Pub. Lib.) as follows:—

"In Jas. I time every person employed in making salt, sometime before the Day fixed for beginning to make it (for then also it was made only one half of the year) gave notice to sworne officers of the number of Phats [pans] he occupied. For each Phat, these officers delivered to him 18 vessels of brine; six from the bottom of the Pit, where the brine was strongest, six from the middle & six from the top, where weakest. 216 vessels made the whole half-years *Walling*; an Anglo-Saxon word for boiling.

In Chas. II reign, the thanks of the Corporation were given to Winter Norris for extending the sale of Salt; & in the same reign one, Gardener, was encouraged to sell Wich salt in Berkeley in Gloucestershire; none having been sent before so great a distance.

In the first year of William & Mary [1688] an Act was passed for better regulating the Salt at Droitwich; and under this Act the Governors & proprietors of salt-works, prevented every one from sinking new Pits, until Robert Stigner Esq. sunk two pits upon his freehold abt the year 1690. The Corporation sued him, & he defended himself at the expense of £6000; which after various tryals was finally determined in his favour in the year 1695. In consequence of this determination many persons sunk pits upon their own land; the main spring was destroyed, the trade greatly extended, and Salt reduced from 2s. to 4d. per Bushell."

† The defendants in this law-suit were:—HUGH LORD CHOLMONDELEY, RICHARD WALTHALL ESQ., RICHARD WRIGHT ESQ., THOMAS BULLEN, SABOTH CHURCH, HUGH DELVES, THOMAS STRINGER, GEORGE CUDWORTH; the plaintiff being Samuel Acton.

‡ Lord Somers, Chancellor of England, having been dismissed from office in 1700.

Mr. Bromhall sent him from his owne house, a Pint of Sherry, and Mr. Hawkins one of the Councell for the Proprietors did goe along with the Jury on the viewe, but never said or did anything to influence them): The Lord Keeper ordered a new Tryall & would not allow the proprietors to have the costs recover'd in the last, wch amounted to about £180.\*

By this tyme with such various successes both p'tys. [parties] were growne weary (& their purses being out of breath) were inclined to parley. What Mr. Actons expenses were is best knowne to himself; but the Proprietors besides ye losse of their Walling, wch was employ'd towards the maintenance of the suit, had by severall assessments of 40s. and 50s. per dozen upon their Walling, rais'd considerable summs; and those who wanted ready money to pay downe their Quota's, took up severall large summs upon interest, and being jointly bound drew upon themselves a debt in the whole amounting to £800; wch made it high time to put an end to so unprofitable a contest; whereupon Mr. Masterson for Mr. Acton, and I [Randle Wilbraham] for the proprietors, mett att Weston, and att last agreed that Mr. Acton should have a lease of the Towne Walling for the terme of 11 years; att the Rent of £100 per ann.; wch Rent by consent of the Proprietors was to be employed towards the payment of the debt beforemention'd, and that after the expiration of the said Terme of 11 yrs. Mr. Acton should demolish his new pitt, and make no further use of it. This Terme did commence att Lady Day 1702.

Prsuant to the Agreemt last mentioned, Mr. Acton had the Towne Walling, tho hee made but little use of it; but within two or three yeares of the expiration of his Terme; Finding I suppose sweetness thereby, hee agreed with Mr. Hugh Delves for an orchard, and some few Cottages, & Gardens in Middle-stich [between Wood Street and the River] out of the compasse of Walling Land, and there sank a Brine Pitt, and erected a Wich-House, without any obstruction.

Upon the expiration of Mr. Actons Terme in the Towne works, The Wichhouses for the most part, being either demolisht,† or much out of repaire, and the proprietors utterly unprovided of Panns, Irons, and barrows, for the making of Salt; they agreed with Mr. Acton for a further Terme of Two yeares, att the rent of £108 per ann., wch is to commence this prsent Lady Day 1713.

To satisfie my posterity how this branche of the Revenue of our family came to be lopt, I have thought fitt to insert this short memorial. R. W." [Randle Wilbraham].

In spite of the enterprise of Mr. Acton, the salt-trade at Nantwich did not increase, owing to circumstances that led to the centralization of the trade in Mid-Cheshire. In 1670 the first bed of Rock Salt had been discovered, when searching for coal, at Marbury, near Northwich, though some years elapsed before mining operations were commenced. About the year 1700 brine-springs were discovered at Winsford.§ In 1721 (7 Geo. I) an Act of Parliament was obtained by which the Weaver was made navigable from the Mersey to Winsford Bridge, thereby facilitating the transit of coal from Lancashire and manufactured salt to Liverpool as an article of *export*. Deeper pits were sunk at Winsford and Northwich, and a stronger brine obtained at depths varying from thirty-five to seventy yards; "*some brine being drawn from Rock Salt Pits, that had*" (probably through bad mining) "*fallen in.*"§ Speaking of the flooded pits, the same writer says, "this Brine varies much in strength, some is so weak as not to be used without a solution of rock

\* In one of Roger Wilbraham's Pocket Almanacs is the following entry:—

"1698. Oct. 19. To Mr. Delves one of ye Rulers of Walling to carry on ye suit against Acton, £5 os. od."

† The Will of Richard Horton, landlord of the Lamb Inn, Nantwich, dated 1 Feb. 1714, and proved at Chester 10 Oct. 1715, mentions three several properties and vacant lands, on Snow Hill, which had formerly been the site of wich-houses.

‡ See "Salt-trade," by Wilkins, *Holt and Gregson MSS.*, vol. xix, p. 242. Liverpool Free Public Library.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

salt; whilst other Brine is nearly saturated." From that time, probably, commenced the subsidence of land in the neighbourhood of Northwich, which has, in later years, by continuing the practice of flooding old mines, assumed so serious an aspect.

To resuscitate the fast declining salt-trade an attempt was made to connect this town with Liverpool and the export trade by lengthening the navigation of the Weaver from Winsford Bridge to Nantwich. For this purpose an Act of Parliament was obtained in 7 Geo. II [1733-4] by WILLIAM MAISTERSON, ESQ., and THOMAS WILLIAMS, GENT., both of Nantwich; which, unfortunately, was never carried out, "owing," says Partridge, "to the jealousies and disputes betwixt the inhabitants and the persons employed to solicit the Act, who were deemed to have acted too partially in favor of themselves, and precluding



THE OLD "LAMB" HOTEL.

in a great measure the advantages the other subscribers to the expense in obtaining the Act ought to have enjoyed."—(*Hist. Nant.* p. 59). No less than 222 names of townspeople and local gentry occur,\* as "Commissioners for determining controversies," in the Bill, which states that Nantwich was the largest town in the County. From that time, however, Nantwich became of secondary importance as a salt-town; the trade was confined to local districts, salt still being carried in packs on horse-back into Salop, the neighbouring counties, and North Wales.

\* Of these names the following may be mentioned:—The Rt. Hon. Lord Kilmorey; Hon. James Cholmondeley; Sir Robt. Salusbury Cotton, Bart.; Sir Philip Chetwode, Bart.; Rev. Thos. Brooke, LL.D.; John Crewe, Esq.; The Earl of Dysart; Rev. Joseph Harwar, Vicar of Acton; Roger Wilbraham, of Nantwich; Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold; Roger Wilbraham, of Hough; Randle Wilbraham, of Rode; Peter Walthall; Gabriel Wettenhall; Nathaniel Wettenhall; Edward Wettenhall; Clutton Wright; Thomas Wicksted; John Wicksted; Samuel Watkiss; Ashton Williams; George Salmon, of Hough; John Starkey, of Wrenbury; John Pratchett, of Worleston; Francis Elcock; John Bromhall; Edward Windsor; Esquires, &c., &c.

Probably about this time the picturesque custom of "*Blessing the Brine*,"\* on Ascension day, when the inhabitants assembled in gala dress round the "*Old Biot*," which was dressed with flowers and rustic finery, to pass the day in dancing, feasting, and merriment, died out.—(*Partridge*, p. 59-60).

Whilst the Parish Registers seldom mention the "*wallers*" and "*briners*" of olden days, perhaps, because they were of the lowest class of the inhabitants, the names of principal salt-makers, Rulers, Officers, and Excise-men frequently occur in those records. Of the last named, implying the existence of the salt-duty, the following are early mentions in Burial Register.

- " 1698. May 11. Baddington, son of William Petty of Dirtwich, Excise Officer.  
 " " 23. Shusanna, dau. of Arthur Keay, Salt Officer.  
 1702. Dec. 20. Backwell, son of Richd. Wilson, supervisor of y<sup>e</sup> Salt-Duty,  
 1705. July 7. Zachariah Turpenny, salt-officer, buried at Acton.  
 1712. Nov. 11. John Godwin, Gent., supervisor of the Salt Duty.  
 1726, July 22. Jonathan Brown, Gent., Collector of the Salt Duty."

John, first Lord Crewe, was mainly instrumental in bringing about the repeal of the Salt duty "which bore very heavily upon Cheese makers, and forced them to an habitual and most demoralizing evasion of the law. Salt-smuggling was a trade countenanced and supported by almost every farmer in the county."† During the French war the duty rose to 15s. per bushell or £30 a ton; and it was not until 1822 that it was reduced to 2s. per bushell; the duty being finally repealed in 1825. In 1774 there were only "two salt-works of five large pans of wrought iron" belonging to Richard Hassall, one situated in Water-Lode and the other on Wych House Bank; these produced about five hundred tons of salt per annum, the duty (5s. per bushel of 56 lbs.) then amounting to £5000. The Chester Canal, which was finished in 1779, but was not brought into the town, failed to revive the long lost trade; and according to a printed Survey of the town dated 1792, the salt-house on Wych House Bank is described as "*in decay and un-used*." After the death of Richard Hassall,‡ the son of the Salt-proprietor above mentioned, in 1820, Mr. Davis succeeded to the last salt-work, which was situated between Water-Lode and the Bridge. In the hope of obtaining a stronger brine, he first made three new borings on the Wych House Bank, and afterwards deepened the old pit,§ and superseded the old horse "gin" with a steam pump; having mortgaged the works in the sum of £4000 to George Walker, Esq., of Chester; who bequeathed them to his only daughter, the wife of the Rev. Dr. Burton, sometime incumbent of All Saints', Manchester. In 1837 J. H. Bradley, Esq., (now of Droitwich) leased the work for twenty-one years; and sub-let it first to Mr. Ellicker, and afterwards to Mr. Beckett, who in 1845 withdrew in favour of Mr. Thomas Wright Townley, the last salt-manufacturer of Nantwich; the works being finally closed in the year 1856.

In these last days, Lord Crewe received, by ancient right, 10s. per ann. as toll for

\* The late Lieut.-Col. Egerton Leigh, M.P., in his "*Cheshire Ballads*," gives a song entitled "*Blessing the Brine*."

† Hinchliffe's "*Barthomley*," p. 305. The duty was felt a great hardship; because, in 1818, when manufactured salt was exported duty free, the home consumer was taxed in the excessive duty of £30 per ton.

‡ In the Churchyard are two flat stones thus inscribed:—

[1] "Richard Hassell, Salt-Proprietor, who departed this life Sept. 7, 1812, aged 83 years."

[2] "Richard Hassell, who departed this life 15 March, 1820, aged 65 years."

§ The present depth of the Brine Pit is, according to recent soundings, 57 ft.—(Information by W. Cooper, Esq.)

brine, manufactured in the three pan-houses, (one of which is still standing) which produced about twenty tons of salt per week. A ton of coals was required to make a ton of salt, which was sold at 18s. to 20s. per ton.

It is an interesting fact that an upper room in the salt-works was let by Mr. Townley to the *Rev. H. Alcocke*, Catholic Priest of Crewe, who held meetings there until *St. ANNE's CHAPEL* was built, and thus gathered together the Roman Catholic Church of modern times.

A project for making Nantwich a brine pumping station was mooted and abandoned in 1875. After having been closed for about a quarter of a century, the ancient *BRINE-PIT* was purchased by William Cooper, Esq., of White-Hall, Welsh Row; who in 1882 had it cleaned out at considerable expense, for the purpose of supplying the newly erected *MEDICINAL BATHS* with brine.

## Corn Mill and Cotton Factory.

The earliest mention of Nantwich Mill occurs in one of the undated Sneyd Charters preserved at Keele, Staffordshire; which is believed to date back as far as 1228. (See p. 6).

In ancient times a corn-mill was an important accessory to a manor, and often embraced the monopoly of a wide circuit of country, within which no one could grind corn without paying *molage* or toll to the dominant miller. Mr. Beamont says, the millers "took toll in kind, and, consequently, making no bad debts, were a sure source of profit to their owners, who were able, therefore, both to afford higher rents, and, as few other tenants could, to pay them in money."\* Manorial rights over the mill at Nantwich, as in the case of the Brine-pit, were exercised by the different lords of the town; thus, for example, according to an *Inq. p. m.* 16 Ric. II. [1392-3] *RICHARD DE LEFTWICH* held *inter alia*, the eighteenth part of the profits of the water corn-mill here. From the "Rental" given on page 62, it appears that early in the sixteenth century, the *LOVELL* and *AUDLEY* shares of the Mill had been purchased respectively by *WILLIAM CHURCH*, of this town, and *SIR RANULPH EGERTON, KT.*, who died 4th March, 1528, and was buried in his newly founded Chantry Chapel in Bunbury Church; his will (dated 26th March, 1525) providing for two Chantry priests "to be maintained out of his Mills in Nantwich and wyche-house and other lands." &c.

In the following century the *Egerton* family appear to have become sole proprietors of the Mill. The *Inq. p. m.* of *RALPH EGERTON, ESQ.*, 18 Jac. I [1621], found him "possessed of lands in *Wich Malbank* and water of *Weever* in *Namtwiche*;" his heir being *SIR RICHARD EGERTON, KT.*, of whom *Webb* says, in his description of the town (c. 1621), that the "fair and profitable mills for the service and use of the town are his inheritance." *Sir Richard* died 15th Feb. 1627-8, and was succeeded by his son and heir, *RICHARD EGERTON*, who dissipated his estates, worth £5000 per annum, in gaming; and thus the Corn Mill came by purchase into the possession of *ROBERT CHOLMONDELEY, Baron* of *Wich Malbank*, about the year 1650; and continued in the same family for nearly two hundred years, until it was sold by *GEORGE* second *MARQUIS OF CHOLMONDELEY*, about the year 1840, to *MESSRS. BOWER & Co.*

\* *Cheshire and Lancashire Domesday Book*, 1863, p. xxxi.

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THE COTTON-MILL.

About the year 1789 the Corn-mill was changed into a Factory for Cotton-spinning; the original firm being MESSRS. BIRCH, RANGLES, and BOWER; MR. MICHAEL BOTT, of Burton-on-Trent, becoming a partner in 1790. The cotton manufacture had been introduced into the town about 1785, in a building on the Weaver on the site of gardens now opposite Bowers' Row, and adjacent to the Waterworks. This Cotton Factory and Waterworks, in 1792, belonged to MESSRS. EDLESTON & Co.; though it was commonly called *Fogg's Mill*, (from Ralph Fogg, Cotton-Master) and was destroyed by fire in 1799. The other Mill in 1797 was considerably enlarged, and steam machinery was added, mainly through the enterprise of Mr. Bott; and from that time it was spoken of as *Bott's Mill*.\* This Cotton Mill, which was a source of great gain to the company, was worked chiefly by children apprentices of both sexes, procured from workhouses and foundling hospitals in various parts of the country;† and even from Ireland. A rigorous system of labour was enforced by overlookers, the factory being worked night and day by two sets of hands. Sir Robert Peel's Act for ameliorating the condition of children apprentices in Cotton Factories came into operation in June, 1802; and as a result the Mill apprentices, though still hard worked, were well-fed, well-clothed, and lived in a large, airy house that stood on the site of the present "Ebenezer" Chapel, under the superintendence of an elderly matron. They had recreation in an adjoining yard, and their religious instruction consisted in their attendance every Sunday at the Parish Church. At the sale of machinery in 1874, the following curious notice relating to runaway apprentices was found amongst some old papers.

"Whereas several of the apprentices belonging to the cotton works in Nantwich have absented themselves without the approbation of their master, this is to give notice, that whoever will restore to the proprietors of the said cotton works, any of the said runaway apprentices, shall be allowed one guinea as a reward, and sixpence per mile as expenses for every mile exceeding eight, necessarily travelled with them for that purpose: or half a guinea for such advice by post letter, or otherwise, as will lead to their apprehension; and whoever harbours or employs any of them after this said notice, will be proceeded against with the utmost rigour.

The usual dress of the above Apprentices for Boys on *Sundays*: an olive drab woollen cloth coat and waistcoat, turned up with green, and green side seams or welts, and leather breeches.

*Working Dress*: Jacket and waistcoat of the same cloth and facings, linen trousers, a felt hat, or leather cap, and the buttons on both dresses are stamped Bott & Co. Nantwich.

*Girls' Sunday Dress*: An olive or drab calico gown with apron of the same, a dark coloured woollen petticoat.

*Girls' Working Dress*: Bedgown and petticoat of the same, or in lieu of the bedgown, a linen brat apron with sleeves."

\* The Parish Register records:—

"1786. Sep. 22. William, son of William Peers, Cotton Manufacturer." [Baptised.]

"1790. Dec. 12. Ralph, son of Ralph Fogg, Cotton Master." [Buried.]

"1791. Dec. 28. Richard Galley of N. cotton Manufacturer married Elizabeth Davies of Nantwich."

"1792. July 12. Joseph Davies, Cotton spinner, & Ann Clutton of N. married."

"1793. Feb. 19. James Sproson, an Apprentice to Bott & Co." [Buried.]

"1794. June 1. John Hayes, apprentice to Mr. Bott, and killed by a wheel at ye Cotton Mill." [Buried].

† Mrs. Sarah Steele, widow, who died on 16th Nov. 1878, at the advanced age of 98, informed me that she was brought from Cirencester, co. Gloucester, in the year 1788, being at that time only 8 years old, to be apprenticed at *Bott's Mill*. She well remembered the destruction of the smaller Mill, and used to say that she was the first to raise the alarm of fire. Interesting letters relating to cotton-mill apprentices will be found in *Gent. Mag.* for 1804, p. 491-4, 711, &c.



In 1825 Mr. Bott withdrew and retired to his newly built mansion at Shrewbridge; the firm then being *Messrs. Bower and Wright*. Mr. Bower died in 1834, and was succeeded by his son THOMAS BOWER, ESQ.; two new partners, named LOWE, joined, and purchased the mill from the Marquis of Cholmondeley; raised it to its present height, and added new machinery. For two years after 1846 the mill was idle; it was then sold to *Mr. Whitelegge*, who, during the cotton famine (1861-5), sold it to *Messrs. Terrington, Gill & Co.*, from whom it was purchased by *Mr. William Hodgson* in Nov. 1873. In the spring of 1874 the female operatives struck for a shilling per week advance in their wages, (their earnings then being 9s. per week) which was refused; the mill being finally closed in the beginning of June, 1874. Fortunately many of the women found employment in the new Clothing Factory on the Barony, but some families were obliged to leave the town. After having been used as a Cotton Spinning Factory for about eighty-five years, it was again purchased for a *Corn Mill*, by Mr. John Whittingham, of Bartherton Mill. Part of the premises is utilized as a Foundry for making Agricultural Implements; and the upper story of the wings as a Clothing Factory.

## Weaving and Stocking-Trades.

Mr. Partridge says (*Hist. Nant.* p. 58) "the *Bone-lace and Knit-stocking* trades, which were heretofore considerable in this town are now [1774] quite declined." *Bone-lace Weaving*, so called because *bone* pins were used instead of metal pins, which were too expensive; and *Frame-work Knitting*, carried on by means of the old Stocking-frame invented by William Lee, of Woodborough, Notts., in 1589, were trades once widely spread over the country. During the Protectorate the stocking-frame knitters obtained a charter, by which they exercised a monopoly in many towns, until 1753, when legal proceedings were taken, which eventually set aside the charter, and the trade became centralized in the counties of Nottingham and Leicester.

Frequent mentions of persons engaged in these occupations are to be found in the Parish Registers; from which the following extracts are selected:—

- " 1630. Aug. 22. Thomas son of Thomas Smith, bone-lace weaver. [Baptised].
- 1651-2. Feb. 22. Jonn, son of Thomas Dutton, Silke weaver. [Baptised].
- 1671-2. Jan. 28. Randle, son of Thomas Massey, silk weaver. [Baptised].
- "   March 5. Randle, son of Richard Marshall, silk-stocking weaver. [Baptised].
- 1683-4. Feb. 8. John Millington, Silk weaver. [Buried].
- 1699. Dec. 19. James Wilson, silk-stocking weaver. [Buried].
- 1707. July 13. William son of William Dale, frame-work Knitter. [Buried].
- 1707-8. Feb. 15. Jonathan, son of Thomas Noden, Frame-work Knitter, [Buried].
- 1715-6. Feb. 15. James fletcher, Frame-work Knitter. [Buried].
- 1742. Oct. 19. Thomas Marshall Stocking-Knitter. [Buried].
- 1792. Feb. 20. Thomas Sant, frame-work Knitter & Mary Owen of Acton. [Married]."

This Thomas Sant was the last person who worked a stocking loom in this town in and after the year 1825.

## Shoemaking.

For three hundred years at least, tanning and shoemaking have been important trades in Nantwich. The names of *Tench*, *Oulton*, *Wright*, *Comberbach*, *Wettenhall*, &c., occur in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as tanners; whilst shoemakers, cordwainers, and cobblers are mentioned in the Registers more frequently than any other class of men. Comparatively little change took place in the art of shoemaking until about twenty-five years ago. In former times the master-shoemakers were many and poor. They worked in their cottage homes with two or three apprentices; (the master's wife or daughters working, too, as hand-binders;) and attended the shoe-market at Shudehill, Manchester, every Friday; performing the journey, sometimes by the Carrier's cart, but oftener on foot. The following prices of a pair of men's shoes at the dates here given, are taken from the Account Books of the Wright's Trustees; it would be curious to know what the earnings of the poor shoemakers were in those days.

A pair of men's shoes in 1656,\* cost 3s.; in 1738, 4s.; in 1768, 4s. 6d.; in 1769, "leather being dearer," 5s.; in 1800, 6s.; in 1825, 7s. 6d.; in 1838, 9s. 6d. In 1825 an industrious workman could make *one pair* of men's shoes in one day, for which he received 1s. 10d.; few earned more than 9s. per week, though working from twelve to sixteen hours per day. Hand-binders (women) earned on an average 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per week. Boys were apprenticed for seven years, and received 6d. per week for the first year, 9d. per week for the second year; and so advancing 3d. per week each year. It may not be generally known that "*rights*" and "*lefts*" in shoes were, at the beginning of this century, things unknown in the trade. The principal manufacturers in this town in 1825 were Messrs. John Davenport, William Davenport, and Thomas Barker, who, being capitalists, opened small factories, ("*Colleges*" they were called), and employed more labour. No change of any importance occurred until the introduction of "*machine bound boot-tops*," by Mr. Bostock, of Stafford, in July, 1858. In the following year Mr. Leonard Gilbert, a native manufacturer, in spite of the bitterest opposition and ill-treatment from his fellow townsmen, introduced sewing machines, and built the first Shoe-factory. In course of time the other masters, one by one, purchased machines; and the men, after suffering privation and want, the trade society's funds being exhausted, began to succumb to the inevitable. Scarcely, however, had these troubles subsided, when another innovation aroused old prejudices. "*Rivetting*" or "*tinkering-shops*," as they were derisively called, were established with a view of superseding "*stitch-work*;" and again, great opposition was raised on the ground that it was impossible to manufacture boots *ad infinitum*, and suppose that feet, somehow or other, would be found for them,—the demand always keeping pace with the supply. But the fears of the old shoemakers were gradually dispelled during the decade of commercial prosperity from 1865 to 1875, when high-storied factories were erected, finding more employment for work-people of both sexes at increased wages. The trade, however, was seriously affected by two strikes; the first commencing on 10th May, 1872, and lasting thirteen weeks, until the 21st August; and the second beginning

\* The wages paid by King James I to his shoemaker are recorded in *Cal. State Papers*, vol. 119, dated 28 Jan. 1621-2; thus:—"Grant to John Smith of the office of Shoemaker to the King with the fee of 12d. per day for life."

on 8th May, 1873, and terminating on the 14th July, a period of nine weeks. In consequence of these strikes, a considerable amount of the shoe-trade was alienated from the town, and has not at present been recovered; many of the manufacturers have thereby suffered great loss; and, but for the establishing of Clothing factories, the position of the workpeople must have been deplorable in the extreme.

## Gloving and other decayed trades.

Gloves were made at Nantwich more than three hundred years ago, as proved by the Parish Register.

"1574-5. March 19. Ellen, dau. of William Shenton, *glover*." [Baptized].

"1575-6. Jan. 2. Eliz. dau. of Henry Clarke, *glover*." [Baptized].

"1580-1. March 24. Margaret, dau. of George Debrah, *glover*." [Baptized].

In former times gloves were expensive articles, the importation of foreign made goods being prohibited until the year 1825. The trade was carried on at Nantwich on a small scale until April, 1863; the last manufacturer being Mr. William Davies, of Pepper Street, whose female apprentices are still remembered for their neat attire and extreme cleanliness.

The Parish Registers afford abundant evidence of other occupations in the eighteenth century that have since passed away; such as *Peruke-makers*; *Tobacco manufacturers*; *Flax-dressers*; *Dyers*; *Stay-makers*; *Straw-plaiters*; *Thread-makers*, &c. Tobacco and Thread were manufactured in Barker Street, in buildings still standing. A *Dye-house* occurs in a Rate Book in 1691 in *Middlesiche*; the *straw-plaiters* lived, until about fifty years ago, in Wood Street, Wall Lane, and Vauxhall.

## Clothing Factories.

On the site of Townsend House, in Welsh Row, commodious premises were built by MESSRS. GEORGE HARLOCK & Co. for the manufacture of moleskin, corduroy, &c. goods, about thirty years ago; and within the last ten years a new trade, namely,—the cutting out and making up of cloth for ordinary wearing apparel, has been introduced; and now gives employment to several hundreds of the population. The first factory, on the Barony, built by MESSRS. HARDING & Co. of Manchester, was opened in June, 1872, and has since been several times enlarged. Others have embarked in the same business; and the trade promises to supersede the manufacture of shoes.





## The Chapel of Saint Mary,

NOW CALLED

## Nantwich Parish Church.



NANTWICH CHURCH is sometimes, though rarely, mentioned in ancient records as an *ecclesia*. It is more frequently styled a "*capella*;" because from a remote period Nantwich, ecclesiastically considered, has been a *chapelry* within the ancient parish of Acton. That Nantwich, like the important towns of Macclesfield and Congleton, did not possess an independent Church of its own, and was not a separate ecclesiastical parish,\* was clearly shown by Dr. Ormerod, who refuted the arguments put forth by Mr. Partridge in favour of the opinion

that Nantwich never was a chapelry within Acton parish; it will therefore be necessary only to notice—

- (1)—That no church or chapel existed at Nantwich when the Domesday Survey was taken *c.* 1087; the parish churches then being at Acton, Wybunbury, and Barthomley.
- (2)—Nantwich is not mentioned as a separate parish in either of the great Ecclesiastical Valuations prior to the Reformation, *viz.*: in Pope Nicholas IV Taxation *c.* 1291; nor in *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, 26 Hen. VIII [1535].
- (3)—After the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Nantwich is described as being in the parish of Acton.†
- (4)—That Sir Peter Leycester, in his Catalogue of Cheshire Churches in 1669, mentions Nantwich as a parochial Chapel within Aghton [Acton] Parish.
- (5)—And that as late as 1789, according to a Church Brief now in the British Museum, the town is described as the "*Parish and Chapelry of Nantwich.*"‡

\* The term *Parish* is synonymous with "*vill*" or "*township*;" and is not necessarily an ecclesiastical division. For much interesting information on this subject, see Toulmin Smith's "*The Parish*," pp. 1-43. (London, 1857, second edit.)

† See the Survey of the Monastery of St. Werburgh in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. I, p. 274. (New Edit.)

‡ To these evidences may be added the authoritative statement of Bishop Gastrell, who says "Nantwich Church has been lately styled a *Parochial Chapel* in the Bishop's Instrument for the confirmation of seats, anno 1671." (*Not. Cest.* p. 225. Chet. Soc. Pub.)

As has already been stated, about the year 1130, by the charter of Hugh Malbank, the parish Church of Acton and the Chapel of Wich Malbank were granted to the then newly erected Abbey of Combermere: by which grant the Abbey was enriched and the parish starved. Most likely for more than a hundred years after the appropriation of Nantwich to Combermere, the officiating priests here would be monks of that Abbey. But the legislature in course of time, perceiving how Churches throughout the country were impoverished by the exactions of Monasteries, first enacted that churches should be served by secular priests, and not by monks of their own order; and afterwards, when it was found that the religious houses abused this law, it was further enacted by the Councils of Bishops at Oxford in 1220 and at Worcester in 1240 that Curates serving in this way should be endowed as perpetual Vicars, and this endowment was often made out of small tithes.\* It was not until the year 1285 that the Bishop of Lichfield compelled the Abbot of Combermere to find a perpetual Vicar for Acton Church, and endow the Vicarage with small tithes and certain other profits of the cure (alterage and oblations) to sustain a *Chaplain* and *Clerk* in the *Chapel of Wich Malbank*. The deed relating to the Ordination of the Vicarage is preserved at Lichfield, of which the following translation is taken from Acton Parish Register; the record having been entered therein about a hundred years ago by the then curate, William Morgan, B.A.†

ENDOWMENT DEED OF ACTON VICARAGE.

“In the Name of God Amen. We Roger‡ by divine permission Bishop of Litchfield & Cov[entry] lately exercising our Visitation in the Arch-deaconry of Chester have found that the Vicarage of Acton is not endowed in any certain Portions, and that the care of the whole Parish did not belong to the said Vicar which usage has occasioned the no small danger of Souls. For which reason, We by these Presents, do ordain that the Vicar for the time being shall have the *entire Cure of the said Parish*, that he may be able to answer meetyly to us, and to our Successors for the same.

And the said Vicar shall receive in the said Church of Acton & in the Villages to the same anciently belonging all oblations & obventions to the Altar in any manner belonging, so as that the *Abbot & Convent of Combermere* shall only receive Tythes of Corn & half the Tythe of Hay in the aforesaid Villages.

But the Vicar shall receive in the Chapel of Wrenbury all oblations and Obventions to the Altar of the said Chapel, in any manner belonging.

Also the Vicar shall receive in the *Chapel of Wich Malbank* all oblations accruing or arising upon the days Nativity, [Dec. 25] Easter Sunday, the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, [Aug. 15] and All Saints', [Nov. 1]; and all oblations for purification of Women after child-birth. *But the Vicar shall support a Chaplain to officiate in the said Chapel with a sufficient Clerk at his own expenses.* And we will that the said *Chaplain* swear as is fitting on the holy Evangelists that he will be diligent & faithful &

\* See Blackstone's "Commentaries;" and "Defence of Pluralities," by Wharton, (Edit. 1703) for information on this subject.

† The Rev. William Morgan, Curate at Acton, was afterwards Rector of Wistaston, from 1789 to 1823.

‡ "ROGER D'MOLEND, *alias* LONGSPEC, Bishop of Litchfield, was a nephew to King Hen. III, by one of King John's natural children; and on the resignation of Roger d'Weseham, he was raised to the See by the interest of his uncle Richard Earl of Cornwall, the King's Brother. He lived beyond the Seas in great splendour and luxury; and in order to keep in favour with the Religious Houses of his Diocese he commuted for his non-residence and neglect of all Pastoral care by appropriating many Churches to them, without reason or conscience. But on the advancement of John Peckham, a Black Friar, to the See of Canterbury he was compelled A<sup>o</sup> 1283 to reside on his Bishopric, and was severely reprimanded by that Virtuous and Upright Prelate for the great neglect of his Charge. On this he visited every part of his Diocese and corrected many of the errors and irregularities which had crept in during his long absence, and died A<sup>o</sup> 1295 a very old man."—(Acton Parish Register).

will in no wise commit any deceit or fraud in the Portions belonging to the said Abbot and Convent. And the same *Priest shall by no right claim the Tythes or obventions* :\* but if it shall happen that any shall be made by the faithful in Christ to him he may receive them : so long as the Tithe or Obvention shall in no manner be assessed.

Dated at La Lee the Ides of March [March 15] *Ann. Dom.* 1285 In the Ninth Year of our Consecration."

Acton continues to be a vicarage; and a list of the vicars for now nearly six hundred years will be found in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, Vol. III.† The patronage of the living and the great tithes of the parish were retained by the Abbey until its dissolution; when they were sold by the King to Richard Wilbraham, of Woodhey, in or before 1544 (*Harl. MSS.* 1967 f. 5); and so descended to the Tollemache family; the Right Hon. Lord Tollemache of Helmingham now being *ipso facto* lay-rector of the Parish. Whilst the institutions of clergymen to Acton have been regularly recorded in the Episcopal Registers of Lichfield and Chester, during that long period; the *Chaplains* of Nantwich, being merely priests appointed and removed by the Vicar, find no place in those records; and hence no complete list of them can be given prior to the Reformation. Two names of Chaplains in early times are here given; one occurring in 1285, or the very year when the above interesting endowment deed was executed; and the other a quarter of a century before that date. Amongst the Wettenhall Charters in *Harl. MSS.* f. 113, is the following deed:—(*translated*)

"I Richard chaplain and rector of Baddilegh Church anno 1259, concede and quitclaim to *Henry de Sondbach, chaplain of the Church of Wich Malbank* all that land &c. which I have held for a term of 35 years &c.

These being witnesses D<sup>no</sup> [Sir] John chaplain of the Hospital of St. Nicholas, William Daulin, Laurence the clerk, John de Wrenbury, Nicholas Calveley, Thomas son of Matthew and many others. 44 Hen. III." [1259-60].

Another deed enrolled in the *Calendar of Fines* dated 13 Edw. I [1285] states that William Dymmock and Margaret his wife acknowledge certain tenements described as—

"One burgage and one acre of land in Nantwich, being those which *Richard Froward, chaplain*, formerly held and lying in Hospital Street to be the right of William Wodenot of Swanle[y], to hold by him and his heirs, of *God and the Blessed Mary of the said town* for perpetual alms at the yearly rent of id. for tapers for the *Blessed Mary in Nantwich*."

The following deeds prove that gifts were made for the better sustentation of the services in Nantwich Church in early times.

(*Translation*)—"I Randle Wode of Wich Malbank and Margery my wife daughter and executrix of the will of Thomas Bickley *alias* Wright as executor of the will of the late David Bickley, have given conceded and relinquished to *Ranulph Crue* and *Richard Pikton wardens* [p'positis] of the Church of the *Blessed Mary in Wich* aforesaid, all that third part of a burgage and one wick-house of six leads with appurtenances in the said Wich called Lamburcots to have and to hold &c.

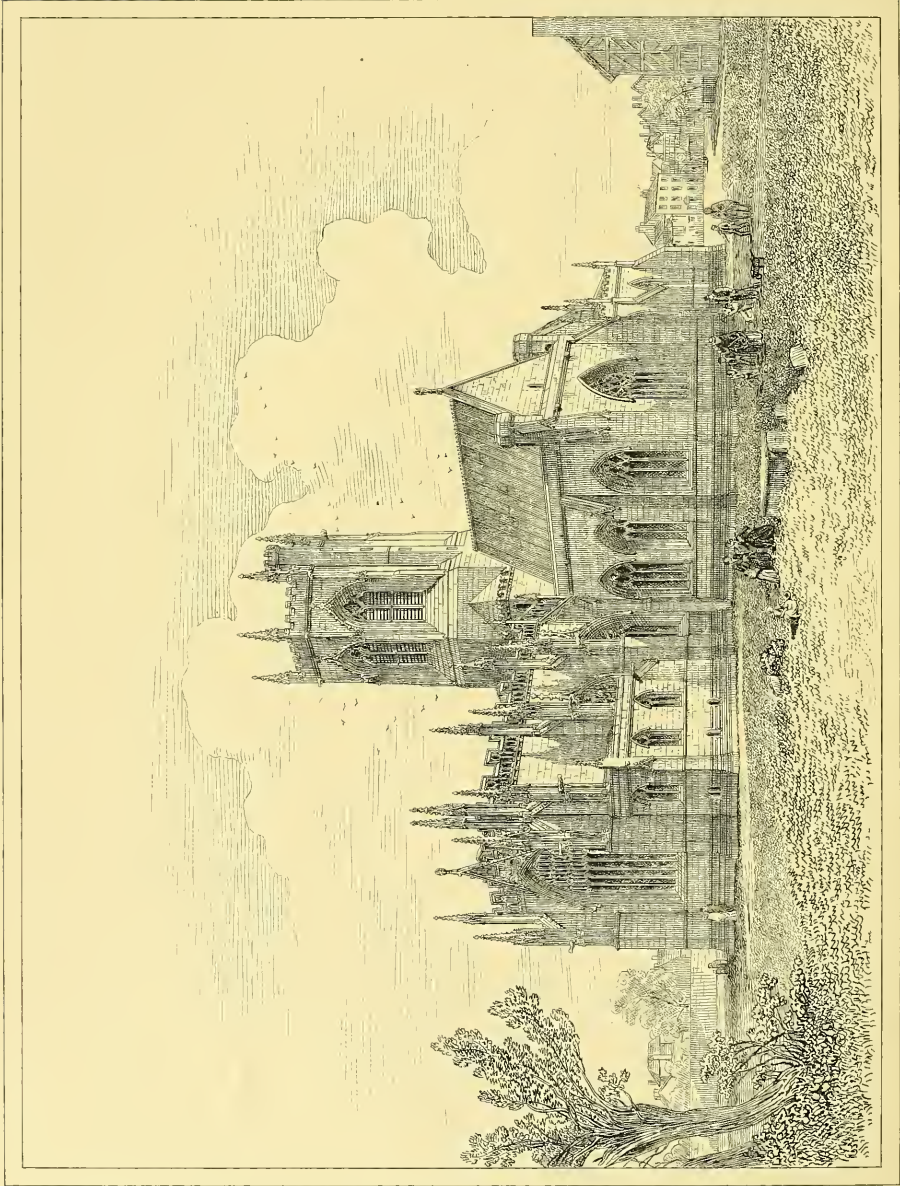
Dated 10 Dec. 14 Edw. II." [1320].—(*Harl. MSS.* 2074. f. 166. a.)

\* The reason of this was because Nantwich was merely a *parochial Chapel*, which Sir Peter Leycester defines as "having all the rights and ceremonies [*baptisms, burials, &c.*] as the mother church or parish church hath, *except the tithes*; so that indeed they are as lesser parishes, created within the greater for the benefit of the neighbourhood."—(Preface to *Antiquities of Bucklow Hundred*).

† The name of a Puritan Vicar, not given in the New Edition of Dr. Ormerod's History, incidentally occurs in Nantwich Parish Register—"1643-4. Feb. 4. Rachel dau. of Edward Boulde minister." [Baptised].

"1645. June 1. Mary dau. of Maister Bould vicker of Acton." [Baptised].





Engraved by J. H. Stanger, London.

NANTWICH CHURCH, N. E. VIEW.



In the Cheshire Recognizance Rolls mention is made of Beatrix Huedoghter\* leaving to Roger Rondulph, chaplain [most likely of Nantwich] who was living in 1338, "an acre of land in Wyghtretton [Wistaston] for the support of a chaplain to celebrate divine service in the Chapel of St. Mary, Nantwich, for 12 years at 6s. yearly."

About thirty years after the date of the Endowment Deed, (*i.e.* about 1315) the Vicar of Acton (probably "Thomas de Prestecote") found it necessary to compromise the oblations at Wich Malbank, according to the following extract of an Inquisition taken at Minshull before Thomas le Yong, Eschaetor, 28 Edw. III [1355].

*Translation*—"Also they [the jurors] say that the Vicar of Acton for certain masses of the same Abbot [Richard de Rodierd?] hath given the same Abbot thirty acres of land in Acton; that is to say in exchange and for the four days oblations in Wich Malbank for the term of his life, forty years having since elapsed; and the aforesaid land with all its issues is worth 15s. 4d. yearly." (*Harl. MSS.* 506 f. 13.)

Whether succeeding Vicars received the "oblations" or not, record does not say; but the probability is, that these offerings ultimately found their way into the treasury of the Abbey. In *Harl. MSS.* 1967 are many pages of particulars relating to Abbey lands in Nantwich dating as far back as 17 Edw. I. [1289]; which prove how for two hundred and fifty years the Abbey was constantly acquiring property in the town, and sometimes defending their claims in legal courts.

Probably in the latter half of the fourteenth century, the Chapel of St. Mary, to which the foregoing account relates, was rebuilt, forming the present Parish Church. Several theories have been advanced to account for so large and beautiful a Church in so small a town. The Rev. J. Partridge, in his admiration of the building, not only denied that it was a Chapel within Acton Parish, but magnified it into a Collegiate Church with a Dean and six priests or prebends! (*Hist. Nant.* p. 45). The fact that Lichfield diocese (which prior to 1541 included the county of Chester) had ruri-decanal divisions, amongst which was the Rural Deanery of Nantwich, cannot prove Nantwich Church to have been of Collegiate foundation. It has recently been suggested that the Church may have been the munificent gift of Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who died 1292.† This theory, put forward on the assumption that Combermere Abbey was too poor, and the inhabitants of the town too few, to have built this Cathedral-like Church, implies that that rich prelate was the patron of the living as well as founder of the Church; and if this be accepted as correct, it must then follow that the Church of Nantwich was dedicated to St. Nicholas, and the list of chaplains given on pages 49-51, would then be the Rectors of the parish in pre-Reformation times. These fancies, however, receive no support from documentary evidence; but are directly contradicted by the clear statements of the deed on page 273-4, dated 1285; and the few records relating to the Church and its priests, when the great crisis in Ecclesiastical affairs—the Reformation—came; unmistakeably proving the Church in this town to have been a dependency of Combermere,—an *Abbey Church*‡—and to have continued to be such until the dissolution of that Monastery. When it is remembered that the work of rebuilding Churches in mediæval times was usually spread over a number of years, the older structure being gradually removed as funds were forthcoming for the new; that the Architecture of the Church proves the *Nave* to have been of earlier

\* The patronymic "daughter" (long since disused) is similar to the common patronymic "son;" which has survived to these times.

† *Cf.* Manorial History, p. 41.

‡ Astbury Church, in this county, is another remarkably fine specimen of an Abbey Church.

date than the *Transepts*; which, again, are earlier than the *Choir* and *Chancel*; (a period of, perhaps, fifty or sixty years having elapsed from the commencement to the completion); that it was erected when Gothic Architecture was at its zenith; on abbatial estates; out of the plenitude of the riches of the Abbey; and by the benefactions of Religious Gilds in the town, and wealthy people in the neighbourhood, as evinced by memorials of ancient families in heraldic glass that once adorned the windows of the church; it is no wonder that the present building far exceeded the mother-church at Acton in size and beauty. The following extract of a deed preserved in the Dodsworth MSS. (vol. xxxi. f. 134. Bodl. Lib.), although undated, clearly refers to the time when the work was still in operation, since the persons named therein, viz.: *William Wodenote*, living in 1399; *Sir Nicholas Audley*, who died in 1391; and *Henry Mareshall*, who occurs several times on the Recognizance Rolls between the years 1380 and 1404; were contemporaries of *Sir David Cradock, Kt.* (the traditional founder of the Church) and *Richard Wyche*, who contributed to the fabric and had his arms in one of the windows. (Cf. *Annals*, p. 84). The extract is as follows: (*translated*)—

“William Wodenote\* gave to the *fabric of the Chapel of the Blessed Mary of Wich Malbank* land lying between the land of Sir Nicholas de Audley and the land of Henry Mareshall near the graveyard.”

Mention has just been made of *Religious Gilds* or, *Fraternities* as they were sometimes called, which were to be found in small country towns as well as in corporate or Cathedral cities. The following interesting deed exhibits a glimpse of social and religious life in the town, when, long before the introduction of Poor Laws, the inhabitants enrolled themselves in societies for purposes of brotherly aid, the distribution of local charity, the sustentation and reparation of the Church, and various other good objects. By this deed two persons were admitted by the Stewards (officials under the President or Dean of Gild) into full benefit of the Gild, which not only provided for the members in the circumstances of life, but cared for them even after death. The original deed, formerly in the possession of “Mr. Wilbraham of Nantwich,” is not now known to be in existence, but a copy in Latin is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 2074. f. 166 a. which has a rough drawing of a seal depending therefrom, representing a naked child with outstretched arms, holding what appears to be a flower or branch in each hand. The following is a translation:—

“To the beloved holy and devoted children in Christ *William Howe* any *Sibyl* his wife, with all others whatsoever.

We, *William Ruddock* and *William Lynche* stewards [*seneschall*] of the *Gilds* or *Fraternities* of *Wich Malbank* lawfully deputed send greeting, that by the prayers of the Saints ye may obtain celestial joys: Forasmuch as out of God’s gifts to you, you have contributed to the sustentation of the aforesaid *Gilds* and to the six priests in the *Church of the Blessed Mary of Wich Malbank* aforesaid, for the daily celebration for the brethren sisters and benefactors alive and dead; We freely admit you to the participation of all masses which shall be celebrated in the said church and to all other and singular “*cantilenas*” [masses chanted] works and prayers which by our brethren are performed: We promise according to the tenor of these presents in life as also in death; and furthermore we concede that after your deaths, prayers for your souls shall be offered by the said priests and brethren of the said *Gilds*

\* The *Wodenote* arms in glass adorned one of the East windows of the North Transept. It may be added that particulars relating to the building of Churches during the Middle Ages have very rarely been handed down to these times; and hence it is impossible to assign exact dates for the erection of mediæval Churches. The ancient records now extant, relate almost entirely to lands, and seldom to other matters of local importance.

with the prayers for those lately deceased; masses, exequies, and prayers being performed as by the brethren is accustomed to be done. In testimony whereof to their children living and dead we append to these presents our seal of office.

Dated on the 8th day of January in the year of our Lord 1461."

Though the information concerning the number of Gilds and their patron Saints is very meagre; it is worthy of note that in 1461 there were no less than six Chantry priests supported by these societies, and probably as many altars in the Church where prayers were daily said. One, called the Gild of the Holy Cross, is referred to in an inscription amongst the ancient heraldic glass; and very probably at Nantwich, on the Invention of the Holy Cross [May 3], the annual Gild Festival was held, with processions and amusements; just as in the neighbouring villages *Wakes* were held every year on the Saints days of their churches, because there were no Religious Gilds there to conduct the ceremonies.\* Some rules regulating the town Gilds are given in the "*Injunctions*" &c. dated 1538. (pp. 30, 32). The Gild Hall, situated in the churchyard, was, after the Reformation, converted into a Grammar School.

Mention has already been made of the Deanery of Nantwich, and Chaplains of St. Mary's in the will of Randle Wettenhall, dated 1437 (see p. 93). Another reference, a few years earlier, occurs in the probate of a will preserved amongst the extracts of Wettenhall deeds in *Harl. MSS.* 1967. f. 118, as follows:—(translated)

"The will of Robert le Mercer of Wich Malbank was proved, &c. before us in our *Christian Deanery of Wich Malbank*, in the Church of the Blessed Mary of the said town, on the 24th July, 10 Hen. V. [1422] and administration granted to John de Wettenhall Esq." &c.

Beyond the grant of a wiche-house and walling-land to *Nicolas Harwar*, Chaplain, and his successors, in 1515, there is nothing of importance to relate concerning the Church until the Reformation. RANDLE STEVENSON, *curate* of Nantwich, is mentioned in the will of *Laurence Maynwaring*, of Nantwich, in the year when the Papal Supremacy was abolished in England. This very interesting Will, which has already been printed in *Cheth. Soc. Publ.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 188-9, is as follows:—

*Testamentum Laurentii Maynwaryng.*

"In ye nayme off God amē ye xxth off July in ye yer' of oʒ Lord God MCCCC and xxxiiij [1534] I Laurens Maynwaryng hole and p'fyte [perfect] off mynd mayke my testame't I com'end and betake my sole to God allmythy and my body to be buret in ye Nontwyche churche I giffe to ye sayd churche vjs. viiij<sup>d</sup>. [6, 8] p'vidyt [provided] yt no mor' be askyt by reson off any custom for my bureall Also I will yt ye abbey [abbot] off Co'burner' have his due porcion for my mortuarye† Also I giffe to Sr Thomas Ankers‡ xs. [10s.] desyryng hy' to say a trentall§ off masses in ye Nontwyche church for

\* See articles on "The History of Gilds," by C. Walford in "*The Antiquarian Magazine and Bibliographer*," 1882. On page 186 is the following description of the anniversary feast of the Gild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon. "The fraternity hold their feast yearly on the 3rd May; and then they used to have 12 priests to sing a *Dirige*, for which they gave them 4d. a piece; they had also 12 minstrels, who had 2s. 3d. besides their dyet and horse-meat. At one of these feasts (A.D. 1445) they had 6 calves, valued at 2s. 2d. apiece; 16 lambs 12d. apiece; 80 capons 3d. apiece; 80 geese 2d. apiece; 800 eggs, which cost 5d. the 100; and many marrow bones, cream and flour; besides what theyre servants and others brought in: and pageants and plays and May-games, to captivate the senses of the zealous beholders."

† "Mortuary;" see explanation in a foot-note on page 93.

‡ "*Sir*;" here used as a title of courtesy similar to the modern word *Rev.*; and in the sixteenth century was generally applied to one who had taken a degree. *Thomas Ankers*, a priest, occurs in the Clergy List, c. 1533-4, (*Pitcopse MSS.* Chet. Lib.) as a private chaplain to Mr. Mainwaring of Baddiley.

§ "*Trentall*;" i.e. thirty masses.

my sole my wife child and all crysten soles Also I giffe to ye sayd Sr Thomas v<sup>d</sup>. [5d.] desyryng hy' to say dirige and masse off ye V wonds\* for a frend yt ye *curat* will schew hy' off and vij<sup>d</sup>. [7d.] to pore fokes for ye sayme p'son latly dep'tyd [departed] Also I will yt Anker [sic] fad' [father of] my p'ntes [apprentice] schall have xiiii<sup>s</sup>. p'vydit yt my sayd prente' will p'forme his prenteschypse† as long as [he] was absent and make gud suche cappes as he sold wen he went And wher[as] John Mynton dyd desyre me to giffe hy' a cappe and I dyd p'myse hy' y'for [therefore] I beqweth hy' a cappe off ye best yt I have I giffe to Robt. my prent' a serke and his workyng scher[es] I giffe to *Ranald Ste'son* a cappe ye [best] off ye ij prestes capp'[s] I giffe to my cosyn Olev' Maynwayring a dagger and a pollax and to Hu'fray Maynwayring a thycke cote and a pollax I giffe to Schenton wyffe a buschell off whete and to hur son my prent' a Kendall jacket ij serke howse [stockings] schone [shoes] and a cappe I giffe Jone my bastard doghtur vjs. vij<sup>d</sup>. [6s. 8d.] To John Fleecher a gowne and a salet and to John Ankers a jacket and a payre off hoose Also I giffe and beqweth to my iij doghtors for yair [their] chyls parts yt is to Magery seve' pounds sterlyng and ye beste sylver pese and all brokyn mone[y] in my cofer to Margaret vij<sup>li</sup>. and ye beste panne to Anne vij<sup>li</sup>. and my beste gowne Also when my detts beqwethis and fun'all expensis be payd then I giffe, &c. ye resydue off all my guds and tacks and gronde to Ellen my wyffe Also I orden and make my trysty cosyn Hu'fray Maynwayring and Ellen my wyffe my executors and my trusty cosyn Olev' ov'sear off this testament Wyttenes John Maynwayring gentillma' John Prachett and *Ranalld Ste'nson curatt* Giffen ye day and ye'r before sayd." [No date of probate].

A complete list of the Clergy in the various Deaneries of Cheshire, dated *circa* 1533-4 is preserved amongst the Piccope MSS. (Chetham Lib.) The names of the clergy connected with Nantwich Church at that time were as follows:—

*Dns.* [Sir] REGINALD STEVENSON [the *Curate*, paid out of the income of the Church, (“*ex fractibz ecclie.*”)]  
*Dns.* [Sir] RALPH MYNSHULL  
*Dns.* [Sir] CHRISTOPHER WENYNGTON  
*Dns.* [Sir] JOHN OLYVER  
*Dns.* [Sir] WILLIAM ROLINSON

} “*Conduct p' Willielm flecher et alios iconimos.*”

Four of these names occur again as priests serving at Nantwich Church in Bishop Bird's Visitation, dated 16th May, 1548, namely, “*Reginald Stevenson, Christopher Wenington, Ralph Mynshull, and John Olyver;*” and in the place of William Rolinson, two other priests are given, viz.: “*Dns.* [Sir] *Thomas Nu'ter,*” and “*Dns.* [Sir] *John Brasnell;*”† who were most likely identical with “*Thomas Porter*” and “*John Brasent*” as they are called in the Chantry Roll, also dated 1548. It appears, too, from the Chantry Roll that *Dns.* [Sir] JOHN CROXTON succeeded Reginald Stevenson as incumbent of Nantwich in 1548; and that John Olyver resigned his post in or about the same year. The last named priest however continued to receive an annual pension until the year 1568, according to the following receipt, and similar ones still extant.‡

\* “*Mass of the five wounds;*” that is, the Mass at the high or principal altar in the Chancel of the Church; which had five crosses carved on the top slab symbolical of the five wounds.

† The testator was evidently a tradesman in Nantwich; and may have belonged to the Manwarings of Baddiley; though his name does not occur in the Cheshire Visitation of 1580; or in any of the Cheshire pedigrees that I have seen.

‡ *John Brasnell*, (*Brasnell*, or *Brasent*, as his name is variously spelled) paid his Composition for First Fruits to the Crown, as incumbent of the Lady Chapel, on the 10th July 38 Hen. VIII. [1546]. (*Record Soc. Publ. vol. viii, p. 396*).

§ Mr. Earwaker's transcripts of “*Miscellaneous Receipts*, West Hall (Cheshire) Papers, vol. iv Dated c. 1560-S.”

"Paid to Sir John olyver his holle yeres pencon going owte of the late Monestor' of comberm' ended at the feast of seint Michell th'arcangell last past ... .. Cs." [100s.]

In 1536 the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was completed, giving effect to the Stat. 26 Hen. VIII [1535] that transferred the first fruits and tenths to the Crown, which heretofore had been forwarded to Rome. The Commissioners for the Rural Deanery of Nantwich, SIR THOMAS FOULESHURST, KNIGHT, WILLIAM VENABLES, ESQ., RICHARD SNEDE and RICHARD HASSALL, in their Survey of Combermere Abbey, returned as follows relating to Nantwich.

*Income of the Abbey in Temporals.*

Rents and Profits in Wich Malbank ... ..	xiiiijl. xiiijjs. vd.	[£14 14s. 5d.]
Great tithes of Acton, Cholmeston, Wich-Malbank, Badyngton, & Leghton, total ... ..	xxijl. vjs. viijd.	[£22 6s 8d.]
Easter Roll of Wich Malbank ... ..	vijl. vjs. viijd.	[£8 6s. 8d.]

*Payments.*

To Robert Bagenhall bailiff [of the Court for the Abbot's Fee] in Wich Malbank, per ann. ... ..	xxxijjs. ivd. ...	[£1 13s. 4d.]
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In *Harl. MSS.* 1967, p. 147 is the following rental of the Abbey lands in Nantwich, dated 31 Hen. VIII. [1539]; being the last year's revenues to Combermere.

	£	s.	d.
"Farm of the Easter Roll* of Wich Malbank ... ..	8	6	8
Farm of tithes of grain from the Mill of Wyche ... ..	0	5	0
Farm of oblations, and obventions [?] called the <i>rood box</i> ... ..	0	3	4
Rectory and glebe of chancell ... ..	4	0	0
The accounts of Thomas Wright Bailiff, for assessed rents ... ..	0	10	10
Farm of the land of 5 salt-houses of six leads in Beam Street in the tenure of Gilbert Walthall ... ..	}	...	...
One salt-house of Roger Harwar of 12 leads ... ..			
One salt-house at the end of the bridge demised by the relict of Laurence Rope ... ..			
One salt-house of 12 leads demised by Henry Sparke in Baywardshale [in Nantwich] ... ..			
One 6 leads demised by George Maisteron ... ..			
One salt-house in the tenure of Isabella Walker in Beamestreete ... ..			
Farm of a mill in Wich Malbank demised by Oliver Mainewaring ... ..			
Total ... ..			

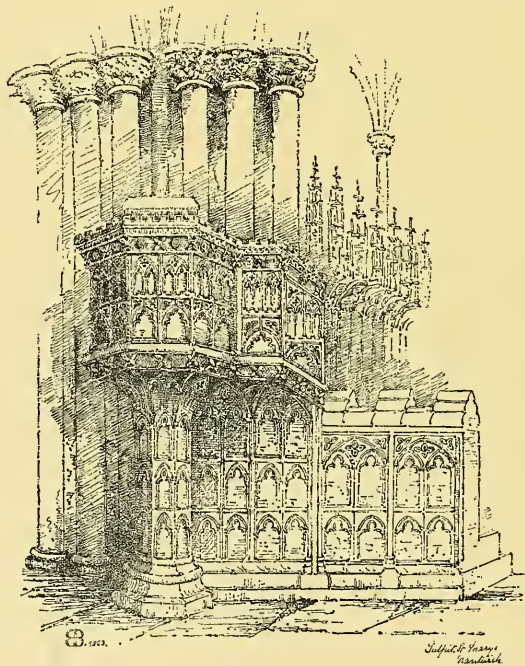
\* The Easter Roll was at this time leased to *William Maisteron* of Wich Malbank, by John, last Abbot of Combermere, by an Indenture dated 25th April, 1538, for the term of 60 years. By this deed William Maisteron claimed—

"all the Tythes called the Ester Rolle or the Ester Booke and all oblacons, Weddyngs & Buryings \* \* \* of the p'isshe of Wyche Malbanke."

The subsequent history of the Easter Roll is given on another page.

Nantwich Church, which had been so intimately connected with Combermere for more than four hundred years, was now no longer a dependency of the Abbey; for on the 27th July, 1539, JOHN MASSY,\* the last abbot surrendered his Monastery to the King. In anticipation of this change, Sir Thomas Fouleshurst, Knight, steward of Nantwich, in his "*Injunctions*" dated May 7th, 1538, provided and ordained that the whole town should be assessed and the inhabitants be required to pay towards the support and maintenance of the Church. (*Cf.* p. 30).

\* *John Massy* or *Massie* was first sub-prior of the Monastery of Combermere, and afterwards (in or before 1535) became the Abbot. He retired upon a pension of £50 per annum, which was regularly paid to him until 1563. (West Hall papers, vol. iv.) He died in 1564-5, and was buried in Chester Cathedral.—(Special Commissions 16 Eliz. [1574], Record Office) "in the north ile," in accordance with his Will, which was proved 4 Feb. 1564-5; and which is printed in Vol. LI *Cheth. Soc. Publ.* pp. 56-7.



## Chantries and Altars.

The history of the chantries here is very scant; no early deeds, throwing light on the foundations and dedications, having occurred. Concerning ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, the only record is a line in *Harl. MSS.* 2074. f. 166. a., which states that it was "neere the [stone] pulpit as it now stands;" and here, says Mr. Partridge, (*Hist. Nant.* p. 33) "Margaret Leech, widow, by her last will bearing date 1545 appointed her body to be buried." The last chantry priest of St. George's Chapel was Peter Blage, [or Blagg] who, after the suppression of Chantries, retired on a pension of £4 which was paid to him as late as 1562. (West Hall Papers, vol. iv.) No mention is made of this chantry by name in any of the surveys at the Reformation; though it may be included in the Chantry Roll given below; but that an altar actually existed in the North Transept is clear from the remains of an aumbry, piscina, and

"a little Gothic niche  
Of ancient workmanship, that once had held  
The sculptured image of some patron saint."

The LADY CHAPEL, being an early extension of the North Transept, is stated in the same MS. and on the same page, to have been "endowed." Hence it is mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Survey 26 Hen. VIII [1535], by which it appears that it was originally founded by the ancient family of *Praers*; but, who the said *Roger Praers*, the founder of the "obit" was, is difficult to say. In the new edition of Ormerod's History of Cheshire, Vol. III, pp. 299, 301, 482, he is said to be "*Roger Praers, chaplain*,"\* who granted Wybunbury to his son "*Richard ye clerk*," in the time of King John (!); a statement which cannot be accepted; since the Lady Chapel could not possibly have existed much before the time of Richard II.

The survey before mentioned records as follows concerning the Lady Chapel.

"CHANTRY IN THE CHAPEL OF WICH MALBANK." [1535].

WILLIAM WRIGHT, chaplain of the same.

	£	s.	d.
Clear value in tithes to the same chaplain for celebrating masses for the soul of <i>Roger Praers</i> deceased and his predecessors, founders of the same chantry ...	7	6	8
Also, paid for the obit of the said Roger to the chaplain, priests and all poor persons according to the same chantry foundation† ... ..	26	8	
And clear remainder .. .. .	6	0	0
Also, the Tithes ... .. .	12	0	

In a survey of the Rural Deanery of Wich Malbank 33 Hen. VIII [1542] this chapel occurs again, as follows:—

"Chantry in the chapel of Wich Malbank"—£0 12s. od.; subsidia £0 10s. 934d.;

and lastly in the Chantry Roll of 1548 [1 & 2 Edw. VI], when the name of another chaplain is given, *William Wright* being probably dead or removed.

\* Mr. Helsby produces no proof for this assertion. It seems more reasonable to suppose that "*Roger son of William of Blackhurst*," one of the Masters of St. Nicholas Hospital from 1365—1374, was the *Roger Praers* who left an obit to Nantwich; being probably the son of *William Praers* of Blackhurst in the neighbouring parish of Baddiley, who occurs in the Plea Rolls 32-36 Edw. III. (1358—1362).

† *Praers' Obit* continued to be paid to the poor for many years after this date by the *Wilbraham* family; and this charity under the name of *Prior's Obit*, is still dispensed by the churchwardens. (See *List of Charities*).

[Description] "The Chantry Within the sayd Church of Namtwyche."

[Incumbent] "JOHN BRASENT\* of the age of lx yeres Incumbent there."

"The yerely Valewe vijli. vjs. viijd. .. ... [£7 6s. 8d.]

"In almes to poore ffolks xxvjs. viijd. ... ... [ 26s. 8d.]

"The clere Remayn. vijli. ... ... [£6 os. od.]

"Plate and Jewells.† x oūz. [10 oz. weight.]

"Goods and Ornaments, None.

"Leade & Bells, None.

Of the *Chantry* in the South Transept nothing is known. It is not mentioned by name in any of the surveys; nor has the name of the Saint to whom it was dedicated been handed down. Mr. Partridge calls it the "*Kingesley aisle*;" and among the ancient heraldic glass remaining in one of its windows in 1572, were the figures of a male and female kneeling with hands folded in prayer. The man had a chaplet of roses round his head; dressed in plate armour, and sword by his side; on his breast was a tabard of arms, and on the lady's kirtle the arms of Bromley. Between the two figures were the Arms of Kingsley impaling Bromley:‡ and the following imperfect inscription:—

" . . . . **Kingesley et Margaret Bromley uxor ejus.**"

"The rest of the Glasse broken where the superscription was."—(*Harl. MSS.* 2151. f. 80).

From this it seems highly probable that John Kingsley was the founder of this Chapel; and that it may have been consecrated by the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry in 1405, according to the following record, which, however, does not mention the dedicatory saint.

"Licentia celebrandi Divina in Capella de Namptwych, an. 1405."§

The Rev. T. W. Norwood, Vicar of Wrenbury, has recently pointed out the square head-dress or ornament in the east and west windows of this Chapel, which illustrates a fashion peculiar only to the early years of Henry IV reign, and thus fixes the date of the erection of this Chantry Chapel about the year 1405.

Towards the end of the reign of Henry VIII, the King decided on appropriating the revenues belonging to Collegiate Churches, Chantries, Fraternities and Stipendiaries, and, as a preliminary measure to their sale, he appointed a Commission in 1545-6, to re-value that kind of property. The suppression of the Chantries &c. was, however, finally carried out by Edw. VI in 1548; in which year the following return was made, giving the names and incomes of the last Catholic clergy at Nantwich.

*THE CHANTRY ROLL FOR NANTWICH, 1548.*|| [1 & 2 Edw. VI].

"*Namtwyche.*"

"Md. The said towne of Nantwiche is a graet town and hath Ml. viijc. [1800] hoslyng people wthin the same and is very necery [necessary] to haue a gramer scolle [grammar school] wthin the same. And also a Vicar and Assistant to serue [serve] the Cure accordingly."

\* Or John Brasnell, cf. p. 278

† "*Jewells*;" i.e. anything reputed precious, and made of valuable materials or richly adorned. Hence the Cross of wood plated with silver, that then stood on the rood screen, is called a Jewell in the Inventory of Chnrch goods.

‡ Cf. Chapter of Annals, p. 92.

§ Hulm MS. from the Lichfield Registers, quoted by Bishop Gastrel in his "*Notitia Cestriensis*," Cheth. Soc. Pub. Translated, this line would read:—Licence to celebrate Divine services in the Chapel of Nantwich in the year 1405.

|| The names of the Commissioners who made this return were "Hughe Cholmeley, Willm. Brereton, Knyghts; John Ascote, James Starkey, George Browne, Thomas Carne Esquyers; John Cheching, Thoms. fletewode & Willm. Laton Gents; Comysyons." (From the Original in the Record Office).



[I] *The ffower Seruyces in the same Church.*

JOHN CROXTON of thag' [the age] of l [50] yeres.

XPÖFER [CHRISTOPHER] WYNINGTON\* of xl [40] yeres.

RAUF MYNCON [MYNSHULL] of xxx [30] yeres.

THOMS. PORTER;\* hauing eu'y [every] of them iiijli. xiijs. iiijd. [£4 13s. 4d.]

"The Yerely Valewe xxjli. xxd. [£21 os. 20d. sic, but should be 8d.]

"Reprises yerely xxvijs. iiijd. ob. [27s. 4½d.]

"The clere Remaine xixli. xiijs. iiijd. ob. [£19 13s. 3½d.]

"Plate, Jewels, Goods, ornamentals, leade &amp; Bells ... none.

"Stokk of redy money xxli. [£20].

[To which is added] "This is discharged for that noe such sune p'med. [promised] to be paid or deliuered According to the will of Randall Carbot vintener of london nor Any such Chauntry hadd begynnyng or contynuaunce."

Lands graunted for Terme of yeres yett to Come	{	The yerely Valewe vijli. xiijs. iiijd. [£6 13s. 4d.]
		Reprises yerely lxxs. xd. ob [70s. 10½d.]
		The Clere Remain lxixs. v <sup>d</sup> . ob. [62s. 5½d.]

Lands graunted by . . . . Gyllette belonging to ye sayd s'vice for terme of yeres.	{	The yerely Valewe xvijjs. [17s.]
		Reprises yerely viiijs. [8s.]
		The Clere Reman. ix <sup>s</sup> . [9s.]

Then follows the "Chauntry [Lady Chapel] within the sayd Church," which has already been given on page 282; followed by "the ffree Chauntries of St. Lawrence and St. James," (page 54) and "the ffree Chauntry of St. Nicholas," (page 51) both of which are described as "within ye sayd Towne;" but not within the said Church; and, therefore, independent religious edifices.

In the same year, 1548, when the pecuniary difficulties of the Government led it to gather up what was left of Church property after the spoliations of former years, Commissions were issued ordering "true and perfect inventories to be taken of all goods, plate, jewels, and ornaments" still to be found in any churches, chapels, &c. Accordingly LAURENCE SMITH, KT., RONDELL MAYNWARING, KT., and RICHARD HASSALL, J.P., as Commissioners for Nantwich Hundred returned as follows for Nantwich Church.

"Nantwiche has iiij chalices, whereof iij are gilt,† and the fourthe ungilt; on[e] cross of wood plated wth silv[er];‡ and a ryng of five bells,§ and on[e] litle auton' bell."¶

It is further stated that whereas at Audlem, Mynshull and Wybunbury the church-plate, vestments, &c., had been sold and "bestowed upon the church reparacon;" at Nantwich and at other Churches in the Deanery the plate, ornaments, &c., were "not alienated or put away." With this record, the history of the Church in Roman Catholic times may be said to end; for within the next twenty years, the Rood-screen with its cross, (and most likely the sanctus bell, the plate, vestments, altars in the chantry chapels, &c.) had disappeared, as proved by the following extract from the original will of Thomas Maynwarding,¶ of Nantwich, now preserved at Chester.

\* These two priests were living in 1556, on a pension of £4 each per annum.—(*Pension Roll*).

† Most of the country churches had chalices of the meaner metals; pewter, &c.

‡ From this return it would appear that only at Nantwich and Malpas, amongst the Cheshire churches, did the Cross on the rood-screen exist in 1548; and at the latter place it is described as "a pi[er]ce of a broken crosse sylo [sic] d."

§ At Mynshull, the church bell had been taken possession of by Rondull Mynshull of Holgreve, and "broken and bestowed to his own private use," before the taking of the inventory there.

¶ The "little auton' [?] altar" bell," was probably a sanctus bell. \* Thomas Maynwarding died in January, 1572-3; the record of his burial being the first now to be found in the Parish Registers.

"The xxvj day of March 1568 I Thomas Maynwaring of the wiche malbanke sonne of Humffrey maynwaring [&c.] give my boddie to be buried in the Church of the Namptwiche nere vnto the place where the *steires dyd stand whiche dyd goe into the Roodlofte*, yf I fortune [happen] to decease or Die in or neare the said towne of Namptwiche, or else to be buried in some other Christen Churche and I gve towards the reparacon of the sayd Churche of Namptwiche the somme of iij<sup>s</sup>. iiij<sup>d</sup>. [3s. 4d.]

## Heraldic Glass and Ancient Monuments.

As has already been stated, much heraldic stained glass adorned the Church prior to the Reformation. Memorial windows commemorated aristocratic families who had been benefactors to the building; and associated with their arms, no doubt, was the common phrase,— "*Orate pro anima*;" words which afterwards became so offensive that edicts in the reigns of Edw. VI and Elizabeth ordered their destruction. And hence in 1572, when the first Randle Holme visited the Church, only *one* inscription of this kind then remained in glass; and *one* in brass. Much of the ancient glass armoury, however, existed for a century later at the least, according to Church notes taken by Elias Ashmole in 1663. These notes, which are now preserved at the Bodleian Library, (*Ashmole MSS.* vol. 854, f. 305—318), serve to corroborate similar notes by successive Randle Holmes' in *Harl. MSS.* 2151 f. 80 &c. at the British Museum. It is necessary to point out that in the latter MSS. the ancient glass is not *always* distinguishable from the later glass armoury; but Elias Ashmole was more careful in noting which was the old, and in what part of the Church it was to be found; for example, drawings are given of "*Armes in the windowes of the South Cross*," [*i.e.* South Transept] viz.: *Kingsleigh*, *Delves* and *Fulleshurst* which are said to have been "*set vp long since*;" and *Mainwaring* and *Wilbraham* which are described as "*lately set vp*;" and again "*in the windowes of the body of the Church*" [*i.e.* the Nave] three coats of arms in the south windows are specified as being "*very old*," viz.:—those of *Oulton*, *Poole* and *Rope*; of which the last named escutcheon still exists in the middle window of the south aisle; while three other coats are mentioned as being "*in a south window [of the nave] of late tyme set vp*." By collating the two MSS. some idea of the internal appearance of the Church and of the armorial devices of the chief local families in the fifteenth century may be obtained. The list, which is necessarily imperfect, is as follows; the \* prefixed to the name indicating that the arms were remaining in 1663:—

### I. IN THE CHANCEL.

#### (1) *In the East window.*

\*AUDLEY: Gules, a fret Or.

\*FULLESHURST: Gules, fretty Or, a chief Ermine.

#### (2) *In the South window.*

\*WICH MALBANK: (the Arms of the town) Quarterly Or and Gules, a bendlet Sable.

\*VERNON: Argent, on a fesse Azure three garbs Or.

\*STAFFORD (or *Bagot*) Argent, on a chevron Gules a crescent Or, between 3 martlets (?) Or.

\*FULLESHURST: Gules, fretty Or, a chief Ermine.

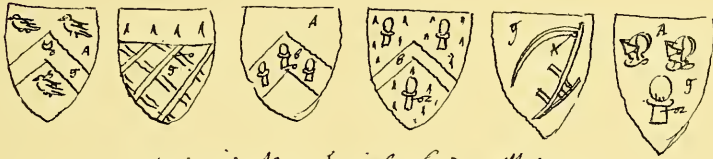
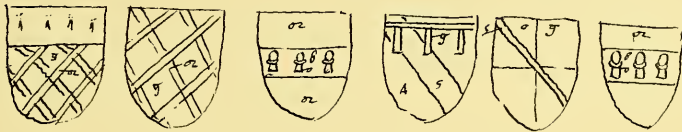
\*MAISTERSON: Ermine, a chevron Azure between three garbs Or.

\*PRAERS: Gules, a scythe Argent.

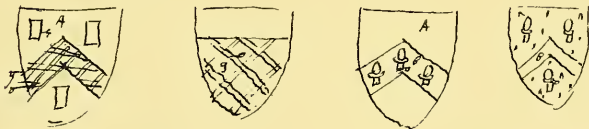
\*CHOLMONDELEY: Gules, in chief two esquires helmets garnished Or, in base a garb Or.

*In the Trancelled Window in Nantwich Church.*

*In the Side Window.*



*In the Side of the only right hand a Monument  
of Abbotter with the Arms on the Window  
over it.*



*In a smaller Window.*

*In the same place in a smaller  
Window.*



*In a Side Window in the same Church.*

*In the great Window - of Lower end  
- of Church at Nantwich.*



*In a rather Side Window.*





(3) *Situation not specified in Harl. MSS. Date 1572.*

RAVENSCROFT impaling BROMLEY: Argent, a chevron Sable between three ravens' heads proper (*Ravenscroft*): Argent on a chevron Gules five bezants Or. (*Bromley*).

WETTENHALL (ancient) Vert a bend Or [Dr. Ormerod says Ermine].

## II. IN THE SOUTH TRANSEPT.

(1) *In the East windows.*

\*KINGESLEGH: Vert, a cross engrailed Ermine.\*

\*FULLESHURST: Gules, fretty Or, a chief Ermine.

\*DELVES: Argent, a chevron Gules fretty Or between 3 turves Sable.

(2) *In the West windows.*

\*DOMVILLE: Azure, a lion rampant Argent collared Or.

\*WETTENHALL: Vert, a cross engrailed Ermine.\*

Below this coat was remaining in 1572 the following inscription:—

“Orate p. fratribus et sororib;. scc. Crucis q'. fecerunt ista'. fenestra'.”

(*Translation*)—Pray for the Brethren and Sisters of the Holy Cross who made this window.

(3) *In the South window.*

\*AUDLEY: Quarterly, 1 and 4 a fret Azure (*Audley*); 2 and 3 Ermine a chevron Gules (? . . . .)†

\*BULKELEGH *alias* WRIGHT impaling BUTLER: Sable on a chevron Argent a fleur-de-lis Or between three bulls' head cabossed Argent. (*Buckley or Wright*). The Butler quarterings are added.

(4) *Situation not given in Harl MSS. Date 1572.*

VERNON: Argent, on a fesse Azure three garbs Or.

ST. PIERRE: Argent, a bend Sable, debruised in chief by a label of 3 points Gules.

CRADOCK: Argent on a chevron Azure three garbs Or.

STAFFORD: Argent on a chevron Gules a crescent Or, between 3 martlets Sable.

MAISTERSON: Ermine a chevron Azure between three garbs Or.

## III. IN THE NORTH TRANSEPT.

(1) *In an East window.*

\*WODENOTE: Argent, a cross voided Sable.

## IV. IN THE NAVE.

(1) *In the South windows.*

\*ROPE: Gules an orle of pheons Argent, a lion rampant Or.†

\*POOLE: Azure, an orle of fleur-de-lis Argent, a lion Rampant Or.

\*OULTON: Quarterly Vert and Gules, over all a lion rampant Argent.

} Said in Ashmo. MS.  
to be “*very old*.”

(2) *In West end window.*

WICH MALBANK: (Arms of the town).

MAISTERSON: Ermine, a chevron Azure between three garbs Or.

\* The *Kingeslegh* or *Kingsley* glass is described under *Kingsley Chapel*. No satisfactory explanation has hitherto been given of the coincidence in both device and tinctures of the arms of *Kingsley* and *Wettenhall*.

† Partridge speaks of Lord Audley's arms as existing “in fine condition” in 1774, in this window; and regrets that no precaution was taken to preserve it. (*Hist. Nant.* p. 32).

‡ Still existing in the middle window of the South aisle of the Nave.

(3) *In the North windows.*

Four coats are given by Elias Ashmole, but it is uncertain whether they are ancient or modern.

(5) *In the Clerestory windows; South side.*

\*AUDLEY: Quarterly, 1 and 4 a fret Azure (*Audley*); 2 and 3 Ermine a chevron Gules.

(6) *In the Clerestory windows; North side.*

\*WICH MALBANK: (The Arms of the town).

V. In other places in the Church windows; the exact situation not stated in *Harl. MSS.* (Date 1572).

COMBERMERE: Quarterly Or and Gules, a bendlet Sable, and over all a crosier per bend sinister, Or.\*

WYCH: Argent, on a chevron Gules an annulet Or (or 5 Besants Or, according to *Harl. MSS.* 2119 f. 119), between three Quatre-foils.

WOLFALL or MERTON: Argent, three greyhounds heads.

MAINWARING *impaling* BROOKE: Argent two bars Sable, an annulet Sable for difference (*Mainwaring*); Or a cross engrailed party per pale Gules and Sable (*Brooke*).†

Of this heraldic glass only one coat now remains *in situ*, namely, that of the ancient family of Rope. Some fragments of old stained glass, which Mr. Norwood thinks is illustrative of the legend of St. George, were removed from the North Transept (St. George's Chapel) to the Choir some years ago; and now fills up the tracery of one of the south windows there.

Before leaving this subject it may be well to allude to Mr. Partridge's imperfect description of another shield dated 1338 (!); which, he says, was in one of the south windows of the nave at the time he wrote, "being the earliest date extant in the church." (*Hist. Nant.* p. 36). From a rough drawing of it by the last Randle Holme in *Harl. MSS.* 2151, it appears to have represented an alliance between two very ancient and notable families; namely, *Erdeswick* (a shield with a bend, no colors given) *impaling* *Stafford* (Argent, on a chevron Gules five bezants Or) with an inscribed scroll as follows:—"Thomas *Erdeswick* Margaret *Stafford* 1338." Below, however, it is added—"this character doth not bespeak this coat to be so auncient as 1338;" a remark which must be received as proof that it was not ancient glass at all; especially when it is known that no mention is made of this glass in the Church notes by the earlier Randle Holmes', nor by Elias Ashmole.

Besides the above memorials of glass armoury, the first Randle Holme (in 1572) mentions the following armorial bearings *on wood*; "these coates are on the roofs [Transepts and Nave] of the said Church—*Wilbraham*, [of Woodhey] *Bulkley*, *Mainw'ringe*, *Delues*, *Maisterson*, *Egerton*, *Bassett*, and [?] *Audley*]. (*Harl. MSS.*)

The last Randle Holme gives a drawing of another shield *in stone*; and adds,—“on the outside the Chancell on the north side is cut in stone about a yard frō[m] the ground this coate;” *i.e.* on a shield an engrailed cross. (*Wettenhall*). This carving which is not

\* Dr. Ormerod gives the Arms of Combermere Abbey slightly different; viz. —“Quarterly Or and Gules, a bendlet Sable, debruised by a crosier *in pale* Or, the head turned sinister ways.”

† This was Roger Mainwaring, Eschaetor of Cheshire 10 Hen. VIII, the second son of Randle Mainwaring of Carincham. He married Mary (or Margaret) dau. of Thomas Brooke of Leighton; and died 5 Oct. 2 Hen. VIII [1510].

now to be seen, may have indicated the place where Randle Wettenhall, according to his will dated 20th Oct. 1437, was buried. (See chapter on *Annals*, p. 93).

Although the Church was rich in heraldic glass in pre-Reformation times, it had very few ancient monuments; two only being noticed by Randle Holme in 1572; one in marble and the other in brass.

The former is described as "The tombe of Sr George [should be *David*] Cradock\* cut in Allablaster with his coate on his brest." In *Harl. MSS.* 2151 p. 80, a rough drawing of the tomb is given; and an engraving of the same will be found in *Gent. Mag.* for 1805, Vol. II, p. 706. A broken part of the effigy of the Knight in the lower room (Crypt) of the vestry, is all that now remains of the monument. It originally stood in the South Transept, and was an altar-tomb of red stone, the sides being ornamented with shields included in quatre-foils. On the top was the recumbent figure of the Knight in alabaster, habited in plate armour, with conical helmet and gorget of mail; his hands clasped on his breast and a sword at his side. The legs were not crossed; the feet rested on a lion, and the head reposed on the crest, which was the head of a lamb. A notice of this monument occurs in Samuel Derrick's Letters (Vol. I p. 9); which alludes to two remarkable traditions of the town concerning it. He says—

"Here we were shown the Monument of the Founder [of the Church] Sir Roger de Caradoc, an ancient British Knight who was said to have been descended from the renowned *Caractacus* (!). It is of white marble and much defaced by *Cromwell's* (!) soldiers from whose violence nothing neat, elegant or venerable was sacred."

The arms on the tomb were "three garbs on a chevron;" which correspond with the heraldic glass on page 285, where the colours are given.†

The other ancient monument, placed at the "North end of the Church" was a brass representing a knight in armour; his feet resting on a greyhound, and on either side of his head shields charged with a griffin segreant. Round the sides of the brass, commencing at the feet of the warrior was this inscription:—

**"Hic Jacet Johis. Griffin militis qui obiit die lune  
pr. post fest. sci. michis. archi. anno. dni. M.CCC.  
LXXXX cuiq. aia. p'pitiatur deus. Amen."**

(*Translation*)—Here lies Sir John Griffin knight‡ who died on Monday next after the feast of St. Michael the Archangel [29 Sept.] in the year of our Lord 1390, On whose soul may God be merciful. Amen.

\* Here is another variation of the name. Dr. Ormerod also, by a clerical error, printed the name *Sir John* Cradock; the real personage being *Sir David* Cradock; which last name is given by Randle Wilbraham in his MS. Journal, by Pennant in his tour from Chester to London, p. 32 (Edit. 1782), and by Partridge, (*Hist. Nant.* p. 32). No mention of "*Sir George*" or "*Sir John*" occurs in the Cheshire records; but *Sir David Cradock* and his son *Sir Richard Cradock* no doubt were really living Knights. (See *Annals*, p. 83).

† It is interesting to note that the Cradock family have, in modern times, been long connected with Audley and Betley, having had possessions in some of the townships on the Wybunbury side of Nantwich and in the neighbourhood of Stafford; but whether the Staffordshire branches of the family and the Cradocks of Nantwich are descended from a common ancestor, I have not been able to ascertain. A "*Thomas Cradock, Gent.*," who lived and died at Nantwich, was "*buried at Audley 27 April 1762.*"—(Nantwich Par. Reg.) He was the brother of John Cradock of Betley, Esq., who died leaving two daughters; and was the last male descendant of the Betley branch of that family.—(Information by T. F. Twemlow Esq. of Betley Court).

‡ Sir John Griffin held the manor of Bartherton near Nantwich, which continued to be held by his posterity, until it was sold by Richard Griffin in 1666 to the Delves family of Doddington.

## The Church since the Reformation.



FTER the great changes in Ecclesiastical affairs that had taken place during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, Nantwich was classed amongst the "*discharged livings*;" that is, such as were exempted from the payment of *first-fruits* and *tithes* to the Exchequer, on account of the smallness of their incomes. Such livings were often called "*scandalous livings*" during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, because they had been deprived of their glebe lands, tithes, &c.; the revenues therefrom being either retained by the Crown, or diverted to individuals who could show a claim

by purchase. Thus the Tithes of Nantwich, and the Tithes of corn, grain, and pulse in Woolston-wood, Willaston, and Alvaston, belonged to the Mainwaring family of Nantwich; until Thomas Mainwaring, the elder, Gent., and William Mainwaring, Gent., sold the same, in 1635, to Raphe Judson; who, by his will, proved on the 17th Aug. 1648, devised the same to his wife, Rebecca Judson; from whom they were purchased by Roger Wilbraham Esq. of Townsend on the 16th April, 1657.\* These, together with his tithes in Leighton, he values in his Rent Roll, dated 1659,† as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
"Tythes of Leighton, and Tythes of my owne lands in Namptwich, in possession ...	20	0	0
"The Tythe-Hay of Namptwch wch was Judsons ... ..	6	13	4

The same Roger Wilbraham also purchased on the 31st Dec. 1678, from Robert Hyde, Gent., "*certain tythes of Namptwich which had formerly belonged to the Abbot of Combermere*;"\* which, together with the "*Tithe-hay of Namptwich*," were assessed for the relief of the Poor in 1834, at £4; being at that time in the possession of his descendant, George Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere.†

Other Tithes in Alvaston and Nantwich-Willaston were purchased, in 1719, for the sum of £200, raised by subscription, and given to the Rector of Nantwich and his successors.§

By deed dated 1st May 15 Car. I [1639] the living of Nantwich had been augmented by "*tithes formerly of the dissolved free Chapel of St. Lawrence*," which for nearly a hundred years previous had been in the possession of the Wright family of this town. By that deed Margaret Woodnoth (*née* Wright) and Elizabeth Davenport (*née* Wright), widows, of Nantwich, conveyed—

\* From authorized copies of the original Indentures preserved at Nantwich Rectory.

† Minshull Accounts, in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

‡ "Valnation of Buildings, Lands, Tithes, and other rateable property in the Township of Nantwich &c. 1834. Printed by E. Carven, Bookseller, High-Street, Nantwich, 1835."

§ Bishop Gastrell's "*Notitia Cestriensis*," Chet. Soc. Pub. vol. viii, which states that Mr. Crewe, of Crewe Hall; Mr. John Bromhall; and Mr. Randle Wilbraham of Townsend; each subscribed £50.



“their tithes of hay, hemp, flax, pigs, onions, and garlick in Wich Malbank, Willaston, and Leighton; and in Milne Street, High Towne and the Welsh Row in the town and parish of Wich Malbank” *in trust* “to raise £26 to provide and buy two silver Flaggons and a silver Patten, and deliver the same to the Churchwardens of the Parish Church of Wich Malbank, to be by them and their successors for ever used in the Celebration of the Sacrament;” and afterwards “to the use of the *preaching Minister in and for the said Town of Wich Malbank.*”\*

In 1839, when the Tithe Commutation Act came into operation, Mr. France, of Bostock, co. Chester, raised a most unexpected claim to the small tithes of Leighton township; which were relinquished by the Rev. H. Gretton, Rector of Nantwich, in the year 1840, when Leighton was separated from Nantwich parish.

Another source of Church revenue which fell into lay hands was the *Easter Roll*, or *Easter Dues*; being a *personal tithe* of twopence from every householder in Nantwich, for each member of his family, due annually at Easter. The history of the Easter Roll from the dissolution of Combermere Abbey to the present time is of a very interesting character; since it became, in a very strange manner, associated with the advowson of the Church, as will next be shown.

The Easter Roll, which according to *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (1535) was let to farm for £8 6s. 8d., was by an Indenture dated 25th April 30 Hen. VIII [1538] leased for a term of sixty years by John, Abbot of Combermere, to WILLIAM MAISTERSON, of Nantwich, at an annual rent of £8, payable to the Abbot at the feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist [June 24]. The deed states the rights and privileges to be—

“Pryve [personal] Tythes called the Ester Rolle or the Ester Booke and all oblacons. Weddyngs & Buryings cumynge or happenynge or that hereafter shall cume or happen durynge the tyme [term] of Yeres underwryten of the pisshe. [parish] of Wyche Malbanke aforesaid beinge due to the seid Abbott & Convent at the clause [close] of Ester or w<sup>thin</sup> any tyme of the yere when the seid Tythes oblac<sup>t</sup>. Weddyngs or Buryings shall happen” &c.†

This lease in all probability became null and void about fourteen months after, when the same Abbot surrendered his Monastery with its revenues into the King's hands. The Crown appears to have retained the Easter Roll of Nantwich until 1592; and out of its profits to have paid the annual stipend of £4 13s. 4d. to the Town Curate. By Letters Patent‡ dated at Westminster 27th June 34 Eliz. [1592], Queen Elizabeth granted a lease of the Easter Roll of Wich Malbank to ROGER WALTHALL, HUGH HASSALL, and ROGER WILBRAHAM, for their lives and the life of the longest liver of them; “for the use and benefit of the said parish of Wich Malbank;” subject to the annual rent of £3 6s. 8d. payable to the Crown; and after the decease of any of them, a payment to the Crown of 30s. in the name of a heriot. “And the aforesaid Roger Walthall, Hugh Hassall, and Roger Wilbraham, and their assigns shall pay £4 13s. 4d. yearly due to the Curate of Wich Malbank, and so yearly from time to time for his *stipend.*”

\* From a printed copy of the Deed, now at Nantwich Rectory; printed in 1784, by order of the Rev. John Smith, Rector, from the original Indenture then in the Diocesan Registry at Chester, which has since that time been lost.

† The “two silver Flaggons,” which were purchased twenty years after (1659), form part of the present Communion Plate of the Church; there is also a “silver Patten,”—a thin, beaten plate (without date or inscription), which may also have been bought by the Trustees, as directed above.

‡ Authorized copy of the original deed at Nantwich Rectory.

§ I have a full copy of this Latin deed, taken from one preserved amongst the Wilb. MSS.; which is too long to be given in its entirety. The principal facts, however, are given in this paragraph.

In the next lease of the Easter Roll, a clause was inserted, which attempted (illegally) to pass the *advowson*, or *right of presentation* as accessory, incident, and appendant to the right of collecting Easter Dues. The deed is here given in full:\* (*Translated*)—

“By Letters patent bearing date the 30th July in the fourth year of our reign [1628] as well under the Great Seal of England as of the Seal of the County Palatine of Lancaster, I King Charles do grant and concede to Ralph Wyse and Henry Harryman [? Harrison†] both of London, Gents., and their heirs and assigns for ever all that *Easter Roll* or *Easter Book* of Wich Malbank in the county of Chester, and all and singular the smaller tithes coming growing or renewing of and in the parish of Wich Malbank with all and singular its rights members and appurtenances then or late in the tenure of Roger Walthall, Hugh Hassall and Roger Wilbraham or their assigns said to be of the yearly value of 66s. 8d. and formerly parcel of the possession of the late Monastery of Combermere in the said county of Chester, and all and singular the *Advowson* donation free disposition and right of patronage of all and singular the *Rectory Church Viarage Chapelry* and of all other ecclesiastical benefits of these presents thus granted &c. to hold the said Ralph Wyse and Henry Harryman their heirs and assigns in fee farm for ever. To be held of our heirs and successors of our Manor of East Greenwich‡ in the co. of Kent in fealty and in free and common socage and not *in capite* nor by Knight's service paying yearly to us and our successors 66s. 8d. &c. in two equal portions on the feasts of the Annunciation and St. Michael the Archangel.”

The Easter Roll was next passed to Sir Ranulph Crewe,§ of Crewe, Kt., by Indenture dated 3rd March, 1631, for the sum of £66 13s. 4d., subject to the annual Crown Rent of £3 6s. 8d. as before, and remained in that family until the year 1820, when by an Indenture dated 24th Feb. 1 Geo. IV [1820]

“between the Rt. Hon. John Lord Crewe, Baron Crewe of Crewe, *Patron of the Parish Church* of Nantwich and Richard Henry Gretton, Clerk, *Rector of the Parish and Parish Church of Nantwich*, Witnesseth that the said John Lord Crewe for divers good causes &c. and for augmenting the living of the said R. H. Gretton and his successors *Rectors* for the time being of the Parish of Nantwich aforesaid, and in consideration of 5s. &c. hath granted bargained sold and assigned to the said R. H. G. and his successors *Rectors* of the Parish &c. all and every the offerings, oblations obventions commonly called the *Easter Dues* or *Easter Roll* of the Parish of Nantwich aforesaid and of right due and payable to the said John Lord Crewe at the feast of Easter yearly, from the several inhabitants for the time being of the Parish of Nantwich &c. subject nevertheless to the Annual Rent of £3 6s. 8d. payable to the Crown in respect of the same, &c. by the said R. H. G. and his successors, *Rectors* for the time of the Parish of Nantwich.”||

For many years after the dissolution of Combermere Abbey, the Curate of Nantwich received a fixed stipend of £4 13s. 4d. per annum; which was further supplemented by other sums collected in the town (see p. 30); and hence as the parishioners were compelled to sustain their minister, they claimed the right of choosing and appointing him. In Puritan times the incumbents were styled *Ministers*; and, the living being a *donative*, that is, given to clergymen by the parishioners without presentation to, or institution by, the

\* From an authorized copy of the original Latin deed now at Nantwich Rectory.

† The name *Harrison* is here introduced from another copy of the same deed *penes me*.

‡ “*Manor of East Greenwich*,” a legal phrase signifying the possession of the Crown.

§ Papers at Nantwich Rectory; and cf. page 209.

|| Original deed by the first Lord Crewe now preserved at the Rectory, Nantwich. The Easter Dues ceased to be collected about the year 1868. The present Rector, however, still pays the same Crown Rent annually.

Bishop, no list of their names is to be found at the Diocesan Registry of Chester, until after the passing of the Act of Uniformity, (19th May, 1662), which rendered Episcopal ordination imperative. Fortunately, however, the names of the Nantwich Ministers for a period of seventy years (1560—1630) have been preserved in an original document, which is here printed for the first time.

“My Co.[usin] To.[m] Maynwaryng touchine o[u]r Curate and his Wages.”\*

“I doe remember & wyll testefye that theis mynysters wch have beene off the Namptwiche Churche have bene placed & displaced bye the gentellmen & others off the towne wthout the Consent or approbation eyther of the Lorde Bishop or anye other parson [person] whatsoever.

“First, (*Sr*) *Richard Hargreve* was displaced & after him, the gentellmen toocke on (*Sr*) *Wylliä[m] Ward*, & vpon some dislicke hee was displaced, then the[y] toocke one (*Sr*) *John* . . . I remember not his Siname, but the[y] called him (*Sr*) *John off Warryngton*: vpon dislicke off him the gentellmen putt him forth & toocke in (*Sr*) *Williä Ward* agayne: whoe reemayned to his dying daye.

After him the gentellmen chose *Mr. Hollford* wthout the consent of anye Ordynarye, & hee reemay[n]ed to his deathe: vpon the place beēg. [being] then voyde Byschopp lloyde sent hecyther one *Mr. Holland* & woulde have placed him heere, but the gentellmen wth the rest off the towne, would not suffer him to bee here; in that they [*i.e.* the] Byschoppe hathe noe titell or ryghte to place anye Mynister amongst vs; but did expulse him from us & chose *Mr. Bradwell* wthout his the Byschopp Consent or approbation: for our Curatesshipp is but stipendarye allowed from the Kinge butt fourteene nobles [£4 13s. 4d.] p. Ann.; wch ryghte & titell wee have bye lease from the latte Quaene Elizabeth, and paye iijl. vjs. viijd. [£3 6s. 8d.] p. an., beesydes the reeperac'on [repairs] & xxxs. [30s.] at the decease off eu'ye [every] one of the leasees, as the lease wyll testefye & for the other I am able & wyll wittenesse that itt is true.”

“*Mr. Clayton* was never lawfullye Elected to the Curatesshippe off Namptwiche, neyther did, or doe the moste (as wyl be proven) houlde him for our mynyster or Curate.”

“THO. MAYNWARYNG.”

#### *The Curate's Wages.*†

“The Town hath a lease of ye Curats place (wch *Mr. Saring* now hath) for 3 liues paying yearlye 5 markes [£3 6s. 8d.] & to repaire ye chauncel: & by ye same lease we are to pay to ye *Minister* of ye Towne 14 nobles [£4 13s. 4d.] wch the towne makes up £10 p. ann. of their owne accord: & giues him moreover the weddinges, burialls, christnings and churchings wch come to about 40s. p. ann. Now to pay this £10 the Towne hathe ye Proctors book‡ wch comes to about £15 p. ann. And this is thus raysed:—

first £5 8s. od. forth of ye whole walling; vizt. out of euery 6 leads sixpence, their being 216 six leads walling.

Then for euery man servant in ye Towne 6d.; and for euery woman servant 4d. Then for euery Cow whereof the milk comes into ye Towne 1d.: And a hal[f]penny for euerie Calfe calued wthin the parish, except *woolston-wood* wch answears but ye 3d pt. [third part] of Tythes wch are pd by Leighton; vizt: smoke,§ coves, and calues, & ye white tithes.|| Willaston and Aluaston pay all tythes belonging to a vicar.¶

\* This interesting document, *penes me*, formerly belonged to the MS. collections of the late T. W. Jones, Esq., Solicitor, of Nantwich.

† This Terrier is preserved amongst the Wilb. MSS. at Delamere.

‡ On the 19th May, 1703, was buried “Robert Oldfeld, Proctor;” (*Par. Reg.*) whose duty it was to collect these fruits of the benefice.

§ *Tithe of Smoke*, sometimes called *smoke-penny* or *smoke-silver* was money paid to the minister instead of *Tithe wood*.

|| *White-tithes*; *i.e.* the tithes of hay.

¶ Probably the vicar of Acton. In 1705, the Tithes of Willaston were held by Mr. Simon Degge, of Nantwich, “from whom” (says Rev. Sam. Edgeley, Vicar of Acton,) “I cannot learn.” *Gastrell's Notitia Cestriensis*, Chet. Soc. Pub. p. 200.

*My Lady Norton* payes yearlye 2s. for tythe Geese, but they are worth 10s. p. ann.

*George Whittakers* payes 20s. for Onions & Garlick, worth p. ann. 30s. Also 5s. for every chamber vnder the schoole [*i.e.* the Grammar School in the Church Yard] & 16s. for *Ric. Barkers* house; all web are of th' inheritance belonging to ye Towne.

“Also, 10s. is paid for a Mortuary for every one dying worth £40 in goods; & 6s. 8d. if worth £30; and 3s. 4d. if worth £6 6s. 8d.: & for every man or woman buried in ye church 3s. 4d.; and for every child 1s. 8d.; and for every one buried in ye chancel 6s. 8d.”

“Theis directions I [Thomas Wilbraham\*] had fro[m] my Cos. Tho. Mainwaring 15 Dec. 1629.”

On the death of Mr. Richard Jackson, the last of the Nantwich *Ministers* or *Curates*, in 1677, John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq., (grandson of Sir Ranulph Crewe, Kt., the purchaser of the Easter Roll in 1631) “assumed the *right of presentation* to ye Curateship of Nantwich,” and was supported by the “restless endeavours” of Gabriel Stringer, a native of the town, who sought and obtained the preferment.† The original presentation of Mr. Stringer is not now preserved at the Diocesan Registry: but it was in existence when Bishop Gastrell wrote, stating that he was admitted as perpetual Curate of the Church of Nantwich on the presentation of John Crewe, of Crewe, Anno. 1677.‡

On the next vacancy of the benefice in 1690, *Anne Crewe Offley*, eldest daughter and co-heiress of John Crewe, Esq., exercised the right of patronage; and, in presenting *Peter Lancaster* to the Bishop, besought his Lordship “to admit and institute him *Rector* of the said Church with its rights and all belonging thereto, and declare and set forth the same publicly by his [the Bishop’s] authority.”§ All succeeding clergymen have been similarly presented, and have received institution as Rectors of Nantwich; but it is very noteworthy that the title, Rector, does not occur in the Parish Register until the year 1714, or thirty-seven years after the death of Richard Jackson, Minister of Nantwich.

Whilst ancient Rectories, with their glebe lands, soon recovered from the effects of the Reformation, and have in recent times greatly increased in value, Stipendiary Curacies, like Nantwich, which could only be augmented by gifts and endowments, increased but slowly in value; and as late as 1786, (Bacon’s “*Liber Regis*”) the annual income was only £27 3s. 4d.! It would seem that the restitution of tithes and gifts to the incumbent have *ipso facto* made the living *rectorial*; and the district in which the tithes were collected an *ecclesiastical parish* separate and distinct from Acton, of which it was originally a part. These changes, however, were brought about in a very gradual manner, and not by any legal act or process. No suspicion appears to have been cast upon the right of the Crewe family to the advowson of Nantwich from the year 1677 until 1840, when the legality of the claim was questioned by the Rev. Robert Mayor, Vicar of Acton. Legal opinion was obtained showing that Lord Crewe’s title was then wholly unimpeachable, according to Stat. 3 & 4 Will. IV [1833] c. 27, which enacted:—

\* Thos. Wilbraham records in the Wilb. MS. Journal:—

“My Cosen Thos. Mainwaring, my Lady Norton’s son, dyed 10 Aug. 1638.”

He was buried on the following day—

“1638. Aug. 11th. Thos Mainwaring, Gent., in the Beame Street.”—(*Par. Reg.*)

† See Roger Wilbraham’s “*Towne Concernes*,” page 209—210.

‡ Gastrell’s *Notitia Cestriensis*, p. 225. Chet. Soc. Pub.

§ From the original presentation, dated 11th Aug. 1690, signed and sealed; and now preserved at Chester Diocesan Registry.

"That after the 31st Dec. 1833 no *quare impedit* or other suit shall be maintainable to enforce a right to present to any benefice after the period during which three clerks in succession shall have held it having been appointed adversely to the right of the party so claiming if such three incumbencies amount altogether to 60 years." (Sect. 30).

Sect. 33. "limits the right to maintain such suit absolutely to 100 years."

Sect. 34. "extinguishes the right of the party out of possession after the determination of the period of limitations."

## The Clergy List.

### I. CURATES OR MINISTERS.

For reasons already given, the list of incumbents of Nantwich Church commences about the time of the Reformation, the first name being—

[*Sir*] REGINALD STEVENSON. *Temp.* Hen. VIII.

He occurs as Curate between the years 1533 and 1548. (*cf.* pp. 277-8).

[*Sir*] JOHN CROXTON, 1548.

The Chantry Certificate of 1548 recommended the appointment of a Vicar with an assistant to supply the spiritual wants of the town. Accordingly the King's Commissioners, on the 13th July, 1548, appointed the oldest of the four priests, *John Croxton*, to be the *Stipendiary Curate* of Nantwich; the other priests retiring on pensions of £4 per ann. The deed of appointment states:—

"That the *Chapel of the Nantwich in the parish of Adon* shall continue;\* and that JOHN CROXTON one of the four Stipendiary priests in the same *Chapel* shall serve the Cure there, and shall have yearly £4 13s. 4d."†

John Croxton resigned his Curateship; (? date); but was living in the parish of Audley (Staffordshire) on a pension of £5 per ann., about the year 1570.‡

[*Sir*] RICHARD HARGREVE. *Temp.* Queens Mary and Elizabeth.

The date of his appointment has not occurred; but he was Curate here in 1560, and in 1562; having received in both those years his annual stipend of £4 13s. 4d. from Richard Legh, of West Hall, Esq., the receiver of Crown revenues in Cheshire, according to the following entry in the West Hall Papers, vol. iv.—

"Paid to Ric' hargreve assistent in the Church of Namptwiche his hole yeres penc'on ended at ye feast of seint Michell th'arcangell last past ... .. iiiijli. xiijs. iiijd."

Having been displaced, he was succeeded by—

\* "*Continue*;" that is, shall not be demolished as the *Hospitals of St. Nicholas*, and *St. Lawrence*, with their Chapels, Altars, &c., and as *Combermere Abbey*, and many other religious edifices were about that time.

† The original document, which mentions other similar appointments in Cheshire, has been recently printed in Mr. Earwaker's "*Local Gleanings Magazine*," pp. 307, 309. The name Croxton, is, however, given *Crapon*; no doubt a misreading of the original that might easily have been made; as those who are acquainted with the kind of handwriting in use 300 years ago, will readily allow.

‡ Special Commissions, 16 Eliz. [1574] No. 3258. Diocese of Chester; 38th Report of Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.

[*Sir*] WILLIAM WARD.

Who must have been appointed early in Queen Elizabeth's reign; and being displaced was succeeded by—

[*Sir*] JOHN\* . . . . . "of Warrington."

This Curate was displaced in or before 1572; and was succeeded by William Ward.

[*Sir*] WILLIAM WARD. 1572—1583.

Re-appointed 1572, and continued to be minister here until his death; his burial, however, not being recorded in the Register. He commenced keeping the Parish Register 1st Jan. 1572 (see chapter on the Registers); and during his incumbency, the high-pitched roofs of the Transepts appear to have been removed, and the flat panelled oak ceiling substituted, according to the following inscription in Roman capitals still discernible on a beam in the North Transept:—

“ANNO DOMINI 1577. THOMAS CLEASE MADE AND FENISHED  
THIS WORKE IN THE 19 YERE OF ELIZABETH QVEENE THE  
4 DAYE OF NOVEMBER. THOS. WRYGHT RYCHARD WYXTED YE CHVRCH WARDENS.”

He was succeeded by—

[*Mr.*] WILLIAM HOLFORD, *Minister*. 1583—1604.

The Parish Register records, “*Dec. 12th 1583 William Holford Minister entereth.*” In the reign of Elizabeth, Puritanism spread rapidly in the south of Cheshire. From 1571 to 1604, ministers were only compelled to subscribe to those of the thirty-nine Articles which concerned the faith and sacraments; and not to points of discipline and Church government; but the Canons of 1604 required the subscription of the clergy to the Articles touching rites and ceremonies; and in the following year, three hundred of the Puritan clergy were driven from their livings for their refusal to conform; and amongst the rest, *Mr. John Paget*, a very learned man, “*preacher of God's Word*” at Nantwich, under the Minister *Mr. Holford*, of whom more presently. Shortly before *Mr. Paget* came to Nantwich, religious feeling had run so high as to necessitate legal proceedings by which, on 21st July, 1595, a Commission was appointed to inquire touching certain “lybelles and Rymes” dispersed in the town of Nantwich to the scandal of the preachers of God's word.

“ELIZABETH &c. To our trusty and welbeloved *Sr hugh Cholmondeley Knighte, Thomas Wilbraham* [of Woodhey], *Henry Delues* [of Doddington], *Thomas Smith* [of Hatherton], *Willm. liu'sage* [Liversage of Wheelock], and *hugh Beeston* [of Beeston], the elder, Esquires, or to any two of them, Greetinge.

Whereas We are credibly enformed That certeyne lewde and seditious p'sons. haue of late dispersed certeyne infamous and slaunderous lybelles and Rymes in the towne of Namptwiche tendinge to the slander and discredit as well of the preachers & ministers of gods Worde as of others of good credit and reputation By oc'con. [occasion] Whereof much inconvenience and breach of our peace is like to ensue if it be not p'vented Wee mynding the speedie reformation thereof for the quiet and peaceable gou[ern]ment of our Subjects and the due punyshment of such offenders doe by these pr[e]sents authorize and requier yow or any two or more of yow at such daies and tymes as shall be agreed vppon by yow &c. to assemble yourselves at the said towne of Namptwiche and to cause to come before yow &c. all such p'sons. as yow shall thinke meete and to exam'. theym by such Wayes and meanes as yow shall thinke convenyent eyther by othe or otherwise &c. And such as yow shall fynde to be any Waye guiltie or vehemently suspected thereof to take theym bounde for their appearaunce in our Exchequer

\* His surname has not occurred. No information relating to this incumbent or his predecessors is to be found in the Parish Registers, owing to the hiatus between 1545 and 1572.

at Chester at such tyme as yow shall lymytte and appoynt. And of your facts doings & pceedings therein to certifie us into the saide Exchequer at or before the first daie of September next cominge together with such exa<sup>m</sup>acons [examinations] as you shall take in this behalfe.

Wytness o<sup>r</sup> seale at Chester the xxj daie of July 37th of o<sup>r</sup> Raigne.\* [1595].

Very interesting particulars relating to Mr. John Paget have recently been printed;† from which the following brief biography is compiled; a few extracts from the Parish Register, and an old pedigree book, furnishing additional information concerning that eminent Puritan divine.

*Mr. John Paget.*

He is believed, though it is not certain, to have been descended from the *Pagets* of Rothley, co. Leicester. He was educated at the University of Cambridge, "where he was esteemed for the most part to surpass his contemporaries." "After some few yeares spent in places of lesse note," says R. Paget in an Address prefixed to a vol. of Sermons by John Paget, entitled '*Meditations of Death*' published after his death at *Dort* in Holland, in 1639, "he was called to the ministry of the Church of Christ, at Nantwich, about the yeare 1598. The extraordinary diligence and paines he tooke there, both in publick and private, with persons of all sorts, and the blessed successe, hath bene already witnessed by the lively Epistles of Christ ministered by him. But when the times would not beare his continuance in that place, where his labours were so profitable, and where he was then so beloved, he followed the hand of God's providence guiding him into the Netherlands, in the yeare 1605." He is described as possessing "rare skill in the languages that conduce unto the understanding of the original text of the Scriptures; for he could to good purpose and with much ease make use of the Chaldean, Syriack, Rabbinicall, Thalmudicall, Arabick, and Persian versions and commentaries." Whilst at Nantwich he published a book, now of great rarity, entitled "*A Primer of Christian Religion, or a forme of Catechising, drawne from the beholding of Gods works, &c.*" By I. P. London 1601." Small 8vo. 183 leaves. This book is dedicated "To my beloved friendes in the Nantwich," and is signed "*John Paget.*"

At Nantwich, too, he married. Dr. Ormerod places him in the Maisterson pedigree as the husband of *Bridget* daughter of Richard Maisterson, of Nantwich; and the Parish Register records:—

"1601-2. Feb. 8. Mr. John Pagett, preacher, and Bridget Thrushe"† [Married].

This apparent error is made plain in old MS. pedigree book of Cheshire families preserved at Dorfold Hall; in which on page 123 is the following:—" *Brigetta qua nupsit 1 Thrushe deinde Joh. Pigett concionator verbi Dei in Amsterdam in Hollandie.*"§

Driven away from Nantwich in 1605 for his Nonconformity, he fled to Holland, where he first preached and taught in the Army; until he was admitted minister of the English Church at Amsterdam|| on 29th April, 1607, where he was pastor for about thirty years

\* *Cheshire Recognizance Rolls*, Pub. Record Office.

† J. P. Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, Vol. I, p. 390; and *Local Gleanings*, 4to series, Vol. I, pp. 33, 40.

‡ *Bridget Thrushe* remained in a state of widowhood only a few weeks, her former husband having been buried at Nantwich in the November previous. "1601. Nov. 10. *George Thrushe, Gent. dyed of a consumption.*" [Buried].

§ (*Translated*)—Bridget [Maisterson] who married first Thrushe, afterwards John Pagett preacher of God's Word at Amsterdam in Holland.

|| Sir William Brereton, Bart., in his "*Travels in Holland*" in 1634 records on "June 12th we dined with Mr. Pageatt:" (p. 57) and that the Church "allowed unto Mr. Pageatt 1100 guilders [£110] per annum." (p. 67.)

"untill age and the infirmities thereof growing upon him the Magistrates of that City vouchsafed him the honour of an Emeritus." He died in 1637-8; and in the Vol. of Sermons before mentioned, his widow "*Briget Paget* speaks of these Meditations of my deare Husband of blessed memory" &c. He was the author of "*An Arrow against the Separation of the Brownists*," Printed at Amsterdam 1618, a controversial pamphlet, dated 1635; and a posthumous book entitled "A Defence of Church Government" &c. 1641.

By a singular coincidence *Mr. Thomas Paget*, younger brother of *Mr. John Paget* married a Nantwich lady, as recorded in the registers.

"1613. April 6. Mr. Thos. pagett, preacher, & Margery Gouldsmith."

He was minister of Blackley Chapel, in Manchester parish, at the time of his marriage; where he remained till he was deprived of his living by Bishop Bridgman in 1631. He fled to Holland to escape imprisonment or fine; and there in 1639 succeeded his brother at the Church in Amsterdam. Returning to England in 1646, he was Rector of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, for ten years; and from 1657 till his death in 1660, Rector of Stockport. One of his sons, Nathan Paget, a physician, was the intimate friend of the poet Milton, and a relative of the poet's third wife, Elizabeth Minshall. (See Minshall pedigree).

Of the incumbent, *Mr. William Holford*, very little is known. Both he and his wife died when the Plague was rife in the town. (See p. 114).

He appears to have died intestate; but an inventory of his goods was filed and administration granted to his relatives, in 1608.\*

#### MR. JOHN BRADWALL. 1605—1623.

After the death of Mr. Holford, the right of the "*Gentlemen*" to appoint the next minister was questioned by Bishop Lloyd, who gave institution to a certain *Mr. Holland*. In opposition to the Bishop, however, the parishioners expelled Holland;† and chose *Mr. Bradwall*; who came to Nantwich, seven months after the death of the previous minister.‡ His name occurs in the Registers as follows:—

"1605. May 31. John Bradwall, minister, entereth here."—(*Par. Reg.*)

"1605. Dec. 14. Samuell son of John Bradwall minister."—[Baptized].

"1608. Aug. 31. John sonne of Mr. John Bradwall minister."—[Buried].

"1608. Sep. 12. Ann dau. of Mr. John Bradwall minister."—[Buried].

"1612. June 16. Annes Conesrak Mr. Bradwall's mother or minister."—[Buried].

"1623-4. March 7. Mr. John Bradwall, preacher & minister of the word of God."—[Buried].

To his memory a monumental tablet was erected "*by the Communion table*;" but it does not appear to have been in existence in 1663 when Elias Ashmole visited the Church. The inscription from *Harl. MSS.* 2151, is as follows:—

"Here lyeth the body of the holy and religious pastor . . . mr John Bradwall, who did zealously & laboriously discharge the office of the ministry . . . for the space of two and 30 yeares; 18 yeares of wch was dilligently bestowed on this towne of namptwch being much admired both in life and doctrine. He came to this towne 18 May 1605 and deceased 5 March 1623-4."

\* Wills at Chester 1545—1620. (Record Soc. Pub.)

† Failing at Nantwich, *Mr. Hugh Holland* was presented by the Bishop, on 5th July, 1606, to the Rectory of Wistaston, which living he only occupied about a year.

‡ Several events in connection with the Church, during the incumbency of Mr. Bradwall, will be found noticed in the *Annals*, pp. 115—120.



Mr. Bradwall's widow seems to have survived until 1645, her burial register being as follows:—

"1645. May 6. Mrs. Ellen Bradwell widowe."

Among the names of minor clergymen between the years 1636 and 1642 occurs *Joseph Bradwall*, who was most likely a son of Mr. John Bradwall.

"1636. Aug. 25. Joseph Bradwall, clerk, and Margaret Wicksteed. [married] at Acton."

"1639. Jan. 19. Mary dau. of Joseph Bradwall minister." [Baptized].

"1642. Aug. 29. Mary dau. of Mr. Joseph Bradwall minister." [Buried].

He must have died before 1648, as another assistant minister here married his widow in that year, as recorded in the Parish Register:—

"1648. July 17. John Roberts, minister and Margaret Bradwall, widow." [*Marr. Reg.*]

[*Mr.*] MATTHEW CLAYTON. 1624.

The appointment of *Matthew Clayton* as Curate of Nantwich, after the death of *Mr. John Bradwall*, was again the cause of disagreement and ill-feeling in the town; some holding that *Mr. Clayton* was not "lawfully elected." A memorandum in the Registers states:—

"That in March 1624, after the death of John Bradwall late mynister here, was placed by the Churchwardens to bee mynister one Matthew Clayton a good gospeller."<sup>\*</sup>

The last word is almost illegible, and other remarks which followed, have been erased, perhaps because they were offensive to the then registrar or some of his successors. The names of the Churchwardens for the years 1624 and 1625 are not given in the Register. A Matthew Clayton, (most likely the same clergyman) was curate of Witton, near Northwich, from Nov. 1616, to the year 1619;† and the same name occurs again as second minister at Middlewich in 1646.‡ Matthew Clayton was one of the fourteen ministers who asked the Rev. John Ley, of Astbury, to write his "*Sunday a Sabbath, 1641.*"

The following extracts from the Registers are of interest.

"1626. April 27. Mathew Cleaton, mynister, and Eleanor Mynshull." [Married].

"1628. July 13. Elizabeth, dau. of Mathew Clayton, clerk." [Bapt.]

"1626. March 6. Katherine Jerram, wyfe to Steephen Jerram, *preacher of gods Word in this towne.*" [Buried].

No other mention of *Matthew Clayton* has occurred. His successors at Nantwich, according to the following memoranda in the Burial Register, appear to have been—

PETER FROGG, c. 1627.

[*Mr.*] PETER LEIGHE, appointed 13th July, 1627; resigned 1632.

[*Mr.*] THOMAS BOYSE, 1632—1633.

[*Mr.*] JOHN SARING, M.A., 1633.

*Mem<sup>d</sup>.* 1627. July. That in this month *Peter Frogg* being *minister* in this towne, fallinge into extreame sicknesse departed away home voluntarilie; and afterwards was placed att Mynshull and there

\* The term "*Gospeller*" was originally a derisive epithet applied to those who read the Scriptures to the unlearned poor. Gilbert Burnett, D.D. (Author of History of Reformation), in "*A Sermon preached on the Fast-Day 22 Dec. 1680, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, before the Honble House of Commons.*" says, "There were two things that were visible in the practice of those who first embraced the Reformation among us; the one was the great pleasure they took in reading the Scriptures, from whence they were in derision called "*Gospellers.*" When Bibles were first set up in Churches, and went at such rates that ordinary people could not buy them, what a running was there to Churches, and what crowds gathered all day long about *such as could read*, to hear this blessed Word."

† Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, New Edit., vol. iii, p. 156.

‡ History of Nonconformity in Cheshire, pp. 164 and 477.

dyed. And about the 13th daye of this month *Peter Leighe* was by the Churchwardens,\* with the consent of the gent. & others, placed mynister here during pleasure."

"*Memd.* [1632. March.] That att Michaelmas last past [29 Sep. 1631] *Mr. John Saringe* was hyred & entered to bee the aforenoone Preacher of gods worde att Namptwiche, as assistante to MR. PEETER LEICHE."

[Signed] William Mainwaring, Gent. }  
Thomas Walthall, Gent. } Churchwardens.

*Memd.* That att Michaelmas this p<sup>r</sup>sent year 1632 MR. THOMAS BOYSE came to bee readinge minister at Namptwiche; and att Christmas *Mr. Mainwaring*† schoolema<sup>r</sup> went awaye to Wibunbury and *Mr. Robert Symons* came to bee schoolema<sup>r</sup> in his place whome *Mr. Boyse* doth assiste."

Of PETER FROGG, there is nothing further to relate.

PETER LEIGH is believed, though it is not certain, to have left Nantwich in 1632 for Chester; where, during the Commonwealth period, he appears to have been minister at St. Oswald's; and afterwards at St. John's. Being ejected in 1662, he became Nonconformist minister at Knutsford.‡

The burial of MR. BOYSE is recorded at Nantwich within nine months of his appointment as minister here.

"1633. June 8. Mr. Thomas Boyse Minister at Nantwich buried."

JOHN SARING, having been incumbent for ten years (1633—1643), suffered imprisonment and the loss of his goods during the Civil War troubles. He was still a prisoner at Nantwich on the 8th Dec. 1646 (p. 185); and, on gaining his liberty, "was forced to quit the country," although he "was a very worthy man."§ His name will be found mentioned on several pages in this work.

RICHARD JACKSON. 1647-8.—Oct. 1677.

No account of the appointment of Richard Jackson is given in the Parish Register; but from the fact that the living of Nantwich was augmented by Parliament c. 1648, by the Commissioners sitting at Goldsmith's Hall, London, for compositions with the Delinquents, (Sir Thomas Smith [of Hatherton] and Sir Thomas Deives [of Doddington] Knights); by which £50 per ann. went to Wybunbury and the rest [sum not stated] to Namptwich,"|| it may be presumed that *Richard Jackson* was a Presbyterian parson appointed by the Parliament; against whose decision the parishioners, (who had successfully withstood Bishop Lloyd's attempt to force a clergyman on the town in 1605), would now, of course, be powerless. His name occurs in the list of signatures to the Cheshire "Attestation," drawn up by the celebrated MR. LEY, of Astbury, and subscribed at Northwich on 6th July, 1648; but in 1662, he must have conformed; for he continued to be

\* The Churchwardens were *Thomas Malbon*, gent., and *Richard Harwar*, Apothecary. See also pages 126—134 for other mentions of the Church, Ministers, officers, repairs, &c.

† *Mr. Edward Mainwaring* succeeded *Thomas Tudman* as Schoolmaster at Wybunbury; and after the death of *Samuel Cole*, vicar of Wybunbury in July, 1659; he appears to have been vicar until 1693; when on the 7th Dec. he was buried as "minister of Gods Word and Vicar of Wybunbury."—(*Wybunbury Par. Reg.*)

‡ History of Nonconformity in Cheshire, pp. 13 and 442. See also *Cheshire Sheaf*, vol. ii, pp. 101, 110, 121 and 162.

§ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy."

|| See Earwaker's "Local Gleanings," quarto series, Vol. II, pp. 170-1.

Minister here until his death in 1677. Richard Jackson,\* who was about twenty-eight years of age when appointed to the Curacy of Nantwich, married, and had issue a daughter, and two sons, (George) both of whom died in infancy.

"1651. April 26. Richard Jackson Minister, and Margaret Broomhall." [Married].

"1651-2. March 7. Anne dau. of Richard Jackson, Minister." [Bapt.]

"1656-7. March 10. George son of Rich. Jackson, Minister." [Buried].

"1663. Dec. 20. George son of Ric. Jackson Minister." [Buried].

"1677. Oct. 15. Mr. Richard Jackson, Minister." [Buried].

He died intestate; but an Inventory of his goods was taken on the 14th May, 1677; and administration granted to his widow, Margaret Jackson, on the 15th Dec. 1677. A monument was erected to his memory within the Communion, and inscribed as follows:—†

"Richard Jackson, minister of Nantwich 29 years, was interred on the 15th Oct. in the 57th year of his age. *Anno. 1677.*"

GABRIEL STRINGER. 19 March, 1678—1690.

Gabriel Stringer, Curate or Minister, was the first clergyman at Nantwich to receive institution from the Bishop; on the presentation of John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq.‡

He was the son of Gabriel Stringer, of the Red Lion [*now Wilbraham's Arms*] Inn; and had been Curate of Little Budworth in this county, from June, 1674. His marriage is recorded; but there is no mention of issue either in the Registers or in his Will.

"1679-80. Feb. 24. Gabriell Stringer & Margaret Wicksted by lic[ence] fr<sup>m</sup> Chancellor Dated 19 feb."—[*Par. Reg. Matrim.*]

Dr. Thos. Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, in his "Diary" (Camden Soc. Publ.) enters as follows:—

"4 Dec. 1686. I wrote to Major-General Worden of making Mr. Stringer of Nantwich my surrogate."

"15 Dec. 1686. Mr. Gabriel Stringer, minister of Nantwich, sent me a cheese weighing 80 lbs."

The will of Gabriel Stringer is of an interesting character. An abstract from the probate copy at Chester is here given.

"In the name of God Amen 21 feb. 1689 I Gabriel Stringer Minister of the parish of Namptwich, co. Chester, [&c.] doe make & ordeine this my Last will & Testament in manner following declaring that I dye in the Com'union of the Church of England & in vtter detestation of either Popery or Phinatiesim [fanaticism] &c. . . . and whereas I am possessed of three severall Cottages situate in the Beame Street in Namptwich the demise of the Right Honble Hugh Lord viscount Cholmondeley for Three Lives [&c.] I give devise bequeath & Assigne the same to be habited Rent free by sixe poor widows if the same may be found and for Lack of such to the Antientest of the maides to make up that number the same to be Elected & Chosen from time to time of such as are or can be found in the Welsh Rowe in Namptwch by my Hon<sup>d</sup> & well beloved freinds Thomas Cholmondeley of vale Royall Esq. Charles Mainwaring of eightfield [Ightfield] in co. Salop Esq. Peter Wilbraham of Derfold Esq. Roger Wilbraham of Namptwich Esq. and their heirs or by my Exors [&c.] *Item* my will is that the

\* Richard Jackson, minister of Nantwich, is mentioned in Zach. Crofton's "*Bethshemesh*," 4to. London, 1653, p. 228. A Richard Jackson, but whether the same individual or not, is uncertain, occurs as a member of Gonvil and Caius Coll. Camb. in 1641-2. (See Vol. of *Protestations*).

† J. W. Platt's *History of Nantwich*, p. 63.

‡ See Roger Wilbraham's "*Towne Concernes*," p. 210.

sd widows or other psons. so cohabiting in the sd Houses shall have yearly pd. [paid] them by my sd Executors the yearly sune of fforty shillings by Quarterly payments & Likewise at every Christmas each of them a Purple Russett Gowne [&c.] *Item.* I give & Bequeath to my Deare mother Isabell Stringer my new wich-House in Namptwch which I lately built Together with three dossen Leads walling of their Maties Inheritance which I have now in Lease for a considerable terme of yeares with the Rents & p'fitts thereof for the terme of her naturall Life shee paying the old Rent Reserved [&c.] and Likewise giving & disposing yearly during the time of Lent upon Wednesday & friday half a Crowne a day in Bread to the poore of ye sd Towne of N. & after her death the aforesaid Gentlemen to dispose of the wich-house & walling for the putting poor children of the sd Towne of N. (them of the Welsh Rowe having the preference) Apprentice or for the encouraging the Benefit of divine service to be Read in the week days by the minister of the sd Towne of N. [&c.] or for the Instructing or Catechising of such poor Children by ye sd Minister vpon Wednesdays ffridays or Holydays. *Item.* I give [&c.] to the Minister of the Towne of N. for the time being the sune of 20 sh. yearly for the preaching of two Sermons one on St. Paules day [Jan. 25] with Relation to Loyalty\* & the other on the day of my funeral yearly encouraging Charity. *Item.* I give [&c.] to my Brother Stephen Stringer & his wife each of them a Guinney to buy them Rings [&c.] to my sister Alice Wilkes 40 sh. [&c.] to my sister in law Sarah Stringer one broad peice of Gold. *Item* to my Honred freinds Thomas Cholmondeley Charles Mainwaring Peter Wilbraham & Roger Wilbraham each of them a Guinney to buy them a Ring. *Item* the Residue of my estate to my brothers John & Thomas Stringer [♠c.] equally to be devidd between them ♠ whom I make executors [♠c.] requesting them [♠c.] to keep the Cottages Hansomly Repaired by nogging† with Brick [♠c.] In witness &c.

Gabriel Stringer."

The date of probate is 13th Aug. 1705; Gabriel Stringer having been buried at Nantwich on 1st July, 1690.—(*Par. Reg.*)

## II. RECTORS.

PETER LANCASTER, M.A. 1690—1695.

Presented 11th Aug. 1690 by Anne Crewe Offley, on the death of Gabriel Stringer.

"1690. Aug. 20. Mr. Peter Lancaster, Minister, entered."—(*Par. Reg.*)

According to Anthony á Wood,‡ Peter Lancaster was the son of a clergyman in the bishopric of Durham. He entered St. John's College, Cambridge; but left to enter Baliol College, Oxford, where he took his degree of B.A. 15th May, 1684, and M.A. 7th July, 1686. He was twice married, his second wife being the daughter of John Lowndes, of Nantwich, glover.

"1692. Dec. 2. Prudence wife of Peter Lancaster clerke."—(*Burial Reg.*)

"1695. Oct. 21. Peter Lancaster cler. & Mary Loundes by Publicacon."—(*Marr. Reg.*)

He resigned the living of Nantwich on the 11th Oct. 1695, and became Rector of Tarporley in this county, being presented thereto by Sir John Crewe, Kt., of Utkinton, 12th Oct. 1695, which living he held till his death in 1709. He was collated to the thirteenth Prebendary of the third Stall of Chester Cathedral, 2nd May, 1694, in which church he was buried without memorial, 17th May, 1709. Having died intestate, administration of his goods was granted to his father-in-law, John Lowndes, on 15th June, 1709.

\* St. Paul's Day, 1643-4, was the date of *Parliamentarian* victory at Nantwich. (See Account of Civil War, p. 166.)

† "Nogging;" a local word, meaning to fill up the interstices between the frame-work of a timber building."

‡ *Fasti Oxonienses*, 2nd part, p. 399.

He was the author of a "*Tract on the rights of the Clergy to exemption from road rates*;" and a translation from Greek into English of "*A Discourse of Envy and Hatred* in the first vol. of Plutarch's *Morals*. Lond. 1684."\*

JOHN BRADSHAW, M.A. 1695—1711.

Presented on 15th Nov. 1695, by Anne Crewe Offley, on the resignation of Peter Lancaster.

1695. Nov. 29. Mr. John Bradshaw Minister entereth here.—(*Par. Reg.*)

He was educated at Emanuel College, Cambridge; and took his B.A. in 1686, and M.A. in 1700.

John Bradshaw, and Peter Lancaster (as Rector of Tarporley) both signed the "Loyal address of the Clergy of the Diocese of Chester to Queen Anne in 1704," congratulating the Queen on the successes of the English arms at Blenheim and Gibraltar.†

An order having been made on 22nd Feb. 1704, by the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, for ascertaining the value of Church livings throughout the country, John Bradshaw, on 10th Oct. 1705, certified Nantwich to be £10 per ann., excepting contributions. The Tithe Hay of one small lordship belonging to the *Rectory* was valued at forty shillings, and a *Library* was then founding, and being settled by the clergy of the Deanery.

The following extracts from the Registers give information relating to his family.

"1698-9. Feb. 12. Jinny Dau. of John Bradshaw, minister." [Bapt.] (Buried March 2, 1699-1700).

"1700. June 5. John son of John Bradshaw minister." [Bapt.]

"1702-3. Jan. 14. Jinny dau. of John Bradshaw clerke." [Bapt.]

"1704. July 24. Harcourt son of Mr. John Bradshaw Minister." [Bapt.] (Buried 1 Nov. 1704).

"1711. July 21. Martha wife of Mr. John Bradshaw Minister." [Buried.]

"1711-12. Jan. 5. Mr. John Bradshaw Minister." [Buried.]

GEORGE GIBBONS, M.A. 1711-2—1719.

Presented on 7th Feb. 1711-2, by John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq., on the death of John Bradshaw.

"Mr. Geo. Gibbons was inducted March 6th 1711-2." (*Par. Reg.*)

He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge; and took his B.A. in 1698, and M.A. in 1709. He married *Mary Hussey*, of Nantwich, at Peover, on 5th Feb. 1713-4—(*Nantwich Reg.*); and in all the baptismal entries of his children, he is styled *Rector*, being the earliest mentions of that title in the Parish Registers.

"1714. Nov. 19. George son of George Gibbons, *Rector* and Mary his wife." [Bapt.] (Buried 10 Aug. 1715.)

"1715-6. Jan. 13. Mary dau. of &c. [similar to above] born 7th inst. and baptized 13th.

"1716-7. Jan. 22. Samuell son of &c. born 14th baptized 22nd. (Died 31 March; buried 2 April, 1717.)

"1717-8. Feb. 27. Lucy dau of &c. ,, 12th ,, 27th. (Died 12 March; buried 14 March 1717-8).

"1718-9. Feb. 5. Peter son of &c. ,, 21st Jan. baptized 5th Feb.

"1719-20. Feb. 16. George son of &c. ,, 12th baptized 16th.

"1719-20. Mr. Geo. Gibbons, Rector, Dyed ye 25th & was buried ye 29th Feb.

THOMAS BROOKE, LL.D. 1720—1757

Presented on 27th June, 1720, by John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq., on the death of George Gibbons.

1720. July 8. "Mr. Thomas Brooke, Rector, entereth here."—(*Par. Reg.*)

Thomas Brooke was a son of Benedict Brooke, of Buglawton and Handforth, co. Cheshire, and was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. in 1713, and M.A. 1717. He became LL.D. in 1732.

\* *Fasti Oxonienses*, 2nd part, p. 399.

† Local Gleanings, Quarto Series, Vol. II, p. 83.

In addition to his Nantwich preferment he was installed *Dean of Chester* 18th July, 1732; and held the Rectory of Winslow, co. Bucks, and that of Doddleston, co. Cheshire, from 15th June, 1739.

The building of a new Rectory house at Nantwich, to the expense of which, Partridge says, "the parishioners largely contributed," the erection of the South Gallery in the Church in 1727, and improvements in the Churchyard between 1735 and 1739, (see *Annals*, p. 217—221), are indications of great activity in the parish during the incumbency of this Rector.

In 1722 Bishop Gastrell valued the living as follows:—\*

	£	s.	d.
Reserved out of the Easter Roll, belonging to Mr. Crewe .....	4	13	4
Dwelling house and garden .....	3	0	0
House given by Mr. Sparke [given in 1515] .....	0	10	0
Left by Mrs. Anne Smith [given probably in 1681] .....	1	0	0
Compensation for tithe hay in Alvaston [given 1719] .....	2	0	0
Tithe pigs, geese, hemp, and flax [given in 1639] † .....	1	0	0
Left by Roger Wilbraham [of Townsend] for reading prayers on Litany days ( <i>Wednesday</i> ) [given in 1700] ‡ .....	5	0	0
Surplice Fees .....	10	0	0
Twelve lead-wallings not to be certainly valued .....	—	—	—
Yearly contributions [not given] .....	—	—	—
Total income of the Benefice .....	£27	3	4

Mr. Partridge says, Dr. Brooke "was an excellent preacher and a most amiable man," and gives an Elegy, probably original, on the Rector's death; (*Hist. Nant.* p. 26-27) the following lines being an extract.

"Methinks I see him venerably great  
With form majestic fill the preacher's seat.  
His voice, how charming! still, methinks, I hear,  
Ever distinct, harmonious, strong, and clear.  
His manly looks our free applause bespeaks  
Ere from his lips the flow of rhetoric breaks.  
With wrapt attention his whole audience hung  
While heavenly truths seemed mended from his tongue."

A singular anecdote is told by Hemingway (*Hist. of Chester*, Vol. I, p. 320), that the Dean "was so athletic a man as to be able to raise the great bell of Chester Cathedral without assistance, in which he was very fond of exercising himself."

Four published sermons are evidence of his learning and ability. §

1.—"The Perfection of God displayed in his Works, and the Obligation that ariseth to Us from a Consideration of them."

"A Sermon, Preach'd in the Parish-Church of Nantwich . . . At the Florists Meeting there April 19 1731. By Tho. Brooke, A.M. Rector of Nantwich. London: Printed for the Author, by T. Wood

\* Bishop Gastrell's "Notitia Cestriensis." (Cheth. Soc. Pub. Vol. VIII. 1845.)

† Margaret Woodnoth's and Elizabeth Davenport's gift in 1639.

‡ "An Annuity of £5 p. an. out of land in Copenhal to ye Minister of Nantwich for ye reading the prayers appointed by ye Church upon Litany Daies & Holy Daies by Roger Wilbraham [of Townsend, Nantwich] anno 1700." (Extract from a Pocket Almanac, dated 1673, in possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.) This sum of £5 is still annually paid to the Rector.

§ Copies of these Sermons are in the possession of John Downes, Esq., of Nantwich.

in Little Britain MDCCXXXI. Price 1sh. Psal. cxlv. 10."

Dedicated "To the Gentlemen, Gardiners, and Others, Who attended the Florists Meeting."

2.—"St. Paul's Argument to Felix consider'd."

"A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral Church of Chester, Sept. 17th 1732. Being the Time of the Assize there. By Tho. Brooke LL.D. Dean of Chester. London: Printed for the Author, by T. Wood, in Little Britain. MDCCXXXIII. Acts. xxiv. 25."

3.—"The Duty and Reward of Charity."

"A Sermon Preached before the Rt. Honble. the Lord Mayor, [Westley] the Court of Aldermen, the Sheriffs, and the Governours of the several Hospitals of the City of London, at the Parish Church of St. Bridget, on Tuesday in Easter-Week 1744. By Thomas Brooke LL.D. Dean of Chester. London: Printed for the Author, by Henry Woodfall, jun. in Little Britain. 1744. Psalm xli. verse 1."

4.—"The Pleasure and Advantage of Unity."

"A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of Chester, at the Assizes, Sept. 2, 1746, Before the Honble. Mr. Sergeant Skinner, Chief-Justice and the Honble. John Talbot, Esquire, the other Judge of the County Palatine of Chester. By Thomas Brooke LL.D. Dean of Chester. Printed, London: by H. Woodfall jun. &c. Published at the Request of the High-Sheriff and the Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, [whose names are thus given]

RALPH LEYCESTER, ESQ., *High-Sheriff*.

THE RT. HONBLE. THOMAS, LORD VISCOUNT KILLMOREY.

SIR PETER DAVENPORT, KNT.

LYNCH SALUSBURY COTTON, ESQ.	CHARLES GORDON, ESQ.	JAMES CROXTON, ESQ.
THOMAS BRERETON, ESQ.	JOHN BASKERVYLE, ESQ.	GEORGE LEGH, ESQ., of Outrington
PETER BROOKE, ESQ.	THOMAS SWETTENHAM, ESQ.	GEORGE GERRARD, ESQ.
PETER SHACKERLEY, ESQ.	THOMAS HUNT, ESQ.	ROBERT CLOWES, ESQ.
GEORGE LEGH, ESQ., of Tatton.	GEORGE HYDE, ESQ.	JOHN PIMLOT, ESQ.
FRANCIS JODRELL, ESQ.	EDWARD WRIGHT, ESQ.	JOHN DAVENPORT, ESQ.

Psalm cxxxiii. Verse 1.

His family register at Nantwich is as follows:—

"1721. April 15. Thomas son of Thomas Brooke Rector. [Bapt.]  
 1723. Octob. 29. Ann dau. of &c. [Bapt.]  
 1724-5. March 22. Mary dau. of &c. [Bapt.] (Buried at N. 4 Dec. 1725.)  
 1726-7. Feb. 19. Samuell son of &c. [Bapt.]  
 1728. Sep. 27. Robert Salusbury, son &c. [Bapt.]  
 1730-1. March 22. William son &c. [Bapt.]  
 1733. June 8. Benedic't son &c. [Bapt.]  
 1736. May 30. Rhoda dau. &c. [Bapt.]

Two other children, whose baptisms are not recorded here, were buried at Nantwich, viz.:—*Elizabeth*, on 8th March, 1721; and *Mary*, 31st Oct. 1723.

Doct'r Brooke's burial is thus recorded:—

"1757. Dec. 20. *Thomas Brooke* LL.D. Dean of Chester, and Rector of this Parish buried in the Chancel."

The Registers also record the burial of his mother, *Mary Brooke*, on 8th Sep. 1747, and of his widow, *Esther Brooke*, on 2nd April, 1771. The family did not continue to

reside at Nantwich, and on the death of Robert Salusbury Brooke, Esq., of Chelford, in 1814, the family in the male line became extinct.\*

The names of three Curates in succession, (the Revs. *Thomas Wattenhall*, *John Twenlow*, and *Thomas Adderley*) occur in the Registers; their presence being necessary when Dr. Brooke was non resident.

JONES READE, D.D. 1758, Feb. 19.—1769.

Presented on 10th Jan. 1758, by John Crewe, Esq., after the death of Dr. Brooke. No record of Dr. Reade's induction, nor, indeed, of any of his successors, is preserved in the Parish Register; but the "*Act Book*" at Chester states that he received Institution on the 19th Feb. 1758.

Dr. Reade graduated at Jesus College, Oxford; B.A. 16th Oct. 1739; M.A. 19th June 1742; B.D. 26th May, 1749; and D.D. 18th July, 1755.

Nothing has occurred worthy of remark concerning this Rector, who held the living of Nantwich little more than eleven years.

JOHN SMITH, B.A. 1769—1792.

Presented by John Crewe, Esq., on the resignation of Jones Reade. Instituted 26th May, 1769.

I cannot state, with certainty, at which University he was educated; several persons named John Smith occurring in the old Clergy Lists, contemporary at Oxford and Cambridge.† He was twice married.

"1770. Dec. 28. Jane the wife of John Smith Rector, buried at Wistaston."

"1779. May 21. Rev. John Smith Clerk of this Parish & Mary Mears of Nantwich, spinster." [Married.]

He published a small book of Metrical Psalms and Hymns for occasional use in Public Worship; printed by E. Snelson, of Nantwich. Enlarged editions were printed here in 1808, 1813 and in 1816, by A. Fox, Nantwich. He also printed four Sermons.

1.—"*A Vindication of the Freedom of Pastoral Advice.*" &c.

"A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Nantwich, on Sunday Sep. 10, 1775, by John Smith A.B. Rector of the said Parish; from Gal. IV. 16. Nantwich: Printed and sold by R. Taylor and E. Snelson, for the Author. &c. Price Sixpence."

2.—"*The Nature of Christian Charity, or Love stated: its excellency proved: and the practice of it enforced.*"

"A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Nantwich, on Friday, Nov. 24, 1780, before the Trustees of the Alms-houses founded by the late Sr. E. Wright, Lord Mayor of London, and the Governors of the Work-house, lately erected, within the said Parish. By John Smith A.B. Rector of Nantwich; 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Nantwich: Printed by Edmund Snelson." &c.

3 & 4.—"*Polygamy indefensible.*"

"Two Sermons Preached in the Parish Church of Nantwich. By John Smith A.B. Rector. &c. On Sunday the 10th of December 1780. Occasioned by a late Publication, entitled "*Thelyphthora*," to

\* Mr. Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, Vol. II, p. 367.

William Brooke, Esq., of Hartford, co. Chester, died in or about 1798, his will being dated 10 Dec. 1798.

Ann Brooke was married to Peter Walthall of Wistaston, 1 March, 1764,—(*Nantwich Par. Reg.*); and died 26 Nov. 1802, aged 79; being buried at Wistaston on the 2nd Dec. 1802.—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

† A portrait of the Rev. John Smith, Rector of Nantwich, was engraved for the "*New Spiritual Magazine*" for 12th June, 1784, published by Alex. Hogg, 16 Paternoster Row. The Magazine contains no biographical notice of this Rector.



which is prefixed "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Madan." Gen. II. 24. Printed: London, Alex. Hogg, Paternoster Row, 1780."

His burial is thus recorded in the Parish Register:—\*

"1792. Oct. 20. Rev. John Smith Rector of Nantwich, Aged 57."

ANTHONY CLARKSON, M.A. 1793—1819.

Presented by John Crewe, Esq., on the death of John Smith. Instituted 2 Jan. 1793. He graduated at St. Peter's College, Cambridge; B.A. 1770; M.A. 1776. Previous to his appointment to Nantwich, he had been at St. Peter's Church, Derby, and had married a native of this town, Mary, daughter of William Watkiss, Esq., of Welsh Row, on 3rd Nov. 1778.—(*Par. Reg.*)

The return of small livings made by the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, Feb. 13th, 1809, states the living of Nantwich "to be *not augmented or charged*, and of the yearly value of £106 3s. 9d., arising from tithes, composition for tithes, surplice fees, stipend, rents, and official house."†

The Rev. A. Clarkson was buried at Nantwich on 10th March, 1819, aged 70 years; and his widow, who resided in Hospital Street, was buried on 1st Sept. 1834, aged 86.—(*Par. Reg.*)

The following is an exact copy of a Request for Sequestration of Tithes preserved in the Diocesan Registry.

"To the Rt. Rev. Father in God William [Cleaver] by Divine permission  
Lord Bishop of Chester."

"The Petition of *Samuel Barrow* of Nantwich Esq., *Richard Smith* (nephew of the undermentioned John Smith) and *John Knight* of Whitchurch, in Salop, Gent., Whereas your Lordship having sequestered the Fruits Tythes and other profits of the Rectory of Nantwich, co. Cest., to *Charles Hall, James Read* (since deceased) & *Samuel Jackson* the then Wardens And we being desirous that a Sequestration of the same may now be granted to Us, that all possible care may be taken of the profits of the said Rectory for the use of the Revd. John Smith the Rector thereof after paying the stipend assigned by your Lordship to the officiating Curate thereof & all other burdens incumbent on the said Rectory, do therefore pray that your Lordship would be pleased to grant Us a Sequestration of the said Rectory for the purposes aforesaid."

Dated April 28, 1792.

SAMUEL BARROW.  
RICHARD SMITH.  
JOHN KNIGHT.

[To which is added in the Bishop's handwriting]

"Granted May 16, 1792, WILLIAM CHESTER."

The first *Curate* licensed under this sequestration was *James Turner*, who was appointed Sept. 23rd, 1792. It has not been thought necessary to give a complete list of licensed Curates; but the following names will be of interest.

*William Leversage*, of Nantwich, M.A.; Brasenose College, Oxford. Appointed 1795. Buried at Nantwich 11th March, 1803.

\* The Parish Register from January to December, 1789, is signed "*J. Wilson, Offg Minister*;" who was afterwards incumbent of Donnington, co. Lincoln, and married one of the daughters of the Rev. John Smith. She died at Donnington, 28th April 1809.

† Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, Old Edit., Vol. III, p. 234.

*John Latham*, B.A., Queen's College, Oxon., from 25th Sept. 1796; Stipend £40 per ann. Afterwards Rector of Baddiley.

*Thomas Brooke*, B.A., Christ College, Cambridge, appointed 1814; afterwards Rector of Wistaston, from 25th May, 1825, until his death on 25th Feb. 1873.

*Rev. Will. Godwin*, A.M., 1817; Stipend £75 per ann. &c.

RICHARD HENRY GRETTON, M.A. 1819—1846.

Presented by John Lord Crewe, of Crewe, on the death of Anthony Clarkson. Instituted 28th April, 1819. He was educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge, taking his degree of B.A. in 1808 and M.A. in 1812.

During his incumbency dissent increased much in the town. The system of Church Rates was strongly opposed in noisy Vestry meetings; and the Rector was subject to so much annoyance that on 3rd Dec. 1844, he resigned this living, and accepted the Head Mastership of the Radcliffe Grammar School, at Stamford, co. Lincoln; his brother, Rev. Fred. Edw. Gretton, B.D., being Rector of St. Mary's in that town at the time. Finding, however, his duties there uncongenial, and the living of Nantwich still vacant, he sought re-institution; and on 15th March, 1845, he was presented by the Hon. Dame Emma Cunliffe Offley, the only daughter of John first Lord Crewe, and sister to John second Lord Crewe, who had died on 4th Dec. 1835. The Rev. Robert Mayor, Vicar of Acton, who had a few years before disputed the right of the Crewe family to the advowson of Nantwich, was now required by a Commission\* from the Lord Bishop of Chester, dated 1st April, 1845, "*to qualify the Rev. Henry Gretton Clerk to the Rectory and Parish Church of Nantwich;*" (*Act Book* Dioc. Registry) and accordingly Mr. Gretton was re-instituted on 10th April, 1845; and continued to be Rector here until his death, which took place on 1st Feb. 1846.

He was J.P. for this district. His only published sermon was one preached in the Church on Monday, 7th Sept. 1835, on the occasion of the first Anniversary of the Nantwich Temperance Society, 1 Cor. ix. 25. He married Frances, dau. of John Bennion, Esq., of Chorlton, on 22nd April, 1822, (*Par. Reg.*) but had no issue. This Rector, his wife, and her four sisters, (maiden ladies\* long resident in Nantwich), were interred in a vault in Malpas churchyard, in this county, where two flat stones, within high iron railings, are thus inscribed:—

"Richard Henry Gretton, M.A. Rector of Nantwich, died Feb. 1, 1846. Aged 60 years.

"His wife, daughter of John Bennion Esq. of Chorlton, died Jan. 5, 1848. Aged 70.

"Esther Bennion of Nantwich and formerly of Chorlton, died Jan. 18, 1848. Aged 72.

"Ellen Bennion, sister of the above, died Jan. 20, 1848. Aged 69 years.

"Mary Bennion, sister, died Oct. 7, 1850. Aged 86.

"Elizabeth Bennion, sister, died Feb. 9, 1855. Aged 85.

ANDREW FULLER CHATER, M.A. 1846—1872.

Presented on 30th March, 1846, by the Hon. Dame Emma Cunliffe Offley, on the death of Richard Henry Gretton. Instituted 6th April, 1846.

He was the son of the Rev. James Chater, who for twenty-two years "laboured zealously" (as stated in Mr. J. A. Hine's *History of Christian Missions* from the Reformation to 1842) as a Baptist Missionary at Serampoor, Rangoon, and in Ceylon, and died

\* They were great benefactresses to the Church and poor. The income of Nantwich benefice was increased to £285 per ann. by the bequest of the last surviving sister.

on his voyage home in 1828. James Chater helped largely in the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the Indian languages, and in 1815 published a Grammar of the Cingalese language, which was printed at the Government Press, Colombo, and dedicated to the Governor of Ceylon, Lieut. Gen. Sir Robert Brownrigg. Andrew Fuller Chater, so named after the distinguished divine Andrew Fuller, (who for many years was secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society), was born at Colombo, Sept. 29th, 1814. He was educated first at Mr. Harley's school in Chester; then at Lyde House School, Bath, under the Rev. Thos. Hale, D.D., Principal, for more than four years as a boarder; and was there awarded by the Examiners, the chief distinction, viz.: the Marquis of Salisbury's Gold Medal; and afterwards at Frome Sellwood Grammar School, under the Rev. William Williams, Head Master. In 1834 he entered King William's College, Isle of Man, as Assistant Classical Master, under the worthy Principal of the College, the Rev. Edward Wilson, Fellow of St. John's, Cambridge, and afterwards Prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral. He took his degree of B.A. at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1842, as a Classical Moderator, and obtained the Silver Medal. After travelling on the Continent with his pupils, the sons of the late Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Green, he was ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Cork in 1844 for the Curacy of Drumcondra, close to Dublin; and Priest in the following year by Archbishop Whateley, when he became a Curate of St. Thomas', Dublin, under the Rector Archdeacon Magee, at which time the Rev. Wm. Connor Magee, the present Bishop of Peterborough, was chief Curate of St. Thomas'. Andrew F. Chater left this Curacy in 1846 for the Rectory of Nantwich, with the highest testimonials from the Archbishop, Archdeacon, and others. Being on a visit to his brother, the Rev. D. S. Chater,\* Curate of Nantwich, at the time of Mr. Gretton's death, the Rev. A. F. Chater, by request, preached the funeral sermon of the deceased Rector, and produced such a favourable impression in the town, that several persons at once interested themselves in obtaining him preferment; particularly Miss Diana Mainwaring,† sister to the late Sir Harry Mainwaring, of Peover, Bart., a lady who was the last descendant of the ancient family of *Wettenhall*, resident in this town, and who had great influence with the then patroness of Nantwich living.

The Rev. A. F. Chater, who became a Canon of Chester Cathedral, and Rural Dean of Nantwich, died at Bonnemouth, co. Hants, on 24th Jan. 1872, and was interred in the Parish Cemetery at Nantwich. Over his grave has been erected a handsome stone tomb, representing an ancient sarcophagus, at a cost of £32 18s., raised by voluntary contributions at Church on Sunday morning, 4th Feb. 1872, after the funeral sermon, preached from Heb. xiii. 7, by the Rev. John Ellerton, M.A., Vicar of Crewe Green.

The tomb is inscribed—

**“Here rests in Peace The Body of Andrew Fuller Chater M.A.  
Rector of this Parish: After he had served his generation, by  
The Will of God he fell asleep January 24 A.D. 1872, aged 57 years.”**

\* The Rev. Daniel Sutcliffe Chater was Curate of Nantwich from 1845 to 1847; and Head Master of Acon Grammar School, near this town, from 1848 to 1861; in which latter year he became Vicar of Blackawton, co. Devon. I am indebted to this clergyman for the above particulars relating to the parentage and education of his much esteemed brother.

† Miss Diana Mainwaring died in Hospital Street on 5th Oct. 1861, and was buried in the Parish Cemetery.

When the Lord Bishop of Chester held his third Triennial visitation of the Diocese, in Chester Cathedral, Nov. 1874, he remarked as follows concerning the late Canon Chater.

“Andrew Fuller Chater was singularly diligent and pains-taking in the discharge of all his Pastoral Obligations, through the twenty-six years of his being Rector of Nantwich. During a visitation of Cholera under which that town suffered very severely, he truly *put his life in his hand*; and had his immediate and ample reward in the general and permanent improvement of its sanitary condition, which was then effected. Among other works which have followed him, he left his mark upon the Parish deep and strong, in the well and wisely managed Restoration of its remarkably fine Church.”—(*Nantwich Parish Magazine*, Dec. 1874).

Exception, however, must be taken to the last words of these, otherwise, just remarks of Bishop Jacobson. The wanton way in which the monuments and flat tombstones in the Church were treated is evidence that *all* the “Restoration” work was *not* “well and wisely managed;” and it is now surprising that the whole parish did not rise and protest against this act of dishonour to the dead. With the exception of five tablets now in the Transepts, all the mural monuments &c. were destroyed, and not even a written record of them preserved!\*

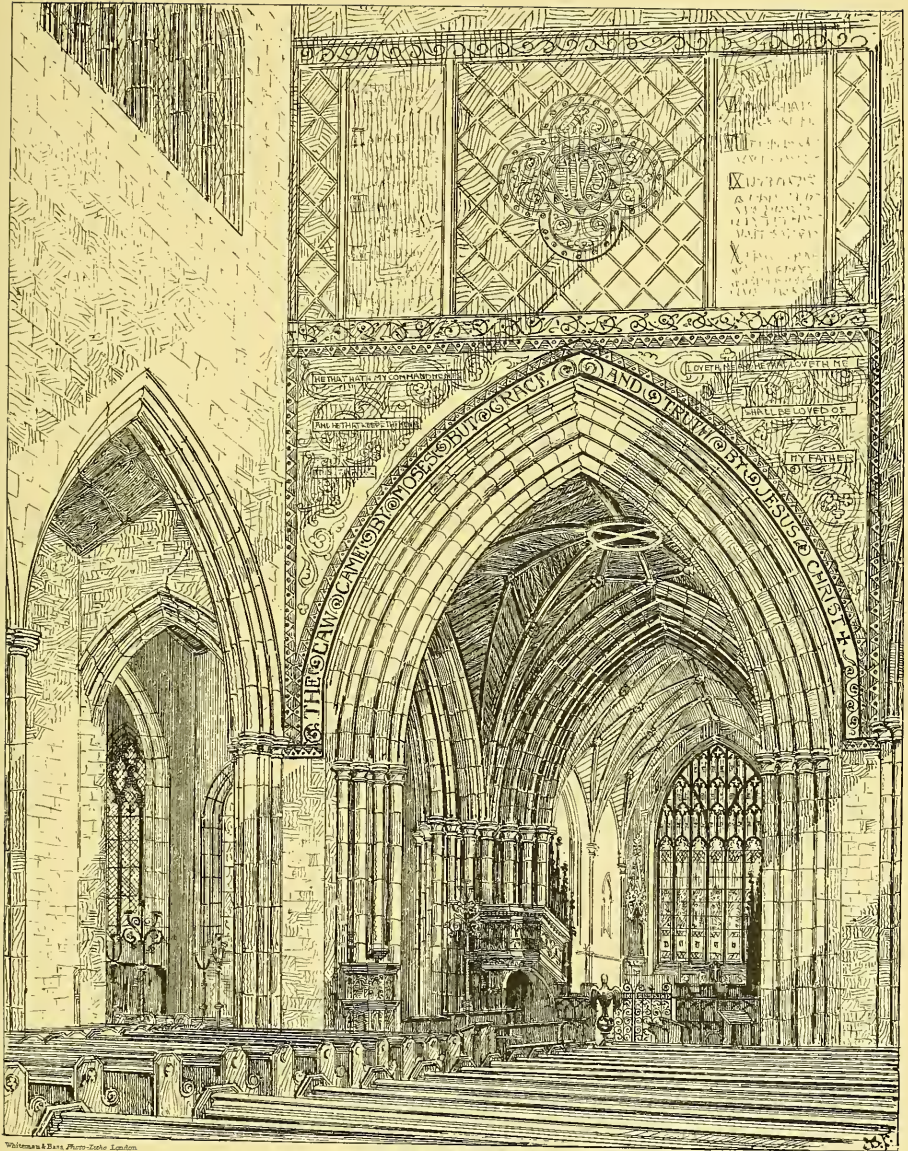
This “Restoration” commenced in 1855; extended over several years under the superintendence of the late Sir Gilbert Scott, Architect; and consisted chiefly of the removal of the pews and galleries of seventeenth and eighteenth century date, the lowering of the floor to the original level of the bases of the doors and pillars of the Nave, the fitting of the Nave and Transepts with carved oak seats, the raising of the roofs of the Transepts; the opening out of the flat plaster ceiling in the Nave, thus disclosing a good timber roof; and the scraping off accumulated layers of plaster and whitewash from the walls.

The total cost of the “Restoration” associated with the name of Canon Chater was £6,109 1s. 2d., of which £4372 5s. 9d. was raised by subscriptions from the nobility and gentry in various parts of the country and by the Parishioners. Among the principal contributors to this fund may be mentioned:—†

	£	s.	d.
The late Miss Bennion of Nantwich .....	500	0	0
The Right Hon. Hungerford Lord Crewe, who restored the Chancel, and filled the East Window with stained glass, at his sole cost, and in addition gave .....	200	0	0
The Most Hon. the Marquis of Westminster .....	100	0	0
The Most Hon. the Marquis of Cholmondeley .....	100	0	0
The Right Hon. the Earl of Cottenham .....	25	0	0
The Right Hon. the Viscount Dungannon .....	25	0	0
The Lord Bishop of London .....	10	0	0
The Lord Bishop of Chester .....	50	0	0
The Right Hon. Lord de Tabley .....	5	0	0
George Fortescue Wilbraham, Esq., who, in addition to the gift of the memorial stained glass in the South Window, gave .....	50	0	0
John Tollemache, Esq., M.P. ( <i>now</i> the Right Hon. Lord Tollemache) .....	50	0	0

\* I am informed that when the plaster was being removed from the walls, and these memorials were carelessly thrown among the dust and *débris*, that the Rector and others became alive to the destruction, and attempted to save them; but no mention of the monuments, &c., having been made in the specifications, the contractor claimed them as materials!

† From the “List of Subscribers,” printed by E. H. Griffiths, Nantwich, 1862; copies of which are still to be had.



W. & A. S. 1851

NANTWICH CHURCH.



Wilbraham Spencer Tollemache, Esq., Dorfold Hall .....	25	0	0
Edward Delves Broughton, Esq. ....	101	0	0
Rev. A. F. Chater, Rector of Nantwich .....	205	0	0
John Downes, Esq., Nantwich .....	25	0	0
William O. Foster, Esq., Stourton Castle .....	100	0	0
T. P. Lowe, Esq., Nantwich .....	50	0	0
J. H. Kent, Esq., Nantwich .....	50	0	0
William Church Norcup, Esq., Betton Hall .....	50	0	0
Randle Wilbraham, Esq., Rode Hall .....	20	0	0

The Church was re-opened on the completion of the Chancel by special services on the 8th and 9th Oct. 1861; the preachers being the Lord Bishop (Graham) of Chester; the Revs. C. J. Vaughan, D.D., Vicar of Doncaster; E. Clayton, Rector of Astbury; and W. H. Egerton, Rector of Whitechurch, Salop.

FOSTER GREY BLACKBURNE, M.A. 1872. (The present Rector).

Presented 15th Feb. 1872, by Hungerford Lord Crewe on the death of A. F. Chater. Instituted and inducted Rector by the Lord Bishop of Chester, on 12th March, 1872, in Nantwich Church.

The Rev. F. G. Blackburne is the son of the Rev. Thomas Blackburne late Vicar of Eccles, near Manchester, and brother to the Rev. Henry Ireland Blackburne, Rector of Warmingham, and belongs to the family of Blackburne of Hale co. Lancashire. He graduated at Brasenose College, Oxon.; B.A. 1861, and M.A. 1864; and was formerly Curate at Bebington, co. Chester, 1864-7; and of St. Oswald's Chester, 1867-72, and Deacon of Chester Cathedral 1868-72. In recognition of his services there, he was appointed Honorary Minor Canon of Chester Cathedral, 25th June 1872, by the Dean and Chapter.

The work of Church Restoration has been resumed by the present Rector. The West Window, by Gilbert Scott, Esq., not being approved of, the same architect designed another which was completed in 1875 at a cost of £300; and was filled with memorial stained glass by Clayton and Bell, at a further cost of £800. In 1876 the North Window was repaired at a cost of £100, and filled with stained glass by C. E. Kempe, at a further cost of £300. In 1877 the memorial (Martin) glass was added by Clayton and Bell.

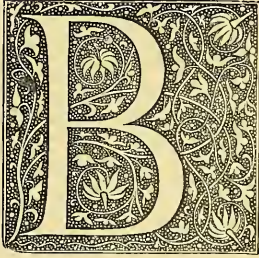
From April to September in 1878 the South Porch underwent thorough repair, under the direction of Thos. Bower, Esq., architect, a native resident, and pupil of Sir Gilbert Scott, who had died on the 25th March in that year. The whitewash was removed from the interior walls, a groined roof added, and new floors laid down. The walls, windows, niches, gurgoyles, parapet and pinnacles, and the curious lean-to appendage of the exterior, (anciently used as a Priest's Chamber) were all repaired.

In the following year the buttresses of the West front, the West windows of the North and South Aisles, a buttress on the east side of the South Transept, and the pinnacles of the Nave, were renewed in accordance with the old design.

The entire cost of the work done in 1878-9 amounted to £1959 5s. 3d.; so that, within twenty-five years, probably no less a sum than £10,000 had been expended in beautifying and repairing the fabric of this Church.

## Monumental Inscriptions

NOW DESTROYED.



ESIDES the ancient monuments and inscriptions mentioned on pages 282, 284, 287; there were many others, together with shields of arms, hatchments, tables of Charities, &c., once in the Church, which have at various times been removed. Copies of them, and in some instances rough drawings, have been preserved in the Church notes in *Harl. MSS.* 2151; and in *Ashmo. MSS.* 854. Of these inscriptions, the principal ones were printed in 1819 by Dr. Ormerod;\* who added to the list some of the later memorials then existing in the Church; but as no complete account of the monuments was taken before their ruthless destruction in 1855, it is impossible to say, exactly, how many of them remained in the Church at that time. A chronological arrangement of the old monuments, classified according to the families they memorialized, is here given from the above sources.

### *Maisterston Monuments.*

On the south side of the Chancel, between the Altar-rail and the south door, was an altar tomb of alabaster, with an incised marble top representing the figures of JOHN MAISTERSON, and his wife, MARGARET, the daughter of William Bromley, of Dorfold, Esq., each with their hands joined in prayer. The drawing of the tomb in *Harl. MSS.* indicates (between their heads) a shield of arms—*Maisterston* impaling *Bromley*; and round the edge of the tomb the following inscription:—

**"Here lyeth the body of John Maisterston, gent., together with Margaret his wife; which John and Margaret had issue Margaret, who marr. to Roudulph Stanley of Alderley: which John died x Dec. M.DLXXXVI."** [1586].

Nearly in the middle of the incised slab, the two figures are cut across by two parallel lines, between which is the following verse in black letter—†

**"Within this fadinge tombe sepulted lyes  
John Maisterston and Margaret his wyfe,  
Whose soules do rest above the vaulted skies  
In paradise with God, the lord of lyfe.  
Which John wrought meanes to build this Nantwiche towne  
When fire had fretted her face, and burnt her downe."** ‡

\* Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii, pp. 235-8 (Old Edit.) pp. 445-8 (New Edit.)

† Mr. J. E. Bowman, of Nantwich, in a letter dated 9th March, 1803, now preserved in the British Museum, says that the inscription *round* the tomb was then illegible; but that the verse was "perfect and in black letter." See Hunterian Correspondence *Add. MSS.* 24,865, vol. ii, f. 284 b.

‡ The register of John Maisterston's burial has already been given on page 107; that of his wife is as follows:—

"1587. Aug. 26. Mrs. M<sup>r</sup>son late wife to John M<sup>r</sup>sonn, gent."—(*Par. Reg.*)



Above this tomb, "in a frame near the achievements of the family" was suspended the following quaint metrical inscription; which, together with the tomb, was destroyed in 1855.

"AN EPITAPH VPPO' YE DEATH OF JOHN MAISTERSON, GEN. 1586.

Nowe Malbank mourne, lament your losse, lay mirthe asyde, be sade,—  
 Lett fall your straenige silner tears for him that made you glade  
 Your Joy and Jewell wears to duste, his bones are clad in clay,  
 Your Piller and your Proppe is gone, gone is your gemme and stay  
 The turrett trewe and stéedfast towre is battred to the grounde,  
 The captane cheefe of all the charge, dead in the campe is founde.  
 Traile downe youre Ensignes and retire, the steede hath loste his breathe  
 Lett trumpet'r sound, strike one the drum, the dumpe of dreadfull deathe.  
 Fowle of youre scattringe shott at ones, dragg on your pearring picke,  
 Close up youre gates, shutt up youre doores, you neuer saw the like.  
 Pull downe youre hangings and begene to attire youre walls with blake  
 Send forthe youre greefed sighes, youre happe is gone to wreack.  
 This dismall day canicular, one this tenth day of December  
 Your towne was burude, your frend did die that was youre cheefest member.  
 Your extreame losse he did repaire, he wypte youre tears away,  
 But now youre glorie and youre gain, shall be no more youre stay.  
 JOHN MAISTERSON hath changed his life, to Malbanke heanie greefe,  
 Good change to him, hard change to them that felt his sweete reliefe.  
 Unto the poore he franckly gaue, the needie shall him wante,  
 To those that lacke, his happie hand was neuer proued scante.  
 When this poore Towne to ashes fell, deuourde with fire flame,  
 By pittie moued, he founde the way, howe to repare the same.  
 Whoe by the grace of our good Queene, and nobles of this land,  
 Tbis poor Towne was builte up againe, in state as it dothe stande.  
 The timber had els growing in woods, which nowe sweete dwellings are,  
 Soe had the seats and plotts of ground, remain'd to this day bare:  
 Had he not bin, this Towne had bin noe Towne as nowe it is;  
 That which he had, he did procure, the traunalle all was his.  
 His deeds weell doone noe faute can foyle nor deathe the same expell  
 Nor ruste nor tonge can tuch his life, nor furies slaight can quell  
 Nor thoghe that deathe dothe put downe life, & nature yealds her dewe,  
 Yete this Towne shall from age to age his Pearles fame renew.  
 The living and the unborne tow, and all that shall sucseede,  
 The roofes and walls shall blase his fame, for this his worthy deede  
 His endless labour in this case deserues an endless crowne  
 With goulden garlands of great thanks, and wraythes of high renoune.  
 The Soun shall witness of his workes, suruayde with his bemes so brighte  
 Soe shall the moone and statly stars, that veve the same by nighte.  
 And all good hearts shall yeald him prayse and moniment his name,  
 And so long as the world endures shall spread abroad his fame."

On the North side of the Chancel were two painted tablets, with the following inscriptions in Roman capitals; and shields of arms.

"HERE BENEATH LYETH YE BODY OF THOMAS MASTERSONE OF WICH MALBANK, ESQ WHO FIRST MARRIED FRANCES, COHEYRE TO SIR JOHN DONE OF UTKINTON, KT., BY WHOM HE HAD YSSUE 2 SONES & 2 DAUGHTERS, WCH ALL DYED YONGE: AFTER HE MARRIED MARY DAUGHTER TO THO: MAINWARING OF MARTYN, ESQ. AND HAD ISSUE MARY, RICH. & KATHERINE Y<sup>T</sup> ALL DYED YONGE, THOMAS, ROBT. JOHN, ELIZABETH, MARY, KATHERINE, FRANCES, BRIDGET, MARGRETT & HELLENA, ALL NOW LIVINGE, Y<sup>E</sup> SAID THO: DYED ON THE 16TH DAY OF FEBRUARY AN<sup>O</sup> D<sup>N</sup>I 1651."<sup>\*</sup>

ARMS: Two shields, (1) *Maisterson* impaling *Done*; and (2) *Maisterson* impaling *Mainwaring*.

MAISTERSON has six quarterings in each.

1. *Maisterson*; 2. *Mainwaring* (a crescent sable for difference); 3. *Blundeville*, earl of Chester; 4. *Lupus*; 5. *Praers*; 6. Azure, three bugles Argent, strung Gules.

The impalement of *DONE* has six quarterings. 1. *Done*; 2. *Kingsley*; 3. the forest of Delamere's badge; 4. *Leph* of East Hall; 5. *Alphraham*; 6. *Weccer*.

The impalement of *MAINWARING* has ten quarterings. 1. *Mainwaring*; 2. *Blundeville*; † 3. *Lupus*; 4. *Praers*; 5. *Glegge*; 6. *Sutton*; ‡ 7. Azure, a lion rampant Argent [*Crewe*]; † 8. *Merton*; 9. . . . ; 10 as 1: ||

Near the above were two shields of arms, with the initials and dates, R.M. 1617; and E.M. 1626; the memorials of RICHARD MAISTERSON, and his wife, ELIZABETH MAISTERSON, the daughter of Sir Thomas Grosvenor, of Eaton, Kt. (*Harl. MSS.*)§ These were not mentioned by Dr. Ormerod.

On the stone Pulpit, a brass with inscription, and the arms of Leech and Dawson, quarterly; viz.:—1 and 4, Ermine, on a chief indented Gules an annulet between two ducal coronets Or, (*Leech*); 2 and 3, Azure, on a bend engrailed Argent three daws Sable, (*Dawson*).¶ The brass remained affixed to the pulpit in 1795;<sup>\*\*</sup> and its exact

\* "1651. Feb. 18. Thomas Maisterson Esq."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

† "1669. April 9. Thomas Maisterson Esq."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

‡ Cf. page 53.

§ The arms of this monument will be found fully described in *Gent. Mag.* 1805, part 2, p. 706, from Church notes taken in 1795.

( " My Cosen Rich. Maisterson died 21 Oct. 1617."—(*Thos. Wilbraham's MS. Journal.*)

§ "1617. Oct. 23. Richd. Maisterson Esqr."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

( "1626. Mar. 1. Elizabeth Maisterson widowe."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

¶ Cheshire Visitation 1580. Harl. Soc. Publ. p. 137.

"HERE BENEATH LYETH YE BODY OF THOMAS MAISTERSON OF WICH MALBANKE, ESQ., WHO MARRIED MARY, DAUGHTER TO THOMAS PALMER OF MARSTON, IN Y<sup>E</sup> COUNTY OF STAFFORD, GENT., BY WHOM HEE HAD ISSUE TWO SONNES AND ONE DAUGHTER, THO: RICH: AND MARY, ALL NOW LIVEING: THE SAID THO: DI- ED ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRILL A<sup>O</sup> D<sup>N</sup>I 1669."<sup>†</sup>

ARMS: *Maisterson* impaling *Palmer*; Argent, on two bars Sable, three trefoils slipped Argent, 2 and 1; in chief a greyhound courant Sable; for difference a mullet Sable.

CREST: on a wreath a greyhound seiant Sable, on the shoulder a trefoil as in the arms.

\* *Gent. Mag.* for 1805, p. 706.

position is indicated in an engraving of the pulpit given as frontispiece to Platt's History of Nantwich, 1818; at which time, however, another brass had been substituted, inscribed thus:—"This burying place, which was formerly the Leighs', [*sic* for Leech's] belongs to Sir John Chetwode, of Oakley, Bart., being three yds. and a half broad as it is now Meered out."\*

The original brass was inscribed as follows:—†

"Here lyeth buried the body | of John Leech late of this  
towne of Nantwich, gen. who dep'ted | this life the last  
day of | March in the yeare of ye | incarn'. of our dom.  
I.X. | one thousand CCCCXCVIII." [1598]‡

*Crewe Monument.*

At the east end of the South Aisle of the Nave, was a carved marble monument fixed to the wall, which was taken down in 1729, when the South Gallery was erected. A rough sketch in *Harl. MSS.* 2151 represents a figure kneeling under an arch; with two shields; (1) *Crewe*; (2) *Crewe* impaling *Mainwaring*; and this inscription:—

Johannes Crewe  
ex antiquâ familiâ de Crewe  
oriundus, vir pius,  
susceptam ex Alicia  
Maynwarding uxore reliquit  
sobolem Ranulphum,  
Thomam, Lucretiam, Prudentiam.  
Vixit annos 74, obiit  
anno Domini 1598.

(*Translation*)

John Crewe descended from the ancient family of Crewe, a pious man, left issue, by Alice Mainwaring his wife, Ranulph, Thomas, Lucretia, and Prudence. He lived 74 years; and died in the year of our Lord 1598.¶

*Clutton Monuments.*

On the north-west tower-pier were three tablets. The *first*, a shield of arms with initials and date; the *second*, a Latin inscription, imperfectly or wrongly transcribed in *Harl. MSS.*; the *third*, an inscription, part of which was legible in 1819.

[1] "The Arms of R. C. 1610."§

[2] "Tho. Clutton \* \* \* sepultus est, 19 Sep. ano. 1628."¶

[3] "Here underneath lyeth burd. the bo[dy] of ELIZ. eldest dau. unto Rich[ard] Clutton of this town, gent., deceased; & late wife of THO. MALBON of Bradley, gent., who dep'ted this life 21 day of March haueing had issue by the same Tho. 2 sonnes & 7 dau. 1622."\*

\* Platt's History of Nantwich, p. 32.

† *Harl.* and *Ashmo. MSS.*

‡ His burial is entered thus:—"1598. April 1. John Leache gent."—(*Nant. Reg.*)

¶ The Register of John Crewe's burial has been given on page 36.

§ Argent, a chevron Ermines, cotised Sable, between three annulets Gules.—(*Chesh. Visit.* 1580. *Harl. Soc. Pub.* page 67).

"Richard Clutton my cosen died 15 day of Nov. 1610."—(*Wilb. MS. Journal*).

"1610. Nov. 16. Richard Clutton Gent. a Laweyer."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

¶ "My cos<sup>n</sup> Tho. Clutton dyed 17 Sep. 1628."—(*Wilb. MS. Journal*).

"1628. Sep. 19. Thos. Clutton, gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

\* "Cozen Eliz. Malbon died 21 March 1622."—(*Wilb. MS. Journal*).

"1622. March 23. Elizabeth wife of Thos. Malbon, Gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

*Minshull Monuments.*

These were situated at the East end of the North Aisle of the Nave; "On a little mont on the pillar on the back of the pulpit." (Not mentioned by Dr. Ormerod).

"In sacra sacræ virginis memoria'  
Margarette Minshull expirantis 22 Aug. 1616.  
Virgo sponsa fulgetra tibi nupta vocarer  
Mortua sum, moriens, virginitate fruor  
Nupta tamen christo, sum virgo, sponsa marita  
Virgo mihi, tibi sum, sponsa, marita deo."

(Translation)—Sacred to the memory of the holy virgin Margaret Minshull who died 22 Aug. 1616.  
A virgin spouse by lightning slain  
I gave my troth to thee in vain:  
'Twas mine to die a wife and maid,  
And thus within this tomb be laid:  
Yet I in Christ have placed my choice  
And will in him my Lord rejoice:  
A maiden to myself and thee  
My only spouse the Lord shall be.\*

Rough sketches of the next two mural tablets are given in *Harl. MSS.* The pedigree monument had carved pillars, heraldic shields, cherubim with expanded wings, &c., but both were almost wholly concealed by the North Gallery from 1765 to 1855, in which latter year they were destroyed.

[1]

"To the memory of RICHARD MINSHALL,† son and heire of Mr. Thomas Minshall, of this Towne of Nantwiche. He married *Elizabeth*, daughter of Richard Wilbraham of Lincolnes-inn, Esq. son and heyre of Mr. Richard Wilbraham of this towne. He lived wonderfully beloved, being of a most sweet, affable, pleasant and generous nature; upright in his dealings, charitable to the poore, and a great lover and maker of peace.

He died very piously upon the 17th day of February 1637, being the 56th year of his age, leaving behind him no child, but his good name, which his most dear, and sorrowful wife here registers in his deserving character.

I wish so longe a peace unto thine urne  
As till it harbour such another guest.  
If so, untill the world to ashes turne  
Thy ashes will unrak'd be like to rest."

ARMS: *Minshull* impaling *Wilbraham*.

Both Richard Minshull and his wife were buried in the Wilbraham burial place in

[2]

GEOFFREY MINSHULL, Esq.,§ in due respect to his ancestors hath erected this monument.

NICHOLAS MINSHULL, a second brother of the house of Minshull, marr. with *Alice*, dau. of *Yewen Clutton*, by whom he had issue, *YEWEN*, who marr. with *Jane*, daug. of *James Calveley* of Peckforten, by whom he had issue *EDWARD*, who marr. *Margaret*, dau. of *Hugh Mainwaring* of Namptwiche, who died on 2 Dec. 1557, and left behind him *GEFFREY*, who marr. with *Ellen*, daug. of *Wm. Bromley* of Dorfold, who died upon St. Stephen's day [26 Dec.] 1603,‡ being aged 64; and left behind him *EDWARD*, *JOHN*, *RICHARD*, *RANDLE*, *MARGARET* and *ELIZABETH*.

*EDWARD* marr. with *Margaret*, daug. of *Thos. Mainwaring*, of Namptwiche, who died upon Tuesday morning, 17th January 1627,|| being aged 68, and had issue *GEFFREY*,§ *EDWARD*, *MARGARET*, and *ELLEN*. *Margaret* died a mayd upon Thursday morning, 22nd Aug. 1616: being aged 20.

*GEFFREY* marr. with *Mary* dau. of Sir *Edwd.*

\* For this translation I am indebted to the kindness of Wm. Beamont, Esq., of Orford Hall.

† 1616. Aug. 23. Margaret daughter of Edward Mynshull Gent.—(*Bur. Reg.*)

‡ 1637. Feb. 20. Mr. Richard Mynshull.—(*Bur. Reg.*)

§ 1603. Dec. 28. Geffrey Minshull, mercer.—(*Bur. Reg.*)

|| 1627. Jan. 21. Edward Minshull, Gentleman.—(*Bur. Reg.*)

§ 1668. Dec. 1. Geffrey Minshull of Stoake, Esq.—(*Bur. Reg.*)

the South Transept; where were two flat gravestones, with a brass plate engraved with their arms and names. (*Ashmo. MSS.* Vol. 854, p. 310).

RICARDUS MINSHVLL OBIIT 17 FEB. A.D.  
1637.

ELIZABETH MINSHVLL UXOR RICHARDI.  
A.D. 1658.

Fitton of Gawsorth, bart, and had issue now living Edward, Richard, Thomas, Anne, Jane, Margaret, Mary and Ellen."

"Within this glasse a patterne you may see  
Of human change, and tyme's mortalitie  
In vaine it were t'expresse: this place hath tride  
Their birth, their breeding, how they liv'd and  
died.

To the memory of GEFREY MINSHULL of Stoke (Aſton parish) Esq. who set up the above Pedigree Monument, a tablet was afterwards placed in the same North Aisle, and in the same words as the concluding sentence of the above inscription; only that it was written in Latin, and of course gave the date of his death, viz.: "27 Nov. 1668 Æt. 76."

#### *Mainwaring Monuments.*

On the east wall of the South Transept, were four mural tablets (with armorial shields) inscribed as follows:—

[1]

"A breviat upon the life and death of RANDULPH MAINWARING, gent., who departed this life the 18th day of February, anno. 1610, and was buried on the 19th day of the same month, ætat. sui. 77."\*

[3]

"Here lyeth the bodies of MATHEW MAINWARING of Wich Malbank, gent., who married *Margrett*, daughter to Thomas Minshull of the same place, gent.; and had issue 14 children. He died [?] was buried] on the 19th day of Jan. 1651; and she died [?] was buried] on the 21st of Oct. 1652."

[2]

"Here lyeth interred the bodies of WILLIAM MAINWARING† of Wich Malbank, gent., who died on the 22nd April, anno. 1637; and also Martha his wife, daughter to Thomas Mainwaring of the same place, gent. She died on 7th Sept. 1658, leaving issue only one daughter, Anne, wife to *John Brock*, gent., both now living."

[4]

"Anna uxor Johannis Brock | generosi, filia atq. hæres | Gulielmi Mainwaring de Wico Malbano | generosi, hic jacet sepulta: obiit quarto die | Decembris a<sup>o</sup> Dom. 1666."

(*Translated*)—Here lies entombed, ANN wife of John Brock, gentleman, daughter and heiress of William Mainwaring of Wich Malbank, gentleman; she died on the 4th Dec. in the year of our Lord 1666.‡

\* "1610. Feb. 19. Rondulph Mainwaring Gent. Dyed at age of 77."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

† "1637. April 24. Mr. William Mainwaringe."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1658. Sep. 9. Mrs. Martha Mainwaringe."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

‡ "1666. Dec. 6. Ann. wife of John Brock, Gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

|| "1651. Jan. 19. Matthew Mainwaringe gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1652. Oct. 21. Mrs. Margaret Mainwaringe wid."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

Of the first three tablets to the Mainwaring family, none were in existence in 1803; according to Mr. Bowman's letter to Mr. Joseph Hunter, mentioned on page 310 *note*. But the fourth is mentioned by Dr. Ormerod as being still in the Church in 1819; and it may probably have remained until 1855.

Besides the above monuments, were several hatchments, (not mentioned by Dr. Ormerod), with initial letters and dates, as follows:—

“Tho. manwaring 1638”	...	["Thomas Manwaring Gent. in the Beame Street, 11 Aug. 1638."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“I.M. 1597.”	...	["Judith wiffe of Rodger Manwaring, gent. 2 July 1597."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“R.M. 1622.”	...	["Mr. Roger Manwaring Post Maister 12 April 1622."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“B.M. 1637.”	...	["Mrs. Bridget Manwaring wief of Mr. Arthur Manwaring 21 Feb. 1637."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“T.M. 1645.”	...	["Thos. Mainwaring, Gent., 15 Feb. 1645."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“I.M. 1638.”	...	["John Manwayring gent., Hospell St. 3 Jan. 1638."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“H.M. 1621.”	...	["Mr. Hugh Manwaring of the Crowne Gent. Ap. 4, 1621."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]
“G.M. 1641.”	...	["Geol[eg]e son of Thomas Mainwaringe Gent. 5 Feb. 1641."— <i>(Bur. Reg.)</i> ]

*Church Monuments, in the Lady Chapel.*

[1]. In 1663 Elias Ashmole wrote—"In the East corner of the North Cross" [*i.e.* Lady Chapel] "hangs a large Tablet, whereon is painted the Pictures of an old man & an old woman to the Brest, with these Armes (*Church* impaling *Mainwaring*) ouer their heads; & under the pictures this Epitaph." A rough drawing of these portraits is given in *Harl. MSS.* 2151; and Dr. Ormerod described them as "an aged male and female figure holding up their hands in prayer; both having large ruffs; the man has a venerable beard and red cap edged with lace; the female a close cap and high-crowned hat."

"Here under lyes the body  
of Thomas Church, gent.  
Aged 71; who married Anne  
daughter of Thomas Mainwaring,  
gent. and dye' the 6 of July  
anno. 1634."

ARMS: Argent, a fesse engrailed Sable, between three greyhounds heads erased, Sable, collared Or; (*Church*); impaling *Mainwaring*, a mascle for difference.

The Burial Register records as follows:—"1635 July 8th Mr. Thos. Church." This discrepancy, and the probable error in the age here given, will be noticed in the account of the Church family. The painting hung in the Lady Chapel until the "Restoration" of the Church in 1858. What became of it, is not now known.

[2]. Next was a tablet with the Arms of *Church* impaling *Wilbraham* with this inscription:—

"Ricardus Church, filius et hæres Ranulphi Church, gen. qui duxit Elizabetham filiam Thomæ Wilbram gen. Vixit annos 43. Obiit 21 Oct. 1637: obiit autem illa 19 Jan. 1638, et reliquerunt sex filios viventes, et quatuor filias defunctas."

(*Translated*)—RICHARD CHURCH, son and heir of Ranulph Church, gentleman, who married Elizabeth daughter of Thomas Wilbraham, gentleman. He lived 43 years. He died on the 21 Oct. 1637.\* She also died on the 19th Jan. 1638, and left six sons now living and four daughters deceased.

\* Thomas Wilbraham's MS. Journal states as follows:—

"My Cos. Rich. Church of hospell street died 21 Oct. 1637."

And the Burial Register:—

"1637. Oct. 23. Mr. Richard Church of the Townsend." [*i.e.* Hospital street-end].

[3]. A gravestone under the "steeple" (*Harl. MSS.*) inscribed "Tho. Church 1652."\*

[4]. Above the crown of the arch that divides the North Transept from the Lady Chapel, is a wood tablet inscribed with capital letters (written from left to right) as follows:  
 "RICHARD CHURCHE MERCER GAVE THIS BEAME."

Probably this was Richard Church, the builder of Church's Mansion; who contributed to the flat, panelled, oak ceiling of the North Transept, which was erected in 1577; according to another inscription on wood, still existing in the same roof. (See page 294).

*Wright Monuments,*

consisting of two flat gravestones in the North Transept, and a tablet with a coat of arms of ten quarterings, given in the *Harl.* and *Ashmo. MSS.*

[1] "Richard son of Robert Wright gentleman, was buried on 31st day of March anno dni. 1652."

[2] "Elizabeth dau. & coheire to Tho. Maisterston Esqr. late wife to Capt. Robert Wright of Wich Malbank died on the 26th day of March 1653."†

On the South-east tower pier was a Monument having this inscription: (*Ashmo. MSS.* Vol. 854, p. 309).

"In memory of HUGH DAVEN | PORT second son of Sr. John Daven | port of Davenport Knight & ELIZABETH his wife one | of the two co-heirs of Rich | ard Wright of Namptwich gen. | & of RALPH WOODNOTH‡ second son | of John Woodnoth of Sha | vington Esq. & MARGARET | his wife the other coheire | of the said Richard: & also of RALPH WOODNOTH | the only child of the | said Ralph & Margaret | all wch persons lye interred | underneath & neere this | Monument 8 Nov. 1654."

"At the top of the Monument are these Coates"

(1) *Davenport* impaling *Wright*.

(2) *Woodnoth* impaling *Wright*.

Special interest attaches to this monument, which is not mentioned by Dr. Ormerod as existing in 1819; though it was certainly there in 1795 (see *Gent. Mag.* 1805, part 2, p. 706-7), from the fact that the two ladies mentioned thereon conveyed, in 1639, certain tithes to the preaching Minister of Nantwich, (see page 288). The date on the monument indicates the time when it was set up. Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., in his MS. Journal, says, "My Cos<sup>n</sup> Hugh Davenport dyed 17 Ap. 1630;" and from family papers now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., it appears that Hugh Davenport, by permission, was interred in the Wilbraham Burial place in the South Transept; and beside him his widow, *Elizabeth Davenport*, was buried in 1653 by the permission of Roger Wilbraham, Esq. Another entry in Wilb. MS. Journal, records the death of Ralph Woodnoth junior, thus:—

"My young cos. Raphe Woodnoth died 13 Aug. 1638;"

\* "1652. April 11. Thomas son of Mr. Saboth Churche."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

† Their burials occur in the Registers, as follows:—

"Richard sonne of Capt<sup>n</sup> Robert Wright 31 March 1652." [Buried].

"Elizabeth wife of Captayne Robert Wright 28 March 1653." [Buried].

‡ A pedigree of the Woodnoth family of Shavington, from the time of William the Conqueror until King James I, will be found in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 508 (New Edit.). It is stated in Lyson's *Cheshire*, p. 831, that the family became extinct in 1637. This is inaccurate; for Jonathan Woodnoth, who was an attorney-at-law, and agent to Sir Ranulph Crewe, conveyed the Shavington estate to Thomas Turner, of Barthomley, yeoman, in Oct. 1661. The last known member of the family was another Jonathan Woodnoth (grandson of the said Jonathan) who became chargeable to Shavington in the year 1707; a payment having been made to him by the Overseers of the township of £1 7s. for clothing.

His father, *Ralph Woodnoth*, having pre-deceased him in 1635; and his mother, *Margaret Woodnoth*, surviving him until 1649; to whose memory a "Marble gravestone was placed at the entrance into the Chancell," inscribed:—

"MARGARETA UXOR | RADOLPHI WODNOTH | SEPULTA 8<sup>o</sup> die Junii | 1649."—(*Ashmo. MSS.*)

Consistent with these remarks the Burial Register records as follows.

"1630. Ap. 16. Hughe Davenport Esquier, buried."  
 "1635. Dec. 20. Mr. Raphe Woodnothe of the Bell."  
 "1638. Aug. 17. Raphe Woodnoth, gent, of the Bell."  
 "1649. June 8. M<sup>rs</sup>. Margaret Woodnoth widowe."  
 "1653. Oct. 30. M<sup>rs</sup>. Elizabeth Davenport widdowe."

Dr. Ormerod mentions "a memorial [in the Lady Chapel] of THOMAS WICKSTED Esq. (died Jan. 11th 1769, aged 60) and of GRISSELL his wife, only daughter of Charles Fletcher of Wigland Esq. died Aug. 18, 1784, aged 82)."<sup>\*</sup>

Other memorials mentioned in *Harl. MSS.* 2151 are as follows:—

- (1) John Bradwall minister of Nantwich (See page 296).
- (2) "On graue stones in the higher end of the Chancell,"  
 "Here lyeth the body of Richard Walthall gen. who died the 13 day of Jan. 1623."<sup>†</sup>  
 "The same on a brasse ou' [over] the com' [munion] table," together with two shields, rough drawings of which are given.
- (3) "On a table[t] by the stone pulpit," the arms of "Woode of Dorington 1635."<sup>‡</sup>
- (4) "On a Tablet fixt on the Rood Loft," *Ashmo. MSS.* 854, p. 308).  
 "Here lyeth Interred the body of ANNE late wife to Jo[h]n DELUES, gent, by whom she had issue 3 sons & 3 dau. wch Anne was ye dau. of Hugh Mainwaring the sone of John, who im'diately desc[ended] frō[m] Hugh the seventh sone of Randle Manwaring of Carincham Esq. She finshed her mortall course Feb. 23 Ano. redempcionis nre. 1636 ætat. sui 41."<sup>§</sup>
- (5) "On a stone in the middle of the Chancell;"  
 "Under this stone lyeth Interred | the body of Captaine George | Beckit son of Geo. B. of Soo | [? Sound] yeoman bur<sup>d</sup> nouemb. 18 | 1644."
- (6) On a gravestone "in the steeple part:"  
 "Here lyeth ye bo[dy] of Leut. Rich. Radmore who was slaine at Ravensmore ye 9th of May 1645."<sup>§</sup>
- (7) "Here interd lyeth the body of m<sup>rs</sup>. Kate Golborne | wife of mr Rich. Golborne of Chester: she died sept. | 18 [? 8] 1645."<sup>¶</sup>
- (8) "Frances dau. to Peter Leigh of High Legh | in the county of Chester esq. wife to Will. | Edwards Alderman of Chester buried | 28 April 1645."<sup>\*\*</sup>
- (9) "Under this stone lyeth the body of John | Clife gēn. who was once a cittizen | of London, & was interred the 29 | of March ano. 1645."<sup>††</sup>

\* "1769. Jan. 11. Thomas Wicksted."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

† "1784. Aug. 21. Grissell widow of Thos. Wicksted, Esq, of *Town Well*."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

‡ "1623. Jan. 15. Richd. Walthall Esqre."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

§ "1635. Sep. 18. Margaret wife of Mr. John Woode of Dorrington."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

¶ "1636. Feb. 27. Aune wife of John Delaues, Gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

§ No record in the Parish Registers. N.B.—A place about a mile from Burland Hall, in Acton parish, is still known as "*Radmore Green*."

¶ "1645. Sep. 9. Catherine wife of Mr. Richard Golborne."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

\*\* "1645. April 28. ffancis wife of Captaine Will. Edwardes Alderman of Chester."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

†† "1645. March 29. Mr. John Cliffe."—(*Bur. Reg.*)



- (10) "Under this stone lyeth the bo[dy] of Jo[hn] Bromhall of Soond who was interred the 7 of April, ano. dni. 1645."<sup>\*</sup>
- (11) On a gravestone in the South Aisle of the Nave, an inscription to "Radulphus Burroughes de wico Malbo. gen. qui obiit 3 die Oct. ano. dni. 1651:" and to his wife "Margareta filia Hugo. Allen, de eadem villam, mercator" &c. she died 21 Nov. 1650.†
- (12) "Under a blew marble lyeth the bodies of mr dod Baron of Escheqr, his wife, and the lady margret Norton, which lady was buried 29 March 1644."<sup>‡</sup>
- (13) The Arms of *John Griffin* impaling . . . (?), with initials and date "I. G. 1623."  
Thomas Wilbraham records "*Mr. John Griffin of Bartherton died 21 Sep. 1623;*" and his burial entry at Nantwich is dated 24 Sep. 1623.§

Near the hatchments of John Griffin on a tablet was:—

"Here lyeth the body of *Martha Griffin* one of the dau. of John Griffin of Bartherton Esq., who died the 25 day of Feb. 1665 aged 55 yeares."

She was buried at Nantwich two days after her death.—(*Par. Reg.*)

- (14) On a pillar near the pulpit a tablet, with Coat of Arms and Crest.

"Neere this place lyeth | Robt. Parker gen. He married | Margaret dau. of Edw. Massy of Namptwich gen. He had issue | 3 sones & 5 dau. wch Robt. died 21 Nov. [?] 1664."<sup>||</sup>

Dr. Ormerod mentions "a coffin shaped slab with a cross thereon ornamented with oak leaves springing from the shaft; the head formed by four oak leaves conjoined within a circle; probably relating to some members of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, who had lands here." It was situated in the South Aisle of the Nave, near the South door: and is now to be seen under a young birch tree in the churchyard. Some flat stones were removed into the churchyard at the time of the "*Restoration*" of the Church, under the superintendence of the Rector; but most of them, together with many others in the churchyard, are now under the greensward.

## Monumental Inscriptions.

(NOW IN THE CHURCH).

At the present time there are several mural monuments in brass and marble; and a few flat tombstones in the aisles of the North and South Transepts, which now are partly, and soon will be altogether, illegible. Of these, only six date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

\* "1645. April 7. John Bromhall of Renbury parrish."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

† "1650. Nov. 22. Margret wife of Raphe Burroughes, gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1651. Oct. 3. Raphe Burrowes gent."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

‡ "1644. Mar. 29. Margaret Lady Norton."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1648. Sep. 31. Margaret wife of Edward Dodd Esq."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1648. Nov. 30. Edward Dodd Esq."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

§ The manor of Bartherton, with its mill, &c., which had long been in the possession of the Griffin family, passed after the death of Richard Griffin, who was also buried at Nantwich on 21 Dec. 1655, to the family of Delves, from whom it has descended to the Broughtons of Doddington.

|| "1664. Oct. 13. Robert Parker."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

*Wilbraham Monuments.*

A tablet of black marble on the south wall of the Kingsley Chapel, which was originally affixed to the south east tower pier, on the 12th July, 1636, (*Wilb. MS. Journal*); and which has the Arms and Crest of the Wilbrahams, is inscribed as follows:—

MARMORI HUIC VICINI

UNA OBORMISCUNT SENEX PROAVUS, PUERQ' PRONEPOS,  
[UTERQUE RICHARDUS WILBRAHAM].

ILLE

EX PATRE FUIT RADULPHO, FILIO  
RANULPHI, FILII SECUNDI THOMÆ  
WILB'HAM DE WOODHEV, AR. PROGNATO.  
VIR, PRÆTER PIETATEM, QUI CLARUIT,  
SAPIENTIE MENSURA, JUDICII PONDERE,  
ET ANNORUM NUMERO OLIM INSGNIS;  
QUI EX UXORE SUA ELIZABETHA  
FILIA THOMÆ MAISTERSON GENEROSI,  
QUATUOR HABUIT LIBEROS, (VIDELICET)  
RICHARDUM WILBRAHAM ARMIGERUM  
ROGERUM WILBRAHAM EQUTEM AURATU'  
THOMAM WILBRAHAM GENEROSUM ET  
RADULPHUM WILBRAHAM DE DERFOLD, AR.'  
OBIIT 2<sup>o</sup> DIE FEB. A<sup>o</sup> SUI JESU 1612.  
ÆTATIS SUI 88.

ISTE.

PRIMOGENITUS FUIT FILIUS THOMÆ  
WILBRAHAM AR'. (FILII ET HÆREDIS  
RICHARDI WILBRAHAM AR'. FILII  
RICHARDI SENIORIS PRIUS MEMORATI)  
EX RACHÆLE CONJUGE EJUSDEM  
THOMÆ, FILIA ET HÆREDE JOSUÆ  
CLIVE DE HUXLEY AR.' SUSCEPTUS;  
PUER OPTIMÆ SPEI, CANDIDISSIMÆ  
INDOLIS, INGENIQU' PRÆCOCISSIMI  
QUI DUM PROAVI PREGRESSI VESTIGIA  
VIRTUTEM ANHELANS, SEQUERETUR,  
ANIMAM IN CURSU HOC EFFLANS, IDEM,  
CÆLUM, IDEM ET SEPULCHRUM INVENT.  
OBIIT 23<sup>o</sup> DIE JULII A<sup>o</sup> SALUTIS 1633  
ÆTATIS 12.

TEMPORE NON UNO VIXERUNT; HIS TAMEN UNA,  
LUX DATUR, ATQ' HIC VELATI NOCTE QUIESCUNT:  
DAT MORS QUÆ VITA NEGAVIT."

[*Translated*]

Near this Marble

sleeping together, lie an aged great-grand-father, and a boy his great-grand-child,  
(Both named RICHARD WILBRAHAM).

This

was descended from his father Ralph son of Ralph, second son of Thomas Wilbraham of Woodhey Esq. He was a man who, besides excelling in piety, was remarkable for his great wisdom, sound judgment, and length of years. Who, by his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Maisteron, gent., had four sons, namely:—

Richard Wilbraham, Esquire.

Roger Wilbraham, Knight.

Thomas Wilbraham, Gent., and

Ralph Wilbraham of Derfold, Esquire.

He died on the second day of Feb. in the year of his Saviour 1612; in the 88th year of his age.

They lived not at one Time, yet to them one day is given.

But here they rest together veiled in Night. Death gives what Life denies.

That

in descent was the son of Thomas Wilbraham Esq. (son and heir of Richard Wilbraham Esq., the son of Richard, the elder, before mentioned) born of Rachel, wife of the same Thomas, daughter and heiress of Joshua Clive, of Huxley, esquire. He was a boy of the greatest promise, the kindest disposition, and most precocious mind; who, longing for the virtue that might enable him to follow in the footsteps of his great-grand-father before him, found, while thus breathing out his soul, the same heaven, and the same tomb.

He died on the 23rd day of July in the year of Grace 1633, at 12 years of age.

On the other side of the great window in the same Chapel, is another marble tablet to the memory of ROGER WILBRAHAM, of Townsend, Esq., the historical collector for Nantwich, another great-grandson of the first *Richard Wilbraham*, of this town. When Dr. Ormerod visited the Church this monument stood near the one just given, on the East wall of the South Transept; and "at the side was a small kneeling figure, habited in a furred gown, ruff, and square cap, intended, most probably, for the person commemorated in the inscription."

ARMS: 1 and 4 Argent, three bends wavy Azure, (*Wilbraham*). 2 Argent, on a fesse Sable between three wolves heads erased Sable, three mullets Or, (*Clive*). 3 Ermine, on a bend Gules, coticed Gules, three crescents Or, (*Huxley*).

CREST: On a wreath a wolf's head erased.

H. S. E.

Rogerus Wilbraham de Wico Malbano arm<sup>r</sup>  
 vir ex indole minime famæ appetens;  
 morum vero gravitate, scientiæ copia,  
 vitæ integritate,  
 non incelebris,  
 quî religionis et literarum studiis  
 penes totus incubuit,  
 Nec amicis interim, nec patriæ defuit.  
 Uxorem habuit  
 Aliciam Darfoldensem,  
 cognatam sibi, et cognomine,  
 amore et virtute multo intimius conjunctam:  
 undecim liberorum pater, quatuor tandem reliquit.  
 superstites,  
 duos filios totidemque filias.  
 Ranulphus natu maximus  
 hoc posuit Monumentum  
 optimo parenti filius pientissimus.  
 Obiit anno { æræ Christianæ MDCCVII.  
 { ætatis suæ LXXXV.

[*Translated*].—Here lieth Roger Wilbraham, of Wich Malbank, Esq.; a man who, though fame was not his aim, yet could not but be known for his sound morals, great wisdom, and uprightness of life; and though much given to the study of religion and letters, yet failed not in his duty to his friends or his country. He had to wife, Alice of Darfold, who, though she was allied to him in kindred and in name, was still more so by her love, her affection, and her virtue. He was the father of eleven children; four of whom, namely, two sons and as many daughters survived him, and are still living; of whom, Randle, his eldest son, in duty to the best of parents, has set up this monument.

He died in the year { of the Christian era 1707,  
 { and of his age 85.

In the aisle of this Transept, is a flat stone,\* (partly under the Organ screen,) which has an oval brass, with Wilbraham Arms engraved thereon, and the following inscription in Roman capitals:—

\* Beside this stone is another inscribed: "*Elizabeth Wilbraham, Felicit of Ralph Wilbraham of Dorfold, Esq.*" She was the dau. of John Bromball, of Nantwich and the Hough; her husband died in 1731; and she was buried at Nantwich on 12th Oct. 1748. (*Par. Reg.*)

“RADULPHUS WILBRAHAM. LINCOLNIENSIS HOSPITHI OBIT A<sup>o</sup> DNIJ 1657.”

[*Translated*]—Ralph Wilbraham, of Lincoln's Inn, died in the year of our Lord 1657.

Ralph Wilbraham, who was born in London on the 13th Nov. 1601, was admitted of Lincoln's Inn on the 16th July, 1619; and, dying unmarried at Peel House, in Tarvin Parish, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, 1657, left all his estate to the poor in general. (See page 193, and List of Charities).

“1657. Aug. 27. M<sup>r</sup>. Raphe Wilbraham.”—(*Nantwich Bur. Reg.*)

There still exists a brass in the South Transept, on which a very curious composition in Latin, eulogising him for his charitable disposition, has been engraved as follows:—

“Ne lateat Posteris quantum funus sit, cui affectus noster justa solvere conatur, quale nomen quod devoto Pietatis Officio æternitati consecramus, sic Famæ Posthumæ tradere placet.

(*Translation.*)—“Let it not be a secret to our posterity how sad is his death, to whom our affection will pay his due: What a name is his, we consecrate to eternity in our dutiful love, and so hand down his memory to posthumous fame.

*Radulphus Wilbrahamus*, tam moribus quam natalibus vere Palatinus, Patriam habuit eximiam Nobilitatis altricem Cestriam; magnâ utrinque inclaruit ex inde parentelâ, quam tamen minor ipse natu majorem meritis reddidit illustrem a propriâ virtute splendorem acquirens ac si nullam a prosopiâ vendicasset. Inter avitas imagines Honoris non Imago, sed angustius Prototypon præluxit, antiquos retro Patres nobilitatis serus nepos, fœnus que sanguini rependit generis sui instaurator, a quo multum decoris si recepit, plus retulit.

*Ralph Wilbraham*, a Prince in all truth by manners as well as birth, had the renowned county of Chester for a foster-mother; on all sides his great parentage is illustrious, which he, though younger in years, made older by his merits, acquiring an illustrious splendour by his own virtues, even if he claimed none from his descent. Amongst the forms of his ancestors, the form of honour shone not forth, but its more august Prototype, he the offspring, ennobling his ancestors, and he, the founder of his race, paying interest to his blood, to which, if he received much glory from it, he gave still more.

Apud Wici Malbani candidissimas salinas\* educatus, qua fuit in agendo prudentia, qua in dicendo per urbanâ festivitate, patrio quasi sapore mores et loquelam fœliciter condidit, cujus salibus\* nil candidius, nil innocentius.

Educated near the salt-springs of Wich Malbank, with what prudence did he act, with what pleasant courtesy did he speak! He preserved, as it were, with a seasoning inherited from his birthplace his morals and conversation, than whose wit nothing was more brilliant, nothing more harmless.

Quoties gustui et palato eruditæ Quiritum coronæ adblandiri libuit; Deus bone! quam Sirenibus attentas inhiantium aures, quibus amœnitatum oblecta mentis delinivit delicie selectiorum ingeniorum, Gratiâ crederes Musis sociatas unius ore locutas, nescio quo procante illapsi ultra Philtrum aut Mercurialem caduceum captans et incantans auditores!

How often it pleased his taste to find delight, in the Civic crown! Bounteous God! what an eloquent companion, what a pleasant guest! with what enchantment, he held the ears of his gaping listeners, with what delights did he entrance choicer spirits; you would think that the Graces, united to the Muses, were speaking in the mouth of one, capturing and carrying along his hearers with a kind of gentle motion, beyond any Philtre or Mercurial wand!

Diceret alterum Ulissem Homericum, a perigrinatione reversum, æquæ homines ac libros edoctum, nisi quod Penelope destitueretur. Rigidus enim Cultor celibatus maluit progeniem adoptare quam gignere, en itaque viduas, orphanos, detorsos, famæ perituros, tanquam tot Lazaros in sinu *Wilbrahami* recumbentes.

You would say he was a second Ulysses returned from his wanderings, learned in men and books (except that he had no Penelope) for, a strict admirer of celibacy, he preferred to adopt children rather than beget them; widows and orphans, bowed down and perishing from want, lying like so many Lazaruses in *Wilbraham's* bosom.

Quid memorem multiformem linguarum varietatem mutuo quidem sed æmulo quasi fœdere sic conjunctam, ut qui loquentem audiret, perigrinam a vernacula discernere non posset.

How can I speak of his varied knowledge of languages united in him, with so mutual yet rival a bond, that he who heard him speak, could not discern if he were speaking his mother tongue or a foreign language.

\* There is a play on the Latin words here, which it is almost impossible to render into English: *salinas*—salt-springs: *salibus*—the salt of wit.

Quid verba narrem cum facta videam, quid Artes  
 reценseam, quibus adeo excelluit sui similes, liberales  
 quas tamen Pietati vestigales fecit. Non loquitur magna,  
 sed facit, quid Hominum et Angelorum linguæ sine  
 Caritate, illa primas habeat, illa proluceat tanquam inter  
 stellas Luna minores Eleemosyna, viaticum in terris,  
 thesauris in Coelis.

*Radulphus eleemosynarius* suâ munificentia inauravit  
 sæculum hoc ferreum. Exteras invisit regiones ut  
 exulante reduceret Charitatem, absoluta Peregrinatione  
 jam reversurus in superum Patriam integras facultates  
 omnes opes divitiasq' Pauperibus, quasi Mercatoribus,  
 (ut fit) tradidit, cum fœnore recipiendas in cœlo, gnarus  
 quod patrimonium Deo creditum nec Resp' eripit, nec  
 Fiscus invadit, nec calumnia forensis evertit.

Egenos adeo ex asse heredes constituit ut nec legaverit  
 sibi vel tumulum vel Epitaphium, utrumque tamen  
 cognato Genevæ defuncto cum extraxit, sibi ibidem  
 erexit, aliud dignitate quam illud perenne pietatis et  
 ingenii monumentum antea plus quam semi sepultus cum  
 charissimo consodale repetitus exequias, alterumq' funus  
 noluit.

Frustra Marmore Tegitur qui cunctorum pectoribus  
 tumulatur.

Ex quo Christo se dicavit non fratrum aut affinium  
 memor, neminem in carne novit, immo carnem suam non  
 agnovit, eutem qui nunquam curavit, de Corpore, prorsus  
 incuriosus, totus de Animâ sollicitus, integrum se cum suis  
 Holocaustum Deo in flammâ charitatis obtulit, consum-  
 matæ Perfectionis apicem quis dubitat illum attigisse? qui  
 omnia profudit pauperibus, qui sic secutus est Christum,  
 procul dubio assecutus est.

Alii aurum inaurantes, divitis propinquos locupletavit,  
 insta fluminum aquas suas in mare mittunt. Illè terras  
 sitientes rigavit, nec oleum suum in plena sed in vacua  
 vasa in fudit.

Quas tulit acceptas Christi *Wilbraham* amoris  
 In Christi moriens membra refudit opes  
 Scilicet hæredem cum se sentiret Olympi,  
 Hæredem contra scripsit Eipse Deum."

It is, perhaps, not generally known, that the above *Wilbraham* monuments were *all* that ever existed in this Church to the memory of that worthy family. To these have recently been added memorial stained glass, at a cost of £500, executed by Wailes, of London, in the large window of the South Transept; and a brass engraved as follows:—

"TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
 AND IN MEMORY OF HIS KINDRED WHOSE  
 BODIES ARE BURIED IN A VAULT BENEATH  
 ✠ THIS WINDOW IS DEDICATED BY  
 GEORGE FORTESQUE WILBRAHAM, A.D. 1858.

Why should I speak of words, when I can behold his  
 deeds? How can I recount his talents in which he so  
 excelled! What revenues he gave away in his generosity!  
 He spoke not of great things, but did them. What are  
 the tongues of Men or Angels without Charity! Charity  
 should have the first place, it should shine forth like a  
 Moon of Mercy amongst the lesser stars, a provision on  
 earth, a treasure in Heaven.

*Ralph the charitable* has gilded this iron age with his mu-  
 nificence. He visited foreign lands to bring back the  
 wanderer Charity; himself now about to return from his  
 Wanderings to his home on high. He lent his substance,  
 wealth, and all his means to the Poor, as if they were  
 Merchants (as is the custom) to be received back by him  
 in heaven with interest; knowing that his patrimony was  
 only lent him by God; his Money-bags corrupted him  
 not; the scandal of the market turned him not aside.

He left his heirs so penniless, that he did not even be-  
 queath means to build a tomb or write an Epitaph for  
 himself, yet he erected a tomb and inscribed an Epitaph  
 for a kinsman who died at Geneva: for he thought him  
 not unworthy of an everlasting monument for his piety  
 and talents, having before that attended the last rites of  
 his dearest friend, half buried, as it were, himself, and he  
 would not have another funeral ceremony even for himself.

In vain can he be read of in Marble who is buried in  
 the breasts of all.

He so dedicated himself to Christ, that he, mindful  
 not even of his brethren or relations, offered no one as a  
 sacrifice to God in the flame of charity. Who can doubt  
 that he reached the highest point of Charity, who poured  
 out all his riches to the poor? Who so followed Christ,  
 though he followed him with trembling at a distance.

Others gild gold, make their rich neighbours richer,  
 like rivers that pour their waters into the sea. He water-  
 ed the thirsty land, nor did he pour his oil into full but  
 into empty vessels.

This good man *Wilbraham* great wealth possessed  
 And dying gave all back to Jesu's breast.  
 For, sooth, he thought himself of Heaven the heir,  
 And as an heir did God receive him there."

✠ ROGER WILBRAHAM OF NANTWICH OB<sup>T</sup> 1754. ✠ MARY DAUGHTER  
OF THOMAS HUNT, WIFE OF ROGER WILBRAHAM OBIT 1760.  
✠ MARY WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1741. ✠ THOMAS WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1802.  
✠ GEORGE WILBRAHAM OF DELAMERE LODGE, OB<sup>T</sup> 1813. ✠ MARIA  
DAU. OF WILLIAM HARVEY, WIFE OF GEORGE WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1822.  
✠ MARIA WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1794 ✠ ROGER WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1784 ✠  
LOUISA WILBRAHAM OB<sup>T</sup> 1797.”

On the west wall of the South Transept, the arms of *Walley* impaling *Wright*, (recently re-painted) and a brass thus inscribed:—

“ HIC JACET  
VIR PIUS, SUBDITUS FIDELIS, MEDICUS PERITUS, PAUPERIBUS CONSANGUINEIS  
CONJUGIS SUE CHARÆ RELATIVIS, ET  
ALIIS AMICUS VERUS: PEPETUUS, ET GENEROSUS;  
GULIELMUS WALLEY  
OBIT XXXI DIE JANUARY ANNO { SALUTIS MDCLXXX.  
ÆTATIS SUE LXVII.  
ELIZABETHAM UXOREM SUAM PER DILECTAM, BENIGNAM,  
ILLAM MATRONAM AC PERDECORAM FILIAM ROGERI  
WRIGHT GENEROSI HEU; IDEM CLAUSIT SEPULCHRUM.  
OBIT XXIV DIE FEBR. ANNO { SALUTIS MDCLXXX.  
ÆTATIS SUE LXXII.  
CREDE CHRISTIANE ET NON MORIERIS  
NAM FIDE CHRISTI MORIENTES RESURGENT.”

[*Translated.*].—Here lies William Walley, a pious man, a loyal subject, a skilful physician, a true, constant, and to the poor, to his own kindred, and the relatives of his dear wife, and to others a genuine friend. He died on the 31st day of January in the year of Grace 1680, and of his age 67. Also, his beloved wife, Elizabeth, a kind matron, and very comely lady, the daughter and heiress of Roger Wright, gent. She is buried in the same tomb. She died on the 24th day of February in the year of Grace 1680, and of her age 72.\*

Believe O Christian! and you will not die, for by faith in Christ, the dying shall rise again.

Between the two west windows of the South Transept, a mural tablet, thus:—

“ M. S.  
THOMÆ WETTENHALL  
de Wico Malbano in com. Cest. arm.  
et CATHARINÆ uxoris ejus  
ex qua  
unicum filium Thomam  
et quatuor filias  
Catharinam, Amiciam, Margaretam.

\* The Register records:—“ 1680. Feb. 4. William Walley Doctor of Physick.” [Buried].  
“ 1680. Feb. 27. M<sup>rs</sup>. Elizabeth Walley *vid.*” [Buried].

et Susannam, superstites  
suscepit.  
Qui quidem THOMAS obiit  
xviii<sup>o</sup> Octob. a<sup>o</sup> MDCLXXVII  
CATHARINA vero  
xiv<sup>o</sup> Maii anno MDCLXXXIII.”

[*Translated.*—Sacred to the memory of THOMAS WETTENHALL of Wich Malbank, in the county of Chester, Esq., and CATHARINE his wife, by whom he had an only son Thomas, and four daughters, Catharine, Amicia, Margaret, and Susannah, now living. Which same THOMAS died on 18th Oct. in the year 1677; also CATHARINE on 14th May in the year 1683.\*

With the above, ends the list of monuments relating to the old families of Nantwich, preserved to these times. Of the monuments belonging to the present century, three mural tablets are on the East side of the South Transept.

A black marble to the memory of—

“RALPH FOX  
of Nantwich died  
Feb. 9, 1820 Aged 77.  
MARGARET FOX  
of Nantwich died  
Jan. 6, 1822 Aged 73.”

A white marble with an urn:—

“Sacred to the memory of  
MARY

second Daughter of the late Mr. JAMES MEEK,  
formerly of this place, who died on the 18 Jan. 1816.

ÆT. 22 years.”

“This lovely bud so young and fair  
Call'd hence by early doom;  
Just came to show how sweet a flower,  
In Paradise would bloom.”

“Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord.”

There are flat gravestones in the aisle of the South Transept, (but partly hidden by modern seats), to *Sproust*, a banker; *Plevin*, a saddler; *Richard Leversage*, Ironmonger, who died 1st March, 1839, aged 71; *Rodenhurst*, formerly a freeholder in Coole Pilate, and resident in Dysart Buildings, Nantwich; and [*Anni*] “*Relict of William Hewitt* ob. Sep. 1 1780.” These names will soon be obliterated.

In the North Transept are two memorial stained glass windows, on the east wall.

(1)—An Angel window; representing Gabriel, Michael the Archangel, and Raphael; and below a brass plate, with arms, and engraved thus:—

\* “1677. Oct. 23. Thos. Wettenhall Esq.”—(*Bur. Reg.*)

“1683. May 17. Mrs. Catharine Wettenhall widow.”—(*Bur. Reg.*)

In *Harl. MSS.* 2151 is given a coat of arms, (*Wettenhall* impaling *Clutton*) with initials and date,—I. W. 1623. Probably intended for the grandmother of this Thomas Wettenhall, whose burial is recorded thus:—

“1623. Nov. 9. Jane, wief of Mr. William Wettenhall.”—(*Par. Reg.*)

"In Dei gloriam et in piam memoriam Locum tenentis Prefecti Caroli Cuyler Baronetti, filii Ducis Cornetii Cuyler Baronetti qui | natus ante diem quartum Kal. Febr. Anno Salutis 1794, obdormivit in CHRISTO et in spe beate resurrectionis ante diem decimum Kal. | Sepr. Anno Salutis 1862 : aetatis suae 69 hanc fenestram ejus Vidua Catharina Francesca Cuyler mœrens ponendam curavit." |

To the Glory of God and in pious remembrance of Deputy Lieutenant Charles Cuyler Bart. son of General Cornet Cuyler Bart., who was born on 29th Jan in the year of Grace 1794. He fell asleep in Christ and in hope of a blessed resurrection on 23rd Aug. in the year of Grace 1862 and of his age 69. His sorrowing widow Catherine Frances Cuyler has caused this window to be placed.\*

(2)—A window representing the Transfiguration : below a brass engraved thus :—

"In memory of William Lowe Esq<sup>re</sup>. long resident in Nantwich as a Solicitor, who died 21st Dec. 1812, and of Elizabeth his Wife, | who died in July 1822, and who, with several of their children and grandchildren are interred in the Chancel of the Church, this | Window was erected to the Glory of God, by their sole survivor in the Parish T. P. Lowe, Esq<sup>re</sup>, Solicitor on the 21st Decr. 1864."†

On the wall dividing St. George's Chapel from the Lady Chapel, is a marble tablet with carved work representing the Muse of Comedy, masks, crowns, &c., thus inscribed :—

"Underneath this marble are interred the remains of  
SAMUEL STANTON,  
who many years presided over a company of Comedians  
in this neighbourhood, with credit and respect ; and  
was deservedly esteemed in private life as an honest man.  
He died suddenly Aug. 20, 1797 : aged 60 years.  
His wife ELIZABETH STANTON  
also died suddenly (in London) Oct. 2, 1790. Aged 57 years,  
and was buried at Barnes in Surrey.  
Her truly benevolent disposition  
excited the Love of her Acquaintance and the Poor.  
Their seventh son, ROBERT, died April 2, 1795, aged 22 years,  
and was buried at Walsall.  
Their surviving children have raised this tribute of affection  
to their memory."

Between the two windows of St. George's Chapel, is a brass inscribed in capital letters :—

"TO . THE . GLORY . OF . GOD . AND . IN . MEMORY . OF  
EDWIN . JACKSON . KENT . A . NATIVE . OF . NANTWICH  
WHO . DIED . MARCH . 24TH . 1878 . AGED . 65 . YEARS.  
THIS . TABLET . TOGETHER . WITH . ALTAR . STEPS . FRONTAL . &C.  
IS . OFFERED . BY . HIS . WIDOW . AND . CHILDREN."

Above is a tablet of white marble within a black border, surmounted by an urn ; with the following inscription :—

\* Sir Charles Cuyler lived for some years at Poole Hall, near Nantwich. He was buried in the Parish Cemetery at Nantwich ; and his daughter, who was accidentally burnt to death about the same time, was buried there also.

† The late Rev. Thomas Brooke B.A. Rector of Wistaston, from 1825 to 1872, and Justice of Peace, married the sister of Thomas Philip Lowe, Esq., of Nantwich ; whose son, Charles Stuart Brooke, Esq. now occupies the same residence and offices of the late William Lowe, Solicitor, Esq.



“Sacred to the memory of  
 Ensign CHARLES HALL of the 38th Regiment of Foot,  
 (Only Son of the late Dr. CHARLES HALL of this town)  
 Whose amiable Disposition endear'd Him  
 to his numerous Friends.  
 He died of a Fever, brought on by excessive  
 Fatigue, soon after his Return from Spain  
 at Plymouth,  
 on the twenty-first Day of January 1809,  
 Aged 28.  
 His sorrowing Sisters SUSANNAH & ANN  
 have caus'd this Tablet to be erected  
 in Token of their affectionate Regard.”

In the aisle of this Chapel, are several flat gravestones to the memory of the Hall family of Nantwich. The inscriptions are partly hidden by modern seats, and are now nearly illegible. Two of them relate to the sisters, *Susannah* and *Ann*; and Charles Hall, M.D., their father, as follows:—

- (1)—“John Hall Surgeon died January 30th 1767 aged 43.”\*
- (2)—“John [?] Hall Surgeon died July 3, 1785 [?] aged — Also Elizabeth Hall spinster, Daughter of the above John & Mary Hall died Oct. 12, 1801. Aged 48.”
- (3)—“Charles Hall M.D. Mortalis esse decessit.”†
- (4)—“*Susanna* eldest dau. of late Charles Hall [died] Aug. 8, 1823.
- (5)—“To the memory of *Anne*, Wife of W. M. Brady, M.D. & last surviving Daughter of the late C. Hall M.D. : Died April 25th 1835 : aged 47 years.”

Also another stone in the same aisle:—

[Richard] “Wicksted M.D. who departed this life March 26, 1810 aged 70 years.”

In the Lady Chapel is a mural tablet—

“To the memory of | SAMUEL HODGSON Esquire | who died on the 16th of September 1807 | at the Age of 72 Years. | This Monument is erected | by his surviving Relatives | as a tribute of respect to his Virtues | and a token of their affection.” |

A lancet window in the North Aisle of the Nave, is filled with memorial stained glass representing four examples of Patriarchal faith, and inscribed:—

IN . MEMORY . OF . EDWARD . HALL . MARTIN . | OF . HENHULL  
 BORN . OCT . 3 . 1799 . DIED . JAN . 25 . 1866.” | †

A brass under the West Window of the Nave, is inscribed:—

“THIS . WEST . WINDOW . WAS . COMPLETED . NOV . 1875  
 TO . THE . GLORY . OF . GOD . AND . IN . MEMORY . OF  
 ANDREW . FULLER . CHATER . M.A.  
 RECTOR . OF . NANTWICH . FROM . A.D . 1846 . TO . A.D . 1872.  
 IN . WHOSE . TIME . THIS . CHURCH . WAS . RESTORED . AND . MADE . FREE.”

\* Buried 2 Feb. 1767.—(*Par. Reg.*)

† Buried 26 Nov. 1805 Aged 75.—(*Par. Reg.*)

‡ The subjects Abel, Enoch, and Noah, were added to the first memorial (Job) in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Martin by the members of their family, and Lord Crewe, in March, 1877. The artists being Messrs. Clayton and Bell of London.—(*Parish Magazine*). The late E. H. Martin, Esq, was articled with Messrs. Tomlinson & Welsby, Solicitors of Nantwich, and ultimately succeeded to their practice. He was buried in Adon churchyard, between the sundial cross and the east boundary wall.

## Description of the Church.



THE CHURCH is dedicated to St. Mary. At the present time, however, it is erroneously called the Church of SS. Mary and Nicholas. The late Sir Gilbert Scott, in his Report on the Restoration of Nantwich Church (1854), adopted this double dedication, possibly on the authority of Bacon's edition of "*Liber Regis*;"\* or on that of the old antiquary, Browne Willis,† who wrote in the early part of the eighteenth century, and who appears to have confounded the two separate religious foundations of St. Mary's Chapel (or Church) and St. Nicholas' Chapel. As there is great danger of this error being perpetuated,‡ it should be clearly understood that not a single instance is to be found of this double dedication in pre-Reformation times; and to adopt it now is both incorrect and absurd; as those Chapels have been shown, in the foregoing pages, to have been two distinct religious edifices in different parts of the town. There seems to be in the Church itself sufficient proof in stone, of the original and single dedication. In the Chancel groining, and over that part of the Church between the altar-steps and the east window, are four carved bosses, (see illustration) representing:—(1)—*The Eternal Father*; (2)—*The Coronation of the Virgin*; (3)—*The Virgin and an Angel*, (Regina Angelorum); (4)—*The Assumption of the Virgin*. If these have any meaning at all, it seems reasonable to suppose that, according to the common practice of ancient times, Nantwich Chapel, (or Church) would be dedicated to God the Father, under the patronage or invocation of the Blessed Virgin, the chief of Saints and Queen of Angels, whose name was thus associated with the High or Principal Altar.

The Church is built on high ground near the centre of the town; in a graveyard, which was formerly larger than it is now,§ and which has recently been planted with ornamental trees and shrubs.|| Partridge made the following remarkable statements in 1774:

"Entering the Church from the churchyard, we now *descend*, though it is certain our ancestors *ascended* some steps into it; and in digging graves, pavements and gravestones have been discovered at the depth of two yards or more. Though the churchyard is a very large one, and seemingly sufficient

\* "*Liber Regis*" contains the following return; the part in italics being J. Bacon's additions to the original:—"*NAMPTWICH (St. Mary & St. Nicholas) olim cap.[ella] to Acton. John Crewe esq. Patr. now [1786] held by institution as a Rectory £27 3s. 4d. certified value.*"

† Partridge's *History of Nantwich*, p. 34.

‡ A few years ago, a banner with the emblems of both saints worked in coloured silks was presented to the Church; and, when the Porch was "restored," although the proposal of filling the empty niches over the doorway with new statues of the Virgin Mary and St. Nicholas was, happily, not carried out; one of the corbels was, unfortunately, newly carved from a fancied resemblance in the original to three children borne up by the wings and hands of St. Nicholas.

§ In digging the foundations for the present District Bank, coffins and remains were unearched.

|| Cf. p. 248. The inscriptions on the principal gravestones in the churchyard are given in various parts of this work.

for the interment of all the dead, yet that illaudable custom prevails here, of burying within the Church; but these graves are not very eligible ones, for scarce are they got a foot below the surface, but the coffins are immerst in water.\*—(*History of Nantwich*, p. 42).

When the above was penned the bases of the pillars of the nave were completely hidden; the floor having been raised in 1615; (see page 120). At the Restoration of the Church in 1855, the floor of the nave was lowered two feet, to its original level; which is approached from the South porch by *descending* four steps. The same writer, who may have been inaccurate in the first sentence above quoted, also says, (*ibid*, p. 40) the Church “stands upon springs;” and in this, he is literally correct; the Church being built on a bed of sand that is saturated with water. The late Mr. Sprout for many years strongly advocated the draining of the Church; but it is believed, that if his suggestion had been carried out, the fabric would have given way. At the present time a fixed quantity of water is drawn away by pumping every week, in order to keep the Church as dry as possible without causing damage to the building.

The general appearance of this handsome structure is exhibited in the three plates, namely:—

1.—The *fac-simile* of the north west view given in Lyson’s “Cheshire;” showing the Perpendicular window anterior to the “Restoration” of the Church.

2.—A north-east view; giving a good idea of the Chancel; with its curious low-pitched roof, “magnificent pinnacles in two ranges to the buttresses, a richly pierced parapet, and windows of great beauty. The east window, with its beautiful crocketed canopy, taken in combination with the exquisite buttresses and groups of pinnacles which flank the east end of the Chancel, form a design extremely beautiful and unique.”†

3.—A south-west view; which, like the north-east view, is reproduced on a reduced scale from the excellent drawings of Messrs. Bowman and Crowther, in the “Churches of the Middle Ages;” and which is introduced as giving an idea of the appearance of the Church in the early part of the fifteenth century, before the roof of the nave was altered.

Of the external sculpture, the grotesque gurgoyles of the choir and north aisle of the nave; the ornaments on the south transept; and the evangelistic symbols on the porch, are worthy of notice; but owing to the friability of the sandstone of which the Church is built, these are either much worn away, or have of late years been renewed. For the want of pointing, some parts of the exterior, particularly the south side of the Church, and the tower, are peeling off in flakes, and thus going to decay.

Cruciform in design, the Church is justly admired for its symmetrical proportions; having a *Nave* with side aisles of four bays; a *Choir* and *Chancel* of three bays, and two *Transepts* of three smaller bays. Between the transepts is a square area (*Interstitium*) over which is a rather low octagon tower, with a picturesque stair turret on the north side.

\* The last interment in the Church, I believe, was Mary Howard, the wife of James Howard, Esq., of Brookfield, Nantwich; and daughter of John Hill, of Walgherton. She died on the 1st Aug. 1847; and in 1865 her grave in the North Transept was opened, and found to be full of water; her remains were removed to Wyunbury churchyard, and re-interred beside her husband, who had died on the 18th March, 1865. The removal of the Organ from the Lady Chapel to the South Transept, in 1875, was partly owing to the injury it was sustaining from the damp.

† Gilbert G. Scott’s Report on Nantwich Church in 1854.

The internal dimensions are as follows:—

	Ft.	in.		Ft.	in.	
The Nave .....	70	0	in length,	57	0	in breadth.
The Chancel .....	52	0	„	24	6	„
The South Transept .....	37	6	„	27	6	„
The North Transept .....	39	9	„	27	6	„
The Interstitium .....	34	0	„	34	0	„
The total length from E. to W. is about 156 ft.						
The total length of the Cross, from N. to S., is 111 ft.						
The height of the Tower to the parapet is 94 ft.						
And to the top of the stair-turret 101 ft.						

On referring to the ground plan of the Church, two irregularities in the building will be seen, namely:—the west window is placed out of the centre of the west front; and the axis of the choir and chancel is not in the same line with that of the nave; being inclined towards the south about nine inches; a peculiarity found in many Cathedrals and old Churches.\*

Built in the fourteenth century, Nantwich Church belongs to the Decorated style of architecture; but the gradual change from the Decorated to the Perpendicular style is exhibited in the Chancel, and in the Chapel of the South Transept. The late Sir Gilbert Scott, in 1854, discovered on and near the site of the west door some remains, of thirteenth century date, of a former Church; and he was of opinion that the builders of the present Church allowed that portion to remain as the oldest feature of the then newly constructed building. This fact explains why at the “restoration” of the Church, the west door was re-constructed in imitation of the Early English style of architecture.†

The *Nave*, the oldest part of the Church, is lofty and has four acute arches, elegantly pointed, thrice recessed with wave mouldings, on clustered piers, that have under-cut abaci and bell-shaped bases. A series of pointed arches are formed in the *side aisles* by curved ribs of stone from the pillars of the nave to the flying buttresses. The *Clerestory*, probably of late fifteenth century date, has a modern roof and on each side eight segmental-arched windows. The line of the original high pitched roof of the Nave is still discernible over the west window, and the superiority of the original design is shown in the S.W. view of the Church. Of the fittings of the nave, oak carved seats, brass eagle lectern,‡ font in Caen stone, and oak pulpit, all are modern except the last named. The oak pulpit is inscribed:—

—: M A Y E : 9 : 1 6 0 1 : D A Y E :-

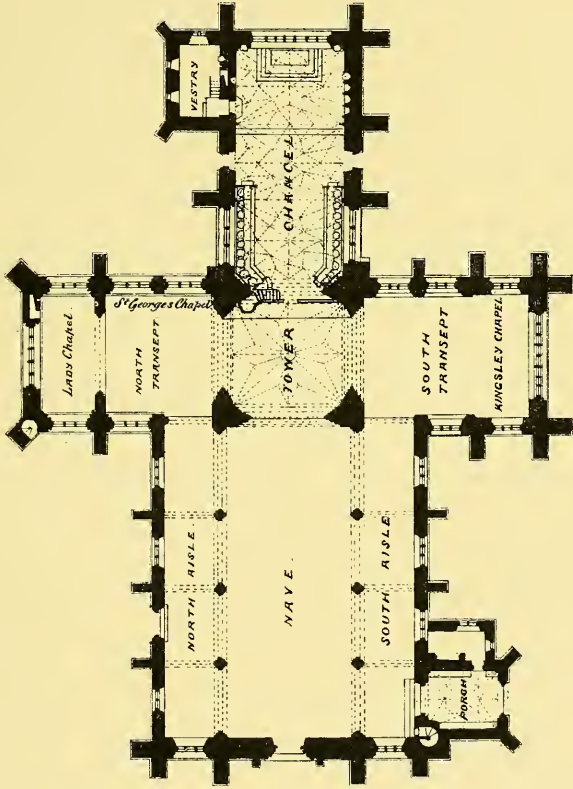
—: T H O M A S F I N C H E J O Y N E R M A D E T H I S :-

Above it, formerly, was a sound board; and below, the minister's seat, where prayers were read; and still lower, the clerk's seat and churching pew, where most marriages

\* Well known examples occur at St. Peter's at Rome; Ratisbon, Norwich, Peterborough, Lincoln and York Cathedrals; at St. Mary's, Oxford, &c.

† The Rev. T. W. Norwood says that “*wimples*” and “*wave-mouldings*” characterize the whole structure and serve to fix the date of the Church, which is middle and latish Decorated work, with nothing earlier. Certain details, (*e. g.* “pointed bowtells” in the Lady Chapel; “under-cut abaci” in the Nave piers; “stiff leaved foliage” on the West Tower arch; and “concave base mouldings” in the same arch) which at first sight seem earlier, being associated with later forms, can only be regarded as survivals of earlier forms, rather than indications of earlier work.

‡ The Lectern was the gift, by will, of the late Mrs. Mary Evans (née Cappur) of Hospital Street, widow. It was placed in the Church on Christmas Eve, 1873.



SCALE OF FEET.  
 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170

PLAN OF NANTWICH CHURCH.

W. G. & A. S. 1861. 2nd Ed. 1874. London.



were solemnized. Humorously spoken of as the "*threc-decker*," and after having been affixed to the second pillar on the north side of the nave for two hundred and twenty-two years, (see page 130), it was destroyed at the "restoration" of the Church; except the top story, which was placed in its present position, beside the north-west tower pier. An oak chest with initial and date, (W. 1676) upon which the weekly dole bread (ninety loaves) is placed, was given by a parishioner, Thomas Cawley, Esq., about forty years ago. On the east wall of the nave is some seventeenth century decorative painting, representing a Cross in a circle, with I.H.S.; and on either side tables of the Law. Below is the verse: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of my Father." Round the arch are these words; which are, however, incorrectly quoted from John I. 17, "The law came by Moses but Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ."\* The restored north door of the nave is not now used. A modern oak screen separates the south aisle from the transept. The restored west window, the second of its kind, dated 1875, has seven lights with geometrical tracery; and is filled with memorial stained glass, the general subject of which is "Christ in His Temple." The *South Porch*, originally of late Decorated work, has a *Parvise*, or upper room, in which is a library† of 190 vols., founded about 1704, (see page 301); and an *East Room*, containing an open-fire place. The porch was restored in 1878, when stone groining was added in place of the former flat ceiling; and stained glass, by C. E. Kemp, of London; two lights being given anonymously; a third by Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode Hall; and a fourth by the late Miss Bennett, of Willaston Hall.‡

The *Transepts*, the *Lady Chapel*, and the *Interstitium* are of late Decorated work; the difference in style between these parts and the *Nave* is well exhibited on the opposite sides of the bases of the west tower-piers. From 1859 to 1875 the *Lady Chapel* was used as the Organ chamber; and since then as a Choir Vestry. The north window, after having long been in a sad state of decay, was renewed, and the "*Jesse*" glass added anonymously, with these words in black letter:—

"Ad laudem Dei Patris Filii et Sancti Spiritus  
hæc fenestra dedicata est M.DCCC.LXXVI.‡"

Both *Transepts* are fitted with seats like those of the nave. The *Interstitium* has wood vaulting of recent date, and is fitted with choir-seats and two prayer desks. Attached to the north-east tower-pier is the stone pulpit (see page 280) which is of Transition to Perpendicular in style.

The *Kingsley Chapel*, of early Perpendicular work, has remains of a piscina, and fragments of ancient glass in the east window. The restored south window of eight lights illustrates, in stained glass, by Wailes, the early life of our Lord as foretold by the prophets, each of whom are represented bearing scrolls with the following texts:—

\* The practice of inscribing Scripture passages on the inside walls of Churches is said to have commenced after a conversation on the subject between Queen Elizabeth and Dean Nowell at St. Paul's, on 1st Nov. 1561. (Hone's "*Every Day Book*," vol. ii. p. 684-5). Sentences of holy Scripture were painted on the walls of Nantwich Church in 1615 and 1633. (See pp. 120 and 130).

† Inside the Church may be seen a shoulder-headed doorway, now filled up, that formerly led from the library to the South Gallery.

‡ The porch has a stone bench on either side, where in former times the destitute poor were relieved.

§ Miss Bennett died on the 6th Aug. 1880, and was buried at Wyburnbury.

§ *Translated*.—"This window is dedicated to the praise of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost 1876."

*Isaiah* vii. 14. The Annunciation.

*Amos* ix. 11. The Salvation.

*Micah* v. 2. The Birth.

*Dan.* vii. 13. The Angel host.

*Jer.* xxiii. 6. The Presentation.

*Zech.* iii. 8. The Epiphany.

*Mal.* iii. 1. Jesus in the Temple.

*Ezek.* xxxiv. 23. The Baptism.

In the tracery twelve angels in white robes bear scrolls with the following texts:—*Isa.* ix. 6; *Rev.* v. 12; *Psalms* lxxii. 10, 11; and *Isa.* xi. 2.

It may here be mentioned that none of the original mullions of the windows of this Church now exist; and the windows behind the organ, which were originally of Decorated work, have at some period, long ago, been made to harmonize with the Perpendicular windows of this Chapel.

The *Choir* and *Chancel* are very handsome; and of late Decorated work, with pear tracery, c. 1380. It has already been conjectured (see page 276) that William Wodenote's grant of land may have had some connection with the erection of the Chancel of the Church; for, as the Rev. T. W. Norwood has recently pointed out, the same "*string-course*" and "*pear tracery*" are exhibited in the Chancel of Bunbury Church which was built by Sir Hugh de Calveley in 1386.\* Along the central stone beam of the richly groined roof are eleven bosses, (carved in stone), representing the following subjects in order from east to west; that is, commencing with number xi in the accompanying plate:

XI. The Eternal Father.

X. The Coronation of the Virgin.

IX. The Virgin and an Angel.

VIII. The Assumption of the Virgin.

VII. The Annunciation.

VI. The Immaculate Conception (?).

V. The Nativity.

IV. The Flagellation.

III. The Crucifixion.

II. The Resurrection.

I. The Appearing to Mary. (*Noli me tangere*,—"Touch me not.")

In the *Choir* are twenty canopied stalls† of ancient workmanship; having seats with *misereres*, ornamented with carvings of animals, foliage, human figures (a pair of wrestlers; St. George and the Dragon; monks and nuns, &c.); and subjects grotesque and satirical. One specimen may be selected for description.

*On the left hand.*

Reynard as a monk returning from hunting; with right arm outstretched carrying a goose by the neck; a hare hanging from a stick across his left shoulder.

*In the centre.*

Three trees, with birds; at the foot of which a fox is laid on his back, shamming dead; that he may catch prey for his cubs; which are seen in holes at the roots of the trees.

*On the right hand.*

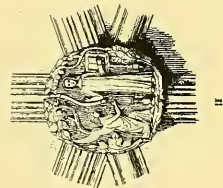
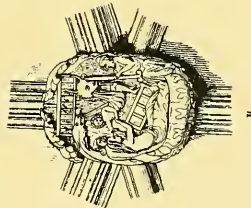
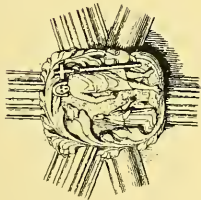
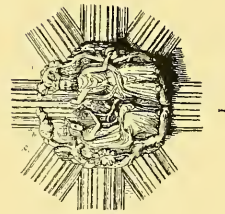
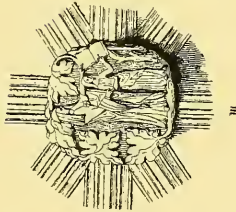
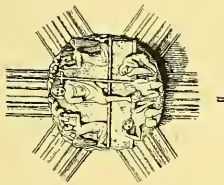
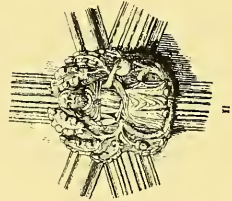
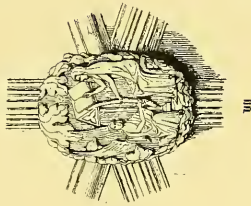
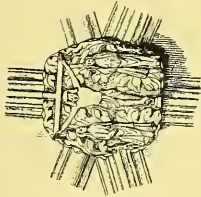
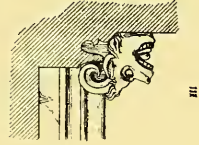
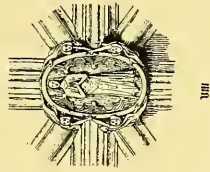
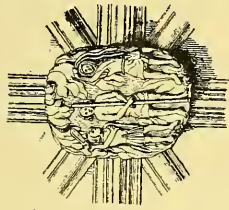
Reynard as a monk going out a hunting. In his right hand is a bow; and in his left a bottle(?); arrows are seen protruding from under his left arm.

Another *miserere* has the monogram **F.W.S.** and the word *merci*.

\* Bunbury Church is situated about nine miles from Nantwich. On the 24th June 10 Ric. II. [1386] a warrant was issued "to John Doune, forester, and Roger de Moldeworth, *equitator*" of the forest of Delamere for delivery to Hugh de Calveley of 20 mastick trees, for making scafoldes to be used for the repairs of the church of Bunbury which the said Hugh proposed to make."—(*Chesh. Recog. Rolls*). In the same year Sir Hugh de Calveley had licence to found a college or chantry for one master and six chaplains to celebrate mass for the King, for himself and his ancestors. The Chancels of Nantwich and Bunbury have some architectural details in common; and in the latter still exists an altar tomb with the figure of Sir Hugh, the founder.

† A Bishop's head, with a mitre, is represented amongst the carvings on the sides of the stalls.





BOSSSES IN NANTWICH CHANCEL.



The *East window* of seven lights, consists of a repetition of small windows of flowing tracery, so combined as to give the whole work the appearance of the Perpendicular style. It is filled with stained glass by Clayton and Bell; the subjects, designed in tabernacle work, being:—The Agony, Judgment Hall, Scourging, Crucifixion, Taking down from the Cross, Entombment, and Resurrection. Above are represented the prophets; *Moses* and *Elias* occupying central positions; and below, the Evangelists and great Apostles.\* A somewhat singular feature of the Chancel is, that it has a *north* as well as south door. The Communion table (Altar) rests on a massive carved oak frame, thus inscribed:—

“GIVEN BY THOMAS CLOWES CLARKE OF THIS PARISH 1638.”†

On the wall above, in letters of gold, is, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me.” Handsomely carved piscina and three sedilia‡ with canopies are situated in the usual place; and on the opposite side is a “restored” Saint’s niche.

On the north side of the Chancel, and *within* the altar-rails, is a low door leading to the *Sacristy* or *Vestry*§ which is entered by descending two steps to a floor paved with glazed tiles of patterns “*in cavetto*” from remains found in 1855-8. This room, with its open fire-place and chimney, no doubt was, formerly, a priest’s chamber. Descending two steps more, the *Crypt*, which is partly underground, and lighted by three narrow windows, is entered. It has a piscina and aumbry, indicating an altar; and contains the mutilated figure of the Cradock monument. (*Cf.* p. 287).

The Vestry also has an upper chamber lighted by three exterior windows; and a fourth looking into the Chancel, which, from the presence of iron hinges, appears to have been in former times, a door.

The octagon *Tower*, on a square base, and in the same style of architecture as the Transepts, is the only unrestored part of this noble edifice. It contains six bells, bearing these inscriptions:—

[1] PROSPERITY TO THIS TOWN & PARISH. A.R. 1713. (Smallest bell).

[2] PEACE & GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD. A.R. 1713.

[3] ABR. RUDHALL CAST US ALL. 1713.||

[4] GOD SAVE THE CHURCH & QUEEN ANN. A.R. 1713.

[5] PROSPERITY TO ALL OUR BENEFACTORS. A.R. 1713.

(This bell strikes the hour of the day).

[6] THO. TALBOT. HUMPHREY HALES. CHURCHWARDENS. 1713. (Tenor Bell).

Mentions of the bells occur on previous pages. Prior to 1713 there had only been five bells. The tenor bell is 3 ft. 8½ in. in diameter, and weighs about 15 cwt.; the note being F. The smallest bell weighs 6¼ cwt.; and the total weight of all the bells is about

\* The East window, and the whole of the Chancel, were restored by the munificence of Hungerford Lord Crewe.

† *Cf.* pp. 115—117.

‡ Anciently these were seats for the officiating priest, deacon, and sub-deacon.

§ Precisely the same arrangement is found at Bunbury; the door entering the vestry on the north side of the Chancel, being within the altar rails.

|| Abraham Rudhall, of Gloucester, bell-founder. The family of Rudhalls carried on the business as early as 1684; and are said to have made the enormous number of 3,594 bells prior to 1774. (*Cf.* page 213).

From an entry in the Burial Register, it would appear that a person was killed either at the time, or very soon after, the present bells were hung.

“1713-4. Jan. 22. Mark, son of Mark Topham, kill’d by the 4th Bell clapper.”

three tons. In 1878 the bells were quartered; new wheels and ropes were added, and the framework thoroughly repaired, at a cost of £113 8s. od., by Messrs. Warner and Sons, of London.

The custom of ringing the "Guttit" or "Pan-cake bell" on Shrove Tuesday, at 11 a.m. ceased about forty years ago; and the *Curfew bell*, rather more than twenty-five years ago.

#### THE CHURCH PLATE.

The present Communion Plate is the same as that described in an Inventory now preserved at the Rectory, dated 20th June, 1763,\* namely:—

- [1] CHALICE, (London Hall Mark, 1604) with a loose lid on which is engraved the date—1605.
- [2] CHALICE, (London Hall Mark, 1633) without a lid. It is inscribed, and dated, the figures being in the centres of four roses, as follows:—  
 " (1) *Ex dono* (6) *Alicia* (3) *Wilbraham* (3) *de Dorfold.*"†
- [3] Two large FLAGONS (London Hall Mark 1659) each inscribed—  
 "The gift of Eliz. Dauenport and Margt. Woodnoth, widdowes,  
 To ye Church of Namptwich, 1659."‡  
 And above the arms and crests of the Davenport and Woodnoth families.
- [4] SILVER PATEN; no date; but supposed to have been given by the same ladies.
- [5] TWO SILVER ALMS DISHES (London Hall Mark, 1732-3); no date; but inscribed:—  
 "The Gift of Mrs. ELIZ. WILBRAHAM, Relict of STEPHEN WILBRAHAM Esq'r."§  
 To the above have recently been added:—
- [6] A BRASS ALMS DISH; given in 1872; superseding the former PEWTER DISH.||
- [7] An old APOSTLE SPOON; not of English workmanship, added in 1873.
- [8] A SILVER STRAINER (London Hall Mark 1822) given in 1879.

\* See Article in *Cheshire Sheaf*, vol. ii. p. 243, by the Rev. F. G. Blackburne, Rector of Nantwich.

† Alice Wilbraham, the donor, was the wife of Ralph Wilbraham, who built the present Dorfold Hall, and daughter of Thomas Mainwaring, Gent., of Nantwich. She was married at Nantwich on the 7th Feb. 1580-1; and died here in 1635. Thomas Wilbraham (*MS. Journal*) says:—"My Ant Alce Wilbraham died 21 Martii 1635."

Her burial is thus entered at Nantwich—

"1635. Mrs. Ales Wilbraham, widdowe, died at Namptwich, buried att Apton March the 23."—(*Par. Reg.*)

‡ *Cf.* pages 288-9.

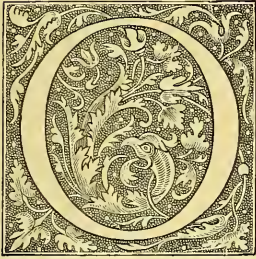
§ Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Nantwich (*MS. Jour.*) says:—"12 June 1708. My only Brother, Stephen Wilb[raham] married Elizabeth the dau. of Thos. Hoole of Bostock, & widow of Crispin Birch." She survived her second husband 21 years, and was buried at Nantwich on the 26th Jan. 1753.—(*Par. Reg.*)

|| This large Pewter Dish, which is preserved in the "aumbry" in the Lady Chapel, bears the following inscription:

"A citizen of London gave this bason and two bread plates to the Church of Nantwich April 4. Ano. Dom. 1640."

Query, whether it was the gift of John Clife, gentleman, who is mentioned on page 318.

## The Parish Registers.



ON the abolition of the Pope's Supremacy in England, Thomas Lord Cromwell was placed at the head of Ecclesiastical affairs under the title of the King's Vicar-General; and to his wisdom was due the introduction of Parochial Registers. Injunctions were set forth for their commencement in Sept. 1538 (30 Hen. VIII); and though, in many parishes and chapelries, those injunctions met with only a tardy compliance, at Nantwich, Registers were commenced in the following year, as proved by the heading of the first page; as follows:—

“The pairyshe of Wychemalbanck.”

“Anno Domine M.DXXXIX,º the xvjº daye of Novembre in the xxxjº year of the Raigne of our most gracious and dread sowergne Henrye the eighte by the grace of god Kinge of England and of fraunce and Lord of Ireland defender of the faythe &c. and on earth Supream head under god of the church of England.”

“This booke conteneith a Register for the Wychemalbancke aforesayd wherein is wrytten the day monethe year of every Christeninge Weddinge and Buryinge.”

This volume, written on paper, and originally bound in calf backs, is now, unfortunately, but a fragment; consisting of only nine leaves of Baptismal entries from the 17th Nov. 1539, to the 5th June, 1545. Then comes a space, from which many leaves have been torn out. That records were kept after the latter date, is proved by the following extract from the “Minshull Accounts and Memoranda,” now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

“The Juste agge [age] of me Thomas mynshull wrytten wth my owne hande owt of the cheresoninge bowke safelic kept in the chorche beinge there sett Downe that I was bowrne in to the woorld the sixt Day of meay beinge the year of 1552.”

The missing pages probably brought the record down to 1558; after which, according to the title page of the next volume, no registrations were made for fourteen years. In consequence of the general laxity in keeping registers throughout the country, the Registration Act was amended in the 1st, 7th, and 39th years of Queen Elizabeth's reign; and, accordingly, this old neglected volume was again called into requisition; and from Jan. 1572-3, entries of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials were re-commenced by William Ward, the then incumbent, and the series have since come down in successive volumes to the present time with almost unbroken continuity. These volumes may be divided into *Old* and *Modern* Registers. The former, from which the extracts given below are taken, are comprised in eight volumes, extending, as a complete series, over a period of two hundred and forty years (from Jan. 1573 to Jan. 1813); the latter, in which a formal arrangement under different heads became imperative by Act of Parliament, are contained in fourteen volumes. All these volumes are in an excellent state of preservation, and every care is now taken of them by the present Rector, who keeps them locked up in an iron safe in



## VOLUME II. Jan. 1572-3,—Sept. 1653.

The title page of this volume has an illuminated border. A vine, bearing leaves and clusters of grapes, branches out from a central point at the bottom of the page, and entwines itself round two columns. On the pedestal of each column stands a female figure, *Faith* and *Hope*. In the middle of the top of the page, is a shield of the Royal Arms, (France and England quarterly) surmounted, crest-like, with a dove; representing *Love*, and thus completing the trio of Graces; and under the shield is the motto, "*Dieu et mon droit*." Within this border is written, very neatly, the following:—

"Anno Reg: Regin:

*Elizabeth 13*

A REGESTER OF THE  
PARISHE OF WICHE  
MALBANKE.

*Beginninge the first Day of Januarie in the  
yeare of our Lord God on[e] thousand five  
hundred seventy & tow, at which  
time ther was no Reister of the  
said Wichmalbanke to be  
founde  
for the space of fourtine yeares befor, till one  
William Warde was admitted Curatte  
there, who in the day & yeare  
aforesayd began the first  
of this Regester  
as followeth.*



Anno D'ini: 1572.\*\*

In 1603 (1 Jac. I) it was ordered by a Canon of the Church that all Registers should be written over again on *parchment*; and accordingly Hugh Price, haberdasher, of this town, was employed to transcribe the entries from the 7th Jan. 1572-3, to the year 1603, contained in the old paper volume. The almost total absence of alterations and errors, and the characteristic neatness of the writing (the years being in red ink, which is still bright and fresh) are evidence of the ability and accuracy of the copyist; whilst the much admired title page remains a proof of his artistic skill in embellishment when art and learning were only possessed by few.

From 1603 to the end of the volume, the register appears to have been kept by the Senior Churchwarden during his year of office.

*Marriages.*

- 1572-3 Jan. 29. James Bullenn and Ellen Edwards.†  
1574 June 18. Richard Brooke of Chester married Alice Colly of Aulim. [Audlem].  
1575 Aug. 20. Richd. Crompton of the parish of Coona in ye county of Sallop to Joan Masterson.

\* This is subscribed "*f* Hugh Price," who is mentioned in the same volume as follows:—  
1590-1. Feb. 8. Hugh Price & Alice Coultonn. [Married].  
1591-2. Jan. 16. Mary d. of Hugh Price, Haberdasher. [Baptised].  
1614-5. Jan. 1. Hugh Price the Author of this Booke. [Buried].

† This is the first recorded marriage.

- 1581 Oct. 28. Thomas Baker, musysyon, & Joan Boulst.  
 1607 Dec. 12. Jasper Wicksted, & Margaret Maddocks at St. Werburg, Chester.  
 1607-8 Feb. 9. John Gibbons, & Mary Smethwicke, by dispensation.  
 1609 Dec. 18. Edmund Sparrow marryed his mayd.  
 1621 May 10. Robert Lawton and Margaret Church dau. of Thomas Church of Bunbury, by a licence.  
 1621 Sep. 8. Edmund Warrington, & Susan Meakin, both of Bartomley parrishe by certificatt.  
 1634 May 6. ffoluk Griffyn and Ann Maddock marr. at Acton.  
 1639 April 18. William Dod gent. & Ann Lotham married at Awgdlem. [Audlem].

*Baptisms.*

- 1573 Nov. 24. Edmund s. of Rondull Wright.\*  
 1576 April 10. Jasper the son of Jasper Rutter, gent.  
 1576 April 21. Margaret the dau. of John Hudson of London.  
 1576 May 8. Ellen, d. of Rondulph Manwaringe of Sarsenshead.†  
 1576 Oct. 8. Thomas son of William Bronley, gent.  
 1578 Aug. 21. Richard son of Richard Griffen, gent.  
 1580-1 Jan. 28. Thomas, s. of William Snelson of London.  
 1582 Aug. 22. Thomas, s. of Robert Briskooe, *fletcher*.‡  
 1582 Oct. 5. Jane d. of Thomas Clowes of the Lampern Bridge.§  
 1592-3 Feb. 28. Margery d. of Thomas Willett of Towne well [Welsh Row].  
 1602 July 10. Roger, s. of Roger Lecher, drummer.  
 1605 Nov. 8. Richd. s. of John Brayne, gent. of Acton p'ishe.  
 1606 Sep. 7. Kathren daughter of Laurance Hopkin, *perigrine* [gipsy].  
 1606 Oct. 26. William s. of John Leigh de Swanne [*i.e.* of the Swan Inn].  
 1607 Oct. 7. Thomas & Anne, twinnes, of William Ince, *cherurgion* [surgeon].  
 1610-11 Jan. 20. Mark, s. of Willm. Partridge, *chapman* [hawker].  
 1613-4 Feb. 13. Lawrence, s. of Richard Woodward of Shrowbridge.  
 1629 April 19. Richard, sonne of John Creswall, *booke bynder*.  
 1629 April 27. Catharine, daughter of Lawrence Eyton, of Leighton, Esq.  
 1630-1 March 7. Marie the daughter of a poore Irishe woman.  
 1647-8 Jan. 16. John son of Mr. William Dodd of Allim [Audlem] pish. [of Highfields].  
 1648 Oct. 29. Mary d. of Raphe Walley *potte-karier* [see Salt-petre man, under Burials 1629].  
 1649 Dec. 23. Mary dau. of Richard Wilkes of Cheere-Brooke.

*Burials.*

- 1572-3 Jan. 7. Thomas Mainwayringe, gent.||  
 1573-4 March 23. Silber Wathew, gentlewoman.¶  
 1576-7 Jan. 19. Thomas Towyearould.\*.

\* In the margin, by a later hand, are the initials E. W.; no doubt added to point out the baptism of one whose memory is still green, viz.; Sir Edmund Wright, Kt., founder of an Almshouse in this town. The Almsmen's Feast is still held on the 24th of November, annually.

† That is, Saracen's Head; an Inn in Beam Street. A Saracen's head was the badge of Lord Audley.

‡ "*Fletcher*"; *i.e.* arrow-maker. Implying the use of the long bow, and the practice of archery.

§ Probably the "*Little Bridge*," that crossed the *Channel* in Welsh Row, not far from the Welsh Bridge. *Lampern*, or *London* is synonymous with channel or open drain.

|| This is the first recorded burial. An extract from his Will has been given on page 284.

¶ "*Wathew*;" this is probably one of the many ways of spelling *Walshall*, a very respectable family that afterwards settled at Wistaston.

\*. "*Towyearould*," or *Twoyearold*, a family name found all through the Registers, and only lately died out in the town.



- 1577 July 9. Sibbell Griffen, gentlewoman.  
 1577 Nov. 21. William Rutter of Wigen in Lancashire.  
 1578 Dec. 6. Thomas Vaughan of church stretton, gent.  
 1581 April 7. Ellen Bromley, late wife of Wm. Bromley, gent.  
 1582 March 29. Rondell Rutter, *minister*.  
 1582 Oct. Roger Wathew gent dyed the 4th daye & was buryed the 7th.  
 1583 June 20. Richard Maisterson, *carryer*.  
 1585 April 2. Isabell Cotton, gentlewoman.  
 1585 Dec. 26. James Bulleine, Cutler, off the age of 74 yeares, he had five wyves and twentie  
 foure children.\*  
 1588 Aug. 15. John Manwaringe of the Hawkes Head, gent.  
 1589-90 March 14. Owinn Mowdy born in cambridge.  
 1591-2 Feb. 10. Thomas Baker, *harper*.†  
 1593 Sep. 28. Maximilian Savage, gent.  
 1596-7 Jan. 26. Rondull Seaboll, *piper* [*i.e.* bag-piper].‡  
 1597 Aug. 29. Richd. Meakin, of the pumpe.  
 1597 Sep. 3. Richd. Crewe, clayman.  
 1602 March 28. Rauffe Wilbram of the Anngell, Smith.  
 1603 Nov. 5. Arthur Minshull with the long berde [beard].  
 1606 Nov. 16. Peter Knowsley, sometyme of the Ambutts.  
 1607 May 24. Richard Hewsonn, *pursmaker*, of Aspell [Hospital] Street.  
 1607 Sep. 18. Margaret wyfe of John Streete, Recusant [*i.e.* Roman Catholic] buryed at Wistanson.  
 1611 Aug. 25. Ann Hassall, widow, genner [gentlewoman] a mirror of vertue.  
 1611 Aug. 31. Anne, wyffe of Edward Diggens, *scrivenner*.‡  
 1613 March 29. Rodger Brouck, whiseler, smith §  
 1614 Dec. 11. John Corbet, an ancient poore man.  
 1617 May 26. Richard Lewis, *Minister at Acton*.  
 1618-9 March 19. Henrie Talley whose dwelling was in Saint Allowes, was buried.  
 1621 June 13. Richard Wilkes of the beame streete, an ancient townsman.  
 1621 Aug. 21. Richard Bookeley, of the pepper Streete, an ancient townsman.  
 1621-2 March 3. Thomas son of John Rudierd, stationer.  
 1629 Nov. 26. John Couper, a *salt-peeter man*.||  
 1631-2 Jan. 28. Mary daughter of Houlsie, Poyntmaker [pin-maker].  
 1632 Aug. 13. Mrs. Ales Birkenhead.¶

\* At Willaston, in the year 1876, died Mr. Jonathan Kitchen, for many years a butcher in Nantwich, who even out-Harried Harry VIII, having survived his sixth wife!

† The services of these players would be in requisition at marriages, and other festivities, wakes, &c.

‡ "*Scrivenner*"; *i.e.* one who drew up and engrossed writings.

§ "*Whiseler*." This appears to have been his nickname. Many like instances occur; and some amusing stories are still told in the town of people in the past generation who were better known by their nickname than their proper surname.

|| The office of *saltpeetre man* was a very obnoxious one. All animal fluids were, by proclamation 3 Car. I 1627, ordered to be preserved by families; and an officer was authorized to collect the same from house to house once in 24 hours in summer, and once in 48 hours in winter, for the purpose of supplying nitre for the gunpowder manufacturers. (See an Article on this subject in Chambers' *Book of Days*, vol. i. p. 666). This town official is traceable at a later date, under the name of "*potte-harier*." (See *Baptisms*, 1648).

¶ "*Mrs.*" for *Mistress*, a title of courtesy of frequent use in parish Registers, &c., is sometimes used to describe a *maiden*, as well as a *married*, lady. Her name occurs in the *Index to Chester Wills* (Record Soc. Publ. Vol. iv. p. 23). as follows:—  
 "Alice Birkenhead, of Wych Malbank, *spinster*, 1632."

In the *Cheshire Funereal Certificates* (Record Soc. Pub. Vol. vi. p. 17) is mentioned another Mrs. Alice Birkenhead, buried in the same year, on 13th November, at Backford, co. Chester, who was the wife of Henry Birkenhead, of Backford, Esq.

- 1635-6 Jan. 20. Syon Venables, Rector of Thurstonington.  
 1636-7 March 8. Gilbert Woollam one of the Almsmen [at Welsh Row Head].  
 1637 Oct. 10. Yewyn son of Thomas Mynshull of Mynshull, buried.  
 1638 June 21. Thomas Mynshull the Almsman being the first [*i.e.* of Sir Edmund Wright's Almsmen.]  
 1638 Aug. 5. William Smallwood miller of the Wych Mill.  
 1638 Sept. 18. Mr. Ridgway brother to the Earl of Londonderry, died.  
 1638 Aug. 31. Peter son of William Lobley, Salt-pecter man.  
 1638 Oct. 12. Edwd. Richardson, barbar, buried in the night.  
 1640 June 24. Richard Venables Esquire.  
 1641 July 2. Lady Leigh buried at Wibunbury.\*  
 1641-2 Jan. 28. Ann, dau. of William Clarke, falkner [falconer].  
 1645 July 31. Nickolas son of Chidley Coote, Lieutenant Collonl.†  
 1646 June 8. Mary, wife of Maior Philipp Mainwaring Buried at Goostree.‡  
 1647 April 12. Matthew Mainwaring, gent., & Constable of Dublin castle.  
 1647 Dec. 30. Edward Moore, tapster at the Lamb.  
 1648 Apri1l 25. Sir Thomas Delves [Kt. and Bart. of Doddington] buried at Widdenbury.§  
 1650-1 Feb. 26. Jane, dau. of Mr. Willm. Dodd of Highfields [Audlem].

VOLUME III. 1653—1678.

This parchment volume was commenced pursuant to an Act passed by the "Barebones Parliament," dated 24th Aug. 1653, which required that a "Parish Register" (*i.e.* Registrar) be chosen by every Parish, to be approved of, and sworn by, a Justice of the Peace for the Registering of births, burials, and marriages.

On the first page a memorandum of the appointment dated 3 Oct. 1653, is entered as follows:—

*"Forasmuch as it appeareth unto mee by severall Certificates under the hands of several persons inhabitants within the Parish of Nantwich that MR. EDWARD HAYES is a fit person to be parish Register within the said Parish. These are therefore to certifie all whom it doth or may concerne that I have confirmed him the said Mr. Hayes to be Parish Register in the Parish aforesaid. And have also given him his oath to execute the said office faithfully according to the late act of Parliament in that case made and provided. Witness my hand and the day and yeare first above written."*

[No signature].

At the same time it was enacted that marriages should be celebrated by a local Magistrate, and not by a clergyman.||

At Nantwich the names of the Magistrates, before whom the marriage contracts were ratified, are not recorded; but in the adjoining parish of Wybunbury, the entries of marriages are much fuller;—*e.g.*

\* Wybunbury Register records her burial thus:—"1641 Julie 2. buried Ladie Dame Elizabeth Lee."

† "Chidley Coote," the same family name occurs again in these Registers under *Baptisms* 1691 and 1693.

‡ The total number of soldiers entered in the Burial Register from 29th March, 1642, to the 17th March, 1645-6, amounts to 188. Of these, 91 were buried in 1643; 38 in 1644; and 48 in 1645. The greatest number of military burials occur in the following months:—19 in Jan. 1643-4; 17 in Feb. 1643-4; 11 in July 1644; 21 in Oct. 1645.

§ His burial is entered at Wybunbury on the 24th April.

|| *Cf.* page 192. The fees were not to exceed the following sums:—

Publication and Certificate	12d.	Entry of Birth of Child	..	4d.
Entry of every Marriage	..	..	..	12d.
Certificate from the J.P. (if desired)	12d.	Entry of every Death	..	4d.

Poor people living upon alms were excused all Registration Fees.

"1655. Nov. 13. Were married as this is to Certifie all whom it doth or may concerne Thomas Cornes of Nampwich parish and Anne Yonge of hatherton in wibunbury p'ish. before Thomas Mainwaring Esq. one of the Justices of the Peace for this Countie in witness of Mr. Smith of Audelem and Mr. Charles Standish and diuers others."

"1655-6. Feb. 25. This is to certifie all whom it doth or may concerne that Robert Timis of hatherton in the p'ish. of wibunbury and Allis Rowley of Keele were married before Tho. Bratt Esq. one of the Justices of the peace for the county of Stafford In witness of John Blackburn, John Timis and diuers others."

"1655-6. March 3. This is to certifie, [&c.] Richard Pemberton of hatherton [&c.] and Elizabeth Yeavenson of Longehill in the pish. of Audelem were married before Thomas Mainwaring Esq. [&c.] in witness of Mr. Samuel Cole cler. [vicar of Wybanbury] Humphrey Hayles and diuers others."

Out of seventy-one civil marriages recorded at Nantwich, only seven are stated to have been published in the Church. From the year 1656 the registrars here adopted the simplest form of recording marriages; (merely giving the names of the parties); whereas in the neighbouring parish of Wistaston, after King Charles' Restoration, the mode of entry, for several years, was as follows:—

"William Colbach and Ann Soot both of Nampwich their banes [banns] of Matrimony being published three several times *accordinge to the Lawes Ecclesiastical of this Realme* in Nampwich Church, were married the twenty-seventh of Januarye," [1678-9 at Wistaston Church].—*Wistaston Reg.*

#### Marriages.

- 1660 Dec. 6. Robert Burroughes gent.\* and Anne Hopkin.  
 1667 June 13. Hugh Whitney of Poole, gent., and Mrs. Eliz. Wright.†  
 1674 Sep. 27. Mr. John Wettenhall and Mrs. Ann Jackson.‡

#### Baptisms.

- 1661-2 Jan. 26. Eliz. d. of John Middleton, *slater*.  
 1663 July 14. John, s. of Richd. Pemberton of Broad Lane.  
 1663 Aug. 9. Thos. s. of Thos. Price, *Parer*.  
 1671-2 March 18. Francis d. of Rich. Griffin Esq.  
 1672-3 March 3. Ann d. of Rich. Griffin Esq.  
 1673 Sep. 1. Ermine, dau. of Hughe Delues.§

#### Burials.

- 1654 May 1. Katherine wife of Richd. Griffin, Gent.  
 1655 Oct. 22. Ellen Shephilbotham.||

\* He was the eldest son of *Thomas Burroughes*, Attorney, of Nantwich, (the son of *Ralph Burroughes*, of Alpraham) by his wife, Anne, daughter of Randle Palyn, of Bickerton. The family of Thos. Burroughes, who was buried at Nantwich on 16th Feb. 1646, was as follows:—

1. *Robert Burroughes*; who married, first, Jane, dau. to John Benyon, of Ashe, co. Salop; and, secondly, Anne, dau. to Thos. Hopkins, of Tilstode, co. Salop, who was buried at Nantwich 31st Jan. 1670. He was Churchwarden in 1651; and was buried at Nantwich 13th Dec. 1677. He entered his name and pedigree at the Visitation of 1663.
2. *Ralph Burroughes*; who married Margaret dau. of Hugh Allen. (See p. 319).
3. *Thomas Burroughes*; who was Churchwarden of Nantwich in 1663.
4. *Anne Burroughes*; wife of Gabriel Wettenhall. (See *Wettenhall Pedigree*).
5. *Elizabeth Burroughes*; wife of John Abnet, of Nantwich.

The name Burroughes is of frequent occurrence in Acton Parish Registers.

† This Hugh Whitney is not mentioned in the account of the family in Green's "*Whitney's Emblems*," Introd. page xl.—xlii.

‡ See *Wettenhall Pedigree*.

§ *Ermine Delves* was the eldest and last surviving daughter of *Hugh Delves*, of Nantwich, Gent., who died at Dodding-ton, and was buried at Wybanbury on 14th June, 1712. (*Wybanbury and Nantwich Registers*); and grand-daughter of *John Delves*, (natural son of Sir Thomas Delves, of Doddington, Bart.) and Anne, his wife, whom he married on the 2nd July, 1623. (*Cf.* pp. 106, 318). By her will, dated 1st Feb. 1728, Ermine Delves, spinster, left a Charity for the erection and sustentation of Almshouses for four poor men, natives of Nantwich, and of 50 years of age, at the least, and their wives; and belonging to the Church of England. (See *Charities*).

|| Shephilbotham, is now spelled Shufflebotham.

- 1655 Dec. 21 Richd. Griffin, Gent. (*Cf.* page 319 *note.*)  
 1662 May 10. John Browne a soldier in Col. flowers Regt.  
 1664 Feb. 27. Mrs. Martha Griffin.  
 1665 July 5. Edmund Griffin, Gent.  
 1668 Feb. 16. Sir Joseph Throckmorton.  
 1673 April 4. Mrs. Anne Jones, Widow.\*  
 1673-4 Jan. 20. George Croxton Esq. buried at Middlewich.†

VOLUME IV. 1679—1740.

This parchment volume was commenced when the Act (30 Car. II. cap. 3), intituled “*An Act for burying in Woollen*” came into operation, which had for its object the lessening of the importation of linen from beyond the seas; and the encouragement of the woollen and paper manufactures in this kingdom. The law, which was rigorously carried out, required an affidavit to be brought within eight days of the burial, under a penalty of £5, that the deceased was not shrouded in linen; exception only being made for persons dying of the plague. So particular were persons to be, that neither thread nor cotton, but only *worsted*, might be used for sewing the shroud. This Act was not finally repealed until 1813. No violation of the law is recorded here; and, what is still more remarkable, for *ninety years*, during which Parish Clerks were the Registrars, no allusion whatever is made to this curious Burial-law. In 1769, and three succeeding years, the Rev. John Smith, Rector, entered the burials in the following manner, and signed his name at the bottom of each page.

*Burials in Woollen Shrouds.*

1769.	No Certificate. Notice given.	Thomas son of John & Jane Amson.....	Aug. 28.
„	Notice given Sep. 9. No affidavit.	Mary White .....	Sep. 1.
„	Notice given Sep. 9. No affidavit.	John Nixon .....	Sep. 7.
„	No notice in this case necessary.	Margaret d. of Chas. Wild .....	Sep. 7.
„	Notice given Dec. 23. No certificate.	Mr. Richard Cooper Surgeon .....	Dec. 17.
1770.	No notice in this case necessary.	Mr. Chas. Salmon, bard. at Middlewich	July 16.
„	An Affidavit made by Elizabeth Cliffe widow and Ann Thomason Spinster before the Rev. Mr. Kent	{ Jane wife of John Smith Rector buried at Wistaston }	Dec. 28.
1771.	Notice given Ap. 10. No affidavit	{ Esther Brooke widow of the late Dr. Brooke Dean of Chester & Rector of Nantwich. }	Ap. 2.

The total number of such entries, from 20th July, 1769, to 2nd Oct. 1772, amount to 255. After the latter date, the name of the deceased person is simply given, by the Parish Clerks who again became the registrars for a few years.

\* This lady gave to Wrenbury Church as follows:—

“Mrs. Hannah Jones of Nantwich gave the sum of Fifty Pounds to be disposed of as followeth, viz.; £10 towards buying a Silver Flagon for the Use of y<sup>e</sup> Sacrament in y<sup>e</sup> Parish Church of Wrenbury. *Item.* £10 to buy a Velvet Pulpit Cloath and Cushion for Adorning the Pulpit. *Item.* £10 to the Schoolmaster of Wrenbury, the Interest to be paid to him Annually upon St. Thomas’ Day by the Churchwardens for the teaching two Poor Boys to Read, out of Broomhall and Sound. *Item.* £20, the Interest thereof to be paid annually upon St. Thomas’ Day by y<sup>e</sup> Churchwardens to y<sup>e</sup> Poor of the Townships of Broomhall and Sound.”

† Very probably George Croxton, of Ravenscroft, Esq., one of the last of an ancient family that became extinct by the death of Thomas Croxton in 1696.—(*Lysons’ Cheshire*, p. 380).

From the year 1678 to 1688 there were two hundred marriages solemnized in Nantwich Church; of which one hundred and thirty-nine were by licence, and sixty-one by publication of banns.

*Marriages.*

- 1679 April 29. Joseph Poynton of Manchester & Margaret Wright of Namptwich by license from Mr. Adams Suragate of Manchester dated the 25th of Aprill.
- 1679 Oct. 6. Anesiphorus Hickson & Jane ffisher, widow, by licence from the Chancellor [John Wainwright LL.D.] dated the 5th Oct.
- 1680 Aug. 24. Edwd. Dodd and Jane Hanson by licence from Mr. [Laurence] Fogg [afterwards Dean of Chester] dated the 17th Aug.
- 1681 May 22. John Goodale\* and Hannah Kirkham by licence *extra p'vintiam*.
- 1688 July 12. Thomas Brooke Esq. [of Norton] and Mrs. Grace Wilbraham by licence from Mr. Stringer [of Nantwich] dated July 7th.
- 1688 Sep. 6. Samuel Barrow Gent, & Mary Astle, by Licence from Mr. Stringer dated Sep. 6th.
- 1689-90 Jan. 13. Solomon ffoley, clerk, & Margaret Wettenhall by Licence from Mr. Stringer dated Jan. 13.
- 1702 Sep. 30. Samuel Walker, cler., & Elizabeth Loundes, by Publicacon.
- 1707 Nov. 5. Robert Withenshaw, tanner, & Anne Churche, by licence from Mr. Bradshaw dated Nov. 5.
- 1711 April 27. Henry Bennett of the City of Chester, gent., & Elizabeth Comberbach by Licence from Mr. Olliver [Vicar of Audlem] dated Ap. 24.
- 1719 June 11. Creswell Tayluer Esqre. & Martha Willdigg by Licence from Mr. Gibbons [of Nantwich] dated June 11th.
- 1720-1 Feb. 14. William Wright Esq.† & Mrs. francis Alice Wilbraham by Licence from Mr. Brooke [of Nantwich] dated ffeb. 13.
- 1722 May 26 William Calkin of Waverton, Cleric., & Jane Sherwin, spinster, by Licence from Mr. Brooke dated May 25.
- 1723 Aug. 11. John Sanders Esqr. & Mary Bayley by Licence from the Chancellor of Chester dated Aug. 9.‡
- 1723-4 Jan. 15. Peter Weever of St. Sepulcher's Parish, London, & Catharine Pratchett of Nant. parish, by Licence from Doctor's Commons. Dat. Jan. 7. G. Paul, Registrar.
- 1724 Ap. 23. William Furnivall Gent. & Margery Jackson by Licence from Mr. Brooke [of Nantwich] dat. Ap. 21.
- 1724 Ap. 23. Peter Furnivall Gent. & Marget Jackson by Licence &c. dat. Ap. 23.
- 1729 May 27. Samuel Stretch & Elizabeth Wilkenson, by Licence from Mr. Brooke dat. May 27.
- 1729 July 26. William Noble & Margaret Jones, by Publicacon, a soldier in the Princes Regiment.
- 1730 Nov. 26. John Cotes of Woodcote in the county of Salop Esq. & Dame Rhoda Delves of Doddington in the County of Chester, widow, by Licence from Mr. Harwar [of Acton] Dat. Nov. 25.§
- 1733 May 3. Thomas Lowe Gent. & Elizabeth ffurnivall, spinster by Licence from Mr. Hanson Dat. Ap. 27.

\* Another John Goodale, (? whether a son of this marriage) is mentioned in a monument now in the Baptist Chapel Nantwich.

† William Wright, Esq., of Mottram, in this County.

‡ A child of this marriage was born and died at Nantwich; see 1735 *postea*; see also Burials 1735-6.

§ *Dame Rhoda Delves*, was the fourth wife of Sir Thomas Delves. The Rev. Thos. Cotes, M.A., Vicar of Acton from 1787 to 1798, belonged to this Shropshire family.

- 1734-5 Jan. 29. Richard Walmsley Esq. & Margaret Williams by Licence from the Revd. Doctor Brooke Dated 28 Jan.  
 1738 Aug. 10. Thomas Hall Esq.\* & Elizabeth Bayley Spinster by Licence from the Revd. Doctr. Brooke Dated the 9th.  
 1739 June 1. Edward fletcher Gent. & Margery Wetwood, by Lic. [&c.] Dated May. 29.  
 1740 May 15. Joseph Skerratt & Sarah Shenton, by Lic. [&c. same day.]

Baptisms.

- 1691 Dec. 23. John sonne of Capt. Chidley Coote, second son to my Lord Caloony in the Kingdome of Ireland.  
 1693 Aug. 6. Mary dau. to Capt. Chidley Coote, &c.  
 1697 May 8. Catharine dau. of Robt. Peplow, Minister of Moreton-sea, Salop.  
 1699 Aug. 2. Richard Chance, a Bastard child lost at the Heath side.  
 1703 May 22. Thomas son of William Simpson, Packsaddle-maker.  
 1703 Aug. 26. George, son of Thomas Polley Gent. [Thos. another son, bapt. 11 March 1707-8].  
 1703 Oct. 26. Elizabeth, dau. of Capt. Washington Shirley second son to Robert Lord fferrers, Baron of Charteley.  
 1705 Dec. 1. Joseph, son of Thomas Newans, Pipe-maker.  
 1709 March 26. Will<sup>m</sup>. s. of Charles Boote, Perriwigg-maker.  
 1710 Nov. 20. Thomas son of Thomas Hewitt of London, Attorney.  
 1712-3 Jan. 10. Hannah wife of Samuel Dutton, aged about 34 years.†  
 1713 Dec. 18. Robert son of John Booth Esq.‡ [Buried 26 May, 1716].  
 1714 May 5. John, son of Robert Withenshaw, Tanner.  
 1714 July 6. Thomas son of Balzar Oulfon, Gent.  
 1714 Nov. 28. Morrice son of Daniell frith, Gent.  
 1715-6 Jan. 11. Thomas son of Robert Withenshaw. [Robert W. died in or before 1721].  
 1716 July 12. John, son of John Edwards, *Surveyor of the Windows*.§  
 1718 Dec. 11. James son of James Bealey [Bayley] jun<sup>r</sup>. Gent.  
 1719-20 Feb. 23. Elton son of Thomas Wood.||  
 1720 Nov. 13. Samuel son of Thomas Sanders.¶  
 1722 Oct. 8. Thomas Mainwaring\* son of Peter Wilding, Supervisor of the Ale Duty.  
 1725 Aug. 8. Mary, dau. of Wm. Lister, Excise Officer.  
 1727-8 Feb. 11. Maurice son of Radcliffe Searle, clerke.  
 1729 March 25. George son of Radcliffe Searle Rector of Thernsway,\* in Lincolnshire. [Buried 26 Jan. 1730-1].  
 1730-1 Feb. 7. Radcliffe son of Radcliffe Searle Rector of Thornsway, Lincolnsh.  
 1732 June 15. William son of Radcliffe Searle Rector of Thoresway &c. [Buried 22nd June].

\* This was Thomas Hall, Esq. of the Hermitage, near Holmes Chapel, who obtained *jure uxoris* the manor of Cotton, near Middlewich. The issue of this marriage was *Thomas Bayley Hall*, Esq., who after residing on the paternal estate at Hermitage for 60 years, died at the age of 83 in Sep. 1828. (See mentions of this family in "*A Sketch of the History of Holmes Chapel*," by T. W. Barlow, Manchester, 1853).

† This is the first recorded instance of an adult baptism.

‡ ? Whether John Booth Esq. belonged to the family of that name settled at Twemlow, near Middlewich, which became extinct in the male line by the death of Thomas Booth Esq. in 1786. (Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 770).

§ The window-tax was imposed by Act of Parliament in 1695. This barbarous tax on the light and air of heaven was not repealed until 1851; (!) the assessors being commonly called *Window-keepers*.

|| To which is added "Had his head shot off by a cannon ball in Flanders where he was a soldier."

¶ To which is added by a later hand "Who died Vicar of Knutsford."

\*. This is the first instance of a double Christian name; two other sons were named respectively, Arthur Mainwaring Wilding, and Peter Mainwaring Wilding. \*. Thoresway is a village 5 miles S.E. of Caistor, in Lincolnshire.



- 1727-8 March 17. Mrs. Ann furnivall, spinster, Buried at Sandbach.  
 1728-9 Feb. 2. Richard Ravenscrofte, of Willaston, *dumbe*.  
 1728-9 March 13. Sarah Leversage widow } Buried at Sandbach.  
                   Stephen Leversage her son }  
 1728-9 March 21. A strange man found drown'd in Weever.  
 1729 March 28. Ralph Horton Esq.\* Buried at Aulem [Audlem].  
 1729 Aug. 29. John Massey *Chanlor*† [Chandler] Buried at Wrenbury.  
 1729-30 Jan. 29. John Parker, *Broker of Cloathes*.  
 1730-1 Jan. 24. Ann dau. of the Revd. John Loundes, decd. Curate at Coppenhall.  
 1732 July 2. Richard s. of Richard Blagg, *Brechtes-maker*.  
 1732 Oct. 16. Hannah Watkiss buried at Sandbach. [In Sandbach Register called "Mrs. Hannah Watkiss, *widow*."] ]  
 1732 Dec. 6. Slater Chaworth Gent. Dyed the 1st.  
 1732-3 Feb. 25. Edward Parrot, steward to Sir Jno. Chetwood.  
 1735-6 March 22. John Sanders Esqre. of Honeley, in co. Warwick, Dyed at Nantwich the 17th.  
                   Buried at Honeley.  
 1736 July 13. Richard Robinson, *Mugman*.‡  
 1736-7 Feb. 10. John, s. of John Walley, *fishmonger*.  
 1737 May 6. Samuel Watkiss, Gent., buried at Wrenbury.  
 1737 Aug. 15. John Brayne, Gent., buried at Acton.§  
 1737 Oct. 3. William Jackson, Glover, kill'd by an ox at Crewe Hall.  
 1737 Oct. 25. Thomas Lovekin, Victualer, burd. at Wybunbury.  
 1737 Oct. 30. Mary dau. of George Moores, *Writing-Master*.  
 1738 May 24. Wm. s. of Wm. Meers, *Cordwainer*.  
 1738 June 12. Jane, dau. of John Sanders Esq. deceased at Madeley.  
 1738-9 Jan. 16. John Pratchett Gent, burd. at Acton.||  
 1738-9 Feb. 5. Eliz. wife of William Hunt, *flax-dresser*.  
 1739 April 6. Joseph Child, *net-maker*.  
 1739-40 Jan. 5. The Rev. John Twemlow, Curate here.  
 1740 June 30 Dorothy wife of ye Revd. Samuel Lowe of Bunbury.  
 1740 Sep. 12. The Revd. Daniel Barnet, Buried at Wrenbury.

\* Ralph Horton Esq. was probably the last descendant of a family that had resided and owned lands in Coole-Pilate, near Nantwich, from the time of King Henry IV. (Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 473).

† This John Massey is mentioned on a board now in the vestry of Wrenbury Church, thus:—"Mr. John Massey, late of Nantwich, chandler, out of true respect to his Native Parish gave in his life-time a handsome silver chalice for the use of the Communion Service in the Parish Church of Wrenbury."

John Withenshaw } Churchwardens 1730.  
 John Sproton }

He fulfilled the office of Churchwarden at Nantwich in 1716 and 1717. His descendants for four generations, (Edward, Thomas, Richard, and Samuel, successively) were Chandlers and Soap-boilers, at the corner of Mill Street and Barker Street. Mr. Samuel Massie succeeded to his father's business in 1839; but, owing to the falling off in the candle trade by the introduction of composite candles, followed by oil-lamps and gas, he gave up the chandlery business about 1846, and commenced selling flour, bread-stuffs, and groceries; a trade that offered great profits at the time of the potato famine.

‡ "*Mugman*;" i.e. a dealer in earthenware. Formerly, on the north side of the Churchyard, was held the *Mug-market*.

§ The *Brayne* family resided in Acton parish for several centuries. Brayne-Hall, now a farm-house, is in Aston-in-Mondrem. The last of the name was another John Brayne, Esq., who died in the early part of this century. (Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 362, 471, &c.)

|| The Pratchetts were connected with Worleston as well as Nantwich, and are frequently mentioned in both Nantwich and Acton Registers. The last representative of this old family was a maiden lady, who died at Nantwich a few years ago; but the name is still preserved in *Pratchett's Row*, Nantwich.



## VOLUME V.

This volume contains Marriages from 1741 to 1754; and Baptisms and Burials from 1741 to 1785. Towards the end of the volume will be found the following *memoranda* concerning the final change in the office of Registrar, from lay to clerical hands; and so for the last hundred years the Registers have been kept by the Rector of the Parish, or his Curate.

"5 Nov. 1762. Then pursuant to Doctor Reades [the Rector's] Request Richard Yoxall Parish Clerk Delivered to the Reverend Mr. George Astley Curate of this Parish this Register Together with Three other Register Books belonging to the sd Parish The oldest of which begins in the year 1572."\*

Mr. Yoxall died the next year. Different handwritings indicate different registrars; and for the next few years the entries are very meagre, consisting simply of names, omitting *trades, professions, &c.*, almost the only additional information being the word "*pauper*," in the case of poor people, who probably paid no registration fee. The registrar in 1764 is more particular in his entries; but in April, 1765, neither baptisms nor burials are recorded, and a wide space is left to indicate the omission. From July, 1769, to Oct. 1772, the registers were well kept, as has been already mentioned, by the Rector himself (Rev. John Smith) who signed his name at the bottom of every page. But after the latter date, he appears to have relegated registration, perhaps, to his Curate. Other irregularities occurred as stated in the following *Memoranda* in the Rector's own hand:—

"*Mem.* An Account of Funerals from this time [31 March 1782] to the 27th Dec. 1782 is contained in a book which was in the possession of Thos. Child late Parish Clerke† at the time of his decease, & which his widow has repeatedly refused either to deliver up or suffer the account to be transcribed.

Witness our hands this 26 day of April 1784.

John Smith Rector.  
Thos. Birchall } Churchwardens.  
Wm. Philipps }

"*Mem.* The said Book has since been delivered up by the late Parish Clerks widow, from which the following entries of Funerals from March 31 1782 are made & continued to the end of the said year."

During the incumbency of John Smith, an occasional note at Easter states that an "*account of Funerals was returned to Court.*"

*Marriages.*

- 1744 July 30. John Tollett Gentleman, & Maria Redsdale, by licence &c.  
1747 Aug. 17. Plant Maddocks and Hannah Hassall, by licence &c.  
1750 Sep. 28. Richard Wrench & Elizabeth Rockett, widow, by licence &c.  
1751 May 18. William Sprout & Mary Fitton, widow, by licence &c.  
1751 Dec. 5. Samuel Palin & Ceiceley Delves, widow, by licence &c.  
1722 June 28. Charles Wrench & Martha Griffies, by licence &c.

*Baptisms.*

- 1741 June 26. Eliz. dau. of Crewe Chetwood, Esqre‡  
1742 Sep. 11. Richd. son of Leonard Morrey, Gent.§

\* The earliest paper volume appears to have been lost at that time; but it had been found before 1831, when returns were made for the "Parish Register Abstract." (Add. MSS. 9335, Brit. Mus.)

† Thomas Child Parish Clerk [buried] 21 Dec. 1782.—(*Par. Reg.*)

‡ Anna, another dau. bapt. 26 Jan. 1742-3.

§ Joseph, another son, bapt. in 1748.

- 1743 April 14. Catharine dau. of James Williams, Gent.  
 1745 May 1. Joseph, son of Joseph Skerrett, *Upholster*.<sup>\*</sup>  
 1746-7 Jan. 11. Catharine Maria† dau. of James Tomkinson, Attorney.  
 1747-8 Feb. 11. John son of John Broadbent, Gent.  
 1748 July 5. Mary‡ dau. of William Watkiss, Gent.  
 1754 July 12. Plant son of Plant Maddocks, born 12th.  
 1759 June 24. James son of James Bayley Junr. Esquire.  
 1763 Jan. 24. George son of William Bailey, Gent.  
 1765 May 22. Sarah dau. of William Brooke, *Woman's Taylor*.  
 1765 Aug. 19. Stephen, son of Joseph Hassall of Brassie Hall [Willaston].  
 1767 Apr. 23. James Wilkenson of Willaston in Nantwich Parish, adult of the age of 63.  
 1769 Sept. 1. Received into the Congregation John Underwood the son of James Bagley, Malster, who was privately baptized July 2, 1769.§  
 1769 Sept. 20. Received into the Congregation Margaret daughter of the Rev. John Smith, Rector of Nantwich, & Jane his wife, who was born at Muccllestone Wood in the co. of Stafford July 13, 1769 & privately baptized July 17, 1769.§  
 1769 Oct. 4. Zillah dau. of James Stockton.  
 1769 Oct. 15. Joan the child of Joseph Salmon, Gent., of Weaver Bank.  
 1769 Nov. 18. Thomas son of Thomas Bayley, Gent.  
 1771 Aug. 10. Richard Wickstead son of Rev. James Thomas, Vicar of Bolton-le-Sands, Lancashire  
 1778 Sep. 1. Peter|| son of Mr. Peter Bailey, attorney at Law, & Sarah his wife.  
 1780 May 1. James son of Mr. Peter Bayley, Attorney at Law, Born Nov. 1, 1779.  
 1781 Sep. 11. Matthew son of Peter Bayley Attorney at Law, & Sarah his wife, Born May 16th & Recd.  
 1779 January. Harry son of Thos. & Eliz. Woodward Innkeeper recd. 15th January; but born ye Day before ye Beginning of the preceding Nantwich Races.  
 1780 June 7. A illegitimate child Baptized at Beam Bridge, John.  
 1780 July 9. Peter s. of James Boyer, *Clerk of Salt works*, recd.  
 1783 May 21. William Plant, son of John Pratchett Gent, & Ann his wife born 2 March last.

#### Burials.

- 1741 July 21. Roger son of Francis Williams Gent. buried at Acton.  
 1741-2 feb. 1. William Cobb, gent. buried at Wybunbury.  
 1742 July 31. Willm. Maisteron Esqr. *Buried in the Chancel by leave from Mrs. Crewe.*¶  
 1742 Oct. 24. Phœbe Lewis, a traveller.  
 1742 Dec. 30. John Johnson, *Fersey comber*.

\* This son lived to be 87; and was buried in the Churchyard in 1832 (see page 53 note.)

† The earliest double baptismal name of a female.

‡ She became, in 1778, the wife of Rev. A. Clarkson, Rector of Nantwich, Other children baptized were: *Ann*, 2 Oct. 1749; *Hannah* 27 Nov. 1750; *Catharine* 28 Oct. 1756; *William* 20 March 1759; *Charlotte* 24 June 1763.

§ This kind of entry commenced when John Smith became Rector of the Parish, and kept the Registers.

|| Peter Bayley was afterwards educated at Rugby, and Merton Coll. Oxford; and entered himself at the Temple, with the view of studying for the bar. He gave more attention, however, to literature than to the law; and wrote "Sketches from St. George's-in-the-Fields;" "Idwal;" "A Queen's Appeal," a poem in the Spenserian stanza; and other poems. He died in 1823.—(Salisbury's "*Border Counties' Worthies*.") Mr. J. E. Bowman, of Nantwich, in a letter addressed to Joseph Hunter, the antiquary, dated 10th June, 1803, speaks of Peter Bayley as a rising artist, as well as a poet.—(*Hunterian Corresp.* vol ii. f. 289. Add. MSS. 24865, Brit. Mus.)

¶ This is the first recorded instance of an interment within the Church. When such burials were of frequent occurrence, the registrars thought it unnecessary to state the fact; but when the practice of burying within the Church became less common, and confined chiefly to the privileged classes, entries like this begin to appear.

- 1742-3 Feb. 27. Catharine dau. of Jas. Bayley, *Oxford carrier*.  
 1743 June 1. Wm. son of Wm. Joynson, *Threadmaker*.  
 1746 April 13. Richd. Walthall, *Gaoler of Chester*.  
 1746 Nov. 13. Willm. Barrett, a Blindman.  
 1746 Oct. 16. Enoch son of Thos Cope, Gent. [Mary, a dau. bapt. on Nov. 30 in the same year.]  
 1747 July 6. Moulton Griffin Esqre.  
 1750 Aug. 30. William Jackson, *Peruke-maker*.  
 1750 Nov. 8. Wm. Hodgson Gent. buried at Chester.  
 1751 March 27 Thomas Tagg, Gent. burd at Acton.\*  
 1753 Dec. 15. George Beckett, coachman to Mr. Wilbraham.  
 1755 March 21 Edwd. Evans shoemaker, *buried by the Club*.  
 1755 March 26 Thos Leversage, mercer, *buried in the Church*.  
 1755 April 20. Ann, wife of Thos. Rowe, *Brass founder*.  
 1756 Nov. 23. Eliz. Daugh<sup>r</sup> of John Lewin *Phishweaver*.  
 1757 Feb. 16. George Bryan, Officer of Excise dyed 11th being a Publick fiast ; buried at Acton.  
 1757 March 18 Ashton Williams Gent. *Buried in Church*.  
 1757 March 23 Eliza, d. of Ann Simson a Comberland vagrant.  
 1757 June 21. ——— a pauper & soldier, buried by the Overseers.  
 1757 July 8. Thos. Bird, peruke maker, buried in the Church by Mr. Jos. Lea of London.  
 1758 Oct. 19. William Butler, Gent. buried at Audlem.  
 1761 Feb. 27. Sarah dau. of Chas. Davenport, *Turnpike Keeper*.†  
 1762 Oct. 4. John Pratchett Gentleman Buried at Acton.  
 1764 Jan. 8. James Topham, *apparitor* [Beadle].  
 1764 May 23. Mrs. Brain Buried at Acton.  
 1764 May 28. Mrs. ——— Watkiss, Buried att Wrenbury.  
 1767 June 28. Mrs. Gilbert [buried] at Uttoxiter.  
 1767 June 29. Robert Eachus [buried] at Middlewich.  
 1767 Aug. 10. Mrs. Bayley wife of Mr. Matthew Bayley [Buried] at Wrenbury.  
 1768 July 22. Henry Johnson Gent [buried] at Bunbury.‡  
 1770 Feb. 14. Mrs. Barrow, widow, buried at Wrenbury.  
 1770 July 16. Mr. Charles Salmon, buried at Middlewich.  
 1771 May 31. Edmund Griffin, of Burland Esq.§  
 1773 Feb. 28. William Watkis, Gentleman.  
 1774 Nov. 20. Mr. Martin from London.  
 1775 Dec. 18. Mr. George Audley Coroner and Attorney at Law.  
 1777 March 14. *Miss* [first instance of this title] Margaret Yoxall.  
 1777 Aug. 30. Thos. s. of Thos. Robinson, killed in fighting.||

\* Thomas Tagg, Gen., owned lands in Worleston. See Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii, p. 357, New Edition; and *Cheshire Sheaf*, vol. ii, p. 363.

† Toll-gates and toll-houses in this neighbourhood, were removed about the year 1875.

‡ Henry Johnson is said to have been an Apothecary in Nantwich. To the memory of his wife, Jane, whom he had married at Bunbury in 1735, and who was buried there on the 9th April, 1741, he erected in the Chancel of Bunbury Church an altar tomb (with a long inscription and epitaph, in verse which is still preserved) and pedestal on which stood the figure of his lady in stone of "shapeless sculpture." The statue was afterwards taken down, and buried in the churchyard; where it remained until it was again brought to light by the sexton, John Smith, on the 4th May, 1882, when digging a grave. It has since been placed in the Church again; and an account of the discovery and an engraving of the figure appeared in the *Palatine Note Book* for July, 1882.

§ Edmund Griffin was the last of the ancient family of Griffin, of Nantwich and Bartherton. (*Lysons' "Cheshire,"* p. 383.)

|| The scene of this fight was Snow Hill; the combatants being Charles Tomkinson and Thomas Robinson. Tomkinson was tried and imprisoned at Chester, and when liberated was branded on the hand.



VOLUME VII *Marriages.* 1776—1812.

- 1780 Aug. 17. George Cappur Cheesefactor and Lydia Maddocks.  
 1781 June 14. Plant Maddocks Gent and Catherine Cappur by Licence.  
 1781 Oct. 18. John Wrench of Wyburnury Parish Apothecary, and Margaret Oulton.  
 1782 March 21 Thomas Nixon Attorney at Law and Sarah Maddocks.  
 1782 May 21. John Pratchett of Acton, Gent. and Ann Maddocks spinster.  
 1789 Feb. 10. William Lowe Gent. and Elizabeth Stone of N. spinster.  
 1792 May 28. Thomas Garnett, Gent. and Mary Harwood of N. spinster.  
 1795 Feb. 24. William Sprout Linnen Draper and Mary Marsh of N.  
 1797 May 21. Charles Gibbons Esq. of Whitchurch and Joan Kent.  
 1800 April 1. John Thompson schoolmaster and Elizabeth Mounfield of N.  
 1800 Aug. 20. Prussia Salmon Gent and Mary Walker of N.  
 1803 April 11. Prussia Salmon Gent and Elizabeth Cowap widow of N.  
 1806 Feb. 9. Sampson Cartwright Confectioner and Emma Perry, of N.  
 1807 June 1. John Richardson\* Esq. of Bunbury and Mary Craven.†  
 1808 Jan. 3. John Bolland Surgeon, and Elizabeth Davies of N.  
 1811 Apr. 25. Edward Kent Esq. and Penelope Jackson.  
 1812 Feb. 6. Charles Delves Broughton Esq. and Mary Ann Atkinson of Manchester.  
 1812 May 21. Peter Sprout Gent and Ann Maule of N.

## VOLUME VIII.

As early as William and Mary's reign, a tax was imposed on the registrations of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials. After having been several times amended, it was enacted in 23 Geo. III that after the 1st Oct. 1783 a stamp duty of 3d. (under a penalty of £5) was required for every entry in the Parish Register. Allusion is made to this law in the second extract.

*Baptisms.* 28 March 1785—31 Dec. 1812.

- 1785 June 16. Recd William 2nd son of Thomas Wettenhall Esq. and Catharine his wife Born March 28, 1785, and baptizd the 30th of ye same month.  
 1785 Oct. 5. George, son of James Moore, soldier, and Sarah his wife [to which is added] "Duty excused."  
 1787 July 31. Diana Dr [daughter] of Thomas Wettenhall Esq and Catherine his wife was born the 14th of March, baptizd the 16th and recd into the Church of Acton 31 July.  
 1789 Feb. 27. William, son of Wm. Tomlinson Gent and Eliz. his wife; born 19 Oct. 1788.

\* This *John Richardson, Esq.*, afterwards purchased for a residence the large old house within walled grounds at Hospital Street-end; and there his son, John Richardson, Esq., died on the 23rd July, 1880, at the age of 68 years. In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the house appears to have been the town residence of the Minshulls, of Stoke Hall, in Acton parish. After the death of Sir Edward Minshull, Kt., in Jan. 1672, his widow, the Dowager Lady Mary Minshull, enjoyed the Nantwich house as portion of her jointure. There she resided in 1674, at which time it was known as "The New Bell." (Notes and Queries, 1st series, vol. xi, p. 109), a name suggestive of having originally been built as an Inn. She still occupied the same house in 1691; according to a Rate Book of that date; and most likely continued to reside there until her death in 1693. A century after, the house belonged to George Garnett, Esq.; from whom it descended to his son, the Rev. W. Garnett, Rector of Tilston, in this county; and, after his death in 1829, to the Rev. W. B. Garnett, (now W. B. Garnett-Botfield, Rector of Shifnall) who sold the house to the above-mentioned John Richardson Esq.; whose son of the same name, lately deceased, has left it to George Garnett, Esq., of London.

† *Mary Craven* was the daughter and co-heiress of Richard Craven, Esq., of Stoke Hall. The lordship of Stoke, in Acton parish, was held by the Minshull family (see p. 314 and Minshull Pedigree) from the year 1610, until it was sold by Edward Minshull, Esq., in 1719, to Thomas Williams, Cheesefactor, of Nantwich; whose son, in 1753, conveyed it to Roger Wilbraham, Esq. In 1781 it was purchased of the Wilbrahams by Richard Craven, Esq., who died at Stoke Hall on the 19th July, 1804, and left his lands to his three daughters:—*Elizabeth Craven*, the wife of John Jasper Garnett, Esq., of Nantwich; *Mary Craven*, the wife of John Richardson, Esq., of Bunbury; and *Anne Craven*, spinster.

- 1789 Oct. 20. Thomas son of Richd. Edleston Gent and Elizabeth his wife.  
 1789 Oct. 31. Margaret Alsager, Daur of James Sheridan of ye Middle Temple, London, Esq. and Catharine his wife.\*  
 1789 Dec. 14. George son of Wm. Lowe Gent and Eliz. his wife, born 17 Nov. 1789.  
 1791 April 21. Charles son of Thos, Nixon, Attorney and Sarah his wife, priv[ately] bapt. 22 March  
 1792 Sep. 18. Arabella Maria dau. of Peter Bayley Esq. and Sarah his wife; bapt 2 Aug. 1790.  
 1793 Dec. 10. Thomas son of Thomas Hall, Liquor Merchant, and Fanny.  
 1796 May 11. William son of William Sprout Linen Draper and Mary.  
 1800 Aug. 15. Matthew son of James Bayley Esq. and Penelope.  
 1801 Jan. 13. George, son of Wm. Harwood Folliott Esq. and Catharine.  
 1802 Jan. 27. Weston son of James Bayley Esq. and Penelope.  
 1803 June 12. John son of John Withenshaw Currier and Mary.  
 1805 March 19. Henry son of King Nixon, Tanner, and Mary.  
 1807 Oct. 9. John son of John Downes, Merchant, and Eliz.  
 1809 Sep. 16. Charles William son of Samuel Bradbury, *Organist*.  
 1812 Aug. 2. John Nelson son of John Squarebridge Methodist preacher and Catharine his wife.  
 1812 Sep. 9. Thomas son of John Downes, Shoe-merchant and Eliz.  
 1812 Dec. 28. Joseph Gardner son of John Bolland surgeon and Eliz.

*Burials.*

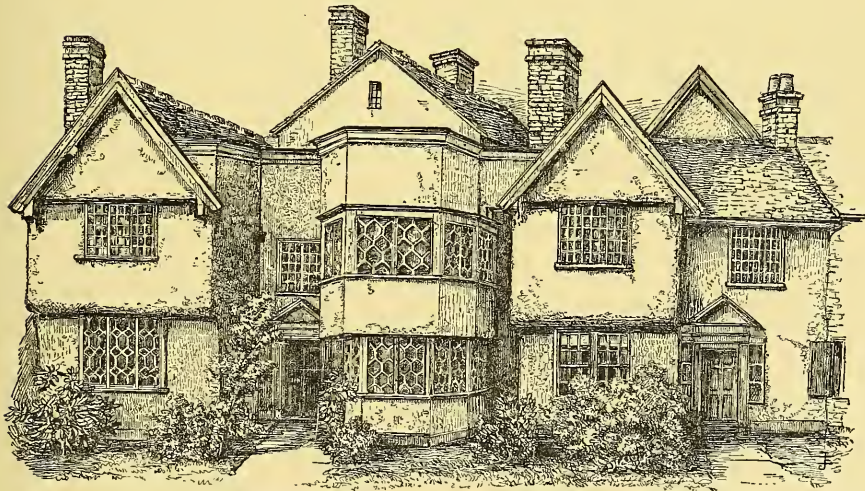
- 1785 June 16. John, son of Richard Edleston, Attorney.  
 1789 Feb. 24. John Lamb, sergeant of ye Militia; fifty years in his Majesty's service; and died in ye 83rd year of his Age in a moment's sickness.  
 1789 Sep. 1. John Cliffe (commonly called Major Cliffe) Pauper.  
 1789 Oct. 12. George Clowes, Apparitor.  
 1789 Dec. 9. Thomas Massey, accidentally drowned.  
 1790 Ap. 10. Thomas Wright, almsman, pauper, drowned by accident.  
 1792 No burials are recorded in March, only 3 in April, 1 in May, and 3 in June.  
 1794 May 2. Mrs. Eaton widow of the Revd. Mr. Eaton.  
 1795 July 12. Deborah Holding, aged 95.  
 1797 Feb. 10. Thomas Robinson, Gaol-keeper.  
 1798 July 13. Edmund Snelson, stationer [and printer].  
 1798 Nov. 29. Thomas Becket, aged 91.  
 1799 Jan. 20. Peter Minshull, aged 92.  
 1799 Feb. 1. Sarah Hope, widow, aged 80.  
 1799 Feb. 10. Mrs. Francis Maisteron, aged 96.†  
 1799 Feb. 15. Mrs. Ann Taylor, aged 80.  
 1800 Feb. 17. Thomas Keay, Tobacconist Manufacturer.  
 1800 Nov. 23. Catharine dau. of Luke Punshon, Engineer.  
 1803 March 3. Thomas Nixon, Attorney at Law.  
 1803 May 31. John Clowes, Clockmaker, and of his Majesty's Navy.  
 1804 June 8. George Cooper, aged 90.  
 1804 June 17. Lydia Hall, aged 90.

\* James Sheridan, of Nantwich, married Catharine, fourth daughter of James Williams, of Nantwich, and Anne Wilbraham, his wife. (See *Alsager Pedigree* in Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii, p. 323, New Edit.)

† The death of this aged lady is mentioned in *Gent. Mag.* 1800, part ii, page 698.

- 1804 Aug. 28. Mary widow of Revd. Mr. Kendall.  
 1804 Dec. 19. Elizabeth wife of Ralph Ratcliffe, Gent, aged 71.  
 1805 May 24. Job Mee, chimney-sweeper.  
 1806 May 20. Andrew Rogers, Pedlar, aged 94.  
 1807 Oct. 1. Thomas Percival, labourer (commonly called Passover).  
 1809 Ap. 14 Sion son of Sion Cooper.  
 1809 May "Not one buried."  
 1810 Jan. 29 Anthony Spencer, aged 98  
 1811 July 21. Isaac Smith Methodist preacher.  
 1811 Dec. 24. John Martin, solicitor, from Newcastle.  
 1812 Sep. 13 Ann widow of William Shenton, Joiner, aged 85.  
 1812 Sep. 22. Mary, widow, of Jonathan Dutton, Joiner, aged 83.  
 1812 Dec. 31. Mary, widow of William Plant, aged 82.

This, the last entry in the old registers, is signed "*Anthony Clarkson Rector.*" The next and succeeding register books down to the present time, contain printed forms. From these volumes a few extracts have been given in the chapter on Annals.



SWEET-BRIAR HALL.



## Charities.



O Tables of the Charities are now to be found in the Church. Formerly, tablets giving the names of benefactors to the poor were affixed to the walls of the Church; but, many years ago, their names and gifts were obliterated with paint, and afterwards, the boards were removed as useless. The list of Charities here given, which I have endeavoured to make as complete as possible from various available sources of information, includes several names and benefactions that have never before appeared in print. To give a full account of even the principal Charities would extend these pages to a needless length; but those who are interested in the subject will find many particulars relating to legacies bequeathed to the poor of Nantwich, and for parochial purposes, (some of which have been lost, and others misapplied), in the thirty-first Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1837, pp. 644—664.

The earliest known list of Charities, dated 1665, which appears to have been taken from a similar one then in the Church, is preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 2176, f. 60; as follows:

*“ A Cataloghe of what Charitabel gifts haue beene given vnto the towne  
and Church of namptwiche.”*

MA<sup>R</sup> HENRY SPARKE gaue six leade wallinge of Inheritance for euer towards the mainetaynace of gods divine seruice.

[PRAER'S OBIT, of very ancient date] giuen from y<sup>e</sup> house of woodhay 26s. 8d. to bee yearely delte to the poore upon euery St. Thomas day [Dec. 21] for euer.

MR ALDERMAN WALTHALL of London gaue 100<sup>li</sup>. [*£*100] to bee lent out from fve yeares to fve yeares for euer to foure tradesmen by 23<sup>li</sup>. [*£*25] a peice paying euery of them yearly for the same 20s. to bee distributed yearely to the poore at y<sup>e</sup> discretion of the Maior or Bayliffe or Communalitie there.



SR. ROGER WILBRAHAM [of Dorfold] KNIGHT, borne in this Towne, founded an Almes-house there for six poore almes men, whereof 4 are to be Chosen in this Towne, and 2 forth of Acton Parish, and gaue euery one of them yearly foure markes [£2 13s. 4d.] and euery other yeare a gowne.

Also, hee gaue 4<sup>li</sup>. [£4] to bee yearly distributed vnto the poore on goode friday for euer.

MR. OLIVER WILKES, of London, gaue 10<sup>li</sup>. [£10] to bee lent out freely euery yeare to 5 poore men by 40s. a peice att the discretion of the Churchwardens.

MRS. MARGARETT SLADE borne in this Towne gaue lands in Haughton for the yearly distributinge of 3<sup>li</sup>. [£3] euery good friday and 3<sup>li</sup>. [£3] euery St. Thomas day to six score poore householders for euer att the discretion of the Church wardens.

MAR ANTHONY CLOWES, Haberdasher of London, also borne in this Towne gaue the bookes of Acts and Monuments\* and soe much sand and quarrell as raised and laid the body of this Church att his owne cost and charges.

SR. EDWARD [*sic.* for Edmund] WRIGHT, KNIGHT, *Lord Maior of London*, borne in this Towne gaue first in his life-tyme 12<sup>d</sup>. weekly in bread to 12 poore people during the space of nere 20 yeares, and after this, alsoe before his death erected a verie fayre and spacious Hospittall for vi poore men; and to maintaine this famous foundatyon hath for euer settled 32<sup>li</sup>. [£32] and to bee distributed in such relacyon there vnto As By deed and Record more p'ticularly aperes directed.

SR. THOMAS CRW: [Crewe] KNIGHT, borne in this Towne gaue certain fee farme rents in Bugglawton amounting to 22<sup>li</sup>. [£22] per an'um. to bee distributed yearly to the poore of the Hospell street for euer.

MR. RICHARD MINSHALL of this Towne gaue y<sup>e</sup> inheritance of 2 sixe leade wallinge, the profitts of the one six leade to the then preacher & his successors, y<sup>e</sup> profit of y<sup>e</sup> other six leade to be bestowed in bread for the releif of poore householders yearly for euer.

MR. SAMUELL GOULDSMITH, citizen and mercer of London, borne in this Towne, gaue 50<sup>li</sup>. [£50] to remaine in stocke, y<sup>e</sup> increase to be bestowed in bread & to be dealt to the poore upon euery Lords day for euer.

MR. RICHARD VENNER, citizen of London, borne in this Towne gaue 30 shillings yearly to be giuen to the poore euery Lords day in bread accordingly.

RICHARD HARWAR of this Towne, apothecary, gaue y<sup>e</sup> inheritance of a house in peper Street in which Thomas Clowes y<sup>e</sup> p'rish Clerke sometime dwelt, y<sup>e</sup> rent and profit thereof to bee distributed to y<sup>e</sup> poore yearly and for euer.

MRS. MARGARET WOODNOTH, MRS. ELIZABETH DAUENPORT, daughters and coheires of Richard Wright of this Towne, Gent., gaue two faire siluer flaggons for y<sup>e</sup> use of y<sup>e</sup> communion & alsoe y<sup>e</sup> tithes of hay within Aluaston and certain small tythes in certain streets of this Towne & other adiacente townships for y<sup>e</sup> better maintenance of y<sup>e</sup> preacher of this Towne & his Successors for euer.

\* Fox's "Book of Martyrs, the Acts and Monuments of the Church."

RANDLE LIGHTFOOTE of weston in ye parish of wibunbury, yeoman, Gaue to this Towne 44 Pounds, ye increase to be bestowed in bread and to be dealte to ye poore eury Lords daye for euer.

MRS. MARGERY MAISTERSON daughter of John Maisteron of this Towne, Gent., Gaue 20 Pounds to ye behoofe of ye grammar school and for ye aduancement of good literature therein 1662.

THOMAS CLOWES late Clerke of this parish Church Gaue ye Communion Tabel.

JOHN MINSHALL late rector of Sidmouth in ye county of Daven-shire son of John Minshall of this Towne, Gent., by his last Will and testament Gaue 40<sup>li</sup>. [£40] to remaine in Stocke and ye yearly increase to bee distributed to ye poore of this Towne for euer.

ELIZABETH, daughter of JOHN BLAGE of this Towne, and late wife of JOHN DAVIES, locksmith, in ye life-time of her said husband and with his consent Gaue ye sum of 10 Poundes to be put forth for the benefitt & behoofe of ye natife Poor of ye mill Street in this Towne.

MARGERY TOMSON, Widdow, sister of ye said *Elizabeth*, by her last will and Testamente Gaue 5<sup>li</sup>. [£5] to bee impeised [employed] for ye same benefitt of ye poore of the same mill street 1665."

In a book containing copies of Deeds, &c., relating to Nantwich, now in the possession of G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere, is the following Memorandum by Randle Wilbraham, of Townsend House, relating to the *Consolidation* of certain Charities in 1704; and an Account of the Charities vested in the Churchwardens, for the year ending 26th March, 1713; as follows:—

I. "CHARITIES: ANNO DNI: 1704."

"The Gentlemen and other inhabitants of the Towne of Namptwich considering that diverse summs of money, wch had from time to time by well disposed prsons been given and bequeathed to the Poor of the sd Towne were in Danger to bee lost, thought fit to collect the said severall summs into One,—& to dispose the same for the purchase of lands; wch might bee a more permanent profit; & bee managed with less trouble & hazard. An opportunity then offering of Lands to be sold neare the Towne, being the inheritance of *Matthew Wright, Gent.*, with whom a bargaine was made; the severall summs under-written were called in & apply'd to that purpose:—

"The deeds are now in . . . . . custody."

<i>The Gifts of—</i>			
ELIZABETH BLAGG, widow ... ..	10£	MR. DELVES ... ..	05£
ROGER COMBERBACH ... ..	40£	MRS. HEACOCK ... ..	20£
WILLIAM WALLEY, Apothecary ... ..	40£	THO. SUCKLEY ... ..	04£
WIDOW TOMSON ... ..	05£	OLIVER WILKES ... ..	02£
ALDERMAN WALLTHALL ... ..	63£	MRS. SEGRAVE ... ..	10£
MRS. KNIGHTLY ... ..	10£	MR. RICHARD WICKSTEAD ... ..	20£
SIR THOS. WILBRAHAM ... ..	25£	MRS. MARGERY MAISTERSON ... ..	20£
MR. JOHN MINSHULL ... ..	40£	MRS. ANNE SMITH ... ..	70£
MRS. ANNE MINSHULL ... ..	05£	WILLM. PHYTHVAN ... ..	20£
RANDLE LIGHTFOOT ... ..	44£	THOS. BRISCOE ... ..	05£
		ROGER WILBRAHAM ESQ. ... ..	45£
TOTAL ... ..			£503.

Lost :—Of money given by ALDERMAN WALTHALL ...	...	...	...	37£
"    "    "    "    MR. SAM. GOLDSMITH ...	...	...	...	50£
"    "    "    "    OLIVER WILKES ...	...	...	...	08£
				95£

The above sum of £500 was expended on Dec. 17th, 1706, in the purchase of the following lands from *Matthew Wright*, of London, son and heir of *James Wright*, of Nantwich; viz. :—

	VA.	R.	P.
A pasture in Nantwich called <i>New-Town field</i> .....	6	1	16
A close in Acton called <i>The Bell-field</i> .....	7	1	8
Land adjoining, next to Acton Pavement called <i>Chapel Croft</i> ... }			
Land in Henhull called the <i>Wall Croft</i> .....	2	2	23
Total.....	16	1	7

As stated below, these lands produced, in 1713, an annual rent of £20 18s. od. The Churchwardens, who have had the management of this fund to the present time, incurred the popular odium in the early part of this century by not applying the increased rents to charitable purposes; but merely expending a certain sum as the interest, and carrying a large surplus to the use of the parish in aid of the church levies. In 1828 the Liverpool and Birmingham Junction Canal was cut, passing through *Bell Field* and *Chapel Croft*; and 2a. 1r. 12p. was bought by the Company at £200 per acre; a further sum of £50 being paid for under-cutting the soil for the purpose of raising the embankment. These, and other sums of recent date, have been invested in the Funds, and according to the Government returns, the Consolidated Charities, in 1862-3, produced as follows :—

<i>Income.</i>	£ s. d.	<i>Disbursements.</i>	£ s. d.
From Land.....	46 0 0	Paid for weekly dole of bread, 90 loaves..	47 18 7
"    £501 18s. 7d. Consols and other securities.....	14 19 10	"    to Rector, for the poor .....	2 0 0
		"    to Parish Clerk .....	2 0 0
		"    to Bellman .....	0 8 0
		"    to Grammar School for educating boys.....	6 13 3
	£60 19 10		£58 19 10

II. "CHARITIES: RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS OF THE CHURCH WARDENS OF NAMPTWICH. March 26th, 1713."

"Rents to be received by the C. W. of the parish of Namptwich yearly.

	£	s.	d.
For Mr. Venners Gift ...	1	10	0
"    Mrs. Slades Gift ...	10	0	0
"    Widow Kemps House ...	2	10	0
"    Newtown field ...	8	0	0
"    Croft by the Almshouse ...	4	0	0
"    Lands held by Davenport ...	8	18	0
"    T. Proudmans House ...	1	0	0
"    A Legacy of Mrs. Masterson ...	1	0	0
	36	18	0

} [Consolidated Fund] {

"To be paid by the Churchwardens yearly."

		<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
To the Minister and Poor ... ..	}	2	10	0
To the Parish Clarke ... ..	}	1	4	0
To the Schoolmaster [Grammar] ... ..	}	3	14	0
To the Bellman ... ..	}	0	4	0
[Richard Harwar's Gift]				
To Poor householders on St. Thomas Day & good Friday, Mrs. Slades gift ...		10	0	0
To the Poor of Mill Street ... ..		0	18	0
To the Poor of Pillorie Street ... ..		1	0	0
To the Poor of Welsh Row... ..		1	0	0
For a School house for ye Charity [Blue-cap] Boys ... ..		1	0	0
Total ... ..		£21	10	0

"The ballance of these sums, viz. £15 8s. od. (Lays and Taxes being deducted) is to be distributed to the poor in bread by the C. W. in the Church."

"There is likewise a Legacy of 4*£* per ann. granted out of Walling to the poor, wch has not been paid since the walling became invaluable." [*i.e.* about 1696].

"Also there belongs to the poore the sum of £1 6s. 8d. payable by ye heirs of Sr. Thos. Wilbraham [of Woodhey], whose ancestor purchased Partridge's Land out of wch the said Rent of £1 6s. 8d. issued, being given for an obit by PRAERS."

"There belongs likewise to the Churchwardens to receive yearly--

		<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>
"The Rent of <i>Goughs House</i> in Barker Street ... ..	}	1	10	0
Also a Legacy given by Mr. Peover to buy Sacrament wine ... ..	}	2	0	0
A Rent from Mr. Hussey [Parish Clerk] for the under-Rooms of the school-house." [in Church yard] ... ..	}	0	15	0
"To the use of the Church ... ..		£4	5	0"

### BENEFACTORS TO THE CHURCH AND POOR.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Donor and Purpose.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
		<i>£</i> <i>s.</i> <i>d.</i>
Ancient.	ROGER PRAERS' <i>Obit</i> , to the poor, annually <sup>a</sup> ... ..	1 6 8
1515.	HENRY SPARKE, rent of a salt-house to the Minister; annual value in 1722 ... ..	0 10 0
1590.	ROGER MAINWARING, of N. to 12 eldest poor folk in N. 4s. each, every Good Friday <sup>b</sup> ... ..	2 8 0
1612.	REV. HUGH ASSWILL of St. Tewes, Cornwall, to the poor. ( <i>see Annals</i> )	1 10 0
1613.	SIR ROGER WILBRAHAM, of Dorfold, Kt., Almshouses for 6 poor men Do. Do. Dole annually on Good Friday	— — — 4 0 0
Unknown.	LADY WILBRAHAM, <sup>c</sup> in augmentation of Almshouse endowment, per ann. ... ..	12 0 0

<sup>a</sup> Still in the hands of the Churchwardens.

<sup>b</sup> See Roger Mainwaring's Will, proved 1 May, 1590. *Chet. Soc. Pub.* Vol. liv, p. 152.

<sup>c</sup> The Lady Grace Wilbraham, the wife of Sir Richard Wilbraham, Bart of Woodhey, 14 March 1661-2.—(*Acton Burial Register*).

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Donor and purpose.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
		£ s. d.
1630.	M <sup>RIS.</sup> MARGARET SLADE, <sup>d</sup> widow, of Poole, to 60 poor householders, pr. ann. ... ..	12 0 0
1633.	S <sup>IR</sup> THOS. CREWE, of Steane, Kt., to poor in Hospital St., per ann. ...	22 0 0
1634.	ANN WRIGHT, spinster of N. by Will dated 25 Sep. 1634, to the poor.	10 0 0
1637.	RICHARD MINSHULL, <sup>f</sup> of N., rent of a salt-house to the Minister ... Do. rent of a salt-house to the poor ...	— — —
1638.	THOMAS CLOWES, Parish Clerk, gave the Communion Table ...	— — —
1638.	S <sup>IR</sup> EDMUND WRIGHT, Kt. of London, Alderman, built an Almshouse for 6 poor men; Endowment per ann. <sup>g</sup> ... ..	32 0 0
1639.	M <sup>RIS.</sup> MARGARET WOODNOTH, widow, (of N. gave part of the Com- munions Plate, and certain M <sup>RIS.</sup> ELIZABETH DAVENPORT, widow, (Tithes to the Minister <sup>h</sup> ...)	— — —
1657.	RAPHE WILBRAHAM, <sup>i</sup> Esq., to the poor ... ..	400 0 0
	Do. to the Grammar School ... ..	50 0 0
1662.	M <sup>RIS.</sup> MARGARET MAISTERSON, spinster, to the Grammar School ...	20 0 0
Ante 1665.	ALDERMAN WALTHALL, of London, to be lent to four tradesmen for 5 years, at £1 int. per ann., which interest to be given to the poor ...	100 0 0
	OLIVER WILKES, of London, to be lent to five poor men ... ..	10 0 0
	ANTHONY CLOWES, of London, raised the floor of the Church, and gave Fox's "Book of Martyrs" ... ..	— — —
	SAMUEL GOLDSMITH, of London, bread to the poor every Lord's Day ...	50 0 0
	RICHARD VENNER, of London, bread to the poor every Lord's Day ...	1 10 0
	RICHARD HARWAR, apothecary, of N., the rent of a house in Pepper Street, to the poor ... ..	— — —
	RANDLE LIGHTFOOT, of Weston, bread to the poor every Lord's day ...	44 0 0
	REV. JOHN MINSHULL, of Sidmouth, to the poor, interest of... ..	40 0 0
ELIZABETH DAVIES, of N. to the poor of Mill Street ... ..	10 0 0	
MARGARET THOMSON, of N., widow, to the poor of Mill Street ...	5 0 0	
1676.	ROGER WILBRAHAM, of Townsend, Esq., Almshouses, <sup>j</sup> for six widows; the endowment, £24 per ann., afterwards augmented by <i>Randle Wilbraham, Esq.</i> , of Nantwich in 1721, and by <i>Peter Sprout</i> , Gentle- man, of Nantwich in 1834 ... ..	— — —
1681.	M <sup>RIS.</sup> ANNE SMITH, to the poor ... ..	70 0 0

<sup>d</sup> Deed dated 25th Feb. 5 Chas. I. [1629-30]. She was the daughter of Lawrence Wright, Gent. of Nantwich; and married John Slade, of Poole, who left a Charity to Wyburny, and was buried at Nantwich, 25th May, 1625.—(Reg.) "Mistress Margaret Slade, [buried at Nantwich] 6 Sept. 1630."—(Ibid.)

<sup>e</sup> From land in Buglawton. <sup>f</sup> See Minshull Pedigree.

<sup>g</sup> Deed dated 20 Aug. 14 Chas. I. [1638.]

<sup>h</sup> See pp. 288, 334.

<sup>i</sup> *Raphe Wilbraham* left all his estate to the poor at the disposal of his executors; who, in addition to £450 for Nantwich, gave to the poor of *Baddeley* £10; *Audlem* £63 6s. 8d.; *Wrenbury* £50; *Wyburny* £50; and *Acton* about £185. To his memory a brass and grave-stone still exist. (See page 322).

<sup>j</sup> These houses were built by Thos. Wilbraham, Esq., in 1637; and were endowed by his son, Roger Wilbraham, as an Almshouse, under circumstances related in "Town Concerns" (Annals) and in the Chapter on Biography. The deed was dated 15th Jan. 1676-7; and the income issued out of lands in Betchton, near Sandbach.

Date.	Donor and purpose.	Amount.
		£ s. d.
1683.	WILLIAM PHYTHIAN, <sup>k</sup> of N., to Grammar School, to educate a child out of Beam Street ... ..	20 0 0
1689.	WILLIAM HODGKIN, <sup>l</sup> Gent. of N., 20 <i>Ac.</i> 3 <i>ro.</i> 24 <i>per.</i> of land in Alvas-ton, to be applied in apprenticing children ... ..	— — —
1700.	ROGER WILBRAHAM, of Townsend, Esq. Annuity to the Minister <sup>m</sup> ...	5 0 0
1701.	RICHARD PEEVER, <sup>n</sup> Apothecary, of N., to buy Sacrament Wine, per ann.	2 0 0
1703-4.	MRS. MARTHA CHORLTON, <sup>o</sup> widow, of Southwark, to the poor (commonly called " <i>the Widows' Mite.</i> ") ... ..	200 0 0
Anti 1704.	ROGER COMBERBACH, <sup>p</sup> by will, proved 8 Oct. 1678, to poor in Hospital and Barker Streets ... ..	40 0 0
	WILLIAM WALLEY, M.D., of N., <sup>q</sup> bread to the poor ... ..	40 0 0
	MRS. ELIZABETH KNIGHTLY, to 10 poor widows in Hospital St. ...	10 0 0
	SIR THOMAS WILBRAHAM, of Woodhey, Bart. <sup>r</sup> ... ..	25 0 0
	MRS. ANNE MINSHULL <sup>s</sup> ... ..	5 0 0
	MR. [Hugh] DELVES, <sup>t</sup> to the poor ... ..	5 0 0
	MRS. [Margaret] HEACOCK, widow, <sup>u</sup> to the poor ... ..	20 0 0
	THOMAS SUCKLEY... ..	4 0 0
MRS. SEAGRAVE <sup>v</sup> ... ..	10 0 0	
RICHARD WICKSTEAD, <sup>w</sup> to the poor ... ..	20 0 0	
THOMAS BRISCOE, to the Grammar School ... ..	5 0 0	
1705.	ROGER WILBRAHAM, of Townsend, Esq., by Deed dated 20 Nov. 1705, an Almshouse for 2 old Maids. The endowment £3, each, per ann. afterwards augmented by <i>Randle Wilbraham</i> , of Nantwich, Esq., in 1721, and by <i>Peter Sprout</i> , Gentleman, of Nantwich, in 1834 ... ..	— — —

<sup>k</sup> "William fithian [buried] Dec. 16, 1683."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>l</sup> "William Hodgkins, Gent., [buried] Jan. 1, 1689-90."—(*Par. Reg.*) Owing to the altered state of the shoe-trade, the number of applications became insufficient to absorb the income of this Charity. Accordingly since 1873, by the approval of the Charity Commissioners, £60 has been applied per annum to provide six exhibitions (free scholars) to the New Grammar School at Nantwich.

<sup>m</sup> See page 302 *note*.

<sup>n</sup> "Nov. 19, 1701. Richard Peever, Apothecary."—(*Bur. Reg.*) The field charged with this £2 is still called "*Peever Meadow.*"

<sup>o</sup> Mrs. Martha Chorlton, (one of the daughters of Sir Edmund Wright) was waited upon by Thomas Maisteron, of Nantwich, then Treasurer of the Wright's Trustees, on 30th Jan. 1702-3, "att her house in the Parke, in Southwarke, upon an intimation given to the Trustees, of a Charitable designe in her towards the poor of Nantpwtch."—(*Treasurer's Book of Wright's Trustees.*) "1717 *Mem.* That Tho. Maisteron esq. in his life time did declare publicly at a meeting of the Trustees in the Church that Mrs. Chorlton was herself an Anabaptist, & did strictly appoint that none should be excluded her charity on account of Dissent fro. ye Church of Engl."—(*Ibid.*)

<sup>p</sup> Roger Comberbach, gave to Wyunbury £10, and to Audlem £10. He was buried at N. 29 Sep. 1678.—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>q</sup> "William Walley, Doctor of Phisick [buried] febr. 4, 1680-1."—(*Par. Reg.*) See Monuments, page 324.

<sup>r</sup> "Sir Thomas Wilbraham de Woodhey Barronett, 19 Aug. 1692."—(*Acton Bur. Reg.*)

<sup>s</sup> Probably "Anne wife of Edwd. Minshull Esq. of Stoake (who was buried) 2 Aug. 1694."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>t</sup> Probably Hugh Delves (son of Hugh Delves, Gent. of Nantwich) who was buried 22 March 1680-1."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>u</sup> "Mrs. Margaret Heacock, widow [buried] 25 Dec. 1691."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>v</sup> "Mrs. Elizabeth Seagrave, widow, [buried] 22 Oct. 1690."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<sup>w</sup> "Richard Wickstead Gent, [buried] 21 April 1681."—(*Par. Reg.*)

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Donor and purpose.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
		£ s. d.
1711.	SIR JOHN CREWE, of Utkinton, Kt., to the poor in Hospital St., land in Wardle, then producing per ann. <sup>x</sup> ... ..	10 0 0
1711.	MRS. ANNE CREWE OFFLEY, <sup>y</sup> of Crewe Hall ... ..	5 0 0
c. 1721.	RANDLE WILBRAHAM, of Nantwich, Esq. ... ..	To the Charity (Blue-cap) School. { 163 0 0 27 0 0 10 0 0 500 0 0
c. 1721.	CATHERINE MAINWARING ... ..	
c. 1721.	JANE EDGELEY <sup>z</sup> ... ..	
c. 1721.	STEPHEN WILBRAHAM, of Nantwich, Esq. ... ..	
Ante 1713	{ THOMAS PROUDMAN, of N., <sup>zi</sup> bread to poor in Welsh Row, per ann. ... ..	1 0 0
	{ MARY MAISTERSON, <sup>a</sup> bread to poor in Pillory St. interest of ... ..	20 0 0
	{ . . . . . GOUGH, producing per annum in 1713 ... ..	1 10 0
1722.	ERMINE DELVES, <sup>b</sup> spinster, of N. property in Love lane { To erect Alms- }	— — —
1738.	MATTHEW MEAKIN, <sup>c</sup> of N. gent. £200 ... .. { houses in Love lane }	
1725.	BRIDGET WOOD, <sup>d</sup> of N., widow, to poor of Beam Street and Wall Lane, the interest of ... ..	350 0 0
1734.	JOHN BROMHALL, <sup>e</sup> of N. & of Hough, Esq., to Charity (Blue-cap) School	50 0 0
1735.	ZACHARIAH TURNPENNY, <sup>f</sup> of N., gent. to Charity (Blue-cap) School	10 0 0
1736.	THOMAS WETTENHALL, of N., to educate four poor boys at the Grammar School, per ann. ... ..	2 0 0
1741.	JANE LOWE, <sup>g</sup> spinster, of N., to buy a Crimson Velvet pulpit cloth and cushion for the Parish Church ( <i>Will</i> ) ... ..	20 0 0
1767.	JOHN CREWE, of Crewe, Esq., Almshouse in Beam Street for seven families; decayed tradesmen having the preference ... ..	— — —
1768.	ANN RATHBONE, <sup>h</sup> widow, to poor widows in Beam St., on Christmas Day ... ..	1 0 0
1775.	JOHN EYTON, to the poor in bread, the interest of ... ..	20 0 0
Ante 1779.	MARY [or <i>Hannah</i> ] HICKSON, <sup>i</sup> of Clotton, to the poor in Barker Street, on St. Thomas Day; interest of ... ..	10 0 0

<sup>x</sup> This Charity, and that of Sir Thos. Crewe, Kt. dated 1633, were annually distributed amongst the poor in Hospital Street, (the native Street of Sir Thomas, and his brother, Sir Ranulph Crewe, Kt., the grandfather of Sir John Crewe) until the year 1733. Thirty-four years after, (i.e. in 1767) John, first Lord Crewe, diverted the donor's original intentions by erecting and endowing therewith an ALMSHOUSE, for married men with families, decayed tradesmen having the preference in *Beam Street*.

<sup>y</sup> Eldest daughter of John Crewe, of Crewe, Esq.; and wife of John Offley, of Madeley, Esq. She died 15th May, 1711; and was buried at Barthomley.

<sup>z</sup> The wife of Samuel Edgeley, Vicar of Acton. She was buried at Acton on 3rd Jan. 1728-9. (*Acton & Nant. Bur. Reg.*)

<sup>zi</sup> In Dec. 1872, twenty shilling loaves were given to poor people in Welsh Row.—(*Parish Magazine*.)

<sup>a</sup> "Mrs. Mary Maisterson vid. 9 May, 1684."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>b</sup> "Ermine Delves, Spinster, buried at Wybnbury 18 April 1729."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>c</sup> "Matthew Meakin, Attorney, 9 Jan. 1740."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>d</sup> "Bridget Wood, buried at Acton, 5 Oct. 1725."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>e</sup> "John Bromhall Esq. 3 April 1735."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>f</sup> "Zachariah Turnpenny Buried at Acton 13 March 1738-9."—(*Nantwich Burial Register*.)

<sup>g</sup> Jane Lowe was the younger daughter of Samuel Lowe, of Newton Hall, Esq., near Middlewich. After her father's death in 1703, she resided in Nantwich until her death, which took place in 1741. She was buried at Middlewich, 10 Sep. 1741. (Information by A. E. Lawson Lowe, Esq., of Shirenewton Hall, near Chepstow). A pedigree of this family, which was in no way connected with the Lowes, Solicitors, of Nantwich, will be found in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, New Edit. Vol. III. p. 182.

<sup>h</sup> *Ann Rathbone*, late wife of Rev. Isaac Rathbone, Grammar Schoolmaster.

<sup>i</sup> In Dec. 1872, poor people in Barker Street received 5s. 11d. each.—(*Parish Magazine*).

Date.	Donor and Purpose.	Amount.		
		£	s.	d.
1793.	ELIZABETH WALKER, spinster, of N., to six maids, each £5 per ann. (called "The Maids' Mite"): total sum ... ..	959	0	0
1827.	THOMAS BECKET, of N., the rent of a pew in Church, to be distributed in bread to widows in Welsh Row, and the two Wood Streets; in 1836 produced per ann. ... ..	2	5	0
1829.	WILLIAM SPROUT, of N. Esq., in augmentation of several Charities, gifts to Rector, Organist, &c.; total sum about ... ..	6000	0	0
1834.	PETER SPROUT, of N. Gentleman, in augmentation of several Charities, gifts to Rector, Clerk, &c.; total about ... ..	2200	0	0
1846.	MARY SWAN, (by will 1837) to poor in Hospital Street; total ... ..	1000	0	0
1851.	GEORGE FOLLIOTT, <sup>j</sup> ESQ., of Vicars Cross, Chester, distributed in coal to poor people in winter time; total amount ... ..	180	0	0
1856.	MARY BENNION, } of Nantwich, spinsters, in augmentation of the ELIZABETH BENNION, <sup>k</sup> } endowment of Wilbraham Almshouses at Welsh Row Head ... ..	738	13	7
1864.	MARY JANE HALL, of Wistaston, in augmentation of Miss Walker's Charity ... ..	200	0	0
1866.	MRS. ANN PEMBERTON, in augmentation of Miss Walker's Charity ... ..	50	0	0
1873.	MR. HYDE, to the poor; (applied to the building of Wood St. School) ... ..	100	0	0

These Charitable Trusts have been vested either in the Churchwardens as representatives of the Parish, or in a kind of corporate body known as the Wright's Trustees.

Of those *now* in the hands of the Churchwardens, are—

- |                  |                                   |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Praer's Obit. | 4. Peover's.                      | 7. Meakin and Delves. |
| 2. Slade's.      | 5. Consolidated Charities (1704.) | 8. Hickson's.         |
| 3. Harwar's.     | 6. Proudman's.                    | 9. Swan's.            |
|                  | 10. Foliott's.                    |                       |

The Charities *now* under the management of the Wright's Trustees, are—

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Sir Edmund Wright's, Almshouse.  | 6. Elizabeth Walker's Maids' Mite. |
| 2. Hodgkin's, Apprenticing Charity. | 7. William Sprout's.               |
| 3. Mrs. Chorlton's, Widows' Mite.   | 8. Peter Sprout's.                 |
| 4. Meakin and Delves', Almshouse.   | 9. Miss Hall and Mrs. Pemberton's. |
| 5. Bridget Wood's Charity.          | 10. Mary and Elizabeth Bennion's.  |

I have a list of the Churchwardens for Nantwich from 1568 to 1789 (a few names only wanting) which, however, is too long for insertion; but, a complete list of the Wright's Trustees, which will be of interest as giving the names of leading townsmen, contemporary at intervals during the past 245 years, is here appended.

<sup>j</sup> In Dec. 1872, fifty-three poor people each received 2 cwt. of Coal.—(*Parish Magazine*).

<sup>k</sup> This lady largely augmented the income of Nantwich living. To the above long list of names may be added Mr. Thomas Cawley, who gave the present gas-standards in the Church; Mrs. Evans; Mrs. Kent; and others whose names have already been mentioned in the foregoing pages as benefactors to the Church.



## NAMES OF THE WRIGHT'S TRUSTEES.\*

The original Trustees appointed by Sir Edmund Wright by deed dated 20th Aug. 1638, were as follows:—

Thomas Maisteron, Esq.	Lawrence Wright, the elder, Gent.
Thomas Wilbraham, Esq.	Randle Church, the elder, Gent.
Alexander Walthall, the younger, Esq.	Jeffrey Massey, Gent.
Thomas Bavand, Esq.	Ralph Woodnoth, Gent.†
Roger Wright, the elder, of the High Town, Gent.	Richard Wright, of the Stone, Gent.
Richard Wright, son and heir apparent of Roger Wright, Gent.	William Grafton, Gent.
	John Saring, Clerk. [Minister of Nantwich Church].

The first Indenture for perpetuating the Trust is dated 7th April, 1666, when *Richard Wright* and *Jeffrey Massey*, being the only surviving trustees,‡ elected the following gentlemen:—

Thomas Maisteron, Esq.	William Walley, Gent.
Richard Walthall, Esq.	Richard Wright, Gent. son and heir apparent of Matthew Wright, Gent.
Thomas Wettenhall, Esq.	Thomas Wright, Gent.
Randle Church, Gent.	Robert Parker, Gent.
Richard Wright, Gent. son and heir apparent of the said Richd. Wright.	Richard Jackson, Clerk. [Minister of Nantwich Church].
Sabboth Church, Gent.	

By Indenture dated 1st Nov. 1681, *Richard Wright*, then Clerk, Batchelor of Divinity; *Richard Wright*, Gent.; and *Robert Parker*, Gent, being the only surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

Edward Minshull, Esq.	Thomas Wickstead, Gent.	James Wright, Gent.
Richard Walthall, Esq.	John Brock, Gent.	Richard Wright, Gent.
Thomas Maisteron, Esq.	John Goldsmith, Gent.	Roger Stone, Gent.,
	Roger Wright, Gent.	Apothecary.

By Indenture dated 5 Oct. 1702, *Thomas Maisteron*, *Richard Wright*, B.D., *Roger Stone*, *Roger Wright*, the only surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

Randle Wilbraham, Esq.	Clutton Wright, Esq.	Sabboth Church, Gent.
Richard Walthall, Esq.	William Jackson, Doctor in Physic, Gent.	Hugh Delves, Gent.
Thomas Wettenhall, Esq.	Thomas Wickstead, Gent.	John Comberbach, Gent.

\* In the weekly issues of the *Whitchurch Herald* from 25 Nov. 1871, to 27 Jan. 1872, Mr. Thos. Dunning, of Nantwich, printed a series of abstracts of Indentures, Leases, Deeds, &c., relating to the Charities in the hands of the Wright's Trustees, from papers which had long been in the possession of the Pratchett family of this town. Although these articles excited little or no interest in the town when they appeared, they will be of the greatest service to anyone who will undertake to write a full account of Nantwich Charities. From these articles, and from deeds preserved in the Deed chest of the Trustees this list of names is obtained.

† Ralph Woodnoth, probably never executed this deed, being buried on the 17th Aug. 1638.

‡ These gentlemen were the only acting Trustees for several years prior to 1666; and it is remarkable how soon they assumed an independent position contrary to the express wish of the Founder.

By Indenture dated 26 Aug. 1717, *Randle Wilbraham, Clutton Wright, Richard Walthall, Roger Wright, and John Comberbach*, being the only five surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

William Maisterson, Esq.	John Bromhall, Gent.
Ralph Horton, Esq.	Matthew Meakin, Gent.
Jonathan Goldsmith, Esq.	Richard Stone, Gent.
Roger Wilbraham (son and heir apparent of Randle Wilbraham,) Gent.	George Gibbons, Clerk [Rector].

By Indenture dated 24th Nov. 1732, *Roger Wilbraham, William Maisterson, Clutton Wright, John Bromhall, and Matthew Meakin*, being the only five surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

Thomas Brooke, Clerk, LL.D. [Rector].	Thomas Williams, Gent.
Peter Walthall, Esq.	Thomas Wickstead, Gent.
Edward Wettenhall, Esq.	George Audley, Gent.
Matthew Wright, (son and heir apparent of Clutton Wright,) Gent.	Richard Maisterson, Gent.

By Indenture dated 24th Nov. 1745, *Roger Wilbraham, Edward Wettenhall, Thomas Brooke, Thomas Wickstead, Thomas Williams, Richard Maisterson, and George Audley*, being the only seven surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

Thomas Maisterson, Esq.	Thomas Pratchett, Gent.	Alexander Elcocke, Gent.
John Hall, Surgeon, Gent.	Ashton Williams, Gent.	Thomas Yoxall, Gent.

By Indenture dated 5th Dec. 1761, *Thomas Maisterson, John Hall, Alexander Elcock, Thomas Wickstead, Thomas Yoxall, and Thomas Pratchett*, being the only six surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

George Wilbraham, Esq.*	Plant Maddocks, Gent.	John Oulton, the elder, Gent.
John Hall, Surgeon Gent.	Thomas Williams, Gent.	William Hewitt, Gent.
	George Payne, Gent.	

By Indenture dated 24th Nov. 1779, *George Wilbraham, Alexander Elcock, Thos. Yoxall, George Payne, William Hewitt*, being the only five surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

Samuel Barrow, Esq.	William Phillips, silk-mercier.
James Tomkinson, the younger, Esq.	Joseph Skerrett, upholsterer.
George Garnett, Gent., cheesefactor.	Richard Liversage, Ironmonger.
Richard Wicksted, Surgeon, Gent.	William Kent, Apothecary.
Thomas Yoxall, the younger, Gent.	George Dutton, Ironmonger.
William Wrench, Surgeon, Gent.	Benjamin Hewitt, Merchant.

By Indenture dated 26th Dec. 1817, *James Tomkinson, William Wrench, and Joseph Skerrett*, being the only three surviving Trustees, the two former of which declined to act, elected the following:—

\* Never executed this Deed of Trust.

William Sprout.	John Jasper Garnett.	Edward Kent.
Benjamin Rodenhurst.	John Downes, Junr.	William Acton.
Richard Liversage.	Samuel Walton.	Thomas Downing.
William Kent.	John Pratchett.	John Richardson.

By Indenture dated — 1829, *Joseph Sherrett, William Sprout, Richard Liversage, William Kent, John Downes, William Acton,* and *John Richardson,* being the only seven Trustees surviving, elected the following:—

William Welsby, Attorney.	George Cappur, Cheesefactor.
William Massey, Silversmith.	John Eyton, Banker.
Thomas Deriemer, Grocer.	Henry Tomlinson.

By Indenture dated 31st Oct. 1839, *William Massey, Thomas Deriemer, George Cappur,* and *John Eyton,* being four surviving Trustees, the rest being deceased, except John Richardson and Henry Tomlinson, who had resigned, elected the following:—

William Ellison, Wine Merchant.	William Salmon, of Mount Pleasant, Esq.
Joseph Henry Kent, Surgeon.	Thomas Bower, Cotton-spinner.
William Hall, Wine Merchant.	Thomas Williamson, Surgeon.
James Latham, Maltster.	Edward Hounsum Griffiths, Bookseller and Stationer.
Richard Martin, Grocer.	

The last Trust Deed was executed on 22nd June, 1866, when *William Hall,* (who resigned at the same time) *Joseph Henry Kent, Richard Martin,* of Acton, *Thomas Bower,* the elder, (late of Nantwich, then of Hankelow), Gent., *Thomas Williamson,* and *Edward Hounsum Griffiths,* being the only surviving Trustees, elected the following:—

THOMAS CAWLEY, of Nantwich, Ironmonger.
JOHN SUTTON NIXON, of Nantwich, Currier and Leather Merchant.
EDWARD SWINFEN BELYSE, of Springfield, Nantwich, M.D.
HOLLAND BLADES, of Stapeley, Chemist.
WILLIAM WALLEY DOWNES, of Nantwich, Esq., Banker.
FREDERICK WADE HOBSON, Gent., Manager of the District Bank.
THOMAS BOWER, the younger, Architect, of Nantwich.
JOHN MARTIN, of Nantwich, Chemist.

### WRIGHT'S ALMSHOUSE.

Edmund Wright, Esquire, one of the Aldermen of London, (afterwards, in 1641, Lord Mayor,) "out of his pious intention and charitable disposition towards the poor inhabitants of Wich Malbank," conveyed by deed dated 20th Aug. 1638 (14 Car. I.) to thirteen Trustees, his newly-erected Almshouse at Hospital Street end, and "all that parcell of land lying and being on the back side of the same Almshouse and containing 1 ro. 2 per. or thereabouts; and "a Yearly Rent Charge of £32 per ann. issuing from a farm called *Ryefields* in the parish of Hillingdon, co. Middlesex;" the whole "to be held in trust to the uses, intents, and purposes expressed and declared" by the Founder as follows:—\*

\* The original "Deed Gift," which is too lengthy for insertion here, is still preserved in the Deed chest of the Trustees; together with a copy of the same.

- 1.—The Almshouse to be “for the use and benefit of six poor men”\* of the age of fifty years at least, natives of the town, and belonging to the Church of England.†
- 2.—The Trustees to pay each almsman 20s. quarterly; and provide on Christmas Day each pensioner with a new shirt, a pair of stockings, and a pair of shoes, at a total cost of 40s.
- 3.—The Trustees to meet at the Almshouse every year on the 24th November, at 8 a.m., and view the Almsmen; then repair unto the Church of Wich Malbank, together with as many of the said Almsmen as should be able to go there to hear divine Service and a Sermon; after which, the said Trustees should have a Dinner of the value of 20s., and be attended by the said Almsmen, and after dinner, they should read unto the Almsmen then present certain “Orders,” (see below), and punish by suspension of the allowance or expulsion from the Almshouse any who should offend against those Orders.

The 24th November, which was the anniversary of the Founder’s baptism, (see p. 338), henceforward became a red-letter day in the town, known as the “*Almsmen’s Feast*.” In 1658 the “Dinner for ye Feoffees and Almsmen wth them” cost £1; and in 1664 Mr. Gabriel Stringer, of the “Red Lion,” provided the dinner for nineteen shillings! This feast, which in 1799 was held at the “*Bowling Green*,” has for many years been held at the “*Crown*” and the “*Lamb*” Inns in alternate years. A quart of ale has been allowed to each Almsman at the dinner since 1712; besides other quantities of “strong drink” paid for by generous gentlemen, who were often witnesses of the third “Order” being violated before the conclusion of the old men’s feast-day.

According to a Memorandum in the Treasurer’s Book, dated 24th Nov. 1793, owing to “the high price of provisions and other causes,” the Trustees appropriated 22s. out of other Charities towards the Dinner; in 1797, the sum of £3 3s.; and in 1825 the following sums:—

0	10	6	from Sir Edmund Wright’s Charity (then in debt).
0	10	6	„ Mrs. Chorlton’s (the Widows’ Mite).
3	11	6	„ Hodgkin’s Apprenticing Charity.
0	10	6	„ Miss Walker’s (the Maids’ Mite).
2	1	5	„ Meakin and Delves’.
0	10	6	„ Bridget Woods’.

£7 14 11

It is perhaps to this period of the history of the great Feast Day that the custom began of inviting tradesmen of the town to dine with the Trustees; and, for the better maintenance of this Charity dinner, one of the Trustees, Wm. Sprout, Esq., left the sum of £5 per ann. At a meeting of the Trustees held at the Savings’ Bank on 16th Nov. 1877, it was agreed that the *Trustees’ Annual Dinner* be discontinued; the Almsmen having their feast as heretofore.

The foundation Deed further directs:—

\* Between the years 1800 and 1840, some of the houses were kept vacant for long periods; in consequence of great expense in repairs.

† On the death of John Cooper, Almsman, in 1835, Peter Bolis, the only candidate for the vacancy, was not admitted because he was not a Churchman. He was a candidate at five different times; and was at last elected, 8th Dec. 1836, having before that time conformed.

- 4.—The Trustees to give “the Ministers that should preach the Sermon” (on the 24th Nov.) “10s. for his pains;” and to reserve £4 yearly for gowns for the Almsmen to be given them every second year.\*
- 5.—That Roger Wright be appointed Treasurer for life; and keep accounts in a book which should be prepared and kept for that purpose; and after his death the Trustees to elect a Treasurer.
- 6.—After the displacing or death of an Almsman, notice to be given on the next Lord’s Day, in the Church, by the “minister” of the vacancy, and of the election of another Almsman “upon the Thursday se’ennight after such notice.”
- 7.—Candidates for these “places” must be single men; and must produce certificates that they were “born in the town; above the age of 50; poor and unable to get their living by labour; of good honest behaviour and conversation, and a professor of the Religion and Doctrine of the Church of England.”
- 8.—If several competitors for one vacancy, they must draw lots, in the presence of five Trustees, the successful one being he who drew the lot upon which was written “Praise God for thy Founder.”
- 9.—A candidate of the name of *Wright* to be admitted without casting of lots, in preference to anyone else.

Out of 197 poor men who have been recipients of this Charity since the erection of the Almshouse, fifteen have had the name of *Wright*. The last, Robert Wright, aged 64, was admitted 31st Aug. 1837, and died the following year. John Wright, aged 73, was a candidate in Nov. 1844, but was not elected. It is not stated why.

The Deed concludes with a long proviso for the appointment of new Trustees; of which the following extract gives all that is necessary to be known.

“The said Edmund Wright did further declare that within six months after the death of eight of the said Trustees before named or thereafter to be named, the five surviving Trustees should nominate and elect eight other able and sufficient men in the place or rooms of the said deceased Trustees where-in such who were or should be of the kindred or Name of the said Edmund Wright should be preferred and chosen before strangers.” &c.

### EMANUEL.

“Orders sett downe and decreed by the Right Worshipfull Sir Edmund Wright Knight borne in this Towne, sometime Lord Maior of the Cittie of London, and Sole Founder of this Almes-house which are to bee observed and kept by all and every person and persons that shall be Elected, Admitted and Received to take the benefit of his Bounty and Charity in this House.†

I. It is Ordered and Decreed that all and every person and Persons that shall be elected, &c. shall Professe and bee of the present Faith now maintayned in the Church of England and shall duely frequent the House of God and his Holy Ordinances soe long as God shall bee pleased to give him or their Health and Ability of Body.‡

II. It is Decreed that all and every such Almsman or Almsmen shall every morning and evening daily humble him and themselves in prayers & Devotions before Almighty God, and shall amongst other petitions pray for the flourishing estate of this Commonwealth, blesse God for their Founder and pray for his Posterity.

\* Gowns and Hats have been delivered to the Almsmen once in *three* years since the year 1771. An Almsman in his dress is given in the illustration of the Gateway to the Almshouses. It represents William Bramhall, who was admitted on 22nd May, 1856, and died on 23rd April, 1883, aged 85 years; having been an Almsman close upon 27 years.

† These orders are taken from “*A true Copy of the Original; renewed 1823.*” Printed by A. Fox, Nantwich.

‡ “1702 paid for repairinge the Almsmens Seats in Church. . . £00 03s. 00d.”—(*Treasurer’s Book*).

“1728 Nov. 18. Paid Jo. Illidge for mending a Desk in the Almsho. & repairinge Almsman Seat in Church, . . . . . £00 02s. 06d.”—(*Ibid*).

“1782 Feb. 11. It was ordered that Richard Wicksted, Almsman, should be suspended for the space of 3 months, and his allowance stopped for absence from Church and other misdemeanours.”—(*Ibid*).

III. It is Decreed that all and every Almes-man and Almes-men forbear swearing, Drunkenness, and all such scandalous Vices, and shall carry and demean him and themselves Christianly, truly, & peaceably, and shall not willingly doe or suffer to bee done any wrong or prejudice to this Almshouse or to any the appurtenances thereof.\*

IV. It is decreed that all and every Almesman, &c. shall Reside and Inhabit in such rooms and parts thereof as shall be Allotted unto him or them : &c. And shall not suffer any other person or persons to Lodge therein Except such as the Feoffees and Trustees of this house, &c. shall think fitt to allowe to attend those Almesmen that shall be Sick, Blind, Lame or impotent.†

V. It is Decreed that upon the death or Expulsion of any of the said Almesmen, The new Gowne Cognizance &c. which shall be delivered to any Almesman or Almesmen within two years next before his or their Death or Expulsion, shall be delivered to the Treasurer of the said Almshouse for the time being, and shall bee by him delivered to such as shall bee next Elected and Received into the Roomes or places that shall soe happen to become Void.

VI. It is Decreed and Ordered That the poor men borne and to bee borne in the Towne of Wichmalbank is to bee Understood of such men onely, who being soe borne, are also knowne to the Feoffees and Governours of this House to have Resided and Dwelled three Years at the Least Last past in the said Towne before hee or they can bee capable of the benefit of this Foundation.‡

VII. It is Decreed that all and every Almesman of this house, if hee or they shall bee able shall walke Orderly in their Gowns and other garments allowed them by their Founder to the Parish Church of Wichmalbank before the dead Bodies of all such Persons especially as shall bee of consanguinity or Allyance to the said Founder : And also before such other persons of Quality as the Feoffees & Trustees of this House or any three of them shall think fitt to Appoint.

VIII. It is Decreed that none of the Almesmen of this House shall Begg any Almes of any Person or persons whatsoever But shall either Labour in some honest Employment as hee or they shall bee able or else Content themselves with the Allowance given by the said Founder, And other such free helpes as it shall please God to vouchsafe unto him or them by good Benefactors ; All which shall bee putt into a Box and Distributed amongst them by the hands of the Treasurer of this House as hee in his Discretion shall think fitt.

IX. It is Decreed that none, &c. shall either marry and take to Wife or Harbour and keep any Woman as an Harlot or give any Entertaynement unto any Vagrant person or persons into his or their House or Houses that may any way bee offensive or Chargeable to the said Towne.

X. It is Lastly Determined and Decreed, That if any of the Almesmen of this House shall breake any of the Orders and Decrees aforesaid, That then such Offender or Offenders shall be immediately Punished by Fyne, Suspension or Expulsion off & from his or their Place or Places by the Feoffees and Trustees &c. And upon Suspension or Expulsion another fitt Person or Persons to bee Elected and Placed in his or their Roomes or Places within one and twenty Days then next Following.

Finally, the Founder earnestly entreats all the Feoffees and Governours of this House As they tender their Truth and Trust to God and him That they will have all due and strict regard in their Elections to the Directions of his Deed and these Orders well weighing and considering every Qualification therein mentioned giving Capacity to Election And rendering the most equal Construction and just Prelation of each said Qualification to the uttermost and best of their Judgments and Consciences That soe God may bee glorified The Feoffees and Trustees duties discharged and the truly Poor Comforted."

\* 1828 Nov. 24. Peter Moss was fined one quarter's salary for getting drunk and also abusing in gross language Mr. John Berks, residing at Church's Mansion. Other instances of fines and suspensions for drunkenness occur.

† 1735 Nov. 26. Samuel Lea had 10s. of his quarterly pension stopped "for Lying out of his Almshouse."

‡ 1745 June 24. Willm. Topps pay stop'd Because he would not Inhabit."

‡ In 1835 Joseph Sant was admitted, but received no pension from Wright's Charity for three years, not having resided in Nantwich the prescribed time.

*Extracts from the Treasurers' (Wright's Trustees) Accounts.*

"*Mem.* In the year of our lord God 1655 Richard Wright, of Wich Malbank, son of Roger Wright, one of the Trustees put in a faire Byble fixed unto a Moovinge Deske in the house of Henry Wright one of the Almesmen to be preserved and kept by the present & future Almesmen for the use of the Hospital June 1665."

"In Witness [where] of  
Will. Grafton."

		£	s.	d.
1656.	July 24.	2 horse load of lyme .. ..	2s.	8d.
		2 horse load of sand .. ..	0s.	4d.
		roo of cou'inge Tyle & carr. ..	1s.	8d.
"	"	pd. John Hill and his labourer for 3 dayes at the Almshouses & the walls there ..	00	05 06
"	"	pd. for makinge the Morter & Berridge [ <i>i.e.</i> allowance for beer] and a labourer to help at the walls wth stones .. ..	00	01 02
"	"	To three men two dayes for clesning the ditch, before the Almshouse, & removinge earth before ye walles .. ..	00	05 00
"	Agt. Christide next.	Paid now for xvj yards and a halfe of Lynan cloth to make the 6 Almsmen Shirts, xvjs. vjd., and for making the 6 Shirts .. ..	2s.	0d.
"	"	Paid to Mr. Jackson for his Anivrsary Sermon .. ..	00	10 00
"	Dec. 23.	Paid Thomas Proudman for six pair of Shoes for the Almesmen .. ..	00	18 00
"	"	Paid Thomas Langley for six pair of white Kersey stocking for the Almesmen at 19d. the pr.	00	09 06
"	"	Paid for a Diner for the ffeoffees and Almesmen 24th Nov. 1656 .. ..	01	00 00
1657.	Nov. 24.	Paid Robert Bins cloathier for 27 yards & halfe to make Gownes for <i>five</i> * Almesmen at 2s. 10d. the yard, abating 5d. at all; and six yards Minikin att 20d. ye yard, all† ..	04	07 06
"	Dec. 10.	Paid Edward firith for makinge of five new Gownes for 5 of the Almesmen & hee found thrid, & Canvas for the Capes .. ..	00	08 00
1661.	March 25.	Paid John Wright, Reginolde Blagg, Richard Jeffes, Richard Cheswis, Richard Symons, & William Cartwright, the six Almesmen all nowe liveinge in the Almshouse to eu'ye of them their severall Quarters pay before hand untill the 24th of June next 20s. a pece .. ..	06	00 00
"Mem. The six almesmen abousd. freely gave eu'ye of them 2s. a peece vnto Margerye Salmon beinge Neice to the founder to relieve her necessitie at present, xij <sup>s</sup> ."				
1661.	June 24.	The usual quarterly payment to the six Almesmen, "whereof 5s." was stopped from William Cartwright "for being severall tymes Drunck; and 2/6 was given to Joseph Robinson towards Cartwrights debt; and the other 2/6 given to Cartwright himself."		
"	Sep. 30.	"Wm. Cartwright the sixt Almesman whoe for his Grosse Misdemean <sup>rs</sup> stands for prsent expelled or suspended. And the old Gowne & this Michas. Quarters pay to be disposed of at the discretion of the Treasurer & ffeoffees."		
"	Sep. 30.	"Whereof giuen freely in Charity to the suspended Almesman Cartwright .. ..	00	02 00
"	"	Also given Margerye Salmon Neice to the founder beinge nowe a widowe, aged, & in great pouertie towards her livelihood forth of the said vacant Quarteridge .. ..	00	05 00
"	Nov.	Paid Sam Salmon & Jo. Poole for making 6 Capps .. ..	00	03 00

\* There had been a death this year,—Laurence Oulton; and the election of another Almsman was suspended a quarter for necessary repairs. Total income for 1657—£32; total Disbursements—£30 16s. 8d.

† In 1738, one hundred years after the founding of the Hospital, the cost of clothing was as follows:—

6 pairs of shoes .. ..	£1	4	0	} Total .. ..	£9	8	2
6 shirts, thread and making .. ..	1	0	9				
6 pairs stockings .. ..	0	9	0				
6 gowns and hats .. ..	6	2	5				
Making gowns and hats .. ..	0	12	0				

In 1838, two hundred years after, the cost of clothing for five men, one house being then vacant, was as follows:—

To Robert Massey for 5 pair shoes .. ..	£2	7	6	} Total .. ..	£14	19	3
Henry Tomlinson for 5 Cloaks & Hats .. ..	10	10	0				
Thos. Shaw, for Shirts, Cravats and Hose .. ..	2	1	9				

					£	s.	d.
1661.	Xmas.	To Margery Salmon, out of ye vacant Quartridge	..	..	..	00	05 00
"	"	To Wm. Cartwright ye present suspended Almesman	..	..	..	00	00 06
1662.	March 25.	To Margery Salmon out of ye vacant Quartridge	..	..	..	00	03 06
		To Wm. Cartwright ye suspended Almesman in his great want & p <sup>o</sup> uertie	..	..	..	00	01 00
		[Cartwright was admitted again, received his gown and a quarter's pay June 1662; but was finally expelled about June, 1663].					
"	Dec. 24.	To Margery Salmon, aged & poor as aforesd...	..	..	..	00	02 00
1663.	March 25.	To Margery Salmon aged and poor as aforesd.	..	..	..	00	01 00
"	Sept. 29.	To Margery Salmon, &c.	..	..	..	00	02 00
1664.	June 24.	To Marg. Salmon, &c.	..	..	..	00	02 00

It is very remarkable that Sir Edmund Wright's niece should have been in destitute circumstances scarcely twenty-five years after the founding of the Almshouse. Messrs. Lysons state that "the six almesmen contributed 2s. each to relieve her necessities in 1661, and agreed to give her a further allowance of 5s. a quarter."—(*Cheshire*, p. 711). The latter statement, it will be seen, is incorrect. Margery Salmon received at various times (all enumerated above) between the years 1661 and 1664, certain sums out of the funds of this Charity, allowed by the Treasurer, Richard Wright, (who at that time was almost sole Trustee, and was a distant relation of the aged widow), during the suspension of the incorrigible Cartwright.

1668.	March 20.	For a load of lyme to make up the gate & sett the worke over the door	..	..	..	00	01 04
"	"	To Mr. Banks in pte. of ye Summe agreed on for setting up the Armes &c. over the door	..	..	..	01	00 00
"	"	To John Johnson, Mason, in pte. for his stone-worke ouer the door & for the gate	..	..	..	01	00 00
"	"	More to the sd. Jo. Johnson & his man in full to him for their worke	..	..	..	00	14 06
"	"	For some lead & pins for ye saide worke	..	..	..	00	01 01
"	"	More to Mr. Banks in full for his stone worke 10s., and for painting & goulding the same 13s. 4d.	..	..	..	01	03 04

One of the first acts of the Trustees elected in 1666 was to erect the present Stone Gateway (see illustration) and Coat of Arms with the inscription carved in stone as follows:—

*Arms*: Sable, a chevron between three bulls' heads cabossed, Argent.\*

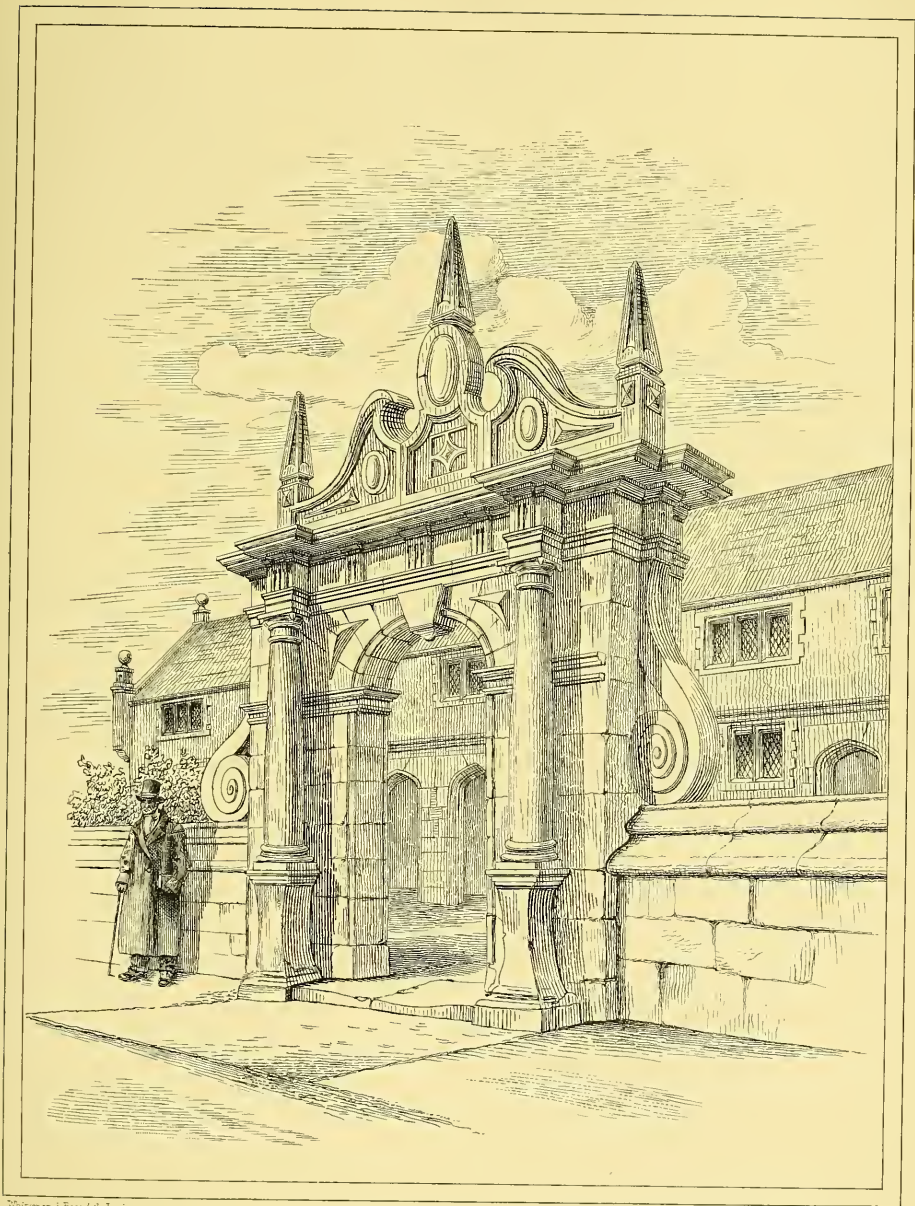
*Crest*: A bull's head on a wreath.

"SR. EDMVND WRIGHT KT. BORNE  
IN THIS TOWNE SOLE FOVNDER OF  
THIS ALMESHVSE A'NO DOM. 1638."

To pay for these additions, one almshouse was kept vacant from Christmas, 1666, to March, 1670; and for half a year, three houses were kept empty. The gateway and front wall, which were originally built nearer to the houses than at present, were taken down and re-built in their present position in the year 1837.

\* These Arms belonged to the ancient family of *Bulkeley*. (Cf. p. 285). From the fact that the *Wrights*, of Nantwich, (who are said in the old pedigrees to have descended from the family of *Bitchley* or *Bulkeley*;) do not appear in any of the *Cheshire Visitations*, it is believed they had no right to use these Arms. In a note in Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 695, it is assumed on the evidence of this stone carving, that Sir Edmund Wright improperly used the *Bulkeley Coat*. It may be, however, that the Trustees of 1666, and not Sir Edmund, are responsible for the presence of these Arms on the Almshouse.





W. H. Stanger & Co. London.

GATEWAY TO WRIGHT'S ALMSHOUSES.



	£	s.	d.
1668. Sep. 29. For 800 setts for a hedge att further end of the garden 4/0, and for 600 more 3/- .. ..	00	07	00
" " For 2 days work to set them, & to make the mudd wall fit for them .. ..	00	03	04
" " For six burne [bundles] of Thornes ijs., & for a day for 2 men to berre the Thornes in the gutter by the Almshous xxjd. .. ..	00	03	09
1669. Sep. 29. To John Dutton for laying the Gate in oyle & for poynting all the stone worke of the portall	00	04	00
1674. Lady Day. "William Fleete dying vpo. 3 dayes before the quarter end, whereby he was pvented of his Quarter's pay, Save only giuen To his poore diseased aged wife and two diseased children towards his buriall &c. £00 06s. 08d."			

This is one of the instances of *married* pensioners. His poor widow was one of the first inhabitants of Roger Wilbraham's Almshouses. Her burial is thus recorded:—

"1679. July 24. Jane Fleete, wid. Almeswoman."—(Par. Reg.)

The following Mem. is entered under date 2nd Jan. 1717—18:—

"It was agreed by a good majority of the Trustees then present y<sup>t</sup> hereafter no married person shall from henceforth be admitted an Almsman in Sr. Edmd. Wright's Hospitall, the same being contrary to ye declar'd Will & direction of ye founder: notwithstanding that such direction may have sometimes been dispensed with by some former Trustees."

"John Bromhall, Treasurer."

"At a Vestry Meeting Aug. 8, 1800, it was judged highly necessary that a proper woman should be appointed to the care of the Almsmen on account of their Inability and frequent Indispositions; when the daughter of Thos. Wicksted was elected, and that the vacant house should be repaired for her to inhabit for her care & attention to them, and that one of the women who receives the Widows' Mite should live with her." Her successors were Mary Wright and Elizabeth Wright, the latter of whom died about 1840.

1678. Nov. Ginen to a poor kinswoman of the founders .. ..	00	02	00
1682. March 25. Paid for binding & clasping the Bible .. ..	00	04	00
1685. June 25. "Mem. Roger Stone, of Wich Malbank one of the Trustees putt into the Almshouse a Booke of Comon. Prayer to be perserued & kept by the present & future Almsmen for the vse of the Hospitall."			
1703. April 2. For a bottle of Sack at ye election of New Trustees (omitted in last yeares disbursements) ..	00	02	06
1712. Nov. 24. Paid for Ale which the Almsmen had .. ..	00	01	00
1728. Nov. 16. Paid Mr. Jonathan Taylor Binding a Bible, which is at the Almshouses .. ..	00	03	00
1731. Sep. 29. Pd. for a Coffen for Richd. Lynn (deceased almsman) .. ..	00	08	00
Gave Ale to funerall .. ..	00	01	00
1733. May 12. Paid Mr. John Tench for hire for a horse to Hough to get Mr. Bromhall to execute the new Trust Deed .. ..	00	01	00
1750. Jan. 29. Receivd. of Mark Topham for goods sold that were John Dean's an Almsman deceased ..	00	08	02
" " " Paid for Coffen for John Dean .. ..	00	08	00
" " " 30. Pd. for Ale for the funerall .. ..	00	03	00
1758. Ap. 5. Pd Jno. Hassall (being the Deputy Overseer) for attendance on Bowers (Almsman) when Ill 3 weeks 6s.; Bowers Coffin & Church Fees 9s. 2d.; Ale for 3 men to carrie him to Church 4s.; Saml. Bowerey who was chose in his room rod. .. ..	01	00	00
(Which was Bowers' quarters' pension due at Midsummer, had he lived till then).			
1768. Sep. 29. Pd. J. Davenport for 6 pair of Shoes, Leather being now much dearer .. ..	01	07	00
1769. Xmas. Pd. 6. pr. Shooes .. ..	01	10	00
1772. Michaelmas. William Bowerey, one of the Almsmen (by Old Age) was so reduced that he could not assist himself; so he was removed Oct. 16th into the poor house; and John Vaughan was elected in Bowereys Room."			

	£	s.	d.
1783. June 24. Fined 5 Almsmen for suffering the wall to be injured & refusing to tell by whom it was done	00	12	06
.. Sep. 29. Stopt with Richd. Wicksted (Almsman) the Repairs of his Windows which he negligently broke .. .. .	00	01	02
1795. Nov. 24. " At Anniversary Meeting in the Vestry it was resolved, that in consideration of the very high price of Grain & all other Provisions, a sixpenny loaf of house-hold bread shall be distributed every week to each of Sir Ed. Wright's Almsmen, till further orders."			
The distribution commenced on Sat. Dec. 5th.			" Rich. Wicksted, (Treasurer.)
1795. Dec. 21. Paid Clerk Burchall for proclaiming Wright's Election & other Meetings of the Trustees..	00	01	04
1827. " Mem. Nov. 24. Messrs. Broughton & Garnett Bankers having become bankrupt on 13th Nov. 1826, and being indebted to the Charities in a Balance of Cash in their hands with interest thereon £136 7s. 4d., and in Nantwich Notes in the Treasurer's hands £13, making together the sum of £149 7s. 4d. The Treasurer in the succeeding accounts has only credited the Charities proportionably with the Dividends he has received on that account."			" Wm. Acton, Treasurer."

The Income and Expenses for the year 1877 were as follows:—

<i>Income</i> :	One year's Rent Charge, due Sep. 1877 .. .. .	£32	0	0
<i>Expenditure</i> :	One year's Pension to 6 Almsmen, at 20s. each per quarter	..	24	0
	Rector for Sermon .. .. .	..	0	10
	For Anniversary Dinner .. .. .	..	1	0
	Hats and Cloaks (once in three years) .. .. .	..	11	5
	Six pairs of Boots @ 13s. 6d. each .. .. .	..	4	1
	Clothing (Shirts and Stockings) .. .. .	..	2	3
	Water Rate 6s. per ann., Repairs various sums.. .. .	..	..	..
	Balance against this Charity 24th Dec. 1877 .. .. .	..	£37	9

Owing to the insufficiency of income, the endowment being exactly the same now as it was 245 years ago, some of the pensioners in the early part of this century quitted the Almshouse for the Workhouse; while others died in great poverty and neglect. Mr. William Sprout's gift in 1829, however, increased each Almsman's pay £10 per annum; and the pensioners since that time have been better sustained than at any former period of the history of this Hospital.

Sir Roger Wilbraham's ALMSHOUSE at Welsh Row Head, was originally a low brick building of one story, the only ornament, in the centre, being a stone tablet of the Arms of Wilbraham, of Dorfold, and the date 1613. It stood close to the road, and had a garden behind divided into six plots. When Partridge wrote the six almsmen were supplied with a warm gown faced with blue, and a cap, once every two years, a pair of shoes every year, and forty shillings per annum. Of late years a sum of money has been allowed, which the almspeople expend themselves in clothing.

The Almshouse was re-built in 1870, by John (*now* Lord) Tollemache on the site of the former garden plots, in two groups of three houses each. These comfortable dwellings of two stories, with their gardens in front, are an ornament to the west end of the town. The inmates are old married men; and on their deaths their widows are allowed to remain during their widowhood, if they conduct themselves properly.

The WIDOWS' HOSPITAL and OLD MAIDS' ALMSHOUSE in Welsh Row, the foundation of Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Townsend, are sustained by his descendant, G. F. Wilbraham, Esq.

The ALMSHOUSE at Beam Street-end is sustained by Hungerford Lord Crewe, of Crewe Hall.

## The Grammar School.



ALTHOUGH the exact date of the foundation of Nantwich Grammar School has not occurred, it is certain that the school was established more than three hundred years ago.\* The Chantry Roll of 1548 (page 282) alludes to the necessity there was for such a school; and in many places the revenues of the suppressed Chantries and Free Chapels were, by Act of Parliament I Edw. VI. c. 14, applied to the establishing of Grammar Schools. This, however, was not the case at Nantwich. Some years must have elapsed before one was commenced; or Gerard, the herbalist, who was born at Nantwich in 1545, would probably not have been sent to school "to Wisterson, two miles from the Nantwich."† Webb, in his "Itinerary of Nantwich Hundred" c. 1621, (King's Vale Royal) says:—

"The school was founded by Mr. John Thrush and Mr. Thomas Thrush, of London, woolpackers, and is well and sufficiently upheld and maintained to the furtherance of teaching the children of the poor and others; and an ancient and grave schoolmaster of very near fifty years continuance, Mr. RANDAL KENT, yet teacher there with a learned assistant, a master of arts of Queen's college in Oxford, whose name is *Mr. Shenton*, of laudable pains and industry."

The exceptionally long period of half a century that Mr. Kent had been master, carries the history of the school as far back as 1572 (14 Eliz.); in which year the name of a scholar, Humphrey Mainwaringe, also occurs, (page 101). A note in *Harl. MSS.* 2074, f. 166, states, that the School-house was formerly the "*Gild-Hall*;" and that "*the woolpackers armes, & the names of the said psons.* [John and Thomas Thrush] *in the school chamber is all that proues the place to be of their foundation.*" The founders above named, who were natives of the town, are said to have purchased the Gild-hall, in the Churchyard, for the purpose of a school, from Queen Elizabeth.‡

What the original endowments were, or how the school was supported in the early years of its existence, is not known. The names of benefactors in later times will be found in the list of Charities. To the Wilbraham family of this town, for a great number of years, belonged the right of nominating the Masters, a list of whose names, though, perhaps, incomplete, is here printed for the first time.

\* It is very singular that no mention is made of the Grammar School at Nantwich in Carlisle's "*Endowed Grammar Schools*," published in 1818.

† John Gerard's "*Herbal*," Edit. 1599, p. 1091.

‡ Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 712; and Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii, p. 436, New Edit.

## MASTERS OF THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

MR. RANDLE KENT,\* from c. 1572 to 1623. This master, who was most likely the first, enlarged the school by adding a handsome wing or porch on the south side. It had two inscriptions.† One giving the date of erection and the builder's name:—

“RICHARD DALE, FREE MASON,‡ WAS  
THE MASTER CARPENTER IN MAKING  
THIS BUYLDINGE. ANNO DOMINI. 1611.”

The other, being the Schoolmaster's epigraph, as follows:—

“*Ranulphus Kent, hujus scholæ gymnasiarchus, singulari suo in bonas literas amore, et summâ in natale solum pietate, hanc ipsam musarum sedem novo hoc adjecto ex suis ipsius impensis auxit et donavit.*”§

Although the Kent family is frequently mentioned in the Parish Registers, the baptism of Randle Kent is not recorded; perhaps, owing to the hiatus in the Register after 1545; but he may have been a younger son of the family mentioned just before that date.

“1542. Aalice, D. of Rondull Kent & Jane.... March xviii.”—(*Bapt. Reg.*)

“1544. John, S. of Randull Kent & Joane.... Feb. xxvj.”—(*Bapt. Reg.*)

It is noticeable that no less than four persons of the name of *Kent* have been masters of this School. In the *Itinerary*, already quoted, Mr. Webb relates that King James I visited the school on the 26th Aug. 1617, and stayed “while an oration was pronounced by one of the scholars.”

The death of the aged master, and that of an usher in the school, are thus noticed in the Wilbraham MS. Journal.

“Ould Mr. Kent the schoolmaister dyed 18 Jan. 1623-4.”

“Toby Tench the usher died 18 Oct. 1624.”

“1623-4. Jan 20. Mr. Randle Kent, an ancient schoolemaister.”—(*Bur. Reg.*)

“1624. Oct. 19. Tobias Tench.”—(*Bur. Reg.*)

MR. WILLIAM SHENTON, M.A. It is presumed from the following entry in the Register, that Mr. Shenton, who was first an assistant in the school, succeeded Mr. Kent, as headmaster; but no mention of his resignation or death has occurred.

“1630. Nov. 7. John son of Mr. Willm. Shenton, Schoolemaister.”—(*Bapt. Reg.*)

MR. . . . . MAINWARING. After having been master for a short time, he resigned at Christmas, 1632 (p. 298); and succeeded Thomas Tudman, as schoolmaster at Wybunbury. ||—(*Wybunbury Par. Reg.*)

\* The Head-masters of the School, like the Ministers of the Church during the seventeenth century, have the designation “*Mr.*,” which was similar to the modern title of “*Rev.*,” and, possibly, indicated the possession of a university degree.

† Both inscriptions were legible in 1842, when Mr. C. J. Richardson published the plate of the Porch, in his “*Second Series of Studies from Old English Mansions*,” which has been re-produced on a reduced scale for this work.

‡ In the illustration will be noticed a masonic emblem (intersecting triangles) as an ornament.

§ (*Translated*)—Randle Kent, high master of this School, out of his great love of sound learning, and his extreme affection for his native place, at his own expense both enlarged this Temple of the Muses and gave it this addition.

|| The singular coincidence in name of Schoolmaster and Vicar at Wybunbury has led to an inaccuracy in a foot-note on page 298, which it will be necessary here to correct. *Edward Mainwaring*, Vicar of Wybunbury from 1659 to 1693, was the second son of Henry Mainwaring, of Carincham, Esq., who married Frances, daughter of Sir Edward Fitton, of Gawsorth, Bart., in the year 1626. Mr. Mainwaring, who left Nantwich for Wybunbury in 1632, could not, therefore, have been identical with Edward Mainwaring, who at that time was most likely an infant.

MR. ROBERT SIMONDS. There is a reference to Mr. Simonds, or "Symonds," as his name is spelled in the Baptism Register in 1633, in the Registers of St. John's College (Cambridge) 1636-7; where it is stated that "Thos. Kirketon, a native of Hinckley co. Leicester, was two years at school at Nantwich under Mr. Simonds; and was admitted sizar in St. John's under Mr. Lacy, on 25 Jan. 1636-7." Robert Simonds was one of the witnesses of Cecily Maisteron's will dated 19 Jan. 1634-5, and now preserved at Chester.

MR. JOHN DOLMAN. His signature occurs as Schoolmaster in a petition dated 1642,\* and in the "*Remonstrance*" (p. 138) in the same year.

MR. WILLIAM SWALDEN. This name is given on the authority of the following line in the Register of Baptisms.

"1661-2. Jan. 5. John son of Mr. Willm. Swalden, Schoolmaister."

MR. THOMAS KENT. I have not met with the date of his appointment; but the Register records his burial, as follows:—

"1686. Nov. 4. Mr. Thomas Kent, Schoolmaster, bur'd at Warmingham."†

MR. . . . . MILLINGE, apparently the next master, resigned in June, 1692. His name is not mentioned in the parish Registers.

MR. JOHN BOYDELL. The following entries are taken from a pocket Almanac, in the handwriting of Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Nantwich, now preserved at Delamere.

"1692. June 30. To Mr. Millinge at his leaving ye schoole 5s.  
 ,, Dec. 17. To ye School Mr. at breaking upp for Christm. a quarters pay 10s.  
 ,, ,, To 5 Boyes that Acted ... 2s. 6d.  
 1693. Sep. 15. To Mr. Boydell or Schoolemr a qt [quart] of Sack to welcome him to N., 2s. 6d."

Regular quarterly payments of 10s. are made to Mr. Boydell; and to his usher, Mr. Pratchett, 2s. 6d. per quarter. Both are also mentioned in the Registers.

"1692-3. Jan. 22. Thomas sonne of John Boydell Schoolmaster."—(*Bap. Reg.*)

"1696. July 26. Martha dau. of John Boydell clerke" [*i.e.* in holy orders].—(*Bap. Reg.*)

"1699. April 23. Sarah dau. of Thomas Pratchett Schoolemaster."—(*Bap. Reg.*)

"1704. Oct. 8. Mary dau. of Thomas Pratchett Schoolemaster."—(*Bap. Reg.*)

The date of Mr. Boydell's death or resignation has not occurred.

During the seventeenth century the exact dates of the appointments of Masters to the Nantwich Grammar School, or "*The High School*" as it was then called, to distinguish it from the endowed Charity School in the town, are preserved in the Diocesan Act Books at Chester.

MR. SAMUEL TOWNSEND. Nominated by Randle Wilbraham, of Nantwich, Esq., 15th Feb. 1716. He appears to have resigned in 1721; and was buried at Nantwich on 6th June, 1729.—(*Par. Reg.*)

\* See Account of the Wilbraham family *postea*.

† His burial is also recorded at Warmingham; and probably he was a native of that parish. There is a Silver Paten in Warmingham Church with the following inscription:—"The Gift of Samuel Kent, of Sandbach, Mercer, for the use of the Communion Service in the Parish Church of Warmingham 1740." (*Reverse side*)—"He was born at the House called the Lane End, in Elton, in this Parish, July 12, 1679." (Obligingly communicated by the Rev. Canon H. I. Blackburne, Rector of Warmingham.)

REV. JOHN KENT, Clerk, (in holy orders). Nominated by George Wilbraham, of Hefinston Grange, Esq., 26th June, 1721. The exact date of his resignation or death has not occurred; but the next nomination in the Bishop's Registry is that of Mr. Adderley. It is worthy of note that a line in the Parish Register mentions another clergyman schoolmaster, as follows:—

"1730. April 27. John, son of the Revd. William Dancalfe, *Schoolmaster*." [Baptized].

REV. THOMAS ADDERLEY. Nominated by Roger Wilbraham, of Nantwich, Esq., 20th Dec. 1732; his testimonial to the Bishop for licence being signed by Roger Wilbraham, Tho. Brooke, (Rector); Will. Maisterson, Clutton Wright, Edwd. Wettenhall, and Thos. Williams. After the death of the "Rev. John Twemlow, Curate," who was buried at Nantwich 5th Jan. 1739-40 (*Par. Reg.*) Mr. Adderley became Curate under Dr. Brooke, the Rector, and Dean of Chester; and, as the whole ministrations of the parish would devolve on the Curate during the non-residence of the Dean, most likely Mr. Adderley found it necessary to resign his school. The Register records:—

"1750. Dec. 2. Eliza wf. of the Rev. Thos. Adderley, Buried in the Chancel."

"1762. May 20. The Revd. Mr. Thomas Adderley, Curate." [Buried].

REV. ISAAC RATHBONE, *clerk* (in holy orders). Nominated by Roger Wilbraham, Esq., 15th March, 1744. He had previously been elected Master of the Free Grammar School at Acton on 3rd Jan. 1725-6, (Acton *Par. Reg.*); and resigned that post to accept the mastership at Nantwich. He was also incumbent of the Chapel of Wettenhall, in Over, until his death. The Register records:—

"1742-3. Jan. 19. Isaac Rathbone, clerk, & Ann Morris, widow, [married] by Licence." &c.

"1767. April 17. The Revd. Mr. Rathbone [buried] at Acton."

His widow left a Charity to Nantwich. (See page 361.)

REV. JOHN KENT. He is described as "of Nantwich;" and was nominated by George Wilbraham, Esq., on 29th May, 1771; the school having probably been vacant since the death of Mr. Rathbone. This John Kent on the 9th May, 1767, also succeeded Mr. Rathbone as Chaplain of Wettenhall (*Diocesan Act Book*). He is mentioned by Mr. Partridge (*History of Nantwich*, p. 57) as a worthy successor to the first Grammar Schoolmaster of that name.

REV. MATTHEW BLOOR, M.A. Nominated by George Wilbraham, Esq., on the resignation of John Kent; licence from the Bishop dated 15th Jan. 1792; his testimonial being signed by the Rev. William Morgan, Rector of Wistaston; Rev. Joseph Partridge, Curate of Baddiley and Chaplain of Woodhey; and Rev. John Kent, Curate of Wettenhall. This is the last appointment preserved at Chester Diocesan Registry.

REV. JOHN LATHAM. Nominated by George Wilbraham, Esq. The exact date of his appointment has not occurred; but he was licensed Curate of Nantwich at an annual stipend of £40, on 25th Sept. 1796. He was educated at Queen's College, Oxon.; and is first mentioned in the Register as follows:—

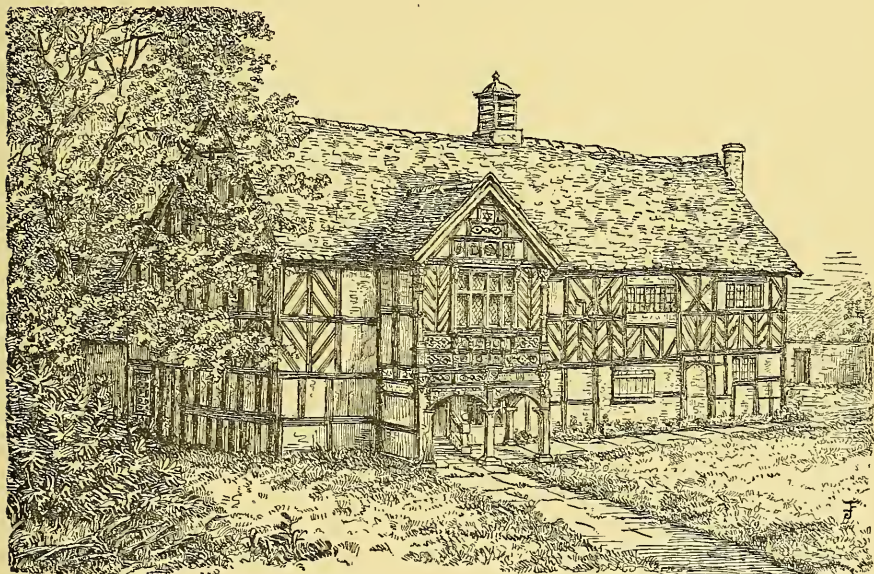
"1798. April 12. John Latham, Clerk of Nantwich and Elizabeth Snelson." [Married].

His eldest son Edmund, was baptized at Nantwich 2nd April, 1799, (*Par. Reg.*); and to the memory of another son, James, who died in the twenty-first year of his age, on 1st June, 1824, is a gravestone in the churchyard near the South door of the Chancel;



beside which, another flat stone records that the Revd. John Latham died Oct. 26th, 1836, in the 64th year of his age. Having resigned the mastership of the school, the Rev. John Latham became curate of Baddiley, near Nantwich, which is said to be the smallest parish in the county. At that time the parson, clerk, and sexton of the parish, all resided in Nantwich, according to the following rhyme, then current in the town.

“I, John Jackson went to ring,  
I, John Moore went to sing,  
I, John Latham went to pray,  
And all the congregation stayed away.”



OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

After the resignation of Mr. Latham, the Grammar School was vacant for several years, owing to the very small emoluments, which, added to the fact that there was no residence provided for the master, deterred clergymen without preferment from accepting the school. Thus for the first time in the history of the school, the next master, Mr. Robinson, was a layman.

WILLIAM ROBINSON. Appointed by George Wilbraham, Esq., on 29th Nov. 1831. The Charity Commissioners, who visited Nantwich in 1836, reported concerning the endowment and condition of the school, as follows:—

£4 os. od. per ann. from Mr. Wilbraham, who for this sum appointed *four* free boys from the town.  
 £6 12s. od. per ann. (variable) from the Churchwardens, on account of certain bequests to the school (see page 361); for which *four* more free boys were appointed from the town: viz., two by the Churchwardens, and two by Mr. Chas. Mare, of the Manor House in Beam Street.

In addition to the eight foundationers, Mr. Robinson had nine boarders, and fifty day-boys. Mention is also made of £2 per ann. formerly paid to the Master, having been lost "for a long time." (Thirty-first Report Charity Commissioners, 1837, page 644).

Mr. Robinson was educated at St. Bees; and was married at Nantwich to Ann, dau. of William Stoneley, on the 8th March, 1832.—(*Par. Reg.*) He committed suicide by hanging himself on the 28th June, 1841, at the early age of thirty-two years; and was buried on the 1st July, in the churchyard, on the north side of the Chancel, where a flat stone covers his grave, and that of an infant daughter.

REV. THOMAS PRESCOTT, B.A. Appointed by George Wilbraham, Esq., after the death of William Robinson, in 1841. He was the son of the Rev. Peter Prescott, for some time Superintendent Wesleyan Minister in this town. Having resigned, his successor was

REV. THOMAS TALBOT DAY, the last master of the old Grammar School. After a short time he left the town; and the school was finally closed in or about the year 1858. When alterations were made in the churchyard, in connection with the restoration of the Parish Church, the ancient timbered school was pulled down, a new one having been built at Welsh Row Head in 1860. Throughout the present century, if not earlier, this school was rivalled by the neighbouring Grammar School at Acton, which has produced some who have distinguished themselves in after life; no list of boys educated at the High School at Nantwich is known to exist.

## The Charity, or Blue-cap School.

Parochial endowed Charity Schools, which were designed for the children of the poor, originated at the close of the seventeenth century, in efforts to counteract the proselytism of James the second's papists.\*

The general mode of founding these schools was as follows:†—The Clergyman of the Parish expressed in a few lines the necessity and usefulness of the design on a roll of parchment, to which benefactors subscribed their names and the sums of money given; these subscribers forming the first governing body of the school. Among the general Orders, it was imperative that the Master should be a member of the Church of England. He was required to teach and explain the Church Catechism twice a week, and to take particular care of the manners and behaviour of the children; to bring them to Church twice every Lord's Day and on Holy Days; and to the Clergyman to be catechised in

\* Fosbroke's "*Ariconensia*," 2nd Edit. 1818, p. 107.

† "An Account of the Methods whereby Charity Schools have been Erected and Managed" (15 pages) was published in connection with "a Sermon (30 pages) preached by Richard Willis D.D. Dean of Lincoln in the Parish Church of St. Andrews, Holborn, 8 June 1704. Being Thursday in Whitson-Week, At the first Meeting of the Gentlemen concern'd in Promoting the Charity Schools in and about the Cities of London and Westminster." Printed by J. Downing, for M. Wotton, at the Three Daggers near the Inner-Temple Gate in Fleet Street 1704."

Church when any number were sufficiently prepared. When the boys could read competently well, the Master was to teach them to write a fair legible hand, with the grounds of Arithmetic, to fit them for services or Apprentices. School hours were from 7 to 11 a.m., and 1 to 5 p.m., in summer; and from 8 to 11 a.m., and 1 to 4 p.m., in winter.

The first mention of the Charity School at Nantwich is in a quarto pamphlet entitled "*An Account of the Charity Schools in Great Britain and Ireland, &c.*, London, 1712," which gives the following information relating to the school here.

"Forty boys taught, who wear blue caps that their behaviour may be the better observed abroad. The Master's salary is £10 a year paid by two ladies. The Minister hath set up another for 30 girls, the charge of whose education is defrayed out of the offertory.\*"

One of the ladies here mentioned was, most likely, Mrs. Anne Crewe Offley, the patroness of Nantwich living, who dying 15th May, 1711, left by Will, £5 per annum to the school (see page 361). No further information has occurred relating to the Girls' Charity School; but many years afterwards the Register records the following burial.

"1784. Oct. 13. Charlotte Blagg, School Mistress."

No school was ever built at Nantwich; but the upper story of a house in Pepper Street was rented for the purpose from the Churchwardens (as Trustees of Harwar's Charity) at £1 per annum, which is stated to have been received in the Accounts for 1713 (page 358).

Bishop Gastrell in his *Notitia Cestriensis* in 1721, speaking of Nantwich Charity School, says, nothing was then "*settled*;" i.e. the monies subscribed were not permanently invested. Donations amounting to £700, of which £663 were the gifts of Randle and Stephen Wilbraham, Esqrs., remained in the Wilbraham family, who from time to time appointed the master and elected the free boys. From 1796 to 1850 the sum of £5 was annually applied to this school out of Hodgkin's Charity. Two other sums were given by John Bromhall, Esq., and Zachary Turnpenny, in augmentation of the Master's salary, and to buy books. From the Treasurers' Books of the Wright's Trustees, in whom those sums were vested, the following names (except the first) of Schoolmasters occur; which list is here printed for the first time.

LIST OF MASTERS OF THE CHARITY SCHOOL.

THOMAS LOWE.† From c. 1711—1742. His burial is thus recorded:—

"1742. Sep. 16. Thos. Lowe, maister of the Charity School."—(*Par. Reg.*)

THOMAS DAVIES. 1742—1766. He received the first payment from Bromhall's Charity, according to the Treasurer's Book, as follows:—

		£	s.	d.
1746. Dec. 25.	Paid Mr. Davis being one half of the money as agreed on by the Trustees at the last Annual Meeting ... ..	3	7	9
1747. May 1.	Paid Mr. Taylor [stationer] for six Spelling Books 3s.; and two Bibles in three vols. 6s. 6d., for the use of the Blew-cap School ... ..	0	9	6
1747. Dec. 9.	Paid Mr. Davis ... ..	1	10	0

\* Re-printed in Local Gleanings, 4to Series, Vol. I, p. 224.

† The house was pulled down at Christmas 1879; and on its site Mr. Jackson, Draper, has erected a commodious residence.

‡ There is an entry in the Bapt. Reg. as follows:—"1714. May 12. Sarah dau. of Thomas Lee schoole-master." Query whether "*Lee*" is intended to be "*Lowe*."

His burial is thus registered:—

"1766. Jan. 19. Thomas Davies, Schoolmaster."—(*Par. Reg.*)

JOSEPH HILDITCH. 1766—1772. He appears to have been the recipient of these Charities as Schoolmaster until his death in 1772.

"1772. Oct. 23. Joseph Hilditch Schoolmaster."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

REV. JOSEPH PARTRIDGE. 1772—1796. He was born in 1724, and was the son of Joseph Partridge of the Red Lion (*now* Wilbraham's Arms) Inn, Nantwich; who is described in the Parish Register as the "*London Waggoner.*"

"1722. Oct. 13. Joseph Partridge and Sarah Tew,\* by licence from Doctor's Commons; Thomas Gyles, junr, Surrogate, Dated Oct. 4th."—(*Mar. Reg.*)

"1724. May 1. Joseph son of Joseph Partridge, Waggoner."—(*Bapt. Reg.*)

"1756. Aug. 15. Joseph Partridge, London Waggoner."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1772. Jan. 9. Sarah Partridge, widow."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

On the first anniversary of his father's death, Joseph Partridge, who had already married, had his only child baptized at Nantwich Church. The entry in the Register is interesting as revealing the fact that he had succeeded to his father's business, as "Waggoner;" *i.e.* proprietor of the Road Waggon for the carriage of goods to and from London.

"1757. Aug. 15. Jane dau'r of Joseph Partridge, Waggoner."—(*Bapt. Reg.*)

When forty-two years of age, however, Joseph Partridge had succeeded in qualifying himself for the Church of England without going to the university, and on the 26th Aug. 1766 he obtained licence from the Bishop to be Master of the Free Grammar School at Acton, on the nomination of several of the Trustees of the School (*Diocesan Act Book*); and, about the same time, he became Curate at Baddiley and Chaplain of Woodhey. Two years after, he and his wife are noticed in a pasquinade, entitled "*Nantwich Notables 1768,*" printed in the "*Cheshire Sheaf,*" No. 985, as follows:—

"Ye Cassocked Waggoner, drole Tale.....Mr. P . . t . . . ge."

"Modern extravagance .....Mrs. P . . t . . . ge."

He relinquished Acton School for the Mastership of Nantwich Charity School in Aug. 1772, which, together with his Curacy and Chaplaincy, he retained until his death. His burial, and that of his widow, are recorded thus:—

"1796. Oct. 29. Revd. Joseph Partridge."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

"1806. Jan. 5. Mary, widow of the Revd. Joseph Partridge."—(*Bur. Reg.*)

A gravestone in the churchyard has this inscription:—

"In Memory of

THE REV'D. JOSEPH PARTRIDGE,  
who departed this life on the 25th of  
October, 1796, aged 72 years.

All that was Good in me to God I owe,  
My Sins and Follies from Myself did flow;  
And I with full Conviction must disown:  
From future Woe, where find the safe Retreat!  
The Good how little, and the Guilt how great!

\* "*John Tew Waggoner,*" probably the father of Sarah Tew, was buried at Nantwich on 14 May, 1722. (*Bur. Reg.*)

Faith and Repentance shew'd the way to Bliss,  
 Those Means apply'd, my End I shall not miss :  
 Humbly thro' CHRIST'S atonement then I trust  
 At the last Day to rise among the Just."

"Also, Mary wife of the above reverd  
 Joseph Partridge, who departed  
 this life on the 1st of January 1806,  
 Aged 79 Years."

Joseph Partridge published the following works:—

1.—A folio pamphlet of 46 pages entitled "*The Anti-Atheist: A Didactic Poem in Two Parts.* By Joseph Partridge of Nantwich, Cheshire. Manchester: Printed by Joseph Harrop, at the Printing Press, opposite the Exchange, MDCCCLXVI." [1766].

2.—"An Historical Account of the Town and Parish of Nantwich, with a particular relation of the remarkable Siege it sustained in the Grand Rebellion of 1643. Shrewsbury: printed by W. Williams 1774."

In the above work the author thus notices the School he taught. "Forty poor boys are clothed and instructed in English and the older part in writing, supported chiefly by the charitable appointments of the family of Wilbraham of Town's-End, which clothes the boys. Mr. Crewe of Crewe hath generously augmented the salary. They are denominated Blue-Caps, from a cap of woollen cloth of that colour which they wear."—(*History of Nantwich*, page 57).

3.—"The Renovation of the Heart, the only True and Acceptable Fast. A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Baddiley in Cheshire, on Friday the 27th of February 1778, being the day appointed to be observed as a general fast."

"Published at the request of several of the parishioners by the Revd. Joseph Partridge, Curate of Baddiley, Nantwich. Printed for the Author by R. Taylor and E. Snelson, Nantwich. Price Sixpence."

JOHN THOMSON, or *Toby Thomson*, as he was generally called, was master for no less a period than fifty-five years (!) that is, from Jan. 1797, until Dec. 1851; and amusing stories are still told by old inhabitants of the system of school management and discipline adopted by that old-fashioned and eccentric pedagogue.

The income of the School in 1836 was as follows:—\*

	£	s.	d.
From GEORGE WILBRAHAM, ESQ.			
On the 30th Jan. in each year, for each of the 40 free boys, a stout drab jacket, a blue cloth cap, a band, a pair of shoes, a pair of stockings, amounting altogether, including the making to	...	...	...
For Master's Salary, per annum	...	...	...
From LORD CREWE, per annum	...	...	...
„ HODGKIN'S Apprenticing Charity, per annum	...	...	...
„ BROMHALL'S and TURNPENNY'S Charities per annum	...	...	...
		23	3 11
		11	0 0
		5	0 0
		5	0 0
		3	3 0

The forty free boys were wholly selected by Mr. Wilbraham's agent at Nantwich, out of the parish, and were not admitted before the age of eight. They were required to pay for stationery, and sixpence in winter for fire-money. In July, 1836, there were, besides, thirty boys received upon the master's own terms.\*

\* Charity Commissioner's Report for 1837, p. 645.

Mr. Thomson, who was married in 1800, (see page 351), died in Beam Street, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years, and was buried in the parish Cemetery on the 15th March, 1852.

MR. . . . . BINNS was the last master of the Charity School; and held that position only about six months. From June, 1853, to November, 1860, the balance in the hands of the Wright's Trustees from Bromhall's Charity due to the School, amounted to £14 6s. 1d.; which sum was paid to E. D. Broughton, Esq., as receiver for the Nantwich Grammar School Trust; and the Governing Body of that School incorporated this Charity in the Endowment at the same time.

## The New Grammar School.

The present Grammar School and Master's residence at the end of Welsh Row, were erected by GEORGE FORTESCUE WILBRAHAM, Esq., of Delamere, who endowed the same by investing the sum of £500, according to the scheme, dated 22nd March, 1860, directed by the High Court of Chancery, for consolidating the Grammar and Blue-Cap Schools Charities. At the same time the RT. HON. HUNGERFORD LORD CREWE transferred to the official Trustees, in respect of the Blue-Cap School, the sum of £200. For these sums, G. F. Wilbraham, Esq. nominates four free boys, and Lord Crewe two free boys, in the parish of Nantwich. The school is controlled by nine Trustees; the original names being Lord Crewe, G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., the Rector, two Churchwardens, Wilbraham S. Tollemache, Esq., Messrs Edward H. Martin, Thomas Williamson (Surgeon), and E. H. Griffiths. Meetings are held twice in the year; *viz.*: Monday fortnight after Midsummer day, and on Christmas Day. The Masters of the New School have been as follows:—\*

- 1.—MR. WILLIAM BROOKS, appointed 25th April, 1860; resigned 19th April, 1862.
- 2.—MR. H. C. BARBER, appointed 30th June, 1862; resigned Aug. 1866.
- 3.—REV. J. V. CRISPIN, appointed 13th Oct. 1866; resigned Christmas 1871.
- 4.—MR. (*afterwards Rev.*) ROBERT BOURNE B.A. (London) appointed April, 1872; resigned Dec. 1875.
- 5.—REV. JERMYN S. HIRST, B.A., appointed Jan. 10th, 1876. Present Master.

\* This list of names was kindly supplied by T. W. Hensley, Esq., Solicitor, one of the Trustees of the School.





## Nonconformity in Nantwich.



ONE of the results of the Reformation under Henry VIII was the rise in the latter part of the sixteenth century of religious sects who claimed the right of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture as opposed to enforced subscription to formulas of creed; and a free and extemporaneous form of prayer as opposed to a fixed Liturgy. When James I became King of England there were two established religions in the kingdom; Episcopacy in England, and Presbyterianism in Scotland. In course of time the latter religion gained many adherents in England, and other societies sprang up,

*Independent* in their government, one of which was distinguished by the practice of *adult* baptism, known as *Baptists*, and nicknamed by their opponents, *Ana-baptists*, or the *re-baptizers*. Puritanism, too, had spread rapidly in Cheshire during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, and though Mr. John Paget was silenced at Nantwich, in 1605, (page 295), nonconformist ministers had their "solemn assemblies," and their "glorious monthly exercises at Northwich, Namptwich, Knutsford, Macclesfield, &c. in and after 1627."\* The Long Parliament abolished Episcopacy in 1646; and during the Protectorate, Richard Jackson was the Presbyterian clergyman of the parish until the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662; when, not having the conscientious scruples of some, he conformed, and so retained his living.

Ejected ministers, numbering throughout the country, it is said, two thousand, afterwards became the heads of *new* Nonconformist churches, which at first met in secret, and multiplied in spite of persecution. The Rev. Philip Henry, in his Diary under date 16th Feb. 1672, says:—†

"Came forth the K.[ing's] Declaration for Indulgence: the Church of Engl. establish'd; pœnal lawes suspended agt. all non-conf. & Recusants [*i.e.* Roman Catholics]; separate places promis'd to bee licens'd; Papists to meet in private houses only."

\* Paget's "*Defence of Church Government*," London, 4to., 1641.

† "*Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry, M.A. of Broad Oak, Flintshire*. Edit. by Rev. M. H. Lee, Vicar of Hanmer, 1882." p. 249.

Under this Indulgence, which only remained in force about one year, licence was granted to ROBERT FOGG to be a Presbyterian teacher in the house\* of *John King* in Nantwich; and two other houses† were licensed as meeting houses, namely:—the house of *John Malden*, and *Robert Fogg*, both in Nantwich. (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom. Series, 1672, No. 185).

Interesting particulars are known of *Robert Fogg*. Born about the year 1596, he had been appointed Rector of Eccleston, Lancashire, in 1627; of Hoole, Lancashire, in 1641; and of Bangor Is-y-coed in 1646; from which last living he was ejected in 1662; and, in his old age, came to Nantwich. He “went constantly to Church at Acton or Nantwich, and preached after sermon on the Lord’s day, and also on week days; and in the latter part of his time he lived alone, (his second wife proving a Papist, and her sons having entered the King’s army), and kept his coffin by him.” He was buried at Acton on the 21st April, 1676.‡

On the “30th Nov. 1682, orders were published in the Churches of Cheshire to present all that come not to Church and to the Sacrament if above sixteen.” (Philip Henry’s “*Diaries*,” p. 319); and for a few years the Dissenters here, as elsewhere, were silenced; but when the Toleration Act of 1689 was passed, there were two distinct congregations of Protestant Dissenters in this town; namely, the *Presbyterians*, and the *Baptists*.

#### PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE AND MINISTERS.

The first Meeting-House of the Presbyterian society in Nantwich was situated in Pepper Street, on the site of cottages now belonging to Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Acton. One of the deeds of that property, dated 16th Feb. 1749, describes it as a “*Warehouse or Ancient and decayed piece of Building formerly used as a Meeting-House.*” In a Rate Book dated 1691, it is entered as a “*Kiln*,” being, probably, a malt-kiln; and here the celebrated nonconformist divine, Matthew Henry, the son of Philip Henry who also occasionally visited Nantwich, commenced and finished his remarkable preaching career. At the age of twenty-three, Matthew Henry, who had then just completed his education at Grays Inn, came from London to Broad Oak in June, 1686, and spent some days at Nantwich with his friend George Illidge, “and preached every night to a considerable company.”§

The first pastor who settled at Nantwich was—

REV. WILLIAM TURTON, M.A. 1688.

Mrs. Savage, of Wrenbury Wood, the sister of Matthew Henry, in her Diary, says:—

“In the year 1688 we had old Mr. Turton for a while at Nantwich.”

\* This house was “*Sweet-briar Hall*,” (see illustration). The earliest deed relating to this property, dated 1701, mentions John King as owner and occupier for many years prior to that date; and the Rev. Samuel Lawrence as tenant of that part of the house to the right of the oriel window. Both occupied these premises in 1691, according to a Rate Book of that date.

† These houses I have not been able to identify.

‡ See “*Palatine Note Book*,” vol. ii, p. 216; “*Nonconformity in Cheshire*,” and “*Philip Henry’s Diaries*,” which contain many references to him.

§ Tong’s *Life of Matthew Henry*, Edit. 1716, p. 52. This biography contains several allusions to George Illidge and other zealous Presbyterian dissenters at Nantwich. The Illidge family belonged to Wyburnbury parish; and many entries of their names occur in the Registers there; and some few in Nantwich Registers. George Illidge, who is stated to have frequented the ministry of Philip Henry, was the son of Lieut. Richard Illidge, of Nantwich and Cheerbrook, whose life, written by the Rev. Matthew Henry, was published in 1710; and re-printed in 1836.



He had been ejected from Rowley, in Staffordshire, in 1662; and removed from Nantwich to Birmingham, where he died in 1716. He was succeeded by—

REV. SAMUEL LAWRENCE. Sep. 1688.—April, 1712.

Samuel Lawrence was the son of William Lawrence, a dyer, of Wem, where he was baptized 5th Nov. 1661. Philip Henry characterized his father as “an intelligent, holy, useful man.”\* His uncle, the Rev. Edward Lawrence, M.A., of Magd. Coll. Cambridge, ejected (1662) from Baschurch, co. Salop, settled as minister in London, and was there known to Matthew Henry. When a child, Samuel Lawrence had a remarkable gift for learning. He was taught Latin at the Free School, Wem, under Mr. Roderick; was next sent to Newport School under Mr. Edwards; and afterwards had as tutors the following ministers in succession: Philip Henry at Broad Oak; Mr. Tallents at Shrewsbury; and Mr. Malden at Alkinton, near Whitchurch, where he improved much in Greek and Hebrew. He completed his education at the Dissenting Academy of Mr. Charles Moreton, whose school was broken up under the tyranny that followed the Act of 1662, its master being obliged for safety and liberty, to sail for New England. Samuel Lawrence, after having been three years an usher under Mr. Singleton, Grammar Schoolmaster of Clerkenwell Close, became domestic chaplain to Lady Irby, widow of Sir Anthony Irby, of Dean’s Yard, Westminster. When the liberty for Dissenters commenced in 1687, he began to preach in a meeting-house “lying very near to my Lady’s.” “In the year 1688 he came down into the country to see his relations; and a society of Dissenters in and about Nantwich being then in quest of a minister, after several motions made to them had miscarried, desired Mr. Lawrence to come and spend a Lord’s Day with them; which he did to their great and universal satisfaction, so that they unanimously chose him to be their minister, and after some time taken to consider of it and consult his friends, he accepted it, but went first to London to take leave of his friends there. The Lady Irby was extremely loth to part with her chaplain, and was very angry with *Mr. Baxter* and *Philip Henry* for persuading him to go to Nantwich, but thither he came in September of that year.” Ordained at Warrington in the beginning of November, he zealously laboured here for twenty-four years, and was never “taken off from his work till the last Sabbath of his life.” Though of a weakly constitution, he preached every Saturday about noon to the country people that attended the market; and frequently on week-days in the country about. He regularly attended the meetings of the Cheshire Ministers twice a year; and in his nonconformity he was “considerate and conscientious.” “His whole conversation in the world was blameless, and without rebuke; and, like Demetrius, he had a good Report of all men; he was of a peaceable spirit, bearing and forgiving; a very good scholar and very communicative of his knowledge. The year before he died he “read University learning, both philology and philosophy,” *gratis*, “to two or three hopeful young men who came and tabled [lodged] near him in the Town for the benefit of his conversation.”

Samuel Lawrence died of a fever on Thursday, 24th April, 1712, in the fifty-first year of his age; and was buried in the Chancel of Nantwich Church, being followed to the grave by a great many true mourners, amongst whom was his “intimate bosom friend”

\* Funeral Sermon of William Lawrence, by Philip Henry, on 26th Feb. 1694-5.

Matthew Henry, who on that day preached a funeral sermon in the Pepper Street Meeting-House, which was published and from which the above particulars are obtained.\* Matthew Henry often preached to the congregation at Nantwich, on his visits to Mr. Lawrence, and to his eldest sister, Mrs. Savage, of Wrenbury Wood. On 21st Oct. 1707, an Ordination Fast was held at Nantwich; the evening was spent in examining the Candidates at *Mr. Lawrence's* house; *Mr. Lawrence* began, *Mr. Irlam* prayed, *Dr. Holland* preached from Acts xxvi, 17, 18; *Mr. Henry* took their Confessions and Vows, and left this memorial of the meeting:—

“We were in all about twenty Ministers; the Candidates discovered much seriousness; we were much refresh'd, and there were none to make us afraid.”

Samuel Lawrence was twice married. “He left behind him a sorrowful widow;† three sons by his first wife; and two daughters by his second; and a dear and tender mother in the 80th year of her age.” Some of his correspondence has recently been published by J. E. Bailey, F.S.A., in the *Palatine Note Book*, vol. ii, p. 98-9.

Several mentions of these early Presbyterian dissenters occur in the Parish Registers, as follows:—

- 1686. July 27. George Illidge & Ellen Seavill. [married].
- 1687. July 14. Elizabeth dau. of George Illidge, shoemaker Baptized by Mr. Henryes.
- 1689. May 19. Mary d. of George Illidge, shoemaker, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1691. June 21. Martha d. of George Illidge, shoemaker, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1698. Oct. 16. Thomas s. of Thomas Hassall, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1700. June 9. Robt. s. of Thomas Hassall, shoemaker, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1705. Aug. 5. Richd. s. of John Gill, Currier, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1707. May 18. John, s. of Thomas Bikerton, Glover, Baptized by Mr. Lawrence.
- 1700. March 25. Wm. s. of Samuel Lawrence, Presbyterian Minister, bur. at Acton.
- 1700. April 26. Sarah wife of Saml. Lawrence, Presbyterian Minister, bur. at Acton.
- 1712. April 28. Saml. Lawrence, Presbyterian Minister." [Buried].

#### REV. JOSEPH MOTTERSHEAD. 1712—1718.

He was ordained at Knutsford on 5th Aug. 1712, and came from Kingsley to Nantwich. During the short term of his ministry, *Matthew Henry* preached his last sermon in the Pepper Street Meeting-House, on 21st June, 1714, from Jer. xxxi, 18. Sir Thomas Delves, Bart., had invited the celebrated divine and his old friend George Illidge to spend the evening at Doddington Hall; but, being indisposed, Matthew Henry dined at Mr. Mottershead's house; and, after a restless night, died there of an apoplectic fit the following morning at eight o'clock. Three days after, in the same Meeting-House, was preached “*A Sermon upon the Mournful Occasion of the Funeral of the Reverend and Excellent* | MR. MATTHEW HENRY | *Minister of the Gospel* | *Preach'd at* | *Nantwich, June 25, 1714.* | *The Day on which the Sacred Corps was carried thence to be interr'd at Chester,* | *By John Reynolds, Minister [of Shrewsbury] in Salop.*” | London: Printed 1714. 8vo. pp. 40.

The Parish Registrar noted the event in the Burial Register as follows:—

“1714. June 25. Mr. Matthew Henryes buried at Chester.”

\* “A Sermon Preach'd at the Funeral of Mr. Samuel Lawrence, Minister of the Gospel at Nantwich, in Cheshire. Who died there, April 24, 1712, in the 51st year of his Age, and was buried April 28. To which is added a short Account of his Life. By Matthew Henry, Minister of the Gospel.” Printed: “London. . . . 1712.” 8vo. pp. 48.

† The widow of Samuel Lawrence, died suddenly at Newcastle-under-Lyme, and was buried at Nantwich, 10th Nov. 1718.—(*Par. Reg.*)

Little is known of Mr. Mottershead; his congregation is said to have numbered three hundred, of whom ten were gentlemen. (*Wilson MSS.* Dr. Williams' Library, London). He was married, and had a son buried and another baptized, at Nantwich, as recorded in the Registers.

"1714. May 22, Joseph son of Joseph Mottershead, Presbyterian Minister." [Buried].

"1716. Sep. 13. Joseph son of Joseph Mottershead, Presbyterian Minister." [Baptized].

He removed to Manchester in 1718, where he lived many years in much reputation, and was succeeded at Nantwich by

REV. WILLIAM VAWDREY. 1719—1728.

Mr. Vawdrey, who was ordained in 1718, came from Allostock to Nantwich in 1719. The population returns of Bishop Gastrell\* in 1721, state that at Nantwich there were 157 Presbyterian families. Shortly afterwards the Society left the old Meeting-House, and built the present Chapel in Hospital Street, as related in the diary of Mrs. Savage, as follows:—†

"1725. March 28. This week ground is bought for the building of a new Chapel at Nantwich, &c.

1725. Tuesday, May 4. Our friend Mr. Braddock came hither from Namptwich, and brought us good tidings. Chapel work begun, and great encouragement from some of our friends, especially at Manchester [most likely Mr. Mottershead's congregation], where they have collected £40 for us.

1725. June, Wednesday. This week our friend *Mr.* [George] *Illidge* called on us, who had been at London, Bristol, and other places negotiating for us; . . . . 50£ collected.

1726. Wednesday, 18th May; a day much to be remembered. We went to Namptwich and most of our family to the dedication of our NEW CHAPEL there. I should have remarked how our good minister [Mr. Vawdrey] took leave of the old chapel with that text "*If thy presence go not with us carry us not up hence.*" Mr. Owen preached first, then Mr. [John] Gardner [of Chester] Mr. Lawrence [of Newcastle] prayed. A very full congregation. Mr. Vawdrey's good humble remark affected me, 'I must endeavour to preach better, you to hear better, and both to live better, and then our light will shine indeed.' I would own the goodness of God that we may set up our Ebenezer—hitherto kept, helped, taught; *very few alive now that were members of this society when we began in the old chapel.* One generation passes away and another comes. but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

1729. January 3. The most considerable event of the past year has been the removal of our dear minister Mr. Vawdrey from Namptwich to Bristol; borne away from us by a violent impotunity."

Mr. Vawdrey, who resigned at Midsummer, 1728, was succeeded by

REV. THOMAS HAYNES. 1729—1745.

The Diary of Mrs. Savage mentions this minister.

"1729. Thursday, August 7. This day Mr. Haines our new minister and cousin Eddowes's daughter, came to see us, &c.

1731. Tuesday, March 1st. This week our minister Mr. Haines and cousin Betsey Eddowes‡ were married at Namptwich, &c.

\* *Notitia Cestriensis*, Chet. Soc. Publ., p' 222.

† The extracts here given are taken from the fuller extracts of the Diary as printed in "*Nonconformity in Cheshire*," 1864; p. 130—132.

‡ *Betsy*, or *Elizabeth Eddowes*, was the eldest daughter of John Eddowes, Ironmonger, of Nantwich; who was cousin, by marriage, to Mrs. Savage. The marriage is recorded at Nantwich on the 2nd March, 1731-2. By his second wife, John Eddowes had four sons, one of whom, *John Eddowes*, born c. 1722, will be noticed presently in connection with Joseph Priestley.

1732. Wednesday . . . 19th. At Namptwich, a double lecture, *Mr.* [Thomas] *Colthurst* [of Knutsford] preached first, from *Gen.* iii. 15, '*The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*' Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, that blessed promised seed; He came in the fulness of time, and has wrought our eternal salvation for all his elect. Afterwards *Mr. Dobson* of Salop, whose subject I thought well followed, i Pet. v. 12. '*The true grace of God wherein ye stand.*'

. . . . Tuesday morning, in bed, I said over to myself the Assembly's Catechism—an excellent form of sound words which I was taught in my childhood, and trust I shall hold fast; and am glad to find that notwithstanding sad decays those good old things I do not forget." &c.

This last significant remark seems to have a tacit allusion to changes of religious thought and differences of opinions amongst the members of the Nantwich society.

*Mr.* Haynes, who took no prominent position amongst the dissenting ministers of his day, removed from Nantwich to Sheffield in 1745,\* and was succeeded by *Mr. Meanley*.

At a meeting of the Cheshire Ministers held at Knutsford on 3rd Sept. 1745, according to the Minute book, "*Mr. Meanley*, at the request of his people at Nantwich, consented to ordination next meeting" which was fixed to be the "first Tuesday in May next." [1746]. Before that date, however, the union of Presbyterian ministers was broken up by divisions arising out of the Arian controversy. Some, called *Subscribers*, required subscription to the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ; others, though differing much in their views and opinions, maintained the fundamental principle of the old Dissent, viz.: non-subscription to creeds—and were known as *non-subscribers*. Of the latter was *Mr. Meanley*. The society, though afterwards adopting Socinian views, retained the Chapel as the representatives of the old Presbyterians; but here, as elsewhere, it has since been called the *Unitarian Chapel*.

#### UNITARIAN MINISTERS.

REV. RICHARD MEANLEY. 1745—1758.

He removed to Platt, near Manchester, and died there in 1790.

He was succeeded by

REV. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY. Sept. 1758—Sept. 1761.

This minister, afterwards the celebrated Dr. Priestley, came from Needham Market, in Suffolk, to Nantwich, at the age of twenty-five, having been introduced to the congregation here by a former minister, *Mr. Haynes*, of Sheffield. An interesting account of his settlement and life in this town is related in his autobiography,† as follows:—

"*Mr. Haynes*, perceiving I had no chance at Sheffield, told me that he could recommend me to a congregation at Nantwich, in Cheshire, where he himself had been settled; and as it was a great distance from Needham, he would endeavour to procure me an invitation to preach there for a year certain. This he did, and I gladly accepting of it, removed from Needham, going thence to London by sea, to save expense. This was in 1758, after having been at Needham just three years.

At Nantwich I found a good-natured friendly people, with whom I lived three years very happily; and in this situation I heard nothing of those controversies which had been the topics of almost every conversation in Suffolk; and the consequence was that I gave little attention to them myself. Indeed

\* On the oak wainscoting in one of the pew aisles on the east side of the Chapel, is a brass inscribed as follows:—

"In Memory of | John, son of the Revd. | Thomas and Elizth Haynes | who Died Jan<sup>y</sup> 6th 1758 | Aged 17." |

† "Memoirs of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Priestley to the year 1795. Written by himself." Birmingham, 1810, p. 31-36.

it was hardly in my power to do it, on account of my engagement with a *school*,\* which I was soon able to establish, and to which I gave almost all my attention; and in this employment, contrary to my expectations, I found the greatest satisfaction, notwithstanding the confinement and labour attending it. My school generally consisted of about thirty boys, and I had a separate room for about half a dozen young ladies. Thus I was employed from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon, without any interval, except one hour for dinner, and I never gave a holiday on any consideration, the red letter days, as they are called, excepted. Immediately after this employment in my own school rooms I went to teach in the family of *Mr. Tomkinson*,† an eminent attorney, and a man of large fortune, whose recommendation was of the greatest service to me; and here I continued until seven in the evening. I had therefore but little leisure for reading or for improving myself in any way, except what necessarily arose from my employment. Being engaged in the business of a school-master, I made it my study to regulate it in the best manner, and I think I may say with truth, that in no school was more business done, or with more satisfaction, either to the master or the scholars, than in this of mine.

Many of my scholars are probably living,‡ and I am confident that they will say that this is no vain boast.

At Needham I was barely able, with the greatest economy, to keep out of debt (though this I always made a point of doing at all events); but at Nantwich my school soon enabled me to purchase a few books, and some philosophical instruments, as a *small air-pump, an electrical machine, &c.* These I taught my scholars in the highest class to keep in order, and make use of, and by entertaining their parents and friends with experiments, in which the scholars were generally the operators, and sometimes the lecturers too, I considerably extended the reputation of my school; though I had no other object originally than gratifying my own taste. I had no leisure, however, to make any original experiments until many years after this time.

As there were few children in the congregation (which did not consist of more than *sixty persons*, and a great proportion of them travelling Scotchmen) there was no scope for exertion with respect to my duty as a minister. I therefore contented myself with giving the people what assistance I could at their own houses, where there were young persons; and I added very few sermons to those which I had composed at Needham, where I never failed to make at least one every week.

Being boarded with *Mr. Eddowes*,§ a very sociable and sensible man, and at the same time the person of the greatest property in the congregation, and who was fond of music, I was induced to learn to play a little on the English flute, as the easiest instrument; and though I was never a proficient in it, my playing contributed more or less to my amusement many years of my life. . . . . At Nantwich I had hardly any literary acquaintance besides *Mr. Brereton*,|| a clergyman in the neighbourhood, who had a taste for

\* The *School-house*, which was pulled down about forty years ago, fronted Hospital Street. It was a black and white building, and had an upper room that extended over the gate-way that led to the Chapel yard.

† This was *James Tomkinson, Esq.*, who married Katherine Wettenhall, and was the first of the family to settle at Nantwich, and the purchaser of Dorfold estate.

‡ The last surviving scholar of the philosopher schoolmaster was Mr. Thomas Hassall, of Nantwich, who died in 1829, aged 82 years; and was interred in the grave-yard connected with this Chapel, without any memorial stone. With the science lectures delivered at Nantwich more than 120 years ago, Mr. Priestley commenced that extraordinary series of experiments and discoveries which afterwards entitled him to the honourable distinction of being the Father of pneumatic chemistry.

§ This was *Mr. John Eddowes* who died 18th March, 1789, aged 67, and was buried in this Chapel. To his memory is a flat stone on the floor, the inscription of which is perfectly legible. The late Joseph Hunter compiled a pedigree of the Eddowes family of Whitechurch and Nantwich, which is preserved amongst the Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 24,444, f. 106.

|| The Rev. Joseph Brereton, LL.B., Vicar of Acton, who was born at Helmingham, in Suffolk, the seat of the Rt. Hon. Lionel, Earl of Dysart, in whose family his father, Mr. Thomas Brereton, was domestic steward. At the early age of fourteen he was entered a commoner of Queen's College, Cambridge, and from his low stature, at that time, he got the appellation of the "Little Man of Queens," by which name he was generally known whilst he continued at the University. Soon after taking his LL.B. degree, and before he had attained to Priest's Orders, he was presented by Earl Dysart to Acton vicarage. He was a man of strong passions, but endowed with great natural talents, which were rendered more conspicuous by his diligent acquisitions of knowledge in every branch of useful refined Science. He died 6th March, 1787, and was buried at Lower Peover, in this county, aged 67.—(*Acton Parish Register*).

astronomy, philosophy, and literature in general. I often slept at his house, in a room to which he gave my name. But his conduct afterwards was unworthy of his profession. Of dissenting ministers, I saw most of Mr. Keay, of Whitchurch, and Dr. Harwood, who lived and had a school at Congleton, preaching alternately at Leek and Wheelock. Being both of us schoolmasters, and having in some respects the same pursuit, we made exchanges for the sake of spending a Sunday evening together every six weeks in the summer time. He was a good classical scholar, and a very entertaining companion.

In my congregation there was (out of the house in which I was boarded) hardly more than one family in which I could spend a leisure hour with much satisfaction, and that was *Mr. James Caldwell*,\* a Scotchman. Indeed, several of the travelling Scotchmen who frequented the place, but made no long stay at any time, were men of very good sense; and what I thought extraordinary, not one of them was at all Calvinistical.

My engagements in teaching allowed me but little time for composing anything while I was at Nantwich. There, however, I re-composed my "*Observations on the Character and Reasoning of the Apostle Paul*." For the use of my school, I then wrote an *English Grammar* [printed 1761], on a new plan, leaving out all such technical terms as were borrowed from other languages, and had no corresponding modifications in ours, as the future tense, &c.

My removal to Warrington was in September 1761, after a residence of just three years at Nantwich. In this new situation I continued six years; and in the second year I married a daughter of Mr. Isaac Wilkenson, an ironmaster, near Wrexham, with whose family I had become acquainted, in consequence of having the youngest son, William, at my school at Nantwich. . . . It was while at Warrington, that I published my '*Chart of Biography*,' though I had begun to construct it at Nantwich."

To the above account it may be added that Mr. Priestley, while at Needham, had published a work entitled "*The Scripture Doctrine of Remission, &c.* 1755;" which shows that he had then embraced Unitarian doctrines. It is unnecessary here to trace the biography of this eminent man any further.

A photograph of the earliest oil portrait of Joseph Priestley, supposed to have been painted during his short stay in this town, was presented to the Trustees of the Chapel, by the Rev. Jas. Yates, M.A., F.R.S., and still hangs in the Vestry. It represents him having a full-bottomed wig, the costume of the Divinity students when they left the Academy at Daventry to settle in the ministry. Later portraits of Priestley have a wig with curls. The photograph was delivered to the subscribers to the Priestley statue at Oxford in 1861.

Joseph Priestley† was succeeded at Nantwich by

REV. JOHN HOUGHTON. 1761—1771.

John Houghton, who had been trained in Dr. Doddridge's Academy at Northampton from 1747 to 1751, completed his education at Glasgow, and was first appointed to *Hyde*

\* *Mr. James Caldwell*, who lived at Hospital Street-end, died 15th July, 1791, and was buried in Nantwich Churchyard. A tombstone, with inscriptions, which formerly covered the family vault, was removed a few feet in Aug. 1879, when the new footpath was made along the north side of the Churchyard. Cf. page 53 note.

† A Portrait and Memoir of Dr. Priestley is given in "*The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature*," Vol. X. 1815.

Dr. Priestley had a stammering utterance. He says (*Autobiography*, p. 43) "for the first two years I was at Nantwich, this impediment had increased so much that I once informed the people that I must give up the business of preaching, and confine myself to my school. However by making a practice of reading very loud and very slow every day, I at length succeeded in getting in some measure the better of this defect, but I am still obliged occasionally to have recourse to the same expedient."

in 1758; where he remained until he succeeded Priestley as minister and schoolmaster at Nantwich. He published "*A New Introduction to English Grammar, in the easiest Method possible for the use of Schools, London . . . .*;" and edited a book entitled "*Sacrificium Missaticum Mysterium Iniquitatis, or a Treatise concerning the sacrifice of the Mass (never before printed) by the Reverend and Learned Mr. Henry Pendlebury, M.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge,*" &c. *London . . . MDCCLXVIII.*" [1768]. The latter work was published by subscription; and in the printed list of subscribers occur no less than seventy-three local names.

Mr. Houghton removed in 1771 to Elland, co. Yorkshire; in 1782 to Wem; and in 1788 to Norwich, where he died.

REV. RICHARD HODGSON. 1771—1799.

Mr. Hodgson, who succeeded J. Houghton, came from Monton to Nantwich in 1771. He ministered to the congregation and conducted the school for nearly thirty years: and in 1799 or 1800, removed to Doncaster.

The next two names are given on the authority of the History of Nonconformity in Cheshire (1864, p. 133); but it is doubtful whether either of them were settled or appointed ministers.

REV. ROGER MADDOX, 1800, for a short time.

REV. . . . . PARTRIDGE. 1800—1801.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNS. 1801—1803. Removed to Manchester.

REV. DAVID WILLIAM JOHNS (or Jones?). 1804—1815. Removed to Whitchurch.

REV. FRANCIS KNOWLES. 1816—1823.

He was a native of Sheffield, and, though not educated for the ministry, he published several pamphlets on religious subjects, entitled "*Observations,*" &c., His most important work was "*The Balance of Scriptural Evidence,*" &c., in three vols., in which Unitarian and Trinitarian arguments are contrasted in parallel pages. Mr. Knowles collected the materials for this work while at Nantwich, although the book was not published until 1835. He removed to Park Lane Unitarian Chapel, near Wigan, and there died.

REV. JAMES HAWKES. 1823—1846.

From 1800 to 1813 Mr. Hawkes had been minister at Duckenfield, where he originated a Sunday School. His next appointment was to Lincoln; and from thence he came to Nantwich in 1823, and conducted the school with great ability, first in the old school-house, until it was taken down; and afterwards in the present school-room over the vestry in the Chapel. Mr. Hawkes died at Nantwich, and was buried in the Chapel, being the first pastor who had died here since Samuel Lawrence, 134 years before. A mural tablet on the south wall is inscribed as follows:—

"In memory of Ann wife of the Rev. James Hawkes who died June 13th, 1826, aged 53 years.

Also Rev. James Hawkes Minister of this Chapel for 23 years died May 19, 1846, aged 75 years."

REV. FRANCIS HORNBLOWER. 1849—1853.

After the death of Mr. Hawkes, the cause having for many years been in a low and declining state, and the chapel suffered to fall into a ruinous condition, no minister was appointed for three years. In 1849 efforts were put forth to renovate the chapel. It

was found necessary to make a new roof, and the south wall was partially taken down and rebuilt; the pulpit being removed from the opposite side of the chapel to its present position, and the oak pews being re-modelled. These repairs and improvements were effected at a cost of over £300; and the chapel was re-opened on 10th Dec. 1849, the preachers being the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, of Duckinfield, and the Rev. Franklin Howorth, of Bury. In the same year Mr. Hornblower had been appointed pastor, and under his ministry Unitarianism in Nantwich revived. It may be mentioned that the celebrated actor Macready attended the ministry of Mr. Hornblower on his occasional visits to his aunt, Mrs. Forshaw, who then resided in Hospital Street.

Mr. Hornblower married a daughter of William Roscoe, Esq., of Allerton Hall, banker, M.P. for Liverpool in 1806, and a well-known author. She was a talented woman, and published a volume of poems in 1843; and one of the Hymns in the Martineau collection is by her pen.\* Mr. Hornblower died at Nantwich in 1853, and was buried at Liverpool. Since his death the congregation has again decreased; and his successors, who have been for the most part young students, have remained only for short periods. Their names are as follows:—†

REV. THOMAS BOWRING. 1853—1857. Resigned.

REV. ROBERT WILKINSON. 1859—1861. Resigned.

REV. THOMAS WILLICOTT. Feb. 9, 1862—Feb. 28, 1864. Resigned.

REV. E. W. HOPKINSON. July 10, 1864—March 22, 1868. Resigned.

REV. JAMES MACDONALD. Feb. 7, 1869—Dec. 28, 1873. Resigned.

REV. T. B. BROADRICK. Dec. 20, 1874—March 11, 1877. Resigned.

REV. JOHN HARDING MATTHEWS. Feb. 3, 1878. Present Minister.

The Chapel, which still retains its original oak pews and pulpit, is 37 ft. by 28 ft., and 18 ft. 6 in. high. It is lighted by four circular-headed windows, decorated with architraves and moulded eills; and is capable of seating about 230 persons. An organ was purchased in Aug. 1875; and the Rev. S. A. Steinthal, of Manchester, preached on the occasion of its opening. Besides the memorials of the dead already mentioned, is a mural tablet on the south wall of the chapel inscribed to

“Mary Street Baron, wife of Peter Baron formerly of Walshaw house Lancashire, whose remains were deposited beneath this Pew on the 2nd of November 1821 at the age of 45 Years. Also the said Peter Baron died Dec 13th 1831 aged 56 years.”

A small graveyard behind the chapel, which was closed for interments about thirty years ago, and is now in a very neglected state, has in it three gravestones;

(1) “Ann, wife of Thos. Cooke, died 12 Sept. 1834;” (2) “Joseph Hassal died 24 May 1833, aged 77;” also “Sarah, his wife, died 30 May 1843, aged 78; also a daughter, Emma Vaughan Hassal, died 11 March 1829, aged 20;” (3) “John Bolland, Surgeon, died 28 April 1850, aged 67 years,” who belonged to a family of that name at Bolesworth.

It is a singular fact, as will presently be seen, that the three old Dissenting Chapels in this town,—the Presbyterian, the Baptist, and the Friends’ Meeting-house,—were all built in or about the same year.

\* This Hymn commences— “My father! when around me spread,  
I see the shadows of the tomb,” &c.

† The names of the Ministers of this Chapel since Mr. Willcott, have been supplied by Philip Barker, Esq., The Grove, Nantwich, to whom I am also indebted for other particulars relating to this Chapel.



THE BAPTIST CHAPEL, MINISTERS, &c.

The earliest mention of a society of Baptists in Nantwich occurs in a book having the curious, if not absurd, title,—“*A History of the Baptists among the Welsh from the time of the Apostles to the present year.* By [Rev.] Joshua Thomas [of Leominster] 1778. pp. 504.” The author states (pp. 158—160) that during the years of persecution (1678—1688) the Baptists at Nantwich, for security, held their meetings in the salt-mines [an error, no doubt, for salt-houses] the pastor being the REV. S.[AMUEL] ACTON, who maintained the doctrine of a general redemption, and was a gifted and acceptable preacher. He also remarks that several members of this society, who had removed to Newbridge, near Wrexham, travelled a distance of twenty-two miles to partake of the Lord’s Supper with the brethren and sisters at Nantwich.\*

In Grey’s “*Examination of Neals*,” (vol. iv. p. 410) is printed the following Address to King William III, in 1688.

“*From the ANABAPTISTS at NAMPTWICH.*”

“Though we want Words to express our Gratitude for so great a Blessing as the free Exercise of our Religion which is now by your Majesty granted unto us, and all others in so full a Manner as could be expected from none but such a Prince, as Heaven designed for the highest Pattern of Royal Goodness and true Policy; yet the Sense of it has made so lasting an Impression upon us, that (we trust) that it shall not be possible for any of your Subjects to serve your Majesty with more ready Obedience and stedfast Loyalty, than we shall do in our Station to the utmost of our Capacity.

Dread Sovereign, that Almighty God who hath established you upon the Throne to correct the Mistakes of past Ages, and make the present happy in the enjoyment of an entire Liberty of Conscience, will crown your Majesty and your Royal Posterity with all temporal and eternal Blessings, making your reign over us glorious and happy to the utmost Wish of your most loyal and obliged Subjects and the Terror of your Enemies, we shall ever pray.” [First printed in “*Gazette*, No. 2244.”]

One of the congregation about this time was Mrs. Milton (widow of the immortal poet) who came to reside at Nantwich in the year of the Revolution (1688). It is worthy of note that Milton in his Latin treatise on “*Christian Doctrine*,” translated and published some years ago, expounds the views of Baptists very strongly as to the immersion of believers only, as against the sprinkling of infants; and on that account it may be, his widow associated herself with the Baptists here, in preference to other Protestant Dissenters in the town.

MR. SAMUEL ACTON,† who has already occurred in these pages as a tobacconist, salt-proprietor, and the first known Baptist minister, must have been a wealthy man. In 1691 he resided in one of the principal houses in the town,‡ now (1883) called “The Elms,”

\* Information of Simon Jones, Esq., of Wrexham, who has a copy of the book.

† Samuel Acton does not appear to have been a native of Nantwich. Query, whether he belonged to the Actons of Little Endworth and Bunbury parishes.

‡ Rate Book, dated 1691, *penes* G. F. Wilbraham, Esc.

in Mill Street. Bishop Gastrell says there were, in 1721, 109 Anabaptist families in Nantwich;\* but whether they then worshipped in Mr. Acton's salt-houses, or had a meeting-house elsewhere, is not known.

The first Baptist Chapel, a low brick building, that has been much altered of late years, was built in Barker Street in 1725. The late T. W. Jones, solicitor, of Nantwich, who defended a trustee of the Chapel in a law-suit at Chester, says, "The earliest document connected with this Chapel which has fallen under my notice bears date 1726, followed by subsequent Deeds renewing the Chapel Trusts from time to time." In the then new Chapel, or its grave-yard, Mrs. Milton is believed to have been buried, (neither line, nor stone, however, remains to prove the fact) a few days prior to the 10th Oct. 1727; on which day her will "was proved at Chester, in common form of Law, by John Allecock, one of the Executors, power reserved to *Samuel Acton*, the other Executor."

No later mention of Mr. Samuel Acton has occurred; but he cannot possibly have lived long after; and may, too, have been buried in the Chapel which had been erected under his superintendence; of this, however, there is no positive proof; the Parish Register being silent on the matter, and the old records of the Chapel having been lost for many years.† Of his published Sermons, the earliest is entitled:—

"Dying Infants Sav'd by Grace, Proved; And the Blessed Man with his Blessedness Described: In a Sermon preached near Nantwich, in Cheshire, at the Burial of a deceased Infant July 25, 1695. By S[amuel] A[cton]. Matt. xviii, 3. 1 Cor. xiii, 7. Lond. Printed for the Author &c. 1699. 4to. pp. 32."‡

The Rev. W. Tong (*Life of Matthew Henry*, 1716, p. 387) speaking of the funeral of Matthew Henry on the 25th June, 1714, says, "the Day before *Mr. Acton*, Minister to the Baptist Congregation, had taken very particular and Respectful Notice of the great Loss the Church of God had sustained."

In 1714 Mr. Acton published the following Sermons:—"The Folly of Wise Scepticks," Jeremiah viii, 8; "Gospel Compulsion," Luke xiv, 23; "Salvation by Grace," Ephesians iv, 5. In 1717, a "Discourse on the Sacrament;" and in 1718 a small book entitled "Uncompromised Truth; or an Attempt at Unity among Christians, together with an Appeal to my Brethren of the Baptized Churches of Great Britain and Ireland." In this book

\*Bishop Gastrell's "Notitia Cestriensis." The Bishop also mentions another meeting-house for Anabaptists with about 40 members in Wybunbury parish; where there were at that time 24 Dissenting families, of whom fourteen were Anabaptists. The field in which this meeting-house stood, in *Blakelow*, is still called *Chapel-Field*; and Mr. Thomas Pedley, of Willaston, aged 75, remembers conversing with old people in his youth, who said that stones from the grave-yard of the old meeting-house were used up in building cottages in the neighbourhood. Wybunbury Parish Register contains the following interesting entries:—

"1723. June 1. Elizabeth Dunbibb, a stranger, interred at Blakelow Meeting-house within the Township of Wibunbury."

"1726. Aug. 21. Joseph Allen, of Weston, a young youth of about 18 years of Age [Baptized] having not Recd. Infant Baptism because Born of Anabaptistical Parents."

"1732. May 1. Elizabeth Smith, of Hough, Spinster, born of Anabaptistical parents, publicly Baptized in the Parish Church of Wybunbury."

"1743. Jan. 1. John Sparepoint, of Stapley, born of Anabaptistical parents Baptized publicly."

"1762. May 1. Mary Birchall about 30 yrs. of Age, Born of Anabaptistical parents, Bapt. into the Church."

† The only mention of Samuel Acton, in any Parish Register, that I have seen, is an entry at Wybunbury, recording his marriage, late in life, as follows:—

"1725. June 22. Samuel Acton, of Nantwich Parish, Gentleman, and Lydia Maddocks of the City of London, widow, p'. lic. dat. 21 June."

He is stated, in the late Rev. R. B. Aspland's MS. collections (vol. iii, p. 148), now in the possession of his son in London, to have died in the year 1728.

‡ Roger Wilbraham, of Townsend House, makes an entry in one of his pocket Almanacs, that he had written a paper in "Nov. 1692" entitled "An Answer to S. A. [Samuel Acton] his cavils to Mr. Lawr. [Rev. Samuel Lawrence] Argum[ent] for Infant Baptism."

the writer remarks that he had been for *forty years* lamenting the disadvantages arising from contentions, and for upwards of *thirty years* had been endeavouring through the exercise of friendliness and goodwill to promote charity," &c. For three years the REV. ISAAC KIMBER ministered to the congregation, at the invitation of Mr. Acton, the latter probably having arrived at an advanced age. Mr. Kimber, who was born in 1692, and is known as a biographical writer, and author of a *History of England*, 4 vols. 8vo., is said to have preached a funeral sermon on the death of Mrs. Milton, on 10th March, 1726, entitled "*The Vanity and Uncertainty of Human Life*," &c. The date here given, which is clearly an error, may be accounted for by the fact that Mr. Kimber's sermons were published posthumously by his son, Edward Kimber, in 1756; but much suspicion has been cast on the truthfulness of the statement altogether, as "not one word occurs that has relation to the deceased" in the printed sermon.\* Mr. Kimber's abode at Nantwich was rendered uneasy by the unkind behaviour of some of the principal persons of the congregation because he would not subscribe to certain Articles. Even his intimacy with the minister of the parish, and also with Mr. Vawdrey (Presbyterian minister) was objected to, though both were very pious and learned characters. He was obliged on these accounts to leave Nantwich in 1727. He took leave of his flock in a pathetic sermon, and most of the congregation wept.†



GROTESQUE  
CARVING.

(See page 332 note.)

The next settled minister was the REV. JOHN ASHWORTH, who removed to London in 1740, and was succeeded by the REV. JOHN GREEN, who was minister here in 1743.‡

A marble mural tablet, formerly in the Barker Street Chapel, and now built into the wall of the school-room in the new Chapel, Market Street, commemorates a lady of the congregation about that time, as follows:—

“Near this place lies the Body  
of LYDIA wife of JOHN GOODALE Gentleman.  
A Woman

Endow'd with the most amiable Qualities  
of Fine Natural Understanding,  
Which She had greatly improv'd by Reading & Meditation.  
To her Husband, Relations, & Neighbours  
Tender, Generous & Humane.  
To relieve the Needy & Succour the Distrest  
Forward, Earnest & Impatient.  
And in her Duty to her Creator  
Regular, Devout, & Fervent.  
She died Universally lamented,  
December y<sup>e</sup> 17th 1746.  
Aged 40.”

\* See Hunter's *Critical and Historical Tracts*, No. iii, p. 72. London: Jno. Russel Smith, 1850; and articles in *the Athenæum* for Sept. and Oct. 1849, &c.

† The late Rev. R. B. Aspland's MS. collections, vol. ii. p. 353.

‡ MSS. in Dr. Williams' Library, Red Cross Street, London; quoted in "*Nonconformity in Cheshire*," p. 135.

A line in the Parish Register mentions this Chapel as follows:—

“1759. March 6. Ann Tomkin, widow, Buried at the Anabaptist Meeting House.”

The Rev. R. B. Aspland says, the Chapel came into the hands of some Calvinistic Baptists, through the influence of a Mr. Price; but the congregation declining, it was at last closed about the year 1772. One of the trustees, Mr. Roger Maddock, in 1777, let the Chapel to the first Wesleyan Methodist Society, which continued to worship there for thirty years. The Rev. John Wesley, on two occasions, preached there; and there, too, in 1785, an eccentric townsman, *Joseph Whittingham Salmon*, Gent., who held Swedenborgian doctrines, preached his own wife's funeral sermon, from Rev. vii, 13—17, which was printed at Leeds in the same year.\* Soon after the year 1808 an attempt was made to re-establish the Baptist Society; and one of the new Trustees, a native shoemaker, Mr. JOHN COOPER, became the first minister. A house was purchased for a minister's residence, and the sanction of the Bishop obtained, certifying it as a place of worship, according to the following petition late in the possession of Geo. Wild, Esq., J.P., of Stockport.

“*To the Right Reverend Father in God B. Edw. Sparke by divine permission Lord Bishop of Chester.*”

“We whose names are hereunto subscribed being his Majesty's protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England have agreed to set apart for the public worship of Almighty God a dwelling house now in the holding and occupation of Sam<sup>l</sup>. Penkethman situate in Hospital Street in the Parish and Town of Nantwich, the County and Diocese of Chester, and desire that the same may be registered according to the Act of Parliament made in the first year of the reign of their late Majesties King William and Queen Mary entitled ‘An Act for exempting their Majesties protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penalties of Certain Laws,’ as witness our hands this 25 March 1812.

Sam <sup>l</sup> . Penkethman	Thos. Cooper	William Fairbrother
John Cooper [Minister]	Wm. Cooper	Thomas Hassall
Samuel Lovatt	Ralph Tilsley	Thomas Louvatt
John Davies	John Tilsley	Matthew Pickering.”

The above document is endorsed as follows: “The 28th day of March 1812. Registered in the Public Episcopal Registry at Chester, according to the Act within mentioned. Wm. Ward, Depy. Regr.” “Extracted by Edw<sup>d</sup>. Jones, Procter.”

Mr. Cooper, who was still minister in 1820, removed to Coseley, in Staffordshire, and afterwards to Wisbeach, and then to Sutton, in Lincolnshire, where he died. Before leaving Nantwich, he installed as his successor, his journeyman shoemaker, *Mr. Thomas Foster*, whose name occurs in the Parish Register, as follows:—

“1831. Jan. 13. Thos. Foster, Genl. Baptist Minister, and Mary Hughes.” [Married].

\* JOSEPH WHITTINGHAM SALMON printed a second edition of this Sermon in 1787. He was the author of “*Moral Reflections in Verse; Begun in Hawkestone Park, May 20 and 21, 1794*” &c. Printed by E. Snelson of Nantwich 1796; which was reprinted in an abridged form; the third Edition, entitled, “*The Beauties of Hawkestone Park*” &c., being printed at London in 1817. Another poem by the same writer, entitled “*The Beauties of Booths, the seat of Willoughby Legh, Esq.*” appeared in 1820.

He was the son of Charles Salmon of Nantwich, Gent., who married Martha Whittingham, 1 Jan. 1747. (*Acton Par. Reg.*) J. W. Salmon was twice married; first to his cousin Mary, dau. of Charles Salmon of Willaston, whom he married on 19 Jan. 1769 (*Nant. Par. Reg.*); by whom he had issue a son, the Revd. William Salmon, B.A., (bapt. 27 June 1775) who was Vicar of St. Peter's Church Stockport, 1811—1816; and afterwards curate at Nantwich; and whose daughter *Annette*, though born at Stockport on 12 Feb. 1811, was baptized at Nantwich on 22 Dec. 1817; and on 28 Nov. 1833, became the wife of Thos. Bower, Cotton-manufacturer, of Nantwich. (*Ibid.*)

There are many entries relating to the Salmon family in Nantwich and Wyburn Registers.

The next minister, also a townsman, was *Mr. Thomas Hammersley*. These three ministers adopted Unitarian views, and the congregation decreased until it became extinguished. Mr. Hammersley took possession of the house in Hospital Street, and the Chapel; and eventually an action was brought against him by the other trustees, which was tried at Chester before Justice Williams at the Autumn Assizes in 1840, but decided in his favour. For several years the Chapel stood a mournful monument of the zeal of a by-gone age, until it was obtained by a new society of *General Baptists*, that had been gathered together by Messrs. Kirkham, Johnson, Pedley and others. This society finally removed to new premises in Market Street on the 14th Nov. 1873, and sold the old Chapel in the following year to the Independent Order of Good Templars. The pastors of the new society have been as follows:—\*

REV. J. B. LOCKWOOD,† Jan. 1864 to Dec. 1865. Resigned.

REV. E. EVANS, April, 1866 to Sep. 1869. Resigned.

REV. EDW. KNIGHT EVERETT, Nov. 1869 to Dec. 1871. Resigned.

REV. ROBT. PEEL COOK, May, 1872 to Sep. 1881. Resigned.

REV. PRICE WILLIAMS, Aug. 1882. Present Minister.

#### THE FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE.

A Society of Friends, originally called *Seekers*, and afterwards *Quakers*, in derision from the quaking they exhibited in their enthusiasm, appears to have existed in this neighbourhood in the Commonwealth period. Edward Burghall, vicar of Acton, in his "*Providence Improved*," says:—

"1660. March 16. *Two Quakers* came to disturb me in the public congregation. I so ordered my studies, that the sermon was put against them; they had liberty to speak, and were answered; at last one of them denied the Scriptures to be the word of God, on which they were, with shame, turned out by the congregation."

"1660. June 9th. *Two Quakers* came into my church with a lanthorn and candle, while I was preaching; their design was (as they confessed) to have lighted a sheet of paper, which they had, as a sign of God's anger burning against us."

In explanation of the vicar's remarks, it may be suggested that open disputings during public worship at that time were neither uncommon nor regarded as a mark of indecorum; and very likely the two quaker declaimers here mentioned on two different occasions, were merely disturbers, or fanatics, for whose actions and opinions the society founded by George Fox was in no way responsible.‡ The names of several quakers in this neighbourhood, who, about the year 1670, had been convicted as recusants for not attending divine service at their parish churches, and had had their estates seized, occur in a roll preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as follows:—"Thomas Brasscy, of Willaston; Joseph Powell,

\* This list of ministers was obligingly communicated by Mr. Richard Forey.

† Mr. Lockwood came from Tarporley; and had formerly officiated for seven years at Hebdon Bridge, Yorkshire. He preached his first sermon at Nantwich on 1 Jan. 1864.

‡ The Rev. Philip Henry, of Worthenbury, in 1659, was also annoyed by such like individuals, whom he also calls "*Quakers* set on by others who wished ill to his ministry." Of those who were Quakers by honest conviction, Philip Henry mentions "*Mery Moody* who left his congregation and turned Quaker, because she refused to partake of the Lord's Supper." (Philip Henry's *Diaries and Letters*, 1882, pp. 68, 285).

of Acton; *John Sharples*, of Hatherton; *Daniel Moore*, of Hankelow; and *Thomas Cornes*, of Barthomley.\*\*

The Quakers suffered severe persecution in Charles II reign; and in 1685, it is said, no less than 1,460 were imprisoned in England and Wales; and great numbers sailed to America, and settled in the newly founded Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, amongst whom were many from Cheshire, who probably built the city of Chester in that State. The first mention of this Sect in the Parish Registers is as follows:—

" 1715. Dec 30. Shussannah Duce, Aged about 42 yeares, *Quaker*." [Baptized].

In 1721 there were thirteen Quaker families in Nantwich.—(*Notitia Cestriensis*).

The Nantwich Friends' Meeting-house, and Burial Ground, is situated in Pillory Street. The land, about eight hundred and twenty-one square yards, was conveyed in 1724 to Benjamin Claridge, of Winsford, and another, together with some buildings thereon, in trust for the use of the people called Quakers, as the site of a building for religious worship, and as a place for the burial of their dead. In the following year a Meeting-house was erected; the cost of which, as also the purchase money for the land, were raised among Friends of Cheshire Quarterly Meeting. The Meeting-house underwent a thorough repair about the year 1850, at a cost of £206. A stable formerly belonging to this property, was taken down a few years ago to provide a better entrance to this secluded and well-kept ground.†

Of the Quaker families resident in this town about a hundred years ago, may be mentioned, *Adkins*, *Bellis*, *Claridge*, *Fallows*, *Morrey*, *Mulliners*, *Stretch*, and *Tunstall*. When the burial-grounds in the town were closed by order of the Board of Health in 1850, special exception was made in the case of the Friends', owing to the smallness of the Society; and during the last thirty years only about half a dozen interments have taken place.‡

#### INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.

The evangelical movement, which was commenced within the Established Church by the Rev. John Wesley, and among Nonconformists by the Rev. George Whitfield, reached Nantwich before the end of last century, and led to the formation of the Wesleyan and Independent societies. It is stated that when Whitfield visited the town in 1753, he was assaulted by a mob and taken over the flood-gates at the Mill, to Marsh Lane, where the rabble obtained a bull, intending to drive it among the congregation, but being thwarted in their designs by the animal falling into a pit, they left him to deliver his discourse.§ More than twenty-five years elapsed before a society of Independents was formed by Captain Jonathan Scott, who has been called the Cheshire Whitfield. He was the second son of Capt. Richard Scott, and was born at Shrewsbury in 1735. Entering the army in his seventeenth year, he rose to the rank of Captain in the 7th Dragoons, and was present

\* The List for Lancashire and Cheshire is printed in Mr. Earwaker's *Local Gleanings Magazine*, 4to series, Vol. I, p. 233-4.

† These particulars are taken from a pamphlet entitled "Some Account of the Trust Property, Belonging to the Society of Friends within the limits of Cheshire Monthly Meeting, Prepared by Direction of that Meeting. Third Month 1855."

‡ For this information I am indebted to Samuel Harlock, Esq., Brookfield, Nantwich.

§ Whitfield's Life, p. 131; and Letter 997.

at the battle of Minden, 1st. Aug. 1759. He commenced preaching to the soldiers of his regiment; and being induced to sell his commission in 1769, he devoted his after years wholly to missionary work; settling first at Wollerton; and visiting Newport, Whitchurch, Newcastle, Nantwich, and other Cheshire towns. In 1773 he had a thousand hearers at Stoke-on-Trent; and in the following year he was ordained at Lancaster to the office of "presbyter or teacher at large." In 1780 Capt. Scott and the Rev. William Armitage of Chester, came to Nantwich and opened a preaching room,—a coachmaker's shop, in Barker Street; (on the site of a row of houses called *Oak Buildings*) the leading members of the small society then being Mr. Henry Kitchen and Mr. John Smith. Another supporter of the cause was Samuel Barrow, Esq., J.P., who lived at a large house, since converted into cottage tenements, on the south side of Hospital Street; and who, in 1796, offered £50 per ann. for the support of a settled ministry; an old female servant of his, likewise, leaving a legacy of £20 towards the erection of a "chapel or meeting-house if ever there should be one."

The Chapel was built in 1801, in Church Lane; and met the requirements of the society until 1842, when the present Chapel, in Monks' Lane, was built at a cost of £2,200; the old Chapel being retained as a Sunday School, and for week-day services. Of the principal supporters in past years, may be mentioned the families of Cummings, Groucott, Hilditch, Jackson, Nixon, Thomson, and Williams. In Jan. 1880 the congregation sustained a severe loss in the death of Miss Janet Ramsay, of Dysart Buildings, Nantwich, who for sixty years had been a most liberal supporter,—not only of the Congregational Church, but of other good objects outside her own denomination. Besides contributing very largely towards the erection of Monks' Lane Chapel, she bore the sole expense of enclosing the garden (given by her brother, Gilbert,) and Chapel with a substantial wall in 1861; in 1871 she invested £700 in Manchester Corporation Bonds, the interest to be a perpetual annuity in augmentation of the pastor's stipend; and in 1875 she presented the congregation with a very fine-toned Organ at a cost of nearly £400.

Memorials of the dead on mural tablets in the Church Lane Chapel still remain to—

- (1) "*Rev. Robert Smith*, forty years a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and late Pastor at Church Lane Chapel Nantwich; died 20 March 1822, aged 73."
- (2) "*Elizabeth Smith*, died 1 Sep, 1814, aged 63."
- (3) "*Sarah*, dau. of *Rev. Peter Henshall* of Nantwich; died 19 June 1823, aged 2 yrs. 4 mths. The following curious epitaph is added :—

"Dear Sarah's left this vale of woe and sin below,  
Triumphant borne away on bright seraphic wings;  
Her infant soul is fled to Regions high and fair,  
Where now for ever Jesu's love she sings;  
Now in full glory she beholds the Saviour's face,  
Which infant thousand thousands more Behold;  
And with the numerous, glorious Blood-bought Race,  
She sweetly sings his praise to harps of Gold."

- (4) "*Henry Kitchen*, aged 68, died 29 Jan. 1821; He was more than Forty Years a stedfast Member of that Church, which he in his youth through Divine Providence was the humble means of first establishing, and for several Years, with the assistance of a Friend and Companion he supported the Ministry of the Independent Church."

- (5) "*Henry Kitchen* [son of the above] died 20 Sep. 1869, aged 77 years. He was upwards of 50 Years connected with this Sabbath School as a Scholar, Teacher & Superintendent."
- (6) "*John Ramsay*, Tea-dealer of Nantwich; born in 1795 at Laggansarroch, parish of Colmonell, Ayrshire, died 23 Jan. 1834, aged 39 years."
- (7) "*Andrew Ramsay*, Draper of Nantwich [brother to the above] died 27 April 1835, aged 56 years; also, *William Ramsay*, Tea-dealer of Nantwich [another brother] died 24 Aug. 1835, aged 35 years."
- (8) "*Robert John*, infant son of Peter and Janet Cumming, died 25 April 1852."
- (9) "*Ann Groucott*, died suddenly 30 April 1876, aged 25 years."
- (10) "*Edgar Whitfield*, son of Rev. E. J. Sadler & Ann his wife, died 28 July 1854, aged 4 months. 2 Sam. xii, 23."

In the grave-yard of Monks' Lane Chapel are memorials to—

- (1) Joseph Jackson, died 25 March, 1876. Aged 76.  
Ann, [his wife] died 14 Jan. 1853. Aged 51.  
Samuel [their son] died 22 July 1819. Aged 8.
- (2) Ann Steele, died 20 June, 1855. Aged 63.
- (3) Henry Hilditch, died 21 May, 1854. Aged 36. [Tablet in the Chapel].
- (4) Samuel Kitchen, died 24 April, 1859. Aged 67.  
Hannah [his wife] died 29 Dec. 1870. Aged 84.
- (5) Peter Cumming, died 11 June, 1869. Aged 69.
- (6) Gilbert Ramsay, died 15 June, 1857. Aged 77.  
Janet Ramsay [sister to the above] died 22 Jan. 1880. Aged 82. } [Tablet in the Chapel].

#### *List of the Ministers.*

It is a remarkable fact that all the ministers of this Chapel have, in their turns, resigned the pastorate. Their names are here given, and the year in which they commenced their ministrations, as follows:—

The Revs. Mr. Gardner, 1796; William Jones, 1799; John Tisier, 1800; John James,\* 1804; Robert Smith,† 1807; Peter Henshall, 1819; Mr. Senior, 1825; Mr. Bury, 1834; Mr. McLean, 1835; J. Simson, 1840; E. J. Sadler, 1852; E. L. Adams, 1856; R. S. Lewis, 1866; H. S. Payne, 1873; and the Rev. F. Moon (the present pastor) 1879.

This society was most prosperous under the ministry of Mr. Simson, who rendered assistance to the Rector and the town during the visitation of Cholera in 1849; but since his resignation in 1851 the congregation has very greatly diminished.

#### WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

It has been previously stated, that a Methodist society existed in Nantwich as early as 1777, in which year, and for thirty years after, the members worshipped in the old Baptist Chapel in Barker Street. There, on two occasions, the Rev. John Wesley preached, namely, on the 6th April, 1779, and again on 17th May, 1781. (*Wesley's Journal*). At that time Nantwich was included in the Chester circuit, which then extended thirty miles to the south as far as Bridgenorth. Parson Greenwood, who was appointed

\* Mr. James was frequently assisted by Capt. J. Scott, who had married, as his second wife, the widow of Samuel Barrow, Esq., in 1802; and who came to reside at Nantwich. The Captain died on the 28th May, 1807; and his widow on the 10th Sep. 1810; both being interred at Queen Street Chapel, Chester.

† Robert Smith resigned Jan. 10th, 1818; and died at Nantwich. (See Monument above).



a second time to Chester in 1789, visiting Nantwich, made the following remark in his sermon: "My present congregation is just the same number as I have been absent from the circuit, namely, 23."\* In 1803 Congleton and Nantwich were made into a separate circuit, Messrs. Shelmerdine and Pinder being then ministers. The Nantwich Society, in 1806, increased from one hundred and twenty-seven to two hundred; and in the following year property was purchased in Hospital Street for £700, and a commodious Chapel of the same dimensions and on the model of Congleton Chapel, together with two preachers' houses, were built at a cost of £3,300.† In Oct. 1808, Nantwich was made the head of a circuit that extended as far as Bickerton, Winsford, Alsager, and Buerton; and on 13th November of the same year the new Chapel was opened by the Rev. J. Gaulter.‡ The leading Wesleyan families at that time were *Allwood, Bebbington, Kennerley, Mellor, Penkethman, Vernon, White, Wood, and Withinshaw.*

In 1835, when the Warrenite agitation broke out, the following members of society, viz.: *James Blagg, Anthony Gilbert, Richard Horton, and Thomas Stanyer,* were publicly expelled by the Rev. John Smithson after service one Sunday evening; as were others on the following day. These became the nucleus of another society§ that worshipped first in a school-room in Pall Mall, and afterwards purchased the old Castle-house, and fitted it up as a Chapel, calling it "*The Tabernacle*;" which has since been pulled down, and on its site was built in 1857 the present *Ebenezer Chapel* in Castle Street.

The Hospital Street (Wesleyan) Chapel, which is the largest in the town, and capable of accommodating more than a thousand people, was improved in 1858 at a cost of £400; and a new organ by Sweetland, of Bath, was purchased for £300, in the following year. In 1876 the Chapel was enlarged by the addition of a new front, re-pewed, and beautified, at a further cost of about £2,300.

For forty years (1808—1848) Nantwich continued to be the head Circuit-town; but after that time, owing to the rapid rise of the town of Crewe, the Circuit for twenty years was called the Nantwich and Crewe Circuit; the latter town having a resident minister from the year 1860. The following list of ministers appointed by the Annual Conference since the formation of Nantwich Circuit was drawn up by the Rev. Jabez Ingham in 1869, in which year Crewe was formed into a separate Circuit.

## LIST OF WESLEYAN MINISTERS.

*Nantwich Circuit.*

Stephen Wilson,	...	1808 to 1809;	William Jones,	...	1808 to 1809.
John Denton,	...	1810	; William Brocklehurst...	1810.	
Daniel Campbell,	...	1811 to 1812;	John Squarebridge,	...	1811 to 1812.

\* No account of the origin of Methodism in Nantwich has occurred; but, when the Rev. John Wesley was travelling to the north of England in March, 1753, it is said, that "at Nantwich he was saluted with curses and hard names, and soon afterwards the mob pulled down the chapel."—(Whitfield's Works, vol. iii, p. 35).

† The above particulars are from a Memoir of Mr. John Withinshaw, of Nantwich, by the Rev. J. B. Holroyd, in the Methodist Magazine for 1842, pp. 399—401; from the Rev. John Beaumont's "*Experience, Travels, Sermons, Treatise on Melancholy and other writings*," 1808, pp. 372, 391, 395-6; and from "*A Memoir of the late Benjamin White, of Nantwich*," by the Rev. A. Watmough, Wesleyan Minister," Printed by T. Johnson, Nantwich, 1850.

‡ The Rev. John Gaulter was of Cheshire birth, and became President of the Wesleyan Conference in 1817.

§ The new society of seceders from the "old Body" was called the "*Wesleyan Methodist Association*." It continued to bear that name until its amalgamation with the Wesleyan Reformers in 1857; and since that time the society has belonged to the *United Methodist Free Churches*.

|| John Squarebridge was Supernumerary in 1813. See also Register extracts, p. 352.

Joseph Brookhouse, ...	1813 to 1814;	James Allen, ...	1813 to 1814.
John Simpson, Senr. ...	1815 to 1816;	Thomas Harris, ...	1815 to 1816.
John Draper, ...	1817 to 1819;	John Hague ...	1817 to 1818.
Moses Dunn, ...	1820 to 1821;	James Mortimer, ...	1819 to 1820.
James Bogie, ...	1822 to 1823;	Thomas Eastwood, <sup>a</sup> ...	1821 to 1822.
Richard Smetham, ...	1824 to 1826;	Robert Watkin, ...	1823 to 1824.
		James Smetham, ...	1825 to 1826.
Thomas Gee, <sup>b</sup> ...	1827 to 1828;	Robert Bentham, ...	1827 to 1828.
John Hughes, ...	1829 to 1830;	Charles Janion, ...	1829 to 1830.
Thomas Hill, ...	1831 to 1833;	Hugh Carter, ...	1831 to 1833.
Thomas Preston, ...	1834	; John Smithson, ...	1834 to 1835.
Richard Tabraham, <sup>c</sup> ...	1835 to 1836;	Richard Smetham, ...	1836.
Richard Smetham, ...	1837	; Wright Shovelton, ...	1837 to 1839.
Peter Prescott, ...	1838 to 1840;	Thomas Stokoe ...	1840 <sup>d</sup> to 1842.
James B. Holroyd, ...	1841 to 1843;	John Cannel, ...	} 1843 to 1845.
		Abraham Stead, ...	
Adam Fletcher, ...	1844 to 1846;	Joseph Lowthian, ...	} 1846.
		John Clulow, ...	
Abraham Watmough, ...	1847 to 1848;	William Henley, ...	1847 <sup>e</sup> to 1848.

*Nantwich and Crewe Circuit.*

Abraham Watmough, <sup>f</sup> ...	1849	; William Henley, ...	1849.
James Godden, ...	1850 to 1852;	William Swallow, ...	1850 to 1852.
John Boyd, ...	1853 to 1854;	Robert Lewis, ...	1853 to 1854.
William Davies, <sup>g</sup> ...	1855 to 1857;	Henry Needle, <sup>h</sup> ...	1855 to 1857.
John G. Wilson, ...	1858 to 1860;	Henry Oldfield, ...	1858 <sup>i</sup> to 1860. <sup>j</sup>
James Mowat, ...	1861	; Thomas Brackenbury, ...	1861 to 1863.
Samuel Allen, ...	1862.		
Robert H. Hare, ...	1863 to 1865;	Charles G. Turton, ...	1864 to 1866.
Jabez Ingham, ...	1866 to 1868;	Charles Crawshaw, ...	1867 to 1868. <sup>j</sup>

*Nantwich Circuit.*

John B. Dyson, <sup>k</sup> ...	1869 to 1870;	Charles Crawshaw, ...	1869.
Joseph Midgley, ...	1871 to 1873;	George Scott, ...	1870 to 1872.

<sup>a</sup> A Pamphlet entitled "*Animadversions on a Sermon by Francis Knowles, preached at the Socinian Chapel, Nantwich, March 2, 1823,; and also upon some other of his Publications,*" by Thomas Eastwood, was printed at Nantwich by E. Jones in 1823.  
<sup>b</sup> A flat Gravestone in the Churchyard, on the south side of the Chancel, records—"Underneath | lie the remains | of the | Rev. Thomas Gee | who for 32 years | was a laborious | and useful Preacher | in the Wesleyan Methodist | Connection. | He died in this Town | May 24th, 1836. Aged 64 years. | Blessed age the dead," &c. His daughter was married to the late George Latham, Architect, of Nantwich.

<sup>c</sup> In Mr. Ingham's list *Thomas Thompson* is given in error for *Richard Tabraham* who died in 1878, having been a Wesleyan Minister from the year 1813.

<sup>d</sup> George Poole was a Supernumerary minister from 1840 to 1846. <sup>e</sup> William P. Peck was third Minister in 1847.

<sup>f</sup> A. Watmough was the author of "A History of Methodism in the City of Lincoln," in 1829.

<sup>g</sup> The wives of these ministers died within three days of each other, and were buried in the same grave in the Parish Cemetery. A tombstone states—"Mary, wife of Revd. Hen. Needle, died 14 Nov. 1857, Aged 34 Years."

"Sarah, wife of Revd. Willm. Davies, died 17 Nov. 1857, Aged 64 Years."

<sup>h</sup> Henry B. Britten was supernumerary minister from 1859 to 1866.

<sup>i</sup> The Ministers residing at Crewe before the separation of Crewe from Nantwich were as follows:—*James Jackson* 1789 1860—1862; *Wesley Bruyate* 1863—1865; *Joseph Workman* 1865—1867; *James Kent* 1866—1868; and *Austin Davey* 1868

<sup>j</sup> William Wears was Supernumerary minister in 1868.

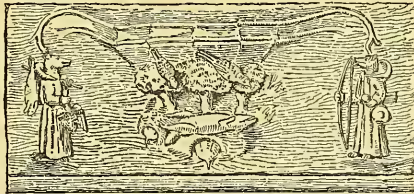
<sup>k</sup> J. B. Dyson was the author of a History of Methodism in Leek (1853, 12mo pp. 92); of Methodism in Congleton, (1856, 12mo pp. 186); and of Methodism in the Isle of Wight (1865, 12mo pp. 344).

John Hooton, ...	... 1874 to 1876;	James Cooke,	... 1873 to 1875.
		Mark Shaw,...	... 1876.
Mark Shaw, ...	... 1877 to 1878;	Buckley Yates,	... 1877 to 1879.
George Cartwright,	... 1879 to 1881;	Samuel Green,	... 1880 to 1882.
John Bramley,...	... 1882	; Samuel Wilson,	... 1883. } Present
(Present Superintendent Minister.)		Henry Wadsworth ( <i>Audlem</i> )	1883. } Ministers.

## PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL.

It remains to speak of another Methodist Society that originated in Staffordshire with Messrs. Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, in the early years of this century, and became established as a Connexion in 1819. The first missionaries that came to Nantwich, William Clowes and John Wedgewood, preached on the Barony in 1817; but several years elapsed before the society obtained a footing in the town. Foremost amongst the leading members of the infant society were Mr. Thomas Bateman, of Chorley, and Mr. Taylor, who, on the 1st Aug. 1826, purchased on their own responsibility, (for the society was then as poor as it was small) a building in Marsh Lane for £100, and fitted it with seats, gallery, and pulpit, and there this new sect of nonconformists, known then by the name of *Ranters*, worshipped until the year 1840; when, mainly, through the exertions and perseverance of Mr. Bateman, (Mr. Taylor having died in 1837) the present Chapel was built in Welsh Row, and opened on the 21st October in that year. At first Nantwich was included in the Burland Circuit of Primitive Methodism; but since 1844 a minister has resided in the town, and the Chapel has been the head of the Circuit. In Nantwich, the late Mr. Thomas Wood was an active supporter of this denomination for upwards of half a century; and principally through the influence and liberality of his brother, Mr. John Wood, a second Chapel, called the Wood Memorial Chapel, was built in 1881 on the Barony.\*

\* For the above particulars I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Thomas Bateman, of Chorley, who, a few years ago, fulfilled the office of President of the Primitive Methodist Conference; and who, though now 84 years of age, is still an energetic worker in the cause with which he has long been intimately associated. His name will long be remembered for the integrity and ability he has shown in the discharge of several important official positions of trust; and for the valuable services he has willingly rendered through a long series of years to the furtherance of good objects beyond his own denomination, in his native parish of Wrenbury, in Nantwich, and in other places in the neighbourhood.



MISERERE CARVING.

(Described on page 332.)



## Alvaston Township.



LVASTON township, which is situated to the north-east of Nantwich, is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, being at that time included under *Acton*, of which parish it then, like Nantwich, formed a part. In early deeds it is variously spelled *Alvaston*, *Alvandeston*, and *Alwaldeston*: the last apparently being the original Saxon name, signifying the *All-wood-town*. Alvaston, and its adjacent township of *Woolstan-Wood*, which is also, for a similar reason, omitted in Domesday Book, most likely formed part of the *Acton Forest*,\* which is stated in that record to have been nine miles long and one and a half broad. The "*Wood*" is first mentioned in Hugh Malbank's Charter to Combermere Abbey, c. 1130, by the appellation of the "*Creche*," a name perhaps of Norman origin, which, though in use in 1557, (see "*Articles*," p. 407) has since been lost. Besides the "*wood*" there has been from the earliest times in Alvaston, a "*waste*," called "*Beam Heath*," a name still in common use and co-eval, perhaps, with the first settlement of English people in this neighbourhood. *Beám* is Saxon for *tree*; and as applied to the heath, it refers to the extent of the waste, which, in former times, would be defined by the line of the forest or by certain boundary trees, commonly called in Anglo Saxon charters the "*mearcbeám*."† In Saxon times the inhabitants of Nantwich had the right of pasturing their cattle on the "*Waste*," and gathering firewood in the forest of Alvaston. These privileges of common right were admitted as "*belonging to the town*" of Nantwich in the Charter of 1130 above-mentioned; but subsequently the Lords of Alvaston somehow (probably by first enclosing and improving small portions, and then exercising what was afterwards called "*the lord's right of approvement*") obtained parts of these lands and settled there. To prevent further encroachments and appropriations of the common lands, an Agreement was made between the townspeople of Nantwich and the lords of Alvaston; by which the former renounced all claim to a certain part of

\* In the adjacent township of Willaston, or Wistaston, was formerly a place called "*Wylde-cattes-heth*," a name suggestive of one kind of forest occupant.

† See Kemble's *Saxons in England*, vol. i, p. 53. Perhaps the word *Creche*, or *Croach*, which is found elsewhere as *Crouch*, meaning cross oak, may have been given because of the number of crossed or marked boundary trees.

the township within limits particularly defined, then held by the lords of Alvaston; whilst the latter agreed that the rest of Alvaston should remain as common land for the benefit of the community in Nantwich, reserving to themselves, however, the sole right of pasturing their cattle for forty days in the year. Although the original deed is not known to exist, an *InspeXimus* and *Exemplification* of it, and three other charters relating to the common land in Alvaston, were enrolled by Richard Maisteron, and Richard Wilbraham, Gents., of Nantwich, in *Recognizance Rolls (Cheshire)* 30 & 31 Eliz. [1593]; three of which deeds are now in the Record Office. Copies of all four deeds in Latin are still preserved amongst the *Wilbraham MSS.* at Delamere; and are here given, (*translated*) as follows:—\*

“AN INDENTURE written and made between RICHARD DE ALWALDESTON and others and all the men of the whole commonalty of the vill [town] of WICH MALBANK.”

“This is the Agreement made between *Richard de Alwaldeston clerk, William fitz* [son of] *William*, of the same place, *Thomas fitz Cradoc* of Weston, *Richard fitz Roger, Godith* his wife, *William* son of *Thomas Totigrewe* [or Totigreux] and *Agnes* his wife of the one part and all the men of the whole commonalty of Wich Malbanc of the other part. Beginning on the tenth day of April in the year of Grace M.CC.LXXXV. [1285] and so to endure for ever, namely, that the aforesaid Richard, William, Thomas, Richard, Godith, William, and Agnes have granted and by this present writing have confirmed for them and their heirs and assigns to the aforesaid men of Wich and their heirs *that they may for ever have free common of pasture for all manner of their moveable animals everywhere sustained in the wood and in all the waste of the said vill of Alwaldeston at all times of the year except only forty days, that is to say between the Feast of St. Michael* [29 Sept.] *and the Feast of St. Martin* [11 Nov.] But so that neither the aforesaid Richard, William, Thomas, Richard, Godith, William, and Agnes, nor their heirs or assigns shall at any time enclose or approve any part of the said wood and waste neither shall they or their heirs or assigns require claim or in any mode whatever be able to require or claim anything therein; but that the same shall for ever lie and continue in common. And for this concession and agreement and confirmation of this present writing all the aforesaid men of the said Wich have granted for themselves and their heirs to the Richard William Thomas Richard Godith William and Agnes that they their heirs and assigns may in any way whatsoever approve as may seem best to them without challenge or contradiction of the said men of Wich or their heirs a certain place of the said Waste lying within the underwritten boundaries that is to say, under “*Schaslar*” in the field which is called the “*Brockefeld*” near the “*Sonsteresty*”† following the knoll on the other part from “*Crooked brock*” [crooked brook] as far as to the “*Sichet*” [runlet,] which lies opposite “*Marler*,” and so by that sichet ascending as far as to the “*great oak*” that overhangs the same sichet and from thence directly as far as to the “*Red Clough*”‡ so as the divisions and metes have been there laid down and so following from thence the Red Clough from that part as far as to “*Roberdesheye*” [Robert’s-hay]: But so that neither the said men of Wich nor their heirs or assigns shall at any time claim or be able to claim any thing within the said place while it shall be enclosed: and because the parties aforesaid are willing that the aforesaid agreement should remain firm and established unshaken between them for ever they have granted that it should be affirmed in the Chester Roll which is called the *Domesday* § and for

\* For these translations I am indebted to the kindness of Wm. Beamont, Esq., of Orford Hall.

† Query, whether the name, the “*Rising Sun*,” in this township is a corruption of this local name.

‡ “*Red Hall*” is the name of an old farm house in Wistaston, close to the boundary of Alvaston.

§ This deed, however, is not mentioned amongst the deeds of the *Cheshire Domesday* given in Dr. Ormerod’s “*Miscellanea Palatina*.”

greater security to the two parts of this chirograph have put their seals. These being witnesses, the lord [*domino*] *Reginald de Gray*, Justiciary of Chester, the lord *Richard de Massey*, the lord *Ralph de Vernon*, the lord *Richard de Sondbache*, *Thomas de Crewe*, *Thomas de Prayers*, *William Wodenoth*, *Thomas de Alston*, *William* the clerk, and many others.”

The next three deeds relate to a tract of ten acres of land in Alvaston which was granted by a charter without date, and consequently before the year 1300, by the lords of Alvaston to *Robert de Bressy*, who quit-claimed the same in favour of the townspeople of Nantwich in 1307. These charters are as follows: (*translated*)—

## I.

“To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come *Richard de Bromhall* clerk, *William fitz* [son of] *William de Alwaldeston*, *Richard* called the charioteer [“bigator”] of Alwaldeston, *Godue* his wife, *William* also called *Totigrewe* [or *Totigreux*] and *Agnes* his wife, the signior lord of Alwaldeston, send eternal greeting in the Lord: Know ye that by our common assent we have given and granted and by this present Charter have confined to *ROBERT DE BRESSY* one place of our land in Alwaldeston in our wood which is called *CRECHE* between the King’s highway which leads from *Marche fjord* near *Wich Malbank* To have and to hold of us and our heirs to the before named *Robert* and his heirs and assigns (men of religion and the chief lords of the fee excepted) freely quietly and entirely as we have measured it as an inheritance for ever with haybote\* in our wood of *Creche* and with all other commons and easements or liberties to our vill of Alwaldeston belonging rendering for the same to us and our heirs from him and his heirs and assigns three shillings in silver at two times in the year, namely, on the feast of *St. John the Baptist* [24 June] eightence, and on the Feast of *St. Martin* [11 Nov.] eighteen pence for all services customs and demands to the beforenamed place of land belonging. And because we mean this our gift grant and confirmation of our Charter to be kept firm and stable for ever we have strengthened it by the impressions of our seals. These being witnesses: *Thomas the lord of Alstanton*, *Richard de Henkull*, *Randle Coterele*, *Philip de Stapeley*, *William Chauu*, [? *Chency*] *Hugh de Blakenhall* and many others.”

II. A Charter of *Robert de Bressy* to all the men of the Commonalty of *Wich Malbank*.

“Know all men both present and to come That I *ROBERT DE BRESSY* have given granted and by this my present charter have confirmed *Richard de ffouleshurst*, *William of the Fountain*, [“de fonte”] *William de ffouleshurst*, *Hugh* of the same place, *Richard Cradock* of *Wich* [Malbank], *William Colfox*, of the same place, *William Wildebor*, *Richard Adcock*, *William Machin*, *Roger Russel*, *Randle Russel*, *William* of the Fountain, junior, and all other men of the whole community of *Wich Malbank*, All that place of land with all the fruits growing upon the same and with all other easements and appurtenances &c. in the vill of Alwaldeston and containing in itself ten acres of land and which we have recovered by an azzize of *novel disseisin*† in the county of Chester against *William fitz Richard de Alwaldeston*, *William fitz William*, *Thomas Cradock* and other persons natives of the same vill, for a certain sum of money to me in hand paid To have and to hold of the chief lord of that fee for me and my heirs for ever, freely quietly heritably entirely lawfully fully and peaceably as I the aforesaid *Robert de Bressy* the aforesaid place of land by its metes and bounds as it is enclosed by a ditch, have more fully or freely held it or in any manner could have held it with all its commons and easements to the said place of land in any manner belonging Doing for the same to the chief lord the services due and of right accustomed for all

\* *Haybote*; i.e. an allowance of timber out the lord’s wood towards the making and keeping up of fences.

† The term “*disseisin*” signified an unlawful dispossessing a man of his land. From this it is clear there had been litigation between the townspeople of *Wich Malbank* and the lords of *Alvaston*.

secular services things and demands whatsoever: And that this my gift and confirmation of this present Charter may remain firm established and unshaken for ever I have strengthened it by the impression of my seal. These being witnesses: [Domino] the lord RALPH DE VERNON, the lord URIAN DE ST. PIERRE, KNIGHTS; *William de Wistaston; Richard de Rope; Geoffrey Griffin; Patric Crewe; Randle Coterel; Richard de Henhull*, and others.

Dated at Alwaldeston on Wednesday in the morrow of Saint James the Apostle [25 July] in the year of our Lord M.CCC.VII." [1307].

### III. Charter conveying the same land to the Commonalty of Nantwich.

"To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come ROBERT DE BRESSY sends eternal greeting in the Lord: Know ye that we have remised released and for me and my heirs have for ever quit claimed to *Richard de ffouleshurst, William of the Fountain, William de ffouleshurst, Hugh of the same place, Nicholas Cradock of Wich, William Colfox, William Wildebor, Richard Adcock, William Machin, Roger Russel, Randle Russel, William of the Fountain, junior*, and all other the men of the whole community of the vill [town] of Wich Malbanc all that place of land with appurtenances which I have in Alwaldeston and which to the aforesaid men of Wich Malbanc by my certain Charter I have enfeofed as in such Charter is more fully and plainly contained together with all my right and claim which I have or might have or might in any manner have or claim in the aforesaid place of land, so that neither I the said ROBERT DE BRESSY nor my heirs or any other in my name or in my right any right or claim in the aforesaid place of land with its appurtenances shall at any time hereafter claim or demand or be able to claim or demand. In testimony whereof to this present writing I have set my seal; These being witnesses: the lord RALPH DE VERNON &c. Dated at Alwaldeston on Thursday next after the Feast of St. James the Apostle [25 July] in the year of our Lord M.CCC.VII." [1307].

The common land, thus secured by the above interesting deeds nearly six hundred years ago, has ever since been jealously guarded by the community. Until the end of last century these ascertained rights were protected by the regulative powers of the old Court Leet, which annually elected two officers, called *Heath-Keepers*, who watched the interests of the townspeople, saw the common domain was equitably enjoyed, and carried out the custom of "stint of common," by which only a limited number of animals of the commoners could be turned out on the waste. It may be inferred from one of the "*Injunctions*" of 1538 (page 31) that a considerable portion of the *Creche* forest was at that time not cleared for pasture or cultivation, as herds of swine, that were reared and kept by the householders in ancient times for their supply of salt-pork, (then the chief article of flesh-food), were confided daily to the charge of a professional swine-herd, who drove the animals into Alvaston wood for the harvest of acorns and beech-mast. No other mention of this town-officer has occurred; and it is noticeable in the following "*Articles*" dated 1557, preserved amongst the *Wilb. MSS.*, and in the extracts already given from Court Rolls still later, (*temp. Eliz.*) that the animals mentioned are beasts, cows and horses.

"*ARTICLES concerning the vsage & occupacon of the COMMONS and WASTE belonging to the towne of NAMPTWICHE commonly called BEAME HEATH and CREACHE agreed and determined by the inhabitants of the said Towne the xij [12] day of March in the third and fourth years of the Raigne of our soueraigne Lord and Ladie King Philip & Queene Mary. Anno Dni. 1557.*"

"*first* it is by the Consents aforesayd ordered and agreed that all the sayd Wastes and Commons shall be inclosed with hedges railles and gates as here before hath bin used and the same for to be kept

severall from all forinners who haue noe right nor good interest to any Com'on of pasture within or vpon the sayd wastes & Com'ons, and alsoe that none of the sayd Inhabitants shall putt anie of their beaste or cattell into the sayd wastes and Com'ons from ye feast of the Annunciacon of our Ladie [25 March] unto the x<sup>th</sup> [10th] daie of May and that euery one w<sup>ch</sup> shall put at the first marking w<sup>th</sup> the burne anie beaste or horse to pasture in or vpon the p'misses shall pay for eu'ry [euery] beaste ij<sup>d</sup> [2d.]; and for euery horse iiij<sup>d</sup> [4d.] for to be employed & bestowed vpon the sayd hedges railles or gates and other defences of the p'misses, and att all tymes after when any beaste shall be marked jd [1d.] for a beaste; and ij<sup>d</sup> [2d.] for a horse.

2. Alsoe it is ordered and agreed that noe one shall at anie time haue in or vpon the p'misses aboute the number of iiij [4] beastes in lay, or to the lay of iiij beastes, and that all and euerie pson. [person] & psons. haueing aboute ij beastes in or vpon the p'misses shall paie yeareley to the hands of such honest and well-disposed psons. as shall be nominated and appoynted by the most substantiall men the w<sup>ch</sup> now be and hereafter shall be elect for the ordering of the same, for euerie horse viij<sup>d</sup>, and for euerie beaste iiij<sup>d</sup>; all which sumes of money soe payd shall be distributed & given by the sayd psons. unto such the poore and needie neighbours of the sayd inhabitants as shall not haue, nor are able to haue anie beaste going w<sup>th</sup>in the p'misses, and as by the discretion of the sayd psons. as shall be thought most needfull.

3. Alsoe it is condiscended and agreed that the sayd honest & well-disposed psons. shall cause a booke to be made as well of their severall receiptes as of their p'ticular payments, and that they or two of them at the least shall yearly w<sup>th</sup>in iiij daies after the ffest of St. Michell [29 Sept.] make declaracon & Accounte before the gentlemen and other substantiall honest men of the sayd Towne w<sup>ch</sup> shall be thought meetest for the hearing of the same; and if it shalbe thought necessary after such declaracon and accounte made yearely for to nominate and appoynt other like men for to execute ye p'misses as is before sayd, that then all such money as shall remaine not distributed the same money to be deliuered unto the same men then appointed as is aforesaide.

4. Alsoe it is further condiscended ordered and agreed that this article and all things herein contained shall be observed and kept without minishing or alteration unlessse it may be converted to greater or more benefits for the use aforesayd, and ye same to be done by the whole consent of all those who now be and hereafter shall be authorized by the whole inhabitants of the sayd Towne or by the greater number of them.

5. Alsoe it is agreed and determined that there shall yearely fower [4] substantiall honest men of the sayd inhabitaunce be elect and appoynted who shall haue the charge as well with the marking and takeing in of all beaste and cattell w<sup>ch</sup> shall be putt to pasture vpon the sayd wastes and Com'ons; as with the making of hedges, railles, gates and other defences necessary for the same, and if the foresayd fower [4] men at euery time hereafter shall by their discretion and good policie invent or fynd anie thinge concerneing the vsage and occupation of the p'misses w<sup>ch</sup> now is or hereafter may be beneficiall and necessary for the Com'onwealth of the sayd inhabitants and now omitted in this booke, that then the sayd fower men, and all others w<sup>ch</sup> hereafter shall be elect & appoynted to the sayd charge shall from tyme to tyme open & declare the same unto the aforesayd gentlemen and other substantiall honest persons who by the advice of the fower men shall take order, and direction therein as shall appertaine.

6. Alsoe it is ordered and agreed that a *Pinfolde* shall be made and sett vpon the sayd Wastes or Com'ons in such place as by the sayd gentlemen and psons. aforesayd shall be thought meete & convenient; and that the sayd fower men who shall haue the ouer-sight & charge of the sayd wastes and Com'ons shall yearely att such tyme & tymes as to them shall seeme most convenient to driue or cause to be driuen all the sayd Wastes and Com'ons all & such beastes and Cattell as shall be found trespassing in or vpon the p'misses, the same for to impound and there to remaine untill such tyme as the owners if they be of the sayd inhabitants haue payd for the impounding of euery beaste iiij<sup>d</sup>; or as the impounders & the owners can agree, and that euery forriner and stranger haueing anie beastes or cattell impounded for trespassing



through escape or negligence, the same for to paye for euery beaste viij<sup>d</sup> or at the discretion of the impounders Provided allwaies that if any beastes or cattell of forinners or strangers or others who shall claime or pretend anie interest right or title for to haue Com'on of Pasture within any part or parcell of the p'misses be found trespassing & impounded as aforesayd, that all and euery such beaste & cattell soe impounded shall remaine in the sayd pounce untill the owners thereof shall obtaine the Kinge and queenes maties writt of Replevie or otherwise by due Course of the Lawe borrow the same, & in case the impounders or anie of them shall att anie time hereafter be impleaded, sued, or otherwise molested for or concerning the executing of ye sayde charge & office that then all and euery of the sayd inhabitaunce haueing beaste or cattell pasturing in or upon the sayd Wastes and Com'ons that they euery of them shall be for the lawfull assisting & aiding of the sayd officers indifferentlie be taxed & cessed by the gentlemen and the others honest substantiall psons. of ye said Towne what they euery of them shall giue and pay as well towards the charges & expense of the sayd officers as in all other causes & pursuits for the quiett using & occupying of ye p'misses.

7. Alsoe it is ordered condiscended and agreed that the *tenants of the townshipp of Alvaston* may & shall peaceably occupy & enioy their com'on of pasture in & upon all the aforesayd Wastes & Com'ons with as manie & like number of beastes and Cattell as was determynd lymitted & agreed betwixt the inhabitants of ye said towne of Namptwiche and the tenants of the said townshipp of Alvaston at such times as the sayd Wastes and Com'ons was last inclosed from all foreinners & strangers, that is to witt ye sayd tenants and their assignes to haue soe manie beastes & other cattell as to the lay of twentie-fower beastes dothe amount at all seasons of the yeare from the Annunciation of our Ladie [25 March] untill ye 10<sup>th</sup> daie of May onely excepted.

8. Alsoe it is ordered by the consente aforesayd that none of the inhabitants aforesayd not haueing cattell of his or their owne or otherwise, as kine borrowed or hired to giue them milke, shall haue or occupy any pte. [part] or pcell. [parcel] of the same Com'ons or Waste with anie Cattell colourably to free anie strangers or other psons. there uppon, paynes [fines] of such sumes of money as the aforesayd fower men shall thinke meete for euerie such trespassse being first duely proved.

9. Alsoe it is ordered by the consent aforesayd that if anie article, clause or sentence expressed or mentioned within this booke shall chance hereafter to be preiudiciall, hurtfull or against the com'onwealth of the sayde towne of Namptwich or to the inhabitors of the same, that the gentlemen and others of the most substantiall and honest psons. then inhabiting in the sayd towne may at anie time or times be at libertie with the consents & agreements of the sayd inhabitants or ye greater number of them for to augment, minish, alter, or to make frustrate and voide any such article, clause or sentence, and the same to conuerte to better purpose if occasion shall serue accordinge to the purport true meaning and intent before specified.

In wittnesse whereof wee the sayd inhabitants haue putt to oure owne seale and sett to oure owne hands the daye and yeare aboue written."

From the above "Articles" it will be seen that one of the duties of the Heath-Keepers was the marking of cattle on the Ley ground. Roger Wilbraham ("*Towne Concernes* p. 207") relates how Lord Cholmondeley, in or about the year 1660, attempted to infringe this custom by adopting his own mark, an innovation that was resented by the townspeople, fearing lest his lordship, who was Lord of the Barony, might eventually claim to be Lord of the Commons also. In the early years of the present century, when the authority of the Court Leet was fast declining, the collective ownership of *Beam Heath* was more firmly established by two Acts of Parliament, which gave power to inclose and improve by cultivation two hundred acres, and eighty-nine acres, respectively.

By the first Act (43 Geo. III, 1803) the Common Land, estimated at about four hundred acres, was vested in twenty-one Trustees, viz. :—

JAMES BAYLEY	ISAAC CHURCH	JOHN PRATCHITT
THOMAS BEBBINGTON, Junr.	WILLIAM GARNETT, clerk.	JOSEPH SKERRETT
EDWARD BELLYSE	RICHARD HASSALL, Junr.	WILLIAM SPROUT
GEORGE CAPPUR	BENJAMIN HEWITT	THOMAS STEELE
WASHINGTON CLIFF	RICHARD LEVERSAGE	THOMAS TAYLOR
JAMES COOPER	JOHN MINSHULL	DANIEL TOMLINSON
THOMAS CLOWES	RICHARD PARRATT	JAMES WRIGHT

This Act directed that the largest portion of the Common should remain as pasture; twenty-four cow-gates being reserved for Alvaston; two hundred acres to be tilled; thirty acres kept as potato ground; and other portions set apart for obtaining gravel, sand, &c., to repair roads in Nantwich and for obtaining clay for bricks for Nantwich. The profits, after paying all expenses, to be divided annually (in January) among inhabitant householders entitled by the Act to receive the same. The Rector of Nantwich to receive tithe; and the Heath to be exempted from all poor and parish rates.

An Amended and Enlarged Act was obtained on 30th May, 1823, (4 Geo. IV.) the number of Trustees being increased to thirty-two, viz. :—

JAMES BAYLEY	WILLIAM GARNETT, clerk.	JOHN PRATCHITT
JOHN BAKER	JOHN JASPER GARNETT	BENJAMIN RODENHURST
THOS. BEBBINGTON, Junr.	EDWARD KENT	JOSEPH SKERRETT
WILLIAM BETTELEY	JOHN LATHAM, clerk.	WILLIAM SPROUT
GEORGE CAPPUR	JOHN LATHAM	THOMAS STEELE
WASHINGTON CLIFFE	RICHARD LEVERSAGE	CROWDSON TUNSTALL
JAMES COOPER	JOHN MINSHULL	WILLIAM TOMLINSON, Senr.
THOMAS COPESTICK	WILLIAM MASSEY	HENRY TOMLINSON
JOHN DOWNES	CHARLES MARE	DANIEL TOMLINSON
THOMAS DERIEMER	JAMES PARRATT	JOHN WITHENSHAW
JOHN EARDLEY	JAMES PLEVIN	

The chief provisions of the Act are as follows :—

- 1.—Vacancies in the number of Trustees to be supplied at the next General Vestry; new Trustees being nominated and elected by a majority of the inhabitants then present.
- 2.—Two Heath-Keepers to be appointed, and paid a salary.
- 3.—Eighty-nine acres of Common land to be enclosed and improved.
- 4.—Persons entitled to benefit are defined to be,—All inhabitant householders for the space of seven years, or if born, or having served seven years apprenticeship in Nantwich, and the widows of any such persons dying after having been so resident.
- 5.—A schedule of Leys to be made out annually in January; and no person to turn into the Ley more than 2 horses, or 3 two-year-old Colts, or 4 one-year-old Colts; or 3 Cows; or 4 Heifers; or 5 Stirks; or 20 Sheep.
- 6.—Persons having left the town, and returning again, must be resident householders in Nantwich for two successive years before they shall be entitled to Leys upon the said Heath.

- 7.—The Trustess may lease the enclosed lands for agricultural purposes for terms not exceeding fourteen years.
- 8.—The prescribed times for opening and closing the Leys to be :—  
 For horned cattle, horses, colts ... .. from 12 or 20 May to 12 or 20 Nov.  
 For sheep ... .. from 12 or 20 May to 4 December.
- 9.—Allotments for procuring gravel, sand, &c., to repair roads in Nantwich.
- 10.—Allotments for making bricks, or tiles, to be sold to the inhabitants.
- 11.—Allotments for Potato-ground, at a rent not exceeding 3d. per rood of 8 square yards.
- 12.—When the surplus of Income amounts to £500, the same to be distributed in equal shares amongst the inhabitant householders of Nantwich entitled to the benefit of Leys.
- 13.—The accounts to be audited annually in June.
- 14.—The enclosed lands to be exempt from all Statute Duty and Composition, and all other poor and other Rates.
- 15.—The Rector of Nantwich to receive tythes of these lands.

In conclusion, it is worthy of remark that, after the vicissitudes of centuries, the inhabitants of Nantwich are still, as in Saxon times, the free allodial proprietors of their common land, which has of late years so increased in value as to have produced in 1879 an annuity of twenty-two shillings to each householder, the recipients numbering about twelve hundred and fifty.

The Common Land above treated of embraces about two thirds of the township. The remaining third seems to have been the part of Alvaston that fell to PHILIPPA BASSET on the first division of Nantwich Barony, (see page 23); and that subsequently passed to the ALVASTONS of Alvaston. From the family, who thus acquired the local name, these lands descended to the PRAERS of Baddiley. By *Inq.* 23 Ric. II. [1399] "Leticæ, widow of William de Praers, held in fee the fourth part of the manor of Alvaston, of Sir John Lovell, *in socage*, val. per ann. 20 shillings." The manor next passed by marriage to the BROMLEYS of Baddington, and the PIGOTS of Butley, and was held by them in 1427-8. (*Inq. p.m.* 6 Hen. VI.) After that date the descent of these lands cannot be traced. In 1666 the landed proprietors were "Mr. Richard Wright, of Namptwich; Sir. Thos. Wilbraham, of Woodhey; Randle Minshull, a minister of Exeter; and Mr. Randle Dod, of Edge, who sold the manor of Alvaston being a 4th part to John Greenough Mr. of Arts" (*Harl. MSS.* 2010. f. 21). The principal estate, consisting of an old mansion and demesne, called WINDY ARBOUR, formerly the property of Richard Vernon, gent., was sold in 1788 by Charles Clowes, Esq., to Messrs. James, William and Thomas Foster,\* of Nantwich, and is still the property of their descendant, W. O. Foster, Esq., of Aspley Park, near Droitwich. Another estate, with a modern Hall, called ALVASTON GROVE, was formerly the residence and property of Mr. Croudson Tunstall, a quaker gentleman; and now belongs to Francis Elcocke Massey, Esq., who is the representative of the Elcocke family of Poole, near Nantwich.

\* The Foster family left Nantwich and became iron-masters in South Staffordshire. They gave the iron railings when the Churchyard at Nantwich was first enclosed. The family vault in the Churchyard has a flat stone (within iron railings) inscribed as follows :—

"In Memory of James Foster of Windy Arbour, who died Feb. 2, 1805, aged 73 years;  
 Also of William Foster, who died June 12, 1812, aged 78 years;  
 Likewise of Henry Foster, who died March 9, 1817, aged 42 years;  
 And of Thomas Foster, who died Aug. 17, 1817, aged 79 years."

For many years an annual horse-race was run on a course in Alvaston, until the year 1824, when the land was enclosed and cultivated. In 1689 William Hodgkin, by will, bequeathed his lands in Alvaston, consisting of 20a. 3r. 24p. for the purpose of founding an Apprenticing Charity for Nantwich. One of the fields, known as the *Brick Barn Field*, contains a spring that was once locally famous for its curative properties in cases of bad eyes. A few years ago an exchange of land was made between the Beam Heath Trustees and Baron von Schröder, of the Rookery Hall, who has since constructed a private carriage road across the Ley ground.

## Woolstanwood Township.

WOOLSTANWOOD, which is not noticed in Domesday Survey of 1086, may have been included, as its name implies, in the Acton forest at that time. It first occurs in the *Inq.* 16 Edw. I. (see page 23) as having been divided between PHILIPPA BASSET and ELEANOR MALBANK, co-heirs of the last Norman Baron of Wich Malbank. The *first share* appears to have passed, like Alvaston, to the families of PRAERS and BROMLEY; and is supposed to have been purchased by the CHOLMONDELEY family in the sixteenth century; and sold by the Marquis of Cholmondeley towards the end of the eighteenth century to Mrs. Anne Elcocke, of Poole, from whom it has descended to Francis Elcocke Massey, Esq., of Alvaston Grove. The other share is said to have been held by the BULKELEGH family for a period of seventy years (1360—1430); but it cannot be traced further with any degree of accuracy. In Henry VIII reign “the capital messuage and mill” of Woolstanwood belonged to the GRIFFINS of Bartherton, from whom the “*house & milnes*” were purchased by SIR HENRY DELVES, of Doddington, prior to 1666, at which date “the King was Lord of the Wastes of Wooleston Wood, but the tenants appeared at the Nantwich Hundred Court,” (*Harl. MSS.* 2010, f. 21). The estate just mentioned was sold by the REV. SIR THOMAS BROUGHTON, BART., early in the present century to THOMAS WICKSTED, Esq., of Nantwich.

At the present time the principal landed proprietors of Woolstanwood are, F. E. Massey, Esq.; Geoffrey J. Shakerley, Esq., of Pimley Manor, co. Salop; and the trustees of Mrs. Lloyd.\*

Woolstanwood, or *Ouston-wood* as it was formerly sometimes spelled, contains about five hundred and ninety acres of land, and has an agricultural population. In this outlying part of Nantwich Parish, a small society of Wesleyan Methodists regularly met for worship at Marshfield Bank Farm, from the year 1830 until 1870, when a Chapel was built in connection with Crewe Wesleyan Circuit.

\* See Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, Vol. III, p. 456; New Edit.

## Willaston Township.

(PART OF.)



WILLASTON, a township on the east side of Nantwich, is now ecclesiastically divided (though when that division was made I am unable to state) into two parts, namely:—*Wybunbury-Willaston*, and *Nantwich-Willaston*; the former containing five hundred and sixty-three acres of land in Wybunbury parish; and the latter 406a. 3r. 38p. in Nantwich parish.

Willaston is referred to in the Domesday Survey of 1086, as follows:—\*

“Isdem Willelmus tenet Wilavestune. Ulviet liber homo tenuit. Ibi i virgata geldabilis.

Terra est dimidia carucata. Ibi est i bordarius. Valebat V solidos. Modo ii solidos.”

(Translated)—“The same William holds Wilavestune. Ulviet, a free man, held it. There is one virgate rateable to the gelt. The land is half a carucate. There is one bordar. It was worth five shillings; now two shillings.”

Some little explanation will render this brief record more intelligible to the general reader. In the time of King Edward the Confessor, ULVIET, a Saxon freeholder, was lord of the manor of Willaston; the estate then being worth five shillings. In 1086, it was under the lordship of William Malbank, first Baron of Wich Malbank, at which time it had decreased in value to two shillings. The extent of the manor is described as “half a carucate,” or about ten acres of land; and of this, a “virgate of land,” that is, the arable land, amounting perhaps to half of the manor, was rated in the King’s taxes. The tenant farmer who ploughed with his yoke of oxen and lived in his timber cottage on the estate, is called a “bordar,” because he rendered as rent and service to the Baron of Wich Malbank for his holding certain quantities of poultry, eggs, and other articles of food for the lord’s table.

After the death of William, third Baron of Wich Malbank, Willaston fell to the share of his daughter *Philippa Basset* (page 23). From the time of Henry III to Henry VIII, during a period of three hundred years, the manor belonged to the family of CHANU or CHENEY,† a name still applied to the brook that passes through the township. In or about 1530 the manor, described as a “Capital Messuage [Hall], II messuages, 300 acres of land, 50 acres of meadow, 500 acres of pasture, 60 acres of wood, and 100 acres of moss and heath in Willaston, Wistaston, Otedische, Walgherton, Acton and Hurdeleston,” was sold by JOHN CHANUE, of *Chanuex hall*‡ in *Wyxsterton* [or Willaston] *gent.* to RICHARD SNEYD, whose direct descendants have owned these lands, but have resided at Keele, in

\* The Domesday Book of Lancashire and Cheshire; translated by William Beumont, Esq., p. 35.

† The descent of this manor is very fully traced by Mr. Helsby in the New Edition of Ormerod’s *Cheshire*, Vol. III, page 487—491.

‡ In a field, called the *Moat-field*, belonging to Cheerbrook Farm, and nearly opposite the Willaston Board Schools, is still to be seen the outline of the *Moat*, which, most likely surrounded the old Hall of Willaston.

In the will of Roger Mainwaring of Nantwich, Gent., proved 1st May, 1590, mention is made of a house “in *Beame-streete* [Nantwich] called CHEYNYE HALLE wherein Mr. Edwards the surgeon dwelle.”—(Chet. Soc. Publ. liv, p. 155-6). This may have been the town residence of the Cheney family. Nearly two hundred years after, in Rate Books dated 1779, 1781, and in the Wright’s Treasurer’s Book under date 1788, mention is made of another *China* or *Cheney Hall*, and a Barn, belonging to it, situated in Barker Street or Love Lane. It was pulled down in 1788; two Almshouses being erected on the site of the Barn.

Staffordshire. John Bayley, Esq. purchased part of the estate, and in 1731 built the present Willaston Hall. In 1860 Ralph Sneyd, Esq. disposed of the remaining lands in Willaston, the purchasers being Messrs. L. Salisbury (about a hundred and fifty acres); Edward Birchall, John Cliffe, Owen Lunt, Philip Barker, and Thomas Pedley, and about sixty acres by the representatives of James Bayley, Esq., J. P., who now resides at the Hall.

Of *Nantwich-Willaston* there is little to record. Two *Inquisitions*, now in the Record Office, relate to claims of Right of Road through this part of the township. One of these, dated 1525, has already been given on page 97; the other, dated the 26th July, 14 Eliz. [1572] mentions a road

"From a certain pasture in Wigstarson [Willaston] held by *Lawrence Wright* to the town of Nantwich: namely, from the said pasture through a certain close of Land in Wigstarson aforesaid called *Sandyhole*, and thence to a certain lane called *Birchin Lane*, and thence to the said town of Nantwich, and so back again. The jurors named in the Inquisition said that the said Lawrence and every tenant of the said pasture ought to have such road from and to the same as is before described."

A field belonging to Red Hall Farm is still called the *Sandyhole*; and perhaps the roads mentioned in the *Inquisitions* correspond with the two field-roads leading from Nantwich to Wistaston Church,—the one from Sandy Lane, and the other from Birchin Lane.

An estate, or hamlet, called *Bressey* or *Brassey Green*, was the residence for several generations of a family of that name, which in ancient times was connected with the adjoining parish and township of Wistaston. ROBERT DE BRACY did homage and service to William, Baron of Wich Malbank, for his lands in Wistanston.\* Another ROBERT DE BRESCHI, of *Wildcatsheath*; his wife, *Alice*; his son, *John*; his brothers, *Thomas*, *Hamon*, and *Nicholas*; are all mentioned in a charter, which is witnessed by Randle de Olton, then Sheriff of Cheshire, Richard de ffouleshurst, William Hamelin, Richard de Rope, and Thomas Chanu, and dated 16 Edw. III. [1342].† In a Rental of Willaston, dated 22 Hen. VI. [1443-4]‡ is mentioned "*fo: braysey pro i acr. 6s. 8d.*"

The following entries from Nantwich and Wistaston Parish Registers, relating to the Brasseys of Willaston, in later times, will be of interest.

"1578. Thomas Brassie thelder was buried the 10th December."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

"1583. June 3. Elizabeth d. of John Brassye of Willasonn."—(*Nantwich Bapt. Reg.*)

"1591. John Brassye was buried the 21st June."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

"1614. John Brassye of Willaston was buried 20 April."—(*Wistaston and Nantwich Reg.*)

"1615. John the son of Danyell Brassey bapt. 1 Oct.; buried 12 Oct."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

"1617. Oct. 15. Anne Brassey, widdowe de Willaston."—(*Nantwich Bur. Reg.*)

"1620. The fourteen daye of December was buried Thomas brassey a gret buriall."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

"1631. Margaret Brassy, widdowe, was buried 29 May."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

"1639. May 23. Raphe sonne of Thomas Brassie gent of Willaston."—(*Nantwich Bapt. Reg.*)

"1669. Sep. 30. Married Thomas Radmore pish. Clarke [of Wybnbury] and Mary Bressie daughter of Mr. Ralphe Bressie of Willaston per licence."—(*Wybnbury Par. Reg.*)

"1701. Mary Brassye of Willaston Buryed 28 April."—(*Wistaston Reg.*)

\* Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, Vol. III, p. 330, New Edit. quoting Dr. Williamson's "*Villare Cestriense*."

† *Harl. MSS.* (British Museum) 2077, f. 110.

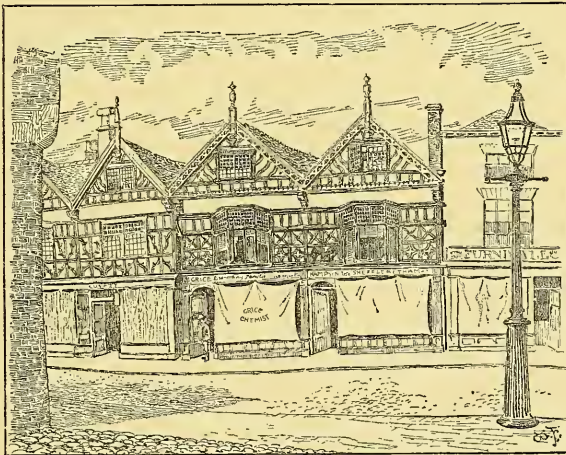
‡ *Ibid.*, f. 100. h.

This is the last mention of the name of *Brassey* of Willaston in any of the local registers that I have seen; and possibly she may have been directly related to *Thomas Brassey* of Willaston, whose name is given in the list of Quakers, *c.* 1670 (page 397).

A modern farm-house now occupies the site of *Brassey Hall*, and retains the old name. Two adjacent fields are still called the "*Hall-field*," and "*The Park*."

One of the principal residences in Nantwich-Willaston, called "*Mount Pleasant*," was built shortly before 1828 by the late William Salmon, Esq.; and is now occupied by his nephew, Henry Daniel Hill, Esq. On this rising ground formerly stood a windmill, that was blown down some years ago. *Windmill Lane* (now *Crewe Road*) and *Birchin Lane* locate the scene of Sir William Brereton's victory on the 28th Jan. 1642-3. (See page 145). For a few years after 1825 Nantwich races were run on the "*Ox Pastures*;" and in this part of Nantwich parish land was purchased in 1875 for a Nonconformist Cemetery.\*

\* Owen Murphy, of Love Lane, aged 45 years, was the first to be buried in this Cemetery, in Nov. 1875. In less than four years, that is down to 18th Sep. 1879, there had been no less than 249 interments.



OLD HOUSES IN HIGH STREET.



## Family History.



GLANCE over the foregoing pages will at once show that the history of a town is the history of the people that have lived in it. On nearly every page mention has been made of former inhabitants of Nantwich, and many particulars concerning them will be readily found by consulting the index at the end of this volume. It now remains to give further details in tabular or narrative pedigrees of some of the principal families, and short biographies of a few native celebrities. In ancient times the most important families were the *Malbanks*, the *Maistersons*, the *Fouleshursts*,

the *Wyches*, the *Cradocks*, the *Griffins*, and the *Wettenhalls*; and notable individuals such as *Wildeborc*, *Russell*, and *Kingsley*. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century there have been generations of *Maisterson*, *Wettenhall*, *Griffin*, *Crewe*, *Leech*, *Hassall*, *Tench*, *Crockett*, *Rutter*, *Sparke*, *Bebbington*, *Cheney*, *Wilbraham*, *Wickstead*, *Wright*, *Mainwaring*, *Church*, *Comerbach*, *Goldsmith*, *Minshull*, *Walthall*, *Clutton*, *Burroughes*, *Malbon*, *Delves*, *Pratchett*, &c.

Of these, the *Maistersons* were the longest resident in the town; and in the subjoined pedigree they are traced through fifteen generations, embracing a period of no less than five hundred years, in direct succession from *Robert Maisterson*, of Wich Malbank, who was living in 1297, to *Thomas Maisterson*, of Shrewbridge, (Nantwich) who was living in and after 1780. Though never manorial lords of Nantwich, they formed alliances with some of the best families in the county; and the natural inference is that they must have held estates elsewhere; for, in former times, even more so than now, the possession of land constituted the gentleman. Amongst the Cheshire Inquisitions preserved to modern times, only *two* relate to this family; so that it is now impossible to say what possessions they had in ancient times, or to test the accuracy of the earlier descents of the family, which are based on the memorials of *Lawrence Maisterson* in 1611, referred to on page 89. Besides the exploits of the renowned hero, *Thomas Maisterson, Esq.*,\* already given; particulars relating to others of the family who distinguished themselves in various wars prior to the seventeenth century, are embodied in the pedigree.

\* Mr. Helsby (Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii, p. 439, New Edit.) has added the following interesting information relating to *Thomas Maisterson, Esq.*, from Lichfield Registers, viz.:—that he "had license for an oratory in his house in Nantwiche 12 Dec. 1398."



The following abstract of the earlier Inquisition just mentioned, will be of interest as affording an instance of *might* over-ruling *right*, which was not of uncommon occurrence in feudal times.

“*Inquisition p. m.* of WILLIAM MAISTERSON who died on the 18th July 10 Hen. VII. [1495] without any heir because he was a bastard and had no issue of his body lawfully begotten. He died seised of 2 salthouses of 6 leads in Nantwich lately held by Richard Bekyngham and John Haryson; another of 12 leads held by William Ypurs Chaplain; another of 6 leads held by Robert Bromley; a messuage held by John Leek; 2 messuages with gardens adjoining held by Thomas Basford; 9 shill. annual rent issuing out of a messuage lately held by Adam Wetenhall; 18 shill. like annual rent issuing out of a messuage lately held by Thomas Starkey; 4 messuages and gardens adjoining late in the separate holdings of Richard Hill, William Mynshull, Edward Thatcher and John Harison.

Richard Wyche, Chaplain, and Robert Littlelover being seised in fee (*inter alia*) of these messuages, salt-houses, gardens, hereditaments and premises in Nantwich aforesaid, did by their deed, grant them to *John Maysterston*, senior, and the heirs of his body on the body of Catharine his wife, the daughter of John Dutton of Halton, lawfully begotten, with remainder to the right heirs of the said John. After the death of the said John, who died without leaving any heir of his body, the said premises descended to *John Marchomley* as his next of kin and heir; viz.: the son of *Margery* his sister; by virtue whereof he was seised of the said premises in fee, & continued so seised until he was *forcibly disseised* thereof by WILLIAM MAISTERSON a bastard, supported by Sr. William Stanley Kt., and was kept out of the possession thereof all his life, but after his death John Marchomley his son, to whom the right of the said premises descended, entered upon the said premises, and was seised thereof, but a parcel of the said premises so restored to him, the said WILLIAM Maisterston re-entered and died seised thereof.”

The other Inquisition *post mortem*, dated more than a hundred years after the preceding one, relates to the possessions of THOMAS MAISTERSON, son and heir apparent of RICHARD MAISTERSON of Nantwich, Esq., whom he pre-deceased. Two Inquisitions were taken after his death; one on the 14th June 4 Jac. I. [1607], and the other, which was taken at Chester Castle, and was a very long one,—the original being contained on seven skins,—on the 8th Jan. 15 Jac. I. [1617-8]. After quoting a lengthy Indenture by which property was acquired by his father’s marriage with Elizabeth Grosvenor, and mentioning lands “formerly the lands of Lord Lovell, and a capital messuage in which *Richard Maisterston* inhabits held of the King as Earl of Chester, with a mill, dove-cotes, 70 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 70 acres of pasture lying in Wich Malbank and called *Presthume*, held of the King as formerly belonging to the dissolved priory of Trentham, co. Stafford, in socage;” the Inquisition goes on to say that *Thomas Maisterston Gent.* of Nantwich

“Died seised of 47 messuages, 8 salt-houses, 1 Mill, 1 dovehouse, 56 gardens, 200 acres of land 80 of Meadow, and 40 of pasture, and £7 18s. 8d. rent in Nantwich; the reversion in fee of a Croft called *Lodge Croft* there, after the death of Lawrence Maisterston, Gent. &c.

Also lands in Oldcastle, Stockton, Willaston, Wigstaston, Worleston and Chester. The said Thomas Maisterston married Catharine Dorrington, and died on the 19 April 1 Jac. I. [1604] leaving *Thomas Maisterston*, son and heir, who was born after the death of his father, namely on 8 Dec. 1604.”

JOHN MAISTERSON, great-uncle of the above, who died in 1586, was famous for his noble exertions in connection with the rebuilding of Nantwich after the great fire of 1583. (see Monument). The Maisterstons of Nantwich and Woodford, in this county, were fined

for their loyalty to King Charles I; and Henry Maisteron, D.D., a native of this town, was deprived of his church preferment, and ejected from Cambridge University, together with the master, Dr. Beal, and other fellows, in 1643.\* Though the exact date of his birth or baptism has not occurred, his parentage, as proved by several wills still preserved at Chester, is shown in the subjoined pedigree. His father, *John Maisteron*, had been dead more than ten years when HENRY MAISTERON† was admitted fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, by royal mandate 6th Sept. 1634. In the following February his mother, Cecill Maisteron, died. Her will, which though very interesting, is too long for insertion here, expresses that her youngest son should be educated at Cambridge, as her eldest son had been. The will says:—

"*Itm.* my will is that my [eldest] sonne *Henry* (if he please) shall have the best bedd, wth the furniture which was my mothers, he givinge to his [youngest] Brother *John* the bedd he hath att Cambridge when hee shall come thither, my trust & hope being that by his Brothers good endeavours, and his unkle williams helpeing hand, hee may be, in due time fitted for the university and mainteyned there."

These intentions were dutifully carried out when, in 1647, Henry Maisteron obtained for his brother John, his admission into St. John's College, having himself been *Concionator* [preacher] at Michaelmas, 1643, and admitted Senior on 15th Jan. 1645-6.

The following notice of him occurs in a very scarce pamphlet entitled: "*An Accusation of Dr. Arrowsmith, Mr. [Master, after Dr. Beal] of St. John's college in Cambridge. By Petition of Robert Waidson Esquire and Doctor of Physick of the University of Cambridge. Printed MDCCL [sic] 4to.* On page 30 is this instance of mis-government:—‡

"Dr. Masterson admitted to be a senior, after he had been sequestered in Cheshire; And by his temporall means is outed by the statute, and for not keeping of his exercises in the Colledge before he commence Doctor, and after he was made senior here, was sequestered by M. Fortune, for what I know, without it is for giving ten pounds in money unto the King, and the Colledge plate which was none of his own; which truly I think he ought to restore to the Colledge, and doe desire it. This Doctor Masterson got his sequestration deferred at London, under a pretence that he hath been a madman these many years; and that you may see the madness of this man, he got his brother *Sir Masterson* [John Maisteron, B.A.] a debocsh [debauched] fellow, and a prisoner for the Kings service taken in warre, to be made Fellow, [John Maisteron, admitted Fellow 7 Ap. 1647], whilst *Captain* [John] *Smelt* for the Parliament mist a Fellowship. [He is however entered in the Coll. Reg. as admitted Fellow, 7 Ap. 1647, and Senior 21 Ap. 1657].

This Doctor since [no date given] had the degree of Doctor conferred upon him by the University, and he is one of our Seniors, so that by Statute he is to be supposed *one of the wisest of us*. I am sure he is wise enough to save his money. Now if he shall be judged to be *non sua memoriae compos, fatuus, vel idiota*, I do humbly desire the Parliament, that I may have the tuition of him. It is *quid pro quo*; for I have been under his tuition ever since he was senior. Now if he be wise enough, I shall then humbly desire the composition for his Sequestration, as a thing the State has been cheated on, if I had

\* *History of St. John's College, Cambridge*, edited by J. E. Mayor, M.A., 1869, p. 224, &c.

† Another *Henry Maisteron*, of Nantwich, gent., in his will, which was proved at Chester on 19th March, 1605, bequeaths a "garden on the *Castle Hill*" in Nantwich; a "pasture in Stapeley called *svvobstall*"; "two pastures in Worleston called the *Barrefields*" (now called *Berry Meadow*) "and one p[ar]cell of ground in *Anesey*;" (Annissey field being still one of the fields of Mile House Farm, in Worleston). These lands descended to *John Maisteron*, the father of Henry Maisteron, D.D.

‡ From a copy of the pamphlet *penes* J. E. Bailey, Esq., F.S.A., who kindly sent me the above extract.

not discovered it. And let Dr. Masterson, with all the distinctions he hath, take off this Dilemma; if he doe, I will give him leave to pay my Garragaskins [breeches], as hee uses the phrase."

Henry Maisterson\* was Zachary Cawdrey's (afterwards Rector of Barthomley, 1648—1684) tutor, at that time [1641 and *postea*] one of the Fellows at St. John's, Cambridge. The quarrels among the old and new Fellows at Cambridge, are alluded to in Newcome's Autobiography, (Chet. Soc. Pub.) Newcome, who went up to College for the second time, in May, 1645, was received "to be sizar to Mr. Maisterson," [*i.e.* John Maisterson] "who was after senior Fellow; and though, good man, he was distempered & jealous, and very suspicious of everyone, and oft of his sizar, yet it pleased God to give me favour in his eyes, and I lived very comfortably in his service and respective [*sic*] to me." . . . "I was also afterwards Mr. Maisterson's proper sizar, which was a fine place, of little service & good help, as is known to be in that College."—(*Autobiography* pp. 8 & 295).

John Maisterson, who is mentioned in the previous extract, was entered in St. John's College Register as "John Maisterson, son of John Maisterson, gent., of Namptwich, Cheshire; born at Namptwich; school, Repton (Mr. Whitehead) 2 years, admitted pensioner 22 March 1641-2; surety Mr. [Henry] Maisterson. act. past 17." He is also alluded to by Mr. Newcome (*Autobiography* p. 151) many years afterwards, as follows:—

"12 July 1665. My old friend *Mr. John Maisterson*, came to me [at Manchester] this night, and was with me all night. We discoursed of old matters when in the university together; and great things we have both seen since that time."

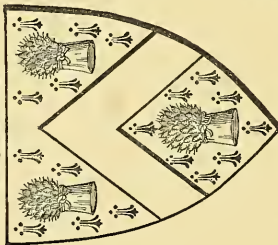
Of the later descendants, I have not discovered the parentage of *Thomas Maisterson*, of Shrewbridge, nor *Martha Maisterson*; nor of "*Richard Maisterson*, of Nantwich, Gent.," who is mentioned in the following pedigree, but whose will, proved at Chester on 30th June, 1747, mentions his two sons, "*Captain Maisterson*," and *John Maisterson* (who was married and had two sons, *Wooley*, and *Richard*, and a daughter, *Elizabeth*), and a daughter who was then married to a Mr. Edwards, and had one son, *Winwood*, and three daughters, *Margaret*, *Ann*, and *Ursula*.

The Maisterson Mansion, the residence of the heads of the family in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and the names of fields situated on the south side of the town, once their possessions, have already been noticed on pages 125 and 172.

\* Anthony á Wood, *Fasti*, ii. 179, says that Henry Maisterson, D.D. was after 1653, "*beneficed at Namptwich*, and died in 1671." The former statement must be incorrect, as the incumbent at Nantwich from 1648 to 1677 was Richard Jackson. The latter statement is correct; he was buried at Nantwich on 12th Aug. 1671.—(*Par. Reg.*)

# Maisterston Pedigree.

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 2119, p. 42; Visitations 1580-1663; Dorfold Pedigrees; Wilbraham MS.; Wills at Chester; Parish Registers.*



ARMS. Ermine, a chevron azure between three garbs Or.  
 CREST. On a wreath a tiger passant Argent.

Swayn filius Magistri

Stwardhus vocatus Magisterston

Rogerus Filius Magistri

ROBERT MAISTERSON, of Wich Malbank, 26 Edw. I. [1297-8]. Then surviving and holding land in Wich Malbank (*Dorfold Ped.*) died 1312

ROBERT MAISTERSON, son and heir = Agnes, dau. of William Wilbraham 26 Edw. I. [1297-8]. (*Dorfold Ped.*) 5 Edw. II. [1311-12]

THOMAS MAISTERSON of Wich = Katherine dan. Malbank, Esq.; son & heir: of Sir [Hugh] Escheator of Cheshire 1396-1404 & 1395-6. Oged. (*Chesh. Reg. Bolls*) Distinguished in French wars from *leignif* of Ed. III. to Hen. V. Died at a "great age, early in Hen. VI," probably c. 1427.

RICHARD MAISTERSON, Esq. = Joanna dan. 19 Ric. II. [1395] & 25 Hen. VI. Seneschall to Thos. Holland, duke of Exeter, for his manors of Spomeley & Adderley in co. Salop.

John Maister-son, said to have been buried in Acton churchyard in 1412.  
 THOMAS MAISTER-son, Esq. son and heir, 13 & 39 Hen. VI. [1434 & 1460] & 7 Edw. IV. [1467]

NICHOLAS MAISTERSON = Ellena dan. of son and heir; 7 Edw. IV. [1467]. He is the first of the family mentioned in Chesh. Visit., 1586.

Nicholas Maister-son Esq. second son 1331.

Margery dan. and Thomas Dawkinson. 1396.

John Maister-son = 1374. Grants lands, the inheritance of his mother, to his son John, and his right heirs. Sep. 1396. (*Chesh. Reg. Rolls*)

Alice Maister-son dead in 1449.

Nicholas Maister-son, died in 1449.

John Maister-son, son and heir = Katherine dan. 7 Hen. IV. [1405] & 33 Hen. VI. [1454]. Died without legitimate issue (*Dorff. Ped.*)

Nicholas Maister-son of Halton.

John Maister-son is added to the family probably by William Maister-son. *Inq. p. m.* II. Hen. VII. [1495.]

Ralph Maister-son who died possessed of one half of a salt pit of 6 leads in Nantwich, with successive remainders to his brothers *Ralph & William*, who being dead before 1396, the property was granted by the King to the Prior & Convent of Rowton. (*Chesh. Reg. Rolls*)

Richard [or Robert] Maister-son Esq. who died possessed of one half of a salt pit of 6 leads in Nantwich, with successive remainders to his brothers *Ralph & William*, who being dead before 1396, the property was granted by the King to the Prior & Convent of Rowton. (*Chesh. Reg. Rolls*)

Wm. Maister-son = 25 Edw. III. [1351] ob. ante 1396. Thomas son of Wm. IV. [1401-2.]

Margaret Maister-son = Robert Marchomley son and heir of *William* Marchomley of Nantwich after the death of her brother *John* Maister-son.

John Marchomley = son & heir; dissolved of Nantwich estates by William Maister-son.

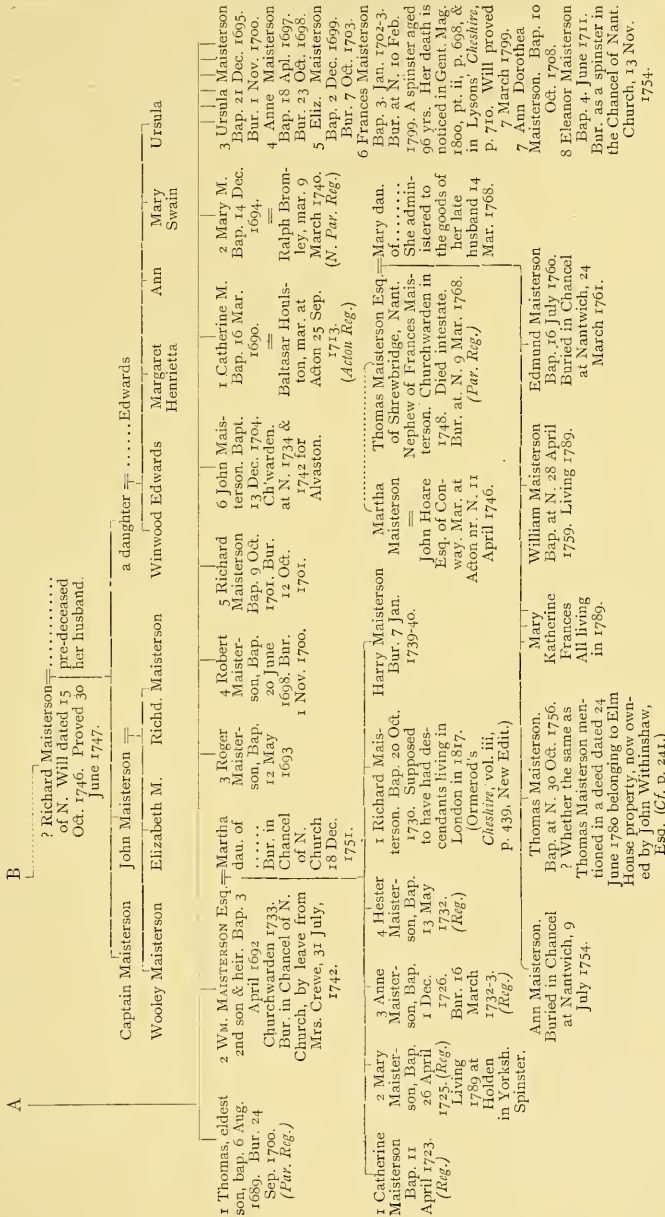
A

B

C



<p><b>A</b></p> <p>John Maister son          Executor of his uncle          Henry M. Will          1605-6; Dead before          31 May 1624, on          which day an inven-          tory of his goods          was taken.</p> <p>Henry Maister son          D.D. eldest son          Tutor in St. John's          Coll. Camb. ejected          1643. Bur. at N.          12 Aug. 1671.</p>	<p><b>B</b></p> <p>Cecil dan. of          ... Mainwar-          ting of N. d. in          Feb. 1634-5.          (M<sup>2</sup>p. 345-5)          Bur. 6 Feb. 1634-5.          Who proved          Will. 14 Feb. 1634-5.</p> <p>Richard Maister          son,          Will. proved 18 Feb.          1647-8. o. s. p.</p> <p>John Maister-          son, youngest          son, b. c. 1624.          3. Anne M.          Bur. at N. 16          Coll. Camb. Liv-          ing in 1665.</p>	<p><b>C</b></p> <p>1 Laurence Maister-          son, for the services he          did in Spain, portin-          gall, frames, the ne-          therlands, &amp; Ireland,          had from Q. Eliz. a re-          ward of as. pr. day, till          he should be better ad-          vanced with a charge of          a company of horse &amp;          foot. Bur. at N. 30          Sep. 1610.</p> <p>2 Roger Maister-          son married &amp;          lived in          Ireland.          4. Anne Maister-          son ob. a mayde          before the year          1612.</p>	<p><b>D</b></p> <p>1 Laurence Maister-          son, for the services he          did in Spain, portin-          gall, frames, the ne-          therlands, &amp; Ireland,          had from Q. Eliz. a re-          ward of as. pr. day, till          he should be better ad-          vanced with a charge of          a company of horse &amp;          foot. Bur. at N. 30          Sep. 1610.</p> <p>2 Roger Maister-          son married &amp;          lived in          Ireland.          4. Anne Maister-          son ob. a mayde          before the year          1612.</p>	<p><b>E</b></p> <p>1 Laurence Maister-          son, for the services he          did in Spain, portin-          gall, frames, the ne-          therlands, &amp; Ireland,          had from Q. Eliz. a re-          ward of as. pr. day, till          he should be better ad-          vanced with a charge of          a company of horse &amp;          foot. Bur. at N. 30          Sep. 1610.</p> <p>2 Roger Maister-          son married &amp;          lived in          Ireland.          4. Anne Maister-          son ob. a mayde          before the year          1612.</p>
<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Catherine          son, &amp; heir apparent          Bap. 14 July 1581. D.          in his father's lifetime          19 Apr. 1604. Bur. at          N. same day. <i>Ing. h. m.</i>          taken on 14 Jan. 1607          and on 8 Jan. 1617-18.          co. Staff.          Gent.</p>	<p>Mary Maister-          son married          1 Lawrence Rope          of Stapely, Esq.          (2) John Smith of          Morville, co. Salop.          Esq.          2. Sir John Gibson          co. York. Had Issue          Edw. Gibson, age 16          in 1612.</p>	<p>Margaret Maister-          son married          1 Edward Butler          of Bewsey, Esq.          o. s. p.          2. Sir John Gibson          co. York. Had Issue          Edw. Gibson, age 16          in 1612.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON of Nantwich,          Esq. Posthumous and only son, born          8 Dec. 1604. Bap. not recorded. Had          cause of the hiatus in Register. Had          1606. Bur. 18 May          1606. Bur. at N. 9          May 1684.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          Sir John Done of Urkinton, Kt., co.          Cest., Bap. at Tarporley 31 Mar. 1603.          and bur. there 23 Apr. 1629; having          died within two days of her father          (Chesh. Funeral Certif. p. 70.) Burghall,          noticing her death, says she was "a          pattern of piety."</p>
<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>
<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>	<p>THOMAS MAISTERSON—Mary dau. of          son Esq. Born in Thos. Palmer          1636 or 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          2 Thomas. bap. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          bur. 1637. (Vid. Stratford on co.          Monument.)          All died          young.</p>



## THE WILBRAHAM FAMILY.

The WILBRAHAMS resided in Nantwich, at Townsend House in the Welsh Row, for two hundred years, that is, from 1580 to 1780. The family, which is one of the most ancient in the county, can be traced back to the early part of the thirteenth century; the earliest known ancestor being RICHARD DE WILBURHAM, who was Sheriff of Cheshire in 53 Hen. III. [1269], and died about 2 Edw. I. [1274]. This Richard, who is stated to have been twice married, *first*, to Margery, eldest daughter and co-heir of Warin Vernon, Baron of Shipbroke, by Ada, daughter of William third Baron of Wich Malbank; and *secondly*, to Letitia, eldest daughter of William de Venables, lord of Warmincham and Radnor, co. Cest., is supposed to have derived his name from the manor of *Wilbraham* in Cambridge, where the family was located as early as the reign of Henry II. (Ormerod's *Cheshire*, old Edit. vol iii, p. 126). Following in succession were WILLIAM WILBRAHAM, living in 1312; WILLIAM WILBRAHAM, who died in 36 Edw. III. [1363]; RALPH WILBRAHAM, who died in 11 Rich. II. [1388], and THOMAS WILBRAHAM, who died at the early age of thirty-eight, in 11 Hen. IV. [1410]. The next successor, THOMAS WILBRAHAM, settled at Woodhey, and became lord of that manor in right of his wife, Margaret, heiress of John Golborne. He had five sons, three of whom became ancestors of different branches of the family. *Thomas*, the eldest, succeeded to the Woodhey estates, which were held by his descendants in the male line, until the death of Sir Thomas Wilbraham, of Woodhey, Bart., who died on 5th Aug. 1692; *Richard*, the progenitor of the Wilbrahams of Brindley and Rease Heath, in Acton parish; who became extinct in the eighteenth century; and *Randle Wilbraham*, the ancestor of the Nantwich Wilbrahams, now represented in direct descent by George Fortescue Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere House, as shown in the accompanying pedigree. Of RANDLE WILBRAHAM and his successor RALPH WILBRAHAM little is known. A curious mistake, however, occurs in Ormerod's *Cheshire*, (New Edit. vol. iii, p. 379), where Randle Wilbraham is stated to have been the *great-grandfather* of *Richard Wilbraham*, and to have died in 1548. It will be noticed in the pedigree that the date of the marriage covenants of Thomas Wilbraham of Woodhey, father of the said Randle Wilbraham, is fixed at 1401-2; and allowing a wide margin for the consummation of the marriage after that date, in case the contract was made during the childhood of Margaret Golborne, the heiress of Woodhey, as was not uncommon, *Randle Wilbraham*, the second son of that marriage, must have been born before 1420; and if so, in 1548 he would have reached the patriarchal age of one hundred and twenty-eight years! The express statement of Richard Wilbraham in his Family Journal, is the best refutation of the error. He writes as follows:—

“yt Randull Wylbrahm. my *grannffather* Dyed the second daye of march in the xiiij yere of the reigne of Kyng Henry the sevonth A° Dni. 1498.”

RICHARD WILBRAHAM, who came to reside at his newly-built Townsend House on 6th Aug. 1580, commenced the remarkable family memorial, to which the successive heads of the family have contributed to the present time. Having lived to see his four sons rise to positions of wealth and honour, he died at Nantwich at the advanced age of eighty-seven; and was succeeded by his grandson, Thomas Wilbraham. The following is an abstract of his Inquisition *post mortem*.



"*Ing. p. m.* taken at Wich Malbank 23 Oct. 11th Jac. I. [1614] before Sir Rich. Wilbraham, Kt., and Henry Mainwaring Esq. Eschaetors, Ralph Wilbraham, and George Cotton, Esqrs., Commissioners, after the death of Richard Wilbraham, Gent., on the oaths of Robert Whitney, John Haughton of Haughton, Thomas Brooke of Leighton, William Allen of Brindley, John Aston of Aston, Ralph Hayle(?) and Randle Smith of Brindley, Richard Wilbraham and William Pratchett of Worleston, William Salmon of Wild Heath, George Cudworth of Newhall, Robert Massey of Coole Lane, Laurence Wode of Wysterion, Thomas Smyth of Chéckley, and Peter Walton of Sound, gentlemen, Jurors, who say that Richard Wilbraham on the day of his death was seised in his demesne as of fee, of and in a capital messuage in Wich Malbank, with garden and lands (pasture and meadow) adjoining; also a messuage, garden, orchard and lands formerly belonging to Sir William Davenport Kt., value 3s. 4d.; four pastures called the *frog-greaves*, in Wich Malbank and Acton, value 13s. 4d.; also the manor of Behton with water-mill, 8 cottages, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 40 acres of land, 100 acres meadow, 40 acres pasture, &c. Also the messuage and farm called the *hall of ffulshurst* in Sound; also 30 acres land, 10 acres meadow, 20 acres pasture &c. in Buerion; a messuage with garden, orchard and lands in Newton near Tattenhall; a messuage with lands in Faddiley and Brindley; a messuage with lands in Somerford Radnor: two messuages &c. in Walgherton and Hatherton; a messuage and lands in Bloore (Staff.); Two pastures, one called the *pease flatt* in Acton, the other the *Brown-Hill* in Wich Malbank; one croft called the "*Cawsey Croft*" in Henhull; five pastures and one meadow called *Shutshawes* and *Wichfeild* in Wich Malbank; 19 messuages with gardens &c. in Wich M.; four salt-houses each 12 leads, and 8 salt-houses each 6 leads in Wich M.; Rents in Hankelow, Brindley and Faddiley; a parcel of land called the *Horse-croft* in Wich M. formerly in the tenure of Rich. Maisterson, Gent.; an annual free rent of 2s. from the west side of a pasture called the *Green-feild* in Wich M.; rents in Great Wood Street; also tithes of corn and wood in Leighton; Messuages in Wich Malbank in the occupation of Thomas Malbon, William Webb, Gents., William . . . ., Dorothy Brooke, widow and John Sparrow, val. 10s.; also other lands in Wich M. in common and free burgage value 40s. They say Rich. Wilbraham died on 2 Feb. 1611-2, and that Thomas Wilbraham Esq. is next heir, being the son of Richard Wilbraham of London Esq. deceased, son and heir of the said Rich. Wilbraham; and that he is aged 22 years and upwards."

THOMAS WILBRAHAM, the grandson of Richard Wilbraham, was born and brought up near London, and was a well educated and accomplished gentleman. He was admitted of the Society of Lincoln's Inn, and of Brazenose Coll. Oxon. in 1613; and at a time when very few travelled abroad, he spent two years on a tour in France, Spain, Germany, and the Low Countries. "for the better experience and knowledge of the Languages;" as stated in his *Licence to Travel*, dated Whitehall, 17th June, 1614. He made a second journey to France in 1618. Of these travels he has left the following brief account in the family Journal:—

"*Memorandum*: yt the 20th of July 1614 I went from London for France in company wth Sr. Tho. Edmonds the French Ambassadour & Sr. Tho. Darnall my familiar friend. And tooke shipping at Douer in one of the Kinges Ships called the Answere the 25 July 1614 at 3 of the clock in the afternoon, & by God's good protection of vs we landed prosperously at Boulongne in France the next morning by 9 of the clocke: the 29th of the same month we came to Amiens where the day following we saw the Duke of Longueville make his solemne entrie, & the 11 of August we came to Paris, &c.

*Md.* that the 18 of Oct. 1613 The Kinge of Spaine was married to the K. of France his eldest sister at Burgos in Spaine. And the same day the K. of France was married to the K. of Spaine his sister at Bordeaux in France. The D. of Lerma was Deputie for the K. of France, and the D. of

Guise for the K. of Spaine. And the 9th of Novemb. following the 2 sister-in-laws exchanged their native countreys meeting vpon the river Behobie\* wch denides France & Spaine, *where I then was*, and came wth th' Infanta of Spaine to Bordeaux, where vpo the 23 November the marriage was solemnly consummated in St. Andrew's Church betwixt the K. of France & her, and vpo the 29th day the King and Queene made an entree into Bordeaux and were received wth great state & Pompe.

The 3rd of December 1615 I imbarqued in a shippe at Bordeaux to go to Rouen in Normandy, but by a contrary wind we were driven to Rochel the 8th day, & during or stay there the Prince of Condé was received by 4,000 musketers into the Towne, & 300 of his followers wth him, who with the Rochellers entered into a league & combination agst the K. but were not able to crosse his designes: the 23 day of the same month we went for Rouen & arrived there the 1 Jan. afr. Before or departure frō Rochel the Duke of Neuers came fro. the french K. thether to treat wth the Prince of Condé for peace.

*Memorandum:* yt the 1 May 1616 I tooke my journey from Paris to Nancy the Court of the Duke of Lorraine, from thence into the higher Germany, & soe to Heidelberg in company of my Lord Gray: from thence I went through the low Countreys & tooke shipping at Dunkerke & landed in England at Margat 29 July 1616. God's holy name be ener thanked & praised."

Of the second tour he records:—

"*Md.* That vpon Monday 10 August 1618 at 7 of the clocke in the evening I took shipping at Douer in company of Sr. Tho. Darnell and Sr. Peter Wentworth and made my second journey into France where we landed at Diepe the next day at 3 o'clock after noone.

I returned forth of France accompanied wth Sr. John Maynard & we landed at Douer 29 Octob. 1618. Thanks be to God who still protected me in all my journeys both by sea and Land in Spaine, France, Germany & diuers other countreys and foraine places."

In the year 1617, the interuening year between the first and second continental tour, he had the great honour of entertaining King James I, as already mentioned, (*see Annals*) at the family seat, *Townsend House*, in Welsh Row; where, after his marriage, he continued to reside until the outbreak of the Civil War. Though a Royalist in principle, he took no active part in the war, being at that time fifty-three years of age, and in ill health; yet, says Roger Wilbraham, his son, he "had a taste of the troubles being made a Prisoner in his own Howse, for refusing to lend Monies to carry on the Warr against his Sovereign K. Char., whose sworne servant he was. Being set at liberty he retired into Sussex where he spent some time with his kind Friend Sr. Tho. Pelham Bart., in his House at Halland; where he dyed of a Fevr 18 Oct. 1643."

In *Harl. MSS.* 2135, p. 17, is preserved the following letter in the handwriting of Thomas Wilbraham, dated 9th Oct. 1642; which will be of interest. It does not appear to whom the letter was addressed.

"Good Cousin,

Many troubles fall upo, or contrey, and vpo, or friends but especially vpon this vnfortunate Town [Nantwich] for the folly of some few wch. are fled; for besides ye losse and terror it hath already sustained by theis late deuouring Troopes, The King hath imposed a Fine upo. it of two thousand pound, without making any distinction between the innocent and ye guilty. It is thought also that now at th' Assyzes or Towne wilbe indicted, and senerly proceeded against: In all wch. p'plexities how I must behane myself, I must entreat yow advice, being absent at ye Bath† all the while theis actions of Rebellion were in agitation, whereof I haue ye testimony of diuers of best credit in or Towne, wch. I haue here inclosed, sent yow for my iustification (if there be cause) and can haue more hands enowe [enough]

\* Query whether the River Bidassoa.

† *i.e.* the town of Bath.

to it if it were requisite: also hereinclosed is a note of some p'ticlers which I heare wilbe charged vpo. the Towne. I am not well able to travel my self in regard of my old paine wch. I cannot yet be cured of. I haue sent my man of purpose to yow wth. theis things yt in case I be named yow will make my excuse, and mooue yt those yt were innocent & ignorant of theis proceedings no way allowing or approving them may not be involved wth. ye delinquents, nor beare any pt. of their clame or burden: It may be for my names sake\* I may find some aduersaries otherwise I think I should find none; for in regard I am sworne his Maties. servant I was very cautious. It was told me yt this last week Mr. Sheriff in ye hearing of my Ld. Chomley and others did averre yt I sent & armed men to rescue Steele our constable when he was vnder arrest, wch. is most false. I myself was then at Bathe [Bath]: and left but onely on[e] man at Nantwich wch. was this messengr. & he will depose yt at that tyme he was forth of ye Towre. What I write to yow I will make good by the testimony of all my neighbours: I haue appointed my man to stay till Tuesday to bring me word how things are carried wch. ye Lord graunt may be for the good of vs and our friends, wch. I am much afraid of, for I received a letter vpon Saturday fro. Sr. Ric. Wilb. intimating yt something wilbe done at this Assizes agst or Towne or our friends or both. I pray [as] there shalbe occasion, doe what good yow can for them [and also] for those yt cannot be there to make their owne defence.

I shall entreat yow to draw me a Petition to his Matie. for my owne iustification wch. I will eyther deliuer myself or procure some to do it for me. I thinke it were not amisse if I made mention of my readines at all tymes to do his Matie. ye best seruce yt lay in my power. That in the yeare 1639 when he went in pson. to make warre against ye Scots whom he then took to be his enemes, without eyther letter or summons fro. his Matie, I furnished myself with a cuirasiers Armes and three horses at my owne charge & went to his Matie. to York, where I tendred my seruce to him for wch. he gaue me his hand to kisse, and gaue com'and to my Ld. chamberlain yt I should be sworne of his Privy chamber. I wayted vpo. his Matie. all yt iourney, in wch. imploymt. I spent betwixt 3 and 4 hundred pounds: His Maties. father was pleased to make vse of my house to lye at, and at my owne charge I entertained & lodged the Earle of Strafford & his company when he came last forth of Ireland vpo his Maties. seruce. That I was farre fro. home when theis fortifications & tumults were in Nantwich &c.

And therefore being his Maties. sworne servant and loyall subject to desire I may be seuered fro. ye delinquents, and not pay or contribute any thing for their salt &c. Yow may put in or take out what yow please: But certainly before I will pay any money for other mens errors, I will preferre some Petition or other as yow shall advise me. If yow please to doe this, any tyme this week I hope will serve turne: I am almost a sleep as yow may see by my scribbling and therefore fro. this sheet I will goe to another and bid yow and all my Cousins godnight who am

9 Oct. 1642.

Yor assured lov. Cousin

THO. WILBRAHAM."

"I had forgott to tell yow yt I heare Mr. Sheriff hath foisted in my name among ye rest into his Catalogue. I [beg] yow keep theis inclosed papers."

George F. Wilbraham, Esq. has in his possession the original "Certificate from the Mayor of Bristol [John Lock] dated 14 Sep. 1642, to permit Thos. Wilbraham to travel safely from Bristol into Cheshire on his return from Bath;" and the following "*Petition*" from the town of Nantwich exonerating him from certain charges, which is signed by influential townsmen irrespective of their avowed opinions.

"Wee the Inhabitants of Nantwich whose names are subscribed being desired to testifie ye truth on ye behalf of Mr. Tho. Wilbraham of oure Towne doe averre that ye s<sup>d</sup> Mr. Wilbraham had no hand at all in advising or making any bulwarke or fortifications in ye s<sup>d</sup> Towne, or in making any opposition, but when ye s<sup>d</sup> devises were made, he was at Bathe in summersetshire for ye use of those hot springs for the recouery of his health, in wch journey he was absent for ye space of about six weeks, and returned but ye day before my Lord Grandison brought his troops into oure Towne, for ye opposing of whose entry Mr. Wilbraham employed no help, but came purposely thither to perswade those yt were most refractory, and we doe confesse and beleeve yt by his prswasions the Towne was better satisfied that no hurt was intended against it."

[Signed] Tho. Maynwaring.

John Dolman, scoolemaister.

John Saring, Minister.

Mathew Mainwaring.

William Lee Bayliffe & Dom.

Rich. Wright.

Edw. Hayes.

Ran. Church.

Henry Wicksted.

\* Alluding to the Wilbrahams of Woodhey and Dorfold, who were not loyal. After Sir Richard Wilbraham's death, his son, Sir Thomas Wilbraham of Woodhey, Bart., being a Royalist, suffered sequestration, compounding for his estates in £2,500.

Thomas Wilbraham was succeeded by his son and heir THOMAS WILBRAHAM, who, at the time of his father's death, was in France. Little more than seven years after, "he dyed of Bleeding at his House in Nantwich 19 Dec. 1649;" and his estates, which, by reason of the late war, "stood deeply charged with Debts & Portions," descended to his brother, Roger Wilbraham.

ROGER WILBRAHAM, like his great-grandfather, Richard Wilbraham, lived to a great age at Townsend House, where he was born on 3rd Nov. 1623. He was educated first at Repton School, Derbyshire; and for three years, commencing June, 1640, at Catharine's Hall, Cambridge, under Mr. S. Lynford, B.D. He was admitted of Lincoln's Inn in Easter Term 1642; and was called to the Bar in Easter Term 1649; but his elder brother dying in the same year, Roger Wilbraham relinquished his law practice for the life of a country gentleman, and came to reside at Townsend House. He married Alice, daughter of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Esq., by whom he had eleven children. In the family Journal is a pathetic account of his domestic afflictions and bereavements, ending with the death of his wife, whom he survived thirty-one years.

He writes as follows:—

"This dark year 1675 was ushered in by the death of Mr. Upshan,\* the Vicar of Acton, who was a burning and shining light; but his lamp went out within less than a year and a half after his coming into this neighbourhood to the grief of his parishioners & all good men that knew his worth.

It pleased God within a few weeks after to take from me my second son Rich. W. in the 16th year of his age, who died with us upon Whitsun-eve 1675, of a stoppage in his breast, occasioned by over-heating himself at schole. He was a spiritfull well-humored Boy & had a secret way of attaching love wch endeared him to his mother & me, & to his Brother, who was but newly come from Oxford, who came seasonably to divertise me after his brothers death.

I had not thoroughly mastered my grief, when it pleased God, a fresh tyde of grief broke in upon us both, who had set our hearts too much upon our eldest son, who was now arrived to the years of manhood, & yet as obsequious as he had ever been from a child. It was the last week in August that I took him with me to Chester, it being the Assize week, where a drowsiness took him in the Shire Hall, which much indisposed him, & made me hasten home the next day, taking Beeston Castle in our way, wch I had promised to shew him. Coming home he grew more indisposed, & to prevent a fever he was let blood; & in hope to procure him a gentle sweat he had a dose of Gasgon powder, wch affected what was designed, but went not off as we hoped it might; but made him more restless, till God took him to rest; wch was upon Wedny. evening 8 Sept. 1675; while we were at prayers with him, after he had with the greatest violence that nature could exert, raised up his whole Body in bed, as if he would take Heaven by violence, and so departed away at 19. *Anno Dom. 1675.*

The effects of these repeated griefs might have been prejudicial to my health; the former affected my eyes with a violent rhume, wch put me to paine, & endangered my sight. The latter so sow'rd my blood that it found vent at my mouth, that 3 weeks that my son Tom dyed. But after 2 or 3 daies, by the help of timely means, by Bleeding, stopped; & I recovered to survive a greater loss the year following than either, or both the former.

The year following, I went with my wife for a diversion to the Bath [Somersetshire], the week

\* The Rev. Wm. Upshan, who had been Rector of Lawton, co. Cest. from c. 1662—1674, died in April, 1675. A grave-stone on the north side of the chancel floor in Acton Church, states that he was "interred on the 19th April 1675," (so also *Acton Parish Register*) "in the thirty-second year of his age." His death is noticed by the Rev. Hy. Newcome, (*Autobiography*, p. 212, Chet. Soc. Pub.) who endeavoured to get the living of Acton for his son; but Mr. Samuel Edgeley, chaplain to Sir Thos. Wilbraham, of Woodhey, obtained the preferment.

before Whitsuntide, wch had she used for a refreshment might have advantaged her; but the over frequent use of the waters in conformity to her sister the Lady B.[ellot]\* insensibly rob'd her of her spirits & brought her so weak that had not Mr. Ford an able Apoth. in whose house we lodged, upheld her with proper cordials, in likelihood she had died there; but God would that she shd dye in her owne Bed, & brought her home to sett her concernes in order, having the pre-apprehension of her change that she was not minded I should know.

At Barthol-tide (wch is our Fare) to be out of the bustle we went to Moreton. Her sister the Lady Bellott brought her home stayed with us 3 daies. The day after being 8th Sept. 1676, I went abroad upon business; whereof my wife took advantage to spend the whole day in her closet, being the day 12 months that her dear Tom died. At my return in the eveng she came out of her closet to welcome me home, supp'd with me, & discoursed with me of the Business I went about. We went to bed at our usual time. About midnight she awakened & having a slight cold, coughed twice or thrice, which awakened me. I asked her how she did. She said, Well; but for her cough: which said, she fetched 4 or 5 faint sighs & turned her over. I asked her again how she did; but she gave me no answer: & though I conjured her of all loves to speak if she was able, she gave me not a word. In this consternation I rose hastily out of Bed, called the servants, and sent for a neighbour, that was oft with her. But whatever could be done, could not bring back the spirit wch she had breathed into the hands of God. All that Grief will allow me to say of her is, that she was knowne to be an humble, pious, virtuous, discreet woman; an ornament to her sex, & a crown to her husband, but woe is me (may I say) the crowne is fallen from my head.†

It was a just Quarter of a year before I returned to my widow-bed, & that while I had no rest in my spirit; sleep became a stranger to me; and while I lay musing I thought of erecting a monument that might transmit the memory of my D.[ear] wife to posterity; it came into my thoughts, that I had in our own Street, three well built houses, under a roof, with convenient apartments, that might easily be converted into an Almshouse, for half a dozen poor aged widows; and thought better to devote something of this nature to the Honor of God and to her memory that had been mindfull to lay something by, to be distributed to poor widows in her own street. I gave notice forthwith to the Tenants of these houses to remove at Christmas coming and till then I cd proceed no further in this affair.

From All-Hallow to Christmas my Fa[ther]-in-law declined very fast, being arrived to the 88th year of his age; (wch was the year in wch his grandfather, [Richard Wilbraham, of Townsend,] my great-grandfather died). I had not seen him of 2 mo[nths], being confined to my chamber. Upon New Year's day, I had the convenience of his coach to bring me to Dorfold to take my last leave of him, who died in his sons arms, the morning after, in a good old age, full of daies, wealth and honor.‡

After the Holy daies were over, and my dr. [dear] Father-in-law laid to rest, I made all possible haste to fitt the houses wch were now in my possession for the reception of six aged widows, that I had there in my thoughts. I endowed the same by deed executed with Livery, with lands [in Betchton] to the value of xxiii<sup>li</sup>. [£24] per ann.; for a constant and perpetual maintenance for so many poor aged widows for ages

\* Anne, daughter of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold, Esq., and widow of Sir John Bellot, of Moreton, Bart., who had died on 14th July, 1674.

† Amongst Roger Wilbraham's papers occur the following lines on the motto "*In portu quies*" belonging to his paternal coat of arms, written, as he says, "in my chamber after God had bereaved me of my Dear wife."

"*All thy waves & thy Billows are gone over Me.*"—Ps. 42, 7.

*In Portu Quies, was my Mott'  
When seas were calm, wch now are not,  
If God give grace to persevere,  
Though seas do rage; I will not fear.*

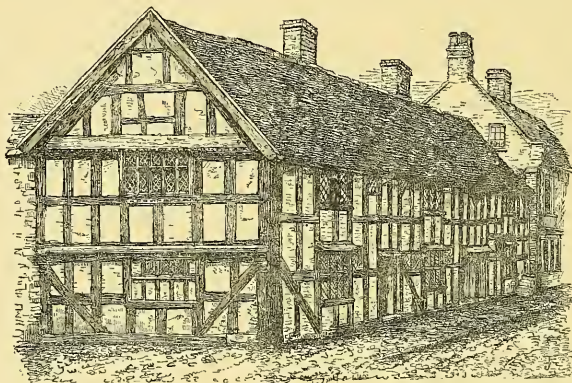
Grant me O my God to have *vitam in patientia, mortem in valo.*

Rogr. Wilbraham 1676.

‡ Acton Burial Register records his burial as follows:—

"1676-[7]. Jan. 8. Roger Wilbraham de Dearefould Ar." [miger. (Esq.)]

to come. Which done the six widows took their lodging in the said almshouse; two in each house (for society) upon the eve of the Blessed Virgin M[ary] 1676. The day following being Sunday the said widows went orderly in their gowns to Church; took their places in a seat wch I had provided for them in the face of the Pulpit; dined with me that day; and joined with me and my family to beg a blessing upon this charitable mite which God enabled me and inclined my heart to cast into the Corban, and lent me life to see it accomplished."



WIDOWS' ALMSHOUSE.

After the death of his wife, Roger Wilbraham devoted much time to reflection and study; and although he did not publish any work, he left behind him MSS. (forty in number) on subjects chiefly theological and historical. He was very methodical in his manner of life, as proved by the numerous memoranda crowded into the fly-leaves of his small pocket almanacs, giving the minutest particulars relating to his crops; how he disposed of his wheat, barley, oats, &c.; his household expenses; the cost of his son Stephen's education at Cambridge; regular gifts at Christmas, the Fair, &c.; to the members of his family, his domestics, the Parson, Schoolmaster, the poor; &c.

A few extracts, illustrating, as they do, the home-life of a country gentleman two hundred years ago, are here given as follows:—

*Commonplace Accounts of Roger Wilbraham.*

1672. Nov. 19.	Winnow'd upp ye Oates fro. Leighton of stricken Meas. 16.	
„	Delivered for ye Stable before my groom is going to Oxf.*	3 measures.
Dec. 20.	All ye Tythe Barley from Leighton was but 34 measures & 2 of w[ite]ght Corne.	
„	Given to Neighbours at Xmas†	14 measures.
„	To be Malted	20 measures.
1672-3. Jan. 28.	Pd. for a bushel of otes in ye Market	5s. 4d.

\* The groom probably was sent to Oxford to bring young Thomas Wilbraham home from the University for the Christmas holidays.

† Poor people and servants seldom tasted wheaten bread.

- 1672-3. Feb. 20. Win'owed up of Otes, 3 daies thrashing . . . . . 30 measures.  
 [Entries occur about every fortnight of Oats "Delivered to ye Stable" 2 or 3 measures at a time, for his Bay Horse, and other horses].
1675. Nov. 25. Winnow'd up of Barley I had out of the way f.[ield]\* in Henhull: Carried to the Granary 48 measures.  
 Dec. 21. Sent to Darfold to be malted 21 measures.  
 Barley given to poor Neighbours at X<sup>m</sup>. 12 measures.
- 1675-6. Marc. 15. Delivered out for Buttery & for Diet Drink 4 measures.  
 „ 22. Delivered for small Beer 1 measure. [Many such entries.]
1676. August. I had to my pt. [part] of ye wheat which T. Stringer sowed in Parkers furthr. Field 41 Thraves &  $\frac{1}{2}$ .  
 Oct. 12. Thrashed 26 Thraves† &  $\frac{1}{2}$ , which yielded 37 measures.‡
- 1677-8. Jan. 2. Win'owed upp, 37 measures of Otes§ which I had for Tythe out of one of ye presthumes, sow'd by T. Stringer  
 Jan. 3. Carried into ye Granary out of ye lower Cheese Chamber 60 measures of Malt, which I had of Mr. Winsor for rent of Sharps Crofts at xij<sup>s</sup> ye Bushell.
- Feb. 19. Bought of wid[ow] Becket 5 pecks of Darby Malt for Ale for myself. [Several similar entries].
1678. Dec. Given of ye wheat to p.[oor] neighbours 5 measures; & 7 measures of Barley for their Xmas. Batch.
- 1688-9. Jan. By an order from Mr. Gonge (my son Ste[phen's] Tutor) I transmitted to his correspondent Mr. T. Clarke a Tradesman in London, to clear my sons expenses 40 li. [£40]. For which I had a Bill from Mr. Salmon, Cheese Factor, in Nantwich, who ordered me to pay ye like sume to Rich. Shore of Baddiley. For which I have Shores acquitance, pd. X date 12 Jan. 1688-9.
- Feb. 22. Tench his Note for Sugr. & Spices since ye week before Christmas last . . . £1 13s. 6d. pd. by Marg. Fisher.
- Mar. 2. Pd. to Mr. Banks, by my servant W. Groott, who gave me a Bill for £21 10s. which Bill was transmitted to Lynsey ye Coachmaker, at London, for Coach & harnesse for 2 Horses, having Mr. Minshulls Letter for £20 more, wch. ye sd. Mr. Lynsey had of mee in November last for ye sd. Coach & harnesse, in all £41 10s.
1689. April 15. Pd. to my daughter Ally her allowance for Lady-day qr. £10.  
 „ To Marg. Fisher, housekeeper, a yeeres wages due at Lady day last, 40s.  
 „ To Alms-women by W. Greene, for Last Quarter, £4 10s. od.
- April 20. Pd. ye Glover at Whitch[urch] for 2 pair of Sham [?] Gloves by him yt brings Bread to or Market . . . 2s.
- May 4. I gave to my Grandc[hild] & Godson R. W. [Richard Wilbraham]|| 10 Ginees, wch. I put into his Fathers hands upon condition to give ye child when he comes to be a man ye silver kan which was my wifes bequest unto my son Ran[dle] W.[ilbraham].
- May 13. To or Clerk my East. dues for my selfe & my servants . . . . . 2s. 2d.  
 „ More for my son & his servants . . . . . 1s. od.
- May 23. To Mr. Stringer our Minister, & W. Hale, Ch. Warden, for relief of ye distressed protestants driven out of Ireland . . . . . £5 os. od.  
 „ To Mr. Stringer my contribucon for half a year from Xmas last . . . . . £1 os. od.  
 „ Pd. to Will. Hayles, his note for shoes, deducing what he owed me for Tythe . . . £1 9s. 6d.
- June 24. Pd. the Collectors for my degree of Esqr. . . . . £5 os. od.  
 „ More for me & my daugh. A. W. for or polls . . . . . 2s. od.
- Aug. 10. I had Mr. Salmon his Bill to his Correspondent for £30 to be paid to Mr. T. Clarke at ye Ship & Star in Cheap-side, for ye use of Mr. Lea my son Stephens Tutor: which Bill I sent by ye next poste after to Mr. Clarke. Pd. Mr. Salmon ye money by my servt. W. Greenold . . . . . £30 os. od.
- Sep. 12. I parted with my old servt. peg. Fisher who has served me now 13 years since her Mistrs. Death. I gave her over & besides her wages, 3 years ago, £10; & at parting 20s.
- Sep. 28. To Rogr. W[illia]ms. for 11 daies ditching ye ground I hold in my owne hands, having my man Hilditch to help him those daies . . . . . 7s. 4d.
- Oct. 16. I paid to Deborah Dawson for Bread for ye poor 4s. weekly for 9 weeke, ye last distribucon was upon Wednesday Oct. 16 . . . . . £1 16s. od.

\* Most likely Causeway Field or Meadow, mentioned on page 7.

† A "Thrave" was generally 12, but sometimes 24, sheaves of Corn.—(Cheshire Glossary.)

‡ The "Measure," or bushel of wheat, in Cheshire, also varied in different localities, ranging from 70lbs. to 80lbs. Four measures made a load.

§ A Measure of Oats varied from 45lbs. to 50lbs.

|| Richard, the eldest son of Randle Wilbraham, died of a fever on 6th Feb. 1706, in the 18th year of his age. (Wilbraham MS. Journal.)

1689. Dec. 21. I sent my son at Bettley a Quartr. of ye Beef & a side of a Doe; & a haunch of ye same to my neighbour  
 -- Mr. Wrt. [Wright.]  
 Dec. 27. To Miss Bellot\* for her new-year's gift a Ginney.  
 Dec. 28. To our Minister, Mr. Stringer..... 20s.  
 To ye stranger that has assisted him this last Quarter ..... 20s.
- 1691-2. Mar. 9. An ague seized in ye mth. of March, wch. preyed much upon my spirits and left me weak, & confined to  
 my chair 6 weeks after.  
 Mar. 13. To Mr. Lancaster our Minister a Ginney.  
 Mar. 24. To Dorothy, this Quarter's wages ..... 12s. 6d.  
 Mar. 28. Recd. of Mr. Roger Wilbraham for Bread delivered to ye Towne by his order 4s. weekly for 27 weeks, ye  
 last distribucon was ye Wednesday next after Lady Day, 1692 ..... £5 8s. od.
1692. April 21. For 3 Holl[an]d Shirts for my selfe ..... £1 2s. 6d.  
 April 28. To ye Collectors of ye Roll Money, ye first quarterly payment for my degree of Gentleman..... 20s. od.  
 „ More upon ye account of finding a light horse ..... 20s. od.  
 „ Head money [Easter Dues] for myselfe, my daughter, & 3 servants ..... 5s. od.  
 May 5. Pd. my daughter for 4 quilted night-caps bought of Bet Meakin ..... 5s. 6d.  
 June 30. To or, Minister, Mr. Lancaster ..... 20s. od.
1692. Aug. 5. Sr. Thos. Wilbraham, of Woodhey, Bart.,† died at Weston in Staffordsh.; whereupon his corpse was  
 brought to Adon Church that day fortnight, and laid in the vault made by his Lady mother, daughter and  
 co-heir of Sir Roger Wilbraham, Kt.  
 Aug. 24. Given in Farings:—  
 To my son Rand., to my D[aughter] Brook, & to my daughter Ally, to each of them a French Pistol;‡ to  
 my s[on] Steph. a Pistol & 10s. in silver ..... £3 3s. 9d.  
 To ye children at Wincham in Toyes..... 2s. 6d.  
 To my servants, viz.—To W. Gr. 2s. 6d.; To Lawr. 2s.; To Pen. W. 1s. 6d.; To ye two new Maids 3s.;  
 To Randles man 1s..... 10s. od.
- Sep. 14. I did sett unto Ellis Key, Carpentr. ye house at ye back of ye Widdowes Hospital wherein Laz. Ward  
 now dwelleth for one whole yeere from Michaelmas next for 24s. to be paid quarterly. Recd. in earnest, 1s.  
 Sep. 10. To Ad. Meanly for boring at Betchton to search for Brine,§ 40s. of which 8s. was to ye Smith. To Jos.  
 Davy to assist 10s.; to Joseph Dyer 10s..... Toto £3.
- Sep. 17. Recd. of Mr. Tho. Broom of Betchton in lieu of a Heriot|| at the death of his father, T. Broom.. £3 os. od.  
 Oct. 14. To Mr. Humphrey Milton,¶ who held ye Courts for me at Clive & Betchton, 10s.; for ye charges of  
 dining ye Juries I am accountable to Ran. Jackson & Jos. Davy.
- Oct. 14. Pd. my son Rand [le] for 5 pound of Tabacco, whereof I gave him 1 pound..... 10s.  
 Oct. 26. To Raphe Burasco for making me a Freel Coat; Silk wastcote & Breeches for my son Stephen.... 17s. od.  
 „ Pd. for a Green Cheese sent to my D. Wilhr. at Rode..... 6s. od.  
 „ To Churchwardens for distribution among ye poor ..... £6 10s. od.
- Nov. 29. I gave to or Minister Mr. L.[ancaster], 20 hlf-crowns ye day his wife dyed, supposing his circumstances  
 might require it.  
 Dec. 3. To my son Ste. [phen] at his going to Rode to Christen his Brothers third Son.... 20s. od.
- [Customary Christmas gifts to his family, grandchildren, servants, the poor, the Parson, Grammar Schoolmaster and  
 boys, and Almswomen.]
- 1692-3. Jan. 11. To Jo. Hall Senr. for a side of Bacon & a role of Brawn ..... 18s. 9d.  
 Feb. 20. My son Rand. his 2nd son T. W. died of weakness occasioned by breeding his teeth, aged 2 yeeres &  
 upward, & was interred at Astbury in ye burial belonging to ye Hall of Rode. He was dear to me upon  
 sondry acct. & to his Godmother A. W.

\* Probably Mary, the eldest daughter of Sir John Bellot, of Moreton, Bart., by his wife Ann, daughter of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorford, Esq. (Ormerod's *Cheshire*, New Edit. vol iii, p. 44).

† He was the last male descendant of the eldest branch of the Woodhey Wilbrahams.

‡ The *French Pistol* varied in value from 17s. to 18s. It would then be worth 17s. 11d.

§ Another entry proves that brine was not only discovered, but worked, at Betchton.

|| *Heriot*; a customary payment due to the Lord of a Manor on the death of a tenant; generally paid in kind, but here in money.

¶ See *postea*.



- 1692-3. Feb. 21. To my son Steph. when he went to ye Funer [al] of his little nephew T. W. . . . 20s. od.  
 Mar. 17. To my son Rand. his Disbursemts. & expences at Chester in my concerne wth. J. Cartwright in ye Con-  
 sistory Court: & for a 4dt. [quart] of Brandy [9s.] . . . . . £4 9s. od.  
 Apl. 27. For a wrought cup & cover wch. I sent for to Chester for my son St[ephen's] godson . . . £3 4s. 6d.  
 Apl. 29. Pd. for wine wch. was had of Rich. Horton [Lamb Inn, Nantwich] at ye funeral of my little Gr. ch.  
 T. W. in Feb. last . . . . . £2 11s. od.  
 1693. May 5. For scouring ye *Shutshaw Ditch*, along ye Marsh Lane 45 roods, @ 2d. ye rood, 7s. 6d.; whereof ye Tenant  
 W. Fleet paid ye one half & I, 3s. 9d.  
 May 28. Pd. to Garnet of Haughton for a House Dog . . . . . 8s. od.  
 „ To my Daught. for 2 pair of sheets wch. she bought for ye house £1 os. 6d.; muslin for cravats, 11s. . . .  
 £1 11s. 6d.  
 June 9. Pd. to M. Stones wife 20s. in pt. for Cambd[en's] Britan[nia] now in ye presse; & am to pay her 20s. more  
 when I receive ye Book. [A subsequent entry says, I received ye Book 11 April 1695 & sent her 20s.;  
 Toto . . . . . 40s.]  
 June 21. Wages for Midsummer Quarter to my servants, viz: To Wm. Gr[ocu]t £1; Jane Key 12s. 6d.; (I gave  
 her 5s.) Cook Maid, 12s.  
 Aug. 4. Paid to Haymakers for the *Frog Greaves*; viz.: Sarah Judson 5 days, 2s. 6d.; Margaret Hitchenson 4 days  
 2s.; Hannah Wright 3 days, 1s. 6d.; Widow Harop 2 days & half 1s. 3d.; Hugh Manning 1 & half rod . . 8s. 1d.  
 Aug. 14. Given for ye Redemption of Christian Captives\* . . . . . £1 10s.  
 Aug. 15. To Ruscoe for mending the Jack . . . . . 1s. 8d.  
 Aug. 24. I had three score Ginnies of Jo. Br[omhall] mercer, at 21s. 8d. apiece, for which I sent him ye value in  
 silver by Wm. Grt. [Grocott] . . . . . £65 os. od.  
 Sep. 19. To Lawr. Steel of Leighton for 2 Loads of Turves . . . . . 5s. od.  
 Sep. 20. To Mr. Delves & Mr. Peever towards ye last Cheese yt was sent to ye Judges . . . . . 15s.  
 Oct. 12. To my son Rand. for his attendance at ye Assizes at Chester, over & above his Disbursemts. in ye Con-  
 cerne for a Pew in Lawton Church, 2 French Pistols [each 17s. 6d.] & 10s. . . . . £2 5s. od.  
 Nov. 2. I recd. of J. Bromhall mercer one of ye present Ch. Wardens a Hundred Broad pieces of gold wch. I took  
 at 24s. a piece, wch. amounts to £120 in silver, wch. sume he found in ye Wardens Box & belongs to ye  
 Poore of this Towne of Nantwich.  
 1694. Ap. 9. To J. Bromhall, his Bill for my Godson Dick Wiibr. his first Coat, Breeches & Wastecote . . . . . £2 9s. 3d.  
 To ye Taylor for making ym. . . . . 4s. 6d.  
 May 26. Pd. to my Collier Wm. Heath for 6 dozn. of coals @ 11s. 6d. ye doz., being 12 Cart loades . . . £3 9s. od.  
 July 3. Do. do. do. do. . . . . £3 9s. od.  
 1 Cart load of slack . . . . . 5s. 9d.  
 June 14. Received of T. Wickstd. for ye 1st & 2nd kindng in both my wich-houses ye sum of xiiiiijl . . £14 os. od.  
 1694-5. Feb. 14. Recd. then of Mr. Acton by deputation of J. Bromhall for 3 kindngs of 4 daies . . . . . £6 os. od.  
 March 5. To Rich. Wilbram. Bart. & Ric. Minshull Ch. Wardens their lay for my House & Lands ½ ye old  
 Rent . . . . . 35s. 6d.  
 1695. May 4. Pd. to Tho. Willms. Constable of Henhul by order of ye Justices of P. to remove Mar. Eaton & her family  
 out of Henhull . . . . . £16 4s. 9d.  
 May 13. Pd. to Edmd. ye Thatcher for 11 days work & ½ at ye *red Lyon* stables & at Jamesons House . . . . . 23s.  
 To my man Law. H. to pay Judson for drawing 50 Thraves of winter straw to thatch ye stables belonging  
 to ye Red Lyon Inn . . . . . 12s. 6d.  
 May 18. For a bushell of Oats bought in ye Market . . . . . 6s. 5d.  
 „ 3 Measures of Mill-corn . . . . . 6s. 3d.  
 May 18. To my son Steven, 10£, wch. is to serve him for Cloathes & expences till Allhallowtide next. . £10 os. od.  
 June 20. To my daughter Ally at her going to Rode to have her picture taken a Ginney . . . . . £1 1s. od.  
 July 8. To ye Brief [Collection] for ye fire in York . . . . . 5s. od.  
 July 16. Recd. by my son Rand. for a Hieriot on ye death of Wm. Shaw of Betchton . . . . . £4 os. od.  
 Sep. 20. To Mr. Broadbent for a pair of worsted stockings . . . . . 3s. 6d.

\* The allusion here is to the nefarious slave-traffic of the Turkish pirates of Tunis and Algiers, (the Sallee rivers of history and fiction,) that infested European seas in the 17th century, and even until quite recent times, robbing ships of their merchandise and taking sailors and passengers captive. Collections in Churches, for the purpose of raising a fund for purchasing the freedom of "Christian Captives" taken by "Infidel Turks" were common in every parish in England.

1695. Sep. 25. Recd. then of Mr. Cartwright of ye Hall of Lee (by ye hand of Mr. Edgeley, Vicar of Aſton,) 14 Ginneys @ 30s. a piece, in full ye costs taxed upon him by order made in ye Kings Bench after a tryall in ye hall of pleas at Chester, for a Pew in Lawton Church ..... £21 os. od.
- Dec. 20. Recd. of my new Tenant Unwin for a capon 15d.; for a hen ..... 9d.
- „ Recd. of Mr. Wilbraham a Salt toll of 8d. yearly for ye years 1693-4-5.
- 1697-8. Mar. 5. To. Wm. Hales for 2 pr. of Shoes for my son Steven. .... 9s. od.
1698. May 9. Pd. to Hilditch, sho-maker, & his p'tner ye last yeeres Tax for my son Steven as Gentleman Bachelor .. 6s.
- 'And now that he is not of my family, nor resident, ye sd. Collectors p'mised me to leave him out of ye roll for ye yeere to come.
- Oct. 15. Two measures of Rye for ye House ..... 11s. od.
- 1698-9. Feb. 2. For 37 Measures of Malt @ 4s. 5d. a measure ..... £8 3s. 6d.
- Jan. 8. A Measure of Corne 5s. 4d.; 3 Meas. Oates 3s. 4d.; a Bushel Oates ..... 9s.
1699. Aug. 28. A Bushel of Wheat ..... £1 3s. 8d.
- 1699-1700. Jan. 13. To Sam. Burgess of New Castle 8 doz. of Candles @ 4s. 6d. .... 36. od.
1700. June 10. Pd. ye Collectors of ye Tax for Windowes for ye yeere last past\* ..... 10s. od.
- June 21. Bought in ye market of Jo. Heyward of Hunsterson a red cow & calf. .... £4 10s. od.
- July 29. Recd. of Mr. Horton of ye Lamb, by Order of Mr. Throp, being ye rent for ye Salt work in Betchton for 3 months, viz.: April, May, June ..... £20 os. od.
- Aug. 10. Sent my son Steven at London a Bill for £11 1s. 6.; a ginney of it was for Sr. Paul Ricalts history of ye Turks, wch. he sent me; & for his maintenance 10£ ..... £11 1s. 6d.
- Dec. 4. To T. Bowers, Gardener, for Trees to replant my Orchard & Wall Fruit; 78 trees in number..£2 14s. od.
- 1700-1. Jan. 2. To Ja. Clowes for bleeding my daug. Ally & for other attendance. .... 1s. od.
- Feb. 3. Pd. to Mr. Andrew Taylor, Goldsmith, for a small patin & chalice of Silver for Hargreave Chapel. .... £2 18s. 6d.
- March 13. Pd. Jo [hn] Church & his p'tner. [John Denton] a Lay of ye whole Rent for glazing & pointing ye Church & Steeple ..... £3 9s. 4d.
1701. Sep. 1. Given to ye Brief for repairing ye Minster at Chester, A Ginnie.
- 1701-2. Feb. 27. A kind friend & near Relation of mine, who knew me to be a smoakr. of Tobacco, presented me with a Tobacco stopper of Ivory wch. ye carver has beautified with sundry Figures, &c.
1702. May 24. Bought at Whitchurch Fare 5 Cows to feed; cost £16.
- June 11. Bought at Holt Fare, 5 Cows to feed; cost £13 6s. 4d.

For many years Roger Wilbraham was an active and never-failing guardian of the rights and interests of the town, as evidenced in the memorials of his public life contained in his "*Towne Concernes*" (pp. 203-211). On one occasion a public honor was accorded him, which he relates, with no small pride, in the family Journal, as follows:—

"My youngest Daughter Grace W. was married to Tho. Brooke, eldest son of Sr. Rich. Brooke [of Norton], 12 July 1688; Sr. Thos. Bellot, Bart., gave the Bride in or<sup>r</sup> Chancel at Nantwch, where the marr. was solemnized. Sir Ric. Br[ooke] & his Lady, my son Rand[le] & his wife, sist<sup>r</sup> to the Bridegroom & other Relations on both sides being present.

The better sort of ye Town did me ye honor without my seeking (hearing that my son & his wife came along with Sr. Richard Brooke & his train) to meet them on Horseback some miles out of the Town all in a manner that had, or could procure horses. Those of the meaner sort, especially in our own streete, expressed their gratulations in that way, that it might be noticed I had their Love, in returne of the good offices which I have done for ye place of my Birth & abode for many yeeres & wherein it is known I have a Concerne."

Roger Wilbraham stands pre-eminent as an antiquary; having been an assiduous collector and transcriber of ancient deeds, as well as the local chronicler of his own times; and but for his industry, much that is contained in these pages would never have been

\* See page 344 note.

known to the present generation. At the Restoration of the Monarchy (1660) he was nominated as one of the intended new order of Knighthood, styled "Knights of the Royal Oak," (the institution of which was, however, never carried into effect) his estate being valued at that time at £1,000 per ann. In 1669-70 he fulfilled the office of High Sheriff of the County; and was the first native townsman to hold that high position. To his memory a marble monument still exists in the Church (see p. 321); and in wealth, in manners, in character, and in religion he resembled in a striking degree his contemporary, the Worcestershire Knight and Squire, Sir Roger de Coverley.

RANDLE WILBRAHAM, the son and successor of Roger Wilbraham, was forty-four years of age at his father's death. He had been educated at Cambridge, having been admitted as a gentleman commoner of Catherine's Hall in July, 1680. After his marriage in 1687 he resided at Rode, in Astbury parish; from whence he removed to Townsend House, about the year 1710; Rode Hall, henceforth, becoming the seat of his second son, Randle Wilbraham, the eminent lawyer and M.P., who became the ancestor of the Wilbrahams of Rode; and of Bootle Wilbraham, of Lathom House, co. Lancashire, now Lord Skelmersdale.

Randle Wilbraham, who thus became head of the family, was the last to leave any records relating to Nantwich in the MS. Journal. Following the example of his father, he took an active interest in local affairs, and appears to have been one of the foremost County gentlemen of his time. He was a Wright's Trustee for thirty years; he originated a Consolidated Charity Scheme, to prevent the loss of bequests to the poor; and by his and his brother Stephen's benefactions, the Blue-cap Charity School was mainly endowed. He was succeeded by his eldest son in 1732.

ROGER WILBRAHAM, Esq., who had been educated at Brazenose College, Oxon., came to reside at Townsend in Oct. 1738, from Chester, after his second marriage. He died in 1754, leaving three sons; the eldest, *George*, being then under age.

GEORGE WILBRAHAM, Esq., who was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, passed some years of his early life in France, Italy, Turkey, Greece, and the Levant. He was the last of this worthy family to reside at Townsend House, which, having fallen much into decay, he quitted about the year 1780. In 1784, and subsequently, he purchased lands bordering on Delamere Forest, and built, after a plan by Wyatt, the house which has ever since been the family seat. He is chiefly remembered as one of the first to introduce an improved system of agriculture into Cheshire.

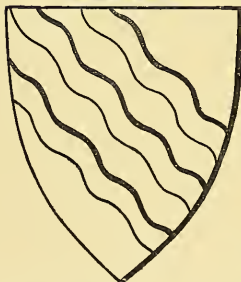
GEORGE WILBRAHAM, Esq., the next successor, who, from 1831 to 1841, in four Parliaments, represented first the whole County, and afterwards the Southern Division, was always the popular candidate at the elections in this town; and although the family have now been removed from Nantwich for upwards of a century, the present representative, GEORGE FORTESCUE WILBRAHAM, Esq., who is the direct descendant of Sir Richard Wilbraham of six hundred and fifty years ago, has, in respect of the place of his ancestors, recently rebuilt and re-endowed the Nantwich Grammar School, and erected a memorial stained glass window, near the ancient family vault, in the Parish Church.

The following family portraits in oil are preserved at Delamere House.

- 1.—In the Dining Room, Roger Wilbraham Esq. of Dorfold, by *Vandyke*.
- 2.—In the Hall, Randle Wilbraham Esq. of Nantwich, dated 1711, by *Otley*.
- 3.—“ “ Stephen Wilbraham Esq. “ “ “ by *Otley*.
- 4.—In the Study, Roger Wilbraham Esq. “ “ 1741, by *Fellowes*.
- 5.—In the Dining Room, George Wilbraham Esq. of Nantwich, by *Battoni*.
- 6.—“ “ George Wilbraham Esq. of Delamere, M.P., by *Sir M. A. Shee*.
- 7.—“ “ George Fortescue Wilbraham Esq. of Delamere, by *S. E. Williams*.

The later history of Townsend Mansion, of which no drawing is known to exist, will be found on page 123. Before giving the pedigree of this worthy family, it will be necessary to point out that the Wilbraham Coat of Arms, although blazoned correctly in Dr. Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, is, by mistake, incorrectly drawn in the new edition of that work.

## Wilbraham Pedigree.

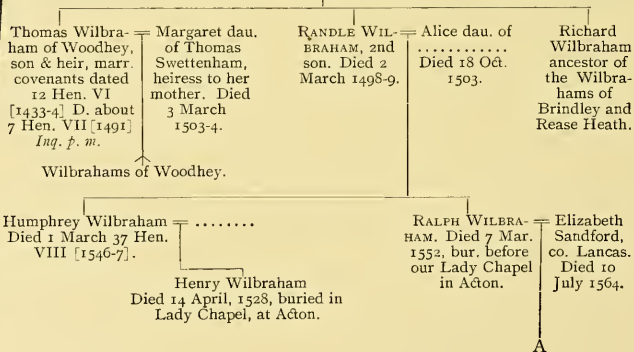


ARMS. Argent, three bends wavy Azure.

CREST. On a wreath a wolf's head erased Argent.

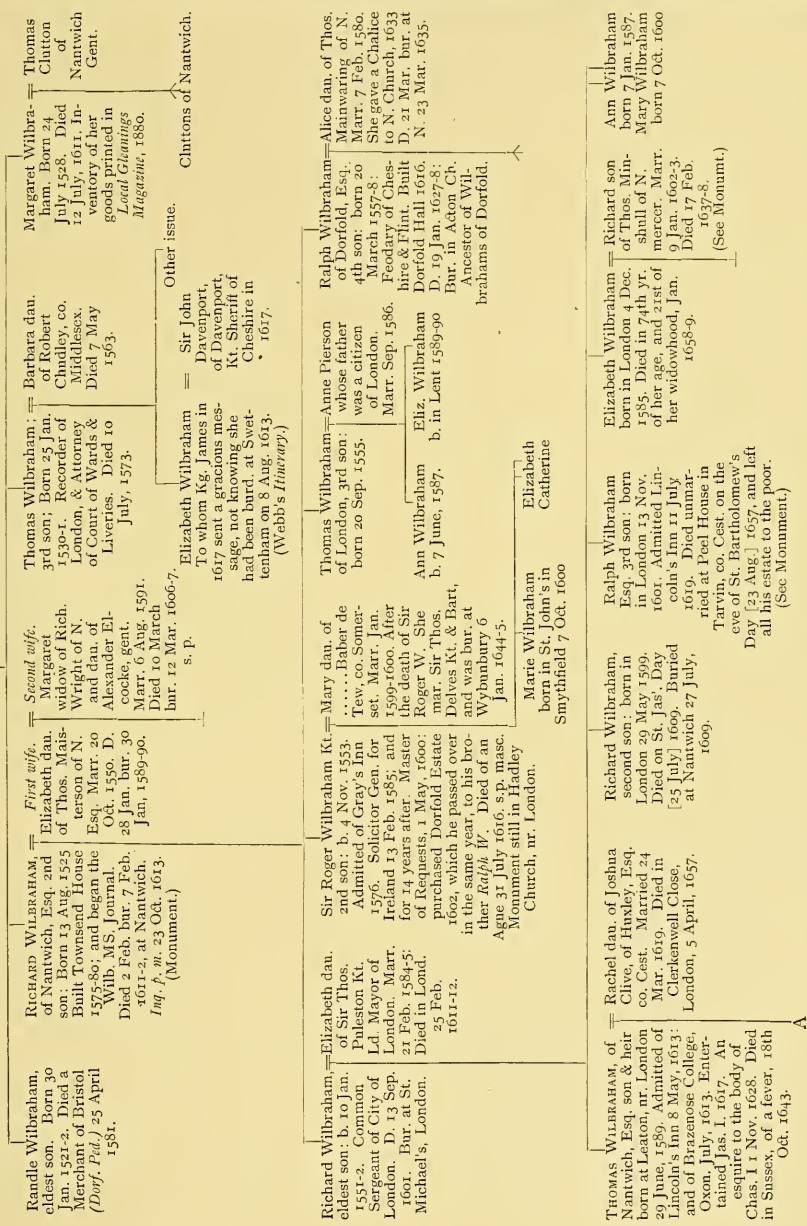
*Authorities:* The Wilbraham MS. Journal; Dorfold MS. Pedigrees; Visitation 1664; Parish Registers, &c.

THOMAS WILBRAHAM, lord of Woodhey, co. Cest., jure uxoris *Margaret*, dau & heiress of John Golborne, lord of Woodhey, marriage covenants dated 3 Hen. IV [1401-2].



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Richard Wilbraham, eldest son: born 17 b. 18 May, bap. 1 Dec. 1622. D. unmarried, of a burning fever" 23 July, bur. at N. 19 Dec. 1649. Monument.)

THOS. WILBRAHAM 2nd son: born 17 Nov. bap. 1 Dec. 1622. D. unmarried, of a bleeding at N. 19 Dec. Bur. 24 Dec. 1649.

ROGER WILBRAHAM, = Alice dan. of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold Esq. and Mary Ravenscroft of Breiton, when so many of his wife, Adon Marr. 4 April 1656. Died 18 Sep. bur. 14 Sep. 1676.

ROGER WILBRAHAM, = Alice dan. of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold Esq. and Mary Ravenscroft of Breiton, when so many of his wife, Adon Marr. 4 April 1656. Died 18 Sep. bur. 14 Sep. 1676.

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ROGER WILBRAHAM, = Alice dan. of Roger Wilbraham, of Dorfold Esq. and Mary Ravenscroft of Breiton, when so many of his wife, Adon Marr. 4 April 1656. Died 18 Sep. bur. 14 Sep. 1676.

Thos. Wilbraham eldest at Dorfold Hall, b. 23 May, 1657. D. 8 Sep. bur. 11 Sep. 1675.

Richard Wilbraham and son: b. & bap. 27 Aug. 1660. Died 27 May 1675.

RANDLE WILBRAHAM, = Mary dan. of Sir Richard Brooke Bart. of Norton, Marr. 25 Oct. 1687 at Aston Chapel, near Norton, Bur. at N. 15, Jan. 1732-3. 1738-9, aged 75 years.

STEPHEN WILBRAHAM, = Elizabeth dan. of Thos. Hoole of Bostock, and widow Birch. Bur. at N. 26 Jan. 1733.

ROGER & ALICE TWINS: b. 28 June, 1662. Roger died 1 July, 1664. Alice, mar. to Raphe Wilbraham of Dorfold, at Wrenbury Church, 26 May, 1709. She died 9 Jan. 1713-14.

Ann Wilbraham b. 28 Nov. bap. 7 Dec. 1665. Died 9 Sep. bur. 10 Sep. 1666. Grace Wilbraham B. 28 Dec. bap. 8 Jan. 1667. Marr. Thos. son of Sir Rich. Brooke, Bart. 12 July, 1688.

Rachel Wilbraham, b. 20 Sep. bap. 24 Sep. 1664. Died 19 Sep. bur. 20 Sep. 1666.

Roger & Alice twins: b. 28 June, 1662. Roger died 1 July, 1664. Alice, mar. to Raphe Wilbraham of Dorfold, at Wrenbury Church, 26 May, 1709. She died 9 Jan. 1713-14.

Elizabeth Wilbraham Born & bap. 13 Aug. 1659 and widow bur. 3 Feb. 1659-60.

Roger & Alice twins: b. 28 June, 1662. Roger died 1 July, 1664. Alice, mar. to Raphe Wilbraham of Dorfold, at Wrenbury Church, 26 May, 1709. She died 9 Jan. 1713-14.

1 Richard Wilbraham, eldest son, b. 13 Jan. 1688-9. Died of a fever 6 Feb. 1706-7. Bur. at Trinity Astbury, where a monument still exists to his memory. 1737. Bur. at N. 14 Oct. 1737.

(1st wife) Eliz. dan. of Thos. Brooke, of Norton, M. 1706-7. Bur. at Ch. Chester 31 Dec. 1731. Died in childbed to Oct. 1737. Bur. at N. 14 Oct. 1737.

(2nd wife) Mary Vere, dan. of Thos. Hunt Esq. of Brzenose Coll. Oxon: Dep. Licent. of Cheshire 17 Sep. 1725. Bur. at N. 13 Sep. 1760. aged 60 years.

2 ROGER WILBRAHAM, = Mary Vere, dan. of Thos. Hunt Esq. of Brzenose Coll. Oxon: Dep. Licent. of Cheshire 17 Sep. 1725. Bur. at N. 13 Sep. 1760. aged 60 years.

3 Randle Wilbraham, of Rode Hall, L.L.D. &c. Educated at Brzenose Coll. Oxon: Barrister-at-law. Marr. in year M.P. for several years. Ancestor of the Wilbrahams of Rode, co. Cest. & of Rode Wilbraham, now Lord Skelmersdale, of Lantash House, co. Lancash.

4 Thomas Wilbraham, of Westmanster, L.L.D., F.R.S. Oxon. Rector of Shelford, Oxon. Fellow of Coll. of Physicians. o. s. p. Diana dan. of John Plumtree of N. Kingham, mar. 1732; died at Westminister 2 Nov. 1757.

5. Hy. Wilbraham M.A. of Brzenose Coll. Oxon. Rector of Shelford, Oxon. married 14 Feb. 1720 (N. Parr. Reg.) Mary Wilbraham, o. s. p. Thos. Cheetham Esq. of Glossop, 13 Mar. 1738-39. (N. Parr. Reg.)

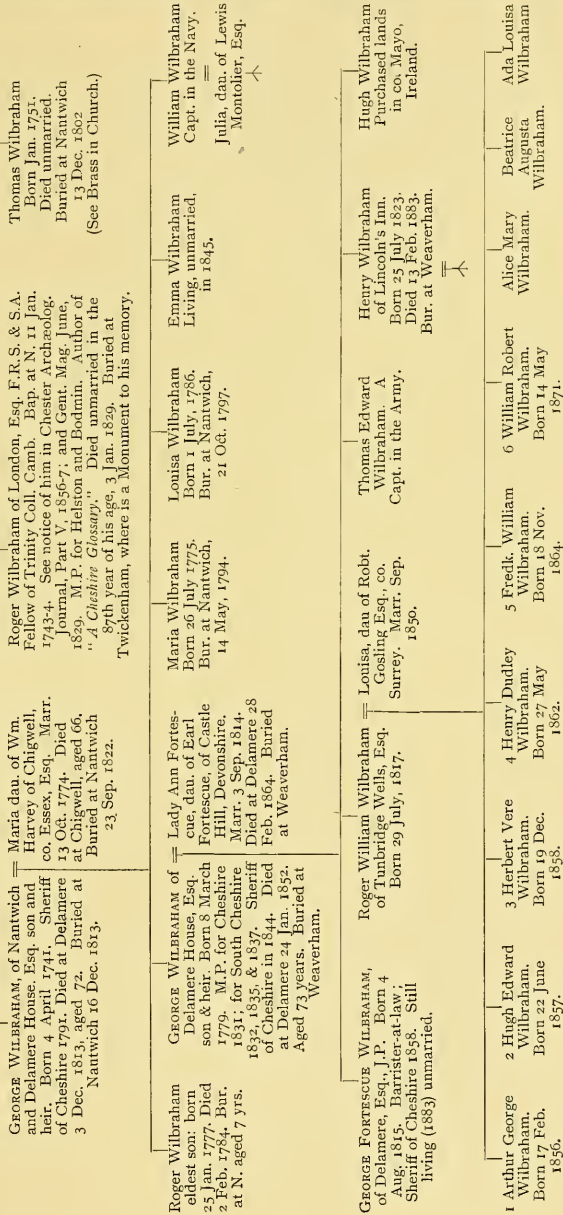
Frances W. m. to Wm. Wright Esq. of Stockport of Chester, 7 Jan. 1730. (N. Parr. Reg.) Mary Wilbraham, o. s. p. Thos. Cheetham Esq. of Glossop, 13 Mar. 1738-39. (N. Parr. Reg.)

Grace, born 20 April, 1735, aged 47. Died 8 May 1738. 1735.

Mary Wilbraham, born 22 April 1736. Bur. 22 May 1741.

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## THE CHURCH FAMILY.

The family of CHURCH, whose original name appears to have been *Churchehouse*, has been seated for many generations in Cheshire. They had estates at Middlewich, Eccleston, Alvaston, Wistaston, Church Coppenhall, and Nantwich. In 29 Hen. VI. [1451] *Richard del Churchehouse* occurs in connection with lands in Wyghtreton [Wistaston], according to a lease dated 30th July, 1451.\* In 14 Edw. IV. [1474-5] by a deed in Mr. Norcup's possession, John Marchomley, son of Robert Marchomley, and John Marchomley, son and heir apparent, (see *Maisteron Pedigree*, page 420), John Bromley, Richard Cholmondeley of Cholmondeley, and William Cholmondeley, granted to *John Churchehouse* and his brother *Nicolas Churchehouse* of Grayste [Gresty] all that land with its buildings, gardens, orchards, &c. situate in "Hospitull Strete" bounded by the land of William Hassall, John Bromley, Edward Wetenhall, and Nicolas Maisteron. On that land was erected in 1577 the present "*Church's Mansion*," which belongs to A. W. Radford-Norcup, Esq., of Betton, Salop, the present representative of the eldest branch of the Church family of this town. In 13 Hen. VII. [1497-8] "*Nicolas Churche, chaplain*," who may have been identical with *Nicolas Churchehouse*, just mentioned, granted by deed to Ralph Malbon certain lands in Haslyngton, and Balterley.† The first mention of the family in the Parish Registers is in 35 Hen. VIII. [1543], when "*William Kyrke alias Chirche*" was the head of the family. His grandson of the same name migrated into Shropshire, where he acquired partly by marriage and partly by purchase very large estates at Betton, Tunstall, Tyrley, and Amington, which on the death of the last male heir in 1780, were divided among the several co-heiresses. At the dissolution of the Monastic Orders, Sir Rowland Hill, the opulent Lord Mayor of London, purchased vast estates in the neighbourhood of Drayton; and the Betton estate was granted to him by King Henry VIII, by deed bearing date 25th Sep. 32 Hen. VIII. [1540]. Sir Rowland conveyed it to his nephew, Rowland Barker, through whose sister, Isabell, one moiety came by marriage into the Church family.‡

RICHARD CHURCH, the eldest son of William Kyrke or Churche, built the Hospital Street "*Mansion*," which is represented in the accompanying plate, and resided there.§ His Inquisition *post mortem* now in the Record Office is much defaced and time-worn; but the following brief abstract, though imperfect, proves that he died possessed of considerable landed property.

"*Ing. p. m.* taken at Nantwich 17 April 35 Eliz. [1593] before Thomas Cholmondeley, Junr., Kt., Escheator, and Ralph Wilbraham, and these Commiss<sup>rs</sup> Hugh Cholmondeley, Richard Wilbraham, Jasper Rutter, and Richard Clutton, gents.; on the oaths of . . . Whitney, . . . Richd. Wilbraham, Willm. ffuleshurst, John Cheswis, &c. [names illegible] who say that Richard Church, of Nantwich, Gent., died seised of one messuage and one wiche-house of six leads in Wich Malbank; one messuage and i acre of land in Worleston; i Messuage, 20 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow and 20 acres of pasture in Coole-lane; also 2 messuages . . . . . 20 acres of pasture in Newhall; . . . . . also 2 messuages in Stafford; 22<sup>st</sup> rent in Alderly, Salop; rent from Thos. Smyth in Nantwich 8d. [?]; another rent of 16s. 4d. for mill-field and corn-mill; also rent of 8s. 4d. in occupation of Humphrey Brooke; 6s. 4d. rent from Richard Weever, gent., for property in Acton; another rent of 5s. for one messuage

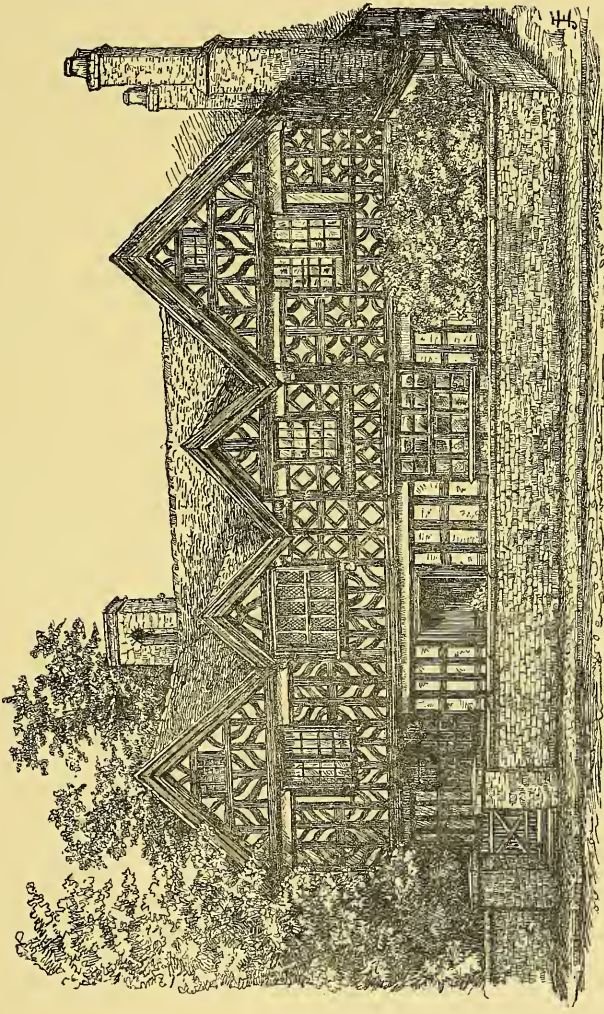
\* Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

† Cheshire Plea Rolls.

‡ Information of A. W. Radford-Norcup, Esq.

§ For a description of the house, its inscriptions, &amp;c., see page 124.





CHURCH'S MANSION.

in Nantwich called *Preyers Hall*, formerly in the possession of John Seckerston; another rent of 5s. for property in N. formerly the possession of Margaret Maynwaring de Marton, widow; annual rent of 3s. 6d. in Poole in the occupation of Willm. Malbon; annual rent of 3s. in Little Acton formerly the property of Thos. Chetwode, gent.; another rent of 16s. from Oliver Cartwright formerly the property of Robt. Goodier, gent.; another rent of 12d. from John Crewe; another rent of 6d. for messuage of Ralph Twoyereold; all which [with other small rents] the said Richard Church by his Will [dated 21 June, 1592] left to his son William Church. Besides these Richard Church died seised of a messuage in Hospital Street, of 3 mess., 20 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 20 acres of pasture in Church Coppenhall; 20 acres of land and pasture in Monks Coppenhall; 1 messuage, 20 acres of land, 6 acres of meadow, and 10 acres of pasture in Worleston; . . . . . 120 acres of pasture and grazing in Oulston and Newton near Middlewich; 10 acres of pasture in Warmincham; certain rents in Monks Coppenhall and Woolstan Wood [all specified], also his house in Hospital Street, with appurtenances, garden, pasture, Dovecotes, stables and buildings 10 (?) cottages and 5 gardens in Wich Malbank, &c.

That the said Richard Church died on the 27 Aug. 34 Eliz. [1592] and that William Church, his son, is his next heir and of the age of 33 and upwards."

Of the Will of Richard Church, now preserved at Chester, and alluded to in the above *Inquisition*, the following are the principal items:—

*Abstract of Richard Church's Will.*

"In the name of God Amen; the 21 June 1592.

"ffirst I give &c. to Margery Church my wife £100, also *wyndmill-field*, also *Malpas-field*, also occupation of salt for 40 years, if she live soe long; and at her death to my son Randle Church, also the barnes and buyldings in *Byrchin Lane*; and certayne gardens lyinge on the North syde of the Churche."

"I give to my son William Church my whole terme & interest in the *Barne Field* adioyning to the Heath; one silver-salt dooble guilt, one drynkinge boole double guilt, one silver pott. I give to my sonne Randull three cottages and gardens in Ospell Street; Also these legacies to Thos. Church 20£, to John Church 40s., to Mary Wettenhall 20£, to Humphrey Renolde 20s., to Robert Wright 20s., to William Wright 20s., also Renold [Wright] 20s., to my god-daughter Elizabeth Church 20s., to Mr. Sherston, [? Shenton] 20s. The property in the co. of Chester and elsewhere to my son William Church, also his howse in Hightowne, also *Birchin Lane* Croft in Wigterson [Willaston] also *Rease Meadow* in Worleston; Wiche-house in Wich Malbank in the occupation of Elen Masterson widow; Lands in *Cowe* [Coolc] *Lane*; Cottage and lands in Newhall; Cottage and Land in Stafford; Betton coppice in Adderley; certain rents in Hatherton, Wich Malbank, Acton &c., and at his death to descend to my sonne Rondull, &c. I give to Rondull Church the house or messuage wherein I now dwell in the Ospell Street with gardens meadowe dovehouse stable & buyldings thereunto belonging; with other cottages; also lands in Church Coppenhall, Monks Coppenhall, Warmingham, Middlewich, Occleston, five wiche-houses in Middlewich," &c.

[Provision for his wife, who was made his sole executrix, his two sons being overseers of his Will].

An Inventory of his goods, appraised by William Churche, Randle Churche, Thomas Churche and Nicolas Gouldsmythe, dated 12th Oct. 1592, accompanies the Will, and amounts to £216 13s. 4d.

The eldest son of Richard Church settled at Betton, in Salop, where the family continued for several generations, as already stated; whilst RANDLE CHURCH, the second son resided at the "*Mansion*" left him by his father, and died there at an advanced age (probably not less than eighty-six years), having survived his eldest son, RICHARD, and his grandson of the same name. A "memorandum" accompanying the will of the said Richard Church, now preserved at Chester, is worthy of being quoted here.

"Whereas I Randull Church of Na'ptwich was named by my sonne Richard Church to be his executor together with my sonne Randull Church of Bullingbroke in the county of Lyncolne I being very aged & also very sickly do renounce to be executor and herevnto I have set my hand in the p[re]sence of the praysons of the testators goods & chattels the xvij day of Jan. 1637[-8].

By me Ran. Church the elder"

[Witnesses] "Roger Wright, Randall Hampton, Richard Wright, James Bullen."

After the death of this Randle Church, in 1648, the *Mansion* in Hospital Street seems to have become the property of the eldest branch of the family at Betton; and, as will presently be seen, was tenanted by the first and second SABOTH CHURCH of Nantwich, in succession, who belonged to the younger branch of the Church family (see Pedigree). I have not been able to trace the descendants of Randle Church beyond his grandchildren; one of whom, however, deserves special notice. This was THOMAS CHURCH, the fourth son of Richard Church, who was born about 1618, and afterwards became a tutor in Brazenose College, Oxon. He matriculated there at the age of sixteen, in 1634; and was Fellow in 1642. Being asked, on 14th July, 1648, whether he would submit to the visitors, he said "I am not satisfied how I can submit to this Visitation, without incurring manifest perjury." Accordingly he was removed from his Fellowship 17th Oct. 1648, by order of the Committee of Lords and Commons.—(Walker's "*Sufferings*," &c. vol. ii. p. 102). He was, however, restored to his Fellowship in 1660; and obtained the degree of B.D. He bequeathed £300 for the purchasing of lands, that out of the revenues thereof two poor scholars of his kindred born in Nantwich, or in default of such, any born in Cheshire, should receive £7 apiece, &c. He also "gave £25 to the Chapel of the College; with which was bought a silver dish to put the offering money therein at times of Communion." He died 19th Feb. 1676-7, and was buried in the Cloisters belonging to Brazenose College.\*

Another Thomas Church, D.D. was educated at Brazenose, Oxon.; but whether belonging to the same family I am unable to say. He was born in 1707; was instituted to the Rectory of Battersea; Prebendary of St. Paul's 3rd Jan. 1743-4; B.A. 22nd April, 1726; M.A. 10th July, 1731. Wrote against the Methodists as a vindication of the miraculous powers of the first three centuries, in answer to Middleton: 8vo. 1749. For this work Oxford gave him the degree of D.D. 23rd Feb. 1749-50. He also wrote an Analysis of the works of Bolingbroke, 8vo., 1755. He died on 23rd Dec. 1756.†

EDWARD CHURCH, second son of William Church, *temp.* Henry VIII, became the founder of the younger branch of the family that has continued without interruption to the present time. His death must have occurred in or before 1560, according to the following extract in *Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 116 d.

"2 Julii 2 Eliz. [1560]. Rich. Walthall son and heir of Roger Walthall of Wich Malbank, gent., and Margt. his wyfe, demised to Thomas Church sone of *Edward Church, late of Wich Malbank dece[as]ed*, and John Church another sone of ye sd Edw<sup>d</sup> Church the Capitall Messuage in Wistanston in occupation of John Alexander [of Wistaston] hend. p. 4 ann<sup>rm</sup>."

THOMAS CHURCH, who succeeded his father, lived in Puritan times, and gave his second son the curious Christian name of *Sabbath* (or *Saboth*: as it is usually spelled in the

\* Anthony á Wood's "*Hist. of the Coll. & Halls in Univ. Oxon.*" 4to. 1786. p. 361 & 374.

† See Alex. Chalmers, F.S.A. Biog. Diçt. Vol. ix, p. 313. (Edition 1813).

Parish Registers and in old Deeds); a name that has been perpetuated, as will presently be seen, through seven generations. The principal clauses of his Will, dated 6th May, 1635, (11 Car. I.) are as follows:—

“I Thomas Church of Wich Malbank, gent. &c. first I devise & bequeath unto Ann Church my wife all that my Messuage or Burgage lyinge and beinge in Wich Malbank, as also one Messuage Burgage & Cottage with the Stable and Garden thereto belonging lyinge and beinge in *Castle Lane* in Wich Malbank, and one great pasture &c. adioyning Ridley field for the term of her natural life,” &c. [also lands in Edlaston] on “condition that she p'mitt & suffer Edward Church my eldest sonne to haue & enjoy the moytie and one haulfe of my said pasture called by the name of “*Wichfeild* or *Shutshaw* and adioyning to *Ridley ffeild*.” [Permission given to his wife to sell, if she think proper, his wiche-houses, bryne, &c.] “Also I give to my said sonne Edward my drawing Table in the Great Chamber next to the *Cage*, one gilded Silver salt, & my Signett goulde ringe &c. I do give and bequeath vnto Sabath Church my second sonne one silver cupp p'cell guilt called a Beaker: Also, I give vnto Thomas Church my sonne Sabaths sonne and my godsonne one wyne cupp p'cell guilt. Also, I give &c. vnto my third sonne John Church 20<sup>li</sup> and one silver Beaker: Also I giue &c. to Thomas Church my sonne Edwards sonne & my godsonne my guilt Boole or Cupp. Moreover I giue unto my two daughters 20 shillings a peece . . . . . Also I giue to all and euery of my grand-children 5 sh. a peece. I make my said wife Ann Church my true and sole executrix.” [Inventory dated 18 July, 1635, accompanying the will, amounts to £311 11s. 10d.]

The date of the will, and the entry on the 8th July, 1635, of his burial in the Parish Register, prove that the monumental Tablet formerly in the Church was incorreçt as to the year of his death (see p. 316). In like manner the age of Thomas Church, which is there given as seventy-one, is apparently an error; for, according to the deed just quoted, his father was already dead in 1560, that is, seventy-five years before.

Of the seven successive Saboth Church's, a few particulars not given in the pedigree, may here be added.

The first SABOTH CHURCH purchased on 20th March, 1662-3, from Sir Edward Minshall of Stoke, Kt., for £180, two fields in Broad Lane, Nantwich, called *Peartree field* and *Peartree Meadow*. These lands descended to the next SABOTH CHURCH, who sold them for £320, on 16th Feb. 1696-7, to his nephew, John Bromhall, Esq.\* According to a Rate Book,† dated 1691, these lands, and the house (“*Church's Mansion*”) where Saboth Church then lived, were assessed as follows:—

“Mr. Churches ho[use] & orchard [Hospital Street end] . . . . .	2	8½.”
“More his land at Broad Lane . . . . .	4	10½.”
“More his field and Barne . . . . .	7	3¾.”

This Saboth Church was named to be taken into custody with thirteen other Cheshire gentlemen, who, being loyal to the Stuart dynasty, were disaffected to William III, in 1696.‡ The tradition of the family is that he was detained a prisoner three days.

\* Family deeds, now in possession of Mrs. Church.

† *Penes* G. F. Wilbraham, Esq., Delamere.

‡ The original Warrant, signed by Thomas Lee and Roger Mainwaring, by order of the Lord-Lieut. of the County, empowering Roger Mainwaring and Cornett John Johnson, and the town Constables, to take the several persons named therein into custody, and to search their several houses for arms and horses, was dated 16th March, 1695-6. It will be found printed *in extenso* in J. H. Hanshall's *History of Cheshire*, 1823, pp. 499—500 *note*.

The *third* Saboth Church married into a respectable family named Wolfe, of Shavington; the marriage settlement dated 10th Feb. 1723-4, mentions the following property, which remained in the family until within a few years ago.

"All that one Meadow in N. with the Barn standing thereupon, lying next to a pasture commonly called *Ridley Field*. One Messuage and one Shop with their Appurtenances situate in High Town adjoining to the *Pudding Lane* [Castle Street], and one Messuage, Stable and Garden, situate in *Pudding Lane* &c. in the possession of John Church\* and Elizabeth Bagnall widow as undertenants of the same. Four cottages in Pepper Street† &c. One barn upon the Snow Hill, halfe a barn lying in the Water Load, and six dozen Leads of Walling," &c.

The above was the marriage portion of Anne Wolfe,‡ who died in Jan. 1736-7, and was buried at Wybunbury, on 1st Feb. following; leaving issue *Elizabeth, Hannah, Martha, Sabbath, and Thomas*. Saboth Church married secondly Rebecca Wolfe, of Shavington, on 29th Oct. 1737, and had issue *Martha, and Charles*. He appears to have lived in Shavington, Willaston, and Nantwich, at different periods of his life. The *fourth* Saboth Church resided on his property at Newtown, in Nantwich, where until recently the family have been located. The *fifth* Saboth Church, whose eldest son was born before his father's marriage, willed his estate to his second son, Thomas; whose son and grandson wasted the patrimony, and brought the family to poverty. The *sixth* Saboth Church was a farmer in Acton parish; and the *seventh* is still living, a septuagenarian, and childless, at Acton.

In *Harl. MSS.* 2119, f. 183, is a rough drawing of the Arms of the Church family similar to the blazon given on page 316. A Crest is also added, which may be described as follows:—

CREST.—On a wreath, a greyhound's head erased Sable, spotted and collared Or.

\* John Church occurs as occupier of this property in a Rate Book of 1691. The house, shop, &c., were sold by Mr. Church to the present occupier, Mr. William Lovatt, a few years since. The illustration on page 415 shows part of the front in High Town; and that on page 110, a side view of the same house in Pudding Lane or Castle Street.

† The site of the cottages in Pepper Street was recently purchased from one of the Church family by Mr. Joseph Jackson, of Nantwich.

‡ It may here be noted that the tradition of *General Wolfe*, of Quebec fame in 1759, having spent his boyhood at the Yew-Tree House, in Acton parish, (as related in "*Historical Facts connected with Nantwich*," &c. Printed at Chester, 1851, p. 52) cannot be substantiated. General Wolfe, who was born at Westerham, in Kent, in 1726, was in no way connected with the neighbourhood of Nantwich; and the local tradition has no better foundation than the fact that a respectable family of that name has been long resident in the vicinity of the town, and the desire of some to connect the brave hero with their own county.

# Church of Nantwich, and Betton co. Salop.

*Authorities: Harl. MSS.* 2119 and 1535; Nantwich Parish Registers; Wills at Chester; Wilb. MS. Journal; Visitation 1613; Family Deeds, &c. The descent of the Shropshire family being continued by the present representative of the family, Alexander W. Radford-Norcup, of Betton Hall, Esq.

WILLIAM "KYRKE *alias* CHURCH,"  
 Anne dau of  
 .....  
 Bur. at Nant. Par Reg. 1543.

**RICHARD CHURCH**, of Nantwich, Gent. = Margaret dau. of eldest son & heir, born before 1540. Built the timber house in Hospital Street still called "Church's Mansion" in 1575. Will dated 21 June, 1592; proved at Chester. Died 27 Aug. 1592. Bur. in North Transept of N. Church 28 Aug. *Inf. f. m.* taken at N. 17 April 35 Eliz. [1593.]

**WILLIAM CHURCH**, of N. = Elizabeth dau. of Reginald Wright by his wife Anne Westenthal (*Harl.* MSS. 2119 f. 109.) Marr. at N. 17 May 1581. William Church and his son Richard of Betton, Esqrs., the former buried in 1632. Both which sires were pious and in bliss with God expecting to be awakened, &c.

**RANDLE CHURCH** of N. = Jane dau. of Thomas Clutton of N. Marr. 2 Jan. 1592-3. Bur. 30 Dec. 1599. (See Monument.)

**RICHARD CHURCH** = Elizabeth dau of Randle Church of Bolinbroke, according to a mem. with the will of his bro. Richard 1637; but said to have settled at Betton in *Harl.* MSS. 1535 f. 100, which is most likely wrong. Sergeant at Arms to King Chas. I.

**RICHARD** = Isabel Pres-  
 CHURCH, dau. of  
 of Betton  
 John Pres-  
 Esq. Bap-  
 at N. 1 Oct.  
 1584.  
 July 1582  
 great niece  
 of Sir Row-  
 Bur. in  
 1654 at  
 Drayton.  
 Lord Mayor  
 of London.

**EDWARD CHURCH**, of Nantwich, Gent. = Elizabeth dau. of second son; bapt. 5 May, 1543. John Alexander, of Wistaston. (*Par. Reg.*) Died in or before 2 Eliz. 1560. (*Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 106d.)

**THOMAS CHURCH**, of Nantwich, mercer, (Hart. MSS. 1967 and 2119). Legatee under his will in 1592. Will dated 6 May 1635. Bur. at N. 8 July, 1635. Formerly a painting of him & his wife in the North Transept of the Church. (See Monument.)

**Edwd. Church** = Margaret of N. eldest son; bapt. 15 Apr. 1590 Bur. 1 Sep. 1645. Bur. at N. 17 Mar. 1639-40.

**Savorth Church** = Elizabeth dau. of John Church 2d son; Bap. 26 Sep. 1590 Legatee under his aunt Margaret's will, 1645. Churchwarden at N. 1633. A Wright's Trustee 1666. Bur. at Nantwich 24 Aug. 1679.

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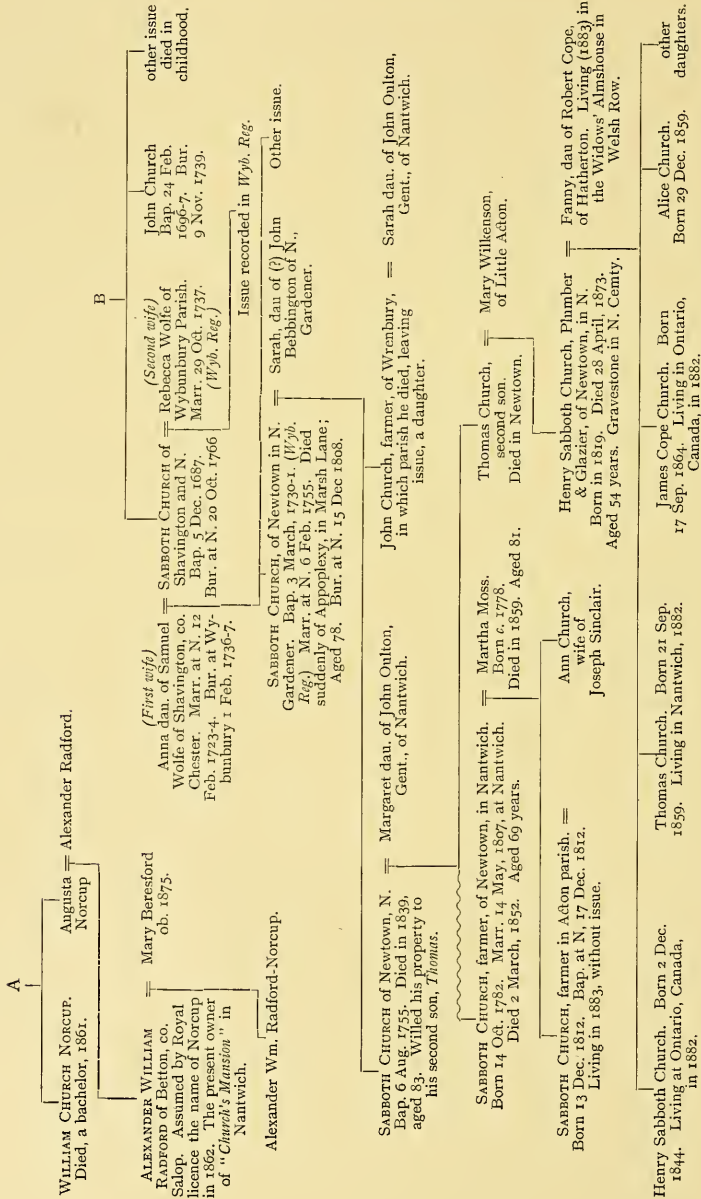
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A

B

C







## THE MAINWARING FAMILY.

The MAINWARINGS were connected with Nantwich for about three hundred years. Three separate branches, that settled here late in the fifteenth century, are traceable to a common ancestor; the eldest branch descending from illegitimate issue of *Sir John Mainwaring*, of Over-Peover, eldest son of RANDLE MAINWARING, ESQ. of the same place, who died at an advanced age in 1456; and the two younger branches from *Hugh*, and *William*, respectively fourth and fifth sons of Randle Mainwaring, of Carincham, who was the third son of the said RANDLE MAINWARING, ESQ., of Over-Peover.

First—*The eldest Mainwaring line.* Slight variations occur in the earlier descents in different old MS. pedigrees,\* which cannot now be rectified, as no Inquisitions or deeds relating to this branch of the family are known to exist. A few particulars from the Registers, and Wills at Chester, &c., however, prove the correctness of the later descents in the subjoined pedigree.

Thus, JOHN MAINWARING, gent., who resided in the Beast Market, in Beam Street, mentions in his Will, dated 24th April, 1581, his eldest son, *Roger*; his wife, *Cicilie*; his daughter-in-law, *Margery* (wife of the said Roger Mainwaring); and his grandchildren, *Richard*, and *Margaret*. He gives unto his “loving sister *Ales Crockett* one Crowne of gould of the value of vs. for a token;” and to his son-in-law, *Thomas Minshull*, “a bible.”

ROGER MAINWARING, who succeeded his father, John Mainwaring, resided at Beam Street-end (*cf.* page 124), and acquired a very considerable property in town and elsewhere, which is minutely described in his Will and Inquisition *post mortem*, both of which are extant. A few extracts from his Will, which is printed in full in vol. liv. Chet. Soc. Publ., and occupies nearly fourteen pages, will not be uninteresting.

“I bequethe unto my lovinge wief MARGRET M. my chief mansion house at the townsende of Namptwiche wth all the buildings and gardens thereunto app'teyninge, three fields called *Tynkers Crofts* lyinge together adioyninge on the southe and southeside of the same house;” &c. . . . “all my lands in *Woolston woode* called *Marchforde* grounde conteyninge five fields and two meadowes wth a new barne;” &c. . . . “two howses and gardens wth a litle pece of waste sometime called the *Mixon* in the church lane in Namptewiche;” &c. . . . “lands and gardens called *Masons yarden* in N.” &c.

“I give &c. unto THOMAS M. my youngest sonne my beste silver pott being all guilte and also my beste sworde;” &c. . . . . “ffive pounds yearlie;” . . . . . and £100 when he shall come of age &c. “I give, &c. unto RICHARD M. my eldest sonne all suche howses, lands &c. as are before given unto my wif after her deathe or decease” &c. . . . . “two messages in Beamestrete in N. one called the *Saracens hed*,” &c. . . . . “one other howse in the same strete wherein my mother [*Cicely*] dwelleth, nexte the *horsmylle* of Henry Manwaringe of Carincham esquier.” &c. . . . . “several wiche-houses and walling; and land that had been leased by the late Abbot of Combermere for 80 years to his grandfather OLIVER M., and his father JOHN M., both deceased” . . . . . “one burgage in Berwick upon Tweed lyinge neare unto the northwest gate of pallace wth in the said towne of Berwick, wch said howse was purchased and morgaged for debte dulye owinge unto me by Roberte Arderne gent. customer of the same towne and the same is forfeited unto me divers yeares sithence [since] the seekinge for the possession whereof hathe bene omytted and delaid by reason of my service and goinge into Ireland;” &c. . . . . “my greate cheyne of goulde with all my goulde buttons” &c. . . . . apparel, swords, daggers, armour, “bookes imprinted or written,” deed chests, and “one other cheste of imbowed worke of walnutte tree beinge a Frenche cheste gotten at Newhaven warres” &c.

\* This will be seen by collating the pedigree printed in the “*Visitation of Cheshire 1580*,” (Harl. Soc. Publ.) taken from Harl. MSS. 1424, f. 106; with other pedigrees in Harl. MSS. 1535, f. 340; in the Add. MSS. (British Museum) 24,444, p. 77; and in other volumes of MS. pedigrees of Cheshire families in private libraries, notably at Dorfold Hall, near Nantwich; and Condover Hall, Salop, &c.

"Unto my younger sonne JOHN M. two howses lyinge together in the Beamestrete the one *Cheynye Halle*" &c. . . . "and the other in the tenure of my *aunte Alice Crokett* wydowe" &c. . . .

"I give &c. unto MARY M. my eldest daughter" £200 &c. . . . . "unto my other daughter MARGARET" [subsequently sole heiress to his estate] £200 &c. . . . .

"I give &c. unto my nephewe ALEXANDER MAINWARING £16 13s. 4d.; and to *John Mainwaring* his basterd brother 6s. 8d." &c. . . . . "Unto my sister ANNE SWINGLEHURST 20 nobles [£6 13s. 4d.] &c. . . . . "Unto my brother [in-law] *Thomas Minshull* one angell of golde [10s.] for a token, and to my neese *Margarett* his daughter 40s.; unto my cosen *Robert Croket* the elder tailor 10s." &c. . . . . "Unto *Thoms. Maisterson* *esquire* my faithfull ffather in lawe and good frend on[e] portegeve of goulde" [£3 10s.] &c. . . . . "and to my mother in lawe *Katheryne* his wyfe twoe angells of goulde to be made in a ringe wth my name in it to be sente unto her into Irelande." &c. . . . . "and lastlie to be geven and distributed amongst the poore people my neighbours in the towne of Nantwicke the daye of my buriall" [sum left blank] &c. . . . . Total legacies £600 . . . . . also a charity left to the poor of Nantwich (see page 358). . . . .

"And my desier is that my bodie may be buried at the upper ende of the highe chauncell on the north este side of the same above the doör called the *revestry* door wth in the churche of Nantwich" &c. . . . . "and at both endes of the grave may be raised the marbell pillars and the greate tombstone of marble that came out of Ireland as the mason shall best devise the same" &c. . . . . "I will that there be a table of brasse to be made at London whereon shalbe written the daie and yeare of our Lorde of my decease out of this lieff and also what yssue or children I then hadd wth all their severall names and the same table of brasse to be set in a faire stone in the church wall even righte over the verie middest of my said tombe stone" &c.\*

The above Will, which is dated 18th April, 1589, was proved on the 1st May, 1590; the testator, Roger Mainwaring, having died on the 1st March, leaving Richard Mainwaring, his son and heir, aged thirteen years five months eleven days, as stated in his Inquisition *post mortem* taken on the 2nd Sept. in the same year. Roger Mainwaring was "Auditor in Ireland." It is very remarkable that several of the Maisterson family of this town held important positions in Ireland; and were the contemporaries of Sir Roger Wilbraham, also a native of Nantwich, who was then Solicitor General for Ireland.

The coat of Arms assigned to Roger Mainwaring (*Harl. MSS. 1424*) was blazoned as follows:—

ARMS.—*Argent, two bars Gules within a borduret goboné Or and Sable.*

CREST.—*An ass's head proper, erased, maned, and haltered Or.*

After the death of Roger Mainwaring, his widow, Margaret, was re-married at Nantwich, to Sir Dudley Norton, whose Funeral Certificate is as follows:—

#### NORTON FUNERAL CERTIFICATE.†

"ARMS.—*Argent on a chevron azure between three crescents of the second a crescent of the first for difference* [Norton]; *impaling Ermine a chevron Azure between three garbs Or.*" [Maisterson].

\* These directions for erecting a tomb and monument to his memory were never carried out; nor is his burial recorded in the Parish Register.

† The "*bordure goboné*" was probably used to prove the family had become legally legitimate. (See Bontell's *English Heraldry*, p. 197.)

‡ This Funeral Certificate, which supplies a missing generation of the Norton family in the pedigree given on page 124 note, has already been printed in Dr. Howard's "*Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*," vol. i. p. 139, from a Book of Funeral Certificates, Ayscough MSS.

"The HONBLE. SR. DUDLY NORTON KNT. principall Secretary to the State and one of the privie Council departed this mortal Life the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1634. He had to wife Margr<sup>t</sup> Dr. of Sr. Thomas Masterson of Fearnies in the County of Waxford Kt. by whome he had Issue *Dudly Norton* his only Sonn who hath to Wife Katherin Dr of Capt<sup>n</sup> Hercie Wolferston of Statfould Esqr. in Staffordshire by whome he hath Issue *Henry Norton*. She was relict of John Bromfeild of Bullthornes in Staffordshire.

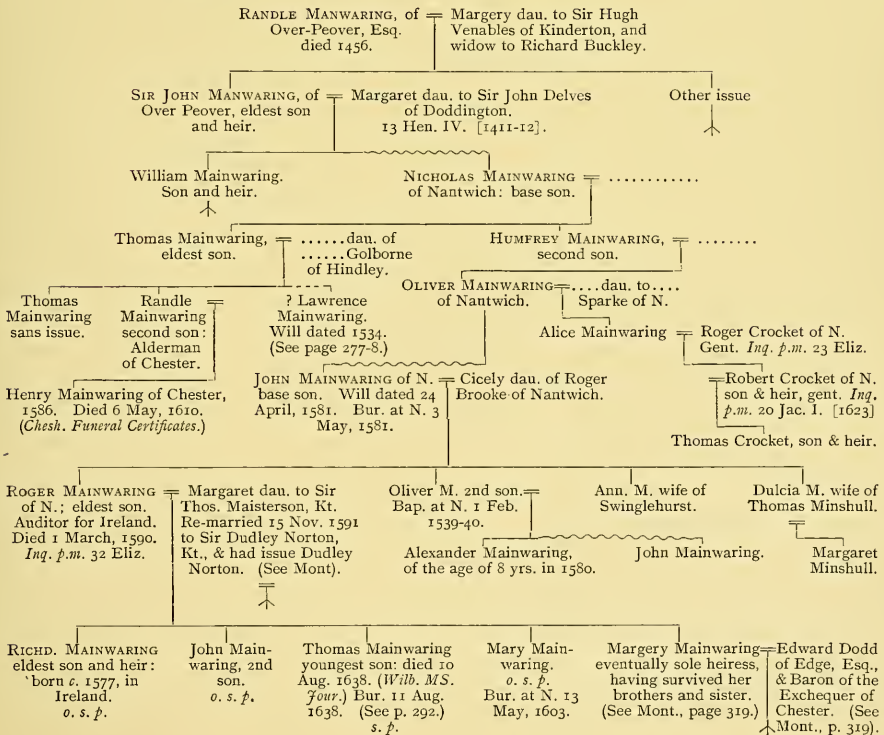
Margaret wife of Sr Dudley Norton before mar[r]ied to Roger Manneringe sometime Remembrancer of the Exchequer of Ireland.

Sr. Dudley Norton was buried in the Choire of Christ Church Dublin ye 30th of July."

## Mainwaring Pedigree.

(ELDER LINE).

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 1424, &c.; Wills; Parish Registers; &c.*



Of the *second Mainwaring line*, the descendants of HUGH MAINWARING, of Nantwich, fourth son of Randle Mainwaring, of Carincham, no reliable information has occurred beyond what is contained in the Will of his grandson, ROGER; and in the Inquisition *post mortem* of his (probably) great-grandson, HUGH. Abstracts of these are as follows:—

I.—WILL OF ROGER MAINWARING, dated 1 OCT. 1510.\*

"My body to be buried in Nantwich Church; I bequeath to my brother *William Mainwaring* my best Gowne my best Dublet my best Hose and my best Shurte; to my brother *Hugh* my second Gowne furred with fox; to my brother *Robert* four yards of tane to make him a gowne. I bequeath to Robert Mainwaring John Bret Thomas Symcock Thomas Wright Richard Ince William Maisterson Nicholas Savage and Rondell Anteley each of them one mark of money [13s. 4d.] a jacket a pair of hose, a cow and a calf. "I will that if *Margaret* my wife depart that Thomas Masterson haue my tacke of Swanley the wh<sup>ch</sup> is 15<sup>th</sup> yere behind. The residue of my Landes and goods I give and bequeath to Margaret my wife the time of her life and then I will that they be devided between my *two children*; and the cheefe place at the *Beyme Strete end* I will that . . . . Glegg haue it beside his pte. and if ought come to the one of my children I will it remayn to the other and for default of issue betwixt them both it to remaine to the heirs males of my brothers *Oliver*, *Robert* and *Hugh* as it appears by a tail deed. I ordene and make my executors Margaret my wife, and Richard Brooke her brother, and the overseers that this be performed the honble father in God William Bishop of Lincoln in whom I putt all my trust and under him John Egerton John Mainwaring Ralf Delves William Hondford and Richard Cholmondeley Esquires, these being witnesses Sr Nicholas Mainwaring my curate, William Mainwaring gent., and Rondell Anteley with others.

Given the day and year aforesaid."

2.—INQUISITION *post mortem* OF HUGH MAINWARING. 19 Jac. I.†

"Inquisition taken at Wich Malbank on 28 Sept. 1621, before Hugh Mainwaring Esq. Escheator, and Peter Daniell Esq. feodary, &c. finds that Hugh Mainwaring, of Wich Malbank, gentleman, died seised of a burgage house and garden, held of the Barons of Wich Malbank in socage, value per ann. 2s.; three acres of land and three acres of pasture commonly called the *Brown Hills* in Wich Malbank, value per ann. 5s. The said Hugh died on 2nd April last past‡ [1621] leaving *George Mainwaring* his son and heir, aged 13 years, on the 19th June last past." [1621].

Of the *youngest branch* of the MAINWARINGS of Nantwich some interesting information is here given from Inquisitions *post mortem* and Wills, &c.

I. HUMPHREY MAINWARING, who died at a very advanced age in 1583, had six sons, *Oliver*, *Thomas*, *John*, *Lawrence*, *Randle* and *Roger*; all of whom, except the first named, attained to manhood, married, and left issue. He had also seven daughters, one of whom, *Alice*, became the mother of the celebrated Lord Chief Justice, Sir Ranulphe Crewe.

I. THOMAS MAINWARING died in his father's lifetime, and by his Will (an extract of which has already been given on page 284), he bequeathed to his father his "golde ringe desyringe and prayenge hym to stand good grandfather and father" to his wife and children. He left legacies to his daughters; namely: to *Alice* £40; to *Ann* 40 marks [£26 13s. 4d.]; to *Margaret* his lastard daughter £10; to his wife, *Margaret*, two crofts in Henhull, one

\* Taken from a copy of the Will preserved in *Harl. MSS.* 1967, f. 131.

† Public Record Office.

‡ Thomas Willbrahem, Esq. of Nantwich, in his MS. Journal, enters as follow:—

"Hugh Manwaring of the Crowne died 2 Apr: 1621."

wiche-house of six leads, and his tithes of corn and hay in Nantwich, Alvaston, Willaston, and Woolstanwood, as long as she remained his widow; his other lands being left to his sons, *Thomas, Matthew, John and Richard*. He appointed as his executors his father, his wife, his brother *John*, and his brothers-in-law *John Leech* and *John Crewe*.

His Inquisition *post mortem*, taken on 29th Sept. 21 Eliz. [1579] finds that "he died seized of 2 messuages, 30 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 12 acres of pasture, and 2 of wood in Monkes Copenhall; 3 acres of land and 2 of meadow in Nantwich, all held of the Queen by the 100th part of a Knight's fee, value per ann. £3 8s. od.; also a salt-pit and a moiety of a salt-pit in Nantwich in a place called *Burwartes Hold* [which he granted to feoffees, namely, John Leech of Nantwich and Laurence Wright of Huxley] to the use of Margaret his wife for life; 2 burgages and 3 gardens in Nantwich; a moiety of certain tithes of corn, grain, and herbage, annually growing &c. in Willaston and Alvaston; and a moiety of all and singular the tithes of hay &c. in Nantwich; and a 6th part of such tithes of corn and grain in Woolstanwood. The said Thos. M. died seized of the above premises and tithes; but long before the said Thomas had any interest in the said tithes, Queen Elizabeth by her Letters Patent dated 23 June in the fifth of her reign [1563] granted the said tithes to Randle Mainwaring his executors and assigns from the feast of the Annunciation then last past [25 March, 1563] for term of 21 years. [cf. page 288.]

The said Thos. M. died on the 5th Jan. 15 Eliz. [1572-3] leaving Thomas Mainwaring his son and heir aged 20 years 2 months."

2. JOHN MAINWARING, third son of Humphrey Mainwaring, by his Will dated 6 Dec. 1596, left his interest in the tithes of corn of the parish Church of Dawlish, in Devon, to executors for the use of his wife *Margerie*, and his daughters, *Cicelie, Elizabeth, Margerie, Margaret*, and *Dorothy*, and his son *Laurence Mainwaring*. To his son, *Humphrey*, his signet ring and best wine bowl; to his son *Roger*, his wine bowl "wch my uncle Olyver gave me;" to his mother-in-law *Clutton*, a gilt spoon; to his brother-in-law, Richard Clutton, his "brooch;" to his brother Rondull Mainwaring, "two paire of spectacles;" to his "cosen" Thos. Mainwaring, his "dyall;" to William Ince, his "shorte sworde wth the dagger belonging to the same;" to Dorothy, "vi silver spoones of the appostles, and to Laurence my sonne the other half dosen of silver spoones of the appostles." His Inventory amounted to £127 14s. 4d.

3. RANDLE MAINWARING, fifth son of Humphrey Mainwaring, by his Will dated 31st Jan. 1610, left 40s. towards mending the leads over his pew in the Church of Nantwich. To his wife, Ann, to his eldest son *John*, to his son *Rondull*, and daughter *Ellen Minshull*, (children by a former marriage); and to his sons *William, Thomas, and Roger*, by his second wife, he left various legacies, and his household goods, the Inventory of which, taken on 23rd Feb. 1610, amounted to £419 9s. 9d.

His Inquisition *post mortem*, taken on 23rd Sep. 9 Jac. I. [1612] finds that he died on 18th Feb. last past [1611-12], leaving *John Mainwaring* his son and heir, aged forty years and upwards at the time of the taking of the Inquisition. He left a wiche-house between Wood Street on the east side and little Wood Street on the west side, together with the *lignarus* [wood-room] and profits thereto belonging to trustees, to the use of his sons, *Thomas and John*; with remainder to *William and Roger* in succession.

His widow, Ann Mainwaring, left a Will, (which is in the handwriting of "Thomas Malbone" of Nantwich, who, together with *Hugh Price*, witnessed the same); dated 12th Aug. 1615; in which she desires "to bee buried in the p'ishe Church of Wich Malbank neere unto my late husband;" and bequeaths legacies to her sons, *William, Thomas*, and *Roger*, who were all under the age of eighteen years; to her "sister Margery, wife of Thomas Ley clarke pson. of Muckleston;" to her brother-in-law Roger Mainwaring; to Margaret Mainwaring "my brother Roger Mainwaringes daughter a Crowne in goulde and my Saddle w<sup>th</sup> ytt furnyture." The Inventory of her goods, taken on 1st Dec. 1615, amounts to £437 6s. 8d.

(a.) JOHN MAINWARING, the eldest son of the above Randle Mainwaring, made a very curious Will, (dated 13th Sept. 1638) in which, after a long profession of his faith, he says, "I give vnto Mr. Saring or to some of the godlie men in his absence to speake some fewe words to the people that shall gather att my fun'all\* that they be admonished of ther mortalitie and be taught how they must dispose them selues in this life &c. x<sup>s</sup>." [Ios.] . . . . . "I doe give vnto my cussen John Manwaringe my vncler Roger's sonne a booke called m<sup>r</sup> Perkins vpon the creede in lewe of my love towards him;" . . . . . "vnto my Uncle Weston a booke called the deceitfulness of mans heart in lewe of my love towards him;" . . . . . "vnto my cussin Ric. Bagnall towe bookes, the one called m<sup>r</sup> Perkinst vpon Mathewe & the other called Barkers sermons in lewe my love towards him;" . . . . . "vnto John Pratchett blacksmith a booke called the castis of conscience in lewe of my love towards him." He makes his wife, *Jane*, his sole executrix, and gives to his nieces *Anne* and *Martha Manwaring* x<sup>s</sup>. [ros.] "a peece to buy ether of them a ringe in lewe of my good will towards them." Inventory, dated 12th Jan. 1638-9, amounts to £257 3s. 10d.

(b.) WILLIAM MAINWARING, another son of the above Randle Mainwaring, died more than a year before his half-brother John Mainwaring. By his Will, dated 22nd April, 1637, he left several houses in Nantwich; lands called *Daubies Crofts* in Tarporley, lands called *sitchfields*; messuages, tithes in Willaston, Alvaston, Woolstanwood, and wiche-houses in Nantwich: the lease of *Walfield* and *Birchin-lane* ground &c. to his wife *Martha*, his sole executrix, until his daughters, *Ann* and *Martha*, attain the age of twenty years. Inventory of goods dated 15th May, 1637, amounts to £295 2s. 10d.

His Inquisition *post mortem*, taken on 19th Sep. 13 Car. I. [1637] states that he died on 22nd April last past [1637] leaving *Ann Mainwaring*, aged seven years ten months two days, and *Martha Mainwaring*, aged five years three months eight days, his daughters and heireses.

II. THOMAS MAINWARING, who died in the life-time of his father, Humphrey Mainwaring, married Margaret, daughter to Randall Crewe, of Nantwich; by whom he had four sons, *Thomas, Matthew, John* and *Richard*; and three daughters, *Alice, Anne*, and *Margeret*.

I. THOMAS MAINWARING, the eldest son, married Margaret, daughter to Richard Lee, of Lea, in Wybunbury parish, and had issue six sons, *Thomas, George, Richard, Matthew*,

\* See page 36, where this curious burial custom, known as *lating*, is mentioned.

† The book here mentioned was probably "*Exposition of Christ's Sermon on the Mount*," by William Perkins, folio, 1608.

Arthur, and John. He died in Feb. 1645-6, shortly after Inquisitions *post mortem* ceased to be taken. His Will is not now preserved at Chester; but his death is mentioned in a letter written by his nephew, Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Dorfold Hall, to John Crewe, Esq., of Utkinton, on receiving intelligence of the death of Sir Ranulph Crewe, Kt., of Crewe Hall, who was cousin to the said Thomas Mainwaring. The letter, which contains interesting particulars relating to the state of the county just after the surrender of the City of Chester into the hands of Parliamentary forces, is here printed in full from the original now in the possession of J. P. Earwaker, Esq., as follows:—

[Endorsed] “*ffor ye wor<sup>ll</sup> [worshipful] John Crew esqr. at Westminster these.*”

“Sr.

I mourne w<sup>th</sup> yo<sup>w</sup> for yo<sup>r</sup> loss in ye deathe of ye good ould man, but reioyce w<sup>th</sup> yo<sup>w</sup> both in ye goodnes of him who p<sup>r</sup>serued him vnto yo<sup>w</sup> so longe, and in his mercies who hath giuen yo<sup>w</sup> (I hope) a heart to submit vnto his good will and pleasure. the truth is he was ye *glorie* of his p[ro]fession, ye *grace* of his Countrey, and a *propp of comfort* to his frends, amongst whom ther is few more weakned then my selfe ther beinge not many more interested in his affections. but this learnes vs how rightly to *value creature* comforts, to be thankfull for them whilst we enjoy them, but not to sit [set] or Rests vpon them. Sr yo<sup>r</sup> two ould cosins on whom yo<sup>w</sup> were so tender are now p[ar]ted, Thomas [Mainwaring] being 87 had he liued vntill August, dyed ye 13<sup>th</sup> of this p<sup>r</sup>sent, and knew of ye deathe of sr Randall, but spake much of him. Mathew [Mainwaring] yet liues to mourne both, for whom poore ould man he sheeds more teares then yo<sup>w</sup> woulde thinke possible to come from such drie eyes.

we are now (thanks be to god) in possession of Chester, and vtkington,\* I hope, will shortly possess many goods yt [that] were carried thither. yo<sup>r</sup> *writinge* s<sup>r</sup> R. B. [?] p[ro]tests vnto me he hath faithfully deliue<sup>d</sup> vnto M. Wright, & so hath others, some of yo<sup>r</sup> goods and p[ro]mised more. my la[dy] Gamull† acknowledgeth a guilt boale giuen her by Marrow,‡ for w<sup>ch</sup> she wilbe accountable. we are yet in an vnsetled condicon there, though ye p[ar]liam<sup>t</sup> hath giuen vs a good entrance by giuing vs a Gou<sup>n</sup>our we may well confide in. or greatest business wilbe to giue *satisfaction* to ye souldiers for ye monthes [month's] *pay* we p[ro]mised them to p[re]uent ye Citie [of Chester] from plunder. this w<sup>th</sup> standinge or engagem<sup>t</sup> to them, to make good at a monthes end, and their p[ro]mises to vs to be gone; yet ye Reformathoes§ and ye Lankeshire horse do still infest ye Countrey and wholly destroy it where they come & will not I feare be gotten out w<sup>th</sup>out they be enforced. Hawarden Castle hath articulated [*i.e.* agreed] to be deliue<sup>d</sup> w<sup>th</sup>in xxtie daies yf not releiued. in ye interim a cessacon. of armes. yf ye Hoult do so and both adioyned to Chester it would be a great strengtheninge to these pts. [parts]. I wish Chester may be p<sup>r</sup>serued both in its im<sup>u</sup>nities and priuileges, though it hath hitherto bin ye ruine of vs all. yo<sup>w</sup> hear or two great lords Chom<sup>r</sup> [Cholmondeley] & Killm<sup>r</sup> [Kilmorey] w<sup>th</sup> many of their adherents now cominge vp to compound though they go a *strange way to it* (by Oxford) amongst these yo<sup>w</sup> will find *Honest H*, [ugh] wilbraham whose carriage [*i.e.* gentility], I hope (ye Jurie excepted) will pleade his innocense and render him in a better capacie [*i.e.* he will be better able to plead his innocence] then many of ye rest. sr Tho[mas] Wilb[raham] || is more indisposed in bodie then in mind to come up; his ladie *worse*, hauinge bin hardly able to sett her foote to ye ground this 3 weekes. this I hope by yo<sup>r</sup> good names, [?] my co[usin] J. B. . . . [?] & sr W. B[rereton's]

\* The *Crewe* family, and the Wilbrahams of Dorfold, favored the cause of the Parliament during the Civil War.

† *Lady Gamull*, the wife of Sir Francis Gamull, at whose house in Lower Bridge Street, at Chester, his majesty King Charles I lodged on Wednesday, Sep. 24th, 1645.

‡ *Colonel Marrow*, a distinguished Royalist, whom Burghall, in his *Providence Improved*, calls “a great plunderer.”

§ *Reformado*; *i.e.* an officer, who having lost his men, is continued on whole or half pay. (*Bailey's Dictionary*.)

|| Sir Thomas Wilbraham, of Woodhey, who died in 1660.

certIFICATE wilbe no priudice vnto them, they resoluinge to come so soon as they are able. I pray com'end me to *both yr sist'r*, yor selfe, ye rest of or frends as yo<sup>w</sup> se[e] them. excuse this hastie scrible, beinge more *afraid to loose ye* bearer, then eu' [ever] yo<sup>w</sup> shall haue cause [to lose] ye true affection of sr

yor most faithfull frend

and readie kinsman to serue yo<sup>w</sup>

Rog<sup>r</sup> wilbraham."

"Dat. Feb ye 17th 1645."



2. MATTHEW MAINWARING, brother to the above Thomas Mainwaring, married Margaret, daughter to Thomas Minshull of Nantwich, by whom he had issue fourteen children. (See Monument). His name has been handed down as the author of the now very scarce Romance of Vienna,\* (4to. 1621); a curious specimen of euphuistic writing, which is interspersed with much original poetry; and, what is still more remarkable, contains, in the pages prefacing the story, commendatory verses of considerable merit by his relatives, Thomas Mainwaring, John Mainwaring, Ralph Mainwaring, Richard Minshull, and Thomas Crockett.† The Romance is entitled:—

"The Honor of true love and Knighthood, wherein is storied ye valorous atchiuements, famous triumphs, constant love, & final happines, of the well-deseruing, truly noble and most valiant Kt. Sr. Paris of Vienna, and ye most admired amiable Princess, the faire Vienna." "London. Printed for Richard Hawkins, and are to be sould at his shop neere Serjeants Inne in Chancery lane."

Here follows the author's shield of Arms, alluded to in a couplet describing the title, thus:—

"If that the bars were red, and scutch'on white,  
The coate would shew who did this story write."

Another edition, which, like the earlier one, contains title-page, four preliminary leaves, and 180 pp., was printed at London for

"George Percivall and are to be sould at his shop at ye Signe of ye Bible in fleetstreete neere the Cunditt."

Matthew Mainwaring, like his brother Thomas, lived to see the outbreak and close of the great Civil War *temp.* Charles I, and, as may be inferred from the notice of him on page 175, was himself a Royalist in principle. He died in January, 1651-2, having nearly completed the ninetyeth year of his age. Another *Matthew Mainwaring*, but whether his son, or nephew, is doubtful, is mentioned as follows in the Burial Register:—

"1647. April 12. Matthew Mainwaring gent., & Constable of Dublin Castle."

There are many entries in the Registers in the latter half of the seventeenth century of the Mainwarings of this town; but further information is required before they can be connected with those in the accompanying pedigree. The last male descendant of the family appears to have been "*John Mainwaring Esq. of Nantwich*," who was buried at Acton on 20th April, 1766. (*Acton Par. Reg.*)

\* Two copies of this work are preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and another copy was in the library of the late James Crossley, Esq., F.S.A., of Manchester; which was purchased many years ago for £8 10s. Besides these, no other copies are known to exist. It has been proposed to re-print the work for the Chetham Society.

† The verses by these local rhymers have recently appeared in an interesting article on Mainwaring's "*Vienna*," in the *Palatine Note Book*, vol. iii, pp. 156—159.



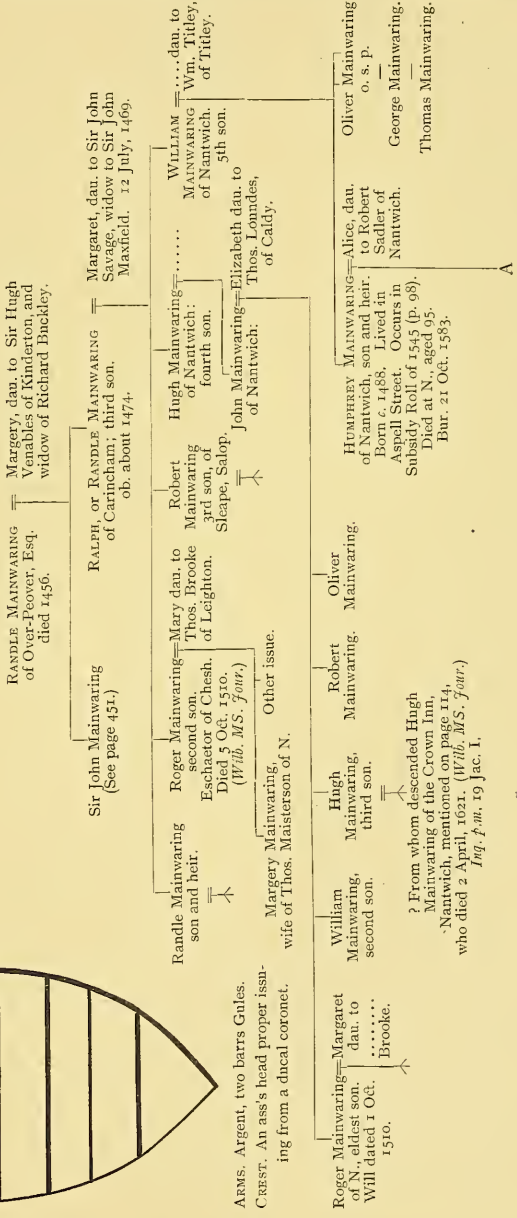
# Mainwaring Pedigree.

(YOUNGER LINE.)

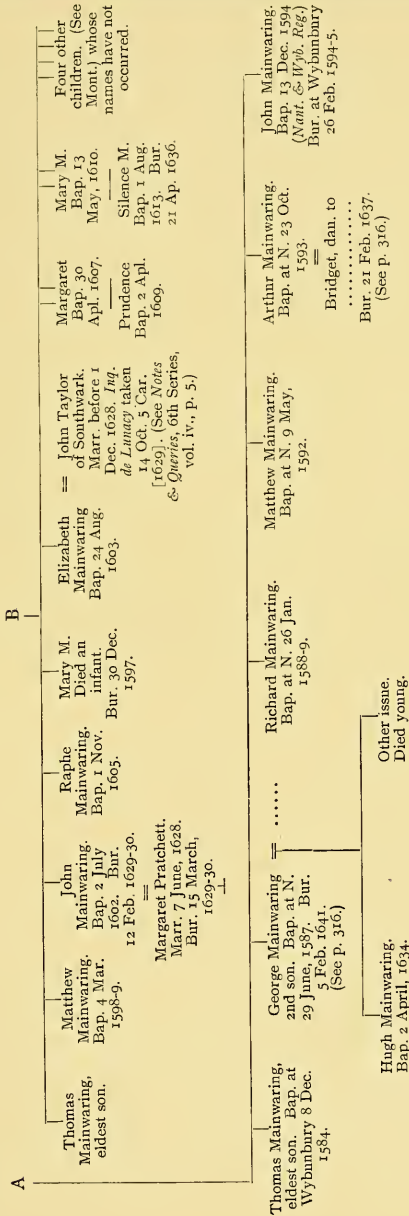


ARMS. Argent, two bars Gules.  
CREST. An ass's head proper issuing from a ducal coronet.

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 1535, f. 347-8; Visitation of Cheshire 1580; Wilbraham MS. Journal; Wills; Parish Registers, &c.*







## WETTENHALL AND TOMKINSON FAMILIES.

Like the Maistersons, the WETTENHALLS of Nantwich and its neighbourhood, were a very ancient family. The earliest Wettenhall resident in the town occurs as far back as the fourteenth century, and doubtless the family descended from ancestors that settled in the township of *Wettenhall*, in this county, from which they took their name. In the new edition of Dr. Ormerod's "*Cheshire*," (vol. iii. p. 479—480) will be found a revised pedigree of the ancient line, which the editor acknowledges to have been difficult satisfactorily to trace out, owing to the absence of Inquisitions *post mortem*,\* deeds, &c., and the mention of so many bearing the same name, *John*. On the second line of descent, (*ibid*, p. 480-1) the accompanying pedigree, containing additional information from local registers, and the will of Gabriel Wettenhall, &c., is based; but it is remarkable that few memorials of this once important family have been handed down to these times.

In *Harl. MSS.* 1991, p. 152, is preserved a copy of the will of Gabriel Wettenhall, of which the following is an abstract.

*Will of Gabriell Wettenhall.*

"In the name of God Amen. The 11th Sept. 1601 I, Gabriell Wettenhall of the towne of Namptwich, gent., being sick in bodie [&c.] doe make my last will and testament in manner and forme following:—

*ffirst* I give and bequeath my soule to Almighty god [&c.] and my body to the earth there to be buried att the discrecion of my exors. *Item.* I give [&c.] unto *William W.* my son and heire apparent all and singular my Messuage, wiche-houses, lands, tenements [&c.] situate in Wichmalbank, Hurdleston, Henhull, Yardley in p'ish of Torpley [Tarpорley] and Coole; the joynture of *Anne* my wife made unto her before our intermarriage for term of her natural life always excepted and foreprised, to have and to hold [&c.] to the heires males of the bodie of the s<sup>d</sup> William W. lawfully begotten [&c.] And for default of such Issue male to my dearly beloved *uncle John Wettenhall* and his heires; and for default of such heires to my dearly beloved *uncle William Wettenhall* and his heires; and for default [&c.] to the right heires of the said William Wettenhall my son, according to the last will and test. of *Thomas Wettenhall* father to mee the s<sup>d</sup> Gabriell.

*Item.* I give &c. unto *William* my son.....[the leases of several lands, *Thackers Croft* in Nantwich, lands in Alvaston ]..... "the moytie of one salt-house .....

\* The only Inquisitions now extant relating to this family are those of: I.—JOHN WETTENHALL [? of Nantwich] who "died on Sunday next after the feast of St. James the Apostle [25 July] last past [1498] leaving *Roger Wettenhall* his son and heir aged one year on Sunday next after the feast of St. Michael the Archangel last past [29 Sept. 1498]. He died seized of a messuage in Nantwich lately held by Edward Mynshull; 12 messuages there; a salt-house of 6 leads there in the holding of John Broke. The said John W. by a writing dated 20 Jan. 6 Hen. VII. [1490-1] granted an annuity of 20s. issuing out of all his lands and tenements in N. to *Robert Sadler* for term of his life. By another writing dated 26 Nov. 9 Hen. VII. [1493] he granted another annuity of 8s. issuing thereout to *John Broke* and *Jane* his wife and their assigns for 41 years. By another writing dated 2 June 5 Hen. VII. [1490] *Adam Wettenhall*, the father of the said John, and the said John, demised to *Robert Sadler* of N. and his assigns two pastures there called *Tynkers Crofts* for the term of his life at the yearly rent of 18s."—[*Inq. p. m.* 14 Hen VII. Pub. Record Office.]

II.—ROGER WETTENHALL gent., [? of Nantwich] who died 1 April 1622, leaving *John W.* his grandson his heir, aged 15 years 3 weeks. He died seized of 11 messuages, 17 gardens, 12 acres of land, a salt-house, and 40s. rent in Nantwich.—[*Inq. p. m.* 19 Jac. I.]

"the waynscott, joyned worke paynted or stayned, clothes and glasse, all cupboardes, desks, tables, formes, bedstidde, stooles, [&c.] w<sup>th</sup> in my Mansion house in N. wherein I now dwell," [&c.] "my Signet of gold & certain rings of gold, one silver salt w<sup>th</sup> a couer, and a picture of a man broken of[f] engraven w<sup>th</sup> goldsmiths worke all gilt;\* one silver Bowle w<sup>th</sup> a couer thereunto p<sup>c</sup>ell gilt; one silver Cupp p<sup>c</sup>ell gilt w<sup>th</sup> T.W. graven in the midst of the same; eight silver Spooones, sixe whereof have three lres. [letters] punched upon the end of euery Spooone, the other two haue R.D. upon the end of either of them; together with the keyes of my cupboard, deske & presse [chest] in the chamber where I lye; and the keyes and chest where my evidence lye."..... "my best pott, best pan, best payre of candlesticks, best posseten, best saddle of Mastyne [?], alsoe my Armour and furniture for war"..... "my booke, evidence, writings, muniments; my malte kilne, stable, and furniture, &c."..... *Item.* I give [&c.] to *Anne Wettenhall*, my wife, one little drinking cupp wyne of silver all gilt; with three Apostle spoones, &c. [other articles of furniture]..... "and the rest of my goods and chattels,"..... "two parts to my sd. son *William*, & the third parte to my sd. wife *Anne*....."

*Item.* I give [&c.] to be distributed among the poore w<sup>th</sup> in the Towne of Namptwiche the summe of fyve pounds.

*Item.* I give to the overseers [Richard Maisteron, Richard Walthall, and my loving brother-in-law Thos. Mynshull of Erdeswick, Esq., Randle Stanley of Adderley, Esq., and John Griffyn of Barderton, Esq.] of this my last will, xx<sup>s</sup>. each, &c.....

*Item.* I give &c.....[legacies of 10s. each to] *Richard Whicksteed* th<sup>e</sup> edler, cozen *Lawrence Maisteron*, *Margery Wettenhall*, my uncle *William Wettenhalls* daughter;..... [also legacies of 5s. each to] *William Whicksteed*, *Alexander Whicksteed*, and *Mr. Randle Kent*, Schoolem<sup>r</sup>." &c., &c.

GABRIEL WETTENHALL."

THOMAS WETTENHALL, of Nantwich, who resided at White Hall in Welsh Row, and was the sixth in descent from the above-named Gabriel Wettenhall, succeeded in the year 1797 to the estates, and took the name and arms of the MAINWARINGS of Peover, in this county; and thus became the ancestor of the present line of Baronets of Peover.

By the marriage of *Katherine Wettenhall*, in 1738, this family became allied with that of the TOMKINSONS, who came originally from Staffordshire.

JAMES TOMKINSON, ESQ., the first of the family to settle in Nantwich, was an eminent attorney and solicitor. By his extensive practice, and parsimonious habits, he amassed a large fortune; and in 1754 purchased the Dorfold estate, and went to reside at the Hall. At his office in the Welsh Row, Lloyd Kenyon,† (afterwards first Lord Kenyon, Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench), was articulated in 1746, completing his term of clerkship there in the year 1753. "While Mr. Kenyon was a clerk," says a well known

\* The silver salt-cellar was usually placed in the middle of the table on great occasions, and divided persons of quality who sat at one end of the table from inferior persons who sat at the opposite end.

† Lloyd Kenyon, the second son of Lloyd Kenyon, Esq., of Gredington, co. Flint, by his wife Jane, the daughter of Robert Eddowes, Esq., of Eagle Hall, co. Cheshire, was born on 5th Oct. 1732. In 1780 he was appointed Chief Justice of Chester; in 1782 Attorney-General; in 1784 Master of the Rolls; and in 1788 Chief Justice of the King's Bench, being raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Kenyon Gredington.

writer,\* "it was the custom for attorneys who had to attend the Assizes to ride to the assize town on horseback. The city of Chester, where the courts always sat, was twenty or more miles from Nantwich; and once, as Mr. Tomkinson and his clerk were riding side by side, Mr. Kenyon asked his master to tell him what was the most important thing in law." "Oh, yes," replied his master, "I will tell you what of all things in law is the most important to be attended to; but it must be on the condition that you pay for the dinner we are to have on our way at Bar Hill to-day." Supposing that this mean condition would be acceded to, Mr. Tomkinson told his clerk, that of all things in law to be most attended to, evidence was the chief. They arrived at Bar Hill, and after dinner, when the landlord's bill came in, Mr. Tomkinson tossed it over to Mr. Kenyon, saying that it was his concern; but he affected surprise, and handed it back again; upon which Mr. Tomkinson reminded him of the condition he had made on the way. The clerk said that if there was any such condition his master must give evidence, which, as the party in a cause could not give evidence, was a complete *estoppel*; and thus the master was caught by his own device." The same writer says, "Kenyon who had been an invaluable servant, remained with his master seven years; at the end of which time he expected to be taken into partnership, but happily for Kenyon's future, no partnership was offered; the reason being that of Mr. Tomkinson, though he was very rich, it might be said that *crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.*"†

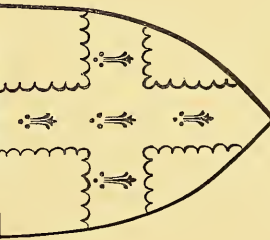
Of the descendants of James Tomkinson, Esq., particulars are given in the subjoined pedigree.

\* "Notes on some English Judges and other men of Law," by W. Beamont, Esq.

† Other stories illustrative of the hoarding propensities of this grasping lawyer, are still told by old inhabitants of the town.

# Wettenhall and Tomkinson Pedigree.

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 1424, f. 149; 2119, f. 65 and 109; Wills; Parish Registers; College of Arms; Ommerod's Clathire; &c.*



ARMS. Ermine.  
Vert, a cross engrailed  
CREST. An antelope's head Argent, attired Gules, issuing from a ducal coronet of the second.

THOMAS WETENHALE,  
descended of the youngest line  
of Wettenhall of Wettenhall.

THOMAS WETENHALE of Nantwich

Elizabeth dau. of .....  
Palain of Woldeley.  
(N.B.—*Elizabeth* is here given  
as the Christian name, on the  
authority of Hunter's Pedigree  
Add. MSS. 24,444, p. 167,  
British Museum.)

Joanna dau. of Thos. Wettenhall=WILLIAM WETENHALL of Nantwich=Elizabeth dau. of John Leche of Nantwich.  
(*second wife.*)  
Occurs in an Inquisition of Right of Way dated 6 Sep. 2 Edw. VI. [1549]

THOS. WETENHALL=Margery dau. of Margaret Bur. at N.  
of Nantwich, 1566.  
Thos. Maister-son of N.  
1578-9.

1 Roger Wettenhall of Coppelhall, who married Isabella, dau. to Thos. Maister-son, & had issue, *Inq. p.m.* 13 May 1573.  
2 John Wettenhall.

3 William 5 Richard 7 Robert Elizabeth  
4 Hugh 6 Gabriel 8 Henry

(*First wife*)  
Catherine dau. of=GABRIEL WETENHALL=Anne, dau. of Thos. Wm. Bromley of Darford [Dorfold] Bur. 5 Sep. 1592.  
Will dated 11 Sep. 1601 (see *Harl. MSS.* 1991, f. 152.) Bur. at N. 22 Sep. 1601.

William Wettenhall=Isabella, legatee, together with his brothers Gabriel & John, under the will of Roger Manwaring of N., dated 18 April 1589.

John Wetten=Dorothy, dau. of Wm. Deyville, of Richmondsh. Chikewould.

Roger Wettenhall=..... dau. of Cheer Brook, Willaston. Damory.

Margaret Wettenhall.  
Bap. 13 April, 1589.

WILLIAM WETENHALL, of Nantwich.  
Bap. 4 May, 1584.  
Bur. 14 Feb. 1670-1.

Jane dau. of Richard Clutton, of Nantwich.  
Married 20 Sep. 1601. Bur. 9 Nov. 1623.  
Arms formerly in South Transept of N. Church.

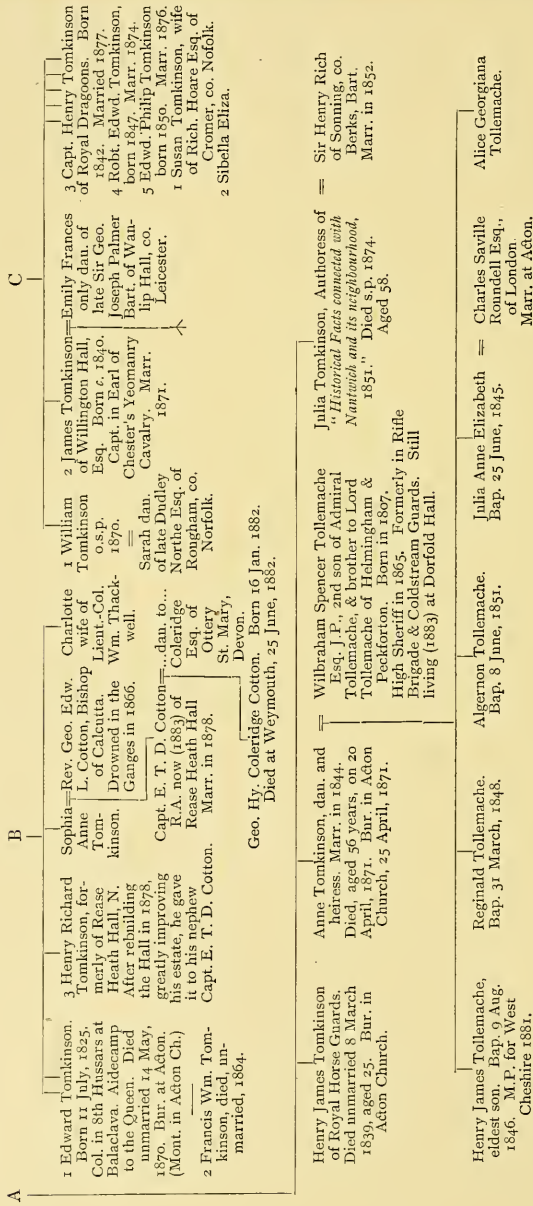
A

Margaret W. Bur. 18 Nov. 1623 at N.	GABRIEL WETTENHALL of Nantwich. Died 8 March, buried 10 March, 1658-9.	Anne, dau. of Thomas Boroughes of N. Died Oct. 1686. Bur. at Nantwich.	Thomas Wettenhall Gent. Bur. 11 Dec. 1672 March, 1678-9.	= Amy (or Anne) dau. of Thos. Scot, of Check- ley. Bur. 11 March, 1678-9.	Richard=Rebecca, dau. of Wetten- Midley.	Elizabeth W. Bap. 5 Nov. 1615. (Reg.) Wife of Thos. Wood of Dorrtington.	Jane W. wife of.... Madocks of N.
THOMAS WETTENHALL=Catherine dau. of N. Esq. of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at- Law. Bap. 9 Dec. 1638. (Visit 1663.) Bur. at N. 23 Oct. 1677. His Mon- ument still in N. Church	1 Hannah W. Bap. 4 Aug. 1650. Wife of John Ely, of Staunton, Chesb.	Sarah W. bap. 13 Mar. 1641-2; wife of Owen Weld, of Wolds Bap. 15 Dec. 1643. Died young.	Richard Wetten- hall. Bap. 15 Dec. 1643. Died young.	Rev. John Wetten= hall. Bap. 27 Feb. 1647-8. Rector of Wistaston 1674-1704 Bur. at Wistaston, 16 May, 1704.	Ann Jackson. Marr. at N. 27 Sep. 1674. (which estate was the gift of his kinsman Nathaniel Wettenhall, son of John Wettenhall, of Hankelow) Bap. 12 May, 1653. Died Aug. 1735. Bur. at Aundlem.	Gabriel Wetttenhall=Katherine, fifth Esq. Barrister-at- Law, of Hankelow, Cope of Ronton Abbey, co. Staff Died Aug. 1722 Bur. at Aundlem	Katherine, fifth dau. of Jonathan Cope of Ronton Abbey, co. Staff Died Aug. 1722 Bur. at Aundlem
THOMAS WETTENHALL=Mary, dau. & heiress of Rev. R. W. Wright, Prebend of Chester, Read St. Mar. 7 8 at N. 19 May, 1709.	Amy W. Bap. 14 Nov. 1666. Catharine W. Bap. 31 Mar. 1672.	Margaret W. Bap. 6 Oct. 1669 Mar. Bur. 19 Mar. 1673-4.	Ann W. Bap. 17 Mar. 1673-4.	John W. Bap. 5. July 1085.	Ann W. Bap. 23 April 1691.	Gabriel Wetttenhall, fifth young; Bur. at Aundlem 11 March, 1703-4.	Gabriel Wetttenhall, died young; Bur. at Aundlem 11 March, 1703-4.
THOS. TOMKINSON of Knightley, co. Staff. born c. 1620= Wm. Tomkinson of Bostock, Esq., 2nd son. Died 1718. Bur. at Davenham.	Mary dau. of.... Bayley of Drayton, co. Salop (2nd wife.)	Mary Wetttenhall Bap. 10 Sep. 1796. Marr. 30 Nov. 1738. Died aged 81 years. Bur. at Acton nr. N. 17 March, 1794.	Edward Wetttenhall of N. Esq. bap. 5 Aug. 1707. Marr. 26 June 1749. Died s.p.; bur. at N. 11 Jan. 1761.	Rev. T. Wetttenhall=Diana dau. of Will Blackett Esq. & wid. of Hy. Mainwaring of Peover, Esq., and mother of Sir H. Mainwaring of Over Peover, who died 1759. Bap. 20 Sep. 1708. Bur. 20 Oct. 1776.	Ann Maria Nathaniel Lancaster DD. Rector of Stan- ford Rivers, Essex. Died 11 Ap. 1794. Bur. at N. (2nd wife.) Aged 34. } B	Elizabeth, a posthumous dau. bap. 18 Sep. Bur. 29 Sep. 1709.	Elizabeth, a posthumous dau. bap. 18 Sep. Bur. 29 Sep. 1709.
JAMES TOMKINSON, born at= Bostock 1711. Attorney; settled at N. & afterwards at Dorfold Hall. Died at Dunstable, 7 March, 1794. aged 83. Bur. at Acton nr. N. 17 March, 1794.	Mary Wetttenhall eldest dau. bap. 10 Sep. 1795. Died un- married 10 Ap. 1798 and left her estate in Rushton, co. Cest. to her nephew, Peter Wettenhall. Comberbach of N. bap. 2 Oct. 1706. Bur. 22 July 1786.	Diana, dau. of John Comberbach of N. bap. 2 Oct. 1706. Bur. 22 July 1786.	Edward Wetttenhall of N. Esq. bap. 5 Aug. 1707. Marr. 26 June 1749. Died s.p.; bur. at N. 11 Jan. 1761.	Rev. T. Wetttenhall=Diana dau. of Will Blackett Esq. & wid. of Hy. Mainwaring of Peover, Esq., and mother of Sir H. Mainwaring of Over Peover, who died 1759. Bap. 20 Sep. 1708. Bur. 20 Oct. 1776.	Ann Maria Nathaniel Lancaster DD. Rector of Stan- ford Rivers, Essex. Died 11 Ap. 1794. Bur. at N. (2nd wife.) Aged 34. } B	Elizabeth, a posthumous dau. bap. 18 Sep. Bur. 29 Sep. 1709.	Elizabeth, a posthumous dau. bap. 18 Sep. Bur. 29 Sep. 1709.

A







## THE MINSHULL FAMILY.

Various branches of this Cheshire family have lived at Erdswick, Hampton, Chester, Nantwich, Stoke, and Wistaston, all claiming descent from the parent stock that settled at Minshull in Norman times. Although the race is not yet extinct, they no longer possess lands in this county. Two lines of descent come within the scope of this history, namely, the *Minshulls* of Nantwich and afterwards of Stoke Hall; and the *Minshulls* of Wistaston and Nantwich, one of whom, ELIZABETH MINSHULL became the third wife of the poet MILTON.

An abstract of the Inquisition *post mortem* of GEFREY MINSHULL, gent., of Nantwich, who died on 26th Dec. 1603, has already been given on page 6. In the same year had died his brother THOMAS MINSHULL, whose Inquisition *post mortem*, dated 4th Dec. Jac. I. [1605], finds that

"THOMAS MINSHULL gent. died on the 13th Jan. 45 Eliz. [1602-3] leaving *Richard Minshull* his son and heir aged 21 on the 26th Dec. last past. He died seized of a messuage and shop in Nantwich in a street called the *Hightown*; three other messuages and three gardens in *Pepper Street*; an annual rent of 4s. out of the lands of Arthur Minshull deceased in *Pepper Street*; and lands in *Burland* and *Faddiley*, late the inheritance of Edward Ithell" &c.

JOHN MINSHULL, ESQ., second son of Geoffrey Minshull, resided on the Heath-side, Nantwich, and died there as recorded in the Parish Register. In his Inquisition *post mortem*, dated 11th Sep. 14 Car. I. [1638], it is stated that

"he died seized of a messuage in Nantwich, and two pastures thereto belonging called *Beame-Bridge Field*, and *Duneley Hill*,\* also of cottages, a salt-pit of 12 leads, and lands in *Alvaston*, *Willaston*, and *Wareton alias Wavreton* near *Bostocke*; and enfeoffed Philip Mainwaring Esq., Thomas Wilbraham Esq., and Hugh Allen, merchant, thereof in trust for the settlor for life, with remainder as to part, to *Thomas Minshull* his second son for life.

He died on 27 Feb. 10 Car. I. [1634-5] leaving *Geffrey Minshull* his son and heir, aged 30 years and more."†

EDWARD MINSHULL, the purchaser of Stoke Manor, married Margaret, daughter to Thomas Mainwaring of Nantwich, and sister to Matthew Mainwaring, author of the romance of "*Vienna*." His son and heir, GEFREY MINSHULL, of Gray's Inn, Gent., in the year 1617, brought himself into debt and to the *King's Bench Prison*; where he solaced his days of captivity by writing a series of Essays, which he sent to his uncle Matthew Mainwaring, who generously assisted him in his misfortunes. In the following year these experiences of prison life were printed under the title of—

"*Essayes and Characters of a Prison and Prisoners.* Written by G.M. of Grays-Inne, Gent.

Printed at London for Mathew Walbancke, and are to be solde at his Shops at the New and Old Gate of Grays-Inne. 1618."

The title-page has a wood-cut representing a ferocious-looking gaoler standing beside a prison door, with staff in hand, and keys chained to his waist; and this rhyme:—

\* *Duneley Hill*, or *Dunnillow-field* (cf. page 7) and *Beame-Bridge field* are adjoining fields at the northern extremity of the township.

† The son and heir of John Minshull was baptized in 1588 (*Par. Reg.*) and consequently at the time of his father's death must have been considerably more than 30 years of age.

“Those that keepe mee, I keepe; if can, will still;  
Hee’s a true Jaylor strips the Diuell in ill.”

It is dedicated to “*his most loving and ever respectiue kind uncle Mr. Matthew Mainwaring, of Namptwich, in Cheshire;*” concerning whom the author says “Why should I feare, since you have alwayes been my anchor, when I have been ship-wrackt, and many times saued my poore barque when it was ready to split?” There have been three editions of this book; the first in 1618; another in 1638; and the third, of which only one hundred and fifty copies were printed in 1821; and all are now extremely scarce. A few extraets, illustratiue of Geffrey Minshull’s punning style of writing, will not be uninteresting.

The following lines appear on the fly-leaf:—

“A Prison is a House of Care,  
A Place where none can thrive;  
A Touchstone true to try a Friend,  
A Grave for one alive,  
Sometimes a place of Right,  
Sometimes a place of Wrong,  
Sometimes a place of Rogues and Thieves  
And Honest men among.”\*

*The Character of a Prison.*

“A prison is a graue to bury men aliuē, and a place wherein a man for halfe a yeares experience may learne more law, than hee can at Westminster for an hundred pound.” \* \* \* “It is a little common-wealth although little wealth be common there; it is a desert, where desert lyes hoodwinckt; it is a famous citie wherein are all trades, for here lies the Alchymist that can rather make *ex auro non aurum*, than *ex non auro aurum*.”† \* \* \* \* \*

*The Character of a Prisoner.*

“A prisoner is an impatient patient; lingering vnder the rough hands of a cruell phisitian, his creditor hauing cast his water knowes his disease, and hath power to cure him, but takes more pleasure to kill him.”

*Of Creditors.*

“A Creditor hath two paire of hands, one of flesh and blood, and that nature gave him; another of iron, and that the law gave him; but the one is more predominant then [than] the other, for mercy guides the one, and mammon the other.” \* \* \* \* \*

*The Character of Companions in Prison.*

“Three kinds of persons thou shalt be sure to find in prison; a *Parasite*, who will no longer faune than thou wilt feed him; a *John Indifferent*, when present, will be with thee, when absent, against thee; hee is *hic et ubique*. A *True-hearted Titus*; come stormes, come calmes, come tempests, come sunshine, come what can come, hee will be thine and stick to thee.” \* \* \* \* \*

*The Character of Visitants.*

“Visitants are men, for the most part, composed all of protesting promises, and little or no performance: they are like your almanacks, which, when they prognosticate faire weather, it is a million to a mite if it proue not contrary: they are like the German clocks, which seldome goe right; their tongues run faster then

\* These lines were copied and printed on a board which hung at the west end of the Hall in the Old Tolbooth, Edinburgh. (*Vide* R. Chambers’s Traditions of Edinboro’, p. 79.)

† It is very remarkable that Hogarth, in 1735, in his “*Rake’s Progress*” (Plate vii. *In the Fleet*) represents an Alchemist in the Debtor’s Prison “placidly pursuing the quest which has beggared him.”

[than] the clocke on Shroue-Tuesday; &c. . . . They are like the ringes and chaines bought at St. Martines, that weare fair for a little time, but shortly after will proue alchimy, or rather pure copper. They are like the apples which grow on the bankes of Gomorrah, they have crimson and beautiful rindes, but when they come to gather them, they crumble all to dust." \* \* \* \* \*

*Of Jaylors.*

"Cruelty becomes them worst of all men; a prisoner is a poore weather beaten bird, who hauing lost the shoare, is driven by tempest to hang upon the sailes and tacklings of a prison: the jaylor is the saylor, and if hee beate that bird off to sinke her in the seas, when by climbing vp to the maine top, or perhaps by lifting vp his hand, hee may take it and lend it heat from his warm bosome, it is an argument that his heart is made of the same rocks that lie in wait to destroy ships in the ocean." \* \* \* \* \*

*A Locker up at Night.*

"The belman of the city and he haue almost offices alike, yet herein they differ, that the belman hath his dog following him, but this night walker grows into the habit of a dog by his currishness." \* \* \*

"Some are of opinion that English prisons lock vp none but Englishmen, but I say they are all Hungarians."

Geffrey Minshull advises those who are compelled to borrow to pay as soon as they can; remembering the blood-thirsty creditor, the "Jew of Malta" (Shakespeare's *Shylock*). There are many classical allusions and quotations, proving the author to have been a scholar.

In *Harl. MSS.* 2119, f. 155, is preserved a copy of the grant of a Crest to SIR RICHARD MINSHULL, of Bourton, co. Bucks, Kt., (see accompanying pedigree) dated 4th July, 1642, which traces his descent for eighteen generations back to RICHARD DE MINSHULL *temp* William the Conqueror; and mentions the first grant of Arms and Crest to Michael Minshull *temp* Richard I, as follows:—

"And Whereas the said Michael did take the cross (*suscipere crucem*) and went with the Kinge of England Richard the first into the holy land and served him in that warres against the Sultan Saladin who was there vanquished and for the price [prowess] of the said Michael he had given him the Crescent and Starre for Armes they being the device of that Kinge he used for that voyage, and the sd family hath sithence born for their Crest two Lions Pawes holdinge a Crescent."

Whether the above account of the origin of the coat-armour of the Minshulls is mere tradition or not, I cannot pretend to say; but these Arms were allowed to Edward Minshull, of Nantwich, and to Geffrey Minshull, of Stoke, in the Visitations of Cheshire in 1613 and 1664 respectively, according to the records at the College of Arms, London



C

B

A

1 Geoffrey Minshull, . . . . .  
 Bap. 6 Sep. 1588.  
 dan. to  
 Rev. Rich.  
 Fowler,  
 Rector of  
 Barthomley  
 Aug. 1658.  
 2 Rev. Thos Min-  
 shall, . . . . .  
 aged 14 years in  
 1620 (*Visit.*  
 Devon.)  
 John Minshull,  
 Living at N. in  
 1795.  
 Sir Richard Minshull, of Bourton, co. Bucks,  
 Kt. Chamberlain to Chas. I., Created Baron  
 Minshull 1 Dec. 1631; and Viscount Minshull  
 of Leominster 4 Jan. 1642. His mansion, Bour-  
 ton Park, sacked by Lord Brooke 18 Aug. 1642,  
 and his patent of nobility burnt then. His loss  
 over £20,000. Compounded for his estate in  
 1637. Married three times; descendants still  
 living. He was bur. at Buckingham 27 Nov. 1667.  
 (See Lysons' *Gleanings*, pp. 352, 357, Manning and  
 Bray's *Hist. of Surrey*, vol. I. p. 353; II. p. 231; III. p. 639).

1 GEFREY MINSHULL, of Stoke Hall = Mary, dau. to Sir Edw.  
 of Gray's Inn. Uter Barrister  
 of Gray's Inn. Author, in 1658, of  
 "Essays and Characters of a Prison and  
 Prisoners." He placed the Monument  
 in N. Church (see p. 374). Bur. at  
 N. 1 Dec. 1668.  
 Sir Edw. Minshull = Marie, dau. to  
 of Stoke Hall, Kt. Wm. Vorrell,  
 Bap. at N. 4 Dec. 1627.  
 Knighted 14 Aug. 1666  
 Bur. at N. 18 Jan.  
 1671-2.  
 Richard  
 Minshull  
 Minshull  
 of Thos El-  
 cocke son of  
 Alexander  
 of Kowland  
 of Kowland,  
 Huntingdon.  
 Wm Min-  
 shall Bap.  
 at N. 9 June  
 1625. Wife  
 of Kowland.  
 Edward Minshull, gent.  
 Served as a Capt. in the  
 Civil War.  
 Bur. at N. 14 July, 1643.  
 Margaret M.  
 Died 22. Bur.  
 23 Aug. 1616.  
 Aged 40.  
 (See Mont.)  
 Mary M.  
 Bur. at Peover 24 Oct. 1656.  
 Ellen Minshull, Marr in = Philip, Mainwaring of Peover  
 1617. She built a Chapel  
 for the Church of Oyston  
 in the Church of Oyston.  
 Peover Church in 1618.  
 He was Capt. of Light Horse at  
 Chester. Sheriff in 1639.  
 Died 10 Dec. 1647.  
 Bur. at Peover.

Sir Thos Mainwaring = Mary dau. to Sir Hen Delves  
 3rd son & heir. Cre-  
 ated Bart. by Chas. II.  
 Sheriff 1657. M.P. co.  
 Cest. 1660.  
 Bur. at Peover, 6 March 1670.  
 Sir Thos Mainwaring = Mary dau. to Sir Hen Delves  
 3rd son & heir. Cre-  
 ated Bart. by Chas. II.  
 Sheriff 1657. M.P. co.  
 Cest. 1660.  
 Bur. at Peover, 6 March 1670.  
 From whom the line of Baronets of Peover.

EDWARD MINSHULL, aged 14 and more or = Anne, dau. to  
 26 July, 1664 (*Glean. Visit.*) Together with  
 his brother Wm. and sister Elizabeth, he  
 renounced all claim to his mother's estate  
 in favour of his two sisters Mary & Anne.  
 Bur. at N. 13 July, 1697. The Manor of  
 Stoke passed by purchase in or about 1719  
 (? date) to Thos. Williams of N., gent.  
 Ann Minshull. Died 11 March, 1752. Bur. at Wenlock  
 Magna, co. Salop, where a memorial slab exists to her memory.  
 She left the interest of £20 to teach poor children in Wenlock.  
 Wm Minshull, "Marr.  
 at Stoke Hall by Parson  
 Stringer [of N.] 22 Aug.  
 1671 by virtue of a licence  
 from the Bishops Court."  
 (*Acton Par. Reg.*) to  
 Richard Wright of N., gent.

Elizabeth Minshull, who was supposed  
 by Mr. Partridge and other writers to  
 have been married to the Post Milton;  
 but who was really married at N. to  
 Raphe Horton, of Coole, (Acton Par.)  
 Gent., on 11 Aug. 1677.  
 Anne Minshull,  
 Marr. at N. to  
 Wm. Jackson of  
 N. Doctor of  
 Physic 20 April  
 1693. He was  
 bur. at Wyth.  
 15 Jan. 1714.  
 Elizabeth Minshull, who was supposed  
 by Mr. Partridge and other writers to  
 have been married to the Post Milton;  
 but who was really married at N. to  
 Raphe Horton, of Coole, (Acton Par.)  
 Gent., on 11 Aug. 1677.

Another branch of the Minshull family, which is traced in the subjoined pedigree through several generations down to the present time, is introduced mainly to show the descent of *Elizabeth Minshull*, the third wife of the great poet Milton.

MRS. ELIZABETH MILTON.

During the last thirty years much has been written concerning this lady, who, at the age of thirty-six, was left a widow, and afterwards resided at Nantwich for nearly half a century.

Toland (*Life of Milton*, 1698, p. 39,) spoke of her as "Elizabeth, the daughter of Mr. Minshall, of Cheshire, recommended to him [Milton] by his friend Dr. Paget." Later biographers and historians, by mistake, (as modern discovery has satisfactorily shown) have claimed for her the honor of high birth, and cast dishonour on her character. Thus, Partridge, in 1774, stated that she "was a daughter of ..... Minshull Esq. of Stoke, three miles from Nantwich."\* Pennant, in 1782,† and Dr. Ormerod, in 1819,‡ relying upon the supposed accuracy of Partridge, connected her with the same family; the Cheshire historian giving her father's name as Sir Edward Minshull, Kt., of Stoke Hall; and, as recently as 1851, an authoress§ states that "Milton was received at Stoke Hall as the husband of Elizabeth Minshull."

On referring to the previous pedigree it will be seen that Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Edward Minshull, was a single lady until nearly three years after the death of John Milton; and that on the 11th Aug. 1677 she became the wife Raphe Horton, Gent., of Coole Pilate, near Nantwich. (*Par. Reg.*) The same lady is mentioned by name as "*Mrs. Elizabeth Horton*" in her mother's, the Dowager Lady Mary Minshull's, Will in 1693. When it is remembered that the great poet was married to Elizabeth Minshull at Aldermany Church, London, on the 24th Feb. 1662, he being at that time totally blind, it is most likely that Milton did not travel far from the metropolis after that event; and absolutely certain that he never visited either Stoke Hall or Nantwich.

The true parentage of the poet's third wife was first pointed out by the late John Fitchett Marsh, Esq., of Warrington, in a volume of "*Milton Papers*," printed for the Chetham Society in 1851; who showed by legal documents in his possession that her father was Randle Minshull, a yeoman farmer of Wistaston, near Nantwich. This discovery led to a diligent search in the local Registers, and amongst the Wills at Chester; and after a long discussion in the "*Athenæum*," and in "*Notes and Queries*," during the years 1853—5, it became an established fact that Mrs. Elizabeth Milton was born in Wistaston parish, and not at Stoke Hall, in Acton parish.||

Probably she was born at Weld's Green, where for four generations her forefathers had resided. She was baptized at Wistaston Church on 30th Dec. 1638; and at the age of about twenty-four years was married to John Milton, having been introduced to him

\* Partridge's *History of Nantwich*, p. 87. So also Platt in his *History of Nantwich*, 1818, p. 87, who gives the father's name as "T. Minshall Esq. of Stoke."

† Pennant's "*Tour from Chester to London*," 1st Edit. p. 35.

‡ Dr. Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, Vol. III. Old Edit. p. 191; New Edit. p. 361.

§ Miss Julia Tomkinson's "*Historical Facts connected with Nantwich*," p. 50.

|| The late Messrs. T. W. Jones and Thomas Turner, Solicitors, of Nantwich, Thomas Hughes, F.S.A., of Chester, and the late Rev. Joseph Hunter (see his "*Sheaf of Gleanings*,") were all deeply interested in the subject and took part in the discussion.



by his intimate friend, and her relative, Dr. Nathan Paget.\* After the death of the poet on the 8th Nov. 1674, she remained for a few years in London, apparently living in the house of her deceased husband in Artillery Walk, Bunhill; where she was frequently visited by Dr. Paget, who, dying in Jan. 1678-9, left her, by Will dated 7th Jan. and proved the 15th Jan. in the same year, a legacy of £20. On the 4th June, 1680, her brother, *Richard Minshull*, of Wistaston, frame-work knitter, invested a part of the sum of £600, (the two-thirds of her husband's effects to which she was entitled as widow and administratrix, the poet having only made a nuncupative will) in purchasing the lease of a farm at Brindley,† in Acton parish, from Sir Thomas Wilbraham, Bart., for three lives, viz.:—Mrs. Milton, Mary Minshull the wife of the said Richard Minshull, and that of his son Richard Minshull, and for the benefit of whichever of the three should live longest. Two months after this investment had been secured, her brother Richard died, and was buried at Wistaston on 6th July, 1680. These bereavements following one another in so short a time, most likely led Mrs. Milton to leave London about the year 1681; and in 1688 she is found living in Hospital Street, Nantwich, with Mrs. Mary Noden,‡ widow of Ralph Noden, and formerly widow of Richard Minshull, the brother of Mrs. Milton. She then appears to have occupied a small house in Pillory Street, near (? whether the old "black-and-white" cottage *adjoining*) the one in which Mrs. Lea, saddler, now resides, for the remaining years of her life.§ Though the exact date of her death is not known, it must have taken place on, or within a day or two after, the 22nd Aug. 1727. Her Will,|| dated on that day, and still preserved at Chester, was a very simple one, for the aged widow had only her household goods to leave, and these were to be equally divided amongst her "nephews and nieces [not mentioned by name] in Namptwich," her executors being her "loving friends *Samuel Acton* and *John Alcock*¶ [or *Alcock*] both of Namptwich." Accompanying the Will is a "A True and perfect Inventory of the Goods & Chattels of late Mrs. Elizabeth Milton, appraised by us whose names are undernam'd [*John Wright* and *John Alcock*] this twenty sixth of August 1727," comprising, in seven common law folios, one hundred and eight different items, and amounting in the aggregate to £38 8s. 4d. This Inventory\* was exhibited by the only acting executor, *John Alcock*, at Chester on the 10th Oct. 1727, when Mrs. Milton's Will was proved.

Amongst the "items" may be mentioned—

\* Dr. Nathan Paget was cousin to Randle Minshull, the father of Elizabeth Minshull. (See Goldsmith Pedigree.)

† On the 22nd Oct. 1720 Mrs. Elizabeth Milton signed an agreement with *John Darlington*, yeoman, letting to him her farm and premises at Brindley, at a rent of £30 per annum; and on the 16th June, 1725, there is a further transaction between her and the same tenant.

‡ Mary Noden, widow, was buried at Wistaston on 18th Jan. 1712-3.—(*Nant. Par. Reg.*)

§ The late T. W. Jones Esq. traced out Mrs. Milton's abode in Nantwich from old Rate Books; and he makes this statement in a letter *penes me*.

|| Mrs. Milton's Will will be found printed in "*Milton Papers*," p. 33-4.—(Cheth. Soc. Pub. 1851.)

¶ This *John Alcock*, of Nantwich, figures in the *Elcoche* pedigree (Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 353, New Edit.) as the son of *Francis Elcoche* of Whitepoole! With the editor of that work, however, must rest the *onus probandi* how the Alcock's, who scarce ranked amongst the tradesmen of Nantwich, belonged to a neighbouring family of landed gentry.

\* An exact copy of the Inventory of Mrs. Milton's goods was printed in full by T. W. Barlow in his "*Cheshire and Lancashire Historical Collector*," vol. ii. p. 98-100, on 1st Aug. 1854. It may also be found in the *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, for Feb. 1855.

	Valued at
"Mr. Milton's Pictures* & Coat of Arms ... ..	£ 10 10 0
2 Teaspoons and 1 silver spoon, with a seal and stopper, and bits of silver ...	£ 0 12 6
1 Pencil Case ... ..	£ 0 3 0
2 Cane Chairs & 2 velvet cushions ... ..	£ 0 17 0
A Large Bible ... ..	£ 0 8 0
2 Books of Paradise ... ..	£ 0 10 0
Some old Books & few old pictures ... ..	£ 0 12 0
A Totershell knife & fork,† with other odd ones ... ..	£ 0 1 0
Tobacco Box ... ..	£ 0 0 6
Blk. & White Gown & Pettycoat ... ..	£ 0 5 0
A Fine Cloak and Hood ... ..	£ 0 17 6
A Norwich Gown and Petticoat ... ..	£ 1 5 0
A Calimancoe Gown ... ..	£ 0 14 0
A Quilted Petticoat ... ..	£ 0 8 0
An old Norwich Gown & Coat ... ..	£ 0 10 0
2 Silk Handkerchiefs ... ..	£ 0 5 0
3 pr. of Old gloves ... ..	£ 0 1 0
The best suit of twad cloaths‡	£ 0 3 0
The Worser do.‡	£ 0 1 6
2 pair Ruffles‡ ... ..	£ 0 2 0
3 Old check aprons ... ..	£ 0 1 0
2 Silk Aprons ... ..	£ 0 2 0
A pair shoes & 2 pair Cloggs ... ..	£ 0 2 6
1 Mask and Fan ... ..	£ 0 2 0

\* These portraits are believed to have been, the one when he was a school-boy; and the other when about twenty. (See *Notes and Queries*, 2nd series, No. 116, 20 March, 1858.) Partridge (*History of Nantwich*, page 88) states that one of the pictures was purchased by one of the Wilbrahams of Nantwich, then a student of Brazenose College, Oxon., and by him was presented to the University. But it is a remarkable fact that neither of the picture galleries at Oxford has a portrait of Milton. See also Marsh's *Tracts on Portraits of Milton*, 1860; *Milton Ramblings*, 1861, by M. Leigh Sotheby; and "The Antiquarian Magazine and Bibliographer" for July, 1882, for information on this subject.

† The late T. W. Jones (*Notes and Queries*, 1st series, vol. xi., p. 109—110, dated 10 Feb. 1855) says, "After the most diligent enquiries in this town and neighbourhood I have not been successful in discovering any of the articles of the Inventory, except one of the knives and forks." This was given to him by one of the *Hassalls* of Nantwich in 1852. In 1857 it was exhibited before the Archæological Society by the late Joseph Hunter; Mr. Jones having sent an affidavit declared on oath before Thomas Brooke, Rector of Wistaston, and J.P., on 29th Sep. 1854, by *Thomas Hassall*, the elder, of Beam Street in Nantwich, joiner, aged 75 years, and *Thomas Hassall*, the younger, attorney's clerk, his son, aged 41 years, to the effect, that the knife and fork were the property of *Anne Hassall*, daughter of the elder Thomas, who died in 1832, aged thirty, and on her death came into the possession of her father. They further affirm that the said *Anne Hassall* lived many years in the service of *Miss Elizabeth Webb*, a wealthy maiden lady who resided in Castle Street in Nantwich, and as they believe, died there in the month of March, 1828, at the age of 83 years and upwards; and that the said *Elizabeth Webb*, some years before her death, gave to the said *Anne Hassall*, as she frequently told them, the said knife and fork, as great curiosities, and informed the said *Anne Hassall* that they had belonged to *Mrs. Elizabeth Milton*, who lived in the town of Nantwich, and was the widow of the Poet. And the said *Elizabeth Webb*, who told the said *Anne Hassall* (as she informed them) that her grandfather owned the said knife and fork, and was on very intimate terms with the said *Elizabeth Milton* and her family. The younger *Thomas* declares that when a boy he used to visit his sister at the house of *Mrs. Webb*, and often read to her; and had heard her say, that she had given the said knife and fork to his sister, as valuable relics. And he, the younger *Thomas Hassall*, further declares that the Rev. John Latham, late of Nantwich, clerk, deceased, was particularly intimate with the said *Elizabeth Webb*, and managed her affairs, and that he had often heard him speak of the said knife and fork having belonged to the said *Mrs. Milton*.

The above declaration is authenticated by the signatures of the two *Hassalls*. *Mrs. Elizabeth Webb* is distinctly remembered by many persons now living at Nantwich; and there is independent evidence of the residence with her of *Anne Hassall*, as her servant, and a person who was much esteemed by *Mrs. Webb*, and intended to have been benefited by a Will, which by some accident was never executed. (See *Archæological Journal*, 1857, vol. xiv., page 89—90.)

‡ These are believed by Dr. David Masson (*Life of Milton*, 1880, vol. vi., page 748) to have been "Milton's old snits of gray in Banhill fifty-three years before." The same writer, who submitted the Inventory to practised feminine judgment, expresses his opinion that *Mrs. Milton's* house at Nantwich consisted of "a single chamber, with a small attached scullery." The "black-and-white" house alluded to above as the probable residence of the widow, answers the description, only that it possesses, in addition, an upper chamber.

	Valued at
2 pr. of Spectacles ... ..	£0 1 6
Coles [coals] ... ..	£0 0 6
A pair Bedsteads and hangings ... ..	£0 18 0
A feather Bed and Bolster, weight 94lb. at 6d. ... ..	£2 7 0
2 Quilts and pair of Blankets, old patched ones ... ..	£0 10 0
1 Chest of Drawers and frame ... ..	£0 13 0
In Money ... ..	£0 17 0

[Pewter dishes, pails, brass fender, fire irons, old tin candlesticks, old looking glass, cooking utensils, &c.]

Though the burial of Mrs. Milton is not recorded in the Parish Registers, it is commonly believed that she was interred either in the old Baptist Chapel, or its graveyard, in Barker Street. Allusion has been made to a funeral sermon supposed to have been preached in that Chapel on the occasion of her death, see page 395. Respecting the imputations first cast upon her conduct by Richardson, who derived his information from one of Milton's unkind daughters,—imputations that have been repeated by Dr. Johnson, Pennant, and others,—sufficient evidence has been brought forward proving them to be entirely groundless. Between the years 1785 and 1791 Mr. Warton ascertained from depositions preserved in the Prerogative Office, that Milton's widow was neither the "termagant" nor "cheat" some biographers had made her; but, on the contrary, that she had kindly treated her blind husband, and acted honestly by his children, who had been very undutiful to their father. Aubrey, the contemporary of Milton, who occasionally visited Mrs. Milton, after the poet's death, speaks of her as having "a peacefull and agreeable humour;" and Christopher Milton, the poet's brother, declared upon oath, that Milton "complained but without passion, that his children had been unkind to him; but that his wife had been very kind and careful of him."\*

The late Thomas Turner, in a letter dated July, 1854,† addressed to J. F. Marsh, of Warrington, states on the authority of a highly respectable lady upwards of eighty-four years of age, then living in Nantwich, "that persons in Nantwich, known to possess but narrow incomes were said to have *Mrs. Milton's Feast, just enough and no more.*" This local proverb has been obsolete for many years.

It is very singular that another family named Milton, in no way connected with the Poet Milton, resided in Nantwich and at Stapeley; and still more remarkable that they should have been proprietors of a dwelling house abutting on the graveyard of the Baptist Chapel from 1650 to 1710. Soon after the latter year, it was transferred by sale, and in 1720 got into the possession of Mr. Samuel Acton.‡

These Miltons were as follows:—

I.—HUMPHREY MILTON, Gent., who, together with the Earl of Ardglass, in Ireland, and Richard Green, Esq., conjointly held part of the manor of Stapeley, near Nantwich, in 1662, was descended from a family in the vicinity of Middlewich. For many years he presided over the Manor Court of Betchton for Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Townsend, who makes an entry in one of his pocket books of the death of Mrs. Alice Milton and

\* See *Milton Papers*, Chetham Society Pub. page 10—13.

† I have a draft copy of the letter in Mr. Turner's handwriting.

‡ Turner correspondence with Mr. Mars's.

her daughter Matilda within a month of each other in 1695. His first wife, *Elizabeth*, was buried at Nantwich on 10th Nov. 1654; apparently without issue. On 22nd Feb. 1656, he married, secondly, Alice Palmer, of Nantwich, by whom he had two sons and three daughters, viz. :—

1. *Humphrey*; of whom more presently.

2. *Thomas Milton*; baptized 20th April, 1662; and buried at Nantwich 8th Dec. 1693. He was married, and had issue Ralph Milton, who was buried at Cheadle 6th Aug. 1692.

1. *Matilda Milton*; baptized 17th Feb. 1660; died a spinster in Welsh Row; buried 24th Dec. 1695.

2. *Alice Milton*; baptized 26th Dec. 1663; and married on 15th Aug. 1693, to Joseph Hodgson.

3. *Katherine Milton*; baptized 23rd Sep. 1666; buried at Nantwich 1st Feb. 1667.

Humphrey Milton was buried at Nantwich on 26th Oct. 1672; and his widow survived until the 20th Nov. 1695; being buried at Nantwich three days after. He was succeeded by his eldest son,—

II.—Humphrey Milton of Stapeley, Gent., who had been baptized at Nantwich on 1st Dec. 1659. He appears to have lived on his property at Stapeley, which his father had increased in 1670 by the purchase of Mr. Green's part of Stapeley manor. He fulfilled the office of churchwarden of Wybunbury in 1696-7; and was buried at Nantwich on 28th Sept. 1701; leaving a widow, *Ursula*, who was buried at Wistaston on 3rd Feb. 1708, and one son, *Humphrey*.

III.—*Humphrey Milton*, baptized 6th Nov. 1684, was the last of the family. He occurs as an attorney. By his wife *Ellen*, who was buried at Nantwich 26th Nov. 1736, he had two children, *Eleanor*, and *Humphrey*, both of whom died in childhood, and were buried at Nantwich; the father being buried there on 13th March, 1724-5.

From the above it will be seen that there were *three* Mrs. Miltons\* contemporary in Nantwich in the year 1695; namely, *Alice Milton*, *Ursula Milton*, and *Elizabeth Milton*, the Poet's widow.

#### THE GOLDSMITH FAMILY.

Closely allied to the Minshulls of Wistaston, were the *Goldsmiths* of Nantwich; a local family of note, concerning which many interesting particulars in the following pedigree are given.

\* Under date 8th Dec. 1768, is recorded the burial of another Mrs. Milton, whom I have not been able to identify.—  
(*Nantwich Parish Register.*)

# Minshull Pedigree.

(SECOND LINE.)

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 2039, f. 163; Visitation of Lancashire 1664; Privately printed pedigrees by John Bellamy Minshull, Esq., of London; "Milton Papers;" (Chetham Soc. Publ.); Wills at Chester; Parish Registers of Wistaston and Nantwich.*

JOHN MINSHULL; fourth and youngest son of John Minshull of Minshull. Built a residence upon a moiety of the estate (*Weld's Green Farm*) obtained *jure uxoris*.  
 ..... younger dau. and coheirress to Robert Conper, a freeholder in Wisterson [Wistaston] near Nantwich.

RONDULL MINSHULL, of Weld's Green. Bur. at Wistaston 21 Feb. 1594-5. Will dated 21 Dec. 1590; proved 23 May, 1595. Printed in *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 1102.

Margery, dau. of Roger Rawlinson of Crewe. Bur. at W. 11 Feb. 1591-2.

(*First wife*.)  
 Alice, dau. of .....  
 Bur. at W. 2 March, 1590-1

THOMAS MINSHULL, of Weld's Green. Bur. at .....  
 W. 23 Sep. 1606. Will dated 15 Sep. 1606; proved 23 Oct. 1606. Printed in *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 1117.

(*Second wife*.)  
 Dorothy, widow of Randle Goldsmith, marr. 17 July, 1592. (*Nantwich Reg.*)  
 She survived her second husband.

Joan Minshull, marr. ....  
 She living in 1606.

I RICHARD MINSHULL, of Weld's Green, eldest son of Ellen dau. to Nicolas Goldsmith of N. mercer. Bur. at N. 8 March 1582-3; marr. at W. 13 Aug. 1599. Bur. at W. 25 June, 1638, aged 86. *Papers*, p. 44-5. Bur. at W. 25 June, 1638, aged 86.

2 Rondull Minshull. Bur. 8 Feb. 1591-2.

3 Thomas Minshull. Bur. 7 May, 1585. Bur. 27 Jan. 1604-5.

5 Robert Minshull. Bur. 31 Aug. 1588. Bur. 15 Dec. 1589.

6 William Minshull. ? Bur. 1590. Living 1606.

A daughter who married Rondull Meakin.

Mabel Minshull. Bur. 13 Jan. 1601-2. Marr. by licence to John Boote; 1 Nov. 1625. Bur. as wid. at W. 26 Jan. 1668-9.

ANNE BOOTE, Marr. at Acton 8 Feb. 1633-4. Bur. at Wist. 10 Dec. 1675. recorded at N.

Richard Minshull, 2nd son. Bur. 18 May, 1613; settled in Manchester as an Apothecary. Aged 51 in 1604. (*Dugdale's 1784 of Lanc.*) He rebuilt Chorlton Hall, Manchester.

THOMAS MINSHULL, 2nd son. Bur. 18 May, 1613; settled in Manchester as an Apothecary. Aged 51 in 1604. (*Dugdale's 1784 of Lanc.*) He rebuilt Chorlton Hall, Manchester.

Ann, dau. of Jas. Lightbourne of Manchester

Ellen Minshull. Bur. 24 May, 1635.

ELIZABETH MINSHULL, Bur. at W. 30 Dec. 1638. 3rd wife of the Rev. Will. Died at N. Aug. 1627, in her 80th year. Will dated 62 Aug. 1727; proved 10 Oct. 1727, with Inventory. 1662-3. Died 8 Nov. 1674.

Richard Minshull, Bur. 7 April, 1641. France world-linnet. Witnessed a bond to his sister Eliz. Milton, 4 June, 1680. Bur. at W. 6 July, 1680.

Alme Minshull. Bur. May 1643. Noden, & survived him. She was bur. at W. 18 Jan. 1712-3.

Thomas Minshull. Bur. 12 June 1645. Bur. at N. John Minshull, 10 Feb. 1659. Bur. at W. 4 Aug. 1657. (*Milton Papers*.)

Peter Minshull. Bur. at N. 10 Feb. 1659. Bur. at W. 4 Aug. 1657. (*Milton Papers*.)

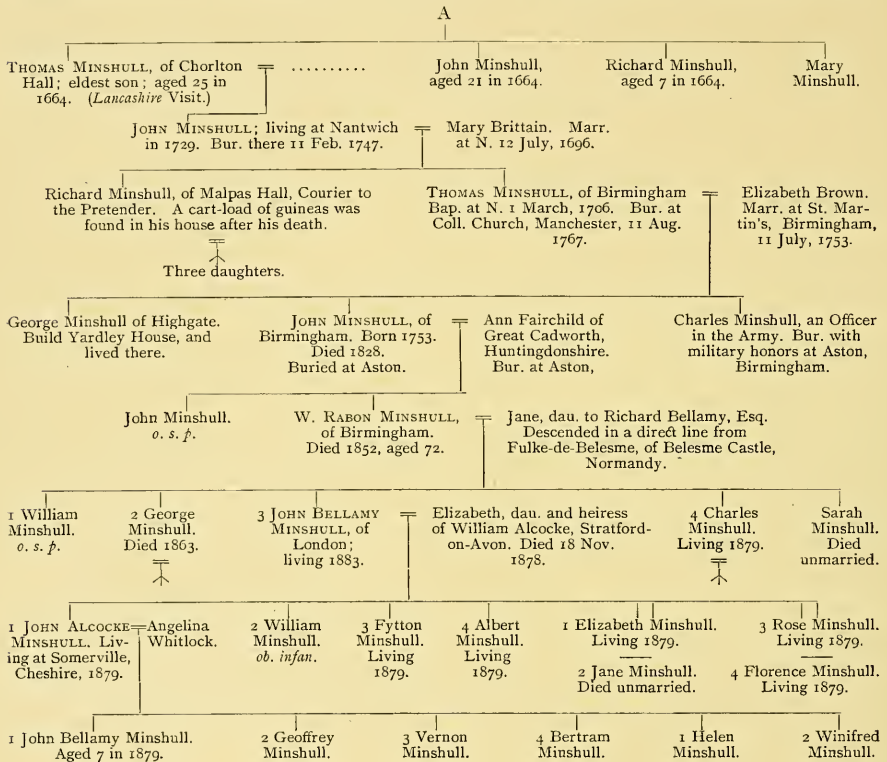
Randle Minshull. Bur. 5 March, 1671-2.

John Minshull. Bur. 23 Feb. 1674-5.

Richard Minshull. Bur. 10 Dec. 1676. Bur. 3 June, 1681.

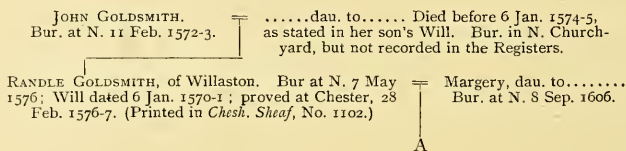
George Minshull. Bur. 7 May, 1680. Apothecary in N. Bur. at W. 11 Aug. 1728.

Daughters, nieces of Mrs. Milton, living 1727.



## Goldsmith Pedigree.

*Authorities:* Privately printed pedigrees by Miss T. E. Sharpe, of Kensington, in her "*Royal Descent*;" "*The Genealogist*," vol. ii, pp. 309-315; Parish Registers; The "*Cheshire Sheaf*;" &c.



A

RANDLE GOLDSMITH, = Dorothy Malbon, Alice Goldsmith, youngest son. Will dated 13 Jan. 1590-1. (Printed in *Chesh. Shuff.* No. 1117.) Wistaston. (See p. 477.)

Margaret Goldsmith, = Thomas Wicksted, 1578-9. Bur. at N. 26 Jan. 1608.

RICHARD GOLDSMITH, of N. mercer, = Margaret, dau. to Rich. Griffin of Bartherton, gent., Bur. at N. 20 Oct. 1582. Bur. [?] as "widow" at Wistaston 1 Feb. 1674-5.

2 Richard Goldsmith, = *(1st wife)* Judith dau. to Robt. Woodroffe of Poyle, Esq. co. Surrey. Bur. June, 1628. Marr. at Seale Surrey, 20 Ap. 1652. Died in London, 1658.

1 Nicholas Goldsmith, = *(1st wife)* Anne dau. to Sir Thos. Smith of Hough. Marr. 24 May, 1666; Will dated 23 March, 1700-1; Bur. at N. 13 Aug. 1701.

1 Dorothy Paget, = Dr. Nathan Paget, M.D., the intimate friend of the poet Milton, and relative of Elizabeth Minshull, whom he introduced to Milton as a suitable wife; and to whom he, with dated 7 Jan., proved 15 Jan. 1678-9. (See Dr. Blunk's "*Roll of College Physicians.*")

2 Mary Paget, = Elizabeth Paget, wife of.....Johnson.

3 Elizabeth Paget, = Rev. Thos. Paget, brother to Rev. John Paget, "preacher of God's word at N." (*cf.* p. 1582-3. Marr. at Wistaston to Rich. Minshull of Weld's Green, 13 Aug. 1599. Bur. there 4 Jan. 1623-4. (*cf.* p. 477.)

Margaret Goldsmith, = Thomas Wicksted, 1578-9. Bur. at N. 23 Oct. 1608.

Richard Goldsmith, = Dorothy dau. to..... Bur. at N. 4 July, 1611.

Geoffrey Goldsmith, = Bur. at W. 1 Nov. 1627.

Richard Goldsmith, youngest son; bur. at N. 30 Ap. 1592.

Margaret = Thos. Brassey Goldsmith, Gent.; bur. 6 Jan. 1574-5. at W. 14 Dec. 1620. (*cf.* page 414.)

Thos. Minshull of Wistaston. (See p. 477.)

Randle Goldsmith, = Rev. John Paget, brother to Rev. John Paget, "preacher of God's word at N." (*cf.* p. 1582-3. Marr. at Wistaston to Rich. Minshull of Weld's Green, 13 Aug. 1599. Bur. there 4 Jan. 1623-4. (*cf.* p. 477.)

Chad's, Shrewsbury, and of Stockport, where he was buried 19 June, 1606. (See Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, vol. 1; Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. ii., p. 393.)

Margery Goldsmith, = Rev. Thos. Paget, brother to Rev. John Paget, "preacher of God's word at N." (*cf.* p. 1582-3. Marr. at Wistaston to Rich. Minshull of Weld's Green, 13 Aug. 1599. Bur. there 4 Jan. 1623-4. (*cf.* p. 477.)

Mabel Goldsmith, = Bur. at N. 5 July, 1592.

Alice Goldsmith, = Bur. at N. 25 Aug. 1593.

Thomas Stevenson of Audley, Marr. 26 Oct. 1620.

Rev. Thos. Paget, brother to Rev. John Paget, "preacher of God's word at N." (*cf.* p. 1582-3. Marr. at Wistaston to Rich. Minshull of Weld's Green, 13 Aug. 1599. Bur. there 4 Jan. 1623-4. (*cf.* p. 477.)

Chad's, Shrewsbury, and of Stockport, where he was buried 19 June, 1606. (See Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, vol. 1; Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. ii., p. 393.)

1 Richard Goldsmith, = *(1st wife)* Anne dau. to Sir Thos. Smith of Hough. Marr. 24 May, 1666; Will dated 23 March, 1700-1; Bur. at N. 13 Aug. 1701.

2 Richard Goldsmith, = *(2nd wife)* Anne dau. to Sir Thos. Smith of Hough. Marr. 24 May, 1666; Will dated 23 March, 1700-1; Bur. at N. 13 Aug. 1701.

1 Dorothy Paget, = Dr. Nathan Paget, M.D., the intimate friend of the poet Milton, and relative of Elizabeth Minshull, whom he introduced to Milton as a suitable wife; and to whom he, with dated 7 Jan., proved 15 Jan. 1678-9. (See Dr. Blunk's "*Roll of College Physicians.*")

2 Mary Paget, = Elizabeth Paget, wife of.....Johnson.

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Chad's, Shrewsbury, and of Stockport, where he was buried 19 June, 1606. (See Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, vol. 1; Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. ii., p. 393.)

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Chad's, Shrewsbury, and of Stockport, where he was buried 19 June, 1606. (See Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, vol. 1; Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. ii., p. 393.)

A

B

A

*(First wife.)*  
Jane, dau. of Hugh Radcliffe, of Islington; marr. at St. Lawrence Jewry 19 Dec. 1682. Died 1 Feb., bur. 9 Feb. 1686-7 at N.

*(Second wife.)*  
Elizabeth, eldest dau. to Jonathan Cope, of Romton Abbey. Born 1 Dec. Bur. 26 Dec. 1655; Licence for marriage dated 22 Dec. 1601; on same day, a settlement made on her of the manor of Stapley, nr. N. Marr. at Westminster 26 Dec. 1601; bur. at N. 24 May, 1706; Will dated 20 Sep. 1705; proved at Chester 30 Aug. and 26 Sep. 1706.

A		B	
Judith Goldsmith. Dep. at 4 Mar. 1683. Bur. at Audlem. Mar. 1684.	Jane Goldsmith—George Dodd, Esq., of Highfields in Audlem, one of the children of Place, Mar. in 1781. Bur. at Audlem 4 Jan. 1713-4. ( <i>Nant. Reg.</i> )	Dr. Jonathan Goldsmith. Exp. at N. 8 May, 1694. Educ. at Brasenose Coll. Oxon. B.A. 13 Oct. 1711. M.A. 13 June 1718. Bacc. & Doc. of Medicine 11 June 1724. F.R.C.P. 25 June 1726. Galstonian lecturer 1728. Censor of College 1729; elected to Roy. Soc. 15 Jan. 1729-30. & Fellow Jan. 29. He resided in Norfolk St. Strand; & died there 17 April, 1732; aged 38. Bur. at St. Clement Danes 24 April, 1732.	Elizabeth, dau. to Wm. Farrington, of Longton Hall, co. York. M. Rich. Atherton of Bewsey, Lanc. Marr. at Weld Chapel, Southgate, Middlesex. 20 Aug. 1729; bur. at Leigh 10 April, 1742; aged 40.
Jane Dodd, heiress of William Baker, Esq., of Leominster. Born in 1711. Died at Highfields 17 March, 1783. Aged 72.	Anna Goldsmith. Exp. 23 Nov. 1692. Bur. 28 Jan. 1692-3 at N.	WALTER STUBBS, who married and left issue, from whom many descendants are now (1883) living. The lands in Stapeley, which had been in the Goldsmith family over 100 years, (described in 1747 as the "Manor of Stapeley, consisting of 6 messuages, 10 cottages, 300 acres of land, 50 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture, and 50 acres of heath," were sold by Messrs. John Dutton and Orlando Stubbs, trustees under the Will of Mrs. Walter Stubbs to Mr. WILLIAM SALMON, of Nantwich, in 1765-7; the purchase money being £2,580. In 1810 the manor was the joint property of CHARLES and Prussia SALMON Esqrs. The Hall, which was moated round, was then in ruins and infested with rats; so that JAMES BAYLEY Esq., to whom these lands descended, took it down and re-built the present Stapeley Hall farm-house, now (1883) the property of his grandson, JAMES BAYLEY Esq. J.P., of Willaston Hall.	Judith Goldsmith, eventually heiress of her brother Pap. at N. 14 June 1695-6. Died 23 Feb. 1750. Bur. at Beckbury.
From whom the BAKERS of Highfields, now extind in the male line since the death of WILLIAM BAKER, Esq., J.P., who died in 1863; and WILLIAM BAKER, Esq., J.P., his son, who died in 1876; to whose memories a stained-glass window, over the Highfields Pew in Audlem Church, was unveiled Christmas Day, 1879.	Jane Dodd, heiress of William Baker, Esq., of Leominster. Born in 1711. Died at Highfields 17 March, 1783. Aged 72.	WALTER STUBBS, who married and left issue, from whom many descendants are now (1883) living. The lands in Stapeley, which had been in the Goldsmith family over 100 years, (described in 1747 as the "Manor of Stapeley, consisting of 6 messuages, 10 cottages, 300 acres of land, 50 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture, and 50 acres of heath," were sold by Messrs. John Dutton and Orlando Stubbs, trustees under the Will of Mrs. Walter Stubbs to Mr. WILLIAM SALMON, of Nantwich, in 1765-7; the purchase money being £2,580. In 1810 the manor was the joint property of CHARLES and Prussia SALMON Esqrs. The Hall, which was moated round, was then in ruins and infested with rats; so that JAMES BAYLEY Esq., to whom these lands descended, took it down and re-built the present Stapeley Hall farm-house, now (1883) the property of his grandson, JAMES BAYLEY Esq. J.P., of Willaston Hall.	WALTER STUBBS, of Beckbury Hall, co. Shrop. Marr. at N. 14 June 1695-6. Died 13 Oct. 1754. Bur. at Beckbury.



## JOHN GERARD.

Of the few native worthies John Gerard, the Herbalist, stands pre-eminent. His great work, a folio volume of 1392 pp., founded on translations of Dodonæus and other foreign authors, and illustrated with more than eighteen hundred woodcuts, chiefly from the Dutch Herbal of Tabernæmontanus, is thus entitled:—

“The Herbal, or Generall Historie of Plantes, Gathered by John Gerarde of London, Master in Chirurgie. Imprinted at London by John Norton 1597.”



This work, which contained many errors and plagiarisms, was re-issued with corrections in 1633 by Thomas Johnson, and became a standard work for English students. The inscription round the portrait, which is here reproduced from the engraving in the first edition of that work, slightly reduced, states the author to have been fifty-three years of age in 1598. Hence he would be born in 1545; but, in consequence of the lapse of the

Registers at Nantwich, no record of his baptism is preserved; and the only mention of the family\* name occurs amongst the Baptisms, thus:—

“1578. Aug. 23. Alice, daughter of William Gerard.”

Incidental allusions to his birth-place, school-days, travels, and to his final residence in London as a surgeon and superintendent of the gardens of Lord Burleigh, occur in the “*Herbal*.” For example, speaking of “*Cuckowe Flowers*,” he says:—

“In Northfolke, they are called Caunterburie bels; at the Namptwich, in Cheshire, *where I had my beginning*, Ladie smockes, which hath giuen me cause to christen it after my countrie fashion.”—(Page 203.)

“I have found it [*i.e.* the *Raspis*, a species of Bramble] among the bushes of a cawsey neere vnto a village called Wisterson, *where I went to schoole*, two miles from the Nantwich in Cheshire.”—(Page 1091.)

“I haue not scene any one tree thereof [*i.e.* the Laurel] growing in Denmarke, Swenia, Poland, Livonia, or Russia, or in any of those colde countries where *I haue trauelled*.”—(Page 1223.)

The *Herbal* was dedicated to the Right Hon. Sir William Cecill, Kt., Baron of Burghley, K.G., Lord High Treasurer of England, &c.;† and in the “epistle dedicatorie” Gerard writes:—“under your Lordship I haue serued and that way employed my principall studie, and almost all my time now by the space of *twenty yeeres*.” Hence Gerard was already settled in London in 1577 as superintendent of the gardens of Lord Burleigh in the Strand, and at Theobalds in Herts; concerning which he says, “a man doth behold a flourishing show of summer beauties in the middest of winters force, and a goodly spring of flowers, when abroad a leafe is not to be scene. . . . I haue added from forren places all the variety of herbs and flowers that I might any way obtaine; I haue labored with the soile to make it fit for the plantes, and with the plantes to make them to delight in the soile, so that they might liue and prosper vnder our climate, as in their natue and proper countrie.”

From several allusions to Cheshire and Nantwich in the *Herbal*, it may be presumed that Gerard, in his manhood, visited the place of his birth. He says:—

“*Phalaris pratensis* is called in Cheshire, about Namptwich, Quakers and Shakers.”—(Page 81.)

“*Buckweate* prospereth verie well in anie ground be it neuer so drie or barren, where it is commonly sown to serue as it were insteede of a dunging. It quickly commeth up and is very soone ripe; it is very common in and aboute the Namptwiche in Cheshire, where they sowe it as well for foode for their cattell, pullen, and such like, as to the vse aforesaide.”—(Page 83.)‡

“*Turneps* flower and seede the second yeere after they are sown; for those which flower the same yeere that they are sown are a degenerate kinde, called in Cheshire about the Namptwiche, *Madweeps*, of their euill qualitie in causing frensie and giddinesse of the braine for a season.”—(Page 178.)

“I haue found *Horse Radish* wilde in sundrie places as at Namptwich in Cheshire, in a place called the *Milne-eye*.” [*i.e.* Mill Field.]—(Page 187.)

“*Bistorta* is called in English *Snakeweed*; in Cheshire *Pashions* and *Snakeweed*, and there used for an excellent pot herbe.”—(Page 323.)

\* An earlier mention of the Gerard family in this locality occurs in the *Ing. p.m.* 1 Hen. VII. [1485-6] of SIR JOHN BROMLEY, Kt., of Baddington, who “died on Sunday in the vigil of Pentecost last past leaving Margaret, the wife of Peter Gerard, his next of kin and heiress” \* \* \* \* “and also leaving—[obliterated] Gerard another of his next of kin and heirs aged 4 years.” &c., &c.

† Lord Burleigh, who expended £10 weekly to keep the poor employed in his gardens, died on 8 Sep. 1598.

‡ The last grower of Buck-wheat in this neighbourhood was Mr. Goodall, a farmer, of Cheerbrook, who died about 20 years ago. (Information of Mr. S. Fitton, of Cheerbrook, Willaston).

"*Wall-flowers* flower for the most part all the yeere long, but especially in winter, whereupon the people in Cheshire do call them Winter Gillo-flowers."—(Page 371.)

"*Small Navelwort* (*Umbilicus Veneris minor*) groweth vpon the Alpes neere Piedmont; I founde the same growing vpon Bieston castell in Cheshire."—(Page 424.)

"I haue founde *Hares-eares* (*Bupleurum*) growing naturally among the bushes vpon Biestone castell in Cheshire [and] the *Stone Cinkfoile*."—(Pages 485, 839.)

"The people in Cheshire, especially about Namptwich where the best Cheese is made, do vse *Ladies Bedstraw* (*Gallium*) in their Rennett, esteeming greatly of that Cheese aboue other made without it."—(Page 968.)

"*Whortleberries* grow vpon the hills in Cheshire called Broxen hills, neere vnto Beeston castle, 7 miles from the Nantwich. The people in Cheshire do eate the black Whortles in creame and milk, as in these south parts we eate strawberries."—(Page 1230.)

"The *Wilde Ashe* or *Quicken tree*, groweth vpon high mountaines, and in thicke high woods in most places of Englande; especially about the Namptwich in Cheshire."—(Page 1290.)

In 1596 Gerard lived in Holborn, then the most aristocratic part of London, where he had an extensive garden; and in that year he issued his "*Catalogus arborum, fruticum, ac plantarum, tam indigenarum, quam exoticarum, in horto Johannis Gerardi civis & chirurgi, Londonensis, nascentium*," of 24 pp. printed in Fetter Lane, being the first complete garden catalogue ever published. A second edition, enumerating 1,071 plants, dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight, appeared in 1599. These Catalogues were re-printed for private circulation by Benjamin Daydon Jackson, F.L.S., in 1876, with a biographical notice of Gerard, from which the following particulars are obtained.

John Gerard, who is supposed to have been descended from a younger branch of the Gerards of Ince, in Lancashire, was elected a member of the Court of Assistants of the Barber-Surgeons 19th June, 1595; and was subsequently appointed Junior Warden; and on 15th Jan. 1598, to be one of the examiners of candidates for admission to the freedom of the Barber-Surgeons Company; and finally in Aug. 1608 he was elected Master of that Company. He died in Feb. 1611-2, and was buried in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, on the 18th of that month, but there is nothing to indicate the exact spot. It is said he was married, and his wife, whose name has not transpired, is also stated to have assisted him in his profession. To the above notice it may be added that Queen Anne (consort of James I.) granted on 14th Aug. 1604, to John Gerard, Surgeon and Herbalist to the King, a lease of a garden plot adjoining Somerset House, on condition of his supplying her with herbs, flowers, and fruit. Gerard granted the said plot to Robert Earl of Salisbury, who surrendered it to the Queen on 27th June, 1611. (*Cal. of State Papers.*)

#### THE MALBON FAMILY.

The MALBONS are said to have descended from "a younger branch of the baronial family of Malbank, as appears by a deed of Joan, one of the co-heiresses of William de Malbank, the last Baron of that family, by which she grants lands in Bradeley, (which continued to be the residence of his posterity for several centuries) to her relation, WILLIAM MALBAN."\* For so ancient a family, it is remarkable how seldom they are

\* Lysons' *Cheshire*, p. 838, quoting *Harl. MSS.* 2022, f. 16. The co-heiress Joan married Reginald Valletort (see *Malbank Pedigree*, p. 24) to whose heirs *George Malbon*, in 1592, paid a chief rent for his Bradeley demesne. (See *Inq. f. m.*)

mentioned in the County Records. There are references to THOMAS MALBON, and his wife, ELLEN, in the *Plea Rolls* 11 Hen. IV. [1409—10], about which time his Inquisition *post mortem* was taken; to WILLIAM MALBON,\* on a Recognizance Roll, dated 6th Sep. 1474; to WILLIAM MALBON, and his daughter *Agnes*; THOMAS MALBON, and his son *John*; and RALPH MALBON; all of whom occur on a *Plea Roll*, dated 13 Hen. VII. [1497-8.] (See page 440.)

Under the township of Haslington, in which Bradeley is situated, in the *Subsidy Roll* of 1545 (page 98) RALPH MALBON is mentioned as assessed at 14s. for goods valued at £8. Possibly he was the father, or near relative, of GEORGE MALBON, of Haslington, whose Inquisition *post mortem*, now in the Record Office, is as follows: (*translated*)—

*Inq. p.m.* taken at Wich Malbank, on the 9 May 35 Eliz. [1593] before Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, the younger, Kt., Eschaetor, and Thomas Wilbraham, Esq., Richard Wilbraham, Ralph Hassall, and Ralph Wilbraham, Gents., feodaries; &c. after the death of *George Malbon* of Haslington, in the county of Chester, by the oath of Thomas Mynshull, Richard Brereton, Thomas Chetwoode, Esqrs., Robert Whitney, Thomas Brooke, Richard Horton, John Chefors, John Witter, Richard Wilbraham, Roger Wettenhall, Robert Alger, Randle [?] Poole, William Salmon, Robert Rawley, and William Salmon, Gents., who say that GEORGE MALBON died seised in his demesne as of fee of and in i message 10 acres of land 8 acres of pasture 4 acres of meadow and one water-mill with water-course belonging to the same mill in Haslington, which he held of the heirs of Reginald de Valletort in socage by the service of 3s. 6d. per ann., and rendering 12d. per ann. to Thomas Vernon of Haslington, Esq. on the feasts of St. Martin [11 Nov.] and St. John the Baptist [24 June] by equal portions being of the total value of 20s. per ann. Also the said George Malbon died seised &c. of i toft and 4 acres of arable land which he held of the Queen as Countess of Chester by Knight service *in capite* of the value of 3s. per ann. That the said George died on the 11th Nov. before the taking of this Inquisition, and that *Thomas Malbon* is his son and heir of the age of 16 years on the 14th March last past [1592-3]. The said George Malbon had to wife Matilda, the daughter of William Leversage, who is now living at Haslington.

THOMAS MALBON, who was under age at the time of his father's death, was born, as may be inferred from the above Inquisition, on 14th March, 1577-8. He obtained livery of his father's lands at Bradeley by Writ dated 20th Aug. 1599;† and, in 1616, according to a tablet with armorial carvings that once adorned old Bradeley Hall,‡ re-built the home of his ancestors. For many years, however, he was connected with Nantwich, where, on 14th Feb. 1597-8, he married for his first wife, Elizabeth, eldest daughter to Richard Clutton, Lawyer of Nantwich, and himself followed the profession of the law. In 1623 he occurs as Sir Ranulphe Crewe's *Steward* for his Manor Court of the Countess of Warwick's Fee; as appears by the following copy of a Presentment from the Court Rolls in his own handwriting.§

*Countess of Warwick's Fee.*

“View of Frankpledge with Court Baron of Sir Ranulphe Crewe, Knight, Serjeant-at-law of the King, and lord of the said Fee, held at Wich Malbank in the county of Chester on the 21 Oct. 21 James I, 1623, before *Thomas Malbon*, Gent., Steward of the said Court.

\* He may have been identical with *William Malbon*, aged 52, who was present as a Juror at Wistaston Church on Saturday next before the feast of St. Thos. the Apostle [21 Dec.] 5 Edw. IV. [1466] when the *prob. atat.* (proof of age) of John Bruen was taken.

† Cheshire Recognizance Rolls.

‡ Bradeley Hall has been a farm-house since about the year 1720.

§ The heading and the names of Jurymen in the original, *venes me*, is written in Latin.

## Names of the Jury for the lord and King.

THOMAS SHENTON, of Stoke.	THOMAS MAYKYN, of Cholmeston.
RALPH STOCKTON, of the same.	THOMAS HODGSON, of the same.
THOMAS HIGHFIELD, JUNR., of the same.	JOHN DAYE, of the same.
WILLIAM SAVAGE, of Wich Malbank.	EDWARD ASTON, of Aston.
EDWARD MASSIE, of the same.	HENRY PENDLETON, of the same.
THOMAS CARTWRIGHT, of Stoke.	WILLIAM ASTON, of the same.
HUGH FILCOCKE, of Cholmeston.	JOHN WATSON, of the same.

The said Jurye upon their Othes doe p'sent [present] :—

That the x<sup>th</sup> daye of Julye in the 21 James I [1623] One Baye trottinge Marc wth a peece cutt furthe of the vtter pte. [outer part] of the Eare from the Mare, wth a Saddle and Brydle was taken vp att Cholmeston aforesaid, as a *wayfe*, and steyed [seized] by the Baylyff for the vse of the Lorde. And afterwards was p'ved [proved] to have byn the goods of one Thomas Mynshull wch was apprehended for stealinge a Nagee from one Rondull Betteley of Cholmeston aforesaid & was executed\* for the same att Chester att the assize holden theire the xxix<sup>th</sup> daye of Sept. in the said year 21 James I."

[Subscribed in the same handwriting]

"A true Copy of the examination by me the said

THOMAS MALBON, Steward of the said Court, 1624."

Thomas Malbon fulfilled the office of Churchwarden at Nantwich in 1626 and 1627 (page 126); and during those years kept the Parish Registers. In 1642 he signed the "*Remonstrance*" (page 139); in 1644 he was one of the Committee of Sequestrators; and in 1651 he wrote the account of the Civil War in Cheshire and the adjacent counties, from which extracts have been given relating to Nantwich and its immediate neighbourhood on pages 140—182.

His first wife, *Elizabeth*, died on 21st March, 1622-3, and was buried at Nantwich, (see Monuments, page 313) leaving as issue two sons, *George* and *Thomas*; and seven daughters, *Margery*, baptized 7th Nov. 1601;† *Dorothy*, baptized 19th Feb. 1605-6; four daughters whose baptisms are not recorded at Nantwich; and *Katherine*, baptized 28th Oct. 1621.

By his second wife, *Sarah*, who only survived her husband about five months, and was buried in Barthomley on the 22nd Nov. 1658, he had no issue.

Thomas Malbon was buried in Barthomley Church on the 23 June, 1658; and on the south wall a brass was placed to his memory, inscribed as follows:—†

"UNDERNEATH LYETH BURYED THE BODIE OF THOMAS MALBON OF BRADELEY,  
GENT., ONE OF Y<sup>E</sup> ATTORNEYS BEFORE THE JUDGES OF CHESTER, WHO DEPARTED  
THIS LYFE THE 21<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF JUNE 1658."

The Rev. Edward Hinchliffe (*Hist. of Barthomley*, page 35) says, the "achievements" of the Malbon family "were hanging upon the walls over their graves when I was young; dusky and ragged mementos of the departed; but, unfortunately, they were taken down without authority, and, as I am told, their sound and well-seasoned oak backs were applied

\* This execution is not mentioned in the "*List of Public Executions in Chester from the 16th Century*," contained in Hemingway's *History of Chester*, 1831, vol. ii., p. 296.

† The Baptism of *Margery Malbon* was originally entered (by mistake as it would seem) at Nantwich under date 18th March, 1603-4; but this error is corrected in her father's own handwriting to 7th Nov. 1601. (See *Bap. Reg.* at Nantwich).

‡ Hinchliffe's *Barthomley*, p. 35.

to the repairs of the pigstye doors of the glebe farm." It may also be added that the stones, which formerly covered the Malbon vault, have of late years been removed into the churchyard, and now form part of the pavement along the north side of the Church. They have lozenge shaped brasses, with Arms engraved, (*Or, two bendlets componé Argent and Gules*)\* and inscribed as follows:—

"Sarah the wife of Thomas Malbon of Namptwitch, Gent., died 20 Nov. 1658."

"Thomas Malbon, of Bradley, Gent., died y<sup>e</sup> 21st day of June 1658."

"Catharine, first wife of George Malbon of Bradley Gent. 1644."

"Elizabeth, second wife of George Malbon of Bradley Gent., died 27 Sep. 1654."

"George, son and heir of George Malbon of Bradley Gent., died 27 Oct. 1708."

1. GEORGE MALBON, of Bradeley, gent., eldest son of Thomas Malbon, was born *c.* 1598. He was married at Nantwich to Catharine Wood on 24th Sep. 1639, who was buried at Barthomley in 1644; leaving a son, *George Malbon*, afterwards of Bradeley, who died on 27th Oct. 1708. His second wife, *Elizabeth*, died on 27th Sep. 1654, and was buried at Barthomley.†

2. THOMAS MALBON, second son of Thomas Malbon was baptized at Nantwich on 11th July, 1613, and buried there on 4th Aug. 1688. Both brothers became officers in the Parliamentary Army, and distinguished themselves at the taking of Cholmondeley Castle (page 178). By his wife, *Elizabeth*, he had a son, *Thomas*, baptized at Nantwich 13th Dec. 1655, and buried there on 30th July, 1697; from whom probably descended *Thomas Malbon*, of Bridgemere, gent., who was Churchwarden at Wybunbury in 1692, and had three sons baptized there, namely:—*Thomas*, baptized 1st Dec. 1687; *George*, baptized 21st May, 1689; *William*, baptized 10th March, 1691-2.

It will not be necessary to trace the family further;† but it may be remarked, that although the Bradeley Hall estate has been alienated from the family since the year 1720, the local newspapers of this present year (1883) recorded the death of a Mr. George Malbon, at Bradeley Green, aged forty-nine years, on 27th March, 1883.

#### THE WRIGHT FAMILY.

From the middle of the sixteenth century to the early part of the eighteenth century the WRIGHTS ranked amongst the principal families of the town. Prior to the year 1540 nothing certain is known of the family; and there is little to relate concerning them beyond what is contained in two Inquisitions *post mortem*, and a few Wills; abstracts of which are here given in proof of the descents in the subjoined pedigree. It has, however, been assumed that RONDULL WRIGHT, the brother of *Edmund Wright*, and father of *Sir Edmund Wright*, was the son of EDMUND WRIGHT, whose name is also given in some old MS. pedigrees as *Edward Wright*. Although the probability of this descent may be admitted from the Christian name of *Edmund* only occurring in that branch of the family,

\* If, as has been supposed, the Malbons descended from the ancient family of Malbank, it is very remarkable that they never entered their names at any of the Heralds Visitations, and thus proved their right to bear arms. No claim to such distinction appears to have been made until 1663-4, when it was disallowed by Sir William Dugdale. (See Dr. Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. iii. p. 318, New Edit.)

† For further information, see Lysons' *Cheshire*, pp. 399 and 838; Hinchliffe's *Barthomley*, p. 74; Earwaker's *Local Gleanings relating to Lancashire and Cheshire*, vol. ii. p. 283.

positive proof is wanting owing to the hiatus in the Parish Register between the years 1545 and 1572.

EDMUND WRIGHT, (afterwards *Sir Edmund Wright*) the son of Rondull Wright, was born at Nantwich, and baptized there on 24th Nov. 1573 (see pp. 338, 366). He was a successful adventurer in trade in the metropolis, where he rose to be an Alderman; and eventually, in 1640-1, when the Long Parliament had assembled, to be the Lord Mayor. Sir Edmund Wright, Alderman of London, is mentioned in the return by the several wards of the City of London specifying the names of such persons as are conceived able to lend his Majesty, Charles I, money upon security, towards the raising of the sum of £200,000 according to Order in Privy Council at Whitehall on 10th May, 1640.\*

In 1640 (Nov. or Dec.) Sir William Acton, Knight and Bart., was discharged from his office of Lord Mayor of London by the House of Commons and *Sir Edmund Wright, Grocer*, substituted.† The date of his death has not occurred. His gifts to his native town have already been noticed, and need not be repeated; but a clause in the Almshouse Deed may here be alluded to. The Founder directed that a candidate of the name of *Wright* offering himself for an Almsman's "place" should be preferred to anyone else; doubtless thinking he was thus providing a home for his poorer kinsfolk. At that time the *Wrights* were as numerous in Nantwich as the Leighs, Davenportes and Massies are said, in the old proverb, to have been in Cheshire. No name occurs so often in the Parish Registers in the seventeenth century; they lived in every street in the town, and belonged to every grade of society from Esquires and Gentlemen, to respectable tradesmen, work-people and cottagers. For example, (and this is by no means a solitary instance,) in the Baptism Registers in the course of *five weeks, five* different families are mentioned; thus:—

"1653. April 3. Richard sonne of Richard Wright in the wale lane."  
 " " 10. Thomas sonne of John Wright glouer."  
 " " 24. Edward sonne of Arthur Wright."  
 " May 1. Dorothy dau. of John Wright Junr."  
 " " 15. Henry sonne of Robert Wright in the welsh roe."

Notwithstanding the multitude of Wrights in the town, it is a remarkable fact, that after the death of *John Wright, Almsman*, about Christmas 1666, no person of the name of Wright had benefit of that Charity for nearly forty years, the next being *Henry Wright*, butcher, "being of kindred to ye founder," who was elected on 28th June, 1705.

*Inquisition post mortem of Richard Wright, 31 Eliz. [1589].*

"*Inq. p.m.* taken at Wich Malbank on 13 Sep. 31 Eliz. [1589] before Hugh Beeston, Senr., Esq., and Thomas Burroughes Gent. deputy Eschaetors, John Ward, of Frodsham, and Richard Clutton, Gents., Commissioners, after the death of *Richard Wright, Gent.*, by the oathes of Ralph Leftwich, Thomas Mynshull, Esqrs., George Bostock, John Hankye, Roger Hockenhull, John Cheswis, Thomas Brooke, Richard Horton, Roger Wettenhall, Richard Wilbraham, William Pratchett, John Cawton, Hugh Wareton, William Salmon of Coole-lane, and William Salmon of Wildheath [Willaston] Gentlemen, who say that Richard Wright, father of the said Richard Wright had by deed dated 1 Oct. 2 Eliz. [1559] (quoted in this Inquisition) granted a Messuage or Burgage called "*The Bell*," and one salt-house of six leads in Wich Malbank,

\* Calendar of State Papers, Car. I. Domestic Series.

† Orridge's "*Citizens of London and their Rulers*."

two acres of land and two acres of pasture in Henhull called the *Wallcrofte*, to Margaret daughter of Alexander Elcocke formerly of Stockport in consideration of her marriage with the said Richard Wright Senr and to their legitimate heirs &c. failing these to his right heirs. The said Richard Wright died seized of the above property and of one vine garden, 2 meadows, 1 pasture called *Peretree field* in Wich Malbank another pasture called "*Chapel-croft*," and half of another pasture called the "*Chapel-field*" adjacent, lying in Acton; 20 acres of land, 12 acres of meadow, 20 acres of pasture, and 40 acres of wood in Wych Malbank, Henhull, and Monks Coppenhall: also, *the tythes of the formerly dissolved free chapel of St. Lawrence*; also 4 pastures in Wich Malbank; 1 meadow and pasture and wood, called *Coppenhall-hey*, in Coppenhall; 1 pasture or croft called *peretree-field* in Monks Coppenhall; 1 pasture or Croft called *Roughfield* in Henhull; *Shutshave* pasture in Wych Malbank; 13 messuages or tenements in Welsh Row, "*le hospell*" St., "*le pillorie*" St., and High Town in Wych Malbank. The aforesaid Richard Wright died 20 Aug. 30 Eliz. [1588] and Margaret Wright, aged 12 yrs. 6 mo. and 5 days; and Elizabeth Wright, aged 1 yr. and 10 months, when this Inquisition was taken, are his heirs." &c.

These daughters, many years afterwards, in 1639, conveyed their interest in the tithes above mentioned to the preaching minister of Nantwich Church. Richard Wright, senr., father of the above Richard Wright, had died in 1585; and his Will, now at Chester, is as follows:—

*Will of Richard Wright. Proved 1585.*

"In the name of God, Amen. 2 May 20 Eliz. [1578] I Richard Wright of Wich Malbank, the elder, &c. I give &c. vnto Margaret my wyffe 40s. yearly yssuing out of a field called *wychefield* in Stapeley for 4 years, and afterwards to my sonne Henrie Wright for the terme of 4 yeares & the remainder of the terme to James Wright another of my sonnes. *Item* I give &c. to Richard Wright my sonne and heire apparent one neste of silver bowles being three and my best silver salte &c. my wife to have the use of all the plate during her natural life. *Item* I give &c. to the said Richard that dozen of silver spoones wch I bought of mr finneshurst and four bedds and my beste gold ringe &c. *Item* I give to Cicilie Wright my daughter three score poundes of money. *Item* I give &c. to my younger sonnes Jerome Wright, Henrie Wright, francis Wright, James and Roger Wright, to euery of them £33 6s. 8d. Also I give &c. to my bastard daughter, (yf she will be ordered by my seide wife) tenne poundes &c.; to my old loving frends Mr. William Massie of Denfield one double ducett; and the rest of my goodes to my wyffe [whom] I make sole executrix &c. And I make &c. my brother in law Thomas Elcocke parson of Bartomley, my brother Thomas Wright, and my cosin Lawrence Wright overseers &c. R. W."

The following Inventory of goods at the "*Bell Inn*," dated 9th Nov. 1585, accompanys this Will.

	<i>li.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Itm. xviiij bedds wth. the furnyturc .....	xxxvij	xj	iiij
Itm. in lynnye [linen] .....	vj	—	—
Itm. in wyne .....	xxxv	—	—
Itm. in brasse potts & pannes and such lyke .....	iiij	viiij	—
Itm. in Iron vi grates wyth hondyarns [hand irons] wythe fyre skyrners [screens] tongs and such lyke .....	—	xxxij	—
Itm. in pewter lxxxvij peces .....	—	xxxiiij	ij
Itm. xiiij candell stycks .....	—	xx	—
Itm. in quyssshens [cushions] x.....	—	v	—
Itm. a carpet & cabbord cloth .....	—	vj	—
Itm. in tables formes & Chayres .....	—	xl	—
Itm. in trene ware.....	—	xx	—
Itm. viij chests .....	—	xx	—
Itm. in plate prayسد to .....	xlv	—	—
Itm. in Cattell .....	xxv	—	—



The other Inquisition *post mortem* is that of LAWRENCE WRIGHT, of Nantwich, which, however, was not taken until twenty-one years after his death.

“*Ing. p m.* taken at Wich Malbank on 9 July 21 James I [1625] before Hugh Mainwaring Esq. Eschaetor, and Peter Daniell Esq. Feodary &c. after the death of Laurence Wright Gent. deceased, by the oaths of Robert Auger, Robert Poole, of Auger [Alsager], William Boulton of Hankilowe, John Cartwright of Aston; William Wast of Hunstaston, Thomas Scott and Thomas Smith of Checkley; Thomas Shenton of Stoke, Francis Betteley of Burland; Olliver Pollett, John Moulton of fadeley, John Gallamore, William Gallamore senior, and William Gallamore Junr. of Betchton, Hugh Wheelock of Betchton, Randle Grafton of Worleston, and Nicholas Hussie of Baguley, Gents. jurors, who say that *Laurence Wright* on the day before his death died seized in his demesne as of fee of and in 15 acres of land, 15 acres pasture, 6 acres meadow, and 15 acres of heath in Henhull; 5 acres land, 3 acres pasture, 2 acres meadow, and six salt leads in Namptwich; 6 burgages or cottages, two salt houses, and 12 acres of land in Namptwich; a messuage called Chadkirk in Romley in the county of Chester formerly purchased from Queen Elizabeth; also certain tithes of corn, wool, and lambs in Baddington Woolston Wood and Namptwich, formerly belonging to Queen Elizabeth, &c. The Jurors say that Laurence Wright died 5 Aug. 1603, and that *Laurence Wright*, his son and heir is at the time of taking this Inquisition 48 years of age and more; and that the said Laurence Wright, son and heir, Margaret his wife, and Robert his son occupied all and singular the premises, lands, &c. The said Robert Wright died 14 Jan. 1616, and the said Margaret died 18 Feb. 1617.”

*Will of Laurence Wright.* Proved 1603.

“In the name of God Amen, the 6 June 1 James I [1603] I LAURENCE WRIGHT of Wich Malbank, gent. &c.

*Item* I bequeath to my singler good *Mr. Henrie Birkenhead Esqr.* my golde Ringe w<sup>th</sup> the deathes head.

*It.* I bequeath to *William Newton Esq.* sonne in lawe my rapier and dager and tenne shillings in gold; and to my daughter Margery his wyffe tenne shillings in gold.

*It.* I bequeath to my daughter *Elizabeth Weyver* 10s. in gold.

*It.* I bequeath to my son in law *John ffyges gent.* and to *Cecell* his wife together 10s. in gold.

*It.* I bequeath to my son in law *John Slade* and *Margaret Slade* his wife together 10s.

*It.* I bequeath to *Robert Wright* one of my yonger sonnes and to his heirs for euer all those messuages and lands in Wich Malbank wch I lately purchased of Peter Dutton gent., Elizabeth his wyffe, and Richard Massie Gent.; and also a messuage in beame streete &c. in the holding of Thomas Minshull; also a messuage in High Towne wch I lately purchased of Raphe Wright &c. also a wiche house of sixe leads lying in Mistlesiche in Wich Malbank.

*It.* I give &c. to Margaret my wife a pasture called the broad-lane field for her life, remainder thereof to my sayd sonne Robert his heirs &c. Also to Robert my sonne my land in Woolston wood wch I holde of William Hassall gent. and my best cloake.

*It.* I give &c. to *Thomas Wright* my youngest sonne a messuage in Welsh Row &c. a messuage in Barkers street &c. also my interest in demeanes meadow other[wise] demeanes bache in Wibunburie wch I holde of the dymise of Thomas Smyth Esq., also a wiche-house of sixe leades in Wich Malbank two messuages in beame street and nyne gardens in Monks lane &c.

*It.* . . . my wyfe Margaret to have certain lands for seven yeares if she soe longe live towards payment to my sonne *Laurence* duringe three years after my decease tenne poundes; also paying my sonne Robert at the ende of his apprenticeship fortie poundes, and to my son Thomas &c. fiteene poundes.

*It.* I give to my daughter *Dorothie* 300*li.* and to my daughter *Ann* 200*li.* [After disposing of his furniture, plate, jewellery, &c., the Will says,] I give &c. vnto my sonne Thomas my bookes of Lawe and Latin bookes; and the reste of my bookes to be divided among the rest of my sonnes” &c.

The Inventory accompanying this Will, dated 10th August 1603, amounts to cccccxxi<sup>li.</sup> xiijs. iiij<sup>d.</sup> [£621 13s. 4d.]

*Will of Roger Wright, mercer.* Proved 1604.

"In the name of God Amen, the 27 June 1604 I ROGER WRIGHT of Wich Malbank mercer, &c. . . . My bodie to be buried in the p'ishe yarde of wiche Malbank.

*It.* I give &c. unto my deare and lovinge mother *Margaret Wilbraham* in Remembrance of the love and dewtie I beare her in gold vjs. viiijd.

*It.* I give unto my well beloved brother [in-law] *Lawrence Wright* in gold vjs. viiijd.

*It.* I give unto my welbeloved brother *Henrie Wright* in gold xs.

*It.* I give to my sister in law *Anne Wright* his wife in gold xs.

*It.* I give to my loving brother *ffrancis Wright* one debt of viijli. and in money xxs.

*It.* I give unto my welbeloved brother *James Wright* &c. xli.

*It.* I give unto *Roger Wright* sonne of the said James ijli. vjs. viiijd.

*It.* I give &c. unto my sister *Elizabeth Minshall* &c. in golde xs.

*It.* I give unto my welbeloved sister *Cycill Haughton* in golde xs.

*It.* I give unto *Anne Haughton* my god daughter &c. xls.

*It.* I give unto my welbeloved father in law *Mathew Wright* to make him a ringe in golde xxs. also my ryding gray cloak &c.

*It.* I give to my poore nurse *Anne Younge* &c. xxs. also to *Henry Young* her husband my old apparell.

*It.* I geve to my wyves [wife's] grandmother *Elizabeth Wright* widow ijli. vjs. viiijd. to my wyves uncle *William Wood* in money xls. All the reste of my goods &c. I give unto *Marie Wright* my wife and make her my sole executrix. *p. me* Roger Wright."

[*Codocil*] "I give unto *Roger Wright* my godsonne sonne of *Roger Wright* of the High Towne in gold xs." &c.

The Inventory of stock in his shop, household goods, &c., which is more than two yards in length, is dated 14th Nov. 1604.

*Will of Henry Wright, Innholder.* Proved 1607.

"In the name of God Amen. The 9 Aug. 1607 I HENRY WRIGHT, of Wich Malbank Innholder &c. I give &c. to my onelye daughter *Margarett Wright* 100li. I give &c. to my brother *ffrancis* 40s. in golde and to every one of his children vs. I give &c. to my brother *James* my bandore [a musical instrument] his owne picture and mine my book of the abridgment of statutes my silver sorde and daggar and 40s. &c. I give &c. to my brother *Jerom Wright* 40s. &c. I give to my loving sister *Elizabeth Minshall* 40s. I give to my loving sister in law *Margaret Georges* 40s. I give to my brother in law *mr John Woodnoth* a debt of £3. I give to my father in law *mr John Woodnoth* 40s. in gould. I give to my cousin *Richard Mynshull* my Vyoll de Gamboe [bass-viol, which in the Inventory is valued with other musical instruments at £2]; to *Thomas Tench* 10s.; I give &c. to my cossen *Roger Wright* of ye High Towne 10s.; to *Richard Harwar* 10s.; also to *mr John ffrancis* of Chester 10s. and my great velvett saddle. I give to *Randull Sparowe* my man my lease I have in the *beare house* vnder such conditions as I now have it. Also *Mr. Wilbraham's* garden behind the Church and £10 in money; and the rest of my goods to my loving wyffe *Anne Wright* sole executrix."

The Inventory taken 15th Oct. 1607, amounts to £268 18s. 6d.

*Will of Anne Wright, spinster.* Proved 12th May, 1635.

"In the name of God Amen. The 25th Sept. 1634 I ANNE WRIGHT one of the daughters of *Lawrence Wright*, of Wich Malbank, gent., &c.

*It.* I give to my cosen *Henry Wright* son to *Lawrence Wright* my brother woods and lands in *Minshall*

Vernon called the Milne Hey Gibbons field the great Brooke flatt the little Brooke flatt in trust to pay the rents &c. by £6 yearly to *Roger Wright* my brother and *Alis* his wife.

*It.* I give to the said *Henry Wright* my yellow bed and the furniture carpitts needlework and tente work qushions two stools for *Elizabeth Weever* my sister.

*It.* I give to *Thomas Wright* my brother p[ar]son of Wilmslow my great silver gilte bowle with a cover whereon my fathers armes are engraven and to his wife my best purse imbroadered with pearle and gould.

*It.* I give to *Laurence Wright* my brother my best bedd curtain valences and other furniture and £10 &c.

*It.* I give to *Lawrence* son of my brother *Laurence* another silver gilt boole with a cover.

*It.* I give to *Thomas, Edward, Elizabeth, Dorothy, and Margaret* [children] of my said brother *laurence* £10 a peece. . . . .

*It.* I give to *Elizabeth Weever* my sister six qushions of neildwork which the sd *Elizabeth* did work with platt stich Speeds Chronicle, Josephus, and £10.

*It.* I give to my sister *ffiges* [and her children, *William, Thomas, Sarah, Francis, and Jane*, legacies of £5 and £10] &c. . . . .

*It.* I give to *Richard Clutton* gent. sonne of my sister *Dorothy Clutton* deceased my great Joyned presse, a feather bed &c. And all the rest of my goods in my trunk marked E. C. to *Richard Clutton, Laurence Clutton, Margaret Wright, and Elizabeth Clutton*, children of my said sister *Dorothy Clutton* at such time as *Richard Clutton* shall come to 21 years and in the meantime to be kept for their use by *Richard Clutton Esq.* their uncle.

*It.* I give to *Roger Wilbraham Esq.* my best gould ring with a dyamond.

*It.* I give to my kinsman *Roger Wright* of the High Towne £10 wch he oweth me. To *Thomas Wilbraham* of the Townsend Esq. my best seeinge glasse. . . . .

*It.* I give to *Margarett Warde Anne Newton Margery Kelfall* daughters of my sister *Newton* deceased £10 a peece. . . . .

*It.* I give to the Poor of the Pi'she of Bunburie 5£ &c. . . . and £10 to be distributed to the poore of *Namptwich*.

*It.* I give to cousin *Mathew Wright* son of my kinsman *James Wright* deceased £10; to *Margaret* wife of the said *Mathew Wright* my best gowne and petticoat of moe heare my cloak sangard hood pillin and all other my riding furniture &c."

Other sums are left by the testatrix to persons named in this interesting Will; and the Inventory of her goods, taken on 1st Dec. 1634 amounts to the very large sum of £1,196 5s. 4d.

*Will of Matthew Wright, gent.* Proved 28th May, 1663.

"In the name of God Amen. I *Matthew Wright* of *Wich Malbank, Gent. &c.* ffirst I doe hereby give devise [&c.] vnto my Executors all that one p[ar]cell of wood or woodland called *Coppenhall Hey* & the meadows thereunto belonging [&c.] for the terme of 4 yeeeres after my decease and after to my son and heir apparent *Richard Wright* and the heirs of his body [R. W. to pay to the said executor £360]. Also I give [&c.] to my sonne *Richard* one brewing panne in the brewhowse all Iron gratts belonging to my message called *the Bell* one *Jack* in the Kitchen all the shelves in the howse one great bedstead in the p[ar]lor chamber; & my signet Ring I give unto my sonne *James* \* \* \* \* [Legacies of 20s. to buy a ring to each of the following friends, namely, to *Leftwich Oldfeild, Esq.*, to "my brother in law *William Bentley* doctor of Phisick;" to *Thomas Ursgate* Gent.; to *William Meakin, gent.*] \* \* \* "And whereas my cozen *Elizabeth Davenport* deceased in her life time by her Conveyance did grant unto my sonne *James Wright* certaine lands lying in or neere *Wich Malbanke* of the yearly value of £23 18s. 4d. and soe received by mee since I

came in possession thereof the which I charge my said Executors to bee Accountable for to my said sonne James hee allowing £10 by the yeare vpon such Account for his table [board] app[ar]ell and Schooleing which I have found for him. And lastly I doe hereby ordayne and make *Ann Wright, Elizabeth Wright,* and *Margaret Wright* my loving and dutiful children executrices of this my last will and testament [&c.] In witness &c. on 1 Aprill 1663.

MATT. WRIGHT."

After a careful search in the Parish Registers, I have failed to find the baptisms of RICHARD WRIGHT, B.D., and of CLUTTON WRIGHT, Esq.; consequently their parentage must remain doubtful until positive proof is forthcoming. The latter gentleman may have been the son of Margaret Wright (*née* Clutton) who is named in the Will of her aunt Anne Wright, spinster, on page 491.

The Lysons (*History of Cheshire*, page 369) say that the Wrights of Nantwich became extinct with the death of EDWARD WRIGHT, Esq. in 1745; who died unmarried and intestate in that year. This statement is proved to be correct by the administration of his effects still preserved at the Probate office, Chester, dated 22nd Oct. 1745; which states that "Ann Wright, of Nantwich, spinster, William Bailey, of Congleton, Gent., Thomas Tagg, of Nantwich, gent., Charles Montague Lyon, of Winsford, salt-officer, and Richard Church, of Nantwich, gent., entered into a bond of £500 on the 16th Sept. 1745. Ann Wright as administratrix of all the goods &c. of Edward Wright to the use and behoof of Sophia, wife of Thomas Tagg, Charlotte, wife of Charles Montague Lyon, Margaret, wife of William Bailey also natural and lawful sisters of the decedent and of all others."

This last generation of the Wrights is clearly shown in the subjoined pedigree.

## Wright Pedigree.

*Authorities: Harl. MSS. 2119, f. 77; Inquisitions post mortem; Wills at Chester; Parish Registers; &c.*

ROGER WRIGHT,  
of Nantwich.  
Subsidy Roll 1545.

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Margaret, dau. to Rich. Leech of N.  
(*Harl. MSS. 2119*). Margery Bradfield  
of N. *Harl. MSS. 1424, f 25; and Visit.*  
*Chesh. 1580*, preserved at Condoover Hall.

1 Roger = Eleanor dan. 2 William 3 Edmund = Eleanor 4 Henry Wright 5 Richard 6 Margaret dau. 7 John 8 Reginald 9 Thos. Wright  
 Wright to Robt Min- Subsidy Roll 1545. Margery dau. to Alex. El- Wright wife of Rondull  
 Subsidy Roll 1545. ?last incumbent of St. Lawrence Hospital. Subsidy Roll 1545. Occurs in Recog. Will dated 2 May 1585. Bur. at N. hamp. 26 Jan. 1540-1. 10 Oct. 1585. cocke. She marr. 2ndly Rich Wilbraham of N Esp. David Bradley of Cop-penhall. Hinton. 1606-7. 1 Ann or Margery wife of Rondull. Crewse of N. Ellen dau. to Robert Sadler of Nantwich.  
 Ann Wright, bap. 12 June, 1540. N. 1535. Rich. Wright, bap. 3 Jan. 1541-2. Humphrey Wright, bap. 28 Sep. 1643. Edward Wright Bap. 28 Nov. 1540. ? Rondull Wright, of mercer. Bur. 9 Sep. 1596. Sir Edmund Wright, Kt. Bap. at N. 24 Nov. 1573. Founder of Almshouse 1638. Lord Mayor of London 1641. Martha Wright, wife of..... Chorlton. She lived in "the Park," Southwark, and left Charities to Nantwich. Judges. A daughter: wife of Sir Francis Harrington, one of Charles I.

1 LAWRENCE WRIGHT = Anne, dau. to 2 Roger Wright 3 Robert Wright 4 Thomas Wright 1 Anne Wright 2 Elizabeth W. 4 Margaret W. 6 Margery W.  
 of N. & Jane Rawfis of Ralph Winn- Living in 1650. Died 14 Jan. 1616-7. Rector of Wilms- low 1010-1601. Died 21 Oct. 1601. Bur. at N. Mary Ann, dau. to Francis Holborn of Alderley parish. 1697. 1595-6. Legatee of Anne Wright, 1634. of "The Bell," N. 3 Henry Wright = Ann, dau. to John Woodmoth of Shavington, Marr. 24 Aug. 1591. Bur. 6 Feb. 1632-3. 1 Jerome Wright = Katharine Brayne of Aston-in-Mondrem, Marr. 30 Nov. 1585. Bur. 28 May, 1633. son & heir. Bur. 21 Aug. 1888. *Ing p m.* 13 Sep. 1580. Katharine = Alice, dau. to port 21 Mar. 1595-6. (See Earwaker's *East Chesh.* Vol. II. P. 353.) 1 Richard Wright = Katharine dan. of "The Bell," N. son & heir. Bur. 21 Aug. 1888. *Ing p m.* 13 Sep. 1580. 1 Elizabeth Wright, Will dated Minshall of N. 14 July, 1604. 2 Cecelia W. Bap. 21 Feb. 1575-6. Wife of Richard Haughton. 5 JAMES WRIGHT mercer. Will dated 27 July, 1604. Bur. 1697. Marie, dau. to Matthew Wright. 6 Roger Wright of N. Will dated 14 July, 1604. Bur. 1697. 21 Feb. 1575-6. Wife of Matthew Wright. 1. P. 128.) 30 Sep. 1584.

LAWRENCE WRIGHT of N. Gent. = Margaret dau. to Robt. Pickering of N. Tanner. Marr. c. 1574. Died 18 Feb. bur. 19 Feb. 1617-8. Will dated 25 Dec. 1617 Inventory, dated 25 Feb. 1617-8, amounts to £792 17s. 4d. Ann dau. to Roger Wettenhall of Calveley. John Mainwaring of Nantwich. Margaret, wife of John Church of N. Margaret dau. to Robt. Pickering of N. Tanner. Marr. c. 1574. Died 18 Feb. bur. 19 Feb. 1617-8. Will dated 25 Dec. 1617 Inventory, dated 25 Feb. 1617-8, amounts to £792 17s. 4d. Elizabeth W. wife of John Newton of Pow- nail Esp. Bap. 28 Oct. 1597. (See Earwaker's *East Chesh.* Vol. I. P. 128.) 4 Margaret W. wife of John Weaver Shade of Poole, a Charity to N. recorded at N. 5. Dorothy W. wife of John Egges, issue recorded at N. 6. Margery W. wife of William Newton of Pow- nail Esp. Bap. 28 Oct. 1597. (See Earwaker's *East Chesh.* Vol. I. P. 128.) 30 Sep. 1584. 1 Elizabeth Wright, Will dated Minshall of N. 14 July, 1604. 2 Cecelia W. Bap. 21 Feb. 1575-6. Wife of Richard Haughton. 5 JAMES WRIGHT mercer. Will dated 27 July, 1604. Bur. 1697. Marie, dau. to Matthew Wright. 6 Roger Wright of N. Will dated 14 July, 1604. Bur. 1697. 21 Feb. 1575-6. Wife of Matthew Wright. 1. P. 128.) 30 Sep. 1584.

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## THE COMBERBACH FAMILY.

The COMBERBACHS of Nantwich were tanners in Barker Street for four generations, from ROGER COMBERBACH, who carried on that trade in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and died in the year 1603, to his great-grandson, JOHN COMBERBACH, who says—

"May ye 1 day 1691, I began the Trade of Tan[n]ing."

And again—

"I follow'd the Tanning trade Eighteen years and some odd months."

ROGER COMBERBACH, by his Will, dated 14th March, 1602 (proved 1603) bequeaths his goods, &c. to be divided between his wife Margaret, and his children, *Thomas, Roger, John, and Margaret*. Mention is made of his mother-in-law Salmon; his brother Richard, to whom he gave his "cloak;" his "men servants" who were "to continue to tanne out the lethr in the pike after as my executors shall thinke fittest."

He was buried at Nantwich on 18th March, 1602-3; and his wife, Margaret Salmon, whom he had married on 12th June, 1592, was also buried here on 6th Feb. 1638. His second son, ROGER COMBERBACH, who has already been mentioned amongst the "disclaimers of gentility" (page 196), fulfilled the office of Churchwarden in 1636, and was buried on 29th Sept. 1678; his personal estate being appraised at £6182 8s. 4d. By his Will, proved 8th Oct. 1678, he left a Charity to the poor of Hospital Street and Barker Street.

JOHN COMBERBACH, third son of the first-named Roger, was succeeded by his son, JAMES COMBERBACH, tanner, of Nantwich, who was buried on 20th Oct. 1696, and left three sons; namely:—

1. *Roger Comberbach*, who became in 1688 clerk of the Courts of Pentice, Crownmote and Portmote for Chester; in 1700 Recorder for that City; and subsequently a Welsh Judge. His grandson of the same name, assumed the name of *Sweettenham* on inheriting the ancient possessions of that family at Somerford Booths, in this county.

2. *John Comberbach*, who has already been mentioned as a tanner at Nantwich in and after the year 1691, and who is also described in the parish Registers as a maltster. His descendants continued at Nantwich until the beginning of the present century; one of the last of the family being *John Comberbach*, who was buried at Nantwich on 4th Nov. 1800, at the age of eighty-one.

3. *James Comberbach*, who settled at Chester, and fulfilled the office of Mayor of that City in 1727.

For further particulars relating to this family the reader is referred to an interesting volume entitled "*Collections for a Genealogical Account of the Family of Comberbach*," (Lond. 1866) by George W. Marshall, LL.B., who has treated the subject in a very able and exhaustive manner.

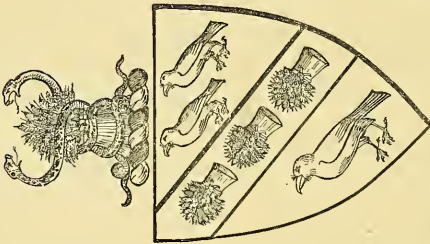
The present Rector of Nantwich has a very curious engraving of the South West Prospect of Nantwich Church, undated, and subscribed "*John Comberbach Delin.*" and "*W. Pritchard Sculpo.*" Its chief curiosity is, however, its inaccuracy of detail and faults of perspective; so that, although the print may be scarce, it is of no intrinsic value.

## THE WICKSTED FAMILY.

The following pedigree, which is re-printed from Dr. Ormerod's work with such additions as the Parish Register affords, supplies all that has occurred relating to this once important family.

# Wicksted Pedigree.

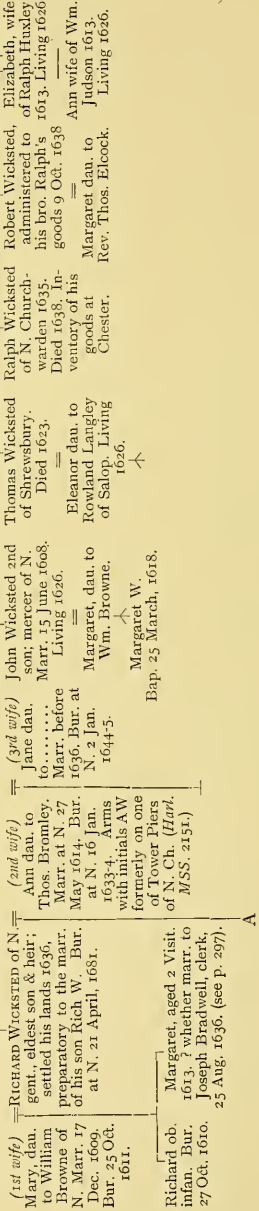
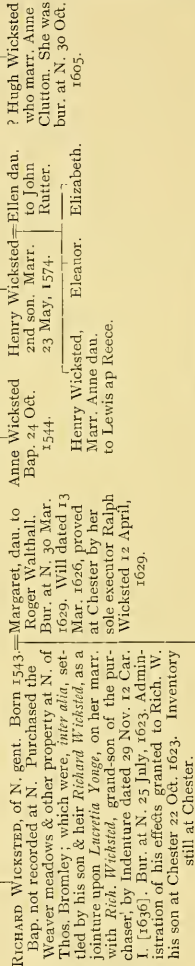
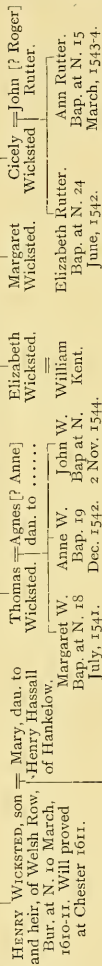
*Authorities*: Dr. Ormerod's Pedigree in *History of Cheshire*, Vol. III. p. 233 (Old Edit.) p. 442 (New Edit.) which is based on Visit. 1613, and records of the College of Arms, Parish Registers; &c.



**ARMS.** Argent, a bend Azure, charged with three garbs Or, between three crow's Sable, beaked and legged Gules.

**CREST.** On a wreath two serpents proper, issuing from and twining round a garb Or.

JOHN WICKSTED, a younger son of  
..... Wicksted of Wicksted. *temp.* Hen. 8.      Anne, dau. to  
Henry Bradford.





A

**RICHARD WICKSTED**, gent., of N., son and heir. Born = Lucretia, dau. to John Yonge of Pembly, co. Salop, gent. Settlement before marriage after Herald's Visit. 1613. Bap. not recorded at N. dated 29 Nov. 1630; described as the "relict of Richard Wicksted, late of Wiche Mabank, gent., deceased," in an assignment of part of her jointure to her son Thos. Wicksted, dated 1 Sept. 1673. Party to the settlement after the marriage of her son, Thos. Wicksted, with Susannah Haycock, dated 2 April, 1675. Burred at N. 11 Dec. 1696.

(1st wife) = **John Wicksted** = (2nd wife) = **Thomas Wicksted**, of N., gent., = Susanna dau. to Richard Wicksted, of Mickley, co. Cest.; Mary, gent. Living in Anna Smith named in the settlement 1642. Wicksted gent. Described in the Settlement 2 April 1642, but died before 1 Jan. Party to the Assignment 1673. = Edward Manley, N. 8 before 3 April, 1666. Bap. 1667-8. Bur. 1667-8. Bur. settled his lands after his marriage, by Indenture dated 2 April 1675. Bur. at N. 22 Dec. 1674. at N. 20 Nov. 1701. was paying him a visit at the time) in *Will. MS.*, 700r.

**John Wicksted**, Bap. 29 Sep. 1668. Thos. Wicksted, Richard Wicksted, Attorney. Marr. at Walsaston 16 July 1696. Bap. 13 Sep. 1673. Bap. 29 June, 1673.

Mary Jobb of Nantwich.

**Thomas Wickstep**, of N., gent. Bap. 11 April, 1683. Killed by a fall of his horse. Bur. at N. 7 July, 1707.

**Katherine**, dau. to Samuel Watkiss, of Aston, co. Salop, gent. Marr. at Wem, 27 May, 1705. Marriage articles dated the day before.

**Thomas Wickstep** of N. Gent., Attorney. Posthumous son. Bap. at N. 4 March, 1707-8. (See Monument.)

Grissel, dau. to Charles Fletcher, of Whitchurch, Salop, Esq. Bur. at N. 21 Aug. 1784. (See Monument, page 318.) (N.B.—Upon the death of her brother, *John Fletcher*, of Lichfield, Esq., without male issue, the manor of Wigland, and other property in co. Cest. was vested by settlement in her son Thomas Wicksted.)

**Thomas Wickstep** of N. = Anne, eldest dau. to John Bennion, of Chorton, co. Cest. Bap. 3 April, 1732. Bur. 9 Feb. 1737. Bur. 18 Apl. 1746. s. p.

**Charles Wicksted** = (1st wife) = Richard = (2nd wife) = Elizabeth, Bap. 18 Esq. Bap. 3 April, 1732. dau. to John Bennion, of Chorton, co. Cest. Bap. 27 Jan. 1814. Bur. 18 Apl. 1746. s. p. Bap. 9 Feb. 1737. Bur. 18 Apl. 1746. s. p. Bap. 29 Sep. 1734. Bur. 29 Sep. 1734. Bur. 1734-4. Bur. 1734-4. Bur. at N. 1 Feb. 1771. Had issue a son an dau., both died s. p.

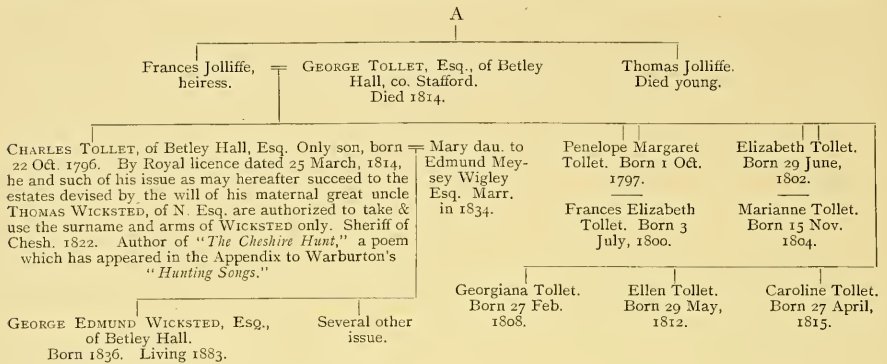
**Frances Wicksted**, Bap. 5 July, 1739. Marr. at N. 4 July, 1771. William Jolliffe, Merchant of Hull, co. York.

**Martha Wicksted**, wife of James Swan of Wavertree, co. Lanc. Marr. at Childwall; had issue *James Wicksted Swan* Esq., B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge.

**Mary Wicksted**, Living unmarried 1815.

**Mary Wicksted**, Bap. 1736. Bur. 17 Nov. 1752. s. p.

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Accounts of other local families not less interesting or important than some that have been treated of in this already long chapter, such, for example, as the CLUTTONS, the DELVES, the PRATCHETTS, might have been included had time and space permitted. A notice of the *Cluttons* of this town has appeared in an article contributed to Mr. Earwaker's "*Local Gleanings Magazine*," (pp. 260-6, and 297-304); where I have endeavoured to show how different in appearance the interiors of respectable houses in country towns like Nantwich must have been two or three hundred years ago. Concerning the Inventory of Margery Clutton's goods, which is there printed in full, as appraised by Hugh Mainwaring, Matthew Mainwaring, Roger Wright and John Maisterston, Gents., on 25th July, 1611, I have said that the heavy, scant, plain furniture, consisting only of long tables, stools, and forms (only eight chairs are mentioned in that lady's house, which contained fourteen rooms) chests, cupboards, and bedsteads; the valuable plate for special, and the abundant service of pewter for common use; chests containing beef and bacon, which had been either salted in brine or dried in the smoke of the capacious kitchen-chimney; other chests with stores of home-spun linen, &c.; the former suggesting the slaughter of stalled oxen in summer time for the supply of meat from Michaelmas to Whitsuntide, when markets were irregularly attended owing to the bad state of the roads; and the latter suggesting the spinning of flax and carding of wool by the family and servants during long winter nights; one solitary "*seeinge glasse*," (what would our ancestors have said to the staring mirrors of drawing-rooms of the present day?) no clock, no fender, no pictures,

few books, &c., and the absence of many common conveniences and elegancies of these days;—all these are evidence of the simplicity and frugality of our ancestors in their domestic arrangements, while they afford a striking contrast to the luxury and ostentation of modern tastes and fashions.

Doubtless many persons, who have received but a passing notice in this history, will be rescued from obscurity by some future genealogist who may be engaged in tracing out their posterity. Thus, for example, it is an interesting fact that about the year 1650 a family in humble life, named *Sharples*, emigrated from Nantwich, or its immediate neighbourhood, to America; where their descendants have continued, and are now represented by merchant princes of that name in Philadelphia; relatives of the late Colonel J. Lemuel Chester, D.C.L., LL.D., who some years ago personally searched the registers at Wybunbury for the purpose of tracing out the ancestry of that family.

It has been pointed out in the foregoing pages that Nantwich has had two important crises in its history,—the Great Fire of 1583, and the scourge of Cholera in 1849. It is also noteworthy that during the period that intervened between the calamity of three hundred years ago, and the outbreak of the Civil War, the town produced its greatest men;—men of learning, wealth, and position. May the spirit of improvement and activity which has manifested itself since the latter event, in like manner, prevent this ancient town from becoming a decayed town; and, as education advances, may men of intelligence and enterprise again be produced that shall be the boast of future days; and may the bells long continue to ring out, and ring out truly, to the inhabitants around, “PROSPERITY TO THIS TOWN AND PARISH, PEACE AND GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD.”



# ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.



WILLIAM MALBANK is said (on page 16) to have been the founder of ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL; and in further proof of that statement it may be added that an Inquisition *post mortem*, dated 6 Hen. IV. [1404-5] recites that "William Maubank [Malbank] formerly Lord and Baron of Nantwich died seized of the site of *St. Nicholas Hospital in Nantwich*, a Hall, and 2 salt-pits with all the lands and perquisites belonging to the said Hospital. These were granted by him to God and to St. Nicholas of the said Hospital in pure and perpetual alms to support a certain priest celebrating Divine

service in the said Hospital for ever."<sup>\*</sup>

Dr. Ormerod, in his additions to the *History of Cheshire* (Old Edition) mentions a "singularly curious oak chest," said to have once belonged to St. Nicholas Hospital in Nantwich, which he purchased from a tenant at Erdswick Hall in this county. He says the chest had belonged to the Astons of Hulgreve Hall, who participated in the divisions of the religious spoil at the Reformation. In his description of the chest, the Cheshire historian was of opinion that the carved work in the centre of the front represented the coronation of Henry VI, and so approximately fixed the date of its construction. But the celebrated architect A. Pugin, who gives three excellent engravings of the chest, suggests that the centre-piece is a representation of the Holy Trinity and the Virgin.<sup>†</sup>

WILLIAM HILL, the last Master and Priest of the Hospital, paid his Composition for first-fruits to the Crown, on becoming Incumbent of the said Hospital, on 28th March 32 Hen. VIII. [1541].—(*Record Society Publ.* vol. viii. p. 394.)

On page 52, line 22, *dele* the words "(see map.)" The reason for this will be found in the Preface.

<sup>\*</sup> Public Record Office; and transcripts of Cheshire Inquisitions *penes* J. P. Earwaker, Esq., F.S.A.

<sup>†</sup> See Pugin's "*Examples of Gothic Architecture*," 1822, vol. ii. pp. 22—28. Plate xlv.

Page 54.—RICHARD WRIGHT, the last Incumbent of St. Lawrence Hospital, paid his Composition for first-fruits to the Crown on 19th Oct. 37 Hen. VIII. [1545.] (*Ibid* p. 395.)

On page 56, line 2, for "aftewards" *read* afterwards.

On page 56, line 21, for "SIR JAME" *read* SIR JAMES.

On page 56, lines 27 and 31, for "siezed" *read* seized.

On page 68, line 18, for "chimnies" *read* chimneys.

On page 97, line 5, for "grandfather" *read* grandson.

On the gravestone alluded to on page 97 are the words "*See the adjoining stone;*" referring probably to the gravestone of *Maria Sparke*. All that is decipherable of the now imperfect inscription is—\*

"MARIA SPARKE. Conditur hoc Maria..... 1595."

Page 98.—The following abstract of the Inquisition *post mortem* of Roger Sparke, probably identical with Roger Sparke named in the Subsidy Roll of 1545, may here be added.

*Inquisition p.m.* dated 27 May 11 Eliz. [1569].

"ROGER SPARKE Gent. died [date not given] leaving *Robert Sparke* his son and heir, aged 18 yrs. 6 mo. 3 wks. and 4 days. He died seised of 5 messuages, 2 salt-houses, 100 acres of land, 40 of pasture, 10 of meadow, 10 of wood, 100 of bruery [heath] and 10 of moor; and 3s. rent in Nantwich, Wolstanwood and Burland; and 20 acres of land in Henhull which descended to *Phillip Sparke* his younger son in taile. *Blanche* the wife of the said Roger Sparke survived him, and had a third part of all the said lands and tenements for her dower during her life."

Page 99, three lines from the bottom: The Inquisition *post mortem* of Roger Crockett Gent. of Nantwich, who died on 19th Dec. 1572, was taken at Nantwich on 28th Aug. 23 Eliz. [1581], when *Robert Crockett* his son and next heir was found to be of the age of 20 years 3 months and upwards.

On the 20th Aug. 20 Jac. I. [1623] Robert Crockett, late of Nantwich, Gent., was found to have died on 13th March 9 Jac. I. [1612-3] leaving *Thomas Crockett* his son and heir, aged 30. (*Inq. p.m.*)

*Isabell*, the wife of Robert Crockett, is named in the Will of John Davenport, of Wistaston, Gent., dated 8 Jan. 1595-6. (*Chesh. Wills*. Cheth. Soc. Pub. vol. li. p. 182.)

Page 105, nineteen lines from the bottom: *John Wydenbury* [or Wybunbury] who is mentioned as the landlord of the *Swan* Inn in 1583, is named in his father's Inquisition *post mortem*, an abstract of which is as follows:—

*Inquisition p. m.* dated 13 Dec. 24 Hen. VII. [1508].

"ROBERT WIBBUNBURY died on Thursday next before the feast of St. Michael the Archangel [29 Sep.] last past [1508] leaving *John Wibbunbury* his son and heir, who was the age of one year and upwards on the day of the taking of this Inquisition. He died seised [*inter alia*] of lands in Bridesmere, Checkley, Wystaston; an annual Rent of 12s. issuing out of a messuage in Nantwich held by Ralph Toore [? Goore] and 11 gardens and 3 acres of land, and 3 acres of meadow there; &c. Also lands in Newhall; a messuage in Nantwich aforesaid called the "*Swanne*;" &c. He granted the same to Ralph Delves, Esq., [of Dodington] John Wynnyngton of the Hermytage [in Wybunbury] Thomas Maynwarving and others and their

\* I am indebted to J. Brooking Rome, Esq., F.S.A., President of the Devonshire Association, for an exact copy of the Sparke memorials, which was received too late for insertion on page 97.

heirs to the use of Catharine Maynwarng the daughter of Randle Maynwarng of Kermyncham Esq., who was then the wife of the said Robert, for her life, who survived him and was living at the time of the taking of this Inquisition."

The Certificate given on page 114 is signed by the following Town Officers and Jurymen; namely—

RICHARD CLUTTON, Sen <sup>lms</sup> [ <i>i.e.</i> Seneschal or Steward of the Cholmondeley Court].			
John Church	} Bailiffs.	Rychard Maystersone	Edward Massye
Rauffe Elcock		William Hassall	tho: tench.
William Huxley	} Constables	Hughe Manwaring	Richard Wilbraham
Raphe Massie		Rand: Minshall	tobyas Tench 1605.

It has been stated (pp. 114, 215) that the Assizes were held at Nantwich on two occasions, namely, in 1605 and 1716. By the following extract of a deed it appears that the Chester Courts were also held at Nantwich in 1648.

"Fine levied in the King's Court of Chester at Wich Malbanc co. Chester, 3 April 24 Charles [1648] before John Bradshaw Esq. Justice of the said lord the King at Chester, and Peter Warburton, Esq., the other Justice of the said lord the King there." &c.\*

Page 138.—ANDREW BOWRY is mentioned in the local Registers thus:—

"1637. April 11. Married Andrew Bowrye minister of Gods word and Anne Slade."—(*Wybunbury Reg.*)

"1646. May 3. Thos. son of Andrew Bowrie Minister."—(*Nantwich Bapt. Reg.*)

Page 176.—*Capt. Thomas Steele* is said to have been a cheese-factor (Newcome's *Autobiography*, p. 95). In the Register of Baptisms is the following entry:—

"1632-3. Feb. 24. Sarah, dau. of Thomas Steele factor."

Page 177.—*Doddington Hall*. Wybunbury Register records—

"1643-4. March 24. Thomas Banforth a souldier slaine at dodington was buried."

Page 186.—*Dele note (o)*. JOHN KELSALL was the son of William Kelsall, vicar of Audley (See Hinchliffe's *Barthomley*, p. 169). His name occurs in the Wybunbury Register as follows:—

"1667-8. March 3. Baptized John sonne of Mr. John Kelsall Cler'. at Barthomley."

Page 187.—THOMAS HARWAR appears to have belonged to a family resident at Bridgemere in Wybunbury Parish. The Registers there contain many entries of their names; among the rest are:—

"1650. May 30. Buried Thomas Harwar senior gent."

"1658. May 12. Buried Capt. Thomas Harwar of Bridgemere."

"1662-3. Jan. 10. Buried Thomas Harwar of Bridgemere, gent. from Nantwich."

Page 201.—In the Churchwardens' Accounts at Wybunbury, under date 1688, occurs the following entry of parish money paid to:—

"Edward Carter, Morice Carter & Robert Merrill being protestants disbanded from Ireland & having the Country disease ..... £00 01s. 06d."

Page 231.—*Slaughter-houses*. In the early years of this century the inhabitants were accustomed to see offensive refuse and carrion in undisturbed heaps in the principal streets

\* Kindly communicated by J. P. Earwaker, Esq., F.S.A.

of the town; the town officers being very remiss in their duty of attending to the proper cleansing of the streets. (*Cf.* page 68.) Old people now living remember an open shop that stood in the centre of the town, on the site of handsome premises now occupied by Mr. S. Harlock, where Mr. E. Barrowcliffe, butcher, *killed* and *dressed* his meat, before exposing it for sale.

Page 239.—In 1819 Dr. Ormerod stated (*Hist. Chesh.*) that there were *three* fairs held in this town; namely, on March 26th, September 4th, and December 4th; to which he might have added another fair held on the first Saturday after Candlemas Day [Feb. 2], then, and *now*, called *New Market*. In the same year another fair was commenced on the second Tuesday in June, and called the *New Fair*. (Advertisement in the Macclesfield "*Courier*," 5th June, 1819). This fair is still held on the same day, and is commonly known as the *June Fair*.

In the last line on page 243, for "the Marquis of Cholmondeley" read John (now Lord) Tollemache.

On page 247, line 25; the Unitarian Chapel was renovated in 1849, *not* 1852.

Page 248, line 20. It is an interesting fact that the Nantwich Association of Parochial Choirs is the oldest in the Chester Diocese. (*Nantwich Parish Magazine*, Sep. 1883.)

Page 250, line 14. Thomas Hassall is stated to have completed his hundredth year at the time of his death in 1875, on the affirmation of his son, Charles Hassall, of Nantwich, now living. This, however, is incorrect. The same Thomas Hassall, joiner, is mentioned in a foot-note of page 474 as being seventy-five years of age in 1854; consequently, in 1875 he would be ninety-six years old. This is further corroborated by the entry in the Parish Magazine of his burial, thus:—

"1875, Aug. 11. Thomas Hassall, Beam Street, *aged* 96 years."

Another inmate of the same Almshouses, *John Horton*, was buried on the 6th Dec. 1879, at the advanced age of ninety-five. (*Ibid.*)

Page 251.—In the present year (1883) the brine at the Old Pit, near the Town Hall, was analysed by Dr. Frankland, D.C.L., F.R.S., whose report of the proportionate chemical ingredients is as follows.

	Grains of Saline matter per Imperial Gallon.
Chloride of Sodium .....	14697.01
Chloride of Potassium .....	135.28
Bromide of Potassium .....	1.67
Carbonate of Lime .....	15.49
Carbonate of Soda.....	6.95
Sulphate of Lime .....	455.99
Chloride of Magnesium .....	157.90
Sulphate of Soda .....	353.09
Alumina and Peroxide of Iron .....	2.53
Silica.....	.47
Nitrate of Soda .....	.47

In the summer of 1883 Alderman J. M. Bennett, Esq., of Manchester, commenced boring operations in the field called *Bathing Meadow*, belonging to Shrewbridge Hall Estate, and discovered brine at a depth of about 140 feet.

Page 252, twelve lines from the bottom; for "Itineras" *read* Itinera.

Page 253.—Several salt-pits (wich-houses) in Nantwich belonging to Lilleshall Abbey were leased to Roger Mainwaring on 20th Dec. 16 Hen. VII. [1500]; and to John Leech, on 13th July 17 Hen. VIII. [1525]. (*Record Soc. Publ.* vol. vii. p. 169).

Page 271, line 20; for "age" *read* ago. *Apropos* of glove making, although the manufacture ceased over twenty years ago, the *Nantwich glove*, as a superior article in the trade, is still sold.

Page 301-3.—To the notice of Dr. Brooke, it may be added that an oil portrait of him in wig and gown, is now in the possession of E. Delves Broughton, Esq., of Wistaston Hall, near Nantwich.

Page 305.—The death of the Rev. A. Clarkson was announced as follows in the Macclesfield "*Courier*:"—

"On March 3. [1819] at Nantwich in the 71st year of his age Anthony Clarkson A.M. *Chaplain to the Duke of Leeds*, and Rector of Nantwich, and of *Langwith co. Derby*." (Communicated by J. P. Earwaker, Esq.)

Page 399-400. To the account of the Independent Chapel it may be added that—Mrs. Scott, the widow of Capt. Scott, invested the sum of £1000 in trustees for the benefit of the Minister for the time being of the Independent Chapel in Church Lane, Nantwich.

Also, that the late Miss Janet Ramsay, in memory of her brother Gilbert, founded a scholarship, known as the "*Gilbert Ramsay Scholarship*," of the annual value of £30, open to all students entering the Lancashire Independent College, Whalley Range, Manchester, for the full curriculum.

Page 400, line 14, for "1819" *read* 1849.

Page 400, line 17, for "Kitchen" *read* Hilditch.

Page 445, line 16, for "have" *read* has.

Page 463, line 8, for "Wohdhey" *read* Woodhey.

Page 472, line 20, insert *of* after the word "wife."





## THE EDDOWES FAMILY.

To the passing notice of the EDDOWES family in the chapter on Nonconformity, is here appended the pedigree alluded to on page 389 *note*; containing the names of several persons mentioned in that chapter, and, in the later descents, showing the connection of the family with the BOWMANS of Macclesfield and Nantwich; three of whom, natives of this town, have, during the present century, risen to eminence, and as such deserve special mention before concluding this volume.

The EDDOWES family appears to have been originally of Welsh extraction. An ancient pedigree, still extant, traces the family back to Howel Dhu, Prince of Wales, and Tudor Trevor, Earl of Hereford.\* A "JOHN EDOW, of Hanmer, living *temp.* Eliz. and James I;" and another "JOHN EDDOWES of the Middle Temple 1673," who entered his pedigree at the Herald's College, are mentioned in the Salisbury MS., in the possession of Sir Watkin Wynn; and possibly they were related to the undermentioned *Ranulph* and *Roger Eddowes* of Whitchurch, Salop.

RANULPH EDDOWES (or *Eddowe*, as his name is also spelled) of Tybroughton, near Whitchurch, Gent., in the year 1606 sold to his brother, *Roger Eddowes*, for the sum of 200 marks, a messuage in Whitchurch, with four closures of land, &c., which he had purchased from William Chydlowe, Gent. These lands, described as "neere the Hall of Hinton," had been in the possession of the Chydlowe family as early as 8 Henry V. [1420].†

ROGER EDDOWES, of Whitchurch, Mercer, by his will dated 17th March, 1646, bequeathed the property purchased from his brother, to his son *Joshua Eddowes* and his heirs, on condition of his paying to his three brothers, *William, Randolph, and Ralph*, £100; and the like sum to the children of his brother *Thomas*, deceased; all by instalments within a certain period after his decease. He was also possessed of some freehold property in Whitchurch, which descended in a direct line to *John Eddowes*, of Nantwich, who, dying without issue 1789, left it to *Ralph*, only son of his cousin, *John Eddowes*, of Chester.

Roger Eddowes was buried at Whitchurch on the 18th Nov. 1648.

ROGER EDDOWES, of Whitchurch, grocer and ironmonger, the son of Ralph Eddowes, and grandson of the above Roger Eddowes, was born about 1648 or 9. By a letter to his brother *Joshua*, dated 5th March, 1693, it appears that his property was very respectable; though, from the circumstance of his having portioned off his whole family of six children during his lifetime, and the general terms of his Will, which is dated 19th April, 1716, it is difficult to ascertain what he died possessed of. He does not seem to have retained much for his own expenditure, since his wants were few. "That he was a sincerely pious and virtuous character," writes the father of Sir W. Bowman in 1808, "cannot be doubted after perusal of a few invaluable letters written to his brother Joshua when in London, and now in my possession. They prove him to have been a man of considerable literary qualifications for that period. The principles of virtue which he so carefully instilled into his children, are yet the most valuable inheritance of their descendants, who are thus worthy of a name, *honourable* for being *his*."

He settled Broughall upon his eldest son, *John Eddowes*, on his marriage in 1703.

\* Sir William Bowman, Bart., has an "Ancient Pedigree of the Eddowes's, copied from a MS. folio volume, *penes* Athelstan Corbet, Esq., of Ynysymaengwyn, near Aberdovey."

† Deeds *penes* Sir W. Bowman, Bart.

JOHN EDDOWES, of High Town, Nantwich, ironmonger and grocer, where he was settled early in 1704, was born at Whitchurch in 1678. He had £150 on his first marriage, together with the Freehold and Copyhold property in Whitchurch heretofore in the possession of his grandfather, which was settled upon his issue. The Rev. Matthew Henry was consulted about this marriage, as appears from the following extract from his Diary:—

“30 Jan. 1702-3. In the evening with cousin Eddowes, finishing the treaty between him and cousin Crue, and with ye Recorder about drawing ye Articles.”

The marriage settlement, by which Susannah, eldest daughter of William Crue, of Chester, ironmonger, had £150 to her marriage portion, was executed the following day, and was witnessed by the Rev. Matthew Henry, “who spent some time at Cousin Crue’s in prayer, committing the work to the Lord.”

In 1722 John Eddowes purchased an estate at Stapeley, containing about thirty acres, which descended to the issue of his second marriage. The following disinterested act of friendship bears a most honourable testimony to his character. When his uncle, Joshua Eddowes, named his intention of leaving him the bulk of his property, he replied, that as it had pleased God to bless him with a competency, he would relinquish his claim in favour of others equally related, and who stood in greater need; whereupon he furnished him with their names and circumstances, agreeably with which his uncle made his Will, and appointed him his executor, with a legacy of £100. The trust, which was extensive and very complex, devolved to the widow and children of John Eddowes, who were not exonerated from it for forty years after his death. He and his descendants occupied the house in High Street (see illustration on page 110) for upwards of a century.

JOHN EDDOWES, of High Town, Nantwich, tobacconist and grocer, to which business he succeeded on the death of his mother, *Anne Eddowes*, was born in 1722. At his house, in and after the year 1758, the Rev. Joseph Priestley boarded. (See page 389). On the death of his brother *George*, John Eddowes enfranchised the land at Broughall from the Duke of Bridgewater, 5th July, 1765, for £30 13s. 9d. To his nephew, *Ralph*, he gave his estate at Stapeley; the property in Whitchurch, which had continued for five generations in the family; and the reversion of Broughall. He died unmarried, on the 18th March, 1789, and was buried in the Unitarian Chapel, where a flat stone still remains to his memory.

After the death of John Eddowes, the business in high Town, Nantwich, succeeded to his distant relative, EDDOWES BOWMAN, whose connection with the Eddowes family is shown in the subjoined pedigree, which contains other details relating to both families.

## Eddowes and Bowman Pedigree.

*Authorities:* A Pedigree on parchment compiled by John Eddowes Bowman, of Nantwich; attested by Joshua Eddowes, of Shrewsbury, Printer, his grandfather, on 18th Feb. 1808; collated with a MS. pedigree by the late Joseph Hunter, F.S.A., now preserved in *Add. MSS.* Brit. Mus. 24,444 f. 106; the later generations by information of Sir William Bowman, Bart., of Joldwynds, Dorking, Surrey.

RANULPH EDDOWE, of Tybroughton, nr. Whitchurch, Salop, Gent. In 1606 he sold to his brother *Roger E.*, for the sum of 200 marks, a messuage in Whitchurch with four closures of land, &c.

ROGER EDDOWE, of Whitchurch, Salop, mercer. Will dated 17 March, 1646. Bur. at Whitchurch 18 Nov. 1648.

Elizabeth, dau. to  
Bur. at Whitchurch  
12 Jan. 1645-6.



A		B	
<p>John Bowman. Born 20 May, 1757. Died, unmarried, aged 17. Died at Shrewsbury 30 Sep. 1844; aged 85 yrs.</p>	<p>Epimachus Bowman, of N. B. Born at Maclesfield 12 Nov. 1758. Settled at N. 1775. Succeeded the late <i>John Eddowes</i> in the business of Tobaccoist &amp; Grocer in 1789; retired in 1812; afterwards a Banker.</p>	<p>WILLIAM EDDOWES, of Shrewsbury, Printer, only son; born 2 Oct. 1754; died 4 Feb. 1835.</p>	<p>Lydia E. Eddowes, dau. of Elizabeth, wife of Joshua Ridgway of Bromington, Flint. <i>(1st wife)</i> John Eddowes, of St. Jude's, Bradford, Yorks. <i>(2nd wife)</i> Lydia E. Eddowes, dau. of John Eddowes, of St. Jude's, Bradford, Yorks. <i>(3rd wife)</i> Sarah E., wife of Hy. Bowman Esq., Archdect. issue.</p>
<p>Catharine Bowman. Born 19 June, 1792. Died, unmarried, 25 Jan. 1872, aged 79.</p>	<p>John EDDOWES BOWMAN of N. and afterwards of Welsbpool, Wrexham, and Manchester, Banker. Born 23 May, 1788. Marr. 6 July, 1809. Died in 1859; Buried at Manchester.</p>	<p>Wm. Eddowes. Born 27 July, 1789.</p>	<p>Lydia E. Mary Eddowes. Born 2 Feb. 1794 aged 10 Wife of W. Nealon. Died without issue.</p>
<p>Henry Bowman. Born 9 Nov. 1788. Died 20 July, 1823, aged 34.</p>	<p>HENRY BOWMAN, Esq. Born at N. Feb. 1814. Settled at Manchester as an Architect. Died 14 May, 1883. Buried at Dorking, Surrey. No issue.</p>	<p>SIR WILLIAM BOWMAN, BART. = Harriet, 5th dau. to L.L.D., F.R.S., F.L.S., F.G.S., John &amp;c. Born at N. 20 July, 1816; Eddowes. Marr. 28 Dec. 1842. Created Baronet 1883. Surgeon to King's Coll. Hospital, and the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital. Now (1883) living near Dorking, Surrey.</p>	<p>JOHN EDDOWES BOWMAN = Ellen, 4th dau. Esq. Born at Welsbpool to Thos. Paget, Esq., Surgeon, Practical Chemistry at King's College, London. Bn. 8 Jan. 1814. Died at Kensington 10 Feb. 1844. Died 9 May, 1868.</p>
<p>Wm. Paget Bowman. Born 25 Sept. 1845. M.A. of Univ. Oxon. Registrar to the Sons of the Clergy. Marr. 9 Aug. 1876. Living in 1883.</p>	<p>Mary Bowman. Born 24 May, 1877. Married to Alfred Bray Kempe Esq., P.R.S., 3rd son of Rev. J. E. Kempe, sometime of the Priory of St. James, West; &amp; presentlly of St. Paul's.</p>	<p>Agnes Bow = John Conyers Merriman, Esq., Surgeon, Kensington. 14 Nov. 1876.</p>	<p>JOHN FREDERICK BOW = Cecelia Charrington MAN, Esq. Born 1 Nov. 1850. Educ. at Eton. A Solicitor in London. of Mr's Court, nr. Keigate.</p>
<p>Angela Bowman. Born 8 Oct. 1852. Died 8 Oct. 1852.</p>	<p>Eliza Bowman. Eldest daughter. Fanny Poole Bowman. Born 22 July, died 27 Oct. 1845.</p>	<p>John Wm. Bowman Merriman. Ruth Agnes. Born 20 Sep. 1877.</p>	<p>Dorothea Percy Bowman. B. 26 July, 1879</p>
<p>Paget Mervyn Bowman, born 1873. Muriel Paget Bowman, born 1875. Guy Eddowes Bowman, born 1878.</p>	<p>Rev. Arthur Gerald Bowman. M.A. Born 14 Feb. 1854. Vicar of St. Andrew 5, Westminster.</p>	<p>Edith, 3rd dau. of late Wm. Paget, Esq., of St. Anne's Manor, Sutton, Bonnington, Notts. Marr. 30 July, 1879.</p>	<p>HARRY ERNEST BOWMAN, M.R.C.S., ENG. Born 29 April, 1855. Now (1883) an Artist.</p>
<p>Edith Bowman = George W. Molineux, Esq. of Eastbourne. Marr. 20 Sep. 1883.</p>	<p>John HERRIGER BOWMAN, Esq. Born 27 Sep. 1846. Under Secretary in Bank of England.</p>	<p>GEORGE CYRIL BOWMAN. Born 2 Jan. 1849.</p>	<p>Frederica Caroline, dau. to John J. Merriman, Esq., Surgeon, Kensington. Marr. 17 April, 1873.</p>
<p>Herbert Lister Bowman. Born 15 March, 1874.</p>	<p>John Merriman Bowman. Born 29 Aug. 1874.</p>	<p>Ethel Mary Bowman.</p>	<p></p>

## THE BOWMAN FAMILY.

The ancestors of the BOWMANS mentioned in the above pedigree belonged to East Cheshire and Derbyshire, and trace their descent from John Bowman, who died Oct. 31st, 1661. The first to settle at Nantwich was EDDOWES BOWMAN, who succeeded *John Eddowes* in the business of tobacconist and grocer in High Town, in the year 1789; from which he retired in 1812, and became a partner with Mr. Hewitt in a Banking speculation, that proved unsuccessful, and collapsed in Feb. 1816 (see page 237). In 1814 he purchased from the Leversage family of this town the house in Hospital Street, known as *Sweet-briar Hall* (see illustration page 353). In 1817 Messrs. Joseph Skerrett and Benjamin Rodenhurst, Assignees of the estate and effects of Messrs. Hewitt, Bowman, and Bowman, (Bankers) bankrupts, together with Miss Catharine Bowman, and Mr. Eddowes Bowman, sold the property to Miss Mary Bennion; whose sister, Miss Elizabeth Bennion, bequeathed the same to Miss E. H. McClure, afterwards the wife of the late Edward Butterworth, Esq.

The Bank failure above mentioned caused the Bowman family to leave Nantwich in 1816, and to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Eddowes Bowman died at the age of eighty-five years, on the 30th Sept. 1844, having lived to see his son, *John Eddowes Bowman*, and some of his grandchildren rise to distinction.

Of JOHN EDDOWES BOWMAN, who pre-deceased his father in 1841, mention has already been made in foot-notes on pages 310 and 348. He was personally acquainted with Bewick, the celebrated engraver, and was a life-long friend of the antiquary, Joseph Hunter, F.S.A., with whom he corresponded much. Some of his letters are preserved in the British Museum amongst the Hunterian correspondence. As a young man while at Nantwich, he appears to have been eager, though under difficulties, in the pursuit of knowledge. Thus in a letter to his friend, dated "Nantwich 7 Nov. 1803," lamenting the disadvantages for study under which he was then placed, he writes:—

"Indeed I never knew such a town as ours is; there is scarcely a person that takes any delight in any species of literature; excepting a very few, who from fortune or other obstacles, are excluded from me; so I am quite solitary, and never hear any literary news, and very seldom can see a Magazine."

In another letter, dated 31st July, 1803, he mentions the visit to the town of the brothers LYSONS, for the purpose of collecting information, and obtaining sketches, for their then forthcoming History of Cheshire; and says, that one of them preached in the Church.

In 1816 John Eddowes Bowman left Nantwich for Welshpool; and about ten years after moved to Wrexham. In both these towns he found leisure to pursue with ardour those botanical and geological studies which occupied all the moments he could spare from his business as a Banker; and the passion for which induced him, in 1830, to retire to Gresford, and subsequently, in 1837, to Manchester, where he sought a larger circle of men of congenial tastes. There he died in 1841 of a fever contracted while geologizing in the mountains of North Wales. "The late Mr. Bowman," says Sir Charles Lyell, (*Student's Elements of Geology*, Edit. 1871, p. 382), "was the first who gave a satisfactory explanation of the manner in which distinct coal-seams, after maintaining their independence for miles, may at length unite, and then persist throughout another wide area with a thickness equal to that which the separate seams had previously maintained." The Rev. W. S. Symonds (*Record of the Rocks*, 1872, p. 154), and other writers on Geology, associate him with Professor Sedgwick, Lyell, and other authorities on that science.

The following notice of his death appeared in the Manchester Guardian for Dec. 11th, 1841.

“The death of this very intelligent and excellent gentleman, which was announced in our last number, will be a great loss to science. He was indefatigable in the pursuit of knowledge, and his time and talents were most willingly devoted to its advancement. In his botanical and geological investigations he displayed a perseverance, activity, and acuteness, seldom surpassed; and he had no greater pleasure than in the discovery and communication of any new fact illustrative of the wisdom, power, or benevolence of the Deity. Soon after the commencement of his residence in Manchester, he became intimately acquainted with the different cultivators of kindred studies; and, by the activity of his mind, and his zeal for the promotion of knowledge, no less than by the accuracy and solidity of his own acquirements, proved one of the most valuable and efficient members of the principal scientific institutions of this town and neighbourhood. His exemption from the absorbing avocations of business enabled him to concentrate his whole attention on objects of science, and to afford a kind and degree of assistance in promoting them, which few others had it in their power to give, and the loss of which it will not be easy to replace. To those who had the happiness of enjoying his private friendship he was endeared by the amiable cheerfulness and simplicity of his manners; by his unaffected readiness to communicate information, and by his generous ardour on behalf of every object and institution connected with the diffusion of knowledge, and with the extension of the means of human virtue and happiness. Those who knew him most intimately can best appreciate the genuine piety and benevolence of heart which formed the animating principle of his character, and pervaded every relation of his domestic life. By his associates in the Literary and Philosophical, the Natural History, and Geological Societies of Manchester, his memory will be warmly cherished; and his death will be deeply regretted by the most distinguished members of the British Association, especially when they assemble in this town next year. His communications to the Transactions of the Linnæan, Geological and other societies, will form lasting evidence of his acquirements, and valuable memorials to his relatives and friends.”

By his wife, Elizabeth Eddowes, who was his cousin-german, he had four sons and one daughter.

EDDOWES BOWMAN, M.A., eldest son of John Eddowes Bowman, was for some time a Professor of Classics in the Manchester New College. He died at Manchester, unmarried, on the 10th July, 1869.

HENRY BOWMAN, second son of J. E. Bowman, who was born at Nantwich in 1814, lived for many years in Manchester as an eminent Architect. In connection with his partner, J. S. Crowther, Esq., he published a very handsome work in two volumes, entitled “*The Churches of the Middle Ages.*” Among the plates contained in that work is a series, fourteen in number, illustrative of the Church of his native town; from which three have been re-produced for this history. On his retirement, he left Manchester to reside at Brockham Green, near Reigate, and died there on the 14th May, 1883.

JOHN EDDOWES BOWMAN, youngest brother of the above Henry Bowman, was born at Welshpool in 1819; and in after life became Professor of Practical Chemistry at King’s College, London, and was the author of a “*Practical Chemistry,*” and a “*Medical Chemistry.*” He died at Kensington in 1854.

Another brother of this very remarkable family, is SIR WILLIAM BOWMAN, BART., of London, now living; of whom the following notice has recently appeared in “*Men of Mark,*” 4th Series, page 29:—

“William Bowman, LL.D., F.R.S., was born at Nantwich, Cheshire, on July 20th 1816, being the third son of John Eddowes Bowman, F.L.S., F.G.S., a Banker in North Wales, and an ardent Naturalist. After being at Hazelwood School under the father of Sir Rowland Hill, of Post-office renown, he resided five years in the Birmingham General Hospital, and entered King's College, London in 1837. In 1840, '41, and '42, he presented papers of value to the Royal Society on “*Muscle*” and “*The Structure of the Kidney*,” and for the last was accorded the Royal Medal in Physiology. At 24 he was elected a Fellow of the Society; two years after to the Council; and he has since been a Vice-President. He contributed the article “*Surgery*” to the “*Encyclopædia Metropolitana*,” others to the “*Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology*,” and published with Dr. Todd the “*Physiological Anatomy and Physiology of Man*,” a work of wide repute. In 1846, being Demonstrator of Anatomy and Assistant-Surgeon at King's College Hospital, he joined the Moorfields Ophthalmic Hospital, and delivered a course of Lectures “*On the parts concerned in the Operations on the Eye, and on the Structure of the Retina*.” Though thus led towards a special branch of practice, he continued to be Surgeon to King's College Hospital till 1862; and he read the “*Address in Surgery*” before the British Medical Association at Chester in 1866. From 1848, he was joint-Professor of Physiology and of General and Morbid Anatomy in King's College; but withdrew from professorial work in 1855, under the exigencies of a large private practice. His services to King's College Hospital from its foundation, and to the College for 22 years were warmly acknowledged; he was named an Hon. Fellow; and is now on the Council. Recently he has become consulting Surgeon to Moorfields Hospital and a Vice-President. Mr. Bowman has been many years Vice-Chairman of the Clerical, Medical and General Life Assurance Society. He has taken an active part in improving the class of Nurses for the Sick, as a Member of the Council of St. John's House from 1848, and of the Nightingale Fund Council from 1856. His later professional writings have been on practical subjects connected with ophthalmology. He has received many marks of recognition from British and Foreign Scientific bodies.”

To the above account it may be added that this eminent gentleman, who has done incalculable service to humanity at large, has, in this month of December, 1883, had conferred on him by her Majesty the Queen the honor of a Baronetcy.

FINIS.

# GENERAL INDEX.

The NAMES OF PERSONS mentioned in the foregoing pages appear in this Index; except those occurring in the tabular Pedigrees.

NAMES OF PLACES,—*Fields, Streets*, particular *Houses*,—are printed in *Italics*. Those far distant from Nantwich are not included in this Index.

Names mentioned more than once on a page are only indexed once.

The modern way of spelling surnames and place-names has been adhered to in the Index; *e.g.* Maynwar yng, Mynshvll, &c., appear as Mainwaring, Minshull, &c.

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