

valued at £304 8s. 10d. Of William's early days we have found no record, nor do we know that he was helped on his career by Nicholas Stratford,* bishop of Chester 1689-1707, with whom Bishop Nicolson ate his Christmas dinner in 1704 (these *Transactions*, N.S. ii, 220). But Nicholas was a name in the family; William's mother seems to have been a Stratford by birth and her portrait with the bishop's was among the heirlooms in the will; and Chester was the scene of William Stratford's activities for the greater part of his life, so that some connexion seems probable. William went to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and took the degree of LL.D. From 1714 to 1726 he was secretary to Francis Gastrell, the famous bishop of Chester, and according to Nicolson and Burn (ii, 14) he wrote additions to Gastrell's *Notitia of the Diocese of Carlisle*, which give so detailed and distressing an account of the poverty of many parishes then in that diocese but now forming the southern part of the diocese of Carlisle. No doubt his knowledge of the district and its needs prompted him in the disposal of his wealth.

How his wealth came to him we do not know, unless it was in the way of business. He was not a clergyman but a lawyer, and a bachelor. After being the bishop's secretary for seven years he became Commissary of the Archdeaconry of Richmond; the letters patent to him, dated 1721, are recorded in the Chester Diocesan Registry.

* According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Nicholas Stratford was born 1633 at Hemel Hempstead, son of a tailor or shoemaker; Trinity College, Oxford, 1651, and fellow, 1657; Warden of the Collegiate Church of Manchester, 1657; D.D., 1673; Bishop of Chester, 1689. He founded a hospital for poor boys at Chester, 1700, and was one of the first governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, 1704. He married the daughter of Dr. Stephen Luddington, Archdeacon of Stow, and had two sons and two daughters. His only surviving son was William, Archdeacon of Richmond and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, from 1703 to his death in 1729. This William "bequeathed large estates to trustees for augmenting poor livings in the north and other pious uses" (D.N.B., which does not mention "our" William Stratford). That may have been so, but we suspect that he has been confused with his namesake.

He must have been often at Chester, to the end of his days, but he lived chiefly at Lancaster (though he bought the estate of Hall Beck in Killington, six miles north of Kirkby Lonsdale in the Lune valley and kept a well-furnished house there) for his will directs that he should be buried either at Lancaster or Chester, at whichever place he died. He was in fact buried at Lancaster on Sept. 13th, 1753, having died on the 7th, and his funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Thomas Hunter, vicar of Garstang (*Chetham Soc.*, o.s. cv, 196; n.s. lviii, 682; references kindly supplied by Mr. J. F. Curwen). In the chancel of Lancaster church is a monument inscribed:—

Near this place are deposited the remains of William Stratford LL.D. Commissary of the Archdeaconry of Richmond who departed this Life September 7th. MDCCLI[II omitted] in the LXXV year of his Age. He was eminent [*sic*] for Knowledge in his Profession Integrity in his Office and for those other Virtues which adorn the Man, the Citizen, and the Christian: His Conduct was influenced by the Dictates of Conscience A rational Faith in his Redeemer and unaffected Devotion to God; Hence it became his Delight to Do good and to distribute. The Monuments of his Charity Are visible to the present And the effects of it will remain to future ages. L. F. Roubillac* inv[eni]t et Sc[ulpsi]t.

The late Mr. W. O. Roper, from whose book on Lancaster church this inscription is copied, quotes the register which gives the burial of William Stratford, LL.D. of Lancaster as “ 1753, Sept. 13 ” and adds in a note, “ A painting of his Arms hangs on the north side of St. John’s Church in Lancaster.”

* Louis François Roubillac (1695-1762) settled in London 1720 and became the most popular sculptor of the time in this country. There are pleasant anecdotes about him in Northcote’s *Life of Reynolds*, and his rather theatrical works can be seen in Westminster Abbey.

In All Saints' Church, Northampton, as Mr. Caine was kindly informed by Mr. Frank Woodford of that town, a tablet was erected in 1831 to Dr. Stratford's memory giving particulars of his local bequests. These were—for apprentices in All Saints' Parish £500; in the three other parishes of the town £500 more; "for the Corporation Charity School then establishing £100," and "for the County Hospital £100"; adding that the first bequest had been invested in land at Helmdon, the second in land at Denton. This however does not touch his connexion with our district, in which he must have been known as a cheerful giver, to judge from the epitaph, though we have only scant particulars.

It is said by the late Rev. F. A. Malleon in his *History of the church of Broughton-in-Furness* (1887, p. 13) that "he generally gave £1000 every year" to augment poor benefices. We have not been able to trace the origin of this statement, but as Mr. J. F. Curwen tells us that the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1786 (i, 277-279) contained a notice and a portrait, and that *An Account of the Charities of the late W. Stratford, LL.D.* was printed in Kendal in 1759, according to *Kendal Notes and Queries*, we admit that we have not exhausted all possible sources. Some of the gifts made during his lifetime were:—

1731, £20 to the Kendal Boys' School (*Report on the Kendal Charities and Endowments*, 1847, communicated by Mr. S. A. Moor). This was the old Blue Coat School, incorporated with the Grammar School in 1886.

1736, £200 to augment the living of Ulverston (*Chetham Soc. o.s.* xxii, 535; communicated by Mr. Curwen).

1744, bell to Woodland chapel, inscribed with his name (F. C. Cheetham, *Church Bells of Lancs., Lancs. and Chesh. Ant. Soc.*, vol. xl. 1925).

1751, £20 to the living of Grayrigg (N. & B. i, 114).

He gave also church plate to several parishes. The Egremont chalice is inscribed, "Given for the use of the



CHALICE GIVEN TO EGREMONT BY DR. W. STRATFORD.

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poor sick Communicants in the Parish of Egremont in Cumberland, 1734," and the paten has 1734 on the foot. In the register under 1735 it is noted that "William Stratford, Doctor of Laws, then gave a Silver Cup and Paten for the benefit of sick Communicants." The chalice appears by its marks to be the work of Ralph Richardson of Chester, 1734-5; the marks on the paten are not conclusive, but it seems to be by the same silversmith. Other specimens of that maker are at Workington, Kirkby Lonsdale (the chalice with cover for the Communion of the Sick, dated 1735) and Kendal, and perhaps may be gifts from Dr. Stratford. So too the silver paten now at Holy Trinity, Whitehaven, by Ralph Richardson with 1732 inscribed on the foot. This is also the date of the cup by Ralph Richardson now at St. Nicholas in the same town, inscribed "Given for the use of the poor and sick Communicants within the Chapelry of Whitehaven, in Cumberland." But the paten now with this last is of a very different date; it was made in London in 1601-2; the maker's mark has not been deciphered, and it has been badly cracked but is neatly mended. Now the chalice and paten at St. Nicholas were given back to the parish in 1883 by Canon George Heron of Moor Hall, Lancashire, who had bought them from a dealer in London, and it would seem that they had been alienated some time previously; but that the St. Nicholas chalice and the Holy Trinity paten were gifts of Dr. Stratford to the then parish church St. Nicholas. At that time Holy Trinity had been not long founded and was perhaps sufficiently provided as a chapel by Sir James Lowther.

The silver paten at Ulpha, still in use, bears the inscription, "Given by Dr. Stratford, Commissary of Richmond, for the use of the chapel of Ulpha, 1746." It is mentioned by Mrs. Ware in her supplement to *Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle*, but its date and maker are not given. Mr. W. N. Godwin, Warden of the Assay

Office at Chester, and Mr. W. H. Robinson, Deputy Warden of the Assay Office, Goldsmiths' Hall, London, in letters to Mr. Caine, have agreed that its marks attribute it to Israel Pinching, of St. James' Street, London, and that 1713-14 is its date.

If during Dr. Stratford's lifetime he gave sums to incumbents for their own use, and even on the plate did not always put his name, it is no wonder that many of his benefactions cannot now be traced. At a number of parishes, which we know from various sources to have received help from him, there is no local record and his name is entirely forgotten. In his will he directed that there should be a funeral sermon but "no character at all" of him. He must have been not unlike his contemporary John Kyrle, "the Man of Ross," of whom Pope wrote:—

Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name.

He certainly gave very freely in his life, and by his will provided for a continuance, in the wisest way, of the help which he knew was required. Before reading the will, we propose collecting a few scattered notices of donations made under it; in some cases the money was not used until some years after it was given.

1753, Nov. 10. Killington (the chapelry in which Dr. Stratford's country house was) £200 paid by James Collinson his executor (communicated by Mr. W. R. Le Fanu, Secretary and Treasurer to Queen Anne's Bounty) and £20 for the poor.

1753? Old Hutton, £100 (Nicolson & Burn, i, 108).

1754, Natland, £100 (N. & B. i, 105).

1754, Kendal, £600 towards building St. George's and £11 for church plate (Curwen, *Kirkbie Kendall*, 299).

1755, Kendal, £50 for the poor, still bringing £2 annually as interest (*Corporation Books*, communicated by Mr. J. E. Bolton, Town Clerk).

1755, Broughton-in-Furness, £200 (the late Rev. F. A. Malleon, *Hist. Ch. Broughton*, 14).

1755? Seathwaite, £200 (letter from "Wonderful" Walker "to Mr. C[ollinson] of Lancaster" in Wordsworth's notes to the Duddon Sonnets; the sum is named by Malleon, *op. cit.* 13).

1756, Beetham, £40 towards buying the small tithes (*Beetham Repository*, 24, 70).

1756, Middleton, £100 (N. & B. i, 260).

1756, Flookburgh, £100 (Stockdale, *Ann. Caermoesenses*, 319-320).

1756, Torver, £100 (tablet in church).

1756, Rusland, £100 (*Rural Deanery of Cartmel*, 1892, p. 115).

1757, Burneside, £100 (N. & B. i, 129; date from Whellan, 871).

1757, Kentmere, £100 (N. & B. i, 138; Whellan, 864).

1758, Ambleside, £100 (N. & B. i, 189; Whellan, 877).

1760, Lindale, £100 (*Rural Deanery of Cartmel*, 70).

1760, Winster, £100 (N. & B. i, 143).

1764? (i.e. apparently on the death of the Rev. W. Atkinson) Selside, £100 (N. & B. i, 122).

c. 1765, Crosscrake, £60 ("from Dr. Stratford," i.e. his executors; Farrer, *Kendale*, ii, 200).

Also, Lowick, £200 (Malleon, *op. cit.* 13).

— Stainton, £60 (N. & B. i, 210).

— Moresby, £200 (noted by Mr. Caine).

These sums amount to more than £3000, but cannot represent the whole of the benefactions, for Hodgson in his *History of Westmorland* (p. 195) says that with the residue of his property "the revenues of 58 small livings in this and the neighbouring counties were augmented and many other excellent charities performed."

We now come to the will, a long document of eleven foolscap pages in the copy. It was signed on July 16th, 1753, and proved in the Consistory Court of Chester on

September 24, 1753, by the executors, Edward Roberts, esq., of Chester, the Rev. Mr. Hunter, vicar of Garstang, Charles Lambert, gentleman, and James Collinson of Lancaster. After the preamble he continues:—"As touching my worldly estate which God hath plentifully bestowed upon me I dispose thereof as followeth."

For public objects:—

Northampton, as already stated:—to All Saints parish £500 and to the three other parishes £500 for the poor and for putting out apprentices; for books, £50; County Infirmary, £100; Charity School opened May 29 [1753], £100.

Chester, Charity School for girls, £50; poor, £100; "in case a County or General Hospital or Infirmary for the sick and lame poor be established within three years after my death," £300; and in the Archdeaconry of Chester for poor clergy £200, and for books, £100 (as in the next paragraph).

Richmond, Yorks., for the poor and apprentices, £100. In the Archdeaconry of Richmond, for poor clergy and their families £200 (gift to each not to exceed £10); for books, £200 for copies of the New Testament, *Whole Duty of Man*, Bishop Gastrell's *Christian Institutes*, Burkitt's *Poor Man's Help*, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, *The Great Importance of a Religious Life*, and others not named, to be distributed among the poor; and £100 for copies of Archbishop Sharp's *Sermons*, *Wheatley on the Common Prayer*, *Nelson on the Fasts and Festivals*, *Gastrell's Christian Institutes* and *A System of Divinity and Morality* to be distributed among curates of poor chapels. He directs that these books are to be bought of "Mr. Manly, bookseller, near Ludgate, and Mr. Innys in Pater Noster Row."

Lancaster, for the poor and for apprentices, £100.

Kendal, for the same, £50 (as already noted).

Killington, the same, £20.

The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, £100.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, £100.

The London Hospital, £100.

The General Hospital, Bath, £100.

The Infirmary "now establishing" at Manchester, £100.

These are all the specific legacies to public funds; the benefactions made to local parishes came out of the residue, given "to my executors in trust to be laid out by them in buying good books. . . and to poor housekeepers . . . cloathing poor old people and poor Boys and Girls and to any publick Charity or Charitable use as my Executors shall approve of."

Legacies in money to various persons:—

Cousin Nicholas Stratford (obviously son of his uncle Nicholas of Northampton) £200; his wife £10; his eldest daughter Elizabeth, wife of George Ecton £200, and youngest daughter Dorothy £100.

Cousin Charles Stratford and his two unmarried sisters, Rachel and Sarah, £200 each.

To these two cousins in trust for Anne, daughter of his late cousin Catherine Stuart, £100; to her sister Brotherston at London, £50; and to James Hedges of Northampton and his youngest brother, £100 each.

To the two daughters of his late cousin Frances Atterbury, £50 each; and to her youngest son now living £20.

Mrs. Richford, sister to his late cousin Lacy, her niece, Mrs. Lowther, and her sister, daughter of Mrs. Penavayr, deceased, £20 each.

His god-daughter Sarah Pigott, £100; her father, Granado Pigott, esq. and mother, £20 each.

His god-daughter Miss Lambert [he never gives her Christian name] £20; her parents, £20 each and to Mr. Charles Lambert if he acts as executor, £100.

His god-daughter Rebecca Roberts, £300; her sisters

Susannah and Dorothy, £100 each, and their parents, £20 each. To Mr. Roberts of Chester as executor, £100.

His god-son Solomon Wycliffe, £20; his parents, Thomas Wycliffe, esq. [of Richmond] and his wife, and to his sister and to Mr. and Mrs. Carr of Gayles, £10 each.

The Rev. Mr. Hunter, vicar of Garstang [executor and preacher of his funeral sermon] £100, and the Rev. John Hunter, curate of Garstang, £50.

The Rev. Mr. Law,* author of *Christian Perfection*, £100.

The two children of Edward Gastrell† of Chester, £50 each; "Mrs. Gastrell, widow of good Bishop Gastrell," 20 guineas, and Mr. Edward Gastrell, 2 guineas.

Dr. and Mrs. Bromley and their three children, 20 guineas each.

Mrs. Mary Burghall of Wigan and Mrs. Margaret Dawes of Lancaster and her sister, £20 each.

"Foulks, peruke maker on the Market Hill at Northampton, " £20.

Mrs. Heblethwaite, £20; her maidservants each £5.

"My coachman"; Mrs. Cooper, widow, Northampton; Mrs. Judith Simpson of Lancaster, and her sister; The Rev. Mr. Lambert of Melton; William Cooke of the

* The Rev. William Law was born 1686 at Kings Cliffe, Northants. He entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1705 and was ordained 1711; published *Christian Perfection*, 1726. "It is said that an anonymous stranger presented him with £1000 after reading it" (D.N.B.). He was an ultra-Tory and nonjuror; became tutor to Edward Gibbon, afterwards father of the historian, who praises him as "a wit and a scholar" (Gibbon's *Memoirs*, edit. Milman, p. 27). His *Serious Call* was published 1728, and he was at one time adviser of John and Charles Wesley, who however outgrew his influence when he became more and more of a mystic. In 1744 he settled at Kings Cliffe with Mrs. Hutcheson, widow of his friend Archibald Hutcheson, M.P., and Miss Hester Gibbon, aunt of the historian, and kept a school for boys and girls. He died in 1761.

† Bishop Gastrell married in 1703, Elizabeth, sister of the Rev. John Mapletoft, rector of Byfield, Northants., from 1721; she died in 1761. The Bishop's son died of smallpox at Oxford in 1716. His daughter Rebecca married Francis Bromley, D.D., rector of Wickham, Herts. Hence the names of Mapletoft and Bromley in the Will; but Edward Gastrell may have been the Bishop's nephew, son perhaps of his elder brother, the squire of Slapton, Northants, and not mentioned in the D.N.B.

Temple, esq.; Mr. Zachary Taylor of Westminster; Mrs. Sclater's three daughters at Hall Bank;* Mrs. Thomson, near Shaftesbury, £10 each.

Mrs. Hemp and Mrs. Moulding of Chester, widows, £5 each.

The Rev. Mr. Nairn, chaplain of Hindon, £5.

Dr. and Mrs. Legh of Halifax; the Rev. Mr. Mapletoft; Mr. Mainwaring, Mr. Aubrey and William Cowper, esq., all of Chester; Miss Mercer and her sister; the Rev. Mr. Routh, vicar of "Spenithorn"; Dr. Fenton, vicar [James Fenton, D.C.L. Oxford, vicar of Lancaster, 1714-67 and rector of Heysham 1738-56]; Mr. [Richard] Atkinson, curate, and Mr. Johnson, schoolmaster, of Lancaster; Alderman Paul Agutter of Northampton and Nicholas Rigby of Harrock, esq., 2 guineas each.

His estate of Hall Beck in Westmorland, purchased of Mr. Thomas Sturzaker, he left to James Collinson, "for his long and faithful service and fidelity to me, and for the true sense he has of Religion"; advising a public sale as

* The Rev. R. Percival Brown kindly sends notes on some of the names here mentioned. Hall Beck is a farm of nearly 100 acres, not found in the Kirkby Lonsdale Register till 1771, when the Cookes were settled there—a family who had been in Killington for at least 200 years. They probably bought the place from James Collinson whose name does not occur in this interval. Col. Chippindall says that Thomas Sturzaker was a lawyer and money-lender who appears in a good number of land transactions. "Mrs. Sclater's three daughters at Hall Bank" neighbours to Hall Beck, were no doubt of the family of William Sclater or Slater, ordained deacon, Sept., 1675, and the same day licensed to Killington; buried Feb., 1724-5. His twelve children were:—Jane, B. March, 1676; Hannah, B. and S. Jan., 1677-8; John, B. Jan., 1679-80; Susannah, B. March, 1682, S. not found; William, B. Aug., 1684, S. May, 1694; Thomas, Nov., 1686; Mary, B. Aug. 1688, married Chr. Jackson, clerk, Oct., 1711; Elizabeth, Feb., 1689-90; Rachel, B. Aug., 1693, S. July, 1745; William (the second), July, 1696, succeeded his father as Reader at Killington Chapel, 1725, S. Dec., 1778; Hannah (the second), B. and S. Aug., 1697; Susannah (the second), May 1700, S. Sept. 1702. Dr. Stratford probably came to Hall Beck after William Slater the elder had died, and so knew the three ladies as Mrs. Slater's daughters; the three surviving in 1753 were Jane, Mary and Elizabeth, all elderly and Mrs. Jackson (Mary) perhaps a widow. The Heblethwaites are represented in Killington, though the registers of Kirkby Lonsdale do not identify the Mrs. Heblethwaite of the Will. Thomas, son of Robert Heblethwaite of Killington was born 1640 (these *Transactions*, o.s., viii, 95) and was a lawyer.

soon as possible. James Collinson was named executor and asked to pay the legacies personally; and he was to "have a guinea a day besides his expenses whilst he is out upon the said business." He was also to have "my saddle horse and clock at Hall Beck"; the Commonplace Book transcribed by Mr. Holmes with the supplement; quarto manuscripts of Opinions and Practice, and another "out of Law Books beginning with Selden's History of Tythes," folios and quartos of "Presidents" of Practice and Various Readings out of law books, and all other MSS.; "but my mind is that the said James Collinson shall let Mr. Charles Lambert have the perusal of the said manuscripts." He was also to share with his co-executors in the law-books, and of the remainder [books on general subjects] he was to choose £10 worth before the rest were divided. James Collinson was to have "the Escrutore of yew, the Desk I write at, the table in my room and all the chairs there, my snuff Box of mother of Pearl, and all my wearing apparel, linnen and woollen of what kind soever." Further, "the picture of St. Peter, and that over the great parlour door, the picture of myself at Hall Beck, the two small pictures on Copper of Mount Vesuvius and Winter in the Great Parlour, the two Landskips in the little Parlour, the Fish piece and the piece of Still Life and the little picture next my clock"; and finally his punch-bowls.

Other pictures mentioned are:—Bishop Stratford in gold in a shagreen case [a miniature], to cousin Charles Stratford; "Bishop Stratford, my mother and sister, and the two Philosophers in the best room at Hall Beck, and the picture of myself in the great Parlour at Lancaster," to cousin Nicholas and his sisters; "one set of Bishop Stratford, my mother, sister and self which I have painted in little" [the doctor apparently painted miniatures himself] to cousins Rachel and Sarah. Then we have five "history pieces" of Joseph and his Brethren. King

Charles and his Queen, and a large "landskip" by Greffier, left to Thomas Wycliffe, esq.; portraits of Mr. Colley and Mr. Beatus Ottey, a fruit piece, a knight of Malta and a monk or friar "in little," to Mr. and Mrs. Roberts; portrait of Mrs. Ottey and "the six Leghorn pictures," to Miss Rebecca, seven heads by Mrs. Beal [Mary Beal, painted after the style of Vandyck and Lely and died 1697] left to Miss Susanna, and two laughing boys and the studious boy, in the little parlour, to Miss Dolly Roberts. Mrs. Heblethwaite was to have "the use of the Picture over the window in my room and all the rest of my pictures and prints not otherwise disposed of, and after her death I give the same to her brother, Mr. Charles Lambert. I give all the family pictures of Mr. William Ottey, deceased, that are with Mr. Roberts to his grandson, the Revd. Mr. Thomas Ottey, and also the pictures of his grandfather and father at Hall Beck."

This completes the picture catalogue; there remain some details to add finish to the portrait of the benevolent but by no means ascetic doctor. "My silver writing stand" to Mr. Mapletoft, rector of Byfield [Northants.]; "my gold watch and Gold Tooth Pick Case," to Rebecca, four large silver candlesticks and snuffers to Susanna, and "my Diamond Ring with a heart" to Dorothy Roberts; and to their father "my chariot and pair of Horses with the Harness." His chaise he left to Thomas Wycliffe, esq. Cousin Charles Stratford was to have his silver decanter; Rachel and Sarah Stratford six silver spoons marked W.S. in cypher [i.e. monogram]. Mrs. Heblethwaite got his repeating clock and the mahogany press in the wall in his chamber, and shared all the china, except the punch-bowls, with Mrs. Charles Lambert. Mr. Lambert had his large mahogany bookcase, his brandy-bottle and little funnel. And Miss Lambert, his god-daughter, two of the silver spoons marked W.S., a little silver can, a rose diamond ring, and "the Madona and the piece of Nun's

Work with a Glass before it representing the Creation." One can hardly help being surprised at the collections of this pillar of the Protestant church in the no-Popery days of the early Georges, but he was of the High Church group, and it looks as though he had made the grand tour and had brought home a few souvenirs.

Most of the books he left have been already mentioned. Those on "Religious subjects and sermons" he desires his executors to "give to poor clergymen and to poor honest housekeepers within the Archdeaconry of Richmond." And his four quarto manuscripts of Various Reading—Elegant Extracts, no doubt—were left to Mr. Roberts and after his death to his daughters. Dr. Stratford must have hoped it would amuse Rebecca, Susanna and Dolly, of winter evenings, when the silver candlesticks were lighted, to read his selections aloud. Does one not see all the prettier part of the eighteenth century in this picture? and its fallacy in all that goes before? The poor, they knew, they had always with them, and they had a "rational Faith" in doles. Perhaps that is why good, kind, clever, dilettante Dr. Stratford has been so long forgotten.
