

**Notes on an old Churchwardens' Account Book
(1597-1718) concerning the Church and
Parish of St. Werburgh in Derby.**

PART III.

By THOMAS L. TUDOR.

THE PARISH POOR.

AMONG all the records with which we are dealing, there are none which give a more vivid idea of the general conditions of the inhabitants of the old parish than the following particulars concerning the poor. The working of the early parochial system is here seen in its full crudity, yet, at the same time, we observe genuine endeavours to alleviate the lot of the unfortunate and the suffering. Destitute children were clothed and put into lodgings, the sick were tended, the aged and infirm poor relieved on a regular weekly list. But from the very beginning of the poor law acts the sturdy beggars were harried from pillar to post, and in extreme cases, forcibly conveyed to houses of correction. Each parish had to find and maintain its own poor-house, and in St. Werburgh's, at least one case has occurred, in which a charity bequest was wrongly diverted toward the cost of such a building.

It was inevitable, at a time when every parish had thus to shoulder its own local responsibilities, that a jealous watchfulness should be kept on all neighbouring parishes; that the wandering vagrant should be hustled

from parish to parish until he found his proper place ; that parishes should squabble and go to law over doubtful cases, and that people who took in lodgers or built new houses should be held answerable to the overseers for every new inhabitant. In case of emergency, every person must get back to the place of his birth, there to be relieved by the churchwardens and overseers, and the most such people could expect elsewhere, was to receive temporary aid on these journeys. Not seldom indeed, the overseers even paid for the conveyance of these people to the parish of their birth, that being the cheapest way out of the difficulty.

The system of apprenticeship is also well illustrated, and it was due to the difficulty of always finding sufficient money from parish rates to meet these requirements, that so many liberal bequests were made from time to time by benevolent donors. Boys, and girls too, at times, were placed out with commendable care and foresight.

The following, selected from a great mass of material, have been chosen to illustrate as many sides of this question as possible. It will be seen that a child was frequently supposed to assist in its own maintenance after seven years of age.

The 6th of Aprill 1640.

Agreed with goodwife Parker to take the child for 10 yeares 3 of the ffirst yeares 16s. the yeare, paying her 4s. a qtr, and the other 7 years to have nothinge but to keepe her of her owne charge.

On the 24th of June Bess ffausitt tooke the above written child, being midsummer day.

16th August 1640.

Agreed with Bess ffausitt the daye & yeare abovesaid to keep the child that Smawley wife hath heretofore kept and she is to have 24s. a yeare so long as shée keepeth the said child.

It is agreed upon the said 16th of August that Henry Yates shall keep Th^o Dicas for 3 yeare next ensuing uppon consideracon that the p'ish shall find him clothes for wch purpose hee hath 11s. in his hands.

It is agreed the said 16th of August that upon the consideracon

of 20s. in money, a pr sheets, a blankett, a pillow & a kettle to Donecliff wife, she shall keep peppers wench fro. o^r Lady Day last 1640 till Michaelmas 1641.

9 Nov 1640.

It is agreed the above written day that uppon consideracon of 20s. a yea^re to be paid to Wm Jackson the said day yearly hee shall keep a child before kept by Bess ffausitt called Bess Gregory & the money is to be paid by the parish of St Warbrough for 7 yea^rs.

The following concern special precautions taken for the protection of the ratepayers of the parish :—

The same 22 day of September 1641 it was also agreed apointed & ordered that the prsent churchwardens shall proceed forthwith to put in operacon the Act of Comon Counsell for the redresse of takeing in cottyers that may be judicially chargeable to the pish & what charges they are at in ye same we p'mise to pay.

(sd) Tho Haughton

Robt Brookhouse, etc.

1642 Whereas Mr George Baynbridge hath heretofore taken into a cottage one Edward Dan a poor man that may in tyme come to be chargeable to the said pish in consideracon that the said pish will suffer the said Ed Dan quietly to inhabit in the said cottage the said George Baynbridge doth hereby promise to give bond in the penall some of xli to free the said pish from any charge & damage as may occur to the said pish by the said Ed Dan, his wife or children.

And further the same day the parishoners now present do promise and covennte that whatsoever tenants they or any of them shall take into any cottage or tenement that shall or may be chargeable to the said pish that they shall & will give sufficient security etc.

[Among the signatures to the above occur—]

John Bateman

John Gisbourne.

April the first 1656.

The parishoners then assembled did agree that an order of the Hall shall be put in execution for the preventing of inmates which was made the 17th day of Aprill 1649 And the chamberlins of the sayd Burrow are desired to enter actions against them that resist the sayd order by continuunge new erected cottages—And the parrishoners desireth the overseers of the poor to assess all

them that are the landlords & continue family or familys in the new erected cottages.

[Among the signatures to the above occur—]

Robert Cheshyere
Humferie Borrowe.

June 5th 1657.

It is this day agreed & consented unto by us, whose names are subscribed that what person soever of this parish, shall hereafter entertain, admitt or receive any tenant, subtenant or inmate into any tenemt or cottage without first acquainting the chief of the parish & their consent gained & give such security to the parish to save & indemnify the same from all charges whatsoever that may befall the said parish by or from any such reception or entertainm't of Ten'ts or inmates as aforesaid, not being before this day lawful hostes in the parish or be p'perly inhabitants of the same, that then all & every such Landlord or other ps'n offending shall be assessed & rated to & pay 7d. releife of the poore of the parish to the value & full rent of all such lands & tenements in the sayd parish over & above his ordinary assessment to the poore.

(sd) Edward Cundye
William Taberer, etc.

1665.

William Yates shall have Mary daughter of Rich. Listchild deceased for the terme of five years The churchwardens & overseers to pay William Yates three pounds & to set the sayd Mary forth with convenient clothing.

The next entry provides for Sarah, another daughter to be placed with Richard Listchild (evidently a relative) for seven years. Four pounds were to be paid in two instalments. At the same time the overseers partially reimbursed themselves for this expense.

1665. Received for Richard Listchild's goods . . . 3 0 0

(Sd) John Dalton
Roger Wheeldon, etc.

12 day of July 1665.

It is ordered at a parish meeting yt ye p'sent churchwardens shall pay Mr Mellor¹ tenn shillings a yeare for one house now in

¹ In 1763 Mr. Henry Mellor lived in the original Babington House, Derby. Was he the same Henry Mellor who was first mayor of Derby (1637), or a son of the same? The Mellors of Derby claimed descent from the Mellors of Idrighay.

the possession of widow ——— her term to commence on Midsummer Day last, he, the said Mr Mellor hath promised shee shall hold the same for her life, the parish churchwardens deducting the same out of her weekly pay.

1679. Sept 1.

At a General parrish meeting . . . It is ordered that the present Churchwardens shall gather one quarters pay for the poor more upon their ordinary asesmt . . . for the putting out of apprentices of the pooi of the said parrish.

(Sd) Robert Wardell

Robert Wagstaffe.

Hum. Yates, etc.

1692 Aug 26 . . . It is ordered that whereas by a warrant under the hands & seales of ffoure justices of ye Peace for the Burrough of Derby bearing date this instant April the churchwardens & overseers of the poor for the said pish of St Warburgh are commanded to appear at the Towne Hall for ye said Burrough & make an Assessmt for reimbursinge the constables of the said Towne of Derby the sum of £12 10s. for releaving, conveyinge with passes & carrying vagabonds & sturdy beggars to the house of correction by the statute of the 13 of Queene Elizabeth, now it is ordered that the said churchwardens & overseers of the said parish due forbear to make any such assessmt accordinge to the said warrant without further order of this parish. And it is ordered that the said churchwardens & overseers are indemnified by this parish for such their forbearance of the same.

(sd) Sam. Dalton

Hugh Bateman, etc.

1693 At a parrish Meeting this day held It is agreed that noe person w^tsoev^r shall have or receave any pay frō the overseers of the poore but such as shall weare the badge W.P. upon the outside of there garmts on there brest.

A similar resolution applied to those persons "who had their rents paid."

1694 Agreed that Michael Hibbard & his children now at Mansfield is a parrishoner of this parrish & we will receave him back at any time so required, & Indemnifie the sd parish of Mansfield frō any damage wch may come upon them.

(sd) Sol Roberts

James Bacon, etc.

1696 Daniell Moore be put Apprentice unto ——— Broughton to be instructed in the trade of a Taylor during the term of eight years from Lady Day last past his said Master to find him in meat drink cloathing washing & lodging for the sum of five pounds upon Easter Munday next.

1699 Oct 4 Ordered that the overseers of the poor do pay Mr Holms Chyrurgeon ye sum of three pounds for curing Elizabeth ye daughter of Dorcas Stone of severall sores & distempers.

May 24, 1699.

At a parrish meeting It is agreed & ordered that the p'sent overseers of the poore shall remove all inmates out of the parrish that do not forthwth bringe certificates¹ from the parrishes where the (y) was last setled or give security to this parrish to good likeinge.

(sd) Nath Brough
Robert Alleyne
Joseph fflowler, etc.

1702 It is agreed that ye churchwardens of ye said parrish shall pay towards ye building of a house for Danyel Wagstaf the sum of five Pounds, to be paid at ye discretion of ye said churchwardens.

sd John Brookhouse
Soll. Roberts, etc.

1704 It is agreed that the present overseers of the poor doe disburse the sume of ffoure Pounds to get Joseph Wagstaffe's discharge from Her Majesties service and in consideracon whereof, the 12d. weekly which is now paid . . . towards the relief of the said Joseph Wagstaff's ffamily is to be taken of, & Mr. Gilbert Wagstaff doth promise that six pence weekly shall be paid from this time to the overseers of the poore of the parrish during the natural life of the said Joseph Wagstaff out of the rent of his house in the ffrayars Gate but the intent & meaning of this is that the six pence weekly before mencond is to be paid noe longer than til the sume of ffoure pounds be run up, including alsoe the 12d. weekly that is taken of

sd/ Jno Gisborne
Tho Roberts, etc.

Nov 1719 Wheras several persons of meane capassitie Inhabitants within this said Parish greatly to the prejudice of the same do take strangers to Lodge in their houses from whence may arrise some charge & trouble to the said Parish. It is therefore

¹ Many charges for certificates are scattered about The Accounts.

unanimously Ordered that the present officers do forthwith give notice to all such persons that entertaine any such persons as aforesaid, that they do discharge ym their several houses, otherwise they will not only meet with all discouragemts in Doles etc. from the said Parish but draw upon themselves a Prosecution for the same.

sd John Bagnold
Tho Gery.

John Leaper's signature occurs in a neighbouring entry.

SUNDRY EXXENDITURE.

1659	Ther is in the hands of Edward Robeson goods of the children of John Dyas as follows—Six Napkins three pillowbeares, one flaxon sheete, one apron, one Brass pott.								
1666	pd Mr Gisborne for thatch for widow bakers house	..	..	..	..	..	0	8	0
	watring the thatch	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	10
	fetching the thatch	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	0
	for lattes ..	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	0
	Widdow Robinsons house repeare & Thatching						0	1	4
	given the thatcher in drink	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	6
	2 stone & 11 lbs. of lead	..	..	..	..	..	0	5	6
1666	pd for two smokes (smocks) & two aprons for the girl with wid. Harvey	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	8
	shirt and smock for Dias children	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	0
	pd to Adam Garrell for the carage of John Dias children & their disb. on theire Joyrney						1	3	4
	pd. to wid. Smith for the setting forth of one of Edward Smiths sonnes	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
	pd to wid. Robinson for washing Elis ffosett						0	0	6
1666	Given the two women in the house of correction to buy coales	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	0
1669	ffor mending Eliz. Peppers shooes	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	8
	ffor mending Listchild's girle's coate	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	6
	ffor a load of coales for John Strong	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	11
	ffor thatching widdow Robinsons house & thatch for it	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	9
	pd to 2 Travellers	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	4
	ffor making a wastcoate for Pycrofts lad	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	4
	a new suite for Thos Dicas	..	..	..	..	..	0	9	3
1667	given to a poor woman a stranger being sick						0	2	0

1667	pd for Maintenance of a girle yt was lost in the pish	0	2	6
	pd for thaching widow Bakers house & drink	0	7	6
	Mr Gisbourn for . . . thach	0	8	0
	for watting the thach	0	0	10
	for feching the thach	0	1	0
	for lattes	0	1	0
	for feching & watering of ye thach	0	0	10
	given the thacher in drink, etc.	0	0	6
1676	pd Thos Shuler for carringe Sarah Moore to Markeaton	0	0	4
	[A legal dispute with Markeaton over this person cost St. Werburgh's parish 12s. 8d. This included a fee of 5s. paid to Sir Simon Degge].			
	For 22 weekes tablis of Horobins boy at 6d. a weeke about what he gott by his worke..	0	11	0
	Given Darby Robins in Labor.. ..	0	1	6
	Bred & drink for her buriall	0	1	6
	A sheet to wind her in	0	1	6
	ye midwife & taking away her child	0	2	0
	Thos Brookhous for Buring her	0	1	0
1676	pd John Sadler for a strike of haire	0	0	4
	pd for a strike & $\frac{1}{2}$ of haire	0	0	6
1679	pd ye Thatcher for Larkhowes house	0	11	6
1679	pd for setting up Bess pepers bed	0	0	2
	1 shift & apherne for Bess pepr	0	3	3
	for Bess pepers funerall & sickness	0	6	5
1680	expended on Samuel dodson & his family	0	1	6
	laid out in Saml dodsons business	0	3	2
	first journey to Long Eaton with dodson & ex- penses	0	5	0
	given to Samuel dodsons wife	0	0	4
	do. do.	0	0	4
	second journey to Long Eaton	0	3	8
	two journeys to Long Eaton	0	11	0
	pd widow—for dodsons lodging	0	0	4
1681	pd Willi ffecher for his man going for dodson..	0	2	6
	Thomas Sligh ffor Dodsons charges	0	1	6
1682	& 3. pd for cloaths for Widdow Wheeldons son & carrying him to London	2	4	6

1685	pd for a post letter about getting Rich. List-child into the Almshouse	0	0	3
1684	pd for a warrant to dissettle Will Ball ..	0	1	0
	for a warrant to remove Jno Barker & his family	0	2	10
1686	pd to a man for bringing back Margery Milward	0	1	6
	for a warrant to carry her to the house of correction	0	0	4
	for a p'tection for Nath Thorpe when he was a witness at the sessions	0	5	0
	given Margery Millward being put out of her roome by Mr Benskin	0	0	6
	for blooding Margery Milward	0	0	6
1687	pd for chimney money for Mary Hardy ..	0	1	0
	pd for coverlid for Mary Hardy	0	1	8
	pd for washing Mary Hardy	0	1	0
	do. do.	0	0	6
	pd for chaffe for Mary Hardys bed	0	0	9
	pd for sheets thread & washing	0	0	6
	pd for a bed tick for Mary Hardy	0	2	6
	making Mary Hardy a gowne	0	2	3

MISCELLANEOUS.

1655. Agreed the same day that at the charge of the inhabitants a comysion be sett out for discov'g of the truth whether the houses in the tenure of Dente be not almes houses, they being now claymed by Henry Jackson as his owne.

Ger. Bennett
Edward Houghton
Tho Sleigh, etc.

Feb 21 1663.

Received att a Collection for a fire att Grantham the sume of eight shillings & paid the same to one Henry Crowder of Stafford being authorized to receive the same.

— pd for a brefe of Withiam in the County of Sussex, the sum of 7s. 2d. & paid the same to John Davis.

This was a bishop's authority to appeal for funds outside the parish first concerned. The previous quotation probably also refers to a brief.

1666 Recd seventiene shillings which was collected for Eayme, & by consent eight shillings was given to a poore minister.

¹ The plague broke out at Eyam in September, 1665 and raged until October, 1666. The mortality reached $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population.

Curiously enough, part of a collection for Eyam (1666) made at All Saints, Derby, was also appropriated for a poor minister. See *Chronicles of the Collegiate Church of All Saints*, by J. C. Cox and W. H. S. St. John Hope, page 202.

The statements of accounts, dated May 13th, 1669, shows a balance due to the wardens and overseers, and the following note occurs :—

But they are not to be allowed till further satisfaction to ye parish, being 1st 1^s his thought too much spent at ye p'ambulacon.

The total amount spent was £2 1s.

1680 (?) pd to Mr Leeson Surrogat for his fee ..	0	0	6
& also to Mr Leeson for his Xchian moderation in swearing us	0	2	6
July 4. to Mr Nichols to take of (off) Ex- communication	0	4	0

We have not been able to find any further information about this entry, nor about the following expenses of commission :—

1682-3 pd for a citacon & entering appearance at the Archdeacon's Commission	0	3	0
pd Butler for carrying in the Register ..	0	1	0
Mr Mahaffy senr. for attending the Commission	4	0	0
Mr Roger one of the Commissioners	2	0	0
Mr Roger the like	2	0	0
Spent on the Commission	0	5	0
Mr ——— for attending the Commission (6 days)	6	0	0
pd the Registrar	4	0	0
pd Mr Henry Moore his Bill & expenses upon several Commissions	16	19	0
pd Dr Masters upon the first hearing ..	4	6	0
do. second hearing ..	2	0	0

This enquiry caused an adverse balance on the year's account of £67 15s. 5d.—due to Mr. Dalton and Mr. Mottram.

1687	pd Richard Sleigh upon the Robbery ..	4	10	0
	pd Thos Keeling for keeping away	0	1	0
	Gave to John Nickels & 8 other sufferers in ye ship called ye Star	0	2	6
	pd for one Hower glass	0	0	9
	given for ye releiseg Mr Johnson a merchant & prisoner in Holland	0	2	0
1691	Given to a poor man who formrly lived in this p'ish	0	0	6
1693	for a pass for a woman to Wuster	0	1	0
1696	for a sessions order for removing to St Michaels parish	0	2	6
	for the exchange of 9 ^l old money for new to pay ye poore	0	6	0
1699	pd for a cow & summering grass for wid Mounsford	4	15	0
1702	pd for Badges for the poor	0	3	6
	crutch for Wrights lame child	0	0	2

About this period many particulars occur of "Trialls" with Alleston, Bakewell and Derby parishes over the poor.

1710	Removing a woman to Codnor	0	6	0
	pd Warden boy going to London	0	10	0
1713	Spent on Wistone a soldier 1s 6d and ..	0	1	10
1714	For a warrant of Removall for Margery Vicars to St Mickaells	0	2	0
1720	pd Mr Byard for curing Simon Dawson's leg for releasing Jno Shepard out of goale ..	1	1	0
	pd Henry Yates for horse hire to carry Jane Johnson to Nottingham & for lodging & to bear her charges, & to Thom Berry as an assistant	0	7	6
	pd for salve for Padley	0	0	8
	pd twice for salve for Anth. Smith's leg ..	0	0	10

Sometimes the mere orthography is interesting. The following are mostly seventeenth-century quotations:—

Ale at doing ye pulpit	0	1	0
pair of breikes for Thos Dyas	—		
pd for Wood kidds	0	2	0
pd for Ignotus ; 3 weekes	0	4	6

pd for beesumes for ye church	—		
pd S. S. Morlidge Poole	0	1	4
pd for flanell & fustion for Wrights child, & making ym up	0	2	5
pd Mrs ——— being disstrest by Mr Mayors order	0	5	0
pd for footing Hall's child stocking	0	0	6
pd Ellen Norman for looking to her mother	0	1	0
{pd for paintinge the church	0	7	10
{pd for drink at church	0	3	3
brag for widdow Harveys chimney	0	0	6
pd for Buns & ale at Fryars	0	2	6

As usual in all such records, a great number of entries are concerned with the slaughter of hedgehogs, which were regarded as vermin. Ravens are also mentioned. This process of destruction increased enormously in the early years of the eighteenth century (see footnote to Dr. Cox's extracts from the Duffield Registers, in the Society's volume xxxix, page 16; also other footnotes. There will also be found interesting extracts in connection with St. Werburgh's).

On page 201 of volume xxxix the following appears: "It is evident from the above that St. Werburgh's had no minister in 1646." We may go further and say: "neither vicar nor minister." The regular clergy were evicted from their livings, the Prayer Book was forbidden, a Puritan Directory was issued in its place, and the Commonwealth Government put into the church livings men who were practically Nonconformists. At the Restoration these men were evicted, and considered themselves aggrieved.

We conclude by quoting the following picturesque extract from a page bearing date 1673. There, a quaint monkish tale occurs, although no information seems forthcoming as to what events in parish history caused William Jerrom, churchwarden, to write it in among the accounts. Some record, not now to be

found, has gone before, but the leaves are much frayed and disconnected, so that we must make the best of what we have. The page begins :—

The holy father, John records a of Barlaam the hermite to our purpose. There was a certaine city or commonwealth which used to choose themselves a king from among the poorest sort of people, to advance him to great honour, wealth, and pleasure But after awhile, when they were weary of him, their fashion was to rise against him, and despoil him of his fortunes, yea the very cloths of his Back, and so to Banish him naked unto an Iland of a fare country, where, Bringing nothing with him, he should live in great misery and be put to great slavery for ever ; which Pracktis one King a certaine time, considering by good advice (for all the other though they knew that fashion yet through negligence and pleasures of their present felicity cared not for it) tooke resolute order with himselfe how to prevent this misery ; which was by this means ; he saved every day great summs of mony from his superfluties and idle expenses, and so secretly made over beforehand a great trespure unto the Iland whereunto he was in danger dayly to be sent ; and when the time came that indeed the(y) deposed him from his Kingdom and turned him away naked as the(y) had done the other before : he went unto the Iland with joy and confidence where his treasure lay and was Received there with eceeding great triumph ; and placed prsently in greater glory than ever he was before.

In the same hand we read :—

“This parable (drawing somewhat neere to that which Christ put of the Evill Steward) teacheth as much as att this present needs to be said on this point, for the city or comonwealth is ther present world which advanceth to authority poor men and on a sudden, when they least look for it, doth pull them down again.” A somewhat lengthy exposition continues, but the moral is obvious. The writer must have been of a literary turn of mind, for he has taken great pains with this entry, and breaks out into Latin phrases at the end. The foolish steward who arrives in the next world without having laid up treasure there, is dismissed to perdition—“Nescio vos” I know you not.

"Ite maledicti in ignem aeternam." Depart ye wicked into fire eternal.

ffinis coronat opus.

Scriptum per me—

William Jerrom

Churchwarden

1673.

The following "Errata" concerns vol. xxxix :—

Page 198, *for* 1867 *read* 1687.

Page 222, *for* Mr. Thomas Benskin *read* Mr. Charles Benskin.

[Thomas Benskin, probably an ancestor of Charles, was churchwarden in 1665].

N.B.—The ff—ā form of the capital F belongs to a certain period and as such has been rightly transcribed throughout this article.—EDITOR.
