

Chester Cathedral in the Eighteenth Century

Part II. 1740-1787

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THE natural way to divide the century would be to make the division at 1750, but there are several reasons why 1740 is a more suitable date.

1. It marks the end of a long period of peace and the resumption of the struggle with France and Spain, a struggle which did not really end until the defeat of France and Napoleon in 1815.
2. It marks the beginning—so far as it is possible to do that in any one year—of the Industrial Revolution with its accompanying enclosure of commons, the moving of cottage industries into the “dark satanic mills” and the consequent extremes of wealth and poverty.
3. In the world of literature and art it marks the beginning of what is often called the Age of Johnson, with such a galaxy of talent as has seldom been equalled at any other period, as, for example, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Goldsmith, Gray, Garrick, Reynolds, Handel, yes, and Boswell—to name only a few.

From a religious point of view this half century has a bad name, though it produced John Wesley at the beginning of it and the Evangelical Revival at the end. We associate it with time-serving and worldly-minded clergy, neglected parishes and decaying buildings. But all generalisations are dangerous and we will take refuge in the kindly judgment of Prof. G. M. Trevelyan and say that though a parson might be as eccentric as he liked, more often he was a “typical Englishman, kindly, sensible and mildly pious. . . . But little pressure was exerted by episcopal authority or by public opinion to compel the clergy to exert themselves more than they wished.”¹ An exception must be made for the Isle of Man where Bishop Wilson, an old King’s School boy who was ordained in the Chester Cathedral, exercised a discipline unknown in this country.

The Dean and Chapter in 1740 were as follows:—

Thomas Brooke, LL.D., Dean	1732—1757
John Prescott, M.A.	1715—1746
Charles Henchman, M.A.	1718—1741
John Mapletoft, M.A.	1719—1761
Samuel Peploe, M.A.	1727—1781
Richard Milward, M.A.	1735—1744
Roger Barnston, M.A.	1739—1782

All these except the last two have been dealt with in an earlier article.

¹*English Social History*, p. 358.

Richard Milward was a Staffordshire man who went as a sizar to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1699 and matriculated in 1701. He seems nevertheless to have taken his B.A. the following year. He was Vicar of Eccleshall, Staffs. and then Rector of Wybunbury, Cheshire. He was made Prebendary of Lichfield in 1730 and continued to hold this office when he was made Prebendary of Chester in 1735. He died in 1744.

Roger Barnston was a younger son of Roger Barnston of Churton in the parish of Farndon. He was baptised at S. Michael's, Chester, on July 19, 1709, which suggests that he was born at the Barnston town residence. He went from Sedbergh School to Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of 17 in 1727 and took his B.A. in 1730/31. After ordination he held the livings of S. Michael's, Chester (1737-1782) and Conover in Shropshire before being made Prebendary in 1739. He was twice married, first to Elizabeth March in 1748 and on her death in 1767 to Anne Egerton of Oulton. However, he died childless and was buried at Farndon on December 19, 1782.

THE WAR WITH SPAIN.

Our story begins with the outbreak of the war with Spain in 1739, commonly called The War of Jenkins' Ear. The proclamation of it in Chester led to a last effort on the part of the Cathedral clergy to insist on their rights and preserve the independence of the Precincts. Dr. Cowper has recorded that on "October 27, 1739, the Mayor and Magistrates etc on horseback with all wonted ceremonies proceeded to proclaim War against Spain in all the usual places of the City; but coming to the great Abbey gates they found the same barrackadoed and admittance denied by the Clergy who protested against the Corporations coming there. However, the Magistrates ordered the gates to be forced open and entered the Abbey Court, and read the Declaration there."³ The Cathedral did not ring its bells on the proclamation of war, though according to Sir Robert Walpole many churches did so,⁴ but it did its best later on in a war which provided very little occasion for bell-ringing.

1740	March 16.	To ringing for the taking of Porto Bello	5	0
1741	May 22.	To ringing on the news of taking several forts near Cartagena	5	0
1743		To ringing on the news of a victory over the French	5	0
1745	Sept. 14.	Pd. the Sexton for ringing upon hearing the acct. of the Grand Duke of Tuscany being chosen Emperor	5	0

Porto Bello on the coast of Central America was surprised by Admiral Vernon and captured with the loss of only seven men, but his attack on Cartagena nearby failed, and only a few outlying forts were taken. The victory over the French in 1743 was the Battle of Dettingen where George II distinguished himself, and the

³Cowper's MS., Book vii. Hemingway (II. 248) says it was Bishop Peploe who did this, but does not give any authority for this statement.

⁴Giving him the opportunity for his famous pun, "They are ringing the bells now; they will be wringing their hands soon."

Cheshire Regiment won their oak leaves. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose election as Emperor set the bells of Chester ringing, was the husband of Maria Theresa, daughter of the last Emperor, head of the House of Hapsburg and ally of England.

In this same year took place the rebellion in favour of the Young Pretender, commonly called The Forty Five. As there was no occasion for bell-ringing in it no mention of it occurs in the Accounts while the rebels were in England, but on their retreat to Scotland we find

1746	Feb. 7.	For ringing on the news of the Rebels leaving Stirling	5	0
	April 27 and 28.	To the Ringers on Sunday and Monday for the victory at Culloden	10	0

The rebels had been besieging Stirling and had defeated the English relieving force at the Battle of Falkirk on January 17, but they made no use of their victory and retreated before the approach of the Duke of Cumberland, who defeated them at Culloden on April 16. The fact that the Cathedral bells were rung for such an apparently trivial reason as the raising of a siege is an indication of the fear caused by the English defeat at Falkirk and the relief felt when it was known that Stirling was saved. And Culloden set the bells going for two days.

1746	Aug. 20.	To the Ringers on the news of the Victory in Italy	5	0
1747	May 19.	Ringers this day on the news of a French fleet taken	5	0

The victory in Italy was an Austrian success in which our troops were not concerned. The naval engagement took place off Cape Finisterre where Sir Edward Hawke with 14 ships met the French with 9, escorting a convoy of 250 sail. He captured 6 ships out of the 9, but the convoy escaped.

We must now go back to 1744 to mention a battle which had an indirect effect upon the Cathedral choir. This was fought with the combined fleet of France and Spain off Toulon and was indecisive, if not a defeat for England, Admiral Matthews in command of the British fleet being badly let down by his subordinate, who deliberately kept out of the fight. And now for its effect upon the Cathedral choir, which we will let the Chapter Clerk tell in his minute book.

"April 9th, 1744. Whereas Thomas LLewis of the parish of Saint Peter in the City of Chester Gent. appeared before us this Day in Chapter and informed us That George Robinson, one of the Conducts of this Cathedral, and Francis Comberbach being on Easter Monday last in company with him, the informant, at the house of John Darwell at the sign of the Lamb in the Eastgate Street in Chester where some talk happening about the late sea fight or engagement between Admiral Matthew's Fleet and the combined Fleets of France and Spain, the said Robinson there said That he *wished that the English ships had been sunk and Admiral Matthews had been taken.* And that upon the Informant's saying he ought not to have said so before him being an officer and eating the King's bread and that he ought to take notice of such seditious words, Robinson replied he would say the same before the best officer in the Town, repeated it several times over, and further, That upon the Informant saying he would inform against him Robinson then said He ought to be damned if he did not."

The Dean and Chapter took a serious view of the case, suspended Robinson from the choir until the November Chapter meeting when "on further consideration of his great enormity it is agreed that he be immediately expelled." He was given

£5 to take with him, and we shall meet with him again only too often when we come to deal with the subject of Poor Relief. Nothing is said in the Chapter Book about George Robinson's companion in the Lamb, Francis Comberbach, who had just joined the choir as a probationer. Probably he got off with a warning, but if so it was all in vain, for in June, 1746, it is recorded that "He has lately been guilty of an high crime and misdemeanour by which he gave great offence to many of his Majesty's good subjects and was indicted for the same and has been upon his Tryal convicted thereof, and imprisoned for the same." The result was that he too was dismissed from the choir and ordered to give up his house, and he was to be paid "up to this day and no longer." However, the Chapter must have relented, for on December 18 he was given his quarter's salary and a bonus of £5.

HANDEL AND THE CATHEDRAL.

The visit of Handel to Chester on his way to Ireland and his rehearsal of the Messiah at the Golden Falcon is well known, but can hardly be omitted in a history of the Cathedral, especially as our authority for the following story is the celebrated Dr. Burney, who was at that time a boy of 16 at the King's School. The Golden Falcon is now the Northgate Brewery, but, says Dr. Bridge, "the Falcon is still on the spouts which were put up at the back of the house a few years after Handel's visit."⁵

"When Handel went through Chester, on his way to Ireland, this year 1741, I was at the Public School in that city, and very well remember seeing him smoke a pipe, over a dish of coffee, at the Exchange-Coffee-House, for being extremely curious to see so extraordinary a man, I watched him narrowly as long as he remained in Chester; which, on account of the wind being unfavourable for his embarking at Parkgate, was several days. During this time, he applied to Mr. Baker, the organist, my first music-master, to know whether there were any choirmen in the cathedral who could sing *at sight*; as he wished to prove some books that had been hastily transcribed, by trying the choruses which he intended to perform in Ireland. Mr. Baker mentioned some of the most likely singers then in Chester, and, among the rest, a printer of the name of Janson, who had a good bass voice, and was one of the best musicians in the choir. At that time Harry Alcock, a good player, was the first violin in Chester, which was then a very musical place; for besides public performances, Mr. Prebendary Prescott had a weekly concert, at which he was able to muster eighteen or twenty performers, gentlemen and professors. A time was fixed for this private rehearsal at the "Golden Falcon," where Handel was quartered, but alas, on trial of the chorus in the Messiah, "*And with His stripes we are healed*," poor Janson, after repeated attempts, failed so egregiously, that Handel let loose his great bear upon him; and after swearing in four or five languages, cried out in broken English: 'You schautrel, tit not you dell me dat you could sing at soite?' 'Yes Sir,' says the printer, 'and so I can, but not at *first sight*.'"⁶

The unhappy Janson joined the choir at Christmas 1731 as a probationer in accordance with the resolution passed by the Chapter in 1713, and it was 1738 before he was admitted to full membership, although the resolution allowed only one year for probation. In 1743 he was admonished for his poor attendance at

⁵C.A.J., xli, p. 61.

⁶Ibid. xix, Pt. ii, p. 106, quoting Burney's *Sketch of the Life of Handel*, p. 26.

church, but he remained in the choir until his death in 1764. He was buried in the Cathedral on February 1, but his place in the choir was not filled until November 27.

Charles Burney must have proved an apt pupil, for Baker had no regular assistant, and he taught the schoolboy to play chants enough "to keep the organ going" while he was absent, when he was attacked by gout.⁷

THE ACCOUNTS.

Unfortunately the Accounts are not as informative as they used to be, for from now onwards few details are given of the nature of the work done, but only the name of the tradesman who did the work.

1740	May 28.	To Peter Parry's son for a journey to Nantwich	4	6
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Peter Parry was the Head Verger. The vergers were generally used as messengers and the journey would no doubt be to Dean Brooke, who was Rector of Nantwich as well as being Dean of Chester.

1740	June 3.	To Sam Davies, Mason, for work at Mr. Baker's house, the Cloysters, making and putting up a new sun-dial	2	12	0
	Nov. 11.	To Mr. Edward Orme for painting the cupolae	8	0	
	Dec. 17.	To Mr. Smith carpenter for repairing the Cupolae; for work in other parts of the choir, and in Mr. Baker's house	14	2	0

Orme was a heraldic painter who afterwards became the Cathedral organist. He died of gout in 1777 and was buried in the Cathedral.

1741	March 10.	To John Davis for carrying rubbish out of St. Mary's Chapel and a cart to take it away	5	0	
	Nov. 20.	To Mr. Baker for writing anthems and services into the organ book	2	2	0
1742	Jan. 12.	To Mr. Nevit his Bill for candles for the choir, 1740	13	6	6
	Feb. 3.	To Councillor Falconer for his opinion concerning our having a title to any of Mr. Henchman's effects at Hare Hill	10	6	

William Falconer was Recorder of Chester and a prominent member of St. John's congregation.⁸ In 1728 the Dean and Chapter had granted a 21 years lease to Prebendary Henchman of "a cottage called Tapley's cottage with a garden thereto belonging and a parcel of common or waste ground in and about Hare Hill . . . in Utkinton." Now Henchman was dead and presumably had died intestate.

The year 1742 ended with an adverse balance £216 12 9½ and as if in explanation, the Treasurer has inserted in his book a list of rents in arrears at the 1742 audit amounting to £224 9 6. Then follows the rent roll as it ought to be, giving a total of £995 19 2. which is about what it was exactly two hundred years ago when the Cathedral first started. Prices could and did rise, but rents were fixed by the Leicester award of 1580.

⁷Percy A. Scholes, *The Great Dr. Burney*, p. 13, quoting Ellis in preface of *Early Diary*, I, p. xix.

⁸Rev. S. Cooper Scott, *Lectures on the History of S. John Baptist's Church*, p. 151.

1744	Jan. 20.	To Wm. Carter for rubbing and cleaning the books in the Library	2	6	
	Jan. 21.	To Painter the Plum[ber]	16	18	6
	April 20.	To Mrs. L. Bunbury for a lock for the Turn Style	1	6	
	April 23.	To Dr. Green's anthems and carriage	3	9	

Maurice Greene (1695-1755) was organist of S. Paul's Cathedral and the Chapel Royal and also Professor of Music at Cambridge. Six of his anthems are still sung in Chester Cathedral.

1745	Jany.	Pd. the man that came from Lichfield as a Candidate for a Conduct's place, but was returned	1	1	0
	May 30.	pd. the Sexton for carrying the old organ out of the room over the Porch [then the Song School]	2	0	
1747	April 2.	Dr. Andrew's opinion about the Chancellor's claim to a stall	1	6	0
	Oct. 20.	The Carlisle Singing boy for his trouble in coming over	1	1	0
	June 10.	Mr. Richardson for mending Ashbrook's virge	5	0	
1749	March 10.	Gave the Virgers on account of fewer candles being burnt in the choir	1	1	0

This probably marks the introduction of lamps, which made the vergers' perquisite of candle-ends a wasting asset.

A summary of Expenses "when the Church was beautified." i.e. from April 29, 1749 to January 9, 1750.

Henry Boxby for whitewashing (in 4 payments)	29	6	4
Henry Cowduck "for repairing the images upon the Bishop's throne," in 6 payments	9	8	6
Charles Nichols, mason, in 6 payments which included taking down "the old monument"	2	17	0
Jo Carney, labourer, for 6 days carrying stone from the monument, and 6 days carrying it to the cellar		12	0
Jo Cross, joiner, for work done in the choir	18	16	6
Thos. Johnson "for 4 days work for scraping the whitewash of some woodwork"		6	0
Mr. Jervis of W'hampton for sconces	6	9	0
Mr. Hervey, Upholsterer, "for making cushions etc."	29	12	0
Mr. Ladsham, Bookseller	4	3	0
"Mr. Borough for lamps and sconces for the Broad Isle."	9	16	0
Mr. Totty, whitesmith	17	3	0
Mr. Aldersey	3	7	0
Mr. Peers	6	4	0
Mr. J. Henley for making the almsmen's gowns	1	11	6
Mr. Edwd. Warrington, Carpenter	11	11	6
Mr. Williams, carpenter	11	13	6
Mr. Geo. Lindsey for timber etc.	20	5	0
Mr. Bayley Junr. for Manchester velvet for the cushions	9	6	0
Mr. Ed. Ormes for painting the choir	80	0	0
Labourers at various times	1	0	6
S. Ashbrooke for making several cushions		14	10½

Towards the cost of all this £130 was voted from the Tarporley account and £500 was borrowed at 3% from Prebendary Peploe to be repaid from the above source. This £500 was to be used "for the Broad Isle, the roof of S. Oswald's and the public Grammar School" as well as for the choir.

Henry Cowduck could not have done his work very well, for later historians have been unanimous in their condemnation of it. "The figures were much mutilated," says Dr. Pigot in 1815, "either at the Restoration or during the civil wars, but were restored in a bungling manner about the year 1748."⁹ The *Stranger's Companion* (fourth edition about 1828) says, "The beautiful statues of the early kings and saints of Mercia were sadly mutilated, and being given to an unskilful artist to repair, he put some of the heads on wrong shoulders, which gives a whimsical effect." On the other hand Dr. Cowper writes "The Chapter of Chester having lately begun to beautify their Cathedral, the decayed decorations on the Episcopal Throne engaged their attention. This fine piece of antiquity had been ornamented with carving and statuary, both which had suffered, not by time but by violence. They have therefore endeavoured to repair the one and restore the other, so that the little Images which have for so many centuries guarded, as it were, this ancient monument, and were so injuriously defaced, are, by a commendable care, now made whole again."¹⁰

This is clear proof that Mr. Cowduck replaced the missing heads and it would be interesting to know who removed them again. As they were still giving a whimsical effect in 1827 the removal probably took place when the shrine was restored in 1889.

1750	April 18.	A labourer levelling the ground in the Little Abbey Court	5	9
	June 27.	To the workmen laying the marble in the choir	2	0
	Sept. 9.	To Mr. Boswell for paving in the Little Abbey Court	15	0
1751	Jan. 7.	To workmen for repairing the Sprice, levelling the ground and sowing it with hay seeds	2	12 6
	Oct. 28.	A brush and wings for the Church	1	4
1752	Nov. 22.	To Mr. Jeynson for printing the prayer for the cattle	1	0

This refers to the cattle plague. Jeynson is our old friend Janson who distinguished himself on Handel's visit. He was a printer by trade.

		Painting and cleaning lamps	2	0
		Oil for the lamps	3	6
1755	March 25.	To Andrew Pugh when going to Shrewsbury Infirmary [Chester Infirmary was not opened till 1756]	5	0
	March 17.	pd. Mr. Batho's horse hire and expenses in going to Nantwich for Mr. Mainwaring to attend a Chapter	7	0

We do not know what Mainwaring was doing at Nantwich, for the Dean was Rector of it and Mainwaring's livings were S. Michaels', Chester, and Coddington. However, the Dean did not attend any Chapter meetings after January 23, 1754, so perhaps he was ill and Mainwaring had taken his place temporarily. Batho was second verger.

1756	Sept. 11.	To two constables for taking into custody the disorderly coachman	2	0
1757		Mr. Boswell for the Abby Court	40	0 0
		Ringling for the K. of Prussia's Vict'y [either Rossbach or Leuthen]	5	0

⁹Dr. J. M. B. Pigot, *History of the City of Chester*, T. Poole, p. 63.

¹⁰*Summary of the Life of St. Werburgh with an Historical Account of the Images upon her Shrine (now the Episcopal throne) in the Choir of Chester*, dated July 31, 1749.

THE CONDITION OF THE CLOISTERS.

By the end of the century the cloisters were in a ruinous state and the south walk next the cathedral had disappeared altogether. There seems no doubt that the Chapter, being always in debt, kept what money they had for the church and let the cloisters go. The extract mentioned above about repairing the Sprice (Garth garden) might seem to contradict this, but it is as a matter of fact the exception that proves the rule. A resolution passed by the Chapter on November 25, 1549, makes this clear.

"Whereas a generous Benefactor yet unknown to us has made an offer to us of fifty pounds towards the keeping up and repairing the Cloysters of the Church, at present in great decay, on condition that what that sum shall fall short of doing in that respect we will ourselves provide to finish, We therefore think fit to vote our thanks to be given to our said Benefactor and promise to make good the condition aforesaid."

It is evident, therefore, that the work done on the Sprice was in fulfilment of the above condition. We must now add an extract from the Cathedral Registers, which completes the story.

1751

"This year the Choir layd with Marble, and the Cloyster covered with a new Roof, by William Stradford, LL.D., Commissary of Richmond."¹¹

In the 'forties the then Bishop left his mark on the Cathedral by erecting two galleries in the choir—it was the great age for galleries and no church was complete without them—one on the south side in 1745 and the corresponding one on the north side in 1749. This was Bishop Samuel Peploe, who occupied the see from 1726 to 1752. He was buried in the Cathedral on the south side of the altar and his white marble tablet with its Latin inscription is now in S. Erasmus Chapel. No doubt the north gallery formed part of the scheme for the beautifying of the Cathedral which took place in 1749. When that work was completed the Dean and Chapter (on November 28) issued the following instructions to the vergers.

"Whereas the Church especially the Choir part thereof hath been lately handsomely adorned and beautified and the seats therein made uniform and decent, It was thought proper that the Virgers should be admonished

To keep the stalls wainscote floor in the Choir and broad Isle clean. To take care that the Cloysters and the several avenues leading to the Church within the precincts of the Abby be kept clean. That the door at each end of the Deanery and prebendary stalls be kept locked and none but Gentlemen and Magistrates of the City, Clergymen and the better sort of Tradesmen (not Mechanicks) be let in, and that the door entering into the Archdeaconry seat also be kept locked for the same purpose, and never at any time so many to be let in as to incommode the Dean and Prebendaries and Archdeacons in their stalls when they are expected to come to the service.

That the several pews appointed to the Bishop's Lady, the Deanery, the Prebendary and Minor Canons wives, be also kept locked, and opened to none except Mistress Bunbury and Mrs. Falconer of the Abby Court, Mrs. Hulton and such persons as inhabit either the houses of Prebendaries or Minor Canons, and

That no servants be admitted into either of the two great pews in the Choir which are also to be kept constantly locked for Gentlewomen, and Lastly That they take care that one of the

¹¹Parish Register Soc., LIV, 1904, p. 27, transcribed by the late Thomas Hughes.

Almsmen stand at each of the small doors in the Side Isles to prevent them being kept open in the winter especially.

All which rules are to be strictly observed on Sundays and Holy daies and the gates leading into the Churchyard are constantly to be kept locked saving from the first opening of the Church doors for Divine Service to the shutting of them again, and the Virgers and under Sacrists and Sextons were called in and admonished to observe the said rules and orders strictly and had a copy delivered to them thereof."

These instructions, or at any rate the spirit of them, seem to have been carried out until almost within living memory, for up to Dean Howson's restoration in the '70s the locking of these doors continued. Miss Bellamira Payne, who lived in Abbey Green, used to relate how her place in the Cathedral in those days was in the Ladies' Gallery above the stalls on the south side. The first lady to arrive was given the key by the verger, who locked herself in. The next to come knocked at the door of the short staircase, and after being let in by the first lady retained the key in order to open the door to the next comer. So the key was passed on to each new comer until the gallery was filled. Just before the service began the Dean's footman would arrive and unlock the Dean's stall and place his service books on the desk. He was always escorted from his house by a verger.¹²

THE TARPORLEY ESTATE.

On June 23, 1747, it was decided to borrow £400, to be repaid out of the Tarporley estate, because "the allowance for taxes at four shillings in the pound and the payments for the relief of the poor settled upon us are at present so great that the rents and revenues of the Church are (if duly paid by the tenants who are for the most part slack in their payments) greatly deficient for discharging of the same and the salaries and repairs and other necessities of the Church."

This leads us to inquire how the income from the Tarporley estate was used. Fortunately the accounts of this property for 1744-1757 and 1763-1825 have survived and they show that the money was used in the following ways. After paying the expenses of management

1. To pay the interest on the loans and by degrees to pay off the loans themselves, which had been raised to finance the litigation which took place over Dean Arderne's will.
2. To provide articles for the Library which had been set up in the Chapter House in accordance with the terms of the will.
3. To make grants from time to time from the accumulated residue towards the annual deficit in the Cathedral accounts.

For example, in the two years ending November, 1746, £515 18 8 was received and £364 3 4 was used to pay arrears of interest and for the repayment of loans. £4 6 4 was spent on the Library, £3 of which went on Calnett's dictionary, and the rest was accounted for by expenses. Again, in the 2¼ years ending June 29,

¹²Information from Mrs. Paget, 17 Jan., 1954.

1750, £792 3 1 was received, £228 15 0 was spent on interest and loans, only 12/- on the Library (10/- for a lock from Wolverhampton and 2/- for a brush) and £360 paid to the Cathedral, £30 of which was for cleansing and beautifying it (May, 1749).

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS.

In this decade the Dean and Chapter were concerned with disciplinary matters—not for the first time. It must be remembered, however, that these would be exceptional and must not be taken as examples of the normal behaviour in the Cathedral. On July 23, 1756, all the bedesmen were admonished for not doing their duty properly “and not to exceed in drink for the future.” But worse was to come, for on December 9 of that year John Prescott was deprived of his prebend by the Bishop “for immoralities.” This was regrettable, but such things did happen and the scandal would no doubt have been hushed up had not Prescott refused to go quietly and (says the Chapter Book) “has frequently since presumed to intrude and sit among the Prebendaries there in Prebendal habit.” with the result that on April 23 his former colleagues actually took the extreme step of ordering the vergers to exclude him. They “do hereby order that in case the same Master Prescott do again (and as often as he shall attempt to) intrude and come into the said church in a prebendal habit, the vergers of the church, without using violence shall prevent his doing so and keep him out.” We hear no more of Prescott’s attempts to come into his stall after this, but he still retained his prebendal house, and on October 29, 1750, the Dean and Chapter had the unpleasant task of ordering him to be ejected.

On October 6, 1747, it was Edmund Baker, the organist, who was up before the Dean and Chapter. The charge against him was that he was not teaching the choristers properly. Baker’s defence was that he taught them several times a week. “The Dean replied that it plainly appeared and was a general complaint that they knew but little and could not be well taught, and therefore he expected from and admonished him for the future more diligently to teach them and fitt them for the service of the choir upon pain of being discharged from being Master and Teacher.” Baker did not lose his place, but died in harness in 1765, so that the Dean did not carry out his threat. Indeed five years later we find him appointing Thomas Spence, one of the Conducts, to teach the boys for £10 a year, to be paid out of the Tarporley estate. He must not be confused with William Spence, also a Conduct, who was before the Dean and Chapter on March 1 1751 for being absent from the choir for a fortnight without leave. It must be admitted that his excuse was an original one. He said “he was obliged to follow a person to Holyhead and thence to Dublin that owed him money.” He is probably the only Conduct who has been honoured with a tablet in the Cathedral on his death. It will be found on the north wall of the Choir aisle and tells us that he “quitted this earthly stage on the 16th of June, 1785, in the 59th year of his age, Near 50 of which he served as a Chorister in this Cathedral and was allowed to have one of the strongest and finest toned Bass Voices in the Kingdom.” The Accounts

record that a boy named Spence was a member of the choir from 1732 to 1744 and then became a Conduct, retaining that office until 1785, so that he must have joined the Choir when he was six years old.

Two years later (January 23, 1754) the Chapter considered a complaint that the Headmaster of the King's School had been charging the scholars more than he ought to do, and they took the opportunity of laying down some rules about the conduct of the School which throw an interesting light on education two centuries ago.

School hours were to be from 7 to 11 and 1 to 5, but in the winter months school was to begin at 8. The under-master was to read prayers at the beginning and end of each day and to teach the boys the rudiments of grammar and the contents of the following books:—Sententiae Pueriles, Cordericus, Castatio's Latin Testament and Phaedrus' Fables, "and that once a year after their Breaking up at Christmas, the head form, having read such books, shall be removed under the care of the Headmaster." The following payments were authorised. For every King's Scholar who came into the Headmaster's class immediately on entering the school 5/-, but nothing for those who came up from the Under Master's class, "but from all under his care he shall take 2/6 Fire money and 2/6 Cock money and no more." The Under Master was to have the same from each scholar entering his class. Both masters were to attend Divine Service in their stalls, wearing a surplice, upon Thursdays and Saturdays and vigils in the afternoon, and upon Sundays and Holy Days both morning and evening—to inspect and take care of the behaviour of the said King's Scholars during Divine service."

Cock money was a small sum of money contributed on Shrove Tuesday by every scholar, with part of which the master procured game cocks to provide sport for the scholars.¹³ The payment of this money is no evidence that cock fighting was still a sport of the King's School in the middle of the 18th century, for customary payments have a way of going on long after the reason for them has ceased, and we note that the Under Master received it too.

Fire money was presumably to pay for the heating of the school, and the mention of it makes one wonder how this was effected. There are no fire-places in the refectory today, but there is a payment in the Accounts every year for sweeping the chimneys of the School and some fires they must have had. In later days they used stoves.

Benjamin Nicholls, the headmaster whose exactions caused these regulations, was admonished in October, 1756 for neglecting the School for several months and on March 30, 1757 he resigned and the Rev. Thos. Woolright, B.A., took his place.

On April 2, 1752, Bishop Edmund Keene, who had been consecrated in January of that year, was enthroned by proxy. As the Dean was absent, Prebendary

¹³*Notitia Cestriensis*, Chetham Soc., p. 361.

Roger Barnston was enthroned by the Vice-Dean, John Mapletoft, which must have seemed a curious and unreal proceeding. Dr. Keene did not have much to do with the Cathedral but he rebuilt the Palace at a cost of £2,200. He was translated to Ely in 1770. Five years after his arrival in Chester Dean Brooke's long rule of twenty five years came to an end with his death in 1757. He was buried at Nantwich, his own parish church, on December 20 of that year.

Bell-ringers may claim him as an early member of their fraternity, for Dr. Pigot records that "He was so remarkably athletic a man, as to be able to raise the great bell of the Cathedral without assistance, in which he was very fond of exercising himself."¹⁴ This tenor bell was sent to London to be recast four years after Brooke became Dean, and the ringing of the bells is said to have ceased only three years before he died. May we not see in these two facts evidence of his great interest in bell-ringing? Perhaps Dr. Pigot over-estimated the difficulty of ringing up the tenor bell, or perhaps bells were not so well hung in those days, for today the raising of it is not reckoned an athletic feat.

POOR RELIEF.

In the 'forties of this century we begin to be aware of an increase in poverty, or else of an increased sensitiveness to it on the part of the Dean and Chapter. In the past they had expended on the poor the money received at Communion services as the rubric in the prayer-book directs, and had perforce made themselves responsible for any foundlings who had involuntarily effected a legal settlement by being laid on a prebendary's doorstep or by being born in the church porch. But now there comes a change. On March 31, 1740, the Chapter decided that the Sacrist should be reimbursed "what money he has paid towards the maintenance of such poor who have a right to be and are provided by the Chapter more than he has received from the Sacrament money." In consequence the Sacrist received £2 0 7½ over and above the money he spent on pensioners and foundlings, who are entered separately in the Accounts. The former in that year were two women and one man. The Sacrist did not overspend himself again until 1746 and then the figures tell a tale. The nineteenth was not the only century to have "hungry forties," apparently.

1746	£8	12	2½
1747	£27	12	9
1748	£43	4	7½
1749	£28	0	0
1750	£22	1	6

The poverty in the Precincts in 1740 was an indication of the poverty in the whole country, for in that year the price of corn which from 1713 to 1764 averaged 34/11 a quarter soared to 46/5 and in the following year the export of corn was forbidden.¹⁵

¹⁴Pigot, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

¹⁵Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*.

A few extracts from the Accounts will illustrate the situation.

1743	Feb. 3.	To Mr. Carter for a pr. of shoes and 2 pr. of stockings for the poor boy	1	2
		To Carter for his care of the boy three nights and other trouble	2	6
	Feb. 19.	To Couns. Falconer for his opinion concerning the poor boy's settlement	10	6
1746	Aug. 21.	To Mr. Batho for a suit for little Andrew Firlow	16	6
1747	Jan. 20.	To warrant against several persons to appear at the pentice about Galespey's girl left in Abby Court and the Virgers and Beadles for their trouble	3	6
		Mr. Fisher for carriage down of Chas. Jones and for his meat at the Wool Hall for two days	1	8 6
	April 15.	Wm. Spence a pair of shoes for Charles Jones	3	0
	June 29.	Martha Owens a quarter for Charles Jones	1	10 0
	Aug. 26.	For Charles Jones' carriage up to London again	1	2 0

Poor lad, sent from pillar to post until it could be decided who was responsible for him.

William Carter was a sort of Cathedral Pooh Bah, for in that year he was head verger, the Dean's servant, organ blower, sweeper of the church and "toller of the bells." He also rode out from time to time to collect the Chapter rents.

We now come to the sad case of Martha Macarthy. She first appears in the Accounts in 1739 when she received 1/6 a week spasmodically and continued to do so until in 1745 she is paid regularly. Then we get

1745	March 29.	Sent Martha Machartey by the hands of her Nurse tender she lying in	2	6
	30.	Pd. Jno. Pritchard the Sexton of St. Mary's for making a grave for Machartey's child, wch was stil-born	1	0
	30.	pd. Machartney's midwife, Mrs. Gough	5	0
	April 6.	pd. Martha Machartey by her nurse tender another week's stipend she being ill	2	6
	8.	pd. for a coffin for Machartey's child	2	0
	12.	pd. for her churching at St. Mary's	1	10
	13.	Gave the woman that look'd after her whilst she was confin'd	5	0
	13.	pd. Martha Machartey another week's allowance she being still weak and ill	2	6
	15.	pd. the Clark of St. Mary's his bill for burial of another of Machartey's children	5	10
	19.	pd. Hor. Rowney for ale at the Funl. of Machartey's child	1	0
	June 1.	pd. for a coffin for another of Machartey's children	5	0

and with that item the unhappy woman disappears from the pages of the Accounts, except that she had her rent paid for her in 1754.

Another sad case was that of the Robinson family. George Robinson, it will be remembered, was dismissed from the choir for treasonous talk in the bar of the Lamb Inn in 1744.

1746	Jan. 4.	Gave Mr. Carter to give to Robinson's family, being sick	10	0
		13. Gave Mrs. Robinson five shillings more, their family remaining (?) ill	5	0
		18. Gave Robinson's family more	5	0

We hear no more of them for three years and then they become a constant liability. In January and February of 1749 George received five payments for his wife amounting to 12/-, and 6/- for blankets for the children. Then

1749	May 30.	Gave George Robinson, he having hurt his arm	1	0
	Dec. 18.	pd. Wm. Carter for shoes for Robinson's family	14	10
		pd. Ely Poynton for stockens for ditto	3	3½
		pd. Mrs. Aldersey for wares for ditto	12	2
		pd. Mr. Ch. Croughton for wares for ditto	8	7½

In 1750 Robinson's wife received weekly payments in February and March amounting to 10/3. She seems then to have recovered sufficiently to do a little work and on August 27 she was paid 1/- for cleaning the Choir. But next year she was in trouble again.

1751	March 7.	To Mary Robinson's funeral	18	2
	18.	A pair of Bodice for Robinson's wife	7	6
	May 29.	Bleeding Robinson's wife		6
	Aug. 19.	To two constables for attending twice on the Mayor and conveying Robinson and wife to the House of Correction	2	6
		To Mistress of Poorhouse to redeem Robinson's wife's gown which she had pawned	3	0
	28.	To the Master of the House of Correction for releasing Robinson and wife	5	0
		Two pair of shoes for Robinson's children	5	0
1752	April 21.	To a midwife for Robinson's wife	5	0

In 1753 Robinson received 6/6, and his son John was apprenticed at a cost of £8 6 0 and his daughter Mary at a cost of £5 6 0. In 1755 another daughter was apprenticed (£4 0 0) and £1 11 0 was spent in making an outfit for her. In 1756 his rent was paid for him (£1 1 0) and besides three payments for sickness (£1 4 0) his children received 5/- a week for board from October 11th onwards. Then a whole year passes without any payment until we come to

1758	Oct. 23.	To cash paid Thos. Coppack Slater and plasterer for taking Willm. son of Geo. Robinson apprentice	3	0	0
1759	July 12.	pd. the expenses of George Robinson's funeral	1	12	6
	Nov. 7.	paid Mr. Batho the consideration money on taking Margaret Robinson an apprentice	4	0	0

Mr. Batho was a barber. This is the last we hear of the Robinson family. George was buried at the Cathedral as "a Pauper," July 11, 1759.

THE POOR HOUSE.

Poor Houses or Workhouses are generally thought of as the creation of the Poor Law of 1832, but parochial workhouses were authorised by an Act of 1723, under which a parish could "purchase or hire a house in a parish and contract with persons for the lodging, keeping and employing of poor persons; and there to keep them and take the benefit of their work and labour for the better maintenance and relief of such poor persons." The author of "The Practical Justice of the Peace" (1756) is loud in his praise of this system. "This statute," he writes, "has had

such excellent effect that I have now by me a true and full account of no less than 130 workhouses already set up and established in England and more are setting up every day." The other side of the picture is to be seen in the verse of a Norfolk parson who takes quite a different view.

"Theirs is yon house that holds the parish poor,
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
There, where the putrid vapours, flagging, play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day;¹⁶

Let us hope they managed things better in Chester. The parish of St. Oswald was one of the 130 who set up a Poor House and a Mr. Thompson was in charge. The Dean and Chapter once made use of it.

1750 Dec. 10. Pd. Thompson for the use of the Poor house 6 0

It is not surprising that such a large parish as St. Oswald's found a Poor House necessary, but what is surprising is that in 1751 the Cathedral followed suit with a Poor House of their own, for one would not have thought there would be enough paupers in the Precincts to make it worth their while, especially as some out-door relief continued to be distributed. As so little has been written about these 18th century workhouses it may not be out of place to give the details of this one.

1751 Jan. 8.	To the Master of St. Oswald's poor house for writing out Rules and Bill of Fare for our Poor house	5	6
22.	To Mr. Thomas Massey for sheeting cloth for the poor house	16	7
	For two chaff beds and Bolsters one pair of bedstocks and a new cord for the Poor house	9	0
23.	For a pair of Bedstocks and a cord for Poor house	4	6
24.	To Thompson's wife for Treacle etc.	2	6
	To towel cloth for the Poor house	1	4
Feb. 2.	To Thompson's wife to buy things for the Poor house	7	2
4.	Writing paper for the Poor house		6
5.	To Mr. Massey for Linnen for the poor house	10	2
	To Thompson's wife to buy tow and other things for the poor	10	10
	To Mrs. Aldersey for Blew Serge for Do.	1	11 6
	To Mr. Orange for a piece of Linen Cloth for Do.	3	5 0
	To Mr. Harvie for blankets for Do.	1	7 0
	To Stockener for stockens 8 pair	6	10
	To 3 pair of Shoes for Do.	2	8
7.	To Thompson's wife to buy Meat	2	0
9.	To Thompson's wife to buy Corn and Meat	10	6
14.	To Thompson's wife to buy knives etc. for poor house	3	0
16.	To Thompson's wife	11	0
17.	To Ashbrook Taylor for making Cloths for poor	7	10
20.	To Thompson's wife to buy coals etc for poor house	8	6
22.	Books for poor house	1	9
23.	To Edward Davies for 2 wheels for poor house	12	0

¹⁶George Crabbe, *The Village*, Bk. I, 1783.

The Cathedral Poor House was now well established and Mrs. Thompson received a weekly payment varying from 13/- to 15/- for the keep of the paupers committed to her charge. Further purchases were made from time to time.

1751	March 8.	To Coy Taylor for poor childrens cloths	1	0	9
	14.	To Thompson's wife for a Tub		3	0
	April 4.	To Thompson for a tun of coals		7	0
	10.	To Thompson's wife for 6 lb. of Tow		3	0
	16.	Cloths for the poor bought of Mrs. Aldersey		15	0
	20.	Shoes for two women in the poor house		5	4
	May 4.	To Ashbrook Taylor for making two gowns for 2 women		5	6

In July there was a change in the management.

	July 3.	To Thompson's wife at her leaving the Poor house	1	1	0
		To Sarah McNairn at her commencing Mistress of the Poor house for two weeks provision	1	0	0
		For 2 pair of Bedstocks, 2 Tables, 3 chairs, 1 Form for the poor House		15	0

Other purchases include soap, coals, a frying pan, a chaff bed, a pot, smoothing irons and a tub for the necessary house.

The choice of Sarah McNairn gives us some idea of the status of the Matron of a Poor House, for she had already figured in the Accounts

1751	Jan. 21.	To Sarah McNairn on condition the Chapter be no more troubled with her	1	1	0
	Feb. 11.	To McNairn pauper (being sick)		1	0
	April 12.	To Sarah McNairn (her child being sick)		1	0
	June 29.	To Sarah McNairn		1	0

It would appear that the venture was not a success, for in 1752 and the following years nothing more is heard of it and payments are again made to the individuals concerned, viz. Margt. Bennett, Widow Davies, Andrew Pugh, Boswell, Mrs. Parry, Sarah McNairn, Vernon and (surprisingly) "Thompson's wife."

The amount spent on the poor during the Fifties was between £40 and £50 a year, but in 1758 and 1759 it rose to £64 and £65 respectively, and it is in the latter year that we find mention of a General Workhouse for the whole City. This united effort on the part of the parishes was allowed for in the Act of 1723, and on April 25, 1759, the Rev. Charles Henchman, Mr. Hugh Speed, Mr. Charles Boswell and Mr. Robert Taylor were appointed by the Chapter to represent them on the Board of Guardians. The House, which was built by the Corporation, was situated "on the waste ground lying on the northwest side of their parcel of land called the Roodee," now called Paradise Row.¹⁷ The Accounts for 1759 contain two payments of £7 and £5 to "the General Workhouse" and one item of £12 14 2 for "clothing the poor when they went into the Workhouse." The weekly contribution of the Chapter was about 11/-. This arrangement did not last long, for in 1762 an Act was passed for Chester only, setting up a new Board of Guardians who were to take over the Workhouse at a rent of £90 per annum; the sending of

¹⁷Quoted from the Act of 1762.

all paupers to this House was made compulsory, as was also the rate levied on each parish in proportion to the number of its paupers. Abbey Court was expressly included in the Act. Henceforward the Cathedral Accounts cease to be concerned with the poor, except for the payment to the Workhouse which relieved them of all further responsibility. Payments averaged about £11 a year until 1774 when for some reason they cease altogether for a time. A fitting close to this melancholy subject is to be found in a contemporary statement carved on a stone in Hawarden Park, presumably by the miller of that day or by the Lord of the Manor himself. It runs as follows:—

“Trust in God for bread and in the King for protection and justice. This mill was erected in 1767 by Sir — Glynne, Lord of the Manor. In this year wheat was 9/- a bushel and barley 5/6. The country was prosperous, charity was abundant, but the poor were starved, riotous and hanged.”

9/- a bushel is equivalent to 72/- a quarter. The average price, it will be remembered, up to 1764 was 34/11.

DEAN WILLIAM SMITH, 1758—1786.

The new Dean was the son of the Rev. Richard Smith, Rector of All Saints, Worcester. Born in 1711 and educated at Worcester Grammar School, he went to New College, Oxford in 1728 where he took his several degrees. On September 11, 1735 he was presented to Holy Trinity, Chester, by the Earl of Derby, to whom he had been Reader since 1732. After 1748 he was also Headmaster of Brentwood School, Essex. In 1753 he was nominated Minister of S. George's Church, Liverpool and on July 28, 1758, was advanced to the Deanery of Chester through the influence of the Stanley family. To this office he added the Rectory of Handley in 1766, but resigned his Liverpool benefice the following year. In 1780 he took the Cathedral living of West Kirby, at the same time resigning the Rectory of Holy Trinity which he had held for 45 years. Four benefices at once seem to have been too much even for those times. William Smith was probably the best scholar that ever held Chester Deanery. His works consisted chiefly in translations of the Greek classics, Longinus in 1739, Thucydides in two volumes in 1758, and Xenophon's History of the Affairs of Greece in 1770. He also wrote poetry, and a volume of his poems was published after his death by the Rev. Thomas Crane, Vicar of Over. His memorial by Banks is on the west wall of the North Transept and records that he died on January 12, 1787, and adds that “as a preacher he was admired and esteemed by his respective auditories.” His widow, who erected the tablet, is depicted weeping over an urn beside which lie her husband's books and academical cap.

The Chapter over which Dean Smith presided in 1758 was as follows:—

William Smith, D.D., Dean	1758—1787
John Mapletoft, M.A.	1719—1761
Samuel Peploe, M.A.	1727—1781
Roger Barnston, M.A.	1739—1782

Abel Ward, M.A.	1744—1781
Richard Jackson, M.A.	1744—1796
Edward Mainwaring, M.A.	1747—1780

The last three of these are new since 1740 when we last looked at them.

Abel Ward, like Richard Milward whose place he took, was a Staffordshire man and also a sizar at Cambridge (Queens College) where he matriculated in 1736 and took his B.A. in 1740/41, becoming a Fellow of his College the same year. Only three years later he was installed Prebendary of Chester and the following year he was made Chaplain to the Bishop (Peploe) and Rector of S. Anne's, Manchester. Archdeacon of Chester in 1751, he was given the Rectory of Dodleston in 1758 but resigned it to Richard Jackson in 1761 when he was preferred to Neston where he died in 1785. His gravestone in the Lady Chapel (not now extant) described him as "a most exemplary man, both in public and private life."

Richard Jackson, also of Queens College (1731-1745), was Vicar of S. Oswald's 1739-1761. He was collated to a stall in the Cathedral on May 27, 1744. He was also Prebendary of the Cathedrals of York (1750-96) and Lichfield (1741-96). He was also Rector of S. Martin's, Chester, from 1738, and in 1761 succeeded Abel Ward at Dodleston. Foster says that he was also Vicar of Trees (? Prees in Shropshire). He died on November 12, 1796, at what must have been a very advanced age. He must surely take the prize for pluralism.

Edward Mainwaring was the fifth son of James Mainwaring of Bromborough. He went to school at Sedbergh and to S. John's, Cambridge, at the early age of 16 in 1726. He took his B.A. in 1729/30 and his M.A. the next year. He was ordained Deacon at Lincoln in 1732 and Priest at Chester in 1733. In 1735 he became Vicar of Weaverham and in 1757 Prebendary of Chester, receiving the living of Coddington the next year. In 1755 he exchanged Weaverham for S. Bridget's, Chester, and in 1761 exchanged S. Bridget's for West Kirby. He died on July 30, 1780, and was buried in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, where there used to be a gravestone to his memory on which he was described as

"polite, learned, ingenious, good,
An honoured ornament
To the Church of Christ."

THE RE-BUILDING OF ABBEY SQUARE.

Hitherto the date of the fine Georgian square has been a matter of guess work, but now the Chapter minute book has yielded up its secret and it is possible to give the date, and also the names of the men who built the houses, for there were several of them.

On March 25th, 1754, the Dean and Chapter leased to Thomas Prescott Esq. "part of certain old buildings situate on the north side of Abby Court, and of a parcel of land thereto adjoining on the north and south sides thereof, eastwards

adjoining to the dwelling house and premises, now in the occupation of Mrs. Keswick Manley." This property had a frontage of 61ft. 8in, "and at the backside thereof 56ft. and 9ins." and 93ft. in depth.

At the same time they leased to Robert Taylor, Gent.¹⁸ "another part of the same old buildings," with land on the north and south sides as above, and the dimensions, measuring westwards from Prescott's building 30ft. 10ins., "on the backside 32ft. 4ins." and 93ft. in depth.

Another part of the same old buildings and adjoining Robert Taylor's portion was leased to Mascie Taylor, with the same length of frontage (32ft. 10ins.) on the backside 32ft. 4ins. and in depth 93ft.

Now this frontage exactly fits the frontage of Nos 7, 8, 9 and 10, leaving No. 11 (The Retreat Hostel) to represent Mrs. Manley's house. It is even possible to get some idea of what these old buildings were, for no less a man than Archbishop Laud described them in his letter to the Dean and Chapter in 1638, and Randle Holme (III) has left us a plan of them. Laud, no doubt quoting Bishop Bridgman, writes, "the third side hath in it one Prebendes house onlie; and the rest is turned into a malthouse." (C.A.J. Vol. 39 p. 22). Randle Holme's plan of uncertain date, but probably later than 1638, shows three houses in the row, two labelled "brewhouse and storehouse" and one, (where the Retreat Hostel now stands) "Backhouse with 2 ovens." There can be no doubt that the "old buildings" in 1754 comprised the old monastic brewery and bakery and that Prescott and the two Taylors took a lease of them with the intention of pulling them down and building dwelling houses in their place. For in 1761 all three are back again in the Chapter office asking for new leases for the houses they had built. Mascie Taylor had built No. 7, Robert had built No. 8 and Prescott had built No. 9 and 10. Naturally they were granted very easy terms, as they had so considerably improved the Cathedral property. We may say then with certainty that this side of the Square was built between 1754 and 1761. One other point. The old building had land in front of it as well as behind. The new houses must have been brought forward into the Square, so that the block is no longer flush with the end of the west side of the Square as it used to be, and the well shewn in the plan outside No. 7 must now be beneath the floor of its front room.

In 1764, which is the date on the spouting, the same architect seems to have built No. 5 and 7 Abbey Street. In 1765 in leasing a house next to the Abbey Gateway it was mentioned that there were once "two little rooms which lay under part of the said messuage, whereof one was used for a courthouse and the other had been reputed a place for a gaol belonging to the said Court," and that in 1696 William Coker, cheese factor, took down the building and erected a dwelling house in its place.

¹⁸Robert Taylor was the Chapter Clerk; he resigned November 25, 1773, in favour of his son Mascie. The appointment was for life.

In the same year an exchange took place which has lasted more or less until today. The Bishop exchanged the old Registry which stood on the site of the present Abbey Chambers for the rooms over the gateway, which henceforward became the Registry, together with two small rooms adjoining the gateway on the south where one of the vergers used to live and which in future were to be offices for the use of the Bishop.

On November 26, 1770, the Dean and Chapter gave their consent to "a navigable canal" to be cut through their lands; it was to run from Chester to Middlewich, "to join the navigation which is now making from the River Trent to the River Mersey."

THE ACCOUNTS.

We are now entering upon the period of the Seven Years War in which as the ally of Frederick the Great and under the leadership of William Pitt we stript France of her overseas possessions and laid the foundations of our Empire in India and America. The bells of the Cathedral had not been kept so busy since Marlborough's day.

1758	Augt. 21.	To ringing on the taking of Cape Breiton	5	0
1759	Augt. 11.	Ringin for the success of prince Ferdinand at		
	Minden Aug. 1			
1759	Sept. 10.	Ringin on Admiral Boscawen's success in the	5	0
		Mediterranen	5	0

Actually it was off Lagos in Portugal that Boscawan caught up with and smashed to pieces the Toulon fleet.

	Oct. 20.	Ringin on taking Quebeck Sept. 18	5	0
	Dec. 3.	Ringin on Admiral Hawke's success over the French fleet		
		Quiberon Bay, Nov. 20	5	0

This was the wonderful year of which Horace Walpole wrote that "One is forced to ask every morning what victory there is for fear of missing one."¹⁹ The colours carried by the 22nd Foot (now the Cheshire Regiment) at the taking of Quebec hang in the Cathedral today. The Accounts for 1760 are missing and when they recommence in 1761 the Allies still continue their victorious career.

1761	May 16.	Paid for taking the citadel of Belisle [a rock fortress		
		off the west coast of France]	5	0
	July 24.	Paid ringin for Pondicherry	5	0
	25.	Do. for the success of Prince Ferdinand over the		
		French army [at Warburg]	5	0
	Dec. 24.	Paid Mr. Hart for expenses at the Yacht Inn on the		
		Dean and Chapter treating Mr. Comyn	1	0 10

Stephen Comyn Esq. of Lincoln's Inn and Philip Sharpe Esq. of the parish of S. James, Westminster, were lessees of the important bailiwick of Chester, for which lease they paid a fine of £1000 in 1755.

¹⁹*Letters to Sir Horace Mann*, No. CCCXIV.

Paid counsel's fees for the opinion taken by the Chapter relating to livings in the disposal of the Dean and Chapter	8	10	0
Paid Mr. Lowe for counsel's fees for opinion taken on behalf of the Dean relating to such presentation	16	17	6

After spending £25 10 6 in this way they arrived at the following agreement: "The present Dean to have the first option of such living as he shall think proper to accept and then the prebendaries to have their option according to seniority till they are all served."

1762	Jan. 28.	Paid Mr. Richardson for mending Mr. Ashbrooke's verge	8	0
	Feb. 26.	paid John Bulkley, Bookseller, for a Common Prayer Book for the Choir	15	0
	July 4.	Paid ringing for a victory Prince Ferdinand gained over the French army	5	0
	Aug. 7.	paid Saml. Bowden for roughcasting Mr. Johnson's [Minor Canon] and Mr. Poynton's [Conduct] houses in Abby Court	4	4 6
	Oct. 4.	Paid for ringing on taking Havannah [from Spain]	5	0
1763	March 6.	To paid George Cheatham for his two Journeys and Expenses from Manchester being sent over to be tryed as a Conduct in the room of Mr. Ely Poynton	1	1 0

Poynton had succeeded Batho as head verger. Cheatham was not appointed.

1764	Aug. 29.	By paid William Jones, Mason for stone and mason's work in repairing the pinfold in the further Northgate Street belonging to the Dean and Chapter	11	0
1765	Feb. 7.	By paid Mr. Baker late organist's burial fee by the order of the Dean and Chapter	2	4 6
1766	March 18.	Paid Mr. Hall . . . for the expenses of fitting up the Rooms over the Cloisters, wh. were thought proper to be allowed him on quitting those rooms upon his being admitted a Bedsman, as residence there for 40 days wd. have gained him a Settlement.	8	19 8½

This is very obscure. Hall was admitted a Bedesman at Midsummer. It looks as though "those rooms" in which he had previously been living would have gained him a settlement and so made the Dean and Chapter liable for him if he became a pauper, while the rooms over the cloisters (?the old dormitory) would not.

1767		paid Mr. Geo. Hastings, Tinman, a bill for mending lamps	4	0
1769	Feb. 9.	Paid Mr. Moody a bill for grates and fenders for the Chapter House	10	8 0
1770	Nov.	Paid John Bowden for the whitewashing the Church	28	1 6
1773		Paid Mr. Orme, Subscription to Kent's anthems	1	1 0
1774	Nov. 3.	Paid Messrs. Read and Huxley for 300d of Hand Bills in Answr. to a Letter published by Mr. Smith of Nantwich about the Lease of the Linnen Hall	13	6

In the summer of this year the Cathedral received a visit from Dr. Samuel Johnson, whose observations, however slight, are always worthy of attention.

"July 27th, 1774. We staid at Chester and saw the Cathedral, which is not of the first rank; the Castle (in one of the rooms the Assizes are held); and the refectory of the old abbey, of which part is a Grammar School. The Master seemed glad to see me. The Cloister is very solemn, over it are chambers in which the singing men live."

We learn from this brief account that the west end of the Refectory had already been cut off and that the dormitory over the cloisters was still in use. We have already seen that one of the bedesmen had been accommodated there and we may take leave to doubt whether the Doctor was accurate in saying that the singing men lived there. The Rev. Robert Vanbrugh was headmaster in 1774 and no wonder he was pleased to welcome such a famous visitor to his school.

1776	April 22.	Pd. a voluntary subscription to the relief of the clergy in America	10	10	0
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The American War of Independence had begun in the previous year. "Early in 1776 Howe was obliged to evacuate Boston and fall back on Halifax, whither he was followed by streams of loyalists and British officials flying for their lives."²⁰ No doubt the clergy for whom this subscription was made were among these refugees. And here we may interpolate an extract from the Tarporley accounts.

1777	May 31.	By paid Thos. Eaton a mason's bill for Flaging the Broad Isle	51	12	0
	Nov. 24.	By paid Do. for flaging part of the South Isle	26	18	0
		By paid Do. for repair'g the steeple and other work,	13	3	6

1780	[Jan.]	Paid ringing Victory of Sir G. Rodney	5	0	
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"He captured off Cape Finisterre on Jan. 8, 1780 a valuable fleet of Spanish merchantmen on their way to Cadiz, and a week later encountered a powerful Spanish fleet which he totally defeated."²¹

1781	March 12.	To paid ringing 2 days on taking St. Eustatius	10	6	
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This was not the famous "Victory of the Saints" which was fought the following year and was celebrated by another two days' ringing.

1787		To paid Geo. Bowden for whitewashing the church	25	0	0
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The War of American Independence, which included a war with France and Spain, ended in 1783 with the Treaty of Versailles, which, thanks to Rodney, was more advantageous to us than might have been expected. But it did not protect the American loyalists, many of whom lost all their property. One of these came to Chester and on his death in 1785 was buried in the South Transept (then S. Oswald's Church). A small stone marks the resting place of the body of Frederick Phillips, but on the south west pier of the central tower will be found his epitaph which breathes the spirit of those times.

"Firmly attached to his Sovereign and the British Constitution, he opposed, at the hazard of his life, the late Rebellion in North America; and for this faithful discharge of his Duty to his King and Country, he was Proscribed, and his Estate, one of the largest in New york, was

²⁰C. R. L. Fletcher, *Introductory History of England*, p. 300.

²¹S. J. Low and F. S. Pulling, *Dictionary of English History*.

confiscated by the usurped Legislature of that Province. When the British Troops were withdrawn from New York in 1783, he quitted a Province to which he had always been an Ornament and Benefactor, leaving all his Property behind him; . . . ”

But the interesting thing is this. In 1756 George Washington fell in love with Phillips' daughter, Mary, and proposed to her. She refused him, but it is interesting to speculate on what would have been the course of history if she had accepted him. Married to the daughter of such an ardent loyalist, would he have been the George Washington that he afterwards became?²²

THE FINANCIAL POSITION IN 1787.

The financial position of the Cathedral in the year that Dean William Smith died was distinctly serious. Ever since 1724 there had been a deficit every year which mounted steadily throughout the century, as the following figures show.

In 1730 the deficit was £21, in 1740 £99, and in 1760 £190. By 1770 it had increased to £565 and by 1780 to £835. It was time that Tarporley came to the rescue. £1566 had accumulated in that account and in 1785 £600 was transferred to the Cathedral, bringing the deficit down to £280. But this could only be a temporary remedy. By 1787 the deficit had risen again to £482. The reason of course was the Leicester award of 1580 which nailed the Cathedral income down to what it was at the very beginning. Static income and rising prices—need we say more?

²²Paul Leicester Ford, *The True George Washington*, J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1902, p. 90. I owe this reference, as so much else, to Canon Baxter.

