

Chester Cathedral 1787-1837

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THE end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth was an eventful period in English history. In 1782 the War of American Independence ended in the Declaration of Independence and the loss to Great Britain of what in those days were called the American Colonies. Two years later the younger Pitt became Prime Minister at the age of 24 and his term of office was marked by the French Revolution and the long war with France, beginning in 1793 and continuing after Pitt's death right down to 1815.

Just as the first decade of the previous century had been marked by continuous war in which Marlborough faced Louis XIV, so in this one Wellington faced Napoleon. At home the Industrial Revolution was gathering strength, and both riches and poverty were increasing. There were, however, signs that the Church was awakening from her slumber. John Howard was busy at this time (1780) exposing the conditions of the prisons and William Wilberforce had begun his fight for the abolition of slavery. Robert Raikes started the Sunday School Movement in 1791, the Church Missionary Society was founded in 1799 and the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804. The education of the poor received an impetus by the founding of the British and Foreign Schools Society in 1808 and of the National Society in 1811.

Such was the background at home and abroad against which the history of the Cathedral must be placed, and if the comings and goings of the Cathedral clergy seem very trivial by comparison it must be remembered that it is not the great events of history but the ordinary every day happenings which give the truer picture of what life was like in days gone by.

DEAN GEORGE COTTON 1787-1805

The new Dean who succeeded William Smith was the third son of Sir Lynch Salisbury Cotton Bart. of Combermere Abbey. He went to school at Westminster and thence as a Scholar to Trinity Cambridge in 1761. He took his B.A. in 1765. In 1771 he married Catherine, daughter of James Tomkinson of Dorfold Hall near Nantwich, and was appointed to the living of South Raston (Lincs.) to which in the following year he added Stowe (Bucks.) and Stoke (Staffs.). He resigned the first two in 1775 and 1780 respectively, but remained in possession of Stoke to the end of his life. In 1787 he took his LL.D., was made Dean of Chester and was given the living of Davenham (Ches.) which he exchanged for Dodleston in 1797.

Dean Cotton was the uncle of Sir Stapleton Cotton, who succeeded to the baronetcy in 1809 and became Baron Combermere in 1814 and Viscount in 1827, and whose equestrian statue stands outside the Castle on the Grosvenor Road. It was the Dean's ancestor, Sir Richard Cotton, who more than 200 years before had

forcibly obtained the freehold of the bulk of the Cathedral lands and sold it to his friends. There is a certain irony in the fact that his descendant now had to face the consequences.¹ The Chapter over which Dean Cotton presided was constituted as follows:

Richard Jackson, D.D.	1744—1796
Thomas Mostyn, M.A.	1766—1808
John Briggs, M.A.	1780—1795
Thomas Ward, M.A.	1781—1827
Thomas Pearce, D.D.	1781—1803
George Travis, M.A.	1782—1797

Jackson has already been dealt with. (See Vol. 42 p. 38.)

Thomas Mostyn was the son of Thomas Mostyn of Whitford, co. Flint. He was born in 1737 and went, as so many of our prebendaries did, to Christ Church, Oxford. This was in 1755 at the age of 18. He took his B.A. in 1759 and after his ordination became in due course Canon of S. Asaph Cathedral in 1773, Rector of Christleton in 1775 and also Rector of Llanycil, co. Merioneth. In 1776 he was made Prebendary of Chester and in 1782 Vicar of Northenden. He died on Dec. 5, 1808, aged 71.

John Briggs was a native of Wakefield where he went to school. He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, as a Sizar in 1745-6 at the age of 17, took his B.A. in 1749-50 and was made a Fellow of his College in 1752, taking Holy Orders in 1758. In 1780 he became Vicar of St. Ippolyts, Herts., Rector of Calverton, Bucks., and Prebendary of Chester. In the following year he was made Chancellor of the Diocese and Rector of Methley, Yorks. Although he was such a new-comer he was elected Vice-Dean in 1783 on the death of Roger Barnston. For some reason he resigned his prebend in 1795 though he did not die until 1804, when he was buried at Neston although he was not the Vicar there.

Thomas Ward, youngest son of Archdeacon Abel Ward, was probably born in the precincts, for he was baptised in the Cathedral on January 13, 1757. He went to Queen's College Cambridge in 1773, took his B.A. in 1777 and was made a Fellow in 1778. In 1781 at the age of 24 he succeeded to the stall in the Cathedral which his father had occupied for 37 years and which the son was to hold for another 46. His livings were Neston (1783) and Handley (1797)—both of which he held until his death in 1827, aged 71. There is a tablet to his memory in the wall of the Chapel of S. Werburgh.

Thomas Pearce was the son of Henry Pearce of Wotton-under-Edge, co. Glos. He went to Oriel College, Oxford, in 1763 at the age of 17, and took his B.A. in 1767. He was installed Prebendary in 1781, having been given the living of Coddington

¹J. Poole, *History of Chester* (1791), p. 87, has an interesting note on the Deanery "the Gothic structure of St. Thomas's chapel (the residence of the late Dean Smith) has been very judiciously taken down; and on the site thereof a spacious mansion, more descriptive of the heart of his successor, Dean Cotton, is erected." But see picture, in Hemingway's *History of the City of Chester*, II, p. 18.

in 1780. In 1786 he was promoted to West Kirby. In 1792 he was made Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal and took his D.D. in the following year. He died at Lambeth in 1803.

George Travis was a native of Royton near Oldham. Educated at Manchester Grammar School, he went to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1761 and in 1765 appeared as 5th Senior Optime and the Chancellor's Senior Medallist—that is, he was the best classic of his year. Ordained Deacon and Priest in the same year, he married and was made Vicar of Eastham in 1766 and remained there all his life. He also held the Curacy of Bromborough, for which he received £13 a year from the Dean and Chapter. In 1783 he was made a Prebendary by Bishop Porteus and Archdeacon of Chester three years later. To these offices he added the Rectory of Handley in 1787, which he held in plurality. Lest he should be too readily accused of accumulating wealth, it should be pointed out that the living of Eastham when he took it over was worth only £30 a year, and had he not had private means he could not have accepted it. He records that preceding Vicars of Eastham, as far as the memories of parishioners went back, "lived for the greatest part of their lives on charity and died insolvent". Having discovered that the poorness of the living was due to the withholding of the tithe by the principal landowners in the parish, headed by Sir William Stanley of Hooton, he courageously went to law with them, fought them from court to court and after expending £2,000 of his own money, finally won his case and raised the Eastham tithes from £30 to £100 a year, and this before he was a prebendary and while he was a simple vicar. Some idea of the time it took may be gained from the endorsements on the Cathedral Accounts which all had to go up to Westminster to be used as evidence. These read "Travis v. Oxton and others 2nd June 1774". "Travis v. Mason v. Urmston, Sept. 1775". "Travis v. Stanley, Bart. and another, 17th Dec. 1777". Finally we have this little bit of information from the Tarporey Accounts which suggests that there were other cases as well.

1782 By paid the expence of sending up the Records of the Church to
London on the trial of one of the Rev. Mr. Travis's Tithe Causes
to support the rights of the Vicarage of Eastham

£20 0 0

In 1784 Travis published a volume entitled "Letters to Gibbon", arguing for the authenticity of the text I John v 7, which drew forth a powerful reply from the famous scholar, Richard Porson. It is no discredit to the Archdeacon that modern criticism has decided in favour of Porson and that that particular verse has been omitted from the revised version of the New Testament.

Travis' memorial tablet may be seen in the north aisle of the Cathedral choir. It bears a profile portrait and an inscription which singles out for special mention his "extensive learning, active mind, and generous heart". In 1790 he obtained from the Dean and Chapter a lease of Hillbre Island, and in 1796 he died. His prayer book is still preserved in Eastham Church.²

²For a fuller account of him see the Rev. F. Sanders in *Wirral Notes and Queries*, I, pp 21-24.

John Cleaver was a Prebendary for only two years (1774-1776). He was the son of William Cleaver, a clergyman of Banbury, and was born in 1737, educated at Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated in 1758 and eventually became Vicar of Frodsham. He died at the early age of 39. His brother afterwards became Bishop of Chester (see p. 12).

THE ACCOUNTS.

The Accounts in this period are not very informative, for they give merely the name of the tradesman and the amount of his bill and do not specify the nature of the work done. There are therefore few items of this kind worth recording. On the other hand we are always told the occasion for any special ringing of the bells, which in the War years was fairly often. This raises a difficulty. If all the battles are left out the reader will think that the Dean and Chapter were oblivious of the tremendous events which were happening around them. If only some are selected for mention a false impression will be given. If all are mentioned it will suggest that the War was the only thing that mattered. In spite of this I have decided, if only for the sake of uniformity, to follow the practice adopted when dealing with the reign of Queen Anne, and mention them all.

1787	To Geo. Bowdon for whitewashing the Church	25	0	0
	To ringing for the Bishop of London		5	0
This refers to the translation of Bishop Beilby Porteus to the See of London.				
	To Great Bell for Lord Lieutenant		12	6
1789	To paid Ringing on the King's Recovery [George III]		5	0
	To paid Mr. Rigby of Hawarden towards the expenses of the Iron rails for Abbey Square ³	26	5	0
1790	To paid advertising Clergy Resolution in the several papers	20	2	0

This was a resolution passed at a meeting of the clergy of the Chester Archdeaconry on February 15th, Archdeacon Travis being in the chair, "to take into consideration the attempts of the Dissenters in various parts of the Kingdom to obtain a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and their assertions that those Acts are acknowledged by many of the established clergy to be a grievance and a common evil". A number of resolutions were then passed to the effect that while they did not wish to deny the dissenters freedom of worship, they did not think they could be entrusted with offices in the State unless they were members of the Established Church. They were suspected of not being loyal supporters of the Constitution. These resolutions were signed by over 250 clergy from all parts of Lancashire and Cheshire headed by the Dean and Chapter who on this occasion attended in full force.⁴

In 1793 war with Revolutionary France broke out and continued with only one year's intermission right down to 1815.

³J. Poole *op. cit.* "The abbey court is a neat and pleasant square, with an obelisk in the centre, surrounded by a large circle of iron palisades".

⁴See the *Chester Courant*

CHESTER CATHEDRAL

5

1794 To paid Ringing all night for Lord Howe's victory 12 6

This was the Battle of the Glorious First of June, in which the Channel fleet defeated the French fleet off Ushant.

1797 Ringing on Admiral Duncan's Victory 1st Acct. 10 0
Do Do 2nd Acct. 1 0 0

This was the Battle of Camperdown fought on October 11th in which Admiral Duncan routed the Dutch fleet and prevented it uniting with the French. Special importance seems to have been attached to this victory in Chester.

1798 Ringing on Admiral Nelson's Victory [Battle of the Nile, August 1] 10 0
Ringing J. Warren's Victory 5 0

A French expedition had landed on the west coast of Ireland and was expecting reinforcements. These were intercepted by Sir John Warren on October 11th and defeated.

1798 Paid to Mr. Walker, a table in the Chapter House and green cloth 1 17 2½
1799 Ringing 25th July and taking Dutch fleet 1 0 0

July 25th must have been an anniversary of some kind and had nothing to do with the taking of the Dutch fleet for that occurred on August 27th. A British force under Sir Ralph Abercromby landed at the Helder and threw open the Texel to the British ships. The Dutch seamen, who were loyal to the Prince of Orange, co-operated, and the whole fleet of 13 ships of the line gladly surrendered and were carried off to Yarmouth out of the reach of the French.

1800 Greswell for matts to cover the organ 5 0
Cleaning the curtains in the choir 18 0
1801 Ringing Lord Nelson's Victory 10 0

This was the Battle of Copenhagen (April 2) fought to rescue the Danish fleet this time, but unfortunately serious resistance was met with.⁵ This was the famous occasion when Nelson put his telescope to his blind eye and sailed boldly into the harbour in defiance of orders.

1802 Ringing Ratification of Peace 10 0

This was the Peace of Amiens (March 25), but it did not last more than a year and the war soon began again.

1803 Ringing 29th July for Volunteers 10 0
Ringing for Prince William of Gloucester 10 0

He was a nephew of George III and "arrived in Chester Sept. 1st. On Sunday, Sept. 4th his Highness inspected the Volunteers on the Roodeye, and accompanied them to the Cathedral, where the Bishop preached".⁶

1804 Ringing presentation of Volunteer Colours 10 0
Mr. Pope an allowance (by order of Chapter) for damage done to his Garden by repairing Free School 2 2 0
1805 Ringing Volunteers returning home 10 0
Messengers to fetch ringers 1 0
Ringing cavalry returning and messenger 11 0

⁵History repeated itself when we had to seize the French fleet in Oran Harbour in 1940.

⁶Dr. Pigot, *History of the City of Chester* 1815, p. 326.

Ringin defeat of combined Fleet by Adml. Calder	10	0
Ringin Adml. Nelson's Victory, Trafalgar	10	0
Ringin Adml. Strachan's Victory	10	0
Illumination	10	0

Admiral Calder on July 22 met the combined French and Spanish fleets on their return from the West Indies where they had given Nelson the slip. Their intention was to join up with the French fleet at Brest and hold the Channel while Napoleon threw his army across. But Calder headed them off from Brest and drove them south into Cadiz—as important and decisive an action as the Battle of Britain in 1794, for it caused Napoleon to give up the idea of invading England. Admiral Strachan's exploit is quite naturally overshadowed by Nelson's victory and is not mentioned in the ordinary text books.

THE VOLUNTEERS.

These had been disbanded on May 10th, 1802, after the signing of the Peace, but when war broke out again they had to be re-assembled. On July 27th there was "a meeting of citizens to raise a Volunteer Corps" and no doubt the ringing of the bells on the 29th had to do with that. The Colours were presented on March 19, 1804, "by Col. Barnston's lady in the area before his house in Foregate Street; after the ceremony, the regiment marched to the Cathedral, where the colours were consecrated".⁷ In 1805 the Volunteers marched to Warrington for 21 days "permanent duty" and presumably were welcomed home by the bells.

The Accounts for this year (1805) show that the two side aisles of the Cathedral were re-slatted for £75 18s. 0d., and the King's School (Refectory) roof was replaced at a cost of £448 17s. 8d., the old roof being sold for £40. Hemingway says the old one was "a roof of oak resting on brackets".

DEAN HUGH CHOLMONDELEY (1806-1815)

Dean Cotton died on December 10, 1806, while he was at Bath, and was succeeded by Hugh Cholmondeley, B.D., F.S.A., the fourth son of Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal, which the Cholmondeley family had bought in 1616 from the Holcrofts, who in their turn had obtained it at the Dissolution of the Monasteries.⁸

Born in 1772, the new Dean went to Brazenose College, Oxford, of which he was elected a Fellow in 1796 at the early age of 23. The way in which he came to take Holy Orders he has described himself in his letters to Richard Heber, who lived at Hodnet and was half brother to Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta.⁹ He must be judged by the spirit of his age, and his attitude to ordination was probably that of his circle in the beginning of the 19th century. He was 26 at the time he wrote.

⁷*Ibid* p 321.

⁸*The Stranger's Companion*, 8th ed. 1849, p. 100

⁹Author of the hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains." R. H. Cholmondeley, *The Heber Letters* pp. 170-172. The Batchworth Press

Stanmore, May 15, 1798.

"After much consideration I have almost resolved to take Orders next Trinity Sunday. It is an object to me to get settled upon some Curacy or other, for living this wandering kind of life will not do for me. And one is more likely by being in Orders to meet with anything than otherwise. I shall then, too, be able to take Priests Orders at Christmas and get it all over. I am not particularly anxious to go into the Church, but as it must be my profession the sooner I take it up the better".

Oxford, May 20, 1798.

"Harper dissuades me very much from taking Orders and what astonished me very much, the Bishop did the same, when I called on him this morning. I think I shall defer it and become military".

B.N.C. May 26, 1799.

"I was ordained last Sunday, so you may direct to the Rev. H. C."

His first living was the Rectory of Harthill. Here he devoted himself to archæology, a subject in which he was much interested and apparently well fitted for. Was he not an F.S.A.? In 1804 he was given the living of Barrow by Lord Cholmondeley, his cousin.

On February 24, 1806, he succeeded Dr. Cotton as Dean of Chester, and once again the story of how he obtained the Deanery is told by himself. What seems to us an unscrupulous rush to get his claim in first was probably not considered in any way peculiar in those days.

To Richard Heber, London, Dec. 14, 1805.

I find you have written to my brother whose letter of application was forwarded to Mr. Pitt at Bath by Lord Chatham last Monday accompanied by one in my favour to Pitt from Lord C. I dare not venture to hope though I certainly have a chance. Pitt will receive the letter the same day the Dean died". (i.e. Dec. 10, 1805).

B.N.C. Dec. 18, 1805.

"Thank you heartily for all your exertions. Indeed my friends have been wonderfully zealous, and Cholmondeley has most fully done his duty. The Dean's death was known to Parker¹⁰ in Chester on Friday last. He instantly sent off an Express to Cholmondeley which on Saturday afternoon found him just returned from a capital run at Belvoir. He instantly set out in a hack-chaise for town where about 12 o'clock on Sunday he arrived at Drummond's. After some consultation about 2 o'clock he started again for Bath from whence I have this morning received the following letter:—

Bath, Monday.

My dear Hugh,

I have this moment left Mr. Pitt, he told me the Grosvenors, J. R. Mill and Leycester had apply'd, but allowed no promise had as yet been given. I spoke to him like a man and a relation, [he was second Cousin] not as a petitioner and left him with an assurance that he would do all in his power to arrange matters so as to serve you and not affront them. I may be sanguine but my opinion is you have a good chance. Of this I am certain, had I not seen him, nothing would have been done.

Yrs. affect.

Thomas Cholmondeley."

Thomas Cholmondeley was Hugh's eldest brother, an M.P. and afterwards Lord Delamere. His race to Bath was successful and his brother was admitted to the Deanery on February 24, 1806 and took his B.D. in March following. In 1808 he added to his emoluments the living of Tarporley which was in the gift of the

¹⁰Of Astle in Cheshire. He had married Hugh Cholmondeley's sister.

Chapter for this turn, and here he spent a good deal of his time. His appointment to Tarporley was characteristic. He wrote to his friend Richard Heber on April 16, 1808.

"You may not perhaps object to a line conveying the information that Mr. Jacson died at Tarporley yesterday evening about five o'clock. You will not be sorry to hear that I think myself secure in succeeding him. But as we know by experience of College Elections nothing can be reckoned upon till it's finally fixed. I expect next Thursday when a Chapter is to be held, will decide the business".

On April 24 he wrote:

"I am happy to announce to you that on Thursday I was presented to the Living of Tarporley".

It is strange that there is no record of this presentation in the Chapter Book.

"When he first succeeded to the Deanery," writes Ormerod,¹¹ "many nuisances existed in the Cathedral, from long indiscriminate access; the substantial parts were on the verge of decay, and many beautiful specimens of architecture as early as that of the original Norman foundation were obscured by piles of rubbish; these nuisances were almost instantaneously (*sic*) done away with, the material parts of the fabric were restored as substantially as the slender funds of the Chapter admitted; and many ornamental repairs and decorations were effected, which reflect the highest credit on his science and taste".

Ormerod was writing an obituary notice of a personal friend and his encomiums must be checked by other documentary evidence.

Hanshall in his *History of Cheshire* (1823) writes:—"This valuable man set on foot the reparation of the Cathedral, opened the different avenues in the cloisters, and other parts long before blocked up and erected iron palisadoes in front of the Cathedral."

A footnote to page 223, headed *Itinerary of the County*, says "In 1812 under the superintendence of the late Dean Cholmondeley the site of the southern angle of the Cloisters was cleared, and it was then that the Saxon arches were discovered".

These three accounts seem to agree that the Dean cleared away rubbish from the South Walk of the Cloisters. It is common knowledge that this South Walk had entirely disappeared long before 1870 when Sir Gilbert Scott re-built it in order to support the vaulting of the north aisle of the nave, and it is natural to suppose that the rubbish the Dean cleared away was the fallen roof of the Cloister. But the second earliest guide book we possess, dated 1793,¹² says that the South Walk was already in ruins and the rubbish removed. "Three walks of the cloisters are entire: that to the South was in ruins, but at the time of repairing of the Chapter house, the rubbish was taken away and the court made level." And there we must leave it.

¹¹ *ib.*, p. 156.

¹² *The History of the Cathedral Church at Chester from its foundation to the present time*, p.105. London. Printed for T. and J. Egerton, Whitehall, and sold by R. Broster, Chester. MDCCXCIII.

THE DORMITORY.

In 1815 Dr. Pigot says "the Dormitory and the stone steps leading to it are in existence, though in a very ruinous state".

In 1831 J. Hemingway says "Over the east cloister was a dormitory, which has either been destroyed, or suffered to fall into decay, much to the injury of the appearance of these venerable conventual buildings".¹³ This fixes the disappearing of the dormitory between 1815 and 1831.

The Stranger's Companion (4th edition, p 39) dated 1828, as far as can be ascertained from internal evidence, says "Above these may still be seen the remnants of the ancient dormitory". We may therefore confidently affirm that the dormitory finally disappeared between 1828 and 1831.

The Chapter who welcomed Dean Cholmondeley on March 28th, 1806 was constituted as follows:—

Thomas Mostyn, M.A.	1766—1808
Thomas Ward, M.A.	1781—1827
Thomas Trevor, D.C.L.	1795—1827
Unwin Clarke, M.A.	1801—1847
Charles Sawkins, M.A.	1801—1818
Thomas Maddock, M.A.	1803—1825

Since 1787 there had also been

Thomas Braithwaite	1797—1801
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of whom nothing is known, and

William Page, M.A.	1796—1801
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William Page, whose father lived at Oporto, Portugal, was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, took his B.A. in 1759 and returned to Oporto after ordination as chaplain to the factory there. In 1776 he became Rector of Frodsham and was installed at the Cathedral in 1796 where he remained until his death in 1801 at the age of 64.

Unwin Clarke was the son of Stockdell Clarke, gentleman, of Sudbury, Suffolk. He went to Wadham College Oxford in 1782 and took his B.A. and M.A. in 1792. He was made a prebendary of Chester Cathedral in 1801 and was given the living of Dodleston in 1806 on the death of its Rector, Dean Cotton. His other livings were Eastham (1827) and Neston (1828). He was also Archdeacon of Chester. He died in 1847 at the great age of 83.

Thomas Trevor was the eldest son of the Rev. Evan Humphreys of Eastham, who was Rector of Montgomery. Thomas, who changed his name in 1784, went to school at Harrow and from there proceeded to S. John's College Cambridge in 1788. He took the degree of LL.B. in 1795 and of D.C.L. at Oxford in 1816. He was ordained deacon in 1793 and two years later was ordained priest and immediately made prebendary of Chester with the living of Coddington added to his

¹³*History of the City of Chester*, II, p. 48.

stall. In 1797 he went to Eastham, and in 1803 he gave up Coddington for West Kirby, which he held with Eastham until his death in 1827. While he lived at Eastham he also held the curacy of Bromborough.

Charles Sawkins, son of James Sawkins of Lyminge, Kent, Gent. went to Christ Church in 1774, aged 16, took his B.A. in 1778 and his M.A. in 1781 and started his ordained life as perpetual curate of Binsey, Oxon, in 1797. In 1801 he was made Prebendary and also Vicar of Frodsham, a living in the gift of his old college where he remained until his death in 1818.

Thomas Maddock was the son of the Rev. Thomas Maddock of Liverpool. He went to B.N.C. Oxford in 1780 at the age of 17, took his B.A. in 1783, M.A. in 1786. He was made Prebendary of Chester in 1783 and in 1786 was appointed by Lord Derby to Holy Trinity, Chester, to which was added by the Dean and Chapter the Rectory of Coddington in 1806. The latter benefice he relinquished in 1809 for the the living of Northenden where he died in 1825.

TROUBLE IN THE CHAPTER.

In November, 1812 an unfortunate difference of opinion arose in the Chapter over the appointment of a new Chapter Clerk in place of Mascie Taylor who had resigned. Four of the Prebendaries voted for the Sacrist, the Rev. Joseph Eaton, while the other two and the Dean voted for Mr. Ward, the Deputy Registrar. The office carried with it that of Steward, Auditor and Registrar. The appointment of the Rev. Joseph Eaton was entered in the Chapter Book and signed by the four Prebendaries, Thomas Ward (Vice-Dean), Thomas Trevor, Unwin Clarke (Arch-deacon) and Thomas Maddock. Beneath this entry is written "I refuse to admit the Revd. Joseph Eaton to any of the above offices.—Hugh Cholmondeley, Dean". And beneath that again is written in another hand "The Dean, in refusing to admit the Reverend Joseph Eaton to any of the above offices, has acted in perfect agreement with our wishes.

Charles Sawkins
Richard Godley".

The battle was now joined and it is mentioned here because there was more in it than a petty quarrel; the real point at issue was whether the Dean had a right of veto over Chapter proceedings as he claimed to have. For the moment he had the whip hand, for in those days the Dean held one half (either the obverse or the reverse) of the Chapter Seal without which no appointment could be made. Both sides appealed, the Dean to the Archbishop of York and the four prebendaries to their own Bishop, who was also their Visitor. Fortunately, but not unnaturally, the decision was the same in both cases. Both agreed that a Minor Canon could not be a Chapter Clerk, Auditor and Steward without breaking the Cathedral statutes. As to the Dean's claim to a right of veto, the Archbishop declined to give an opinion, but the Bishop pronounced against it. The Dean wrote a protest against this latter decision and inserted it himself in the Chapter book, an action which called forth a protest from the four prebendaries. Meanwhile Joseph Eaton resigned, William Ward was appointed by the whole Chapter and peace reigned once more.

A FINANCIAL CRISIS.

There was however one outcome of it which was important. The four prebendaries in their appeal to the Bishop raised the question of their finances. For a long time now—since 1724—there had been a deficit every year on the working of the Cathedral, which the Dean and Chapter had tried to meet by borrowing under the Chapter Seal. But the debt grew steadily and the time came when the security of the Chapter no longer sufficed and the money had to be borrowed on the security of the individual members of the Chapter. That too had now come to an end through the unwillingness of the prebendaries to sign any further securities, and the last £500 had to be borrowed by the Dean alone. The total debt was now £4260. It is true that they had also been borrowing on the security of their Tarporley property, but Counsel's opinion, taken in October, 1811, warned them that they could not legally do this. What was to be done, they asked the Bishop, and referred him "to the 38th section of our Statutes which places them [their finances] under the jurisdiction of the Visitor." Their income, they said, came from three sources:

1. Annual rents.
2. An estate at Tarporley left to them by Dean Arderne.
3. Fines on the renewal of leases.

"The first of these has been appropriated for the discharge of the salaries of the officers of the church and repairs of the ffabrick.

"The second has been applied according to the will of the Donor in defending the rights of the church and occasionally in aid of the first fund

"The third ffund is divided into 8 shares amongst the members of the body, the Dean taking 2 shares".

So there we have it in black and white! No wonder the Cathedral finances were in a poor way. The Chapter book shows that the property in the hands of the Dean and Chapter was let at ridiculously low rents and that the real income from it arose from the fines imposed every time a lease was renewed, which was generally every seven years. *And these fines went into the pockets of the Dean and Chapter.* For example, the rent of the Bailiwick of Chester, which was the most valuable property they possessed, was only £73 p.a.; but the fine for a 21 years' lease was £2920. That this was a very wasteful way of dealing with Cathedral property was admitted by the Chapter themselves when they put their case up to Counsel about the Tarporley estate. For they wrote:

"The profits of this estate amounting at present to no more than £800 have been applied in aid of the funds of the Church, but as the system of leasing for lives or a term of years, or a fine, being very wisely abandoned, the property whenever it becomes clear may be worth £1500 per annum".

Could anything be more damning?

We are in a position now to appreciate the Bishop's answers to their cry for help. He was George Henry Law.

"The third point to which my attention has been requested is the embarrassed state of the Finances of the Dean and Chapter. And here, Reverend Brethren, I must declare my honest opinion. That some degree of blame attaches to you all. The expenses incurred by the Body should, in part at least, have been defrayed by the same body and at the time that they were incurred. . . . if all other funds unfortunately prove insufficient, the fines in aid of them must be had resource to. . . . I hope that I only discharge the duty which the Statutes upon this head impose upon me as Visitor by ordering that an eighth part of the fines be set apart and applied each year at the November audit to the discharge of all the debts of the Dean and Chapter as a body till the whole of them are paid off".

The effect of this very sensible order is to be seen—if we may anticipate a little—in a memorandum preserved in the Muniment Room headed

Fine Money carried to the Church Account:

$\frac{1}{8}$	to audit	1814	£335	16	11
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1815	£ 24	11	2
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1816	£ 54	11	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1817	£ 51	16	1
$\frac{1}{2}$	Bailiwick Fine	1818	£406	5	0
$\frac{1}{8}$	to audit	1818	£ 6	10	0
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1819	£362	15	0
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1820	£ 27	5	0
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1821	£ 55	5	0
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1822	£ 3	15	0
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1823	£ 43	7	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1824	£ 47	7	10
$\frac{1}{8}$	Bailiwick	1825	£485	0	0
$\frac{1}{8}$	to audit	1825	£ 6	11	3
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	1826	£148	0	0
12 years —			£2059	7	2
			(£158 p.a.)		

THE BISHOPS OF CHESTER, (1788—1837).

It may be well to put on record the occupants of the See of Chester during this period although only one or two of them had much to do with the Cathedral.

William Cleaver (1788-1800) was Principal of B.N.C. Oxon, 1785-1809, and owed his bishopric to having once been tutor to the Marquess of Buckingham. He was translated to Bangor and thence to St. Asaph.

Henry William Majendie (1800-1810) was Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral before being consecrated bishop. Like his predecessor he was translated to Bangor.

Bowyer Edward Sparke (1810-1812) was Dean of Bristol. He was translated to Ely after having been in Chester only two years.

George Henry Law (1812-1824) was the son of a Bishop of Carlisle and himself a prebendary of that Cathedral. One of his brothers he made Prebendary of Chester and another one was Lord Ellenborough, Lord Chief Justice. Bishop Law was translated to Bath and Wells.

Charles James Blomfield (1824-1828), the son of a Norfolk Schoolmaster, was Archdeacon of Colchester before he was made Bishop of Chester. He was translated to London.

John Bird Sumner (1828-1848) was Canon of Durham, was appointed Bishop of Chester by Robert Peel and translated to Canterbury by Lord John Russell.

It is supposed that it was the small income of the See which led to these constant translations, which in turn gave rise to the saying: "The Bishop of Chester never dies".

THE ACCOUNTS (1806-1812).

Ringling for victories in the long drawn-out War inevitably provides most of the extracts from the Accounts, but it is interesting to see how the War was viewed in England and which engagement was thought worthy of the ringing of the bells and for how long.

1806	Ringling Admiral Duckworth's victory	10	0
	Ringling Admiral Warren's victory	10	0

"In February the French force at St. Domingo surrendered to Sir James Duckworth: Admiral Warren in March closed the career of the adventurous Linois"¹⁴

	Paid Boden for cleaning and colouring the Cathedral	46	5	0
	William Hall Cleaning the Cathedral after colouring	2	12	6
	Mr. Humberston Solicitor	53	7	3

These legal expenses arose from the Dean and Chapter taking Counsel's opinion as to the legality of appointments to livings while the Deanery was vacant. Counsel was doubtful and advised that any such appointments should be made over again. So Unwin Clarke was re-instituted to Dodleston and Thomas Maddock to Coddington.

1807	Bill for parchmt, vergers, seal and ingrossing the address to his Majesty respecting the Catholic Bill	15	0
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This was a bill to remove some of the disabilities of Roman Catholics who served in the Army and Navy. The King stopped it by dismissing his ministers.

	Ringling the defeat of the French by Russia in May ¹⁵	10	0
	Ringling the taking of Copenhagen [Sept. 7th by Ld. Cathcart]	10	0
1808	Ringling the taking of the French fleet at Cadiz	10	0

The fleet consisted of five ships which had been in Cadiz harbour since Trafalgar and were now captured by the Spanish insurgents.¹⁶

	Ringling the defeat of the French by the Spanish patriots	10	0
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This was little more than a skirmish in which the French fled before the insurgents right back to Barcelona on June 12.¹⁷

¹⁴ J. Holland Rose *The Life of Napoleon*, II, 81. Linois is described as "the terror of our merchantmen in Eastern Seas." *Ibid.* I, 376.

¹⁵ J. H. Rose *op. cit.*, II, 109. ["The fighting in the open also went against the allies, though at Puttusk, a town north of Warsaw, the Russians claimed that the contest had been drawn in their favour."]

¹⁶ Camb. Mod. History IX, p. 238.

¹⁷ Napier's *Peninsular War*, ch. VI, p. 77.

Ringin the Surrender of the French army commanded by Genl. Dupont to the Spanish Patriots [at Baylen]	10	0
Ringin on the 29th of Augt. for the glorious news from Portugal [Battle of Rovica, Augt. 17]	7	6
Ringin on the defeat of Junot in Portugal by the British command- by Sir Arthur Wellesley [Vimiero, Augt. 21]	10	0
Ringin on the surrender of the French troops in Portugal [Con- vention of Cintra]	10	0
Mr. Eaton [Sacrist] in lieu of perquisites formerly taken by the Sacrist out of the offerings— $\frac{1}{2}$ year at Mich'as.	4	0 0
The Vergers the like— $\frac{1}{2}$ year due Mich'as.	1 11	6
Do an allowance on Good Friday (by order of Mr. Trevor)	1 0	6
Do their fees on tolling the bell for Mr. Mostyn	2 2	0
	12	6

This is explained by the following resolution passed by the Chapter on April 21, 1808—"It was also ordered that the sum of eight pounds be annually paid to the Sacrist in lieu of perquisites formerly paid him out of the Offering money given whenever the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered. And that from the date hereof the Treasurer do pay all expenses for bread and wine. And that the sum of one guinea be paid annually to each of the Vergers, and to the Sweeper, in lieu of their perquisites on the same occasion".

Prebendary Mostyn for whom they tolled the bell was the doyen of the Chapter, having joined it in 1776—32 years ago.

1809	Ringin the defeat of the French Fleet in Basque Roads by Adm'l. Gambier and Lord Cockrane [April 11th]	10	0
	Do the taking of Flushing	10	0
	Finney, Cross Foxes for a Dinner for part of the Members of the Church on the Jubilee	3 7	0
1810	Ringin for Lord Wellington's Victory, Buscao [Sept. 27]	10	0
	T. Hodgkinson, The balance of cash paid the workmen employed about the Cloisters and other places	154 8	10
	Cash from the Prebendaries	12 12	0
		141 16	10
1810	Tolling the Great Bell for Princess Amelia [favourite daughter of George III who had died]	12	6
1812	Ringin the good news from Lord Wellington [Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, Jan. 19 and Ap. 6]	7	6
	Ringin the Battle of Salamanca [July 22]	15	0
	Ringin the taking of Madrid [July 22]	15	0
	Ringin the complete overthrow of the French by the Russians [Retreat from Moscow began Oct. 18th]	7	6
1813	Great Bell for the Duchess of Brunswick	12	6
	Ringin the 4th June and the Battle of Vittoria	1 2	6
	Ringin the taking of the Pyrenees and 12th August	1 2	6
	Ringin the Victory gained by the Austrians [Kulm]	15	0
	Ringin the Victory gained by the Allied Armies [Leipzig, Oct. 16-19]	15	0
	Ringin the Defeat of Suchett [The French Commander in Catalonia]	15	0

1814	Mr. Leatherbarrow's bill for the Illumination	8	0	0
	4th June a Peace [Treaty of Paris—May 30]		15	0
	Weeding the Sprice		8	0
	Illumination		15	0
	Thanksgiving		15	0
	August. Cleaning the Chandeliers		16	0

DEAN ROBERT HODGSON (1816—1820)

Robert Hodgson D.D. was instituted to the Deanery on January 25, 1816, on the death of Dean Cholmondeley. He was a Cheshire man, the son of Robert Hodgson of Congleton and Mildren, daughter of the Rev. Robert Porteus. He went to school at Macclesfield and from there proceeded to Peterhouse Cambridge where he took his B.A. (14th Wrangler) in 1795 and the following year was elected a Fellow of his College. Ordained in 1796, he served as Chaplain to the Bishop of London, Beilby Porteus, who was his great uncle and a former Bishop of Chester (1777-87). Promotion was therefore easy and assured. He was Rector of St. George's, Hanover Square 1803-14; Chaplain to the King; Vicar of Hillingdon with Valridge 1810-14, Archdeacon of St. Albans, 1814-16. He left Chester in 1820 to become Dean of Carlisle (1820-40) and also Chaplain-General to the Forces (1824).

THE ACCOUNTS.

1818	Rev. George Pearson Lecturer at St. Peter's, a donation	10	0	0
	Clothier's bill (Mr. Francis) for hanging the stalls and pulpit	37	16	6
	Iron Chest for the Registers	2	3	6
1819	Laying the gas pipes in the Cathedral	68	18	11½
	Enlarging and altering the swell organ	30	0	0
	Bill for ornaments in the Choir	3	0	0
1820	Gass bill for lighting the Cathedral	3	0	0
	Mr. Holland, a new clock for the Broad Aisle	2	10	0
	A damask table cloth for the Altar	2	10	0
1821	Police for paving Church Yard	4	12	6
	Kelley's Balance of Bill for the late repairs	200	0	0
	Martin and Ingram Balance of their Bill for the late repairs	29	19	5
1821	A piece of plate presented to the Chapter Clerk [Rev. J. Eaton]	20	0	0
	Martin and Ingram, Balance of their Bill for the late Repairs	29	19	5
	Gas Bill for lighting up the Choir	4	0	0
	Expenses on a Parliamentary Petition		17	10
1822	Martin and Ingram, Carpenter's Bill for 1821 and 1822	263	1	9½
1824	Christian Knowledge Society donation	5	5	0
	Do do do Subscription	5	5	0
	Mr. Morgan assisting at the organ (paid to the Bishop)	10	0	0

THE RESTORATION OF 1818—1819.

One would never guess from the meagre details given in the Accounts that a considerable restoration of the Cathedral was undertaken in 1818 and 1819, but fortunately the details of Martin and Ingram's bill for work done in 1819 has been preserved and gives us some idea of the nature of this restoration. It seems to have been very much over-due. In an appeal issued to the clergy of the diocese on July 1,

1818, the Bishop (George Henry Law) asked for contributions from each parish "for the repair of our Cathedral. It may perhaps be unnecessary for me to apprise you," he wrote, "that the funds of the Capitular Body are unequal even to the annual expences of the Cathedral, much more to the repair of it. From this cause, and from an anxious wish on the part of the Dean and Chapter to leave nothing undone that they could accomplish, they have become involved in a considerable degree of debt. An accurate Survey and Estimate have been made by Mr. Harrison, the Architect, and from these it appears, that at least £7000 are required for the decent repair of our ancient and venerable fabric. Unless something be done, and done soon, the building must inevitably fall into a state of disgraceful dilapidation".¹³

Further evidence about this restoration can be obtained from *The Stranger's Companion*, the guide-book of that day, first published in 1823. There it is stated

"The exterior had, from neglect, or the low state of revenue, fallen into the most abject and fearful decay, till it was taken under repair by public subscription; much has been done to strengthen it, and many parts are renewed; the exterior has likewise been much improved and beautified".

This account appeared annually until 1833 when a new editor re-wrote it as follows:

"It is greatly to be lamented that owing to the low state of the Cathedral revenues the whole building was suffered to fall into a serious state of dilapidation before it was attended to A subscription was therefore set on foot throughout the Diocese, and a handsome sum was collected, though not sufficient it was thought to restore the grandeur of its former architectural dignity. Accordingly, the repairs as they now stand were completed at the least possible expense".

This is borne out by details from the carpenter's bill alluded to above.

Extracts from a bill of Martin and Ingram, Chester 1819:

March 27	176 ft. of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. red deal for Coir		2	6	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Thos. Ingram at Tabernacle work	4d		16	8
	Thos. Edge at do do	5d	1	0	10
April 3	100 feet of 1 In Red Deal for Doors and Tabernacle work		2	1	8
	Thos. Ingram at Tabernacle work	4d		16	8
	Thos. Edge at do	6d	1	5	0
April 17	Thos. Edge at do	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d	1	2	11
May 15	Thos. Edge at do	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d	1	1	10
" 22	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft. of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. for Tabernacle			2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Thos. Ingram at Tabernacle wk	2d		8	4
	Thos. Edge do do	6 days	1	5	0
" 29	33 feet of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deal for East window		1	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
June 5	37 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet of 1 in. Deal for Catofiles under window			15	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Thos. Ingram at Tabernacle	6d	1	5	0
	John Snelson at Catofiles	6d	1	5	0
" 12	Thos. Edge at Tabernacle and Porch	6d	1	5	0
	228 feet of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ plank for Bell floor		10	9	0
	172 Treads up Tower as pr. Contract		1	16	4

¹³Ormerod, I, 252.

The purchase of red deal and the many days spent on the tabernacle work in the Choir—49½ in all—rouse our apprehensions. What damage, we wonder, was being done. The answer is given by the firm which repaired the wood work in the Choir in 1870. They wrote, "All the old stalls and canopies were in a very bad state, and had been to a large extent repaired in deal . . . no less than 35 of the large topmost finials were either altogether missing or in deal . . . The canopies at the west end were all new, as also six of the canopies to the side stalls, which were found to be all in deal".¹⁹

*The Stranger's Companion*²⁰ gives these further details about this restoration. The walls of the Choir were found "to be too much decayed to support a new stone roof", and "an artificial one of lath and plaster has been suggested to supply the deficiency . . . anything would be preferable to its present uncouth ceiling". "The tower of the church," we read, "has five unequal bells, which we cannot commend for their melody". That this restoration did not pass off without any friction is clear from the correspondence between the Dean and Chapter and the architect, the famous Thomas Harrison. Harrison had rebuilt the Castle and erected the monument on Moel Famau, and in his 81st year was going to be asked to design the Grosvenor Bridge, his greatest work, which he did not live to see completed. Dean Hodgson wrote to him on November 30, 1818, asking him to advise on getting tenders for the work, "and for that purpose it will be necessary to state by public advertisement, as near as may be, what is to be done, and what part of it is to be undertaken *first*". Harrison did what he was asked to do, but on March 5, 1819, he wrote to Prebendary Slade "despairing that any professional skill of mine can be of use under the present interference of the individual I mentioned to you". Slade replied courteously but firmly—"We are truly obliged to your important advice, but at the same time feel ourselves to be alone responsible". Harrison replied with some asperity "Altho' the restoration of a building like the Cathedral cannot be considered as the most agreeable employment in which an architect can be engaged; yet from the high respect I have for the worthy Lord Bishop of Chester, who first employed me to examine this Church, and for the very Revd. the Dean and other members of the Chapter, I willingly entered upon the business, however I might be remunerated, and made the necessary drawings, specifications, estimates etc preparatory to commencing the operations, little suspecting that any person would so soon interfere in what I conceived essentially necessary for the benefit of the work". He added that as an architect of "this almost ruinous church" he must be allowed to superintend the repairs in order to guard against accidents, "whereas I learnt from your self I am to be restrained from visiting the works whenever I may think proper". In consequence he begged to be excused having anything further to do with the work and—a parting shot—he would take his foreman with him. On the face of it he seems to have been rather badly treated, but we have not got the Dean and Chapter's side of the story.

¹⁹C.A.J. ix, p. 48.

²⁰4th ed., c. 1828, p. 46.

DEAN PETER VAUGHAN (1820-1826)

Peter Vaughan was the son of a doctor in Leicester. He went to Merton College Oxford in 1787 at the age of 17 and had an unbroken career there—except for one year as assistant master at Rugby School in 1792—ending up as Warden of his College, an office which he held from 1810 to 1825. During that time he seems to have been Vicar of High Offley (Staffs.) and Minister of S. John the Baptist, Oxford. When he came to Chester as Dean in 1820 he received the Chapter living of Northenden, which he held till his death on April 25, 1825. Half the Chapter at this time had changed from what it was under Dean Cholmondeley, and was now constituted as follows:

Thomas Ward, M.A.	1781—1827
Thomas Trevor Trevor, D.C.L.	1795—1827
Unwin Clarke, M.A.	1811—1847
James Slade, M.A.	1816—1860
James Thomas Law, M.A.	1818—1828
Francis Wrangham, M.A.	1825—1843

James Slade was the son of a clergyman of Northamptonshire who had educated his boy himself, and evidently found it difficult to pay for him at Cambridge, for James went to Emmanuel College in 1800 as a Sizar. However, he repaid his father's self-denial by being placed 9th wrangler in 1804 and being made Fellow and Tutor of his College in 1806, in which year he was ordained. From 1807-1811 he managed to hold two curacies at once, Willingham (Camb.) and Dodford (Northants.). Then he got the living of Teversham (Camb.) and married on the strength of it, adding to it in 1813 the Vicarage of Milton in the same county. He resigned the latter benefice on being made Prebendary of Chester in 1816, but received instead the Vicarage of Bolton-le-Moors (Lancs.) in 1817, and the Rectory of Tattenhall (Ches.) in 1818. He resigned the latter and Teversham in 1826 when the Dean and Chapter presented him to Northenden, which he exchanged for West Kirby in 1829, and here at last he remained until his death in 1860, aged 77. For the last four years of his long life he ceased to be a pluralist, for he resigned Bolton in 1856. He attained a great reputation as a preacher and as an advocate of Church reform—including the abolition of pluralism?—and the Bolton Parish Sunday School became famous under his care. He also wrote several books on the Bible.

James Thomas Law, eldest son of a Carlisle clergyman, was educated at the Grammar School there and went to Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1807. He took his B.A. in 1812, was made Fellow of his College in 1814 and was ordained priest in 1815. His first living was Tattenhall which he held for only two years (1816-18) and then was made Prebendary of both Lichfield and Chester Cathedrals—this at the early age of 28 and in the third year of his priesthood. This rapid promotion was due to shameless nepotism on the part of the Bishop of Chester, George Henry Law, who was his brother. To his two prebends Law the younger added the livings of Childwall (Lancs.) and Bowdon (Ches.) (1818-21) and while at Bowdon he

married Lady Henrietta Charlotte Gray, eldest daughter of the Earl of Stamford. In 1821 he was made Chancellor of Lichfield and in 1825 Vicar of Harborne (Staffs.), a living he resigned in 1845 on being given the sinecure office of Master of St. John's Hospital, Lichfield,²¹ where he died in 1876. In the meantime he had been obliged to resign his Chester prebend (1828) for reasons which will be given later. Besides some ecclesiastical works he was the author of "The Poor Man's Garden or a few brief rules regulating allotments of land to the poor for potato gardens".

Francis Wrangham, who was admitted a Sizar at the age of 16 to Magdalene College, Camb. in 1785, was the son of a Yorkshire farmer, and went to school in Hull. He took his B.A. in 1790 (3rd Wrangler). Ordained in 1794 he was made Vicar of Hunmanby with Muston, Yorks, a benefice which he held for the rest of his life. He was made F.R.S. in 1804, Archdeacon of Cleveland in 1820 and Prebendary of York in 1823. In 1827 he came to Chester as Prebendary of the Cathedral and was given the living of Dodleston. He resigned his other Cures except Hunmanby, but in 1828 was made Archdeacon of the East Riding. He was an ardent book collector and a friend of William Wordsworth. He died on December 27, 1842.

DEAN COPLESTON (1826-28)

The new Dean was a Devon man and managed to combine his duties as Dean with those of Provost of Oriel College, Oxford. His career was wholly academic, for he was made Fellow of Oriel as soon as he had graduated. From 1802 to 1812 he was Professor of Poetry. He went on from Chester to become Bishop of Llandaff in 1826 and Dean of S. Paul's in 1828.

RESTORATION OF S. OSWALD'S CHURCH.

It must have been shortly before his departure in 1824 that Bishop Law ordered the parishioners of S. Oswald's (the South Transept of the Cathedral) to put their church into complete repair. According to *The Stranger's Companion* of 1825 it was separated from the rest of the cathedral by a screen and contained nothing worthy of remark: "From the nature of the building it is very heavy and gloomy". The details of the restoration are given in the 1833 edition, which records that "the whole was new flagged and pewed,²² a new pulpit and reading desk added; and the old gallery, which was at the west side, taken down, and a new one erected at the south end; the walls were cleaned, and the whole as far as possible, renewed; so that it is now the neatest Church in the City". In that period to call a building "neat" was the highest praise you could give it. The 1849 edition adds this paragraph. "In the following year (1828) several other improvements were added by the munificence of Dean Copleston. Hitherto the screen, which divided the parish church from the side aisles of the nave and choir, was comparatively low, but this he raised to the roof; a handsome throne for the bishop was also placed against the screen

²¹*Cf. The Warden*, (1855) by Anthony Trollope.

²²*The Ecclesiologist* for April 1846 wrote "One of the first improvements should be the unpewing of the spacious and beautiful South transept," quoted in *History of Chester Cathedral*, J. Hicklin, p. 99.

inside the church, on each side of which is an elevated seat, one for the dean and the other for the precentor. Under the superintendence of Dr. Copleston also, the ground within the Cloisters and the Churchyard was lowered to its level, and a trench dug round the building from south to north, in order to preserve the interior from dampness". So that although this Dean was only in Chester for two years he made a valuable contribution to the fabric of the cathedral. There is some difference of opinion about the screen, for Winkles (1842) calls it a wall,²³ but this seems hardly likely. There were two doors in it, leading into the two aisles of the parish church.

The south window seems to have been included in the restoration ordered by Bishop Law, for the editor of *The Stranger's Companion* (1833) writes "The south window, from its newness and modern appearance certainly does not tend to increase our veneration, though it must be admitted that it was not placed there before something of the kind was required. The former window was unquestionably one of the most magnificent of its kind, and was the wonder and praise of every scientific admirer. Just before it was taken down, several draughts were made of it by artists of the city, so that its beautiful form may still be contemplated with delight". Would that some of these "draughts" had survived²⁴.

ST. THOMAS' COURT (1783-1815)

The minutes of this Court, if they may be so called, have survived for the above years. They are headed "The View of Frank Pledge with the Court Baron of the Reverend the Dean and Chapter", but in the Steward's order to the Bailiff to summon the court it is styled "The Court Leet and Court Baron". All three titles take us back to Norman times. The frank pledge was originally an association of ten men who were to be standing securities for one another and bound to report any offenders within their ranks. They met twice a year to be "viewed", and this "view" became associated with the Court Leet or private police court held by the Lord of the Manor for his tenants. "Twice a year", says S. R. Maitland, "the villagers, bond or free, had to report themselves and tell tales of one another".²⁵ After the passage of seven centuries we find them still doing so, albeit with considerable reluctance. In this court the bailiff was the judge. The Court Baron was originally for the free tenants of the Manor and they themselves were the judges, but the distinction between the two courts had long ago been given up since there was no longer any distinction between servile and free tenure of land. In the Court Leet in Norman times the fines were "affeered"—that is to say the amount to be paid by each person who had been found guilty was fixed by two or more of the suitors who were sworn to do the work justly.²⁶ Strange though it may seem, this practice still continued right down to the 19th century. In 1814 for example we find

²³*Cathedrals in Great Britain* III, p. 62.

²⁴The present window was put in in 1887.

²⁵Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, I, 581.

²⁶*Ibid.*, I, 560.

“Afferers

We Edward Bailey and Thomas Millington Inhabitants within the View of Frank pledge chosen and sworn afferers by the Court having heard the several amerciaments before mentioned read do adjudge the same to be reasonable.

E. Bailey
T. Millington.”

We come now to the constitution of the Court at the end of the 18th century. It used to be held in the room north of and adjoining the Abbey gate way, according to Randle Holmes’ plan,²⁷ but from 1808 it seems to have been held in different inns, whose names are scribbled on the outside of the Minutes as e.g. in 1808 and 1814 The Ram in Boughton, in 1809 The Castle and Falcon in Watergate St., and the Red Lion in Boughton; in 1810 The Stag’s Head, “behind the Exchange”, in 1811 The Bull’s Head and The Wheatsheaf in Boughton.

There were 83 tenants distributed as follows:

Outside Chester	5	Parsons Lane	2	Boughton	36
Abbey Square	5	Watergate St.	1	Bridge	
Northgate St.	25	Cuppins Lane	1	Trafford	8—83

A Jury of 18 was summoned (and its members were fined if they did not appear)—9 from Chester and the other 9 from Boughton and Trafford in proportion to the number of tenants in those places. All the “suitors” or tenants were summoned, and the chief and often the only business of the Court was fining those who did not attend. Once a year, however, a constable and a burleyman were elected. The duties of the latter were to “Present defaulters—and other Presentments. You shall well and truly affeer and affirm (?) the several amerciaments here made and now to you read over; you shall spare no one out of Love, Fear or Affection, nor raise or enhance [the fine of] anyone out of malice or hatred, but impartially shall do your duty herein. So help it.”²⁸

A letter of apology for non-attendance has been preserved among the records of the Court and is here reproduced in its original spelling:

“gentelmen,

As I am on the King’s duty and cannot atend on your Court this Day I hope youl be so good to excuse me and I shall be glad to wett any other time with Pluser in your Company.

I am gentilmen your very
Humbel Servint

Chester 31 Octbr. 1796

Davd. Melvill.”

The word is certainly “wett”, but there is no mention in the Accounts of a dinner in connection with the Court. However another loose paper without heading or date suggests that the word is justified!

²⁷See *C.A.J.*, 39, p. 90.

²⁸Does a burleyman exist anywhere else?

24 Dinners at 2/-	2	8	0
1 Bottle Brandy		10	0
2 Do of Rum		16	0
2 Do of Wine		11	0
3 Do of Gin		12	0
3 Bowles of Sugar		1	6
4 Lemons		1	0
Tobacco			8
	<hr/>		
	5	0	2
Ale and Porter		19	4
	<hr/>		
	£5	19	6
	<hr/>		

The presentments made to the Court were few and far between. Many years passed without any being made at all, except for non-attendance at the Court. Such presentments as there were are usually of persons who have not scoured their water course, but in 1801 we have a complaint that in Great Boughton a "certain garden place, adjoining that of Mr. George Lowe, is become a place of resort for many idle and disorderly persons who assemble there upon the Lord's Day and practise gaming and create great disturbance to the neighbourhood by quarrelling and profane language".

Also in 1803 there was a pigstye in Sandy Lane that was deemed a nuisance and the owner was given a month in which to move it. John Healey Butcher was presented "for not ditching his ditch and repairing the plott adjoining the Hoole Lane Field and along the Green Lane in Boughton", Thomas Taylor and Edwd. Mainwaring Esqs were presented for not repairing a garden wall.

The right to hold a private court was one which was jealously guarded, for the fines went to the Lord of the Manor. One would not have thought that they were not worth very much in these later days but in 1769 the Dean and Chapter paid the Chapter Clerk's "Bill of costs in the dispute between the Dean and Chapter and Trafford Barnston Esq. as to the right of the suit and service of the inhabitants of Bridge Trafford to the Court Leet and Court Baron of the Manor of St. Thomas", amounting to £43 18s. 9d. So they must have thought it was a privilege worth fighting for.

To complete the picture let us glance at the Manor Court of Tarporley which came into the hands of the Dean and Chapter as a result of the Arderne legacy in c. 1740. In 1815 three persons were presented "for leaving pigs going at large in the public street of Tarporley" and five persons "for leaving dunghills" in the same street. But the most interesting presentment is that of Dean Cholmondeley himself "for stopping the way to a public well called the Church Well and taking away the water from the same and we amerce him in the sum of ten pounds". This is an interesting example of the right of the Manor Court to punish the Lord of the Manor himself if he transgressed the custom of the Manor, a right which goes back to Saxon times. "The custom of the Manor" was superior to private rights.

We notice in conclusion that in 1810 "it is agreed by the jury of this meeting that all Pigs found in the street at Tarporley shall be taken to the pinfold and fined".

THE BUILDING OF NOS. 2—8 ABBEY STREET

No one can view the Cathedral from the north without regretting the row of four houses in Abbey Street, which have no architectural merit in themselves and completely block the view of the Refectory and the Cathedral behind it, and the question is often asked why they were ever allowed to be built. The answer is that they were built by one of the prebendaries in opposition to the Dean and the rest of the Chapter as a result of which the offender was suspended by the Bishop, who suffered an action in the King's Bench in consequence. This is how it happened.

In 1821 Prebendary James Thomas Law persuaded a Chapter meeting consisting of only two others beside himself to give him a lease of his prebendal property, consisting of Nos 1 and 2 Abbey Square²⁹ and a stable and garden in Abbey Street. We can let him tell his own story, in a letter to Dean Copleston, at Oriel College, Oxford, dated September 28, 1826.

"I succeeded to a most dilapidated prebendal property. Being engaged at the time building etc at Bowdon I put off any expenses of bricks and mortar at Chester. But my Father . . . informed the Chapter that he considered my houses in Abbey Square, as left by Mr. Preby. Sawkins, a nuisance. The Chapter of course would do nothing, but put the whole onus upon me. I laid out in consequence £800 to £1000 on my property there. But I told the Chapter my predecessors had a lease for 40 years as an encouragement to them, and I claimed the same indulgence, which was granted to me. When I had finished my House, I turned to my Stables, and told Dean Vaughan they were in a shocking state, and must be taken down. [He asked the Chapter to take them over and give him something in exchange, but they declined]. Whilst I was yet doubtful what my next step should be, a respectable man named Thomas offered to take a Building Lease of the Land. As the Dean and Chapter seemed so totally indifferent what was done, I accepted his offer, first sending him to Mr. Eaton, the Chapter Clerk, to see that all was correct. That is my case".

The Dean's case may be read in a memorial he presented to the Bishop dated April 26th, 1827, requesting him to "Visit" the Cathedral. "Soon after my Installation in September last my attention was drawn to a row of brick houses then building in Abbey Street on a narrow strip of ground between the Street and the Cloisters, which all the neighbours regarded as a nuisance, the houses being of an inferior order and likely to introduce a low population within the precincts of the Church. They were besides objectionable as darkening the School windows, confining the air, hiding the ancient architecture of the Abbey, and carrying back their offices within a few feet of the School window". The Dean also said that the lease which Law had obtained was not a valid one, as it contravened the Statutes, and in any case it expressly stipulated that the stables should be maintained and kept in a

²⁹A picture of No. 1 is given in Hemingway, *op. cit.* II, p. 116.

state of repair, and he had pulled them down. Law met these arguments by a counter-attack. "I consider", he wrote in his letter to the Dean quoted above, "the Archdeacon's stables, *blocking-up* the East Window of the School as a *much greater* nuisance. Perhaps you would begin by having them removed? Again, the house immediately opposite the Deanery, I mean Mr. Rowland's surgery etc., and also the houses to your right as you go along the passage³⁰ from the Deanery to the Cathedral surely are worse. They too should be previously removed".

So the correspondence went on, Law sitting securely in his Lichfield prebendal house and only once coming to Chester to attend a Chapter Meeting called expressly to settle this dispute. The Dean's patience began to be exhausted. In January, 1827, he arrived in Chester from Oxford and received a note from Prebendary Trevor, Vicar of Eastham, asking him to put his views before the Chapter, as he was too ill to attend himself. In reply the Dean gave vent to his feelings. "I am come", he wrote, "resolved as to the course it becomes me to take. We have been too lenient and forbearing already. It seems to have encouraged Mr. Law to act towards us, not as a person who has fallen into a material error, which he regrets and would willingly amend, but as a party who sets us at defiance, who sneers at our efforts of kindness, and who presumes to treat on a footing of offensive familiarity the body whose statutes he has violated for his own benefit".

What the Chapter wanted was that Law should surrender his lease and remove the half-built houses and they were prepared to meet him half-way if he would consent to do this.

Then on February 13, 1827, Mr. Thomas intervened. Writing from King Street, he said he was called upon either to complete the houses forthwith or "pay the Contractor for the building of them agreeably to a measurement price *as they now are*". As he thought the latter would cost almost as much as the former he proposed to finish them, and finish them he did, and that is how they are with us to this day.

The rest of the story is soon told. In July, 1827 Bishop Blomfield was called in as Visitor, with the result that he suspended Law. The latter refused to resign and hung on until towards the end of 1829, though without salary. During 1828 he applied in the Court of King's Bench for "a Rule to show cause why a Writ of Prohibition should not issue against Dr. Blomfield", but the Judges returned a vague and indeterminate decision, and as the Bishop was just then translated to London, the case was dropped.

We learn from this unhappy dispute two hitherto unknown dates of buildings in the precincts. The date of No's 2—8 Abbey Street is 1828 and the date of 1 and 2 Abbey Square is 1821-26. A glance at these two houses will reveal to the most unobservant eye the difference in style between them and the rest of the houses on that side of the Square. We miss especially the Georgian front doors.

In the Accounts for 1829 the name of James Thomas Law is superseded by

³⁰A picture of the passage is in the *The Stranger's Companion* 1833.

Richard Vanbrugh Law, who is in turn superseded in 1834 by William Barlow. Meanwhile Dean Copleston in 1828 had been promoted to the Deanery of S. Paul's and the Bishopric of Llandaff and his place was taken at Chester by Henry Phillpotts, D.D., who had been Prebendary of Durham. He was also Rector of Stanhope and continued to hold that benefice in addition to his Deanery. In 1831 he was made Bishop of Exeter and George Davys took his place as Dean. Davys had been Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge (1806-1814), Vicar of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, Notts. (1811-1829) and in 1827 was appointed tutor to Princess Victoria. Perhaps it is not too fanciful to see a connection between this appointment and the opening of Grosvenor Bridge by the Princess in 1832.

EPILOGUE

We conclude with a general view of the Cathedral as it was in the year Queen Victoria ascended the throne.³¹

Starting at the west end of the nave, which of course was devoid of chairs or pews, we should find the Norman arches of the present baptistery blocked up in order to provide a wine cellar for the Bishop's palace. A flat wooden ceiling obscured the stone work above the arches of the central tower. The choir was divided from the nave by the pulpitum, a mediæval stone wall adorned with the 18th century arms of Earls of Chester, which are now to be found affixed to the south wall of the refectory. The pulpitum had a projecting porch in the middle of it on which was placed the organ—"a full-toned organ, newly erected by Messrs. Bewcher and Fleetwood".³² The choir itself was cluttered up with ugly box pews and galleries, from which the Bishop's throne must have stood out in marked contrast, built as it was out of parts of St. Werburgh's shrine. A pulpit stood opposite to it. The arch behind the high altar was blocked by a stone screen, and it was probably on this that the tapestry now on the west wall of the refectory was displayed to form a reredos. The Lady Chapel was open on both sides to take in both S. Werburgh's Chapel on the north and the corresponding chapel (destroyed by Gilbert Scott) on the south.

³¹Based on Hemingway, *op. cit.* and *The Stranger's Companion*, 1833 edition.

³²A view of the nave at this time is given in Ormerod I, 254.

