



“Popish Recusants” in Flintshire in 1625

BY HENRY TAYLOR, F.S.A.



THE following Privy Council Order, and other documents now among the large and valuable collection of Historical MSS. at Mostyn Hall, furnish a complete list of those residents in Flintshire who were in the Roman Catholic Faith on the accession of the unfortunate King Charles I. to the Throne. By the kind permission of Lord Mostyn I am enabled to publish the same in our Society's Journal; and that accurate and able Flintshire Genealogist, our member, Mr. Hugh Robert Hughes of Kinnel, the Lord Lieutenant of Flintshire, has also kindly furnished me with a short description identifying, as far as possible, those whose names are given by the Bishop of St. Asaph¹ in his return to the Deputy Lieutenants of the County, which I also publish. Both, I venture to think, will prove interesting, and perhaps valuable to Flintshire Genealogists.

I would premise, however, that the political circumstances which led to this return being made are not

¹ John Hanmer, S.T.P., Prebendary of Worcester, and Chaplain to King James; of the family of the Hammers of Flintshire, he was born at Pentrepant, in Selattyn Parish, in 1574. Educated at Oriel College, Oxford; Fellow of All Souls', 1596; Proctor for the University, 1605; Rector of Bingham, Prebendary of Worcester, and Chaplain to the King 1614; elected Bishop of St. Asaph Jan. 20; and consecrated Feb. 15, 1604. Died at Pentrepant, June 23, 1629; and was buried at Selattyn, where a monument to his memory relates his benefaction to the poor of that parish. *Thomas' History of the Diocese of St. Asaph.*

unworthy of consideration. In obedience to the will of the Nation immediately after the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the Throne (no matter what may at first have been the private wish of the Sovereign and Court) the Reformed Faith was declared to be the Church of the State. Every subject was directed to attend and conform to the tenets of the Church of England. By the Act 1 Elizabeth, Chapter 2, the penalty for not resorting to church was punishment by the censures of the church, and a fine of one shilling to the poor for every offence. This was followed later on by the Statute 23 Elizabeth, Chapter 1, which enacted that:—

“Every person above the age of xvi yeares, which shall not repaire to some Churche Chapell or usuall Place of Common Prayer, but forbear the same contrarye to the tenour of a Statute made in the 1st yeare of Her Maties Raigne for uniformitie of Common Prayer and being thereof lawfullye convicted shall forfeite to the Queene’s Matie, for everye moneth after theird of this Session of Parliament whiche he or she shall so forbear, twentie poundes of lawfull English Money; and that over and above the Forfyitures everye person so forbearing by the space of xii Monethes as aforesaid shall for his or her obstinacie, after certificat thereof in writinge made into the Courte commonlye called the Kinges Benche by the Ordinarie of the Dioces, a Justice of Assisse and Gaole Deliverye, or a Justice of Peace of the Countie, where such offendor shall dwell or be, be bounde with two sufficient suerties in the saume of two hunderth ponde at the leaste to the good Behaviour, and so to continue bounde untill suche tyme as the persons so bounde do conforme themselves and come to the Churche accordinge to the true meaninge of the said Statute made in the said firste yeare of the Queenes Maties Raigne.”

The Statute 35 Elizabeth, Chapter 2, describes a recusant to be one who does not repair to some church or chapel or usual place of Common Prayer to hear Divine Service. Afterwards, receiving the Sacrament

of the Church was made a further test of conformity. By this same Statute it was further enacted that any person above sixteen years of age who obstinately refused during the space of a month to attend public worship, should be committed to prison; that if after being condemned for this offence he persist three months in his refusal, he abjure the realm; and that if he either refuse this condition or return after banishment, he should suffer capitally as a felon without benefit of clergy.

By the Statute 3 James I., Chapter 4, those who absented themselves from church for a month together, forfeited £20 per month. And further, if a recusant conformed and did not receive the Sacrament once a year at least, he forfeited for the first year £40, and for every default afterwards £60; and if after he had once received it he made default therein by the space of one year, he forfeited £60, to be recovered by indictment and divided between the King and the Prosecutor. These were heavy fines as measured by the difference in value of money between then and now.

On the accession of King Charles I., strong suspicions were entertained in the minds of the people as to the influence of the Church of Rome at the Court, in consequence, in the first place, of the treaty for marriage with the Spanish Princess, which was broken off; and secondly, of the King's subsequent marriage with Henrietta Maria, the daughter of Henry IV., the Roman Catholic King of France. In his marriage treaty the King had in fact undertaken to protect the Roman Catholics in this country. In the first Parliament held at Westminster on the 23rd June, 1625, we find "the House went into Committee on supply and religion, wherein religion was to have the first place." The keynote of the debate was struck by Sir John Eliot. The

result of this debate was a petition drawn up by Pym and Sandys, in which the King was asked to execute the penal laws in all their strictness, and to take other measures to prevent the spread of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

On the 9th August, the Parliament being assembled at Oxford, the Duke of Buckingham directed that the King's answer to the petition on religion should be read. All, he said, the Commons had demanded was fully and freely granted. If they thought that the execution of the penal laws against the Catholics was an object worth striving for, they were to have their wishes. This was the spirit in which the Privy Council Order here set out was sent to the Earl of Northampton¹ as President of Wales, and by him to the Deputy Lieutenants of Flintshire. The King's answer with regard to supply was unfortunately not so satisfactory, and a few days after (on 13th August), he dissolved Parliament—a Parliament which, says Mr. Gardiner, opened the floodgates of that long contention with the Crown which was never, except for one brief moment, to be closed again till the Revolution of 1688 came to change the conditions of government in England.

The Deputy Lieutenants of Flintshire, on receipt of Lord Northampton's mandate, appear to have acted upon it at once, for the certificate of the Bishop of St. Asaph

¹ The Earl of Northampton was installed a Knight of the Garter and constituted Lord President of the Marches and Dominion of Wales, 2nd August, 1618. He married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir John Spencer, Knight, Lord Mayor of London, in 1593. He died in 1630. The manner of his death is thus described on the 2nd of July:—"Yesterday se'night, the Earl of Northampton, Lord President of Wales (after he had waited on the King at supper and had also supped), went into a boat with others to wash himself in the Thames, and so soon as his legs were in the water but to the knees, he had the colic and cried out, 'Have me into the boat again for I am a dead man.'" No wonder. He was succeeded by his only son, Spencer, second Earl and a Royalist, who lost his life for that cause.

is dated very shortly after the Privy Council Order. This certificate purports to be a complete return of all the Popish Recusants within his Diocese in the County of Flint, which we have seen would mean those in the Roman Catholic Faith within the county. Whether any proceedings were taken against those named in the certificate, there is at present no evidence to show. Probably not. Prior to the Statute of 35 Elizabeth, all nonconformists were considered "Recusants," and were all equally subject to the penalties of "Recusancy." This Statute was the first penal statute made against "Popish Recusants" by that name and as distinguished from other Recusants. From this Statute arose the distinction between Protestant and Popish Recusants; the former were subject to such Statutes against Recusancy as preceded this one (35 Elizabeth), and to some Statutes against Recusants made subsequently to that time; but they were relieved from them all in 1689 by the Act of Toleration, 1 William and Mary, Chapter 18.

The Pilgrim Fathers had previously emigrated to New England in 1620, because they could get no toleration at home. From the Statute of 35 Elizabeth arose also the distinction between Papists, or persons professing the Popish religion in general, and Popish Recusants and Popish Recusants' Convict.

MOSTYN MSS.

The Lords of the Council to the Earl of Northampton.

1625, October 2, Salisbury. As to seizing the arms of recusants—*Circular letter in same words as that to the Duke of Buckingham printed in Report on Rye MSS., Hist. MSS. Commission, 13th Report, pt. 4, p. 175.*

The Lords of the Council to the Earl of Northampton.

[1625, November.] The Court "Whereas you lately received directions from this Board for the disarminge in such manner

as is thereby signified of all recusantes within the Counties of your lieutenances there, whoe are either convicted or justly suspected accordinge to the actes of state heretofore expressed because it seemes that these actes are not nowe to be founde, where they should be used for light and instruction, the want whereof must needes greatly hinder the execution of this important service, we hould it necessaree for your lordships directions in this behalf, to imparte unto you, that which was written from this Board divers yeares since to the High Shereffes and Justices of the Peace upon this occasion wherein you maie find in what sense the late Kinge of happie memory, by the advise of the lords and others whoe were then of his Privy Councell with the opinion of some of the Judges of the realme declared alsoe thereupon explained himself concerning recusantes justly suspected viz., that his meaning was to proceede not only with convicted recusantes, but alsoe with such as give any ouvert suspicion of ill affection in religion, of whiche sorte he understood to be as well those that doe not ordinarily and frequently repaire to the Church to heare divine service, when there is not just cause either of sickness or other lawfull impediment to excuse them, as also such as have not for three or fower yeares received the Comunion once a yeare at the least, and such as have their children or servants recusantes or non-communicantes as aforesaid or are otherwise knowne to be popishly affected, or such as have any noted or extraordinary number of retainers or tenantes, recusantes or non-communicantes. These sortes of people therefore and every of them whom his Majestie and the states at this tyme have the same reason to hould in jealousie, wee are in his Majesties name and by his expresse command, to require your lordshipp to proceed with, as by our former letters you were directed, to which letters we reffere you saveinge that you maie forbear the nobility and peeres, if any such be within those Counties, his Majestie haveinge taken another course for disarminge them. Lastly, wee praie and require your lordshipp to give order that the armes taken from these and other recusantes be kept in good condition by beinge scoured and otherwise looked unto, as shall be needefull through the care of those whoe shall have the custody of them, but at the charge of the proprietaries.''

[*The Bishop of St. Asaph*] to the Deputy Lieutenants of the County of Flint.

1625[6], January 14. "I here send unto you a true Certificat of all such papistes and recusantes inhabitinge within the Counties of Flint and my dioces of St. Asaph that according to his Majesties Comission in that behalf you maie discerne them and also levie the xiid. appointed both by the statute and the said Comission for every Sonnday that every of them shalbe absent from divine service. In witness whereof to this my Certificat I have put my seale this xiiiith of January, 1625."

THE CERTIFICATE REFERRED TO—

- NORTHOPPE—Hugh Conway of Soughton esquire and Elizabeth his wief, Edward and John Conway his sonnes.
- HALKIN—John Hanmer of Halken gent and Mary his wief, Jane Conway the wief of Rees Evans of the same gent.
- CAERWYS—Grace Robertes the wief of William Williams gent, Elizabeth John ap Rees spinster, Margaret Lloyd the wief of Piers Williams gent.
- RELOSNOYD (*Newmarket*)—Margaret Davies of Relosnoyd in the said Countie widdow, Mary Davies of the same Spinster, Katherin Robert of the same widdow.
- KILKEN—Katherin Wynter of Llysycoed widdow and Elizabeth her maide, Jane Hanmer of the same spinster.
- WHITFORD—Hugh ap Thomas of Maton in the Countie of Flint gent and Anne Pennant his wief, Henrie Hughes of the same in the said Countie gent, Katherin Hughes of the same in the said Countie Spinster, Wynifryd Hughes of the same Spinster, William Parry Wynne of the same in the said Countie gent and Jane Pennant his wief, Margaret Davies of Tree Abat widowe, Anne Hughes the wief of Raphell Davies in the same, in the said Countie gent.
- RHUDLAN—Margaret Conway, widowe, Elin her maide servant, John Conway gardner, Nicholas Salusbury, Grace Conway widowe, Richard Jones of the same in the said County of Flint, Yeoman.
- LLANELWEY (*St. Asaph*)—Thomas Griffith of Tre Llanelwey, Yoman.

- LLANHASSE (*Llanasa*)—Elizabeth Mostyn, Robert Pugh gent and Margaret Pue his wief, Morgan Thomas gent, Anne Morgan, Spinster, Jane vz [verch=daughter of] Hugh Lewis Spinster, Ales vz Hugh Lewis Spinster, Judith Hanmer Spinster, Mary vz Robert Spinster.
- FLINT—Mary Salusbury, widowe, Harry ap Hugh Yeoman and Elizabeth his wief.
- BOTFARRY (*Bodfari*)—Harry Thomas ap Harry of the same in the Countie aforesaid and Anne vz Harry ap Robert his wief, Harry ap Jevan Yeoman, Hugh ap Robert Weaver and Margaret vz Thomas his wief, Blanch vz Hugh Spinster, John ap Hugh Weaver, Jane vz William the wief of Harry Lloyd of the same in the said Countie Yoman, Margaret vz John ap Edwards of the same Spinster, Mary Lewis the wief of Thomas ap John Wyn of the same Yoman, Rose vz John Hock of the same widowe, John ap Richard Taylor of the same and Margery his wief, John Thomas ap Jevan of the same Yoman and his wief, William ap Robert Weaver of the same.
- DIMERCHION (*Tremeirchion*)—Thomas William of the same in the said Countie gent and Elizabeth his wief and Alice his maide, Thomas ap Thomas ap Richard of the same in the said Countie Yeoman and Elizabeth his wief, Elizabeth vz David Griffith the wief of Thomas ap Thomas Yeoman, Jane Birchinshawe Spinster, Margaret vz Richard widow, Grace the wief of Robert ap Evan of the same Yoman, Margaret vz Robert ap Jevan Spinster, Thomas ap Robert of the same Yoman, Margaret vz Robert ap Jevan Spinster, Thomas ap Robert of the same tailor.
- HOLLIWELL—Jane Pennant of the same in the said Countie widowe, Catherin Dicins Spinster, Jane vz Thomas Spinster, Gwen vz Jevan of the same Spinster, Ales vz Bennet widow, Margaret vz Piers the wief of Thomas Griffith of the same Yoman, Jane vz John Spinster, Gwensie vz Rees Spinster, Margret Pennant widdowe, Margaret Lloyd wydowe, Mary vz Thomas wydowe, Elinor Thomas Spinster, Catherin vz Thomas Spinster,

Luce vz Nicholas the wief of Thomas Sparke Yoman, Jane vz Thomas Pies widdow, Blanch vz Richard Spinster, Catherin Lloyd widdowe, Lowry vz Evan Spinster, Elinor Lloyd widowe, Alse Lloyd Spinster, Robert Robertes gent and Mary his wief, Hugh ap John Gruffith Yoman, and Catherin Pennant of the same widdowe.

DISSERTH—Dame Mary Conway the wief of Sir John Conway Knight, Margaret George Spinster, Mary Mostyn of the same in the said Countie Spinster, all of Bolbruddan, Mary the wief of William Hughes of Rhyd gent.

TREYDDYN—Mary Mostyn widow and Fraunces Wyn her daughter.

NERQUIS—John Parry gent and his wife and children, William John Itchell Yoman, Gwen vz Reignald Spinster, Robert Robertes of the same in the said Countie gent and his wief and children.

*GENEALOGICAL NOTES AS TO SOME OF THE
PERSONS NAMED IN THE ABOVE CERTIFICATE
OF THE BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH*

BY MR. H. R. HUGHES OF KINMEL

NORTHOPPE—Hugh Conway of Sychton, was eldest son and heir of Edward Conway of Sychton, by Elizabeth his wife, daughter of Edmond Gee of Chester. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Conway of Arrow Court, Co. Warwick, knighted in 1560. By her he was father of three sons—Edward, Robert, and John. Edward, the eldest, died 1 March, 1627. (I believe he was executed, but I have lost my reference to this.) By Mary his wife, daughter of Edward Lloyd of Pentrehobin, Co. Flint, he had a son, John Conway, who married Catherine, daughter and heir of Edward Hanmer of Caerfallwch, Co. Flint, by whom he was grandfather of Elizabeth Conway, who became the wife of the Rev. Benjamin Conway, Rector of Northop. On the failure of the descendants of her brothers and her only sister, her posterity became possessed of the Sychton property

which they still enjoy. Her husband, the Rev. Benjamin Conway,¹ was not related to her, neither did he belong to any branch of the Conway family. His father, James Conway, was a poor man, a native of the Parish of Efenechtyd.

HALKIN—I am unable to identify this John Hanmer. There were several John Hammers living in 1625, but none of them are described as of Halkin. He may have been John Hanmer of Halghton, who was second son of John Hanmer, M.P. for Flint Boroughs in 1597. William Hanmer of Fennes, undoubtedly possessed property in Halkin Parish, and by his wife Margaret, daughter and heir of David Kynaston of Kricot, he had a fourth son named John. His eldest brother William, was knighted at Whitehall 23 July, 1603, and died 24 September, 1620.

RELOSNOYD—The modern name of this Parish is Newmarket, first called so in 1700, when Mr. John Wynne of Copparrleini in that Parish procured for it a weekly market. The original name has been variously spelt Rhylownyd, Rhylofnyd, Trelawnyd, &c.; but the form "Relosnoyd" I have never before met with. It is possible that Margaret Davies, widow, may be the same person mentioned under Whitford. Her husband owned a house in Rhylofnyd called Craig Arthur, which may have been used as a Dower-house; and he had a sister named Mary Davies. In the same Parish another family of Davies owned a property called Henfryn. In 1689 it was owned by a Mr. John Davies.

WHITFORD—Hugh ap Thomas was of Golch in the Township of Mertyn Isglan, Parish of Whitford. He married Anne Pennant, fifth daughter of Harri Pennant, who was grandson of Thomas Pennant, the famous Abbot of Basingwerke. Henry Hughes was his eldest son, and Katherine, Winifred, and Elizabeth, his daughters. The latter died unmarried, and her Will as "of Golch, Parish of Whitford," is dated 17 September, 1678, and was proved 23 November, 1693.

¹1712 Rector of Flint; 1713 Warden of Ruthin; 1717 Vicar of Northop.—*H. T.*

William Parry Wynn of Mertyn Isglan, was the son of Parry Wynn ap Thomas, by a daughter of the Rev. John Nicholas, Vicar of Llanasa, Co. Flint. His Will was dated 10 June, 1658, and he was buried the 19th of June following. In one Pedigree which I have seen, his wife is described as "Katrin Verch Gr. ap Robt. ap David of Gronant gent"; and Jane, daughter of Thomas Pennant, is assigned to his brother Thomas ap Parry Wynn; but probably the Certificate is right. I have been unable to find this Jane Pennant in the Pennant Pedigree.

Margaret Davies of Tre'r Abad, was widow of William Davies of Tre'r Abad, and daughter and sole heir of Thomas Arundel. Anne Hughes, wife of Raphael Davies, was daughter of Thomas Hughes of Prestatyn, Co. Flint, Sheriff of Flintshire, 1611. Her husband, Raphael Davies, was eldest son and heir of William and Margaret Davies aforesaid.

RUDLAN—Margaret Conway, widow, was daughter of Piers Mostyn of Talacre, and widow of John Conway of Bodrhyddan. She survived him many years, and died in her house at Rhuddllan, 29 April, 1627.

LLANHASSE—A Robert Pugh of Creuddyn married Margaret, one of the daughters of William Lewis of Presaddfed in Anglesey. And Elizabeth Mostyn, daughter of William Mostyn of Basingwerke, second son of Piers Mostyn of Talacre, Parish of Llanasa, married a William Pugh of Creuddyn. I suspect that these are the persons named in the certificate. Robert and Margaret may have had a son named William, after his maternal grandfather, who married Elizabeth Mostyn. Morgan Thomas was probably Morgan ap Thomas of Golden Grove, Parish of Llanasa. He was father of Edward Morgan "learned in the lawes" and of a daughter Anne Morgan. A Hugh Lewis, apparently a landowner in the Township of Ayton, Parish Llanasa, witnessed a Deed 21 September, 1622. Having regard to dates the aforesaid Elizabeth Mostyn is more likely to have been wife of Edward Mostyn of Talacre, and daughter of Edward Morgan of Golden Grove, who died in 1611.

FLINT—Robert Salusbury, second son of Thomas Salusbury of Leadbroke, married Mary, daughter of John Edwards of Plas Newydd. She might very well have been living as an old woman in 1625. Her mother was Anne, daughter to Robert Putnam.

DIMEIRCHION, otherwise called *Tremeirchion*—A gentleman's family named Williams formerly owned land in this Parish. Thomas Williams married Katherine, daughter and coheir with her sister Jane of Robert Massie, fourth son of Robert Massie of Coddington, by Dorothy, daughter to Hugh Calveley of Lea. By her he had many children, and amongst them a son, Thomas Williams, who is very likely the man referred to. Robert Massie was M.P. for Flint County in 1553 and 1554. His wife, Jane, was living a widow on June 25, 1608.

The Birchinshawes were a respectable English family which had long been resident in the Parishes of Llan-sannan and Dimeirchion. Phowke Burchenshaw of Dimeirchion had a daughter name Jane, who might have been living in 1625.

HOLLIWELL—"Jane Pennant widow" was probably a daughter of William Mostyn of Maesglas or Basingwerk, sister to Elizabeth, wife of William Pugh of Creuddyn aforesaid, and relict of Nicholas Pennant ap Harri Pennant of Holywell. Nicholas Pennant had a sister Jane, who married John Deikws ["Dicius"] of Kinerton. "Catherine Dicius" may have been his sister or daughter. "Margaret Pennant, widow," might have been a daughter of Hugh Mostyn of the Grange, and widow of John Pennant of Holywell. "Ales Vch. Bennet, widow": Margaret Pennant, sister to Jane Deicus aforesaid, married Hugh Bennet ap Thomas of Llanasa Parish; and Margaret had a sister named Alice. This is suggestive of a connection between them.

"Elinor Lloyd" was widow of John Lloyd, whose family were originally the owners of Downing, and daughter of William Mostyn of Maesglas aforesaid. "Robert Roberts gent" was of Nerquis, and Mary his wife was sister to Elinor Lloyd aforesaid. "Catherine

Pennant" was probably widow of Nicholas Pennant, fifth son of Hugh Pennant of Bychton, and daughter of Griffith ap John ap Robert of Whitford. "Margaret Lloyd wydowe" may have been a daughter of Edward Morgan of Golden Grove, and relict of Edward Lloyd of Pentrehobin, who died 30 July, 1620. She was buried on June 1st, 1631.

DISSERTH—"Dame Mary Conway, the wief of Sir John Conway, Knight," was one of the daughters of Edward Morgan of Golden Grove, by Katherine his wife, daughter of John Davies of Gwysanea. Lady Conway's sister, Elizabeth Morgan, married Edward Mostyn of Talacre, and had, with other issue, a daughter, *Mary Mostyn*, who became the wife of John Conway of Bryn-y-Cwning, a place closely adjoining Bodrhyddan.

TREYDDYN—A chapelry of Mold, near Nerquis. "Mary Mostyn" was a daughter of Piers Mostyn of Talacre, and widow of Ithel Wyn of Coedllai als. Leeswood, by whom she was mother of a son, Pierce Wynne, and a daughter, Frances Wynne. The retention of the maiden name after marriage was a common custom in Wales.

NERQUIS—There were Parries of Hendre in this Chapelry, of whom was Edward Parry living in the first half of the last century, who was grandfather of Bishop Parry of Barbadoes. "John Parry gent" was probably an ancestor. "William John Itchell" is probably intended for William ap John ap Ithel. A family named Bithel formerly owned Llwynegrin, near Mold. "Robert Roberts" is the same man who is mentioned under Holywell. He was of Plas Ucha, in Nerquis. A descendant of his, also named Robert, who died in 1705, was father of a daughter and heiress, Helen Roberts, who was the third wife of Peter Giffard, of Chillington.

