

IV.—BOOK OF EASTER OFFERINGS, SMALL TITHES, AND
‘OUTEN’ TITHES OF THE PARISH OF RYTON.

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and rector of Ryton.

[Read on the 28th October, 1896.]

Ryton is a parish singularly fortunate in the possession of a long and unbroken series of registers and other books bearing on parochial matters.

The registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, begin on 17th December, 1581. One volume of the register of marriages is lost, that containing entries from 11th May, 1767, to 3rd February, 1776; with this exception the series of registers is complete. Archdeacon Thorp (rector 1807-1862) in a catalogue of the registers drawn up by him on 1st January, 1813, speaks of the volume above referred to as having been lost since 1794. He adds a note that the names of the persons married in the parish church during that period are regularly entered in the general register of this parish, and are found in volumes 4, 5, and 6. The ancient mode of registering marriages was continued down to the end of the year 1808, so that the break in the marriage registers from 1767-1776 is supplied from the general register, and from 1776-1808 there are duplicate entries of all marriages.

A perfect series of the account and minute books of the vestry is preserved beginning with the year 1598.

There is also another series of books, of which I propose to give some account in the present paper, containing a record of Easter offerings, of certain small tithes, and a statement of the Outen tithe paid annually on ‘Saynt Marke’s daye,’ April 25th.

Nine volumes containing these records have been preserved; they are for the years given below:—

Volume 1	...	...	...	1593, 1594.
„ 2	...	...	...	1595.
„ 3	...	...	...	1609, 1610.

Here there is a break of a century in the series:—

Volume 4	...	...	...	1711, 1712, 1713.
” 5	...	...	...	1714 to 1723, both inclusive.
” 6	...	...	...	1724 to 1729
” 7	...	...	...	1730 to 1740
” 8	...	...	...	1741 to 1747
” 9	...	...	...	1748 to 1758

There is also a very defective and carelessly written abstract of the S. Mark's books for the years 1693-1700, both inclusive.

These books are, as a rule, and specially so in the earlier years, remarkably well kept, and furnish amongst other information lists of the inmates of the houses in the ancient parish of Ryton, divided now into the four parishes of Ryton, Winlton, Stella, and Greenside, for the years with which they have to do.

The lists are made for the four quarters into which the parish was at that time divided—Ryton, Winlton, Chopwell, and Crawcrook.

Each page is ruled in columns, the first containing the names of the inmates of the various houses, followed by columns in which are charges under the headings of ‘Ester book,’ of ‘Breeving,’ of ‘Hens,’ of ‘Lambs,’ of ‘Wooll.’ Then comes a column for totals, and two supplementary columns for geese and bees. In 1593, there are no entries in the first of these supplementary columns, and only one or two in the second.

In the column headed ‘Ester book’ the following charges are entered :—

Cælebs 2d.	Plow 1d.
Man and wife 3d.	Reek 1d.
Children and servants ... 1d. each.	

Under the second column, headed ‘Breeving,’ come :—

Nuckled cow 1½d. each.	Farrow cow 1d. each.
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In the earlier years there are also entered in this column :—

Foles 4d. each.	Ewes 4d. every 20.
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Hens are charged 6d., apparently without regard to the number kept, as the charge is in all cases uniform. An analysis of the Easter book for 1593 supplies some statistical information for that year :—

In Ryton quarter there were	...	...	79 houses.
In Winlawton	”	...	122 ”
In Chopwell	”	...	52 ”
In Crawcrook	”	...	55 ”
Total	...	...	308

indicating, if we allow five persons to each household, a population for the whole parish of 1,540. Probably the actual population may have been somewhat in excess of this number, as the very poorest class of cottages may not have been chargeable.

In 1781 the rev. J. Mirehouse, curate, gives, as the result of a census taken on the 24th of November, 970 houses, containing 1,125 families in all—equivalent to a population of 5,625. In 1801 the population is set down at 5,423. The population of the same district at the census of 1891 was returned at 22,679, and has since that time increased considerably.

The total number of cattle, exclusive of calves, paid for in 1593 was 329, and of ewes 718.

At Bladon Arthur Swinburne paid for a great boat ij^d. Was this a ferryboat? If so, it is possible that it was in connexion with the ferry at Blaydon that a terrible catastrophe happened nearly a century later, when on May 27th, 1682, 18 people (three men and fifteen women), belonging most of them either to Blaydon or Winlaton, were drowned, and buried the next day in Ryton churchyard.

The names of most frequent occurrence are those of Saunder, Newton, Swinburne, Greeney, Hedley, Merriman, and Dod.

Christabel occurs no less than seven times as a christian name. Allis and Allison, Agnes and Annes, Ellinor, Janet and Jinney are of frequent occurrence.

Among other noteworthy christian names there are of men—Launce, Raife, Arthur, Gerard, Anthony, Allan, Oliver, Clement, Patrick, Rowland, Victor, Harvy, Bartram (frequently written Bartye), Michael, and Oswyne. Arche, a contracted form of Archibald, also occurs.

Of women we have, in addition to those already cited, Mally, Madg, Phillis, Betrix, Dina, Susanna, Barbara, Dorothy, and Mariery (Margery).

At the end of the Easter book comes a second part, headed—'The Outen tyth booke of Ryton perishe payable on S. Mark's Day (April 25th).'

I do not possess such knowledge of the tenure of land and the customs appertaining to it as will enable me to give a full account of the charges contained in this record, but I may take the definition

appended to the copy of the bill in an action Blackett against Finney tried in 1723 as a brief statement of the scope of this book, 'St. Mark's book is modus for hay or corn or other things payable on St. Mark's day 25 Apr.' The other things mentioned in this definition include :—

' John Robson for fishing of Stella, iij^s iij^d, Holme Milne ij^s; and the Winlaton Milnes—Thos. Achesons Milne iij^s and Bartye Bowes Milne ij^s.'

In Ryton, Crawcrook, and Winlaton quarters the payment is for hay only, in Chopwell for hay and corn. The payment of a modus in lieu of tithe in Chopwell quarter is explained by a note at the end of the bill already referred to—'Chopwell pays no Tyth.' Following this statement there is another explaining the payment of 4d. a score for sheep, which appears in the Easter book—'anciently and within memory they milked Ewes in Gayers field, & the 4d. was for Tyth milk, the same p^d in other parts of the parish & also Tyth wool, & Lamb.'

In Crawcrook quarter 'The ffermers of Crawcruck pay iij^s' and 'The ffermers of Kepier xix^d.'

A note at the end of the accounts for outen tithe for the years 1714-1723 enumerates twenty-four farms at Crawcrook.

Memorand. That every farm in Crawcrook pays 3d. Tot.: 24 Farms, which at 3d. per Farm yearly makes 6s.

The 12 Farms besides Mr. Stephenson & Surtees, Anno 1724, as given in by Nic. Greenoe & now Farmed. M^r Bowes 4 Farms, Ann Hedley 1 F., Jo. Weatherly 1 F., Tho. Eltringham sen^r & Tho. Eltringham jun^r each $\frac{1}{2}$ F., Mat. Weatherly $\frac{1}{2}$ F. & Tho Greenoe $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm.

Four farms called Ryton 4 Farms. Eliz. Jolly 1 F.; Tho. Bell 1 F. for M^r Surtees, Geo. Sanders 1 F., & Vicars for Frenches 1 F.

Four more Farms. Gawen Naseby 1 Farm called Coulson's Farm, Rob. Newton & Vicars a Farm & $\frac{1}{3}$ called Newton's Land for which Vicars pays 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ^d, Newton 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ^d, Geo Weatherley two-thirds is to pay 2^d, Tho. Eltringham sen^r a third, Tho. Newton a third, Newton Mill 2 thirds.

M^r Bowes Kepier Lands pay 1^s 8^d per Annu. (the Kepier farms are charged 19^d in the earlier books). Tenants Ann Hedley a $\frac{1}{4}$ pt. Tho. Eltringham jun^r & sen^r $\frac{1}{4}$. John Weatherly $\frac{1}{4}$, Mat. Weatherly $\frac{1}{8}$ & Tho. Greenoe $\frac{1}{8}$.

The remaining twelve farms required to make up the total number of twenty-four consisted of one hundred acres taken in from Ryton, or rather Crawcrook common, by one of the Carnabys, at a rental of 4d. an acre, payable to the bishop as lord of the manor.

Robert Surtees, gent., in his will dated 10th June, 1700, leaves to

his son, Edward Surtees, his undivided lands in Crawcrook, which himself and John Stevenson, gent., bought of Ralph Carnaby of Chollerton, gent.

These twelve farms are, in 1706, described as Surtees and Stephenson's land, and were then in the hands of sixteen tenants.

Tho. Eltringham jun^r held 1 Farm.
 Nich. Greenoe 1 Farm & $\frac{1}{2}$ F.
 Two Robert Eltringhams 1 Farm
 & $\frac{1}{2}$.
 John Craswell 1 Farm.
 Will. Atkinson 1 Farm.
 Tho. Newland $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm.
 Mary Humble $\frac{1}{2}$ F.

Wm. Maughan $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm.
 Tho. Greenoe $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm & Will.
 Anderson & Tho. Cowan 2
 Farms.
 John Hauxley $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm.
 Tho. Urwin $\frac{1}{2}$ Tho. Chambers $\frac{1}{2}$
 Edward Grey $\frac{1}{2}$ Farm partner
 Newby.

In Winlton quarter the names of the common lands on which the modus for hay was paid are given. These lands are evidently divided into strips of equal area; in a few cases two or more strips are assigned to one occupier, and rarely a smaller area than the one strip is assigned.

As an example, fifteen occupiers hold between them 'Darwen Haugh,' of this number eleven pay a modus of 2d., two of 4d., one of 1d., and one of a $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The other common lands in the Quarter are :—

The Bancks.
 Highfield Com'on.
 West Haugh Lees.
 Nyne Roods for wh. a sole holder Jeffrey Trotter pays 12^d.
 The flashes for wh. John Barley pays 9^d.
 Gibbes Medow for wh. John Greenwell pays 16^d & M^r Selbee 16^d.
 Long Medow for which Thomas Wilkyson pays 18^d Roger Hall 10^d &
 M^r Selbee 16^d.
 The fleets for which M^r Selbee pays 6^s & 6^d.
 Porke or fride medow—John Pickering 1^d.
 Little Strothers—John Pickering 5^d, Robt. Joplin 5^d.
 The West gate—Will'm Tempest 1^d.
 Four Acres, assigned to Robt. Joplin, Rowland Turners ferme & M^{rs} Blunt
 of Blaydon on payment of 6^d, 2^s & 2^d & 6^d respectively.
 The Estfleets are charged to Will'm Turner's ferme & Roger Walker's ferme
 at 2-8 $\frac{3}{4}$ each.

Although it is stated that the payments in Winlton quarter are for hay only, there is a marginal note opposite the payments of Will'm Tempest for the year 1594 that shows that occasionally a strip

of land was ploughed and a crop of corn grown upon it. The note runs, 'no[n] solvit pro high feild Com'o quia aratur. Rog. Hall teste qui solvit.' Manifestly this did not imply that the land was taken permanently under the plough as the payments for 1595 are simply for hay.

The total receipts for the Easter book and the S. Mark's book amount for 1609 to £14 4s. 3d. for the Easter book, £6 6s. 10d. for the S. Mark's book ; making, in all, £20 11s. 1d.

Here and there interesting notes relieve the monotony of long columns of names and figures.

At the end of the Easter book for 1593 the rector, Francis Bunnye, gives vent to his feelings of relief at the conclusion of what must have been a very wearisome work in the not altogether faultless hexameter :

Sic faciens finem jubeo te bene valere.

In a vacant space he gives the number of communicants for Holy week and Easter, 1593 :

April viij.	Palm Sunday	170	April xiiij.	Easter Eve	60
"	ix.	10	"	xv.	460
"	x.	30	"	xvj.	22
"	xij.	88			878
"	xiiij.	38			

A similar list is given for 1594 ; but the most interesting record is for 1595. Bunnye, who was a very strong Puritan, 'very zealous in the way he professed, a great admirer of Jo. Calvin, a constant preacher, charitable, and a stiff enemy to Popery,' records under this year the use of tokens¹ in connection with the holy communion, and gives one evidence of his care for his parish by the way in which he went about in Holy week communicating at convenient centres those who, presumably from failing health or advanced age, were unable to attend the parish church. His record runs thus :

Upo' Palme Sunday rec^d 80 tokens. and then of Chopwell house & such as gaue in no tokens about 20 p'sons.

¹ My attention has been drawn by two friends to passages in vol. xxxiv. of the Surtees Society Publications, which throw light on the use of these tokens. It seems (p. 96) that they were of the nature of receipts for payment of Easter offerings, which were to be produced 'at the tyme of the administration of the sacrament,' so that defaulters might then and there be made to pay their dues.

At pp. 6-8 this custom is illustrated by the description of an extraordinary scene which occurred in the parish church of Alwinton in connection with the payment of Easter dues at the time of holy communion.

Rec. in mony then of Edw. Dodde xiiij^d and of Robt. Saunder vij^d.

At John Jollyes upon Tuesday after 8 tokens.

Wednesday.—At Cuthbart Swinburns xiiij Com'unicants. Att Winlawton milne ix Com'unicants. At John Greenwells viii Com'unicants. At Thom's Halydaies v Com'unicants.

Thursday.—Rec. 96 tokēns.²

ffryday.—Att Stocoēs vij & at Blaydon ix & at the Communion lv^{ti}.

Satterday.—At Ryton wth Margaret Sharde v. At Crawcrook wth Oswine Newton vj. At the Communion xxxviiij^{to}.

Easter Day.—Com'unicants iiiij² lacking 5 tokens & Rec. in mony ijs ij^d. The names of those that receyved at hebshest'r (Ebchester?) Andrewe hedley & his wife. Wydow Smithe. Wydow Wilkinson. Dorathye Laburne.

The last enumeration of communicants is given for 1609 :

April ix th (Palm Sunday)	380
Aprill 13 (Maundy Thursday)	90
Aprill 14 (Good Friday)	52
Aprill 15 (Easter Eve)	22
Ester daye	468

1,012

The following memorandum seems scarcely to merit the importance with which the writer invests it :

M^{dum}.—March 31st 1719.

For y^e Information of the succeeding Rectors of Ryton that Henry Hearst of Ryton afores^d paid for the half a Tithe-calf due to the Rev^d D^r Finney Rector thereof in y^e year 1718. Attested by Tho^s Simpson Curat de Ryton.

Here is a curious little record of the way in which the curate tried to benefit an old dependent at the expence of the endowment of the living :

1717.—Memorand.

That the following Memorand. writ by M^r Simpson, Curat, is wrong & Tho. Heath's wife was formerly servant to M^r Simpson aforesaid & is excused for that reason and no other.

Mem^{dum}.—That M^{rs} Stephenson's Farm now in the possession of y^e above mentioned Tho. Heath at Hooker gate pays no Easter reckonings as being a part of Chopwell Demesne.

We are incidentally told that Winlaton mill, which became a part of sir Ambrose Crowley's ironworks in 1691, was originally 'a Fulling Mill.'

A short note in rector Lloyd's handwriting is interesting, as showing the wage paid to a labourer in 1740. It is as follows :—

² A sign follows the figures iiiij, which, I presume, is intended to denote a hundred.

Errington, Lanclot, came to work for me June 30, 1740 by agreement made by him the day before with John Lampson for 10^d a day. On Monday June 30 in the evening he sent me word that he would work no longer without 12^d a day & drink. My answer was I would consider of it & he might come to work next Day. he worked afterwards the 1 & 2 July and I detained all his 3 days wages on account due for Easter Reckonings.

One other note, and I will tax your sorely-trying patience no longer. The cover in which the book is stitched is of no little interest. It is a folio leaf of MS. on parchment. I do not profess to be skilled in palaeography, and venture, therefore, with great diffidence to express an opinion that the leaf in question may have been written in the middle of the fourteenth century. On examination, it is seen to be a fragment of a commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. The fragment contains the portion allotted to verses 1-5 of the 8th chapter of the epistle.

Following a hint from the rev. canon Savage, I consulted bishop Westcott's commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and on turning to the 8th chapter was fortunate enough to find in the notes on verse 2 a fairly long quotation identical with the parallel passage in my fragment. This fortunate find enabled me to identify my page of MS. as a portion of a commentary, the authorship of which is ascribed by some authorities to Primasius, an African bishop, said to have been a disciple of S. Augustine, who flourished A.D. 440; and by others to Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt, who died in that city in the year 834 A.D.