

PARSON RUSSELL'S REPLY TO BLOMEFIELD'S QUERIES

By William J. Blake, M.A.

IN order to gather material for his projected *History of Norfolk*, the Rev. Francis Blomefield "laid out", as he put it, a circular¹ in 1735 to more than two hundred persons, nearly all incumbents of Norfolk parishes. This circular contained some eighty queries arranged under twenty headings and was certainly comprehensive. He made inquiries not only about the churches and their patrons, manors and principal families, coats of arms, rectory houses, Roman remains, monastic buildings, gilds and chantries, but he also included schools, markets, fairs, workhouses, gifts to the poor, commons belonging to the parish and their extent, etc. In Sections VIII and IX the following questions are asked about the church:

To what Saint is your Church dedicated? Is it a Rectory, Vicarage, Curacy or Donative?² Who is now Patron and what Families anciently were so? Who is now Incumbent? Had you anciently any more Churches or Chapels than one? If more, where are they situate, and what Remains are still left? How long have they been disused? Is your Parish Church still standing? If not, how long hath it been down? What are the Synodals, Procurations and Pensions paid out of the Living? and to whom? What are the Bishop's Procurations at every primary Visitation?

Is there a Rectory or Vicarage House? How many Rooms on a Floor? How many Acres Glebe? Hath the Living a Manor belonging to it? If it hath what are the yearly Quit Rents? Are there any Customs confirmed under Seal in relation to Tithing? Hath your Church any particular Chapels, or appropriated Burying Places in it? What Inscriptions or Arms are on the Bells, Monuments or Grave Stones? What Communion Plate is there? and what Arms and Inscriptions thereon? What Carvings on Wood or Stone, Inscriptions, Effigies or Arms in Windows were or are now to be seen?

The queries were not confined to the parishes of the incumbents for No. XX asks:

Are there any old Deeds, Manuscripts, Registers, Pedigrees, Grants of Arms, Old Rolls, Paintings of any House, Church, Monument, Ruins etc. that gives Light to the History of any Place in the County, in the Possession of yourself, or any of your Friends and Acquaintances?

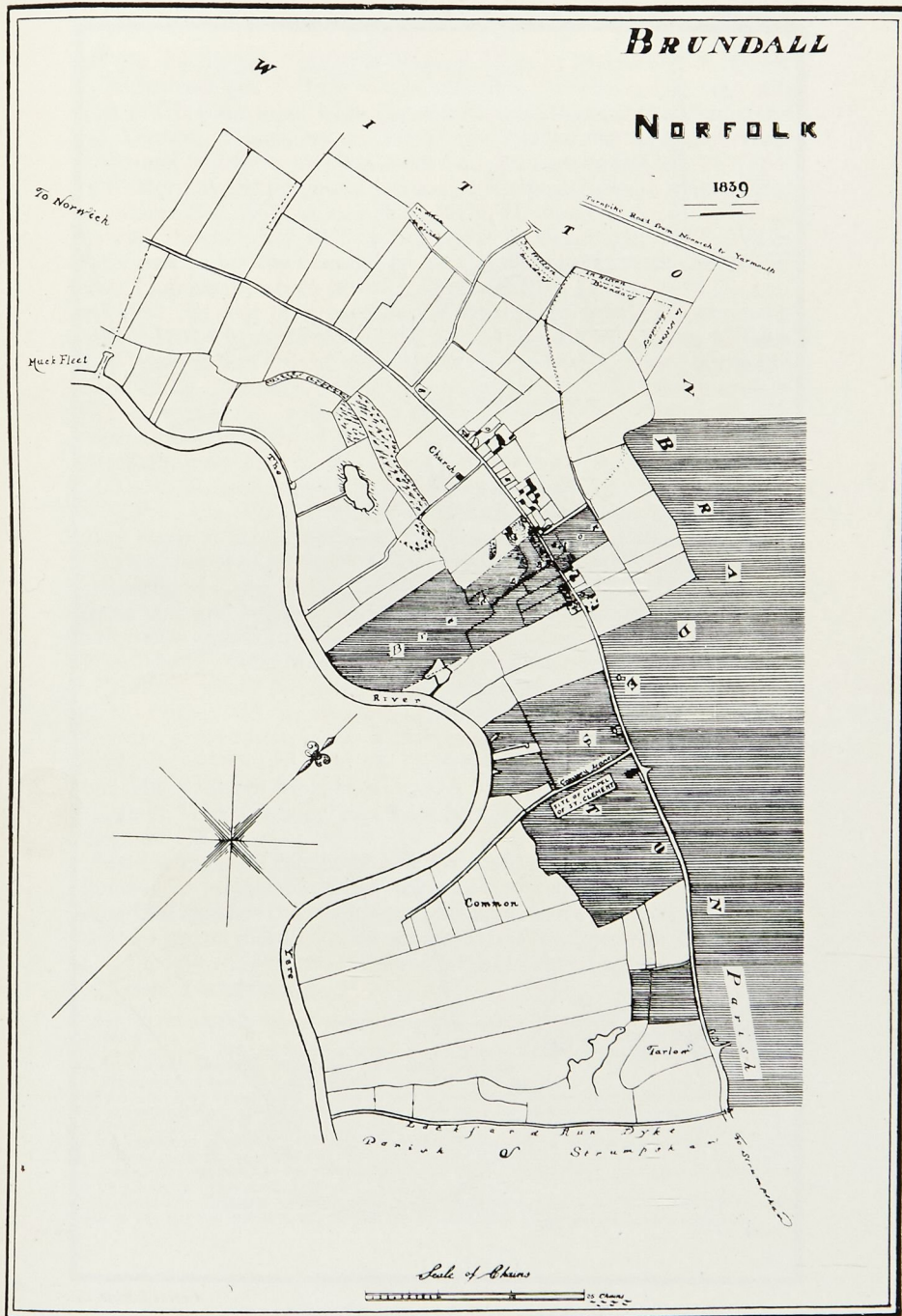
He concludes:

These are the Queries which I would beg of you to answer, and the larger it is, the Greater Obligation it will bring upon me.

Among the incumbents to whom the appeal was addressed, No. 16 was "Mr. Jno. Russell Rector of Posswick & Brundall"

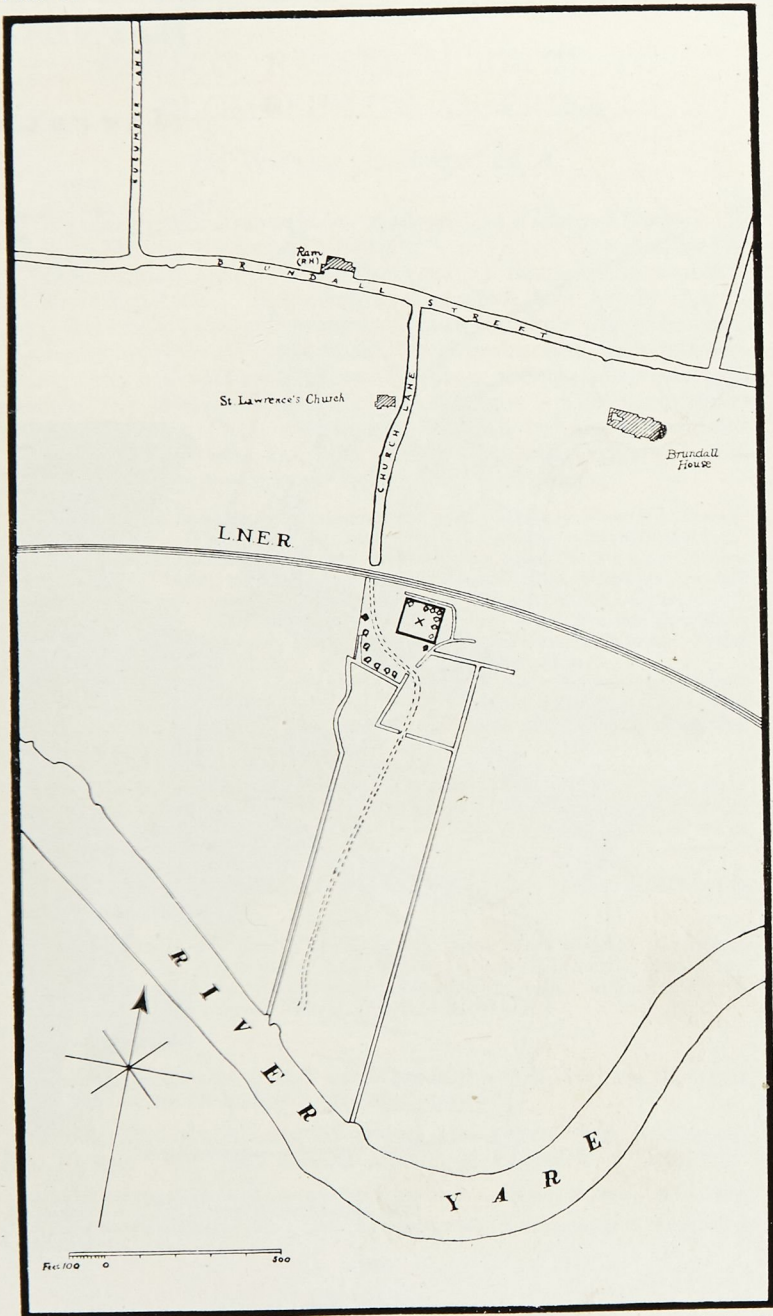
¹ A facsimile of this circular with an article by the late Mr. G. A. Stephen, Norwich City Librarian, was published in Vol. XX of *Norfolk Archaeology*, 1921.

² A Donative was a benefice directly given by a patron without presentation to or institution by the ordinary.



PLAN BASED ON TITHE MAP OF BRUNDALL, 1839

George Levine, del.



PROBABLE SITE OF BRUNDALL HALL

George Levine, del.

and No. 88 his son "Mr. Jno Russell vicar of Plumstead & Rector of Plumstead pa."¹ This was a mistake, for the father was still vicar of Gt. Plumstead while the son was Rector of Little Plumstead and Witton. According to Venn² the former was admitted sizar at the age of fifteen at Pembroke College, Cambridge, on 28 June, 1669. Born at Birmingham, the son of Richard Russell, blacksmith, he became B.A. 1672-3 and M.A. 1676. He was ordained deacon at Norwich in February 1675-6 and priest in December, 1677. While still a deacon he was licensed on 31 October, 1677, to the curacy of Great Plumstead, which he held till his death in 1737. On 13 December, 1681, he was instituted to the rectory of Brundall, which he held till 1701 when he resigned but he was again instituted on 10 June 1723, when it was united with Postwick of which he had been made rector on 24 February, 1697-8. In 1700 he was instituted rector of Witton, which he resigned in 1723.³ He married Elizabeth, the daughter of William Tooley of Norwich, who may have been related to John Tooley, who was sheriff in 1630 and mayor in 1638 and 1644. Russell himself may have had a family connection with the city as there was a family of Russells, who were ironmongers,⁴ living there in the seventeenth century.

He had two sons at Cambridge, the elder, John, who was admitted a pensioner, i.e. commoner, at his father's old college in 1712, at the age of sixteen, became LL.B. in 1718 and was ordained deacon at Norwich on 13 July the same year, and priest at Peterborough on 20 September, 1719. Ten days later he was instituted to the rectory of Brundall, which he held till 1723, when his father succeeded him. On 10 June, 1723, he was made rector of Witton, which was the same day united with Little Plumstead. He was rector of both these places until 1745 and died on 12 February, 1746-7 in his fifty-first year. His younger brother, Bernard, was admitted sizar at Caius College in 1719 where he became a Scholar but died of small-pox in college in 1723.

Few incumbents can have given a more enthusiastic response to Blomefield's appeal than the octogenarian rector of Brundall who apologized because the weakness of his hand and eyes at eighty-three⁵ obliged him to dictate to an amanuensis,⁶ and sent in December, 1735, the following letters, together with the descriptions of Brundall and Great Plumstead.⁷

¹ Rye MS. Blomefield's *Book of Memoranda*, p. 153. Against No. 88 is placed a cross and "ret'd." after the entry.

² Venn: *Alumni Cantabrigienses*.

³ The Rev. J. F. Williams kindly sent me details from the Consignation Books of the livings held by the two Russells. They have often been confused.

⁴ "Probably in a large way of business": Rye's *Norfolk Families*.

⁵ He is a bit hazy about dates. If Venn's figures are correct he was only eighty-one.

⁶ The handwriting of the amanuensis is beautifully clear and legible but his attempts at punctuation often obscure the meaning. It is rather curious that although he uses indifferently the old and modern forms of writing "the", he never uses the old form of writing the capital F with the intertwining small f's, a form which was almost universal in the previous century. He frequently uses contractions to indicate that a letter or letters have been omitted. These are shown in the text by raising the contracted letter, e.g., *comon* for common.

⁷ Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy found Russell's contribution among the Frere MSS., which were presented to the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society in 1926.

*Postwick, December, 1735*Rever^d S^r

You have undertaken an elaborate work which needs not only great application but also good correspondence of such as can and will lend their assistance in answering with due observations the Queres you propose in y^r printed Letter. I heartily wish you health and years to compleat what I have heard you have already for some considerable time applied yourself to. I doubt not your having perused Essays of y^e same nature with yours, to which the usefulness & entertainment of it, can't but give the desired Success & kind acceptance. Herewith you have the most material information within my Cognizance relating to y^e respective Parishes I am concern'd with, the truth whereof, I think I may aver, mostly upon personal knowledge, And I hope will be as kindly received as tendered by

Worthy S^r

Your most respectful
 Brother & very humble Servant
 John Russell Cl.

BRUNDAL

is a Village about five Miles Eastward from the city of Norwich (and lieth on y^e North Side of y^e River Yar), formerly more considerable than now; There were two Churches in it, the one called St Clements the other St Lawrence. The former hath i^mmemorially been out of proper use: The Latter seems plainly to consist of part of an old one ruined; and of an addition thereto; and both make but a very small Building; and instead of a Steeple, there is only y^e wall of y^e West Gable raised higher than y^e Roof of y^e Church; with two thorough spaces in it, for Bells to be hanged in, but no body now knows of any other but the little one that is now in one of them. There certainly was some considerable Family in the Parish, that probably lived in a Hall (called Brundal Hall:) The Scite whereof only, remains moted about, with a Canal (now reduced to a water Ditch) from thence to y^e River.

About 5 or 6 years ago, Two Stone Coffins were taken up, but still preserved by y^e South side of the old wall of the Church; The only remains therein (besides Earth) were pieces of a Helmet, reduced to Rust, in that proportioned to a Male Corps; and in the other proportioned to a Female Size, were several teeth very sound and white: There was no inscription or date upon the covers, but a large raised Cross upon each of them.

The Hobarts of Little Plumstead, were formerly Patrons of Brundal St. Lawrence Church and Lords of y^e Mannor of Brundal, from which the Patronage of y^e Church, hath not yet been seperated, But upon y^e death of S^r Miles Hobart who sold that and all his others, it hath gone through divers other persons, but now rests in the Heirs, not by descent, but by y^e Will of William Hewer late of Clapham in Surry Esq^r, And there being several that claim, and y^e case not yet decided in y^e Chancery where it is now depending, the particular owner is not known, but supposed to be, the Relict of Hewer Edgly Hewer Esq^r to whom and y^e heirs of his body William Hewer Esq^r devized it, And he leaving no Issue, hath occasioned some others to claim, as residuary heirs, for want of Issue of Hewer Edgly Hewer.

The Rectory hath belonging to it A Mansion House with 4 rooms of a

Floor, with Chambers over, and a little one for a Study: There is also a Scullery, a Cellar with a Pantry, a Chamber and Garret over it, Built new by the present Rector me John Russell, in a former incumbency, for he resigned about 40 years ago, and about 15 or 16 since resumed and still enjoys it: There is also a small Barn & Stable, and a pump set down by him: There are about two and twenty acres of Good Glebe land, six whereof are enclosed in three pieces; also a Garden and Orchard; and the Revenue of all with the tithes is about 45 Li. per Ann; The Arch Deacons procurations 3^s. B^{ps} Synodals 1^s per Ann: And 3^s upon Primary Visitation;

There is also outgoing 4d. per Ann: for a cobby hold void Tenement and a Rood of Land with Appletrees, by vertue whereof only the Rector hath right of Co^monage upon ye Co^mon pasture, called Brundal Co^mon.

All Tithes are payable in kind, and no Customs but 8d. per Acre payable upon La^mas day, for such Lands as are not profitable otherwise then by natural growth, without improvement, by Tillage.

There is great Difficulty as to knowing the Lands that tith to this Church; the Village being as it were in two parts, and they intermixt, tho' y^e whole Street is called Brundal, and is but one Constablewick, and considered as one Town as to y^e Land taxes and Highways; But as to Parish Charges and Rates, there is a distinction made, as also as to y^e tithes; For the tithes are determined by y^e Mannor or Fee whereof y^e Lands are holden. And altho' the Mannor of Brundal extends Eastward to y^e Fleet from Leckford to y^e River, yet there are divers lands within that space that hold of y^e Mannor of Bradeston, and consequently tith to Bradeston Church, and pay Town charges to Bradeston and not to Brundal. And for as much as the tithes of y^e Lands are determined by the Tenure of y^e Lands as to the Mannors whereof they are holden, the tithe of all the lands in y^e whole Town of Brundal, (and elsewhere also) which hold of Brundal Mannor, are payable to Brundal St. Lawrence Church; As likewise the tiths of all such Lands as belong to Bradeston Mannor, are payable to Bradeston Church.

It may not be amiss to observe that in or about the year 1704 or 5, the old rotten Thatch'd Roof of y^e Church not capable of being Repair'd, nor y^e Inhabitants able, the Honorable the then Lord and Patron William Hewer of Clapham in Surry Esq^r. No less worthy than Wealthy (he was abundantly Rich & by his own acquisition) did cause an entire new Roof tiled & Ciel'd, to be built upon y^e Walls of the Church, and all entirely at his sole charge and expence, as also to tile & Ciel, y^e Roof of the Chancel. But y^e said new Roof can't be of very long continuance, Because there is neither Tenon nor Mortoise, in the whole, but all that should be joynts are fastned together with nothing but Iron nails, through the Baseness of y^e undertaker (one Killick of Clapham a Carpenter.)

The general Bounds of y^e whole Town of Brundal in y^e County of Norff: in Bloffield Hundred.

Beginning from y^e Kings Stream where Brundal Co^mon Ditch enters into it.

From which point y^e said Co^mon Ditch and water course, is y^e East bounds up to y^e Kings high way at Leckford, from which Ford y^e Bounds goe in y^e said High way Westward to y^e end of Brank lane, that falls into the said way, in which old lane y^e Bounds go Westward, to y^e East Corner of Bloffield Park Meadows (near Bay Bridge) from whence y^e Bounds go Westward by y^e said Park Meadows as far as Brundal field, Then at that corner they turn Northward to y^e hardland on y^e North-side of y^e Meadow Spong,¹ than they turn Westward to y^e South West corner of a piece of late Mr. Burkins Land, called Gravel-hole-piece, by y^e West end whereof the bounds go as far as y^e North end of the Furlong wherein Hixes two acres lies, and the breadth of two small Lands farther, by the North Meer² whereof, they go Westward directly up to Brundal Green Meer, and from

¹ Spong: a long enclosed strip of arable or pasture land.

² Meer: a boundary, especially the boundary formed by the baulks or furrows in an open field.

thence Westward including two Lands besides Mr. Russells eight acre hole piece, till they come to the field way leading from Brundal to Witton Cross in which way they go Westward, to the West Meer of a five Rood of Witton Glebe upon which meer they go to y^e new ten acre close of y^e Lords of Brundal, where y^e bounds turn direct west ward, to y^e corner of y^e Little Furlong called the short Row Furlong, on y^e west side of y^e said Furlong downward crossing y^e Road from Brundal to Norwich, Southward till they go thorough the Muck Fleet and Canal, to y^e said River, and from thence Eastward by the Kings Stream to the point where the Bounds are mentioned to begin as before.

The particular distinct bounds of Brundal St. Lawrence as separated from y^e Bounds of what they call Brundal St Clements.

The Bounds beginning at y^e Kings Stream, and so going Northward through y^e middle of a coarse piece of Hardland, towards the Hardland Ditch between Mr. Russell's Fish-hold and late Mr. Browns lands, and from y^e Northend of y^e said Hardland Ditch by y^e West side of the South Field, called Suffield Close, and so on Northward by the East side of y^e Scite of y^e ancient Tenement Lampkins into Brundal Street, and out of the Street, right on North ward, by y^e West side of a Croft, formerly called Townshends, now Yallops Croft, and crossing a cart-way by y^e West side of a Fightle of Brundal St. Lawrence Glebe to the enclosed Meadows called Bloffield Park Meadows. These are y^e distinct Bounds between the Parish of Brundal St Lawrence, and Brundal St Clements.

But y^e Bounds of y^e Manor of Brundal to which the Rectory of Brundal St Lawrence is an Appurtenant, goes so far Eastward as to y^e Common Run from Leckford to the Kings Stream from Norwich toward Yarmouth, including all y^e Common called Brundal Common, as also all that parcel of hard and Meadow Land called Tarnover, and commonly Tarlow;¹ which said parcel of hard & Meadow Land, by computation above 30 acres, were about y^e Year 1700 given in trust (renewable) to certain Feoffees for an endowment of a Charity School in Norwich Thorp, by the Reverend and Pious Mr. Samuel Chapman,² who was many years Minister of that Parish; But the said Lands are Copsyhold of y^e Manor of Brundal and now letten for about 14 or 15 Li. per Ann: And altho', the Lords Fine be but two shillings per acre, upon y^e Renewal of every trust, yet by the exorbitants claim of A particular Fine for every one of ye Feoffees, and by ye extortion of Stewards for their Coppys and entries, The good Gentlemans Benefaction is too much clogg'd and lessened, and so like to continue by that means, as also by y^e negligence, or want of due under-standing, in y^e successive Trustees. Neither has there been care taken by the present Trustees to find and Settle a Master proper and fit to be Master of y^e said School.

The Land in this town is generally good Soyl for wheat, and usually valued at 10^s per Acre per Ann: But y^e Meadow Ground is Subject to be overflowed, and to continue under water sometimes for Weeks together; which Discourages y^e Occupier, causing the growth to be very good neither for feeding nor mowing, without improvement by Muck or otherwise, For it is commonly much Damified by y^e water covering it so long in y^e Winter time.

GRIMER³-PLUMSTEAD

By corrupt short writing commonly called GREAT PLUMSTEAD And to distinguish it from Little Plumstead and Contiguous thereto.

It is a Village about three miles distant from y^e City of Norwich Eastward, and lies between little Plumstead & Witton on y^e East, and y^e common River

¹ Tarlow, Tallow in 1839, close to the eastern boundary by Lackford Run Dyke.

² Fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, 1655-62, Rector of Thorp by Norwich 1670-1700. His widow founded the Bethel Hospital for poor lunatics.

³ Grimmer: a large shallow pond covered with weeds and green slime. A corruption of "green mere".

in part, and y^e Parish of Postwick in part, on y^e South; And the Parish of Thorp (next Norwich) on y^e West, and part of Mushould heath & Rackheath on y^e North.

The living or benefice is A Rectory impropriate, and part of y^e Revenue of y^e Dean & Chapter, of Norwich Cathedral; worth near 60 Li. per An^o: And usually Letten to ferme and y^e Lessee, to pay for serving of y^e Cure, as also to pay an unalterable money Rent of 4 Li. per Anⁿ: and 4 comb of good Merchantable Wheat and five Comb, one bushal, one peck, of Malt at two equal payments, at two usual times of payment viz: the 25 of March, and 29th of Septemb: every year; Or else in lieu of y^e said Grains so much money as y^e said Grains shall be sold for in Norwich Market, y^e Saturdays next before each of y^e said days of payment. But y^e Dean & Chapter are obliged to pay for y^e said Corn, out of y^e said Rent, £1 6^s 8^d per Anⁿ: to their Tenant in two equal parts upon paying y^e Rent.

The Tenant also is obliged to pay all Taxes both ordinary & extraordinary and to maintain & keep & leave the Chancel of y^e said Church in good Repair And to pay all parish charges, as also, The Bishops Synodals, which is 1^s per Anⁿ: & 3^s every Primary Visitation.

This Church & Rectory is one of y^e fourteen called Peculiars, as belonging only to y^e said Dean and Chapter, and exempted from other Jurisdiction, but visited by an Official of their own or Surrogate. And all Ecclesiastical cases are transacted in a Court held in St. Lukes Chappel, in the said Cathedral, for that purpose; And y^e Church Wardens are Annually sworn there and pay usual Fees and giving in a true Coppy every year of y^e said Parish Register.

The said Dean and Chapter can Grant Leases for no longer then one and twenty years, but may renew their grant at y^e end of every seven years for one and twenty years from thence, if desired by y^e Tenant, And paying a Fine for y^e said Renewal; which Fine is co^monly agreed by y^e parties, and if the Tenant does not submit thereto it is supposed the Lessers are not obliged to renew. And tho' they seem arbitrary in setting y^e Fine, yet it seems they have rules for their usual direction. But whether they always observe those rules or no, is not certain, because they are not co^monly known without doors, But doubtless they are not intirely arbitrary but within y^e limits of y^e law.

There is a Tradition in y^e Town that there was a Chantry therein with Five Monks to officiate for the supposed benefit both of y^e living and dead of y^e great man that took them in and his Family; Which Monks had a Priviledg for Marrying any that applied to them from any part of y^e Kingdom, without Banns or Licence, for the usual Fee of a Bushal of (Malt) grains, and a share in y^e Wedding dinner. And there was a House on purpose for their entertainment, and all manner of Utensils for Cookery, Necessary for making ready, the provisions. The married people & their friends should bring or send upon that occasion. But all y^e said utensils were imbezled in y^e last generation. Their Mansion house hath none of its ruins remaining But the scite thereof is still called the Chanters Yard being a pigtle of about 2 acres of Land, and immemorially become part of y^e Glebe of the said impropriation.

The House for y^e aforesaid entertainment is called the Guild House,¹ and is now standing, but converted to a Town House, or Alms House, consisting of two apartments and usually inhabited by two poor families. It standeth upon part of two acres of land thereto belonging, the Rent whereof the Church Wardens usually receive towards their disbursements in that Office. The said Guild House and land, was granted by King Edw^d y^e Sixth, To Ralph Sadler Knight, and Lawrence Winnington Gentleman & their heirs and Assigns, by Letters patents, dated at Westminster y^e 15th day of

¹ The Rev. J. A. Hannam, Rector of Great Plumstead, kindly searched his records but could find no reference to the Guild House or Alms House.

Decemb: in the fourth year of his Reign, for y^e uses & trusts therein mentioned, one whereof was for discharging the inhabitants of y^e said Village from doing Task (or Threshing) work for y^e Lord of y^e Mannor of y^e said Town; And y^e said Guild House, & two acres of Land, have by divers successive Feofments, been conveyed, to the respective Feoffees, therein named; But y^e last of y^e surviving Feoffees named in y^e last Feoffment, whose name was John Marker¹ being dead and not carrying on y^e said Feofment to any Further Feoffees, There wants the Authority of a Royal co^mmission, for pious & charitable uses to determin & ascertain, to what uses & purposes the said house and land & produce thereof are to be applied to for the future. But in y^e mean time y^e Rent of y^e said Land is received and applied as formerly to y^e uses before mentioned.

There is a small Mannor called y^e Mannor of Great Plumstead, belonging to y^e Honorable S^r Edw^d Ward of Bixley in y^e said County Bart. Whose Ancestors have for many generations successively been Lords thereof; And y^e fines upon alienations at y^e will of the Lord, who usually takes two years Rent of the heir at Law upon Desents, and but a year & half of a purchaser. In this Mannor as in most others, the exactions of Stewards, it is to be feared will remain a grievance generally complained of without any hope of redress.

The Mannor aforesaid is in great measure interolved with another much larger, which is y^e Mannor of Thorp next Norwich, antiently called Bishops Thorp, of which Mannor, A greater number of y^e Tenements in Great Plumstead, and several in little Plumstead together with y^e lands thereto belonging are holden. The Fines of which Mannor are also arbitrary, and supposed to become so in the last Century, and not before. At the Lords Court of that Mannor which is usually kept at or by Thorp Hall, The Constables of Great Plumstead nominated by y^e Leet, are always sworn into their Office. And there is always a Jury of the inhabitants of Great Plumstead Su^moned to attend at every general Court, and Sworn to act on the part of Great Plumstead, as belonging to y^e said Mannor; And that Jury is distinct from y^e Jury of the Mannor of Thorp, which never meddled wth any of y^e affairs on y^e part of Great Plumstead.

There are fourteen called Capital Tenements in Great Plumstead, whereunto a very good Co^mon appropriated, comonly called & known by ye name of Great Plumstead Smeeth,² All The feed and Sweepage whereof neither any other of the Inhabitants of Great Plumstead or elsewhere have any manner of Right or pretence of claim except by encroachment or usurpation, both which have been too much suffered. And y^e said Co^mon by usual computation is not less than a 100 acres.

There is also in y^e bounds of Great Plumstead a Fold Coast³ or sheeps Walk for 400 sheep or thereabouts, which is extended into and part of the very large Co^mon called and known by the name of Mushould Heath which said Sheeps walk is y^e sole property of y^e Lord of y^e Mannor of Great Plumstead, as to pasturing a flock of sheep thereupon, but as to y^e feed of Great Cattle and y^e sweepage thereof and cutting & taking of Flaggs & Lyng and other Growth thereupon the inhabitants of sixteen towns or Parishes which encompass it, claim and intermix Right and have immemorially Enjoyed ye same without interruption.

The tithe of y^e Flock of Sheep which the Lord of Plumstead hath the Right to keep upon the said Fold Coast (both wooll & Lamb) belongs to the Rectory of Great Plumstead Only. But in Lieu and discharge thereof there is a Modus or customary payment of sixteen shillings per Ann: payable upon every La^mas day by y^e Lord or his tenant or y^e Occupier, whether there be a Flock kept upon y^e said Fold Coast or not, and i^mmemorially accepted as such by y^e Parson or others that have had the said impropriation in tenure.

¹ John Marker was churchwarden in 1711 when the new tower was finished.
² Smeeth, a level plain. ³ Sic. Otherwise Fold Course.

The Parish Church of Great Plumstead consists of one Isle & y^e Chancel, together about Sixty five feet long, the roof of y^e Church old and weak, covered with Lead, and y^e Walls of it built with field stone, very weak also; The Mortar being very rotten. The Walls of y^e Chancel somthing better, and a new substantial strong Roof, lately built and covered with a new coat of Lead, at y^e sole charge of the (then and now) present Curate.

The Steeple supposed to have been built when the Church was built, and with y^e like Materials, by reason of y^e rottenness of y^e Mortar fell down in 1709 with the three good large bells therein not damaged by y^e fall, which broke down some part of y^e Roof of y^e Church, the Curate being much concerned for y^e Melancholly accident, industriously applied himself, to build a new one upon y^e foundations of the old one, and by his Industry & endeavours, and by y^e liberal benefactions of y^e Honorable the then Lady Jane Dowager Ward, and of her son the Honorable S^r Edw^d Ward Bart. then of Bixley together with the assistance of the then Parishioners by the Carriage of all Materials and three years Successive Assessments. A Steeple was intirely new Substantially built with strong Brick Walls and finished to y^e height it now stands very Decent and graceful, with the three good old Bells with strong Frames over the two substantial Floors; And besides the Benefactions of y^e Honorable persons before mentioned they were also pleased to bear their respective Tenants charges in ye Parish assessments relating thereto as also some other Landlords did, by y^e Interest the Curate¹ had with them.

When and by whom the Church was founded is out of y^e extant of this information, but as it is supposed to be first endowed. so it is now possessed with eighteen acres and a half of Glebes in divers & several pieces; and all tithes both great and small belonging to y^e said Rectory are payable in kind. There are indeed divers lands within y^e bounds of y^e Parish, the tith whereof are claimed by y^e Rectors of Witton, Brundal, & little Plumstead, and confirmed by prescription, both in and since the com^mon Wealth's usurpation. But then there are divers lands without y^e said Bounds, the tithes whereof by i^mmemorial prescription have been paid & still enjoyed as belonging to y^e Rectory of great Plumstead.

There was formerly a Rectory House, so long since totally delapidated that none of the Ruins thereof remain visible, It was scituate by the South Side of y^e Church Yard; neither hath been in any ones Memory, any Barn or Outhouses belonging to y^e Rectory wherein to lay either tithes or the product of the Glebes; for want whereof the Impropriation is of less value than otherwise it would be, Nevertheless the impropriation is worth about Sixty pound per Anⁿ: towards paying all y^e out-goings before mentioned which the Lessee is to pay.

Great Plumstead is but a Mean Obscure Village affording nothing of extraordinary notice, or Fame; The yearly value of y^e whole, as charged in the Land Tax Assessments, hath ever since the Revolution, been laid at about four hundred pounds per Anⁿ: But according to y^e present Rack Rents, it amounts to somthing above, with y^e impropriation included.

The particulars before mentioned being all that are most material give A competent knowledge of it.

Worthy Sir

Herewith I send you what relates to Great Plumstead and Brundal, in Blofield Hundred, in my Cognizance, agreeable to your Queres, in Relation to your undertaking; You will take or leave as you please. But what you take keep to it, as right upon my word.

¹ Russell, who was curate of Gt. Plumstead from 1677 to 1737, habitually speaks of himself in the third person. J. H. Harrison notes that there was formerly an inscription on the chancel beam of the church: "Built at charge of J. Russell, M.A., Curate of this town AN. DOM. 1696".

If what I have done answers, you may (if God permit, and I know you desire), expect such an account of Postwick in ye same Deanary, as will give a competent knowledge of it, and its appurtenances; where I have been Incumbent near upon 40 years, not to expectation of A Purchaser, who bought the next turn about 20 years ago; at a great price; counting my then great Sickness would be my last.

The weakness of my hand and eyes at 83, oblige me to dictate to an Amanuensis who writes this, and without one I can't transact any thing in legible writing, but remain in the Cleric Fraternity,

Sr

Yr most Respectful Brother
John Russell

Postwick Decem. 8th, 1735.

Did Russell send the promised account of Postwick? So far it has not been found among Blomefield's papers but in 1858 there was printed, for private circulation only, a book quaintly named, *Postwick and Relatives*¹ which was said to have been written in 1735/6 by Thomas Harrison of Great Plumstead. It contains some twenty pages, of which seven give a description of Postwick on exactly the same lines as Russell's accounts of Brundall and Plumstead. The rest consists of digressions on the neighbouring villages of Thorpe and Blofield with the families more or less connected with them. The book is edited with notes and a short introduction by the author's great great grandson, James Hargrave Harrison, who was much concerned with the gentility of the Harrison family.² From him we learn that Thomas Harrison, who was born in 1681, was intended for the Church and at the age of eight was placed under the Rev. Samuel Chapman of Thorpe, of whose piety and benevolence contemporaries speak so highly. Unfortunately he died in 1700 when Thomas was only eleven but the latter alludes to him thirty years later as "my tutor yet intimate friend". He was then sent to Norwich where he remained at school until he was seventeen but, probably for financial reasons, gave up all hope of becoming a parson and farmed a small portion of an estate at Plumstead and Postwick, which he inherited from his father who died in 1710. In 1714 he was appointed Clerk of the Parish of Great Plumstead, which office he retained till his death in 1770.

He must thus have been intimately acquainted with Russell, to whom as Parson he probably owed his appointment as Clerk. It seems highly likely that he was the amanuensis whom Russell employed. There is a striking similarity in the style, spelling and

¹ Mr. Percy Millican drew my attention to this book and kindly lent me his copy.

² He gives an elaborate pedigree of the Harrisons, tracing them from Rycharde Heryson, the last Roman Catholic rector of Braydeston, who was deprived by Mary for being a married priest. This is modest indeed compared with another which he mentions as recently compiled by G. H. D. Neville Plantagenet Harrison, Esq., "an extraordinary, if not unparalleled, Pedigree of 36 Lineal descents, with multifarious connexions, closely and concisely written over nearly 28 superficial feet".

punctuation of the three accounts. Moreover, his pamphlet is written just after the date when Russell offered Blomefield a description of Postwick. It looks as if Harrison made a copy of this and added the digressions for his own amusement and the edification of his friends. The account of Postwick, stripped of the more irrelevant digressions, may with some confidence be added to those of Brundall and Gt. Plumstead as part of Russell's reply to Blomefield's queries.

POSTVIC, POSEWYKE, POSSEWYKE, POSTWICK, POSWICK is A village about three Miles from y^e City of Norwich, Eastward, and is bounded by y^e River Yar, leading from Norwich to y^e Town of Yarmouth on y^e South, Great Plumstead East and North, and on y^e West by Thorp next Norwich, called Norwich Thorp, Concerning which places a Digression may not be improper or unacceptable to mention some things relating thereto, being neither vulgarly known nor quite to be forgotten.¹

However it is time to return to y^e intended account of Postwick; Which (as before said)² is but a small Village, but hath two distinct Mannors in it, and consequently small ones, and compounded of two join'd together, called Postwick cum Cranly Mannor. The Fines upon alienations are at y^e will of the Lord: There are but few Lands or Tenements of that Ma^{or}, but what have been bought in by former Lords of it, to make their Estate in y^e Town y^e more intirely their own. The Mannor house is that next to y^e Parsonage House South, which is betwixt it and the Church.

The other Mannor is y^e Mannor of y^e Rectory of Postwick and so called; The Fines upon alienations are certain, four shillings an acre, all its Rents, both free and copy, are about 15 or 16^s per Ann: payable upon Lady day. But all y^e lands and tenements belonging to it have also been bought by the Lords of y^e other Mannor. So that the Lord of y^e Rectory Mannor, can't now hold a Court as formerly, for want of another Tenant besides y^e other Lord: The Rectors of Postwick for y^e time being, are Lords of y^e Mannor thereof.

The Lord of y^e other Mannor is Patron of y^e Rectory, and hath y^e donation of y^e Benefice. It is something unco^mon, that y^e Patron should be Tenant to his Clerk, and owe suit and service and swear fealty (if required) to him as Lord: But so it is in this rare instance. This constitution at first, demonstrated such kindness and condescension in y^e Patron, as to oblige the Clerks to utmost Regards and returns of Gratitude and love. Nevertheless no one ought ever to give way to any incroachment or aggression upon y^e Rectory or any of its Rights intrusted to him, if ever any such attempts should be made thereupon.

The present Lord of Postwick, is the Honorable Sr Edw^d Ward. Baronet, a polite Person, and head of y^e ancient family of Postwick, as also of y^e younger Branch of it, in Staffordshire, which hath not only the title and Honor of Lord Dudley, (as y^e Suttons formerly had) but also of the Baronage of Birmingham, a very large well built and rich trading town in Warwickshire.³

Leaving then Relatives to Postwick, pass to the Village it self, which within its proper Bounds contains but between 12 and 1300 Acres, Exclusive of the Co^mon Doles, and some Marshes Extra-parochial tho' part of it, hereafter to be mentioned.

The Church and Chancel are but one Isle besides the Steeple, the Church and Steeple covered with Lead, the Chancel Tiled; All being 96 feet in length, not vastly ancient, but probably Built when St Etheldred's Chappel

¹ Here follows a digression of ten pages about Bishop's Thorp, Blofield and the Pastons, with a long account of the curse pronounced on that family by the prior of Bromholm. On this, see Mr. R. W. Ketton-Cremer in *Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol. XXVII, Part III.

² It has not been said before.

³ Then follow five pages of digression on the history of the Ward family.

which was in y^e field decumbred, which whether in y^e times of y^e Wards, or Beaumonts before them, is in y^e dark, as also by whom or to what Saint dedicated: However, it and y^e Rectors thereof have been i^mmemorially possessed therewith, of about 50 acres of good Glebe Lands (but most in y^e field) a very good Parsonage House, and outhouses and Garden (all made more comodious by y^e present Rector than before) together with all tithes within y^e bounds, but none without.

There are no remains of great antiquity in y^e Church or Churchyard except some Grave Stones (perhaps brought from St. Etheldred Chappel) which are very Rotten. But in y^e Painted Glass in one of y^e South Windows are remains of three Pictures, underwritten Jaspar, Melchior, Balthazor, feigned by the Romanists to be Kings of Cogn, and the wise men that were led by y^e Star went to Bethlehem to make presents and devotions to our blessed Saviour just before born there. In y^e Chancel are divers Modern Grave Stones of y^e Ward Family buried there, upon changing their dormitory to Bixley Church. There are also two Grave Stones covering two Close Vaults in one of which, Elizabeth Wife of John Russell Clerk (Rector) was buried; Under y^e other Bernard his younger Son, Room being left therein for his father's Corps, against y^e time for it.

There is inserted into y^e North Wall of y^e Chancel, a little Monument of Marble with the following inscription upon it.

In Memory of Bernard Russell who died y^e third day of May 1723, in y^e 23^d year of his age, (of y^e small pox, in Caius College in Camb:) His Sorrowful Parents erected this.

Dear Son! what dead? yes buried near do lie
My Bones: But I am gone to dwell on high
With God: Not lost but only gone before
To meet with you in joy, and part no more.
Weep not for me who lived on earth to die
That I might live with Christ eternally:
Then rest Dear Soul with God, whilst we
Do live in hope ere long to rest with the.

There is a large Co^mon called Postwick Co^mon containing about 300 acres, the one half Marsh, the other dry: whereon are kept about 300 Cattel, it is usually Rated, and y^e number of Beasts proportioned, or ought to be, to y^e bigness or number of Tenements and Farms; it is a vast Benefit to y^e inhabitants, especially when they honestly keep their covenants in the Rate, as they ought to do for their own Benefit.

The Lord of Postwick claims y^e Liberty of putting his flock of sheep unto y^e same Co^mon, but it is only continuing in white wheather and no longer.

There is a sheeps walk which extends thro' y^e whole Parish excepting y^e ancient inclosures of y^e Rectory, and some very ancient Closes belonging to some Tenements; all the rest of y^e Lands being half year Ground, which he may shack and feed with his flock, from Mich: day to Lady day in every year, but if any of y^e Lands in y^e field be sown with Winter corn, three acres lying together, the Shepherd is to Staffhold y^e Flock, and not suffer them to feed upon any of y^e said Lands.

Instead of y^e tith of wool and Lamb in kind there hath been usually paid and accepted the customary payment of 15^s per Aⁿⁿ: upon La^mas day in every year, in Lieu and discharge of y^e tithes thereof in kind.

There is also in y^e said Parish a large tract of Land, near 100 acres, called y^e Doles;¹ Lying between Postwick field in part, and Great Cranly in part, on y^e East; and y^e old ditch which extends from y^e Bottom of the Valley called Dussings Dale up to the West corner of a 20 acre close of y^e Lords of Postwick (but lying in Thorp Bounds,) on y^e West, and abutting North upon Great Plumstead Smeeth.

¹ Doles or Dools, allotments or lands parcelled out.

These doles seem originally to be apportioned by y^e Lord to several Tenements of his Ma^{or}. But all those Tenements having been bought in by y^e Lord, and y^e Soyl being his, he may if he please apportion them again to such of his Farms, as he shall think fitt. But they all have for many years been look'd at as a part of his fold Coast or Sheeps Walk, and been fed by the Lords flock thro' y^e whole year. The inhabitants taking y^e Sweepage of y^e upper growth, Broom and Furz; but there is one Dole belonging to a Tenement now Charles Robert's not yet bought in by y^e Lord, and y^e whole sweepage is claimed by him. This Dole is y^e most Westward of them all. And y^e Road from Postwick field gate toward Norwich lies upon part of it. And there remains some old ditches that seem to have been y^e Boundaries of that Dole.

There hath been a Difference long subsisting between Thorp and Postwick, as to y^e Bounds betwixt y^e two towns: Thorp people taking in some part of y^e aforesaid Doles, and Postwick people taking in all y^e Ground between Dussing Dale, and y^e old Ditch before mentioned. Both seem to be in y^e wrong. Dussing Dale seems to be a proper and natural Division, and it would be more proper and expedient for both Towns to avoid contention, mutually to agree to make their Perambulation in that Dale, from y^e nook of y^e East part of Thorp Comon, directly towards Drove Lane, which leads unto Mushold Heath. This seems to be a natural and lasting Division.

There is a large tract of marshes towards Yarmouth, lying near y^e Town of Runham, anciently called Sturgot or Stargate Marshes, and now called Postwick Marshes, and well known by that name. These Marshes long time belonging to y^e Pastons of Barningham are lately sold or pretended so to be to one Mr. _____ to avoid being double taxed as they have been (but moderately) ever since y^e Revolution. These Marshes tho' much distant from y^e proper bounds of Postwick, are reputed as a part of that Parish, and by i^memorial prescription are so. They are and always have been rated and taxed, in all Town Rates in equal proportions with y^e rest of y^e Land within y^e s^d Parish Bounds. In lieu of y^e proper Tithes of these Marshes there is an i^memorial prescription of paying only 6s. 8d. yearly to y^e Rector of Postwick, upon La^mas Day in ful discharge. This seems now a very unequal pittance, all y^e said Marshes being lett out in several parts to divers Tenants, and y^e Rent of y^e whole amounting to near 140 £ per Aⁿⁿ: But probably this pittance might be a proper proportion when those Marshes were first drained; the value both of Money and Land being vastly different from y^e present.

There are several such Tracts of Marshes in ye same Vast Level¹ apportioned, as belonging to several other Towns, and rated along therewith. And a Modus instead of tith, paid to y^e respective Rectors or Vicars.²

Postwick is become fertile, and with proper use and Management is worth, and comonly lett at 10^s an acre or more. The North part of y^e Parish, is better than the other, both for wheat and clover, but the other is profitable, being very good Barley and Turneb Land, and especially since y^e use of Muck and Compost brought by y^e River from Norwich and Yarmouth; In old times y^e occupiers used to Till those lands as long as they would bear any thing, and then laid them, and tied Horses upon them untill they gathered Heart, and then ploughed and sowed again to little profit.

There is plenty of good Marl in y^e Town, whereby y^e stronger land is very improvable, But y^e lighter not at all: There is a want of Clay, and Brick and tile earth; and but a small Stock of Timber: in comparison of what there was formerly.

¹ J. H. Harrison has the following note. These marshes comprise part of the level known as the Breydon marshes. This level at a remote period was covered with water, which flowed from the sea off Yarmouth and must have formed no inconsiderable portion of the estuary to Norwich.

The Breydon marshes are traditionally said to have been reclaimed by the several parishes to which they now belong, each parish having sent gangs of men for the purpose of throwing up embankments to prevent further inundations of the river. Some of these marshes are extra-parochial.

² Here are inserted some notes on the previous incumbents of Postwick. They will be given later.

S^r Edw^d Ward's estate there and at Great Plumstead, contiguous is about 1200*l* per Ann: and at Bixley and elsewhere Superior: All Bixley is intirely his except the Mannor and Advowzon, which are y^e Dukes of Norfolk with many others thereabout.

In his account of the Ward family, Harrison relates with great zest the following story of the rise of the junior Postwick branch to fortune and a peerage. He claims to have had it from "a very ingenuous and Martial Baronet of Bixley, well acquainted with Memoirs of ye whole Family".

One Mr William¹ Ward a younger son of Postwick, was made a Gold Smith in London, and standing before his Shop in Lombard Street, asked a man passing in a Sailor's Habit (the usual question) whether he wanted any thing in his way? the man said, he could not say, till he knew if he had any occasion for something he had to dispose of, and which he would shew if he pleased to go into y^e Back Shop, where going together, Mr Ward was surprized with a great number of rough Diamonds, which y^e other poured out of a Bagg on to y^e Counter, asking Mr Ward if he had occasion for such things, and if so, whether he would buy, and what he would give for them: He answered that, the stones he could use, but that they being not all of a Bigness, he must sort and number them, before it was proper for him to bid, which being complied with, a Bargain was made, perhaps not without two or more words, but so much to Mr Ward's content, that he invited y^e Sailor with all y^e Ship's Crew to Supper, at a Tavern he named. They all went, and were treated to ful satisfaction of every one, especially the Seller whose heart so opened with Mr Ward's generosity and obliging conversation, that at parting the Sailor whispered to him, that he had another such parcel, which he should see in the morning, and buy if he pleas'd. Mr Ward gave him thanks, and accepted y^e offer. Accordingly the man went and surprized Mr Ward more than before, with what he had promised to shew him: They bargain'd as before, and y^e like Treat given and accepted, and they merrily parted with mutual joy.

Hereupon Mr Ward fell to work upon ye Stones, which abundantly answered his expectation; And having quick Markets and good prices, much wealth was added to his former Riches, and his reputation growing therewith, he became a great Banker as he after appeared.²

Thus far ye noble Baronet, exclusive of his embellishments. Some years after, Sutton Lord Dudley, by criminal conduct (having very many Bastards which he made Gentlefolks) was very much run into Debt, and being at London and enquiring who was likely to supply him, was advized to Mr Ward as a very honest and substantial banker: My Lord applying to him for 20,000*l* was told it was ready, provided the security would be to satisfaction. Mr Ward was satisfied as to that very Material point, but told his Lordshp he thought he might be better and more honorably supplied than by Borrowing. And being asked how? Mr Ward said he had an only son, and his Lordship a Grand daughter, the only issue of his son and heir, S^r Ferdinando deceas'd, and if they might be married together, he would supply more than y^e present want. My Lord listnd thereto, and so y^e Match was made and the two Families and Estates were and are united.

Mr. Ward's son, Humble, was knighted by Charles I and shortly afterwards raised to the peerage as "Baron of Birmingham". His

¹ William was the sixth son of Edward Ward, who built Bixley Hall. An interesting but not uncommon example of the younger son of a country squire making a successful career in trade.

² Blomefield, who follows Harrison's account so closely that he must have had it from him or the original source, describes this transaction as a "lucky accident"; Walter Rye, more bluntly, as "besting a sailor of a handful of rough diamonds". No sympathy need be wasted on the sailor, but it would be interesting to have the comment of the original owner of the diamonds!

beard seems to have been the subject of rustic jests for Harrison says that

"he was in some esteem with the King, to whom he was loyal and kind in his straits, and much revered in his Contry, tho' y^e Bores,¹ in their witty Scisms, call'd him Nine Beards, because He had none or very thin: He usually swore by y^e world: and spoke through the Nose, as many of y^e whole race have been something subject to, or at least to snuffle a little."

Harrison, who was always keenly interested in clerical affairs and an inveterate gossip, gives some details of the previous rectors of Postwick. He probably obtained the information from Russell, who, however, was not likely to have included them in his contribution for he always follows closely Blomefield's questionnaire in which the subject was not mentioned.

Next before Mr John Russell, A.M. Mr Charles Lulman was in 1688, incumbent proper to be forgott rather than to be remembered; His father bought that turn for him under age and unfit, and when y^e incumbent was past Speech. His institution was stopt near two years after, his Minority being plain by y^e parish Register Book, altho' it was altered and falsified to prevent Discovery. Next before Lulman, was Mr Daniel Johnson, B.D. in 1660, a learned pious Divine, and diligent Preacher, and of exemplary life and conversation, not secular enough to leave much more than just a competency to his very Religious Widow. Next before Mr Johnson, the Reverend D^r Thomas Wyth was incumbent in 1612, of whose Learning and Merit the co^mon people conceited, he had power over evil spirits, and reported that contesting with a very powerful one, his head and neck were set awry and afterward alwaies shook: So in fact they did, But the wiser sort want credulity as to y^e occasion thereof.

The D^r was obnoxious to y^e usurpation and thereby outed of y^e Rectory of Shipdam w^{ch} he then also had, and y^e better of y^e two, but held Postwick by y^e influence his Patron, the first S^r Edw^d Ward, had over y^e Norwich Comitty, for S^r Edw^d was his friend, and indeed a lover of worthy Ministers; And it was with utmost regrett that he obeyed his Superiors, in turning Mr Shipdam out of Blofield. The Doctor loved Botiny and planting, and some of his Trees are yet standing near 100 years old. He built y^e Brick part as also y^e Bakehouse of y^e Parsonage.

Mr Edw^d Lane was Rector next before D^{ct}r Wyth, but of him scarce any thing but his name in the Register now remains.

It will have been noticed that Russell in his description of Brundall, pays special attention to the vexed question of the boundaries between Braydeston and Brundall. This problem has caused endless perplexity to generations of rectors and inhabitants of the two parishes. The intermixture is indeed such as to lend plausibility to the local tradition that one cottager used to sleep with his head in Braydeston and his feet in Brundall as the boundary line ran through his bedroom! A newcomer to Brundall, residing near the church, to which his neighbours belong, may be astonished to learn that his own parish church is Braydeston, an ancient and lonely little church a mile away, on the top of Braydeston Hills, with no houses near, except the Hall.

¹ Either Harrison's way of spelling boors or perhaps the last syllable of neighbours.

If a line is drawn north from the river through the east of Brundall House, it will be found that all the land to the west of it is Brundall. East of this line and north of Brundall Street the land is Braydeston with the exception of one large block. South of the street there are three blocks of Braydeston land, the largest situated on both sides of the Common Lane, now Station Lane.¹ On the east of this lane stood the ancient chapel of St. Clement, a full history of which was given in a very valuable paper by the late Mr. Fred Johnson.² In this he points out that in a law suit in 1277-8 the jury declared that the Chapel of Brundall belonged to the Church of Braydeston, and whoever was Parson of Braydeston was Rector of the Chapel of Brundall. Moreover, they added that the hamlet of Brundall was an appurtenance of the town of Braydeston.³ It is interesting to note that in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, Brundall Church is valued at £2 13s. 4d., while "Breistone cum capella" is nearly double, viz., £5. In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 Brundall is raised to £5 and Braydeston to £5 6s. 8d.

The Chapel of St. Clement was originally built as a chapel of ease to St. Michael's, Braydeston, probably because of the difficulty of reaching that church in winter when the marshes were likely to be flooded. It was dissolved in 1547, but its ruins existed until 1820. Russell speaks somewhat disparagingly of "what they call Brundall St. Clements". It certainly did not lessen the confusion that a chapel belonging to Braydeston should have been called the Chapel of St. Clement of Brundall.

In the early Middle Ages Braydeston and Brundall manors were held for half a knight's fee each by the Caston and St. Omer⁴ families respectively. But these families held other manors in Norfolk although Blomefield gives their history under these places, perhaps considering them the principal manors.

It seems incredible that these fantastic boundaries should have existed when the manors were formed. We should have expected that originally the eastern part of the village, that which borders on Braydeston and Strumpshaw, would have been included in Braydeston manor and the western part in Brundall manor. The western part is still Brundall but the other is intermixed. The most plausible explanation is that in the course of time one of the lords either by purchase or exchange or mere encroachment increased his manor at the expense of the other. What evidence we have goes to show that in the Middle Ages Braydeston was the more important.⁵

¹ Besides these main divisions there are little islands of Braydeston in Brundall and vice versa.

² "The Chapel of St. Clement at Brundall, Norfolk", by Frederic Johnson, Assistant Secretary, *Norfolk Archaeology*, 1924, pp. 194-205.

³ "Et quod predictus hamelettus de Brundale est pertinens et dependens ad villam de Braydestone."

⁴ The last of the Castons, Sir Robert de Caston, was Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk five times between 1336 and 1341, and eight times M.P. for Norfolk between 1336 and 1357. The last of the St. Omers, Sir Thomas de Sancto Omero, was Sheriff from 1360 to 1363.

⁵ Johnson states that in nearly all the early wills of the residents of Brundall, the testators desire to be buried at St. Michael's, Braydeston.

It seems therefore that Brundall was the encroacher. But when this encroachment took place it is impossible to say. The most likely time seems the lawless fifteenth century when we know from the Paston Letters that the ownership of Braydeston was fiercely disputed. The importance of the change to the rectors lay in the fact, which Russell emphasizes, that the tithes followed the manor. It was therefore essential that the exact boundaries should be known to prevent tenants playing off one rector against the other.

Perhaps the most interesting piece of information which Russell gives us is the reference to Brundall Hall. "There certainly was some considerable Family in the Parish, that probably lived in a Hall (called Brundal Hall:) The Scite whereof only remains moted about, with a Canal (now reduced to a water Ditch) from thence to y^e River." This is something quite new. When Johnson wrote his paper he strongly deprecated the use of the title Manor House for the old house facing Blofield Road and suggested that Brundall Manor House was in the neighbourhood of the present Brundall House. This, however, stands on high ground, and could not have been moated about with a canal to the river. The most likely site seems to be a plot of hard ground about forty yards square at the bottom of the Church Lane on the marsh just south of the railway line. It is still surrounded by ditches with two dykes, one much overgrown, leading to the river. Around the edges of the plot are some large oaks and elms which seem to have been planted at regular intervals. It is a site admirably suited for defence but uncomfortably exposed to the east wind. The Hall was probably abandoned when times became more settled. The considerable family that occupied it was probably the St. Omers who held the manor from the reign of John, if not earlier, to the middle of the fourteenth century. It could hardly have been the Hobarts, who were lords in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for Russell would have known about them.

What do we make of Parson Russell from his contributions? Like the Vicar of Bray he got preferment in "good King Charles's golde days", retained it under "Royal James" and received further preferment under William. He survived Anne and the first George and died in 1737, holding in plurality the livings of Great Plumstead, Brundall and Postwick. If, like the Vicar, he suffered not at all for conscience' sake, it is greatly to his credit that he took such care of the fabric of his churches, and we can share his indignation at the baseness of "one Killick of Clapham a carpenter" who had scamped the work on the roof of Brundall Church by substituting iron nails for tenon and mortise. We can also share his glee at the discomfiture of the speculator who bought the reversion of Postwick twenty years before "at a great price, counting my then great Sickness would be my last". He was evidently proud of the new mansion house he had built at Brundall as a Rectory and is careful to give all the details not excluding the pump. He cannot conceal his distrust of lawyers,

especially those dealing with the appropriately named "Peculiars" of the Dean and Chapter, "who seem arbitrary in setting ye fines", adding unconvincingly, "But doubtless they are not intirely arbitrary but within ye limits of the law". He deplors the exactions of stewards by whose extortionate fines benefactions to the poor "are too much clogg'd and lessened". Altogether a very likeable man. We should be glad to come across his diary if he ever kept one. It might have rivalled that of Parson Woodforde!

Finally we come to the important question. What use was made of Russell's contribution in Blomefield's *History*? Apparently none whatever as far as Brundall and Great Plumstead are concerned. Blomefield makes some use of the Postwick material in his account of Bixley but he was dead before the volume dealing with the Blofield Hundred was published. Nor can his continuator, the Rev. Charles Parkin, whom Walter Rye, in his racy article on Blomefield in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, dismisses as "a most incompetent man", bear any blame, for he never had access to the whole of Blomefield's original collection.¹ By his time the *History* was mainly concerned with the devolution of the manors and the history of the various families connected with them.

If the original design had been carried out and if the other contributions were anything like as full as Russell's, we should have had an invaluable survey of Norfolk in the early eighteenth century. It is pleasant, however, to feel that Parson Russell's effort has not been altogether wasted, although it has had to wait so long for public recognition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very much indebted to Mr. George Levine of Brundall who is responsible for the two plans which illustrate this paper. The first is a copy, with additions by Mr. Levine, of the Brundall Tithe Plan of 1839 kindly lent by the Rev. G. A. Church, Rector of Brundall. As far as they can be tested, the boundaries seem the same as they were a century before but of course during the interval the large open fields have disappeared. As will have been noticed a certain amount of enclosure had taken place in Russell's time. In the plan have been inserted Brundall Church, the site of the chapel of St. Clement and other places mentioned by Russell as far as it is possible to identify them. The second is a plan of the most likely site of Brundall Hall.

My thanks are also due to the Hon. Editor, Mr. Percy Millican, the Rev. J. F. Williams, and the Librarian and Staff of the Norwich Central Library for suggestions and advice.

¹ See the Prefatory Note to the Calendar of Frere MSS., by Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy in Vol. I of *The Norfolk Record Society*.