

GRANTS OF ARMS IN THE COMMONWEALTH PERIOD

by Una Long

As a footnote to M. J. Sayers' article 'Norfolk Visitation Families: A Postscript on the 1664 Disclaimers' (*Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol. XXXVII, Part III, 1980) an additional point may be of interest.

By a Warrant under the Royal Sign Manual of Charles II dated 4 September 1660, all Grants of Arms made by the Kings of Arms intruded in the Commonwealth period were declared 'illegal and void.'¹

Strictly, therefore, Grants of Arms said to be disclaimed by Bysshe at the Visitation of Norfolk in 1664 were not necessarily omitted as a result of Bysshe's duty to make 'infamous by proclamation those who without just authority who assumed the title of Esquire or Gentleman or any other.'

One example of such a Grant is that given to James Long of Swinthrope (Swainsthorpe) by Sir Edward Bysshe in 1651.² Rye, *Norfolk Families*, says that this Grant was disclaimed at the 1664 Visitation. However, a point which could raise an argument is whether a Grant made illegally during the Commonwealth and declared void in 1660 could be considered to be disclaimed in 1664.

I should add that the Long of Dunston family (originally Long of Swinthrope) appear to have disregarded the Royal Sign Warrant of 1660, for they continued to use the 1651 Grant until 1797 when application for a change of name and the use of the Long arms of 1651 quartered with the arms of Kellett was made. A new Grant was given in 1797³ because the College of Arms then discovered that the 1651 Grant was void.⁴

September 1981

¹ College of Arms: Misc. Grants 8 folio 27.

² Report from the College of Arms re Long of Dunston 13 September 1979.

³ *Ibid.* This Grant was made to Robert Churchman Kellett (Long). Norfolk Record Office: DUN (B) 88 497 x 3.

⁴ College of Arms Report, as above.

PULHAM ST. MARY MAGDALEN: A CONSTRUCTIONAL MYSTERY

by Edwin J. Rose

The church of St. Mary Magdalen dominates the centre of the village of Pulham Market. The dating of the visible work in the building may be briefly summarised: the chancel was completely restored in 1873 and a new chancel arch added, but if (as claimed) it accurately copies the original then it would seem to be of the 14th century. The nave and west tower are in the Perpendicular style; the details suggest that the south arcade is earlier than the north, and that the north porch preceded the north aisle. It is noteworthy however that the westernmost arch of the south arcade is rounded, unlike the other pointed arches, though its mouldings are identical to the rest.

In November 1981 a sudden increase took place in the rate of subsidence which had been evident in the south arcade for some time. Mr. K. Darby of Feilden and Mawson was appointed as architect to carry out stabilisation; it was naturally

assumed that some alteration in the subsoil had caused the subsidence, and the foundations of the westernmost pier (between the rounded arch and the next) were exposed in a trench 1.40m E-W and 76cm N-S on the north side, and a similar trench on the south. The details which this revealed were unusual and Mr. Darby asked the writer to report on them.

As might be expected, the pier rested on a sleeper wall or plinth of Barnack limestone, 27cm in thickness. However beneath this was a void of 17cm caused by the rotting of a wooden sill. Beneath the centre of the pier itself was a square column of yellow bricks 49cm wide (the pier being 71cm wide) but probing by Mr. Darby established that there was a gap between the brickwork and the limestone; so that instead of the arcade piers supporting the roof, it might be said that the roof and upper walling were holding up the piers; hence the alarming cracks that had appeared above them.

The brick pillar stood on a course of pammets which continued in an east-west direction beneath the vanished wooden sill, but did not extend north or south into the nave or aisle; it was not a fragment of a former floor level, but a constructional feature. The pammets were 5cm thick and rested on top of courses of brickwork 14cm thick. These in turn stood on another course of pammets, beneath which once again appeared a void filled only with traces of rotten wood, this time 25cm in depth, with again a square brick pillar below the centre of the arcade pier but with a small void between its top and the pammets. The trench was dug no deeper than the base of this void.

A similar trench was opened around the next pier to the east; the upper levels were identical to those described above as far down as the first course of pammets, but below this there were here six courses of bricks, 34cm in total depth, and if there was a second void it was below the bottom of the trench. Mr. Darby reports that the remaining piers to the east produced a similar pattern; the courses of brickwork below the upper void increased in number towards the east.

The pammets and brickwork used in these foundations are of the type and consistency of those usually found in the late 18th or early 19th centuries; some of the bricks appear to be kiln wasters. They do not appear to be as late as the 1873 restoration of the chancel. (Samples have been deposited at the Rural Life Museum, Gressenhall). The area of the trenches where they extended a slight distance northwards into the nave, and a longer distance southwards into the aisle, showed no trace of a construction trench; the subsoil beneath the floors was consistent clay. However in the aisle south of the westernmost pier, at a depth of 60cm, two bricks were found of similar type to those in the foundation. The only other brickwork or constructional feature visible were some patches of brick which did not reach deeper than the base of the limestone sleeper wall. No fragments of bone or any other finds were made in the soil removed for the trenches.

Quite apart from the lack of evidence for a construction trench, it would have been physically impossible for the brick pillars beneath the piers to have been inserted beneath the pre-existing stone plinth from a trench. The only possible explanation seems to be that at some date around 1800 the arcade showed signs of collapse and was taken down (perhaps the arches were supported on staging, as they were during the 1981 repairs). The floor of the aisle and at least part of the nave was completely dug up, the foundation wall constructed and the stone plinth and piers replaced on top, before the clay was rammed down on each side again. The style of using horizontal wooden beams between

courses of brickwork is well attested in houses of the period, though it seems remarkable that it did not occur to the builders that the wood would rot away and present the same problem in the future. The courses of pammets are a feature not encountered by the writer or by Mr. Darby before. In one corner of the aisle are a group of tombslabs dated from the 1780's to the 1820's, said to cover a vault, and it may have been the digging of such vaults that originally caused the arcade to become unsafe. Mr. Darby is of the opinion that the wooden beams may have remained in a spongy condition until the drought of 1976 caused them to dry out and disappear, as similar subsidence has resulted in other churches in the area owing to a lowering of water tables since that date.

On some of the piers of the south arcade are marks, facing north and south, which might have been made by a parclose screen and might indicate that the piers were replaced facing the wrong way; but this is far from certain.

When the above conclusions were first made, no documentary evidence had been found; but the staff of the Norfolk Record Office have since discovered references in the Norfolk Archdeaconry visitation books in 1786 to 'some underpinning and earth to be removed' and in 1788 to 'earth to be removed from the walls of the church and some underpinning wanting to the walls'.¹ This would seem to confirm the suggested date.

The lesson that these findings teach us is that many other churches of apparently medieval date may have undergone considerable post-medieval reconstruction which is not evident simply from the visible structure.

April 1982

¹ Refs ANF/1/125 and ANF/1/128 respectively.

THE STOKE FERRY TURNPIKE

by J. F. Fone, B.Sc., F.I.C.E.

If one looks at the turnpike map of Norfolk (see page 196) one notices that they mostly radiate from Norwich or Kings Lynn. There is, however, a cluster around the small town of Stoke Ferry. These were created under the Stoke Ferry Turnpike Act of 1770,¹ (see map page 197). The present paper seeks to investigate this unusual situation.

From Tudor times² it was the duty of every parish to maintain its roads. Owners or occupiers of land valued at £50 per year were obliged to provide a cart, horses, tools and two men. Everyone else had to work on the roads for four days (afterwards increased to six); this became known as statute labour. In the late seventeenth century, with the more common use of wheeled vehicles, the standard of maintenance became unacceptable, particularly on important roads leading to large market towns, or London. To deal with this problem, Turnpike Trusts were set up to repair and improve particular roads. Capital was subscribed and tolls were collected to pay the interest and repay the capital. The normal period was for 21 years, as it was thought that by then the roads would be in such a condition that parishes would find little difficulty in keeping them in repair.