

A FORMER VICAR OF MARLOW, 1753—1801.
JOHN MORTIMER CLEOBUREY.

The Rev. J. H. Light, the present Vicar, has made out a complete list of vicars of Marlow from A.D. 1204 to the present time. The parish magazine, February, 1904, contained the following note by him:—"Of the older effigies that existed till the destruction of the old church in 1832 was a brass to John Warner, Rector, 1421, evidently placed over his grave, as our record says he was buried in the church. Also brasses to two priests, 1430 and 1440, generally supposed to be those of John Cambus, who succeeded Warner, and his brother, who was vicar of Bisham, on the Berkshire side of the river." Mr. Light has been able to obtain portraits of several of the vicars of more modern times, and would be grateful to anyone who would assist him in making the collection more complete. He thus relates how he became possessed of the portrait (Plate I.) of Dr. (as he was commonly called) Cleoburey:—"From a private source I heard that an effigy of this Marlow Vicar was to be found in an old curiosity shop near the Obelisk, Southwark. After some little difficulty the shop of a certain Mrs. Brown was discovered and the effigy produced. It is a beautifully-carved profile in (pear) wood, in high relief,* in an oval recessed frame. . . . The features are perfect, every lineament most delicately portrayed. He is attired in cassock-coat and cravat, and wears a large full-bottomed wig. Of genial countenance and portly frame, dignified withal, a very representative type of the parson of Georgian days."

* Plate I., about two-thirds of its actual size. It now hangs in the vestry.



THE REV. JOHN CLEOBUREY.

VICAR OF MARLOW 1753—1801.

On the back of the frame, in faded ink, is the inscription:—

*John Mortimer Cleoburey
Of St. John's Colledge Cambridge
Doctor in Divinity, Vicar of
Great Marlow, and Wooburn, and
the Senior Magistrate on the
Bench for the County of Bucks
He died August the 14. 1801
Aged 83 years.*

*To John Cleoburey Prattent Son
of Mr Joseph Prattent whose
Mother was Neice to the above
Dr. Cleoburey this
deliver
H.C.*

“Having been presented to the living by King George II., he was instituted in 1753, and died in 1801, aged 83 years. He was the only Vicar of Marlow who also held the cure of Wooburn. His memorial tablet is on the south wall of the south aisle, and is combined with that of John Cleoburey, A.M., vicar of Abingdon and Medmenham, J.P., who died August, 1800, aged 51. As our vicar was born in 1718 and the other in 1749, they probably were father and son, though the inscription does not state this” :—

Sacred to the memory of John Cleoburey, A.M.
Vicar of Abingdon & Medmenham, J.P., died Aug. 1800, Aged 51
His words were words of Wisdom; His actions just & generous
John Cleoburey, D.D., died Aug. 14, 1801, Aged 83 Yrs.
Learned in every useful branch of divine or human knowledge
LIII years the pious, practical Minister of this Church
XL years an active upright Magistrate for this county
Ever studiously promoting the honour of GOD
And the peace & comfort of his neighbours.

The obituary notice in the Gentleman's Magazine (1801, p. 860) is:—“At Great Marlow, of which he was vicar, presented by George II. in April, 1753, aged 83, the Rev. John Cleobury. He was also vicar of Woburne, near, 50 years, and one of his Majesty's justice of the peace 47 years. He was of St. John's College, Cambridge; B.A. 1742, M.A. 1753. His son John died vicar of St. Helen's, Abingdon, in Sep.



SCOTT & SMITH, MARLOW.

1800 (by mistake, in our vol. LXX., p. 1,000, called vicar of Gt Marlow), also of St. John's; B.A. 1772, M.A. 1775." The son was licensed by his bishop to hold both livings, as they were not more than 25 miles apart. The actual distance, to ride, would be quite 22 miles.

Mr. R. F. Scott, St. John's Coll., Cambridge, who is annotating the Register of admissions, wrote that two things puzzled him, namely: how Vicar Cleoburey obtained the name "Mortimer," and how he became a D.D. The entry in the register is: "John Cleoburey, son of Augustine Cleoburey, shoemaker, born at Longden, Salop; educated Shrewsbury school, admitted sizar of St. John's Coll. 19th April, 1739."

Amongst the inter-mural inscriptions given by Mr. A. H. Cocks (RECORDS VIII., 177) is the following:—

"Sacred to the Memory of those devotional Duties, and those domestic Virtues which adorn'd and endear'd the character of Eliz'th Cleoburey, eldest Daughter of Tho's Keen, Gent., the fav'rite Niece of Eliz'th Winkles, and Thirty five years the beloved Wife of John Cleobury, D.D. Born A.D. 1718, Died 1777. . ."

And, amongst benefactions inscribed: "The Yearly Produce of £100 Stock Reduced 3 P.c't Annuities was given in his life time by the Rev'd Dr. Cleobury, Vicar, to buy good Welch Flannel Waistcoats or Bed Gowns. Old Labourers in Husbandry or poor lying-in Women to have the preference."

The very fine silver watch illustrated (Plate II.) by the courtesy of the present owner, Mr. Rowe, silversmith, etc., of this town, would seem to have been presented to their vicar by the parishioners, being inscribed as shown in the illustration. This fine old silver watch retains, as will be seen, its original fob chain of the same metal, with name plate and pendant keys. Being a difficult subject for photography, the plate does not do justice to the fine engraving which enriches both watch and its cases, which are shown very slightly reduced in size. Mr. Rowe, the owner, has favoured me with the following expert notes upon the watch:—This is a specimen instrument signed *John Trubshaw*, who (or his predecessor) was admitted a member of the

Clockmakers' Company in 1686.* A gilt metal-cased repeating watch by him is in the South Kensington Museum. Dr. Cleoburey's watch is a silver, pair-case, striking watch with pierced and engraved inner and outer cases of rare artistic merit, with, in spaces between the scroll-work, engraved views of the Thames, the old church, and timber bridge. Its magnificent silver dial has the hours in relief in both Roman and Arabic numerals, the sunk centre displaying a shield of heraldic form, bearing the name *J. Trubshaw, London*, surrounded with marginal lines of oak leaf design. The escapement is of the verge principle, the favourite one of that period, the whole of the movement being finished in lavish style, pierced and carved at all available points, demonstrating the love the craftsman then had for his work, when the satisfaction of having produced such an instrument was no small part of its maker's reward.

W. N.

* "Old Clocks and Watches and their Makers." Britten, who gives his membership 1686-1715. So that presumably the business was carried on by his son or successor under the same name, this watch dating perhaps c. 1770