

EASTER-OFFERINGS AND SMALL TITHES—
1616.

Through the kindness of the Rev. Ronald Bale and of the Rev. H. H. Bartrum it is possible to give some particulars of an account-book relating to the parish of Hanslope, but at present in the church-safe of Lathbury. It consists of eleven foolscap pages stitched together but unbound, and is described on the outer page as: "The Easter Booke at Hanslopp for the yeare of our Lord God 1616." Page 2 consists of a summary, not obviously related to the succeeding pages:—

Imprimis for offrings at Thrupp ¹ on patient Sundaie	iii ^s iii ^d
The offeringes at Hanslop on palme Sundaie	vii ^s iii ^d
The offeringes at Thrupp on Easter Daie	v ^s x ^d
The offeringes at Handslopp on Easter Daie	v ^s ix ^d
The Tythe Egges come to in all	34 ^s 11 ^d
Sum 56 ^s 4 ^d	
[rectius 57 ^s 1 ^d] ²	

Page 3 is devoted to "Grene Ende," and gives a list of 24 payments which include Easter offerings, and a compounded payment in satisfaction of small tithes.

Easter offerings afford a pleasant field of debate as to whether they are in the nature of personal tithes, or whether they are not merely voluntary gifts afterwards rendered compulsory by special custom, but the point is fine since "personal tithes are never payable

¹ Thrupp stands for Castlethorpe, which "has been always ecclesiastically annexed to Hanslope," says Lipscomb. "Patient Sundaie" is Passion Sunday.

² The totals of each page are usually less than the true total; presumably the Vicar did not trouble to cast the column—and his agent pocketed the amount of the discrepancy!

without a special custom.”³ Certain statutes of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. enabled lay impropiators to recover them in the spiritual court; but in the case of Hanslope they were evidently paid to the vicar by custom. The usual rate was twopence a head for every person in the householder’s family, of sixteen years of age and upwards, except his servants; this might be varied by special custom, and it was so at Hanslope, for among the entries at Bullington End we find:

Mr Lane 1 offer	i ^d
Richard Travell g. 2 offer	iii ^d
Robert Inges g. 2 offer	3 ^d
Richard Coles 1 offer	i ^d

and in the Church End list we find:

Griffin Parrat g. 1 offer	ii ^d
William Travell 2 offer	ii ^d
William Course g. 3 offer	iiii ^d

and very many others of similar variety, whilst in the Green End list Mr. Alexander Troughton gave an offering of 1s.; a few have their names recorded with a row of ciphers against them. There is a brass to a Troughton and to his wife, a Hampden, in the north chapel of the church; it bears no date, but is attributed by the Historical Monuments Commissioners to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. There are eight lines of verse concluding with the encomium:

Yet this they left too, [*sic*] their immortale praise:

They livd well, did [*died*] well, full of happie dayes.

Then follow the words: “Composed in duetye by their beloved Sonne Richard Troughton.” The relationship which he bore to the Alexander of our list remains to be determined. At Church End, page 5, Mr. Richard Troughton actually appears—possibly identical with the “beeloved Sonne” and versifier. Page 4 deals with Bullington End; there are 24 names upon it beginning with Sir Guye ffoster and Mr. Lane, both names are associated with the manor of Hanslope some fifty years after our list was written. Mr. Lawrence ffoster figures with 44 others in the Church

³ Wm. Eagle: “A Treatise on the Law of Tithes,” 1830; vol. 1, p.p. 412—416.

End list, page 5, and on the same page is the name Benett Byrchmore, probably related to the Mary, daughter of Thomas Birchmore, to whom there is a quaint little brass in the church with the effigy of a child in Elizabethan dress. She died in 1602, aged 6. Page 6 is also devoted to Church End, with 29 more names, and page 7 sets out 41 names in Long Street. We meet with Thomas Byrchmore^e and Thomas and Christopher Foster again on page 8, where there are 19 names recorded at "Tottall End."⁴ Page 9 gives us 11 names at Herngate Ende;⁵ page 10 contains 16 names at Pinden End, and page 11 has 27 names upon it for "Castle Thrupp." These, however, represent "Lammas Tythinges," and there are therefore no offerings.

Besides the names already quoted those which recur most frequently are: Travell (Thomas, Christopher, Richard, and William), Quaie (Thomas, Richard, and Edward), Wharton (Henry, William, and Thomas), Parrott (Bartholomew, John, Richard, and Robert), Sibthorpe (John and Robert).⁶ The spelling is very erratic, as "Raulens" for Rawlings, Lasee for Lacey, Asabee for Ashby, and so on.

The most interesting part of the list deals with the small tithes, however, and it will be useful to furnish some examples of the entries before seeking to explain them.

P. 3. Thomas Travell senior g. 2 off. 6 kine 1 heckfor 1 barrig, 2 sheep	xxiii ^d
Thomas Gardner g. 3 offer 1 heckfor 4 sheep 3 lambs	ix ^d
4. Mark Travell g. 2 offer 4 kine ii heck- fors 3 barrige 1 colt	ii ^s 4 ^d ob
Thomas Clarige 2 offerings 1 cow b. 1 heckfor	viii ^d

⁴ This represents modern pronunciation better than the present-day spelling Tathall End.

⁵ Now Hungate End.

⁶ There is a second Robert Sibthorpe, distinguished by the word "Garder"—? Gardener.

Robert Parrott g. 3 offer. 6 kine 2 barrige	ii ^s iii ^d
P. 5. Robert Hollis g. 2 offer for 7 sheep sold, 3 lambs	viii ^d
Thom. Reeve 2 offer 1 cow 1 ewe 1 lambe	vi ^d
6. Thom. Jenkins g. 2 offer, 1 barrige cow	v ^d ob.
7. Robert Benett g. 2 offer, 2 kine, 5 sheepe, 1 lambe	x ^d
Thomas Mablee g. 2 offer 2 kine 1 heckfor barrige, 1 colt	xiii ^d
8. Thomas Pettie g. 2 offer 2 kine 6 sheep 1 barrige 1 lamb	xv ^d
9. Henrie Tompson 4 offer. 5 heckfor 1 cow ii barrige 1 calf	ii ^s ii ^d
10. Henrie Scriven 2 offer 4 kine 1 bought	xvi ^d ob.
11. William Johnson 2 kine, for sheep sold and 3 lambs	xv ^d
Thom. Harbar 2 kine 1 barrige, for sheep sold, 5 lambs	xiii ^d
Robert Haward for sheep sold and 2 lambs	v ^d
William Stoppe 3 kine and 1 lambe 6 piggs	ix ^d ob.
John Banks for his mill tythe	x ^s

The spelling "heckfor" for "heifer" was usual in the seventeenth century; the O.E.D. gives 40 different forms of the word from "heahfore," "heyghfer," "heffeker," to "heckfer." The word "barrige" has so far defied research, not figuring in Wright's Dialect Dictionary or in similar works of reference, nor is it known to men who have spent the whole of a long life in Hanslope and are living there to-day. The meaning, as will presently be seen, required is "barren," and as the quotation from page 6 appears to use it adject-

tively in conjunction with the word "cow," it must be assumed to have that connotation.⁷

In order to understand the payment of small tithes it is necessary to have a very complete idea of the theory of tithes, which not only exacted a tenth of the annual increase of flocks and herds, but also required payment for "agistment,"⁸ signifying the feeding or depasturing of cattle. It is explained, with his customary clearness, by William Eagle:⁹ "Whatever species of tithable produce is severed from the ground by the mouth of an animal comes under the denomination of agistment. Tithe of agistment is payable of common right for all barren and unprofitable cattle; but no tithe is by law payable for the feeding or depasturing of profitable cattle, as milch cows and sheep; for these are animalia fructuosa, which render tithes of calves and milk, and wool and lambs, to the parson." The essence of the matter is that, though tithe should be paid, it should be paid only once, so that horses or oxen used in husbandry were exempt, because their labour produced something which could be tithed; and "no tithes are payable for the feeding of young cattle, reared by the occupier for the plough or cart, or for the pail, to be used in the same parish. For the exemption is founded upon the indirect or collateral benefit which the parson receives from their labour in the production of other tithable matters." On the other hand, if these young animals were sold before they become profitable, they paid tithe for their depasturage. This may explain the "heckfors" in our lists. Dry cows ranked with barren and unprofitable cattle, and therefore paid tithe for their keep. The numerous payments for kine

⁷ Eagle, *op. cit.* vol 1, p. 345, says that "barren milch-cows or heifers, that is to say, missing or not having a calf within the year, are sometimes termed farr, or farrow, or veere cows."

⁸ This is derived from Old French "à + gister," meaning to lodge. The present writer used often to see the word "agistment" used in advertising the sale of grass-keep; this was in North Northamptonshire, where the word was pronounced "joist," the prefix "a" being silent.

⁹ "A Treatise on the Law of Tithes," 1830. Vol. 1, p.p. 288-317.

in our Hanslope lists are probably moduses in lieu of tithe milk, which were, says Eagle, "perhaps more numerous than any other class of customary payments." Cows which were kept for milking and became dry through accident, or in the ordinary course before their usual time of calving, were exempt; but those which were sold dry, or husbandry oxen which were grazed and fattened for sale, paid tithe for their keep from the time they became dry or were withdrawn from the cart and the plough.

When we come to sheep we find that they were tithed from shearing-time in one year to shearing-time in the next, and "the payment of tithes of wool and lamb has merely a retrospective operation, and covers the pasturage of the sheep up to the time of their lambing or shearing only, and that only within the same parish." Consequently sheep purchased out of another parish after shearing-time paid a tithe of agistment in the parish to which they were sold, even though they had already paid a tithe of wool or lamb in the parish of their origin; while those sold before lambing or shearing-time would naturally be tithable on that account. Then it was held that the tithe of agistment was payable by the occupier of the ground, consequently he paid for the grazing upon it, whether by his own cattle or by the cattle of strangers who paid for the accommodation. Since the quantity of grass eaten could not be ascertained moduses were payable according to "the numbers, species, and quality of the cattle depastured." The moduses payable by custom varied largely, and Eagle cites¹⁰ a large quantity of case-law in support of moduses for the tithe of agistment, some agreeing with our Hanslope figures,—although they themselves appear to vary. As regards sheep, a modus was due for those sold or sent out of the parish before shearing-time "as an average or rateable payment for the tithe of the wool carried out upon their backs." When it came to young animals,—lambs, calves, colts, and pigs,—the complications were endless owing to the

¹⁰ Op. cit. 1 p. 317—319.

very different numbers of these animals which could be born in one year, and the certainty that fractions would result. So long as tithes were paid in kind this was got over by "carrying the computation over to the next year," or by handing over every seventh, and receiving a money payment back from the parson graduated according to the degree in which the total tithable number fell short of ten. Then there was the further complication afforded by the varying merits of the young animals. Should the parson choose the best? Sometimes parson and tithe-payer chose alternately. It is obvious that moduses in all these cases must have been very welcome; and threepence for a lamb was held not to be "rank" ¹¹ (*i.e.* too high), though apparently more than was paid at Hanslope. The tithe of calves varied according as they were reared or sold, when a tenth of the sale price was sometimes exacted. Generally speaking, the moduses for all these creatures at Hanslope appears to be low enough to avoid all charge of "rankness." What we need is a comparison with some neighbouring parish, and, to a small extent, we had this in a former volume of the RECORDS, ¹² where some of the "Privytithes" of Wavendon are given "as they were received by Mr. Charles Stafford, Rector;" those include "the milk of a barren cow kept on the common 2½d." (the phrase "milk of a barren cow" is obscure); for a heifer kept on the common 1½d. was payable, and 4d. per score per month was payable for sheep brought into the parish in the spring.

The Castlethorpe entry for mill-tithe is interesting because this was held to be a personal tithe, which could be levied, by the statute *Articuli Cleri*, upon all grist-mills erected since 1315. It was based upon the annual value of the work performed by such a miller, so that he had to declare the quantity he had ground, not the price at which he may have sold meal. ¹³

¹¹ *Op. cit.* p. 367.

¹² Vol. IX., p. 47. Stafford was rector during the last quarter of the Seventeenth century.

¹³ *Eagle: op. cit.* vol. 1, p. 402.

In 1788 an Inclosure Award was made¹⁴ which assigned to the Mayor and Corporation of Lincoln (the lay impropiators and owners of the advowson of Hanslope) certain lands equal in value to one-sixth of all the residue of the open fields that had been in tillage within eleven years of the passing of the Act, and one-ninth of the residue "in full lieu recompense satisfaction and compensation of and for all great and small tythes moduses payments and compositions." Hanslope Park and Bosenham Field were excepted from that Act and continued to pay tithe until a further Act was obtained in 1803 (43 Geo. III., Cap. 47).

¹⁴ Under the Act 18 Geo. III. Cap. 76.