

THREE DOCUMENTS CONCERNING THE CONSTABLES
OF NEWTON WITH SCALES, 1687-90.

Contributed by G. H. Millner.

THE following documents, illustrative of the office of petty constable in the seventeenth century, are now in the possession of the Trustees of John Hornby's Charity, Newton with Scales, Lancashire. The custom of selection here was by house-row, as in the case of Peter Harrison in 1661.¹ Although a tradesman living in Preston, Harrison was ordered by Quarter Sessions to discharge the obligation of constableness incumbent upon him as owner of a tenement in Newton. He doubtless paid a substitute to serve in his stead: this practice certainly obtained from 1708 onward, when the same man officiated for more than one year.

The onerous duties of the office, coupled with the practice of annual service without remuneration, sufficiently explain the need for the detailed instructions which appear below.

Oath Certificate, 1687.

Lancr.

Wee the Kings Majties Justices of the Peace & Quorum for the said County doe hereby certify that James Davy of Newton cum Scales came before us this present day and tooke the oath of a Constable to serve for the said Township this next ensuinge yeare.

Witness our hands the day and yeare above said.

'Ch [.....] Rd. Longworth. H. Rigby.

April the 28th, 1687.

Inspection of Weights and Measures, 1689-90.

To the Constable or Head-boroughs of Newton cum Scales.

By virtue of Authority to me given by Their Majesties Letters Patent under the Seal of his County Palatine and Dutchey of Lancaster: These are to will and require you, upon the sight hereof, to summon *fower* honest, lawfull and discreet *men* within your Liberty to be and appear before me or my lawfull deputy *at the house of Henery Hall in Preston* by eight of the *clock in the morning on Friday, the 27th of this instant March* Then and there to Inquire and Present upon Oath, as on Their Majesties behalf shall be required, and in the meantime, that you, together with the *fower*

¹ *The Harrisons of Newton and Bankfield.*

men so summon'd by you as aforesaid, do personally repair to the several Houses and shops of all Vinteners, Inn-holders, Ale-house-keepers, Brewers, Bakers, Millers, Mercers, Grossers, Drapers, Milliders, Butchers, Chandlers, Smiths, Weavers, Tailors, Naylor, Glovers, Clothiers, Cloth-workers, Fullers, Maulsters, Swalers, Badgers, Farmers of Husbandry, Buyers and Sellers of Wool, Cheese or Butter, and generally of all Artificers and Tradesmen, or of any private Housholders whatsoever within your Liberty, and then and there upon your own views, take an account in writing of all Corn-measures, Water-measures, and Land-measures, Yards, Ells, and Weights, of whatever content soever they be of, Small and Great, kept or used by any Person or Persons as aforesaid, Sealed or not Sealed, and that you the said Constable or Head-boroughs do give particular warning to all and every the person and persons respectively, that they bring their said Weights and Measures, with beams and Balances at the Day and Place aforesaid, to be duly examined by their Majesties Standard, certified to me, under the Seal of the Exchequer, according to the form of the Statute in that case provided; and that you then and there, return under your Hand, fairly written in Paper, the Account of all Measures, and Weights taken by you as aforesaid, with the Names, Surnames, and Additions of all and every Person or Persons respectively, that keep or use such Weights of Measures, return'd by you as aforesaid, so that Their Majesties service herein may not by your neglect be obstructed and hindered: and have you then and there this Precept. Hereof fail you not, as you will answer the Contempt at your Peril.

Dated 14th day of March in the second year of their Majesties Reign that now is &c. 1689.

JOHN IBBETSON.

Clerk of the Market for the
County Aforesaid.

Articles of Presentment, 1690.

1. What felonies hath been don within your Townshipp since Last assizes, against whom and at what Time and whereof and at what pursuite hath been maid for the felonies and in whom default of pursuite of felonies hath been.
2. What vagrant and Suspected persons have been Apprehended within your Townshipp and what hath been don with them and in whose default have any such persons escaped from Apprehension, and how the watch and ward have been kept within your Townshipp accordinge to the Statute.
3. What Recusants are within your Townshipp and come not to the Church according to the Law.
4. What decays of Houses and Husbandrie that have 20 acres of Land or upwards, when decayed and by whom.
5. What Grounds be in your Townshipp which have Ordinarily been

- tilled and since for 12 years have been Turned from Tillag, and what Kind and by whom and what is there names.
6. What Ale Houses be in your Townshipp and what are there names that keep them, how many Licenced and by whom, How many unlicenced and what are there names.
 7. Whither such Ale Houses that Are Licenced do observe the Articles Escribed them or not.
 8. What vagabonds have been taken up and punished within your Townshipp.
 9. What forestallers regretters or Ingrossers be in your Townshipp, what there names are and when put in use.
 10. Wither the Impotent poore have been provided for soe that no one be suffered abroode out of there Townshipp.
 11. What Maltmakers be in your Townshipp that hath malte to sell and not of their owne grooth, Tool Tith or Rent Corne not being Licenced.
 12. Whither the Highways be Amended or not, and in whose default they are not Amended.

These are in his Majesties Name to Charge and Comend you that you make True presentments according to the foresd. Articles and to deliver the same to us or the one of us faire written in paiper at the House of Thomas Jagers in Hambleton on fryday the 28th day of this Instant March by 10 of the Clocke in the forenoone : hereof faile not as you will answer the Contrary at your perills.

Given under our hands the 21 day of March annoque domoni (*sic*), 1689.

JA : CARTER
JO : CHARNLEY } High Constables.

To the Constables of the
Townshipp of Newton and Scales.