

THE BURIAL LIST OF THE ORMSKIRK CLERGY AND MINISTERS.

By James Dixon, F.R.H.S.

(READ 8TH FEBRUARY, 1877.)

IN offering the following list,—taken from the parish registers, and extending over three hundred years,—it may be well to state that it includes the names of many others besides the parochial clergy: as for instance those of the chantry priests located about, who happened to end their days in and around Ormskirk after the suppression of monasteries and chantries, at the time of the Reformation. Where possible to distinguish with certainty, notes are given, by way of needful explanation.

Of those connected with the parish church itself, there is a succession of vicars who held the office of “king’s preacher” for the county palatine. There were four such in Lancashire, and they owed their existence to an order of Queen Elizabeth, which provided for each an annual stipend of £50, with power to preach in any part of the county where no adequate ministry was in existence. But the emoluments of the office have been alienated by a former Government, and the last stipendiary representative of it was the late Dr. Smith, head master of the Manchester Free Grammar School.

For a long period, at any rate, the office was not held as a sinecure, neither was it given as a simple reward of merit, but to add to the income of some poorly endowed benefice; and for the discharge of a good deal of laborious duty, at a time when the country was thinly populated, roads were bad, and the bulk of the people were wretchedly poor. To many who may meet with the title casually now, the idea conveyed

by it is, that it represented one of high standing in the eyes of the Court, and meant a well-paid office of dignity.

There was also, now and then, a "king's preacher" stationed at Ormskirk, who does not appear to have held any other preferment. Of this class we find John Lewis, in 1624, and Bartholomew Cade, in 1626. And it is not improbable that from this circumstance we find mention in the registers of the "king's chancel," unless it be from an attendance at service of Henry VII, during his visit to Lathom in 1495; for the seat of the lord of the manor was formerly in that part of the church, being westward of the now removed chancel screen. Both of these were also governors of the Free Grammar School, it being provided in the orders of constitution, that there should be three governors *ex officio*, namely, the Earl of Derby, the Vicar of Ormskirk, and the "King's Majesty's Preacher there." The other governors are elected by the body, each new one being chosen from the township where the last resided.

During the vicariate of Nathaniel Heywood, the annuity of £50 was surreptitiously obtained by his wealthy neighbour, Mr. Stanninghaugh, of Aughton, but afterwards regained.

John Lewis was married, and had children at Ormskirk, and there are reasons for believing that he was the ancestor of T. D. ("Dandy") Lewis, and William Thomas ("Gentleman") Lewis, the birth of the latter being fixed at Ormskirk, in 1748; but I have searched there, without success, for some notice. It is, however, so stated on an engraved print of him.

The registers of Ormskirk Church, from which the following extracts are taken, date from the first year of the reign of the queen before mentioned, and are therefore among the earliest kept, and not only so, they have been preserved till now with scrupulous care. And the writing itself is, in some periods, of superior excellence.

During the latter half of the 16th century, we find the old

ecclesiastical prefix "Sir," in general use, though the names found during that period are of those who belonged to the pre-Reformation era. Occasionally we have the title of "parson," and not till long after, that of "reverend."

It is a somewhat singular circumstance, though not an unnatural one, that the first ecclesiastic registered,—in that of burials, and one of the earliest in the book,—should be the expelled prior of Burscough; followed by several of the local monastic and chantry priests. And the number of such burials, in so short a time as is shewn, favours the supposition that they were either far advanced in years, or that their griefs hastened their deaths. From hard fare to absolute poverty was a trying visitation, and doubtless death was welcome to all.

1558, May 2. Sir Hugh Huckesley pryor of Burscough, in Eccli^a.

1558, May 3. Sir Will^m Burscough Clerke bur^d in Eccli^a.

1558, July 30. Sir John Dolland Preeste in Eccli^a.

1558, August 14. Sir John Pursivall in Eccli^a.

„ „ 21. Sir Gilb. Shurlicars p^t in Eccli^a.

The name of Shurlicar, now corrupted to Shorlicar and Shollicar, is of very frequent occurrence, as also once in the parish of North Meols.

1559, Januarii 10. S^r George Parker Preest in Ecc.
One of the chantry priests of Rufford church.

1562, October 16. S^r John Mouldrie parson of Eccleston.

This was John Modye or Moodye, who was priest, cantarist, and almoner of the hospital of St. John (now known as Lathom Chapel) within Lathom Park, prior to the suppression of the chantry altars. Having renounced the Romish and embraced the Protestant faith, he became rector of Eccleston, in the year 1546, on the promotion of Dr. Richard Layton to be Dean and Canon Residentiary of York.

1562, December 25. S^r Will^m Aspinwall.

The inventory of Sir Wm. Aspinwall, from Rev. G. J. Piccope's "Lancashire and Cheshire Wills," (Cheth. Society,) may be interesting here.

The Inventorie of all soch goodes w^{ch} did belonge and appartaine to Syr Will^m Asspinwall, pst and Chanon of the late dissolved Monasterie of Burscoe, prayسد and cessed by Richard Lathome, Thomas Morcroft, Lawrence Gaskene, and John Tasker, the xxviiith day of December Anno Dⁿⁱ 1562. Item. his bedde and all thinges therto appartayning and belonging xxx^s; one pair of beddestocks, iij^s iij^d; his apparell aswel gownes as all other thinges xl^s; one cupborde v^s; iij chayres and iij quishones* ij^s; iij Colfers vj^s viij^d; in bookes ij^s; one brasse chaundler x^d.

1566, ffebruarie 4. S^r Denyze Stanleze p^t.

In all likelihood Dennis was the adopted saint of this ecclesiastic, as it agrees with the practice of the Catholic priesthood, and the name does not sound as of the Stanley family. He was one of the chantry priests.

1572, June 1. Ellis Ambrose, late Vicar of Or^k in Eccli^a.

Ellis Ambrose succeeded Henry Hill in the vicarage, sometime after the year 1505, but the cause of the vacancy or when it occurred is uncertain.

1576, ffebruarie 1. S^r John Rainforth Prista in Eccli^a.

1612, ffebruarie 7. Richard Ambrose, Clarke, Vicar of Ormsk. bur. in the high chancell.

The "high chancell," frequently the place of burial of the deceased ecclesiastics here, is that part of the double chancel lying nearest the high altar of the past, or the sanctuary, and is co-extensive with the Derby Chapel. It was formerly separated by a screen, which would share the fate of many other things in the Civil War period, if not removed. The eagle lectern now used in this chapel was found in a garret of

* I have frequently heard a cushion called a "quishone" in the districts between Ormskirk and North Meols. One tradesman in Ormskirk uses the word to this day.

Lathom House some years ago, and it likewise might have been carried from Ormskirk Church with the same object. They would hardly be likely to be found in the small chapel in the catholic times.

1628, Aprill 25. Henry Ambrose Vicar bur. in the high chancell.

1637, July 29. John Bragge Minister bur. in the high chancell.

John Bragge was master of the Free Grammar School, founded in 1614, the Rev. William Knowles then being vicar and king's preacher. John Chorley, mayor of Liverpool (1678), was master of this school in 1654. Its situation from 1614 to 1850, was on the north side of the church, in the churchyard.

1642, August 2. Thomas Allen Minister bur. in the high chancell.

1643, November 25. Peter Brooks Minister bur. in the high chancell.

1643, December 23. John Broxop Clerke and Vicar of this Church bur. in y^e high chancell.

John Broxop was a king's preacher, as well as vicar.

From 1644 to 1653 there were no registers kept, owing to the unsettled state of the nation.

1658, July 2. Mr. John Lappage of Orm^{ke} Chaplayne at Lathom bur. in my Lord of Derby's chancell.

In the absence of a curate, and when the vicar, as king's preacher, was on a preaching tour, the chaplain of Lathom seems to have officiated on week-days, on occasions; and there seems to have been at one time a tacit understanding that such chaplain should assist at the parish church, on great festivals and at other special times. When the Grammar School master happened to be a cleric, he too, owing to the contiguity of the school, was often found conveniently near.

1670, March 25. Jos. Thompson de Orm. cler. sep. in can.

1677, December 18. Nathaniel Heywood de Orms. in canc.

Of Mr. Nathaniel Heywood, the ejected vicar of 1662, it would be futile to attempt to do justice here by any biographical notice. The events of his whole life, as well as his special ministry at Ormskirk, both as vicar and king's preacher; and after his ejection, both as a licensed public and a private preacher, furnish material for a volume of a respectable size; and this may be undertaken some day, as it deserves to be. Mr. J. P. Heywood, head of the Liverpool banking firm, is his lineal descendant; and in memory of this worthy ancestor, he placed a costly new east window, the subject of which is, "The Ascension of Our Lord to Heaven," in the chancel of Ormskirk Church, in 1859. The legend at the base of the window tells in one line the summarized story of Nathaniel Heywood becoming vicar, his ejection, and time and place of burial, agreeably with the record in the register. There is a good account of him in the first of five volumes of his ejected brother Oliver's life and collected works, published in 1827. Mr. Picton, in his *Memorials of Liverpool*, gives some account of the family. It is not a small thing for the parish of Ormskirk to possess a memorial of such a man in the ministry as Mr. Heywood undoubtedly was, and no less pleasing at this time of our history to be able to learn with what an affectionate interest he looked upon the "poor" but "docile" people, as he termed those for whom he laboured, against most surprising difficulties, both "in season and out of season." The labours of Nathaniel Heywood for Ormskirk, are enough to render the place unmistakeably dear to all sincere christians; and his record is above.

Mr. Heywood's successor, John Ashworth, seems to have recovered the king's preachership to Ormskirk, but he resigned the living, and was followed by the Rev. Zachary Taylor, also king's preacher. He likewise resigned. It is worthy of note here, however, that this zealous man was not only intent

on the extermination of "witchcraft," but was hostile to dissent, especially to Quakerism; for we find him putting on record in the Grammar School minute-book a protest, "for the clearing of his conscience," against "neglect of "catechizing, to the spread of Quakerism, now too much "increased." At this time Quakerism certainly did flourish around, especially in the township of Bickerstaffe, where the Friends had both a "meeting house" and a burial ground: the former demolished, but the latter known to this day as the "Grave Yort." An entry in the registers relates to its use thus—

1668, February 3. Oliver Atherton de Bickursteth Bur. in his owne yeard.

It was, doubtless, due to Lady Stanley, the special friend of Nathaniel Heywood, that the Quakers had so much success in Bickerstaffe; yet they were sometimes maltreated by "people of the baser sort." This lady's daughter, Barbara, became the wife of Zachary Taylor. She was buried at Ormskirk, 30th Sept., 1689.

1678, March 21. D^s Christopher Bradshaw de Scaris.

The family of Scarisbrick, Scarisbrick Hall, maintained a priest within the hall for several centuries, and till the erection of the chapel for the use of the tenantry, at Bescar, on the north side of the park. To his burial in the grave-yard around this chapel, the late Charles Scarisbrick, Esq., was carried from the hall in a direct line, walls and fences being levelled to form a roadway for the occasion.

1679, December 18. Thomas Hodson Clerk Can.

Mr. Hodson, though the fact is not stated here, was curate to the Rev. John Ashworth, who would find it necessary to have one, notwithstanding that Mr. Heywood was in the parish doing much work in visiting till the time of his death; for Mr. Ashworth, being Master of Merchant Taylors' School at Crosby, spent only his Sundays in Ormskirk. The

particulars of Mr. Hodson's engagement I find in the Churchwardens' accounts, and Mr. Ashworth appears to have had two in succession:—

		£	s.	d.
1677, August.	Spent on Mr. Hodson at twice when he preachd at Ormsk.....	00	02	0
„ September	Spent for wyne on the Com- munion Day	00	04	02
	Spent on Mr. Vicar Mr. Hodson and our selves the same day.....	00	07	06
	Spent on Mr. Ashworth in consulting about a curate	00	01	04
	Spent on Mr. Bardsley and others in consulting about his goeing	00	01	03
„ October.	Spent on Mr. Vicar & Mr. Hodson when we agreed with Mr. Hodson to stay..	00	04	04
	Spent on Mr. Vicar and Mr. Bardsley when wee parted with Mr. Bardsley	00	01	06
1718, May 6.	The Rev ^d Archippus Kippax Vicar of Ormskirk.			

Archippus Kippax, both vicar and king's preacher, came to Ormskirk in 1693. He was sometime Archdeacon of the Isle of Man, during Bishop Wilson's episcopate. Keble mentions him in his "Life of Bishop Wilson." According to his monumental inscription, on the north wall of the chancel, he was a man of superior attainments and great amiability of temper. He left a family at Ormskirk, and his lineal descendants acquired property in the neighbourhood. His granddaughter, Miss Elizabeth Kippax, left sundry legacies to the poor of the parish, and the late Miles Barton, cotton broker, of Liverpool, who was a relative of the family, was executor under her will. She also left a freehold cottage to the sexton, and an annuity of two pounds for the care of

the monument of her grandfather; but the latter bequest never was invested, and is therefore lost.

1722, February 23. The Rev^d George Hardy, Curate of Ormskirk.

This is the first direct information in the register of the existence of a recognised curate, though there were others before him, as I have shewn.

1727, August 16. The Rev^d Mr. Chr: Gibson, Vic: of Ormskirk & King's Preacher.

Mr. Gibson lies beneath a much dilapidated tomb in the churchyard, on the north side of the vestry. He appears to have taken a warm interest in the management of the Free Grammar School.

1733, February 9. The Rev^d W^m Dewhurst A.B. Curate of Douglas Chapel——Orms.

Douglas Chapel lies close to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the river Douglas, about a mile from Newburgh, on the way to Wigan. It was originally a cell under the priory of Upholland, and is an interesting relic of the past. A new church on the slope of Parbold Hill has superseded its use as a place of public worship. Before the erection of Newburgh Church, a quarter of a century back, though not in the parish of Ormskirk, the people of the hamlet of Newburgh regarded it as their rightful place of worship, Ormskirk Church being fully five miles distant. The initials of an academic degree appear here for the first time. This ancient chapel, familiarly called "the Duggas" by the rustics about, seems to have been closely associated with the Bridgeman family in the 17th century; and from a stained glass inscription in one of the windows, Dr. Bridgeman, Bishop of Chester, appears to have been a benefactor thereto. An oak pulpit of this period, richly carved, and for some time bedaubed with filthy paint, stands, or stood, on the north side of the building. It stood, when I saw it, on an octagonal block of free stone, as did also the timber shafts supporting the roof,

in the same way that the roof of the Burscough Priory Granary, better known as the Tithe-barn, was upheld, before that bit of lingering antiquity was demolished but a few years since.

1735, August 8. The Rev. Christopher Sudell, Clerk, Prebendary of Chester, Rector of Trinity there, and of North Meols in the county of Lancaster.

Almost as great a pluralist as Dr. John Nutter, or Nuttall, of Sefton, Queen Elizabeth's "Golden Ass," who was at once rector of Sefton, of Aughton, Walton-on-the-Hill, Bebington, Barrow, and Sub-dean of Chester.

Christopher Sudell lies entombed in the little chapel of the Stanleys of Cross Hall, to whom he was allied by marriage of his daughter Jane to Charles Stanley, Esq., the head of the Cross Hall branch of the Stanleys at that period, and brother of Dr. Thomas Stanley, Rector of Winwick. The chapel here named is formed by the splayed window recess on the south side of the tower, being of considerable width. A tasteful mural tablet, as a memorial of Mr. Sudell, and recording his beneficed position, is affixed to one splay, while another in memory of Mr. Stanley and his wife Jane occupies the opposite one.

1742, Nov^r 17. The rev : Alex^r Wright Ormsk^k.

1765, June 18. Mr. Benjamin Sandford, Dissenting Minister——Orms.

1777, July 5. The Rev^d Mr. Leyland Curate of Ormskirk——Orms.

1778, June 10. Edward Scarisbrick, Priest——Scaris.

This would be a member of the family of Scarisbrick, Scarisbrick Hall, as most of the males are known to have joined some religious order.

1779, Dec. 31. Rev^d William Knowles Vicar of Ormskirk.

Mr. Knowles was the second king's preacher as well as second vicar of the same name. He must have been a man

of good means, as he was a considerable benefactor. Amongst the rest of his gifts are two silver communion flagons, and other plate containing a large weight of silver of a very superior quality. The whole of the Ormskirk Church plate is perhaps quite unequalled in the county. No clergyman or archæologist visiting Ormskirk Church ought to miss an inspection of it. The Rev. Wm. Knowles was the owner of acquired property in Ormskirk, both houses and land, which his descendants still hold. A large house in Burscough Street he built designedly for his wife after him, but she departed first to the eternal mansions above.

1781, Dec. 20. Mr. Henry Holland Dissenting Minister
 ———Orms.

Up to this time we must take for granted "minister" and "dissenting minister," unless otherwise specifically described, denote Presbyterian ministers, whose chapel was at the south end of Chapel Street, of which a portion yet stands as part of the garden wall of Chapel House, the doorway and windows being filled up with rubble. In 1783 a new chapel was erected behind the north side of Aughton Street.

1788, Sept^r 13. Mr. Bulmer Priest of the Papist Chapel
 in Ormskirk.

"F. Maurus Bulmer was the first priest fixed at Ormskirk
 "on the present mission coming there in 1732. He took a
 "lease of some ground and erected a house and chapel upon
 "it. (This house and chapel form the present presbytery.)
 "Some years later, when his landlord came to the determina-
 "tion of selling the land and tenement, he purchased it as a
 "permanent settlement for the Benedictines." This was
 followed by another chapel adjoining, in 1795. And in 1850
 the present detached handsome church was erected as suitable
 to the wants of a large Catholic congregation. It is dedicated
 to St. Anne.

1789, Oct^r 30. The Rev^d Samuel Smith Minister of Rufford Chap.

1791, Jan^y 23. The Rev^d John Hurst Priest from Scarisbrick Hall.

1800, Jan^y 13. Reverend George Crook, Priest of the Roman Chapel Aughton.

Mr. Crook was first assistant and then successor to Mr. Bulmer. The chapel, it should be stated, is just in the parish of Aughton.

1800, Nov^r 27. The Rev. Randal Andrews Vicar of Ormskirk.

1812, June 17. The Reverend James Stanley, Vicar of Ormskirk.

The Rev. James Stanley, who was of the Stanleys of Bickerstaffe, being brought up by Edward twelfth Earl of Derby, became Vicar of Ormskirk in 1800, and wore out his constitution by the age of forty-four with close application to the entire duties of the parish, which he even increased by adding services to the number of those he found observed by his predecessor.

1822. The Rev^d W. Naylor, Ormskirk, 28th Jan^y, 88 y^{rs} of age.

The Rev. William Naylor was incumbent of Altcar for a long series of years, and journeyed each Sunday from Ormskirk, a distance of eight miles, to conduct the service there. He was also master of the Grammar School sixty-five years, from 1756 to the time of his death. During his mastership the late Bishop Goss was educated there, as also was Dr. P. A. Nuttall, another Ormskirk boy, at the same time as Dr. Goss. Dr. Nuttall is known as the compiler of a "Standard Dictionary," and was the author of a "Classical and Archæological Dictionary," and translator of Juvenal's Satires and the works of Horace. In Bohn's edition of "Brand's Antiquities," is an article on "barring out" at

schools, by Dr. Nuttall, and is descriptive of a practice very common within the present century, adopted by the boys on special occasions when a holiday they wanted, and a holiday they would have.

1824. Peter Walkden Fogg, Presbutarian Minister, Ormskirk, 1st Oct^r, 59 y^{rs}. Buried at the Presbutarian Chapel.

The Foggs have long been connected with Ormskirk, not only in the Presbyterian interest, but also as an educational family. They were associated with the Aikins, Enfields, and Barbaulds; and with the founders of the Warrington Academy, hoped to have had it established at Cross Hall, near Ormskirk, but their wishes were strenuously opposed and defeated by Dr. Stanley. The Rev. Henry Fogg, son of the above, is minister of the same chapel now, but the congregation has dwindled down to about half a dozen persons—the Church, Congregationalism, and Wesleyanism having absorbed the remaining descendants of the old Presbyterians.

1845, Nov^r 28th. Joshua Thomas Horton. Aged 55.

The Rev. J. T. Horton was one of the Hortons of Chaderton, and came to Ormskirk from the curacy of Rochdale. He married Harriet, daughter of Sir T. D. Hesketh, Bart., of Rufford, by whom he left one son, Joshua Thomas Horton, Esq., of Howroyde, Yorkshire. He was a magistrate for the county, and a friend of the late Archdeacon Brooks. As a preacher and public speaker he stood in a high rank. And when the county constabulary was established here he protested against the innovation, speaking against it at the Sessions House, at Preston, for upwards of six hours, with powerful eloquence. He is still popularly remembered as the "Old Vicar."

1855, Dec^r 24. Charles Forshaw. Aged 62.

The Rev. C. Forshaw was master of the Free Grammar

School, from 1825 to 1856, being the last occupier of the original school building in the churchyard. He was also incumbent of Altcar, and held both offices at the time of his death.

1870, 21 May. Joseph Bush. Aged 57.

The Rev. J. Bush brings my list a few years beyond the 300, as named at the head of this paper, but my long personal association with him, both as vicar of the parish, from 1853, and as chaplain of the Workhouse, from 1857, and as a sincere friend in both places, forbids the omission of his name. While he acted as president of the Ormskirk Public Library, founded under the auspices of the present Earl of Derby, when Lord Stanley, in 1854, I was there, too, officially connected with him: and in all of these places he was ever seen as the scholar, the gentleman, and the christian.

He was some time curate of St. George's, Everton, and afterwards of Long Ashton, near Bristol. At the latter place he published a volume of Evangelical Sermons, and at Ormskirk, a small book of Devotional Poems, entitled *Lyra Sacra Privata*; also, *The Canticles, or the Song of Solomon*, a Metrical Paraphrase, dedicated to the Venerable Archdeacon Jones, of Liverpool. By his marriage with the daughter of the late Major Brooks, he became allied to the family of the late Archdeacon Brooks, brother of the major.

During the 16th and part of the 17th centuries, interments within the church were more numerous than in the churchyard, a circumstance sufficient to urge on the proposed restoration of this edifice, to secure the relaying of the floor, on sanitary grounds alone.
