

SOME INSTRUCTIONS TO THE PARISH CLERK
AT PRESTON BY
SIR HENRY HOGHTON, BART., 1758

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Walton, 17th Jany. 1758.

Mr. Barnes,

As our family has allways enter'd in a book (kept for that purpose) copys of all orders made by the Vestry, the same having been discontinued for some time, I got Mr. Cowburn to enter copys of them in my book from the Parish book kept by you, and as you have 20s. a year for keeping it, I'm surprized that it has been kept in such an irregular manner.

I observe that (until Mr. Thos. Starkie was mayor) the bills p[ai]d by the Parish have not been enter'd in the book, and even now, only the persons named and sums paid have been enter'd, but not what they were paid for doing and their receipts should be kept by you, if the Vestry have not order'd some other person to keep them, that the sums may not be again demanded.

And when any extraordinary thing is done, it should be particularly mention'd in the Order, and not only in general for necessary repairs and for Communion wine.

And when money is paid for the preceding year, if the payments exceed the money order'd, the overplus should be p[ai]d out of the next order, and if the payments amount to less, the succeeding Churchwardens should receive that money which remains—by virtue of the last order to account.

Formerly all Parish officers were enter'd in your book, but now only the Churchwardens, and its more regular to have the Churchwardens for the Lower End to be such as live in the Lower End, and not such as live in Preston, except they have estates in the Lower End, which I desire you to acquaint the 8 of the Lower End.

And as Notice is given in the church when there is to be a Parish meeting I observe that many of the orders to tax the Parish are only signed by 8 or 10 of the Vestry: I think no order is good to charge the Parish, unless signed by a majority of the 24, which I desire you to mention at the next Vestry.

When any of the 8 for the Lower End are named by our family, the appointment should be enter'd in the Parish book, as also when any have been removed and others chosen (of which there are some instances) or any alteration or new appointment of the 8 for the higher End, it should be enter'd in the Parish book.

I desire you to give Mr. Cowburn for me all my appointm[en]ts of the 8 for the Low[e]r End, since you came in Clerk, as also all the allowances I have given for the burying in my chancel—and when any Vestry orders are made, I expect copies to be sent to me, as also the names p[ai]d to, the sums and for what services, of such bills as are yearly p[ai]d by the Parish. I pay for Grim-sargh Demesne and my tenants for several townships in the Parish pay large sums yearly, 'tis reasonable I should know how the money is layd out.

You are appointed Clerk and Sexton: you are answerable for him. I'm told the sexton makes graves in the churchyard and Chancell close to the foundations, the paving stones tumble down and are carr[ie]d away and I hear either you or the sexton have sold them: by this practice the church and my chancel are undermin'd and is the sole occasion of the great charge the Parish must now be at in the repairing or rebuilding the Church. If the Graves are

not made at a proper distance from the foundations, you will very justly be blam'd, and I shall be call'd upon by the Parish to take proper notice of it. I hope the Vestry will make an order to oblige you that no graves are made (especially in the churchyard) but at a limited distance from the foundations of the church and chancel.

I choose to put this in writing rather than to send for you, least some of my directions should be forgot or not observed. I am

Your friend &c.

(Endorsed) H. Hoghton.
To Mr. Henry Barns, Clerk of Preston Parish.