

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE
APPOINTMENT OF A CHURCHWARDEN
AT LEYLAND 1714

The four documents printed below are among the Hoghton archives (Preston Church, DD. Ho. 101-104) at the Lancashire Record Office. I am indebted to Sir Cuthbert de Hoghton, Bart., for permission to transcribe and publish them.

1. *Letter from Sir Henry Hoghton to the Rev. Tho. Armetriding.*

Sr.,

I was surprised at yr. refusing Wm. Crooke who I had appointed Churchwarden being a right our family constantly enjoys. I hope you will upon enquiry find no reason to p[er]sist in the affair, but if it must be decided in a Judiciall method, it shall upon my p[ar]t be so amicable as to shew I am, Sr.
9th Ap[ri]l. 1714. Yr. Servt. H.H.

Notwithstanding, by one of the Canons ye choice of the Churchwardens &c. is to be by the Joynt consent of ye Minister and Parish[i]o[n]e[rs]: where custom has been otherway it has even been adjudged accordingly as I could give you several cases so that I wish you would rightly inform yourself before you give yourself and me the trouble of a suit, which if once begun, its not so soon ended. I am unwilling to have a dispute w[i]th a neighbour, but on ye oth[er] hand cant quit so ancient a right to our Family.
(Endorsed) To Mr. Armatriding, 9th Ap[ri]l, 1714.

2. *Letter from the Rev. Tho. Armetriding to Sir Henry Hoghton, bart.*

Sr.

My quiet & Peaceable behaviour in ye Parish for above 20 years will (I hope) be sufficient satisfaction to all persons yt I have no inclination to promote suits, much less to begin with so powerfull an adversary as y[ou]rself; Whoever inform'd you yt I absolutely refus'd Wm. Crook does me wrong. I only desir'd yt ye names of two Reputable P[er]sons might be added to his. I've done what I can (according to y[ou]r good advice) to inform myself rightly about ye election of Churchwardens, but cant find the least hint either in Sr. Simon Pegg, Godolphin, Nelson, Watson & several others yt ever any particular person of w[ha]t Quality soever claim'd such a Priviledg as you do in the choice of these officers: I could wish for the future we might have a Parish-meeting at Easter (as is usual in most Parishes) to choose ye C[hurch]wardens by ye consent of ye Minister & people as ye 89th Canon directs, or els yt ye names of three credible persons might be sent to me from every Quarter as has been ye custom in ye Parish. If ye contrary can be prov'd in any part of it, I'm ready to submit to the determination of Proper judges in ye affair & subscribe myself

Sr. Yr. most humble Servant,

Lealand. April ye 12th, 1714.

Tho. Armetriding.

(Endorsed) To Sr. Henry Hoghton, Baronet at Preston.

These.

(Paper seal)

3. *Letter from Sir Henry Hoghton to the Rev. Tho. Armetriding.*

Sr.

I am as averse to suits as you can be but I dont see how it can be avoided if you persist in refusing Wm. Crooke to be Ch[urch]warden, for I take it to be

a prejudice to my right to name any other p[er]son along w[ith] him as you desire, and therefore cant comply w[ith] it. I have ye priviledge in other places to apoint churchwardens, w[hi]ch was never oposed. As to this Parish there are six churchwardens, and the vicar is not at all concern'd in the chuseing of them. Doubtless there are hundreds of instances in ye kingdom of the same nature, and notwithstanding the Canons, that may be in favour of w[ha]t you offer, I doubt not but any civilian will (I presume) inform you, they have allways been over-ruled where Custom has been to the contrary, as I can fully prove in my case. I dont know w[ha]t I can add more, but that I wish this matter might be amicably settled.

Who am, Sr. yr. Servt.

H.H.

Ye 14th Appl. 1714.

(Endorsed) To Mr. Armetriding, 14th Apriill, 1714.

4. *Letter from Sir Henry Hoghton to the Rev. Tho. Armetriding.*

Sr.

To my great surprise I am told this morning that you have publicly [declared] Robt. Woodruffe Ch[urch]warden for ye Moore p[ar]t of Leyland Parish for this year, w[hi]ch you know is directly contrary to my appointment, Wm. Crooke beinge ye man I had sent you word I ordered to serve, and I will insist upon it for him to serve and no other. I wonder the more at what you have done, because you told Jno. Gerrard you would publish Wm. Crooke to be ch[urch]warden (if the Chancellor approved of him.)

To prevent misunderstanding I wish you would give me answer how this mishap hapened.

Wo am yr. Servt.

H.H.

8th May, 1714.

(Endorsed.) 8th May, 1714. To Mr. Armetriding.

GEO. C. MILLER