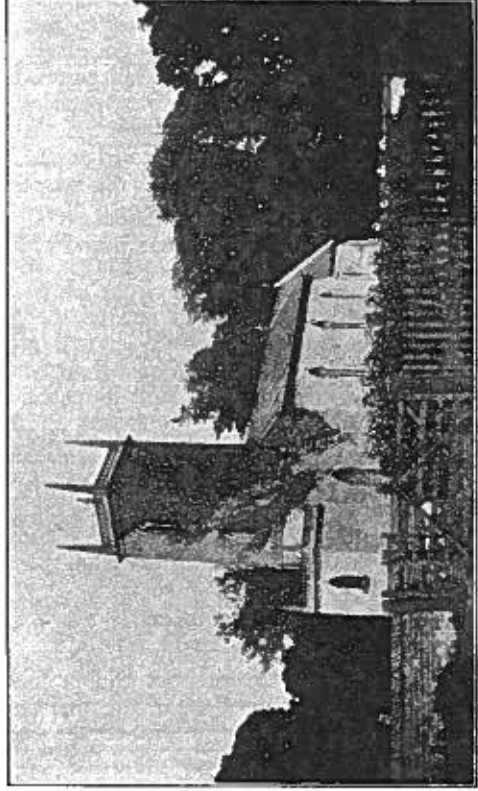


THE
CHURCH AND PARISH
OF
S. MARTIN, STUBTON

BY
THE REV. E. R. MILTON, M.A.
RECTOR.

1938.



STUBTON PARISH CHURCH.

THE CHURCH AND PARISH

OF

S. MARTIN, STUBTON.

THE PARISH.

Although the present Church of St. Martin is coeval with the nineteenth century, the village of Stubton is of Saxon origin and the parish a very ancient ecclesiastical unit. The Domesday Survey mentions "a priest there and a church" in 1086. The Taxation Roll of Pope Nicholas IV (1292) shows that the Rector—styled "Dñ Martini"—then had an interest in the Church at Westborough to the extent of half the value of that benefice. At the same time the incumbent there is stated to combine the priest's stipend with the vicarage⁽¹⁾. This reference seems to suggest that the Rector shared the emoluments of Westborough in virtue of his office and points to the possibility that originally St. Martin's was the mother Church and that the Church of Westborough was built at a time nearer the Norman Conquest when the newer Danish settlement had come to overshadow the Saxon as the administrative centre of the manor to which it gave its name and of which a considerable portion of Stubton formed a member. In that case the "porc' Dñi Martini" may have represented the Rector's traditional share of income from sources anciently comprised within the area of the mother parish.

St. Martin was a popular pre-Conquest dedication for churches (*e.g.*, St. Ninian's church at Whithorn was so named in the 5th century, and St. Martin, Canterbury) and it is likely that the first Saxon church in the village was a modest structure of wood; a building of stone following at a later date but still before the days of Norman influence.

Stubton is situated six miles south-east of Newark, some three miles off the Great North Road and just over the Lincolnshire border. The parish contains 1157 acres 1 rood 16 perches; it is bounded by the parishes of Fenton on the north, Brandon on the east, Dry Doddington on the south

(1) This "Vicar" need not have borne any relation to the "Dñ Martini": indeed, I think his "Rector" was a monastic institution to which half the benefice had been alienated.

and Claypole to the west. The population fluctuates round about 100 inhabitants.

THE OLD CHURCH.

The medieval Church and Churchyard occupied a site immediately opposite the present front of Stubton Hall and in dimensions and appearance was probably not unlike the neighbouring Church at Fenton. In the course of centuries it must have undergone many structural alterations and the best description we have of it suggests an appearance typical of the Decorated period in English Church architecture rather than of the Norman. In the Proceedings of the Architectural Society of the Diocese of Lincoln for 1871 it is described as having been—

"a small Church having a tower and crocketed spire,
said to resemble that of Claypole, but probably only
in miniature."

This account must be based upon information derived at second hand as the present Church was begun in 1799 and there could have been few in 1871 who remembered much of the former edifice. The only other evidence we have of its appearance consists in a tiny drawing on a parish map of 1788 where it is shown as having a chancel, nave and western tower surmounted by a spire. Apart from these references we know nothing about the old Church except that when inquisition was made into the state of the Churches in 1602 it was reported, among others, that "the churche & chauncell here are well repayred & kept decently." At the time of its demolition, however, it was said to be "very much ruined dilapidated and decayed." The only vestiges which survive consist of the two bells lodged in the tower of the new Church and a memorial stone of 1530 let into the wall of the vestry.

THE BELLS bear the following dates and legends :—

"God save our Kinge. 1616. G.L."

"Jhesus be our speed. 1618."

THE MEMORIAL STONE reads :—

Thomas Marsar hic rector
hoc opus fieri fecit Ao Dni
1530.

(Thomas Marsar the rector here caused this work to be done Anno Domini 1530).

This must be the stone referred to in Holles' "Notes on Lincolnshire Churches 1634-1642" as the only monument in Stubton Church but his version is so much at variance with the original both in form and substance that we must conclude either that he refers to another inscription now lost, or, that he got his information inaccurately from another source.

THE MODERN CHURCH.

The present Church, consisting of a chancel, nave, pinnacled tower and vestry, was built on a new site commonly known as Bemrose's Croft. It was begun in 1799 and consecrated on 4th June, 1800, by Bishop Tomline of Lincoln, at which time the nave, tower and vestry alone were completed. When Archdeacon Bonney visited the Church in 1848 he noted the "King's Arms in front of ye gallery" and the Commandments painted on either side of the (temporary) chancel. (2) These have since disappeared. The chancel was added in 1869 as a memorial to the late Rector, the Rev. W. S. Hampson, as recorded on the south wall. At the same time other improvements were carried out including the removal of the manor gallery from the west end and the insertion of the present nave windows in place of some others of plainer character. Even so the structure is lacking in artistic merit and stands in contrast with the picturesque traditions and associations of the village. It will be noticed that all the windows are carried out in the Decorated style of architecture. With the exception of two at the west end of the nave all are filled with stained glass as follows:—

East End—Scenes from the life of Nathaniel.

S. Chancel—The Good Shepherd; St. Catherine of Sienna.

S. Nave—Madonna and Child; The Light of the World. The Crucifixion, the two Marys and St. John.

N. Nave—Faith, Charity and Hope.

Except for the last these windows are of a memorial character.

The Faldstool was given in 1919 in memory of a former parishioner.

(2) Bonney's "Church Notes" ed. Rev. N. S. Harding, 1897. p. 274.

The organ, built by Cousans Sons and Co., of Lincoln, was presented in 1920 by the present Squire, Lieut.-Col. Edmund Royds, D.L., O.B.E., of Stubton Hall, and the existing gallery was built to contain it.

In 1936 the oil lamps, which many years ago displaced the original candles, were discarded in favour of the present system of electric light.

The conspicuous broken column resting upon a mound in the north-east corner of the Churchyard marks the grave of Sir Robert Heron, Bart., lord of the manor of Stubton between 1790 and 1854, and builder of the present Church. His successors, Mr. George Nevile (1854-1913) and Sir Ralph Wilmot, Bart. (1913-1918) are also interred in the Churchyard which contains the grave of Rector Stayner, the only incumbent of the new Church buried beneath its shade. On the north side under the chancel wall are two memorial stones of unusual pattern. They are cylindrical in form, 3 ft. 8 ins. in height and bear the dates 1801 and 1814.

THE PLATE.

The Communion Plate consists of five pieces:—

(1) A silver Chalice 6 ins. high, with diameter $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. at top.

(2) A silver paten cover, $4\frac{3}{8}$ ins. diameter.

They are of Elizabethan type and are known to have belonged to the Church in 1683. The Chalice is particularly worn and neither is ornamented.

(3) A silver salver inscribed on the under side as "The Gift of Thomas Lovett, A.M., 1773" measures 9 ins. across and is reputed to date from the end of the previous century. The donor was Rector of the parish 1719-1720. (See p. 14).

(4) There is a silver Flagon of modern design $10\frac{1}{2}$ ins. in height and

(5) A chalice spoon purchased in 1905.

Besides these pieces the Church possesses, in common with many others in the neighbourhood, a Pewter Flagon and Bowl dated 1820 and no doubt intended for Baptismal use.

THE REGISTERS.

The Parish Registers begin with the year 1577 but the earliest volume survives now only in four parchment leaves which were rescued from oblivion by the late Dr. J. J. Howard, Maltravers Herald Extraordinary, in 1883 and generously restored by him to the Church from which they had disappeared. These leaves measure $17\frac{1}{2}$ ins. x $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. and comprise Baptisms, Marriages and Burials from 1577 to 1595; Baptisms 1625—1628; Marriages 1625—1626; and Burials 1619—1626. On the second page occurs the following entry:—

“ This booke was exhibited at Lincoln the xviiijth of
“ October 1601 and beinge examined there wanteth 1558—
“ 1559 et 1560. Wch yeres are not to be founde in the
“ Registerie at Lincoln and therefore the book is pfected
“ for soe manie yeres as cann be founde viz: from the
“ yere 1561 untill this psent yere 1601. The cause whie
“ this booke is exhibited is for that the churchwardens
“ were soe warned at my Lord Bishoppes last visitacon.
JO: PREGION.”

Parish registers were first ordered to be kept in 1538 and similar Injunctions were issued at intervals until in 1597 Convocation took definite steps to have them observed. It was enacted that all existing registers on paper should be copied on to parchment as from the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558 at least and that henceforth annual transcripts should be made and forwarded to the Bishop's Registry. The book to which these sheets belonged must have been a copy such as was required. All the entries contained in them from 1577 to the first gap in 1595 are made in one hand and suggest it. But when the copy was made, probably just before 1601, the original book (which may have been older even than 1558) had become mutilated. The first three years of the reign were missing and were not recoverable through the Registry which could only supply copy entries as from 1561. The new book must have continued down to 1659, and was still in the possession of the Church in 1720 as the name of “ Jno. Moore son of J.M.” concludes the list of eight Rectors entered on the second page of the surviving sheets. On their recovery in 1883 twelve copies were printed at the private press of Mr. F. A. Crisp (*). One of these is preserved in the British

(*) This edition is described in Lincs. N. & Q. 1888-9 as “ the only Lincolnshire Parish Register yet printed.”

Museum Library and in February, 1935, Mr. A. H. M. Praed, of Ousden Hall, Suffolk, purchased “ No. 1 ” of these rare volumes and kindly presented it to the parish.

Volume II of the registers, also on parchment, measures 9 ins. x $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. and consists of twenty-four leaves with a detached slip some $5\frac{1}{2}$ ins. square bearing duplicate entries of the baptisms of John, Christopher and George, sons of the Rev. John Moore, Rector 1683-1719 and latterly Squire. It covers the years 1660 to 1705 for Baptisms, Marriages and Burials with one additional Baptism under date 1706.

Volume III is bound in leather and is $12\frac{1}{2}$ ins. x 6 ins. in size. It has twenty-four leaves, all, except the first, of parchment. On the inside of the front cover occurs a list of surplice fees and mortuaries. The book contains Baptisms 1706-1785: Marriages 1706-1757: and Burials 1707-1787. The last four marriage entries are duplicated in the book which follows.

Volume IV is written on paper bound in vellum $9\frac{1}{2}$ ins. x $7\frac{1}{4}$ ins. In it are entered Marriages from 1754 to 1812 in many instances preceded by banns.

Volume V is a leather-bound parchment volume $15\frac{1}{2}$ ins. x $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. containing Baptisms 1786-1812 and Burials 1788 to the same date.

Volume VI continues Marriages down to 1837 when the book now in commission was begun.

Volumes VII and VIII are the present registers for Baptisms and Burials, both begun in 1813.

All the marriage entries from 1562 to 1837 including such as were accessible through the Diocesan Registry were transcribed and published in Phillimore's Parish Register series in 1913.

Scattered throughout these registers there occur some interesting observations. Thus, appended to the baptismal entry of John Moore at the beginning of 1696, is a note—

“ Att that time no silver money would goe but by weight.”

On the last page of the same book—

“ George Moore Gent had A Leass of the Town upon
“ the 26 day of March 1702 the Leass is ffor one
“ and twenty yeares for ward.”

That recording the consecration of the new Church adds:—

“ being the Birth Day of our most gracious Sovereign
“ King George the Third the Church was called St.
“ George”

—a dedication the parishioners would not have and which has never been used. A footnote on the same page says that—

“ On the same day & in the same Church 484 Children
“ were confirmed.”

Considering the size of the building as it then was we can only conclude that they arrived in relays. A note on the fly-sheet in the same book observes that—

“ In the year 1800 Wheat sold so high as 8 Guineas per
“ Quarter & all other Corn proportionatly high. Meat of
“ all kinds was very dear insomuch that the Poor People
“ in many Places were very much distressed, & would
“ have famished but for the Liberality and Benevolence
“ of the Oplulent.”

OTHER RECORDS.

Other records survive which include :—

- The Parish Overseers Accounts { for the Poor, 1764-1836.
 for Highways, 1841-1855.
- The Minute Book of the Parish Vestry 1849-1922.
- Churchwardens' Accounts, 1800-1911.
- The Constable's Book, 1820-1839.

All these throw an interesting light upon the general life of the village in the course of these years. The last mentioned volume contains such items as—

- “ Gave a poor Man. 1s.”
- “ Paid for Sparrows During the Year. 15s. 2d.”
- “ Carpenter's Bill for New Stocks. £1 15. 3.”
- “ Blacksmith's Bill for iron work. 5. ”

In addition the Church Chest contains some old documents of the eighteenth century including one dated 1778 in the form of an agreement between the sixteen signatories to establish “A Society for the encouragement of Piety and Religion and for the improvement of themselves in Psalmody.” The members undertook, on pain of specified fines, to attend Divine Service regularly on Sunday in the parish Church and to attend choir practices twice a week in winter and once in summer.

Among the books there is a volume of 1633, being a reprint of Elizabethan Homilies, on the title-page of which have been written the following lines :—

- “ The mony is Trash, This Booke a Treasure.
- “ Read, Understand Remember, Practise,
- “ To that end, alwaye Pray.”

BENEFACTIONS.

The Church does not appear to have benefited by many bequests during the middle ages. Those on record are, for the most part, of a minor character and occur in conjunction with other Churches in the neighbourhood.

In 1530 William Cooke “of the parysh of Westburgh” bequeathed—

“ To the churches of Clapole and Hough, Benyngton,
“ Hougham, Stubton, to every (one) of them iiijd.”

In 1531-2 his widow (“wydoy”) Parnell Cooke devised—
“ To the Church of Stubton iiijd.”

In the same year “Richerd Alcoke of Clapole” left—
“ To Stubton churche iiijd.”

The largest benefaction was that which still goes by the name of Hargraves Charity. But of its founder no details have survived. It was probably established in the 16th or early part of the 17th century and in 1681 one of the Trustees was Stephen Moore, brother of the Rector. It was intended for the relief of the poor and the maintenance of the fabric of the Church, and long consisted in rents and land. Some years ago the charity estate was bought up by the present Squire, Lieut.-Col. E. Royds, and the income is still administered by Trustees under the Charity Commissioners.

SUMMARY HISTORY.

From late Saxon times a considerable part of the parish formed a “soke” of the manor of Westborough. Throughout the middle ages and until comparatively recent years this portion shared the fortunes of that manor in large degree. The history of its manorial associations is, however, so complex as to preclude any mention here ; suffice it to say that it has

been identified at various times with some of the most influential baronial families in the kingdom—the Bardulfs, de Everingham, Beaumonts, Constables, etc.

Towards the close of the 16th century (1574-5) a “manor of Stubton” independent of Westborough, was sold by the Thorold and Markham families and in 1633 became the property of the Moore family until 1748. Under two of these the parish experienced the rule of the “suarson”.

As we have already seen, Domesday mentions the existence of a priest and a Church here in 1086 ; and the Church was almost certainly not the original.

Prior to 1242-3 there were two medieties in the parish Church ; the advowson of one had been bestowed upon Shelford Priory in Nottinghamshire when that house was founded by the lords of the manor of Westborough, Ralph Hanselyn and Robert de Cauz, in the reign of Henry II (1154-1189). The medieties were merged just before the middle of the 13th century when the Priory seems to have assumed the entire advowson.

In 1262-3 a concord was registered between “ John prior of Schelford, querent, and Adam de Eueringham, deforciant,” whereby Adam acknowledged the claim of the Prior to (*inter alia*) “ 20s. of rent in Westburg, and the advowsons of the mediety of the church of the same vill” and “ the mediety of the church of Stubeton ” as “ those which the prior and his church have of the gift of Adam’s ancestors and by the confirmation of Adam.”

In the register of Bishop Welles (1209-1235) the Rector is described as the Dean of Stubeton and appears to exercise a Ruridecanal function.

At the end of the century the Taxation Roll of Pope Nicholas IV returns the annual value of the benefice as £16 3s. 4d. ; in addition the Rector had a moiety of £20 in the Church of Westborough (p. 4). Shelford Priory received a pension of 10s.

A Roll of the Bishop of Lincoln’s tenants in Newark belonging to the 15th century shows that the Rector then had a “selion” or parcel of land, together with a “tenement” (for

which he paid a rent of 2d.) in the neighbourhood of Beaumont Cross.(4). There is evidence of one Rector during this century serving a Chantry Chapel in Newark for a short time.

The Valor Ecclesiasticus 1535 returned the gross value of the benefice as £13 3s. 10d. from which deductions had to be made as follows :—Pension to Shelford Priory 10s., The Bishop of Lincoln for synodals and procurations 10s. 2d. leaving a net value of £12 3s. 8d. on which sum £1 4s. 4½d. was due to the crown on account of tenths.

About 1561 Thomas Plumtre was ejected from the living for not complying with the Act of Uniformity 1559, and his successor, John Potter, dignified with the title of “ Sir,” is typical of the new class of clergy then becoming common ; his previous calling is given as “serving man.” It is recorded that he was “ignorant of Latin ; well versed in sacred learning.”

About 1563 the Archdeacon’s Returns gave the population as twenty-two families in “ Stubtounne.”

In 1590 the Rector was required to furnish a piece of mail to the “ Subsidy of Armure” and in 1601 to contribute 5s. to the provision of light horse for Ireland.

In 1604 the churchwardens were cited to appear at the Visitation in Grantham to explain why they had omitted to present their minister who, it was alleged, did not wear the surplice or use the sign of the cross. They were excused on account of the Plague which was then prevailing in the district and the minister was subsequently required to certify that he complied with the requirements.

A census taken in 1676 of all inhabitants over 16 years of age gave the result as 62 Conformists, 0 Non-Conformists, 0 Papists.

The Rev. John Moore, 1683-1719 was also Squire of Stubton as from the death of his father in 1697. Naturally he resided at the Hall which is described in Visitation Returns as “his own house next to the rectory.” In 1720 his son, another John, combined the status of squire and parson until 1733.

(4) Brown’s “Hist. Newark.” Vol. I. p. 164.

RECTORS OF STUBTON.

In the intervening year the benefice was held by the Rev. Thomas Lovett, nephew of his predecessor. He was buried at Stubton in 1776 and by his Will left a sum of £2000 for the foundation of two exhibitions at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, for the sons of clergy proceeding to the University from King's School (the Grammar School), Grantham, and failing them from Oakham Grammar School.

Visitation Returns for the first quarter of the eighteenth century provide some interesting details concerning the parish and the services during these years. Thus we learn that the number of families decreased from 25 to 20 and that there were no dissenters among them. Services were held twice on Sunday and Communion services, after the custom of the age, only three times a year. Catechising of young people—"Children, Servants, and Apprentices"—went on during Lent and in the summer.

The old Church was demolished in 1799 and the present one consecrated on 4th June, 1800.

In 1855 the Churchyard was surrounded by the present wall and the new Rectory followed shortly after.

The Church was enlarged by the addition of a chancel, and other improvements were carried out, in 1869 ; since when no great alterations have been made.

<i>Rector.</i>	<i>Institution.</i>	<i>Patron.</i>
Colin, rector of one mediety, before	1242-3	
Geoffrey, rector of other mediety	before 1242-3	Shelford Priory.
Geoffrey, rector of united medieties	1242-3	—
Fulk of Lincoln	1249-50	Shelford Priory.
Jocelin of Rauceby	1266	" "
William de Vilers	1272	" "
Elias de Muschamp	1278-9	" "
Benedict of Halam (or Southwell)	1286	" "
John of Fledborough	1307	" "
John called Oldeman	1310	" "
William Bozon	1313	" "
†Ralph Burgeys	d. 1349	—
Richard, s. of Robert Hauberk	1349	§Robert Burgeys of Melton Mowbray
Robert of Oxford	1372	" " "
John, s. of Simon Sumpter	1373	" " "
John Bolet	1423	Shelford Priory.
John Sutton, M.A.	1447	" "
John Suthwell	—	—
Robert Bolton	1470	Shelford Priory.
Thomas Clerk	1473	" "
Thomas Whyte	—	—
William Walker	1507	Shelford Priory.
William Cresswell	1510	" "
Thomas Marsar, bach. in degrees	1529	John Donnyngton by grant from Shelford Priory.
*Thomas Plumtre, B.A.	1547	John Palmer and James Plumtre
John Potter	1561	The Crown.
Henry Bromley	1589	Sir Thomas Stanhope, kt.
Humphrey Sanders, M.A.	1630	Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield
William Whittell, M.A.	1669	Thomas Moore, Gent.
Ralph Thompson, M.A.	1671	" " Esquire.
John Moore, B.A.	1683	" " Gent.

† Probably died of the Black Death. Shelford lost two priors of the sickness in this year.

§ Burgeys had a 40 years' lease of the advowson from Shelford Priory.

* Deprived about 1561 for not complying with the Act of Uniformity, 1559.

<i>Rector.</i>	<i>Institution.</i>	<i>Patron.</i>
Thomas Lovett, B.A.	1719	John Moore, clerk.
John Moore, B.A.	1720	Elizabeth Moore, widow, for this turn.
Robert Gardiner, LL.B.	1733	Christopher Moore.
Edmund Guy	1760	Bp. of Lincoln by lapse.
Thomas Stanley, LL.D.	1798	Thos. Stanley, LL.D., himself.
Edward Fane, M.A.	1816	Sir Robert Heron, of Stubton, baronet.
Robert Rastall, B.A.	1819	” ” ”
William Seymour Hampson, M.A.	1857	George Nevile, of Stubton, Esq.
Pennyman Ralph Worsley, M.A.	1868	” ” ”
George William Sandford, M.A.	1886	” ” ”
Thomas Lawrence Stayner, M.A.	1890	” ” ”
Richard Duncan King	1898	” ” ”
Ernest Richard Milton, M.A.	1932	Lt.-Col. Edmund Royds, of Stubton Hall.