

STOCK REGISTERS 1563 TO 1804

to be the parish Register of Stock & Buttsbury aforesayed. And he was this day sworne before me well & truly to execute the said office (of register of the) said Parish to the best of his skill & power according to the Act of Parlim^t in that case made untill he be thence duly discharged by order of Law."

(signed) Peter Whitcomb "

In 1656 a new Act of Parliament respecting marriages came into force, as we find by the following entries on p. 2 :—

"April 1654—

Marriages

"John Grub the sonne of John Grub of Stock in the county of Essex Yeoman was married unto Rode Sherife of South Hanningfield according to the Act of Parlm^t the eighteenth day of Aprill 1656."

Also,

"John Gearson the sonne of Robert Gearson was married unto Elizabeth Read the daughter of Thomas Reed by M^r Negus the 30th day of July 1654."

Who Mr. Negus was I cannot make out, nor can I understand why the entry bearing date 1654 was made by him after the one for 1656. This is another instance of the careless and confused manner in which the Registers were kept.

On p. 7 (A.D. 1655) there are 14 entries of *births*, baptisms not being permitted in the church, or at all events not allowed to be entered in the Register Books. The only entry of any interest among the marriages during the time of the Commonwealth is the following :—

"M^r Philologus Sachererell minister of the Gospel of Eastwood was married unto M^{rs} Anna Barnaby of All Hallows Barking in London Spinster the 15th day of April according to the Act of Parliament by M^r Martin Simson Person of Stock in the yeare 1658."

The burials were regularly entered at the end of the small book (turned upsidedown), and show an average of 32 per annum, from 1654 to 1660. The following may be of some little interest :—

- (1.) "George Stathum a recusant of Buttsbury drowning himself in one of the Park ponds was buried the 24th of May (1655)"
- (2.) "That vertuous religious woman, M^{rs} Anne Babington widow was buried in Stocke Chancell the 28th day of Aug. (1658)"

We now come to the third part of the subject, viz., from the Restoration to the end of the book, and the first thing to be noticed is the custom of collecting sums of money on "briefs," which appears to have been very common.

I have selected a few, as found on p. 74, as specimens, though by whose authority they were ordered I have not been able to find out.¹

"February the 10th 1660."

Memorandum. "there was collected in Stocke church by John Grubb sen^r & Thomas Allen churchwardens for a briefe which came from Milton Abbas in the county of Dorset the somme of eight shillings & too pence entered by mee Andrewe Reade church Clarke of Stocke."

"November ye 10th day 1661."

Memorandum. "There was collected in Stocke church by John Grubbe

¹ I believe either by Royal or Episcopal Authority.

Jun^r & Thomas Allen churchwardens for a briefe which came concerning his Majesties Royall fishing ye somme of eight shillings & foure pence."

"December ye eighth day 1661."

Memorand: "there was collected in Stock church by John Grubb Jun^r & Thomas Allen churchwardens for a briefe concerning ye Dukedome of Lithuania, John de Kraino Krainsby (or Krainsly) ye somme of 3 shillings & 3 pence."

There are altogether 39 similar entries up to March, 1663, most of them from towns in different parts of the kingdom, but two were for the benefit of private individuals—the average amount collected being about 4s 6d to 5s. The same was the case with Buttsbury, where many collections were made for the same objects as in Stock. Also in 1707 there are 12 entries for briefs, entitled, "lost by fire," four of which bear the same date May 11, and three more appear in 1708. The following is a sample:—

"Anno Domini 1707."

"collected as follows to Briefs in ye prsh. & church of Harward Stock John Laver churchwarden."

(1) "May ye 4th Towcester Brief lost by fire 1057l. collected nine pence halfpenny."

(2) "1708. April 25th Lisborne in Ireland, lost by fire 31770l, collected seven pence."

A sad falling off in the amount—the custom appears to have been given up about this time.

On p. 53 of the little book is a list of "Christenings since Charles Hoole was Rector," who acted as minister for the united Parishes of Stock and Buttsbury till 1664. The Register is pretty regularly kept, and calls for no comment, the average of baptisms being about 12 per annum; and of marriages three per annum.

About this time the custom of excommunicating offenders appears to have been pretty common, for in 1660, Oct. 7th, "Thomas Allen churchwarden was excommunicated," and "Robert Bundock was excommunicated the same day."

Thomas Allen, we find, "was absolved" Oct. 17th day, but nothing is recorded further about Robert Bundock. There is also an entry in the Register of burials that a woman named Elizabeth Perrin, dying excommunicate, was buried on the "Comon."

In 1664, "Édward Philips was excommunicated May 3rd," and in 1665 the above Elizabeth Perrin was similarly treated on April 9th.¹

The entries of baptisms in the little book end with the year 1682, and are then continued in the old book as before.

In the year 1678 "A Register book for burying in woollen was bought at the Parish charge. Zeph. Pierse Rect de Harward Stock." This was in compliance with an Act of Parliament, which required that affidavits should be produced in all cases that the corpse was wrapt in woollen cloth. It remained in force till 1782, and was probably enacted in order to encourage the woollen trade; and consequently affidavits to this effect were duly entered in all cases. These entries continue in the affidavit

¹ Among the burials during the first few years of the Restoration we find the following rather curious one:—

"Ralf Boyce was buried 15th day of February (1661), and it thundered at the same time (p. 14 little book)."