

STOCK REGISTERS 1563 TO 1804

book, which is bound up with the old book to A.D. 1769. The only ones of any interest being the following :—

(1) “Mr. Zephaniah Pierse late Rector of this Parish was buried July ye 23rd 1703,”

from which we see that the custom of styling all clergymen “Reverend” was not then introduced,

(2) “Susannah Alleyn was buried Jan ye 17th 170³,”

which shows that the custom of considering the year to commence in January seems to have gained ground 50 years before Lord Chesterfield’s Act for authorizing the same.

(3) “Four sons of John Maskell in June 1745.” (Perhaps all at one birth)

(4) “The *Rev.* Philip Chetwode Rector of Stock was buried 28 Jan 1769 by Sam Howe M.A. Rector of West Hanningfield.”

in which we notice the titles of “*Reverend*” and M.A., and

(5) “Richard Billing from Crondon Park a Romish Priest ye 3rd of March 1769.”

The affidavit book is now turned upsidedown, and contains a regular list of baptisms, marriages, and burials till 1795.

Returning to the old book, p. 79, we find the following :—

“A Register for the parish of Harward Stock 1683,” and a table of the fees of the parish “as formed by immemorial custom.”

In 1695, we find that an Act of Parliament was passed taxing all Registers of Births and Marriages, for on p. 95 is the following notice :—

“A Register Book 1695 for the Parish of Harward Stock, pursuant to an Act of Parliament taxing of Marriages & Births beginning from the 1st of May in this present year 1695 & to continue five years.”

In 1785, when it was no longer compulsory to wrap dead bodies in woollen, a tax was collected on all registers of burials, as we find by the following entry :—“Accounted for the above (burials) to the collector 1785.”

Mr. Pierse, who died in 1703, seems to have been very careless in filling up the Registers during the latter years of his life, as we find on p. 104—

“The following Marriages were celebrated in Mr Pierses time left only on a paper.”

These consisted of 4 entries in 1702, and 1 in 1703, and again,

“Mr Zephaniah Pierse late Rector of this parish left the following acct. of the baptisms of 1702 & part of 1703 to his death in a foule book which whether exact or no I cannot tell, but as I find it, have set it down to supply the defect. (signed) Thomas Cox, Rector.”

These entries comprise 12 baptisms for 1702 and 12 for 1703.

Then follow on the succeeding pages a regular list of baptisms and marriages, the former from May 19th 1706, to December 16th 1807.

The latter from Nov. 28th 1714 to Feb. 21st 1754.

At the bottom of page 136 is the following note :—

“Here end the marriages by Rubric & Canon. For marriages by a thing called an act of Parliament see the other book. [entered by Thos. Cox, senr.]”

From this page to the end of the book is a continuous list of baptisms till the end of 1806. The only one of any special interest being

“Mary D^r of William Butt born Sep. 14 1700. William son of William Butt born aug 24 1702. Ann the d^r of William Butt &

Ellen his wife was born Nov 21. 1707. mem^d. These children were born in Stock Parish, but not baptized by ye minister, their parents being Papists.”