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**Transactions at Tockington Park**

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## Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.

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### TRANSACTIONS

AT A SPECIAL MEETING AT TOCKINGTON PARK, OCT. 14TH, 1887,  
FOR THE WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE DIVISION.

*The arrangements for which were made by Mr. G. W. Keeling,  
(Hon. Local Secretary for the Division).*

THE members and their friends (about 80 in number) assembled at Tytherington Station at 10 o'clock, and at once proceeded to walk up to the ancient Camp on the adjacent hill, for which permission had been kindly given by the owner, Mr. Hardwick, who met the party.

Mr. G. B. WITTS, who acted as guide, stated that this camp is locally known as "The Castle," or "Castle Hill," and there could be no doubt that it originally formed one of a line of camps extending from the Severn at Aust on the west, to "The Wash" on the east. In area it was rather more than five acres; and in the past it had formed a strong position and had played an important part in the history of the country. Most of these camps were, probably, of British origin, and were taken possession of, and altered to suit their needs, by the Romans. Nothing striking in the shape of the ramparts had been found there, but the remains of a Roman villa had been discovered in the neighbourhood, and if proper excavations were carried out he had no doubt other discoveries, of an equally interesting nature, would be made.

The party then joined the carriages at Stowle Hill, on the northern side of the camp, and proceeded to Alveston. Mr. Wits pointing out on the way the Abbey Camp (the road passing through the centre of it), and explained that the Tytherington Camp was intended to protect the Roman road on the eastern side and the Abbey Camp on the western side of the intervening ridge.

On arriving at Alveston, the Old Church, which is in a state of great disrepair and is fast becoming a ruin, is used only for funerals, a new church having been recently built in a more convenient situation. Sir John Maclean, on entering the building, was requested to give some description of it. He said, however, that not expecting to be called upon, he was scarcely prepared to do so. He had given some attention to the structure, and had made a few notes on it, which he would be pleased to read if desired. This he did, but a more full and particular description of the church and history of the manor will be printed hereafter.

A very hasty visit was made to the Manor House, which has been almost wholly rebuilt, but some portions of Jacobean work still remain. It is a building of much interest. It was long the seat of the Corbets, and afterwards of the Dennis family. It was subsequently vested in the Veel family. Over a modern porch at the west entrance, of excellent workmanship, is a shield of arms of the last mentioned family, who bore :—*ar. upon a bend sa. three calves passant of the field.*

From Alveston the party walked across the fields, along the ridge of the hill, to Tockington Park. In the second field from Alveston, upon the ridge, is an avenue of ancient pollard ash-trees, and, according to tradition, this is the original site of the Roman road known as "The Ridgway." This is not unlikely for its course lies in a more direct line than the present road, and, moreover, it occupies the ridge of the hill from which this part of the road derived its name, and commands on the east the whole of the vale to the Cotteswold hills, and on the west the estuary of the river Severn and the Welsh hills beyond. So far as appears, however, the tradition has never been tested by excavation.

On arriving at Tockington Park, Sir John Maclean conducted the party, as far as practicable, over the site of the Roman Villa, and afterwards read a paper describing what had been discovered, so far, in the excavations made under his superintendance. This paper has since been enlarged and, together with the history of the devolution of the Manor of Tockington, has been printed, ante pp. 123-169.

On the conclusion of the paper the following remarks were made:—

The Rev. Preben. SCARTH (Wrington) said he visited the site on the occasion alluded to by Sir John. He was at once convinced that a great and valuable "find" had been made, and that the opening up of the ground at various points would produce great results. He had not been there since, and he thought more had been realised than he had right to expect. A great deal had been done, and in an able, masterly way. He had had something to do with the excavations of Roman villas and towns, and he could say that a great deal of judgment had been shown, and he trusted that the search would be further prosecuted, when he believed that other discoveries of great interest would be made. Speaking of the recent discovery of a Roman villa at Yatton, he bore high testimony to the liberality of the lord of the manor, Mr. Pigott, who had borne the whole of the expense of the excavation and for the preservation of the remains. A large "find" of 800 Roman coins had been discovered within a short distance of the villa, and who knew but that further investigation might bring a similar hoard to light on that farm? The pavements they had seen that day he considered very good, and of an early date. They were of no ordinary workmanship, and bore comparison with some of the best found at Rome, and it was to be hoped that every fragment had been carefully drawn and preserved. Having emphasised a fact that was occasionally overlooked, viz., that the Romans were very good agriculturists, the speaker mentioned that during the Roman occupation of the island large quantities of corn were exported. That villa was contiguous to one of the important Roman roads, and, probably, was the station of some Roman official, military or civil, who had important

district duties to perform. Having fixed the date of the remains probably to the time of Agricola (A.D. 78-85), or perhaps somewhat later, the speaker concluded by expressing a very earnest desire that no pains would be spared to continue the work of uncovering. Already there had been a splendid harvest for the labour done. He could scarcely hope that they would find a Mr. Pigott in their neighbourhood, but he would remind them many contributors would make the cost fall light, and he trusted one and all would come forward and help.

Mr. E. P. LOFTUS BROCK followed, and said it would be a thousand pities to leave that remarkable site without begging the good friends who had taken up the matter so well to go on. A site of that kind ought not to be left without the fullest investigation. Already there were 23 rooms and spaces laid bare, with 5 or 6 pavements of remarkable beauty and of design strikingly noticeable for purity and elegance, all of which it was certain had been executed by local artificers. He would ask one and all of them to have a careful look at the remarkable table which had been shewn. It had stood upon fixed masonry, and his opinion was that it was used as a kind of pedestal for a statue; and further, he considered it not at all unlikely if the adjoining ground was investigated an altar might be found in front.

The party next made a move to the ancient church at Olveston. Here an interesting paper was read by the vicar, the Rev. J. E. Vernon (which will be printed *post*) and the antique Communion vessels were produced. A visit was then made to

#### OLVESTON COURT,

amidst a thunderstorm and heavy rain, and the remains of the ancient castellated and moated mansion, which appear to be of the last quarter of the 15th century were hastily noticed, but they have since been more carefully examined by Sir John Maclean. Much of the moat, especially on the south side, now exists. The old gate-house, of two stories, is tolerably perfect. The north doorway is walled up, but that on the opposite side is almost perfect, as is also a small door with three-centred arch on the east side of it leading from the court-yard into the building.

The great gate-way has a four-centred arch with mouldings of four members, which are continuous. The walls are of good ashlar masonry, especially in the interior. A spiral staircase leads to the upper chamber, which was fitted up as a columbarium, and contains holes for many nests. At a little distance from the north side of the gate-house, is a large lofty building with a somewhat large doorway having a depressed arch. There is a good plain roof, the principals of which have two collar beams, and between the principals it is strengthened by wind braces. The house is now used as a shed for cattle.

There are long ranges of walls upon the premises. The walls on the north and west sides of the orchard and garden attached to the present farmhouse were perforated with windows, now walled up, shewing that these walls originally formed portions of the domestic buildings, of which we observed no other remains. A careful study of this building and history of the manor is much needed,

## OLVESTON CHURCH.

The building is a fine and large structure, but almost everything of ecclesiastical interest has been swept away through successive "restorations" by well-meaning though ignorant and incompetent people. It sadly needs a restoration indeed, in the proper sense of the word. It consists of a chancel, nave of five bays, north and south aisles, with a chapel at the east end of each, and a tower, the basement of which forms the choir, the upper part, with the spire that surmounted it, was destroyed by lightning in 1604. In the south aisle there is a recessed tomb of second-pointed work, probably that of a benefactor to the church. There is a shield of arms on it, but the stone is so much abraded that the charges cannot be defined. Against the east wall of the north chapel is a brass commemorating Morys Denys, Esq., son and heir of Sir Gilbert Denys, Knt., Lord of the Manors of Alveston and Irdecote, and, also, of Sir Walter Denys, Knt., son and heir of the said Morys. The figures are represented kneeling, Morys on the dexter side and Sir Walter on the sinister, both wear tabards over their armour with their arms thereon. From the mouth of the former proceeds a scroll inscribed: "**unicus et trinus bone Ihu sis nobis Ihus,**" and another from the mouth of Sir Walter inscribed: "**In trinitate p'fecta sit nobis requies et eterna vita.**" And on a label between them is: "**Misere-  
mini n'ri, miseremini nostri, saltem vos filii et amici nostri,  
quia Manus Dominus tetigit nos.**"—[Job. xix. 21]. On the sinister upper corner are the arms of Denys: *Gu, a bend Eng. ar. betw. 3 leopards' heads jessant de lis or,* and on the dexter corner the arms of Russell of Dyrham: *ar. on a chief gu. three bezants.*

On a brass plate is the following inscription:—

**Her wyth buried in ye middt of the quere morys denys  
esquyere sonne and heire of Sr Gilbert denys knyght lordc  
of the manor of albveston & of the manor of Erdecote: and  
also Sr Walter denys knyght sonne and heire to the seid  
morys denys Esquyer ye which Sr Walter denys decessed  
the first day of the moneth of Septembre in the xxj yere of  
the reigne of Kyng henry the vij whos soules Ihu p'don,  
Ame. All ye that this rede and see of yor charite save for  
their soules a pater noster and an abc.**

On the tabard of Morys are the following arms: quarterly. 1, DENYS. 2, RUSSELL, as above. 3, *lozengy. ar. and az. a chevron gu.* GORGES. 4, . . . a cross moline . . . (query). On the tabard of Sir Anthony DENYS: DENYS quartering, RUSSELL, GORGES, and 4, . . . a chevron . . . between three roses . . . ? for DANVERS. Without the blazon, which does not appear, we are unable to assign the fourth quarter in the first shield without greater research than we can give it. The arms are thus derived:—

Sir Gilbert Denys acquired the Manors of Alveston and Erdecote by the marriage of his father, William Denys, with Margaret, daughter and heir of William Corbett, of Alveston (ob. 2nd Ric. II.) and relict of William Wroth, who died in the same year. Sir Gilbert succeeded his father in 6th Ric. II.,

from whom the manor descended as stated in the inscription. Sir Gilbert married Margaret, dau. and coheir of Sir Maurice Russell, of Dyrham, Knt., whose grandmother was dau. and heir of Sir Ralph Gorges, Knt. Maurice Denys married twice: first, the dau. of Sir Edward Stradling, Knt., and, secondly, Alice, the dau. of Sir Nicholas Poyntz, of Iron Acton, Knt., by whom he was the father of Sir Walter, who was four times married. His second wife was Agnes, the daughter of Sir Robert Danvers, Justice of the Common Pleas, his last wife being Alice, dau. and heir of William Walwyn, of Bykerton, co. Hereford, and relict of Thomas Baynham, of Dene, Constable of St. Briavels Castle in 1483 (ob. 10th Feb. 1499-1500). Sir Walter Denys died 1st Sept. 1505. She survived him, and died 10th Oct. 1518 (Inq. p.m. 10th Henry VIII. No. 1 Exch.) Her monument is at Michel Dene Church, together with that of Sir Thomas Baynham's first wife (See ante Vol. VI. Pl. VIII.)

It had been intended to visit Oldbury Church and the Roman Camps in the neighbourhood, but unfortunately time did not permit. Mr. F. W. Waller, however, had obligingly prepared the following notes describing that church:

#### OLDBURY CHURCH.

I am compelled so to call it because merely Oldbury is now unknown. It is distinguished from Oldbury-on-the-hill as Oldbury-on-Severn. The Rector may have a few remarks to make upon this subject, but the enquiries that I have made have entirely failed in producing any really satisfactory information.

The history of the building also, as derived from the county historians, is of small account. Atkyns says: "The church is in the Deanery of Dursley, and is annexed to Thornbury. The church has two aisles, it had a spire steeple, but it was blown down in the great storm."

Bigland, Fosbrooke, Rudge and Rudder have little or nothing to add to this. The great storm alluded to is probably that which is referred to in *Gloucestershire Notes and Queries*, A.D. 1606, see Vol. I., pp. 247, &c., or that which occurred in A.D. 1703 (See the same publication, Vol. II., p. 545).

One strong piece of circumstantial evidence, at any rate, still remains as regards the spire; the base for the reception of which still exists, and can be seen in the upper stage of the tower.

Actual records being so scant, I am compelled, in giving a description of this church, to judge of probable dates of its erection from other buildings of similar styles of architecture, and these can only be given very generally.

The church consists of a chancel, a nave, with north and south aisles, a tower at the east end of the north aisle, and entrance porches on the north and south sides. The general dimensions are as follows:—The chancel, 19 ft. by 15 ft. The nave, 45 ft. by 15 ft. North aisle, 45 ft. by 12 ft. 6 ins. South aisle, 45 ft. by 12 ft. The walls of the nave and aisles and the arcades stand, with few exceptions, as erected in the 13th century (Early English work), and the church was at that time, no doubt, a complete building in that style;—it may be well to note that there is a discrepancy in the width of the openings and in the heights of the arcades,

those on the south side being considerably higher than the corresponding arches on the north. These arcades are rather singular in their construction, and they are of excellent design and workmanship, the arches are three-centred, and the mouldings continuous from base to base of each pier without the usual capital at the springing of each arch—the bases are well elevated and handsome.

With the exception of the north wall the chancel is an entirely new building, erected some years ago by a former Rector. Entered from this, by a very nice old doorway, is the tower, an erection of later date than the body of the church,—it is in three stages, the upper one having one bell.

The north porch has been much altered, the old doorway remains, but the buttresses and parapets are very late and debased work.

The south porch, now entirely new, was worn out and a much dilapidated erection of comparatively recent date.

An old rood screen is said to have been removed from the church about 12 years back. There is no record as to what the original chancel arch was, but prior to the erection of the present one, there existed only an archway of the same size cut square through the wall without any chamfers or mouldings of any kind.

Originally, the roofs of the nave and aisles were, doubtless, of good oak timber, and terminated in three distinct gables on the western front, and they were covered with lead. In 1835, prior to the repairs which have been since effected, they presented a very singular appearance, the top part of each roof having been cut off by bisecting the angle about half way up the rafters, and the boarding and lead was then brought down nearly flat at the level of the collar beams. The roof timbers had been altered and patched in all sorts of extraordinary ways, and thin fitches of oak introduced to form principals, the timbers taking the same arched form as that now seen, but covered with decayed plaster instead of boarding and felt, as at present. The nave roof, however, was so perished that it was found to be impossible to keep it up, and the present new roof, therefore, in this case, was erected. The rafters have in each roof been reinstated to the old pitch, and the roofs now shew as originally constructed.

An interesting history attaches to the very fine old font, which may now be seen at the entrance door in the north aisle. Less than two years ago it was in the flower garden of Thornbury Castle, to which place it had been removed, probably when the font, which now stands in the churchyard in front of the north porch, was introduced to the church. During the recent repairs it was returned by Mr. Howard, and it now rests again somewhat near to the site it occupied more than 500 years back.

On the way from Olveston to Thornbury, at about half-a-mile east of Elberton, Mr. Keeling pointed out the British, or Roman, Camp on the hill to the right, which, under the name of the Elberton Camp, is described in Mr. Witts' book on the "Camps in Gloucestershire." This camp, however, was so covered with trees and underwood that it was useless to visit it. The foss can be clearly traced, the embankment is very steep, and the position very strong. In the home field of the farm, near the camp, several specimens of pottery have been found, and it is not improbable that it may be a site of a Roman villa.

On the left-hand side of the road, a little further on, Mr. Keeling pointed out the site of an old vineyard—the terraces, on which the vines were planted, being still plainly visible. It is well situated, both as to soil and aspect for the growth of vines, but it is supposed that vines have not been grown there for the last 300 or 400 years.

William of Malmesbury says : “There is no province in England hath so many, or so good, vineyards as this county (Gloucestershire) either in fertility or sweetness of the grapes. The wine whereof carrieth no unpleasant tartness, being not much inferior to the French in sweetness.”<sup>1</sup>

The party arrived at Thornbury Castle at 3.15 p.m. Mr. Stafford Howard was from home, but he had kindly arranged for guides to conduct the party through the castle and its grounds. He had also marked extracts in a book containing a full description of the most interesting features of the castle. These extracts Mr. G. B. Witts read to the members in the garden on the south front of the castle.

The Castle and Church of Thornbury were visited by the Society in July, 1883, and particulars of both are given in the volume for that year, Vol. VIII. of the Transactions.

The party, after inspecting the outworks of the castle, was shewn through the apartments. Some of them afterwards visited the church, and all those who had taken luncheon tickets assembled at the Swan Hotel at 4 p.m.

Mr. G. B. Witts presided at the luncheon, and in proposing a vote of thanks to Sir John Maclean, pointed out the obligations the Society were under to that gentleman for kindly arranging for this meeting and for the time and trouble he had devoted to the exploration of the Roman Villa at Tockington Park. Mr. Witts remarked that such interesting and valuable explorations could not be effected without money, and he trusted that now the members had had the opportunity of seeing the satisfactory results which had been obtained, that they would, at once, write their cheques for a subscription to the Exploration Fund, and forward them to Sir John Maclean.

Votes of thanks were also tendered to Mr. Stafford Howard and the Rev. C. L. Peach, who had contributed so much to the day's enjoyment, also to Mr. Keeling (*the Local Secretary* for West Gloucestershire) and those who had assisted him in making the necessary arrangements.

The members present were unanimous in carrying the above votes of thanks and with acclamation.

The party left Thornbury Station at 4.50 p.m., all expressing their satisfaction with the interesting and pleasant day they had spent.

The financial result of the meeting shewed a balance of £6 9s. 8d. to the good. The Local Committee suggested that the available balance should be devoted to the Exploration Fund.

<sup>1</sup> We are indebted to Mr. Robert Cam-Lippincott, the owner of the estate, for the above information on the camp and vineyard.

## ANTIQUITIES OF OLVESTON.

EXTRACTED BY THE REV. J. E. VERNON, M.A.

*From Canon Moseley's Papers on Old Olveston.*

INSCRIPTION on a tile of red clay, inlaid with letters in white clay, found by Mr. Noah Ball at Ingst:—

Thinke—mon . thi . liffe  
 Mai . not . ever . endure .  
 that . thow . dost . thy . self—  
 of . that . thow . art . sure .—  
 but . that thou — kapist  
 unto . thi . sectur . cure .  
 and . ever . hit . availe . the .  
 hit . is but . aventure .—

A drawing of it was sent to Mr. Albert Way. The tile, he says, conveys a moral admonition to carry into effect any good or charitable intention during life, and not to trust to bequests and executors. Such moral teaching was common in the 15th century, and other instances might be given. A tile exactly similar is to be seen fixed to one of the great Norman piers of the nave of Malvern Priory Church, so placed in a little cavity, cut for the purpose out of the pier, that the words on it may catch the eye of any worshipper entering by the north porch.<sup>1</sup> It is very probable that this tile was made at Malvern, with many others, and amongst them the one found at Ingst. A kiln for the manufacture of such pavements was discovered in Malvern in 1833, containing fragments and damaged tiles of the same kind and date, viz., 1450, the time of Henry VI. Probably the monks directed the works, and supplied the patterns. Of these there is a great variety, some are coats of arms of the great families of the county, many bear inscriptions of a religious character, but that

<sup>1</sup> The north porch was not the usual way by which the congregation entered the church—Ed.

on the Ingst tile is remarkable as being the only example of the inscription, being in English, in every other case it is in Latin. The tiles were used to form pavements for churches only; they are rarely, if ever, found in secular buildings. It is, therefore, very possible that there may have been a chapel or oratory at the place where farmer Ball found the tile, especially as traces of building are said to have been found there.

The Saxon character is used as in writing of that date, and the inscription, being made easy, may be read as follows:—

Think, man ! Thy life may not ever endure,  
 That thou doest thyself, of that thou art sure.  
 But that thou keepest unto thy executor's care,  
 And ever it availe thee it is but aventure.

#### THE PARISH CHURCH.

At the foot of the chancel steps, inserted into the pavement, is a large square gravestone, bearing an inscription to the memory of Ralph Greene, 49 years Vicar. His body does not rest there, however, but, probably, in the centre of the chancel, where the stone was found, about 1862, a few feet below the pavement, which was removed when the present tiles were laid down.

Ralph Greene, born 1552, became vicar 1590.

Troubled times. First six years of his life Mary was Queen. Then came Elizabeth. Spanish Armada. Hooker, Lord Burleigh, Sir W. Raleigh, Sir Ph. Sydney, W. Shakespeare, Lord Bacon. Two years after destruction of Armada, R. Greene became Vicar of Olveston. He probably found the church in a very sad state of neglect. He procured the present plate—two chalices, two patens, and an alms dish, inscribed with his initials and the date 1634. The white communion cloth of fine linen, which was used till within the last few years (not now to be found), is marked 1602. In those days the church tower was surmounted by a lofty wooden steeple covered with lead. On November 28th, 1604, soon after the Gunpowder Plot, Olveston church spire was struck by lightning, and burnt down, and the tower and part of the chancel destroyed. The village, could, apparently, boast of a

good school in those days ; at any rate the schoolmaster was a well educated man and a latin scholar. The events of that autumn evidently made a great impression on his mind ; and in a strange way he linked together an aurora borealis, which had appeared shortly before, the gunpowder plot, and the burning down of the spire, considering all three as especial manifestations of the power of the Almighty God, and direct warning from Heaven. He, therefore, wrote a full account of the storm and its consequences, and addressed it to James I. Copies of this book, the title of which is " Feareful Newes," are now very rare.

The schoolmaster begins :—Most puissant King, my dread and dear Sovereign, in most humble and submissive manner, I, your Highness' most dutiful and loyal subject, do herein present unto your excellent Majesty, the true report of a most fearful accident which Almighty God, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, sent among us, your Highness' poor subjects, at Olveston, in the County of Gloucester, on Thursday, being the 28th of November last, whereof I was both an ear and an eye witness."

He then goes on to say, that if the wonderful works of God are profitable for the reverent consideration of ordinary men, above all are they so for kings and persons in high office, and he thus excuses his boldness in writing.

The " Feareful Newes" is printed in black letter, and, of course, in the quaint spelling of the time : this has been altered for the sake of clearness. After a long and confused preamble about Judgements, Kings, and Papists, he, at last, begins his story. " First, therefore, where report is to be made of an action done, the time and place are no small moment, for the evidence of the matter. The time, therefore, was on Thursday, the 28th Nov. last, about a month after the aforesaid flaming of the heaven, and most horrible treason complotted and detected. The place was at Olveston (spelt Ouelstone) in the c<sup>o</sup> of Gloc<sup>r</sup>, situated some 8 miles from the famous city of Bristol, and 2 miles from Aust, which is well known in regard of the often transportation and passage there over the river of Severn.

The morning of the aforesaid day being lowering and sad, did yet, a little after 8, begin to smile and look somewhat cheerful towards the east; which was indeed but a smile, and for a very small time, for even anon, before 9 of the clock, the west, as it were, envying the east's merriment, sendeth me up with a strong wind a most dark mantle, which overspread the whole heavens."

From this he draws at some length moral lessons, and then describes the increased blackness of the sky and the strange darkness followed by a heavy hailstorm, fearful flashes of lightning, and loud claps of thunder. He then continues—

"Whereof I took occasion of talk to the gentlewoman of the house, and her young gents, which (being five sons with the son of a friend) sat at table with us. . . . . In the midst of our talk, behold, there flameth in an wonderful flash of lightning, seconded with as horrible a report of extraordinary thunder as I think any man living has heard . . . . . The table being taken up, and, God, for his mercies praised, I betook me even upon twelve o'clock to my school, where, finding my scholars amazed with what had even then past, I put them in mind of that I had spoken in the morning (for, with our morning prayer, we had the 6th chap. to the Romans, read) concerning the two means whereby God maketh Himself known unto the world: His word and His works . . . . . But in the midst of my speech I heard the bell knoll extraordinarily, and sending one forth to enquire the occasion, he presently returned answer, the steeple was afire. So concluding abruptly, and passing forth at doors, I I saw it was no false report of a feined fire. For, behold, the force of God's terrible voice had shaken, rifted and rent the tower of stone, whereon the spire of lead of a great height stood, towards the west, from the rest of the battlement almost to the roof of the church. And it appeared, afterwards, all the west end of the church was likewise shaken, which was so much the more to be wondered at, as, it being crushed in divers places, as a rotten apple, it was only so done within and no appearance of it without, and of three great glass windows that stand in that end, not one of them hurt by it either in the glass or lights; albeit the walls were shaken both

immediately about and under them, the stronger being hurt, and the weaker escaping harmless. As this was the effect of the terrible thunder, so His fearful fire (the lightning I mean) had fired the steeple about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a yard beneath the foot of the bar whereon the weathercock perched ; which fearful fire, considering the powerful Hand that had kindled it, the matter whereon and the bellows which did blow it, being at first a strong western wind, how it did rage they may well imagine that saw it not, which they farther understand by this, that within the space of 2 hours, it did devour, consume, melt, and throw down, all the timbers, lead, and irons, that were, from the top of the steeple (being, as I have said, of great height) to the tower of stone ; and in other 3 hours did burn to the ground, melt, and cast down, with an irresistible force, all the lofts, timbers, stocks, and wheels, of five very tuneable, but *often abused*, bells. The clock, which before had notified precious time, calling on men, as it were, to take time and to take heed of the abuse of so excellent a treasure, was likewise hereby silenced. The chancel, through the fired timbers and firebrands which fell from the steeple on the roof of it, was fired and defaced, as it was very probable the church would have been also with the like had not the wind carried the rage of the fire so much on the chancel, which stood on the east side from the church, which is seated on the west. But the fire itself did not much harm the church ; the most hurt it received, being great, was from the hands of men, who fearing, what was likely, that the rage of the flames would have the like force on the church as it had on the steeple, sought to save what might be. They, therefore, lift up and cast out almost all the seats, and uncovered the three aisles of the church in the middle, in hope to save, if it might be, that half which was westernmost, if the other half next the steeple were fired. But their labour indeed turned to loss, as it fell out, for God, by His good providence, did not only restrain the rage of the fire from the church, which was on the west, but likewise from the houses near, most admirably, especially from the minister's, which stood so under the mercy of the fire and the wind, that a thousand flashes of fire might be seen to light among his wood, on his hay and corn mows, and so on whatsoever almost

was about his house ; and yet, so gracious is God, the fire itself only, I think, did him not herein five pennyworth of hurt."

The schoolmaster reflects on the hard-heartedness and blindness of the Olveston people, and concludes his book with many serious reflections and much grave counsel.

In two years the tower was rebuilt, for the date is plainly to be seen on it, 1606. During the 49 years that Ralph Greene was vicar, the registers were most carefully and correctly kept. Many of the names there inscribed are still common in the parish. Some occur as early as 1562. Addis, 1562. Holister, 1569. Dyer, 1590. Pullen, 1590. Hancock, 1592. Boulton, 1590. Champion, Curtis and Cullamore, 1630. R. Greene married three times, and out-lived his three wives, the "three" referred to on his tombstone. He married his second wife two months after his first wife's death, and his third wife nine months after the death of the second.

The living of Olveston appears to have been after R. Greene's death, held by Dr. Nicolas, Dean of Bristol, who, however, did not reside in the village, or take any part in the duty, as his name only once occurs in the registers, when, in 1643, he baptized a child, and is especially mentioned as "Dr. Nicholas, our Vicar."<sup>1</sup> His curate was Thomas Hearne and both were probably puritans, as the Dr. resigned his Deanery at the Restoration of Charles II. in 1660, and Thomas Hearne disappears at the same time. Atkins' history mentions "a godly minister," of Olveston, having been ejected at that time.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Matthew Nicholas, Dean of Bristol, was not a Puritan as suggested in the text. In addition to the Deanery of Bristol, he was a Canon Residentiary of Sarum, a Prebendary of Westminster, and of Sarum, a Dean Rural in Wilts, Vicar of Olveston and of St. Nicholas Hospital, near Salisbury. He was a younger brother of Sir Edward Nicholas, Secretary of State to King Charles I. He was deprived by the Cromwellite faction of all his preferments, but living until the Restoration, he was appointed Dean of S. Paul's, but whether or not he was first restored to his Deanery of Bristol we cannot say. If he were, he must have resigned it for S. Paul's, which must have been the case if he resigned it in 1660.

A Mr. Henry Heau, Curate of Olveston, is stated in Dr. Calamy's "Nonconformist's Memorials" to have been ejected after the Restoration. Nothing further is said about him. As a Nonconformist he could not have continued to hold any office in the Church after the Restoration.—ED.