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Records of four Tewkesbury Vicars, c. 1685-1769

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By IRVINE GRAY

The Records

The Library of University College, London¹ possesses a series of small manuscript volumes of which the provenance is obscure and which do not appear to have been hitherto described in print. They were compiled by three of four successive vicars of Tewkesbury, all four related to one another: John Matthews (1689–1728), Henry Jones senior (1728–29), Penry Jones (1729–54) and Henry Jones junior (1754–69).² After the death of the last vicar, the manuscripts – doubtless in unbound quires of paper – evidently descended to the Rev. Charles Lewis Shipley (St. Catherine's, Cambridge; M.A. 1781),³ who was headmaster, 1788–99, of Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire, about twenty miles from Tewkesbury. It must have been he who had the MSS. bound, and numbered on the spine with small printed labels. In three of the volumes he has written, in decorative style, a Latin dedication extolling the virtues and erudition of the four clergymen, signing himself 'Carolus L. Shipley, nepos indignissimus'. He was presumably a nephew of the last vicar, Henry Jones junior, and it may be that the books came to University College (founded 1828) on Shipley's death.

There are now 38 volumes, but the numbers show that there were originally at least 42. Those which had lost their numbered labels have now been renumbered as nos. 1–5, 7, 8, and 34; nos. 10, 11, 20 and 25 are still missing. The earliest is apparently Vol. 15, which includes some information on the life of the first vicar, John Matthews, before his preferment to Tewkesbury in 1689.

Many of these volumes contain only sermons, and may be briefly described as follows. Vols. 4–9, 12–14, 16–19, 23, 24 and 26 are all of sermons by John Matthews, who usually gives the dates (c. 1680–1724) when they were first preached, adding when and where they were re-used later; often also on what festival or national or local occasion. Vol. 12 contains sermons (1693–99) for marriages of named persons, with one preached at Matthews's 'reading-in' at Tewkesbury, 1687, and one in Gloucester Cathedral, c. 1680. Vols. 13 and 23 are of sermons for funerals of named persons, 1687–1712, Vol. 17 sermons on public days of Humiliation, Vol. 18 on Feasts of the Church. Those in Vol. 26 were preached for elections of Tewkesbury Corporation, 1687 to 1713, and one at the bishop's visitation in 1698.

The following volumes were also compiled by John Matthews:

- Vol. 1 Commonplace book and spasmodic diary, including memoranda (mainly religious) and much verse, presumably his own, pedestrian but occasionally amusing. On p. 56 there is a poem on Tewkesbury. The 'diary' entries, often in Latin, were apparently started in February 1711, but only the day and month are given, no year, until January 1713. After 1715 the entries become for the most part religious ramblings, increasingly incoherent in the writer's later years. (See Appendix).

A note on the fly-leaf reads: 'Hic tomus Rev^{di} Johannis Mathews scripta continet'.

- Vol. 15 'Pious maxims, meditations, occasional observations on the passing incidents of Mr. Matthews's life, before and after his preferment to Tewkesbury' (note in handwriting of Penry Jones, on fly-leaf). A personal diary of John Matthews from 1685 to 1691 is scattered through long religious passages, abstracts of sermons, etc. (See Appendix).
- Vol. 19 Theological 'Expositions', 1689, 1691 and undated.
- Vol. 21 'Essays in Poetrie on several pious subjects and useful occasions'. Including 'An epitaph on my dear Aunt Mrs. Ann Barnsdale'; Latin verses in another hand signed 'Jer. Wells'; 'Tewkesbury Activity & Piety' (verse and prose polemics on Matthews's side of his long dispute with the Tewkesbury Corporation; see below in the account of John Matthews).
- Vol. 39 (a) Religious disquisitions, about 50 pp. (no dates)
 (b) Catalogue of books (presumably his own library), with date and place of publication for each, c. 1550–1706 (alphabetical, 86 pp.)
 (c) 'An account of stitch'd books or pamphlets in my study, as they came to hand in my reading' (alphabetical, 46 pp.)
 (d) 'An account or catalogue of printed sermons as they come to my reading' (24 pp., some blank)
 (e) 'The Cases of London' (1683–4), pamphlets by divines against dissenters and papists (7 pp., 3 blank)

Six volumes of sermons are by Penry Jones, the third vicar, viz. Vols. 28, 36–38, 40, and 42, dated from 1725 to 1739 and 1748 to 1754, with some undated.

Vol. 3 is a mixed bag, containing sermons by John Matthews, c. 1687–1724; several in other hands (?Penry Jones and Henry Jones junior), one of them preached from 1728 to 1763; a letter on Methodism by, or copied by, Henry Jones junior and other religious writings. List of Contents.

Vol. 2 contains commentaries on the Latin text of the New Testament, in a small 17th-century italic hand (cf. Vol. 27, below). Further commentary has been added by Henry Jones junior, in the mid-18th century.

Vol. 27 contains religious commentaries, mostly in Latin, in the same 17th-century hand as Vol. 2. Unused space was used later by Henry Jones junior for a Commonplace Book, with long extracts from the *Spectator*, etc. Eight pages in an unknown hand are a short guide to heraldry.

Vols. 29–33 and 35 are mainly Commonplace Books kept by Henry Jones junior. Of these, Vol. 33 was started when he was at Oxford, since it includes synopses of lectures given there – one at Balliol, his own college, – in 1740. There follows a laconic daily journal of his life as his uncle's curate in Tewkesbury, 24 December 1748 to 15 April 1749 only. The extracts in Vol. 29 run to 1762; Vol. 30 is largely mathematical and scientific; Vol. 31 is of post 1750 date; Vol. 32 consists in prose and verse extracts from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *London Magazine*, and the like, up to 1759. Vol. 35 (part verse) includes 'Scheme for an Index' (pp. 63–5) and 'A Method for a Commonplace book' (pp. 67–73).

Vol. 22 begins as yet another of Henry Jones's Commonplace Books, but the latter part, in a smaller script, describes travels and antiquities in Italy, Switzerland, etc. (? late 18th century).

Vol. 34 has religious writings (copies in various hands) including John Wesley's 'Journal of the Passage from England to Georgia' (1735).

Finally, Vol. 41 is of sermons in an unknown hand (? 17th cent.). The name John Craggs is scribbled several times.

The Vicars

The Reverend John Matthews, as his admission early in 1667 at Oriel College, Oxford, tells us,

was the son of a John Matthews of Gloucester. An entry in the vicar's 'diary' reveals that he owned the lease of the well-known New Inn at Gloucester (see below).

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Brian Frith, with his unrivalled knowledge of Gloucester City records and genealogy, for pursuing the Matthews family there. John Matthews (the name is spelt variously in the parish register as Mathos, Mathews, and Mathewes), married to Joan Allen on 30 December 1648 at St. John's church, Gloucester, had children, John, Mathew, James and Barbara, all christened there from 1650 to 1659. John (9 Oct. 1650) was the future vicar of Tewkesbury. James and Mathew were buried there in 1683 and 1684. Their father was buried on 19 December 1676 as 'Mr. John Mathews', and his widow on 21 January 1687/8, as 'Joane the late wife of Mr. John Mathews of the New Inn'. Their son James had been apprenticed in 1673 as a son of 'John Mathewes, innholder'.⁵

The New Inn, once a pilgrims' hostel, was Gloucester Dean & Chapter property, and Mr. Frith has found among the Chapter archives, now in the Gloucestershire Record Office, the lease of the Inn to 'John Mathews' on 30 November 1667 and a further lease of 9 January 1677 (after John's death in December) to his second son 'Mathew Mathewes, inholder'. The next lease (1685), after Mathew's death, was to a John Deane, but there was then a lease of 19 December 1693, for 30 years, to John Matthews of Tewxbury, clerke. On 11 December 1714 the Inn was leased to Rowland Pitt of Gloucester, woollendrapier. The vicar of Tewkesbury, an absentee landlord for nearly twenty years, noted in his diary on 30 April 1712 that he had agreed to sell the New Inn lease to Mr. R. Pitt for £600, a substantial sum. 'I free myself from much care,' he wrote a month later.

Of John Matthews the innholder we know nothing save that he was of sufficient social standing to be called 'Mr.', and that he was literate, for his clerical son mentions in his diary (16 February 1689) some books inherited from his father. He also records in Vol. 21 of the MSS. an epitaph on 'my dear Aunt Mrs. Ann Barnesdale, widow, who lived about 90 years'.⁶

The landlord of the New Inn no doubt sent his son John to one of the two Gloucester Grammar Schools, most likely to the King's (Cathedral) School. The school register survives only from 1685, but the Master from 1660 was John Gregory; and the Usher (assistant master), Abraham Gregory (1661–1671), though he took a Cambridge M.A., had been at Oriel College, Oxford, where John Matthews matriculated early in 1667. Abraham Gregory became a canon of the cathedral, and from 1664 was vicar of Sandhurst, near Gloucester. In 1687 the Rev. John Matthews, before going to Tewkesbury, made some efforts to obtain the living of Sandhurst (see his diary), and must have been familiar with the parish. At the very beginning of the diary, in an entry of September 1685, he refers to the sickness and death of 'my friend W. Gise'. This must surely have been the Rev. William Guise, of Ablode Court in Sandhurst, related to the Elmore family and a brilliant young contemporary of Matthews at Oriel, who became a Fellow of All Souls' and Professor of Oriental Languages, but died of small-pox aged 31 on 3 September 1683.⁷

After taking his M.A. degree in 1673, and being ordained, Matthews spent the next few years as Master of the ancient Grammar School at Derby. The John Matthews who was there from about 1674 to 1679 is identified by A.F. Leach⁸ with a John Matthews of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge (B.A. 1670/71), and the *Alumni Cantab.* follows Leach with the qualification 'perhaps'; but the many references to Derby School in the Vicar of Tewkesbury's journal make it certain that it was in fact he. Matthews thanks Providence more than once for his election to Derby at such an early age, and for his friendly reception there. Why he left is not clear, but he revisited Derbyshire at least twice, staying in 1711 with friends, not named, at Norbury, near Ashbourne, and he refers nostalgically to the River Dove.

For the next five years or so, there seems to be no trace of him, until in 1685 he was appointed to the Mastership of Tewkesbury Grammar School, thus beginning a connection with the town

which was to last nearly 45 years. The account of the school written by Leach for Volume II of the *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire* is rather sketchy, and includes no list of headmasters, but there is such a list, from 1686 to 1845, in James Bennett's *Tewkesbury Yearly Register*, ii, 440. This shows William Price as being appointed Master in 1686, and succeeded by John Barnett in 1687. Evidently John Matthews's tenure was brief, and it is in fact recorded that objections under several heads were drawn up against him.⁹

When John Matthews began the earlier of his two diaries, in January 1686, he was still in Tewkesbury, for he mentions having received part of the Chief Rents for the school meadows, and refers to the death of a man in a brawl in the town. On 8 July he remarks caustically on the public reception of Tewkesbury's new charter, and on 'the designs of my adversaries'.

They were apparently successful, for the brief diary ceases until an undated memorandum, written probably about January 1687, records his departure from Tewkesbury on the Sunday before Christmas 1686. He was then at Hailes near Winchcombe, having become domestic chaplain to the 3rd Viscount Tracy of Rathcoole, whose family (the Traeys of Toddington, Glos.), had acquired the Abbot's Lodging as a residence after the dissolution of Hailes Abbey. Matthews was also doing duty for the small chapelry of Hailes, later annexed to Didbrook parish. He writes gratefully of his kind treatment by the family, but this interlude was not to last long, for old Lord Tracy died suddenly on 8 March 1687.

On 29 March 1687 Matthews moved to London, presumably to seek his clerical fortune, but by about the end of August he was back in Gloucester, hoping for the living of Sandhurst. In mid-October, however, the town of Tewkesbury had made him some kind of proposition. The incumbency of Tewkesbury, where the Abbey had become the parish church at the Reformation, was vacant through the death, that year, of the Rev. Robert Eaton, and John Matthews must have been able to exert some influence to overcome any antipathies lingering from the Grammar School dispute. Although there is no direct evidence, it looks as though his good standing with the Tracy family was the deciding factor. Judge Robert Tracy, the late Viscount's brother, had married Elizabeth, daughter of William Dowdeswell of Pull Court, in Bushley (Worcestershire, but only a mile or two from Tewkesbury). The Dowdeswells,¹⁰ established there since the 16th century, were a powerful local influence, serving regularly on the Tewkesbury Corporation; and Richard Dowdeswell, whose sister Elizabeth was Lord Tracy's niece by marriage, was one of the two Borough Members of Parliament from 1684 to 1710, with a brother-in-law as the other member until 1698. Matthews's later diary shows that he had social relations with the Dowdeswell family, who invited him to meals now and then. He may, of course, have made their acquaintance before 1687 and gone to Hailes through their recommendation. At any rate, he must have been accepted for the Tewkesbury vacancy by 24 November 1687, when he was 'graciously received by the Bishop', who prudently cautioned him against 'medling in the Town business'. Although, according to Bennett's *Tewkesbury* and the *V.C.H.*, he was not inducted until 1689, he was preaching and taking services in the abbey church during the previous year.

In his first diary, which ends in December 1691, there is no word of conflict with the local authorities, except for an argument in January 1691 with the severely Baptist and anti-royalist Town Clerk, Henry Collet. Before the later diary (1711 onwards), however, there had been a serious controversy between the vicar and the Corporation. Until the Reformation, the abbey had provided and paid a priest and assistant priest for the parish of Tewkesbury, so that there were no medieval endowments; and post-Reformation vicars, though responsible for the great abbey church and a populous parish, had little in the way of a living, and were largely dependant on the benevolence of the Borough Corporation for their maintenance as well as for the upkeep of the church.¹¹ There had, however, been a few gifts and bequests towards the support of the

incumbent, and Viscount Campden (Baptist Hicks), by his will of 1629, had left in trust to the Corporation the rectory of St. Ishmael's in Pembrokeshire, half the income to be applied towards 'the better maintenance of a preacher to serve in the church of Tewkesbury'.¹² At this period and earlier, when many towns of Puritanical inclination maintained a 'Reader' or lecturer for preaching the long sermons which were fashionable, dissension was apt to arise between the Reader and the regular incumbent, or between their respective supporters. In Tewkesbury it appears that the Town Council, in the late 17th century, sought to apply Lord Campden's Trust to the Reader, whereas the Vicar also claimed entitlement to the income. Mr. Matthews, as his multiple volumes of sermons testify, was by no means backward in preaching; and although he undoubtedly had some private means inherited from his innkeeping father, he was not disposed to forgo his claim to the endowed income.

Matters came to a head, it seems, at about the turn of the century, when William Wilson was Borough Chamberlain and Henry Collet was Town Clerk.¹³ We have no diary of John Matthews for this period, but Vol. 21 of the manuscripts at University College contains his views on 'Tewkesbury Activity and Piety', in 'an Advertisement, a sermon to the Magistrates, a short letter to the R.R. the Bishop of the Diocese, and a Poetical Essay'. There is also an Epistle in Latin, addressed to the Archdeacon. The 'Advertisement', unfortunately not dated, begins with an extract from Viscount Campden's will, followed by a sermon in which Matthews protests against the withholding of his 'stipend' for six years. In a climax, he denounces 'the principal obstructors of the payment of this benefaction' . . . 'Mr. William Wilson, Chamberlain, Mr. Henry Collet, Town Clerk, Mr. Thomas Warkman, Attorney, –

Such a Triumvirate is seen
In famous Spencer's Faicry Queen, –
Sansfoy, Sansloy & Kirkrapine,¹⁴

– who, if they design public advantage, they certainly take the wrong measures, and if any of them design personal advantage, I hope they will be disappointed.'

Pages of protest conclude: 'I am in a great measure at the disposal of my superiors . . . But if ordinary mechanics, if the butcher and the baker, the glazier, the grazier and the glover, be suffered to domineer over their orthodox and aged pastor, and stint or alienate at their pleasure a considerable portion of his revenues, I am sure it will do great disservice to the true ends of Religion . . . But one thing to our comfort. On the 2nd day of the present year Mr. Wilson promised before substantial witnesses that if I would leave the church, I should have the privilege to chuse my successor, and have my full money paid. I shall not reflect on the reasonableness of the conditions, but on the assuming air of this town-bred Gentleman. And that a Pastor must be retain'd or cashier'd *ad ructum Camerarii*, – at the belch of a capricious Chamberlain'.

The vicar's 'Abridgement, or Tewkesbury Piety' is a poem of 109 numbered triplets like the one quoted in his sermon, against his three adversaries, likeing them to Dives, Judas, and others. Whether the sermon was actually preached we do not know. The feud culminated in or before 1705, when according to Bennett¹⁵ some kind of legal action against the vicar was in progress and a petition was addressed to the Lord Chancellor recommending Mr. Richard Cox, the Town Reader, as Mr. Matthews's successor, 'in case of a vacancy'. Matthews, however, had the last word in 1710, when an appeal to the Bishop resulted in a decision that the moiety of the rents of St. Ishmael's should be paid to Mr. Matthews, 'to put a final end to all differences'. There are a few echoes later in the vicar's diary.

The irregular diary of John Matthews starts again (an intermediate section may be lost) early in 1711, when an entry of 14 March indicates that his relations with the Council were still no friendlier than armed neutrality. For the next two years he was active in his parish, and the

frequent diary entries are at times quite lively; but after a serious illness of some kind in 1713, entailing a cure of months in Bath, the vicar, now in his sixties, seems to have resigned himself to old age and melancholy.

'Urged by a dry distemperature of brain, I scarce can preach, or study, but complain' he writes on 17 November 1716. He first refers to his niece in September 1716, when he says that a Mr. Jones, schoolmaster, is seeking her in marriage; so it seems that Henry Jones may have arrived in Tewkesbury to teach at the Grammar School, before becoming curate to the failing vicar. It was not until 1 May 1718, that Jones was married to Matthea Matthews. The sparse diary entries of current interest after this date contain several references to the Jones family – there were children by 1722 – who must have brought some new life into the house. There are no entries after 1724, and the diary ends with a promise (undated) by Henry Jones to feed and maintain Mr. Matthews for the rest of his life. Matthews continued to hold the living until 1728, dying aged 79 on 26 May 1729, actually three weeks after Henry Jones, who had become vicar the year before.¹⁶ The Latin memorial to John Matthews in the south transept of the abbey church,¹⁷ which pays the customary tributes to his learning and virtue, also confirms that he had retired from his office fifteen months before his death, on account of failing health and memory.

His learning, if pedantic, was in fact respectable; his diary shows him as fluent in Latin as in English, and he occasionally quoted from Greek writers. His library, listed in Vol. 39 of the MSS., included a good many secular as well as religious books. Born during the Commonwealth and very much a cleric of the 17th century (though he survived well into the 18th), he was much worried by the political changes through which he was living. Although a native of the staunchly Parliamentary city of Gloucester, he was an undoubted Royalist, who revered Charles I as a martyr; and at the same time was strongly anti-Catholic. As a result, while he felt thankful for the departure of James II as the end of a threat to the established Church, he suffered from serious doubts about the legitimacy of William of Orange's claim to share Queen Mary II's throne.¹⁸

Personally Matthews was for ever fretting about his sins, and his prospects of a future life; but he had his practical side. He had been a schoolmaster, and although he – perhaps advisedly – seldom mentions the then very small Tewkesbury Grammar School, he refers continually to the charity school, visited it frequently, and actively canvassed, not only locally but also further afield, for subscriptions from the nobility and gentry. So far as one can judge from the intermittent diary, he was also, when in good health, diligent in his parochial duties and on good terms with many parishioners. He never married, but in 1686 had recorded his wish to find a 'pious wife', and in 1689 refers to an unidentified 'M.J.' . . . 'O that I were worthy of her love!' This may possibly be an echo of his earlier years in Derbyshire.

As we have seen, Henry Jones senior actually held the Tewkesbury living for little more than a year, but he had previously acted, from probably 1716 to 1728, as curate to John Matthews in the latter's declining years. Jones had also been Rector, from 1720, of the small parish of Woolstone, five miles north of Cheltenham.¹⁹ The *Alumni Cantab.* records that he entered Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1711 and came from a school at Usk in Monmouthshire; the *Alumni* gives his degree of 1718 as LL.B., but he is styled M.A. in the tablet to the three successive Joneses in Tewkesbury church.²⁰

Reference has already been made to the relationship of Henry Jones to John Matthews, who calls him 'nephew' and 'kinsman' after his marriage to Matthea Matthews.²¹ Matthea, as the family memorial shows, was about seven years older than her husband; she is referred to by John Matthews as his niece (2 May 1718), but her baptism has not been found in Gloucester.

Henry Jones senior seems to have contributed nothing to the manuscripts, unless a few of the sermons were his. He must, however, have largely taken over the running of the parish of

Tewkesbury – doubtless maintaining a curate at Woolstone – during John Matthews's last years. He and Matthea had at least three children, including Henry Jones junior, our fourth vicar. Henry Jones senior, died aged only 38, 'praematura morte correptus' on 3 May 1729.

The Rev. Penry Jones, who succeeded his brother Henry in the living, is never referred to as a graduate, and his name does not appear among the *Alumni* of either University. Little is known of him, except some glimpses in his nephew's brief diary; if there was any memorial in the church, it is not recorded by Bigland, but six of the MSS. volumes of sermons are apparently in his handwriting. He was vicar of Tewkesbury until his death in 1754, and as he also served as both 'Reader' and Master of the Grammar School, Penry Jones was presumably *persona grata* to the civic authorities. he also held the living of Tredington, a poor 'perpetual curacy', in which, as in Tewkesbury, his nephew followed him.²²

The third and last of the Jones dynasty, the Rev. Henry Jones junior, added considerably to the manuscripts. The son of Henry Jones senior (vicar 1728–9), and nephew of Penry Jones (vicar 1729–54), he was 18 years old in 1739, when he went up to Balliol, Oxford. After taking his B.A. degree in 1743, and being ordained, he evidently became curate to his uncle Penry at Tewkesbury, and probably continued as such until he succeeded him in the benefice in 1754. He was Master of the Grammar School, as well as vicar, until 3 November 1769, when he died at the age of 47.

The outlook of Henry Jones the younger was very much more modern than had been that of John Matthews, who was still vicar for some years after his birth. His Commonplace Books, of which seven have survived, disclose an interest in mathematical and scientific subjects as well as in current politics and literature. In one of the books, he luckily took it into his head to start a diary. Although he only kept this up for less than four months, there are daily entries, which give some impression of social life in mid-18th century Tewkesbury, such as it was. We are now in the world of Parson Woodforde, with its constant round of hospitality given and returned, trifling sums won or lost at cards, and minor country sports; apparently not, however, the gargantuan meals which the Norfolk rector was so fond of describing in detail. The weather is also recorded daily. There are references to Henry's two brothers, Philip and Matthew Jones, the latter of whom probably emigrated, since the diary records as its last entry: 'Matty went away, having got £50 of us for his expenses to Nova Scotia. Drank tea.'

The diarist was unmarried at the time, but a wife, Mary, older than himself by thirteen years, is recorded on the Jones memorial as dying aged 70 in 1779.

APPENDIX

Diaries of the Rev. John Matthews, 1685–1691 and 1711–1724

The following extracts are very selective, and mainly confined to entries relating to Matthews's personal affairs and those concerning Tewkesbury. The original manuscript volumes (now numbered 1 and 15) containing the diaries are largely devoted to religious meditations which in the writer's later years become increasingly repetitive and rambling. Some entries are in Latin but given here in translation, with (*L*) following the date. There are many abbreviations, and for most personal names the diarist gives only initials (perhaps for fear of prying eyes); few of these have been identified. Dates have been shown in accordance with modern (post-1751) practice.

Vol. 15 'Pious meditations, occasional observations on the passing incidents of Mr. Matthews's life before & after his preferment to Tewkesbury'. [Note on fly-leaf in Penry Jones's handwriting]

1685

Sept. 2 How gracious was thy Providence to me at Darby, when I was most humble. [References to the sickness and death of his friend W. Gise]

1686²³

- Jan. 7 (L) Such great mildness for winter that there are ripe apples &c and flowers wont to be out at midsummer are flourishing at midwinter. Continual rains with strong winds, and scarcely any cold. We hear that there are great numbers of migratory birds in the woods. . . .
- 13 Heard of Mr. Bromley's death, formerly a Fell. Collg., a pious gentleman.²⁴ Received part of the Chief Rents for the School Meadows.
- 25 I ask not high promotion, nor great riches, but a pious wife in whose societie I might acquiesce and live in Thy glorie.
- 31 [Historical jottings, 3 pages]
- Feb. 13 [References to 'my election to D'(erby)]
- 24 A young man, Mr. Brown, kild in the street of Th.[eokesbury], near the Inne, and by a comp[anion] of his. . . . 'Tis judged his own provocation. He seem'd unwilling to accuse the slayer.
- Mar. 27 Give my friend Dr. Fowler²⁵ gifts proportionate to his weightier charge and troubles.
- Apr. 2 Our King, being of another persuasion, may be detrimental to our Church.
- July 8 Charter of Theuxbury received. Several pious gentlemen there and appeared very confident and debonair. One who had murdered another dined in the same room, and his brother lay upon the same bed. Mr Myr [Mayor] told me of the designs of my adversaries, a factious sermon laid to my charge.²⁶
- Aug. 28 Lord guide me at this time, whether to seek a residence in this place or depart from it.

Departed from Thewxb. the sunday before Xmas Day. I preached at Hales. I continue in the Familie,²⁷ reading prayers commonly twice a day and preaching once on Sunday. I was verie generously & respectfully used by the Heads of the Familie, and his L[ordship] was verie kind in lending books with great freedom and communicating the papers of N. My abode here somewhat solitarie, but afforded a considerable time for reading & studie. Muich companie resorted not to the house in the time of the festivitie. But verie good entertainment to those who came, and a constant good table to the servants. His L. but one meal a day, but I am apt to thinke he eats to over-repletion, especially considering his age; being neer 71. The service in good degree orderlie and the government of the Familie regular. Servants most permitted to goe to bed betimes.

1687

- Feb. I came to Hales sometime before Christmas, and there continued, preaching weekly and reading the divine service of the Church twice a day generally. Much opportunity of studying. For the most part I composed fresh discourses and they were well accepted. I began so late this diarie, because I had not my trunke and books brought to me . . . This I shall observe, that for some months time before the Ld. Tracie's death I had verie great, sensible and forcible disquietment.
- Mar. 7 [Describes uneasiness after going to bed]. In the morning L[ord] Visc[ount] Tr[acy] died soddenly, the cause not known. Great was his kindness to me.
- 9 (L) Received letters from Mr. Thorne & J.C. Burf. ?Lvg. L Bertrim²⁸
- 10 To advise the Ladie to augment the poor livings in her presentation.
- 29 Removed from Hales in Gloc. to London. First lodgeings near St. James Gate. After in a hired house in Great Russell Street.
- May 12 Saw the French Congregation. Pleased with the harmony of theyr singing, the civility of the P[astor]. Something read by the Minister before S[ervice]. Confession, Absolution, etc., afterwards a psalm, then his sermon, *memoriter* [i.e. from memory], then his prayers, and afterwards a psalm. A preparatory S[ervice] for the Sacrament. The church built with a decent gravity and plainness.²⁹
- July 8 The Royal Cittie is cast into great divisions, and how soon may these produce Confusion?
- Aug. 26 Give me a prosperous journey.³⁰ Incline the heart of our King to visit Gloucester and forgive the guilt of the Rebellion.
- Sept. 10 I have thought of returning to London; which had been a vexatious wandring. . . . Give the L[ord] Tr[acy] wisdom to love his faithful servants. . . . Blest be God, who inclineth the heart of the King to such testimony of kindness to his people and this my native Cittie.
- 17 If I may obtain a useful employment, I will be diligent, that I may carrie an humble and charitable mind to Thewx.[bury] and find favour.
- 23 A journey to Oxford in s. [solicitation for] the Vic[arage] of Sandhurst. The Bp. of Bristol conf.[ided] the nomination of the succeeding Vicar to the Duke of Gloucester, to whom I addressed myself. He seemed to be in hast, & promised to deferr the busines til his coming into the countrey.
At Thewxb. I stood fair to be readm.[itted], &c.
- Oct. 15 The L[ord] h[ath] wr.[ought] a gracious inclination in the Town of Thewx. to me, & he can effect the prop[osal] made to me.
- Nov. 24 Grac[iously] rec. by the Bishop. Caut[ion] against marriage out of the canonical hours, and against medl[ing] in the Town business.

Dec. 10 (L) A certain Magal³¹ expelled from the living of Sandhurst. I hope to be worthy.

1688

Jan. 1 (L) Preached & administered the sacrament, first day. Congregation not large.

3 (L) Preached concerning the widow Palmer, deceased. Many Dissenters present.

5 (L) I was to give an address on Edward Dargle, deceased; but I did not return from Twyning (where I went to see the Bishop) before he was buried.

25 (L) Received from Mrs. Hancock, a pious and most humble woman very regularly at church, five pounds for repairing a paten for the use of Tewkesbury church.³²

[During March Mr. Matthews is much concerned about the policies of James II, and also about his own mother's health. There are no local references for the rest of 1688.]

1689

Feb. 1 We thankfully acknowledge our deliverance, but [God] instruct them to enact righteous decrees.

16 Vouchsafe, O Lord, to send timely succour to the Irish Protestants in so much danger. If the present King & Queen sitt by Thy authority, it may be wel for us.³³

Bless these books of my dec'd father to me, and grant that I may use them to thy glory and the good of others.

[References to his brother and sister]

31 What might our condition have been, if the furie of our late King had not been restrained? And how happie may we be with a Prince who proposes the glorie of God & welfare of the people for his designments.

May 1 Began a journey to Derby; saw the grave stone of S.D. de J; beseech God to bless his sons.

Aug. 17 I bless God for my education, for my ab[?perhaps abstinence] in the University . . . for my reception at Darby, in a strange place. . . . Be merciful to my brother in a strange place, & direct him to a profitable course.

30 Forgive our provocation since the beginning of this Warr. Prosper & preserve our fleet. . . . Humble the proud Monarch & let his enemies doe valiant things.

Sept. 6 Give success to our Warrs with France, that we may be instrumental to humble the pride of that insolent King.

13 Blest be Thy servant M.II., and O that I were worthy . . . of her love! Show favour to my brother and give him health and inclination to worke.

[Frequent regrets that he was not kinder to his late mother]

Nov. 20 Our late King is against us, and we dread what tragedy there would be if he should return again.
[Occasional wishes to be granted a wife]

1690

Jan. 3 Tempest weather and much rain and great flood upon Severn began the year.

Apr. 5 Keep my brother from insnaring company & dangerous courses.

July 28 [Report of the French landing]

[Scarcely any local allusions this year. He is constantly concerned about his sins. Politically seems to have doubts about the legitimacy of William III's claim to the throne, and fears lest the Almighty may consider England as in a state of rebellion.]

Oct. 2 (L) Brother II. died in London from an effusion of blood on Sunday. Alone I survive of the brothers, not without premonitions of my own death.

Dec. 12 My father, mother and 3 brethren deceased, and I left alone and solitary.

26 I see no likelihood of getting new relations, though worthy & disp[?osing] me to submitt to Thy wil & be grac.[ious] to that pious family.

1691

Jan. 2 This evening I had a conference with Mr. II. Collett of this town³⁴ . . . He denied our Church to be a Church, he disowned any national Church . . . & held unlawfull any imposed forms of praier. He ignorantly condemned our church service; he approved the murder of King Charles I. He persisted in his judgment against the coming in of King Charles II. . . . He spake contemtuously of Dr. Shirlock,³⁵ and said I did not preach, for I did read my sermons.

Aug. 29 This year proceeds too much like the last.

[No other local allusions in 1691. The Diary ends with the end of the volume and year.]

Vol. 1 This volume, one of the two larger ones, had lost its number, and had been renumbered, the original

Vol. 1 being either missing or not identifiable. It is a commonplace book interspersed with an erratic diary, in a mixture of Latin and English, with Greek quotations. There is much verse, apparently the diarist's own, pedestrian but occasionally amusing, including a poem on Tewkesbury (p. 56), reproduced below. The book is paginated up to page 113, but pp. 1–4 are missing. Marginal dates are fairly continuous, but only the month and day are given, no year, until January 1713. The book apparently starts in February 1711, when Matthews had already been at Tewkesbury for 23 years. After 1715 the 'diary' entries degenerate into religious ramblings which grow more and more incoherent. In the last 8 pages, however, some more lucid notes of parochial and household matters appear.

1711

Feb. 24 (L)

Solicited to write an epitaph for the parents of C.D.[owdeswell]³⁶

Mar. 6 (L)

Visited Mr. M.Wh., who told me of the sudden and unhappy death of R.D., Prebendary of Gloucester, – that he arrived at an inn in London late on a Saturday evening, and told the servant not to disturb him until 11 o'clock on Sunday, and a little later was found dead in bed. He was deprived of the office of Reader at Gloucester, and occasioned scandal by the irregularity of his life. He was further pursued by the Bishop and Dean for neglect of Gloucester Cathedral.³⁷ I was godfather at the christening of the son of a relation by marriage of Mr. Jo. H., together with Circuit Judge D. Price and the sister of Justice Powell.³⁸

Mar. 12 (L)

We heard from France of a nobleman thrusting a knife into the breast of Secretary Harley, Chancellor of the Exchequer.³⁹

14 (L)

I received the magistrates in token of reconciliation, but the architect of the mischief, the Chamberlain W.W., was absent.⁴⁰ I can perhaps guess the reason. No public purpose was served.

[Copy of Latin verse epitaph follows, on Charles Dowdeswell esq., senior (d. 21 Oct. 1706) and his wife Elizabeth (d. 22 Dec. 1707)]

17 (L)

I visited J.P. almost in the agony of death, and in almost intolerable pain.

24

Dreamt of Bishop Frampton praying that he might be a Bishop before he died. £100 a year, clear of all charge, is as little as can support a clergyman decently.

Apr. 3 (L)

New churchwardens elected; since the previous ones had continued for ten years, and had rendered their parish accounts for the poor.

6 (L)

Edward Popham, esq. generously promised to clothe 12 boys annually at his expense: I myself promised to clothe a like number this year. He said that he had come into the parish with that intention. It was agreed that he should exercise his authority to elect [scholars], etc.⁴¹

10 (L)

Mr. Th.H.,⁴² W. Sc. and Jos. Wh. inspected the damage to my house from the over-building of my neighbour, Is. M. I warned that it would be hurtful to me, &c. Magistrates sworn in. Council and assessors nominated, E.B. esq. withdrew, annoyed by the unfriendly atmosphere.

15 (L)

I took service at W[alton] Chapel; a large attendance of the poorer sort.

20 (L)

Edw. B. Sympathy for his wife, (left) very poor and a court order for possession of the house granted to a kinsman of his.

21 (L)

Death of the Emperor.⁴³ An engagement of our warships; about 100 killed or wounded.

26 (L)

Visited E.B.'s house. Much furniture and household goods sold, at moderate prices. A wretched dismantling of a well-ordered home. A picture for a few pence. Five books for a price that one was worth.

28 (L)

Took service and catechized at W[alton] Chapel. Wrote on behalf of Thos. E. to Mr. H.G., that his debt would be paid, – I pray it will succeed.

May 3 (L)

R.H., son of a most religious mother and sisters, great friends of mine, has killed himself with a hand-gun.⁴⁴ The cause not yet discovered, so far as I know. . . .

4

'I certify to the Revd. the Archdeacon of this Diocese and to the Ecclesiastical Court, that Hieron. [Jerome] Jacques doth teach a Grammar School in the Town of T., where there hath been for many years an endowed settled Grammar School and of a competent salary; which is expressly contrary to Canon lxxviii. And that since he hath undeservedly obtained a License, he very rarely attends our Church service, but commonly resorts to a separate Meeting: neither doth he offer any of his scholars to be catechiz'd by the Parochial Pastor, contrary to Canon lxxix.

J. Matthews, Vicar

(L) I transmitted (this) to the Archdeacon to be exhibited. . . .

May 11 (L)

Learnt from private letters that there is hope of D.B.'s being relieved and the creditors satisfied. Wrote to his wife.

14 (L)

A useful discussion with D.W., an invalid. I believe (there are) several relations of his among the elect.

- He himself is intelligent and of great piety, in constant bodily weakness.
- 18 A great preass upon the water-men by the orders of Mr. F. Br. and by the direction of Mr. H. of the Privy Council.⁴⁵
- 19 (L) Presented clothing of linen and woollen cloth to studious boys, out of a great number of poor ones. Very decent apparel.
- 25 (L) Urged by a pious and excellent matron that in my (public) prayer I should honour the magistrates with the title 'worshipful'. Which I refrain from doing, not out of pride.
- 28 (L) At Gloucester. I saw 40 or 50 boys, educated by public care and generosity, going to St. Michael's Church.
- 29 (L) Mr. K., a prebendary, preached at the Cathedral;⁴⁶ a methodical and practical sermon.
- June 3 (L) Celebrated communion at W[alton] C[ardiff]; only one man there besides myself.
- 4 (L) Intimation that Allen hath renew'd his lease about a year since. (L) The Chamberlain is therefore withholding my money.⁴⁷
- 16 (L) Arrived at Norbury.⁴⁸ We walked along the most charming banks of the Do.[ve]. There made this translation of my Latin hymn of the Sacrament.
[A poem of some length follows]
- 19 (L) (Hear) much concerning the very corrupt election at Derby. Mr. S.G. is to give a certain church in Derby £60 a year for the perpetual benefit of the incumbent. One of my former scholars says he has reached his 57th year. By which I am reminded of my own age.
A seminary of Dissenting pupils under a master, — Hill. . . . Neglect by my nephew and frequent absence are blamed by common report.⁴⁹
- 21 Lichfield. (L) Antiquity enough, but nothing of ?good taste (palati)
- 22 Birmingham (L) A new church building. Returned to Tewkesbury. God be bless'd for his goodness.
- 28 (L) A letter about the perfidy of H. Tibs, and an attempt against the virtue of a young girl under pretext of marriage, — he has a wife in our parish.
- 30 (L) Received the last payment from J. Taylor for the Poulton house (pro domo Pulton).⁵⁰
- July 7 (L) Frequent ringing in my ears.
- 12 [Verses, ending]:
My journeys don't promotion court,
I need not Bath, Tunbridge, or Epsom see,
But out of common curiosity;
Bon Retiro is my resort.⁵¹
- 13 (L) Replied to the frivolous and false complaint of H.C. and Mich. W., men very litigious and troublesome, as I hear. Which does not become a clergyman.
- 14 (L) Called upon the Revd. Bishop,⁵² whom I found in the chapel. After evening prayer, we had a sermon on the wonderful Revolution begun a few years since.
- 15 (L) Betook myself to Prestbury . . . saw the building soon to be finished, if the contractor is willing. Took luncheon with my friend Mr. W.⁵³ Discoursed of many things. . . .
- 17 (L) Mr. Th. B. freely promised £1,000 for his daughter's dowry.
- 18 (L) The Bishop of London died.
- 23 (L) Thrown from my horse, bruising my left side. Thank God nothing worse.
- 30 (L) Mr. Br.⁵⁴ promised to present complete clothing for six boys, and two guineas yearly.
- Aug. 4 (L) A maidservant seized with fever.
- 5 (L) Preached at Bredon.
- 10 Putt to the sick physitian: Whether he had strong convictions then of a future state. He answered with great seriousness: O yes.
- 19 (L) A new gown, cassock and wig.
- 22 Be silent, thou Divil; as Ambrose once spake:
I'll live as a clergyman, not as a rake.
- 28 (L) The Archdeacon of Hereford came to see me concerning a question of marriage. A man promised to return to our communion from the Quakers. Such proselytes not worth much!
[Four pages of extracts from *The Examiner* follow, on current politics]
- Sept. 7 Poem on The Vertigo in the Head, 'upon occasion of a short fit of it after some pains at the Charity Schools some few days before'.
- 23 Poem on *Bon Retiro* [a friend's house]
- Oct. 1 (L) Dined at Pool [Pull] Court. Unbecoming and lamentable behaviour of Mr. R.D. Charles D. of Fort.[hampton] promised to clothe the boys not yet clothed. Mrs. D. and her daughter, from both of whom I expected liberality & benevolence, have contributed nothing.⁵⁵
- 4 I rec. the salary of one year of the money out of Pembrookshire (L) by the hands of Bailiff W. There

- remains a year and a half's stipend owing. They say they have received no more from D. Allen.
- 11 (L) A collection taken for the Charity School boys. But the congregation and collection very small on account of heavy rain.
- 17 (L) I hear of the death of a fellow-clergyman, (D——ll of K.),⁵⁶ who took the service in church and expired a few hours later. A relative of his, Wm. D. of Pool Court, died yesterday.
- Nov. 20 (L) Mr. Popham signified the pious intention of giving the cost of 20 books a year to the Charity School. May he happily put it into effect!
- Dec. 1 (L) Many scandalous things concerning Mr. D. of P[ool] C[ourt].
I wrote to R.D.W. on behalf of my friend John II.; was not honoured with a reply, but he acceded to the petition.
- 10 Her Maj[esty's] excellent speech to her Parliament, wherein she inclines much to the accomplishing a lasting & honourable peace.
- 14 [A dream of being assailed by demons in the larger stable of the New Inn at Gloucester]⁵⁷
- 15 (L) We hear that Henry Ireton, one of the members of Parliament for our town, is dead, from stone in the bladder. Query whether his father did not die similarly and at a like age.⁵⁸
- 17 (L) R.D. and C.D. candidates.⁵⁹
I received this year £32 from the tithes of Tredington and Fiddington, mostly from the legacy of Edwin Scrimshire. . . .⁶⁰
Anthony L[echmere],⁶¹ a man of high intelligence and elegant conversation, and expert in Italic canticles; but, it seems, rather hostile or ill-affected towards the Rector of Hanley. He strenuously opposed H.C. and Mich. W. and repressed their arrogance.
- 22 (L) Gift, from a pious family in the town, of money to buy 4 books for the Charity School.
- 1712
- Jan. 1 (L) Election of Wm. Dowdeswell as Burgess [M.P.]; no other candidate.
- 3 (L) The Duke of Marlborough dismissed at the height of his power and dignity. Twelve new peers created.
- 14 (L) Dined at Gloucester with relations and sister of Judge P.[?Powell]
- 31 At the funeral of Mrs. B., one Sm. of Worcester was present who began to speak of the times; against the displacing of the Duke of Marlborough . . . I answered that the Queen might have sufficient reason for what she did . . . I was afterwards told that he is a rigid Dissenter.
- Mar. 20 (L) B.H. dead, without any divine offices. He left an excessive fortune, most unjustly acquired.
- 25 I writ letters to the Lord Cap.[el] and Mr. B. Parker, for their subscriptions . . . Out of gratitude to God for his singular providence to me in my election to Derby School, I will be more kind to the charity-children.
- 31 (L) Good hope appears from my letter and petition to Lord Capel. May he be blessed. Other noble families in the county to be approached — Tracy —
- Apr. 2 Sett [leased] the small tythes of Walton Cardiff and Southwick for 21 years, if I should live so long and he hold the farm.
- 13 Discourse with S.B. I admonished her to make her peace with God by humble confession, supplication and weeping . . . to forsake utterly vicious company . . . to be sensible that she escaped by the partiality of the Jewry [Jury] . . . that we did not think that she would have been that day in the land of the living . . . &c, &c. She promised reformation.
- 20 (L) The Hon. Lady Capel promised £5 per annum to the Charity School, to be paid me by Mr. G. Wilson.
- 30 Agreed to sell the lease of the New Inne to Mr. R. Pitt of Gloucester for £600.⁶²
- May 2

Tewkesbury

Cities and Towns by rivers mostly stand,
Which doth yield benefit and trade command;
And since brave Severn doth so near us coast,
We may our Tewkesbury's situation boast.
Avon is also proud to visit us,
And becomes navigable by our sluice;
Swolgate, a third enricher of our soil,⁶³
Doth often with a sodain ferment boil!
But when the high and lashing floods surround
The place, the dead are buried and drown'd.
Happy in fishy waters and fat lands,
A populous and trading Burgh it stands;
Our cotten-work to every shape we bring,
Which some once thought a present for a king.

The little poignant seed I will not name,
Which lies conceal'd under a gilded frame,⁶⁴
But now, alas, these famous balls less shine,
This noble manufacture doth decline.

Our Church is stately and well fill'd the steeple,
I wish there were like harmony in the people;
One Church, but three conventicles are here, –
Calvinists, Anabaptists, Quakers interfere.

Here a decisive Battle once was fought;
Some died in field, some were to scaffold brought;
The valiant Somerset fell a sacrifice
By Wenlock's treachery, or cowardice.

The ponderous school-roof on a sodain fell,⁶⁵
– The youth first rescued by a miracle.
Had not kind Heaven interpos'd to save,
The School had been their unexpected grave
Heav'n grant our nursery to this antient place
May be a lasting and additional grace;
Being well-manag'd, it may do more good
Than if the Abbey in its splendour stood.

- May 19–20 At Worc. Preach'd in churches of St. Andrew & All Sts. Saw much of the City & divers alms-houses.
27 Mett the Archdeacon's son, a Mr. H. None but approve the sale of the lease of the N[ew] I[nn], and that I free myself from much care.
28 (L) At Prestbury. It is almost agreed to buy the three very convenient ?fish-ponds (piscuorum) adjacent, if we can enjoy a clear title. Communed with R. Sm., a clergyman who has lately lost his only and most promising son.
- June 3 (L) An earthquake felt by many of this town and at Prestbury, Gloucester and Cirencester, lasting a few minutes. It struck terror into those who felt it. Two o'clock in the morning. I enquired of a neighbouring clergyman, – he neither felt nor heard anything.⁶⁶
5 (L) I met Mr. Th. W., member of the lower House of Parlt. He freely intimated to me the views of certain members. . . .
6 (L) The Rev. Mr. Y made mention of the Gloucester Cathedral School, and proposed me as suitable to succeed to it if I aspired to it. Which I once did.
14 (L) Mem. £25 paid me by Mr. W. One year's stipend from the munificence of Viscount Camden, – at a very convenient time. There remains the stipend of another year and a half on St. John's Day next.
22 (L) I took duty at Cammerdon [Kemerton] and B. [?Beckford] for the incumbent, who has preached for me. He does not rule his congregation well. The rustics misbehave during the service, especially at C. The rector is looking for a wife with an ample dowry. Excessive gesticulations in the pulpit. His sermon 'de sonibus'⁶⁷ was, on the word of a gentlewoman, preached in her hearing in A.D. 1688!⁶⁸
- July 10 I drew up an Address to Her Majesty at the request of Mr. P.[?Popham] for our Town. (L) Without the magistrates' knowledge. I signed it.
29 Mr. Dr. of Worcester told me that our Address, without the magistrates, was ridiculed by some clergymen there. He is a rank W—g, like his kinsman Sm.
- Aug. 2 (L) For the fruits and amenities of my little garden, God be blessed.
12 (L) I offended the Dignitaries – Dean and Prebendaries – because I said I had put aside an extravagant sum for the coming restoration.⁶⁹ And the Chancellor because I spoke of the presumption of H. Jacques. Mr. Bunyan's book (The Life & Death of Mr. Badman), commended by Mr. Wh. as usefull for Charity Schools, tho he hath some things favourable to Dissenters. I bought four of them.
14 (L) At Presbury. Spoke with the Rev. Vicar of (?his) luncheon with the Judges and the Bishop of Oxford; of the trial; of the alliance of the Kings of France and Spain.
21 I received a paquet from the H^{bk} Society,⁷⁰ and their favourable account of Tewkesbury Charity School.
25 The D[uke] of Beauford (*sic*) at Gloc. Mr. W. disc[oursed] with him about half an hour. I din'd with some of his servants. His valet de chambre did often swear, a Frenchman. Mr. Kinsman earnestly intreated me to tarry for the title of his Chaplain.
28 (L) Dined at Pull Court. J.H. said objectionable things [political].
31 I preach'd a sermon on behalf of the Charity Boys. The collection exceeded £3. I purpose to print it.

- Sept. 2 Took a journey to Worcester in order thereto.
 14 In Worcester news that the Chevalier of St. George⁷¹ is now stiled Duke of Glour.]
 16 (L) With the physician Dr. Bagly, of Worcester. He seems a man of experience and judgment. Jaqu[es] presumed to speak, ineptly.
- Oct. 1 The day before, I stood with Judge P[owell] and his niece at the baptism of a relation's son.
 4 Advt. of my printed sermon in Worc. News. Mr. M. & Mr. Woolley, booksellers of Worcester, Mr. Loveday of Evesham, Mr. Johnson⁷² of Litchfield, Mr. Russel of Bridgenorth, Mr. Peach of Birmingham, Mr. Gittings of Salop [Shrewsbury], Mr. Wild of Hereford.
- Nov. 11 (L) The very religious lady Mrs. D., attacked by the small-pox, was received into my house, and happily recovered, by the grace of God. Her niece Catherine H. stayed here with her for some days, but left at the same time; it was thought by the doctors and others that she [too] had shown some signs of the disease.⁷³
 The doctor from Worcester, Mr. Th., a former Fellow of Oriel, Oxon.,⁷⁴ a praiser of College life and of the hospitality of the Bishop of Worcester.
 She, Mrs. D. was taken home in a sedan chair.
 Mr. Ch.[arles] Dowdeswell hath ordered the clothing for the other [charity] children. (L) Mrs. D. offered me 3 guineas in return for hospitality, but I accepted one only.
 Mr. Colson's birthday; the D[uke] of B[eaufort] and others dining at his Hospital.
- 15 (L) Wrote to the wealthy and immensely beneficent Mr. Colson⁷⁵ of Bristol, M.P., enclosing my sermon on charity.
- 17 (L) Our churchwarden Mr. Henry Dobyns, that upright man, praiseworthy for his piety, died; and a few days before, Jane, wife of G. Guy, a woman of good report and pious. There are all too few upholders of religion in this Town.⁷⁶
- 18 (L) Baptised a child at Walton Cardiff, going and returning with difficulty owing to the flood.
 22 (L) In the Worc. News of this day: that the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun have mortally wounded each other. (L) Let this be a warning to others.
- 26 (L) Bought some useful books at auction.
- Dec. 5 Wretchedly suggested by some that it is a dangerous thing to the Society⁷⁷ to teach the slaves (of America) that they have an immortal soul, becaus (say they) they grow proud thereupon, and think themselves as good as their masters.
 8 A generous present of gold and wine from a gentleman, – but the same day a scanty collection of benevolence from the Town.
 11 Received a kind letter from the Hon^{ble} Society, thanks for my sermons, and approbation of my proceedings.
- 1713 [Jan.–Feb. Apart from brief references to the Charity School, there is nothing but verse, classical quotations, and religious musings]
- Mar. 10 For about a fortnight, troubled with a great indisposition of body, occasioned (as I suppose) by a cold . . . I hope to recover.
- [A long gap in the journal, doubtless due to ill-health. Later in the year Mr Matthews appears to have had a long stay at Bath ('ad Balneas prope Bristol'). On Nov. 9 he records taking his first services after his return.]
- 1714
- Feb. 25 Lent two vol. of Mr. Shakespears works to Mr. M. Wilson.
 [Then notes on early Tewkesbury history, taken from Atkyns' *Ancient & Present State of Gloucestershire*, published 1712, – e.g. 'The curate (of Tewkesbury) hath no house nor glebe'.]
- Mar. 13 'Mrs. G. . . . A rent-charge of 20s per annum is due from the house to the Minister. Be pleas'd to send the arrears. Your Friend and Servant, J.M.'⁷⁸
- Apr. 6 Lent to Mrs Mary Sayres the vi Vol. of Shakespear. That return'd, a vii Vol., in May.⁷⁹
 May 12 Mem. Paid to my servant Esther, two guineas.
- June 16 (L) I resume my trifling account of things.
 [Then an obscure reference to one B.B. and a Borough election]
- Aug. 27 Lent to Mrs. Sayres the iii Vol. of Plutarch's Lifes (*sic*)
 28 London, on Thurs. last, died the Ld. Bishop of Gloc., aged 82.
- Nov. 9 Could any one have flattered himself with a prospect of this day in 1688? when all the foundation of the Government was out of course . . . our legal constitution dissolv'd, the fences of our civil & federal rights overturn'd . . . mass-houses publicly opened, &c.⁸⁰
- Dec. 11 (L) Visited the Grammar School; only 9 boys and not profiting much. I hear of various candidates for the School, – one a sectary.

- 23 (L) I recognised J.H. at Bredon, but he did not salute me.
25 The care of all the churches lay upon St. Paul, but I have labour enough in one, in this divided Town.
- 1715
Jan. 30 Lent to Mrs. Sayrs the i Vol. of the Turk. Spy.⁸¹
Feb. 4(L) My friend the Rev. J. Pr. visited me, whom I received with great cordiality.
[More dreams related, and many appeals to the Almighty for grace and mercy]
n.d. If the Pret[ender] should prevail, what can the Church of England expect but ruin and destruction?⁸²
- 1716
Feb. 20 A Sea-Monster about 15 feet high appeared near Marseilles, making lament on the shoar (Worcester Newspaper)
Mar. 14 Lent to Mr. G.J. upon bond, £100.
June 15 (L) After the sale of a bedchamber by my niece to Mr. Jones,⁸³ I feel weak in the head and feeble-minded.
Sept. 22 (L) Mr. Jones (Sch. Mr.) seeks my niece in marriage.
I rejoice in your names, Matthea Joannis.
Nov. 5 Hear that J. Howe hath marr. the daughter of Mr. Rob. at Worcester.
17 Consider the advance of my age. . . .
Urged by a dry distemperature of brain
I scarce can preach, or study, but complain!
23 I have felt gracious impulses. (L) Why are they wanting in my old age?
Dec. 21 I saw one whom I supposed to have been a scholar of mine at Darby (Tho. Brookehouse), but he did not own himself to me.
26 *Mem.* 5 guineas to my kinswoman, lent.
I seem to sink apace
And shal not long hold out the rugged race.
- 1717
Feb. 6 Lent Mr. Cotton's *Wonders of the Peake* to Mrs. Sayre.
25 Benjamin Pearson, *Of the Creed*, lent to Mr. Jones, Schol. Mr.⁸⁴
May 4 Lent to Mr. Jones the 2 vols. of Dr. Burnet's *H[istory] of the Reformation*.
31 If here they love me not, Thou canst remove
Thy servant to a sphere of love,
Or show me my dear friend on banks of Dove.
June 16 Lubin, upon Juvenal, lent to Mr. Jones
Aug. 10 Numquamne visam Darbiae gratum oppidum
Dovaeque ripas fertiles?
(Shall I never again behold the pleasant town of Derby,
And the fertile banks of Dove?)
Sept. 10 (L) 'Let this be the end of the sacred works of Matthew' was said after the death of Matthew Paris; let it not be said *before* the death of Matthew Tewkesburyensis.
[Throughout this year, a torrent of appeals for divine mercy]
- 1718
Mar. 30 Began the reading of the N[ew] T[estament] with Dr. Ham, son and aunt.
Apr. 12 We must abstain from all places of danger such as playhouses, balls, dancings, Musick Meetings, and the like.
May 2 (L) My niece joined in matrimony yesterday with a clergyman. May God bestow his blessing and the best of consequences.
?July Few families of the town that I can with (?) go to.
To my N[ephew or niece], 5 guineas.
Sept. 13 A guinea into E[sther]'s hands.⁸⁵ I observe whether she gives an account of it.
Oct. 4 Preach'd to the bailives, and clos'd with admonition to do the repairing of our church.
31 Lent to my kinsman Mr. H. Jones, £30. The money paid Jan. 13, 1718. [1718/19]
- 1719
[The only journal entry for (apparently) this year is one undated: 'On Easter Day a considerable number of communicants. I preied & administered the sacrament, my kinsman assisting me.']
- 1720
Jan. 20 Paid to servant Anne, 16s.
Mar. 12 A guinea to Esther, to change.
June 25 *Mem.* Lent to my kinsman Mr. Jones fifty pounds upon security of writings and a Bond to be given.

- n.d. Bless my family and the young branch of it.
Mr. Br. des[ired] my vote for Mr. Read.⁸⁶
- 1721
- Feb. 10 £5 lent to my niece, £90 to my kinsman Mr. Jones.
- ?1722
- Sept. 13 Lent to Mr. Jones £6.
- Dec. 10 Received of Mr. Jones £20 for tabling of himself, wife, two children & two maids, which is not sufficient.
Death of my friend W.G.
- ?1723
- Jan. Lent Mr. Jones £6.
- Mar. 1 (L) Jo. Br. went out before prayers were ended and with some sign of being offended. The cause I know not.
- July 13 [Memoranda of small loans and payments to a Mr. Brassington]
£100 delivered to Mr. G. Taylor for my use.
- 1724
- Apr. 17 Paid to Esther one year's wages £3.
- June 10 Writings relating to ?Graton delivered to Mr. Jones.
- Oct. 11 John Hains's insolent behaviour at the church of W[alton] C[ardiff], my kinsman Mr. Jones supplying [doing duty] for me.

The diary ends with an entry by the nephew and successor: 'I promise to pay Mr. Matthews fifty pounds a year for his life, and to allow him his dyet and maintain one to attend him.

Witness my hand Henry Jones'

Notes

1. 'Tewkesbury Vicars' MSS., in Rare Books & MSS. Dept., D.M.S. Watson Building, Malet Place; but enquiries should be addressed to the Librarian, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
2. The relationships are discussed below.
3. *Alumni Cantabrigienses*.
4. Tewkesbury incumbents of the 17th century had included John and Francis Wells, but no Jeremiah Wells has been traced.
5. Gloucester City Apprenticeship Register (now in Glos. R.O.).
6. I again have to thank Mr. Brian Frith for the information that a memorial in St. Mary de Crypt church, Gloucester (as given in Fosbroke's *Hist. of Gloucester*) records the death, on 3 June 1700, of Mrs. Ann Barnsdale, widow, aged 90, and her husband William, a Gloucester clothier, in 1665. This was an old yeoman family of Woodford, nr. Stone.
7. See *D.N.B.*
8. *V.C.H. Derbys.*, ii, 219.
9. *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 165.
10. James Bennett, *Hist. of Tewkesbury*, 439–445.
11. See *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 154–5.
12. Bennett, *op. cit.*, 230.
13. *Ibid.*, 416.
14. The three villainous knights in Book I of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*: 'Faithless, Lawless, and Church Robber!'
15. Bennett, *op. cit.*, 188, f.n.
16. *Ibid.*, 188, 366, 368. Mr. Brian Frith has suggested that both Jones and Matthews may have succumbed to an epidemic which burial registers show to have been rife in West Gloucestershire in 1728–29.
17. *Ibid.*, 368.
18. For a brief and clear discussion of the problems, see F.W. Maitland, *Constitutional History of England*, 283–286.
19. Cf. *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 108: 'During the later 17th century and the 18th, the rectors [of Woolstone] were often non-resident'.
20. Bennett, *op. cit.*, 366.
21. At Tewkesbury, 1 May 1718 (ex. inf. Mr. Brian Frith).
22. *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 156.

23. In the original, the entries for 1687 are found before those for 1686, through misplacing of a section when the MSS. were bound later.
24. The Bromley family of Upton-on-Severn were descendants of Sir Thomas Bromley, Lord Chancellor in the reign of Elizabeth I.
25. Doubtless Edward Fowler, later (1691–1714) Bishop of Gloucester; under James II a controversial figure because of his strongly anti-Catholic views, which John Matthews shared, cf. the next entry.
26. For the new Borough Charter of 12 Mar. 1686, see Bennett, 209–210, and 383. The first Mayor (for a few months only) was Charles Hancock of Twyning, with whose family the Vicar was apparently on good terms (see his entry for 28 Jan. 1688).
27. The Tracy family of Toddington, Glos., who acquired the Abbot's Lodging at Hailes after the Dissolution but did not use it as a residence after 1686 (see Rudder, *New History of Glos.*). 'His Lordship' is John, 3rd Viscount Tracy of Rathcoole (Ireland), born 1617, died 8 March 1686/7. John Matthews's temporary employment as his private chaplain was ended by Lord Tracy's death.
28. Perhaps a reference to the living of Hidcote Bartrim, near Chipping Campden.
29. Perhaps the Savoy French church, not far from his lodgings; but the Huguenot refugees already had several churches in London, of which the most important was in Threadneedle Street in the City.
30. To Gloucester. James II had just paid a formal visit, on 22 August, to the city still in disgrace because of its stubborn resistance to Charles I.
31. 'Magal' is obscure, if not misread. One Samuel Corbett was Vicar of Sandhurst 1685–87.
32. Mrs. Ann Hancock left by will to the church in 1725 a silver cup (Bennett, 311).
33. William III and Mary were proclaimed sovereigns on 13 February.
34. Henry Collet, later Town Clerk from 1698 to 1715, – see Introduction and Bennett, 416.
35. Probably William Sherlock (1641?–1715), Dean of St. Paul's and religious writer, involved in controversy about the 1688 Revolution.
36. See below, after entry of 14 March. C.D. is Charles Dowdeswell (d. 1713); see Bennett, *op. cit.*, footnote to p. 441. The memorial is recorded by Bigland, in Forthampton church.
37. This is Richard Duke, M.A. (1658–1711), 'poet and divine', a Chaplain to Queen Anne, but not, it seems, of irreproachable morals. His death, similarly described by the *D.N.B.*, occurred on 10 February, 1711.
38. 'Justice Powell', to whom Matthews refers several times, is Sir John Powell (1645–1713), Town Clerk of Gloucester (his native city) from 1674, M.P. for the city 1685, and a judge in the Exchequer and Queen's Bench from 1691. His reputation for humanity as well as learning is illustrated in the *D.N.B.* by his remark to a woman accused of witchcraft who was said to fly: 'You may, – there is no law against flying'.
39. Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford, was stabbed, but only slightly hurt, on 8 March 1711 by a French refugee calling himself a marquis, who had turned traitor and was being examined by a Privy Council committee.
40. William Wilson, Borough Chamberlain 1698–1728 and Bailiff 1701; see Introduction.
41. Edward Popham of Tewkesbury Lodge, aged only 23, an unsuccessful Parliamentary candidate for Tewkesbury in 1714, was perhaps already nursing the constituency. For the family, see *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 132; and cf. entry for 20 Nov., below.
42. Perhaps Theophilus Holland (Bailiff, 1702).
43. The Austrian (Holy Roman) Emperor Charles VI, our ally against France in the War of the Spanish Succession.
44. *Schlopetus*, – an arquebus.
45. The conscription or 'impressment' of seafaring men for the Navy was regularly (and legally) practised in time of war until the 19th century, though it seems doubtful if 'water-men' so far from the sea as Tewkesbury should have been liable to the press-gangs' attentions.
46. Doubtless Benjamin King, a Canon of Gloucester 1700–1728.
47. Allen must have been the tenant of the Campden bequest property in Pembrokeshire, (see Introduction).
48. Norbury near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, on the River Dove.
49. This is obscure. It is just possible that Henry Jones, Matthews's nephew and future curate, had been usher for a short time at Derby School (where his uncle had earlier been Master), as Jones was older than usual (20) when he went up to Cambridge in 1711.
50. A rent-charge bequeathed by Thomas Poulton in 1607 for the benefit of the Vicar. (See below, 13 Mar. 1714, and *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 155.)
51. The name of a friend's house; cf. below, 23 Sept.
52. Bishop Edward Fowler.
53. Doubtless Francis Welles, Vicar of Prestbury 1699–1756.
54. Perhaps John Bridges (d. 1731 aged 70), whose monument in Tewkesbury Abbey is recorded by Bigland.
55. For the Dowdeswell family of Pull Court, see Introduction and n. 10 above.
56. Evidently William Dowdeswell, Rector of Kingham, Oxon., 1680–1711.
57. Familiar ground to John Matthews: see Introduction.

58. One of Tewkesbury's two members since 1708, and the only son of Henry Ireton, the Parliamentary general, son-in-law of Cromwell, and regicide. The father, however, died of fever during Cromwell's Irish campaign.
59. Presumably Richard and Charles Dowdeswell; it was, however, William Dowdeswell who was elected: see entry for 1 Jan. 1712, below.
60. For the gift (not legacy) of Edwin Skrymsher, see *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 155.
61. See Bennett, op. cit., 256, f.n., for the Lechmere family of Hanley Castle, Worcs., a few miles from Tewkesbury. Anthony, elected to one of the Tewkesbury seats in 1714, was succeeded as M.P. by his brother Nicholas, created Baron Lechmere in 1721.
62. See Introduction.
63. The River Swilgate, rising near Cheltenham, joins the Avon at Tewkesbury shortly before the Avon's junction with the Severn.
64. The once celebrated Tewkesbury mustard was sold in balls, which were often gilt; see *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 143.
65. Tewkesbury Grammar School was long held in the chapels of St. James and St. Nicholas, then cut off from the Abbey church. There seems to be no record of this collapse, possibly during Matthews's incumbency.
66. Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates* records no earthquake shock felt in England at this date.
67. ? for *sontibus*, – malefactors.
68. The Rector of Kemerton, Nathaniel Lye, held the living for 62 years (*V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 218).
69. Of Tewkesbury Abbey church, – see Bennett, op. cit., 144–5.
70. No doubt the S.P.C.K.
71. The Old Pretender. This seems to have been only a rumour.
72. Doubtless Michael Johnson (1656–1731), father of Dr. Samuel Johnson.
73. The Mrs. Dowdeswell in question was probably the widow of Charles Dowdeswell senior. Catherine H. may have been a daughter of Charles Hancock senior, who married a niece of Charles Dowdeswell.
74. Not identified in the Oriel College printed register.
75. Edward Colston (not Colson), M.P., the Bristol merchant and philanthropist.
76. Bigland records a memorial in Tewkesbury Abbey to Henry Dobbins, sen. and one to Jane, wife of *William* Guy; she died 16 Nov. 1712, aged 35.
77. The S.P.C.K. (founded 1698) or the S.P.G. (1701).
78. See above, note 50. 'Mrs G' was evidently a new tenant.
79. Mrs. Sayres (several more loans of books to whom are noted) may have been related to previous Vicars, Robert Eaton (d. 1668) and his son Robert (d. 1687). A memorial in the church (see Bigland) was to Mrs. Joyce Sayer, daughter of the elder Eaton; she died in 1753 aged 96.
80. King George I had been crowned on 20 October, and the Protestant succession secured.
81. The fictional *Letters written by a Turkish Spy*, by G.P. Mariana, a Genoese, published in English translation in ?1687–94, were widely read and imitated.
82. The abortive '15 Jacobite Rebellion was defeated at Sheriffmuir and Preston in November 1715.
83. This and the next entry are the first references to Henry Jones, who becomes curate and eventually vicar.
84. ?Samuel Jones (no relation), a learned dissenting minister whose academy in Tewkesbury was of high repute. (See Bennett, op. cit., 224–6 and 370, and *V.C.H. Glos.*, viii, 165–6.)
85. A servant, – see above, 12 May 1714.
86. George Reade was elected an M.P. for Tewkesbury in 1722. (Bennett, op. cit., 257).

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