

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES OF PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH HATHERN

THOMAS ALLSOPP was a conforming Presbyterian and Rector of Hathern for 34 years until his death in 1682. he left an annuity of 24 shillings for the poor of the parish.

JOHN AYLMER was tutor to Lady Jane Grey and became Bishop of London. He was also a Patron of the Church. He was described as "the only preacher in Leicestershire, where he effectually fixed the Protestant religion." He died in 1594.

GABRIEL ARMSTRONG was curate to and son-in-law of Thomas Barrowdale, whom he succeeded as Rector for 21 years.

The plague killed 74 of the total population of 200 in the village, probably including his wife and 3 of their children. They died in August 1645.

He was a popular man and his name was a favourite choice for children for the next 100 years.

JOSEPH SMITH was the next Rector but on 17 Sept. 1646 Robert Palmer, Vicar of Shepshed was intruded into the rectory. Although he was a Puritan sympathiser, he was also "no preacher and scandalous." He was buried in Shepshed on 30 Sept. 1658.

ANDREW GLEN was a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge and a widely-travelled authority on and collector of botanical specimens. He was a friend of Mr. Willoughby of Wollaton Hall in Nottingham. After his appointment as Rector in 1694 all these activities appear to have ceased. He married Elizabeth Palmer in Hathern in 1698, the same year that Dame Mary Phillipps presented silver plate to Hathern Church. She was the wife of Sir Ambrose, Patron. In September 1998 there was a service in the Church to celebrate the 300th. anniversary of this with a dramatic re-enactment by children dressed in the costume of the day. It was recorded in the Press and on BBC Radio.

He may possibly have been the same Andrew Glen who was pastor of Cotes during the ravages of the plague. Either he or his father was a hero, another Mompesson, who tended the victims. Potter reports that "He cheered the victims with the consolation of religion: he fed and tended them while living, and after their death, bore them himself to the grave, which his own hands had dug, for nobody else had the courage to go near the stricken."

Andrew and Elizabeth had 3 daughters.

The eldest, Elizabeth married Thomas Allsopp, Attorney, of Loughborough. Their daughter Mary married Samuel Phillipps of Garendon. Her second husband was Sir William Gordon, Patron of the parish.

The middle daughter, Mary, married Caleb Lowdham, Vicar of Diseworth.

THOMAS HEATH became Rector in 1732 after the death of Andrew Glen.

He was also Vicar of Shepshed and preferred to live there.

It was not a fortunate time for Hathern because he took almost all of the church plate with him to Shepshed for 'safe-keeping', where it has remained ever since.

Hathern was served by several curates over the next 33 years.

WILLIAM MIDDLETON was one of these curates until he became Rector in 1765. He served as Rector for another 35 years.

Nicholls found him very helpful when compiling his book on Leics.

There were family connections with banking.

Three of the five bells were hung during his incumbency, the treble being paid for by voluntary subscription from the parish.

His grandson had the present East window installed as memorial to him. The existing medieval one was removed in order to make this possible.

SIR WILLIAM GORDON K.B. became a principal landholder in Hathern following the 1777 Enclosure Act, along with his wife, Dame Mary Gordon, the Rev. William Middleton, the Rev. Joseph Smith (curate of the Chapel of Osmaston), the Master and Fellows and Scholars of Christ's College, Cambridge.

Richard Cheslyn Esq. was a lessee and his sub-tenants included Thomas Exon, John Exon, Thomas Harriman, Samuel Bowley, Samuel Smith.

A map was issued at the time indicating the ownership of the land.

WILLIAM BAYLEY COCKER was a curate in 1801. He established Sunday Schools and tried to put an end to the cock-fighting in the churchyard.

EDWARD THOMAS MARCH PHILLIPPS became Rector in 1808.

He had been born in Uttoxeter and was married to Elizabeth and had 2 sons and 2 daughters, Rose and Lucy. Lucy lived in Hathern until her father died and then moved to Cheltenham. She wrote a book "Records of the Ministry of Rev. E. T. M. Phillipps". London 1862.

His deeds were also recorded in Margaret Pawley's book "Faith and Family, the Life and Circle of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle". Canterbury Press.

Rev. A. J. Ison published a book "A Few Notes on the History Of Hathern" in 1927 and wrote accounts of the lives of past Rectors including ETMP. He in turn made references to the work of T. R. Potter, 1868.

Rev Phillipps built the Charity Room as a Sunday School in 1832 and this was run by staff trained by him. 250 children began to read and write there.

Education was very important to him. He taught his own sons and daughters before they went to grammar school, but was not confident enough to teach them a foreign language. However, his boys had reached such a high standard in Latin that they were far ahead of their class-mates when they arrived at boarding school.

He provided a library for the village.

When he arrived in Hathern, most of the 1200 villagers were illiterate. The school was being run by an untrained parish clerk, and there was no building as such. He developed education to such a degree that some 400 persons were educated in his night school for sums and reading. The day school opened in 1850.

He was the last minister of All Saints' Dishley and founder of Thorpe Acre Church and took great interest in the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He would travel

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to give weekly lectures and would think nothing of walking through the night to reach the venue and back home again for distances of 40 miles

In 1835 he organised a collection for those who suffered on account of the problems in the hosiery trade. He and his relative Ambrose provided impoverished workers with allotments large enough to feed their families. He also established soup kitchens. There is at least one example of his kindness in helping the destitute where a starving young woman walked as far as the Anchor Inn and collapsed. He saw to it that she was taken in by a villager and looked after til she subsequently died.

He worked closely with the local physician, Dr. Peach, and learned from him how to care for the sick. He was tireless in his medical administrations. In 1846 he cared for 290 people with smallpox, measles and 'low fever', and all but 17 survived. As he aged, so he became disabled and crawled on his hands and knees in order to climb the stairs to the sick rooms of the poor who were unable to afford the doctor.

Despite his strong efforts to encourage temperance, he was renowned for his sense of humour and was a keen advocate of sports. He was instrumental in the provision of a sports field for the village. He is quoted as having said to his sons "I allow you one game of cricket per day until your examinations, and after that as many games as you think will not damage your advancement."

Many people ascribe to him the phrase 'Wicked Hathern.'

Before he arrived in the village there had been trouble from certain groups of belligerent males. There were regular fights in the churchyard and onlookers yelled encouragement. During church services it was common for the congregation to pelt each other across the aisles with prayer-books. On one occasion during a wedding, those present became even more rowdy than usual, and objects were thrown about with great abandon. The couple at the altar were narrowly missed by a heavy missile and Rev. Phillipps stopped the service. Only after the churchwardens had ousted the congregation did he continue with the ceremony behind locked doors. The mob outside hooted and yelled through the windows.

He described Hathern as a "barbarous place" and "a cage of every unclean beast"

He was a much-loved and great man and was mourned by all at his death during Wakes Week, on 12th. July 1859

He was buried near to his memorial set into the exterior of the north side of the church, and lies with his wife Elizabeth who died on 28 th April 1861 aged 69, and three of their children, Edward Thomas (died 22-7-1838 aged 22), Frederick (died 23-3-1831 aged 14) and Emma Sophia (died 8-5-1849 aged 25)

Potter said of him "The Church had no better pastor and the Bible Society no better friend.... of him those that loved him may truly say

'That life is all the sweeter that he lived,
and death is all the brighter that he died' "

AMBROSE MARCH PHILLIPPS was baptised in Hathern Church in 1809. He was founder of Mount St. Bernard's Abbey.

EDWARD SMYTHIES was curate to E.T.M. Phillipps and his son-in-law. He became Rector in 1859 and restored the church in 1861-2. He built the transept chapel in memory of Edward.

JOSEPH GLEN LAWRANCE was Rector from 1891-1923. George Webster can remember him and the following rectors to date. His nickname was 'Jody' and was always seen in a black cloak. Whenever he saw a poor child in the village streets he would stop to speak and often pulled a silver coin from his pocket to give to the child. George used to deliver milk from house to house from two gallon buckets. He had to walk down the steps behind the rectory where Mrs. Lawrance would hold out her aluminium measuring bowl and watch carefully while George filled it.

ARTHUR JESSE ISON wrote a booklet 'A Few Notes On The History Of Hathern' while he was Rector from 1932-1931. He was also a history master at Loughborough Grammar School. He was said to be a very pleasant man and always took part in village life, including char-a-banc trips to Skegness.

DOUGLAS HOOLE is remembered as a tall man.

ROBERT DOBLE died tragically in 1961. He and his wife took their yellow Labrador dog on an outing to Hunstanton. The dog got into difficulties in the water and the Rev. Doble tried to save him. His wife then went into the water too but they both drowned. The dog managed to scramble to safety and survived. George remembers only ever seeing him in sandals, whatever the season or weather. He used to mow the Rectory lawns after the 11 o'clock service on a Sunday. When criticised, he would say that Saturday was the true Sabbath Day in days gone by. He was noted for interest in astronomy and 7 or 8 students at a time lodging in the rooms in the Rectory. The numbers on the bedroom doors survived until the sale of the Rectory in 1998.

CYRIL ROBERT BULL was in the Mansfield hosiery business before becoming ordained.

FREDERICK CHARLES JOHN CRAVEN served as Rector for 4 years until 1973. He was quite elderly and suffered ill health after some youths broke into the Rectory and knocked him unconscious.

LEONARD ARTHUR DUTTON occasionally comes to visit with his wife Meg.

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STUART SAMUEL was the youngest man to be appointed Rector within living memory at least. As a Yorkshireman he was a keen viewer of the TV series "Last of the Summer Wine". He told me that Yorkshire women aren't like Edie and Pearl .. they're much fiercer.

He always seemed to wear shorts, sandals, and a purple sweater with holes under his cassock. He was a welcome visitor to the sick as he always had something interesting to talk about.

He remarried after the death of his first wife, Madeleine. He is now settled in Waltham-on-the-Wolds with Judith who is active in church life.

Andree Bagley