

NOTES ON A RECENTLY RECOVERED REGISTER  
OF CLAYBROOKE.

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FOLLOWING on a change of Churchwardens at Easter, 1893, an examination was made of the contents of the Parish Chest, and among the papers was found a small book, bound in parchment, in which were entered in strict chronological order, all the births, baptisms, marriages, and burials, which took place in the parish of Claybrooke during the years 1701-1715. The importance of this find consists in the fact, that the oldest Register now in the Vicar's possession begins Lady-day, 1705, so that four years have been added to the annals of the Parish.

It is rather curious that although Macaulay in his History of the Parish published 1791, does not give any extract from the Register earlier than 1705, in which he is followed by Nichols, yet this book had been in the Vicar's possession in 1778, as a note inside the parchment cover testifies. "A mutilated copy of the Register of the Parish of Claybrooke commencing with the year 1701. It is to be observed that the recovery of this Copy enables us to go as far back as Dec. 1701, which gives us an addition of three years; the utmost distance to which we could resort before was to March 25, 1705; Claybrooke 27 March, 1778." This note is in the handwriting of Rev. Abraham Rudd, Curate-in-Charge of the Parish during the absence of Dr. McKinnon. It is still more curious that the very tradition of any Register earlier than 1705 had completely died out, but of this mention will be made later on.

The entries in the book are of purely local interest. We find the usual social divisions of poor, gentleman and esquire, this last being only once given, and then to William Byrd, Esq., buried 17 Jan. 1704-5. If the character given to this person in an electioneering pamphlet copied by *Nichols* be anywhere within the bounds of truth, the title must have been singularly ill-bestowed. He was the father of the still more unpopular Justice Byrd. In 1715, Justice Byrd was in the estate of matrimony for the third time. The newly-recovered Register gives the name and date of death of his first wife: Elizabeth, wife of Thos. Byrd, gent. Nov. 1702. His second wife, also Elizabeth, died 6 May, 1706, and by 1712 he was married to his third wife, Catherine; but *Nichols* gives no hint that his unpopularity arose from his being regarded as a modern Bluebeard.

The name of Washington appears twice among the burials; perhaps an offshoot from the family of that name resident at Frolesworth the nearest village to the north of Claybrooke. A fair number of the surnames still survive in the parish. Samuel Musson and Nathaniel Scotton still have representatives bearing the same Christian names, but the latter is the last of his race.

As might be expected there is a large sprinkling of Biblical names, of which the only one not now in use is Hermon. (Has any one ever borne the companion name of Tabor?) Basil is probably due to Basil Lord Denbigh, a great man in these parts; while among the ladies' names, Arminel is pretty enough to make one regret that it should have been crowded out by Enid and Gladys and the like.

The proper name, Groocotte, had been altered by the middle of the century into Grewcock.

The book itself is in a very bad condition. I have copied the entries of the first four years, but from the rotting away of the outer edges of the leaves many of the entries are fragmentary. (Appended to this paper is a copy of such as are perfect enough to be useful). That the book in its present condition is mutilated appears from the portions of leaves still adhering to the threads which held the quires together. How much of an earlier date has perished it is impossible to say.

It is not quite clear, when the entries from 1705 onwards to 1715 were copied into a proper Register, why the the earlier portion should have been neglected, unless it was that the person responsible would not take the trouble to copy so many pages of entries into what may be presumed to have been a new book in 1705. After that date the Register was well kept and the value of the old book in the clerk's keeping was forgotten, and it began to perish piecemeal in one or more of the many ways too well known to antiquaries.

The older Registers are contained in three parchment books and cover the period 1558-1685, to the death of Samuel Byrd, Vicar. From that date the books have never been in the custody of their lawful possessor. My own theory, nothing more, is that the new Vicar, Lionel Legat, on his entry into the Vicarage could not get possession of the Registers, and that after waiting twenty years during which the small book, the subject of this paper was used, in 1705 the Churchwardens purchased a new parchment book, and began the Registers of Claybrooke de novo.

It is impossible to trace the wanderings of the older books or to give a reason for them, but eventually they passed into the possession of the Cave family, and are now at Stanford Park, the residence of Lord Bray.

## REGISTER OF CLAYBROOKE, 1701—1705.

*(Only complete entries given).*

## 1701.

- 8 July Born & baptized John an enfant of Ric: Wells & (blank) his wife.  
Buried John the son of Richard Wells.
- 23 „ Born a child of Rich: Hackett.
- 26 „ Bapt. Anne an infant of Rich: Hackett and Eliz: his wife.  
Buried Will: Narurrowe.  
Born a child of John Coles.  
Born a child of Natt: Scotton, labourer.  
Buried Jane, the wife of Charles Townsend.  
Born a child of Edward Boddinton.
- 14 Jan. Marr. with banns Will: Hackett & Anne Sutton.
- 15 „ „ „ „ Tho: Detelin of Lutterworth & Susannah Everard.
- 8 Feb. Bap: an infant of Ed: Boddinton & Margaret, the name Anne.
- 10 „ Marr. by banns Tho: Miles of Leicester & Mary ffrome of Lower Claybrooke.
- 13 „ Bur: Frances Bradgate.
- 15 „ Marr: with banns Charles Townsend & Isabeel Bagshaw.  
Born a child of John Musson.  
„ a child of John Smith.  
„ a child of William Musson.
- March Buried Widow Hudson.

## 1702.

- 27 March Born a child of Will: Dawes.
- 3 April „ a child of Rich: Groocotte.
- 4 „ Bapt: an Infant of John Bray the name William.
- 6 „ „ : an Infant of John Bray the name Sarah.
- 10 „ Born a child of Will: Wright.
- 30 „ Marr: with banns Rich: ffrost & Mary Bamberry.
- 3 May Bur: Benjamin th son of Hermon Whitmore.  
Bur: Stephens Roberts poor.  
Marr: Will: Webster of Bitchwell and Anne Poole.  
Born a child of John Carrinton.  
Born a child of John Coltman.
- 6 June Bapt: an infant of John Coltman, the name Richard.
- 28 „ Bur: Anne the daughter of Ralph Winterton.
- „ „ Bur: Matthew an Infant of Tho: Byrd.
- July Born a child of Will: Harris.  
Bapt: Anne ye daughter of Will: Harris.
- Aug: Born a child of Edward Gilbert.  
Bapt: an Infant of Charles Malor & Anne his wife, the name James.

- 19 Sept. Bapt- an Infant of John Blockley, the name John.  
 22 " Marr: by banns Will: Wright & Anne Grocott.  
 30 " " " Samuel Goodman of Bruntisthorpe  
 and Grace Edmonds.  
 8 Oct. Bur: Michael Hudson, Husbandman.  
 Bur: John Townsend, Labourer.  
 Bur: Eliz: the wife of Thos: Byrd Gent.  
 16 Nov. Marr: with Licence Jervies Haywood & Eliz: Smart.  
 20 " Bur: Susannah an infant of John Clark.  
 24 " Marr: with banns Richard Townshend Senr. & Jean Page.  
 " " " Will: Short & Jean Page.  
 Dec. Born a child of Sam. Abbott.  
 27 " Buried Jervies Heywood.  
 28 " Born a child of John Gervais.  
 5 Jan. Marr: with Licence Hen. Perkins and Eliz: Looms of  
 Clondesley.  
 9 " Bapt. an Infant of John Gervais and Mary his wife, the  
 name Anne.  
 10 " Burryed Will: Nichol.  
 Born a child of Will: Hackett.  
 Born a child of Hen: Beeby's.  
 Born two children of Jarvis Heywood.  
 11 Feb. Bapt. two children of Jarvis Heywood and Eliz: his  
 wife, the names John and Mary.  
 16 " Bur. Mary ffreer widow of Wigston P.  
 Bur. the same day Michael Carter sen.  
 17 " Bur. two infants of Jarvis Heywood their names John  
 and Mary.  
 27 " Bur. Mary the wife of Will: Smart poor.  
 15 March Bur. Mary Pratte a Servant.  
 Born a child of R. ffrost.  
 " a child of Tho: Page Molecatcher.

1703.

- Bur: Susanna Washinton.  
 11 Apr. " Hannah Washinton. (In Marriage Register 14  
 Oct. 1682, Edward Washington and Hannah Bassom).  
 13 " Marr. with Banns William Smart and Hellen Narberrow.  
 Bur. Patience Coltman, widow.  
 29 May Bur. Mary the Daughter of Widow Townsend.  
 2 June " a child of William Page, the name Mary.  
 the same day Bur. a child of John Gervaes the name Mary.  
 8 June Bur. Elizabeth the Daughter of Widow Nicholes.  
 Born a child of Tho: Boswell.  
 Born a child of Tho: Nicholes.  
 22 July Bur: Jarvis Heywood.  
 7 Aug. Bur. Elenor Relict of Ste: Halford Gent.  
 27 " Bur. ffrancis Jordan Senr.  
 Born a Child of Sam: Musson.  
 Born a Child of John Bray.

- 18 Oct. Bur. Timothy Thorp poor.  
 29 „ Bur. John Clark of Wigston.  
 Born a Child of John ffreer.  
 30 Oct. Bapt. an Infant of John ffreer and Anne his wife, the  
 name ffrances.  
 „ „ Bur. Thomas a Child of Will: Thornton.  
 4 Nov. Marr. with Licence Major Pomfret of the County of  
 Coventry and Mary Hudson of this Parish.  
 „ „ Born a Child of Jo: Holywell.  
 16 „ Born a Child of John Mason.  
 „ „ a Child of Will: Short.  
 3 Dec. Bapt. an Infant of John Holliwell and Sarah, the name  
 Emme.  
 9 „ Bur. Jo: Coles.  
 Bapt. a Child of John Mason and Eliz: his wife the  
 name Thomas.  
 15 „ Bapt. a Child of Will: Short and Jane, the name  
 Thomas.  
 Bapt. Thomas the son of Jo: Moor.  
 Born a Child of John Carrinton.  
 24 Jan. Bur. Widowe Carrinton.  
 „ „ Bapt. a Child of John Clarke the name of his wife  
 Anne, of his child William.  
 19 Feb. Bapt. Hannah Carrinton the daughter of John and Eliz:
- 1704.
- 28 Apr. Bur. Widow Thorton.  
 Born a Child of Will: Haynes.  
 2 May Bapt. William an Infant of Will: Haynes of Wibtoft  
 and Amey his wife.  
 12 „ Bapt. an Infant of John Iliffe and Catherine his wife,  
 the name John.  
 6 June Bur. John a Child of John Iliffe.  
 29 „ Bur. Will: Townsend poor.  
 Born a Child of Will: Page.  
 Bapt. an Infant of Will: Page, the name Robert.  
 Bur: ffrances Smith of Wigston.  
 Born a Child of John Coltman.  
 Bur. Will: the son of John Coltman.  
 Born a Child of of Tho: Hodskins.  
 Born a Child of Will: Harrison.  
 Born a Child of John Mason.  
 26 Oct. Marr: with Banns Tho: Croll and Alice West.  
 Born a Child of John Legil.  
 Born a Child of Tho: More.  
 19 Nov. Bapt. Rich: an Infant of Tho: More and Sarah his  
 wife.  
 Born a child of John Coltman's poor.  
 Born a Child of John Mariot.  
 Buried Henry Thorpe.

- Bapt. a child of Tho: Wagstaffe, name Thomas.  
17 Dec. Bapt. an Infant of Sam: Marston and Margaret his  
          wife ye name Thomas.  
          Bur: Mary an Infant of John Mariot and Arminel.  
17 Jan. Bur: Will Byrd Esq.  
          Born a Child of Sam: Parker.  
24 ,, Bur. Tho: Page senr.  
the same day buried Hannah a Child of Tho: Blakesley.  
          Born a Child of Nat: Scotton.  
          Born a Child of John Gervaes.  
          Born a Child of Rich: Grocotte.  
          Born a Child of John Carrinton.  
          Born a Child of Will: Stretton.
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