

NEWTON LONGVILLE PARISH REGISTER.

Book I. contains entries from 1560 to 1717, viz., 1,310 baptisms, of which 686 are boys and 624 girls; 824 burials, of which 422 are male and 402 female; and 170 marriages.

The ratio of male to female births is rather more than 109 to 100, a much higher proportion than is shown in these days. Only 17 instances of twins are recorded, being one case of twins in 77 births. In six cases both children were boys, in four cases both girls, and in seven cases boy and girl.

The influence of the Commonwealth is indicated in the register, for in 1653 Mathew King signs as parish "register," though there is no record of his election to that office: his inferior hand-writing is in strong contrast to that of previous and subsequent recorders. During his tenure of office births are entered, not baptisms; his tenure ceases abruptly in 1658, when Hen. Wynnington signs, and baptisms are again recorded. During 1657-62 there are no burial entries.

Of the 160 years (about) contained in this book, 34 years have no burial entries, due to imperfections in the book, and to evident slackness in the recorder; the average burial entries for the remaining years is about seven. Years of extra mortality are 1586-7, 1598, 1613, 1645 (32 burials), 1710-13. These periods correspond roughly with known epidemics; the 1710-13 period was influenzal. In 1665, the great plague year, when the adjacent parish of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford had 126 burials; Newton Longville had eight, so evidently escaped the scourge.

Book II. contains entries from 1717 to 1803.

Book III. contains entries from 1803 to 1813. The marriages after 1753 being in the book prescribed in the Act of 26 Geo. II. In the foregoing from 1717 to 1813 are: 1,216 baptismal entries, 639 of which are boys and 577 girls; the burials number 833, made up of 391 males and 442 females; and 198 marriages.

The ratio of male to female births is 110.7 to 100. Twins are recorded 17 times, that is once in seventy

births; in five instances both boys, in eight instances both girls, and in four instances boy and girl.

No burials are recorded between 1716 and 1726; for the 86 years from 1727 to 1813 the burials average 9.6 per year. Increased mortality is shewn during 1727-9; this period is remarkable in nearly all registers for increased deaths, due to influenza and mentioned in contemporary chronicles. In 1783-4 influenza was again epidemic, and caused extra deaths in Newton Longville.

The period 1813 to 1840 is contained in register books of prescribed pattern. In these are 453 baptisms, 207 boys and 247 girls; 317 burials, 132 males and 185 females; and 110 marriages.

During this period the proportion of male to female births is reversed, 100 girls to 83 boys, or 100 boys to 119 girls. During this 27 years the burials averaged 11 or more annually.

From 1560 to 1840 the register contains 5,431 entries, viz., 2,979 baptisms, 1,531 boys and 1,448 girls; 1,974 burials, 945 men and 1,029 women; also 478 marriages. The baptisms show 105 boys to 100 girls, and the burials 100 males to nearly 109 females.

Nearly all country parish registers show a marked excess of births over deaths, also more boys born than girls, but usually more women burials than men. During the 17th and 18th centuries the population of the rural districts did not vary markedly, therefore there must have been a steady emigration of the natural increase, especially of the men, many of whom probably entered the fighting services and never returned.

Population may be estimated by taking the average baptisms for a period of ten years and multiplying by 30. This process is said to give a result within ten per cent. (excess or defect) of the fact. Calculated in this way the people of Newton numbered 300 about 1680. Archbishop Sheldon's census taken in 1676 gives 190 Conformists and 3 Nonconformists over the age of 16 years, say a total population of 350.

In 1740 Dr. Browne Willis says there were 78 houses and 80 families; allowing an average of five to a family this means 400 people. Calculated by the

method just mentioned the population in 1740 was about 360.

In 1831 the census made the population 473, viz., 237 males and 236 females, forming 118 families living in 72 houses. The average births for the decennium 1826-35 was 17; multiplied by 30 this gives 510, an excessive estimate of about 8 per cent.

About 60 births, 32 boys and 28 girls, are noted as illegitimate, rather more than 2 per cent., probably an under-estimate.

Of the 2,979 births at least 340 died within one year, about 12 or 13 per cent. This cannot represent the real mortality, which was probably twice as high, but the absence of any guiding detail to the mere list of names which forms so large a part of this register renders correct analysis impossible.

Between 1560 and 1813 at least 21 women died in child-birth, a mortality of nearly one per cent. on the births. The real percentage was undoubtedly higher; better kept registers show about 1.5 per cent.

During the 18th century there are five entries like the following: "John son of John and Ann Chilton, yeoman, bapt. on his Mother's coffin. 18 Oct. 1749."

In a fairly extensive experience of parish registers the writer has never met with similar entries elsewhere. It may have been a local custom to associate thus the orphaned infant with its deceased mother.

The year 1645 is noted "being the yeare of ye Visitacon": there were 34 burials between July and October. Several whole families were destroyed by the plague. In 1771-2 small-pox is given thrice as the cause of death.

This register is below the average in interest. There are very few noteworthy entries, and they follow.

John Cook, a stale bachelor. bur. 7 Oct. 1670.

Mary Cook, an ancient mayde of Paradise. bur. 24 April 1675. Paradise is the name of a part of the parish which has nothing celestial about it but its designation.

Nichols, Jeff. died in ye night and ye next morning before 7.0 was buried 26 Feb. 1675.

No cause for this hasty interment is apparent.

Ann Hart, in linen, bur. 7 July 1710.

This is the only burial in linen mentioned in the register; there was at least one other, as in the accounts of the Overseers of the Poor we find in 1700, "distributed among ye poor ye money that was forfeited upon Robert Willison's being buried in Linnen." A Robert Willison was buried 2 June, 1699. The penalty for using linen was £5, half of which went to the informer and the other half to the poor.

Milligan, Andrew, prisoner in ye King's Bench. bur. 14 May 1750.

Mellagon, Ann, bur. 19 Nov. 1766.

Cole records in his diary: "1766. Mrs. Meligan buried at Newton on 20 Nov. She died in Clerkenwell Workhouse and was brought down to be buried by her first husband. Her second husband is a baronet by the name of Yeomans as Mr. Cartwright assures me, but using her ill and having no estate she would never go by his name. I have heard Mr. Thomas Willis and others say that when she kept a good shop in this town, his mother Mr. Browne Willis' wife, used to pawn her clothes to her and borrow money of her at an exhorbitant use. She was a tall strapping woman and several times within this six or seven years used to walk on foot from London to Bletchley in a day. She was between 80 and 90 at her death." Add. MSS. 5835.

The oldest stone in the churchyard is to "Ann, late wife of David Milligane, died 4 Nov. 1711. age 31." There is another old headstone to James Milligan, died in 17—, aged 84: but no entry of the burial in the register.

Pearce, John. brought from Aylesbury where he was executed for burglary on the Friday before. Bur. 2 Aug. 1812.

Instances of advanced age are not numerous, the greatest are:—

Elizabeth White, widow. 99. Bur. 16 Dec. 1806.

Matthew Turner. 92. Bur. 11 April 1799.

Entries like the following are occasionally found in a register:—

Annis, daughter of a beggar, born in ye Porch. Bapt. 11 Oct. 1763.

The second oldest tombstone in the churchyard is to a parish clerk, John Reeve. A skull is rudely cut on the headstone with this inscription :—

My only love and dearest dear
 Thou art gone and left me here
 In sorrow to lament and cry for
 Thy dear sake alass must I. But
 my days are short and my years
 draw out apace where I shall
 once again behold thy face
 1714
 In Heaven where
 I hope for to remain
 where I hope to see my
 dear and my sweet babe.

On the foot stone is a + J.R. 1714.

The register entry is "Reeve, John, clerk of y^s parish. buried 25 Jan. 1714." The sweet babe is Ann dau. of John and Ann Reeve bapt. Jan. 1714 and buried 27 Feb.

This family existed here for about 150 years, and supplied hereditary blacksmiths and parish clerks.

Reeve, George, blacksmith and parish clerk. Bur. 25 March 1748.

Reeve, George, the parish clarke. Bur. 16 Oct. 1753.

In 1839 William Reeve was blacksmith.

In 1764 William Allen the sexton was buried; also Geo. West, sexton.

In the churchyard there is an epitaph to Robert Warner, who died in 1871; 50 years clerk of this parish.

From the Records of Quarter Sessions it appears that an inquest was held 17 Aug. 1775, on Frances Harroway; verdict, drowned. The burial entry records Frances Harroway, infant, bur. 19 Aug. No mention of cause of death.

On 23 March 1781 an inquest was held on Richard Randall, found drowned. There is no burial entry about him.

On 29 Jan. 1795 an inquest on the Rev. A. Saunderson; verdict, died by visitation of God. No mention of inquest in burial register.

On 18 Mar. 1795 an inquest on John Gill, a poor man who was found dead in his bed. He was buried on 19 March; inquest not mentioned.

The foregoing examples show some of the imperfections of the register.

RECTORS MENTIONED IN THE REGISTER.

Sextus Quartermaine, instituted 23 Dec., 1558. He was buried 27 July, 1613; his will was dated 8 July, 1613, in which he desired to be buried in the chancel.

William Twisse, D.D., instituted 18 Sept., 1613. He and his wife Frances had three children baptised here in 1616, 1618, and 1620. He exchanged with Nathaniel Gyles, M.A., entered on the Rectory 29 Oct., 1620, on which day he read himself in and recorded it in the register. About 1628 he removed to Chinnor, co. Oxon, but apparently kept possession until his death in 1655. Thomas Power signs the register as Minister, 1630-41, and was evidently curate, as was Jasper Simonds during 1648-53. (Jasper Simands).

Henry Wynington became Rector in 1655, but not thinking his title sufficient, he took out a legal presentation 1 Aug., 1661, and on the 15 Sept. following read the Articles all publicly and recorded the performance in the register, evidently wishing to make quite sure he again read the Articles on the 8 Dec., and made another record in the register. He is said to have been buried in the chancel in 1678, sans memorial; but his death and burial are not recorded in the register, in fact, there are only two burial entries in that year and none in 1679.

Edward Young signs as Rector in 1680. He left and was succeeded by

Joseph Lavington, B.A., instituted 1 Dec., 1680. The register records the baptism of 12 children born to him and his wife Elizabeth. He himself was buried 9 Sept., 1709. Cole writes: Under the

north wall of the chancel lies an ordinary free stone inscribed:—

Here lyeth the Body
of Mr. Joseph Lavington
twenty-nine years
Rector of this Parish
who was
a loving Husband
a tender Father
a good neighbour
a faithful Pastor
He died { Aged LXIII. } MDCCLXIX.
 { Septem. VI. }

John Lydiatt, M.A., instituted 22 Dec., 1709, said to have left owing to the ill-treatment by his "sordid parishioners."

Richard Ridge, L.L.B., instituted 1 March, 1710; he had a son baptized here 12 Sept. 1713, who was buried 12 days later. This Rector died in the West Indies.

James Edmonds, M.A., instituted 13 June, 1727. Cole writes:—"The present Rector (14 May, 1758) has long been disordered in his head; the Church is served by the curate of Whaddon." He died in April, 1765, but his death is not recorded in the register.

Anthony Nourse Sanderson, inducted 3 Aug., 1765. He was the son of Anthony and Elizabeth Sanderson, and was born 11 Sep., 1729, at Hammersmith. Six children were born to him and his wife Mary between 1767 and 1775, whose baptisms are in the register. He was buried 30 January, 1795. There is a stone on the floor of the north aisle close to the east wall:

"To the Memory
of the Reverend Anthony Nourse Sanderson,
LL.B.

Rector of this Parish 30 years
who died 18 January 1795
in the 63 year of his age."

The inquest on his remains has already been noticed; it is probable that he died suddenly.

During his life time, William Lord signs the register as curate in 1770, and later, and James Lord signs as curate in 1794.

William Glaspole, Rector in 1795, leaves no trace in the register.

Thomas Le Mesurier, M.A., inducted 11 July, 1799. He and his wife Margaret had ten children baptized between 1801 and 1813; one daughter died in 1813, aged 18 months, and is remembered by a tablet on the vestry wall. Mr. Le Mesurier built the Rectory, and his portrait is preserved therein; he resigned in 1813, and William Poynder signs as curate until June, 1814.

Robert Wetherell, B.C.L., presented in 1813, signs the register to 1842; he died 20 Oct., 1842; was a prebendary of Hereford, and formerly Fellow of New College, Oxford, and aged 75. There is a tablet to his memory in the north aisle. The long epitaph records his good qualities; in 86 words of eulogy there are 25 adjectives descriptive of about a dozen virtues.

Cole writes, Add MSS. 5,830: "The village has the reputation to be none of the best conditioned, being a loose disorderly quarrelsome litigious and drunken place and so noted in all the country. I never was there but twice during my neighbourhood to it." In 1744 there were seven ale houses.

Dr. B. Willis mentions: "A Newton Longville reckoning: Tenpence bread and twopence beer." This was alluded to on a sign at Leighton Buzzard:—

My cousins of Newnton have been here

Eat tenpence in bread and drunk twopence in beer.

Mr. Sextus Quartermaine became Rector in 1558, and so far influenced baptismal nomenclature as to find his christian name adopted and used by sponsors; several infants were given the name of Sextus, and in certain families, viz., Cooke, Tomkins, and Walduck, it became hereditary, and was in use for several generations. Other christian names of noticeable quality which were not uncommon are Ambrose, Bennet, or Benedict.

The first instance of double baptismal name occurs in 1696, when Richard Coles Willison had a child

baptised. Richard Coles Willison must have been born at least twenty years earlier, though his baptism does not appear in this register; he died in 1730. The name Coles has been used by this family ever since. The next instance of double name occurs in 1750, when Frances Elizabeth Reeves was baptised. The practice of so naming continued rare until about 1800, and even then was not common, the few examples being nearly all illegitimate, and the second name being the surname of the father. The name Mary Anne becomes quite common after 1800.

The surnames Massingberd and Messenger appear about 1700. In 1803 Mr. Le Mesurier writes the following note in the register: "Messenger, this family should be properly entered Massingberd, that being the real name."

SURNAMES IN THE REGISTER.

The more frequently occurring surnames are, with date of first mention:—

Adams, 1763.	King, 1560.
Allen, 1560-1784.	Line(s), 1739.
Battams, 1754.	Matthews, 1600, 150 entries.
Boughton, 1716.	Massingberd and
Brinklow, 1562-1762.	Messinger, 1700.
Chilton, 1631.	Page, 1632-1800.
Cook(e), 1560. 300 entries.	Pearce, 1750.
Cox, 1741.	Perry, 1740.
Dickens, 1624.	Pitkin, 1734.
Foulkes, 1678.	Reeves, 1665.
French, 1779.	Rutland, 1570-1783.
Gilbert, 1651-1760.	Smith, 1600.
Hall, 1650.	Tomkins, 1560. 300 entries.
Harroway, 1746.	Walduck, 1560-1630.
Hart, 1560-1773.	Willis, 1578-1716.
Hawkins, 1560-1776.	Willison, 1560. 200 entries.
Horne, 1560.	Young, 1779. 150 entries.