

WOODCHURCH NOTES.

BY CANON SCOTT ROBERTSON.

RECTORS OF WOODCHURCH.

ROBERT DE NORTON was collated to this rectory by Archbishop Reynolds (*Reg.*, fol. 12^a) in September 1314; but he resigned it in the following year. He was an ecclesiastical lawyer, who became Dean of the Arches; Rector of Ickham 1322; Rector of Ivychurch 1323-25; and a Canon of Wingham 1326.

ROBERT DE TERRYNG succeeded Norton, and was instituted by the same Archbishop (*Reg.*, fol. 15^b) in July 1315. He died in 1321.

ADAM DE PENYTON, "*medicus*," the "medical chaplain" of Archbishop Reynolds, was by him collated (*Reg.*, fol. 28^a) in May 1321. He was promoted to the rectory of Chartham early in the spring of the year 1323.

RICHARD DE KYNTON, who is described as the Archbishop's servant or household chaplain (*familiaris suus*), was collated in February 1322-3 (Reynolds's *Reg.*, fol. 32^b).

NICHOLAS DE GORE, whose monumental brass remains in the chancel, was probably Rector here at about this period.

ROGER DYGGS, Rector of Cuxton (1327-33), was promoted to Woodchurch in 1333.

WILLIAM DE TUNSTALL, who had been Rector of Ham, held the benefice of Woodchurch for some time, until he was promoted to the rectory of Tunstall in October 1361.

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JOHN SAVAGE held this benefice from October 1375 (when he was collated by Archbishop Sudbury, *Reg.*, fol. 115^b) until April 1386, when he effected an exchange, and took the Rectory of St. Mary Moses, Friday Street, London.

WILLIAM DAPUR, who had been Rector of Adisham for a day, in March 1378-9, and then Rector of Penshurst, but who had become Rector of St. Mary Moses, Friday Street, exchanged that living for Woodchurch, and was instituted by Archbishop Courtenay (*Reg.*, fol. 261^b) April 4th, 1386.

JOHN PRIEN, styled "magister" because he had obtained the

degree of Master of Arts, or one of higher rank, held the Rectory of Woodchurch for a short time. He resigned it in A.D. 1400.

THOMAS EVERDON, a chaplain, succeeded Prien, being instituted by Archbishop Arundel, January 24th, 1400-1 (*Reg.*, i., 273^b), but he resigned in the following year.

MATTHEW LYTHERLAND, a chaplain, was collated by Arundel (*Reg.*, i., 282^a) 20th of April 1402, and held the benefice during two years. In those two years he proceeded to a higher degree at his University, so that when he resigned he was styled "magister."

WILLIAM TYRELL, a chaplain, was Lytherland's successor, being collated on the 9th of March 1403-4 (Arundel's *Reg.*, i., 288^a). He exchanged with

HUGH SETUR, Rector of St. Thomas the Martyr at Winchelsea, who was instituted April 20th, 1406 (Arundel's *Reg.*, i., 307^b).

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RICHARD ATKINSON, author of a Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, was Rector of Woodchurch at some time, about this period, but the date is uncertain.

In A.D. 1437, William Benge, a chaplain here, was buried in the church.

JOHN HAWKYNs was collated hither, on the death of the previous Rector, by Archbishop Morton (*Reg.*, 155^b) on the 17th of September 1493.

THOMAS MYLLING, LL.B., on the death of his predecessor, was admitted to the benefice by Archbishop Warham (*Reg.*, fol. 365^a) on the 30th of April 1518; but in the following year he was promoted to Chartham, *vice* Walter Stonedean.

THOMAS WELLES, Prior of St. Gregory's, Canterbury, a native of Alresford, Hants; Fellow of New College, Oxford, 1484; Bishop of Sidon 1505, and for six years suffragan of Canterbury; became Rector of Woodchurch on the 15th of May 1519. He had been Rector of Heyford Warreyn 1499-1505; Vicar of Holy Cross, Canterbury, and Rector of Chartham 1508; Arch-presbyter of Ulcombe Church until March 1512-13; Vicar of Lydd 1514-23; Rector of Adisham 1523; he died in 1526.

RICHARD BENER probably succeeded Bishop Welles in 1526. He died in 1545.

JOHN RAMSEY succeeded Benger, being collated by Archbishop Cranmer (*Reg.*, fol. 396^a) on the 3rd of July 1545. He died in September 1551.

THOMAS COURTHOPE died in 1553.

WILLIAM GWYE was Rector in 1554-5. He resided outside the diocese, and his curate was named John Girdler.

* * * * * In 1560, the Rector of Biddenden was also Rector of Woodchurch. I cannot clearly ascertain

whether this was Dr. John Leffe (Rector of Biddenden 1550-5) or his successor.

THOMAS PETT was collated by Archbishop Parker (*Reg.*, fol. 364^b) on the 4th of May 1564; and held the benefice until 1579, when he resigned.

ANDREW DOWLE, who became Rector in May 1579, died in 1582.

RICHARD BIRD, S.T.P., was collated in 1582. He held the Vicarage of Brookland (1597-1609) and also the tenth Prebendal Stall in Canterbury Cathedral from 1590 until 1609, when he died.

JOHN BANCROFT, S.T.B., succeeded Dr. Bird, being collated by his uncle Archbishop Bancroft (*Reg.*, fol. 291^b) on the 28th of June 1609. During twenty-four years he held this benefice. Having become Bishop of Oxford (June 10th, 1632) he resigned Woodchurch in 1633. He retained, with his Bishopric, the Rectory of Biddenden (1610-40) and the impropriate rectorial tithes of St. Mary Cray, but he gave up the Rectory of Orpington which he had held from A.D. 1608. In the year 1633, by the Primate's license, he consecrated a chapel in the dwelling-house of Sir John Sedley, called St. Cleres, at Ightham, on the 12th of October. He was Master of University College in Oxford, and his arms impaled with those of the College, and also with those of Oxford University, are still emblazoned in a window of his Rectory-house at Orpington, which is now called Orpington Priory, and is the residence of Dr. Broome.

EDWARD BOUGHEN was instituted by Archbishop Abbot (*Reg.*, iii., 201) on May 21st, 1633. Mr. William Finch, of Woodchurch, wrote thus to Sir Edward Dering on the 7th of January 164^e, making complaint "of the ministry at Woodchurch, performed by Mr. Edward Boughen, with single sermons on the Lord's days, and oftentimes the only reading of an homily; and in his absence, without either" . . . "his exalting the Communion Table and compelling the churchwardens to rail in the same, refusing to administer to such as came not thereunto; his seldom warning of Communion, viz., once a quarter or thereabouts; beside, at Easter time, his walking the parish round in his surplice and hood, reading prayers and psalms at divers crossways, and digging crosses in the earth at divers places of the outbounds of the same." His holding the King's Commission of the Peace was made a matter of complaint by the parishioners at the same time, and he was removed from his benefice. He lived until the Restoration, and was then reinstated.

STEPHEN MUN, who probably succeeded Boughen, died March 6, 1684.

THOMAS HUXLEY, S.T.B., was collated by Archbishop Sancroft (*Reg.*, fol. 403^a) on the 10th of April 1684. In November

- 1685 the Archbishop issued his certificate that Stephen Mun had died on March 6, 1683, and that Thomas Huxley died on September 5, 1685 (*Reg.*, fol. 260^a).
- JOHN LOVE was collated by the same primate (*Reg.*, fol. 411^a) on the 1st of October 1685. He died in 1688.
- HENRY HUGHES, Senior, was collated by the same Archbishop (*Reg.*, fol. 425^b) on the 19th of January 1688^q.
- HENRY HUGHES, Junior, died in 1704.
- EDWARD BROOKE became Rector September 30th, 1704. He died February 28, 1728-9.
- WILLIAM GREEKIE, LL.D. (whom Hasted erroneously calls John Geekie), was collated 3rd March 1728^q. He was Rector of Southfleet 1729-67; Archdeacon of Gloucester; and Prebendary of Canterbury for 40 years. Having vacated Woodchurch for Chevening in 1738^q, he held the latter only two years. When he died, in July 1767, he was buried at Ickham, in the vault of the Head family; his sister having married Archdeacon (afterwards Sir John) Head, Rector of Ickham.
- HERBERT RANDOLPH, Rector of Upper Deal 1726, and one of the Six Preachers in Canterbury Cathedral, became Rector of Woodchurch in March 1729-30. From his father, who was Recorder of Canterbury, he inherited an estate called Lessenden in Biddenden. He was buried September 8, 1755, in Canterbury Cathedral.
- NICHOLAS CARTER, S.T.P., was collated in September 1755. He held also the Rectory of Ham, together with this benefice, and the Perpetual Curacy of Deal Chapel. His daughter, Elizabeth Carter, was well known for her learning. He died October 23, 1774.
- JOHN COURTAIL, Vicar of Burwash, Sussex, held this benefice with that vicarage for more than 20 years, being admitted to the Rectory of Woodchurch in April 1775.
- GEORGE MURRAY, who succeeded Courtail, was a grandson of the Duke of Atholl. He became Rector of Bishopsbourne; Dean of Worcester; and Bishop, first of Sodor and Man (1813-27); and then of Rochester (1827-60).
- CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH ultimately presided over Trinity College at Cambridge, as Master, from 1820 to 1841.
- GEORGE NOTT, D.D., was Rector of Harrietsham and of Woodchurch from 1813 until he died in 1841. He was a Fellow of All Souls, Oxford; a Prebendary of Winchester; and Preceptor in English History to the Princess Charlotte of Wales. He resided partly at Winchester, and partly at Rome; never at Woodchurch.
- FRANCIS BALLARD WELLS, the present Rector, was Private Secretary to Archbishop Howley, who collated him to the Rectory of Woodchurch in 1841. He is the first resident Rector whom the parish had seen for a long period; and he has done very much for the fabric of the church.