

CHAPTER 18 – THE CHURCH

The Dedication, Fabric and Bells.

Domesday Book

Domesday Book mentions a church here in the 11th century and it is, therefore, likely that one existed for many years before that survey was made, but to whom it was then dedicated we cannot say with accuracy, and although the present patron saint is St. Helen, which St. Helen is a matter for conjecture; it has even been suggested that the name should be that of Eleanor – queen of Edward I – who was regarded by some as a saint.

Original dedication

However, it is believed that the church was originally dedicated to St Luke, and that at some time or other the building must have been defiled and so warranted re-dedication; or perhaps, long ago, a completely new church was built to take the place of an inferior structure and the opportunity then taken to re-dedicate it to St. Helen. In support of the St. Luke theory are two very strong points; firstly, the annual feast, or wakes, which is governed by old St. Luke's day (October 29th) and generally is the last Sunday in October, but if that Sunday falls on the 31st of that month the Sunday previous is then chosen as the week, commencing with the Sunday, would not include old St. Luke's Day. (Defiance of the change in the calendar of 1752?); secondly, there is the figure, taken to be the emblem of St. Luke, carved on the principal face of the old cross in the churchyard.

History of the structure and glass

In a parish the church is usually the oldest building and because of its great antiquity any history must, perforce, be incomplete; the structure will have undergone many changes—additions, demolitions, extensions, etc.—making the fabric a composition of many styles, all of which can be ascribed to a certain period. At the outset I wish to make it clear that in the following notes the dates given to any parts of the church are not my own but have been extracted, quite unashamedly, from sources with more authority on such matters. What the church looked like in those for off days and of what it was built we shall never know, for the earliest part of the present edifice – (the lower portion of the tower) – is accredited to the middle of the 13th century. As this was after its appropriation to Newstead nothing remains of the church of the time when Avice de Heriz made her gift. The south aisle windows and the doorway date from about the year 1300, also the east window, (but not the glass), which is

said to be a fine example of early tracery. The beautiful glass of this window is of German workmanship and depicts the Nativity, Crucifixion, Ascension and Glorification of Christ. It was erected in 1877 by John and Mary Ann Whitely in memory of Thomas Whitely. For balance of good colours, it is one of the finest east windows of a small parish church and it is unsurpassed for many, many miles around. The nave arcades date from the same century as the stonework of the east window, those on the north side supposedly being the older. The font, too, is of the same period, although its cover is as late as the mid-17th century.

Spire

The spire was added to the church in the 15th century and towards the end of the 18th the top fell down, through the roof, and into the nave. This part of the church was not without its tragedy, for on Easter Monday (28th March) 1692 John Rivett the younger was accidentally killed in the steeple. PR, how this happened is not disclosed but one asks “Was he on some lawful business?”, or “Was he simply larking about in a place where he had no right to be?” In 1728 it was noted by Authority that there was no weather-cock upon the spire which makes one wonder if there used to be one (and perhaps it had fallen down) or whether this observation was to serve as a reminder to get one set up. Is the one the set up the once which we see today?

Renovation in 1785

The porch was added sometime during the 18th century and in 1785 the whole was re-roofed, new box-type, pews were installed, the rood screen taken down—only to be set up again a century later --, and many of the antiquities of the church, amongst which were old stained- glass windows bearing the arms of families and persons connected with the parish, were irrevocably lost. Thoroton in his “Nottinghamshire” records the following with others, and such of these as were left all disappeared at this time.

Old glass

“In a high window and twice on surcoats were the arms ARGENT, on two bars AZURE three cinquefoils OR (for Stapleford) and the same impaling ARGENT, a bendlet GULES (unknown). In a window of the chancel, GULES, on a bend AZURE between two wolves heads erased ARGENT, three leopards’ heads OR a bordure company of the second and third: underneath, “Thomas Gunthorpe, Prior of Newstead”.

Loft

Another major alteration at this time was the erection of a loft, or balcony, at the west end of the nave and the recesses cut out to receive a supporting beam for this can still be seen just above the capitals of the two most westerly aisle columns.

Pew allocation 1789

In 1789 the church officials ordered that each set or pew – “newly erected in the Church at Stapleford” – should be numbered and that the person occupying a particular seat or pew should have his or her name recorded and written opposite the number. The result of this resolution was as follows: -

Pew Number	Name
1	John Robinson, Cossal
2	Lady Warren
3	Thomas Greasley, Plough
4	Rachel Towle
5	M. Sherwin Esq.
6	Joseph Bonsall
7	Edward Ashpenshaw
8	The Parish Seat
9	John Butler
10	Thomas Gamble
11	John Oldershaw 2 seats Moses Greasley 2 seats Mr . Loper 1 seat Thomas Greasley. Plough. 1 seat
12	Wm. Saxton 2 seats George Hart 1 seat George Brown 2 seats Robert Greasley 1 seat
13	Mr Lamb Snr.
14	John Oldershaw
15	Mr. Taft
16	Mr. Hickinbottom
17	Clerk
18	George Hart
19	Henry Atkin 2 seats Mr. Taft 1 seat James Brown 1 seat William Wallis 1 seat Gervase Attenborough 1 seat
20	Mr Wheeldon
21	Mr. Oldacre 2 seats George Butler 2 seats

	Thomas Smedley 1 sat
	Moses Atkin 1 seat
22	John Greaseley 4 seats
	Thomas Greasely 2 seats
23	Thomas Bostock
24	German Brooks 3 seats
	The Parish for Churching , 3 seats
25	Mr.Jackson 3 seats
	Mr. John Jackson 2 seats
	John Wheatley 1 seat
26	Mr.Jackson
27	Mr. Antill 2 seats
	Mr Taft 2 seats
	Jno.Jackson 1 seat
	German Brookes 1 seat
	Moses Atkin 1 seat
	Wm Farrands 1 seat
	Jno. Butler 1 seat
	Mr. Jackson 1 seat
	Jno. Robinson 1 seat
	Parsonage House 2 seats
	Wm. Saxton 1 seat
28	John Lambe Jnr
29	Henry Greasley 1 sea
	Christopher Greasley 1 seat
	Moses Atkin 1 seat
	Mr. Hickinbottom 1 seat
	Mr. Jackson 1 seat
	George Hurst 1 seat
	Gervase Attenborough 1 seat
30	Me. Antill
31	Sir John B. Warren
32	Elizabeth Atkin
33	Charles Butler
34	The Parish

On the 8th July 1799 John Daykin bought of Joseph Smedley a seat in the front pew in the loft. The amount paid for this vantage point is not disclosed. ¹

¹ PR

The church must have been altered and restored long before the year 1785, possibly during the period 1550-1650 for there is mentioned in the earlier Tevereys will the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary; there were, also, the tombs of the early Tevereys. There is no evidence in the church of these today, and there was apparently none in Thoroton's time for he makes no mention of them. It is surprising that the later Tevereys permitted the removal of any indication as to their whereabouts.

Bells

Today there are six bells but for many years there were only three. When Stretton visited the church in 1818, he noted their inscriptions thus;

1. "GERVASIUS TEVERIE ARMIGER OPE OPPIDANORUM DE STAPELFORD 1602" which seems to suggest that this bell was given by Gervase Tevereys and the people of Stapleford.
2. "THE NAZARENUS REX IVDEORUM FILI DEI" – "Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews, Son of God".
3. "AVE MARIA GRACIA PLENE DOMINAT TECUM" – "Hail Mary, full of Grace, God be with thee".

The second and third bells date from pre-reformation times.

In 1870 there were still only three bells, but the "Gervase Tevereys" had been replaced by one of much later date. A writer in the "Reliquary" of that year described them more accurately: -

1. "JOHN STREETS JUNR & JOHN SMEDLEY CHURCHWARDENS MDCCCXLIII" – in one line round the haunch in Roman capitals. Diameter 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
2. The inscription as at 2 above in one line round the haunch in highly ornamented Lombardic capitals without any break between the words. Diameter 31 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
3. The inscription as at 3 above in one line round the haunch in highly ornamented Lombardic capitals, the same as the last bell but jumbled together in a peculiar manner. All the "R"s are upside down, likewise the "V"s, and all the "M"s except the first one; also the "L" in "PLENE". In the word "DOMINUS", "C" is put instead of "D", and a "T" sideways instead of "S". There is no break between the words and there is the same initial cross as on the last bell.

These three bells, together with three smaller ones dated 1932 and uninscribed, hang in the belfry today.

Restoration 1876-77

In 1876-77 the church was once again restored and altered; the north wall was taken down and rebuilt and a writer who visited the church ten years later declared “The old windows, with bad taste, have been removed from the north side and erected in the vicar’s garden”; the chancel was partly taken down and then rebuilt as we see it today. At this time, too, the parapets on the nave were added, the porch entrance altered, and the interiors refitted with the present indifferent style pews to replace the box type. The loft was also taken down during these alterations.

Memorial Chapel

1922-23 saw other changes. Due largely to the efforts of the vicar, Crawford Hillis, the Memorial, or Lady Chapel was added. Inside, on the north wall is a list of those who fell in World War I, while in the cabinet below the south window is the Book of Memory for World War II. A page is turned over each week and relatives are invited to place flowers on the window sill in memory of the one whose name appears on the page. The east window of the Chapel depicts the figures of St Oswald, St George, and St. Edward. Outside the chapel, fixed to the south wall is an old sundial with the date 1679 and the instruction “Vigila Oraque” – “Watch and pray”. The tower was stripped of its creeper, the entrance drive resited after much opposition, and the fine early Victorian wrought iron gates erected after their transference from Wellington College, Shropshire. It was during these alterations that the clerk’s cottage by the old church gates was demolished.

Tower restoration and graveyard alterations

The tower was restored at great expense in 1931-2 and some twenty years later, 1952-3, the grave-stones in the churchyard were torn up and many trees cut down in an attempt to beautify the church.

The Glebe Terrier of 1777 gives us some idea of the churchyard then: there were only three trees growing therein – two ash and one sycamore – worth together about 22 shillings; the fences were quick and the churchyard, together with the vicarage garden covered an area of about 3 roods. The parish was then responsible for the repair of the church, chancel, and churchyard fences. By 1786 the situation was much the same but the chancel was then the responsibility of John Jackson of the Manor House, he having purchased the advowson. In 1817, by which time John Jackson had come into his inheritance, the chancel was his concern as well as half “the Large gate – 1 post and 2 lengths of Rails”. Similar arrangements may have been in force during the ensuing years but today, since the closure of the churchyard for burials, the District Council is responsible for its maintenance.

The Monuments

Inside the church ancient tombs and memorial tablets are few, and some bear witness to unkind treatment.

John Teverey

On the south wall of the nave at the east end is a tablet to the memory of John Teverey and his wife Ann Crewker. It carried his crest: a wolf's head erased ARGENT muzzled AZURE, and the arms: quarterly, 1st and 4th, ARGENT, on two bars AZURE three cinquefoils pierced OR (Stapleford). 2nd and 3rd, ARGENT, on a bend GULES three hedgehogs OR (Pascal). All impaling OR, a pretty SABLE: on a chide GULES, a lion passant guardant of the first (Crewker), and an inscription in latin which, translated, reads: -

"Near this place lies John Teverey, son and heir of Robert Teverey and Katherine Chaworth, beloved of his friends, a friend of the poor, gracious, affable, loving and generous: a learned man. He enlarged his family property. His wife was Ann Crewker, daughter and heiress of John Crewker of Twyford. Their three children on the day that he died (the others having died some time before) were Gervase, Ann and Katherine.

After the birth of these children his wife left this earth on the 17th day of March 1580 AD, her husband being hale and hearty; then he, when he had reached 66 years of age and in the 1603rd of our salvation, died by disease, not of old age, on the 14th March, and so the bonds of life were dissolved".

The last seven words of the latin inscription are no longer visible on the tablet but evidently were in Thoroton's time.

Gervase Teverey tomb

Between the two windows of the south wall is the once fine alabaster tomb of Gervase Teverey and his wife, Ann Ashby. This is an altar tomb and bears their effigies in a recumbent and prayerful position: smaller effigies of their four children kneel on the floor under the front alcove of the tomb. This monument carried the same crest as the previous one but the arms:- quarterly, 1st. AZURE, a lion rampant argent, a bordure engrailed OR (Teverey), 2nd ARGENT, on two bars AZURE, three cinquefoils pierced OR (Stapleford). 3rd ARGENT, on a bend GULES, three hedgehogs OR (Pascal). 4th OR, a pretty SABLE, on a chief GULES, a lion passant guardant of the first (Crewker). All impaling AZURE, a chevron ERMINE between three leopards' heads OR (ASHBY). The tomb was originally decorated with more shields of arms but these have either long gone or else the colours have so faded as to render any devices undecipherable. There is also a lengthy, laudatory, latin inscription which, loosely translated, reads:-

“Stop.
Read”

“It will be worth the delay to know who is buried here. A man who was happily born to increase his own virtue, to be an ornament of his family to posterity, and a benefit of the public weal to his country. He served as a Magistrate in his own district so widely that amongst the highest he was held as the oracle of the law; such a protector of equity and justice he was that amongst the lowest of the poor he is held as a divine protector. A man who in his friendships most devoutly kept faith, in his meetings displayed humanity; and in his personal life, integrity.

Always a generous host, likewise a provident head of the household; Gervase Tevere, gentleman, descendant and heir of the most noble Stapleford, Pascalls, and Crewkers. As in life (which he departed the day after the ides of August (14th) in the year of our Lord 1639 aged 65) so in death he succeeded them, and here among the shades of his forefathers he lies peacefully.

To his sacred shades and worthy memory this monument unequal to his many virtues, is, with many tears, by his most sad widow, Ann, set up and dedicated. She originated from the old family of Ashby of Quenby in Leicestershire and bore him one son and three daughters. John in the first year of his life and Elizabeth in full flower were snatched away; Mary was married to Brian Palmes, a nobleman, and Ann, she is the remaining heir and survivor.”

This tomb is now back in its original position belying the inscription chiselled in 1877 when the lower portion was humped across the nave to the north east wall (backing on to the vestry) to make room for a couple of extra pews. Its present appearance is to be deplored and reflects no credit upon the church’s custodians of other days.

On the same wall, to the west of the tomb is a tablet of white marble

Sacred to the memory of
GEORGE JOHN BORLASE WARREN
Eldest and last surviving Son of Admiral
Sir John Borlase Warren, Bart. KB and
Caroline his wife, third Daughter of
General Sir John Clavering K B
He was born 12th August 1782; and lost his
Life most gallantly leading his Troops into
Action after the Landing at Aboukir in Egypt
On 8th March 1801
His afflicted Parents have raised this Marble,
The Monument of his Virtues and their Misfortune”.

.....

This tablet was originally in the chancel. Now, more than 130 years after the event, someone had seen fit to inscribe on the top portion of this memorial the following:

-

“Also to the memory of Admiral
Sir John Borlase Warren, Bart.,
K.B., P.C., born at Stapleford
2nd September 1753, died at

Greenwich 27th February 1822".

On the same wall, on the west side of the door, a stone tablet reading: -

"Near unto this place lyeth interred
The Bodies of George Jackson
Gentleman, and Elizabeth his wife: he dyed ye 5th day of September
1684 in the 68th year of his age. She
Dyed the 4th day of August, 1707
In the 89th year of her age"

.....

"Reader consider here thy frail estate
Thou thy days be prolonged then still must dye.
Fear God and his just laws then imitate,
That thou with him may'st live eternally."

-

Mors mihi munus erit"
[Death will bounteous show" Ovid's Tristia]

.....

On the north wall, at the west end, a tablet: -

"To the Memory of
WILLIAM ALLSOP
Whose Piety of Mind & Probity of Conduct
Distinguished him in an humble Station;
And who Reliance on the Creator,
Smoothed his departure from this Life
On the 6th day of February 1795,
In the 42nd year of his Age.

.....

William Allsop was some time Butler to Sir John Borlase Warren. He married Mary, sister to George Antill. Thomas Antill married William's sister Penelope Allsop.

In the centre of the same wall are two tablets with the legends: -

"Underneath lies
Waiting the coming of
JESUS CHRIST
The Body of Mrs. Joyce Gray
Wife of Mr. Thomas Gray of Nottingham;
Who broke the Bonds of a well spent Life, beloved and lamented by all her Friends, on the 13th Day of
February 1795
In the 70th Year of her
Age.

Cease then frail Nature to lament in vain,
Reason forbids to wish her back again;

Rather congratulate her happy Fate,
And her advancement to a glorious State.”

.....

“Sacred
To the Memory of
THOMAS GRAY of Nottingham, GENT.
Who died July 9th 1802 Aged 75 years.
Industry, Integrity and Honour ever marked his actions, and secured to him that Respect and Friendship
Which causes his loss to be truly lamented,
By his Relatives and Acquaintance:
His skill and Public Spirit in the improvement of Roads, made him a Blessing to the Neighbourhood in
which he lived, but the great facility of conveyance by the Mail Coaches being first projected, plan’d,
and put in practice by him made him a Blessing to the Kingdom at large.

This humble tribute of regard to his Memory
was erected by his nephew
John Gray

.....

(The author has been unable to discover any reason why these two persons should
have been buried at Stapleford and commemorated in this church.)

Again, on the same wall, ay the east end, a tablet telling that;

Near
This place rest
the remains of
GEORGE ANTILL
who departed this life
the 25th December 1788
Aged XXXVIII Years

ALSO
THOMAS ANTILL
WHO DIED
OCTr 30TH 1823
AGED 61

.....

The main memorial to the second World War is the middle window in this wall and
shews the two symbolic figures for “War” and “Peace”.

On the east wall of the chancel, on the north side of the window, a tablet (All in
capital letters.):-

“Sacred
to the memory of

Mr. Thomas Whiteley
Born at Stapleford 1790
Died Sept. 17th 1860
Also of
Millicent his wife
Born at Stapleford 1789
Died August 28th 1860

This tablet was erected by the Employees of Messrs Whiteley Stevens & Co. to testify Their admiration for the character of Mr. Thomas Whiteley, and their appreciation of his efforts To extend the lace trade of this place. And also in token of their esteem and gratitude To his son Mr. John Whiteley, and to Mrs. John Whiteley for their generous gift to this church of the memorial east window”.

.....

Thomas Whitely was married at Stapleford on 18th April 1808 to Millicent, daughter of Thomas and Jane Towle.

High up on the north wall of the name, a tablet of the Warren family: -

“Near this Place rest
the remains of Mary Warren
who departed this life the 15th Day
of Augt in the year of our Lord 1783.
Fourth and youngest Daughter of
Borlase Warren Esq. of Stapleford in the
County of Nottingham (who represented the
said Town in several Parliaments) by Ann his
Wife, Daughter of Sir John Harpur Bart. of
Caulke Hall, in the county of Derby, who
married Ann, Daughter to the Rt Honble
William, Lord Willoughby
of Parham.
In the same Vault lie the Remains of
Frances Warren second daughter to the above
Borlase Warren Esqr. by Ann his wife
who departed this life the 27th
of July 1784.
Here, too, reposeth with the Ashes of her
Her Sisters, the mortal part of
Elizth. Warren, who closed a Life
of Piety & Beneficence on the
13th March 1794

.....

Gravestones or memorial tablets that were once in the church and which have been removed or are no longer visible include a floorstone to a former chaplain of the

church, John Abbot. The inscription was in Latin but the English version is as follows: -

“Near this place lies John Abbot, chaplain of this church for 23 years, who died 7th day of November in the year of our Lord 1438”²

.....

On an alabaster gravestone, which once lay in the south aisle near the great tomb but is now under the carpeting immediately in front of and centre to the chancel steps, the figure of Robert Tevereley in armour, and his wife, Katherine Chaworth. Also displayed on the stone are their arms, (which, if tinctured would read) ARGENT on two bars AZURE, three cinquefoils pierced OR: (Stapleford). Impaling ARGENT, a barring of five GULES between three martlets SABLE) Chaworth).

There was a latin inscription now no longer readable that which, translated, is as follows:-

“Near this place lies Robert Tevereley, joined in marriage to Katherine Chaworth who, with the three children she had born him, John, George, and Dorothy, was, about the feast of Pentecost in the year 1553, bereaved by the death of her husband, and survived him until the year 1571 at which time she yielded to the fates and left the world”. Stretton.

.....

According to Stretton there was once a floorstone to Arthur Warren who died 2nd November 1697 (buried 29th November), and a wall tablet to John Jackson (d.1808) by his first wife, Hannah). (Sic)

One other item which must be mentioned is a fine black oak carving depicting the Last Supper. This is now fixed to the north wall of the nave but was at one time the reredos. It is thought to be of foreign workmanship and found its way into the church from Stapleford Hall.

The Furnishings

Of the furnishings-movables etc – there are only chance references from time to time, and then concern only the bare necessities. In 1559 (the first year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I) the Church Commissioners reported “Stapleford Church is vacant; no curate; their books were burned in Queen Mary’s time”.³ At the

² Torre.

³ VCH II p693

Archdeacon's Visitation 20th May 1577 the wardens were "in want of a sufficient Byble" and were enjoined to provide one "before Midsummer next and to certify the same on the Saturday before then, at Nottingham.

On a similar occasion in 1722 there was no Book of Homilies and it was ordered that one be bought. Also the pulpit cushion was to be lined and the canopy over the pulpit (something not in the church today) to be mended and a table of Degrees set up.⁴

In 1735 it was certified by the minister and two others that the orders given by the Archdeacon at his visitation that year had been carried out, viz. "The Church and Chancel whitewashed: the King's Arms beautifully drawn, framed, and hung up; the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments also framed and hung up".⁵ The stone tablets now in the church bearing these last three items are therefore of a date later than 1735.

In 1770 there was a Bible and a book of Common Prayer; a Communion Table and cloth; necessary utensils(?); "One little Silver cup with no inscription upon it". This is, of course, the real treasure of the church and is the work of an unknown Nottinghamshire goldsmith of the reign of Elizabeth I. It has a beaker shaped bowl with curved lip on a spool-shaped stem with a round knob and moulded at the neck and base above a domed, moulded foot. It has a maker's mark and base above a domed, moulded foot. It has a maker's mark of a leopard's head and the height is 4 5/8" diameter 2 11/16" base 2 9/16"; depth of bowl 2 5/8"; weight 3oz. 9dwt. ⁶ There was also a book of Homilies and a clock.

Seven years later there was still the clock, the silver cup, Bible, Prayer Book and book of Homilies but in addition there was "a scarlet cloth and crimson velvet cushion for the pulpit: a green cloth: a linen cloth and napkin for the Communion Table; a pewter Tankard and a cover for the silver cup.) No clue as to the material of which this item was made). By 1817 there was, in addition, a purple cloth and cushion as well as two pewter plates.

A stray entry in one of the Registers notes that "Book of Homilies Deliverd. to Mr. Taft June 20th 1825 By me John Daykin". Why did Daykin see fit to make a note of this fact? Perhaps he had been entrusted to purchase a new copy, (If it had not already been replaced, the old one would have been more than a century old), and its delivery to William Taft, as one of the church wardens, would be a logical thing to do.

No mention of a cross, candlesticks, flower vases etc'; all these were yet to come and, in some stances, go, in their turn.

⁴ UL Pv.37485.

⁵ UL MISC 269.

⁶ Church Plate of Nottingham by Jeavons. No.68.

The Benefice

The founding of the benefice of Stapleford is not on record, but as the Domesday Book mentions a church and a priest, so, presumably, there would be some provision made for the latter, usually out of the tithes – a subject which has already been dealt with at some length in an earlier chapter.

Church given to Newstead Priory

The right of patronage, the advowson, had been in the possession of the Heriz family-possibly with a little outside interest as we shall see – for many years but at some time before the year 1216 Avice de Heriz, an heiress of this family, who was married to Richard de Camera, gave the church to Newstead Priory. “To all sons of the Holy Mother Church both present and future, Avice de Heriz gives greeting. Know all men that I have given, granted, and by this my present charter, confirmed to God and Saint Mary of Newstead and the canons there serving God, the church of Stapleford in pure and perpetual alms for the salvation of my soul and the souls of my ancestors”⁷ There is no confirming charter from York; had there been e it would have helped, perhaps, to make dating more precise.

This grant does not mean a gift of buildings: the church in such a case is the benefice, and its gift is the benefit of the advowson. Thus, the priory became the patron and its obligation for the bestowal of the gift was to pray for the donor’s good estate in this life and for his (or her) soul in the next. This also left the priory freedom to enter upon and take to itself the rectorial tithe but whether or not it did so at this stage is a little obscure.⁸ and although the priory was the Rector, no vicarage was ordained. Successive holders of the benefice have had divers titles, chaplain, priest, vicar, vicar perpetual, perpetual curate, according to the whim of the scribe of the time. (The Priory of Newstead was suppressed on 21st July 1539 and Stapleford, together with some other churches which had been appendages thereto was declared a Perpetual Curacy. Again, no vicarage was ordained, but a Perpetual Curate was appointed, and so it continued up to 1868, the year in which an Act of Parliament was passed declaring that Perpetual Curates shall have the titular style of Vicar.)

Henry de Lexinton presented to Stapleford

The See of York was vacant from 18th December 1212 until 27th March 1216 and towards the very end of that period the Charters of Newstead reveal a unique occurrence for Stapleford. At the instigation of the Prior and Convent, Master R. de Kyma, Archdeacon of Cleveland, and Master Peter de Schireburn, officials of the Archbishop of York (in the absence of such) presented Henry de Lexinton to the

⁷ NC I

⁸ TLAS XXII p4

church of Stapleford,⁹ and the Dean of York (during the Vacancy) admitted and instituted him.¹⁰ (No mention of any title). It must have been very soon after this event that the new Primate, Walter Gray, entered upon his Archbishopric for our Henry wrote to him, by name, to thank him for his institution.¹¹

A few words of explanation about Henry de Lexinton. He was a member of the influential Lexinton family which had its roots and seat in Laxton (Lexinton), Nottinghamshire: he was brother to Robert – the Justiciar mentioned earlier in this book – and to John who died c 1256 and whose estates Henry inherited. Evidence points to a short stay in Stapleford and nothing is heard of him afterwards until he holds the office of Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral in 1241. He was a prebendary of North Muskham at Southwell previous to 1242, Dean of Lincoln 1245, and finally, Bishop of Lincoln 1253-1258 in succession to Robert Grosseteste.

The monks were conscious of Henry's standing; this is very obvious. No other appointment to Stapleford church is mentioned at all in their Cartulary and the following charter is also an indicator to his importance.

Shortly after Henry's institution, Eustace, the Prior of Newstead confirm to him 14 marks a year for life, payable out of the Treasury of Newstead on the feast of St. Martin in Winter (November 11th) to Henry, or his assignee, at Drayton. O why Drayton I wonder?). If payment was tardy then the Priory bound itself "on all the goods of our house both movable and immovable and both worldly and ecclesiastical on pain of 100 shillings for each term payment is delayed plus the "pension" (the 14 marks) owed. The Archdeacon of Nottingham was empowered to act on Henry's behalf should the priory default. The document was sealed buy the Archbishop as well as by the priory.¹²

There is also a record of Henry remitting the 14 marks but unfortunately no reason is given.¹³ Perhaps to priory was falling on hard time and could no longer afford to pay such a princely sum – in Henry VIII's time the Perpetual Curate received only 4 marks a year. This poverty certainly became a fact, for early in his "reign" the Archbishop granted Newstead 1 mark from Stapleford and ½ mark from Hucknall because of their plight.¹⁴ The straitened circumstances continued and culminated, in so far as Stapleford was concerned. with the appropriation of the church to the Prior and Convent because "of their poverty and want." The grant was made by Archbishop Gray on 19th April 1229 and this meant that Newstead now had the lot, buildings, tithes, advowson, etc.¹⁵ Henceforth the priory was to supply one of its

⁹ NC V

¹⁰ NC VI

¹¹ NC VII.

¹² NC VIII

¹³ NC IX

¹⁴ NC IV

¹⁵ NC X. ArchB Grays Register. Surtees Socy.

own brethren to be priest, or chaplain; a situation which lasted up to the time of the Suppression.

The stipend and other income of the perpetual curate

The 4 marks yearly “stipend” of the vicar perpetual” at the time of the Valor Ecclesiasticus was still being paid in 1825 ¹⁶. Originally paid out of the value of the tithes by the Priors of Newstead, after the Suppression it was paid by the owners of the tithes to the Receiver General of the County, or his successors, and then paid out to the incumbent by the King’s Auditor. For many years this sum was augmented only by the small tithes, any fees, and by bequests – the most notable being the 2 marks yearly mentioned in the will of Gervase Teverey. As for the small tithes, they consisted of a variety of things; some were rendered in cash and some in kind and were “paid by custom time out mind from the Town and parish of Stapleford.”

Glebe Terriers

Making a summary of the nine extant Glebe Terriers from 1714 to 1825 it seems pretty safe to say that the tithes rendered in kind were pigs (1 in 7) and eggs: also, apples (specifically mentioned as such in 1764 although “tithes of orchard” (1714 and 1743) could well be another way of expressing the same things), and bees (only mentioned in 1777); on servants wages, a farthing in the shilling.

There were also the twice-yearly offerings at Easter and Lammas. At Easter, 1/- every farmhouse (in 1726 presumably the “1/- a husbandry” is the same thing); 9d every cottage and, in 1743 only, 1/- every manservant and 6d every maidservant. The Lammas dues were 1½ d a cow and calf; 2d a mare and foal (increased to 4d each foal in 1777); and 1d a “stropper” (barren cow).

These Terriers can hardly be described as meticulous, so much-or so little-depended upon the person supplying the information but no doubt the Authority for which it was intended knew what was implied. Anyway, there is a sufficiency of information to arrive at a general picture even if the interpretation be a little awry.

Apart from the small tithes and offerings the minister had an addition to his income from various fees. These are only mentioned in the 1726 Terrier and may have been included in error but they serve as a pointer to what must have been a general practice. They were, 5/- a licensed wedding; 1/- for publishing (reading the Banns); 6d a burial in the church-yard and 6d a churching.

¹⁶ GT

Queen Anne's Bounty

The living had ever been a poor one, although today the Church Commissioners assure a reasonable income. In the first year of the reign of Elizabeth 1 all benefices which did not exceed £10 a year were excused payment of First Fruits, and Stapleford was, therefore, discharged from such an obligation.

The First Fruits and Tenths confiscated to the Crown by Henry VIII so continued (with the exception of Mary Tudor's reign) till the beginning of the 18th century when Queen Anne determined to give them back to the church. They were not, however, surrendered to the persons from whose incomes they were drawn, but were paid to a new corporation called "The Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne for the Augmentation of the Maintenance of the Poor Clergy", who were to administer then as a fund augmenting the incomes of poor benefices and from this Stapleford received gifts on a number of occasions. In 1740 £200 was allocated and the 1743 Terrier declared "Paid by the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty the interest of £200 being £5 per annum". In 1769 a further augmentation of £200 was made and the fact that there were now two such bounties is mentioned in 1770.

In 1784, instead of receiving the interest, the moneys were applied in the purchase of 16 acres 3 roods 9 poles of land in the parish of Wymeswold, Leicestershire, but this was eventually sold under the Glebe Lands Act of 1015. In 1787 £186 was made available to the benefice from the same source; the 1825 Terrier refers to this amount as being paid annually but I would question this; in 1814 an augmentation of £832 from a Parliamentary Grant was made which, in 1821, was laid out for the purchase of two fields in Sandiacre amounting to 16 acres 2 roods 21 poles. This land, too, has now been sold. In 1879 a further grant of £200 was made to meet a total benefaction of the same amount.¹⁷

In addition to the foregoing there was, of course, the old glebe land in Stapleford. In the Terrier of 1770, just prior to the Enclosure Award, those making the return categorically stated that there was no glebe land – it wasn't mentioned in the early Terriers either – but why it was ignored is a matter for speculation. It is mentioned in 1777, and is described most accurately in terms reminiscent of the Enclosure Award as if that Act had reminded them that there actually was some glebe.

Unlike some churches, St Helen's was not blessed with extensive lands; in fact, at this time of which we are speaking it amounted to only 3 acres 1 rood 10 perches. This was situated in the Pastures (Crawford Avenue now occupies most of the site) and was the result of an exchange of two parcels of land, one on either side of Ilkeston Road at its junction with the Coventry and Ewe Lamb Lanes and known respectively as the Hill Close and The Pingle.

¹⁷ CH.COMM.

Though held by the churchwardens for the time being, it appears that the rents from this land were paid to the incumbent and when the wardens wanted to appropriate these for the church there was contention as to whom the rents were really due, for after the decease of the incumbent, Richard Haygarth, in 1847, a Vestry meeting was held in the church and a committee, consisting of Thomas Honey, John Palmer and William Osborn (all new-comers to Stapleford!), was chosen to investigate the claims of the new incumbent, William R. Almond, to these rents and emoluments.

The Committee traced the occupation of the lands through four or five successive tenants for upwards of 70 years, all of whom had paid the rent to the incumbent. It could also find no single instance where the rent had ever been paid to the churchwardens and the committee's advice was that the present tenant, Thomas Smedley, should pay the rent to the vicar, as usual.

The Palmer Chantry

For many years there existed in Stapleford church a chantry founded by one, Alice le Palmer of Nottingham. In 1320 she gave 3 messuages and 3 oxgangs of land in Barton, and 2 messuages and 2 oxgangs of land in Stapleford to a certain chaplain to celebrate Divine Service daily "in the church of St. Elena of Stapleford" for the souls of Hugh de Stapleford, of Alice (when she be dead), their ancestors, and all the faithful deceased. To have and to hold to the said chaplain and his successors forever.

¹⁸

The relationship which existed between Alice and Hugh is not definable: some authorities say that he was her father, others say her brother, whereas some maintain that he was her first husband, but this latter relationship, I think, is hardly likely since the general inference is that the bond stems from Stapleford and the family of that name.

During the lifetime of Alice she was the patroness of the Chantry and after her death she right of presentation passed to the Prior and Convent of Newstead. A chantry priest was usually specially appointed and was distinct from the incumbent, but, there is always the possibility that after the decease of the foundress the chantry and the church were served by the same cleric.

On October 15th 1413, for as much as the rents and profits of the chantry, (by reason of the decay of the lands and dwellings belonging to it in Barton being washed away by the frequent overflowing of the river Trent) in those days scarcely amounted to 30 shillings per year, (All necessary charges and expenses being deducted), the Archbishop of York ordained that the chantry with all its rents and profits, should be consolidated with the Priory of Newstead. In future the chantry would be served

¹⁸ I.A.Q.D, 13 &14 Ed.II

by one of the canons of the Prior who would celebrate mass and Divine Service in that monastery for Alice the foundress.¹⁹

A list of the Priests, according to Torre, who served the Chantry

Date of Institution	Name	Style	Cause of Vacation	of Patron
23 Nov 1322	Richard Stapleford	de Chaplain	?	Alice le Palmer
?	Richard Anneys	Chaplain	Death	..
1 Feb 1331	John de Muston	..	?	..
6 Mar 1356	John Breton Annesley Wodeouse	de ..	Resignation	Priory & Convent of Newstead
?	Thomas Bren	Presbyter	..	..
9 May 1360	Nicholas Scopton	de Chaplain	?	..
?	John de Stapleford	..	Resigned for the vicarage of St. Mary's Nottingham	..
18 Dec 1364) 7 Aug 1365)	John de Hovedon	Presyter	?	..
23 Oct 1368	Robert Haloughton Gedlyng	de Chaplain	?	Arch. B of York by lapse
26 Aug 1371	John Heriz	Presbyter	?	..
?	John de Stapleford	Chaplain	Death	P. & C of Newstead
30 Jun 1405	Robert Fobysate	Chaplain	?	..

Visitation of Archbishop Herring 1743

Over the years there have been many visitations, all very much following a similar pattern, but during the 18th century we come across one which is a little different. Archbishop Herring of York wanted to know more about his Diocese, so, in 1743, a visitation was made and the returns for Stapleford to tell us a little about the parish at that time. By the following answers to the questionnaire, one is able to frame the questions asked of the incumbent.

STAPLEFORD

¹⁹ Torre.

1. There are about 50 families in my parish and not one Dissenter of any sort whatever.
2. There is no Licensed or other Meeting House in the Parish.
3. No Public or Charity School is endowed or otherwise maintained.
4. No Alms-house, Hospital or other Charitable Endowment; no Lands or Tenements left for the repair of the church; or to any other pious use.
5. I do not personally reside upon my Cure, my Residence is at Risley in the County of Derby which is but one Mile distant from it and where I am obliged to Residence.
6. I have no residing Curate.
7. I know of none. (This, to the question: "Do you know of any who come to church who are not Baptized, or being Baptized, and of competent age, are not confirmed?").
8. Publick Service is duely performed once upon the Lord's Day, morning and afternoon alternatively every third Sunday excepted, and the same at Risley where I reside, and the Reason why it cannot be oftener is because the Benefice is so small, not exceeding £12 per annum, Surplice Fees included.
9. I catechise in Lent, nor are any of the Children or Servants negligent in coming.
10. I administer the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper Four Times in the Year. There is about an Hundred Communicants in the Parish, and about 40 usually receive each time; there was about that number last Easter.
11. I always give open and timely Warning of the Sacrament before it is administered. But the Parishioners have not been accustomed to send in their Names. I have no reason to refuse the Sacrament to any one.

I am Your Grace's Most Obedient Son and humble Servant.

Geo. Bettinson. Minister of Stapleford

.....

Non-residence in the Cure.

The practice of the incumbent being a non-resident in his cure was a prominent abuse in the 18th century; (the case of George Bettinson is one example.), but at its close some measure of reform was introduced and Bishops were required to keep a list of non-resident clergy. Those who, for any reason, did live away from their benefice could only do so on licence from their Bishop.

In 1805, Joseph Smith, the Perpetual Curate of Stapleford, was granted such a licence for two years from February 9th "on account of his being the licensed curate of

Alvaston in the County of Derby”. This accounts for many entries in the register, as well as returns, being signed by others as “officiating ministers”.

Richard Haygarth, a later incumbent was constantly receiving licences to be absent from his cure; they cover a period from 1833 to about 1840 at which latter time he was residing at Muswell Hill in Middlesex, and therefore not of much use to Stapleford.

The Vicarage.

Information about the house of the early priests of Stapleford is non-existent. I think it can safely be said that in pre-Reformation times it would be no more than a cottage alongside many others of a similar type in the village. In Elizabeth I’s time we find John Warburton, clerk, living in such a cottage for which he paid 12 pence a year.²⁰ Indeed, some seventy years later, John Wooley, clerk, made this note and attached it to the Bishop’s Transcript for 1663: “Stapleford. Our Vickridg is worth but twelve shillings a year.” Granted, this is twelve times as much as his predecessor was paying, but it still was no mansion. In the Hearth Tax returns, where we could, perhaps, expect to find a clue as to the size of the parsonage house there is no mention of such. At the time of the 1670 levy there was no minister and the parsonage house, or vicarage, is not mentioned by name; likewise in the 1674 levy, the name of John Francis, does not appear (although he may have taken over after the levy was made there is still no mention of a parsonage house etc..)

During the 18th century just a little more information is forthcoming about the vicarage, as it is now usually called, and for this we have to thank those scant, but revealing, Glebe Terriers. In 1714 it was described simply as the “vicarage house and Barn adjoining”; likewise in 1726. In 1743 the description alters but little, “the vicarage and small garden adjoining the churchyard”; 1748, “vicarage house and garden”; 1759, “vicarage house, garden and orchard”. In 1770 there is a more detailed description: “The parsonage house is built of brick and mortar and covered with thatch; 6 rooms on the whole – presumably 3 up and 3 down. No outhouses; a little garden, no trees”. Seven years later there were 7 rooms, those on the ground floor were floored with brick and those above with plaster except one which was partly floored with board; the walls of the lower rooms were drawn with mortar and ceiled with lime; whilst the upper rooms had bare walls and were open to the thatch. There were at this time two outhouses, one called a kitchen about 4 yards square, and the other a coalhouse approximately 4 yards by 3 yards and both built of mud and covered with rushes. And thus it continued: it was certainly so in 1825, but a few years later the old house seems to be in a poor state for between the years 1833 and 1840 we have Richard Haygarth’s absence from Stapleford. The reasons given in the licenses for his action are, “the unfitness of the glebe house for his residence”; “there being no house of residence”, and again “the glebe house was unfit for his residence”.

²⁰ Aug. Office Roll II Fol. 63

Perhaps here is a clue to its decay, demolition, and re-building. All very primitive by modern standards and not the most comfortable of houses, especially when so many 18th and 18th century clergymen's homes are portrayed on such a grand and pompous scale.

The vicarage which followed was a great improvement on the old one and dated from the late 1830's. It has been said that Lady Warren caused it to be built, but I have found no corroboration of this. It was, however, conveyed by certain trustees to the benefice in 1890 with the consent of the Charity Commissioners. CC Millbank. It was a house well balance in design, brick built with a slate roof, three floors and spacious rooms. At some time during the mid-Victorian part of its existence it was enlarged by an additional wing on the south side and by adding bay windows to the ground floor rooms as well as a porch. As the Revd William Almond had such a large household, (in 1851 here was himself, his wife, two sons – (more children to come) – his mother-in-law, cook, coachman, nursemaid and housemaid), the alterations could well have been carried out during his incumbency. This house was demolished (unnecessarily some thought) in the 1950's and much of its curtilage and garden was sold to help defray the expense of a new vicarage.

The present edifice (completed in 1960) is a modern, unpretentious, and sadly lacking in all but its name-plate to distinguish it from many other houses in Stapleford. It has been built a hundred yards or so to the north of the site of the old vicarage, in fact in the extremity of the old garden.

The Registers.

The Registers commence at the year 1655 and on the whole are quite readable, although at time there is a lack of neatness and legibility; in 1718 the Archdeacon noted this fact at his visitation and “ordered that the Register Book be better kept.”²¹ It is a very great pity that the earlier registers, (which would have commenced in 1538), are lost; from a genealogist's standpoint the loss of the information that would be covered by this one and a quarter century is to be lamented, although in some very small measure the extant bishop's Transcripts help to make up the loss.

In addition to the Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials of Staplefordians (and the odd “foreigner”), other items were sometimes jotted down in the older registers or carefully noted by the clerk or minister when thought worth or necessary to be put on record; when this happens, be it only the age of the deceased person, it is to be seized upon with joy, and when even more is given – Manna from Heaven!

²¹ UK PV. 374 & 5.

For instance, a pathetic entry in 1818 reads “A child left at a Dore in the Parish and they had it called Rose”; it was baptised 21st August.²² PR

In 1826 Sophia Toulson, aged 14 years, “wilfully and feloniously and of her malice died, killed and murdered herself. No funeral service was read.” Just how she set about all this we do not know, but the wording of the entry is clearly indicative of the condemnation with which the writer looked upon the crime.²³

Sometimes an entry in the register of a parish remote from here can be the means of informing us of an incident which happened in Stapleford: for instance, in the register of Wymondham, Leicestershire, is the following entry: “John Edward George aged 22 accidentally killed 7th October in the Brickyard, Stapleford, Notts. Buried at Wymondham 11th October 1903.”

The registers are also valuable in that they can give some indication of the local dialect of years ago, especially when the clerk who made the entry was Stapleford born and bred. One such gem is this: - “Ealyzbeth Hobbod (Hubbard) daughter of John Hobbod and Ealyzbeth his wife baptised October 27th and shey whas Barne August 28th 1755”.

The Churchwardens and their Accounts.

The office of Churchwarden is very ancient and is known to have existed in the 14th century; there were usually two, though not necessarily so, and were either elected or appointed at the Vestry, or served by rotation among all householders, or were the proprietors of specified houses or lands: they could also serve simultaneously as Overseers of the Poor. In Stapleford they were elected (as they are today) or possibly appointed at the Vestry; there is no evidence to suggest that they either served by rotation or for the reason that they owned specific houses or land: the records do suggest that they combined their duties with those of Overseers of the Poor.

The list of Churchwardens from 1609 to the present day is much too lengthy to include here; it contains many names, some of which recur with great regularity for a decade or so, later to be replaced by others-some of which are quite new to the list and are those of obvious newcomers to the parish who have sought office. In the old days when a certain amount of authority went with the position-not so now of course-an aspiring man could seek such an appointment and so put himself, temporarily at least, on a higher plane than his fellows; to be ever vigilant over them and, if need be, bring the erring ones before the Ecclesiastical Courts.

²² PR

²³ PR.

Presentment bills

Way back in Elizabeth I's time, after so many religious upheavals, to achieve some uniformity of belief and conduct was no easy task for the church and a basic feature of parochial discipline through which the church endeavoured to ensure uniformity was the system of presentation; before the early 17th century there was but one Visitation annually in Spring, after 1618 there were two, Spring and Michaelmas. It was usual for the Apparitor to take round the articles of visitation to each parish within his jurisdiction; the answers on Presentment bills were either written in the parish, or more often, copied up by one of the visitation officials at the place appointed – Nottingham for Stapleford.

The plaintiff or defendant would then appear before the Archdeacon's Court at Nottingham to answer the charges.

The articles to be enquired of an answered by the wardens covered many subjects, such as:-

1. Whether your parson, vicar, or curate, is a haunter of taverns, alehouses, or suspected places?
2. Whether your chancel, parsonage house etc. be in good repair or not?
3. Whether any in the parish have quarrelled, fought, or brawled etc. in our church or churchyard?
4. Whether men or women within the parish have committed fornication or adultery?
5. Whether you have a decent pulpit, communion table, Bible, register, etc.?

Sometimes the parishioners would be presented, sometimes the wardens or even the parson. The following are extracts from the Archdeacon's Act Books and refer to visitations made to Stapleford; they make interesting reading and shed some light on the life in a village in Tudor days.

5 th June 1568	Roger Storer and Richard Walker, churchwardens, were presented for not rendering the accounts of their wardenship. They were ordered to do so and were eventually dismissed.
27 th March 1574	Agnes Meare was presented for behaving during divine service in a manner to disturb other parishioners. She was absolved and dismissed.
4 th June 1579	The wardens were presented because the churchyard was not in repair. It eventually was repaired and they were dismissed.
16 th May 1587	Roger Storer, William Graysley, wardens, William Gunel, John Faulkner, sidesmen. They said "We have had no sermons since my Lord Archbishop's visitation. Our vicar is sequestrator and the living is poor, neither do we think that he is charged there withal.

		Humphrey Oker did not receive Communion last Easter. Our chancel is in decay. Mr. John Teverey and Peter Martin are the "farmers" of the tithes. Richard Dodson and Dorothy Teverey have committed fornication together.
8 th	September 1593	William Staley and Thomas Mere, the wardens, were presented because a glass window of the church was in decay. They declared that it had been repaired and so were dismissed.
17 th	September 1597	Bridget Greasley, wife of William Greasley of Stapleford, was presented for adultery with John Warburton, curate, of Stapleford. They were dismissed and she was warned not to consort with Warburton except in public.
17 th	September 1597	On which day William Staley appeared before the Archdeacon in answer to the presentment of the wardens for creating a disturbance in church. In his defence William said that upon one Sunday when he came to divine service at his parish church of Stapleford, there sat in his seat one Roger Clarke who would not suffer him to take his place as he was accustomed to do.

It is unfortunate that the early churchwarden's accounts for Stapleford are non-existent, and the oldest one which is extant is for the year 1837. This and others up to the year 1868 are all contained in one volume and as it would take up too much room to include all of these, the one for 1837 is given as an example of the parish church's expenses for the year in which King William IV died.

The Accounts of John Wallis Churchwarden for the parish of Stapleford for the year 1837.

		£	s	d
May 20 th	Bread and Wine		7	6
	Parchment for the Register		5	0
	Court Fees	1	0	3
	Expenses at Visitation		16	9
	Brushes		4	9
	Cleaning Churchyard 2 days		4	0
	Court Fees		16	4
	Expenses at Visitation		15	10
	3 letters			7
	Cleaning and fencing Churchyard		4	6
Dec' 25 th	Bread and wine		7	6
	Taylor's bill for Gravel		4	0
	Putting Gravel on		2	9
	Levey signing 2s a then		5	6
	Levey Book		1	6
April 14 th	Bread and Wine		7	6
	Toeling bell for the King		1	0
	John Oldershaw bill	2	11	3
	Women Cleaning Church		9	0
	for Coal		16	4
	Eaton's Bill	1	12	3
	Mr Cantrill for writing Register		10	0

Daykins Bill	3	15	6
New book for the Accounts		2	6
3 papers from the Union			9
Daykins bill in Mr. Jackson's time	3	15	6
To loading Gravil		10	0
	<u>20</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
To a rate of 2 1/2d in the pound	21	0	5
Total expenditure	<u>20</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
		12	1
Paid John Doar for Collecting		<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>
Due to the church wardens		1	5

These Accts have been examined and allowed to pass by us-

Thos Barton Chairman
 Jno Streets Jnr
 John Ashpinshaw
 R M Hallam
 William Eaton

.....

Church Rate

A noticeable omission in the foregoing account is any receipts from collections. Prior to 1868 the expenses of the church were met, not by the voluntary contributions of the congregation as is the case today, but by means of a Church Rate. In those days the Common Law imposed on every parish the duty of maintaining the fabric of the church, (apart from the chancel which was the obligation of the rector), and meeting the expenses incidental to the celebration of Divine Worship. This was met by a Rate assessed by the Parish Vestry and levied on all eligible land and property within the parish; as can be guessed, it was a most unpopular levy with those of the parish who were not upholders of the Established Church. The rate was a variable one of so much in the pound according to the outlay which had to be met.

The only collections made in church in the old days were (1), for the poor, at Holy Communion four times a year – at Easter, Whitsuntide, Michaelmas (sometimes called Harvest Communion) and Christmas; and (2) by a Brief authorising collections for some special cause or calamity.

By this method there were at least four collection made on behalf of St. Albans in the year 1613; the first was made January 2nd and the amount collected at Stapleford 6 pence. A similar sum was taken at the second collection on March 16th, but no

amounts are recorded for Stapleford for the ensuing third and fourth collections which were made. ²⁴

The Parish Clerk

The Clerk, together with the Beadle and Sexton, was one of the servants of a parish. His office was one of trust and public confidence and, once appointed, he could not be dismissed without good cause. He received a yearly salary out of church funds and this could be augmented by fees and contributions in money or kind.

His many duties included setting in order the Bible, and Prayer Books, making the necessary provision for Baptism and Communion, and ringing the bell for service. He wore a surplice and led the worshippers in the responses of the public prayers.

There is no complete roll of Stapleford's Parish Clerks but such names as have come down to us are those of

Francis Hewson	1674-1683
William Jackson	1684-1700 (Buried 30 th January 1700)
John Oldershaw	Clerk in 1700, 1728 and 1731 so, presumably, he held the office during all intervening years.
John Smedley	Clerk in 1731.
Thomas Attenborrow	Clerk sometime prior to 12 th March 1784, the date on which he was buried.
John Daykin (Father)	Appointed 13 th March 1784 and buried 30 th April 1824.
John Daykin (Son)	Succeeded his father and was buried 25 th September 1842.
William Daykin (Grandson)	Succeeded his father and was buried 1879.

Such items of interest which relate to those of the Parish Clerk who were Daykins are to be found under the chapter on that family.

The custom in Stapleford was for the minister to appoint the Clerk and the parish, in the persons of the church-wardens, to pay him. The position of Sexton was combined with that of Clerk. In 1770 his wages were £1:7:0 a year (6d a week and a 1/- extra at Christmas?); in 1811 he received £3:3:0 a year, but in 1825 his wages were declared at £2:2:0 a year; from the Accounts of 1837 it looks as if his wages were then £3:15:6 a year; in 1868-0 they had risen to £5 a year.

This appointment has now fallen into disuse.

²⁴ Arch.D. Reg. No. 19.

St Andrews and Moorbridge Mission.

The growth of Stapleford in the thirty years prior to World War I created a need for mission churches in the new areas. St. Andrew's church was built in Antill Street and serves the south west section of the parish. At about the same time Moorbridge Lane Mission was acquired from the Methodists to meet the needs of the estate expected to grow to the north between Stapleford and Trowell.

Incumbents of Stapleford

Known Years of Incumbency	Name	Style	Cause of Vacation	Patron
1216	Henry de Lexinton	Chaplain	Cession	Prior and Convent of Newstead
1260	Robert	..		..
1307	William Cobbeley	..		..
1317	Gilbert	..		..
1415-1438	John Abbot	..	Death	..
1505	Richard Pawson	..		..
1534	William Dutton	..		..
1543-1550	William Bartheley	Perpetual Curate		Henry VIII
1577-1621	John Warburton	..	Death	
1622-1631	Thomas Eyre	..	..
1631-1642	Richard Jepson	..		
before 1650	Edward Dodson	..	Death	
c1650-1659	Robert Leigh	..		
c1663-1665	John Morley	..		
1667-1668	Thomas Portwood	..	Death	
1669-1671	No curate			
1672	Richard Goulding	..		
1674-1689	John Francis	..		
1689-1697	William Wightwick	..		
1698-1707	Edward Griffin	..		
1708-1712	William Thorold	..		
1712-1725	Thomas Trowell	..		
1726-1728	Thomas Blunt	..		
1728-1772	George Bettinson	..	Death	
1773-1809	Joseph Smith	..	..	George III
1811-1815	William Tiffin	..	Cession	John Jackson of Stapleford
1815-1847	Richard Haygarth	..	Death	..
June-October 1848	John Branfill Harrison	..	Resignation	..
1848-1867	William Russell Almond	..	Death	..
1867-1875	William Balhetcher Budd	Perpetual curate and Vicar	..	W. Morris of Lincolns Inn
July-December 1875	Robert Clayton Heslop	Vicar	Resignation	E Hammond of Camden Town and J F

				Turner of Nottingham
1876-1878	Henry Thomas Scott	..	..	..
1878-1885	Thomas Ratcliffe	..	Cession	R.C.Heslop of Stretford
1885-1888	Isaac William Tapper	..	..	Lydia Hope Aldersley of Jersey.
1888-1913	James Holroyd	..	Resignation	..
1913-1931	Crawford Hillis	..	Cession	James Holroyd and 4 others
1931-1935	Charles James Arthur Burden	..	..	Church Pastoral Aid Society
1935-1949	Charles Reginald Baggs
1949-	James Stanley Lemon
	Michael John Walker

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