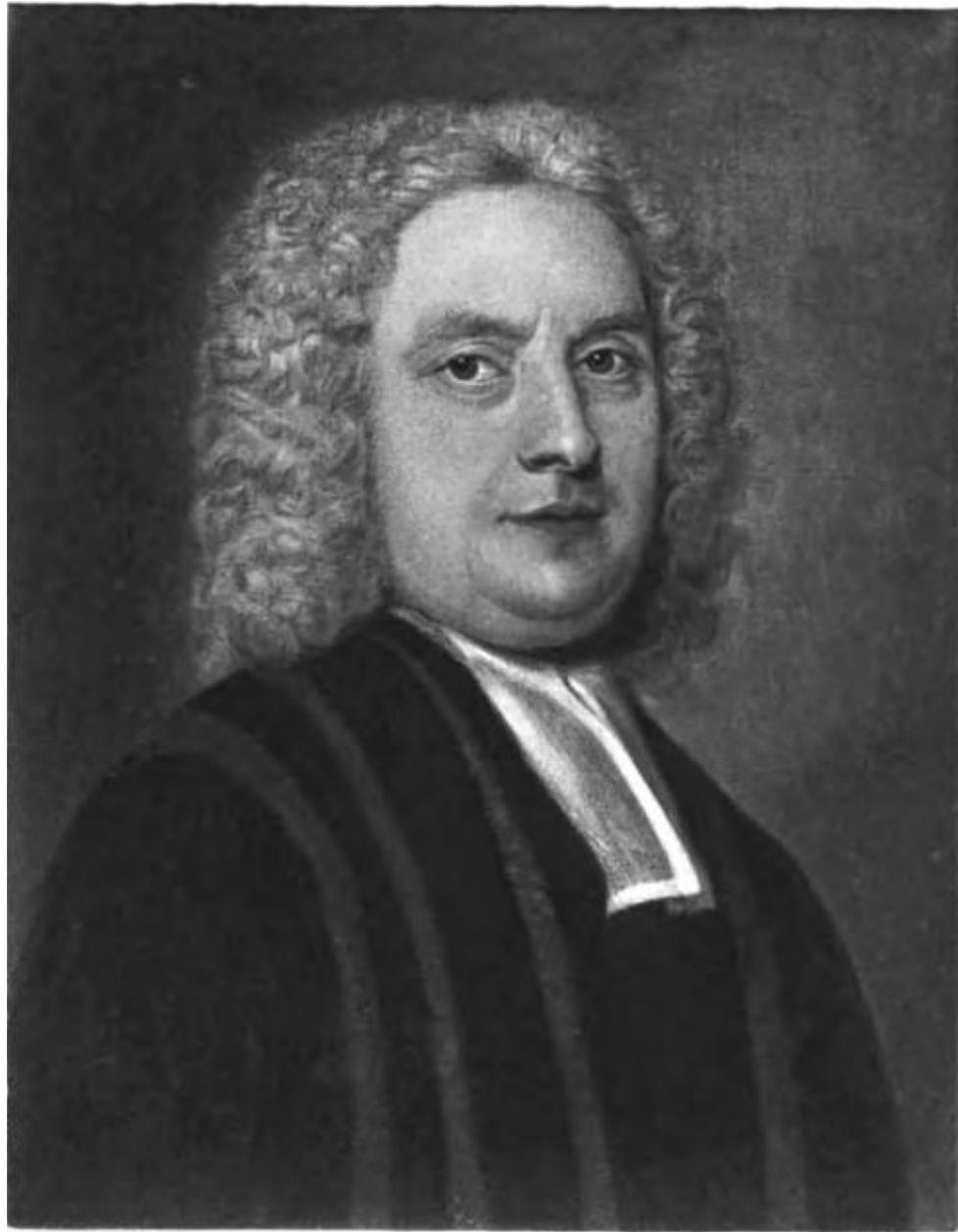


MEMOIRS OF A ROYAL
CHAPLAIN, 1729-1763

SERMONUM STET HONOS, ET GRATIA VIVAX.



*Samuel Kerrich S.T.P.
Painted by Thomas Bardwell, 1736.*

**MEMOIRS of a ROYAL
CHAPLAIN, 1729-1763**

**THE CORRESPONDENCE OF EDMUND
PYLE, D.D. CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO
GEORGE II, WITH SAMUEL KERRICH
D.D., VICAR OF DERSINGHAM, RECTOR
OF WOLFERTON, AND RECTOR OF
WEST NEWTON. ANNOTATED AND
EDITED BY ALBERT HARTSHORNE.**

**JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD,
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LETTER XXIV

“Xtmas Eve (1745).

“DEAR SIR,

“I had seen you ere now, but I’ve had a very bad cold, and am still a good deal out of order. Yesterday’s *Gazette* gives us hopes that times will mend, as they had need. The Duke is up with the Rebels’ rear, & has had one bout with them, till ‘twas dark, on the Fast Day, their loss not known when the express came away, ours forty wounded & killed. A prospect of peace is very near ‘twixt Prussia, Poland & the Empress. Twenty transports of the French, run a-ground & taken by our privateers; a very large Spanish ship taken with arms & money; six thousand Hessians a coming with consent of Parliament; thirty Martinico ships taken & sunk; stocks risen 3. The French commander in Scotland has sent Marshal Wade word he comes to make war against England, by the King of France’s order, & as his general. I doubt that fag-end of Britain is thoroughly corrupted. With all possible good wishes,

“I remain, Y^{rs} &c,

(Addressed)

“E. PYLE.”

To the Revd Dr. Kerrich
at Dersingham.

On December 10, 1745, Barbara Kerrich wrote as follows to her sister, Elizabeth Postlethwayt, at Denton Rectory, near Harleston:—

“DEAR SISTER,

“I write to you now in ye greatest confusion, as is all ye countrey hereabouts, for yesterday it was report’d yt ye Rebels wou’d be at [Lynn](#) as to morrow, but we had a Letter from D^r Pyle just now & he says ye Rebels are at Ashbourn in Derbyshire The Duke at Coventry, & Marshal Wade at Mansfield, this is ye last advice, however he says we are greatly alarm’d. The Rebels may some of them straggle hither if thrash’d, or ye French may come who are making a vast Embarkation, we are arming to defend ourselves, & if we hear they bend this way we shall cut down all our Bridges & lay Ships in ye shallower parts to defend us, this is what was in Dr Pyle’s L^r This is a little Respite, but God know what is to become of us nor where we can go for to be sure they will be all over ye County if they come here, we have Pack’d up our most valuable things to hide somewhere if they do come, Mrs Grigson & me meet allmost every day to contrive & comfort one another I Pray God you may be safer where you are I dont know where to wish you for ye best, & that we may meet again in this World Tilly that was one of my greatest Pleasures is now my greatest Sorrow when I look upon her, to think what may befall her She never was so well & looks ye Picture of Health & grow very Tall, pray God preserve her . . . God grant us a meeting in better times

“Dear Sister yours very affectionately,

B. K.”

The letter referred to from Dr. Pyle is missing from the series; it was probably lent in the neighbourhood, and in the excitement went astray.

To this Elizabeth Postlethwayt replied, December 26,

1745: "I receiv'd your letter with a good deal of concern. I was in fears for you before, for it was report'd here that the Rebles were expect'd at Lynn every day. I wish'd you all here. I thought perhaps you might be safer here as we have but few Houses hereabouts to what you have worth plundering that its possible they may escape us. I should wish to be all together if it shou'd please God to Suffer such a dreadful thing to happen, but I hope God Almighty will defend and keep us, our apprehensions and fears I hope will prove greater than our sufferings."

Matilda Postlethwayt, sister of Thomas Gooch, Bishop of Norwich, and stepmother of Barbara and Elizabeth, writing from Benacre Hall to Mrs. Kerrich, January 14, 1746, says: "This brings the wishes of many happy years which I hope will prove so tho' at present the Prospect be dark, and I must think the coming time is to be dreaded, & can only depend on Providence for security. . . . We have had many alarms of the French coming on this coast, my Nephew wrote me word if they did I must take the Chariot and come up to London. I told him he might as well bid me go fight the Rebels, for I was almost as capable of one as t'other; no, I was resolved to stand my ground tho' I did believe the hurry & fright wou'd demolish me, & so it wou'd if I remov'd, for I grow weaker and weaker going on in my old way."

The panic in London on account of the invasion was extraordinary. These are evidences of the scare that ran through England, even to remote parts of East Anglia, when the Young Pretender captured Carlisle, the Great Border City of Rufus, November 18, and made his memorable march into the heart of England in the winter of 1745, and entered Derby on December 4. Here the rebels stayed until the 6th. A broadside printed at Derby states that they drank great quantities of beer, ale, wine, and drams; that they were very dirty in their persons and savage in demeanour; and adds the interesting philological intelligence that most of them "talked a language called Earsh or Wild Irish." Ashbourne had been visited on the way to Derby, and was the first halting-place of the Highlanders retreating in anger and with curses by the way that they came, and now changed into a plundering, dispirited, and disorderly rabble. This soon induced reprisals, and a legend still darkly exists that a Highlander who had strayed away from romantic Ashbourne into the Peak was caught, killed, and flayed.

The "bout" mentioned by Pyle was the skirmish on Clifton Moor, near Penrith, the last engagement ever fought in England, in which the attack was directed by the Highlanders on the Duke of Cumberland's Dragoons. This had the effect of checking the pursuit, and enabled the rebels to continue their march by night, and the van to reach Carlisle the next day, December 20, there then being a distance of eight miles from the van to the rear. Leaving a garrison, the Young Pretender and his forces quitted Carlisle on the 21st, and the turbulent Esk was crossed by the men by hundreds abreast, and breast deep in the water. On reaching the opposite wooded bank the pipes struck up and the drenched rebels danced reels till they were dry—changing the gender, from naiads they turned to dryads! The unfortunate garrison of Carlisle capitulated to the Duke of Cumberland, December 30, many eventually to fall victims to inhuman

retribution, and to suffer the ferocious death for high treason, in exact accordance with the ancient Statute of four centuries before. It is recorded that one intrepid spirit of these victims struggled for a few moments with William Stout of Hexham—the fiend who, for twenty guineas and the clothes, did the bloody business—when his bosom was opened and his heart plucked out.

Seasonably on the very day that Pyle indited this letter peace was concluded at Dresden. Frederick the Great had already in September, after the defeat of Maria Theresa at Sohr, near the sources of the Elbe, offered to make peace, but his overtures had been rejected. Another victory over the Austrians and Saxons put the King in possession of Dresden, where peace was concluded on Christmas Day, 1745. Silesia was confirmed to Prussia, and Frederick acknowledged the election on September 13, at the Diet of Worms, of Francis, Duke of Lorraine, and husband of Maria Theresa, as Francis I., Emperor of Germany. By the “Christian, universal, and perpetual Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle,” signed October 18, 1748, the Duchy of Silesia, and the County of Glatz, which included the important glass-making districts, were confirmed to Prussia. Full accounts of this war will be found in Coxe, “House of Austria”; Koch, *Traité de Paix*; Flassan, *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française*; Lacretelle, *Histoire des Français*; Ancillon, *Système politique de l’Europe*, &c.

Among the numerous German subsidies that were bestowed by England at this time was one of £300,000 to Maria Theresa, “King” of Hungary. When Hanoverian and Hessian troops were temporarily discontinued as British auxiliaries they were transferred to Maria Theresa and her subsidy increased to £500,000. Subsequently, as there was no clamour raised, the former troops were again taken into direct pay and, as Pyle states, 6000 were coming to England. In 1746, 18,000 Hanoverians were employed abroad, and 20,000 in the following year.

Marshal Wade, the not very brilliant commander, who was so out-manœuvred by the Rebels in “the ‘45,” is perhaps best known to fame as the maker of the military roads, begun in 1726, for the civilisation of Scotland; though he will always be remembered by the lines inscribed on an obelisk formerly standing on the way between Inverary and Inverness:—

“If you’d seen these roads before they were made,
You wou’d lift up your hands and bless General Wade.”

The meaning of “made” being, “put into order and made fit for the use of artillery.”

Wade’s memory is not held in greater esteem by antiquaries than by military critics. Being called upon in 1750 to make “the military way” from Carlisle to Newcastle he carried it wherever he could upon the Roman Wall, which he threw down to its lowest course for that purpose.

With regard to the civilisation of Scotland when the military roads were begun, the following letter from John Butler, Fellow of Corpus, to Kerrich, may not be without interest, and as showing the change that was wrought a century later under the “magic touch of the great Novelist”:—

“Edinburgh, Aug^t y^e18th 1728’

“DEAR S^r

“We have been in Scotland 6 or 7 days, ye motive of our touring hither you know was Curiosity & that has also occasion’d our making so long a Stay here; None Sure ever came into this Country for the Gratification of their sensual Appetites of any sort; their Provisions for the Belly are plenty enough & good in nature but the Cooks never fail to spoil it in the Dressing, were all our Fellows to spend a week here, they wou’d cease their Complaints & commend the neatness of Benet College Kitchen. The women in this part of Britain have no Allurements for one born & bred in the South, They must be hungry Dogs indeed who can dispence with such dirty Puddings; Monkish Chastity may be preserved here without Particular Præcepts. The sluttishness of the Creatures is, I think, a sufficient noli me tangere. I must do the justice to Glascow to say the people there seem much more humanized than ye rest of their Compatriots. Mr Houblon, Mr Eyles (members of Corpus) & all our fellow Travellers are in good health & join with me in due respects to Yourself & all friends. We propose to hasten towards Cambridge with all convenient expedition. I shou’d be glad to have a Letter at York from you, y^t I may know wⁿ ‘twill be necessary for me to come to y^e University upon Duty. “I am, Dear S^r,

“Your most humble Ser^t

“J: BUTLER.”

LETTER XXV

“24 May 174⁶.”

“DEAR SIR,

“I am come home, & very well, after great rejoycings for the illustrious Duke’s victory—such as were never seen in London before. To-morrow ought to be observed as a Day of Thanksgiving throughout the kingdom, and will be so, I presume, almost everywhere; but, I know not by whose blunder the Additional Thanksgiving to to-morrow’s Service is not come hither tho’ I hear they have it at Wisbech, & in Lincolnshire.

“You are to know (if you don’t already) that your subscription to the widows & children of poor clergymen is desired to be advanced now, for the year 1746, as the inclosed will inform you; so pray send me your money on Tuesday that I may remit it with the rest. I intend to see you soon, but can’t as yet say when. I go, after preaching on the 29th, into Lincolnshire to meet the Dean of Norwich & bring him hither. He is much better, so much better as to dine in the publick room at Buxton with the Duke of Kingston, and some other rakeshanes who are there, and to go to the public prayers, I suppose, without them.

“With all good wishes and service to you & yours, I am, &c,

“E. PYLE.”

(Addressed)

To the Reverend Dr. Kerrich
at Dersingham.

This obsolete term of reproach should be Rakeshame, signifying a base rascally fellow. Milton in his work on "Reformation in England," Bk. II., has "Tormentors, rooks, and rakeshames sold to lucre."

LETTER XXVI

"9 Mar. 174⁶.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have not had the grace to thank you for a very good sermon of your relative's. The truth is I've been on horseback all the morning long, these two or three weeks, to bring myself into order (after the gout), and, as I dine late, I have not returned time enough to write by the Dersingham courier. But to-day, being the first of my staying at home, I do you to wit that I am going to London, by way of Cambridge, where I shall stay ten days; and if you have any commands I desire you'd let me have 'em by Saturday's Mercury. To be sure you've heard of Ben: Hoadly's Comedy called 'The Suspicious Husband'? I am going to read it, & see it, and then, I'll say more to you. At present all I have to observe is, that it is a wonderful thing (to me) that any man could find in his heart to write a Comedy in the year of mourning for his wife. I suppose 'tis to be solved by the old rule of evils being cured by their contraries. I correspond with a lady in London who tells me Ben's is a fine play, & 'tis generally thought that the Bishop corrected it. Isn't this pleasant! Surely the town's quite out in thinking thus. For an old man that marries a young wife, is not so proper for a writer of comedy, as for a subject of it. But, to be serious, the play is none of Ben's. It was left, nearly finished, by an acquaintance who died; Ben put the last hand to it, and used all his interest to get it the run it has had, and has given all the profit to his friend's widow. However, 'tis published, with Ben's name on the title-page. I am very credibly informed that a Norfolk physician (I think he's of Norwich, though I am not told his name), has also produced a piece for the theatre, but knows not yet the fate of his brat. I wish him well, and pray God to bless both him and Ben for setting so good an example; which it would be happy for the nation if ninety-nine out of each of the many hundreds of the faculty would follow, by writing for the stage, instead of the churchyard. This would lessen the Bills of Mortality more than any twenty ordinary expedients, and the very best thing that can be done—not excepting even the suppression of gin in these woeful times, when men are so much wanted for the wars,—wars—both foreign & domestic.

"Pray have you seen his Grace of York's fast-sermon? It is a fine one, and has recovered him the credit he lost by his sermon at York last year. N.B.—To page 15 it is the very sermon he preached against the "Beggar's Opera."

"There is one Jack, a poor Scotch schoolmaster, who has written a book that you must get. 'Tis a demonstration of the being and attributes of God, in a method strictly geometrical. He has another work a-coming, viz. a demonstration of the great truths of morality, written in the same manner. This last was, with all his goods and chattels, carried away by

the Rebels, and the poor man is writing it again. He is certainly a very extraordinary fellow.

“There is a critique upon Dr. Rutherford’s Essay on Virtue coming forth, being assisted in its birth by the Great Mr. Warburton. The writer of this is also a very extraordinary person, being an old lady, of the county of Northumberland, the widow of a clergyman, and the Daughter of one. She wrote a defence of Mr. Locke’s essay about the year 1707, and has since written several things in the Republics of Letters, & such sort of works, one particularly, whilst Jackson and Mr. Law were disputing about Space, &c.

“My father has had an ague, but is very well again. I little thought, when I sat down, of writing such a heap of stuff; but, as I was going on, it came into my head that I would refute a calumny which Mrs. Kerrich has several times thrown in my teeth; (which are very bad ones, & one or two of ’em going out) ‘that I could not write a long letter.’

“I am, Dear Sir,

“Y^{rs} &c.,

(Addressed)

“E. PYLE.”

To the Rev. Dr. Kerrich
at Dersingham.

On November 2, 1745, Pyle asked: “Do you preach stoutly ag^t Popery, as is the way now, every where?” In answer Kerrich sent him a sermon by his father-in-law, Matthew Postlethwayt—“On the Moral Impossibility of Protestant Subjects preserving their Liberties under Popish Princes.” In the following year Kerrich published “A Sermon on the Suppression of the Late Unnatural Rebellion,” at that time a very popular but soon a very hackneyed text with the clergy, “well affected to the present establishment.”

Benjamin Hoadly was the eldest son of the Bishop of Winchester; he was appointed physician to the King’s household in 1742, and to that of the Prince of Wales in 1746. “The Suspicious Husband” was styled by a contemporary “Hoadly’s Profligate Pantomime,” because it consisted principally of entrances and exits through windows at night and of dissolute small-talk. Such was the play which delighted the town and was generally thought to have been corrected by the Bishop of Winchester.

With regard to the excessive drinking of gin, it may be recalled that up to so late a date as the end of the fifteenth century, there was no distillation of ardent spirits in England, and no acquaintance with the art of extracting aromatic essences from flowers and plants. The knowledge of distillation, like that of many other arts and sciences, came slowly westward from the Orient and was practised here quite early in the sixteenth century, the results rapidly becoming popular both in England and in Ireland. There is apparently no mention of “usky,” or aqua vitae, in Scotland before 1495. “Glasses” of “waters” were fashionable birthday gifts in Elizabeth’s time, and early in the seventeenth century there were few houses of great lords, such as William Lord Howard of Nawarth, “Belted Will” of Border history, where “waters” were not distilled for

home consumption, as well as cordials and perfumes. Gradually the practice fell into the hands of fair ladies, who artfully extracted a world of waters, cordial and ardent, from mingled and spiced liquors, herbs, flowers, whites of egg, and other surprising sources. These were the “pretty secrets of curious Housewives”; they included many “aquae” and odd receipts for surfeit waters, remedies against the plague, drinks for those that are forspoken, &c., the use being generally, as with “Xeres sec” at its first coming into England early in the sixteenth century, medicinal. Glasses were specially made called “aqua vitae measures,” and long before the Restoration the English palate had become well accustomed, but with moderation, to what the travelled Baskerville calls the “uncomparable strong waters “to be found in country inns.

The Dutch habits introduced on the return of Charles II. included the use of “innocuous giniva”—“oude klare jenever,” and this was here translated, name and thing, into the pernicious, cheap, low-class liquor called “gin,” of which the only merit even of the better sort seems to be certain diuretic qualities, which other much less harmful liquids supply. The consumption of this noxious fluid increased so rapidly that the Gin Act of 1736 was passed. It was a strongly repressive measure and greatly enraged the ill-regulated and fatuous mob, who raised the ominous cry of “No Gin, No King,” the people declining then, as they always will, to be made sober by Act of Parliament. So the laws were defied and the evil increased until the Gin Act was repealed in 1742, and less severe legislation introduced. But the popularity of the degrading spirit was established, and the people only too faithfully copied the example of their betters at the time when the expression to be “as drunk as a lord” was no mere figure of speech. The conditions adverted to by Pyle were well and truthfully illustrated by Hogarth in his print of “Gin Lane” published in 1750.

The “Beggars’ Opera,” by John Gay, was first produced in 1728, and at once made the author’s name a household word. Portraits of “Polly,” “Lucy,” and “Macheath,” were reproduced upon fans and screens, as well as the favourite songs; and long after Gay’s death, upon the flat circular table snuff-boxes called “Turgotines” after the minister; and pictures of the Polly and Lucy scene were painted by Hogarth. That this sparkling play should have been advanced to the dignity of condemnation in a sermon by his Grace of York is sufficient testimony to its extraordinary popularity.

The “Critique” alluded to by Pyle relates to “An Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue,” 1744, of which Mrs. Catherine Cockburn wrote a confutation which Warburton published, with a preface of his own, as, “Remarks upon the Principles of Dr. Rutherford’s Essay in Vindication of the contrary Principles and Reasonings inforced in the writings of the late Dr. Samuel Clarke,” 1747. Catherine Cockburn, a dramatic and philosophical writer, at an early age joined the Roman Church, and, in 1702, published her defence of Locke’s theories against Thomas Burnet of the Charterhouse. She returned to the Church of England about 1707, and married Patrick Cockburn, an English clergyman, who eventually held the vicarage of Long Horsley, Northumberland, where she died and is buried. The work particularised

by Pyle is "Remarks upon some Writers in the Controversy concerning the foundations of Moral Duty particulars in Works of the Learned."

John Jackson was a persistent controversialist . He was refused his M.A. degree on account of his writings respecting the Trinity. He established himself at Leicester on receiving the position of confraternity of Wigston's Hospital, which involved no subscription, and carried the Lectureship at St. Martin's. On Clarke's death Jackson became master of the hospital. Presentments were made against him for heretical preaching, and he was forcibly kept out of St. Martin's pulpit in 1730. In this year Hoadly offered him a prebend at Salisbury but he would not subscribe, having resolved since the publication of Waterland's "Case of Arian Subscription" in 1721, to do so no more. At Bath, in 1725, whither he had gone with a dislocated leg, he was refused the Sacrament on the ground that he did not believe the divinity of the Saviour. The matter alluded to by Pyle is the tract "A Defence of the Existence and Unity of God proved from his Nature and Attributes," 1735, against Edmund Law's "Enquiry into the Ideas of Space and Time," 1734.

Edmund Law was descended from an ancient family of "Statesmen" in Cumberland. He was of St. John's, Cambridge, and became a Fellow of Christ's. At the university his friends were Jortin, Waterland, Master of Magdalene, and Taylor, the editor of Demosthenes. He was elected Master of Peterhouse in 1756, and appointed Principal Librarian to the University of Cambridge in 1760, an office created in 1721 and first held by Conyers Middleton. It was occupied by Thomas, only son of Samuel Kerrich, from 1797 to his death in 1828.