

Report 1 (6 July 1968)

HOMER NODS AT LYDIARD

by Frank T.Smallwood M.A.

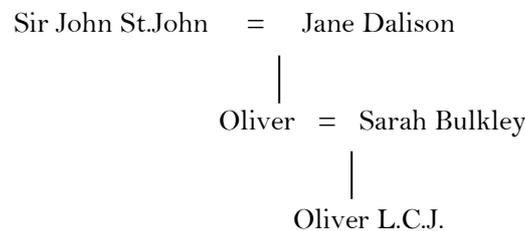
Whether he has read his Horace or not, every schoolboy knows that on occasion dear Homer nods. In religion, Shakespeare has assured us,

What damed error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with text?

It is well that two such authorities have warned us. Otherwise every error known to the grammar book would have to be accepted from the works of "standard authors", and every fallacy known to the logician have to be accepted from philosophers, politicians, and scientists. Certainly on his visits to Lydiard Tregoz the dear old gentleman was several times caught napping.

When he began work on the triptych in 1615 and again a few years later when he designed the East Window, he evidently did not think that Beatrix Broy, great-great-grandmother of the Sir Oliver St.John who married Margaret Beauchamp, was herself an heiress. Consequently the arms of Broy – ermine a lion rampant purpure crowned or – do not appear in an early position among the seventy- one at the feet of the 1st Baronet, nor do they appear at all in his achievements of sixteen quarterings in the window. (They are not included in the two achievements in the Battersea window, 1631). In the work of 1683 and 1699 Homer placed them between St.John and Umfraville. Clearly one of the views – probably the earlier one – is incorrect.

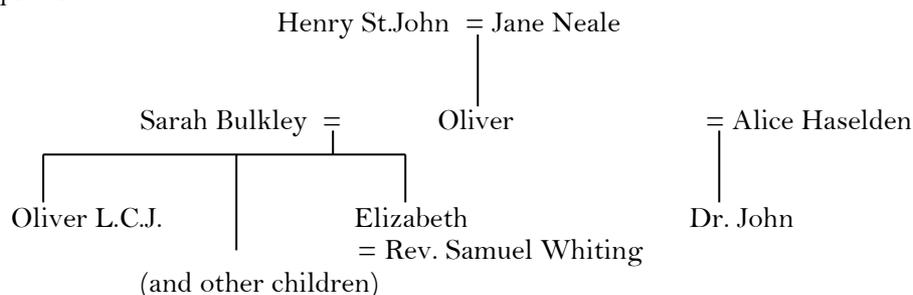
The pedigree of the Oliver St.John who was Lord Chief Justice from 1648 to 1660 has long been the subject of conflicting evidence, and in the 1694 tree on the triptych Homer only makes confusion worse confounded, for he shows



But Jane Dalison was the wife of a certain Alexander St.John; and Oliver, husband of Sarah Bulkley, was a son of a certain Henry St.John and his wife, Jane Neale, and not – pace Burke's Peerage (1967) p.2203 – of a certain Thomas and his unnamed wife one generation later. As Thomas married in 1594 I doubt whether a grandson (Oliver, L.C.J.) was born in 1598!

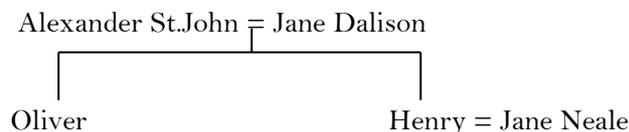
The facts may be presented in two stages:

A. To prove:



The will of Jane (Neale), widow of Henry, (ABP/W 1616/97) names as her grandchildren the persons whom the will of Oliver, son of Henry and Jane, (PCC Hele 73) names as his children. As Chaucer would put it, What nedeth wordes mo?

B. To prove:



This is more difficult. The will of Alexander has not been located. Oliver's will (PCC Sainherbe 9) does not mention a brother Henry, and the record of Henry's christening has not been found. But, there are two pointers: which must suffice:

1. Alexander St. John of Thurleigh was the youngest of three brothers. The eldest, John, head of the Bedfordshire St. Johns and father of the first Baron St. John of Bletso, had no recorded son named Henry; the second, Oliver of Sharnbrook, had a fifth son named Francis; and the will of the Henry under present discussion names his 'cosen' Mr. Francis St. John of Sharnbrook. If 'cosen' here means 'first cousin', it is difficult to escape the conclusion that Henry was a son of Alexander, who certainly had a nephew Francis. Moreover, as Alexander, his two brothers, his son Oliver, and the Henry under discussion all resided – according to the Bedfordshire Visitation and the available wills – within a very limited district in Bedfordshire, it is difficult to believe that Henry belonged to a distant branch of the family.
2. The mention of Jane Dalison in the 1694 tree on the triptych shows, despite the serious inaccuracies, that at that time the St. John believed that Jane came into the pedigree somewhere.

In 1634 he again nodded twice – on the monument to the 1st Baronet – for the year of the death of Sir John's first wife is given as MDCXXXVIII – i.e. 1638. On this evidence Sir John was a flagrant bigamist, for he married his second wife – as the inscription records – in 1630. Elsewhere on the monument the year is correctly given as 1628. But the table that corrects this error itself contains an error. The list of the 1st Baronet's children includes the following two consecutive entries of births:

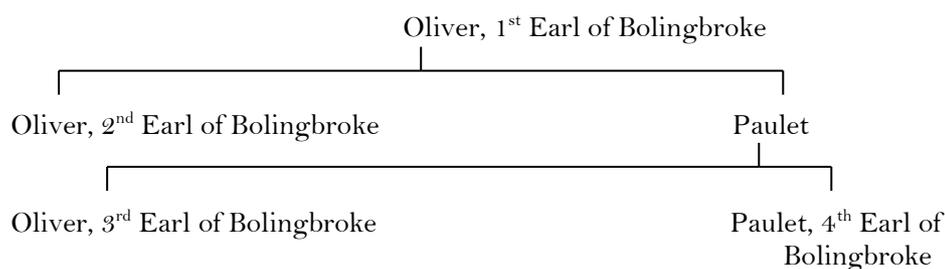
John	24 th March,	1615
William	29 th March,	1616

The discrepancy is hardly self-evident, but it arises from the difference between the Julian (Old Style) Calendar and the Gregorian (New Style) Calendar. The 24th March was the last day of the Old Style year; the 25th was the first day of the Old Style year. John was, therefore, born on the last day of 1615 (O.S.), and William, apparently, five days later on the fifth day of the new year 1616 (O.S.)!! Homer was not merely nodding; he was snoring. Under the New Style Calendar, which the United Kingdom did not officially adopt till 1752 – it was unofficially used long before that date, but not as early as 1616 – the days 1st January to 24th March, which had been the last days of, say, 1615 (O.S.), became the first days of 1616 (N.S.). From the adjoining entries in the list it is evident that John was born on 24th March, 1615 (O.S.), i.e. 1616 (N.S.).

The record that William was born on 29th March, 1616, does not involve the problem of O.S. and N.S., for 29th March is in the same year by either reckoning. Fairly obviously, despite the inscription, William was born in March 1617, and his next brother came to town on 26th February, 1617, as the inscription says, which would be 1618 (N.S.). Adjusting the four consecutive entries, where necessary, to N.S., and correcting the error about William, we get the following comparable series of births:

	Details on the Monument		Monument dates adjusted to N.S.		Corrected list (N.S.)	
Anne	5 November	1614	5 November	1614	5 November	1614
John	24 March	1615	24 March	1616	24 March	1616
William	29 March	1616	29 March	1616	29 March	1617
Edward	26 February	1617	26 February	1618	26 February	1618

In 1684 the dear old man set out the pedigrees of the two branches of the St. John family, and in 1693 he came back to bring them up to date, particularly that of the Bletso branch. The resulting table still stands on the outside of the west lateral wing of the triptych:



But history knows only three Earls of Bolingbroke. (The subject is particularly interesting, for when the title became extinct on the death of the 3rd Earl in 1711, Henry St. John, of the Wiltshire branch, hoped that the earldom would be revived in his favour. He made the point with the utmost plainness to Harley, who had recently been created Earl of Oxford, and he was very annoyed when, in 1712, he was merely Viscount Bolingbroke.)

Oliver, Homer's 2nd Earl, was never Earl of Bolingbroke. He pre-deceased his father, the 1st Earl, by four years. At Edgehill (1642) he was wounded and captured by the Royalists, and died the next day. Homer's 3rd and 4th Earls were in fact, the 2nd and 3rd and were both sons of Paulet.

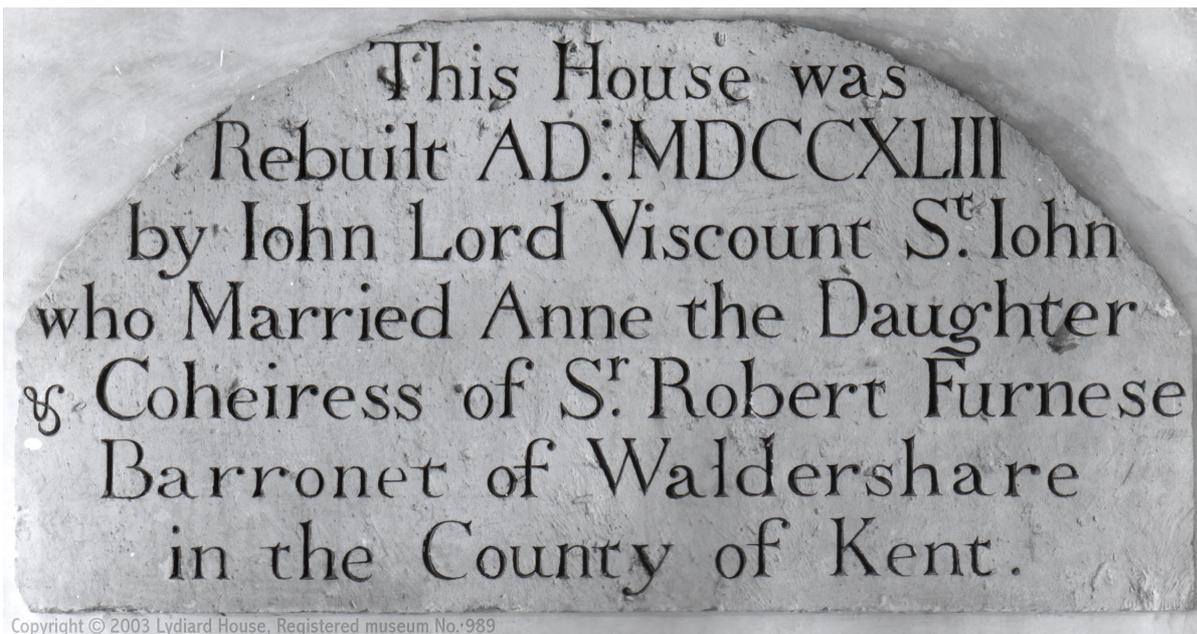
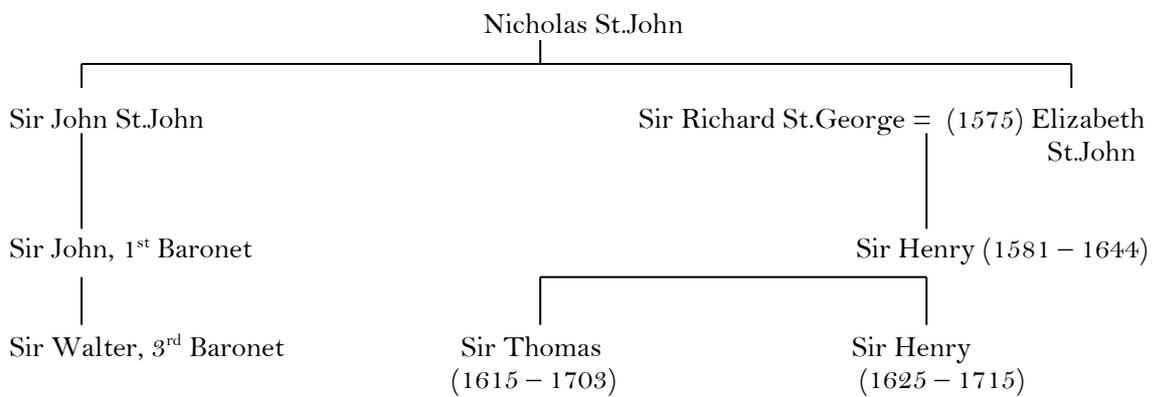
The identity of the Lydiard Homer is less difficult to establish than that of the epic poet. The triptych itself informs us that the original work of 1615 was that of Sir Richard St. George, an uncle of the 1st Baronet by marriage. But even here Homer nods again, declaring Sir Richard to have been Garter King of Arms; in fact Sir Richard's professional career did not take him quite to the top of the hierarchy: he rose only to the rank of Clarenceux. Possibly he designed the window also, but by then he may have been too old. If we presume that when Richard married in 1575 he was at least twenty, then by, say, 1630 he was at least 75. His eldest son, Henry, at that time Richmond Herald, may have been responsible for the window. (This Henry performed two specially interesting duties: in 1625 he escorted Princess Henriette Maria to England, and in 1627 he conveyed the insignia of the Garter to Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden.) Very late in life he became Garter King of Arms. Sir Henry is more likely to have had a hand in the monument (1634) than Sir Richard, who died in 1635, aged presumably at least 80. The later work on the triptych (1683 – 99) may have been planned by Sir Henry's eldest

son, Sir Thomas, who reached the top of his profession by becoming Garter King of Arms in 1685/6. But by 1688 he was nearly seventy, and although he lived on till 1703 it is possible that the work of 1688 – 99 – particularly the later parts of it – was designed by his brother Sir Henry, who had become Clarenceux in 1678/9 and succeeded Sir Thomas as Garter in 1703. (There is no reason to doubt that Sir Walter followed his father's example in using the services of relatives – in fact, second cousins – who were the highest heraldic authorities of their day.)

But littera scripta manet, and in consequence amateur historians get headaches.

Footnote:

A short pedigree of St.George



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The stone in the attics

(see illustration opposite)

In the attics of Lydiard Park is stone whose inscription reads:

This House was
Rebuilt AD: MDCCXLIII
by John Viscount S.^t John
who married Anne the Daughter
& Coheirress of S.^r Robert Furnese
Barronet of Waldershare
in the County of Kent.

At times it has been stated that the date, 1743, cannot possibly be taken as marking the end of such remodelling of the House as took place, but rather as the beginning of the process or, at most, some intermediate stage of the work. The purpose of this article is to suggest that the inscription on the stone may be taken as correct.

A series of articles which assume that the attic stone is incorrect appeared in the "Country Life" magazine in March and April 1948. The views expressed there will be quoted, but first it would help to indicate the relationship between the characters in the story.

Lady Mary Rich (1) Bured 1678	=	Henry, 1 st Viscount St.John. Buried 1742 in his 90 th year.	=	(2) Angelica Magdalena Buried 1736
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Henry, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke
Married twice, died without
issue 1751. Lived mainly
abroad 1714 – 1744. Settled
at Battersea 1744.

John, 2nd Viscount St.John
died 26th November 1748, aged 46.
Married (1) Anne Furnese in 1729.
Anne died July 1747, aged 36.
There were children by this
marriage. Resident at Lydiard
Park and remodellers of the House.

With the scene set we can turn to the "Country Life" articles.

19 March, 1948: "The change of intention or interruption of building, and obvious parsimony or haste in finishing it, are accounted for by the circumstances under which the reconstruction was executed. John, second Lord St.John, when at last hid father died and his half-brother Bolingbroke surrendered Lydiard to him, was no doubt impatient to bring the neglected old house up to date with his heiress wife's fortune. The tablet recording the rebuilding is dated the year following his succession and no doubt refers to its commencement. But according to Bolingbroke's (no doubt biased) testimony, John St.John combined ostentation and vanity with a reputation for stinginess. Then, in 1747, Lady St.John died, the widower re-married within the year, but himself died early [sic] in 1748, being succeeded by a son aged 15. This combination of misfortunes might have halted building, involved a change of plan to humour a second wife, and finally led to the work having to end prematurely."

The article that appeared on 26 March, 1948, misquoted a letter written by Bolingbroke to Henrietta, John's sister, on 10 August, 1745. The letter read, "I am glad that my Lord St. John has done so much at Lydiard. I abandoned it to him that he might restore that family seat, and that by living there decently and hospitably he might restore a family interest, too much and too long neglect. He may perhaps do the first in time. He seems well pleased with what he has done ...". Christopher Hussey, in writing the "Country Life" article, gratuitously adds the words, "(i.e. restore the building)" after, "He may perhaps do the first". The words in brackets belong to the author of the article and not to the original letter. One cannot assume that Bolingbroke's reference to 'restoring that family seat' was limited to the restoration of the House, the laying-out of the Park and making the estate economically viable could equally well have been in Bolingbroke's mind, in addition to the work on the House.

Also in the same article we read, "In the previous article it was indicated that the rebuilding was never completed and that possibly the design was altered in course of construction. Only the south and east fronts were rebuilt; the back of the house was left a patchwork of many dates, and the three angle pavilions, added apparently as after-thoughts, are mere shells. This can be accounted for by lack of adequate funds, the death of Lady St. John in 1747, and of Lord St. John in 1749 [sic]."

These articles assume that the commencement of such rebuilding as was done took place between the death of John's father in 1742 and his own death in 1748.

This time-table should be questioned, for we read, in the article of 26 March, "It was in 1739 that Bolingbroke surrendered his reversion of Lydiard to his half-brother John, retaining only the Battersea and Wandsworth properties". Mr. Hussey is here referring to a now-lost letter quoted on pp.90 and 91 of "Our Lady of Batersey". In 1743 Bolingbroke wrote to his half-brother, "I said you and yr children were to keep up the Family and in that view I put you four years ago in possession of the seat of it ... for the prospect of my having children is chimerical". We know that Bolingbroke was in this country in 1738, and it would therefore seem likely that, in addition to selling his property at Dawley during that visit, he was party to the installation of his half-brother at Lydiard. Although John did not enter into the ownership of the property until 1742, there is no reason why he should not have begun the remodelling of the House soon after Bolingbroke's visit in 1738. The period between that date and 24 March, 1744, when the year 1743 (O.S.) ended, would give sufficient time for the stone in the attic to record correctly the date of a concluding stage in such remodelling as was done.

The fact that the remodelling was incomplete has been accounted for by the early deaths of John and his first wife. Is it not equally possible that such work as was done represented all that John intended to do? The guidebook, "Lydiard Park and Church", published last year, indicates the extent of the considerable remodelling that was accomplished. It is true that only

the south-west and south-east fronts received special treatment, but, if Bolingbroke's description can be trusted, is this not a perfect example of combining "ostentation and vanity with ... stinginess"?

In short, on present evidence it appears likely that the work on the House was begun and ended during the period 1738 to March 1744, and that the inscription in the attics can be taken as reliable.

Of dogs

Churchwardens' accounts survive in detail for two periods, April 1668 to May 1669, and from June 1823 to March 1831. During the long intervening years only totals of receipts and expenses were recorded.

In the earlier period, there is an item of 8s. paid to Richard Charles as wages for the year for "keeping the dogs out of Church". The office of dog-whipper is an ancient one, and their wooden tongs are still to be seen in some churches today.

It would appear that there was a 'No dogs' order for public worship at Tregoz, possibly reflecting zeal of Archbishop Laud, who, some thirty years before, sought to crush the slackness and disorder in many churches. It was Archbishop Laud who ordered the erection of altar rails both to keep the altar at the east end and to keep dogs out of the chancel.

How long the dog-whipper's office remained at Tregoz is impossible to say, but towards the end of the 18th century contemporary evidence elsewhere shows that it was usual for worshippers to bring their dogs with them to church, shepherds with their sheep-dogs, ladies with their lap-dogs, cooks with their turnspit dogs: the dog-whipper of those days merely putting out those dogs, and children too sometimes, who did not behave themselves.

W.E. Tate in "The Parish Chest", page 107, quotes Bishop Warburton of Gloucester, who declared:

that being at Abbey Church (in Bath) one Sunday, when a certain Chapter in Ezekiel was read in which the Word Wheel is often mentioned, that a great number of Turnspits, which had followed the Cooks to Church, discovered a manifest Alarm. the first Time the Reader uttered the Word Wheel: but upon its being repeated twice more, they all clapt their Tails between their Legs, and ran out of Church.

Lydiard Park

-the work of restoration, by A.W. Flack A.R.I.B.A., A.M.P.T.I.
Deputy Borough Architect

When the Corporation took over the house in 1945 it was found to be in a badly neglected state.

The roof over the rear portion was in a very precarious state. In one place the tiles had fallen and the hole was covered with roofing felt held down with battens. Elsewhere the pegs holding the stone tiles and the battens had rotted or had been eaten away completely, and the whole roof was kept in position by its own weight, the fiction between the tiles and spiders' webs.

The lead on the turrets had slipped, the roof timbers had rotted and the rendering to the turret walls had broken away.

The slated main roof, however, was in fair condition, but gutters and valleys were leaking in several places.

Internally, the penetration of water had done terrible damage to the walls and ceilings, including the ornamental plasterwork. Woodworm and dry rot had seriously affected all timber.

It was impossible to estimate the cost of restoration, but a figure of £50,000 was given, at that time, by a consultant architect.

The first essential measures were to make the building weather tight and in 1950 a start was made on the repair of the rear roof. The felt was removed and the timber below treated with preservative and renewed where necessary. Matching stone tiles were laid and fixed with copper nails. The lead was stripped from the turrets and replaced with copper on new timber, the rendering was taken down and the walls treated and re-rendered. At the same time the walls by the side entrance were repaired and rendered and some windows repaired.

In 1954 a grant was made by the Ancient Monument Division of the Ministry of Works to enable work on the roof to be completed. Further grants were later made for general restoration works.

The remainder of the stone roof was repaired and the internal gutters renewed. It was then possible for work to be started on the interior.

The ceilings in the Drawing room adjoining (which may have been the bedroom) were strengthened and repaired. The plaster was strutted up and the rotten laths and joists above were removed, steel joists and copper netting were put in. The whole was covered with new

plaster, so that the ceilings are now reinforced solid plaster. The missing ornamented areas were replaced by craftsmen who made gelatine moulds of the existing and then cast and carved new pieces and fixed them in position. It is now impossible to see where the replacement was made.

The original flock wallpaper, which was hung on fabric stretched over timber panels, was re-used as far as possible. Further paper was specially manufactured for the completion of the restoration in the two rooms.

The floor of the Library was strengthened with brick walls and the rotted timber joists replaced.

Repairs to the first floor ceilings and floors were extensive. Practically all the timber was affected by rot and woodworm and had to be renewed or treated with Cuprinol to prevent the spread of decay. Stonework was similarly treated with sodium Fluoride. Main beams were replaced with steel, and new joists and floorboards laid. During this work evidence of a staircase and blocked up windows in the older part of the building were discovered.

The ceiling over the main hall was repaired and strengthened similarly to the others, but being on a curve the work presented some difficulty.

The beam over the pillars in the Dining Room was cracked, due to subsidence of the pillars, the timber was therefore removed and replaced with steel and the pillar strengthened. In the room over the Dining Room the partition carried on the old pillars was removed to give the large room which now exists. The position of the partition is shown by the change in ceiling level in the upper room.

The main staircase had been badly attacked by woodworm and was found to be unsafe. It is strengthened with new timbers and steelwork.

All timber work throughout has been treated with preservative and plaster repaired as far as possible. Decorations to the ceilings and walls have been carried out, but the Library ceiling has not been touched. It is not known for certain when the gilding of this ceiling was done, but it was left unfinished reputedly late in the last century.

Some restoration of the external stonework has been carried out.

Further work is planned for the attic restoration and repairs, and this will be carried out when funds are available.

POPULATION NOTES

Among the very many practical friends of Lydiard Tregoz is Mr. T. Daish, of Ramsden, Oxfordshire, a member of the Society of Genealogists. As one of his retirement hobbies he offered his services to the Society to transcribe parish registers, and those of Lydiard Tregoz were his first assignment. In 1965, he presented to the parish a bound and indexed volume of transcripts of the parish registers 1666 to 1840. (Prior to 1666 the only entries known are the incomplete returns that are kept in the Diocesan Registry at Salisbury.)

In his introductory notes to the volume, Mr. Daish draws attention to the fact that there are gaps in the marriage registers during the following periods:

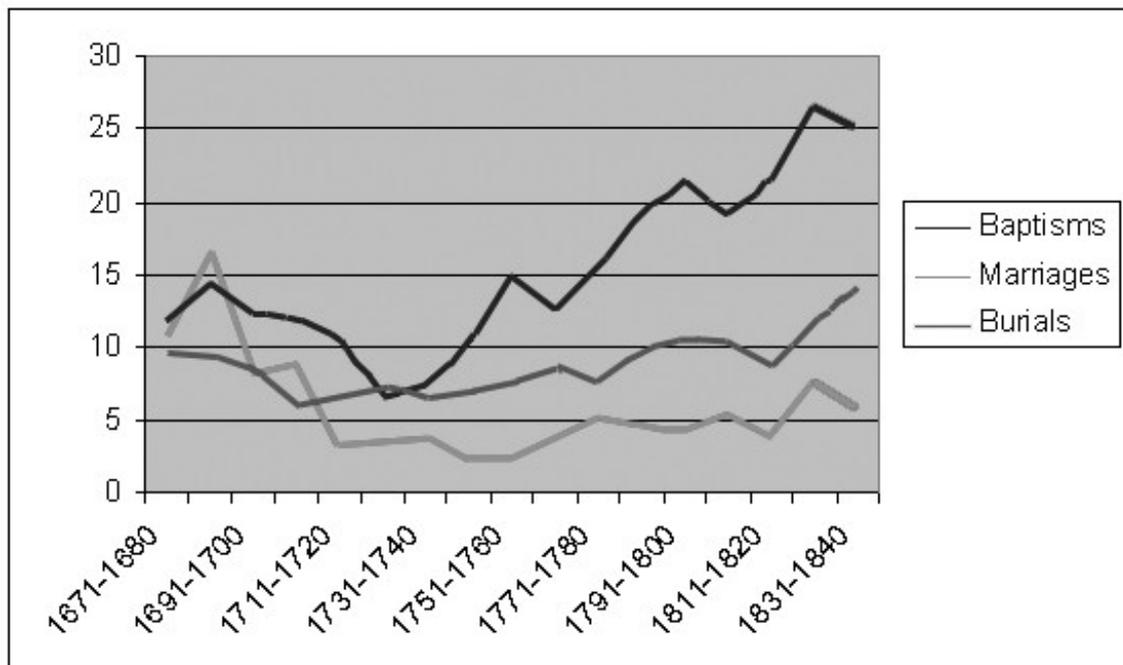
16	April	1668	to	12	April	1670
12	April	1670	to	31	July	1671
1	February	1691	to	29	April	1693
21	December	1724	to	7	July	1726
26	August	1734	to	17	January	1735
14	February	1736	to	3	April	1738
28	December	1741	to	10	May	1744
10	May	1744	to	30	September	1745

He comments, "No explanation can be offered for these considerable gaps. It is noticeable, however, that from about 1710 to about 1770 the average number of marriages registered is only about 3 a year, whereas previously it had been about 11 a year. After 1770 it rose again to about 5 a year. The average number of baptisms and burials registered yearly shows some reduction in the first half of the 18th century, but to nothing like the same degree as in the case of marriages."

In order to look at the relationship between marriages and baptisms and burials over the whole period of the register transcripts and to make some sort of assessment of the population, the following table has been drawn up showing the average number of entries per year for each ten-year period between 1671 and 1840. In the fifth column the last four entries, for 1801 to 1841, are the actual census figures, the previous ones are estimates based on the decennial averages of baptisms multiplied by 30. (This calculation is said to give an estimate generally within 10 per cent of the truth either way.)

Ten-year Periods	Annual averages of Baptisms	of Marriages	of Burials	Total Popn Est.	Census
1671-1680	11.7	10.9	9.5	351	
1681-1690	14.3	16.6	9.3	429	
1691-1700	12.3	7.9	8.4	369	
1701-1710	11.9	9.0	5.9	357	
1711-1720	10.6	3.2	6.6	318	
1721-1730	6.7	3.3	7.2	201	
1731-1740	7.4	3.7	6.5	222	
1741-1750	10.4	2.2	6.9	312	
1751-1760	15.0	2.2	7.6	450	
1761-1770	12.6	3.8	8.5	378	
1771-1780	15.5	5.3	7.6	465	
1781-1790	19.2	4.5	9.8	576	
1791-1800	21.4	4.3	10.5		578
1801-1810	19.0	5.4	10.4		613
1811-1820	21.5	3.9	8.7		717
1821-1830	26.5	7.8	11.7		765
1831-1840	25.0	5.6	14.2		960
(1851)					807

The same data appears in the following chart:



Of the incidence of marriages in the first half of the 18th century nothing final can be said, for trends and fashions can produce variations in the number of weddings unrelated to variations in the size of the total population. An undue fall in the number of marriages can equally well be explained by the migration of young people of marriageable age to employment elsewhere, as by the migration for one day of bridal couples to celebrate their weddings in nearby parishes.

What is of more interest is the overall decline in population. The ten-year period, 1721-1730, shows an even greater number of persons buried than were either baptised or married. This decline in population is no doubt attributable to agricultural depression.

“From the middle of the 17th century, rents in Wiltshire per acre were stagnant or depressed for about 100 years. This depression of rents was accompanied by a general weakness in the prices of farm produce. In the late 17th century and the first half of the 18th century rents were generally one-third lower than in the first half of the 17th century, despite the unprecedented heights reached for a brief time in the second decade of the 18th century. Then, from 1750-9, rents began to mount swiftly...” (VCH IV 62)

The effect of a depression in farm prices on total population will in part depend on the size of the farm units. Where, in times of prosperity, a labour force is needed in addition to the farmer and his family, that labour force will be more susceptible to reduction in times of depression. Details are not known of the sizes of units in the first half of the 18th century, but if one can assume that their size was approximately the same as the picture revealed by the Poor Rate books which date from 1805, then it would appear that units in Lydiard Tregoz parish tended to be larger than elsewhere in the Cheese and Butter belt of north Wiltshire. Furthermore, the ownership of land was concentrated. Of the parish's 5,184 acres 80% was in the hands of the St. John family or formed part of the Midgehall estate. Low rentals would hardly encourage further investment on the part of such large landowners; their tenants would tend to reduce their labour force where possible.

With a declining population one would expect to find a decline in the sums spent on poor relief. In fact, the opposite is true. Totals have survived for only two periods, 1670-1693 and 1707-1741. Whilst the product of a single rate varied only between £11. 7. 5d and £11. 10. 0d throughout these two periods, the decennial averages of the totals expended rose considerably in the second of these two periods:

Decennial period	Average expended per year		
1671 – 1680	£54.	11.	5½
1681 – 1690	£42.	10.	9½
1691 – 1693 (three years)	£47.	4.	3
1707 – 1710 (four years)	£65.	15.	0
1711 – 1720	£70.	7.	6
1721 – 1730	£70.	7.	10
1731 – 1740	£87.	11.	3
1741 (one year)	£114.	9.	3

The amount expended in 1711 amounted to £114. 7. 11d which was an increase of £45. 3. 8d. on the average of the five years' figures on either side; the amount expended in 1731 reached the unprecedented height of £137. 7. 0d., an increase of £54. 18. 10d. on the average of the five years' figures on either side. 1741 was also an expensive year.

The increase in the Overseers' expenditure can only reflect an increase in the number of people who were unable to find work either in the parish or elsewhere.

With a return of prosperity to agriculture, followed later by the development of the railway works in Swindon, we find the natural and concomitant increase in population from the end of the 18th century to late in the 19th century. Indeed, the 1841 Census returns account for the big increase in population recorded in that year by stating that "many" labourers in the Great Western Railway were included.

THE EAST WINDOW

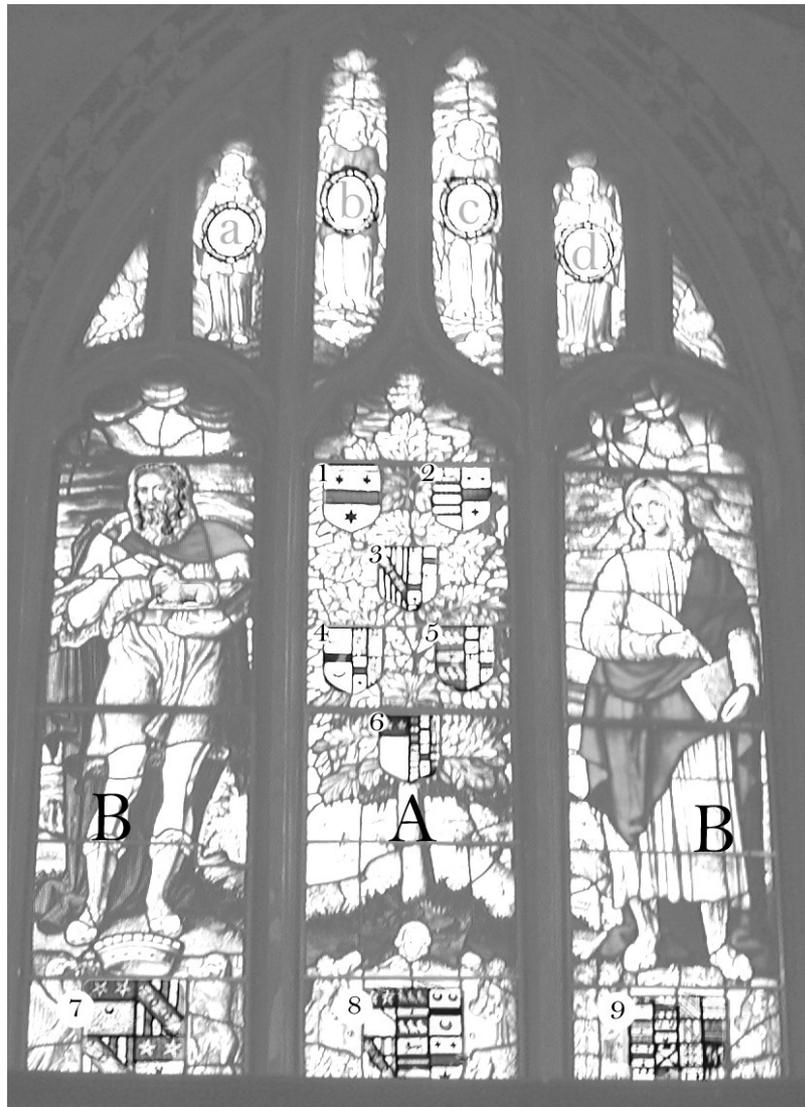
The East Window was commissioned by Sir John St. John, 1st Baronet, d. 1648. The identity of the artist is not known, though the name of Van Linge has been mentioned by some, particularly in connection with the Flemish influence that is apparent in the design.

The window consists of three lower and four upper lights. The upper lights (a. b. c. d., see sketch on next page) portrays angels holding ovals on which are displayed the crests of the major families from which the 1st Baronet is descended. These are, from left to right:

- a. the hames of the Tregoz family. Robert, Baron Tregoz, d. 1198, married Sybil, a daughter and heiress of Robert de Ewyas. Through this marriage the Tregoz family held Lydiard Tregoz during the 13th century, and their tenure accounts for the place name.
- b. the golden eagle with wings displayed of the Grandison family, here bearing hames on its breast. In 1300 the Tregoz interest passed by marriage to the Grandisons.
- c. the rising falcon of the St. Johns with a ducal coronet round its neck and with a strap and bell on each leg. The falcon crest is said to derive from the de Haya family. Tradition has it that Kenith, king of the Scots, 'gave [to a de Haya] as much

Land as a Falcon flying out of Hand, should measure out before he settled'. In the middle of the 12th century a Roger de St. John married Cicely de Haya, of Boxgrove in Sussex. In later years the falcon was adopted by the St. Johns as their own emblem.

- d. the monkey of the de Ports. A grand-daughter of the Roger de St. John – Cicely de Haya became the wife of Adam de Port, Lord of Basing. Their son re-assumed the name of St. John.



In the three lower lights we have figures of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist (B;B), an olive tree (A), nine shields, a motto, a delightful pastoral scene at the foot of the tree, and other decorative features to complete the whole.

B A B

The two St. Johns of the New Testament and the olive tree are used by the artist to suggest the name of Oliver St. John. There is little doubt that it was the 1st Baronet's intention to draw attention to three St. Johns of that name:

1. the Oliver St. John, d. 1437, who married Margaret Beauchamp about the year 1430. With her portrait in the tympanum, Margaret Beauchamp is given pride of place on the triptych, the monument that stands against the north wall of the Chancel. Her marriage to Oliver St. John founded two new branches of the St. John family. The elder (**ed: sic. elder?**) son inherited Bletsoe in Bedfordshire, the younger son inherited Lydiard Tregoz. Margaret's second marriage was to John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, by whom she bore Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII; thus the St. John family claimed common ancestry with that of the sovereign.
2. their younger son, another Oliver, d. 1497. He inherited Lydiard Tregoz from his mother's estates and, in 1487, received a grant of Hatfield Peverel in Essex from King Henry VII. It is from these two Oliver St. Johns that all of the Lydiard St. Johns down to the present Viscount Bolingbroke are descended. The St. Johns held Lydiard Tregoz for 500 years.
3. a further Oliver St. John d. 1630, 1st Viscount Grandison of Limerick and Baron Tregoz of Highworth, the 1st Baronet's uncle.

The 1st Baronet's estates included the manors of Lydiard Tregoz (from Beauchamp, Grandison, Tregoz and Ewyas ancestors), Battersea and Wandsworth (from uncle Oliver), Purley in Berkshire (from Carew and Ewarby ancestors), and Hatfield Peverel in Essex. He was a wealthy young man who, in 1611, at the age of 26, was able to afford the £1,095 plus fees which was the price of a baronetcy.

Shields 1 to 6

On the olive tree hang six shields, These show the descent of the manor of Lydiard Tregoz from Conquest days through to about 1430, when the St. Johns entered upon the inheritance. They are:

1. the Barony of Ewyas. This was an extensive holding with land in Herefordshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, Hampshire and Somerset. At the time of the Domesday Survey Alvred of Marlborough was in possession of this Barony; earlier a large part of its land belonged to Karl, an Anglo-Scandinavian thegn.
2. Tregoz impaling Ewyas. Robert, Baron Tregoz, d. 1198, married Sybil, an heiress of her hather (**ed: sic. father?**), Robert de Ewyas.
3. Grandison impaling quarterly Tregoz and Ewyas. William, Baron de Grandison, d. 1335, married Sybil de Tregoz, joint-heriess (**ed: sic. heiress?**) with her sister of her father's estates.
4. Patshull impaling quarterly Grandison, Tregoz, and Ewyas. John, Baron de Patshull of Bletsoe, d. 1349, married Sybil de Grandison and it was through this marriage that the Grandison estates were inherited by Roger Beauchamp. This

shield could be taken as evidence that Sir John Patshull once held the manor; and the line:

“Whose daughter Patshull took in marriage”

in the outline history of the manor on the triptych could be similarly interpreted. But, in fact, Sir John Patshull was never Lord of the Manor. Several Grandisons held it, and eventually it was settled on Sybil, wife of Roger Beauchamp and daughter and heiress of Sir John Patshull and Mabel Grandison. The Patshull-Grandison marriage thus forms the vital link between the Grandisons and the Beauchamps; it also explains why the later St. Johns included Patshull in their full achievement of arms. But Lydiard Tregoz was never held by Sir John Patshull. One of the 1699 genealogical tables on the triptych shows:

”John de Patshull, Baron Patshull, Lord of Bletsoe
& Caysho and of Lydiard Tregoz in right of his wife.”

The apparent error here disappears if one can use a big stretch of legal imagination and accept, for the purposes of the table on the triptych, that the Lordship of Lydiard Tregoz was his, albeit posthumously!

5. Beauchamp impaling quarterly Patshull, Grandison, Tregoz, and Ewyas. Roger Beauchamp, Barob Bletsoe, d. 1380, married Sybil, heiress of Sir John de Patshull.
6. St. John impaling quarterly Beauchamp, Patshull, Grandison, Tregoz and Ewyas. Oliver St. John’s marriage to Margaret Beauchamp, sole heiress of her family’s estates.

It is interesting to note that the Manor of Lydiard Tregoz passed by simple inheritance or by marriage from the earliest times until 1943, when its first sale in history took place.

The sixth shield incorporates the previous five by the rule that a man shows, in addition to his family arms, the arms of those families whose arms he has inherited. Although a family name may disappear through there being no sons to carry it on, yet a sort of immortality is achieved by the inheriting daughter bringing to her husband and her descendant her own family coat of arms.

The designer of the window may fairly plead that the particular difficulties of working in stained glass should acquit him of the charge that in these six shields the heraldry is technically incorrect. If a man marries an heraldic heiress he shows this by placing at the centre of his shield his wife’s arms very much reduced in size. (An example of this can be seen in the pediment above the front door of Lydiard Park.) Impaling or showing the husband’s and wife’s arms side by side on a shield is used where the wife is not an heraldic heiress, and in such cases the wife’s arms are not transmitted to their descendants. The designer of shields 1 to 6 has endeavoured to produce something which can readily be seen and which represents at a glance both a particular marriage and the inheritance which it brought.

Shield 7

This shield is surmounted by a Viscount’s coronet; below is the St. John motto, Sanctus in terra, beatus in coelo (Holy on earth, blessed in Heaven); beside it, on either side, are an eagle and a monkey as supporters. This shield bears, quarterly, 1st and 4th St. John, 2nd and

3rd Grandison, with the addition of a crescent on the St. John coat. This crescent is a cadency mark to show that here is a second son or the member of a second branch of the family.

There are two difficulties about this shield. It does not match shields 8 and 9 in style, and it is heraldic nonsense.

Whereas shields 8 and 9 fit in with the 17th century style of the rest of the window, shield 7 in its diaper glass, colouring, and draughtsmanship is unmistakably 19th century. Corroboration of the fact that the present shield 7 is not original comes from late in the 17th century, when John Aubrey recorded the heraldry of the window and listed twelve coats on this shield, twelve of the sixteen that appear on shield 9.

It would appear that in the 19th century, presumably after damage to the window, the panel in which shield 7 appears was replaced. Instead of the twelve quarterings that John Aubrey recorded we have only four. At first sight it seems as if the 19th century repairers were guilty of making heraldic nonsense in a desire for economy: in fact, they copied similar errors elsewhere.

The shield is nonsense because the arms by which a man is identified are either inherited or granted to him. If a man has the right to a coat of arms, whether he is plain 'Mr.' Or has the largest collection of titles anyone can muster, the basic shield remains the same. Titles are not shown on the coat itself but by the adjuncts of the shield such as a helmet, coronet, supporters, or the insignia of one of the orders of chivalry. Shield 7 seeks to represent Oliver St. John with his title of Viscount Grandison by showing the St. John and Grandison family arms! His right to the Grandison arms is not in dispute, for he numbered that family among his ancestors; it is the use of the arms to suggest the title that is disputed. It would appear that Viscount Grandison is himself to blame for the error. His portrait, in the possession of Lord Bolingbroke, has in its top left-hand corner the same arms as shield 7, quarterly 1st and 4th St. John, 2nd and 3rd Grandison. He was created Viscount Grandison in the Irish peerage in 1621 and Baron Tregoz in the English peerage in May 1626. About that time, he was involved in the rebuilding of the tower of the church at Purley. On the south wall of the Purley tower is a stone, dated 1626 which gives the arms of Lord Grandison as:

St. John	Grandison
Tregoz	St. John

There is a further example of this treatment. In the south aisle of Tregoz church is the monument to Lord Grandison's parents, Nicholas and Elizabeth St. John. Below the effigies the monument bears the arms of their children. Although Grandison's shield has been inadequately repainted in recent years, it bears the same arms as appear on the Purley tower.

If, in fact, Lord Grandison is himself responsible for the creation of this error, then he was certainly more successful as a soldier and administrator than as a heraldist.

Shield 8

These are the arms of Oliver St. John, d. 1497, the younger son of the St. John-Beauchamp marriage. It has six quarterings:

St. John	Beauchamp	Patshull
Grandison	Tregoz	Ewyas

The crescent cadency mark for the younger son is missing although Aubrey's list includes it. Doubtless this is a further example of 19th century replacement – in this case of just a small piece of glass.

Shield 9

These are the arms of Sir John St. John, 1st Baronet, head of the family of Lydiard St. Johns and donor of the window. There are sixteen quarterings:

1. St. John	2. Umfraville	3. Delabere	4. Pavely
5. Beauchamp	6. Patshull	7. Grandison	8. Tregoz
9. Ewyas	10. Ewarby	11. Carew	12. Huscarl
13. Hungerford	14. Heytesbury	15. Botreaux	16. Molines

The shield is made up as follows:

1. Sir John's family coat with the crescent for the Wiltshire (junior) branch.
2. 3. 4. the heiress brides of three consecutive 14th- and 15th-century St. Johns of Fonmon and Penmark. The third of these, Isabella Pavely, was the mother of the Oliver St. John who married Margaret Beauchamp.
5. Margaret Beauchamp was the heiress of the Beauchamps and an heiress accordingly of the Patshulls (6), of the Grandisons (7), of Tregoz (8), and of the Barony of Ewyas. (9).
10. A grandson of the Oliver St. John and Margaret Beauchamp marriage took as wife an heiress, Jane Ewarby. The Ewarbys inherited from the Carews (11), and, reinforcing the link, a son of Sir John St. John and Jane Ewarby married Margaret Carew. The Carews counted among their ancestors the ancient Saxon family of Huscarl (12).
- 13 The 1st Baronet's mother, Lucy, was an heiress of the Hungerford family. The Hungerfords were inheritors of the Heytesbury (14), Botreaux (15) and Molines (16) families.

Date of the window

On grounds of style, the date of about 1633 is ascribed to the window. Evidence from the window itself is not strong enough to be more precise.

Early 17th century stained-glass windows are not all that common in this country. The east window at Tregoz is a notable example of its period.

The blazoning of the shields in the window is as follows:

St. John Arg., on a chief gu. 2 mullets pierced or, with a crescent sa. for difference

Umfraville	Arg., a fess between 6 cinquefoils pierced gu.
Delabere	Az., a bend or cotised arg. between 6 martlets or
Pavely	Erm., on a fess az. 3 crosses Moline or
Beauchamp	Gu., a fess between 6 martlets or, with a mullet sa. for difference
Patshull	Arg., a fess sa. between 3 crescents gu.
Grandison	Paly of 6 arg. and az., on a bend gu. 3 eaglets displayed or
Tregoz	Or, 2 bars gemelles and in chief a lion passant guardant gu.
Ewyas	Arg., a fess gu. Between 3 mullets of 6 sa. (Aubrey gives estoilles of 6)
Ewarby	Arg., a saltire engrailed sa., on a chief sa. 2 mullets arg.
Carew	Or, 3 lions passant in pale sa., armed and langued gu.
Huscarl	Sa., 3 battle-axes (2 and 1) arg.
Hungerford	Sa., 2 bars arg., in chief 3 plates
Heytesbury	Per pale indented gu. and vert, over all a chevron or
Botreaux	Arg., 3 toads erect sa. (2 and 1)
Molines	Paly wavy of 6 or and gu.

CHURCH RESTORATION

The maintenance of old buildings is a perennial affair. The 20th century began with major restoration work undertaken under the direction of C.E. Ponting F.S.A., and the century has seen continual efforts to keep the building in good repair. Major work was done on the tower in the early 1950's. Since 1960 over £6,000 has been spent.

The first job tackled by the Church Council was to raise money for the re-hanging of the bells.. This project, sponsored by Mr. Frank Coleby, seemed an impossible task, to raise £1,500. One person who particularly commended the appeal was Mr. Louis Wilson of Wooton Bassett. In a letter dated 13 October, 1961, he wrote,

On reading the article re Lydiard Tregoz House & Church in the North Wilts Herald I would like to express my delight on reading of the restoration of the Bells. Many years back in the time of Rev. Harrison I with the help of the late E. Bishop, auctioneer of Swindon, tried to get him interested in the Restoration. The Freemasons of Swindon at that time offered to undertake the job in memory of the Rev. Bailey, once the Rector of Lydiard Tregoz. The cost then was about 300 pounds, but alas he turned it down flat. I expect I am the only living person who rang the bells at the coming of age of Lord Bolingbroke I am now 86, and hope to see your Bells in order once more.

Mr. Wislon did live to see the bells ring again. John Taylor & Co. of Loughborough recast the

4th, added a new treble, and installed a new cast-iron bell frame. The new treble was the Church's memorial to the late Canon and Mrs. W.H. Willetts.

Although work on the bells was to be a priority, the re-hanging did not take place until 1964. The bad weather of 1962/3 intervened and destroyed the heating system entirely. The old heating system consisted of a solid-fuel boiler situated in a lean-to shed beside the west wall of the south aisle, the hot water circulating through heating coils, radiators, and an endless supply of 3" cast piping which snaked its way round the Church. "On ye ice and snow, praise ye the Lord". The frost did its good work and, coupled with £1,600, we had a new heating system, oil-fired and feeding hot water into discretely positioned convector heaters.

Thieves removed some of the lead from the north aisle just as the P.C.C. were giving earnest consideration to re-laying the whole section. The action of the late-night visitors precipitated matters. £1,000 saw that job done.

Re-roofing the Church is engaging our attention, as well as masonry repairs. One of the slopes of the chancel roof has been re-laid, and more work is being planned on the nave roof and south aisle. Mr. John Salter of Corsham is at present busy on the outside faces of the walls; last year Messrs. Furse repaired the exterior faces of the tower.

These seem to be the major items over the past eight years. Coupled with them, however, have been a whole range of ancillary jobs which have been listed by the Architect, Mr. Oswald Brakspear A.R.I.B.A., in his quinquennial reports under the Inspection of Churches Measure, 1955. In these ancillary jobs the hero has been Mr. Bob Hatch, one of the Church members, who over the years has spent weeks at a time, working in the Church. His skill in carpentry has been greatly to the benefit of the building and its fittings.

There is still much to do. As soon as the building is wind-and-weather-tight a start will be made on the restoration of the tombs and monuments.

Where has the money come from? In the main it has come from the direct giving and through the efforts of Church members. The biggest 'effort' has been the annual Gymkhana and Fete; this year being the 7th. An average of £300 has been realised each year. Added to the giving of members and friends has been the help from the Diocese of Bristol. Their gift of £750 was much appreciated. The Historic Churches Preservation Trust has made a grant of £500, and the Incorporated Church Building Society has added a further £100.

This note about restoration work would be incomplete without tribute being paid to the hard-working team of Church Council and Church members. It is their enthusiasm which has sustained the work.

CULME

Buried in Tregoz Churchyard, lies Benjamin Culme, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, and his wife Deborah, niece of Sir John St. John, 1st Baronet. Dean Culme's tombstone has long since disappeared but the inscription was noted down by John Aubrey. It was in Latin and, very freely translated, would read in English:

Stay traveller!

Benjamin Culme, no ordinary man lies here; a very distinguished ornament of the most noble family of Culme of Devon, a Doctor of Theology, not 'formerly' but still at his death Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin; acquainted with good and bad fortune, he behaved with dignity in both. He was constant in prosperity (**ed: sic. prosperity?**) and adversity; in all things a model of the ancient faith, of piety, patience, and good government; a man to be copied, living in an age – an evil age – that was not to be copied. Exiled back to his own country, he was yet not at home in the conditions of his own country; he was neither frightened by the unheard-of savagery of the Irish, nor led away by the unexpected success of the English. He had his fill of cares and of years, but was disgusted with neither, rather he was so full of hope and trust in God. He had experienced – more than enough – the vanity of earthly things, and in order to enjoy eternal quiet and glory, he peacefully fell asleep in Christ 21 October 1657 in his 76th year, awaiting the coming resurrection of the blessed.

His arms, the same as those borne by the Culmes of Suffolk and Ireland, were: Azure, a chevron ermine between 3 pelicans vulning themselves proper.

Benjamin Culme was born in 1582, the son of Hugh Culme of Molland, Devon. He took his M.A. degree at Oxford, being entered first at St. Alban's Hall, and later at Lincoln College. He moved to Ireland where others of his family also found position and fortune.. There is a record of him as Rector of Trim in 1613, Prebendary of Malahidert in 1615, and Rector of Rathmore, co. Meath, 1616. About this time he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Dublin. In 1619 he obtained a patent for the Deanery of St. Patrick's, to be operative at the next vacancy. He was installed as Dean in 1625, and at St. Patrick's was "esteemed an excellent preacher and good divine".

The 17th century in Ireland was very unlike the Golden Age of learning and literature more than a thousand years before. Centuries of near anarchy marked by inter-tribal conflicts, and widespread and grinding poverty had brought Ireland to a low ebb. The English conquest of Ireland was first seriously undertaken in Tudor and Stuart times. In Elizabeth I's reign Anglo-Irish relations worsened, for the Irish, regarded as savages, had the English language and English institutions like the Church of England imposed on them without any consideration for their wishes or feelings.

The Pope and the King of Spain, Elizabeth's Catholic enemies, took a great interest in Ireland. Ireland seethed with rebellion, the English met it with ferocity. English settlers ousted native owners, and systematic starvation kept people fairly quiet. James I turned Ulster into an Anglo-Scottish territory. Charles I appointed Sir Thomas Wentworth, later created Earl of Strafford, as Lord Deputy in 1632. Wentworth believed that 'order was Heaven's first law' and his policy of 'thoroughness' earned him the nickname of 'Black Tom Tyrant' – although it must be added that his seven years of service in Ireland brought to Ireland some economic benefit too.

It was after Wentworth was recalled by Charles I, and his strong hand was removed, that rebellion broke out again. The great massacre of 1641 sparked off an insurrection throughout the land. Neither the King nor Parliament was able to act, for they had more pressing matters to attend to. The Civil War broke out in August 1642: Ireland lapsed into anarchy. Eventually, for his own ends, Charles I made a treaty of peace with the confederate Irish against the English parliamentarians.

In 1646 Dean Culme joined about eighty fellow clergy at Dublin Castle to present to the Royalist Marquis of Ormonde "an affectionate address" expressing "sincere gratitude for his vigilant care, exercised to preserve, not only within the city of Dublin, but also in our garrisons, the free exercise of the true reformed religion according to the liturgy and canons of the church of England, at a time when the use of that liturgy was prohibited, both in England and Scotland". Their joy could only be short-lived. Ormonde's treaty sought to unite strange bedfellows; the alliance broke asunder, and Ormonde was defeated in battle. On 24th June, 1647, the commissioners of the English Parliament banned the Book of Common Prayer and declared that any who continued to use it would be "out of the protection of the government". The Bishop of Killaloe, the Deans of both Dublin Cathedrals, and fifteen of the city's clergy drew up a remonstrance in which they presented their objections in matter of both law and conscience. They requested a stay of the order until the Irish clergy or Parliament could debate the matter. Their plea was in vain.

Early in 1649, at the age of 67, Dean Culme left Ireland for England, having appointed deputies at the Cathedral, which arrangements were soon superseded by the commissioners of Parliament. Later that year Cromwell arrived: the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford followed. Benjamin Culme's forty years in Ireland covers what seems to us a sad chapter in a very sad story.

It is not known when he married, but the fact that his wife out-lived him by thirty-eight years makes the year 1642, when he began his will at the age of 60, a possibly significant year. He married Deborah Pleydell, d. 1695, daughter of Sir Charles Pleydell of Midgehall, d. 1642, by his second wife, Jane, sister of Sir John St. John, 1st Baronet. Jane is the third from the right of the six sisters whose portraits are on the central panels of the triptych.

He had one son, Benjamin, and one daughter, Elizabeth, d. 1715, who became the third wife of Sir John Morton, Bt., of Milborne St. Andrew, Dorset.

Dean Culme's will speaks of his property, his "Lands of inheritance" in co. Cavan and co. Meath, also lands that he had acquired in the same counties, in co. Dublin and in Yorkshire.

In his retirement he spent at least part of his time in this parish, living at his wife's old home, and presumably died there, the remainder of his time having been spent at Canonsleigh, *near* to his birthplace, in Devon. [*Addenda and Corrigenda to Report 2 – it is stated that Canonsleigh is situated near to Benjamin Culme's birthplace, Molland. It is in Devon, but in the parish of Burlescombe some twenty-five miles south east of Molland. Canonsleigh was an Augustinian nunnery which surrendered on 16 February, 1538/9. After some years it passed into the hands of the Culme family, who possessed it until 1658. (B.G.C.)*]

Deborah Culme died in 1695. The entry in the register for her burial reads "17 November 1695 The most incomparable Deborah Culme". That succinct appreciation by Rector Stephen Charman testifies to the warm regard in which she was held. Of her character and good works all too little is known. Her husband's will testifies to her ability by stating that it was through her care and pains that a great part of his estate had been preserved. Of her generosity we still have proof in the Church. In 1670 she presented an alms dish, and one of the great flagons which bears the inscription, "The gift of Deborah Culme, Daughter of Sr. Chas. Pleydell of Midgehall". (The other flagon was the gift of her sister, Lady Elizabeth Newcomen.)

The alms dish and flagon, together with the memorial to her parents above the south-west door of the Church, serve as reminders of Deborah Culme and her husband. Their presence in the community will have enriched local society, and Deborah's good works as a wealthy widow must have endeared her to the local population.

Seating arrangements

Among Lord Bolingbroke's papers is one, undated, which gives the allocation of certain seats in the Church: as follows,

Window

1. Midgehall	C	Bassett Down		1. The Clerk's seat
2. Marsh	L	2. Eastleaze		2. Formerly occupied
3. Blagrove	A	3. Windmilleaze		by Plummers and
4. Spittleboro	R	4. used as over-		Badcocks, the 1 st
5. Can Court	E	flow for		named renting the
6. Whitehill	N	Can Court	N	Church Ground &
7. The Marsh	D		A	Stalls previous
8. Wick	O		V	to Jonas Clarke
9. Chaddington	N		E	who afterwards
10. Flaxlands				rented the land
	A		A	together with
	I		I	Wick.
	S		S	3. Mannington
	L		L	4. Toothill
	E		E	5. Creeches

Editor's Postscript

In greeting the Friends of Lydiard Tregoz on their formation as a Society I would like to pay tribute to those who, by their actions, encouragement, and example, have made the formation of the Society a worthwhile proposition. However omnibus a vote of thanks is made, it is never all-inclusive and is therefore better not attempted. Mention must, however, be made of the regular congregation at the Church, who have worked hard to retain their place of worship, of the Corporation of Swindon, who have saved Lydiard Park for posterity, and of Mrs Crittall and Mr. Dufty, whose sterling work in the guidebook is highly esteemed.

In the production of this bulletin sincere thanks are due to Mr. Flack, Deputy Borough Architect, for his account of the restoration work on Lydiard Park, and to Mr. Frank T. Smallwood. Mr. Smallwood gave a lifetime of service on the staff of Sir Walter St. John's Grammar school at Battersea. In his retirement he has continued his careful study of Battersea, the School, the St. John family, and many related topics. He has written only one article for this Bulletin, but much of the information throughout the Bulletin is the direct result of his researches. Mr. Douglas Perry has contributed his specialised knowledge of heraldry and genealogy, and Mr. Arthur Jones has been busy with the not inconsiderable task of Secretary and Treasurer of the Society.

It is hoped that the Bulletin will be an annual production. To this end, I hope that members of the Society will make their contribution. Some will be able to contribute articles, others will add pieces of information or point out errors, others will raise queries which may lead to the writing of articles. Although the immediate interest of the Friends is in Lydiard Park, the House and the Church, there are very few aspects of the history of the whole parish that do not contribute something to our understanding of the role of the House and Church in history.

Future Bulletins will contain biographical notes on people of interest, information about the parish gained from old maps and old records, as well as plenty of bits and pieces. Articles and suggestions will be warmly welcomed.

I am sure that it is the wish of all members that our new Society will be a success. Let us make sure that it is so.

Brian Carne