

CHAPTER VIII.

Wigan Sports and Race Course—Churchwardens' Accounts for 1700—General Election—Whig and Tory Members for Wigan—Wigan Agreements—War and Loyal Addresses—General Election in Wigan—Ford's Charity—Charities of Willes, Holt, and others—Organ in Parish Church—Resolution passed at Parish Meeting—Election—Death of Henry Bradshaigh—Election—Religion and Politics—Local Trials and Executions—Local Bye Law—Mayor's Gallery in Parish Church.

WHERE was now quite a craze for athletic sports in Lancashire, Wigan being one of the chief centres. 'There there was a properly prepared course of three miles, part of which is now the Cricket Ground. The names of the competitors had to be given in to the town bailiff, and five shillings deposited as entrance fee for the chief race for a plate of £10 value. The sports lasted for several days. In the year 1700 they continued for three days, viz., 6th, 7th, and 8th August. The highest prize for running on the first day was a £10 plate, that on the second day a 50s. plate, and on the third day an £8 plate. The sports were publicly advertised during every market day for over a month before, with the hope of inviting distant competitors. These races for footmen afterwards gave place to horse races on the same ground, but there are no races at Wigan now. The following is an advertisement from the *London Gazette* which re-appeared in "Local Gleanings," Vol. I. :—

A Plate of £10 value will be run for by Footmen, on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, at Wigan, in Lancashire, the usual 3 Miles Course there; all Persons may run that enter their names with the Bayliffs there by the First of the said month, and that pays down 5s. On the 7th a Plate of 50s. value will be run for there, excluding such as ran for the first Plate. And on the 8th a Plate of £5 value will be run for there, and any Persons to put in without paying anything to this or the foregoing Plate (except the winner of the first Plate), provided they enter their names as above said.—(June 10 to 13, 1700).

The churchwardens' accounts have never been published, although the entries are very useful and interesting items of local history. The accounts for 1700 are the only examples given here in entirety, not because that is a more interesting year

than any other, but simply as a good illustration of the whole. Every item of expenditure in connection with the Parish Church is there carefully entered. Every penny officially spent by the churchwardens is accounted for, and the receipts from the different townships given. The following entries have been copied directly from the account book now in the vestry at the Parish Church.

The accounts of William Smith and John Rigby, churchwardens of the Towne and parish of Wigan, beginning the second day of Aprill, 1700, and ending the two and twentieth day of Aprill, 1701.

| | | |
|---------|---|-----------|
| Impris. | Recd. of the Township of Wigan..... | £15 00 00 |
| Itm. | Recd. of the Constables of Haigh and Aspul | 7 10 |
| Itm. | Recd. of the Constables of Hindley, Abram, Billinge, Winstanley, and Orrell | 7 10 |
| Itm. | Recd. of the Constables of Ince and Pemberton | 7 10 |
| Itm. | Recd. of the Constables of Upholland and Dalton | 7 10 |
| | | 52 10 00 |

The disbursements of the said William Smith and John Rigby, churchwardens, are as fols. (vizt.) :—

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 2nd of Aprill, 1700. Impris. | paid for ale and other things with the parishioners at the choosing of churchwardens | £00 15 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for ringing on the 11th of Aprill, 1700, being the king's birthday | 00 08 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for ale and meate at swearing of the sidesmen | 00 14 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Thomas Barton for iron worke about the bells as appears by bills | 01 04 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Charles Banks for lead and worke done about the church | 02 01 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for new bell ropes to John Carter | 00 17 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for a ffox head to James Langshaw | 00 01 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for twoe ffox heads to John Grimshaw | 00 02 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for a ffox head to Ellen Ryding | 00 01 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Wm. Parr | 00 01 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Edward Bayley for makeing a new Press for poore's bread and for mending beeres | 3 12 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for ringing on the 29th of May, 1700..... | 00 06 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for a new paire of surplices and for makeing them | 02 17 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for church clerk and for washing the church linen | 01 00 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to John Laithwaite for dressing fflag lane and for mending the bell ropes, and making the church yard cleane | 00 08 00 |
| Itm. pd. | at the Parish meeting | 00 05 00 |
| Itm. pd. | out on the severall constables at receiving of the money..... | 00 03 00 |
| Itm. pd. | out on Mr. Holt and other gents. of the parish at the time when Mr. Holt gave the poore's bread..... | 00 09 00 |
| Itm. pd. | at two meetings | 00 02 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Peter ffairhurst for slateing stiple (steeple) and vestry and for naeles..... | 00 10 08 |
| Itm. pd. | to church clerk for wire for the church clock and for other things | 00 05 00 |
| Itm. pd. | for one half years' ringing..... | 00 13 00 |
| Itm. pd. | to Mr. Grime (?) for two large prayer books and paper booke and sheete almanack | 01 10 03½ |
| Itm. pd. | to the clerk for sweeping the church | 01 00 00 |

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|---|-----------|
| Itn. pd. to Mr. Carter with the sidesmen..... | £00 04 00 |
| Itn. pd. at a meetings at the Bishopp's court..... | 00 14 00 |
| Itn. pd. to Thomas Cronelly for Teassing of the Steeple and other work | 00 10 00 |
| Itn. paid to the Church Clerk for Copying out the Registers..... | 00 10 00 |
| Itn. pd. for Communion bread for the whole year..... | 00 05 00 |
| Itn. pd. to Henry Taylor for mending the Church yard stile | 00 01 06 |
| Itn. pd. to George Greene for mending of the church yard gate and for wood..... | 00 05 06 |
| Itn. pd. to James Molineux for mending of the church windows for the whole yeare | 01 05 02 |
| Itn. pd. to Adam Young for white lyming in and about the church..... | 00 05 00 |
| Itn. pd. for 3 leads of lyme | 00 05 00 |
| Itn. pd. to Adam Young for work done in and about the church | 00 11 06 |
| Itn. pd. for ringing at the king's return | 00 05 00 |
| Itn. pd. for ringing on the 4th and 5th November | 00 17 00 |
| Itn. for neales and other things for the new Presse | 00 02 02 |
| Itn. pd. for oyle and other things to Mr. Baldwin | 00 04 09½ |
| Itn. pd. for the Cannons of the Church..... | 00 01 06 |
| Itn. pd. at the Bishopp's Court for fees | 00 06 10 |
| Itn. pd. for ringing on the 11th of Aprill, 1701 | 00 08 00 |
| Itn. pd. for warrants | 00 02 06 |
| Itn. pd. for 18 quarts of wyne to Upholland | 01 10 00 |
| Itn. pd. for 12 quarts of wyne to Billinge Chappell | 01 00 00 |
| Itn. pd. for 6 quarts of wyne to Hindley | 00 10 00 |
| Itn. pd. for Communion wyne for Wigan, being Lent wyne..... | 17 18 00 |
| Itn. pd. to Mr. Martin for mending the church clock..... | 02 10 00 |
| Itn. for work done about the bells to John Smith and John Laithwaite..... | 15 04 00 |
| Itn. pd. for attending the church clock one quarter | 00 10 00 |
| Itn. pd. for 2 prayer bookes for ffast day..... | 00 01 04 |
| Itn. pd. for mending the little Beere (Bell ?) | 00 00 04 |
| Itn. pd. to Mr. Greenhough for painteing and laying gold letters upon the Presse... | 05 00 00 |
| Itn. pd. for drawing these accounts..... | 00 02 00 |
| Itn. pd. for making the yard in sd. fflag lane | 00 04 00 |

22nd of Aprill, 1701.

These accounts before written were then seen and allowed by us whose names are hereinafter subscribed, and we doe find there to the sd. churchwardens, Mr. Wm. Smith and Mr. John Rigby, from the Towne and parish of Wigan, the sum of three pounds and ninepence, and doe hereby order the same to be paid by the pr'sent churchwardens, Mr. John Harvey and Mr. James Leyland, fullcos., out of the ffirst Lyes that shall be laid for the use of the sd. Towne and parish.

ZACH. TAYLOR, Cur.
 WM. WOOD.
 JOHN BALDWIN.
 GERRARD FFORD.
 ROBERT FFELLINGHEAD (?).
 WM. ARBOWSMITH.
 ROGER BULLOCKE.
 ROGER BULLOCKE.
 his R. B. mark.
 GER. BANCKE.
 JOSEPH HIND.
 his + mark.
 R.A. BANCKE.

The dawn of the eighteenth century was clouded with gloomy forebodings to England. The king was gradually and perceptibly slipping into his grave at the very time when—according to all human appearances—his life was most necessary to the nation. Affairs between England and Scotland had reached such a crisis that something should inevitably be done either to alienate or cement the two countries. The Jacobites, high in the hope that the Stuarts would soon have their own again, were prepared to take the field at a moment's notice. Many were discontented with the ruling of William, as must necessarily be the case at the beginning of every doubtful dynasty. The Whigs, anxious to subvert the ruling Tories, seized every opportunity of causing political commotion. News had just arrived from France of the death of James, and it was expected that the national sympathy would foster fresh Jacobite feelings; but, simultaneously with that news, came the intelligence that the king of France had broken faith with England—that the treaty of Kyswick had been openly ignored and violated, and, from that moment, everything with a French connection was hopeless of success in England. The Tories were exposed as the enemies of the country and the courtiers of France, and there was immediately a revulsion of feeling in favour of Whigism. Parliament was dissolved, writs were issued, and the most keenly contested election known to king and men took place. Even the ancient and loyal borough of Wigan was again to be lured into a contest.

The following shows how agreeably one constituency wrought into the hands of the other, so that in times of a general election the electors of one place might not be debarred from giving their votes in another:—

Richard Norris, Esq.,
Mayor.
Worshipful Sir,

Wigan, Jan'y. 7, 1700-1.

The day of election for Burgesses of Parliament for this Corporation is proclaimed to be on the 13th instant. This is, therefore, to desire you (if possibly you can) so to order the day of election for your Town that we may have those of your Corporation who are Burgesses of this here to give their votes at this election, whereby you will oblige very many, and among them

Your humble and already obliged servant,

P. HADDON.

—(Chet. Soc. Pub., vol. ix., p. 60, the Norris Papers.)

Never had the Whigs made such a determined stand, never had they been so anxious to win. They were as free with their money as if they had improvised a mint of their own. Down into every borough went their representatives and electioneering agents. Couriers, with speeches, pamphlets, and electioneering aphorisms and political war-cries, posted to every borough and county. Every burgess of Wigan might have made for himself a small library of broadsheets, so plentiful was the supply, although there is good reason for supposing that many of the voters were

unable to read. Of course bribery and corruption were unknown by their modern names : a guinea was a convincing argument, not a bribe. Money was the strongest language an electioneer could use : verbosity had no power of persuasion : no English dictionary contained words that could be woven into an argument so strong as the small glittering pieces in the stocking-like purses of the canvassers. The voter admired the language of all candidates alike, but their golden apostrophes were the logical premises that decided the conclusions. In the three previous general elections Wigan had sent to Westminster nothing but Tories, and it was expected by the Tories she would do the same again ; but an election, influenced by substantial persuasions, is as deceitful as bewitching beauty. To the disgust of all high-minded Tories, Wigan returned a Whig and a Tory, Sir Roger Bradshaigh and Sir Alexander Rigby, Knight, the latter of whom had unsuccessfully petitioned against the returns of 1698, when he had been a discomfited candidate. This Whig Parliament, which assembled in December, 1701, was the fifth and last Parliament under William and Mary.

During the eighteenth century there were twenty general and nine bye elections in Wigan. At six of these general elections two Tories were returned, 1702, 1708, 1710, 1714, 1790, 1796 ; at two of them, 1768 and 1774, two Whigs were returned. According to the returns of the other twelve elections, both parties were represented. By two bye elections the parties were differently represented ; in 1775 a Tory gained a seat from the Whigs, and in 1782 a Whig obtained a Tory seat. In nine consecutive Parliaments Sir Roger Bradshaigh represented Wigan as a Tory, and in the five following ones he was the representative of the Whigs. He became a turncoat at the general election of 1716, which was a very critical one.

The following local agreement, disagreement, and arbitration is of interest :—

1st July, 1702.—Articles of Agreement between Thomas Edleston, now of the city of London, victualler, of the one part, and Alice Rigby, of Wigan, spinster, of the other part. Whereas Richard Arrowsmith, of Pemberton, co. Lanc., husbandman, deceased, did by his will give a tenement in Wigan to the benefit of four sisters, Elizabeth, Margaret, Mary, and Alice Rigby equally. And whereas Thomas Edleston, who married Elisabeth Rigby, the eldest sister, and has purchased the shares of Margaret and Mary Rigby and doth now live in the city of London, at a great distance, hath a mind to sell the premises, and hath offered a sum of money to Alice Rigby for her share, but she desires more. Wherefore it is agreed by the parties hereto that the property shall be appraised by James Mollyneux, of Wigan, glazier, and John Prescott, of Hindley, yeoman, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS EDLESTON.

Signed, sealed, &c., in the presence of us, W. Rylands, John Dicconson.

28th July, 1702.—Know ye that we, Thomas Edleston, of the parish of St. Clement's, Danes, in the county of Middlesex, and Elizabeth, wife of the said Thomas Edleston ; Margaret Rigby, of Cartwright Street, Westminster, spinster ; John Cullis, of the parish of St. Anne, in the county of Middlesex, and Mary, wife of the said John Cullis ; and Alice Rigby, of Wigan, spinster, have

quit-claimed, &c., to John Prescott, of Hindley, co. Lancaster, gent., as well as all legacies, bequests, &c., bequeathed to us by the will of the said Richard Arrowsmith, &c., &c.

(Signed) ELIZABETH EDELSTON. THO. EDELSTON.
JOHN CULLIS. ALICE RIGBY.
MARGARET RIGBY.

Sealed, signed, and delivered by ELIZABETH EDELSTON, JOHN CULLIS, and MARGARET RIGBY, in the presence of Will. Dandy, Elizabeth Clayton, X her mark.

Sealed, signed, and delivered by THOMAS EDELSTON and ALICE RIGBY, in the presence of James Mollyneux, John Dicconson.

It seemed to be the predestined fate of England to get mixed up in every Continental dispute as if the English nation was always on the *que vive* for war. On the battlefield of modern Europe the English troops, with German and Dutch allies, met under the command of Lord Churchill—afterwards Duke of Marlborough—to settle the disputed Spanish succession. The two great victories of 1704 were Blenheim and Gibraltar, and the whole country was so elated with the success that Queen Anne was presented with numerous addresses of congratulation. The following address, preserved in the Chetham Library, Manchester, was signed by Bishop Stratford and presented to Queen Anne in 1704:—

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Address of the Bishop, Dean and Chapter, Archdeacons, and Clergy of the Diocese of Chester.

May it please your Sacred Majesty,

To permit us together with the rest of your Loyal Subjects to Congratulate the Success of the pedition of Your Forces under the Command of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough; which has been attended with all the happy circumstances that could any way contribute to enhance the Glory of it: and is as much to be admired for the Design, as for the Execution; nor more important for the Entireness of the Victory than for ye juncture in which it was obtained.

It has also pleased God that the joy of your People should be further heighten'd by the Defeat of the French at Sea where the Conduct and Bravery of your Admiral overcame all the Advantages on which the Enemy, with so much reason presumed.

The Peculiar Providence that blesses your Counsels must be remarkable to all men, who have seen the Power of the French King (which till your Majesty's Access to the English Throne had overborn all Opposition and was then likely to overrun Europe) so soon and signally checkt and broken, at a time and by those Hands He least expected.

Your Clergy, who have had so early and so great a part, in your Care and Munificence, are bound by all ties to pray to God, that he would continue His Blessings to us, by prolonging your Reign over us, that we may see y^r glory of it contemplated; That when through the Divine Assistance, you shall have settled Peace in Europe, you may be as renowned for the Propagation of Religion and Learning as you are for the success of your Arms.

(Signed) N. CESTRIENS, &c., &c., &c.

If a single individual rules over sovereign and country, that individual is sure to be a woman. The beauty, capricious wit and temper, and political deceit and intrigue, if not wickedness, of Lady Marlborough brought Queen Anne beneath their spells. This lady, once a poor and penniless girl, guided and governed Anne, and

Anne ruled over England. Hitherto the feeling of the queen and country was naturally opposed to a Whig Government, but the beauty and darling of the palace was a Whig, and savagery and civilisation must alike yield to beauty, and so, at this time, and often before and since, did politics. By crafty suasion the queen was first enticed into tolerating the Whigs for the sake of her confidential pet, and that toleration grew and spread, like an epidemic, through the whole country into the smallest and staunchest boroughs. The results of that powerfully winning influence were an overwhelming Whig return at the general election of 1705, being the second Parliament of Queen Anne. In the previous election, Wigan, true to her colours and traditions, had returned two Tories—members of families who almost claimed the seats as heirlooms—Sir Roger Bradshaigh and Orlando Bridgeman. So infectious and powerful was the influence of a beautiful and determined woman, that even Wigan, yielding to the reaction that had been commenced by her fascinations, returned a Whig, Emanuel Howe, with Sir Roger Bradshaigh. The election cries were naturally, as usual, like the dead sea fruit, everything to please the eye and gratify the wish, until grasped after the work of the hustings was over, when they vanished into thin air, or exploded and left but an offensive smoke and indelible chagrin. The eyes of the Wigan burgesses had scarcely been opened to their political back-sliding when they regretted it and longed for another election. But the die was cast for that Parliament, which, indeed, did not obtain its majority in vain, for it accomplished a work of the highest possible importance to the country, negotiations, for which had been going on since the reign of the first Stuart—the union of England and Scotland. The discontent and pleasure over the accomplishment of this great act were alike shared in Wigan, where Tories lamented over the prospective influx of Presbyterians who would be certain to overwhelm or undermine the Episcopalians, and Whigs groaned as their minds' eyes beheld the steady emigration of all trade from England to Scotland, where labour was cheap. The party of peace and advancement rejoiced, and the Whigs, as a party, were pleased because they were in power, and the honour would be theirs in the annals of their country. The Whigs became more powerful than ever, but Wigan had not forgotten her former chagrin, and at the next general election, in the summer of 1708, she returned to her first love and sent two Tories from the house of Haigh. The brothers, Sir Roger and Henry Bradshaigh, were duly elected. This election was the precursor of the great political re-action, for although the Whigs went back in power they had reached their zenith. Great men, who rise in the annals of all countries, shoot across their social and national horizons like bewildering comets, and having accomplished some important work, pass away into oblivion, only to be raised from the dead by future historians, and so, too, the great political parties of English government are raised

to power, but have no sooner done their work, or failed in the attempt, than they are overtaken by some new progressive idea and hurled from their lofty heights. Scarcely had this Whig Government brought about the union then a paltry incident, made important by their own bigotry, overwhelmed them in disgrace. An appeal had to be made to the country before their legitimate three years lease had been run. The Parliament of 1708 to 1710 was the first Parliament of the United Kingdom. It was a Whig Parliament to which Wigan had sent two Tories. Here was the election again, and bravely did both parties fight in the election of 1710. There was no struggle in Wigan, for she was given up by the Whigs as a malignant Tory. Her principles had been tried and determined in the previous struggle. The same two Tory brothers were returned to the fourth Parliament of Anne, and Wigan rejoiced that the Tories had a large majority in the new government, in which the Prime Minister was Oxford, who can scarcely be said to have been assisted by his bitter rival, though partizan, the infidel, Bolingbroke. In 1713 the younger member for Wigan, Henry Bradshaigh, died, and at the bye election of April 22nd of the same year George Kenyon, a Tory, was appointed in his stead.

Gilbert Ford, by will dated 2nd January, 1705, devised one moiety of a close in Wigan, containing three tofts of land or thereabouts, to his executors, on trust, to lay out the rents and profits in linnen, cloth, and thread, and to cause shifts to be made thereof, and distribute the same to such poor persons, inhabitants of Wigan, every Christmas eve, as his trustees and their heirs should, in their discretion, think convenient. The Commissioners in 1839 found that with one moiety of the rent Mrs. Tennant (she having the management of the charity) purchases linnen or flannel, which she has made up into garments, and gives them away about Christmas to such poor women of the town of Wigan as she thinks most proper objects of charity.

The following is an epitome of the information obtained by the Royal Commissioners on enquiring into the charities of Welles, Holt, and others:—

In a decree of the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Lancaster, made in a suit instituted by the Attorney-General against Thomas Bowyer, 3rd September, 1741, it is recited that Ellen Welles, by her will bearing date 22nd August, 1707, bequeathed £100 to the poor of Wigan, and that Richard Welles, by his will bearing date 8th December, 1707, bequeathed £200, either to be made use of towards employing the poor of Wigan or the improvement thereof or to put boys of that town apprentices yearly for ever.

By the decree above-mentioned, and another made in the same suit, 2nd March, 1752, it was ordered that the £100 left by Ellen Welles and £200 left by Richard Welles should be paid to the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of Wigan, and placed out by them, with the consent of the Mayor and justice of the borough

of Wigan, the produce of £100 to be laid out in linen cloth, to be distributed at Christmas yearly amongst such of the poor belonging to the town as the churchwardens, with the Mayor and justice of the peace of Wigan for the time being, should appoint, and the produce of the sum of £200 to be disposed of in employing the poor, or in putting out poor boys of the town of Wigan apprentices, by the overseers and churchwardens of Wigan, with the consent of the said Mayor and justice of the peace.

Edward Holt, by his will bearing date 7th October, 1704, bequeathed £150 to James Holt and nine others of the town or parish of Wigan, upon trust, to put forth the same at interest, or to lay it out in purchasing land or a rent charge, and to lay out the yearly produce thereof in oat bread, or any other sort of bread as they should think most meet; and he directed that they should cause such bread to be distributed to such poor people as for the time being should inhabit and dwell within Wigan, and also within the townships of Haigh, Aspall, Ince, Pemberton, Hindley, Abram, and Winstanley, as the said trustees or the major part of them should direct and appoint, the same bread to be distributed in the Parish Church of Wigan in the manner following (that is to say), 22 penny loaves every Sunday, viz., one Sunday to the poor of Wigan, and the other Sunday to the poor of Haigh, Aspall, Ince, Pemberton, Hindley, Abram, and Winstanley, and so on alternately; and he further bequeathed to the same trustees £75, upon trust, that they should lay out the same in like manner, and with the yearly produce thereof buy 10 twopenny loaves every Sunday, and distribute the same in the Parish Church of Wigan to 10 of the most necessitous poor persons, inhabitants within the town of Wigan, such as the said trustees should nominate; and he thereby appointed that whenever seven of the said trustees should happen to die the survivors or survivor and his heirs should choose seven other honest, substantial persons, inhabiting in the town of Wigan, to be trustees, in the room of those so dying. The same testator also left to trustees £100, the yearly produce thereof to be applied in the purchase of bread for the poor of Blackrod. He also bequeathed £25 for the better maintenance of poor householders and inhabitants belonging to Shevington, and for teaching poor children to read or binding them out apprentices. The several legacies above-mentioned were laid out in 1774, together with other money, upon the Workhouse.

By indentures of lease and release bearing date 16th and 17th June, 1767, between John Marsden, of the first part; Thomas Barton, of the second part, and William Ollerhead, Mayor of Wigan; the Rev. Shirley Cotes, Rector of Wigan; John Percival, and seven others, the then churchwardens of the said parish, and overseers of the town of Wigan, of the third part; the said John Marsden and

Thomas Barton, in consideration of £175, conveyed to the said William Ollerhead and others, their heirs and assigns, a close of land, being part of a field called the Great Trumpeter's Field, and containing by estimation 1 acre 1 rood 18 poles, upon trust, to build thereon one or more houses to be used as a workhouse for the maintenance and employment of the poor of the borough and town of Wigan: and upon further trust to demise the same by way of mortgage for securing the repayment of any sums of money borrowed for the building or furnishing the said houses: and upon trust to pay the clear profits of the said close for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Wigan, as the said trustees, with the Mayor of Wigan and the justice of the peace of the same, and the churchwardens and overseers of the poor, should think fit.

By indenture bearing date 13th June, 1768, the premises above-mentioned were demised for 2,000 years to the Right Hon. Richard Clayton as a security for £200, with interest, and by indenture bearing date 22nd October, 1771, Edward Clayton and Richard Clayton, executors of the above-named Richard Clayton, assigned the said term to Roger Holt, his executors, &c., in trust for the said Edward Clayton.

There was also produced to us an indenture, bearing date 24th March, 1774, between Joanna Holt and Thomas Barton, executors to the above-named Roger Holt, of the first part; Robert and William Clayton, executors of the above-named Edward Clayton, of the second part; Robert Green, the then mayor, William Ollerhead, and six others of the third part; and Robert Percival, William Bolton, and William Rigby of the fourth part, purporting to be an assignment of the said term of 2,000 years, as security for the sum of £892 6s. 2d., with interest, to the parties of the fourth part, who, it is recited, had advanced for the building and furnishing the said workhouse, £692 6s. 2d., and had also paid off the said sum of £200.

This indenture was not executed by Joanna Holt and Thomas Barton, in whom the term had become vested as executors of Edward Holt.

On this indenture there is an endorsement, without any signature thereto, which states that £200, part of the within mentioned sum of £892 5s. 2d., was trust money, arising from a fine lately paid for a lease of a messuage and lands in Rainford, devised by the will of Edward Bir; that £85 8s. 2d. belonged to the Corporation of Wigan, arising from fines paid upon admission of Freemen: that £302 was trust money given by the several wills of Richard Welles, and Ellen, his wife, the rest to be applied to the poor of Wigan; that £225 was given by the will of Edward Holt, for the purposes mentioned in his will: that £60 was given by the will of Henry Mason, the interest to be applied in binding poor children of Wigan apprentices, and £20 given by the will of Mrs. Keeling, the interest to be applied to teach five poor children of Wigan to read, and that the yearly interest

of the said several sums should be paid and applied for the uses to which they were respectively appropriated.

There was also produced another indenture, bearing date 21st March, 1774, and containing a declaration of trust with respect to the sum of £892 5s. 2d., similar to what is declared by this endorsement in the indenture of assignment above mentioned, but this deed is not executed.

Upon the preceding abstracts the following observations arise:—First, with respect to the purchase deed of 1767, although it is provided thereby that the clear rents, after paying the interest of any money borrowed for the purpose of erecting a workhouse, should be paid for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Wigan; it does not appear but that the purchase was made solely for the advantage of the rated inhabitants, and without any view of giving an immediate benefit to the poor, nor does it appear that the consideration was devised for any charitable donation. Secondly, with respect to the assignment of 1774, as the deed was not executed by the executors of Roger Holt, it must be considered that the legal estate in the Workhouse premises, is now vested for the residue of the 2000 years, in the representations of the survivors, subject to the equity of redemption, by the heirs of the last survivor of the trustees named in the indenture of 1767, all of them being now dead, in the payment of the sum of £892 5s. 2d., with interest; and lastly, though no declaration of trust was formerly executed as to the several sums of money, which were comprised in the sum of £892 6s. 2d., yet there is sufficient evidence to supply this defect, and to show that the workhouse premises are chargeable with such several sums; and that the interest on the whole sum, except in £85 6s. 2d., which is payable to the corporation, is applicable to the different charities from which they are stated to have been devised.

The premises above mentioned are strictly used as a workhouse for the poor of the township of Wigan, and as the interest of the several sums laid out thereon, there is now paid out of the poor rates the yearly sum of £27 6s. 3d., being at the rate of 4½ per cent., on the said sum of £607, devised from the charities of Ellen and Richard Welles, Edward Holt, Henry Mason, and Mrs. Keeling, and £4 5s. 4d. is paid to the corporation at the interest at 5 per cent. on the sum of £15 6s. 2d. No interest has been paid for a long period on the sum of £200, devised for parish charity.

For several years, previous to 1828, £17 4s. only had been paid for the poor rates, apparently by mistake, but upon looking into the documents above noticed, before an enquiry took place, the error was discovered, and in the beginning of 1828 £27 6s. 3d. was paid to the churchwarden.

The sum of £17 14s. has been usually added to the rent of the estate

belonging to the charity of Edmond Molyneux and disposed of therewith, in bread, amongst the poor of such townships of the parish as attend the church of Wigan. This sum was in the year 1828 carried to the account; and in January, 1828, £4 10s., as the interest of £100 given by Ellen Welles, was laid out, with other money, in linen, which was disposed of by the churchwardens amongst 35 poor women of the township of Wigan, recommended by one or more of the principal householders of the town. The residue remained, in September, 1828, in the hands of the churchwardens, who had not at that time decided in what manner it should be disposed of.

Protestants destroyed cathedrals, monasteries, and images, and the Puritans, in their day of victory, went further, and purged the Protestant churches of organs even, so that sounds of mirth should give place to solemn and more fitting prayer. The building of the first church organ in Wigan Parish Church gave rise to an important local law suit with the town *v.* the rector, or, as represented in the Court, Ralph Banks, gentleman, syndic of the Mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of the borough of Wigan, in the diocese of Chester, and Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Baronet, Ralph Winstanley, and William Glassbrook, parishioners of Wigan, *appellants*: against the Reverend and Honourable Edward Finch, Clerk, M.A., Rector of Wigan, and William Holland and William Taylor, churchwardens, *respondents*.

It seems that the rector and churchwardens, if not the whole parish, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, wished to have an organ in the church, and accordingly in 1709 they built one. Whether the burgesses, as a body, objected to this on principle, or whether they objected out of petty, jealous, spite, being determined to maintain their rights, is not particularly stated, although from the evidence of the facts it seems to have been a mere question of dignity. Mr. Finch went about the erection of the organ in a high-handed manner, and the Corporation was offended. Although Mr. Finch was rector of the parish, he was not sole proprietor of the Parish Church, and the Corporation, having a share in the concern, should have been consulted concerning the improved innovation. It seems that the mayor, burgesses, and bailiffs had not room in the ordinary church pews to bow their portly bodies or to kneel comfortably; it may be also they felt their robes (although the mayor had then neither gown nor chain) were not sufficiently conspicuous in pews on the flat. Be that as it may, they determined to build a gallery for their own special use and comfort, where they could kneel, see, and be seen: so they built a gallery between the nave and chancel about 1685, and paid the cost thereof. The Corporation gallery was, therefore, the town's property; but Mr. Finch thought that where that gallery was there the organ should be, and accordingly, without consulting the Corporation, pulled down the gallery and built

the organ. The burgesses were offended, and rather than sit spread here and there over the body of the church, many of them left the church and went nowhere. Mr. Finch repented, and being wishful to bring back his flock to the fold, offered to build a new gallery at his own expense; but the offended dignity of the Corporation was not so easily conciliated, and so the town went to law as above stated. The Rector built an oak gallery, with seats for 80 persons, over the west window, as a bribe to bring back the dissenting Corporation. The seats in this gallery not occupied by the Town Council were let out to parishioners, and the proceeds applied to the repairing and beautifying of the organ. (In 1717 the salary of the organist was fixed at £20 per annum.) After much hesitation and disputation the gallery was built, and remained until the restoration of the church in 1847, although the inhabitants and Corporation were so dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Rector that an action at law was the result. The suit was tried at Chester, and the town lost, but appealed to the higher ecclesiastical court at York. There the court pronounced against the appeal on the 14th October, 1710; but the town again appealed, after paying costs. After a long, litigious, and circumlocutory disagreement, the town, on the 10th June, 1712, was ordered again to pay costs and keep "perpetual silence."

The following is a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of the parish in the vestry by the sympathisers of the Rector on this occasion, and entered in the minutes of the churchwardens, from which it is taken, and here published for the first time:—

Wigan, Feby. 3d, 1709-10.

It is this day agreed and ordered at a Parish meeting yt. the thanks of this Parish be returned to ye Honble. and Reverd. Mr. Edward Finch, our Rectr., for ye great trouble he hath undergone and ye favour he has shewd. us in endeavouring to procure a good organ for our church, and ye preparations he hath already made to set it up in a Proper Place. We are very sorry yt. some p'sons have usd. their endeavours to obstruct soe good a work and given him soe much groundless trouble by indicting ye workmen he Employed and makeing use of many names in our Parish, pretending ye greater pt. of it to be of ye same Oppinion for a Foundating or instituting a suit in ye Bps. Court to put a stop to this work. And we doe hereby disclaime every such act and deed, and heartily entreat our sd. Rectr. to continue his kindness, to cause this organ (left us by the will of Mr. Richd. Welles) to be set up as soon as may be. And we also agree yt. this order be fairly entered in our Parish Book, there to remain as a Testimony of our earnest desires to have ye worship of God p'formed in our Church wt. all due decency, and for a Gratefull memory of and obligation to our P. Honble. Rectr. for the great trouble and charge he hath undergone to promote the compleating and setting up of this organ.

This resolution is signed by 338 parishioners, of whom 122 make their mark in hieroglyphic strokes and fancy signs. That two-thirds of such a large number should be then able to write their own names speaks very favourably for the state of elementary education in the town, for there was not then as now 20,670 inspected public schools, with 3,155,000 scholars in the country.

The third Parliament of Queen Anne was dissolved 23rd September, 1710, and at the general election for her fourth Parliament Wigan returned two Tory representatives, Sir Roger Bradshaigh and his brother, Henry Bradshaigh. The Parliament assembled on the 25th November, 1710, but by the death of Henry, the younger representative of the house of Haigh, a Parliamentary vacancy occurred in the borough, and at a bye election, held on the 27th April, 1713, Wigan returned another Tory member, George Kenyon. This Parliament was dissolved on August 8th, 1713.

At the general election for the fifth Parliament of Anne, 1714, the year of her decease, a keen interest in political matters was shewn at the hustings by all parties in Wigan. So strong was the Tory feeling in the town that no Whig was found sufficiently presumptuous to enter the lists. That two Tories would get in was a foregone conclusion. Three Tories were nominated for the two seats, Sir Roger Bradshaigh, George Kenyon, and the Earl of Barrymore. Money, canvassing, speeches, bribery, and corruption—according to modern ideas, but then considered legitimate, and even necessary—were free agents of all. Barrymore, the new candidate, was determined to get in. In all 319 votes were given to the three candidates, and both the old representatives were returned. The poll shewed 128 votes for Sir Roger, 104 for Kenyon, and 87 for the Earl. Barrymore and his party, disappointed at the result, and chagrined at the ingratitude of the burgesses, determined to vent their spleen on the victorious party by appealing to the Government for an enquiry. A petition was formally filed and presented, but, as it was clear that nothing but recognised bribery and corruption had been resorted to, the petition was dismissed, and the members kept their seats until the beginning of the following year, when the first Parliament of George I. was convoked.

Great efforts had been made to ameliorate the condition of Nonconformists, one of the most active zealots in this cause being Bishop Wilkins, Rector of Wigan. The effort failed, and the laws against them were enforced with more stringency than before for some years. Trouble came on the nation, and the people were robbed of their annuities, many being reduced to poverty. The king sought the favour of the people by unconstitutionally granting the Declaration of Indulgence, by which Nonconformists were allowed to preach in chapels and churches. So proud were they of this indulgence that their hopes were raised so high as to make them publicly declare their confident belief that churches and cathedrals would soon be at their service. Bishop Stratford had exerted himself much to prevent his chapels coming into the hands of the Dissenters, and from Wigan he wrote many letters showing his indignation and determination to oppose all such proceedings, and especially in the case of Nettenhall Chapel, near Over, in Cheshire, where he neither supplied an incumbent himself to preach nor allowed a Dissenting minister to officiate.

A melancholy cavalcade passed through Wigan in 1715, the year after the accession of George I., who could neither speak nor write a word of English. Great Britain had become a vast Bedlam—every man was an enthusiast. Church and State were at war; Guelphs and Stuarts opposed each other, and the whole kingdom was divided against itself. In 1708 many of the best nobility of Scotland had been suspected, captured, bound with ropes, and driven like cattle to London prisons, which were prototypes of hell. The cause, of course, was politics and religion. Again the land was seized with the suicidal mania, and thousands of Jacobites took up arms in favour of the Pretender, who had not even yet set foot on British soil. Rebel armies were raised all over the land, proving that the Jacobite feeling was strong, and that the approaching struggle would be severe. Poets sang, journalists wrote, and ministers preached about the hopes and fears, justice and injustice, and madness of the times. Enthusiasm drove the rebels to rashness, and at Sheriff Muir and Preston on the same day their cause for the time was overthrown. Three hundred good and true men were taken prisoners at Preston after a brave resistance. They were prepared for their march to London. Some were bound and some were loose. There were among them earls, lords, knights, and esquires, the chief of whom were the Earl of Derwentwater and his brother, Lord Widdrington and two brothers, and Edward Howard, brother of the Duke of Norfolk, and many others of illustrious name. Those of them who were allowed to ride had the bridles taken from their horses, whilst those who walked travelled their weary journey in pairs tied by the same rope. Here a father and son were tied together, and there two affectionate brothers, whilst there were frequent rows of cousins, the whole being closely guarded, although some managed to escape or were killed in the attempt. Thus were they marched through Wigan and other towns on their route, amidst the jeers of the Royalists and the sobbing sympathies of the Jacobites, and given into the cruel custody of the extortionate keepers of the prisons, where they had to mix with reprobates, murderers, chronic drunkards, and the very scum of the lowest society, until they were brought out to be ignominiously paraded to Tyburn, there to be hung till dead, and from thence taken to be quartered and exposed on prison gates in different parts of the country.

On Friday, Dec. 11th, 1715, just as the insurgents had taken possession of Preston, General Willes left Manchester for Wigan, taking with him four regiments of dragoons and one of foot, the best being the corps called "the Cameronians." At Wigan, where he arrived that evening, he was joined by Pitt's regiment of dragoons, which had been there quartered, and also by Stanhope's, which, having been disposed at Preston, had necessarily retired to Wigan on the approach of the insurgents. Five of these six horse regiments—Wynne's, Honeywood's, Munden's, Dormer's, and Stanhope's—

had been raised within the year ; the men were raw recruits, but the officers experienced soldiers. Willes had intelligence at Wigan that General Carpenter would advance to Preston next day, and also that the insurgents were lingering there to sustain the attack. He therefore marched to Preston next day. The insurgents had been joined at Preston by almost all the Catholic gentry of the neighbourhood, amounting, with their tenants, to about 1,200. The mass of the recruits were mere rustics, and very imperfectly armed, some having swords and no muskets, others muskets and no swords, while a great number had only pitchforks or no weapons at all. Foster was perfectly ignorant of war. At a council of the insurgents it was determined to send an advanced party of horse to Wigan, to plant strong guards at Derrin and Ribble Bridges, and to get the whole army in readiness to fight at the shortest notice. The insurgents surrendered on Sunday, 13th, to Carpenter, much to the chagrin of the soldiers. Among the captives were 75 English and 143 Scots, nobles and gentlemen, who were confined in irons. 1,400 common soldiers surrendered. 1,000 Scots were confined in the church. 17 insurgents were killed ; 60 or 70 assailants were slain, and as many wounded.

Some of the prisoners contrived to escape and some were reprieved. Between thirty and forty were hanged in London. Lord Nithsdale escaped by the strategy of his countess, who, visiting her condemned husband in the Tower, carried female attire with her, in which he arrayed himself and passed out as the countess herself, without being detected by his sentinels. Those prisoners who were not brought to London were tried in Preston, where they were taken. Five of these were condemned and executed in Wigan, the town to which they belonged. James Blindell, James Finch, John Macillwray, William Whatley, and James Burn were publicly executed in the Market Place, to the great pleasure of the Loyalists, but amidst the sympathetic groans of the Jacobites. Less sympathy was shown them in Wigan than might have been, for the rebels in their northward journey had plundered many of the Wigan people, and so rendered themselves, as a class, unpopular. They had passed through Wigan on the 28th of November full of the hopes of victory, but were led back fettered prisoners about a fortnight after.

The following is a new Wigan bye-law, passed September 2nd, 1715. It is taken direct from the minutes entered in the churchwardens' books :—

It is further ordered at the sd. parish meeting, for the more effectual punishment of wickedness and vice in this parish, that such persons as shall be presented p' the churchwardens in the Consistory Court shall be prosecuted p' the churchwardens of the sd. parish, which sd. order is to be in force until Easter and no longer.