



1861 Newspaper article on Local Charities in Bishopstone

COKER'S GIFT - The School

By Deed of Bargain and Sale enrolled, dated the 5th March, 1778, the **Rev. Thos. Coker**, for the purposes of establishing for better educating the poor children of the parish of Bishopstone in reading and learning their duty towards God and man, conveyed to John Coker, Esq., his heirs and assigns for ever, a close or parcel of pasture ground, situate at Purton, called Coker's Close, containing by estimation five acres, the said close being charged with the annual payment of 30s., clear of all deductions whatsoever, towards the maintenance of a school founded by the said Thomas Coker in the parish of Little Hinton, by deed, dated 2nd October, 1777, in trust that he and they should permit the vicar of the parish of Bishopstone, and his successors for ever, to receive the rents and profits of the premises for the purpose of perpetuating a school for better educating the poorer children of the parish of Bishopstone, as directed by certain rules and ordinances bearing even date with the said conveyance; and by the said deed it is further witnessed, that for better executing the purposes aforesaid, the said Thomas Coker had paid over to the said John Coker £200, by whom the receipt thereof is thereby acknowledged, in order that the same should with all convenient speed be laid out in lands to be conveyed to the said John Coker and his heirs and assigns, in trust that he and they should permit the then and all future vicars of the parish of Bishopstone to receive the rents profits thereof, to be applied towards the maintenance of the said school; and so laid out the £200 should be invested in some of the public funds in the name of the said John Coker, that the interest and produce thereof might be disposed of by time, his executors and administrators, in the manner aforesaid.

The deed also contains an acknowledgment on the part of John Coker of the trusts of the premises conveyed, and of the £200.

Coker's Close is let by the trustees to Mr Henry Horton, as yearly tenant, at the annual rent of £8 which is its full value. The rent charge of £1 10s is regularly paid to the rector of Little Hinton.

The £200 has not yet been laid out in hand, but is believed to have been all invested in £300. Three per cent. consols, where it has ever since remained; it now stands in the name of John Spranger, Esq.,

The statutes and ordinances are dated the 5th of March, 1778, and with some slight alterations are the same with those contained in our report for the parish of Little Hinton in this county.

It appears by the book of accounts and proceedings kept by the trustees, that in 1821 the number of scholars in school on Mr Coker's foundation was 18, at which number it has continued ever since. The same minute shows, that in 1821 the rewards to deserving children had been for some time neglected, and that 31 13s a year was at that date set aside for that purpose, it being expected that three children would be entitled to rewards yearly.

No separate list has been kept of the children instructed on Coker's foundation since that of Goddard was made, as after mentioned: 18 children are ascribed to Coker's gift, which 18, along with those taught on Goddard's foundation, receive instruction in arithmetic, in addition to what is given by Coker's rules. The girls are besides taught to work, by the schoolmaster's wife.

The children are taught in a house belonging to the schoolmaster, there being no school room belonging to the trust. On Sunday the children assemble, along with other scholars, at a Sunday school, where they receive the usual Sunday school instruction, and then attend church.

In consequence of delay arising from the death of surviving trustee of the stock, the dividends of the £300 were not received from 1825 till the end of March 1834; eight and a half years dividends were then received by Mr Spranger, the executor of the surviving trustee, and are about to be paid over to the trustees for the purposes of charity.

GODDARD'S CHARITY

Thomas Goddard, by Will, dated the 8th August 1794, directed his executors, within six months after his decease, to invest £600 in the Three per cent Consols, in the name of the vicar of Bishopstone and the then rector of the adjoining parish of Hinton; and should the then vicar of Bishopstone die in the life time of the rector of Hinton, he directed that the rector of Hinton should, with all convenient speed afterwards, transfer the said stock into the names of himself and the succeeding vicar of Bishopstone; and should the rector of Hinton die in the lifetime of the vicar of Bishopstone, then the vicar of Bishopstone should in like manner transfer the said stock into the names of himself and the succeeding rector of Hinton, so that such stock should always stand in the name of the vicar of Bishopstone and the rector of Hinton for the time being, upon trust, that trustee should from time to time receive the dividends, and pay there out £4 10s a year for spelling and other books to give to the poor children and pay the remainder thereof to a schoolmaster for instructing all the poor children, male and female, of Bishopstone, as well parishioners as certificated persons, to read and write, and knitting of stockings, and addition, and multiplication, and the females to sew with their needles, and to teach all the children of little farmers of £20 a year, and to teach all the children of any relations of testator in any of the adjoining parishes, the same as the children of Bishopstone, if they choose to send them. If the schoolmaster has no wife to teach knitting and sewing, he is to find a proper person to teach both. He further gave unto the vicar, churchwardens and overseers of the poor of Bishopstone for the time being, or majority of them, full power, by any writing under their hands, to appoint a schoolmaster for the purpose aforesaid, and to remove him at their pleasure, and upon his death or removal to appoint a proper successor from time to time. And reciting that there was then a small donation to a schoolmaster, he left it to the discretion of his trustees to unite the two donations, or keep them apart as they should think proper. He directed that the children so to be taught should not be received under five years of age, unless his trustees should approve of their going sooner, and that they should continue to be taught as long as his trustees should think proper. He also desires that the schoolmaster should instruct any of the children on evenings or Sundays, who might be prevented by their labour from going in the day time, as his trustees should direct; and he desired that the schoolmaster should read prayers, the catechism and a sermon to the children at the school every Sunday afternoon when there was no service at church. He also gave to his said trustees, in trust for the use of the school, his eight day clock.

And he directed his executors to invest and keep invested the further sum of £300 in Three per cent Consols, in the names of the vicar of Bishopstone and rector of Hinton for the time being, as directed with respect to the trust for the school, upon trust that they should from time to time receive dividends, and pay the same to the churchwardens of Bishopstone for the time being, who should pay the same from time to time to eight ringers, if they rang a good peal on all eight bells on every Sunday afternoon when there should be no service, 3s. For ringing the said peal, and for ringing a peal on the afternoon of St Thomas's day 10s 6d, and at Christmas and the King's birth day what the churchwardens might think proper, and to keep the bells and tower in good repair; and if ever there should be savings of the said dividend in hand, to keep his tomb clean and in good repair, and to beautify, or new pew, or pave the church, as the vicar and churchwardens should direct, but never to give the ringers if they did not ring all eight bells; and he desired that the churchwardens should render a full account every Easter to the vestry of all money received and how explained. Part of his books he gave to Edward Butler, otherwise Hawkesworth, the other part he gave to the school at Bishopstone.

The whole clear residue of his personal estate and effects he gave to his executors in trust, to lay out part thereof in building a school house at Hockenbench, as the churchwardens of Bishopstone and his executors should direct, provided the farmers gave the carriage of the stone from Bourton quarry gratis, and the carriage of the slates to cover the house from the quarry, and all other materials carriage free, otherwise the residue to go to his brother Stephen; and he desired that the house might be built and finished in two years after his decease, and that part of the money remaining, when the house was finished, he desired his executors to place and continue in the Tree per Cent Consols, in the names of the vicar of Bishopstone and rector of Hinton for the time being, as directed with respect to the trust for the

school, upon trust that they should from time to time receive the dividends, and pay them to the churchwardens of Bishopstone for the time being, in trust that they should therewith keep the house in good repair, and buy yarn to give to the poor boys to knit their own hose, and to pitch the footpath, round the school, but the stones to be fetched gratis, and if ever there should be any saving of the dividends in hand, to pay it to help to new pave or mew pew the church; and he desired the churchwardens to make up their accounts of money received and paid every Easter to the vicar and vestry.

The £600 and £300 were, in May, July and August 1796, invested in the purchase of £1,397 19s. Three per cent Consols.

To this £1,397 19s stock, £275 stock was added in 1798 and 1799, but how acquired cannot now be ascertained. It belongs to the fund for the bells, and new pewing and paving the church. The trustees for the whole stock, amounting to £1,672 19s., are the rector of Hinton and the vicar of Bishopstone. It now stands in the names of the Rev. George Whateman, deceased, and the Rev. Henry Purrier.

Of the annual dividends of this stock, £27 19s 1½d. Is applied to the school yearly. Of this £4 10½s. Is paid for books and stationery, and £23 9s 1½d to the schoolmaster. The schoolmaster was appointed by the vicar, churchwardens, and overseers of Bishopstone.

The various duties of the schoolmaster are performed, as pointed out by Mr Goddard's will, to the satisfaction of the trustees of Coker's, who annually meet and examine the children, and settle the accounts.

The eight day clock is kept in the schoolmaster's house, as there is no schoolroom provided.

Knitting is seldom asked to be taught, but when requires is taught by the schoolmaster's wife.

All children who are entitled to the benefit of the charity, are received and taught gratis.

The school room is a very large one. The schoolmaster has at present 18 or 20 pay scholars. The charity children are taught at one end of the room, and the pay scholars in the other. He has an assistant; all the children are taught alike, so far as English, writing, and the plain rules of arithmetic are concerned.

That proportion of the stock which is applicable to the bells, produces £13 19s 6½d yearly.

Of this 3s. for ringing bells is given as required; 10s. 6d. Is given for ringing on St. Thomas's day, and other sums to ringers at discretion. Bells and ropes are also provided as required. Money has also been given for new pewing and new paving the church, according to the saving in hand. Accounts are kept, as required, of all sums disbursed, and for what purpose. The accounts have been examined and found correct, and there is now a balance of £86 12s 3d. In the hands of trustees.

Nothing was received from the residuary bequest of testator, it being considered void under the statute of Mortmain, consequently the school was not built as required.

KEATES'S CHARITY

Gilbert Keates, by his Will, dated 10th June 1657, and proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 16th July, 1658, directed the master and wardens of the Grocers Company of London, out of the profit of £600 in his will mentioned, yearly for ever to pay unto the churchwardens for the time being of the parish of Bishopstone, £16 to be distributed by them equally amongst four such aged persons of the same parish, during their respective lives, as the greater part of the said parish for the time being, at a vestry part of the said parish for the time being, at a vestry there to be holden, should think fit.

The Grocers' Company half yearly pay £8 to the minister and churchwardens, which is by them equally distributed between four aged persons, sometimes men and sometimes women, who are chosen at a vestry meeting of the parish, and received the charity for life.

STEPHEN GODDARD'S CHARITY

Stephen Goddard, by his will, dated in 1819, gave to the minister and churchwardens for the time being of the parish of Bishopstone, £200, Three per cent Consols, upon trust to pay the dividends thereof, as they should become due, after the death of a person since deceased, to any poor widow or widower of the same parish who should be 60 years of age or upwards, for her or his life, and so on from time to time for ever.

This charity came into operation in 1821. The minister and churchwardens have always appointed widows to receive the dividends of the stock.

The legacy duty was paid for the gift, which reduced the stock to £180, Three per cent Consols, which now stands in the names of the very Reverend Whittington Landon, D.D., late vicar, Robert Church and Peter Dore, churchwardens.

The half yearly dividends, are received by the minister and churchwardens, and paid to Sarah Arrowsmith, who was nominated by the minister and churchwardens. She was at the time of appointment upwards of 60 years of age. The widow appointed is usually the oldest poor widow in the parish of good character; but the circumstances of not having been in the parish, is always taken into consideration. A separate account is kept of the receipt and applications of this charity. The dividends have been received and paid over up to January 1834.

WILLOUGHBY'S GIFT

By Indenture, dated 8th June, 1680, **Christopher Willoughby** conveyed the graet tithes of the hamlet of Clynche, in the parish of Milton, in the county of Wilts, to the trustees therein named, their heirs and assigns for ever, being a portion of the tithes of the impropriate rectory of Milton Abbotts, which he had purchased for £640, in trust, upon the death of any one trustee to another trustee, who should be one of the ablest and most substantial inhabitants of Bishopstone, of whom the lord of the manor of Bishopstone, and the vicar of Bishopstone for the time being, to be always two, in trust to pay to the churchwarden of the tything of Aylburton, in the parish of Sydney, in the county of Gloucester, £16 yearly.

And on further trust to pay £1 a year to the vicar of Bishopstone to preach a sermon in the parish church of Bishopstone, next before the 14th of August, and £3 10s. A year to each of two poor perons of the parish of Bishopstone during life, as should from time to time be chosen by the lord of the manor, churchwardens, overseers and trustees aforesaid, or majority of them in vestry.

It is by the said deed provided, that no persons of the kindred, blood or same of Shelton, Colman *alius* West, or Pontings, are to be chosen, that 20s. A year is to be given to the clerk of the parish to ring the eight o'clock bell, from 15th September to the 1st of November, and from 2nd of February to the 15th March yearly: 10s. Per annum to the vicar for keeping a register, as directed with respect to another charity: 20s. Should be paid to the vicar of Bishopstone for preaching a sermon on the Sunday next before or after the donor's interment yearly, and the residue to be paid to four poor people of the said parish during life, to be chosen by the parties, and in manner and form aforesaid respectively. Allthe payments are directly to be made on the Monday in Whitsun week.

From a map in possession of the trustees of the premises of which the tithes are given, they appear to consist of property belonging to different owners, viz. Arable, meadow and down, amounting altogether to 655 A. 1 R, 23 P.

The tithe have been let for some time, year by year to the different occupiers of the lands charged, and amount yearly to £80, which is their full value. The two persons receiving the £3 10s. Each. And the four poor persons entitled to the residue, are chosen as directed by the original deed.

A separate book is kept, in which the proceedings and accounts of the trust are recorded

From failure of trustees, application to the Court of Chancery became necessary, and by virtue of certain orders therein made, new trustees were appointed by deed dated 21st February 1818.

The trustees are the lord of the manor of Bishopstone. Whittington Landon, then vicar of Bishopstone, William Pusey, Robert Church, deceased, and Edward Curtis, upon the trusts of the original deed.

The Swindon Advertiser 4 February 1861

OPC note:

The same article can be found in "REPORTS from COMMISSIONERS, Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons and Command, Volume 21, Part 2". Dated 1835.

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