

CHAPTER 4

Church People:

Rectors, Vicars, Curates and Church Wardens

By Maureen L. Ille PhD

Our earliest documentary evidence of the people connected with Springthorpe's church is the Domesday statement:

& Coringeham

“In Springetorpe are 41 sokemen¹ with 10 ploughs, a church and a priest.” (see opposite page)

Thus we know that in 1086, the date of Domesday, a priest was already attached to this church, but we know nothing more about him.

The patronage of Springthorpe Church was in the hands of the lords of the Manor of Kirton, one of the largest and certainly the longest lasting of the medieval sokes of Lincolnshire. In 1066 that lord was Earl Eadwin of Mercia, but two years later the Normans defeated him and William the Conqueror took his lands. The king continued to hold the Soke of Kirton *in demesne* until at least 1086 (Domesday Survey), so either he or Eadwin must have been responsible for the initial building of the church and the appointment of the priest.²

¹ A *sokeman* belonged to a class of tenants within a lord's *soke* or jurisdiction, occupying an intermediate position between free tenants and bond tenants.

² See Appendix 1 for further information.

THE RECTORS OF SPRINGTHORPE (in context)

Pre-Reformation

What was a Rector in the English medieval church and who appointed him? Basically, the Rector was 'endowed with' parish by the lord of the manor. The first parish churches were not built by the Church, but by local lords. They were essentially owned and operated by that lord. Many Rectors appointed during this period never even saw their parish; they just collected the revenue. Most were not even fully ordained priests. The patron appointed such people in order to build up political support groups by providing his protégés with an income. An incumbent Rector would enjoy the assets and receive all the tithes of a parish

Essentially, *tithes* were taxes on land amounting to one-tenth of whatever the land produced. In theory the revenue was to be used to support the church building and its staff, as well as the poor of the parish. The Rector was responsible for the repair of the chancel of his church, but the parishioners were usually responsible for the upkeep of the rest of the building and the churchyard.

In ideal circumstances a parish had a resident Rector who:

- a] Used his benefice correctly
- b] Took Holy Orders
- c] Served his parishioners well.

A non-resident Rector would appoint a vicar to discharge all the spiritual duties of the office and pay him a small salary.

Usually, parishes that had a Rector also had *glebe* lands attached to the parish. Glebe included the parsonage house and grounds, as well as

farms and fields. An incumbent was entitled to retain the glebe for his own use if he wished (for instance, some incumbents farmed their own land) or he could let it, and any income formed part of his stipend. This was over and above the tithe.

Oxoniensis (the pseudonym of Rev. Charles Moor of Gainsborough All Saints) did much of the research about the Rectors of Springthorpe, in the late nineteenth century.³ The following account follows his, with added pieces of information to place those Rectors into a historical context.

Beginnings

We know the details of the history of the Manor of Kirton Lindsey thanks to Sir Hickman Beckett Bacon, who purchased the manor in 1905 and then deposited the previously private records of the manor at the Lincolnshire Archives.⁴ *Oxoniensis*, in that same year, tells us that “*The Patronage of Springthorpe was exercised in 1224 by an agent of the Count of Boulogne who then held the Manor of Kirton.*”⁵ Since the Manor of Kirton had been held *in demesne* by the monarch, for his own exclusive use, since the Norman invasion, the Counts of Boulogne must have acquired it through King Stephen’s marriage (c. 1125) to Matilda, who was Countess of Boulogne. In 1224 the Count of Boulogne was Reginald, or Renaud de Dammartin through his wife Ida, Countess of Boulogne (a granddaughter of Stephen and Mathilda). Reginald’s agent, Robert de Dammartin⁶, who was probably a relative, appointed the first Rector of Springthorpe for whom we have a name.

³ *Oxoniensis*, The History of Heapham, Pilham and Springthorpe (1905)

⁴ Lincoln Archivists Report #9.

⁵ Quoted information about the Rectors is taken from *Oxoniensis*, pp11-13.

⁶ A Robert of Boulogne was also a named benefactor of the Knights Templar’s Preceptory at nearby Willoughton.

† **1224 – 1232: Laurence of Boulogne** (*de Bononia*)

Subdeacon⁷ was appointed Rector “*by Robert de Domp martin [sic] minister of the Count of Bononia (Boulogne) on the part of the said Count, he having first exhibited royal letters to shew that he has been made Count's seneschal in England, 16 May 1224.*”

Various different families were granted (or leased) the Manor and Soke of Kirton by the reigning monarch during the thirteenth century. They in turn appointed the Rectors of Springthorpe until the manor reverted to the monarch.⁸

† **1232: Henry de Honon**

Subdeacon, was appointed Rector “*by H de Burg, Earl of Kent and Justice of England, 23 Wells, 1232.*”

† **?-1284: John** “*died 1284.*”

† **1284: Thomas de Wyssenden**

Clerk of Minor Orders was appointed Rector “*by Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, on death of John, last Rector, 23 Dec 1284. (Ordained Subdeacon at institution).*”

† **William de Schiring.** “*Resigned 1308.*”

The Italian Rectors

For thirty years, from 1308, four Italians were appointed to the Rectory of Springthorpe. *Oxoniensis* tells us that they all seem to have been connected with Florentine merchants trading with England: “*Probably the presentation of a clerical member of their family to Springthorpe was considered equivalent to part payment of the royal debts.*”

⁷ See Appendix 1 for the meanings of ecclesiastical titles

⁸ See Appendix 2

† **Peter de Brixia. 1308 - 1318.**

Acolyte. By Lady Margaret de Clare, Countess of Cornwall, on res of Mgr William de Schiring, 2 June 1308.

- *Peter de Brixia received letters testimonial from the Bishop on 29 Nov 1308 on his going abroad, to certify he was of good morals and honourable life.*
- *On 7 Mar 1311, being then the Rector of Springthorpe and of Chevening, dio Rochester, he had papal license to retain both, as well as his church of S. Mary at Garda, dio Verona.*
- *On 10 Jul 1313, he had leave to visit the Court of Rome, transact he affairs and return within a year, providing for the parish in his absence.*
- *In 1318, notwithstanding papal dispensations, he was dismissed from Springthorpe, for lack of sacred Orders.*

† **1318 – 1321: Bartholemew de Verrona.**

Clerk. “By Hugh de Audley junior, on dismissal of Mgr Peter de Brixia, last Rector, ‘in accordance with the new constitution’, 26 Mar 1318.

† **1321 – 1327: Ambrose de Castello**

Acolyte. “By King Edward II, on res of Mgr Peter de Brixia, Bartholemew de Verrona [sic] last Rector, 5 Jan 1327.”

- *In 1314 William de Castello was the King's tentmaker.*
- *Ambrose de Castello had leave on 9 Apr 1321 to pursue his studies for one year in England, and proceed to Subdeacon's Orders.*
- *In 1321 he and Peter de Brixia acknowledged that they owed the Society of the Peruzzi £12, secured on their lands and chattels in Norfolk and Lincolnshire.*

† **1327 – 1336: Benedict Junctyn de Florencia**

“By the Lady Isabella de France, Queen of England, Lady of Ireland and Countess of Pontum, on res of.....last Rector, 27 May 1327.

Benedict Junctyn de Florencia was provided by the Pope, on 4 Nov 1327, with a Canonry of Wells, with a reservation of a Prebend. He was the son of Benedict de Florencia”.

- ❖ In 1324 the Manor was described as “*the queen’s manor of Kyrketon-in-Lyndeseye*”.⁹ Queen Isabella was then a Regent for her young son Edward III, whose coronation was in 1327. On 4 Dec 1330, King Edward III granted the manor of Kirton to his brother, John of Eltham, on his elevation to the earldom of Cornwall. John, however, died in

⁹ Ibid. (ref: CChR, 1327–41, p. 198)

1336-37, and the King appointed the next Rector of Springthorpe. In 1337 the King granted one William Clinton, a boyhood companion, the Manor of Kirton, worth 500 marks a year.¹⁰ After that the Manor and Soke of Kirton remained a parcel of the Duchy of Cornwall.

† **1336 – 1337: John de Wynteringham**

Son of Robert de Wynteringham. By King Edward III 16 Dec 1336.

- *Rector of Plumstead 1338*

† **1338 - ?: John de Belton**

By William de Clynton, Earl of Huntingdon, in exchange with John de Wynteringham, last Rector, 22 Apr 1338.

- *Rector of Debache 1329, and afterwards of Plumstead, both dio. Norwich.*



1349 THE BLACK DEATH



- ❖ William de Clinton died childless in 1354. The Manor was then held by Edward, the Black Prince until his death in 1376. It then must have reverted to the monarch, King Edward III, who instigated a Poll Tax in 1377 to raise money for his war with France. The Clerical Poll Tax records name the Rector of Springthorpe at that time, although he was not mentioned by Oxoniensis:

† **Bef. 1377-1378 John Gardiner**

Recorded in the Clerical Poll Tax records of the Diocese of Lincoln for the parish of 'Springthorp', 1377.¹¹ A chaplain, John Veisyn was also named, suggesting that John Gardiner was not resident. John Gardiner paid 12d. tax and his chaplain paid 4d.

¹⁰ "Edward III and the 'New Nobility': Largesse and Limitation in Fourteenth-Century England" by James Bothwell in The English Historical Review, Vol. 112, No. 449 (Nov., 1997), p.1114 (Oxford University Press)

¹¹ McHardy, p.62

- ❖ Edward III died in that same year, to be succeeded by his grandson Richard of Bordeaux who became King Richard II (Richard's father, Edward, the Black Prince, having predeceased his own father). Subsequently, the Monor of Kirton became part of the dower of Richard II's queen, Anne of Bohemia. The following Rectors were appointed either by King Richard II or by his wife, Anne of Bohemia. Most had short terms of office.

† 1378 – 1390: John de Rotherham

By King Richard II 11 Dec 1378.

- *Rector of Lannendon, dio Bangor, 1377,*
- *of Bettescombe, dio Salisbury, and Kilkeyn, dio S Asaph 1378.*
- *Leave of absence for two years, in fitting places, 3 May 1379.*
- *Rector of All Saints, Beanewell, dio Lincoln 1387, of Hengham, dio Norwich 1388,*
- *of S. Andrew's by the Wardrobe, London and of Pottersbury, Northants 1390.*

† 1390 – 1395: John de Garton

"Clerk. By Queen Anne, on res of John de Roderham, last Rector, 1 Feb 1390."

† 1395 – 1397: William Tayllour

"Chaplin. By King Richard II, on res of John de Garton, last Rector, 12 July 1395 [Exchanged to S. Nicholas, Thanet 1396]"

† 1396 – 1397: John Randolph

"Vicar of S. Nicholas in Caneto, dio Canterbury. By King Richard II, in exchange with William Tayllour, last Rector 25 Apr 1396. [Exchanged to Throwley, Kent 1397]."

† 1397 – 1403: William Camerynham

"Vicar of Thurlegh, dio Canterbury. By King Richard II, in exchange with John Randolph, last Rector 25 Sep 1397."

- ❖ After the death of Anne of Bohemia the manor was farmed for an annual rent by successive local magnates (including the Burghs and the Sheffields)¹² but the monarch appears to have continued to appointed the Rectors to Springthorpe

- ❖ Henry V was crowned king in 1413 and died in 1422. Before that he had been Prince of Wales as well as Duke of Cornwall. He appointed two known Rectors to Springthorpe. *Oxoniensis* records no resignation or death of the second of these but there is a period of forty-one years before the next record of a Rector of Springthorpe. Could the same incumbent have lasted so long in the position?

† **1403 – 1415: William Sprydlyngton**

“Clerk. By Henry, Prince of Wales, Duke of Aquitaine, Lancaster and Cornwall, and Earl of Chester, on death of William de Cameryngham, last Rector 1 Oct 1403.

- *William Sprydlyngton was a clerk in 1369 to Edward, Prince of Wales, and the Auditor of his ministers' accounts*
- *Licensed to proceed to all Orders, minor and sacred, and ordained Deacon and Priest 1404*

† **1416 – 1457?: Roger Helwys**

Chaplin. By King Henry V, on death of William Sprydlyngton, 3 Feb 1416.

- ❖ Henry VI was but a baby of eight months when his father, Henry V, died and he succeeded him. He was not crowned king until 1429 and did not assume the reins of government until he was declared of age in 1437. He has been described as a pious but weak monarch during whose reign the Wars of the Roses started. He and his son (Edward the Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall) appointed three Rectors to Springthorpe.

¹² Lincolnshire Record Society, 19, I / 38-64.

† **1457 – 1459: William Hoode**
Chaplin. By King Henry VI, 25 Apr 1457.”

† **1459 – 1461: Thomas Kyrkegate**
“Priest. By Prince Edward, eldest son of King Henry VI, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester, on vacancy, 16 Feb 1459.”

† **1461 – 1473: John Pleseley**
“By Prince Edward, on res of Thomas Kyrgate, 13 July 1461. [Exchanged to a moiety of Treswell, Notts 1473].”

- ❖ Henry VI lost the throne to Edward of York who was crowned King Edward IV in 1461. Edward appointed just one Rector to Springthorpe.

† **1473 – 1494: William Rodys**
Rector of a moiety of Treswell, dio York. By King Edward IV, in exchange with John Pleseley, last Rector, 26 Sep 1473. [Retired on a pension of 7 marks per annum, 1494].

- ❖ During this long incumbency of over twenty years, there were turbulent times in England. Three different monarchs reigned: Edward V (one of the Princes in the Tower who was deposed after two months reign), Richard III (defeated by Henry Tudor in 1485 after a two-year reign) and Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch, who reigned until 1509. Nominally, Henry VII’s son, Arthur Tudor, Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall, appointed the next three Rectors although he died before his father, in 1502, aged only 16 years. His brother Henry became King Henry VIII on the death of their father in 1509.
- ❖ From this time the Manor of Kirton became permanently attached to the Duchy of Cornwall.

† **1494 – 1498 : William Wysehede.**

“Chaplin. By Arthur, eldest son of King Henry VII, on res of William Rodis, 27 Jan 1494. [Vicar of Orreby 1498].”

† **1498 – 1501: Richard Stoks**

“Priest. By Arthur, Prince of Wales, on res of William Wisehead, 20 July 1498.”

† **1501 – 1508: John Gorle M.A.**

“Priest. By Arthur, Prince of Wales, on res of Mgr Richard Stoks, 12 Sep 1501.”

† **1508: John Tomson.**

“Priest. By King Henry VII, on res of last incumbent, 19 Dec 1508.” [One Richard Tomson is named as Rector in a Visitation record of 1523. One ‘John Comys alias Thomson’ was at the time Rector of Grayingham.]

The Reformation

With the reign of Henry VIII came the English Reformation (1533-41). In Lincolnshire the Dissolution of the Monasteries led to rebellion. The Lincolnshire Rising was a brief rebellion of Roman Catholics against the establishment of the Church of England by Henry VIII. It began in Louth, on October 1, 1536, shortly after the closure of Louth Abbey. It quickly gained support in nearby towns. With support from local gentry, a rebel force estimated at up to 40,000 marched on Lincoln and, by October 7, occupied Lincoln Cathedral. They demanded the freedom to continue worshipping as Catholics and protection for the treasures of Lincolnshire churches. The rebellion, however, effectively ended on October 10, 1536 when King Henry sent word for the occupiers to disperse or face his forces. Most of the rebel leaders were executed. We have no record of how Springthorpe reacted during the rebellion, but the Rector of Springthorpe, Richard Harpham, remained in position throughout this period until his death in 1539. In 1531 the will of one Richard Terwhit of

Gainsborough refers to him as “*Sir Richard Harpam the parson of Springthorpe*”.¹³

† **1530 – 1539: Richard Harpam.**

“*Chaplin. By King Henry VIII, on death of last incumbent, 27 Sep 1530.*”

† **1539: Thomas Clarke.**

“*Priest. By King Henry VIII, on death of Richard Harpam, last Rector, 30 May 1539. [Still Rector 1546].*”

The removal and destruction of objects associated with Catholicism did not occur quickly at Springthorpe Church (suggesting some sympathy for the rebels’ cause). They remained in place throughout the Protestant reforms of the five-year reign of the child king Edward VI and the nine-day rule of Lady Jane Grey (1547-53). The pressure to purge the church building of such objects must have decreased during the subsequent five-year reign (1553-58) of the devoutly Catholic Queen Mary I, who sought to undo many of these Protestant reforms.

† **1551: Richard Robinson**

Firstfruits 9 May 1551. [Still Rector 1561]

- *Vicar of Torksey in 1535*

❖ Only in 1561, during the reign of Elizabeth I, did Springthorpe Church eventually dispose of its “*images of papistrie*” and “*monuments of superstition*” (see Chapter 2). This was during the incumbency of the above Richard Robinson, although he had been Rector throughout the earlier period of Protestant reform. During Queen Elizabeth I’s long reign (1558-1603) we know of only three of the Rectors of Springthorpe. There appear to be periods without a Rector at all, or more likely, missing records of incumbency.

¹³ Lincoln Wills: volume 3; C.W. Foster (editor) 1930; pp. 125-135. Transcribed at www.british-

† **1576: Gregory Garth.**

Firstfruits 10 Oct 1576.

- *Gregory Garth was a native of Richmond.*
- *He matriculated as a sizar at Pembroke Coll, Cambs 1545, proceeded B.A. 1549, M.A. 1552, B.D. 1562, D.D of Oxford 1566.*
- *He was Fellow of his College about 1550, Proctor 1554, Lady Margaret Preacher 1562, Prebendary of Bedford Major at Lincoln 1564 - 1574, Chancellor 1568 – 1605.*
- *He was Rector of Chalfont S. Giles, Bucks 1562 - 1585, of Glatton, Hunts 1563, of Warbovs, Hunts 1565, of Hemel Hampstead, Herts 1565, of Wallington, Herts 1566, of Holton le Beckering 1576.*
- *He was admitted to Gray's Inn 1605 and died in 1608.*
- *Rector of Springthorpe for only six weeks, the shortest incumbency recorded.*

† **1576-86: Boniface Martyn**

First fruits 24 Nov 1576. [Still Rector about 1579]

- *Vicar of Corringham 1562,*
- *Rector of Heapham 1565*
- **Buried at Springthorpe Church 8 Oct 1586¹⁴**

† **1586-1621 William Farmerye**

Clerk M.A. By Queen Elizabeth, on death of last incumbent 9 Nov 1586. [First fruits 7 Feb 1587. Signs Transcripts 1599 to 1621.

- *Rector of Heapham 1588, of Ludborough 1627*
- **Buried at Heapham 11 Nov 1633**

- ❖ King James I reigned in England from 1603 to 1625 (he was already king of Scotland as James VI). His eldest son was Henry Stuart, Prince of Wales, who died at he age of eighteen in 1612. Henry's brother, Charles, then became heir to the throne, and he was created Prince of Wales in 1616. As Prince of Wales he appointed two Rectors of Springthorpe. He became King Charles I in 1625.

† **1621 Robert Waterhouse of Hallifax**

- *Benefice sequestered for his adherence to the royal cause, but afterwards restored.*¹⁵

† **Thomas Wye. 1624.**

By the Prince of Wales. First fruits 12 May 1624.

- *Called Thomas Wier.*
- *Still Rector 1642-3*

❖ **Cromwell's Commonwealth of England**

King Charles I was executed in 1649, the monarchy abolished, and the Commonwealth of England created. Government of the country took the form of direct personal rule by Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector until his death in 1658. There was apparently only one incumbent Rector of Springthorpe through this turbulent period. The information is a little confusing:

† **Before 1647: John Halifax**¹⁶

- *Undated: "No reason for subscription given. Subscribed before Sr Edw Lake, Regr of Archdeacon of Stow. Subscription to the Act of Uniformity by someone already in office".*

† **1647- Johannes (John) Hallifax M.A.**¹⁷

- *Appointed 9th March 1647*
- *Ordained Deacon 1637*
- *Ordained Priest 1639*
- *1658: Re-appointed Rector of Springthorpe*
- *1662: Licensed as a preacher in Springthorpe, but also listed as Rector*
- *John Halifax had a large family born in Springthorpe, including two sons also in Holy Orders.*
- *His son William, bapt. 24 Sept 1655, became Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons in 1706.*¹⁸
- **Buried at Springthorpe Church 8 March 1676**¹⁹

¹⁵ *Worthies of Barnsley*, Ch.VII, p.166

¹⁶ www.theclergydatabase.org.uk *Liber cleri* record

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ *Davies*, p.77

¹⁹ *ibid* p.87

- ❖ **The Restoration of the monarchy** brought King Charles II to the throne of England (1660-85), and thus to the appointment of the next Rector of Springthorpe. Thereafter, the monarch appointed all subsequent Rectors of Springthorpe.

† **1677-1705: Thomas Mason. B.A.**

By King Charles II, on death of last incumbent 22 Mar 1676/77.

- *Ordained priest by Abp of York 1674*
- *Licensed to preach at Springthorpe and throughout diocese 1677²⁰*
- **Buried at Springthorpe Church 17 Sept 1704²¹**

- ❖ No new Rectors were appointed to Springthorpe during the reigns of James II (1685-88) and William III (William of Orange) (1689-1702).
- ❖ The last Stuart monarch was Queen Anne who reigned 1702-14. She appointed one Rector to Springthorpe.

† **1705 – 1710: Thomas Reynolds M.A.**

Clerk. By Queen Anne 10 Jan 1705.

- *Ordained priest by Abp of York 1679. Also Vicar of Haugham*

After Queen Anne's death a Protestant successor had to be found because the Act of Settlement 1701 prohibited Catholics from inheriting the throne.

- ❖ George of Hanover was Queen Anne's nearest Protestant relative and became King George I of England. Thus he inherited the Manor of Kirton and the right to appoint the Rector of Springthorpe. The following four Rectors were appointed by the Hanoverian kings George I, George II, George III and George IV.

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ *Davies, p.77*

† **1717 - 1744: Robert Althorp. LLB Cambs.**

By King George I on death of Thomas Reynolds 4 Apr 1717.

- 1710 Licensed as Deacon at Springthorpe
- 1712 Ordained Priest by Bp of Lincoln
- 1712 Rector of Hammeringham and Vicar of Scrafield
- Also Sequestrator of Haugham, residing at Maltby
- 1717 Appointed Rector of Springthorpe
- **Buried at Springthorpe Church**²²

† **1744 – 1775: Thomas Wells.**

Clerk. By King George II on death of last incumbent 7 Sep 1744.

- Ordained priest by Bp of Peterborough 1707.
- Also Rector of Willingham

† **1775 – 1807: Robert Wells.**

By King George III, on death of Thomas Wells, last Rector 13 Dec 1775.

- Son of Thomas Wells of Willingham. Clerk.
- Matriculated at Lincoln Coll. Oxon. 1752, aged 18. B.A. 1766, M.A., R.D. and D.D. 1774.
- Vicar of East (Market)Rasen 1781-3.
- Died 26 Mar 1807

† **1807 – 1826: Robert Willoughby Carter.**

By King George III, on death of last incumbent, 25 Apr 1807

- Rector of Quarrington 1805. Re-instituted 1825.
- Resigned 1826

† **1826 – 1863: Isham Case. M.A.**

By King George IV, on cession of Robert Willoughby Carter, last Rector, 18 Feb 1826.

- Rector of Quarrington 1821
- Vicar of Metherringham 1825

❖ By the end of the 18th century most of the Manor of Kirton was ‘disposed of’. (Allegedly, in 1799 George IV, when Prince Regent, sold the Manor of Kirton to discharge his gambling debts to John Julius Angerstein, a wealthy Russian Jew.) Nevertheless, the Duchy of Cornwall retained certain manorial rights. It appears from

²² Davies, p.77

Oxoniensis's research that the monarch was still responsible for appointing the Rectors of Springthorpe parish.²³

❖ The three Rectors appointed to Springthorpe by **Queen Victoria** were:

† **1863 – 1891: Edward Clennell Leaton Blenkinsopp.**

By Queen Victoria, on death of Isham Case, 17 Jul 1863.

- *B.A. of Durham 1839, M.A. 1842.*
- *Ordained priest 1843.*
- *Perpetual Curate of S. James' Lathom, Lancs 1851 - 1855,*
- *Chaplin to the Forces 1856 - 1862.*
- *Resigned Springthorpe 16 Oct 1891.*
- *Died at Ilfracombe 18 Aug 1898*

† **1892 – 1895: Frederick Alfred Wallis.**

By Queen Victoria, on res of E.C.L. Blenkinsopp, last Rector 20 Feb 1892.

- *Missionary at Zanzibar 1881 - 1889.*
- *Resigned at Springthorpe 21 Jan 1895*

† **1895 - 1910: Thomas Toovey Hedges.**

By Queen Victoria, on res of Frederick Alfred Wallis 5 Apr 1895.

- *Vicar of Alfriston, Sussex 1877 - 1882,*
- *Rector of Pilham 1882*

*****Here the research of Oxoniensis ends.*****

²³ Leaflet St Andrews Church, Kirton-in-Lindsey [<http://www.the-umc.org.uk/StAsleaflet.pdf>]

The Research of Edward Clennell Leaton Blenkinsopp

In 1886 the Rev.E.C.L.Blenkinsopp, Rector of Springthorpe, took the time to examine and comment on the signatures in the parish registers of the church. The earliest signature was that of John Hallifax who signed in 1658, 1661, 1668 and 1669. His successor, Thomas Mason signed almost every year until his death in 1704.

The parish registers were not signed at all 1705-18 (during the incumbency of Rector Thomas Reynolds) and 1743-44 (Rector unknown).

GET COPY OF Blenkinsopp notes in PR from Archives

Following the example of Blenkinsopp, an examination of the 20th century registers shows the following incumbents of Springthorpe Parish:
1910-37 Rev. Benjamin Davies was Rector of Springthorpe parish and remained the incumbent until 1937. He was also curate at Morton (from 1903) and Rector of Pilham with Blyton and Wharton. He died in 1952 aged 89.

1938 to 1958 F. Butterworth signed the Parish Registers, as Vicar of Springthorpe.

1959 to 1966 Martin Cordes signed the registers, also as Vicar.

1967 to 1972 Denzil Wright signed, first as Priest in Charge and then as Rector.

1974 to 1977 John Fairweather signed the registers as Rector

1979-82 Rev. H. J. Knight, Rural Dean of Corringham signed

1980-81 Rev. Clifford Hendry signed some baptisms

1985-91 Rev. Andrew C. Grieve signed as Rector

From 1993 Rev. M. W. Page-Chesney signs the Parish Registers as Vicar.

The Lincoln Diocesan Calendars 1900-2004 confirm these appointments:

<u>DATES</u>	<u>INCUMBENT CLERGY</u>	<u>ORDAINED</u>
1910-37	Benjamin Davies B.D.	1892
1937-59	Frederick Butterworth	1922
1959-66	Albrecht Johannes Martin Cordes	1956
1967-72	Denzyl (E.D.C.) Wright M.A	1932
1973-78	Rev. John Fairweather	1967
1978-79	Vacant	
1980-82	C. Hendry B.D.	1954
1982-83	Vacant	

1983-91	R.A.C.Grieve	1971
1991-2003	Michael William Page-Chestney	
2004	Vacant	
2005-	Rev. Chris. Green of Glenthams seconded to the Corringham Group for 3 out of 4 services	

OTHER CLERGY OF SPRINGTHORPE:

Documentation on other clergy appointed to Springthorpe church is more difficult to find. The earliest reference found so far is in the Clerical Poll Tax records for the diocese of Lincoln.²⁴ There, those clerics of Springthorpe parish eligible to pay the tax in 1377 were named. Apart from the incumbent Rector, John Gardiner, a chaplain is cited, called John Veisyn. Thereafter, there is a gap of 270 years before more information emerges.

“The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835” (CCed)²⁵ includes a list of church officials appointed to Springthorpe from 1647 to 1831. The list includes the offices of Rector, Deacon, Preacher and Curate. The office of Rector, as already discussed, was an Institutional Appointment, the Rector directly receiving both the greater and lesser

²⁴ McHardy, p.62

²⁵ www.theclergydatabase.org.uk launched in 1999 and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, makes available the principal records of clerical careers from over 50 archives in England and Wales with the aim of providing coverage of as many clerical lives as possible from the Reformation to the mid-nineteenth century.

tithes of his parish. However, he was not necessarily licensed to preach. The Rector John Hallifax, an ordained deacon, was appointed Rector in 1647, but was not licensed to preach in Springthorpe until 1662. His successor, Thomas Mason, was both appointed Rector and licensed to preach in 1677. Indeed, Mason was licensed to preach not only in Springthorpe but also throughout the diocese of Lincoln.

Historically, Anglican parish priests were divided into rectors, vicars, curates and, less often, perpetual curates. These were distinguished mainly according to the way in which they were appointed and so remunerated. Each was invested with ‘the care of souls’ of a parish, meaning instruction of the members of the church, essentially through administration of the sacraments. The title “Preacher” as distinct from other titles within the clergy, indicated that the person was licensed to preach sermons and give admonitions (advise, counsel, cautions, exhortations).

† The earliest record of a clergyman other than a Rector is that of **Rev. Robert Waterhouse Hallifax**, who was cited in a document at Sussex Archives as Vicar of Springthorpe in 1633.²⁶ This would have been during the incumbancy of Rector Thomas Wye (1624-47). The name is very similar to that of Robert Waterhouse of Halifax, Rector of Springthorpe 1621-24. The family is recorded as having changed its surname name to ‘Hallifax’. This Robert was probably the son of the former Rector. He is also thought to be related to the subsequent Rector, John Hallifax (1647-77).

²⁶ A document in Sussex Archives describes Arms granted to Robt. Waterhouse Hallifax, Esq., of Yorkshire, 9 Oct. 1572, and “allowed, with difference, to Rev. Robt. Waterhouse Hallifax, Vicar of Springthorp, Lincs, 24 June 1633”.

- † Yet another member of this family, **Rev. Thomas Hallifax**, is also documented as Vicar of Springthorp, in the “late 17th C” at the Sussex Archives.²⁷ This would have been during the incumbancy of Rector Thomas Mason (1677-1705).

- † During the incumbency of Thomas Reynolds as Rector (1705-17) a deacon, **Robert Althorp**, was appointed in 1710. On the death of Reynolds in 1717, Althorp became the new Rector, settling in Springthorpe. In 1718 he bought a cottage and lands in the parish from John Rimington of Little Corringham, Yeoman, and his wife Mary for £115.²⁸ Robert Althorp was buried at Springthorpe church on 17th January 1743/44.

- † In 1733 and 1734 **Francis Althorp** was licensed as curate in Springthorpe. He was both an ordained deacon (1733) and an ordained priest (1734), and moved to North Wheatley as assistant curate in 1736. He was probably a son of Robert Althorp.

- † During the incumbency of Thomas Wells as Rector (1744-75), **Robert Broughton** was appointed curate in 1744, followed by **Robert Wells** in 1756. Robert Wells was a busy man: he was also vicar at Market Rasen (1766-83) and perpetual curate at Hemswell (1774-1807).

- † In 1775, on the resignation of Thomas Wells (his father?), Robert was appointed Rector of Springthorpe, a position he maintained until 1807, but he was also Rector of Willingham from the end of 1781 until his death in 1807. He had three curates appointed to Springthorpe during

²⁷ Pedigree of Rev. Thos. Hallifax, Vicar of Springthorp, Lincs. (late 17th C.) describing his descent from Richd. Waterhouse, Esq., born 1438. Sussex Archives Ref. HA 519/63

²⁸ Lincolnshire Archives document MISC.DON 264/4

his Rectory, **Henry Willis** (1777), **John Bellaman** (1790) and **John Orde** (1793).

- † A Stipendary Curate, **Thomas Ramsden Ashworth**, was appointed to Springthorpe in 1825, the last year of Robert Willoughby Carter's incumbency as Rector (1807-26). An ordained deacon, Ashworth had a stipend £50 with surplice fees, and he was also resident curate of Heapham.
- † The next Rector of Springthorpe, Isham Case (1826-63), was also Rector of Metheringham, southwest of Lincoln, and was living in the Vicarage there in 1842. He had a Stipendary Curate appointed to Springthorpe in 1831, **Hompesch Massingberd**, an ordained priest and deacon, with a stipend of £50, who was to reside at Gainsborough. Massingberd was also a stipendary curate at Kettlethorpe with Laughterton and Fenton, Bradley, and Barnoldby le Beck, as well as vicar at Upton with Kexby – another busy man, it seems.

The later issues of the Lincoln Diocesan Calendar (after 1967) sometimes gives information about the assisting curates of the parishes.

- † Revd E.D.C. Wright had two assistant clergy during his incumbency: 1967-70 **P.R. Miller**, and 1970-73 **J.R. Armfelt**.
- † Throughout his incumbency (1991-2003), Michael William Page-Chestney was assisted by his curate **Rev. Susan Valerie Page-Chestney**, who was also his wife. They left in 2003 when he became Vicar to Immingham.

† Known Curates Appointed to Springthorpe:

1733	Francis Althorpe
1734	Francis Althorpe
1744	Robert Broughton
1756	Robert Wells
1777	Henry Willis
1790	John Bellaman
1793	John Orde
1825	Thomas Ramsden Ashworth (Stipendiary curate)
1831	Hompeche Massingberd (Stipendiary curate)
1863-48	James Cox D.D.
c.1850s ?	Benjamin Street (d.1892)
1967	P.R.Miller
1970-73	J.R. Armfelt B.A.
1991-2003	Susan Valerie Page-Chestney.

Laymen in the Church Organisation

The Church Wardens are the senior lay leaders of a Parish.

Traditionally, one is appointed by the Vicar (known as the Vicar's Warden) and the other elected by the parishioners (called the Peoples' Warden). They are both part of a Church Council. In Springthorpe only after 1965 were the terms "Vicar's Warden" and "People's Warden" mentioned in the minutes, and both were elected by the P.C.C.

Known Churchwardens of Springthorpe church:

1533	Henrye Wygglesworthe Wyllm Hansone
1561	Robert Naylor William Andrew
1566	William Burie George Swyfte
1671	John Stocks William Prockter
1699	J.R.Nocton R. Duckle
1701	John Smith Robert Wilkinson
Undated terrier	Robert Wilkinson Robert Chambers
1702	Robert Lacey John Oldham
1746, 1749, 1755, 1773, 1774	Samuel Hill
1747, 1749	Joseph Milnes
1778	James Hill
1864	Benjamin Milburn
1911	George William Stephenson Charles Joseph Kells
1960-1977	Mr Percy G. Stephenson
1960-2009	Mrs Elizabeth (Bessie) Anyan
1977-78	Mr Landers
1978-1985	Miss D. Stephenson
1985-current	Michael C. Anyan
2009-current	Mrs Penny Sedgewick

The Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) is elected each year at the Annual Meeting of parishioners. The Church Council is responsible for the affairs of the parish under the leadership of the Vicar. It includes a treasurer who reports to the Council about the finances of the parish. The Church Council is responsible for the finances of the Parish.

Elected Springthopre P.C.C. members since 1960 (from Minute Book):

Anyan, Mr Charles	Stephenson Mrs Mary
Anyan, Mr Michael	Stephenson Mrs Percy
Anyan, Mrs Bessie	Stephenson, Miss D.
Casswell, Mr J.	Stephenson, Mr Lionel
Deekin, Mrs	Stephenson, Mr Maurice
Durdey, Miss Norma	Stephenson, Mr Percy
Durdey, Mr	Whitehouse, Mrs
Graham, Mr Tom	Wilcox, Mr A.
Landers, Mr	Wilcox, Mrs
Middleton, Mr J.	Willey, Mrs E.M.
Newton, Miss G.	Winter, Mr F.
Newton, Mr Fred	Winter, Mrs G.
Newton, Mr J.	Wood, Miss
Saynor, Mr E.	Winter, Mrs Shirley
Saynor, Mrs L.	
Sedgewick, Mrs Penny	

From 1987 members of the P.C.C. were no longer named in the minute book. There were 32 people on the church's electoral roll in 1960 but only 6 in 1990, perhaps largely due to the death of older members and the lack of incoming younger people. The usual attendance at the AGMs of the P.C.C. between 1985 and 2004 was limited to the two Churchwardens and the Vicar. From 1997 the Churchwarden Michael

Anyan fulfilled all the roles of Treasurer, Secretary, and Deanery Synod Representative.

In 2005 a new Church Support Group was formed, encouraging far more parishioners of Springthorpe and Sturgate to become involved with church activities. The following year it was reported to be working excellently, with the Church being regularly cleaned by volunteers. Heading the Church Support Group was Mr Stephen Cartwright who began making applications for grants to repair the fabric of the building. Unfortunately, despite Mr Cartwright's efforts, in 2008 English Heritage refused to grant aid for the necessary repairs. Although re-applications were to be made, much of the initial momentum was lost.