

## Elizabethan Yeovil: as Recorded in Churchwardens' Accounts

BY JOHN GOODCHILD

IN the recently published volume *Somerset Parochial Documents*,<sup>1</sup> there appears under 'Yeovil, St. John Baptist with Preston Plucknett', the following items in the inventory: 'Churchwardens' Accounts—1577, 1587, 1676, 1687, four skins in good condition; 1561, 1568, 1569, 1572, 1573, 1640, 1642, 1644, fragile and needing repair, mostly legible; 1545, 1546, 1565, fragments, and one undated (early); 1566, 1588, 1644, in bad condition, legible in part; one undated (Eliz.) and one undated (Caroline).'

These particular accounts were in a bundle which came to light a few years ago amongst the few remaining archives of Yeovil Corporation. They had been lost sight of for a very long time.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, enough of them are in such a condition of legibility as to provide much valuable information of a most interesting period of which few similar accounts appear to have been published.

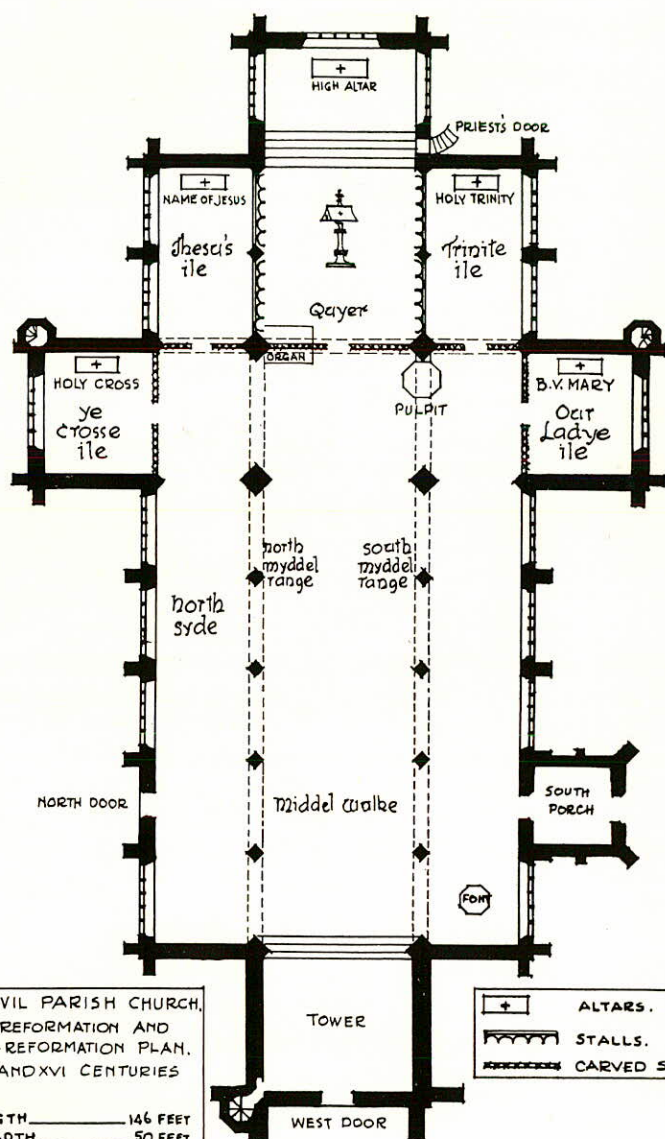
From those of the early years of the reign of Elizabeth it has been possible to locate with reasonable certainty the sites of the four Chantries remaining in Yeovil Parish Church at the suppression,<sup>3</sup> the exact number of bells then in the tower, the position of the organ, the font, the pulpit, and the extent of the great choir screen. More than this, they throw much light on the everyday life of the people of Yeovil in the first twenty years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The Elizabethan accounts are written on skins of parchment

<sup>1</sup> *Inventory of Parochial Documents in the Diocese of Bath and Wells and the County of Somerset*, by Dr. J. E. King.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xvi, 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Som. Rec. Soc.*, vol. ii.



in ink which must have been of fine quality to retain its colour. Those from 1561, when they begin, to 1566 have headings with ornaments and initials in exquisite penmanship. They are the work of one John Stockwell, who was paid five shillings annually for it. His origin is unknown, though he is presumed to have been clerk and organist, as in 1566 he gave 'sertayne bookes of pricke-songe' to have all the bells rung at his funeral. From 1566, although the writing is carefully done and reasonably legible, the accounts lack the distinction of those of John Stockwell. They are all uniformly accurate where they are sufficiently complete to make a check possible.

The incomings of the wardens are set out on the left hand under the heads of 'Rece<sup>its</sup>'—'lone of vessels'—'Rece<sup>its</sup> for belles' and 'sale of setes', the 'sommás' being recorded separately and drawn to a grand total at the bottom. On the other side of an ornamented division line are the 'Payments'.

At the foot of each membrane is the discharge of the outgoing warden, generally in this form, the example being for the year 1561:

'And soe the sayde John Langdonne owithe clere to the sayde Church ov<sup>r</sup> and above alle his allowynce <sup>li s d</sup> xi xvii v of the whyche somme the sayde John hath levied and payde before the hole p ish the daye and yere above sayde and so he goeth quite and clere from this his accompte.

*Recessit quiets.'*

The first-named warden of the two acting for the year is invariably mentioned, and in most cases his colleague acted as senior of the two for the following year.

It will be seen from the accompanying illustration that it has been possible to visualize from these accounts the pre-Reformation plan of Yeovil Church. It is worth noticing that although Elizabeth restored the Protestant forms of worship in 1558 it was not till 1564 that the tabernacle or pyx from the high altar, altar stones from the Chantry chapels, and 'stones' which may have been images, were sold out of the church. It was in that year that ink was used to deface the windows in one chapel, and a cloth was hung before another window in 1566, both these items suggesting that this was less expensive than providing new glass. They also show that the ancient



glass bore some relation to the dedication of the chapels. The 'pictors' on the ancient lectern were defaced in 1565, but the Lent cloth did not disappear till 1569. It may be that the 'popish' fittings had been kept in hand in case there were other changes.

Yeovil Church had in pre-Reformation times six recorded Chantries, of which four were in existence at the time of the suppression.<sup>4</sup> With the exception of that of Holy Trinity, founded by Robert de Samborne in 1342, the altar of which stood in the south choir aisle, the positions of the others had never been definitely fixed. Prebendary Bates Harbin in his monograph on 'John Botreaux of Trent and his Chantry'<sup>5</sup> had tentatively suggested that a shield of arms in the roof of the old chapel, which formerly stood at the south-west corner of the tower of the church, might indicate that that chapel had been the home of the Chantry of Holy Cross.

These accounts not only confirm that Holy Trinity was in the south choir aisle, but almost certainly fix the sites of the three others, and that Holy Cross was, as the King's Commissioners' Report says, 'within the said parish church'.<sup>6</sup>

The positions are thus established: The Chantry of the Name of Jesus, founded in 1480, in the north choir aisle; that of the Holy Trinity, founded in 1342, in the south choir aisle; that of the Blessed Virgin Mary (within the church) and existing in 1302, in the south transept; and that of Holy Cross, founded in 1432, in the north transept.<sup>7</sup>

Following a custom which was more or less general, the Chapels of Yeovil Church retained the names of the dedication of the altars which had heretofore stood in them. The mention of the 'Cross Ile dore' and 'the dore to or ladye ile' suggests that the great choir screen was either continued across the transepts, or that others enclosed them as chapels. The precise details of the positions of seats allocated by the wardens in these aisles or chapels are outstanding guides. For instance, in 1568: 'the northe syde in Jhesus Ile'; in

<sup>4</sup> *Som. Rec. Soc.*, ii, 138, 314.

<sup>5</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxiii, 21, 29.

<sup>6</sup> *Som. Rec. Soc.*, ii, 138, 314.

<sup>7</sup> It was reported of Holy Cross that *vis. viiid.* was paid annually to the Provost of Yeovil 'for superintending the will of the founder'. *Som. Rec. Soc.*, ii.

1569: 'on the northe syde behynde the Crosse yele dore'; in 1577: 'in the higher southe Ile called Trinite Ile'; also 'seats in the northe myddel range under the organes' and 'in the southe myddel range by the pulpit' show the position of these fittings. It is known from other evidence that the ancient organ stood on the screen.

Incidentally, the years under review saw great activity in the extension of the seating of the church, and in the details of location the back of the church appears as 'the north myddel range albehynde' and 'nexte before the almeshouse sete'. In 1572 materials and labour for 'the newe church pulpitte' amounted to £42 10s. The allocation of a seat in 1588 to 'Edwarde Mollyns, the glovier' is a scanty addition to the small store of evidence of the antiquity of the glove trade.

By 1578 the distinguishing names of the Chapels were being dropped, and in 1577 Trinity Aisle had become 'the southe syde next the Quyer'.

Included in the ancient foundation of the church was a choir of seven singing boys and four clerks.<sup>8</sup> An entry in the accounts for 1568 records a payment for the repair of the 'men's sete' in the choir and the children's seat in Trinity Aisle. These stalls were in existence in 1690, when the Rev. Martin Strong recorded the traditions of the choir, and that the seats for the singing men and the desks for the singing books remained in the chancel.<sup>9</sup>

No satisfactory answer has yet been given to the question why, in view of the value of the property of the Yeovil Chantries and the substantial pensions awarded to the dispossessed priests, a school was not founded in Yeovil as was done in other places which had enjoyed similar endowments. Prebendary Bates Harbin had reached the conclusion that a choir school had existed from early times,<sup>10</sup> and the references to boy choristers in the accounts show that the choir was still in being. In 1547 the parishioners had besought the Chantry Commissioners to let them have for a school the ancient chapel standing in the churchyard;<sup>11</sup> but it was not

<sup>8</sup> Gerard's 'Survey of Somerset 1633', *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xv.

<sup>9</sup> MS. in Church Chest.

<sup>10</sup> *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xvi,\* 29. <sup>11</sup> *Som. Rec. Soc.*, ii.



till 1573, as the accounts show, that the school was got going and then 'at the expense of the parish'. There is evidence of it over many years, and it was this school which was refounded or extended by the Rev. Martin Strong in 1707.<sup>12</sup>

The social side of church life is brought to light by the many entries relating to the 'pish howse' or Church House. Its site was the extreme end of Middle Street at its junction with the Borough on the south side. It would appear to have consisted of a large hall used for the parochial gatherings, a cellar, shops and other accommodation for the occasional use of which the parish received rent. It was known for centuries as the Corner House. In the schedule of the property owned by the Chantry of the Name of Jesus in 1547, the Commissioners record that 'the Corner House is held by the Churchwardens'.<sup>13</sup> It was, down to the days of the Puritan upheaval, the centre of parochial life, the scene of baptismal, marriage and other feasts, public brewings and bakings, church ales and other celebrations.

Here was kept great store of platters, vessels and cooking utensils, which were loaned to those keeping festival in the parish, and yearly to responsible people in neighbouring parishes, possibly for the village festivals. The churchwardens recorded the receipt of money from this source under the heading of 'lone of vessels'. Some of the walls of the old house were exposed when the building on the site was destroyed by a German bomb.

In 1564 begin a series of entries relating to an Ascension Day festival in which certain persons arrayed as Robin Hood and his band took a prominent part. The entries may have begun earlier, but there are insufficient complete accounts before this date to prove this. Churchwardens and 'a Constable of the Borough' are recorded as playing the part of Robin Hood. It is possible that this festival was a survival of the old Rogation-tide procession which, discontinued at the Reformation, was revived to a certain extent by an injunction of Elizabeth. The festival was held on Ascension Day. It was, at least on one occasion, connected with a church ale—its object the raising of funds for the church.

<sup>12</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxviii, 120.

<sup>13</sup> *Som. Rec. Soc.*, ii.

The entries occur with more or less regularity till 1587, in which year there is no mention of Robin Hood, but money is gathered 'for the reparacyon of the Churche'. The band seems to have been largely re-fitted in 1572, when Robin Hood's arrows were feathered and a green silk ribbon bought for the sheriff. A new leash for Little John's hounds had been bought in 1568. In 1566 gowns and 'joukons' were made for the 'plaiers' and their garments were hired to Sherborne, and in 1569 to Leigh, near Sherborne. From later accounts of Yeovil Church it would appear that this festival on Ascension Day continued till the early years of the nineteenth century when 'beating the bounds' was its chief interest.

The references to Robin Hood point to the survival here of some part of the pre-Reformation plays. The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield<sup>14</sup> says, 'Almost every village seems to have had its company of players who visited the neighbouring towns and gave their performances'. He gives instances of plays of Robin Hood and the Sherwood fellowship in the fifteenth century in the Eastern Counties and Berkshire. He also records 'Robin Hode' money gathered at Croscombe. In the reign of Henry VI there was enquiry at Wells 'in whose hands moneys of the Church are unjustly detained, namely, those arising before this time from Robynhode', etc.,<sup>15</sup> In 1500 money was raised for St. John's, Glastonbury, by Robin Hood, and there was expense for his costume and boots.<sup>16</sup>

Ballads and rhymes on the subject of the English legendary hero are legion. The first mention is in the second edition of *Piers Plowman*, and the earliest is probably as old as the reign of Edward II.<sup>17</sup> In the Elizabethan period and afterwards mentions are numerous. As to the plays, they seem to have been performed at different times according to local custom. At Reading they were associated with the May Day Morris Dances. These were not known in England till late in the fifteenth century or early in the sixteenth. The Maid Marion element is thought to have been introduced for the

<sup>14</sup> *Old Village Life*, by Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, 165.

<sup>15</sup> Historical MSS. Comm.—*Corporation of Wells MSS.*, ii, 107.

<sup>16</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xlviii, ii, 14.

<sup>17</sup> *Essays on England in the Middle Ages*, by Thos. Wright, ii, 174.



purpose of these Morris Dances, when she was generally paired with Robin Hood or Friar Tuck. There is no mention of Maid Marion in these Yeovil accounts.

The accounts definitely fix six as the number of the church bells, which was apparently the number in pre-Reformation days, the 'great Bell' mentioned, which is still the heaviest bell in a Somerset church apart from Wells Cathedral and Downside Abbey, having been the gift of Stephen Hooper and Joan his wife. They were among the founders of the Chantry of Holy Cross in 1432.<sup>18</sup> There are many entries relating to the bells, most of which are recorded in the M.S. survey of the Church Bells of Somerset by Mr. H. B. Walters and now in the possession of the Somerset Archæological Society. At the time of death or burying, the size of the bell or the number rung seemed to depend on the extent of the estate of the departed. In the case of the very poor sixpence was sometimes paid by the overseers of the poor. There are several references to the clock; in 1588 the 'hande' was painted and the painter paid for 'payntyng the clocke'.

The bells were loyally rung on the anniversaries of Elizabeth's coronation, and in 1577 there is a characteristic entry on the costs for the twentieth occasion.

Expenses (in 1577) connected with the re-building of the church wall 'above Nunnes Welle' recall the association of the Convent of Syon with Yeovil rectory, which began in 1415 by the gift of Henry V, and ended with the dissolution of the monasteries. This well, often referred to as 'the pish welle', still exists at the bottom of Silver Street, though no longer in use. In 1941 water was taken from it to fill emergency tanks placed in the churchyard as part of the town's arrangements for protection from fire.

These accounts are not altogether lacking in humour. In 1577 a new surplice was made for the clerk and at the same time a rochet was made for the bedeman out of an old surplice—possibly the one cast off by the clerk. The wardens were troubled with counterfeit money in 1564, and the same year they mended the leads of the church porch with a broken platter. In 1569 Gyles Salmon paid twopence in recompense for the 'squatting' of a plate. Did this happen on a similar

<sup>18</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxiii, 21-29.



occasion to one in 1573 which resulted in a bill for 6/8 to mend the parish drum? And finally, was the bird which haunted the church in 1566 taken with the bird-line which the wardens bought to catch it with? As the accounts were passed it was possibly a success.

The following are extracts from a selection of the Accounts, and care has been taken to avoid repetition of unimportant details:

## 1561—INCOMPLETE

John Langdonne — Churchwardens

*Receipts*

Rents from a barn <sup>19</sup> in Grope Lane (Wine Street),  
The Corner House (Church House), tenements in  
Shaston (Shaftesbury) and Stoford.

*Payments*

Itm. payde for mendynge of the lock in our ladie ile	ii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> to Thomas Clare for O <sup>r</sup> ladye q <sup>r</sup> for keepynge of the belles . . . . .	xvi <sup>d</sup>
<sup>20</sup> Itm. payde for a paraphass . . . . .	xvi <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> for two Sawters (psalters) books in Englyshe . .	iii <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> for the carrydge of the same bookes . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>

## 1564

Edmunde Shepparde and Tristram Brooke, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

Rec <sup>d</sup> of Robarte Dennys being Robart Hoode this yere . . . . .	x <sup>li</sup> v <sup>s</sup> viii
Rec <sup>d</sup> more two base pecis of monie the value . . .	ii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> more a cownterfett peic of syxpence of phylype and Marie . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of xiii <sup>1</sup> of changing of the leddes at ii <sup>d</sup> the pounde . . . . .	ii <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> the gyfte of Thomas Whitbie of Prestone to the Churche . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> also this yere for the buryynge of Thomas Whitbie of Preston with all the belles . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>21</sup> Rec <sup>d</sup> of Wm. Stone for the tabarnacle . . . . .	v <sup>s</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The medieval 'parsonage barn'.

<sup>20</sup> Paraphrase of the Gospels by Erasmus, still preserved in the church, with chain attached, purchased in 1565, which see.

<sup>21</sup> *Et seq.*—Tabernacle and altar stones removed from Church.

Rec <sup>d</sup> for two tabullmentes . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Slade for a olde tabulmente . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Reynold hardynge for iiij stones in Jhesus Ile . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> for the house at Stoford <sup>22</sup> the hole yere then due at the Annunciation of the blessed vgyne marie in the yere of our lorde god mccccxv . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>23</sup> Rec <sup>d</sup> of the gyfte of John horsey, knyht, toward <sup>e</sup> the reparac <sup>n</sup> of the Church . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> at the buryng of John horsey, knyht, for all the bels . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of the p <sup>ish</sup> for the reparacyon of the Church .	iii <sup>l</sup> iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of the Gipsians <sup>24</sup> for the p <sup>ish</sup> house, called the Corner House (item partially obliterated). . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Whitwicke for his seate in the mydle range in the south side by the pulpit. . . . .	—
<sup>25</sup> Itm. Edmund Shepparde and John Slade have made a seate in trinite ile of their own charge and do give to the Church for a knowledge . . . .	iiii <sup>d</sup>

#### *Payments*

P <sup>de</sup> for the mendyng of the olde cope . . . . .	i <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for the mendyng of the collars of Vicar's ii surples and for John Northe's (clerk) surples, and the <sup>26</sup> children's and for new clothe . . . . .	ix <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> Thomas Willes for the kepeing of the belles and clocke this yere . . . . .	vii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for four score and thirtene pownde of sowder at xi <sup>d</sup> the pownde for to mende the leades upon the Church and uppon the tower . . . . .	iiii <sup>l</sup> v <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for the plumber and his man for iii dayes labour apiece . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for their meate and drynke . . . . .	iii <sup>d</sup>
Itm. p <sup>de</sup> for Incke to blott owte the trinite in the glassene wyndowes . . . . .	i <sup>d</sup>
John Stockwell for makynge of this p <sup>st</sup> booke of accompte . . . . .	v <sup>s</sup>
Itm. occupied one broken platter to mende the leade over the Church porch.	

<sup>22</sup> Now part of Yeovil Church lands.

<sup>23</sup> The Horseys of Clifton Maubank had farmed the Rectory since early in its possession by the Convent of Sion in the fifteenth century. This John Horsey, who is buried in Sherborne Abbey, was the son of Sir John Horsey who sold Sherborne Abbey to the parish at the Dissolution.

<sup>24</sup> *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xx, 147.

<sup>25</sup> Chantry of Holy Trinity in south choir aisle.

<sup>26</sup> Boy choristers.



## 1565—INCOMPLETE

Tristram Brooke and Giles Hacker, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

For the tenement in Shaftisberie this yere . . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Marchaunte for the sellar in the 27 Corner House, before the Pillarie this yere . .	xvi <sup>d</sup>
Itm. Received of Thomas Rodbar which his father did gyve at his deathe to the reprat <sup>ns</sup> of the Churche . . . . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
Itm. Rec <sup>d</sup> of Robarte Plumpton, Vecar, for all the 28 belles . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Richarde Jacob for ryngynge of his mother's knell with all the belles . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Walter Wallis at the buryynge of his wife for the fyve belles . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>

*Payments*

P <sup>d</sup> for corne which was gyve to the poore of the p'she . . . . .	viii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> for bakynge of the same . . . . .	x <sup>d</sup>
29 P <sup>d</sup> for the puttyng out of the two pictors uppon the brasse dexte that the lessuns be reade on . .	ii <sup>d</sup>
30 P <sup>d</sup> for ayle for the ringers uppon Assencion Daie .	iii <sup>ii</sup> <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> for mendynge of the greate belle . . . . .	—
P <sup>d</sup> for a booke of the Quene's Injunction . . . . .	iii <sup>ii</sup> <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> to the Sumner because the pishe should not appeare before the Bishoppe at Wels . . . . .	ii <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> John Northe for ryngyng of the Daie belle this yere . . . . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> to Thomas Wyls for mendynge of the wether cocke and for setting uppe of the same . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
31 P <sup>d</sup> for makynge of a chayne and a lock to fasten the paraphrase . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>

## 1566—INCOMPLETE

Gyles Hacker and John Toker, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

For the stable in grope Lane . . . . .	vi viii
For Roble Hood this year . . . . .	iii <sup>ii</sup> <sup>d</sup> —viii

27 The Ancient Church House, at the junction of Middle Street with the Borough, sold by the feoffees of the Church Lands in the early nineteenth century.

28 Robert Plumpton died in 1565.

29 Erasion of effigies on ancient lectern, 'Monumental Effigies in Somerset', by A. B. Connor. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxi.

30 Robin Hood procession.

31 See 1561.

Rec <sup>d</sup> of Rob <sup>t</sup> Dyer of Sherborne this yere for the lone of the plaiers' garments . . . . .	vii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> for the lone of the Anvyle . . . . .	xvi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Edmund Shepparde for the hyer of the plaiers' garments which should have been levyed when he was warden . . . . .	iiii <sup>d</sup>
The tenement at Stoforde this yere . . . . .	vi. viii
Rec <sup>d</sup> for xxiii <sup>lb</sup> of olde brasse . . . . .	viii <sup>s</sup>
Bells.— <sup>32</sup> At the buryynge of Mistresse Penye with all the belles . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
For the grave of the sayde Mistresse Penye in the Chauncelle . . . . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viiii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>33</sup> Mr. John Stockwelle gave unto the Church for to have all the belles at hys buryynge sertayne bookes of pricke songe as doth appear by a byll thereof made . . . . .	vi <sup>s</sup> viiii <sup>d</sup>

### Payments

Wheat and baking of the bread for the poor at Easter Itm.—P <sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for a hapse to the cofer that the syngyng bookes are put in . . . . .	ii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for a score and xviii <sup>lb</sup> of soder for mending of the Church tower and Chappell . . . . .	iii <sup>ll</sup> v <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for two brasses for the greate belle weighing xxxv <sup>lb</sup> . . . . .	xix <sup>s</sup> ix <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Stoky of Closeworthe for setting of the saide brasses of the greate Belle . . . . .	—
P <sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for making of vii wedges for the greate belle stock and for mendyng of a strappe and nailes . . . . .	x <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for hanging of a clothe before <sup>34</sup> the Name of Jhesus in the Chauncelle and for nayles for the same . . . . .	i <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>d</sup> for birde lyme to take the birde that did haunte the church . . . . .	i <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Mr. Pennandocke's man for a quittauncer <sup>35</sup> warrante for the delyvery of sertayn Latyn and brasse that remayned in our Vestrye . . . . .	xx <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to John Twobblefield for makyng of ii gownes and iii joukons for the plaiers . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iiiii <sup>d</sup>
For v peckes of lyme for to set the stone in the Chauncelle over Mistresse Penneye's grave . . . . .	(?) vi <sup>d</sup>

<sup>32</sup> The second wife of Gyles Penye, commemorated on the brass in Yeovil Church.

<sup>33</sup> Parish Clerk and organist—prick-song: harmonized singing as distinct from plainsong.

<sup>34</sup> Chantry of the Name of Jesus in north choir aisle of the Church.

<sup>35</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxx, 117.



P <sup>de</sup> to William Slanne for v yerde and three quarters of hollande to make John Northe a surples	vi <sup>s</sup> vi <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to the wyfe of William Jennynges for makynge of the same	xiii <sup>d</sup>

## 1568—INCOMPLETE

Richard Bradley and James Everdone, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

Itm.—whereas there was brought in by Gyles hayne which kept the p <sup>ish</sup> ale this yere the som of	xxx <sup>li</sup> vs vi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> at two sundrye times	viii <sup>li</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Thomas Phelpes for a peale with all the belles the <sup>36</sup> 24th daie of October gyvyng by one Master Penye at the George	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of the Vicar for a seate for his wyffe in the north side in Jhesus yele	xx <sup>d</sup>

*Payments*

Wheate and breade and bakynge for the poor of the charite of the p <sup>ish</sup>	
P <sup>de</sup> for a comunyon Booke	vii <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for a newe Byble	xxiii iiii
<sup>37</sup> P <sup>de</sup> for mendynge the Chappell dore and new settyng the lock	—
Payde for lether and mendynge the Bellawes of the great organes	—
For mendynge the olde Byble (‘tyell’ for the roof of the parish house and for dressing the same, much material for labour and apparent re-construction)	xii
Payde for nayles to mende the bord under the men’s seat in the Quyer and the children’s sete in trinite yele	ii <sup>d</sup>
Payde for iii dosen of spones and iii dosen of trenchers for the p <sup>ishe</sup> house	ii <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
Payde for a Reband lace for lytel John’s Howndes P <sup>de</sup> to him that gathered for to ransom the prisoner that be in turkey	vs
Paid for ontringe (? entringe) John Traske in the hundred corte	iiii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>38</sup> Payde to Gyles Apsey for trussing the firste, seconde, thirde, fourthe and fyfthe belle and the greate Belle and fasting the googyiens of the fyfthe belle and the greate belle	iii <sup>s</sup>

<sup>36</sup> ‘The George’, Yeovil, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxvi (1930).<sup>37</sup> The Chapel at S.W. corner of church tower, originally the Choir School  
and afterwards the Grammar School. <sup>38</sup> Evidence for six bells in tower.

<sup>39</sup> Payde for a quyer of paper to prycke sertayne songe for the churche . . . . .	—
Payde for the pyhowse (?) towards there charges that Ryd to London Arraye . . . . .	—

1569

James Everdone and Andrew Vanstone, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

John Tucker being Robyn Hoode this yere . . . . .	x <sup>li</sup> xxi <sup>d</sup>
Itm.—Rec <sup>d</sup> of William ffather for a olde clothe called the lente clothe <sup>40</sup> . . . . .	ii <sup>s</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Rob <sup>t</sup> Downton of lye <sup>41</sup> for the lone of the plaiers garments . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Traske in pte of the paymente of xl <sup>s</sup> which he borrowed of the pish . . . . .	x <sup>sd</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> for branne which came of the whete bought for the poore at lente . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Michaunte the younger for occupyng of the p <sup>ish</sup> howse kychen serteyn times to swele (?) his skynnes there . . . . .	iii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Gyles Woodell for the lone of the greate crocke and other things . . . . .	iii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Lawrence Phelps for viii dosen . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> more of him for occupyng of the p <sup>ish</sup> howse at his marraddge . . . . .	ii <sup>s</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Giles Salmon in recompense of the squat- tinge of one plate . . . . .	ii <sup>d</sup>
Lawrence Phelps for a pele with all the bels at his marraddge . . . . .	xiii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>42</sup> Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Bachelaw for a seate in the south side by our ladye Ile . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>43</sup> Rec <sup>d</sup> of Thomas Hawkynnes for a seat for his wyffe in the north side behind the Crosse Ile door . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of William Colyer for a seate for his wyffe in Jhesus Ile . . . . .	

*Payments*

Whete and breade for the poor in lente	
Payde for mendyng of the box to put comunyon brede in . . . . .	iiii <sup>d</sup>
for makynge of ii towells for the comunyon . . . . .	viii <sup>d</sup>
<sup>44</sup> P <sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for scouring of the Dexe . . . . .	ii <sup>s</sup>

<sup>39</sup> See 1566.<sup>40</sup> Pre-Reformation fittings still being sold.<sup>41</sup> Leigh, near Sherborne.<sup>42</sup> Lady Chapel in south transept.<sup>43</sup> Chantry of Holy Cross, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxvi (1930), Yeovil Church.<sup>44</sup> The medieval lectern (*Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, ix, 71; *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lvi, 30, and lxxi, 112).



P <sup>de</sup> to Walles of Melburye for new vessels and for the exchange of the olde . . . . .	xxix <sup>s</sup> ii <sup>d</sup>
Paide to the constables of the Borough and of the hundred at the settinge forth of the soldyers into Irelande . . . . .	iiii <sup>li</sup>
Payde to the under sherife's man for amerthe-mentes of Yevell brydge . . . . .	ii <sup>d</sup>
Payde to the clerke Edmonde for his erneste at the makyng of his covenante . . . . .	iiii <sup>d</sup>
Payde to the bailiff of the hundred of Stone for mreamentes <sup>45</sup> because Rycharde Bradley, warden of this p <sup>ishe</sup> did not p <sup>'seante</sup> his suite then agaynste the aforenamed John Traske . . . . .	—
New clothe for the Vaunte . . . . .	—

1572

John Phelpes and William Fforde, Churchwardens

*Receipts*

William Becke <sup>46</sup> being Robyn Hooe this yere doth yeld uppe for the use of the p <sup>ishe</sup> . . . . .	xiii <sup>li</sup> viii <sup>s</sup> ii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>de</sup> of Wm. ffathew for the fyne of a shoppe under the p <sup>ishe</sup> howse at the West Corner . . . . .	xx <sup>s</sup>
Rec <sup>de</sup> of the sayde Wm. ffathew for the rente of his sayde shoppe syne the feaste of the natyvitie of Sainte John the Baptiste when he toke it untill the feaste of the birthe of our lord god then nexte ensuing . . . . .	iiii <sup>s</sup>

*Payments*

Payde for xii yerdes and a halfe of normandy canvas olbrod (?) delyvred to Robyn Hooe to make two borde clothes . . . . .	x <sup>s</sup> v <sup>d</sup>
Payde for a grene silke Rebyn for the Sheriffe . . . . .	iii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Robarte hooe for drinke for the Ringers Assencione Daie . . . . .	viii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to John fflatcher for fetherynge Robarte hooe's arrowes . . . . .	iiii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for a booke of praier for the churche . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for a paraphase of erasmus uppon the Episles John Balke and his man for xxiiii daies work abt the p <sup>ishe</sup> chappell <sup>47</sup> . . . . .	—
Thomas Willes for a keye for the aforesayd chappell dore and for mendyng the locke . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Scribe apparently in difficulties.<sup>46</sup> Elsewhere referred to as 'one of the constables of the Borough'; churchwarden in 1577.<sup>47</sup> Preparations for the school.

P <sup>de</sup> to John Martyn for one daies work aboute buryynge of the sculles and bones that were in the Charter howse <sup>48</sup>	—
<sup>49</sup> P <sup>de</sup> to Gyles hayne and Wm. fforde for their charges being at Ivelchester about the p <sup>ish</sup> chapelle	—
Payde to a poor man which was robbed by pirattes and had a (? pass) from the lorde Admyrall for a rewarde	xiiii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Robarte Baker, the Clarke for a rewarde when he was preste (?) for the Quenes Mat <sup>ie</sup>	xx <sup>sd</sup>

## 1573—INCOMPLETE

William fford and — Churchwardens

*Receipts*

Rents as usual	
Rec <sup>d</sup> of the chaplyn for the occupyng of the p <sup>ishe</sup> howse at his marrydge	xii
Rec <sup>d</sup> of John Torre for his wyffe's sete in the north myddel range under the organes	—
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Mr Dyrdo for ii setes in Or ladye Ile which he had in exchange of the wardens for his ii setes under the organes	—
Rec <sup>d</sup> for olde broken stuffe at the Scole howse	xii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Thomas Osmonde for a olde sete at the scole howse	iiii <sup>d</sup>
Rec <sup>d</sup> of Nicholas Mill for the olde dore of the scole howse	iiii <sup>d</sup>

*Payments*

Payde for a frame and a bord for the hawle of the scole howse	vi <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for the settinge the benches	vi <sup>s</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Robt Nailo for a bedstedde for the scole howse	x <sup>d</sup>
Payde to Mr Shaffyngton for mendyng the organes and for makynge the regalles <sup>50</sup>	viii <sup>l</sup>
John Northe xii daies work to attend him	iii <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>l</sup>
Payde for mendyng of the dromme at the p <sup>ish</sup> howse	vi <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
Payde the souldyers that wente into Irelande	iiii <sup>l</sup>
Payde for ii Geneva psalme bookes for the church	vi <sup>s</sup>

<sup>48</sup> The crypt of the church used as a 'bone-hole'.<sup>49</sup> Preparations for the school.<sup>50</sup> Regal—a small organ to maintain the treble lead in the choir.



1577

John Dyer and William Becke, Churchwardens

*Receipts*


The sayd John Dyer being Robyn Hoode this yere  
doth yelde uppe to the p<sup>yshe</sup> made by keepinge  
of the Church Ale the some of . . . xviii<sup>li</sup> iii x<sup>d</sup>  
Rec<sup>d</sup> of Gyles Walls fyve score and nyne powndes  
of olde ledd which came off the olde gutter at the  
p<sup>ish</sup> howse at i<sup>d</sup> the li . . . ix<sup>s</sup> i<sup>d</sup>

*Payments*

P<sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for gymmys and nailes for the  
Dore of the greate organes . . . —  
John Phelpes for a planke and a giste (joist) for the  
organ plaier to stande uppon when he doth  
mende the greate organes . . . xii<sup>d</sup>  
John Phelpes for a borde of xv foote to make a  
hutche for the Breade Howse in the p<sup>ish</sup> howse . . . xii<sup>d</sup>  
(timber for lyddes, twistes, hokes, nailes and  
iiron bolles for the same hutch) . . . xvii  
P<sup>de</sup> for the new fetherynge of Robyn Hoode's  
arrowes . . . vi<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>de</sup> to Englyshe Torre for two pieces of timber for  
the Dexte to bear the bookes uppon . . . ii<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>d</sup> to Gyles Bentley and Gyles Woodell for iiiii foxes  
heddes accordyng to the Statute in that case  
provided which foxes were taken at Podymore . . . ii<sup>s</sup>  
Gyles Wallis for mendyng of the greate wether  
cocke . . . iiiii<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>de</sup> to the constables towards the charges of  
traynyng of souldiers the same being rated by  
the Justices . . . x<sup>s</sup>  
Thomas Willes for foure clamps of iiron, a rodde of  
iiron, two lockes, iiiii staples for the litle organes . . . vi<sup>d</sup>  
<sup>51</sup> Payde for a keye and a staple for one of the cub-  
bordes in the chauncelle . . . vi<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>de</sup> for a tonne of ledde . . . ix<sup>li</sup> vi<sup>s</sup> viii<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>de</sup> for conveyinge the same unto the vestrye . . . vi<sup>d</sup>  
P<sup>de</sup> for flicke <sup>52</sup> to grease the belles and for caun-  
delles for the Ryngers when the Quene's M<sup>te</sup>

<sup>51</sup> There were two 'cupboards', possibly aumbries, on the north side of the sanctuary. These were defaced or covered with the panelling placed round the walls in the restoration in the fifties of the last century. In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1824, pt. 2, pp. 17-19, they are described as 'two well-proportioned Gothic niches which have recently been opened to view by the removal of a cupboard door.'

<sup>52</sup> *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xxiii, 120.



beganne the twentieth yere of her most happie rayne . . . . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to the ryngers for a rewarde the same tyme . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Rycharde Lococke for ix yerdes of Dowlis to make a new surplis for Edmonde the clerke . .	x <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to goodwyfe Jennynges for makynge of the sayde surplis . . . . .	iii <sup>s</sup> iii <sup>d</sup>
Payde to Johan Jennynges for makynge of a rochett for the Bedman of an olde surplis . .	vi <sup>d</sup>
Payde to Gyles Marchaunte for a new phalter of the largest volume w <sup>th</sup> Jeneva phalmes and two other phalters for the churche . . . . .	—
P <sup>de</sup> to Mr. Champiton for mendynge and tunynge of both pairs of organes and for his charge the same time . . . . .	viii <sup>s</sup> viii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to John Phelpes for tymber to make new seates in the higher south Ile called trinite ile .	xi iii <sup>i</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for sawynge of the sayde tymber . . . . .	xii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> for iii carpenters for fyve daies worke to make the sayde setes . . . . .	xviii <sup>d</sup>
P <sup>de</sup> to Thomas Willes for makynge of ii kaies to the locke of the cofer wherein are the wardens accompts . . . . .	viii <sup>d</sup>