

A snapshot of Kildwick Parish in 1764 – Archbishop Drummond’s Visitation return

According to the Canons of the church, bishops were required to visit each parish in their diocese, in person, every three years.

Robert Hay Drummond became archbishop of York in 1761, and carried out his first “visitation” between 30th April and 29th June 1764. Prior to this, a questionnaire was sent out for the clergy of each parish to complete and return.

In Kildwick, the questions were answered by the vicar, Rev. John Dehane, who had been in the post since 1734 and who would remain vicar until his death, at the age of 82, in 1790. His responses give us an interesting snapshot of the parish in 1764.

Below we give the full text of each of the 12 multi-part questions and Rev. Dehane’s responses to them, followed by some commentary.

Kildwick Parish Return

Q1: What number of families have you in the parish ? Of these, how many are dissenters ? And of what sort of denomination are they ?

In the parish of Kildwick are 873 families whereof one is a papist. 20 Baptists or Antinomians and 26 Quakers.

[The Quakers were probably part of the Steeton meeting. The number of Baptists is much reduced from the 100 families recorded in the previous visitation of 1742]

Q2: Is there any licenced or other meeting-house in your parish ? How many ? Of what sort ? How often do they assemble ? In what number ? Who teaches them ?

There are 2 Antinomian or Baptist meeting houses, both licenced, to wit, one in Cowling where they assemble every Sunday, the teacher Colbeck Sugden resident in Cowling, the other in Sutton where they assemble every other Sunday, the teacher John Nuttall , whose usual address is in Rossendale in the County Palatine of Lancaster. The number usually assembling in either of the said meeting houses is uncertain.

[The fact that the Baptists in Sutton have no local leader may account for the reduced number of Baptists in the parish. Notice that Dehane has no idea of how many attend the Baptist meetings and has nothing to say at all about the Quakers.]

Q3: Is there any publick or charity-school, endowed or otherwise maintained in your parish ? When and by whom was the school founded ? Who is the master or mistress ? What number of children, boys or girls, are taught in it ? In what language ? Are they cloathed maintained or lodged ? What ar they taught ? Are they employed in working, and afterwards put out to husbandary, trades or services ? More particularly, is there care taken to instruct the children in the principles of the Christian religion, according to the Church of England, and to bring them duly to Church as the Canon requires ?

There are 2 charity schools (to wit) one in Silsden, to which 2 marks are paid yearly out of certain lands lying in Steeton belonging to Mr. Hudson by the report of credible persons. John Blakey the master is obliged to teach 3 poor children of Silsden and 2 of Silsden gratis, the founder thereof unknown. The other in Cowling, endowed with certain lands lying at Bawsedge in the said township of Cowling now let at the yearly rent of £5. Robert Smith the master thereof is obliged to teach 4 boys gratis. In both the said schools children are taught English only.

And another school at Kildwick without any endowment save only the school house, the master whereof is appointed by the vicar. Thomas Johnson, the present master, teacheth to read English and likewise writing and accompts.

[The question itself is interesting. It shows the Church at the centre and controlling, or attempting to control, education. It allows that girls as well as boys may be educated; and it implies that the school should take some responsibility for getting pupils into appropriate jobs afterwards. Dehane's response shows that there must have been a school at Kildwick, associated with the Church, and that it taught the three Rs.

John Blakey, the man named as the schoolmaster in Silsden, was certainly not equipped to give pupils any religious education. He was only baptized himself in 1760, at the age of "about 30".]

Q4: Is there in your parish any alms-house, hospital, or other charitable endowment ? Have any lands or tenements been left for the repair of your church, or to any other pious use ? Who has the direction of such benefactions ? How are they managed ? Do you know, or have you heard, of any abuses or frauds committed in the management of them ? Has there been any augmentation to your church by benediction or lot from Queen Ann's Bounty, and when ? Has there been any purchase of lands etc. in consequence of that augmentation ? And what does the purchase consist in, and amount to yearly ?

No alms house or hospital but we do have a benefaction of the yearly sum of £15 6s. duly distributed to poor housekeepers in the several townships of the parish by trustees who are for that purpose elected by the parishioners, which charity ariseth as follows. To wit, out of the estate of William Rishforth £3 12s, out of William Bradley's estate £2, of Thomas Shackleton's estate £4. All of the above estates are in the parish of Addingham. Also out of the estate of Mr. Hudson of Steeton £1, out of Rev. W. Dehane's estate in Cowling £2 7s and out of the estate of Daniel Emmott £2 7s.

An augmentation was made to the church by the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church in Oxford in the year 1704 of the yearly sum of £7 to be paid out of the tythes of this parish by the Right Honourable the Lady Stourton by two equal portions, one whereof at the feast of the annunciation and the other at the feast of St. Michael.

Another augmentation by the governours of Queen Anne, in conjunction with £200 given by the Right Honourable Thomas, earl of Thanet in the year 1720, with which a purchase was made of certain lands and tenements lying and being in the parish of Carlton in the present occupation of William Baxter, John Edmundson and Mary Roberts. The clear yearly rents of the said several tenements amount in the whole to something more than £23.

[Apart from the £1 derived from "Mr. Hudson of Steeton", the other five benefactions recorded match with the known annual income of the Rycroft "Winter Silver" charity between 1657 and 1886; the locations given for the various parcels of land and the way in which the charity is managed and distributed also match. The "Rev. W. Dehane" mentioned is highly likely to have been a relative of the vicar; the vicar's nephew, also called John, would subsequently take over two of the Cowling estates, Windles (perhaps the one occupied by W. Dehane in 1764 ?) and Emmott's, for which pair he would pay the Rycroft charity a total of £4 14s per annum.

Queen Anne's Bounty was a scheme established in 1704 to supplement the income of poor clergy. In its early years the livings that would receive the bounty were selected by a lottery from those with an annual income less than £10 or those which were promised money from a third party conditional upon them also receiving Bounty money. Kildwick appears to have been in the second category, receiving Bounty money as a result of £200 offered by the Earl of Thanet.

Bounty money was not paid directly to the vicar, but had to be used to buy land from which rental income would be obtained. Brereton records that the £200 offered by the Earl of Thanet was matched by Queen Anne's Bounty and that the £400 total was used to buy a farmhouse, barn and lands at Carleton above Redford Gill, in July 1724, from Haworth Currer, of Kildwick Hall.

The "something more than £23" recorded in the return as the rental from the bounty tenements was, in fact, substantially more. Documents exist that show Rev. Dehane arranging the lease of church land on Carleton Moorside, in January 1764, to William Baxter for a period of 11 years at an annual rent of £12 12s; another, admittedly dated 1765 – so a year after the visitation, but probably with a valuation similar to that that might be expected in 1764 – is a lease of land at "Whiteheads" in Carleton, to John Edmondson, for 10 years at an annual rent of £19. That gives a total of over £40 for the two parcels and does not include any rental money coming from the third piece of land mentioned, occupied by Mary Roberts.]

Q5: Do you reside personally upon your cure, and in your vicarage house ? If not, where do you reside ? And what is the reason of your non-residence ?

The vicar resides personally upon the cure and in the vicarage house.

[Not the current vicarage, but the Old Vicarage (now a private house) on Grange Road.

The following is John Dehane's own description of the vicarage(as quoted in Brereton):

The Vicarage house and its offices are ancient stone buildings [and] are in good condition; the house consists of a kitchen or (?), two parlours at the east end of the same, two rooms at the west end, these are floored with stone, with a closet with boarded floor; under which is a cellar; a staircase, a servant's dining room, a buttery, and a back kitchen, a garden, orchard, with several pieces of ground called the Hemp Garth, Swine Garth, Calve Garth, Dovecote Hill, Churchyard, and the Springs, containing the whole about near six acres, and are worth by the year about £10.

Q6: Have you a residing curate ? What is his name ? How long has he been curate ? Is he duly qualified according to the Canons in that behalf ? Doth he live in your parsonage-house ? If not, where doth he live ? What allowance do you make him ?

No curate, the vicar perform his own duty.

[Interestingly, in the visitation return for Beverley, one William Mosey claims to be curate of Kildwick. His name does not appear in Brereton's history; however it is recorded there that Rev. Dehane's daughter, Mary, married one Leonard Mosey of Farnhill, in 1781.

Later, between 1785 and 1790, Rev. Dehane's son would perform the role of curate in Kildwick; and he probably took over all church duties from September 1787 until his father's death in 1790.]

Q7: Do you perform divine service in any church besides your own ? On what days and at what times is divine service performed in your church ? If not twice every Lord's Day, with a sermon in the morning, for what reason ?

The vicar performs divine service in no church besides his own wherein divine service is performed on Sundays at 10 o'clock in the morning and 4 in the afternoon and usually on holidays at 11 in the morning and a sermon every Sunday in the forenoon only besides one sermon on the feast of the nativity and another on Good Fryday in the forenoons because his immediate predecessor, the Rev. Mr. Driffeild, performed divine service at those times and in that manner.

[It is perhaps surprising that, 30 years after becoming vicar of Kildwick, Dehane was still performing services the way his predecessor had done – particularly as Rev Christopher Driffield was vicar for barely six months (31st December 1733 to July 1734).]

Q8: Do you know any, who come to church in your parish, that are not baptized ? Or, that being baptized, and of a competent age, are not confirmed ? Have you baptized any adults since my coming to be your bishop ? If you have, I desire you to exhibit a schedule of their names and ages.

None are known to come to the parish church that are not baptized and the utmost care hath been taken to quallifie such as were of age for confirmation and as many of those were confirmed as your Grace was pleased to admit. No adult person hath been baptized in this church since your Grace became our archbishop.

[Dehane's responses are perfectly accurate for the period 1761 to 1764. But he could have noted that in 1760 John Blakey of Silsden (the schoolmaster, see earlier) was baptized at the age of "about 30"; and in 1762 he baptized a child of about 15 months whose father was a Quaker. Between 1761 and 1764, there were a total of 371 baptisms in Kildwick church: 98 in 1761, 105 in 1762, 84 in 1763, and 84 in 1764.]

Q9: How often, and at what times, do you catechise in your church ? Do your parishioners duly send their children and servants to be instructed and catechised ? Do they learn any, and what, exposition for the better understanding of the church catechism ?

The children are catechised after the second lesson on Sundays in the afternoon in Lent and likewise usually every Sunday in the afternoon from the time notice is received of a confirmation till the day appointed for that purpose.

Many send their children and servants to be catechised but they repeat no other but the Church Catechism publickly.

Some have the same explained for their own private use from Archbishop Wakes, Bishop Beveridge and Mr. Nichols on the Church Catechism.

[Here the archbishop was asking when and how children were prepared for confirmation as adult members of the Church of England. Then, as now, all candidates for confirmation had to be taught the basic doctrines of the church – including the Creed, the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments – from the Catechism included in the Book of Common Prayer, and their knowledge tested (catechised).

Dehane's response show that most children in Kildwick were simply taught by rote from the Church Catechism; although others did use commentaries such as: "The Principles of the Christian Religion Explained" by William Wake; "The Church Catechism explained for use in the diocese of Asaph" by William Beveridge; or William Nichols' "Comment on the Book of Common Prayer". Dehane may have specifically mentioned the second of these as it was a work that he knew the archbishop must have been aware of; Drummond having been bishop of Asaph before becoming archbishop of York (1748-1761).]

Q10: How often is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered in your church ? Do you give open and timely notice that it is going to be administered ? What number of communicants are there in your parish ? How many of them usually receive ? Particularly how many did communicate at Easter last ? Have you refused the sacrament to any one ? For what reason ? And how has the person so refused behaved himself since that time ?

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered 6 times, i.e. on Palm Sunday, Good-Friday, Easter Sunday, Whitsunday, Sunday next after the feast of St. Michael and on the feast of the nativity of our Lord Christ. Open and timely notice that it is to be administered is given the Sunday immediately preceding the celebration thereof.

Although it is not easy to ascertain the exact number of communicants in this parish, it is grievous to observe how few there are that do communicate after all the care that hath been taken to convince them of their duty in this respect. The number 93 who did receive at Easter last hath been a very small proportion to the number of those who ought to have received the holy sacrament. The sacrament hath been refused to none.

[At this time Holy Communion was only administered on selected feast days, but there was a duty on all confirmed members of the church to receive Holy Communion at Easter, Christmas and Whitsunday.]

At this distance in time it is even more difficult for us than it was for Dehane to determine the number of possible communicants; but in a parish containing 873 families, and where there were more than 90 baptisms each year (on average), he was certainly correct in saying that, at 93, the number of people taking communion the previous Easter was a very small proportion of those who should have been present.]

Q11: Have you any chapels within your parish ? What are the names of them ? How far are they distant from the parish-church ? How are they endowed ? By whom, and at what times, are they served ? Is the curate duly qualified ? By whom, and when, was he nominated ? Have you any chapel in ruins in which no divine service is performed ?

One chapel at Silsden, about a computed mile and a half from the parish church, endowed by the right honourable Thomas earl of Thanet with £20 per annum in the time of Archbishop Sharp, who consecrated the same.

The Rev. Mr. Jackson is the curate, and the Rev. Mr. Newby is the substitute who performs divine service on Sundays in the morning about 11 o'clock and about 3 in the afternoon, the curate of Silsden usually assisting the vicar on Good Friday and Easter Sunday in the morning. The curate and his substitute are both duly qualified.

This chapel was augmented in the year 1719 with Queen Ann's Bounty and £200 given by the Earl of Thanet, which was laid out in a purchase of land in Silsden in the year 1751.

[The "Rev. Mr. Newby" mentioned is Joshua Newby, after whom Newby Road in Farnhill was named.]

Q12: Have any public penances been performed in your church since I became your bishop ? Do you know of any commutations of penance made by any of your parish within the same time ? By whom was it done ? For what money ? And to what use was that money applied ?

If you have met with any particular difficulties in the discharge of your duties:- If you have discovered any abuses or corruptions in any ecclesiastical officers:- In general, if you have any advice to give, or proposal to make, by which the glory of God and the honour and interest of our established Church, may be promoted, or the government of this diocese be better ordered, I desire you freely to communicate your thoughts to me: And be assured that no other use shall be made of your answers or suggestions, but to attain these ends.

5 persons have performed public penance in this church since your Grace became our archbishop, No commutation of penance in that time hath been known to be made by any person in this parish.

Acknowledgements

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The annotations are the result of research carried out by the History Group and include material derived from Rev. E. W. Brereton's "History of the Ancient and Historic Church of S. Andrew" (published 1909) and notes on the visitation made by the late Michael Baumber, now in the possession of the History Group.