The Diary of John Lewis
Thoughts of an 18th-Century Minister

Matthijs van der Steege
S1500848

Supervisor: Dr. K. Dekker
Second reader: Dr. H. Jansen

25 January 2010

University of Groningen
Faculty of Arts, Department of English Language and Culture
# Table of Content

1. Preface 3
   1.1 The Life of John Lewis 3

1.2 The Diary 4

1.3 Language 4

1.4 Historical Context 5

2.1 Literary Context 7
   2.1.1 The Diary as a Genre 7
   2.2.1 Genre Theory 9

2.2 Diaries Compared 10

3. Development 13

4. The Diary of John Lewis 15
   4.1 Emotions 15

4.2 Intellectual Interests 17

4.3 The Club of Melksham 18

4.4 Lewis’s Congregation 19

Conclusion 21

Edition of the Diary of John Lewis 23

Works Consulted 40

Works Cited 40
1. Preface

John Lewis (ca. 1685-1760) was an English minister who served the Wiltshire parish of Chalfield and was curate of the nearby Holt and Atworth parishes. He also had a lectureship in Gloucestershire. Between 1718 and 1760 Lewis kept a diary in which he recorded his performance of divine service and administration of communion in each of his parishes. Lewis’s diary shows that he served these parishes from 1718 to 1760 and supported the people in his parishes in a surprisingly complete and intensive manner.

The fact that Lewis served more than one parish makes him a pluralist. Pluralist ministers were single stipendiary ministers who held several parishes (Spaeth 9). The prevalent image of pluralist ministers in scholarly literature is negative. Spaeth remarks that “at the local level, a pluralist clergy who appeared more interested in the hunt than in the pulpit must inevitably have neglected their duties” (8). The diary of John Lewis, however, strongly contradicts this image and shows how a pluralist member of the clergy could successfully serve a congregation. Even though Lewis was a pluralist and therefore well-known in more than one parish, little is known about Lewis or about his diary. By presenting a partial edition of Lewis’ diary this study aims to examine a broad array of relevant aspects from the diary in order to provide evidence of the fruitfulness of John Lewis’ life and work. It will show that Lewis’s diary provides important evidence of the struggle of the Church to cope with an increasingly negative attitude of society towards the Church of England, which John Lewis was part of. However, Lewis’s diary is not only evidence of this struggle; it is also evidence of how the clergy found ways to maintain their social position in a turbulent age. Next to its historical importance, the diary is of great literary significance as it marks an important stage in the history of diary-writing and adds to the genre of the diary by being a valuable link in the chain of diary-writing.

1.1 The life of John Lewis.

Very little is known about the life of John Lewis, and he is not listed in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. The diary appears to be the main source that is able to reveal more about the life of John Lewis. It mentions that Lewis was married, although he does not mention his wife’s name, and had a brother. The death of his brother due to the plague is mentioned in the diary as well. It is not clear whether Lewis had any children. As a pluralist, Lewis “was incumbent of one Wiltshire parish [Chalfield], curate of two others nearby [Holt and Atworth] and had a lectureship in Gloucestershire. He also was Master of the School at Tetbury from 1705-1712. His diary documents his performance of divine service and administration of communion in each of his parishes, as well as regular pastoral visits to visit the sick” (Gregory and Scott Chamberlain 126). It also shows that he was not only profoundly interested in clerical and political writings but that he also wrote himself. Some of his work was used when instructing younger generations: “when catechism was taught, some clergy found
it helpful to use printed expositions of the catechism by writers such as John Lewis” (Gregory and Scott Chamberlain 214). He was a minister who took great interest in and care of his parishioners and received reciprocal care and interest. It is unclear when Lewis died, but since Lewis kept writing his diary for almost all his productive life, from 1718 to 1760, it may well be that he died in 1760 or shortly afterwards as he stopped writing in that year. He does not mention suffering from any (chronic) disease other than the regular colds. It is therefore impossible to uncover the cause of his death from the diary.

1.2 The Diary

The first page of the diary mentions that the manuscript is to be found in Oxford Bodleian Library, MS. Eng.misc.f.10. The diary itself is listed under Mss. Eng. Misc. e. 23-7, f 7-11, titled: Collections of Rev. John Lewis. Information on the diary is available through the Online Catalogues of Western Manuscripts of the Oxford Bodleian Library. The Library lists its dates of creation as 1701-1761, indicating that the original manuscript contains additional material to the microfilm as the diary on the film starts in 1718. The complete diary is divided into several small booklets, the first ranging from 1718 to 1720, the second from January 1721 to December 1721, the third contains the year 1722, the fourth contains 1723, the fifth ranges from 1724 to 1739 (notes have now become less regular and therefore require less space), the sixth from 1739 to 1755 (the cover of this diary mentions a range from 1739 to 1755). In general, the diary is perfectly legible. However, in some cases legibility has suffered from curled page corners or blurred endings of sentences due to either extremely dense writing when there was too little space on a page to properly finish a sentence or due to stains of some sort. This illegibility is rare and does not have any negative consequences for a proper understanding of the intended meaning of the text.

1.3 Language and Editorial Principles

The language of the diary appears to be fairly modern. Yet, there is much more to the diary with regards to lexicon, syntax, punctuation and spelling than meets the eye. I will briefly discuss some examples. Even though the lexicon is fairly modern, the 18th century character is unmistakable. We find slightly archaic terms and phrases such as ‘manservant’ (July 1722), meaning ‘a male head of servants in a household’ which today would be referred to as ‘butler’ or ‘servant’, and ‘electuary against the plague’ (October 1721), or ‘humour in the eyes’, where the first phrase describes a cure for the plague and the latter refers to the ancient Greek and Roman theory of the four humours, four basic substances that filled the human body. However, even though many non-academic readers will not understand every one of these lexical items completely very often the context provides sufficient information to understand correctly what Lewis tried to get across.

Lewis’s syntax also deviates slightly from modern usage. In July 1718, he writes, “In planting an orchard, the general fault of most men is to set the trees too near so that when they are come to the
full growth […]”. The fact that Lewis uses ‘are’ instead of ‘have’ is a perfect example of a prevalent use of “to be” present-perfect constructions in the 18th-century.

The use of punctuation in the diary is not always accurate and represents eighteenth-century use of punctuation. As Geraldine Woods points out in her New World punctuation, “The preference of individual writers and printers determined the placement of punctuation, not the needs of the reader” and it “did not become standardized until the late 18th century” (viii). The rather arbitrary use of punctuation that existed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is also present in Lewis diary. Many sentences follow fairly modern and normal punctuation, as for instance in “She was the 2nd daughter of Mr Joseph Punter, attorney at law, and Elisabeth his wife, born at Doughton near Tetbury December 3 1585, and for many years was her father’s clerk in conveyance and engrossing his deeds and writings.” (1744). The relative clauses are correctly set off by two commas. Other sections use “rather arbitrary” punctuation: “July 5. […] He had been drinking the Bristol waters for two months past for a cancerous humour in his mouth but finding no benefit from them, he was advised to make use of Holtwater which he did for nine weeks” (1722). The omission of a comma after ‘but’ is an example of the use of punctuation at the time and this clearly reflects the “rather arbitrary use of punctuation that existed in the 16th and 17th centuries” that Woods writes on.

Spelling, too, was not what it is today. There are many more spelling surprises to the modern reader as in ‘extream’ (1744), ‘stedfastly’ (1721), and ‘expence’ (1719). Moreover, unstressed -e- is often omitted in inflexions: e.g. ‘stopt’ and ‘adornd’.

Despite these archaic features, most readers will be able to understand the complete text successfully without a modern ‘translation’. Because my main concern is the content of this diary, I have modernized only the lexicon and the spelling. Other linguistic aspects of the diary such as syntax and punctuation have in nearly all cases remained unaltered. There are several reasons for these editorial principles. First of all, the phrasing of John Lewis, even though sometimes awkward and chaotic, represents his style and the age in which he wrote. Second, when editing punctuation, there is a certain risk that one misunderstands the original meaning and coherence of a storyline. In order to present the reader with a text as original as possible, I have chosen to retain the punctuation. When there were obvious gaps in punctuation, I have made additions.

1.4 Historical Context

Lewis lived in an age of turbulence. It was an age of a declining influence of the Church of England on society, and an age of strife between Catholic views, evangelical views, and the predominant Anglican view of the Church of England of which John Lewis was a member. The once more or less stable Church of England faced major challenges both from the inside as well as the outside. Among these challenges were “Catholic recusancy, … high levels of irreligion … and the Anglican ascendancy in politics and religion was losing members and influence” (Ali and Cunich 57). The difference between these views is important for our understanding of the diary in its historical context,
and some elaboration on this subject is therefore necessary.

Physical mobility led to mobility of ideas. The first half of the eighteenth century saw an English society that was increasingly mobile. Travel by water, via canals and along the coasts flourished, as did the English economy. This created a sense of freedom, not only material but also in thought. Together with the increasing influence of the evangelical movement this posed a serious threat to the dominant societal influence of the Church of England, even though in the first half of the century “Anglicanism and society remained virtually coterminous” (Jacob 3). In general, the main influence of the evangelical movement, which had its roots in the evangelical teachings of John Wesley and George Whitefield, was making religion much more personal and closer to the ordinary English people than ever before, and “weeknight services, Sunday-schools, and classes for Bible instruction were being started […] [which] ‘unquestionably affected a great moral revolution in England.’” (Sydney Carter 125). Though Lewis rarely comments on evangelical views – he is mainly concerned with his own congregations – the evangelical movement gained serious influence in Lewis’ period.

Views of religious and clerical developments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been traditionally divided into a pessimistic approach, stressing the decline of Anglican societal influences, and a more optimistic approach especially advocated by Norman Sykes. Both views can be supported with historical data. Spaeth indicates that “The number of communicants in selected Oxfordshire parishes fell by 25 per cent between 1738 and 1802. In the north they fell by almost 18 per cent in only twenty years. By 1851, the Church of England accounted for a minority of worshippers in most places, and even in Anglican bastions such as the county of Wiltshire it accounted for little more than half of those attending religious services” (Spaeth8). Despite such powerful arguments, recent research has stressed that on some levels the Church of England was able to more or less successfully cope with changes:

The use of religious patronage for political purposes appears to have been neither as pernicious nor as effective as had been thought. Historians have also found considerable potential for pastoral care and lay piety in the late eighteenth century and have stressed the vitality of local Anglicanism, even in industrializing communities such as Oldham and Saddleworth, although this depended upon local initiatives and must be set against the considerable success of aggressive evangelical churches. (Spaeth 9)

The evangelical movement started by George Whitefield and John Wesley no doubt had an enormous influence on the changing attitude towards the established clergy. Whitefield and Wesley did not only address the problems of the Church, but they also strongly reacted against them. The main subject of their criticism was the involvement of the Church in ‘worldly’ matters in all levels of society. “The Church could not avoid the stain of ‘Old Corruption’, and the political alliance between the Whig regime and the bishops made the latter appear to be little better than placemen. At the local level, a
pluralist clergy who appeared more interested in the hunt than the pulpit must inevitably have neglected their pastoral duties” (Spaeth 8). Even though there was considerable clerical malfunctioning in a number of parishes, not all parishes suffered from unwilling ministers. John Lewis is one example of those ministers who were able to serve several flocks successfully. Though Lewis was a pluralist – he was a single stipendiary minister who held several parishes – there is no convincing evidence neither from external sources nor from the diary that suggests that Lewis neglected his pastoral duties. Lewis might be considered one of those ministers who carried their communities through an age in which Anglican sentiments clearly lost influence. Lewis and several other clergymen “served their livings to the satisfaction of their congregations, aided by the proximity of their churches and by the small size of some of the congregations” (Spaeth 116).

When taking a closer look at Lewis’ diary there is one thing that stands out: his unconditional care for the parishes Lewis held: Chalfield, Holt, and Atworth. This care ranges from inserting “more notes in Mr Johnson’s Psalter” to Lewis and his wife brewing “a hogshead of ale for Mr Lisle”. His care resulted in reciprocal gifts, such as a parishioner who sent Lewis “a dozen of pigeons” (July 1718). Although Lewis worked in relatively small parishes, his work may have been of greater importance than even the diary suggests. The seventeenth and eighteenth century pluralists were notorious for appearing to be “neglecting their pastoral duties” (Spaeth 8). Yet the original image of the pluralist minister not taking sufficient responsibility for his parishioners is not confirmed by the works and words of Lewis. Thus, though Lewis acted on a local and seemingly non-influential level, his dutiful service inevitably contributed to the loyal commitment and faith of his parishioners and, therefore, to a positive image of the Church of England in that place and in that period. The diary explains to the modern reader how an 18th century local minister was able to serve his flock successfully. Numerous accounts of gifts from parishioners in Lewis’s diary support this claim as well as the numerous accounts of his visits to members of all social classes and his pastoral care. Lewis’s account of his life exemplifies “the vitality of local Anglicanism”.

2.1 Literary Context

2.1.1 The Diary as a Genre

The *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* describes a diary as “a book in which you can write down the experiences you have each day, your private thoughts” (OALD, “diary”). The diary clearly differs from a journal in that the writer of a journal “sets out to record certain types of occurrence or experience in regular fashion” (Matthews 286). Usually a journal has a clear objective and is formal and regular in style whereas the diary usually has few other objectives than to display “private thoughts” and record one’s personal moments. The history of the diary as it is known in its modern sense dates back from the first centuries A.D. *To Myself*, written in Greek by the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius in the second half of the 2nd century A.D., already displays many characteristics of a
diary. In later ages diaries are found in Middle Eastern and Asian cultures. Medieval mystics used the
diary to record their mystical emotions and visions. From the Renaissance onwards, the diary was used
more and more to record personal events and emotions, and in later centuries the diary has become
even more personal as will be explained in the following sections.

A modern view of the dairy, however broad this term may be, is usually one envisioning the
diary as “to deal solely with those experiences, observations and reflections that appeal to the writers
as being significant at the very time they occurred”, and the “true diarist writes for no one but himself.
The form is unique among literary genres in that it envisages no external audience, and that peculiarity
affects both the contents and the style” (Matthews 287). Although the assumption that most diarists
envisage no “external audience” may be a very natural one, the content and style of many diaries
clearly show some awareness of an imagined reader or listener. Samuel Pepys, for example, kept a
diary for seven years, from 1660-1667. Though the essence of his diary appears to be very personal
and self-reflective, some passages may strike one as being self-conscious and aware of some reader.
On July 281667 he writes:

(Lord’s day). Up and to my chamber, where all the morning close, to draw up a letter to Sir W.
Coventry upon the tidings of peace, taking occasion, before I am forced to it, to resign up to
his Royall Highness my place of the Victualling, and to recommend myself to him by promise
of doing my utmost to improve this peace in the best manner we may, to save the kingdom
from ruin.

Though this passage obviously is personal, it also speaks of Pepys’ business affairs, and the very last
lines may raise the image of an audience-aware, self-propagating author. The superlative use of
“utmost” and “best” along with the heraldic closing “to save the kingdom from ruin” do leave room
for an audience-aware interpretation. The point of the argument here is that it may be extremely
difficult to determine whether diarists write completely unaware of an audience or whether diarists
may be consciously or unconsciously aware of an audience. This presupposed awareness or non-
awareness is one of the central issues in the study of diaries as it may influence an entire perspective
of a diary. A natural attitude towards a diary may be one of open and unbiased acceptance, yet diarists
are no less human than non-diarists and, therefore, no less inclined towards some degree of
exhibitionism. In understanding Lewis’ diary one definitely needs an understanding of genre in
general and of the diary more specifically. It is not too bold to claim that ever since writing has existed
genre has existed as well. Moreover, even the oral traditions preceding literary traditions may be
classified in genres as they “possessed social purposes in a community, and […] genres arose to
contrast, complement, define each other’s aims” (Cohen 206). If not every single piece of writing is a
genre in itself, it at least forms part of that which is called genre. However, in order to avoid the sense
of vagueness that can easily accompany a term like genre, more depth needs to be added to the term.
This desire to specify genre has obviously been prevalent in genre theory ever since genre theory has existed. The ongoing debate about whether or not to specify texts in certain classes, then, will remain an ongoing debate especially since a new generation of texts such as online blogs, e-mails, and electronic messages creates its own history. Despite the ambiguity of the term, many things may be said about genre. First, I will briefly discuss the essence of genre theory. Secondly, I will focus on the diary with respect to genre and I will conclude by discussing Lewis’s diary in particular as being part of the diary genre in general.

2.1.2 Genre Theory

Though the study of genre, commonly called genre theory, can be classified as immensely varied and broad there are two main perspectives from which genre theory usually works: that is, a theoretical and a historical perspective, sensibly explained in Hayden White’s work on anomalies of genre. Whereas the historical approach is rather objective and descriptive, and focuses mainly on different types of genre and their typical role in the literary tradition, the theoretical approach offers a more analytical view of genre itself and how it functions. In his treatise on genre White states that the historical approach “lets you simply show the ways genre works in different times and places in the development of literature, without having to raise the vexing theoretical question of the value typically assigned to specific genres, various notions of genre, and the idea of a hierarchy of genres in both culture and society at large” (White’s emphases, 599). The historical approach is of great value as it may work as genre itself. It classifies and orders and it may function as a rather objective approach towards its subject matter. However, the theoretical approach offers more analysis, raises “vexing” questions, and confronts us with the possibilities and impossibilities of genre, for the central question concerning genre, though little asked, may essentially be if there is a thing like genre at all. Inside this framework of historical and theoretical approaches, the closely related synchronic and diachronic approaches have their place. These approaches have “been most marked among formalist and structuralist critics […] both influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure, who argued that the rules governing language constitute a system in which the function or meaning of a given linguistic unit is determined by its relation to the other units in the overall system” (Makaryk 81). The core of these approaches is the tension in genre theory between either focusing on the role of a single literary work in relation to a genre or the role of the genre in relation to that literary work.

Although there is general agreement that texts may share common traits or that some traits may share a common background, this does not at all imply that these texts belong to the same genre. Can a novel containing explicit autobiographic elements, for example, be inserted in that class of texts which we commonly call diaries or biographies? These are the questions posed by genre theory. Cohen remarks in this perspective that “First, the very notion that texts compose classes has been questioned. Secondly, the assumption that members of a genre share a common trait or common traits
has been questioned, and thirdly, the function of a genre as an interpretive guide has been questioned” (203). With respect to the stability of the term he continues:

> With regard to the number of genres, critics have suggested that every work is its own, that there are two genres – literature and nonliterature; that there are three genres – lyric, epic, and drama; that there are four genres – lyric, epic, drama, and prose fiction – and, finally, that genres are any group of texts selected by readers to establish continuities that distinguish this group from others. (203)

The essence of his argument lies in his question of how texts can compose a class. This question is a very legitimate one, since every text added to a genre influences the genre. The central point here is that “we are still enthralled by an ideal of purity that promises relief from the contradictions we must live between theory and practice and the paradoxes that attend our efforts to live as both individuals and members of communities” (White 602). Yet there may simply be hardly any other conclusion than to say, with Ralph Cohen’s words, that “Genres are open systems; they are groupings of texts by critics to fulfill certain ends. And each genre is related to and defined by others to which it is related. Such relations change based on internal contraction, expansion, interweaving. Members of a genre need not have a single trait in common since to do so would presuppose that the trait has the same function for each of the member texts. Rather the members of a generic classification have multiple relational possibilities with each other, relationships that are discovered only in the process of adding members to a class” (Cohen 210). Hence, the unique aspects or traits of a single text will remain unique when that text is added to a class. However, by this addition the fullness of a text in relationship to other texts having “multiple relational possibilities” with each other is made visible not only to those who study these relational possibilities but to the readers of the text as well.

### 2.2 Diaries compared

Though this paper deals with an eighteenth-century diary, and some aspects of the diary have remained the same, much of the form and style of the diary has evolved. It is interesting to investigate whether and how the genre we call ’diary’ has been enriched by the addition of newer forms and kinds of diaries. This is not only interesting because of the particular nature of, for example, modern electronic diaries, but also because it will appear that the modern diary is in essence not at all that different from its predecessors and from Lewis’s diary.

Before the introduction of digital data the diary used to be a hand- or typewritten collection of personal experiences. Especially since the introduction of internet with its forums and its possibilities to express oneself to the world, the online diary, or weblog, has emerged and developed rapidly. One main difference with the diary in its old sense is that a weblog inherently presupposes an audience. Yet
the intentions of many ‘bloggers’ may differ little from previous diarists. Another remarkable aspect of an electronic diary is the fact that one may read “too much [one] didn’t need to know about too many people’s everyday lives—lives without anything particularly extraordinary to recommend them, except the diarists’ own sense of importance and relevance” as Laurie McNeill poignantly explains (24). The online blogger of today may, therefore, be called a diarist even though genre theory purists will disagree on this. It has been and still is characteristic of a diarist that he mainly writes down his personal experience which need not necessarily be interesting to a later reader. This is the main core of diary-writing:

   unlike biographies or autobiographies it lacks pattern and design. As life-records diaries present a natural disorder and emphasis which is artfully rearranged in biography and autobiography and so corrupted. The diary emphasizes only what seems important on any individual day: not what is important in a lifetime or a historical sequence. Nor does it lend itself to regularity of form, even in so simple a matter as the length of entries: everything depends upon the excitement of particular days. (Matthews 289)

Thus, both Lewis’s diary and the modern blog belong to one generic class, that of the diary. All elements listed in Matthews’s description of the diary, lack of pattern and design, emphasis on the quotidian and no regularity of form, apply to most modern blogs and Lewis’s diary.

There is even more to Lewis’s diary than the comparison with modern blogs. Within the class of the typical diary, Lewis’s diary takes a firm place. In April 1719, for example, John Lewis writes:

   As to the great light which was seen the 19th day of the last month it is said that the ball of fire, when it first broke out, was 42 miles high which was within the compass of the atmosphere, for that is said to be 45 miles high. Some are of opinion that it portends great drought, others think it presages great mortality and sickness, for they say such a kind of light was seen about Dantzick a little before the plague broke out there a few years ago and others again believe it to be a sign of war and bloodshed, of an invasion or some great mischief done by a foreign power. Some sanguine people will have it to be ominous of a revolution in England. At the same time that this light was seen in England the great church of Sancta Sophia in Constantinople was thrown to the ground by an earthquake. It was formerly a Christian church built by the emperor Justinian, but has for many years past been a Turkish mosque.

Lewis records here a natural event while immediately dwelling on his own interpretations of it as well as on the opinions of “some sanguine people”. Finally, he diverts to the history of the Sancta Sophia
church of Constantinople, providing us with seemingly unimportant information. It is clear that this event may have had some importance for Lewis. He might even have agreed with the “sanguine people” that it was ominous for a revolution in England, as he mentions their interpretation of the event. In this light, it is highly interesting what McNeill has to say about the online diary, “Often almost absurd parodies of the stereotypical diary, many online diaries are fragmented narratives that jump disconnectedly from topic to topic, recording in mundane detail the diarist’s daily life. They focus on the quotidian and the personal, foregrounding the diarist’s experiences and emotions. Their narratives follow the generic convention of starting in medias res, with the most recent entry appearing as the diary site is visited […] Entries are organized chronologically, though their regularity may range from several a day to one every few months” (her emphasis, McNeill 8). A striking example of the comparison between older diaries and modern diaries is this part of a blog written by Robert Mackey writing for the New York Times website:

This is for readers who followed The Lede’s coverage of the activists who invented a replica of the French foreign ministry’s Web site earlier this month, and used it to post a statement that drew attention to the huge sum of money France forced Haiti to pay in the 19th century, after it won its independence in a successful slave revolt. The money, 90 million gold francs — which Haiti paid to France from 1825 until 1947 to compensate slave-holders for their loss of “property” — was estimated by the Haitian government in 2003 to be the equivalent of nearly $22 billion today. […] During the news conference, one member of the group said that they had been inspired by the anti-corporate pranksters known as the Yes Men.

Both excerpts highlight what McNeill describes as “quotidian” events which, in some way or other, bear relevance to both the diarists. In Lewis’s case it concerns a “great light” whereas Mackay writes of supposed immoral behaviour of the French government. It is also interesting that both authors use figures to enrich their entries and explain the subject matter to their audience. John Lewis is very open about his own interpretation of the natural event. He lists at least four current opinions on how this natural event might be interpreted and adds information about the destruction of “the great church of Sancta Sophia in Constantinople”, hereby adding to the gloominess of the preceding information. Mackay also lists some facts about the event he describes. He adds a video dealing with the “hoax” and inserts the personal element as he chooses to write about this particular topic. Both authors, therefore, “focus on the quotidian and the personal, foregrounding the diarist’s experiences,” and “Their narratives follow the generic convention of starting in medias res”. Both examples show that the diary essentially has not altered in appearance that much. It may have developed itself in its adaptation to modern times, by adding video material to the entry, for example, but the essential parts that construct a diary entry have remained to be the most essential parts of that same diary. These elements, then, are the personal experience: the quotidian events that are often the subject of the
entries, and, as McNeill correctly points out, the starting in “medias res”, in the middle of things. After considering the position of Lewis’s diary the context of the genre, I will continue by showing how the details and development of Lewis’s diary fit in with these characteristics of the genre.

3. Development

Throughout John Lewis’s diary it is evident that he writes on not only his daily affairs, that is, his day-to-day business in and around the house and his contact with his parishioners, but he keeps record of important spiritual discoveries or insights as well. The first months of his diary are almost entirely filled with descriptions of his duties as a minister. In April 1719, for example, 27 out of 31 days record events directly linked to his office as a minister. Lewis read “part of Mr Baxter’s Life, and in the evening visited Mr Panton”, “preached at Holt on Psalm 38:18, at Chalfeld on Matthew 27:3-4, and at Broughton for Mr Hickes on John 9:4 and spent the evening with Mr Horton”, and, for example, “read part of Dr. Prideaux’s letter to the deists”. He is very conscious of the fact that he represents God to his parishioners. This is not only visible in his daily records but also in his annual prefaces. He starts every year with a section which is almost a prayer in writing. In 1721 Lewis writes to God:

> to keep me in all my ways and to defend and preserve me from all harm and danger and from all sin and wickedness for the year ensuing and for all the days of my life. I do now dedicate both my soul and body to thee o most merciful father to promote thy glory and my own salvation in a sober, righteous and godly life and I do sincerely resolve so to improve the time which thou shalt be pleased to grant me in this world.

Andy Alaszewski, a University of Kent specialist on diary research techniques, comments on this reverence in such diaries: “protestantism […] played a key role in the development of diaries. It stimulated the development of vernacular writing, and provided an incentive for using diaries to record and reflect upon personal actions and activities. Puritans emphasized the importance of the direct relationship between the individual and God” (8). This recording and reflecting upon personal actions and activities, especially religious actions and activities, is dominantly present in Lewis’s diary. Lewis chooses to “dedicate both my soul and body to thee […] to promote thy glory” and to live a “sober, righteous and godly life”, which typically exemplifies and supports Alaszewski’s claim that Puritans tend to emphasize the personal relationship with God.

Every month Lewis uses one page to describe other activities and thoughts as well, such as how to plant an orchard: “In planting an orchard, the general fault of most men is to set the trees too near so that when they are come to the full growth and their branches spread every way they intangle in one another and cast so close a shade that the sun cannot enter to raise the juices kindly from the root”. He also writes about events that appeared to be just of interest to him, “The newspapers (April 9) gave an account of a great globe or ball of fire which was seen in the air in Flanders, March 26, which after some hours blazing aloft fell down to the earth and falling upon the town of Ronsen, burnt
10 houses and 12 persons”. He also chose to write in these sections on events that occurred to his parishioners, adding comments that might not only be read as personal but even as comical:

“Mr Sartain cured two or three of his children of the ague this month only by turning their shirts or shifts inside outward and so putting them on again. So Mrs. Woods tells me, but vix credo [I scarcely believe it]”. Throughout the diary, Lewis chooses to maintain this dualistic style of writing being mostly rather brief and official in his descriptions of his daily events, but often also quite elaborate and lively, especially when the events are of special interest to him.

This liveliness continues to be a typical trait of his writing although later entries develop into more practical and factual entries. From the 1730s onwards Lewis chooses to write less frequently, and more on peculiar events instead of quotidian. In 1739 he writes in a very elaborate manner on the Great Frost:

The river Avon was froze up so that people walked on the ice from Bradford to Stafferton Bridge. The Severn was so much frozen that it put a stop to all carriages by water. The Thames floated with rocks and shoals of ice which when they fixed represented a snowy field […] All navigation obstructed coals rose to 3 l. 10 s a [per] caldron and several perished with cold in the streets of London and in the fields and roads about the kingdom. By all advices from Holland, France, Germany, etc., the cold was extreme in those parts. (1739)

This entry shows the main difference between the later and early parts in Lewis’s diary: his later writing is clearly more practical, factual, and informative than his early writing which has much more human interest to it. In his later entries there is human interest as well, but it is about people not close to Lewis, whereas the earlier entries are mainly focused on people which he at least knew or had met once. In July 1718 he writes, “Farmer Eyles begun reaping July 18 this year, it having been a very dry and hot summer. There was a good crop of wheat on the ground almost everywhere and in most places good barley. The wheat was had in in the dry”. The fact that Lewis refers to the man as “Farmer Eyles” indicates that he at least had a basic relationship with him: he knew his name and his dates of reaping the crops. He could have mentioned a date of reaping without mentioning a specific farmer, yet Lewis chooses to mentions this farmer. Moreover, by referring to the amount and quality of Eyles’ crops, and the fact that Eyles is mentioned in his diary Lewis reveals that, for Lewis, the relationship had more to it than the relationship he describes in the following entry from 1743 where Lewis writes: “In October 1743 Sir Erasmus Phillips Bart of Picton-Hall in Carmartenshire, taking an airing on horseback near Bath either by the sudden start of his horse or by mistaking the place where he used to water his horse was thrown into the Avon and unfortunately drowned.” This is a very factual and simple description of the death of a member of the gentry. It is known from the diary that Lewis tended to be preoccupied with issues concerning the higher classes, and he liked to mention peculiarities like these. Lewis does not elaborate on any consequences of the accident for himself, and Sir Erasmus Phillips Bart is mentioned nowhere else in the diary. Hence, this later entry displays more
distance than earlier entries. It also stresses his preoccupation with writing on events rather more often than on personal relationships. In 1751, for example, he writes on the death of the king of Sweden. He notes that “The princess dowager of Wales was appointed regent of the kingdom during her son’s minority on the king’s demise,” and “In August 1751. One miss Blandy poisoned her father, MrBlandy, an attorney at Henly in Oxfordshire because he opposed an amour between her and captain Cranston of Scotland.” The last part of his life as a diarist is almost solely dedicated to writing on historical and political topics, although his interest in extraordinary matters remains.

4. The diary of John Lewis

John Lewis wrote a simple and at the same time complex diary. His diary is simple in the sense that it often lists daily occurrences in a rather factual and sober manner. Despite this seemingly simple outlook of the diary it definitely develops in the course of the years, and this development makes the diary more complex. In the next section I wish to develop and conclude the discourse dealing with the essence of diary-writing that was started in the previous sections. These sections explain that the most essential part of any diary is the personal part. However, it is important to notice the difference between the diary as a personal piece of writing and the material inside this piece of writing. It is not at all necessary that this personal writing should deal with matters explicitly personal to the author. Yet, despite this difference, the choice to record material in a diary always reflects a more or less personal interest in the material. In sections of Lewis’s diary edited below this personal preference manifests itself in the main topics of his writing. These are most notably his occupation as a minister and all related duties, responsibilities, and joys; his interest in natural events, ranging from rumors of diseases to actual nature; and his extensive historical-political sections. As we saw, the first years are indeed factual with some rather elaborate notes each month. In later years, Lewis starts to write less about his quotidian events and pays more attention to the worldly matters. He then often writes of political events and events of historical importance. I will show the interplay between simplicity and complexity with the help of three aspects from the diary: emotions, intellectual interests, and social contacts with the Club of Melksham and with his parishioners.

4.1 Emotions

There are a few situations in which Lewis shows an insight into his personal emotions, though in a rather indirect manner. It is known, for instance, that his brother died of the plague. Lewis does not write of this death in a very elaborate manner. He rather chooses to list numerous “electuaries” against, and causes of the plague, which is Lewis’s way of showing that the cause of his brother’s death and its impact is of great importance to him. In April 1721, for example, he notes:
Another cause assigned for the plague is this. It is the nature of all putrid and corrupted bodies to tend more or less to a new state of vitality and life. Thus, rotten cheese, stale meat, and other such corrupted bodies are visibly perceived by Mr. Lewenhoeck’s microscope to abound with vast numbers of animals, insects, and maggots.

In July of the same year, then, he lists another “medicine against the plague” and in October an “electuary against the plague”:

Take roots of contrayerva 3ij. Valerian, masterwort and zedoary ana 3iss. Seeds of angelica hulled, dittany of crete and myrrh ana 3j. Virginian shakerooot 3ss. Saffron 3ijj. opium 3ij. Pulp of juniper berries extracted with malaga wine q.s. and with enough of the same wine to dissolve the myrrh and opium. Make an electuary with syrup of red poppies or of saffron. It may be used by way of preservative to be taken the quantity of a nutmeg every night going to bed or in infusion. From Dr. Quincy.

It seems almost an obsession for Lewis as he continues to write on these questionable cures for the plague. In the same month he writes:

To prevent infection of the plague or cure it when infected. Take 3 pints of muscadine and boil it in red sage rue of each a handful till a pint be wasted. Then strain it and set it over the fire again and put to it a pennyworth of long pepper, half an ounce of ginger, a quarter of an ounce of nutmegs beaten together. Then boil it a little, take it off the fire and put it into one ounce of the best venice. Treacle and half an ounce of the best mithridate and a quarter of a pint of the best angelica water. Take half a spoonful morning and evening warm, if infected a whole spoonful.

The cures listed here not only display the very nature of Lewis’s work and interests, as they are derived from different sources, but they also show that he uses more than one of the available sources. This suggests that he was desperate to find some or other cure for the plague, which, in turn, might prevent more casualties in his personal surroundings. The July cure uses valuable ingredients such as saffron and opium whereas the October cure has a much more common nature with common ingredients such as pepper, ginger, and treacle. “The plague drug of choice was theriac, a mixture of viper’s flesh, garlic, rue, vinegar, walnuts, onion, and (to leave nothing to chance) opium. For the very poor an onion could be applied directly to a plague sore to draw out the venom” (Moote and Moote 105). Originally derived from Venice, London treacle was soon introduced as the market demanded ingredients for the poor. These marketing strategies were applied to many ingredients listed in the cures for the plague. Even though Lewis was a well-educated and sternly literature minded minister, he
drew advice from all available recipes. Lewis’s efforts show the lengths to which he was prepared to go if he felt passionate about a cause.

A second aspect from his personal life which features in his diary is the illness and subsequent death of his wife. Throughout the diary his wife is not prominently mentioned by Lewis. He often refers to her in rather practical settings. In July 1718, for example, he writes, “My wife brewed a hogshead of ale for Mr Lisle after which she made somewhat more than half a hogshead of small beer”. In July 1719 he writes, “My wife set slips of lavender and sage and set some julyflowers”. Lewis does not go much further in the other descriptions of his wife in the rest of the diary. It is not until the death of his wife in 1743 that Lewis proceeds into a more detailed description of his wife and the life they had together. Though the section in this year mainly deals with the physical aspects of the final years of his wife’s life, it is the first time that he speaks of her in a manner different from the practical which is so characteristic of Lewis. The section, then, starts with the physical constitution of his wife after she had suffered from a stroke, “then not fifty years of age, she was able to walk about for many years though somewhat limping on that side”. This is followed by a more detailed description. After her 1734 stroke she “[...] grew gradually weaker and weaker till in May 1743 she was taken with the epidemic fever of that year which disabled her to that degree that she could not walk without somebody to support her. Thus she continued till March 1743/4 when a second paralytic stroke deprived her of the use of her legs and feet after which she sunk very fast and, being reduced to extreme weakness, died April 5 in the 59th year of her age. As the palsy enfeebled her nerves and gradually weakened her body, it likewise affected her mind and impaired her understanding and memory”. After this physical description of his wife Lewis continues in the final lines of his description by lovingly mentioning that: “During her health she was a woman of good sense, a ready wit and a cheerful, lively spirit, strictly virtuous and sincerely religious and never better pleased than when doing good offices among her neighbours, by whom she was much respected and beloved. Her person was of a middle stature, well made, of good complexion and in her youthful days very handsome. She was the joy of my heart and the delight of my eyes while she lived and we loved each other with a true and cordial affection.” The fact that he chose to write an elaborate section on his wife stresses her importance to him.

4.2 Intellectual interests

Apart from the personal interest in his family Lewis was a rather literary man. Every month he read at least one book and often more than one. Lewis did not only read books, but he also “made collections” from them by extracting parts of the books that were of peculiar interest to him. In the first year of his diary writing, for example, he read Mr Richard Baxter’s Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times (1696). Baxter was a Puritan minister “known as a peacemaker who sought unity among the clashing Protestant denominations, he was the centre of nearly every major
controversy in England in his fractious age” (EB, “Richard Baxter”). Apart from being a Puritan minister, Baxter also was “a believer in limited monarchy, Baxter attempted to play an ameliorative role during the English Civil Wars. He served briefly as a chaplain in the parliamentary army but then helped to bring about the restoration of the king (1660). After the monarchy was reestablished, he fought for toleration of moderate dissent within the Church of England. He was persecuted for his views for more than 20 years and was imprisoned (1685) for 18 months.” It is interesting to notice that Lewis read many books having something in common with each other, religion for example, with titles such as Young Clergyman’s Instructor, Directions to Churchwardens, and The Life of Mahomet. The last two books both were written by Humphrey Prideaux who, apart from being a critic of the Muslim prophet Mohammed, wrote in his “Life of Mahomet” about seven examples of “imposture in its doctrines and since none of these can be found in Christianity, Mahomedanism must therefore be false” (Prideaux, Price, and Lesley, 10). But also medical books such as, for example, Doctor Thomas Sydenham’s ObservationesMedicae were of great interest of to Lewis. Yet again, Sydenham was known for “his participation on the parliamentary side during the first of the English Civil Wars” (EB, “Thomas Sydenham”). Similarly, Prideaux did not only write on Christianity but was as concerned with politics as with religion. Though Lewis was obviously interested in the religious parts of the books he read, he inevitably must have been well aware of the political attitude and movements of the authors he chose to read. Lewis’s choice of literature and instructional reading, therefore, was not limited to the content of the works. The author, and his views on politics and religion, were of great importance as well.

4.3 The Club of Melksham

Even though the final years of his diary mainly deal with foreign politics and not as much with national or church affairs, Lewis was no doubt interested in “high church” affairs as he also was a member of the Clergy Club of Melksham. Spaeth explains that the meetings of the Club “were no doubt occasions for conviviality enlivened by political news and diocesan gossip. Club members shared High Church Tory political opinions” (Spaeth 55). Thus, the meetings were not just for social reasons, but they also fulfilled a political function. For example, a meeting on May 2nd, 1722, “when they dined with John Ivory Talbot, MP, [their meeting] enabled allies of the Tory Richard Goddard to prepare for the forthcoming elections, and Lewis recorded in his diary how he canvassed support for Goddard” (Spaeth 55). That religion and politics often intermingled becomes clear when Lewis writes, “The Clergy Club was to have met at Melksham April 28 but the inn where we meet being full of officers and soldiers, it was thought advisable to put it off till some other time”. The most important difference between the High and Low Church attitude was the fact that those who saw themselves as belonging to the High Church were rather strongly opposed to the nonconformist attitude,
“Throughout the century after the Restoration nonconformity appeared to many clergymen to represent the greatest threat to the Church of England” as “separatists were a constant reminder of the failure of the Restoration settlement of religion. After 1689, the issue of the treatment remained important as an ideological fault line dividing the political elite between High Church Tories who wished to restore the monopoly of the Church establishment and anticlerical Whigs who decried the intolerance of churchmen” (Spaeth 155).

In this perspective it is not remarkable that Lewis chose to support the Tory Richard Goddard. As Spaeth correctly points out, Lewis already engaged in “over 170 social contacts” in a single year, the meetings of the Clergy Club of Melksham excluded. The Clergy Club of Melksham provided a more private social structure, different from Lewis’s regular visits to the members of his congregation. That “conviviality” and political talk ruled these meetings may be a logical conclusion if one imagines that the clergy too needed a place where they were able to create some distance between their work and their private life. Even “though no record of club discussions survives” (Spaeth 55), the fact that Tory Members of Parliament visited the club, as well as the fact that Lewis actually helped one of them in his political efforts, support this conclusion. Political involvement was an important part of the life of clergymen, and this involvement confirmed the power and status of their class. They were not merely clergymen, but also had a voice in the national affairs and therefore in the Church affairs on the highest level. The social behavior of Lewis probably made him an influential member of the Club. Even though “some clergymen, less fortunate than John Lewis, found themselves to be relatively isolated – culturally, socially, and physically […] these patterns of sociability reveal a clergy which saw itself as a distinct social group” (Spaeth 55). Thus, the Clergy Club of Melksham must have been of rather great importance to Lewis’s life, and he often visited the meetings. In April 1719, for example he visits the Club every two weeks. Yet, apart from mentioning his visits to the Club, Lewis rarely writes on the content of these meetings: there is much we have to guess.

4.4 Lewis’s Congregation

The contacts with the members of his congregation are described differently and are of a quite different nature. It is difficult to exactly describe the relationship Lewis had with his parishioners. There are, however, several facts that show that he was on rather good terms with his parishioners. In July 1718, for example, Lewis records at least 13 visits to members of his congregation. These are only the recorded ones. There may well have been several people who visited Lewis house, either for practical purposes, “I had two load of coal brought in by farmer Mexham and farmer Loscomb” (July 4, 1722), or for more personal purposes as when he “inserted some notes in Mr Johnson’s psalter” (July 21, 1718). He often visited the sick or dined with members of the gentry, “I waited on Mr Wadiman to the mineral water and dined with him, Mr Long of road Ashton, Mr Townsend of Stoke and Mr Thompson at S. Seresi’s” (July 15). Spaeth comments:
The diary of John Lewis shows a man who had found his position in society and was content with it [...] he appears to have found his place among the gentry, farmers, and clergy in the neighbourhood. The farmers accepted his position and looked to him for help in drawing up rates. The gentry were also on good terms, and were prepared to treat him as an equal as long as he did not presume too much. He served on tax commissions and occasionally helped others to draw up rates. (54-5)

The terminology Lewis uses is rather meaningful in this perspective. When he refers to farmers he actually refers to them as, for example, “farmer Moxham”, and when he refers to members of the gentry, he uses, for example, “Mr Long of road Ashton”.

When Spaeth points out that the gentry “were prepared to treat him as an equal as long as he did not presume too much”, this is extremely subtly hidden in Lewis description of his dinner with the gentry. When Lewis writes, “I waited on Mr Wadiman to the mineral water and dined with him, Mr Long of road Ashton, Mr Townsend of Stoke and Mr Thompson at” (July 15) this was more than a simple and seemingly dull description of a dinner with some friends. First of all, the fact that Lewis mentions this dinner points to some sort of importance, and secondly, the phrase “I waited on Mr Wadiman to the mineral water” is important for two reasons. Lewis “waits on” him at a certain place which signifies a position of dominance of one person over the other. This position of dominance, if not overt then covert, lies in the relationship between the one who waits and the one who is waited on. The *Oxford English Dictionary* mentions several meanings for “wait on”: “to linger about a place”, “to linger in expectation of death”, and “to wait for a while” (*OED*, “wait”). All meanings suggest the same: the waiting has a specific purpose; it is a waiting on something or somebody, it is no useless waiting. Even though this conclusion might seem a little overdone, it is a fact that Lewis nowhere mentions waiting on a farmer or someone non-gentry. The very fact that Lewis was able to dine with the gentry was a sign of at least social acceptance:

The social position of other clergymen was ambiguous [with respect to descent] and was far weaker in consequence. […] Members of gentry society visited one another regularly and dined together. […] The clergy might have an opportunity to participate in these forms of leisure and business, but their status was rarely better than marginal. Dining and visits were important forms of gentry sociability. It might be suggested that gentlemen regarded those with whom they dined, who included clergymen, as members of the gentry. (Spaeth 44)

Thus, the fact that Lewis was able to dine freely with the gentry confirmed his status as a near-equal. More evidence for this status of near equality can be found in the entry for April 1719, at the “4th Sunday after Easter. [Lewis] preached at Box for Mr Millard” which implies Millard was a rather dear colleague or even friend. Spaeth comments on this George Millard of Box:
The diary of Thomas Smith, a magistrate living in Shaw in Melksham, shows that some members of the gentry socialized freely with the clergy and treated them as social equals. Smith dined regularly with other gentlemen, and a clergyman was often one of the guests. In September 1716 the vicar of Box, George Millard, joined Smith and others who dined at the house of Mr Norris in Farley. Smith also received occasional visits from local ministers. (44)

Therefore, even though Spaeth suggests that the social position of clergymen was often ambiguous and their position was usually lower than the gentry, the dining of George Millard, a colleague and probably a friend of Lewis, suggests that Lewis’s position may have been similar to Box’s position, Lewis may have been one of the “others who dined at the house of Mr Norris in Farley” and that one of the “occasional visits from local ministers” may have even been a visit from John Lewis himself. Moreover, Lewis was not able to rely on his income to give him the necessary status for having relationships with the gentry as “his income cannot have been high. Great Chalfield was returned to Exchequer in 1707 as being worth only £38. Bradford-on-Avon was not a rich benefice, and the incumbent is unlikely to have paid his curate more than £30. With the addition of his Tetbury lectureship, Lewis may almost have scraped the £80 which the Crown recommended as the minimum stipend for incumbents after the Restoration” (Spaeth 54). The parishes mentioned here were Lewis’s parishes and, even though much of the food was generated by Lewis himself and he often received gifts he and his wife were probably not able to save enough money to lead a life of luxury and wealth as the gentry were.

In sum then, Lewis was not only able to socialize with the more humble parishioners but he also managed to successfully contact the educated and more influential people he lived with in his parishes. This inevitably must have provided him with the necessary opportunities to share his beliefs and wield his congregation. His social skills, therefore, were for a very important part the basis of his successful service to his parishioners.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed a variety of issues arising from the study of John Lewis’s diary. First, the diary has been established as being a typical eighteenth-century diary, mainly because of the emphasis on the personal relationship with God. Yet, the diary is not just a puritan diary, in the sense that the various interests we discover in the diary are rather extensively discussed by Lewis, especially in the later entries. His fascination with natural events, diseases, political and national events and just peculiarities makes the diary rather extraordinary in its own genre.

Second, the comparison with modern diaries, both written diaries as well as electronic diaries, shows that the essential elements of a diary also feature in Lewis’s diary. These elements include writing on “only what seems important any individual day: not what is important in a lifetime or a
historical sequence.” Moreover, there is a lack of regularity in form in Lewis’s diary as well as in modern diaries as “everything depends upon the excitements of particular days” (Matthews 289). It is therefore reasonable to claim that the diary generically fits in not only with eighteenth-century diaries but also with the genre of diaries in general.

Third, the diary gives a clear insight into Lewis’s relationship with the members of his parish and with the gentry. Contrary to the prevalent image of the Church in that time, which considered ministers as being “more interested in the hunt than the pulpit” (Spaeth 8) and “neglecting their pastoral duties”, Lewis’s diary proves that there were exceptions to this image. His practical and steadfast care is remarkable.

Finally, there is a clear development throughout the diary. Lewis initially writes on many topics, ranging from the diseases of the time, to the many visits to his parishioners, to important political events. In the course of time he tends to narrow his writings to mainly natural events, historical and political events and peculiarities he heard of. The personal elements, except his interests, slowly disappear from the diary, and he starts to write on an annual basis instead of the daily basis he was used to. This diary is more than one of the many that were written in the eighteenth century. It is exceptional in its development and style, and more study needs to be done how this diary fits in the genre and how, if carefully examined, it may add to the genre. Moreover, this diary provides a rich source for the study of the effect of the attitude of eighteenth-century ministers on the view of the Church in the period. This paper has argued that the relationship between Lewis and his parish was good, perhaps even better than good, and without this type of minister the Church’s influence would have declined even more rapidly than it did. The diary of John Lewis, therefore, is a source of valuable information which has not received enough attention. A full and comprehensive edition of this important document is necessary, therefore.
1718

A Diary

Containing an Account

of the Transactions of

my Life

and of the Spending of

my time every day

in the Year, beginning

July 1718.

John Lewis.

A. Ætat mea 33½

½At the age of 33.
1 – I read part of Mr Baxter’s Life².

2 – I read part of Mr Baxter’s Life, and in the evening visited Mr Panton.

3 – I read part of the same; - had 2 load of coal brought in, which cost 3 pounds - 2 shillings

4 – I copied out Sir J. Floyers’s Specific’s Classed: - had the clock cleansed, which cost

1 shilling – 6 pence, and in the afternoon went to Trowbridge to buy trimming to a

great coat.

5 – I accounted with Mr James Baily and prepared for Sunday.


7 – I read part of Mr Baxter’s Life.

8 – I made some collections from Mr Baxter’s Life and in the afternoon visited Mr beach of

Holt

9 – I went to the Clergy Club at Melksham.

10 – I went over a second time with part of Mr Baxter’s Life, and in the afternoon visited Mr

beach of Woolly.

11 – I drew up part of a sermon upon Psalm 38:18⁴.

12 – I added something more to the said discourse and attended the funeral of W. Woolly.


14 – I read Mr Wall’s conference about infant baptism.

---

² Mr Richard Baxter’s Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times (1696). Baxter was a Puritan minister “known as a peacemaker who sought unity among the clashing Protestant denominations, he was the centre of nearly every major controversy in England in his fractious age” (EB, “Richard Baxter”).

³ “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (King James Version (hereafter :KJV)).

⁴ “For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin” (KJV).

⁵ “The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born” (KJV).

⁶ “Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that” (KJV).
15 – I waited on Mr Wadman to the mineral water and dined with him, Mr Long of road Ashton, Mr Townsend of Stoke and Mr Thompson at S. Seresi’s.

16 – I went to Atford to visit 2 sick persons, viz. Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Martia.

17 – I went to Tetbury and preached there on Matthew 16:24.

18 – I returned home from Tetbury.

19 – Dogdays begin. I prepared for Sunday, and read part of Dr. Prideaux’s *Directions to Churchwardens.*

* 20 – 6th Sunday after Trinity. I preached at Holt on Psalm 38:18, at Chalfield on Matthew 27:3-4, and at Broughton for Mr Hickes on John 9:4 and spent the evening with Mr Horton.

21 – I inserted some notes in Mr Johnson’s psalter.

22 – I made collections from Mr Baxter’s Life.

23 – I finished such collections / and went through Dr. Prideaux’s *Directions to Churchwardens* and read over the *Life of Mahomet* by Dr. Prideaux.

24 – I took a view of some of the orchards in Holt and inserted more notes in Mr Johnson’s Psalter.

25 – S. James. I finished the additional notes to the Psalter and read something in *Dr. Sherlock of Death.*


* 27 – 7th Sunday after Trinity. I preached at Chalfield on Psalm 38:18 and at Atford on Matthew 27:34 and after divine service visited Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Martin and prayed with them.


29 – I drew up a part of the Young Clergyman’s Instructor.

30 – I read part of Dr. Prideaux’s *Letter to the Deists.* Sedpartemdieiperdidit

31 – PartemPrioremDieiperdidit. I read part of the life of Monsieur de Renly.

---

7 “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (KJV).

8 “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (KJV).

9 “And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (KJV).

10 “But I have lost a part of the day”. Probably referring to “Diem perdidit”, a phrase mentioned in Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus’ biography of the Roman emperor Titus (39-81). Suetonius writes of Titus that “On another occasion, remembering at dinner that he had nothing for anybody all day, he gave utterance to that memorable and praiseworthy remark: ‘Friends, I have lost a day’”. (*Penelope*, “Suetonius”)

11 Another variation on “Dieiperdidit” which can be translated as “I have lost part of the former day”.
In planting an orchard, the general fault of most men is to set the trees too near so that when they are come to the full growth, and their branches spread every way, they intangle in one another and cast so close a shade that the sun cannot enter to raise the juices kindly from the root, nor to make the grass grow. I was taking notice of this to farmer Box and he was saying that if he was to plant an orchard, every tree should stand at the distance of 40 foot asunder for he said it was but a sorry tree which, when full grown, did not spread his branches 20 foot.

Col. Hale’s estate at Cottles is reputed above 400 pounds per year.

Farmer Eyles begun reaping July 18 this year, it having been a very dry and hot summer. There was a good crop of wheat on the ground almost everywhere, and in most places good barley. The wheat was had in in the dry.

The assizes begun at Salisbury, July 25 and that night, according to the old observation, we had rain. It was a maiden assize.

Mrs. Tidcomb makes excellent eyewater, good for any inflammationor humour in the eyes. She says she has done many notable cures with it.

July 28. My wife brewed a hogshead of ale for Mr Lisle after which she made somewhat more than half a hogshead of small beer.

July 29. Mr Tidcomb sent me a dozen of pigeons.

July 31. There was dreadful thunder and lightning in many places. Two men and five horses were killed with the lightning at Winterborn – Earls near old Sarum, as they were fetching home oats out of the field called Hurcot field. A third man which sheltered himself under the wagon was struck to the ground and scorched in his legs; some of the oats were burnt.

Mrs. Sartain sent my wife a present of a half a pound of coffee from Salisbury, by Mr Millard of Box.

The Lord Harley, son to the Earl of Oxford, has 17,000 pounds per ann., 15 of which came by his lady and 2 by his father. He has one daughter, about six years old.

The bishop of Worcester in a ms. Comment of his upon Daniel 7:25 declared that Rome shall be burnt on or before July 13, 1717. Mr Whiston has set the destruction of Rome A.D. 1725 or 1726.

---

12 A hogshead is a traditional UK measure of volume or size of barrel: for beer or cider it contains 54 gallons (243 L); for wine it contains 52½ gallons (236 L). (Oxford Reference Online, “hogshead”)
13 Per year, from Latin “annus”: year.
14 Daniel 7:25, “And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” (KJV).
15 Lewis probably refers to William Whiston (1667-1752), a theologian, historian, and mathematician notable for his translation of Flavius Josephus’ Antiquities of the Jews. According to Couch “In post-Reformation days many continued to see Rome as the Antichrist. WhilliamWhiston […] felt Christ’s coming would take place in 1715, and then later he said 1766.” (Couch 47). It is not clear whether Lewis misinterpreted Whiston’s predictions or whether he heard another prediction which Couch has not been aware of.
The Bishop of Worcester going one day to visit the Archbishop of Canterbury met with two Savoyards or Piedmontese at his Grace’s table whom he roughly accosted saying what do you do here? Why don’t you repair into your own country; for by the time you can get thither you’ll certainly be restored to the quaint profession of your religion and Mr Newburgh a clergyman told me his lordship gave them order to carry them home and accordingly in a very short time after they were restored.

April 1719
D16. 1 – I drew up a rate for the churchwarden and in the afternoon visited Mrs. Bodwin of Atford.
D. 2 – I drew up a rate for the Tythingman; and visited Mr Horton.
D. 3 – I added to the discourse on Colossians 3:1-2\(^{17}\).
D. 4 – I carried out the said discourse to a proper length for a 2\(^{nd}\) sermon.
D. 5 – 1\(^{st}\) Sunday after Easter. I d w S.\(^{18}\) I preached at Chalfield and Atford in Colossians 3:1-2 and administered the sacrament at Chalfield.
D.W. 6 – I went to Holt to speak with farmer Chivers. In the afternoon I went to Bradford, paid Dr. Harris and visited Mr Halliday and had a wet journey home.
D. 7 – I went to Melksham and dined with the clergy of the club.
D. 8 – I sowed some radish, poppy, cabbage, amaranth, julyflower and scurvy grass seed and set some kidney beans. My wife set slips of Lavender and Sage and set some julyflowers.
D. 9 – I went to the Devizes to be an evidence in a cause depending between Mr Tidcomb and Thomas\(^{20}\) Oyliff, before the bench at Quarter Sessions.
D. 10 – I returned home from Devizes and walked to Atford in the afternoon to pass the churchwarden’s accounts and elect a new churchwarden.
D. 11 – I walked to the mineral well; sowed some cucumber seed in the garden and added somewhat to the sermon on Colossians 3:1-2.
D. 13 – I walked to the mineral well and to Farmer Clark’s in some business and in the afternoon busied myself in the garden, etc.

\(^{16}\) Lewis uses “D” and “W” before the date to indicate whether that day was dry or wet. Occasionally, he also indicates fog.

\(^{17}\) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (KJV).

\(^{18}\) In the diary itself Lewis writes this simply as 1, for the sake of legibility I have chosen to add the numeric description.

\(^{19}\) It is unclear what Lewis intends here, a possible reading might be “first day with S.” where S. could imply a person or place/ It might also refer to the sacrament he administered in Chalfield which he mentions here.

\(^{20}\) Colon in the diary for “mas” which indicates an abbreviation of “Thomas”.

28
D. 14 – This day I had the grass of the garden walks cut. I spent some time in the garden and the rest idly in drawing pictures for the children.

D. 15 – I extracted some scriptural remarks out of Surenhusius\(^{21}\).

D. 16 – I wrote a letter to send to Mr Woodford in Salisbury and extracted more remarks from Surenhusius.

W. 17 – I added to the discourse on Colossians 3:1-2.

W. 18 – I finished the said discourse.


W. 20 – I extracted remarks from Surenhusius.

D. 21 – I read somewhat in Dr. Sydenham\(^{22}\) and employed myself part of the day in the garden.

D. 22 – Lecture in Tetbury. I went to Tetbury. Wind North-East.

D. 23 – I returned from Tetbury after preaching my lecture there. Wind East.

D. 24 – I had the assessors of the land tax and farmer Chivers with me in the morning and in the afternoon went to little Chalfield to gather herbs.

D.W. 25 – St. Mark. I read a little in Dr. Sydenham.

D. 26 – 4\(^{th}\) Sunday after Easter. I preached at Box for Mr Millard on 2 Corinthians 5:1\(^{23}\) and Atford on Colossians 3:1-2.

D. 27 – I read in Dr. Sydenham and Mr Young’s volume of Sermons and spent some time in the garden.

D. 28 – Club\(^{24}\). I read part of Dr. Sydenham and wrought a little in the garden.

D. 29 – I read part of Dr. Sydenham.

D. 30 – I read part of Sydenham and was visited by Mr Jeanes.

[p.4]

* Mr Fox says the fee to the minister for breaking the ground in the churchyard for the burial of strangers is 3 shillings 4 dimes – He has 5 shillings for every flat stone that is laid over any grave in Melksham churchyard.

---

\(^{21}\) Willem Surenhus (Surenhuys) (c.1666-1729) was a Dutch Christian theologian, known for his Latin translation of the Mishnah. *(Nieuw Nederlands Biografisch Woordenboek, “Willem Surenhuys”)*

\(^{22}\) “Sydenham, Sir Thomas(1624–89). British physician. Born at Wynford Eagle, Dorset, he studied medicine at Oxford and Montpellier. He was remarkable in his time for insisting on accurate and detailed descriptions of disease, thereby making important contributions to medical classification.” *(ORO, “Sydenham”). Sydenham was known for his inclination that hysteria mainly had psychological causes instead of physical causes. The physical line of thinking had dominated emphasizing that hysteria originated in displacement of the womb. The uterine hypothesis has regained its influence in the past centuries making Sydenham rather exceptional in his time.*

\(^{23}\) “It is reported commonly [that there is] fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife” *(KJV).*

\(^{24}\) Clergy Club of Melksham
* The newspapers (April 9) gave an account of a great globe or ball of fire which was seen in the air in Flanders, March 26, which after some hours blazing aloft fell down to the earth and falling upon the town of Ronsen, burnt 10 houses and 12 persons. (March 19, a globe of fire from the clouds burnt down the famous Royal Abby of S. Requiers with a street that lay before it in Flanders.)

* John Foreman of Devizes was troubled for several years with the bloody-flux and at length after many unsuccessful trials of divers physicians at great expense and to no purpose was cured by a small quantity of ipecacoanna to which he was advised by a gentleman who accidentally called at his house. This he told me himself April 9, 1719.

* Mr. Sartain cured two or three of his children of the ague this month only by turning their shirts or shifts inside outward and so putting them on again. So Mrs. Woods tells me, but vix credo.

* I took cold April 9th or 10th which ran at my nose till the 17th, then turned to a cough which held me till the 20th.

* The Clergy Club was to have met at Melksham April 28 but the inn where we meet being full of officers and soldiers, it was thought advisable to put it off till some other time.

* April 23. News came that the Spaniards were landed in Scotland.

* As to the great light which was seen the 19th day of the last month it is said that the ball of fire, when it first broke out, was 42 miles high which was within the compass of the atmosphere, for that is said to be 45 miles high. Some are of opinion that it portends great drought, others think it presages great mortality and sickness, for they say such a kind of light was seen about Dantzick a little before the plague broke out there a few years ago; and others again believe it to be a sign of war and bloodshed, of an invasion or some great mischief done by a foreign power. Some sanguine people will have it to be ominous of a revolution in England. At the same time that this light was seen in England the great church of Sancta Sophia in Constantinople was thrown to the ground by an earthquake. It was formerly a Christian church built by the emperor Justinian, but has for many years past been a Turkish mosque.

* There is a report that the latter end of this month or the beginning of the next it rained for three hours together in and about Sutton and Belsford in Derbyshire a sort of grain like wheat, but somewhat smaller. Great quantities of it were gathered up and some sent to London. It is said likewise that at Barthomley in Cheshire they had a shower like hail but it proved to be a real grain.

---

25 Archaic term for diarrhea or dysentery. It is believed that the latter illness is the subject of Lewis writing since the woman mentioned had suffered from the “bloody-flux” for several years.

26 “Ipecacuanha (ipecac). A plant extract that contains two alkaloids, emetine and cephaeline, that irritate the lining of the stomach and intestines and act as emetics. Ipecacuanha has been used to induce vomiting in people (especially children) who have swallowed a non-corrosive poison. In very small doses it can act as an expectorant, being available as syrups and tablets and included in many cough medicines.” (ORO, “ipecacuanha”).

27 Archaic term for malaria

28 “I scarcely believe it”. 
A

Diary

for the Year

MDCCXXI (1721)

John Lewis

A. Ætat. Mea 36.

Quisquisherivisceririllesapit.
Sera nimir vita estcrastina vivododic

A prayer for New Year’s Day.

Almighty and everlasting God in whom I live, move, and have my being. I, unworthy creature
and servant out of a deep sense of thy manifold mercies bestowed upon me and deliverances
vouchsafed unto me in the year now past, do with all possible sincerity, devotion, and
gratitude render unto thy gracious goodness my humble and hearty praises and thanksgivings
for the same, most earnestly beseeching thee, o Lord, to vouchsafe unto me the continuance of
thy grace and mercy towards me and thy protection over me, to keep me in all my ways and to
defend and preserve me from all harm and danger and from all sin and wickedness for the year
ensuing and for all the days of my life. I do now dedicate both my soul and body to thee o
most merciful father to promote thy glory and my own salvation in a sober, righteous and
godly life. And I do sincerely resolve so to improve the time which thou shalt be pleased to
grant me in this world, that I may every day improve in goodness and persevere therein unto
my life’s end; in which resolutions, do thou, o gracious God, confirm and strengthen me and
keep it steadfastly in the purpose of my heart to perform them, that as I grow in years I may
grow in grace and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for whose sake I
beseech thee to hear me.

Amen, Amen.

29 “He who lived yesterday is wise. Tomorrow’s life is too late. Live today”. The first phrase is derived from a
line of poetry in Marcus ValeriusMartialis’ Epigrams, V.58 (Carpe Diem). the original line “Illesapitquisquis,
Postume, vixiheri” has been translated as “The wise man, Postumus, lived yesterday” by Peter Whigham
(Sullivan and Whigham 211).Epigram V.58 was published autumn 90 A.D. The second phrase is a line in
Epigram I.15 (To Julius) and can be translated as “Tomorrow’s life is too late, live today”.

* The newspapers give us an account of a Dutch ship that was seen the beginning of this month off of Hull, the crew of which were infected with the plague and had thrown 50 overboard in four days. The English government has sent out several ships to chase her and if she offers to land on the English Coasts to fire upon her and sink her.
* October 26. I bottled off 5 dozen of strong beer.
* September 14, 1721. I bought me a new saddle of J. Marsh Jr. of Tetbury which cost me a guinea and a new bridle, 3 shilling.

An electuary against the plague.

Take 30 Roots of contrayerva 3iii. Valerian, masterwort and zedoary ana 32 3iss. Seeds of angelica hulled, dittany of Crete and myrrh ana 3i. Virginian shakeroot 3ss. Saffron 3iii, opium 3ii. Pulp of juniper berries extracted with Malaga wine q.s. and with enough of the same wine to dissolve the myrrh and opium. Make an electuary with syrup of red poppies or of saffron.

It may be used by way of preservative to be taken the quantity of a nutmeg every night going to bed or in infusion. *From Dr. Quincy.*

* In July or August this year a branch of one of the codling trees in the garden blossomed afresh out of season which is looked upon as ominous of the death of some near friend and, though I love not to have any regard to such kind of prognostics, yet the event answered too truly at this time for before the year expired my wife lost a near friend by the death of her father.

---

30 Written as “Rx” which is “A medical prescription. The symbol “Rx” is usually said to stand for the Latin word “recipe” meaning “to take.” It is customarily part of the superscription (heading) of a prescription. Another explanation for the origin of Rx is that it was derived from the astrological sign for Jupiter which was once placed on prescriptions to invoke that god's blessing on the drug to help the patient recover.” ([Medterms](#), “Rx”)

31 3 drachma. A drachma is a is a medical unit of weight of about 3.9 gram. Every “i” stands for one unit of each.

32 One and a “semidrachma”, one and a half drachma.

33 “as much as suffices”. (From Latin *quantum satis* or *quantum sufficit*)

34 Extracted from an essay by John Quincy, *On the different Causes of Pestilential Diseases, and how they become Contagious, in Loimologia: or, an Historical Account of the Plague in London in 1665: With precautionary Directions against the like Contagion* by Nath. Hodges. The account written by Hodges was published in 1721. The essay written by Quincy which is inserted in Hodges’ account has been published in 1719 or before as Lewis recorded this extract in his diary in 1719 (Hodges and Quincy, 166).
Mr Prior’s Epitaph,
Written by himself.
Heralds and courtiers, by your leave,
Here lie the bones of Matthew Prior,
The son of Adam and Eve;
Nassau and Bourbon go no higher.
He died 1719.

To prevent infection of the plague or cure it when infected.
Take Three pints of muscadine and boil it in red sage and rue of each a handful till a pint be wasted. Then strain it and set it over the fire again and put to it a pennyworth of long pepper, half an ounce of ginger, a quarter of an ounce of nutmegs beaten together. Then boil it a little, take it off the fire and put it into one ounce of the best venice. Treacle and half an ounce of the best mithridate and a quarter of a pint of the best angelica water. Take half a spoonful morning and evening warm, if infected a whole spoonful.

[p.91] July (1722)

* July 4. I had two load of coal brought in by farmer Moxham and farmer Loscomb.

* July 5. Dr. Eyre of Winchester with his two daughters and manservant came to my house. He had been drinking the Bristol waters for two months past for a cancerous humour in his mouth but finding no benefit from them, he was advised to make use of Holtwater which he did for nine weeks. It gave him some ease from his pain and had he applied himself to it sooner it would probably have helped him, but the cancer had eaten in deep under his tongue before he came to Holt and killed him about five weeks after he left Holt.

* July 23. Lent Mr Lee three guineas which he paid me August 11.

* This month I had the chancel of Chalfeld Church new tiled with some new rafters and white limed on the inside. The whole expense came to three pounds, viz.:

---

36 Treacle is the “first product of refining of molasses from sugar beet.” (ORO, “treacle”).
37 “a supposed universal antidote attributed to Mithridates VI” (ORO, “mithridatise”).
38 “Angelica is a plant of the carrot family, with small pinkish-white flowers in star-burst clusters. Medieval and Renaissance herbals ascribed to it the property of warding off poisons and pestilence (‘The roots of Angelica are contrarie to all poyson,’ Henry Lyte, Dodoens’ NieweHerball 1578); hence the name angelica, short for Latin herbaangelica ‘angelic herb’. Both the leaves and the roots have been used for infusions, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries angelicawater, or angel water, was popular for washing the face.” (ORO,”angelica water”).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s.</th>
<th>p.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For four hundred of laths at two shillings per 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For five sacks of lime at one shilling, eight pence per sack</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For 2500 of lath nails at 1 shilling, 10 pence, ten pence per (000)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For 350 of larger nails</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the tiler for work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- For hair etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the carpenter for four rafters, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For new tile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mr Harrington went home July 21 and returned August 11. Mr Lee went from my house to wait on Sir James How at Somerton July 23 and returned August 19 and paid me for his own and Mr White’s boarding with me to August 13, viz. five pounds and fourteen shillings.

Mr Saunders’s Bill, 1721.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s.</th>
<th>p.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For twenty-seven and a half yards silk crape at three shillings and six pence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A necklace</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four and a half yards Tamy at 14 pence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girdle etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed April 12, 1722.  

Cousin Punter’s Bill, 1722.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s.</th>
<th>p.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For twenty-two yards of Callimanco at one shilling and ten pence per yard</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteen yards of Cherry Derry at two shillings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39“A glossy woollen cloth chequered on one side only.” (ORO, “callimanco”).
One and a half yard Scotch cloth – thirteen -------------------------------------- 0 1 7,5
Persian silk ---------------------------------------------------------------------------------- 0 1 7,5
Fine thread ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------0 0 1,5

Signed August 21, 1722 03 06 0,5

[1744

* April 5 1744 my dear wife died about one in the morning. She was seized with a hemiplegy\textsuperscript{40} in July 1734 which struck her on the right side from head to foot but, being a gentle stroke and then not fifty years of age, she was able to walk about for many years though somewhat limping on that side, yet gradually weaker and weaker till in May 1743 she was taken with the epidemic fever of that year which disabled her to that degree that she could not walk without somebody to support her. Thus she continued till March 1743/4 when a second paralytic stroke deprived her of the use of her legs and feet after which she sunk very fast and, being reduced to extreme weakness, died April 5 in the 59\textsuperscript{th} year of her age. As the palsy enfeebled her nerves and gradually weakened her body, it likewise affected her mind and impaired her understanding and memory. She was the 2\textsuperscript{nd} daughter of Mr Joseph Punter, attorney at law, and Elisabeth his wife, born at Doughton near Tetbury December 3 1585, and for many years was her father’s clerk in conveyance and engrossing his deeds and writings. During her health she was a woman of good sense, [p.182] a ready wit and a cheerful, lively spirit, strictly virtuous and sincerely religious and never better pleased than when doing good offices among her neighbours, by whom she was much respected and beloved. Her person was of a middle stature, well made, of good complexion and in her youthful days very handsome. She was the joy of my heart and the delight of my eyes while she lived and we loved each other with a true and cordial affection. I hope one day to meet her in a better state, never to know a second parting.


* In January we had very severe cold weather with frost and snow.

* February 14 and 15\textsuperscript{th}, a violent and high wind did great damage in town and country; houses chimneys and trees were blown down and many vessels lost at sea, in particular the Ramillies, a 90

\textsuperscript{40} Paralysis of one side of the body through a lesion in the contra lateral part of the brain. “(From Greek hemi-half + plege a blow + -ia indicating a condition or quality)” (ORO, “hemiplegy”)
The HMS Ramillies, originally named the HMS Royal Katherine, a 84-gun ship of the Royal Navy and launched in 1664, was wrecked at Bolt Head, February 15, 1760, near Plymouth. The ship was rebuilt in 1702 and relaunched as a 90-gun ship. In 1709 she was renamed Ramillies in honour of the victory of John Churchill in the Battle of Ramillies which took place in 1706. (Pepysdiary, “Royal Katherine”)

François Thurot(1726–60), one of the boldest and most accomplished privateers, born at Nuits, France, the son of a small innkeeper. He was apprenticed to a druggist and then went to sea as a surgeon in a privateer in 1744, during the War of the Austrian Succession (1739–48). He was captured by the British and imprisoned but, like another French privateer, Jean Bart, managed to escape and returned to privateering with great success. During the Seven Years War (1756–63) he was commissioned into the French navy and commanded a frigate. However, his reputation as a privateer was so outstanding that his ship was allowed mainly to act independently against British trade, and he captured many prizes in the North Sea and English Channel. In 1757 he was appointed to a larger frigate and given a regular squadron of six ships with the rank of commodore, though still operating a guerre de course, and was very successful in the number of merchant ships he captured. In 1760 he was dispatched with a force of 1,300 troops to Ireland, for a descent on Carrickfergus and Belfast. However, little was achieved and in the ensuing battle with British men-of-war he was killed.” (ORO, “Battle of Carrickfergus”).

Originally the “Stirling Castle”, was a 70 gun, third rate ship. She was launched in 1742 in Chatham and was part of Commodore Charles Holmes’ fleet on the North America Station in 1756.

The league, estimated as roughly three miles or the distance a man could walk in an hour, was one of the most commonly used European measures for describing journeys over land or sea. The word can be traced back to Greek and Latin. The league soon diversified into a multitude of standards. France, for example, had a “marine league,” an “astronomical league,” and a “posting league” for road measurements. In some cases the league was taken as roughly the distance a ship could sail within an hour. Many marine leagues were tied to degrees of latitude; in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the earth was taken to be spherical, one degree was judged to be equivalent to 16 or 17 leagues. Elsewhere and at other periods a degree is variously explained as 25 English leagues, 20 French marine leagues, 18 Portuguese leagues, 17.5 Spanish “geographical leagues”, and 20.17 “common leagues,” while the Italian ports of Leghorn and Genoa had marine leagues of
* In August 1759 Admiral Boscawen fought the French fleet between Gibraltar and Lagos, burnt the Ocean of 80 guns and the Redoubtable of 74 guns and took the Temeraire of 74 guns and the Modeste of 64. 45

* A squadron of our fleet under commodore Moore in the West-Indies, in 1758 and 1759, took 53 French Privateers, besides others run ashore and destroyed, and retook 24 merchant men.

* May 5, 1760. Laurence Earl Ferrers was hanged at Tyburn for murdering his steward Mr Johnson. 46

* In June or July part of our army under Prince Ferdinand fought the French near Corbeke in Germany and again near Emsdorf and in both were victorious, the English dragoons distinguishing themselves in the action. We had above 20,000 of the British soldiery, horse and foot, this year in Germany.

* In July a considerable body of Prussians under General Fouquet were attacked by the Austrians under Laudohn and put to the Rout, but the King of Prussia fought Laudohn a little after in Silesia and gained the victory. 7000 were said [p. 203] to be killed and 90 pieces of cannon taken.

* In July a fire broke out in his Majesty’s Rope-yard at Portsmouth and did great damage.

* In August 1760 6 houses were consumed by fire at Warminster and in September 72 at Auborn in Wilts.

* In this dry summer the dogs were seized with madness in London and other places to an uncommon degree by which several persons lost their lives and the dogs were dispatched in considerable numbers. 47

20 and 25 to the degree, respectively. Today the statute league equals 3 statute miles, and the nautical league equals 3 nautical miles.” (ORO, “league length”)

45 Edward Boscawen, “(1711-61) British admiral, known as ‘Old Dreadnought’. He served in the West Indies during the War of Jenkins’s Ear and the War of the Austrian Succession, and was in charge of naval operations at the siege of Louisburg, Nova Scotia, in 1758, where his success opened the way for the conquest of Canada. His most famous exploit was the destruction of the French Mediterranean fleet off the Portuguese coast at Lagos in 1759, which helped to establish British naval supremacy in the Seven Years War.” (ORO, “Boscawen”)

46 Laurence Shirley, fourth Earl Ferrers, inherited his peerage and estates from his uncle Henry, third Earl Ferrers, who was confined as a lunatic and died in 1745, “Under the act of separation of 1758 Ferrers's estates were vested in trustees, and John Johnson, who had been in the service of the Shirleys for many years, was appointed receiver of the rents. Ferrers developed an obsessive resentment of his steward, and on 18 January 1760 shot him with a pistol in a locked room at Staunton Harold. Johnson languished for a day before dying. The crime was premeditated, and afterwards Ferrers, both sober and drunk, upbraided Johnson as a villain. On 19 January the earl was spotted crossing his bowling green, armed with a blunderbuss, dagger, and pistols, trying to escape the crowd of colliers that had come to detain him. He was apprehended, and after examination at the bar of the House of Lords (13 February) was committed as a prisoner in the Tower of London.” (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, “Laurence Shirley”). In court Ferrers tried to plead himself as being periodically insane. Despite his argumentations he was found guilty of felony and murder and he was hanged the 5th of May at Tyburn gallows.

47 As early as in 1752 rabies appeared about St. James in London. Orders were issued to shoot dogs on sight. In 1759 and 1760 the disease spread in London. Dogs should be confined and dogs on the streets should be
* This summer a great number of turtles were brought to England from the Leeward Islands one of which was said to have weighed near 500 pounds and another upwards of 400 pounds.

* October 25 1760 died King George II in the 77th year of his age and the 34th of his reign and was buried November 11. His Grandson George, the eldest son of Frederic, Prince of Wales, succeeded to the throne in the 23rd year of his age.

---

killed. Each dog killed was worth two shillings. This outbreak lasted until 1762 and by 1774 the disease had spread throughout England. (Baer 4-5)
Pictures


Works-Consulted


Works-Cited

Electronic sources:


*Penelope.uchicago.edu*. Summer 2010 <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/>.


Print Sources:


Hodges, Nathaniel, and John Quincy. *Loimologia or An Historical Account of the Plague in London in 1665: with precautionary against the like contagion.* Printed for E. Bell, 1720.


