

BRIEFS AND COLLECTIONS IN BUNBURY CHURCH

1665-1704.

(Part i)

A "brief" is a letter of authorities civil or ecclesiastical commending a charitable appeal. Few "original briefs have survived in this country but in most early church records the copies of briefs are to be found sometimes jotted on the spare pages of the Church Wardens accounts or occasionally written in a separate brief book.

After the Reformation briefs were issued by the Privy Council or (after 1660) by the Lord Chancellor, and came to the parishes in the form of "Letters Patent" which were to be read from the pulpit in Church. The Book of Common Prayer still contains the rubric after the Creed in the Communion Service which reads

"...And then also (if occasion be) shall notice be given of the Communion; and Briefs Citations, and Excommunications read."

These "good cause" appeals were usually for funds towards church repair and rebuilding in various parts of the country, helping those towns or persons who had lost property through flood, fire or earthquake, towards the ransoming of Christian captives taken by the Turks, or towards aiding persecuted Protestants overseas.

Although it was usual to make the collection in church at the close of the Sunday service (the clerk standing at the door with a "decent bason") the entries show that a house to house collection was sometimes organised as well which covered the whole parish. The sums collected were then handed over by the churchwardens to a duly authorised travelling collector or to the Chancellor at the time of the Bishop's Visitation.

Unfortunately it was a system which could easily be abused and in the hands of unscrupulous persons much of the money never reached and helped the causes for which it had been collected. Patent Officers, King's Printers and those who farmed the briefs taking the lions share. The abuse continued throughout the 18th century and eventually due in part to the action taken by Lord Shaftesbury a close inspection was ordered and the formation of the Incorporated Church Building Society in 1828 helped to abolish the system.

The earliest copies of Briefs preserved at Bunbury are grouped together and bound with the oldest surviving volume of Churchwardens' Accounts (1655-1709). They cover eleven leaves at the beginning of the book, one or two others having been destroyed, with the result that the earliest brief is dated Ap. 1665. Further references to Briefs and to those who brought them are made from time to time in the Accounts themselves and will be transcribed with them. They throw an interesting light upon the nature of 17th and 18th century good causes, and show by the amounts given where the sympathies of the Bunbury people most lay at that period.

Maurice H. Ridgway.

April 16 1665.

| | | |
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| Apr. 16. | Collected, in ye Church for Henery Lisle of Guisbrough in ye North Riding of ye County of York, Woolen draper by lett pten ye some of eight shillings & foure pence | 8s. 4d. |
| May 14. | Collected in ye Church for William Shuter of ye pish of Tanworth in ye County of Warwick being a Tanner who had loss by fire to ye value of five hundred pounds & had letters ptens ye sum of nine shillings eight pence | 9s. 8d. |
| May 28. | Collected in ye Church for ye rebuilding of Tynmouth Church in ye County of Northumberland ye sum of six shillings and five pen | 6s. 5d. |
| June 11. | Collected in ye Church for ye re paireing of St. Marys Church & Churchyard att Chester ye sume of six shillings and ten pence | 6s. 10d. |
| June 25. | Collected in ye Church for Richard Morecroft of Aughton in ye County of Lancaster dyer ye sum of seven shillings six pence halfe pennie | 7s. 6.5d |
| July 9. | Collected for Gilbert Greene & Hamlet his sonne of Wigan by a letter of request ye sum of six shillings and eleven pence | 6s. 11d. |
| Sep. 24. | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury ye sum of eight shillings three pence for a fire in Bidford in ye county of Warwick | 8s. 3d. |
| Octo. 22. | Collected for ye Inhabitants of Stilling in ye Eastriding of York ye sum of seven shillings & eight pence | 7s. 8d. |
| Decem. 3. | Collected for ye Inhabitants of ye towne of Cock Shutt in ye County of Salop ye sum of five shillings and six pence | 5s. 6d. |
| March 11. | Given to a man yt had lett of request that came from Weltch-Poole in ye behalfe of him selfe and divers others yt had great losses that happened by fire one shilling 1s. | 1s |
| 1666. | | |
| June ye 3. | Collected for ye Inhabitants of Chalbury yt had loss by fire ye sume of ten shillings | 10s. |
| July 22. | Collected for a fire in ye towne of Sheristhales in ye County of Stafford ye sum of seven shillings and four pence | 00-07-04 |
| October 7. | Collected in ye Church for join Cooke of Newton in ye parish of Midlewich ye sum of ten shillings six pence | 00-10-06 |
| Febr. 27. | Collected for Clunn Church Rebuilding in ye County of Salop ye sum of six shillings & eleven pence | 00-06-11 |
| March 17. | Collected for ye town of Hartlepoole in ye Count palatine of Durham a remarkable place for Cmerce and Comodious for fishing saltery ye sum of five shillin and eightpence | 00-05-08 |
| Aprill ye 28 1667. | | |
| Apr. 28. | Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury for John osborne Russia Marchand who had sustained great losses att sea ye sum of eight shillings & sixpence | 00-08-06 |

- June ye 2. Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury for ye towne of Hinxton in ye County of Cambridge who loss by fire ye sum of six shillings & fivepence 00-06-05
- June ye 23. Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury for Waymouth & Melcomb Rests in ye County of Dorset for thirty seven houses burned by fire with goods & other househould stuff therreunto belonging the sum of eightshillings & nine pence 00-08-09
- July ye 7. Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury for ye towne of Poole in ye County of Montgomery who had losse by fire ye sume of six shillings & eleven pence 00-06-11
- July 21. Collected for ye Inhabitants of grindle in ye Parish of Ryton in ye County of Salop ye sum of eleven shillings & three pence 00-11-03
- Sept. 15. Collected for Fire, in Longborough in ye County of Leichester ye sume of five shillings & nine pence 00-05-09

June 6th 1667.

Reced of Mr. Spurstowe of Spurstowe four Pounds three shillings and five pence it being so Much Money collected in Spurstowe and Bunbury Parish for the use of those that suffered by fire in ye town of Drayton 04-03-05

I say Received Jno. Steventon
1668

- Feb. 23. Collected in the Parish Church of Bunbury for Captin Baret who had loss by the Hollinder ye sum of five shilling and seven pence 00-05-07
- Aug. 16. Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury for Richard Linaker of Moreton in this County of Chest who had loss by fide & had a letter of request under ye hands of Sr. John, Booth Sr. Phillip Edgerton, Sr. Jos Shakerley Edward Glegg Esqr. the summ of five shillings & elevenpence 00-05-11
- Octo. 4. Collected in this Parish of Bunbury these severall sums as followeth towards ye Reliefe of ye Inhabitants of Newport in ye County of Salop

lps from Spurstowe 00-07-()
It from Alpram 00-08-()
It from Peckforton 00-04-00
It from Wardley 00-03-00
It from Haughton 00-02-2
It from Calveley 00-03-00
It from Tilston 00-01-00
It from Ridley 00-01-08
It from Teaverton 00-03-00

Received the sum of one pound thirteene shillings nine pence for the releife of Newport by nice John Brocke ()eife

Feb. 14. Coll For ye Inhabitant of ye towne of Haverhill in ye County of Suffolk, for loss by fire ye sum of eight shillings & three pence 10 00-08-03
 Coll in ye Parish of Bunbury for the use of the poore of London these several somes as followeth

| | li.s. d. |
|--------------------|----------|
| From Bunbury | 01-02-04 |
| It From Ridley | 00-11-07 |
| It From Haughton | 00-04-00 |
| It From Peckforton | 00-03-10 |
| It From Warley | 00-08-04 |
| It From Beeston | 00-13-05 |
| It From Alpram | 00-08-08 |
| It From Teaverton | 00-14-05 |
| It From Calveley | 00-00-04 |

Apr. 25. 1669 Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for & towards ye redemption of poor Captives being prisnors in Algiers Sally & other parts under ye Turks Dominions ye some of eight shillings and three pence 00-08-03

Aug. 15. 69 Collected in the parish Church of Bunb for ye, Inhabitants of Tiberton in the Count of Salop who had loss by fire to the Burning of their Chappel and many of their Dwelling houses ye some of ten shillings 00-10-00

Sept. 26. Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury for ye poore Inhabitants of ye towne of Brocton in ye County of Stafford who had loss by fire ye some of eight shillings and elevenpence 00-08-11

Novem.28. Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for three or foure of the Inhabitants of Malpas Towne that had loss by fire the summe of six shillings six pence by a letter of request from the minister and others of the Parish 00-06-06

Aprill 24. 1670 Collected in the Parish Church of Bunbury for ye towne of Isleham in ye County of Cambridg by lett patt for loss by, fire the sume of 00-07-00

May 22. Collected in the. parish Church. of Bunbury (For the Inhabitants of the towne of Weeklebrace in the County of Salop) who had Letters Patt for losse by fire the summe of 00-06-00

Sep. 25. Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury ye sum of seven shillings and eight pence for ye Inhabitants of Cotten end in the parish of Hardington in ye County of Northampton 00-07-08

Nov. 6th. Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for the Inhabitants of the Township of Wolsingham in the County of Durham who had losse by fire, the sume of seaven shillings 00-07-00

Dec. 25. Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of ye towne of Beckles in the County of Suffolk ye sum of 00-06-03

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| | six shillings and three pence for loss by fire & had letters patters | |
| Feb. 5. | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for John Turner of Bentley in ye County of Stafford ye sum of seven shillings & sixpence for loss by fire & had letters patters | 00-07-06 |
| July 2. 1671 | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for Jo. Dixon James Ainsley. Robert Lackin Mary Clement & other Inhabitants of the towne of Yarum in ye County of York the sume of nine shillings | 00-09-00 |
| Aug. 20. 1671 | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunb for ye Inhabitants of ye towne of Halton in ye pish of Whit Kerk in parte of ye west riding in ye Countyof Yorke who had letter Paten for loss by fire the sum of eight shilings sixpence | 00-08-06 |
| Decemb.3. | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury For the Inhabitants of the Hamlet of Lygrave in the parish of Luton and County of Bedford the summe of eight shillings and eight pence | 00-08-08 |
| Feb. 25. | Collected in ye Parish Church of Bunbury For Stephen Harrison at Milburn gate in ye suburbs of ye City of Durham the sum of six shillings, sixpence halfe penie | 00-06-06.5 |
| 1672. June 9 | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury For the Inhabitants of the towneship of Kellington within the parts of the west riding in the County of Yorke the sume of thirteen shillings & six pence | 00- 13--06 |
| Sept. 15. | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for Matt. Sheapard, John Juxon &c, refiners of sugar for the city of London who had loss by a feirce and terrible fire which broke out in a sugar house in cole harbor in the parish of great Allhallowes the sum of eleaven shillings & tenpence | 00-11-10 |
| Januar. 26. | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury For the Inhabitants of Bulkinton in the County of Warwick who had los by fire the summe of eight shillings & eight pence | 00-08-08 |
| March 9. | Collected in the parish church of Bunbury For James Perry of Hinstocke in the County of Salop who had loss by fire and had Letters patt, | 00-08-10 |
| 1673. April 25th | Collected in the parish Church & Bunbury For John Hall Clarke Edward Norise &c. of the towne of Fardingbridge and County of Southampton whose losses by fire amount to the sum of 13633Li. 8s. 8d. the sume of eleven shillings ninepence | 00-11-09 |
| May 18. | Collected for Mr. Randall Shenton att willcats heath for loss by fire and had letter patt ye sume of twelve shillings eight pence | 00-12-08 |
| March 29. 1674 | Collected For the inhabitants of neither Wallop in the County of Southampton who had letters patters for loss by fire; The summe of nine shillings & one penny | 00-09-01 |

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| Aprill 23. 1674 | Collected in th pish Church of Bunbury for the Inhabitants of ye Borough of Knarsbrough who had lett p for loss by fire ye sume of six shillings five pence halfpenie | 00-06-05.5 |
| May 17. | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for Tho Blackhalfe in ye parish of Woolverhampton & County of Stafford who had loss by fire & had Letters Patt. the sum of ten shillings three pence | 00-10-03 |
| June 7. | Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury for severall of ye inhabitants of ye County of Middlesex Inhabitating near Russel Street in ye pish of Martin in ye Feilds who had Lett. Patt. ye sum of nine shillings | 00-09-00 |
| July 5. | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for Thomas Gibbon of ye parish of St. Margarets at Cliffe in ye said County of Kent who had letters pat. for loss by fire the sume of eight shillings & ninepence | 00-08-09 |
| Aug. 23. | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for one Hundred twentie foure houses that were burned neere St. Catherines Hospitall & ye honors had letters ptins the sum of ten shillings and too pence | 00-10-02 |
| Feb. 4. | Collected for the Building of the Parish Church of Benenden in the County of Kent ye sum of | 00-09-04 |
| Mar. 14. | Collected for John Halsey & Francis Hallsey wid. of ye towne of Redborne in ye County of Hertford the sum of eight shillings & nine pence halfe penie | 00-08-09.5 |
| May 21. 1675 | Collected for the inhabitants of Walton in the Count of Norfolk by Letters Patt for loss by fire the sum of ten shillings five pence halfe penie Christopher Hey Thomas Jarvis Ralph Joes Francis Hammond Wid Edmond Jarvis John Howard & severall other | 00-10-05 |
| Oct. 3. 1675 | Collected in the pish Church of Bunbury for ye repairing of Newent Church in ye Count of Gloucester ye sum of seven shillings and sixpence | 00-07-06 |

June 21. 1676

Collected in the parish of Bunbury for the Inhabitants of Northampton that had loss by fire & Letts Patt, these severall sumes following

| | li. s. d. |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Inpris Bunbury | 01-02-06 |
| It from Spurstowe | 01-01-10 |
| It from Haughton | 00-07-08 |
| It from Peckforton | 00-05-07 |
| It from Calveley | 00-14-04 |
| It from Alpram | 00-12-04 |
| It from Tilston | 00-06-06 |
| It from Teaverton | 00-10-07 |

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|-------------------|---|----------|-------------|
| | It from Ridley | 00-04-07 | |
| | It from Wardley | 00-06-07 | |
| | It from Beeston | 00-09-08 | |
| | the summe is | | 06-02-02 |
| July 9. | Collected for the reapiereing of Oswestrey Church & Steeple in the Church the summe of ten shillings sixpence halfe penie | | 00-10-06.5 |
| March 18th. | Collected then for the inhabitants of Eaton near Windsor in the County of Bucks who had losses by fire the summ of twelve shillings sixpence | | 00- 12-06 |
| Aug. 1. 1677 | Collected in ye pish of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of Southwark in the County of Surrey yt had Lett pt. for loss by fire these severall sums following | | |
| | | s d. | |
| | It rec from Bunbury | 06 -10 | |
| | It from Beeston | 04-04 | |
| | It from Tilston | 02-08 | |
| | It from Burwardsley | 01-11 | |
| | It from Teaverton | 05-07 | |
| | It from Peckforton | 03-04.5 | |
| | It from Spurstowe | 04-07 | |
| | It from Haughton | 02-03 | |
| | It from Calveley | 04-10 | |
| | It from Wardley | 02-04 | |
| | It from Ridley | 02-11 | |
| | It from Alpram | 07-11 | |
| | sum is | | 02-09-06.5 |
| Sep. 16. 1677 | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for the Inhabitants of Cottenham in the Count of Cambridge who had lett ptine for losse by fire the sum of | | 00-08-04 |
| | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury by letts pattins for ye Inhabitance of Towcester in ye Count of Northampton the sum, of eight shillings ten pence halfe pence | | 00-08-10.5 |
| Sept. 29. 1678 | Collected in the pish Church of Bunbury by Letts Pattin for ye Inhabitants of Wem for loss by fires the sume of sixteen shillings three pence three farthings | | 00-16-03.75 |
| | eight pence more given to this Collection after Ingrossing | | 08 |
| Nov. 10th. 78 | Collected in the parish of Bunbury towards ye rebuilding of St. Pauls church in London the sum of three pounds nineteen shillings & sixpence | | 03-19-06 |

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| Feb. 23. 78 | Collected in ye parish church of Bunbury by Letts Patt for John Allingham Nic Dean & severall others of ye towne of Uftington in ye County of Lincolne ye sum of nine shillings & one penny | 00-09-01 |
| March 23d. 78 | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of pattingham in Stafford Shire by Lett Patt for loss by fire ye sum of ten shillings and seaven pence farthing | 00-10-07.25 |
| June 22d. 1679 | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of ye Township of Lurgishall in ye County of Wilts by Lett patt for loss by fire ye sum of nine shillings & seavenpence | 00-09-07 |
| Sept. 7. | Collected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of Weedonbeck in Northamptshire for loss by fire by Lett Patt ye sum of nine shilings two pence halfepenny | 00-09-02.5 |
| 1680. Septr. ye 12th | Collected in the parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of East Dearham in ye County of Norfolke by Lett Pat for loss by fire ye summ of eleven shillings ten pence halfe penny | 00-11-10.5 |
| Mar. 13. 1680 | Colected in ye parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants Tadcaster within westriding in ye County of Yorke by lett pat for loss by fire ye sum of nine shillings & 5d. | 00-09-05 |
| May 8. 1681 Lett. p | Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of ye towne f Duxford in County of Cambridge the sum of nine shillings for loss by fire | |
| Octo 2. 1681 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury for the Inhabitants of Stafford by Lett Pt for loss by fire ye sum of eleven shillings four pence | 00-11-04 |
| Feb. 26. 1681 | Coll in ye Church of Bunbury for ye releiefe of ye Protestants Churches in lesser Poland by Lett Pt ye sum of | 12s 0 |
| Sept. 10. 1682 | Coll in ye parish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of the towne of Caistor that had loss by fire in ye County of Lincoln by Letts pt the sume of | 00-08-09 |
| Nove. 19. 1682 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury for Thomas Nicholls neere Dyers hall in London & John Ellers who had Lett ptents for loss by fire the sum of | 00-09-02 |
| Jan. 21. 1682 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury by Vertue of Lett pat the sum of nine shillings & a penie for ye Inhabitants of new Windsor who had loss by fire in the County of Berks | 00-09-01 |
| Mar. 4. 1682 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury by vertue of Lett Pt the sum of seven shillings six pence three farthings for the Inhabitants of Presteigne in ye Count of Radnor | 00-07-06.75 |

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| Aug. 19. 1683 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury be Lett pat the sum of eleven shillings three pence for ye Inhabitants of Colompton in the County of Devon | 00-11-03 |
| Sept. ye 2d. 1683 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury by Lett pat the sum of twelve shillings & three halfe pence for Preston Candever for losse by fire the Church being burned with other losse of the Inhabitanse | 00-12-01.5 |
| Mar. 9. 1683 | Collected in ye pish Chur of Bunbury by Lett pat the sum of ten shillings & seven pence for ye inhabitanse of Chancill Row in ye pish of St Margarets Westminster in ye Count of Midlesex | 00-10-07 |
| May 11. 1684 | Coll in ye parish Church of Bunbury for Llanumddufery in ye Count of Carmarthen the sum of foure shillings | 00-04-00 |
| May 8. 1684 | Coll in ye pish of Bunbury By Lett Patt from house to house the sum of one pound sixteene shillings seven pence for new Markitt | 01-10-07 |
| June 1. 1684 | Coll for Northriding in ye Count of York nine & three pence | 00-09-03 |
| June 22. 1684 | Collected in ye pish of Bunbury by lett patt for ye Inhabitants of St Paul Shadwell & ye Hamlets in ye pish of waping White Chappel & pish of Stepney Waping White Chappel ye of eleven shillings | 00-11-00 |
| Aug. 24. 1684 | Coll in ye parish Church of Bunb for ye Building of ye pish Church in Portsmouth ye sum of nine shillings | |
| Octo. 12. 1684 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury for the reparing of St Bridgets Church in Chester ye sum of 10 shillings and sixpence. | |
| April 1685 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury for Saresden in ye Count of Oxford ye sum of eight shillings & sixpence | |
| May 3. 1685 | Collect in ye pish Church of Bunbury for Elie St. Maries within the City of Elie in ye Ille of Elie the sum of eight shillings & tenpence | |
| May 24. 1685 | Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of nine shillings for the Inhabitants of Alrewas in ye Count of Stafford for loss by fire. | |
| June 7. 1685 | Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sume of nine shillings for the Inhabitants of Causton in the County of Norfould for los by fire. | |
| June 21. 85 | Collected in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of seven shillings for ye Inhabitants of Staverton in ye County of Northampton for loss by fires | |
| Aug. 23. 1685 | Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of six shillings for Thomas Woodward of great Bloxwich in ye count of Stafford by Lett patt for loss by fire | |

- Nov. 29.
1685 Coll. in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of seven shillings seven pence for Tho Cooper Walter Andrews Henry Griffit in ye towne of Bulford in ye Count Wilts
- Dec. 6.
1685 Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of six shillings & eight pence for Jo. Kirke Ann Stubs Jane Stubs George Dickinson & severall other Inhabitants of ye town of Haxby in ye Count of Yorke By Lett Ptente
- Dec. 20.
1685 Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury ye sum of five shillings & five pence by let patt for ye Inhabitants of ye towne of Alfriston in ye Count of Sussex
- Jan. 17.
1685 Coll in ye pish of Bunbury the sum of six shillings & seven pence for ye Inhabitants of ye towne of Beamister in ye Count of Dorset by lett patt for loss by fire.
- Marc. 14.
1685 Coll in ye pish Church of Bunbury for ye Inhabitants of Deeping Caloe markitt Deeping in ye Count of Lincoln that had loss by fire the sum of six shillings & threepence
- June 15.
1686 Coll in ye pish of Bunbury from house to house in ye severall townships by his Mtis Letter patins towards ye releiveing of the French protestants these severall sumes following

li. s. d.

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|------------|----------|
| Bunbury | 00-07-04 |
| Haughtori | 00-15-00 |
| Spurstow | 00-05-00 |
| Calveley | 01-06-10 |
| Tilston | 00-01-05 |
| Teaverton | 00-12-01 |
| Wardley | 00-05-05 |
| Beeston | 00-02-11 |
| Peckforton | 00-02-09 |
| Alpram | 00-05-00 |

the sume is 04-03-09