

Act of Parliament; nor with any thing but what was made of sheep's wool only, As witness my hand,

Elizabeth Mortimer

Sworn in the said town, this 1st day of January, 1776, before me W. Weales, Mayor.

**[MEMORANDA OF THE REV ALEXANDER AKEHURST, CURATE  
1784 TO 1789]**

[p. 4] Alexander Akehurst held this curacy from the 21st of November 1784 to the 5th of January 1789. He had no license from the Bishop, nor was he required to take one out, though he had attended an Episcopal Visitation at Towcestre.

[Signed] Alexander Akehurst

The usual fee for exhibiting letters of Orders at the Visitation was paid by Alexander Akehurst. (On the subject of License, see Grey's *System of Ecclesiastical Law*, pages 227-312, 2nd edition, 1732.)

[p. 74] The names of the Compounders February 21st 1786

	£	s	d
Mr Thomas Adams	3	4	0
Mr Wodhams	2	4	0
Mr Thomas Clarke	1	16	0
Mr Tomelin	1	12	0
Mr Richard Rawbone	1	12	0
Mr Richard Stanton	1	12	0
Mr Bull		16	0
Mr Masters		16	0
Mr Roberts (Whelton)		12	0
Mrs Andrew		8	0
Mr Clarke		8	0
Mr John Adams		6	0
Mr Blount		2	6
	15	15	0

[p. 73] Deduct for Land tax $\frac{1}{2}$ year	1	2	0
—for collecting eggs		1	0
—for ditto at the <i>Horse Shoe</i>		11	0
—for ditto garden tithes		1	0
—for land tax $\frac{1}{2}$ year	1	2	0
—for collecting the churching fees		10	0
—for collecting the subscription		10	0
Necessary outgoings	3	17	0

[p. 75] Garden tythes

John Lyddal—home garden	6	0
Ditto—Tippet's near Daventry Wood	2	6
Mr Wilcox	1	0

Ditto—Bumbler's Close	6	0
Mrs Peter Freeman	5	0
Mrs Cadman	2	6
Mrs Watkins	2	6
Mr Hickman of Newnham	2	6
Mrs Marshall	2	0
Capron's Orchard	1	6
	<hr/>	
	1	11 6

The Clerk has one shilling for collecting these tythes; and receives for Bland's mill 2s.

In the account which Mr Slade gave me of these tythes there was a garden mentioned, called the *Green Garden*, charg'd 6d, which never paid me anything. [Initialled] A. A.

This composition is due at Michaelmas and is usually collected the first week in the January following

[p. 2] [*Memoranda about alms boxes and charity money*]

December 9th 1786. On this day the alms-boxes in the church were opened. Present A. Akehurst, Peter Freeman, churchwarden, and William Simcock, clerk and Thomas Crofts, whitesmith. There were found in them the sum of three shillings and ninepence half-penny, which Mr Freeman had to distribute to the poor. They had not been opened for seven years.

January 7th 1788. On this day the alms-boxes were opened and five farthings found in them, which were suffer'd to remain. Present A. Akehurst, John Morgan, church warden.

December 4th 1788. On this day the alms-boxes were opened and five pence and one farthing found in them, which are suffered to remain. Present William Simcock, clerk, Richard Morton, sexton.

Alexander Akehurst. Witness William Simcock, Richard Morton.

[p. 3] January 6th 1786. Distributed the sacrament money this time in small sums to each person by the hands of William Simcock, clerk.

at sundry times	£3	11s	0d
January 6th	£11	1s	10d
	<hr/>		
	£14	12s	10d

January 3rd 1787. Disposed of it this time in bread and meat by the hands of Mr P Freeman, churchwarden and William Simcock, clerk.

at sundry times	£5	2s	4d
January 3rd	£9	2s	6d
	<hr/>		
	£14	4s	10d

January 17th 1788. Disposed of it this time in bread only, on the last two Tuesdays in 1787. This appeared the most eligible plan. The bakers which I employed were Mrs Birch, Mrs Rogers, James Brompton, Thomas Butlin, Richard Cole, William Cole, and William Bucknell, who delivered

89 sixpenny loaves every Tuesday for five weeks to 89 persons, who, upon strict enquiry seem'd to be most in want.

at sundry times	£2	16s	0d
January 17th	£10	19s	0d
	£13	15s	0d

January 12th 1789. Disposed of it this time in bread the last week in 1788 to 85 persons and the first two weeks in 1789 to 113 persons each time

85 loaves	£2	2s	6d
113 ditto	£2	16s	6d
113 ditto	£2	16s	6d
Given at sundry times	£4	13s	9d
	£12	9s	3d

[Signed] Alexander Akehurst

[Leaved between pp 40 and 41]

Mr Akehurst's Account of the Curacy of Daventry [c. 1787]<sup>28</sup>

Dear Sir

I was sorry to find that it was inconvenient to you to visit Daventry at present, as a personal inspection would have been much more satisfactory to you than any account that I can send by letter. However all that I can do is much at your service. First, let me thank you for inquiring about the letter (which arrived last Sunday) and for examining Hownam's account. I think that I paid for disputations in Michaelmas Quarter, which made me wonder at another sconce coming so soon.<sup>29</sup> Will you be so obliging as to make a memorandum just to ask about this when you return to Oxford?

The Dean asked me, when last in College, to send some account of this Curacy to be inserted into the Students' book. I do not think the whole of what follows fit for that purpose, but I leave it to your discretion to make any extracts from it, which may appear to you of any moment.

	£	s	d
1. A house, with something more than an acre of land, worth about twenty guineas per annum	21	0	0
2. Almost fifty acres of land, let for fifty pounds per annum. No deduction, except £2 4s for land tax. This rent will perhaps bear some advance.	47	16	0
3. Farmer's benefaction	20	0	0
4. Good Friday sermon	1	0	0
5. Tithe of Borough Hill, two guineas, out of which the shepherd has one shilling	2	1	0

This payment remains as I found it; but as it has varied some years back from this sum up to £4 12 7 I apprehend more might be made of it than is now paid.

<sup>28</sup> The heading is in the handwriting of the Rev Dr Samuel Smith, Akehurst's successor but one.

<sup>29</sup> In eighteenth-century Oxford 'disputations' were still much the same series of syllogistic exercises which had constituted the 'examination system' of the medieval university. John Fell was responsible for many reforms of the old 'schools' system during his Vice-Chancellorship, but it was only in the nineteenth century that the modern examination system was introduced, and that remained largely an oral system until well into the century, 'Sconcing' in Christ Church was a system of fines payable to the censors. From the context they seem to be a penalty for non-payment of fees in this particular case. *Ex inf.* Mrs June Wells, Assistant Archivist, Christ Church, Oxford.

6. Composition for small tithes at 8 shillings per yard land—fifteen guineas—at pay day the farmers are treated so that I put down only fifteen pounds.	£	s	d
	15	0	0
An old book in my possession speaks of this composition as commencing about the beginning of this century, and gives an account of eight sums (amounting to £8 7s 6d) which arose from articles ' <i>taken in kind, without any agreement</i> '. If the tithe of hay does not belong to the curate, this composition is even then too low. If it does (and this is the opinion of the best informed people in the Parish) it is much below par			
	106	17	0
[verso]			
7. Composition for two mills	1	3	0
8. Garden tithes one pound eleven shillings and sixpence. One shilling for collecting	1	10	6
This tithe is paid only for ten gardens. Why <i>they</i> pay so little, and why <i>others</i> pay nothing, might be worth enquiring.			
9. Rent of church yard one pound eleven shillings and sixpence. This let for forty shillings half a century ago, and then was not so large by a third	1	11	6
10. Two visitation fees, five shillings each, and signing the register, six shillings and eightpence		16	8
These are certain payments			
	111	18s	8d
11. A pew in the church, and three sittings. These would let, as I am informed, for two pounds			
12. Share of a benefaction for reading prayers	6	0	0
13. Afternoon sermon, twenty pounds, deduct for collecting 10s	19	10	0

	1785			1787			medium		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
14. Eggs		6	1½	6	11		6	6	
15. Easter offerings	4	16	7	5	3	0	4	19	11
16. Sacramental wine	3	8	0	4	14	0	4	1	0
17. Silk and gloves	2	11	0	3	10	0	3	0	6
18. Pigs		7	6		12	0		9	9
19. Mortuaries	2	0	0	3	10	0	2	15	0
20. Vaults, gravestones etc	4	6	10	5	6	10	4	16	10
21. Extracts from register		3	0	1	2	0		12	6
22. Weddings	9	8	0		14	0	7	12	6
23. Banns		13	0		14	0		13	6
24. Funerals	5	9	3	6	3	0	5	16	0
25. Churchings	2	0	0	1	14	6	1	17	3
							174	9	11

There is a sacrament the first Sunday in every month, as well as on Christmas day, Easter Day, and Whitsunday, and the Sundays that immediately follow these great Festivals. The duty on Sunday:— Prayers and Sermon in the Morning, except on sacrament days and then the sermon is omitted; and prayers and sermon in the afternoon, but this sermon is paid

for by the parish. Prayers in the morning on Litany and Saints Days, and in the afternoon on Saturday preceding a sacrament. Prayers morning and afternoon in Passion Week.

In 1788 there were thirteen weddings, seventy nine baptisms, sixty seven funerals. The calls for private baptism, and visiting the sick are frequent.

[p. 20]

[Memoranda about a parsonage house]

After many fruitless applications had been made at College for a house at Daventry for the curate, the Dean and Chapter at length determined to comply with so reasonable a request, and in the spring of 1787 Mr Pywell (the Steward of Mr Hatton, the College Lessee) gave John Ward notice to quit his house and the land belonging to it on the North side of the High Street at Lady Day 1788. He accordingly surrendered the premises to me on the 7th of April in that year. William Cole, builder, had contracted with the College to take down the old house, and to build a new one according to a plan delivered, and to complete by the 31st of October in the same year. His terms were to have the materials of the Old House, and £350. To raise this sum the Chapter cut down wood on their estates at Thrupp to the amount of about £250.

(This house is not yet finished January 5th 1789. A. A.)

I was in Oxford about the time the house ought to have been finished, according to the contract, and represented to the Dean and some of the Canons the unfinished state of the house and the insolent treatment I had at various times received from the contractor. In consequence of my representations a builder was sent from Oxford to view what had been done: and Mr Cole, in conversation with him, expressed his opinion that all might be completed by St Thomas 1788, and he solemnly promised him that by that day all should be done. (The house is still unfinished this 6th day of March 1789. A. A.)

[p. 76]

Compounders February 21 1789

	£	s	d
Mr John Adams's executors	1	0	0
Mr Thomas Adams	3	12	0
Mr Blount		2	6
Mr Clarke (Judkins)	1	16	0
Mr Bull		16	0
Mr Masters		16	0
Mr John Rawbone malt mill	1	1	0
Mr Richard Rawbone	1	12	0
Mr Robert Rawbone of Welton		12	6
Mr Stanton	1	12	0
Mr Tomalin	1	12	0
Mr Wodhams	2	4	0
	16	16	0

A. A. has received to the 5th of January 1789.

This Composition is usually allowed to be a quarter of a year in arrears. The Curate meets the compounders at a public house and pays for the entertainment, about 1s each person. A. A.

[p. 49] [*Memorandum of an undated lease of the glebe in Drayton.*]

	£	s	d
Rent of 32 acres 2 first years at 2.2.0 per acre	134	8	0
Rent of ditto 3rd and 4th at 1.11.0	103	4	0
Rent of 19 acres for 4 years at £1.0.0. per acre	76	0	0
Rent of all the land for the last 4 years at 52.0.0 per annum	210	0	0
	523	12	0

A lease for eight years. Four crops of corn, one Summer's fallow, then laid down with oats or barley. No straw or hay to be carried off the premises. Five pounds off the rent for the first four years to be allowed the tenant towards necessary buildings, the rent to be paid quarterly.

**[MEMORANDA OF THE REV SAMUEL HUMFREYS, CURATE  
1789 TO 1794]**

1794

[p. 36] In the month of October this year I began to drain the two lesser portions of the glebe and finished on Christmas Eve. The work was very tedious and heavy, and much impeded by the frequent falling in of the ground. In the upper part of the portion farthest from the high road the drain is very deep, extending nearly the breadth of the close in a right line of ten foot depth. The same depth is continued in a rectangular line from the transverse section down the middle of the close for several yards. In consideration of the expense which hereby I incurred I advanced the rent of the whole to £60 Mr Richard Staunton being still my tenant

	£	s	d
Paid Mr Hart the contractor of the work	6	16	6
For stones	2	11	6
For labor	18	18	0
	28	6	0

[*Signed*] Samuel Humfreys, minister.

[p. 47] [*Undated memorandum of an 8 year lease of the Drayton Estate*]

Rent of 32 acres. 2 first years at £2 2s per acre	134	8	0
Rent of ditto 3rd and 4th at £1 11s 6d	103	4	0
Rent of 19 acres for 4 years at £1 per acre	76	0	0
Rent of all the land for the last 4 years at £52 10s per annum	210	0	0
	533	12	0

A lease for 8 years. 4 crops of corn. One Summer's fallow. Then laid down with oats or barley. No straw or hay to be carried off the premises. 5 pounds of the rent for the first 4 years to be allowed the tenant towards necessary buildings. The rent to be paid quarterly. The expense of the lease to be joint.