

John Burton, D.D., one of the Founders of the Colony of Georgia

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WITH an area equalling that of England and Wales combined, Georgia touches the Atlantic seaboard of the United States just north of the Florida peninsula. The basis of this Empire State of the South, to-day the largest state east of the Mississippi river, was laid in 1732 when King George II chartered the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America. These patriots and philanthropists, of whom James Edward Oglethorpe was a leader, undertook without gain to themselves—their motto was *non sibi, sed aliis*—to erect a haven for poverty-stricken Englishmen and persecuted European protestants. The new province was designed as a buffer between the southernmost existing settlements of Carolina and the ever-present menace of Spanish-occupied Florida.¹

The almost forgotten but nevertheless earnest colleagues of Oglethorpe included Dr. John Burton, the scholarly teacher, the persuasive preacher, and the versatile author whose life was linked for all of his maturity with the University of Oxford. In his career Burton fell just short of real greatness; but even at that—since he was importantly connected with Eton College too—he was, according to Lyte, 'by far the most distinguished Fellow of Eton in the middle of the eighteenth century.'² Burton's cousin, Edward Bentham, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, published in 1771 a biographical sketch in Latin,³ of which an English epitome⁴ came out in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. This sketch has hitherto furnished the main source of information about Burton.

¹ The Georgia Charter, in abbreviated form, is printed in *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies*, 1732 (London, 1939), pp. 138-146.

² Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, *A History of Eton College*, 4th ed. (London, 1911), p. 305.

³ *De vita et moribus Johannis Burtoni . . . Epistola . . . ad . . . Robertum Lowth . . . episcopum Oxoniensem* (Oxford, 1771).

⁴ *Gent. Mag.*, xli, 307-10. This epitome alone was available to the writer in preparing this essay. Statements for which Bentham is the authority are marked (B) in the text.

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John Burton was born in 1696 at the village of Wembworthy, Devon, where his father Samuel, who died at some date during his boyhood, was rector. His ancestors were probably not Devon people. Since the boy's mother was first cousin to a clergyman of Yorkshire ancestry, Samuel Bentham (B), the father may have been connected with the numerous Yorkshire Burtons. Young John began his schooling at Okehampton (B), probably at the grammar school, presided over for several years after 1706 by Edward Cornish, chaplain of St. James's church. There is no doubt, however, that his main preparatory schooling was received at Ely, a change made under the guardianship of the aforesaid Samuel Bentham, who was either the father or the grandfather of the writer of the Latin sketch of Burton's life. The widowed Mrs. Burton became the wife of John Bear, rector of Shermanbury, Sussex, who had taken his M.A. as a member of Exeter College in 1689 and served as a curate at Bray in Berkshire.¹ Instituted at Shermanbury in 1711, he lived there until his death in 1762. Burton's mother died at Shermanbury in 1755 at the age of eighty (B).

John Burton owed little to south-west England. He was early brought into the learned atmosphere of Ely cathedral, where he made such progress at the cathedral grammar school, also known as the King's School at Ely, that he attracted the notice of two prebendaries, Dr. Ashton, Master of Jesus, Cambridge, and Dr. Turner, President of Corpus Christi, Oxford (B). His birth in Devonshire giving him a statutory qualification, Burton at sixteen or seventeen was elected to an 'Exeter' scholarship at Corpus,² where he matriculated on 21 October, 1713,³ and graduated B.A. on 27 June, 1717. The name of James Edward Oglethorpe, who had been educated at Eton, was entered upon the Corpus rolls less than a year later than Burton's.

The Regius Professor of Divinity, Dr. John Potter, then Bishop of Oxford and later Archbishop of Canterbury, was pleased with Burton's ability in theological disputations and especially befriended him (B). It is worth noting that Potter, though a high churchman, was in politics a whig.

Burton's personality and conversational ability coupled with his sound ideas about academic discipline tended to make him popular throughout the university (B). Shortly after 24 March, 1721, when he took the M.A. degree, he succeeded to a fellowship at Corpus. He took exceptional interest in the University Press, advocating new type sets and procuring contributions for its better support.

¹ Hearne, *Collections*, ed. Salter, VIII (O.H.S., I), 227; IX (O.H.S., LXV), 29.

² For assistance here and elsewhere in this essay I am much indebted to Dr. J. G. Milne, Librarian of Corpus.

³ J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714*, I (1891), 218; Thomas Fowler, *Corpus Christi* (London, 1898), p. 174.

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Thomas Hearne in his diaries mentions Burton a number of times, showing that the two had a mutual enthusiasm for manuscripts, inscriptions, and antiquarian learning.¹ He tells of their spending the evening together on two occasions in 1725.

As Master of the Schools, on 10 February, 1726, Burton preached a Latin sermon in St. Mary's before the determining bachelors on the topic of unseasonable leniency in a magistrate (*B*). The exhortation toward firm academic discipline drew no unfavourable comment from Hearne then; but when the sermon was published in 1729 (*A.1*),² the diarist remembered little good in Burton's record as Pro-Proctor and Master of the Schools, asserting that in most respects Burton had behaved indiscreetly (*H*). In 1725 he preached an Assize Sermon in St. Mary's before Lord Chief Justice Eyre and Mr. Baron Hale (*H*). On 20 September of the same year he preached at St. Mary's in the forenoon, while his stepfather, John Bear, preached in the afternoon (*H*). These were some of Burton's early appearances in St. Mary's, where he was destined to be heard frequently in after years.

Edward Bentham entered Corpus in 1724 and pursued studies under the oversight of his cousin. For this reason and also because of Bentham's own long relationship with the University, his sketch of Burton's life gives helpful insight into the pedagogy of the older man. In ethics, Burton recommended Aristotle and Cicero, followed by Puffendorf's Abridgements and Sanderson's Lectures. In logic, he prescribed Sanderson and Le Clerc as preparatory to Locke, of whom he was a champion. In natural philosophy, after an outline on the plan of Bartholine, guarding against the errors of Descartes, he led his students through a series of experiments under John Whiteside, Lecturer in Experimental Philosophy, and Dr. James Bradley, Savilian Professor of Astronomy. For the use of younger students he printed a double series of philosophical questions that gave the hint for a larger work of the same kind published by Thomas Johnson of Cambridge. He was never very good at mathematics, nor was he grounded in Hebrew; but where he felt his incompetence, he hired special assistance. He was most at home in teaching the classical languages. Twice each week he lectured his students in Xenophon and Demosthenes, 'hearing them word for word and interspersing critical observations.' He insisted specially upon a knowledge of Greek, requiring frequent written translation or original composition, which he painstakingly corrected himself. As a rule, he did not encourage private study, 'having found by experience, that this

¹ Hearne, *Coll.*, viii (O.H.S. L), 125, 227, 339, 383, 404; ix (O.H.S., LXV), 23, 72; x (O.H.S., LXVII), 5, 213; xi (O.H.S., LXXII), 254, 256, 263, 306, 431, 435. Hereafter referred to as (*H*).

² A select bibliography of Burton's works will be found in the Appendix, the items in which are referred to in the text by numbers (*A.1*), (*A.2*), etc.

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method is rather productive of idleness in the tutor, than of improvement in the pupil.' (B). There was published in 1736 a set of Greek and Latin exercises that he had given the Corpus undergraduates for their benefit during the long vacation (A.5).

On 26 November, 1725, Burton was presented to the vicarage of Buckland (Berks.) (H). Since the church of St. Mary at Buckland¹ was only twelve or thirteen miles from Oxford, Burton could fulfil the duties there and retain his college fellowship at the same time. There was rivalry for the appointment, though Burton was named without his own application. Another fellow of Corpus was surprised 'that Mr. Burton (who aims at higher Matters) would have taken so small a Place.' (H).

Continuing his University associations Burton in 1728, for example, spoke against conferring a medical degree upon a London physician whom Thomas Hearne identifies as a non-juror, formerly ejected from Balliol College. The once friendly Hearne now describes Burton as 'a busy man and always speaking of it in a very dull flat way in the Convocation House.' (H). On 19 July, 1729, he took the degree of B.D., or Bachelor of Sacred Theology, and preached in St. Mary's one of two Latin sermons that were published later in the year (A.2). The appearance of the printed sermons, one of which was dedicated to Henry Godolphin, Provost of Eton, caused Hearne to remark of Burton: 'Tis a hard matter to tell what he drives at or what 'tis he would have. He is always zealous, and yet cannot tell what scheme to fix upon, being an uneasy, conceited man, and discontented.' (H).

In politics Burton was a follower of Walpole in a period when whigs were relatively few at Oxford. His attempt to introduce into the curriculum the study of Locke and other modern philosophers was not destined to meet with success.² If Burton is sometimes classed as a tory,³ the suspicion doubtless had origin with his strong stand against Oldmixon's charge that persons at Oxford had tampered with Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, altering it in the printing into more of a tory document than Clarendon had intended. Burton took up the cudgels against Oldmixon in 1732-33 with the publication in the *Weekly Miscellany* of a preliminary confutation signed 'Oxoniensis.' A dozen years later he published a full dress vindication of the University Press and of Oxford (A.8); it is not a party performance. Burton rightly prophesied that the intrinsic value of Clarendon's work would always recommend it to the esteem of all moderate and impartial men while Oldmixon's own history would tend to be forgotten.

¹ For an article excellently illustrated with 14 plates describing St. Mary's, Buckland, see C. E. Keyser in *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Journal*, XII, 97-107.

² T. Fowler, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

³ Cp. *Gent. Mag.*, XLIX, 455 and I, 166; also W. P. Courtney, *D.N.B.*, III, 460-462 (s.v. Burton, John, D.D.).

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To account for Burton's connexion with the founding of Georgia, Bentham asserts that Dr. Thomas Bray, Dr. Stephen Hales, Dr. William Berriman and other well-known London preachers asked for Burton's cooperation (B). Of these men Bray counted for most in preparing the way for such a colonial enterprise as Georgia. He had several decades earlier helped to found two great English missionary societies, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Bray had visited America in 1700; and before dying in February, 1730, had organized such kindred spirits as Hales into a group subsequently called the Associates of the Late Dr. Bray, an organisation which aimed at spreading parochial libraries and christianizing the blacks in the British plantations.¹

John Burton was not one of the original Associates; but by the end of 1730, when, under the leadership of Oglethorpe, they were informally expanded into the twenty-one petitioners for the Georgia Charter, Burton and Hales were amongst those who had definitely come into the scheme of founding a charity colony.² Oglethorpe asked Burton to preach the 1732 anniversary sermon before the Associates of the Late Dr. Bray. On 24 February Burton did so at St. Bride's church, London, stressing Christian education and the conversion of negroes and Indians. Toward the close of what struck his hearers as an excellent sermon, he commended the King for approving the Georgia idea.³ Burton was formally named one of the Trustees for establishing the experimental colony on 9 June, 1732, when the Georgia Charter was at length promulgated.⁴ Nearly all the other Trustees were, as members of Parliament or for other reasons, resident at least a part of the year in London, but Burton could scarcely expect to visit the Georgia Office except at infrequent intervals. The distance from the metropolis probably kept him away from the initial meeting of the Trust, 20 July, 1732; and perhaps the first official meeting he actually attended was 10 January, 1733.⁵ Not until some months after the Charter had been obtained did the work of the Georgia Trustees become fully differentiated from that of the Bray Associates; and even then, there continued to be a considerable interlocking of personnel, though not of function. When the two organizations held a joint anniversary meeting in the parish church of St. Mary-le-Bow, London, 15 March, 1733, John Burton preached on the subject of Abraham a sermon that was ordered by his hearers to be printed (A.3). Laying down the

¹ Burton is said to have published in 1764 *An Account of the Designs of the Associates of the late Dr. Bray, with an account of their Proceedings*. For a concise notice of Bray, see V. W. Crane, in *Dictionary of American Biography*, II (N.Y., 1929), 610-611.

² *Calendar of State Papers, Col. Series, Amer. and W.I.*, 1730 (London, 1937), pp. 357-358.

³ *Diary of Viscount Percival, afterwards First Earl of Egmont* (ed. R. A. Roberts), I (Hist. MSS. Comm., London, 1920), 223. (Hereafter cited as E.D.).

⁴ *Gent. Mag.*, II, 825.

⁵ E.D., I, 286, 306.

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premise that Christian principles had to be built upon civility of manners, Burton argued that negroes and Indians would have first to be civilized before they could be christianized.

In the same year when the voting fellows of Eton met to select a fit person to hold an Eton fellowship vacated by the death of Dr. Richardson, three of them wanted Burton and three wanted a man from Peterhouse, Cambridge (*H*). Fortunately for Burton, the final selection was left to Dr. Henry Bland, a former Headmaster of Eton who had become Dean of Durham and very recently Provost of Eton at the instance of Sir Robert Walpole. The fact that Burton had taught many Etonians, and particularly the fact that he had tutored Bland's son, worked in his favour (*B*).¹ But a deciding factor in his confirmation, 6 September, 1733, may well have been the congruity of his and the Provost's political principles. A month later Hearne noted that the fellow of Corpus now also a fellow of Eton College 'hath lately printed an English Sermon, occasioned by the Colony, that is planting in Carolina' (*H*). This undoubtedly was the sermon that had been preached the preceding March, to which the Georgia Trustees annexed an abstract of their financial account for the previous year. Burton preached further on the subject of Abraham in a sermon he delivered before the University of Oxford in November (*A*. 33).

The new fellow of Eton had been named but a few weeks when the vicarage of Mapledurham, in the gift of Eton College, fell vacant with the death of Edward Littleton, 16 November, 1733. Mapledurham, which had been bestowed on Eton by Henry VI, was 'the most beautiful, the wealthiest, and in every way the most desirable of the College livings.'² The village is on the left bank of the Thames about half way between Oxford and Eton, and not more than 25 miles distant from either. The vicarage, occupying ample grounds, lies close to the water's edge beneath a wooded hill. Nearby is a house connected with the story of Pope's Martha Blount, 'the finest old house in Oxfordshire' from an antiquarian viewpoint.³ To this charming, almost idyllic retreat Burton was presented on 27 February, 1734.⁴ He resigned his Berkshire charge of Buckland, and was instituted as vicar at Mapledurham, 4 March, 1734. Though he had less than fifty pounds of available capital (*B*), on settling at Mapledurham he decided :

'to spend himself and his money on building, repairing, and ornamenting, on elaborating the charm of the gardens, on planting or training trees . . .

¹ Maxwell Lyte, *op. cit.*, pp. 298, 305.

² A. C. Benson, *Fasti Etonenses* (Eton, 1899), p. 141.

³ *B.B.O.J.*, xxi, 53; see also *ibid.*, iii, 33; xi, 75-76. An illustration of Mapledurham Church in 1836 accompanies A. H. Cooke, 'New Light on Mapledurham Church,' *ibid.*, xxxi, 162-164.

⁴ A. H. Cooke, *Early History of Mapledurham* (O.R.S., vol. vii, 1925), p. 173.

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on making pathways, and carrying out works of a like nature, by which he hoped in some way to afford pleasure to his successors.¹

Here Burton was destined to live during the greater part of his service as a Georgia Trustee and in fact during the greater part of his productive life. Littleton's widow² continuing temporarily with her three small daughters to occupy the Mapledurham vicarage through the kindness of Burton, pleased the thirty-eight year old Oxford bachelor so much that he soon made her his wife. Bentham described her as handsome, elegant, accomplished, ingenious, sweet-tempered and discreet (*B*). Though the couple apparently never had any children of their own, they lived happily in the congenial atmosphere of Mapledurham, with Burton assuming a parental care in the upbringing and disposition of his wife's daughters (*B*).

Just before Burton left Corpus and removed to Mapledurham, he published in folio a Latin eulogy of a Corpus man, Dr. John Rogers (*H*), late canon of Wells and rector of St. Giles's Cripplegate, London (*A.4*). The same Latin eulogy along with a biographical sketch of Rogers in English was published in 1735 as a prefix to a volume of sermons by Rogers.³ Thomas Hearne, attributing the sketch as well as the eulogy to the hand of Burton, refused to admit that there was merit in either (*H*). Burton also appeared as sponsor of a plan to reprint two linguistic works of the scholar Junius, the *Glossary Linguarum Septentrionalium* and the *Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae* (*H*).

Burton was not too absorbed in his Mapledurham life or too occupied in getting out erudite publications to let the colony of Georgia slip from his remembrance. He appears to have conceived the idea of influencing the Holy Club of Oxford to become Georgia-minded.⁴ And when the brothers John and Charles Wesley evinced an interest in Indian missions, Burton brought their names to the attention of his colleagues of the Georgia Trust,⁵ and brought the elder brother to see Oglethorpe in August, 1735. In a letter of 8 September, Burton urged John to make the final decision; and he subsequently expressed his pleasure at a favourable answer.⁶ Burton gave the founder of Methodism this practical advice, unfortunately not too well heeded by Wesley in Georgia: 'You will keep in view the pattern of that Gospel preacher St. Paul, who became

¹ Cooke, *l.c.*, translated from Bentham's Latin sketch of Burton's life.

² She was Frances Goode, who had married Littleton c. 1726. Austen-Leigh, *Eton College Register*, 1698-1752, p. 214.

³ *Nineteen Sermons by John Rogers, D.D.*; to which is prefixed the Author's Life, with an Elogium written by John Burton, B.D., Fellow of Eton College (London, 1735).

⁴ Leslie F. Church, *Oglethorpe: a Study of Philanthropy in England and Georgia* (London, 1932), p. 195.

⁵ *E.D.*, II, 194; *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. N. Curnock, VIII (London, 1916), 151.

⁶ Rev. L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of John Wesley*, I (London, 1850), 109.

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all things to all men that he might gain some.¹ After pointing George Whitefield, the Great Awakener of a few years later, to the Georgia mission-field, John Wesley ended a brief American career in discomfiture. The Georgia Trust was not reluctant to accept Wesley's resignation in 1738. Something of Burton's own ecclesiastical outlook can be inferred from the fact that he soon began to suspect Whitefield of wanting sole control of a Georgia orphanage and sole control of building a church there, merely to foster Methodism.²

Besides collecting several minor subscriptions in aid of the Trust, Burton habitually donated, anonymously, ten pounds each year toward the maintenance of a catechist in Georgia, his seventh regular payment being made in 1740.³ These contributions bring to mind the fact that the colonization of Georgia, the last to be founded of the thirteen colonies that revolted in 1776, was financed in a way peculiar to itself. Private subscriptions were gathered amounting to about £15,000; and Parliament voted in various grants a total of more than £136,000. Georgia was therefore truly a darling of the British public.⁴ Burton was never elected into the Common Council, the executive branch of the Georgia Trust, for the good reason, no doubt, that he was detained away from London except on special occasions. He remained a Trustee, nevertheless, throughout the incorporated existence of the Trust, attending forty-six board meetings and one committee meeting.⁵

Continuing to be closely identified with Oxford affairs, he published separately during the decade of the 1740's five of the sermons that he delivered in St. Mary's church before members of the University (A.6, 7, 9, 11, 12). One of these printed sermons was dedicated to General Oglethorpe, whose activity in America had successfully defended Georgia against Spanish military attack.

In 1749-50 Burton published a shilling tract containing three characteristic items: a critical letter to John William Thompson, editor of the *Parmenides* of Plato; an erudite letter to his future biographer Edward Bentham, then newly become D.D.; and the eulogy of Dr. John Rogers, which had already been printed once or twice before (A.16).

Dr. William King of St. Mary's Hall delivered a famous speech in Latin at Oxford on 13 April, 1749, at the dedication of the Radcliffe Library. When the oration was printed it was attacked in a pamphlet by 'Phileleutherus Londinensis'—supposedly Burton. King had harked back to the last four years of the

¹ Charles C. Jones, *The History of Georgia*, 1, (Boston, 1883), 203-204.

² *E.D.*, II, 481; III, 127.

³ *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, III (Atlanta, 1905), 208; *E.D.*, III, 64, 146.

⁴ H. B. Fant, 'Financing the Colonization of Georgia,' *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XX, 1-29.

⁵ J. R. McCain, *Georgia as a Proprietary Province* (Boston, 1917), pp. 31-39.

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reign of Queen Anne as a sort of golden age. But the pseudonymous author objected to the pronounced party bias, and he picked out petty flaws in the Latin usages of King (A.14). In reply to 'Phileleutherus,' King soon got out the rather clever *Elogium famae inserviens Jaci Etonensis, sive Gigantis*; or, *the Praises of Jack of Eton, Commonly called Jack the Giant*.¹ He had Burton in the character of Jack sing such self-praise as the following stanza:

. . . Latin Writers make me smile;
For rival me can no Man,
Who am the only Judge of Style;
And mine is truly *Roman*.

Burton's tendency to speak in self-appointed personification of the University was sufficiently blasted; but on the surface Burton felt no damage, and he apparently failed to pay King any further published notice. King, however, never forgave Burton for what he thought was a rude and unfair treatment of the speech of 1749.²

His beloved wife Frances died in 1748, and thereafter Burton began to spend the greater part of the year at Eton, where he could better enjoy his friends and pursue his studies. Tenderly recalling his Frances in certain of his poetic meditations (A.35), he continued to supervise the Littleton daughters (B). At intervals he visited his mother and her husband John Bear at Shermanbury. In 1752 he published Greek and Latin accounts of his horseback journeying 'from Oxford, by Henley, Windsor, Hampton, Kingston, Banstead, Ockley, Horsham, to Shermanbury . . .; and thence to Lewes, Brighton, Shoreham, Findon and Chichester.'³ The original (A.17), now preserved in the library of the Surrey Archaeological Society, was a communication addressed to William Greenway, Vice-Principal of Hart Hall, Oxford. Translated extracts from the *Iter*, showing that Burton had an eye for topography and the practical matter of roads, have appeared in historical publications of the respective counties.⁴ There were also passages of more human interest, such as the following:

Among an earthborn herd my time I pass
With parson-hating farmers, and alas!
With clownish squires, smeared with no bookish dust,
Merry or sadly patient, dwell I must.

¹ Collected into Latin and English Metre, after the Manner of Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins, John Burton and Others. To which is added A Dissertation on the Burtonic Style. By a Master of Arts. Oxford, pr. for S. Parker; and sold by W. Owen, near Temple Bar, London, MDCCL. Price 1s.

² Dr. William King, *Political and Literary Anecdotes of His Own Times*, 2nd ed. (London, 1819), p. 155.

³ H. E. Malden, 'An Eighteenth Century Journey through Surrey and Sussex,' *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xxix (1916), 34.

⁴ *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, viii (1856), 250-265; *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xxix (1916), 34-48.

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At times these Sussex boors my laugh provoke,
At times in frowns my deep disgust I cloak.
Wearied with these, my tedium to beguile,
My friends the clergy do I seek awhile,
Join in their jokes, their wisdom praise, while they
Groan o'er small livings or a curate's pay.
Much of their talk, while o'er their wine they sit,
Of tithes and sheaves, were more for silence fit.
'The Church for ever! hip, hurrah!' they shout,
While I with cheers mix in their joyous rout.

Burton received the fourth and last of his academic degrees, that of D.D., on 1 July, 1752, the year of the publication of the *Iter*. Two of his extant printed sermons were preached before the University in June and November of 1752 (A.29), and several of his Oxford sermons of the period of the Seven Years' War or immediately thereafter are known (A.23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 33, 36). His appearances at St. Mary's church were so numerous that in Bentham's observation, 'No preacher before the University was better heard or more frequented' (B). When nearly seventy, Dr. Burton made a gesture of farewell to the University by collecting and publishing in two volumes his *Occasional Sermons* (A.29, 33). In dedicating the first volume, looking back to the days of his youth over more than fifty years of Oxford events, he was conscious, in a manner that must have irked such persons as Dr. William King, that he had always expressed a disinterested zeal for the University: 'my situation in life, as well as disposition of mind, set me above the influence of vulgar Hopes and Fears, and every sinister motive; nor have any private regards ever diverted my view from the publick service.'

Dr. Burton was a member of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts as late as the 1750's.¹ He gave a dissertation in 1756 on doctrinal fundamentals at St. Alphage's church, London, before the assembled London clergy (A.19). Three years later, under the auspices of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, he preached at Christ Church, London, to the children being educated in the charity schools of London and Westminster (A.24). For the charitable organization known as the Sons of the Clergy, Dr. Burton preached an annual sermon at St. Paul's cathedral in 1761 (A.27). The last of his separately published sermons, a comparison of papists with the biblical pharisees (A.32), may have been delivered in London or elsewhere rather than at Oxford. In connexion with Dr. Burton's missionary and ecclesiastical outlook, one may note that he is said to have published in 1764 *An*

¹ His name was on a list of S.P.G. members printed with a sermon by Anthony Ellis, Bp. of St. David's, preached before the S.P.G., 23 Feb., 1759 (London, E. Owen, 1759).

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Account of the Designs of the late Dr. Bray with some Account of their Proceedings (B).

More in keeping with Dr. Burton's role as vicar of Mapledurham was the Latin poem *Sacerdos Paroecialis Rusticus* that was given to the public in 1757 (A.20). In 630 hexameters he described with some degree of charm the duties of a parish priest. Occasionally the poem brings to mind, someone has said, the picture of the country gentleman in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*.¹ Dawson Warren considered it worth while to publish a translation of Burton's little masterpiece in 1800.² Three plays of Sophocles, one of Euripides, and one of Aeschylus were grouped together in an annotated volume that Burton got out in 1758 (A.21). Eton boys in the sixth form and in the upper part of the fifth were soon being set to work construing from the Burton edition.³ Thomas Burgess, scholar of Corpus and later Bishop of Salisbury, added further notes and republished the work after Burton's death (A.21).

Long years of looking out upon the Thames at Buckland, at Oxford, at Mapledurham, and at Eton gave Dr. Burton an interest in river-borne commerce. By 1764 he had become a commissioner for regulating river traffic. He wrote *The Present State of Navigation on the Thames considered and certain Regulations proposed* (A.30) to show that the shipping public would fare better if smaller craft were substituted for the illegally large or overloaded barges that damaged the locks when water was not plentiful.⁴

At the advanced age of seventy, Burton became rector of Worplesdon, Surrey, a transfer that must have been linked in some way with his Vice-Provostship of Eton. The advowson, like that of Mapledurham, was in the gift of the college. His tenure of the living began on 1 February, 1766,⁵ and lasted until his death in 1771. During the five intervening years he was only a part-time resident in the community, but he was remembered for initiating the improvement of the causeway connecting Worplesdon and Guildford.⁶ He probably continued to spend most of his time at Eton, which is about the same distance from Worplesdon as from Mapledurham.

Dr. Burton was an old friend of Thomas Secker (B), the former dissenter who became Bishop of Oxford in 1737 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1758. A strong supporter of the Hanoverian government, Secker in 1751 wrote Horace Walpole a letter, which was not published for a number of years,

¹ 'Oxoniensis' in *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., v, 13.

² *The Parish Priest: a Poem* (London, 1800).

³ Maxwell Lyte, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

⁴ For a letter of Burton's, 15 Sept., 1764, about removing an obstruction presumably below the lock at Mapledurham, see A. H. Cooke, *The Early History of Mapledurham*, p. 173.

⁵ O. Manning and W. Bray, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, III (London, 1814), 101, 102.

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advocating the appointment of bishops in America.¹ In 1768 Dr. Burton printed a panegyric of Secker that aroused both latitudinarian and nonconformist ire (A.34). Francis Blackburne, Archdeacon of Cleveland, observed that there could be no doubt 'that Dr. Burton was well acquainted with his Grace's motives for promoting Episcopal government in America . . . after his commerce of friendship with his Grace, for more than forty years.'²

Many of Dr. Burton's varied writings, including a few sermons, were published in two volumes of opuscula that appeared at the end of his life (A.35, 36). Tracts, memorials, essays, and other matter, much of it in Greek and Latin, that had previously appeared in print were here gathered together. The second volume, bearing the date 1771, is the fullest anthology of Burton's poetical work; some of the short pieces contained therein may not have been given to the public previously. It is said that Dr. Burton had prepared a manuscript essay on improvements projected at Eton College, but the manuscript was lost.³

As Vice-Provost of Eton in his later years, Dr. Burton is said to have been careless of his dress, delighting to wear old clothes. He probably never got over his lack of judgment in finances.⁴ His enemy Dr. King declared that Dr. Burton took an officious interest in the private affairs of his acquaintances to the neglect of more important business.⁵ He had cronies, such as Edward Barnard, the Headmaster, with whom he enjoyed much good-natured raillery.⁶ 'The Eton boys rather loved the old man.'⁷ When literary or ecclesiastical functions called Dr. Burton to Oxford, Cambridge, or London, 'he had as much pleasure in being present, as others have in hunting, racing, or gaming' (B).

Dr. Burton objected to sitting for his portrait; but a sketch of him said to have been drawn while he was asleep is inserted in Manning and Bray's *History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*.⁸ The excellent representation of Dr. Burton in the Gallery of Eton College has been reproduced by Benson with the comment that it shows 'a man of marked features, with a somewhat sly and

¹ *A Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole, Esq., Written Jan. 9, 1750-1. By the Right Reverend Thomas Secker, LL.D., Lord Bishop of Oxford: concerning Bishops in America* (London, 1769).

² *A Critical Commentary on Archbishop Secker's Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole, concerning Bishops in America* (London, 1770), Postscript, p. 107.

³ Benson, *Fasti Etonenses*, p. 142.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Dr. William King, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158.

⁶ Benson, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

⁷ *Gent. Mag.*, LI, 120.

⁸ 'Engraved by S.W.R. after the original drawing by (Cosins Sen.^r) in the possession of Rev^d W. Pennicott,' Manning and Bray, *op. cit.*, III, 102.

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humorous expression, adumbrated by a huge wig.¹ The British Museum possesses an engraved portrait of him.²

In his seventy-fifth or seventy-sixth year, 'an erysipulous fever disturbed his intellects and shattered his decaying frame.' After a rally the day before, he died on 12 February, 1771 (*B*). Befitting his long and important connexion with the college, his remains were interred in the centre of the ante-chapel, the main entrance to the inner chapel, at Eton. A visitor there ten years later found the following inscription in memory of 'him who lately was the pride of this seminary, the great Dr. Burton'³:

Johannes Burton, S.T.P.
Collegii Eton. Socius,
Obiit A.D. 1771.
Aet. 75
Vir inter primos
Doctus, Ingeniosus, Pius,
Opum Contemptor,
Ingenuae Juventutis
Fautor Eximius.

APPENDIX⁴

WORKS OF JOHN BURTON

1. *Heli: sive exemplum magistratus intempestiva lenitate peccantis.* (Sermon, 1725). (Oxford, 1729; ed. 2, 1761; reprinted in 36).
2. *Hophni et Phinees: sive impietas sacerdotum publicae impietatis causa.* (Sermon, 1729). (Oxford, 1729; ed. 2, 1761; reprinted in 36).
3. *The duty and reward of propagating principles of religion and virtue exemplified in the history of Abraham.* (Sermon to Georgia Trustees, 1733). (London, 1733; reprinted in 33).
4. *Elogium sacrum memoriae Johannis Rogers.* (London, 1734; reprinted in editions of Rogers' sermons, London, 1735, London, 1784, Oxford, 1819; see also 16 and 35).
5. *Sacrae Scripturae locorum quorundam versio metrica: sive exercitationum poetiarum quae pro disciplinae solennis ratione adolescentibus C.C.C. longae vacationis tempore praecipiantur elaborandae delectus.* (Edited by Burton). (Oxford, 1736; reprinted in 35).
6. *A sermon preached before the University of Oxford, 4 Febr., 1740-1.* (Oxford, [1741]; reprinted in 29).
7. *The principles of Christian loyalty.* (Sermon). (Oxford, [1743]; ed. 2, 1749).
8. *The genuineness of Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion printed at Oxford vindicated.* (Oxford, 1744).

¹ Benson, *op. cit.*, pl. facing p. 142.

² By an anonymous engraver. Freeman O'Donoghue, *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits in the British Museum*, 1 (London, 1908), 302.

³ *Gent. Mag.*, LI, 120.

⁴ For the compilation of this list I am indebted to Mr. R. F. Ovenell.

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9. The folly and wickedness of misplacing our trust and confidence. (Sermon). (Oxford, 1744; reprinted in 29).
10. The extensive propagation of Abraham's religion represented. (Sermon). (Oxford, 1745).
11. Principles of religion the only sufficient restraint from wickedness. (Sermon). (Oxford, 1746; reprinted in 33).
12. The expostulation and advice of Samuel to the men of Israel applied. (Sermon). (Oxford, 1746; reprinted in 29).
13. *Epistolae altera peregrinantis, altera rusticantis.* (Oxford, 1748; reprinted in 35).
14. Remarks on Dr. King's speech before the University of Oxford at the dedication of Dr. Radcliff's Library. (London, 1750).
15. An attempt towards the eulogium of Conyers Middleton. (London, [1750]).
16. *Epistola critica Graece conscripta ad Joh. Gul. Thompson.* Accedit eulogium memoriae sacrum Johan. Rogers, item epistola ad Edv. Bentham. (London, 1750; reprinted in 35).
17. *Ὁδοιποροῦντος μελετήματα: sive Iter Surriense et Sussexiense. De linguae Graecae institutionibus quibusdam epistola critica.* (London, 1752; reprinted in 35).
18. *Τοῦ δεινὸς νοσοῦντος καὶ περὶ τῶν νοσοῦντων μελετήματα.* (Oxford, 1755; reprinted in 35).
19. De fundamentalibus dissertatio theologica. (Address to London Clergy). (Oxford, 1756; reprinted in 36).
20. *Sacerdos paroecialis rusticus.* (Oxford, 1757; another ed., London, 1814; reprinted in 35).
21. *Πενταλογία: sive Tragoediarum Graecarum delectus.* (Oxford, 1758; enlarged ed. in 2 vols. by Thos. Burgess, Oxford, 1779; another edition, Oxford, 1801).
22. De literarum Graecarum institutione dissertatio, epistola ad Edv. Bentham. (Oxford, 1758; see also 16).
23. Samuel triplici nomine laudatus, propheta, populi Israelitici iudex, scholarum prophetarum rector. (Two addresses). (Oxford, 1759; reprinted in 36).
24. Religious education of poor children recommended. (Sermon). (London, 1759; reprinted in 33).
25. University Politics: or, the Study of a Christian, Gentleman, Scholar. (Three Sermons). (Oxford, 1760; reprinted in 29).
26. De praxeos theologiae abusibus. (Address). (Oxford, 1761; reprinted in 36).
27. A sermon preached before the Sons of the Clergy. (London, 1761).
28. Two sermons preached—before the University of Oxford—1757 and—1762. (Oxford, 1762; reprinted in 29).
29. Occasional sermons preached before the University of Oxford on Publick days appointed for Fasts and Thanksgivings. (Oxford, 1764).
30. The present state of navigation on the Thames considered, and certain regulations proposed. (Oxford, 1764; ed. 2 with appendix, Oxford, 1767).
31. King David's charge to Solomon, or The religious prince. (Sermon). (Oxford, 1765).
32. Papists and Pharisees compared; or, Papists the corruptors of Christianity. (London, 1766; reprinted in 36).
33. Sermons preached on Publick occasions. (Oxford, 1766).
34. *Ad amicum epistola; sive commentariolus Thomas Secker—memoriae sacer.* (Oxford, 1768).
35. *Opuscula miscellanea metrico-prosaica.* (Oxford, 1771).
36. *Opuscula miscellanea theologica.* (Oxford, [1771]).