

**A NARRATIVE OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE GOVERNORS OF THE  
GRAMMAR-SCHOOL IN BRUTON,  
FROM THE DEATH OF THE LATE LORD  
BARKELEY TO THE PRESENT TIME**

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A narrative of the proceedings of the governors of the grammar-school in Bruton, from the death of the late lord Barkeley to the present time by The Master

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# **THE MASTER**

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## NARRATIVE, &c.

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**T**HE man who holds a publick office is responsible to the publick for his conduct in it. Of this denomination is the Mastership of an endowed Grammar-School. The publick has a just claim on every Master of such a School for the constant exertion of his literary abilities. From such a discharge of his duty, and from such alone, he may have reason to hope for the favour and patronage of a discerning neighbourhood.

An equal degree of responsibility to the publick tribunal, the Trustees or Governors of an endowed Grammar-School subject themselves to on *their* entrance into office. True it is, that they act in a different department from that of the Master. But unless their endeavours co-operate with his exertions, the wishes and expectations of the publick

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are not likely to be fully answered. *Their* countenance is necessary to *his* success. But if, instead of giving him their friendly aid and protection, to sweeten his toils of duty, and to smooth its rugged paths, they unhappily resolve to oppose every effort he can make, such unhappy resolutions are the certain forerunners of ruin and destruction: vain and fruitless are all subsequent hopes of success: an unnatural opposition from this quarter suddenly blasts the expectations both of the publick and of the master: *actum est, illicit, perisisti.*

Short as I wish the following narrative to be, necessity will, I fear, compel me to protract it to a length agreeable neither to my reader nor myself.

In the year 1769 I received my appointment to the Mastership of Bruton School, in the following form:—

“ Know all men by these presents, that the Right  
 “ Hon. John Lord Berkeley, Thomas Sampson,  
 “ Robert Pavy, John Dampier, George Cox,  
 “ William Vigar, Gerard Martin, Harry Albin  
 “ Martin, Joseph Whitehead, John Morren, Thomas  
 “ Whitehead, William Snooke, Governors of the  
 “ Free Grammar-School of King Edward the Sixth  
 “ in

" in Bruton, in the county of Somerset, by virtue  
 " and in pursuance of the power and authority to  
 " them given, in and by the charter granted in the  
 " reign of the said King, and of all and every or  
 " any other power and authority in them vested or  
 " reposed, have nominated and appointed, and by  
 " these presents do nominate and appoint Edward  
 " Michell, late of Kingsbridge in the county of  
 " Devon, but now of Bruton aforesaid, Clerk,  
 " from the date hereof to be Master of the said  
 " School, as long as he shall behave well in his  
 " office, for the education, teaching, and instruction  
 " of youth in grammar. And we do further ap-  
 " point him, during such time for the purpose  
 " aforesaid, the possession, use, and occupation of  
 " the said school, school-house, garden, green, and  
 " appurtenances to the same belonging, and an  
 " annual stipend or salary of fifty pounds, clear of  
 " all deductions, to be issued and paid to him by  
 " equal half-yearly payments at Christmas and  
 " Midsummer, out of the rents, revenues, and pro-  
 " fits of the lands, tenements, hereditaments, or  
 " other emoluments belonging or appertaining to  
 " the said school, the first payment to be made on  
 " Christmas-day next ensuing the date hereof. In  
 " witness whereof the said Governors have put their  
 " common seal and subscribed their names to these

“ presents, the fourteenth day of August one thou-  
 “ sand seven hundred and sixty-nine.

“ *Berkeley,*  
 “ *John Dampier,*  
 “ *Gerard Martin,*  
 “ *Thomas Whitehead,*  
 “ *Joseph Whitehead,*  
 “ *Harry Albin Martin,*  
 “ *John Morren,*  
 “ *William Snooke.*

“ I do approve of the within appointment,

“ *E. Bath & Wells.*”

Here I would observe, that Mr. H. A. Martin, who drew the appointment, informed me that the words *clear of all deductions* would fully answer the intention of the Governors, by guarding me against expences of any kind. On this assurance, a fair copy was drawn for the signature of the Governors. The school, at which not a single boy had been educated for fourteen years immediately preceding my appointment, now began to revive. I had several young gentlemen from Devonshire and this neighbourhood in my house, and many day-boys from the town and circumjacent villages.

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In the year 1771, the late Lord Berkeley, seeing the duty to be done by the Master more than equal to the emoluments of his office, proposed to the Governors, that with a view of raising my salary he would pay off their debt of 250l. This liberal offer was gladly accepted. In consequence of this discharge of the debt, the following appointment was drawn by Mr. H. A. Martin, and approved of by the Governors:

“ Whereas Edward Michell, of Bruton in the  
 “ county of Somerset, Clerk; by deed of appoint-  
 “ ment dated the fourteenth day of August 1769,  
 “ duly executed and confirmed, was elected and  
 “ appointed Master of the Free Grammar-School  
 “ of King Edward the Sixth in Bruton aforesaid, as  
 “ long as he should behave well in his office; with  
 “ an appointment of a stipend or salary of fifty  
 “ pounds a year, clear of all deductions, to be iss-  
 “ ing and paid out of the rents, revenues, and pro-  
 “ fits of the lands, tenements, hereditaments, or  
 “ other emoluments, belonging or appertaining to  
 “ the said school, which was as much as could then  
 “ be appropriated to his use, paying a proper atten-  
 “ tion to the discharge of a debt of 250l. due from  
 “ the said school; but the said 250l. having been  
 “ since paid off and discharged by the Right Hon.  
 “ John

“ John Lord Berkeley, Baron of Stratton, for the  
 “ benefit and advantage of the said Edward Michell  
 “ and the succeeding Masters for the time being,  
 “ We, the Governors of the said school, whose  
 “ names are hereunder subscribed, duly considering  
 “ the state of the said school revenues and disburse-  
 “ ments, therefore, and in pursuance of the powers  
 “ to us given in and by the charter granted by  
 “ Edward the Sixth, by and with the advice and con-  
 “ sent of the Right Worshipful the Lord Bishop of  
 “ Bath and Wells, have nominated and appointed,  
 “ and by these presents do nominate and appoint to  
 “ and for him the said Edward Michell, as long as  
 “ he shall continue and be Master of the said school,  
 “ the further annual stipend or salary of thirty  
 “ pounds (making with the fifty pounds the yearly  
 “ sum of eighty pounds) clear of all deductions, to  
 “ be issuing and paid him yearly, and on Midsum-  
 “ mer-day in every year, out of the rents, revenues,  
 “ and profits of the lands, tenements, heredita-  
 “ ments, or other emoluments belonging or apper-  
 “ taining to the said school, the first payment to be  
 “ made on the 24th day of June next ensuing the  
 “ date hereof.

“ In witness whereof the said Governors have  
 “ put their common seal, and subscribed their  
 “ names

“ names to these presents, the thirtieth day of  
 “ November one thousand seven hundred and  
 “ seventy-one.

“ *E. Bath & Wells.*

“ *Berkeley,*  
 “ *Joseph Whitehead,*  
 “ *Harry Albin Martin,*  
 “ *Gerard Martin,*  
 “ *Thomas Whitehead,*  
 “ *William Snooke,*  
 “ *Charles Moore,*  
 “ *George Cox,*  
 “ *John Morren.”*

There was now every appearance of a rising school. In the midst of this pleasing prospect, a sudden coolness towards me on the part of two of the leading Governors arose, a coolness unaccountable then, and unaccounted for to this day. I begged an explanation; none could be obtained. Whoëver has experienced a similar treatment, will be enabled to judge of my feelings. The consideration of my Lord Berkeley's advanced age, at whose death the sole government of the school would in fact devolve on these my two cool friends, determined me to take the first convenient opportunity of leaving Bruton. A very advantageous  
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