

**THE TRAVELS THROUGH ENGLAND
OF DR. RICHARD POCOCKE,
SUCCESSIVELY BISHOP OF MEATH
AND OF OSSORY, DURING 1750,
1751, AND LATER YEARS. VOLUME I**

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RICHARD POCOCKE & JAMES JOEL CARTWRIGHT

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PREFACE.

THE materials for the following pages are taken from four volumes in the series of Additional Manuscripts in the British Museum numbered respectively 15,800, 22,999, 23,000, and 23,001. The three last volumes formed a part of the valuable manuscript library of Mr. Dawson Turner, dispersed by auction after his death in 1859. The original letters of Dr. Pococke, describing the particular travels now printed for the first time, are not known to exist; the above manuscript volumes contain transcripts of the originals only, evidently made with a view to publication, as they bear marks of careful revision by the traveller's own hand. Many other volumes of like transcripts, made with the same unfulfilled intention, with some original letters, were also transferred to the British Museum from the Turner collection, but these relate almost entirely to his travels over the continent of Europe and in the East.

Apart from his journeyings, the life of Pococke presents little to interest the reader, and may be told in very few words. He was born at Southampton in 1704, a son of Richard Pococke, described as sequestrator of All Saints church, and headmaster of the Free School in Southampton. After receiving some education in his native town he proceeded to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where it is recorded that he took a degree of Bachelor of Laws in 1731; two years later, when proctor of Lismore, the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him.

Shortly after this date, that is, at the end of the year 1733, we meet with the first written evidences of his passion for travelling, in a series of original letters written to his mother and bound up in a volume, numbered 19,939, among the Additional Manuscripts. These are all addressed to "Mrs. Elizabeth Pococke, at Newtown [or Newton], near Newbury, Berkshire;" the first is dated from Genoa, on December 10, 1733; from there we trace him to Rome, between January and May in the following year, thence to Venice, Milan, Turin, Lyons, and back to Dover on June 30. Holyhead he reaches on July 13, apparently with a view to resume his not very exacting clerical duties in Ireland.

The following is the last letter he wrote to his mother on this journey:—

Holyhead, July 13th, 1734.

I writ to you from Chester on the 9th, the day we got there: the 10th we set out for Holyhead, stop'd at Holywell, din'd at Rithland, and lay at Aberconway. 11th we din'd at Beaumorris, a way I had never been before—a little clean town: L^d Bockley's seat close to it, a fine situation and pleasant gardens on the side of the hill; we saw the house and gardens, and a gentleman had us into the cellar and gave us beer and wine: there are 32 hogsheds of ale on one side and 32 of beer on tother; good stables, &c. My lord and family are at his Indie's grandmothers in Merionethshire; the lady is an heiress of the name of Williams.

Mr. Pasher was not here; he is a mixture of a gentleman, a librarian, and steward in some cases, has an exceeding good character, is Mr. Pasher's 3^d son, batchelors standing at Lincoln when his father died, and since has been wth that L^d. I apprehend his submitting to such a condition is because he will not take the oaths. There's a chapel in the house and prayers twice a day. His Ldship being an Irish peer, I think Viscount of Cashil, is member for Beaumorris.

We had with us 2 masters of ships, Germans, Hamburgers, that talkd English, and diverted us much with their riding, &c.

We go off in the Carteret packet boat about two a clock this afternoon.

Pococke's next tour abroad appears to have been undertaken about two years later. It was preceded by a little jaunt, of which he has left a description among his manuscripts headed "A Journey from Ireland to Oxford in 1736," which runs thus :—

I landed at Holyhead on the 25th of April, 1736. The first place we came to was Bodedar, six miles when the strand is paseable; it is eight miles when it is not. The church, and two others near, belong to Jesus College, and so does the church at the Head. A mile or two on this side Llangevany I passed very near the house where Owen Tudor was born, and a little further by an almshouse for ten poor persons, who have £5 a year each, if I mistake not, five men and five women.

26th. We crossed over the river Conway out of Carnarvonshire, and came in to Denbigh, where are remains of a strong castle on a hill. The church is near it, and near the old church is the shell of a new one, long built but not covered; 'tis but a small town. I was told that between Denbigh and Ruthen there is a church on the road with fine painted windows, found not long since under ground. We came five miles to Ruthen, a pretty little town on a hill; the church was collegiate, the minister is now called warden; it is old within, but the side next the town and one end are beautifully cased with hewn freestone. In it is a monument to the memory of Dr. Goodman, dean of Westminster in 1601, who founded a hospital for 10 men and 2 women in the church-yard, and also a school: his nephew was bishop of Gloucester, both born in this town, and at this time there is one of the family here who is in trade.

Ruthen stands on a little hill in the vale of Cluid, so called from the river Cluid that runs through it into the sea at Rithland. The vale is about a mile broad, and a most delightful part of Denbighshire, and very full of inhabitants, the hills on each side being finely improved. Passing through this vale into a worse country we travell'd over some dismal hills to another fine large vale, thro' which the river Dee runs to Chester, and travelled ten miles; on the

27th. To Wrexham; a midling town with one broad and short street, in which there is a handsom town house built on eight arches on each side, with pillars of one stone of ten feet high; they are of freestone, and

there are two arches in the front. But the great ornament of this town is the church; the tower is a most beautiful Gothick building, with a turret at each corner, and adorned with statues in niches, and is esteemed one of the four wonders of Wales. There is a good piece of the Lord's Supper over the altar, and another of king David over the door. In the chancel are buried Hugh Bellot, first bishop of Bangor, then of Chester in 1596, his couchant statue is on the tomb; St Henry Power of Bersham, made Viscount Valencia about 1642; Daniel Jones, clerk of the parish, with this epitaph—

Here lies interr'd beneath these stones
The beard, the flesh, and eke the bones
Of Wrexham clerk, old Daniel Jones.

In the churchyard was buried Elisha Yale in 1721. Among other lines of his epitaph are these three remarkable ones—

Born in America, in Europe bred,
In Africa travell'd, and in Asia wed,
Where he long lived. At London dead.

After dinner we travelled ten miles in this beautiful vale to Elsmare, going over the Dee on a good bridge of two very fine arches, and entered into England at the bounds between Flintshire and Shropshire, two miles from Elsmare. Wrexham is eight miles from Chester, and I passed pretty near at an equal distance from Whitechurch, Malpas and Oswestry; that is about seven miles from each. Five miles from Wrexham we passed by a second wonder of Wales, which is Olton churchyard, in which the yews all round are to be admired in rows of ten each at 10 feet distance; it is a very pleasant village on a hill. The third wonder is to the east of Wrexham, which is Gresford belfry, in which are eight bells; but there being 12 bells at Wrexham—a very fine sett with 52 tunes on the chymes—given by St Watkins William Wynne, this is no longer a wonder. The fourth wonder is Clangothen bridge, over the river Dee to the south of Wrexham; the arches are very high, and the piers, or pillars, that support 'em are hewn out on the rock on each side of the river. I omitted one thing between Conway and Denbigh, which is the tower of Hendon church; it stands about 80 feet distant from the church, and is built on a rock, which is, I believe, ten feet higher than

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the lowest part of the east wall of the church. Elsmear is so called from a mear or lake at the foot of the hill on which the town stands; the lake is at least two miles round. The town is on the side of a hill finely situated, and on the top of the hill was a castle with an entrenchment, and now the summit is a bowling green, from which there is a delightful prospect. The town belongs to the duke of Bridgwater, who is baron of Elsmear, and it is leased out for lives renewable: the duke has 6 or £7000 p^r aⁿ: in this county. The fish of the lake is leased for £6 a year to a gentleman who makes presents of 'em. On this lake Mr. Kynaston of Oatly Park has an old seat, with a fine situated garden on a declining ground to the lake. Here are two bayliffs put in every year, a certain number being nominated by the burgesses and by the duke, out of which two are to be approved of. The duke, by his steward, has probate of wills and the granting of administrations. The church and churchyard are pleasantly situated over the lake, and in the chancel the Kynaston family are buried, where are some marble monuments with couchant statues to their memory. This town did formerly belong to the Derby family, and was called with the estate about it the Barony of Elsmere; and the inn, the Royal Oak, is now called The Barony of Elsmere, because the Courts Baron were held here, as appeared by an inscription on it, now plastered over.

28th. I came to Shrewsbury by noon. In the way I saw two more mears or ponds, about a mile round; for this country being full of small hills, the water falling from them, and some springs it may be rising between them, make these lakes. Shrewsbury is situated on a peninsula made by the winding of the Severn. It stands on a rising ground, between which and the river are fine meadows, some within the walls and some without them. The peninsula may be three miles round, and the town walls two; there is a walk on the town walls almost all round the town; the walls are built with hewn stone, with battlements and turrets also at certain distances. There are pleasant walks in the meadows by the river side, some of them planted with limes, which, together with the fine river, make it a most delightfull scene. There are great remains of the castle, and at one corner a high mount, from the top of which is a most beautiful prospect; a fine, plain country, at a distance bounded by low, well-improved hills, insomuch that it is one of the finest views I ever