

In the first volume of the diaries, the new Vicar, James Brogden, appeared to have enjoyed something of a honeymoon period during which he gained respect for his "feeling" sermon after the death of Risley's only daughter Bessy, and support as his wife gave birth to their ninth living child (her last son was born in London two years later). By the end of 1848, the seeds of doubt had already begun to sour the relationship he had with his predecessor, Risley. At a personal level, he seemed to take Risley's support for granted, frequently requesting him to read prayers for him when indisposed, and often sitting for hours at Risley's house "to my annoyance". His behaviour also seemed odd, in returning the library he had transported to Deddington in April back to London for auction in the summer, not to mention going to expense in buying his own books back, whilst ignoring the necessity to sweep the vicarage chimneys, occasioning the fire! There was also an issue with Brogden's initiatives for a new school, since Risley was opposed to the terms under which government grant could be sought, and personally owned property, formerly the girls' school, which might reasonably have formed part of the new proposal. In June Risley had written "the Bishop heard more of Mr B than I had done" but he was speedily catching up.

James Brogden had many positive qualities. Son of a London jeweller, he studied at Oxford, and trained as a barrister before becoming a priest at the age of 33 and serving an Essex parish as rector, and a St Albans parish as curate, prior to becoming vicar of Deddington. He enjoyed, according to E Marshall, "at one period of his life a literary reputation" based upon his *Catholic Safeguards* of 1845-6 and five works published after 1848, one of which, a Fast sermon, was published in Deddington in 1849, and at his death received an obituary in the *Gentlemen's Magazine*. Despite all of this, Bishop Wilberforce considered his tenure "fatal to the interests of Christ's church and of the souls of your people" in 1856, and in his diocese book recorded his death from apoplexy in 1864 with comments and exclamation marks. Risley, to whom fell the task of conducting the burial service, found it "a trial to me altogether".

Brogden's residence in the Vicarage lasted, in the first instance, less than two years: his withdrawal to London was precipitated by a court judgment against him for debts to George Dugate (Risley's footman) and led to the first sequestration order pinned to the church door in December 1850. Susan's candour, in letters to Holford who was away at school with a Hertfordshire clergyman, is the first indication of a problem. She claims he "humbugs Mr Wilson" (the Worton landowner) over his activities for the new schools, though it is clear that the *North Oxfordshire Monthly Times* is at pains to credit the Vicar in these and most other matters. This is all in sharp contrast to Risley's perception of a man who neglects his duties and thus abuses Risley's willingness to assist, and replaces Field as his churchwarden by grocer Margetts, "a man that is as often tipsy as sober" as Susan further confides to her son. By April 1849 Risley, his suspicions aroused, wrote to the Windsor Canons in complaint and even made a trip to St Albans to discover the reputation which Brogden had left behind him. By the end of the year, Bishop Wilberforce was also chiding him: "I greatly regret that you should have burdened yourself with a parish so miserable to you: but so long as you retain it you must provide properly for its duties".

At issue was the low salary which accompanied the Deddington benefice, which had also been an annoyance, rather than a problem, for Risley. Indeed, his obituary, for which information must have been garnered from Holford, states that he resigned "not meeting with that responsive feeling from some of the parishioners that a yearly expenditure in acts of charity of twice the amounts of the pecuniary profits of his benefice ought to have entitled him to." In fact he had himself raised the question of the level of Queen Anne's Bounty (a fund to support poorer parishes). The local press in 1853 gave the annual value of the benefice at £166 3s. 8d., together with a Vicarage with Glebe house, made up of £85 in lieu of tithes on two farms, £44 from Queen Anne's Bounty, £14 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, £9 from 3 acres of glebe, £5 Easter dues, £7 Surplice fees and £21 from Dr Chamberlain's Benefaction. This was a small income on which to rest a professional family life for a man with ten children, and a governess in the early years, but it was higher than his income when attempting to live on a curate's income or the level of poverty he pleaded successfully at the Woodstock court in 1856. The plight of the children abandoned in the Vicarage in the autumn of 1856, and the much later death of a son released from prison, are visible tokens of the difficulties, but it should be noted that the education of at least two of his children at Huntingdon Grammar School was assisted by charities: one of these, James E Brogden, 39 and born in Great Henny, Essex [one of his father's early parishes], was a surgeon's assistant in Glamorgan in the 1881 census.

Not at issue was Brogden's right of tenure, where his legal background assisted his acute sense of timing: his riposte to the Bishop's scathing comments in 1856 was that "nothing but preferment should ever induce him to resign". He appointed Faulkner as his churchwarden, and consented to the building of the hamlet chapels, with thanks to Risley in respect of Clifton. His first absence lasted 3½ years. The developments in the parish during this time will be summarised separately.

Brogden's second period of attention to his flock lasted for three years, from 1853-6, the last year of which took place under the cloud of two further sequestrations. He organised a second opening of the new schools built in his absence, "exerted himself" over the Coal Fund according to the still friendly local press, quarrelled with the timber works owner Robert Franklin, and then with the postmaster John Caulcott over the Town Pool question, going so far as to organise a petition for his removal from that post. He was a participant in whatever events at Gulliver's (across the road from Risley) in the autumn of 1855 occasioned the row over Barford's curate and provoked a (temporary) breach between Risley and Wilberforce. Risley otherwise did his best to steer clear of all contact with Brogden.

Further sequestration orders in October 1855, and actions by Hatten, Hiron and others in the County Court, combined with dereliction of duty on three Sundays in August 1856, gave the Bishop opportunity to impose a curate whom Risley inducted, whilst the Brogdens – though not immediately their children – left again for London. Once more parish affairs took a separate turn, but after 2½ years' absence Brogden passed the debtors' Court which obliged the Bishop to end the sequestration. Brogden at once gave the curate Burgess notice to quit, and in July 1859 returned to Chater's the bakers to await his reoccupation of the Vicarage. His success had as background a continuing attempt to prevent his return. Faulkner produced a petition of over 100 signatures, and assistant curate Cave compiled a dossier of Brogden's misdoings, seeking to make a case of "scandalous behaviour contrary to the 75th Canon". None of this served its purpose, as Brogden's tenacity and legal expertise led him to counter Cave – the same day – with a denial supported by churchwardens, guardians and eight publicans. The following Easter, his "victory" complete, he saw forwarded to the Bishop a critical petition signed by the bulk of the respectable folk of the town (see Appendix D). There was sympathy for Brogden, as shown by fellow-magistrate Curme, who asked "In what position should a humble individual like myself stand, had my Diocesan the power to swamp what are called my low-Church views by sending two or three of the well-trained Cuddesdon Anglo-Catholics (as in the neighbouring town of Deddington, now set all about by the ears) to assist me?"²

Brogden spent his final five years, having resumed his duties, in exhausting an apparent fund of goodwill (or animus against other Church tendencies), claiming "I have returned to be a peacemaker" and even, when a proposed exchange of livings plan foundered in December 1860, claimed it his "duty [to his friends] to remain". The Risleys were ignored by Brogden when he and Field set up a local Rifle Corps (though Robert Risley had just joined a similar unit at Oxford University). Most offensive was the mysterious removal of the altar picture donated by Risley to the parish twenty years earlier: its return was consequent on a stern order from the Bishop to churchwarden Field. Risley kept his distance thereafter, so far as he was able, given the deceitful allegations of the Vicar's son against his footman, and his being obliged to be consulted about saucy sextons and dead jackdaws: the dinner organised by the High Steward, grocer Sammans, for the marriage of the Prince of Wales saw two venues, one headed by Brogden in the Boys' School, the other by Risley in the old Girls' School. By this time, Risley had to contend with Susan's terminal illness, hence his very human reaction to the duty of burying his successor.

The forlorn intervention of a succession of curates in Brogden's absence, be they the Evangelical Wilson's friends in 1850-3, or the Cuddesdon variety in 1856-9, undoubtedly improved the spiritual care, but they were swiftly compelled to move on, Venables to Worthing, Burgess to Burford, and Egerton to Bloxham School (which he had re-founded, against Risley's advice).