

Aubrey's Life
of
John Graunt
(1620-1674)

Captaine John Graunt¹ (afterwards, major) was borne (ex MSto patris sui) 24 die Aprilis, $\frac{1}{2}$ an houre before eight a clock on a Munday morning, the signe being in the 9 degree of Gemini that day at 12 a clock, Anno Domini 1620.

He was the sonne of Henry Graunt, who was borne 18 January 1592², being Tuesday, at night; et obiit 21 March, 166 $\frac{1}{2}$, being Fryday, between one and two in the morning; buryed in the vault in the new vestrie in St. Michaels church in Cornhill. He was borne in . . . , Hantshire.

His son John was borne at the 7 Starres in Burchin Lane, London, in the parish of St. Michael's Cornhill.

He wrote *Observations on the bill of mortality* very ingeniosely (but I beleeve, and partly know, that he had his hint from his intimate and familiar friend Sir William Petty), to which he made some *Additions*, since printed. And he intended, had he lived, to have writt more on the subject.

He writt also some *Observations on the advance of excise*, not printed: quaere his widowe for them.

To give him his due prayse, he was a very ingeniose and studious person, and generally beloved, and rose early in the morning to his study before shop-time. He understood Latin and French. He was a pleasant facetious companion, and very hospitable.

He was bred-up (as the fashion then was) in the Puritan way; wrote shorthand dextrously; and after many yeares constant hearing and writing sermon-notes, he fell to buying and reading of the best Socinian bookes, and for severall yeares continued of that opinion. At last, about . . . he turned a Roman Catholique, of which religion he dyed a great zealot.

He was free of the drapers' company, and by profession was a haberdasher of small-wares. He had gone through all the offices of the city so far as common-councill-man. Captain of the trayned-bands severall yeares; major, 2 or 3 yeares.— He was a common councill man 2 yeares, and then putt out (as also

¹Aubrey gives the coat: — 'ermine, on a chevron gules 5 besants.'

²159 $\frac{1}{2}$.

of his military employment in the trayned band) for his religion.

He was admitted a fellowe of the Royalle Societie, anno 16... (about 1663).

He broke³... He dyed on Easter eve⁴ 1674; buried on the Wednesday in Easter-weeke in St. Dunstan's church in Fleet Strete under the gallery about the middle (or more west) north side, anno aetatis suae 54.

He had one son, a man, who dyed in Persia; one daughter, a nunne at ... (I thinke, Gaunt). His widowe yet alive.

⁵Major John Graunt dyed on Easter-eve 1674, and was buried the Wednesday followeing in St. Dunstan's church in Fleet street in the body of the said church under the piewes towards the gallery on the north side, i.e., under the peiwes (*alias* hoggsties) of the north side of the middle aisle (what pittie 'tis so great an ornament of the citty should be buried so obscurely!), aetatis anno 54.

Was borne in Burchin lane, at the 7 Starres, in St. Michael's Cornhill parish, at which place he continued his trade till about 2 yeares since.

His 'Observations on the bills of mortality' { 1. Political
2. ... , hath been printed
3. ...

more then once; and now very scarce.

He wrott some 'Observations on the advance of the excise,' not printed; and intended to have writt more of the bills of mortality; and also intended to have written something of religion.

He was by trade a haberdasher of small wares, but was free of the draper's company. A man generally beloved; a faythfull friend. Often chosen for his prudence and justnes to be an arbitrator; and he was a great peacemaker. He had an excellent working head, and was very facetious and fluent in his conversation.

He had gone thorough all the offices of the city so far as common councill man. He was common councill man two yeares. Captaine of the trayned band, severall yeares: major of it, two or three yeares, and then layd downe trade and all other publique employment for his religion, being a Roman Catholique.

Ex MSS. patris ejus:— 'My son, John Graunt, was borne 24th day of April halfe an howre before 8 a clock on a Monday morning anno Domini 1620.

He was my honoured and worthy friend—cujus animae propitietur Deus, Amen.

His death is lamented by all good men that had the happinesse to knowe him; and a great number of ingeniose persons attended him to his grave. Among others, with teares, was that ingeniose great virtuoso, Sir William Petty, his old and intimate acquaintance, who was sometime a student at Brase-nose College.

From '*Brief Lives,*' chiefly of *Contemporaries, set down by John Aubrey, between the Years 1669 & 1696.* Edited by Andrew Clark. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1898.

³i.e. became bankrupt.

⁴Died April 18, buried April 22, 1674.

⁵Remainder written May 26, 1674.