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Charles Tudway 1 (1660-1692).

Charles I was born in 1660 at the end of the interregnum period when King Charles II was restored as England's Monarch. It is possible that he was named by his loyal Royalist father after the new king, signifying the dawning of a new era. Like his other siblings they grew up close to Windsor Castle and the St Georges Chapel due to their father's position as a lay clerk. He would have been 11 when his father died, going with his mother and younger siblings to Essex, presumably to joining her parents where she raised her children as a widow with little independent income. The three elder brothers, Clement 1, Thomas, and Richard would no doubt have been expected to contribute to the upkeep of their mother and siblings, but Charles was just a little too young for that as his education would also have been a priority for the son of a 'gentleman'.

It would appear that Charles followed in the footsteps of his father and older brother in beginning a career in the Church as a chorister. The establishment where he began this is not known, but there is evidence that he came to Wells as a chorister in the Cathedral. The Communar's cash book of 1678-1679 has an entry:

"...various payments to and for Charles Tudway, a chorister, an original bill for making him a coat and breeches and supplying stockings and shoes, is inserted."

Whether this was his first post or if he transferred from elsewhere is not known, but at age 18, Charles 1 is firmly in Wells, and by the looks of things 'on his uppers', meaning he appeared poor and in need of assistance. It appears that his career did not go well as a 'Vicar-Choral' as in January 1684 he had asked for leave of absence, which was denied by the President of the Chapter. This caused him to leave in a fit of pique, thus offending his superiors. He had married Mary Robinson of Wells in 1683, and she would have been pregnant at the time of this incident. Perhaps she was unwell and he needed at home, storming off in anger perhaps at having to make the choice between wife and job. Charles 2, his only child was born and baptised that year in August in the Cathedral, despite his parish being that of St Cuthbert.

However in 1687 he left his wife and son behind going to Antigua at his brother Clement 1's request to help in managing the Parham plantation until Clement died in 1689. Charles then took over running the plantation, as directed by his brother, Clement 1, in his will, at the rate of 12% return on all profits. However, that was not for long, as he became ill in 1693, returning, not to his wife and son, but to Canterbury, where he died and was buried.

It is also mentioned in the family tree that Charles was a 'Captain of the Militia'. Which militia this was and when is not known. Perhaps he took part in the quashing of the Monmouth Rebellion in 1685, presumably as a Royalist. This experience would have been helpful for Charles 2 if he then served in the militia keeping order in Antigua, especially in preventing rebellions by the enslaved. There is no evidence yet found that supports these conjectures.

No other Tudway brother took on the direct management of Parham, this passing to Rachel Tudway (Clement 1's wife) as an absentee plantation owner on Charles 2's death. All of the Tudway brothers who had direct involvement with the slave trade and early plantation life died early, perhaps unable to cope with adjusting to tropical life and succumbing to diseases that caused their respective deaths.

ⁱ Communar's Cash Book 1678-1678.

[Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter of Wells](#)

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