

The Cartwright Archive at Northampton Record Office gives a graphic account of the scale of emigration from some parishes.¹⁰ Over the period 1829-1847 at least 243 people from the village of Aynho went to Canada. It began with two single men and a single woman in 1829; thereafter the emigrants were mostly families: 1830 three families with 14 children; 1831 six families with 30 children and two single men; 1832 three families with 20 children; 1836 four families with 15 children and 11 other adults; 1842 20 people including 7 children; 1845 eight families with 35 children and 9 other adults; and 1847 20 people. The recurrence of family names, including the names of Bye, Betts and Ansty, the three single adults who went first in 1829, suggests that some emigrants went out to test the waters and reported back, encouraging others to follow. The *Northampton Mercury* in 1834 published a letter from John and Ann George dated 22 September 1833, reporting great success in Canada – “we never were so well off before as we are now” – and urging the rest of their family in Aynho to follow them. The squire, Colonel William Cartwright, in answer to the Poor Law Commissioners in 1833 said that 100 had gone and that the benefit to the parish had been “great and immediate”; and in 1847 his annotations on the list of those going showed that he was glad to see the back of some of them. Against the name “Spiers” he wrote “a very good riddance”; against Robbins and Watts he wrote “ditto”; and against Astell he wrote an emphatic “ditto ditto ditto”. Although the parish may have borrowed the money to pay for emigration, the Cartwrights evidently guided the parish’s decisions.

This is borne out by a letter sent to Colonel Cartwright by the churchwarden William Scott who with his fellow churchwarden Edward Holloway accompanied the emigrants to Liverpool in April 1845 to see them off:

“Sir

“It is with pleasure I write to inform you I am just returned from sea after spending a night with our emigrants whom I breakfasted with and left in good health and spirits and hearts full of gratitude for the kindness you have shown them there was not an individual of ours either sick or sorry when I left them this morning at ten o’clock after sailing thirty miles with them and returning by the steam tug vessel which took them out of the river this morning at seven o’clock they would have sail’d before had it not been for contrary winds which I stated to you in my last letter John Turner’s wife particularly

¹⁰ See C(A) Box 85, and Nicholas Cooper, *Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village* (Banbury Historical Society vol 20) pp 209-11.