

Mrs Anne Candler, Poetess

This initial story is taken word by word from a leaflet printed in 1914 entitled “**Pocket Histories of Suffolk Parishes – No 16 Tattingstone**” telling the sad tale of Anne Candler:

“Anne Candler was born in 1740 at Yoxford, in which town her father was in business as a glover. In her twenty-second year she married a worthless scamp from the village of Sproughton who, a year after her marriage, enlisted in the Guards, leaving his young wife totally without means of support. After enduring many privations she became an inmate of Tattingstone Workhouse, where she remained secluded from the world for nearly twenty years. While there she frequently indulged the poetic faculty, and fortunately some of her verses came into the kindly hands of Mrs Elizabeth Cobbold, who, finding the case so sad a one, came forward to help her. Some of the poems were published under the patronage of Mrs Cobbold, and by this means a sum of money was raised sufficient to enable her to leave the Workhouse and hire lodgings for herself, first at Copdock, and later at Holton, near Stratford St Mary, where she died on the 15th September 1814, aged 74.

We quote six verses from the best known of her poems, and after their perusal one feels thankful that a more enlightened age has removed many of the horrors of which she speaks:

*“Reflections on my own situation”
Written in Tattlingstone House of Industry February 1802*

*For many years are past and gone.
How altered I appear:
How many strange events have known,
Since first I entered here?*

*Within these dreary walls confin'd
A lone recluse I live,
And, with the dregs of human kind,
A niggard alms receive.*

*Uncultivated, void of sense,
Unsocial, insincere:
Their rude behaviour gives offence,
Their language wounds the ear.*

*Disgusting objects swarm around,
Throughout confusions reign;
Where feuds and discontent abound,
Remonstrance proves in vain.*

*Insulted with indignant scorn,
Aw'd by tyrannic sway;
A prey to grief each rising morn,
And cheerless all the day.*

*Look down, O God! In me behold
How helpless mortals are,
Nor leave me friendless, poor, and old,
But guide me with Thy care.”*

*Jane Kirk
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