

Daniel Dalton Long-case lock and the Christopher Holtum bracket clock

These clocks are both inscribed as made in Church Lawford and show a similarity of style and detail. Christopher Holtum resided in Church Lawford from c1711 up to his death in 1749 and was possibly making clocks throughout that period. Daniel Dalton Senior and Junior were thus contemporaries of Christopher Holtum and clearly associated in some way, as is evidenced by one of the Daltons taking on the tenancy of his property in 1749 when Christopher died. The inference is that one, or both, of the Daltons were apprenticed to Christopher Holtum and later set up their own businesses. As Daniel Dalton Senior was a carpenter the Daltons may have made cases for Christopher Holtum. On the other hand the similarity could be coincidental: many clocks looked very similar in those days.

Christopher Holtum thirty-hour clock dial

The back of the back plate is dated 1742. This clock dial has obviously been well cleaned and renovated. Only the chapter ring has been re-silvered, as was usually the way for lower cost. Silvering was used to help read the time in candlelight; candles were expensive so as few as possible were used. The chapter ring is fairly simple but with Fleur de lys half-hour marks and with minute marks on the inner part of the ring. Without a minute hand an outer minute ring with Arabic numerals was unnecessary.

The spandrels are the most usual pattern used in Church Lawford clocks (C & W No. 22)ⁱ. The spelling of Lawford is with the *rv* in diphthong style for the W. Judging from this photograph the plain brass inner dial, separate and behind the chapter ring, looks to be hand milled, a common practice with this vintage of clock.

In late 2012 this dial and its movement, without a case, was offered for a private sale in Oxfordshire. It was bought and has returned to Church Lawford.

A thirty hour lantern clock by Christopher Holtum of Church Lawford, 1771

As Christopher died 14th May 1749 the date on this clock is not understood unless it was made by a son or grandson.

Early lantern clock by Christopher Holtum of Church Lawford

Though the inscription is barely legible in this picture the spelling of Lawford has the W in the *rv* form (like a diphthong).

Both dials have lozenges for half hour marks, which could mean they were for the Quaker market or made by a Quaker; that could mean Christopher Holtum was a Quaker. The Masonic Hall clock by Daniel Dalton also has the lozenge marks.

ⁱ Cescinsky and Webster, *English Domestic Clocks*, lists numerous spandrel patterns; six of the Dalton clocks used their No 22 pattern, popular 1715-1745 but some were used later; No. 22 pattern is found on both two-handed and single-hand clocks.

The author is most grateful to Bruun Rasmussen of Copenhagen for their permission to quote their description of the relevant clocks.