

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2018

NEWSLETTER No. 114

FROLIC 2018 – NORWICH

You may read an account in the accompanying Journal of the recent Frolic at the Maid's Head, Norwich. Some 45 members and partners enjoyed the three days very much. The 50th Anniversary publication, "James Woodforde's World: a Chronology", is being distributed to all members who didn't receive their copy at the Frolic.

Ann Brayne, who was unable to attend the Frolic, thanks members at the Frolic for their kind thoughts and for the beautiful flowers.

During the Frolic, I paid a visit to Phyllis Stanley, now living in retirement at the Great Hospital in Bishopgate, Norwich. From her window she looks out over the Swan Pit, the only surviving one in the country. Until the end of the last millennium, Phyllis held numerous offices in the Society, and when she stepped down from them it took four members to replace her.

FROLIC 2019 – NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

The 2019 Frolic will be held at New College, Oxford, between Monday September 23rd and Wednesday September 25th. It will be a privilege to be in this historic venue so closely associated with James Woodforde, but we appreciate that Monday to Wednesday will be less convenient for members of working age. However, it does avoid the difficulties of train travel at weekends. It may also make it easier to arrange excursions. Further details and a booking form will be enclosed with the Spring mailing.

THE COLLINS FAMILY AND CHARLES II

An interesting talk was given in Castle Cary last summer under the auspices of the local History Society. The speaker, Maureen Wincott, daughter of Castle Cary's answer to Pam Ayres, has previously spoken about the Civil War in Ansford and Castle Cary and at that time she discussed the Cary Hoard, a cache of coins probably hidden about 1643 which was discovered a few years ago in the course of renovations on a

shop in the high street. This time she spoke more generally on the Civil War in this area and particularly mentioned the Collins family in Lower Ansford, who were James Woodforde's maternal ancestors.

It is known that after defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1651, the 21-year-old Charles Stuart, the future Charles II, spent the night in Castle Cary on his way to escape to the coast. It was formerly believed that he stayed at the Manor House in Cary, but it's now thought that his hosts that night were the Collins family in Lower Ansford, very likely to have been at the Lower House. When the Parliamentary soldiers came searching for him that night, the story is that Charles and Mr Collins hid in a ditch between Lower Ansford and the Half Moon inn on Ansford Hill, and when the soldiers burst in on Mrs Collins she was alone, calmly reading her bible. Perhaps this story was passed down through the family and was told to James in his turn. He himself lived at the Lower House between 1765 and his father's death in 1771.

JOHN WESLEY'S HOUSE

In September, I had a guided tour of John Wesley's house in the City Road, Shoreditch. He lived there from 1779 until his death there in 1791 at the age of 87, but only in the winter months, as he was touring all the rest of the year. It is a tall narrow house on four floors, with only two small rooms on each floor. One interesting exhibit was Wesley's own black gown which he wore indoors. I wondered whether James Woodforde's "morning gowns" were similar. Another object of interest was a "Chamber Horse", an early exercise machine, which Wesley used regularly. Perhaps James Woodforde would have lived longer had he used an exercise machine, and if he had adopted Wesley's habit of drinking only Sage tea. Revd Samuel Woodforde, the diarist's father, drank Sage tea for his gouty foot (18th February 1769).

John Wesley is buried in the small back garden behind the adjoining Chapel. Incidentally, Margaret and Dennis Thatcher were married in the Chapel.

In the PWS Journal for Autumn 1987, our late Editor Roy Winstanley published an article entitled "The Clarkes and John Wesley", about Sister Clarke's stepson James Clarke and his wife

Susannah Hawley Dawe, who are mentioned by Wesley. The cover of the 1987 Journal has a sketch by Heighes Woodforde of “John Wesley preaching at Castle Cary”.

DIARIES NOW ALL IN PRINT!

For the first time for several years, all seventeen Diary volumes are in print. This is thanks to a limited reprint of Volumes 5, 6 and 9, covering 1772-3, 1774-5 and 1780-81. All Diary volumes, old Journals and other Woodforde material may be obtained from Jenny Alderson of Castle Cary. Contact her on *jenny@aldersons.plus.com*, or ring her on 01963-350765.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Annual subscription for 2019 is due on January 1st. It is £16 for ordinary UK members, £25 for Overseas members, and £10 for Students under 25. Many members now pay their annual subscription by Standing Order, which greatly reduces the Society’s administrative burden. If you do not yet do this but would like to do so in January 2019, then please contact the Treasurer, Ann Brayne, at the address below, for a standing order form, or print the forms on the Website under “Contact”.

If you still wish to pay by cheque, then please use the form below.

To the Treasurer, Mrs Ann Brayne, Long Croft, Whitehough Head, Chinley,
High Peak, SK23 6BX

I enclose my cheque for £..... payable to the Parson Woodforde Society,
for my subscription for the year commencing 1st January 2019

NAME (Please print)

ADDRESS

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TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

During the winter of 1768/9, curate James Woodforde was living at the Lower House, Ansford. On October 26th, he successfully carried out a surgical operation on a cat with a broken rib. The long-running dispute about Castle Cary Church Gallery was under way, and on November 5th, an effigy of Justice Creed was carried through the streets of Castle Cary and burnt on a bonfire in front of his house. On February 7th and February 9th, meetings were held about the Gallery dispute and the planned law-suit between Justice Creed and the Cary Churchwardens, and a plan to partition the Gallery was discussed.

Society's website: www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk
