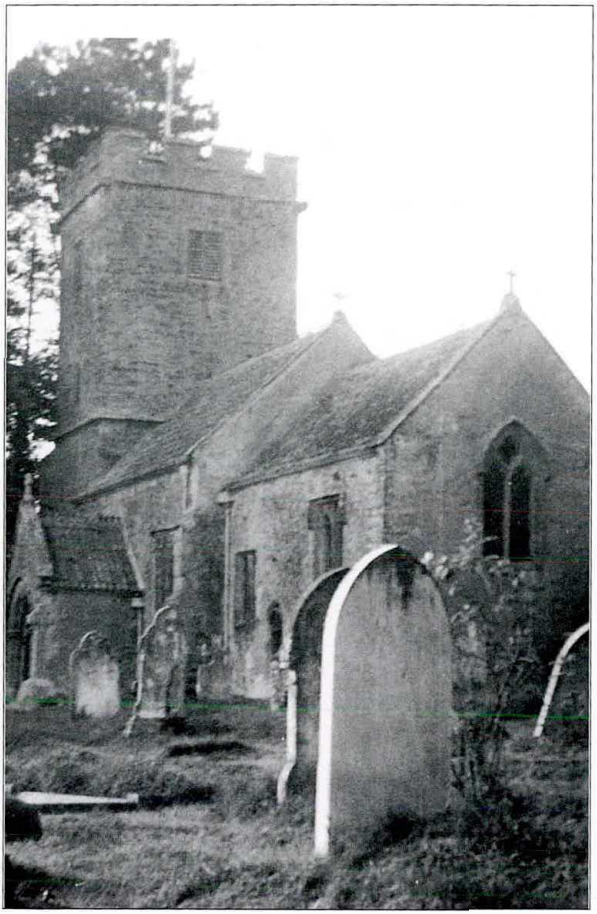
PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY JOURNAL



St Giles, Thurloxton where Woodforde was curate in 1763

VOL. LIII NO. 2 AUGUST 2020

1783

14 August – My Maid Lizzy very ill today, worse than ever
And kept her bed most part of the Day –
Dr Thorne came here – whilst we were at Dinner, and
he dined with us, but obliged to leave us immediately
after Dinner, having a great many Patients to visit –

20 August – Dr Thorne called to see my Servants again this Morn' –
People are daily falling down in the reigning illness

H. Edwards (ed.), *The Diary of James Woodforde, Vol. 10, 1782-84*

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EDITORIAL

The coronavirus has caused, and doubtless by the time you read this will still be causing, much devastation world-wide so that the affairs of this Society will inevitably appear parochial, trivial even, in such a context and the postponement of the annual Frolic until May 2021 hardly more than a very minor inconvenience. Nevertheless, it is not too grand a claim to remind ourselves that 'not by bread alone.....'. Without cultural and artistic endeavours, without writing, music and theatre, Life would be but a pale imitation of what we have all had the good fortune to become accustomed to.

In addition to the pandemic, the global community has been rocked by the circumstances of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the consequent reminder that Black Lives Matter. Whilst we may not all agree with all of the actions and pronouncements made in the name of that movement, all with an interest in eighteenth century history must surely welcome the attention which has subsequently been given to the Slave Trade and its human and economic impact. Carole Child's article in the current issue of the Journal was written prior to Floyd's death but serves as a timely reminder that, in the words of the Oxford historian Paul Langford, slavery was 'one of the central institutions of the British empire' and that few lives, however innocent, can have escaped some contact with that appalling commerce.

Thankfully, not all of the news has been bad. You will be pleased to learn that by the combined efforts of the Society and the Weston PCC sufficient funds have been raised to ensure the professional restoration and re-hanging of Samuel Woodforde's important portrait of his uncle, our Parson. This has been a magnificent achievement from which all concerned can derive a great deal of satisfaction. Particular thanks must go to John Hurst for his co-ordination of this great effort.

Congratulations must also go to Margaret Bird on the completion of 30 years of work on the diary of the Norfolk brewer Mary Hardy, the fruits of which you can read about in the following pages. It is a triumph which deserves celebration by all with an interest in diaries and the history of Norfolk. It was a great pity that the completion of the final volumes could not be marked, as was planned, with the

launch at Norwich Cathedral. Here our President considers the overall achievement whilst the Venerable Bill Jacob focuses on the spiritual and social forces at work in Mary Hardy's day in Norfolk. Congratulations must also go to another of our members, Mr Francis Witts, the tenth and final volume of whose great-great-grandfather's diaries, published as *The Complete Diary of a Cotswold Parson*, will appear later this summer.

Jenny Alderson reports that there has been a 'mini-boom' in the sale of the Society's diary volumes, a reflection, no doubt of the increase in reading generally during the lock-down. My own reading, reflected in a short piece in the pages which follow, has included the three volumes of *The Letters and Memorials* of that witty, acerbic, hugely intelligent and so sadly unfulfilled woman, Jane Carlyle. After Jane, I wanted something less sour and full of human life benevolently perceived and, confined to the country, wanted more of the city. This meant *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb* in the volumes edited by E.V. Lucas. People that live in green fields can easily give the impression, as Wordsworth did to Mary, of doubting whether 'a Liver in Towns had a Soul to be Saved', but there is no one as eloquent as Charles at praising 'Streets, streets, streets, markets, theatres [and] churches'. Following the publication of Elia's famous *Dissertation upon Roast Pig*, incidentally, the Lambs seem to have been almost as frequent recipients of gifts of pig as the Test Match Special team (ah! cricket, remember that?) were of offerings of cake. If Woodforde's diary had been published in his lifetime what unexpected gourmet delights might have turned up at Weston Parsonage! Perhaps not whole pigs but pigs' ears, certainly.

CHARLES ANSON: 'A MODEST, SOBER, GOOD KIND OF MAN'

When James Baldwin, the Rector of Lyng, died in 1783 – news communicated to Woodforde by 'the Butcher's Lad' – he was succeeded by the absentee pluralist (Rector of Oxnead and Vicar of Buxton) John Arden. Eventually, without having secured for himself the posthumous honour of being mentioned in Woodforde's diary, Arden resigned the living in 1794 making way for the recently-ordained Charles Anson. It cannot be a coincidence that Arden had been the Domestic Chaplain to Anson's maternal grandfather, George Venables Vernon, Baron of Kinderton. He had, presumably, been occupying the living – if not the rectory – until such time as Charles came of age and qualification.

Charles Anson came from a large family: George Adams Anson and Mary Venables Vernon having produced eight boys and three daughters.[1] George's mother was the sister of George, the circumnavigating admiral, and Thomas, a dilettante and creator of most that is magnificent at Shugborough Hall, Staffordshire. Both of these brothers died without issue and they were succeeded by their sister's son, George Adams, who added Anson to his name and followed Thomas as MP for Lichfield. Charles's mother, Mary, was a daughter of George Venables Vernon, 1st Baron Vernon, of Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire.

The third son, Charles had entered Christ Church, Oxford, at the age of 18 in 1788. He graduated BA in 1792 and MA in 1795, between which times he had been ordained deacon in 1793 and priest the following year. Both ordinations had taken place at Rose Castle, the palace of the Bishop of Carlisle, his uncle Edward Venables Vernon who, in 1808, was to become Archbishop of York and, after inheriting the Harcourt estates in Oxfordshire, was later to add Harcourt to his name.[2] He died at the age of 90 in 1847.

Charles's connections were such that within a month of becoming a priest – on 31 August 1794 – he had been presented to the living of Lyng by his eldest brother, Thomas. He was 24 years of age. A fortnight before this, however, he had conducted the marriage ceremony at Holkham of Thomas 'of the Parish of Colwick in the County of Stafford', to the 15 year-old Anne Margaret Coke,

daughter of 'Coke of Norfolk', the Earl of Leicester. The parish register indicates that the couple were married by licence 'by me Charles Anson Student of Christ Church Oxford', where he perhaps remained in residence for a further two years before, on 8 August 1796, Woodforde wrote in his Diary that –

> It being a fine Morning, I drove down to Lyng
> And made the Revd Mr Anson rector of that Place
> My first Visit. He is but very lately come to reside –
> He is quite a young Man, very fair, of great Family –
> He has at present two younger Brothers with him

Within a week the visit had been returned. On 13 August –

> Mr Anson of Lyng with one of his Brothers, called
> On me this Morning and stopped better than ½ Hour –

Although his days as a generous entertainer were drawing to a close at this stage of his life, the following month Woodforde sent 'a note to Mr Anson of Lyng to desire his and his brothers Company to Dinner' but, alas, 'a genteel Answer' revealed them to be 'already engaged'. A meeting over dinner was further postponed when , in October, an indisposition meant that he could not take up an invitation from Mr Stoughton of Sparham to meet the Anson brothers.

The following spring – that of 1797 – saw a change in the diarist's fortunes and on 26 April, he drove his little cart to first Stoughton's and then Lyng where 'Anson being gone to Aylsham', he left a note with the housekeeper 'Mrs Wood who had lived with the Family upwards of 25yrs'. The note was clearly an invitation to dinner, for on 1 May Anson paid him 'a Morning visit' presumably to accept for the next day

> Mr Custance & Son Will^{m}, Mr Anson of Lyng
> and Mr Stoughton of Sparham, dined & spent the
> Afternoon with us, till near 9 in the Evening –

The entertainment was certainly lavish for –

> We gave them to Dinner, Salmon & Shrimp Sauce,
> Ham & a Couple of Nice young Chicken boiled,
> a saddle of Mutton rosted & plumb Pudding,
> Potatoes, Colly-flower, Broccoli, Spinage & Cucumber –
> After, 3 rosted Pigeons & asparagus, Damson

Tarts, Tartlets & Custards – Dessert. Oranges,
Almonds & Raisins, dryed Apples & others –
After Coffee & Tea we got to Cards

Happily for Woodforde, who had spent 1/6d per pound on 5lbs of the 'very dear' fine fresh Salmon, at limited loo he and Nancy between them won 13/-.

The following week he but not Nancy, 'there being no Ladies', was invited to Lyng, together with Stoughton, Colonel Lloyd, old Mr Hammerton of Lyng and 'one Powel a young Farmer'. The table was comparably, if not quite so splendidly, furnished as was that of Weston Parsonage –

We had for Dinner, some Rice-Soup, boiled Leg
of Lamb, with the loin fryed & Spinage, baked
plumb Puddings, rost Beef &c – Then Veal Collops
a Fowl rosted with a Pudding in its Breast, Crabbs,
Custards, Cheesecakes &c – Dessert Apples only

What then follows is then best described in the words which the editor of Volume 15 of the Society's edition of the Diary, Peter Jameson, following Beresford, chose to employ:

The next eleven lines are scribbled out and made illegible either by the Diarist or by someone else; if the later comment in the entry on the boisterous character of Mr Anson's other guests is any guide, they may refer to unseemly behaviour.

Beresford calls it an 'unseemly carouse'. Feeling unwell, Woodforde himself left at 8 unlike 'The other part of the Company which was to sup there'. The entry concludes –

I feel sorry for Anson as he appears a modest,
Sober, good kind of man – It is much but
they keep him up almost all night, being
pretty good ones at the Bottle.

The two men met once more that year when on 17 July 'Mr Anson and a Brother of his' paid him a visit, staying about half an hour and 'drinking a Glass of Wine with us'.

More than a year then passes before Woodforde, now almost house-bound, is next visited by Anson who is 'with two of his Brothers, Frederick and [ ]', unfortunately the name is omitted.

Shugborough Hall, Staffs – Early home of Charles Anson (Courtesy of Roy Creamer).

Later that year Woodforde hears from 'the old Apparitor Thos Roberson, aged 80 Years of age', that the Archdeacon's Visitation was to take place on 28 September and 'the Revd Mr Anson' has been appointed Preacher. Woodforde, of course, was unable to attend so we learn nothing of Charles Anson's performance in the pulpit.

There are a number of references in Woodforde's diary to Anson's brothers and, especially, to Frederick.[3] Frederick, who was nine years younger than Charles, appears to have visited his brother during the long, summer vacation when he was a fellow of All Souls, Oxford. Like Charles, he was ordained by his uncle at Carlisle. On becoming a priest in 1803 he was straightaway inducted into the Vernon family church at Sudbury and, four years later, he married Anne Levett of Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. In 1826 he was made a canon of Southwell and in 1839 was appointed Dean of Chester, a post which he retained until his death in 1867 at the age of 89.

The 1861 Census gives an interesting glimpse into Frederick's home at that time. He was, of course, living in the Deanery (what is now Bishop's House) in Abbey Square. Living with him and his

wife were two unmarried daughters, Lucy and Georgina, and a son, also Frederick ('Canon of Windsor'), together with a housekeeper, two ladies' maids, a house maid, a kitchen maid, a butler, a footman and a page (the Bishop, his wife and two daughters, by contrast, made do with but four servants). One wonders if, in old age, Dean Frederick ever looked back on the days when he would stay at Lyng in Norfolk with his brother Charles, where they were looked after by the family's faithful Mrs Wood.

As well as making fleeting appearances in the pages of Woodforde's *Diary*, Frederick is also encountered, although not to best advantage, in one of Maria Edgeworth's *Letters from England.* In 1818 she was visiting relatives in the Midlands and at Foston Hall, just a couple of miles from Sudbury –

> We met no one.....but a Mr Frederick Anson, brother of Lord Anson's, who had been years ago a rejected lover of Miss Sneyd's [of Byrkley Lodge, Staffs, and a cousin of Maria's] and who has since consoled himself with a wife and '6 squalling brats'. How easily affairs of the heart are settled by most men.[4]

If Frederick's brother Charles was ever similarly afflicted he never did 'console himself' for he remained unmarried.

Back at Lyng at the turn of the century, Charles, in addition to paying an annual visit to the ailing Woodforde, would also send him gifts – on one occasion a leash of partridges, and on another some gudgeons, which were fried to accompany a goose. Following a visit paid on 13 July 1801, Woodforde –

> Sent Briton this Morn' to Mr Anson's of Lyng
> after a Puppey promised me by him, and a
> very nice little bitch he sent me back, a reddish
> Colour, all over – quite of the fairy Size, there=
> =fore we name her Mab

The last we hear of Anson in the Diary is on 8 February 1802 when –

> Mr Press Custance told Briton this Morning (by whom
> I sent to him Weston House Newspapers) that
> he received a Letter from Mr Anson of
> Lyng, now at Bath, & desired his Compt. to us.

In 1804 Charles was given another Norfolk parish by his brother Thomas, that of Mautby, near Great Yarmouth, and the following

year, doubtless owing to the influence of his uncle Edward, he was made Archdeacon of Carlisle – a role in which he was preceded by the theologically hugely influential William Paley – and Rector of Great Salkeld, a few miles from Penrith. As W.M. Jacob has pointed out, at this time diocesan officers, such as archdeacons, needed to be pluralists because their only income otherwise would be from the fees collected from clergy at their visitations and in their courts.[5] At the time of his death in 1827 Anson still held all three, widely separate livings (even the Norfolk parishes were more than 30 miles apart). My assumption was, however, that his duties as archdeacon would necessarily mean a move to the Eden valley, probably to the remarkable fortified rectory at Great Salkeld. However, an examination of the Lyng parish registers shows that it was there that Charles Anson chose to spend by far the greater part of his time.

Conclusive evidence of Anson's preference for the banks of the Wensum comes from his will.[6] It was made three years before his death which was in 1827 and is dated – 'this 25th day of April 1824 Lyng'. It is an unusually informal document, suggesting that it was made in something of a rush – "As I may not from circumstances have an opportunity afforded me of putting it into a more legal form".[7] He remained unmarried and the principle beneficiaries were his surviving brothers and sisters and his god-children but of interest too, not least because it says something of the focus of his concerns, is the very first stipulation –

> I wish my landed property in this parish to be sold towards payment of my just debts but that the portion of it lying intermixed with the pleasure ground belonging to the parsonage shall be offered to the next incumbent at a fair and saleable price without making any extraordinary charge.[8]

To James More he gave fifty pounds 'for his faithful service' and to 'William Cook and George Cook, sons of my old valued servant William Cook I bequeath the sum of fifteen pounds each towards placing them out in some trade or business' and, 'as a trifling token of friendship and remembrance' he left 19 guineas to William Repton, Solicitor of Aylsham and son of the famous landscape gardener, Humphry.

Not only did Charles Anson live at Lyng, he must have grown to love the place for the very last line of his will reads: 'It is my wish

and desire if I should die in this county to be buried under my own seat in the Chancel of Lyng Church'. Whether he did die in Norfolk and whether he is buried as he clearly hoped I do not know, but there is every reason to doubt it for the funeral service took place at fashionable St George's, Hanover Square. Perhaps his executors, his brothers Lt. Gen. Sir George Anson K.C.B. and the Rev^{d} Henry Anson, thought that more appropriate for a member of what Woodforde called 'a great Family'. Whatever the reason, there can be little doubt that his parishioners in Norfolk to whom he had ministered for more than thirty years, will have been sorry not to follow him, as Woodforde's had done, to his grave.

REFERENCES

1. According to Namier & Brooke, *The House of Commons, 1754–1790, II, Members A-J*, 1964, Adams Anson had 8 sons and 3 daughters. The three daughters were – Mary (b.1763), Anne (b.1768), & Catherine Juliana (b.1780), and the boys were – Thomas (b.1767), George (b.1769), Charles (b.1771), William (b.1772), Henry (b.1774), Edward (b.1775), Sambrooke (b.1778) and Frederick (b.1779).
2. Edward was very fond of hunting and Augustus Hare relates that 'he was very near refusing the archbishopric because he thought if he accepted he should have to give it up. He consulted a friend, who said that he must take counsel with others. "Of course, I should never join the meet", said the Archbishop, "but you know I might fall in with the hounds by accident." After some time the friend came back and said on the whole the party considered that the Archbishop might hunt, provided he did not shout'. *The Story of My Life, Vol. 2*, 1896.
3. In addition to the occasion already quoted (29 Aug. 1798), Frederick came to Weston Parsonage on 28 June 1799 and 19 June 1800.
4. Letter to Sophy Ruxton, 17 Dec. 1818 in C. Colvin (ed.), *Maria Edgeworth: Letters from England, 1813–1844*.
5. W. M. Jacob, *The Clerical Profession in the Long Eighteenth century 1680–1840*, 2007.
6. National Archives, PROB 11/1730/415.
7. National Archives, *op. cit.*
8. National Archives, *op. cit.*

BRITISH DIARISTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH & NINETEENTH CENTURIES No. XXXX:

John Carrington, Farmer of Bramfield, His Diary, 1798-1804. Volume 1; Hertfordshire Record Society.

John Carrington was 72 years of age when he commenced keeping a diary. He had been born in the village of Tewin, Hertfordshire in 1726 where his father was a gardener, possibly head gardener, for Lady Cathcart of Tewin Water, where, age fifteen or so, he began work as an under-gardener. Some time later by 1750 he was employed by Richard Warren of Malden Hill, near Tewin, who in 1760 gave him the tenancy of Bacon's Farm in nearby Bramfield where he remained for the rest of his life. His son William continued there well into the nineteenth century.

John married Elizabeth Waple in Shadwell in 1767. Their son John had been baptised at Bramfield in 1763, then Mary Ann (known as Poll), in 1769 and then William in 1777. Elizabeth 'my Dame', some twelve years younger than her husband, had died in 1797 a year before the Diary opens. By the 1790s John, or Jack as his father called him, was the landlord of the Rose and Crown at Tewin and had a large family. Mary Ann would have been kept busy running the household with its constant visitors, the numerous children and grand-children of their father's four sisters and their mother's relations who were tradespeople and inn keepers both locally and in London. Over the years there had been several lodgers in the household and other visitors would be given a bed for the night. Mary Ann did not marry until 1814 and William ran the day-to-day work of the farm.

The parish of Bramfield had a population of 214 persons according to the Census of 1801, living in 28 houses, while Tewin was somewhat larger with 73 houses and 473 inhabitants. Bacon's Farm was half a mile from the village and on a survey taken in 1810 was one hundred and sixty acres in extent comprising eighteen fields, the largest being twenty-eight acres and the smallest, the pightle, just over one acre in extent.

Farming underpinned the local economy and nearby Hertford was the market town for produce of every kind, held on Saturdays; John hardly ever missed the two and a half mile well- trodden road to buy

and sell, meet friends and socialise. He usually recorded prices achieved for livestock and the staple commodities of wheat, barley, oats and peas, remarking on the steady increases as the century drew to a close. St Albans was another frequently visited centre where administrative business was transacted, again increasing with the threats posed by hostilities with France.

John noted down the state of the weather especially when unusual or extreme events took place. The 1790s were a decade of extremes, sometimes intensely hot bringing drought and water shortages as springs and water courses ran dry, but more often there were periods of intense cold, with heavy falls of snow, succeeded by widespread flooding, endless rain and strong gale force winds and bitterly cold. Such conditions seriously affected the food supply.The harvest of 1799, begun in August, was not finally finished until the beginning of October. This was unheard of, livestock was short of fodder and ploughing could not start due to the waterlogged ground. Poor harvests meant high prices so that by 1801 wheat per load at Hertford market was at an all time high of five pounds eighteen shillings and was the cause of much unrest. Farmers and others benefitted from this, John along with others, but he was always aware of the plight of the less fortunate and as a parish officer took steps to subsidise the price of wheat.

When the Diary opens vigorous efforts were already being made nationally to enrol sufficient men into the local Militias. The threat of invasion by French forces was taken seriously, an Act of Parliament of 1797 was passed to raise a Supplementary Militia beside the existing one and the quota for Hertfordshire required five hundred recruits. As a Chief Constable John had the arduous task of listing the men to be ballotted. In addition, as an Assessor and Collector of Taxes his workload increased as ever more taxes were imposed as hostilities intensified. Taxes had to be assessed, collected and paid in to the Commissioners at St Albans town hall and he would have been responsible for some large sums of money. He was also an overseer of the poor, a surveyor of the highways and checked weights and measures. John's work would have been made easier thanks to his long residence in the neighbourhood and consequent friendship with local landowners and their servants, farmers and their workers, tradespeople, publicans and the poor.

Apart from St Albans town hall most other business would take place at an inn and invariably would end with a dinner.

During the years before he kept his diary, John had been in the habit of recording any unusual and interesting people and events in what he called his Arithmetic Book. This had been written carefully in a different hand and John's entries were scattered in any available blank space, including accidents and the weather. Christmas Eve 1796 was the coldest night anyone could remember, people actually froze to death and John narrowly escaped a similar fate as he came home in his cart from St Albans; he was taken out almost dead and for weeks lost the use of his right arm. Short entries recalled the executions of Dick Turpin and Jonathan Wild and the King of France. On the 15 September 1784 he recorded how Vincenzo Lunardi, having ascended in his balloon from the Artillery Ground, Finsbury landed near Tewin at Standon Green End in a field. He threw out a line to a young woman and was pulled down by her who then ran off thinking he was the devil. A present of five guineas soon calmed her fears and a crowd collected to see him. William Baker of Bayford Bury took him home in his carriage where Lunardi stayed for a week or so.

An excursion to Sheerness in Kent was recorded for 22 October 1797 when John went with his brother-in-law and a Mr Aylon to see Mr Aylon's son on board the *Victory*. Passing through London having slept at cousin Cooks at Billingsgate they boarded a vessel for Gravesend. After breakfast and looking round the town for two hours they set out on foot for Chatham. On arriving at Sheerness the only place available to pass the night was at the house of a ship's boatman for one shilling each. John's bed was too short and they were glad to leave. In the morning they were rowed out to the *Victory*, moored at Black Stakes, where they were well received and had breakfast. Returning to Chatham, the Master of the Works, a Mr Boddington showed them around and took them on board a new ship of ninety-eight guns, finished but not launched, to be named the *Temeraire*. They got back home to Hertfordshire on the Wednesday.

On 20 March 1796 John wrote two entries which were taken up with the efforts he and Mr Chapman made to save Thomas Witty from the gallows; he had been found guilty of sheep stealing and was

sentenced to death. He had stolen "1 fat sheep out of a drove passing to London, value 1 guinea, in November last". He was thirty-two years old and had a wife and four children and was in Hertford Goal awaiting execution. John and Mr Chapman set out on horseback for London on the Sunday morning to petition their local MPs for a reprieve. "Made application to them all for the poor fellow". Their efforts were rewarded when an order for a reprieve, signed by the Duke of Portland, came down to the gaoler at Hertford the night before the execution. Instead of being hanged Thomas Witty was sentenced to seven years transportation to Botany Bay. However, a note explains that he did not leave prison until October 1797 when he was taken to the Lion hulk at Portsmouth. It is not known if he ever got sent to Australia, he could have died in the hulk or even been allowed to go free as sometimes happened.

The Diary entries were not written in note books but on loose sheets of paper, often on the reverse of offcial forms, notices and old posters. They were bound together much later on in the nineteenth century.

The Diary opens on 10 March 1798 with what would become a familiar routine, a journey on horseback to St Albans to the Angel Inn where he met the Marquis of Salisbury, the mayor and different justices and local administrators. Their purpose was to raise the Supplementary Militia. John was paid one guinea for his trouble. "Staid all night. The Marquess gave us a good dinner or rather supper. Very late." John's spelling was often somewhat eccentric. The next entry was not until Easter Monday 9 April when he had a bad fall, tripping over some hurdles in the Red Field coming home from the Rose and Crown in the dark. Over the ensuing months John took many rides on his horse Diamond to St Albans and other collection points. On Friday 11 May he made his way to the Bull at Ware to pay in all taxes collected, except £32. 16s. 8d, to Mr Bye of Ware Park, the Receiver General of Taxes. The outstanding sum was not collected and paid in until October. John spent a lot of time and trouble to no avail when little or no business could be done. This was often due to the relevant people not turning up, not surprisingly in cases where they had been ballotted for militia duty, non-arrival of correct forms or no forms at all and as in most cases, over assessment. In October there was a "great meeting at the Grandison

Arms, Bramfield, as Esqr Emmitt had given notice of his appeal against the poor rate last Quarter Sessions as being over rated ... and was settled very amicably with a good dinner". All this after numerous meetings with the assistance of two attorneys. The month of June was taken up with sheep shearing and a visit to Bacon's farm by Mr and Mrs Follett who kept the Salopian Coffee House at Charing Cross; they stayed from the 9th to the 24th. After they left Mrs Parker and Nanny Pierce came for a week. John took them back to London in his son's cart, pulled by Whitefoot, and came back with Mrs Beck and her maid and young John Beck. "Put up my mare at the Bear and Ragged Staff, Smithfield." The Beck family were the children and grandchildren of his sister Mary. July was a busy month with more visitors, the christening of his grandchild George Carrington and attending the ringing feast at Hertford. This was an important annual civic event held at the Town Hall where some one hundred and thirty people sat down to dinner. The dinner was provided by Mrs Ramsey who kept the Falcon in Fore Street where John changed into his best clothes. Another feast on a similar scale was given by Henry Cowper to his workmen who were building his new house, John also enjoyed the good dinner washed down with three barrels of beer. The Cowpers were local landowners.

July also saw an early start to the harvest on which so much depended, a good crop of wheat was noted. Reapers would be up at dawn with a long day ahead for which they demanded five meals a day plus drink. Harvest was finished on 25 August before the more uncertain weather in September. Militia business was still in progress, lots were drawn for one man per parish. The three parishes for which John was responsible provided two labourers and one porter who had to be sworn in on the 22nd. When that day came only one man turned up and he had found a substitute, the other two were not to be found. At the beginning of September the Folletts were back at the farm and when they left Mary Ann went with them. After a heavy thunderstorm at the Bush Fair, where John bought some live stock on behalf of his neighbour at Tewin Water House, the next two days were fine enough for a "Great cricket match single wicket." Mr William Fennex from London played both matches. He was originally from Bedfordshire and according to a note he was an innovative batsman and an excellent bowler. He was paid to play

and betting on the outcome was usually heavy. September was licence renewal month for public houses which was conducted at St Albans Town Hall. A licence cost one pound sixteen shillings and six pence. All the local publicans attended including the three widows from the public houses in the village of Codicote. Everyone dined at the Red House kept by Thomas Piggott, a relative of John's mother. Various statute fairs were also held this month, all ending with a good dinner, there were seventy at the White Horse, Watton at five shillings a head. John hired S. Freeman for six pounds ten shillings for the year, in what capacity he does not say. Bramfield tithe feast was held on 5 November and in the evening he was at the Rose and Crown for the club night. Clubs and societies were organised for different reasons and many villages had a benefit club for the purpose of saving money for funeral costs or doctors fees. John belonged to several in the area.

Swearing in recruits for the Supplementary Militia was still going on, Reeves, the missing man from Paul's Walden, appeared to have been found and was given a month to find a substitute. Closer to home, Billy Johnson, the brother of his daughter-in-law Sall, had apparently enlisted in the Essex Iight horse regiment and gone to Ireland. They were keen to get him back especially as he appeared to be married. This was eventually achieved some months later when John and his son and good friend Mr Randall applied to their local MP who gladly wrote a letter to Colonel Burgoyne in London who in turn sent in a petition to the Duke of York. "Sunday the 18 went to London on foot from Cheshunt. Rode so far and Curries brought the horse back. Slept one night at Mrs Goodalls, 2 nights at Becks and 1 night at Cooks. Came home on Thursday with brother Hasler in Flack's coach to Ware for 5s 6d inside. Saw the King go to the Parliament House on Tuesday the 20th with his great state coach and 8 horses, cream coloured and very finely dressed and the procession very quiet. Stayed 1/2 an hour and then returned as quiet home. Went to the Treasury to Mr Pollock and took for Mr Hopkins £30. Went to the bank and took £10 10s for 2 ½ qrs stock in 4 per & in 3 per cent". Mr Hopkins was Lieutenant Timothy Hopkins RN, one of several people who had lodged at the farm over the years. He had been pressed into the Navy as a young man where he served "upwards of 60 years as a good & faithful servant". He had been on

board the *Duke* man-of-war in company with the *Victory* when that ship went down with all hands in 1743 during a terrific storm. Thursday 29th saw John in Hertford when the colours were presented to the Hertford Association of Gentlemen by Alderman Gillman the Mayor and also brewer and grocer. They were conveyed to All Saints' church and after a sermon were taken in procession to Bayley Hall where they were then presented to the captain, young Baron Dimsdale, the second son of Dr Dimsdale who had inoculated the Imperial Russian family. Three volleys were fired and they all marched back to the Town Hall and had dinner given by the Captain, some hundred people in all. The colours were said to have cost £12.

January 1799 ended with one of the heaviest falls of snow anyone could remember, the snow fell all night and into the next day. The drifts blocked the lanes and snow was blown through the roof tiles. Nevertheless Sall at the Rose and Crown managed to get a post chaise to take her to St Albans where her sister Sukey was dangerously ill; she died three days later. A few hardy souls attended the Saturday market – John heard of several who had perished in the drifts one of whom was Mr Raymond, a local farmer who, having walked to the market, was found the next day within yards of his house. "Very sober man", Carrington added. Mrs Woodcock of Impington however had a miraculous escape when returning from Cambridge market. She fell into a pit of snow and apparently survived for eight days before she was found.

March saw a resumption of all the various parish and municipal meetings, Watton turnpike, vestry day at the Grandison Arms, appointing overseers at St Albans and Lord Cowper's wood sale at the Rose and Crown. John also felt it worthwhile to take Mary Ann to Ware to see Joe the Hatter on his way to be hanged. His real name was Alexander Hobbs age twenty-two, and he had been found guilty of highway robbery at Chipping Barnet. April weather still continued cloudy, wet and cold, so much so that there was no new grass or vegetation and most of the farmers had not sown half their barley by the end of the month. At Bacon's farm the sheep were fed on hay and oats mixed with malt dust and bran. On Sunday 28th John set out for London inside Ramsey`s coach in order to bank £40 for Mr Hopkins,he slept at the Salopian Coffee House and returned

by coach to Hertford. Hertford May Fair was held on Whit Monday 13th where plenty of livestock was for sale. John sold his horse Gilbert for twelve guineas to Mr Archer, a butcher at Hertford. A manor court was held at the end of the month by order of Francis Earl Cowper and as a copy holder of a house on Tewin Upper Green John was obliged to attend. John would make a note when a funeral took place particularly if the deceased was a well-know character or if the ceremony was on a grand scale such as that of George Augustus Cowper back in the winter, or that of old Will Watson, a wheeler, who died suddenly age seventy-seven.

Another sudden death this summer was that of John Whittenbury of Bramfield who succumbed to a violent fever "about 3 o'clock afternoon" that had carried off several of the villagers. As far as John and the adults of his family were concerned they appeared to enjoy good health, for the infants it was very different. Jack and Sall Carrington had ten children altogether, eight of whom died as babies, George died age twenty-five and only Ann reached old age, dying in 1873. July and August were busy months with a lot of John's time taken up with quite lengthy journeys on horseback. From one visit to St Albans he went on to Hemel Hempstead to collect a warrant for his expenses due from militia meetings. These were a generous one guinea per visit and he could always reclaim any money spent on offcial business such as food and overnight expenses. Almost every day in the summer months John had somewhere to go and something to do, he was equally at home in a local inn as he was in grander surroundings. On Monday 22 July he rode over to Earl Burford's to collect fifty pounds. "Was treated very kindly by his Lordship with good roast beef and beer." From there he went to a cricket match at Gusterd Wood between Kimpton and the Datchworth lads who won by great odds. At the end of the month he was having dinner in the Great Marble Hall of Cole Green House the residence of Earl Cowper, all the tenants had been invited with the Earl presiding at the head of the table. A Mr Mullet managed to break the glass door.

From August of this year John made a record of the price gained by the staple crops at Hertford market every Saturday. September saw the return of Billy Johnson from Ireland, having got his release from military service, and a family dinner was held at the Rose & Crown

to celebrate, hosted by old Mr Johnson. The harvest at Bacon's Farm was finally got in at the start of October though many other farmers still had wheat and barley in the fields, much of which was spoilt by the almost endless wet weather. John noted the flooded lands as he travelled about, managing to attend five Statute Fairs, view two properties for sale and settle accounts for the month. Bramfield tithe feast was held at the beginning of November, the next day the traditional perambulation of the parish boundaries took place and a few days later he was on the coach for London. Commenting on the dearness of the times after a vestry meeting had been called to give help to large families, it had been decided that those with three or four children would be given half a peck of flour each week and other relief. December started badly for John when he was taken in by a swindler who came to the house selling Dr Willis's colic remedy. The price was two shillings for a quart bottle which turned out to be nothing but water.

Although there was no let-up in the bountiful dinners John attended there are signs that the times were becoming hard for some – there was the suicide of a young man with a family, housebreaking and more relief ordered for the poor. On into the New Year of 1800, John had to attend the Quarter Sessions at Hertford for the trial of Mrs Page, brazier, who was found guilty of buying two iron wedges, value six pence, knowing them to be stolen. She spent ninety-nine days in prison before she was released when her conviction was overturned. February Sunday 2nd "My sister Martha Warby buried at Tewin Church aged 86 years. A great number of people at the funeral. She died Monday morning the 27 January last month. She was a very charitable good woman, good to the poor and had been a good housekeeper at Tewin Lower Green upwards of fifty years at the butcher's shop there, joining the bakers there. She died as she lived, much respected and lamented by all. Had brought up a large family of her own, 5 sons, 2 daughters in great credit, and after that supported her grand-children." A less pleasant side to John's administrative duties was the obligation to attend the execution of felons; the Hertford Assizes in March had many felons on trial but only eight were condemned and two of them hanged – for violent robbery. Apparently thousands watched in the field near the house where one of the condemned lived "on the

right as you go to Hunsdon". Afterwards he went with his friend Mr Randall to the Crown at Wilford for dinner and then bought some houses from Mr Aylon for eighty pounds. The weather still continued wet but not so much as to cancel the three day race meeting at Brocket Hall, John attended the last two days and saw the Prince of Wales. At the beginning of June his old lodger Lieutenant Timothy Hopkins died aged about eighty-two which required a journey to London to acquaint his agent and inform his sister of the death of her brother. Some days later he took his sister-in-law and Mary Ann back to London to collect the sixty-eight pounds due for board and funeral expenses. While there they made a family party to the Royal Circus Theatre, price two shillings each in the pit, where Mrs Cook had her pocket picked.

Earlier in the month John was at the Grand Review of the yeomanry in Hatfield Park, another occasion graced by members of the Royal Family. He listed all the local troops of horse and foot which were there and who all had a good dinner in the park provided by the Marquis of Salisbury. There was said to be some one thousand five hundred and ninety-four troops taking part. The harvest this year was done in good time with the price of wheat increasing steadily, over four pounds per load at this time. Farmers had to be alert to the fluctuation in prices. Friday 12 September on his way home, John called into a local hostelry and "staid too late, got merry & foolishly said I would sell my wheat for 10s per bushel, but Will would not, for he sold it for £4 6s 0d per load". However, he did sell at the cheaper rate to the Association of Poor Men held at the Green Dragon Hertford. Watton Statute Fair was well attended possibly because there was a travelling show of wild animals with a large elephant and lions. At the fair John hired a man and boy and on the way back his horse Diamond managed to break one of Mrs Deard's windows which cost him 1/6d. The remaining months of the year followed the familiar pattern with a combination of farming matters, local administration and friends and family. It had been, as he recorded at the end of the year, an extraordinary one, mainly from the high cost of basic foodstuffs, when he sold wheat for five guineas a load and barley for the same amount a quarter.

On Monday 12 January 1801 the Quarter Sessions were held at Hertford, where John served on the jury, with the proceedings

taking up the entire day until 8 o'clock in the evening. Fortunately no one was hanged; those found guilty were given short sentences of a few months including William Warner found guilty of uttering a counterfeit seven shilling piece. On the 27th John was at a wedding at William Hunsdon's farm when two couples got married. "Gave 4s. Great plenty & Mr. Hoare the fiddler".

Throughout the Diary there are entries recording when he had too much to drink, losing his way as a result, falling off his horse and requiring the assistance of a boy with a lantern. Friday 14 February it was Mr Randall's boy Stotan who escorted John back home from Hertford and was given six pence for his trouble. "Got very drunk this time". When almost all parish and local affairs and his own business dealings would take place at a local inn and when social events and visits included generous amounts of alcohol, it would have been too easy to drink more than was beneficial. After John and his two farmer friends, Mr Preston of Broadoak Farm and Mr Randall of Bramfield Place Farm, had taken the first ever national census for Bramfield and Tewin on March 26 they afterwards "Dined at Grandison Arms, Widow Deardses, on fresh cod and salt fish. Mr Vaux of Green Hall dined with us & he sent home for two bottles of port wine and brandy and water etc. We drank till 10 o'clock at night. Old Mr Benjamin Whittenbury was with us sometime". On one pub visit he drank seven tankards of "six penny". John noted eighteen days of expenses for March, from the thirteen shillings when he went to London to the usual two or three shillings for a dinner with a shilling's worth of punch to the nine pence for the ostler and small amounts given away to old folk and boys. In all he spent £2 3s 3d that month.On Saturday 6 June when John was at the Market he witnessed 250 French prisoners come into the town on their way to the prisoner of war camp near Stilton, Huntingdonshire.[1] From his dealings with raising recruits for the Militias he would have been more aware of what was going on in war with France than some of his contemporaries appeared to be. The preliminaries to the Peace of Amiens were in fact signed a few months later on 1 October, welcome news for all with celebrations and illuminations everywhere. In the meantime, in August, John bought Cherry Tree Farm and Steel's Wood at Datchworth from the estate of Lord John Townsend, paying his steward Wilson one

hundred pounds deposit, only to sell on at the month's end to Mr Edmunds of Watton.

Wednesday 2 September – "attended the funeral of my Coz Thos Beck's wife from Long Lane, London at Tewin church". John described the elaborate arrangements with coaches draped in black, the horses with black feathers, and the mutes and bearers from London all in black likewise. All the family dined and slept at the Rose and Crown, Mr Beck and son and her brother returning to London the next day in the coach. Some days later John accompanied his friend John Randall on a long distance journey beyond Reading in Berkshire to look at a farm he had seen advertised for sale in the village of Bradfield. The entire journey was accomplished on horseback, John riding Mr Randall's pony. They set out at 8 o'clock in the morning passing through Watford, Rickmansworth and Amersham, dinner in High Wycombe then on to Marlow where they crossed the Thames. They spent the night in Twyford at the Kings Arms kept by Nathaniel Sandys. Off by 7 o'clock they rode through to Bradfield and refreshed at the Star kept by one Simmonds. Unfortunately, the farm was a disappointment, neither of them liked it and it did not come up to expectations as described in the advertisement. After a second night at the Kings Arms and an early start they went on to Slough, put up at the White Hart, had breakfast and then walked to look at Windsor Castle and Eton College. While at Slough they took the opportunity to visit Observatory House, the home of Dr Herschel and his sister, where they marvelled at the various instruments including his largest telescope some forty feet long with a forty-eight inch mirror. They eventually arrived back home by 10 o'clock that night having covered one hundred and sixty miles or so.

The farm at Bradfield was one of several that the friends had been to look over, John Randall having lost his tenancy at Bramfield Place on the death of Lord Grandison whose tenant he had been. After harvest the crops were sold in the field and on Monday 2 November "this day was the sale at Mr Randalls', Bramfield Place of all the farming stock, a vast wet high windy day. I bought a colt there for £8 13s 0d". On the 17th all the household goods were sold and the next day at 9 o'clock at night Mr Randall, his wife and brother finally left the farm. They did not immediately leave the area and John met up

with them several times in Hertford. They eventually relocated to Brighton where Mr Randal set up as a coal merchant and where John visited them in 1804.

This year Christmas had an entry for the first time. After church John spent the evening at West End Farm next door at Mr Hunsdon's with several friends. "Gave maid 1s 6d. Gave Hoar the fiddler 1s." The end-of-year comment was that nothing remarkable had occurred except the Census to number the inhabitants of every parish in the Kingdom. John then went on to list the one marriage and the dates of all those who had died. One of these was Sall Munns wife to John Munns of Tewin who passed away on Friday morning 29 May. "She used to make numbers of cakes to sell & wiggs". Wiggs were a type of sweet bun which required yeast as a raising agent. Baroness Dimsdale who lived in Hertford had a recipe for them in the hand-written book she kept. One old local character buried in December at Watton was John Wicks, age eighty-six, known as "a hard working man, and a great wood carter, particularly of Bramfield Wood".

(To be concluded)

NOTE

1. Woodforde records his relative Robert Woodforde being Assistant Surgeon to the French prisoners there – see *Diary*, 2 July, 1797.

JANE CARLYLE IN WOODFORDE COUNTRY

In the summer of 1852 Jane Carlyle, the wife of Thomas, set out from their home in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, to visit their friends, the great actor – and diarist – William Charles Macready, and his wife Catherine, who was dying of tuberculosis. They were then living in Sherborne, Dorset.[1] There were two ways of reaching Sherborne by rail, neither easy; one involved travelling to Frome, the other to Dorchester but, as Jane wrote to Thomas, "You recollect, dear, that Macready told me of two routes, recommending that by Frome as the quickest and least fatiguing".[2] That was the one she chose. She reached Frome 'quite fresh' and all set for 'the thirty miles by coach' but when she enquired about the coach to Sherborne, she was told there was none. She would have to take the Yeovil coach which would take her to 'a wayside inn within eight miles of Sherborne ' and there find a fly or something'. At five o'clock in the evening she set out in the Yeovil coach and, her letter continues:

> I had the coach all to myself for awhile; then a young gentleman got in, who did exactly the right thing by me, neither spoke to me nor looked at me till we stopped at Castle Carey (Yeovil is pronounced Youghal, Carey Carry? I grew quite frightened I had somehow been transported to Ireland). There the young gentleman went into the inn, and said to me first, 'Excuse the liberty I take in asking, but would you take anything – a little wine and water?' I thought that very polite; but I was to meet with 'something more exquisite still' before I got to Sherborne. At the 'Sparkford Inn', eight miles from Sherborne, I got out and asked had they a fly? 'Yes, but one of its wheels was broken and gone to be mended!' 'Had they any other conveyance that was whole – a gig or a cart?' 'Yes, they had a nice little gig, and I should have the loan of a cloak to keep me warm' (the evening was rather chill). So I went in, and sat down in a parlour; where an old gentleman was finishing off his bread-and-cheese. He soon made himself master of my case, and regretted he was not going back to Sherborne that night, as then he would have taken me in his carriage; and presently he offered something else more practical, viz. to try to recover my parasol (my mother's, the one she bought with the sovereign you gave her, and which I had got new covered), left stupidly on the roof of the coach, and never

recollected until the coach, with its four horses, had thundered past the window! If the landlady would tell the coachman about it next day, and get it there, he, the old gentleman would bring it to Sherborne House. I went into the lobby to tell the landlady, some five or eight minutes after the coach had started, and told her in presence of a gentleman who was preparing to start in a barouchette with two horses he looked hard at me, but said nothing: and a minute or two after I saw him also drive past the window. Some twenty minutes after, I started myself, in a little gig, with a brisk little horse, and silent driver. Nothing could be more pleasant than so pirring through the quiet roads, in the dusk, with the moon coming out. I felt as if I were reading about myself in a Miss Austen novel. But it got beyond Miss Austen when, at the end of some three miles, before a sort of carrier's inn, the gentleman of the barouchette stept into the middle of the road, making a sort of military signal to the driver, which he repeated with impatience when the man did not at once draw up! I sat confounded, expecting what he would do next. We had halted; the gentleman came to my side, and said, exactly as in a book: 'Madam, I have the happiness of informing you that I have reclaimed your parasol; and it lies here in my carriage ready to be restored!' 'But how on earth?' I asked. 'Madam, I judged it would be more pleasing for you to take the parasol along with yourself than to trust to its being brought by the other gentleman; so I just galloped my horses, overtook the coach as it was leaving this court, reclaimed the parasol, and have waited here, knowing you would take no other road to Sherborne, for the happiness of presenting it to you!' – To an ostler – 'Bring the parasol!' It was brought and handed to me. And then I found myself making a speech in the same style, caught by the infection of the thing. I said: 'Sir, this day has been full of mischance for me, but I regard the recovery of my parasol so unexpectedly as a good omen, and have a confidence that I shall now reach my destination in safety. Accept my thanks, though it is impossible to give any adequate expression of my sense of your courtesy!' I never certainly made so long and formal a speech in my life. And how I came to make anything like it I can't imagine, unless it were under mesmerism! We bowed to each other like first cousins of Sir Charles

Grandison, and I pirred on. 'Do you know that gentleman?' I asked my driver. 'Never saw him before.'

I found Sherborne House without difficulty; and a stately beautiful house it was, and a kind welcome it had for me. The mistake [of recommending the Frome route] had been discovered in the morning, and great anxiety felt all day as to my fate.

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1. For Macready, the diarist see R. L. Winstanley, *British Diarists of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: No. XXIV, William Charles Macready, Actor*, Journal XXVII, 1.
2. J. A. Froude (ed.), *Letters & Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle, Vol. 2*, 1883, letter dated 5 Aug. 1852.

BOOK REVIEWS

M. Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World 1777–1809* (4 vols. Burnham Press, Kingston upon Thames, 2020). £130 the set plus £8 p. and p. (3332 pp. illus.).Volumes may be purchased individually at £37.50 plus £3.50 p. and p. Available from Amazon and in bookshops, and direct from the publishers: Burnham Press, 193 Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 5DD. https://www.burnham-press.co.uk

Margaret Bird's edition of Mary Hardy's diary in four volumes was a triumph (see my long review in the *Journal*, Vol. XLVI no. 4, Winter 2013). It was a mammoth task to reproduce in full a half-million word diary together with the 73,000 word diary of her nephew who served a long brewing apprenticeship with the Hardys. Both boasted a superb index, very accessible marginal notes and a large number of illustrations. Mary Hardy, a busy woman, wrote a terse but full account of her daily round and of her family for almost thirty-five years. The editor admitted, though clearly invaluable to a wide range of historians, her daily entries were 'not inviting to read'. She therefore took the bold and demanding task of spelling out the world of Mary Hardy in four large volumes of commentary, each of 800 pages plus. Again the result is a massive achievement, her thirty-three years of devoted labour to this extraordinary

venture echoing the thirty-five-years of entries her sedulous heroine recorded each day in her diary.

The four volumes, each of which are designed to stand on their own, discuss in great detail: the lives of this hardworking, upwardly-mobile 'middling' family; the production and sale of beer, first in the brewery her husband managed at Coltishall and then, from 1781, the small but innovative brewery he built up with his immensely capable son at Letheringsett; the omnipresent role of religion in the lives of the diarist and her family, her conversion from twice- a-Sunday Anglicanism to Methodism and a discussion of social life in the villages and market towns of North Norfolk; and finally the role of transport in the Hardy's daily round and the impact of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars on this quiet corner of rural England. Such a bald description of the four volumes gives little indication of their riches. The author meticulously draws out every nuance from the brief accounts the diarist made each day and places them in the context of Britain's economic and social transformation in the early years of the Industrial Revolution. The result is the best form of immensely detailed local history, always explored and expanded in the context of the latest secondary literature.

Historians will find varied interest and insights throughout the thirty-nine chapters of the four volumes, for example in well-researched accounts of the workings of the excise system, a key element in the Georgian taxation system; the Sunday School movement in rural areas; the significant role of river navigations; important calculations about the hours the Hardy's labourers and servants worked (more than double those of their twentieth-first century equivalents). And the story doesn't end abruptly in 1809 with Mary Hardy's death; we see the progress of a leading non-conformist, landowning and legal family with declining business interests in the next generations.

Historians are now blessed with the complete editions of the exceptional diaries of Parson Woodforde and Mary Hardy, the former detailed in the many essays in the Journal which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary and the latter expanded in these four remarkable volumes. Together they provide unparalleled insights into Georgian society in the late eighteenth century. In

some respects the two assiduous diarists, roughly contemporaneous, inhabited worlds apart. Woodforde, enjoying a good benefice of around £350 a year, led a life of leisure supported by his five servants. Of good clerical stock, his education at Winchester and Oxford allowed him, when he came to his Norfolk living, to slip easily into the circle of the gentry, his squire's family the Custances and their neighbours the Townshends of Honingham, and the more well-to-do clergy. Mary Hardy in contrast knew only a world largely devoted to work. The drive of her and her husband and surviving son is everywhere evident in her diary. Not for her the leisurely routine of morning calls and extended dinners stretching out from mid-afternoon that were the core of Woodforde's existence. To establish a brewery and network of tied and free public houses, to farm eventually on an extended scale, and to create an interesting house, garden and estate and yet enjoy some semblance of a social life and regular religious experience required immense application in the testing economic conditions of the period. To survive, the Hardys were tough to the core.

Readers of Woodforde's diary always conjecture about his faith and clerical duties especially in comparison with later generations of reforming Victorian Anglican clergy. Margaret Bird discusses this in some detail. Her chapter on the clergy, as in each of her thirty-nine chapters, shows her wonderful capacity for drawing out her themes from imaginative and extended research. Here she makes full use of the bishop's visitations of 1784, 1791 and 1801 to make out a case that the Georgian clergy in the vast Norfolk diocese 'were not as they are much portrayed'. Woodforde, whose returns to the bishop were always amongst the most minimal of the hundreds of replies, emerges in this chapter as a man of quietly devoted Latitudinarian views, content with the example he set of good works and charity. But whether the author makes her case for the Norwich diocese in general, considering the army of poorly paid curates and the prevalence of non-residence amongst large numbers of beneficed clergy, is a matter of dispute. The total picture of clerical life, however, with vivid vignettes of a number of clergy, which emerges from the returns, is well drawn from a variety of sources and the secondary literature. It is an approach used with great effect throughout the four volumes.

Mary Hardy and her World fully lives up to the high standards of scholarship and presentation of the four volumes of the diary. Again they are most attractively produced with the same winning format of innumerable illustrations (revealing the author's love of Norfolk and her task), easily accessible full marginal notes, and 353 pages of meticulous index. The result is an important contribution to the social and economic history of the period. I concluded my review of the diary in 2013: 'they (the commentaries) will be a fitting conclusion to what is already a most remarkable achievement'. Without doubt their publication more than sustains that promise.

Margaret Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World 1773-1809: 3 Spiritual and social forces,* Burnham Press, Kingston upon Thames 2020. ISBN 978-1-9162067-3-1, £38.00 + £2.80 p&p.[1]

Woodforde's world at Weston is brilliantly illuminated and extended by Margaret Bird's four volume study of the world of Mary Hardy, a devout lay diary-keeper, who was Woodforde's almost exact contemporary, twenty-five miles or so away, in North Norfolk, at Coltishall, and then Letheringsett. At least once they were present on the same occasion, at the celebrations in Norwich market place at the end of the American War on 24 March 1783. Mary Hardy merely noted '... took a walk to Mr Ravens in the Hay Markt, saw the Prosesion of Wooll Combers &c, then went back again to Mr Wymers in St Giles Broad Street ...'.[2] Woodforde, was accompanied by Nancy, Mrs Davy, and his servants, Will, Ben and Lizzie, and waxed lyrical about the great pageant and procession of woolcombers they watched from Mr Priest's. He called on the Custances and Sir Edmund and Lady Bacon at the King's Head, to describe it to them. He commented '.... We were all highly delighted indeed with this Days Sight – it far exceeded every Idea I c'd have of it ....'.[3] These contrasting accounts of the same event are exceptional, for mostly they are both equally prosaic, noting the weather, and comings and goings. The Hardys, people of business, prosperous brewers, maltsters and farmers, had a much more extensive social life than the Woodfordes, with visitors for dinner or

tea, or taking tea themselves with other people most days. Their social ranges are slightly different. The Hardys are on their way up the social scale. Their house is grander than Weston rectory, they buy the sort of mahogany furniture that Woodforde bought, they have their portraits painted, they socialise with the rector, doctors and lawyers, as well as farmers and millers, and shopkeepers, but not customarily with gentry, who only very occasionally come to see their gardens, or their organ. The Woodfordes, despite living in an old-fashioned, unimproved parsonage, inhabit, if slightly uneasily, a grander world, of the Custances (having moved by money and marriage into the county elite), and the Bacons, Beauchamp-Proctors and Townshends. Mary Hardy worked with the maids, and helped to prepare dinners for the 'poor'. Did Nancy? William Hardy would have been invited to Woodforde's tithe 'frolic', but would he and Mary have been invited to tea at the rectory? The rectors of Letheringsett, the Burrells, are rather similar to the Woodfordes at Castle Cary. They were Gresham's school Holt, the local grammar school, being son-in-law and grandson respectively of the master, and Caius College Cambridge, the predominantly Norfolk college. Winchester and New College were grander, but Winchester was probably the local grammar school when Woodforde's forebear first went there. The Burrells had more glebe, and had purchased land and the patronage of Letheringsett, and lived more grandly than Woodforde. They were more confident and innovative than Woodforde. They began a Sunday school at Letheringsett in 1786, the first village to have one in Norfolk, in which Mary Hardy was involved.[4]

In addition to much background information about clergy incomes (including tithes), curacies, parsonage houses, and preaching, through Mary Hardy's diary and Margaret Bird's volumes of commentary we see the world of the prosperous 'middling sort' of the laity, who only have minor walk-on-parts in Woodforde's diary. Apart from the Priests at Reepham and Norwich, from Woodforde one would not be aware of the social world in which clergy mixed with farmers and shopkeepers. Mary Hardy was a village shopkeeper's daughter, and socialised with the rector, who married, as his second wife, a milliner from neighbouring Holt. From Woodforde's diary one gets little sense of lay people's engagement

with religion. He notes they send for him when they or their relatives are very ill, and to baptise their new born children, who, to his annoyance, they do not always get round to subsequently presenting in church. Once when he tackled a father about it, we discover that Weston laity considered they had a choice about where they worshipped, for Harry Dunnell, the father 'had the impudence to tell me that he would take it to some Meeting House to be named &c'.[5] From Woodforde one would never know that there was an Independent meeting house in Mattishall, which so prospered in the 1770s and '80s, perhaps when John Smith the new vicar had the nerve to challenge the long-standing tithe compositions, and very significantly increased his tithe income, that the meeting house had to be extended.[6] Woodforde seldom mentions Methodists at Weston. He described Harrison, his thatcher, as 'reputed to be a rank Methodist'.[7] Towards the end of his life he noted without comment on 7 April 1801, 'A Methodist meeting is held at Whisson's House on Sundays – very near us'.[8] If Westoners gadded off to Mattishall to have their ears tickled by a dissenting minister, Woodforde does not mention it.

At Letheringsett when Mary Hardy and her daughter and son become disenchanted with the rector's sermons they start going occasionally, then every Sunday, alternating morning and afternoon, to Wesleyan Methodist meetings[9] in Briston, or Cley, and eventually only went to the meeting house. Margaret Bird has revealed that North Norfolk was a hotbed of evangelical preaching. Nearby Briston, had an Independent meeting house, and a Calvinistic Methodist meeting house, part of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion,[10] later taken over by the Wesleyans, and there was a Wesleyan society in Cley. Mary Hardy in due course established a Wesleyan society in Letheringsett. The Hardys also went gadding off to hear itinerant Evangelical Anglican curates at neighbouring Holt, Briningham and Field Dalling. Only a few miles from Weston, a very different picture of religion in late eighteenth-century rural Norfolk is presented from that described by Woodforde. Unlike Woodforde and Nancy, who seldom venture out even down the lane in winter to church, let alone socially, and certainly not after dark, Mary Hardy and her women friends made long journeys to Methodist meetings, jolting in a cart along the

rutted lanes with one or two maids, and a driver. It was a seventeen mile round trip to the Sunday meeting in Cley in the morning and Briston in the afternoon, which she did even when there was a rime frost on the ground. Understandably she was not best pleased if the preacher failed to arrive.

In researching the spiritual and social context of Mary Hardy's diary Margaret Bird draws on the resources of the National Archives, Norfolk, Suffolk, North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire Record Offices, King's College and Westminster College Cambridge Archives, numerous websites, and an eleven page bibliography. Margaret draws on the most recent scholarship to help the reader to understand the distant and foreign world of rural life during the American and French Revolutionary Wars, and she grounds it in a familiarity with the countryside, the landscape, landholding and agricultural customs and buildings of the period. There is much here that will be new to people, even like me, who think we know this world and locality well. This is particularly the case for the religious context, for Margaret has revealed, as I have already hinted, a much more diverse, consumerist rural religious culture than has previously been supposed. A whole new world has emerged of Independent meetings, as well as Calvinistic Methodist meetings, subsequently rather aggressively taken over by the better organised Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, and a network of itinerant Evangelical Anglican clergy. When Briston Independent and Calvinistic Methodist meetings united the sixty-three members came from twenty-two parishes in a sixteen mile radius. It can no longer be assumed that in the country, when people went to church, it would be their parish church. It has long been known that in the early days of Methodism there were women preachers, but Margaret illustrates the high level of participation of women in North Norfolk's religious life. Two sisters founded and built Calvinistic Methodist meeting houses, in Fakenham and Briston, where they preached. A woman established a Wesleyan meeting in Cley and there was a woman Wesleyan preacher at Wells Wesleyan meeting. Women significantly contributed to the costs of building meeting houses, and were often trustees of meeting houses, and often formed the majority of the membership.

Margaret's splendid work on the background of Mary Hardy's diary, which in this volume includes, as well as the religious

context, fascinating material on village and town life, throws lots of light on other aspects of Woodforde's life, for example, how the grain from his glebe was sold, how the auctions at which he bought furniture worked, the nature of the market town community the fringe of which he was on at Mattishall, as well as the more cosmopolitan Norwich, how shopping worked, and the taxation and excise system.

I cannot recommend too highly Margaret's volumes for deepening our knowledge of Woodforde's world, as well as Mary Hardy's world. The volumes are also immensely accessible, They can be dipped into. This volume has 123 pages of index, so it is easy to look up anything one wants to explore from 'accidents' to Count 'Zinzendorf'. The price may seem steep, but £40-80p (including postage) for 793 pages with numerous illustrations, in hardback, is in the current state of the book trade, at just over 5p a page, very good value.

REFERENCES

1. Available from Burnham Press, Burnham Lodge, 192 Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 5DD, www.burnham-press.co.uk.
2. *The Diary of Mary Hardy 1773–1809: 2 Beer supply, water power and a death 1781–1793*, ed. Margaret Bird, Burnham Press, 2013, p. 86.
3. *The Diary of James Woodforde Vol. 10, 1782–1784*, ed. R. L. Winstanley, 1998, pp 117–119.
4. For the Burrells, as well as Margaret Bird's four volumes, also see Charles Linnell, *Some East Anglican Clergy*, Faith Press, London, 1961, pp 95–129.
5. *The Diary of James Woodforde (The first six Norfolk Years 1776–1781), Vol 1, 1776–1777*, ed. R. L. Winstanley, 1981, p. 168.
6. For the Independent Meeting house in Mattishall see John Browne, *History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk*, Jarrold & Sons, London, 1877, pp 351–352. Independents in the nineteenth century became known as Congregationalists, the majority of whom eventually in 1972 became part of the United Reformed Church.
7. *The Diary of James Woodforde, Vol 10, 1782–84*, ed. R. L. Winstanley, 1998, p. 202.
8. *The Diary of James Woodforde, Vol. 17, 1801–1802*, ed. Peter Jameson, 2007, p. 30.
9. Wesleyan Methodists were part of John Wesley's Connexion.
10. Calvinistic Methodists were followers of George Whitefield, whose patron was Selina Countess of Huntingdon, who after Whitefield's early death, managed the Connexion.

"IN AWKWARD REVERENCE": TOP TEN SMALL CHURCHES

Having, to my shame, neither a complete set of Pevsner nor Jenkins, I can't be accused of cheating or, more mildly, borrowing. When I say 'small churches' I don't always mean that; perhaps it would be more accurate to say 'churches in small places'. Indeed, two of them are quite isolated and two are quite big. What they have in common is that I feel I responded to them in a personal way – not with awe as with the great cathedrals and some of the large town churches (Ludlow, say, or Boston) – but something more individual. I don't include the two churches which have played a great part in my life, St Ann's, Manchester, where I was married, or All Saints, Weston Longville. Their significance transcends the vulgarity of ranking. On another day, and certainly during a different pandemic, I may choose very differently.

1) **St John the Evangelist, Escomb, Co. Durham** – completely Saxon from the time of Bede. In the middle of a mining village, the surrounding graveyard has the appearance of a fortified enclosure. Within, it is tall, narrow and austere, yet the purity of its survival moves one to imagine that one stands – kneels even – shoulder-to-shoulder with Dark Age ancestors.

2) **St Mary & St Hardulph, Breedon-on-the Hill, Leics.** – has the advantage of sitting on top of a prominent Carboniferous Limestone hill with views over much of the North & East Midlands, and the disadvantage that the hill has been to a considerable extent quarried away. It's a kind of epitome of the English parish church: a remarkable collection of Saxon sculptures (from an earlier minster), recumbent crusaders, flamboyant Renaissance memorials, lordly pews, and plaques commemorating the fallen in colonial wars. All English history is here.

3) **Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, Suffolk** – by no means a small church. But possessed of the most perfect roof, the carved angels being exactly those who, if I were to pray, I would wish to 'hover around me'. Peter Porter wrote a fine poem – 'An Angel in Blythburgh Church':

Shot down from its enskied formation,

this stern-faced plummet rests against the wall;
Cromwell's soldiers peppered it and now the death-watch beetle has it in thrall

4) **St Peter, Hornblotton, Somerset** – I wrote about this for the PWS Journal in 1993: "This is the place to which Woodforde travelled in 1765 to officiate at the funeral service of the rector, Elias Dimmock, 'who bears a most infamous character'. The place but not the church. St Peter's is pure Victorian Domestic Revival, being the work of T. G. Jackson, famous for his Cotswold pastiches, such as the High Street front of Brasenose, Oxford. A visit to Hornblotton is a Betjemanesque delight. Approached by narrow cow-parsley-lined lanes, it lies buried so deeply in the fields that the proximity of Fosse Way is easily forgotten. The interior is decorated with strawberry and white sgraffito in the Arts and Crafts style."

5) **St Eilian, Llaneilian, Anglesey** – a cliff-top, late-medieval Celtic church. The striking feature is the oak rood screen and loft. The central panel of the screen bears the figure of a skeleton wielding a scythe on the blade of which are the words *"Colyn angau yw pechod"* (English: The sting of death is sin).

6) **St Protus & St Hyacinth, Blisland, Cornwall** – on the edge of Bodmin Moor; the dedication is, of course, beguiling. Betjeman calls it, the church, 'dazzling and amazing' and it's certainly colourful and, thanks to the clear glass, full of light. It's really a representative Cornish church. On another day I might have chosen Mullion, Lelant, Gunwalloe, or Betjeman's own St Enodoc's.

7) **St Mary the Virgin, Bromfield, Shropshire** – near Ludlow and at the confluence of Teme and Onny. The reason for visiting is the painted 17thC. ceiling executed, says Pevsner, with that excellent thing, 'robust naivety'.

8) **Corpus Christi, Tremeichion, Clywd** – This is a place of literary, rather than religious or architectural, pilgrimage. Dr Johnson's friend – and Boswell's enemy – Mrs Thrale (later Piozzi) was born nearby and is buried there. In a letter to her daughter Queeney, written in 1802, she explains that they were

paving, Glazing, slating, painting it &c and we give them a new

Pulpit, Desk , & Cloths besides – with a brass Chandelier – It was a Place like a Stable you know: and we have made a Vault for ourselves & my poor Ancestors.

9) **St Michael & All Angels, Letcombe Bassett, Berks** – chosen for its location, at the foot of the Berkshire Downs with views cross the Vale of White Horse, and associations, rather than for its own sake. I went there when I was researching the life of Woodforde's friend John Geree. Geree's paternal grandfather was rector there at the beginning of the 18thC. In the summer of 1714, the Tory leadership at daggers drawn and the Queen's demise expected any day, Jonathan Swift, who had been much involved with Tory politics, sought sanctuary with his old friend the rector. It's intriguing to think what kind of a figure the Dean of St Patrick's, and future author of *Gulliver* would have cut in the rector's pew.

10) **All Saints, Brenchley, Kent** – a 13thC. church, much Victorianised in an uninspiring way but I include it for the warm welcome it gave me. It did this by having an avenue of yew trees which obligingly lead you across the churchyard, from which there are fine Wealden views, to the north door, and by having a pleasing party of women flower-arrangers once I was within. I was there to see what had happened after the Great Storm of 1703 which brought the spire crashing to the ground. The curate at the time, Thomas Figg, claimed that it had been the highest in Kent 'at least 10 rods [165ft] some say 12 [198ft]'. Figg told Daniel Defoe that once levelled with the ground, it became 'the sport and pastime of Boys and Girls, tho' perhaps incredibly... [to] boast they leaped over such a Steeple'. It was never rebuilt and the locals didn't know the story.

THE CROSSE FAMILY OF THURLOXTON

On 11 May 1763 Henry William Fitch, a student at Queens College Oxford, made James Woodforde the offer of the curacy of Thurloxton near Bridgwater in Somerset. The living was held by the Fitch family of Wimborne in Dorset and his father, Henry Fitch, was its absentee Rector. The offer may have been made to him because Fitch's cousin was Charles Russell (1741–1833) who was one of James's closest friends at New College and was part of the group with whom he seems to have spent much of his time either drinking, eating, gambling, shopping or playing at bowls and skittles.[1] Although the salary of £40 was a good one for a curate, it took James a little while to make the decision to accept it. Eventually, on the 8 October, he made his first visit to the village. Mr Fitch was obviously rather out of touch with his parishioners' lives as James, having been told that he could find lodgings with the Widow Nowel, discovered that she was dead.[2] Her family were unable to help with accommodation as was a local farmer, Mr Harrison, but a place to stay was eventually found with Mr Cross (more properly Crosse) whose house was conveniently situated just to the west of the church.

In all James made eight trips from Ansford to Thurloxton, usually spending Saturday and Sunday nights there so he could serve St Giles' church twice on Sundays, and also occasionally the chapel at Newton, which was about a mile distant. He then returned to Ansford on the Monday morning. Today the journey takes nearly an hour by car, but for James it meant starting off soon after breakfast, taking a rest for refreshments at an Inn half way through the journey and arriving at five or six in the evening by which time it was dark. It was a long trip to be constantly making, and it must have been hard going for both horse and rider, especially during the winter.

His life as a curate started well, he got on with his hosts, commenting 'I like my Place of Abode very well, & likewise the People I board with' (19/10/1763) but as the weeks progressed disillusionment crept in and after a month James began to enquire about taking on the curacy at Babcary, which was much nearer to Ansford. On 7 November he had to make a trip to Oxford to take part in the College elections and having returned home on the 16th

the very next day he had to set off again on the long journey to Thurloxton. All the little costs involved with making the journey began to mount up and Mr Crosse, who had started to charge him for extra corn for his horse, told him on the 20 December that he could no longer board him at the agreed cost. A replacement curate, Mr Boon[3], was quickly found and on the 9 January James took his payment of £7-10-0 for the quarter that he had served the church, settled Mr Crosse's bill of £3-6-0 for his board, paid a few gratuities to the servants, and left Thurloxton for good.

Mr Crosse had asked James to stay on for another couple of days so as to publicly baptise his 4th son, Richard, who had been born 29 October and was privately baptised by James 10 days later; an occasion that resulted in Mr Crosse and a neighbouring farmer drinking from early afternoon until late at night. James had drunk his fair share as a student but by now was beginning to dislike the alcoholic binges so enjoyed by his brothers Heighes and John and possibly foresaw the baptism as another excuse for a long drinking session. He may well have been right especially as Richard's elder brother, Thomas Bickham, who had been born the previous year, was also baptised at the same time.

John Crosse had been born in the village in 1726 and the family's name first appears in the registers in the sixteenth century. He married Elizabeth Tobin at Bridgwater on 7 October 1758 and the couple had six children, all boys. It was a financially advantageous marriage for him as Elizabeth's father, James Tobin, had been a sea captain and the Tobin family were important sugar plantation owners on the island of Nevis in the West Indies. Elizabeth's brother, another James Tobin (1736/7–1817)[4] was a cultured man. A fellow of the Linnaean Society, he knew both Sir Joseph Banks and Sir Joshua Reynolds and was also a gifted amateur artist. In print he was a strong supporter of slavery and was also a proponent of the importance of the slave trade, arguing that it was essential in order to provide a continual supply of slaves so necessary for the economic success of the plantations. In arguing this he was involved in a series of acrimonious published exchanges with James Ramsay, one of the first abolitionists.

Of the Crosse boys, only George, the fifth son, seems to have lived his life at Thurloxton while John Tobin Crosse (1761–1819),

Thomas Bickham Crosse (b.1762) and Andrew Moore Crosse (1769–1823) all made their lives in the West Indies. Their uncle James Tobin was in partnership with John Pretor Pinney[5] whose family had owned lands on Nevis for some 100 years. Between them they owned several plantations on the island and were also heavily involved in shipping with a home base in Bristol.

John Tobin Crosse settled on one of the estates owned by the Tobins where he married Mary Burke, the daughter of another plantation owning family. Thomas Bickham Crosse became a sea captain and served as master of at least two of Pinney/Tobin ships, the *Tobin* and the *Perseverance,* while Andrew Moore Crosse took an apprenticeship with Hill Dawe, a surgeon practising in Bridgwater,[6] after which he set himself up in business as a doctor on Nevis. The plantations were owned by a mix of resident and absentee owners with most of the day-to-day dealings with the slaves being done by white overseers who carried out their job with an attitude that at best was harsh and at worst downright cruel. The land-owning and administrative elite mixed socially and often intermarried. Pinney was related by marriage to the young Nevis-born widow, Fanny Nisbet, who was acting as housekeeper for her uncle John Herbert the President of the Island, when, in 1785, she met and two years later married, a young naval officer by the name of Horatio Nelson.

As plantation owners neither Tobin nor Pinney were known to be exceptionally harsh towards their slaves, but all was to change in 1808 when Pinney sold the Mountravers Estate to Edward Huggins, a man well known for his extreme cruelty towards his workers. Forced to toil even harder than before, some of the slaves tried to run away and others refused to work. The law allowed flogging with a limit of 39 lashes, but Huggins was determined to show who was master and to do so in a very public way. Floggings were usually carried on the estates well away from the public gaze but on the morning of 23 January 1810, accompanied by his sons, he marched a group of slaves into the market place at Charlestown where he instructed two of his cart drivers to begin whipping them. The proceedings soon drew some interested bystanders and several men went up onto the veranda of Dr Crosse's house to view what was happening. Dr Crosse was one, as was another doctor, Henry Cassin. Two clergymen were also witnesses as was John Burke who

started to keep a count of the number of slaves who were whipped and the number of lashes each received. The whipping went on for over three hours. At one point Dr Cassin told Huggins that it "was enough" but Huggins replied that he did not want his advice. While it was true that many of the planters, greatly outnumbered by their slaves, were frightened that if they didn't keep absolute and total control they might rise up in revolt against their masters, the brutality used that day went far beyond the normally accepted levels of punishment and, inexplicably, those viewing the proceedings did nothing to stop it. Dr Cassin was also a magistrate and one of two magistrates present and what happened far exceeded what the law allowed. Burke's careful score taking showed that a total of 2,386 lashes had been administered to 9 men and 10 women. One of the women, a girl called Fanny, received 291 lashes and died some three weeks later.

When word got around Huggin's actions were bad enough for the Island's Assembly to order a trial. This started in May 1810 and lasted for 10 days with Dr Cassin called as a witness. Employed by Huggins he had attended to the slaves after their beatings, but played down their injuries. Later he seems to have developed a conscience about what he had said as he changed his story and as a result lost his job. Perhaps Dr Crosse, who would also have been reliant on an income obtained from the plantation owners, decided to keep quiet as his testimony was simply that he had been present during the floggings and that John Burke's tally was correct. It didn't matter anyway as it was little more than a show trial as the jury was rigged heavily in Huggins' favour and he was found not guilty. However this was not the end of the story, as some of the slaves turned for help to James Tobin's son James Webbe Tobin who was then managing the family's Stony Grove plantation on Nevis. Tobin Jr. was a radical thinker and was friendly with the poets Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey. Holding quite opposite views to his father and being a vocal critic of slavery, he launched into a war of words with the authorities and in the press.

Sending a letter to Hugh Weeks, the Governor of the Leeward Islands, he wrote that the verdict meant that 'every overseer in the country, however ignorant or brutal' was 'left at full liberty to whip, mutilate and destroy at pleasure the Slaves committed to his care'

and ended the letter by stating that he himself 'exists only by the labour of negro slaves, and from them derives most of the comforts he enjoys, as well as those advantages of education, which have taught him what, in return, he owes to them. If it is their lot, in this world to labour, it is his duty to render their existence happy by the right exercise of his understanding and the cultivation of every good feeling with which he is endowed.' The following year saw the execution in the British Virgin Islands of Arthur Hodge, the only white plantation owner ever to be hanged for the murder of a black slave. Both cases caused questions about the treatment of slaves to be raised in Parliament. Although the slave trade had legally been abolished in 1807, the transportation of slaves continued in the Caribbean until 1811, but the shock of the Huggins case and Tobin's reaction to it, all added to the growing feeling in Britain that the entire system of slavery must stop.

Dr Crosse died in 1823[7] and was buried with his brother John Tobin Crosse and his Tobin relatives at Figtree on Nevis. He gave a life interest in his properties on the Island to Lucretia Griffin, a free coloured woman, and 'my mulatto girl named Frances' (probably his mistress and daughter?) and directed that Frances was to be made free of her slavery. After their deaths everything was to pass to his brother George and his family back in England. Richard Crosse, the infant that James had privately baptised at Thurloxton in 1763, was still alive in 1803 as he was mentioned in his father's will[8]. It has proved difficult to trace his later life, but it is quite possible that he too made a life on Nevis. Britain finally abolished slavery in 1833 at which time the government set up a fund of £20m to pay compensation – not to the finally freed slaves – but to their owners. In 1836 a man called Josiah Nicholson, acting as executor of the will of Richard Crosse, a planter of Charlestown Nevis, made a successful claim for compensation of £39 17s for two slaves who he said had been owned by Crosse. The family ties that they shared with the Tobins took the Crosse family far away from Somerset and the remote little village of Thurloxton, where their ancestors had lived quietly for centuries, to a world where greed, exploitation and cruelty produced great wealth for Britain through the evil that was the sugar trade.

REFERENCES

1. After Henry Fitch's death in 1768 his nephew, the same Charles Russell, became its absentee Rector until his own death in 1833
2. The most recent Nowel burial at Thurloxton was Joan Nowel who had been buried 2 June 1761 over two years before.
3. William Boone remained curate at Thurloxton for the rest of his life and was buried there on 4 December 1844.
4. Both he and three of his sons have the distinction of entries in the *DNB*. James Webbe Tobin (1767–1814) features in my article while George Tobin (1768–1838) enjoyed a highly successful naval career during which he sailed with Bligh on his second journey to Tahiti in 1791. He kept an illustrated journal of the voyage, which included some of the first European records of Tasmania. The youngest son, John Tobin (1770–1804) suffered from TB. He wrote several plays none of which were performed in his lifetime but achieved a considerable, if short lived, success soon after his death.
5. John Pretor Pinney (1740–1818) was one of the wealthiest West Indian plantation owners. He left a large archive of accounts, letters and other papers concerning Mountravers, his Nevis estate. Detailed researches on these have been carried out by the University of Bristol and the results are published online https://seis.bristol.ac.uk/~emceee/welcome.html. His family home in Bristol, which also served as offices for Pinney and Tobin, is now a museum.
6. Not to be confused (although it is easy to do so) with his uncle and cousin who lived at Ditcheat, shared the same name, and appear in the Diary.
7. Andrew Moore Crosse PCC Will PROB 11/1675/140 1823.
8. John Crosse Gentleman of Thurloxton Somerset PCC Will PROB 11/1392/109 1803.

OBITUARY – David J. Williams (1932-2020)

It is with great sadness that we must report the loss to the Society of David Williams who for many years assisted his wife Ann in making arrangements for the annual Frolic. Ann and David met when students at King's College, London in the early 1950s and were married at All Saints, Weston Longville, Ann's parish church, in September 1956. On graduation, David had joined the Standard Telegraph & Cable Company where he was involved in the early development of computer technology. In the 1960s the couple moved to Buenos Aires where David was involved in the installation of a computer system in the city's banks. After four years in Argentina they moved back to the UK where David became a Senior Manager with the firm – now ICL – based at Kidsgrove in Cheshire. There they spent six years before David was transferred to Bracknell and they were able to settle down in Wokingham.

David couldn't bear to see things *not* being done . When Ann met him he was student president of the Science Faculty at King's where he was also a founder of the Sceptics Society (whilst he was a 'doer' he was also a 'thinker'). It was whilst they were living in Cheshire that the children, Carol and Stephen, were born and David was a particularly active and practical member of the Elford School PTA. He also became treasurer and then Chairman of the British Humanist Association.

Ann and David joined the PWS in 1991 and Ann was soon recruited onto the Committee. Her greatest contribution was in the organisation of Frolics, especially in Norfolk but on one occasion in Bath. But these were always joint efforts in which Ann and David combined to bring about a succession of highly successful gatherings; Ann always being the first to acknowledge that their efficient organisation owed much to David's computing and logistical skills. That the Society continues to flourish owes much to the intelligence, energy and 'behind-the-scenes' contribution of David Williams.

To Ann, Carol, Stephen, and the grandchildren we pass on our sympathy at the loss of a remarkable man.

LEAVES FROM AN UNWRITTEN JOURNAL

Aunt Bodham of South Green (1796–1804). Pt. VI (cont.)

Mary Barham Johnson inherited a great number of family papers and portraits which no doubt did much to inspire her keen interest in the lives of her forebears and, especially, in that of Anne Bodham. In 1984 she presented a copy of this unwritten *journal to the History Group of the Mattishall Society. It was composed by Mary from a variety of sources, including Parson Woodforde's Diary and family letters and other papers and amounts to a most interesting biography of one of the Rotation Club's most attractive characters.*

We are grateful to Mrs Iris Coe of Mattishall for transcribing the 'Journal' from the MS and to Mary's great-nephew Dr Martin Sharman for blessing an enterprise of which this is the eighteenth instalment. (Ed.)

1804

Fri. Jan. 20.
Paid for Mrs Heath's Head Dress £4.2.6, Muslin 8^{s} and 6^{s}, six pocket Handkerchiefs £1.2.0, Spectacles 10^{s} 6^{d}.

Mon. Jan. 23.
Washing 6^{s}, whalebone 3^{d}, Lavender Water 1^{s} 9^{d}, Lett^{rs} 2^{s} 7^{d}. Gales and storms in Norfolk – much talk of Invasion, but trust the weather will prove unfavourable.

Tues. Jan. 24.
To Hampstead to call upon dear Nancy Woodforde. Grey silk Handkerchief 4^{s} 9^{d}, Lace 1½ yds for H.T. [her maid Hannah Turner] 6^{s} 9^{d}, Knife for Do. 1^{s}, knife for myself 2^{s}, Almanack 1^{s} 8^{d}, Gloves 3^{s} 6^{d}, Salt Bottle &c 5^{s}.

Wed. Jan. 25.
To Camberwell to see Mrs Breach (late Mary Donne) and her 5 little children. Coaches 11^{s} 8^{d}.

Fri. Jan. 28.
To Covent Garden – 'The English Fleet in 1342' – Ticket 6^{s}.

Mon. Jan. 31.
Letters 1^{s} 2^{d}, paid Hannah 1^{s} 8^{d}, washing 5^{s} 5^{d}, Pencil 5^{s} 6^{d}, Gloves 2s 3d, Powder 1s 6d, Cotton &c 2s.

Tues, Feb. 1.
Paper &c 2^{s} 2^{d}, pens 1^{s} 6^{d}, letter 8^{d}, netting twist 2^{s}.

Fri. Feb. 4.
To Covent Garden – 'The Cabinet' – Ticket 6^{s}, Coach 5^{s} 6^{d}, washing 4^{s} 9^{d}.

Wed. Feb. 8.
Paid into Housekeeping Purse £10. Hear from dear Mrs Hewitt that her Brother was greatly distressed when he learnt, from an acquaintance in the street, of dear Anne's marriage. She fears he is now running after her husband's Cousin Fanny Brooke, which would be a most unsuitable alliance, her Father having died insane. Paid for ticket to 'Messiah' 13^{s} 6^{d}, Shoes £1.5.6, Coaches 10^{s} 11½^{d}, washing 4^{s} 2^{d}.

Fri. Feb. 17.
Gave my dear Anne £15.

Sat. Feb. 18.
Rec^{d} by Messrs. Barclay &c in Lombard St £50 drawn from my money in Gurney's Bank, Norwich. Paid for cold cream 2^{s}, cotton 2^{s}, Thimble 2^{s}, Otto of Roses 2^{s}, Coach to Mr Newton's 2^{s} 4^{d}, gave him 2^{s} 6^{d} for the Bill against Slavery, cotton box 7^{s} 6^{d}, Muslin for Hannah 2^{s} 3^{d}, washing 5^{s} 7^{d}, Miss A. Donne for Anne's hat £1.16.0, netting silk 3^{s} 6^{d}, Gloves 3^{s} 6^{d}.

Fri. Feb. 24.
Took Nancy Woodforde the £10 she had requested of me. Paid for pins &c 1^{s} 6^{d}, Nail brush &c 1^{s} 6^{d}, washing 6^{s} 1½^{d}, sweet meats 1^{s} 6^{d}.

Sun. Feb. 26.
Thanksgiving Service at St Paul's for the King's Recovery. A most resplendant Procession.

Mon. Feb. 27.
To the Wrights. Coach and Servant 5^{s} 6^{d}, letters and parcel 4^{s} 4^{d}, Silk gown dyeing 6^{s} 6^{d}, netting silk and pins 1^{s} 6^{d}, paid Mrs Reina for Anne's Pelice £6.18.0, Do. for my gown's making &c £1.10.7, brush 9^{d}, ribbon 9^{d}, at Confectioners 1^{s}.

Wed. Feb. 29.
Paid for Anne's Piano Forte repairing, £5.14.0.

Thurs. Mar. 1.
To Camberwell. Coach there and back 10^{s}, for the little Feildes school purse one guinea, Mrs Feilde's servant 2^{s} 6^{d}.

Sat. Mar. 3.
To Drury Lane – 'The Soldier's Daughter' – Ticket 9^{s}, Coachman 2^{s} 6^{d}, washing 5^{s} 6^{d}, purse tassels 2^{s} 6^{d}, letters and parcel from Norwich 2^{s} 8^{d}, Coach shopping 5^{s}, parcel 1^{s} 10^{d}, figs 1^{s} 4^{d}, letters 1^{s} 3^{d}.

Sat. Mar. 10.
To Covent Garden – 'The Wheel of Fortune' – Mr Kemble as Pendruddock. 'The afterpiece 'The Paragraph' with Mr Braham's music. Coach 7^{s} 6^{d}, Ticket 6^{s}.

Mon. Mar. 12.
To Covent Garden – Mrs Siddons as Lady Macbeth. 'The Paragraph' again. Ticket 6^{s}, Coach 7^{s}.

Tues. Mar. 13.
To Merlin's Museum – wonderful mechanical inventions. Ticket 3^{s}, Coach 1^{s}.

Wed. Mar. 14.
To Oratorio – 'Creation' and 'Acis and Galatea' – Tickets 6^{s}, Coach 5^{s} 6^{d}. Letter from Hemblington 8^{d}, hartshorn &c 1^{s} 2^{d}, omitted washing 5^{s} 6^{d}.

Fri. Mar. 16.
Muslin for Mrs Hewitt's Handkerchief £3.5.0. One doz. four-pronged Forks for Dr and Mrs Donne £11.18.6.

Sat. Mar. 17.
A pair of walking shoes &c 10^{s} 6^{d}, purse twist and rings 6^{s} 6^{d}, Coach to Mrs Donne's 1^{s}, omitted for gown making 11^{s} 6^{d}.

Mon. Mar. 19.
Gave little William Wright a Guinea. Washing 10^{s} 1^{d}.

Tues. Mar. 20.
Muslin for Handkerchiefs Mrs C.D. 8^{s} 6^{d}, a handker^{cf} £1.14.0. Borrowed of Mrs Donne Senior £50. Rec^{d} from Messrs Gurney's Bank £22.10.0. Coach to Miss Woodforde 1^{s} 6^{d}, to Hannah & Riches for a Play ('Pizarro') 8^{s}, Spence's powder & brushes for Teeth 9^{s}, preserved Ginger 2^{s} 6^{d}, pins and brush 1^{s}, Coach 6^{s}, letters 1^{s} 4^{d}, a great Coat for Mrs Balls 3 Guineas, Do. for myself 3 Guineas, for Fillets as by rec^{ts} £4.2.0, washing 8^{s} 6^{d}.

Wed. Mar. 21.
To the Wrights. Lost at cards 7^{s}, Coach 7^{s}, Nurse 2^{s} 6^{d}.

Fri. Mar. 23.
Gave my dear Anne £10. Mail Coach for myself and Hannah 4 Guineas, Coach to Charing Cross and back 4^{s}, Coachman and Guards 4^{s}, Tea at Thetford 3^{s}, omitted to Servants for a Play 5^{s} each, 15^{s}, Pelice for dear Kitty £1.9.0. Post Chaise from Norwich home 13^{s} 9^{d}. Postilion 2^{s} 6^{d}. Omitted for Lodging rooms in London £22.1.0.

Sat. Mar. 24. South Green
Sent Mrs Donne the £50 I owed her from Gurney's Bank.

Tues. Mar. 27.
Mr Wright called. Paid him for various articles during my absence One Guinea. Rec^{d} at the Bank of Messrs Gurney £550.

Mon. April 2.
Paid Mr Collison, Trustee for Charles Hewitt, £500 and rec^{d} the Bond. This is now the whole sum owing from Mr Bodham's Legacy, with Interest. Heard that little Kitty Hewitt is to be christened at Holt Church on Friday, she having been done only privately at birth and never taken to Church. Now that she is 6 years old she will be able to answer for herself.

Sat. April 14.
To Dereham to see dear Mrs Hewitt and Kitty who are on a visit to Dr Johnson. Kate hears that the Brookes are at Bath, and much fears that her brother will go after Fanny on the excuse of visiting Lady Hesketh. Rec^{d} of Miss Perowne for Muslin and 2 Head-dresses for Mrs Hewitt and herself £5.9.0.

Sat. May 26.
General Fast yesterday. Buonaparte is to be crowned in Paris! How I feel for the poor King in exile. Sister Balls paid me 3 Guineas for her Coat and £1.8.0 from Mrs Heath for her Fillet.

Sun. June 10.
My last Sunday here. Bade Farewell to many friends after Church. Gave Mr Smith a sovereign for his children. It is 25 years since I came to South Green as a Bride. I pray that dear Anne and Edward Donne may be as happy as I have been, but be spared the sadness I suffered. Tomorrow we remove to Swaffham.

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1968 by the Rev. Canon L. Rule Wilson and may be said to have two main aims: one, to extend and develop knowledge of James Woodforde's life and the society in which he lived, and the other, to provide opportunity for fellow enthusiasts to meet together from time to time in places associated with the diarist, and to exchange news and views.

Membership of the Parson Woodforde Society is open to any person of the age of 18 years and over upon successful application and upon payment of the subscription then in force, subject only to the power of the committee to limit membership to a prescribed number.

The Annual membership subscription of £16 (overseas members £25, student members £10) becomes due on 1 January and should be forwarded to the Treasurer, David Atterbury Thomas, 47 St John's Road, Blackheath, London SE3 7JW.

Website:
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Indexes to all past Journals may be accessed from the website under 'Publications'.
The indexes cover Subjects, Names, Places and Authors.

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