PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

Quarterly Journal

SUSANNA, LADY DURRANT

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JIM HOLMES

Jim Holmes died on 1 December last. His services to the Parson Woodforde Society were many and varied. He gave lectures on Woodforde and appeared in radio programmes about him, as well as enlivening some of our Frolics with magic lantern displays, among others of his beloved home town, Great Yarmouth. He also generously purchased the famous Woodforde cup, for drinking the toast to the Parson's memory at our dinners.

He was a remarkably pleasant man, equable, with a happy and friendly disposition, and fully deserved Parson Woodforde's own ultimate commendation of "Good natured". Our Society will be the poorer for his passing. – Ed.

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 £12.50 (overseas members £25) becomes due on 1 January and should be forwarded to the Treasurer, Dr David Case, 25 Archery Square, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7JA.

PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY COMMITTEE 1998/99

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The Parson Woodforde Society is a registered charity no. 1010807

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EDITORIAL

In the 30 years of its existence our Journal has had only two editors, and my spell in the tenure of the office has been by far the longer of them. When I reflect that in addition to running the Journal I have also produced nine volumes of the complete and unabridged diary in our edition, it occurs to me that I am entitled to congratulate myself to the extent of awarding myself the regulation two cheers, or at least one-and-a-half. I can certainly claim that I put in some hard work, especially as for the ten first years of my editorship I also did hard labour in a full-time teaching job. I'll tell you a secret about that, known of course to all members of the teaching profession, but probably to no-one else. In the days of what used to be called "Further", in contradistinction to "Higher" Education (of course they are all universities now, and the former Coketown Poly is on a level with Oxford or so they tell us), colleges such as the one in which I was employed spent a far longer time in the classroom than university teachers, because they were not expected to do original research as well as the basic scholastic job. Well, I did the research for which in the very early days I had to make a journey to Oxford each time, because Woodforde's manuscript was only to be found in any form in the Bodleian Library; and I coped with the long teaching hours as well. The nine diary volumes are there to show I managed to do it. I cannot help regarding this as something of an achievement, of a modest kind. As the gentleman says in the song: They can't take that away from me. But, lest I am accused of self-pity and making out for myself a hard case of overwork, let me hasten to say that I hugely enjoyed it. I would not have missed having the opportunity for the world, and learned in doing so far more than I was ever able to teach others.

But it is now a long while since I first took over the Journal, if not exactly in the full vigour of youth at least an active middle aged person still on the right side of sixty. Old Adam says in *As You Like It*, "But at fourscore it is too late a week". As in all human activities there must come a time when it is advisable to give up even the best-loved of tasks, a more sensible procedure by far than hanging on until the job itself calls a halt. I have already found some difficulty in choosing topics to write about to fill the columns of future Journals. I light upon a theme which sounds promising, begin to take notes and find that an odd word or phrase sounds hauntingly familiar. I have been here before, I mutter confusedly to myself. Then I look up David Case's excellent Index to the Journals and

find that the subject has been very comprehensively covered, and at a date too recent to make it possible for a reworking to produce much else than unwanted repetitions. I am not for a moment declaring that what has been written about Woodforde is all that could be discovered about him. More simply, I am saying that I have perhaps done all I could do on these themes, and that progress awaits another hand.

I have quite recently discovered that the verbal recall which used to make me a rather good solver of crossword puzzles has gone without trace. I don't so far actually find any difficulty in writing; but this is also liable to suffer with the onset of old age. The question of the length of time a writer may retain the use of such skills as he or she once possessed has always been of particular, and may I say apprehensive interest to me. I began to worry about it while still at a time of life when there could have been little or no objective probability that any degenerative mental process could have advanced so far as to produce actual and tangible results. It may be thought that a person so afflicted would be aware of what was happening. Often the victim is the last to realise it. We all know of established writers whose later work shows a sad falling away from the intellectual level of earlier standards.

All these considerations have come together to convince me that it is time for me to go, bowing out as gracefully as it is possible in the circumstances. This editorial contains a formal statement to the effect that the present issue, appropriately enough at the end of a year, is my last as editor of the Journal. I have decided to give a period of notice, ending on 1 February next year. Until then I shall remain in an advisory capacity, and may be reached by letter or telephone in case of emergency. After that, of course, our new editor takes over in full.

We are very fortunate that Martin Brayne has agreed to assume the editorship, and there cannot be a better choice. I am more than happy to leave the job in his far more than just merely capable hands. He has worked for many years for the Parson Woodforde Society in various capacities. His contributions to the Journal are noteworthy, work in which accurate and painstaking scholarship and an agreeable lightness of touch combine. Since 1995 he has been Vice-Chairman of the Society, a post in which he will remain.

R. L. WINSTANLEY
Editor

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

A new year and a new era

If we are to believe the stories concerning the Millennium bug then the start of the year 2000 could be traumatic. For your Society it is the start of 1999 which sees change, but not trauma. But first you need to visualise your committee sat around JoAnn Archer's dining table a few days ago. We gathered to review the year to date and to plan the next 12 to 18 months of the Society's activities. We had almost a full house; however your Editor, Roy Winstanley, was unable to attend. Magically he was conjured up over the loud-speaker telephone and, figuratively, sat cross-legged on the middle of the table!

The committee's business was processed; we reviewed the Oxford Frolic, planned our publications, finance, the forthcoming Frolic and AGM in Norwich while nibbling on the food so thoughtfully provided by JoAnn. Then . . . silence . . . Roy offered his resignation as Editor of the Journal. Although he had mentioned, and even discussed, succession planning, the actual announcement took us by surprise. A mixture of sadness; the realisation of the gratitude we as a committee felt; a feeling of helplessness. The words had been spoken and we could no longer depend upon Roy for his unstinting dedication to the production of the Journal; the Journal which is the backbone of the Society, linking members to Woodforde and his world; the Journal which has undergone continual improvement over the tens of years of Roy's stewardship; the Journal which, through Roy, keeps alive the age and tradition of Woodforde.

I feel that neither the numbness nor the gratitude felt by your committee were adequately transmitted to Roy over the phone. So let me add my personal thanks to Roy, without detracting from the many tributes being paid by others. He has, throughout the Society's life, educated, intrigued, enlightened and enthralled us with Woodforde. The Journal, with contributions from himself and others, has revealed so much that would otherwise have remained both hidden and untold. His eagerness for research has infected others who, in turn, have fallen for the fascination of the diary and its associations. For me he has, with a few wise words, kept my Chairmanship focused on the key issues.

I implied a new era for the Society – and how challenging it will be. First, Roy is not being allowed to retire! Far from it – we argue that he now has *more* time on his hands! On this point he politely

declines to comment. I know we are all delighted that he believes he will be able to turn his attention more fully to the diaries and their analysis. In this task he is able assisted by the Reverend Jameson. Martin now takes over the reins of editing the Journal while remaining Vice Chairman. The roles of the rest of the committee remain unchanged and we will support Roy, Martin and the Reverend Jameson in their new positions.

I fear my tardiness may well have delayed the publication of this Journal. If so, I trust you have had a peaceful Christmas and are looking forward to a year of enjoyment.

NIGEL CUSTANCE
Chairman

WOODFORDE BEYOND OXFORD

> Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side . . .
> (Matthew Arnold: *Thyrsis*)

During his two periods of residence in Oxford, James Woodforde visited many of the villages and towns in the countryside around the university city. Some of these excursions were purely recreational, while on other occasions they were to act as a curate. Woodforde, himself a country boy, probably possessed sufficient urbanity to pass himself without comment on his occasional visits to London but for him the countryside was not merely "a healthy graveyard" but the environment in which he was most at home.

By the time that he arrived in Oxford in 1758, the future diarist was already very familiar with the life and vocation of a country parson, being himself, of course, of a clerical family. Although he quickly adapted to life at Oxford, Woodforde does appear to have set his sights on a country living from an early age and, once it was apparent that this was not to be Ansford, there can be little doubt that some other rural incumbency, avoiding the political pitfalls of a city parish, would be his preference. Significantly, even when he was most optimistic about becoming Master of the Charity School at Bedford, he voices a caveat:

> The only bad thing belonging to it, is, being a Borough Town, and there is no such thing as being neuter –
> (1/9/1773)

Woodforde's early sallies into the countryside around Oxford, prior to his ordination as deacon on 29 May 1763, were, of course, of a purely recreational nature. By the time the diary begins, he had spent a year at Oriel College so that his initial exploratory trips beyond the city limits went unrecorded but, once he had transferred to New College, we find him making fairly frequent excursions out to Stanton St John. On 30 October 1759 he went shooting in Stanton Wood with William Master who had been at New College for a year longer than himself.

Stanton was the nearest New College living to Oxford, situated just four miles away on the Corallian Limestone ridge to the east of the city. The Lordship of the Manor was acquired by New College in 1526 and much of the village is still in college hands. The young Woodforde occasionally went shooting in Stanton Woods in the autumn months, more often than not with Gabriel Tahourdin, a fellow Wykehamist, now at Corpus Christi. Either they were not very good shots or the sport was, as Woodforde believed, poor, diary entries tending to conclude with such remarks as "poor sport" or "very bad Sport" or "no sport at all". Woodforde often took a walk to Stanton and sometimes rode there taking the picturesque route over Shotover Hill. When there he would take a drink at the New Inn (as when Geree treated him to "a glass of Cherry" (22/4/1763) or dine at Peezley's. The fellows of New College enjoyed an income from the timber of Stanton Woods – "wood money". "It is customary to go to Stanton once a year to see the Wood that is cut down, measured", he recorded on 28/8/1761. On 3 June of that year the New College fellows received a third of a load of wood as "Stanton Wood comes this year to everyone in College which is very extraordinary". The following day we find him paying 2/6d "for a Sawe to saw my Wood".

From an early period in his undergraduate career Woodforde spent a considerable amount of time on the river, the Isis, as this stretch of the Thames is called; but never, apparently, on the Cherwell. Boats were hired from Mrs Gardener at Folly Bridge or from Hythe – Woodforde calls it High – Bridge and taken upstream to Binsey or Godstow, where there was already a lock in Woodforde's day, or downstream to Iffley – Woodforde's Evefly – or, beyond the first downstream lock, to Sandford. The destination of these water-borne excursions was often one of the riverside inns, such as Beckley's at Sandford or Mr Pollington's at Iffley, and a game of skittles (see 'Woodforde: a Sportsman at Oxford', Journal XXVII, 1.

It was not until halfway through his second year at New College that Woodforde ventured beyond the tight, if golden, triangle formed by Stanton, Sandford and Godstow. On 12 March 1761 he embarked on what was to be the first of the tourist "Schemes" to be described in the diary:

Breakfasted at Dyers with Geree	
Went afterwards with Geree & Dyer to Blenheim	
For seeing the House – we paid –	0 .. 2 .. 6
To the Porter of the House – we paid –	0 .. 0 .. 6
To the Porter of the Park Gates – we gave –	0 .. 0 .. 6
To the Turnpikes for three we paid –	0 .. 0 .. 3
Paid for my Horse that I had of Castel before I mounted	0 .. 2 .. 6
We dined at Woodstock at the Bear belonging to Charles Cross – & we paid	0 .. 11 .. 6
We gave the Drawer –	0 .. 0 .. 6
We gave the Hostler –	0 .. 6 .. 6
There is in Blenheim Park the finest Bridge that ever I saw, but one entire Arch.	
N:B. This Scheme cost me in all –	0 .. 8 .. 1

All that one can really deduce from this is that Woodforde appears to have been more impressed by the Grand Bridge than by the house. If that is so he was at one with the Oxford antiquary Thomas Hearne who, after regretting the decision of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to pull down the medieval royal palace of Woodstock, was a good deal more opinionated, and certainly better informed, than our diarist:

> I never was in it before. It is grand; but a sad, irregular, confused piece of work. The architect (if a blockhead may deserve that name) was Vanbrugg. The hall is noble. The painting of the top was done by Thornehill. It represents Marlborough's victory at Blenheim. There is one room in which lye some antiquities. There are two bustos in it and two Moors. But the greatest piece of antiquity I saw in it is of white marble, like your Parian marble, in which there are several figures of Pleasure by a river. The Duke of Marlborough's misses are represented in figures (by way of statues) on one side of the front of the house. The new bridge (which hath cost £30,000) over the rivulet below the house is wonderful: particularly on account of the arch – the biggest, at least one of the biggest, in the world – and a show of antiquity. The arch is 103 yards.

Woodforde made two subsequent visits to Blenheim: on 13 July of the same year he went there with John Lucas "in a one-horse Chair"

and he went again with Brother John and Richard Clarke during their "Jaunt to Oxford" in 1772. Unfortunately, he only tells us of the costs incurred.

The only other country house which Woodforde was tempted to visit was Earl Temple's Stowe, over the county border in Buckinghamshire. Many of his fellow collegians went but it was a disgraceful episode from which he did well to extricate himself. On the morning of 1 June 1763 Woodforde and several of his friends had processed to the Convocation House and taken the B.A. degree. Inevitably, a good deal of treating with wine and punch followed. Woodforde sat up in the B.C.R. until after midnight before going to bed, but

> . . . at three in the Morning, had my outward
> Doors broken open, my Glass Doors broke
> and pulled out of Bed and brought into the B.C.R.,
> where I was obliged to drink and smoak,
> but not without a good many words –

Despite the understandable blackness of Woodforde's mood, the celebrations were by no means over for:

> Several of our Fellows went at four
> o'clock in the Morning, for Stow, and all
> drunk: some in a Phaeton, some in a Buggy,
> and some on Horse-back –
> I went as far as Weston-on-the-Green
> with them upon my grey, and then
> returned Home . . .

One suspects that a combination of depression and discretion persuaded the diarist to turn his horse's head about and retrace his steps. It may be that as the dawn broke on that June morning so too did the realisation that the drunken revellers' route would take them through the tiny village of Newton Purcell where in three days' time the diarist's career in the Church of England was due to begin!

Newton was the first of several villages in Oxfordshire and Berkshire which Woodforde was to visit in the role of curate: it was also the most remote being some twenty miles from Oxford on the road between Bicester and Buckingham. He had agreed to act as supply clergyman for George Sale during the older man's proctorship and on Saturday, 4 June 1763 we find him travelling to "my curacy" for the first time, staying overnight at Mrs Cotton's, the mother of another Fellow of New College. The following

morning the young diarist – pride, no doubt, tempered by anxiety – took his first service:

> Breakfasted at Cottons Mothers, with Cotton
> and his Brother, and four Sisters –
> At eleven o'clock went to my Church, and
> read Prayers and preachd my first Sermon –
> Cottons Family and about twenty more
> People were all there were at Church –
> Did Duty again at two o'clock . . .

For the next three Sundays Woodforde sets out early in the morning on his grey horse for Newton. The fifth Sunday, however, sees him coming to an arrangement with Mr Sheffield of Worcester College, who wished to visit Newton, to serve that gentleman's church at Ardington some 12 miles from Oxford near Wantage. There, for the first time, he churched a woman, who gave him 6d ("which I received and pocketed") and dined with the squire, "whose Name was Clarke, who behaved extremely civil and genteel indeed".

It was during this summer of 1763 that we see our diarist at his most engagingly equestrian. The demands of the journey to Newton clearly concentrated his mind on the requirements of the road for within the scope of a couple of weeks we find him buying "a Cane with a Piece of Lead at the end of him to ride with", "a little swish to ride with" and, perhaps most characteristically, "a Pocket Pistol, alias a Dram Bottle, to carry in one's Pocket, it being necessary on a Journey". This last purchase would, presumably, have obviated the need, which he had felt on the previous Sunday morning, of stopping at Gosford ("Gozard") for "a little Shrub and Water ... having had no breakfast" (26/6/1763). Perhaps it was a growing confidence in his horsemanship which almost brought disaster on the ride to Ardington when:

> My Horse fell down on a Trot as I was going
> and threw me over his Head, but
> (I thank God Almighty) I received no Hurt –
>
> (3/7/1763)

Nor were the journeys to Newton without discomfort and even hazard. On 17 July "It rained all the way from Newton to Oxford ... I had my great Coat and my Oil-Skin-Hood". The following Sunday, the last occasion on which he was to serve Newton, the going was a good deal worse for:

> . . .The Waters going to Newton were out
> excessively, which made it very danger=

=ous; I was up half Way my Boots in Wa=
=ter for near half a mile going to Newton –

The probability is that this was at the point, near Gosford, where his route crossed the Cherwell valley, an area still prone to inundation as the floods of Easter 1998 showed.

On the following Sunday, Woodforde once again got "almost wet through" but by now he was travelling only as far as Great Chesterton, a New College living on the Oxford side of Bicester. There the rector was Benjamin Pye who had given up his fellowship earlier in the year on getting married. Chesterton was also the home of Mr Pryor, steward of New College. At Chesterton, which he served for five weeks, the young Woodforde was treated with great kindness by Mr Pryor "for my Father's sake". The diarist certainly appears to have enjoyed his visits to Pryor's house where he was invited to dine with a socially fascinating variety of diners who included, at different times, Mrs Bertie ("Aunt to the present Lord Abingdon"), Pryor's niece (twice described as "a very fine Woman"), a local farmer and his wife and "Mr. Payne, a Baker at Brackly, an everlasting Spunger but a droll Fellow". On the same day on which he had been entertained by this last character Woodforde's day was further enlivened on his return journey to Oxford by seeing:

a little grey Horse about the Height of
mine, leapt over the Turnpike Gate
which I came through, and standing –

(21/8/1763)

It may well have been this happy acquaintance with Mr Pryor that persuaded Woodforde to go and visit another old school friend of his father's, William Bowler, the Master of New College School (and "Informator celeberrimus" according to the Winchester register} who was also rector of the New College living of Colerne, Wiltshire, at his home at Great Milton "two miles beyond Wheatley" and a village where "a great Fire happened last year". Mr Bowler was very glad to see Samuel Woodforde's son who may, however, have had some ulterior motive for riding out to Great Milton. Pryor, who clearly had Woodforde's interest at heart, was actively engaged in trying to find a suitable curacy for the young man, who, although he had already accepted Mr Fitch's offer of Thurloxton, would certainly have been interested in something better. Later in the year, on the diarist's return to Oxford for the Wardenship election, he received a letter from the Steward

"desiring me to wait on him at Chesterton, as he had something to communicate to me which he thought would be to my Advantage". By this time Woodforde had already been offered Babcary and had decided to give up Thurloxton, to the annoyance of Mr Fitch. He was unable to visit Chesterton but in the letter he wrote to Pryor before returning to Somerset he evidently did not discourage the old man's efforts on his behalf for, three months later, when he was once again in Oxford, he writes:

> Mr. Pryor the Steward offered me
> this Morning a Curacy by Bath
> at a place called Colerne worth
> 50. Pound Per Annum & a House the
> Living is Old Mr. Bowlers. (14/3/1764)

This was £10 per year more than he would have got had he stayed at Thurloxton and £20 more than he himself would offer Mr Corbould to serve Weston Longville some thirty years later. Nevertheless, grateful as he is to Mr Pryor for his kindness, Woodforde has decided that he must "keep House" (i.e. live at home) and that the Wiltshire parish – on the "wrong" side of Bath – "will not do at all for me".

This, however, has taken us a long way from the environs of Oxford and the sodden summer of 1763. Woodforde's soakings were by no means over when we left him on his way back from Chesterton at the end of July. In the middle of the following week he borrowed a horse from Thomas Nicolls – "as my Horses back is sore, being lately gall'd by the Saddle" – and went with Mr Sheffield to "a place called Combe about ten Miles of". The parish of Combe lis just to the west of the Blenheim perimeter wall, the living having been in the hands of Lincoln College since 1478. The church had been served by the young John Wesley, a fellow of Lincoln, on several occasions earlier in the century. But the church was not the destination of the diarist and his friend; rather they were going to a "very pretty place" near the river, Evenlode, which "Mr. Sheffield, Nicholls & Skinner of C.C.C. have fitted up for fishing and they rent there 5. miles of water". Despite the intrusion of the Oxford–Worcester railway – Edward Thomas' Adlestrop line – this is a beautiful stretch of English countryside, wooded valley-side slopes contrasting with the flat meadows across which the river Evenlode swings on its way to the old bridge at Hanborough. Alas for Woodforde, he seems to have spent the afternoon drying out rather than enjoying the challenge of barbel or bream as "we were

wet through going there" and the rain continued all the day preventing his return to Oxford. He did, however, meet another old clergyman:

> M[r]. Smith the Parson of the Parish of Combe
> an old Man, and Sen[r]. Fellow of Lin: College,
> spent an Hour with M[r]. Sheffield and me
> at Combe this afternoon: he is very deaf –

Woodforde was to visit Combe on two further occasions. In May 1765 when he was in Oxford "for my M.A." he went there with Mr Newte, officiating at the church for Mr Whitmore, himself the curate, and dined "at one Farmer Gunnis's there upon a Chine of Pork and Greens and a rosted Breast of Veal and had a good Bottle of Whitmore's Port after Dinner". Four years later, on 3 September 1769, although on the briefest of visits to Oxford, en route to Winchester for the Election, he "went and Preached this morning at a place called combe about 11 miles from Oxford – for Master Senior". Unfortunately, both Woodforde and Wesley, and even poor deaf Mr Smith, would have been denied sight of the fine medieval wall paintings, including the Doom painting over the chancel arch, which are the church's greatest feature. They were rediscovered before those at Weston Longville but even so not until the 1890s.

After serving Chesterton, Woodforde received a request, via an improbable intermediary – Mr Orthman, the dancing master, cellist and steward of the "Catch Clubb" – to serve the church at Drayton "two little Miles beyond Abingdon". Accordingly, on Saturday, 3 September 1763 he rode to "Draton" (his spelling) to talk to:

> M[rs]. Bacon about serving that Church
> to Morrow, she says that she will give
> me half a Guinea, a Dinner, & stabling
> for my Horse –

The diarist agreed to take the service at Drayton on the following day and on the next Sunday. Mrs Bacon behaved "very handsome" to him, giving him a "Glass of mountain" and pressing him to dine, an offer which he had to refuse having already "ordered in Hall". Mrs Bacon, it transpired, was the mistress of a boarding school of twenty-two young ladies so that it may be that Mr Orthman taught them the accomplishments of the ball-room. Almost inevitably on the second and last ride to Drayton "I was almost wet through, as it rained all the Way". During the following week, Woodforde left Oxford: his first period of regular residence had come to an end.

In the spring of 1767 Woodforde was back at the university in order, finally, to take his master's degree. One of his fellow diners at the house of Mr Pryor at Chesterton in the summer of 1763, together with the "everlasting Spunger" from Brackley, had been "Mr. Banks of our College". Banks held the New College living of Wootton – "worth 300 – Per Annum or more" – a pretty village in the Glyme valley a couple of miles beyond Woodstock. The church is picturesquely located at a point where the road winds up from the bridge and a reminder of the New College connection can be seen at its east end where a stone angel supports the arms of William of Wykeham. Although Banks was the rector, Woodforde rode there on 17 May "upon a Hack" for "Oglander Jnr. who was to have went for Whitmore but Oglander's father being just now dead he desired me to serve it". Once again the diarist was unlucky with the weather for it rained all the way there "with the Wind directly in my Face", but was rewarded with a dinner of "seven or eight dishes" and was able to appreciate Banks' "charming pretty House and Gardens". A fortnight later Woodforde was back at Wootton, for although he was to have gone to Heyford for John Hook, "Whitmore desired me to change with him as he wanted to go to Haiford". This must have suited Woodforde as the New College living of Upper Heyford is three or four miles beyond Wootton and, once again, he was out "in a very smart Shower". This was not the last that Woodforde was to see of Wootton for, during his second prolonged period of residence in Oxford, on 18 August 1774, he was invited by Banks to dine there upon a fine haunch of venison together with "the President of Trinity and his Lady", Mr Banks' aunt "who is above 80. and very hearty", William Master, Dr Wall and Mr Lucas.

During this second period of residence in Oxford Woodforde led a rather less peripatetic existence than he had done towards the end of the first period but nevertheless he was still able to explore more of the countryside around the city. He would already have been very familiar with Abingdon – he had, for example, skated there together with Nicolls during the prolonged freeze of 1763, and would have passed through on his way to Ardington and Drayton. On 3 June 1774 he went there with other senior Fellows of New College "to the Markett House and saw the Tragedy of Cato and the Padlock for Entertainment" as well as what Roy Winstanley describes as a "very raffish off-stage scene". The plays were performed by Wood's Company which was familiar to Woodforde

as they had visited Castle Cary. After the performance he went up into the dressing room and met, among others, Miss Wood ("very pretty but pokes a good deal")* who, rumour correctly had it, was engaged to Mr Trotman "of our College". Being beyond the sphere of proctorial power, the town probably had a rather dubious reputation so Woodforde could not have been altogether surprised to see "two gownsmen at the Play in the Boxes with two noted Ladies of Pleasure". It was here that, on 26 June 1777, Woodforde himself had his unfortunate liaison at "a private house" with "one Miss Clarke". Just before midnight the New College men set off back to Oxford where "We had a Supper prepared for us in the Chequer . . . and enjoyed ourselves to half-past two o'clock". Woodforde seems to have been the prime mover behind this Abingdon "Scheme"; he certainly paid the bills for "Turnpikes, Tea, Ticketts & Drivers" and for "one of Kemps Post-Coaches".

College and university responsibilities probably limited Woodforde's ability to take up curacies at this time (we remember how he took over Newton Purcell from Sale to allow that friend to carry out his proctorial duties). He was, however, relatively busy during the summer of 1774. Thus on 24 July he went to Yarnton "about 4. miles north of Oxford where I read Prayers and Preached for Holmes of our College, who is gone to Salisbury to preach the Assize Sermon there this very day". He then goes on to make one of his very rare comments abut the interior of a church, noting that:

> . . . There is in Yarnton Church a very handsome
> marble Monument of the Family of the Spencers,
> which Family is extinct – No relation of the Marlborough
> Family at all – the other part of the Church shabby.

Today the church and manor house form a pleasant group on the lane that leads down to the Isis. The manor house was built in 1612 by Sir Thomas Spencer whose arms decorate the doorway and whose "big baroque monument . . . with life-sized figures, all very static", according to Pevsner, had impressed Woodforde.

Headington has long since succumbed to the suburban growth of Oxford. Even the former quarries of the once separate village of Headington Quarry, from which came much of Oxford's building stone, have largely disappeared beneath urban sprawl. By the time Woodforde first served the church there, 21 August 1774, he was

* i.e. "round-shouldered", stooping. With that kind of disability, it was fortunate that she was the manager's daughter.

already familiar with Headington, the Hill being the frequent object of many of his shorter walks while his footwear was purchased from "Sellard of Edington" (later "Sellar of Heddington"). Five days before, Woodforde, together with a number of others, including Nathaniel Blisse and one Finch of Headington, had made "a very jolly Night of it" not going to bed until 6 in the morning. Despite the fact that Blisse had been "much cut indeed the worst of us", he and Finch had set off the following afternoon for Cirencester to attend the celebrated Woodhouse music concert. His departure from Oxford contributed to a relatively frenetic period of activity on Woodforde's part. On 18 August he travelled the 10 miles to Wootton to enjoy the distinguished company and "fine haunch of venison" at John Banks'. The next day he travelled 4 miles in the opposite direction to Garsington where "I buried a Corpse . . . for Master Senior" who was himself still at Wootton "& knew nothing of it". Then on the Sunday, despite being in agony with "the bleeding piles":

> I walked to Headington this morning and read Prayers
> & Preached for Blisse of our Coll: who is out –

He served Headington for the next three weeks and on Sunday 27 August, having spent the morning "tossing up" with Coker and losing a guinea:

> I went to Headington at half past 11. o'clock this morning
> on foot, and married a Couple there for Blisse before
> the Clock struck 12. – I rec^{d}. for it – 0 : 10 : 6
> The Peoples Names were Lazarus Cox of Headington
> a Labourer & Mary Syres of the City of Oxford –

Woodforde served the church at Headington on one further occasion but it was not until February of the following year when "by desire of proctor Webber" he stood in once more for Blisse. This is worth recalling because it was the cause of some embarrassment to the diarist. After the service:

> Sir Banks Jenkinson of Headington sent his Servant
> to desire me to dine with him, but did not like it.
>
> (5/2/1775)

Presumably he made some excuse and declined. Roy Winstanley suggests (note 3, February, 1775, *Oxford & Somerset Diary*) that the reason was political. Jenkinson's cousin, Charles Jenkinson, M.P. for Hastings, was the leader of a party very supportive of the king and Woodforde had not voted for him when he stood for one of the university seats in 1768.

On 11 June 1775 Woodforde undertook his last duty as an Oxford curate serving the church at Marcham, on the road from Abingdon to Faringdon, and its chapelry at Garford for his friend Robert Holmes who "preached in our Chapel before the University – being Trinity Sunday". At the Parsonage House – "in which lives a Man & Wife by name Hopkins . . . [he] had an odd Dinner . . . a boiled Loin of Lamb, some Peas, and an odd Plumb Pudding baked". Like Drayton, Marcham has now been overwhelmed by the growth of Abingdon, but Garford remains a lovely spot beside the River Ock.

During his last year in Oxford, when his mind was, no doubt, increasingly turning towards Weston, we find the diarist frequently taking long walks, often by himself but sometimes accompanied by the young gentleman-commoner Nathaniel Acton, with whom he took "a pretty long Walk this Evening on the Wantage Road, about 9. Miles in length" and, two days later (8/12/1775), "took a long Walk this morning into Bagley Wood and back again". His last significant excursion before departing for Norfolk took place on 17 May when he "took a long Walk . . . with Bill Woodforde all over Port Meadow to Godstow & shewed him Rosamunds Tomb". He was about to become even more intimately acquainted with another stretch of English countryside.

Much of the countryside around Woodforde's Oxford has, of course, disappeared beneath the spread not only of suburbs but of by-passes, car factories and motorways. Not all of this is regrettable – Betjeman's Belbroughton Road *is* bonny – but the old ghosts have surely fled. Charles's army no longer retreats, wraithlike, across the bridge at Hanborough and Glanvil's Scholar has quit the Cumnor Hills. Fortunately for us, we have the diary and Mr Sellar's boot-leather still does duty as we take another walk with Woodforde "across the temporary bridge"* and "up the Hill".

"CYDER AS USUAL": CLERICS & CHRISTMAS PAST

"Fifteen poor old People dined here as usual being Xmas Day", recorded James Woodforde in his diary. It was 1764, and the guests were entertained in the kitchen of his father's rectory at Ansford in Somerset, while the family dined in the parlour.

* This was the structure by Magdalen, which took the place of the original bridge as part of the changes carried out by the implementation of the Mileways Act (1771).

In the kitchen they had "a large Rump of Beef of thirty pound roasted, and three large plumb puddings. Fine beef it was", added James, who was always an appreciative gourmand.

Late on Christmas Eve the church singers had arrived (a new group from Samuel Woodforde's other parish of Castle Cary), and after they had sung a carol and an anthem they were given "cyder as usual", and two shillings.

On Christmas Day, prayers had been said in the church and the holy sacrament celebrated, before the party for the poor folk in the afternoon. Boxing Day was the occasion for distributing more money and food (and wheat in hard times) to the poor of the parish, and Christmas boxes to the tradespeople. The whole Christmas season was according to custom.

It was a pattern that James maintained when he moved to his own parish of Weston Longville in Norfolk. The local farmers paid him their tithes early in December, and had a good dinner for their pains. In 1782 Woodforde gave them salt fish, a leg of mutton boiled with capers, a knuckle of veal, a "Piggs Face", a fine sirloin of roasted beef, and plenty of plum puddings. The farmers also worked through six bottles of wine, five of rum, and as much as they wanted of strong beer and ale

It got the Christmas season off to a good start. From then on Woodforde would distribute shillings and sixpences to the poor and widows, especially on St Thomas' day, when many poor people of the parish would come to the rectory to be given sixpence.

On Christmas Day itself, about a dozen poor men would dine on roast beef and plum puddings in the rectory (that year of 1782 they also had mince pies for the first time). In Woodforde's early years in the parish, wives were not invited, but each husband was sent home with a shilling for his spouse. (One wonders how well the wives had eaten that day, and whether they were allowed to spend the shillings on themselves.) Portions of dinner were sent to invalids in the parish.

Boxing Day was the day for Christmas boxes: half a crown among the bell-ringers, and a shilling to each tradesman's boy.

Eighteenth-century country clergy were not rich, but they were generous at Christmas time to the ill-paid farm workers and old people who lived around them.

Back in Somerset, Woodforde's contemporary, William Holland, also kept the tradition. On a fine bright Christmas Day in 1799 he

gave "a good dinner to the Sunday School children and a great many to dine in the kitchen. I think there were no less [than] thirty nine that dined at my expense", he wrote in his diary. He had had a full congregation in his parish church at Over Stowey, and 28 of them stayed for the sacrament afterwards.

A good collection was taken and, as was his custom when he celebrated communion, he immediately distributed the alms to the poor; but he kept back four shillings to divide between the church clerk (he called all church clerks "Mr Amen") and old Ben Hunt who ran the Sunday school.

Before Parson Holland could have his own dinner he had to ride to his other church at Asholt, where he had a "tolerable" congregation. He would have been quite tired by the time he got home to his family, because the Over Stowey carol singers were apt to wake the rectory family at three in the morning. The kitchen guests were still there, but they "bowed off between nine and ten in good order and thankful. Little Mouse Weymouth [the sexton] said not a word but sucked in the liquor very kindly. I asked him whether he felt stronger, he believed he was".

Holland could be genial enough on occasion, but he was a Welshman who never ceased to complain about the laziness and incompetence of his Somerset parishioners. "Zomerzetshire Boobies", he called them, and was always an irascible master when it came to the manservants he employed to work both in the garden and serve at table. Few of them lasted more than a year.

But he never forgot those who had been good to him in times of trouble – like the maidservants who had shared with him and his wife that terrible fortnight when four of the five Holland children died of scarlet fever. One daughter remained, and then, some years later, when his wife was 47, Little William had been born, and became the joy of his father's life.

There had been a dreadful day early in 1805, when eight-year-old William was on his first Christmas holiday from school. Father and son had ridden out on parish business, and little William had been thrown from his hired pony and dragged by one stirrup for 50 yards. His anguished father was sure he was dead, but "a decent looking man" from the nearby cottage came to pick him up. The child was taken into the cottage and put into a clean bed while the helpful man borrowed Holland's horse to fetch the doctor. No bones had been broken, but the doctor advised that little William should stay

where he was for the time being, and the two families who shared the cottage, "the most clean and decent people I ever met with", nursed him for several days. The Hollands never forgot the kindness, and thereafter the cottagers, husbands and wives, were always among the guests in the parsonage kitchen on Christmas Day.

Christmas presents as we know them wre not the custom, but new clothes are often mentioned in the diaries of these two clergymen. When little William was not quite three, he was made to try on his new "jackett and trowsers" on Christmas Eve, and "he cried not a little when taken off, for tomorrow is when he is to begin his career in them in earnest".

Holland would occasionally treat himself to a new suit, and quite often at Christmas both he and Woodforde would give away their old coats to one of their poorer guests. Nancy Woodforde, who lived with her generous uncle, would get a new silk gown or as much as ten guineas from him, though there is no mention of any presents for Mrs Holland.

However, one year gifts came from Mrs Holland's richer sister-in-law in London: silk for a gown for her, and for Holland himself "a very handsome Court Calendar bound in Morocco ... it has in it twice what others have in general with the Peerage of England and Baronets and their respective incomes and supporters and other articles. It has clasps and is as thick as a small Bible, in short a very capital present."

Christmas decorations are not mentioned by Holland, although Woodforde writes of decorating the windows with holly and ivy, and says that every Christmas afternoon he lit his "great candle" for an hour at teatime.

For real decorations we have to turn to another and later clergy diarist, Francis Kilvert in Clyro on the Welsh side of the border. There the church was decorated on Christmas Eve with ivy dusted with flour to look like snow, and straw texts on red flannel. Kilvert was only a curate, and a poor one at that, but he still managed to give presents of tea and sugar, supplied by his mother, to the old and poor.

All these clergy celebrated the eucharist at Christmas, usually with good congregations, though only Kilvert mentions doing other duty. On Christmas Day 1877 he had to go back to the church in the afternoon through falling snow and intense cold to bury little Davie, the shepherd's son. At the afternoon service it was so dark

he could hardly read the lessons, but he preached from Luke 2.7: "There was no room for them in the inn", "and connected the little bed in the churchyard in which we had laid Davie to rest with the manger cradle at Bethlehem".

Very cold weather could have a marked effect on congregations at Christmas. it could also make other marks. It was such intense frost on Christmas Day at Clyro in 1870 that Kilvert "sat down in my bath upon a sheet of thick ice which broke in the middle into large pieces with sharp points and jagged edges stuck all round the sides of the tub like *chevaux de frise*, not particularly comforting to the naked thighs and loins, for the keen ice cut like broken glass ... I had to collect the pieces of ice and pile them on a chair before I could use the sponge".

Kilvert died tragically young, and was spared the gout which afflicted the other two. Holland describes struggling to church on a very wet Christmas Day, his feet wrapped in flannel, two great-coats and "my Gambadoes" (leather leggings). He managed his duty in the freezing church with the help of a chair within the altar rails.

Woodforde also struggled to walk to church with an extremely painful foot, but still managed to administer the sacrament to 22 communicants. But in 1794, when he was only 54 and already thinking of himself as an old man, he fainted in church with an "epileptic fit". Though he recovered and managed to finish the service, he hardly ever went to church thereafter.

He never again went on Christmas Day, though he remained Rector until his death six years later. But, to the very end, like Holland, he kept up the hospitable customs of the rectory: the tithe dinner, the distribution of alms, and the Christmas dinner for the old and poor in the kitchen of the rectory.

– By kind permission of the editor, 'Church Times', 19/12/1997

WOODFORDE SURROUNDED BY DESERT

This, we know, was the term he always used for dessert, perhaps not altogether displeased to have the opportunity to anglicize a word he found too "frenchified" for his liking. I wrote a short essay recently (published in the spring of this year, Journal XXX, 1), called 'The Parson at the Dining Table', which dealt with the

differences between the composition of Georgian meals and those of our time, and distinguished between what our ancestors called the "first course" at dinner, all meat items, and their "second course", which contained lighter dishes of meat and fish but also sweet pies, puddings and tarts. But it did not go on to mention another addition to the bill of fare which was never termed a course, perhaps because it required no cooking at all.

This was Woodforde's "desert", which was not put on the table until the end of a meal, after all the rest had been removed, or *desservi*, and hence the origin of the word. It consisted of little else but raw fruit, and sometimes nuts. It was a supplement to the meal, an appendage which did not appear ever until the serious work, the real knife-and-fork drill, had been accomplished, and the guests, now replete and happy, were in the humour to sip their wine lazily and perhaps peel an apple or pear to go with it. Men carried in their pockets little dessert knives for this purpose. Johnson's friend Joseph Baretti, set upon in a London street by what he took to be a murderous gang of ruffians, and terrified out of his wits, drew the only defensive tool he had with him, "a small knife kept for paring fruit", and with this seemingly innocuous weapon killed one man and seriously wounded another. ('Mrs Thrale', Part III, in our 'British Diarists' series, No. XI.)

I have an idea that the "deserts" were always present as a part of formal meals; but very often Woodforde omits to mention them. Thus, a passage selected at random shows him presiding over Dr Bathurst's Tithe Audit at Lenwade in 1780, along with a Magdalen Fellow named Captain Hatch:

> We had for Dinner a large Piece of boiled Beef
> a Goose rosted, a Couple of Fowls boiled, Pudding & Pies

This was clearly a quite elaborate meal, with the regulation two courses; but there is no mention of the dessert which probably completed it. Or was the post-prandial fruit a gentleman's item, and not likely to be appreciated by farmers, even if the Fellow of Magdalen College missed having it there?

The dessert is described in detail whenever the diarist wanted to signalize a dinner as particularly luxurious or varied. On 24 November 1780 he was host to the Custances. Here he really spared no effort to impress his guests, by providing something not far from the kind of fare they might have given him up at the great house. With some pride he details the entire meal, desert and all:

I gave them for Dinner, some Skaite boiled with
small Whitings put round the Dish & Oyster Sauce
a Couple of boiled Fowls & a Tongue, a rost Leg of
Mutton, and some Artichokes – 2nd. Course –
a Rabbit Fryed, a Duck rosted, the Charter for the
first Time of ever making it and very good, Tarts,
Rasberry Puffs, Blamange, with black Caps in Custard –
Fruit after Dinner – Almonds & Raisins, Golden Pippins,
Nutts and Grapes –

After all that, it is no wonder that the squire and his wife "stayed till near 9. in the Evening with us, were very highly pleased with their Entertainment".

In general, eighteenth century people were fond enough of fruit and some believed that it was good for them as well as an appetite for it being a sign of robust health. Samuel Johnson wrote to a doctor in a letter of 1784, the last year of his life: "I have a voracious delight in raw summer fruit".

JOHN BAPTIST MALCHAIR AND HIS CIRCLE

A recent exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, *Malchair and the Oxford School* (22 September – 13 December 1998) featured the work of a man who would certainly have been well-known to James Woodforde. Although the diarist mentions Malchair, the leader of the Holywell Music Room band, on only one occasion, they shared many acquaintances and Woodforde, as a subscriber to the Music Room concerts in the 1774-1775 season, would certainly have been familiar with the subject of this absorbing exhibition. Much of what follows is derived from the highly informative and finely illustrated catalogue entitled *John Malchair of Oxford: Artist and Musician*, compiled by Colin Harrison with essays by Susan Wollenberg and Julian Munby.

Joannes Baptist Malchair, the son of a watchmaker, was baptised in Cologne on 15 January 1730. It was as a member of the cathedral choir in that city that he appears to have received his early musical training and, although he left Germany at the age of 22 to make his fortune initially at Nancy in Lorraine and then in England, in his old age he showed a particular interest in what today we would call folk tunes, not only those of England and Wales but also those of

his native land, some of which he re-worked in compositions of his own, including one entitled "The Waits of Cologne".

It was probably in 1754 that Malchair came to England, part of that harmonious stream of migrant musicians which had begun with Handel and would go on to include Johann Christian Bach and many others. A crucial contact on his arrival appears to have been with one Captain Bonfield, an acquaintance of his father, who introduced him to his first patron, Robert Price of Foxley in Herefordshire, the father of Uvedale Price who was to achieve fame for his writings on the picturesque. Price was a highly cultivated man who, while on the Grand Tour, together with William Windham of Felbrigg, father of the statesman, and his tutor Benjamin Stillingfleet, had formed the nucleus of the Common Room set in Geneva. R. W. Ketton-Cremer provides us with a colourful glimpse of the nature of their activities: "One of the chief activities of the Common Room was the production of plays. They acted *Macbeth* and *The Siege of Damascus*, and pantomimes and harlequinades of their own composing, to delighted if somewhat bewildered audiences of the citizens of Geneva. Windham painted the scenes: Price, Tate and Stillingfleet composed the music; and Stillingfleet also directed the machinery".

Although employed as a musician at Foxley, Malchair himself appears to have received instruction in drawing from the hands of his patron, adopting his habit of using a sketchbook as well as the then unusual combination of pencil and wash. While living at Foxley, Malchair started playing at the Three Choirs Festival at which he performed annually from 1759 until 1776. After playing at the festival for the first time in September 1759, Malchair decided to move to Oxford in the hope of filling the position of leader of the Music Room Band recently vacated upon the death of Thomas Jackson. He succeeded in obtaining the post possibly thanks to the influence of the Rev. and Hon. Shute Barrington (eventually to become bishop of Durham), Price's brother-in-law who at that time was one of the stewards of the Music Room. It may very well be that Malchair's very first concert as leader was also Woodforde's own first recorded visit to the Music Room: a performance of Handel's *Alexander's Feast* on 29 November 1759 "for the Benefit of Mrs. Jackson and her family" (see R. L. Winstanley, 'The Music Room', Journal XXVI, 1).

There can be little doubt that Malchair would have been distressed to hear of the premature death in 1761 of Robert Price,

Malchair: Self Portrait 1765. Brown no. 991

coincidentally only a few weeks before that of William Windham. It would however appear that from shortly after his arrival in Oxford Malchair would start to pass on the artistic skills he had learnt from Price to pupils of his own. One of these was John Skippe of Upper Hall, Ledbury, Herefordshire, itself not far from Foxley, who was a student at Merton between 1760-1764. We know from later correspondence that Malchair set his young pupil the exercise of copying prints after Carracci. Ironically, the work of the Carracci brothers, copying from whom, Malchair believed, helped to give "a flowing freedom of hand", fell from grace in the nineteenth century and John Ruskin who, as the first Slade Professor, was a successor to Malchair, was of the opinion that the Carracci and other Bolognese painters had "no single virtue, no colour, no drawing, no character, no history, no thought".

The Bolognese artists remained favourites with Malchair as a letter written to Skippe, dated 7 November 1782, reads: "I have just no [sic] purchased for three guineas the Gallery of Carracci by Cassio – the impressions are not remarkably strong, but they are not retuchet and I think the boock a great acquisition as the prints are become exceedingly scarce . . ."

Skippe, who was to become a close friend of Malchair's, was also an acquaintance of Woodforde who, unsuccessfully, endeavoured to intervene on Skippe's behalf when the latter fell foul of the proctors in his second year at the university. On 19 November 1761 Woodforde records that he attended a lecture given by "a famous Methodist" Thomas Haweis at the church of St Mary Magdalene in St Giles, "A very stupid, low and bad stuff" according to the diarist. Woodforde makes no other comment about the lecture but then, on 7 December, we read:

> Goring of Magdalen Coll: and
> Skipp of Merton Coll: were
> had up to Nowell the Prctor,
> by Haws for making a Dis=
> =turbance at his Church
> last Thursday Evening, and
> Geree and myself went this Morning
> to Nowell to witness that they
> made no Disturbance, but
> we lost it –

Woodforde himself, of course, had no time for dissenters and Nowell may well have suspected the impartiality of his evidence.

Skippe's name makes no further appearance in the diary although he was to achieve a brief mention in the *DNB* as "an amateur artist", but he continued to correspond with Malchair until long after he left the university, and a drawing by Malchair survives of Skippe's house near Ledbury. One of the German's letters contains this charming description of the nature of friendship: "we all have a some thing that is whimsical when we come to consider ourselves impartially and a Mutual indulgence to that some thing in Each other constitutes real friendship".

In 1767 and 1768 Malchair's own artistic development was acknowledged by his being chosen by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press to provide the headpiece of the Oxford Almanack. Traditionally, these were illustrated with views of the colleges represented in allegorical form with their founders or benefactors. Malchair broke away from this convention by providing idyllic pastoral views of the surrounding countryside. These did not have sufficient appeal to the Delegates to persuade them to re-employ him after 1768 when the work fell to a London artist "Michael Angelo" Rooker who preferred detailed depictions of college buildings.

By the late 1760s Malchair's style was developing to maturity. Although employing a limited range of colour there is a softness and lightness of touch about Malchair's views of the countryside around Oxford which gives them a strong appeal. Both these "landskipps" and his topographical drawings of Oxford itself are characterised by a simplicity of content which enabled Malchair to invest the most commonplace objects with considerable artistic value so that, according to his unpublished *Observations on Landskipp Drawing*, "even a Pig-Staiy with a single Elder bush is a Landskipp, or a punt, a man & a willow". There is plenty of evidence in the exhibition that he practised what he preached: thus in a letter to another of his former pupils, Dr Wynne, he describes 'The Ferry at Hinksey' as:

> a little drawing of the little Hovel and pigsty at Ferry Hingsley humble objects indeed but deare to your Memory and Mine as it recales to our Meindes former happy days indeed.

From the historian's point of view the greatest value of Malchair's work lies in the record he made of Oxford before the drastic changes brought about by the Mileways Act of 1771 which enabled the city authorities to destroy much of medieval Oxford by widening many of the roads, demolishing and rebuilding Magdalen Bridge and taking down the East Gate and the North Gate (which included the

old city prison, the Bocardo). Colin Harrison contrasts the concern of Malchair for these threatened antiquities with that of "the young and thoughtless" typified by Woodforde who, on returning to Oxford in the autumn of that year, found that:

> The Streets in Oxford are much improved, as the Signs are taken down and put against the Houses, the Streets widened, East Gate & Bocardo taken down & a new bridge going to be built where Magdalen Bridge now stands, and temporary Bridges during the building of it now making by Christchurch Broad-Walk, for to go up the Hill &c.
>
> (19/10/1771)

Malchair, unless he relied in part on memory, must have been very busy during the summer of 1771 recording these and other monuments and buildings prior to, and in some cases during the course of, their destruction. As the letter to Wynne suggests, Malchair was deeply attached to the architectural antiquities of Oxford and its environs, however humble or dilapidated. Thus he executed many drawings of the back streets and alleyways of the city and titles such as 'Behind the Tanner's Yard' and 'A Stream from behind a Row of Old Houses' are common. In showing the destruction of medieval buildings, such as that of the Canterbury Building, knocked down to make way for Wyatt's new quadrangle at Christ Church in 1783, Malchair seems to have been more interested in the poignancy of the destructive act, with the sun's rays shining through clouds of dust, than the recording of antiquarian detail. Likewise his drawing of the fire which destroyed New Inn Hall in 1776 is atmospheric rather than a last minute effort to record faithfully the appearance of the doomed building. One of Malchair's favourite subjects was Friar Bacon's Study, the gatehouse at Folly Bridge, and he must have been especially upset when it was demolished by the Hinksey Turnpike Trustees in 1779.

Although Malchair was resident in Oxford until his death in 1812, he did make three tours of Wales, the last of which, in 1795, produced what Harrison describes as "a fierce burst of creativity". Fine as are many of the dramatic drawings of this tour, Malchair was in fact already suffering from the eyesight problems which would eventually lead to blindness when, doubtless, his musical talents and interests became a particular consolation.

Before leaving Malchair the artist, however, mention must be made of another of his Oxford pupils: Jane Mary Oglander, the wife of the Warden of New College. Jane Rayne, the daughter of the vicar

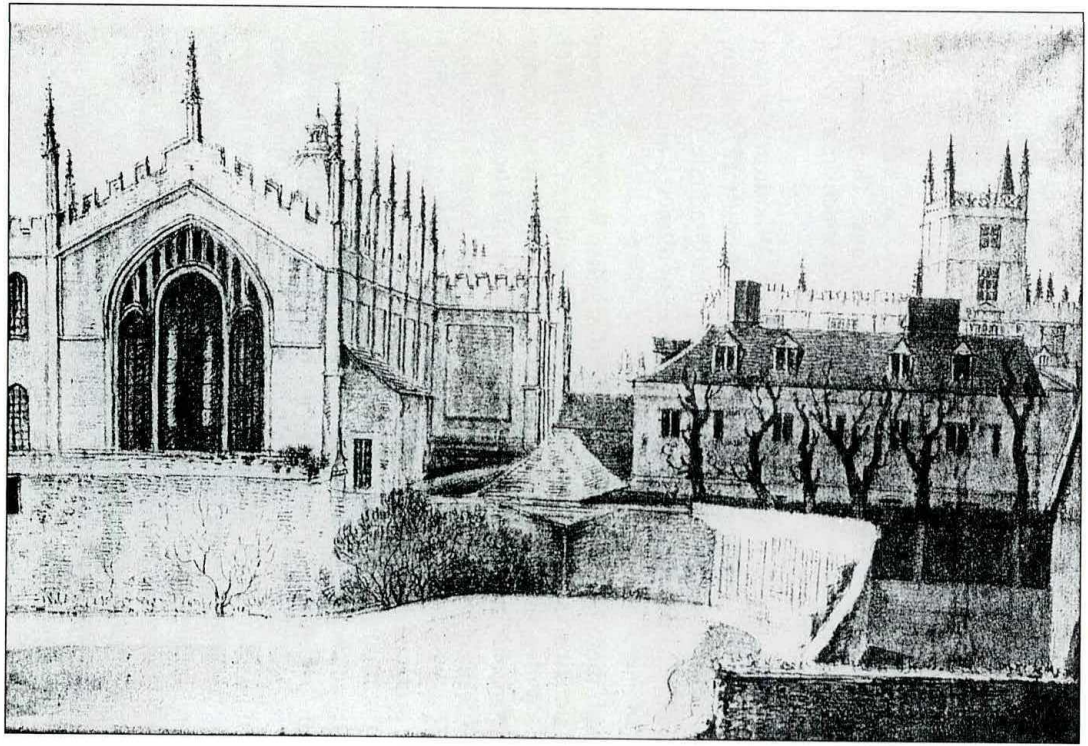
of Netherbury, Dorset, close to the Oglander estate at Parnham, appears to have married John Oglander in 1776 when she was eighteen and he thirty-nine (see F. H. Erith: 'The Oglander Family', Journal XII, 1). The Oglanders had been settled at their principal seat at Nunwell on the Isle of Wight since the twelfth century and in his family history entitled *Nunwell Symphony*, Cecil Aspinall-Oglander wrote of the Warden's wife that:

> Ever since her marriage Aunt Jane had been a great asset to the family circle at Nunwell . . . She was a great lover of music and a gifted painter in water-colours.

It is certainly easy to see how the connection between Malchair and the young Mrs Oglander developed, although the evidence for their relationship is confined to two pictures with an identical subject, both included in this exhibition. The *verso* of Malchair's watercolour 'View from the Warden's Lodgings, New College' bears the following inscription: *A View taken from a Window of the Warden's Lodgings in New College Oxon. Nov. 20 - 1786 - 10/- - this drawing served as a lesson in the Art of Perspective to the Lady of Dr. Oglander the present Warden of that College. The Greate Gothic Window is at the East Ende of All Souls Library – the Lowe Building intercepted by the lopped trees in the back part of Hartford College, above which appears the lofty pile of Gothic building, called the Schooles.* The exhibition also contains Mrs Oglander's attempt at the same subject, the longer shadows suggesting that it was executed later in the day. It is a relatively clumsy piece of work but by no means without merit. Interestingly, as Mr Erith points out, when her father died in 1789 his obituary in *The Gentleman's Magazine* concludes with the words: "His remembrance will be regretted by his amiable relict and accomplished daughter". Jane, who outlived her husband by some thirty-five years, was later to become a prolific artist, her mature style apparently owing more to her later teacher, the water-colourist John Glover, than to Malchair.

Malchair seems to have made very little by selling his pictures but his reputation as a drawing master, assisted by what appears to have been a warm and sympathetic personality, enabled him to supplement his income from music, and it is to that aspect of his work that I now wish to turn, concentrating, in particular, upon the links with Woodforde and other figures in the diary.

The sole mention that Woodforde makes of Malchair in the diary could hardly be less informative: it occurs on 3 August 1774 when,



View from the Warden's Lodgings, New College. Brown no. 958

after discussing at length his good fortune in a lottery, he adds:

> M^{r}. Mellchair had a Benefit at the Music Room at
> $^{s}2/6^{d}$ a Ticket – I lost* a Ticket to Coker 0 : 2 : 6
> I did not go to the Music Room myself being late –

However, during that season, 1774-1775, Woodforde had subscribed to a season ticket and did visit the Music Room for many of the Monday evening concerts. Susan Wollenberg, in an excellent essay on 'Malchair the Musician' in the exhibition catalogue, makes it clear that these were not necessarily such sedate occasions as we might expect. Thus the Articles of Subscription for the following season include the following entreaty:

> In Compliance with the earnest Request of a very considerable Number of Subscribers, it is hoped, that for the future, Gentlemen will not suffer Dogs to follow them to the Room, which are a great Annoyance to the Company.

As Roy Winstanley points out (*vide supra*), Woodforde's own behaviour left something to be desired on 15 August 1774 when, having visited the Coffee House, he and an undergraduate, Grattan, went to the Music Room where "We were both merry and taken notice of".

Although there is no indication in the diary that Woodforde ever met Malchair socially, he was acquainted with a number of the band leader's colleagues. Wollenberg points out that in his first decades at the Music Room Malchair's name is often coupled in advertisements for the Holywell performances with that of James Lates who appears to have been leader of the second violins. Lates, the son of an Oxford Jewish scholar, has been described as "the first Oxford Jewish composer" whose "idiomatic and stylish compositions" probably reflect the kind of playing being cultivated at the Music Room at that time. Woodforde's first reference to Lates (28/10/1762) is with respect to an Italian and French Grammar "which I subscribed to when I was at Oriel College – 0 : 3 : 0". He subsequently refers to Lates as "Segnior Lates, a French & Italian Master in this Town" and as "Senior Lates" and, confusingly, "Lates Senior". Woodforde mentions Lates on numerous occasions among lists of fellow freemasons attending the meetings of the Alfred Lodge.

While Malchair and Lates are often advertised as providing the instrumental parts for concerts at the Music Room, the leading vocal parts were many times provided by Messrs Norris and

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By this the diarist apparently meant that he betted, perhaps by tossing a coin, for the price of the ticket.

Matthews. Woodforde refers to Thomas Norris on a number of occasions, the first being 21 March 1762 when "Norris the singing Boy sung (in our Chapel this Evening) a very fine Anthem". Norris, who came from Mere in Wiltshire, makes another appearance in the diary when Woodforde notes that "Norris from Sarum sung in our Chapel this evening, which occasioned a great deal of Company to be there" (10/7/1763). Norris next appears in the diary as a visitor to the Alfred Lodge, possibly the guest of Lates, in 1775, by which time he was the organist at St John's and had received his B.Mus. degree. He arrives at the Lodge meeting together with William Matthews, his Holywell colleague, and on 30 November 1775, at another Lodge meeting, Woodforde notes: "We had some good songs from Norris and Matthews".

The Music Room figures who would have been best known to Woodforde were probably the dancing master and cellist E. C. Orthman and Woodforde's own music teacher Philip Hayes, subsequently Professor of Music, who is described by Wollenberg as "corpulent and quarrelsome". Of all Malchair's musical associates, however, the one to which we are most indebted for preserving the talented German's name and much of his work was Hayes' successor William Crotch. He was, of course, the child prodigy from Norwich whom Woodforde had encountered on 15 May 1778:

> In the Evening we took a walk into S^{t}. George's Colgate to see
> a very remarkable & surprising little Boy, who is just 3. years
> old and in Coats, and will play on the Organ some Tunes –
> He was rather sleepy this Evening and therefore could not
> be prevailed on to play any Tune, but he would touch
> the Keys indiscriminately, & not play any thing but what
> completely was concord – Sharps & Flats the same –
> He would suck at his Mothers Breast & play with one hand
> upon the Organ and every Note in proper Tune –
> He is quite a miraculous Child & must be inspired –
> He is also a sweet pretty Boy & very engaging –
> His name is Crotch & his Parents very poor Mechanics –

The following year the little boy made his first appearance at the Music Room in Oxford when "as a child in a Frock on his Mother's Knee" he performed on the organ "to the great astonishment of a large Audience". In 1788 the youthful genius returned to reside in Oxford, lodging at the house of the singer William Matthews. (The story of Crotch's sensational rise through the musical profession is summarised by Roy Winstanley in a note (p. 213) in Volume 8 of the Society's edition of *The Diary of James Woodforde*.)

Nine years later, at the age of 22, Crotch, who was organist at Christ Church, himself became Professor of Music, and, in a vivid and touching memoir (Bod. Lib. MS Mus. d. 32) quoted by Wollenberg, recalled that it was about this time that:

> I became more intimately acquainted with Malchair and he paid me a daily visit at 4 o'clock staying till 10 min[utes] before 5 when I was obliged to go to Christ Church prayers. He brought a music book for me to play to him under his arm and sometimes brought a new tune for me to write down as his eyes became too dim to see even his large notes any longer – He continued these daily visits till breaking his shin against a Wheelbarrow in Trinity Court where he used to take a few turns, he never again ventured out . . . I used to call on him every Sunday after morning sermon.

Crotch was probably the last of Malchair's students of drawing and the exhibition includes a "Classical Landscape" after Carracci copied by him in 1802. By this time Malchair's failed eyesight had caused him to give up drawing but until the late 1790s he continued to retouch his old drawings, in Crotch's words: "poor old Malchair used to delight in improving his old sketches, he called it reforming the old sinners".

Malchair had married Elizabeth Jenner in London in 1760 but she had died childless, possibly of consumption as long ago as 1773, so that, despite the support of numerous friends and especially Dr Crotch, his declining years must have been difficult. Crotch transcribed and annotated much of his work, placing a high value on many of the tunes "of great antiquity and of Various Nations" which Malchair had preserved. The old master died on 12 December 1812 and was buried in St Michael's Church in the Cornmarket.

THE *KINGS HEAD* AND THE *ANGEL* INN

Both important hostelries, the *Kings Head* and the *Angel* experienced their heyday in the nineteenth century. This was the bonanza caused by the great upsurge in national coaching facilities. No longer was a trip to London a journey into the unknown – arduous, beset by many and great dangers, of which highwaymen

were not the worst, it is true, but feasible and growing in popularity. These inns quickly geared themselves to their new-found method of raising revenue.

As the *raison d'être* of these inns was the coaches, it would not be out of place to look a little closer at their main services. The steady increase in the provision of coaches is a barometer of the inns' prosperity. Coaches of one sort or another had definitely started to work regularly in England by 1657. By 1681 there was a stage coach that plied between Norwich and the *Saracen's Head*, Aldgate. This was followed by another in 1696 which ran from the *Four Swans*, Bishopsgate Street, to Norwich. In 1745 there is found an announcement of the usual London trip at Christmas time, carrying parcels and turkeys as well as passengers from the *Castle Inn* in the Market Place. This took one and a half to two days and cost per person £1.2.0. By 1769, coach services costing £1.8.0 per person were advertising the journey as being covered in one day. Finally, in 1802, the Norwich Mail Coach Office at the *Kings Head* was announcing two mail coaches to London every day, one running via Ipswich to the *Swan with Two Necks*, the other via Newmarket to the *Golden Cross* – fares by this time having nearly doubled in thirty years to 42/- per place inside, but only 22/- outside. This service continued until 1846.

The *Kings Head* was situated at No. 11, The Market Place. Little definite is known of it before 1727 other than it was already an inn of some importance in Norwich, being a much-favoured posting establishment. In that year, following improvements to the inn, this advertisement appared in the Norwich Mercury: "John Durich at the King's Head in the Market Place having agreed with his landlord to have his house made more Commodious for the Engertainment of Gentlemen, Travellers and others, and taken a new lease, takes this opportunity to acquaint all his Customers, that he has now taken in a fresh Parcel of Neat Lines of all Sorts, which he will sell at Reasonable Prices to oblige his Friends and Customers, where they shall meet with a kind Reception, Civil Usage, and a hearty Welcome". Obviously this improved custom, for we read in an article of December 1729 that the King's Head Play House opened with the Norwich Company of Comedians presenting "Mackbeth, with all the witches, Original Songs and Dances". Among the facilities supplied by a good inn were spectacles for the curious: the *Kings Head* was not lacking in these. Its shows included natural curiosities, giants, boxing matches, and

other grotesques. For instance, it is recorded that in 1797 the giant O'Brien paid a visit to the inn – he was said to be 8′ 4″ tall. Not surprisingly, the *Kings Head* gained itself a superlative reputation, especially as William Leach, the proprietor, had post-chaises and three daily services to London. However, the *Kings Head* was doomed. It was demolished in 1813 to make way for a new pedestrian precinct called Davey Place to immortalize the name of the Alderman who constructed it, and so removed what would surely today have been a major asset, both practically and historically, to the City of Norwich.

The *Angel Inn* occupied premises at No. 16, The Market Place, a mere stone's throw away from the *Kings Head*. Indeed, in Robert Dighton's 1799 map they are inaccurately located next door to one another! The name was a very common one at that time; and is said to be derived from the salutation of the Archangel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It was an inn in the time of Queen Elizabeth I, and probably earlier, a Katherine Dyesse owning it at the beginning of the fifteenth century, when it was described as being in Cordwainer Row. In the year 1530 its owner, a Richard Grymes, is described as an innkeeper, which was unusual at that time. During the time that Parson Woodforde lived in Norfolk, it changed hands several times. When he first comes to Norfolk, it is under the new management of William Wetherill who, when he died, left the property to William Atthill. On his death, in 1789, it was sold to William Coleman from whom it passed in 1799 to Jonathan Davey. That it was a building of some size is known by a reference to the window tax of the 1700s, which was payable on thirty windows at this establishment, and also that the rent was £115 per annum. *The Angel* had its share of distinguished visitors. The Duke of York stayed there in 1794, while in 1820 both Viscount Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington stayed there en route for Yarmouth. The honour of Freedom of the City was conferred on these two distinguished gentlemen, following which everybody sat down to a "cold collation" at the *Angel*. During Parson Woodforde's day, but more so after his death, the *Angel* began to become important politically. In the 1830s, it became the Whig headquarters, and elections were run and rigged from there. In fact, before its end, it was said to be the centre of political corruption in Norfolk.

The *Angel*, in fact, was the principal hotel in the city. In 1840, following the fashion of rather dubious merit that was sweeping the

country, it was renamed the Royal Hotel. Oh! that one coat of paint could sever so many links with the past. This was the beginning of the end for the old inn. In 1897, the new, commodious and hideous Royal Hotel was built in Bank Plain – a short distance away – to which the licence was transferred. In 1889, the Victorian horror of the Royal Arcade was opened. The *Angel*, alas, had become another victim of the ideology of neatening and straightening within our cities, and another link with the past had been severed.

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TWO BOOK REVIEWS

1. Kate Chisholm: *Fanny Burney: Her Life, 1752-1840* (Chatto & Windus, 1998)

This is an attractive as well as useful and informative book, containing contemporary maps of London and Paris, with numbered circles to indicate places associated with the Burneys, an impressive number of portraits and other illustrations, and a clear and admirably detailed family tree. All the same, the pleasure to be derived from this work must to a certain extent be determined by the reader's opinion of Fanny Burney and interest in her life story. Perhaps I am diminishing my qualification as a reviewer if I confess that I do not find her very attractive as a person. She strikes me as quite often sly and upon occasion even treacherous, as her one-time friend Mrs Thrale found to her cost. As a writer she is hardly in the same league as Jane Austen, with whom she is often bracketed. Even in this category, she is probably less remembered as a novelist than as a diarist and letter-writer. Ms Chisholm recounts at quite unmerciful length the plot of *Evelina*, thereby probably acknowledging that even that former best-seller will be unknown to many present-day readers.

As her father's biographer, and in dealing with family papers, Fanny believed, as most people did in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that there was a radical distinction to be made between the public life of a person about which it was permissible to write in detail, and the private affairs of the same individuals, which had nothing to do with the reader. Fanny Burney, however, took this to a greater extent perhaps than anyone else. Having gone through his

surviving papers, she made up her mind that their contents "were so unlike all that honoured writer had ever produced to the Publick, that not only would they not have kept up his Credit & fair Name in the literary World,if brought to light, but would certainly have left a cloud upon its parting ray". She then spent 12 years in the production of a narrative from which all the life of the subject had been removed, and expressed in what Macaulay calls "the worst style that has ever been known among men". After which, of course, she destroyed almost every scrap of her sources.

Frances Burney was the second daughter and fourth child of Charles Burney and Esther Sleepe, who were married in London in 1749, having already a child of a month old. Burney was a very bright young man, organist of a fashionable City church and making fast progress in the musical world. He had acquired a patron, Fulk Greville, and was employed by the well-known composer Thomas Arne. He organised concerts and gave music lessons – until, all at once he was struck down by one of the mysterious fevers that so plagued the people of the time. It is remarkable that the air of a London "small and white and clean", in the words of William Morris, with no smoke pollution other than domestic coal fires, was considered so unhealthy. Burney was advised to leave the capital at once, if he wished to preserve his life. He took his family to Ipswich, and this accounts for Frances Burney's birth there on 13 June 1752. The Burneys were a brilliant, highly articulate family, among whom she, given the nickname of "the old lady" by her siblings, was the backward exception, unable to read until she was eight, and even after she had become an established writer herself knew little about books written by other people.

In 1760, his health restored, Burney went back to London, where the family lived, first in Poland Street, off Oxford Street, and then in a very famous house, in St Martin's Street, once the residence of Newton, the site now occupied by a branch of the Westminster Library. Soon after the move to the capital, in 1762, Fanny's mother, to whom she was devoted, died and Burney married again, his second wife being Elizabeth Allen, from King's Lynn. Fanny has little good to say of her. We are told that Fanny began to write as a young girl, but her stepmother, who disapproved of what she considered mere time-wasting, persuaded her to burn all her manuscripts, including a first novel, *Caroline Evelyn* – note the consonance of the surname with *Evelina*. Fanny had much to suffer

from this kind of parental tyranny. When, some years later Johnson offered to teach her Latin and Greek, her father refused to sanction it, holding that classical learning was unsuitable for a young woman.

Fanny had a certain affinity with older men. Although she clearly idolised her father, she also found a surrogate parent in a man named Samuel Crisp, her "Daddy Crisp". No more than nine months after she had made a bonfire of her literary juvenilia, she began to write the now famous diary. This is a very peculiar form of diary, since only part of it consists of ordinary journal entries, the rest being made up of personal letters, copied into her text before the originals were sent off to correspondents. Most of these diary letters went to Crisp, a man already elderly when she was in her teens. I find that when I wrote on Frances Burney in our 'British Diarists' Series, I was in error when I called him "a failed playwright". His single play, *Virginia*, so far from being a total flop, ran according to Ms Chisholm for 11 nights at Drury Lane in 1754 (I thought 9 was the limit at the time) and that his disappointment came about because Garrick refused to revive it for another stage run – even here, she said, his later reclusive existence was simply because he ran out of money.

Crisp and Fanny enjoyed an intimate correspondence, a blend of literary allusion and elaborate witticism. I find both sides of it artificial and mannered to the last degree, but no doubt they gave great pleasure to those who wrote and read them. Certainly the correspondence with Crisp must have had its influence on Fanny's literary development.

It is noteworthy, however, that when she wrote the novel that so soon catapulted her into fame and which from the first she saw in terms of a publishable commodity, she told neither her father nor Crisp about it. As a young woman of the time could not possibly negotiate with publishers, she brought in her brother Charles. She first approached by letter the well-known James Dodsley of Pall Mall, whose father had published Johnson's *Rasselas* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, but as her letter was sent anonymously and the publisher refused to move without the name of the author being disclosed, she next tried Thomas Lowndes of Fleet Street. Charles was brought in to go in disguise to the publisher and deliver the manuscript, which was eventually bought at 30 guineas for the copyright.

Fanny Burney was 26, not particularly young for the author of a first published novel, when *Evelina; or, A Young Lady's entrance into Life* was issued and became a great success. With it her life

was totally changed. She was outrageously spoiled by Dr Johnson, who chose to treat her almost as though she were a child, certainly much younger than her real age. She had a famous encounter with King George III who, out of his mind, chased her about Kew Gardens, calling out "Miss Burney! Miss Burney!" his voice coming "loudly and hoarsely". Ms Chisholm suggests that this dramatic account was written as a set-piece, which no doubt it was. There are several versions of it, in one of which the king appears in manacles, dropped from the printed text. This was later, however, after she had accepted the post of Second Mistress of the Robes at the Royal Court in 1786. Meanwhile she had published her second novel, *Cecilia*. The First Mistress, Juliana Schwellenberg, who had been with Queen Charlotte ever since the queen came to England to be married in 1760, is seen in the savage diatribes of Macaulay, but even if less intemperate language than his is used, she still appears as a remarkably unpleasant old woman. Fanny seems never to have thought this other than an ill-judged move, and soon came to detest the work and the kind of life it entailed for her; but her father, who saw in the court appointment a chance of profit for himself or the family, was "transported with delight" when she took it up, and this no doubt explains why she stayed so long, between four and five years, in a post which she eventually came to loathe and which damaged her health, although we need not believe Macaulay when he says she would actually have died had she stayed longer. But it took a lot of persuasion, on the part of the survivors of the Johnson circle and others, before her father was brought round to sanction her leaving. He had a terrible battle with Mme Schwellenberg and gave his permission for his daughter to resign her post in the Court. Even then the queen would not accept it, and the refusal of an offer of a holiday in the country as an alternative to resignation resulted in her "Cordiality" towards Fanny being diminished. In the end, however, the royals bowed to the inevitable. Fanny was given an annuity of £100, which Macaulay thought a very inadequate recompense, and left the Court for good on 9 July 1791. Once free, her health rapidly improved and she began to enjoy life again.

The French Revolution, or rather its adversaries' reactions to it, now became the most vital influence over Fanny's life. Her sister lived in the village of Mickleham in Surrey, and it was probably through visits to her there that she got to know a group of high-born emigrés at the big house in the neighbourhood, Juniper Hall. The

Revolution was now two years old, and these, unlike the ultras who had left France as soon as it had broken out, were up to a certain point liberals and reformers who had supported it, until they were overthrown and driven out by the extremist Jacobites. Famous people were there: Talleyrand, Mme de Stäel, and her lover the Comte de Narbonne, who had been made Minister for War by Louis XVI so recently as the end of 1791.

It was among this group that Fanny Burney found a husband. Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste-Piochard d'Arblay, of a landowning family, was a professional soldier who had attained the rank of general in the French army. He was exactly one month less than two years her junior, born on 13 May 1754. Having lost everything through the Revolution, he was horribly poor. He offered his services to the British Government and sent in a proposal for the raising of a regiment of emigré soldiers, both of which were turned down. After France declared war on Britain and her ally Holland things became even worse for the refugees. Talleyrand was asked to leave England by William Pitt, and went to America. D'Arblay hung on, because he had nowhere to go. The former general was reduced to giving French lessons, and it appears to have been in this way that he first got to know Fanny Burney. They swiftly fell in love. In spite of his troubles D'Arblay was a romantic. After she had written him a letter encouraging him to stay in England, he started off from Juniper Hall at seven o'clock in the morning with a rose tree for her, with which he walked the 17 or so miles to Chelsea where she was staying at the time.

As may be easily imagined, Dr Burney was not at all happy about his daughter's throwing herself away upon a penniless Frenchman. For some time he withheld his permission for them to marry, although he was not above asking D'Arblay to write out for him "a comprehensive analysis of all the factions in France". Fanny was now in her late thirties, and it is a striking commentary on paternal authority as it was seen at the time that she could no more have married without his consent than she could have left the Court until he allowed her to do so. Even when he came round and grudgingly allowed them to marry, he still refused to attend the ceremony in person, and Fanny had to be "given away" by her brother. The newlyweds were very poor, apparently with nothing beyond the £100 a year from Queen Charlotte, until 1793 when her third novel *Camilla* was published, for the copyright of which Fanny is said to have received £3000, a very large sum for the time.

In her first two works of fiction, Fanny had been content to write as naturally as possible. But by the time *Camilla* appeared, as an established and much respected literary figure it occurred to her that she must have a "style". With her intense veneration for Johnson, it was not to be expected that she would take anyone else as a model to copy. It was the worst possible choice, and she became quite incapable of producing prose that was anything but inert and lifeless, what I in another place called "leaden polysyllables and elephantine Johnsonese". Of her fourth and last novel, *The Wanderer*, Macaulay says that it is "a book which no judicious friend to her memory will attempt to draw from the oblivion into which it has justly fallen"; and the memoirs of her father are even worse, if that is possible.

Fanny, however, was happy in her belated love. Her only child, named Alexander after his father, was born in the year following her marriage, when she was forty. It was a good but scarcely exciting marriage that offers little to the biographer. D'Arblay was clearly an honourable man, a good husband and upright citizen; but to a reader, more impressed by the lively than the virtuous, he remains a most desperate bore, nothing he did or said or wrote having interest.

When the Peace of Amiens was signed in 1802, he could not wait to get back to France. Through the good offices of Lafayette he was offered a brigade, provided that he agreed to fight in the colonial war against the rebels of Santo Domingo. Fanny, left behind in England and expecting him to rejoin her there, was shocked. "A rash and dangerous enterprise", she called the expedition. Worse than this, unable to leave well alone her husband had apparently sought an audience with Bonaparte, to whom he rashly said that he was not prepared to fight against the countrymen of his wife. This annoyed the dictator so much that he wiped D'Arblay out of the active military list altogether. At the same time he was unable to leave France because his exit passport had stipulated that he was not to attempt to re-enter Britain for a year.

This in turn meant that Fanny had to live with him in France. The war recommenced and she was trapped there for 12 years. D'Arblay at length received his army pension, the princely sum of about £62 for over 26 years of service, and was made Adjutant-General, but there was no question of his being employed in the forces again. In 1805 she developed cancer in the right breast and had a mastectomy. It has been suggested by commentators in our time

that she had a benign tumour, not cancerous at all. Mr Chisholm puts the words "while fully conscious" into italics to make it clear that no form of anaesthesia was known at this time.

Then in 1814 D'Arblay was kicked by a horse, a form of accident to which even generals were subject at that time. An incompetent apothecary stitched up the wound without first cleansing it, and as a result the patient developed septicaemia. This happened in Trèves, where he was serving in the army, having signed a Proclamation of Loyalty to Louis XVIII, in the time of the Hundred Days before Waterloo. It would have been disastrous if Napoleon had been victorious at Waterloo. As it was, there was now no further hindrance to Fanny's return to her native country and she arrived on 17 October 1815, after a journey which she calls in her typical later and inflated manner: "in full & terrible unison with our jarred & unstrung feelings" – another way, I suppose, of saying that there had been a rough Channel crossing. Having arrived, Fanny nursed her father, who died two years later.

D'Arblay, however, was very ill when he came back to England. He had, according to Ms Chisholm's account, chronic constipation, severe haemorrhoids, pain, fever and weight loss. On 5 April 1818 he wrote his last words, "Pazienza! Pazienza!", and then stopped because he was too weak to go on holding the pen. He died on 3 May. Fanny buried him in the Walcot Street cemetery at Bath.

Her son Alex, upon whose prowess as a scholar she had at one time placed great hopes, was in some ways a disappointment. He was never a strong man, and predeceased her in 1837. Her own very long life came to an end on 6 January 1840, the anniversary of a date which she had long consecrated to prayer and to the memory of her beloved sister Susanna.

2. The Wensum Wordsmiths: *Mischief & Mayhem. Norwich 1798* (1998)

The collective *nom de plume* of the authors who have produced this pleasant and attractive little book hides the identities of four Norfolk writers who met first at a creative writing class and have continued to work together. Their volume of 64 pages is made up partly of short stories with a specifically East Anglian flavour, and partly of extracts from the Norwich newspapers. The year 1798, exactly two centuries ago, when Britain defeated the French at the

Battle of the Nile won by the local hero, Nelson, has been selected as a focal point to draw all the material together.

I fancy that most members of this Society will read first the story entitled 'A Night to Remember', because it is based on passages from Woodforde's diary and features several diary characters. It is a conversation between Young Stephen Andrews, who was later to run about the parish collecting names for the first occupational census, and a member of the Reeve family, farriers and horse-doctors, a relative of whom had 32 years before pulled out Parson Woodforde's aching tooth "with a monstrous crash". There are also accounts of a survivor of the famous battle, a wild gallop through Norwich and a most sinister legacy.

The extracts from the papers are amusing, occasionally grotesque. I revelled in the acquaintance of John Press, carpenter, of Little Walsingham, aged 31 years, about 5 feet 11 inches high, "a strong muscular man but bare of flesh", grey eyes and dark brown hair. He was arrested on suspicion of "sheep stealing", and while in custody cut his throat "almost from ear to ear, through not effectually". Thereupon he escaped and was on the run. The account ends by assuring readers that he should be easy to recognise because of the thickness of the bandages round his neck. Then there is a summary of the delights to be expected from Keymer's Gardens, on the occasion of the "Presenting and Consecrating to the Lincoln Supplementary Militia", when "Several pieces of Philosophical Fire-Works [!] were to be exhibited on the Stage, the whole without smoke, smell, or gunpowder". Mr Keymer not only ran the show but also sang and contributed addresses. A pocket diary called the Norfolk Ladies Memorandum Book charmingly described as "a Christmas Present for a Young Lady", a bargain at "One Shilling or Eighteen Pence in Red or Green with a Tuck or Clasp (Embellished with Portraits of Two Ladies of Distinction in Fashionable Dresses of the Year)" was on offer, containing an anthology called *The Flower Basket of Poetical Blossoms* including "A String of similies on a Swallow" and a "Sonnet written at Southend, Essex", together with "The Pilgrim by S.K.".

Let it never be thought that our ancestors did not know how to enjoy themselves.

OUR COVER PORTRAIT: SUSANNA, LADY DURRANT

Woodforde was very well known to Anne, Lady Bacon, Mrs Custance's sister, who was married on the same day as herself; and admired them both verymuch, calling them "the two best Women in England", the most generous tribute contained in the pages of the diary. He had no such intimate acquaintance with the squire's sister, born in 1752 and married about 1993 to Thomas Durrant of Scottow. He came from a very wealthy family of landowners, richer than the Custances, who had been at Scottow since the mid-sixteenth century, and he had "an almost obsessive pride" in his house and estate.

The diarist saw Thomas Durrant, possibly for the first time, in April 1784, at the nomination meeting for the county General Election of that year, over which he presided in his capacity of High Sherriff of Norfolk, a post to which he had just been appointed. At nearly the same time, he was created a baronet.

Woodforde met the Durrants socially on 4 September 1789, upon the occasion of the christening party held for the Custance's fourth son, John. There were two coaches-and-four and "a Post Chariot". After showing what appears to have been a numerous tally of guests round the church, while they got into the vehicles he walked up to Weston House for dinner. Woodforde says that "a Dozen of very fine Anson Apricots" which he had sent round were on the table and "all eat, but not a word mentioned from whence they came, therefore suppose that neither M^{r}. or M^{rs}. Custance knew anything of the matter". Following dinner, before the Durrants left Weston House and went off home "to a place called Scottow, S^{r}. Tho^{s}. invited me to his House". Nothing appears to have come of this invitation, which was perhaps not meant with more than a show of sincerity.

The marriage of the Durrants was a prudent rather than romantic union. Sir Thomas was 18 years older than his wife. Although in his Will he rather goes out of his way to stress that he was in good health, he may have felt a premonition that he had not long to live and became anxious lest his youthful wife should become the prey of adventurers and fortune hunters. He solved this problem, as best he could, by this Will which, while it gave her a generous settlement, put her to a very severe financial restriction in the event of her remarriage. He said he had done this not out of spite, but for his wife's own sake – just in case anyone was tempted to place a

different interpretation on his actions. In 1790 his health broke down altogether and he died at harvest time, having left a direction that he was to be buried in the family vault just seven days after his death, as a precaution against his coming back to life before that time was up. He left "£1000 charged to the estate of the widow, and £500 for the children's education". He left also a particular sum entirely for the upkeep of his furniture and other possessions with instructions for a suitable person to be put in charge of these during the minority of the heir.

There were two children, a son and a daughter. The latter was present at the christening party, when she was "about 11. Years old", her name being Susanna after her mother. A wilful, headstrong girl, and of course fatherless, in 1794 when she was eighteen she fell in love with a man named Samuel Swynfen. The story provides a neat illustration of the theory propounded by Professor Lawrence Stone, to the effect that while in earlier times marriage among the property-owning classes tended often to be no more than financial deals for the mutual settlement of agreements involving land or money, in which the young principals in matches arranged by their parents were lucky if some degree of mutual affection was present, by the second half of the eighteenth century a more liberal attitude was beginning to make itself felt, in which they were more likely to be consulted. So it happened in this case. The younger Susanna insisted on marriage to Samuel, and there was nothing that either her mother or her uncle, Mr Custance, her official guardian, could do about it, although other friends were called in and tried unavailingly to make her change her mind. The Hill-Custance essay, 'The Custances and their Family Circle', which has provided much of the factual detail for the present article, makes no pretence of impartiality upon this point, taking the view that Samuel was after Susanna's money and little more. The mother and guardian were mainly preoccupied in trying to prevent a runaway marriage without a financial settlement, and Lady Durrant told her brother, pathetically, that she wished "to keep friends with them ... I could not bear a run away match", which would leave her daughter unprotected by law and her property in the sole hands of the husband. Even after yielding in this point, Samuel wanted a settlement which would leave him in control of at least £4000 of Susanna's fortune and the reversion of it all if she died before him. Samuel, however, was no mere penniless fortune hunter. His family, originally from Leicestershire, had been established in

Staffordshire, near Lichfield, about as long as the Durrants in Scottow, as I showed in an appendix I wrote to accompany the Hill-Custance article. It is true, all the same, that they were short of money at the time, Samuel's father John Swynfen having torn down the old hall and was trying to build another. It is also possible that they did not have any right to the name they bore, that they were not related to the old Swinfen family and that their real name was Grundy, descended from a London fishmonger. But as it is most unlikely that the Custances knew the least thing in the world about this, it is unnecessary to pursue the matter further here. Finally Lady Durrant gave way graciously, and took her daughter to London, tactfully informing Mr Custance that she did not expect him to undertake the long journey. But as Woodforde wrote on 23 May 1795: "Mr. Custance gone to London to day in a great Hurry, it is supposed on Miss Durrant's intended Marriage". But if this were a last minute attempt to prevent the wedding, it failed and the pair were united. £3000 in cash was handed over and every legal device taken to safeguard the rest of the £10000 fortune. Samuel and the younger Susanna had a long life together.

Susanna Durrant did not derive much joy from her elder son, the second baronet. He seems to have been mentally abnormal in some way, although the statement in the Hill-Custance article that he "had suffered in infancy a severe illness which left him wanting in intellect" does not seem easily credible. He married Sarah Crooke Steenbergen of the West Indian island of St Christopher. This was a very unhappy union, full of quarrels and punctuated by periods in which they lived apart. The second baronet ran into debt, was apparently persuaded by Swynfen to spend money over "hare-brained financial schemes", and on one occasion lent him £5700, which would be "a great benefit to Mrs Swynfen and myself" as the lucky recipient put it, although by this time he had debts of about £12000. The second baronet's "wretched and deranged existence" came to an end in May 1819, when he was fifty-four.

His son the third baronet, Henry Thomas Estridge Durrant, married his second cousin Agnes Sophia Katherine Marsham, the daughter of John Custance's eldest daughter Frances Anne and Robert Marsham of Stratton Strawless. She, and one of her sisters, were painted together, one fair, one dark and, as Mrs Hill says, "surrounded by the fashionable music instruments of their day and with their elaborate clothes and romantic names presage the dawn

of a new age". It was not to be. Married at 17 in June 1830, she died in childbirth in April 1831. Under the hatchments her black marble grave-stone bears the saddest of all the Durrant epitaphs. Her baby son William lived only five days.

Lady Durrant was fortunately given by her younger son, another William, all the affection and respect lacking in her relations with his elder brother. He lived at Lowestoft and gradually took on more and more of the family business. He put up the memorial to his parents in Scottow church, with its generous inscription: "Their youngest and only surviving son William in pious and grateful affection to their beloved memories has caused this monument to be erected and inscribed as a memorial of their departure to a more blessed state". Lady Durrant, his mother, lived happily with him until her death in 1833.

NO REJOICING FOR MR CUSTANCE

When Napoleon Bonaparte signed the articles of the Peace of Amiens with Britain in 1802, the cessation of hostilities was looked upon by both sides as no more than a breathing-space badly needed after 9 years of war. Whatever naive innocents may have thought about it, there was a consensus here, among those who best understood the politics of the time, that no lasting peace with the Corsican ogre would ever be possible, and that he had to be fought to a finish and totally overthrown. In general, the Tories were more enthusiastic about the war than the Whigs, and Mr Custance was a High Tory whose views were probably identical with those of Windham.

In small villages all that was usually done by way of celebration was to open a barrel or two of strong ale or cider, and perhaps to fire off a few guns and light fireworks to tear into the night sky, although in larger centre of population, such as Norwich, a whole ox might well be roasted in the Market Place, as indeed was done upon that occasion. The local celebrations were paid for by the squire, and Mr Custance did not see why he should be asked to put his hand into his breeches pocket to finance empty spectacles commemorating a peace progress that was unlikely to have any lasting effect.

So much for 1802, and the squire's attitude is easily understood. Three years before there had been another opportunity for celebration which he had likewise passed up, and the reason seems much less clear. The long diary entry dated 29 November 1798 is one of the most interesting in the whole of the later diary. "Miss Woodforde" – her uncle was regularly calling her this at the time, not being very friendly towards her, had the previous day complained of "being unwell", caused he thought by drinking home-made "Water-Cyder", whatever that was. Now she had a letter from London to tell her that she had drawn a winning ticket in the Irish Lottery "which was entirely unknown to me". This must have caused great momentary excitement, until it was seen that her prize was worth 3d less than the cost of the ticket.

The rest of the entry is devoted to news of the Battle of the Nile which was truly one of the decisive engagements of the entire war. The destruction of the French fleet totally ruined the Egyptian campaign, which had had as its long term objective cutting us off from India, because whatever happened in Egypt Bonaparte could not possibly release his forces which were trapped. In East Anglia the rejoicing was particularly heartfelt, because the victory had been won by the local hero, Nelson. The situation was not at all analagous to the case three years later since this was not a pact made with the French dictator, but a very serious defeat inflicted upon his forces. Yet – "No rejoicings at all at Weston – I should have been very glad to have contributed toward some, if M^{r}. Custance had come forward". It was the nearest to a criticism that he would have permitted himself when writing about the squire. – Ed.

NOTES AND QUERIES

More about the Gardener's Brother

The squire's light-fingered gardener was featured in an essay by Mr Clifford Bird, his direct descendant (see 'Mr Custance in a very great passion', Journal XXXI, 1). The essay recounts how the gardener, Michael Haylett, was left by his brother Henry an estate in Jamaica, with plantations and slaves, worth £20,000, but made no claim for it, as when he was told about this windfall he did not believe he had a brother Henry, having been accustomed to call him Harry.

Some news about the latter has come to light. Mary Hardy was a Norfolk woman, a contemporary of Woodforde and a neighbour – she lived at Dereham with her husband, a farmer, and a fellow diarist, although they did not know one another. George Bunting reviewed this diary in 1997 (see Journal X, 1).

A new edition of Mary Hardy's diary is now in preparation, and we find from it that she knew the Hayletts. Apparently Henry was a waterman and a prizefighter of some note, who was sworn as the father of a child being carried by a maid at the Manor House at Coltishall. The maid was marched before a JP by her angry mistress. He sent for another brother Robert and both were bound over and released the following day. Through examination of Wills mention has been found of Henry's daughter Elizabeth, who was lame, but it is not known if he married her mother. The purses he won in prizefights, as much as 20 guineas at a time, could have enabled him to set himself up in the West Indies.

DR HEDLEY BOARDMAN

All his many friends in the Parson Woodforde Society will have been saddened to learn of the death of Dr Hedley Boardman on 19 October 1998, at the age of 94. He was a long-standing member of the Society, and on the Committee 1984-88. Dr Boardman lived and practised medicine in Melbourne, Derbyshire, but his last years were spent in London. He had two sons and was a grandfather and great-grandfather.

My own most vivid memory of Hedley goes back to one of our Frolics in Norfolk. I was staying at the Old Brewery House, Reepham, an ancient building on many levels. I went down two steps where I thought there was only one, came down heavily and twisted my ankle. Hedley's professional skills were at once called on; he treated the injured foot with bathing and bandages, which much reduced the pain. My ankle recovered quickly.

On behalf of all of us in the Parson Woodforde Society I should like to express my condolences to Daphne Boardman at this sad time. She also regularly attended the Frolics, taking a lively interest in all our activities and projects. – Ed.

Privilege, snobbery, jobbery, obsequiousnes, exclusivity, pomposity, arrogance, nepotism, croniedom, cynicism, smugness and senility . . . an enemy to loathe. God rot the House of Lords.

– Robert Harris in *Sunday Times*, 18/10/1998 quoted in William Rees-Mogg: 'Pompous old cynics? Not us, my Lords', *Times*, 19/10/1998

Woodforde was a conformist, a man happy to accept the ordered society in which he lived. He may not have read so much as a single line of Tom Payne (who incidentally had a great deal of fun pointing out the absurdities inherent to the notion of hereditary legislators, as crazy, said Tom, as that of hereditary astronomers or mathematicians must be) but he would have instinctively rejected all such levelling ideas, if they had ever chanced to occur to him.

At the same time he never seemed at all interested in any of the social classes above his own. It was Nancy who became starry-eyed at the vision of Mr Townshend, not yet a lord, although the time of his ennoblement was not far away, and his sister the widow of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, sitting in the Parlour at Weston Parsonage, just like so many ordinary common mortals. Her uncle sounds rather dismissive, as though he considered the visitors rather a nuisance. Indeed throughout the diary lords, and ladies, appear only as objects of the utmost rarity. An odd anecdote which happens to surface in the memory concerns Lord Guildford, father of the Prime Minister Lord North. The Parson's unsatisfactory nephew William told him a story about Guildford's bestowing his patronage upon the young man and helping him to get into the Navy. "I wish my Head might never ake before that Time", his uncle wrote with dismissive sarcasm, but the point of the story does not lie in his scepticism; rather in his utter lack of interest in the nobleman and his affairs.

– From an unpublished essay by the former Editor, Parson Woodforde Society Quarterly Journal

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