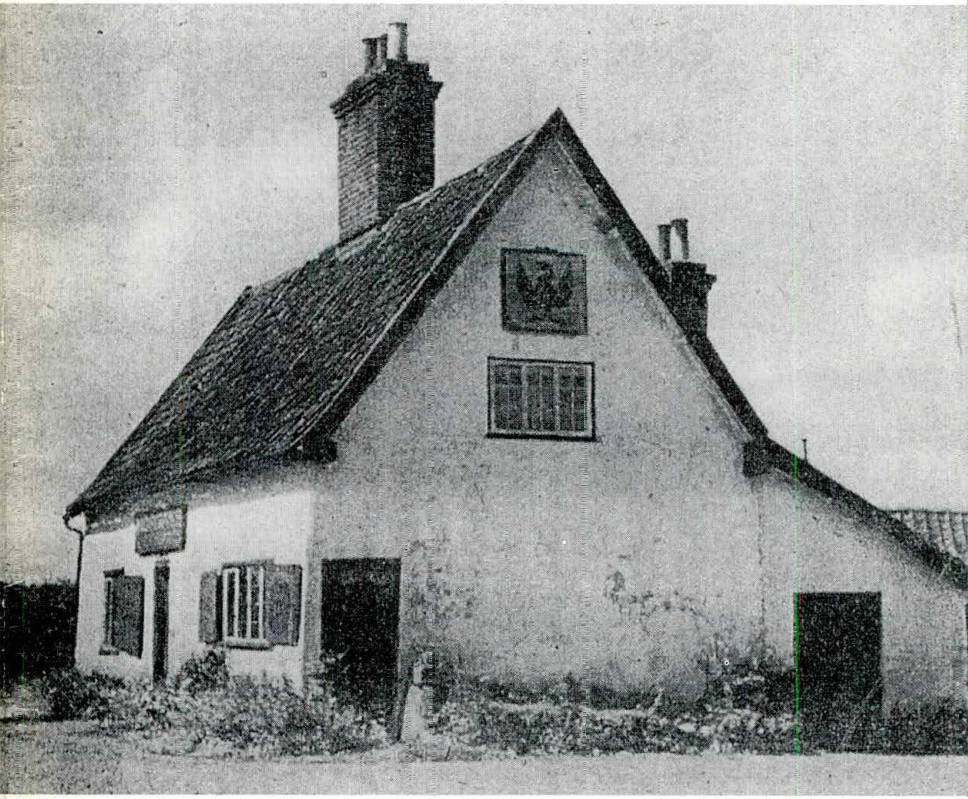
PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

Quarterly Journal



THE EAGLE, WESTON LONGVILLE

VOL. XXXIV NO. 3 AUTUMN 2001

Several eighteenth century clerical diarists have achieved world-wide fame; especially James Woodeforde [sic], the lovable bachelor rector of Weston Longueville, near Norwich, from 1776 to 1802, which had been given him by New College, Oxford, and was worth between £300 and £400 per annum. In fact since the discovery of his diaries (which he kept for forty years) by Mr J. Beresford in the nineteen-twenties, his has become almost a household name, and as such need not long detain us here.

A. Tindal Hart: *The Eighteenth Century Country Parson* (1955)

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Front Cover: The Eagle Inn – a photograph probably taken in the early twentieth century. Note the Eagle inn-sign high up in the end wall and the two doors in the same wall. *(Reproduced by kind permission of Mrs M. Futter)*

EDITORIAL

In the current Newsletter announcement is made of the imminent publication of Volume 12 of the Society's edition of the Diary covering the years 1789-91. The loss of Woodforde's notebook for the period from 6 March 1790 to 21 March 1791 means that for the last nine months of this volume our editor, Peter Jameson, had to rely upon the incomplete Beresford edition. This section has, however, now been annotated in a far more comprehensive way than hitherto to conform with the rest of the Society's edition. I say this not to denigrate Beresford, who, as one of our founder members, David Gould, has forcefully pointed out, deserves rather more reverence than he has sometimes received in these pages, but as simple recognition of the Society's achievement in building on the original editor's immense achievement. Peter Jameson uses, of course, the editorial apparatus established by his predecessor, Roy Winstanley, but what emerges in this volume, more than in the previous volumes for which Peter has had a responsibility, is a clergyman's 'Parson' and, as a consequence, we see a little more than hitherto of the Rector of Weston Longville. Like its predecessors, it is an absorbing volume and contains such highlights as the famous 'Dies Memorabilis' at Sherborne and Mr Du Quesne's visit to Somerset in the summer of 1789 as well as those more humdrum events which are the Diary's warp and weft.

Many years ago when studying Geography at university I remember being required to read a sociological account of a village in, I think, Cardiganshire in which the population was divided, more or less evenly, between the *pobol y capel* (chapel folk) and the *pobol y buchedd* (pub folk). Such a division was essentially the product of the mid-nineteenth century Temperance movement and occurred not only in Wales but also in many northern industrial towns. The period covered by the first part of David Case's study of the Weston Hart which appears in the present issue pre-dates that kind of split which, in any event, was probably less pronounced in rural England. Nevertheless the question arises as to who went where and how often. We know that one publican, Johnny Reeves, knew his Bible well enough to name a child after Pharoah's daughter while another, Tom Thurston, became parish clerk. Dr Case has skilfully reconstructed for us the Hart of Woodforde's time which our imagination easily peoples with faces, ruddy with a life-time of agricultural labour, glowing in the firelight of Mr Reeves' taproom.

Recently the wedding of a young friend took my wife and I to Glasgow. The University occupies a dramatic site perched above the splendidly landscaped pathways of Kelvingrove Park. Walking there – it was a Saturday morning in the vacation – I wondered what Adam Smith would have made of the occasional jogger or practitioner of t'ai chi and was reminded, too, of another distinguished alumnus, Sir Angus Fraser. Angus, of course, died earlier this year but we are fortunate in being able to publish the text of the talk he gave on 'Smuggling in East Anglia in Parson Woodforde's Day' at the 1996 Frolic in Norwich. Having, as it were, a professional interest in smuggling – he had been Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise – his, we can feel confident, is likely to be the last, and highly entertaining, word on this fascinating topic.

At the recent AGM in London a number of members made clear that they would like to see some of the important early Journal articles reproduced. I am working on this idea with the aim of producing an occasional series devoted to such significant early features. Should readers wish to nominate articles which they would wish to see included in such a series I hope they will let me know. New work is, however, the lifeblood of the Society and as such is always particularly welcome.

MARTIN BRAYNE

The Hart, Weston Longville

THE HART AT WESTON LONGVILLE
(Part I: The Woodforde Era 1776–1802)

Introduction

The Old Hart, as it is now known, stands just across the road about a hundred yards to the west of the church at Weston. The Hart has been aptly described as appearing "... squat and secure, like a hen sitting on eggs ... inside the cosiest place on earth".[1] It has been noted on a number of occasions that this is one of the very few buildings remaining at Weston which Woodforde would still recognise today and it is certainly one of the oldest structures in the parish.

In Woodforde's era, probably for some time earlier, and certainly in the next two centuries, the Hart provided a focus in the parish for all manner of secular activities. We may note, for example, that in 1798 there was:

> A Meeting of the Parish this Afternoon at the Heart, respect=
> =ing a sudden Invasion from the French &c.
>
> (Diary 27 April 1798)[2]

Almost one and a half centuries later:

> The Home Guard was formed in case of invasion. We were issued with rifles and cartridges, gas masks and met at the Hart Club room for training.[3]

The enemy had changed but the venue for such meetings at Weston remained the same.

The Hart is mentioned on numerous occasions throughout Woodforde's diary and, despite the importance of this enduring building, not a word seems to have been ascribed to it in the pages of our Journal. I shall try to redress the balance in the following pages and in a second article, which will appear later, the history of the inn will be traced up to the present day.

The Building

About a mile away from the Hart, the old inn at Lenwade Bridge stands at a curious angle to the modern road, but the road once swept past the front of this building to a bridge located further down the river Wensum from the present bridge.

Similarly, when one visits the Hart today it is immediately apparent

that this building is also curiously out of alignment with the road which curls past it. The probable truth of the matter is that this modern road is out of alignment with the very much older building. One notices that the front wall of the Hart is parallel with that of the venerable Church Farm House across the road and at some time they probably both faced squarely onto an open space here, probably not a picturesque village green, but a muddy open area where the road came up to the church; an area much used by horse-drawn traffic visiting the Hart, Church Farm House, or the church. As the Hart is so many centuries old we can only wonder how many other similar buildings may once have stood alongside it here at the roadside.

The Hart is a timber framed building said to date from the sixteenth[4] or seventeenth[5] century although the timber frame is no longer visible from the outside. The timbers are, however, much in evidence inside the building and many of the timber joints are found to be numbered, suggesting that they were fashioned and matched on the ground before the structure was assembled. One may speculate that this was first built as a farmer's house and the steeply sloping roof, providing space for attic bedrooms, suggests that it was originally thatched. The house appears to have been constructed on the simple kitchen–one parlour plan, the two ground floor rooms having huge open fireplaces sharing the single central chimney stack. The front door is typically a little off-centre in the front elevation and gives access to a tiny front hall from which doors lead to left and right; the hall also provides access to the winding staircase occupying the space next to the central chimney stack.

The layout of the building appears to be typical of the style of farmers' houses being built in the late sixteenth and in the seventeenth centuries, and without further clues it may be quite difficult to date its period of construction with more precision.

At some unknown point in time the owner of this private dwelling house presumably started to sell beer and the living accommodation had to be shared with the customers as the new trade found favour. It was possibly the 'kitchen', at the south west end of the building, which was first used for the new business, the occupiers retaining use of the parlour. In due course, however, both rooms must have been opened up – the parlour for the gentry and the old kitchen for the labourers. It is possible that the 'outshot' – a single-storey extension running along the back of the building, was added at this

time. This would have provided extra space for the proprietor and room in which to store the barrels and bottles now invading his house. The roof of this extension is not set at the same pitch as that of the main house – again suggesting that it is a later addition; it had its own chimney and must therefore have contained a third fireplace at the rear of the building. The addition of the extension, later to be known as the 'Back House' would mean there were essentially three rooms on the ground floor and this is confirmed by a description of the inn in the early twentieth century:

> The old inn consisted of three rooms and a built-on cellar ... On either side of the Back House were the kitchen and the parlour. The kitchen was used by workers and those who need not brush their boots ... The parlour now, that was the 'quality' room ..."[1]

An old photograph of the Hart (see front cover) shows the north-east elevation of the building (the end nearest the church) and clearly shows two doors in this end wall – one giving access to the old parlour, at the north-east corner, and another giving access to the extension running along the back of the house. The first has now been walled up and the second replaced by an end-window. The insertion of these two doors may have been associated with the altered use of the building. In particular, the addition of the door into the parlour would have made it possible to enter the two main ground floor rooms of the building from separate entrances. Much of the above of course is based upon speculation but would be consistent with the alteration of a seventeenth century private dwelling house into a 'beerhouse'.

In the early twentieth century the 'Club Room' appears to have been a separate building behind the Hart; it has been described as '... the Big Room, a large independent wooden building across the yard'.[1] Behind the main building there remains a long line of outhouses of indeterminate age which undoubtedly once provided space for stables, cartsheds, and all manner of storage.

In the twentieth century an extension was built onto the back of the main building, at right angles to the original line of the house, to provide additional modern accommodation; it may be sited near the location of the old "built-on cellar". It is known that the Hart was sold by a brewery in 1964 and 'The Old Hart' is now a Grade II listed building and a private residence.

The Name

Throughout this article I have referred to the 'Hart' as this is how it is generally known. During his first decade at Weston, Woodforde referred in his diary to the 'Hart', but sometimes to the 'Heart' and on two isolated occasions to the 'White Heart'. Thereafter, he always used the spelling 'Heart' and on just two occasions he referred to the 'red-Heart' or 'Red-Heart Inn'.[6] Was the name temporarily changed from the animal Hart to the anatomical Heart? I prefer to question Woodforde's spelling, and assume that the intended name in use was always the 'Hart'. There is, however, further evidence that the inn was known as 'The Red Hart' in the 1790s; alehouse recognizances for the period 1789 to 1799 consistently list this as the name of the establishment at Weston, the victualler at that time being John Reeve followed by James Hardy in 1799.[7] The returns for Eynsford Hundred were signed by John Custance, presumably as one of the Justices of the Peace for this area.

It is surmised that the use of the names 'Hart' and 'White Hart' for public houses to this day can be traced back to the times of Richard II whose insignia included a swan and an antelope; his supporters, who could not cope with the antelope, are said to have met at houses marked out with the sign of the hart.[8] A last piece of evidence for the name of the establishment at Weston I find compelling: after Woodforde's death in 1803 a local newspaper carried a notice to announce that a sale of Woodforde's effects would take place on 19-21 April: 'Catalogues to be had on Saturday previous to the Sale, at Attlebridge Bull; Lenwade Bridge; Mattishall Swan; Weston Hart ...'.[9]

At some point in time between 1803 and 1825 the name was, however, definitely changed. When the Enclosure Commissioner visited Weston on 15 August 1825 to hear claims, he held his meeting at the 'Eagle'.[10] When a further meeting was held on 23 January 1826, to consider Hambleton Custance's objection to one of the proposed public roads, the meeting was held "... at the Public house called the Eagle situated in Weston ...".[11]

The reason for this change remains obscure, and indeed 'The Eagle' is now frequently encountered today as the name of an inn.[12] The 'Eagle', however, would remain the name of this establishment at Weston throughout the Victorian era and into the twentieth century. An old photograph clearly shows the eagle depicted on the inn-sign mounted high up on the north east gable of the building (front

cover). My own preferred explanation for this change of name is based on the observation that an eagle is the single emblem appearing on the coat of arms used by the Custance family and the new name may have been adopted when the Custance family became the owners, or simply as a mark of respect for this important family in the parish.[13,14]

Thus, for well over a century, this inn was known as the 'Eagle'. However, at the time of the First World War, the Prussian eagle would have been associated with the insignia of the enemy and was clearly disliked for this reason:

> ... the sign was so like the eagle on the German flag that ... it was taken down so as not to offend the local population.[15]

Another source relates that:

> A large Prussian Eagle decorated the inn sign until the Great War, when a party of soldiers so heavily stoned the sign that it was removed and the old pub reverted to being the 'Hart' again.[16]

It is not clear whether the name was actually *changed* at that time, or whether the inn-sign was just taken down. The reminiscences of local people, as recorded in Marjorie Futter's book, provide conflicting clues. Recollections of the 1930s refer to both the Hart and to the Eagle:

> The Eagle public house, as it was known in those days, was also a favourite haunt of school children ...[17]

> ... the farmers ... come to mind driving up to Mrs Bates at the Hart ...[18]

> ... Nancy Bates was at the Hart ...[19]

Norfolk Directories as late as 1937 refer to the 'Eagle P[ublic] H[ouse]'. During the second World War, it has been recalled, the Home Guard met 'at the Hart club room'[20] and dances were held there to raise funds for the proposed new Village Hall.[21] Inevitably, in recollecting the past, some individuals may have been referring to events which took place at [the inn now known as] the Hart, omitting the 'obvious' words I have placed in brackets.

We are also told that:

> when the brewery sold the pub in 1964 one of the conditions of the sale was that the property should not include the word Eagle in its name, and so it reverted to that by which it was known in the time of Parson Woodforde, the original name 'The Hart' or as it now is, 'The Old Hart'.[15]

It is notable that the memory of this former name should have been so prominent as late as 1964 and suggests that the name 'Eagle' was used right up to this date. As late as 1974-1975 the Register of Electors for Weston Longville mentions 'The former Eagle Inn'. There is, moreover, a further little mystery, as the Listed Buildings Schedule describes this as the 'Former Spread Eagle Public House' but I have yet to find any other reference to this particular form of the name.[5]

Woodforde's Era: The Landlords

When Woodforde arrived at Weston in 1776 one Harry Andrews was at the Hart:

> P[d]. Harry Andrews for Beer this Evening – 0: 1: 0
> (Diary 20 July 1776)

but we know very little about him. There were clearly two of this name in the parish and they may have been father and son:

> Old Harry Andrews, my Clerk, Harry Dunnell and
> Harry Andrews at the Heart all dined &c. in Kitchen –
> (Diary 3 December 1776)

Harry Andrews at the Heart supplied '6 Gallons of cyder' on 18 January 1777 and a few days later his father (?) died:

> Poor old Harry Andrews departed this Life
> (Diary 24 January 1777)

The register tells us that he was 'Aged 66 of Dereham'. Later in the same year a new proprietor appears, apparently swopping accommodation with his predecessor:

> Betty ... stayed out all Night at a Frolic ...
> She was at the Hart & slept at Harry Andrews's, he living
> now where Tom Thurston did, as Tom has taken the Hart
> (Diary 10 October 1777)

Tom Thurston may have been at the Hart until 1785 but we have only one further strange reference to him in the meantime; Mr Girling had apparently been accosted by two footpads:

> The two
> Men are well known and bear very good Characters
> one of them is my Neighbour John Gooch, the other
> was Tom Thurston who keeps the Heart – I apprehend
> they were both very much in Liquor – but it looks bad –
> (Diary 28 November 1782)

This strange escapade passes without further mention by Woodforde and it appears that this same Thomas Thurston eventually became the parish clerk in 1793. He died in 1798:

> The first thing I heard this Morning when I came
> down Stairs, was the Death of my poor Clerk
> Thos. Thurston ...
> ... His Death was oc=
> =casioned by a sudden & rigid Swelling in his
> Throat which suffocated him ...
> He was as harmless, industrious working Man
> as any in the Parish and very serviceable.
>
> (Diary 12 December 1798)

He was buried two days later at Weston, a 'Widower, aged 64'.

In the meantime Johnny Reeves appears as the new man at the Hart and we first hear of him when his memorable daughter was baptised in 1785:

> ... christened a Child by
> Name, Tabitha Bithia this morning ...
> It was a child of Reeves at the Hart and a pretty Girl.
>
> (Diary 13 Mary 1785)

From the church register we learn that John Reeves and his wife Mary (née Bowles) had four boys and three girls baptised at Weston (one boy died in infancy) over the period 1785-1797.

Johnny Reeves remained at the Hart until 1799 and there are frequent references to this versatile individual in Woodforde's diary:

> ... I sent for John Reeves the Farrier who lives at the Hart
> and often draws Teeth for People, to draw one for me ...
> ... he pulled it out for me the first Pull, but it was
> a monstrous Crash ...
>
> (Diary 24 October 1785)

> Sherwood's daughter and Cuppers Daughter that were inoculated
> by Johnny Reeves a fortnight ago ... are now seized with the
> Smallpox in the natural way ... tho' they were supposed to be out
> of it by being inoculated ...
>
> (Diary 8 April 1791)

> ... soon after breakfast I sent to John Reeves
> at the Heart who practices something in
> the doctoring way, for some Yellow Basili=
> =cum Ointment ...
>
> (Diary 25 September 1794)

Paid John Reave, Farrier, & also Landlord at Weston Heart
for Physic &c. for my late Mare Phyllis – p^{d}. 0. 12. 6
Also paid him for two Gallons of Rum 1. 11. 0
(Diary 5 September 1797)

There are further purchases of "two dozen of Port Wine" and a "dozen Bottles of Port Wine 13. to the Dozen", both from "Johnny Reeves at the Heart" who is last mentioned in 1799 in one of those curious references to the Red-Heart:

This being Whit-Monday there were merry do=
-ings at Weston – Red-Heart Inn by Jn/o Reeves
(Diary 13 May 1799)

Johnny Reeves appears to have lived at Ringland after leaving the Hart[22] and in 1800 a newcomer appears:

Paid James Hardy, Landlord of Weston-
Heart this Morning, for Liquors 2. 13. 0
(Diary 15 April 1800)

It appears that this James Hardy came from Morton as he was described as occupier of property at Morton in the 1798 Land Tax Assessment.[23] In 1802 'Jas. Hardy bricklayer of Weston' was entitled to vote in the Norfolk election by virtue of Freehold at Morton.[24]

On 11 March 1801 Woodforde notes that "James Hardy of Weston-Heart Inn ... is a very civil obliging young Man" and confirms for us that this innkeeper had a second trade:

... the Study
is going to be white-washed to Morrow
by young James Hardy who lives at Weston
Heart-Inn, tho' a Mason.
(Diary 29 April 1800)

Paid Js. Hardy Junr. Mason for white-washing
and other Jobs of Work 0. 5. 0
To ditto for 2. Gallons of Rum 1. 12. 0
(Diary 10 June 1800)

It is presumably this James Hardy who appears in the 1801 census for Weston in a household of six.[25]

The last reference to James Hardy in the Woodforde diary extracts available to us is to be found on 7 November 1801:

... Recd. this Morning of James Hardy for four small
Piggs, about 8. Weeks old. 2. 4. 0
Paid him for 2. Gallons of Rum 1. 16. 0

We shall be hearing a little more of James Hardy and his descendants later in this history, but for the moment we must pause as we approach the end of Woodforde's window onto this story. We should pause also to note that we have no idea who actually *owned* the Hart at this time; those described above were the inn keepers all of whom presumably paid rent to the owner, an arrangement perhaps confirmed by Woodforde's earlier comment that Tom Thurston had "taken the Hart".

Woodforde's Era: How Often did Woodforde actually cross the Threshold?

Woodforde must have passed by the Hart on a countless number of occasions, quite apart from his regular journeys to and from church, but I suggest that he seldom crossed the threshold. During Woodforde's inspection visit to Weston in April and May 1775 we learn that:

> We took a very long Walk this morning round
> by Moreton and to Leonade Bridge where we
> dined & spent the Afternoon at the Inn there –
> (Diary 19 April 1775)

On 6 May:

> ... went to Attlebridge & dined at the
> public House there by myself – p^{d}. 0: 3: 0

And when he next returned to Weston on 24 May 1776:

> As there was nothing to eat at Weston we rode down
> our Horses on Leonade Bridge about a Mile and there
> we dined & spent the Afternoon –

Why didn't he call at the Hart? In later years there are several occasions on which he might have been expected to attend meetings at the Hart, but did not do so. On 13 October 1777 there was a Manor Court meeting at the Hart:

> I was sent to just at Dinner
> Time to dine there, but I did not go –

There are five entries when Woodforde notes that a "Parish Meeting" was held at the Hart and on all five occasions it is clear that Woodforde did not attend.[26] Typical of these is the entry for 27 March 1780:

A Parish Meeting at the Hart to day. I did not
attend, but nominated M^r^. Mann to be my C. Warden.

When the Churchwardens were appointed, one would be nominated by the parish and one by the rector; but why did Woodforde choose not to attend these meetings?

However, the most strange example is to be found in 1798. At this time –

Nothing talked of at present but an Invasion of England by the
French – great Preparations making all over England &c.
against the said intended Invasion ...

(Diary 25 April 1798)

On the next day:

J^s^. Pegg called on me again this Morning with more Papers
respecting an Invasion, the Names of all People in the
Parish between 15. and 63. Years of Age &c.

(Diary 26 April 1798)[27]

And on the next:

A Meeting of the Parish this Afternoon at the Heart, respect=
=ing a sudden Invasion from the French &c. what was
necessary and proper to be done on a sudden attack.
M^r^. Custance attended as did most of the Parish – I could not.

(Diary 27 April 1798)

How extraordinary. One surely cannot imagine a more urgent reason for Woodforde to join his flock? What is more, "M^r^. Custance attended" which, one may have supposed, would have endowed this meeting with a respectability which Woodforde could not resist? It is fair to relate that on 20 April Woodforde was feeling "much indisposed ... I am very weak indeed"; but on 25 April he "walked to Betty Cary's this morning". It is very puzzling.

If my suspicion that Woodforde seldom crossed the threshold of the Hart was ever to be debated, I have to concede just two diary entries which might be made much of:

For some Beer from the Public House to day – pd. 0: 0: 8

(Diary 10 June 1776)

Pd. Harry Andrews for Beer this Evening – 0: 1: 0

(Diary 20 July 1776)

These are the only examples found which could be construed to be personal visits for refreshment. They occur in Woodforde's first

year at Weston. Thereafter, I would suggest, there is no evidence that Woodforde frequented the Hart. We know he stayed and called at all manner of inns – in Norwich, on his trips to Yarmouth and elsewhere, and also on his journeys to and from the west country. Maybe, compared to the larger hostelries he patronised, the Hart in his time was closer to being a rural 'beerhouse'? Perhaps it was just not quite the right thing to do – for the rector to visit the inn in his *own* parish – where he might well have to rub shoulders with the local farmers and labourers?

Woodforde's Era: The Social Events at the Hart

On one occasion at least Woodforde was persuaded to venture out when the famous Hannah Snell arrived in the parish:

> I walked up to the White-Hart with M[r]. Lewis and Bill,
> to see a famous Woman in Mens Cloaths, by name
> Hannah Snell who was 21. Years a Common Soldier
> in the Army ... (Diary 21 May 1778)

However, there is no evidence that he ventured forth on a Whit-Monday; this was a regular occasion for fun and games at Weston and they appear to have been centred about the Hart. There are many references in Woodforde's diary to "Merry doings" or "Merry making" on this day, for example:

> Merry doings at the Heart to day being Whit Monday
> plowing for a P[r]. of Breeches, running for a Shift,
> Raffling for a Gown &c. (Diary 12 May 1788)

> Smock-racing at the Heart this Aft. being Whit-Monday
> (Diary 24 May 1790)[28]

In some years, the ploughing competition appears to have taken place at an earlier date in the year:

> There was Plowing to day for a Hat at the Hart
> The Man that plowed the best & straightest Furrow
> was to have the Prize. (Diary 16 February 1779)

and the ploughing may have taken place in the fields immediately behind the Hart. While there is no evidence that Woodforde ever actually attended these events it is clear that his servants were allowed to take part:

> A smock Race at the Heart this Afternoon. I let
> all my Folks go to it but Lizzy, and all came home

in good Time but Will who being merry kept us
up till 11. o'clock ... (Diary 31 May 1784)

Rafling for a Gown this Evening at the Heart both
my Maids went, but returned without Gown.
(Diary 25 June 1792)

When we visit this quiet little corner of Weston Longville today it seems extraordinary that this small area outside the Hart was so regularly the scene of crowded "Merry making" – enlivened no doubt by sales from the inn. Woodforde, it seems, on almost all these occasions, would be soberly waiting at home for his "Folks" to return safely, but without his diary we would have known nothing about it.

Woodforde's Era: The Hart as a Meeting Place

When one gives some thought to the various houses and other buildings at Weston in Woodforde's day, it soon becomes clear why the Hart had become a venue for meetings of various kinds. There is no clue in Woodforde's diary to meetings of any kind being held at the rectory (apart from his annual 'Frolics') or at Weston House, and the use of the church would probably have been ruled out for most purposes – besides being cold and draughty. The Hart, by contrast, was presumably a warm, convivial location for meetings, well known to all.

I have already mentioned one diary entry which indicated that a Manor Court was held there (13 October 1777) and the various entries relating to "Parish meetings". The latter seem to have addressed a variety of issues:

I sent a note this morning to the Gentlemen at the Heart
at their Easter Meeting, nominating M^{r}. Burton my Churchwarden
(Diary 20 April 1778)

M^{r}. Howlett & M^{r}. Forster called here this Afternoon
as they were going to a Parish Meeting at the Heart
to speak to me respecting the Rent due for the
Poor Cottage where Dick Bush &c. live ...
(Diary 20 January 1789)

I drew up a Petition this Morning
by desire of M^{r}. Peachman, for poor
old Peachman and Wife and sent it to
the Heart Inn, as there was a meeting.
(Diary 1 April 1793)

Yet another group, the 'Purse Club', appear to have held their meetings at the Hart:

> Mr. Custance sent us some green peas last even –
> by Knights, who also lodged in my custody by de=
> =sire of the Purse Club held at the red-Heart, Weston
> two forty Pound Bonds of Stephen Andrews Senr. ...
> (Diary 27 May 1794)

Beresford notes that "the Weston Village Purse Club was an example of the kind of [friendly] society which was then most common, i.e. 'small clubs, in which the feature of good fellowship was in the ascendant, and that of provident assurance for sickness and death merely accessory' ".[29] The above, incidentally, is the second of those strange references to the "*red*-Heart" noted elsewhere.

Last but not least, in the context of the Hart as a meeting place, we should not overlook those delightful references to the one occasion when Woodforde organised his flock to "go the Bounds of the Parish":

> After Service I ordered the Clerk to give notice that
> the bounds of the Parish would be gone over on
> Wednesday next to meet at the Hart by 10. o'clock –
> (Diary 30 April 1780)

The perambulation started and ended at the Hart:

> About ½ past nine o'clock this morning my Squire called
> on me, and I took my Mare and went with him to
> the Hart just by the Church Where most of the Parish
> were assembled to go the Bounds of the Parish ...
> (Diary 3 May 1780)

and on their return Mr Custance rewarded those who had helped:

> To Robin Hubbard also who had carried a Spade he gave
> 5. Shillings, and sent all the rest of the People to the Hart
> to eat and drink as much as they would at his Expence.
> The Squire behaved most generously on the Occasion –
> (Diary 3 May 1780)

Once again, Woodforde did not share in this generosity, declined an invitation to dine with "The Squire" and "begged to be excused being tired, as I walked most of the Day".

Let us pause to note the name of Robin Hubbard. In the twentieth century, after the Hart had finally closed, this building was lovingly repaired and restored by – "Mr. Hubbard, a builder in Lenwade ...".

Woodforde's Era: Beerhouse or Inn?

As the 'local' establishment providing liquid distractions there is no shortage of references in Woodforde's diary. Thus, after a day's fishing:

> I gave the Folks for to drink at the Hart – 0: 1: 3:
> (Diary 16 September 1778)

After the storm of January 1779, it seems that the workmen who were employed to make repairs to the chancel on at least one occasion had 'repaired' to the wrong place:

> I gave the People at work for me a pretty
> severe Jobation this Aft: finding them at the Inn –
> (Diary 13 February 1779)

And on the evening before Will Coleman returned to Somerset:

> Ben and Briton were up with Will, at the Hart, this
> Evening, stayed there till after 10. o'clock –
> (Diary 25 July 1785)

It seems to be fairly well accepted that an 'Inn' offered accommodation in addition to the essential commodity and Woodforde frequently referred to the Hart as an inn. However, as far as I am aware there are only two entries in his diary which indicate that visitors to the parish actually stayed there. In 1789, two gardeners from Mattishall came to Weston to "prune my Wall Trees &c.":

> I paid John Piper for 2. Days work – 0: 4: 0
> I paid him also for his Man one Day before – 0: 1: 0
> I gave them besides to spend at the Heart
> last Night where they slept – 0: 0: 6
> (Diary 28 January 1789)

A similar entry appears in January 1788, when the two gardeners had slept at the inn. Accommodation at the tiny Hart inn would undoubtedly have been limited and modest and this may well explain why such references in the diary are so rare.

As we near the end of Woodforde's diary, the last reference to the 'Heart' appears to be the usual entry for a Whit Monday:

> Merry doings at the Heart today, rafling for
> a Gown &c. &c. being Whit-Monday
> (Diary 7 June 1802)

As mentioned above, after Woodforde's death, the notice

announcing the sale of his household effects in April 1803 mentions 'Catalogues to be had at ... Weston Hart '.

In the second part of this story I shall attempt to summarise the history of this special building in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a story made the more difficult to tell, as we no longer have the diary entries of James Woodforde to provide us with the delightful detail.

Notes and References to Part I

1. Ida Fenn, article in the *Eastern Daily Press*, 10 July 1964. This was also published in *Tales of Norfolk* by the same author (Geo. Reeve Ltd, Wymondham, Norfolk, 1976).
2. References to the Diary of James Woodforde will be given in this form throughout. The Parson Woodforde Society transcripts have been used for the period 1776-1787 and the MS Diary for the years 1788-1802.
3. Futter M., *An Historical Walk Round Weston Longville* (Greensgate Publications, 1997), page 87.
4. Futter M., op. cit., page 21.
5. Listed Buildings Schedule entry: 'Former Spread Eagle Public House – Former public house, now private dwelling. Late 17C, rendered and colour-washed, probably timber framed. Steeply-pitched pantile roof. One storey and attic. Entrance slightly off-centre. 2, 3, and 4 light casements, some with leaded glazing. Attic casement in east gable. Large central chimney stack. Later lean-to on north side'.
6. Diary: 27 May 1794 and 13 May 1799.
7. Alehouse Recognizances returned to the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Norfolk for the years 1789-1799. Norfolk Record Office reference C/Sch 1/16. Few of these returns have survived; the only earlier returns extant, for 1661 and 1670 do not mention the Hart.
8. *The English Inn*, John Burke, Batsford Ltd, London (1981), p. 30.
9. This newspaper cutting was found pasted into the front cover of a Beresford volume by one of our members.
10. Journal III, 4, 53.
11. Note appended to map dated 1826 which showed the proposed new roads; Norfolk Record Office: NRO Weston Inclosure [Reel No. 113/1 and 2]. Notice of this meeting also appeared in the Norwich Mercury of 7 January 1826.
12. It has been suggested that the new name of the 'Eagle' was adopted in celebration of the marriage of Queen Victoria to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg in 1840, but this must be in error.
13. The arms can be seen depicted on the front cover of Supplement 8 to the Parson Woodforde Society Journal (1989). They are described as 'Or, an eagle displayed gules charged on the breast with a star of six points' [essentially a red eagle on a gold field]. An eagle appears on the Custance arms – one of three coats of arms (the others being those of Rokewood and of New College Oxford) appearing on the village sign near the church.
14. It should also be noted that two Custance weddings took place at Weston in the period in question: that of Frances Anne Custance on 26 June 1804 and

of Emily Custance on 12 February 1811. Was the name of the inn changed to mark one of these occasions?

15. Futter M., op. cit, p. 22.
16. John Gray, personal correspondence.
17. Futter M., op. cit, p. 42.
18. Futter M., op. cit, p. 84.
19. Futter M., op. cit, p. 85.
20. Futter M., op. cit, p. 87.
21. Futter M., op. cit, p. 88.
22. Journal XVII, 4, 46.
23. Journal XXVII, 4, 12.
24. Journal XXVII, 4, 19.
25. This James Hardy "Mason" is often referred to by Woodforde as "J^{s}. Hardy Jun^{r}." suggesting that there was another James Hardy (senior?) alive at that time. The "William Hardy & Brother James, Masons" (see eg Diary 3 March 1777 and 12 August 1796) almost certainly belong to the previous generation and this may be the James Hardy senior). William Hardy appears to be the "M^{r}. Hardy" who appears so frequently in Woodforde's diary. Note also that "M^{r}. Hardy and his Nephew J^{s}. Hardy, Masons ..." are mentioned by Woodforde (Diary 30 May 1791); it appears that it was this "nephew" who would become the innkeeper at the Hart.
26. 20 April 1778, 27 March 1780, 20 January 1789, 1 April 1793, 6 April 1801.
27. The age range was actually 15 to 60 years.
28. The O.E.D. includes this citation from Woodforde under its description of 'Smock Race'.
29. Beresford Vol. III, p. 192.

St James' in the reign of Queen Anne, the passage between St James' Palace and Marlborough House in the centre.

PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY ANNUAL FROLIC, LONDON, 29 JUNE–1 JULY, 2001

There was something of a risk involved in deciding to hold the annual Frolic in London. Many of our members are, almost by definition, bred in the bone country folk who would no sooner think of going to London than to Mars. Others live, or work, in or around the metropolis and look forward to nothing as much as a week-end in Norfolk or Somerset. A good coach-load of members nevertheless assembled for what was generally agreed to be a most memorable meeting. Those of us who thought that London was not perhaps the most appropriate location in which to remember our 'country diarist', came away with a far clearer idea of what late eighteenth century London was like, and were reminded that the entries which record the eleven trips to the capital are along the longest and most rewarding in the whole Diary.

Having registered at the Walter Sickert hall of residence, members gathered for a sherry reception and buffet dinner in the Common Room block of City University. This agreeable entrée to the week-end was followed by the AGM, run with his accustomed courteous efficiency by our Chairman, Dr Nigel Custance. Recalling the heavy toll, in terms of personnel, which the Society has sustained in the past year, he referred to the Society's solid foundations and tradition of happy fellowship. Dr David Case, the Treasurer, was able to report on a sound financial situation, including the success of the Gift Aid Scheme, and thanked our Auditor, Bryan Sampson, for his sterling work on our behalf. Martin Brayne, the Journal Editor, made a plea for members to consider whether they might make a contribution and was able to announce that, thanks to the scholarship and hard work of Peter Jameson, we can look forward to Volume XII before the end of the present calendar year. Vacancies on the Committee were filled by the election of Professor Bruce Archer, Mrs Yvonne Bird and the Reverend Peter Jameson. After the AGM the Society's book-stall, manned by Molly Matthews and George Bunting, did a brisk trade.

Saturday morning saw us embarking for a coach trip to the splendid Geffrye Museum in Hoxton. Established in the former almshouses of the Ironmongers' Company and surrounded by attractive gardens, this is a wonderful haven in the middle of the busy East End. The Museum is devoted to the study of the changing styles of domestic interiors since the seventeenth century. Here we were

Geffrye Museum – chapel and clock tower

treated to a most informative and entertaining illustrated talk on Georgian building and the development of London by the Museum's Director, David Dewing. This proved to be a helpful introduction to the London which Woodforde would have known, a theme taken up by Professor Bruce Archer as we made our way to the Barbican.

After lunch at the Waterside Cafe, our conducted tour of the Diarist's London continued as far as St James' which, as Professor Archer pointed out, was a location much favoured by our Parson. Here we alighted and enjoyed a splendid pedestrian tour led by Bruce Archer and his daughter Miranda Newton. We were able to

see buildings and shops superficially at least little altered since Woodforde's day, and were reminded of the alarming occasion in October 1795 when James and Nancy witnessed his Majesty being 'very grossly insulted by some of the Mob'.

From St James' we went to the George in the Strand for tea, near to the site of the Diarist's favourite London inn, the Angel at the Back of St Clements' which was, as Bruce informed us, the actual name of the street in which the inn was located. From thence a greatly enriched and highly delighted group of Frolickers returned to Walter Sickert Hall after a thoroughly enjoyable tour, our coach, unlike King George's, escaping the unwanted attentions of the Mob!

St Giles Cripplegate – from the Barbican

St James'

On Saturday evening we returned to the Main Building of City University for a much appreciated formal dinner. The toast to 'the imperishable memory' of James Woodforde was proposed by our President, George Bunting, drinking from the silver goblet given to the Society for that purpose by the late Jim Holmes. After dinner we received a most apposite address on time pieces from Mr Clifford Bird, happily combining enthusiasm with expertise and introducing us to a fascinating range of horological hardware as well as to philosophical speculations on the nature of Time. Apposite because the City University had its origin in a college

specifically devoted to the technical education of Clerkenwell's young watchmakers.

Sunday morning saw members of the Society worshipping in St Paul's Cathedral on the occasion of a Sung Eucharist – Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* – sung by the St Paul's Choir with the City of London Sinfonia. Privileged to be given places beneath Christopher Wren's great dome, we experienced a magnificant performance which will be long remembered. This was the last Mass that Haydn wrote, dating from 1802, the last full year of our Diarist's life.

The service was followed by lunch in the Cathedral crypt. Ann Williams passed on the Quiz winner's baton to Peter Jameson and an excellent meal made a fitting end to a marvellous week-end. The arrangements at City University had also – thanks to Liz Kernan of the Events Management Office – been flawless. Our particular thanks go to Bruce Archer – and to his daughter Miranda – who took over the organisation of the Frolic which had been the inspiration of JoAnn. It was a fitting memorial to a fine Woodfordean, greatly missed.

Martin Brayne (text) & Mary Price (illustrations)

DID PARSON WOODFORDE BUY A HAT HERE ?

Such was the remark made by our excellent guide, Bruce Archer, as we passed the well known hatter Messrs Locke & Co in St James' Street, London, on our June Frolic.

We pondered, and peered through the ancient panes at the seemingly unaltered Georgian interior. The member who now owns, in the opinion of the writer, the clock made by John Symonds of Reepham which belonged to Parson Woodforde (who wrote on 31 August 1776: "It is a very neat clock and I like it very much") drew our attention to a splendid nearly 9ft tall longcase clock with a complicated break arch dial in a mellowed burr walnut case standing quietly at the back of the shop. None of us had the nerve to walk in and ask to look at the clock but the writer knew he had been introduced to this outstanding piece through at least one article sometime in the last 40 years, but where?

The penny dropped a couple of days after getting home from the excitement of the Frolic: suddenly it all came flooding back. H. Alan Lloyd, the respected author on horology, had written about this self-same clock in *The Collector's Dictionary of Clocks* under the heading 'Length of Day and Night' as the main subsidiary dial shows the times of sunrise and sunset or the hours of darkness and daylight throughout the year, as well as lots of other exciting information. It is a rare tellurian clock like the one by Thomas Baker of Portsmouth which we looked at after dinner at the Frolic. H. Alan Lloyd evidently did have the nerve to go into the hatter's shop as he wrote in his article 'No Real Night', which was the very first written in Volume I, Number 1 of the Journal of the Antiquarian Horological Society, December 1953. He was told that the clock "had been in possession of the firm from time immemorial. The records of the firm go back to the middle of the 18th century, and before that the building was a private house. There is on the premises an old lead cistern with the date 1728, and this can well be assumed as the date of the construction of the building." The style of the case and dial indicates a date of c.1730, and is clearly the work of an accomplished craftsman although it is curious that no record can be found of the "Daniel Man" of London who signed the dial.

If Parson Woodforde had wandered into the shop there is no doubt that quite apart from admiring the finest examples of the latest headgear, he would have been thoroughly intrigued by all the

information given by the clever clock. He would have appreciated the early use of the sweep second hand, the indication of the phase of the moon, its age and the tides at London Bridge (or King's Lynn, by moving a ring on the dial). He would have recognised that the clock was made before the Gregorian calendar was introduced in England in 1752 and therefore could be 10 days slow. The equation of time on the upper dial would be familiar to him, showing how fast or slow the clock should be at any time of the year compared with a sundial. Of one thing we can be sure, James Woodforde and our forefathers who had to rely on their own observations of the sun and stars to find true time, would have been much more at home with this clock than our generation who are spoon-fed with time signals on radio, television and even self-adjusting radio-controlled watches, and who scratch our heads trying to work out what the clock is trying to tell us!

SMUGGLING IN EAST ANGLIA IN PARSON WOODFORDE'S DAY

Talk delivered at Parson Woodforde Society Frolic, Norwich, 18 May 1996

About two-thirds of my career as a civil servant was spent, off and on, at the headquarters of HM Customs & Excise. One of the nice things about C&E for someone of an antiquarian disposition is that it is not one of your fly-by-night Whitehall Departments. It has a long and, for the most part, honourable history. In its present form, given the current pace of management change affecting the civil service, it probably goes back to about last Tuesday; and I confidently expect it to be something quite different by around next Wednesday. But for the moment, there is still something, even in these gritty days of unremitting reorganization, that is recognizable as the lineal descendant of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval tax and customs administrations. Perhaps I am only confirming your worst suspicions. If I start by saying something about the organization of Customs & Excise at the time of Parson Woodforde, it is because I have noticed a number of misconceptions in some of the things that have been written on the subject in the Journal and other writings on the Parson.

Customs duties in England go back in fact to Roman times. It was, however, much later that a national Customs system was introduced by King John, although he farmed out the job of actually collecting the duties. This mania for privatization still hasn't abated, of course, though it is as well for the Department not to mention too often to present-day governments that we have been trying that old thing out, intermittently, since about 700 years ago, and it didn't work too well then either. Parliament in the time of Charles I realized that contracting out to tax farmers – landowners, merchants and financiers – wasn't all it was cracked up to be in the textbooks, and showed a strong disposition to centralize. First they put Customs back into direct management in England and Wales, though they made the mistake of trying to have it run by Parliament; then, in order to find money for the Parliamentary forces, they devised things called excise duties, and had them administered by a Board of Commissioners. The difference in principle between "customs" and "excise" duties is that the former are levied on imported goods, while the latter are primarily on home-produced goods and services.

During the Commonwealth, there was another U-turn, and both Customs and Excise were put back in farm. It was really at the time of the Restoration that something recognizable as the modern style of organization was introduced in England – in 1671 for the Customs, when Customs Commissioners were re-established, and in 1683 for the Excise, when Excise Commissioners were again appointed. Both these Boards were founded under Charles II; and Nell Gwyn, who was also found under Charles II on more than one occasion, was paid a pension from the Excise revenues (which were the personal property of the king). It is from those years that the successive centenaries of the Customs and the Excise are counted.

I have lived through two *ter*centenaries. The next centenary year, however, will come as quickly as 2007, for it was in 1707 that Boards of Customs Commissioners and Excise Commissioners were first appointed in Scotland. In the United Kingdom as a whole, revenue jurisdictions used to be much more fragmented than they are nowadays, when the entire UK has the blessing of a single Board of Commissioners administering both Customs and Excise (and VAT). This unitary organization goes back only to 1909. For much of the time before that, including Parson Woodforde's time at Weston, there were a Board of Customs and a Board of Excise for England and Wales, a similar duo of separate Boards in Scotland,

and Commissioners of Revenue for Ireland. Among them, these various bodies can boast of an extraordinary array of literary figures. One of the first customs officials to grace the pages of modern history was Geoffrey Chaucer, best known as controller of wool and hides for the Port of London. He also had a secondary reputation as a bit of a poet in his rare moments of relaxation from his official duties. The literary ascendancy really reached its peak in the 18th century. The poet Matthew Prior was a Commissioner of the English Customs, and combined in his poetry the lightness of touch and mock seriousness that have become the hallmark of VAT. Adam Smith (son of a Collector of Customs at Kirkcaldy) became a Commissioner of the Scottish Customs, after almost writing himself out of a job by advocating free trade in *The Wealth of Nations*. The Scottish Excise employed one Robert Burns, who wrote the heartfelt song "The De'il's awa' wi' the Exciseman"; but his annual appraisal report still survives, and shows it did him no harm: "the Poet; does pretty well". One of Norfolk's famous sons, Tom Paine, author of *The Rights of Man* (or, as it appears in the Virago Press edition, *The Equal Opportunities of Persons*) was on the Excise payroll near his home town of Thetford from 1762. In a recent issue of the PWS Journal, Martin Brayne was regretting the fact "that little is known of a personal nature of Paine's formative years in Thetford". Well, I can tell you about one formative experience he had there. We sacked him. That was after three years as an Excise officer, for what was then known as "stamping his rounds", that is, showing in his journal that he had visited traders when he had in truth been pursuing his own affairs. He was taken on the books again at Lewes, after he wrote a grovelling letter of apology. But then he did it again, and was sacked a second time, for being absent from his work without the Commissioners' permission. Perhaps what had really got up the collective noses of the Board was the fact that in 1772 he had published a pamphlet called *The Case of the Officers of the Excise*, arguing for a pay rise. Predictably, the answer from the Treasury was a short, sharp "No". As everyone is aware, he got his own back by taking himself off to America and encouraging people to set up tea duty avoidance schemes.

But I must stop this litany of illustrious names, and home in on the way that Customs and Excise matters were run in East Anglia in the second half of the 18th century. Just as central revenue jurisdiction was fragmented, so was local administration. Customs

had one set-up, Excise another. On the Customs side, there were head Collectors, i.e. regional supervisors, at King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth in Norfolk, with outstations at a variety of sub-ports, including Norwich and Lowestoft. In Suffolk, the Customs Collector was based at Ipswich, again with a range of sub-ports. The Excise Collectors were differently distributed, mainly on a county basis. Norfolk formed one Collection, Suffolk another. Norwich and Ipswich were their headquarters, but there were Excise officers stationed at a score of additional towns in each of the two counties. Weston Longville lay at the centre of an Excise triangle with officers at Norwich, East Dereham and Aylsham. This contrasts with the situation today, when a single Collector is in charge of Customs and Excise and VAT for the whole of East Anglia and his jurisdiction extends well beyond Norfolk and Suffolk, taking in much of Essex and Cambridgeshire and bits of southern Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire, thus covering an area that was held to justify at least 12 Customs Collectors and four Excise Collectors in the 18th century. It has to be said too that in those days not a few of the Collectors held "patent offices"; that is, they were appointed by royal or Treasury letters patent and got handsome salaries but weren't expected to do any work. For that, a deputy was employed, at much less cost. It was the sort of situation that eluded me in all my years in the civil service. I would like to mention too the places where the main Customs business was transacted, the Custom Houses, the focal point of the maritime community of the port. Even now, another part of the Customs heritage is a legacy of a number of fine old buildings. In many ways, the jewel in the crown is the Custom House at King's Lynn, originally built in 1683, but sadly that one is no longer occupied by the Department.

From its inception in the 17th century, the Excise aroused intense popular opposition, not least because of the wide powers of search and entry given to its officers, but also because the duties fell mainly on necessities of life and were a great burden on the poorer members of society. The Excise, though primarily concerned with duties on home-produced commodities, was almost equally concerned with smuggling. Excise duties were imposed on a range of imported goods – tobacco, spirits, wines and tea. In fact, the Excise duties on spirits and tea were higher than those of the Customs. Excise officers were stationed at most of the East Anglian ports, and the Excise service had their own revenue cutters

operating from Great Yarmouth and elsewhere. Often the Customs and the Excise officers were at loggerheads and downright obstructive to each other, instead of working together against the smuggling community. Not until 1822, when all the Excise duties on imported goods were transferred to the Customs, did peace break out between the two revenue services.

In the 18th century the East Anglian coast, and more especially Suffolk and Essex, was second only to Kent and Sussex for its smuggling activity. This was the heyday of smuggling and of the violence and bloodshed that went with it. The fight against smuggling was a long, unrelenting battle waged on both land and sea. The Essex coast, with its rivers, creeks and small islands, was, and for that matter still is, ideally suited for smuggling. Suffolk, however, was better provided with open landing places and had far more professional smugglers than either Essex or Norfolk. These Suffolk gangs operated on a massive scale, and the violence they used far exceeded that in the rest of the region. The extent of smuggling in Norfolk wasn't as great, largely due to the longer sea journeys from Continental ports, giving a bigger risk of capture. However, the profits were still high enough to justify the range and the risk, and the Norfolk coast from the Yare to King's Lynn afforded dozens of places where smuggled goods could be landed directly on to carts and quickly transported inland. In 1729 the Yarmouth Collector estimated that 49,000 half-ankers of brandy (an anker was about 8½ gallons), 70,000 half-ankers of gin and 50,000 pounds of tea were landed each year on the east coast. He also pointed out that the smugglers' vessels had become so large and formidable that Customs vessels stood little chance against them. A Parliamentary report of 1736 confirmed this perception, and described bands of smugglers of up to 40 or 50 in strength, going around armed with swords and pistols. In the previous 12 years, this report stated, no less than 250 Customs officers had been beaten and wounded, besides six others who had been murdered. The death penalty was introduced for attacks on revenue officers and long prison sentences for those assisting smugglers, not just in landing goods but also in making warning signals. The effect was to incite the smugglers to greater violence in order to evade capture. Few of them were caught and little or no information was forthcoming. The retribution they meted out to informers was normally death, while juries were often reluctant to convict – not just from fear of retaliation, but also because of sympathy with the smuggling

trade. When a soldier and an Excise officer were killed by a party of smugglers at Hunstanton, near Lynn, in 1784, and two of the gang were brought to trial, the jury pronounced them not guilty in the teeth of all the evidence. The prosecution demanded a new trial, remarking angrily that "If a Norfolk jury were determined not to convict persons guilty of the most obvious crimes, simply because, as smugglers, they commanded the sympathy of the country people, there was an end to all justice." At a second trial, the jury's verdict was once again "not guilty", and the accused men went free.

Smuggling was a very profitable and highly organized business in Parson Woodforde's day. The smugglers, who styled themselves "Free Traders", were probably better organized than the revenue services, and the odds were loaded in their favour. Smuggling involved four distinct groups of people: the venturer, a man of substance who put up the money; the captain and crew of the vessel that brought the contraband over; the merchant overseas who supplied the captain with the goods; and finally the organizers on shore who arranged for the landing, transportation and distribution. At the end of the line there were, of course, the customers. By the time the smuggled wares reached *them*, the dirty work of the trade probably seemed very remote, if anyone thought about it at all.

The smuggled goods came mainly from Flushing, Ostend and Dunkirk. English merchants and smugglers set up their own firms in these ports to supply the trade. It wasn't just a one-way traffic, for the traffickers smuggled goods out of England too – cotton and woollen goods, gold, and so on – and sold them on the Continent to finance some of their contraband for home consumption. There were several distilleries in Schiedam (next to Rotterdam) producing millions of gallons of gin almost solely for the smuggling trade. Tea could be bought in Holland for as little as 6d per pound and then be sold for as much as 6s per pound. It was estimated that in 1773 over 7 million pounds in weight of tea was smuggled into England annually. In effect, something like 60% of the tea consumed in the country had never borne duty. When Pitt the Younger, in 1784, slashed the duty on tea from 119% to 12½% (introducing the ridiculous tax on windows instead), smuggling of tea became much less profitable, and the Scandinavian East India companies went out of business, for they were transporting a good deal of the tea supplied to English smugglers. Similarly, when Pitt cut the duty on wine by more than half, the smuggling of French wine stopped almost overnight. The French revolutionary and

Napoleonic wars led to steady increases in these duties again, while the duties on spirits had remained consistently high.

The Customs resources on their own stood little chance against the flood of contraband, and they looked for assistance from the military – dragoons (mounted infantrymen) and militia. Anyone who read my article on the West Norfolk Militia in the most recent issue of the Journal may remember that Lord Orford, their colonel, conducted something of a crusade against smugglers when the battalion went to camp at Aldeburgh in 1778. He was convinced that all the clergy, lawyers and doctors of the area were involved in the traffic, while in Aldeburgh everyone was, apart from the parson. In a battle with a gang of smugglers who were attempting a landing at Southwold under cover of a twelve-gun cutter, the West Norfolks took the prize but lost six or seven men. George Crabbe, the Suffolk poet, was born in Aldeburgh 24 years before that, and grew up there during the heyday of smuggling. He left a realistic picture of the land operations in his poem, "The Village", published in 1783:

> Where are the swains, who, daily labour done,
> With rural games play'd down the setting sun;
> Where now are these? – Beneath yon cliff they stand,
> To show the freighted pinnace where to land;
> To load the ready steed with guilty haste,
> To fly in terror o'er the pathless waste,
> Ir, when detected, in their straggling course,
> To foil their foes by cunning or by force;
> Or, yielding part (which equal knaves demand),
> To gain a lawless passport through the land.

From this, it would seem that bribes could sometimes buy off the opposition. Since Crabbe's father was Collector of Salt Duties at Aldeburgh, the poet probably knew what he was talking about. His verses also bring out the point that the traffic depended on an early warning system of signals from collaborators on shore. This has enriched the phraseology of the English language. "The coast is clear" is a smuggling phrase, while "a flash in the pan" was a signal made by a special pistol to inform the captain that it was safe to land. The word "bootlegger" originally referred to smugglers who brought tobacco ashore inside their sea-boots.

It wasn't only around Aldeburgh that the clergy were implicated. There is no lack of other instances of clergymen condoning smuggling, and many stories of churches and churchyards being used to hide smuggled goods. Parson Woodforde's diary records

how, from 1777 to 1794, he was supplied with smuggled tea, gin, brandy and rum, although he also bought in such commodities from legal sources, at much higher prices. He knew full well when he was dealing in contraband. Three successive local suppliers catered for his needs. In 1777 he had three deliveries of tea from "one Richard Andrews a Smuggler" (a pig-breeder when he wasn't dealing in contraband goods). The price was, first, 9s a pound, then 10s 6d. Thereafter he seems to have bought his tea through legitimate channels. In 1778-80, this Richard Andrews also supplied him with some rum, at £3 10s an anker, 5 gallons of cognac (£2 10s), and tub after tub of gin. The price of the gin remained pretty constant over the years, at £1 5s per tub of four gallons. If my conversions of imperial to metric measures and of 1780 pounds sterling to 1996 pounds are correct, that works out at around £3.50 a modern 70 cl bottle in current terms. Andrews seems to have won the Parson's trust. He is referred to as "my Smuggler" and "the honest Smuggler", and was occasionally allowed to dine in the Parsonage kitchen. He was succeeded by Clark Hewitt (the parish clerk at Mattishall Burgh, no less), who kept the tubs of smuggled gin flowing in 1781-84, at the same prices. The third in the trio was Robert Buck, the blacksmith at Honingham, whose supplies are recorded in the diary from 1788. Presumably he had also been the source of the spirits that were dumped anonymously at the Parson's door on 29 December 1786: "Had another Tub of Gin and another of the best Coniac Brandy brought me this Evening abt. 9. We heard a thump at the front door about that time, but did not know what it was, till I sent out and found the 2 Tubs – but nobody there." Where Woodforde's gin came from in the 20-month period before that, the diary doesn't say [?], but it is difficult to believe that there was none at all.* John Buck's sideline was well known to all and was recognized in his nickname, "Moonshine Buck". After visits from these people, the Parson was kept busy bottling the contents of the tubs, usually at first light, no doubt in order to get rid of the evidence as soon as possible.

There are no references in the diary to smuggled goods after 1794. Could this have been out of patriotism, at a time of war with France and Holland; or was the parson anxious lest his dealings with Buck

* Sir Angus Fraser's talk was delivered prior to the publication of Vol. 11 of the Diary in 1999. That reveals that Clark Hewitt's last delivery of gin – at £1:6:0 a tub – was made on 16/1/1786. The next recorded deliveries, on 8/6/1786 and 18/12/1786, were brought by Ben Leggatt from 'Robert Buck of Honingham'. Then came the clandestine delivery mentioned by Sir Angus. (Ed.)

might get him into trouble? The Excise had been on to Buck for some time, and in October 1792, on the basis of a tip-off from an informer, he had been raided at Mattishall and fined. Just a month before that, after picking up a tub of rum left outside his window, Woodforde had been worried about what he described as "bad reports about the Parish". Whatever the reason, during the remaining eight years of his life, he had, so far as I can discern, "nothing to declare".

As Parson Woodforde noted, Moonshine Buck got off pretty lightly when he was found in flagrante. Successful prosecutions by the Customs and the Excise weren't all that frequent, and even when smugglers were convicted, very few of them were transported to the colonies, and even fewer suffered the death penalty. Most of the East Anglian smugglers who were caught or sentenced to imprisonment for not being able to pay the smuggling penalties ended up in either Norwich or Chelmsford gaol. Ipswich wasn't considered secure enough to hold them. They were in effect Crown debtors and thus could languish in prison until the debt was paid. As most of them claimed to be in absolute poverty, the Customs were forced to pay for their daily keep. The going rate in Parson Woodforde's time seems to have been 4½d a day, which provided a pound and a half of bread and a quart of beer. Sometimes, enterprising imprisoned smugglers made offers to change sides. In 1773, a Norwich Customs surveyor, Mr Hoyle, received a letter from one Stephen Rolfe, a prisoner in Norwich gaol: "I shold be obliged to you to acquaint the Hon. Commsnrs, I could be of infinite service shold there honours think fitt to instruct me with the command of a cutter. I say I would positively destroy smuggling on this coast soon". There is no indication that his offer was accepted. But the seamanship of smugglers were undoubted. Normally the naval Impressment Service drew the line at impressing criminals into the navy. Smuggling was the one felony that was acceptable in the Service. Many of these smugglers were simply taken at sea and pressed without ceremony, but others were discharged from gaol to the navy.

Since I find that research and collecting tend to go together, I started last year to pick up sporadically manuscript documents of bygone centuries relating to Customs and Excise matters, as well as to the military. I was very interested to acquire some papers that had formerly belonged to one John Winter, a London attorney who was appointed by the Admiralty to register certificates issued under the

terms of a royal proclamation of 1782 which provided for imprisoned smugglers to be pardoned if they enlisted in the navy or provided substitutes. A similar proclamation had been issued in 1778, allowing service in the army as well. This was at the time of the war with the American colonies and France, when skilled seamen were in short supply. I have yet to research this barely known provision properly, but want to do so sometime, because I suspect it may be the explanation of a rather archaic power that still survives in present-day Customs and Excise legislation. The Commissioners have the power to "order any person who has been imprisoned to be discharged before the expiration of his term of imprisonment, being a person imprisoned for any offence under [the customs and excise] Acts or in respect of the non-payment of a penalty . . .". I believe I was the only Commissioner ever to make use of this provision during the present century. That was the result of a deal struck about 17 years ago with the American Drugs Enforcement Agency, who were anxious to get their hands on a black American who was being prosecuted for involvement in drug smuggling into this country. Following a short spell on remand in Brixton gaol, where he evidently had been done over by the brothers, he was pretty anxious, in exchange for his release here, to sing like a canary in a New York court, so that a number of drug barons could be sent down there. After the man had been sentenced at Reading, and a New York District Attorney had flown over to plead for our co-operation, I signed a release order, on the understanding that he would be taken out of the country on a military aircraft (to avoid risk of some fatal happening en route) and was certain to do gaol time in the US. It seemed prudent to explain to the Home Office what was going to happen, if only to avoid head-scratching by the governor of Maidstone prison when he received the order for release. The Home Office kept saying: "This is a very curious power; how did you get it?" At the time, no-one seemed to know. I think I may now have stumbled upon the answer, though it hardly seems likely to keep the power in existence for much longer. In his recent report on the export of defence equipment to Iraq, Sir Richard Scott, having read the current Customs and Excise Management Act, observed that this provision reads very oddly to a lawyer:"Why the Commissioners should have power to remit criminal penalties imposed by a judge, whether by way of fine ... or imprisonment ... is ... not clear", and, even though it had no bearing on the Iraq situation, he recommended that it be abolished, particularly if, as he suspected, it now served no

useful purpose. I can't see a plea that it might be useful if we wanted to transfer convicted smugglers into the navy helping to save the day.

But I have now strayed a long way from the subject Phyllis asked me to talk about: smuggling in Parson Woodforde's time. The balance of advantage against the smugglers was tipped in the Customs favour only after his death, when the formation of a much more effective Coast Guard under the direct management of the Customs Board, combined with large reductions of import duties, brought the smuggling wars on the east coast and elsewhere virtually to an end, for the time being at least. Moreover, as the Customs Board reported in 1857, there had been a marked change in public sentiments: "The smuggler is no longer an object of public sympathy or a hero of romance, and people are just beginning to awake to the perception of the fact that his offence is less a fraud on the Revenue, than a robbing of the fair trader." Liquor and tobacco smuggling still exists, but no longer seems such a threat as drugs, weapons, and hard porn. If nowadays the East Anglian Collection has again become a natural target for smugglers, it is because of the rise in drug trafficking. Of the [£30] million or so of drugs seized in the Collection last year, most came from the European Union, and more especially the Netherlands. It is a different world from the one Parson Woodforde lived in.

LETTER

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt that members will be queuing to give answers to the questions you posed in the Summer Journal. The old Norfolk II volume of the complete transcript of the Diary (1778-1779) certainly tells us that Woodforde was no swimmer and indeed preferred to view the sea from the safety of the beach:

> 6th May 1779:
> We breakfasted at Wells and after breakfast we got
> a small Boat and went to Sea in it – we carried
> some cold Meat & some Beer with us in the Boat –
> My Man Will went with us also – We had two
> Men to manage the Sails &c. for us – When we
> got to Sea we fastened our Boat to a Sea Mark &
> regaled ourselves – but I could eat but very little
> being very near sick as was Will, it being the first
> Time of my being upon the Sea – and the Waves so
> large that frightened me, as I thought it dangerous . . .
> Mr. Hall having been often at Sea did not mind it . . .
> I was glad to set my Foot on land again . . .

Remember all those visits to Yarmouth, where he never ventured to go either in or on the sea and Southwold where he stayed firmly on the beach searching for amber.

This aversion to total immersion in water is I think echoed in the typed copy of the list of Woodforde's household and farming goods sold on 19 April 1803, which is in the Society's possession. A copy of the Notice of Sale appeared in Newsletter No. 46 and, although it contained the words "Bath and moving stove", I could find no mention of a bath having been knocked down to any purchaser. Mr Dell, the incoming Rector, purchased a 40 gallon copper, furnace and lids (£3:9:0) and a large iron pan, furnace and lids (£2:4:0) but I think these were in connection with the brewhouse. However, if the Woodforde household had taken baths they would have had about 50 gallons of hot water at their disposal! I could find no vessel in which to take a bath unless they fancied a large tub (4/-d) or several iron-bound barrels (averaging 10/-d). Several "moving stoves" were sold, the most expensive of which (16/6d) was described as "polished" and was sold to Mrs Browne.

Phyllis Stanley
Norwich

THE MEMOIRS OF THE REVD. DR. EDWARD NARES 1762-1841

War and Peace

The year is 1814 and the Regius Professor of Modern History at Merton College, Oxford, surveys the momentous events occurring on the world stage. In grandiloquent terms he tells of the invasion of the south of France by Wellington's victorious peninsular armies, the crossing of the Rhine by the forces of the Northern Confederacy, leading inexorably to the 'downfall of the Tyrant' and the occupation of Paris by the allies.

> The king of France being in England, and his recall appearing to be a pledge of returning peace ... occasioned an extraordinary degree of Joy and congratulations throughout the Kingdom. White flags were display'd on all the Churches & the White cockade became a common badge in the Metropolis. The Prince Regent went in State to accompany the King of France upon his public Entry into London ... and I am [now] within hearing of the Guns firing Royal Salutes upon the Coast upon the occasion of his Majestry's Embarkation in the Royal yacht of England, under the command of his R.H. the Duke of Clarence, to take possession of his ancient kingdom.

After spending the winter in his parish ('the severity of the weather was extreme') the Revd. Nares in February 1814 left for London in order to attend an address from the University to the Prince Regent, only to find it postponed to his His Royal Highness's indisposition. Nares seized this opportunity to journey on to Oxford to take the degree of Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity, to which he was admitted in Convocation on 2 March 1814. From there he paid a second visit to Blenheim where he was made most welcome. Unfortunately illness had prevented him from enjoying a round of parties to celebrate his appointment. Likewise, he was unable to attend the postponed address to the Prince Regent and the opportunity of being presented to H.R.H. to kiss hands on his appointment.

The Marlborough family took up residence at Marlborough House in London in April, Nares' daughter being en famille. Lord Francis offered to present her father to the Prince Regent at the levée to be held on 11 May. It was fortuitous that this would concide with the forthcoming publication of the second edition of his Remarks on the Revised Version of the New Testament. Accompanied

therefore by Lord Francis Spencer Churchill he was received by His Royal Highness most graciously. 'The crowd was prodigious. I dined afterwards with the Duke'. His books having now been delivered, he spent 17 May presenting them

> to particular persons – some of whom I saw & some not. Of the former, the ArchBp. of Canterbury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, & the Bishop of Durham, were particularly civil & obliging. Lord Liverpool, to whom in gratitude I had dedicated it, was not at home, but he did me the honor of writing to me in the course of the Evening, as did the Bishop of London also ... with a card of invitation to dinner on the 19th, which I accepted, and where I had the pleasure of meeting many persons of high rank & consequence. On the 20th, I returned with my daughter to Biddenden.

The month of June 1814 saw the most illustrious princes of Europe gathered in this country for the victory celebrations, culminating in a dinner in their honour by the City of London. Nares notes that so extraordinary a company will perhaps never meet again. He proceeds ot list, firstly H.R.H. the Prince Regent, then four Royal Princes, five Royal Dukes, followed by 17 other Princes, Dukes and Marshals, not least being Marshal Prince Blucher and H.R.H. the Duke d'Orleans. Amongst lesser folk were all the foreign ministers, heads of the church and law, and of the administration. This great dinner took place in the Guildhall on 18 June. The Regius Professor was greatly mortified, owing to insufficient notice, to have missed the state visit to Oxford where he would, as of right, been entitled to dine with the Prince Regent and his illustrious guests. He was also unable to be present at the subsequent state visit to Blenheim Palace.

As consolation for this disappointment the Revd. Nares organised an excursion to Dover with his wife and daughters, to witness the entry of the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia with their respective suites, prior to their embarkation. Several regiments were employed to line the route, with the Scots Greys stationed at the entrance of the town to provide an escort. After several false alarms their Majesties eventually arrived. First came the King of Prussia with his suite. Then, near midnight, his Imperial Majesty the Emperior of Russia entered, seated in an open carriage with his sister, the Grand Duchess of Oldenburgh.

> Though the weather was bad, and the night so far advanced, He condescended to sit with his Hat off through the whole Town,

visible to ever individual by the light of the Candles & Lamps – in the mean while, Royal Solutes were firing from the Castle, Batteries and Shipping ... He was drawn by six artillery Horses, with 3 Military Drivers, while his attendant Carriages & the whole Regt. of Scotch Greys on Horse back going rapidly through the Streets with Swords drawn, exhibiting a Scene scarcely to be exceeded. I shall never forget it.

The following day the Rector's party were able to witness their royal personages' embarkation and departure, distinguished by every display of martial grandeur and public enthusiasm, and gracious acknowledgement by their majesties.

The summer continued to be eventful. Nares sped from Dover to Oxford where, on 3 July, he was appointed to preach the Act Sermon as a Regent Doctor. 'Several persons of singular Eminence were pleased to compliment me highly upon it'. His status also allowed him the opportunity of attending the presentation of two addresses from the University to the Prince Regent at Carlton House. The Prince was overhead to say that his reception at Oxford was more gratifying than anything he had ever experienced. On the next day her Majesty held a splendid drawing room which the Professor also attended and had the honour of kissing her hand.

His Grace, the Duke of Wellington, was there, decorated with innumerable orders. ... It was pleasant to look at so renown'd an Hero, with such perfect ease in the full Zenith of his Glory. He came to Court and departed alone, and in so plain a Carriage that the crowds who waited to see him, let him pass almost unobserv'd. The Russian General of Cossacks, noted for offering his Daughter and an immense revenue to any person who wd. bring Bonaparte to him dead or alive, ... was also there. Her Majesty receiv'd me very graciously, & seem'd to recognise me, tho' she had not seen me for many years.

On Sunday 17 July Nares preached a Charity Sermon at Brentford in aid of the National School, founded and patronised by his friend Col. Clitherow of Boston House. Two days were spent at Boston House with his two sons, just brought from school for their summer holidays.

The new professor had intended taking up his duties in the Michaelmas Term but the formalities had not been completed. In the meantime he had agreed, with some misgivings, to accept the office of a Select Preacher. His apprehension lay in an increasing weakness in his eyes which threatened to interrupt his studies, should certain remedies fail him.

In December 1814 Edward conveyed his daughter to Blenheim for her third winter with her Godfather, the Duke of Marlborough. This visit was to be fraught by another rift with one of the Marlborough clan; not the Duke this time but with his heir, Lord Blandford.

> Soon after my departure, Lord & Lady Blandford came to Blenheim to pass a few days there. They were very kind to my Daughter & gave her valuable presents and invited her to their House in Berkshire. She was also invited to Lord Charles Spencers.

Feeling that his daughter was too young to accept such invitations indiscriminately, her father wrote to Lord Francis Spencer hoping that such engagements would only be accepted with the Duke's concurrence. Lord Francis replied putting his mind at rest, but his intervention resulted in both visits being postponed.

> I have incur'd Lord Blandfords great displeasure so that he writes that I have "shut the door of reconciliation with *him* for ever". What can have prejudiced him against me I know not, but it is an odd event and may lead to unpleasant consequences as to my future interests.

The Revd. Dr. Nares had now received his formal appointment to the Professorship of Modern History. The terms were a disappointment to him. Whereas his predecessor enjoyed something of a sinecure, *he* was to be bound by onerous regulations. It was stipulated that he must reside there 90 days in each year and, as well as deliver four solemn lectures, also read a course of not less than twenty lectures in Michaelmas or Lent term. He was to pay salaries of £25 each to two language masters, and to have £80 additionally deducted from his £400 emolument for the office and Property Taxes. There was to be no house provided, so accommodation would have to be found for himself and family, entailing the employment of a curate during his absence from Biddenden. While accepting God's will, he viewed the future with misgivings. The prospect of studying an unfamiliar subject, preparing twenty lectures on modern history, and preaching at St Mary's, while burdened by failing eyesight, occasioned him much anxiety. Feeling that the appointment had come too late in life, he put himself forward for the Margeret [sic] Professorship of Divinity which carried with it a Stall in Worcester Cathedral. This was shortly to become vacant and was more in line with his former studies. Though encouraged to believe that he was fitted for higher

things Nares, congenitally shy, was loath to solicit advancement and preferred to limit his ambition solely to that of caring for the future of his family. Moreover, he abhorred dependence on his noble connections for favours, but felt strongly that his merits deserved recognition by his ecclesiastical superiors. He was also sensitive that, although the Marlboroughs were very attentive to his daughter, they had not noticed the second Mrs Nares, even in their letters, despite her loving care for the daughter of his first marriage to one of their family.

The memoir leaps forward to December 1815 when the Regius Professor recalls his labours in the past year over the required twenty lectures and expands on continued injustices. He was induced to recruit Lord Shaftesbury to support a candidacy for the Bishopric of Oxford. To his chagrin his successful rival was the Hon. Dr. Legge, Dean of Windsor.

> I hope his Episcopacy will mend his Manners. ... once my intimate friend and once a very obsequious Suitor to me when his Brother, the Hon. Augustus Legge, stood for a Fellowship of Merton College & succeeded through my Especial interposition, but since ... so distant & formal as to compel me to break off, not only all intimacy, but all acquaintance. Lord Shaftsbury [sic] has treated me like a Brother – I believe him to be sincere – but I am as much as ever in the dark as to any assistance from the Bm. family, or the Bishops, and I still think that I shall die Rector of Biddenden.

On 8 January 1816, having installed himself in Oxford, the Regius Professor read his Inaugural Lecture before the Vice Chancellor and a crowded assembly. Since the Professorship was founded in 1724 it would seem that the lectures had never been properly attended. But now Nares found an audience twice that of his predecessor and was told it would have been more had it not been for a clash of dates and hours. Nevertheless, there were present many tutors, Masters of Art, some Heads of Colleges, and brother professors. He was now committed to lecture in Merton Hall every other day for seven weeks. He was most gratified with the success of his addresses, the general perception being that this was in some degree the commencement of a new course of studies.

> The extreme attentions of the principal people in the Place left me no time for study, as intended (in order to improve my lectures). We were overwhelmed with invitations & engagements too civil to be declin'd, but ill according with the state of my

health and the need I had of time & privacy to complete my Lectures.

As a Select Preacher the Revd. Dr Nares had also to preach before the University at St Mary's on three successive Sundays, on the subject of the three Creeds. This threw an additional physical and mental burden on him as he worked on this theme, sometimes being called by the beadle to enter the pulpit with a bundle of pencilled notes still in his hand. So well received were his sermons that invitations arrived to preach elsewhere, but his ill health precluded acceptance. He complained of great hoarseness and an incessant cough, feeling so ill at times that it was as much as he could do to leave his room, never mind the house. His low spirits would however have been assuaged by evidence of warmer relations with the Marlborough family.

For very much to my satisfaction, every branch of the Duke's family express'd a desire to be introduc'd to Mrs. Nares. Lord & Lady Churchill came to Oxford on purpose, with Lord Charles's family we lived upon terms of intimacy, & in our way home were particularly invited to pass a day with the Duke at Syon Hill, where my daughter had been confin'd with measles.

Despite rubbing shoulders with such great ones the rector confides that 'retirement has not lost its charms'.

During my stay at Oxford the Countess of St. Vincent died. She was first cousin to my Mother & God Mother to my Daughter. She left me a legacy of £50 and Jewels to my Daughter of the value of £700. My own Legacy probably was to cover the Legacy tax on my Daughters Jewels. I hear that Lord St. Vincent has in view to leave more to the family.

On 30 April Dr Nares was in London attending the belated presentation of an address by the University, congratulating the Prince on the late victory (postponed due to ill-health). In the absence of the Principal of Brasen Nose [sic] College he had the honour of kissing hands and of dining afterwards with Lord Grenville, the Chancellor.

I was not much dispos'd to attend as a mere substitute, nor were Lord Grenville's manners much calculated to soften any difficulties. A more uncourteous Man I never saw in so publick a station, but happening to sit almost next to him at dinner ... when I touch'd upon topics that were not beneath his notice, I found him both animated and very communicative.

While in London he frequently visited Marlborough House and dined there with a large party to celebrate the Christening of Lord Churchill's son. On the same day the Princess Charlotte of Wales was married to Prince Leopold from the nearby Carlton House. Some of the former party were under an obligation to appear at both functions.

At this point Edward Nares launches himself into another lament, deploring the lack of sponsorship by his noble kinsfolk, and worse, the lack of recognition of his worth by his profession. He recognises that he should do more to bring himself forward, blaming his sensitiveness and moral superiority for these shortcomings.

The marriage of the Princess brought forth another loyal address by Oxford University. This was followed on 27 May by a levée which Edward was told he would do well to attend. This was a more glittering occasion than anything he had before witnessed.

> I cd. scarcely refrain from Laughing at my own Black Gown & Cassock, in the midst of Stars & Ribbons, Grand Crosses & Military orders without end &, I think, almost beyond the bounds of reason. Personal distinctions shd. neither be render'd too common, nor be too much confin'd to one profession.

Following a dinner for the delegates the Regius Professor received invitations to dine from the Duke of Marlborough and from the Bishop of London, both of which were ill-advisably declined. He was, however, able to render the latter a service in connection with a Clergy Residence Bill to be laid before Parliament. An incorrect version having reached Somerset,

> ... the Clergy of the Deanery of Castle Cary had met, and pass'd some resolutions of a very extraordinary tenor and complection [sic] – strongly worded, and intimating a design of resistance to the utmost the enactment of certain clauses.

A meeting had been convened by the Archdeacon of Canterbury to hear similar objections by the Kentish clergy. Nares, after consulting with his colleagues among the Oxford clerical fraternity, realised that the objectors were suffering under a misapprehension. He advised accordingly the Bishop of London, the sponsor of the Bill, and was thus able to defuse the situation. In subsequent correspondence with the Bishop, Nares suggested some slight alterations to the Bill which were favourably received.

On 10 June Professor Nares attended the Commemoration at Oxford and read a terminal lecture. On his return journey he spent

an evening with the Duke, and Lord and Lady Churchill, at Blenheim. It was perhaps a measure of his renown as a preacher that his services had been elicited a year previously to preach before the District Society of the Rape of Hastings for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, at their annual meeting on 11 July. The occasion was attended by many local worthies who treated him as a celebrity, overwhelming him with compliments and who, at the dinner which followed, expressed the thanks of the public. Two very pleasant days were spent at Hastings as a guest of the mayor, an old school-fellow, before returning to his home parish.

> I left Biddenden for Oxford to read my Terminal Lecture on the 26th November, carrying my Daughter to pass the Winter, as before, at Blenheim, which place we reach'd on the 29th, to dinner & where I continued till the 3rd. December on which day I read my lecture.

A fellow guest at Blenheim was his old rival, the Bishop of Oxford. Thus thrown together they soon patched up their differences.

> On this occasion he seem'd very desirous of renewing his former intimacy, and was exceedingly civil and attentive, and thus ended the year 1816.

The Regius Professor's next series of lectures were due to be read during February and March 1817 and lodgings had been taken for that purpose. Shortly before setting out a letter was received from his daughter with the news that the Duke of Marlborough had died in the night of 30 January, leaving his 19-year-old granddaughter the only member of the family at Blenheim. Her father forthwith set off post-haste for Oxford, arriving there late the following day. Awaiting him was a further letter informing him that the Duke had left his daughter £9,000 and that the funeral was to take place in three days. The Marlborough family having assembled at Blenheim, Nares was gratified to receive an invitation from the new (5th) Duke to join them. His Grace, despite past offence, received him most cordially. The funeral was duly conducted on 7 February.

> Tho' conducted very privately, the sight was very awful and grand. The Body was convey'd from the front door to the Chapel very slowly, the corporation of Woodstock walking before it with the Coronet & Banners, an immense crowd being outside the Rails; the Mourners that followed being the Present Duke, Chief Mourner, Lord Charles, Lord Robert Spencer, Brother of the late Duke, Lord Blandford, Lord Churchill, Lord C. Spencer etc. etc.

> including myself & Mr. Boyce, as sons in law of the late Duke ... The Service was read in the Vault, which was lighted up for the purpose, and all the family descended into it, exhibiting certainly a very striking appearance, during the performance of this concluding part of the Ceremony.

Subsequently, Edward Nares was greatly mortified to learn that the late Duke had made no provision for the continuance of his annuity of £400, which consequently ceased upon the Duke's death.

> I fancied that we had been sufficiently reconciled to have procur'd me some notice at least, that shd. prevent my being a sufferer by his death, especially as I receiv'd no sort of assistance from the family in the way of my profession.

It had been intimated to Edward that testamentary dispositions had remained unaltered since the death of the old Duchess, and that the Duke had been too infirm (of purpose?) to make any changes. The old Duke continued to be held in high esteem by his son-in-law, for his kindness and friendliness. In contrast, Edward's relations with his fellow son-in-law, Lord Shaftesbury, became chilly. As the former Hon. Ashley Cooper he had always posed as Nares' friend and had rendered him many kindnesses. To the latter's bitter regret Shaftesbury now adopted a stiff attitude. He considered it entirely reasonable that having married his (the Duke's) daughter without his consent, and afterwards having severed the family connection by marrying again, he could not expect more than that the Duke should take care that his granddaughter was no burden to the rector. One other source of bitterness was that his daughter's legacy drew attention to the gap in their relative stations in life; this despite all the loving care and attention lavished upon her by himself and her stepmother. With sadness the Regius Professor returned to his duties. *(To be continued)*

CHAIRMAN'S ENDPIECE

I recently rediscovered my copy of Roy Winstanley's *Volume 1 – The First Six Norfolk Years*. Published by the Society in 1981, this volume covers the years 1776 and 1777. It hardly seems possible that more than 20 years have passed since Roy proudly completed his manuscript.

Of course I could not place the Diary back on the bookshelf – it was too late to curtail my curiosity. The pages I started to glance at were late September 1776. Woodforde had the decorators in – he was employing Wetherell and 'Mr Thorne's Man Richard' respectively to paint the parlour doors and to put up the shelves. Later on we find him fishing; I chuckled when he wrote that Harry Dunnell was 'quite knocked up and ill after it'. In October turf was laid in the garden, coal delivered and barrels of beer continued to arrive. How well organised ... and that started me on a two hour diversion into 1777!

The Diary is, as we all know, an excellent insight into Woodforde's daily existence. Day by day it chronicles his achievements. I suppose I think of him looking back over the day and capturing the events he considered appropriate for his diary. Was he ever tempted to change style and record that he had ordered the turf; that when coal was delivered he anticipated the next order; when he decided that decorating would best be done?

True he was so angry he warned Molly on 4 November 1776 to go away at Christmas. Perhaps the crocus bulbs he acquired in the late Autumn were for the spring – but I wish he had indicated his intentions. My curiosity kept me reading the entries, turning the pages looking for evidence of his recording his day's thoughts as opposed to solely his actions.

I resisted the temptation to see if Molly went away at Christmas! It seems to me I should reserve such an investigation for a late December evening by the fire.

Woodforde would have encouraged me to record that 'I did today construct the Chairman's endpiece'. I prefer to wish you well for the future and to look forward to Christmas, and the Society's Frolic in Woodforde's Norfolk.

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.

The Parson Woodforde Society is a registered charity no. 1010807

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