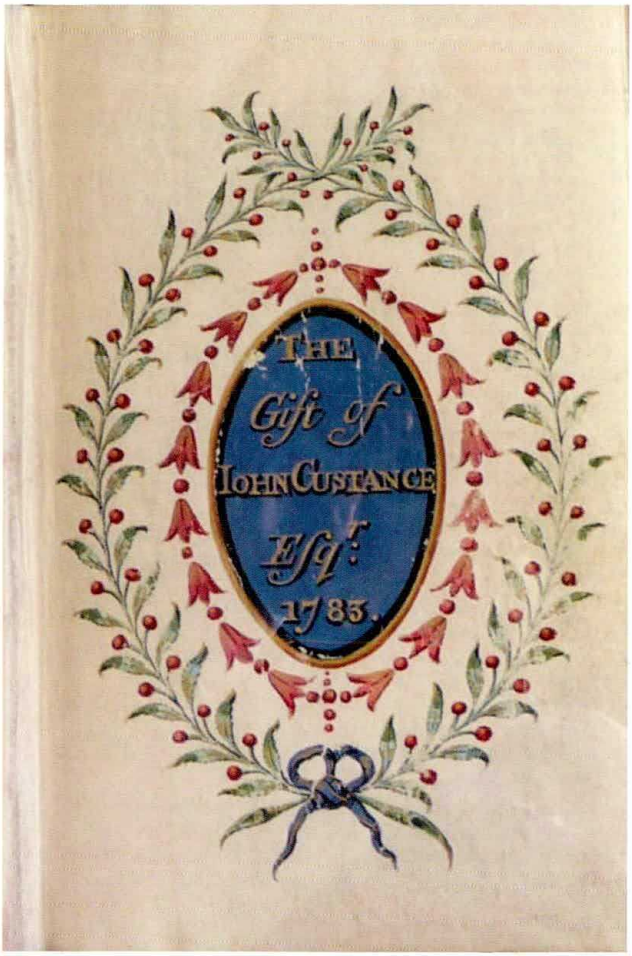
PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

Quarterly Journal



THE CUSTANCE REGISTER

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At Quadrille this Evening – won – 0: 4: 0
I played the finest Sans Prendre Vole to Night, that
I ever had – not a loosing Card in hand – it was
Mattadores, 9 black Trumps in Spades and the
King of Hearts – I was the last Player, after the first Card
was played, I declared the Vole –

(*Diary*, 30 May 1783)

Quadrille, she had often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners – a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and quick investiture of Quadrille – absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces; the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone: above all the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*, to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist; all these she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *soldier* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches.

(Charles Lamb – *Mrs Battle's Opinions on Whist*)

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The Parson Woodforde Society en fête – in the grounds of the Old Rectory, Weston Longville.

EDITORIAL

The summer just past was, at least in this part of the world, one of contrasting halves; first dry and then wet. Fortunately, the wet half came to an end before the children went back to school and along the roads tractors bumped and bounced their haymaking equipment about as the farmers rushed to get in the last of their grass crop. They will need as much as possible as the failure of the drought-stricken Russian wheat harvest threatens to push fodder prices to record levels.

Today we live in a world in which, for many of us, the seasons are less significant and, thanks to central-heating and air-conditioning, less noticeable than they were in Woodforde's day. Only the extremes make much of an impact upon our memories. The early summer of 1846 in London was one of the hottest on record and on the 1 August it came to a climax with a frightening hailstorm which shattered the glass roofs of the Regent Street arcades. Charles Dickens had wisely taken himself off to Lausanne to write *Dombey*. Jane Carlyle, more than usually irritated by her husband, left him to sweat it out in Cheyne Row and took herself to Liverpool. Peel resigned. Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning planned their elopement and Benjamin Haydon committed suicide. The story is told in a wonderful book by Alethea Hayter, *A Sultry Month: Scenes in London Literary Life, 1846* (1965). Haydon left his journals to Elizabeth Barrett and Hayter is very good on the difficulties encountered by literary executors when faced with memoirs and journals which may hurt the living or damage the reputations of the dead.

Because he was himself a farmer Woodforde understood the problems faced by the majority of his parishioners who made their living from the land. Unlike his neighbour the Revd John Smith of Mattishall, Woodforde does not appear to have been a progressive farmer although it is interesting to note that it was to him that his old university friend Ben Jeffries of Brecon wrote when he wanted to know about 'Norfolk Turnip Seed, Quality & Price'. Because the parish was a community of occupational interest, of which the priest was very much a part, his pastoral duties – dealt with here by the Venerable Bill Jacob in a paper originally delivered at our Summer Frolic – must have been more effectively carried out.

We have no real evidence as to how effective a preacher James Woodforde was. We do know that soon after arriving at Weston he had the pulpit and preaching desk moved to a more central position and, as Dr Jacob points out, he frequently, unless the weather was very bad, had a 'large' congregation. One Sunday in 1797, when his curate Mr Corbould was unable to take the service, the duty was performed by Mr Beevor of Great Witchingham (himself Jeans's curate) and it was reported to the Rector that he was 'very much liked at church'. This suggests that Woodforde valued being 'liked' in the pulpit. Perhaps because he had been himself?

Elsewhere in this edition that stalwart of the Journal John Heighes augments what Sir Angus Fraser had to tell us about Nephew Bill's friend Admiral Squire, whilst Phyllis Stanley continues her investigations into the wills of the Custance family. Following his article in the Spring Journal, Dr Case adds to our knowledge of the forebears of our benefactress Mrs Arisoy and Professor Wilson subjects Amanda Vickery's latest book to appreciative appraisal. The Frolic Report – with lovely illustrations by Mary Price – will serve as a happy reminder of that highlight of the blessedly sunny half of the summer. On the subject of frolics, next year's, with the theme of 'Woodforde in Dorset', will be held over the week-end of **16-18 September** at the **King's Arms, Dorchester**. More details on what promises to be another very enjoyable occasion, in the Winter Journal.

MARTIN BRAYNE

JAMES WOODFORDE AS A PARISH PRIEST

Eighty-one years after Woodforde's death, the vicar of Scarning, a village two or three miles the other side of Dereham from Weston, wrote in his history of the diocese of Norwich:

> The Georgian period in the diocese of Norwich was a period of such deadness as had never been known before, and which we may well pray never be known again.[1]

Augustus Jessop, the vicar of Scarning, was writing forty-two years before John Beresford published his first volume of selections from Woodforde's diary, but I suspect he would not have seen anything in Beresford's book to persuade him to change his mind. Successive commentators on, and quoters from, Woodforde's diary have seen it as evidence for his lack of seriousness about his role as a parish priest, and as evidence of a general disinterest in religion in the eighteenth century.

Since the mid-nineteenth century the phenomenon of the 'enlightenment' in late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century England has been thought to have led the intelligentsia and politicians and the genteel classes to cease to take religion seriously. Churches, it was claimed, if full, were full of sleepers, or seducers eyeing up pretty young women, and that clergy were boring time-servers, or poverty-stricken curates, and that bishops and dignitaries were idle nepotists. It was claimed that only the emergence of devout evangelicals in the 1760s, on the one hand, and devout high church Tractarians in 1833, on the other, awakened the Church from its long eighteenth century torpor, and reformed the idleness and nepotism of men like Woodforde and his friend Henry Bathurst, the absentee vicar of Great Witchingham.

Until about thirty years ago most historians subscribed to the claim among Victorians that there was a great divide about 1832, before which what was called 'Old Corruption' reigned supreme in politics, in the administration of justice, in economic and social policy, and especially in the Church of England. After 1832, there was a sense that new men arose to change and reform everything, creating a new world, of efficiency and hard work. One gets a sense of this from Dickens's and Trollope's novels. The recent past was disparaged, while the middle ages were romanticised, and the

practices of their fathers were held up to ridicule, and, it almost seems, deliberately misunderstood. Bright young bishops and clergy, seeking to rise to the challenge of a rapidly growing population, with extensive migration into towns, and the development of mechanised processes in industries and in agriculture, and a transport revolution, who adopted more aggressive approaches to pastoral care and evangelism in their dioceses and parishes, judged their predecessors by the standards of their different world, and found them most unsatisfactory. They assumed that to be effective parish priests it was necessary to be busy all the time – or at least that their curates should be busy – visiting, doing things for people, controlling things, changing things, intervening in people's lives. Their forebears, who had not done as they were doing, were judged and found wanting, and held up for ridicule and execration. Only negative and bad things that contemporaries of their forebears said were believed, and repeated, and quoted, and are often still quoted in standard works about England in the eighteenth century.[2] We know the popular picture this view created of Woodforde – as someone primarily interested in food, with little interest in the Church of which he was a minister, or the people whose pastor he was expected to be.

If one looks at his time in his curacies in Somerset, and at Weston, not through nineteenth century spectacles but by the expectations of people of his own day, I think that we can see in Woodforde, and in most eighteenth century clergy, people who were intending to be faithful and godly pastors of their congregations. Using the evidence of Woodforde's diary I hope to show how he fulfilled the expectations of the Canons of 1604 of the Church of England, of the bishops under whom he served in his parishes, and of the congregations to whom he ministered.[3]

Starting at the beginning of Woodforde's clerical career, late seventeenth and early eighteenth century bishops, under the leadership of archbishop Tenison, were determined to raise the standards of ordination candidates and to have rigorous oral examinations of candidates' competence in Latin, Greek, the New Testament and theology. Woodforde noted beginning to prepare, at home in Castle Cary, for his ordination as a deacon on 20 April 1762: "I began the Epistles of the G Testament to learn and read for

Orders",[4] and intermittently thereafter he mentioned days spent in study for ordination. Thirteen months later, in May 1763, he went to Corpus Christi College, Oxford:

> to M[r] Hewish the Bishop of
> Oxford's Chaplain, before whom I was
> examined for Deacon's orders, and I
> came of very well –
> I was set over in the middle of the
> fifth Chapter of S[t] Paul to the Romans,
> and construed that Chapter right to the End –
> I was quite half an hour examining –
> He asked a good many hard & deep Quaestions,
> I had not one Quaestion that yes, or no,
> would answer . . .
> M[r] Hewish is a very fair Examiner,
> and will see whether a Man be read or not soon –[5]

He was also, of course, expected also to provide references from the Warden of New College, and a priest who had known him for three consecutive years.

After ordination Woodforde gained experience of pastoral care, taking services and preaching as his father's curate initially at Ansford and Castle Cary from 1762 to 1763. He then extended his experience by securing a curacy to a non-resident incumbent at the very small village of Babcary, where he was effectively in charge of the parish. Although he had the use of the parsonage, garden, stables and furniture at Babcary he spent the greater part of every week at home at Castle Cary, within easy reach of Babcary if he were needed in an emergency. He rode over every Saturday evening and stayed at the inn ready for the Sunday morning service. This meant that he had the advantage of his father's support and advice, and was protected from the loneliness and isolation that clergy, even married clergy, felt in remote villages.[6]

There was a close relationship between a priest's pastoral standing and care in a parish, and the way he gained his income. A proportion of the income of a parish came from the glebe, the land with which a benefice had been endowed over the centuries, and a proportion came from tithe, which notionally was a tax of a tenth of the value of the produce of the land. Woodforde at Weston, like most of his

contemporaries, cultivated his glebe land himself, and owned a range of agricultural equipment. Parsonage households were very much like small farms. He employed a man to work the land, growing wheat and barley which he sold at Norwich to corn merchants, and oats and turnips to feed his own livestock and horse and to sell to local farmers. He kept at least one pig at a time, and one cow and chickens, to provide household needs in the way of milk, butter, eggs and tallow fat, and sold the surplus to the shopkeeper in Weston. To a significant extent, the parsonage household was self-sufficient, which of course was a significant element in his income. At busy times of the year he himself helped out on the land. Familiarity with the agricultural customs of a parish was also important for the other element in his income, tithes paid by parishioners. In order to collect tithes, an incumbent needed to be aware of the value of crops, what the yield was, and to have nerve to persuade people to pay it. An incumbent who proved himself incompetent in cultivating his land, like Samuel Wesley, John and Charles's father at Epworth, was likely to be disdained by parishioners, especially men. If he couldn't do what they did, could he be reliable as a pastor and teacher?

Collecting the tithe, which at Weston had for many years been "compounded" for a money payment, was a source of great anxiety to Woodforde. He, like significant numbers of other diary-keeping and letter-writing clergy, found tithe collecting challenging. Woodforde never attempted to increase the levels of tithe contribution from the farmers in Weston, which amounted to between £245 and £297 over a thirty year period, in spite of a massive inflation in the price that grain fetched during the period of his incumbency. His neighbour at Mattishall, John Smith, increased his income from tithe from £157 6s. 6d in 1781 to £576 10s. 9d in 1788-89, without any evidence of alienating his parishioners – for increasing tithe payments might not just offend farmers, they might decide to pass on the increase by reducing the wages of their labourers so that everyone was affected and offended. Woodforde's successor at Weston immediately doubled the tithe income, by adjusting the composition or the basis on which it was paid.[7]

Tithe collection was a tricky matter. Woodforde was anxious even about collecting tithe at historic levels, and his annual tithe dinners

or frolics were never enjoyable occasions. He only invited the better-off and more respectable tithe-payers, and they were segregated between the kitchen and the parlour, and Nancy his niece dined alone in the study or went to stay with the Custances, if they were in residence, at Weston House. These were uneasy social occasions, and illustrate the social divide between the university-educated rector with his books and glass decanters and silver, and even the better-off farmers. They may have been as uncomfortable in the rectory, even though it was probably a house very like theirs, apart from having a study, as he was with them. Drink may have helped their social confidence, even of the better-off farmers in the parlour who in 1782 got through "7 bottles of Port Wine and both my large Bowls of Rum Punch, each of which took 2 Bottles of Rum to make". No wonder "Mr Girling and Forster had a Battle last Night after they left me ..."[8] Perhaps in 1791 Stephen Andrews and Billy Bidewell had drunk too much courage when Woodforde noted that when they arrived they were "rather full". He discovered next day that, although he had thought it had been "all Harmony and Mirth", there had been a fight between Andrews and Bidewell in the kitchen.[9] In 1796 he noted that two women farmers had been present, and all seems to have gone well.[10] Such occasions must have emphasised the social distance between the university-educated urbane incumbent, who was no stranger to drink himself, and even his leading parishioners.

Though his house was very similar to the farm houses in Weston, he was aware of current fashions in interior decoration. He spent the considerable sum of £42 19s on curtains, carpets and beds when he moved in. The "Great Parlour" and the "Study" were papered. He bought mahogany furniture from cabinet makers and auctioneers in Norwich, china and glass and silver in Norwich and London, and a barometer from Pedralio, the manager of Bunns Fields fireworks, who travelled around the country selling them. In the late 1780s and early 1790s he upgraded much of his furniture.[11]

Whether it was his clerical role, his social distance or his own shyness, Woodforde appears to have been socially isolated and rather lonely. There were few people with whom he mixed socially, apart from some other clergy and some gentry, chiefly the Custance's relations and friends. He was lonely when either his

nephew or niece were not living with him, but when Nancy did live with him they got on each other's nerves during long spells without visitors or outings. The state of the roads, especially in winter, meant that travel, especially for women, was difficult. Nancy, according to her own diary, did not mix at all in the village, even by taking walks, but just walked in the rectory garden and felt bereft when the Custances moved to Bath.[12]

When it comes to the duty of the parish, the Canons of 1604 and bishops expected clergy to have two services on a Sunday and prayers on holy days and on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. As his father's curate in Castle Cary and Ansford Woodforde conducted two services and preached twice on Sundays, and had also read Morning Prayer on saints' days. When he moved to Weston he followed the custom of the parish, with one service, alternating between morning and evening, on Sundays, but did not introduce any weekday services apart from on Good Friday, presumably because he doubted whether he would get a congregation on a weekday.

Sunday worship in the eighteenth century was the centre of the public life of a community. Public announcements were made in the context of the Sunday morning service, including very occasional national proclamations, notices of events of local and community significance, including publication of banns of marriage, and baptism of children, marriages and burials, and public reconciliation of disputes by means of public penance took place. In a strongly communal society, not being present at church on a Sunday morning, apart from its religious significance, excluded a person from the focus of community life.Woodforde occasionally gives an impression of numbers of people at church. For example in June 1787 he noted "a great Congregation of Common People at Church" and the following month "There was a very large Congregation at Church this Afternoon". Weather could make a difference to attendance. In January 1787 he noted: "Not above 20 people in all at Church – The Weather being extremely cold and severe with much Snow on the ground and still more following with cutting winds", and on 15 July 1787 he noted: "Very few people at Church being very wet". Throughout the 1790s he frequently noted "very full" or "large" Sunday congregations.[13]

A fascinating feature of eighteenth century life, in relation to timekeeping and starting services on time, is revealed when Woodforde noted on 20 November 1791: "Mr and Mrs Custance did not come to Church till I was reading the first Lesson owing to our clocks being so different. Mine being half an hour faster".[14] In later years, when he was unable to take services himself, Woodforde complained about the unreliability of curates turning up and beginning services before people had arrived, or in a few cases not turning up at all. Morning services were, of course, long, including Morning Prayer, the Litany, the ante Communion, and a sermon, as well as the public notices which would not have been many in Weston.

He also preached every Sunday. It should be remembered that bishops and clergy handbook writers had a high expectation of clergy's sermons, as did lay people. Woodforde, within four months of his arrival in Weston, persuaded the vestry meeting to move the reading desk and pulpit and commented: "I can be heard much better than where it was and easier".[16] As Elizabeth Longmate has shown, he usually preached for about twenty minutes. He drew on published sermons by masters of the art of preaching. Like all his contemporaries Woodforde had a collection of sermons which he preached on a fairly regular basis, carefully noting when he had preached them.[17] He refused to preach ex tempore, when unexpectedly asked to preach when he was visiting Somerset in 1782, and noted that the last time he had visited Somerset he had taken his sermon book and no one had invited him to preach.[18]

Music played a part in Sunday worship. The parish clerk's role in services was to lead the congregation in their responses, and also to lead the singing of metrical psalms between Morning Prayer and the Litany and between the Litany and the ante Communion. In town churches, and sometimes in villages, there were also choirs, usually men, often young men, for it was a way to encourage them to church, but sometimes mixed. They might sing the psalms and the canticles to Anglican chant or, if they were ambitious, would sing the canticles to settings. Clergy were often resentful of the tendency of choirs to take over services and dominate them by singing elaborate music to exclude members of the congregation from singing. Bishops quite often fulminated against choirs in their

visitation charges, and encouraged clergy to forbid choir members to sit together and require them to sit among the congregation so as to lead them in singing and to suppress anthem singing. There were problems with the choir at Castle Cary when Woodforde was curate. There were about thirty members of the choir, one of whom, I suspect, was Woodforde's brother. There had been an attempt to remove the choir from the gallery and so they allegedly sang Psalm 36 in Brady and Tate's metrical version to settle a score with the person responsible. I think the offending words were:

> My crafty foe, with flatt'ring art, his wicked purpose would disguise; ...
> He soothes himself, return'd from sight
> Secure he thinks his teacherous game;
> Till his dark plots, expos'd to light
> Their false contriver brand with shame.

On 17 November 1769 Woodforde became embroiled in this because he had asked them not to sing the responses to the Ten Commandments in the ante-Communion. A month later they tried to get their own back on him by singing Psalm 12 in the Brady and Tate paraphrase. The offending words I suspect were:

> For God who hears the suff'ring poor,
> And their oppression knows,
> Will soon arise, and give them rest
> In spite of all their foes.

At Weston he mildly encouraged the singers. In 1792 when a new group was formed he gave them a guinea towards buying books and noted "A very large Congregation" on the first Sunday they sang in church, but he was rather put out the following spring when, in spite of his generous support, they talked of "giving up".[19]

I suspect that he may also have obeyed the Canons and the Prayer Book rubric to read Morning and Evening Prayer every day, but at home, not in church. Just once does he note attending a daily service: when on holiday in Somerset on Wednesday 20 September 1786 he mentions "Walked into Bruton, and being Prayer Day we went to Church and heard Prayers read". During Mrs Custance's severe illness he once commented: "It is my daily Morning and evening Prayer that she may get over it and that soon".[20] His diary

also shows him making many "arrow prayers", often for parishioners, during the course of days. I suspect that prayer and worship ran as a steady thread through his and other clergy's lives, quite naturally and taken for granted.

Woodforde celebrated Holy Communion the canonical minimum number of times a year, on Christmas Day, Easter Day and in the autumn. I suspect that was not because he did not have a strong sacramental faith but because of the difficulty of persuading people in Norfolk villages to receive communion. His practice was about average for Norfolk villages. People feared receiving communion unworthily, and the Prayer Book heavily emphasises the risks of eternal damnation for those who do receive communion unworthily, for example as a result of not being in love and charity with their neighbours, and often people were out of love and charity with their neighbours. Some of the poorer sort thought that communion was only for the better sort, and thought that they were not socially worthy to receive communion. Reluctance to receive communion may be evidence rather of awe and respect towards the sacrament than lack of faith or devotion. Possible evidence of this is the number of times Woodforde and other clergy noted, as we will see later, that they went to administer communion to the sick and the dying.

Woodforde only once mentions perambulating the parish in procession with the parishioners on Rogation day, which was a very common practice in the eighteenth century, for in the days before maps it annually reminded people of the parish and community boundaries, which were very important elements in their lives. However, he supported the annual feast day at Weston.

He regularly administered baptism, churched women after childbirth, married and buried his parishioners. He, like many of his contemporaries, was resistant to parishioners' demands for private baptism of their babies, and complained in his visitation return to the bishop in 1784: "I only wish that parents could be prevail'd to bring their children (after being privately baptized) to be publicly presented in Church". He was embarrassed by not wishing to offend his kind benefactors, the Custances, by not responding to their

Editor's note – see the table showing percentage of Weston marriages by month in M. Brayne, *Weston Weddings*, Journal XXXI, 1.

request that their children should be baptised at home, but he attracted great animosity when he refused to privately baptise the child of a villager who had not bothered to bring an earlier baby, whom Woodforde had baptised privately, to be publicly presented in church.[21] He regularly churched women after childbirth, and usually returned the offerings of poor women to them. He also regularly married couples, often on a Sunday, but I'm not sure whether he followed the canonical requirement of not marrying people during Lent.* His genuine compassion comes over after an unfortunate wedding he was asked to conduct in 1787:

> Rode to Ringland this Morning and married
> one Robert Astick and Elizabeth Howlett by
> Licence ... the
> Man being in Custody, the Woman being with
> Child by him – The Man was a long time before
> he could be prevailed on to marry her when
> in the Church Yard: and at the Altar behaved
> very unbecoming – It is a cruel thing that any
> Person should be compelled by Law to marry –[22]

He also regularly conducted funerals, often at very short notice, and often expressed sadness at a person's passing, and commended their souls to God's mercy.

In the matter of pastoral care, bishops and the Canons expected clergy to live exemplary lives, which it was suggested was of more value to their parishioners than long sermons exhorting them to good behaviour. Bishops pointed out that living blameless lives, catechising children, visiting the sick, studying Scripture, being regular in prayer, and maintaining their church in good order, established a reciprocal and contractual relationship with their parishioners and encouraged them to pay their tithes and fees. Bishops also encouraged clergy to support each other by regular meetings, to provide an opportunity to compare notes and to learn from one another, as well as to study the Bible and theology together. I suspect that the "Rotation dinner" which Woodforde was included in during his early years at Weston may have had its origins in a clerical society.

There is little evidence that Woodforde regularly visited his parishioners to reprove them of their shortcomings and failings, as

clerical handbooks, usually written by people who became bishops, recommended. I suspect that there was no need for him to visit parishioners to get to know them, for Weston was small enough for everyone to know him and for him to know everyone and to be well informed of their needs. I also suspect that parishioners did not like or expect too much attention from their parish priest.

The Canons strongly commended clergy to visit the sick and the dying, and his diary shows that Woodforde was diligent in this, frequently going to pray with the sick and to administer holy communion to the dying. He describes a touching scene in May 1796 when the brother of one of his maids, a farm servant, was "in a low way". He noted that on a Sunday

> By particular desire of Billy Gunton, & which I promised him on Friday last, as this day to administer the H: Sacrament to him, himself with his Mistress M[rs]Michael Andrews, came to my House about 11. o'clock this Morning and I then had them into the Parlour and there administered the H: Sacrament to them and which I hope will be attended with due effects both to him, M[rs] Andrews & myself – It gave me great pleasure, tho' far from well in doing what I did, as it will ever give me pleasure to do any thing in my power, that may give any satisfaction or ease to any person whatever, especially to the distressed –[23]

He may also have assisted the dying in making their wills, which was an important pastoral responsibility, to prevent conflict and dissension in families over possessions after someone's death.

An important aspect of a priest's pastoral ministry was to distribute charity, in the form of money and goods, to the poor and needy. People expected it, it was part of the contract between a priest and his people, in that the better off paid him tithes and offerings, enabling him to be generous to the poorer sort. If the poorer sort did not get what they regarded as their customary dues, they could get resentful. Woodforde constantly gave small sums of money, without any obvious discrimination between the deserving and the undeserving. He gave small sums to a steady stream of travellers

who called at the rectory. He regularly gave around fifty poor people 6d and gave "largess" to farmers' men at the end of harvest, in 1791, at the rate of 1s per farm for 13 farms. He was hospitable, and as well as giving dinner on Christmas day to seven or eight poor old men he frequently offered the hospitality of meals to the "poorer sort" in the kitchen, as he entertained the "better sort" in the parlour. He also sent meals out to poor sick people. He drew up petitions for collections for the poor when they suffered misfortune, like a cow dying or a cottage being burnt down, and gave generously himself. In the very hard winter of 1795 he contributed the large sum of £10 to the £49 collected for the poor by the churchwardens. He also paid for medical treatment for the poor, and paid doctor's bills.[24]

An area where there is very little evidence of activity by Woodforde is in the teaching of children. The Canons and bishops were firm that clergy ought to ensure that children and servants were taught to know and understand the Prayer Book Catechism, from which they would learn their duty towards God and their neighbours. He was not alone in Norfolk in not being particularly proactive in this, for only about a quarter of Norfolk clergy informed the bishop that they catechised the children in their parishes, which was a much lower proportion than for most of the rest of the country.[25] Woodforde only seems to have taught children the catechism in preparation for confirmation. Nor did he initiate a charity school or Sunday school to teach children to be able to read the Bible and the Prayer Book, and to learn the Catechism.

Much more evidence could have been produced from the diaries, but in general the evidence suggests that Woodforde was a conscientious parish priest by the lights of his day, and met the expectations of the Canons. He was no enthusiast but was discreetly devout and obviously pastorally concerned for his parishioners and attentive to the needs of the poor. He was, I suspect, liked and respected, but there is no obvious evidence that he was particularly close to or involved in the community life of Weston. He seems to have been a detached observer rather than a participant. He was, I suspect, a pretty typical late eighteenth century parish priest, and from that point of view much more interesting for research purposes than a larger than life and eccentric figure. I certainly don't think that he represents the deadness which Augustus Jessop alleged.

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7. For a fuller account of clerical incomes and tithe in particular see Jacob, *The Clerical Profession*, pp 121-149.
8. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 10, pp 82 and 290-9.
9. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 13, pp 90, 317 and 320.
10. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 15, p. 101.
11. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vols 5, 6, 7 passim, and 13, pp 218 and 233-234.
12. *Woodforde Papers and Diaries*, ed. Dorothy Heighes Woodforde, London, 1932, pp 48, 49, 79.
13. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 11, pp 206, 253 and 257.
14. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 13, p. 83.
15. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 11, pp 43-44, Vol. 14, pp 115-138, and Vol. 15, pp 31-37.
16. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 7, p. 87.
17. See Elizabeth Longmate, The Sermons of Parson Woodforde 1740-1803, unpublished University of London PhD thesis, 1999.
18. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 10, p. 61.
19. Ken Baddley, *Trouble in the Gallery,* in *Georgian Psalmody 1: The Gallery Tradition*, ed. Christopher Turner, Corby Glen, 1997, pp 17 and 24, and *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 4, p. 73, Vol. 13, pp 167 and 239.
20. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 11, p. 167 and Vol. 13, p. 98.
21. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 7, p. 168, and Vol. 10, pp 278-279.

22. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 11, p. 205.
23. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 15, p. 36.
24. *Diary of James Woodforde*, Vol. 11, pp 39 and 93, Vol. 12, pp 109, 111, Vol. 13, pp 61-62, 232, Vol. 14, 114ff.
25. Jacob, *The Clerical Profession*, p. 237.

ADMIRAL SQUIRE AND LADY

> 23 March 1799
> Ben brought a Letter for Nancy from her Brother Will[m] of Galhampton, informing her of her Mother's Death &c – and that Admiral Squire & Lady had made them a Visit lately.

At the time of this visit, "Nephew Bill" had known Admiral Matthew Squire for 20 years, since serving under him on the sloop HMS Fortune in 1779, this association being fully detailed in the Winter Journal of 1993.[1] The Squires were a Northamptonshire family, as originally were the Woodfordes, although the Squires came from Peterborough. Matthew Squire's grandfather, Thomas Squire (1681-1759), under a Parliamentary Act, had obtained a licence to make navigable the River Nene from Peterborough to Oundle, sharing the cost with a partner, in consequence of which they were permitted to charge 1s 6d per ton of goods transported. The will of Thomas states, "I also give unto Matthew Squire the Son of my late Son Matthew Squire deceased the Sum of one hundred pounds of lawful money of Great Britain to be paid unto him when he shall have attained to the age of Twenty one years and my Will is that the interest of it at the rate of four Pounds by the year shall in the mean time be applied towards his maintenance."

It would be more accurate to say that this grandson of Thomas was known as Matthew Squire as it would seem that he was baptised at Alverstoke (south of Gosport, on the west side of Portsmouth

Harbour), on 14 September 1744, as Matthew Mooring, son of Martha Mooring, the father not being named. Then, on 9 July 1745, the marriage took place at St Thomas' church, Portsmouth, between Matthew Squire and Mary Mooring. This church is in what is now known as Old Portsmouth, near the harbour entrance and became the cathedral when the Diocese of Portsmouth was formed. It is assumed that Martha and Mary are one and the same person and explains why Sir Angus Fraser was unable to find a baptism for Matthew Squire.[1]

If this Squire father and son assumption is correct, Matthew Squire never knew his father, as on 15 September 1745 a captured Spanish privateer taken into the service of the Royal Navy and placed under the command of Commander Matthew Squire foundered off the Irish coast with the loss of all hands. Commander Squire was 28, his son was a year old and he had been married for just two months.

A memorial tablet to Admiral Matthew Squire in Chelsea Old Church giving his age at the time of his death on 22 January 1800 as 55 helps to confirm his baptism in 1744. The date of his commission as Lieutenant was 20 September 1765, prior to which he was required to have served six years at sea, usually commencing from the age of 12 to 14. Between January 1771 until August 1772 Squire was Master and Commander of a small sloop, HMS Bonetta, following which he was ashore on half pay until January 1775 when he took command, again as Master and Commander, of the sloop HMS Otter. In May 1778 he went into the naval hospital on Long Island NY, during which time the Otter was sent to Florida but was wrecked near Cape Canaveral in August 1778. With his ship lost Squire was permitted to return to England.

The significance of this as far as Nephew Bill was concerned was that on transferring commands captains usually took their "servants" and often their Midshipmen with them, but in the case of Matthew Squire, when he took command of HMS Fortune on 1 June 1779 his staff had either been lost in the wreck of the Otter or were still serving in America. So there would have been vacancies.

From the 1993 Journal one finds that William Woodforde was listed as Captain's servant but, able to read and write, William may well have been the Captain's Clerk, for which the pay for the vessel on which he was serving was £1 10s 0d per 28 day month.[2] That could

be enhanced considerably by prize money. Prize money arose through the Admiralty "buying", that is, taking into service, ships and stores taken as prizes through naval engagements.

> Mr Custance's Servant brought Nancy a long wished
> for Letter from her Brother William. Now stationed
> at New York in North America, very happy and
> very well, has gone through a great deal & weathered it all.
> It was dated from Sandy Hook, New York August 19.
> He has taken many Prizes and is in no want of
> Cash – he is on board the Astrea Frigate with his old Capt.
> Squire, whom I hope will prove a good Friend
> to him. (13/12/1782)

It is the will of Matthew Squire dated 28 February 1790, made aboard HMS Solebay in Plymouth Sound, that allows us to discover the probable identity of the "and Lady" of the 1799 visit, as he bequeathed "all money that I may have in the hands of Messrs Thomas and William Squire of Peterborough" (his cousins who were merchant bankers) "as well as Wages and Sums of Money Lands Tenements Goods Chattels and Estate whatsoever ... to Miss Mary White Spinster living at No. 8 in Queens Buildings Knightsbridge for her care and attention of me for fourteen years past". Mary White was appointed sole Executrix, the will being proved in her favour in March 1800. From the 1993 Journal article we find that Admiral Squire died at Durham Place, Chelsea.

So the friendship between William Woodforde and Matthew Squire continued long after William had given up the sea and made his good marriage. The visit to Galhampton in 1799 is interesting in that it reveals an unmarried naval officer travelling with a Georgian single lady who was not his aunt, sister, cousin or niece. Perhaps he was already experiencing the illness that was to end his life a few months later and Miss White was giving nursing care during the journey. The phrase "her care and attention of me" in Matthew Squire's will might suggest a housekeeper, but it is unlikely that an Admiral would travel with his housekeeper. We shall never know how Mr and Mrs William Woodforde received them; what a pity William's letter to Nancy did not reveal any more about Miss Mary White, but as she was referred to as "Lady", it seems highly probable that she was invited into the parlour rather than asked to take tea with the maids.

REFERENCES

1. Sir Angus Fraser, *Nephew Bill – Sailor and Soldier*, Journal Vol. XXVI, No. 4, Winter 1993.
2. N. A. M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean, A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815*, Allen Lane, 2004.

Information provided by naval historian Mr Bob Brooks of Maine, USA in private communications is most gratefully acknowledged.

MRS ARISOY – A SHORT PROGRESS REPORT

Following the publication of my article about our former member and benefactress Mrs Arisoy [1,2] there have been several new developments and I shall summarise them in these notes. First, I should mention that our President, George Bunting, recalled that a photograph of Mrs Arisoy had been taken at the 'Black Boys' in Aylsham during our lunch there at the Frolic of 1983. As this is the best photograph we have of Mrs Arisoy it is reproduced in this issue of the Journal. In the report describing this Frolic [3] it was mentioned that "it was particularly good to see our American member, Mrs Arisoy, who had come so far to join the Gathering, and brought with her a friend, Mrs Lumb"; does anyone recall anything about Mrs Lumb? She also was probably an American.[4]

New Contacts

Much to my surprise I was contacted by two members of our Society who have friends living in the Millbrook area of Dutchess County, New York State, where Mrs Arisoy lived in the later years of her life. These new contacts replied enthusiastically to my requests for further information, but sadly very little has been gathered. The one snippet of 'local gossip' is that Mrs Jane Nuhn, after the death of her first husband in 1969, went on a tour of Turkey, "fell in love with Turkey and with the tour guide, and married him!" Thus, in 1973, she became 'Mrs Arisoy' as explained in my original article.

Mrs Arisoy (second from left), Col. Knight and Others at the Black Boys, Aylsham

I have also recently corresponded with Noel de Cordova of Millbrook who is a Trustee of the Jane W. Nuhn Charitable Trust and was one of the solicitors who managed the details of Jane's probate. Sadly, it appears that the solicitors in Poughkeepsie have recently moved office and in the process 'all items regarding Jane Nuhn's estate are lost'. This is very disappointing as I had hoped that among her written instructions there may have been an explanation for her generous bequest to our Society.

Humphrey Fitter

In June of this year I published a short note in *Family Tree Magazine* asking if anyone could identify the family of Mary Worrall and her eight children who emigrated to America in 1824.[5] To my great surprise I was contacted by Anne Barber who described

how her great-great-grandfather, Humphrey Fitter, had visited the Worrall family in Poughkeepsie in 1888. *The Curious Story of Humphrey Fitter* appears elsewhere in this Journal and describes how it led to the discovery that the Worrall family originated from the village of Tanworth in Warwickshire. However, we still have several missing pieces of information, in particular the marriage of William Worrall and Mary and the baptisms of their eight children who left England in 1824. One of them, Benjamin Worrall, would become the grandfather of Jane Worrall, later known to us as Mrs Arisoy; the search for these events continues.

Daughters of the American Revolution

In my original article I described how in 1941 'Mrs George Worrall and her daughter Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn [who would later become Mrs Arisoy] will be hostess at tea' at a meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Poughkeepsie.[6] The Daughters of the American Revolution is a lineage-based membership organization open to women who can prove their lineal descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving United States independence.[7] I was given a note from Katharine Solomon, the Editor of our Newsletter, who was firmly of the opinion that the involvement of Mrs Worrall and her daughter in this event would not have been permitted unless they also were members of this organisation. She was subsequently proved correct. An item found at the Dutchess County Historical Society proved to be the lineage chart for Mrs George Worrall, formerly Mary Lake.[8] This showed that she was a direct descendant of Peter Lake (1762-1846) who the British would describe as a 'rebel' but whom the Americans regard as one of their 'patriots'. Peter Lake served in Captain Livingstone's Company, Colonel DuBois' Regiment, of the New York Line during the War of Independence of 1775-1783 and was granted a pension for his service. Subsequently I was pleased to find a report in the local paper of a meeting of the Mahwenawasigh Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, at the Clinton House, Poughkeepsie, at which Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn was included in a list of new members of the Chapter.[9] This is an interesting story but adds little to our quest for information about Mrs Arisoy except to show that her maternal ancestry was rooted in America back to this period.

Newspaper Articles: Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn

After her first marriage to Clifford Nuhn in 1925, Jane was known as Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn and under this name she features prominently in the Poughkeepsie newspapers. These may be found in a delightful website on the internet which can be searched by key words.[10] A search for the name 'Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn' produces no fewer than 273 entries and if they were all to be summarised here they would probably fill this Journal. She was clearly very much involved in the 'war effort' and she appears as President, Chairman, Vice Chairman or member of countless organisations in Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County; I list a selection in order just to provide examples: the Red Cross Volunteers, the Civilian Defense Volunteers, the British War Relief Society, Poughkeepsie National Defense Council, Dutchess County Welfare Council, the Girl Guides, Dutchess County League of Planned Parenthood, Dutchess County Horticultural Society, the Poughkeepsie Junior League, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Remarkably, Jane appears to have owned dog kennels and was interviewed on the local radio about her experiences in judging at dog shows – always, it seems, the 'bull terrier' class. In 1936 we learn 'that Mrs Nuhn who is recognised as an expert on bull terriers is the owner of the Far Cry Kennels.' It is difficult to imagine how she found time to fulfil all these commitments and she must have had extraordinary energy. It may be that, married to a fairly wealthy husband, and with no children of her own, she was free to participate in these activities; she was clearly a remarkable lady. In view of all her experience, I shudder to think what impact she would have made had she ever become a member of the Parson Woodforde Society Committee.

The Worrall Family of Warwickshire and Poughkeepsie

In the course of my searches for information about Jane Worrall, who later became Mrs Jane W. Nuhn (otherwise Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn) and who later remarried to become Mrs Arisoy, I have collected a great deal of information about the Worrall family which I would be happy to share with others who may be interested, but which would be out of place in this Journal. In addition, Gilbert

Leach, my family history enthusiast who lives in Dutchess County, New York State, has informed me that he may attempt to write a detailed history of this family. If anything of interest emerges from his further researches I will of course report the details in our Journal.

Conclusion

Sadly, after all my efforts to learn more about Mrs Arisoy we still don't know *why* she was so supportive of our Society. She and her first husband became members of the Society in 1968, the year in which it was founded and she crossed the Atlantic three times in order to attend our Frolics. She made generous donations to the Society while a member and made a bequest to the Society of $50,000 in her will dated 1986; although she was a wealthy lady, previously involved with many other organisations, this was the only bequest in her will of this kind. The reason for her interest does not seem to be based on any family connection with Norfolk; her father's family came from Warwickshire and her mother's family can be traced back to the mid-18th century in America. I hope we may be able to learn more, but for the moment this mystery remains unsolved.

Errata

Those who may be particularly interested in the story of Mrs Arisoy may like to note the following errors which invaded my original article and for which I apologise:

On page 7: the photograph of 1970 should have been annotated 'Mrs Nuhn' not 'Mrs Arisoy' as she remarried to become Mrs Arisoy in 1973.

On page 14: the will of Mrs Arisoy was dated in the year 1986, not 1987.

On page 18: in Note 18 the year should have been 1973, not 1983.

On page 18: in Note 23 the name of the ship was the 'William Byrnes', not 'William Baynes'.

Notes and References

1. Journal Vol. XLIII, No. 1, p. 4.
2. Jane Worrall became Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn after her first marriage in 1925. After the death of her first husband in 1969 she used the name Mrs Jane W. Nuhn. After her second marriage in 1973 she became Mrs Arisoy.
3. Journal Vol. XVI, No. 2, p. 23.
4. Mrs Lumb may have been Mrs James L. Lumb (formerly Florence Josephine Pratt) who can be found in newspaper reports attending the same meetings and committees as Mrs Clifford J. Nuhn in the Poughkeepsie area.

5. *Family Tree Magazine*, June 2010, p. 80.
6. Journal Vol. XLIII, No. 1, p. 11.
7. See website www.dar.com, and notes in Wikipedia.
8. I am grateful to Gilbert Leach of the Dutchess County Family History Society for sending me this information.
9. Poughkeepsie Eagle News, 13 May 1941.
10. See website www.fultonhistory.com

THE CURIOUS STORY OF HUMPHREY FITTER

On 5 November 1888 Humphrey Fitter stepped ashore from the Cunard steamship *Umbria* and found himself in the strange surroundings of the New York docks.[1] He was an Englishman aged 59, a carpenter by trade, and he had travelled to America to visit his uncle and aunt. It seems a strange venture for him to have undertaken, as he was a widower and he had left his younger children in the care of their elder siblings. He and his family lived in Tanworth, Warwickshire, where he and his children were born.[2] It is clear that Humphrey Fitter was travelling with a younger companion, Samuel Reader, also from Tanworth, but his is a quite separate story.[3]

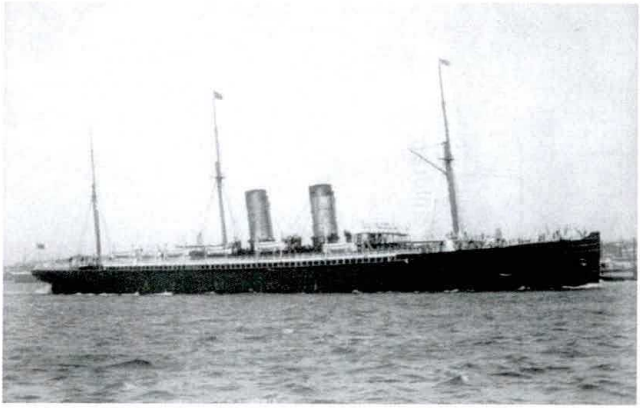
Humphrey's uncle and aunt lived in Poughkeepsie about 75 miles north of New York and three days after his arrival he wrote his first letter home to his daughter. He describes how the *Umbria* had a very rough passage across the Atlantic:

> but I am thankful to say it made no difference to me, as I never felt the least sick, although some nights it nearly threw us out of our bunks only for the board that kept us in …

On his arrival in Poughkeepsie he needed to seek directions to his uncle's home, he –

> … went to Christ Church and saw the minister there … and he found by his book that my Aunt was buried on the 20th June and he knew Uncle well and gave us instructions for finding him.

We learn from his letters that his uncle had the surname Worrall,



The Cunard steamship Umbria in which Humphrey Fitter sailed for America

and was a farmer aged 78. The only person who fits this description to be found in the 1880 Federal census was a Thomas Worrall, a farmer, then aged 70, living with his wife Sarah, aged 69, at Poughkeepsie; the census records indicate that they were both born in England.

This is virtually all we know about Humphrey's visit except that he apparently stayed in Poughkeepsie for about a year before returning home. He mentioned in a letter that he intended

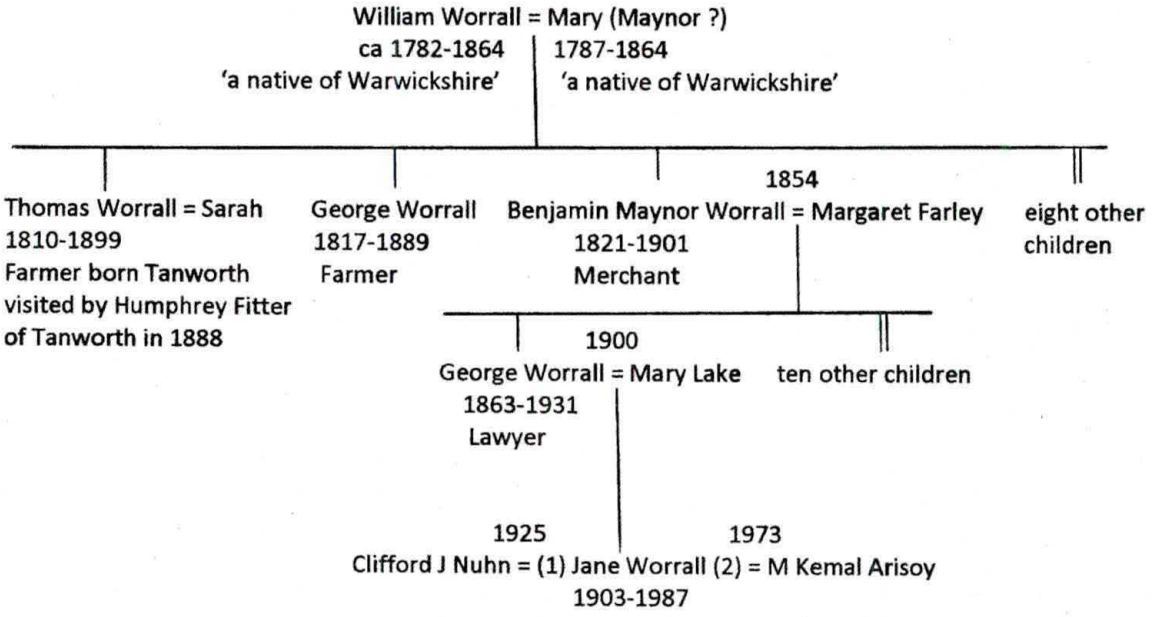
> to buy some tools and try to get work in Poughkeepsie the wages for joiners is from 2 dollars to 2½ per day which would be about 8s & 6d to 10s.

In a letter dated February 1889 he mentioned that his uncle had a brother, George Worrall.

> George is much worse and they do not expect him to recover but they are a very odd curious family and very unsociable with each other.

George Worrall, brother of Thomas, died 26 July 1889, and is buried in the family plot at Poughkeepsie.[4]

Humphrey's uncle Thomas Worrall and aunt Sarah are to be found in all the census records for Poughkeepsie from 1850 to 1880 and it appears that they had no children. Thomas Worrall died in 1899[4] and a search in Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery was rewarded with the discovery of his memorial stone erected adjacent to his grave in the Worrall family plot. This stone records: 'THOMAS WORRALL



Skeleton Family Tree for part of the Worrall family of Warwickshire and Poughkeepsie

Born Tanworth Warwickshire England Dec 5 1810', but with no date of death. So, Thomas Worrall came from the same village in Warwickshire as his visitor Humphrey Fitter. This was an exciting find. On the reverse side of this same memorial stone is the inscription: 'SARAH Wife of Thos Worrall born Tamworth [sic] Warwickshire England Aug 24 1809 died June 16 1888'. This latter date fits very well with the date of her burial on 20 June reported to Humphrey by the minister. Sarah's death was noted in the *Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier* of 17 June: 'Worrall – in the Town of Poughkeepsie, Sarah, wife of Thomas'.[5]

So, how exactly was Humphrey Fitter related to his uncle Thomas and his aunt Sarah? Further searches showed that Humphrey's mother had a sister Sarah (Barratt) who was baptised at Tanworth 9 January 1810, so it appears that Sarah Worrall was Humphrey's blood relative, "my Aunt".[6] The spelling of Tamworth on her memorial stone must have been in error for Tanworth.

My patient reader will be excused for wondering why this story invades the pages of our Journal. But all will become clear if I explain, first, that in the same family plot at Poughkeepsie are to be found the graves of the parents of Thomas Worrall – William and Mary Worrall who both died in 1864; their two headstones stand side by side and are both inscribed 'a native of Warwickshire'. Secondly I must explain that William and Mary were the great-grandparents of Jane Worrall – who in later life would become Mrs Jane W. Nuhn and after the death of her first husband, remarried to become 'Mrs Arisoy'. Mrs Arisoy of course was a member of our Society and our important benefactress.[7]

In my article about Mrs Arisoy it was noted that her great-grandmother Mary Worrall had emigrated to America in 1824 [8] with her eight children, including her sons Thomas Worrall and George Worrall. These would appear to be the Thomas Worrall and George Worrall mentioned in the letters of Humphrey Fitter.

Another son of William and Mary Worrall was Benjamin, who would become the grandfather of Jane Worrall, later known as Mrs Arisoy. On his headstone and in the obituaries for two of his own children, Benjamin is named as Benjamin Maynor Worrall and I have wondered if Maynor was the maiden name of Benjamin's mother Mary.[9] I can find only one Mary Mayner [sic] who was

baptised 27 December 1787, the daughter of Joseph and Sarah – at Tanworth, Warwickshire. The father Joseph Maynor [sic] appears in the 1841 census, aged 80, living at Tanworth. He was probably the Joseph Maynor, victualler at the Red Lion at Tanworth in 1820.[10] This is yet another line of enquiry which leads to Tanworth.

From all the above evidence I suggest that the Worrall family, ancestors of our Mrs Arisoy, came from Tanworth, Warwickshire.[11] Humphrey Fitter's letters provide us with a previous insight to the past and provided me with the starting point for the subsequent searches described above. His uncle Thomas Worrall was the brother of Benjamin Worrall, grandfather of Jane Worrall. My only disappointment is to find that the Worrall family came from Warwickshire, and not, as some have suggested, from some corner of Woodforde's Norfolk.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Ann Barber who read my plea for help concerning the origins of the Worrall family, published in *Family Tree Magazine* [12] and supplied me with the information contained in the letters of her great-great-grandfather Humphrey Fitter. I am also grateful to Gilbert Leach who explored Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery on my behalf and found and recorded the memorial inscriptions and to his wife Julie who photographed the headstones for me.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. New York Passenger Lists 1820-1957.
2. Humphrey Fitter was baptised 23 August 1829 at Tanworth, the son of George Fitter and Hannah (Barratt).
3. Samuel Reader was a butcher from Tanworth born in 1866. He appears to have settled in Dutchess County, New York State, and was married there. When Humphrey Fitter returned to England he lodged with Sarah Reader, Samuel's mother.
4. Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery burial records.
5. Various searches have been made to try to discover Sarah's maiden name, but Sarah and Thomas did not have obituaries placed in the local newspaper and they did not make wills. Thomas Worrall's probate was managed by his brother Benjamin and his nephew George.
6. The marriage of Thomas Worrall and Sarah Barratt has not yet been found; it probably took place in America. A Sarah Barrett [sic], aged 23, arrived in New York from London on 1 July 1833 but we cannot be certain that this is the right lady.

7. Journal XLIII, No. 1, p. 4.
8. Journal XLIII, No. 1., p. 18, Note 23.
9. Mary Worrall, the wife of William, died in 1864 aged 76 and was therefore born in 1787 or 1788. Her obituary and her headstone describe her as 'a native of Warwickshire'.
10. Warwickshire Victuallers Database Record, Document Reference QS36/16.
11. It is important to note that I have not as yet been able to find the marriage of William Worrall and Mary, or the baptisms of their eight children born in England.
12. *Family Tree Magazine*, June 2010, p. 80.

FROLIC REPORT – NORFOLK, 26 – 28 JUNE 2010

Illustrations by Mary Price

The 2010 Annual Meeting and Frolic was held between Saturday 26 and Monday 28 June. It had been dry for weeks and the weather remained gloriously sunny. Many old friends were re-united at the George Hotel, Newmarket Road, Norwich, and a pleasing number of first-timers were warmly welcomed.

After dinner came the AGM at which the Chairman, Martin Brayne, reported hopeful news with regard to the proposal to erect a memorial to Woodforde at New College. He also announced that Dr Heather Pearson had been invited to revise Volume X of the Diary and that she has agreed to do so. Mr Robert Bates, who has a number of Diary characters in his family tree, has been co-opted on to the Committee. In the absence of Dr David Case, David Williams read the Treasurer's report which indicated that, thanks to the timely increase in the subscription in 2009, the Society continues to operate on a firm financial footing. Only a continued gradual decrease in the size of membership remains a cause for concern.

Sunday morning saw us smoothly transported about the Wensum parishes, thanks to a finely tuned logistical operation devised by Ann and David Williams. We visited St Peter's, Ringland, and St Mary's, Great Witchingham, where their particular architectural, historical and Woodfordean connections were explained to us. Of

especial interest were the parish registers which Selwyn Tillett had most thoughtfully obtained for us from the Norfolk Record Office. Thus at Ringland we were able to see the entry for the marriage – "very disagreeable to me" – between Robert Astick and Elizabeth Howlett. The wonderful hammerbeam roof at Ringland and the Seven Sacrament font at Great Witchingham, with its fine coloured panels, were much admired. We were most grateful to the ladies at the two churches who provided us with coffee.

From these villages we converged on the Old Rectory, Weston Longville, where we were welcomed by Mrs Alison Pearson, her daughter Anna, son-in-law Hugo Stevenson and Hugo's father Barrie. There, in the very welcome shade of a most elegant marquee, we enjoyed a splendid lunch before taking a walk around Woodforde's garden – as Nancy had done so many times, so many years ago – and viewed 'my Great Pond', the ice-house and, thanks to the kindness of Mrs Pearson's neighbours, Woodforde's barn. This was all a great privilege, allowing us to tread what for us was sacred ground.

Great Witchingham porch

Great Witchingham font

From the Old Rectory we made our way to All Saints' Church for a concert of Musick for the Parson to celebrate his 270th birthday. Of all the very many wonderful times we have had at Frolics down the years this was surely a highlight. The programme, consisting entirely of music which Woodforde would have heard, was splendidly performed by vocalists and instrumentalists of the Play-House Musick under their director Michael Withers. Included was a sonata by the diarist's spinet teacher Philip Hayes and how delighted he would have been, as we were, at the keyboard virtuosity of his successor Selwyn Tillett and how surprised to hear extracts from his own diary read by Barrie Stevenson. My particular favourite, perhaps because the roof at Ringland was so fresh in the memory, was tenor Paul Norcross-King's rendition of 'Waft her, angels' from Handel's *Jephthah*. But what was there not to like in this absolutely wonderful concert?

Nor was this all. We were able to toast James on his birthday in Woodforde Ale, eat birthday cake and view the parish registers, including the famous page which the Parson had painted to mark Mr Custance's gift.

Back at the George Hotel, the formal dinner was followed by a most stimulating address delivered by Society member and Archdeacon

of Charing Cross, the Venerable Dr Bill Jacob. Dr Jacob, the author of *The Clerical Profession in the Long Eighteen Century, 1680-1840* (reviewed by Elizabeth Longmate in Journal XXXX, 4), took as his subject 'Parson Woodforde – a Priest in his Parish'. He found Woodforde to be a typical Anglican priest of his time – not an enthusiast but 'discreetly devout' – and conscientious by the standards of the day which were a good deal higher than Victorian commentators have often led us to believe. There is much food for thought in Dr Jacob's paper which will be found elsewhere in this Journal.

On the Monday morning members made their way to St Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich Market Place where we were welcomed by Mrs Barbara Miller and her team of Blue Badge Guides. Mrs Miller gave us an excellent introduction to St Peter's before we were conducted about the city centre by the very well-informed guides. Norwich may no longer be 'the finest city in England by far' but it still has a great deal of interest.

All that remained was for us to return to the hotel for lunch where Mr Brayne proclaimed Katharine Solomon the winner of the Frolic Quiz. Once more we owed a great debt of gratitude to Ann (and David) Williams who co-ordinated the superb arrangements made for us by Alison Pearson, Anna Stevenson and Cassie and Selwyn Tillett. To them all – a big Thank You for a truly memorable Frolic.

Ringland font

FROLIC 2010, NORFOLK – QUIZ

1. In what year was James Woodforde's house replaced by the present 'Old Rectory' at Weston Longville?
2. Who lived in Church Farmhouse at Weston?
3. At the 'Beating of Bounds' ceremony in Weston, from where did the party start?
4. What is depicted on the Weston village sign?
5. Who was James Woodforde's curate when he first took up the living at Weston?
6. When did James Woodforde first sleep in Weston rectory?
7. When did he drain his 'Great Pond'?
8. Who was Rector of Weston before James Woodforde?
9. On what date, in the Diary, does Woodforde first mention the building of Weston House?
10. In what year did the Custance family actually move into their new home?
11. In which year did Mr Custance present the new Register to Weston Church?
12. Who were Woodforde's last two maids at Weston Rectory?
13. Who was Rector at Ringland for most of the time Woodforde was at Weston?
14. Why did James Woodforde feel unhappy about the marriage he conducted at Ringland on 25 January 1787?
15. Which church in Norwich has a roof of similar construction to that of Ringland Church?
16. Where did Woodforde first meet Henry Bathurst?
17. What task, in addition to church services, did Woodforde regularly undertake for Dr Bathurst?
18. Which notable Norfolk family is commemorated by memorial features in both Ringland and Gt Witchingham churches?
19. A performance of which oratorio did James Woodforde attend in St Peter Mancroft Church in September 1788?
20. Which word did Woodforde use to describe 'The Messiah', of which he was to hear the principal parts in St Peter Mancroft in 1790?

THE REVD. JOHN CUSTANCE

John Custance was born on Sunday 6 May 1787 and privately baptised at Weston House by James Woodforde five days later. On 23 October he made his first visit to the Parsonage, in the arms of his nurse Hetty, and grew up to become the Diarist's favourite among the Custance children. John survived whooping cough and inoculation against smallpox and in May 1792 his fifth birthday was celebrated by a Frolic at Weston House, to which the Parsonage servants were invited.

By this time Mrs Custance had borne three further children, and Neville who "... was always very ill", had died. "He was only 12 Weeks and 2 Days old." Another Neville was born at the end of February 1790 and went on to reach the age of 90. Charlotte was born at Christmas 1791. This event brought on Mrs Custance's illness and it was not until the end of May that there were "Bells ringing, Guns firing etc. on Account of Mrs Custance coming down Stairs for the first time". Just over four months later the Custance family set off for Bath and the Diarist and Nancy saw nothing of the children for four and a half years except as they passed through Bath on their visits to the Woodforde family in Somerset.

The Custance family arrived back at Weston House on 13 June 1797 and found Woodforde ill and Nancy being supported by her brother William and uncle John Woodforde and his wife. The happy days of visiting and dining at Weston House were over for the Parson and news of the family and their activities recorded in the diary came from the frequent visits of them all. John often called with his older sisters Frances and Emily and, before setting off to the Revd Mr Hunter's school at North Walsham – with brother Neville in tow – John called to see the Diarist who regarded him as "a nice steady young Man and fond of Books" and thought that "he promises to be something clever".

John was certainly a studious boy and it was not long before his father, no doubt feeling that he was more suited to life at university and the church than service in the militia, set him on that course. In August 1799, by himself, he called at the Parsonage and Woodforde remarked "... drank Tea with us in the Evening. He is going to School to Morrow near St Albans in Hertfordshire – He kept up his

Spirits very well considering." And it was at his new school with Edward Marsham that the connection between the two families strengthened. Home for Christmas holiday in December 1800 John borrowed Woodforde's "little cart" so that he could "... go to Mr Marshams to Morrow at Stratton Strawless". In June 1801, with Nancy and Mr Maynard dining at Weston House "Mr Marshams Children of Stratton there also" and with a note of two further visits to the Parsonage, John Custance's connection with the Diary ends.

The Squire had been admitted to Trinity Hall, Cambridge in 1765 where he obtained a law degree. John followed his father to Trinity Hall and obtained his law degree in 1816.[1] He was ordained Deacon in 1820 and Priest in 1821 at Norwich. His father died suddenly the following year. John was only briefly mentioned in his father's will, having no doubt received his portion during his education. But in 1828 he received £1,200 under the will of his aunt, Sarah Custance, together with a one-third share of the £2,000 destined for his uncle, Press, who had died earlier that year.

Frances Anne Custance married Edward Marsham's brother Robert at All Saints, Weston on 26 June 1804 and they lived in the newly-completed Hall at Stratton Strawless. Robert was patron of the small, once-thatched church of St Peter, Brampton, in the Bure Valley, close to Aylsham, and when in 1828 the living fell vacant John was installed as Rector. The Parsonage had been destroyed by fire and John lived in Marsham Hall, but it would seem, by the terms of his mother's will, that he spent a great deal of time with her at nearby Catton where he had "his own room".

Frances and Robert raised a large family and in 1830 their daughter Agnes Sophia married Henry Durrant, the grandson of Squire Custance's sister Susanna. The next year the Revd John Custance, Rector of Brampton, had the sad task of conducting the burial service of Agnes, his niece, and her baby son William.

In April 1836 the *Norwich Chronicle* carried a notice of the death of his mother "in the 79th year of her age". John would have collected his share of his mother's possessions – silver and plated tableware, furniture and bedding – and settled down to a solitary life in Marsham Hall. No doubt his studious and bookish nature came to his aid, as he was Rector of a parish rich in Roman finds which had attracted the attention of Sir Thomas Browne, the seventeenth

century doctor and writer. St Peter's, Brampton, was noted for having a shelf above the pulpit on which rested a broken Roman burial urn and maybe it was in John's mind that this could be the same which prompted Sir Thomas to write "Urne Burrials". But it appears that inspiration came from an urn unearthed at Old Walsingham in Norfolk, although Sir Thomas did write a note on the Brampton urns.[2] A 2005 note on St Peter's, Brampton, takes us from the water meadows of the Bure across a sagging footbridge, up a track through a farmyard and from a narrow road into a "heartily Victorianised church with a tiled floor and pitch-pine benching", but retaining fine brasses to the Brampton family both in the floor and on the walls.

In 1840 John moved a few miles across country to the valuable and prestigious living of Blickling, serving a church and living in a rectory by the gates of Blickling Hall. He was appointed Chaplain to the Dowager Lady Suffield and rector of Blickling with Erpingham. Lady Catherine Hans Suffield, born a Hobart of Blickling, had married William Asheton Harbord, Lord Suffield, who died in 1821. Having no children of her own she was a benefactor to children and education and her servants' hall is said to have had a library of "religious books, books of legends and biographies of exemplary people."[3] However, the church of St Andrew had to be almost completely rebuilt after her death, its completion coming several years after the death of the Revd John Custance in 1868.

To discover something of John's life in Blickling has been difficult. Mrs Hill in her 1989 Supplement to the Journal, *The Custances and their Family Circle*, says that he is mentioned in the diaries of his friend William Repton, a solicitor of Aylsham. Many interesting articles could be penned on the lives of the Repton family from Humphrey, the improver of the landscape surrounding country houses, his son John Adey who assisted him and William who dealt with all the legal requirements of people of wealth and property in the market town of Aylsham and nearby Blickling.

Only two tattered volumes of William's diaries are lodged in the Norfolk Record Office and so many of the pages have become stuck together that it is possible to read only a small portion. A little of William Repton's activities in Norwich and London can be discovered but nothing of John Custance. William made use of the

new railway, travelling by coach and rail to London. Aylsham boasted two railway stations, nearly a mile apart, to Norwich and the Norfolk coast. He made use of the Norwich Royal Hotel which was in the Market Place where once the Angel, known to Woodforde, stood. The circus with "wild beasts" visited Aylsham and cricket matches were held at Blickling. Cromer on the coast was becoming a local health resort. Only meticulously-kept parish records and census returns tell us anything about the Revd John Custance.

The Ecclesiastical Census taken in 1851 shows information about St Andrews, Blickling, given by Revd John Custance, Rector:

Tithe	£404
Sittings	Free 156
	Other 167
Average attendance	Morning 30-50
	Afternoon 120-150
Sunday Scholars	26 Adults

Weather and sickness was the cause of a smaller congregation than usual on Sunday 30 March. The larger Portion of Children go to Oulton, a neighbouring parish, where a fine school was built by the late Lady Suffield.

A new miles to the southwest the Revd John Conyngham recorded that the church of All Saints, Weston Longville had a total of 333 sittings with an average attendance of

Morning 60. Afternoon 100. Sunday Scholars 35.[4]

The national census for Blickling records under Church Hill

John Custance	um	63	Rector of Blickling
Thomas Walpole	m		Indoor Servant
Ellen E. Walpole	m	35	Wife of T. Walpole
Alfred Walpole			Visitor
Peter Walpole			Visitor
Arthur Walpole		5	Visitor
Eliza West	um		Cook
Charlotte West	um		Housemaid
Mary Ann Moneyment		16	Housemaid
Thomas Woods	um		Groom

It is difficult to explain the presence of Thomas Walpole "indoor

servant" as the owner of nearby Wolterton Hall was the Rt Hon Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford and Baron Walpole of Walpole and Wolterton. Before the taking of the 1861 census Thomas Walpole was dead and on 21 February that year the Revd John Custance conducted his last burial service, as recorded in the parish records of Blickling.

The 1861 census for the Parsonage, Blickling shows:[5]

John Custance,	Head	um	73	Rector of Blickling and Erpingham
Ellen E. Walpole	Boarder	w	45	Fundholder
Norman Walpole	"	um	17	Scholar
Arthur Walpole	"		15	"
William J. Thrift	"	m	24	Teacher of Mathematics
Julia Thrift	"	m	25	Wife of Wm. J. Thrift
Samuel Daniels	Servant	um	31	Groom
Mary Ann Moneyment	"	um	26	Cook
Mary Savage	"	um	16	House domestic
Sarah Ducker	"		15	Kitchen domestic

This does nothing to explain the connection between Wolberton Hall, Blickling Rectory and the Walpole family but it seems likely that John Custance was providing accommodation and educational facilities for the family. But the description of Thomas Walpole as "indoor servant" in 1851 is difficult to explain.

By this time John Custance was employing two curates, one to care for his other parish of Erpingham and the Revd Henry Earle Bulwer – of the nearby Heydon family – to assist him in Blickling. However, he was carrying out some duties at St Andrews and baptismal entry 494 of August 1860 shows that he was feeling his age:

> Butler. Amelia daughter of ~~Right~~ Rice. Labourer. and ~~Sarah Ann~~ Mary. Signed J. Custance. Rector
> (I am deaf and mistook.)

On 28 April 1868 Revd George Fish, Rector of Ingworth, Conducted the burial service of John Custance, James Woodforde's "nice steady young Man" who promised to be "something clever". The only members of his family known to the Diarist, still living, were the widowed Frances Anne Marsham and Neville Custance.

Together with Hambleton Francis Custance (son of Hambleton Thomas Custance) and William Neville Custance (eldest son of Neville Custance) they were called upon, a year later, to deal with Letters of Administration of all and singular the personal Estate and Effects of The Reverend John Custance who had died without making a will but in debt to Alexander Robert Chamberlin of the City of Norwich, Wholesale Draper and Silk Mercer.

NOTES

1. In Cantabridgensis Alumni his degree is given as LL.B. In Crockfords it is shown as B.C.L.
2. When visiting the church of St Peter Mancroft at the end of our Norwich Frolic, members met in the Haymarket. There sits Sir Thomas Browne, surveying a broken burial urn and gazing out to where his Norwich house once stood. Below his figure are scattered marble seats, a massive brain and an eye, all inscribed with titles of his writing: *Vulgar Errors, Urne Burrials, Amphibium, Brampton Urns, Memorabilia, Religio Medici, Garden of Cyrus, Mimiesis, Hidriotaphia, Quincunce*. John, maybe, had read them all!
3. Susanna Wade Martins, *A History of Norfolk*.
4. 1810/303-316.
5. 1205/91-98.

BOOK REVIEW

Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (Yale University Press, 2009). 383 pp., 102 illus., £18.99; from 30 Sept 2010, £10.99 pbk.

Readers of James Woodforde's diary and the Society's Journal will be delighted with Amanda Vickery's latest book. Like her acclaimed *Gentleman's Daughter* (1998), it is attractively written, moderately priced and, as might be anticipated from her publisher, well illustrated, principally with a well-chosen selection of eighteenth century prints. It is also based, as was her earlier success, on extensive primary research. At its heart is a detailed discussion of the meaning of home for Georgian society, its domesticity and its growing passion for an ordered sociability.

Of course, it only opens up for us the households of the upper classes and of the middling sort. Those of the poor are not excluded from Professor Vickery's account, but inevitably the sixty sets of diaries, letters and accounts she has so imaginatively mined from the treasures of Record Offices across England were almost entirely compiled by members of the upper and professional classes. As she admits, middling and genteel homes in London and the provinces hold centre stage in the book. Yet her sources are vivid and varied. They range from the familiar and printed such as Anthony Trollope's *Autobiography* and the diary of Sylas Neville to the little known depressive diaries of the Nottinghamshire spinster and gentlewoman, Gertrude Savile and the account books of the Forths, Elizabeth, a York wholesale grocer's daughter and John, her husband, chaplain to the Earl of Carlisle at Castle Howard.

From these sources the discussion of the Georgian home is wide ranging and novel. She summarises her approach as "a claim to an uncharted space *between* architectural history, family and gender history and economic history." The result of the exploration of this territory is social history at its best.

The introduction firmly roots Professor Vickery's discussion of the Georgian home in the historical scholarship of the last thirty years on the family, conspicuous consumption, politeness and sociability. Then, with her rich source material, she opens up the subject from several angles: the meaning of privacy with many examples taken

from Old Bailey cases; setting up home; constructing distinctive male and female consumption patterns by using three remarkable sets of account books where husband and wife carefully entered a separate record of their spending; a fascinating chapter on taste especially related to the growing fashion for wallpaper in the eighteenth century house; the problems of housekeeping for bachelors, spinsters and widowers in a society in which the married state was highly exalted; the significance of what women made for the home and, finally, an exploration of five key commodities to establish male and female ownership of them and the way in which a distinct female demand developed. But on the last point the author sensibly argues that with the onset of matrimony both parties were involved in the establishment of their home. They simply possessed different roles and occupied different spheres in the household.

Undoubtedly, *Behind Closed Doors* provides rich food for thought for devotees of Parson Woodforde's diary. At first sight my recommendation might seem a little odd since, beyond two fleeting references, the Parson fails to appear in the book. Did the author find the diary in the Society's complete version too extensive to summarise effectively, its subject a little too well known? But Society members need not be disappointed for *Behind Closed Doors* throughout provides a wonderful context from which to approach the diary. For home meant a great deal to the diarist. A quiet man, of conservative tastes and opinions, to whom politics, local administration, even religion, beyond formal observation, were not matters to which he warmed. Home and the peaceful domesticity of rural life, whether in the bosom of his family in Somerset or as a well-to-do householder in Norfolk, were central to his very existence.

The second chapter of *Behind Closed Doors* is pivotal in its illumination of Woodforde's diary. In it Professor Vickery looks at the living arrangements of half a dozen young bachelors, after a vivid opening section in which she uses the diaries of two Lincolnshire widowers to underline how marriage was seen to secure the comforts of a well managed home and domestic respectability. In one, a country doctor with a brood of young children, devastated by the loss of his wife, remarried within twelve months and the other, a churchgoing attorney, racked by guilt from

a thirteen-year liaison with his servant, sought remarriage to salve his conscience and secure the comforts of a "good woman".

The chapter continues with the domestic provisions of half a dozen young bachelors: Dudley Ryder, an up-and-coming barrister; John Egerton, like Woodforde a Wykehamist, at this stage an eligible young cleric lodging in chambers in Lincolns Inn Fields; George Hilton, in fact a young widower, a Westmorland Catholic, Jacobite and violent alcoholic; the impoverished young Anthony Trollope; John Courtney, the somewhat effete Beverley gentleman in frantic pursuit of a wife and Sylas Neville, the unstable Norfolk lifelong bachelor. All of them, save the rackety Neville and Hilton who was drunk most days, far outdistanced Woodforde in their searches for the comforts of matrimonial security, both domestic and sexual. All of them, with the exceptions of Egerton and Courtney, pursued far more adventurous sexual adventures than our diarist. But the account from these half dozen diaries of bachelor housekeeping provides an immediate parallel with Woodforde's attempts at Thurloxton, Babcary and Ansford, the latter a distressing three year affair because his two thoroughly unenterprising brothers with whom he shared the arrangement were rowdy, disputatious and frequently "much in liquor". And, of course, the record of his long periods of residence as a fellow at New College is a first rate account of institutional bachelordom, a way of life open to those who, for whatever reason, chose to avoid matrimony.

It is into Woodforde's arrival in Norfolk and the setting up of his household at Weston Longville in 1776-7 that *Behind Closed Doors* provides most insight. In many ways he had led a frustrating life in the previous decade. It was not so much that after ordination he had had to serve a string of ill-paid curacies – that was usual for the over-subscribed apprenticeships of those young clerics without powerful connections – but that through the machinations of his duplicitous uncle he had not been appointed to the Ansford living of his father which he had clearly counted upon. His single, less than half-hearted, attempt to find a wife (he measures up very poorly in comparison with the bachelors cited in chapter two of *Behind Closed Doors*) seems to have ended all thoughts of matrimony. Putting these two major reversals behind him, he came to his good Norfolk living determined to set up an establishment that would

guarantee him domestic content and a decent sociability in the neighbourhood. It also shows how a confirmed bachelor, unlike the examples Professor Vickery cites, could put together a comfortable home without the guidance of a wife and engage in a reasonably full, polite social round. Moreover, from the evidence of the diary, the bachelor households of Parsons Du Quesne and Mellish of Honingham, Smith of Mattishall and Stoughton of Sparham mirrored those of Woodforde at Weston Longville.

The first two years of the Norfolk diary show exactly how Woodforde with his love of order approached his dream of domestic comfort, the creation of a neat and well-managed household, that would fix his status as a newcomer with the neighbouring gentry and clerical community. The rectory, where his long-serving predecessor, Ridley, had lived only in the summer months, was in poor repair, "very inconvenient", and the garden near derelict. Immediately, he set to work repairing and furnishing the house, setting up his small farm of glebe and rented college land and restoring the garden.

Within two months of his arrival at Weston in May 1776 he had no fewer than fifteen people working for him on some days. He settled the dilapidations with Ridley's widow and acquired goods valued at £38 2s 9d from her. He bought and had carted by his farming neighbours 40,000 used bricks from Great Witchingham Hall to build a good kitchen garden wall. In November he was planting trees in fashionable clumps and early the following spring he purchased ninety gooseberry and currant bushes and eighteen apple trees from Norwich's leading nurseryman. And within a week of his arrival in Norfolk, the diarist had gone into Norwich, "the finest City in England by far", on a major three-day shopping expedition with his nephew and servant. He took delivery of his boxes from Somerset, sent via London and weighing over three-quarters of a ton, spent £8 1s 6d on a pair of old pistols and some silver at "a toy shop adjoining the King's Head" and then walked up to an auction of the goods of a gentleman in St Giles who had lived beyond his means. There the Parson spent £23 15s 6d on furniture and silver, including eight good dining chairs at 15s each and a large salver for £12 5s 7d. Clearly, dining at the rectory was to be an elegant affair. The following day he gave Brookes, an upholsterer in White Lion

Lane, the order for a bed and gave the cabinet maker, Edward Thorne, in St Stephen's Churchyard "a good order" for £17, delivered the following week and including "a very handsome Mohogany Wardrobe", a dressing chest and swing dressing glass. A long case clock was ordered for six guineas and a good deal of china from William Beloe, china merchant in the Market Place. Soon Woodforde was noting that he possessed a complete set of fashionable cream ware.

No aspect of the refurbishment of the Rectory came cheap and Woodforde had to borrow £700, or well over twice his new annual income, from three separate sources. The result of his spending, with the ministrations of the five indoor and outdoor servants he soon acquired, was a comfortable establishment – neat, as he would have described his achievement – if not in the forefront of fashion. From his well-furnished home, which the inventory prepared for the three day sale of his chattels in 1803 details, the Parson could regularly entertain the families of his neighbouring clerics and squire with all the ceremony Georgian élite sociability demanded. His niece Nancy when she came to live with him in 1779 from Somerset described him to her relatives back home as living "in a very genteel manner ... our visiting all in high style". For Woodforde had planned and created his ideal home, the perfect base from which he could live the quiet, well regulated life he desired and had at last realised.

Thus, although Amanda Vickery barely mentions Woodforde, who gives the fullest continuous account of any eighteenth-century diarist of daily domestic existence, she provides an excellent context to it. She will set readers thinking about the unsatisfactory nature of makeshift bachelor establishments, institutional college life, how marriage and domesticity was viewed and, above all, the importance and meaning of home, the one thing Woodforde was so eager to establish for himself at Weston Rectory. She also writes that "a history of Georgian men at home has still to be written". When it is James Woodforde will hold centre stage.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Robert Dighton's fine 1799 topographical painting of Norwich Market Place is well known as an illustration in books about Norwich and as a greetings card. It is also of course central to the Society's "Walks Around James Woodforde's Norwich". I have often wondered why a London coach drawn by four horses, emerging from the Angel, is so out of proportion to the market cart into which it is galloping full pelt.

It was while staying at the George in Lichfield, where the yard and stabling at the rear of the building has been altered only to the extent of welcoming motor cars, that I realised a large coach with four horses needed a lot of space and a main road for entry into and exit from the yard.

On our recent Frolic tour of Norwich Market Place our guide was anxious to point out the enclosed nature of the Market Place in the eighteenth century, with no Exchange Street, narrow Cockey Lane leading only to the Cathedral and Briggs Street nothing but a narrow lane leading to St Stephen's Street and the main roads south. The Angel, altered in the early nineteenth century and renamed the Royal Hotel was altered again in the early twentieth century into almost as we see it today. It retains its wide side exit out into White Lion Street where large London coaches, drawn by four horses, could bear right into Red Lion Street and away up to St Stephen's Gate and the road to Bury St Edmunds.

The present-day Briggs Street bears a blue plaque to the Revd William D'Oyley (1745-1814) who "Rode 12,000 miles in his old age on horseback collecting subscriptions for the widening of this street". Too late for the Diarist and Nancy (with Briton seated "outside") but rest assured, as they travelled to London and on to Somerset, they emerged sedately from the south-side exit of the Angel into White Lion Street.

Surely Robert Dighton never painted the toy coach and horses emerging full gallop into the Market Place (unless the proprietor of the Angel – for advertising purposes – made it worthwhile!).

Phyllis Stanley, *Norwich*

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 1841.
2. Stephen Andrews.
3. The Hart.
4. The Custance Coat of Arms, New College Coat of Arms and Rokewood Arms.
5. Mr Howes.
6. 15 April 1775.
7. September 1777.
8. Dr Ridley.
9. 13 April 1779.
10. 1781.
11. 1783.
12. Betty Dade and Sally Gunton.
13. Revd Samuel Carter.
14. It was a 'forced' marriage.
15. St Peter Mancroft.
16. At Winchester College.
17. Collected the 'tithe' for him.
18. Le Neve.
19. Judas Maccabaeous.
20. Grand.

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

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

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

The Annual membership subscription of £16 (overseas members £25, student members £10) becomes due on 1 January and should be forwarded to the Treasurer, Dr David Case, 25 Archery Square, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7JA.

Website:
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