

PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY JOURNAL



Miss Mary Woodforde (in the bath chair) at the presentation of a tribute
to Miss Anne Willey for 50 years service to Miss Woodforde,
Stoke St Mary, 1902

(D/P/stoke.s.ma/23/1, *Somerset Archives and Local Studies*)

Among the motives for keeping a diary, one generally finds love of the truth and a desire to record it. Writers who enjoy powers of invention will take to another medium and probably become novelists.

Frances Partridge, in the Foreword to *Life Regained: Diaries, 1970–72*. 1998

ISSN 2517-5572

© THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

Issued to Members of the Parson Woodforde Society

Chairman & Editor

Martin Brayne
Longcroft
Whitehough Head
Chinley, High Peak
SK23 6BX

Membership Secretary

Mrs Diana McKay
68 Hillside Road
Beeston
Nottingham
NG9 3AY

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....	2
Margaret Bird: NORFOLK PARISH CLERGY IN JAMES WOODFORDE'S TIME: PART 2	4
David Sharp: THE PARSON AND NORFOLK POLITICS ..	19
Jennifer Soan: KALM'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO ENGLAND ON HIS WAY TO AMERICA 1748 ...	28
Martin Brayne: MARY WOODFORDE REMEMBERS.....	37
The late Mary Barham Johnson: LEAVES FROM AN UNWRITTEN DIARY	43

EDITORIAL

THE NORFOLK PARISH CLERGY OF JAMES WOODFORDE'S TIME

Part 2: Pluralist priests under pressure

Part 1 of this article in the previous issue placed James Woodforde alongside his fellow clerics, noted distinctions in education and background and quoted some parish statistics which made Norfolk unique in the British Isles. It also drew on the evidence of the episcopal visitation returns, ranging from the handling of the offertory to the lack of parsonages.

This concluding part will examine the way various types of parish clergy operated: the resident beneficed cleric (like Woodforde at Weston), the unbeneficed curate (like Woodforde in the first ten years of his ministry in Somerset), and those who were both incumbent and curate. A rector or vicar in one parish often served as curate in another, usually when filling the void for an absentee and pluralist minister busy elsewhere. Absenteeism features prominently in this part of the study. It ends with the coming of the Evangelicals, a new force in the countryside prepared and willing to take on the fast-growing Nonconformists.

Consolidated livings

There were also clergy with consolidated livings, a device peculiar to the see of Norwich. As one parish alone could not provide an incumbent with sufficient income he was instituted to two neighbouring parishes yoked formally but at times uneasily, as at Horstead and Coltishall on the northern Broads, Lamas with Little Hautbois on the Aylsham navigation, or Gunthorpe and Bale in the north of the county.

This was purely an ecclesiastical union, to serve a particular need. Parish government, the lowest tier of local administration, remained unaffected. Each parish within a consolidated living continued electing its own parish officers such as churchwardens and overseers and setting separate rates to maintain the church, highways and the poor. It is remarkable how little Woodforde appears to have immersed himself in parish business. A great many resident clergy gave active leadership and attended meetings, as

indicated by their visitation returns and the parish ratebooks; the Burrells, father and son, at Letheringsett set an outstanding example of parochial leadership. Weston's parish officers and ratepayers, by contrast, went about their business with little recorded interaction with their rector. Perhaps all preferred it that way.

Sensitive incumbents respected the separate parochial identity within consolidated livings. They not only ensured that services were held in both churches in a regular rotation but hosted a tithe frolic for each parish instead of trying to economise by offering just one joint celebration. However the system did not work for 'twicers' among the congregation: those who attended church twice on a Sunday. Morning service would be held in one parish, such as Coltishall, with an afternoon service at Horstead. The following Sunday the services were reversed, with Horstead hosting Morning Prayer. But unless the cleric had recourse to a colleague for the second service of the day he was tempted to deliver the same sermon—a hardly satisfactory outcome for the faithful.¹

The resident incumbent

The parish clergy worked under enormous pressure. The universities were producing ample numbers of graduates for the Church, but in 1791 the 11,164 parishes of England and Wales had only 4412 beneficed clergy.² As a result there was roughly only one incumbent for every third parish. The beneficed clergy had perforce to double up and become pluralists, some appointing a curate to serve in person the second or third parish to which they had been instituted. Appointing a curate cut into income, however; as a result, as described later, curates' incomes were kept extremely low in the mid- and late eighteenth century.

As seen in Part 1 with Lancaster Adkin, many incumbents elected to serve all three cures in person and even then take on an additional curacy or two to make ends meet. Having parishes within fairly easy reach made this possible and kept road journeys short. Further, average population density at 147 persons to the square mile in 1801 was fairly low in Norfolk; the figure includes Norwich. This was just below the average for England and Wales at 152 persons, towns and cities included.³ (As an aside, the figure represents a complete

reversal of fortune for Norfolk. Bruce Campbell estimates that at the close of the thirteenth century the most heavily settled agricultural districts in the east of the county had a population density of nearly 500 persons to the square mile, thus helping to explain the profusion of both parishes and mediaeval churches.)⁴ The existence of reasonably small populations per parish and per square mile further enabled the clergy of Woodforde's time to take on multiple cures—as they do today.

Doubling and tripling up meant that only one parish could lay claim to having a resident incumbent. The others technically were served by absentees, even though the total geographical area covered by one cleric might be the same or appreciably less than one of the parishes of the north of England with ten or more townships served by one parish church and a series of chapels of ease.

Having dug himself into the sanctuary of Weston parish Woodforde did not engage much in covering for his fellows. His neighbouring brethren probably discovered that such requests irked or flurried him, as when he deputised at Great Witchingham for a few weeks in 1787. He seems never to have contemplated taking on a Norfolk curacy: he had no need, for he enjoyed one of the most valuable livings in the county—worth three times the average value of a Norfolk benefice. Less and less does he resemble the typical Georgian parson of mythology. And his occupancy of just one benefice, with no other services to conduct in nearby parishes and no other flocks to care for, meant that other clergy nearby were at even fuller stretch. The workload fell especially on the 'clerical subalterns', the curates.⁵

Curates: backbone of the Church

When James Woodforde arrived at Weston to take up residence this would have been a novel experience for his parishioners. His predecessor as rector from 1733, Dr Gloster Ridley (1702–74), named for the East Indiaman on which he had been born, had lived two counties away at Poplar, south Essex, where he served as curate; he was also the absentee Perpetual Curate of Romford in Essex. Clerics holding multiple curacies had shouldered the burden at Weston, the most recent being the unsatisfactory and later heavily

indebted Revd John Wilson junior (d.1806 aged 55). He appears never to have obtained a benefice of his own. Instead he served as curate 1774–1801 variously at Great Witchingham, Weston, Alderford, Attlebridge, Lyng and Bylaugh; he lived at Elsing and Briston during those years.⁶

The pattern adopted by Ridley and Wilson, of serving non-resident incumbents as curates, was the norm. As late as 1835 curates serving non-resident clergy across England and Wales outnumbered those serving resident by more than four to one.⁷ Some of these non-resident curates, like Ridley, were in fact incumbents elsewhere. Mary Hardy's resident rectors at Letheringsett, John Burrell senior and junior, were at the same time most conscientious pastors for other parishes nearby, acting for absentee incumbents.

Some absentees were so absent as to be untraceable when needed. John Burrell senior was wholly unsupported by the rector when serving as Curate of Hunworth and Stody (another consolidated living). He explained his predicament to the bishop: 'The Revd Mr Greene ... being absent, and the place of his residence uncertain, sometimes in England, sometimes in France, and at this time unknown to me ...'⁸ Two incumbents of Wiveton, near Blakeney and Cley, lived at Monmouth on the Welsh border and at Devizes in Wiltshire, as the two Mr Burrells reported.⁹ At Brisley the rector 'has been abroad for two or three years past with Lord Bruce', while the Rector of Swanton Morley with Worthing (consolidated) was literally on the move as chaplain on board HMS *Britannia*.¹⁰

The Revd Dr Thomas Jeans (1746–1835), Woodforde's neighbour as Rector of Great Witchingham, was also absentee Vicar of St John Maddermarket in Norwich, both New College livings. He became even more absent towards the end of Woodforde's life. His curate at Great Witchingham, Augustus Beevor, told the bishop in 1801 that the rector had departed 'to take charge of the education of the son of a nobleman'; as a result, so Mr Beevor implies, the village Sunday school had folded. Given that Dr Jeans later became master of a charity school at Egham, near Windsor, the Sunday school may have been an early indication of his interest in schooling for the poor—an aspect of his character which does not emerge in Woodforde's diary.¹¹

The bishops of Norwich, in their charges to the clergy, were each in turn firmly committed to stamping out non-residence. They would have had sinking hearts as they worked their way through the mounting piles of returns. Dr Charles Poyntz, the nobly connected Rector of North Creake whom we met in Part 1, breezily informed the bishop that he naturally needed a curate as he could not always be in Norfolk. He served as Prebendary of Durham three months a year, was also Prebendary of Llandaff, might be away seeing friends or on business, and was 'sometimes in waiting on His Majesty if required'.¹²

On perusing the returns there is no escaping the conclusion that the Church in Norfolk, as elsewhere, was wholly reliant on an entrenched system of cover: unbeneficed clergy, and those with benefices additionally taking on curacies, were routinely covering for absent rectors, vicars and perpetual curates. The system gave flexibility, but it resulted in high curate turnover in some parishes. As many, and possibly most, were not licensed to their curacy by the bishop many safeguards for the curates, particularly over proper levels of pay, were bypassed. Such men were expendable; sometimes the incumbent could not even put a name to his deputy. The curates survived by simply taking on more curacies, three or four held simultaneously being not unusual in the visitation returns. A great many parishes consequently had no resident minister at all.

We cannot trace unlicensed curates in the official record, the register of curates maintained by the diocese;¹³ nor are they identified on the Clergy of the Church of England database. But we pick them up in the visitation returns. Avoiding licensing enabled the holder of the living to appoint a curate who already held numerous cures, for officially the bishops frowned on pluralism among curates as well as among incumbents. The unlicensed clergy, as also licensed curates with multiple cures, often sign the parish baptismal, marriage and burial registers not as curate but as 'officiating minister', presumably to spare the blushes of errant incumbents. That all-embracing but misleading term, suggesting they were acting just in a temporary capacity, masks the reality that unlicensed and pluralist curates were rife in the see of Norwich.

Inadequate pay

Low levels of pay were endemic. James Woodforde noted in his diary for 24 June 1798 and 27 May 1800 that he paid his curates Mr Cotman and Thomas Dade £30 a year at Weston—when his annual income was £300 or more. Out of this they had to find and pay for their accommodation, as there was no room at the parsonage house.

Very many curates lived on or below the poverty line. Bill Jacob has done important work on this topic. As late as 1784, 82 Norfolk curates received £20 or less a year, and a further 106 were paid £30 or less.¹⁴ The clerical stipend per parish failed spectacularly to keep pace with inflation, falling well behind rises in agricultural earnings.¹⁵ When in 1775 the good-hearted Mr Hanmer of Horstead and Coltishall appointed a new curate to help him look after the 971 souls (the 1801 census figure) in the consolidated living he could afford to pay him only £20 for each parish, leaving £60 per parish for the rector himself.¹⁶

Carole Child has investigated the case of the Revd John Cartwright Maynard, curate of a string of parishes close to Weston. His annual salary on being appointed to the curacies of Attlebridge and Morton in 1786 was £45; an average of £22 10s per parish. This figure helps to put in perspective Woodforde's treatment of his own curates a few years later. The unfortunate Mr Maynard almost certainly could not afford to live in a home of his own, and seems to have served until his death in 1804 from his base in the public house at Attlebridge. He may not even have been able to maintain a horse to help him get about between his parishes. Carole Child portrays him as a conscientious minister. His experiences as a sizar at Caius, Cambridge, may have shaped his outlook (see Part 1 of this article). He was what would be called today a mature student and never took a degree.¹⁷

The pressures on the curates were immense. The 'repertory of officiating curates', compiled from the returns of 1784, displays in convenient form the curacies held in plurality. The brothers-in-law of the unfortunate John Wilson junior, the Revd John Crofts (d.1828 aged 80) and the Revd Benjamin Crofts junior (c.1755–95), serve as two such examples. The first, as absentee Vicar of East Bradenham and absentee Rector of Stratton Strawless, lived at Fakenham, where he was curate. He was also Curate of Brisley, of

Shereford and of West Barsham. Ben Crofts served as Curate of East Bradenham, of Themelthorpe, of Twyford, of Billington, of Brisley, of Horningtoft and of Whissonsett during his short ministry. Thomas Lloyd (c.1745–1814), of North Walsham, held as many as five curacies at the same time: Ashmanhaugh, Beeston St Lawrence, Sco Ruston, Tunstead and Worstead. He had been licensed to each of them on the one day in 1777. Dr Yonge evidently had fewer scruples than his successor as bishop, Dr Bagot, over curacies held in plurality.¹⁸

However, we might argue, does this pluralism *matter*? Curates were frequently young men, active and eager, with new ideas. Were they not likely to be more conscientious pastors than an aging, ailing incumbent keen to hug the parsonage fire? Time and again it is striking in the returns how sensitive the curates are to the needs of their flock. Impoverished themselves, they understand the privations of the poor. This was an age long predating the ‘squarson’, the squire–parson in his vast mid-nineteenth-century rectory, his eye on his game birds and his hounds and preoccupied with visits to family and spas.

Critics of the Established Church of England in Woodforde’s time, all too ready to characterise the Church as ‘in its doldrums’ (Ronald Blythe’s phrase quoted at the start of Part 1), will point to the inadequacies of the shaky structures underpinning the great institution. Yet on the ground the flock could be well served when populations were small and densely distributed. And when we read the list of cures held by one person it sounds rather familiar today. Parish priests race from one church to the next on Sundays, unable to linger after briefly shaking hands in the porch. Often they manage to hold a service only once every fortnight, as could also be the case in Woodforde’s day. However, as Norfolk parishes lie close together the flock, then and now, could walk or ride to a neighbouring church and worship there without too much difficulty.

Roving Anglican preachers

The coming of the Evangelicals signalled change, heralding a transformation wrought by some of the most active and eager of the county’s curates. From a few years after Woodforde’s arrival in Norfolk a new breed was lighting up religious life. This was the

roving Anglican preacher, fired with a mission to convert the people living in darkness: the conversion experience was one held dear. Quiet, undemonstrative Christianity, so the new type believed, was not the answer. The flock must be brought to a knowledge of the suffering Christ (the emphasis among these stern Calvinists being generally on the Crucifixion) by freely admitting their sins and adopting a new life. Until his move to Clapham the Revd John Venn (1759–1813) led the charge from his base as Rector of Little Dunham, north of Swaffham, but there were many others.

Most of these young men had been trained and inspired at Cambridge by the Revd Charles Simeon (1759–1836); he had found John Venn his remote Norfolk living. A man of great charm and emotional sympathy, and revered by his followers, Simeon stood apart from the mainstream in the university—including members of his own college, King's. While retaining Holy Trinity Church as his public platform at Cambridge for most of his career he contrived to hold 'pulpit classes' in his rooms in college. Here he succoured his little flock of promising young undergraduates from other colleges and taught them how to win hearts and minds. But he faced ridicule and opposition from those who found his 'Methodistical' pulpit excesses an embarrassment. 'O Mama', whispered a small girl in the pew—evidently unused to histrionics in her preacher—'What is the gentleman in a passion about?'¹⁹

Some of the Evangelicals had also been funded through crammers and university by the Elland Society in Yorkshire—founded, with others, by the Revd Henry Venn (1725–97), father of John. The Atkinson family, including the brothers Miles, William and Christopher, were also central to the success of the Evangelical movement. The Revd William Atkinson (1758–1845), while serving as resident lecturer at Bradford Parish Church in Yorkshire, was also Rector of Warham All Saints on the north Norfolk coast. His career demonstrates how even a non-resident priest could achieve remarkable results. His appointment of promising 'Sims' straight from Simeon's care to be his curates, parachuted young missionaries as they saw themselves, into the Norfolk countryside.

The Evangelicals excelled at networking and at flexible extra-parochial working, abhorring the notion of a fixed ministry. By clever use of contacts and patronage they obtained village curacies,

and occasionally livings, from where they would journey forth bringing their message of Redemption to the startled, impressionable flock. These included Mary Hardy and her daughter and son. The diarist's appetite for a dramatic gospel-preaching sermon was seemingly unlimited. When visiting Cambridge in 1800 she attended Simeon's Holy Trinity services three times on Sunday.²⁰

Perhaps surprisingly, the gentle toleration shown in the visitation returns by the resident clergy was extended even to the thrusting young firebrands who challenged their more sober, restrained ways. Both the Rector of Holt and the Rector of Letheringsett, neither of whom was touched with the Evangelicals' fervour, accepted the missionaries as a presence in their midst.²¹

There is no room here to recount the careers of these driven men, such as the gifted preachers William Upjohn (d.1855 aged 81) and George Barrs (1771–1840) in north Norfolk. They moved from parish to parish as they preached; and the faithful, newly energised, followed them. Mary Hardy and her grown-up children, committed disciples, were prepared to jog in a cart along rutted roads for hours on a Sunday or when attending newly-instituted weekday evening services.

The preachers, well tutored in their art, had the ability to draw huge crowds. At the age of 23 Simeon showcased his performing skills for some months when he covered for the rector (another clerical Atkinson) at St Edward's Church, Cambridge. Dominating his hearers from the slender pulpit occupied by Latimer and Cranmer in the sixteenth century, the young man filled the church to the aisles. The crowds pushed their way into the sanctuary and even took over the parish clerk's appointed seat. 'Oh sir', the thankful clerk greeted the returning Christopher Atkinson junior, 'I am so glad you are come; now we shall have some room!'²²

The gospel-preachers stood apart from the Erastian Church and avoided divisive politics in their sermons. They focused on addressing each upturned face in the pews as they brought their powerful 'message from God unto *thee*' (the text from Judges for one of George Barrs's sermons). Barrs employed a direct approach, and as a Calvinist rejected justification by works:

My aim is the salvation of your souls ... It [his message from God] is of such a nature, that on your acceptance, or rejection of it, depends your everlasting happiness or misery; your eternal all ...

Do not, then, fancy thine own goodness can profit thy soul ... But come empty-handed to Christ, or determine not to come to him at all.²³

The new breed favoured intensive training for their mission, Simeon having begun the work in his 'pulpit classes' at King's, Cambridge. A group of them banded together under John Venn to form the first clerical society in Norfolk as early as 1792, their minutes revealing the depth and passion behind their determination to set the countryside alight with the fire of God's love. Founder members included William Ivory (d.1802 aged 50), a literate (non-graduate), of West Somerton, Horsey and Waxham with Sea Palling on the windswept coast, Vicar of Hindolveston and curate of Briningham and of Briston south-west of Holt. Ivory was a hugely articulate and significant figure, as we can judge from his informative visitation returns; another was the distinguished Edward Edwards (1766–1849), lecturer of St Nicholas at King's Lynn.²⁴

These young men cleaved unwaveringly to the Church of England. Whereas Henry Venn and William Grimshaw (Patrick Brontë's predecessor at Haworth) in Yorkshire had been prepared to work with Nonconformists in a common mission, very few later in the eighteenth century shared the elder Venn's generosity of spirit towards those labouring outside the confines of the Church.

To clergy of Woodforde's bent the Evangelicals would have seemed intemperate, perhaps even unstable; many did indeed suffer from depression and burnout as they drove themselves far too hard. Their endeavours however totally undermine the notion of a 'spiritually comatose' Church, the phrase adopted by Blythe at the start of Part 1.

Open and close villages

One final point needs to be made, concerning the social background to this story. Missionary work was not easy to undertake in a close parish like Weston. Such parishes, the opposite of open parishes,

had a single dominant landowner, or perhaps two at most, who could thus wield undue power over their tenants; this power might extend to influencing church worship and restricting the opening of meeting houses. Without doubt Woodforde would have been careful not to cause offence up at the Big House. Quite apart from any misgivings of his own he would not have upset the equilibrium of the village by welcoming these fearless, unsettling preachers into his pulpit.

The villages in which Mary Hardy wrote her diary, with their surrounding areas, as also those around her birthplace at Whissonsett, near Fakenham, were made up largely of open parishes with wide diversity of land ownership. The land tax assessment names both owner and occupier for every taxable acre (not common land, or stretches of water) in each parish, enabling a precise picture to be formed of its social structure.²⁵

But Weston was under the sole control of the Custances. Roy Winstanley tried to put numbers to this argument and lamented the lack of Custance estate accounts which would have included rentals. However Woodforde, so Winstanley explains, is able to help us. When two new farmers arrive, Girling and Howlett, the rector quotes the acreage each was to hold. All 1000 acres are Custance property.²⁶ William White's 1845 county directory (page 358) states the case succinctly. The parish contained '2727 acres of rich loamy land, mostly the property of H. T. Custance, Esq., the lord of the manor ...' Such estates tended to put a brake on expansion by restricting settlement by newcomers and blocking the building of new houses which would attract them. Every effort was made to reduce numbers of paupers and potential paupers.

As magistrates such landowners would also at times suppress public houses, or at least lobby to prevent the licensing of additional ones. As late as Francis White's 1854 county directory Weston under the Custances still had only one public house, the Eagle (as the Hart/Heart had long become), serving a total parish population of 458 souls (page 448). By contrast Coltishall was literally open—and quite possibly reeling—in the sense of being open all hours. In 1854 its population of 907, double that of Weston, had three inns and two beerhouses to choose from (pages 421 and 422 of the directory).

The static, undynamic social model of the close parish, taken by some interpreters of the clerical diary to be representative of a deferential countryside in Woodforde's time, was far from the norm in Norfolk. This was, and is, a county noted for independence of mind and freedom of thought. Its unofficial motto 'Do Different' was adopted by the University of East Anglia as its own motto on its foundation. And there is not a trace of deference at any time in Mary Hardy's record. 'If only', the clergy might have thought to themselves.

Woodforde's New College sermon

This study has tried to dispel the myths presented at the start of Part 1. James Woodforde was far from typical among his brethren. Further, the notion of the 'typical Georgian parson' is surely illusory, as revealed in their own frank words to the bishops of Norwich. And the Church they served was experiencing an exciting time spiritually, with waves of itinerant preachers spreading what they biblically termed 'flames of fire' through the countryside.²⁷

In stark contrast quiet, understated Christian witness was the Latitudinarian Woodforde's contribution to religious and pastoral care. He shrank from proselytising, believing that 'very few ... will be disputed into a good life.' Instead, as he argued in his beautifully crafted New College sermon of 1776, 'Example is a living precept.' Setting a model of undemonstrative Christianity would carry the greatest force of persuasion: 'Let us therefore put on this armour of Righteousness, and we shall prove successful champions for our holy religion.'²⁸

This was one model, indeed. But it was one among a whole series of competing models. The Church of England in the fifty years after his death would need more active and imaginative champions than Woodforde as it reshaped itself to meet the forces of urbanisation, population increase and wider diversity of worship which had already come into being during his tenure of Weston.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *consolidated livings* The workings of two yoked parishes are chronicled day by day by the Norfolk diarist Mary Hardy (1733–1809), writing at Coltishall 1773–81 before the family's move to Letheringsett, near Holt (M. Bird, ed.,

- The Diary of Mary Hardy 1773–1809*: Diary 1, *Public house and waterway* (4 volumes, Burnham Press, Kingston upon Thames, 2013). The Rector of Horstead and Coltishall, the Revd William Hanmer (1716–86), memorably described by Woodforde as ‘a very merry and sensible as well as good-natured man’ and ‘a chumm of Mr Du Quesne’s’, was a man of some tact (H. Edwards, ed., *The Diary of James Woodforde*, vol. 7 (The Parson Woodforde Society, 2016), p. 175, 10 June 1777).
2. *clergy numbers* W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman and G. Eayrs, eds, *A New History of Methodism* (2 volumes, London, 1909), vol. 1, p. 364.
 3. *population density* See table 1.1.1 in M. Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World 1773–1809* (4 volumes, Burnham Press, Kingston upon Thames, 2020): Volume 1, *A working family*, p. 17.
 4. *mediaeval population* B. M. S. Campbell, ‘Population pressure, inheritance and the land market in a fourteenth-century peasant community’, in *Land, Kinship and Life-Cycle*, ed. R. M. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 92; see also his pp. 89–96.
 5. *clerical subalterns* Norman Sykes’s phrase, in his massive study *Church and State in England in the 18th Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1934), pp. 189–230.
 6. *John Wilson jnr* Mary Hardy tells us that he was arrested in 1783, probably for debt as he had thereupon to part with his Briston house (M. Bird, ed., *The Diary of Mary Hardy*: Diary 2, p. 81, entry for 11 Feb. 1783, and note). On 15 May 1795 Woodforde in his own diary attests to the curate’s poverty ‘owing entirely to his own indiscretion and dissipation’. Wilson’s string of curacies emerges from the visitation returns. The speculation by John Venn in *Alumni Cantabrigienses* that he later became Vicar of Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire and died in 1826 is incorrect.
 7. *curates* N. Sykes, *Church and State in England in the 18th century*, p. 217.
 8. *Mr Greene* Norfolk Record Office (NRO): DN/VIS 29/6, Holt deanery visitation 1784, Hunworth and Stody return.
 9. *Wiveton* NRO: DN/VIS 29/6, 46/7, Holt deanery visitations 1784, 1813, Wiveton returns.
 10. *abroad* NRO: DN/VIS 33a/1, Brisley deanery visitation 1794, returns for Brisley and for Swanton Morley with Worthing. The curates filled in the returns. The Rector of Sharrington with Saxlingham, neighbouring parishes to Letheringsett, infuriated his parishioners by decamping to India, where he died many years later. His flock took him to court for non-residence (M. Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World*: Volume 3, pages 102–4). This was the Revd James Estcourt Atwood (1758–1810), a former army officer and chaplain to the East India Company at Madras.
 11. *Jeans* NRO: DN/VIS 38/6, Sparham deanery visitation 1801, Great Witchingham return. Roy Winstanley devotes a fascinating chapter to the escapades of Thomas and Mary Jeans; the nobleman’s son was probably ‘young Ward’, son of Lord Dudley and Ward (R. Winstanley, *Parson Woodforde: The life and times of a country diarist* (Morrow & Co, Bungay, 1996), pp. 167–84).

12. *Poyntz* NRO: DN/VIS 33a/2, Burnham deanery visitation 1794, North Creake return.
13. *register of curates* NRO: DN/DIS 1/2, Register of curates, schoolmasters, surgeons and midwives 1768–1810. Another source, ‘Repertory of the Officiating Curates in the Diocese of Norwich 1784’, does however draw on the returns to list the unlicensed curates, with their pay, where known (NRO: DN/VIS 31/2).
14. *curates’ pay* W. M. Jacob, ‘Clergy and society in Norfolk, 1707–1806’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 1982), p. 167, table iii.II, using data per parish from the returns of 1784 and 1806. He examines the pay of 236 curates in 1784 and 277 in 1806.
Occasionally the visitation returns mention Queen Anne’s Bounty and the benefits it brought the incumbent, such as the opportunity to improve the parsonage—as the Revd John Venn reported in 1784 from Little Dunham, near Swaffham. But it is difficult to ascertain from the returns whether curates, if present, benefited from the reforms. See W. M. Jacob, ‘Clergy and society’, p. 191; his findings are summarised in his later work, *The Clerical Profession in the Long Eighteenth Century, 1680–1840* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 121. Bill Jacob observes that many parishes in northern counties and Wales received grants from Queen Anne’s Bounty (*The Clerical Profession*, p. 179). Perhaps the need was greatest in those more deprived areas.
15. *inflation* With 1891 as the base year and set at 100, the agricultural earnings index for 1773 is 51, as against 105 for 1810: a rise of 106 per cent (B. R. Mitchell and P. Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 348. But curates’ pay rose only 60 per cent over the same period.
16. *Horstead and Coltishall* NRO: DN/VIS 29a/10, Ingworth deanery visitation 1784. By then the curate had done all the work in the two parishes for years, Mr Hanmer being incapacitated by illness and confined to the rectory.
17. *Mr Maynard* I am grateful to Martin Brayne for drawing my attention to this very interesting article: C. Child, ‘More on John Cartwright Maynard’, *Parson Woodforde Society Quarterly Journal*, vol. XLIX, no. 1 (Spring 2016), pp. 20–7.
18. *curacies in plurality* NRO: DN/VIS 31/2, the repertory of curates; see also the visitation returns for 1784 and 1794 for those parishes and all four volumes of Mary Hardy’s diary. She and her husband were on very friendly terms with the Crofts family from their days living at Litcham, near the Crofts’ base at Gressenhall.
19. *Simeon in a passion* H. E. Hopkins, *Charles Simeon of Cambridge* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977), p. 65. Anecdotes about the preacher, many highly amusing, are legion. See, for instance, A. W. Brown, *Recollections of the Conversation Parties of the Rev. Charles Simeon* (London, 1863).
20. *Mary Hardy and networking* M. Bird, ed., *The Diary of Mary Hardy*: Diary 4, p. 166, 11 May 1800; she also heard well-known Evangelicals in City of London churches that summer. She became part of the network of supporters. One Evangelical base was at Hovingham in north-east Norfolk. The rector, the

- Revd James Alderson (a ten-year man at Cambridge, like the Revd John Cartwright Maynard), had a young enthusiast as his curate: James Bingle, formerly of Queens', a strongly Evangelical Cambridge college. Bingle would dine and stay overnight with the Hardys while conducting preaching tours nearby at Holt, Briningham and Field Dalling. The Revd William Upjohn, an Elland Scholar whom Mary Hardy first described as a young gospel-preacher in September 1804, preached in those same welcoming churches.
21. *the Evangelicals* Their story and their reliance on networks in the eastern half of the county is told in M. Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World: Volume 3*, pp. 239–65.
 22. *Now we shall have some room!* H. E. Hopkins, *Charles Simeon of Cambridge*, p. 35.
 23. *text from Judges* Extracts are given in M. Bird, *Mary Hardy and her World: Volume 3*, p. 261. This was the first sermon Barrs preached after leaving Norfolk in 1800 to give strenuous service for the rest of his life in Birmingham and the Black Country.
 24. *Ivory* He instituted the earliest harvest festival service I can find, at West Somerton, between 1776 and 1784 (NRO: DN/VIS 30/11, Flegg deanery visitation 1784, West Somerton return).
 25. *land tax* TNA: IR 23/59–23/61, Land tax assessments 1798; they are arranged by hundred. While writing this article in summer 2020 I could not visit the National Archives at Kew to check the returns for Weston as it was closed, or with restricted opening, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. Norfolk's predominantly open form of society and diverse landholding owed much to patterns of settlement under the Danes. Free sokemen established themselves in large parts of the county, especially in areas near the coast.
 26. *acres* R. Winstanley, *Parson Woodforde*, pp. 120–1.
 27. *flames of fire* MS diary of Richard Reece (1765–1850), the 23-year-old Wesleyan Methodist itinerant preacher from Cheshire. He pleads for God's help in the Norwich Circuit, 7 January 1789 (NRO: FC 17/151, p. 37). William Upjohn also chose this text from Hebrews chapter 1 at Briningham in 1807, during the last attendance by Mary Hardy at an Anglican service (M. Bird, ed., *The Diary of Mary Hardy: Diary 4*, p. 357, note for 11 January 1807).
 28. *Woodforde's Christian precepts* E. Longmate, ed., 'The Sermons of Parson James Woodforde 1740–1803' (unpublished external PhD thesis, University of London, 1997), pp. 393, 399, 400.

THE PARSON AND NORFOLK POLITICS

Those many readers familiar with Trollope's picture of the mid-19th century Church peopled by characters such as the rich, ambitious Archdeacon Grantly, the political but ineffective Bishop Proudie, the peaceable Mr Harding, and poorer incumbents such as Mr Quiverful, would not find themselves in unfamiliar territory in the 18th century Church.

As far as clerical politics was concerned, the parochial clergy may have been largely Tory inclined, but after the eclipse of the Tory party in 1715, until the ascendancy of the Pittites much later in the century, the higher ranks of the Church tended to support or at least accept the various Whig administrations. This reflected their appreciation of where the fount of patronage lay. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London 1720–1748, was known as 'Walpole's Pope'. Patronage opened the door to considerable wealth for the ambitious cleric. In 1762 the Deanery of St Paul's was worth £1800 per annum, the Deanery of Oxford £900, the Bishopric of London £4000 and, the ultimate prize, Canterbury £7000. Naturally, ministers found themselves constantly lobbied for clerical preferments. For example, in 1760 the Duke of Newcastle wrote to the Revd Fredrick Harvey to dash his hopes: 'Sir ... I am obliged to acquaint you that I have received such strong applications from the Townshend Family, the Walpoles and all the nobility and first gentlemen in the County of Norfolk in favour of Mr Edward Townshend, son to the late Lord Townshend, to succeed to the Deanery of Norwich, and all my near relation to the Townshend Family, and the regard that must be paid to the gentlemen of Norfolk ... are such that it will be impossible for me to avoid recommending Mr Townshend to the King.'¹

The diarist's friend, the Revd Thomas Roger Du Quesne, was one of those fortunate enough to enjoy the considerable fruits of being well connected.² His patron was his cousin the Hon. Charles Townshend of Honingham, later Lord Bayning. Townshend's sister married Frederick Cornwallis (1713–1783), Archbishop of Canterbury.³ Du Quesne became not only Rector of East Tuddenham and Honingham, but also of Scole. He was Prebendary of Lichfield, Chancellor Canon of St David's, and Prebendary of Ely.⁴

Unsurprisingly, the Archbishop himself had not risen without some lobbying of the great. The Duke of Newcastle made him Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry in 1750. Nine years later he wrote to Newcastle as he had heard that the Bishop of Worcester was dying: 'A removal to that see would be most agreeable to Your Grace's most obliged and most humble servant'. The Duke failed to oblige, he was not translated, and also missed out on both Salisbury and Ely. However, through the Duke of Grafton's friendship he secured the ultimate prize in 1768.⁵

It should be stressed that in an age of inequality the Church reflected the times. At the bottom of the hierarchy some curates were very poor indeed, unlike Woodforde's curates who had other sources of income. There were curates trying to live on £20 pa. One clerical diarist in 1803 noted: 'A journeyman in almost any trade or business, even a bricklayer's labourer, or the turner of a razor grinder's wheel, all circumstances considered, is generally better paid than a stipendiary curate.'⁶ Fears were expressed that impoverished curates might preach 'radical' sermons.

The country gentry, Whig or Tory inclined, did have influence over some of the clergy at a purely local level. Many appointed to livings and naturally chose incumbents who could be expected to share their views. Therefore, at all levels in the Church it could be difficult to be politically neutral, the expectation being you would vote for your patron's choice of candidate, and in some cases even take an active part in organising voters. At the time of the 1754 election on 28 April Du Quesne wrote to George Townshend, heir to the third Viscount: 'If you could give me a line where I could have the pleasure of meeting you before the Election, I will certainly wait upon you, and would be glad if you would let me know where you would like to have our party join you ... I should be at Norwich Friday and Saturday and should be glad if it happened so that I could meet you there.' In another letter dated 7 May he wrote: 'Mr Custance has engaged all Weston to go for you, and they are to breakfast with him tomorrow.' Those 'breakfasting' with Mr Custance would be 40-shilling freeholder voters enjoying a very substantial meal. This Mr Custance was Hambleton Custance (1715–1757), the father of Woodforde's squire who had been High Sheriff in 1753 and was well acquainted with George Townshend.

Du Quesne continued ‘... they said at Ringland that a great Lord and his nephew were to pass by today – I suppose Lord Leicester (Thomas Coke of Holkham 1697–1759) and Robert – what trouble they are taking to expose their nakedness.’⁷ Leicester was almost certainly testing the water to see if his nephew was popular enough to stand for election. Du Quesne also mentioned that Mr Howes and the Tuddenham freeholders were breakfasting with him and supporting Townshend. In the event, Townshend and the Tory Sir Armine Wodehouse were returned unopposed, on a ‘balanced ticket’. Despite Du Quesne’s political support for Townshend, he may not have been so personally attached to him. On 14 December 1791 he sent a note to the diarist that he was going to Raynham with ‘the Honingham family ... which he does not like’.

Lord Leicester was an exceptionally partisan figure in Norfolk politics, he saw himself as the leader of the Norfolk Whigs, but also believed that all Tories were potentially subversive Jacobites with whom there could be no compromise. In 1747 he had accused Townshend and his father of wooing Tory voters and ignoring the Whig interest, as well as later asserting that Militia officers appointed by George Townshend were Tories and therefore politically suspect.

George Townshend was at one with most of the local gentry in wanting to remain on good terms with neighbours regardless of their political attitudes. In any case in the mid-18th century, contested elections were avoided whenever possible, both at county and borough levels. This was not only on the grounds of keeping the peace, but also of expense. In 1766 Oxford suggested its candidates discharge the town’s debts of £5650 as a condition of re-election. In 1784 food and drink at Chester for 3000 electors cost the Grosvenors £8500, but they could afford it. The cost of transporting and entertaining 40-shilling freeholders in a large county such as Norfolk with more than 11,000 voters was far beyond the purse of the average country gentleman.

Even in the mid-18th century when there were no great political issues there were undercurrents of differences; these were often the result of personal rivalries or local issues. Purely political partisans such as Coke were the exception rather than the rule, both ‘Whig’ and ‘Tory’ can be seen as attitudes or states of mind as much as clear

political stances. These attitudes did not normally translate into hard political campaigning until later, when divisive, important national issues disturbed the peace. Woodforde's arrival in Norfolk coincided with an increasingly raised national political temperature. He already noted in some detail the Wilkes' agitation.⁸ This was only the forerunner of a series of issues that caused divisions: the American War, the unpopular Fox–North coalition, the appearance of movements for parliamentary reform and the French Revolution. There was a revival in Tory fortunes led by Pitt who, after flirting with Reform, represented conservative opinion, which later in the 1790s shaded into reactionary repression. Still, when it came to elections, in some cases local issues, personalities and rivalries could still play a significant part, regardless of national politics.

The radical undertones of the 1770s onwards found Woodforde always on the 'conservative' side of issues. In any case, he seems often to have been cautious and regretful that divisions appeared. This aspect of his nature is shown early on when in 1773 he heard that the Mastership of Bedford School, 'the third best thing in the gift of New College' was vacant, 'the only bad thing belonging to it is, being a Borough Town, and there is no such thing as being neuter.' He wrote that he would accept it, 'if it comes to me' but his concerns about having to engage actively in politics were well founded. Bedford with 1000 voters and an assertive Corporation had a history of acrimonious electoral struggles featuring among others the Corporation versus the Duke of Bedford. The 1774 election, even without the Duke's influence, resulted in a petition to the House of Commons by the defeated candidates.

In his view of the world was a suspicion of Dissenters who seemed to be not only a threat to the established Church but potentially politically radical. The common unease about Dissenters dated back to the Civil War with the revolutionary Puritan Levellers of 1647. Also, with some notable exceptions, Dissenters tended to be lower down the social order, and his dislike of them was tinged with snobbery. On 26 February 1799 he was indignant that he had been written to regarding unpaid bills (he seems to have been a slow payer generally) and he sent Ben Leggatt, his 'farming man', to Norwich to pay 'Messrs Smith Woollen Drapers and Forster,

Taylor ... the remembrance of their being sent me by them, will not by me so soon forgot having dealt with them for at least 23 years. Smith, the Mercer is a Presbyterian and I suppose, Forster the Taylor is of the same persuasion. I have now done with them forever for their late shabby, ungentleman-like behaviour.'

Woodforde's attitude to the American war was to support the Crown and North's Ministry. On 28 January 1778 he attended a meeting at Norwich regarding the raising of a regiment. Almost all the leading figures in the County were present with Sir John Woodhouse of Kimberley in the Chair. The diarist noticed that Mr Windham of Felbrigg spoke 'exceedingly well but on the wrong side'. When the subscription was opened Windham, Thomas William Coke and their supporters – 'many' according to Woodforde, withdrew to The Swan and drew up a protest against 'the continuance of an unnatural war, which by various deceits ... we have been betrayed'. Woodforde did not see any deceits and duly subscribed his 5 guineas.

The election of 1780 was called by North to gain a mandate for the war. The Ministry spent about £62,000 on supporting candidates against the Rockingham Whigs with their policy of ending the War and 'economical reform', which involved cutting down on 'place men', corruption and government pensioners. There was considerable agitation throughout the country with elections being contested on these battle lines. The Norfolk county election however did not reflect this. The county seats were not contested, Sir Edward Astley of Melton Constable and Thomas William Coke were elected unopposed. Sir Edward Astley was very much the country gentleman, popular across varying shades of opinion. He saw it as an honour to represent Norfolk; he opposed the American war (one of his sons was killed in it), supported reform but at the same time was independently minded despite his Whiggish leanings. He, like most country gentlemen, wanted to reduce taxation on the agricultural sector and in 1785 he told the House that 'he had long wished to see a tax imposed on hair dressers, men milliners and all others who dealt in effeminate occupations.'⁹ Coke, later Lord Leicester of the second creation, the great landowner and agricultural improver, continued the family tradition of being a strong Whig. He supported Charles James Fox

throughout his career. His 'radical' leanings made him uncongenial to both Woodforde and Custance. When the former received an invitation 'general throughout the county' to celebrate the centenary of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to be held at Holkham he declined to go, but that may have been on social rather than political grounds. He certainly would not have been opposed to the revolution of 1688, he was no Jacobite.

The Norwich borough election of 1780 for Norwich was rather different. The candidates for the two seats were Harbord Harbord of Gunton and William Windham for the Whigs, Edward Bacon of Earlham who had been a Whig but switched to supporting the Ministry, and John Thurlow of Norwich, a merchant who stood on local issues but was a Tory. Harbord was a strong Whig with one blind spot: he was a fanatic for enforcement of the unpopular Game Laws. Windham had only agreed to stand at the last moment and did not have time for canvassing. In the event Harbord headed the poll with 1382 votes, Bacon was on 1199, Thurlow 1103 and Windham 1069. On 11 September 1780 Woodforde noted the candidates and the results but made no further comment. Arguably he was interested because later he purchased 'a small pamphlet relating the late election at Norwich' for which he paid one shilling.

The acrimonious election of 1784 has been covered in three articles in previous journals.¹⁰ Suffice it to say the diarist declined to vote for any other candidate but Sir John Wodehouse who opposed the Fox-North coalition. Woodforde saw North's coalition with Fox as an apostasy on his part. 'North how low art thou fallen', and as far as Fox was concerned he regarded him as an unprincipled, dangerous radical. He did not vote for Astley because he was associated with Coke.

On 16 September 1786 there was another Norwich election because Harbord was raised to the peerage. The candidates were Henry Hobart of Intwood and Sir Thomas Beevor. Hobart was a Pittite, Beevor was of low Church or even Dissenter leanings, but took the sacrament on becoming a JP. He was created baronet in 1784 possibly through the influence of Lord George Townshend. Certainly, Beevor was Townshend's correspondent, reporting to him from Norwich about the 1784 election and they were on friendly terms. In 1786 he stood as a Whig and the Tory election propaganda asserted that 'he purchased a baronetage, his father was

a Shoemaker, lived a Grocer died a Brewer in Norwich.’¹¹ Hobart was elected with 1450 votes while Beevor got 1383. The election was an extremely violent, rowdy affair. At the time Woodforde was in Somerset and made no comment on it. However, such was the violence surrounding the poll that on 10 March 1787 he wrote, ‘the last City election was declared void by the House of Commons, and that there would be a fresh election for the City very soon – the City when Briton came from it was all in a Hurley-Burly. Mr Hobart was returned for the late election and is supposed to succeed in the new election’. He reported correctly that Beevor had petitioned against the result and that he would stand again. On 15 March he reported that ‘Mr Hobart had a majority of 118 above Beevor – am very glad of it ... all talk now is about the election; the meanest actions of [which] the Beevor party were guilty on the above occasion’. On 17 March he wrote that Hobart had ‘only 80 majority of Sir Thomas Beevor’ (the actual figures were Hobart 1450, Beevor 1383), and that the election was a peaceable one, ‘no appearance of a Riot or disturbance whatever ... Sir Thomas Beevor is said to have demanded a Scrutiny at first, but has since dropped it ...’.

It is not surprising that Woodforde was ‘very glad’ that Sir Thomas was defeated. He was a more extreme Whig with, for the diarist, dangerous views associated with his Dissenter sympathies. In April 1789 at a Whig meeting in Norwich, presided over by William Windham, Beevor proposed a toast to ‘the liberal minded Members of Parliament who voted for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts’. For an Anglican clergyman like Woodforde the repeal of the Acts would be, of course, an attack on the Church of England and the established order.

Like Pitt and so many of the propertied classes, fear of social unrest and mob violence lurked in the diarist’s mind, especially after the French Revolution and also during periods of bread shortages and unprecedented high food prices. On 14 July 1791 he hoped that ‘this day will be attended with no bad consequences this being the day that the French Revolution first took place ... many meetings advertised to be held this day in London, Norwich etc ... to commemorate the above Revolution’. On 12 October 1792 he was told that there was a rumour ‘there would be a Great Mob collected at St Faith’s Fair ... on account of the dearness of wheat and other

provisions, but I believe rather from the late long propensity of the discontented, to a general disturbance, so prevalent at present in France'. Woodforde therefore saw both dearth and incendiary politics to be linked – as did many others. In the same year on 24 November he noted that 'Revolution Clubs in Town and Country much talked of and Riots expected to take place on that account'. Significantly he noted 'the lower sort of people have nothing to lose being ripe for it'. In December there is a further entry regarding expected riots. Any mob violence worried him; he was also disturbed by 'Church and King' loyalist mob rioting that had occurred earlier in July 1791. 'Shocking accounts in the papers dreadful riots at Birmingham, Nottingham etc ... the Presbyterian and Independent Meeting Houses pulled down ... many of the Dissenters Houses destroyed, amongst the rest Dr Priestly's both Town and Country houses burnt.'

On 14 October 1796 he was called on to 'subscribe my name to an agreement to prevent riots or any publick disturbance that may happen, by being active in suppressing such.' He 'heartily concurred in it' but would not sign it as he did not think a clergyman should put his name to it. He probably thought it could involve him in supporting violent, repressive measures. He may have been right to follow his pacific instincts. By contrast, in 1800 Col. Earle Bulwer of Haydon, faced with the possibility of bread riots by starving labourers, eagerly reported that his volunteer cavalry troops were ready with live ammunition.¹²

The diarist has left a vivid account of the mob violence of 29 October 1795, which he witnessed in London, after a meeting of the reformist London Corresponding Society. He also reported the story that the King had been subject to an assassination attempt with an airgun. Pitt later admitted that the glass of the royal coach had been shattered by a stone. He was 'never in such a crowd in all my life ... the mob was composed of the most violent and lowest Democrats'. His estimate of 200,000 present is the same as that of the Annual Register.

In the 1796 election he supported Sir John Wodehouse again, declining to cast his second vote for Sir Thomas Hare, though he did not indicate why. When called upon he said 'mine would be a single vote for Sir John Wodehouse only'. He was also lobbied by Mr

Stoughton of Sparham who 'desired that I would vote for Mr Coke, gave him the same answer as I did Mr Maynard'. The fact that Stoughton was a strong Whig supporter does not seem to have affected his warm regard for him. Squire Custance was, of course, a Wodehouse supporter. The result was a 'balanced ticket' with Coke and Wodehouse elected without a contest. Given their strong views, one cannot imagine that either successful candidate was happy with their running mate. The diarist went to Norwich on 2 June to see 'Sir John Wodehouse and his friends enter the City'. Shortly afterwards Sir John Wodehouse's loyalty to Pitt was rewarded by being translated to the Lords as Baron Wodehouse of Kimberley. Sir Jacob Astley, Sir Edward's son, replaced Wodehouse as a County member without a contest.

The election in 1802 found the diarist increasingly frail. Despite being urged by a Doctor Ogilvie, who came 'post haste in a Post Chaise after me to vote for Col. Wodehouse' [Sir John's son] but he declined to go. Ben Leggett, as a 40-shilling freeholder voter cast his vote for the Pittite Wodehouse. The election was a rowdy affair; the poll was open for 8 days. Sir Jacob Astley was described by his Tory opponents as being 'a coward, a liar and the murderer of his father'; nevertheless, he still beat Wodehouse. The final votes received were: Coke 4317, Astley 3612, Wodehouse 3516.

Woodforde's politics reflect his essentially conservative, cautious, peaceable attitude to life in general. For him, the Anglican Church was an integral part of a settled social and political order, which could not be changed or improved. He was therefore fearful of 'democrats', even of possible Trojan horses within the Church itself. On 20 May 1799, he noted that 'Young Baker of Cawston was to have succeeded Cotman in my Church as curate, but was very lately preferred to a Reader's Place at Bury. I cannot say that I am sorry for it, as of late I heard that Dr Baker and whole Family are very violent Democrats indeed'. Social, political and religious harmony were important to him, kindly paternalism was his guiding light. He was content with his comfortable living, made no attempts to cultivate potential patrons, followed his squire's political lead, but unlike Du Quesne did not involve himself in active electioneering. With these attitudes he was probably typical of many of the late 18th century clergy.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. E. N. Williams, *The 18th Century Constitution*, Cambridge 1970, p. 362.
 2. For Charles Townshend see Prof. R. Wilson, 'The Townshends of Honingham', *Journal*, vol. LI, no. 3, December 2018.
 3. For the Archbishop see B. Pateman, 'The Archbishop and his Lady', *Journal*, vol. XLI, no. 2, Summer 2008.
 4. For Du Quesne see M. Brayne, 'The Family of Thomas Roger Du Quesne', and F. Steer, 'Mr Du Quesne of East Tuddenham', *Journal*, vol. LII, no. 1, April 2019.
 5. Pateman *ibid*.
 6. Williams *ibid*, p. 372.
 7. Raynham Archives, RAS C1/9.
 8. See M. Brayne, 'Woodforde, Wilkes and Liberty', *Journal*, vol. XXVIII.
 9. *History of Parliament 1754–1790*, vol. 11, p. 31, London 1985.
 10. C. Brown in *Journal*, vol. XIII, no. 2, Summer 1980; D. Sharp in vol. XLVIII, no. 2, Summer 2015; and M. Brayne, in vol. XLVIII, no. 3, Autumn 2015.
 11. A. Carter, *The Beevor Story*, p. 39, Norwich 1993.
 12. J. Barney, *The Defence of Norfolk 1793–1815*, p. 37, Norwich 2000.
-

KALM'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO ENGLAND ON HIS WAY TO AMERICA IN 1748

Pehr Kalm, born March 1716 in Finland, then part of Sweden, became a student at Abo Royal Academy in 1735 where he studied Natural History for which he had a keen interest. There he was introduced to Baron Sten Carl Bjelke, an amateur botanist and someone for whom the agricultural improvement of Sweden was a priority. Pehr lived at the Baron's house and oversaw the management of the estate, reporting on the condition of the crops and, in particular, improvement to the grasslands. The Baron, who became his patron, was also a friend of Linnaeus and after being introduced to Pehr the Swedish botanist enrolled him at Upsala University and gave him personal instruction. Pehr was to become his most able and acclaimed student. The Baron paid his fees.

For three years Kalm explored Sweden, recording and collecting specimens, then in 1744 they set out on an expedition to Russia and

the Ukraine. The following year, while still a student, he was elected to the Swedish Academy of Sciences and then in 1746 was nominated Professor of Economics at Abo. That same year Pehr, at the recommendation of Linnaeus and the Baron, was commissioned by the Swedish Government to visit North America, 'for the purpose of describing the natural productions of that part of the world, and of introducing from thence into Sweden such useful plants as might be expected to thrive in the North of Europe'.

So, having been granted permission by the King to leave his academic duties and armed with a licence to travel and letters of introduction, Pehr and his assistant and travelling companion Lars Jungstrom set sail from Gothenburg on 11 December. Lars was well chosen, being 'quite at home in the science of Horticulture and the cultivation of plants, adroit in delineating all sorts of things by mechanical drawing, indefatigable on journeys, and in the highest degree trustworthy'. Before long a violent storm obliged the ship to seek shelter in Norway where it had to be repaired. Finally, on 28 January 1748, they were on the open ocean and after a fair passage caught sight of the English coast and the North Foreland lighthouse on 4 February and had cast anchor off Margate by nightfall. At dawn the next day a pilot came on board to navigate them up the River Thames to London.

Continuing up river between numerous banks marked by floating buoys, Pehr was impressed by the well-cultivated fields with horses and sheep grazing the pastures, 'beautiful' houses, mostly brick-built were to be seen everywhere with weather-boarded cottages dotted about, also many windmills and stone-built churches whose towers reminded him of the city gates of Moscow. On 6 February they sailed past Gravesend with its little fort and in the evening at sunset arrived at London. As soon as he could, and according to instructions from the Royal Academy of Science of Sweden, Pehr got in touch with Mr Abraham Spalding, a merchant based in London, 'who afterwards, during the whole of my visit to England, gave me every imaginable information, help, advice, and explanation of various things'. Mr Spalding told him where to go and what to see as well as being his banker; he also arranged their first three weeks' lodging with Mrs Westfall. She provided a room with beds, lights, wood for a fire, washing etc., for the princely sum

of £2 10s 8d. Expensive London rates.

They would not leave for North America until August, so the intervening months were to be fully occupied in examining the innovations and improvements to all branches of agriculture which put England far in advance of other countries and was the main purpose of his visit. He saw much to admire and was immediately struck by the market gardens and nurseries which surrounded London. His entry for 19 February described how, although early in the year, cauliflowers, radishes and even asparagus were starting to sprout, protected from the cold by moveable glass frames and bell-glasses.

On 28 February Pehr and Lars set out to visit Woodford in Essex; along their way was a 'succession of beautiful houses, fertile arable fields and verdant meadows'. Hawthorn hedges surrounded the enclosures and gardens which were full of fruit trees with crocus and snowdrops in flower even though early in the year. Hedges were of special interest and many pages were given over to their culture and management, with lists of the plants and trees found in them. When visiting Woodford Pehr was often shown round by Mr Richard Warner, a country gentleman with a keen interest in agriculture, who estate was divided up into farms which he rented out. He had travelled widely, was acquainted with many in the scientific world and was always ready with help and advice. The road to Woodford was so full of traffic, with wagons and carts of all shapes and sizes, people on horseback and those on foot, that 'one often has, as it were, to steer through them'. In the distance they could see the Thames and London with a fog-like cloud hanging over it. No other fuel but coal was used there and in the surrounding villages; people kept their fires going all day. Over the 10 and 11 March there had been some heavy falls of snow which he was told was quite unusual and had the effect of turning snow on the roofs a dull black or grey colour. Pehr found the effects of coal smoke very annoying, 'for it affected my chest excessively, especially at night'. Country air cured his cough which always returned when back in London and led him to suspect that smoke was the reason why so many in England were troubled with lung disease.

Pehr described Woodford as a well-built village of scattered houses mostly occupied by farmers and numerous gentlemen whose

incomes came from renting property, while tradesmen such as bakers, innkeepers and butchers made a good living. The farmers' main crop was hay. Huge quantities were required to feed the large number of horses used everywhere and gave them a good income, others made a good living from fattening cattle and sheep to supply the London markets. Unusually, it was the men who milked the cows and then the girls churned it into butter. The buttermilk was sold to the poor or fed to pigs. The farm workers were kept busy 'but as soon as they entered the cottage in the evening ... they ate, sat and talked till eleven o'clock'. No-one made their own implements, they were readily available from specialist artisans.

Pehr's entry for 19 March was dedicated to English eating habits, starting with breakfast which consisted of tea and toast. Tea was available to all but the poorest, London servants expected to drink tea but 'in the country they have to content themselves with whatever else they can get'. Dinner revolved around meat, either boiled or roasted. Pehr never saw soup of any kind, unlike at home in Sweden, so spoons were only used for ladling out sauce or gravy or serving the vegetables which 'lay in abundance on their plates'. Potatoes, whole carrots, turnips, spinach, sprouts and cabbage were all liked, with peas and beans in their season. English roast meat was remarkable for its fatness and delicious taste due not only to the cattle being fed on high quality pasture and hay but because 'Englishmen understand almost better than any other people the art of properly roasting a joint'. Roasting had reached the peak of perfection. Many varieties of puddings were served as were pies and tarts; salad also was popular and most meals ended with cheese. Most people drank cider and ale and, if affordable, wine, but the favourite drink of all, so Pehr thought, was punch.

On 25 March Pehr and Lars set out to pass the next three weeks at Little Gaddesden in Hertfordshire. This visit was at the request and cost of the Baron with the aim of meeting Mr William Ellis who enjoyed a great reputation for his numerous works on agriculture and rural affairs, such as *Chiltern and Vale Farming* and *The Practical Farmer or Hertfordshire Husbandman* among several other works. Their route took them through country that was 'simply beautiful' and so well cultivated that it had the appearance of a garden. The next day, Pehr went to call on Mr Ellis who was not

at home but out in his fields. On their way to find him they could not help but notice how well kept some of the fields were and how others appeared neglected and 'deserved our pity'. As they looked about them they met an old farmer, Mr Williams, and began to question him on the contrast between the fields. Pehr was taken aback when told that the poorly cultivated fields belonged to Mr Ellis – surely not the same Mr Ellis who writes such celebrated works? Mr Williams went on to say that Mr Ellis 'mostly sits at home in his room and writes books, and goes sometimes a whole week without going out into his ploughed lands or meadows to look after the work', which was left to his young son and one farm servant. Pehr thought this must have been said from envy but soon found it to be true. Mr Ellis appeared not to put his theories into practice and was not at all as informative as Pehr had hoped. On the other hand, Mr Williams was 'indisputably' the best farmer in the area, and was more than happy to 'relate to me his different contrivances in farming economy', and from whom Pehr learned a great deal and spent most of his time with. Mr Ellis did however have a better reputation where payments were concerned and never kept anyone waiting for their money. He would pay his labourers their due at the end of each working day, wages being from eight pence to a shilling with small beer provided; very few lived in for annual wages. Carpenters were paid eighteen pence per day while Mr Warner at Woodford gave his men nine shillings a week plus beer.

During their three weeks in Little Gaddesden Pehr and Lars stayed at the village inn, possibly the Robin Hood, and were surprised at the number of labouring men who came in for a drink after the day's work, some even sitting there for an entire day. He seldom saw any drunkenness and saw it was the custom 'that friends and neighbours come together, sit and converse, the abundance of money in this country ... seems to have conduced to this effect'. In keeping with the general air of prosperity, Pehr observed how well dressed the women were. 'Here it is not unusual to see a farmer's or another small personage's wife clad on Sundays like a lady of 'quality' at other places in the world, and her everyday attire in proportion'. When out visiting a red clock and straw hat would be worn with pattens to protect their shoes and on special occasions the sleeves

would have ruffles; hair styles would be the same as in London. With a note of disapproval, Pehr went on to say that the women seldom did much outdoor work, leaving such toil to the men, while they confine themselves to household duties such as preparing meals, keeping the house clean and washing their clothes, 'for about cleanliness they are very careful'. With a baker in every village there was no need to make their own bread or to get sore fingers from spinning and weaving because manufactured goods supplied their wants. Unlike in Sweden, the wives could spend their evenings chatting comfortably by the fireside. However, Pehr had to give them credit for being 'very handsome and very lively in society. In pleasant conversation, agreeable repartee and polite sallies ... they are never wanting'. If, however, necessity required greater exertion than would normally be expected women could be as clever managers as anyone and had the capability to get through any difficulties. As far as his observations went, Pehr was of the opinion that England was a paradise for 'ladies and women'.

At the end of three weeks, on 15 April, they set out to return to Woodford in Essex. Out every day, he had made enough notes for an entire treatise on every aspect of successful husbandry in Hertfordshire along with the geology and ecology of the county. When they came to say farewell to Mr Ellis he gave Pehr a list of his secret receipts and then offered to make a fourteen day tour with him into several other counties. He only expected to be provided with a horse, all his expenses en route and twelve or fourteen guineas 'into the bargain'. 'I thanked him for his attention, and asked him to defer this tour till another time.'

Throughout his travels Pehr kept a careful account of his expenses. Brought forward to 2 April, £25 11s 1d had been expended. Since that date three weeks' accommodation and food at the Robin Hood came to £2 13s plus six shillings for the woman who waited on them and two shillings and six pence for laundry. One pound and ten shillings were spent 'on sundry occasions when I entertained farmers to get to know various things about their practices. They had partly punch, partly beer, tobacco and cider'. The greatest cost incurred was the five guineas for fifteen weeks' bed and board at Woodford with Mr Hither. '(Note. It did not matter that we were away part of the time. He said that was how others charged.)' By

21 April his expenses thus far had amounted to £37 1s 7d.

On 21 April Pehr went into London to meet up with Abraham Spalding who introduced him to Mr Elliot, FRS, reckoned one of the best watch and clock makers in London, and after marvelling at his ingenious productions they made a visit to Peter Collinson, 'the great patron on Natural History and lover of learned men'. Together they went to the Royal Society which met every Thursday at 5 o'clock where the Secretary read an announcement that 'a Swedish gentleman of the name of Kalm had been introduced to see the Royal Society by Mr Collinson, Fellow of the same Society'. Pehr was quite struck to be referred to as a gentleman.

The 22 April was devoted to sightseeing in London, shown around by Mr Warner, visiting Westminster Abbey and both Houses of Parliament. That evening was spent with Dr Mortimer where they also met George Edwards who had recently published his *Natural History of Birds*. The 25 April he was watching the stone masons at work, how they cut and worked the stone for the many uses it was put to, from the largest buildings and houses, to door and window jambs, floors, paving, steps, garden rollers, posts to support ricks. London was built of Portland stone, including the London and Westminster bridges. On 29 April he went with Mr Warner and Captain Shierman to the top of St Paul's to get a view of the surrounding country. Unfortunately, the air was so thick with coal smoke as to obscure much of what might have been seen. The beginning of May saw the milk-girls out in the streets, decked out with flowers with their milk pots and cans. The girls would dance outside the houses, accompanied by a fiddler and then be given tips by their customers.

The next few days were spent out of town but on 4 May Pehr visited the Duke of Argyle at his country house at Whitton some ten miles from London. Before long his attention was again drawn to the cultivation of the land around London. On all sides there were market gardens, nurseries and pleasure gardens. The market gardeners were paid 'manyfold for their labour and outlay'. Some of the gardeners specialised in certain vegetables while others, such as Mr Gordon, grew purely for seed and made a good living out of doing so. 'Besides ordinary vegetables there were planted in the market gardens which lay nearest the high road all kinds of flowers,

which the passers by bought and carried away with them. I saw also the whole of this season both men, old women and girls, walk or sit in the streets of London with baskets full of all kinds of flowers, bound in small bunches, which they offered to the passers by, who also bought them in numbers’.

On 11 May they walked out over Fulham bridge and into the surrounding country, all of which was devoted to the growing of vegetables and fruit. Fulham itself consisted of several smooth streets of well-built brick houses with here and there tea gardens for Londoners to get some fresh air and taste ‘the pleasures of a country life’. On 13 May they were in London to see King George II close the session of Parliament for the season; he delivered the Articles of Peace for the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and took his leave of the House before setting out for Hanover. Pehr was standing in the front row and watched as the King got into his carriage and drove away accompanied by the Duke of Richmond. That evening he visited Ranelagh House, a popular place of entertainment where people of all sexes and ages came to hear the music and stroll in the gardens. The cost of entry was one shilling which included food and drink. Although impressed with the set-up and acknowledging that to freshen up the spirits once a week was a good thing, Pehr clearly frowned upon those, especially the young, who had far too many opportunities to waste their youth in ‘dissipation, idleness and libertinage’. He felt that precious time was wasted in vanity and idleness which in turn would lead ‘young girls to become in many ways altered and ruined and lose all pleasure in household duties’.

As an antidote to dissipation on 15 May they walked out into the country to the north of the Town where well-built villages and farm houses were scattered among the hay meadows, where a ‘superfluity of inns and beer shops’ attracted the multitudes who streamed out of London on fine Sunday afternoons and where summer houses with tables and benches provided tea and relaxation for many more.

At a meeting of the Royal Society, Pehr had been introduced to Philip Miller, head gardener at the Chelsea Botanic Garden and author of *Miller’s Gardeners’ Dictionary*, a work universally acknowledged to be the best of its kind, and on the 18th he spent the day with Mr Miller who later accompanied him to see Sir Hans

Sloane, by then in his ninety-fourth year. Pehr described Chelsea as a small suburb some two miles out of London. It resembled a small town with streets of well-built houses, where innkeepers, coffee house keepers, butchers, bakers and various tradespeople could make a good living from the Londoners who came out in fine weather. Also making a good living were those who had rooms to let out and 'all such people know how to charge for what they sell'.

On 20 May they walked out to Greenwich and on the 22nd, in company with some Englishmen and the Professor of Economics at Lund in Sweden, they went out to Hampstead. A few days later with another group they explored the neighbourhood of Dulwich; while there they quenched their thirst at a mineral spring. On 29 May Pehr went in company with several naturalists to the Duke of Argyle's house at Whitton. 'The Duke himself invited me, and begged me to come there once more before I left England, for which visit he himself fixed the day'.

By the end of the month all the hay meadows which lay around London had been mown and carried. This work was done by seasonal workers from Wales and Ireland who remained all summer. In Kent, all the fruit and hop picking was done by women and girls from Wales, 'all well, cleanly, and very neatly clad'. The meadows alone provided the farmers with enough income 'for their households, food, clothes, and everything that they require, and to give them power to pay their heavy rents without loss'. The production of hay was of such importance that Pehr devoted many pages of close observation to its cultivation.

When walking about the London streets, Pehr was impressed by what he called its institutions, in particular the London Bridge waterworks which supplied 'one's own kitchen by means of pipes made of the bored stems of trees' laid underground, and the hackney coaches for hire, and the penny post. At all the steps or stairs leading down to the Thames troops of watermen were available at all times of the day or night, particularly convenient when crossing over the river to Vauxhall Gardens which he did on 9 June together with some acquaintances to experience the 'much vaunted' place of entertainment. At the time of his visit Vauxhall Gardens had been transformed under the proprietorship of Jonathan Tyers and his family into a glamorous, exciting and fashionable venue where for

the one shilling entrance money a mix of all levels of society could partake of the attractions on offer. It covered some twelve acres of gardens and shady alleys with hundreds of coloured lights hung from the trees along the main walks. By the 1740s the main buildings were the Turkish Tent, the organ room and the famous orchestra building, and just completed in time for the 1748 season was the Rotunda or Grand Assembly Room for use in bad weather. There were also three ranges of supper boxes where hundreds of revellers could be speedily served with the legendary wafer thin slices of ham or beef, 1 shilling a dish, or a cold fowl for 2/6d; salad was extra a 6d with bread 1d, butter or cheese 2d each. Also on offer were cakes and pastries and a selection of wines, beer and cider. These supper boxes with their plain tables and fixed benches had been decorated by William Hogarth and Francis Hayman. The musicians and singers were generally the most popular ones of the day. Pehr took no notice of the appearance of the gardens, being more concerned with the large profits being made by all connected to them and the dangers to young people who might be accustomed to squander their money there. 'Young ladies, also, might not always be improved to the pitch of perfection here.'

The next day, in the afternoon, he went out to Peckham to visit Peter Collinson and his garden full of rare plants. Pehr spent the rest of June walking out of town and conversing with the farmers and growers, until the 30th when he and Lars left London at 3pm on the Gravesend tilt-boat, arriving at Gravesend at 7.30 in the evening having paid 9d each for the passage. The town itself was mostly made up of old and ugly-looking houses on uneven streets paved with flints. The chief occupations of the inhabitants were selling provisions to seafarers and travellers 'before they commit themselves to the waves'. All ships coming from overseas had to take on board an officer from the Custom House and it was where most people, Pehr and Lars included, would board their outward bound vessels. In the meantime they explored the Kent countryside which presented itself with the familiar well-cultivated fields and orchards. Cherry orchards lined the roads from Gravesend to Rochester and beyond, and a second cut of hay was being mown. The houses as usual resembled manor houses and even the timber-framed and plastered cottages of poor labouring people

looked well with vines and fruit trees trained against the walls.

Eventually, on 4 August, Captain Lawson came down from London and the next day, at 6 o'clock in the evening, they went on board his ship *Mary Gally* bound eventually for Philadelphia in North America. On 6 August the voyage continued down the Thames and out into the Channel, skirting the coast until the evening when they cast anchor off Deal, where 'the inhabitants live tolerably comfortably and support themselves principally by trade'. Others made a living by rowing passengers from ship to shore and back and others did well by supplying fresh fish to the mariners. In times of war, many turned to privateering and became rich. On the 7th, Pehr spent all day watching the fishermen digging for bait and seeing the boats at high tide being wound up the beach by means of capstans.

The ship set sail at three o'clock in the morning on the next day and by two o'clock was passing Dover, a 'little spot' with a castle on the hill. He could see the French coast through his telescope and came to the conclusion, on comparing the chalk cliffs, that the two countries had at one time been joined. This day, one of the women from a group of sixty German religious fugitives was buried at sea; they were on their way to the English colonies in America. At daybreak on the 9th they passed Dungeness followed by multitudes of porpoises tumbling in the waves. By the morning of the 10th they caught sight of the Isle of Wight and by the afternoon the Isle of Portland. On the 11th they passed Plymouth at a rate of five miles an hour which all agreed was incredibly fast. 'At noon we left the English Coast, and saw it again no more'.

During their time in North America Pehr and Lars went on botanical expeditions which took them from Canada to the Carolinas, resulting in a large quantity of specimens contained in chests and boxes which all survived the dangerous sea crossings back to Sweden. Also while in America, Pehr married a Swedish widow and together with her daughter and Lars they left the Delaware River in February 1741 on the perilous return voyage. A price of forty pounds per couple had been negotiated with Captain Shirley to include the transportation of the bulky collections. 'After a bad voyage, unusual storms, and often being in peril of our lives, on the 23rd March we caught sight of England. On the 27th of the same month our ship ran aground at the mouth of the river Thames so hard

... water poured through the bottom of the ship'. Reaching land they travelled by road to London which they reached by the 29th. Some days later, after it had been repaired, their ship docked safe and sound with all their goods. On 5 May they departed from London and on the 16th reached Gothenburg and by 3 June were safely back in Stockholm.

Editor's Note – Kalm's Account of His Visit to England on his Way to America in 1748, translated by Joseph Lucas, was published by Macmillan in 1892.

MARY WOODFORDE REMEMBERS

James Woodforde's 'Cousin Tom' was, like the diarist himself, born in 1740, yet Thomas's grand-daughter did not die until after the earliest volumes of *The Diary of a Country Parson* had been published.¹ This unlikely circumstance was a consequence of her father, Thomas's son Charles, marrying late and being relatively elderly – he was 58 – at the time of her birth in 1835.

According to the unpublished *Woodforde Family Book*, Charles had been 'page to William IV'. If that was so, it must have been when the future king was Duke of Clarence and the prospect of the throne still a remote possibility. Later Charles, who was born in 1777, worked in the Treasury, and Mary's place of baptism was St James, Paddington. Sadly, the 1901 Census tells us that she was 'Paralysed from accident at birth', an occurrence which did not prevent her from living to be 93 and leading an active mental life.

I first came across Mary Woodforde in the introduction to Dorothy Heighes Woodforde's *Woodforde Papers & Diaries* (1932) in which the editor writes.

A few years ago an old lady died at Taunton who would not only talk of Wellington as though she had met him at a garden party a few days before, and of the gay Paris of the Third Empire as though she had just returned from a visit there, but she would tell

KEY TO THE 'WOODFORDES' PHOTOGRAPH, STOKE ST MARY, 1902



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 MISS ANNE WILLEY | 6 MRS. PATTEN, wife of Col. Patten | 10 ² FARMER | 16 MR. DREW, Farmer, Post Office |
| 2 MISS WOODFORDE | Stoke House, later Stoke Court | 11 MRS. HARDWILL (1st) | 17 MRS. PORTMAN |
| 3 REV. H.F.B. PORTMAN | 7 MISS GRACE PORTMAN - | 12 MR. HARDWILL, gardener | 18 MRS. LANCE, nee Portman, Stoke Court |
| 4 MISS JOAN PORTMAN | Lady Adams | to Miss Woodforde. | 19 MISS SUSIE PESTER, Tucker's Cottage, |
| 5 MR. BEAMS (Bristol), nephew | 8 MISS RUBY DREW - Mrs. Rowse | 13 MISS RILEY, assistant to Miss Willey | later Mrs. Bird, mother of Mrs. Clarke, Stoke Hill |
| to Miss Woodforde | 9 MRS. POOLE, wife of Mr. Poole, | 14 DR. & MRS. CORBY, Corfe | 20 MRS. CHALLICE |
| | Tailor, Fyffe Cottage | 15 MR. TRUMP, The Forge - Last of | |
| | | the Blacksmiths | |

The photograph, a tribute to Miss Willey on completing 50 years of service for Miss Woodforde, was brought by Mrs. S. Salter of 2 Pattens at the sale of effects of Mrs. Dorch, Dairyhouse Farm, Stoke St. Mary.

Both Miss Woodforde (d. 1928, aged 93) and Miss Willey (d. 1914, aged 84) are buried in Stoke St. Mary churchyard.

Miss Mary Woodforde, related to Parson Woodforde the Diarist (1740-1803), was an invalid from birth. She lived at the Old Rectory, Orchard Portman, prior to moving to Woodfordes.

Help in identification has been received from Lady Adams, the late Mr. Roy Drew, Mrs. Rowse and Mrs. Silk.

stories both amusing and interesting of William Pitt, the earl of Chatham, for her grandfather, Dr Thomas Woodforde had been physician, and on occasion, banker to Lady Chatham, mother of William Pitt the Younger.

The link, however, goes back further than this. Mary Woodforde could well remember her grandfather telling her that when he was a small boy he had been taken by his father [Dr Thomas Woodforde] to visit a very old woman whom they found smoking a pipe. This was Elizabeth Broadbent, the last of the Fair Maids of Taunton who had gone out carrying a banner and a Bible to welcome the Duke of Monmouth before the Battle of Sedgemoor.

Whatever the truth of this last charming tale, alas, it was never told to Mary by her grandfather who had died some years prior to her birth but, of course, it could very well be that Charles had heard it from his father's lips and passed it on to his daughter. Nor was Elizabeth's name 'Broadbent'; it was 'Broadmead'. Dr Woodforde was very interested in her and a miniature of her painted by him is in Taunton museum. She was buried at the parish church of Wilton, now a suburb of Taunton on 10 March 1784. She was thought to be between 114 and 117 years old!²

A link which Mary certainly had with the seventeenth century was, however, provided by Sir Peter Lely's portrait of her 3x great-grandmother Alice Beale, the first wife of Dr Samuel Woodforde which, according to the *Family Book*, was in her possession at Stoke St Mary.³ Sadly, Alice herself never saw the completed portrait. She died shortly after the birth of James's grandfather Heighes and was buried at Binstead, Hampshire, on 16 June 1664. On 29 September of that year her husband records that he went to 'Mr Lely's ... for the finishing my dearest, dearest Alice's Picture begun by him long ago soone after we were married. It is exceedingly like and by it I am able perfectly to remember her.'⁴

Dr R. E. H. Woodforde, the compiler of the *Family Book*, also indicates that Mary was 'the last of the descendants of Dr Thomas Woodforde of Taunton' and that, although he had never seen her, 'I have had an interesting correspondence with her'. Mary had also been in correspondence with James Greig, the editor of *The Farington Diary*, in the second volume of which may be found the following footnote. It follows a reference to the banker-poet Samuel

Rogers (1763–1855):

Mary Woodforde, Stoke St Mary's, Taunton, Somerset, writes: I have been much interested in the 'Farington Diary' as have been many of your correspondents.⁵ I think you, and perhaps they, may be interested to hear that I met one of the persons about whom Farington writes. My father, a Treasury Clerk, knew Samuel Rogers, the poet, and in the year 1849, when I was fourteen, my father took me to a village flower show, at St Peter's, in the Isle of Thanet, and there met Rogers, a very old man, to whom my father introduced me, when he kissed my hand, and said he felt sure I should always enjoy [his poem] 'The Pleasures of Memory' without any assistance from him. He struck me as being very old [Rogers was 86] and inclined to tremble, and with a white face.⁶

This story is supported in the most recent biography of Rogers in which it is stated that 'His most regular holiday destination throughout the 1840s was Broadstairs' and that he and Alexander Dyce, the author of *Recollections of the Table Talk of Samuel Rogers* (1887), 'would meet for breakfast in Broadstairs, their rendezvous being St Peter's churchyard'.⁷ Although St Peter's has been engulfed by the growth of Broadstairs, it would then, as Mary says, have been a separate village.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The first three volumes had been published by the time Mary Woodforde died in 1928.
2. More information on Elizabeth Broadmead can be found on the Stoke St Mary & District History group website: <http://www.stokestmary.org.uk/page86.html>
3. The portrait is reproduced in Dorothy Heighes Woodforde, *Woodforde Papers & Diaries* (1932) and in the edition of that book reprinted by this Society in 1990.
4. *Woodforde Family Book* (unpublished), compiled by Dr R. E. H. Woodforde. Sir Peter Lely's home and studio was at 10–11 Great Piazza, Covent Garden <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol36/pp96-97>.
5. She would doubtless be still more interested when, from Volume 2 onwards, references are made to Samuel Woodforde, the artist.
6. J. Greig (ed.), *The Farington Diary, Vol. II* (1923).
7. M. Blocksidge, *The Banker Poet: the Rise and Fall of Samuel Rogers, 1783–1855* (2013).

LEAVES FROM AN UNWRITTEN JOURNAL

Part VII – The Swaffham Sisters (1804–1808)

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

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

1805

Sun. March 31.

Have spent £212.3.8 this quarter, and received only £153.14.0½. I cannot see where to draw in. Dr Donne has paid over my share of the Mattishall rents up to Christmas – no more will now come from there.

Fri. April 5.

A pleasant card-party yesterday. Castres appeared to be much attracted by Miss Fanny Manning, daughter of the Master of Thetford School, who is now a Governess at Swaffham. Sister Donne tells me they read Italian together. She seems an amiable girl, but exceeding delicate.

Mon. April 8.

Was obliged to send for Mr Laws to draw a tooth, for which he charged 10/6 – far too much, it being no distance to come.

Sat. April 20.

Anne Donne of Norwich has been with us – such a dear girl. I wish she could find a husband, but I fear she feels bound to care for her Mother. She is too thin and has a troublesome cough – pray God she may not be going into a decline. Since she had ordered a Chaise to

go to-day to Mattishall to visit her Brother I took the opportunity of accompanying her to spend the day at South Green. Dear Anne well, and little Willy thriving. Poor little George Smith the Curate's son has died – only 7 years old.

Tues. April 30.

To Ashill. Paid Mr Watts a Guinea for his Mare. Enjoyed a talk over old times with Mrs Watts, who was Anne Smyth of Dereham, Aunt Fanny Donne's Niece. Her Grandfather Mr Edmund Nelson being related to Lord Nelson, they have planted a Cedar in front of the parlour windows to commemorate their famous kinsman.*

Fri. May 10.

Dear Kate Hewitt plans to go to London to consult Dr Sims again, her alarming internal complaint being worse. Her Brother goes with her, thence proceeds to Blithfield near Lichfield where he hopes to borrow from Mr Bagot some of Mr Cowper's letters. He is indefatigable in his search. Sent Kate a draft for £40 for her to deliver to Miss Nancy Woodforde, being the residue of what I had from her when she left Norfolk.

Sat. May 25.

Have been a few days at Norwich at Mrs William Donne's. She is anxious concerning her Anne's health. For two gowns paid £4.0.3.

Tues. May 28.

Letter from dear Kate Hewitt from London. She was very ill from travelling in the night Coach, but is better already of Dr Sims' prescriptions. On arrival she found that her friends were not expecting her for three days and were unable to give her a bed. Her Brother flew to Mrs Lambert in Holborn, where he lodged some years back, but all her beds were full. He then went to Mr Miller's, and they opened both arms and doors and took her in. Next day John set off for Blithfield, but missed the Coach, jumped into a Chaise in the hope of overtaking it, but, failing to do so, returned to London where he will spend some days to recover from his agitation.

Fri. May 31.

The Downham Volunteers marched through Swaffham in their way

* The tree was in very fine condition until about 1912 when a limb was brought down by the weight of snow. Since then it gradually lost its beauty, and has recently been cut down.

home from doing duty in Lynn. There is still much talk of Invasion by the French being undertaken.

Tues. June 25.

Dear Kate Hewitt and Kitty are come for a short visit. Dr Sims' pills are proving efficacious I am thankful to hear. We have been much diverted by letters Kate has received from her Brother John relating his adventures on his second attempt to reach Blithfield. After travelling for two days and a night in a Coach full – 2 very fat women and a giant of a man, besides 2 other women and himself – he arrived at Lichfield at half past ten at night to find the Inn full of soldiers, and only one room to be had, on entering which he was fairly knocked down with the stink of Rat-rot. 'Young woman', said he to the chambermaid, 'I am nobody for stinks, and if I was, I have had enough of them since yesterday afternoon to serve my nose for a twelvemonth, so unless you have some sweeter hole than this to put me into, I must go on to Blithfield.' 'Very well, sir', said the girl, 'so it must be then for no stink, no wink is the order of the day or rather of the night with us', to which he returned, 'No wink with stink is the order of the night with *me*, and so your room and I can never agree'. Whereupon he jumped into a Chaise to drive 11 miles to Blithfield, arrived about one in the morning, and had a fine job to get in, for the housekeeper, hearing a knock, and thinking it was a Servant who had gone to a Fair and failed to return in time, said to herself, 'You *may* knock' – which they did, until she popped her head out of the window and saw a carriage! Whereupon she hurried down to let him in, made him a delicious cawdle, after which he slept like a top. He enjoyed his visit, admired old Mr Bagot and his wife and second family, quite falling in love with the baby Agnes, 9 months old – said he was fit to eat it up! He secured a good packet of Mr Cowper's letters, and after a visit to Mr Rye is now at Mr Hayley's. When in London he made the acquaintance of Mr Charles Cowper, brother to Mrs Pratt, who was most civil to him and may prove a useful friend, but who he is sure, would not welcome him as a suitor for his Niece Charlotte, of whom poor John still thinks most tenderly.

Sat. July 27.

Sister Donne and I have taken Castres to call upon many of our friends in the hope of finding some healthy girl who might engage

his affections, fearing that Fanny Manning is not likely to bear healthy children. Have dined with the Watts's of Ashill, Masons of Necton, Jowetts of Dunham, Bartons of Rougham (Mr Wright's niece Miss Saffery that was) and the Bedingfields of Oxburgh. Gave dear Castres £5 when he left to go to Mr Rolfe at Saham. He has sat for his portrait at Cambridge – a good likeness but rather small.

Sat. Aug. 3.

News of a glorious Victory over the French and Spanish Fleets, but alas! Lord Nelson was fatally wounded. The bells rang for Victory, and then tolled for poor Lord Nelson. Joy at the great news is wholly absorbed by sorrow. The Paper aptly remarks 'May his Name prove a Talisman of Inspiration to the heart of every British seaman, and every British soldier, in every clime and in every future combat with our inveterate enemies!'

Sat. Sept. 14.

Have been at South Green on a short visit. Dear little Willy goes on well. Left 2 Guineas for him. Dr Edward Donne looks far from well. He spends too much time in his study, reading and writing. In my return, called in at Dereham to see my Nephew Dr Johnson, whose adventures at London and in his travels are immensely diverting. He contemplates moving to Scarning Parsonage which is to let, and would be a more convenient house for Pupils, though somewhat large.

Sat. Oct. 26.

Have been on a round of visits – Norwich, to Mrs William Donne's – bought some black luster for a gown, and a gown for Mrs Hewitt – Hemblington, the first time of my going there – Yarmouth, for the christening of my little Godson Thomas Borrett. Gave the Nurse and Servants at Mrs Borrett's £1.6.6, and a Guinea for the Baby, half a Guinea for my Godson Francis Worship – returned to Hemblington to pick up Mrs Heath to go with me to Brooke to see her little girls and Kitty Hewitt at the School. Mrs Heath is a singularly amiable woman and a loving Mother to her large family. Maria is going on for 21, William at Cambridge, John, Kitty and Susan at School, and the 4 little ones – Philip, Sally, George and Edward – at home.

Fri. Dec. 6.

Grand Ball at the Assembly House in honour of Victory. Many gowns were of scarlet or crimson, making a gay appearance. The newest styles are short-waisted, high in front and low at the back, with long trains. Large crimson shawls are fashionable.

Tues. Dec. 24.

Sent little William Wright £1 for Christmas. Gave Miss Yonge half a Guinea for poor Widows, and 2/6 for a Lottery.

1806

Sat. Jan. 11.

Read on the Paper of Lord Nelson's body being taken in procession from Greenwich to St Paul's Cathedral, where it will lie in state until the Funeral. All London in the streets to see it pass.

Thurs. Jan. 16.

Am come to Scarning at the urgent request of my Nephew Dr Johnson, who was summoned back from Bath by Mr and Mrs Hewitt who fear his intentions regarding Fanny Brooke, whose Father suffered from brain fever which might be hereditary. It would indeed be a sad misfortune after all he has suffered with Coz. Cowper, were he to marry one who became similarly afflicted. She is at Bath for her health, having been advised by her Doctor not to winter in Norfolk. Kate having begged me to endeavour to discover the truth of the case, we go tomorrow to Norwich to call upon old Mrs Bowles, who was in the Brooke's family before her marriage. This is a pleasant house — Peggy Perowne has arranged the parlours and bedrooms well. In the Vestibule is a glass case with the little Spaniel Beau with a water-lily in his mouth, and over it Mr Cowper's mirror. In the Dining-Parlour are Mr Abbott's portraits of John and his Sister Kate, in the Study the portrait of Mr Cowper which I gave him when I left Mattishall, a Sofa under it, and a bust by Flaxman of Mr Hayley between the windows on a little circular table fronted with brass-wire net-work over green silk, answering to the cupboards under the bookcases containing Mr Cowper's books, all bound in calf with scarlet bands and gold lettering and the Cowper crest, gold on black. Half-way up the stairs is a window representing St Peter, which John picked up at an auction.

Sat. Jan. 18.

Yesterday to Norwich with John and Kate – called upon Mrs Bowles who was delighted to see us – talked much of my Bro. Castres and Sister Kitty – was pleased indeed to see ‘Master John and Miss Kitty’. When ‘Master John’ mentioned that he had been at Bath and made the acquaintance of Mrs Brooke and her daughters it was easy to draw her out to tell of the eccentric Mr Brooke who would not come to meals if he were reading Shakespeare. She never heard that his Father was thought crazy, though a very odd man, but the young one (Fanny’s Father), had two tremendous fevers – obliged to wear the strait waistcoat. We could not of course dwell exclusively on this subject. Poor John is clearly disturbed, knowing that it would be more prudent to give up thinking of Fanny, but fearing that he has gone too far in giving her reason to expect that his intentions are serious. But surely his sudden departure from Bath without a word will have cooled her ardour! Sad news of the death of Mr Pitt – Lord Grenville to succeed him. A full account of Lord Nelson’s Funeral – a most impressive spectacle!

Sat. Feb. 1.

Yesterday Johnny Mott gave a Ball and Supper in the Swaffham Assembly Rooms to celebrate his coming of age. The dear boy insisted that his Aunt Donne should be there, and prevailed upon Sister Balls and Self to accompany her. There was a splendid supper with all kinds of confectionery, grapes, etc. He sent a 6d loaf, a pd of beef, and a pint of beer to each poor person on the Estate – near 1500 in all.

Fri. Feb. 14.

Valentine’s Day. Sent little Kitty 2 Guineas. Went to Mattishall. Dear Anne much concerned for her husband’s health. They plan to go to Bath, where his Mother and Sister Anne are passing the winter.

Tues. April 1.

Archdeacon Yonge called for his Easter Offering – gave a Guinea – also 2/6 to the Clerk and 1/- to the Sexton.

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

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

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

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

Website:

www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk

Indexes to all past Journals may be accessed from the website under 'Publications'.

The indexes cover Subjects, Names, Places and Authors.

PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2020/21

Professor Richard Wilson

President

Martin Brayne

Chairman & Editor

Lee Abraham

Secretary

David Atterbury Thomas

Treasurer (General)

Peter McKay

Treasurer (Gift Aid)

Jenny Alderson, Robert Bates, Dr David Case, Diana McKay,
Brian Richardson, Katharine Solomon.

The Parson Woodforde Society is a registered charity no. 1010807

