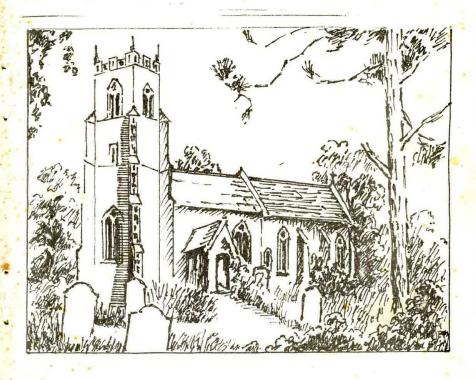
PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY Quarterly Journal



HOCKERING CHURCH, NORFOLK drawn for the Parson Woodforde Society, by Bertha Fügl DECEMBER 18. ... Another thing which is disappointing to me is, that Carrie and Lupin take no interest whatever in my diary.

I broached the subject at the breakfasttable to day. I said: "I was in hopes that, if anything happened to me, the diary would be an endless source of pleasure to you both: to say nothing of the chance of the remuneration which may accrue from its being published".

Both Carrie and Lupin burst out laughing. Carrie was sorry for this, I could see, for she said: "I did not mean to be rude, dear Charlie; but truly I do not think your diary would sufficiently interest the public to be taken up by a publisher".

I replied: "I am sure it would prove quite as interesting as some of the ridiculous reminiscences that have been published lately. Besides, it's the diary that makes the man. Where would Evelyn and Pepys have been if it had not been for their diaries?"

Carrie said I was quite a philosopher; but Lupin, in a jeering tone, said: "If it had been written on larger paper, Guv., we might get a fair price from a butterman for it".

As I am in the prospective vein, I vow the end of this year will see the end of my diary.

- "Mr. Charles Pooter" in George and Weedon Grossmith: 'The Diary of a Nobody' (1892).

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EDITORIAL

As mentioned before, some of the early back numbers of the Journal can no longer be obtained in their original format. In the first days of the Society, it seems to have been the policy to produce only enough copies to supply the membership as it was then. Since I took over the Editorship, I have tried to ensure that spare copies of each issue were printed. But over the years there has been a considerable sale of these, to new members and after the Gatherings when the Journals have been put on display, so we have very little left from the first five or six years of the Society's existence. At the same time, photo-copies of either complete Journal issues or separate articles can easily be obtained. The going rate at present is around 10 p. - 11p. per sheet, each sheet containing two Journal pages. This price is soon to be increased, and members who wish to have the work done are advised not to wait too long. I shall be quite happy to make copies from my own set of the Journal, if memhers will write to me.

I was reminded of this recently when I was asked to make copies of the long Custance article which appeared so long ago as 1970. The issue also has a somewhat perky Editorial comment, to the effect that we were to be congratulated on still going strong, after two years. I do not think that at that time anyone would have been prepared to take bets on our continued survival a further eleven years on, still less that we should have produced in the meantime three whole volumes of the complete diary of James Woodforde, with more to come. So I think I may in reference to the Society be permitted to re-echo with much greater emphasis the tag quoted first in that bygone Editorial - "Fluctuat nec mergitur!".

Only once, in the case of Mrs. R.P.Baker's article on the "Charter" originally published in the first number of the Journal, has material been reprinted in the Journal itself. I should naturally be still more averse from reprinting old work of my own. However, in 1973 there appeared an essay on Parson Woodforde's home, taken from the inventory made at the time of the sale in April 1803, and entitled 'A Tour of Weston Parsonage'. As we all know, the diarist constantly mentions the different rooms in his house, the inventory tells us how each was furnished; but this 'Tour' piece still represents the only attempt ever made to describe how the rooms were used, and by whom. Since the time it was written, various scraps of additional information have come to light. Now Miss Penny Taylor has done something I would not know how to begin to do, and has drawn out plans and elevations of the house. She calls these "highly speculative". They look very convincing to me. So in the next issue a revised and corrected version of the old 'Tour' will appear, embellished with the plans.

As for the present number, Miss Phyllis Langley's article on the Norwich Waits follows on naturally from Mr. Trevor Fawcett's on Norwich music, in our last issue. At last Briton, in many ways the most satisfactory of the Parsonage servants, receives his due meed of attention. As Mr. Bunting has pointed out, other servants have been featured in these pages from time to time. But in most cases they have been seen on occasions when things were going amiss - the misadventures of poor Sukey, the ups and downs of Ben Leggett's betrothal, the ludicrous antics of Will Coleman. Here, on the other hand, we have a most interesting analysis of the day-today relationship between master and servant which is of great value to anyone who wishes to

understand some of the finer points of eighteenth century social and domestic history.
And finally, a pleasant task awaits me. I
should like on behalf of the Parson Woodforde
Society, to extend the very warmest welcome
to the Rev. Paul Illingworth, who was instituted as the new rector of Weston Longville on
1 February, and is also the incumbent of the
other parishes lately in the charge of Mr.
James. We all hope that he will be very
happy in his new home. We hope too that if
he is not a Woodforde "fan" already we shall
soon be able to make him into one.

- R. L. WINSTANLEY

SUSAN OFFLEY

The winter 1981 Journal, the one before this present issue, was the last prepared for the printer by Susan Offley, to whom we now say farewell after a working relationship of some years. I well remember that it was indeed "a sauce of joy" to find her, after my misadventures with previous typists. These well-meaning young ladies, having been to school and secured one or two 'O' levels, knew very well that "Pigg" and "Wigg" were not the currently accepted ways of spelling those words, and used to correct poor Woodforde's locutions most ruthlessly.

However, Miss Offley will always be associated with the Society through the beautiful fair copies she made of our editions of the diary. The meticulous accuracy and neatness of this work does, I think, go a long way to compensate the reader for the fact that we do not have the resources of a publishing house at our disposal. The last work she did for us was to prepare the typescript of the Norfolk Diary, Vol. II.

CHATRMAN'S NOTES

At the time of writing, plans are going ahead for the Gathering and A.G.M. to be held this year at the Reform Club in Pall Mall, London, on Friday 14 May. While it is not possible to give details here, since much depends upon members' response, it is hoped that the occasion can be made both interesting and enjoyable. By the time these Notes appear in print the matter will have been decided and details circulated.

Our Society continues to attract attention in various quarters. An invitation was extended to us to seek membership of an Alliance of Literary Societies, and this we have done. The Alliance seeks to draw together groups of similar interests and to afford opportunity for mutual assistance and protection in a variety of ways, should the need ever arise. We are also listed in an increasing number of specialized journals and guides, and have received enquiries about membership as a result. There have also been a few occasions upon which members have made mention of the Society in either regional radio broadcasts or articles in the local press.

In early February I had the pleasure of representing the Society at the Institution and Induction of the Rev. Paul Illingworth, M.A., at All Saints' Parish Church, Weston Longville. Mr. Illingworth thus succeeds "Jimmy" James, now rector of Diss, and whom members will remember with so much affection. The new incumbent of Weston told me how very conscious he was of following Parson Woodforde, and expressed great interest in our Society. I have pleasure in reporting to you that he has accepted our offer of honorary membership. Many members will, no doubt, have the opportunity of meeting him on one of our future "Frolics" in Norfolk.

With postal charges again increased the Society's expenses in this direction would be somewhat reduced were subscriptions paid promptly without the necessity of reminder letters. The position has (continued on page 56)



Norwich Waits's ilver chain and badge, 1535

THE NORWICH CITY WAITS

12 December 1777. "I had but an indifferent Night as I thought my Sheets were not over and above aired - I heard the City Waits about 4. in the morning and their Musick was very entertaining indeed ..." - Norfolk Diary I, under date.

When James Woodforde was entertained by the Waits at 4. a.m., he was in no position to know that he was witnessing the closing stages of a widespread tradition more than 400 years old.

From a very early date there were official groups of waits or watchmen in large towns who were supported by the townspeople by law. These would probably be the natural descendants of the watchmen who formed part of royal and large private households where they were "on the strength". When they were employed by the town council they had to be supported by taxes on the townspeople. At first, however many watchmen there may have been, only one of them appears to have had a musical instrument which was usually a trumpet. Leicester had a trumpeter in 1314, and by 1396-7 an official band of waits was recorded in Exeter, and by 1408, in Norwich.

The office of Wait was clearly an important one, and is proved by numerous tenures of land by wait-service in many parts of the country, including Norfolk. As an example of this, Blomefield in his account of Norwich Castle states that "the Abbot (of St. Edmunds's) used to pay the sheriff yearly for castle guard and wait-fee £16. 3. 4" - a lot of money in the fourteenth century - and that was not an isolated case. A Wait in Royal Service had his duties and emoluments set out in detail in an account of the Household Establishment of the King, probably Edward IV (1461-83). For piping

the watch four times a night in winter and three times a night in summer he was entitled to a fixed amount of bread and ale, so many candles and so much coal. This was actually handed out in kind, but at the discretion of the Steward he might also receive a daily stipend of three pence or fourpence halfpenny. He was also supplied with a livery, and if he were ill or had been "lette bloode", he had a double ration of bread and ale and "one messe of grete meate".

In the course of time it became the duty of the watchmen or waits to pipe certain hours at night and as the sound signals became varied in tone, the waits developed by degrees into bands of minstrels, although even then they were still, for a time at least, bound to carry out their original duties as watchmen. For instance, in 1440 the three Norwich Waits were required to watch for the due hours from 1 November to 2 February.

The earliest reference to a Norwich Wait appears to be in a deed of 1288 entered in the Court Rolls of the City. He was also mentioned in 1312-3, and by 1346-7 Norwich had a Trumpeter, Johannes Sturmyn "Trompour", who was admitted a freeman of the City. From early in the fifteenth century, Norwich had a band of waits to whom there are numerous references in the City archives, and in 1475 they achieved national fame when they went in the train of Edward IV on an expedition to France which resulted in a very advantageous treaty with Louis XI. The City paid the Waits' expenses.

So far there had been apparently nothing to show how well the Waits could play their instruments, but an entry in the Chamberlain's accounts in 1533-4 reads: "And to the waites at commandement Forsed For studyeng to play upon the pryksong iijs iiijd" or, in other words, to teach

them to play from written notes, which must indicate that they had hitherto played by ear. At all events, the Norwich Waits had by this time become a team (now five in number) of very versatile musicians who were supported by the Mayor and Corporation and who figured in all the public occasions: royal visitations, proclamations, processions, thanksgivings and beating the City bounds. They were required to play during guild festivities, private banquets and weddings, and for pageants and plays. They alone had the privilege of performing music out of doors (including on the roof of the Guildhall) every Sunday and other holydays at night, which it is to be hoped the residents in adjoining houses enjoyed as much as Samuel Pepys' neighbours when he and Sir William Penn went out on to the leads of his home at the Navy Office on a fine night in June 1661 and "played upon the flageolette ... and sang". And the Waits took advantage of this privilege to go round the streets playing at inns and for the wealthier citizens. They may even have travelled further afield, for in 1589 Sir Francis Drake, who liked to have musicians aboard to keep his men cheerful, invited the Norwich Waits to go with him on his expedition, with Sir John Norris, against Lisbon. This was agreed by the Mayor's Court, who also made arrangements to supply livery and instruments for the voyage, but it is not absolutely certain that they did, in fact, go. However, in 1600 they indoubtedly had their moment of fame in playing Will Kemp into the City after his arrival - dancing - from London ... "passing the gates whifflers made him way through the throng of the people, and with great labour he got through the narrow press into the market place, where on the cross, ready prepared, stood the city waits which with wind instruments, viol and violin and voice not a little refreshed him.. " (7 March 1600).

During the Commonwealth the waits fell on lean times and even after the Restoration they did not altogether regain their former prosperity. They were still the official City musicians but they were less in demand for private parties and concerts, owing to the encroachment of unlicensed musicians; and travelling companies of entertainers were now in the habit of bringing their own musicians with them. Nevertheless, the practice of having the "town musique" playing at inns and for private individuals went on, outside Norwich as well as in. For instance, Pepys was well acquainted with them. As he says:

9 October 1667. (at Cambridge). "Up, and got ready, and eat our breakfast, then took coach.. and the town musique did come and play but Lord! what sad music they made...".

But he fared better at Bath :

13 June 1668. ... "Carried away wrapped in a sheet, and in a chair, home, and by and by, comes musick to play to me, extraordinary good as ever I heard at London almost, or anywhere, 5s ...

They fell into disgrace at Reading, though:

17 June 1668. ... "Rose, and paying the reckoning . .. musick, the worst we have had, coming to our chamber-door, but calling us by wrong names, we lay ...

And a century later Elizabeth Noel writing from Bath to Judith Noel (who would eventually be the mother of Annabella Milbanke, wife of Lord Byron) said:

27 January 1774. ... "the Season is almost over, people going daily ... The <u>Music</u> has been to serenade us, but I was not drest, having been very lazy this morn".

In Norwich during the eighteenth century the

City Waits were still playing four nights a week from 1 November to Christmas "under the windows of all good citizens and bidding them good morrow by name". They quartered the City and played "from midnight till about daylight" in one particular quarter on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, which was why Woodforde heard them after his sleepless night at the King's Head in 1777. Private individuals were not always able to command the waits' services, though few were like the Duke of Norfolk who at the beginning of the century was so incensed because he could not have the City trumpets (i.e. waits) to escort his company of comedians into the city that he virtually abandoned his great palace, so that part of it was eventually used as a common staithe or quay, and the remaining buildings were let out as the City workhouse. But the waits continued to be in demand for civic occasions: it must have been they whom Woodforde saw in the Guild Day procession for "swearing in the new Mayor" on 20 June 1780, for he says: "I saw the Procession from St. Andrew's Hall up to the old Guild Hall in Coaches and all full dressed, and a very great appearance they made - a band of Musique before, and the Musicians dressed in Gowns. Bells ringing, &c. &c."

This was almost their final appearance as an official band, so the reference to their gowns makes a good opportunity to consider their material organisation. From the time they were first promulgated and paid in kind or with small remuneration it gradually became the practice for them to be paid so much a year from taxes levied of the townspeople. This culminated in £30 a year in 1790, a sum practically impossible to rationalize by present day currency, but as curates at the time could often command no more, perhaps not an unreasonable amount.

It is not known whether the Waits worked at a trade besides their official work but it seems likely, at least until they attained the skill to take private engagements. This was certainly the case with Samuel Cooke who was blind. Appointed a Wait in April 1737, he became organist of St. Peter Mancroft church in 1748, holding both appointments until his death in November 1780.

Their livery was provided. It was variously described as russet coloured, tawny and even "blood coloured" at first, but was changed to blue in 1711. It was probably a long garment shaped like a cassock, perhaps like the garb of Christ's Hospital schoolboys. They also wore long silver collars and badges. One of the two still surviving in the Norwich City treasures is illustrated. Dating from 1535, it consists of alternating castle and lion links with a pendant shield of the City Arms.

The instruments they played changed considerably over the years. Sackbutts, cornetts and recorders were much in favour in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but early in the eighteenth century they gave place to bassoons and French horns. Stringed instruments were not much in use, except in private concerts later in the century, and by that time the Waits had to be content with joining other players, owing to the growing interest in music shown in the development of concert societies and music clubs. By 1790 the Waits had virtually played themselves out, and the disastrous effect of the French Revolution on trade in Norwich, as elsewhere, gave the City Council the chance to disband them. They lingered on for a few years more, playing individually or together for private gatherings. One of the last of them, William Johnston, who died on 1 September 1804,

was "a noted teacher amongst the amateurs of vocal and instrumental music in this city", and so perhaps provided the last word to a long and honourable tradition.

SOURCES

G.A. Stephen : 'The Waits of the City of

Norwich' (Norwich, 1933)

Trevor Fawcett : 'Music in Eighteenth Cen-

tury Norwich and Norfolk'

(U.E.A. 1979)

H.B. Wheatley (ed): 'The Diary of Samuel

Pepys' (1962)

Malcolm Elwin : 'The Noels and the

Milbankes' (1967)

'The Norfolk Tourist' (Republished 1819)

BILL WOODFORDE TO HIS FATHER

Mr. Woodforde Att.

at Castle Cary

Somersetshire

Dear Father

The pleasure I have in writing to you once more from a British Port is beyond conception. We arrived the 30th being only 28 days crossing the Atlantic from North America to the place of date, leaving that desirable City New York in possession of the Rebels as also Long and Staten Islands. Oh! it grieved me much to give up those enchanting isles; and we being the last Kings Frigate there had the most stinging and most mortifying scene of seeing the 13 stripes hoisted on a Battery of our own erection and French & American ships sailing by us without paying the least homage, with their insulting colours flying.

"O Britain, Britain, that was wont to conquer others has made a shameful conquest of herself"*. I cannot as yet inform you whether we shall be kept in commission or be payed off, or when or where it will be as Captain Squire has not yet received an answer from the Lords of the Admiralty.

I yesterday received a most Fraternal Epistle from Brother Sam, who informed me of the health and welfare of you and all friends in the West which I have been most anxious to learn Not receiving a single Scribe of a Pen all the long time I was in America from the West which caused me many a heavy hour and I thought it cruel. But no more of that: shall conclude with duty to you. Love to Sister Jane and compliments to all friends at Ansford, Alhampton and Castle Cary and remain your

+ Dutiful and unsettled Son W^m Woodford

Astrea. Spithead (near the fatal Royal George)
January the 17th: 1784

P.S. This instant heard it whispered that we are going round to Woolwich and believe it to be true therefore must beg you to direct your Letters there. I intend calling on Sam in town. I have many curiositys to bring home and one in particular for the Earl of Guildford; it is a small Canoo made of the bark of a Tree which I bought from an Indian at Nova Scotia. You shall see it as [I] intend to bring [it] into S-shire.

If you can send anything under the Seal it will be very acceptable at this time.

Am afraid Mr. H. Jennings has lost the use of his right hand as well as other people.

Pray send my Duty to my Mother if you please.

- * 'Richard II', ii, 1.
- + He started to write "Affectionate", but changed it to "Dutiful".

NOTE ON THE WRECK OF THE 'ROYAL GEORGE'

This was a first rate ship of the line. She had the tallest masts and the squarest canvas of any English built ship in the Navy, and at one time the heaviest weight of guns, of which she carried 108. Launched in 1755, she was fairly old, but not excessively so by the standards of the time. Her timbers, however, were entirely rotten.

On the point of sailing to the relief of Gibraltar as the flagship of Rear Admiral Kempenfelt, she went down off Spithead on 29 August 1782, in water so shallow that, the wreck having eventually righted itself, part of the masts and yards were visible. It is to this that Bill alludes in the letter. The exact number of casualties was never known, but put at over 800. There were two reasons for the very high number of victims. The ship was crowded with relatives of the crew, tradesmen and all the other people who came on to naval vessels while they were in port. The ship went down so quickly that none of those trapped between decks got out alive. The dead included the admiral, who was writing in his cabin.

In his once famous poem 'Loss of the Royal George', Cowper wrote :

A land breeze shook the shrouds, And she was overset ...

This has been derided as a landsman's idea and nonsense; but the poet probably took it from one such source as the 'Annual Register', which has "a sudden gust of wind overset her". In

reality, the cause of the disaster was quite different. A small leak was discovered some inches below the water line. The only way of making it possible to effect repairs to the hull of a ship was by the operation known as "careening". This meant causing the ship to list, so that one side of its hull came up out of the water. In warships it was done by taking the guns on one side out of the gun ports and wheeling them across the deck to put them with those of the other side. The double weight was too much for the bulwarks, which broke up; the water rushed in, and the ship heeled right over and capsized. The captain, a survivor, was tried by court martial for losing his ship, but this was a mere technicality, and he was "honourably acquitted". Eye-witnesses stressed the suddenness of the accident, and the great speed at which the vessel sank.

- 'Gent. Mag.', Vol. LII, Historical
Chronicle, 29 August 1782, 450-1,455.
'Annual Register ... for the Year 1782'
(1783)

A DIARY ENTRY RESTORED: THE DEATH OF "BROTHER JOHN"

Beresford's editorial dots signify places where the printed version omits passages of the manuscript and causes a hiatus in the text. This manner of editing is far preferable to the less honest mode of silently deleting material from an edited text, so that the reader has no possible way of knowing what has gone.

However, the reader who naturally relies on the dots telling him of omissions can be misled by their absence into thinking that he has an entire passage under his eyes when in reality he has only a part of it. An example of this came to be noticed the other day.

The reader of the printed diary will see under date of 31 March 1799 some account of the death of Woodforde's brother. It ends: "I sincerely pity poor M. Woodforde my poor Brothers Wife for so dreadful a shock & not being with him at the time". There is nothing more to suggest that the entry does not end here. In reality it is completed by another long passage, which shows the diarist growing more and more emotional as he continued to write :

Very poorly indeed all the Day long -Pray God! may my dear Brother be eternally happy in a far, far more blissful State

than here -

He died fully resigned to his Fate and sensible almost to the last Minute of Life

and very penitent -

The dismall News made us quite miserable -M. Jeans (who married Patty Clarke) went immediately to Bath after my Brothers Wife and returned with her the same day - What a dreadful Meeting must have been the occa= =sion between her and her Sister - by the great Loss & the sight of my poor Brothers Corpse-May the Almighty have supported her in so trying & so afflicting & truly sorryfull

[sic] distress.

My Nephew Will- Woodforde was with him, when he died, and dined with him at M.

Jeans's -

Violent Spasms in the Stomach attended with incessant Vomitings, and bursting some blood vessel inwardly was supposed to be the so sudden

Death - as he was taken & dead in so little Time Oh! what dismal Days! have we of late seen! May God Almighty be our Friend & Supporter -

For members who have joined the Society since 1975, when I published the biographical study called "Brother John", issued as a supplement to the Journal in that year, the following note about him may not be out of place.

John and his wife Melliora, a childless couple, lived for many years in a house near the top of Cary High Street with her widowed sister Martha or "Patty" Clarke. Two years before, however, the news reaching the John Woodfordes while they were in Norfolk, Patty announced her forthcoming marriage to Mr. Jeans of Alhampton. diarist sounded quite piqued: "I wonder much at the Ladys Choice - an old man & most ordinary"-Beresford V,45. (10/6/1797). After that John and Melliora moved out and went to live in lodgings at Bath. Woodford gives us their address - "Chatham-Row N.8." - and remarks that they had only one servant girl with them. must have seemed like the ultimate in deprivation.

On 17 March 1799 Anne Dorville, Heighes' widow died at Alhampton. The mysterious Ralph, eldest of the three expressly repudiated by Heighes as not his children, lived in Bath. Being named as the executor of his mother's Will, he started out on the day of her death. John Woodforde was his godfather, and unlike the diarist was no doubt on terms of friendship with him, so that the two men went together. If they rode, we may imagine John parting from his putative nephew by the Ditcheat turn some way outside Cary, and then going on through the town to the home of the Jeans. He was still there when, almost a week later, he suddenly collapsed and died.

In the light of the passage given above, my guess that he suffered a heart attack is clearly untenable. Perhaps some medical reader might tie up the symptons as described into a reason-

able diagnosis. John was born in September 1744, and was thus in his 55th. year when he died.

WESTON LONGVILLE WELCOMES ITS NEW RECTOR

The sound of church bells pealing on a mild winter evening heralded the welcome which Weston was to extend on Monday 1 February to its new rector, the Rev. Paul Illingworth. It was followed later in the service of institution and induction by a loud shout of "Welcome" from a large congregation, led from the pulpit by the Bishop of Lynn.

The institution of the new rector was conducted at All Saints' Parish Church by the Bishop of Lynn and the induction by the Archdeacon of Norwich. The church, enriched with decorations of spring flowers, was a colourful setting for the ceremony, over which the portrait of Parson Woodforde cast an ever watchful eye. Under the organist, Mr. Neville Moon, trumpeters and an augmented choir led the music. The congregation included members of the new rector's former parish in Yorkshire, chairmen of the Parish Councils in the area covered by the Weston Longville group of parishes, and members of the Parson Woodforde Society. In his sermon the Bishop spoke of the work done by the former incumbent, the Rev. Jimmy James, and went on to urge parishioners to support the new rector in his ministry there.

Paul Illingworth was born in 1938 and is unmarried. He studied at New College, Oxford, and Chichester Theological College, and was ordained at Wakefield, Yorkshire, in 1963. After curacies, he was Anglican Chaplain at Gothenburg in Sweden from 1970 to 1974, when he returned to Wakefield, where he remained until his appointment to Weston Longville.

NOTES TOWARDS A LIFE OF BRETINGHAM SCURLL, MANSERVANT.

April 26, 1785 ... Bretingham Scurl a new servant came here whilst we were at Dinner - I ordered him into the Parlour directly and made him wait at Table and he did pretty well - He appears to be a good natured willing young Fellow - Will: Coleman who is gardening for me looked rather shy upon Scurl at first - We call him Briton -

Thus, quite abruptly, was Bretingham Scurll introduced to the readers of Parson Woodforde's diary. Thereafter, for some seventeen years, until shortly before the record ended in 1802 his name appeared regularly in its pages and, throughout that period, some small detail of his life and character emerged. Equally suddenly, with the death of the diarist, the source of that detail dried up and the name of Briton sank again into the obscurity from which Woodforde had first rescued it on that early spring day of 1785.

For many readers of the diary a source of special interest is the life and destiny of some of the humbler folk appearing in it. What happened to a particular individual after Woodforde's death is a perfectly legitimate question, deserving of answer wherever possible, and a number of articles published in previous issues of the Journal reflects this interest. Those on Will Coleman (Vol. III,2 - Summer 1970): Ben Leggett (Vol. VI,3 - Winter 1973) and on the maidservants in general (Vol. IV,1 - Spring 1971) are examples.

The purpose of this essay is to shed some light upon Briton's life and background, and to trace so far as it may be possible what happened to him after the diary ended, until his own death, full of years half a decade after Queen Victoria came to the throne.

Perhaps it is not surprising that from the very first day of his service with Woodforde young Scurll should have been called "Briton". The full 'Bretingham' might well have been thought a trifle ostentatious for a manservant whose position in the household, at least to begin with, must have been lowly and unassuming. On the other hand it is not unlikely that to Woodforde's Somerset ear the young man's pronunciation of his own name came across as "Briton" or something very similar to it. That our Scurll was a local man is made clear in a number of references available to early readers of the diary.

At Reepham, three parishes meet in a single place, the churchyard, which contains two churches set side by side, Reepham St. Mary and Whitwell. The view was featured in a sketch drawn by the late Marian Peck in 1968 and reproduced on the cover of the Journal issue for Autumn 1980. A third church, Hackford All Saints, had been burned down in the sixteenth century and never replaced. Only the tower was standing in Woodforde's time. But the parish remained a separate entity, and it was not until 1781 that it and Whitwell shared a common register.

Briton was born at Hackford on 21 May 1762 and baptised three days later. He was the eldest of no fewer than fourteen children born between that date and 1785 to Robert Scurl, a baker, and his wife Sarah Robins. In the Hackford register, in which most of the Scurll entries were made by Woodforde's "M. Priest of Reepham", the forename appears "as "Brittingham", with a distinct dot over the "i", although it looks as though there was a later attempt to convert that letter into an "e". We have no information about the origin of the appellation, probably the surname of a family friend. There was at

Weston a Mr. Brettingham or Bratingham, but he was a landowner, and very unlikely to have numbered the Scurlls among his personal acquaintance.

No verifiable detail has emerged of Briton's childhood and early youth. It may be supposed that he would have assisted his father with the family business. Some eduation there must have been. Briton was probably fully literate, to judge by his various signatures in the register at Weston where he witnessed a number of marriages. A signature of his was reproduced in R.L. Winstanley's 'Another Parson', issued as a supplement to members of the Society in 1978. There is no record of lessons in writing offered by Woodforde, as was the case with Will and Ben. There is no record, either, of any previous period of service before Briton joined the household at Weston. It is likely, therefore, that at 23 years of age in 1785 Briton was both easing the burden upon the family purse and making way for younger brothers when he began his new life. He was obviously a personable young man; well might poor Will have looked "rather shy" on him. Coleman had been dismissed only days earlier, following a long stretch of unsatisfactory behaviour. As Briton arrived Will was merely filling in as a jobbing gardener might have done, pending a return to his home county. For over 14 years, since as a boy of sixteen he had begun to "live in" with Woodforde, first in Somerset and latterly in Norfolk, Coleman had enjoyed a comfortable living and had received many favours. He must have thought himself well settled, in so far as such thoughts ever entered his head. He now found himself obliged to witness the arrival and cordial reception of a younger man, and with feelings impossible to hide. Briton must have been as relieved as Woodforde himself when Will finally left for Somerset a few weeks later.

By that time, Briton had settled in. One of James Woodforde's earliest decisions had been to equip him with uniform. Within a week or so of his arrival, barely time enough for Woodforde to have felt himself satisfied with his new man, frocks and waistcoats were being ordered. These, together with such necessary embellishments as "buttons and pockets", cost Woodforde a guinea. Not long after, a new suit of livery was added, together with a "great Coat of Brown Cloth and red Cape to it". All these, as Woodforde was most careful to point out to Briton, were no gift but were to be worn while in service; ownership remained firmly with Woodforde. There was an obvious determination to introduce Briton to a full understanding of his duties as soon as possible. He was very soon being initiated into the mysteries of home brewing and Woodforde went to some pains, over several months, to make sure that his new man became thoroughly familiar with the art. By the end of his first year of service Briton had become an established and trusted member of Woodforde's household. He was considered reliable enough to escort Nancy on various little journeys; honest, in that he could be sent off alone to Norwich, to Dereham, to Mattishall, entrusted with commissions of one sort and another; and companionable enough to attend Woodforde and Nephew Bill on a tour of coastal Norfolk. It is impossible to detect, from the diary entries alone, just how Woodforde regarded his man in those early "My Man" he sometimes called Briton, or "my Manservant". Less frequently, perhaps reflecting a mood, the higher ranking of "My Footman" is used by Woodforde to describe Scurll but, on the whole, the simple and familiar "Briton" is used whenever Woodforde referred to him. It is reasonable to infer a similar usage in everyday affairs, indicating

an easy familiarity, a comfortable and friendly relationship. There is no evidence, however, to suppose that Briton was regarded by Woodforde at this time as anything other than a servant.

Despite the relationship, Briton was far from indispensible to Woodforde in his first years of service. When Woodforde set off for a three month visit to Somerset in the summer of 1786. his man was left behind. There is no record of Briton's feelings about this but as a personal servant, perhaps already something of a Sam Weller, he must have viewed the departure with some dismay. Although the Parsonage servants probably regarded Woodforde's absence as something of a holiday, the routine work would have had to be kept up, the glebe farmed as usual, and it is likely that Briton found himself obliged to turn his hand to unfamiliar. perhaps less congenial work. Only once, during Woodforde's time away, seems there to have been any news from Norfolk, and this was when Nancy received a letter from Mrs. Bodham reporting that all was well at the Parsonage. It may be that a request for news had been arranged beforehand and if so, would indicate that Briton did not enjoy any particular authority at that time. It was early in the following year, after his return from Somerset, that Woodforde first recorded some "uneasiness" over Briton. Significantly, it was about money and occurred at the time of Woodforde's annual payment of wages to his servants. Briton received his agreed £8 for the year with some hesitation. Yet this sum was far more than his predecessor, Will Coleman, had ever had. Four guineas was his wage, save for his last year, when Woodforde had increased it to five. Dorothy Marshall, in her book 'English Domestic Servants in History' points out that at this time personal servants in London could command sums of between fifteen

and twenty guineas a year, with extras.

It is not possible to identify the cause of Briton's discontent. It may have been the simple fact that Ben Leggett, Woodforde's "farming Man", received a greater sum; or possibly that Briton considered his position as a personal man to be the worthier of the two. Whatever the reason, Woodforde's unease subsided. As was usual with him, his temperament had no doubt caused him unnecessary nervousness. There was no suggestion of a change, and life at the Parsonage continued on its even course.

It is impossible to discover from the printed diary when the idea of another trip to Somerset first occurred to Woodforde. No mention of such a possibility was made, even at the time of his brother's death in March 1789. It was not until the end of May, less than two weeks before the eventual departure, that the subject was mentioned. A letter from Sister Pounsett told Woodforde that he was expected soon. His last letter to her, written a fortnight before, may have contained details of his plans. It may well be, therefore, that not until comparatively late in the day was Briton made aware that he was to accompany his master and Nancy. It must have been welcome and exciting news for the young man and probably generated some feeling among the rest of the household. On Tuesday 9 June, the party set off from Norwich, with Briton on the outside of the London coach, no doubt full of eager expectation. Woodforde himself recorded that it was Briton's first visit to the capital and later, in an unusually expansive mood, tells us that "Briton was highly pleased with London". He certainly made every effort to enable Briton to see the sights. A visit to the Covent Garden theatre featured in the itinerary, Briton watching the entertainment from the two shilling gallery. The next morning Briton accompanied

Woodforde to see, like any modern tourist, the Changing of the Guard. "Briton was well pleased with the Sight", Woodforde wrote in his diary that evening. This part of the diary brings rmediately to mind the amusing and enlightening journal kept by another rural visitor. That stalwart Somerset farmer, John Yeoman, recorded his opinion of London in 1777, some years before Briton's vist. Delightfully simple, sometimes confused, it exemplifies just those impressions which must have made Briton so "highly pleased".

It may be possible to detect in Woodforde's diary entries over this period a subtle change in his attitude to Briton. It is possible that he was beginning to regard the young man with something approaching affection. The very fact that he recorded Briton's obvious pleasure in the new experiences he was enjoying is significant. Woodforde was not a man given to enthusiasm in himself, let alone in others. And Briton was merely a servant. Woodforde was now approaching 50, a lonely man in many respects and, although it is difficult to consider him as a "family man", is it too fanciful to suggest that he may have had occasional feelings of regret that such a life had passed him by feelings, perhaps, just a little more than avuncular for Briton? Without doubt, he would soon have dismissed them.

From London Woodforde, Nancy and Briton moved on to Salisbury, to Hindon and Stourhead, and so to Cole. The round of visiting and being visited began. Briton saw much of Castle Cary and Ansford and, according to Woodforde, "was highly pleased with the people there". Certainly the young man, a new face and full of Norfolk gossip, must have been welcomed by the local servants. Woodforde himself, surrounded now by family and friends, was perhaps less inclined to require

Briton's constant attendance. Friends or relatives accompanied him on the famous fishing expeditions and during the whole of that long "Dies Memorabilis" at Sherborne there is no suggestion that Briton was present. Perhaps Woodforde felt that he had already over-indulged his man; more likely that in the enjoyment of his own family circle there was neither need nor inclination for undue intimacy with Briton. Yet, when the time came to leave Somerset in early September, Woodforde was aware that his man had found contentment there. "Briton left Somerset with great Reluctance", he wrote, as the party began the journey back to Norfolk. As Briton endured a night of pouring rain, on the outside of the London coach, it is not difficult to imagine that reluctance.

Once back in Norfolk, Briton's life soon settled to the old routine. The daily round was enlivened from time to time by journeys to and from Norwich, a half day's coursing, visits to his family at Reepham. Yet there are few diary references to him over the months to the summer of 1790. Not long after the return from Somerset Woodforde himself played host - to Brother John and his wife and Mrs. Clarke, her sister. They arrived at Weston in November and were to stay for more than six months. Once again Woodforde enjoyed the close proximity of family and friends. It is not altogether surprising then, to find that Briton's role was reduced to that of a mere servant. He had little part in the round of social pleasure, in the heightened activity and entertainment which Woodforde arranged for his quests, other than that of occasional attendant. Yet Briton must have had some vicarious pleasure in the bustle of activity which surrounded the usually so quiet household, even though there must have been more work for him to do, with additional guests for

him to wait upon. When the Somerset folk finally departed in June 1790, Briton found himself once more accompanying Woodforde, travelling with him in the "little Cart" on visits around the neighbourhood, frequently spending a day in Norwich. Several times during these visits it would seem that Briton was left to his own devices while his master attended to some special business or socialized with friends. There is no indication of how Briton used his own leisure.

With less distraction around him at home Woodforde found time to make more mention of Briton and his affairs in the daily record. He noted the accident when Briton, while harvesting, severed part of his thumb with a sickle. Woodforde ascribed the cause to drink. Briton had been to Norwich earlier in the day and had met with his uncle there; he had been "treated with Wine", a beverage that Briton could hardly have been accustomed to. That he should be assisting in the fields at harvest should occasion no surprise. It was a necessity, at the time of year when every available hand would have been pressed into service. Harvest frolics followed the gathering of the grain and Woodforde was careful to note down the fact when he had given special permission for Briton to stay out all night.

Increasingly, members of Briton's immediate family are mentioned by Woodforde. At nearby Lenwade Bridge lived Mr. Foster, the miller, who had taken as servant apprentice the 22-year old Jacob, one of Briton's younger brothers. He came up to the Parsonage on occasion. A sister called too. Woodforde does not name her but it is likely that she was Mary, the eldest of the surviving girls. She was about 20 at this time.

It may have been Woodforde's preoccupation with his health during the early part of 1792 which caused him to feel "hurt" again over Briton. As before, money was involved. Briton was reluctant to accept a bank bill in payment of his wages due. It may have been merely a preference, understandable in his case, for actual cash that caused the hesitation. Nevertheless it affected Woodforde sufficiently for him to note it down, and obviously ruffled him. feelings did not last. By the spring of the year, his health a good deal better, Woodforde was again on friendly enough terms with Briton. When they went into Norwich for a few days in early May, taking Nancy in the small cart, with room for only one passenger. Woodforde took turn and turn about with Briton each of them walking about half the distance. Once arrived and comfortably lodged, Woodforde set about making arrangements for attendance at the theatre; he treated Briton to a place to watch the performance. It was about this time too that Briton witnessed his first public hanging. These were frequent enough at Norwich, and Briton must have heard often of similar scenes from the other servants. The fact that Woodforde wrote of it establishes that it was talked of at the Parsonage, and it is likely that Briton recounted his experience to his master. He did so also following a "Servants Frolic" up at Weston House, given by the Squire in celebration both of a birthday and to mark an improvement in Mrs. Custance's health. Briton attended, accompanied by Woodforde's maid Betty and their high opinion of the event was duly noted, evidence again of the informal relationship. It is unfortunate that the diary which Nancy kept at this time does not add to our knowledge of Briton's life at the Parsonage. Apart from recording that she "cut out half a Dozen

Stocks" for him, her only references are casual mentions of his various trips to Norwich or his visits to his family at Reepham.

Early in 1793 came Woodforde's first note about Briton's mother. She was very ill: "her Disorder a Decline", he wrote. Briton was given leave to visit her and, in the following month when, according to Woodforde she was "almost gone", he went to Reepham again. She died in the first week of April and a few days later Woodforde noted that he had given Briton leave to attend the funeral and to be out all night. Mrs. Scurll must have been in her early fifties when she died. She had borne many children, as many as fourteen between 1762 and 1783; at least two died in infancy. Woodforde does not record any of Briton's feelings at this time, but this does not necessarily indicate a lack of sympathy. Briton was back "at home": i.e. at the Parsonage on the day after the burial and seems easily to have slipped back into routine. In that summer of 1793 Briton was 31 years old and had spent his last eight years in Woodforde's service. Another Somerset visit had been arranged and in late June Woodforde, Nancy and Briton set off from Norwich for London in the "Angel Post Coach". They were not to return to Weston until 23 October, and it is remarkable that in that long period away, Briton is hardly mentioned in the diary, a very great contrast when compared with the previous record of the Somerset visit in 1789. He did, however, receive a new frock and livery for the visit.

It may be that by this time Briton fitted so naturally and so comfortably into the Parsonage househo ld that the diarist barely thought of him when making his daily record - save only, perhaps, if some event, a trifle outside the normal routine, forced itself upon his attention. Certainly Woodforde had much to interest and

amuse him during the visit, as well as concern for a number of happenings back in Norfolk. There was the short stay in London, meetings there with Nephew Sam, visits to picture galleries and the Haymarket theatre; a reunion with the Custances at Bath and numerous shopping expeditions. He was, as he would have said, "much hurried". Once in Somerset, in early July, there began again that interminable round of visits and being visited. Woodforde called frequently at Ansford, Castle Cary and Bruton. A number of excursions to places within reasonable range of a hired chaise was arranged, Stourhead among them. Much fishing and walking took place, together with inspections of his Ansford estate.

Several matters troubled Woodforde at this time. He heard from Betty Dade, looking after affairs at Weston Parsonage, of the death of his clerk, old James Smith; of the problem of Winfred Budery his maid, sent packing because of her pregnancy - "very well managed by Betty". There was the death of Mr. du Quesne. The days of his "acting young" were over. In all the activity, in all the coming and going, Briton must have played a part, must have been despatched upon a variety of errands, have accompanied Woodforde about the countryside, assisted with the domestic routines at Cole. He must also have renewed the relationships he had established during that previous visit some four years earlier. It was only at the end of the holiday, when Woodforde had what he regarded as a providential escape from injury, that Briton figures in the diary as anything other than a mere attendant. While ascending Frome Hill, on the way to Bath, the Bruton chaise, hired for the trip, was overturned during an attempt to avoid being driven over by a large waggon. Briton, accompanying Woodforde and Nancy on horseback, was able to

proffer aid. He dismounted and was able, by stopping the eight horses pulling the waggon, to prevent further damage. The long journey back to Norfolk was broken by a few days spent at Bath, a visit to Oxford and the usual sightseeing in London. It is curious that, although there was some buying of presents, including a new gown for Betty Dade, presumably in recognition of her good management at the Parsonage, there is no mention of any reward for Briton. Perhaps his assistance at the scene of the chaise accident was regarded as part and parcel of his normal duties. On the journey to Oxford, however, Woodforde did express pious thanks for the fine weather when recording that Briton was to ride "outside". There is little of real interest about Briton

There is little of real interest about Briton in the months following that long absence from Weston. There was the purchase by him of a mahogany table for, or perhaps on behalf of, his brother. This piece of furniture, given in part-exchange by Woodforde for new tables supplied by Sudbury, "my Upholsterer", had to be paid for by Briton. There was no question of a gift. Even Betty Dade had to find eighteen shillings for the smaller table she acquired for her mother. Curiously, the prices which the two servants paid were exactly those allowed to Woodforde by Sudbury. There was no attempt at additional profit.

Other references to Briton at this time tell of his day at St. Faith's Fair, of a servants' "frolic" at Honingham Hall, of an occasion when Woodforde again treated him to a place at the Norwich playhouse. Although Briton enjoyed these occasional breaks in an otherwise regular routine, it was, perhaps, inevitable that the dullness of the life at the Parsonage irked him from time to time. Even Nancy complained bitterly about it. Briton at 32, vigorous in health, unmarried, must surely have had mom-

ents of utter dejection, have felt almost mutinous. He was not, as so many servants were, entirely dependent upon the good will of a master. He had a family nearby; moreover, he had a father in a fair way of business. When Woodforde, in July 1794, reprimanded Briton for taking "French leave", visiting the Bidewells and staying out late, the younger man was not slow in reminding Woodforde of these facts. He told his master that he would leave his service. come Michaelmas. "Such is the gratitutde of Servants", Woodforde wrote, feeling no doubt that he was much put upon. "He has been with me 9. years the 26. of April last, which I find is much too long for any Norfolk Servant for they will then get pert, saucy & do as they please". On the following day, when Woodforde renewed his remonstrances, Briton was very inpudent and his master, obviously of the opinion that Briton was getting above himself, might well have concluded with Dodsley that

... Haughtiness and Pride but ill agrees
With one whose Duty is to serve and please.

Although the differences did not seem to last long, for there is no further mention of Briton's actually going, the event marked a stage in Woodforde's relationship with him. No longer is it possible to detect much more than a somewhat impersonal tone in the entries. There is still some concern, on occasion, for Briton's welfare and that of his family. Briton himself must have been pleased when the Parson invited Scurll senior to make the bread for distribution to the poor of the parish. Woodforde ordered fifty shillingsworth, and at 3d. and 6d. a loaf. This represented a large order. The Parson is found doing quite another kind of favour for his servant's family, and this is important because it tells us a good deal about

the sort of people they were, so that we are not surprised to discover that Briton himself was an owner of property in after life. In a very late part of the diary, on 27 December 1800, Woodforde wrote that he had lent Briton £5 "to help paying for a House at Reepham, lately purchased by the Family of Scurls'".

In the end Woodforde seemed to develop a kind of resigned acceptance of Briton's ways, familiarity and a preference for a known character being, in part, responsible for this. When Briton, slightly drunk, became very "saucy" again, Woodforde merely commented that "He is treading fast in the Steps that poor Will Coleman did". Upon another occasion, when Briton complained at being obliged to walk to and from Tuddenham, there being no available horse, Woodforde simply noted that "he had been making too free with M. Mellish's Beer". So much was this revised attitude the case that. during the whole of the long Somerset visit of 1795 - it lasted from late June until early November - references to Briton were few indeed and merely recorded his presence or his despatch upon some errand or other. Neither Woodforde nor Briton realised that this was to be their last view of Somerset, that never again would they make the familiar round to Ansford and Castle Cary, not again stay at "dear old Cole". For Woodforde there would be a regular exchange of letters and proof that Briton too kept some sort of contact with his Somerset friends was provided when Woodforde noted that Briton had received a letter from Philip, one of Sister Pounsett's servants, during the year which followed.

In the early months of 1797, life at the Parsonage continued its customary tranquility, the routine seldom interrupted. The diary records little of Briton's activities at this time,

save that he was "poorly" for a day or two, his complaint a "violent Purging, he is subject to it". Woodforde's remedy was to dose Briton with rhubarb! When, in May, Woodforde himself developed serious symptoms, so serious that members of his family were summoned from the West country, the diary takes on a different form. Written now upon sheets of loose paper, it becomes more a record of the diarist's own feelings and preoccupations, less concerned with external events, increasingly introspective. Instead of appearing as Woodforde's personal servant, Briton features as merely another member of the household, all of whom take it in turns to sit up at night with him. Nancy, too, takes part in this. She, with one or other of the servants, for it is always two of them together, keeps watch by Woodforde's bedside. Although Briton is not singled out for special mention, he at least avoids the accusation levelled by Woodforde at Sally: "she is not good at it". Yet surprisingly, once Woodforde has recovered from the immediate crisis, it is to Sally, as well as to Betty, that he offers tangible reward. Sally gets two yards of black silk, itself a present to Woodforde from elsewhere. Betty enjoys a new silver spoon. Briton gets nothing at all.

Although Woodforde made something of a recovery and the family returned again to their Somerset house, the pattern of life at Weston Parsonage had changed for good. Throughout the years which followed Woodforde continued in indifferent health, suffering fainting fits, often "weak and fearful", short of breath and with odd feelings about him. From time to time, temporary improvement gave him hope that all would yet be well, that he could soon resume his old style and enjoy a more active life. At such times his interest in affairs other than his own health revived, and he would record more cheefully the domestic

trivia. He became more centred upon that which immediately surrounded him. There are signs that Briton is restored once more to something approaching favour: a little gift at tithe audit time, a word of praise as when, upon returning from a trip to Norwich Woodforde says of him: "Briton did all his business extremely well". More frequent permission is given for Briton to visit Reepham and stay out all night. Yet, with a flash of his former self, Woodforde refused Briton a new great coat: "his old one is as good as new".

In April 1799 Woodforde made a new Will. There are no details in the diary. He merely notes that it was properly witnessed. Briton was one of the signatories.

It was in January 1800 that Briton received £9 at the annual payment of wages, the second time that this had occurred. This larger sum which, incidentally, represents a 12½% increase, must have been by way of special recognition, since payments thereafter reverted to the smaller amount. It was, perhaps, belated approval of Briton's value, since Woodforde must have realised that he was not an easy master to serve at this time. Woodforde's health continued to decline and as a result, Briton seemed gradually to achieve a greater degree of freedom, of independence. He was now approaching 40 and, with an ailing master, could have been expected to take what reasonable advantages he could. A day at the Lenwade races, a number of frolics in Weston House, Honingham and Tuddenham, a harvest supper at Billy Bidewell's, a trip to Reepham Fair, and increasingly, permission to stay out all night. It was now that he acquired his new great coat, a new velvet frock, a woollen waistcoat, pretty in red, green and brown stripes, some breeches, these too in velveret. His relatives seem to call a little more

frequently at the Parsonage: his father, a brother from Colchester. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Briton, finding it far easier now to manage a sick and ailing master than had previously been the case, was making the most of the circumstances.

Throughout all his years of service Briton seems to have shown no special interest in the female servants of the household. There can be little doubt that Woodforde, had he been aware of any possible intrigue, would have confided details to his diary. Yet now, in the course of just a few weeks early in 1802, Briton accompanied Sally Gunton on a number of occasions to various local frolics, probably without the knowledge of her "intended", Thomas Harrison. She was in her late 20's and was probably a most attractive companion for Briton.

By this time, though, Woodforde was most likely too weak and ill to take much interest. The end was fast approaching. In the September of his last year Woodforde notes that Briton has been sleeping in his master's bedroom, upon a sofa, and that a candle burns there the whole night through. Briton is performing almost the last of his personal services for Woodforde. In October comes a last mention of the Scurlls. Lydia, Briton's youngest surviving sister, called at the Parsonage and Woodforde, with a last flicker of an appreciative eye, notes her down as a fine young woman. He lived on until the first day of the New Year, but wrote no more. His record of Bretingham Scurll had come to an end. A note in the Beresford edition of the published diary tells of letters between Nancy and Briton in the years immediately following Woodforde's death. None of these have survived.

Woodforde's Will was one of utter simplicity. Apart from a nominal sum of £5 for the poor of

Weston he left everything to his niece and nephew, Nancy and Bill, each taking half of the estate, both real and personal. His reasons for so doing fall outside the scope of this article, but the result of the bequest meant that Briton received nothing at all, not even a token of his long service; nor, of course, did any of the other servants. In the April following, the great sale of the diarist's effects took place, spread over three days. The purchasers of almost every item are recorded, but Briton's name is not among them. We may presume, however, that he kept his clothes!

At Woodforde's death Briton was 40 years of age with more than seventeen years of service at Weston Parsonage behind him. The diary displays him as a versatile man, able to turn his hand to a whole range of domestic duties, from waiting at table to working in the fields, from competent brewing to the safe handling of money and business matters. He had never given Woodforde any major cause for concern, not had he any real faults. He was well qualified for similar employment elsewhere. would be satisfying to record his immediate pattern of life once he had left the Parsonage. Unfortunately, it is not possible to do so. Wild speculation there has been: suggestions that the Squire's wife intervened to find him work, or gave him financial backing. All this is quite fanciful, for which there is no evidence whatever. The plain fact is that in the years following Woodforde's death Briton disappears from our knowledge. We do not know where he lived or where he worked, whether he returned to the family at Reepham or sought fresh fields.

The first information about Briton in his later years comes from the "Norfolk Roll" of 1819.

He appears therein as the owner of land at Hardley, the tenants of which were a "J.Halls" and others. Hardley is some three miles north east of Loddon, with Bergh Apton a similar distance to the north west. Briton obviously did not live there at this time. At 57 years of age, he was probably still in an active occupation. A further gap of years ensues before there is any fresh information. In 1835, the year following the death of his brother Robert at Reepham, Briton described now as "of Bergh Apton", is named as an elector in the Hardley division of Loddon Hundred. The Reform Act of 1832 had enfranchised, among others, £50 short leaseholders. The fact that there were only nine electors in all indicates that Briton, now 73 years old, had become a man of some substance. In the very same year his name appeared in the "East Norfolk Roll Book and Register" as being of Hackford-next-Reepham, and this points to the possibility that he had retained some interest in the bakery there, now managed by his nephew, son of brother Robert.

In 1840, now an old man of 78, Briton made his Will, describing himself as "Yeoman" of Bergh Apton. It was a document rather more complicated than had been that of his old master James Woodforde; unnecessarily complicated in that the trust clauses were ineffective and his entire estate was destined for his nephew, Brettingham Potter Scurll, of Reepham. There were two main bequests: the property at Hardley, and cottages in the parish of St. Julian, in Norwich. There is little doubt that these had come into his possession after the death of his father. Briton's furniture and personal effects were also to go to the nephew.

On 15 April 1842 Briton died at Bergh Apton. The death certificate, only recently made a statutory requirement, gave the cause of death as "Old Age", and his age as 81. The obligatory informant was

an Elizabeth Forder, the wife of a tailor resident at Bergh Apton. She may have been a friend, or possibly the mistress of the house in which Briton lived. His death at Bergh Apton and his appearance in various local records are strong indications that he remained in Norfolk thoughout the second half of his life. It does not seem possible that he could have accumulated sufficient funds while in Woodforde's service to set up for himself, unless helped by his own family. Passages in the diary of the Rev. William Jones, in the Torrington Journals and in Macdonald's 'Memoirs of an Eighteenth Century Footman', show that this was by no means uncommon at that period. But no trace of Briton as a local shopkeeper or as proprietor of an inn or tavern can be found. The likelihood is that he served other small households from time to time; perhaps worked with his brothers at Reepham; perhaps never becoming really settled. Briton died unmarried. No gravestone markes his last resting place and, since no grave plan of the churchyard at Bergh Apton exists, it is unlikely that the exact place will ever be known.

No farther seek his merits to disclose, Or draw his frailties from their dread abode

APPENDIX: ROBERT SCURLL AND HIS FAMILY

A closer look at Briton's family background and antecedents, although hardly acceptable as an integral part of the essay dealing with him, where it must have been censured as a wholly unjustifiable digression, is worth taking here, since it will throw a certain light upon his own position and status within the society of his time.

Although Robert Scurll apparently spent the whole of his working life at Hackford, he was born in neighbouring Whitwell. The notice in the register of that parish reads:

Robert y^e Son of William Skirle & Margaret his Wife y^e 10 th February 1736

It could surely have been no joke to raise a family of fourteen on the proceeds of a small-town bakery in the eighteenth century. But Robert seems to have prospered, although we have only one small piece of evidence concerning this, apart from what has been noted previously about his ownership of house property. In 1789 Whitwell church acquired a new peal of six bells, brought from Downham to replace the former ring of five. Quite a substantial sum of money was paid for this by the ringers, of whom Robert Scurll was one.

However, the medical record of the Scurlls was very little different from that of other large families. Sarah Scurll was three years younger than her husband, and probably married in 1761, at the age of 22. The first five children, Bretingham and the three brothers and one sister nearest to him in age, were healthy and longlived. But there was one four-year period during which Sarah bore a child every year. The exhaustion produced by these manifold and nearly-spaced pregnancies began to show in the much decreased life-expectancy of the younger children. Leaving aside those who died in infancy we might notice Mary, the seventh child. She survived long enough to marry an Edward Plane, but died in 1796, aged 24. Benjamin who came next died in 1804, aged 30. Joseph, the twelfth child, is glimpsed for a moment when as a boy he came to the Parsonage with yeast from the family bakehouse. He died in 1803, aged 22. John, the "poor, weak Brother" said to be "in a decline", died at the age of 20. The illness and death of Briton's mother is also noted in the diary.

Robert died in 1807, and the notice in the register is very circumstantial:

Robert Scurll (Widower) Son of William Scurll and Margaret his Wife (late Till, Spinster) aged 71 years, was buried August 14.

In the Norfolk Record Office at Norwich may be seen the Consistory Court copy of Robert Scurll's Will, dated two years before. This is indeed a most interesting document. By 1805 only half the original number of children were still alive: five sons beginning with Bretingham, a married daughter named Sarah Chapman, and Lydia, unmar-Her father left almost everything he possessed to Lydia, presumably because it would have been she who cared for him after his wife's The Will specifies first the "Messuage or Tenement and Baking Office with the Yards, Rights, Ways and Appurtenances thereto belonging", and second "all my Stock in trade Baking Utensils and implements of trade Household furniture plate Linen Money Book and other Debts and all other personal Estate of what nature or kind soever". The only condition of inheritance was that Lydia should pay to each of her surviving brothers and her sister a nominal sum of two guineas, and that in the event of non-payment they would be entitled to distrain on the premi-There is no mention of houses or any other form of real property such as we know Robert must have owned, and it seems likely enough that it had been given to the other children in the testator's lifetime. This, then, is the most likely origin of the cottages which Bretingham owned and in turn bequeathed to his nephew.

As for the bakery, there are no directions in the Will about selling the business, and the implication must be that Lydia would have carried it on by herself, either employing a journeyman or two, or with the help of her brothers. For all I know, Briton may have gone into service in the first place because he disliked the bakery trade. All the same, it would be pleasant to

imagine him producing lovely, nourishing wholemeal loaves for the sustenance and well-being of the Reepham folk, the day of the factorymade product being happily still far off.

THE ANDREWS FAMILY

At the time I wrote the essay published in the Journal in 1975 under the title of 'The Girlings: Chronicles of a Farming Family', it crossed my mind that a similar study of the Andrews family might interest readers and add to our stock of available knowledge about the farming community of Woodforde's Weston. Indeed, they were far more authentically natives than the Girlings, who were by origin just as much strangers to the village as Woodforde himself, although it is true that they did not come from nearly so far away.

It would be a good thing, and historically very useful, if we could supplement the diary with a real in-depth study of Weston. This is unfortunately no longer possible, since we are lacking a vital piece of primary evidence, the Custance estate records. Without the farm accounts we cannot know, except in the rare cases where Woodforde himself tells us something about these matters in his diary, how much land a given farmer was holding at a certain time, where it was situated and how much he paid for it in rent. However, even if these accounts were to be found and made available to researchers, we should still be far from having the entire farming picture. We know that there were other proprietorial families, such as the Berneys and the Lombes, whose lands extended to Weston parish, and whose tenants are found among Woodforde's tithe-payers. It is also clear that some of the larger and more prosperous of the farmers owned land as freeholders. For thirty years before Mr. Custance came to reside in the parish, the nominal

squires had been absentees. On such estates the wealthier farmers often bought up land with less difficulty than on manors where the landowner was on the spot and concerned to keep the acreage of his property intact.

In the case of the Andrews family, evidence exists that they owned some freehold land. The so-called "terriers" of ecclesiastical estates, required by the bishop and when provided stored among the diocesan records, dealt mainly with the glebe and other land belonging to the rectory. Therefore, it was of the utmost importance to set down the exact location of each parcel of land, however minute. In open-field agriculture, where the various holdings lay in strips side by side, without boundary or other markings, the only way of determining this was to say that it "abutteth on" a strip belonging to someone else. The name "Andrews" appears on all the five terriers drawn up by Woodforde during his incumbency, and also on a much earlier example, dated 1706. The inference is surely that the name is present on all the others which I did not have time to examine on my last visit to the Norfolk Record Office. The importance of the family is shown also by the fact that this or that member of the family signs with the rector as a churchwarden on some of the documents, and on others countersigns as one of the "Chief Inhabitants" of the parish.

Our main authority for the history of the village families, in the early days before Woodforde(s diary is there to help us, is of course the parish registers. The oldest Weston register begins in 1660, and the Andrews family are in it almost from the beginning.

For our purposes the first dates we need examine are early in the eighteenth century. In 1708 "Stephen y Son of Michael Andrews & Elizabeth his Wife was baptized August 29th".

In 1710 "Michael Andrews Son of Michael Andrews and Elizabeth his Wife was baptized February 10th".

Our next extracts show the marriage of the same two people, now grown to manhood:

1729

Michael Andrews & Eliz: Mack were married July the 29

1732

Stephen Andrews & Mary Crotch were married April y tenth

The younger brother, we see, was married first and at the early age of nineteen. In May of the following year his daughter Susanna was baptized. But there is no further notice of them, or of any other children born to this couple, and they may have left Weston soon after Susanna was christened. A sort of unofficial primogeniture system often prevailed among farming families, and if the inheritance of the family farm were earmarked for the elder son, the younger might have little option but to seek his fortunes elsewhere.

The elder son in this case, Stephen, stayed on and became the father of not one but two families. His first child was Elizabeth, baptised 2 January 1733/4. There is no other record of her. Then came Stephen, 4 April 1736. "John Son of Stephen and Mary Andrews" was baptised on 14 May 1738, and is presumably identical with "John Andrews an Infant" who was buried on 23 July of the same year. "Michael Son of Stephen and Mary Andrews" was baptised on 6 July 1740, which makes him a very near contemporary of Parson Woodforde, born three weeks before.

With that last entry the sequence of children born to Stephen and Mary ends. Perhaps the mother's health now began to fail. She had given birth to four children in a little more than six years. At all events, she died in 1742, the register recording the burial of "Mary Wife of Stephen Andrews" on 7 November. The two surviving children, Stephen and Michael, grew up to become the farmers of Woodforde's generation whom he found there upon his arrival at Weston.

Not more than three years after the death of his first wife, Stephen married again. Unlike his previous marriage, the new one was not celebrated at Weston, so we do not know anything about the second Mrs. Andrews, except that she bore the Christian name of Bridget, not very common at that place and time.

Anyone who wishes to grasp the stark realities of eighteenth century life, even among relatively prosperous inhabitants of a country village, always markedly less unhealthy than the town of the period, might look at the mortality record of Stephen Andrews' family. He had probably lost two out of the four children of his first marriage. Now he was to beget a large number of children by his second wife, only to see most of them die almost as soon as their lives had begun.

There is an odd burial notice, for a "John Son of Stephen & - Andrews", August 1745, who could have conceivably been Bridget's, the second wife's child, or even the son of another Stephen Andrews altogether. Passing over him, we see that the eldest child of the second marriage was perhaps Mary, baptised on 6 July 1746. Richard Paul Andrews was baptised in January 1748/9 and Bridget in September 1750. The parents of these children must also have been

anxious to name a daughter "Priscilla", perhaps the name of a much-loved relative or close friend. We shall see how they went about this, and how their expectations were defeated by the appalling facts of eighteenth century mortality. "Priscilla, Daughter of Stephen & Bridget Andrews" was baptised on 11 September 1747 and buried on 30 September. A second Priscilla was christened on 8 October 1752 and died in 1754. Then in 1757 this notice was written into the register:

Prisilla [sic] and Anne Twin Daughters of)
Stephen and Bridget Andrews) May:15

The above date may be and probably is incorrect. Four baptisms dated "May" of this year were inserted between some for June and others dated in November. It may be that the right month was March, since the burial of what seems to be one of these children is dated "Ap. 20". Again, there is confusion over the other twin. is not mentioned again, but there is a notice of the burial of "Susanna Daughter of Stephen & Bridgett Andrews" on 22 August 1758. If this entry refers to the second of the twins, of course the name either in the baptismal or the burial entry must be wrong. The item could also be about another child born to the same parents, and lacking a baptismal entry, but this would seem unlikely.

However this may be, Stephen and Bridget appear to have had no more children. Some ten years later, on 27 September 1768, their 20-year-old son Richard was buried, five months after his father, who was entered in the register as:

Stephen Andrews Yeoman - Ap. 1768

Some eighteen months after the death of the elder Stephen Andrews, another burial entry heralded a further loss in the family. It runs as follows:

Mary y. Daughter of Stephen) Mary Andrews)

Recollecting that Stephen's first wife had been Mary, we might take this entry to refer to either yet another daughter whose baptism had gone unannounced in these very ill-kept records, or the eldest daughter Mary of the first marriage. But if it refers to her, she must have been in her late twenties when she died, and neither of her parents was living in 1769. The form of words, in fact, is typically that used to mark the burial of a child. Now the second Stephen, Woodforde's Stephen if you like, whom we know from the diary, also had a wife named Mary, as we can see from other register entries. He was aged thirty-two when his father died, and very likely he was already married. The coincidence of the child's death having occurred at Weston soon after that of the grandfather there may, I think, be explained in this way. Even the elder son of a farmer, who would reasonably expect to inherit the ownership or tenancy of a family farm, might while he was still young prefer going away and making a livelihood for himself elsewhere to working for his father. But on the father's death it would be natural enough for Stephen to return, with his wife and child, and take over the Andrews' farm.

I think we can almost prove that we are on the right track here, by considering another baptism, that of "Stephen Son of Stephen & Mary Andrews" on 7 April 1771. For this was none other than that most vivid and colourful chararter called by Woodforde "Young Stephen Andrews". He was followed by a brother, Richard (1773) and a sister, Susanna (1774), neither of whom survived. Mr. Howes indeed made yet another mistake over a Susanna or Susan Andrews. He listed the child's baptism as on 18 July 1774. But in fact she was dead

by then, having been buried on 5 June. The baptismal entry is the last on a copied list, Easter Day 1773 to Easter Day 1774. The entry immediately before it is dated in March. That immediately after, the first on a succeeding yearly list, bears the date 22 May. "July" therefore cannot possibly be right. The point I am making here, however, is that all three were entered as the children of Stephen and Mary; and Mary is the "M. Stephen Andrews" of Woodforde's diary.

In March 1773 the widowed Bridget Andrews married a William Ames, three weeks after her only surviving daugher, also Bridget, married Barnard Dunnell, as recounted in my recent essay on the Dunnell family. It therefore came about that when Woodforde arrived to take up residence in the parish three years later, the only representatives of the Andrews family there were Stephen and his wife and son, Michael, their stepmother Mrs. Ames and stepsister Mrs. Barnard Dunnell.

The diarist soon came to know the farming brothers. In my essay 'Woodforde and Tithe', I remarked that in the first few months of his residence at Weston the parson had little to say about tithe, and ascribed this to the fact that he arrived in May, almost exactly between one tithing period and the next. But after all, tithe did constitute by far the greatest part of his income from the living and was not something that could be left unsettled, whatever the time of his arrival. It can now be seen from the entries printed in the appendix to the Norfolk Diary, Vol. I, that nearly all the tithe-agreements with the local farmers were made during the diarist's inspection visit of the previous year. Having with the assistance of Mr. Peachman made out "a proper Plan concerning my Tithes & Glebe" on 2 May 1775, two days later he invited most of the farmers up to the Parsonage, got out some bottles of wine and came to an agreement

with all but two of them. As he was, unlike many incoming clergymen, not proposing to raise the tithe, it may be accepted that he would meet with little opposition. Stephen Andrews was one of the "Gentlemen", as Woodforde politely called the farmers, who concluded this amicable bargain with him. Then in 7 May the diarist wrote: "I settled both Rent & Tithe with Michael Andrews this Afternoon from Michaelmas 1775 to D. 1776". The rent was presumably in respect of part of the rectory glebe land which he had already announced he was willing to let at eighteen shillings an acre, tithe free.

By the next year, however, Michael appears to have changed his mind. Beresford printed part of the diary entry for 4 June 1776, describing how the local farrier pulled out one of the diarist's teeth, somewhat less expertly than we should expect from a modern practitioner of what P.G. Wodehouse called the fang-wrencher's art. The editor left out the last part of the entry altogether, admittedly less "quaint" but far more important from a historical point of view:

Michael Andrews called on me this Evening and told me that he did not chuse to keep my Glebe any longer than till Michaelmas next, unless I would let him have it. for a Term and also my Barn with it, which I would not.

The farmer's two requests, for a lease extending over a period of years, and the use of the rectory barn for storage of the grain harvested, may suggest that a considerable acreage was involved in his farming operations, and that he was an agriculturist upon quite a large scale. It did occur to me, indeed, that Woodforde's expression "my Glebe" could refer to

the whole of it, leased to Michael before the diarist's arrival, by Mr. Howes. But this can hardly be squared with the offer to all the farmers to let parts of the glebe at a fixed sum per acre. However this may be, it would seem likely that his taking on of Ben Leggett as a "farming Man" on 30 September, after he had got in his first harvest with the aid of Mrs. Dunnell's son and the hired man, was the result of a decision to keep at least some part of the glebe in his own hands.

On 21 August he wrote one of those maddening passages occasionally to be found in all parts of the diary, that might have explained so much but in fact tell us nothing at all. He wrote on that day :

Michael Andrews & another Man called on me this morning Michael was very civil indeed & matters were made easy -

At least, however, we can see that harmonious relations between the two were established. Woodforde had recovered from the toothache, and Michael was no longer making unreasonable requests. As the farmer was not to relinquish his part of the glebe until Michaelmas, he could have retained occupation of it through the harvest time of 1776. The rectory glebe lands always adjoined the parson's house and grounds. On 24 August, three days after the last quoted entry, Woodforde wrote:

Gave Michael Andrews's Harvest Men that were cutting Wheat

at the end of my Garden a Largess of - 0: 1: 0 They gave me three cheers for the same -

On 12 September he explained the practice as "A Custom in this Country when Harvest is in to give the Farmers Men who call on you - each Set

0: 1: 0

Perhaps, as a "foreigner" who did not yet know the ropes, he had mistakenly paid the men before they finished their work. When the harvest time came round again next year, Woodforde recorded, on 20 September:

To M. Manns Harvest Men - gave - 0: 1: 0

To Stephen Andrews's Men - gave - 0: 1: 0

To Michael Andrews's Men - gave - 0: 6

condition that they never ask me again

for a Largesse -

The labourers evidently concluded that he meant what he had said, for the entries of many subsequent years have no mention of any payment of this kind made to Michael's men. It would seem most likely that by 1777 he was no longer cultivating land in Weston parish, a supposition which may be corroborated in different ways through the diary. One way of doing this is to look up the list of guests at different tithe frolics. The bigger farmers and most important tithe-payers were naturally invited year by year, and they themselves would have naturally been unlikely to miss their one chance in the year of enjoying a good dinner and plenty to drink at the Parson's expense. So I think it may be taken for granted that the omission of one of these farmers' names over some years, without explanation, means that he was no longer farming in the parish in those years.

We find upon examination of this source that Michael Andrews was present at Woodforde's first Tithe Audit on 3 December 1776, but not listed in the following year. In 1778 Woodforde did not put down the individual names, but after that for some consecutive years only Stephen is there. He is called simply "Andrews", as though there were no possibility of confusing him with any other man having the same surname. In 1783 Michael reappears, but only as representing his brother, "who is ill". In 1790, 1792 and 1794

Stephen is again absent, but it is his son, not Michael, who deputizes for him. Only in 1795 does Michael come back as a tithe-payer in his own right, at the same time as the diary reveals him as once more residing in the parish.

The diary indeed records the names of people who lived in the parish but did not pay tithe to the rector, and also the opposite cases, those who were tithe-payers but not residents, as the Girlings were for some years. As for Michael, however, he appears to have disposed of his land in the parish at the same time as he ceased to live there. The first terrier to be drawn up by Woodforde, which he dated 22 May 1777 and which was signed by Stephen Andrews as one of the churchwardens (the other was John Bowles), lists a number of small parcels of land now held by Stephen but previously in the ownership of Michael. These are mentioned wherever they adjoin the rectory lands. One is particularly interesting. It concerns half an acre in the great field "and lieth between the Land of J. Biddle's N. and Stephen Andrews, late M. Andrews, formerly Stephen Andrews & sometime Wakefields. S -".

People had long memories in those days, and the entry deals with land once owned by a Mr. Wakefield, no doubt sold by him to Stephen Andrews the elder, left to Michael and passed on by him to his brother. "Late" simply connotes the owner immediately before the present one.

We hear that Michael Andrews' barn was one of those blown down in the great storm of 1 January 1777, but the diarist does not tell us where it was situated. Michael was the owner or occupier of some water-meadows at Attlebridge in 1780, from which he gave Woodforde leave to fish. With his habitual lack of care, Beresford at this point refers to "one Michael Andrews", although his own index to Vol. I of his edition shows three

previous references to Michael. By 1783 we are given positive evidence that Michael resided at Morton-on-the Hill where, we recollect, his step-sister Bridget Dunnell was also living:

At 12. o'clock walked to Weston Church and buried one Susannah Thurston of Morton aged 27
Years She lived with Michael Andrews as do her 2.
Sisters Michael Andrews p. me my Fee for burying

her - 0: 10: 6

If the reader wishes to enquire about Michael's marital status, all he can be told was that the farmer was presumably a single man all this time. In fact there is nothing at all about him in the first Weston register, except his baptismal entry already quoted; nothing at all in the register for 1783-1812, or in those of Mortonon-the-Hill. We have to go back to Woodforde, and even that infallible source has nothing to tell us for some time. Then on 15 May 1791 the diarist retailed a very interesting piece of information:

I read Prayers and Preached this Afternoon
Weston Church My Squire and Lady at Church this Afternoon Michael Andrews of Morton and his
new Bride dressed very smart and more People
with them were at Weston Church to day -

I thought at first that "new Bride" could signify only that Michael had been married, his wife had died and he now married again. But in view of the total silence of the records it would appear more likely that all Woodforde meant to say was that Michael was newly married, at the age of fifty-one. The lady's maiden name was probably Clarke.

She now enters the diary as one of the select

group of characters of whom it can be said that they add greatly to its interest. Relations between the Parson and her were at first quite cordial:

M. Michael Andrews of Morton admiring my black kind of Ducks some time back, sent a few Days ago to know if I would send them a Duck and a Drake, therefore sent by Boy Billy Downing with a Duck and a Drake to day to her as a present, as I don't sell them - She gave the Boy a Shilling and was well pleased - Diary: 2 November 1791.

We hear no more about the Andrews while they remained at Morton, except for one incidental reference to a man named Fisher, of that parish, who was ordered by the ecclesiastical court to carry out "a kind of Penance next Sunday for calling M. Michael Andrews, a Whore". Woodforde called this "a foolish kind of Affair between the Parties, and the expences of which to both must be high" -

In 1795 they returned to Weston, Michael having "taken M. Smiths Farm (lately James Herrings)". From that point on, they are seen much more frequently. We might almost deduce that Mrs. Andrews had no children of her own, from the great interest she took in her young servant Billy Gunton, the brother of Sally at the Parsonage. She made a special arrangement to come with him to the Parsonage, where both took the sacrament, on Sunday 8 May 1796, and "appeared to pay as much attention" to him, "as if it was really her own Son".

After Woodforde's serious illness in the next year, while he still had his relations staying with him, we are told that on 25 June "my Brother and Nephew took a Walk in the Afternoon to Michael Andrews and there stayed till near 8.in the Even' - They behaved exceedingly civil

& genteel to them -

However, the diarist's opinion of Mrs. Michael eventually changed, and by 1798 he clearly had her down as a meddlesome and interfering woman; or, as he more picturesquely put it:

...A more officious, busy-bodied, Woman in all Cases relating to other People's Concerns I know not - more particularly when ill - a true Jobish friend". - Diary, 29 February 1798.

The last piece of news we have of her is contained in the diary entry for 10 June 1799: "Michael Andrews Wife has met with a very bad Fall, and very dangerously strained her Ancle". Michael on the other hand, is mentioned from time to time, later than this. When the bucket fell down the Parsonage well because the chain broke, and could not be recovered, it was Michael who lent what the diarist called "some large Iron Creepers", or grappling equipment, to draw it up again.

To be concluded.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (cont'd)

improved a little this year, but a number of subscriptions is still outstanding, in spite of letters requesting payment. It is proposed to circulate with Journals a note to those members who have not yet paid and consideration is being given to a plan whereby, in the absence of any response to such a note, further issues of the Journal would not be despatched.

On a personal note I should very much like to hear from any member who is in a position to add to my essay on "Briton", which appears elsewhere in this issue. Scurll is a diary character of some fascination and, since I am told that he is a "fawourite" with a number of readers, any fresh information would be of great interest. I have not been able to trace any earlier attempt at a "potted biography" of the man, and information upon this too would also be of value.

-G.H. BUNTING, Chairman

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