PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

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As it was in Woodforde's day, before restoration.

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Some aspects of his character as revealed in his diary are certainly unattractive - he could be vindictive gluttonous, selfish, idle and over-critical of others. He was not a deeply religious man in the sense that the Victorian revivalist clergymen were. But these are at any rate very human failings, in a man doing his job no worse and perhaps rather better than most of his contemporaries.

It is the other and more often expressed side of Parson Woodforde that shines out of the pages of his diary - kindliness, humour salted with irony, friendliness, open-handed generosity to rich and needy alike, a direct and unaffected humanity and interest in everything going on around him. He was a welcome guest in all the villages round Weston Longville: Hockering, where Mrs Howes sought his advice on making her Will; East Tuddenham, where he brought a cucumber in his pocket for his ageing but sprightly friend Mr du Quesne; Mattishall, where the diarist enjoyed a syllabub while playing at quadrille with his host Mr Smith (he lost 6d.); dining with Mr and Mrs Townshend, who "behaved very genteel to us", but whose dinner of eighteen dishes was spoiled "by being so frenchified in dressing"; Witchingham, where the self-important Mr and Mrs Jeans held sway; Sparham with its beautiful church, where sporty Mr Stoughton came with dog and gun to lighten the depression of Woodforde's last years when many of his former friendships were going astray.

- *Christopher Somerville: Twelve Literary Walks - A Prodigious Fine Walk with Parson Woodforde (1985), 60/61.*

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EDITORIAL

In the *Times Saturday Review* for 10 October this year there was an interesting piece by Hugh David, the biographer of Sir Stephen Spender, which I took particular note of since I have made my own entrance as the humblest of aspirants to membership of that fraternity. David found that the subject of his proposed work fell out with him before a word of the book had been written; and that most violently. Spender wrote to David's publishers, saying that he was "someone to whom if you say 'No' he reports you as having said 'Yes'." He went on to attack biographers in general, calling them "muckspreaders" and "parasitic hypocrites".

I have always had a feeling that Parson Woodforde would as strongly have disapproved of me. I can see him, sitting in some Elysian counterpart of the parlour at Weston Parsonage, flicking through a representative selection of our Journals, and finally tossing them aside with a good deal of impatience. Didn't the man have anything better to do with his time than write all that stuff about me! And that about Betsy White – she *was* a mere jilt, and who knew it better than I? And if my nephew blacked out all those entries describing how he sowed his wild oats, who had a better right to, once he had turned respectable? And of course Brother Heighes was a scrounger. Look at those loans he wanted me to guarantee for him, and I'd have been left to repay them when he defaulted. He expected me to find his daughter's school fees. Why, he even reneged on the measly one-and-sixpence a week that Cary parish tried to screw out of him for the upkeep of the child he had by a common wench. But what I say is this: it was all private, family matters. And now it's been dragged out into the light of day. I wish I'd never written that ——— diary.

And the shade of Dr Johnson, just inside the door, rumbles approvingly: "Sir, let not his faults be remembered . . .".

Mention of Brother Heighes reminds me of a point I have made recently: that it is time to examine some of the essays written in the early years of the Society, never seen by many of our more recent members, and to bring them up to date by incorporating the information that has come to hand since they were written. Mrs L. H. M. Hill's articles on the Custance family and the Priests have already appeared in a revised form.

Now we turn our attention to the Woodfordes, and in particular to Heighes. Two essays have been written about him, of which the first, *Brother Heighes and Sister Woodforde*, takes the story down to the final breakdown of his ill-starred marriage, and is included in this issue.

I should like to welcome to our pages a new contributor, Mr Roy Creamer, who has made a most readable addition to the *British Diarists* series. John Byng, author of the so-called 'Torrington Diaries', was a *tourist*. If we must classify, he belongs to a particular sub-genre of diarists, a man who went on trips partly for the pleasure he derived from travelling, and partly for the sake of being able to write accounts of his travels. Martin Brayne, who certainly needs no introduction to our readers, has written on the only recently published eighteenth century traveller James Plumptre, and his contribution will appear in a forthcoming issue when members will be able to, as the newsboys used to cry: "Read all about it!".

Usually the autumn number carries an account of our annual "Frolick". In 1992, however, it was held much later in the year, and therefore a description of the festive weekend could not be included in that issue. The account, written as usual by our valued contributor Phyllis Stanley, is printed as part of the present number.

R. L. WINSTANLEY
Editor

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The annual "Frolic" and AGM for 1993 is to be held in Somerset and the date chosen is the weekend of 14-16 May. A programme is being prepared which it is hoped will appeal to old and new members alike in that, while the itinerary will include old favourites, areas previously unvisited will be added. An outline programme and booking form will be sent to all members as soon as details are settled. Those members proposing to attend will be sent a detailed itinerary nearer the date. Now is the time to ensure that your diary is clear for that weekend.

The project for the printing of a new edition of Ansford I is well advanced. When the volume first appeared, 12 years ago now, as the Society's first adventure into the field of publication, the volume was a work of some 126 pages, covering the years 1759-1763, and without an index. The editor has long thought that a revised edition, with a text roughly double that of the original and professionally indexed, would be welcomed by members. The volume would be, in fact, not simply a revision but an entirely new work. It is hoped that a publication date and details of cost can be announced early next year.

Following repeated requests plans have recently been approved to reprint a limited number of copies of Norfolk II and III, currently out of print. By this means it is hoped that newer members will be able to complete their sets of the three Norfolk volumes. Quality photocopying is the only viable production method, the volumes being bound as were the originals. It is not possible yet to specify a date when these copies will be available, or to guarantee a price, but it is unlikely that this latter will vary much from the price charged originally to members. Remember that this will be a strictly limited production run, so if you do want to reserve a copy it would be as well to let me know in advance.

I write these Notes as the Christmas season approaches and hope that they will be in your hands by then. As always, it is my hope that members and their families will enjoy the festivities and that the New Year will bring you all you wish yourselves. As I wrote in my Christmas Notes sixteen years ago, may I say again for 1993, with Woodforde himself: "Pray God an happy Year may this be to us and all our Friends every where."

G. H. BUNTING
Chairman

BROTHER HEIGHES AND SISTER WOODFORDE

Historical research is an endless task. We might think that, after much hard work, we had found out and made clear everything that was possible to be known about a particular person, or event, or institution. But then time passes; more and more information comes to light which, if we had only possessed it at the time we were writing, would certainly have been in our text. The acquisition of additional fact very often leads us to alter this or that detail of interpretation. Finally the time comes when our once pristine work comes to look old-fashioned. And then, if interest in the subject survives, it is time for a new look and a revision, which preserves of the old piece only as much as deals with incontrovertible facts and so may take its place in what is practically a new work.

The essay *Brother Heighes* was written for a very early issue of the Journal, No. IV, 2, and was published in the summer of 1971. It was a very long one of 41 pages, not far from the length of a whole Journal at the present time. However, four pages were taken up by pictures of Heighes and his wife Anne, and a family tree. All these have appeared in more recent numbers of the Journal and do not need reproducing here. I had hoped to show a picture of the Dorville House, his wife's ancestral home, but this proved not to be possible.

The Diary of a Country Parson was issued without any scholarly apparatus at all, as was thought fitting for a book regarded as no more than a semi-comic domestic chronicle. Woodforde certainly delineated himself admirably in his diary, but for early readers he existed in a void, particularly where his early life in Somerset was concerned. In its first years, then, the Journal concentrated on his immediate surroundings and the close relatives who feature so often in the printed diary but about whom virtually nothing was to be learned from that source. The original *Brother Heighes* was a typical piece of that pioneering kind. Later, as our understanding of the diarist's environment grew and was enriched, it became possible to add historical studies of people and things not bound up with his actual experience, although they were all part of the familiar world he lived in. This policy has not pleased every reader, although I believe that it was fully justified and adds much interest to our now fully detailed and three-dimensional

portrayal of what it no longer seems either presumptuous or absurd to call *Woodforde's England.*

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The name Heighes first came into the Woodforde family in the seventeenth century through Susan Heighes of Binsted, Hampshire, who married a London citizen named Haunch and became the mother of Hannah Haunch. She married Robert, the prototype Woodforde who worked his way up into the professional classes. Her uncle, Henry Heighes, owned the Binsted estate. He was childless and when he died, Hannah's brother, his nephew, having predeceased him, the property passed to the great-nephew, Samuel Woodforde, son of Robert and Hannah. He named his eldest son Heighes, the first to bear it as a Christian name, and this Heighes' eldest son, Samuel, did the same. In this way "Brother Heighes" of the diary obtained the name by which he is so well known today.

Our Heighes, named after his grandfather the vicar of Epsom, was the eldest son of the Rev. Samuel Woodforde and Jane Collins. Unlike his elder sister Clementina Sobieski, who first saw the light at Epsom, he was the first of the children to be born at Ansford Parsonage, on 6 July 1626, and baptized in Ansford Church later the same month ("July 27th Heighes Son of Sam^{l} and Jane Woodforde R^{tor}."). One of his godfathers was Robert Woodforde, his great-uncle, Rector of Yeovilton and Treasurer of Wells Cathedral. The other was Heighes' maternal grandfather James Collins, and the godmother was *his* mother, styled by Samuel "my Grandmother-in-Law", Mrs Joan Collins.

If we look at Samuel's three sons, "career-wise", we are faced with: one failed lawyer, one quite prosperous clergyman and one failed merchant and unsuccessful farmer. When I wrote the original essay on Heighes, I was fairly convinced that Mr Woodforde senior had weighed them up and come to the conclusion that of the three, James was the only one who had any chance of making a satisfactory clergyman and that therefore a Public School and University education would be wasted on the others.

Of course, if he had thought this, he would have been perfectly

right; but the notion that James was deliberately chosen, and favoured, and that a sense of injustice done to them may explain his brothers' sometimes unfriendly treatment of him must be abandoned. Winchester must have been ruled out for Heighes before either of the other two was born. And it can hardly be maintained that James was singled out for special favour, in terms of the money spent on them by their father, and it is more likely that Samuel was a conscientious parent, anxious to do the best for all his children. James probably cost him least of all. He was on the Foundation at Winchester, which meant that his tuition and board were free, except for the surreptitious payments made in defiance of the Founder's express orders; and at least part of his incidental expenses were funded out of the revenues from his own little estate at Sandford Orcas. On the other hand Mr Woodforde was prepared to spend £700 in buying John a partnership with the Bristol merchant; and, as we shall see, Heighes also cost him a lot of money, one way and another.

Anecdotes of Heighes' childhood are as non-existent as we expect to find when we study the domestic history of the eighteenth century. Nor do we know anything about his education, and can only guess that it was obtained at one of the many private schools in the district. Our first trace of him comes with the sight of his initials, floridly scratched with a diamond on a window pane at the White residence, now called Ansford Lodge, just down the road from the Parsonage, together with a representation of the Woodforde arms and the date, "1742", when Heighes was about sixteen. Some two or three years later he was indentured to an attorney, Mr John Tilley, "of the Poultry, London", who must I think have been a relation of Jane Tilley, Heighes' maternal grandmother. The "articles of agreement" are dated 1 February 1744/5. In consideration of the sum of 100 guineas, to be paid at once, and a further instalment of fifty guineas payable on 1 February 1749/50, at the end of the five-year apprenticeship, the lawyer undertook to instruct Heighes "in the practice and proceedings of an attorney or solicitor", and to "provide him with sufficient meat, drink, and lodging" throughout the time of his indentures.

But Heighes did not spend five years in London. After an

illness he returned home when only about half that time had elapsed. This comes from Samuel's absolutely priceless account book which has been used on so many occasions to provide information. In July 1747 Heighes returned, at the cost of £2 for the journey and an extra of £2. 10. 0 "for bringing his portmantua down". Beneath this Mr Woodforde drew up the total cost of Heighes' abortive London venture:

To Mr. Tilly in London	105 0 0
For Cloaths at his going thither	10 0 0
For 2 years & ½ allowance whilst there at £20 pr. an.	50 0 0
For Doctors Fees, nurses &c. in his Illness there	10 0 0

This is explicit enough. As it was Heighes' illness that had caused him to withdraw and break the indentures, no part of the hundred guineas could well be claimed back. The same appears to have happened when John's partnership with the Bristol merchant broke down – at least, there is no trace in the accounts book, or anywhere else, of return payments or refunds. Heighes' illness must have been severe, and perhaps long-lasting. Some time later his father settled two additional bills: one for £7. 4. 0 and a second and final account for £1. 4. 0, which money went to a London apothecary named Lowther.

Heighes arrived home on 21 July 1747. He stayed at Ansford for no more than a fortnight. Above the sum of expenses just mentioned is written: "NB. Sent Heighes to Mr. Kings Aug: 7: 1747". This was another lawyer, living not in London but at Wincanton. As Heighes went off to make a fresh start in the little Somerset town his father gave him a "hatt" worth 8/-, a "pair of Doe-Skin Breeches", value 13/-, a waistcoat which had been "turned" at a cost of 6/-, and 10/- in cash.

The costs of Heighes' resumed legal training were not as heavy as the London solicitor had charged. All the same, some quite considerable payments were recorded: ten guineas on 2 June 1748, and £42 on October of the same year. But most of the items were for Heighes' personal, day-to-day expenses: new clothes, washing and mending, journeys to assize towns, and such miscellaneous charges as the 5/6d. "for a Book of Short-Hand". Heighes may have spent extravagantly in London and his father determined to keep him on a tight rein, for in

addition to the various payments for his maintenance he seems at first to have received no more than 5/- a month. But Samuel apparently relented from time to time, on one occasion pushed the allowance up to 7/6, and quite often threw in an extra five shillings. There were also various presents such as the "New Years Gift" of 5/- in 1749. Once, after spending £2. 2. 6 on a "great Coat" for his son, Samuel added: "gave him when it was sent to Wincanton 0 : 3 : 0". When the total of expenses incurred since Heighes had left Mr Tilley was added up, it came to £106. 4. 11. Even this was not quite all. It was unrealistic, to say the least, to have expected a young man of Heighes' temperament to confine his spending to 5/-, or even 10/-, a month. He ran up debts in Wincanton amounting to £4. 10. 0, which his father afterwards settled.

Heighes must have left Wincanton on some date before 23 June 1779. On that day a new list of expenses was begun. Samuel gave his son the large sum of £4. 10. 0 "for a superfine-cloth Coat". On 6 April next year: "gave him on going to London to be admitted - - 21. 0. 0" or a twenty guinea fee. This and the item for 4 September - "paid for Law-Books to Mr. Goldsborough 11. 0. 0" - probably indicate that Heighes had now set up as an attorney on his own account. His father had already bought him a "Beaurough" for £2. 2. 6, and perhaps he was installed in one of the rooms at the Parsonage, turned into an office. Years later he sold these same law-books to his brother James.

The final table of accounts extends over five years, a much longer period than the others, and the sums paid out make a far smaller average per year. The separate items are much fewer, and some of them appear to be for loans rather than gifts - for example, "Aug: 8. Let him have more money upon his Note of Hand - 20. 0. 0". Heighes was now receiving from his father an allowance of £5 a quarter, and out of this he presumably paid some part of his personal expenses, the rest being found out of his own earnings, such as they were. If all the sums are added together, a grand total of £555. 4. 0 was paid by Samuel to and on behalf of Heighes in eleven years. This works out at not much less than £1 a week, an amount which would have been considered generous in the eighteenth century.

One of the last items is both significant and amusing. On 12 December 1754: "Gave Heighes for his journey to London - 30. 0. 0". His father could scarcely have had the least idea that, when Heighes went off on the jaunt, the money securely buttoned up in his pocket, he intended to use it to finance his elopement with Miss Anne Dorville.

It was the most disastrous step of his entire life. Yet, at the time he took it, his "o'erhasty marriage" must have appeared not only romantic but prudent and wise. For Miss Dorville, an only surviving child, was an heiress.

*

The Dorville house at Alhampton still stands, although it has been much altered over the years. I was in it once, and remember a fine stone chimneypiece in one room. The family had been in Alhampton a long time, at least since the sixteenth century. They appear very frequently in the parish records in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and then begin to thin out markedly. In the easy-going way of their time, the various rectors of Ditcheat provide the very minimum of information about their parishioners. If any family monuments were erected in the church, none has survived, and the same Christian names recur constantly. So any reconstruction of Anne's line of descent must be at least partly conjectural. But in 1667 a "Ralph Son of Ralph Dorvill was born the 11th May and baptized June y^{e} 10th of Allhampton". In 1684 "Ralph Dorvil Jun^{r}." was buried; but if he were the Ralph born in 1667, there must have been another contemporary Ralph who survived him, for in 1693 an entry runs: "Ralph Son of Ralph Dorvill Jun^{r}. baptized the 2 Day of September born the 11 of August". Much later comes another "Ralph, Son of Ralph Dorvill, born in 1719. The name "Anne" appears in an entry of 1725, reading: "Anne wife of Ralph Dorville buried June the 5.".

So far little progress has been made. Light begins to dawn only with the appearance of another baby who is authentically our Anne Dorville. The entry reads: "Anne Daughter of Ralph and Hester Dorvill born on October the 24th bapt^{d}. on November 7th", 1734. There is no record at Ditcheat of a marriage between Ralph and Hester, but other children were in all probability born to them. In 1738 there was "ffrancis Son of M^{r}. Ralph

Dorvell born July 22nd Bapd. Aug ye 5th". He died in the following February. In 1740 and 1741 are burial notices for two children, Mary and "Rachell", each described as "Daugr. of Mr. Ralph Dorvill". There are no traces of their baptism, but if they were Anne's full sisters their mother had predeceased them, for she died in 1739 - "Hester wife of Ralph Dorvill buried March ye 15th". Under the year 1750 is a mysterious entry reading: "Mary Daughter of ye late deceased Ralph Dorvill buried June ye 30th Day". Although the word "late" might seem to indicate a very recent event, in fact it probably refers back to a burial entry made three years earlier: "Mr. Ralph Dorvell was buried July ye 11th Day". Finally, another "Mr. Ralph Dorvill" was buried on 21 March 1755.

It is possible that several at least of these names are capable of being arranged in some sort of comprehensible order. There must have been at least two adult kin named Ralph Dorville at Alhampton in the early part of the eighteenth century. As the younger of the two would have been only fifteen in the year of her birth, it is probable that the elder man, born in 1693, was her father. Possibly the Ralph born in 1667 was his father and the Anne who died in 1725 his mother. As for the date of his death, his Will, which would have settled the matter, has disappeared, like nearly all Somerset Wills. A "Ralph Dorvill" signed the Ditcheat churchwardens' accounts book for the last time in 1746, and this may be connected with the man of that name who died the following year; but I think Anne's father survived until 1755. The "Rentall" of the Dorville estates, now in the possession of New College, Oxford, is mainly concerned with the property in the 1760s. But near the beginning of the book is a list of tenancy agreements covering the years 1753, 1754 and 1755, in the handwriting of Heighes Woodforde. All begin with the words: "Let by Mr. Dorvoll to . . . ". They are not in chronological order, and appear to represent a summary of various tenancies of which the landowners had left no written record. Taken into conjunction with the Dorville burial entry for 1755, this could be taken as supporting the probability that Ralph Dorville died in March of that year. In other words, he was still alive when his daughter returned with her husband.

It would be natural enough to assume that it was Ralph Dorville who, as almost the last act of his life, secured to his

daughter the free ownership of her property. Someone certainly did carry out that action, so important for her since it was typically the eloping brides who were married without safeguards and found that everything they owned went to their husbands. In Anne's case there were two settlements, but they were dated 1757 and 1761. I have not seen the originals and these may not be in existence today, but they are quoted in a document which we must come to later.

The 1971 article spent a lot of time explaining in detail the nature of the clandestine marriage and the effects of the Hardwicke Act, passed the year before Heighes and Anne were married. Very recent work on this subject has taken away the necessity to repeat any of it. It need only be pointed out that the law now made it quite clear that clandestine marriages were illegal. The point was driven home when in 1755 John Wilkinson, the Savoy Chapel minister who had married Heighes and Anne - and a great many other couples on the same day - was brought to trial, found guilty and sentenced to transportation. But at first no-one in distant Cary and Alhampton worried about this. Samuel Woodforde presented his son with the rental of the "Sussex estate", at Pagham, near Bognor, once the dowry of his grandmother Mary Lamport.

It was not until the winter of 1756/7, when Anne was pregnant for the first time, and Nancy due to be born on 8 March following, that Mr Woodforde did anything about remedying a situation he must have felt unsatisfactory from his family's point of view. While Anne's property had been secured, so that Heighes could not touch it, the children's right of inheritance could in the future be compromised by its basis in a marriage ceremony declared to be illegal. It must have been such considerations that led to the second wedding, this time in Ditcheat church on 22 January 1757. It must have been a bleak little ceremony; like the Savoy Chapel wedding it took place in the depths of winter, and the parish clerk was the only witness.

But we must not anticipate, or make use of hindsight, to condemn this relationship before it had even begun to go wrong. For some years there is no sign that it was anything but reasonably successful, and destined to go on until one of the partners broke the tie by dying. There is not much in

Woodforde's diary about them, because the first years of the marriage coincide with those in which James was at Winchester and Oxford. But he does record a number of visits to "Brother and his Wife at Allhampton". The impression we are left with is one of harmony there. Meanwhile the family grew. Nancy's birth in 1757 was followed by that of Bill a year later. No baptismal register entry for him has ever been discovered; but the Woodforde "Family Book" says he was born on 8 May 1758. Then came Juliana, born 5 March 1760, and Samuel, the later RA, born 29 March 1763.

The late Mr Dorville, along with other members of his family, had taken seriously the responsibilities which custom threw on to people of his class. In turn he served on all the parish bodies under the vestry system; he was churchwarden, overseer of the poor and overseer of the highways, or "Waywarden", for the tithing or subdivision of Alhampton. In addition he acted at different times as auditor of the various accounts, and as one of the householders who selected the parish officers.

All the information we have suggests that for some time Heighes tried to take his place and, like him, was active in parochial matters. Just as his father-in-law had done before him, Heighes signed the highways accounts, in 1757, 1758 and 1760. In 1758 he became a churchwarden, and served a three-year stint. Three sets of churchwardens' accounts covering this term, are extant. The last set were written out by Heighes himself, in a very careful hand. Heighes wrote almost as neatly as his brother the Parson, and the two styles are not dissimilar. It opens with the words: "The Account of Heighes Woodforde churchwarden of the Parish of Ditcheat for the Year of our Lord One Thousand and Seven hundred and sixty". Then below the figures, also in Heighes' most careful handwriting, come the words: "At a vestry held in the Parish Church of Ditcheat on Thursday the Sixteenth Day of April 1761 (pursuant to Notice given up on the Sunday before for settling the Churchwardens Accounts). The preceding Accounts of Heighes Woodforde and Philip Welchman Churchwardens of the s^{d} Parish for the Three Years last past were examined. Allow'd by me ...". Then follow ten signatures, the last of which is "William Cornish, Clerk of the Parish", who had witnessed Heighes' marriage in 1757.

After that, however, there was a change. The especial care with which Heighes made out his last set of churchwardens' accounts was perhaps owing to his giving up the office. One would have expected him to go on to another official job within the system. But in fact he dropped out of it altogether. After April 1761 there is no further trace of him to be found in the parish records.

This was over three years before any hint of marital disagreement surfaced. But the kind of strife that leads to open quarrelling in public never arises spontaneously but is the outcome of much latent and mounting tension. Whether or not James noticed that his brother and sister-in-law were no longer getting along well, he does not mention this until near the end of the year 1764:

> Spent part of the afternoon at Uncle Toms, with Aunt Tom, Aunt Parr, and Brother Heighes's Wife -
> There have been sad Quarrels between Brother & his Wife -
>
> - *Ansford Diary II, 1/11/1764*

This part of the diary now reveals something that may be significant. In 1765, while there are still entries showing Heighes and Anne together, a much larger number record meetings with Anne in the absence of Heighes. She was, however, still on good terms with the Woodforde family, and could not as yet have done anything to forfeit their regard. So far as we know, she was staying at home like any dutiful wife, while Heighes was showing traces of that footloose quality that became marked in later life.

In 1767 we have the first clear notice that Heighes had left his wife and was living in Castle Cary, presumably alone. That he had not gone back to live at Ansford Parsonage suggests that he was not on good terms with his father. He was ill, at one time believed to be seriously affected, "the ~~F~~ever having fell upon his Lungs", as Woodforde put it. He recovered but perhaps resumed active life too quickly, for the next thing we hear is that he was "very bad at C. Cary and confined to his Bed in the Rheumatism", and James was sending his maid Betty Crich on a number of occasions to sit up all night with him. She did this for the last time on 25 November, after which Heighes must have got better.

The next thing to happen was that Anne gave birth to her fifth child, whom she named after her father as "Ralph Dorville Woodforde". The diary entry for 19/1/1768 makes it clear that Heighes was back with Anne:

> I dined, supped & spent the Evening at Parsonage -
> Jack dined, supped & made a very late Evening of it
> at Brother Heighes's at Allhampton - He having a Child
> christened to Day there - Jack was Godfather to* Ralph
>
> [on the blotting paper] *Boys Name
>
> I was invited but could not go agreeably -
> I lent Brother Heighes my Man to wait at Table -

A year later, Heighes was still living with his wife. An entry in the diary for 29 December 1768 shows them together at Alhampton: "... I went with Sister White and Sister Jane in our Chaise down to Allhampton to dine with Sister Woodforde, where we dined and spent the afternoon with her, her husband, Brother John, & then returned". It will be noted here that Anne is more or less officially designated as the hostess, and Heighes mentioned almost as if he were among the guests. There is a possibility, indeed, that by this time Heighes had the status rather of a lodger than a husband.

However this may be, if the presence of Heighes in his wife's home suggests a reconciliation, it did not last. On 25 September 1769, in large characters on the blotting paper opposite his diary entry, Woodforde wrote:

> N.B. Brother Heighes had his Bedstead put up
> at Lower House to Day, and there he slept -

On Christmas Day Anne bore her sixth child who was registered at Ditcheat as "Francis Dorvell Woodforde Son of Heighs Woodforde Gent". There is no allusion at all to this birth in the diary. Heighes dined at the Parsonage on that day.

For the next eighteen months all three brothers continued to live at the Lower House. This episode has been well documented by recent work, so we need not recapitulate the drinking, occasional violence and constant disturbance that made the Lower House, as James confided bitterly to his diary: "the worst House in the Parish, or in any other Parish". What is also clearly shown is that Heighes had failed both as a husband and as a professional man.

It is doubtful, indeed, if Heighes ever made any serious effort to practise as a lawyer. In the early years of his marriage, with a rich wife to provide for him, he may well have said, if he had been able to speak in the idiom of our time, that he needed a legal practice "like a hole in the head". Now, he had nothing but the "Sussex estate" and an allowance of £10 which ceased when his father died, no further provision being made for him in Samuel's Will. There is no sign that he tried to supplement his exiguous income by working. All we can find in that direction are odd scraps of legal jobs, such as family land agreements, tossed to him at long intervals by his relations. He was for a time clerk to Justice Creed, but was unceremoniously sacked from that appointment: (the Justice "never behaved handsome to Brother Heighes", as James wrote mournfully in the diary). He was steward to the Lady of the Manor Mrs Anne Powell, but Uncle Tom manoeuvred him out of that post without trouble, something he could not, surely, have done if Heighes had been ordinarily competent. The diarist said that this was "scandalous", but it was a necessary part of Thomas' plan to attain the living of Ansford for his son.

We can say of this marriage that it came to an end with a bang, not a whimper. Christmas 1770 was approaching when Heighes came home "very merry this Night, and made a great Noise". This was probably a worse exhibition than usual, for either Woodforde or someone else after him determinedly crossed it out and part of the entry is illegible. But it is still possible to make out that Heighes put "on his Boots, and was going from me to Allhampton". Either his brother, or the entire situation, was "extremely disagreeable", as Woodforde muttered plaintively to the diary. It was 21 December, and he was forced to stay up until 12 o'clock.

Perhaps Heighes had been seized by some drunken fancy of claiming his marital rights. Two days later he had not forgotten it, for

> Brother Heighes went to Allhampton this morning, had his Bed carried down there by Mark Gristock, and was there all Day and all Night - but how it is I know not between him and his Wife, I imagine she is not pleased.

The last words may fairly be called the understatement of the

century. Two lines from the entry of 24 December succinctly describe the outcome:

> Terrible Works all last Night at Allhampton - Brothers Wife sent his Bed back to our House again this morning.

As a sort of gentle reminder to Heighes that his presence was not desired in his wife's home, this seems to have worked perfectly, for it ended what may have been left of the marriage for good. From that time on, the couple were separated as effectually as though they had been a modern husband and wife sundered by the Divorce Court. It is true that they were still legally married, and that neither could marry again. Yet their experience of marriage had been so unhappy that it would have been reasonable if neither wished, even if it had been possible, to repeat the experiment; and Anne at least appears to have had a long-time extra-marital partner, although not a single word which might lead to his identity being traced has ever come down to us. Heighes was out of her life forever; but eight months after the final showdown she produced her seventh and last child. This was James - surely not named after the Parson! - who was like all the others given Heighes' surname. He grew up to become James Woodforde M.D., who took the place of James Clarke as the Ansford doctor, and wrote a *Treatise on Dyspepsia* which got into print - there is a copy in the Bodleian Library, dated 1821.

In 1776 the ending of the marriage was formally recognised by the drawing up of a deed of separation, which is in the Woodforde archive at New College. The preamble recites that unhappy dissensions between the married pair had rendered it advisable for them to live apart from one another. In one of the Settlement deeds mentioned earlier Anne had promised to pay her husband an annuity of £20. By 1776 she was ten years in arrear with this, and now owed Heighes £200. He agreed to accept a sum of £150 in lieu of the debt, and to free her from the obligation to pay the annuity in future.

The other clause dealt with the children. Responsibility for their maintenance was to be shared between them, Anne taking over the three youngest and Juliana, and Heighes the others. He must have found it difficult to maintain himself, let alone the additional burden of three adolescent children, and

in practice they appear to have lived with their mother, whom they seemingly disliked and through different ways escaped from as soon as they could. On the other hand Ralph, Francis and James lived with her even after they had become adults. Juliana was the odd one out here. So far as I know, there was no doubt of her paternity. The younger of the two daughters, now 16, for whom Heighes had disclaimed responsibility and handed over to her mother, was in later years the only one of the children to make her home with him.

One need not, I think, have an inordinately suspicious mind to harbour some curiosity about this extraordinary arrangement. As we have seen, Heighes had been leaving Anne, and returning to her over many years, and there is, so far as we know, no inherent impossibility that all seven were his children. On the other hand, Woodforde refers to the three youngest sons in some very strange ways, as though he were unwilling to call any of them his nephews outright. We find applied to them such terms as "Son of Nancy's Mother", and once explicitly: "Ralph, a —— Son of Anne Dorville". The original Heighes essay cites a number of these expressions, which reveal the diarist's scepticism as to their paternity.

But we have much more direct testimony than this. On 25 June 1783, seven years after the separation document had been drawn up, Heighes Woodforde drafted a Will. Or rather, he wrote it out completely, initialled the correction of an error, and signed his name at the foot. The only feature lacking is the signature of witnesses*. In this Will he bequeathed to his sons William and Samuel, who are also named as executors, "All my Estate at Pagham in the County of Sussex settled on me & Wife by my Father To hold the same unto my said two Sons their Heirs and Assigns for ever . . .". They were to pay the sum of £200 to each of their two sisters. Then comes the punch-line. If either son were to die without making any testamentary disposition of his inheritance it was to be divided between the

* Aunt Anne's 1773 Will had likewise no witnesses, and the testatrix was dead before this was discovered. The problem was solved by an appeal to Doctor's Commons in London, which had jurisdiction over cases involving Wills, and two people were found who were prepared to swear that the signature was genuine. - *Aunt Anne and her Will - James Woodforde, Executor* in Journal XVII, 1.

two daughters "in preference to the rest of the Children whom I do most solemnly declare and affirm not to be mine . . .".

I suppose the reason why this Will never went to probate was that someone persuaded Heighes that it would be unwise to publish his wife's infidelity in this way. We do not know how the final Will was phrased, because it was lost, together with nearly all the Somerset Wills, in 1942, but it is a fair assumption that it contained no such statement.

BRITISH DIARISTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES - No. XX: THE HON. JOHN BYNG

(*The Torrington Diaries*, ed. C. Bruyn Andrews (1934/8), Eyre and Spottiswoode.)

At much the same time that James Woodforde was making his journeys across England between the fixed points of Ansford, Oxford, Weston Longville and London, and deriving no discernible pleasure or interest from his experiences, another traveller was undertaking a series of tours of the country with precisely those ends in mind. He was sufficiently pleased and interested to record his journeys in a series of journals which today provide a vivid picture of provincial Britain and fascinating insight into the personality of the writer himself.

The Hon. John Byng (1740-1813), a close contemporary of Woodforde, was the traveller. He was the second son of George Byng, the third Viscount Torrington and nephew of the Admiral John Byng who was executed by firing squad on his own quarter deck in 1757 "pour encourager les autres". John's grandfather George Byng (1663-1732), another admiral, was the first Viscount Torrington and the son of a London draper John Bing (1628-1688). The traveller and diary writer John Byng eventually succeeded to the title as fifth Viscount Torrington for the short period of a few weeks on the death of his elder brother George in 1813.

John Byng was born on 18 February 1740, attended Westminster School, served as a page to George II in the 1750's

and was commissioned into the Royal Horse Guards as a cornet in 1760. In 1762 he transferred as a captain to the 58th Regiment of Foot and later in the same year took a lieutenant's commission with the 1st Foot Guards. By 1776 he had attained the rank of captain again and, continuing with the Foot Guards, retired with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in 1780.

Army service was followed by the Civil Service where Byng worked for the Stamp Office of the Inland Revenue at Somerset House probably from 1780 till at least as late as 1798. The necessity for such employment might be questioned in relation to the son and brother of a viscount but might be explained by family disagreements hinted at in the diaries and mentioned in a letter by Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory "... I remember ... that Lord Torrington [that is, George the fourth viscount] was the sole cause of his brother's ruin".

In 1767 Byng married Bridget Forrest, the daughter of Admiral Arthur Forrest and Juliana Lynch. They had twelve children who survived childhood, five sons and seven daughters.

Byng's friends and acquaintances, several of whom accompanied him on some of his tours, included Colonel Albemarle Bertie, later the Earl of Lindsey, and William Windham of Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk. The latter was, of course, the Mr Windham whom Woodforde heard speaking "exceeding well with great Fluency and Oratory, but on the wrong side" at a public meeting held to solicit subscriptions for the raising of a regiment "in these critical Times for the King" at the *Maid's Head* in Norwich on 28 January 1778.

Byng's diary-keeping, unlike that of Woodforde, was not a minute recording of everyday life sustained over a major part of his lifetime. The period covered by the diaries is from 1781 to 1794 and the subject matter is a number of tours, fourteen in total, undertaken by Byng as holidays from his work in the Stamp Office in London.

In keeping such journals of his tours Byng was conforming to a fashion among educated men and women in Britain at that time. The travel journals of such a variety of characters as Boswell, Burney, Gibbon, Johnson, Pennant and Wilberforce immediately spring to mind as examples of the genre.

The tours described in the journals vary in their length and

adventurousness. Visits were made to those districts in North Wales and Derbyshire which contained the "sublime" and "awful" views which appealed to the sensibilities of the emerging romantic movement. At the same time Byng was not above remarking on the more everyday scenes of agriculture, commerce, mining and manufacturing as they presented themselves in their turn. In this he echoes the utilitarian curiosity of Daniel Defoe in his tour published 1724/6 describing journeys made many years before. Of particular interest to Byng were architecture and scenes of the picturesque. He had a keen eye for the ruined abbey and its bosky surroundings and a sharp tongue for many of the then newly erected country houses set in newly landscaped grounds - today the pride and joy of the National Trust and the Georgian Society. One of his strongest anathemas was reserved for the planting of Scots pines.

Throughout the journals Byng shows a continuous interest and pleasure in (and not infrequently umbrage at) what was going on around him, whether it be of personal or international significance. On the outskirts of Rotherham he remarks on a small child who reminds him of his youngest son Frederick; at Cromford in Derbyshire he describes the momentous activities and creations of Richard Arkwright.

A particularly charming feature of the original journals which has been reproduced in subsequent publications is the collection of inn bills interleaved at appropriate points in the narrative. These, often handsomely headed, list the food, drink, stabling and other charges incurred at a large number of inns up and down the country. Good food is clearly appreciated in the diary and bad food condemned. Those following in Byng's footsteps will find it interesting to compare eighteenth century with twentieth century standards in those hostelries which have survived. A surprisingly large number still exist.

The fourteen tours which were undertaken begin in 1781 with "a Tour to the West". This was succeeded by tours to the west again (1782), North Wales (1784), Oxfordshire (1785), South Wales (1787), Sussex (1788), the Midlands (1789), the Midlands again (1790), Bedfordshire (1790), Kent (1790), Lincolnshire (1791), the North (1792), North Wales again (1793) and finally,

in 1794, Bedfordshire.

In order to provide the reader with some sense of the nature of the journals it is convenient to describe just one of the fourteen tours, and one taken precisely two hundred years ago has been chosen.

The tour was "to the North" and took Byng along the Great North Road into Yorkshire where he visited York, Ripon and the area now called the Yorkshire Dales. He then crossed into Lancashire via Clitheroe and passed through Rochdale and Manchester, skirted the western boundary of the Peak District and entered Staffordshire. A short entry into Shropshire was then followed by a traverse of the Black Country and Birmingham, emerging at Stratford-upon-Avon. He then passed through rural Warwickshire and Oxfordshire to Woodstock. At Woodstock he had arranged to meet his wife and youngest son Frederick who were to travel from London. A stay here and the short ride back to London was to complete the tour.

The tour was certainly full of variety and interest for Byng but the weather was almost uniformly bad. This may well have increased his natural tendency to grumble at the disagreeable things that crossed his path. These were many.

"At 12 o'clock, Saturday May 26th. 1792, I had taken the Paddington Road, which the rains of last night had made nice riding, and the face of the nature gay . . .". His dinner was at the *White Hart* in St Albans "and such an inn is scarcely to be found . . . of filth, inattention, and charge". A further ten miles riding took him to Welwyn where another *White Hart* "appear'd magnificent after that of St Albans".

The next day, Whit Sunday, he rode to Biggleswade where, at the *Sun* inn, he "had for dinner at 2 o'clock (the hour of rational but useful appetite) a boil'd fowl, greens, rst. beef, Yorkshire pudding, asparagus, tarts and custards . . . I ate like a parson . . .". How true.

Byng's departure the next day was delayed for half an hour by the arrival at the inn of Humphry Repton, the noted landscape gardener who was a protégé of his friend William Windham. Two nights were spent at the splendid *Sun* inn before he proceeded up the Great North Road towards Yorkshire, staying at Alconbury Hill ("the Wheatsheaf - a good inn"),

Greetham ("the Royal Oak - bad"), Newark ("the Kingston Arms - tolerable") and Barnby Moor ("the Bell - good") where he took "snail tea for breakfast, for my chest is very sore".

Yorkshire was entered at Tickhill from where he rode to Conisbrough. Here Byng was able to indulge his enthusiasm for ruins by visiting the castle. A visit was also made to "Mr Walkers's Iron Mill upon the river . . . saw there the boring of a large Howitzer".

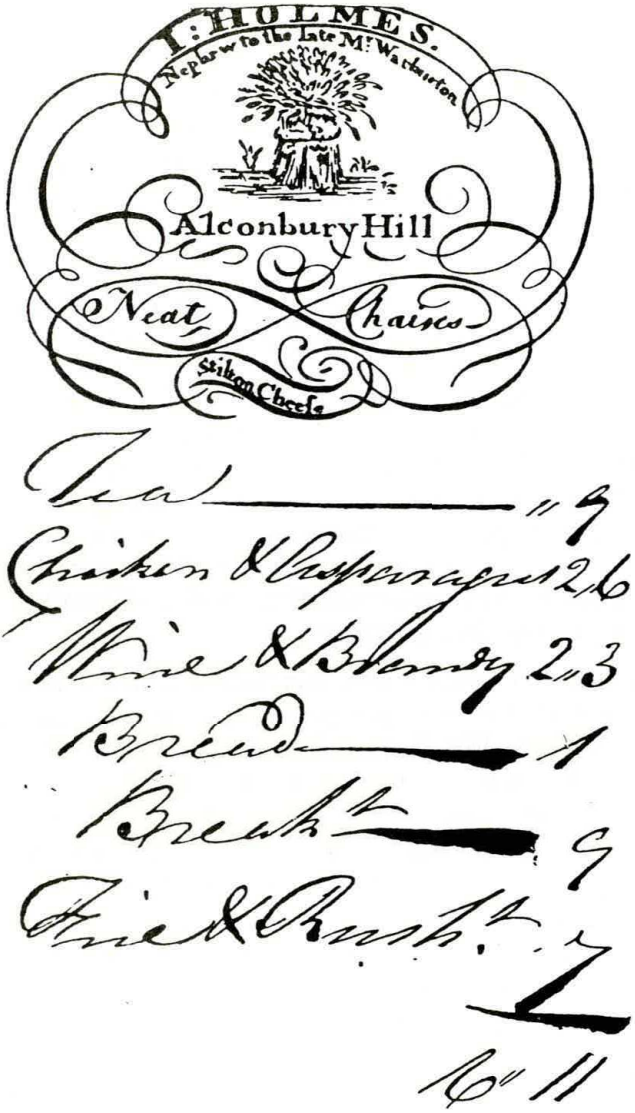
The night was spent in the *Angel* at Doncaster where he met with insolence and bad food and he was consequently eager to leave early the next day (Sunday 3 June). He travelled to Pontefract, "surrounded by garden grounds, producing liquorice, a plant I never saw before . . .". Staying at Ferrybridge that night, he was informed by the landlord that "The Players were at York". This determined him to go there where, having put up at the George, he found to his chagrin that the players had moved on to Leeds. Moreover, the militia were assembled in York at this time "(debauching themselves, and disgracing their country)".

York and its buildings were examined, however. Some were approved of, but the "pompous" and "magnificent" prison (now the Castle Museum) and the Assembly Rooms, designed by Lord Burlington - "surely the most tasteless Vitruvius" - were both deplored.

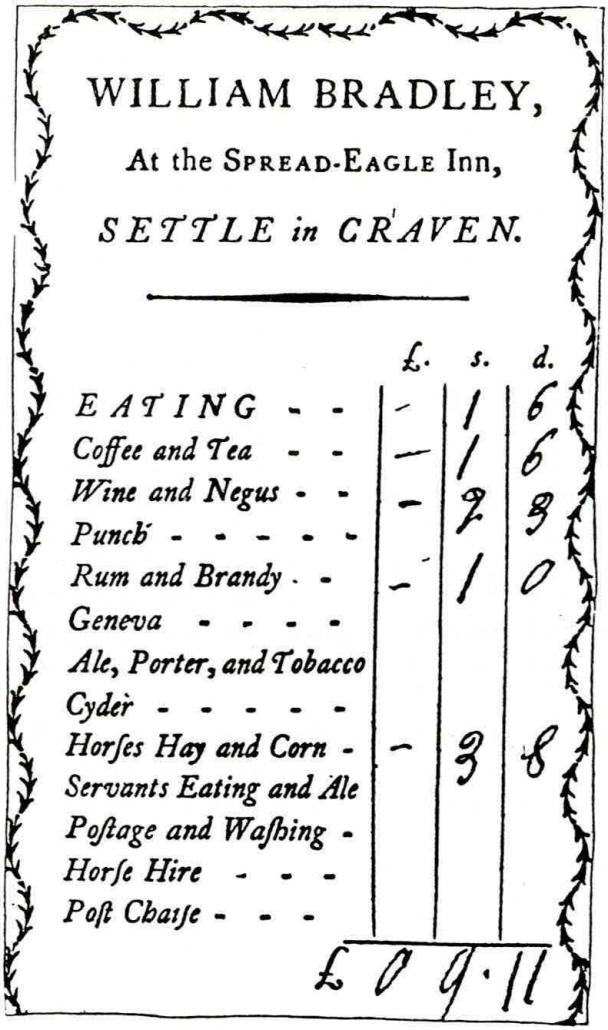
York was left in the afternoon of 5 June for Wetherby. Knaresborough was reached on the sixth. Byng had hoped to see John Metcalf - "Blind Jack Metcalf", the pioneering road engineer still then, at the age of 75, living in Knaresborough, - but he was disappointed and had to make do with Mother Shipton's petrifying well and the picturesque scenery of the area.

On the seventh he proceeded to Ripon and visited Fountains Abbey - "a Beauty and perfection of ruin"; but the cloister gardens were "infinitely too spruce" and the surrounding Studley Park were "tricked out with temples, statues &c".

The next abbey visited was Jervaulx where on the eighth "I got an honest Yorkshire tyke to walk about with me, who knew nothing . . .". He then passed up Wensleydale to Richmond and visited Easby Abbey, where in a most characteristic



passage Byng says: "There cannot be a more *complete*, or a more *perfect* ruin: about every part of it I did crawl ... Above these fine ruins has been built (to expose modern architecture) this ugly, staring, brick house, whose owner too has fell'd most of the wood about the Abbey; leaving foolishly, a few oaks, to prove how beautiful many must have been".



WILLIAM BRADLEY,

At the SPREAD-EAGLE Inn,

SETTLE in CRAVEN.

	£.	s.	d.
EATING - -	-	1	6
Coffee and Tea - -	—	1	6
Wine and Negus - -	-	2	3
Punch - - - - - -			
Rum and Brandy - -	-	1	0
Geneva - - - - -			
Ale, Porter, and Tobacco			
Cyder - - - - - -			
Horſes Hay and Corn -	-	3	8
Servants Eating and Ale			
Poſtage and Waſhing -			
Horſe Hire - - -			
Poſt Chaiſe - - -			
	£	0	9·11

The North York Militia were assembled in Richmond at this time and the old soldier, perhaps by now a little disillusioned, was prompted to comment: "a fine body of men; but ruined here, and rendered useless to their country in every way, both as soldiers and labourers; whenever I see a fine young fellow I think what a handsome soldier he would make; and yet, when

made one, I should pity him as doom'd to be sacrificed in some horrid climate; a transportation; for they never return!"

On 12 June Swaledale and Teesdale were crossed and Barnard Castle, "a black shabby town", reached. From here he visited Cotherstone "where an excellent cheese is made", Middleton in Teesdale ("in that sort of wild country ... that I wish to explore; and wherein to lose the memory of all the midnight follies, and extravagant foolish conversations of the Capitol") and the waterfall at High Force.

Byng retraced his steps southwards on 15 June, riding to Askrigg in Wensleydale where the inhabitants "live to a great age" and "are all employed in knitting stockings". But further down the dale at Aysgarth he observed "the erection of a cotton mill ... whereby prospect, and quiet, are destroyed ...; the people, indeed are employ'd; but they are all abandoned to vice ... when people work not in the mill, they issue out to poaching, profligacy and plunder. Sr Rd Arkwright may have introduced wealth into his family, and into the country; but, as a tourist, I execrate his schemes, which, having crept into every pastoral vale, have destroy'd the course, and beauty of Nature ...".

Staying that night in Askrigg, Byng fell in with a Mr Blakey of Manchester who was visiting the area in order to establish a cotton business. Despite the views already expressed above, the pair got on and visited Hawes and Hardrow Force together and discussed Manchester, manufacturing and inns.

18 June found Byng weatherbound at Askrigg but he was able to leave at 11 o' clock in the company of Mr Blakey, riding via Grierstones (crowded with "Scotch cattle and drovers ... buyers and sellers, most of whom were in plaids, fillibags [kilts] & c.") to Ingleton, inspecting caves and potholes on the way.

The next day he passed on to the *Spread Eagle* inn at Settle where, feeling unwell, he took "Dr James's Pills".* On his way to Skipton on the next day he observed the Leeds and Liverpool canal, then being constructed. He stayed at the *Black*

* The pill form of the famous "Powders", as prescribed by James Clarke for Nancy Woodforde when she had "the Ague" in 1786. They contained antimony, a dangerous poison.

Horse in Skipton, spurning the *New Inn*, "a gawky, dismal, inn-contriv'd thing built by, and resembling the Duke of Devonshire". A visit to Skipton Castle - "a nasty miserable place" - a tour of the town - "nasty, filthily-inhabited ... I never saw more slatterns or dirtier houses" - and "a vile supper" completed what must have been a thoroughly unsatisfactory day for Byng.

The following day was better, with fishing available at Malham Tarn, "a wonderful lake".

On 22 June the Duke of Devonshire came in for more opprobrium when Byng visited the ancient Barden Tower, "only demolished about 20 years ago for the sake of the lead, slates and timber by the Duke of D.[evonshire]". He found the ruins of Bolton Abbey further down the Aire Valley "very magnificent ... the foolish possessor [again the Duke of Devonshire] has order'd that they should be repair'd".

Byng then turned west and rode to Clitheroe in Lancashire, staying at the *Swan* where he was "still hoarse, weak with lungs much congested".

From the natural beauties of the Yorkshire Dales Byng now passed into industrial Lancashire, riding to Rochdale past "numberless coal pits ... rows of houses ... every vale swarms with cotton mills". In Rochdale, staying at the *Roe Buck* inn he read a new newspaper "call'd the Manchester Herald, fraught with sedition - Tom Paine the hero, with extracts from his damnable publication".

Riding to Manchester on 25 June he passed along "roads crowded by idle fellows [enjoying] the holiday of S. Monday".

Manchester was a "dog hole", his dinner uneatable and, "to increase my spleen", it began to rain. After his dinner he rode to Stockport where "all seemed holiday, and drunkeness ... drunken weavers ... men and children kill'd by gin ... near Stockport hangs a weaver in chains, for the murder of his wife and my wonder is, that murder does not happen every hour from eternal drunkeness".

But things looked up in the evening when, having left the industrial area he found the "snug Dishley [sic] Inn' at Disley - "a parsonage kind of parlour, and my horses in a dry, good stable, eating sweet hay".

Nearby Lyme Park, visited on the 27th, was found to be an "ugly, staring red-brick house ... with nasty Scotch firs in the hedge rows". Dinner was taken in the *Angel* at Macclesfield which was rather crowded with a meeting of a benefit club formed by the "old women of this town". That night he reached Leek in Staffordshire where he collected his mail and spent all night "deciphering and answering Mrs B's".

After Leek large scale industry was again encountered in the Potteries where he rode along a "street of many miles ... everlasting ovens ... hundreds of horses and asses with panniers". He sent his compliments to Josiah Wedgwood who then still lived next to his factory at Etruria, requesting a visit. He then "saunter'd about Mr W's grounds; which are green and pleasant, with some pretty plantations". These grounds were later grossly despoiled in the nineteenth century but have recently been reclaimed as part of the site of the National Garden Festival.

Staying that night at Newcastle-under-Lyme he visited the next day Trentham Park where "my old friend L[auncelot] Brown* is to be traced at every turn", and dined at Stone where he stayed in the face of bad weather.

The next day he continued south through Staffordshire, passing by Ingestre Park (home of the Earl Talbot) where he observed gamekeepers catching young deer with a greyhound. "Is this barbarity necessary" he wrote. "Blackguards and boys should be deprived of all hostile and barbarous weapons ... And people who are to have the care and guidance of animals, should be chosen for their sobriety, and mild disposition". Passing through Stafford and Penkridge he then entered the high road to Shrewsbury (now the A5) and rode to Shifnal in Shropshire.

Near Shifnal stood Tong Castle, a "moorish Gothick" masterpiece by Capability Brown (demolished 1954). This was visited and found to be magnificent. But its owner, George Durant, had covered his walls with "pictures from Xtie's [presumably Christies] and other auctions, of dying saints, naked Venuses

* Now much better remembered as "Capability Brown", from his habit of telling landowners who had brought him in to advise them that their estates had "a great Capability" for improvement.

and drunken Bacchanals", subjects which did not please Byng who then rode on to Boscobel House, a place "suitable to my tory sentiments". It was of course at Boscobel where the fugitive Charles II was sheltered and hid in the oak tree. Heading eastwards he then plunged back into industrial England, staying at the *Swan* inn in Wolverhampton, "a large, black ill-paved town, swelling by commerce".

However, there were compensations. Rising early in the morning of 2 July he visited the market and "bought all the strawberries that were brought". This fruit seems to have been a special weakness of Byng's.

He then penetrated into the heart of the Black Country where "every field is scoop'd by collieries and canals; and the iron stone (happy distribution) lays under the coal. Iron foundries around are numberless; and the roads made of iron dross". Dudley was reached at midday where he found the *Dudley Arms* inn, "a grand, and comfortable hotel, with good wine, good cookery and good stables!" He would have stayed but was lured away by a newspaper announcement that Mrs Siddons was playing at Birmingham ". . . This temptation was too strong to be resisted".

In Birmingham accommodation was found only with difficulty. There were large crowds at the theatre but Byng secured an invitation from Mr Siddons and was admitted at the stage door and chatted with the lady in her dressing room after the play.

Whatever Birmingham possessed in theatrical glamour it lacked other distinctions ". . . no strawberries here . . . no booksellers", so on 3 July Byng rode on to Henley-in-Arden where "my old Corps the Blues, are quartered to maintain the peace . . . I never saw a regiment in worse orders, or looking less like soldiers". He was more amused when he joined a crowd to see "two fellows upon stools, grinning for a wager (a sport I thought disused)". At Stratford-upon-Avon Byng "walked about the town in a Shakespearean reverie", but from his comments did not approve of the Shakespeare industry, under way even then.

On 4 July Byng continued south via Alderminster, and Burmington (where he sketched the churches), and Shipston-on-Stour. He detached his servant Garwood "to make him an

antiquary" by examining the Rollright Stones before arriving for dinner at "that capital inn, Chapel House" where there was "nothing I could touch ... Port not drinkable, a cold, fat, raw ham, some stinking cold lamb; with a black doughy tart". He then rode on to Woodstock where he was better served at the *Bear* inn, having such "elegancies as jellies and blancmange" with his supper.

The next ten days were spent at Woodstock as had been arranged. Mrs Byng was expected to arrive on 7 July but on that day "my early morning was rendered miserable by a letter from Mrs B, making doubts of her coming ... but I will hope". Garwood was sent to Oxford to pick up the expected party but returned alone with the news that the author's son Frederick, who was accompanying his mother, was not well enough to travel.

While awaiting their arrival Byng passed his time in touring the neighbourhood and Blenheim Park and its gardens, where he prevailed on the head gardener to allow him to pick some hothouse fruit for his wife.

On 8 July two family friends (identified only as Mr and Mrs D.) arrived at Woodstock, and on the ninth Mr D. informed Byng that he had secured permission to fish in the lake at Blenheim. This provoked a flow of (written) invective from Byng who had earlier been informed by the rector of Woodstock that permission could not be secured. "The little, dirty-subservient Tickle Text ... who never ... dared to make one trial to serve me ... afraid of the Duke's servants ... this too often is the road to preferment".

However, things were looking up. He had a good morning's fishing, dinner at 4 o'clock, a visit from his friend Colonel Bertie and rounded the day off by riding out to meet his wife and son coming from Oxford.

On the tenth bad weather intervened yet again: "Mr D. says this weather is caused by a Comet". The disconsolate party was confined to the *Bear* inn for two days. Things improved on the 13 and 14 July and then, on the fifteenth, the day of their departure, after "the first hot night I have passed", the weather improved for their homeward journey.

They travelled to Oxford, putting up at the *King's Arms*,

Holywell (an inn known to Woodforde), and attended evening prayers at Christ Church – "miserably perform'd".

One last treat was in store for 16 July in the form of an "aquatic expedition ... in a ... pretty cabin'd boat". The party were punted and towed through the meadows to Iffley and Sandford when, at "a neat public house frequented by Oxonians ... our bread and cheese and cyder was handed to us by a gay drest-out lass". They disembarked at Abingdon where after dinner a post chaise took "Mrs B." and Frederick to the Red Lion at Henley where they were later joined by the author.

On the next day, leaving his wife to settle bills, Byng then rode via Slough and Southwell to "Kensington gravell Pitts". Here he left his horse and reached his home in Manchester Square by half past three "in a hackney coach which offer'd its services for a sixpence".

His 1792 tour was complete. He had travelled 931 miles in fifty-three days, experienced ill health in a variety of poor inns, often in vile weather. But he was not deterred. He had also covered a vast area of the country, taken pleasure in the countryside and met a number of agreeable strangers and old friends. Despite his complaints he was as eager as ever, twelve months later, for his next tour, this time to North Wales.

A note on the publication of Byng's journals

Byng's diaries were not published until 121 years after his death. The manuscripts had been sold in the 1920s and subsequently dispersed. These were then located by C. Bruyn Andrews who assembled them into a four volume publication published between 1934 and 1938 as "The Torrington Diaries, containing tours through England and Wales of the Hon. John Byng (later 5th Viscount Torrington) between the years 1781 and 1794" by Eyre and Spottiswoode.

A single volume edition was published by Eyre and Spottiswoode in 1954. This was an abridged version omitting, among other sections, the whole of the Welsh tours and prepared by Bruyn's daughter, Fanny Andrews.

In 1991 a paperback edition, edited by David Souden, was published by Century in the National Trust Classics series.

POSSESSIONS OF A WOODFORDE ANCESTOR

Robert Woodforde was the great-great-great grandfather of Parson James. He was the son of Edward and Marjery Woodforde, of Old, Northamptonshire, born in 1562 and baptised 1564. He was, like all his kinsfolk, a small, open-field farmer. At about the age of 40 he married Jane Dexter, daughter of Thomas Dexter of Old, some 20 years younger than himself. He died on Friday, 5 June 1636, at about 11 o'clock at night, in the 74th year of his age, and was buried in the churchyard at Old, near to the northern corner of the chancel. All this exact detail comes from a note written by his son and only child, another Robert, the original compiler of the Woodforde *Family Book*, and the first of his family to break through into the class of professional men.

The Will of the elder Robert is in the Northants Record Office. It is the original, and has the inventory of the testator's possessions still attached to it. The latter is given in full here:

An Inventory of all the Goods and Chattels late of Rob[te] Woodforde of Old in the Countye of Northton, Yeoman, deceased, taken the fifth day of July in the twelfth yeare of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord King Charles over England and by John Warren of Old aforesaid in the Countye aforesaid, Yeoman, and Henry Woodforde of Old aforesaid in the Countye aforesaid, Yeoman, as followeth:

	£	s	d
Cattell and first in Shepe. 8 shepe and 5 lambs price	2	13	4
Item 3 Kyne	6	–	–
One Hogge	–	10	–
In Mutton	–	2	–
The Crop in the field	8	–	–
Household Stuffe. Imprimis in the Hall			
A table and frame. 5 Joyned Stooles and Chayres. 2 little Stooles –	–	18	6
Item. One Cupboard		10	–
Six Cushions		3	–
In the Butterye			
Itm. one little chest. 4 Barrels. 3 tubbs 2 Runnells. 2 Payles	1	–	–

Itm. In Napery. Sheets. Table cloathes Table Napkins. Pillow beeres: etc.	1	13	-
In the Kitchen Chamber. One bedstead.		13	4
Beddinge uppon it and the Trundle Bed	-	13	4
One Trundle Bed.	-	3	4
One Old Chest.	-	1	-
One Flasket and two little formes	-	2	-
One sack one Halfe Strike and other Implmts.	-	5	-
In the cheese Chamber. One cheese Rack. 3 cheese boards and cheese	-	6	8
In the Kitchin. One dresser Board and little Table and formes.	-	5	0
One panne. One old cupboard.	-	6	8
One cheese Presse. 2 Payles. A Salt Box Box and other Implements.	-	4	-
In Brasse. 2 potts 1 Great Penne. 4 little Pannes. i Chasing Dish. 1 Skimmer. I Warming Panne.	2	2	4
In Pewter. 6 platters. One Basin. One chamber pott. One Pint Pott 2 sawcers, and a salt and other small Pewter.	-	6	-
Two spits. One payre of Cobirons. One dippinge Panne. Pott Hangers and other implements.	-	11	6
One Load of Coales.		13	4
One Meele Bowle. One Fryinge Panne. One Barre of Iron. One axe and one Picke Axe.	-	5	0
In the Yard. One Hovell.	-	13	4
One Hive	-	5	0
Fforkes, Rakes, and other implements.	-	2	6
Three Ladders.	-	2	0
One old Malt Querne.	-	6	8
One Horse Trough.	-	6	8
Itm. The Testators Apparel.	2	-	-
One Garner.	1	-	-
Summe Total	36	12	6

John Warren Henry x Woodforde

(One or two of the words may require elucidation. A 'pillow beere' was a pillow case. Both 'truckle' and 'trundle' were words for a low bed mounted on castors - the "truckles" - which

when not in use could be rolled, or trundled, beneath the high formal bed. In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* Mercutio says: "Romeo God night, il'e to my trundle bed". This is the Folio text, which modern editions naturally amend to "truckle bed". A 'flasket' was "a long shallow basket", the meaning found in Johnson's dictionary. One of the many definitions of 'strike', used as a noun, was "a cylindrical wooden measuring vessel, and this maybe explains "halfe strike", as a measure of up to half a bushell. 'Cob irons' were irons which supported the spit, used in the cooking of meat. A 'garner' was a building used for the storage of grain: i.e., a granary.)

*

An inventory of this kind always tells us a good deal about the living standards of the people who owned the property. Here the striking features are the paucity of household goods, the low monetary value placed upon most of them, and the complete absence of any articles of which we might be able to say that they contributed to the comfort and ease of the inhabitants of the house. It represents life lived at a basic subsistence level. Everything listed there has a purpose of simple utility. While we must take into consideration the greater value of money in the seventeenth, as compared with the early nineteenth century, and also accept that a small farmer could not possibly afford the life-style of a beneficed clergyman and former Fellow of New College, the difference between this inventory and the listed contents of Parson James' well-ordered home in 1803 is immense, although even the latter is totally lacking in many of the amenities that modern householders expect to have and take for granted. The truth is that in material things, and in them alone, the concept of historical progress makes sense. (ed.)

For 2. little Potts of Mininett for my back Windows pd. 1 : 6 - 22 June 1774

Mignonette was introduced into this country from Egypt in 1752 and this small perennial with its fragrant little flowers soon became popular because of its scent, despite its somewhat ragged and diffuse habit. The seed of Reseda odorata was normally sown in May in small 2½" pots known as "thumbs",

and these would probably be the "little Potts" bought by Woodforde at the end of June.

In the nursery these seedlings would have been potted on several times, and with much "pinching out" would have reached the preferred bush-shaped plant, about 18" high, in an 8" pot at the end of the year, when they were considered to be ready to take their place on the conservatory staging.

Whether our Pro-Proctor was able to provide these subsequent stages of cultivation for his seedlings is perhaps debatable, although if "Potts of Mininett" were enjoying a craze at New College at that time the necessary knowledge may have been there, and the purchase of some "Panns for my Flower Potts" five weeks later would further support the idea that the plants had indeed been potted on, and were in need of increased water supplies.

Finally, the purchase price of one shilling and sixpence seems rather steep for just two, and if this is the case we may consider that, while our "two little Potts" are sitting happily on the back window-sill sweetly scenting the studious air, there were other more attractive plants on display in more prominent positions.

ed. note. "Mininette" was back in New College quite recently, as the author brought a flowering root of the plant with him to the Frolic.

ANNUAL FROLIC AND GENERAL MEETING HELD AT NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD 25-27 SEPTEMBER 1992

It is usual for the Society's AGM and Frolic to be held in a part of the country where James Woodforde spent some part of his life. Somerset and Norfolk have been comprehensively explored, we have met in Winchester and London and this year saw our second visit to Oxford. I have often pondered on the thoughts of members attending a Frolic in a place they do not know very well, indeed have only become acquainted with through the pages of the diary. My only visit to Oxford had been a few hours spent there last year, although I had rapidly passed through it on some occasions on my way to the west country. I have always found it difficult to appreciate the

Oxford part of the diary; here was to be my opportunity to get to grips with it. That is my reason for waiting a few weeks before writing this report on our meeting: I have been able to read much of the Society's transcript 1774-1775 *Oxford and Somerset Diary* and Dr Hargreaves-Mawdsley's *Woodforde at Oxford.* I must admit that I have a better understanding of Woodforde's life at New College, but I will be so bold as to say it has not changed my opinion that these are the least rewarding parts of the diary. (Stand by for irate rebuttals from the Editor and other members!)

On a very wet Friday afternoon 60 members passed through the Porters' Lodge in Holywell Lane and collected their keys for their weekend's lodging. Oxford being a city which does everything possible to discourage motorists to park and New College having very few parking spaces, most had come by public transport and would have wished for a drier welcome. I believe there has been only one previous occasion when all members have stayed together, under one roof so to speak, and that was at Dillington. I found this a very good arrangement which does add a further dimension to the weekend, but where can we stay, apart from educational establishments? That would mean a permanent change of date to vacation time and a booking made well in advance – a problem for the committee to resolve.

Our rooms were scattered all over the College, some in the new building in study-bedrooms with every facility, some in "the pink house" with double glazing and central heating and others in the Garden Quadrangle, not much changed since the eighteenth century, with handsome but bare suites of rooms, antiquated heating and few "necessaries"! But these were the rooms to occupy if you wanted to feel you were at New College with the diarist. Here was the entrance to the Junior Common Room, the erstwhile Chequer, the magnificent wrought-iron screen leading to the Garden, the city walls, the Mound (landscaped with a gazebo on the summit in Woodforde's days) and the site of the bowling green where the diarist enjoyed some of his meagre ration of fresh air and exercise. There have been so many internal alterations to the Garden Quadrangle that our Editor was unable completely to identify the position of Woodforde's rooms, but certainly there was a doorway leading

to the staircase leading to where his rooms would have been. From my sitting room window I could see the doorway and, judging from the article by Roy Winstanley in the last Journal and Dr Hargreaves-Mawdsley's comments in his book, I could well have witnessed the diarist staggering in from Hall or from the Common Rooms!

This year we were happy to welcome several members who were attending their first Frolic, as well as many old friends who meet every year. After sherry and then a buffet supper in the Founder's Library, the Society held its AGM, the minutes of which will be circulated later but, in the meantime, it is worth mentioning our Chairman/Treasurer's plea for prompt payment of subscriptions and the usual reminder that members should consider taking a more active part in the running of the Society. However, the existing officers and committee were re-elected for a further year.

The next morning we went for breakfast in Hall and, overcome by the history and magnificence of the room, many members paraded through the ultra-modern servery and collected all their food only to realise that they would have to eat their breakfast in reverse or suffer congealed bacon and egg. By the next morning we had learned the lesson of going round twice.

Nigel and Suzanne Custance, the organisers of our weekend activities, had divided the company alphabetically into small groups to follow one another round those buildings we had come to see. I was in the first group to visit the Bodleian Library so an early start had to be made. We were conducted round this imposing building by official Bodleian guides. Unfortunately we were unable to see the manuscript diary: a great disappointment, as I am sure all members would have welcomed the opportunity to see all the booklets piled on a table, even though they remained at arms' length. Did Woodforde frequent the Bodleian? Perhaps not - but he mentions his visits to the Divinity School and Convocation House and, having made sure that Nephew Bill was taken to the Bodleian on his journey from Oxford to Norfolk in 1776, we could not have left Oxford without doing the same. Quantities of coffee were continuously served in the Junior Common Room as the groups returned to New College to explore the exhibition of Woodfordean documents and books which our Chairman had set up. Mrs

Dalton, the New College Archivist, appeared with a bunch of ancient keys (very likely those that Woodforde took charge of as Sub-Warden) and escorted us into the Treasury to see the Founder's mitre and jewel, the Monkey Salt and the large silver tankards for dispensing ale, but surely the most weird were the "Unicorn horns" - which perhaps help to explain how the diarist developed his faith in unusual medicaments.

A leisurely lunch in Hall gave us the opportunity to admire the sixteenth century linenfold panelling and, if one is of a mind to concede that the Victorians sometimes got it right, the reconstructed roof and the stained glass. Even the College guide book admits that the display of portraits is not very interesting but Romney's portrait of Henry Bathurst, Woodforde's college friend and the recipient of his generous help in the matter of tithe collection, is certainly of interest to readers of the diary.

After giving us an insight into college life and university regulations in Woodforde's time, Mrs Dalton led us up the spiral stone staircase of the Muniment Tower where she had arranged an exhibition of New College documents bearing the diarist's name and a further collection of Woodfordean documents. It can be proved that James borrowed a book from the college library and that he returned it! We returned to the Junior Common Room for another browse through the Society's exhibition, tea and biscuits and then we were invited to enjoy a walk in the Warden's Garden. In the free time before dinner some of our party ventured beyond the college gates to get a view of Oxford and our Editor led a group over to Oriel, where Woodforde spent a year before transferring to New College, but most of us, determined to spend all our time within the walls, strolled in the garden and visited the chapel and cloisters.

Dinner was a very grand affair, served by candle-light, and here I was able to share the same experience as Woodforde's guests, dining on pike in the dusky light of the Parsonage at Weston, for my mullet was full of bones! Once again an effort had been made to reproduce The Charter: the result was unauthentic but nonetheless delicious. I wonder if they ever serve New College puddings nowadays. The port passed briskly and toasts were drunk, that to the memory of the diarist proposed by Jim

Holmes and drunk from the silver goblet Jim has presented to the Society. A desk and a flickering candle were placed by the high table from where our Editor, Roy Winstanley, was invited to give his paper *James Woodforde at New College*. I hope Roy will publish his paper in a forthcoming Journal: the acoustics and the fact that we had partaken of much food and wine meant that we would welcome the opportunity to give his erudition the attention it deserves, and at leisure. Besides there are 300 members who could not be there.

Next morning we attended Chapel. The hymns chosen for the day had words by George Herbert, who was the subject of the sermon by the Rector of New College, the Rev. Stephen Tucker. Members may recall a television programme some time ago when the lives of Herbert and Woodforde were compared, much to the diarist's disadvantage. The College guide sums up the appearance of the Chapel neatly: "... it is now undoubtedly an anti-climax after the splendours of the Ante-Chapel". Woodforde describes the changing of the window glass in the eighteenth century; he might have approved of the Victorian seating, but what would he have made of Sir Gilbert Scott's restoration of the East end? You may say that he gives us no description of the churches he entered but New College Chapel had a special place in his life and his diary.

After the service we gathered in the Ante-Chapel where the Rector joined us to give an interesting and comprehensive history and guide, including the Cloisters and Front Quadrangle. The Reynolds window is striking; Woodforde first saw it on 12 September 1779 when journeying back to Norfolk after a holiday in the west, and waxed lyrical over the painting of the figures, particularly Faith, Hope and Charity. He was not to know that a copy of these "most beautiful emblematic figures" was to be placed in St George Colegate, Norwich, a church he visited. Nor was he to know that the beauties he so much admired were to become known as "half-dressed, languishing harlots". James was reminded by Warden Oglander in October 1782 that his £10 subscription towards the cost of the window was due and he paid that sum on 7 December through Mr Francis in Norwich.

The Rev. Stephen Tucker visited Weston Longville in September last year at the time of the Flower Festival which

commemorated the 450 year association of New College with the parish and preached at Evensong. In thanking him and Mrs Dalton for according us such a warm welcome to New College, I am sure members will join me in expressing the wish that it will not be long before another Oxford Frolic is arranged.

Up that steep flight of steps into Hall once more for lunch and a reminder that the Nativity hanging above the Gallery at the East end was once the altar-piece in the Chapel. We enjoyed an excellent meal and all too soon goodbyes had to be said - for another year, or in this case a mere nine months: we meet again in Somerset in May. I had enjoyed a splendid weekend in Oxford and sadly followed in the diarist's footsteps (20 May 1776) "... took my final Leave of my Rooms at College and set forth for Norfolk ...".

ADDENDA TO TWO RECENT ARTICLES

Woodforde and the Demon Drink - Journal XXV, 3

'Beer Street'

The remarks in the article on the supposedly beneficial effects of beer held by contemporaries are borne out by the verses appended to the Hogarth engraving (1751). They run as follows:

Beer, happy Produce of our Isle,
Can sinewy Strength impart;
And wearied with Fatigue and Toil
Can cheer each manly Heart.

Labour and Art upheld by Thee
Successfully advance;
We quaff thy balmy Juice with Glee,
And Water leave to France.

Genius of Health, thy grateful Taste
Rivals the Cup of Jove;
And warms each English generous Breast
With Liberty and Love.

The Aftermath of Thrale's Brewery

Hester Thrale had such a snobbish aversion to the drink trade that, once her husband was dead, she could not wait to get rid of the great brewery. She was abetted in this by Johnson, who helped her over the details of the sale.

An offer for it was made by John Perkins, the chief clerk at the brewery. He had behaved with great bravery at the time of the Gordon Riots in 1780, when he was credited with having almost single-handedly persuaded the rioters not to burn the place down. He was financed by the banker David Barclay and others, and the new firm began trading in 1781 under the name of Barclay, Perkins and Co. Later the firm adopted Dr Johnson's head as a trademark, a liberty with which I fear the sage would not have been at all pleased.

A Tailpiece

Although sales from ale houses declined as a proportion of the tippler's trade, aggregate consumption of alehouse liquor remained high. One important incentive . . . was the continuing absence (on any scale) of alternative forms of liquid refreshment. Though many larger cities began to make determined efforts to improve their water supply from the close of the seventeenth century, with new pipes and pumps, their principal concern (as with other civic improvements) was to pander to the needs of the gentry and professional classes flocking to town. For ordinary citizens supplies were as bad as ever, too often polluted and meagre. At Norwich, for instance, despite the establishment of a private company in 1699 to bring fresh water to the city, the lower orders drew their requirements from the river Yare, fouled by night soil, dyeing and tanning, and from wells which were described in the 1750s as "vastly unwholesome and intolerably disagreeable". In the countryside supplies probably deteriorated with the important development of rural industries. Not that quality or availability was the only determinant of popular water consumption (or lack of it).

A Swiss traveller in England in the 1720s observed that even when water was drinkable and reasonably abundant, "the lower classes . . . do not know that it is to quench their thirst" with it. Water, like brown bread, still carried the stigma of social deprivation. Admittedly fashions were starting to change in this period.

The landed elite frolicked at the spas and sipped small amounts of usually noxious spring water there, while a handful of eccentrics proclaimed the prophylactic qualities of regular water drinking. But most ordinary people were only too happy to demonstrate their newly acquired prosperity by turning up their noses at water and drinking alehouse beer instead.

Peter Clark: *The English Alehouse – a Social History 1200-1830 (1983) pp. 213-14.*

(ed.)

More Light on the fair Louisa

The most frustrating thing of its kind that can well happen, both to the historian and the simple connoisseur of history, is for a personage who has aroused interest and about whom one would very much like to learn more, to vanish suddenly without trace into lasting oblivion. It might be thought that Boswell's Louisa fitted exactly into that category. After she had received her benefit payment from the Covent Garden theatre on 7 May 1763 when, as was noted, she was not in the cast of either of the pieces performed that night, my essay had no more to say of her. I did indeed discover that eleven days later she played the Queen in *Hamlet* again. But she was plainly not engaged for the 1763/4 season, and so drops out of the theatre lists.

The information I now have comes from a source which I did not check when writing the article. That famous Boswellian Frederick A. Pottle published his book *Boswell: the Earliest Years 1740-1769* in 1966, sixteen years after he edited the *London Journal*. It contains data not in the earlier book. If I had possessed the information, I could only have spoiled it by cramming it into a footnote, for want of space.

Let us begin by citing exactly what Louisa told Boswell about herself: "She was born of very creditable parents in London. But being too strictly confined, she ran off and married heedlessly. She was obliged for subsistence to go upon the stage, and travelled in different companies. Her husband proved a harsh, disagreeable creature, with whom she led a terrible life; at last, as it was discovered they were illegally married, they parted by consent, and she got into the Covent Garden Theatre".

So far we can go with the *London Journal*. Now let us see what may be added. Her maiden name was Anne Lewis, which became her stage name also. On 4 August 1755 she married Charles Standen, described as a strolling actor. Her address was given as Swallow Street, London. If her age as told to Boswell later was the true one, she was at this time no more than 17. A child was born of the marriage, a son who was certainly not in evidence at the time Boswell was seeing her, when she was living as a single woman in lodgings - we remember the landlady of whom she was so afraid. Boswell's account tends rather to telescope events. Seven years elapsed between Louisa's marriage and her first-time appearance at Covent Garden. It is likely that she ceased to live with her husband soon after the baby was born, or perhaps even before his birth. Boswell mentions that he had been acquainted with her before they met in London in 1762, and there is an interesting addition to this by Pottle, who claims that Boswell had seen her on the stage in Edinburgh, where she went by the name of Mrs Standen. But he does not adduce any evidence in support of these statements.

As for the illegal marriage, it sounds like a tale concocted by Louisa or her husband so they could get free of one another and contract other unions. Both made second marriages. Louisa married a man named Vaughan. Standen had five children by his second wife. He was on friendly terms with a man of property named Miller, who left by Will a large estate "to the children of Charles Standen".

Twenty-eight years after Boswell had last seen Louisa, a London newspaper, the *Oracle*, carried in its issue for 23 February 1791 the report of a lawsuit recently concluded in the Court of King's Bench. Both Anne Lewis' son and Standen on behalf of his children, claimed the property. The whole case hinged on which of Standen's two marriages was the valid one. Standen argued that his first marriage was void in law because it had been contracted before the third and final publication of banns. But Louisa, who had probably used the illegal marriage story for her own benefit, now saw that the time had come to abandon it. She testified that there had been a third reading of the banns, which quite properly took place a week and a day after the second, and the wedding was subsequent to the date

of this. The marriage register was consulted, and found to be in order. The jury thereupon found in favour of Louisa's son.

So her last appearance which has left a trace anywhere ended in a triumph for her. The irony of the situation was a double one. Both second marriages were pronounced to be bigamous. Standen's five children were illegitimate and, as the law then stood, were barred from inheritance as bastards. The verdict also frustrated the testimentary intentions of the late Mr Miller who had wanted to benefit his friend's children and whose property went to a man whom in all probability he had never known.

By this time Boswell was living permanently in London, a feat which he had never been able to accomplish when he was young. He was sadly changed from the lively, hearty young man who had written the *London Journal*. He was sunk in depression so acute that one of his concerned friends, Courtenay, wrote to another, Malone: "Poor Boswell is very low and dispirited and almost melancholy mad - feels no spring, no pleasure in existence - and is so altered that it is remarked everywhere". In his own diary, about the time Louisa's action was heard, the whole of the entry for 19 February consists of the words: "Dejected and miserable". On 23 February, the day on which the newspaper report appeared, he was "not at all well". One wonders if he could by any chance have seen and read the passage and, if so, what memories it might have awakened in him.

But it was certainly Louisa who had the last laugh.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Plated furniture (Journal XXV, 2)

Both Mr D. E. Wickham and Dr David Case have written suggesting that the term refers to items such as the handles on carriage doors, hinges, brackets, oil lamps, trimmings etc.

Mr Wickham equates them with the chromium trim on the modern motor car. Dr Case suggests that Woodforde thought these metal fittings were specially metal plated, thus appearing to him perhaps a little ostentatious. He also cites an

advertisement on one of the end pages from the 1883 Directory for Norfolk:

> William Tonks and Sons, Brassfounders and Manufacturers ... in Brass, Iron and other Metals ... used in the Furniture of Public Buildings, Ships etc.

William Crotch

Canon Alan Warren, who was Provost of Leicester Cathedral, writes with further information on William Crotch (*Norfolk Diary II, 15 May 1778*):

> William Crotch was born in Norwich in 1775, the son of a carpenter and, unlike many infant prodigies, his gifts developed. He was the organist of Oxford Cathedral at 15 years old and a professor of music there, aged only 22.
>
> He became a most celebrated composer and scholar. One of his lovely anthems: "Lo, Star-led Chiefs" is regularly in the repertoire of Leicester and other cathedrals.

Charles Lamb and his Hertfordshire (Journal XXV, 2)

Mr D. E. Wickham writes as Chairman of the Charles Lamb Society:

> Reginald Leslie Hine was born in September 1883 and died on 14 April 1949 by jumping in front of a train at Hitchin Railway Station.
>
> He was a member of the Charles Lamb Society and had just written the above-mentioned book which was published later that year.
>
> Hine was an insomniac and had turned to writing in his sleepless hours. On medical advice he ended his partnership as a solicitor on 31 May 1949. His doctor had warned that a combination of work and writing would result in a nervous breakdown. At the inquest the Doctor stated that Mr Hine had been suffering from depression several weeks before his death. He had such bouts for thirteen years.

A further comment comes from Mr D. H. Bott who recently obtained a copy of the first edition. He notes that the last acknowledgements read:

> Mrs Reginald Hine wishes to acknowledge most gratefully her indebtedness to Mr S. M. Rich and Mr E. E. Kellett for most

kindly reading the proofs on her behalf, owing to the author's death whilst the book was in preparation.

Tales of Two Chinese Men

Mr Martin Brayne has sent in the following, after re-reading "Woodforde's really rather good description of the Chinese visitor to New College on 18 June 1775". To refresh our readers' memories, in case that should be needed:

> ... He talks English very well - He had on his Head
> a Cap like a Bell covered with a red Feather &
> tyed under his Chin, a kind of a Close Coat on
> his Back of pink Silk quilted, over that a loose
> Gown of pink Silk quilted also which came down
> to his Heels, and over that a black Gauze or Crape
> in Imitation of a long Cloak, a P^{r}. of Breeches or
> drawers of pink Silk also and quilted, and a kind
> of silk Boots of the same colour and quilted also,
> & a P^{r}. of Red Morrocco Slippers - His Hands
> were also covered with some thin silk of Pink -
> He had a Fan tyed to a Sash before him -
> He was of a moderate Stature, a tawny Com=
> =plexion, black Hair tyed in a kind of Tail,
> small Eyes, short Nose, no Beard, in Short as
> to his whole Face, It was uncommonly ugly, not
> unlike some of the runabout Gipsies -
>
> *Oxford and Somerset Diary*

Nearly two centuries later, another Chinese visitor came to New College, and it was he who left a description of the place; a nice contrast, as Mr Brayne observes:

> Continuing my way I discovered at the corner near the college wall, a group of green bamboo leaves nodding their heads to me in the wind. They must, I thought, have recognised my racial kinship to them! The wind swished pleasantly among the trees, yet still the garden was silent and peaceful. How could I fail to be moved to put my thoughts into verse?
>
> The fresh and tranquil scenery has checked my wandering feet,
> A college called New is full of antique colours.
> Half drunk, half awake, oh, the spring in May!
> A thousand flowers in bloom raises the entire garden.
>
> *Chiang Yee: The Silent Traveller in Oxford (1944)*

Mr Brayne adds the perfect comment: It may well read better in Chinese!

DESPERATE DOINGS AT THE HIGH TABLE

Any institution that has been going on as long as our Society, in time develops its own special traditions. Our annual weekend Frolic is not only an integral part of the Society's programme, but the order of events within it has become relatively fixed. On the Saturday evening the dinner in honour of a man who always thanked God for a good appetite is followed by a talk about some aspect of his life. I must say I question whether any group of peple who have just eaten their way through a four-course meal ("and wine with my dinner", as the Duchess of Plaza Toro observed) is likely to be in the receptive mood needed for appreciation of any pearls of wisdom that might be scattered around. On the other hand, invert the sequence, put the cart as it were before the horse, and the scene may easily be visualized. Imagine a gaggle of starvelings, all growling softly under their breath, flexing their claws and lashing their tails, more like lions at the Zoo just before feeding time than members of the superior species *Homo sapiens var. hyper-civilizatus*, forced to listen to a solid hour of chit-chat about Woodforde on an empty stomach. At the same time, we can't very well suppress the talk entirely, and thereby risk creating a lacuna not adequately filled by drinks at the bar and desultory conversation until bedtime.

Hearing of the arrangement that New College had made for us this year, I was at once seized by apprehension and omens of disaster. The Talk was to be given in the Great Hall, at the High Table. Mediaeval buildings are lovely to look at, but acoustically terrible. Your voice goes straight up to the roof and stays there. An urgent telephone call was necessary to elicit promise of a microphone.

I do not like or enjoy formal meals. I do not think that work and eating go well together. So I ate only the main course, which had a very fancy name but looked to my untutored eye exactly like a mutton chop, and the sweet. This was called *The Charter*. It was very nice, but no more resembled Woodforde's famous dessert than I am like Arnold Schwarzenegger the famed muscle man. I drank only enough wine for the toasts. I have a poor head for alcohol, and felt I could not risk being the protagonist in a scene in which I reel paralytically on to the rostrum and mumble something like: *La'ies an gemmen,*

unaccushtomed though I am to public shpeaking (hic), I am ere on thish shushpishious occashion to shelebrate –". Here I fall off the platform with a resounding crash.

Not, I hasten to say, that such behaviour would have been unusual in Woodforde's Oxford. Remember Jim Chaunler, "our Chaunler's Brother", a "mad-Fellow" (the word not used in its academic sense) who was "both mad and drunk" in the very Hall where I was supposed, sober, to deliver my address.

The High Table, to which I clambered, was in Stygian blackness, unused for its normal purpose on this evening. I cowered on the Warden's throne, like some unpractised member of a very amateur drama group about to play the king in a production of the *Henry IV* cycle, whose mind had suddenly gone blank and failed to retain any of his lines. Light, if that is the right word to use, was now provided by three candlesticks. I had noticed over dinner that there was a strong draught in the Hall. The flames blew about furiously in the wind. When they were wavering away from me I couldn't see my script, and when they blew near I was afraid the pages would catch fire.

Opinions seem to have been divided about this performance. Some said that the microphone was not working properly, so that they could not catch enough to know what on earth I was talking about; and those who enthused with "Jolly Good! Splendid!", and would have added "Bravo! Bravissimo!" if they had been Italians, were I am afraid just being nice to me.

There is a perfectly daft story about Winchester in the autobiography, called *What I Remember*, of T. A. Trollope, Anthony's brother. In Woodforde's time, and for long after, Winchester and New College were the head and tail of the same penny; so I make no apology for introducing it here. Tea did not replace beer in the dietary until 1838, but the boys would bring in the forbidden stuff and brew it up on the school premises. A certain master, plainly demented (but that would not in itself have attracted undue notice at Winchester), used to go about armed with one of the huge mediaeval keys of the school. If he met a boy carrying a teapot, he would bark: "What is this? Tea, Sir! William of Wykeham, I think, knew nothing of tea!". And with that: Crash! Smash! – he would let fly with his key, and shatter the teapot into fragments.

Now, if I had known beforehand what I was letting myself in for at New College, I should have taken the precaution of slipping an electric torch into my pocket before I left home. And if I had then brought it out at the High Table, "I am perfectly willing to swear" (as the man said who heard nightingales sing in Berkeley Square, and saw angels dining at the Ritz as well) that upon my doing so an enormous roaring voice would have filled the Great Hall, scaring everyone out of his and her wits: "William of Wykeham, I think, knew nothing of electric light!".

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