

NOTES & QUERIES

FOR

SOMERSET AND DORSET

EDITED BY

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AND

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*16 Melcombe Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7TH**"Attempt the end, and never stand to doubt;
Nothing's so hard, but search will find it out".*

HERRICK.

CONTENTS

No.		Page No.
292	The "Invasion" of Weymouth	569
293	Wells' Inns	573
294	Captain John Chaffin of Sherborne	576
295	Martock Roads	579
296	Linden Lea	580
297	A Letter from W. W. Wheatley	583
298	Scrimshaw in Australia showing the Ship Inn	584
299	First Translation of a Welsh Poem by William Barnes ...	590
300	The Belets: The Norman Connection	592
301	John Jarman and Priddy Barrows	594
302	An Incised Design on a Stone Artifact from Priddy, Som.	596
303	Bridport in 1792	597
304	A Somerset Coroner's Roll	598
305	A Somerset Coroner's Roll	598
306	Sir Francis Drake at Yeovil	599
	Queries	599
	Book Reviews	603

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292. THE "INVASION" OF WEYMOUTH — 1804. On 1st May 1804 the inhabitants of Weymouth awoke to the news which they had been anticipating with fear for many months past, the news that Napoleon's army had landed on Portland. By midday they had learned that the alarm was false. What happened within the town during those intervening hours? This is a question which is difficult to answer because there is so little recorded evidence of the event.

The two primary sources that exist locally are a newspaper report in the *Sherborne and Yeovil Mercury*, dated 7th May 1804, and an *Account of the Origin and Proceedings of the Dorset Yeomanry Cavalry, 1793-1814*, probably written in 1814, by Major James Frampton who lived at Moreton and who was temporarily in charge of the Dorset Yeomanry at the time.¹ There is also the journal of Elizabeth Ham who, aged twenty one, lived in St. Thomas Street at the time of the scare but who did not write about it until forty five years later when she recalled that "The most stirring event was an alarm of Invasion", but admitted that "The season of 1804 has left but a dull picture of my memory."²

Finally, there are the references to the event in Thomas Hardy's novel *The Trumpet Major*, his play *The Dynasts* and the poem *The Alarm*. He has explained in the preface to *The Trumpet Major* that the events which occur in these works were based primarily on eye-witness accounts which he heard from people who had lived through the events. So, although they were written some eighty years after 1804, they do provide oral evidence of the incident and, whilst they may not always be factually accurate — Hardy uses the year 1805, for instance, to set the scene of the supposed invasion in his story — they do illustrate dramatically the tense atmosphere which prevailed at the time.

Two facts are certain. First, there was a thick fog hanging over southern Dorset at dawn on May 1, 1804 and, secondly, a fishing fleet was involved in the alarm being raised. Accounts vary, however, on whether the alarm was raised by people on shore who believed that the incoming fishing boats were French ships or whether the fishermen themselves raised the alarm when they returned to harbour. In support of the latter, Elizabeth Ham recalled that:

Soon after dawn some Portland fishermen landed on that Island with the report that having been out looking after their nets they were lost in the fog. When all at once they found themselves in the midst of a large Fleet of armed ships. They pulled with all their might and it was fortunately towards land.

The *Sherborne and Yeovil Mercury*, on the other hand,

reported:

A few fishing boats, imperfectly seen from the island of Portland through a very foggy atmosphere, created a suspicion that a French squadron had eluded the vigilance of our cruisers and made its way up channel.

According to Major Frampton's account, however, it was not "a few fishing boats" but "a large fishing fleet" which, fogbound, took refuge in Portland roads and made so much noise that it frightened the local inhabitants into thinking that the French had landed.

A secondary source, J. H. Bettey's *The Island and Royal Manor of Portland*, is more explicit in pin-pointing the source of the scare. "It was the Verne Signal which in May 1804 during a thick sea fog gave a false alarm and started the rumour that the French had landed on the Island."³ This seems to be the most likely place for the scare to have started because at such signal stations there was always a man on look-out, continually scanning the horizon with a telescope. There were eight signal stations along the Dorset coast from Ballard Down to Golden Cap. There were also beacons, which were to be lit in the event of an invasion, on eleven Dorset hill-tops. These were the two types of early warning system which should have been used to alert the county on that May morning. Whether they were or not is not known. Perhaps they were used but not seen through the fog. Certainly when Major Frampton heard the news at his home at Moreton some two hours after the supposed landing he was surprised to find that the neighbouring beacon on Piddletown heath was not yet lit.

The alarm in Weymouth was actually raised by a horseman. His name was Daniel. Frampton referred to him as "Captain" and Ham as "Mister" whilst the newspaper referred to him as "A gentleman of the first respectability of the island of Portland". Whatever his status, he seems to have had a hectic ride. In Frampton's account, he swam his horse across part of the ferry between Portland and Weymouth, whilst in Ham's, shots were making the stones fly about him as he rode along the Chesil bank. What with the fog and the sudden, frenzied appearance of this respectable gentleman so early in the morning, it is little wonder that the people of Weymouth were prepared to believe that the long expected invasion had finally happened.

Elizabeth Ham was aroused that morning when her brother awakened her father with the news of the French landing. Dressing quickly, she hurried downstairs to find the maid about to flee, still grasping the broom which she had been using. A minute later a neighbour called to ask for a place for his wife on the Ham's cart as he had been unable to hire a

conveyance anywhere in town. The consternation aroused in the Hams' household was probably typical of many others. However, not everyone fled. The Hams themselves remained and Elizabeth noted that many people stood at their doors asking passers-by for further news. Many, though, undoubtedly left town as quickly as they could. Their sense of urgency is neatly illustrated in *The Trumpet Major* when a butcher, accompanied by his wife who had not even had time to put on her bonnet, hurried past the miller's cottage in his cart. Bob Loveday asked him what the matter was.

"The French have landed!" said the man, without drawing rein.

"Where?" shouted Bob.

"In West Bay; and all Budmouth is in uproar!" replied the voice now faint in the distance.⁴

Meanwhile, across in Portland, the Legion of Volunteers, consisting of one hundred men under the command of Captain John Penn, had been placed on 'permanent duty' whilst in Weymouth the whole garrison was under arms within half an hour. The defensive forces consisted of the Sea Fencibles, a mixed force of seamen and fishermen, manning a battery of six eighteen-pound guns, under the command of Captain Ingram; a Regiment of the King's German Legion, quartered in the recently built barracks in Dorchester Road; and two companies of the 3rd Battalion of the Dorset Volunteer Infantry, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Pleydell. These two companies were from Blandford. They had reported for permanent duty only the previous evening. Twelve of their number, led by a subaltern, were immediately sent out as a reconnaissance party. Meanwhile, the three companies of the Weymouth Volunteers, who had been stood down the evening before, volunteered to a man to return to permanent duty. Ironically, the Commanding Officer when dismissing them the previous evening had assured them that they would be "of the greatest service to the country if at any time they should be called upon to repel an invading enemy."⁵ Meanwhile, the third company of Volunteers scheduled to report for permanent duty that day, the Piddletown Company, were marching as expeditiously as possible from Dorchester to Weymouth.⁶ They, however, were not the only troops marching towards Weymouth. Messages had been sent to other towns, raising the alarm throughout the county. The second Regiment of the King's German Legion were quickly despatched from Dorchester and numerous bodies of Volunteers were soon on the move. In Sherborne, for instance, according to the newspaper report, "The three companies of Volunteer Infantry were on their parade almost as soon as the report arrived, and the yeoman cavalry resident here galloped off towards the supposed point of attack"

One of the first messages sent from Weymouth that morning

was to Came House, near Dorchester, to inform Lieutenant Colonel Damer, Officer Commanding the Dorset Yeomanry, of the supposed landing. The messenger found that Colonel Damer was in London so he sent the following note to Major Frampton at Moreton:

Came, May 1st 1804
½ past six o'clock

Sir,

I came here by the recommendation of Captain Ingram who informed me that Captain Daniel had called on him and informed him that the French were landed in Portland and Captain Ingram said that our Corps ought to assist in repelling them immediately, Weymouth is entirely in a state of Confusion and Uproar. The Corps are out and every possible Step taken. Excuse this Scrole written in Mr. Damer's Stable.

I am Sir

Yours very obediently

Joseph Johns

Private DYV

On receiving this message, Major Frampton ordered his troop to assemble at Poxwell and sent word of the supposed landing to other troop leaders. At Poxwell he left those of his men who had already assembled to wait for the rest whilst he rode into Weymouth to see for himself what was happening. By the time he arrived, however, the fog had lifted, the alarm was over and the soldiers, other than the Volunteer Infantry, had returned to quarters.

Before the Volunteers were allowed to stand down they were paraded in open ranks on the grand parade to witness the punishment of the one man who had not turned out when the alarm was raised earlier. He was paraded through the ranks, with a rope tied around his neck, whilst the remainder of the soldiers hissed at him and the band played *The Rogue's March*. He was then expelled from the company and handed over to the women who hooted him out of town?

It is obvious from Major Frampton's account that the Yeomanry were halted before they reached Weymouth. This contrasts with the recollections of Elizabeth who recalled, "By this time (mid-morning) troops of Yeomanry were galloping into the Town." Her evidence differs from the other sources too in that she implied that the King was in residence in Weymouth at this particular time. She wrote:

"That there was real cause for alarm no one could doubt who witnessed the anxious looks of the Field Officers, and saw the Royal Carriages drawn up in front of Gloster Lodge, ready to start at a moment's notice."

A number of local historians have agreed with Elizabeth Ham that the King was staying in Weymouth on May 1, 1804.⁸ If he were, though, he must have been on a private visit because there is no mention of his stay in the local newspaper which normally gave complete coverage to his activities whilst he was in

Dorset. Nor is there any mention of his visit in the records of the Yeomanry, who frequently escorted him whilst he was in Weymouth. Furthermore, if he had been in Weymouth at that time the local garrison would almost certainly have been strengthened by at least one regiment of the Regular Army. It is unlikely, however, that he was even on a private visit because he had been ill at Kew during that spring and he was not considered well enough to move to Windsor until mid-July.⁹ He normally visited Weymouth in mid-August and in 1804 he kept to his customary practice, arriving on 25 August and staying for ten weeks.

What actually happened in Weymouth on 1st May 1804, then, is still uncertain. The military reaction is well documented but what happened among the civilian population is still open to conjecture. There is no doubt that the town was in a state of consternation but how this affected individual people, other than members of the Ham household, is still not certain. Finally, there is the question of the King's presence — was George III in Weymouth throughout this invasion scare or is the report that he was just another historical myth?

1. C. W. Thompson, *Records of the Dorset Yeomanry* (Dorchester, 1894). Dorset County Record Office (DCRO), D.29/X3.
2. E. Gillett, *Elizabeth Ham by Herself, 1783-1820* (Faber, 1945), pp. 64-5.
3. J. H. Bettey, *The Island and Royal Manor of Portland* (University of Bristol, 1970), p.103.
4. Thomas Hardy, *The Trumpet Major*. In the Macmillan, 1974 version, the incident takes place on page 223.
5. DCRO, D.640/X2, Lt.-Col. Pleydell's Order Book.
6. DCRO, Photocopy 415: letter from George Boswell, Piddletown, to George Culley, Northumberland, 6 July, 1804.
7. *Sherborne and Yeovil Mercury*, 7 May, 1804.
8. See M. Weinstock, *Old Dorset* (David & Charles, 1967), and J. H. Bettey, *Dorset*. (David & Charles, 1974), p.120.
9. I. Macalpine & R. Hunter, *George III and the Mad-Business* (Allen Lane, 1969), p. 136.

G. LANNING

293. WELLS' INNS (*SDNQ*, XXXI, 378). Since the above was published there has been considerable work done by the archivists in both the Cathedral Library and the Town Hall at Wells. In the former Mr. L. S. Colchester has produced a series of transcripts, notably his 'Communars' Accounts 1327-1600'.¹ This gives all surviving material, much of which the editors of the earlier *Calendars*² omitted because of space constraints. Simultaneously, in the Town Hall, Miss J. Imray has sorted and indexed a mass of material, including a large run of rate books. In addition I have had a number of helpful comments, notably from Mr. M. Windeatt and Mrs. R. Harris of Wells and Mr. S. Hobbs of the Somerset RO. The latter drew my attention to the records of licences by Sir Gyles Mompesson, who held a patent for this from James I as one of this monarch's

money raising expedients. As a result a number of doubts and queries have been resolved and a number of inns have been pushed back further in time, but it is doubtful if over all clarity has increased. It is now apparent that each of the Ash in the Well and Joiner's Arms signs has consecutively occupied two sites in High St. There are also minor variations on known sites and two additional inns. The extra material relating to individual inns is given below with numbers as in the gazetteer, which formed the appendix to the original article. It is followed by a brief survey of the capital value of various inns in contrast to the rentals which were dealt with previously.

6. **Antelope** then **King's Arms**, in being by 1490/91.
8. **Ash in the Well** then the **Three Kings**, in being 1565.
9. **Bear** then **Angel**, licensed as Angel in 1617.
11. **Blackboy**, address should be 43 High St.
12. **Black Bull**, in being 1665.
24. **Cock Ale House** then **King's Arms**, in being 1712.
34. **Full Moon**, in being 1825.
38. **Goat's Head**; the name Three Goats' Heads appears as a variant in deeds of adjacent properties.
43. **Joiner's Arms & 69 Red Ox**; the sign of the former was used at 38 High St before moving west to 66 High St. The transition was in 1835 when Richard Boyce, inn-holder, surrendered his lease to it, which was sold shortly afterwards as 'late the Joiner's Arms and now rebuilding', but there is probably a gap between the use of 38 High St as the Red Ox and its use as the Joiner's Arms. In the 1821 Corporation survey it is described as a dwellinghouse and slaughterhouse, but it was licensed in 1825. 66 High St (by then the Blacksmith's Arms) was sold by the Corporation in 1858.
49. **Mermaid**, sold by the Corporation in 1858.
57. **Moner's Inn**, only known to adjoin Mogge's tenement. The Communar's accounts show that to have become the original Antelope. Moner's Inn, therefore, was either 4 Chamberlain St or 5 New St. As both of these were inns by the early 17th cent. a longer continuity is possible.
66. **Rainbow** then **Ash in the Well**, next the **Town Arms** & finally the **City Arms**, sold by the Corporation in 1858. Paid a fee farm rent of 40s to various private individuals until 1705. By then it was known as the Ash in the Well and it is likely that the sign was transferred soon after 28 High St abandoned it. In 1753 it was the Town Arms or the Ash in the Well. If it displayed a sign without lettering it could, of course, be described as either. In 1760 it was an alehouse called the Town Arms and can only be clearly identified as the City Arms in 1801, as the rent rolls stubbornly prefer the City Gaol.
70. **Red Ox**, Corporation owned until 1858; Corp. leases 3 lives at 13s 4d.
81. **Sun**, Corporation portion sold 1835.
84. **Three Cups**, address is 73 & 75 High St; licensed in 1620.
86. **Three Horse Loaves** then **Globe** & finally **White Lyon**, known as Globe in 1665.
97. **White Lyon**, 15 Chamberlain St (Grove Lane); 1753-7; Corp.; 3 lives; 13s 4d.
104. **East Wells Inn**, etc., Corp. rentcharge sold 1835; St John's Hospital, Bath, sold freehold 1888.³ Use as inn ended soon after Charlton Brewery Co. sold it to the Corporation in 1913.

117. **Wagon and Horses**, address is 69 Portway.

118. **Bell**, address is 34 or 36 St. Thomas St.; 1851-3; private.

Additional Inns

138. **Red Dragon**, ? within city; licensed 1619.

139. **Three Blackbirds**, ? probably do.; *fl.* 1726.

Turning to capital value, the following purchases and sales by the Corporation give a good idea of the relative value of a full coaching inn as against an ordinary inn, an alehouse or, at the bottom of the hierarchy, a beerhouse. It must be stressed, however, that the figures are only general guides as they also reflect the state of repair and, more especially, the number of lives surviving on the standard 3 lives lease.

1754: purchased the Queen's Arms and tenement to east for £80; they were probably in poor repair, as immediately afterwards £350 was spent on their rebuilding.⁴

1768: sold to Charles Tudway the rebuilt Queen's Arms and property to east, but excluding the new market yard to the rear; price £340.⁵

1800 sold⁶:

(1) Swan to Clement Tudway for £505 16s 2d.

(2) Three Kings to Maurice Davies for £200 5s

1835 sold⁷:

(1) Bull's Head to Turnpike Trustees for £229

(2) King's Arms to William Charles for £238 7s

(3) King's Head to Jillard, Spencer & Co for £195 7s

(4) Sun (front only) to Robert Davies for £85

1858 sold⁸:

(1) Blacksmith's Arms to T. T. Boyce for £146

(2) City Arms to Charles & Robert Orledge for £99

(3) Red Ox to William Charles for £75

(4) Mermaid to Benjamin Watts for £143

1901: purchased the Crown, Royal Oak and two adjoining properties of the Bishop for £969 10s.⁹

1913: purchased the Somerset Inn from Charlton Brewery Co. for £160 which also covered their surrender of their leasehold interest in nos 13, 15 & 17 St Thomas St adjoining.¹⁰

To put these figures in perspective two further points can be made. Firstly, no single sale of Corporation property exceeded that of the Swan in 1800 until 1867, when Frederick George purchased 18 & 20 High St, the latter no longer the Queen's Arms, and the yard behind, described as 'late a sheep & cattle market', for £800.¹¹ By that time the value of the Swan had soared; in 1885 Charles Clement Tudway sold it to Frederick George's widow, Louisa, for £5000.¹² Secondly, the 1835 sales were the biggest single disposal of Corporation property. The prices obtained for the inns need to be contrasted with an average price of £117 12s 8d from all other urban freehold properties. If inns, farmland and rent charges are added the average for all sales falls to £110 5s. Apart from the inns only 2 properties reached more than £200. They were both large and well placed High St properties, being nos 33 & 41 respectively. All this reinforces what analysis of rentals and rateable values

had already shown. That is that inns were an element of outstanding importance in the Wells' property market. This must in turn reflect their importance in the town's economic life.

1. Published by the Friends of Wells Cathedral, 1984.
2. Hist. MSS. Com., "Calendar of the MSS of the D. & C. of Wells", HMSO, 1907 & 1914.
3. The Hospital of St John the Baptist had owned it from 1239. The original grant is given in Som. Rec. Soc., 73, p.77. This span of 649 years exceeds anything that can be demonstrated for any other ordinary urban property in Wells. It was, of course, an inn for only a fraction of that time.
4. Wells Town Hall (WTH below) Receivers Book Vol. 251.
5. *Ibid.*, plus S.R.O. DD/TD Box 30/28.
6. WTH Bargains Book.
7. WTH Receivers Books Vols 270 & 271 and Bundle 57/1.
8. WTH Bundle 57/8 & Council Minute Book.
9. Wells Cath. Library VI/1 & WTH 131/1.
10. WTH Box 658, which also gives their sale by the Corporation in 1925. No. 11, the former inn, with its garden enlarged, fetched £370.
11. WTH Bundle 57/12.
12. S.R.O. DD/TD Box 45/15.

Bristol

A. J. SCRASE

294. CAPTAIN JOHN CHAFFIN OF SHERBORNE. In *The Massey Brigade in the West* (SDNQ, XXXI, Part 322), local historians were invited to shed further light on any of the 113 named officers. Some details are available about Captain John Chaffin.

John was the son of William Chaffin, a cordwainer of Sherborne, and was baptized there on 30 August 1607. He married Agnes Kelloway on 3 July 1626 and either Agnes died very soon afterwards and he re-married to Anna, or more likely Agnes was always known as Anna, for Agnes is not mentioned again and no marriage to Anna has been traced.¹ John and Anna baptized nine children in Sherborne between 1627 and 1644². John was, like his younger brothers William and Robert, a button-maker by trade and in 1652, the year that his son John married, he took an apprentice to assist him in the business that flourished in the town³. He lived in a house in Cheape Street, Sherborne, and also held the New Inn which later passed to his son John and was the subject of an interesting dispute between them⁴.

Captain John Chaffin signed a receipt for pay in Massy's muster book on 10 November 1645⁵, and signed the petition to the Houses of Parliament in July 1647⁶. In 1649/50 he was commissioned as Captain of Dorset H Troop,⁷ and in 1655 he was busy in Sherborne taking custody of a drunken Royalist.⁸ In 1654 John was "late of London Buttonmaker otherwise called John Chaffin of Sherborne in the Countie of Dorsett

Buttonmaker"⁹. He was Sherborne's postmaster in 1657 and probably for several years before that ¹⁰. The family had London connections and may have actually operated a branch of the buttonmaking business there. This business as well as that of innkeeper, was aided by the benefits of the office of postmaster such as free carriage of letters and relief from quartering soldiers. At the Restoration, his activities in the Parliamentary army marked him out and in a declaration to the Court of Chancery much later, Captain John Chaffin said that he had been imprisoned, first in England then he was sent to Ireland by the King's command and was a prisoner for about four years¹¹. The entry for him in the Carlow Quaker Minutes shows that he "was sent close prisoner to Dublin Castle in the time of Ormond lieutenancy"¹². In 1665 one Robert Monmoth of Sherborne was stopped in Somerset and questioned. He said that he had served as a soldier under Captain John Chaffin and hoped he would do so again for he had "bin amongst Quakers, Anabaptists and others in Cornwall and Devonshire, and that hee knewe severall such to bee in readinesse for arms, and they did only waite for an overthrow of ye English by ye Dutch and when ye word should be given them". He said he was on his way to Ireland to speak to Captain Chaffin on business that could not be entrusted to a letter¹³.

Captain John Chaffin became a Quaker and it is noted that as early as 1656 he favoured toleration for Quakers¹⁴. He is probably the "C. Chaffin" who was in "Carloe", Ireland in 1669 and was given books by William Penn for dispersal¹⁵ for John's wife was buried at Newgarden, Carloe in 1670/71¹⁶. In June 1681 Captain John sold for £96 his share in Joan Parson's tenement in Home Street, Sherborne, to his son-in-law Christopher Port, a buttonmaker, and soon after emigrated to America — a big step for a man of 74. It was said in 1686 that John Chaffin senior "about fouer yeares since departed out of this Kingdom for Carolina and is since dead"¹⁷. Documents in America show that not only did he and his daughter Hannah survive the journey but he settled with other Quakers in the newly founded town of Burlington, New Jersey, where he bought 135 acres of land, was chosen to be one of the Justices and served as a member of the Council¹⁸. A warrant for his arrest was issued on 4 June 1685, but the authorities were too late. John Chaffin was buried in Burlington on 18 May 1683¹⁹ although the administration of the estate of "Capt Chaffin" was not granted until 1696²⁰.

It may be helpful to give an outline of the career of Captain John's son, John Chaffin junior, the only other John Chaffin in Sherborne during the same period, for he also served in the Parliamentary army.

John Chaffin junior was baptized in Sherborne on 22 October 1629²¹ and, "there being love and affection between them", married Joan, the daughter of Thomas Sampson, a clothier, in 1652²². At various times he kept the New Inn, the King's Arms and the George Inn, all in Sherborne, and for some years he had "a very great trade of makeinge of Buttons and Silke Lace" at the King's Arms²³. He was postmaster of Sherborne in 1660-61, in 1670, and from 1673 until he tried the patience of his London masters too far and was ousted in 1676²⁴. He held the office again from 1690 until his death in 1691. He apparently occupied the position at other periods, for in 1660 it was recorded that he and his relations had managed the office nine years together before that time. The reason this was mentioned was because Francis Tompson, who worked under the Postmaster General in London, wanted John Chaffin junior to continue as postmaster after the Restoration. Chaffin had to point out that because he had "beene in Armes against the King that now is and his Father", he was ineligible to undertake a post handling royal mail. It was said that he had been "a Leiutennt under his Father as Captaine under the said late usurped powers". This difficulty was overcome by the appointment of a trustee in whose name the business was conducted, although Chaffin ran the office and took the profits²⁵! Apart from serving under his father, Lieutenant John Chaffin is shown with Captain James Dewie in 1656 under General Desborow²⁶.

My researches continue into the entire Chaffin family and I would appreciate a note of any reference found.

1. Transcript of marriages, St. Giles in the Fields, Middx.
2. Dorset Record Office (DRO), P.155/RE 1; P.155/RE 2.
3. DRO. D. 204/C57.
4. Public Record Office (PRO), Chancery depositions C/8. 186/12.
5. PRO. State Papers (SP) 28/144, pt 10, 103-30, Receipt bk. Maj. Gen. Massy.
6. *SDNQ*, XXXI, Part 322.
7. PRO. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic (CSPD)*, 1650, 505.
8. *C.S.P.D.*, 1655, 244.
9. PRO. Common Pleas, 6 Chas II, Trinity 2648, fol 2666.
10. *Calendar State Papers, Ireland, Adventurers*, 1642-1651.
11. PRO. Chancery depositions, C/8 186/12.
12. *Carlow Minutes*. Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. (RSFI), Dublin.
13. Somerset Record Office, *Information of John Newman*, Q/SR 108/6, 1665.
14. PRO. SP. 18/130/46, 1656.
15. *Journal of Penn's second visit to Ireland*.
16. RSFI. *Carlow Registers*.
17. PRO. Chancery depositions, C/10 270/19.
18. *Revel's Book of Surveys*. New Jersey Colonial Documents (NJCD).
19. *Encyclopaedia of American Quaker Genealogy*.
20. NJCD. *Calendar of Wills*.
21. DRO. P. 155/RE 1; P. 155/RE 2.
22. PRO. C/8 186/12.
23. PRO. Chancery depositions, C22 672/33.
24. *Peover papers: Whitley's Letter Books*. Post Office Archives.
25. PRO. C22 672/33.
26. PRO. SP. 25/77, pt 3, 868 & 891.

295. MARTOCK ROADS, 1830. The following letter¹ was written by Revd. George Musgrave² of Ash House to Edward Coles, Clerk of the Peace for Somerset. It highlights the state of the roads in Martock and provides a graphic account of the difficulties faced by road users in the early 19th cent.

Ash House, near Martock.
February 25 1830.

Sir,

I beg to offer my apologies for this intrusion from which I should have refrained but for the urgency which compels me after long and undeserved forbearance to state in the highest and most proper quarters the extent of injuries to which my neighbours and self have been subjected by the disgraceful condition of the roads, whether highway or byway in the hundred of Martock, the district of Chilthorne and Liberty of Yeovil, but more especially the former — where I conceive the neglect has been most wanton. I am but a new settler here, awaiting the lapse of a Family Living, but have seen much of the general routine of county business, including M'adamization³ and the Commission of Sewers in London where I very recently lived as Minister among twenty seven thousand parishioners and thus I do not obtrude myself upon your attention in this matter as an individual altogether incompetent to form a correct judgement or to substantiate a formal statement. I ought to observe however that this district is but thinly sprinkled with Gentry, Mr. Phillips⁴ of Montacute being the only man of family or fortune near us, who may lay full claim to the denomination of 'Country or County Gentleman'; and perhaps the absence of such occupants of land has at all times enabled those persons who are by law and office responsible for those continued neglects, to persevere with impunity from year to year in resisting every complaint and despising all remonstrance on the part of those who have so frequently suffered both in purse and person from the dangerous state of the causeways.

It is no light matter that the road is in one or two instances worse immediately contiguous to the Way Wardens' residences than in other places, as you would discover by a ride through Tintinhull and Chilthorne, between this village of Ash and Yeovil. It was but yesterday that the most sure footed horse I ever crossed, (and I have ridden many hundreds of leagues in the most precipitous countries without an accident) was thrown violently forward upon his head and knees, about a quarter of a mile on this side of Chilthorne, by having put his forefoot into a hole, filled with water and loose clay, which might with ease have contained a sheep; and but for God's mercy and my wary extrication of the stirrups I might have been killed on the spot. As it is, a few bruises and a ruined suit of clothes are the sum total of the injury. On my return however from Yeovil in a carriage with my Wife's sister, (the groom having ridden the horse home afterwards,) I was in continual dread of overthrow and scarcely managed to accomplish the five miles in safety. A Gentleman, apparently a stranger in this vicinity, actually stopped his horse to enquire of our coachman 'Who had the direction of roadmaking and mending in this Hundred?' 'For', said he, 'I never rode over such a carriageway in my life.'

Let me add that I actually paid several pounds in hiring a vehicle to convey part of my female servants to church all through the Autumn and Winter, their attempts to reach Martock in pattens being attended with such disfigurement to their dress and so much delay to their regular going and return that, but for this expedient, none of the domestics could have attended Divine service. Even the gardener, a hale, strong man (informs me that two Sundays since he stuck fast up to the knee, in what is called Short Lane, the nearest road to Martock by a mile — and which were it attended to now and then would all through the year

be an excellent broadway, in every respect adapted for the largest or smallest carriages. It has now lain impassable for three months! But I must entreat your pardon for what must appear to you superfluous description until you have had opportunity to judge for yourself which as an act of real mercy I entreat you to do. Letters and circular warnings will, I fear, be wholly unavailing in these quarters. They have had their own way too long not to be callous to that sort of discipline; and yet one would think that the sight of so many broken down carts, the wheels of which snapped short in the ruts would by this time have moved compassion. A carrier whom I employ two or three times weekly has lost three horses within the last two months; and at the time of Mrs. Musgrave being confined, by a perilous indisposition, the surgeon, (Mr. Moore of Yeovil) was often compelled to slacken his horse's pace into a walk when the emergency of the case required a gallop. My dear little children too are with their nurses imprisoned for months because it is morally impossible for them to walk outside our gates without imminent danger of falling and slipping down in the wretched roads contiguous to our home. Believe me Sir I have not exaggerated my part of this case, as you would easily discover. I shall be most happy to see you at this House, call when you will and I entirely confide in your conscientious principle which, I hear, has always distinguished you in your transaction of the County Business. Indictments and appeals on my part as a new settler and as a clergyman would be invidious and unneighbourly, but some severe measures are indispensable and I leave the choice thereof in your hands, auguring speedy success and efficient reparation.

I have the honour to be Sir, Your very obedient humble servant
George Musgrave.

1. S.R.O. Q/C 8/6
2. Revd. George Musgrave is described in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as 'an assiduous traveller, who probably knew the surface of France better than any other Englishman since Arthur Young's day. He wrote several travel books as well as a translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, and this gives added weight to his views on the subject of this letter. He served as a curate in his birthplace, Marylebone, Middlesex for three years before moving to Martock in 1829. He was appointed Rector of Bexwell, Norfolk in 1835 and subsequently, Vicar of Bedwell, Kent in 1838, where he remained until 1854. Latterly he lived in Bath where he died in 1883.
3. Macadamization: roads repaired or made according to John Macadam's system.
4. Mr. J. Phelips.

Taunton

S. D. HOBBS

296. LINDEN LEA. In an exhibition at the Dorset County Museum to mark the centenary of the death of William Barnes, there was a letter (undated) from Ralph Vaughan Williams to Thomas Hardy enclosing copies of his setting to music of two of Barnes' poems. One of the poems was 'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea', now more widely known as the song. Vaughan Williams explained that the translation into 'ordinary' English was not his doing, but was insisted upon by the publisher. But where was Linden Lea?

Linden Lea is not found as a place-name in Dorset¹, and a search amongst modern and other field-names and topographical features recorded in Dorset since the Middle Ages discovered nothing resembling Linden Lea². *Linden* was the adjective formed from *OE lind*, 'lime tree'³. Except as a

house name in Herefordshire, Lancashire and Northumberland⁴, and elsewhere as a suburban street name, notably in London⁵, *Linden* appears to have survived as a living word only in German and Dutch. The English house and street names are probably modern imports. There was a Geoffrey de la Lynde in Fordington, Dorchester, in 1332⁶, but his name does not appear to have been given to any place or topographical feature. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* treats 'lea' as a 'poetical' form of 'leigh' or 'ley', both of which derive from *OE lēah*, *ME lee*, *legh*, 'a wood, a clearing in a wood'. *Lea* was, in fact, the dative of *OE lēah*, and occurs as a place-name in several English counties⁷, though in Dorset it has been traced only as a field name, 'The Lea', in Affpuddle⁸. In the light of the investigation thus far, it might have seemed reasonable to assume that 'Linden Lea' existed only in the poetic imagination of William Barnes.

When, however, the search was pursued into pre-Conquest Dorset charters, a probable candidate was found in a grant of land by King Edmund to Eadric, dated AD 943. The land was in Mapperton. The bounds, as was usual, were given in English and they include the passage: '*Of Weritun on Limbenlee*'⁹. In his rather free translation, Grundy does not attempt to explain the name, or term '*Limben-*', but leaves it as: 'From the Farm at the Weir to ... Lea'¹⁰. In the English Place-Name Society's work on Dorset, this landmark is quoted from the same source, under 'medieval and early-modern field-names', with the comment: '*V.lēah*, first element perhaps corrupt for *linden* "growing with lime trees"'.¹¹ (It is for consideration whether *limben* was a transitional form towards modern 'lime' rather than corrupt.) Although this charter is accepted as authentic¹², Grundy suggests that it is a post-Conquest copy 'but not necessarily later than the 12th century', and points out that the copyist had rendered some of the terms into forms used in his own day and had misread others. It is therefore fairly safe to infer that there was a '*Linden lēah*' or 'Linden Lee' in Dorset in the tenth century but that it was probably already forgotten before the Middle Ages were far advanced.

In Somerset a form of the name existed there in the fourteenth century. When Robert de St. Clair died in 1308 he held the manor of Stapleton, near Martock in southern Somerset. As he was a tenant of the Crown in chief there was an *Inquisition Post Mortem*. It included a detailed extent in which all Robert's tenants are named and classified according to their type of holding. Among them was a cottar whose name, as written, was William Lyndenelogh¹³. Robert's heir, another Robert, died in 1336, and in the assignment of dower to his

widow Sibyl, the name William Lyndene(l)o^{gh} occurs again, though here the vowel in the final syllable is illegible¹⁴. It was, of course, a topographical surname.

While the element *logh* existed as a term for a type of land-unit in medieval Kent¹⁵, and the possibility that *logh* in this instance was a *ME* form of Old High German *lōh*, cognate with *OE* *lēah* and Latin *lucus*, 'a grove', should not, perhaps, be entirely disregarded, there is good reason to believe that 'Lyndene^logh' was a scribal error for 'Lyndenelegh'. In some medieval hands the letters 'e' and 'o' can be confused, but close examination is usually sufficient to distinguish one from the other. In the *IPM*, however, the clerk has carelessly written in one place *tonens* for *tenens* ('tenant'), and in another *tenentos* for *tenentes* ('tenants'). As we have seen, Lyndenelegh would have been an early form of Lindenleigh, or even Linden Lea.

For all that, we are still left to wonder whether, by coincidence, William Barnes invented a name which had existed as a landmark in Dorset a thousand years ago, but had been long forgotten, though it was also known in medieval Somerset; or did he come across it in one of his divers researches, and its charm had inspired the poem? It is perhaps relevant to observe that some of what might seem the more improbable names in Thomas Hardy's novels can be found on the signposts, shopfronts and tombstones of Dorset.

EPNS

English Place-Name Society

ME

Middle English

OE

Old English

PRO

Public Record Office

1. Fagersten, A., *The Place-Names of Dorset*, Uppsala 1933/Wakefield 1978; Mills, A. D., *The Place-Names of Dorset*, Cambridge, Part I 1977, Part II 1980, (*EPNS* volumes LII and LIII); Shuttleworth, B., *A Gazetteer of Dorset Place-Names*, (n/p) 1984.
2. Mills, *op. cit.* 1977/80.; Grundy, G.B., 'Dorset Charters' *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society*, LV, 55-61.
3. Smith, A. H., *English Place-Name Elements*, Part II, Cambridge 1970, (*EPNS* XXVI), pp. 24-5.
4. *Bartholomew's Gazetteer of the British Isles*, Edinburgh, 1966.
5. *'Geographia' A1 Atlas of London*, London (n/d).
6. Mills, A. D., *The Dorset Lay Subsidy Roll of 1332*, Dorset Record Society, 1971, p.55.
7. Ekwall, E., *English Place-Names*, Oxford, 1966, p.291.
8. Mills, *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 293.
9. Kemble, J. M., *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, vol. II, London 1840, No. 394, (text); Grundy, *op. cit.* vol. 55, p.246 (bounds).
10. *Ibid.*
11. Mills, *op. cit.* 1980, p.58.
12. Sawyer, P. H., *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, London 1968, No. 490.
13. *PRO* C134/10.
14. *PRO* C135/49.
15. Sinclair Williams, C. L., 'The Term "Logh" in Medieval Kentish Documents', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, vol.XCII, 1977, pp.65-72.

C. L. SINCLAIR WILLIAMS

297. A LETTER FROM W. W. WHEATLEY. The artist W. W. Wheatley, who died in 1885 aged 74, is best known for the paintings of Somerset churches, mansions and antiquities with which he illustrated the Braikenridge and Adlam copies of Collinson's *History and Antiquities of Somerset*. These now belong to the Somerset Archaeological Society and the Society of Antiquaries of London respectively. Wheatley also painted a series of Somerset churches for Prebendary J. S. H. Horner, Rector of Mells (1835-74). These are now in the possession of the Earl of Oxford and Asquith. In addition his work is to be found in numerous museums, art galleries and private collections in Somerset, Avon and Wiltshire.

Despite a fine effort by readers of *SDNQ* in the 1920s (XV, 154; XVI, 10; XVII, 92, 138-39) little is known about his life, character or working methods. This makes the following letter from him to the Rev. William Phelps, author of *The History and Antiquities of Somersetshire*, all the more valuable. The original is to be found in the British Library under Add. MS. 33836 ff. 258-59. The letter reveals the difficulties inherent in painting remote parts of Somerset in those days and also Wheatley's enthusiasm for the antiquities of his native county. The letter needs little explanation except that the Rev. J. E. Jackson was the well-known Wiltshire antiquary, who was curate of Farleigh Hungerford from 1834 to 1845. At the time Wheatley wrote Jackson was still collecting material and illustrations for his *Guide to Farleigh Hungerford*. His church was Leigh Delamare, near Chippenham, of which parish he became rector in 1845. The account of Barton St. David which Wheatley criticizes is that in Phelps' *History*. The letter is not entirely grammatical but I have confined alterations to an occasional full stop or capital letter.

Road July 9th 1849

I received yours of the 6th instant and was happy to hear from you. I envy you the pleasure you must have enjoyed in your continental tour, a happiness that I am fearful will not fall to my lot but since I saw you last, I have been sketching over three parts of the County of S[omerset] visiting *all* the churches & Antiquities & I expect D.V. to visit the remainder. I am just returned from an unfortunate journey I have made in the neighbourhood of Porlock &c. having to travel to the various Parishes on foot with my bag and sketching implements, going over those *Hills* (Beautiful as they are) the Toil in travelling, the difficulties in finding the road &c I was overcome with fatigue, Taken ill, & was obliged to return home (having only finished six parishes after been out 8 or 9 days) just a day before I received your Note. I am now very unwell, but must endeavour to recruit Myself for another attempt. I am making these sketches for a private collection — independent of toil & Time the expence (economical as I am obliged to be) leaves me at the end of the sketching season poorer then when I started, there are a great many who pretend to be interested in these pursuits, but few really appreciate or understand them — I have no view by me of Farleigh House. The one I did for Col. Houlton is in the album in possession of one of the Family. The Rev. E. Jackson has I believe one or two views — I have not even a sketch. I think Mrs. Jackson has that I saw on my way home

through Bath at Everitts, Print Seller, Poulteney Bridge, a Painting — a very good one — of the City of Bath. He told me it was painted for him & from which he is about to have a first rate L[itho] print, he has published several other views of Bath all very good, but the painting he showed me is the best view I have seen — but to (*sic*) Elaborate for a small view. Probably you might look at them — I was at Corsham some time back making a drawing for the Rev. Mr. Jackson of the almshouse which is connected with the Hungerford History. I have not seen Mr. Jackson for a long time. His church has I believe been restored, there was upon the old one a curious Sancte Cote — I visited last Summer Barton St. David, Somerset. I was agreeably surprised to find it more interesting than I expected — I wish with due Submission a little more elaborate description of the Church had been given. It is rather a singular one from those around — I saw the Rev. Jn. Ireland at his living of Queen Charlton. I was surprised to find him there but not after what I heard. He spoke to me about you & the work. I Remain Dear Sir your Obt. St. W. W. Wheatley

[P.S.] Have you seen the discoveries at St. Cuthbert's, Wells? I have been there — they are really beautiful — I mean the Jesse & Lady Chapel. There was a brass inscription plate of one of the Bishop' found in the Cathedral.

Frome

MICHAEL McGARVIE

298. SCRIMSHAW IN AUSTRALIA SHOWING THE SHIP INN, PORLOCK. Before coal-gas was manufactured, petroleum discovered and steel mass produced, northern Europe, north America, Australia and many other regions were dependent on the products of the whaling industry. Oil from whales was used in lamps, made soap, paint and varnish and lubricated the machinery of expanding industries. Wax from the head chamber of Sperm whales (*Moby Dick* was such a creature) made the finest candles. Baleen or "whalebone", large sheets of flexible horny material which hung in the mouths of Right and Humpback whales was used for a multitude of things later made in steel and plastic.

The whaling industry involved hundreds of ships and thousands of men. On whaleships, large crews were necessary to capture whales and process the blubber and baleen, but on the long cruises in search of them there could be days or weeks of boredom. So men turned to craftwork and made a wide range of useful and pretty things from materials which came to hand. During the 19th century the word scrimshaw, with a variety of spellings such as skrimshont and squimshon became used for this craftwork, which reached its climax between about 1830 and 1870. It included tools, canes and sticks, toys and games, staybusks and pastrycutters but the commonest type of scrimshaw was the decorated sperm whale tooth, with pictures and designs scratched into the surface and filled with pigment, usually black. Similar pictures might adorn walrus tusks and bone plaques sawn from the huge jaws. Occasionally

tusks such as elephant and hippo were decorated, but bones of animals other than whales were rarely used and techniques such as painting and ink drawings were very unusual.

During a six month visit to Australia to study the scrimshaw collections there, I was interested to find scrimshaw showing 'The Ship Inn at Porlock in Somersetshire' and signed T.E.A. (*Pl. 1*) which combined three rare features. It consisted of a section of long bone, probably beef, with an Indian ink drawing of The Ship and an inscription to identify it: this last is all too rare alas.

Early surveys suggest that the Ship may have existed as a cottage in 1606 and a house by 1613.¹ By the date of the next survey, 1723, it had become the Ship and was described as 'a very good dwelling house, barn, stables and garden and an orchard behind the house'.² Collinson describes the town as consisting of 'about 110 houses, chiefly built of rough stone or mud walls, two stories high, and thatched, with the backs of the chimneys projecting from the fronts into the streets'.³ This chimney construction is characteristic of west Somerset and is a prominent feature of the Ship. Access from Porlock Hill to the west was particularly difficult and there was no stage coach until the 1840s, but many travellers passed through, possibly (as Chadwyck Healey suggests) because the churchwardens were charitable.⁴ Thus, between 1740 and 1760 he notes that many entries of gifts appeared in the parish records: they paid '2s for Meat and Drinck for Tho. Foy a man belonging tow ye Ruby Man of War travling this way tow Kingrod' (Kingroad) and made numerous donations to 'Pore travellers with passes' and 'Pore sailors with their wives and chilrn'. He was also prompted to wonder whether in 1754 'some of the townsfolk in joyous moments shot at the sign of our ancient Inn, and the host came to the churchwardens for indemnity' by the entry 'Pd for ale ye 5th of November for ringing and for shutting down the sign of Ye Ship 10s-6d'.⁴ The sign must have been replaced many times. The scrimshaw shows a large 3-masted sailing ship, possibly a model, with the name in capitals on a long board below it and supported on an S-shaped iron bracket.

The source of the picture is intriguing. There appear to be no prints of The Ship, so was it done from life, a photograph, a drawing or even from memory? There are some conflicting features which have made it difficult to date. The scrimshaw shows the chimney much as nowadays, cylindrical and plastered, but with a spiky chimney pot. The main entrance appears to be to the right of the chimney breast and is surrounded by a wooden rustic porch with diagonal slats, double windows with diagonal bars, a flat roof and a seat inside, all enveloped in foliage.

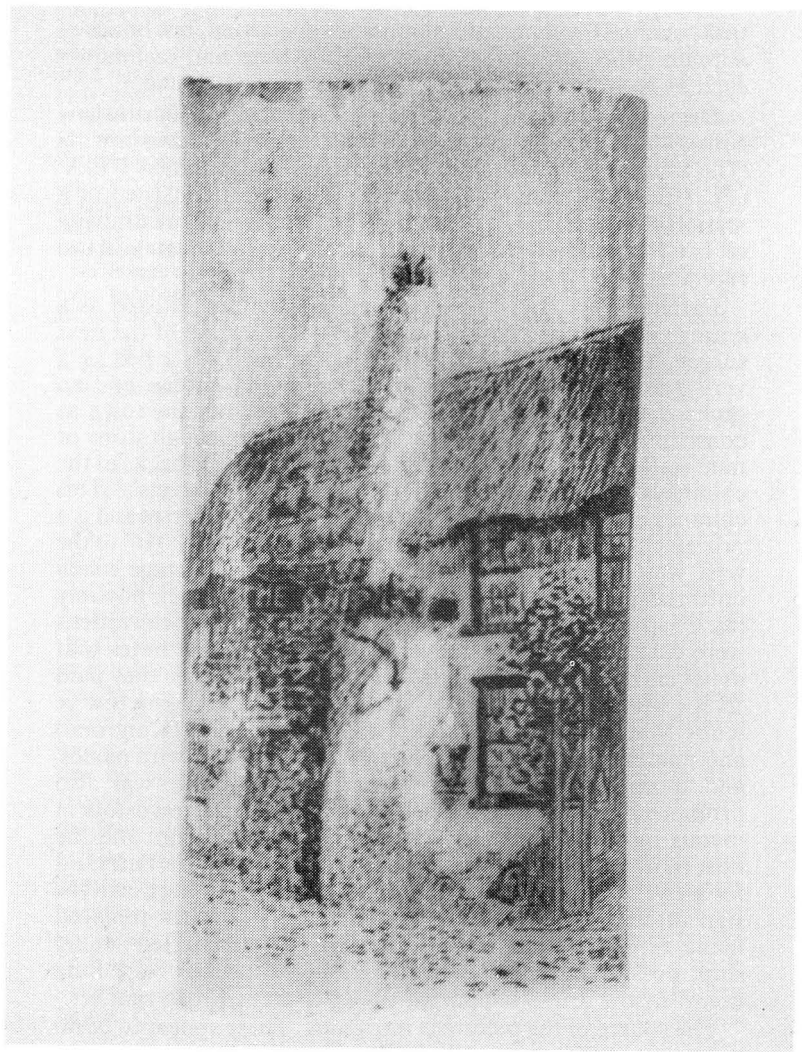


Plate 1.

Section of bone, height 9.5 cm., with an Indian ink drawing inscribed 'The Ship Inn at Porlock in Somersetshire. T.E.A.'. The porch is much like that shown by the left hand door in the 1894 photograph (*Plate 3*), although here placed on the right and with a bench seat in the alcove. There is a sailing ship on or above the sign.



Plate 2.

By Robert Gillo, 1860-1870. There is a brick extension to the chimney but no rustic porches.



Plate 3.

Photograph by Francis Frith, 1894. Both entrances have porches. That on the left, which resembles the scrimshaw, is too narrow for a seat.

The earliest known photograph of The Ship was taken by Robert Gillo of Bridgwater, probably in the 1860s or 70s. (*Pl.* 2).⁵ Here the cylindrical chimney is surmounted by a vast oblong brick stack, increasing its height by about 50%. The main entrance seems to be on the left, though there is a door to the right of the chimney breast, and a small tree has been planted against the wall. The next available photograph was taken by Francis Frith in 1894 (*Pl.* 3).⁶ The brick stack remains, but there are two prominent entrances: one has a porch with shrubs similar to that on the scrimshaw, but it is narrower and on the left, not the right; the right hand porch has a seat as on the scrimshaw, but the roof is pitched, not flat, though the tree has grown to cover it. A later photograph, taken some time after 1902, shows the right hand porch much the same, but a rustic seat has been put across it, so the main entrance must once again be on the left of the chimney. Though little of the chimney top is visible, its brick stack seems to have gone.

All available photographs from 1894 onwards show the sign almost square with plain lettering, supported on an S-shaped bracket similar to the scrimshaw but there is an extra diagonal brace at the side. These features still survive, as does the flat roofed porch, still recognisably the same in shape and construction, narrow and with no seat and remaining on the left. Did our scrimshander work from memory, showing the inn with remarkable accuracy though the porch is transposed, whilst romanticising it with a beautiful ship for the sign, or were these features a reality, introduced sometime in the early 20th century?

How the scrimshaw came to be in Australia is not known. It is at present in the Western Australian Museum, Fremantle, having come from a collection in Tasmania, which was a major whaling centre and still has a great deal of scrimshaw. Perhaps T.E.A. was a Somerset man who emigrated and was inspired to create his own unusual type of the art form, though it is always possible that it was taken out as a souvenir. Any suggestions or information as to its possible date or maker would be welcomed by the writer at 111 High St., Linton, Cambridge, CB1 6JT.⁷

1. Information supplied by the County Archivist, SRO refs. D/D/Rg 354, D/P/plk 3/1/1
2. Do., D/P/plk 3/1/3.
3. J. Collinson, *History of Somerset* (1791), II, 34.
4. C. E. H. Chadwyck Healey, *History of the Part of West Somerset* (1901), 386.
5. Information supplied by the County Local History Librarian.
6. Do. by the County Archivist.
7. I am grateful to the British Academy and the Smuts Fund, Cambridge University, for financial support in Australia, the Western Australian Museum for their help and facilities and to the County Archivist and David Bromwich of the Local History Library, Taunton, for supplying photographs and archive information.

299. FIRST TRANSLATION OF A WELSH POEM BY WILLIAM BARNES. William Barnes's version of the Old Welsh poem on the death of Geraint Ab Erbin was given with a warning that the 18th and 19th century forgeries of Iolo Morganwg were not understood before the 20th century (*SDNQ* XXXII, Part 323). As Barnes showed that poem could at least be matched with the entry for AD 501 in the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle*. Although the versions in Barnes's collected *Verse Translations* are not as poetry better or worse in themselves for some such parallel as the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* gives for the poem about the death of Geraint, it is only fair to say that the following 'Dialogue Between King Arthur and Queen Gwenhwyvar' has no parallel of that kind. Moreover, although the translations themselves are neither better nor worse for want of outside witness, the notes in which Barnes seeks to clarify the meaning of the poems had to be based on texts available in his time. This means that Barnes had the same handicap as other Welsh scholars. Lady Charlotte Guest (1812-1893) made her English version of *The Mabinogion* without knowing that some of her materials might be suspect.

On the strength of the *Triban* (triplet) form in which it is written one may put the 'Dialogue' in the same age as the poem about the death of Geraint in battle at Portsmouth. At the same time one should not forget that an 'age' may spread over centuries. We understand this readily in such phrases as 'dark ages' and 'middle ages'. We should also read these *Tribannau* as not so much the outcome of a culture but as the tokens of its having been alive from its rise to its setting, however short or long that time may have been. Dating the 'Dialogue' by its *Triban* versification does not mean that its matter is not drawn from a much earlier time, matter even that may have become hard to understand by the time the poem was made. A text of an old poem may be one that was put on paper or vellum long after it was first composed. There are references to The Matter of Britain in Old Welsh literature of a time long before that of the *Tribannau* here printed from Barnes's *Verse Translations*:

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN KING ARTHUR AND GWENHWYVAR

ARTHUR

Black is my steed, and safe of tread,
No stream, however deep, he'll dread,
Nor e'er from man will turn his head.

GWENHWYVAR

Bright is my steed, and bay of hue,
But scorn'd be all the boasting crew;
A true man to his word is true.

And who will go and fight to win?
And ride amid the battle's din?
None but a man — Cai ab Sevin.

ARTHUR

Why, I will ride and take my stand,
To fight upon the tide-left strand;
I am the man for Cai's right hand.

GWENHWYVAR

Ha! youth thy words sound idly light,
If I may rate thy might by sight,
Thy hundred with thee Cai would smite.

ARTHUR

Gwenhwyvar, maiden, snowy white,
Deride me not, though small my height,
I will myself a hundred fight.

GWENHWYVAR

Ha! youth in black and gold, aw o'er
Thy form I look, the more and more
I think I saw thee once before.

ARTHUR

Gwenhwyvar, maid of looks so gay,
O tell me, if thou canst, I pray,
Where thou hast seen me ere to-day.

GWENHWYVAR

I saw a man, not over tall,
In Dyvnaint, handing wine to all
His friends in Celliweg's wide hall.

ARTHUR

Gwenhwyvar, maid of speech so gay,
Women have merry words to say.
'Twas there thou sawest me that day.

After the translation Barnes gave what he would have called some 'outclearing notes.' For printing these with the 'Dialogue' here, they have been adjusted for the convenience of readers. They have not been altered in substance, but it is often clear that printers were at sea with Barnes's wild hand writing, especially after 1854. Adjustments in what follow are mostly mere matters of consistency in setting out:

'1. 4. *Gwenhwyvar*, the true name which became in the romances Guenever, Genievier, Gweniver, is from *Gwen* (fair) and *Chwyvo* (to go or move), and would mean the 'Fair or gracefully walking one.' Her mind, however, was not of a very lovely cast. The Welsh have a couplet about her —

Gwenhwyvar, merch Gogyvran Gawr,

Dryg yn vechan, gwaeth yn vawr.

Gwenhwyvar, daughter of Gogyvran Gawr,

Bad when small, and worse full grown.

1. 9. *Cai ab Sevin*, son of Sevin, afterwards one of Arthur's warriors.

1. 19. *Melyn*, yellow. It seems from the *Mabinogion* that a yellow robe or surcoat was much worn by knights of the olden time. In *The Dream of Rhonabwy* we read:

"A robe of honour of yellow diaped satin was upn the knight." Of the knight Iddawc it is said that he wore:

"a coat and scarf of yellow satin, sewed with green silk," and a page is

said to wear a surcoat of yellow satin.

l. 26. Dyvnaint, Devonshire, the hilly land farther west, so called from *Dwvn* (deep) and *Naint* (ravines, dells). The Britons called the valley of the Avon from Bath *Nant y Baddon* (the dell of the Baths).'

In these notes from Arthurian sources Guinevere is not the heroine she became in later romance. *Cai* is the Sir Kay of Arthur's Court in The Matter of Britain. Arthur here is not the 'one' raised above the rest that is found in later Arthurian myth and legend. Perhaps the yellow coat is a link with the quest for a yellow skin often found in saga literature. *Dyvnaint* in the poem about Geraint Ab Erbin is taken straight from *l. 26.* of this 'Dialogue'.

The 'Dialogue' is clearly a tale in the old question and answer form, and there is even a hint of flyting, and song contest — in Welsh, *Caniad Pennillion*. Equally clearly, at this stage the myth was far from being sanctified as a national epic.

BERNARD JONES

300. THE BELETS: THE NORMAN CONNECTION. The history and royal service of the Belet family of medieval Dorset have been recently examined¹ but hitherto it has only been possible to speculate as to their Norman origins and the possibility of the William Belet who is recorded in the Domesday Book² being a member of Duke William's household in 1066. It is argued that because of William Belet's comparative wealth amongst the Domesday sergeants of southern England, and because of subsequent family connections with service to the royal household, that the William Belet recorded in the Domesday Book was possibly a member of the ducal household and retinue at the time of the conquest. Such a supposition is based on circumstantial evidence only. Recent evidence of the Belet family in Normandy confirms their Norman origin and adds weight to the arguments for their ducal associations in 1066.

Between 1089 and 1091 Gilbert Belet attested an act of Robert Curthose³, who succeeded the Conqueror as Duke of Normandy, in which land was restored to Fecamp following the Duke's defeat of Robert of Mortagne. From this reference to Gilbert as a *fidele* of Robert Curthose it is clear that he was a trusted companion. Confirmation of this comes in the form of the motte at Maniquerville which Gilbert Belet held as part of a series of castellanies created around the ducal demesne at Fecamp for protection during the troubled period of Robert Curthose's rule. Similar mottes were held nearby at Cretot and Criquetot by the Martel family and the Esneval family. The motte at Maniquerville was near both the village church and the main road between Lillebonne and Fecamp which it guarded. In this context Gilbert, and his son Robert, who was

killed at Evreux in 1091, appear with the other favoured vassals as "new men", faithful vassals whose loyalty was rewarded with concessions to assart in the ducal forest of Fecamp. This benefited both the new families and the duke.

In 1111 a John Belet is described as an officer of Henry I⁴. In the second half of the twelfth century the *Chartres des Abbayes* show the Belets to be associated with Fecamp and Caen. In return for his loyal service in the ducal household at Caen Robert Belet⁵ received land at Vitreville in 1183, not far from the family estate at Maniquerville where his son William made a grant to the parish church sometime between 1184 and 1207⁶.

Besides receiving Vitreville for his service to the ducal house at Caen, Robert Belet also served the King in England⁷. He was sheriff of Dorset and Somerset, and furthered his influence in Dorset at least by holding the wardships of other Dorset families. His son William is barely mentioned in England. Along with his father he acted as bailiff to William de Mustiers in the late 1180s and in 1201/2 he appears on the Pipe Rolls owing 10 marks. He may have been more interested in the family's Normandy holdings because with his father busy in England these would have needed looking after. His and their fates after King John lost Normandy are uncertain.

Caen and Fecamp were both closely associated with the dukes of Normandy. That the family should hold land amidst the ducal demesne at Fecamp, and that Robert should receive more land as a reward for his loyal service, strongly suggest that the family served the Duke/King in his household. John was described as a ducal officer and Gilbert's military actions in defence of the Duke speak for themselves. It is self-evident that the Belet family was closely connected with the ducal household in Normandy.

Bearing in mind that by the time Gilbert Belet received the land at Maniquerville a William Belet was already well established in England according to the Domesday Book, it seems likely that Gilbert and his short-lived son Robert represent a junior branch of the family (perhaps Gilbert was a younger brother of William) who seized upon the opportunity to further themselves through service to the new Duke who replaced the Conqueror. If the Domesday William had fully emigrated to England with the Conqueror then he would have continued to serve the King as he had served William whilst he was still Duke. But when for a brief period the Duke and the King were not one and the same then there arose the chance for lesser members of the family to advance through service to the new duke with the service of senior family members acting as supporting references.

From the evidence it is clear that, in the eleventh and twelfth

centuries at least, the Belets had parallel interests either side of the Channel. On both sides of the sea these interests were closely connected with the ducal and royal households. These facts strongly support the conclusions drawn elsewhere based solely on the English evidence. It now seems probable, rather than merely possible, that the William Belet recorded in the Domesday Book did indeed come to England in the Conqueror's household. The story of the Belet family which is emerging is remarkable but probably is not as unique as the scarcity of the evidence for other families suggests. The Belets were important members of the "middle management" of the ducal and royal households.

1. C. G. Harfield, 'The Belets: notes on a mediaeval Dorsetshire family from the 11th to the 14th centuries' *Proceedings D.N.H.A.S.* 106 (1984), 43-9; 'William Belet: a sergeant of the King's retinue?', *SDNQ*, XXXII, Part 324.
2. *Domesday Book*, i, fos. 48d, 75d, 84d, 85a.
3. C. Haskins, *Norman Institutions* (Harvard 1918), 288-9.
4. *Regesta* ii, 992, 1645.
5. In the family tree, (Harfield *op. cit.* 1984, 49) he appears as Robert Belet I. His son is William Belet III.
6. *Cartul. Norm.* 659, 1190; *Henri II* 638; *Longuev.* 53.
7. Harfield *op. cit.* 1984, 44-5.

C. G. HARFIELD

301. JOHN JARMAIN AND PRIDDY BARROWS. William John Fletcher Jarmain, who wrote under the name John Jarmain, was born in 1911 of Huguenot paternal descent. He took a degree in mathematics at Cambridge about 1932. About 1940 he enlisted in the 51st Highland Division, in which he served as an anti-tank gunner in areas including El Alamein and Normandy. At the time he was killed in action in the early morning of 26 June 1944 near Caen he held the rank of Major. A pencil portrait by E. E. Houghton forms the frontispiece to his *Poems* (Collins, 1945). This information is almost all from the biographical foreword in that volume.

His *Poems* fall into two groups: those written before the 1939 to 45 War and those written during it (including one on Leptis Magna). According to a review in *TLS* Jan. 1945 they rank high among the poetry of the Second World War. His *Priddy Barrows* (Collins, 1944), a novel of 191 pages, reveals an intimate knowledge of the Priddy area. After taking his degree at Cambridge in 1932, he taught for a short time at a small school in the North of England, but was a master at Millfield School during the approximate period 1935-40, and retired staff of that school remember him taking parties of interested boys to visit the Priddy area and its barrows.

The plot of the story is that one 'Captain' Nelson Hayes bought the land between the Miners' Arms, East Water Drove and St. Cuthbert's Lead Works (p.13) and established a preparatory school for backward boys at Girt House, sited in a clearing among firs, almost certainly at or near Harptree Lodge, north of the road and a short distance east of Bowery Corner. He put up a 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' notice in front of the Nine Barrows, thereby alienating the local people who had for long been accustomed to go rabbiting on that land. He then indulged in clandestine digging into the barrows (pp. 103-5). When the local vicar, Rev. Luke Francis, asked him why he could not leave the barrows alone, he replied, 'My land, isn't it?' (pp.109-10). The local people soon decided to stop him from digging into the barrows by getting them scheduled by H.M. Office of Works (as it then was). The morning that the letter containing the scheduling notice was delivered to Girt House, the house caught fire (pp.178f). Topographically the work is very precise, even down to the minor detail of the stone stile (p.88), still at ST 535521 and seen by the writer with R. G. J. Williams on 5 April 1985, where an old footpath crosses East Water Drove south-west of the single barrow west of the Ashen Hill barrow group.

The context suggests that the novel was not written until after the Priddy Nine Barrows and the Ashen Hill Barrows had been scheduled. The former were scheduled on 19 July 1933 and the latter on the following day. Jarmain's widow, now Mrs. Beryl Ditchfield, informs me that the final draft was completed in 1937 from an earlier version, and passed to his literary agent A. M. Heath Ltd., but not published until late in 1944 because of the war. It is a question whether the two groups of barrows may have been scheduled in response to the activities of a local menace of the type postulated by Jarmain. The review in *TLS* (Dec. 1944, 633) describes the novel as 'in spite of its amateurishness, full of sensitivities and very readable. It contains tokens of literary promise which the author's premature death on active service has denied fulfilment'. With the partial exception of Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, centred on one of the three *Rainbarrows* east of Dorchester, Jarmain's book appears to be the only novel centred on any notable barrow-groups in England, but it has been almost forgotten because of its publication during the war. A short account of it was given by Charles Thomas on p.317 of *To Illustrate the Monuments: Essays ... to Stuart Piggott* (1976), ed. J. V. S. Megaw.

Any further details of Jarmain's sojourn in the Priddy area will be gratefully received by the writer, 32 Queen's Court, Bristol. BS8 1ND.

L. V. GRINSELL



Stone Artifact showing Six Line Incised Design

302. AN INCISED DESIGN ON A STONE ARTIFACT FROM PRIDDY, SOMERSET. The artifact described and figured below was found on the surface of arable land at NGR ST 509527, 260m OD, where large collections of flint and stone implements, now in the Axbridge Museum, have been made. A description of several stones found here in recent years was recorded in 'SEARCH 21'. The artifact appears to represent an axe or adze of Neolithic type, shaped and ground from a piece of fine-grained sandstone containing both fawn, and red colouration. The butt end has been truncated by damage, but whether this truncation was acquired deliberately, or by accident is not easy to assess.

The artifact has not been well finished, and does not present the impression that it was intended to fulfill the role of a functional axe or adze. The suggestion of an other than tool role may be enhanced by the deliberately incised 'design' which occurs on one side. The surface shows a number of nondescript pock marks and scratches, some of which may have been deliberately applied. There is however, no doubt that the incised 'design' was intentionally applied. These incised lines are very finely cut and have acquired the same surface patina as the surrounding area. Similar incised lines were noted on an area of reduced cortical crust which occurred on a flint scraper, also found at Priddy.¹

Incised abstract designs of this type have occasionally been

noted on items which are referable to the British Neolithic period. Examples have occurred on chalk pieces found during the excavations at Windmill Hill² and again on a small stone plaque found at the stone implement 'factory' site at Graig Lwyd, Penmaenmawr.³ A small pebble of slaty limestone bearing several deliberate scratch marks was found, in a possibly earlier context, at Gough's Cave, Cheddar, during the 1929 excavations.⁴

1. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, CXXIX, 'Somerset Archaeology 1984'.

2. I. F. Smith, *Excavations at Windmill Hill & Avebury* (1965), fig. 57.

3. S. Warren Hazzeldine, *Excavations at Graig Lwyd, Penmaen mawr* (1920), 194.

4. R. F. Parry, 'Excavations at Cheddar', *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, LXXVI (1930). (Thanks are due to Messrs. A. Harris and H. J. Sheppard for permission to observe and collect at the site. The stone will be given to the Axbridge Museum.)

Cross, Axbridge

BRIAN HACK

NOTES

303. BRIDPORT IN 1792.

To the Printer of The St.J. Chronicle.

Sir,

On an excursion into this part of the country, the beauties of this little town, and its environs, have induced me to spend a few days in its neighbourhood, and meeting with your paper, the reading of which always makes a part of my country amusements, the idea struck me that by communicating an account of the situation of this place, I might at this season of universal peregrination, suggest the means of being very comfortable to some of your readers.

Bridport then is a clean, well-built, small town, situated in the midst of a number of little mountains, which give one no bad idea of many parts of the Alps, and about a mile and a half from the sea. The walks about it are extremely pleasant, and the air very pure and salubrious. There is excellent bathing within a few miles; and for the more hardy bathers, such as can swim, especially, there is the best bathing in the county at Bridport beach. To those who, like me, may visit it from London, there is a peculiar convenience arising from the speedy communication with Town, a mail-coach, and two others, passing every day through the town.

All the conveniences and comforts, indeed, the luxuries of life, are obtainable here; and that which infinitely surpasses every consideration of this kind, namely, the society of sensible and hospitable people, whose notions of urbanity incline them to treat strangers with distinguished civilities; the only contention amongst them appearing to be who shall excel in instances of politeness and kindness to them.

If this letter should appear a worthy insertion, as containing in the first instance, a faithful account of a place which may be unknown to many of your readers; and, also, as a tribute of grateful acknowledgement of the pleasure I have received during a few days residence in this hospitable and charming place; you will, by giving it a place in your paper, much oblige an old correspondent and friend.

Bridport, June 28th

VIATOR

Reproduced from *St. James's Chronicle*, a tri-weekly London newspaper, 12 July, 1792.

JEREMY BLACK

304. A SOMERSET CORONER'S ROLL (*SDNQ*, XXXI, 451). The entry under Brompton Ralph tithing on p.470 records the discovery in 1317 of the body of a girl 'in the vicinity of la Yoldemenestre near the lake', which had been 'thrown over by the waves of the lake'. Mr. Stevens knew of no minster in Brompton Ralph, but suggested a site near Combe Bottom. Unlikely as it may at first seem, the site was in fact not in Brompton Ralph parish at all, but in a distant part of the tithing in St. Decuman's parish.

In the 14th and 15th centuries land at Watchet was said to be held of the fee of Brompton Ralph and to be in the hundred of Brompton Ralph. (*V.C.H. Somerset* v. 163). The origin of this apparent anomaly was an estate which Ralph son of William was holding before 1189 and which had descended to him (like Brompton Ralph which took his name) from his grandfather Durand de Mohun in the early 12th century. Part of this estate, namely land between Kentsford and St Decuman's, was granted to Neath Abbey (*Ibid.* v. 20, 155).

A field on the southern side of Cleeve Hill, west of Watchet, was still known as Old Minster in 1801, and was in all probability the earlier site of St. Decuman's church (*Ibid.* v. 165). It overlooks the valley of the Washford river which, divided between East and West Water and possibly forming a shallow inlet called Bynneport, flowed into the sea at the western end of Watchet. It was presumably here that the waves overthrew the little girl in 1317.

Taunton

ROBERT DUNNING

305. A SOMERSET CORONER'S ROLL (*SDNQ*, XXXI, 451). By way of footnote to this roll, a document among the Wharton MSS. in the Somerset RO illustrates one aspect of the business of inquests in West Somerset: the right of the Crown to the object or goods causing violent death as a deodand, which were then distributed in alms. The document is a release by Henry Sever, the King's Almoner, to Helen Cameys, widow of John Cameis

of Watchet, of all claim to the wagon and eight oxen which had caused the death of her husband on 7 Dec. 1452.¹ Deodands were abolished in 1862, although long before that time the right had been granted to the lords of manors or other liberties for uses other than their original design. References to them occur occasionally in manorial records, and this anachronistic privilege can provide insight into life up to the 19th cent.

1. S.R.O. ref., DD/S/WH.

Taunton

S. D. HOBBS

306. SIR FRANCIS DRAKE AT YEOVIL. The late T. Bruce Dilks (*SDNQ*, XXV, 200) recorded charges of 19s. 8d. in Bridgwater Borough Receiver's accounts for 1584 for entertaining Sir Francis Drake. Yeovil's churchwardens, in their accounts for 1583-4, under the heading 'Receipts for Belles', showed receipt of 1s. 8d. 'of Sir Francis Drake for a Peal with all the Bells'. So far as is known, this is the only mention of that famous seaman being in Yeovil.

Since it was Sir Francis who paid for the peal, it cannot have been a ringing in honour of his visit. His presence might be accounted for by the fact that two years later he married Elizabeth Sydenham, daughter of George Sydenham of Combe Sydenham in Stogumber. Elizabeth's father had purchased the manor of Sutton Bingham in 1561 — later to be inherited by Elizabeth herself — furthermore, George Sydenham's brother was Sir John Sydenham of Brympton D'Evercy, both within a short distance of Yeovil. It seems quite probable that Sir Francis, already well acquainted with the Sydenhams and possibly courting Elizabeth at the time, was escorting her on a visit either to her father's estate at Sutton Bingham or to her uncle's home at Brympton. One can further speculate that they actually became engaged at this time, and Sir Francis celebrated the event by spending 20d. for a peal on the Yeovil bells.

It may also be significant that the churchwardens that year recorded the loan of six dozen unspecified vessels from the Church House to Brympton at a charge of 2s. 6d. — an unprecedented number for that manor, and one that was not to be repeated — a celebratory dinner?

Yeovil

L. E. J. BROOKE

QUERIES

JOHN SIBBINS. Among the Horner archives at Mells Manor is the letter quoted below from Thomas Strangways Horner (1762-1844) probably to his father Thomas Horner

(1737-1804), Squire of Mells, a collector of epigrams and literary curiosities. It is undated but is likely to belong to the 1780s. I should be grateful if any of your readers could provide further information about Sibbins and the village from whence he came.

Sais Hotel, Covent Garden

Decbr. 22d

Dear Sir,

The following curious inscription is copied from the door of a house in a small village in Dorsetshire —

John Sibbins, Taylor, Schoolmaster, and Astronomer — I also keep a Journeyman to do all sorts of Blacksmith & Carpenter's work and to Hang Church Bells ---- any Gentleman As Bespeaks a Coat may have it on Friday or Saturday — without Fail.

N.B. It being rumoured that I intend to leave of Business on Account of my being elected Churchwarden, I hope my Friends will not give ear to such Bloodthirsty Reports ---- by their Humble Servant, John Sibbins —

By your Humble Servant

Strangways

Respectfull Compts. to Mrs. & Miss Horner

MICHAEL McGARVIE

JOSEPH DAY, ENGINEER. In 1952 staff of the Science Museum appealed — without success — for information about this English pioneer of the internal combustion engine. Day had designed a valveless two-stroke gas engine, patented in 1891-2, examples of which survive in the Science Museum and the Deutsches Museum in Munich. He came from a Catholic family with long connections with Bath, was born in Sept. 1855 in Bayswater and after school at Beaumont, Windsor, became one of the first engineers to train at the Crystal Palace School of practical engineering. After a 3 year pupilage at Stothert and Pitt's works in Bath, Day set up as an engineer in 1878, where, after various partnerships, he built the Victoria Ironworks in Spring Gardens, Bath, in 1883. He was elected A.M.I.C.E. in 1883 and was granted a series of patents between 1878 and 1908.

An attempt to raise capital in 1892 to develop his gas engine patents failed to attract shareholders and the costs of the whole enterprise soon proved too much for Day and his last partner, who went bankrupt in 1893. Day then moved to Weston-Super-Mare, where he continued active, as an inventor if not as a manufacturer, until 1902. In 1904 he was in London and with the help of his father, a noted London lawyer, he recommenced the manufacture of Day 'valveless' two-stroke stationary and marine engines by 1906, later produced by the Day Motor Co.

Ltd. of 1908 in Putney. The engines had only three moving parts, would run equally well forwards or backwards and achieved world wide sales as petrol and paraffin models. Day was an inspiration, too, behind the two-stroke engined Trojan car of 1912, but the war interrupted this work as the firm became busy on government contracts. In 1923 his firm was reformed as the Day Foundry and Engine Co. Ltd. in Richmond, Surrey, but by 1927 Day engines had ceased manufacture. He died, aged 91, on Christmas Day 1946 near Twickenham, apparently quite forgotten.

His role in showing that the two-stroke engine could compete, especially in the field of marine engines, with those working on the Otto four-stroke cycle deserves proper recognition. Information is sought on any aspect of Day's life and work for a planned biography, in particular data on the evolution of the marine boat engine and, in the present context, on his time in Weston-Super-Mare. News also of the survival of any Day engines or other artifacts would be welcomed by H. S. Torrens, Lower Mill Cottage, Furnace Lane, Madeley, Crewe, CW3 9EU.

CAPT. GEORGE GOSLING, R.N. The review of Hereward Davies, *Channel Crossing* (SDNQ, XXXI, 530) refers to the allegation made of the Duke of Kent's association with Elizabeth Harwood and a claimed illegitimate son of that mesalliance. I wonder if the author consulted Mollie Gillen, *The Prince & His Lady: The Love Story of the Duke of Kent & Madame de St. Laurent* (1970), where there is a section devoted to the veracity of various claimants' alleged parentage (including the allegations of royal involvement of the Harwood issue)? Every claim is fully explored and debunked, as are the several inferences concerning the Duke's mistress, her ancestry and later life alone, together with any alleged progeny.

My interest in this book and, indeed, any books on royalty, their issue, legitimate or otherwise, and the scandals surrounding them derives from my quest (hitherto without success) to establish the royal parentage of the above officer, whose distinguished service is related in published naval biographies. Descendants suggest that the royal connexion encouraged the success of his career and the advancement of his family, who married into the Swedish aristocracy and, in one instance, reached high office as Ambassador (Sir Audley Gosling). George was born in Westminster in 1790 and died in Bath in 1841, a few months before the death of his father-in-law, Preb. Charles Johnson, for whom he was to have been executor. He had married the latter's daughter, Felicia Jane, at

South Stoke in 1821, the ceremony being conducted by her brother, the Rev. Francis Charles Johnson, vicar of White Lackington and father of the second Rajah of Sarawak. Although no proof is offered for this claim and no facts can be substantiated, there is no easy explanation for the fact that he was a proficient linguist in French and employed in that capacity by the Navy; his will, also, shows that a substantial settlement of £10,000 had been made at his marriage. Whether Gosling is yet another royal claimant is uncertain, but according to information from a descendant, 'everyone in his day knew who he was', but no evidence or source can be supplied. It may be that, one day, someone will come forward and either substantiate or demolish such claims totally so that speculation can die, but in the meantime any information on Gosling in this direction would be welcomed by Peter A. Robb, Thirty-Two, The Fairway, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5DU.

[*Hereward Davies* writes that he had read *The Prince & His Lady*, but had been unable to contact the writer. He mentions also in his book that 'Victoria is reputed to have ordered all records everywhere to be purged' which tended to bring dishonour on her father's name.]

DAMPIER, WILLIAM of Wambrook, *m* Alice. Their first child, JANE, was baptized at Wambrook in 1744. My searches have not uncovered either the marriage or William's place of birth. He was buried at Wambrook, April 6, 1800. Any further information of the family prior to 1744 to Kenneth P. Hyde, 57 Victor Drive, East Northport, Long Island, New York, USA 11731.

An abridged version of Elizabeth Ham's autobiography by Eric Gillett was published in 1945 by Faber as *Elizabeth Ham by Herself, 1783-1820*. I am anxious to discover any further information about Elizabeth Ham's life and her writings and to find the unabridged manuscript, transcript, or typescript, from which Gillett worked. My only clue to the MS is the acknowledgement to Courtenay Dickinson made by Gillett. Is the manuscript held in private hands, or can it be found in a public collection? Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Dr. Bernard Jones, The Red House, East Stour, Gillingham, SP8 5JY.

BOOK REVIEWS

P. & S. Drake, *The Chaffin Family: a study of one name* (P. Drake, 16 Downsland Rd., Basingstoke, Hants. 1986. Pp. 77, illus. £3.95). An exercise in family history from the early sixteenth century of a family which lived in Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire. Clearly a labour of love for the authors, and a search which has taken them a very long time. The sources, though listed and numbered at the end of each chapter, are not separately distinguished in the text, nor are quotations acknowledged. Regrettably, therefore, for the local historian, the book may prove to be of limited value.

G.J.D.

Roger Guttridge, *Dorset Murders* (Roy Gasson Associates, 1986. Pp. 189, illus. £4.95). Twelve murders, ranging from the Channing murder of 1705 to the death of Diane Kemp in 1969 are succinctly reported. Mr. Guttridge, a journalist himself, has made a very effective use of local and national newspapers in his search for the stories. His style is not lurid, though he never fails to capture the grisly horror of the incidents. Most of the murders will be little known, except to those who follow closely such matters; though the death of Doreen Marshall at the hands of Neville Heath has some wider public significance. Perhaps we in sleepy Dorset have not appreciated how many times the county has appeared nationally as a place of such monstrous crime. Mr. Guttridge reminds us!

G.J.D.

A. D. Mills, *Dorset Place-Names: their origins and meanings* (Roy Gasson Associates, 1986. Pp. 192. £3.95). Mr. Mills's name is well known among Dorset historians as the Editor of the *Dorset Lay Subsidy Roll, 1332*. This volume is derived from his scholarly work, *The Place Names of Dorset* Parts I & II. But where his fuller work is expensive, this simpler volume is inexpensive and more popular in its selection and account of the derivation of place-names. This is a pleasant little volume to have on the shelf or to offer as a gift, but I believe that the serious student would still prefer the fuller work, and would still prefer to follow the scholarly place-name maze in preference to this shorter, and less comprehensive little volume.

G.J.D.

Michael McGarvie, *Guide to Historic Street* (C. & J. Clark, 1986. Pp.36, extensively illus., £2.00, available from the Shoe Museum, Street). Mr. McGarvie takes the reader on a well-directed tour of 55 buildings (public, domestic, industrial, etc.) in this small town, for each of which he provides thumb-

nail sketches in words and pictures. These range from the mainly medieval church to its 1962 College neighbour. But predominantly and inevitably, for a town which has grown and prospered in the last 150 years around the shoemaking presence of C. & J. Clark, they belong to the 19th and 20th cents. The bonus, however, is that the author has been able to establish date, architect, builder and past and present use for many of them.

There is a brief historical introduction and a supplementary list of 20 buildings or sites elsewhere in the parish, which are dealt with similarly. The quality of production, layout and proof reading is high and the work is further enhanced by the coloured cover, which provides 4 aerial or high level views.

D.M.M.S.

E. Holmes, *Leper Hospitals in the Manor of Kingston: a question?* (Typescript, n/p. 1986, available from 79 East Borough, Wimborne, 11 pp.)

J. L. Kirby (ed.), *Abstracts of Feet of Fines Relating to Wiltshire 1377-1509* (Wilts. Rec. Soc., vol. XLI for 1985, 1986. Pp. xvi + 248. £15 (plus £1.50 postage) from Hon. Treasurer, 53 Clarendon Rd., Trowbridge. With the appearance here of the abstracts of some 790 documents spread over 130 years Wiltshire has completed the publication of all its fines from the PRO between 1195 and 1509. The average of 6 entries per year conceals a significant drop from 9 in the early years to only 3 during the last 50, perhaps because of the rise in popularity of the feoffment to uses.

The value of this class of record lies in the wide range of persons involved and the identification of place names, and in these respects this is, commendably, a thoughtful piece of work: the majority of places are given both modern and original form in the text and are helpfully indexed under the former; fines relating to 'divers counties' are abstracted in full, in contrast to the parochial attitude shown elsewhere; non-Wilts. interests are further served by indexing their places both individually and collectively under the county; and the fallibility of the original clerks in assigning places to wrong counties is demonstrated. To the comprehensive index of persons and places is added a brief selective subject index, reflecting the major shortcoming of these records, the lack of virtually all descriptive detail. Mr. Kirby and Miss Crittall, whose work he took over, are to be congratulated on their labours; if the occasional slip in transcription can be found, it must be said by way of compensation that they have also corrected mistakes in other earlier publications.

D.M.M.S.

*N.B.—All replies to advertisements to be sent to
the named addressees*

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