
NOTES & QUERIES

FOR
SOMERSET AND DORSET

EDITED BY

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*"Attempt the end, and never stand to doubt;
Nothing's so hard, but search will find it out".*

HERRICK

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60. ROE DEER FOR GEORGE IV. Nowadays, when roe deer can be seen wild, in twos and threes, by many a hedge and are so prevalent as to be a pest, it is interesting to learn that in the early nineteenth century they were almost extinct.¹ A series of letters in the Dorset Record Office² shows the trouble that George IV's courtiers went to to procure some of these deer for the Royal Menagerie in Windsor Great Park.

Royal Lodge
Windsor
22 July 1826

My dear Okeden,

His Majesty has understood that Mr Pleydell has in his Park or Place some roe bucks and indeed is the only gentleman in Dorsetshire, or should I say in England who has Roebuck Hounds and who follows the chase of that beautiful animal. His Majesty is forming the Menagerie here and has [*two words illeg.*] the Elk, the German Red Deer, and numerous species of the Indian Fallow and [*one word illeg.*] the Chamois and the [*one word illeg.*] but not the Roebuck and it would give his Majesty Great Pleasure to possess some specimen of that species of deer especially when produced in his own domain in his favourite County of Dorsetshire and from an old acquaintance and brother Sportsman of Mr Pleydell's character and consequence and I expect old acquaintance.

I do not have the honour of knowing Mr Pleydell or I would convey his Majesty's wishes to him. I am sure you will readily communicate to him his Majesty's wishes which will be quite as agreeable to him as if I were to trouble him with letters. You who are so good and loyal a subject will I know be delighted to hear his Majesty has not been better in health for these twenty years than he is Thank God at present.

I remain [*illeg.*] my dear Okeden with every kind thought to Kathy and my neighbours.

Yours ever most sincerely
Graves

The letter is addressed to David Okeden Parry Okeden [1775-18] of Uddens near Wimborne Minster and More Crichel, though at this time he appears to have been living at Hanford, the seat of the Seymer family, near Shroton. He was well known in Dorset and a friend of Lord Lansdowne. Lord Graves (1775-1830) was a Lord of the Bedchamber to the King and married to Mary Paget, the youngest sister of the Marquess of Anglesey. Four years after writing this letter he killed himself, allegedly because he was upset by the gossip concerning his wife and the Duke of Cumberland. 'Kathy' was David's daughter who kept house for him at the end of his life and to whom he left his books and his late wife's jewellery.³ Edmund Moreton Pleydell (1775-1835), of Whatcombe House, was the eldest son of Edmund Pleydell and Ann Luttrell, daughter of Francis Luttrell, of Ven House. [Ann's very lengthy and closely written letters to her son are preserved in the Dorset Record Office.] Parry Okeden lost little time in furthering the request:

D.O.Parry-Okeden to E.M.Pleydell from Hanford
3 August 1826

My dear Sir,

I will not make any apology to you for the present communication but leave it to yourself to pardon me if I intrude on your time and attention. Some time ago I received a letter from my friend Lord Graves informing me that the King was very anxious to procure a brace of Roebucks, a male and a female to place in a Menagerie which his Majesty is forming. I answered that I knew of no one in the County except yourself who had any means of assisting the King's wishes in that respect. In answer to this which I suppose Lord Graves mentioned to the King I received the enclosed. I send it to you that it may speak for itself and will [*illeg.*] my apology for the intrusion. Lord Graves has twice written to me to say that he begs if the animals could be obtained that I would arrange the mode of sending them to Windsor Lodge with you. I have now my dear Sir executed my commission and shall be most happy to convey any answer to Lord Graves that you may wish ; if you address Lord Graves yourself his direction is at the Royal Lodge, Windsor.

The very sick state of my family whom I can hardly quit must be my excuse for not having paid me respects to you at Whatcombe. I beg my compliments to Miss Pleydell and remain Dear Sir,

Yours Truly

D.O.Parry-Okeden

There is only a copy in the Record Office of Pleydell's reply to Okeden; it is undated.

I yesterday received the favour of your letter and am certain that you will give me credit for being a most loyal subject and will readily believe that it would afford me the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction to meet his Majesty's wishes in all respects wherein I am personally or generally concerned; but I fear there will be some insurmountable Difficulties in procuring these Roebucks; the few which I have in my woods are those which have strayed from Lady Caroline Damer's Territories, and the country about Houghton which they inhabit is so wild and extensive that I know not by what possible means they can be taken alive. About three years ago I received a similar request from lady Shaftesbury who wished to procure a brace of Roebucks for David Churchill the brother of Lady Shaftesbury but I was unable to comply with it from the apparent Impossibility of taking the Animals alive.

The Roebucks being more numerous in the woods of Lady Caroline Damer near Milton Abbas, if I could obtain her Assistance, I think there would be a greater Probability of succeeding. I shall return to Whatcombe on Tuesday next, for a few days, and will take an early opportunity of calling on her Ladyship and making known to her the Wishes of his Majesty and feel certain that she will readily lend her Aid and Assistance to accomplish, if possible, the proposed Object. You will of course return an answer to Lord Graves and perhaps you will be kind enough to say, I feel highly honour'd by his Majesty's Command and that no Exertion shall be wanting on my Part to obtain the desired Object though I fear the taking of Roebucks alive will be attended with considerable Difficulty. When I have seen Lady Caroline Damer I shall probably have occasion to trouble you with another letter.

I wish I could have received a more favourable Account of your Family and with our best Compliments and Wishes, believe me.

The copy of this letter in the Record Office is unsigned. Lady Caroline Damer (1752-1828), at the age of fifty-eight, inherited the care of Milton Abbey after her three elder brothers had died childless; her brother George, second Lord Dorchester, had brought a small herd of deer from Scotland, possibly these roe deer.⁴ It would be interesting to know by what methods Pleydell and his keepers were successful. On 24 August, 1826, he wrote to the Marquess Conyngham.

E.M.Pleydell. Whatcombe House to The Marquess
of Conyngham. Lord High Steward, Royal Lodge
24 August 1826

My Lord,

With Lady Caroline Damer's assistance I have the honour to send four Roe Deer to the Royal Lodge at Windsor according to the wishes of his Majesty expressed in a letter from Lord Graves to my neighbour Mr Okeden and I hope they will come safe. The deer were taken on Lady Caroline Damer's property and her Ladyship's keeper and my keeper will attend them to Windsor and I beg leave to add that the keepers have received sufficient supply to pay all expenses up and down.

I have the honour to be, My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient humble servant

E.M.Pleydell

A few days later Pleydell received the following brief note dated 26 August:

Lord Conyngham presents his Compliments to Mr Pleydell and with Pleasure conveys to Mr Pleydell his Majesty's high satisfaction at the receipt of the Roe Deer and at the same time has to express to Mr Pleydell his Majesty's most gracious acceptance of the Roe Deer.

Henry, first Marquess Conyngham (1766-1832) was the Lord Steward of the King's household. The King, having no family of his own during the last years of his life, was devoted to all Conyngham's family, particularly his wife Elizabeth, by now the mother of grown-up children. As often as not the whole family was with the King at the Royal Lodge and he liked to drive Lady Conyngham about the Park himself in his phaeton

drawn at speed by four grey ponies. He would have been glad to have something new to show her although she was well-known to be more interested in jewels. He would dine with her on his right, her elder daughter Elizabeth on his left, her son Francis at one end of the table and the Marquess at the other.⁵ A most affectionate correspondence exists between the King and the Conynghams' younger daughter, Maria.⁶ In the month the king acquired the roe deer the Princess Victoria, later Queen, then aged seven, visited the Royal Lodge with her mother and sister: 'Lady Maria Conyngham and Lord Graves were desired to take me a drive to amuse me,' she wrote years later, 'I went with them and Miss Lehzen in a pony carriage and four with four grey ponies (like my own) and was driven about the Park and taken to Sand-pit Gate where the King had a Menagerie with wapitis, gazelles, chamois etc ...' Whatever may have happened to the more exotic animals after the King's death only four years later, it is probable that the roe deer from Dorset thrived and multiplied.

1 Desmond Hawkins, *Cranborne Chase*, (Dovecote Press, 1998), p.8

2 Dorset County Record Office, D/TRD c 12.

3 M.McGarvie, 'A Sequel to the Capel Letters', *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, Vol 29, 1985, pp.151-160.

4 Richeldis Wansborough. *The Tale of Milton Abbas*, 1974, (Dorset Publishing Company, Milborne Port), p.87.

5 Christopher Hibbert, *George IV: Regent and King*, Allen Lane, 1973. p.217.

6 *Ibid.* p.218.

7 Quoted by Sir Owen Morshead. *George IV and the Royal Lodge*, Regency Society of Brighton and Hove, 1965. p.28.

SUSAN RANDS

61. PORTLAND STONE TRADE, 1718-9. On the royal manor of Portland the main industry was quarrying for stone. Certain quarries were reserved for the exclusive use of the king, and stone could only be removed by royal warrant. But from the earliest times all tenants on the manor had the right to quarry stone for their own use from the common land. The commercial sale of any stone from common land imposed on the buyer a duty of 12d. per ton, with one half passing to the Crown, and one half to the tenants. The money raised in this way was paid into the Poor Rates, and provided poor houses, financed church repairs, paid for the draining and clearing the land, the upkeep of wells, and so on. In Nov 1665, Charles II increased the inhabitants' share to 9d. per ton, and, naturally, this was

welcomed thought the island. Their joy was short lived. In 1668, when London was beginning to recover from the Great Fire, Sir Christopher Wren was appointed Surveyor General of His Majesty's Works. All royal buildings, estates, forests and quarries, came under his supervision. The design and building of a new St Paul's was entrusted to him, and he decided to build the new Cathedral in Portland Stone. Almost immediately he came into conflict with the Portlanders. To Wren, the stone extracted from both Crown and common land was intended for the king's use, and none of it was subject to the payment of a duty. The Portlanders took a different view. They considered that stone quarried from the common land was dutiable, and their share was 9d. per ton. The disputes soured relations between the Surveyor General and the Portlanders, but eventually the Crown was forced to intervene to reassure the royal tenants that their long established rights would be respected.

In 1718, when Sir Christopher Wren was in his 86th year, he surrendered his title of Surveyor General of His Majesty's works to Mr Benson. Wren had always held the view that the Portlanders abused and exploited the privileges which they claimed, and Benson, who was convinced that there were 'very many and great Abuses Comitted in the office of the Works', probably felt the same way. He visited Portland to see for himself the royal quarries, 'but the People were very unwilling to open themselves to me and I could get but little intelligen^{ce} from them either as to the Management of the Kings Quarries or which were the Kings Quarries or what profit arose from them.' He decided that the stone trade needed further investigation because 'if proper care had been taken his Maj^{ty} might have had the best Stone for about Six Shillings a Tun the first cost but instead of that his Maj^{ty} has had all along the worst Stone that ever came from his Quarries and every Tun of it by passing thro the hands of the Keeper of his Maj^{ty} Quarries in Portland and of his Mason here has Cost his Maj^{ty} Thirty Shillings a Tun in the rough Block exclusive of the Freight.'¹ Failing to get the information needed, he instructed John Anderson, a Surveyor, to visit the island, and on 26 Jan 1781, Anderson wrote a report about his findings which was later to be referred to as 'the Paper Call'd No. 4'; a copy of which was made by Edward Tucker, 'Keeper of His Majesty's Quarries in

Portland'.² He was directly responsible for the royal quarries, and for the stone purchased from the Common land. Any criticism of the stone trade from Portland would reflect immediately on the management provided by Edward Tucker.

A Copy of the Paper Call'd No. 4

I have taken a Survey of all the Quarries in the Island of Portland & I find that most of the Quarries upon the Common are wore out and of little use. I find likewise that Gilbords new Quarry upon the West side of the Island is wore out, & of no use to him. There is about two or three Quarries more out of the Common that hath about 3 or 4 Men at Work in each of them but raise little Stone, so that I find that their cheif dependence is upon the Kings Quarries where they raise the Best and largest Stone in the Island and have for 3 or 4 Years past employ'd near an hundred Men at Work in them Further I observe that one part of the Quarry men go on, if any great Quantity of good Stone shou'd be wanted for his Majesty. I cant think where it will be had for I plainly see by those Quarries upon the Common that they loose the Greatest Rock and come to some small stone that is of no use. I am Inform'd by the Inhabitants that till of late Years no Stone was dug out of the Kings Quarries but for the use of the Crown and St Pauls. The Inhabitants I am told have only a right to Digg in the Common by a grant from the King but now they chiefly digg in the Kings Quarrys and they are allow'd the same advantage amongst them for the Stone dugg out of the Kings own Land as it was dugg out of the Common. This do's not seem to be right any more than it is said of M^r Tucker & M^r Gilbords making what advantage they can to themself^s of the Kings Quarry allowing 3 p ton or some such sum to his Maj^{ty} for his own Stone dugg in his own Land, which is what is allow'd by the tennants for the Stone dugg in their Common as I said before. And the proffit of what M^r Tucker and M^r Gilbord have Exported since his Maj^{ty} Reign must needs amount to severall thousand pounds.³ I endeavour'd to inform my self of the Quantity they have ship'd off. It is said to be about 30000 Tun which at 3 p Ton for they can't get less comes to a great deal of Mony. I cou'd not Learn the real Quantity because a great deal

of Stone hath been shipp'd off by Warrant that pays no duty, and there are some People who Suspect the Measures are not very fair. Indeed the person who doth measure betwixt the King and M^r Tucker and the Island and M^r Tucker and paid by him for his Labour formerly the Measurer was put in by S^r Chr Wren. In the same manner M^r Tucker Repairs the Peer's ways and Crane, & receiving the Mony that is got by them, but his Acco^{ts} are not Examin'd by any Body that I can Learn neither will he let every Body use the Peers Ways and Cranes tho they are willing to pay the Duty of 4 or even more than that Sum

The Common Price of raising and Shipping Stone with the Dutys is about 7^sp Tun. But when Dugg for the King about Six Shillings.

The Freight to London is Generally 10^sp Tun, but I fear there is some underhand dealings in that matter by reason the Freight from purbeck which is just by Portland is but 8^s for two tuns of Pavement

There is one thing which I must likewise take Notice of which is that the Quarry men throw all the Rubble & Earth that they digg of the Stone in Quarrys over the clift as near the Quarrys as they can to save the trouble of Carrying it further, but this may be a great Injury to the Crown, for if the Rubble which is in a great heap there slides away, as it did in the Year 1698 and 1705 as the Inhabitants say It would destroy the Peers Ways and Crane and Cost the Crown a great Deal of Mony to rebuild them. It is said the Dean and Chapter of St Pauls expended about 1500^s to recover One of the Peers again after the last slide

I am

S^r

January the 26th 1718

Your most humble Serv^t

John Anderson

The report went to the Treasury, and from there to Whitehall. Edward Tucker was then instructed to reply 'with all Expedition' to the accusations made against him by the

Surveyor.⁴

The Represent of y^e Inhabitants & Quarrymen of y^e Isle of Portland in Answer to y^e Suggestions of John Anderson Humbly Sheweth

That the Inhabitants of y^e said Island have time out of mind enjoy'd y^e priviledge of raiseing & Shipping of Stone from y^e Quarrys open'd in y^e s^d Island w^{ch} has been always allowed by y^e Crown on paying the Customary Tunnage and when they y^e said Inhabitants have not Shipped or sent away y^e Stone raised by them on their own proper All^o & risque, have never received less for their Wages on hire for raiseing Stone in y^e respective prices following for Casual Block and Ashlen Stone five shill^s p Tun 16 feet Cubical measure for S.S.Stone 6/2 Tun for 3 Tun Stone 7/5 for 4 Tun Stone 10/ p Tun for 5 Tun Stone 10/ 8 p Tun for 6 Tun Stone 12/2 Tun for 7 & 8 Tun Stone 14/2 p Tun, beside which respective Sumes there is a Charge of carting halling Loading & Craneidge p^d by those persons who Ship y^e Stone over & above y^e Customary Tunage above mencon'd Which Customary Tunnage is One Shilling p Tun except only for such Stone as is raised for y^e Service of his Maj : on such as y^e Inhabitants make or raise in their own Tenantany grounds for w^{ch} no Tunage was ever paid – The s^d Tunage duty was formerly equally divided between y^e Crown & y^e Inhabitants untill y^e Restauration of K Cha y^e 2 when he was graciously pleas'd to grant for himself and successors the one halfe of his Moiety of y^e s^d Tunage duty to y^e Inhabitants of y^e said Island, by w^{ch} means their Share of y^e Tunnage is nine pence p Tunn & y^e Share of the Crown is three pence p Tunn, & y^e Same Grant has been Confirmed in succeeding Reigns & more pticularly by our Present most Gracious Sover^s L K George – The Quarrys in the s^d Island have been since his Maj^{ty} happy Accession to y^e Throne & now are in good order and affoord as good & large quantitys & of as considerable highths of Stone as any have been raised in y^e Memory of man – The whole Island contains by Estimacon about 2500 Acres all w^{ch} Except about 500 Acres near y^e Castle Appears to be a Continued bed of Stone every Acre of w^{ch} will (by a just Calculate) produce upwards of 16,000

Tunn w^{ch} will amount to 32 Millions of Tunns – y^e whole quantity of ground clear'd of Stone since y^e Quarrys were first open'd (of w^{ch} time we have no record in y^e Island) do not appear to be more than 30, odd acres, so y^t much larger quantitys are required than have ever been hitherto yea & here can never be want of good Stone for his Maj^{ty} Service nor his Posterity for 3 or 4000 Years to come

Wherever y^e bed of Stone is quarryed on & (in the 30 Odd acres above mention'd) y^e Space is filled us wth the Rubble leaving only a Passage to draw out y^e Stone when Quarryed & there is no more rubble thrown over y^e Clift than is absolutely necessary to keep y^e Entrance of y^e Quarrys from being stop'd up – y^e Rubble y^t is thrown over is carry'd a convenient distance from the Ways that no damage may Accrew thereby

The reason of y^e great Slide of y^e Island in Jan or Feb in y^e Year 1695/6 could never yet be discover'd by y^e strictest Inquiry ⁵ The Charge of recovering the Way & Piere was p^d by y^e Comm^{rs} of S^t Pauls but did not amount to near y^e Sume suggested as we have been credibly Informed & as for y^e Slide of y^e Way that happen'd since it was repaired for a much less Sume than Twenty pounds – The Answer of ET Keep^r of his Maj^{ty} Piere &c &c to so much of Representⁿ of WB Esq^r as relates to y^e s^d Island Shews That his Maj^{ty} is L^d of y^e Man^r of Portla^d & all y^e Quarrys there (except those in y^e Tennants inclosed grounds) belong to his Maj^{ty} & y^e Inhabit^s have time out of mind been permitted to raise Stone in y^e Quarrys that have been open'd – y^e Suggestion of want of Stone is altogether ground less as will appear by y^e Representation of y^e Inhabitants in y^e Inclosed paper marked 4 w^{ch} I know to be true & to w^{ch} crave leave to Referr – The Tunnage duty p^d by all persons y^t Raise Stone in y^e Quarrys (except such as is for his Maj^{ty} service on what is raised in ye Tennants Inclosures) is 12^p p Tun no greater Sume was ever paid for any Stone sent out of y^e Island, nor has M^r Gilbert & any selfe ever paid less than 12^d p Tun for any Stone sent by us – The said money is divided between his Maj^{ty} & the Inhabitants as they have set forth in their Represent^{ta} mark'd 4

The Stone sent by y^e s^d M^r Gilbert & myselfe is such only as we buy of y^e Quarriers after they have raised it in y^e Quarrys w^{ch} we deliver at Londⁿ on our own risque and for w^{ch} y^e whole Tunnage duty of 12^d has been paid, but it is not by sev^{ll} thousand Tunns so much as is suggested, nor is y^e profit one halfe of what is asserted, we being a long time out of y^e Money for y^e first cost & running y^e hazard of y^e Seas & had debts – y^e Stone sent by Warr^{ts} of y^e R^t Hon^{ble} L^d of his Maj^{ty} Trea^{sy} & w^{ch} has been Exempted from paying y^e Tunnage Duty has been for y^e Service of his Maj^{ty} Docks at Portsm^o & Plym^o & it has been my care so farr to promote his Maj^{ty} Service y^t for all y^e Stone at y^e Dock at Plym^o his Maj^{ty} pays 5/- Tunn less than what was p^d for Stone of y^e Same quality & dimensions to a former Contractor

All y^e Stone raised is measured by y^e Quarryers themselves as well as by y^e person appointed by me & every Stone is Immediately mark'd what it contains by w^{ch} measure y^e Quarryers are paid for y^e Stone y^e Carters that hall it to y^e Piere, y^e Loaders at y^e Piere y^e Lightermen & Shp^s Mas^{rs} are paid for Halling, Carting, Loading Lighteridge & ffreight by y^e Same measure w^{ch} is return'd to y^e Court Leete held by his Maj^{ty} Steward & there presented by y^e Jury (composed of y^e Inhabitants) on their Oathes, and as the said Inhabitants have a Share in y^e Tunnage Duty it would be Impossible that a ffraud should Escape dtection when they & so many others have Checks upon it

The price of raiseing & shaping Stone for y^e Service of his Maj^{ty} is 1/4 Tunn less than what is p^d by y^e Quarryers, but y^e price Vary according to y^e magnitude of y^e Stone as is p^ticularly set forth in y^e Inhabitants Represent^a 4 – The Am^t of y^e Repairs of y^e Piere Crane & Way together wth y^e Acc^t of y^e Receipts of y^e Cranidge duty of 4 Tunn for Shiping Stone at y^e Peere has been regularly transmitted from time to time to y^e Audit^{rs} of his Maj^{ty} land Revenue in y^e Excheq^r & by him examin'd & I have Surety's for y^e Same to y^e 1st Oct^r 1718 & do deny y^e ever I refus'd y^e Use of y^e Piere Crane & Way to any pson that desired it when the public service was not retaadad thereby nor did I ever receive nor was ever offe'd more than 4^s a Tunn for Shiping Stone at y^e Piere from or by any person

whatsoever –

As for y^e freight of Stone from Portland to Londⁿ I crave leave to refer to y^e Inclosed papers sign'd by y^e Own^{rs} & Mas^{rs} Ships useing y^e Coasting Trade Mark'd B & do Affirm yⁱ I never made any private advantage by any ffreight of Stone whatsoever. The freight from Purbeck are never fixed by y^e Tunn but by y^e Square w^{ch} Contains 100 feet of Pavement & y^e price Varys according to y^e Scarcity or plenty of Shiping, but generally y^e s^d freights are from 10 to 12/ p hund^d feet & at this time as I am informed are at 14/- w^{ch} is much deerer than y^e freight from Portland, tho y^e dispatch given Ships from Purbeck is much quicker than he can possibly be given at Portland by reason that Pavement is more easily handled & loaded than large Block Stone

The Utmost care has been always taken to prevent any damage to y^e Way in throwing Ruble over y^e Clift as y^e Inhabitants have set forth together wth the Charge of repairing y^e last Side of y^e Way in their Represent^a afores^d mark'd 4

The journey of y^e Survey^{or} of his Maj^{ty} works, to Portland was altogether unknown to me but had I rec^d any intimacon of y^e journey I should have thot it my duty to have waited on y^e Survey^r & given him y^e best Information I was capable off as for y^e price charged for Stone by his Maj^{ty} Mason I am intirely ignorant of it ; & if at any time it has been Exorbitant I am very positive that it was not occation'd in y^e least degree by passing thro y^e hands of
mar 24. 1718/9

Y^r Obed^t

ET

- 1 Bodleian Library, Tucker papers, MS Don b. 16f. 138, Mr Benson's accusations against Mr Tucker. A full account of the Tucker papers may be found in 'The Tucker Papers' by Jeremy Black, *Notes & Queries, Somerset and Dorset*, vol XXXII, March 1990, pp. 817-823.
- 2 Bodleian, Tucker papers, ff. 144-145.
- 3 'Gilbord' may be a reference to 'Gilbert'. The greater part of the Portland stone trade up to 1704 was in the hands of Thomas Gilbert. Edward Tucker took over the management of the quarries after Gilbert's death, and the Tucker family controlled the trade throughout the 18th century. See J.H. Bettey, *The Island and Royal Manor of Portland* (Bristol, 1970) p.50.
- 4 Bodleian, Tucker papers, ff. 140, 142.
- 5 The piers, platforms of squared stone blocks, were built mainly on the eastern side of Portland, and were essential for loading stone on to coastal traders for 'export' to London.

Extensive quarrying meant that landslips were common. Unfortunately, while they exposed fresh surfaces of stone, they also destroyed roads and piers. See Stuart Morris, *Portland* (Dovecote Press, 1985), pp. 30-1.

GLANVILLE J. DAVIES

62. EVIDENCE OF DORSET MILLS AND MILLERS IN SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY MANORIAL RECORDS.

*He that wyll have here any thyng don
Let him come friendly he shal be welcom
A frynd to the owner and enemy to no man
Pass all here freely to come when they can
For the tale of trothe I do always professe
Miller be true disgrace not thy vest
If falsehood appere the fault shal be thine
And of sharpe punishment think me not unkind
Therefore to be true yt shall the behove
[To] please god chefly 'that liveth] above.*

This verse carved on the mill building at Fiddleford in Sturminster Newton parish and dated 1566 is a reminder that relations between millers and their customers were often strained and difficult. Millers were traditionally and proverbially regarded as being dishonest and devious. Chaucer describes his miller as apt to steal and take three times the legal toll on the corn he ground: *Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thrice*. – Everyone needed flour from wheat or barley for baking, many required bran and meal for livestock, and ground malt was essential for brewing beer. Manorial custom on many Dorset manors decreed that tenants could only have their corn and malted barley ground at the manorial mill, and private querns were prohibited. Although it required a large initial outlay of capital, the possession of a mill was a valuable perquisite for landowners. Secure in the knowledge that they could count on a regular supply of customers, millers were prepared to pay high entry fines and rents for mill leases. The Franciscan friars of Dorchester derived much of their income from the town mill which had been granted to them by Sir John Byconil in 1485 in return for their daily prayers. At the dissolution of the friary in 1538 the mill was said to be worth £10 per annum¹. A manorial survey of Kingston Lacy on behalf of the Crown in 1552 revealed that 'the mill called Whitemills' was let for 26s 8d per annum, whereas the average annual rent

for the 27 copyhold farms on the manor was 12s 0d². In 1697 the newly-built mill and eel fishery at Standlynch on the Avon, south of Salisbury, which was described as 'well customed', was let for 21 years at an annual rent of £44³.

In return for grinding the tenants' corn or malt the miller was entitled to take a toll on what he ground. This was carefully set down in manorial customals, but there were many opportunities for fraud by millers. At Chideock where all the tenants were obliged to use the manorial mill, the miller had a 'toll dish' in which to measure the flour or meal he took, and he was obliged to produce the dish at every meeting of the manorial court. A contemporary abstract of the court rolls of Chideock 1629-43 'as it respecteth Customs' includes the following:

April 6th 1641

It appears by severall presentments that the Mill is a customary mill whereat the Tenants of the Mannor are obliged to grind and that the Miller is obliged to produce his tollidish att every Courte Leete⁴.

The leases surviving for Chideock mill covering the years 1647-1857 illustrate the profitability of this manorial perquisite⁵. A late sixteenth-century custumal of Piddlehinton shows that the miller was entitled to keep 1/24th of all the corn and malt he ground, and all the copyhold tenants were required to work each year on the Thursday in Whitsun week at cleaning and scouring the mill pond⁶. A custumal of the manor Little Windsor in the parish of Broadwindsor which was set down by the steward in 1707 recorded that

The Tenants [are] to Grind at the Custumary Mill and the Miller to take his due (that is to say) of the Corne that is growne within the Mannor⁷.

Manorial courts regularly reminded tenants of the obligation to use the lord's mill, and exhorted millers to be honest in their dealings. The Court Book of Stratton 1583-1656 sets out the obligations of tenants and miller:

4 October 1611

It is ordered that noe Tennante of this Mannor shall grynde his Corne and grayne which he shall spend in his house within this Mannor att anye other Mill that att the Ordes mill of this Mannor upon payne of everye one doing the contrarye to loose for everye tyme iis. And it is further

ordered that the Miller and grister of the same Myll shall use the said Tennants well both with the Toll and grinding of their said Corne upon payne to loose for every offence iis and to make full recompense for the wronge done unto them. And to grynde their maulte only on the Mondaye and Friday and not to keepe their grayne above one daye⁸.

The order was strictly enforced and tenants who attempted to use another mill were fined in the manorial court. As late as 1686 three tenants from Stratton were fined iis od each 'for not grinding at the Lords mill'⁹.

A complex legal suit from the ecclesiastical manor of Chardstock which was tried before the Court of Requests in 1590 illustrates some of the problems which could arise. The manorial mill had been leased by Christopher Stone, a barrister of the Middle Temple in London. He complained that George Cate, yeoman, one of the copyhold tenants, 'being a frowarde and Evill disposed man' and wishing to do harm to Christopher Stone, not only refused to have his corn ground at the manorial mill according to the ancient custom, but also encouraged others to do the same. In his successful response George Cate pointed out that since this was a manorial matter, it should have been decided in the manor court and not in London, 'being a thing here Customary and between the Customary tenantes of the said manor'. He claimed that there were three ancient mills in Chardstock, and that customary tenants had always enjoyed free choice as to which one they used. He alleged that Stones mill was 'unskillfully worked being most commonly but boyes and youthes', so that often the corn and malt was spoiled, and that sometimes 'double or treble toll was taken thereof'. He therefore used the other mills even though they were further from his dwelling'¹⁰.

Disputes over tithes payable by the mills at Charminster and Bere Regis in 1634 also provide information about the operation of the mills and of the possibilities of fraud by the millers¹¹. A court action over the mill at Shapwick in 1622 also reveals details of the difficulties involved in operating a mill and balancing the interests of manorial lords, millers and customers. Like several others in Dorset, the Shapwick mill was used both as a grist mill for corn and malt, and as a tucking or fulling mill for cloth. Each side of the business had been leased and sub-leased, so that when the mill needed repair there was a dispute

as to who was responsible. The complex case illustrates how subject water mills were to manage by floods and how often the water courses, hatches, wheels and machinery needed attention to keep them in good working order¹².

Not all millers were dishonest or unpopular. A dispute over the mill at Fordington was tried before the Exchequer Court in 1599, and evidence was taken by a Commission sitting at Dorchester. Several tenants commended the miller and the 'loader' at the mill, and mentioned that the latter used the mill horse to help the poorer farmers. He was said sometimes to carry their corn to market, and 'as occasion did serve he often also carried their seed corn into the fields'¹³. Such helpfulness seems, however, to have been uncommon. Two 'water corne mills and a tucking mill' were rebuilt at Fordington early in the seventeenth century, and disputes over water tried before the Exchequer Court in 1607-9 provide information about the new mills and the complex water courses, hatches and channels which supplied them with power¹⁴. Leases of the Friary Mills at Dorchester reveal a similar complicated system of water courses¹⁵.

Although a few windmills continued to operate, most of the Dorset mills during the seventeenth century were water-driven, and were subject to problems of drought and flood. The creation of water meadows along many of the river valleys during the seventeenth century also affected the water supply to several mills. For example, in 1646 the miller at Tarrant Rushton complained at the manorial court that his water course was blocked 'obstructat et divertit causam innundationi pratori'¹⁶. At Waddock Mill in Affpuddle the manorial court ordered that the meadows could be watered 'from each and every Saturday night unto each and every Munday morning and at all and every other Tyme or Tymes doing no prejudice unto the mill there'. A series of leases of the mill from 1606 to 1725 all repeat this formula¹⁷. In 1686 a dispute over water rights and the rival claims of mill and water meadows at Dudle in Puddletown led to a long and expensive suit before the Court of Chancery¹⁸. An earlier dispute concerning mills on the river Stour at Fiddleford is also informative, although only fragments of the documentary evidence survive. As already mentioned, one mill had been rebuilt as a corn or grist mill by Thomas White during the 1560s. There was also another mill used for tucking or fulling

cloth a short distance upstream; this mill was leased by Thomas Holeman and Elizabeth, his wife. Thomas White's work on his mill produced a complaint to the Exchequer Court from Thomas and Elizabeth Holeman. The complaint is undated, but one of the commissioners appointed to hear the evidence of witnesses was Sir John Tregonwell of Milton Abbas, who died in 1565. Only the 'Interrogatories' or questions to be put to witnesses remain, but these make it clear that Thomas White had not only rebuilt the mill but had also enlarged the mill pond and raised the banks of the mill stream leading from the Stour. This must have penned back the water, thus affecting the upstream mill. Thomas Holeman and his wife complained that Fiddleford mill, mill pond and banks had been 'newly raysed and exalted by the defendant [Thomas White] to the Annoyance of His Majesties Mill nere adjoininge whereof the plaintiff [Thomas Holeman] is farmer'. The commissioners were charged to enquire 'whether the plaintiff's mill may grinde when the defendant's mill is enforced to stand still by reason of Fluddes or over much waters'. They were also to inquire 'whether the plaintiffs mill may grinde first when the Fluddes or great waters begun to sincke away'. No resolution of this complaint appears to have been made, and the dispute between the two millers continued until 1603 when a compromise was finally reached¹⁹.

This difficulty, which was not uncommon on major rivers where mills were closely situated, may be reflected in the lease of a tucking mill in the parish of Sturminster Newton dated 1627, although the precise location of the mill is not given. The lease was between John Young of Sturminster Newton who is variously described 'yeoman' or 'clothier' and Morgan Strood of Sturminster Newton, 'fuller'. In return for a down payment of £10 and an annual rent of £6 13s 4d, Strood leased a tucking mill 'lately erected and edefyed nere adjoining to the grist mill of the said John Young'. The lease was for 90 years or for the lives of John Young, George Young and William Young. An interesting feature of the lease is the arrangement for rights to water. In times of drought if the grist mill lacked water, the hatches supplying the fulling mill were to be closed and all the water directed downstream to the grist mill. The lease also included a provision that if John Young and his assigns wanted any cloth 'tucked, fulled or dressed', they were to have it done before anyone else²⁰.

- 1 J. Hutchins, *History of Dorset*, 3rd Edn., 1861-70, II, 365-6.
Valor Ecclesiasticus, I, 25.
Dorset Record Office D/BLX/T69.
Letters & Papers of Henry VIII, XIII(ii), 474.
- 2 Public Record Office DL42/108 ff 24-28.
- 3 Wiltshire Record Office 490/1068.
- 4 D.R.O. D/WCJ/M52.
- 5 D.R.O. D/WCH/T16.
- 6 Eton College Records 2/426; 2/432; 2/563.
- 7 D.R.O. D1/10, 629.
- 8 D.R.O. MIC/R1202.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 P.R.O. REQ2/127/44.
- 11 P.R.O. E134/10 Charles I/Easter 26; E134/10 Charles I/Trinity 1.
- 12 P.R.O. C2/JAMES I/B34/61.
- 13 P.R.O. E134/41 Elizabeth/Easter21
- 14 P.R.O. E134/6 James I/Michaelmas 18; E134/9 James I/Hilary 15.
D.R.O. D/RGB/LL737.
- 15 D.R.O. D/BLX/T69.
- 16 Salisbury MSS, Hatfield House, 9/3.
- 17 D.R.O. D/FRA.T9.
- 18 P.R.O. C31/26/301-3/Hilary 1686.
- 19 P.R.O. E134/Misc 2400; E178/3721.
- 20 D.R.O. D/PIT/T710.

J.H. BETTEY

63. WELSH *PYBYR* 'STAUNCH' AND POORTON, DORSET. Poorton (ST 5198) is a hilltop village four miles north-east of Bridport; it is recorded as *Pover-* and *Pourtone* in Domesday Book, *Poertona* in 1168, *Pourton* in 1212, and *-porthon* in 1229. A mile south of it is Powerstock, recorded as *Pourestoca* and *Povrestoch* in Domesday, *Pourstoke* in 1195, and *Pourstok* in 1205. Ekwall also mentions a form *Power* in a local grant (?not mentioned by Sawyer) of Egbert¹.

Ekwall thought *Power* might refer to a river, but regarded the etymology as unclear. Mills calls the element 'obscure', but perhaps an old river-name². So the hunt is on for a Celtic word that would give *Pover-* and allied forms. There is a Welsh word *pefr* 'radiant, beautiful', related to the names of Polpever in Cornwall and the river Peffer of Strathpeffer, Scotland³. Yet this could not give the Dorset forms in *o*. However, Welsh *pybyr* 'strong, stout, staunch, valient' is another matter, and can be argued for on semantic and phonological grounds.

Pybyr is well attested in Welsh literature. The heroic seventh-century *Gododdin* laments 'fiery men (*gwr pebyr*) from the lands of wine-feasting', where *pebyr* might equally be translated 'valiant'⁴. The strange mythological poem 'The Spoils of Annwn' (tenth or eleventh century?) refers to *ynys pybyrdor*,

taken as either 'radiant-door island' or 'strong-door island'. Since doors are for keeping people out, the second perhaps makes more sense⁵. A character of the twelfth-century *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* is Gronw Pebyr, lord of Penllyn in North Wales. He is seduced by Blodeuedd and tries to murder her husband, Lleu. Rachel Bromwich imagines his epithet means 'shining, handsome', which she thinks apt for this 'gay profligate'⁶. But the sense 'strong, valiant' may suit the context better. Gronw is not a gigolo but a hunter and (near) murderer: for any killer, strength is more useful than charm. A thirteenth-century poem attributed to Meilyr ap Gwalchmai declares 'To love God would be most splendid (*oedd bybyriaf*) for everyone'⁷. Iolo Goch praises Sir Hywel of the Axe (who fought for Edward III) as protector of Gwynedd from his 'strong seat' (*cadair bybyr*), Criccieth Castle⁸.

As for *pybyr*'s meaning, William Salesbury in his dictionary of 1547 defined it as 'thryfty' (not in its modern sense 'frugal' but its older one 'thriving, flourishing'). In 1632, John Davies took it as 'strenuus, robustus, fortis'⁹. So we can understand *pybyr* as 'in good or healthy condition; flourishing; strong, staunch, valiant'. It is true many rivers have names meaning 'strong one' (the Calders of the North Country, the Stours of the Midlands and South). Yet the Mangerton river, which Poorton and Powerstock adjoin, is little more than a stream. The idea here may thus have been less 'strong, powerful' than 'flourishing, thriving'.

As regards phonology, if the first vowel of *pybyr* were a short *u* in British, this would become *o* in the Brittonic dialects giving Cornish and Breton. The contrast is shown by Romano-British *Durnovaria* 'place of fist-sized stones' giving *Dornwaraceaster* 'Dorchester', as opposed to Welsh *dyrnfol* 'glove'¹⁰. In native forms, the same development is seen in Gaulish *Dubnorix* 'king of the world' as compared to Welsh *dyfnder* and Breton *downder* 'deepness'¹¹. It also appears in Latin loanwords. Here *culcita* 'mattress, pillow' gave Welsh *cylched* 'coverlet, blanket' but Old Breton *colcet*; *cultellus* 'knife' gave Welsh *cylllell* 'knife' but Old Cornish *collel*¹². So there is a case for deriving *Pover* from Primitive Cornish *Pober*, cognate with Welsh *pybyr* 'thriving; strong'. The *b* here would be a bilabial, close to the semi-vowel *w* and even the labiodental [*v*]¹³. Hence, it seems, the spellings here of Anglo-Saxon and later documents.

If this reasoning is sound, we solve a problem of etymology, provide evidence for Celtic survival in Anglo-Saxon Wessex, and even glimpse British attitudes to Mangerton river, seen (it appears) as a beneficial and health-giving force, called 'vigorous one, thriving one' by the Ancient Britons of Dorset.

- 1 Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn (Oxford, 1960), 371; P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (London, 1968).
- 2 A.D. Mills, *A Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford, 1991), 261, 263.
- 3 *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1950-2002), 2714.
- 4 *Canu Aneirin*, ed. Ifor Williams (Caerdydd, 1938), 15; K.H. Jackson, *The Gododdin: The Oldest Scottish Poem* (Edinburgh, 1969), 130.
- 5 R.S. Loomis, *Wales and the Arthurian Legend* (Cardiff, 1956), 136; Marged Haycock, "'Preiddeu Annwn" and the Figure of Taliesin', *Studia Celtica*, xviii/xix (1983-4), 52-78, at 71.
- 6 *Troedd Ynys Prydein*, ed Rachel Bromwich, 2nd edn (Cardiff, 1978), 367.
- 7 *The Medieval Welsh Religious Lyric*, ed. Catherine McKenna (Belmond, 1991), 172, 173.
- 8 J.P. Clancy, *Medieval Welsh Lyrics* (London, 1965), 135; *Gwaith Iolo Goch*, ed. D.R. Johnston (Caerdydd, 1988), 8.
- 9 Williams, 166.
- 10 K.H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), 274-5.
- 11 *Geiriadur*, 1124; D. Ellis Evans, *Gaulish Personal Names* (Oxford, 1967), 196-7.
- 12 Henry Lewis, *Yr Elfen Ladin yn yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Caerdydd, 1943), 5; *Geiriadur*, 748, 751; Jackson, *Language*, 276.
- 13 Jackson, *Language*, 414.

ANDREW BREEZE

64. MARKET DAYS IN SOMERSET AND DORSET IN 1685. Information on the dates of fair days and market days in the 17th and 18th centuries is not readily available. The present paper attempts to address the situation for Somerset and Dorset. In preparing a paper on the Fairs and Markets of Norton St. Philip¹, the author was fortunate to come across a rare 'distance' map that contains information on market towns. In 1685 William Berry published *A New Mapp of the Kingdome of England and Wales*². An elaborate cartouche surmounted by the Stuart arms gives the claim that the map contains 'all the Cities, Market Towns, with the number of Roades, from Town to Town. And the Number of Reputed Miles between them'. The cartouche also contains a dedication to James II. William Berry sold the map 'at the Sign of the Globe between Charing Cross and White Hall' in London. The map gives the names of cities within double-lined rectangles (e.g. Bath, Bristol and Wells), major market towns within singled-lined rectangles (e.g. Dorchester) and the other market towns within ovals. Roads between the towns and intermediate places are shown by straight double lines with the

appropriate mileage shown within circles. Very little space is left for topographical detail, although Brent Marsh between 'Axbridg' and Glastonbury is depicted in the manner of present Ordnance Survey maps, and hillocks representing the Blackdown Hills as in the contemporary mapmakers' style are squeezed in to the west of 'Ilmister'.

Of interest to historians are two tables, one on either side of the map, each with the heading 'An Alphabeticall Table of all the Cities and Market Towns in England and Wales'. Elsewhere on the map there is the 'Explanation' that

'The Tables hath five Columns the

1.Contains the Names of the Towns

2.The Counties in which they are

3.What day of the Week the Market is on

4. The Distance of Miles from London ['d, f, L' as in the actual column heading]

5.Letters referring to the Mapp' [co-ordinate letters]

Altogether 781 cities and market towns are listed in alphabetical order.

Information relating to market towns in Somerset and Dorset is transcribed from columns 1, 3 and 4 to give a readily-accessible source of historical data. The original spelling of place-names is retained.

Somerset

Market Towns	Market Day	d.f.L.	Market Towns	Market Day	d.f.L.
Axbridg	Th	105	Northcurry	Tu. S	114
Bath	W. S	087	Pensford	Tu	094
Bridgwater	Th	116	Philips Norton		084
Bristol	W. S	094	Porlock		136
Bruton		093	Sheptonmallet	F	092
Castle carey		096	Somerton	M	105
Chard	M	116	South Petherton	Th	109
Chewton		094	Stokegomer		125
Crookhorn	S	110	Stowey	Tu	120
Dulverton	S	136	Taunton	W. S	120
Dunster	F	130	Watchet	S	126
Frome	W	085	Wellington	Th	124
Glastonbury	Tu	103	Wells	W. S	096
Ilchester	W	104	Wincaunton	W	093
Ilmister	S	113	Wivelscomb	Tu	128
Keynsham		090	Winton	Tu	103
Langport	S	109	Yeovil		104
Minhead		132			

Dorset

Market Towns	Market Day	d.f.L.	Market Towns	Market Day	d.f.L.
Abotsbury	Th	106	Lime		120
Bemister		111	Melcomb	Tu. F	106
Bere		092	Milton	M	092
Blandford	S	087	Pool	M. Th	086
Bridport		115	Sherborn	Th. S	100
Cerne	W	099	Shaftsbury	S	088
Corfe	Th	093	Stalbridg		095
Cranborn	W	078	Sturmister	Th	094
Dorchester	S	100	Wareham	S	090
Evershot		106	Weymouth	Tu. F	106
Frampton	Th	102	Winborn	F	082

The absence of letters showing the market days for some places is frustrating, for whatever reason Berry had been unable to ascertain the actual day on which the market was held when the map was engraved.

A word of warning: Berry produced his map at a time when publishers were keen to present information to an expanding market of readers and travellers. Plagiarism was rife and publishers did not always care to check that information was correct when it was copied from another source onto their printing plates.

Another fact to be taken into account is that Berry's map shows 'the Number of Reputed Miles' between the market towns. An examination of the extracted information from the tables shows that the 'distance from London' mileages are not as they should be. Although John Ogilby had surveyed forty thousand miles of roads of the kingdom for Charles II and had published his strip maps in his ground-breaking *Brittania* in 1675³, his accurate measurements of road distances were not utilised by Berry in his tables⁴. Berry's 'reputed miles' were those that had been accepted in common usage. Ogilby's map of the London to Bath and Wells road, for instance, shows the mileages from London to 'Phillips Norton', Bath and Wells as 104, 108 and 120 miles respectively and his London to Barnstaple map show mileages of 143 and 170 for 'Bridgewater' and Dulverton.

- 1 C.J. Brett, *Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society Proceedings*, 144, pp. 165-196.
- 2 W. Berry, *A new Mapp of the Kingdome of England and Wales*, London, 1685. I am indebted to Jonathon Potter Limited, Antique Map Dealers, London, for the information given in this map.
- 3 J. Ogilby, *Brittania*, (London), 1675.

- 4 Berry published his map by copying a similar one by John Adams of six years earlier – an example of blatant plagiarism.

COLIN J. BRETT

65. SMUGGLERS' DEFIANCE. In April, 1784 the Commander of the Customs boat *Laurel* sent a report to the Controller of Customs at Weymouth concerning the defiant behaviour of some smugglers he tried to apprehend:

To the Controller and Comptroller of His Majestys Customs Weymouth
Alarm April 25th 1784

Gentlemen

The inclosed is a full Account of a Boat riscued from my Boat, which be pleased to transmit to the Board, and am

Gentlemen

Your's & c^o.

George Gibbs Commander

Alarm April 9th. 1794 In Chiswell Cove becalm'd found a Lugger nam'd the Dilly John (alias, Dillgence), and several other small Vessels belonging to Portland, were at Alderney, and soon expected with Prohibited Goods in Consequence of which went on Shore, on the Island Portland, with my Chief Mate and Boats Crews in order to look out for the said Vessells and at half after five in the Evening the Haze clearing away observ'd a Lugger which I supposed to be the Dillgence above mentioned and a small Cutter at Anchor about 4 Leagues from the Land near the same Time saw a Boat put off from each Vessel (which I supposed to be laden with Tea) Rowing in for the Land as its customary for those Vessels to send their Tea away in the Boat when becalm'd. Accordingly I immediately sent my Chief Mate & Boats Crew in pursuit of them, at Dusk should see the Boats plain and was not above six Miles from the Land, the people on Shore finding my Boat in pursuit of them a little after seven made Fires, as Signal for them to go back again.

In the Morning of the 10th at day light I boarded the Lugger which proved to be the Diligence but had no Goods In & about 8OClock my Boat returned having Boarded the Boat belonging to the Diligence laden with Tea about Quarter after Eight, they Rescued the Boat & Goods as will appear from the Evidence of the Officer and Boats Crew

Geo^r Gibbs

The Following is the Evidence of the Officer and Boats Crew

About 20 Minutes before seven in the Evening left Portland & Row'd out after the Boats and about a Quarter of an Hour after sun set saw a Boat Rowing to the Southward kept chace after her and about a Quarter after eight row'd a long side the Boat and made fast to her, it prov'd to be the Dilly, John, (Alias Diligence) Lugger Boat W^m Way who is a part Owner of the said Lugger and a notorious Smugler was as Master

of the Boat, being a little fatigued with rowing set down to rest ourselves a few Minutes and desir'd them to hand in something to drink this W^m Way ask'd the Off^r how far he was from the Land, he said he could not tell exactly but might be three or four Leagues the people under this said Way said they were taking and would lay down to Sleep, upon which Way said they were not taking yet, and desir'd them to drink Gin, and have a good Heart to it, and from all his proceedings it appeared as if it was his intention to Resque the Boat & Goods, the people in Consequence of his Encouragement began with him to be very Abusive, and declar'd if we would not Compromise with them they would not be carry'd into the Land. Way Order'd all his People to set over to the side next were he was, to keep us out of their Boat they repeatedly ask'd the Officer to compromise, but he refus'd and said he would not, but if he Acted Contiary to Law he must Answer for it. Immediately they cast off and put us off from them, and dar'd us to come along side again, they had 10 Men in the Boat they then got out their Oars (which was seven) & Row'd to the Southward kept very near them, and soon after Boarded them again M^r Curtis the Officer got hold of the Boat & said he seized the Boat for the King & himself they declar'd he should not come on Board, but endeavouring to get In, one of the Crew Struck him with an Oar and they all began to arm themselves with Bludjeings, one in particular ship'd to Flight, we saw plainly Oil Skin Bags and some small white ones which the Smugglers commonly use to carry Tea In, and could smell the Tea. about one OClock in the Morning a Breeze sprung up and they made Sail away to the Southward, finding we could not do more in Executing our Duty, without the utmost Danger of our Lives, was obliged to return M^r Curtis can sware to the said W^m Way who is one of Portland and William Williams of the Parish of Wyke.

William Curtis Chief Mate, Tho^s Distin Mariner Sam^l Davis Nich^s Wells Mariner Tho^s Perry Mariner Rob^t Roberts Mariner

The Commissioners of Customs could take no action because they could not show that Way was importing tea illegally. Rightly, the Chief Mate seized the Boat 'for the King and himself', but, unfortunately, he did not seize any goods. Whatever the reputation of William Way he had never been convicted of smuggling. He had twice been named as one of a gang who defied the Customs boat when it came close to shore off Portland by throwing stones at it to dissuade the Customs men from dragging the area to recover floating casks.

PRO, Cust 59/17

GLANVILLE J. DAVIES

66. RURAL AFFAIRS, 1826. The following letter turned up in a Frome shop in 2000. It was bought for its frankings but the letter itself – newsy, lively and entertaining – is worth putting

on record for its own sake. It was written by the Revd. R.J. Meade, Rector of Marston Bigot from 1821 until 1834, to Edmund, 8th Earl of Cork and Orrery, of Marston House, patron of the living. When the letter was written on 26 Apr 1826, Lord Cork was at his London house in Hamilton Place. The letter was written at Marston, posted in Bath where Mr. Meade was dining, and arrived in London the next day. It was a reply to one from Lord Cork telling him that his son John Boyle had decided to become a lawyer.

My dear Lord

I had only time to acknowledge the arrival of your kind letter yesterday without replying to it. As my young friend Mr. John Boyle withdraws his claim upon the living of Marston I shall heartily wish him success in his new pursuit & continue, as you kindly desire, to hold the living until either Robert or Richard shall be disposed & qualified to take it. It is not at all likely that I shall meet with some more valuable preferment in the mean time, and indeed wherever my lot be cast, it is improbable that we shall ever find so kind and valued friends as we have always found in your lordship and Lady Cork, and shall certainly look back on the interval passed at Marston as one of the most happy periods of our life.

I have left word with Mrs Dillon that we hope Lord Dungarvan will dine with us today, and as long as he stays. I have not heard that he has yet arrived. Mrs. J. Meade will receive him, but I am unfortunately engaged to dine in Bath with Miss Hares, and hear some fine music & good singing at her house in the evening.

Mrs. J.M. & Mrs. Arnold & her daughter go tomorrow to Chatley for 5 days, that Mrs. Arnold may pay her promised visit there, for her time is nearly approached for returning to Surrey. Miss A's health being so indifferent, her mother wishes to have her near good advice & sadly curtails her visit to Somersetshire. The roof of Millard's Hill was put on the day before yesterday but this week it is hoped will advance it much – poor Cooper is very dangerously ill – his family are in great distress about him & not without reason – I trust he may recover, if it please God, for in his station he is a most valuable member of society and an excellent Father to his family. I made his will for him 2 days ago.

I am very much obliged to your Lordship for so kindly & speedily executing my little commission about paint. If you should see anything of the man & could pay him the bill I will repay it with many thanks. If you should not see him I can contrive to remit it to him another way. I think it would be preferable to send the paper by Lidbury to Mells then to apply through your Lordship to Col Horner & I therefore sent it in the former way, but the Col was not at Mells. I will this day call & see the Filley & send you word in what condition I find her.

I think of going to Wells to examine the Terrier of Frome in preparation for our boundary walk, which I wish was well over. Mr. Wickham I

hear is likely to attend for the Lord of the Manor & the refreshments at the Parish expence are to be provided one day at the Castle & another day at Sheppard's Inn for the Farmer's declare they will not perambulate without food. We have sent 7 notices to the 7 adjoining parishes & shall proceed the first day round the Frome side & the second day towards Gearhill.

We trust that the next account of Lady Lucy will be more favourable than that of Lady Louisa's, and with our usual kind regards and respect I remain

My dear Lord your Lordship's obliged &
faithful servant

R.J. Meade

Wednesday morning

The letter has the Bath postmark, free mail cover and Meade's seal, a two headed bird with spread wings and the initials RJM. Not all the places and people can be identified. Chatley Lodge is near Norton St. Philip. The Castle was in Catherine Hill, Frome, a detached portion of Marston parish. Sheppard's inn was 'The Jolly Butcher' in Trooper Street, Frome, no doubt conveniently en route for perambulating another detached part of the parish in Spring Gardens.

Millard's Hill is a mansion in Trudoxhill which belonged to Lord Cork and was let to Marianne Hare, the lady with whom Meade was dining. She came from Sussex and claimed to have been proposed to by Napoleon in Paris; she died in 1842 and a memorial in Witham Friary Church praises her benefactions to the poor. James Anthony Wickham (1786-1854) was a Frome solicitor and steward to Lord Cork. Col. T.S. Horner (1762-1844) was Squire of Mells.

Also mentioned are Lord Cork's children John (1803-1874), Robert (1809-1854) and Richard (1812-1886) who became Rector of Marston Bigot in 1836. Lord Cork's daughters Lady Lucy (1804-1827) and Lady Louisa (1806-1827) both died of consumption. Mrs. Dillon was probably housekeeper at Marston House. Lord Dungarvan (1800-1834) was Lord Cork's second son and heir. His elder brother had died earlier in the year. Mr. Meade became Perpetual Curate of Christ Church, Frome in 1834 and was later a Canon of Wells. He was a keen antiquary and friend of Revd. John Skinner. He was Vicar of Castle Cary, 1845-1880 when he died.

MICHAEL McGARVIE

67. DILLIES, FLIES AND MIDGES. Retrieved from an enviably retentive memory and given new life as carefully executed watercolours, Syd Durston's evocative and vivid scenes from his war-time childhood on the northern rim of the Poldens have aroused interest and enthusiasm well beyond Somerset, not least among his contemporaries with a comparable rural background. Some might, admittedly, but for the commentaries and the pictures themselves, have problems with expressions such as *ray-ball*, that is, a bunch of worms for catching eels, the *stitching* that has nothing to do with sewing and everything to do with harvesting, or *mumps*, not an illness, but blocks of turf ready for stacking and drying. For the philologist, however, there is a bonus in all this, since dialect words, many now half forgotten, are windows into the past. Take the painting 'Boys and the Dilly', which shows two boys in a cornfield, loading sheaves on to a small two-wheeled, horse-drawn wagon. This is the 'dilly' of the title.¹ But what precisely is a *dilly*?

In dialects from Lincolnshire to the westcountry, *dilly* signified various kinds of light wagon. In Cornwall it was a long narrow wagon with low sides, for taking baskets of potatoes. In parts of Somerset it was a light tray-like cart supported on two wheels, on which teasels formerly were carried. In West Somerset it was a cask on wheels for carrying liquids. In parts of northern England, however, a *dilly* was a small public carriage, and here we begin to glimpse the name's origins, which lie in *diligence*, meaning 'public stage-coach'. Thus in the 1797 *Papers on Reform of Posts* we read that 'the Diligence that sets out from Bath ... on Monday afternoon, will deliver a letter on Tuesday morning', a feat, one might add, that is frequently unmatched over two centuries later. And when Smollett in his *Roderick Random* satirically refers to an ordinary wagon as a 'diligence', we get an inkling of how the sense of the word could deteriorate.

Of course questions remain to be answered. What, for instance, has a stage-coach to do with *diligence*, an abstract noun meaning 'steady application, industry'? The point is that the word could also mean 'speed', in English, but also in French, where it originally formed part of the phrase *carrosse de diligence*, literally 'fast-moving carriage'. In time this was whittled down to just *diligence*, a form that entered many European languages, not just English.

Although it is far from obvious, then, the idea of speed or dispatch is at the back of *dilly* and *diligence*. In fact the same idea underlay another word for a kind of stage-coach, current from the beginning of the eighteenth century for well over a hundred years. This was the *fly*, 'distinguished by this name in order to impress a belief of its extraordinary quickness in travelling'. The sense is, thus, 'something that flies', that is, 'moves quickly', as in *Flying Scotsman*. There is no direct connection with the noun *fly* as an insect name, as in *house-fly* or *horse-fly*. This fact was, however, overlooked or ignored by those who, in possession of another kind of horse-drawn vehicle, christened it the *midge*.

Just as the biological name *midge* refers to an insect that is generally smaller than the one known as a *fly*, so the vehicle known as a *midge* was at least one step down in size from the stage-coach distinguished by the appellation *fly*. From 1865 for about thirty years, midges, that is, small one-horse cabs, seem to have been especially common in the south-west, at Avonmouth for instance, and on the Isle of Wight. About 1877, small flies licensed to carry two or at most three persons, and seen on all cab-stands about Torquay, were likewise known as *midges*. Originally, however, such miniature carriages had been drawn by a mule, and had seldom held more than one person with comfort. After a while, 'small ponies were used instead of mules, and then larger ponies, and the size of the vehicle consequently grew'.

It thus emerges that, while the *midge* increased in size, but presumably never surpassed the *fly*, the *diligence* shrank to a *dilly*. Nevertheless, many who still remember the expression *dilly* will be surprised and pleased to know it has such a venerable ancestry. There is, incidentally, no connection between *dilly* in this sense, and *dilling* in the sense of 'smallest pig in a litter', otherwise known in Somerset as *nestletripe*, *squeaker*, or *caddy*. The original reference of *dilling* was to the youngest child of a family, the *darling*, which in due course underwent a change in pronunciation. A further step was from *dilling* to the Midland *dilling-pig* or *dilly-pig*.² All that is, of course, a different story.

1. Exhibition at the Holburne Museum of Art, Bath, 24 September to 8 December 2002: Syd Durston, 'A Child in Wartime Somerset: Owe Twerr ("How It Was")'.
2. See the relevant headwords in Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-

1905; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1970); J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989; Paul Robert, *Le Grand Robert de la langue française*, 2nd edn. (Paris: Dictionnaires Robert, 1992); H. Orton et al., *Survey of English Dialects* (Leeds: Arnold, 1962-71).

J. B. SMITH

68. BRADON IN SOMERSET AND BRAYDON IN WILTSHIRE. South Bradon (ST 3618) is a hamlet by the river Isle, two miles north of Ilminster; a mile from it are North Bradon and (near Westport) the deserted village of Goose Bradon (which has nothing to do with geese; it belonged to the Norman family of de Gouiz). These forms, figuring as *Brede* and *Bredene* in Domesday Book, *Bradene* in 1266, and *Suthbradene* in 1320, have puzzled scholars. Ekwall called them 'obscure', though linking them with Braydon (SU 0488) in north Wiltshire (site of an old royal forest and still thickly wooded), which Coates now relates to Welsh *brad* 'treachery'.¹

This note develops Coates's surmise. The Somerset Bradons lie near water; so are perhaps linked with Nant Llanbradach (ST 1392) 'Llanbradach Stream' north of Caerphilly, Glamorgan. This Welsh stream was formerly called *Bradach*, which is Irish for 'robber' (an Irish thief may have lived there). But we do not have an Irish form at Bradon, so must seek a another sense. This seems suggested by *Y Bradnant* 'the treacherous brook' joining the Severn below Llanidloes (SN 9584), Powys; *Nant Brad* (now obsolete) 'brook of treachery' east of St Florence (SN 0801), Pembrokeshire; *Bratffos* 'treachery ditch' on Gylchedd (SH 8544), Snowdonia; and *Pant-y-Brad* (ST 0287) 'treachery valley', Glamorgan. *Bradpwll* or *bratpwll* 'pit of treachery' is also Welsh for a pitfall or trap.²

How do these Welsh rivers relate to Bradon, Somerset? They have been regarded as liable to flood quickly, sweeping away house and beast, and hence treacherous.³ This certainly makes sense as regards Bradon. South Bradon, on a river-bank in a low-lying region, is where the river Ding joins the Isle, a likely spot for bursting of banks. The sites of North Bradon and Goose Bradon are or were also liable to floods. If so, these places or the rivers at them may have had a Celtic name meaning 'little treachery', the suffix *-en* being a Brittonic feminine diminutive.⁴

If this solution is correct, it has three implications. First, it

shows Somerset Britons knew the risks of flooding at South Bradon and its neighbours, where conditions would be damp, as at Cad Green (apparently related to Welsh *caddug* 'fog') a mile south-west.⁵ Second, it provides evidence for Celtic survival in Anglo-Saxon Somerset. Third, it indicates a solution for Braydon near Swindon. The brooks there are small and pose no flooding danger. If Braydon Forest is linked to Welsh *brad* 'treachery', it would be because of danger from bandits, not streams. Braydon (a sanctuary for thieves) thus provides evidence for crime in Celtic Britain. So we can make a distinction. Bradon in Somerset and most of the Welsh names refer to rivers that were dangerous in spate (and even when low might have 'treacherous' waterlogged banks). But Braydon in Wiltshire, and perhaps Pant-y-Brad 'treachery valley' in Glamorgan, suggest haunts of criminals. They resemble such forms as Mortgrove 'murder grove' in Hertfordshire, Dupath 'thief path' in east Cornwall, *Llwyn Lladron* (now obsolete) 'thieves' grove' at Bishopston in Gower, Morpeth 'murder path' in Northumberland, and Skillymarno (NJ 9552) 'hut of the robbers' in Aberdeenshire.⁶ In short, Bradon in Somerset, with Braydon in Wiltshire, cast unexpected light on danger in Celtic Britain, whether from flooding or crime.

1. Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn (Oxford, 1960), 59; Richard Coates and Andrew Breeze, *Celtic Voices, English Names* (Stamford, 2000), 339.
2. R. J. Thomas, *Enwau Afonydd a Nentydd Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1938), 3-4.
3. Thomas, 4.
4. John Morris-Jones, *A Welsh Grammar* (Oxford, 1913), 229; Thomas, 103.
5. Coates and Breeze, 83-4.
6. A.C. Breeze, 'Does Lamorna in Cornwall mean "Valley of Murders"?' *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*, xxxviii/9 (2001), 261-2 (though Professor Coates now convinces the writer that this Cornish name has no link with murder.)

ANDREW BREEZE

69. LULLINGTON, IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY. These reminiscences of Lullington in the early 19th century were found in the Somerset Record Office with some material on the regulation of the watermeadows at Orchardleigh, near Frome. They were taken down by the squire, Revd. W.A. Duckworth (1829-1917), who had gone to see one of the oldest inhabitants and repository of local lore, Benjamin Grant, about how the watermeadows were controlled. Grant evidently did not keep to the subject and Duckworth wrote up the surplus material.¹

Memoirs of Benjamin Grant nearly 87 on July 12 (in the year 1895) of Spring Gardens.

Thatched cottage next Widow Dymott which I pulled down used to be Lullington School, private school, 6d. a head for each child. If 3 in a family, 3 could go to school for 1/- a week. Mrs. Pearse (school mistress) took in washing from Frome. Husband hedger & ditcher & mower worked by piece because on Mondays he collected the clothes from Frome & on Fridays took the clean clothes to Frome.

Old Hall's House [now the old Post Office]. The place before it was built was where the refuse of the parish used to run. 2 thatched cottages used to stand near the refuse rubbish heap, the property in Chancery, no repairs, cottages fell down. Old Hall, a tea traveller, built his house out of the ruins of the 2 cottages & occupied it when my father bought O.L. [W.A.D. is now writing about his father and himself: the family tended to spell the place-name Orchard Leigh]. He questioned old Hall as to his title & told him he might remain there undisturbed for his life. I bought the cottage & garden in 1878 subject to Hall's life occupation rent free. He died in 1895.²

Black Death in Lullington. Gipsy recommended onions peeled & put under the bed as a cure. It cured one case & a labourer who ate one of these onions which had been thrown on the refuse heap died 8 hours afterwards. Sir Thomas Champneys gave old Benjamin Grant's father £2 for ½ sack of Prince & Beauty potatoes, rough potatoes with a pink eye. Benjamin's father had paid a guinea & a half for one sack of then at Warminster. At the time 4 lb. Loaf cost 11d½. The labourer was not living but starving in old days, but now he has every advantage. Wages now 14/- or 15/- instead of 9/- or 10/- & food & clothes a little more than half the price, but they are not so well off now as they spend it in pride.

Benjamin has six pillions (man & wife riding on one horse) going out of Lullington on a Wednesday morning to market. At that time they were taxed £5 a year for a trap, £2 for a horse & £1 for the man to look after the horse. If you went down to Lullington you would not have found a piano then, Sir Benjamin's father was a former tax collector & used to bring the dues home.

Present postman's grandfather (Francis) lived at Whatcombe for many years, more than 50. Old Francis had 3 daughters who worked at lace with bobbins & made 15 guineas for one veil, what they call Honiton lace. They dressed very smart in church, slippers & sandals, they made stockings of various shades of colours, with small holes so that one could see the flesh of their legs. One of these, the youngest, is Mrs. Ashby, now living as matron at Keyford Asylum, widow, husband drank, very bad, brought her low. They used to live at Brokeover.³ The labouring class much improved but the middle class want something done for them.

Mr. Wood Wright, of Park Hill House, Frome, keeps show dogs, has lived at Darwen,⁴ on County Council. He has been 2 years at Park Hill where Mr. Williams.⁵ Always grind your own pepper, chemists add

salt to keep it when it is ground. Go to bed at 9. Eat watercress when you first wake up in the morning & drink linseed tea last thing at night. At Collins's⁶ watercress always grown & carried to the mansion by Sir Thomas Champneys.⁷ Watercress a fine thing for young ladies!

1. S.R.O. DD/DU 151.
2. *Kelly's Directory of Somerset 1894* refers to John Hall as baker and grocer.
3. A farm at Spring Gardens, Frome.
4. A Duckworth property in Lancashire.
5. Revd. W.M.H. Williams, Rector of Lullington and Orchardleigh, 1838-1870, former headmaster of Frome Grammar School.
6. Longhouse Farm, Orchardleigh.
7. Squire of Orchardleigh, 1795-1839.

MICHAEL McGARVIE

70. WILLIAM GILBERT, FIRST ABBOT OF BRUTON. The 'promotion' or elevation of a priory to an abbey, and thus its prior to an abbot, was an event rare enough to be remarkable and important enough to be worth exploring. It happened only once in medieval Somerset, but in what circumstances and through whose influence has not been clear. John Leland recorded that William Gilbert, who had been prior for some fifteen years, 'went to Rome, and there procurid first that the name of the priory ... be chaungid ynto an abbay'.¹ The date was thought by the editor of Bruton's cartulary² to have been about 1510. Royal letters patent of 21 June 1511 permitted the change.³

Letters from the papal chancery of Julius II⁴ tell the story of the process and demonstrate both the importance of political influence and the fact that the prolonged absence of the head of a religious house in the later Middle Ages can so easily be overlooked in the surviving record. It also suggests that such absence made little difference.

Abbot Gilbert's absence from Burton might have been assumed in the years 1506-8 when he was studying theology at Oxford and acquired the degrees of B.Th and D.Th, and where on Palm Sunday 1508 he was University preacher. Short absences might reasonable be assumed after his appointment as bishop *Majorensis*, a now unidentifiable see within the archbishopric of Nazareth to which he was appointed in 1519 so that he might serve as suffragan to successive bishops of Bath and Wells.⁵ It is clear, however, that he was away from Bruton probably from the end of November 1509 perhaps until the early months of 1512.

Such an absence might have been complained of at Bruton in normal circumstances, but Gilbert was evidently part of a royal embassy to Rome and thus an object of some pride to his community; and the man he left behind in charge was probably not unhappy with the arrangement. That may be assumed from the terms of a petition Gilbert addressed to Pope Julius II in July 1511 in which he recalled that on the death of Prior John Henton at Bruton in 1494 he had been elected prior by a majority of the community after making an agreement with his rival John Lotte, then subprior, 'and his adherents' that Lotte would remain in office and that Gilbert as prior would assign him either a manor or a pension. Some five years later, realising that he had thereby incurred the possibility of excommunication, Gilbert had obtained absolution from Cardinal Hadrian de Castello, then papal nuncio and collector. Not entirely satisfied of his safety Gilbert had subsequently secured absolution from Gaspar Pow, archdeacon of Mallorca and commissary-general to Pope Alexander VI. The 1511 petition for further absolution to Pope Julius II was 'for greater security and peace of conscience'.⁶

Gilbert was no stranger to business with the papal chancery, for in 1500 he had obtained licence to receive and retain *in commendam* any other benefice, and was appointed vicar of Minehead in 1507.⁷ Now in 1511, his conscience as clear as it was likely to be, his home had become an abbey and he himself its abbot. And a few months later, early in 1512 the new abbot received the right to wear a mitre fringed with gold *laminae* and decorated with gems, and to wear pontifical gloves, dalmatic, sandals, almuze, ring, staff and other pontifical *insignia*. This was declared to be a personal grant which mentioned both his vicarage of Minehead and his parents Otto and Isabella Gilbert. A month later the pope, in response to his petition, reissued the letters of confirmation of all Bruton's ancient rights made by Pope Boniface IX in April 1400, themselves confirming earlier letters of Bishop Ralph Erghum of Bath and Wells.⁸ The new abbot and his abbey were secure.

Grants of this kind imply that Gilbert had influence in high places, and the beginning of the papal grant reveals that he was actually in Rome in 1512 and that he had a powerful patron: he was described as 'a continuous commensal member of the household of Christopher, cardinal-priest of St Prassede',

in other words that he belonged to the household of Henry VIII's Orator to the Roman Curia, Christopher Bainbridge, archbishop of York.⁹

Bainbridge arrived in Rome in November 1509 and Gilbert may well have been with him. Two years later Pope Julius made him his personal representative to the papal troops then at Ferrara and put him in charge of siege operations there. Hostility between himself and the king's agent Silvestro de Gigli, bishop of Worcester, which culminated in Bainbridge's death by poison in 1514, soon after Wolsey's opposition had prevented his appointment by the new pope, Leo X, as legate in England.¹⁰ Gilbert's role in all this is quite unknown, but he is unlikely to have remained in Rome after his patron's death.

William Gilbert, a member of a small yeoman family from Whitcomb in Corton Denham,¹¹ had no obvious patrons in his youth, but during the time he was at Oxford, possibly a student at the Augustinian college of St Mary, Bainbridge was nearing the end of his term as Provost of Queen's. They might also possibly have met in Somerset for Bainbridge was rector of Aller between 1497 and 1506. Other possibilities might suggest themselves, such as the influence of Bishop Hadrian de Castello, bishop of Bath and Wells, of the feudal overlord of Whitcomb, the Lady Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond, or of the bishop of the neighbouring diocese of Salisbury, Thomas Langton, Cardinal Bainbridge's uncle. By such means a young man of promise could make his way in the world, even if it was a world rather far removed from that of the cloister to which he belonged.

1. *Leland's Itinerary in England and Wales*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, i. 150.
2. *Two Cartularies of...Bruton...and Montacute* (Somerset Record Society viii), xliv.
3. *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, i (1), p. 447.
4. *Calendar of Papal Registers*, xviii, pp. 99—100; xix., pp. 344-5, 455.
5. A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford*, ii. 768.
6. *Calendar of Papal Registers*, xviii, pp. 99—100.
7. *Ibid.* xvii(1), p. 170; *Registers of Oliver King and Hadrian de Castello* (S.R.S. liv), pp. 124, 133.
8. *Calendar of Papal Registers*, v. 326—7; xix, pp. 344-5, 455.
9. *Ibid.* xix, p. 455.
10. Emden, *Biographical Register*, i. 92.
11. *V.C.H. Somerset* vii, 103-4.

ROBERT DUNNING

71. NATHANIEL IRESON AND SOMERTON TITHE BARN, 1759-1760. In the middle of June 1759 the tithe barn at Somerton was severely damaged by a strong wind. A small group of papers in the Arundell of Wardour archives in the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office which record its rebuilding are of interest in illustrating how the work was tackled under the guidance of an important Somerset architect.¹ A narrative rather than an analytical account follows as the documents are sufficiently informative to stand alone as an example of how such a common problem was tackled in 18th century Somerset.

On 18 June 1759 Thomas South, agent of John Everard Arundell, wrote to Ireson seeking his assistance.² The barn, although well tiled and timbered had been weakened by breeches in the walls. It was much larger than the tenant needed and South urged that as much of the materials as possible should be reused. New timber could be provided from Mr. Arundell's nearest estate of Southey farm, Isle Brewers although it was some distance from Somerton and served by bad roads for carriages. He asked Ireson to go to Somerton and also to visit John Pester, tenant of Southey farm, to view the trees to be cut and also to assess the repairs needed to the farm house there. Pester lived in Ilton and had put a subtenant into the farm house. Ireson replied on the same day accepting the work which he would undertake with the assistance of his son-in-law.

Four days later he wrote to South describing the work to be done and enclosing an estimate. About 30 feet had collapsed at one end of the barn. He advised that a further 30 feet was taken down and timbers used there to form a pinion end which should be covered with straw. This was a temporary measure as the barn would need to be completely rebuilt or 'Els Evrey peney Laid out is Interley thrown away for it cannot any ways be maid to stand'. He proposed that the new barn should be the same length as before (131 feet), but narrower (24 feet 'from out to out'), so that much of the timber can be reused although 12 new beams measuring 24 feet by 10 feet by 11 inches either in elm or oak will be required together with 5000 lathes, all to come from Southey. Elm beams would be as good as oak, 'and easier had'; they may be cut in winter and sawn and be ready in spring or else the barn will not be ready by harvest next year. The walls were to be 5 feet higher than before at 18 feet thus enabling the new barn to have the same capacity as before.

There would be two doors ('portals') on either side of the barn 'to break out 7 foot'. South's opinion that a smaller barn would be sufficient appears to have been ignored and was not pressed further. Since the pitch of the roof would be less, fewer new tiles would be required. Furthermore reed was expensive and in short supply. Ireson added that money had been spent on patching up the tiles and 'paynting' them and the walls with lime which was extravagant and not worth doing. The estimate totalled £122 18s., the most expensive item being £22 10s. for lime and sand for mortar for the walls - the building of which was estimated at 18d. per perch (5½ yards). £20 was the estimated cost to take down the barn, sort out the reusable materials and clear and prepare the foundations. A new door was to be made. The work on Southey farm would cost £22 5s. 6d. which covered rebuilding the wall on the east side, altering the kitchen and chamber windows, taking away the gable and repairing the roof. The stone wall on the the south side of the 'back kitching' was to be rebuilt and the rough cast all around to be repaired. Other work involved making new stairs out of the kitchen, plastering the ceilings of the dairy, the cellar, the kitchen and chamber. Finally the mud wall on two sides of the stable was to be rebuilt in stone to a measurement of 50ft x 10ft. Ireson continued 'I have been In a new world as I never was befor and that at Hil brewers ... In that watery distate [?distant] plase I found a way to mr. pesters house wher he was not to be found.'

He next wrote on 20 July to say that a fall had made him lame and unable to attend to the work. Farmer Haggett has been unable to find another barn for the year and so could not take down the end of the barn. So both ends of the barn must be patched up for the winter. He went on 'two peny of Long timber' of elm must be used to shore up the two ends together with other timbers which will later serve as beams; these must be bought or cut down to 'make shift this year'. If the barn is to be built next spring the timber for the beams must be cut soon 'and sawn out' and be brought into place. He hopes that South has a man to mark and saw the timber and bring it to Somerton as 'there is not a Labering man to be got in ye wholl Cuntry nor any other work man good for any thing'. Because of his incapacity his son-in-law, Richard Kittermaster of Yeovil will take his place. He was sure South must know him as 'he bilt

sq[iur]e bickfords house and mr stille at knile and now is bilding Lord digby stables'.³ This is the last direct involvement by Ireson as the other letters are all from Kittermaster.

In his first letter dated 18 Aug 1759 he reported that he had been to Ilton but did not see Mr. Pester who was confined to bed. So he took one of Pester's servants to Isle Brewers, marked five elms for the beams and 18 pollard oaks for the lathes. He then went to Somerton and found a workman to cut and saw the timber. He wanted 3s. 6d. per hundred (? feet) for sawing the elm, 'a price I had never heard in my life before'. He will send some people to do the work next month and 'get one to put a pole into farmer Haggits wheels' for the carriage of the timber. Work on Southey farm can wait until next year also. 'Labouring people are very scarce in Somerton and will be until the harvest is over'. If all the materials are in place this year the work should be finished before the harvest.

On 3 November Kittermaster wrote to explain problems with transporting the timber. He found a carrier in Yeovil who would take all the timber for 12s. a load with horses and hay or grass provided by farmer Haggett. The farmer had asked for just two loads of timber to be taken now for the temporary shoring-up work on the barn. This Kittermaster felt was foolish since it is not worth sending a wagon from Yeovil for just two loads. Mr. Pester could not get anyone to carry it but the timber had to be moved soon or not that year: it is not clear how this was resolved. No letters cover the actual building work which appears not to have been completed by the summer of 1760 since Kittermaster's next letter was written on 20 Feb 1761 and reports on the completion of both projects. There had been inevitable extraordinary expenses. For the barn these amounted to £65 4s. 1¾d. and included making up the end of the barn, cutting and carriage of timber including scaffolding, 197 feet of blue stone to lay on the end floors of the barn @2d. per foot and the stone and laying for the middle floor; finally the working of Ham Hill crest out of old stone for the ridge of the roof. At Southey farm the extra cost was £7 18s. 2d. which included replacing a partition that fell down and re-plastering the chamber ceiling that fell down with it. The charge for each of the two visits of Nathaniel Ireson in the summer of 1759 was 10s.

In his final letter dated 20 Feb 1761, Kittermaster asked for payment in particular for a fine gable (presumably the formed timbers) that he bought at Whiting⁴ and which cost more than he got for selling the other gable South had supplied. The Beer (?stone) masons cost £30 yet he had only charged South £10. The excess was due to the fact that the walls were 'burnd and thus rotten' and required more work. It is not clear whether it was the walls of the barn or the farmhouse that he was referring to. He continued 'but be that as it will I trust to your goodness but should be glad of some money to pay everyone concerned'; the receipt for the final payment by Thomas Haggett on the instruction of Thomas South was dated 6 Aug 1761 over two years after the barn had collapsed.

1. WSRO 2667/23/43.
2. Arundell acquired the inappropriate rectory of Somerton by his marriage to Ann, the daughter of John Wyndham of Salisbury. According to South's letter of 18 June it was leased to Thomas Haggett at the annual rent of £200. Haggett appears to have sublet the barn.
3. William Beckford (d. 1770) bought the Fonthill Gifford estate, Wiltshire, in 1745. Fonthill house burned down in 1755 and the letter must refer to the building of the new house (see Wilts VCH 13 pp.161-2). James Still owned Clouds, East Knoyle, also in Wiltshire. That house was replaced in 1881 by the present building (see Wilts VCH 11 p.88). Lord Digby of Sherborne castle.
4. Possibly Whitedown, an important agricultural fair near Chard.

STEVEN HOBBS

BOOK REVIEWS

Cecil N. Cullingford, *A History of Poole* (Phillimore, 2nd ed., 2003), pp. 258, illus & photographs. £18.99 Readers must not expect to find substantial changes; this edition differs very little from that of 1988. The greatest change comes in the format: the text is now easier to read, and the illustrations have been enlarged. Chapter 13, which ended at 1988, has been revised by the late author's children, Angie and Adrian, so that it is brought up to date, and they have included a few additions to the booklist.

Cecil Cullingford was a competent and well known local historian, and this book has been a cornerstone in the history of Poole for the last fifteen years. Undoubtedly, the best parts of his work lay in chapters 8 to 12, where he abandoned the strait-jacket of dynastic or constitutional divisions, and concentrated

on social and economic themes. It was always my hope that any revision he undertook would recognize that, and produce a history based on those themes. Unfortunately, that task will now be left to another author. This edition does not attempt a revision, and has reproduced his first text. It is to be regretted that the changes we see are largely cosmetic. Material published since 1988 should have prompted some revision of the text because there has been some very good research over the last fifteen years. No reference has been made to *SDNQ*, despite the fact that since 1988 we have published material on Poole's coastal trade, smuggling, population figures, textile mills, pipe-makers, puritanism, etc. etc. Some items in the booklist have still not been amended to include publishers and dates, nor have articles been properly indicated with volume and page numbers. The pathetically weak doctoral thesis of E. Mathews is still included, while the more significant and influential thesis of the late Keith Matthews from 1968 has still been ignored. The readers, therefore, are offered substantially the same text and illustrations, with no revision of twelve of the thirteen chapters.

G.J.D.

Barnes, William, *Views of Labour and Gold*, (Fiducia Press, 2003), pp. 148. From 10 Fairfield Rd, Southville, Bristol BS3 1LG. This is a reprint of a work on political economy that Barnes first published in 1859. It consists of extended notes for free lectures he gave to working men in Dorchester in that year. The resultant book is a specimen of extreme Victorian eccentricity. Both the ideas and language are odd:

Who it may be asked, can measure labour in all its bearings? By the social law of the Allwise, a man cannot win any unlimited quantity of another's labour for a given quantity of his own. Every man's labour is rated in the market by the labour that brings, or could bring, all kinds of life-gear against it.

The term 'life-gear' is used throughout to denote the necessities of life and is a sample of the book's persistent linguistic archaism.

No man was more hostile than Barnes to the brutalities of the emerging industrialism of the early 19C. He deplored the inhumanity of the factories, the 'money-making mind' that had grown so common in England, and the growing antagonism

between masters and men. There need be no such conflict, he argued, if workers and employers remembered their Christian duty to one another. Far better than industrialisation would be a return to the rural self-sufficiency he had observed in the Blackmoor Vale in the first decade of the century. Even as late as 1859, there was still enough land in Dorset for each farming family to have 130 acres.

Though time may have rendered his argument redundant, what makes this book a delight is the variety of illustrative examples he uses to support it. Here we may learn that there were 100,000 workers in the Woolwich Arsenal during the Crimean War, that the inhabitants of the Philippines build their houses of Nipa grass, and that the ancient Spartans liked to eat 'blood food' or black pudding.

The book is printed on good paper with excellent illustrations. The Fiducia Press is to be congratulated in bringing out a text which was previously available only in expensive editions of the 'complete prose'. It is a 'must' for all those who would wish to understand the views of this extraordinary man.

ALAN CHEDZOY

Frome Society Year Book volume 8 2002, edited by Michael McGarvie (Frome Society for Local Study, 2003), 118pp., £6.00 paperback, numerous illustrations, ISBN 0948014 12 9. Available from Hunting Raven Bookshop, Cheap Street Frome, or £7.50 by post from Michael McGarvie, Marston House, Marston Bigot, Frome, Somerset, BA11 5DU.

Once again Michael McGarvie has discovered an Alladin's Cave of historical material not just for Frome, but for most of the surrounding countryside. The contents of this the eighth volume in the series has brought into print material concerning architecture, poetry, family history, topography, business history, diaries, correspondence, medieval documents, wills and a great deal of illustrations reproduced for the first time. The book is divided into two sections, the first deals with the longer articles and the second with shorter notes which give the authors the opportunity to have some ephemeral material brought to a wider audience.

The volume opens with the diary of Edmund Crocker

recording events during the turbulent years of 1798-1801, which also contains records of deaths and local events, such as the wager of a guinea between two shearmen that one of them should run to Bath and back within five hours. Crocker has left us with a wealth of material on matters such as troop movements, local curiosities, and small town gossip. After this I wondered how the editor could follow such entertaining reading, but, Michael's selection of material and his arrangement of a wide variety of material, in terms of content and scholarship, has been achieved to the satisfaction of any student of local or family history with interests in East Somerset.

For a local society to produce such a high quality publication such as this is a great testament to the hard work and efforts of not only the editor and contributors, but of the officers and committee of the society.

Peter J. Foss (*ed*), *Wessex Memories: Country essays* by Llewelyn Powys, (The Powys Press, 2003), pp. 126, line illus., £9.95 Many years ago a disciple of Richard Jefferies insisted that I should read his collected works. I did so reluctantly and with mounting distaste, for I have no sympathy with the ardour of impassioned naturalism. That sense of frustration was further fuelled by my subsequent deception, for I was constantly forced into a pretence that I admired and enjoyed his work. I experienced all that again when I began reading this collection of notes and essays by Llewelyn Powys, all of which were first published in the 1930s. I read the book somewhat unwillingly, but nevertheless became intrigued by some parts of his writing. I enjoyed his sympathetic portrayal of Thomas Fuller, and by his special insight into the work of Henry Williamson. His 'Recollections of Thomas Hardy' was fascinating because I understood how he had upset Hardy and his wife with unguarded talk, and then appeared to dislike the person of Hardy yet retain an admiration for his work. But, his 'country essays' were, to my taste, cloyingly sentimental. Safe in his comfortable middle class life he was insulated against 'these dangerous times', and could write whimsically about 'country places where healthy men and healthy animals are gathered together'. But I resolutely read on, and came, finally, to the last essay 'True Happiness'. At that point my anger fell away. Those final few

pages converted me, not to being a devotee, but certainly to being a sympathiser. He was communicating to his readers his love of the countryside, and his constant desire to see in Nature a changeless and familiar world, but one that could only be revealed to those who patiently observed it, or worked with it. Who am I to disagree with that? I was left with only one small question: why didn't Peter Foss open this collection with 'True Happiness'?

G.J.D.

NOTES

I was under the impression that we had exhausted all possible interpretations of 'F' seat, but Mr. G.A. Brine, 55 Pretoria Road, London SW16 6RR, has come up with a surprisingly simple possibility: that the 'F' stands for 'Fabric', as opposed to velvet upholstered, or a plain wooden seat. (*Dorset Ed.*)

VERSE FROM THE HATCHMENT OF HENRY UVEDALE.
Made after his death in 1601. It is painted on wood and shows his family as a grape vine with the thirteen children's names on the leaves and bunches. This is a pun on the Latin *uva*, a grape, combined with *dale* in the manner of those times. Alas, as the verse reveals, several of the children died young, and Isabel Uvedale who brought him those 13 children 'to his joie' must with him have suffered much grief at their loss.

'Heare in this dale longe since a grape was sett
Ere it was longe that grape became a vine
Nor was it barren for it did begett
Riche store of fruite for Heaben on it did shine
Yet every parte thereof withers and dyes
Except the roote whence still new branches rise
Under a Tombe one vertuous branche doth lye
Vertue (alas) coulde not this branch preserbe
Even HENRY UVEDALE, who with dignitie
Did while he lived his prince & country serve

All sortes of men did of his sweetness taste.
Lord of this dale Ninetyfive years he past
Expecting Heaben, where now he springs at last'.

M. McGARVIE

WHAT IS ALDERGLOSS? Like the late professor Ossi Ihalainen, we also interviewed Mrs Louise Norman and recorded her account of collecting hogweed as a child. We transcribed the word in question as 'elderdrots', which is how we used it our Somerset Scrapbook (INA Books, Wells, 1987).

BOB & JACQUELINE PATTEN

SOME ELIZABETHAN BUILDING TERMS and ROVELESS etc TENEMENTS. Dr J.B. Smith has added some useful observations in *SDNQ* XXXV 281-3 to my earlier note in the same volume, pp. 179-81. However, in explaining *virses*, *vyrstes* or *firsts* I was careful to qualify the meaning by the use of the word 'probably'.

Furthermore, in my notes on 'Roveless, etc. Tenements', XXXIV, 297 and 423, I was fully aware that the original meaning derived from *row* and *lease*, and hence had meant *rough pasture*. Gill and Locke Radford had explained this in 1946¹, and I have relied on the evidence from original documents in attempting to trace the development of the term *roveless* from the 16th to the 18th centuries.

I was in good company in choosing the words 'used in the West Country to describe a wasted or unprofitable land without a house'. To repeat, the Rev. Jackson had quoted 'Any tenant being a *place-holder of a row-lease tenement without a house* belonging to thereto'², and for the term *rowless-thing* Dartnell and Goddard had used the phrase 'apparently meaning *waste and unprofitable land*'³. Hall had written about the Waldegrave estate survey-books, 'entries of "roveless", "roofflesse" or "roofless" are numerous and that in all cases the details make it clear that the tenements in question were of lands *without a homestead*'. 'It appears clear, therefore, that whatever earlier meaning "roofless" and "overland" may have had ... to the clerk of the later period [seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries] they were terms to be employed indifferently to refer to

tenements *lacking a house*⁴. Later, Seaward and Baker in commenting on the 1563 and 1598 surveys of Ryme Intrinsica wrote 'the word "roveles" in a context implying a roofless, probably ruinous, building. Four copyholds are involved ... but showing *no obvious trace of buildings*'⁵.

Lord Hylton, in writing about the manor Kilmersdon⁶, quoted from a Chancery suit of 1694. Sixty-one entries of possessions within the manor were itemised in the form of a survey. Forty-one entries were of 'Messuages and Tenements' or of 'a house' each of which contained a dwelling house in addition to a varying quantity of land. There were two groups of cottages and one Rectory. One possession was of two woods, and there were also six plots of meadow, pasture or arable; and of these seven, three were supplementary to a 'Messuage and tenement'. The remaining ten possessions were of *Roveless* or *Rovelesse Tenements*:

The Rovelesse Tenem't now in the possession of Tho^s Shute or his Ass^s
cont. 10 a. and one p. of Meadow, 3 a. and 119 p. of pasture...⁷
... 11 a. and 144 p. of meadow, 12 a. and 49 p. of Pasture, 2 a. and 80 p.
of arable in the West and 3 a. and 80 p. in the Eastfield...
... 5 a. and 70 p. of meadow, and 16 a. and 70 p. of pasture...
... 12 a. called Emblett's being three grounds of meadow or pasture..
... 24 a. and 36 p. of Pasture...
... 11 a. and 89 p. of Pasture called Shere's Close...
... 31 a. and 98 p. of Pasture...
... 12 a. of Pasture called Halswood and Rasters wood...
... 10 a. and 110 p. of arable inclosed....
... 7 a. of arable lying in the Northfield and 5 in the Westfield....

None of these ten entries make any mention of any form of dwelling house or building. To '*Roveless*', Hylton added a justified footnote '*i.e.* Roofless'. Whilst two of these tenements were not in tenancy it stretches the imagination to believe that these 10 tenements were all 'rough pasture'. Each was a possession without a house, and some of them contained 'meadow', the most-prized land that could be had, which surely would not have been allowed to degenerate.

Returning to my original quotation from Samuel Parsons' survey of the manors of Norton St. Philip and Hinton Charterhouse of 1638⁸ a fuller extract of the text reads:

Ann, the now wife of John Bridges, and Marie their daughter, clayme for the terme of their lives, whose ages are 52 & 29 years one ruinous or *rollesse tenement* ... particular, One close of pasture called Butt Close, lying by the owlett on the backside of his dwelling house

containing 0a-2r-10p ... One close of pasture or arrable land lying at Hassidg Hill, containing 2 acres ... and 2 acres of earrable land lying in Telsford Feild'.

This was the only tenement in Norton St. Philip that did not include a dwelling house. The statement that Butt Close lay 'by the owtlett on the backside of his dwelling house' did not indicate that his house belonged to this tenement but it was, in fact, part of the next tenement described by Parsons:

The said Ann, wife of John Bridges, Claymes to hould for terme of her life, one tenement with thappurtenances, scituate in the South Strete ... particular, the house they now dwell in, with the orchard, garden, barne & backside, containing 0a-1r-12p, one acre and a halfe lying in the close of Godes Peece ... one acre of land lying in the North Field and another acre in the Breaches Corner, containing both 2a-1r-02p ... and two acres of arable land lying in the South Feild.

There is a possible explanation as to why the first tenement is described collectively as *ruinous* as well as *rollesse*. It is perhaps significant that as these two tenements (and a third also) are in Ann's name and not in John's. He might not have been able to manage effectively the whole of the tenement; Hassidg Hill being at the far west of the manor and Telsfords Feild being in the adjacent manor of Tellisford to the east of the manor. Butt Close, which is to the rear of High Street (South Street in 1638)⁹, had originally been part of a Saxon field and therefore cultivated. Late, in the thirteenth century, when burgage plots were newly laid out within the same Saxon field Butt Close had been incorporated into one of the tenements. My conjecture is that in 1638 it was certainly not a *rough lease*, but being very close to Ann's house was probably the best looked-after plot of hers. It is interesting to know, not only that 'the owtlett on the backside of his dwelling house' is still there, but also that Butts Close still does not have a house built on it.

With regard to the second description – 'land not having a house, but without indicating its condition'. The four 18th century advertisements quoted¹⁰, I believe, fully justified the description I gave. Then, as now, if land was advertised for sale, buildings were mentioned if they stood on the land. The term *roveless* or *roofless* in the advertisements only described a tenement that did not have a house. To describe the quality or condition of the tenement an additional description was required. Of the five *roveless* or *roofless* advertised properties one had the additional description of 'in good condition',

another had 'of good arable, meadow and pasture, capable of great improvement' added to entice potential purchasers. That is not to say that the other three properties were 'rough pasture'.

Thus, notwithstanding the original Old English meaning of 'rough lease' or 'rough pasture', as time progressed *roveless* took on an entirely different adjectival meaning of 'roofless' when applied to a property. Finally, I should add that I have noted the following variants: *rollesse*, *rofflesse*, *roofless*, *rooflesse*, *roughlease*, *roughless*, *roveles*, *roveless*, *rovelesse*, *rowlease*, *rowless*.

1 *SDNQ*, XXIV, 278.

2 *Notes and Queries* (Third Series), vol. Seventh, January-June 1865, pp.276-7.

3 G.E.Dartnell and E.H. Goddard, *A Glossary of Words used in the County of Wiltshire*, (London), 1893.

4 *SDNQ*, XXVIII, 41-2. Re. 'overland', Collinson in *The History of Somersetshire*, Vol. iii 233, gave the following, 'The Overland is that whereon in ancient time there were no dwellings, and is held by a fine and rent certain and fealty, but the tenants thereof pay no heriots, and do no other customs, suit, or service, for the same.'

5 *SDNQ*, XXXIII, 430-1.

6 The Lord Hylton, *Notes on the History of the Parish of Kilmersdon*, (Taunton), 1910.

7 I have abbreviated 'acres' to 'a.' and 'perches' to 'p.'

8 SRO DD/RG 36, quoted in *SDNQ*, XXXIV, 297.

9 OS. ST77535585

10 *SDNQ*, XXXIV, 423.

COLIN BRETT

DISSATISFIED TENANTS. A letter in the archives of the Bishops of Winchester, at Hampshire County Record Office, written by P.A. Hancott gives a strong view as to the feelings concerning the appointment of a new gamekeeper for the manor of Taunton Deane in 1819.¹

Dear Sir

The Bishop of Winchester as Lord of the Manor of Taunton has a right to appoint a Gamekeeper of that Manor. The Right of appointment is given to the Lords of Manors, as such, by statute, and the Bishop or his Predecessors in the See not having made an appointment hitherto does not take away the right. He may therefore now appoint whoever and whomever he pleases.

Mr Beadon² states that the appointment will give great dissatisfaction to the Tenants. This is a question of policy, and not of right.

The dissatisfaction of the Tenants to the exercise of a just right does not seem to me worthy of consideration; except that it may induce the Bishop to appoint only a person of respectability, and one who is interested by his situation to protect and preserve the game. Coll. Cooper seems to be a person fully answering that description.

The author goes on to mention that 'I have lamented that the customs and privileges and also the rights of the Lord should have been so much neglected', and discusses the difficulties on collecting rents. This document clearly illustrates the problems faced by the Bishop as an absentee landlord and only three years later the manor was sold to Thomas Southwood of Pitminster, retaining only a claim to 'mines and minerals'.³

1. H.R.O. 11M59/BP/E/B81.

2. Beadon at this time was deputy clerk to Brownlow North esquire.

3. T. Mayberry, *The Vale of Taunton Past* (Phillimore, 1998), p.97.

ADRIAN J. WEBB

GROUNDING PICKS. Against the headword *groun'* in Barnes's *Glossary* we find the information that *to groun' a pick* is 'to put the end of its stem on the ground, as a bearing in raising a pitch of hay'.¹ This will perhaps satisfy students of old-fashioned haymaking techniques, but for anyone interested in the rules and conventions governing them there is a little more to be said. Barnes himself points us in the right direction in his 'Eclogue: The Best Man in the Vield'. Here, two rival haymakers, Sam and Bob, express contempt for each other in no uncertain terms, each describing the other's alleged shortcomings. Thus, in verse 5, Bob to Sam: 'What dosten mind/ Thy pitchen to me out in Gully-plot/.../An' how didst groun' thy pick? an' how didst quirk ['grunt', 'wheeze']/To get en up on end?'²

As Barnes himself tells us, having first explained the expression to *ground the pick* in words slightly different from those just quoted from the *Glossary*: 'Young men, proud of their strength, would scorn such a mechanical aid.'³ Indeed, in some counties such a breach of punctilio as grounding the pick could lead to a fine. Thus, in Gloucestershire *to ground the shuppick* ('pitchfork'), that is, to put the end of the *stael* ('handle') on the ground in order to raise the pitch of hay or corn, incurred the penalty of a quart of beer: 'A quart! Thee's grounded un!'⁴

The question is not merely whether such penalties were current in Dorset, but also whether a more rigorous code is known to have existed, enforcing discipline within a band of haymakers or harvester. In parts of the Midlands, for instance, a lad who had committed some misdemeanour such as

overthrowing a load during harvest time was *booted* or *given the boot*. In other words, he was laid face downwards on a flat surface and hit with the leg part of a long boot. The punishment was also known as far south as St Mary Bourne near Andover in Hampshire.⁵ For Wiltshire, we have an account provided about the middle of the nineteenth century by an old lady who was nearly ninety at the time. She said that if, during the harvest, a load was thrown down, the person through whose fault this happened was booted at the harvest-home supper. This meant that, after the cloth was removed, he was taken and laid on the table face downwards. Then, the head carter, having procured one of his master's boots, took hold of it by the foot end, and gave the delinquent three blows with the top end of it, 'in a manner more calculated to injure his honour than his bones'.⁶

The use of one of the master's boots is significant here. As Bushaway points out, in such instances discipline was administered on behalf of the master, as is shown by the use of his boot, by a representative acting independently of him. That representative was the workers' leader, often elected by them. It was the workers' own interest to function as a disciplined, self-regulating team under his authority, not in order to underpin the power of the landowner, but in effect to safeguard their own employment and rewards.⁷

1 William Barnes, *A Glossary of the Dorset Dialect with a Grammar* (1886; rpt. St. Peter Port, 1970), p. 67.

2 *The Poems of William Barnes*, ed. Bernard Jones (London, 1962), 1, 117-19.

3 *Ibid.*, Notes, p. x.

4 Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905; rpt. London, 1970), 2, 742. Wright's informant here appears to have been Sydney Savory Buckman, born in 1860 at Cirencester.

5 *Ibid.*, 1, 344; Bob Bushaway, *Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880* (London, 1982), pp. 116-17.

6 F. A. Carrington, 'Ancient Wiltshire Customs,' *The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, 1 (1854), 87.

7 Bushaway, *op. cit.*, pp. 115 ff.

J. B. SMITH

CASTLE NEROCHE. This charming account of a visit by pony chaise to Castle Neroche was written by Eleanor Clark, a daughter of James Clark, one of the founders of C. & J. Clark, the shoemaking firm of Street. She was accompanied by her brother James. It appeared in the Street Village Album, a manuscript compilation, volume 31, 1878-79.

... We had climbed up, up, up, mile after mile from Chard, so coming to a lovely down covered with purple heath and ling and the golden gorse and potentillas and other heath flowers. We got out, tied Bob to a gate and roamed about a bit looking for the castle unsuccessfully. So we drove on still peering about and the master getting out now and then to look over the gate for the castle which we began to fear might turn out to be a myth till we passed another village on our left and came to another hill, higher yet.

Fortunately, seeing some people about we asked them was this Buckland Hill or Down. "Oh, Buckland Hill, there be no Buckland Down". "Is there any castle near here?" "No there is not". "No place people come to see?" "Oh" said another man standing by, "perhaps you do mean the Biggan – we don't know much about it here, but you must go on and take the next turn to the right and you'll find someone to tell ee". So we went on to the next turn where was a neat pretty cottage and a nice old woman at the door who was able to direct us on further. We told her she seemed to have a nice healthy place there. "Yes", she said, "rather too much so in winter".

After passing another cottage where we gained more information, we at last reached the gate leading into Castle Neroche itself. We first drove along the edge of a deep cleft where we looked down on the vale below, through very tall trees, thickly planted up the bank. The path led onto a mill but was too rough to follow and we retraced our steps and, driving a short way, still among trees, came to a clear space and a cottage around which, as well as a much larger space, were extensive earthworks and close by was a high artificial mound surrounded by trees. This James climbed and found at the top a large flat space, but no ruins, although it gave him the idea that a castle might have stood there in former days, an idea that the Norman sounding name seemed to justify.

By his aneroid he found the point is 800 ft. above sea level and it commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country, the finest we had ever seen in Somerset, One side sloped steeply down, apparently as Nature formed it, but on the others it is flanked by deep trenches and earthworks connecting it with the rest of the fortifications ... the area within the ramparts is divided into three parts, the largest which we entered first evidently meant for cattle, the second for the inhabitants of the adjacent country to shelter in in the time of war and the third, the smallest and strongest, the citadel still further strengthened by the fortifications of the Beacon lying outside. The place was so interesting we were loath to leave it ...

MICHAEL McGARVIE

QUERIES

NORTH PERROTT COFFIN STOOLS. Sir Mervyn Medlycott has discovered in the vestry at North Perrott church a pair of 17th century style oak coffin stools, which are both inscribed on their tops 'np / Anthony Slade / Church Warden / 1734'. Their purchase is recorded in the churchwardens' accounts:¹

At a Vestry held in ye Parish Church North Perrott in ye County of Somersett the 23^d day of May 1733, it is agreed by whose names are underwritten yt ye Church Warden doe provide . . . 2 stools for ye bearing up of corps An account of what may have been laid out by Anthony Slade in the church for the yare 1733 5th Novembr pd. Mr: Porsey for 2 joint stooles – 00 – 10 – 0

There is no other reference to this Mr. Porsey anywhere else in the North Perrott churchwardens accounts between 1725 and 1738, nor was he listed as a church rate payer in 1735. He is presumably the 'np' whose initials are inscribed on the stools. The surname is quite clearly written as Porsey and not Horsey or Porley. Perhaps it might be a misspelling for Pawsey. Has anybody come across a joiner of this name in the Crewkerne area?

1. S.R.O. D/P/per 4/1/1.

THE 'LOCK-UP' AT POOLE. David Lunn of Lower Broadwood, High Bickington, Umberleigh, Devon EX37 9BE, has been told that a member of his family possibly someone with the surname Gibbs, was one of the last people to be detained in the lock-up in Sarum Street, Poole. 'This may have been during an election.' Does anyone have any further information, or know when the lock-up was last used?

The Borough Archivist at Poole has no record of this, and doubts that any record of names and dates was kept. The lock-up actually forms part of the present museum of local history in Poole, and it is a small store-room in which there would not even be enough space for someone to lie down. The main cell for prisoners was in King St. (*Dorset Ed.*)

Geoffrey Hayward, a contributor to this journal, has come across an interesting entry in the parish register of Sturminster Newton, for 12 July, 1816. Among the burials is Henry Thorne, a cooper aged 29, and among the baptisms for that same date,

Mary Ann Thorne, daughter of Henry and Mary Thorne. This is a remarkable coincidence. Mr. Hayward of 195 Sandbanks Rd, Poole, BH14 8EJ wonders whether anyone can shed some light on this.

HOLCROPPER. Frances Neale and Hazel Hudson, c/o Mellifont Abbey Barn, Wookey, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1JZ write in with the following query. In a court roll of Bempstone hundred in 1528¹, Joane wife of William Browynyng of Sonde [Sand, in Wedmore] is fined 3d for stealing a piece of woollen cloth (*pannus lanuti*). Joan is then described as a woman not of good standing, of depraved condition and suspected *vinent*² and also a common *holcropper* to the grave detriment of the neighbours dwelling there, against the peace of the lord King. For this she is fined another 3d. Can anyone suggest the meaning of *vinent*² (or *vinenc*²) and *holcropper*? The court clerk had to lapse into English for the second term, suggesting it might be a local dialect word. We have failed to find anything resembling them in any Latin dictionary or in any of the dictionaries of provincial or dialect English. The only word with any resemblance to *holcropper* in the complete OED is *holour* and variants, an obsolete medieval word for a whoremonger. The court is dealing with secular offences, so that misdeeds seem more likely than witchcraft or immorality. Are they terms too rustic and rude to have made the dictionaries?

In *Somerset words: a dialect word-list particularly relating to agriculture and natural history* by James Skeggs (privately issued in 2000) he gives the following entry: **hole-creeper** sneaking thief. Although no source is given, further particulars of this word-list can be had from the author at Park Bridge Cottage, West Buckland, Nr. Wellington, Somerset, TA21 9LA.

¹ Lambeth ED 226.

A.J.W.

BURYING PLACES FOR SUICIDES. To Dr. Davies' list of 'Grave' place-names one could add Popham's Grave, a field-name right on the parish boundary between Wedmore and Allerton, and West's Grave Batch, Wookey, at a hill-crest cross-roads between Wookey and Fenny Castle, both in Somerset. Popham's Grave can be documented from 1809, with Popham's Batch and Hedge nearby from 1747; West's or Wester's Grave

only from the 19th century. There may well be many more; it would be interesting to collect a big enough sample to form some conclusions about their dating and whether they do record the burial of suicides.

FRANCES NEALE

When opening a new Churchwardens' book for Worth Matravers in 1722, each Churchwarden, to mark the occasion, made a separate entry on the first page. One man wrote a short religious poem which he had written, but another – perhaps at odds with his fellow parishioners – decided to include a text from Matthew 21, verse 13:

It is Written my House shall be called
The House of Prayer for all people but ye
Have made it a Den of Theeves.

(Dorset Editor)

LESLIE BROOKE (1915-2004)

We regret to announce the death of Leslie Brooke, the well known local historian, artist and lecturer. He served on the committee from 1985 to 2001, and for many years gave valuable service as an indexer of our volumes.

A full obituary appeared in the 'Western Gazette', 11 December, 2003.

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