
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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Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset

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38. SPEEDING THISTLES? CONUNDRUMS FOR INCOMERS.

Anyone inclined to the view that proverbialisms are unambiguous, immutable vehicles of simple truths might care to take a look at *to spoil the ship for a penn'orth of tar*. Early variants of this have *hog* instead of *ship*, as in Camden's version of 1623: 'A man will not lose a hog, for a halfepert of tarre.' But what precisely is a hog? Besides referring to pigs, we discover, the word can mean a young sheep before its first shearing, as when Hardy tells us in chapter twenty-two of *Far from the Madding Crowd* that, having dealt with the older sheep, shearers 'were proceeding with the shearlings ['once-sheared yearlings'] and hogs'. That being so, we ought not to be surprised if some variants of our proverb mention sheep rather than hogs, the two being roughly the same in sense. The question remains, however, as to how a sheep alias hog could have become a ship. The answer, as explained in *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* is that over a great part of England 'ship' was a dialectal pronunciation of sheep. We thus have to accept that the original reference of the proverb was to the use of tar in treating sheep for parasites.¹

Since the long vowel of SE (Standard English) *sheep* was represented in many dialects, including south-western ones, by the corresponding short one, we have to ask whether this points to a dialectal deficit. That is, do some dialects lack the long vowel of SE *sheep*, thus being forced to use the short one of *ship*, even for instance when the context is agricultural rather than nautical? At this point, generally restricting our inquiries for the sake of brevity to the dialect of west Somerset and adjacent areas, we have to state that there is no such deficit. At the same time we observe that, though west Somerset has both the long and the short vowel, they are not necessarily deployed as in SE. Taking the short vowel first, we find it used according to Elworthy in, for instance, *wil* and *wik* where SE has *wheel* and *week*. On the other hand, to give but a few examples, SE *bid*, *if* and *hinge* are in west Somerset *beed*, *eef* and *eenj*. Sometimes it would even appear that in a pair of words distinguished only by short vowel and long vowel respectively that word which in SE has the short has the long in dialect, and vice versa. Thus, according to Elworthy, the SE noun *steel* is *stil*, while the SE adverb *still* is *steel*.²

So far our concern has been with the archaic speech of west Somerset and adjoining areas as described by Elworthy in the late nineteenth century. To what extent, though, have the features

in question lingered on? Seeking relevant information in recent literature, we shall not be disappointed in the matter of *i* for *ee*. In his *Wessex Dialect*, for instance, Norman Rogers, referring perhaps to his home area of west Wiltshire in particular, tells us that SE *ee* is represented by *i* in *leek*, so that this, unlike *leak*, sounds like *lick*. Similarly short are for instance *keep*, *week*, *needle*, *sheep*, but also *seed* as the weak past tense of *to see*.³ Wakelin for his part presents a similar picture, stating that 'in the SW area' shortening is sometimes found before a final voiceless consonant, as in *sheep* and *week*, but also in *needle* and *seed* meaning 'seen'.⁴ As for Upton and Widdowson, drawing on the mid twentieth-century *Survey of English Dialects*, they have produced a map showing *ship* for *sheep* in a belt extending from the West Midlands eastwards into East Anglia and including much of Wiltshire. In southern England, only the south of Sussex and the south of Devon are shown to have *ship*.⁵ No doubt these are relic areas. West Somerset for instance had a short vowel in the nineteenth century, if not later.⁶

We now concern ourselves with *ee* for SE *i*, a phenomenon that since being recorded by Elworthy⁷ and Wright⁸ seems to have attracted little attention. Although he exploits a wide range of material, Wakelin comes up with only one item with *ee* for *i*, though in a number of texts it is *een* for SE *in*. Because he does not see this *een* in the context of other words with *ee* for *i*, Wakelin seems to regard it merely as a variant of *in*, and not as an independent and original form gradually being eroded and replaced by the SE form. Needless to say, however, the information provided by Wakelin is invaluable, not least because the source of his most far-flung examples of *een* (or similar) for *in* is the *Survey of English Dialects*. The result is that we gain a useful impression of the extent of *ee* for *i* in the mid twentieth century. According to Wakelin, the easternmost example is from the village of Portesham, which lies six miles to the south-west of Dorchester. Farther west we have occurrences from South Molton on the south-western corner of Exmoor and, some eighteen miles to the south, from Spreyton close to the northern edge of Dartmoor.⁹ We note that, though Wakelin's examples indicate distribution through much of Devon and into south-west Dorset, none comes from Somerset. Moreover, there seems to be little or no recent published material from Somerset with which to fill the gap. The evidence for Devon is better. Over and above

Wakelin's examples, a useful indication of the feature's survival in the western part of the county is for instance a work by John Germon, a native and resident of Ashburton on the south-eastern corner of Dartmoor, with forms such as *deesh* for *dish* and *veesh* for *fish*.¹⁰ As for south-east Devon, perusal of a no less recent volume by Derrick Rugg of Ottery St Mary provides us with *meels* for *mills*, *skeens* for *skins*, *teen* 'at for *tin hat*, and *cheen* for *chin*, to name but a few examples.¹¹

My gist will be clear: although Elworthy's work, valid for east Devon as well as west Somerset, provides copious nineteenth-century examples of *ee* for SE *i*, recent published evidence of *ee* for *i* in any part of Somerset seems non-existent. For Dorset my only example is the above-mentioned Portesham one provided by Wakelin. If readers of this note could help remedy the deficiency, either from their reading or from first-hand experience of Somerset and Dorset speech, that would be a useful and much appreciated step in the right direction. In the meantime, I submit a couple of my own observations, the first of which dates back to my early days in Bath some decades ago, when a conversation about a *sill* was taken by me to refer to a *seal* (in the sense of 'closure'). Since then I have gained the impression, whether right or wrong, that the reverse obtains, so that *to seal* (in the sense 'to form a closure') is *to sill*. Confirmation or otherwise would be helpful

My next examples have to do with thistles. Some forty years ago, an excellent elderly informant from Churchingford in the Blackdowns, whose speech abounded in *eel* for *hill*, *een* for *in*, *veesh* for *fish*, *ween* for *wind* and the like, was telling me of his experiences 'scheming' thistles. At least, that is what I understood. In fact the subject was the *skimming* of thistles, to *skim*¹² being pronounced with a long vowel and used in the sense of 'to mow tufts of coarse grass or weeds'. I find an entry with an appropriate spelling in an MS list of Devonshire words, where *skeeming* is defined as 'scything off weed heads in permanent pasture'.¹³ The matter is clinched by Derrick Rugg: he tells of a farmer who spent more than a little time '*skeemin*' off dieshels and docks' with his scythe.¹⁴

We continue with a rhyme containing information on which months are traditionally considered best for dealing with thistles:

Speed them in May
 They are up next day.
 Speed them in June
 They come again soon.
 Speed them in July
 Then they soon will die.

In the journal to which it was contributed, the rhyme was said to be about thistle-cutting.¹⁵ However, a later issue of the same journal has the dialect verb *to speed* in an item contributed by an informant from Chittlehampton. It is glossed 'to dig', and is followed by a very apposite editorial query as to whether *speed* is 'from "spit" by vowel shift and the common [south-western] substitution of "d" for "t"'.¹⁶ Certainly *to spit*, like its Old English predecessor *spittan*, means 'to dig'. We also find that in Devon, but also Dorset, Somerset and adjoining counties, a spitter was in the nineteenth century, and perhaps still is, a tool for digging out weeds such as docks and thistles, while on the Isle of Wight an instrument for the rooting-up of thistles was known as a *thistle-spitter*.¹⁷

While noting that *to speed* in the sense of 'to dig' apparently has a long vowel in part at least of Devon, we see that Elworthy gives what must be the same verb, namely *to spit*, a short vowel.¹⁸ In the absence of further evidence, we have to assume that long and short are distributed differently in different dialects within the same region. Needless to say, other queries arise, such as why Elworthy, while giving *beech* for SE *bitch*, presents the same word with a short vowel in *bitch-fox* and *son of a bitch*.¹⁹ Note also that *mill* according to Elworthy has a long vowel in the dialect, while *millerd* for 'miller' has a short in its first syllable, perhaps conditioned by the presence of a second syllable in the same word.²⁰ The same argument could be adduced for *bitch-fox*, but not for *son of a bitch*. Perhaps it is this sort of consideration that led Wright to state that *monosyllables* (my emphasis) with SE *i* often have *ee* in west Somerset and east Devon.²¹ He is, however, given the lie by many of Elworthy's items, examples being *keecheen* for *kitchen*, *keendlee* meaning 'to whelp', and *peendee* meaning 'musty'.²² Compare also, in Elworthy's transcriptions of texts, his consistent rendering of the SE suffix *-ing* as *-een*, as in *kauleen* for SE *calling* and *raideen* for SE *reading*.²³ Take also, say, Germon's *plancheen* for *planking* in the sense of 'floorboards', or Rugg's

eencome for *income*, and *eenterest* for *interest*.²⁴

With such polysyllables containing *ee* may be compared the spellings *parrafeen* (sic!) for SE *paraffin* and *eenvitation* for SE *invitation* in a dialect work we have not mentioned so far. It is *Wold Ways A-Gwain*, published in 1914 by John Read of Podimore, a village some five miles to the north of Yeovil in south-east Somerset.²⁵ Though far from providing recent evidence to match the contemporary Devonshire material found in Germon and Rugg, this can give us a useful impression of the vernacular as spoken a century ago in a corner of Somerset remote from Elworthy's and quite close to Dorset. In other words, like Elworthy's work it can serve as a foundation for present-day observations. Unfortunately, the spellings just given are the only explicit evidence of *ee* for *i* in the body of Read's work, so far as I have been able to ascertain. On the other hand, there are indications elsewhere in that work that words such as *in*, *mill*, *pin*, *wit*, though spelt thus, are meant to be pronounced with *ee*.²⁶

1. F. P. Wilson, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, 3rd edn. (London: Oxford, Clarendon, 1970), p. 723.
2. See Frederic Thomas Elworthy, *The West Somerset Word-Book* (London: Trübner, 1880), p. xv and relevant headwords.
3. Norman Rogers, *Wessex Dialect* (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker, 1979), p. 19.
4. Martyn F. Wakelin, *The Southwest of England, Varieties of English around the World*, Text Series, vol. 5 (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1986), p. 25.
5. Clive Upton and J. D. A. Widdowson, *An Atlas of English Dialects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 22-23.
6. See Elworthy, *op. cit.* p. 663, where we read of *sheep* that 'the *ee* in that word is as short as it can be'.
7. *Ibid.*, p. xv.
8. Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 19, para. 67.
9. See Wakelin, *op. cit.*, p. 21 and the relevant texts.
10. John Germon, '*Zee 'ee Dreckly*' (Chudleigh: Orchard, 1995), pp. 13 and 32.
11. Derrick V. Rugg, *Ditties vrum Devon* (Ottery St Mary: Derrick V. Rugg, n.d.) pp. 24, 25, 43, 47.
12. Cf. Wright, *op. cit.*, 5, 474, where *skim*, 'to mow tufts of coarse grass,' is cited for Shropshire, Dorset and west Somerset, but always with *i* rather than *ee*. In fact Elworthy, *op. cit.*, p. 673, uses *ee*, thus indicating a long vowel.
13. Murray Laver, 'A Devonshire Word-List' (MS, 1990), 5, 40.
14. Rugg, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
15. Gillian F. Moore, '71st Report on Dialect', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association* (= TDA), 100 (1968), 369; cf. Roy Vickery, *A Dictionary of Plant-Lore* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 369; J. B. Smith, '98th Report on Folklore', TDA, 139 (2007), 420-21.
16. F. J. M. Laver, '91st Report on Dialect', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 122 (1990), 237. Cf. double-spide with final *d* for Steeple Ashton in Wiltshire and, for Weare Gifford in Devon, spit with a long vowel, namely [e:], in Harold Orton and Martyn F. Wakelin, *Survey of English Dialects* (Leeds: Arnold, 1967), under I.7.8, 'to dig'.
17. Wright, *op. cit.*, 5, 670-71 and 6, 96.
18. Elworthy, *op. cit.*, p. 701, where we find a similarly short (and centralized) sound

for the first vowel of *spitter*, 'a tool like a chisel, with a long handle, used for weeding'.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. xv, 68 and 694 respectively, the last two again with a centralized vowel.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 477. Once again the first vowel is centralized as well as short.
21. See note 8 above.
22. See relevant headwords in Elworthy, *op. cit.*
23. Frederic Thomas Elworthy, *An Outline of the Grammar of the Dialect of West Somerset* (London: Trübner, 1877), 'Dialect Specimens', p. 97 and pp. 96-111 *passim*.
24. Germon, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Rugg, *op. cit.*, pp. 32 and 48.
25. John Read, *Wold Ways A-Gwain* (Yeovil: Western Gazette, 1914), pp. 139 and 165.
26. *Ibid.* See key to vowel sounds, p. 177 and relevant entries in glossary, pp. 178-89.

J. B. SMITH

39. A SOMERSET BODY SNATCHER. If the question were asked, "what is the link between Tom Jones, Little Britain and the parish of Durleigh?" it might well raise a few eyebrows and cause a certain amount of head scratching amongst local historians. A brief pencilled remark in the Durleigh parish register gives one clue to a most sinister series of events. Underneath an entry marked Martin (*sic*) Watkins dated 3 Feb. 1829, 77 years old, are the words 'stolen from her grave'.

In 18th and 19th century Britain human bodies were in great demand amongst the medical profession.¹ This demand was largely satisfied by a regular stream of executed criminals. An early, rather amusing story of one such criminal is reported in the *Norris's Taunton Journal* of 20 April 1727. It tells of a criminal by the name of Thomas Brown who had recently been executed. He subsequently suffered the indignity of being transported in a bag on the back of a horse from 'Ivelchester' to Dunster for dissection. A suspicious tide waiter at Watchet, believing he had discovered some contraband demanded that the sack be opened. The mischievous rider of the horse, clearly upset by such an accusation must have given no indication of the sack's contents. The shock of opening the sack and finding the gruesome remains caused the tide waiter to pass out, and if the reporter of the event is to be believed, it almost killed him!

By the 1820s the number of executed criminals available for dissection fell far short of the ever growing demand. Many unscrupulous surgeons were only too willing to pay high prices, with no questions asked as to the origin of any bodies which came into their possession. In an age when a large proportion of the

population lived hand to mouth, the temptation of a substantial financial reward was far too great. Consequently, body snatching proved a lucrative supplement to the income of anyone with a strong stomach and an appetite for night time work.

Shortly after Mrs Watkins of Silver Street, Bridgwater was buried at Durleigh her family had an inkling that something was amiss. Perhaps it was the disturbed earth around her grave, or possibly whisperings circulated the district telling of a shadowy figure seen leaving the graveyard late at night. Suspicions were strong enough for the grave to be reopened and sure enough, the body had vanished. Two events which unfolded over the next month made it clear that the removal of Mrs Watkins's body was not an isolated incident.

On the 18th February a basket destined for London was left at the Castle and Falcon ready to be collected. The 'pick up' must have been delayed and consequently, after some days an offensive smell began to emanate from the basket. The coach firm's office keeper took it upon himself to open the basket. To his astonishment, he found the remains of a male child about four years of age. This prompted an investigation of recent burials in the surrounding villages. It was discovered that five bodies had been recently disinterred.

A second revelation was soon to follow. On the 28th day of the same month a basket was delivered to the George Inn to be forwarded by coach to London. Mr Sutton, the landlord, was concerned that the basket might contain some valuable property. He therefore had the basket moved from the courtyard to a safer place. In so doing part of the basket tore open. One of the men assisting in moving the basket placed his hand into the hole and to his surprise found himself holding a human foot! On further examination the basket was found to hold the body of a lady by the name of Bryer. She had died during childbirth and been buried in Cannington churchyard.

An inquiry was made as to who had brought the basket to the Inn. Edward Barber, known locally as 'Nimrod' had brought it from the White Horse Inn. Further investigation showed that the basket had been left at the White Horse by Thomas Jones of Durleigh. He had apparently persuaded a man named Channing to transport the basket in his cart to the Malt Shovel Inn and from there he had carried the basket to the White Horse Inn.

Two constables were dispatched to Jones's home, but by the time they arrived the bird had flown. A question mark hung over Barber's involvement and he was committed to gaol pending further enquiries. The basket had been addressed to Mr J. Jones, Mr Hall, 41 Duke Street, Little Britain, London.² What became of Thomas Jones remains a mystery. There is no record of him being incarcerated in Wilton Gaol and so it is quite probable that he was never caught. Perhaps his ill-gotten gains bought him a better life in a distant town.

Some months later when a giant by the name of Sewell was transported to Taunton from Swansea for burial, the Durleigh case must have still been fresh in the memory of local folk. So many offers were made to Farnham, Sewell's assistant, to purchase the giant's body that great care was taken with the burial. Quick lime was thrown into the grave, and the 'best expedients adopted to accomplish the wishes of the deceased, regarding the security of his remains'.³

It is quite possible that the spate of grave robbing around Bridgwater was just the tip of a much larger iceberg. How many other grave robberies occurred in the area without ever being discovered we may never know.

1. Dissection of dead human bodies had been legalised in 1540 Henry VIII (ex inf Somerset editor).

2. *Taunton Courier* 4 March, 18 March 1829.

3. *Taunton Courier* 15 July 1829.

PAUL MANSFIELD

40. NORTH CURRY, THE PLAGUE AND TAUNTON ASSIZES, 1646/7. The survival of the petition of Ann Hawkins widow, presented on 22 March 1646/7 to the assizes held at Taunton Castle, is a fortunate one for several reasons. Firstly, the case referred to does not appear in the orders enrolled in the Assize order books compiled at the time and published by the Somerset Record Society in 1971.¹ Secondly, the two volumes edited and published in one appear to be complete, covering the assizes held at Taunton on 28 August 1646, 22 March 1646/7 and 6 October 1647 when John Godbolt, Justice of the Common Pleas presided.² Thirdly, the survival of this petition amongst manorial papers relating to the hundred of Taunton Deane is surprising because it was not in the jurisdiction of the bailiwick of Taunton and a substantial number of similar documents have not survived

because of water damage whilst they were in Taunton Castle.

The content of the document is typical of events from the 1640s. The mention of the plague would have come as little surprise as in 1640 charitable benevolences were collected at Wells on behalf of the borough of Taunton, as it was infected with the 'contagion of the plague' and a similar fate occurred again at the time this document was drawn up, as well as at many other places in the county.³ Having survived the plague it was a sad state of affairs Anne found herself in, especially after leaving her own family to give her help to others, at the end of the which saw her receive no remuneration for her trouble, only to be faced with a lawsuit to recover what was allegedly owed to her.

Of those involved in the case the clerk of the Western Circuit, Francis Swanton, or one of the associated clerks,⁴ presumably never received this petition back after it had passed through Godbolt's hands. Godbolt added his instruction and the petition was given to the three local justices of the peace, or referees. If it was never returned to the clerk this would explain why the matter was not included in the order books. Perhaps it was left at Taunton Castle for the assizes held on the 6 October 1647 but overlooked and not enrolled on this occasion. Godbolt only appeared on the Western Circuit for a short time between 1646 and 1648 when he died in London, whereas Henry Rolle appeared intermittently from 1646 until 1655, only ceasing in that year when he was captured at Salisbury by the Penruddock rebels.⁵ Of the three justices John Pyne (c.1600-1678) had the most colourful of careers, serving as an M.P. for Poole, Dorset, appeared against Penruddock and his rebels in 1655, headed an extreme parliamentarian faction in Somerset but took the oath of allegiance at the Restoration. Surprisingly the year of this petition was also the first year both Pyne and Newton served as justices of the peace, whereas Jennings (of Curry Rivel) had served as a justice under Charles I.⁶

To the right honorable⁷ the Judges of Assize⁸ of the County of Somerset.

The humble petition of Anne Hawkins widdow the late wife of John Hawkins.

Sheweth to your honor.

That one Richard Foster of the parish of North Curry dyed in the plague [sic] and contagious sicknes, had at the tyme of death due unto hime (uppon specialtie) from one Nicholas Fevian of the parish aforesaid the somme of tenne pounds, or thereabout and from Thomas Curry, and Robert Curry, of

the same parish the somme of three pounds or thereabout, all which money after his death by the lawe, belonged to one John Foster, uncle of the said Richard, which said John and Julian his wife presently after the death of the said Richard, fell sicke likewise in the same infectious sicknes, and in the tyme of their extreame sicknes, the said John Foster desired that your petitioner would attend them in their misery, and if that hee and his wife dyed hee would give to your petitioner all the goods that hee had, or was in the howse; and according to his desire your petitioner forsooke her owne husband and children, to attend the said John and Julian his wife, which said Julian and John shortlie after dyed, and your petitioner found thaforesaid bonds in the howse, whereof John Fevyn brother of the said Nicholas, understanding, came very cunningly unto your petitioner hee being neere of kynn unto her desiring to see the said bonds wherein his brother stood bound, promising either the bonds againe, or the money, and your poore petitioner being a very silly woman her husband being then dead in the same house, showed the bonds to the said John Fevyan, who refuseth to deliver them againe, or paye the money, likewise thaforesaid Thomas Curry refuseth to pay the money, due from him, though your petitioner hath approved the last wil and testament of the said John Foster.

May it therefore please your honor in regard your petitioner is a very poore impotent women, and unable to sue for her right by lawe, yt your honnor would be pleased to take her cause into consideration, and to order that John Pyne Marmaduke Jennings and John Newton Esquire, or any two of them may have the heering thereof and to certify your honor of the trueth.

And your petitioner shall ever pray &c.

[*Marginated*] 23 March 1646.

[*Annotated by the serjeant*] I desire the 3 referrees abovenamed or any 2 of them to call the parties before them and to end the matter if they can [*signed*] Jo. Godbold.

[*Endorsed*]

Aprill the 6th 1647

uppon the examination of this businesse before us, we findinge by the confession of John Fivian that there twoe bonds belonginge by guift unto the Petitioner An Hawkins widow the one bond the principall debt due from Nicholas Fivian beinge 4*li.* and one bond due from John Trott deceased the summe of 5*li.* for which sayde summe the sayde Nicholas Fivian stood bound for as a surity, which twoe bonds the sayde John Fivian confesseth he burned, and in regard John Fivian furnished the petitioner with money and goods to the value of 20*s.* or upwards as is alleadged it is therefore thought fitt that the above bounden Nicholas Fivian doe forthwith pay the sume of seaven pounds unto the overseers of the poore of North Currye, to the end they may employ the sayde 7*li.* for the best advantage and benefitt of the Petitioner and placeinge abroad and releevinge her poor children that neither of them may become a charge to the sayde parish and whereas it is confessed before us by Thomas Currye that he oweth 3*li.* on bond beinge parcell of a debt given to the petitioner it is by us thought that the sayde Thomas Curry doe pay the sayde 3*li.* unto Steven Light for the petitioners use whereuppon

she is to deliver him his bond.

[Signed] John Pyne, John Newton, Marmar: Jennings.

August the 30th 1647.

We humbly certifie that accordinge unto your Honors reference we find two bonds (confessed to be burned) amountinge to the summe of nine pound, we thereuppon made the order hereunto annexed which Nicholas Fivian refuseth to perform, and in regard it concerns poore fatherless children and that they be not chargeable unto the parish, we humbly desire your Honors opinion in Law whether or noe we may not bind Fivin unto the next Generall Session and there by order of the bench to compell Fivin to pay the overseers of the poore the seaven pound accordinge unto our order for the plassing out the poor children and servinge the parish of the charge.

[Signed] John Pyne, John Newton, Marmar: Jennings.

The petition hath noe remedy but in equity.⁹

1. J.S. Cockburn, ed., *Somerset Assize Orders 1640-1659*, SRS 71 (1971).
2. Ibid, xi.
3. Ibid, 12; SRO, DD/SAS/ C795/SE/28; ibid, Q/SPET/1/131. Numerous other references can be found in court and parochial records.
4. Cockburn, *Somerset Assize Orders*, xiv-xvi.
5. Ibid, xiv; D. Ibbetson, 'Godbolt, John (bap. 1583?, d. 1648)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10852, accessed 22 Sept 2007].
6. D. Underdown, 'Pyne, John (bap. 1600, d. 1678)', rev., *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37873, accessed 22 Sept 2007]; Cockburn ed. *Somerset Assize Orders*, 1; E.H. Bates Harbin ed. Quarter Sessions records for the county of Somerset, vol. II 1625-1639, SRS 24 (1908), xix.
7. *Henry Rolle one of the Justices of his Majesties Corte of Kings bench and one of* has been crossed through.
8. Taunton Assizes were held 28 August 1646 and 22 March 1647 before Henry Rolle, Justice of the King's Bench, and Serjeant John Godbolt (SRS LXXI, 9, 15).
9. SRO, DD/SP 26/1.

A.J. WEBB

41. THE 'GLASTONBURY' ST. PAULINUS RELIQUARY.

Although no relic from Glastonbury Abbey's great collection can be proved conclusively to have survived the dissolution in 1539, there are three possible contenders. The relic of the Holy Thorn at Stanbrook Abbey and the relic of the True Cross at Downside Abbey are both well known, and their histories and association with Glastonbury have been published.¹ Less well known however, is the 'Glastonbury' reliquary of St. Paulinus. Part of the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society's collection, until recently it was exhibited in the Glastonbury Tribunal, but at present it is kept in storage at the Somerset County Museum in Taunton.²

The reliquary takes the form of a large oval locket or theca,³

measuring 5.8cm in height by 5.1cm in width (see figure 1). The relic of the saint, a small bone fragment, is suspended in the centre of the reliquary accompanied by two small labels or 'cedulae'⁴ for identification. Both relic and cedulae are surrounded by an oval frame of gilt metal tinsel and gilt rolled paperwork, held between two faceted glass panels.⁵ The body of the reliquary, which surrounds and secures the faceted panels, is carved from bone or ivory, the reverse side of which is discoloured. Both reverse and obverse of the frame are decorated with thirty-two small mirror backed pyramidal glass 'jewels', two of which are missing on either side. At the top of the reliquary is a threaded aperture which formerly held a metal suspension loop. It is unclear how the reliquary is constructed, but it seems likely that the frame consists of two pinned and glued sections, which join along the outer edge, a band 9mm wide which marks the circumference of the reliquary. The edge contains three small grooves or channels. The central channel is slightly wider and deeper than the two side channels and it is probable that it originally held a silk thread from which an ecclesiastic's seal of authentication was suspended.

Unfortunately, the reliquary lacks any provenance and an accompanying seal and document of authentication are absent.⁶ Although the property of the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, it did not feature in the exhibition which marked the foundation of the society in 1886,⁷ nor is it listed in the society's original catalogue of acquisitions.⁸ It has formerly been assumed that this relic had survived Glastonbury's dissolution in 1539, perhaps in the keeping of a recusant Somerset family, and that it is to be identified with a relic which John of Glastonbury recorded as gifted to the monastery by Count Aelstan: '*Ibi sunt reliquie Sancti Paulini Northanhimbrorum episcopi de dono comitis Elstani*'.⁹ Although it has been described as '... a small Tudor reliquary'¹⁰ of presumed sixteenth-century English manufacture, this attribution does not bear scrutiny.

The gilt tinsel and rolled paperwork which surround the relic, are identical to the decoration frequently met in European reliquaries produced between the late seventeenth and late nineteenth centuries.¹¹ The two cedulae enable a more precise dating. Printed on paper, they are directly comparable to labelled relics and reliquaries produced in Italy circa 1675-1775.¹² Although it could be argued that the relic was translated to its present reliquary during this period, its identification as an 'ex

ossibus'¹³ relic of 'S. Paulini m.' (St. Paulinus the Martyr) would belie this assertion, for St. Paulinus of York was not martyred. However, a number of early martyrs with the same name, e.g. St. Paulinus of Antioch (relics at Lucca)¹⁴ and SS. Felicissimus, Heraclius & Paulinus (relics at Todi)¹⁵ are enshrined in Italy. One of these saints therefore, would seem a more plausible candidate for the Glastonbury reliquary.

In summary, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the 'Glastonbury' St. Paulinus reliquary is of both eighteenth-century Italian manufacture and provenance. It seems probable therefore, that the reliquary was gifted to the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society's collection by a well meaning but misguided amateur antiquary, who mistakenly identified it with Glastonbury's medieval relic of St. Paulinus of York.

1. See Dom H. Connolly, 'Relics and Plate from the Benedictine Chapel of the Rosary (c. 1650-1681)' in *The Downside Review* LII, no. 152, (Oct. 1934), 586-606.
2. Reliquary of St. Paulinus TTNCM 5/1989/716.
3. A general term used for the container of authenticated relics.
4. A small strip of parchment or paper kept with a relic to identify it, bearing the name of the saint in question.
5. Tiny bubbles present in the panels demonstrate that they are glass and not rock crystal. Both panels are rather worn and the reverse panel is fractured, probably the result of being dropped.
6. As well as a seal to fasten the reliquary and secure the relic from tampering, a reliquary is usually accompanied by an 'authentic' – a document signed and sealed by the ecclesiastic responsible for overseeing the translation of a relic to a new case and guaranteeing its authenticity.
7. See 'Catalogue of the Exhibits in November, 1886, at the Glastonbury Museum' in *Glastonbury Antiquarian Society: Proceedings for the Year 1886* (Glastonbury, 1887), 76-81.
8. Glastonbury Antiquarian Society Accession Register.
9. J. Carley, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An edition, translation and study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (Woodbridge, 1985) 18.
10. J. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey: The Holy House at the Head of the Moors Adventurous* (Glastonbury, 1996), 131.
11. For numerous examples of both forms of decoration, employed separately and in conjunction, see A. Legner, ed., *Reliquien: Verehrung und Verklarung* (Koln, 1989).
12. For example, see A. Legner, ed., *Reliquien: Verehrung und Verklarung* (Koln, 1989), 285-6, 293-4.
13. Ex ossibus – from the bones.
14. See 'Paulinus of Antioch and Comps' in B. Watkins, ed., *The Book of Saints: A Comprehensive Biographical Dictionary* (London, 2002), 454.
15. See 'Felicissimus, Heraclius and Paulinus' in B. Watkins, ed., *The Book of Saints: A Comprehensive Biographical Dictionary* (London, 2002), 200. Although bones of St. Felicissimus do feature in Glastonbury's medieval relic collection, this St. Felicissimus was a deacon martyred with St. Sixtus II and should not be confused with St. Felicissimus of Todi. See J. Carley, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation and Study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (Woodbridge, 1985), 26.

42. NEW LIGHT ON W.W. WHEATLEY. In *SDNQ* volume 32 p.582 I published a rare letter from the antiquarian watercolourist William Walter Wheatley to the Somerset historian Revd W. Phelps. This was written in 1849. One of Wheatley's main commissions was to make a record of Somerset churches for the Rector of Mells, Revd J.S.H. Horner. These remain in a series of massive albums at Mells Manor although many are duplicated in other collections.¹ Recently Mr Horner's great-grandson, the Earl of Oxford and Asquith, discovered another portfolio of Wheatley watercolours and epitaphs most of which were duplicates of pictures in the main collection.

Among them is a short letter from Wheatley with two epitaphs from the chapel at Farleigh Hungerford Castle:

Road Jany 30 1850

Revd Sir

Enclosed I send the remainder of the Drawings connected with the Frome Deanery. I am sorry that I was not able to send them before, but I have had a considerable delay in getting my Drawing papers from London. If I have sent any duplicates I can have it or them when I next see you Sir. The Legend of Mrs Mary Shaa in the chapel of Farley Castle has been generally supposed to belong to the monument with the 7 alto Relievo figures. I think myself there is a great doubt about it. We cannot make out what Branch of the Hungerfords the Monument does belong to. I am finishing some other subjects and when I have done so I will bring them over and I can then consult with you relative to which shall be the next deanery I had better finish.

I remain Revd Sir
Your Obt St

W.W. Wheatley

The tomb and the brass at Farleigh had been thought to commemorate different people because the brass mentions an only son while the tomb shows four sons and two daughters (six figures not seven). But Mrs Shaa left one son living; the others died in her lifetime. Moreover in her will Mrs Shaa asks that an epitaph be set over her tomb in brass. If brass and tomb go together there is no problem about the branch of the family which is clearly stated.² The letter shows that Wheatley was working for Horner in 1850 and recording churches deanery by deanery. In his letter to Phelps he mentions his visit to St Cuthbert's, Wells, to see antiquarian discoveries. Among the papers at Mells is a note of biblical scrolls painted on the walls at St Cuthbert's in Latin. Wheatley gives the following references: Deuteronomy 4.32 and 18.18, Genesis 3.15 and Isaiah 7.14.

In 1994-5 I was in correspondence with David Friend, of Whitakers, New Zealand, Wheatley's great-great-grandson. He died before we could meet or co-ordinate our researches but he gave me useful information. Some was based on his research in England, some on family tradition so the sources are not impeccable but as we know so little about Wheatley the main strands are perhaps worth recording.

It has been said that Wheatley was born in Bristol in 1811. He died in Bath in 1885, said to be 74.³ Throughout life his age is given variously but he stated consistently that he was born in Weymouth. In fact he was baptised at Melcombe Regis on 22 August 1802, the son of John Francis Wheatley and Mary. His father was an officer in the 66th Regiment and was killed at the siege of San Sabastian in 1813. His mother came from Ilfracombe.

Mr Friend believed that Wheatley had a sister Amelia, a brother Ernest, a soldier, and another brother John Francis, an actor who died in Wincanton Poor House. He thought that Wheatley spent his early life at Stoke Damerel, Plymouth, the Isle of Wight and Ilfracombe but these suppositions may be based on the evidence of his art. Wheatley lived in Mells c.1825-9 where he came to know the Horners. His first wife Anne died there in 1828 aged 40.⁴ Wheatley lived in Marsh Lane, Rode from about 1829 to 1857. At Rode he became a Baptist being baptised there on 25 September 1852.⁵ He later served as a minister or preacher.⁶

Wheatley's second wife was Emma buried in Rode Chapel in

1855 aged 47. She had been a member for 12 years and paid 5s 3d a quarter for a pew.⁷ He is said to have had a third wife. Five children were known to Mr Friend: Caroline (1822-50) whose illegitimate son, Thomas Wheatley, was Mr Friend's grandfather; Amelia; Emma, baptised 'in the water' by Rode Bridge on 27 August 1843; Claude; and William Walter who died in 1868 leaving four daughters none of whom married. It is said that Wheatley became a recluse in old age and was estranged even from his grand-daughters.

From the later 1850s until his death he lived in Widcombe, Bath being dismissed to the Ebenezer Chapel, Bath, from Rode in 1860. More information about Wheatley is to be found in SDNQ 15, p257; 16 p17 and 17 pp106 and 160.

1. Notably the 14 grangerised volumes of the *History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset* (Bath, 1791) grangerised and donated to the Society of Antiquaries by Mr Adlam, and the Braikenridge Collection donated to the people of the county of Somerset and stored in the library of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society at Taunton.
2. See A.B. Connors, *Monumental Brasses in Somerset* (Bath, 1970), 331 and Revd J.E. Jackson, *Farleigh Hungerford* (London, 1879), 41-2.
3. *SDNQ* 17, 107.
4. *Bath and Cheltenham Gazette*, 4 November 1828, page 3, in which Wheatley is described as an 'artist'.
5. Rode Baptist register kindly communicated by Mr Michael Morris.
6. M.D. Costen, *Wesleyans and Bible Christians in South Somerset* SRS (Taunton, 1984), 202-9.
7. Ex inf Michael Morris.

MICHAEL MCGARVIE

43. JOHN TOOGOOD OF SHERBORNE (1713-1795). In the Dorset Record Office is a Memorandum Book¹ which was compiled by John Toogood,² an 'opulent mercer', relating to various public affairs in the administration of the town in which he was involved between 1748 and 1757, entitled 'The gift of an affectionate parent to his children ... I have here made you a present of the following pages, which contain some occurrences relating chiefly to the public affairs of Sherborne, in which it has sometimes fallen to my lot to bear a part ... I shall here give you some account of the past transactions of those who have trod the path of life before you in this place, and I wish you may collect from hence any observations that may be useful to you in the course of your own lives'.

Clearly not intended for public consumption, his account expresses strong and opinionated views on a number of interesting subjects. Certainly the most detailed is his dealings as a member of

the Sherborne and Shaftesbury Turnpike Trust from its formation in 1753, till both he and his brother, William resigned in 1756 in protest over the application of an amending Act of Parliament intended to extend the number of toll gates on more side roads into Sherborne, which they felt would ruin the trade in the town with neighbouring villages.

John Toogood was a Governor of Sherborne School from 1746, Warden (Chairman) in 1752, 1764 and 1776, and Master of the Sherborne Almshouse in 1749-50, 1762-3 and 1788-9, and he mentions these bodies too. Stated to be preserved in the library at Sherborne School³ is a history of the school Toogood wrote in 1766, and 'as ever he was outspoken and keen on enforcing statutes. His criticisms of headmasters were not always generous and sometimes malicious'.⁴ He commenced his memoirs in 1748 with an account of the purchase by Sherborne School of The Priory, a part of the former monastic buildings which lay just to the north of the oldest school buildings, which was in use from 1738 as the parish workhouse, but by order of the Sherborne Vestry Meeting was closed in 1748 and moved to new premises, as it was felt 'it was too close to the school to house sick people'.⁵ John Toogood gives quite another reason, the aggravation between the schoolboys and the inhabitants of the workhouse, which seems much more plausible. The Priory was demolished by the school soon after and the site is now part of the large courtyard around which the present main school buildings are assembled.

'*Anno 1748.* The present Master of the Free Gramar School in this town is Mr: Tho: Paget, who after a College life at Oxford for many years, came to Poynington (*sic*) in this neighbourhood and opened a Gramar School there, but upon the death of Mr: Gaylard, our late School Master, he was chosen Master of this School and the School seems to be in good reputation for that we have many of the principal boys of this neighbourhood educated here. But the present Workhouse in this Town (which was formerly a Priory) being contiguous to the School, it fell out oftentimes that the School boys practiced insults and disorders on the people of the Workhouse, and they in return did sometimes trespass on the School, hence arose complaints on both sides, and the Master at length prevailed on the Feoffees of the School to purchase the Workhouse and garden thereto belonging and to annex it to the School. This change of the Workhouse was disagreeable to many of the inhabitants, because the former was a Freehold Estate, but

the present a Leasehold; in answer to which it is said by those that favour this alteration, that it must always be greatly for the interest of the Lord of the Manour to support a Workhouse here, and consequently it is presumed he will at any time renew, gratis; nevertheless it is very obvious that a certainty is changed for an uncertainty, and I am sorry to say that I was prevailed on to execute this Deed contrary to my inclination, being a necessary party thereto, as an Overseer of the Poor in this year: however it must be allowed that the present situation is the most preferable for a Workhouse. The Workhouse in this Town was begun and opened in the month of May 1738. Great savings have thereby been made to the Inhabitants, and the spirit of industry was for several years encouraged among the Poor’.

‘Anno 1751. I find no occurrences in this Town worth notice (or I have been remiss in my History) till the month of December in this year, when Mr: Hutchings, an Attorney at Law in this Town, being now a Justice of the Peace, begins to exert his authority with respect to the Highways, and has prevailed on Mr: Meech to join with him in making out Warrants requiring many of the Inhabitants to appear at Dorchester to shew cause why the penalties for their default of Duty according to the Statutes, should not be levied upon them, and obliged the four Surveyors of the Highways together with a Constable to attend at two several meetings at Dorchester on this occasion, and as an instance of this man's pride in power, I may here observe that he was about to comit Mr: Robt: Hart of this Town to Dorchester Jail, for saying only that Mr: Hutchings was a troublesome man, and indeed obliged him to enter into a Recognisance to answer it at the next General Quarter Sessions. It is certain that the affair of the Highways in this Parish greatly wanted regulation, but these measures being very sudden and unusual as well as arbitrary occasioned much uneasiness here; However on the 26th. day of December the Parishioners and the new Justice of the Peace were present at a Vestry and upon examining this matter it appeared that every housekeeper without exception was liable to do six days Duty or to the penalty of 9/- and that there was no discretionary power in this case for the Justices to excuse even the poorest labourer; Therefore it was agreed to divide the Inhabitants into three classes, and the payments to be: The First: 4/6; Second: 3/-; Third: 18d. By these means about £60 were collected of the Inhabitants and the full Statute Duty was performed by the Occupiers of the Lands,

and not withstanding all this, a Rate was obtained at the Quarter Sessions held at Bridport amounting to: ... (*blank*).’

There followed a lengthy account of a dispute against Peter Walter, of Stalbridge Park, who claimed exemption from payment of highway rates on Wyke Farm, which lay just to the west of Sherborne, partly within the parish of Castleton and partly in Nether Compton, before he turned again to an even more strongly worded harangue against John Hutchings, whom he describes as ‘very obnoxious’.⁶

‘*Anno 1752*. This Town having no Justice of the Peace for many years residing here, and Mr: Hutchings being very obnoxious to many of the Principal Inhabitants, ... this man became more and more despised, and his schemes, however useful in themselves, were generally opposed; so that these measures failed not to produce disorder and division among the Parishioners concerning the management of the parish affairs. And now the Overseers of the Poor are indicted at the Quarter Sessions for making an unequal Rate, and that there have been many Parish Vestrys held on this affair, and the Church Wardens and Overseers of the Poor find their office to be very troublesome, nor did these troubles abate till there was an Addition made to the Poor Rate by charging the Inhabitants for their Stock in Trade, which was never done in this Town till now; and at this time also the Poor Rate is made a double Rate; which ever since the first institution of a Poor Rate has been single and was at about 3/4d. in the pound, that is to say, the Owner of an Estate, value £20 per annum, paid about 12d. or 15p. P. Rate for such Estate; The making of this a double Rate is not approved of by many of the Inhabitants, and to prevent perplexity in future time, it is hoped, it will be brought back to it’s antient method’.

‘*Anno 1752*. The Button Manufacture of this Town having been in great decay for several years past, there came hither a Silk Throwster from London, and made proposals for employing the Poor, which were encouraged and having taken the house (late Mr. Staveley’s in Cheapstreet for this purpose) this work is now introduced among us’. This was John Sharrer, a Whitechapel silk thrower, who rented Westbury Mill, a water grist mill in Sherborne from Lord Digby. Sharrer had decided to begin business in Dorset as he had relatives in Sherborne and there appeared to be plenty of cheap labour for him.’⁷

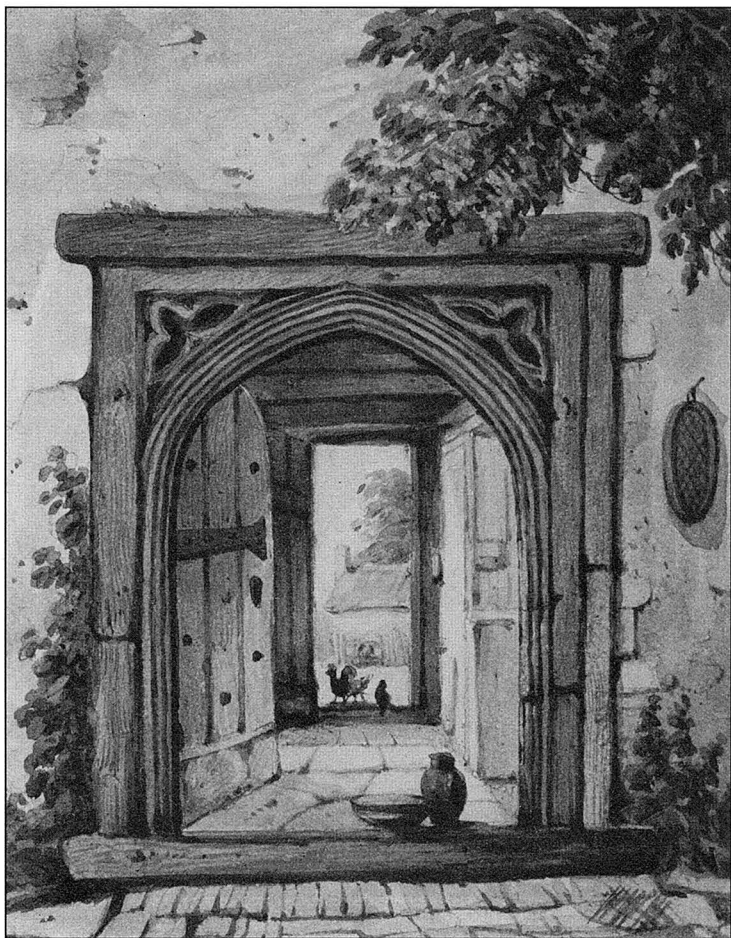
Toogood continued with an obituary of William, Lord Digby. He was however less charitable towards his successor, Edward, Lord Digby, whom he accused of being the cause of a reduction in the stipend of the Vicar of Sherborne from £50 to £40 a year 'upon which the present Vicar takes this opportunity to dismiss his Curate and to reduce the public service in the church by reading Prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays only, which for many years have been every day in the week'.

Anno 1753. The spirit of repairing the public Roads prevailing much at this time, the Inhabitants of Shaston applied to and joined several of the Inhabitants of this Town in presenting a Petition to Parliament for erecting a Turnpike, which Petition was forwarded by Lord Digby, who was a Member in the House; In the mean time Mr: Hutchings spared no pains in stirring up the neighbouring parishes to raise money to oppose and defeat the Intention of this Bill, and went himself to London for this purpose; but all these endeavours proved in vain, for an Act of Parliament is obtained, and the Comissioners have their first meeting in Sherborne in the month of June; and in July - gates were erected on several roads near the Town, upon which there appears a general discontent from the neighbouring parishes. There now begins to appear more and more among the Inhabitants of the Town, party or division, the bane of human society, which is spirited on by this new Justice of the Peace, and which probably may be productive of no good consequences to this Town. I have been induced together with my bro(the)r Wm: Toogood to act in forwarding this Turnpike, but certainly it would have been much more prudent for us to have declined it, for I think we are not rightly aware of it's consequences, but it's picture is drawn in colours of public good, and the principal inhabitants here are in number few, so that, hands are wanted to carry this affair into execution.

The Turnpike being now a fashionable and new thing among us, it becomes the principal subject of conversation, and in order to put forward the repairing of the roads, the Comissioners agree to divide themselves and severally to take upon them the care and inspection of some particular part of the work, it fell to my lot to have the care of that from the top of Westhill to Westbridge, and this having always been an exceedingly bad road, and there being now money in stock, I was willing to embrace the opportunity of having this road completed, the doing which, I think, cost about £400.'



*The 'Glastonbury' St. Paulinus Reliquary. Obverse.
With kind permission of the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society.*



*Oak doorway, Barrow House, Rode, W. W. Wheatley c.1858.
Reroduced by kind permission of the Society of Antiquaries.
(from the Adlam 'Collinson')*



*William Walter Wheatley (1802 – 1885)
sketching in Lullington church c.1845.
(Reproduced from a private collection).*



The Galilee at Glastonbury Abbey looking east. From a stereoview card, published by A.W. Bennett of 5, Bishopsgate Without, London, c.1860.

'*Anno 1755*. The Gates now erected are, one on the London Road at Dodge Cross and one at the Drum being a little beyond Barton Barn, and on the north and south roads, one at White Post on the Bristol Road, and one at Lime Kiln and in Horse Castles Lane'. The routes maintained by the Sherborne and Shaftesbury Turnpike Trust, and the locations of gates, with identification on modern maps, has already been covered in great detail,⁸ and Toogood's account provides interesting additional information to that recorded in the 1753 and 1756 Acts of Parliament of what was intended, which could be quite different.

'But in the beginning of this year some of the Comissioners being very desirous to apply to Parliament for erected more Gates about the Town, sent to Lord Digby (who is now in London) a Petition to be presented to Parliament to that end, but as my brother and I at several meetings had often remonstrated, against this undertaking, tho' in vain (for in the small number of Comissioners who acted in Sherborne there were some who seemed to sit superior and give motion to the actions of the rest, and could not easily be prevailed on to yield to any arguments that differed from their own sentiments) we thought it proper to write the following letter to Lord Digby:

Dated, 18th. Janry: 1755

My Lord,

As we happen to differ in opinion from a few of our neighbours concerning the proposals made in the Petition which has been sent to your Lordship by Mr: Foot, we beg leave to lay before your Lordship our objections to it.

If a gate be erected on Gainsborough Hill we cannot think it adviseable to undertake to repair the road so far as Mr: Hathway's House in Bishop's Caundle, because we cannot possibly conceive that the Tolls arising from that Gate can ever in any degree answer for the Interest of a sum necessary for that purpose, together with a Toll Gatherer's wages, &c, much less admit of any savings to be made to repay the Principal money, therefore we advise that this proposal may be limited to two miles

distance from Henry Oke's Mill, and even with this limitation we are in some doubt, whether the Tolls of this Gate will be equal to the charges.

If in Pinford Lane, a Stop Gate only be sett up, and the overplus of the Toll Gatherer's wages, together with such Statute Duty, as may be deemed necessary there, be applied annually to repair the several parts of that Lane, we think it may sufficiently answer the end designed which is, to reduce the Tolls on the East Road into their proper channel, without the trouble of undertaking to repair four miles this way on a road, which in our memory has been considered rather as a Bye Way, than a Road worthy this notice, and whether the Tolls of a Gate in this Lane will answer for this work, we submit it to your Lordship's judgement.

On the Marston Road, we cannot approve of erecting a Gate, because the road this way, as far as your Lordship's Manour extends, is at all times and in all seasons extremely good, and this being a road, which leads to a great number of parishes, this Gate must inevitably be the cause of great complaints and discontent, and as to the proposals for repairing the Road to Marston Inn, and to Mudford Bridge, we think it has not been maturely, if at all, considered, for that the materials for this purpose lye at a great distance, insomuch that this undertaking will in our opinion amount to at least £1,500, and it seems very clear to us that this Gate cannot possibly answer for any such sum, and further we are ready to shew that at an easy charge, Stop Gates may be erected at certain places which will answer the purpose of this Gate in all respects.

We ... think it both our duty to your Lordship and to this Trust, in which we have hitherto exerted our best endeavours, to represent these things, which we conceive will be real grievances, if the proposals made in the Petition should pass into a Law, and as we are truly sensible of your Lordship's good disposition towards the Inhabitants of this Town, we shall think ourselves

happy if this meets your Lordship's favourable reception and we remain your Lordship's, &c.

Wm: Toogood; John Toogood.

'The result of which letter was, that Lord Digby deferred forwarding the Petition for this Session of Parliament, being willing to be further informed of this matter. Upon his return therefore to Sherborne my brother and I presented to him as follows ...

Considerations on the North & South Turnpikes

If we enquire into the reasons that first induced us to apply to Parliament for an Act to erect a Turnpike, they will appear to be these.

As the greatest part of travellers coming from London to Exeter at that time passed thro' Blandford and Dorchester, notwithstanding it's being 8 miles the farthest way, on account of the badness of our roads on this side (of) White Sheet Hill, it was presumed that if Shastbury & Sherborne obtained an Act of Parliament for this purpose, it would be the means of bringing all travellers regularly this way, and consequently be of advantage to the inhabitants of these towns, and it seems reasonable to suppose it was then the general sense of the Inhabitants of Sherborne that on these motives only application was to be made to Parliament, for as soon as it was discovered that the North and South Roads were to be included in this Act, it produced a general discontent in this Town and in the neighbouring parishes.

If it be objected that this clamour sprung only from some principal person in the opposition, without any real cause for complaint, how comes it, that it did not soon subside? On the contrary, that this discontent is now become general among the inhabitants of Sherborne and the neighbouring parishes, on account of the North and South Gates, is undeniably true, in as much as it brings an annual charge upon every housekeeper, lays a burden upon trade, reduces our markets to a low ebb, and consequently lessens the sale and consumption of all goods in this Town, by discouraging the neighbour(ing) parishes from a frequent intercourse with us. On the South Road, that is, to Revels Gate there has been, and must be a large sum expended to complete it, and when this is done, what advantages are we to

receive from it?

Can it be our interest to promote a communication with Weymouth by these means? Nay in what degree has this communication ever been, or can possibly be expected to advance, and is not the balance evidently more in favour of Weymouth? Should they not mutually exert themselves, are not the roads between Dorchester and Weymouth extremely bad for all carriages in the Winter season, and why on their parts did they and Dorchester people after due consideration decline to apply for an Act of Parliament, and rather determine on leaving their roads open and to repair them by Statute Labour? &c.'

'Lord Digby having great interest in Parliament by reason of his uncle being Prime Minister of State, it was easily perceived that he was the sole hinge on which this affair was to turn, and it was as easily perceived also that this new scheme for enlarging the Turnpike was, upon the whole, not disagreeable to him, and consequently we soon found there was but little hope of our defeating it, notwithstanding his Lordship was very ready to acknowledge the reasonableness of our representations; However he expressed a great desire that we should agree upon this matter before he presented the Petition in the next Session of Parliament: and in the month of December Mr: Wickham, Foot and Bastard had a meeting with my brother and me on this affair, but it proved of no effect; This Meeting on their parts was rather a matter of shew or sham, for it was very evident that they seemed to pride themselves in the prospect of gaining their point, however oppressive the consequences may be to their neighbours.'

'We thought it prudent therefore to decline our attendance for the future on Turnpike affairs, and to leave them for time and experience to shew the event thereof; however my brother sent the following letter to Lord Digby -

20th. December 1755.

My Lord

At our Meeting in order to reconcile the affairs of the Turnpike, I was in hopes it had been made agreeable to us all by the proposals, which your Lordship will be pleased to see by the inclosed, but Mr. Foot tells me just now, that Mr: Wickham will not depart one

tittle from his plan, therefore I beg leave to resign this affair entirely to your Lordship's determination, and shall content myself with the satisfaction of having endeavoured to prevent that which I firmly believe will be a real and sensible evil to the Inhabitants of this Town, if carried into execution.

I have only added a few observations concerning the manner of carrying the Road &c, if a Gate be erected at Stony Lane, which I hope may be worthy your Lordship's consideration and I am My Lord Your Lordship's much obliged humble servt:

Wm: Toogood.

‘The principal reason offered for a gate at Stony Lane is, that the tolls at Gainsborough Hill are expected to be insufficient for the present design, therefore a part of these tolls are wanted to be applied that way. But will it not be unequal to tax the travellers on this road for the support of another with which it has no relation? And will it not be deservedly censured as an act of oppression to lay a tax on the carriages of salt, culn, grocery and iron which come from Ilchester to this town in great quantities, whose natural and constant way hither is from Mudford Bridge thro’ the parish of Hummer and will never receive the least benefit from the road being repaired to Marston?’

‘Here end our endeavours for preventing this new tax, which is coming on the inhabitants of Sherborne, and now the Petition is presented to Parliament, and goes forward without opposition.’

‘1756. In the month of July the Commissioners of the Turnpike have their first meeting for putting in force this new Act of Parliament, and that they proceed to erect gates at every entrance into the Town; hence arises more and more discontent, and Turnpike becomes a despicable term, for notwithstanding these new tolls are levied on travellers and carriages, yet none of the new roads are repaired, and all the excuse made to the public for so ungenerous a proceeding is, that they cannot find persons who will lend money on the credit of the Tolls.’

At this point John Toogood ends ‘this disagreeable subject’ and passes on to two other matters. First the raising of a regiment for foreign service in 1756, which he thinks the recruits were told

was for service only within Britain. True, a regiment was raised of Dorset Militia for service within this country and not for overseas, but this did not occur till a year later in 1757. Presumably the recruits had heard of the proposals to raise county militias, then being widely discussed, and they may have been misinformed that this was the unit they thought they were joining

'1756. In the months of February and March we were greatly alarmed with the apprehension of an invasion from France, and at this time Mr: Fox, uncle to Lord Digby, being Prime Minister of State, sent a letter to acquaint his Lordship, that there was great reason to believe it would so happen, and recommended strongly the raising men on this occasion; whereupon public notice was given in the market, and an advertisement was published in the Sherborne news paper to this end; but this proved an unfortunate affair to Lord Digby, with respect to his public character, for in this advertisement it was said, that these new raised men were not to be sent abroad, but to be inlisted only for 3 years upon this emergency in defence of their country, and it was remarkable what numbers of stout young fellows from all the neighbouring Counties presented themselves at the Lodge upon this occasion and entered on the service with the greatest cheerfulness; but soon after the number, to be raised here, was completed, they were sent to Salisbury and joined to the other parts of this new raised regiment, and the apprehension of an invasion soon vanishing, these new recruits were marched from Salisbury to Plymouth and from thence sent to Gibraltar, where many of 'em dyed. It was a melancholy scene to see, how these young fellows were affected with this unexpected disappointment. What grief, rage and resentment they expressed in their march to Plymouth, and much more so, when they were drawn up without their arms in Plymouth Dock and drove like cattle into the ships.'

The second subject was of a subscription organised by the Toogood brothers to sell subsidised 'bread-corn' to the poor inhabitants of Sherborne due to high prices of wheat and other produce during the summer of 1757. John's brother, William, who was presumably a farmer and corn merchant, then living in Acreman Street in the town, was on the receiving end of threats of violence if he did not lower his corn prices and John's account details a riot in the town in April 1757. At the end of this account Toogood accused the proprietors of the 'Sherborne Mercury' for publishing inflammatory material against farmers for 'price-

fixing'. Clearly Toogood supported the farmers, but felt it a wise precaution to organise the subsidised grain distribution to turn away the poorer townspeople from resorting to violence.

'1757. This year begins with a general complaint of the sufferings of the Poor by reason of the high price of all kinds of provision, and particularly of bread-corn; frequent accounts we have of riots from all parts, and on the 30th. of April, being Market Day, many of our idle and insolent poor men and women assembled and begun a riot in the Market House, went to Oborn Mill and brought off several bags of flour and divided the spoil here in triumph. On the monday morning early, a letter was found in the Abby directed to Mr: Toogood in Acreman Street, the contents of which were:

'Sr: If you do not bring your wheat into the Market, and sell it at a reasonable price, your barns shall be pulled down, &c.'

'This letter was taken up by a poor fellow of the town, who could not read himself, but carried it to a public house where the Landlord immediately burnt it, being apprehensive, so he said, that my brother might otherwise be displeased with him. My brother Wm: Toogood being the principal person in the farming business here, it seems nothing strange that he should be the first mark; but here it must be confessed that there was one unfortunate circumstance, which I think was in a great measure the cause of his being thus aimed at; that is, my brother had in the preceding market agreed to sell 10 bushels of wheat at 14/10 p. bushl. (a great price indeed) to a miller at Goathill, and on the morning of the day, when this riot happened, he went himself with the carriage that conveyed this parcel of wheat to the miller's house, and the reason of his going was, in order to prevent any interruption to his servant by the way; but this circumstance was taken notice of, and aggravated with much ill nature and falsity, not by the Poor only, but by the rich men also of this place, if there are any such here, for the farmer is now no respectable name.'

'I may here observe that since our declining to act in the affairs of the Turnpike, our intimacy or acquaintance with these men, who have been the cause of inclosing the town in this manner, have declined also; this seperation or division among us tends to weaken their hands in the execution of their measures, which

they're very sensible of, and as revenge is said to be sweet, particularly to weak minds, I have reason to believe that some of these little, great men here have secretly encouraged this mobbing of the common people, which they knew would in some degree turn towards my brother ...'

'However as rioting is quite a new thing in Sherborne, the like having not been known here in the memory of any one, and as the neighbouring parishes seemed ripe for joining in this sport; I thought there was no time to be lost, and that it was proper to crush this evil in it's bud, in order to which we took the following measures.'

'Having called a meeting at the Almshouse, it was agreed that Mr: Jeffery and I should take a Survey of all the most necessitous Families in the Town - this done, we raised about £100 by subscriptions, and before the next market day, our Justice of the Peace and some of the principal inhabitants made a procession throughout the town and published by the Cryer of the Town the following notice:

That the poor families of this town will be supplied with a quantity of wheat sufficient for their support every week till harvest at the rate of 8/- p. bushel. And that if any person whatsoever after this public notice shall use any threatening expressions, or commit any riot or disorder in this Town, the offender shall be forthwith committed to Prison.

We then contracted for a quantity of wheat sufficient for this purpose, some at 10/- some at 12/-, as we could prevail with the farmers to supply it, and the List of the Poor, who were to receive it, being settled, there was about 60 bushels weekly delivered out to them at 8/- p. bushl. until Harvest, by means of the aforesaid subscriptions. By these means we restored peace, and disappointed many loose, disorderly fellows of the neighbouring parishes, who appeared in the Market with their empty bags, expecting to have had corn without money.' However, 'Harvest being come, and the crop of corn in the field being very good, the expectations of the people seem impatient for having it at a low price'.

The remainder of Toogood's memoirs contains a long moralising sermon to his children, and a further blast against other principal inhabitants of Sherborne who took opposing views to

his. At the end of the book is a list of donations to the Sherborne Almshouse and what happened to the funds, with a somewhat comical description of the dissentious meetings in 1757 of the almshouse trustees: 'The Trust is composed of twenty men, a motley mixture of different complexions, of jarring interests, of secret or open animosities, not without much mulish nonsense often in loud and flaming ferment disputing and differing about trifles, negligent and inattentive to the more essential parts of the Trust - In their meetings nothing is more common than to hear it said - 'this is wrong and ought not to be done' - 'this is right and ought to be done' - and Lo! - the farce is ended and seldom any proper measures taken either to prevent the wrong or to execute the right, - one is surfeited with the presence of an obnoxious neighbour - one in haste to go to his own concerns and another to his dinner, and thus I have often seen their Meetings 'left ridiculous, and their work confusion' rightly named. This picture, you will say, is not very inviting, but it is the effect of many years observation, and but a faint resemblance of the original, in such deformity as hath been exhibited there.'

The text closes with an interesting reference to considerable debts to the Almshouse Trust of over £108, owed by Francis Fisher, a former steward, who Toogood felt had sufficient means to discharge, and who he felt he and his family should have settled, but did not: 'Francis Fisher was an Attorney and Steward of the Almshouse, and his family had been in good estimation here, but being an indolent, weak man and without economy in his affairs, he was so remarkably under the influence of his wife, that, although he was possessed of effects sufficient to discharge all his debts, yet, when he was arrested, he did by her instigation submit to go to Dorchester Jail and there died: He left 3 daughters, whose 3 husbands, 2 of 'em clergymen, were Trustees of these Charities, to whom I frequently exhibited the abovementd: memorandum at our Meetings in the House and endeavoured to shame them into a discharge of their father's debt to the Poor, but all in vain - such are the effects of avarice and the want of a due sense of justice and charity'

1. Dorset County Record Office, D170/1.
2. J.Hutchins, *History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset*, 3rd. edition, 1873, IV, p. 212.
3. 'The Sherborne Register', 4th. edition (1950), p.13.
4. Shelagh M. Hill, *Sherborne House and Its People*, 1996, pp.30-1.
5. Note in catalogue to Sherborne School archives, DCRO S235/ D1/ 3.
6. This I alighted upon with glee, as Hutchings is an ancestor of mine, as also is Paget and a sister of Peter Walter.

7. M. Weinstock, *Studies in Dorset History*, (Dorchester, 1953), p. 84.
8. R. Good, *The Old Roads of Dorset*, (Bournemouth, 1966); J.B. Bentley and B.J. Murless, *Somerset Roads: The Legacy of the Turnpikes: Phase 1: Western Somerset* (1985) and Phase 2: *Eastern Somerset* (1987), published by the Somerset Industrial Archaeology Society.

MERVYN MEDLYCOTT

44. THE GALILEE AT GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

It would seem that a marked divergence of opinion has unwittingly opened up between scholars as regards the date of Glastonbury's Galilee, and as to whether its fusion with the abbey's virtually unique, western Lady Chapel was part of its designers' original conception, or an 'afterthought'. Can documentary clues shed any light on this matter?¹ Most recently R. Dunning has stated that it was Walter de Monington [abbot 1342-1375] who 'provided a link between the (abbey) Church and the Lady Chapel in the form of a galilee'.² However, according to P. Rahtz, it was 'in the 13th century' that 'the two were linked by the structure known as the Galilee', and moreover 'it is likely' that the crypt well-recess, with its 'elaborate chevron decoration', was 'in fact the east window of the Lady Chapel, taken down when this was extended to the east as the Galilee, in the 13th century'.³ On the other hand, J. Carley states that it was Adam of Sodbury [abbot 1323-1334] who 'united the Galilee to St. Mary's chapel',⁴ implying that although the former was an earlier construction, the dividing wall was not removed until the early 14th century; whereas R. Radford had concluded that the interposed arch 'was cut through the east wall of the Lady Chapel when the Galilee was built', and this was added 'about 1320'.⁵

Almost a century ago, F.B. Bond, following the pioneering study of R. Willis,⁶ dated the Galilee to the earlier abbacy of John of Taunton [1274-1294], on the grounds that it was 'erected in a mature Early English style, the mouldings being those used in the later 13th century' and in his opinion the 'old east wall of the Lady Chapel was pulled down in the 14th century to allow the Galilee to be united with it', so that the latter 'became as it were a chancel' to the former. Bond noted that 'there is no record of the date of this alteration, but a benefaction of Abbot de Sodbury is recorded ... and is regarded as implying that the union of the two buildings had probably been effected in his time', so 'we might assign 1330 as a conjectural date for the arch'.⁷ However H. Woods has recently recorded that 'cleaning and conservation of [the Galilee] in 1993 made possible the detailed examination of

all its architectural details and this has involved a reinterpretation of the architectural sequence. It could be seen that the west portal of the Church and the surviving north wall of the Galilee were of one build', and 'the door in the north wall is trefoil headed with crockets, and by comparison with work at Salisbury cathedral can be dated to the 1240s'. His conclusion is that 'by the mid 13th century then, the east end of the Lady Chapel had been taken down, and an extension of three bays constructed at the same time as the west front of the *ecclesia major*, in order to give even greater prominence to the *cultus* of Holy Mary, Mother of God'.⁸

So where does the truth lie, with such differences of judgement? What has been overlooked, and can perhaps help towards resolving some of the contradictions, is an *inspeximus* of 1294, buried in the cartulary of Bath Abbey.⁹ According to this, at the petition of Gilbert 'de Wollanyton' [Woolavington], rector of 'Hunespulle' [Huntspill], John [of Taunton] abbot of Glastonbury, appointed 'two secular chaplains to perform divine service ... [who] shall sing daily *Placebo*, *Dirige*, Commendation, Mass and the other canonical hours and Masses *in aurora diei*, at the altar of All Saints, built in a place called Galilee, which place is situate between the great monastery and the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. From this evidence it is clear that the Galilee had indeed been built by the end of the 13th century, but that it was still a self-contained 'sacred space', with its own function within the overall design of the abbey, both structurally and liturgically distinct from that of the Lady Chapel – just as its name ['Galilee'] implies and its surviving north and now destroyed south doorways suggest. Thus it subsequently lost its separate identity when, as an 'afterthought,' it was converted into 'a kind of chancel' for the Lady Chapel, a development made possible by the seemingly previously-unplanned demolition of the east wall of the latter. When exactly this might have taken place is uncertain, although the architectural style of the interposed arch should give experts a clue, rather than the sometimes cited 1333 charter of Adam of Sodbury.¹⁰

This document indeed provides for the augmentation and amalgamation of the abbey's clerical but non-monastic personnel, stipulating that four new 'chaplains or clerks recently made priests ... together with two of the Galilee already existing, and with another two provided by the said Abbot and convent, shall minister daily in the Lady Chapel wearing surplices and amuces,

divided into choirs, and they shall serve the Lady Chapel devoutly in song and melody, together with the Warden [*custos*] of the Lady Chapel and the two seniors deputed to supervise the place'; but it also makes it clear that the two Galilee chaplains were to continue to offer 'their own masses' (at the altar of All Saints) just as the other six priests were to celebrate mass in St. Michael's chapel on the south side of the monastic cemetery, in addition to 'the Lady Mass.' Clearly at this date the liturgical life of the Galilee had not been (if it ever was?) fully incorporated into that of the Lady Chapel; nor it cannot be deduced from this source that they had been fused structurally as yet.

All that can be said for certain is that since William Worcester's late 15th century description gave the measurements of the '*ecclesia Sanctae Mariae*' as 34 rods [31 metres], 'the whole of the Galilee as far as the base of the steps leading up to the [abbey's] west door then formed the Lady Chapel'; and thus, as Radford argued, by 1478 the Lady altar apparently 'stood at the base of these steps against a screen with two flanking doors through which the liturgical processions could enter the nave' (and presumably vice versa).¹¹ It is always possible, as Bond suggested, that initially this screen (or an earlier reredos?) was positioned 'to the west of the north and south doors of the Galilee', as a partition allowing an altar to remain in the latter for some, indeterminate time after the removal of the eastern wall of the Lady Chapel;¹² but given the dearth of evidence this will most likely remain a matter of speculation.

1. N. Pevsner, *Buildings of England, South and West Somerset* (Harmondsworth, 1958) curiously silent and thus of no assistance!
2. R.W. Dunning, ed., *A History of the County of Somerset*, vol. IX (Woodbridge, 2006), 11-12, adding that 'its construction brought all the major relics into a continuous space with the sanctuary of the Lady Chapel ... probably only enclosed by a screen', thus implying that the eastern wall of the latter was demolished at the same time?
3. P. Rahtz and L. Watts, *English Heritage Book of Glastonbury* (London, 1993), revised by R. Croft, and republished as *Glastonbury, myth and archaeology* (2003), 104, 107.
4. J.P. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey* (Woodbridge, 1988), 41.
5. C.A.R. Radford, *The pictorial history of Glastonbury Abbey* (London, 1966), 12, 14, 20.
6. R. Willis, *The Architectural History of Glastonbury Abbey* (Cambridge, 1866), 55-59.
7. F.B. Bond, *An Architectural Handbook of Glastonbury Abbey* (Glastonbury, 1909; 4th ed., 1925), 58-60. The reference to 'a chancel as it were' echoes the '*quendam cancellum*' recorded on the plaque fixed to the pillar erected to mark St. David's legendary addition of an eastern extension to the *vetusta ecclesia*: see J.A. Robinson, *Two Glastonbury Legends* (Cambridge, 1926), 56-58, and The historical evidence as to the Saxon Church at Glastonbury, in *PSANHS*, LXXIII, part 2 (1927), 48.
8. H. Woods, *Excavations at Glastonbury Abbey, 1987-1993*, in *PSANHS*, 138 (1993), 67-9. It is worth noting that M. Thurlby, *The Antiquaries Journal*, 75 (1995), 165, suggests that at its time of its creation Glastonbury's late 12th century Lady Chapel was arguably 'the finest architectural 'shrine' in England and a monument fitting for the glorification of the Virgin Mary'.

9. W. Hunt, ed., *Two Chartularies of the Priory of St. Peter at Bath*, pt.II, SRS, VII (1893), 101.
10. Dom A. Watkin, ed., *Great Chartulary of Glastonbury*, III, S.R.S. LXIV (1956), 4-6. Woods, *Excavations*, made much, and somewhat inaccurate use of this document, to support his contention that 'by the mid 13th century [*sic*] the east end of the Lady chapel had been taken down...', and also that 'there is a vibrant echo here of William of Malmesbury's description of the twelve hermits who used to meet together continuously in the Old Church...' Incidentally Bond, op. cit, wrongly referred to it as providing 'endowment for a Lady Mass'.
11. C.A.R. Radford, *Abbot Richard Beere* (undated, unpublished ms., National Monuments Record, Swindon), 32, quoting from *William Worcestre, Itineraries*, ed. J. Harvey, 175. Radford went on to argue however, and contrary to the testimony of Fr. William Good SJ. which he only partly quoted, *ibid*, 30, that 'there is no evidence that St. Mary's church remained in use as such after the insertion of St. Joseph's Chapel in the vaulted crypt...and in may be concluded that the western building served solely as the Galilee or porch of the Great Church', *ibid*, 33. Dom Aidan Gasquet's *The last Abbot of Glastonbury and his companions, an historical sketch* (London, 1895), though incidentally referring to 'the chapel of St. Mary [as] forming the atrium of the monastic church' (p.6) reprints (pp.178-81) the text of an indenture of 1534, from which it is clear that non-monastic 'matins, masses, evensongs, compline, anthems and all other divine services' were 'daily' sung 'in the chapel of our Blessed Lady of Glastonbury'. If further proof were needed that the liturgical life of 'this special sanctuary of the Mother of God' (p.177) continued until its suppression, with the dissolution of the monastery.
12. See F. Bond, *Architectural Handbook*, 62, for a conjectural plan.

M.J. PROTHEROE

BOOK REVIEWS

Robert G. Allwood, *Early Flax Growing: the Flax Industry in the Cokers* (2007), no publisher or ISBN, 22pp, illus., £3.50 (including postage) from the author High Banks, Longlands Lane, East Coker, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 9HN. This attractive looking publication contains a concise history of how the construction of a leat affected a village. Broken down into short sections on producing flax, retting methods, the construction of a leat at East Coker, how the leat worked, scutching, spinning and weaving, and finally 'why did the village industry disappear?', it will be clear to readers that there is a fair amount of technical information inside these covers. The author uses his knowledge of a variety of horticultural subjects to pen a picture of Coker which, despite some technical terms, is easy to read. Accompanied with a variety of illustrations showing the different stages of production, anyone interested in this subject during predominantly the 19th and 20th centuries will find the £3.50 money well spent.

A.J. WEBB

Colin Brett, *The manors of Norton St. Philip and Hinton Charterhouse 1535-1691* (2007), Somerset Record Society, ISBN 978 0 901732 42 2, 596pp, £30 to non-members, p+p £5.00 inland and £7 surface mail overseas (see the back cover for the postal address). The Somerset Record Society is building up a reputation for providing its members with exceptional value for money, mainly due to the publication of very large volumes which members receive for a trifling £10 per annum. Enter Colin Brett's *magnum opus* of over 250,000 words compiled from a vast array of documents located in nine different archives across the country, which falls into this category.

This volume contains a mixture of documents relating to the manorial history of what were two relatively important manors for different reasons: Norton was an important cloth production centre and Hinton a former ecclesiastical estate. The documents edited in this volume includes reeves' accounts, extents, surveys, customs, rentals, manorial accounts, glebe terriers, indenture of sale and an account of composition for tithes, all of which are brought into print for the first time. Thus there is a great deal of information for both the local and manorial historian, as well as the genealogist, although to contain such a wealth of material into one volume has meant some of the text being reduced to quite a small size. Also with this volume comes a map of the manor and parish of Norton dated 1638, reconstructed by regressive map analysis using the 1885 Ordnance Survey maps, the 1828 tithe map, the survey and terrier of tithe, and Samuel Parson's survey of Norton. The inclusion of this map is the icing on what is a very large and impressive cake, one that will sit proudly alongside many other volumes which make up the Somerset Record Society series.

A.J. WEBB

Neil Bentham, *A history of Blagdon volume 3* (November 2007), Blagdon Local History Society, ISBN 978 0 9548125-5-3, 205pp, £5, p+p £2.50 inland from Court Lodge, Blagdon, Bristol, BS40 7US, or in person from the Village Stores. To be able to publish three volumes on the history of a small village such as Blagdon is truly testament in itself to the efforts of the Blagdon Local History Group. This third volume contains a wide variety of subject material arranged into chapters on the development of the village, part two of Hannah More's connections with the

village (1798-1802), the Baptist Church in Blagdon, The Forest of Mendip Lodge Province of Somerset (1962-1999), the Methodist Church in Blagdon, teasles, the Weavers' milk round, some Blagdon houses visited by the Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group, lectures and open forums, and finally current research. Interspersed are a good selection of postcards, maps, photographs, prints, documents and portraits, which help to bring the subject matter to life.

The quality and strength of this volume lies in the diversity of the source material which has been pulled together by the group. This presents to the reader a selection of chapters on subjects, some of which, would otherwise not obviously have been brought into print because of their obscure nature. This is not to say they are not of interest or of value to historical research, far from it, especially the chapter on the Weavers' milk round. Here is a chapter which typifies local history research and has left us with a permanent record of something which everyone took for granted years ago, but now has almost become a rarity. I am already looking forward to volume four in this series. Although there is no index to this book the whole volume is very well presented and thanks to the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Nationwide, this volume is good value for money at only £5.

A.J. WEBB

NOTES

A MEMORY OF MRS S.W. RAWLINS. The following is from a letter written to the Hon. Secretary from Newton Surmaville on 5 Nov. 1999:

'I should be very pleased to have the S.D.N.Q.'s meeting here next July instead of September. I should, however, warn you that by the end of this month I shall be 91 and this is an age at which it is unwise to make engagements too far ahead! There is a gene of longevity in the Harbin family; one of my grandmother's cousins was 95 but I have no intention to be a centenarian! Moreover the cost of living goes up by far more than the official figures when it comes to paying wages and repairs. I think looking forward to N. & Q.'s is one thing that keeps me going.'

MICHAEL MCGARVIE

Som. Ed. It is worth noting that Mrs Rawlins' father, E.H. Bates Harbin, wrote for this journal on 'Somerset Centenarians' just before his death. This sparked a flurry of notes, in reply, by other subscribers.

THE NAME OF THE POLDEN HILLS. The Polden Hills are a conspicuous ridge (some ten miles long) which separates Sedgemoor from the Glastonbury Levels, and is followed by a Roman road. The name has been obscure, barring the last part, which is Old English *dun* 'hill'. Yet we know the remainder was the old Celtic name of Greinton (ST 4136), attested in eighth-century records as *Pouelt*, *Poelt*, and *Pouholt* (the last showing assimilation to Old English *holt* 'wood').

Opinion has been divided on what this means. Ekwall long ago explained the first element of *Pouelt* or *Poelt* from Old Welsh *pou* 'country; dwelling-place', which is a borrowing of Latin *pagus* 'village; district'.¹ But he was challenged by Turner, who (on the basis of an isolated form *Bouelt*) explained the form instead as 'cow pasture', comparing *Builth (Wells)* in Powys (which means exactly that).² Jackson called Turner's etymology 'hardly probable', as it does not account for consistent p here.³ Mills nevertheless thinks it likely.⁴ Coates and Breeze consider it doubtful, giving slight preference to an equivalent of Modern Welsh *pau* 'country' and (lenited) *gwellt* 'grass' (with loss of g).⁵ Watts also explained the first element from Old Welsh *pou* 'country', with the second from English *holt* 'wood', unless that part is folk-etymology. But he did not rule out Turner's etymology 'cow pasture', despite Jackson's objections.⁶

This note makes a revised proposal. The first part of *Pouelt*, *Poelt*, *Pouholt* and the like is surely Old Cornish *pou* 'country' (perhaps also 'settlement'). Ekwall was right here. The second element has probably confused scholars because it seems to be a plural, apparently being the Old Cornish cognate of Middle Welsh *eillt* (later *aillt*) 'hills, slopes, cliffs'.⁷ The singular *allt* 'hillside, slope' is common on maps of Wales, with *Allt Fawr* 'great slope' near Ffestiniog, *Yr Allt-wen* 'the white slope' in Glamorgan, and so on. It even occurs in England, at (for example) *Alt*, a steep place two miles from Oldham, Lancashire.

On that basis *Polden*, attested in early records as *Poeldune* and *Poweldone*, may be taken as Old English *dun* 'hill' suffixed to a Celtic form meaning 'country of slopes' or, better, 'settlement

of slopes'; an apt description of Greinton, with hillsides to the north of it. It seems, then, that eighth-century *Pouelt* or *Poelt* was equivalent to early Modern Welsh *pau aillt* 'settlement of hillsides'; that it contains elements known elsewhere in Britain; and it has nothing to do with grass or pasture for cows.

Finally, another etymology should be mentioned if only to be rejected. Middle Welsh *eillt* exists both as a singular 'yeoman; villein' and as (rare) plural.⁸ 'Place of churls' might, in the light of English places called Charlton, Carlton, thus appear a possible explanation of *Pouelt* or *Poelt*. But this can fairly certainly be ruled out for three reasons: a Cornish cognate of *eillt* 'villein(s)' is not attested; the Welsh form seems unknown in toponyms, when *allt* 'hillside' and its Cornish and Breton cognates *als* and *aot* are common place-name elements; and 'settlement of hillsides' makes good sense at Greinton, which is situated at the foot of slopes.

After the above paper had been refereed, Dr R. W. Dunning alerted the writer to Lesley Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury* (Woodbridge, 1996), 210 n. 117. This cites Dr O. J. Padel for the very etymology from Celtic forms meaning 'region' and 'hill-slopes' given here. It is unfortunate that Dr Padel's explanation has been overlooked by later authorities. Hence, it seems, the need to repeat this etymology, which the writer arrived at independently.

1. E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford, 1936), 352.
2. A.G.C. Turner, 'Some Somerset Place-Names Containing Celtic Elements', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, xiv (1950-52), 113-19.
3. K.H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), 437 n. 1.
4. A.D. Mills, *A Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford, 1991), 78.
5. R. Coates and A. Breeze, *Celtic Voices, English Places* (Stamford, 2000), 333.
6. V. Watts, ed., *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Cambridge, 2004), 135.
7. J. Lloyd-Jones, *Geirfa Barddoniaeth Gynnar Gymraeg* (Caerdydd, 1931-63), 20.
8. *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1950-2002), 73; R. Bromwich, ed., *Trioedd Ynys Prydain*, 2nd edn (Cardiff, 1978), 179-81.

ANDREW BREEZE

A NOTE ON 'WESSEX'. In the Preface to the 1912 'Wessex Edition' of *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Hardy records that it was in the chapters of that novel 'as they appeared month by month in a popular magazine, that I first ventured to adopt the word 'Wessex' from the pages of early English history'. Sure enough, in the opening sentence in Chapter L of the book we are told that 'Greenhill was the Nijni Novgorod of South Wessex', which is intended, I suggest, to indicate a sheep fair of great size.

Derived from the name of Cerdic's sixth century West Saxon kingdom, the revival of the term 'Wessex' had surprising results. Some years after the first publication of his novel Hardy noted that 'the appellation which I had thought to reserve to the horizons and landscapes of a partly real, partly dream country, had become more and more popular as a practical provincial definition ; and the dream country has, be degrees, solidified into a utilitarian region which people can go to, to take house in, and write the papers from.' This employment of this term is, indeed, one of the very rare examples of literature directly effecting practical life.'

Where did Hardy get his idea? In his Preface he says, 'I believe I am correct in stating that, until the existence of this contemporaneous Wessex in place of the usual counties was announced in the present story ... it had never been heard of in fiction and current speech, if at all, and that the expression 'a Wessex peasant', or 'a Wessex custom', would therefore have been taken to nothing later than the Norman Conquest.'

Nevertheless, though his novel first appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine' in 1874, six years earlier Macmillan had brought out William Barnes's *Poems of Rural Life in Common English*, the Preface to which begins: 'As I think that some people, beyond the bounds of Wessex, would allow me the pleasure of believing that they have deemed the matter of my homely poems in our Dorset mother-speech to be worth their reading ...'. Of course, Hardy knew the works of Barnes well, and it is very likely that he was familiar with this little book. From it he could have picked up the term 'Wessex', though he later forgot its origin. So it would seem that whereas Hardy popularised the term, it was Barnes who first revived it.

ALAN CHEDZOY

VICAR'S WALK. The late Mrs S.W. Rawlins (*SDNQ* March 2007, p. 89) has bequeathed her Somerset books to the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. That many of them are duplicates reflects the keen interest that she and her father, Prebendary Bates Harbin, took in keeping the society's library well stocked while they were alive. One newcomer is *Vicar's Walk: a chronicle of certain adventures and mis-adventures, traffics and excursions, in the life of Enoch Saint, chorister, soldier, and dean's verger*, by Horace Annesley Vachell (Hodder

& Stoughton, 1933), an agreeable if now largely forgotten work of fiction set in early 20th century Wells, barely disguised as 'Fountains', as the author explains, to free him from the need for slavish topographical accuracy.

The interest in this copy lies in a few notes, in Mrs Rawlins' unmistakeable handwriting, on the endpapers. She knew the pre-war cathedral clergy at first hand, and must have been one of the last survivors of those who did so. This is what she has written:

'Anyone who remembers Dean Armitage Robinson who d. in about 1932 would know he was the origin of Dr Dyson [the Dean in *Vicar's Walk*]. His successor Dean Malden is less kindly treated as Dr Marsack. How far the 'Levites' were drawn from life I do not know. Mrs Vye certainly sounds true to life in Somerset. Dean Robinson did have a heart attack in the Cathedral but he recovered – better perhaps if Vachell's dramatic ending had occurred. The Dean subsequently had a stroke which left him speechless & apparently unable to think clearly. After some months in a private mental home his devoted wife (who does not appear in Vachell's story) took him to the small manor house she had bought for their project retirement & nursed him to the end which was not long delayed. It was said that at his funeral in the Cathedral the last hymn was unfinished for half the choir had broken down in tears. Since the book was written shortly after Dean Robinson's death, the portrait of his successor is an uncanny prophesy.*'

Evidently added later:

'Dean Robinson was Dean from 1911-31, not the same years as Dr Dyson – his predecessor Dean Jex Blake formerly Headmaster of Rugby was quite a different character & might have been known as 'the Autocrat of the Close' but I doubt, though he had 6 children, that he would have been so good at children's services. I do not recognise either of the Bishops.'

Added later still

'*As this was written in 1932 Vachell cannot have known much of Dean Malden. He seems to have drawn on Dean Jex Blake who had been an Headmaster & had 4 daughters. A country parson said of him 'he improved on acquaintance'.'

DAVID BROMWICH

QUERIES

GONE FOR A BURTON! or whatever happened to the music of Bournemouth's most prolific composer?

Natives of Bournemouth will know the remarkable position that Bournemouth, and its Municipal Orchestra, occupies in British musical history. This has been wonderfully explored by Stephen Lloyd in his 1995 book *Sir Dan Godfrey: Champion of British Composers*.

Some of the more remarkable of these were local, yet have completely disappeared from sight and sound. I have been trying to discover what happened to the most prolific composer that Dorset and Bournemouth has produced, and to all his orchestral music. He was Thomas Arthur Burton (1842-1936), organist and choir master, born Derby in 1842, and who died, aged 94, in Swanage 1936. This caused a first problem, as he outlived all his contemporaries, who had found his music, when performed by the Bournemouth orchestra, so compelling. Between 1895 and 1919, these comprised nearly 30 works, including a violin concerto, four symphonies, ten orchestral suites and two symphonic poems. He married in 1871 and had three children, who were equally musical. In 1928 he published *A List of [the musical] Compositions from the pen of Mr [T.A.] Burton* 'for private circulation', but no copy has ever been located. His children, in order of death, were Arthur Seymour Burton (1873-1951), who lived at 13 Coombe Gardens, Ensbury Park; Alice May Burton (1874-1956), who lived at 21 Boundary Road, Ensbury Park; and Ernest St John Burton (1875-1962) of Barton-on-Sea (musician, artist and geologist, whom I knew well, as he taught me geology). The first of these married the sister of another local composer, Cecil Bernard Southey-Frost (born c.1880), whose father William (1845-?) also had his orchestral compositions performed in Bournemouth between 1901 and 1907...

Can anyone please help me find the 1928 lost *List* or tell me what became of all the written music of these two? Any information on these would be welcomed by Professor Hugh Torrens, University of KEELE, Staffs, ST5 5BG, U.K., e mail gga10@keele.ac.uk, tel: 01782 583754 or 750689.

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