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Sub 0/5

Send History Society

(Formed January 1975)

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CHURCH PEWS AND SEATS

Whilst Ken Bourne and Jim Oliver were carrying out research in Send Church recently in preparation for the guide to the Church, which at the time of writing is with the printers, faint numerals about 4" high, stamped inside a circle at the end of some of the pews, were observed. These will be some of the numbers mentioned in the document in the church safe headed "Copy of an Account of the seats in Send Church number'd and affixed to different Houses, by Robert Boughton and John Hole, Churchwardens. August 8th, 1773". The document has been referred to before in Newsletters 24 and 31. In this article it is proposed to write a few words concerning church pews and seats so that readers may appreciate its significance.

To dispose of a preliminary matter first, the word "pew" derives from the Latin "podium", meaning an elevated place. As early as the 15th century it referred to a raised standing-place, stall or desk in a church. Later it came to mean a raised and often enclosed place for a great personage or family to sit in in church, but now it signifies a bench with a back, usually but not always, in a church. The word "seat", on the other hand, means, of course, anything that can be sat upon, and in a church can include pews as well for instance as benches against the walls or round the base of pillars. In spite of the use of both words in the title of the document, it probably refers only to pews.

The basic law relating to church seats was stated in one of the old law reports as follows: "By the general law, and of common right, all the pews in the parish church are the common property of the parish; they are for the use in common of the parishioners, who are entitled to be seated orderly and conveniently, so as best to provide for the accommodation of all. The distribution of seats rests with the Churchwardens as officers, and subject to the control of the Ordinary. Neither the Minister nor the Vestry have any right whatever to interfere with the Churchwardens in seating and arranging the parishioners as is often erroneously supposed". Individual rights to pews in ancient parish churches were illegal, and Churchwardens who attempted to enforce any sort of pew rent or payment for seats risked being reprimanded by the Ordinary. However, under the Church Building Acts, in churches for which commissioners of competent authority fixed a scale of pew rents the usual powers of the Churchwardens were to a degree restricted, and in certain cases the selling of pews was legalised by the Church Buildings Act 1818. Not withstanding the legal position, in early times the wardens construed their duties as allowing them to allocate specific seats to certain houses or families, and they often charged substantial rents for them. This resulted in much controversy and many court cases which decided, among other things, that nobody with a pew appurtenant to his house could let it to a person not resident in the parish, and that anybody quitting the parish lost any rights he may have had to a seat in the church. Addleshaw and Etchells in "The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship" state that pews became attached to houses if their occupants kept in repair either the pews or the aisles and chapels in which they stood. In his book "The Parish Chest", W. E. Tate quotes many interesting instances regarding presumed rights to pews. For example, at Bury St. Edmunds elections were held for the allocation of pews, with rival candidates issuing election cards. Pepys records in his diary that on Christmas Day 1661 he was kept waiting by the locked door of his pew. In Letter III of the Rev. Gilbert White's "Antiquities of Selborne" (which this Society is visiting shortly), published in 1788, he writes "Nothing can be more irregular than the pews of this church, which are of all dimensions and heights, being patched up according to the fancy of the owners."

Dr. J. C. Cox in "English Church Fittings" suggests that the right of the "Squire" to a pew or other seat in the Chancel often attaches to him not as rector, but as patron, and that this was recognised in the diocese of Exeter in the 13th

century. Another interesting suggestion by Dr. Cox (in the light of the fact that there were formerly parclose screens around side chapels in Send Church) is that manor pews had their origin in the parcloses surrounding the chantries of manorial lords. The history relating to pews is complicated and by no means clear. It is perhaps best summarised by Addleshaw & Etchells quoted above.

In a talk given by Marjorie Sex to the Send Residents' Association in 1975, and written up in Newsletter 16, she recalled that the Lancaster family occupied the pew in the chancel of Send Church near to where their plaques are now, and woe betide any of the staff of Sendholme who were not present in church for the service.

In a notebook which the executors of the estate of the late Miss Eveline Lancaster gave to the Rev. Garrett, Arthur Lancaster, who came to Send about 1896, recorded that in 1890 Mr. R. Boughton Smith made a claim that the first pew in the nave on the north side was a "faculty" pew belonging to the estate of the late Mr. Boughton. He noted that the claim was not in any way proved and lapsed. The correspondence on it was at that time in the church safe.

There were personal name plates on the pews at and near the front of St. Peter's Church, Old Woking, until about the 1940's. Margaret Bayliss recalls that her family had one and that they cost a guinea a year, payable to the churchwardens.

The 1773 Account of the seats in Send Church indicates that the seats there were numbered up to 19, and allocated to the owners of particular houses and where appropriate to the tenants who occupied them. Men and women were segregated. As recorded in N/L 30, Robert Boughton of Griggs (now Boughton Hall), who was a churchwarden and co-signatory of the Account of Seats, had seat No. 1.

A seating plan of the 1860's in the late Mr. A. H. Lancaster's papers shows the seats by then numbered up to 21. No. 1 was still allocated to Boughton Hall, but the others where allocated did not correspond with 1773. Segregation in the 1860's is between owners and servants whose seats were towards the back of the church. An illustration of the 1860's plan and the 1773 Account will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter together with a brief analysis of the remaining pew numbers.

The old enclosed family pews were replaced by the Victorian open arrangement of pews still in use today, largely as a result of pressure from Dr. J. M. Neale and his fellow Cambridge ecclesiologists. Dr. Neale started his career as a curate at St. Nicholas, Guildford, but was relieved of the position by Dr. Sumner, Bishop of Winchester, who found him too revolutionary.

Les Bowerman

FURTHER NOTES ON THE POOR LAWS - RESIDUAL FEARS

A discussion with my father just before production of the last issue of the Newsletter illustrates the effect of the poor laws referred to therein. It seems that in the mid 1920's my grandfather retired, and requested allowances from his not well-off children rather than go "on the parish". His belief was that this would involve his forced return from Birmingham to Shipley, Sussex, which he had left in disgrace in 1884 (just after the windmill visited by the Society in 1977 was opened), with my grandmother at about the time of their marriage. She came from well above his station, being the daughter of the schoolmaster at the school opened about 15 years earlier, at which he claimed he was the first pupil enrolled. That the fears described to me should exist so long after the Act ceased to apply indicates the effect it had on the poorer members of society.

Geoff Parker

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 18th May ... Please note that the visit to Selborne previously advertised for this date has had to be postponed to Sunday, 1st June.

Sunday, 25th May ... Natural history walk in the Papercourt-Broadmead area. Meet at 2.30 p.m. at the Manor House, Send Marsh.

Sunday, 1st June ... All day visit to the Selborne area, Hampshire, to view the home and haunts of the 18th century naturalist the Rev. Gilbert White, and other places of interest in the area. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Manor House, Send Marsh.

Thursday, 19th June ... Open meeting at the Church Room at 8 p.m., when the Viscountess Hanworth, FSA, will speak on Roman Villas in Surrey.

Sat./Sun., 28th/29th June ... Ripley Section of the Southern Veteran Cycle Club Camping Weekend on Ripley Green. Interested spectators welcomed.

Thursday, 10th July ... Meet at 7.15 p.m. at St. Peter's Church, Old Woking for a look at the buildings, etc., of historic interest in the original town of Woking.

Thursday, 18th September ... Open meeting at the Church Room at 8 p.m.. Speaker to be announced later.

Saturday, 28th September ... Surrey Local History Symposium at Dorking Halls on "Sports in Surrey".

Thursday, 6th November ... Open meeting at the Church Room at 8 p.m., when Dr. Robinson, the County Archivist, will speak about the work of the Record Office, drawing as far as possible from records relating to Send and the area around it.

Thursday, 11th December ... Annual social evening at the Church Room.

Thursday, 15th January, 1981 ... Open meeting at the Church Room, when Mr. Bernard Pardoe will speak about the history of Chertsey.

FARNHAM CASTLE

Our visit to Farnham Castle on 19th April proved to be very popular. Two guides, who belong to the Farnham Museum Society, voluntarily gave their services, each showing a large group of us around the castle.

The keep was the first part to be built, about the year 1138, by Bishop Henry de Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror. This is now in ruins and in the hands of the Department of the Environment, but the Great Hall and Norman Chapel, built soon after, are in very good condition. During the next 400 years additions were made to these buildings, giving us Farnham Castle as we see it today.

The castle belonged to, and was lived in by, the Bishops of Winchester until 1926 when it passed on to the Bishops of Guildford, who lived there for 30 years. Since then it has been, and is used as, the Centre for International Briefing.

Bishop Morley, during 1662-1684, spent £30,000, a great sum of money then, on modernising these buildings. He raised the ceiling of the Great Hall and also built a wall containing a fireplace on the line of one aisle. This has a very impressive carved surround. On each side are the arms of the Bishops - the sword of St. Paul and the keys of St. Peter.

The Great Stair leading from the Great Hall was also put in by Bishop Morley. On each side of the main uprights are carved swags of fruits of the Earth, possibly carved by the pupils of the great Grinling Gibbons; the work is of very high quality. Among the fruit are pea pods. We were told by the guide that the apprentices would carve these as closed pods until they were paid, and we were very pleased to see the finished work had open pea pods. This may not be true, but it is an amusing little tale.

We then saw the Bishop's Chapel, still a consecrated chapel, and used by the students of many religions for worship. This too has very beautiful carvings, the walls are in panels of flowers and leaves and headed by cherubs. The style is very different from the Norman Chapel with its very thick stone walls, pillars and arches.

Very carefully, four at a time, we crawled through the roof of the Drawing Room, once known as the Bishop's Camera. We were shown the 13th century scissor-braced roof, one of the finest in the country. The Bishop would have entertained his private guests in this room rather than in the Great Hall. Imagining this room, without a ceiling, it would have looked like a huge barn.

The Norman Kitchen is now used as the students' dining room, and is the most unaltered part of the castle, with the possible exception of the Norman Chapel. The bread oven is still in a corner and a few hand moulded tiles are on the floor.

Outside we looked at the Tower, built by William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, about 1470. This was built by bricklayers brought over from Holland because the English did not have the skills, but the bricks were made in Farnham. They are the red bricks that one sees everywhere in this district. On the south side of the Tower are two sundials with Latin mottoes, "PRAETEREUNT" (they pass by) and "IMPUTANTUR" (they are reckoned unto us), referring to the minutes of time.

Our time spent at the castle passed very quickly, everyone of us completely absorbed. After lunch some of us had a browse round the Museum and the Maltings.

Gloria Henson

WANBOROUGH BY R. G. VEVERS

Many members will recall the visit of the Society two years ago to the unspoilt farming hamlet of Wanborough on the northern slopes of the chalk ridge mid-way between Farnham and Guildford. On Thursday evening, April 17th, Mr & Mrs R. G. (Jock) Vevers left their sheep and their farm at Puttenham to come to speak and show slides of Wanborough, with particular emphasis on the last years of the 18th century when a young farm foreman, James Greenwood, ran the 1000 acre farm for the tenant, Morris Birkbeck, under the ownership of Thomas, 2nd Earl of Onslow.

In the spring of 1797 in the opening years of the war with Napoleon, Greenwood was the successful applicant for the post of Bailiff at Wanborough. Still in his early twenties, he came from Essex stock and was a member of the Society of Friends in that County. The reference which he brought to the Elders of the Quakers at

Guildford is couched in delightful language of that day and assures them that he is diligent, honest and God-fearing, and free of matrimonial entanglements. Greenwood settled quickly at Wanborough, and must have been educated to a high standard for that time, for whilst there he kept a Diary in grammatical English in a good practical hand, recording the day-to-day working of the farm. Here his good references to the Elders at Guildford manifest themselves, for it is obvious that he himself was able to perform all farm tasks. A foreman of this calibre is always respected by master and men, for the men know he is unlikely to ask them to do anything he cannot do himself.

James Greenwood's diary lay hidden in a desk at Wanborough Manor Farmhouse for a century and a half, and was eventually discovered by Miss Perkins, a member of the family farming Wanborough in the 1950's, and so the chain of investigation of which Mr Vevers spoke began. Greenwood's diary gave details of field names, many still in use - "Barn Piece" and "Garstons" - and speaks of ploughing there himself in preparation for beans - "The horses going well". He speaks also of the great activity at haymaking and harvest, when casual labour was brought in, housed and fed, and paid at an agreed rate. This rate was later reduced if the men worked too fast and earned too much. A man mowing two acres a day from 4 a.m. till dusk with a gallon of beer is recorded with satisfaction. Women and children were employed, as general practice, on the most menial work, usually hand picking the weed seeds from the seed corn, stone picking in the fields, and spreading droppings in the pastures.

Mr Vevers laid this vivid picture of the practices of those days against a backcloth of present day mechanical farming at Wanborough, with the present labour force of two or three compared with ten or rwelve, with women, children and casuals in addition in Greenwood's day. Details were also given of the use made of local markets at Farnham and Guildford, and a seedsman at Godalming, and mention made of the shepherd and his boy driving fat sheep to London, setting out on Friday or Saturday, to arrive at Smithfield on Monday, having spent the preceding Sunday night in pasture where Paddington Station now stands.

Homesickness seems to have overpowered James Greenwood, and in a few years he returned to Essex, this time accompanied by a suitable report from the Quakers at Guildford stating that he was clean living and free of marriage commitments. Sadly in later years he seems to have dropped his high principles, for he left the Society of Friends, and indulged in a riotous intemperate and adulterous life.

Morris Birkbeck, the man who employed Greenwood, was a capable and highly respected farmer, and played the host to agriculturalists who came to see his farming methods on open days at Wanborough. His daughter records his pleasure in his pioneer work in fertilising, draining, and horse-powered threshing, and also his pride in his flock of Dorset Horn Sheep. In later life he emigrated with his friend, George Flower of the brewing family at Stratford-on-Avon, to America where he took up a vast tract of land, calling it Wanborough after the small part of the most English of landscapes under the Hogs Back. Birkbeck took with him some members of the hamlet community at Wanborough, and their successors in the New World still come from America to visit the place of their origin.

This talk was well illustrated, and shown was the present farm, the sheep dip of Birkbeck's day, the diary in facsimile, and some hedgerow details. Mr Vevers spoke briefly of documentary evidence of one Wanborough hedge which was 800 years old. He had confirmed this by field walking, using Professor Hosking's method of dating from plant species. He also mentioned the bank and hedge bordering the A31 on the Hogs Back, which is the extreme southern limit of the Great Windsor Chase laid down in the Norman period. This hedge contains 13 varieties of hedgerow shrub, and must be almost 1000 years old.

This lecture was a fine example of the mass of information which the local historian can extract with luck, perseverance and enthusiasm, coupled with experience.

Jim Oliver

NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

Those who attended the walk held on the warm and sunny afternoon of 13th April were well rewarded. Starting from the shopping parade, we heard the willow-warbler's song as we walked between Send Heath ponds. The real excitement of the day came when we heard for the first time this year the cuckoo calling loudly, from the direction of Sendholme.

We watched a mandarin duck on the River Wey, not far from Triggs Lock, and saw a green woodpecker fly over. We also heard a blackcap in a tree at the bottom of Send Hill. The best sighting of the afternoon was a pair of nuthatches in an oak tree along Send Hill.

We noticed many common spring flowers, including red and white deadnettle, celandine, speedwell, shepherds purse, etc., and also saw some Solomon's seals and lungwort.

Our next walk is planned for Sunday, 24th May, starting from Send Marsh Green at 2.30 p.m. There should be plenty to see, so do come along for a pleasant afternoon's walk. We shall be walking along footpaths in the Papercourt Farm, Tannery and Broadmead area, and also the towpath by the Wey Navigation; we will be pleased to welcome any interested member.

On Sunday, 22nd June, we are meeting at 2.30 p.m. at Send Marsh Green for Ken Dawson to lead an orchid spotting walk at the Sheepleas. Please make a special note of this because it was arranged too late to be included in Forthcoming Events.

Anne Bowerman

ORNITHOLOGICAL REPORT

March and April are interesting months birdwise due to the fact that winter and summer visitors can be seen side by side.

March began quietly with 4-6 brambling and up to 15 cormorants at Papercourt. Duck numbers were still quite high with up to 100 each of tufted duck and pochard. There were also 4 shoveler on the 2nd. A surprise visitor on the 9th was a winter plumaged dunlin, which was seen off by a lapwing. A green sandpiper was in residence at Ripley Sewage Farm that day and was joined on the 23rd by the first returning redshank, while cormorants dropped to a flock of six.

Spring really began on March 29th when four little ringed plover passed through, and chiffchaff and willow warbler arrived and began singing. On the 30th a summer plumaged water pipit was in the area, and it was still present on April 3rd.

The first swallow arrived at Papercourt on 2nd April and sand martins were present at Send Heath Ponds later that day. On the 6th two tawny owls were calling along Send Road after dark. On the 11th two green sandpipers were present at Ripley Sewage Farm and the last cormorant departed North over Papercourt; however a flock of fieldfare were still feeding in the area.

The first (?) cuckoo in Send was heard calling at Sendholme on April 13th. A pair of redshank arrived at Ripley Sewage Farm on April 19th and were seen together with two green sandpipers: at Papercourt three little ringed plover and a summer plumaged dunlin completed the wader scene.

The month finished with some new arrivals on the 27th: whitethroat, another cuckoo, and the first turtle dove and swift.

David Nurney

A cuckoo, presumably the same one, was heard at Sendholme on 12th April.

Chris Parker

ALDERTONS, SEND MARSH

The Buildings Group surveyed this house on 15th March 1980, by kind permission of the owner, Mr Shilton.

On first sight the construction of the building was difficult to identify, but on closer inspection a Medieval 15th century timber-framed house was found to form the ogiginal core, to which extensions have been added over the centuries.

This original build lies approximately East to West and is of four bays indicated by the principal uprights, portions of which are still apparent together with some original bracing. The bay widths from East to West are approximately 11' 0", 13' 0", 7' 6" and 14' 0". It is thought that the East 11 ft bay would probably have been the service area housing the buttery and the pantry, the West 14 ft bay would have been the parlour and the other two bays the open hall, the open fire being situated within the 7' 6" smoke bay.

The present chimney stack was probably inserted during the late 16th century within the original smoke bay. At the same time cross beams would have been inserted, the floor joists laid and the main hall floored over. The present stairs to the new first floor would then have been constructed at the rear of the chimney stack with the entrance door on the opposite side in the traditional position.

The 13 ft bay shows an original cross beam with 15 floor joists laid flat, the beam showing signs of blacksmith's reinforcement at one end. The upper portion of the staircase balustrade is interesting and is thought to be Jacobean.

In common with many old buildings a timber-framed extension has been added on the North elevation, as indicated by a principal upright erected adjacent to the original house: this was perhaps for the use of the aged farmer or his widow when the son took over. Within this area there is a nice example of floor construction with main beam and floor joists showing carpenters' fitting marks consecutively numbered. This extension has been further extended at some recent date.

Other extensions to this original core of the building have been added at various fairly recent dates in a sympathetic manner which does not detract from the original style of the building.

D. Bromley

SECRETARY'S REPORT

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Mr Paul G. R. Marshall, 63 Warren Farm, Pyrford, Woking.
Mrs H. Sanger, Willingham Cottage, Farm Lane, Send.
Mr D. Nurney, 89 Linden Way, Send Marsh.
Mrs E. Mark, Whitehill Lodge, Portsmouth Road, Ripley.

Total paid up membership stands at 54 double and 41 single subscriptions.

The University of Surrey

Notice has been received of an Open Day at Surrey University, Stag Hill, Guildford, to be held on Saturday, 17th May, from 2 to 6 p.m. Admission is free and no ticket is required. There will be demonstrations, exhibitions, talks, question sessions, music, drama, sport - opportunities to try for oneself.

Surrey Archaeological Society Symposium

The Surrey Archaeological Society Excavations Committee is holding a symposium at Dorking Halls, also on Saturday, 17th May, commencing at 10.30. Talks will cover such diverse subjects as Recent Discoveries in the Godalming Area, Blechingley Castle, Place-Names in Surrey, etc. There will also be exhibitions of recent work by groups throughout the county. The charge for admission is £1 at the door, but tickets may be bought in advance for 70p. Afternoon tea at 50p may be ordered in advance. Anybody wishing to order tickets or tea may do so by giving names and money to me no later than 10th May, or direct to Mrs K. Needham, Castle Arch, Guildford, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope.

PLACE NAMES - SEND HEATH PONDS

In N/L 28, reference was made to the water-filled worked-out sand pits on Send Heath between Send Road and Potters Lane. It was pointed out that although they were known to older residents as Spooner's Pit or Pond, and Athertons Pits or Ponds, after those who excavated them, a notice has recently been erected by Woking Angling Society proclaiming them to be Cobbetts Lakes and Langhams Lake. We implicitly deplored this at the time, since this is a name which has no historic connection with Send.

It will be noted that in the natural history reports in this issue the name Send Heath Ponds appears twice. This is probably the best solution to the question of what they should be called nowadays, since they are sometimes referred to in Send as "the ponds", this area was of course the centre of Send Heath and is designated as such on maps, and it is the name by which they appear in published ornithological reports.

Les Bowerman