

THE STAPLEY DIARY.

BY THE REV. EDWD. TURNER, M.A.

THE following Diary is, for the most part, a continuation of that kept by Richard Stapley, of Hickstead Place, in Twineham, and given in Vol. II., pp. 102 to 128 of the Sussex Archæological Collections. It is there stated that, having lived and died a bachelor, the Hickstead Estate passed, at his decease in 1724, to his brother Anthony, with whose memoranda this supplemental Diary commences; and after his decease in 1733, it is carried on by his son, John; finishing with the coming into possession of the same estate by his grandson, Richard, the eldest son of this John Stapley, and the last male heir of the family. The record of this event is, as far as I have been able to discover, the last entry in any of their books. No other memoranda of any Archæological interest are to be found. The last Stapley possessor was probably too much taken up with the daily cares and concerns of his own agricultural life to be able to find time to chronicle passing events; the books of accounts which he left behind him, bearing ample testimony to his diligence and perseverance as a farmer.

A few of the earlier memoranda are, it will be observed, of a date anterior to the death of Richard Stapley; which is to be accounted for in this way. Richard's health, after a life of great activity and usefulness, began to fail, and infirmity to come upon him about ten or twelve years before his death; on which account he requested his brother Anthony, who had previously resided at Cuckfield, to remove himself and his family to Hickstead, and to reside with him. This he did in the year 1713, at which time Richard Stapley's regular Diary, except as far as his own private affairs were concerned, breaks off, and his brother Anthony's begins. The Diaries, however, of Anthony Stapley and his son are not so full,—they do not record so minutely the

events of any interest occurring in the neighbourhood,—as Richard Stapley was in the habit of doing; who appears to have noted down, with great diligence, every thing, both public and private, in which he took part, or which came within his knowledge, as it happened. Richard's Diary was entered in an old interleaved almanack; while Anthony's and his son's were kept in their different account books. Of these I have selected the most striking occurrences, omitting all such as have reference to household receipts and payments only; and to these I have added a few explanatory remarks where the event recorded seemed to require it, and I thought it might be useful to do so. The Diary is as follows:—

“September 18th.—My son, John Stapley's wife, was born on this day, but in what year I do not know. Her father was married the first day of August, 1684.”¹

“Mem.—That Mr. Edward Hinde, Rector of Twineham, died the 13th, and was buried the 17th of February, 1684-5. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Sheward, the curate, the text being selected from the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, and the 21st verse. He had been in an infirm state of health for some time before he died. He and my brother Richard fell out the year before, about the tythe of the Poynings-wish mead, which ended in an expensive lawsuit, in which my brother was successful, and from the effects of which the poore man seemed never to recover. My brother too, had to sue him for the part of the expenses, which were given against him. All this was too much for a constitution otherwise shattered and impaired; and he died not many months after. His death was for some time a great trouble to my mother and brother. Mr. Hinde was a conscientious man; and as long as he was in

¹ The lady here alluded to, was Miss Sarah Savage, the daughter of a gentleman of that name, who in a later memorandum is described as of Sydney, in Cuckfield, in which parish the Savages appear to have been ancient residents and landowners. Of this family was Alan Savage, who in the year 1659, gave, Horsfield tells us, £100 to the parish of Cuckfield, to be laid out in land, the rent of which, as it accrued, he directs

to be expended annually in bread, and given on Sundays to six poor people, resident in the parish, and not receiving parochial relief. As the money was not invested in the father's life time, it was returned to the son, who, in lieu of it, granted an annuity of £5 per annum out of the rent of lands in Cuckfield belonging to him, from which it is, I believe, still paid.

good health, an active parish priest. The attendance at his funeral, which was very large, shewed the respect in which he was held."²

"August 6th, 1690.—Mr. Thomas Hoadley built a new lew end to old Thomas Jupp's house, near Staire Bridge. It was reared on this day by John Hazlegrove, carpenter, and he was to have for it £5. I note this, because it was partly made of some timber I sold to him the yeare before, and which grew in the Laine's Wood."

The next memorandum is dated 1713, the year Anthony Stapley went to reside at Hickstead, and has reference to two properties in Twineham, called Wapses and Colwells, which are described as at that time belonging to James Chripps, of Wyndhams, but which subsequently came by purchase into the possession of the Stapley family, and one of which—Wapses, if not both, now belongs to their descendants, the Woods. Beyond the statement of the fact of the Chripps' possession at the above date of these two properties, the memorandum is of no interest.

"1714. Queen Anne died, August the first, and King George was proclaimed the same day."

"August 8th.—Went to Bolney Church, where Mr. Ingram preached a sermon on the Queen's death. Having expatiated on her character, both publick and private, he exhorted us to be loyal and peaceable under the new sovereign, and to continue steadfast in the Protestant faith. The church, which had just been repaired and beautified, was full in every part, some who had come a distance to attend the service not being able to find room. This, too, Mr. Ingram touched upon in his discourse, earnestly setting forth the obligations parishes are under of keeping their churches neat and in good repair, as befits the houses of God. The advice was good, and attentively listened to; and may we all profit by what we this day heard."

Two memoranda next occur, of no other importance, than that in one Mr. William Sheward is described as Rector of Twineham; and in the other Mr. James Wood is stated to be the occupier of the Place lands.

² For an account of the expenses of this suit see the Diary of Richard Stapley, Vol. II., pp. 109, 10.

"1716, August 24th.—Received back from Lewes my silver-mounted bridle and saddle, and the saddle cloth, which required to be new embroidered. They were brought back by Mr. Lindfield's man, and I gave him a shilling for his trouble. I was to have had them ready for the assizes, but did not get them in time. My silver spurs were remounted at the same time."

"1717. A sad accident happened in the house of John Morley, the carpenter, living at Twineham Green, by which his daughter, Mary Morley, aged about eighteen, being all the children he had, met with her death. As he was bringing his gun, ready charged, out of the shop into the kitchen, something took hold of the hammer that it went off, and shot his said daughter in the bowells, as she was there sitting and engaged in spinning woollen, that she died on the spot. From sudden death, good Lord deliver us! This happened October 26th."

"1718. There was a Court holden in July at my house by Thomas Medley Esq., Steward thereof, for my Manor of Twineham."³

"1719. My brother Richard's infirmities are growing so fast upon him, that he is now unable to transact the business he has heretofore been accustomed to do. I have, therefore, begun this year to receive his rents for him, and to look to all household matters, which I shall probably be obliged to do, so long as it shall please God to continue him here, which the doctor thinks cannot be long. He sometimes talks of leaving Hickstead; but this I will not listen to. My wish is for him to continue till death in the ancient seat of his ancestors."

"1721. This year Twineham Church was again repaired, and some of the pews were rebuilt. This was the case with our Place pew; and one tree, cut in the further field, was more than sufficient to supply timber for it."

"1723. My brother is now quite paralyzed, so that he is unable to do anything for himself. I have therefore this year been appointed churchwarden of Twineham, in his stead,

³ This manor had been in the family of Stapley from the time of Queen Elizabeth, and was anciently held of the Honour and Barony of Lewes in free and

common soccage, by the service of finding the Lord in a pair of gold spurs, and the payment of sixpence.

he being obliged to discontinue the office, from inability any longer to discharge its duties, after having done so for many years. May I be able to do so as diligently and conscientiously as he did!"

"1724, April 29th.—My poore wife was this day struck with palsy."

"My brother Richard died, and I this year became the actual possessor of the Hickstead estate, having, by his incapacity been nominally so six or eight years before. Never lived a better man than he was, or one more beloved or respected; and my heart's wish is that the remainder of my life may be passed in as upright and exemplary a manner; and may my end be as peaceful and happy as his was. His loss will be much felt in the neighbourhood; for he was not only socially and hospitably inclined towards his neighbours, but his heart and hand were ever open to the calls and wants of charity. Few applied to him for relief in vain. His delight was to do good, as became a man of his rank and station in life; and that he did so to the best of his ability all that were acquainted with him can testify. In the sermon which Mr. Healey preached at his funeral, he bore this just testimony to his character."

"My brother was buried in Twineham Church, and the expenses of his funeral came to £32. 8s. 7d. By his own desire it was conducted in as plain and quiet a manner as could well be."

In the four succeeding years, nothing is noted worthy of observation. The memoranda which I find made, chiefly relate to private receipts and expenditure.

"1729, November 20th.—My wife having lingered on to this time, died at 8 o'clock this morning, after we had been married fifty-four years and some odd months; for we were married at Wadhurst, on the 24th day of August, 1675, by Mr. J. Smith, Clerk, as appears by his certificate in my bureau drawer. She was buried in the Church of Twineham, November the 25th, next to her daughter, Jane Streatfeild."

It will be seen by the genealogical table of this Hickstead branch of the Stapley family, that Jane, the youngest daughter of this Anthony Stapley, married Mr. Richard

Streatfeild, of Cowden, in Kent. She lived a year only after her marriage, having died in giving birth to her first child, which survived its mother a few days only.

“The charges of my wife’s burying and sickness were—

	£	s.	d.
For a coffin to Wood of Hurst - - - - -	01	10	00
For grave and knell to Hillman - - - - -	00	16	00
To Hillman’s wife for things, and sending at several times - - - - -	00	10	00
To Mr. Healey for sermon, grave, and affidavit - - - - -	01	03	00
To Mr. Durrant for gloves and hatbands - - - - -	09	00	00
To Mary for sending - - - - -	00	10	06
To Kidd for wine, but it was not all drank, and four broken glasses - - - - -	03	19	00
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	17	08	06
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Wine seems to have been a considerable item of expense at the funerals of the better class which took place at this period. We have here £3 19s. 0d. charged for this article, and at the funeral of Anthony Stapley himself, the husband, there is, as we shall presently see, a much larger item of expenditure for the same article brought into the accounts; £6 1s. 0d. being the charge upon that occasion. Wine appears at this time not to have been a very costly article of consumption; for the claret sent as a present by Richard Stapley to Mr. West and Mr. Gratwick, who were engaged as assessors in the suit, *Hinde v. Stapley*, to which I have alluded, is charged 14s. 6d. per dozen only. At this price then, the consumption of wine upon these mournful occasions, if all that was provided was customarily consumed, which doubtless was expected to be the case, must have been very considerable. For though it is stated in the account just given of the expenses of Mrs. Stapley’s funeral, that the whole of the wine provided was not consumed, we are not told the exact quantity that was left. Probably therefore it was not much. This, coupled with the four broken glasses, would seem to imply that these family funereal gatherings were made the occasions of some excess, if not of much jollity. The wine being brought into the account as a special provision, naturally leads to the supposition, that it was needful so to provide, in consequence of no great stock being kept in the cellars of the Sussex gentry at this time.

“A stone was put over my wife’s grave by William

Hazlegrove, of Shoreham, stonecutter, which cost me £5, as by his bill appears, which was discharged the same day."

The name of Anthony Stapley's wife before marriage was Allen; and at the time of her death, she must have been 83 years old.

"December the 12th.—Paid to my son, John Stapley, and to my grandson, Richard, seventy broad pieces of gold, of my wife's money, which she ordered me to pay. I paid it as follows:—viz., to the said John, sixty pieces, and to his son Richard, ten pieces, whereof every one is worth 25s."

"1730, October the 8th.—Anthony Stapley went to board and school at Bighthelmstone. He boards at Thomas Browne's, at 4s. 6d. per week; and goes to school to John Grover, to learn to read and write, and cast accounts."⁴

This Anthony was probably one of the younger sons of the John Stapley mentioned in the preceding memorandum. He subsequently settled at Arundel, and was ancestor of the Stapleys of South Berstead and Bognor.

"1731.—A very dry year."

"John Cheale departed this life at Cambridge, January 17th, of small-pox; and was buried at Shermanbury, in Sussex, the 21st day of the same instant."⁵

"February 3rd.—Anthony Stapley came away from Lindfield."

What Anthony Stapley is here alluded to, I am unable to discover. Of the Framfield Stapleys, Anthony was the usual Christian name of the eldest son. But of the Hickstead branch of the same family, this was not the case. Of this, there are two Anthonies only of which we have any

⁴ See Worthies of Sussex, pages 330—331.

⁵ The Cheales were an opulent family for many years resident at Shiprods, in the parish of Henfield. Their burying place was Shermanbury, into which parish their property extended, and where many of the family are interred. By the marriage of Anne, the only daughter of Mr. Philip Cheale, with Mr. Robert Hoffman, of London, the estate passed to him; and again by the marriage of a female of the Hoffman family, with a Mr. Faulconer, into the family of the

late Mr. Robert Hoffman Faulconer of the firm of Hoper and Faulconer, with whom it now remains. The inscription on the mural tomb placed to the memory of the Mr. John Cheale, whose death is here noticed, is as follows:—"John Cheale, a Fellow-Commoner of Trinity College, Cambridge, died October 17th, 1731, and was buried in the Church of Shermanbury, aged 18." His mother was one of the two daughters and co-heiresses of John Gratwick, Esqre., of Shermanbury Park.

knowledge; one of whom was resident at Hickstead, and the other, we have just been told, was at this time a school boy at Brighton, having commenced his education the year before. He might possibly have been a member of a collateral branch of the Framfield Stapleys, resident for a time at Lindfield. The memorandum referring to him is not very explicit.

"1732. August 2nd.—Parson Staples, of East Grinstead, departed this life, having been taken off by small-pox, and was buried the 5th, at night."

This Parson Staples was probably one of the Stapley family, Staples being the original mode of spelling the name; and hence the Staple in the hands of a Savage adopted as the early family crest. But to which branch of the family the Parson belonged, whether to the Framfield or the Hickstead, we have no means of judging, his Christian name not being mentioned. Long after the change of the name into Stapleigh, which afterwards became Stapley, some branches of the family rigidly adhered to the more ancient form of Staples, to which Parson Staples might have belonged.

"November the 26th.—Henry Lintott died, age 32, and was buried at Bolney; James Ingram preached his funeral sermon. He was the largest man that ever was seen."⁶

"November 17th.—Sir Harry Goring was buried at Billingshurst."⁷

I may here, perhaps, be permitted to remark, as bearing upon the cost of some of the principal articles of consumption at this period of the Stapley Diary, as it is given by the writer of two papers in the "Cornhill Magazine" (Thackeray), entitled "The Four Georges," and which he quotes from a contemporaneous chronicle. Wheat, he says, was from 25s. to 28s., and barley from 20s. to 22s. per quarter; best loaf sugar was 9½d. per lb. But tea was very high, the prices of the different kinds being—Bohea, from 12s. to 14s.; Pekoe, 18s.; and Hyson, 25s. per lb. Tea, then, could not possibly have been consumed at this time, except in the

⁶ For an account of the Lintott family, see Vol. VIII., pp. 275-6.

⁷ This Sir Harry was Lord of the Manor of Twineham Benefields, having become the possessor of it by marriage

with Mary, the daughter and coheirress of Sir John Covert, of Slaugham Place, and it has continued in the family of Goring, of Highden, ever since.

houses of the more opulent class, and not generally even in these.

“December the 22nd.—My father, Mr. Anthony Stapley, departed this life, after a short illness, between twelve and one o'clock in the forenoon, and was buried the 26th day of the same instant, in the Church of Twineham, aged 79 years. Mr. Ralph Healey, the rector, preached his funeral sermon. The text was from the 57th chapter of Isaiah, the first and part of the second verses.”

With this memorandum, the Diary of John Stapley, the son and heir of the above-named Anthony, deceased, begins. And in continuation, it states—

“January the 9th.—Paid Timothy Browne for the hat bands used at my father's funeral, at five shillings and sixpence a piece; and for the pall, and gloves, and shroud, and sheet, £20 8s. 1d. And I paid at the same time, £6 1s. 0d. for wine.”

“January the 10th.—Mr. Thomas Butcher departed this life about eleven o'clock in the night time, and was buried the 13th of the same instant; and Mr. Ralph Healey preached his funeral sermon, the text being the third verse of the one hundred and forty-sixth Psalm. His age was sixty three years and some odd days.”⁸

“January the 28th.—Received from the furnace at Buxted, the new Brand-dogs for the Hall at Hickstead, which my father, Mr. Anthony Stapley, had ordered sometime before his death, on which were cast the Stapley coat of arms, with his initials A. S. over it, and the date 1732 below. For the casting of these I paid £2 4s. 8d., and two shillings and four pence more for the expense of getting them home.”

For these brand-dogs (andirons) I have enquired in vain at Hickstead. The present owner of the property knows nothing of them.

⁸ The Butchers were a family of good Yeomanry extraction; and the owners of the Newhouse property, in the parish of Hurstpierpoint, and of the Westlands, in that of Twineham. Richard Stapley mentions in his Diary, under the date of April the 19th, 1692, having received

and held, probably as a trustee, the deed of settlement of the Newhouse estate, upon this Thomas Butcher, by Richard Butcher, the father. Thomas, whose death is here noticed, was the younger of the two sons.

"1733, April the 5th.—Mr. Ingram and his wife were married at Chailey."⁹

"1734. May the 26th.—Jacob Harris, a Jew pedlar by trade, and travelling the country with his wares, having murdered at Ditchling Common, one Miles, his wife, and maid, and then plundered the house, was captured at Turner's Hill by John Oliver and his man, and committed by Mr. Sergesson, before whom he was taken, to Horsham Gaol. Having been found guilty of the offence at the assizes, and condemned to die, he was hung at Horsham, August 31st, and his body afterwards removed to Ditchling Common to be hung up on a gibbet near to the house in which the murder was committed, the 2nd day of September. Many went to see him hanging; and Mr. Healey preached an impressive sermon upon it the Sunday following."

About five or, perhaps, six feet of this gibbet still remain above the surface of the soil in which it is fixed. All gibbets are imagined to possess a power of enchantment—some being found to be a remedy for, or preservative against, one kind of disorder, and some another. This at Ditchling Common is supposed by the inhabitants of the surrounding district to possess a peculiar preventive virtue against aching teeth, a small piece of it carried in the pocket being an effectual remedy against that racking disorder. Instances are quoted of its complete efficacy in such cases, parties being referred to who have tried the remedy for years with unfailling success. Whether they might not have been as free from pain in the teeth if they had not adopted this charm, is a point which it would be difficult now to decide. An excellent old lady, and an aunt of my mother, who lived in her single, married, and afterwards widowed state, for upwards of eighty years, at no great distance from this post, had so much faith in it, that she was accustomed to expatiate largely on its efficacy, and the many instances of good she herself had known to be derived from it. And she used most amusingly to declare, that nothing should induce her to be without a piece of the far-famed

⁹ The Mr. Ingram here alluded to is probably the Mr. James Ingram, mentioned November the 26th, 1732. His family resided at Chailey. The entry of the marriage in the Chailey Register

Book, as it has been kindly sent to me by the Rev. F. Hepburn, is as follows: "1733. The Rev. Mr. James Ingram and Mrs. Ann Heesman, both of Cuckfield, married April 5th."

gibbet in her pocket, though she had long ceased to have a tooth remaining in her jaws.

The part of the Common on which the remaining portion of this gibbet stands, and the houses about it, are still commonly called from this circumstance "Jacob's Post."

An account of the particulars of this atrocious murder, together with the concluding lines of some not very poetical composition in verse referring to it, and to Harris's execution, still current in the neighbourhood, will be found in Vol. XIII., p. 247 of our Collections.

"October the 25th.—There was a great earthquake in England, which many people felt. It happened about 3 o'clock in the morning, and it was a general thing."

"January the 8th.—There was a great storm of wind and rain that did much damage."

"March the 14th.—Went to Lewes, where the bells were ringing on account of the marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Princess Royal."

"March the 25th.—I began to wear my ring with the Coat of Arms upon it, having three boar's heads in the shield."

"1735, April the 12th.—A valuation took place at Biggs, between myself, John Stapley, and Richard Stapley, my son."

"July the 31st.—A great quantity of rain fell, which did much damage; and the next day the flood was so great in the north river, that it carried away ten loads of hay, and four loads more were so spoiled, that they were fit only for litter, and were carried into the yard for this purpose."

"November the 11th.—Mr. Courthope and his wife were married at Newtimber, by the Revd. George Beard, the curate."¹⁰

"March the 15th.—There was a great eclipse of the

¹⁰ This Mr. Courthope must have been Peter, the son of Peter Courthope, Esqre., who purchased Danny, in Hurstpierpoint, of the Gorings, in the reign of Charles the Second. The issue of the marriage here alluded to was one daughter only, who married Henry Campion, Esqre., and he thus became possessed of Danny, and the estate belong-

ing to it, and in whose descendant, W. J. Campion, Esqre., it still continues. The Revd. George Beard was of the family of Beard, also of Hurstpierpoint. He was appointed to the incumbency of Poynings in 1749, and is buried in the church there, where a tomb is erected to his memory. See Vol. XV., p. 231.

moon at 11 o'clock at night. It was very visible, and held a great while."

"1736, May the 21st.—The white horse was buried in the saw-pit in the Laine's wood. He was aged about thirty-five years, as far as I could find by people that knew him foaled. He had been in his time as good a horse as ever man was owner of, and *he was buried in his skin, being a good old horse.* Both my brother Sawyer and I gave Daniel 6d. for burying him."

"1738, March the 6th.—My son, Richard Stapley and his wife, were this day married at Maresfield."¹¹

October the 21st.—In a memorandum of this date, Samuel Stapley is mentioned. He was probably a younger son of John Stapley.

"1743, November the 27th.—I, Richard Stapley, my wife, and daughter, came to live at Hickstead, after my father's death, which took place September the 3rd."

This is the only memorandum made by Richard Stapley, the last male heir of the Hickstead branch of the family. He had two daughters only, the one here mentioned, and another, born at Hickstead. By the marriage of Martha, the elder, with Mr. James Wood, the estate passed, at the death of the father in 1762, into the Wood family, in which it still continues. The younger daughter married Mr. Tuppen, of Lindfield.¹²

¹¹ Upon referring to the register of this marriage, I find that Richard Stapley's wife's name, previous to her mar-

riage, was Martha Burt. They are described as residents of Cuckfield.

¹² See Stapley (of Hickstead) Pedigree. S. A. C., Vol. 11, p. 107.