

# AN OLD SUSSEX HOUSEHOLD DIARY.

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IN a bundle of miscellaneous books purchased by Mr. Frank Duke, of Steyning, at a recent sale at Washington, there was found a slender manuscript book in which, at the close of the eighteenth century, in the years 1793-5, were entered varied memoranda relating to the affairs of the household of William Frankland, Esq., of Muntham, in the parish of Findon. The writer was one William Davy, and from the nature of the notes it may be inferred that the position which he held was that of steward. And a suitable man he must have been for the post, for the detailed way in which he records trivial things shows that he was a methodical and careful soul.

How extensive was the establishment at Muntham may be gathered from the number of outdoor men employed upon the estate. We are told who they were, for on "Feb. 12th, 1795, A two year old Steer having it's leg broke by accident was obliged to be Kill'd, & is Distributed amongst the Undermentioned Workmen belonging to Muntham." The bearers of the same names who still reside in the locality may be able to recognise in some of them their ancestors of a hundred-and-thirty years ago, and may also learn the nature of their occupations and something of their doings. These are their names: "Jas. Wood, carter, W. Juding, oxman, T. Artolatt, labourer, E. Banfield, do., G. Wells, do., R. Herbert, do., J. Lilliwhite, do., T. Heryett, shepherd, G. Andrew, do., J. Moore, jobber, W. Thorp, groom, H. Hasted, W. Wild, carpenter, J. Osburn, do., J. Andrew, gardener, M. Butterly, do., J. Langrage, do., Wm. Viner."

But these were not the only men upon the estate. There was, for instance, Scardefield the keeper, who fittingly enough, from the number of hares, snipe, woodcock, landrails, etc., that he brought in, was no mean shot; an accomplishment in which his son also showed equal promise, for on Sept. 15th there were "3 snipes shot by Scardefield's boy"; a performance which he repeated the very next day. It is evident, however, that they *ought* to have hit something whenever they fired, for, although a modern cartridge weighs only an ounce and a half, we are told that "By Scardefield's Account there is in 1 Bag of Shot of 28 lb. & 4 lb. of Gunpowder, 80 charges—& in 1 ounce of Gunpowder &  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of Shot there is 2 charges." The numerous rabbits are classified apart in ruled columns according to whether they were "Pounded, Ferreted or Shot or Coursed"; and we are told that "The proper time to pound Rabbits is from Holland-tide to Candlemas."

Now Scardefield had a vigilant eye no less than a straight one, for on "Jan. 20th, 1794, Scardefield met Sir Geo Warren & his Servant, Major Bisshop, the Revnd. Mr. Turner of Fittleworth and the Revnd. Mr. Smith with Spaniels & Greyhounds chiefly belonging to Mr. Turner. Who came on North Farm hill whilst Scardefield was a beating for Game, by his Master's Order to send to Chichester. All was very civil, except Mr. Turner, who called Scardefield an insolent fellow for beating on North Farm downs." The next day "Scardefield met with the Revnd. Mr. Hatch & Farmer Hards coursing on Washington Manor, & kill'd a Rabbit under Tanglee Holt." Then on the "27th. John Churcher, Bricklayer of Washington was in Snelling's Mead with a Gun," and on the "28th. John Churcher of the above-mentioned place, was in new Common Washington with a Gun.—Scardefield see him in both these places"; whilst on "Sunday, May 4th. at 4 o'clock in the Morning Absalom Greenfield was Shooting Rabbits on Washington Common." What the issue of these intrusions was we are not

informed, but on "Feb. 17th. The Son of Mr. Fuller of Sullington took the liberty of Shooting a Hare at Cobden for which his Father came the next day to make an Apology to Mr. Frankland." Another apology for a different offence was when on "July 26th. Mr. Hards came to ask pardon for Cutting the Turf on Washington New Common"; and on the "29th. Mr. Jeffrey, Malster, came to Muntham upon the same business." Mr. Frankland was no doubt accessible when they called, for in the previous January we are told that "Master is to be spoke with whether Company is with him or not, the person coming on Business."

An incident which occurred early in 1794 must have occasioned some inconvenience, for on "Feb. 12th. The Chain & Bucket fell into the Well." On the "14th. Jas Osburn went down the Well & brought up the Chain & some of the Buckets," and again the next day "Jas. Osburn & Jas. Baker went down the Well & brought up Sundry things"; but the salvage was not complete until the 18th, when "Jas Osburn & Jas Baker went down the Well & brought up Buckets & Sundry things." The well apparatus apparently must have been of an unusual character, for on "July 21st. Alderman Boydel & Wife came to see the Well house," and "Miss Goring call'd" the same day for the same purpose. Perhaps this may explain why on "June 18th. Mr. Hore the Banker & 3 Ladies from Worthing came to Muntham to see the Machinery"; though there were other mechanical appliances to be seen, as instanced in "A Plough With Which one Man can Plough, Harrow & Sow all at once." At any rate, when Mr. Hore & the Ladies left "they gave Mr. Hasted 5 shillings, with which Osburn & Glassbrook went to Mr. Gravely at Storrington & bought beer at the rate of 14d. pr Gallon, brought it home & gave every one their proper share about the house, except Dick & Thorp, who were at Cricket." It would appear to have been a somewhat risky proceeding to send those two particular men for the

beer, for, less than a week earlier, on "June 12, Osburn Glassbrook & Dick got Drunk & kept holidays." The day after Mr. Hore's visit "Miss Wyatt & Niece the Housekeeper from Mitchelgrove & Mrs. Tate from Findon came to Muntham to see the Machinery, & gave Osburn a Shilling to which the Workmen added a little more & bought Beer at the Gun, brought it home & drank it in the afternoon."

The authorised consumption of beer, both strong and small, together with ale and mead, must have formed a very considerable item in the domestic expenditure at Muntham, for, in addition to what was brewed upon the spot by Mr. Hasted, many hogsheads were supplied to the house throughout the year by "Mr. Satchell," as well as by "Mr. Gravely" and by "Mr. Stoveld at Steyning." It is not surprising to find that on July 10th, Mr. Davy "Tapt the Strong Beer at the lower hole for the Sheep-shearers," and that he did so "about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3," for the work of shearing the 800 sheep began both on the 10th and 11th at 6 p.m., and continued through the night till eight the next morning. And thirsty, fatiguing work it seems to have been, for although the shearers began their labours with "2 Buckets Small," they received an additional "1 Bucket Strong & 1 do. Small" at intervals of two & a half hours till 6 a.m., after which they had "2 Do. Strong" at 7 a.m., & "1 Do. Strong" at 8.0. Meanwhile Mr. Frankland's personal wants were amply provided for, as Mr. Davy "Drowed off a Pipe of Port, in all 638 Bottles," and "Made two Stone Jarrs of Cherry Brandy."

Other domestic matters are touched upon in a variety of ways: "Make Butter twice & Cheese 4 times a week"; "A new end hoop to the Barrel Churn cost 5d."; "Milk 8 Cows, one of them has her Udder tore, & Dick applys a remedy to it"; "Given to Ely 1 dozen of House Candles. Given to James 2 papers of Mould Candles & 1 pound of Music Candles"; "Williamson Tun'd the Harpsichord";

“A Box containing Varnish came from London by the Steyning Coach”; “Received no newspaper”; “Given to Molly 1 Wedge of Sope, weight about 3 lb &  $\frac{1}{4}$  for washing Bucking”; “Gave 4 Quarts of Ale at the time of Washing Bucking.” “Given to Ann Benn 2 new Dishclouts, each near 2 Feet square, also a new Cabbage Nett, 2 Feet 2 Inches long, 40 Mashers round & each Mash 1 Inch &  $\frac{3}{4}$  wide”; “Sent a Grist to Mill. Out of 2 Bushells all but a Gallon &  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Wheat, Received 1 Bushell & 3 pecks of Flour & 1 Bushell of Bran”; “Had 1 Groce of Quart Corks from Edmunds at Tarring”; “Bought 6 New Door Matts of Goatcher from Amberley. Gave the Dairy Maid one of them”; “If Henry Elliott of Washington delivers anything out of his Shop to any Person belonging to Mr. Frankland without their producing the book he is to loose the Money. Witness to this Wm. Davy”;—a warning which may account for the visit subsequently paid to Muntham by a neighbouring trade rival—“Mr Soane, Shopkeeper from Steyning.”

Not the least interesting thing about this little book is the insight that it gives into the weaving that was done at Muntham. No less than six different looms are mentioned, and two men, William Buxton and Mason, were constantly employed upon the work. Large numbers of “Scanes of Cotton” in eighteen different specified shades of colour, together with quantities of silk and worsted, were bought from London; whilst at the same time “Dame Juding,” otherwise “Juden,” was busily engaged in spinning dozens of “9d. Tire bought from Champen at Ashington”; she being remunerated at the rate of “10d pr lb.” Both the men, too, at times took part in the spinning; and Wild, the skilful carpenter, on one occasion “Improv’d the Dutch Spinning Wheel, new Fill’d & plain’d up the Lapidary’s Table, Chang’d & finish’d the stamp Table & Filed & Fitted in a chuck & 9 Bits”; whilst on another occasion it was necessary to call in the services of “Edmund Gardener, Turner & Spinning Wheel maker from

Cold Waltham, & brother to John Gardener coachman." Mr. Hasted, too, lent a hand, for he "has finished the Carpet, mended the Turkey Carpet, & is at work on the Slugging & Spinning Machine."

Mason appears generally to have made up his material after weaving it, for he produced many pairs of "fine figured Cotton Hose," "coarse (& fine) Under Stockings," "speckled & figured Silk Stockings," "6 Fine Twill'd Cotton Night Caps weighing 14 oz.," and a "blue & white Fleecy Worsted Jacket," as well as "2 pieces 37 yards each of brown cotton for Drawers" and "3 yds Snuff Colour Worsted Cut Shagg for Breeches."

But it was Buxton who took the leading part; in fact he is specifically described as "Wm. the Weaver." And he seems to have lived laborious days, for it was decreed on Sept. 10th, 1793, that "William is to work at the Table Linnen from 6 in the morning till 8, & from  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 to work at the Lace Loom the remainder of the Day, by order of Wm. Frankland Esq." A month later "William left off working at the Lace Loom in which is a piece of Lace finish'd containing 8 figures and about one half & has begun to work at the Table Linnen." Then in succession we learn that "William has Mounted the Large Loom with a piece of Diaper for Table Cloths & has wove 10 yds of it"; "he has set the little Loom to work that came from London"; "Mounted the Lace Loom with 3 Colours and 3 Tyers for the Coat of Arms"; and "Put a piece into the new Loom for 6 Waistcoat pieces with 7 colours." All this last, however, was not destined to adorn Mr. Frankland's person, for there were "Given to Ann Benn 2 Dishclouts being the remnant of the waistcoat pieces." Afterwards there was "Received from William a piece of Diaper containing 6 Table Cloths of Lady Frankland's pattern," whilst there was "Cloth given to Molly to Bleach as follows—24 yds of Huckabag for Servants Hall Table Cloths & 76 yds of Servants Sheeting." This was about the time that "Molly

finish'd the black curtains." Then there was "Given to William 8 lb. 5 oz. of fine thread for Doyleys," and he handed in "a piece of cloth out of the Pump Loom." In June "Buxton was sick one week & could not work; he has got 2 pieces of sheeting 19 yds each & 11 yds of Huckabag for Towels." Perhaps family responsibilities were too much for him, for on "Feb. 4th, 1794, Wm. Buxton & Mary Belchamber housemaid were married at Findon Church," and on "March 6th Mary Buxton was deliver'd of a Daughter at Muntham." However, William soon recovered and handed in "11 yds of Diaper for Servants Hall Table Cloths," and "11 yards of Coarse Twill'd Cloth for Dishclouts made from odd ends." He received back some of the "Dishclouts for 8 Bags for the 4 Shuttle Loom," together with "3 lb. 11 oz. of White Carpet Worsted," the purpose of the latter being evident when we learn that "Buxton has finish'd 7 Scotch Carpets." The last that we hear of him is that "Buxton has made a Ash Cloth of 9d Flax, 6 yards long & 2 Feet 4 ins. wide."

John Gardener, the coachman, had under his charge five "Coach Horses—Poppit 15 years old, Butcher 18, Captain 20, Bumper 14, & Farmer 11"; rather an old lot on the whole, but then there were besides them "4 Colts 3 of them black & 1 a bright Chestnutt." Only once do we hear of the horses being used, and that was on the occasion when, on July 2nd, 1794, "Sir Thomas Frankland & Lady & 2 Daughters came to Muntham about 1 o'clock from Chichester with Post Horses." Their visit was but a brief one, for they left the next morning "about 8 o'clock. John went with them with his Master's Horses as far as Steyning, where they took Post Horses for London";—with whose departure we also may be allowed to take our leave of William Davy and his interesting little book.