

Gazette Extracts

Houses that are no more. . .

27 December 1768: Friday evening, between five and six, a fire broke out at Mr Henry Simmons, Weaver, at Bridge, which intirely consumed his workshop, with an adjacent building, in which were stowed 150 pieces of hop-bagging, but by the timely assistance of the neighbouring inhabitants, the hop bagging was saved from the flames. This unhappy accident was occasioned by the candle setting fire to some loose pieces of tow in the loom.

This was as nothing compared with the sums claimed elsewhere. . .

26 August 1791] To be let. A Mansion house called Bridge Place, now in the occupation of William Hougham Esq. Jun. Consisting of an eating parlour 22 by 18½, a drawing room 22 by 17, and a small room,; on the second floor, good bedrooms; and four garrets etc. [again in 1793]

Advice to the Ladies

Never sit between two windows open, or a door and window, to play at cards. This short hint may save the life of many a good Card-Player. I have sneezed above a thousand times from so sitting, and would not do it again to get two sole voles in a night. An ingenious author says, if a man gets a fever by drinking and dies, he dies of drinking, and should be put down so in the bills of mortality; so if a Lady dies of a cold caught at quadrille, she dies of quadrille. [1768]

On Friday next will be played in Bourn Paddock, a MATCH OF CRICKET between the Gentlemen of Surrey and the Bourn Club, for a large sum The last match was thought to be as good a match as was ever played. [August 1768]

15 August 1772] On Wednesday next the 19th instant, will be played in Bourn Paddock the long and great depending match of cricket, the Gentlemen of Hampshire against all England; the wickets to be pitched at ten o'clock, and the match to be played out. There is a large commodious stand for gentlemen, and a fine ordinary as usual, there will be a large Ring made, and it is hoped that no one will, out of the great company expected, encroach upon the noble players.. . [18 August] At the cricket match to be played in Bourne Paddock tomorrow, is expected the greatest company ever met on such an occasion; amongst whom will be the Duke of Dorset, the Duke of Richmond, the gentlemen of the county and much company of rank and distinction. Sir Horace Man has made great preparations at Bourne house, and a long range of booth are erected in the paddock for the reception of the spectators. [21 August 1772]. . . The concourse of spectators is incredible, and a computation can scarcely be formed, but there were supposed to be in the field on the first day's sport between 15 and 20,000 people, among whom were several noblemen, the principal gentlemen of the county, and other persons of rank and distinction. [scores given – England won by 2 wickets]

24 July 1769: Monday next July 24 will be run At Bridge-Hill, A match of running by Maids. To strip at five o'clock. They are desired to meet at Bridge-Hill on Saturday evening, at six o'clock to give in their names, and to run that night that the Goals may be made equal on Monday.

[later] On Monday evening the match of running by young women was played upon barham Downs, to the great satisfaction of a vast concourse of people.

28 June 1770: This present evening will be run at Bridge Hill a match at running between twenty-four gentlemen of the Chilham Club, and twenty-four gentlemen of East Kent, to meet at four o'clock, and strip exactly at five o'clock. It is expected to be a fine match, as both parties are determined to set every stroke aside, that does not appear remarkably clear. . . . (won 7-3 by chilham) There was a very numerous appearance of genteel company, who were well entertained with the sport of the day, and what added to the general satisfaction was, that the whole match was won without a single dispute. . . .

We hear that on Monday the 18th inst. [July] there will be a match of running on Barham Downs, between young women, twelve or fifteen on a side. The meeting to be at Bridge-Hill, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on that day, or on the first day afterwards that the weather will permit; --- great diversion, and much Company are expected. We hear likewise, as a reward to those who shall have the best of the match, that twelve shifts will be given them by the gentry &c. [again on August 1st – unless this was the first clear day!]

A local spat in 1769:

[August] William Nash Clock and watch maker at Bridge

Begs leave to inform the publick, that the servitude of his brother, John Nash, is now dissolved. Therefore what watches he should be instructed with for the future, I will not be accountable for, nor for the performance. I continue working in the country as usual, and shall be ever studious in meeting the approbation of those who will continue their favours to their obedient humble servant William Nash.

Wanted immediately, a journeyman or a young person, to be instructed in the Clock and Watch Making business.

[September] John Nash takes this opportunity to acquaint the public, that there is no occasion for his brother Mr William Nash, to be answerable for any watches intrusted in his care, for he has not wronged him of any thing, as was imagined by his advertisement. New Clocks and Watches to be had at reasonable terms, by sending to John Nash at Beakesbourne, near Canterbury, who will go round the country as usual. All persons, that please to favour him with their custom, may depend on their work being done well, and reasonable, by their humble servant John Nash.

[11 December 1769] John Nash, Clock-Maker at Beakesbourne. Whereas some malicious Reports have been propagated by my brother, Wm Nash, clock-maker at Bridge, representing me as imposing on my kind employers, - in particular, that I had overcharged Mr Drayson of Upstreet, for repairing his clock; and as such Reports have a manifest tendency to prejudice me in my business, I have taken the opportunity to lay the said charge before some reputable clock-makers of Canterbury; who have confirmed the equity of the same, and will readily attest, if called upon, the injustice done to John Nash.

[16 December 1769] William Nash, Watch-maker At Bridge. Thinks the advertisement in last Tuesday's paper too abrupt to pass unnoticed. - The clock of Mr Drayson, that could not perform, was charged 8s 6d. It was examined by Mr Warren, the reputable watch-maker, who said, what was done to the clock was worth 4s. and the other 4s for fetching and carrying it back. This is my brother's method of working in the clock way. I have said, and can attest, he never cleaned and put together more than one watch, to my knowledge, all the time he was with me, and that was in April last. Therefore what injustice is done to John Nash by me, I leave the reader to determine.

If the kind friends of John Nash would prevent his ill designs, and put him on a better plan, it may answer his end better, as well as the reputable watchmaker and his former friend, William Nash.

[march 1769] Cock fighting. At Bridge-Hill on Thursday the 23rd instant - Canterbury against Bridge - to shew eleven cocks on each side, and fight for four guineas a battle and ten the main. Dinner will be ready at one o'clock. NB a pair of five pound cocks to fight before dinner for five guineas.

[6 June 1772] Cock-Fighting. At John palmer's, the White Horse at Bridge; to show twenty-one cocks on each side; to weigh on Tuesday the 9th of June and to fight on Wednesday and Thursday for four guineas a battle, and ten the odd battle. A close pit and a good ordinary at one o'clock each day. A pair of large cocks to fight before dinner.

In addition to the regular easter and Autumn meetings

[22 April 1769] Horse racing. On Tuesday next will be run for, over barham Downs, a match of fifty guineas between a bay gelding, late the property of William Lynch esq; who won the Easter Plate last year, and a grey gelding, who won the Easter plate this year, the bay gelding to carry eight stone, two pounds, and the grey gelding nine stone. Dinner will be ready, at Bridge-Hill, at one o'clock.

Origins of the Horticultural Society?

[1769] This is to acquaint all lovers of Auriculas. That on Thursday the 6th of April, will be an Auricula feast, at Sarah Gilbert's the White Horse, in Bridge. The best flower produced, will be entitled to a guinea, the second best to fifteen shillings, the third best to half a guinea and the fourth best to five shillings. Each flower that is entitled to a prize, must have six pips. And every person that shews a flower must have had it in his own possession fourteen days before the day of shewing, which must be attested on oath if required. No person will be entitled to a prize, but who has subscribed half a crown three months before the day of shewing, unless he makes it up five shillings on the feast day, before one o'clock. No flower to be entitled to a prize, unless it is in the house before one o'clock. And no person to win two prizes. Every person that shews a flower to appoint an umpire. NB There will be a good twelvepenny ordinary at one o'clock.

20 March 1774] again at Mrs Gilbert's. A good ordinary on table at two o'clock, and every shewer of flowers to be at dinner, or have no right to shew his flower.

[1769] Bridge. Made by John Thompson, Junior, a plough for lays, with two chips, one before the other in the length of a common beam, with turned Reests, the fore share to cut only the turf, the other to bury it. Also house joinery and carpentry work done, from the saloon to the plough. NB A journeyman wanting for the last branch.

10 march 1772] Whereas on Friday night last, the 6th of this Instant March, the workshop of John Thompson, Carpenter at Bridge; was broken open, and the several tools hereafter mentioned stolen thereout, viz One ax, one handsaw. One cast steel panel ditto, two tenant ditto, and one turning ditto, one plough-plane, two bench ditto, one smoothing ditto, one double-iron smoothing ditto, and several moulding ditto; one wimble-stock and bitts; several firmer chisles, gouges, mortis chisles, and socket-chisles; one claw-hammer, one bench ditto, with squares, gauges and several other articles . . .if any of the said articles are offered for sale, that the person offering them be detained. . .etc. Reward two guineas.

8 August 1772] Thomas Kedman, for stealing one ax, five saws, a plough, several planes, and divers other carpenters tools, out of the workshop of John Thompson of Bridge; and Margaret Lamb, for stealing a pair of silverbuckles, a pair of silver buttons, two gold rings, two handkerchiefs, and three caps, out of the dwelling house of Bridget Little, in Chatham, were burnt in the hand, and ordered to be discharged.

[23 December 1769] We hear some public-spirited gentlemen intend to petition Parliament for a turnpike act for the road from Dover lane in Canterbury to the half-way house leading to Dover over Barham Downs, and that the gate will be erected opposite the mile-stone near St Lawrence.

[11 April 1772] Wanted. A mistress for a workhouse in the parish of Bridge, at Easter next. For further particulars enquire of Mr Miller, or Mr Champion., Churchwarden, and Overseer. NB She must write a tolerable hand.

Also at Bridge Hill House: 21 December 1773: Sale of property in Barham by auction.

24 January 1815] To Be Sold by Auction. At the White Horse Inn, Bridge-Street, on Friday the 27th instant, at three-o'clock in the afternoon. All the interest or right and occupation of Mr Richard Sherrard, as tenant under E. Taylor, esq. Containing a large Farm House, barn, yard, stabling, lodges, and all other necessary out-buildings; together with 20 acres of rich pastureland, three acres of hop ground and ten acres of arable. . .

21st/22nd March 1815] Auction of all the genteel and valuable household furniture of Miss Fitch, at Bridge; consisting of four post and tent bedsteads, with handsome mahogany carved and plain pillars, elegantly burnished gold and other cornices, with fashionable white dimity and printed cotton hangings to ditto; French drapery and festoon window curtains, with cornices to correspond; excellent goose and down beds in bordered and plain ticks, paillasses, bordered horse-hair and wool mattresses, fine witney and other blankets, large 14 4ths Marseilles quilts and counterpanes, Kidderminster, Venetian, and Brussels carpets, nearly new; hearth rugs; mahogany double and single chests of drawers, circular and straight fronts, of excellent workmanship; circular and square bason-stands, ditto commode dressing drawers and tables, pier and dressing glasses, an elegant mirror in burnished gold frame, inlaid sideboard with celleret drawer, set of mahogany dining tables with circular ends, two sets of mahogany carved back chairs, neat painted and stained bedroom ditto, excellent elliptic, Pembroke, card and tea tables, a square stuffed sofa, with bolsters and cotton cases; polished steel fenders and fire irons, a capital bracket clock, a barometer and thermometer, hall-lamp, figured and plain oil cloths, tea trays and waiters, a set of blue and white printed dinner service, a quantity of queensware, a great variety of kitchen requisites in copper, pewter, and tin, in excellent preservation, washing tubs, brine tubs, &c. an assortment of garden tools, hand glasses, ladders, and garden lights, about 11 rods of capital oak garden fence, a quantity of coals, faggots, and other effects, as will be particularised.

2 May 1823] similar list for Mrs Stephens at Bridge.. Houses were sold with entire contents.

27 January 1773] Horse racing on 1st February a match over the new round course on Barham Downs, one four miles heat, for one hundred guineas, between two gentlemen's horses – one is the grey horse, that run twenty miles in an hour some time since on Barham Downs, the other a capital hunter. To start exactly at twelve o'clock. Dinner will be ready at Bridge-Hill after the race is over.[further report later]

5 June 1799] Wanted, a roomy and airy situated house, or other sort of building, in the city or suburbs of Canterbury, to be used as a regimental hospital. Any person, having such a building to let, may apply to Dr Wardell, physician to the forces, Bridge, or to Dr Bruff, surgeon, 2nd battalion of grenadiers, St Dunstons.

1799] military camp on Barham Downs ca 6000 men. August 13] second encampment of 18-20,000 men. . . .The immense train of farmers and artillery wagons, employed in conveying the troops and baggage, ammunition, military and other stores, and provisions, towards the camp, adding the numerous carriages filled with officers and other passengers; these together have produced a scene of populousness and traffic in this ancient city which has not been beheld by its inhabitants since the days of St Thomas Becket. . .

15 April 1823] A robbery attended with aggravating circumstances, was committed between the hours of five and six o'clock, on Monday afternoon, in the house of ---Brooks, a shepherd in the employ of Mr Henry Croasdill, of Tyler Hill, near this city. In the early part of the afternoon of the above day, a man had been to the cottage, soliciting alms, and from his apparently earnest representations of distress and hunger, he was relieved, and a quantity of victuals given to him by the wife of Brooks: he was however subsequently observed lurking about the premises by a part of the family, who expressed an apprehension of the man's intention. About four o'clock, Brooks went from home, leaving his wife, who also went out a short time after. The man, it would seem, watched the opportunity of their absence, and with the aid of a knife, took out a pane of glass, and throwing up the sash, entered the house, and stole a quantity of tea, four silver spoons, a silver watch, a pair of silver studs, three silk handkerchiefs, and two cotton ones, together with a waistcoat and other articles of a portable nature; but it would seem he was disturbed by the return of Brooks, as upon entering the premises, Brooks found the back door, leading to the wood open, and upon calling his wife from a neighbouring house, and remonstrating with her upon the impropriety of leaving the door open, the robbery was immediately discovered. A search was commenced, and it was ascertained that the object of their suspicion had been to a public house in North-lane, and there divided the tea between two men, acquaintances of the fellow, and from their statement, a constable traced the robber, and overtook him at Renville pond, near Bridge, with part of the property in his possession. After an examination of the prisoner, by the Rev. C Hughes, of Bridge-place, he was committed to St Augustine's gaol.

7 November 1823] Daring outrages. On Monday night a carpenter's shop, at bridge, was broken open; the depredators stole from the tools there deposited several implements for breaking open doors, and on their departure left a right-hand glove. The villains then proceeded to the church, which they forcibly entered, and stole the prayer books and baptismal basin. It is supposed that the same gang subsequently proceeded to the house of baron Montesquieu, and broke into the servants' room, from which they stole a quantity of wearing apparel; one of the servants, hearing a noise, struck a light, upon which the robbers decamped. The same night the same depredators went to the parsonage at Beakesbourne, from whence they stole two hives of bees and the garden line; and here they left the fellow glove to the one left at Bridge. They made a secure retreat with their booty, and no clue to discovery has yet been obtained.

17 November 1823] In the night of Tuesday last, a barn in bifrons Park near Bridge was feloniously entered by some thieves, who stole between three and four bushels of white wheat, with which they got off undiscovered.