

WMW 1912'

His main preoccupation at the start of the year is the specifications of the new stable block to be built at the Manor. He visits numerous local stables to measure up for size, including Sleight's at Weelsby, (*"very pleasant, port wine and cake"*), Scallows, and the Grange. The architect is G.H.(Herbert) Allison from Louth, who is paid £42/15s, the builder C.M.Scargill from (?)North Thoresby who gets £150 on account in May and July and £100 in September, and is recorded as being present on site on 121 days. The joiner is Wm Bacon from Ashby, who gets £60 on account in May and July and £50 in September. Several trees are cut down and uprooted to clear the site, and 55,000 bricks ordered (there is a note in September of a payment of £54/16s on brick account, the payee looks something like 'Berry and Stone', and £50 in July). A payment of £69/10s is made to Dawlis Townsley and Co Ltd for tiles in November, also a payment of £82/10s to Cartwright and Pickering, the recently departed ironmongers in Louth, presumably for metal fittings for the stables. Foundation-digging starts the week after Easter, in April. Much of March has been spent with digging out and laying down chalk for the new back drive.

Much hunting is going on, with Squire, Maggie and Lambert often out three days a week hunting, and riding horses out every other day, Squire on 'Pins', 'Hat Box', 'Kg Alfred' or 'Blaney'. 30th March, *"Hounds meet Riby cross-roads last advertised meet. Borman (farmed at Swallow) joins me at Welbeck and notices I have forgotten my teeth."* A couple of days earlier, they had met at Boswell cross-roads, and hounds had called at the Manor for refreshment at 11 on the way there. Came on Wold Newton, *"saw 3 foxes on place."*

There is sale of effects, or rather two sales, at "Scallows Farm" on 4th April. Presumably still owned by the Dennis estate at this stage, I don't think Miss Brewster moves in until 1916. He calls it 'Smeeton's' Sale, but whether that is the auctioneer or the seller isn't clear. 6th April, *"Mention about taking straw to Scallows"* with 'old Addison', Matthew, the father of Alfred and Edmund, who are now ensconced at North and South Farms (tho' Langmore isn't built yet.) Their brother, Dick, is frequently about. Why he should take straw isn't clear. Several times in the year Squire and siblings walk up to Scallows to have a look round, implying that it's empty.

He is gloomy when on Good Friday the Passiontide frontal is not removed from the altar 'for the first time, in spite of my remonstrance'. He records good congregations at the four services on Good Friday. Relationships with the Rector, Fagan, are difficult with disagreements over the School. 25th October, *"School meeting a regular row, rather depressing. Rectory housemaid disappeared"*. (Use of the School Room for a meeting on Oct 23 attracted a charge of 3s6d!) 12th October, *"In afternoon see Mr Fagan about School house copper shed, long depressing talk. Annoyed at the word 'Mass' inserted in paper."* On Wednesday 20th November, *"Rural Decanal Conference at Caistor, I go as special speaker on Sunday Observances - Shock them of course. Lovely star and moonlight. Roads clear for biking."* Wednesday 4th December, *"Mr Fagan's horse clipped in afternoon. Help in a small way. In evening Maggie and I dine at Rectory, everything very sumptuous and both very pleasant, dangerous topics avoided."*

The Rector's son, also Edward, is inducted to the living of Little Coates. 'Bettinson of Swinhope' makes a couple of appearances, preaching at Thorganby, and Wold Newton Harvest Festival. A visiting priest, Tucker of Thoresby, covering while Fagan is away, delivers a 'good sermon' at Evensong the day after the news of the Titanic comes through, His text is 'Thy ways are in the sea'.

Miss James, the schoolmistress, a good friend of the Squire's (she has a brass plaque in the church) leaves to go to London. 23rd March, *"Miss James gives her farewell concert in schoolroom, Miss Edith J having got it up. Most enjoyable, packed house. Rector gives leaving present, gold cross £23 in gold"*. 30th March, *"Miss James goes away, Parsons motoring her to Thoresby. Maggie and I*

examine school house.“ 3rd April, “New School missus Lucy Ashton arrives 7am in Prestwood's waggonette.” She and her sister have lodgings with Day. She doesn't last very long. In October, on the 2nd, “good reports of new schoolmistress”. On Monday 7th, “Mrs Davis new schoolmistress with her little boy come to tea, a very charming widow.” Saturday 26th October, “Rector calls in morning, Schoolmistress leaves for month's rest and cure”. Friday 29th November, “Evensong for St Andrew's, Mrs Davies the new schoolmistress performs very nicely with pedals, hardly a soul at church.”

Usual problems with staff. Jan 1st, “Fuss and Row in afternoon caused by squalls as usual in connection with the Kitchen Maid.” Tuesday 2nd, “Alice Small doesn't come. Mrs Day steps into the gap”. (Alice Small being Tom Hewson's mother.) Monday 8th, “Kitchen maid leaves for Cadeby”.

Political snippets – Ettie and Maggie go to a Suffragette meeting at Hawerby on 16th February. Parsons goes to a Conservative 'do' at North Thoresby. Polly and Maggie go to a 'Liberal meeting about insurance at Ravendale'.

On April 19th, after the end of the hunting season, Tommy Sands (I think a gamekeeper from Grainsby) is joined by Jim Smith, the Brocklesby huntsman, having a 'badgering day at Peterhills'. He records they get four old badgers and three young ones.

Parsons gets a new Ford motor car from Lincoln on 9th March. . The next day, it 'refuses to budge an inch'. 13th March, “Parsons gets his new Ford car to go with help from Lincoln”. Squire notes again on December 24th, 'Parsons' new car comes'. Most transport is still by bike or horse, Squire mainly rides or bikes into the Sessions each Tuesday.

Social life – a Hospital Ball at Louth, “all the gentry and nobility from around there”. A Dinner Party in Grimsby given by Doughtys for “the Young People”, *Sir Geo D away on parliamentary business, I take Lady D in to supper. Sutcliffe and fiancée there*”. At another Grimsby party, he stays until they start to dance the Tango which makes him leave.

Work on the stables goes on all summer, and the horses are installed for the first time on Saturday 5th October, 'very smart'. The bricks have come from the brickyard at South Elkington (located apparently up the track on your left driving towards Louth just at the foot of the hill after the roadside yews and beeches coming out of the village.) There's quite a gang of people working on the site, as well as Scargill and Bacon, various workers, such as Joseph Small, 'Fred', 'Old Broken-Body Man', Lingard from Fenby, etc. When a large delivery of bricks and tiles comes, by traction-engine and trailer, it takes four men three hours 'and ten pints of beer' to unload it in hot summer sun. Monday 8th July, “I set the date stone, 1912, Maggie also a brick, give beer in consequence.” (A note in the 1913 diary records the stone coat of arms on the west wall of the stables being a gift to him from Polly, cost £3 14s 6d). Much chalk is led from around the place to lay the 'causeways', (presumably the stable yard) and 'grit' is fetched from the road-sides on Ravendale Road, Hawerby Hill, and 'Thoresby Road at Scallows'. After a meet at Binbrook in the autumn, Lord Yarborough calls in to have a look at Squire's new stables.

Village life. January 31st, “Edmund Addison gives a concert at night..... Peculiarity of Edmund's concert was there were no lady singers and nearly all the songs were comic. Alfred Addison sang.” February 1st, “Miss Warren skating on pond”. Feb 2nd, “Take Pins round by Cold Harbour and Barker's farm Lambcroft, deep drifts all over, See Alfed Addison with sheep in Louth Road, in tribulation somewhat.” Monday 19th February “Parish Meeting, regular row”.

A wasps nest that establishes itself in the false roof at the Manor is treated twice by Day using Potassium of Cyanide! An infestation of 'beetles' in the cellar in April is treated by the Squire laying 'beetle powder' one night. 'Come down early to see the results of beetle powder, which is quite comic. They lie so thick

on the floors.'

Lambert and Day provide constant companions and workforce. 25th January, "*L's birthday, 36 yrs old*". I think Squire is 39 this year. Each, while being respectively Groom and Gardener, appear to be able to be deployed on whatever job, digging potatoes, shifting bricks, fetching grit etc. There's a boy assistant, Walter, (surname Moncaster?) who moves in April from the stables to the garden, which seems like a promotion. They seem to share equipment, Squire goes off to Grimsby on Day's bike one time, and Lambert and Day frequently use his. (Tho' it's left to him to bike into Grimsby for the Sessions on a Tuesday with a flat tyre!) There's a good tiff at one time between Squire and Lambert, who 'goes off in the morning in the cart without a word to anyone. Simply furious"! Squire sulks about it all day, and obviously has it out with L the next day, but doesn't tell us what it's all about. Most Sundays Squire will walk with Lambert around the farm or do some job together. In the summer, Lambert and wife and daughter go off for a few days holiday to Mablethorpe. (what happened to the daughter?) December 10th, "*Take Blaney out leading Kg Alfred, muscle of leg very painful (he'd pulled a muscle some days earlier), Walter on Pins. Blaney gets away at X-roads, rather scene. Take him into plough. L in a temper afterwards which naturally puts my back up*". Lambert isn't alone in criticising the Squire's horse management. January 9th, "*Do damage to Kg Alfred. (Unspecified – he'd ridden him into Grimsby to the Sessions on slushy roads.) Wednesday 10th "Maggie takes Gladia out, horrified at Kg Alfred's side, result of yesterday's ride."* The horse is out of action for 4 weeks. 9th February, "*L rides Kg Alfred out first time for a month after my mischief*". 16th October, "*Take Pins out round by Lambcroft and back by Wyham and Cadeby, go over garden fence out of 'Lovers Wallk'. Row with Maggie who is irritated obviously at my strapping Pins,- guessed it would be so.*" Strapping, according to my technical adviser, is a vigorous grooming to encourage muscle condition on a horse.)

There is a constant financial relationship also, with numerous 'tips' to L during the year, eg £1 in April for '*a real good hunting season*', a shilling in October for negotiating the purchase of a clipping machine (presumably for horses) from Cadeby for 15s, a shilling for the burial of Pins as below, 16s in July being ten per cent of the profit from the sale of two cows purchased for £26/10s in April from Squire's friend Lowish, a farmer he often meets out hunting, from Barnoldby, and sold in July for £34/10s. In October's account, "*L present for help opening stables £1*". Day also gets extra payments, recorded as 'for mill', presumably the maintenance or similar of the water mills, which suffer damage in a severe gale in December, '*blown to pieces*'.

December 28th, "*Hounds meet Ravendale cross-roads. Nice morning but very heavy and deep going. Maggie on Gladia, L on Blaney. Try Ravendale plantations and get to the top of Hawerby Hill when Pins suddenly drops down dead, pins me to the road. (No pun intended?) Horrible shock. Maggie there, come back on Blaney. Wire for Eved (Louth vet) who comes and makes an examination at Peterhills and says it is a ruptured blood vessel.*" He is sore for a good time afterwards. (A quick look at 1913 diary reveals that Lord Yarborough was so moved at the news that he sent Squire a replacement hunter called Bondsman from his own stables, '*most awfully gracious*'. Also on a gloomy note, March 1st, "*Poor old Niobe done at last, has to be taken to Peterhills and shot, Day doing it.*" (With what isn't clear. Day did have use of a shotgun, and later Squire pays for a gun licence for him.)

In September, Squire goes off on a jaunt down to Oxford to visit his friend Ollard, now installed at St Edmund Hall as ?principal?. Another acquaintance, Gabb, joins them for supper at High Table. '*Gabb and I take turns to fall asleep, much to our amusement and our host's displeasure*'.

Old Mrs Wright doesn't feature much, apart from regular departures 'by Prestwood's conveyance' to various resorts with one or other daughter for company, and occasional trips out by car with Parsons or being driven by Polly or Maggie (presumably in horse and trap). She and Ettie go for Christmas to Scarborough. Squire notes receiving a '*very amusing*' letter from her on 26th December, which is found at

the back of the diary. Teddie's son, Edward Hargrave Wright is born and his health much drunk in the house. (Hargrave being a name from old Mrs. Wright's ancestry, an interesting 'political' choice?) On October 22nd Squire and his mother go down by train for the christening, "*taxi to Waterloo, experience of skid in Kingsway*", and three nights, "*see more of dear little nephew, his yeowl most entertaining*". On the way back, "*cross to King's X in Tube which Mother enjoys*".

A note in the 1913 diary gives a rough total cost for the stables, showing Scargill at £350, Bacon at £240, bricks and carriage at £127 11s, and extras Cartwright and Pickering £18 4s, Bacon £20 6s 8d, Scargill £30 15s, Architects £42 15s, so a total of £827 11s 8d. That's without continual weekly payments to Small and others for work done on a daily basis. (And I think it's wrong based on Cartwright and Pickering and tiling payments recorded in the monthly accounts).

His income comprises two rental deposits from the farms of £930 5s in June and £894 5s in November. He has quarterly receipts of rents from cottages of 13s from Joe Small, £1/ 5s from George Watson, 10s from Bancrofts. (and a shilling in May, "Plaskitt boy for broken window"). Say a rough income of £1830.

Major expenditure, outwith the stables

Jan Tithes ER Fagan £168 15s 2d
 Wm Wright and Mary Wright trust £230 9s 9d
 Income Tax House duty etc £106 2s 9d

Feb Mother's interest £125.

April Mother's interest £75
 Ettie Polly and Maggie interest £18.

June Wilson Bell and Ingoldby Trusts £230 9s 9d

July Tithes Revd ER Fagan £172 6s 6d

August Mother's due £125

September Rates £7 2s 7d

October Ettie Polly and Maggie's interest £18
 Mother's interest £75

December Burlson and Gryles, Gt Ormond St London £55 10s 6d
 (note in diary, "*Pay account for Memorial Window in St Ambrose Bournemouth to Cousin Clara and Matilda Tootal*".)

Say a rough total of £1405, and then a rough average expenditure of £15/month on general living.

