

The deposit by Mr. C. J. Ollard of the library and family papers of the late William Maurice Wright of Wold Newton was very briefly mentioned in the last *Archivists' Report* (p. 43.) During the last year work has proceeded on the collection: the library has been installed in a special room in the administrative block of the archives building, put in order, catalogued and indexed. For this work, as for help in many fields, we are indebted to Mr. David Smith who undertook the cataloguing and indexing of the books as light relief from his thesis on Bishop Hugh of Welles.

The Wright library is particularly strong in ecclesiastical history, art and architecture, liturgiology, ecclesiastical biography and in English topography and local history. There are also a fair number of books on European topography, especially on France, whose cathedrals and churches, together with those of his own country, were the consuming love of Mr. Wright's life. An interest in field sports is also displayed in a number of works, including a run, not quite complete, of the *Sporting Magazine* from 1805 to 1823.

Work on the documents is not so far advanced as on the library, largely because of the complete disorder in which they were found, scattered through almost every room in Wold Newton Manor. They consist mainly of the personal papers of William Maurice Wright and other members of the family. Although a summary list of the collection will have to wait till the next report when the remainder of the deposit, which includes correspondence and weather records, has been dealt with, enough work has been done to give a clear idea of the contents of some of the main sections. It is on a preliminary examination of these that what follows is mainly based.

The Wrights had been established at Wold Newton for many years as tenants of the Brocklesby estate when William Wright bought Newton from the Earl of Yarborough in 1870. He died in 1879, as the result of a riding accident, leaving his widow to bring up four girls and three boys. The eldest son was William Maurice, born in 1873. We can follow his career in detail in the diaries which he kept from 1894 until his death in 1956 (WWN 1/A). Together with a parallel series, kept by his brother Parsons, from 1903 to 1966 (1/C) they give fascinating pictures of life at Wold Newton, described by two contrasting characters.

After preparatory schools, Malvern College and a coach at Basing, William Maurice went up to St. John's College, Oxford, in October 1892. His first year or so at college, although he did not keep full diaries, is covered by the cryptic comments written in the minute space left for memoranda in calendars for 1891-4; remarks such as "Heard Father Ignatius" (Feb. 5th 1893) and, "Shotover hill, no joke" (Feb. 28th 1893). (1/B/15).

His first extended diary (octavo size, three days to a page) was commenced in 1894 and he used the same form for the rest of his life, normally filling in all the available space and rarely, if ever, missing a day. At the beginning of the first diary (1/A/1), "in case this book may be read years after", he gives a summary of his family background and describes a normal day at Oxford: "Lectures from 10-11. Very rarely more than one lecture a day, usually 10-11 a.m." At some of the less interesting lectures he whiled away the time by drawing caricatures, usually episcopal figures in copes and mitres., in his note books or diaries, Apart from lectures, "awful bosh" in many cases, his diaries bear witness to a recurrent struggle to rise in time for 8 o'clock Chapel, which he usually reached in an "unwashed and half-dressed" state.,

Outside the lectures, the essay writing, the reading, where his wrestling with Stubbs' *Constitutional History* were constantly interrupted by the invasions of his friends, he seems to have sampled most of the amusements which Oxford had to offer; the theatre, the river, long walks in the surrounding countryside, a constant round of tea parties and "wines". He attended debates in the Union, where "Belloc of Balliol speaks awfully good" in December 1894 (1/A/1), also using the Union library to pursue his particular interest in genealogy and family history when he should have been attending a lecture on Aristotle. There is no evidence that he ever spoke himself in one of the Union debates, but he did take part in those in St. John's Junior Common Room, supporting "lady undergrads" in November 1894; his maiden speech in a previous month had been in favour of religious education in Board Schools (1/A/1).

Among a number of college clubs of which he was a member were the Archery Club and the King Charles Club. The latter, for all its Royalist and High Tory ethos, seems to have been a club for mild social wining and dining and even milder gambling, where Wright regularly lost about 2/- each week. His refusal to attend the club on January 30th 1895, "the anniversary of his martyrdom and so hardly the time for a club called after him... to assemble to feast" aroused the indignation of some of the other members and further unspecified "rows" later in that term prompted his resignation (1/A/2).

In view of his many extra-curricular activities it is not surprising that William Maurice Wright should note in his diary that his tutor,

W. H. Hutton, "apparently" thinks I am a pleasant pupil but not a hard worker". (1/A/1, 8th Dec. 1894). Hutton, himself a Lincolnshire man, was to remain a lifelong friend until his death, as Dean of Winchester, in 1930. Another tutor, Leighton Pullan, also remained in close touch with Wright until the end of his life. It was probably his churchmanship, most of all, which endeared him to them, for his consuming interest in ecclesiastical history, architecture and liturgy was in complete contrast to his apparently lukewarm affection for the broader fields covered in the School of Modern History.

St. John's' College in the 1890s seems to have been notorious in more Protestant circles as a hotbed of High Churchmen. Such subjects as the use of incense and vestments in church services were a constant source of interest to Wright and his friends. He censored his own room, his friends' rooms, the college library and "a hostile bible meeting". When in February 1895 the President of the college accepted a cross for the altar in the college chapel for which William Maurice Wright had collected much of the money, he wrote, "Thus achieved another point, 3 cheers!" (1/A/2). Apart from the College chapel, services at several Oxford churches, meetings of the English Church Union and frequent visits to Mowbray's shop, as "the young Ritualist enthusiast" (1/A/2, 25th Jan. 1895), took up a great deal of time.

These Oxford influences are reflected in his purchases of vestments, ornaments and decorations for the church at Wold Newton and in his efforts to encourage the cause of High Churchmanship in the parish (arousing the local Methodists at one point to cries of 'No Popery' (2/A/14)). Most of the rest of the family shared his interest in the affairs of the parish church: visits were constantly exchanged between the Manor and the Rectory, and the Succession of new curates was observed with interest, pleasure or dismay:

1st Apr. 1894. New curate arrives and causes tremendous' consternation, Looks as though he had lately resigned his position as pubkeeper. Mother feels sick when she sees him. (1/A/1).

For some time William Maurice Wright himself had very serious thoughts of entering the Church as a career. However, a miserable fortnight in December 1897 at Ely Theological College, where he went to see how he liked the life, discouraged him completely. For a landowner and, by now, a Justice of the Peace, used to complete independence, to be "treated in so absurdly juvenile a way", to be aroused at 6.15 a.m. by "that miserable school bell", to suffer the discipline, the cold, the fatigue, and, above all, the meals was too much (1/A/4). He settled down to life at Wold Newton, busying himself with parish affairs, his work as a J.P., Diocesan committees, his antiquarian interests, gardening and estate business, interspersed with trips the length and breadth of Britain and, most years, a holiday abroad to study church architecture. Sometimes there is a separate journal covering these holiday trips in greater detail than his main diary (1/B).

The most amusing journal is one relating to a holiday in France in 1905 as the passenger in a motor cycle combination driven by his friend Herbert Mather (1/B/2). William Maurice Wright travelled in the "trailer": a photograph shows it to have been a kind of armchair on wheels which was pulled along behind the cycle (3/B/7).

After several soakings his real troubles began 10 kilometres short of Chartres in pouring rain and gathering gloom, when a trailer tyre burst and could not be repaired : he walked the rest of the way pulling the trailer, while his companion went on to find a hotel. After repairs they went on towards the Loire at a " terrific and really alarming pace some of the way ". The final blow fell between Blois and Chambord: the tyre burst beyond hope of repair and Wright pulled the trailer 17 miles, deserted once more by his friend. For the rest of the tour they travelled by train. Apart from transport problems they narrowly avoided incineration in Chartres Cathedral, when a flare-up of offertory candles nearly set the building on fire. There was a great rush of worshippers to get out but, " I remained in my seat with a few English people."

Throughout his expeditions at home and abroad he' was an assiduous collector of postcards: the deposit includes more than fifty volumes of views collected between 1890 and the early 1950s. Many of the cards are ones sent by Wright to his family or by friends to him, but the majority have not been used for correspondence. While mainly consisting of views of ecclesiastical buildings, they also include family snapshots, views of Wold Newton, pictures of horses and cars. (Many more family pictures are to be found in a separate series of photograph albums, one of them consisting of photographs of his Oxford friends, while many more loose postcards and photographs have yet to be fully sorted). Interesting little groups of cards are those showing Edward VII at Biarritz (3/B / 13, 20), pictures of various ships which plied in the Bournemouth area (3 /B/12) and cards celebrating the opening of the Simplon Tunnel in 1905, showing the first train and the machines used for tunnelling (3/B/11). Albums belonging to his brother Edward Wright show examples of traction engines and farm machinery at work as well as a few election scenes, probably at Alton, Hants., where he lived (3 /B/g, 16).

Two volumes containing postcards received by Parsons Wright between 1903 and 1914 are very entertaining (3 /B/3, 18). Their main contents are photographs of actresses, seaside postcards in dubious taste and, above all, motoring cartoons, for motoring and amateur entertaining were his two great loves. His services as singer and comedian were in demand at innumerable parish and private house concerts in the neighbourhood of Wold Newton. Much of the time not spent in rehearsing for these was passed in, around and often underneath his succession of motor bikes, motor trikes and motor cars, or " jawing in the garage " with like-minded acquaintances. The splendours and miseries of the heroic age of motoring emerge vividly from his pre-1914 diaries, as may be seen from the following few extracts from the 1903 diary (1/C/1), with which we conclude:—

Feb. 5th. Fool about trying to improve trike compression but fail.
Apr. 16th. Dr. Stedman arrives and 'talks in the garage like a maniac about the various qualities of motor bike' not on the market . . . His trike needless to say has broken down.

May 5th. Wire comes after lunch to say [new] car has arrived in London [from Paris].

May 21st. Busy all morning, afternoon and evening trying to get my beastly car to start. All my attempts prove futile.

June 20th. Car goes wrong coming home. We take 4 hours to do the 4 miles. Push the blooming affair the last 2 miles.

Sept. 14th. Slight bother with Mr. Chapman's horse from **Waltham** . . . The horse became frightened and took the fence, leaving the covered cart with the shafts in the air. The man . . . was in the midst of paraffin, parcels of sugar, Lipton's tea, plum cake etc., but quite intact.