

# SACKVILLE COLLEGE



## Friends' Newsletter Spring 2021



for one, did not expect to be in the same situation as we were last March. The effects of the pandemic will remain with us for some time therefore all fundraising events, venue hire and tours are postponed until it is deemed safe to open our doors.

Our residents have thankfully remained free of Covid-19 and are looking forward to a little relaxation in the restrictions and seeing their loved ones again.

The scaffolding that has dominated the front of the building for some time should be dismantled in the near future; the chimney repairs are now underway. It will be a welcome relief to see our building whole again.

Thank you for your ongoing support during the last year.

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

With best wishes

Rosalind Crowther

### News from the Garden

Last year we were very fortunate to have a contact with access to surplus plants who arranged delivery to us, all free of charge. With Friends and public support this helped boost our dwindling funds and enabled us to buy further horticulture items for the garden.

We anticipate we will be able to follow the same trend this year. At the present time we have Broad Bean plants looking good, Foxgloves grown from seed and if the weather is kind, plenty more plants rearing their heads.

### News from the Warden



Dear Friends of  
Sackville College

There is nothing like the emergence of spring flowers in the Sackville College gardens, with new buds on all our shrubs

and trees, to brighten our days and make us look forward to sunnier times. The last year has been exceptionally challenging for so many people and I,

Many thanks for your support and we will be sending an email out to you all when things are ready for sale.

## Events at Sackville College

A short production on John Mason Neale was made in December and is available on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aCmy4goAgY>

If you do not have a computer but can play a DVD, and would like a copy, please let us know.

## From the Archives

Some early De La Warrs and Sackvilles

At **Boxgrove Priory** there is a Chantry Chapel built in **1532** by order of **Thomas, 9<sup>th</sup> Lord De La Warr** (c. 1475-1554) Patron of the Priory, and his wife Elizabeth, intended as their burial place, where masses would be sung for their souls. The Reformation swept such practices away, but the Chapel remains, beautifully decorated with heraldry of the De La Warr family.



At **Westhampnett church** there is a monument to **Richard Sackville** (c. 1501-45) and his wife Agnes or Elizabeth, neé Thatcher. The monument is an Easter Sepulchre, which would have been at the heart of Easter celebrations.



In the centre are depictions of God the Father, the Body of the Son and the Holy Ghost as a dove. Richard and his son are on the viewer's left, and his wife and daughter on the viewer's right. Richard's daughter, Elizabeth, was, in fact, his only surviving child. He bought land formerly belonging to Boxgrove Priory in 1545. This Richard Sackville, a lawyer, was the younger brother of John Sackville, who married Margaret Boleyn, aunt of the more famous Anne Boleyn.<sup>1</sup> This Richard Sackville is often confused with his nephew, Sir Richard Sackville (d. 1566), who is buried at Withyham.

In **1566, Sir Richard Sackville** bequeathed 'for the perpetual Sustenance of the Poore Alms Folks at Lewis and **Grenested** so much Revenue as I have usually paid them and so much for Reparations as shall be limited and appointed by my Wife and Son'. It is not clear whether this referred to an almshouse in Church Lane, East Grinstead or another almshouse.<sup>2</sup> His grandson, Robert Sackville, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Dorset, continued the family tradition of helping the poor when he founded Sackville College in 1609.

In the last Newsletter, I wrote about **Dr John Henry Rogers, Warden of Sackville College 1872-79. Thank you to Graham Edwards** for resolving my uncertainty about the manner of the death of Dr Rogers.

**From the Kent & Sussex Courier, 29 October 1879**

***Death of Dr Henry Rogers***—The Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead, Dr Henry Rogers, was found dead in his bed on Saturday last, the 18th inst, and inquiries have shown that he died by his own hand,

<sup>1</sup> *History of Parliament* online.

<sup>2</sup> MJ Leppard, 'Almshouses in East Grinstead', *Bulletin of the East Grinstead Society* 82, Spring 2004.

*a bottle which had contained prussic acid being found by his side, a sad ending to a somewhat singular life. Dr Rogers had travelled much and was man of accomplishments, reading with ease in Latin, German, French, Spanish, and Italian. He founded a cottage hospital close to his then residence in the early days of that movement, and assisted Mr Charles Hill, F.S.A., and some other gentlemen of the neighbourhood, in establishing the East Grinstead Dispensary. At Sackville College, where he effected many improvements, he had made an interesting collection of books, prints, and relics connected with its history. It is hoped his successor may have taste and judgment to preserve the collection. What led to the fatal act on the part of Dr Rogers is not known to us. He had recently lost much of both eyesight and hearing and was possessed by a melancholy idea that he should die in poverty; the depression may have become too great to be borne. He was a lineal descendant, we may add, of Theodore, "the unfortunate King of Corsica."*

Dr Rogers had been a friend of John Mason Neale's but the two fell out after their trip to Portugal. Rogers was one of Neale's Assistant Wardens and often interfered in College matters. Neale and his family called Rogers 'The Bear'. After Neale's death in 1866, Rogers became the Warden in 1872. Despite his quarrels with Neale, he then created the Neale Memorial Library in the Study at Sackville College. Some of the books still bear a label with the handwriting of Rogers. It is interesting that Dr Rogers was succeeded as Warden by two more medical men: Dr George Covey 1879-93, and Dr James Harrison 1893-1908.

In the Study there is a Book of Common Prayer that was presented to Dr White in 1852, signed by the residents, in gratitude for his (medical) help. Rogers apparently said that White was 'only a common physician' whereas he, Rogers, was a surgeon as well. This tale is echoed in the Diary of William Wren, College Porter and Senior Brother, who recorded: 'Mr Rogers told me that he was made a physician as well as surgeon'. (26 March, year uncertain).

## **The Diary of William Wren**

William Wren entered Sackville College in about 1848, as a resident and Senior Brother and Porter. His Mother was a resident, too.

Wren's duties included drawing one bucket of well water every day from the well inside the quadrangle, for each of the 20 to 30 residents of Sackville College, and probably for the Neale household as well.

He wrote short diary entries in a plain manuscript notebook and on loose scraps of paper, kept inside marbled board covers. What has survived is now in the Warden's Study. More scraps may turn up. The dates he used are not reliable.

Wren's entries, despite their misunderstandings, give a vivid picture of life at Sackville College in his day. He wrote about Mr Martin, a resident who was expelled from Sackville College for drunkenness, and about quarrels amongst this community. Wren was accused of adultery with a blind girl called Betsey Ongley, who was also a resident, but he did not write about that!

Entries include:

5 of March Mr Neale told Betsey Ongley that she was not to throw any dirty water out in the front it was in the evening.

12 of July they had a pig in the pown (pound)

24 of July the circus came here with the bull and Elephant

**The visit by circus animals was recorded in Neale's Letters, and by his daughter, Mary.**

Neale would call on the proprietor to make sure that the performance did not include anything 'unfit for children to hear'. 'Once, the proprietor sent up his performing elephants, gratis, to the College; and there in the quadrangle, to the equal delight of its inmates and the orphanage, the animals went through their unwieldy performance on tubs, the



large porch door, only as a rule open for funerals, being swung open for their entrance'.<sup>3</sup>

Neale wrote to his wife: 'We are going, all well, to Felbridge Water this afternoon: May and Ermy [Mary and Ermenild] and two servants in donkey cart, Corny [Cornelius] and me in the coach. **Wombwell's Menagerie** is coming tomorrow. I should have liked to have seen May with the beasts, however I must be in Brighton, so they will have to go without me'.<sup>4</sup>

**Wombwell's Menagerie** was founded by George Wombwell (1777-1850) then directed by his wife after his death. It sounds cruel today, but arguably touring menageries helped to educate the British public about the animal kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

In the last *Newsletter*, we included mention by the present Warden's father, Warden Derek Chislett, of College resident, Mrs Grace Bingham:

'Our oldest resident is Mrs Grace Bingham. She is 89 and has been at the College for 23 years. Mrs Bingham lived on a smallholding at Furnace Wood, 3 miles from East Grinstead, keeping goats, pigs and hens for 40 years. When her husband died, she found work as a housekeeper to a doctor in Hastings, but after several years returned to East Grinstead and became a member of the College. She was given an upstairs room, with a gas cooker under the stairs: a bathroom and 2 lavatories were shared between every 4 Residents.'

We are delighted that some more information has very kindly been sent to Sackville College by Mrs Betty Salmon of East Grinstead.

'Mrs Grace Bingham was the Resident ('Amazing Grace') whom I had visited occasionally. She had been our neighbour at Felbridge when I was young and had been a Cook at Felbridge School. Grace enjoyed going to the Cantelupe Cattle Market and there is an enlarged photo of her at the sheep pen (wearing a hat) in the Town Museum'.

## **Anthony Trollope, *The Warden*.**

This novel was first published in 1855. Trollope (1816-82) invented the fictional Hiram's Hospital almshouse and its Warden, Parson Septimus Harding. Visitors sometimes remember this book when Guides tell them about Sackville College. Harding had accommodation and a salary of £800 a year and others thought that he had 'nothing to do'. Neale had accommodation and £28 a year and a great deal to do! Harding was a clergyman and Precentor at Barchester cathedral and played the violincello. Neale was a clergyman but claimed to have 'only one tune in his head', and that he was not musical enough to accept the only other post he was offered, whilst at Sackville College, as Precentor at Perth Cathedral. Harding had 2 daughters and grandchildren. Neale had 1 son and 4 daughters. Harding was persecuted by articles in *The Jupiter*, Neale by articles in *The Brighton Gazette*. Neale was criticised for not being a poor brother, Harding for his salary which was thought untrue to the spirit of Hiram, the founder.

A description of Hiram's Hospital sounds very like Sackville College:

'...a small quadrangle...the high wall of Mr Harding's garden, one gable of Mr Harding's house...the end of the row of buildings which formed the residences of the bedesmen. It was flagged all round small stone gutters...a conduit with four [water]cocks covered over from the weather, at which the old men got their water. It was a quiet sombre place, shaded over by the trees of the Warden's garden...Nothing could be more private than the quad of the Hospital'.<sup>6</sup>

## **The Cricket Match 1955**

Jonathan Parrett at East Grinstead Town Museum, wrote in *East Grinstead Living*, January 2021, about the 1955 Cricket Match held to support Sackville College, 'Politicians vs The Stage'. You can read it here:

<sup>3</sup> M. Lawson ed. *Letters of John Mason Neale*, edited by his daughter. (Longmans, 1910), p. 339.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters*, p. 181. 30 July 1851. Mrs Neale and their eldest child, Agnes, must have been away. Margaret was not yet born.

<sup>5</sup> *ODNB article by G. Speaight*: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29859>

<sup>6</sup> A. Trollope, *The Warden*, (Penguin Classics, 1855) pp. 40-41.

<https://issuu.com/nathan2003/docs/eg-jan21-lr>

You can watch a Pathé News extract here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrJ5YubPJY8>

## Work parties

Unfortunately, we have not been able to have any work parties in the last year.

## Friends News

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the College has been closed to all visitors with only essential carers and tradesmen permitted access. We do not yet know when the College can be open to visitors and for events again. We will let you know when things change and keep you informed via occasional email bulletins.

## In Memoriam: Gordon Waddingham

We offer sincere condolences to Hilary and her family upon the loss of Gordon. Hilary has given many delightful musical recitals at Sackville College, ably supported by Gordon. Together, they helped the Lifeboat Choir to raise thousands of pounds during the Christmas period, over many years. Gordon could be seen afterwards quietly dealing with the money.

## General Matters

### Amazon Smile

We are now a registered charity with Amazon who will make a small donation to Sackville College with each purchase. Please recommend to family, friends and contacts working for large companies who order from Amazon.

### Legacies to Sackville College

Leaving a legacy gift to Sackville College is easily arranged with your solicitor. There are 3 main types: residuary, pecuniary and specific gift (personal possession).

### Fundraising with Ebay.

Sackville College is now an Ebay registered charity. Place items for sale in the usual way and follow the link to the donation site and pick us! Please ask family and friends who use Ebay to give a percentage of their sales to a good cause. Grateful

thanks go to those who have done this, for their support. Sackville College is receiving regular small donations this way.



*Vermeer: The Milkmaid, Rijksmuseum*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Milkmaid\\_\(Vermeer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Milkmaid_(Vermeer))

## Footwarmers

Guides will be familiar with the wooden box in the background of this Vermeer painting, because Sackville College has a footwarmer like it. Robin Whalley has kindly written a piece about footwarmers, which appears at the end of the Newsletter.

## Accommodation Availability

There are flats available at the College. If you know of anyone who may be eligible, please contact the College Office for more details.

## Visits

The College is currently closed to visitors, to protect the Residents.

## Books for Sale

Please see the website

<https://www.sackvillecollege.org.uk/Books/>  
or contact Steve or Caroline (01342 312722) for more details or to arrange a purchase

Atlas of Man and Religion	£2.00
Historical Atlas to the Bible	£4.00
London 1000 Years	£5.00
National Portrait Gallery Catalogue	£1.50
Observer's Book of British Geology	£2.00

Observer's Book of Glass	£2.00
Observer's Book of Music	£2.00
Observer's Book of Silver	£2.00
Old English Customs and Ceremonies	£5.00
Oxford Advanced Atlas (1936)	£4.00
Oxford Companion to English Literature	£5.00
Peters Atlas of the World (1989)	£4.00

Regional Books Surrey-Sussex	£4.00
Synoptic Gospels	£2.00
The Great Archaeologists	£5.00
Traditional Dialect of Sussex	£5.00
Assorted Pelicans (Historical)	£5.00

## Welcome to new Friends and Thank you to all Friends.

We hope that new Friends will enjoy being Friends and supporting Sackville College.

**Thank you** to the growing number of Friends. Your continuing support is very much appreciated and brings funds, practical help and additional support to the life of the community at Sackville College.

As the College cannot be open to visitors for the time being, due to the current pandemic and resulting restrictions, your support is particularly valuable at this time.

When Sackville College can be open again, we will let you know about forthcoming events. Please keep safe and well.

The newsletter can be downloaded from

<http://sackvillecollege.org.uk/Files/Friends/Newsletter%20Spring%202021.pdf>

## Sackville College

Patron	The Earl De La Warr	
Warden	Mrs Rosalind Crowther	Office 01342 323414 warden@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Trustees	The Countess De La Warr	
	Mr Christopher J Rolley	
Sackville College Office	Open Weekday mornings 9am-1pm	01342 323414 admin@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Almoner	Mrs Linda Bryant	01342 323414 almoner@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Chaplain	The Rev'd. Andrew Hawken	St Swithun's Church
Head Guides	Mr & Mrs G. Edwards Contact the Office- Mrs Linda Bryant	01342 323414
Friends' Secretaries & Newsletter Editors	Steve and Caroline Metcalfe	friends@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Maintenance	Mr Marcus Bryant	thepottingshed@sackvillecollege.org.uk

### Important Dates for Your Diary 2020-21 (**Friends' Events**)

We will let you know when Sackville College can welcome visitors again.

Dec 2021	Christmas Music - to be confirmed.	
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We have used email addresses where possible to save printing and postage costs.

## Foot Warmers in Art

By Robin Whalley

Those Friends familiar with the College and its furnishings will have noticed the ancient (possibly 17<sup>th</sup> Century?) foot warmer, which is prominently displayed in the Dining Hall.



The foot warmer in Sackville College

I have done a little research (as is my wont!) and found several references to similar items, which are often portrayed in medieval paintings.

First of all a brief description of foot warmers from the Victoria & Albert Museum:

*“Foot warmers were perforated boxes mostly heated by hot coals and widely used in Northern European countries such as Holland, Scandinavia and the British Isles during the 17th and 18th centuries. These items would have been regarded as a necessity particularly in damp, poorly heated houses with stone or brick floors, but would have only been found in prosperous middle-class homes. They would have been the responsibility of the woman of the house, as was maintaining the warmth, light and comfort of the home. In order to spread the heat, they needed perforated sides, which made for elaborate carving. The carving might commemorate family ties, religious beliefs or national preoccupations. When not used, foot warmers would be hung from a ceiling beam, which explains why the base was often as elaborately carved as the other sides.”*





In this example from the V&A website, the foot warmer is catalogued as: "Dutch and from around 1650".

*"Foot warmer of carved oak with brass drop handles, carved in openwork on the top and on the end of the four sides with a bird amid foliage, with borders of scrollwork and leaf ornament; one side slides upwards and serves as a shutter."*

*"Foot warmers were a miniature form of brazier. They consisted of a pierced wooden or metal box housing an earthenware container for burning charcoal embers and were in use from Roman to Edwardian times. As carpets were expensive, a foot warmer would be used to prevent the loss of heat from cold stone floors."*

The Dutch in particular, used to be known for a certain kind of foot warmer found alongside other household furniture: a pierced box with an earthenware or metal pot holding glowing coals inside. They called it a *stoof* (stove) and you can see it in countless paintings from the 17th century. See examples below, often partially hidden under ladies' voluminous skirts!



***The first is by Dutch artist  
Quiringh van Brekelenkam  
around 1662***



and *The Chess Players* by Cornelius de Man  
circa 1670

***“Doctor’s visit” by Jan Steen 1660***

*Note receptacle for coals in this painting and again in the next with a similar theme!*







***The Sick Girl by Jan Steen 1665***



.....  
***Job Adriaensz. Berckheyde***



*Unknown Artist*



**Quiringh Gerritsz  
van Berkelenkam**

**1661**



**DIRCK HALS** (Haarlem 1591 –  
Haarlem 1656)

***Elegant Company Playing  
Music in an Interior (c 1640)***