

Shanklin & District History Society

SHANKLIN HISTORY UPDATE

December 2020



The entrance hall
at Landguard Manor in 2018

with
Good Wishes to all our Members and their families for a
Merry Christmas and a Happy 2021
from the Committee of S&DHS

The Smith family of Languard

The Smith family of Languard can be traced directly back to a John Smith who was born on the Isle of Wight in about 1540. Five generations later, Richard Smith and his wife Ann moved to Languard Farm (now Landguard Manor, Shanklin) in 1758. The Smith family motto is 'I strive after better things'. Four generations of the Smith family farmed at Languard where they strived for 120 years.

There were a great many children. Some stayed at home where they took an active part in Island life and entertained some interesting visitors. Others left the Island with news of their adventures coming back, sooner or later, to Languard. These are some of the Smith family stories.



Part of Isaac Taylor's Map of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight published in 1759

Portsmouth University at www.geog.port.ac.uk

Richard and Ann Smith move to Languard

In 1753 Ann Knight sold her whole estate including 'the manors of Great Languard and Lowcombe [Luccombe] and 10 messuages and 350 acres of land, 50 acres meadow, 400 acres pasture, 40 acres wood, 100 acres furze and heath, 70 acres moor and 50 acres marsh there and in Sandham, Eldyard, Blackpan, Ageston, St. Helens and Godshill' to William Pyke, the famous Portsmouth brewer. At Michaelmas (then 11th October) 1758 William Pyke let Languard, Little Languard, White Cross and Leigh (Lee or Lea and now the site of Sandown airfield)) to Richard Smith of Winston, near Wroxall. This first Smith lease was for twenty-eight years at £300 a year. Richard had inherited from his mother, Mary Reed, the small Winston estate near Wroxall and in 1749 married Ann Phillips of Span Farm near Appuldurcombe. Ann was a co-heiress of her brother, David Phillips of Cridmore Farm near Chillerton.

When Richard and Ann came to Languard they already had five young children and their next to arrive, a son named John, was born at Languard five weeks after they moved in. Three more children were born by 1766. Their third daughter, another Ann (1761-1838), married John Roach of Arreton Manor Farm in 1790. It was not all easy going. On 7th September 1766 there was a fire at Little Languard which burnt down the house, two barns, a hay rick, one wheat rick and a waggon load of wheat. It was thought to have been started by the hay being put up too green. There were also distractions. The Smith family were on friendly terms with both Sir Richard Worsley of Appuldurcombe and John Wilkes.



Clockwise:

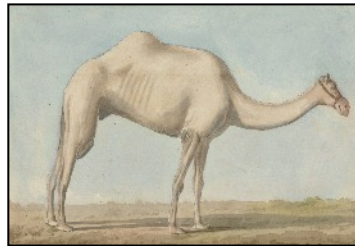
John Wilkes with his daughter Mary by Zoffany (c1782), Sir Richard Worsley by Reynolds (c1775) and David Garrick with his wife Eva Maria by Reynolds (c1772)

© The National Portrait Gallery, London
and (Worsley) en.wikipedia.org

Interesting friends and foreign travel

The controversial radical politician, journalist and agitator John Wilkes (he has been compared to Nigel Farage) is best remembered on the Island for his retirement in 1788 to Sandham Cottage (now commemorated by Wilkes Street in Sandown), but he was a visitor in earlier years. In early August 1772 he was staying with the Jolliffe's in Shanklin (we presume at Shanklin Manor Farm). On Sunday, returning from the little parish church where he had accompanied the Jolliffe family, he had the pleasure of seeing Mr and Mrs Garrick (his friend the famous actor David Garrick and his captivating wife), Mr and Mrs Smith and Mr Fitzmaurice who took him off to his seat at Knighton for dinner and the rest of the day. At Knighton he met Sir Richard Worsley (who was not yet married) and was invited to spend Monday at Appuldurcombe. It seems likely that Mr and Mrs Smith were Richard and Ann from Languard. Wilkes found Mrs Garrick the most captivating of the circle but noted that 'there is a wife of Mr Smith, *une femme d'un certain age* [Ann would have been forty-four]... ..very sensible and entertaining, with politeness free from the least affection of it.'

In 1784 John Smith took over Languard Farm from his father while Richard and Ann went to live at their Winston property. It was also at this time that Richard Smith went travelling. Acting as a secretary and companion to Sir Richard Worsley (after his marriage and the subsequent well known scandal) he accompanied him on his travels in Italy and Greece. In Rome Sir Richard engaged the young artist Willey Reveley who recorded the sights the two Isle of Wight men encountered on their travels.



Views in the Levant
by Willey Reveley, c1785
Rome with Ruins seen through an arch,
A Camel and A Temple at Paestum

Yale Center for British Art

Richard died at Winston in 1789, aged 71, and Ann at Arreton Manor in 1798, aged 70. Both were buried at Brading with their son Richard who had died at the age of 15 in 1766 'from inoculation of small pox'.

The second generation at Languard and theatrical inspiration

At the same time as taking over Languard Farm in 1784 John Smith married Ann, daughter of Henry Roach of Arreton Farm, strengthening the connection between the two families. They subsequently had five sons and four daughters. The owner of Languard by this time was Arthur Atherley Esq. John held the Game Keeper's Certificate on his behalf for Languard and Luccombe and shooting at Languard seems to have provided inspiration for a play.



Playwright Thomas Morton (1764-1838) made yearly visits to Shanklin and was staying at Eglantine Cottage in 1798 when he wrote, at least in part, his highly successful comedy *Speed the Plough*. It seems that Morton and John Smith had been 'on terms of close intimacy' for some years and Morton was a frequent visitor at Languard where John, with his eldest son Henry, took him off shooting. *Speed the Plough* includes a farmhouse, a castle overlooking the Isle of Wight and features rural life inspired by Languard, with the rustic hero *Farmer Ashfield* speaking in a strong provincial dialect. Henry was later to perform the part with success, and the appropriate accent, in amateur charity productions.

*Thomas Morton in c1803
by John Raphael Smith*

© The National Portrait Gallery, London

John Smith and experimental farming

John Smith was a progressive farmer, keen to improve his land and was not afraid to experiment. Some of the things John tried were recorded by Board of Agriculture Surveyor Charles Vancouver. By a judicious plan of underground draining John reclaimed a large tract of low peaty meadows close to the farm house. Different drainage methods were tried and one using stones, about the size of a hen's egg collected from the beach, seemed to be the most efficient and cost effective. Vancouver noted that 'well executed with a gentle and regular descent' these drains would continue working for ever.

Wheat was an important crop at Languard. John experimented with lime, applying it at the extraordinarily large amount of 320 bushels to the acre on a crop of young clover in December. The clover did not appear to benefit but the following wheat crop was ready to harvest earlier and produced eight or ten bushels more per acre than on untreated land. The effect of the lime was still visible in wheat crops sixteen years later.

An experiment of ploughing in buckwheat as a green manure was not apparently successful. Malt dust, applied to wheat at the end of March at 80 bushels per acre, was found to 'answer very well' and the same result came from top dressing both wheat and pasture land with soot at 60 bushels to the acre. John was also able to provide Vancouver with information on Sir Richard Worsley's failed attempt to establish a vineyard at St Lawrence.



Harvest time on the Isle of Wight

IWC Museum Service 2012.246

When John Smith died at Languard in 1812, aged 53, his widow Ann moved to Illyards (Ellyyards or Hillyards) with her unmarried third daughter Elizabeth and died there, aged 68, in 1832. Her eldest daughter Ann married Lieutenant John Everleigh of the Coastguard Service in 1816 and her second daughter Mary married William Jolliffe in 1817. William, born at Shanklin Manor Farm, had become a colonel in the Royal Marines at Southampton. John and Ann's second son, another John, lived with his wife and family at Niton Farm and their third son Richard took over the farm at Languard. Their other three sons, Henry, Edward and Charles went further afield.

Henry Smith witnesses an historic event

During the war with France, John and Ann's eldest boy, Henry (1785-1868), entered the Royal Marine Forces as a Second Lieutenant on 18th February 1809.

In 1815, serving under Captain Maitland on the *Bellerophon* he was an eye-witness to the surrender of Napoléon Bonaparte. An extract from a letter written to his brother Richard at Languard was first printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1868 and is partly reprinted, perhaps for only the second time, here.

Napoléon approaching the Bellerophon

Lautresaintehelene.com



H.M.S. Bellerophon, at Sea, July 19th, 1815.

Dear Richard, - We have been for a long time strictly blockading two French frigates, two corvettes, and a brig, lying in the Basque roads, under the protection of heavy batteries on the Isle d'Aix. Those ships, we heard, had been given to Buonaparte by the French revolutionary government to take him to America... ...Captain Maitland had so excellently arranged his plans that it was impossible the 'great man' could escape.

On the morning of the 10th, a schooner came out of Basque with a flag of truce flying, which we received; and there came on board us from her, the Duke of Rovigo and Count de Lascasse, to know if we would receive Buonaparte. Our captain told them he would receive him on no other conditions than those of affording him and his retinue protection till we got to England. The flag of truce then went back, nor did we hear anything more of her till the evening of the 14th, when we saw her standing out again, and the Count Lascasse and General Gorgan in her; the latter was immediately dispatched to England in the *Slaney*, with a letter from Buonaparte to the Prince Regent. Count Lascasse then went back to the frigates; but he informed us the emperor was not on board then, as had been reported, but was at Rochefort; and that he accepted our captain's conditions, and would be on board the *Bellerophon* the next morning.

Accordingly the next morning we saw the schooner coming out. We immediately sent the barge and two cutters; and at seven o'clock the barge returned, and in her the great Napoleon, who made his appearance exactly at seven o'clock on H.M.S *Bellerophon's* quarter deck; and said to our captain, 'I throw myself under your protection'... ...The emperor came on board in a plain great coat. He now wears a green coat with red cuffs and collar, two plain epaulettes, and a star on his breast. He is very affable and pleasing in his manners. He speaks to any one he comes athwart, and is always in a good humour. He bears his misfortune with a great deal of fortitude, which is to me astonishing. I am sure if I, like him, had tumbled from the highest pinnacle of greatness, I could no more bear up like him under my bad luck that I could fly. He has a most keen, penetrating eye; I think the most commanding countenance I ever saw. His eye is like a hawk's; he never sees anything once but he recollects it. He is a very different man from what he has been represented in England. He is in height about 5 feet 7½ inches; very broad across the shoulders, and rather corpulent; there is not the slightest pride in him: he asks one of us to dine with him every day.

*Napoleon on Board the
Bellerophon
by
Sir William Quiller
Orchardson*

The Tate Gallery, London



Henry was made a Lieutenant in 1825, a Captain in 1837, and was again on the *Bellarophon* during the bombardment and capture of the Syrian port of St Jean d'Acre in 1840. Many of his appointments were in the Mediterranean where, during his leisure time, he enjoyed antiquarian excursions, the study of music and the theatres of Malta and Naples. During his long service he repeatedly served under the command of Admiral Sir Charles Napier (also known as 'Mad Charlie') and the two became friends. It may not be entirely coincidence that Sir Charles' estranged wife Lady Elizabeth (Eliza) Napier spent her later years in Shanklin, at Swiss Cottage on Sea Terrace and that his stepson, Lieutenant-General Edward Elers Napier, settled with his family at West Hill, Shanklin.

The date of Henry's marriage to Julia Woodforde, a doctor's daughter from Jersey, is not known, but within twelve months she had died in childbirth and he did not re-marry. In 1848 Henry accepted retirement and became a Major in 1854. He was interested in botany although his work on this subject was never published. His other interests were the dialect and provincial language of the Isle of Wight together with stories of local life, customs and nursery tales. His work on these subjects was given to others to publish, including his youngest brother and executor Charles Roach Smith.

Henry Smith and Three Little Pigs

Nursery rhymes were passed down orally through the generations, with many variations in the detail, until people began to collect and publish them. The earliest printed version of one tale was *Pigweency the Wise: or The History of a Wolf & Three Pigs* in 1830. It involved a fairy and a house of iron rather than brick. A variation from Dartmoor, published in 1853, involved a fox stalking a group of pixies. It is thanks to Henry Smith that we have the authentic Shanklin version of the story. It includes a reference to the family farm and the additional feature of an apple tree which does not appear in other versions. Henry's version was sent, with other tales then current in the Isle of Wight, to James Orchard Halliwell, a friend of his brother Charles, who included it in the 1853 5th edition of his *Nursery Rhymes and Nursery Tales of England*. Henry's Shanklin tale is reprinted here with illustrations by J S Alpenny from *Pigweency the Wise* courtesy of Toronto Public Library.

The Story of the Three Little Pigs



Once upon a time there was an old sow with three little pigs, and as she had not enough to keep them, she sent them out to seek their fortune. The first that went off met a man with a bundle of straw, and said to him, "Please, man, give me that straw to build me a house;" which the man did, and the little pig built a house with it. Presently came along a wolf, and knocked at the door, and said, - "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." To which the pig answered, - "No, no, by the hair of my chiny chin chin." The wolf then answered to that, - "Then I'll huff, and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in." So he huffed, and he puffed, and blew his house in, and eat up the little pig.



The second little pig met a man with a bundle of furze, and said, "Please, man, give me that furze to build a house;" which the man did, and the pig built his house. Then along came the wolf, and said, - "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." To which the pig answered, - "No, no, by the hair of my chiny chin chin." The wolf then answered to that, - "Then I'll huff, and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in." So he huffed, and he puffed, and he puffed, and he huffed, and at last he blew the house down, and he ate up the little pig.

The third little pig met a man with a load of bricks, and said, "Please, man, give me those bricks to build a house with;" so the man gave him the bricks, and he built his house with them. So the wolf came, as he did to the other little pigs, and said, - "Then I'll huff, and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in." So he huffed, and he puffed, and he huffed, and he puffed, and he puffed, and he huffed; but he could *not* get the house down. When he found that he could not, with all his huffing and puffing, blow the house down, he said, "Little pig, I know where there is a nice field of turnips." "Where?" said the little pig. "Oh, in Mr. Smith's Home-field, and if you will be ready to-morrow morning I will call for you and we will go together and get some for dinner." "Very well," said the little pig, "I will be ready. What time do you mean to go?" "Oh, at six o'clock." Well the little pig got up at five and got the turnips before the wolf came - (which he did about six) - and who said, "Little pig are you ready?" The little pig said "Ready! I have been and come back again, and got a nice potful for dinner."



The wolf felt very angry at this, but thought he would be *up to* the little pig somehow or other, so he said, "Little pig, I know where there is a nice apple-tree." "Where?" said the pig. "Down at Merry-garden," replied the wolf, "and if you will not deceive me I will come for you, at five o'clock to-morrow, and we will go together and get some apples." Well, the little pig bustled up the next morning at four o'clock, and went off for the apples, hoping to get back before the wolf came; but he had further to go, and had to climb the tree, so that just as he was coming down from it, he saw the wolf coming, which, as you may suppose, frightened him very much. When the wolf came up he said "Little pig, what! Are you here before me? Are they nice apples?" "Yes very," said the little pig. "I will throw you one down;" and he threw it so far, that, while the pig was gone to pick it up, the little pig jumped down and ran home.



The next day the wolf came again, and said to the little pig, "Little pig, there is a fair at Shanklin this afternoon, will you go?" "Oh yes," said the pig, "I will go; what time shall you be ready?" "At three," said the wolf. So the little pig went off before the time as usual, and got to the fair, and bought a butter-churn, which he was going home with when he saw the wolf coming. Then he could not tell what to do. So he got inside the churn to hide, and by so doing turned it round, and it rolled down the hill with the pig in it, which frightened the wolf so much, that he ran home without going to the fair.



He went to the little pig's house, and told him how frightened he had been by a great round thing which came down the hill past him. Then the little pig said "Hah, I frightened you then. I had been to the fair and bought a butter-churn, and when I saw you, I got into it, and rolled down the hill." Then the wolf was very angry indeed, and declared he *would* eat up the little pig, and that he would get down the chimney after him. When the little pig saw what he was about, he hung on the pot full of water, and made up a blazing fire, and, just as the wolf was coming down, took off the cover, and in fell the wolf; so the little pig put on the cover again in an instant, boiled him up, and ate him for supper, and lived happy ever afterwards.



Edward Smith and his Australian Diary

Edward, born in 1797, was John and Ann's fourth son, and probably stayed working on the family farm until he emigrated to Australia at the age of about thirty eight. He sailed on the *Sir Thomas Monro* which left London on 18th September 1832 and arrived in Sydney on Monday 18th February 1833. In the passenger list published in the *Sydney Herald* he is described as 'Edward Smith, Farmer'. By 1st June he was working as an overseer at the Paulsgrove Estate at Mt Keira near Woolongong in the Illawarra District of New South Wales.

During 1833 and 1834 Edward kept a diary which was transcribed and published by the Illawarra Historical Society in 1988, although the name of the author was then unknown. It was only through further research, and contact with the IoW Record Office, that the identity of the writer was established by the Illawarra Historical Society in 1996. This link with Paulsgrove only came to the attention of S&DHS in 2020.

Paulsgrove (later known as the Mount Keira Estate), was owned by James Stares Spearing who 'came free' on the *Harvey* in 1825. He received grants of land and acquired further grants through his marriage in 1827. The 1828 Census credits Spearing with 4000 acres. He was allocated 'convict servants' to work the land and also employed local indigenous workers. He bred his own livestock including sheep and cattle, grew wheat and a variety of other crops and operated his own watermill, the first to be built in Illawarra. He was also the first producer of grapes in the area and the first to produce his own wines.



*Mount Keira in about 1840
attributed to Frederick Garling*

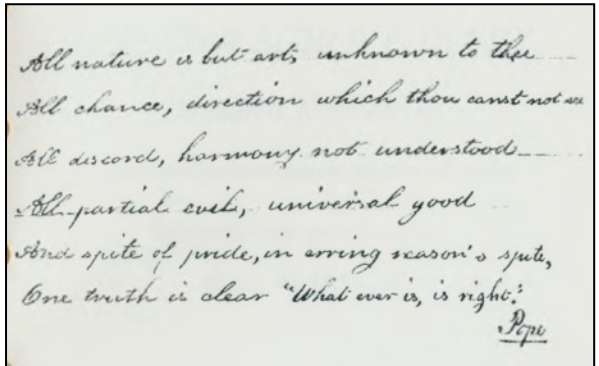
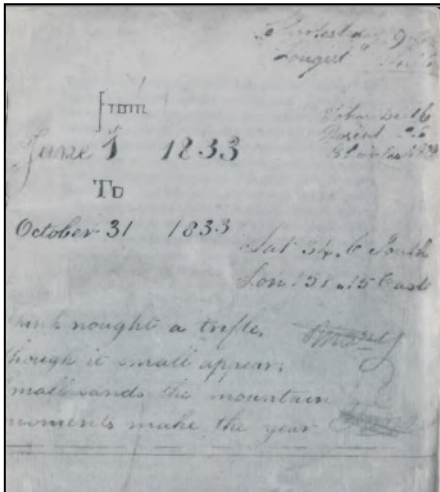
Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library New South Wales

Overland Paulsgrove is about 60 miles south of Sydney, but given that roads had yet to be built, goods were shipped the 40 miles by sea. By 1833 it was an established, if somewhat remote, enterprise.

Spearing was baptised in 1780 at Porchester and the adjacent Paulsgrove in Portsmouth is presumed to have given the name to his New South Wales estate. He is said to have lived on the Isle of Wight for several years before leaving for Australia, was reputedly a miller and is possibly the Mr Spearing running Shide Mill in Newport in 1812. In Australia he had dealings in Sydney with Jonathan Williams, who he claimed to have known for many years in England. Jonathan Williams, born in Brading in 1783, was transported to Australia for handling stolen goods (silk handkerchiefs and other items) in 1820 for fourteen years. When he arrived in Sydney on the convict transport *Shipley* in September 1820 he was listed as a carter and sawyer. His wife Fanny paid for her own passage and arrived to join him on the *Midas* in August 1821. Fanny petitioned the Governor for a block of land in Sydney and Jonathan received a 'Ticket of Leave' on 6th September 1821. This allowed him to work on his own account and buy property within a prescribed geographical area. By 1822 the couple were living at 52 Phillip Street in Sydney and Jonathan was in business as a dealer with a contract to ship spirits to the Illawarra district with return cargoes of cedar. To travel outside Sydney he had to obtain a special pass. When James Spearing had business in Sydney he stayed at 51 Phillip Street.

It seems likely that Edward Smith had agreed a job with Spearing, through Isle of Wight contacts, before leaving home. No advertisements for the Paulsgrove post have been found.

Edward's Paulsgrove diary records day to day farming activities, including trimming the vines, and also mentions his family back in England. He recalls drinking tea at Portsmouth with his sister Mary just after he had left home and there are exchanges of letters with his brother Charles, sisters Betsy (Elizabeth) and Ann, Mr Jolliffe and Mr Williams in Sydney. On Monday 10th June 1833 he sowed some flower seeds that he had brought from England and on 1st September recalled that twelve months earlier he had been at his mother's funeral service at Newchurch: 'there a respectable congregation and a large church – here convict and a barn'. On 14th October Edward 'drank W Jolliffes health and many happy returns' which we assume referred to his sister Mary's husband William Jolliffe. While Edward's spelling, punctuation and grammar are somewhat erratic, his education is demonstrated by a quotation from Alexander Pope's *An Essay on Man*.



Extracts from *Edward Smith's Paulsgrove diary*
Illawarra Historical Society



Nankeen Bird, 1813
by Richard Browne

Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library New South Wales

Like any good farmer he made notes on the weather, the state of the crops and stock numbers. He went for walks on the beach but his favourite leisure activity seems to have been shooting, often in the company of Spearing's son Marcus. The birds, including a small kind of Parrot with a top-knot like a cockatoo and the satin bird (the satin bowerbird), were rather different from the game at Languard. His other hobby was taxidermy and there are a number of references to stuffing birds including a kingfisher and a nankeen bird which he had bought for three shillings. The Nankeen or Rufous Night Heron is about 2 feet in length and primarily nocturnal. On 2nd March 1834 Edward 'sent a nankeen bird to go by the Bee for Mr Williams'. The Bee was a 14 ton sailing vessel, thought to have been owned by James Spearing, which traded between Wollongong and Sydney.

The diary entries show that Edward was increasingly fed up with Paulsgrove, calling it a 'dreary hole', and was disgruntled with James Spearing. On Sunday 26th January 1834 Edward went to church at Wollongong where 'Mr Wilkinson preached, capital sermon on scandaling slandering and interfering with our neighbours. very suitable to the Illawarra gentry'. The crunch came on Wednesday 9th April 1834 when Edward wrote 'had the deuce of a breeze with Spearing determined to leave'. The weather was against him with a gale and a tremendous sea preventing him getting a boat. On Saturday 12th April 'at eleven left Paulsgrove with my boxes with regret that I ever went near the place dined and slept at Browns [the only Inn] drank some of the colonial rum dreadful headach'. The following day he waited at the beach until 5 o'clock when he finally got on board a boat. There were strong winds, it was very cold and it was not until 12 o'clock on the Tuesday that the boat anchored at Market Wharf (at Darling Harbour) in Sydney.



*Wollongong,
Mountains Keira
and Kembla in
Distance
by
Henry Grant Lloyd*

Courtesy Dixson Library,
State Library
of New South Wales

It seems that Edward did not leave Paulsgrove without a plan. After arriving in Sydney 'completely tir'd of my journey din'd at Mr Williams spent the afternoon and slept'. The next entries suggest he was settling in with Mr and Mrs Williams:

Wednesday 16: 10 AM got my boxes on shore (paid 10s for them and myself) and brought them to Mr Williams cart 2s - a pen knife 2

Thursday 17: setting up birds for Mr Williams bought a felt hat 15s.

The final entry reads: *Monday 21: wrote Mrs Spearing for Mrs Williams.*

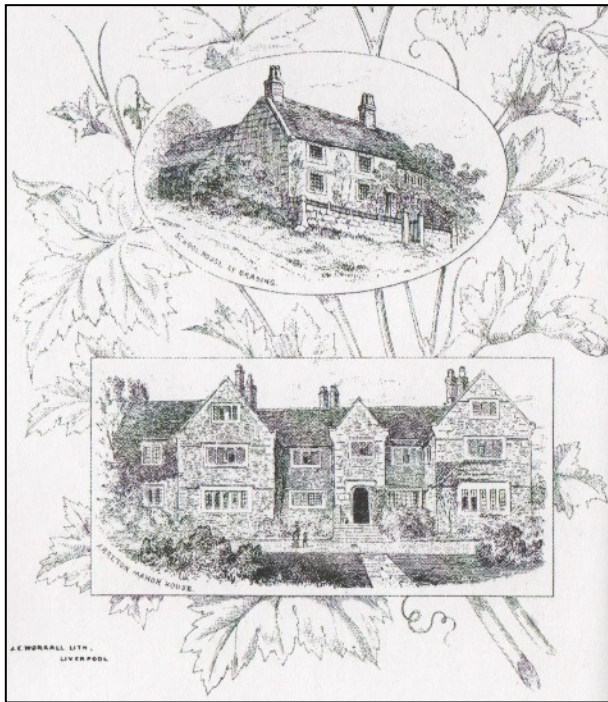
In April 1834 Jonathan Williams was a dealer at No 1 Hunter Street, on the corner of Phillip Street in Sydney and also owned other property in the area. On 4th March Jonathan had received his 'Certificate of Freedom'. In May 1834 all the William's household goods were put up for auction and in July Jonathan and Fanny sailed for London on the *Eldon*. The passenger list included a Mr Smith. Jonathan had done well in Australia and when he died in Brading in 1856 he owned a number of properties in the town. Fanny married again in 1859 to Benjamin Jolliffe.

James Stares Spearing sold Paulsgrove in December 1835 and returned to England with his wife Harriet. They retired to Molena Cottage in Carisbrooke where James died in 1859. Part of his Paulsgrove Estate is now the Botanic Garden of Wollongong and he is remembered by the names of the small Spearing Reserve on Spearing Parade.

No definite records have been found for Edward after 21st April 1834. Whether he was the 'Mr Smith' on the *Eldon* and whether or not he too returned home to the Isle of Wight is not known. His Paulsgrove diary is now in the National Library of Australia.

Charles Roach Smith - archaeology and Languard superstitions

Charles (1806-1890) was the youngest of John and Anne's ten children and, in his day, the most famous. His father died when he was only six, but he later recalled his early childhood at Languard. When John was about to place him before him on his horse Black Sloven, to ride over the fields, the young Charles would hide himself behind the large lime trees which skirted the Green Court. Charles had an early passion for fishing, a liking for all kinds of poultry, but 'cared nothing for horses, cows, sheep or pigs'. He regarded the Roach family's Arreton Manor as a second home, although his early education was at a small boarding school run by the Misses Trattle in Brading. He then went to a school outside Winchester and another in Lymington. When he was about fourteen he was placed in the office of Newport solicitor Francis Pittis while boarding at Alexander Clarke's academy. It was during his time in Newport that one of his Roach cousins took him to Portsmouth to see his brother Henry play the part of 'Farmer Ashfield', in a performance of *Speed the Plough* with his fellow officers.



Charles' school-house at Brading and his second home, Arreton Manor with a scene from 'Speed the Plough'

From 'Recollections' vol 2 and stanstedplayers.wordpress.com

A law career, Charles decided, was not for him. He considered following his brother Henry and brother-in-law William Jolliffe into the Royal Marines, but was unwilling to wait the three years until he could get a commission. In 1822 his eldest sister then saw an advertisement in a local paper placed by John Follett, a respectable chemist in Chichester, who was seeking an apprentice. Charles went to Chichester and it was there that his interest in old coins and archaeology developed. His brother-in-law John Everleigh, stationed at Bognor with the Coast Guard Service, took him to see the Roman villa at Bignor with his two sisters, Ann Eversleigh and Elizabeth. It was a long journey, taking a whole day. Charles was highly pleased, later writing that a new world seemed to be opening up to him and he at once purchased, read and re-read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

Through a connection of one of his sisters with a Mrs Captain Cooper in Lake, in 1827 Charles secured a post in Snow Hill, London, with wholesale druggists Wilson, Ashmore, Hodgkinsons and Minshull. The hours were 6 am to 8 pm with half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. In 1834 he started his own chemist's business in Lothbury, at the back of the Bank of England in central London. It was here that he started to collect Roman and medieval antiquities which were being recovered during construction work on sewers, office buildings and from dredging the Thames. Eventually he had over 5000 items which were eventually sold to the British Museum for £2000. In 1840 his premises were compulsorily purchased and he moved to 5 Liverpool Street where he was joined, by his youngest sister Maria. Neither married and when business dwindled they both retired to Temple Place in Strood, Kent in 1856 where they lived happily together until Maria's death in 1874.



Some items from Charles' collection now in the British Museum



Romano-British Samian Ware bowl found in Botolph Lane, London

Roman Coin with the head of Vespasian

Medieval miniature anthropomorphic baluster jug

Neolithic/Bronze Age flint axe found at Landguard - with Charles' inscription

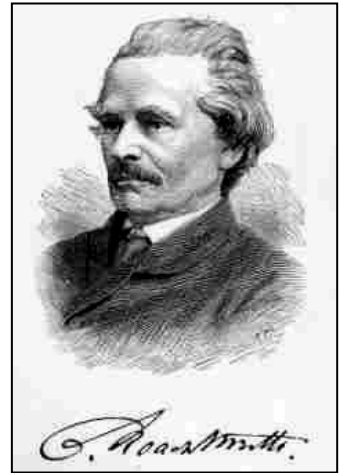
HILLYARDS SHANKLIN

britishmuseum.org

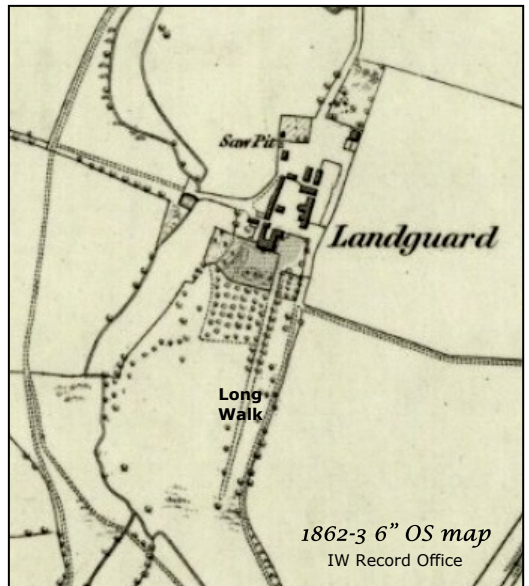
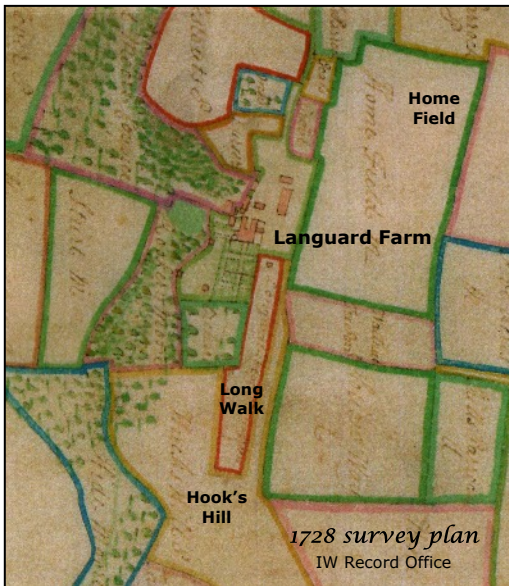
Charles pioneered the study of Roman coin hoards, publishing articles in the *Numismatic Chronicle*. He made regular excursions, at home and abroad, in search of archaeological field monuments and antiquarian collections. The results were published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and his own *Collectanea Antiqua*, the first journal devoted to archaeology, in the modern sense, published between 1840 and 1880. He was a recognised authority on antiquarian matters, elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1836, elected to the London Numismatic Society in 1837 and was one of the founders of the British Archaeological Society in 1843. When Charles visited the Isle of Wight in 1855 with some antiquarian friends, a grand public dinner in Newport was held in his honour.

At Stroud Charles developed other interests including Shakespearian studies and horticulture. He acquired some horticultural land, grew grapes and produced wine, which at the time was very unusual. It is not known if he was aware of Sir Richard Worsley's failed vineyard in the Isle of Wight or his brother Edward's experience with vines in Australia. Charles' 1863 pamphlet *On the Scarcity of Home-grown Fruits in Great Britain* advocated planting waste ground at the side of railway lines with dwarf fruit trees. The idea proved more popular in France and Germany than in England.

He also worked on the glossary of words used in the Isle of Wight compiled by his late brother Henry. A manuscript copy had been made available to James Orchard Halliwell in compiling his *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, first published in 1847. Since then it had been augmented and stories of local life, customs and habits added.



Charles arranged publication of Henry's work, with additions by himself, by the English Dialect Society in 1881. Many words reflect their childhood at Languard farm including Zive (a scythe), Zull (a plough), Jackheyarn (heron) and Vanner (a large hawk). There are also the delightful Midgemadge (confusion) and Flustration (to be in a fright). A section on superstitions includes the 'Ladies in white, not of earthy mould' who were 'once supposed to be seen, at certain times, in a log yew and box walk which reached from Landguard to Hook's Hill towards Shanklin'. The Long Walk is named on a Landguard survey plan of 1728 and indicated on Ordnance Survey maps in the 1860s.



Three days before Charles died in August 1890 he was presented by fellow antiquaries with a specially struck silver medal to commemorate his 'lifelong services to archaeology'. Despite this, his work was soon forgotten until it began to regain recognition in the 1970s and many of his books have now been re-published.

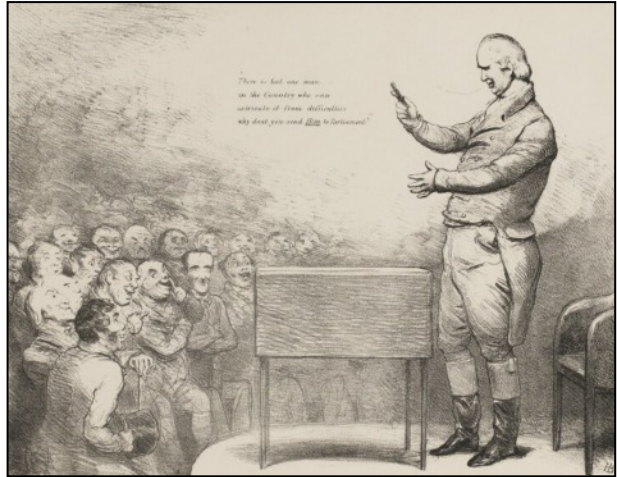
The third generation at Languard and an appreciative guest

John and Anne's third son Richard (1794-1842) and his family were the third generation of Smiths to farm at Languard. In 1824 he married Amelia, daughter of his Uncle Henry Roach of Redway. They had seven children. In 1832 the farmer, writer, and independent journalist of national repute, William Cobbett (1763-1835), was a guest at Languard. He arrived from Portsmouth at Ryde on Sunday 15th July with his horse and carriage and travelled through Brading to the farm. He lectured at Brading on Monday and at Newport on Tuesday.



*William Cobbett in 1831 and
a caricature view of him
lecturing in March 1830*

© National Portrait Gallery, London



Following journeys around southern England which culminated in his 1830 *Rural Rides* (still in print), Cobbett was particularly interested in the plight of many agricultural workers. It was therefore with approval that at Languard he found 'a real English farm house, and two pork tubs, containing each, I should suppose, three quarters of a ton of pork, to be eaten by those who made the wheat and the pork to come'. He spent Wednesday walking and lounging about at the Smith's 'beautiful and pleasant farm'. In the garden he saw a patch of Italian clover (*trifolium incarnatum*) which a few people were then experimenting with as a green animal feed, ready in early May when little else was available. Cobbett's horse ate some with 'great greediness' and Richard gave him some of the seed. Cobbett left for Portsmouth on Thursday:

quitting one of the pleasantest houses I was ever in in all my life; a house of plenty, of unaffected manners, of real hospitality, and of everything desirable in the world. I have been at a great number of friends' houses in my life-time; some of them equal to this, but never was I at one to surpass it.

At the Isle of Wight Agricultural Society's Annual Exhibition of Fat Stock in December 1836 Richard won the first prize of £6 for the best fat ox and a second prize of £2 for the best pen of five fat wethers, all bred in the Island and fed on succulent food only. When the Society held its Breeding Stock Show in July 1840 Richard was one of the two judges. He was also in favour of Parliamentary reform and suffrage for all men over twenty-one. In April 1839 Richard presided over a large chartist meeting held at the Green Dragon Inn in Newport. Newspaper reports described the meeting as 'admirably conducted' and Richard as 'a highly respectable and esteemed farmer of Languard'. Richard died at Languard, aged 49, in July 1842. According to the Brading tithe map he was then the tenant of Languard and Leigh with over 554 acres and the owner of Ellyards with eight acres and of James Day's cottage at Lake.

Amelia Smith entertains with local tales

Richard's widow Amelia remained the tenant at Languard until her death in 1853. In July 1849 she entertained her brother-in-law, Charles Roach Smith and his friend the antiquary and wood-engraver Frederick William Fairholt (1814-1866). The pair were making a tour of the Isle of Wight visiting historic houses, churches and Carisbrooke Castle. They stayed with Charles' brother John at Niton farm and on 6th July walked along the undercliff from Niton to Sandown Bay and Languard. Amelia gave them a hearty welcome and, with the large party there to meet them, they passed a merry evening.

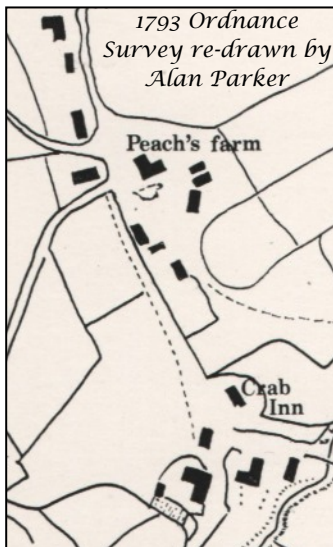
They enjoyed a quiet and amusing time on the following day wandering about the farm, playing at nine pins with the men and at poetical forfeits with the ladies. On Sunday 8th July they visited Brading Church and Yaverland before departing the next day for Ryde by coach.

A nine pins skittle alley
Henry Thomas Alken, 1823

Yale Center for British Art



Fairholt recorded details of the trip in *My Journey Book* including the many original anecdotes of Isle of Wight people he heard while he was at Languard. He noted that all the farm servants believed in ghosts, fairies and omens. The gardener, Joe Barnes, assured him that the bees always die when their masters or mistresses die if they were not told about it. Joe knew this from his own experience from when his brother died in the autumn and his bees died the next spring. One story Fairholt heard at Languard concerned a farmer named Peach and was said to have occurred some twenty years earlier. It has similarities to a story later told by James Warder in *Shanklin Sixty Years Ago* published in 1881. This is the Languard 1849 version recorded by Fairholt:



Old Simon Peach, who lived near (at?) Shanklin, had come into his brother's house by heirship; but feeling sure that his brother must have been comparatively rich, and as no money was found, consulted 'a cunning man', who told him that the money was buried in the house, and that a woman would find it. He went home and worried his wife until she had nearly pulled the house to pieces, with no success. Still he continually annoyed her, so that she could think of little else; when, about eighteen months afterwards, being in the washhouse, and treading upon a stone in the floor, it sank a little. She lifted it up, finding beneath it more than 500 guineas. With this a farm was bought; and they began to invite folks like other farmers, who at this time kept much company. At the first dinner they gave, Simon, taking a fowl, began carving, at the same time exclaiming, 'I likes the liver, and my wife the gizzard wing'; and so, cutting both off, pushed the dish away, adding, 'and now, ladies and gentlemen, help yourselves!'

The fourth and final generation of Smiths at Languard

Another John, the eldest son of Richard and Amelia Smith, born in 1829, succeeded his mother at Languard on her death in 1853. He married Kate White from Carisbrooke in 1856. John farmed 500 acres and employed 13-15 labourers and 4-5 boys in addition to 4 indoor servants.

Turnip thefts were a problem. In April 1853 Benjamin Cotton, his son Benjamin and Charles Reeves were convicted of stealing nearly a cartload of turnip greens from Languard. Each was sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour at Winchester. In August 1867 Samuel Spencer of Sandown got off with a fine for stealing Languard turnips.

When a bill in Parliament was proposed in 1859 for a Ryde and Ventnor railway, both John and Colonel Francis Henry Atherley, owner of Languard and Luccombe farms, were among those opposed to the scheme, but without success. When the line to Shanklin opened in 1864 it ran through and divided the fields of the farm.

Languard livestock remained highly regarded. When the Isle of Wight Agricultural Society held there first show of breeding stock in July 1861, John took Alderney cows from Languard. At the December 1869 Gilten Market at Newport John's excellent pen of sheep were bought by local butcher Mr C Saunders.

*Market Day
at
St James
Square,
Newport
in
about 1900*

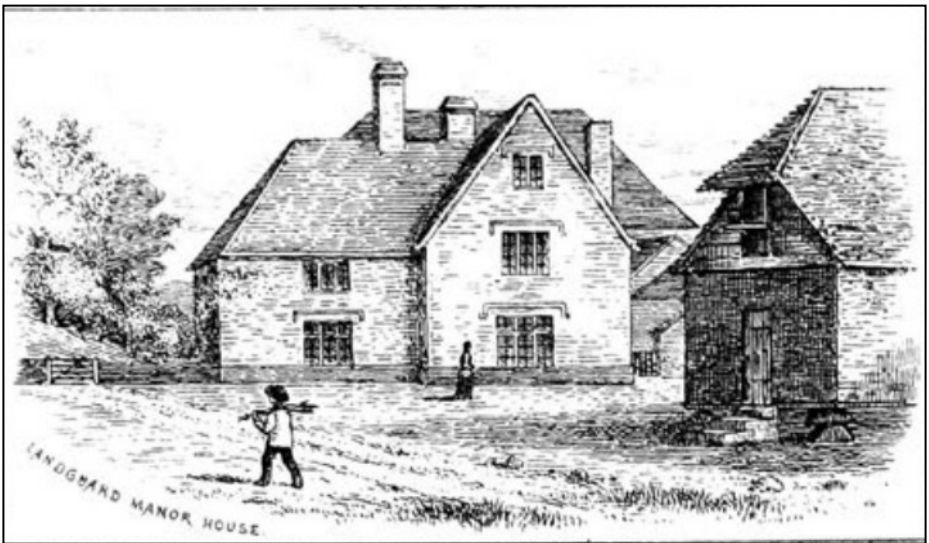
Museum of Island
History
IWCMS 1996.52



John Smith also knew his rights. When the family drove in the 'four wheel' each Sunday to Christ Church in Sandown, which had been built in 1845, they were charged 6d by the Brading tollgate-keeper William Leigh. There was an exemption from tolls for those going to church in their own parish and the matter ended up at the County Petty Sessions. There it was decided that as Christ Church was a district church to Brading the plaintiff was exempt. William Leigh was fined 5s with 10s court costs and 2s 6d expenses to John.

In the summer of 1867 John and Kate had a colourful garden at Languard with at least twenty-eight rose trees. On the morning of Wednesday 17th July John went out to find that their roses had been very much disfigured with all the blooms taken off. Suspicion fell on a labourer, John Brett, and was put in the hands of P C Kennard who found rose cuttings in Brett's garden shed. He took them to Languard and found that several matched the places where they had been cut off. A prosecution followed.

By 1871 John and Kate had seven children aged from a few months to twelve years old, but their time at Languard was running out. Colonel Atherley and his wife Lady Isabel had decided to make extensive alterations to the house at Languard and make it their home. The matter appears to have been amicable. On 23rd March 1877 Colonel Atherley held the annual audit dinner for his tenants at the Marine Hotel in Shanklin. The Colonel made a presentation to John of a silver salver with the inscription: 'Presented by Lieut. Colonel and Lady Isabel Atherley, as a token of regard and esteem, to Mr John Smith, on his leaving Landguard Manor House, which had been held by himself and family for 150 years'. John stated that his natural regret at leaving the old house was relieved by the thought that he would continue as a tenant of 'one of the best and kindest of landlords, Col Atherley'. As it turned out John only continued to farm at Languard until 1878 when he was given notice to quit by the Colonel. On 11th October an auction of Languard stock was held in a field adjoining Shanklin station including five clever cart horses, five choice dairy cows in calf and 150 fine Dorset ewes in lamb, the property of Mr Smith, leaving the farm.



Languard Farmhouse viewed from the farmyard to the north. This drawing is possibly the only illustration of Languard prior to its alteration by the Atherleys

Recollections Volume 2, 1886

In April 1878 John had taken a lease on Bembridge Farm which amounted to 754 acres, including copses and waste, and in October 1892 his son, Oscar Harvey, took over Little Yaverland Farm. Both were leased from Lady Mary Hammond-Graeme of Norton Lodge. The 1876 *Black's Picturesque Guide to the Isle of Wight* noted 'the old farm-stead of Languard' which was replaced in the 1888 edition with 'a large house recently built by Colonel Atherley'. The Atherleys retained the southern 18th century brick front below a new roof and parts of the stone walls of the old dwelling survive in the new Manor House which was further enlarged in 1906.



The 18th century south front today, an early 20th century view with the reputedly haunted Long Walk on the right and the 1906 entrance front

W J Nigh

A final legacy

John and Kate Smith's youngest daughter, Amelia Frances born in 1870, married architect and antiquarian Percy Goddard Stone as his second wife in 1900. London born Percy Stone is remembered for his architectural works and his *Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight* published in 1891. He also wrote *Legends and Lays of the Wight*, published in 1912 which is likely to have drawn on Smith family stories. There is a reference to 'Smith o'Languard' taking part in a fox hunt. Stone's 'homely verses' are written in Isle of Wight dialect, as recorded by his wife's Great Uncles Henry and Charles, and are perhaps a final legacy of the Smith family's time at Languard farm. An old-style Isle of Wight farm Christmas dinner:

Us zettled down. Wold Jaarge zaid grace,
 An' then us did pitch in a pace.
 I hreckon us maade proper plaay
 Wi' all t'zpread thet Crismus day.
 Zoon 'Missus' Varmer Chick did cry
 'Heres bottom to thy hrabbit pie.'
 Then vollied on the breast o'veal,
 The hribs o' beef, the hroasted teal,
 The vigg ypudden, thick wi' peel,
 All vairly hround divided.
 Us vinishd off wi' cheeze an' bread,
 White zelery an' beetroot hred.
 Begob! It wor a toppen zpread
 That Varmer Chick provided.



Extract from *A Christmas Party* by Percy G Stone, 1912.

Merry Crismus!

Sources

We are grateful for information on the Smith family supplied by IoW resident, and farmer, John Henry Smith who is the three times great-grandson of Richard and Ann Smith who moved to Langard in 1758. Further research on the Smith family has been carried out by their distant relatives in Canada and can be found at www.laurencebarber.ca. We also thank David Williams for drawing our attention to the story of the Three Little Pigs.

Much information on the Smith family has been gleaned from historic British newspapers at britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk and from Australian newspapers at trove.nla.gov.au. Census records have been consulted at findmypast.co.uk

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Research and text by Helen M Thomas for Shanklin & District History Society 2020



Landguard after dark can still be a little spooky!

November Quiz Answers from Terry

- 1 Old Village by Grange House
1875 - stone for construction of St Saviours
- 2 Old Village Old Thatch Pencil Cottage
- 3 Outside the High Street Post Office now a Spar store
- 4 Ability Dogs 4 Children charity shop
- 5 Grange House Old Village
- 6 Ventnor c1864-6

Next Issue

There will be no edition of 'Shanklin History Update' in January 2021 when we would not normally have a meeting.

We plan to issue the next edition in February 2021 and if you have any pictures or ideas for articles you would like included, please contact Helen and, in the meantime

Happy New Year!