

*Arcadian*  
*Club*  
SCARNING



*Newsletter May 2002 No. 8*

# The Arcadian Club

You are invited to an  
Augustus Jessopp Evening  
at Scarning Village Hall

Dr. Jessopp was Scholar, Headmaster Edward VI School,  
Norwich 1859-1880, Rector of Scarning 1880-1911. and Author  
of many books covering life in those times and earlier.

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2002**  
**At 7.30pm**

## *Programme*

*Display of books, pictures, letters and documents*

Welcome, followed by

**'Dr. Jessopp's Ghost Stories'** – *David Bunting*

**Pentney Priory (STUDIES BY A RECLUSE IN  
CLOISTER, TOWN AND COUNTRY)** – *Fred Hoskins*

General Discussion during which subscriptions (£5)  
due last October, will be collected.

Light refreshments. All are Welcome

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**It was most unfortunate  
that our October meeting  
had to be cancelled owing**

to the after effects of a fall sustained in Germany during September. The cancelled meeting was the first break in a continual sequence since our group commenced, way back in 1996. As it transpired, it might well have been blessing in disguise, as Fred too, was under the weather, as we say in Norfolk, and both of us have subsequently not been as well as we would have liked.

However, we have recovered sufficiently to resume our gatherings and trust after an indifferent winter and the arrival of more conducive weather, we can look forward to a warm and sunny summer.

As we all know, one hundred years ago, Scarning Village Hall was opened amidst great pomp and ceremony, and August Jessopp and Margaret Jessopp were heavily involved in the splendid new building as it then was, which was to be of immense benefit to the residents of Scarning.

Augustus Jessopp obviously considered this milestone to be one of the highlights of his incumbency in the parish of Scarning, his ministry lasting from 1880 until 1911, when he retired and went to live at the Chantry in Norwich.



During his period, there were the beginnings of great changes in country life. Queen Victoria had died, Edward VII had come and gone and was succeeded by George V, grandfather of our present Queen. The Boer War had taken place and Lloyd George had started to bring up a fledgling Social Security system which has been improved upon ever since, to the existence of the Welfare State as we know it today, despite our current problems which we are experiencing today, on the finer points of perfecting the system.

These pale into insignificance compared to the working conditions and standard of housing one hundred years ago during Augustus Jessopp's life in Scarning. The plight of the poor, especially our rural workers, was high on the national agenda. Also, the modernisation of the transport system, the introduction of the railway network and the motor vehicle were treated as revolutionary just as we today look upon modern technology in the form of computers and the I.T. revolution in the same vein.

The growing strength of Methodism, one hundred years or more ago, especially in rural communities, troubled Augustus Jessopp, but he acknowledged the enthusiasm of non-conformity although he considered it a constant threat to the Church of England's hold on the religious face of



the nation. He nevertheless envied the spirit of unity of Methodism which its chapels brought to their ever growing membership and which poached wavering Anglicans away from the Parish churches.

Augustus Jessopp, like his friends Henry Rider Haggard and the North family at Rougham were staunch traditionalists and felt threatened by the anti-Anglican climate of the day. However, Augustus was if nothing, a realist and looked upon the new Village Hall opposite his splendid Church at Scarning as a new focal point to unify the residents of the parish and open up a facility for the benefit and advancement of his parishioners.

Whatever the religious leanings, Scarning, like most villages today, has changed out of all recognition. Most of the inhabitants are no longer engaged in agriculture or allied trades, and communities have moved into new large housing estates and make their livings elsewhere, mostly in nearby towns or in the City of Norwich.

As a result of all the changes in village life in recent years, a new challenge faces rural communities today and the countryside again faces a crisis of identity, a different one from the early agricultural revolution beginning to appear towards the close of the late nineteenth century and early into the twentieth century.



## The Mystery Deepens!

or  
Was it you?

In our studies of the life of Dr. Augustus Jessopp, we have been constantly astonished at the width of his experiences and his association with people in high places. As one avenue has been explored, so another opens up.

Judge therefore the surprise of David when he received towards the end of last year, an *envelope*.



Yes!

An envelope! In it, was no letter or indication from whence it had come, but there *was* a photostat copy of an extract from a book published in 1898 called **Memorials of .....** This particular extract dealt with the life of Edward Burne-Jones.

So who was Edward Burne-Jones? Read on and all will be revealed!

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During Jessopp's life time, there was a group of well-known artists who specialised in oil painting, furniture manufacture, wall-paper designing, and stained glass manufacture.



Notable names were Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. The latter specialised in Church interior decorating and there you have the clue.

An extract from the photocopy reads as follows: Though Edward was always ready to declare that he would make no more new friends – the old were better – yet on the appearance of what seemed the right person, he or she was accepted with all the confidence of youth. In these months began an acquaintance with Dr. Jessopp, Rector of Scarning in Norfolk, which contained the promise of friendship.

Even before they met, the two men were attracted each by the other's work, and at last came a note from Dr. Jessopp, proposing to call at the Grange when he was in town. The effect of this letter may be read in Edward's answer:

“And I too have greatly desired to see you, and sent you my love last autumn, when Rudyard Kipling said he was to sit next to you at a dinner, and the

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pencilled card you sent by him has been duly delivered, and I have it now.

What a pity about your journey to Rottingdean. I was there only three weeks ago – such a welcome you should have had – but some plan of meeting shall be devised.

I am also nearing the year of limit, and travel little, but to have reached Rottingdean you must have passed through London, and there was our chance, and I should love a time with you. So if by and bye you have to come to London, let me know, and I will clear everything in the way of impediment aside, and we will have a good time.

Yes, this is a day of good omen, that brought your letter and as I am struggling out of a six weeks' wrestle with influenza, with its accompaniment of despairs, remorse, and humiliations, think how cheering it was."

The meeting took place soon afterwards, and this is Edward's account of it:" Jessopp's was a dear visit yesterday, and he is a most loveable man; tall, a splendid-looking fellow; I gave him a good welcome."

A second and last letter to Dr. Jessopp shows the beginning of intimacy. "I will forthwith send you the promised photograph, and also, if you will not impute it to forwardness, a photograph of my son's

portrait of me, most like the old man, busy at his work and out of mischief for the time."

It would seem likely that Jessopp considered that friendship with this fraternity might be beneficial for the future for Scarning Church. If you would like to read more about Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones and the work for which they are celebrated, considerable information appears in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

*Thank you to whoever sent in this information*

*Fred Hoskins*

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(continued from page 5)

Much larger farms manned by far fewer workers, a change of emphasis in production, the turning of old, redundant farm buildings into living accommodation, much of it occupied by second home owners – what Augustus Jessopp would have made of the last hundred years is a matter of conjecture but I am sure he would have written thoughtfully on what our recent history has produced and the huge advance in modern technology which affects all our lives in one way or another.

I believe plans are afoot to upgrade the present Village Hall to bring it in line with modern demands. Let's hope the present community takes advantage of the proposed changes and rally round to make a success of it for life in the twenty-first century just as Jessopp had hoped for in the present village hall.

*David Bunting*





# Elders of Arcady

AS WE PROGRESS INTO the new millennium, the residents of this country of ours have untold state aid and benefits unknown and undreamed of by our ancestors. Advances in medical knowledge, drugs backed up by sophisticated equipment all combine to improve our health and the possibility of a longer life, free from many illnesses that plagued our forbears, such as Scarlet fever, Consumption and Diphtheria.

Admittedly new forms of disease have taken their place, but with our National Health Service, our Doctors Centres and hospitals are in a better position to cope and together allow all of us free access to the facilities on offer despite our criticisms. The raising of living standards, pension rights and support services allow us to live a life far in excess to that which existed during the lifetime of Augustus Jessopp.

Life expectancy today is now reckoned to be in advance of the three score years and ten, frequently quoted by our parents and grandparents. We have only to look at Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother as an example and many others who reach



the magic milestone of one hundred years and it is confidently predicted that this age span will be common place within the next twenty years or so.

If this is a good thing or not is another matter but I always use the maxim, as an old age pensioner, that if your health is reasonable and you have interests and hobbies and a little savings to enjoy these things, old age can be a happy time. Unfortunately, as we all know, this is an aspiration and many difficulties come along to deny many people this enjoyment.

It is then, possibly, a surprising thing that our great grandparents and great, great grandparents also experienced longevity despite not having the advantages that we have at our disposal today regarding the wealth and security many of us are blessed with. Times then were much harder except for the very rich and influential, poverty was more widespread, physical work, especially on the land or in industry, more demanding and home comforts and leisure time often non-existent.

Those of us who are fascinated with the past, are only too acutely aware how our ancestors lived and, speaking for myself, wonder at the way they coped and overcame the obstacles, to enjoy a reasonably satisfactory life. For many, of course, they knew no other way than to toil long hours for little reward.

Augustus Jessopp, living, working and writing throughout the reign of Queen Victoria, marvelled at those old folks in

Arcady and how they and their parents lived a hundred years before his coming to Scarning.

Augustus was not interested in Education, the Church, his Parish or his Antiquarian pursuits alone, he was particularly interested in his older parishioners and the lives they and their parents led. This is one aspect of Augustus Jessopp's make-up that appeals to me – a fascination for family history and events and all things appertaining.

Census returns in the nineteenth century, not infrequently had 'pauper' written against the names of the old or infirm and 'field worker' or 'labourer' against the names of children as young as eight years old. We cannot visualise an eight year old working in the fields full time; it is forbidden today, but in the nineteenth century, parents with large families such as I have described, were glad to send their very young children out to work to earn a shilling or two shillings a week to add to the household's meagre finances, especially in rural communities or in our vast industrial areas – we have only to read Charles Dicken's novels to gauge the climate of the times.

This is what fascinated Augustus Jessopp who, as often as he could, crept into a corner of an old couple's cottage and plied them with questions about their younger days, and their parents and grandparents.

*David Bunting*

*Please note that our May meeting is a little later in the month than usual. Details are given on page 2*