The
Transactions
of the
Sabine Baring-Gould
Appreciation Society
Volume 11 (2011)

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The Transactions
of the
Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society

The original talks from which the main articles in this journal are drawn were presented at the annual gathering of the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society held at Northwich, Cheshire over the weekend of 9th/10th October 2010.

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Published for SBGAS by Greenjack Publications, 100, Cheltenham Road, Gloucester, GL2 0LX

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Articles for publication
Articles for publication are welcomed. The main categories of material published in this journal are:

- Papers presented at the SBGAS Annual Meeting
- Original essays on aspects of the life and work of Sabine Baring-Gould
- Reprints or transcripts of hard-to-find published material and manuscripts written by or about Sabine Baring-Gould

If you wish to offer a piece for publication, please submit a brief description to the editor by e-mail at the address above.

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Introduction

The annual meeting of the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society in October 2010 was held in Northwich, Cheshire, a centre for the salt industry which was the setting for Baring-Gould’s novel *The Queen of Love*. This year’s Transactions feature three papers from the weekend, as well as some useful background material.

**Troy White** gave a paper entitled *Catholicism and the Circus in ‘The Queen of Love’* in which he shared his thoughts on the way in which Baring-Gould sets up the opposing camps of the ‘worldly’ circus and the serious minded citizens of ‘Jewry’ and uses the situation to show the dangers of extreme views on either side.

**Roger Bristow** talked at the meeting about *The Geology of the Cheshire Basin*, a topic on which he is professionally well qualified to talk. His enthusiasm for the topic is so strong that he has supplemented this with a second article in which he looks more broadly at *Sabine as a Geologist*.

**Martin Graebe** talked about Baring-Gould’s time in Yorkshire in his paper *A Devonshire Man Goes North* and looked at the way in which his time in Yorkshire paved the way for his later work as a folklorist and song collector.

**David Shacklock** was inspired by reading an inaccurate account of Baring-Gould having lived in Launceston to prepare a summary of all the places that he really did live in, *Sabine Baring-Gould Dwelt Here*.

This issue also includes one of the magazine articles written by Sabine Baring-Gould about the salt industry in Cheshire, based on the knowledge he gained while researching for *The Queen of Love*. This is ‘The Cheshire Salt Region’ from *Good Words* published in January 1893. There are two other articles on the same topic which are anonymous, but which have been attributed to Baring-Gould. You can view these on the SBGAS website (www.sbgas.org)

With this issue, the SBGAS Transactions reach their second decade and this seems an appropriate point at which to consider the first series complete and to embark on a new one. There are some minor changes in design but the basic formula devised at the outset by Philip Weller, and which has proved so successful, remains unaltered. To mark the completion of the first series an index of the articles that have appeared has been prepared and is included in this volume.

May I, once again, thank all the authors who have contributed to this issue. I hope that you will enjoy reading it.

Martin Graebe
February 2011
Catholicism and the Circus in The Queen of Love
Troy White

As is typical of Baring-Gould's novels, The Queen of Love (1894) serves as a sort of holiday excursion—or, rather, an expedition—taking the reader into a provincial corner of rural England (see Baring-Gould’s essay, ‘Colour in Composition’). What I would like to do in this essay is study the distinctive way that Baring-Gould presents the salt-mining region of Victorian Cheshire in The Queen of Love, a presentation of setting shaped by his beliefs and experiences.

Baring-Gould regularly drew from the supernatural- and terror-based structure of the Gothic fiction tradition, a form that appealed to his particular interests. In my PhD thesis I analyze Mehalah (1880) and Margery of Quether (1884) as Gothic stories. The ‘Gothic’ moments in The Queen of Love include the apocalyptic-like subsidence at the circus, the snoring owl that frightens Queenie, Ada's cruel treatment of Queenie, the description of Delamere forest at night, and of course the suicide-murder towards the end. Nonetheless, the structure of The Queen of Love is not essentially Gothic, so I required a different approach in studying it.

When I need a point from which to consider a text, I usually begin at the beginning, and in this essay I will analyze The Queen of Love by focusing on two of its beginning parts: the novel’s title and the title of its first chapter. I will then show how these two titles can be considered together to give us an understanding of Baring-Gould’s presentation of the novel’s setting. To explore such connections is an extension of the act of reading fiction, wherein one considers, remembers, anticipates, and makes connections throughout the reading process.

Title: The Queen of Love

The foremost introductory element of the novel is the title ‘The Queen of Love.’ Who is Queenie meant to be during her circus performance as the ‘Queen of Love’—a specific, recognizable figure or more an abstraction? The goddess Venus comes to mind, and Venus is titled the ‘Queen of Love’ in the popular 1697 English translation by John Dryden of Virgil's The Aeneid (19 BC):

Thus having said, she turn'd, and made appear
Her neck refulgent, and dishevel'd hair,
Which, flowing from her shoulders, reach'd the ground.
And widely spread ambrosial scents around:
In length of train descends her sweeping gown;
And, by her graceful walk, the Queen of Love is known.  

1 Found in On the Art of Writing Fiction (1892), a collection of eleven essays. (The Atalanta Scholarship & School of Fiction, Vol. 6 [Dec.].)
In *The Aeneid*, Aeneas’s goddess mother Venus arranges for him to fall in love with Dido, the queen of Carthage, but he later abandons her because he is told by the council of gods that he must leave in order to fulfill his destiny of founding Rome (rather than become king of Rome’s future enemy, Carthage). In presenting this scenario Virgil allowed Aeneas to exemplify the Roman virtue of prizing duty to the State over all else.

Likewise, in *The Queen of Love*, Andrew Grice falls in love with Queenie yet abandons her for his own ‘destiny’—as described by his father in his speech on Providence—of founding a prosperous salt-mining operation (161). The situations are similar, though the founding of Rome becomes the founding of a salt-works, and the council of gods becomes Providence as interpreted by Jabez Grice. Andrew, like Aeneas, chooses duty and his seemingly spiritually sanctioned ‘destiny’ over love.

The abandoned one in *The Aeneid*, Dido, is not herself titled the ‘Queen of Love,’ but she is a queen, and Venus, the ‘Queen of Love,’ appropriately arranges her loving union with Aeneas. In Baring-Gould’s novel, Queenie is positioned, like Dido, on the side of love and therefore in a parallel association with the ‘Queen of Love.’

The connection between these two works is speculative, yet Baring-Gould may have been influenced by *The Aeneid*—consciously or unconsciously—when he wrote out Andrew's course (and I assume that he was familiar with Dryden’s translation). This topic was of personal interest to Baring-Gould, who experienced the struggle between social duty and love both in his choice of a job in the Church (against his father’s insistence that his ‘destiny’ was to become squire) and in his choice of a bride below his social class.³

**First Chapter Title: ‘The Deputation’**

The first chapter of *The Queen of Love* is entitled ‘The Deputation.’ A *deputation* is a person or group authorized with power to act as a representative. This opening chapter depicts the deputation of the local dissenting denominations of Saltwich. Jabez Grice, along with Nottershaw and Poole, have been commissioned to travel to Mr. Button's farm in order to convince him to rescind his offer of the New Hall Field as a site for the coming circus, and to offer the Old Hall Field instead; this change will distance the ‘worldly’ circus from the nondenominational Dissenter's meeting where a visiting US preacher will be speaking. This change will furthermore place the circus on unstable ground prone to subsidence.

As with some other Baring-Gould stories I've read, most notably *Mehalah*, the setting of *The Queen of Love* is described as comprised of two hemispheres: the ‘Serious-minded’ live mostly in the elevated area designated ‘Jewry,’ while the more frivolous and less meticulously religious townspeople live down below in ‘Heathendom.’

³ I would like to do more research on the Victorian connotations of the term "The Queen of Love" and see if this was an actual name used in circuses
deputation of Jabez ‘The Hammer’ Grice and company is a deputation of the Serious-minded. Jabez is in fact both the deputation and distillation of this group. As such he is presented as a strong yet narrow man, self-assured of his own absolute righteousness. His imposing and domineering nature has drained any strength of will from his naturally soft-willed son Andrew.

When the circus comes to Saltwich, it is grouped within the ‘dual’ setting as part of Heathendom. Thus the scene in which the barren ‘ceremony’ of the Serious-minded nondenominational meeting is contrasted with the ‘ceremony’ of the circus, as Jabez Grice, entering the meeting, looks down on the circus and condemns them:

“Look there, at the many,” said Jabez Grice, sternly; “see here the few! I feel like Moses on the mount when he saw the people dancing and feasting. He broke all the commandments, he was in such anger. I could do the same.”

Then he turned and entered the hall [...]. The hall was very new, very white, and very glaring with the gas turned on full. It was but half filled, and the prospect of its filling was scanty. [...] Those who had come set up their greatcoats, mantles, and umbrellas on the vacant seats at their sides to disguise, as far as might be, the emptiness.4

While this description of the nondenominational meeting suggests deprivation and emptiness (in decoration, vivacity, and numbers), descriptions of the circus suggest abundance, in the overwhelming and various number of acts and skills on display, the crowded spectators from all classes and backgrounds, the menagerie of animals—culminating in the extravagant procession and performance of the Queen of Love. In fact, Queenie becomes a sort of ‘deputation’ and distillation of the circus, displaying in her character a fullness of life which cannot bear containment or paucity.

Sectarianism and Catholicism

Occurring shortly before this comparison of the non-denominational and circus ‘ceremonies’ is the visit of Jabez's son, Andrew, to the circus, where he encounters Queenie and Rab Rainbow. Queenie, the extravagant Queen of Love, with her overflowing personality, and Rab with his name and personality suggesting a wide spectrum of thoughts and feelings, are contrasted with the reserved Andrew.

As in Mehalah the central female figure, Queenie, is a young girl crossing the threshold into womanhood, and she experiences this transition as situated between two suitors from each side of the setting. Rab Rainbow is a heavy-drinking, unstable member of Heathendom, while Andrew Grice is a straight-laced, obedient young man of Jewry. Also, as in Mehalah, this central female character, Queenie loves one, Andrew, and is madly desired by the other, Rab. This trio and their interrelationships emerge ‘organically’ from the divided setting of Saltwich.

During their first meeting Andrew tells Rab that he will not patronise the circus because horse-riders are known to be “disreputable set”. The regularly insightful Rab speaks his mind to Andrew about the nondenominational meeting and the circus, events which he contrasts as opposite types of “shows”:

These poor creatures in the circus, they paint for an hour, and then wash it all off, and they are natural men and women, as God made them, for the other twenty-three hours. [...] The fellows in your show [the nondenominational meeting] get to so believe in and worship their own painted-up and false selves, that they think and say that nobody can be right unless he be a reflection of themselves. If they likes beefsteak puddin’, then cursed be he who has a fancy for mutton hash. If they walk on the shady side of the street, then may a sunstroke take him who prefers to go on the south side. They have such a likin’ for the smell of a cauldron of biled cabbage, that anathema be to him who likes the scent of the flowering beanfield.

Rab argues that the Serious-minded err in considering themselves to be the centre of rightness. Baring-Gould describes a similar idea, though in a more intricate style, in his religious treatise The Origin and Development of Religious Belief (2 vols., 1869-70):

No man is able to embrace at once and in all its aspect that truth or perfection which is infinite, because he himself is a finite being, and he sees only a corner, an angle corresponding to his moral, intellectual or æsthetical predispositions. For him that is truth, and that alone; and as every man differs from every one else in his predisposition, whether native or acquired, every one beholds a different phase, and pretends that his own visual angle is the entire plan, and that one detail is the totality of the statue.

What then is Error? It is nothing per se. It is the opposition of one relative truth against another to the exclusion of the latter.

Simply put, Baring-Gould argues that error and sin occurs when a person holds to one truth and thereby dismisses another truth—what Baring-Gould terms specialization. For instance, Baring-Gould felt that a Calvinist rightly held to truths concerning God’s sovereignty, but wrongly dismissed truths concerning free-will. A memorable picture Baring-Gould presents of specialization is that of a child who imagines someone on the antipode of the Earth to be standing upside-down. Like the Serious-minded of Saltwich, such a child misunderstands his own self and perception as the centre of reality. To correct this “optical hallucination” the child must recognize that both he and his antipodal counterpart stand in a similar relation to a shared centre of the Earth’s core.

As a member of the second wave of the Oxford Movement, Baring-Gould chiefly blamed this specialization—at least in England of his day—on an excessive Protestantism, displayed most obviously in the ever-dividing sects of the Dissenters. Furthermore, Baring-Gould held that specialization could only be overcome by a

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5 The Queen of Love, p. 36.
6 The Queen of Love, p. 37-38.
8 The Origin and Development of Religious Belief, Part II, p. 42
9 The Origin and Development of Religious Belief, Part II, p. 47
recognition of the Anglican Church as a Catholic Church able to draw contradictory truths into a unity (‘Catholic’ not as in ‘Roman Catholic,’ but as in a central Church holding universal authority derived from its connection via apostolic succession to Christ).  Baring-Gould believed that specialization necessarily led to ever-increasing antagonism, which was contrary to the Church’s role as a ‘shared centre’ for seemingly contradictory ideas.

Though Baring-Gould later distanced himself from The Origin and Development of Religious Belief, this idea of the Catholic Church’s power to ‘marry’ opposite truths remained a part of his religious belief, as evidenced by its appearance throughout his later fictional and non-fictional writing.

Returning to The Queen of Love, one can see how the Serious-minded of Saltwich are modelled upon an extreme picture of sectarian Protestantism. Jabez Grice, the ‘deputation’ of the dissenting Serious-minded, is shown to be what Baring-Gould in The Origin and Development calls an ‘auto-theist’—in practice he acts as if he were God. The religion of Jabez is depicted as strict and impoverished, cut off from the fullness of life that can be drawn within and harmonized by the ‘universal’ Catholic Church. This universality is suggested obliquely, not by the overly mild Anglican priest and his Church (who barely registers in the story), but by the ‘world’ of fullness found in the circus. In this way the circus represents the ‘universality’ that falls within the Catholic Church’s scope.

Jabez recognizes himself as the centre of truth, not as sharing a centre existing between himself and his ‘worldly’ brother Joe Santi who owns the circus—his ‘antipodal’ brother. Chapter IX is titled ‘Brother or No Brother?’ and refers to Jabez’s intense desire that no one learn that Joe is his actual brother (they are not brothers by blood). Other depictions of ‘opposed’ brothers are found in The Queen of Love. When an exhausted Queenie is taken into the home of Jabez and Andrew Grice, she is forced to sit before Jabez as he gives her an ‘improving discourse.’ While she attempts to listen and stay awake, her unstable consciousness transforms a picture in the room, a ‘chromo-lithograph’ of the killing of Abel by Cain, the first fratricide:

*Her thoughts were becoming confused. She looked again at the picture of the first fratricide, and in her bewildered brain thought that the parts had become reversed, and that Abel was slaughtering Cain, and was knocking him about the head with a great volume. First he knocked his head to one side, then to the other, then he knocked it up with a blow under the chin, then he knocked it down with a blow to the crown. Queenie’s eyes sank to the floor, became dazed, and still saw Abel pounding at Cain with the big book.*

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10 As Bill Oke said at the SBGAS Meeting, Baring-Gould’s understanding of himself as a priest of a ‘Catholic’ Anglican Church included his consideration of everyone in his parish, including non-Anglicans, as under his care.

11 This distancing occurs in a later preface to The Origin and Development of Religious Belief, as pointed out to me by David Shacklock.

12 The Queen of Love, p. 94.
It is appropriate that the Grice home, dominated by sectarianism, holds a picture of brotherly strife that becomes thus imagined by Queenie, with the more religious brother killing his ‘carnal’ brother (and Jabez did kill Joe indirectly by having the circus moved to an unstable field).\textsuperscript{13}

Nonetheless, in an attempt to be conciliatory, Baring-Gould allows Queenie to locate that which is good in the Grice home (though it is not the complete goodness Jabez believes it to be):

\textit{Yet as Queenie looked back to the time she had been in Alma Terrace, she could not refuse to acknowledge that, notwithstanding the exaggeration and restraint there, she had learned something, and that a something of immense importance to her—the lesson that she should be ruled by principle, and not be swayed by caprice, should live to fulfil duties—not be the creature of impulse.}\textsuperscript{14}

According to Baring-Gould’s philosophy, the Grice’s do not err in that they do not hold a truth, but in that they disregard any other truths that are not their own.

**Conclusion**

Now that I have discussed the novel’s title, ‘The Queen of Love,’ and the title of its first chapter, ‘The Deputation,’ I will draw some conclusions based on some of their connections. As in \textit{The Aeneid}, Andrew chooses duty over love as he follows the overconfident ‘inner light’ of his father in humble obedience towards his supposed ‘destiny’ in founding a salt-works—a destiny which requires a ‘proper’ woman, not one like ‘The Queen of Love’ who is associated with the circus and Heathendom. He later learns that this destiny was the wrong path, and that his father's self-assured beliefs were misguided and incomplete; in fact, the chief fault of Jabez is that he believes himself to be faultless.

Unlike Aeneas, who is told that he must not remain with Queen Dido in Carthage, the future enemy of Rome, Andrew discovers that he as one of Jewry should unite with his ‘enemy’ in Heathendom. The final scene of the novel shows the married members of Heathendom and Jewry, Queenie and Andrew, standing together. Andrew speaks of how he has learned to be open to the ‘universal’ goodness (and truth) in others—corresponding to the Catholic Church’s mission of reconciling oppositions, which is exemplified in their marriage\textsuperscript{15}(346).

At the SBGAS Meeting Eric and Christine Cudworth brought a very interesting piece of information to my attention that is possibly related to this unusual marriage. During their time in Cheshire they visited the National Trust property Dunham Massey, an estate located some fifteen miles north of the ‘Saltwich’ area. In 1855 the 7th Earl of Stamford, owner of Dunham Massey, scandalously married Catherine Cocks, a former bare-back circus rider (and his previous wife, deceased, had been the

\textsuperscript{13} In \textit{Mehalah}, Baring-Gould uses the ghostly battle in Grimshoe to represent a battle of ‘antipodal’ twins, alike in every way yet opposed in their identical desire for one woman.

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{The Queen of Love}, p. 206.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{The Queen of Love}, p. 346.
daughter of his servant at Cambridge.) Catherine was attractive and clever but unpopular with both the local gentry and the respectable middle-class of the area.

The situation of the Earl of Stamford, as a man who fell in love with a ‘disreputable’ woman, resembles the scandal and dilemma facing Andrew. Baring-Gould may have learned of this story during his time in Cheshire, and the story of a mismatched and controversial marriage would have held great personal interest for him, somewhat resembling his own marriage. Consider how Through Flood and Flame (1868), which is supposedly modelled after Baring-Gould’s own struggles in deciding to marry Grace, shares similarities with The Queen of Love: the young hero works under a domineering father (or father-figure) at a rural, industrial site, he has high prospects and threatens them by falling in love with a woman below his station, and he struggles intensely with the path he should choose. One main difference is that in The Queen of Love the hero overcomes his feelings of love, at least temporarily, while the hero of Through Flood and Flame gives in to them.

Generally Baring-Gould seems to have preferred the pairing of opposites in his fiction. His marriage to Grace, and the tendencies that led to that marriage, influenced his approach to fiction, as he continually writes of a poor, encumbered young woman entering adulthood, faced with the possibility of marriage with a complete opposite (sometimes a strong-willed older man, as Sabine was to Grace). He struggles with this scenario throughout his long line of fiction, sometimes presenting it as good, though sometimes presenting it as comic or even diabolical. For instance, we see a diabolical version in Melahal, while we find a more comic (though it becomes serious) version in Red Spider. The Queen of Love has not only straight-laced Andrew as Queenie’s opposite, but also the sheepish Mr. Poles foolishly attempting to win the much younger Queenie, and in the case of Mr. Poles the treatment is purely comic.

Furthermore, as I have discussed, Baring-Gould held strong religious beliefs concerning the Catholic Church’s role in “marrying” opposed philosophies and people.

As described in his preface to the novel Court Royal, Baring-Gould had a method he used in the writing of Court Royal and perhaps other novels: he considered a hypothetical question for some time, and then, when he could extend his thoughts on the situation no further, he set to ‘externalizing’ the situation in the form of a novel. He "was teased by the problem that rose continually in his brain" until he felt that he could only

work it out by calling his representative characters out of the vasty deep of conjecture, and setting them on the table, giving them souls, and letting them move and act towards each other automatically, and work out the problem for themselves. 16

Certainly Baring-Gould had ideas which he thought over throughout his life, partially through his religious writing, partially through his various other writing outlets, and partially through his fiction. The young woman on the verge of adulthood, struggling

against difficulties towards some goal was one of these ideas, and the choice of marriage between opposite suitors towards a goal of marriage was another. Such recurrent ideas contributed to Baring-Gould’s unique style of fiction.

Though novel-writing did become a necessary burden for Baring-Gould, it also provided him, through his presentation of a place—usually a part of rural England—with an outlet for difficult considerations brought about by his experiences, his numerous interests, his active mind, and his strong emotions.

Works Cited
Sabine Baring-Gould as a Geologist
Roger Bristow

As you are all aware, Sabine Baring-Gould was a polymath with an extensive knowledge of many different subjects. Geology was one of these. This article arose out of the introduction that I gave at the 2010 Annual Meeting to The Geology of the Cheshire Basin (see the following article). In many of his travelogues and novels, there is usually a geological setting. Sabine clearly had a detailed understanding of the geological succession and geological processes, although in some accounts, the language is somewhat ‘flowery’. It is unclear where Sabine gained his geological knowledge – presumable self taught, although he must have picked up some at Cambridge. In none of his accounts (including his Diary), does he mention any of the leading West Country geologists of the day (e.g. De La Beche, Ussher), nor the Geological Survey of Great Britain (GSGB) which was founded in 1835 (born out of the Ordnance Survey) and which commenced work in the West Country and continued working therein throughout the 19th Century. Rarely does he give the source of his geological information. The geological map at the back the Cambridge County Geography on Cornwall (1910) is almost certainly based on the work of the GSGB, but remains unacknowledged. In his Book of the Cevennes (1907), he does, however, quote (p.14), the source of his geological account of the volcanic rocks of the Haute Loire and Ardeche.

In this account, I have expanded my opening remarks given at 2010 Annual Meeting, but lack of time has prevented a thorough treatment of the subject. Instead, I have just dipped into the more obvious publications of Sabine which are likely to have some geological content.
Not surprisingly, the most extensive geological descriptions and illustrations are in the 2-volume *The Deserts of Southern France* (1894). In it, he says (p.11) that ‘geology is made easy to beginners’: ‘Kind Mother nature opens wide her storybook full of pictures, and shows us what will interest us, in the simplest manner, in the way most easy to grasp’. There then follows a geological description of the rock succession, a cross section through the rocks, a geological map of the Causses area, a diagram showing the weathering of the Chalk, a sketch showing houses built into crags of limestone etc. The book is full of wonderful drawings of geological scenery – of canyons, crags, pinnacles, caves, waterfall, swallow holes (including a map of their location) and stalagmites.

In the *Book of Dartmoor* (1900) he concentrates on the granite tors, pointing out that the granite is composed dominantly of the minerals quartz, feldspar, mica and hornblende and that it is not a homogenous rock, but comes in a variety of colours – red, pink, greenish or white.

In the Methuen Little Guide for *Brittany* (1902), he has a 2-page introduction to the geology, as well as including a simple, geological sketch map showing the outcrops of the granite.
In the Cambridge County Geography on Cornwall (1910), there is an 8-page section on ‘Geology and Soil’ (including a somewhat geographically misplaced geological cross section from Snowdon to Harwich, as well as a stratigraphic column for the whole of the British Isles), an 8-page section on ‘Minerals and Mining’ and a coloured, double-page, geological map of the County at the back. In the ‘Geology and Soil’ section, Sabine gives a very simple introduction to the study of geology, distinguishing between rocks ‘laid mostly under water’ (sedimentary rocks) and those ‘due to the action of fire’ (igneous rocks). He explains the ‘order of super-position’ - i.e. with sedimentary rocks, those at the top of the sequence were laid down after (are younger) than those at the bottom (older) – an obvious, but fundamental, principal of geology - and the mechanism of folding of strata. After this general introduction, he then outlines the geology of Cornwall.

The Book of the Cevennes (1907) is full of geological notes and photographs, especially the volcanic vents – including the volcanic plug of Le Puy en Velay.
There is a detailed description (pp. 153-157) of the formation of ‘The Wood of Païolive’ – an area of Cretaceous limestone that exhibits classic karst scenery of pinnacles and galleries.

In *Cliff Castles and Cave Dwellings of Europe* (1911) he starts with a 2-page section on the Chalk. There then follows numerous examples of houses, castles, robbers’ dens, monasteries etc. built into varying rock formations. I have selected the photograph below because it is cut into the Triassic Sherwood Sandstone.
Essentially, the Triassic strata can be divided into two major units: the Sherwood Sandstone below, and the Mercia Mudstone above.

Rocks of the Triassic Period feature in several of SB-G’s novels: *Bladys of the Stewponey* (the Sherwood Sandstone at Kinver), *Winefred* (East Devon cliffs – mainly Mercia Mudstone), *The Frobishers* (Pendabury House lies at the foot of the Sherwood Sandstone escarpment and is partly built out of this stone – as well as Bath Stone) and *The Queen of Love* (the Mercia Mudstone and contained salt deposits of Cheshire – see the following article).

In his novels, the level of geological detail ranges from a brief mention, such as ‘the Chalk pits in North Kent’ (*Moth Mullein*, 1889), an historical account of stannary laws, tin mining and smelting on Dartmoor (*Guavas the Tinner*, 1896), a fuller account of a mining scam (*John Herring*, 1883), to detailed accounts of the local geology and which form important backdrops to the whole story (*Queen of Love; Winefred*, 1899).

In fact, the real and spectacular landslip, which is the core to the *Winefred* novel, Sabine described separately on Jan. 14th 1899 in *The Queen*. The mechanism of the landslip and resultant landforms (both transient – the toe of the landslip which formed an island offshore, and more permanent features such as The Plateau and Goat ‘Island’) - he accurately portrayed. However, he was not writing from first-hand knowledge, as the slip took place 60 years before, but it was well documented at that time and subsequently ‘mined’ by Sabine for his own use.
In contrast, the background to the *Queen of Love* appears to have been gathered first hand by Sabine during a visit to Cheshire in early 1892 and published [Anonymously] as *Among the ‘wiches’* in the September issue of the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1892, [Anonymously] as *Salt Manufacture in the Weaver* in the December issue of *Chamber’s Journal*, 1892, and, illustrated, as *The Cheshire Salt Region*, in the January 1893 issue of *Good Words*. In the *Queen of Love*, he accurately describes the occurrence of salt, in two principal levels, within the red mudstones of the Keuper Marl (as it was then known – now the Mercia Mudstone), the methods of extracting salt with all the attendant problems of collapse of the overlying strata and damage to property and the flooding of the land.

For me, the geological background to his novels adds another component to the topographical detail that he usually weaves into his novels. It shows that he was an acute observer and this gives added vitality to his novels. In fact, I have to be careful that in looking for the geological detail, I don’t miss the main point of the story!
The Geology of the Cheshire Basin
Roger Bristow

Much of Cheshire is underlain by rocks of Triassic age. The Triassic period saw the appearance of the first mammals and the first dinosaurs, but fossils are rarely found in the UK – the most common fossils are footprints.

Essentially, the Triassic strata can be divided into two major units: Sherwood Sandstone below, and Mercia Mudstone above.

The Sherwood Sandstone formed under arid desert conditions with recognisable sand dunes. It occurs over a wide area of central and southern England.

The Mercia Mudstone was laid down in shallow coastal lakes under hot arid conditions. In places, these coastal areas were continually inundated by the sea, followed by evaporation of the water in these shallow lakes leaving behind layers of salt. This process, coinciding with gradual subsidence, was repeated until thick deposits of salt were laid down. The Mercia Mudstone has a relatively wide outcrop at the surface in Cheshire and the Midlands, but this narrows southwards into Devon and northwards through Yorkshire – in places, it extends a long way underground buried beneath younger strata.
Salt does not occur everywhere in the Mercia Mudstone, but where it is present, it occurs at two principal levels. Below is a map showing the distribution of salt in the British Isles, together with a schematic section through the Mercia Mudstone.

Rarely are the salt deposits seen at the surface because of natural solution by groundwater. Commonly, however, there is a saline spring marking the position where it used to occur. Tell-tale natural collapse structures at the surface evidenced by irregular hummocky ground may indicate the former presence of salt at the surface. This zone where natural solution of the salt has, or does, take place is known as the wet rock head, as opposed the dry rock head underground.

Modern day extraction of the salt takes two forms:

a) large-scale underground mining leaving large pillars to prevent subsidence
b) brine solution by pumping water down into the salt which then dissolves, and the salt solution is then pumped to the surface where it is evaporated to produce salt crystals.

With rigorous mining and salt pumping regulations now in place, subsidence from modern extraction is largely a thing of the past. However, the extent of former workings is not always known with certainty and if water breaks through from old workings, it can dissolve the supporting pillars or intervening areas between solution cavities. Clearly, in the days of the *Queen of Love*, salt extraction was totally unregulated and it is the dramatic collapse of the overlying strata into salt-solution cavities which produces the problems in *The Queen of Love*.

The Winsford salt mine is now used for secure document storage and also disposal of hazardous wastes. Salt solution cavities are also used for natural gas storage, but this has been a controversial issue in Cheshire.
At some period before history began, but from which faint wafts of tradition come to us, a vast sea occupied the centre of Asia, probably connected with the ocean between the Ural and the mouth of the Olensk. It extended westward to the mouths of the Danube.

Then the land in central Asia and in Siberia rose, and the waters burst forth through the Bosphorus, leaving a recollection of the cataclysm in the fable of the deluge of Deucalion. The Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Seas of Azof and of Aral are the remains of this inland ocean. The Caspian and the Sea of Aral are without vents, and receive the drainage of vast tracts of country. The bed of the Caspian forms one of the deepest depressions of large extent on the surface of the earth, and into it flows the Volga, bringing in not only enormous volumes of fresh water but also vast deposits of mud. These deposits are gradually cutting off arms of the great sea from the main bulk of salt water, and when such arms, or bays, are not fed by rivers, they evaporate, and as they evaporate become annually more salt. Van Baer says: "In the neighbourhood of Novo Petrovsk, on the eastern coast, where was once a bay, is now a large number of basins, presenting every degree of saline concentration. One of these still occasionally receives water from the sea, and has deposited on its banks only a very thin layer of salt. A second, likewise full of water, has its bottom hidden by a thick crust of rose-coloured crystals, like a pavement of marble. A third exhibits a compact mass of salt, in which are pools of water whose surface is more than a yard below the level of the sea. And a fourth has lost all its water by evaporation, and the stratum of salt left behind is now covered by sand." On the same coast of the Caspian is the Kara Boshaz. This is almost cut off from the sea, but there still exists a mouth through which the salt water of the Caspian flows in, but there is no return current, the waters are exhausted by evaporation. The result is that they are becoming more saline, and a salt deposit is forming. Eventually, when the mouth choking, the whole gulf will dry up and leave behind a bed of salt, over which the sand will blow, and which in time will be buried.
On the north-west of the Caspian, at a distance of some 200 miles from it, are the remains of what was at one time a portion of the same great sea. It is called on the maps Lake Elton. In 1805 Gobel bored at a distance of 11 miles from its then shore. "He found forty-two distinct layers of rock salt, the uppermost 1 ft. 4 in. thick, the lowermost 9 in. thick. The deeper he went the more solid the rock salt was, and the purer. At the hundredth layer (a foot thick) the salt was so hard that the iron tool broke." In process of time Lake Elton will disappear, as have thousands of other lakes and meres, the remains of the ancient sea, and leave behind it only beds of salt. Thus we have actually in progress in Asia a picture of what took place to a large extent in Europe in the Triassic age, and an explanation of the way in which the salt was deposited in Cheshire and Worcestershire, indeed, throughout the region of the New Red Sandstone.

The great rock salt deposits in Europe are nine in number. First of all is that vast basin which extends from Galicia through Transylvania and Wallachia, and is cut into three by the Carpathians. The second is the district of the Austrian and Bavarian Alps the third is the district of Western Germany, extending from Holstein to Württemberg. Then come the two districts of the Vosges and of the Jura. We have next the slightly worked district of the Swiss Alps. Then comes a large Pyrennean deposit of rock salt in the basin of the Adour. In Spain is an important but not extensively worked region of salt deposit. Finally we arrive at the Cheshire and Worcestershire region, which is specially the subject of this paper.

The Permian period at which the salt beds of this last region were formed was one of great lakes and inland seas, some perhaps fresh, but the majority salt. These tracts of water were studded with islands and were fed with streams. Some were like the Mediterranean, in connection with the ocean; others, like the Caspian, were cut off from it. Now salt is not deposited in the ocean. Water will take up salt to the extent of 2 lb. 10 oz. a gallon, but no more. That is to say, 27 per cent. is the proportion of the strongest brine. The average saltness of the sea is about 3½ per cent. The Caspian has but 1 per cent. of salt.

No crystallization takes place till the balance is disturbed and the water reduced by evaporation. The salt then begins to form on the surface of the water, and after a while sinks to the bottom.

The salt formation of the Triassic period is by no means continuous. The salt lies in pans or beds of various extent, and between these pans there are but traces of salt. At one place is rock salt; this thins away, becomes more and more mixed with marl, and finally is represented by a trace only. When that is the case we know that we have come to the margin of an ancient Permian mere. In the Triassic period there extended a chain of salt lakes from the mouth of the Mersey to the Severn, and the great Cheshire deposit occupies the bed of one of these, which in all probability formerly

1 For an admirable account of the chief rock salt beds of Europe see Mr. Thomas Ward, "The Great European Salt Deposits," in the Transactions of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, 1874.
communicated with the ocean somewhere where now stands the great port of Liverpool.

It may be said to occupy the depression through which now runs the river Weaver. The rock salt lies above the New Red Sandstone. The lowest bed is at Northwich, 87 ft. thick, and lies 213 ft. below the surface. Above that is a layer of impervious marl, locally termed "stone," 30 ft. thick. Above that again is the first deposit of rock salt reached in boring or mining; it is 63 ft. thick, and that lies 120 ft. below the surface. Between the surface and the first rock salt are gravels and gypsum beds, and immediately over the salt is "beany-metal," or "flag." Very generally as soon as this flag is pierced brine rises and rushes up the shaft. Water percolates through the porous beds to the topmost rock salt and takes up from it as much as it can hold, and there lies in subterranean lakes of brine. When this brine is pumped to the surface fresh water takes its place and is in turn converted into brine, to be again removed by pumping. Thus in the proximity to the salt works the salt rock is being incessantly corroded and removed in the form of brine. The result is the formation of a vast reservoir or cavern underground, in the place where was the rock salt, and as the water which does all the mining leaves no pillars to sustain the roof, the land above it sinks, and eventually must go down, not indeed 63 ft., but considerably more than half that amount. If the salt rock were perfectly pure it would be wholly removed in the form of brine, but it is not pure. It was formed in lakes into which streams flowed, carrying deposits of mud, and this muddy deposit remains.

Now the river Weaver at Northwich is 32 ft. 6 in. above the sea-level, and the level of the lower part of the town is 40 ft. Consequently, if only a little over half the subjacent salt rock be removed, the river and town will sink to the sea-level, and become a vast lake. Already, in the neighbourhood, something of the kind is taking place. What was at one time a brook is transformed into a mere, which in places is deeper than 40 ft., and which is gradually increasing, and would increase much more rapidly were not all kinds of rubbish and the dredgings of the canal and river thrown into it, to the amount of 100,000 to 150,000 tons annually. At Winsford the land has gone down to such an
extent that two great lakes have been formed, locally termed "flashes," and rows of houses, shops, a church and chapels have had to be removed because sliding down into the gulf that was forming and is continually increasing.

In Northwich the greater portion of the town is sinking, and as it goes down, the inhabitants are obliged to rebuild or adapt their houses to the changed conditions of level. What was a ground floor becomes a cellar. What was first floor becomes ground floor. The houses and churches crack, stagger, and go to pieces. A new police station of brick showed such rents that it had to be banded about with iron to hold it together. In May, 1892, a house lurched over, and its foundations sank on one side, and water came up over them. The appearance was extraordinary, and the angle of subsidence was so great that it was no longer possible to occupy the house. It had to be taken to pieces. A horse in its stable disappeared into the bowels of the earth. Another horse went down in a field. In the middle of a large cornfield suddenly the land sank, the hedge and great trees went down, and disappeared, and now there stands a crater-like hole with a tarn covering 5½ acres in its bottom. In 1890 over 2,000,000 tons of salt were exported from the Cheshire salt district. That signifies over 2,000,000 tons of rock drawn out from under the feet of the inhabitants and the foundations of their houses. It is, or was, a favourite joke among schoolboys to remove surreptitiously the laths from a bed, when he who slept on the mattress above sank, mattress and bedding and all, to the floor. Something of the same sort of thing is being done to the inhabitants of the Weaver valley in Cheshire. An entire mattress, or the major part of one, 63 ft. thick, is being pulled away from under them, and as it is plucked away, down they go deeper and deeper.

The rock salt is quarried or mined out of the lowest bed, but brine is pumped from the upper bed. Enormous damage has been caused by water getting into the old salt mines. These mines were opened in 1781, but some out-crops of the upper salt were worked from 1670. When the lower run of salt was discovered those worked in the upper deposit were abandoned. Water got in, and these mines have fallen in and formed great funnel-shaped craters. But such subsidences are inconsiderable when compared with those produced by pumping out the brine from the upper bed.
At Middlesborough, in Durham, salt had been discovered by boring at the depth of 2,000 ft. There two shafts are opened; fresh water is injected by one, and is drawn out in the form of brine from the other. In Cheshire water is sometimes pumped down, but usually it descends naturally through cracks in the subsiding surface and through the gravelly soil that lies above the "rock."

Naturally the brine does not run away in springs. In ancient times it was brought up from shafts in leather buckets, and was then steamed in "wych-houses." Various Cheshire noblemen and gentry had their "wych-houses" and brine wells in the salt district. In and about Northwich the land is literally honeycombed with old salt mines. When the fresh water in its course passes over the rock salt forming the roof of the mine it dissolves it completely, and then the upper earths fall in, leaving an enormous hole. There are over 80 acres of standing water in Dunkirk and Marston thus formed.

At the latter is a mere, covering 15 acres, that has come into existence within the last fifteen years. The ground is rapidly sinking in both these districts, and the area of lakes is rapidly increasing. When there are buildings on the sinking ground they present fissures, and literally fall to pieces. The amount of injury to property is enormous. In 1881 evidence was produced before a Committee in Parliament that 644 acres of land had been damaged by subsidence, 295 houses, 12 warehouses, and 62 shops. The depreciation on this property was estimated at £40,037 10s., and the annual loss to the owners £1,579 18s. The rateable value of property affected by subsidence was as follows: Wincham, £882; Leftwich, £728; Winnington, £1,382; Anderton, £1,878; Castle Northwich, £319; Witten, £6,710; Northwich, £4,938.
The injury done in the early days, when the manufacture of salt was small, was infinitesimal. Then the brine was brought up in buckets by hand. After that, windmills were employed to pump up the brine. Now we have steam-engines, and the trade in salt is greatly increased. As it increases so does the action of the subterranean water, and the state of quietude which existed by nature is disturbed. First a few sinkings took place, then they became more numerous, and now go on irregularly in some places, regularly in others, and will so continue till a whole district is submerged, and the towns of Winsford, Middlesville, Northwich, Sandbach, lie at the bottom of an inland lake, much as do the cities of the plain under the briny waters of the Dead Sea.

Rock salt is indeed mined chiefly at Northwich, but the rock salt is extracted from the lowest bed, one which the water does not reach, as it is separated from the upper flooded bed by impervious marl. Where man works, there he leaves pillars sustaining the roof, or at all events would build up supports, but where the mining agency is water no such provision is or can be made, and as the rock salt is dissolved and removed, the surface must sink over the void artificially formed. If the whole surface will not sink as much as sixty-three feet it is because the salt rock, as already said, is not pure, it contains much grit and mud that was washed into the great lake when it was in process of evaporation. This grit or mud still remains, but we can hardly allow for it more than fifteen feet, and the surface will sink eventually some forty-eight feet, that is to say some eight feet below sea-level. In some of the meres or "flashes" formed, the bottom is considerably below sea-level, and inevitably these "flashes" will extend till the entire surface over the salt-runs is submerged.

One might perhaps have thought that these "flashes" and the wells in the craters would be briny; such, however, is not the case, for fresh water, being of less gravity than brine, floats on the surface. Taken on the whole, the salt district of Cheshire is one of the most interesting in England that could be visited, and it is interesting not only on account of the process of the manufacture of salt, but also because there we can see a whole tract of country being let down under water, whilst teeming with life, by the activity of the salt trade.

In 1890 a bill was brought into parliament to enable a company to pump out brine at Wincham, and convey it by pipes to Widnes, in Lancashire, for the manufacture of alkali. This was, with a vengeance, to despoil the district without bringing in a corresponding gain. It was successfully defeated. A bill for compensation to land and house-owners, introduced in 1881, was thrown out, through the determined resistance of the salt and alkali manufacturers.

No doubt the inhabitants of the towns live on that trade, but no doubt also that they are subjected to very extraordinary risks and very great disadvantages.

*Good Words*, Vol. 34, Jan 1893, p. 59 - 63
Sabine Baring-Gould Dwelt Here

David Shacklock

In his book *Ghosts of Cornwall* Peter Underwood has a section on Dockacre House in Launceston. He writes: ‘The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould lived here at one time and he wrote about the ghost in his book *John Herring*, where he has the ghost appear to two of his characters at the front door’. The connection appears to be, according to the entry in Baring-Gould’s 1881 Diary for 3 July 1882, that Sabine had visited Dockacre.¹ The owner, Mrs. Smith, had shown him the bundle of old walking sticks and, although he doesn’t mention it, no doubt told him the story of Nicholas Hele, the 18th century owner of the property. These features he then wove into *John Herring*, which was published in the following year, and where Dockacre becomes Dolbeare.² Maria Smith was the widow of Dr. Thomas Smith, the surgeon at Lewdown when Sabine was a boy (the comma in the Diary entry makes the timescale ambiguous!). The Smiths had three unmarried daughters, Charlotte, Sarah and Frances Smith, ‘schoolmistresses’ at Lew Trenchard (as reported in the 1881 census) – Frances being a ‘teacher of music’. Perhaps they had mentioned the mysteries of their Launceston home and thus encouraged the visit. There is no evidence that Sabine ever lived – or even stayed – there. However the diversion served to motivate the present quest.

To list and describe the homes of a man who spent over 40 years in one place might seem a relatively simple task, but tracing Baring-Gould’s movements during his first 50 years with a degree of accuracy is surprisingly complex. After a year of research there are still some loose ends. As to what counts as a ‘home’ or ‘residence’ I’m including properties owned or rented by the family, not inns or hotels, and for Sabine as an adult the accommodation connected with his work. I’ll flag up the residences with their locations in bold, with a sequence number – in some cases debatable - in square brackets, e.g. [1].

He was born (28th January 1834) in Exeter in Dix’s Field [1]. Hazel Harvey has discussed the puzzle of identifying the house – there being a discrepancy between Sabine’s account and the statement on the birth certificate and parish register.³ The possible conclusion is that he was actually born at No.1 Chichester Place, Southernhay, a maternity home round the corner from the parental home, No.1 Dix’s Field. The latter was part of a development of 24 Georgian terraced houses by brewer William Spicer Dix, the owner of the land, who built a group of houses in two rows with a central green, over a period of about 20 years. One of the first, put up for rent in about 1804, consisted of ‘five bedrooms, two good sitting rooms, kitchen &c’. Each house was customised internally and attracted members of the medical

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profession in particular. A military contemporary of the Baring-Goulds was Capt. J. L. Hulme R.E., who lived at no. 7 from 1835 to about 1870. If Edward and Sophia took up residence there at the time of their marriage at the local parish church St. Sidwells (10th May 1832), it seems that they retained the property for seven years, as they were reportedly there in 1839 (perhaps subletting when they were away). However, as Hazel Harvey notes, a different owner/occupier is shown in the Valuation of Exeter for 1838. The area was damaged by bombing in 1942, and mostly demolished apart from four houses of one terrace.

The family moved in 1835 to Bratton Clovelly. The house which Edward ‘took’ from the Phayre family – distinguished servants of the Victorian Empire – was referred to by Baring-Gould as Palm Court [2] – possibly a childhood mistake for Culm Court: it had been built by Sir Elijah Impey on the site of an older farmhouse known as Culmpit. Culm was the local name for coal, and the Culm Measures were an area of Devon and East Cornwall, characterised by heavy clay-based grassland on carboniferous rocks. At any rate, the house was subsequently known as Eversfield Manor, Grade II listed, and sold by Judge Markham-David in 1994 to Shirley Hewitt, mother of Major James Hewitt. It then became Eversfield Lodge - an hotel, and now a country house rented out for events, with a coach house B&B. It is situated nearly opposite Bratton Mill on Chapel Road, leading eastwards out of the village from opposite the church. SB-G describes the house as being ‘in a valley, facing the west, watered by a little stream, beyond which rises a steep and lofty hill crowned by the village and church of Bratton, shutting off afternoon sunlight from the house during winter…….Across the brook at the bottom of our lawn was a little footbridge……’ He records that his nurse, Ann Bickle, protected him by holding him above her as she fell when this bridge collapsed, earning her a number of painful bruises and the gratitude of her parents. He visited her a few years later and remembered a number of songs that she sang; including the ghostly ‘My Lady’s Coach.’

For the summer of 1840, he writes, ‘…we retained our house at Bratton . . . we took the castle at Bude’[5]. This property had been built ten years earlier by the inventor Goldsworthy Gurney, to prove that a house could be built on sand with a concrete ‘raft’. Gurney was knighted in 1863 after nine years in charge of the heating and lighting for the House of Commons. The castle is now a museum and heritage centre, dedicated to his memory.

And so to the nomadic years in Europe. I have arbitrarily decided to count as ‘residences’ those which the family appear to have taken over, as distinct from inns and hotels where they stayed. (This distinction will of course be modified when we get to SB-G’s ‘independent living’).

The first foray was in 1837, fetching up in Pau, in the Basses Pyrenees, France, ‘where we took a flat on the Grande Place’ [3] for the winter; staying there until his mother’s poor health caused them to move on in May 1838. When they returned ten years later (1847-8) ‘we lodged in Maison Gautier [13] on the Jurancon road beyond the bridge over the Gave’, while his grandmother and aunts ‘occupied a flat in the Basses-Plante called Maison Marchalier’ (SB-G has Marchadlier). It was on this trip
that Sabine found himself embarking on his lifetime’s work of archaeology, excavating a Roman villa on the edge of the town.

This time, despite political unrest in the country, the family did not move back to England until June. Only sixteen months later they were back in Pau: ‘my father took a flat in a large new house [14] on the outskirts of the higher town’. According to research kindly undertaken by the current Archivist, this can be identified as the Maison Marchalier (see above), registered to ‘Mr Baring Goli’, 4 children and an ‘institutrice’, with 4 servants. It still exists, under another name, at the entrance of the Castle Park.

In the following summer (1850) he reports ‘we took the Chateau d’Areit [15] on the mountainside opposite Argelez, commanding a glorious view…(it) had a fine terrace with orange trees….and looked straight up the Val d’Azun.’. The cure expressed disappointment that they were not to be permanent residents, but the ever-twitchy Edward had planned for their next winter to be spent in Bayonne, in ‘an exchange of chateaux by which we get one larger than before’ - the Chateau St. Aulaire [16], described by Sophia in a letter as ‘very nice…with labyrinths of long oaken polished floors’. It contained a billiard-room, three or four other sitting-rooms, and a grand garden , ‘all this got for less than we paid for Marchalier’s etage last year’. According to Sabine the reason for the low rent was the castle’s reputation for being haunted. Once again the ‘winter’ extended to May, the return to England being ‘compelled’ by the failing economy of the tenant farms at home.

We must now return to the ‘ten year gap’ between the first two excursions to Pau. Those winters were spent in France, Switzerland and Germany. In Montpellier [4] (1838-9), according to Purcell (p17) they took a snug and pretty little house ‘in the best part of the town, the most airy and distinguée’. There was a pleasant flower garden, with a goldfish pool to delight Sabine.

The following winter the family were at first in Cologne (but not ‘lodging’) and then Mannheim [6], until May 1841. The winter of 1841 found the family at Vevey (St. Martin) [7] where they ‘took a house with a terrace commanding a noble view of the lake and the mountains beyond’. The illustration opposite p. 34 of Early Reminiscences is taken from a sepia drawing of this view by his aunt Emily. The house shared the chimney problems of most of the houses in the resort, according to Sabine, who described the situation with his customary whimsical humour.

October 1842 took the family to Dresden [8], where, again, they spent the winter, but although Sabine has plenty to say on social and ecclesiastical matters, no specific mention is made of their accommodation. They were back in Mannheim [9] from October 1843 to the spring of 1844.4

The Baring-Goulds were back in England from 1844-7 trying to organise some more formal education for Sabine. They were based in London where ‘my father took lodgings at the head of Albemarle Street' [10], while Sabine attended King’s College School in the Strand. Albemarle Street lies off Piccadilly to the north-west, opposite

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4 It may have been August – see Baring-Gould’s Early Reminiscences p. 91.
St. James Street. The following year, when his parents moved to Warwick, Sabine became a boarder, living ‘in a large house at the corner of Queen Square’[11] in Bloomsbury, at the west end of Great Ormond Street, now consisting mostly of medical institutions. In 1846 Sabine joined his parents in Warwick, living at their house in the High Street[12], while he attended the Grammar School (now Warwick School). But poor health (Sabine’s this time) saw them back in Pau for the winter of 1847 (see[13] above).

At last these perambulations came to an end in 1851 when the family took ‘a furnished house’ in Tavistock[17]. The following year Sabine was sent to Cambridge, to lodge with the Revd. Harvey Goodwin (1818-91) at St. Edwards Vicarage[18]; Goodwin later became Dean of Ely and then Bishop of Carlisle. For three months in 1853 Sabine went to a classical tutor[18a] before entering Clare Hall (now Clare College)[19], where he had rooms looking out at King’s College Chapel. At this point Edward & Sophia returned from Warwick to Lew House – but we’ll number that for Sabine when he finally took up residence there in his own right!

After coming down from Cambridge Sabine decided without much parental consultation to offer himself as Master of the Choir School at St. Barnabas, Pimlico, where the senior curate, Charles Lowder, found him ‘a little bedroom in the attics’ at ‘the college’ or Clergy House[20] and then, during the Christmas and Easter vacations (1856/7), lodgings in Ebury Street[21]. As a correspondence address he used the residence of his great uncle Colonel (later General) Edward Sabine, 13 Ashley Place, near the junction of Victoria Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road, three-quarters of a mile from St. Barnabas.

The same year, 1857, brought Sabine to Sussex, first to Lancing College, Shoreham – too short a stay to qualify as ‘residence’ - and then to Hurstpierpoint[22], where he had a room in the main buildings of the College, which visitors can still be shown today.

Sabine was ordained at Ripon Cathedral on Whitsunday 1864 after seven years schoolmastering in Sussex (eight by inclusive counting!), to become Curate of Horbury Bridge, but had rooms in John Sharp’s Vicarage up the hill in Horbury[23]. By the time he was married to Grace Taylor in 1868 he had moved (the previous Christmas) to Dalton, near Thirsk[24], where there was no purpose built vicarage or clergy house but ‘a small brick house, with a sitting room, a kitchen and a scullery downstairs, and three bedrooms upstairs,…a maid occupied the third bedroom’. It was reported that Lady Downe, the Patroness, ‘had refused to enlarge the house’. With much relief the couple, then with two babies, took up Gladstone’s offer of the living at East Mersea, on the Essex coast in the spring of 1871. Six more children were born during their ten years at the Rectory[25], so it needed to be ‘large’, albeit in a poor state of repair when they arrived. It only just lasted them out, as in 1884 the house as well as the church were ‘extensively damaged’ by an earthquake. It was later destroyed by fire, and no remains can be seen today. In one bedroom of the rectory [the piping of the wind] was so noticeable that visitors had to be warned of

the constant moaning to be expected during the night’, reports W. E. Purcell. Writing in 1957 he says, ‘...some way off [from the church] among trees and weeds, is a successor to the rectory in which the author of Onward, Christian Soldiers went to live in 1871’.

Before the final great move to Devon, Sabine spent the winter of 1876/7 in Lew Trenchard, at the Rectory [26] (see below) at the behest of his ailing Uncle Charles, and a further four months, June to October 1880, spanned by a couple more winters in Germany. In October 1877 the family took lodgings at Dreikonigstrasse no.10 in the Black Forest town of Freiburg [27]. They returned there in October 1880, hiring a furnished house 17 Katherina Street [28], from November until July 1881, moving to an old haunt, Der Krone at Laufenburg on the Rhine for their final month before settling in at Lew. During that year Sabine’s Uncle Charles had died in February and Sabine himself was instituted as Rector in July. But from 1881-5 the family lived at the Rectory.

And so at last in 1885 they moved into Lew House (known variously as The Manor House, Lew Trenchard Manor, Lew Trenchard House – and now since the 1980s Lewtrenchard Hotel) [29]. ‘My wife had managed the transfer with great skill and everything was in perfect order’, writes Sabine. Their 11th child was born shortly afterwards. As Purcell explains, ‘the old house, of no particular character, resembled countless similar old places, a flat-surfaced, stuccoed building, two-storied, the front broken by a commonplace glass porch. Lew House today is a mansion’.

There was one more period of exile from his earthly paradise. In 1900 the financial pressures became severe, and Baring-Gould decided to resolve them by living abroad and letting the house. He moved, with some of the family, to Dinan, in Northern France in October and, after three months in the Hotel des Voyageurs, moved to the Villa Penthièvre, [30] where they stayed until December 1901, when they returned to Lewtrenchard.

I will not attempt to say any more about Baring-Gould’s time at Lewtrenchard, as the subject has been thoroughly and splendidly covered by others. However it might be helpful to quote Dickinson’s biography in explanation of the relationship between the three ‘parsonage’ houses. At some point ‘Sabine obtained permission to sell off the old and dilapidated rectory and build a new one for his successors nearer to the church, while he himself continued to live at Lew House. The Sperlings purchased the former rectory and completely transformed it, making of it a beautiful mansion that they renamed Coombe Trenchard [...] the new rectory [...] constructed of stone and slate quarried on the estate [...] original and beautiful, but the second flight of stairs was an afterthought and is more nearly vertical than stairs have any business to be’.

It would be really good to know more detail about the houses in Tavistock and Warwick; at the moment they must remain ‘cold cases’ awaiting more research.

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[20] The Clergy House, St Barnabas, Pimlico

[22] View from SB-G’s window, St. John’s College, Hurstpierpoint

[1] Dix’s Field, Exeter
## Where Sabine Baring-Gould Lived – summary table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref No</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No 1, Dix’s Field, Exeter</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Sabine Baring-Gould’s birthplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eversfield (Palm Court), Bratton Clovelly</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grande Place, Pau, France</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>[unidentified], Montpellier, France</td>
<td>1838-9</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Castle, Bude</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Summer residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>[unidentified], Mannheim, Germany</td>
<td>1840-41</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St. Martin, Vevey, Switzerland</td>
<td>1841</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>[unidentified], Dresden, Germany</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>[unidentified], Mannheim, Germany</td>
<td>1843-44</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Albermarle St, London</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>SB-G at King’s College School as a day pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Queen’s Square, London</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Parents move to Warwick, SB-G stays as a boarder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>High St., Warwick</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>SB-G day pupil at Warwick Grammar School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Maison Gautier, Pau, France</td>
<td>1847-8</td>
<td>Winter residence (SB-G’s health poor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Maison Marchalier, Pau, France</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Chateau d'Areit, Argelez, France</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Summer residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Chateau St Aulaire, Bayonne, France</td>
<td>1850-51</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>[unidentified], Tavistock</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Family returned permanently to England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>St. Edward’s Vicarage, Cambridge</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Living with his tutor, Rev., Harvey Godwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Clare College, Cambridge</td>
<td>1853-56</td>
<td>University studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Clergy House, St. Barnabas, Pimlico, London</td>
<td>1856-57</td>
<td>Teaching in Choir School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ebury St., London</td>
<td>1856-57</td>
<td>Lodging during vacations from St. Barnabas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>St John’s College, Hurstpierpoint</td>
<td>1857-64</td>
<td>Teaching at the College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The Vicarage, Horbury</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Curate in charge of mission at Horbury Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Dalton, near Thirsk</td>
<td>1866-71</td>
<td>Perpetual curate at Dalton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rectory, East Mersea</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Rector of East Mersea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>10, Dreikönigstrasse, Freiburg</td>
<td>1877-78</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>17, Katherina St, Freiburg</td>
<td>1880-81</td>
<td>Winter residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Rectory, Lewtrenchard</td>
<td>1881-85</td>
<td>SB-G now rector of Lewtrenchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Lew House, Lewtrenchard</td>
<td>1885-1924</td>
<td>SB-G now permanently resident at Lewtrenchard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Villa Penthièvre, Dinan, France</td>
<td>1900-1901</td>
<td>Resident in France for a year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sabine Baring-Gould was the first of the large scale collectors of folk songs in England and our understanding of the importance of his collection of songs from Devon and Cornwall has been enhanced by new discoveries in recent years. Though his major quest for folk song began in Devon in 1888, it is becoming clear that his interest in English folklore, tales and song was already present when he moved to Yorkshire as a curate in 1864. He published a number of items, including stories, riddles and songs during the period from May 1864 to March 1871 while he was living in Yorkshire. But there was little information about when and from whom he had collected the items that he published. A previously unknown personal journal discovered in the autumn of 2009 throws new light on this early work and on the riddles, songs and stories that he heard from Yorkshire mill-girls and others.

Baring-Gould in Yorkshire

On Whit Monday, 16th May, in 1864 a young clergyman stepped off the train at Horbury Station. It was a hot day, and he tugged at an unfamiliar collar. It was new. He had been ordained in Ripon only the previous day and he was to be a curate in the village. There were no cabs and enquiries revealed that there was not a bus either. He shouldered his black cloth bag – a strange piece of luggage that he had devised to be slung over the back of a horse when he was travelling in Iceland a few years previously. The boys at the school where he had been teaching had christened it ‘The Black Slug.’

As he was walking up Quarry Hill he came upon a procession, marching with a band. Having been told that it was a school festival he left his bag at a shop for collection later and joined in. They processed up into the village to the strains of ‘See the Conquering Hero Comes’, but then passed both church and vicarage and marched onwards. Further enquiries then established that the group was of Methodists so, rather sheepishly, the young man dropped out, collected his bag and made his way to the vicarage. His earlier march-past had not gone unnoticed and was the cause of amusement for the vicar and other curates for some time afterwards.

Such was the arrival in Yorkshire of Sabine Baring-Gould. Not, perhaps, an auspicious start, but he achieved a great deal while he was working in Horbury. For the first few weeks the Vicar, John Sharp, allowed his new curate to work alongside his colleagues in the parish. This included visiting the newly established ‘House of Mercy’, where 30 beds were provided for ‘fallen women’ from the streets of London and other big cities. But the main task he was given was to set up a branch of the church in Horbury Bridge, among the mill-workers and boat people.
Sharp must have realised that this was a good task for his new curate who, at thirty years old, may have been new to the church but had honed his edge as a teacher for 8 years while just managing to stay on the right side of authority himself.

The district was certainly tough. Crowds of men would meet on the bridge on a Sunday morning, with their dogs, to arrange dog-fights and races, and fighting in the ring was often an attraction – not always confined to men. There were four pubs in the area and drunken men were a common sight on a Sunday. Baring-Gould threw himself into his new task with enormous energy, renting a three-room cottage to use as a chapel and schoolroom.

His mission became popular and he found himself standing on the hearth stone because every inch of space was occupied with young people keen to learn and enthusiastic for the gentle brand of Christianity that he brought to them. There was a little trouble from the clientele of the ‘Horse and Jockey’ just up the street but a friendly giant by the name of Scholey provided a personalised ‘Neighbourhood Watch’ scheme. The sight of him cracking walnuts with his bare hands was enough to cause the ‘young roughs’ to cross to the other side of the street. Baring-Gould recruited his choir in an unconventional manner. Sometimes groups of boys would gather outside the cottage and throw mud at the windows, so Baring-Gould went out of the back door and ran round to the front to seize the ringleader, who was then pressed into service as a chorister. Strangely, it seems to have worked, though the boys’ habit of eating toffee or oranges during the service proved hard to break.

After the lessons were over, the younger children would beg for stories. They sat on Baring-Gould’s coat-tails until he obliged them – which he always did willingly. After he had cleared up he was sometimes too tired to walk back up the hill to his bed in the vicarage, so would curl up in his coat on one of the benches, to be woken early.
in the morning by the clatter of the clogs on the street outside as the mill-girls made their way to the factories.

At the same time as he was starting up his cottage mission, Baring-Gould was seeking funds to build a new chapel and schoolroom on a nearby plot of land. As early as June he had written the first of several letters to the *Church Times*, appealing for funds – he even offered *Church Times* readers the opportunity to buy quality hand-made worsted stockings, knitted by his young pupils. He also put in money of his own and borrowed more from his relatives. But he was successful and the building opened in the summer of 1865. That building is still part of the local school and a new church was built shortly after he left. In it is a carved rood screen, installed as a memorial to Baring-Gould by grateful parishioners.

But that is not the only reason why he is remembered in Horbury. As you enter the town nowadays you are greeted with a sign that it informs you that it was here that Baring-Gould wrote his best known hymn *Onward, Christian Soldiers*. His memories of writing it when he was older were, as with so many things, a bit confused. Though in later years he said that the hymn had been hastily written for the procession of the children from Horbury Bridge to the mother church on Whitsunday, 1865, it had, in fact been published in the *Church Times* in October 1864. The hymn was originally set to a tune by Haydn but it became more popular when it was set to the tune ‘St. Gertrude’ written by Arthur Sullivan.

Apart from the hymn, the procession had an even greater impact on Baring-Gould’s life. It was a big event in Horbury with up to 700 people taking part. 100 of the
children from ‘The Brig’ were to march up to the mother church to join in the main event and all would be wearing their best clothes. Sabine heard that one of his young assistants was not going to be coming to the procession, so he went round to her house to find out why. Her mother said that it was because she had nothing to wear. His answer was ‘What more does she want? She has a nice bonnet and looks well in it.’ That girl was Grace Taylor, who had been born at Bank Hey Bottom, between Ripponden and Barkisland. The family had moved to Horbury where her father, Joseph, worked at Poppleton’s Mill and they lived in a cottage in the mill-fold. By the age of fourteen, Grace was herself working in the mill. When Baring-Gould visited her at Whitsun 1895 she was just fifteen years old.

Despite the difference in their ages – Sabine was then 31 years old – they fell in love. It was, of course, a controversial match and set tongues wagging – particularly among the middle-class parents with unmarried daughters. John Sharp approved of the relationship, however, and arranged for Grace to stay with some female relatives of his in York, where she learned some of the finer points of Victorian etiquette. We can get an idea of their courtship and a picture of life in Horbury at that time, from Baring-Gould’s early novel ‘Through Flood and Flame’ (1868) which tells the story of a mill owner’s son who falls in love with one of the mill girls. Baring-Gould had some regrets about writing this story later in life and was grateful that it went out of print. He later used the setting and some of the incidents from the book in another novel, ‘The Pennycomequicks’

Grace Taylor – as she was in her teens

Sabine left Horbury at the end of 1866 after an eventful two and a half years. He now had a parish of his own, still in Yorkshire, at Dalton near Thirsk – known to the locals
as ‘Dalton In t’ Muck’. Here he found himself in a very different situation. The parish was small, the community staid and agricultural, and his patroness, The Countess of Downe, hard to please. He did not even have a proper church for the first year he was there, since services were held in a converted barn, reached across open fields.

The new church (which has some nice glass by William Morris and Burne-Jones) was opened in 1868. Without the activity of the mission and with little to occupy his time beyond dinner with the Countess or other local worthies he started to write more than he had before. While he was at Horbury, he had written mainly magazine articles and hymns, except for his book, *The Book of Werewolves*, published in 1865, which brought together werewolf legends and lore from across Europe. This is now one of his best-known books, and has been reprinted many times. It has, undoubtedly, contributed to the growth of interest in werewolves over the last 140 years. While at Dalton he wrote another popular collection of antique legends, *Curiosities of Olden Times* (1869) and another novel – *In Exitu Israel* (1870).

Things looked up considerably when he married Grace on May 24th 1868. It was a very small ceremony with none of the parents present – only one of Grace’s sisters. They honeymooned in Switzerland and the trip furnished Baring-Gould with the material for a series of magazine articles on the European churches he had visited. Upon their return to Yorkshire Grace took up the responsibility for the household at Dalton, while Sabine got on with his work and his writing. His writing was, however, to prove both his downfall and his salvation. When he dedicated his book, ‘The Silver Store’, a collection of medieval poems, to the Countess, he didn’t recognise that she might find the inclusion of some about domineering women to be a problem. Relations grew frosty and when Sabine sought an extension to his house to accommodate his growing family – the first two of the fifteen children that he and Grace were going to have – his request was not granted. It was though, another of his books that bought his ticket out of Dalton.

In 1859, Charles Darwin had published his ‘On the Origin of Species’. Darwin’s theories sparked an idea in Baring-Gould’s mind that he should look at the way in which human beliefs had evolved. The outcome was ‘The Origin and Development of Religious Belief’, published in two volumes in 1869 – 70. For a while it looked as if he had made an even bigger mistake with this book than with ‘Silver Store’ since it stirred up a lot of critical comment. Luckily the then Prime Minister, William Gladstone admired the book and offered Baring-Gould the Crown living of West Mersea in Essex. So, in March 1871, Baring-Gould left Yorkshire for Essex. In the preface to his book ‘Yorkshire Oddities, Incidents and Strange Events’, published in 1874, Baring-Gould says ‘I look back with great pleasure to the kindness and hospitality I met with in Yorkshire, where I spent some of the happiest years of my life’. He was not to say the same about his time in Essex but it offered him an escape from his difficulties with the Countess. In 1881, he returned to Devon where he lived until his death, a few days short of his ninetieth birthday, in 1924.
The Folklorist

Having given you a picture of Baring-Gould’s time in Yorkshire, I now want to step back and take a broader view of the way in which his interest in folklore forms a strand throughout his life – though I will return to Yorkshire more specifically later on.

Shortly after Sabine Baring-Gould was born in Exeter on 28th January 1834, the family moved to Bratton Clovelly, to be nearer the family estate at Lewtrenchard. Like many children with his background Sabine had a nurse. Her name was Anne Bickell and she had left her own baby son in the care of her family so that she could save Sabine’s mother from the chore of feeding her own child. For this she was well paid and, of course, well fed. Though she left the family’s employment when Sabine outgrew the need for her milk, they did not lose contact and Sabine recalled visiting her when he was older. He remembered her songs and her stories and reconstructed many of them from memory later in his life. He records that, as a boy, he listened to the people around him, remembering and noting some of their stories and songs and their speech and beliefs. No notes survive from this time, but it is clear that the ground was being laid for his understanding of the lives of ordinary people, which would serve him so well in his future life as a clergyman, as a writer and as a folklorist.

Edward Baring-Gould could not settle to life in the country so he took his wife, family and a small retinue and embarked on a series of travels around Europe that lasted most of Baring-Gould’s childhood, with only brief periods in England and short interludes of conventional schooling. Baring-Gould’s father did not approve of stories in general and fairy tales and romances in particular, so there were none available to him as a child. But at the age of nine he was placed at a school in Mannheim he had access to both and started to read them voraciously. He quickly moved on to the old stories of the Northern Gods, which became one of his chief interests, while boys of his age back home were learning the classics and the Greek and Roman mythologies.

This interest continued into adulthood when, as a young teacher, he learned to read Icelandic and to start to translate the Icelandic sagas, one of the first Englishmen to do so. He told stories from the Sagas to the boys in his charge but just reading them was not enough. The biggest adventure of his life was the journey that he undertook to Iceland in 1862 to see the places where the sagas were set. He spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness of Iceland, sketching the scenery and recording his impressions of the people to put his studies of the sagas into context. When he returned, tired and very dirty, to England he wrote a book about his journey – ‘Iceland: its scenes and sagas’ (1863). ¹ This was his first major book – a strange mixture of myth, observations and fiction. Had he continued with his Icelandic studies he might have become a significant figure in the field, judging by the notes and translations that remain as unpublished manuscripts.

¹ Sabine Baring-Gould, Iceland – it’s Scenes and Sagas,
His course changed, however, when his mother died in December 1863 and, as she was dying, withdrew her objection to Sabine entering the church, as he had always wished. His father reluctantly agreed, though he did disinherit him — luckily only for a short time. This led, as you have heard, to his arrival in Horbury in May 1864 and I have told you a little about his work and his personal life in that period.

A few years ago I read a passage in the second volume of Baring-Gould’s biography *Further Reminiscences* (1925) in which he gives the text of a song ‘The Bonny Blue Handkerchief’ which he collected from John Woodridge of Thrushelton in Devon and says

“I presume that the following was gathered in Yorkshire, but I do not know. Ginger Jack professed not to be able to recall where he learned it.”

The Yorkshire link here is weak and is in connection with a description of the mill workers leaving at the end of a shift. Intriguingly, though, his closing remark on this passage said:

“I may add that whilst at Horbury I collected several folk-songs, carols and folk-tales.”

At that time a search of the manuscripts, including the additional material unearthed at Killerton in 1992, had not turned up anything collected in Yorkshire. Then I found a few items in articles and books that Baring-Gould had published. He wrote briefly about the ‘Cherry Tree Carol’ in his introduction to Chope’s ‘Carols for Use in Church’ (1875), where he says:

*I was teaching carols to a party of mill-girls in the West Riding of Yorkshire, some ten years ago, and amongst them that by Dr. Gauntlett — ‘Saint Joseph was a walking’ — when they burst out with ‘Nay! We know one a deal better nor yond;’ and, lifting up their voices, they sang to a curious old strain, — [a version of ‘The Cherry Tree Carol’]*

1. Sant Joseph was an old man,  
   And an old man was he;  
   He married sweet Mary,  
   And a virgin was she.

2. As they were a walking,  
   Thro the garden so green,  
   They spied some ripe cherries  
   Hanging over yon treen.

3. Mary spake to Sant Joseph,  
   With her sweet lips and smiled,  
   ‘Go pluck me yon ripe cherries off  
   For to give to my child.’

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2 Sabine Baring-Gould, *Further Reminiscences*, London, John Lane at the Bodley Head, 1925, p3-4
4. Joseph said to the cherry tree
   ‘Bow down to my knee
   That I may pluck some cherries off
   By one two and three’

* * * * * * * * *

5. Mary loved her only son
   She dressed him so sweet
   She laid him in a manger
   Her dear God to sleep

6. And as she stood over him
   She heard angels sing
   God bless our sweet saviour
   And our heavenly King

And then I found the first of a series of articles in ‘Notes and Queries’ for 1865 with the title Devonshire Household Tales. This included five tales which he had heard whilst living in Devon. The introduction to those tales is a harbinger of his calls to action on folk song 25 years later:

“It is of great importance that the household tales of England should be collected, as they have been collected in France, in Germany, in Russia, in Greece, in Scotland &c. … Our antiquarian collectors of folk-lore have hitherto searched for legends, superstitions and charms; let them diligently seek out the household tale and I am sure they will find them still existing. I am now removed from my native county of Devonshire, where I know these tales may be picked up, and I have but a few which I was able to collect. Seeing before me no prospect of being able to continue my search for them I contribute what I have to ‘N&Q’ in hopes of setting others on the scent.”

Having tried to encourage others, Baring-Gould now continued his own search for tales and folkloric material in Yorkshire. Later in 1865 a small collection of ten Yorkshire riddles was published in ‘Notes and Queries’. Baring-Gould wrote that they had ‘been all orally collected in an outlying manufacturing hamlet in the West Riding; many of them from people who are unable to read, or at all events, unable to read with any comfort’.

In the following year (1866) Baring-Gould contributed an ambitious appendix on ‘Household Tales’ to William Henderson’s ‘Folklore of the Northern Counties’. He

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3 R R Chope, Carols for Use in Church, London, Metzler, 1875, p xi
4 Sabine Baring-Gould, Devonshire Household Tales - in, Notes and Queries Vole 8, 3rd Series (187) Jul 29 1865 (The other two parts of this article appeared in September and October of the same year)
5 Sabine Baring-Gould, Yorkshire Household Riddles, Notes and Queries, 3rd S. VIII. Oct 21, 1865
also supplied a number of anecdotes for the book. The appendix contained the Devonshire tales that he had contributed to ‘Notes and Queries’ and there were also a number of tales from Yorkshire. The appendix also contained another product of Baring-Gould’s spare evenings at Horbury. This was his list of ‘Story Radicals’ – a remarkable attempt to classify folk tales by content and plot. Baring-Gould was not the first to try this but it was an early example of the application of a scientific approach to folklore.

In his papers there is a small notebook in which he developed this classification and it is plain that he continued to work on his system after its original publication. When the Folklore Society published a second edition of Henderson’s book in 1879, however, this appendix was not included, nor were a number of the footnotes that had been supplied by Baring-Gould. There was, in fact, a great deal of discussion within the Folklore Society about ways of classifying folk tales. They did not believe that Baring-Gould’s classification met all their requirements and felt that more work was needed. When George Lawrence Gomme’s Handbook of Folklore was published by the Society in 1890, they included Baring-Gould’s analysis of the story elements in folk tales but without the classification.

A page from Baring-Gould’s ‘List of Story Radicals’

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G. l. Gomme, The Handbook of Folklore, London: David Nutt for the Folklore Society, 1890
Baring-Gould has never been taken seriously by the Folklore establishment. He was (and is) seen as too much of a ‘populariser’, writing for large audiences, rather than for academic circles. But his novels and other books do contain a lot of the folklore that he collected in the locations that he was writing about. So you can learn, for example, about the Padfoot that haunted the dark wildernesses around Horbury and about the use of a loaf, hollowed out to contain a candle and weighted with a pennyworth of mercury to seek out the corpse of a drowned man in the river.

Another article that he wrote for ‘Notes and Queries’ gave the words of a ‘Yorkshire Ballad’ he had collected ‘from some mill-girls’. The song was ‘The Jovial Reckless Boy’ with what he describes as ‘a tune with an ancient character’. Notes and Queries does not give the music but I found it in one of the Rough Copy manuscript books in Plymouth, together with a note confirming that it came from Yorkshire. Though I had noticed it several years ago, I had not made the connection that this was actually collected by him 23 years before he ‘officially’ started to collect in Devon. So here is the song.

‘I am a jovial reckless boy,
And by my trade I go;
I trudge the world all over,
And get my living so.

‘The fringes of your apron,
And by your slender shoe;
Your stockings they are as white as snow,
So that’s how I know you.’

‘I trudged this world all over,
A pretty fair maid I spied;
I asked her if she would go with me,
And be my lawful bride.

‘The pretty fair maid denied me,
And said ‘If I do so,
I shall be ruined for ever a day,
And shall be loved no mo.’

‘The fringes of your apron,
And by your slender shoe;
Your stockings they are as white as snow,
So that’s how I know you.’

‘Oh, how will you be ruined?’
The reckless boy replied,
‘For I am sure I will marry you,
As soon as work I find.’

‘I could not help for smiling,
To hear the girl say so.’
I threw my arm around her waist,
And along we both did go.

‘Now hold your tongue from clattering,
And tell me none of your tales,
For you are a jovial reckless boy,
And that is your only trade.’

‘She brought a glass all in her hand,
And filled it to the brim;
Here’s to the health of each reckless boy,
That calls my true love his!’

For some time I could not understand what this song was about. Then I re-read a paragraph in the essay about folk song that Sabine included in his book ‘English Minstrelsie’:

_The other day, in 1896, I was back in Horbury, and I went to see old friends I had not seen for thirty years and more. One of these my first singers came running to see me when "t mill loosed" at noon. "Eh, lass!" said I, "dost' remember singing to me the 'Jovial Heckler's Boy'? She laughed, and her eyes danced as she said, "Aye — but if thou'lt stay a bit I'll sing thee a score more."

So now we have it called ‘The Jovial Heckler’s Boy’. I found another version – ‘The Roving Heckler Lad’ – in Frank Kidson’s _Traditional Tunes_ where there is an incomplete version of the song and the following information:

_In the days of handloom weaving, a "Heckler," or "Hackler," was a man who heckled flax to make it ready for the distaff or spinning wheel. It was a labour which required some degree of exertion and skill, and therefore a heckler would, to ply his trade, travel from village to village to heckle the flax which many house-holders who had suitable land would grow themselves. ... The hecklers were famous for wearing a fancy linen apron with an ornamental fringe hanging from it. The wandering heckler is, however, now a thing of the past, and his trade is superseded by machinery; but the above account is from the remembrance of a person who knew the time when the hecklers travelled about from place to place as described. The song of "The Roving Heckler Lad," used to be popular in the clothing districts round about Leeds."_ ⁹

So, if you replace ‘reckless’ with ‘heckler’ it makes a lot more sense, particularly the mention of the fancy apron. ‘The Jovial Reckless Boy’ is certainly the first English folk song collected by Baring-Gould to be published, 24 years before the issue of his book _Songs of the West._

This and the other items uncovered confirmed that Baring-Gould was collecting songs, stories and riddles in Yorkshire between 1864 and 1868 when he married. There certainly were other items which he collected, since he also records, for example, that, in 1867, he took down a version of ‘The Spanish Lady’ from a workman on a train between Leeds and Thirsk. ¹⁰

But, after these early experiences, he seems to have put folk song on the shelf until 1888. Marriage and the start of what was to be a large family as well as a lonelier, more responsible parish seem to have cooled his interest and the focus of his writing shifted to religious topics. He continued to mine his notes on his trip to Iceland for magazine articles and, later, a couple of novels. His interest in folklore continued and was regularly demonstrated in his writing, but it was not until some years after his return to Devon that, at a dinner with friends in 1888, he was encouraged to collect folk songs again. He took up their challenge with passion and energy.

He recruited two expert musicians to help him by taking down the music while he noted the words of the songs. One of these helpers was Henry Fleetwood Sheppard,

⁹ Frank Kidson, _Traditional Tunes_, Oxford, Charles Taphouse, 1891, p. 146-147
the Rector of Thurnscoe, between Barnsley and Doncaster – another connection to Yorkshire. Sheppard was an expert in church music and, as Precentor of the Doncaster Choral Union, was involved with choirs throughout the area. It is likely that it was through this connection that Baring-Gould met him. He had published some arrangements of Yorkshire folk songs before he started to collect with Baring-Gould. Sheppard became the musical editor for the two main collections of folk songs that Baring-Gould published: *Songs of the West* and *A Garland of Country Song*.

We still don’t know exactly how many songs Baring-Gould collected in total, as they are spread over a number of different manuscripts. I am working on that but I have a way to go before I have the final tally. Though it is certainly in excess of 1000 songs and, probably, closer to 2000. While it falls short of the totals of Sharp and some modern collectors it is still a major achievement and there are many ways in which he set the pattern for the collectors that followed him, particularly the way in which he recorded the personal details of the singers. And the time he spent in Yorkshire was important to the development of his interest and of his methods.

Apart from the songs that he collected himself, another important aspect of the collection was the songs that were sent to him by other people – mainly from the South-West but also from other parts of the British Isles. This gives us a few more songs from Yorkshire, such as that sent to Baring-Gould by Lewis Davis of Pinner who had heard it sung by boatmen on the Humber. An unusual version of ‘I saw three ships’

I saw three ships come sailing by,
I saw three ships come sailing by.
By, by.
I saw three ships come sailing by.

I asked them what they’d got aboard,
I asked them what they’d got aboard.
Board, board.
I asked them what they’d got aboard.

They said they’d got their crowns aboard,
They said they’d got their crowns aboard.
Crowns, crowns.
They said they’d got their crowns aboard.

I asked them where they were taking to,
I asked them where they were taking to.
To, to.
I asked them where they were taking to.

They said they was going to Coln upon Rhine,
They said they was going to Coln upon Rhine.
Coln, Coln.
They said they was going to Coln upon Rhine.

I asked them where they came from,
They said they came from Bethlehem.
Beth, Beth.
They said they came from Bethlehem.

This is interesting because of the reference in the song to Coln – actually ‘Koln’ or Cologne, as we know it – and to the three crowns. These crowns adorn the skulls in the shrine of the Three Holy Kings in Cologne Cathedral.

The 1862 Diary Notebook

Though the songs that Baring-Gould collected in Devon are well documented there was no manuscript evidence for the collection that he made in Yorkshire. I was pretty sure that there had to have been some sort of notebook since he wrote an article for ‘The Yorkshire County Magazine’ in 1892 with a much larger collection of 46 Yorkshire riddles, including the ten he had published in 1865. He could not have done this without some sort of written record – but I had found nothing in his papers. It was also known that there had been a diary for this period but that had been lost sometime after his death, as well as a number of other manuscripts.

Then in October last year (2009) I had a phone call from Merriol Almond, Baring-Gould’s great-granddaughter. She told me that a couple more of his manuscript books had turned up and that one appeared to be a diary for the period that he was in Horbury. I’m sure you can imagine my excitement when I went down to Devon a few days later to see it. It is a small book – much smaller than the other diary that we have and in rather poor condition externally. The pages are all intact, however, and the writing is relatively clear. It is as much a notebook as a diary recording his thoughts as well as his activities. Many of these are focused on religious concerns in this period leading up to his ordination. It contains a number of hymns and other verse that he had written or translated, but, as I turned the pages, I came to the heading ‘West Riding Household Tales &c.’.

I quickly realised that what I was looking at was, at last, the original handwritten notes of some of the material that we knew Baring-Gould had collected in Horbury and, if not noted directly ‘in the field’ reasonably contemporaneous.

It includes three of the stories published in Henderson’s ‘Folklore of the Northern Counties’ – ‘The Golden Ball,’ which is a version of ‘The Maid freed from the Gallows’. Francis Child had included it as published in Henderson as version H of his ballad No 95 in ‘The English and Scottish Popular Ballads’, The second story is

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12 The 1862 Diary Notebook has been transcribed by Ron Wawman and can be read on his website ‘nevercompletelysubmerged.co.uk.’
unnamed but Baring-Gould called it -‘The Prophecy’ and the third is ‘A Lying Tale’. There are 52 riddles – including all those collected in Yorkshire that Baring-Gould had published. And two songs: ‘The Cherry Tree Carol’ and ‘The Jovial Reckless Boy’.

To be honest, the manuscript tells us little more than we knew from the published material. But it does give us some details about the people from whom the stories and songs were collected. ‘The Golden Ball’ was collected from Sarah Hirst. She would then have been 14 but we know that, in 1861, when she was aged 10, she was living in White Row, Horbury with her parents Nathan, a wool dyer, and mother Mary. No occupation is given for her mother or for her brother John (15) but her 21 year old sister, Elizabeth, is described as a rag picker.

The unnamed story which Baring-Gould called ‘The Prophecy’ was collected from James Shilton described as a ‘railroad boy’. He would then have been aged 13 and was living with his father, also James Shilton, and his mother, Ann. His father was the Station Master at Horbury Junction – so it is not, perhaps surprising that he had joined the railway.

‘The Lying Tale’ was heard from Joe Wilson who, Baring-Gould tells us, was one of the choristers in Horbury. I have not found out anything more about him, as yet. We know that some of the riddles came from a Mrs Warren. The two songs are said to come ‘from the children of Horbury Bridge’.

As an example, here is the tale from James Shilton, that Baring-Gould called ‘The Prophecy.’

*There was once a rich man & he had brass, that he had. One day he was riding out of t’ town, & he saw an old witch & her child had fallen intut mire & she axed a rich man to hug him out, but he wouldn’t do nowt of t’ sort. Eh! she wor angry! She said to him “Tha must have a son & he shall dee afore he be turned 21.” Well he had a son. And he was flayed lest what she’d said would come true. So he built a tower all round & there was not a door I’t tower & only a window & he put barn in there. And he put an old man it’ tower to fend for barn & he would send him his food & clothes & all he wanted by a rope up intut’ lodging. Well when lad was one & twenty, ont’ very day, it was cold & t’ lad was right down starved so he said tut owd man that he’d fain have a fire, and they let downt’ rope & they brought up a bundle of wood. T’lad hugged bundle & cast it ont’ fire & as he cast it a snake came out fromt’ bundle in which it had been hidden & it bit lad and he died so t’word of old witch cam true. But she wor a bad un: & she wor as hugly as a flay-craw!*

So, at last, we have a little more information, and we have the manuscript evidence of this small collection of Yorkshire stories, songs and riddles, made by the young clergyman in Yorkshire. It doesn’t account for everything that we know about – there are a few stories missing and that version of ‘Spanish Ladies’, collected on the train. But it is useful confirmation and gives us a little insight into Baring-Gould’s approach.

Towards the end of his life Baring-Gould came to regard his collection of folk songs as the greatest achievement of his life. Given all that he did as a journalist, archaeologist, antiquary, architect, hagiographer, novelist, churchman and – the list
goes on – this seems a remarkable statement. But I am not going to argue with it. There is no doubt that his reputation was eclipsed by Cecil Sharp and his followers whose remarkable campaign seems to have convinced a large proportion of the literati that Sharp was singlehandedly responsible for the folk revival. Sharp himself didn’t believe that and credited Baring-Gould with ‘the first serious and sustained attempt to collect the traditional songs of the English peasantry’.

Though the collection that he made in Devon was much larger and more comprehensive, I think that Yorkshire was his training ground and that the work that he did in the 1860s is of great significance.

Baring-Gould’s affection for Yorkshire was exceeded only by that for his own small corner of Devonshire and the moor that adjoined it, not least because it gave him Grace Taylor, the woman who supported him throughout his long life. He was devastated when this lovely, down-to-earth Yorkshire-woman, who proved such a good companion for an extraordinary man, died in 1916.

Another Yorkshireman, Frank Kidson, visited Baring-Gould at Lewtrenchard and wrote an article for the Yorkshire Post in 1911 in which he described the hospitality of the Baring-Goulds and of the children practising their Yorkshire accents for his benefit, and to the amusement of their mother. He also wrote:

“I shall always be remembered” said Mr Baring Gould “by my folk song collecting”, but how, in 1888 he began the great work of gathering the folk-songs of Devon and Cornwall is so long and interesting a story that it cannot be put in the few lines now left at my disposal. How his heart has warmed to the old Devonshire songs and their singers only those who have heard him talk on the subject can tell. If any man had sympathy with the old country labourer whose songs and traditions he has so lovingly preserved surely Baring Gould is the one. There is a touching tenderness when he speaks of the old singers and tells of such a one, perhaps now dead, from whom he had obtained a particular song.

The old folk songs of Devon have for him great sacredness and it is pleasant to listen to his stories of his long rambles in search of them and of nights spent in lonely inns where he gathered round the board those old men in whose memories they linger”. 13

I believe that Yorkshire folk can take pride in the part they played in the life and work of this remarkable man.

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Notes on the contributors to this issue

**Dr Roger Bristow** is the editor of the ‘official’ bibliography of Sabine Baring-Gould’s work – though he is still not ready to regard it as definitive. He is also the Newsletter Editor for SBGAS. And, once again, he was a co-organiser of the 2010 meeting. As a professional geologist, he has often deployed the knowledge and experience gained in his career to explain the formations that make up the physical framework for Baring-Gould’s books, for the benefit of SBGAS members.

**Troy White** has now returned to the USA, having completed his PhD at Warwick University. His doctoral thesis was, *The Gothic Threshold of Sabine Baring-Gould: The Religion and Gothic Fiction of a Victorian "Squarson."* He has delighted SBGAS members with his fresh viewpoint on Baring-Gould’s novels and his ability to explain literary technicalities to a lay audience.

**David Shacklock** was the founder of SBGAS and, for many years, its Chairman and guiding light. He was also the first Editor of the *SBGAS Newsletter* in the days before computers eased the burdens of publication for the non-professional. The editorials and other articles that he wrote at that time still contain much of interest and value to those interested in the work of Sabine Baring-Gould. He is also an expert on his published works and an active dealer in his books.

**Martin Graebe** researches and writes about folk song and folklore as well as performing songs, particularly from the Baring-Gould collection, with his wife Shan. He has given a number of talks on aspects of Baring-Gould’s work as a folklorist and folk song collector to SBGAS as well as to other organisations around the World. He is Chair, Website Editor and Transactions Editor for SBGAS.