

SABINE BARING-GOULD APPRECIATION SOCIETY

Newsletter 88 October 2018



Various SBGAS covers over the years

The Aims of the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society

The aims of the Society are to enable those interested in the man and his work to share their enthusiasm and spread the interest among others. These aims are to be achieved by means of *Newsletters*, a membership list, website, Annual Gathering at venues with some association with Sabine Baring-Gould, and publication of the *Transactions*.

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SABINE BARING-GOULD was born on 28th January 1834 in Exeter and died on 2nd January 1924 at Lewtrenchard

- Hugely influential collector of folksongs at a time when such songs were being rapidly forgotten.
- Prolific novelist. Among the ten best of his time?
- Folklorist. Magpie collector of anecdotes, practices, beliefs.
- Archaeologist. Pioneer of over 60 excavations on Dartmoor.
- Loved and respected pastor to a widespread Devonshire community
- Reconstructor of buildings - he made enormous changes to both house and church at Lewtrenchard.
- Wrote or translated well known hymns and carols.

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Editorial

I feared that I would find it difficult to complete this final Newsletter. In fact, however, it has really written itself and without any effort from me has become a showcase for all that is good in the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society. Robin Price's lovely account of the October Annual Gathering describes the careful organisation, excellent speakers and convivial atmosphere that we have grown to expect every year. Ron Wawman's concluding part of *Sabine Baring-Gould: The Long Road to Ordination* shows the fruits of active research and scholastic expertise that we have benefitted from over the years from Ron and many others. The report of Martin Graebe's well deserved awards shows the high esteem in which our members are held, and his wise words as Chairman are a reminder of well the Society is managed. The comments of members tell us of the fellowship, support and inspiration the Society has brought into their lives.

Lets face it, we have created something wonderful here. The Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society is not now crawling into oblivion, but marching in step, head high, into history.

My last words. *Hurrah for The Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society—Hip Hip Hooray!*

The Annual Gathering 5-8 October 2018 at Tavistock

Robin Price

We met in the Bedford Hotel, a wonderfully unchanged traditional country hostelry, for a full and well-organised programme based on SB-G's novel *Mrs Curgenven of Curgenven*. Many SB-G enthusiasts claim this exciting and plot-twisting and not entirely unconvincing story to be one of his best, and his least melodramatic. It was certainly well worthy of an SB-G weekend in the redolent surroundings of Tavistock within its largest and most traditional establishment.

Tradition was fortified by assembling on the Friday evening over a good pub meal in a private quarter of The Cornish Arms, supported by excellent local beers (probably *not* SB-G-approved).

The next day, Saturday 6th October, after members had been welcomed by the Chairman Martin Graebe, we began with the equally traditional paper by Roger Bristow, identifying the real places in which the novel is set. Considerable research had gone into identifying the ground original of Curgenven Hall, very probably Trebartha Hall (destroyed by fire in 1949), on the east of Bodmin Moor, since it seemed to answer both to site and style of SB-G's account. It seemed also to fit nicely with the Church and Rectory south-east of the Hall described by SB-G as half a mile from the Hall (in fact, about three-



quarters of a mile). Absolute accuracy is not to be expected in an SB-G account. However, the topography of the novel is for the most part set in real and identifiable territory, the most dramatic and memorable of which is Trewortha Marsh on the Withy Brook. The treacherous bog (so described in the novel, and into which SB-G himself once fell) well known in the novel to Esther the wild girl of the moor, and used by her to defeat the pursuing policeman. Full marks to Roger Bristow for his meticulous research, his photographs, and his accompanying and useful gazetteer of all the localities used in the novel.



Becky Smith and Pat Tansell next took the floor to place the novel within its temporal and mythic contexts. Written in 1891, published first in instalments in *The Cornhill Magazine*, and in 1892 published in 3 volumes by Methuen. Becky Smith described it as unusually carefully written and planned, and one of his richest and indeed least melodramatic offerings, written during his southwest period after *In the Roar of the Sea*, and after his rise to fame with *The Red Spider* and *John Herring* in the 1880s. *Mrs Curgenven of Curgenven* was on the whole well received by the local and national press, and even *The Church Times* gave its august approval. Some reviews thought the characters deficient in the minor emotions. Becky also pointed out that bigamy, the major theme of the novel, was widely discussed at the time, and featured also in Wilkie Collins' *No Name*, and in William De Morgan's *Somehow Good*.

Continuing the session, Pat Tansell had discovered that there had been a fairly recent Curgenven bigamist, the court case reported in the local papers in 1865, relating to one John Curgenven aged 45, consigned to prison and there relegated to cleaning jobs, but discharged later in 1865. Whether or not this triggered both name and plot we shall never know.



After coffee, Katherine Stansfield, novelist and poet, spoke on the folklore of the west, knowing it well from her childhood in Cornwall. The wild topography of Bodmin Moor, derived from the underlying geology, made the area until fairly recently perilous to traverse. Thin soil, poor and limited grazing, little arable, deep bogs, with some mining and quarrying, made a hard life for its few inhabitants. It was, and probably still is, the wildest and wettest terrain in England.



Singular features of this deserted landscape gave rise to singular legends, relating in particular to the Cheesewring on Stow Hill, Men-an-Tol and The Hurlers, with their attributed magic and healing properties. Moreover, Cornwall too has a long history from its numerous Celtic saints, St Petroc and St Piran chief among them, with their histories of caves and holy springs and streams, to later legends associated with prominent topographical or Neolithic features, and to the huge influence of John Wesley whose 31 missionary visits to the spiritually deprived areas of south Cornwall raised in their wake numerous Methodist chapels. Thus, a mix of ancient, Christian, and modern customs exist throughout the region. Much sympathetic magic and its rites and beliefs survived, even into our own times. Among them, witch ladders and wart-charming yet persist.

The outing to Liskeard led by Brian Oldham, President of Liskeard Old Cornwall Society, followed in the afternoon. The town remains almost exactly as SB-G described it, an ancient township twisting down its narrow valley, its inhabitants once watered by a still existing spring. Our guide led us to many sites, often remarkably well preserved Georgian structures, possibly those SB-G had in mind when composing his novel; not least, perhaps, the building once known as Webb's Hotel where Percival 'dined at the ordinary'. After a truly fascinating and informative tour, which gave evidence of our guide's huge and long and careful research and reading of the novel, we repaired for very welcome tea and biscuits to the Town Museum, itself of considerable interest, before this enjoyable and informative visit ended.

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Sunday opened with a well-researched and scholarly talk by Norman Wall-work on *Priests Parsons and Prelates in the novel of SB-G*. Furnished with a



splendid hand-out of carefully garnered quotations from all SB-G's relevant novels about clerics, on which he enlarged, it became delightfully apparent how much SB-G disliked bishops, dissenters (this an ancient inheritance), clerics of no definite opinions, tame conformists enjoying comfortable livings and doing little for them, and clerics both pompous and vain. His *Church Revival*, 1914, excoriated bishops, and the novels bear every mark of his resplendent prejudices against the tepid, the conformist, the vain and the mediocre. His novel *The Frobishers*, 1901, has perhaps his most concise diatribe '... a man such as an Established Church can alone produce to an almost unlimited extent: well-bred, well-educated, harmless in life, and best described as a series of negatives.' This was a wonderful excursion into the worst aspects of the 19th century Church of England, and enjoyably related. But then, High Church clerics ever loved a quarrel with time-serving bishops whose hold was on the temporal rather than the eternal.

Since the minutes of the AGM which followed will be recorded elsewhere, this account will only record the Chairman and Committee's view that the SBGAS has no course but to terminate its existence after some 30 creative and enjoyable years. Members have aged and few have joined since its inception, numbers are falling, and there are none to fill vacating places on the Committee; we have covered most of SB-G's life, activities, and many novels; and the task of organising the often complex annual gatherings gets no less. With great sadness, the Committee's view was accepted. After discussion, it was agreed that a formal Special General Meeting would be convened within a few months to declare the Society formally closed, and to determine the proper disposal of its assets. It was suggested that there could be some possibility of the occasional day meeting. This however lay in a future as misty as some of SB-G's favourite moorland settings. We shall see.

But we were all hugely grateful to the committee and organisers of the present meeting, and indeed of all past meetings for their effective work in making meetings so enjoyable and informative, and for maintaining the character of a Society of enthusiasts, at once congenial, knowledgeable and scholarly. We shall close with great regret, with much gratitude, and with happy memories of time well spent.

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Chairman's letter

Dear SBGAS Member

We had another enjoyable meeting in Tavistock and we are very grateful to Becky, Helen and Roger who put a lot of effort into organising it.

Two votes of thanks were passed at the meeting which should be mentioned. The first was to our President, Merriol Almond, who has decided to step down from that role. We are very grateful for the support that she has given to us over the years and many of us have received the benefit of her practical help.

The second was to Bill Oke, who asked last year to be released from the job of Treasurer. He has continued to act while we sought a replacement, and we are very grateful to him for his commitment over the years. It has not proved possible to replace him and the Chairman and Secretary will 'caretake' the role for the time being.

There was a careful discussion at the Committee meeting about the future of the Society. For several years, the number of members has been falling. We now have only 46 subscriptions (63 members) and we have to face the fact that many of us are now older and not as physically capable as we were. Within that number there are, as in any society, only a small number who take an active part in organising events. We no longer have a significant number of active members in each of our key locations: Lewtrenchard, Horbury, and Mersea, and the organisation of events is falling on shoulders that live at a distance from those locations – increasing the cost and difficulty of organising meetings. The committee were agreed that we cannot continue as we are and recommended to the AGM that the Society should be wound up.

This recommendation was put to the AGM and there was further discussion there, but the conclusion is inescapable that, in the absence of more members and, particularly, members who are able to take an active role in running the Society, we should dissolve SBGAS. This was, reluctantly, agreed by the meeting. The officers have agreed to continue in their roles for the period needed to do this and we will not be asking for subscriptions from members for the coming year.

Our Constitution (you can see a copy on our website) lays out a process for dissolving the Society. Our plan, which the Committee believe complies with this process, is to create a sub-group (Roger Bristow, Martin and Shan Graebe) who will draw up a proposal for arranging a Special General Meeting at which the decisions that need to be made, and the arrangements for dealing with residual assets of SBGAS, in line with the constitutional process, will be discussed and agreed.

The objective will be to complete publication of the next SBGAS Newsletter and the Transactions of the recent meeting and send them to existing members. For the future,

the hope is that we can create an interest group who would be kept informed of relevant information and news – probably through an internet newsletter. The SBGAS website should be appropriately modified and maintained into the future as a focus for information about SB-G, and to encapsulate the publications and records of the Society. It has been suggested that it might be possible to arrange one-off meetings of the group.

I'm sure that you will share my disappointment, and that of the committee, that we have reached this point, but I think we all recognise that the Society cannot continue in its present form. It seems to us that it is better to take the decision now and to try to find a way to re-create an organisation that will meet our needs and those of all who have an interest in the life and work of Sabine Baring-Gould.

All of us have good memories of the things the Society has done, of enjoyable times spent at the annual meetings, and for the knowledge shared so freely by fellow members. We are profoundly grateful to the Society's founder, David Shacklock, and to all the past officers of the Society for their vision and for their efforts. I hope that we will be able to preserve the best of our past, and to find a way to secure a future for our common interest in Sabine Baring-Gould.

Yours sincerely

Martin Graebe

SAINT EUSTACHIUS CHURCH., Tavistock

After lunch on Sunday, Shirley and I had a walk around Tavistock, including a visit to SAINT EUSTACHIUS CHURCH. On part of the west wall is a large painting with a small plaque stating " Painted by PAUL DESHWANDEN. The gift of the Reverend S Baring-Gould. 1921 "

In a copy of the history of the Church it states "In 1921 the church received the gift, from Sabine Baring-Gould of Paul Deshwanden Madonna and Children, a painting that the good squarson of Lewtrenchard had requisitioned from the Swiss artist some years earlier".

We hope you find it of some interest.

Regards,
Shirley& Ray Scott.

Sabine Baring-Gould: The Long Road to Ordination The Final Rocky Path

In 1863, Sabine's attitudes to life would seem to have been changing. He had renounced Ruskinian dress fashions (Baring-Gould, S. 1923a, p.285). Letters (8/10 Nov. 1857 and 17 May 1858) to his mother revealed that he was giving serious thought to finding a wife. In December 1863, after a long illness, Sabine's mother died causing him much distress. Also in 1863, his father, in response to his wife's dying wishes, had withdrawn objection to, if not disapproval of, ordination (Wawman, R. 2009, p. 65).

In order to fully understand what happened around this time, it is necessary to start by looking at what Sabine wrote in his diary 17 years later on 12 September 1880 (Wawman, R. 2009, p.64):

After eight years [that I had] spent there, [St. John's College, Hurstpierpoint] my friend Joseph Fowler was offered the vacant chaplaincy. He came down to Hurst. He was very anxious to take it. I was most anxious to secure him for the place, as I feared the church tone was declining.....Fowler said he could not take the chaplaincy as he was engaged to go to Horbury to be curate to Revd. John Sharp...

[Fowler had been curate at Houghton-le-Spring since 1861. It is not known where Sabine struck up his friendship with Fowler. Before taking orders, Fowler had been a medical practitioner and had been working at St Thomas's Hospital, London when he became drawn to Anglo-Catholicism. This was around the time Sabine was at St Barnabas Church, just across the river from St Thomas's. They probably met there.]

...On a sudden inspiration of enthusiasm I said "I will go and take your place if Mr Sharp will have me in deacon's orders in your room." Fowler wrote, Mr. Sharp consented to the substitution, and gave me a title for orders. I had long desired to take orders but my father and mother had constantly refused me permission and I did not like to go against them in so important a matter. They just endured me being at Hurst in a position they thought very unsuitable.

My father put it plainly before me as his determination, if I went into orders I could not hope to inherit Lew. The property was entailed on a son, but not on an eldest son, or so he informed me. The living was destined for one son, the estate for the other. If I took orders I must be content to be only rector at Lew, and Willy [Sabine's younger brother, born 1837] should be squire.

Before my mother died, she withdrew her opposition and asked my father not to refuse his consent should I again solicit it.

When I had finally made up my mind, I wrote to him, to ask his consent. He gave it but again let me understand that I was cut off from the succession to the property.

This situation was also covered along broadly similar lines in *Early Reminiscences*, partly on page 297 and partly on page 336, where he stated:

I did not look out for a curacy, but remained a master at Hurstpierpoint. We had lost our chaplain, [The Rev E Field] moved to Lancing College, and I was particularly desirous to have a friend, the Rev J T Fowler, eventually Honorary Canon of Durham, as a suitable successor. He was, however, engaged to go to the Rev. John Sharp, Vicar of Horbury, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, to start a mission there in an outlying part of the parish. Accordingly I volunteered to go in his room, if Sharp would give me a nomination, and accept a deacon, waiving his claim on Fowler. Sharp raised no objection....

The Rev J T Fowler's appointment to the chaplaincy to St John's College, Hurstpierpoint, was announced in the December 1863 issue of the school magazine, the *Hurst Johnian*. It is now known that in that very same month Sabine wrote two letters to Nathaniel Woodard, Provost of the Woodard schools. (Held in the Woodward Archive, Lancing College.) In the first letter, written from St John's College on 3 December 1863, Sabine wrote:

Dear Sir

After much consideration I have decided on leaving Hurst at Easter, and spending a few months with my father, till the shock of my mother's loss has worn off: after which I shall take duty somewhere where I can be near him. This will relieve you from the difficulty which you seem to feel in giving me a title, and which had led me to consider whether it would not be better for me to get one a title where I can have more opportunities of learning parochial work.

Sabine's reference to being refused a title can only refer to his being refused a request to be ordained while still in a teaching post at St John's College.

Sabine's mother was still alive when this first letter was written. She died 3 days later on 6 December. It is probable that the letter was written immediately after learning that his mother's death was imminent and before returning to Lew to be with her. Three weeks later, on 22 December 1863, Sabine wrote the second letter to the Rev. Nathaniel Woodard, this time from Lew House:

Dear Mr. Provost

I do not know that I can tell you yet for certain what will be my final destination, but I have decided on the following course which seems to me sufficiently rational.

I go, as I told you, to my father at Easter, and I shall remain with him at least till Michaelmas. Then, if he wishes me to continue to live with him, I shall consent to do so, if he will do what he has often talked of – settle in some town, where I can get a title for Holy Orders, and if he will give me such allowance as will, with my curacy, be equivalent to what I get at Hurst. Should he decline to meet me so far, I shall consider myself free to return, may be, to my former work.

My ultimate object is to establish a mission in Cornwall, but a few years more at Hurstpierpoint might give me opportunities of studying Theology, which I should not have if I were engaged in mission work.

I confess that I was much hurt by your declining to nominate me for ordination at Christmas, and it was your apparent reluctance to giving me a title which was one cause of my thinking of applying for one elsewhere. Your explanation that the difficulty arose from the Bishop [Gilbert] and not from yourself, was therefore a great relief to my mind, as I could not but think that, after having worked in the Society for seven years, I had a right to ask for a title.

Three facts become very clear at this point

1. At the time that the Rev J T Fowler was appointed chaplain at St John's College, Sabine had just had his hopes of ordination at St John's College dashed and patently had no thoughts of a nomination to Horbury.
2. It was Sabine's presumption of rejection by Woodard that had triggered his thoughts of seeking ordination elsewhere rather than stay at St John's. He was intending that such an appointment would be in conjunction with entering into a supportive role with his father somewhere other than Lew. It is very doubtful that a Northern industrial town would have been considered as a likely destination for them both.
3. On learning that it was Bishop Gilbert of Chichester, who had little love for Woodard or his schools, who had rejected Sabine's application to be ordained at St John's, Sabine again felt able to entertain the thought that he might eventually return to Hurstpierpoint as a teacher after all. As late as 22 December, a move to Horbury was undoubtedly not being considered.

The first intimation of a move to Horbury appeared as an entry in Sabine's diary/notebook made on 6 February 1864 when he wrote:

I believe that I am going to Horbury as curate to Sharpe, there to establish a mission, may God be with me!

How could this have come about? It is likely that Sabine's unrealistic thoughts that he and his father would set up home at some place where Sabine could be ordained, received short shift from a grieving father with whom, as we have seen, Sabine already had a difficult relationship. Could it be that what actually happened was that, on his return to Hurstpierpoint for the Spring term, his good friend, Joseph Fowler, now already established as chaplain at St John's, had taken his grieving and doubly rejected friend under his wing? If so, Fowler may well have pointed out to Sabine that the curacy at Horbury that he had turned down was still vacant and that working with a well-known Anglo-Catholic priest and possibly being involved in the establishment of a mission there would be right up his street. It is very possible that Fowler actually recommended Sabine to John Sharp at Horbury at this time.

The important question remains – how was it that, not only in *Early Reminiscences* but, much more significantly, also in his private diary, Sabine gave an account of how he came to leave his beloved Hurstpierpoint and be appointed to Horbury that was completely erroneous, if not patently fictitious. Such very inaccurate reporting of momentous happenings in both published and private writing, albeit several years after the event, cannot easily be explained.

This was, without any doubt, a devastatingly traumatic period for Sabine involving as it did the distressing terminal illness and death of his much loved mother, apparent rejection by the Church and rejection by his father, Edward.

Edward had always been disappointed with his eldest son and heir. He despised Sabine's love of fantasy, his artistic and bookish interests and his espousal of the Catholic wing of the Anglican Church with its concerns for the beauty of church architecture and liturgy. It is possible that Edward saw all this as signs of effeminacy and weakness. He had therefore striven, unsuccessfully, to force such tendencies out of his son, turn him into a mathematician and engineer and mould him for a career in the army – thus making 'a man' of him!

As we have seen, Edward had made it clear to Sabine that if he persisted with his intention of being ordained then he would never inherit Lew House which would pass instead to his younger brother, Willy. Under the circumstances, it is not difficult to imagine the sort of reception that Sabine's plans for them both, as expressed in the letters to Woodard, would have received from Edward at a time when he was deeply grieving for his wife. Edward may well have exploded ferociously and left Sabine in no doubt about what his father thought of him.

After considerable thought, the author of this paper has reached the conclusion that over the years Sabine had unconsciously suppressed these unpleasant memories of rejection by the Church. As part of the process of coping with all the bitter disappointments associated with this period in his life, Sabine would seem to have rationalised the painful and humiliating memories of it so as to allow himself to look back on his appointment to Horbury in a wholly positive light.

There is much to suggest that throughout all his life Sabine was far less self-confident than he appears to be from his writing. He was also sensitive to criticism and the possibility of rejection. He professed not to read critiques of his work – although the presence of numerous reviews of his books pasted by him into his *Common Place book* (Baring-Gould Archive, 5203) might suggest otherwise. His French friend, l'abbé Duine (SBGAS Newsletter 1963) who came to know him well, wrote:

I tried valiantly in our letters and exchanges to awake his prudence as regards the lines that he took in these areas of patient and difficult work [in his writing]. To the point where one day when I had sent him back certain pages he replied "I never read what displeases me or anything that attacks me".

Sabine was also reluctant to reveal his inner feelings to others. Thus in his published *Reminiscences* he actually wrote:

Others will remonstrate at my digressions, yet, if I digress, it is precisely for the sake of avoiding to talk of self (Baring-Gould, S. 1923a, p.343)

Sabine was similarly reticent in exchanges with members of his family. His half brother, Arthur Baring-Gould, although junior to Sabine by 31 years, eventually became his curate in 1895. Through working closely with Sabine for several years, Arthur came to know him quite well, but was nevertheless compelled to write:

The one thing he would never talk about was his inner life, his spiritual struggles, what doubts or difficulties he had conquered, how he had been led to take Orders, and what his thoughts were on his ordination. (Unpublished memoir)

Fortunately, as we will see, he did confide his thoughts on ordination to a diary.

In his novel *Arminell* (Baring-Gould S. 1889.) Sabine conveniently rationalised such reticence as the outcome of the cultural demands of being a member of the upper classes:

When our temper is ruffled, we do not fret with it those we meet – when our heart is bitter, we do not spit our gall in the face of our friends – when our blood boils in our veins we are careful to let none of it squirt on and blister the hand that is extended to us. A man may smile, and smile, and be a villain – that is true, but a man or a woman may smile, and smile, and be exceedingly sorrowful, may dance and laugh with an aching heart.....So it is with all who have gone through the great discipline of culture; they no more expose their wounds and cry out for sympathy than they expose deformities....

However, the personal springs of Sabine's secrecy concerning his inner life and feelings are not difficult to find. Sabine was aware from an early age that sharing his feelings and opinions with his father was likely to incur intense displeasure, so he learnt to keep his thoughts to himself. As a youngster he was faced, as eldest sons in the upper strata of 19th century society sometimes were, with a need to find favour with a demanding father who had high, but also selective expectations. Unfortunately Edward disapproved of almost all of Sabine's interests and aspirations. For Sabine, the disapproval of his father would have been distressing, while the thought of overt rejection by him, with all its implications, would have been unbearable. Put simply Sabine would have been faced with three alternatives:

- To conform and go under.
- To rebel and go his own way.
- To stick to his personal beliefs, but strive to eventually find favour and acceptance by his father, through his achievements.

Much to his personal satisfaction and at some distance in time after coming to these conclusions, the author of this paper found in Chapter 2 of *The Growth of Religious Conviction* (Baring-Gould S, 1923b) the following comments on what Sabine called *Divine Discontent*, a state in which there is

.....a desire for that which is, perhaps, unattainable, but which serves as a goad to endeavour.

and

.....a determination to fight against adverse circumstances and by resolution and perseverance to overcome them.

The response of those who do not *fight against adverse circumstances*.....

.....takes the form of aggression against social order as at present constituted.

I.e. they rebel.

People are inclined to describe Sabine as 'driven' without fully comprehending what that means. A psychological, rather than a spiritual explanation of Sabine's actions, could well be that he was driven by the consequences of the internal conflict that arose from adopting the extremely difficult third alternative: - sticking to his beliefs and striving to eventually find favour with his father through achievement. As we have seen, he took up this option in Bayonne when, at the age of 17, he committed himself to the three purposes in life from which he wrote that he *never wavered*: (Baring-Gould, S. 1923a)

- To improve the spiritual life of the parishioners in Lew Trenchard.
- To restore Lew Trenchard church.
- To restore Lew House.

It is particularly enlightening to look at the brief glimpses of the mental preoccupations that Sabine wrote down in his diary/notebook during Lent 1864. (1962 Dairy Notebook) This period fell between the extremely distressing events of December 1863 and his ordination at Ripon in May 1864.

On Ash Wednesday, 10 February 1863, Sabine wrote:

This is my rule for Lent this year:

Be present at Matins daily at 7.

Say each hour of the day when the clock strikes these few prayers – *Our father. O Lord who hast taught us etc. O saviour of the world etc. God*

be merciful to me a sinner.

Subjects for meditation = *The six things that God hateth (Prov. vi. 16)*

[Holy Bible: Proverbs vi. Verses 16-19: There are six things the Lord hateth. Seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.]

Subjects for prayer. *Humility. Sincerity. A good example. A clean heart. Recollection. Peace.*

Subjects of intercession. *Relations. Friends. The cold and indifferent. Restoration of Religious Orders. The Perfection of the Saints.*

Some of the subjects selected for intercession would seem very pertinent.

Then, eight days later, on 18 February, these thoughts were followed up with:

Oh, Lord! I purposed to have meditated this week on Sincerity and I have not done with Humility yet! I think that one subject must last me through Lent. I am beginning to fear Pride. I never knew before its horrible nature.

The next day, 19 February, Sabine wrote:

The country white with snow. Oh Jesus! Would that thou didst snow down on me the whiteness of Thy Purity that this dark wintry heart were prepared as a bride for thee! That it were overlaid with the altar linen of Thy Virginity, whereon Thou mightest rest, when Thou comest in thy blessed sacrament to visit and abide with me. I have been looking at the beautiful little chrystals, [sic] so perfect in their symmetry so immaculate in their whiteness: and how soon do they melt away with a big tear. I could not help thinking of the dear children about me – whose souls white beautiful and clean will alas! soon melt away and dissolve into – Ah! Please God it may be into – tears of repentance.

Sabine's use of the term *this dark wintry heart* gives a stark indication of his mood at this time.

Then, two days later, on 21 February, he added his fears concerning his ability to cope as a priest, together with his distress at the need to leave St. Johns, Hurstpierpoint, and to give up some of his interests:

I feel a sinking of heart at the thought of my so soon being in the ministry. Ah! My God what cases, what sorrows, are in store for me. I do feel most keenly the guilt of others and when I have that to bear as a Priest, I feel as though I should be crushed with the weight. Some years ago we had a sad case here of sin in which many of one's dear ones were involved. The discovery bowed me down, I almost sank, with sorrow, into despair. What will it be when I have so many, many sinners to deal with. The Gospel for this Sunday – the Syro-Phoenician woman – always brings me special comfort in seasons such as this – it teaches me how I can make the cause of another quite my own. The poor woman pleading for her daughter cried "Lord help me!"

[The Syro-Phoenician woman whose daughter, possessed by a demon, was healed by Jesus. Mark vii, 25-30; Matthew xv, 21-28.]

I have been obliged wholly to give up my Icelandic studies: I cannot bear to read those dear Sagas now when I know that my hopes of ever revisiting Iceland are over. Some of the boys were looking over my sketches today. I could hardly control myself it really upset me.

I think that the life of all others which I should enjoy would be that of a hermit in some Alpine glen. I know of no earthly happiness greater than: the contemplation of beautiful scenery, and a life of prayer is one of perfect peace.

The extent of Sabine's emotional turmoil at this time is manifest in his uncharacteristic desire to escape from it all, become a hermit in an Alpine Glen and live a life of prayer and perfect peace!

It is thought that Sabine's hymn *On the Resurrection Morning* was written during the winter and early spring of 1864 as part of the process of coming to terms with the death of his mother. This belief is supported by a brief statement written in his diary on 1 May of that year:

These lines have been for some months in a portfolio

Beneath the entry Sabine had then included a draft of *On the Resurrection Morning* that was subsequently to be published as Mission Hymn I in *Church Times* Volume II on 23 July 1864.

The drafts of two other hymns were also entered in the diary around this time. *The Shepherd Good and True am I* on 15 February and *All the World in Sin was Lying* on 16 February. *The Shepherd Good and True am I* was written in November 1863 in memory of a pupil at Hurst who died. It is not clear whether this hymn was published or, if so, where. *All the world in Sin was Lying* was published as *Mission Hymns II* in *Church Times*, Vol. II, Page 243, 30 July 1864.

Sabine's on-going unhappy relationship with his father at this time could well be the explanation for the entry Sabine made in his diary notebook on Good Friday, 25th March 1864:

During Lent I have been coupling another name with mine in all my prayers. The great longing of my heart is that he and I should learn to love Jesus with the perfect love that He alone can give. Last night I dreamed that I heard distinctly the words 'The Lord hath heard thy petition.' I have not the slightest recollection of the person who spoke – but I remember the words very clearly – everything else in connexion with the dream has vanished from my mind.

Sabine gave no clue to the identity of the person whose name was coupled with his in prayer. One reason why Sabine's father eventually changed his mind was probably because he was aware that William, his second son, was gravely ill and unlikely to recover. See *Never Completely Submerged, The Diary of Sabine Baring-Gould*, p. 65 and endnote 26.

It was to be eight long years before Sabine's father relented and, in May 1872, completed and signed a deed of settlement which at last ensured that Sabine would inherit the bulk of the Lewtrenchard estate on the death of his father. At the time the deed of

settlement was completed, his father appeared to be in excellent health, but either the timing was extremely fortuitous or Sabine's Lenten prayers of 1864 really were answered, as his father died from a brain haemorrhage, at the comparatively young age of 67 years, a mere eleven days after signing the settlement!

Sabine's rapprochement with his father before he died meant that in later years he was able to reflect on a better relationship with his father than might otherwise have been the case. Indeed, sixteen years later, he felt able to write in his diary:

My father's face which was once hard and stern and showed little gentleness in its reserved severity, in old age became wonderfully soft and sweet and loveable. I remember when we — Grace, Mary and I were at Lew [to sign the deed of settlement.] just before my father's death. That afternoon Grace said to me "I could hardly resist kissing his hand as he put it in mine" (Wawman R. 2007, 255)

Not surprisingly, towards the end of his life when writing in *Further Reminiscences* (p.102) about his induction as Rector of Lew Trenchard in 1881, Sabine was able to comment:

In a very wonderful manner the way had been opened to me for undertaking the three tasks I had aspired to execute when I was a boy of seventeen, although at that time, and for many years after, the prospect was obscure, and I could see no means whereby these objects might be attained (Baring-Gould, S. 1924, p.102)

Epilogue

After the extraordinary emotional build-up over the preceding five months, the actual process of ordination would seem to have been something of an anti-climax. Sabine had been interviewed in London on 14 March 1864 by Bishop Robert Bickersteth of Ripon. He gave the following account of the meeting in his 1862 diary:

Saw the Bp. of Ripon at 8 o'clock in the morning. I had not a long interview as he was hungry. There was an excellent Passentide breakfast on the table, consisting of Ham, pies, a leg of cold mutton and preparations for cutlets and stakes. Bishops are advised in the Epistle to be given to hospitality. Ripon probably differs in his opinions from S. Paul on that score, as he probably does also on every article of the Catholic faith; he certainly never invited me to breakfast with him, though he had dragged me all across London without my breakfast to see him at that unearthly hour. Returned in the evening to Hurst.

In *Early Reminiscences* (Baring-Gould, S. 1923a, p. 336), Sabine gave a somewhat different account of this interview. In it he wrote that the bishop had already eaten when they met. Where in London the interview took place is not recorded. To be dragged... all across London, the venue must have been at some distance from 13 Ashley Place, Victoria Street, London, where Sabine's great uncle, General Edward Sabine lived and with whom it is known from his diary that Sabine had stayed the night before the interview.

Unfortunately the actual ordination at Ripon on Whit-Sunday, 15 May 1864 was not recorded by Sabine in his diary, nor was his arrival at Horbury the next day. No doubt he had too much on his mind. However aspects of the account of an ordination given by him in *The Church Revival*, (Baring-Gould, S. 1914, p. 203-204) which purported to be the ordination of an unnamed 'friend' at an unnamed location by an unnamed Bishop, are so close to the above contemporary account, as well as to the brief and less forthright account that Sabine gave in *Early Reminiscences*, (Baring-Gould, S. 1923a, p. 337- 340) that the author is convinced that what Sabine wrote in *The Church Revival* was an account of **his own** ordination experience not that of a friend. In *The Church Revival* he wrote:

The candidates were expected to lodge in the town and to walk out some considerable distance in the morning to the palace, where the examination began at 10 a.m. At noon a meagre refecton was served to us, ham-sandwiches and very small beer, in the hall, of which we partook standing. Meanwhile lunch was being carried into the dining room for his Lordship, chaplains and family.....At length we were suffered to return to the palace, when the comestibles had been carried from the dining room in which we were examined, but from which the smell of the meal had not been dissipated.

Nothing could have been more unsuitable for drawing out the knowledge of a candidate than the papers we were required to answer. They were keys to taps from which might flow a stream of unctuous twaddle. Our principal examiner was a man considered a burning and shining light of the Evangelical school, if that can be called a school where there is no scholarship.....We were ordained in the private chapel of the palace robed in black gowns, and the Bishop preached empty nothingnesses to us for an hour. After that we were invited to lunch with him.

It is worth commenting that in his published writing Sabine did occasionally pass off his own experiences as those of 'a friend' if he thought the account could prove embarrassing to a party to the event. Thus, when describing the manner in which he had helped one of his masons at Lew Trenchard to recover from what was probably a depressive illness by encouraging him to make the mouldings for the ceiling of his

newly created ballroom in 1896, he ingenuously attributed the building of a ballroom in that very same year to 'a friend.' (Baring-Gould, S. 1898, p.93-95)

Whatever the personal problems that may have troubled the months leading up to what he clearly regarded as a shambles of an ordination at Ripon, there can nevertheless be no doubt that Sabine's move to Horbury on the Whit-Monday did have very positive connotations. The unhappy thoughts, characteristic of diary entries in the preceding months, suddenly disappear never to recur.

The Anglo-Catholic world was small and Sabine would have known all about the Rev. John Sharp, son of Samuel Sharp and all he had achieved as Vicar of Horbury. He would have been aware of John Sharp's status as a leading High Church clergyman in the North of England and that he was a descendant of Archbishop John Sharp of York who had been adviser on religious matters to Queen Anne. Believing Queen Anne to be a staunch defender of the Catholic faith against the Reformation, Sabine had a high regard for that monarch as he did also for Charles I. This probably explains the presence of portraits of both monarchs at Lew House. Sabine would have regarded Sharp's pedigree as impressive.

Sabine would also have known of the Rev. John Sharp's successful struggles to remove the box pews from his church in Horbury and that, in 1858, he had built a magnificent Gothic 'House of Mercy' in which good works were being carried out by the Sisterhood he established there. (Lister, K, 2002, p.30-31) Furthermore, he was very aware of Sharp's intention to establish a mission in the outskirts of his parish and knew that he had a good chance of being asked by Sharp to take this on.

Sabine did eventually open a mission amongst the mills at Horbury Bridge and there he was at last able to put into practice the skills he had acquired in London with Fr. Lowder. It is, however, likely that, under the shrewd eye of John Sharp, many rough corners were rubbed off the uncompromising style of Anglo-Catholicism to which Sabine had become accustomed at Pimlico and Hurstpierpoint, while his attitude to auricular confession probably now became closer to customary practice in the Church of England. Nevertheless, Sabine never lost his deep personal reverence for ritual. Indeed, he privately practiced this into great old age and, while at Horbury, actually wrote ritualistic hymns such as 'Daily, Daily' and 'Hail the Sign'. But he knew that to be a successful priest who could attract and influence his parishioners and not attract hostility, he had to be pragmatic, even entertaining (his skills as a colourful actor and story teller had been well honed at Hurstpierpoint) and to feed them a diet they could digest – a recurrent theme in much of his theological writing.

A good example of this dietary theme in Sabine's theological writing is to be found in the 1899 pamphlet *The Present Crisis: a letter to the Bishop of Exeter*, where Sabine wrote with some heat about recent strictures issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury on the use of incense. Sabine wrote as:

one who has never been in the habit of using incense in public worship.
(Baring-Gould, S. 1899)

While agreeing that, on the grounds of prudence, the church might willingly accept advice from the Archbishop of Canterbury that it should abjure the use of incense, he vigorously objected to the Archbishop's opinion that the use of incense should be banned because of the provisions of a 1559 Act of Parliament. For him, this smacked of state control. In the pamphlet, Sabine suggested that the Archbishop might instead have followed his own very different approach:

It is possible, nay rather probable, that the mediaeval elaboration of ritual, such as may content a Latin, may be more than a cold Anglo-Saxon can understand and stomach. Long privation from food requires that the administration of indispensable nourishment should be in spoonfuls, and not poured down the throat in pailsful. I knew an old woman, who was given roast duck on her eighty-first birthday. Roast duck is excellent and savoury meat, but it killed the old woman, because she could not digest it. The English people have for a long time been fed upon wind, and we cannot expect them at once to appreciate and to assimilate the invigorating and edifying diet that the Church possesses in her stores.

As for the Ministry of the Keys, in 1914 this is what Sabine wrote in *The Church Revival*:

That which led many right-minded men to speak against Confession was the dread lest it should be made compulsory. A little inquiry would have shown them that this fear was groundless. Any one who has lived abroad in Roman Catholic countries will have learned how mischievous, how perilous to souls is the Roman insistence on private Confession before Communion, and the Anglican rule is so clearly defined that no doubt can exist as to what the mind of the Church is—that Confession is to be made in private only when the conscience is stirred with remorse, but that otherwise public Confession and Absolution suffice. Doubters might have learned from common sense that Confession can only be a voluntary act, and, in fact, it is only as such that it is ever urged. (Baring-Gould, S. 1914, p. 304)

Anyone reading this would find it difficult to reconcile this position with what Sabine had to say in the self-same book about the use of the Ministry of the Keys at St Saviour's, Leeds. They would also be surprised that such a statement could be made by someone who had, over a long period of time, been willingly associated with regimes that used private auricular confession before communion with children!

Nevertheless, these two quotations leave the author in no doubt where Sabine stood throughout most, if not all, of his ministry in the Church of England. He became a pragmatic and successful minister whose parishioners, certainly in Horbury and Lew, would seem to have been content with the 'roast duck free' diet he fed them.

At Lancing, in the same year that Sabine was ordained, Woodard had laid the foundation stone for his own towering Gothic Chapel – the biggest in the Northern hemisphere! This was not to be consecrated until long after his death in 1891. At Horbury Bridge in 1884, John Sharp presided over the consecration of the newly built church of St. John the Evangelist. This building can be seen as the fulfilment of the pioneering missionary work started there by Sabine twenty years previously.

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David Nicholls has kindly provided the following transcript of an interview with Charles Head in the Essex County Standard, January 5th 1924

On Thursday a representative of the Essex County Standard had an interview with Mr. Charles Head, artist of Creffield Road, Colchester, who was intimately associated with Mr. Baring Gould for very many years and whose artistic work is well-known to Colchester people.

Mr. Head informed our representative that his acquaintance with Mr. Baring Gould commenced well over fifty years ago. *"At the time,"* said Mr Head. *"I was living at West Mersea, having to look after some property there. Mr Baring Gould would often ask me to his house at East Mersea. He was very fond of old prints, illuminations and all ancient objects of art. He used to say that he liked having me to talk to as we had so much in common in our tastes."*

The acquaintance soon ripened into something more practical.

Mr Baring Gould (as already mentioned) was busy from 1871 onwards with his "Lives of the Saints."

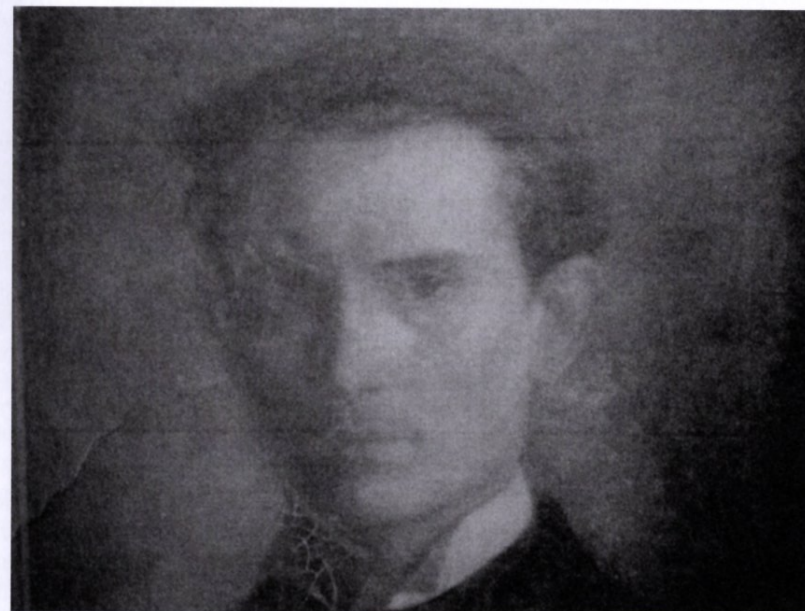
"He first published "Lives of the Early British Saints." said Mr Head. "He had travelled about Cornwall and elsewhere in this country and in Wales and in Ireland, and had picked up a lot of information. He was, in a way, an artist, and had made many small sketches. When he published the "Lives of the Early British Saints" he asked me to do the drawings. I made all the drawings for the wood engravings which illustrated this book. They were chiefly from his sketches. The publishers used to send me rough pencil sketches, so rough sometimes that they expressed surprise that I was able to make such finished drawings from them."

Asked whether he had not done a good many paintings for Mr Baring Gould. Mr Head said that he had done so much for him, in that way, during so many years that he could not tell the number. *"I painted all the panels in his fine drawing-room at Lew Trenchard" ---and Mr Head produced a photograph of the room showing about a dozen large canopied panels each occupied by a pictorial design. "I also did the church screen for him at the church at Lew Trenchard."*

Mr Head added that he painted a large number of portraits in oils, copies of family portraits.

Extract from the obituary to Charles Head also from the Essex County Standard dated December 11th 1926

The late Mr Head lived at Colchester for nearly 50 years. He had painted portraits of many notabilities, including the late General Buller, General Larpent and the Rev. S. Baring Gould. The last named portrait is in the Colchester Town Hall. He spent many months at the home of the last mentioned at Lew Trenchard, Devon, where he painted many beautiful panels..



Self portrait of Charles Head (original in colour)

FRANCIS BARING-GOULD by David Shacklock

As the continued recent spate of biographies of SB-G have borne witness, there is so much to say about our man and his multi-faceted life that there has been no need to scratch around for fringe material to keep his story going. However, it has meant that other members of his family have suffered somewhat by neglect.

One of those worthy of greater limelight is Sabine's younger cousin Francis, one of Uncle Charles' large family, born in 1839. The event took place at Teignmouth, it is thought at a cottage belonging to Sabine's mother Sophia. By this time, Charles had already been Rector of Lew Trenchard for seven years (of his eventual forty-nine), so why the birth happened some forty miles away 'off site' is a matter of speculation. At any rate, the baptism took place at Lew Church on Nov. 1st and his father signed himself Chas B. Gould – subsequent entries in the register showing 'Baring' in full: in the case of his son the repetition of the already stated surname not being required!

Francis – otherwise known as Frank – was educated at King Edward's Grammar School, Marlborough (1853-7), arriving at about the time a relative, Frederick Hookey Bond, took over as Headmaster, rescuing it from a proposed merger with its more illustrious College neighbour. It was in 1857 that Sabine turned down his father's proposal that he should join the staff, in an endeavour to wean him off the idea of ordination. Bond continued as Headmaster until 1877. Francis entered St John's College, Cambridge, as a 'pensioner' in 1858, taking his degree in 1862. There is then a three year gap before we find him accompanied by his younger brother Edward en route for South Africa in 1865. Also on the voyage was one Flora Davies of Shropshire, to whom he had proposed marriage before they reached Pietermaritzberg in Natal, where they tied the knot the following year. They settled on a small farm before moving on to what became known as Kimberley in Cape Colony, named after John Wodehouse, 1st Earl Kimberley, the Colonial Secretary of the time. Diamonds had been found on local farms in the years 1869-71, notably the Eureka Stone, discovered by a fifteen year old boy. In that same year, Francis was the first to peg a claim at what was then known as New Rush (50,000 diggers came to work 'the Big Hole'). After ten years in South Africa he was well established in business and had become a Justice of the Peace. But of their first three children, two died in infancy. The surviving offspring were Charles Sabine (1870-1946), Flora Caroline (1878-1959) and Winifred Mary (1883-1919).

Meanwhile in 1877, Francis had become Chairman of the Kimberley Central Mining Company, reputedly the best organised firm in the Kimberley mines, and for some years the most important – expanding and becoming known as the Central Company. The first of the mine compounds (later to become controversial) was built by the Central Company in 1885, following a persistent outbreak of smallpox – a facility for miners' accommodation and amenities. By this time there were other players on the

stage with ambitious plans, in particular JX Merriman, Barney Barnato, Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Beit, all fighting for control of 'the big four' (Central, Standard, French and De Beers). A phoney financial war broke out, with Rhodes and Barnato reaching a deal in 1887. Francis was still nominally chairman of Central and had been party to the negotiations, but fought a rearguard action on behalf of his shareholders. The last attempt to prevent amalgamation took place at the Supreme Court, but although the Chief Justice ruled in the shareholders' favour, Rhodes and De Beers found the capital to clinch the deal, and Central Company went into voluntary liquidation. Concerning Baring-Gould, Rhodes' verdict was that 'a weak man has made up his mind to go along with the tide', but this appears to have been bluff and bluster and not the true story. At any rate, part of the deal in 1888 was that Francis would be Chairman of the London Board of Kimberley Central and a Life Governor of De Beers. This seems to have been quashed, largely through Barnato's antipathy to him, but after the latter's suicide in 1897, supporters of Francis, led by Sir Frederick Philipson Stow, made moves to establish his position, and he actually continued as London Director of De Beers until 1923.

Francis had returned to England with his young family and, after a short time living in Winchester (where his uncle Alexander was Vicar of Christ Church), in 1895 he bought Merrow Grange near Guildford from Earl Percy, son of the Duke of Northumberland. This was a substantial property built in 1868 and including at least thirty acres. No doubt it seemed a good way of re-investing the proceeds of his 10% share in the Cracken Creek Gold Mines in Oregon which had just been wound up. He spent the rest of his life developing both the house and gardens, with the help of his head gardener George Nicholls, eventually opening the gardens for charity. Nicholls had been in the employment of the purveyors of Parhamite stone, which he used extensively at Merrow. Francis' son Charles was also a keen gardener, who developed his skills at Whiteways near Newlands Corner, as were his aunt and two spinster sisters who gardened at nearby Boxgrove House. Sadly Maria died in 1911 at the age of 64. She and her husband and his sister Sophia are buried at St John the Evangelist, Merrow. Fifty years after Francis died, a tree list was drawn up at Merrow, including twelve species of 'outstanding character and rarity'. Francis was also active in the community, being president of the Village Hall and Club which he set up in 1907 and financed until 1921. Co-incidentally, the village blacksmith was one Frank Gould. At his death, he left an estate valued at £500,000 (£15-20 million in today's money). After the Grange was sold to an independent girls' school (1928-1971) – with an interlude as a hospital in World War II – it was leased from the convent which owned it to the Surrey County Council to be part of St Peter's Comprehensive School. More recently, the site has been developed for housing and flats.

While the Kimberley connection has not redounded to the credit of some of the better known movers and shakers, it seems clear that Francis was at the centre of an important era of South African history, while maintaining his integrity and respect; a man of adventure without flamboyance, yet of creativity with flair.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 7th October 2018 in Tavistock

Martin opened the meeting and welcomed all members.

Apologies for absence: David Shacklock, Hilary and Hugh Gould.

The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters arising. Under item 7. Membership. Becky had looked into creating a Twitter account, but this proved too complex and it was thought unlikely to produce results.

Treasurer's report. Bill Oke explained his report and offered the detailed accounts should any member wish to see them. There will not be subscriptions for 2019.

Reports from Committee members. Shan read out reports from Roger, Helen and herself.

Martin's Chairman's report. He reminded the meeting that our Treasurer had stepped down and it had not been possible to find another. He thanked Bill for his work over many years, and invited the meeting to give a vote of thanks. This was proposed by Susan White and seconded by Becky Smith and carried unanimously.

Martin then informed the meeting that our President, Merriol Almond has stepped down from the role. She has been an unfailing friend to the Society for many years and her presence at many meetings and her significant contributions have been highly valued. Martin invited the meeting to give a vote of thanks. This was proposed by Helen English and seconded by Ron Wawman and carried unanimously.

Martin also gave his reports as Transactions Editor and Website Editor, and informed the meeting that Bob Mann will oversee the publication of future Transactions.

He also let members present know of the intention of the Committee to wind up SBGAS in its present form, as it was proving untenable to continue.

Commemorative postage stamp Roger suggested the possibility of asking the Royal Mail about producing a commemorative stamp to coincide with the death of Baring-Gould in 1924. Martin pointed out that Cecil Sharp also died that year, and perhaps there could be an edition of notable British Folk Song Collectors. The meeting approved the idea. Roger will make enquiries.

The future of SBGAS : Martin described the reasons why it is proposed to disband the Society. While there was fulsome discussion on this topic, no one in the room could suggest a viable alternative. The meeting asked for clarification of the process for ending SBGAS, and Shan read the relevant section from the Constitution. The meeting agreed that there should be a sub-committee, to oversee the process. This was proposed by Susan White and seconded by Roger, and carried unanimously.

This development will be set out in a letter or email to all current members and included in the next Newsletter.

Membership – 45 memberships (57 individuals)

Officers 2018-19 – The Committee signaled its willingness to continue until SBGAS dissolves. In the absence of a Treasurer, Martin and Shan, who are co-signatories for the SBGAS account, will enable expenses to be paid. Bill will confirm with the account holding Bank that they are authorized signatories. Martin, Shan and Roger were willing to organize the process for dissolving the Society. This was proposed by Helen English and seconded by Ray Scott and carried unanimously.

Any other business None.

Susan White wanted to thank the Committee of SBGAS, which was warmly applauded by those present.

Minutes written by Shan Graebe, Secretary. 10th October 2018

Accolades galore!

Recently, at Exeter University, Martin Graebe was presented with the W.G. Hoskins Prize from the Devonshire History Society for his book *'As I Walked Out. Sabine Baring-Gould and the Search for the Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall'*.

In addition, Martin Graebe has been awarded the Katharine Briggs Prize from the Folklore Society for his book *'As I Walked Out - Sabine Baring-Gould and the Search for the Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall'*. He and Shan had the pleasure of attending the reception at University College London last week. This is an important prize and has been awarded in the past to many eminent scholars, so we are particularly gratified that S B-G has been recognised in this way. The judges comments were, of course, very positive, and noted that Martin's book was both 'readable and rigorous' - exactly what he was aiming for!

Quite a season for SBGAS members. Our very warm congratulations also go to our member Sylvia Crocker who was awarded the *Farmers' Weekly Farming Champion for 2018*. This was for her project to encourage supermarkets to put fresh milk alongside 'food to go'. She attended a glittering ceremony in Grosvenor House Hotel in London last month.

Memories of SBGAS

David Shacklock

Of the many memories covering thirty years of the Society, it is hard to be selective. Here are ten, virtually 'headings', strung together: starting with Joanna Bogle's single column on SB-G in the Daily Telegraph, enough to set me off on the trail; followed up by a visit to the Calmady-Hamlyns at Bridestowe to seek good will in starting an appreciation society; then as a treat sleeping in the four-poster at Lew Trenchard Manor on the way back from a Cornish holiday; two lunches at his London club with our first member, Jim Sunnucks, and a bit later his five star funeral at East Mersea; the Horbury Hill hike to umpteen renderings of *Onward Christian Soldiers* and Bishop Nigel McCullough's inspiring sermon at the parish church; the many brilliant Bristow 'booksteps'; the SBGAS meteors – Patrick Hutton, Philip Weller and Troy White – and the galaxy of luminaries eg Merriol Almond, the Graebes, Becky Smith, the Listers and Bristows; the deluge of biographies in 2017, each with something 'extra' to offer; the Maxted magic in dealing with my collection – a considerable and ongoing task; and of course SB-G himself – the elusive squarson.

Ray & Shirley Scott.

Between David Shacklock's first Newsletter Editorial dated 1989 and my first contribution in Newsletter no 9 dated 1991/92, concerning the novel Cheap Jack Zita, Shirley and I joined SBGAS. During that time, it is impossible to put into words the brilliant locations of the Annual Gatherings, the vast number of people who have become friends and the sheer enjoyment of collecting the SB-G novels. Shirley and I have organised three Annual Gatherings, 2001- Cheap Jack Zita, 2004 - The Chorister, 2011 - Mehalah, and as anyone who has been involved with one, they are one of life's rich experiences you would not want to miss! It is disappointing to have reached this point, unfortunately a sign of the times. Our sincere thanks and best wishes to all our friends within SBGAS, along with our hope that we can keep in touch one way or another.
Kindest regards,

Robin Price

Since joining SBGAS in 1997 through a chance dinner conversation with Jim Sunnucks (of SB-G's Mersea Island) I have of necessity, and with regret, attended annual gatherings far too intermittently. Those gatherings I did attend were always an instructive and social delight, meeting and learning from fellow-enthusiasts, always so much better informed than I was. These meetings have led to a much greater appreciation and understanding of the protean character of SB-G, of his multiple contexts and activities, and to the enjoyment of a number of his quirky and highly melodramatic novels: his settings so wonderfully haunting and magical, because he evokes them so clearly.

It has been a privilege to belong to the SBGAS tribe. With all of us I deeply regret its passing, and shall continue to do so.

Ron Wawman

The presence of the Society was very important to me when I was involved in my researches. The contacts with others I physically met at meetings pointed me in the direction of information I wanted. Without the contact with Keith Lister at the outset of my time in SBGAS I would never have discovered the diary, without which my deep interest in Sabine would never have been stimulated. I have hugely enjoyed being able to share my knowledge with others and I am particularly aware that at the end of each annual meeting I have felt fired up to get out there and build on what I have heard. The society will be sadly missed.

Keith & Sylvia Lister

In 1992, we visited Patrick Hutton's bookshop in Launceston to inquire about SB-G and were quickly signed up as SBGAS members. The following year, we agreed to organise the first SBGAS visit to Horbury without knowing any members except Patrick and a few telephone calls to David Shacklock. The meet was successful and we really enjoyed the pleasure of facilitating that first meeting between SB-G's descendants Merriol Almond and Image Briggs and 16 members of the Taylor family at Horbury Brig Mission. While marching (well

o.k. - walking) up Quarry Hill Horbury to recorded music of Onward Christian Soldiers, Image Briggs commented: "*I'm disappointed Keith. This hill just doesn't compare with those in Devon*".

At the early 'meets' we met founders David Shacklock and Gillian, Jim Sunnucks, Sybil, Patrick and Felicity, Roger & Pam, and Ray and Shirley Scott. It was great to have access to specialised book sales at meets and to benefit from Roger's wonderful bibliography of SB-G'S works. We also enjoyed the company, help and encouragement of long-serving treasurer Sybil Tope and daughter Becky.

Merriol and Doug's kind invitation to visit Connecticut in 1995 was a wonderful opportunity to discover wider aspects of SB-G. We also met their children, and also descendants of Sabine's half-brother Rev Arthur Baring-Gould. On a visit to NY Central Library we were in awe at the complete computerisation of the system which enabled us to discover several original documents connected with SB-G.

Being appointed Newsletter Editor and producing seven Newsletters. Also becoming the North Country Representative and Research Co-ordinator which was both challenging, enjoyable and unpredictable!

Over the years we enjoyed listening to and participating in reading suitable topographical extracts from SB-G'S novels at meets around the country. For us, all the SBGAS meets were wonderful events following in SB-G's footsteps across Devon and Dartmoor and beyond always benefitting from Roger & Pam's detailed organisation including the organisation of great catering by the W.I. and a range of carefully selected speakers who revealed many aspects of Sabine's life. Another great source of enjoyment was listening to Martin & Shan regaling us with West Country songs.

Our particularly memorable meets include: The 1997 Red Spider Weekend and Wren Trust production at Victory Hall at Lew Down. Also Cambridge in 2001, Kinver in 2003, Hurstpierpoint in 2007, and Mersea in 2011.

Following one meet, we visited the DRO Archive at Exeter to enjoy the excitement of discovering a wealth of SB-G documents in 25 largely unopened boxes thereby enabling Ron Wawman and other locally based members to follow up and publish the results.

We visited Lew Trenchard whenever possible. On one occasion, scaling the high shelves of SB-G'S original library to discover new items and references to his friend Gatrill.

At the 2009 Devon Meet, I organised an extra curriculum activity by leading a 'select' (physically fit) group of SBGAS enthusiasts on a moonlit madcap scramble to the top of Brent Tor to explore the church of St Michael de Rupe by torch light. It has the distinction of being the highest working church in Southern England with an elevation of 1100 feet (335 m).

Until the last 4 years, Sylvia and I have attended almost all SBGAS weekends which we have thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed. Sadly, we were unable to visit Iceland, but enjoyed the write up in the Newsletter/ Transactions and we thank the committee and members for their unstinting interest in all matters SB-G.

Thank you all. We will miss you and SBGAS!
Our address is as shown in the SBGAS directory and should you find yourself in this area please call or give us a ring.

Roger Bristow

My time in the Society has been most enjoyable. Pam and I have made lots of new friends and visited many different SB-G localities associated with his novels, and sampled some wonderful cream teas on our journeys. As many of you are aware, I love unpicking the topography in his novels to reveal the real geographical setting behind the stories. Whilst a member of SBGAS, I have learnt so much about Sabine—especially from the 2 recently published biographies. My research won't lapse and I will enjoy passing on my latest findings. SBGAS has not died, just taken a different direction.

Red Spider Company
presents
The Wheel of Life
A Play by Ron Wawman

I am delighted to be able to tell you that my play *'The Wheel of Life'* which tells the story of Sabine's life following the death of his wife, Grace in 1916 until his own death in 1924 a few days short of his 90th birthday, will be staged at the Parish Hall, Bratton Clovelly on 26, 27, and 28 March 2020.

The play is essentially a study in bereavement and the desire to write it came some months after the death of my wife, Margaret, when I suddenly realised that I was in the same boat that Sabine was in after the death of Grace. Then, I thought to myself *'now I understand what he was going through, how he felt and how he struggled to cope.'* There was absolutely nothing in Sabine's published work or in biographies to guide me and I have relied almost entirely on the extensive correspondence by him with friends and family and to a lesser extent on the unpublished memoirs of his daughter Joan and particularly his granddaughter Joyce, together with brief entries by Sabine in his family bible and snippets of information passed down through his descendants. The play deals with Sabine's reaction to events involving family members in WWI as well as post-war tensions within the family. A little light relief is provided by two grandchildren.

I am giving you this very advanced notice as sadly this will be the last SBGAS Newsletter and, otherwise, I would not know how to let followers of Sabine know about the production nearer the date. I recommend that, nearer the date of the production, those interested keep themselves informed by visiting the Red Spider Company website, www.redspidercompany.co.uk or indeed by contacting me on ronwawman@googlemail.com

Hopefully somewhere along the line we Sabine aficionados will find ways of keeping in contact.
Until then, au revoir from Ron.

BARING-GOULD TITLES
CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

This list is constantly expanding, and older titles are gradually being left out, to save space. Almost certainly there are omissions. Bossiney Books and Llanerch are regularly producing books by or including SB-G. By far one of the biggest publishers of SB-G material is Kessinger Publishing (www.kessingerpub.com) - over 62 titles are currently available, although some of the 'titles' are in fact chapters from some of SB-G's books. If anyone knows of additional titles, please let the Editor know.

- A Book of Folklore.** Paperback. Praxis Books £5.00
- Through Flood and Flame.** Paperback. Praxis Books £8.50
- Winefred.** Paperback. Praxis Books (very few left) £6.50
- Red Spider.** Paperback. Praxis Books £5.00
- Mehalah.** Paperback. Praxis Books £8.50
- Guavas the Tinner.** Paperback. Praxis Books £7.50
- Bladys of the Stewponey.** Paperback. Praxis Books £8.50
- Court Royal** Paperback. Praxis Books £10.00
- John Herring.** Paperback. Praxis Books £12.50
- Margery of Quether** Paperback. Praxis Books £6.00
- Nebo the Nailer** Paperback. Praxis Books £6.00
- Myths of the Middle Ages.** Edited by John Matthews. Hardback. Blandford 1996. New illustrations. £16.99
- Lives of the British Saints.** Llanerch. 1990 onwards. Various volumes.
- The Book of Werewolves.** Senate 1995. Introduction by Nigel Suckling. Paperback
- Five Devon Seafarers.** Taken from SB-G's *Devonshire Characters*. Bossiney Books. 2000. £2.99.
- Six Devon Rogues.** Taken from *Devonshire Characters and Strange Events*. Bossiney Books. Paperback 2000. £2.99.
- Iceland its Scenes and Sagas.** Paperback. Signal Books. £12.99
- Queen of Love.** Gloucester: Nonsuch Publishing. £6.
- Red Spider.** Gloucester: Nonsuch Publishing. £6.
- The West Country as Literary Invention.** Simon Trezise. University of Exeter Press. 2000. £13.99
- Never Completely Submerged. The Diary of Sabine Baring-Gould.** Transcribed by Ron Wawman. Grosvenor House Publishing. 2009. £9.99 (see website)
- Sabine Baring-Gould The Life and Work of a Complete Victorian** by J.E. Thomas, Fonthill Media 2015. £30.
- Sabine Baring-Gould: The Man Who Told a Thousand Stories** by R. Tope, 2017. £20 to SBGAS members.
- As I walked out. Sabine Baring-Gould and the Search for Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall** by Martin Graebe, 2017. Oxford: Signal Books. £16.99
- Furze Bloom.** 2018. Reprinted by Becky Smith. £7
- An 89-page Bibliography is available from the Hon. Editor.*