

Hillman & Bond Copy Letter Book 1920-1921

Summarised by Roger Clarke, LRM Research Team, 2011.

1. Letter from the Solicitor dated 12 August 1920 to Mr T Bradford of Ware Lane, Lyme Regis. He asks whether, when Underhill Common is not let for shooting, any game is trapped or shot for Miss Philpot or sold on her behalf. There is no record in the index of a reply from him. However, this is linked to a letter from Miss Caroline Philpot dated 9 August 1920, and a long letter from the Solicitor to her dated 13 August 1920. The latter is impossible to read in parts, but obviously involves “shooting rights” on the land, and indicates that Miss Philpot may be represented if a summons is served.
2. Letter dated 15 August 1920 from the Solicitor to Mr J S Grattan, Standard Inn, Lyme Regis, on behalf of his brother Mr E Grattan . It warns the former that if the “threatening and insulting conduct” towards his brother continues he will have no alternative but to take proceedings.
3. Letter dated 16 August 1920 to Mr H G Pocock, Assistant Secretary, Cottage Hospital, Lyme Regis, notifying the recent appointment of Reverend E Bramwell and Mr H J Ramsbotham as Trustees of the Hospital – in place of Reverend A W Parke and Mr Bickley.
4. Correspondence to Mr C Hallett, No38, Church Street, Lyme Regis, commencing with a letter dated 17 August 1920. This concerns his purchase (together with a Mr George, Lloyds Bank, Lyme Regis) of land at East Cliff and a storeroom and gardens at the Cobb. These belonged to the estate of a Mr Wallis. Letters dated 31 August, 22 and 29 September, and 6 October 1920, request the purchase money for the properties, and cover completion, deeds, signing of documents, etc.. Letters to Mr George dated 24 September and 9 October 1920, also concern the balance of purchase money and final documentation.
5. A letter dated 20 August 1920 to Mrs Larcombe, Venlake Cottages, Uplyme, informed her that they are contacting Mr G M Saunders, Solicitor of Crewkerne, on her behalf. The issue is described in a letter to Mr Saunders dated 20 August 1920. Mrs Larcombe was assaulted by a neighbour, Mrs Ellen Matthews, and sustained a badly cut lip that needed treatment from a doctor. The matter will go to Court, and the defendant is described as a bully (she has 5 children and is married to a carter). A further letter to Mrs Larcombe on 23 August 1920 includes a copy of the evidence to be presented at Court. A letter to Mr Saunders also dated 23 August discusses whether a witness (considered to be unreliable) and the doctor should attend Court. Finally a letter to Mr Saunders dated 26 August 1920 includes payment of his bill (presumably for his representation at Court) and states that “the result was satisfactory” – but does not say what the result is?
6. Letter to Miss Dewe of No 33, Silver Street, Lyme Regis, dated 3 September 1920 regarding the receipt of a cheque for £250 as deposit on a property called “Landford” she is selling to Miss Stanger-Leathes of Stone House, Charmouth. Subsequent letters dated 19 October, 1 November, 23 November 1920, 13 and 15

January 1921, concern the progress of the sale – insurance, deeds, balance of purchase price, etc.. Letters to Miss Stanger-Leathes dated 29 September and 22 October 1920 are difficult to read, but concern the same matter.

7. A letter to Mr F Paul, Silver Street, Lyme Regis, informing him that Mrs Knight is entitled to claim interest from him. The amount payable is interest at 5% for 133 days totalling £7.5.9d, less £2.3.9d tax – equals £5.2.0d. However, the Solicitor is making a further effort to obtain a reduced amount.
8. The Solicitor wrote to Mr H G Pocock of No30, Broad Street, Lyme Regis, on 11 September 1920 with a demand for an extra insurance premium of 9/6d in respect of the Cottage Hospital.
9. A letter from the Solicitor dated 15 September 1920 to Messrs Harris and Co, Lyme Regis, enclosing a note of changes in the matter of the sale by Mr T G Harris (senior) of his garage and premises in Silver Street, Lyme Regis. The deeds have been lodged at the Bank.
10. On behalf of their client Mrs Olive Drummond, the Solicitor wrote to Mr W H Spiller, Slopes Farm, Lyme Regis on 20 September 1920, serving notice to quit tenancy of two fields near Fairfield because of non-payment of rent. A letter dated 23 September 1920 to the client informed her that notice to quit had been served. Further letters dated 19 October 1920 and 27 April 1921 to Mr Spiller also requested payment of half year's rent and a fire insurance premium – these were due to Mrs Drummond and Miss Munro.
11. Correspondence concerning rates due to be paid on the home of Countess Bathyany ((Sylvan View, Lyme Regis). The Assistant Overseer had called upon Mr Harold Ramsbotham, Solicitor, in his capacity as Clerk to the Justices, asking for a summons to be taken out. This is described in a letter dated 25 September 1920 to Messrs Jenkinson, Meyler and Co (presumably Solicitors).
In contrast to the tone of other letters used when following up a debt, the rather grovelling tone of this letter is noticeable. For example – “the Countess was not likely to refuse payment unless there was some misunderstanding”; and “could you give the matter your urgent attention as naturally I do not wish to put the Countess to the trouble of a summons”.
A letter to the Countess dated 6 October 1920 is unreadable (seems to be asking for payment), and is followed by another letter dated 9 October 1920 concerns a cheque, and a Mr Wiscombe is mentioned. A letter to Mr Wiscombe, Broad Street, Lyme Regis dated 8 October 1920 mentions an account against the Count and Countess.
A letter to the Count dated 10 October 1920 includes the statement “the return of my receipt is an unwarrantable impertinence”. A further letter on 16 October 1920 to Meyler and Co refers to a “stopped cheque”, asking if the client could “remove the stop”.
12. A letter from the Solicitor to Sun Insurance dated 28 September 1920 asks for the issue of a fire policy in the name of Mr Herbert Love, Butcher, Broad Street, Lyme Regis. This is to cover: a rick of hay - £100; a rick of oats - £130; and a rick of barley - £70. These are all situated at Southdown Farm, Uplyme, within 20

yards of the stable and cowstall. Also a rick of hay situated on a field on the Westhill Estate, Lyme Regis - £100. None of the ricks are within 100 yards of any railway, road, or path. Letter to Herbert Love on 6 October 1920 enclosing the fire policy and asking for a premium of £1.10p.

13. On behalf of their client Miss Reeves (owner of Glenmire, Lyme Regis) the Solicitor wrote a letter dated 1 October 1920 to Mr W N Farnham, Woodville, Lyme Regis. It draws his attention to a defective downpipe on his house adjoining her property, which is causing water to get into her house and damage the wall.
14. A letter dated 11 October 1920 to Mr F A Bishop of No 08 Windsor Terrace, Lyme Regis, enclosing the Letters of Administration and Death Certificate relating to his late wife's estate. Also registering with the Bank, and enclosing details of charges and disbursements in the matter.
15. A letter dated 14 October 1920 to Mrs Connelly, Broad Street, Lyme Regis (no number given). The Solicitor had collected 8/11d from someone named 'Hodder', and enclosed 7/6d having deducted 1/5d charges. The Solicitor wrote again on 1st March 1921 having collected £2.8.6d from Mrs Arbuckle, enclosing a cheque for £2.5.0d, having deducted commission.
16. The Solicitor sent a letter dated 22 October 1920 acting on behalf of Mr W Emmett, Drill Hall, Lyme Regis. Mr Wentworth Croke Esq, Studley, Lyme Regis, owes an amount of £30.2.6d, and proceedings are threatened. The debt relates to non-payment for hire of the Drill Hall for a series of two-night events (unspecified – 6 guineas per event). In spite of Mr Emmett reducing the bill by 4 guineas, letters dated 25 October, 27 October, 9 November, still pursued the debt and threatened proceedings. A large bundle of tickets are waiting for Mr Croke at the client's house – there is a threat of a further charge for storage. There is also some dispute about payment of advertising costs. On 15 November 1920 a letter states that Mr Croke sent a cheque for £23, but it was unsigned. A letter dated 23 November 1920 indicates that the debt has finally been settled – Mr Croke's address is now shown as 'Constitutional Club, Northumberland Avenue, London'.
17. A letter dated 25 October 1920 on behalf of Reverend C L Saunders, Woodmead Road, Lyme Regis, was sent to Mr J Billen, Rose Nursery, Lyme Regis. Reverend Saunders' dog had destroyed some of Mr Billen's fowls, and the letter asked for details of the value of the birds so that he could pay compensation. A further letter dated 28 October 1920 enclosing £7.10 and expressing regret followed this. Letters to Reverend Saunders dated 27 and 30 October 1920 confirmed final settlement and closure.
18. Mr Joseph Curtis directed the Solicitor to write a letter dated 27 October 1920 to Mr G Curtis, Sherbourne Lane, Lyme Regis, drawing the latter's attention to the fact that he had placed boats on the land let to him by the Church Preservation Authority. If he refuses to pay the "modest" rent of 1 shilling per boat for the use of the land, he should remove his boats to the beach.

19. A Solicitor's letter dated 22 November 1920 sent to Miss N Grattan, No 28, Sherbourne Lane, Lyme Regis. This was in response to a statement made by her to the effect that William Geer and Mrs Govier's daughter Fanny had been "misconducting" themselves at Horn Bridge. The Solicitor points out that this is a very serious allegation, and as it is denied by the clients an apology is requested.
20. On 30 November 1920 the Solicitor sent a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty Prize Fund, Cornwall House, London. This was on behalf of Mr David Cozens, No 49, Silver Street, Lyme Regis, who had received a cheque for £12 from the fund. The client contends that as a Stoker Petty Officer, he is entitled to more than this amount, and the Solicitor is asking that they look into the matter. On 13 December 1920 the Solicitor wrote to Mr Cozens enclosing a letter from the Admiralty (no details of content given), and asking for payment of 3/6d charges.
21. A letter dated 11 December 1920 indicates that Mr Joseph Hargreaves, Drill Hall, Lyme Regis, dismissed Miss Trixie Estello. The Solicitor, acting for Miss Estello, is asking for payment of £4.10d wages due to her, otherwise steps will be taken to recover this amount.
22. A letter dated 17 December 1920 to Mr E Eglon, Church Street, Lyme Regis, informing him that the Trustees of the Burr ridge Educational Foundation had decided to renew a grant. This was in respect of his daughter, who is being educated at Bridport Secondary School – a cheque for £1-10-8 was enclosed. A letter also dated 17 December 1920 to Mr W Abbott, Coombe Street, Lyme Regis, reports the award of a similar amount to his daughter, who attends the same school.
23. Mr J Schaulch Esq, The Court, Charmouth, Hon Secretary of Lyme Regis Golf Club, was sent a letter dated 4 January 1921, pointing out that the letter should have been addressed to Mr Ramsbotham as "Clerk to the Justices", not "Clerk to the Corporation". Mr Schaulch required a form to complete as a 'return' for the Club. The Solicitor gave him an address in London where the form could be obtained from, which could then be duly completed and forwarded to the Solicitor together with a fee of 5 shillings. There is a further letter to Mr Schaulch dated 10 January 1921, acknowledging receipt of the form and the letter.
24. A letter dated 8 January 1921 to Father van Heede, Roman Catholic Presbytery, Lyme Regis, enclosing a cheque for £5 bequeathed in the will of Mrs Mary Reed of Ware.
25. A letter dated 17 January 1921 to Mrs Brown, Warren Cottage, Harcombe, Uplyme, accepting her offer to pay 30 shillings per month towards a debt due on Mrs Bosence's account.
26. A letter dated 19 January 1921 to the Chief Constable of Dorset, under the terms of the "Probation of Offenders" Act. This informed him that at a meeting of the Borough Justices, Mr A C Drake (schoolmaster) of No 11, Church Street, Lyme Regis was re-appointed Probation Officer for the Borough for the ensuing year.

27. A series of letters commencing on 24 January 1921 on behalf of Mrs and Miss Slater, Royal Lion Hotel, Broad Street, Lyme Regis. These concern Mr A Clarke, a tenant of theirs at No 57, Broad Street, Lyme Regis. The Slaters wish to take possession of this property, as he was given notice to leave “a long time ago”. They are prepared to waive any liabilities if he vacates by Lady Day. A further letter dated 2 February 1921 asks him if he would vacate the upper floors of the house, in return for a reduction in the “already low rent”.

Letters to Mrs and Miss Slater on 10 and 11 February 1921 suggest that the concessions offered have been unsuccessful, as the tenant (in particular Mrs Clarke) are not willing to vacate. The Solicitor suggests that the two parties should get together and discuss the situation. It was obviously still not resolved, as a letter to Miss Slater dated 14 April 1921 indicates that the Solicitor has served notice on Mr Clarke to the effect that the rent is to be increased by 17%.

28. Mr Frank Newbey of No 29 Coombe Street, Lyme Regis, instructed the Solicitor to write a letter (dated 4 February 1921) to Mr J P Copp, Old Mill, Uplyme. Mr Capp’s cattle had strayed into Mr Newbey’s allotment causing damage, in particular the “cabbages were quite spoilt”. The solicitor is asking for compensation, and has suggested 15/=, without prejudice, in settlement.

29. The Solicitor has been instructed by Mr W H Norman (no address) who is employed as a night watchman at the Lyme Regis Cement Works. A letter dated 17 February 1921 was sent to the employer, Messrs Allan Richards and Co Ltd, 19, St James Street, London, SW1, demanding unpaid wages from 31 December 1920. The weekly wage was £3.13.3d, and the amount due is £25.12.9d plus 4 shillings for grease purchased by Mr Norman. Unless a cheque is received, proceedings will be taken.

However, there was no response to further attempts at contact. On 21 February 1921 the Solicitor wrote to Messrs Bridgeman & Co, Solicitors, College Hill, Cannon Street, London, with whom they have much contact on other cases. Mr Norman is a disabled soldier, and is remaining at work as he has not been given notice. Apparently there are rumours that the business has failed. Because of this disgraceful treatment of Mr Norman, he asks Bridgeman & Co if they would “kindly send someone round” to St James Street to see if wages can be extracted from them.

A further letter to Bridgeman & Co on 24 February 1921 indicates that the client had received a letter promising a cheque – this was from the “Lyme Regis Cement Syndicate” – are there two companies involved? A letter dated 1 March 1921 to Bridgeman & Co states that a cheque has not yet been received, and the client is suffering whilst the two concerns quarrel over who should pay him.

On 9 March 1921 a letter to Bridgeman & Co informs them that a cheque had now been received, but had been marked “referred to drawer”, and action to take proceedings is again mentioned. Finally, a letter dated 11 March 1921 confirms that Bridgeman & Co had managed to obtain payment of the wages in cash. Obviously both firms of Solicitors have tried to keep their charges as low as possible.

30. The Solicitor wrote to Doctor Spurr, Colway Cottage, Lyme Regis, on 12 March 1921, on behalf of Mr Cyprian Taylor. He has received a cheque from Mr Taylor in order to pay the Doctor’s bill, but is unsure whether it is £3.5.0. or £3.10.0. A

later letter to Mr Taylor, No 11, Broad Street, Lyme Regis, promises that if it is the lesser amount he will send the balance.

31. On 17 March 1921, Hillman and Bond wrote to Clarke and Lukin, Solicitors, Chard, Somerset. This approach was prompted by a contact from a firm of Solicitors in Washington, USA, who are acting for a Walter Reginald Powell. The latter is the son of the late Reginald Powell who died in 1879, and was the owner of the "Three Cups Hotel", Broad Street, Lyme Regis. The son sold the hotel in 1897 to Messrs J.C. & R.H. Palmer of Bridport, the present owners. Clarke and Lukin acted for the brother and administrator, Robert Powell, who lived at Elmore Farm, Thorncombe. The latter has been dead some time, and had a son called Walter, who was killed in the First World War. Efforts have been made on behalf of the latter's representative to find the Walter Reginald Powell who is at present in the USA. Can Clarke and Lukin provide any information that may be useful? A further letter dated 18 April 1921 repeats the request – sadly we have no further information.

32. Solicitor's letter dated 16 April 1921 to Mr F.G. Isbell, Broad Street, Lyme Regis. Enclosed is a cheque for £2.12.6d, being the balance of Mrs Birkett's account less 5 shillings charges due to the Solicitor for collecting the money. Mrs Birkett formerly lived at Sandford Cottage, Charmouth (she is now at Bexhill-on-Sea) and there are a series of letters between 15 January – 15 April 1921 pursuing this debt.