

Hillman & Bond Copy Letter Book, August 1944 to May 1945

Summarised by Research Team Member Derek Perrey, 2010

This period covers the concluding phase of the second World War in Europe and sees Harold John Ramsbotham reducing his public commitments to devote more time to the business. He has already resigned from the position of Town Clerk and later he resigns as Magistrate's Clerk due to Mr. Long's .."continued, and, I fear, permanent ill health.." (p701 26-2-1945) (*Mr. Long is thought to be HJR's clerk.*) The character of the business has now moved into the relatively relaxed cash generating conveyancing and probate work usually dealt with by a clerk with a little supervision by a solicitor. It seems that with the end of the War, and victory in sight there is considerable movement in the property market. There are no direct comparisons to be made but the impression is that house prices have increased over pre-war values.

Miscellaneous matters

Although the emphasis of the business is very definitely on conveyancing and probate, there are a number of the `solicitors' letters type of cases. One such is where there is a marital dispute between the Elliott spouses and H&B write to Chapple Measures & Rowe of Axminster to say that their client (the husband) can have the property he claims except the picture which is not his and he can send a representative for them but may not attend in person as he has been heard to threaten `he would knife her`. (p37 4-9-1944).

H&B write to Mrs Fundamore on behalf of their client Mrs. J.E. Brown complaining of slanderous statements made that she received men in her rooms at night. (p77 15-9-1944.) Letter to Miss Barr advising her that a fire had been reported at the Old Post Office. (p87 19-9-1944).

If you wanted `comfortable accommodation` in Lyme Regis HJR was prepared to suggest either the Royal Lion or the Three Cups Hotel. (p288 4-11-1944.)

Letters to Mrs Froom (*the family is variably addressed as From or Froom*) and to the Milk Marketing Board concerning producer's retailers licences serve as a reminder of controls on farmers during the era. (p126 27-9-1944). Later, Mrs. Froom received £9-19-11 from the Board arising out of her husband's death. (p323 13-11-1944.) Mr. H.J. Hallett also received a cheque from the Board. (p284 3-11-1944.)

H&B write to Mr. A.V. Holmes to require payment of arrears of maintenance for his child as an evacuee who returned to London in September 1944. (p247 26-10-1944). *The figures are to be found in the section on costs and prices.*

HJR writes to Cecil Forward & Williams re Carling v. Carling to say that as the parties cannot agree the case is being set down for the 29th. Inst. (p334 16-11-1944.) HJR reports that he has served the petition on the Respondent and the Co-respondent. (p457 20-12-1944.)

Mrs. Bramwhite is written to on behalf of her husband pleading for her to return. (p446 18-12-1944.) *Whether or not the request is genuine such a letter will be kept on file for the purpose of establishing the commencement of the three year period as a basis for divorce.* The response was prompt, as Mrs Bramwhite called on HJR the next day to say she would not return to him and alleged violence. (p450 19-12-1944.)

The brother and sister, Mr. D.W. Pinkney and Mrs. Rootham, were at odds with one another and Mrs. Rootham wrote postcards to Mr. Pinkney, which HJR described as scurrilous and libellous. (*libellous because they were postcards and therefore "published" to one or more third parties*). Mrs. Rootham had said that they were written on the advice of HJR, which he not only denied, but also denied that she was even a client currently. To Mr Pinkney he writes that "if the statements she has made to me are correct, she has suffered a great wrong, but statement and proof are not the same thing." In the letter to her he advises her to stop unless she can take legal proceedings (p465 21-12-1944). Later, with reference to 2 further postcards sent on 7th January, writes to tell her to stop and emphatically states that he is not her solicitor. (p526 10-1-1945.) He also writes to Mr. Pinkney to say that her cards are most improper, but that he is partly to blame for refusing to answer her questions or discuss matters. He further comments that she has suffered from unsuitable food and accommodation, because of lack of money. (p529 11-1-1945.)

This year the Burrridge Charity for the Poor is entitling nominees to obtain goods to the value of 10/- from Mr. H.C. Parham of 64 Broad Street Lyme Regis. 6 persons have been nominated leaving a further three yet to be named. The 6 are Mrs. S. Curtis, Mrs. W. Curtis, Mr. Manley,

Mrs. Goldsworthy, Miss Hockey and Mrs. Bailey. (p483 19-12-1944.) The further three were Miss Annie Gollop, Mr. T. Searle and Mrs. Rowe. (p562 15-1-1945.)
Miss M.J. Harrison died 21-11-1944. (p623 5-2-1945.)
Miss F. Roche died 13-3-1944. (p775 15-3-1945.)
HJR tells Mr. Dale "I am not very fit at the present and much hampered by the breakdown in health of my chief clerk.." (p752 9-3-1945.)
Mrs. Walsh has instructed Hillman & Bond to take proceedings against Mrs. Scudamore if the slanderous statements she has made are repeated. The offending statements are that Mrs. Walsh has been associating with Lt. Dowie, the husband of the manageress of Messrs. Trevett hairdressers of Bell Cliff Lyme Regis. (p799 22-3-1945.)
On behalf of Mrs. Potter H&B write to Mrs. Bruin to tell her that having been given notice to quit the two furnished rooms she occupied, she had no right to refuse to go as she was outside the Rent Restriction Act. (p816 26-3-1945.) (*The Rent Restriction Acts did not apply to furnished accommodation.*)
HJR informs Miss Wiscombe that Mr. Burrage of Bridport has asked that HJR prepares a partnership Agreement between Miss Wiscombe and her sister. (p823 27-3-1945.) H&B register the business name of the Misses L.M. And M. Wiscombe as The West Dorset Shoe Shop. (p862 7-4-1945.)

Magistrates' Clerk

Replying to a letter from a Mr. A.S. Worford concerning his complaint as to being over charged for gin sold by Three Cups Hotel Lyme Regis. (p145 3-10-1944).
HJR advises Mr. G.H. Worth J.P. that Patrick Henry O'Dwyer who was ordered to be placed in an approved school, was sent to a remand home on 23-8-1944 pending finding a suitable school. The school has to be found within 28 days and on the eve of the period's expiry HJR rang the police to say the boy needed to be brought to Court but Mr. Bird and the Superintendent said it was unnecessary. (p366 25-11-1944.)
Mrs. Hosack summoned her husband but failed to turn up for the hearing and the case was therefore dismissed. (p402 6-12-1944).
HJR sends to Mr. L.H.G. Messer the Order for the adoption of Douglas A.W. Potter made the previous week. (p516 8-1-1945.)
Miss Hitchcock is sent a letter by HJR to pay a fine of £1 imposed by the Magistrates for failing to send her children to school. (p524 10-1-1945.) Later she was reminded to pay the outstanding 10/-. (24-2-1945.)
HJR writes to Customs & Excise to report on the annual licensing meeting at which licences for 11 Ale Houses, 4 Beer Houses and 1 off-licence were granted. (p656 14-2-1945.)
HJR sends his resignation as Justices' Clerk to the Mayor. The date to take effect being 31-3-1945. He attributes the reason as being due to Mr. Long's .."continued and, I fear, permanent ill health.." (*Mr. Long is presumably HJR's clerk.*) (p701 26-2-1945). The advertisement for a replacement was sent to Bridport News, Pulmans Weekly News and Justice of the Peace. The appointee must provide an office, books and stationery. The remuneration being £100. (p718) Answering an enquiry by a potential applicant, Mr. G.A. Lipscombe HJR informs him that Petty Sessions take place on a need basis usually 2 or 3 weekly. Last year there were 40 cases give or take. (p765 14-3-1945.) There were four applicants for the post and the appointee was Mr. Thomas John Williams of Axminster. (p800 22-3-1945). Regrettably, Mr Williams was unable to take up the post because of ill-health. (p877 11-4-1945.) Mr Austen Whetham was appointed to the position on a temporary basis pending revision of the Justices' Clerks in the County as a whole. (p899 13-4-1945.) (*He was already Clerk to the Bridport Magistrates.*)
Dr. R. Bramley was fined £30 for misusing petrol coupons. (p910 19-4-1945.)

Conveyancing matters

Letter to Mr. W.D. Saunders at Uplyme Post Office to tell him that his brother wants to give a 14 year lease of a room and loft used in connection with the Post Office. (p96 20-9-1944).
Letter sending lease of shop at 29 Broad Street to Mr L.D. Haddon. Another letter sending counterpart of the lease to Mr. Paul. (p97 20-9-1944).

H&B write to their London Agent to say that completion of Umbrella Cottage Lyme Regis is due at their offices on the 31-10-1944. (p255 27-10-1944.) On 1-11-1944 Mrs. Sweet-Escott is told that the balance of £2265-1-8 for the purchase has been received. (p272). Insurers are confused by their files and wish to know whether Mr. Warmington's house at Hill Rise Rocombe was ever known as Hill Side. (p257 28-10-1944.) Answer "not as far as I know." (p296 6-11-1944.)

HJR writes to Mr. Jeffrey of 30 Church Street Lyme Regis to tell him that Mr. & Mrs. Moulton have decided to sell Nos. 30 & 31 Church Street. Number 31 may not be occupied until made fit for occupation. The asking price is £250. (p270 1-11-1944.) Later HJR announced that there was no interest shown in the properties. (p327 14-11-1944.)

HJR advises Mr. Burge that his asking price for Keble Cottage is too high and that £1500 is right, so go to auction with that as a reserve. (p290 4-11-1944.) Mr. Burge suggests going to auction immediately, but HJR says that an auction before Xmas would be a failure. He is trying to sell privately for £2000. (p356 22-11-1944.) In answer to queries raised on Keble Cottage Lyme Regis there is gas laid on to the house but only ever used for lighting- since replaced by electricity. No electricity for heating or cooking. *This must mean that cooking was by solid fuel.* (p259 28-10-1944.) HJR responds to the Dorchester County Council to tell them that he is one of the trustees concerned with Keble Cottage and that they will be willing sellers and easily come to agreement with the District Valuer. (p588 26-1-19445.) Mr. Burge was told by HJR that the County Council were definitely purchasing Keble Cottage for road widening. (p708 27-2-1945.) Writing to the District Valuer re Keble Cottage H&B complain that they are instructed to accept £1,500 but .."protest of the gross unfairness of taking away your land at a price substantially below the market price." (p849 3-4-1945.)

Mrs. Joliffe is asked to provide the balance of the purchase price for the cottage at Charmouth, which is £607-10-0. (p143 2-10-1944.)

The purchase of Bridge House Bridport from Mrs. Hunt is complete. (p336 17-11-1944.) The purchaser was Mrs. Ada Margaret Hart (widow). (p338 17-11-1944.)

Mrs. Ellis has got herself a problem, because she has agreed to sell a flat at Bell Cliff with vacant possession but Mr. Paul in occupation maintains that he has a lease for 1 year, not 6 months as Mrs. Ellis believes. (p350 20-11-1944.)

Mr. Buckland was informed by HJR of properties that were shortly to come on the market viz: St. Joseph, Pound Road; Rose Cottage, Silver Street and Kent Cottage, Silver Street. (p385 30-11-1944.)

Mr. T.B. Mitchell has been asked to consent to a proposed assignment from Mr. and Mrs. Broom to Miss McKenna and Mr. West. The subject property being Argyle House and Cafe Marine Parade Lyme Regis. (p647 112-2-1945.)

H&B were instructed to act for Mr. G.A. Warren the purchaser from Bidwell of "Crofters" Yawl Uplyme. (p774 15-3-1945.)

HJR advises Miss Wadham that she and her sister, Mrs. Hallett can complete the purchase of "Velotte" (GD - Verette?) at any time. (p798 21-3-1945.)

Mr. Dale is informed by HJR that Mrs. Wild has decided to put her properties up for auction, including 20 Millgreen and the garage, which are held on one tenancy. (p890 13-4-1945)

H&B tell the House Agent Van H Allen & Co that the sale of "Westfield, Ware Lane Lyme Regis has been completed. (p977 7-4-1945).

A cautionary note is sounded in H&B's letter to the Halifax Building Society: "in view of the expected VE day there may be a day or two's delay in getting the matter completed." (p979 7-5-1945.)

Probate matters

HJR tells Mr. Turner of the Prudential at 38 Broad Street of the need to prove the will of the late Mrs. A. Gollop. (p67 13-8-1944.) Miss Gollop of 8 Church Street Lyme Regis is informed that the winding up of her Mother's estate is complete. (p292 6-11-1944.) The Estate Duty Office is informed by H&B that Annie Gollop is an invalid, unable to look after herself. (p315 11-11-1944.)

In a letter to Mr. Roche HJR explains that succession duty is assessed on the annuity value of the property for his life and therefore varies with the age of the life tenant. (p106 22-9-1944.) Mrs Kate Froom of Middle Mill Farm Lyme Regis, Executrix of Mr. F. W. Froom who died 16-9-1944. The son is Mr. Percy Froom. (p89 19-9-1944).

In reply to questions raised by Chapple Measures & Rowe Axminster re 39 Broad Street Lyme

Regis H&B advised that Mr. F.E. Radford died 30-9-1933. (p261 30-10-1944).
H&B "...We regret to inform you that Mr. J.H. Roche died this morning." (p316 11-11-1944.)

Costs and prices

A quarter's rent for Tollgate Charmouth charged to Mr. Hansforth was £4-11-0. The landlord being Lt. Col J.F.S. Bullen. (p33 2-9-1944). As Magistrates Clerk HJR sends copies of evidence notes by express letter post at a cost of 8^{1/2}d. (p70 14-9-1944). A quarter's rent for Courtheath cost Miss Thwaites of Newbury Berks £11-5-0; the landlord being Miss Barratt of Whitchurch Canonicoram. p112 25-9-1944.) Also due to Miss Barratt is a quarter's rent for Wayside and field near Whitegates, £4-10-0. (p135 29-9-1944.)

Letters to various clients from HJR tell them that for weekly rent collections of smaller amounts he charges 1/- in the £1. But Miss Reeves 8/- for £13-6-6. (p141 2-10-1944). Letter to Mr. Miller acknowledging a quarter's rent of £4-10-0 in respect of Wayside and a field both at Morecombelake. (p135 29-9-1944). HJR writes to Mrs. Joliffe that he is about to complete the purchase of a cottage at Charmouth and requires the balance of the purchase money amounting to £607-10-0. (p143 2-10-1944.)

Mona House Uplyme is in process of sale and after searches a draft for £2956-13-0 will be sent (The deposit of 10% has presumably been paid and therefore the purchase price was probably £3250 +or- £50, depending on the apportionments.) (p150 4-10-1944.)

Mrs. F Turner of Belvoir Silver Street Lyme Regis has agreed to sell to Mrs Geary at £850. (p445 18-12-1944.)

Brook Cottage Lyme Regis was sold on the 8th January and the London Agents for H&B sent a banker's draft for £1,801. (p523 9-1-1945.)

The rent of Manor Farm Charmouth was £150 half yearly; that of Yondover £12-10-0 and the Lears £13-10-0, all due from Mr. R. Loosemore. (p197 14-10-1944.) The rent of 'Gipsy Plot' leased to Miss Cunlett near Wishaven Morecombelake was £2pa. (p173 9-10-1944.) The rent of 17Towngate Street Poole was 12/11 per week and the rates 2/11 per week. (p588 26-1-1945.)

H&B guess that the cost of contents insurance at Sunnyside Whitchurch Canonicoram, a thatched house, for Mr. C. Knight will be 5/- per £100. (p193 13-10-1944.) Mr. Love of Southdown Farm Uplyme wants to insure a stack of Barley at £150; a stack of hay at £100 and a stack of straw at £30. (p208 16-10-1944.) Miss Reeves is told ...`rates are actually going down this half year.` (p212 17-10-1944.) Mr. & Mrs. Gollop were charged £1 for both their wills. (p216 19-10-1944.)

The contract for the sale of Bell Cliff to Mr. Jeffrey carried a price of £4000 negotiated by the House Agent Mr. Van Allen. (p226 20-10-1944.)

The sale of "Sunny Brae" by Mr. Goldenborough at £300 includes an apportionment of 4 weeks rent totalling £3-2-0. (p530 11-1-1945.) HJR informs Mrs. Moulton that the purchase of 30/31 Church Street had been completed by Mrs. M.H. Searle and the balance of £230 paid. The rent of No.30 @ 7/6 had been apportioned. The water rate was 4/- for 6 months. Fees of £5-17-0 were charged. (N.B. No.31 was uninhabitable.) (p740 7-3-1945.)

The receipt of a bank draft for £3,735-12-10 is acknowledged to Messrs. Kitson & Trotman for the purchase of Bell Cliff. (p833 29-3-1945.)

H&B acknowledge the rent of £4 for a half year's rent from Mr. Chedd of Gollops Morecombelake due to Miss Barratt. (p811 24-3-1945.) Also due to Miss Barratt was Mr. Miller's rent of £4-10-0 for Wayside Morecombelake. (p811 24-3-1945.) Miss Barratt gained 1/- rent for the school garden at Woodcocks. (p812 24-3-1945.) A sum of 10/- on account of rent due of £5-10-0 was acknowledged to Mrs. Cox of the Old Post Office Morecombelake. (p832 29-3-1945.) Miss L.M.M. Barratt was also paid £11-5-0, a quarter's rent, by Miss Thwaites in respect of Courtheath. (p843 3-4-1945.)

The half year's rent of £21-10-0 due to Lt. Col. Bullen from Mr. Elliott in respect of Rose Cottage and fields at Charmouth is acknowledged. (p823 27-3-1945.)

H&B's charges for reporting on simple titles was one guinea. (H&B to Lloyds Bank p243 26-10-1944.) But later he wrote revising this charge to 2 guineas as a minimum charge under the Dorset Law Society's revised scale. (p583 25-1-1945.)

His charge for money collection is 5%. (p250 27-10-1944.) His fee for serving the petition in Carling v. Carling is 15/-. (p457 20-12-1944.)

H&B letter to Mr. A.V. Holmes asking for his arrears of maintenance for his evacuee child. For a 4 week period maintenance was 6guineas less 12/-pw paid by the evacuation authority.

(p247 26-10-1944.)

Messrs. Radford & Radford required to be paid £23-0-0 for a funeral. (p308 10-11-1944.)

To Mr. Mundy HJR suggest that as he is in the building line he might wish to consider 30&31 Church Street. No.30 is let at 7/6 pw. (p364 24-11-1944.)

Messrs. Thomas and Hallett called and the latter gave a cheque for £350 to purchase 7 Cobb Road Lyme Regis from Mr. Lane. (p682 21-2-1945.) Mr. Lane is invited by HJR to consider advancing £2000 @4.5% on mortgage for Mr. Reeve who has purchased Kent Cottage at a price of £3050. (p750 9-3-1945.)

In a letter to Field Roscoe, solicitors, H&B say that Mr. & Mrs. Wright have agreed to buy Kent Cottage from Mr. Parkins of Charmouth Kent Cottage Lyme Regis for £3,500. (p869 9-4-1945.)

H&B's London agents are instructed to complete the sale of 13 Silver Street Lyme Regis (Turner to Geary) and to obtain a draft for £765-2-6. (p677 20-2-1945.)

London solicitors are informed that H&B have been instructed by Mrs. W.F. Surridge to act for her in her purchase of Penny Cottage Lyme Regis at a price of £1700. (p756 12-3-1945.)

Mr. Warren is told that his sister-in-law has succeeded in selling 18 Millgreen for £1,200. (p846 4-4-1945.)

H&B ask Hugh R. Poole & Son to return the deeds to Hillcrest Lyme Regis which were handed over in error when Dr. Cooper agreed to sell to Mr. Legs for £2,500. (p853 5-4-1945.)

Mr. Warren of Cobb Lodge Lyme Regis is asked by HJR to provide the balance of purchase money viz: £1353-16-7 in respect of Crofters Yawl Uplyme. (p917 20-4-1945.)

H&B write to Mr. Reeves at 34 Sherborne Avenue Lyme Regis to say that Mr. Radford tells them that Mr. Reeves has agreed to purchase your home from Mr. Ruffell for £600. (p960 2-5-1945)

Mr. J.F.L. Lampard is told that Miss Ostick and Miss Dunning say that you are selling the Cottage occupied by Miss Ostick to Miss Dunning for £850. (p965 3-5-1945.)

Mr. Paul is told that H&B's London Agents have completed the sale of Coram Corner and received £2850 being the purchase price less the deposit. They did not collect the rent due to you which, for 43 days is £10-0-3. (p992 11-5-1945.)

H&B advise that the rates have been increased from 6/- to 7/6 in the pound so that for the half year the rates will be £15 instead of £12. (p999 14-5-1945.)