

Hillman & Bond Copy Letter Book 1919 (Mar – December)

Summarised by Research Team member Diane Shaw, Jan 2014.

Introduction

This book has been bound leaving a large margin at the top of the page so many of the addresses have slipped off the bottom of the page. Others are incomplete, often just saying Lyme Regis.

This copy book also has a relatively high number of pages which are difficult or impossible to read, particularly the carbon copies of type written letters.

The first thirty-five pages of letters in this book appear to have been written by Mr Long, clerk to Mr Ramsbotham, who has been running the business while Mr Ramsbotham is away in the Army. "I was away from July 1917 to February 1919" Mr Ramsbotham writes a letter on 20th March saying "I returned to Lyme today..." He is recovering from influenza and takes a long time to get back to normal. In June he is complaining of sciatica. "My leg is worse this afternoon and I find it very hard to concentrate owing to the continual pain." On 27th June his clerk sends a letter to the Surveyor of Taxes Dorchester "We duly received your letter but regret that Mr Ramsbotham since his return from active service been very unwell and by his doctor's orders has had to take to his bed. It will therefore be impossible for us to render our accounts for the next month or so...." On 3rd July Mr Ramsbotham wrote "...yesterday was my first day out of bed and I'm afraid I'm not yet at all well. I'm being sent to Harrogate on Monday for further (electrical) treatment which may last a month." He returned home on 7th August.

One person who gave Mr Ramsbotham problems during this book was Mr Cyprian Taylor. He was an executor for his deceased sister Mary. He approached Mr Ramsbotham to advise him. Mr Ramsbotham, Mr Long and their London agents were quite happy with this but Mr Ramsbotham became worried as he felt that Dr Spurr and Dr Wood felt that Mr Taylor was too insane to be involved with legal affairs (he had already spent some time in a lunatic asylum). Dr Lumsden was also consulted and eventually it was agreed that he was at that time able to function as an executor. Mr Taylor's income is not paid directly to him but comes via the Trustee Department of the National Provincial and Union Bank in London. In August he tries to get this changed so that he gets his money directly. He is ill at the time and giving his landlady much extra work, and also she has to supply the red wine (it must be burgundy!) recommended by his doctor. The bank replies that they will reconsider paying Mr Taylor directly after his sister's probate has been finalised, Mr Ramsbotham gets the bank to agree to extra payment.

Several letters are sent following the death of the licensee of the Royal Lion Hotel, Mr R H Russell, particularly in respect of who will take over the license. In his will of June 23, 1916, Richard Harold Russell made Harold John Ramsbotham and Howard Spensley his executors and trustees. A later codicil to the will added the testator's sister Mrs Mary Caroline Harington Harris (Mrs Harington Harris lived in Battersea Park in London, and was wife to Henry Harington Harris, clerk in Holy Orders.) Mr Spensley did not wish to act as an executor. Two other sisters, Mrs Jones and Mrs Garrett were not happy about the codicil and caused Mr Ramsbotham much aggravation during the probate. At one point Mr Ramsbotham became very annoyed because Mrs Harington Harris had gone behind his back and consulted another solicitor "taking Counsel's opinion without consulting me". Following a letter from her presumably apologising he responded saying "I am glad we need not quarrel." Later in the same letter he says "I am sorry I did not give you more information about the assignments but I thought it would be quite enough when I told you I had approved them – I find most clients especially ladies usually refuse to have things explained. The Royal Lion and Nos 57 & 58 Broad Street were eventually sold to the Slater family (Mrs Kate Louisa Slater & Miss Kate Matilda Slater) who had been managers for Mr Russell. By the 4th of June the sisters are still not happy although probate has been settled, they are objecting to the distribution of personal items belonging to their brother "Mrs Jones cannot demand green vases or anything else – if it comes to the point 1/3 of a green vase is of very little value."

Addresses

Mr R W Baker, The Cosy, L R
Mr Harold Ball (a saddler), 16 Coombe Street
Mr J Boalch, 15, Marine Parade
Capt J Bond, Royal Horse Artillery Establishment, Weedon Northants
Mrs Boswell, Sherborne Lane
Miss L F Bridge, Rest Harrow, Uplyme
Mr C Case, Bridge Street
Miss A E Collins, Franksholme, L R
Miss H A Coombe, Windsor Terrace
Mr W G Cornish
Mr R Davey, La Casa, L R
Miss Dean, Broad Street
Mr W J Emmett, Drill Hall Cottage
W N Farnham Esq, Woodville, L R
Mrs Fowler, 35 Coombe Street
Mr C H Freeman, Rousdon
Mr Guppy, Woodmead Road
Mr Wm Halliday, Coastguard Buildings
Mr J F Hodder, Cobb House
Mr J Homyer, 26 Coombe Street
Mrs Johnson, Pyne House, 10 Broad Street
Mr H G Newbury, Woodmead Road
Mr F Paul, Silver Street
Mr W Plum, Coombe Street
Mr William Powell, Corporation Terrace
Mrs Prescott, Ship Inn
Rev J G Ridley, Bow House, Charmouth
Mr C N Samson
Mr John Seddon, Parade Villa, Marine Parade
Mr J D Staple, St Martin's Cottage
Dr Taylor, Temple House
Mr T L Tidwell, Jordan (re: Woodmead Estate Philpot to Tidwell)
Mrs Turner, 5 Bridge Street
Mr Cyprian Taylor, 11 Broad Street, (DS - boarding with Mrs Lane?)
Mr R Warren, Church Street
Mr J Welch, Little Hill Cottage, Uplyme
Mr Harry Wiscombe, Lower Rhode Farm
Mr J Wood, Sherborne Lane

March (p 1)

To Solicitors in Yeovil: Mr Edwin Henry Wallis has agreed to sell the property known as Tower House Coombe Street which was recently practically destroyed by fire to our client Mrs S H Fowler for the sum of £40.

To Mrs Arnopp & Mrs Ames re Cathole Farm: An inspection of the farm has revealed many problems with the structure of the farmhouse and outbuildings needing extensive repairs. It is pointed out that under the terms of the lease the owners Mrs Arnopp & Mrs Ames are responsible and the tenant, Mr Moss could claim against them if they were not done. It is suggested that Mr Moss may be able to do the repairs but that he would need some help. Mr Larcombe of Uplyme, son-in-law of Mrs Arnopp is

recommended as being able to do this if he is prepared to do it as he is currently working for Wiscombes.

To Mr A G Case c/o Mr Govier, Broad Street, re The Old Factory, draft lease from W R Wallis for approval.

To Mrs Stanley Hillman: Mrs Hillman has decided to go to New Zealand and is asking Hillman & Bond to try to raise money for her using her separation annuity from her husband as security. Mr Ramsbotham tells her that he has tried to do this from the Bank and the Sun Life Assurance Society but they are unwilling to give her any cash. He suggests she tries to raise the money from friends and family.

To The Secty. Demobilisation & Re-settlement Dept.: Will you kindly send us the necessary forms to enable our client Mr Love, butcher of this town to apply for the release of his son from the Colours on compassionate grounds.

Mrs Jenkins has sold Westhill at Rocombe to Rev G F Eyre for £750.

Mr Cartwright is selling Hook Farm, Uplyme to Mr Bartlett (£3,832).

To Mr A Clarke, 57 Broad Street: On behalf of the Executors of the late Mr R H Russell, we hereby give you notice to quit & deliver up possession of the premises No 57 Broad Street held by you as tenant from them on the 29th day of September next.

To Devon & Exeter Gazette: As I have recently been demobilised & have returned to Lyme Regis. I should be much obliged if you would send me your paper again to reach me daily by the early post at No. 8 Cobb Road Lyme Regis.

To The Mayor and Members of the Lyme Regis Corporation: "In reference to the consideration of salaries on Friday night, I desire to make application for a substantial increase. My salary remains at the same figure (£100 per annum) as before the War, as fixed in 1910 at the time of my predecessor's appointment. As the council is aware out of this amount I pay for all postage and stationary and also have to provide my own office accommodation so at a very low estimate the absolutely necessary deductions bring down the salary to £75 per annum and as all these expenses have greatly increased I am really in the position of having had my salary reduced. As you are all aware, since 1910 the work has very considerably increased and the cost of living and value of money standards has radically altered. I therefore trust the council will see their way to grant a substantial increase. I am your obedient Servant, Harold John Ramsbotham."

To Regimental Paymaster, Dorset Regiment, Exeter: Mr H Rattenbury of Higher Mill has not been receiving the "ring paper" due to his son whose No is 16806 of the 2nd Dorset regiment. The old paper was sent to you three weeks ago & this man urgently requires this weekly payment. (DS The 'ring' papers were the separation allowance books, so called because of the circular stamp embossed each time the weekly allowance was paid to dependents.)

April (p 78)

Mr Foxwell is selling Rotherfield to Mr Sing (sic – should read Synge)

May (p 184)

Many of the letters sent in early May were paying the debts of Mr Russell of the Royal Lion hotel following the sale of the Hotel by the executors allowing the debts to be paid from the proceeds.

To The Officer, No 1 Infantry Records, Preston: "We have been requested by our client, Mr Huxford of Waterloo House, Lyme Regis to write to you in regard to an extension of leave for his only son Private R Huxford, Lancashire fusiliers whose leave we understand has already been extended to the 18th inst.

Our client is suffering from a severe nervous breakdown and quite unable to attend to his business as the Goods Agent for this town of the London & South Western Railway....."

To Miss Munro, Fairfield: "As you are no doubt aware the late Col Henley's property is probably shortly all coming into the market & probably you will wish to consider, whether it may not be advisable to purchase the field you now rent from him."

The Secretary, Dorset Local Pensions Committee, Dorchester: "Mr A A Loud, of this town, who at the time enlistment in the Army was carrying on a good business as a retail butchers in this town has consulted me with reference to obtaining some assistance towards restarting in business. I referred the matter to Mr H Ellis the Secretary of the local subcommittee who however refers me to you. I shall be obliged if you will let me know what steps Mr Loud should take to obtain assistance & whether he has any chance of doing so." (This was later referred to The Secretary, Civil Liabilities, 2 Savoy Place London, "We herewith send you the form which Mr Loud has filled in to the best of his abilities".)

To Mrs Jefferd, 3 Monmouth Street: "I herewith send you the bill I have received from Mr Foxwell in respect of the panes of glass at my office which were broken by one of your children & which you promised to pay.

To Mr Edwin Eglon, Church Street "The Trustees of the Burridge Educational Legacy have decided that this years income of the Trust should be divided between the girls in the Town who have won scholarships at Secondary schools & I therefore have pleasure in sending your cheque for 15/4 being a half share of the income."

To Mr W Abbott, Coombe Street: "The Trustees of the Burridge Educational Foundation have decided to allow you a grant of 15/4 for the further support of your daughter at the Bridport Secondary school, which they hope you will find helpful, I enclose cheque for that payment."

To Sun Insurance Office: Re Cobb Arms "The insured reports that a small fire occurred at the above premises on Wednesday 21st a beam at the back of the small kitchen range catching fire by some means. We enclose a builder's estimate obtained by the agents to the owner, and shall be glad of your instructions. (A later letter reveals that the repairs, done by Mr Cooper, cost £3-10-0.)

Rest Harrow sold by Miss Bridge to the Misses Gumbrell.

June (p 317)

To: Capt G Cartwright, owner of High Knapps Farm: The tenant Mr G L Scott has had his rent cheque for £42-10-0 dishonoured.

A Mrs Adams of Southampton has sold No 1 Monmouth Street to A & F Wiscombe for £135.

A coal yard near the Cobb is being sold by Osborn & others to Mr Boulton (DS - possibly previously owned by Gaius & Henry Osborn)

To: L D Haddon re the proposed purchase by L D Haddon from H O Bickley of 26 Broad Street for the sum of £1500.

July (p 420)

To: Mr C Saunders, Broad Street, re the purchase of Malabar House.

To: The Secretary, War Office, London re Private Major, Dorset Yeomanry, "We have been requested to apply on behalf the above for his demobilisation from H.M. Forces on compassionate grounds. He informs us that he enlisted in Jan 1916 after having been rejected 3 times and served over 2 years in Egypt. He is now home at 2 Church Street L R & has a widowed mother who is in poor health and an

invalid sister, and as he is the only unmarried son they naturally look to him for support. His pre-war employer is willing to re-engage him which if he is released will enable him to support his mother and sister in a proper manner. We therefore ask your favourable response of the case."

To: Mr G Curtis, Sherborne Lane, "Mr Joseph Curtis of George's Court has seen us in reference to your cutting across the bows of his boat whilst he was in pursuit of fish. He has no wish to be unreasonable, but he cannot permit this sort of thing to continue and if it is persisted in will have to take steps to effect a remedy. We feel sure however that you will recognise the importance of "fair play" and that there will be no further interference with him."

To: Mr W Gollop, Sherborne Lane "We herewith enclose letter & money order for £2.18.0 respecting W E Case's payment to Miss Gollop." (This was maintenance money for an illegitimate child).

To: Rev Noel Ives, Woodmead Road re the probate of the will of Miss Lawson.

August (p 497)

To Mr A Lane: "I don't as yet know whether you have found a purchaser for these premises (DS presumably No 10 Broad Street, H & B's offices), but if not, I should like you to consider again whether you could not sell me the office part only for £350 or regrant me a lease of the whole or of the office part only – or if not I would take either as a yearly tenant. I would also consider giving £1000 (not mine) for the whole. I should not dream of buying were it not for the inconvenience it would be to have to move. On the 16th August Mr Ramsbotham add a footnote to a letter to Mrs Bond "We agreed to buy Pyne House & office for £1100.

To Mrs Arnopp: Miss Prescott of Woodhouse Uplyme would like to buy a piece of land to build a cottage for her gardener. She may be interested in a piece on the hill above Knollside which is part of Cathole Farm. The piece is between a quarter and a half an acre, and it may be a good thing to sell for about £50. She does not yet know for certain as she does not know if she could get a water supply up there. Mr Ramsbotham advises that Mrs Arnopp should not give Mr Moss (the tenant farmer) any compensation for the loss of the field, and also that Miss Prescott should pay Mrs Arnopp's costs, if any. (DS Mrs Arnopp rejects this offer)

High Knapps Farm: The tenant Mr Scott has had his rent cheque to Capt G Cartwright for £42-10-0 refused again "we have instructed Mr Pitfield Chapple of Axminster to take the necessary steps to obtain leave to distrain" (to take property or force payment of a debt).

To Mr C E Cuthell, Manson Cottage Clareville Street, Onslow Gardens, S W 7: "Mr A E Fooks who owns the 'Sundial' next door to your land on the Marine Parade has called on us & asked us to make you an offer on his behalf of £300 for your land. We told him WE thought this was hardly sufficient, but in view of the expense & difficulty attending building at this time, we thought it possible you might be disposed to part with it at this price, & we shall be glad to hear from you in due course. (Mr Cuthell responded that he would not take less than £700. Mr Fookes then offered £400, the reply was "The price I want for it is £700 and I will not take a penny less."). NB Mr Cuthell sold the land in December to Mr Anderson, receiving a cheque for £600 purchase money.

Mr Clifford Sanders is selling 38, Broad Street, a confectionery, to Mr H E Jeffery.

To The Surveyor of Taxes Dorchester, "I am in receipt of your letter of the 21st. I have no notion what it refers to. I was away from July 1917 to February 1919 & have since been ill twice & away from my work. You had better assess & do what you like & if I find you have done anything against which I can appeal, I must take my remedy. I do not suppose you want to extract more than I ought to pay."

To Mrs Chaffey, Millgreen Court, "Unless you pay rent arrears of £1-19-0 on or before Saturday, proceedings will be taken to evict you."

September (p 585)

To: Mr H R Morgan, Montague Lodge, L R (Masons) "The masonic clothes and jewels of R H Russell deceased are to be given to the Montague Lodge on the understanding that if a nephew of Mr Russell should in the future become a Mason he should have the option of taking back any items he wishes.

To Mrs Arnopp re the sale of 50 Broad Street, tenanted by Mr Adams to Mr S E Govier

Mr Hussey has been staying in a hotel in Weymouth and has fallen and broken his arm. He is having to stay for longer than planned at the hotel but does not have the money to pay his bill. He lives on an annuity which pays only £98 per annum from which Mr Ramsbotham gives him £8 per month. The hotel bill is for £15, when it arrives Mr Ramsbotham writes on his behalf as his arm is in splints, to a cousin who sends him the money as a present. Mr Ramsbotham sends a letter of thanks, adding that he feels Mr Hussey could manage on his annuity "but he will keep drinking whisky".

To: Mr Bain Esq, Woodmead Road "Our client Miss Biggs complains that the traction engine now being used by you to cart goods from the Railway to the Cement Works has caused serious damage to the wall of her property in Pound Road having shaken the foundations and caused some of the stones to fall out. Mr Caddy on our client's behalf has temporarily shored up the wall to prevent immediate danger of its collapse. (DS Mr Bain paid 30/- compensation, of which Mr Ramsbotham kept 10/- and the house owner got £1.)

October (p 708)

To: Mrs Greed, "20 Marine Parade: "The purchase of your house by our client Mrs Reeves has now been completed & we hereby give you notice to pay all future rents to us until otherwise directed by Mrs Reeves or ourselves".

To: Miss Gumbrill (Gumbrell), Restharrow, Uplyme "Our clients, the owners of the field containing the spring from which you draw your water, consider that they ought to receive a payment from you in respect of the water you take, and we suggest a payment of £1 per annum would probably meet the case...."

November (p 849)

To: Messers Bridgman & Co, "We herewith send you a cheque for £6-8-0 in payment of practising certificate for Mr H R Ramsbotham. The latter is now a member of the Dorset Law Society."

To: Solicitors in London re Poole's Court Stables, conveyance W Peek to Mills.

December (p 949)

To George Cartwright Esquire: re Scott This morning leave was obtained to distract on the above, but during the morning the man accidentally shot himself and is dead.