

Hillman & Bond Copy Letter Book, November 3, 1917 to March 4, 1919

Summarised by Graham Davies, Nov 2013.

Introduction

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

At the beginning of this book, November 1917, solicitor John Harold Ramsbotham is serving with the British Expeditionary Force in France. He has not been released from the Army by January 1919. He comes home on leave for a few days in August/September 1918, attends to the firm's business, and returns to France, visiting his parents in the IOW on the way. We do not know his rank or role in the Army, but his clerk in Lyme Regis, Mr Long, is able to have regular correspondence with him, updating and asking advice when needed. Mr Long is in charge of the Lyme office during this period; how many more staff were there?

Hillman & Bond acts for the sisters, Mrs Arnopp & Mrs Ames, both of East Ham, who in 1900, became the heiresses to the James Loveridge Estate, and inherited 16 freehold properties in Lyme Regis, and a further 3, including Cathole Farm and the Black Dog Inn, in Uplyme. All were let out on various leases. This correspondence gives us an insight into the identity and management of a few of these properties.

An insurance policy for Mrs Elizabeth Lane, widow, of 11 Broad street.

Household goods - £200

Stock & utensils in trade - £100

premises are brick built and tiled or slated. (Nov 5, 1917)

Request to Mr W H Spiller, Slopes Farm, for half year's rent, due to Mrs Drummond, for the renting of land at Fairfield. (Nov 6, 1917)

Request to Mr Lankley, piano tuner, Bridport, to pay his outstanding account of 14/8½, owed to Mr G Bartlett of Hook Farm, Uplyme, for the purchase of milk. (Nov 7, 1917)

With respect to No.10 Coombe Street, G S Philip Esq, Fleet Street, EC4, is informed that 13/4 is owed to Mrs Warburton with respect to the water rates. (Nov 8, 1917)

Mr G Stanley Philip is paying rent and 'Poor & District rates' for No.10 Coombe Street, possibly on behalf of a Mrs Carden. (Dec 7, 1917)

H&B to act as solicitors for vendor (Mrs Adams of Southampton) in the sale by auction of No.1 Monmouth Street. (Nov 8, 1917)

Request to W R Wallis Esq for the accounts relating to the houses in Coombe Street and George's Court which are held in trust for the children of the late Mr W F Wallis, as under the will of Mr W B Wallis.

Miss Bessie Wallis, now 21, is entitled to ½ of the net rents, whilst the other ½ will be paid towards the maintenance of her sister. (Nov 13, 1917)

Request to W R Wallis to send Miss Bessie Wallis £20, out of her share of the rents, before she leaves for South Africa in about a week's time. (Nov 20, 1917)

Harold John Ramsbotham, principal of Hillman & Bond, is presently serving with the British Expeditionary Force. (Nov 19, 1917)

The death of Mrs Brown of 'The Retreat'. (Dec 5, 1917)

No.34 Sherborne Lane is sold for £230 by Messrs Wiscombe. A cheque for the deposit of £30 is sent to J Hill Esq at the Lyme Regis Lloyds Bank. (Dec 11, 1917)

Request to Dr Taylor of Temple House for his quarter's rent due on Dec 29. (Dec 29, 1917)

Mr G Salter, baker, Uplyme is informed that a further 10/- will be taken off his next rent towards the gate he has made and fixed. (Dec 31, 1917)

Mr D Lawson is tenant of Bow House. Mrs Lockhart may be the owner. (Jan 7, 1918)

Mrs P M Foy, The Sundial, Lyme Regis (Jan 11, 1918)

H & M informing Mrs Escott, The Red Cottage, how to make an insurance claim after the fire at her premises, with respect to builders' estimates. Mr Foxwell is mentioned in this correspondence. (Jan 18, 1918)

Alderman H O Bickley JP, living at Holmlea (Holm Lea) (Jan 26, 1918)

Apparent discussions about Mr Bickley purchasing Holm Lea. (June 18, 1918)

Bickley purchases property for £1400. (June 24, 1918)

Rev F S Ramsbotham lives on the IOW. (Feb 14, 1918)

Agreement about the repair of a wall between the property of the Oddfellows in Coombe Street and the Church. (March 14, 1918)

Hillman & Bond are using Lloyds Bank as their bankers. (March 15, 1918)

Writing to Mrs Arnopp, 26 Lathom Road, East Ham, with reference to an Income tax claim. (April 1918)

Further correspondence with Mrs Arnopp regarding Temple House. Mrs Ames (GD - her sister) does not wish to sell at the present time, and will discuss it with her. There is also the problem that the sitting tenant has another 10 years on the lease. As to Mr Govier's tenancy, the lease agreement will allow termination at Xmas next, if you wish to sell the property.

GD - a further reference to WWI in the letter's last paragraph, ' We hope that you and Mrs Ames escaped any harm from the air-raid'. (May 21, 1918)

Mrs Arnopp is considering selling both Temple House & Cathole farm. (June 17, 1918)

Mr A Lane has offered £100 for Lot 3 which is occupied by Mr G Street. This cottage adjoins a property owned by Mr Lane's wife. (GD - we have no details but it appears that the sisters Arnopp & Ames have put some of their properties up for sale. There have been discussions about their properties. With particular reference to the cottages occupied by Govier and Adams, they are a good investment as long as the Corporation does not call upon the sisters to carry out extensive repairs under the Housing Acts. Another letter at this time suggests that they own 'The Retreat').

Further developments - Mr Radford has offered £350 for Lot 2, the property let to Adams and Govier. Mrs Arnopp wants a minimum of £450.

Mr Govier has asked if he could buy the blacksmith's shop, and what would be their asking price. The sisters are not prepared to sell the blacksmith's shop separately.

Mr Lane is asking if he can pay the purchase price for Lot 3 by the end of the week, and thus collect the rent from then on. (July 1, 1918) Sale went through.

Sale of & No.7 Sherborne Lane (Arnopp & Ames) to Mr Hockey of the Nest, Chard for £150 (Sept 1918)
The vendors are unclear about the boundaries of the property. It is the opinion of H&B, after visiting the site, that the boundary wall dividing No.7 from No.8 belongs to the former, whilst the hedge & fence between No.7 and No.6 belongs to the latter. (Oct 16, 1918)

Mrs Arnopp is wanting to borrow £300 at 5% against one of their properties. Initial discussions of possibly borrowing £200 at 5½ % from Mrs Radford of La Casa, Ozone Terrace, who has already loaned them £100 with Cathole Farm as security. A request to JHB for a loan was turned down as he had only recently loaned a substantial amount to a client. Mr Long hopes, now the war is over, that JHB will be released from the Army in a week or two. (Nov 18, 1918)

Estimate sent to Mrs Arnopp for work required to outside of Temple House. (Nov 23, 1918)

Mrs Arnopp is to borrow £200 at 5½% from Mrs Radford, La Casa, Ozone Terrace, using Mrs Arnopp's ½ share of Temple House (occupied by Dr Taylor) as security. H&B find that Cathole farm has already been charged for a further sum. (Dec 11, 1918)

Send letter out, on behalf of Mr Salter, baker of Uplyme, requesting the payment of overdue bills to -
Mrs Grattan, Coombe Street
Mrs W Case, 3 East Cliff
Mrs Makepeace, Corporation Terrace
Mrs Major , 6 Church Street (April, 1918)

Letter to Mr (Miss) Reeves informing him of a complaint by Mrs Hains, tenant of 11 George's Court, of broken floor boards inside front door and at bottom of stairs. Inspection has revealed dry rot, and H&M ask if they may instruct Messer Wiscombe to repair/replace the damaged floor boards. (April 22, 1918)

With reference to the sale of Miss Cleave's Estate, Lyme Regis, H&M have been instructed to act for the purchasers of Lots 2 & 3 (Mr A Lane) and Lot 9 (Mrs Stapleforth). (April 23, 1918)

In accordance with the Dog Act 1906, Harold John Ramsbotham, acting as magistrate's clerk, writes to the Clerk of the County Court (or Council), Dorchester, acting on behalf of a farmer, claiming exemption from licence duty for one dog. (April 24, 1918)

Mrs or Miss Davis is living at the Mission House, 1 Mill Green (May 21, 1918)

GD - It is clear that John Harold Ramsbotham (on active service - serving with BEF) is in regular contact with his office.

H&M, on behalf of Miss Gollop, attempting to find the whereabouts of William Edward Case, said to be serving with the 4th Dorsets, with a view to obtaining registration of the enclosed Bastardy Order. (June 17, 1918)

Stanley Charles Ridgewell convicted under the 'Motor Car Act 1903' this morning at the Borough Police Court. (June 19, 1918)

Letter to Miss Munro reporting Mr Spiller's denial that he had given permission for anyone to shoot over the fields at Fairfield. He will see 'young Frost' and warn him of police action if it happens again. (June 26, 1918)

Pte ? Hallett, living at 1 Monmouth Street, has not paid any rent (£14 a year) to Mrs Adams for the last three months. (June 27, 1918) (GD - It would appear that she did sell the house in 1917)

Capt E C Boys, 8 Sherborne Lane, formerly lived at Chard House, Lyme Regis. (July 5, 1918)

Mr Lloyd is selling Madeira Cottage to a Mr Barrett for ? £800 (difficult to read). (July 1918)

Miss Philpot is offering the museum to the town. Says it is to be always free to the public. (Aug 21, 1918)

Mr Ramsbotham arriving in England on leave on Monday. (Aug 28, 1918). (GD - Mr Long, the firm's clerk in charge in JHB's absence, is in regular correspondence with the solicitor about client matters).

On Sept 13, he travelled (via London on firm's business) to IOW to see his parents before returning to France.

Mr Bartlett has purchased Hook Farm for £4,250. Wants to know what JHB will charge for the conveyance. (October 1918)

Cancellation of Insurance policy on Parade Villa, Lyme Regis (policy value £700) in the name of Miss Jane Elizabeth Dean, Miss Dean is to reside at 22 Broad Street (value £100). Parade Villa to be sold, and if possible, H&B will get the purchasers to take over the fire policy when issued. (Oct 18, 1918)

Mr G Scott is tenant of Upper Knapps farm but is not paying his rent punctually. (Jan 14, 1919)

JHB still not released from the Army. (Jan 20, 1919)