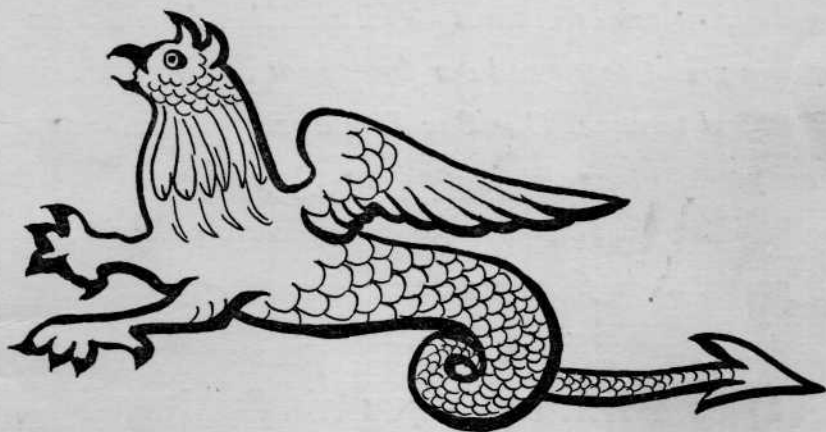


Wherwell

An Anthology



The Cockatrice

Wherwell Playing Field

Sports & Fete Programme

August 26th 1974

Field Opens 2 p.m.

Price 10p

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INTRODUCTION

Wherwell, stretching along the western bank of the beautiful River Test, presents a picture of almost perfect rural scenery. The quiet atmosphere giving no hint of the turbulent past. This brief anthology does not set out to give readers a history of Wherwell, but simply to draw from the rich vein of history and legend surrounding the valley.

How fascinating it is to think that almost a thousand years ago Wherwell was the centre of a macabre intrigue with King Edgar, the Earl Athelwold, and his wife Elfrida, being the trio involved.

This sordid story is well covered in the article "A brief history of Wherwell Priory", written by Lady Brecknock and included in this programme. From this unsavoury episode and subsequent events came the founding of Wherwell Abbey, later to be called Wherwell Priory. It was then, as it is now, the centre of all village activities.

The Wherwell Estates passed into the possession of Colonel and Mrs. Jenkins in 1913, and the present Lady of the Manor is their daughter, Marjorie, Countess of Brecknock.

Their tremendous contributions to the community makes it difficult to believe that historically their association has been so short.

The Sports Field and Pavilion, and Col. Jenkins' Memorial Hall are but two examples of their love of village life.

This estate has also made the much maligned tied-house system really work. Retired estate workers enjoy peace and security in beautiful cottages around the village.

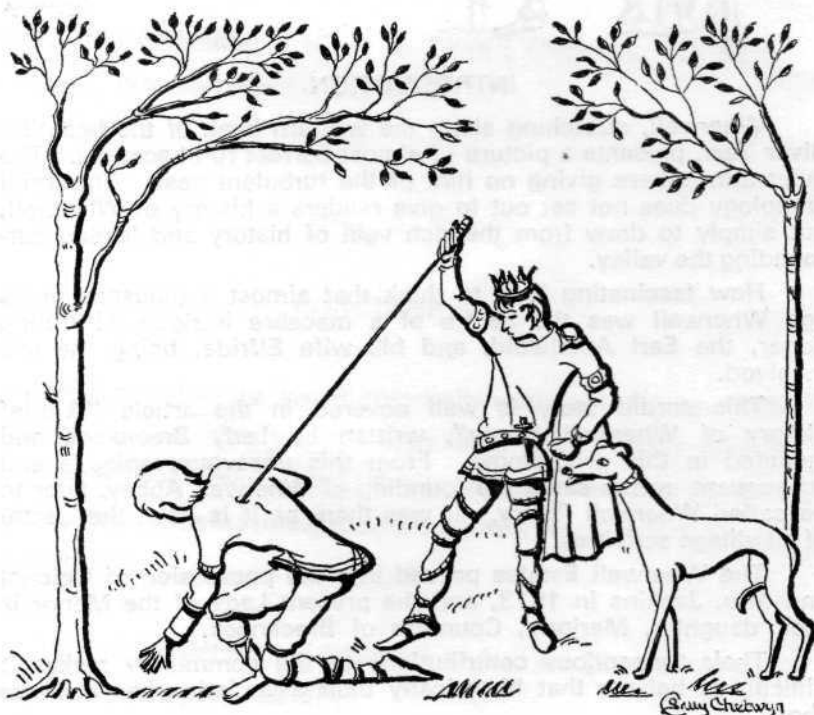
Harewood Forest, so steeped in history and folk lore, offers the Naturalist flora and fauna in a setting difficult to match.

The love of this village has inspired many of its sons and daughters through the ages, to sing its praises in one form or another. Today, like all other villages, Wherwell has had to move with the times, and sadly the rural scenes of great horses hauling loads of corn from the fields would seem to have gone for ever.

The village crafts are also on the decline. However, we are fortunate to have in Wherwell quite a few senior citizens capable of teaching the young the art of basketmaking and corn-dollies, etc.

It would be unforgivable if this generation allowed these ancient skills to die.

We welcome you to "Wherwell Sports Day", 1974 — and hope you have a most enjoyable afternoon.



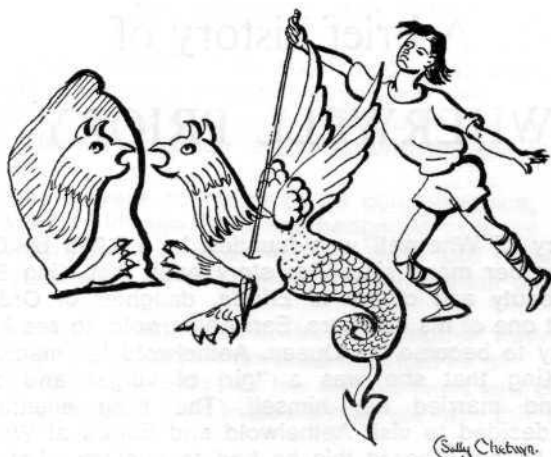
A brief history of WHERWELL PRIORY

The Nunnery of Wherwell was founded in A.D.986 by Queen Elfrida in atonement for her many sins. The story goes that King Edgar, having heard of the beauty and charm of Elfrida, daughter of Ordgar, Duke of Devonshire, sent one of his courtiers, Earl Aethelwold, to see her and report on her suitability to become his Queen. Aethelwold fell madly in love with her, told the King that she was a "girl of vulgar and commonplace appearance" and married her himself. The King eventually became suspicious and decided to visit Aethelwold and Elfrida at Wherwell. When the unfortunate husband heard this he had to confess what he had done to his wife and begged her to "attire herself as unbecomingly as possible". She however took a different view and set about trying to charm the King, which she did with such success that (with her connivance) he took Aethelwold on a hunting trip in Harewood Forest, in the Parish of Wherwell, and stabbed him in the back. A monument stands on the spot, known as "Dead Man's Plack"

Edgar then married Elfrida, and when he died was succeeded by his eldest son Edward, Elfrida's step-son. This did not suit her as she wished to see her own son on the throne, so under pretext of offering him a stirrup cup she stabbed Edward at Corfe Castle, and Ethelred, her son, became King. It appears that she was connected with one or two other murders, after which she founded the Nunnery at Wherwell Abbey, and lived there in penance until she died in 1002.

In the years that followed the Nunnery flourished under many good Abbesses, the most outstanding being Euphemia (1226 - 1257) who was responsible for many improvements to the large estates which included the manors of Wherwell, Tufton, Goodworth, Little Ann, Middleton (Long-parish) and Bullington. Before the dissolution of the Nunnery by Henry VIII in 1540 two other Queens had taken refuge in the Abbey. The Dissolution is recorded on a plaque which may be seen in the wall on the way to the Church.

Henry VIII made the lands of Wherwell Abbey over to Lord De La Warr in return for help with his divorces and in exchange for estates in Sussex called Half Naked (now known as Halnaker). In 1695 the Lord De La Warr of the day disposed of the Wherwell lands to a Mr. Boulter, and after they passed down through several generations of female line to the Iremonger family who eventually sold it in 1913, when it was bought by Sir Ernest Cassel for his niece Mrs. Jenkins. The present house is reputed to be Carolean, but no official record of this can be found, nor is there any indication of why, or when, the name was, rather unsuitably, changed from Abbey to Priory.



THE COCKATRICE

The legends of Wherwell are numerous, the best being that of the Cockatrice, of which there are several versions. Here is one :—

A duck laid an egg in the crypt of the Abbey which was hatched by a toad, and turned into a Cockatrice—a kind of a dragon (see front cover). It grew to an enormous size and had an insatiable appetite.

It flew from the Abbey in search of food and many of the villagers were snatched and taken to the Abbey lair to be eaten.

This state of affairs could not continue and a reward of four acres of land was offered to anyone who would kill the cockatrice.

A man named Green polished a piece of steel until it gleamed like a mirror and lowered it down to the beast's lair. On seeing its reflection the cockatrice fought until it was exhausted, and then Green ran the beast through with a javelin and claimed his reward.

Today in Harewood Forest there is still an area known as "Green's Acres".

THE LEGEND OF THE ROMSEY NUNS

Another legend is that of the Romsey nuns, who on fleeing from the Danes, came to Wherwell Abbey, but before reaching there they got lost in the woods which still remain and many of them died from exposure and starvation. Tradition says they sat down in despair and began to reproach the Almighty, so that when they died their souls were transformed into wild cats which roam in the woods.

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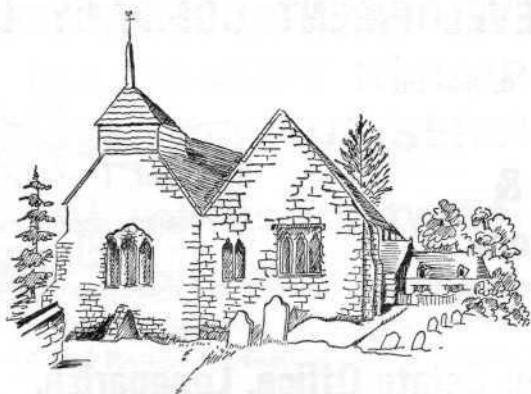
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THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER AND HOLY CROSS

Without extensive research the history of the Church of St. Peter and Holy Cross, Wherwell, is difficult to trace, accurately, beyond the Reformation.

The present building is relatively modern, being built on the site of the Old Church by a Mr. Holdway in 1856.

The original Church could quite easily be the one built by the Abbess Euphemia. In the Victorian History of Hampshire it states that an Abbess Euphemia built a chapel outside the cloisters, beyond the farmery, as a place of worship for both nuns and the villagers. In another reference it says that the Church was built in the thirteenth century.

As Euphemia was Abbess from 1226 A.D. it would seem logical to suppose that this was the original Church.

In the present Church there is a stone effigy, which represents an Abbess, of supposedly 15th century origin and it would be difficult to establish which Abbess the figure commemorates without diligent investigation.

Of the Abbesses of Wherwell, Abbess Euphemia was the most entitled to fame.

The font is said to have been dug up from the river bank.

There is a detailed description of the font in the Victorian Hampshire series. However, its present beautiful condition makes the origin and age doubtful.

The Abbey, fortunately, has an extremely well documented history, which is proof in itself of the important role that it played in the affairs of the country.

Several Kings and Queens were involved with the Abbey in one way or another. Some used it as a place of refuge, while others were kept there in undeserved state of retirement or semi-disgrace.

WHERWELL FOOTBALL CLUB

Wherwell Football Club was re-formed after the war in 1955. The first year being an under-15 side.

In 1956 a men's team was formed and the club over the years has shown an extremely good record, winning the Andover League Division 2 in 1967 and being runners-up on many occasions.

These awards are highly commendable, but the Committee of the Wherwell Sportsfield would like to congratulate the club for winning the award for the most sporting team in the Andover League in 1973. This, we feel, should be the most coveted award of all—playing to win is important, but playing the game with the right spirit is surely TRUE sportsmanship.

We hope that Wherwell Football Club will again strive in the coming season to win this award, together with the Andover League Championship.

The Cockatrice shown on front cover is the mascot of Wherwell Football Club.

WHERWELL PENALTY KING COMPETITION

for the

MARJORIE COUNTESS OF BRECKNOCK CHALLENGE CUP

The competition will take place at the Wherwell Playing Fields on Monday, 26th August, at 2.00 p.m., and will be open to all ages.

All entrants will be divided into sections (amount of sections depending on entries).

Each competitor will take six penalty kicks, top competitor in each section to qualify for final later the same day. In case of ties sudden death play off will decide both in heats and finals. Block or individual entries will be accepted, but must be on official entry forms, together with competition entrance fee of 10p per person and named below.

All entries to : — MR. E. W. ROWLES, 7 Beech Grove, Wherwell, Andover, Hants. SP11 7JE.

WHERWELL PLAYING FIELD

PROGRAMME OF SPORTS TO BE HELD ON THE SUMMER

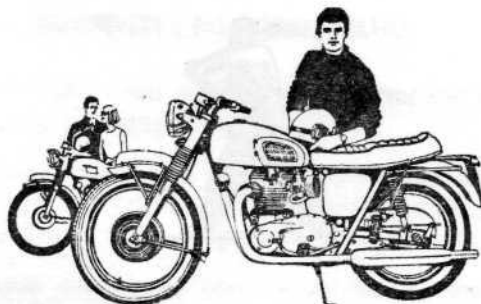
BANK HOLIDAY, MONDAY, AUGUST 26th, 1974.

FIELD OPENS 2 p.m.

OPEN PENALTY KING COMPETITION

(Entries by Monday, August 19th)

	p.m.
Men — 14 and over. 100 metres	2.10
Boys & Girls, 5, 6, 7. 60 metres	2.15
Toddlers' Race, Boys & Girls, 1, 2, 3, 4	2.20
Boys & Girls, 8, 9, 10, Sack Race. 60 metres	2.25
Ladies — 14 and over, Egg and Spoon. 25 metres	2.30
Boys & Girls, 11, 12, 13, 14, Sack Race. 100 metres	2.35
Boys & Girls, 5, 6, 7, Wheelbarrow. 25 metres	2.40
Boys & Girls, 8, 9, 10, 3-legged Race. 60 metres	2.45
Boys & Girls, 11, 12, 13, 14. 200 metres	2.50
Men — 14 and over, Sack Race. 100 metres	2.55
Ladies — 14 and over Flower Pot. 25 metres	3.00
Boys & Girls up to 15, Pick-a-Back. 60 metres	3.05
Toddlers, Boys & Girls, 1, 2, 3, 4. 25 metres	3.10
Boys & Girls, 5, 6, 7, Sack Race. 60 metres	3.15
Boys & Girls, 8, 9, 10. 100 metres	3.20
Boys & Girls, 11, 12, 13, 14, 3-legged Race. 100 metres	3.25
Men — 14 and over. 200 metres	3.30



MOTOR RODEO, 3.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON VIKINGS MOTOR CYCLE RODEO, run under regulations of the A.C.U. National Trials. Each competitor will be riding 250-325 c.c. Spanish Bultaco Montesa, or Ossa Motor-cycles. Each competitor will cover the obstacles with the object of not stopping or putting a foot down. The scoring being if you stop on an obstacle the rider will lose five points, or if he puts his foot down will lose three points.

After everyone has been round once for practise we will carry on lap by lap, and the rider who has lost the most on each lap will drop out.

Ladies — 14 and over, Sack Race. 60 metres	4.30
Boys & Girls, 5, 6, 7, Obstacle Race. 200 metres	4.35
Boys & Girls, 8, 9, 10, Obstacle Race. 200 metres	4.40
Boys & Girls, 11, 12, 13, 14, Obstacle Race. 200 metres	4.45
Men & Ladies, 14 and over, Obstacle Race. 200 metres	4.50
Penalty King Finals	Approx. 5.00
It's a Knock-out: Wherwell Cricket Club v. Wherwell Football Club	5.25

GRAND DRAW

Sideshow : Skittles : Tombola : Hoopla : Trampolines, etc.

Caged Bird Show.

Car Park — 10p.



WHERWELL CRICKET CLUB

Wherwell Cricket Club was formed 104 years ago. During its long history it has won outright the Village Cricket Challenge Cup (Andover District) in 1892-93-94.

The Club was also runners-up to its successor, the Andover Village K.O. in 1970, losing to Andover by 37 runs.

Also in the same year they reached the final of the Andover Business House League 6-a-side tournament.

This year they reached the area semi-final of the Haig National Village K.O. The longest serving member is the Chairman, Mr. F. Goddard, who has been with the Club as player, captain, hon. secretary and treasurer for over 50 years.

The present officers are :—Mr. A. Rowles, Hon. Secretary; Mr. M. James, Hon. Treasurer; Mr. W. Barter, Captain; Mr. S. Rowles, Vice-Captain.

THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER AND HOLY CROSS (continued)

It was far from being a peaceful abode for religious contemplation.

During the Civil War in 1141 A.D. between King Stephen and his cousin, Empress Matilda, Matilda's men defended the crossing of the Test at Wherwell. When the tide of battle turned against them the soldiers took shelter in the Abbey.

The Holy Sanctity of the Abbey was ignored, the soldiers slain and the Abbey put to the torch.

The terrified nuns were driven out, shrieking, and had to find shelter wherever they could. Fortunately the Abbey was saved and continued to be the centre of all activity for miles around.

In Domesday Book the Abbey was said to hold Wherwell, Tufton, Goodworth (Clatford), Anne (Little), Middleton (Long- parish), Bullandum (Bullington), and had interest as far away as Winchester in Flesmanger's Stret (St. Peter's Street), Scowiten's Stret (Jewery Street), Colwern Street (Parchment Street).

When we look back on the picture with the Abbess controlling this large area we can perhaps imagine the great loss felt by the community when, on the 21st November, 1540 A.D., King Henry closed Wherwell Abbey after his quarrel with the Pope.

The Abbey was ransacked of all its treasures and considerable wealth.

The last Abbess was Morphuet Kyngesmill, cousin of the Dean of St. Swithin's. Her brother, Sir John Kyngesmill, was one Commissioner for the Dissolution and used his influence to see that the Abbess and her incumbents were treated as fairly as the troubled times allowed.

The Abbess and her nuns were assigned pensions.

In comparisons to current trends throughout the country, with many churches reporting diminishing congregations, the present vicar, the Rev. Murray Gawne, who serves both Parishes of Wherwell and Chilbolton, has a vigorous following from all walks of life.



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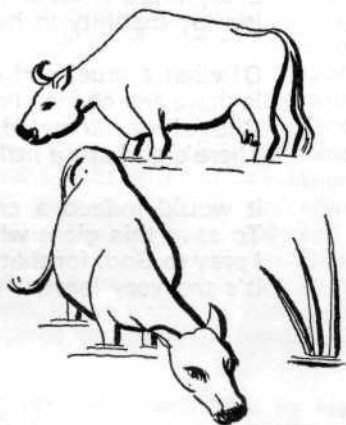
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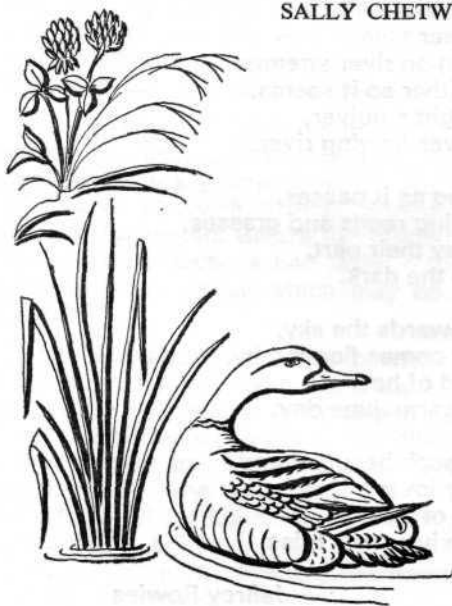
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BY THE TEST

Oh! I could lie here for hours and hours,
On soft short grass interwoven with flowers.
With trefoil clover, pale ladies smock,
Toadflax, milkwort, hairbells and dock.
A patterned carpet hot scented, sweet,
Clouds barely moving; birds hushed by the heat.
Whisper of water as it flows through the weed,
Whistle of wind as it winds through the reed.
For there is peace to be found where waters run,
Where cattle knee deep, drink, warmed by the sun.
Soon seasons alter, winds shriek through the trees,
Blue skies will darken, rain drip from the eaves.
As beneath the bridge the waters race,
Tiny waves curl, foam-edged like lace.
Bare branches beseech the threatening skies,
Beneath whose dead leaves the new life lies.
Clouds, low, rainfilled, ominous, grey,
Are a far far cry from that summer day.
But there is peace unequalled where waters flow.
Where speckled trout leap, and gold king cups grow



SALLY CHETWYN



THE DEATH OF THE ELM

Do you remember? I do, the friendly Elm tree,
You do! Then we are fortunate, you and me.
The chaffinch still sings on the orchard bough,
Alas! There's no green leaves around the old Elm now.

Once there were so many to be commonplace,
Almost every village, bank and hedgerow to grace.
Everywhere I see another leafless dead and twisted frame,
It's my inability to help which gives me such pain.

O! what a cruel and disastrous blow mother nature's dealt.
Is there any chance that for once man can help?
With all our knowledge of the environment and chemistry,
There's perhaps a little hope we may yet save this tree.

It would indeed a credit be, to usually destructive man,
To save this giant who's stood for centuries in this land.
I pray to God, for that's all I know how to do.
It's the very least, I think, I shall expect of you.

Jeffrey Rowles.

MOONLIGHT ON THE RIVER

Moonbeams on river
Moonbeams gleam on river streams,
Dancing hither thither so it seems,
All with shining light a quiver,
Gently goes the ever-flowing river.

Chuckling bubbling as it passes,
Clutching at bending reeds and grasses,
Gentle breezes play their part,
Rustling leaves in the dark.

Hold your head towards the sky,
Sweet scented air comes floating by,
Best of all the field of hay,
Memories of the warm June day.

Surrounded with such beauty stand,
Holding tight your lover's hand,
Thank God for all of this,
Enveloped in such heavenly bliss.

Jeffrey Rowles.

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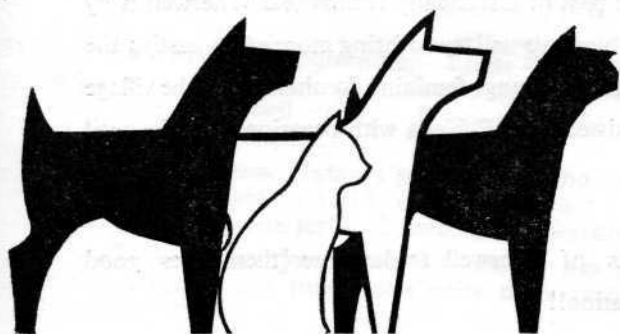
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The Compilers wish to express grateful thanks to all who have so kindly helped in making this anthology possible.

To the traders who by placing their advertisements covered the cost of the printing. We hope they benefit by their support.

To the contributors who submitted articles or information, Marjorie, Countess of Brecknock, Miss Diane White, Jeffery Rowles for a collection of poems to choose from, to a grand and interesting gentleman Mr. Pond for patiently typing copy, to the Wherwell Women's Institute for the loan of their extremely interesting Scrap Books and especially to Sally Chetwyn for all the illustrations.

Playing Field Committee: Major T. Palmer, Chairman, D. Nolder, Treasurer, Mrs. Mary Makin, Hon. Sec.

CONCLUSION

This brief glimpse into the past of historically remarkable Wherwell is by no means exhausted. Next year we will try to bring more of its past to the surface and possibly explore the strange feminine domination of the village life which seems to have existed from Elfrieda with occasional breaks until the present day.

Many of the inhabitants of Wherwell to-day are themselves good material for future publication!!

PRETTY WHERWELL

(A mental picture—seen somewhere in France—
by Pte. A. J. Parker, 031635).
(1914-1918 World War)

A. J. Parker left school at twelve years of age to work at the Priory, eventually becoming chaffeur to the Lady of the Manor.

In fancy I walk through the firs on the Mount,
And gaze on the elms too many to count,
The beeches that border the drive through the Park,
And hear overhead the song of the lark.

Below there's Will Smith raking weeds from the rack,
While hoping he'll not find a trout on its back;
Just watch with what care his footway he feels
Over the weir, dropping pots for the eels.

And elsewhere, over the top of the hill,
How lovely is nestling the old water mill;
And I ask our friend Carter, whose feeding the trout,
If that big one I knew is still swimming about.

In the tail of my eye I can just see the spire
Of the ivied old church where I helped in the choir;
And I thought of the people below in the nave,
And wondered how many more sleep in the grave.

A magnificent sight on a sweet summer's day
Is the Test, which is winding its silvery way;
I think of the wild duck which nest in the sedge,
And see Freddy Young at the gap in the hedge.

And gently the hill two motors descend,
And slacken their pace at the hairpin bend;
At the foot of the hill comes a man on a bike,
And all get a welcome from genial Fred Pyke.

I see woods in the distance with oak and with larch,
And Spratt's team of horses come under "first arch",
And woodman Will Monk works with saw in his hand,
And Sandom's just left with a cart full of sand.

The tower of the Priory above the trees shows,
And there's Freeland's below with its masses of rose,
The island in front where coots make their nest,
The "Seven Stars" in the distance, where labourers rest.

Was ever a place so peacefully blest —
From turmoil so free, so brimful of rest?
Serene and delightful; no poet could tell
Half the charms of my home, native Wherwell.

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