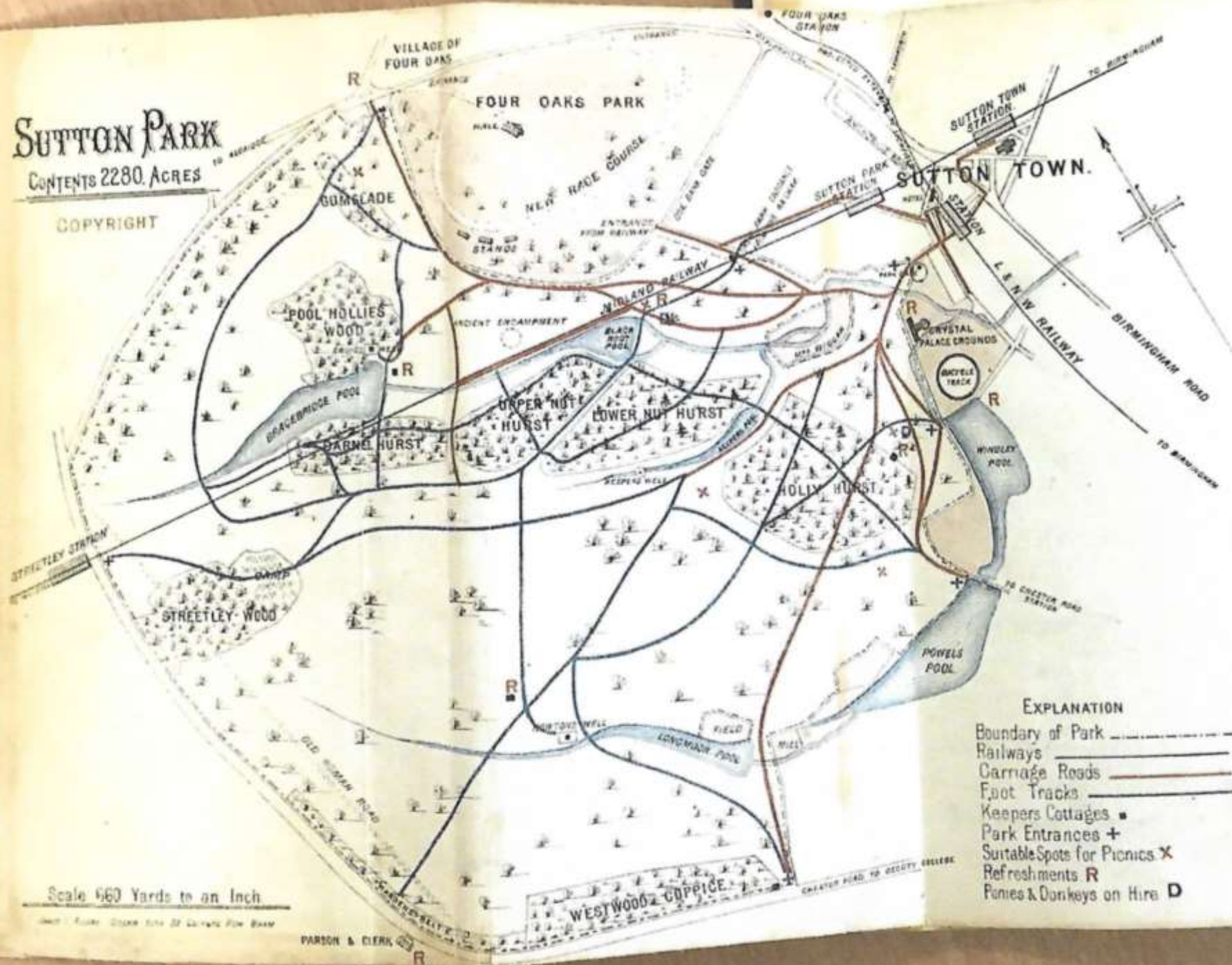


SUTTON PARK

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PARSON & CLERK

SUTTON COLDFIELD A HISTORY AND A GUIDE with a Coloured Map of Sutton Park and many illustrations, by Eliezer Edwards ("S.D.R.") Author of "Personal Recollections of Birmingham," "Life of Sir Rowland Hill," Etc. Etc. [Note 1]

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Sutton Coldfield

Chapter I. --- Introductory.

"God made the country, but man made the town"

Cowper. [Note 2]

Birmingham is fortunate in many respects. Its population is not so densely packed as in other towns. It is surrounded by pleasant suburbs, where its people may, at the cost of a short walk, get a glimpse of trees and greensward. Within easy distance are several public parks, freely open for public use and benefit, where town-dwelling folks may wander at will, comparatively free from dust and smoke, amid shrubs and flowers, and scenes as bright and lovely as nature and art combined can make them. These suburban parks, and their surroundings, are, however, but poor substitutes for woods and fields, where we can luxuriate in the fathomless ocean of pure air which floats above us in the open country. There thirsty veins drink in the mysterious invisible essence that gives tone to the nerve, colour to the cheek, and brightness to the eye. Thence, after a visit, men come back to dusty streets and dingy courts, with hopeful hearts and cheerful voices, as though they had caught some inspiration from the sprightly song of the thrush, or from the merry chirp of the grasshopper.

Thanks to the railways, Birmingham people can, easily, cheaply, and expeditiously, escape from the noise, the smoke, and the dust, into a purer air and brighter scenes. In half-an-hour, at the cost of a few pence, they can reach Sutton Coldfield, where, for an additional penny, the whole expanse of the glorious park will be made as free to them for the day, as though it were their own freehold. They can stroll across its broad moors, and wander through its woods and thickets; and they may listen to the song of birds, the babbling of brooks, or the murmur of waterfalls. They may lie supine upon some mossy bank and watch the pure white clouds as they glide across the unsullied blue of the sky. They may botanize; or they may hunt for rare and curious butterflies and moths, with which the park abounds.

As I write, the sound of a cheerful voice, the expression of a pale, thoughtful face, and the light of a bright intelligent eye, are fresh upon my memory. Their owner was a fellow-passenger with me in an evening train from Sutton. I did not speak to him upon the journey, nor he to me; but he had an excellent listener, who was --- as I gathered from their talk --- an apprentice in the jewellery factory where the elder one was a journeyman. I, too, as I hid my face behind a newspaper, listened with interest, and resolved that the wise talk of my pale friend --- jerked out at intervals, between whiffs from his short pipe --- should be embodied in this introductory chapter, as a specimen of the spirit in which a visit to Sutton should be undertaken.

I have said "wise talk"; but this man's was not *school wisdom*. It was that which Shakespear called "mother wit." Spoken with the broadest Birmingham accent, this was what he said, --- not continuously, as I am obliged to print it, but in short, and sometimes disconnected sentences:-

"When folks come to Sutton for a day's *out* it isn't so much the fresh air as does 'em good, it's the different sounds and sights what does it. Why, when I go through them woods, and hear the birds singin', and the wood pigeons cooin', and the rooks cawin' overhead, I feel as if they was a singin'songs

to me, like; on'y I don't understand the language. And then everything looks so bright an' cheerful, as it seems to raise your spirits an' make you feel cheerful too. Why the werry trees to-day seemed to enjie the fun; and when the wind come up all of a sudden out o' the valley and tickled 'em, they fairly shook a laughin'. Then there was that 'ere little brook, chatterin' an' rattlin' along just like a lot of children comin' out o' school, an' it looked as if the water were glad to get out o' the quiet pool, and be rushin' off somewhere. I'll tell yo' what, when I heerd all them noises together, --- the water, and the birds, and the rostlin' of the trees, and the buzzin' of the bees, --- it sounded to me jes' like a psalm, and I began a wonderin' whether the music in Heaven is like that, or whether the Angells sing like men and women do.

"When you was gone up, this arter-noon, to the Druids' Well for a drink o' water, I stood on that 'ere little bridge agen Bracebridge pool, lookin' at the water, and listenin'; and there was a stone lyin' in the stream, which the water seemed as if it were a tryin' to drive down a bit funder; and it came rushin' agen it, and wrostlin' with it, and kickin' it; an' I noticed as the noise as it made come round, now and agen, like the notes in a tune. Well, I made up some words as it seemed to say, like; an' it kep' on 'Get out o' th' way, get out o' th' way, get out o' th' way,' but the stone wouldn't move, an' daint; but some o' these 'ere days, there'll come a flood as'll move it, and then the water'll go free again. An' I been a thinkin' as there's many a man like that 'ere stone, as won't stir for anything or anybody, but by-and-bye, he gets a fever, or he breaks his leg, or summat happens as topples him over, an' shows him that there ain't nothin' i' this world, as can set itself up an' say 'I'll be master, I'll do as I've a moind.' "

As I wished him "good night" at New Street Station, I told him that I had been listening with much pleasure, and that I should put some of his sayings into print. At this he smiled and said "If I'd a' known as you was a takin' any notice, I shouldn't a' made such a fool o' myself;" and so we parted, and I found myself unconsciously repeating Longfellow's words

"Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught." [Note 3]

Chapter II. The Journey to Sutton.

"The massive engine stood, in front, and fiery red it shone,
And spat forth hissing steam, as if impatient to be gone;
One minute more, and like a ship just launched into the main
With unimpeded easy march, majestic moved the train." [Note 4]

New Street Station resounds suddenly with the shriek from the engine of our train as we move slowly towards the tunnel, dark into the darkness, and rush down the steep incline to pass under the girder bridge which carries the Great Western Railway. From this point we begin to rise until we get to level ground again near the ticket platform at Banbury Street. The Proof-house discharges a volley as we pass. We throw a hasty glance at the busy goods yard at Duddeston Row, and at the lofty stone building which was the Queen's Hotel, when the low shed near it was the terminus of the London and Birmingham Railway. We rattle across the wilderness of rails where the various lines diverge, and soon approach our first stopping place --- Vauxhall. As we slacken speed and look out upon the left we see a clock on the west front of a building. That plain brick structure was the booking office, forty years ago, when this was the Birmingham terminus of the Grand Junction Railway from Liverpool and Manchester. There the writer, in the year 1837, took his first railway ticket, and made acquaintance with a mode of travelling which was as strange to him then as a trip in a balloon would be now.

We rattle on again and are soon at Aston. The old Hall stands on the hill top, as it has for three hundred years, but the town has crept up to it, and the avenue of trees, which at one time reached down to the railway embankment and even beyond it, has been replaced by populous streets. The fine spire of the Old Church rises above the tree tops by the river Tame. Away to our right, on the top of a hill, we see a large building crowned by a tower and spire. This is the Aston Union Poorhouse, and although it is now so much to our right, the curve is so great that when we next stop it will be half-a-mile to our left. Those large pools on the right are the Corporation water works reservoirs, and the massive square buildings just beyond, are the sheds for the colossal engines which pump the water to the reservoir near Monument Lane, Edgbaston, four miles away, and at a higher level by two hundred and thirty five feet. We soon reach Gravelly Hill Station, the only one on this line in a cutting, all the others being upon high embankments. The station yard is prettily planted with flowers and shrubs. Our next stopping place is Erdington, and as we approach it, we see the square tower of the Church among the trees. The Station is nearly opposite the Roman Catholic Church, which is one of Pugin's very finest works, the spire being remarkably beautiful. On the left we see the great Catholic College at Oscott, crowning a fir-clothed hill. **[Note 5]** The next station adjoins the Chester Road, the old highway from London to that City, and thence to Ireland. It was busy once with coaches and posting, but is now comparatively deserted. On our right we see the lofty tower of Sir Josiah Mason's Orphanage, and if we are lucky as to time, as we stay, catch the sound of the clock chimes, the most musical in this part of the country. The institution is a most noble one. Hundreds of fatherless children are housed, clothed, educated, and otherwise well cared for within its walls, entirely by the self-sacrificing munificence of one man, whose bounty has so enriched it, that its provisions will be available for the benefit of generation after generation of orphans, for ever. **[Note 6]**

The next stopping-place is Wylde Green, where we give up our tickets. On an eminence to our left is the pretty church of Boldmere. A little to the right of the church we get a glimpse of one of the large pools or lakes of Sutton Park – Powell's Pool. Beyond is the far-famed group of trees known as Barr Beacon, standing on a lofty hill, whose summit has often shown the ruddy glare of the signal of danger, but at no time with a fiercer glow than when the Spanish Armada came in sight of England's western shores. Then from one end of the country to the other, hill answered to hill, and height to height, "Till" – as Macaulay sings –

"The proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Derwent's rocky dales:
Till, like volcanoes, flamed to heaven, the stormy hills of Wales;
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height;
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light;
Till bright and fierce the star came forth on Ely's lofty fane,
And town and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly towers the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on, through the broad vale of Trent,
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burnt on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle." **[Note 7]**

But our train has moved on, and we are in a deep and wide cutting, from the sides of which huge blocks of sandstone jut out. The exit from this cutting is singularly abrupt, the train being shot out, as it were, from the side of an almost precipitous rock to the top of a lofty embankment. We here catch our first view of Sutton, its gray church tower crowning the hill, with the fine Town Hall and the pretty turreted school buildings crouching at its feet. Their bright appearance, and sharp outlines, as seen in the clear atmosphere, strike one with surprise from the contrast with the dingy aspect of the big town we have left seven miles behind us. In two or three hundred yards we pull up at the Sutton station, where the line terminates at the foot of a precipitous rock. **[Note 8]**

As this little book is passing through the press, a bill is before Parliament authorizing an extension of this line of railway to Lichfield. It is proposed to tunnel under the town of Sutton, and to form another station near Four Oaks. **[Note 9]**

Chapter III. The New Line of Railway to Sutton.

“We’ll to Sutton Coldfield to-night.” – Shakespear. **[Note 10]**

The Midland line to Sutton gives an entirely new approach to the place, and, as it is comparatively little known, a short description may be interesting. The district through which it passes is entirely unlike the old route, which is skirted by houses for its entire length, whereas on this, there are probably not more than thirty or forty houses visible near the line, between Castle Bromwich and Sutton.

The Midland trains to Sutton run upon the Derby line as far as Castle Bromwich, from which station the line branches off to the left upon a bank, which rapidly rises until the rails are 30 feet above the level of the meadows. The line has been raised to obviate the dangers of level crossings; and it runs for about a mile across the broad valley of the Tame, the villages of Gravelly Hill and Erdington being visible upon the hills to the left. The embankment reaches to Minworth, where the Tamworth road and the Fazeley Canal are crossed. A little further on, in a deep cutting, is the station of “Penns.” **[Note 11]** This is the only station between Castle Bromwich and Sutton. It is close to the village of Walmley, and is very convenient for the residents of Penns Lane. Emerging from the cutting, a little further on, the line comes out upon a pleasant valley, on the right side of which, nestling among trees, is seen the ancient seat of the Chadwicks, which has been called New Hall for more than five hundred years. A flag is flying from the tower. A mile or two to the left of the line is seen another tower with a flag. This is the Mason Orphanage. A second deep cutting is entered, and when the line comes once more upon a bank the gray and venerable tower of Sutton Church is in full view. The line curves here very rapidly to the left, and soon enters the yard of the *Sutton Town Station*, which is about 150 yards from the central part of the High Street, with which it is connected by a newly-made road. **[Note 12]**

There is a second station three or four hundred yards further on, called the *Sutton Park Station*, which is very convenient to excursionists, inasmuch as they may go straight to the park without passing into a public road. The station is very commodious and will accommodate thousands of persons, without inconvenience or confusion. **[Note 13]** A private roadway leads from this station, by which visitors to the races and other sports at the new establishment at Four Oaks Park can proceed direct to the race ground, which is less than half-a-mile away. **[Note 14]**

Chapter IV. The Route to Sutton from Wolverhampton and Walsall.

“Pastoral images and still retreats,
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
Are all enchantments.” **[Note 15]**

Passengers to Sutton from the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton join the new line, at the present Midland Station at North Walsall. From the Dudley side, they pass through the South Stafford Station at Walsall, and run on the Lichfield line for about a mile, when they branch off to the right, and running up a steep incline unite with the Sutton line. From this point the line runs upon a very high embankment, and soon curves to the right around the hill upon which the pretty Church of Rushall is seen peeping from amongst the trees. A little beyond is the heaviest piece of engineering work upon

the entire line, a cutting more than a mile in length, through solid rock. The strata, which belong to the Upper Silurian series, are very curious and interesting. At the end of this cutting a valley is crossed by a high bank, from whence passengers will have a very extensive, but not very beautiful view of the Brownhills Colliery district, looking very black and grimy. This is the last that is seen of the Black Country. In a few hundred yards the line reaches the pretty rural village of Aldridge, and comes, all at once, into the pure air of an agricultural country.

After leaving Aldridge the line passes through a farming district, with few signs of human habitation; deep cuttings alternating with high embankments. From one of these embankments Shenstone may be seen in the distance. A glimpse may also be caught of the spire of the exquisitely beautiful Church of Little Aston, which the Hon. Edward Parker Jervis has recently built and endowed at a cost of something like £20,000. Near here we cross the old Chester Road, and soon afterwards enter the coverts of the Jervis estates, through which the line runs for nearly a mile, emerging close to the boundary of Sutton Park. Here the trains stop at "Streetly" Station, which is very extensive, the platforms being two hundred yards long. An entrance gateway to the Park is nearly opposite the Station. **[Note 16]**

The line now enters Sutton park, and about one hundred yards from the station crosses the old Roman road, overgrown with heather, but easily perceptible, being slightly raised, and having a shallow ditch on each side. The railway passes for a short distance over a morass, and then dashes into a cutting through a wood called Darnel Hurst; it then skirts an angle of Bracebridge pool, crosses a boggy valley upon an embankment which is continued along the margin of Black Root pool, and then enters a deep cutting. About the middle of this cutting is the "Sutton Park" Station. A few hundred yards further is "Sutton Town" Station, which is near the centre of the quaint and picturesque Royal town of Sutton Coldfield. Visitors to the park from the Black Country will find *Sutton Park Station* more convenient in most respects than the Town Station.

Chapter V. Historical – Before the Norman Conquest.

"My simple baldrick bears my bugle, or my horn,
Which setting to my lips, I wind so strong and shrill,
As makes the echoes shout, from every neighbouring hill." **[Note 17]**

The earliest historical fact, of which we have any definite knowledge in reference to Sutton, is the construction by the Romans of the great road called Icknield Street, which ran through the parish, and which can still be traced for three-quarters-of-a-mile within the park, emerging near the Streetly Station. It ran in nearly a straight line from Southampton to Newcastle-on-Tyne, and appears to have been an object of great terror to the Ancient Britons, who removed their dwellings and their houses to a distance from its course. So much was this the case that we are told that "there was not a house or a village standing near it between Perry Bridge and Chesterfield."

After a domination of nearly five hundred years in Britain the Romans finally retired about A.D.410, leaving the country in a state of complete anarchy. Forty or fifty petty chieftains, who were constantly quarrelling and fighting amongst themselves, held sway in different parts of the Island. The Scots and Picts, who had been kept at bay by the Romans, seized the opportunity, and again pushed their forces southwards. About the year 430, two warlike continental nations – the Saxons and the Angles – were invited by the Britons to assist them in driving back the northern invaders. With the aid of these stalwart allies the enemy was soon compelled to retire across the borders. The Saxons, however, seeing how fertile the country was, and how powerless the natives had become, turned upon their former friends, and drove them pell-mell into the fastnesses of Wales, taking possession of their country and their property. This accomplished, they divided the country amongst themselves, forming it into seven distinct kingdoms, under the general name of the "Saxon Heptarchy." This arrangement,

notwithstanding a good deal of occasional quarrelling and fighting, lasted for about four hundred years.

The kingdom of Mercia – one of the seven – comprised the Midland portion of the country, and extended into the eastern provinces. The kings had their chief palace at Tamworth, where they held their councils, administered justice, and established a mint. They had other residences, one of which was at Kingsbury, and another, a sort of hunting lodge, upon an eminence to the south of what is now Sutton Coldfield. This hunting lodge received the name of Southton, from the fact of its being nearly due south of Tamworth palace. This has been corrupted into the modern form of the name.

The Saxons were a fierce, cruel, and fearless race. They delighted in bloodshed, and when not engaged in actual warfare, allayed their sanguinary instincts by hunting and destroying the wild animals which then abounded in Britain. For hunting purposes the kings depopulated large tracts of land, which, under the name of “Forests,” were appropriated to the sports of the chase. The kings of Mercia had several such forests, of which that of Arden in Warwickshire was one, and another was Charnwood in Leicestershire. But the favourite hunting ground of the Mercian kings, from its proximity to the Royal palace at Tamworth, from its varied character, and from its large extent, was that which afterwards became known as the “Forest and Chase of Sutton Coldfield.”

Modern people have little notion of the enormous tracts of land set apart in those days for sporting purposes. To give some idea of the Sutton Forest, I will ask my reader to accompany me in an imaginary journey around its boundaries. We start from the western side of Barr Beacon Hill, where a small stream, called the Bourn brook, has its source. It flows through Weeford, and past Hynts Hill to Drayton, where it discharges itself into the river Tame. We now turn westward, and keeping to the course of the Tame, pass through Water Orton and Aston, to Perry Barr, where a stream called the Holbrook flows into the Tame. We leave the course of the Tame and turn northward along the banks of the Holbrook, and in a few miles reach its source at Great Barr, within a very short distance of our starting point. We have completed the circuit of the ancient forest. Our walk has extended to nearly fifty miles, and the area, whose boundary we have traversed, is more than fifty thousand acres.

With the exception of the kingly seat on the present Manor Hill, and a few huts scattered here and there for the use of foresters, verderers, and huntsmen, the whole of this vast tract lay wild and desolate. Except for the Roman roads, which crossed them, the moors were destitute even of bridle tracks. The forests were interspersed with woods and thickets, and the valleys were damp fenny bogs. Wild boars roamed through the bushes, and battened upon the acorns that fell from innumerable oaks. Wolves made their cozy lairs within the coverts. Herons competed with otters for the trout that glanced in the brooklets. The Crane, the Gray-lag Goose, and other water fowl, hatched their young undisturbed among the sedges and the water-lilies. Herds of wild cattle browsed on the broad plains, and countless deer sought shade from noonday heat under the spreading elms and oaks. The whole place was undisturbed by man save on the days when the yellow-haired Kings came hunting. At early dawn on these days a sharp blast of the horn of the chief huntsman was heard from the heights of Southton. In a few minutes the signal was taken up and repeated from hill to valley by the foresters, until the whole domain rung with the unfrequent sound. Not the musical note, however, of an artificial horn, such as we hear now-a-days, but the bellowing sound given forth by a real horn taken from the head of some gigantic ox.

At the well-known signal the retainers flocked from all parts of the forest to the royal court-yard, where piles of solid food and huge casks of the sweet and viscid ale of the period, awaited them, and were soon consumed. Then the King's Trumpeter gave the marching signal, and the cavalcade set forth like a little army. Bowmen came first. Then the spearmen, their weapons glittering in the sunlight. Next came the viewers and verderers leading, in couples, fierce hounds and wolf-dogs. Following them came the king, on horseback, accompanied by nobles and attended by a body-guard, all armed with spears and hunting swords. Finally, slowly toiling through the heather and the tangled thickets, came meek-eyed oxen drawing heavy wains, laden with food and drink. Arrived at the rendezvous the sportsmen separated into parties, each in pursuit of a different kind of game. The boar hunting, as the most noble sport, was reserved for the king and his friends. Bolder spirits tried

conclusions with the wolf; and others sought venison. Some pursued feathered victims such as the bustard, the wild swan, the black cock, wild ducks, and smaller game, and so throughout the live-long day the destructive work went on, amid the neighing of horses, the deep bay of the half-wild hounds, the sound of horns, and the shouts of men half frantic with excitement. Went on till sundown, and then, perspiring and weary, their heavy wains laden with the spoil, the tired huntsmen came slowly back to the royal seat. There by the lights of huge torches, the whole party, king, nobles, and servitors caroused together in the great hall, and talked over the chances and dangers of the day. At length – worn out with fatigue; heavy with the burden of hastily-swallowed masses of half-cooked flesh; and stupefied by the fumes of unbounded libations of the royal ale; they sank, one by one, to heavy slumber upon the litters of heath which had been placed around the room for their reception, as straw is now placed in stables for horses.

But the times changed, and these festive doings had to be abandoned. Troubles came over the land, and the sports of the chase had to be exchanged for more exciting pursuits. Kings and nobles met in fierce fight. Men were drained from farm and village to repel Danish invaders. Huntsmen and foresters had to abandon their huts, and the forests were left untended. Wild squatters came and took possession of the deserted cottages, and enclosed around them large plots of land unchallenged. The cattle were killed. Venison was plentiful. Hamlets began to appear; at first near the outskirts of the forests, but as time went on, upon fertile spots in the interior. The ancient seat of royalty at Southton becoming ruinous, some of the old retainers crossed to the opposite hill, and built for themselves houses with material from the decaying palace. In this way Sutton became a village.

When peace was once more established, the country was greatly impoverished, and the disjointed forests – now greatly reduced in area by encroachments – were a heavy charge upon the royal revenues, and very difficult to manage. The forest of Sutton was greatly disturbed by marauders, or poachers. It was therefore resolved to reduce the exclusive hunting ground to a comparatively small space, and to fence it in. A plot some two thousand acres in extent, of easy access from the hunting lodge was accordingly selected and enclosed. To distinguish it from the unappropriated lands outside, it was called the “Park,” a word which at that time simply meant “a place set apart,” or “fenced about.” The space so enclosed a thousand years ago, is, with a few trifling subsequent alterations of boundary, the present Sutton Park.

After finally defeating the Danes, Alfred the Great became the first “King of England.” He placed the government of the “province” of Mercia, in the hands of his daughter Elfrida and her husband Ethelred, who resided in great state at Tamworth for nearly fifty years. During that period large tracts of land in the forests were granted in fief to nobles and others. The condition of these tenures was that the holders were bound to serve their “Lord,” and to equip and support a certain number of men for the armies of the king. Under these circumstances the forest became once more the seat of population and industry. Hamlets sprang up around the homesteads of the principal “tenants in fee.” Roads were made, walls were built, and bridges were thrown across the streams. The district thrived, and at the time of the Norman Conquest contained many villages, in two of which – Wishaw and Middleton – churches had been built.

Chapter VI. Historical – William 1. to Henry VII.

A.D.1456

“The Earl of Warwick

The greatest man in England but the king.”

SHAKESPEAR. [Note 18]

A.D.1471

“Lo, now my glory smeared in dust and blood,
My parks, my walks, my manors that I had,
Ev’n now forsake me, and of all my lands
Nothing is left me but my body’s length.”

SHAKESPEAR. [Note 19]

William the Conqueror caused a survey to be made of his newly-acquired dominions. The greater portion of the record of this survey is still in existence, and is known as the Domesday Book. The amount of land under cultivation in each parish, and the annual value, are set forth. The land was estimated by a measurement called the “Hide,” the exact contents of which are now unknown, but have been variously estimated at 60 to 120 acres. In this book Erdington is estimated at three hides valued at 30s., a mill value 3s., and woods of considerable extent. Wishaw had two hides, a church, and some wood, the whole valued at 30s. Middleton had four hides, a church, and a mill valued at 20s., the entire valuation being six pounds. Sutton is rated at eight hides, “the woods extending two miles in length, and one in breadth,” the whole being valued at four pounds.

William retained Sutton in his own hands for about twenty years, when he granted it to one of his Norman followers, Henry de Beauchamp, whom he created Earl of Warwick. William Rufus confirmed the grant, and upon the death of Turchill, the last Saxon Earl, conferred upon the new Earl the whole of that unfortunate nobleman’s estates, which he had been allowed to retain during his life. The first Norman Earl was on terms of great friendship with the two sons of the Conqueror, Rufus and Henry, and died in the reign of the latter (A.D.1124). [Note 20]

The Earls of Warwick revived something of the ancient splendour of Sutton. They rebuilt the ancient Hall, which henceforth was called the “Manor House.” It was a place of great extent and magnificence, and was strongly fortified. A chapel stood within the precincts, and a kind of semi-regal status was maintained. The town of Sutton flourished. A weekly market and a yearly fair were established A.D.1300. The church was built, to accommodate the increasing number of inhabitants. A dam was thrown across the valley from Sutton to the foot of the Manor Hill, confining the waters and forming a lake which extended back nearly to the boundary of the park. A roadway for horses and vehicles ran at the foot of the dam, a small stream of surplus water flowing on the surface of the road near where Maney bridge now stands. Foot passengers could cross the valley upon the dam itself. A mill was built near the foot of the present Mill Street, the tenants of the Lord of the Manor being bound by their tenures to bring their corn to this mill to be ground. The Warwick family in the course of three or four generations became very powerful and enormously rich.

It has been stated by Warwickshire historians, from Dugdale downwards, that the Earl of Warwick was visited at the Manor House by King John, and that he, on the 7th of April 1208, issued a proclamation while visiting there; but this statement is altogether erroneous. An examination of the Records of John’s reign, shows that on the 4th of that month he was at Waverley Abbey in Surrey, and on the 6th, was at Guildford Castle. The proclamation dated the following day was probably issued from the hamlet of Sutton, in the parish of Woking, where the early Norman kings had a residence. It is about three miles from Guildford.

Earl succeeded Earl at Sutton Coldfield in due succession from 1086 to 1445 when Henry, the last Earl of the Beauchamp family died at the age of 22, leaving an infant daughter. Her death took place four years later, when the estates became vested in her father’s sister, who was the wife of Richard Neville, eldest son of the Earl of Salisbury. The earldom of Warwick, was conferred upon Neville, with remainder to the heirs of his wife. This Richard Neville was the powerful Earl of Warwick known in history as the kingmaker. [Note 21] After a life spent in intrigue and treachery, he was killed at the battle of Barnet, in 1471. With him fell the honours of a house which for four centuries had been one of the foremost in the kingdom. Even during his life, the king, Henry VI., to punish him for his treasonable practices had seized upon the Manor of Sutton. It was afterwards, by Henry VII., granted for life to the widowed Countess, but at her death, Sutton became once more a Royal domain.

The Warwick family being extinct, and their retainers having left Sutton, the impoverished inhabitants migrated to more prosperous places, and the town fell to decay. The markets were deserted, and at length the Manor House itself, the scene of so much magnificence, was pulled down. The materials were sold to Grey, Marquis of Dorset, who removed them to Bradgate in Leicestershire, where they were employed in building the mansion in which Lady Jane Grey was born a few years later.

Chapter VII. Historical – Sutton's Great Benefactor, Bishop Vesey.

"Why should his praise in verse be sung?
The name that dwells on every tongue
No minstrel needs." **[Note 22]**

William Harman, the father of the future bishop had a stone house near Moor Hall, in the Parish of Sutton, where four children were born to him. **[Note 23]** The eldest, John, resolved to enter the church. He became a student at Oxford in 1482, and was elected a fellow of Magdalen College five years later. He was afterwards professor of Civil Law, and took the degree of D.C.L. In 1495 Henry VII. granted him by patent the incumbency of the Chapel of St. Blaize, within the Manor House at Sutton, which had been held by his uncle, of the same name, for upwards of fifty years. In 1500 he was Vicar of St. Michael's, at Coventry, and Vicar-General of the diocese. In 1515 he assumed the name of Vesey, was made a prebendary of Salisbury, and was appointed tutor to the daughter of Henry VIII., who was afterwards Queen Mary of England. In the same year Vesey became Dean of Windsor, Registrar of the Order of the Garter, Domestic Chaplain to the King, Archdeacon of Chester and Barnstaple, and Precentor of Exeter. In 1516 he was Dean of St. Peter's Collegiate Church at Wolverhampton, and in 1519 he was consecrated Bishop of Exeter, one of the richest Sees in the country.

During Vesey's tenure of this bishopric, King Henry VIII. confiscated a very large proportion of its endowments, so that the See, which at one time possessed twenty-two manors, was left with only seven, and where there had been fourteen furnished residences for the bishop, only one was left. When Vesey resigned the See in 1550 the Bishopric of Exeter had become one of the poorest in the kingdom.

Vesey had a strong attachment for the place of his birth, and in the year 1527 he obtained from the king a grant of a large plot of land, upon which stood the house in which he was born. This house still remains, and has a curious round tower, containing a winding stone staircase leading to the upper chambers. About a quarter-of-a-mile from this old tenement, Vesey built himself a mansion suitable to his exalted station and great wealth, to which he gave the name of Moor Hall. Here he resided in great state, dispensing a splendid hospitality until his death. The greater part of the old hall was pulled down in the last century, and the present hall, the residence of Mr. Sampson Lloyd, was erected on its site. A portion of the kitchen and other domestic offices, and a small room, occupied by Mr. Lloyd as a study, are the only remaining portions of the original building. **[Note 24]**

In the year 1528, Vesey, presumably as some recompense for the alienation of some of the ancient endowments of his bishopric, induced Henry VIII. to grant a charter, bestowing the entire manor of Sutton Coldfield to a Corporation, in trust for the use of the inhabitants for ever. Under the provisions of this grant, the property is still held, and in accordance with one of its provisions the park still remains to show us and succeeding generations what an English forest was like in the days of our Saxon forefathers.

Vesey was a great benefactor to the town and neighbourhood from his own funds. He built two aisles to the church, and gave it an organ. He paved the streets of the town. He built a Free Grammar School, and a dwelling for the master, and endowed the school with a perpetual rent-charge for its support. He fenced the woods in the park, and repaired the decaying outer fences of the park itself.

He erected a large number of stone houses for the dwellings of the poorer people, and he built at his own expense two stone bridges over the Tame, one at Water Orton, and the other at Curdworth. In many other ways the bishop, with far-seeing philanthropy, tried to elevate the town and the people of Sutton. The roads in his time were dangerous to horsemen, by reason of the number of loose round stones upon their surface. The bishop employed poor people to collect these into heaps, and two hundred years after his death a large heap still remained on the road between Coleshill and Lichfield, near the 113th milestone, which even then was known as the bishop's heap of stones. He died suddenly at Moor Hall, in the year 1555, and was buried in the north aisle of Sutton Church, where a fine altar tomb to his memory was set up, containing a sculptured figure of a bishop in full episcopal dress. [Note 25] This ancient monument was taken down in 1748, and another, in the vitiated taste of the period, was substituted, the figure of the bishop being placed within a niche in the wall. A few years ago this too was removed, and that of which a view is given was erected.

[here there is a sketch of]
BISHOP VESEY'S ALTAR TOMB

The figure is the original one, and the inscription is the one set up in 1748, the first portion of which is supposed to have been copied from that on the earlier tomb. The following is a verbatim copy:-

"Beneath lie the remains of that pious and learned prelate John Harman, als Vesey, who was promoted by King Henry the 8th in ye eleventh year of his Reign to ye See of Exeter; was employed by Him on sundry Embassies; was Tutor to his then only daughter the Lady Mary; and President of Wales. So great was his Affection for this, his native place, that he spared neither Cost nor Pains to improve it, & make it flourish. He procured it to be incorporated by the name of a Warden and Society of the Kings Town of Sutton Coldfield, granting to them & their successors for ever, the Chase Park, and Manor.

He built two Isles to ye Church, and an organ; erected ye Moot Hall with a Prison under it and a Market-Place; fifty-one Stone Houses; two Stone Bridges, one at Curdworth, and one at Water Orton; paved ye whole Town; gave a Meadow to poor Widows; and for the improvement of Youth, founded and endowed a Free Grammar School which was rebuilt 1728.

He built Moor Hall, where he spent the latter part of his Life in Hospitality and Splendour; saw for many years the good Effects of his Munificence, and died in ye 103rd year of his age and in ye Year of our Lord MDLV

This monument, erected by John Wyrley of Hampstead in Handsworth Staffordshire Knt. to the Memory of the good Bishop his great uncle, was repaired and beautified by the Corporation in ye Year of our Lord MDCCXLVIII."

The inscription, it will be seen, states his age to have been 103, but this is probably erroneous, as there is reason for thinking that his age did not exceed 93.

During the restoration of the tomb the vault in which the remains of Bishop Vesey were interred, was laid open, and the contents exposed. The following account of the proceedings on the occasion is taken from the *Sutton Coldfield and Erdington News*, of August 28th, 1875.

"BISHOP VESEY'S MONUMENT

Mr. Cook, the sculptor employed in the restoration of the monument of the benefactor of the town, laid open the vault in which his remains were supposed to be deposited, on Wednesday morning last, in the presence of the Warden, the Deputy Stewards, the Corporation Surveyor, Messrs Wiggan and Hayward (members of the Restoration Committee), Dr. Lakin, the Rector, and Churchwardens. Upon raising the alabaster slab formerly enclosed by the iron railings, a vault was exposed six feet ten inches long, by two feet five inches broad, and two feet six inches deep. Upon the floor, lay a skull and various human bones scattered in the utmost confusion, having evidently been disturbed. The upper part of the skull, which was of a remarkably globular figure, lay at the western end of the enclosure, while the lower jaw, in which two teeth still remained, was at the east end. It may be added that the traces of

extreme old age were perceptible in the jaw bone, as, not only were the whole of the back teeth wanting, but the sockets were almost filled up with the growth of bone. The whole of the earth having been carefully sifted, and all fragments of bone picked out, the latter were placed in an earthen jar covered with stone, in which also a certificate of the facts (a copy of which we give below) was enclosed in a bottle; and the order was given to replace the earth, and turn an arch over the vault, for the purpose of supporting the monument.

COPY OF DOCUMENT

This writing is to commemorate the fact that, on the 25th day of August, A.D. 1875, the vault wherein the remains of John Harman, *alias* Vesey, were interred, was opened on the occasion of the restoration of the monument, by the Warden and Society of Sutton Coldfield, and the bones deposited in the earthen pan within which this writing is also enclosed, were the only remains discovered beyond the dust and earth covering them, which was also replaced in the tomb.

Witness the hands of those present,

Montague Webster, M.A., Warden.
W.K.R. Bedford, M.A., Rector.
John Wiggan.
Thomas Hayward.
J.H. Lakin, M.B.
J.H. Cull,)
Thos. S. Eddowes,) Churchwardens.
Henry Addenbrooke,)
Thomas V. Holbeche,) Deputy Stewards.
Richard Cook, Architectural Sculptor.
Charles Cooper, Corporation Surveyor." [Note 26]

Chapter VIII. Historical – From 1555 to 1880.

"Councils at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated." -- Lord Bacon. [Note 27]

The history of Sutton, from Vesey's death, can only be summarised. Some of his relatives were the first Wardens or Presidents of the Corporation; but the family seems to have become extinct soon after his death. [Note 28] From its formation to the present time, the Corporation has administered the funds with more or less faithfulness. Sutton was not included in the Municipal Reform Act of 1836, and its Corporation has been for 350 years a self-elected body. It has a privilege, which I believe is only possessed by one other Corporation – the City of London. This is the power to nominate two of its members to be "capital Burgesses," who by virtue of such election become Magistrates for life. These two, with the annually elected Warden, have the full power of justices of the Peace within the Manor, "excepting in matters touching life or limb." The Warden is Coroner during his year of office. The Corporation, including the Warden and capital Burgesses, consists of 25 persons. Great discontent has been frequently manifested at the secrecy and uncontrolled nature of their proceedings, and an appeal has been more than once made to Chancery, but the power still remains in their hands

Under the exclusive character of its government, Sutton has not materially advanced either in population or importance. In 1630 there were 298 houses in the parish, and in 1841 there were but 882. In 1638, when King Charles levied a tax called Ship Money, Sutton's assessment was only £20 less than that of Birmingham, and in 1665, when collections were made in all the Churches in the Kingdom for the relief of the Protestants of Piedmont, Sutton contributed £14, and Birmingham

£15.11s.2d. A comparison with Warwickshire's other "Royal" town – that of Leamington – is curious. In the year 1801 the population of Leamington was 315, and that of Sutton 2847. In 1871, Leamington had 17,402 inhabitants, and Sutton 4642.

A curious little volume of which the Rev. A. Smith has a copy, was published in 1762 entitled "The History of Sutton Coldfield, by an impartial hand." It has for a motto the lines:-

"Here dullness, universal dullness reigns
O'er brainless heads, and desolated plains."

The book is written in a very "free and easy" style, and gives details which cannot be reproduced. It mentions Rowton's Well, which is spelt "Rownton's," and it contains the following curious account of the manners and customs of the place:-

"No place was once more noted for hard drinking than Sutton. Scarce a night happened but most of the better sort of people assembled together, either at the public, or at some of their own houses. The only ambition was, who had the best tap of ale, and who could drink of it longest."

"But," the writer adds despondingly, "one extreme succeeded another. Assemblies are no more. The dear harmless quadrille* once adored, is now wholly neglected. Visits of form supply the place of friendly intercourse. Jealousy has superseded brotherly love. And upon the whole no place in the space of a dozen years has undergone a greater revolution, and that with this single advantage, I mean the health of individuals, who now drink, if they drink at all, in dark obscurity." [*footnote: This was not the *dance*, but a game at cards known by that name, played by four people. It was similar to whist, but the eights, nines, and tens, were thrown out, the pack being thus reduced to 40 cards.]

The writer of this curious little volume mentions some details of the great flood on July 24, 1668, which broke down the dam between Sutton and Maney, "completely draining Sutton pool." The water rising in the park, has, since that time been allowed to escape by the stream skirting Manor Hill. The bed of the ancient "Sutton pool" is now crossed by the railway embankment, and is gradually becoming covered with streets and houses. One old half-timbered house, facing the dam, still remains, the inhabitants of which must have witnessed the great flood of 1668. The house itself, as will be seen by the

[here there is a sketch of]
YEW TREE COTTAGE [Note 29]

annexed engraving, is in a very ruinous condition, and the roots of the old yew tree have so undermined the walls that their restoration seems impossible. Both would have disappeared long ago, but they were spared at the intercession of a Sutton lady. The embankment, occupying the site of the old dam, was constructed in 1826, at which time Maney bridge was also erected. The construction of this embankment has greatly improved the roadway leading to Birmingham.

Up to the year 1824, the large space known as the "Coldfield" lay waste and barren. In that year an Act of Parliament was obtained for enclosing it. [Note 30] Roads running perfectly straight were made through it, and the gorse and broom soon gave way to cultivated fields and pastures. The place, even now, is singularly free from large trees, but is rapidly losing its bare appearance, and villas are gradually springing up around the pretty church which stands in its midst.

Two years later, in 1826, Sir Edmund Hartopp, of Four Oaks Park, effected an exchange with the Corporation of Sutton, by which both parties were benefited. Sir Edmund acquired 63 acres of Sutton park adjoining the Four Oaks estate, and gave up in return 97 acres of pasture land, which were added to the park. Some of this lies on the northern margin of Powell's pool, and the remainder on both sides of the present town entrance to the park. Sir Edmund, as part of the bargain, made the present roadway from the town to the park gate. The nearest approach before that time was by the narrow and steep lane leading to the dam of Windley pool.

Chapter IX. The Town.

“Know old Sutton? Hope you do.
Born there? Don’t say so! I was too.”

Sutton Coldfield is on the extreme north-west of the County of Warwick. The boundary between Staffordshire and Warwickshire passes through the parish, and that portion of the park which lies to the west of the old Roman Road is in Staffordshire. The town stands upon a sandstone rock. The Manor Hill is a similar rock, rather more than a quarter-of-a-mile away. It is probable that these two rocks, the strata of which are alike, were at some early geological period united by a continuation across the valley. If this were so, the space to the south and west of the present town, including the low-lying portions of the park, must have been occupied by an extensive lake, dotted here and there with many islands. Some convulsion of nature probably made the breach in this continuous hill, allowing the pent-up waters of the lake to escape towards the valley of the Tame, through which they would flow to the sea by way of the Trent and the Humber.

Sutton, standing as it does on the edge of the almost precipitous chasm thus formed, has a singularly picturesque appearance. As we stand within the grounds of the Manor House on the opposite hill, the prospect is of great beauty and wide extent. **[Note 31]** Down in the valley immediately beneath us, nestling under the cliffs of the rock, are numerous pretty villas with a sparkling stream curling through their gardens. The valley between us and Sutton is crossed by two embankments, one of which carries the Birmingham road. The use of the other is soon apparent, for as we look, a puff of steam rises, as it were, from beneath our feet, and a long train of carriages comes out suddenly from the hill, and crosses to the opposite side, where its further progress is hindered by a solid rock in front. Along the face of this rock wide terraces have been cut and planted, so that it looks like a great bower of evergreens. The top is fittingly crowned by the Royal Hotel, an elegant building, whose quaint tower and curious “mansard” roofs stand out sharp against the sky. **[Note 32]** A little to the right the town is seen, looking quite panoramic as it basks in the golden sunlight, and in the pure atmosphere. At the base of the hill upon which the town stands – crouching completely under the cliffs – is a pretty modern building with gables and a turret. This is one of the corporation schools. Almost adjoining it, but on a little higher level, is the Town Hall, an ornate building in the later Tudor style. **[Note 33]** It has a lofty campanile and clock. On the ground higher than the roofs of these buildings, and immediately beyond them, stands the venerable Parish Church, whose time-worn and picturesque tower rises above all and fitly closes the view. Grouped all around these edifices, peeping here and there from amongst trees, and occupying every nook and “coign of vantage” are the old-fashioned and quaint dwellings of the Sutton people.

To the far right the eye ranges over a rich valley enlivened by streams, and bounded by rising ground, the slopes of which are rich in sylvan beauty, and dotted here and there with houses and cottages. The newly-made Midland line of railway runs through this valley. In the opposite direction, towards the south and west, the view is altogether of different character. The park is immediately below us, its glades and woods spread out like a map. To our left is the college of Oscott, standing in strong relief against the dingy cloud of smoke that hangs over Birmingham. In front of us we catch a glimpse of Four Oaks Park. Our range of view is very extensive, and it has one great charm – in all that broad expanse there is not a factory chimney visible.

Chapter X. Sutton Church.

“On a glorious Sabbath day,
In the church so old and grey,

I heard the words of mercy falling on my soul like balm,
And the glorious notes of music, and the rich and solemn psalm.” **[Note 34]**

The date of the foundation of the church is not accurately known, but the style of the architecture of its older portions suggests the 13th century. It is dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and originally consisted of tower, nave, and chancel only. Bishop Vesey considerably enlarged it, adding a north and a south aisle. He also contributed land to provide funds to defray the cost of service by a properly ordained priest three times a week. When Henry VIII., however, began to confiscate church property, the bishop very wisely diverted the gift, devoting it to the establishment of schools for the children of the parish.

The church having gradually fallen into decay, the Corporation, about 150 years ago, resolved to apply some portion of their income to its repair. They thoroughly restored the church, and placed in the tower a clock and a peal of six bells. A London newspaper of the period in mentioning this subject, says:-

“The Corporation of Sutton Coldfield, in Warwickshire, instead of spending the income of their estate in what is called Good Living, have nobly expended fifteen hundred pounds in repairing, beautifying, and new-pewing the church. An example worthy of other rich bodies. But though the inhabitants have been at no expense, some of them are very wisely quarrelling about who should sit in the uppermost seats, and the affair is already got into the Spiritual Court at Lichfield, but when it will come out again is no easy matter to determine.”

It did, however “come out,” for a local paper in 1766 tells us that –

“We hear from Lichfield that on Tuesday and Wednesday last several Causes which had been long depending in the Bishop’s Court concerning the seats in the church of Sutton Coldfield, in this county, came on to be heard before the Worshipfull Richard Smallbrooke, Esquire, Doctor of Laws, and Chancellor of that Diocese, who was pleased to declare his Approbation of the Conduct of the Persons concerned in the disposition of the Seats, and to confirm the Allotment thereof.”

During the incumbency of the present rector, the Rev. W. K. R. Bedford, considerable alterations and improvements have been made in the church. A new vestry has been erected and the chancel has been fitted up with some fine carved oak stalls and canopies, removed from Worcester Cathedral, where they had been placed by Bishop Fleetwood in the reign of Charles II. As this little book is passing through the press, further alterations are, by the munificence of the rector, and at his sole cost, being effected. An additional north aisle has been added; the large projecting western gallery has been removed. The tower arch has been opened, and the original western entrance restored. These alterations add greatly to the beauty of the interior, and to the convenience of the worshippers.

Bishop Vesey was buried in this church, and an elaborate monument was placed by his family over his remains. An engraving and full description of the tomb will be found in the seventh chapter of this book. There are many other monuments, ancient and modern, within the church, the only one of historic interest being that to the memory of George Sacheverel, of New Hall, in the parish of Sutton, a relative and patron of the celebrated Jacobite preacher who created so much mischief and excitement in the days of Queen Anne, by preaching against the Whig Ministry. **[Note 35]**

The ancient font, represented in the annexed illustration, is a curious specimen of Norman workmanship, and has a singular history. It originally stood in the church at Over Whitacre, from which it was removed in the last century to make room

[here there is a sketch of]
THE FONT

for a modern one. For some years it was used as a horse block at the inn at Shustoke. Here, Mr. Sadler, of Sutton, saw it some years ago, and bought it to ornament his garden. It was presented to Sutton Church by his son, who died in 1836. **[Note 36]**

The east window of the Church is enriched with some good stained glass by Gibbs of London. Its principal feature is emblematic of the Trinity, and there are figures of John the Baptist as a prophet; of St. Peter as an Apostle; of St. Paul as a Martyr; and of Bishop Vesey as representing the church on earth. It also contains five lights, illustrative of the life of Christ from the annunciation to the crucifixion. The south-west window has also some good stained glass by Ballantine of Edinburgh. The Church-yard contains the grave of Mary Ashford, a servant girl, who was foully murdered in the parish of Sutton, in the year 1817. Some incidents connected with the trial of the supposed murderer created great excitement at the time, and led to the abolition of the ancient ordeal called the "Wager of Battel." The supposed murderer was acquitted, although there was a strong presumption of his guilt. He afterwards, it was believed, emigrated to America. The brother of the girl – a milkman in Birmingham – died a very few years ago at a great age. **[Note 37]**

Chapter XI. The Grammar School.

"Then the whining school-boy with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school."

SHAKESPEAR **[Note 38]**

When Bishop Vesey discontinued his allowance to Sutton Church in 1544, he conveyed the lands from which the income was derived, to the Warden and Corporation, in order that they might establish a school in the parish, and "provide a learned *layman* fit and Skilful to teach Grammar and Rhetorique." No word in the grant limited the use of the school to any class. It was to be a public school in the fullest sense of the term, and it was amply endowed. The trustees, however, after the good bishop's death, shamefully abused their powers for their own benefit, being guilty of all sorts of tricks and devices to cover their knavery. In order to prevent the successive schoolmasters from complaining, it was their custom when a new one was chosen, to elect him a member of their own body before he could become acquainted with the rights of his position. By thus making him a partner, his mouth was stopped, and however unwilling he might be, he had no power to prevent the others from granting long leases of the school properties to their children and their friends at nominal rents. "Thus," says Dugdale, "was the pious intent of the well-meaning founder abused." The result of these malpractices was that the Lord Chancellor in 1634 took the management of the school out of

[here there is a reproduction of the]
OFFICIAL SEAL AND SIGNATURE OF
BISHOP VESEY *

[and another of]
BISHOP VESEY'S SIGNATURE †

the hands of the Corporation, and established a fresh trust consisting of thirteen persons, who were to keep up that number by electing others as vacancies occurred. This trust remains in force to the present day. **[Note 39]**

* Half size; copied, by permission of the Rev. A. Smith, from the Grammar School Charter.

† Exact size. The mark on the left represents a crosier. The signature proper is – "Jo. Exon," meaning *John* [Bishop of] *Exeter*.

The term "*Grammar School*," in the last century, was held to mean a *classical* school only. Modern languages, and other matters, were left pretty much to chance. The masters of Sutton School, although drawing a yearly stipend from the trust fund, had very few "foundation" scholars. They were not idle, however, for being allowed to receive boarders, they generally had a number of other pupils, whose parents paid school fees. To show the abuses that existed, it may be mentioned that a return

made to the House of Commons in 1840, stated that “The master was unable to give a list of the [foundation] scholars, and could not tell accurately how many had attended in each year for twenty-two years.” He “*believed* that up to 1829 there were usually three or four; since that time five or six, and on the 7th of June, 1840, there were seven.” The report of a public meeting held 27th May, 1843, stated that “at the recent death of the master, there was only one [foundation] boy in the school.” The result of the agitation then made, was that a decree of the Court of Chancery enlarged the scope of education in the school, and made other provisions for its future management. **[Note 40]** The school buildings were enlarged in 1863, so as to accommodate fifty boys, and they are now far too small, the number of pupils being about 80. These pupils whose parents live in the parish, pay 10s. per quarter; other day scholars pay £2 10s. per quarter. The master is allowed to take boarders, and has the power to appoint an assistant master at a minimum salary of £100. The Rev. Albert Smith is the Head Master, and is deservedly popular. **[Note 41]**

Chapter XII. The charity Schools.

“ ‘Twas in the prime of summer time,
 An evening calm and cool,
 I saw some happy boys and girls
 Come bounding out of school;
 There were some that ran, and some that leapt
 Like troutlets in a pool.” **[Note 42]**

In the year 1825 there was a large sum of money, which had been derived from the Sutton properties, lying in the Court of Chancery. In that year the court made a decree disposing of the money by the establishment of schools in the parish for the gratuitous instruction of poor children, male and female. A large proportion of the children were also to be clothed at the expense of the fund. Under this decree three schools were immediately erected, one in the town of Sutton, one at Walmley, and another for the hamlets of Hill and Little Sutton. At various times since that date other schools have been established at Boldmere, Roughley, and Maney.

Up to the year 1870 schools for infants, although conducted in the Corporation buildings, received no pecuniary support. Since that year they have been under the same management, but the infants pay small fees. Infant Schools have been built, at the cost of the Corporation, at Walmley, Maney, Merepool, and Roughley. All the Corporation schools are visited periodically by the Government Inspector. The total number of pupils is between 800 and 900, and the expenditure from the Corporation funds for purposes connected with these schools in the year 1876 was £1,781.11.9d. The accounts of the Grammar School are kept and audited separately.

Chapter XIII. The Town Hall and the Corporation.

“All is spent
 In soothing sorrow, and in quenching strife,
 In aiding helpless indigence; in works
 From which at least a grateful few derive
 Some taste of comfort in a world of woe.” **[Note 43]**

The Moot Hall, or Town Hall, as was stated a few pages back, stands at the foot of the church hill, adjoining the road to Birmingham. It was designed by Mr. George Bidlake of Wolverhampton, and

was built in the year 1859, at a cost of £4,400. Part of the expense was defrayed by the London & North Western Railway Company, in consideration of their being released from the obligation to make a railway through Sutton to Lichfield. The building, besides the apartments required for Corporation purposes contains, a large and handsome assembly room, which is used occasionally for concerts, public meetings, and lectures. This, and other rooms, may be hired on reasonable terms. There is also a library and public news-room, which is open to visitors on payment of a penny fee. The antique halberds, and other quaint weapons used by the ancient watchmen, are preserved in the Town Hall, and on Trinity Monday in each year are taken out for an airing, borne by eight of the oldest men of the place, who, tottering under the weight of these obsolete weapons, and headed by the Town Serjeant, in curious green velvet costume, carrying the silver mace of the Warden, walk in procession to the spot where the annual fair is proclaimed.

[here there is a sketch of the]
THE TOWN HALL

The income of the corporation is entirely derived from the trust property. Nothing is obtained from rates. Besides the various farms and dwellings, there is large funded property. Considerable additions to the income are made by the sale of timber, entrance fees to the park, and from various other minor sources. The total income is about £3000 a year.

After defraying the necessary expenses, and paying the corporate officers, the surplus is devoted to educational and charitable uses. The schools, as we have seen, absorb about half the income. Besides this, there are twenty almshouses, for aged people, ten of which are in the town of Sutton, and ten are distributed in the various hamlets. The inmates are rent free, and have an abundant supply of fuel. If single they are paid 15s a month, and if married 25s. Fifty pairs of blankets are distributed yearly. A Lying-in Charity is supported. Children are occasionally, upon leaving school, if boys, apprenticed; or, if girls, well clothed upon going into service. Four marriage portions of £25 each are given to deserving maidens of the parish. An annual dole of £2 each to fifteen widows is made, and various other benefactions, direct and indirect, are provided for. It is calculated that in various ways there are more than a thousand people at the present time who derive benefit from the ample properties bestowed by Bishop Vesey, the funds of which are dispensed by the Corporation.

Chapter XIV. The Park.

"If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou would'st forget;
If thou would'st read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting, and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! – No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears." **[Note 44]**

Sutton's great attraction is the glorious Park, which lies to the south and west of the town. Its area, including the pools, is 2,082 acres, and its boundary fence is about eight miles in circuit. With the exception of rocks and mountains, it contains almost every description of scenery. Hill and valley, wood and thicket, heath-covered moors, mossy dells, umbrageous groves, babbling streams, emerald pastures, and placid lakes, alternating upon its broad surface, give infinite change and boundless variety. If a visitor expects to see a modern Park – if he hopes to find the mathematical accuracy of Hampton Court or Bushey, he will be disappointed, for nothing is formal here. **[Note 45]** He may hide

himself in thickets that have been thickets for centuries; he may encouch himself amid bracken, growing upon soil undisturbed by the ploughshare since the creation; he may traverse a moss-covered road along whose surface Roman cohorts marched with glittering spears and gleaming helmets seventeen hundred years ago; he may refresh himself with the waters of Rowton's well, which have had a reputation for their healing virtues from the time of the Saxon kings; or Ancient Britons, perhaps before the advent of the marvellous Babe of Bethlehem. But he will find here no shaven lawns; no artfully contrived grottoes or fountains; no classic urns or monumental columns; no avenues of stately ancestral elms rigid in their grim formality; and indeed little of man's work, and that little merely enhancing the natural features of the place, and making them more accessible. So marvellous is the diversity of the surface of the park, and so entirely differing from each other its various places of beauty, that any attempt to describe it as a whole must be a failure. All that can be done is to point out to visitors some of its chief charms, and that will perhaps be best accomplished by asking the reader to permit us to be his guide in two or three imaginary walks through some of its most attractive portions. We advise him, however, to take the map only for his guide, and stroll through the woods just as his fancy may lead him, assuring him that at every turn he may take he will find ever-changing varieties of lovely scenery.

Chapter XV. A Walk in the Park.

"To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven – to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament." [Note 46]

Entering the Park by the Town gate we cross the little bridge, and take the left-hand road. At the point where the pasture suddenly ceases, and heath and gorse appear, there are a few hollies and trees forming a broken line towards the Crystal Palace gardens. [Note 47] This was the ancient boundary of the park at this spot. The whole of the meadow land through which we have passed was added to the park in 1826. [Note 48] The pretty cottage and grounds on the right, now occupied by Mrs. Wiggan, were, up to that date, outside the park fence, and are still private property. [Note 49] Where our road curves to the west at the top of the hill we come to a spot from which we may get a charming view of the town and its surroundings. The Church tower and the Town Hall on the right, and the hotel to their left, form fitting frames to the picture. Looking across the Crystal Palace gardens we see pretty villas perched on the side of Manor Hill, which is crowned by the picturesque Manor House itself. Towards the west we look upon a verdurous glen between the hills, clothed to their very summit with trees of varied hue. The green carpet of the valley is dotted here and there with cattle in all sorts of picturesque attitudes. Some are grazing, some contentedly reclining, and others bathing in a sparkling streamlet; the waters of which fall in a cascade over the embankment of Blackroot Pool, whose placid surface is seen through openings in the foliage, glinting like a mirror. This is one of the most beautiful "bits" of scenery in the whole park.

As we follow the newly-formed road, we skirt the fence of the glorious old wood known as Holly Hurst, which is intersected in every direction with delightful meandering footways. We, however, keeping outside, beneath abundant shade of oak and holly, come presently to Keeper's Pool, glorious woods rising on both sides from its very margin. We keep straight on, and see on our right a small fenced enclosure. Inside is Keeper's Well, a fine spring of limpid water rising within a circular wall, whose margin it overflows at the rate of some twenty or thirty gallons per minute. A little further on, just as the valley broadens, and becomes heath-clothed, there are, on the rising ground to the left, the remains of some ancient earthworks, well placed for defending the passage to the high ground.

When we go higher still, we arrive at a heath and gorse covered plateau, from which there is a very extensive view over a wild and weird district, scarcely a building being visible. Right in front is Streetly Wood, which, when we were last upon the spot, looked exactly like a churchyard full of gravestones. These were, however, neither graves nor stones, the tents of the volunteers who were then in Camp caused the illusion. We pass into the wood, and arriving at the Roman road, turn to the left, and walk upon its surface for some half-a-mile, when, coming to a footway, we follow it to our right through a gate into the old Chester Road. A little southwards from this gateway is a clean and respectable tavern – the “Royal Oak” – better known, however, as the “Parson and Clerk,” which we enter and refresh ourselves with some home-baked bread, delicious cheese, and home-brewed, nut-brown ale, whose flavour, after our long walk in the fresh air, seems unequalled, and whose tonic properties give us new vigour to continue our stroll.

Resuming our walk southwards along the road, we soon come to “Banners Gate,” and re-enter the precincts of the park. We pass Longmore Pool and the pretty water mill turned by superfluous waters. To the right is Powel’s Pool, its water sparkling in the sunlight. Beyond is Boldmere Church and the Orphanage. We climb the hill in front of us and enter the far-famed wood called Holly Hurst, one of the most beautiful woods in the park. If we are young, we probably start off in couples to range through some of its innumerable walks, to gather bluebells and primroses, and to listen to the songs of the birds and the sighing of the breeze. If we are older, we make our way straight onwards to the keeper’s pretty cottage, which stands on the outskirts of the wood overlooking the town, where we sit in the open air and refresh ourselves with tea or coffee which is provided by the keeper’s family. As we sip of the cup that cheers but not inebriates, we look upon the lovely prospect that lies before us, and listen to the merry sounds of the youngsters as they gambol upon the smooth greensward amongst the holly bushes. Then we have a quiet cigar; muse over the pleasant scenes and circumstances of a happy day, and stroll quietly back to the neat and cleanly station, where we enter the train which whirls us back in half-an-hour to the noise and bustle of Birmingham.

Chapter XVI. A Second Walk in the Park.

“Think! their sad lives of want and gloom
But rarely meet a sunny ray,
And none perchance that e’er illumine
So brightly as a holiday.” [Note 50]

Travelling by the Midland line we *pass through* the SUTTON TOWN Station, and alight two or three hundred yards further on at the SUTTON PARK Station, upon Tudor Hill, to the west of the town of Sutton. This station has been established expressly to accommodate the excursion traffic. It is well planned for its intended purpose, and is extensive enough for the reception and despatch of a very large number of passengers. Large, lofty, and properly furnished waiting rooms for each class are provided on both sides of the line. There are three platforms of great capacity, the length of each being nearly two hundred yards, and the width varying from twenty to fifty feet. There is room within the station fences to provide “sidings” where twenty or thirty trains may remain in waiting for their return journeys. The wise provision of a distinct station for excursion traffic will obviate confusion and delay, in cases of extraordinary influx of visitors, and no doubt will, at such times, attract many who have hitherto been kept away by the dread of the difficulty and delay in getting home.

A light lattice bridge crosses the whole width of the station, having approaches from each platform. Descending the steps at the north end of this bridge we emerge upon a newly-made road, leading directly to the park. We pay our penny at the wicket, and find ourselves about one-third of a mile from the northern bank of Blackroot pool, so well known as a favourite spot for pic-nics and pleasure

parties. This is one of the most convenient spots in the park for such purposes. Its cool, smooth greensward; the cozy nooks among the holly bushes; the daily attendance of women who provide hot water and fresh milk, and who are always ready to perform other little services, are attractions which numbers appreciate. Then there are swings for the children, and ponies or donkeys for those who are more ambitious. There is one other recommendation – its central position makes it convenient as a starting-point for any of the other objects of interest within the park.

As we, in our second walk, approached this point, we found there some four or five hundred visitors, all in the highest state of delight. A tent from which many flags were flying stood in the centre. Twenty or thirty “drags,” and numerous private vehicles of various descriptions, were arranged around, and some fifty or sixty horses were tethered here and there. Long tables were arranged beneath the trees, and the commissariat seemed pretty well officered, for there was no lack of anything in that department. We noticed that a majority of the females wore gowns of a blue and white striped material, and that most of the men and boys were dressed in drab corduroy. Fair and elegantly dressed ladies, with happy faces, moved about, and benevolent-looking gentlemen gazed on approvingly. Upon enquiry, we found that it was the annual pic-nic of the inmates of the Walsall Union Poor-house. By the bounty of the inhabitants of that town, nearly three hundred of the paupers had been brought in carriages to this spot to be feasted abundantly with unaccustomed fare, and to have one day of true enjoyment. The Corporation of Walsall had granted the use of the police band for the occasion, and at the sound of a merry tune, the majority of the party, young and old, rich and poor, all at once, and immediately, joined in it; how the wrinkled face of an old woman of nearly eighty, lighted up when one of the Guardians asked her to dance with him; how she left the short pipe she had been smoking, and joining her kindly hearted partner, skipped merrily to the sounds of the music, were sights to thoroughly enjoy; and it was touching, when an old man, bent nearly double, came up, touched his hat, and said, “Yo’ see that old ‘oman a dancin’ with that ‘ere genelman in the white hat, Sir? Well! her’s my wife, an’ her’s seventy-seven.” The old man seemed so proud and happy, that we could but regret that opportunities such as this were not more frequent. Happily it was one of the few fine days the summer of 1879 afforded, and happy indeed must have been those from whose voluntary bounty such a gleam of sunshine was made to shine into the hearts of the poor recipients of their beneficence.

But we must get on with our walk. Passing down to the margin of Blackroot Pool, the most beautiful of all the pools in the park, of which an engraving will be found at page 66, we call at Mr. Phillips’ booth and get some light refreshment. **[Note 51]** We cross the dam, upon which several patient fishermen are plying the “gentle art.” One shows us a fine tench, some three pounds in weight, which he has just landed, the bronze coloured sides of the fish still bright with the metallic lustre which this fish possesses only in life. Two gentlemen in a punt in the middle of the pool seem very successful, for as we pass we see the capture of three victims, but are too far off to see what they are.

At the end of the dam we pass up the broad roadway which divides the Upper from the Lower Nuthurst, where we find the shade of the noble over-hanging oaks very grateful. The upper portion of this roadway is one of the most delightful avenues the park possesses. Its broad and level surface of greensward is pleasant to walk upon; the ever-varying character of the foliage on both sides is refreshing to the eye; and the ear is charmed with the notes of the birds which seem more numerous in this part than in any other locality within the park fences.

Arriving at the open moor, we turn to the left, and skirt the margin of Lower Nuthurst until we come in sight of Keeper’s Pool. We turn a little to the right to avoid the swampy ground, and passing Keeper’s Spring come to the dam of the pool where we rest awhile, and watch the antics of some water fowl. We then pass through the turnstile into Hollyhurst, passing up the beautiful walk called *The Glade*, for nearly the length of the wood. We turn down the opening to the left, and shortly emerge upon the Brownhills, near the keeper’s lodge mentioned in our first walk, and from thence we stroll quietly back towards the town. At the Station Hotel, in the long and pleasant up-stairs room, we refresh ourselves with tea and substantial accompaniments, provided in Mrs. Stent’s well-known liberal and admirable manner, and served by Martha, the most cheerful and attentive of waiting

maids. **[Note 52]** This over, we light our cigars, and at the sound of the railway bell cross the yard to the North Western Station, where we catch a train and are soon at home, feeling all the better for our day in the glorious old park.

Chapter XVII. A Third Walk in the Park.

“Let us gently rove
Through the deep-bosomed holly grove,
To rest us on some rustic stool,
By the guarded oaks of Bracebridge Pool.
Thence onward wander through the wood,
Half sunshine and half shade;
And stay not till our feet have stood
On the green slope and sacred sod
Of beautiful Gumslade.” **[Note 53]**

Travelling by Midland Railway we alight at the Streetly Station, and entering the park immediately opposite come upon the Roman road within a short distance from the entrance gate. Following the track marked in blue upon the map we soon arrive at the camping ground of the Volunteers in Streetly Wood. Here we turn to the north-east, and enter upon a wild, breezy moor, crossed by the slight embankment of the railway. Keeping this to our left, and not being very particular as to a few furze bushes, we make our way to Darnel Hurst, rousing the ire of sundry peewits as we go. When we reach the wood, and enter one of its winding walks, we are well repaid. The sylvan glory of the scene is past description. Jays and wood pigeons flutter across our path. From some tall tree-top the song of the thrush comes to our ear flute-like in the clearness of its notes, each cadence being thrice repeated. We involuntarily recite Browning’s exquisite lines ---

“The careful thrush who sings his song thrice over,
Lest we should think he never could re-capture
That first fine careless rapture,” **[Note 54]**

and so we pass on, and see ferns bursting through the leaf-covered soil on every side, each emerging frond looking like the gothic finial of a bishop’s crook. The dog-rose and the honey-suckle perfume our path; and nimble squirrels jump from tree to tree, over our heads. Presently the roar of a railway train on our left startles us and we see a long string of carriages pass. We cross the railway by a bridge and find ourselves on the dam of Bracebridge Pool. Here we rest ourselves awhile upon a rustic bench, and lighting our cigarettes, gaze upon the beautiful lake, bordered with verdure to its very edge, and dotted here and there with merry water-fowl. Continuing our walk along the dam, we pass the keeper’s cottage, and turn down a winding walk which skirts its little garden, to see the waterfall which so inspired the Birmingham jeweller mentioned in the introductory chapter, and of which the annexed engraving is a correct

[here there is a sketch of a]
WATERFALL

representation. Its rustic beauty might well awake the enthusiasm of our humble friend. The engraving is from a drawing by Mr. Frederic Davis, of No 57, New Street, Birmingham.

Returning by the same path, we enquire at the cottage for the Druids' Well. Following the directions we receive, a walk of about a hundred yards into the depths of *Pool Hollies Wood* brings us in front of a gothic-arched recess, overhung with wild roses, honeysuckles, and hollies, and surrounded by ferns. This is the famous Druids' Well, and of which an engraving is given at page 5. We retrace our steps for a short distance and, coming upon a pathway, turn abruptly to the left, pass through the wood for a time, and then, emerging, follow the track upon the moor, until we find ourselves near the entrance to Gumslade, the gem of the whole park. We pass up the lovely glade, overhung with massive oaks and beeches, and skirted on each side with shelving banks laden with sylvan beauty. These banks are full of cozy nooks and natural harbours. Hollies group themselves into all imaginable forms of loveliness, and form hiding places so secluded, that they might remain unexplored for years. Between the groups of evergreen the ground is carpeted with the most exquisitely soft greensward. Near the summit of the glade, the open spaces are more expansive, and here is the *beau ideal* of a camping ground for a picnic. Open and smooth lawns for dancing, plenty of shade, and cozy nooks for the seniors, capital tethering ground for the horses, and grand plots on which to "lay the cloth." And then it is within five minutes' run of the village of Four Oaks, where at Mr. Jackson's well-known comfortable hostelry, the Four Oaks Inn, refreshments of all kinds, and assistance of any description, are available. **[Note 55]** My picnic-ing days, alas, are over, but there is a rare chance for those who are younger to have a glorious day amongst the hollies at this spot.

But I am forgetting that I undertook to convoy my reader through this part of the park. Well, we must leave the young folks to their chicken, champagne, and flirting, and get on with our walk. We shall go down the exquisite valley for its entire length, follow the carriage road for two or three hundred yards, and then get on the high ground to our right. Keeping on the ridge, with the wall of Four Oaks Park well in view, we come at last to a sort of bluff overlooking Blackroot Pool. **[Note 56]** This is a most interesting spot. You will see that, except by the route we have come, this spot is almost inaccessible by reason of boggy morasses on two sides, and the pool in front. You will observe also that the surface is entirely composed of ridges and depressions. If you follow them, you will find that they are arranged upon a systematic plan. This is a time-worn military encampment – so ancient that all record of its origin has long been lost. **[Note 57]** A military engineer would no doubt be able to tell the uses of each curving bank, and deep depression; but we, who are peaceable people, can only guess and wonder. As we do so, however, we may think with pleasure and gratitude that war, with its deadly surroundings, is now happily unknown within this fair England of ours.

We shall have to retrace our steps upon the high ground, for immediately below, between us and the road, is a damp unpleasant swamp. We can cross with dry feet a little higher up. When we reach the road by the wall, we turn to the right, and soon find ourselves in front of Mr. Phillips' boat-house, which we enter and refresh ourselves with tea, served with delicious bread-and-butter and fresh water-cresses. We then – instead of passing to the town of Sutton by the newly-made roadway – climb the steep pathway to its left. As we walk along the ridge of the hill, we get a view to our right of one of the loveliest valleys in the park. We pass Mrs. Wiggan's pretty cottage by the bridge, catch a glimpse of some merry excursionists dancing on the greensward by the Crystal Palace, and stroll leisurely back to the station, just as the sun is setting.

It must not be thought that these are the only beautiful walks. On the contrary, a visitor may wander daily in the park and find something new in the way of scenery on each occasion. The great wonder is in the infinite variety. The imperfect sketches of the walks we have taken together give but a slight idea of the marvellous diversity of the surface of the park. With the map for his guide, a stranger will be at no loss, and there is certainly no place in the Midland Counties where a day may be more delightfully spent by a lover of nature.

"Flowers smile upon us ever with their sweet and holy smiling
 Like their lovely human sisterhood, and ever as we pass
 Look up to us beseechingly, as if they were beguiling
 Us to take our seat beside them on the warm and sunny grass.
 And think you they will answer, if in gentle tones we woo them?
 Yes, believe me, they have voices sweet as any singing bird,
 But they speak to those who love them, and who bend their souls unto them,
 And by such, and by such only, are their silv'ry voices heard." [Note 58]

When I was about to commence writing this little book I was greatly puzzled to know what to do about the botany of the park. I felt my complete inability to say anything on the subject that would be worth reading, and was almost beginning to despair when a fortunate circumstance enabled me to make the acquaintance of Mr. James E. Bagnall, a gentleman who is unquestionably better acquainted with the botanical treasures of Sutton Park than any other person living. [Note 59] He at once offered his assistance, and we spent a few hours together in the park with a pleasurable result which I shall never forget. His acquaintance with plant-life is so ample and so minute, and he possesses so happy a manner of conveying his knowledge to others that every yard of our trip had a lesson for me, and every lesson its most painstaking and enthusiastic teacher. I look back upon that summer day – although it rained nearly the whole of the time – as one of the most delightful I ever spent, opening as it did to me new glories, new wonders, and new delights. Mr. Bagnall has kindly added to my obligations by writing a most interesting descriptive account of our trip, which I shall now proceed to give in his own earnest and graphic words:-

"It is a good thing for every man to have a hobby; but a prudent man takes care that his hobby doesn't make too great a demand upon his time or his purse, and is not hurtful to his health and morals. If the hobby be one that will cultivate or educate any of his faculties, mental or physical, it will be so much the better for him, and if it lead him to spend his time in the pure air of the open country, better still. My hobby is Botany, and I know of no "hobby" and no pursuit which fulfils the conditions I have mentioned so fully and so completely as the study of trees and plants. Even when pursued only to the most limited degree it is conducive to healthy thought, and pure enjoyment. It may be taken up at any time by persons of either sex, and of any condition of life, and be studied with advantage at any season of the year. The subject is practically inexhaustible, and it requires no outlay beyond a few cheap books. Little talent is required; the main requisites being a desire to know, careful observation, and unwearied perseverance. To those possessing these qualifications, the study once entered upon becomes so interesting and so fascinating that few who have commenced it have ever been known to lose interest in it.

There is no more interesting nor better stored botanical hunting ground than Sutton Park; neither is there one more easily accessible to the dwellers in Birmingham and the adjacent manufacturing towns. Independent of its richness in botanical treasures, it is charming, if merely for its scenery, varied as it is by meadows, heath lands, woods, pastures, marshes, bogs and pools. I have myself found and recorded more than 500 species of flowering plants and ferns, and about 230 mosses, within the area of the park. These represent about one-fourth of British flowering plants and mosses; hence an industrious student may find in Sutton Park alone material sufficient to make him fairly acquainted with British Botany.

Our excursion, as you will remember, was from Streetly Station, opposite which we entered the park by its wildest and least known entrance. Our attention was first directed to the many forms of Bramble (*Rubi*) to be seen within a limited area. I pointed out *Rubus atro-rubens*, *R. plicatus*, *R. sprengelii*, *R. radula*, etc; and I mentioned that I find within the confines of the park at least twenty-eight Babingtonian species of Bramble. I also mentioned that these plants forcibly illustrate the difficulties that surround the question, "What is a species?" Among the brambles extreme forms are found, so unlike as to convince the most non-observant of their distinctness as varieties; yet, between

these extreme diversities links occur which appear to connect them. The Bramble species, in their great variety, may be said to form a typical case of a class where the intermediate links have not yet been eliminated by natural selection. The fruit of all the varieties is grateful to the palate, wholesome and nutritious; but in the separate kinds it varies in flavour, in form, and in the time of ripening.

We next passed on to the Heath-land, where we found abundance of the little heath-like plant, the Crowberry, *Empetrium nigrum*, a sub-alpine plant belonging to northern climates. This plant bears a small berry-like fruit, which is a favourite food of the grouse and other feathered game. Its taste is bitter, but, notwithstanding this, the children in the Scottish Highlands, where the plant is abundant, are said to be fond of it. In Siberia an acid drink is made from these berries, which is said to be not unlike lemonade. In Kamtschatka, the natives make the berries into puddings, and also use them for making a black dye for their clothing.

Growing with this we found other boreal plants, such as the Scottish Heath, *Erica cinerea*; the Cross-leaved Heath, *Erica tetralix*; the Ling, *Calluna vulgaris*; the Bilberry, *Vaccinium myrtillis*; the Cranberry, *Vaccinium oxycoccus*; the Red Whortle-berry *Vaccinium vitis-idea*; all of which are found at altitudes in the Scottish Highlands, varying from 900 to 1400 yards.

It is stated that the Picts made a delicious fermented liquor from *Erica cinerea*, but the method by which this was obtained has been lost. The Highlanders of the present day use the young shoots for dyeing their clothes yellow. The flowers are much resorted to by bees, but the honey obtained is of a dark colour and somewhat unsightly. The Bilberry, Cranberry, and Red Whortle Berry all bear fleshy fruit, which when fermented yields an intoxicating liquor, which is sometimes used to restore the faded colour of certain wines. The Red Whortle-berry makes an excellent jelly, which is said to be superior to that made from the Red Currant. Moor game, such as the Grouse, Black Cock, &c., feed to a great extent on the berries of these plants.

Near this spot we noticed some fine tussocks of the noticeable moss, *Polytrichum commune*, one of the most noble of the Sutton mosses. We do not economise these mosses in this country, but in less favoured lands – as in Lapland, for example – this moss affords both bed and bedding. The Lapps choose great tufts which, just as cut from the earth, form both bed and bolster, and as the plants grow together in a matted form they are not readily disentangled. Another large tuft of the same moss forms the coverlet of the bed, and a very warm covering it is said to make. When not in use, this bedding is folded up, and being very light is readily carried from place to place. The couch formed from this material is exceedingly elastic, and should it become too dry a little moisture restores its former elasticity. In Germany it is esteemed a sudorific, and was at one time famed for promoting the growth of hair; a fancied property, but faith hath its charms! We also noticed, in this part of the park, great masses of *Sphagnum* of various species; these plants, too, are used as bedding in cold countries; they are also useful for packing; and are much used by Orchid growers for floricultural purposes.

We next made our way to Bracebridge Pool, where we saw the very beautiful pearl-like flowers of the Pearl-wort, *Sagina nodosa*, a remarkably rare plant in the country. We also saw another of our rare plants, the Butter-wort, *Pinguicula vulgaris*, noticeable for its beautiful purple flowers, and large fleshy greasy yellow leaves, (hence the name of butter-wort,) and interesting as being one of the plants which possess insect-devouring tendencies. The leaves of the plant are covered with minute glands which secrete a slightly viscid fluid of an alkaline nature. The insects are entrapped by the folding over of the leaf-margins, and are dissolved and formed into plant food by the action of the fluid secreted by the glands, just mentioned. This plant possesses another remarkable property – that of acting like common rennet in curdling the milk of cows. It is used by the Swedes and Norwegians for coagulating reindeer's milk, and the curd thus obtained is considered a grateful food.

Here we also noticed a wonderful little plant, remarkably rare in this neighbourhood, the Bladder-wort, *Utricularia minor*. It is called Bladder-wort on account of the numerous bladder-like bodies which occur on the leaves of the plant. According to Darwin this plant is also an insect-devourer, but its game are the lesser water fleas, and such small fry. Each of the bladders of the plant is a veritable "catch 'em alive oh." They have mouths, with lids opening from without, inwards, so that an insect readily gets in, but once in the lid closes, the prisoner is safely housed, and all his energies and talents

are insufficient for his escape. The poor venturesome Daphnia has no chance of egress, there is a spring to the lid which will not relax until he has submitted to his fate and is quietly digested.

Here, too, we observed the most elaborately beautiful of all our wild flowers, the Buckbean, *Menyanthes trifoliata*; a plant still used in herbal medicine as a valuable tonic. The leaves are generally used, and they yield a bitter principle. The decoction gives appetite and promotes digestion. The intense bitter of the leaves had led to their use as a substitute for hops in brewing, and large quantities are annually used in this country for the adulteration of beer.

The roots of this plant yield a large amount of starch. In Finland and Lapland they are, after due preparation to deprive them of their bitter flavour, made into a kind of bread. The name Buckbean is a corruption of Bog-bean, which was given to the plant on account of its pod-like fruit, and from the plant being found in bogs and marshes.

Attention was, as you will remember, next called to the fact that we have in Sutton Park the three species of Forget-me-not, *Myosotis palustris*, *M. repens* and *M. coespitosus*, but which of these is the veritable Forget-me-not, upon which the romantic story of its name is founded, tradition sayeth not.

Here, too, we noticed the most beautiful and stately of the Buttercup tribe – the Greater Spearwort, *Ranunculus Lingua*. It was, however, growing too far in the water for us to reach it. This plant, though beautiful, possesses, in common with the other Ranunculaceae, acrid, poisonous, properties. Earlier in the season we should have found abundance of Wordsworth's favourite flower, the lesser Celandine, *Ranunculus Ficaria*, and the beautiful golden blossoms of the Marsh Marigold, *Caltha palustris*. You will remember my pointing out the chaste, delicate denizen of the marshy moorlands that was then only just beginning to display its charms, the Grass of Parnassus, *Parnassia palustris*, so named, it is said, because abundant on Mount Parnassus. This is a flower which bears minute examination with advantage. Alternating with the stamens are five fleshy scales, (abortive stamens) divided at their edge into numerous rays, each of which is tipped with a beautiful transparent greenish gland, so that the flower, when viewed from above, appears set with sparkling jewels. The petals are delicately white and beautifully veined, and the whole look of the flower is so charming, that one naturally regrets that such a plant will not flourish in the garden. The glands I have mentioned secrete abundance of the nectar so attractive to the insect tribe, and their purpose is, doubtless, to encourage the visits of these valuable aids to cross fertilization.

As we wandered over the burnt heathland we noticed the extensive yellow patches of the Cord Moss, *Funaria hygrometrica*, one of our commonest, most widely diffused, but most beautiful species. The exquisite fringe which adorns the capsule, or spore case of this moss, is one of the most attractive of our microscopic objects, and one feels that Ruskin must have been speaking of this lovely child of nature when he says, "No words that I know of will say what these mosses are. None are delicate enough, none perfect enough, none rich enough. How is one to tell of the rounded bosses of furred and beaming green – the starred divisions of rubied bloom, fine filmed, as if rock spirits could spin porphyry as we do glass – the traceries of intricate silver and fringes of amber, lustrous, arborescent, burnished through every film into fitful brightness, and glossy travesties of silken change." This moss is found most frequently where the earth has been burned, and is one of those cosmopolitan species which seems to flourish the world over.

In the damp, shady nooks of Darnel Hurst we noticed the delicately sensitive Wood-sorrel, *Oxalis Acetosella*, a plant so sensitive as to be affected by every change of temperature and light. By many this is thought to be the true Shamrock of Ireland. The common white clover is, however, the plant that is usually worn by the working classes of that country as the Shamrock.

The Wood-sorrel was one of the mystic plants of the Druids, by whom it was looked upon as the symbol of a secret doctrine known only to the initiated. The mysticism connected with the plant probably arose from its being a three-leaved plant which occasionally, though very rarely, forms a greater number of leaflets. He who found a four-leaved *Oxalis* was supposed to have acquired the power of dispelling illusions, and of holding evil spirits in subjection.

In many of the marshy and boggy places we found the Sheep's Penny Rot, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, a plant anathematized by farmers in days when education and scientific studies were confined to the

few. The crime laid to the charge of this plant was that it was the cause of liver rot in sheep, but sheep never eat it; the true cause of the disease is the larvae of the fluke or flounder insect *Fasciola Lepatica*, which occurs in the marshes where the Sheep's Penny Rot grows, and this dangerous larvae is probably swallowed by the sheep when drinking the waters of these marshes. Growing near to the last mentioned plant was the Sundew, *Drosera rotundilolia*, a beautiful insect-devouring plant, which has been rendered famous by Darwin in his wonderful book on "Insectivorous Plants." [Note 60] When this book first appeared, every one seemed anxious to know the plant; to cultivate it; and to experiment upon it; some out of mere curiosity, others for the sake of confirming Darwin's observations, or to carry out further scientific enquiries. The result was that most of our local bogs were entirely stripped of their carnivorous treasures, Sutton Park suffering most on account of its nearness and accessibility. Spite, however, of the greediness of collectors, the plant survives, and patches may still be seen, though few and far between. To appreciate the beauty of the Sundew it should be seen in its own boggy habitat. The leaves are nearly round, slightly concave, and taper abruptly into a longish hairy-leaf stalk; the margin of the leaf is fringed with long purple glandular hairs, and the concave disc of the upper surface is studded with shorter but similar gland-tipped hairs. These shorter glands have the power of secreting a viscid fluid, which not only retains any unfortunate insect that alights upon the leaf, but also possesses the power of digesting it. When an insect is thus retained, the outer fringe of long hairs closes over him gradually, the leaf then folds upon itself and thus remains until the captive is completely digested. The leaf then expands again, secretes more fluid, and patiently awaits the coming of another insect. Mr. Darwin, in the book mentioned above, gives details of innumerable experiments. The plant was formerly in great repute as a remedy for consumption, and some of the older physicians held that the *Herba solis* as it was then called, surpassed all other plants as a cure for that fell disease. It was also believed by farmers to be a great cause of liver rot in sheep; this opinion is now known to be erroneous.

Passing over many interesting plants that we noticed, I may mention the last which occupied our attention – the beautiful Golden Rod, *Solidago Virga-aurea* – at one time abundant here, now only sparingly represented. This was once thought to be a great cure for wounds. It was largely imported as a dried herb from abroad, and sold in the London market by the herb women in Queen Elizabeth's days. About this time, however, it was found wild in the woods about Hampstead, where it had probably grown for untold ages, but had been overlooked. Old Fuller, [Note 61] who, in enumerating the "Worthies of England" introduces them to his readers by an account of the vegetable productions of their native counties, speaks very highly of the Golden Rod, and censures its disuse thus:- "Some maintain that every county cures the disease which it causes, and bringeth remedies for all maladies bred therein. An opinion which, grant not true, yet may have much of truth, seeing that every county of England especially affordeth excellent plants, were it not for men's laziness that they will not seek them; and partly from their ignorance, that they will not know them; and partly from their pride and peevishness, that because when they are found they disdain to use them." He adds that when the Golden Rod was brought at great price from foreign countries it was highly valued, but that it was no sooner found to be native than it was discarded from use."

Here Mr. Bagnall's interesting record of our trip, and what we saw, comes to an end. He has, however, added a list of some of the more remarkable plants, ferns, and mosses found in the park. I shall reverse the order in which he places them, and give the mosses first, because it enables me to reprint from the pages of the *Midland Naturalist* the following eloquent, poetical, and enthusiastic passage from his pen, as an introduction:-

"The dim world of weeping mosses, is wondrously interesting, so varied are they in structure, in form, in mode of growth, and in colour. Covering the bosom of their mother earth with a green velvety mantle when the cold winds of autumn and winter have robbed the trees of their beautiful foliage, and the nipping frosts have chilled into death their lovely sisters the flowering plants; clothing, all the year round, the wayside bank with beauty; clinging with tender embrace to their high-born kinsmen the forest trees; bedecking with a thousand fairy urns the time-worn walks of old monasteries and castles; covering the rotting thatch of some ruined cottage with beautifully mingled masses of feathery

Hypnum, tufted *Bryum*, or hoary *Tortula*, of every shade of green; filling the treacherous bog with pale green *Sphagnum*, or noble-looking *Polytrichum*; flourishing amid the unpleasant odours of the poison-breathing marsh; and climbing, slowly but surely, from the lowest valley to the snow-line of the greatest mountain."

MOSSES

Sphagnum Papillosum
Dicranum Montanum
Tortula Marginata
Mnium Subglobosum
Polytrichum Gracile
Hypnum Intermedium
Hypnum Stramineum

Systegium Crispum
Leucobryum Glaucum
Ephemerum Serratum
Amblyodon Dealbatus
Climacium Dendroides
Hypnum Exannalatum
Hypnum Vernicosum
 &c., &c., &c.

FERNS

Preris Aquilina
Athirium Filex-Faemina
Nephrodium Filix Mas
Nephrodium Spinulosa
Nephrodium Oreopteris
Botrichium Lunaria

Lomaria Spicant
Aspidium Aculeatum
Nephrodium Dilatata
Nephrodium Thelypteris
Polypodium Vulgare

RARE PLANTS

Ranunculus Lenormandi
Draba Verna
Viola Flavicornis
Spergularia Rubra
Cardamine Amara
Viola Palustris
Moenchia Erecta
Montia Fontana
Erodium Cicutarium
Ulex Gallii
Comarium Palustre
Rosa Tomentosa
Peplis Portula
Chrysosplenium Alternifolium
Helosciadium Inundatum
Galium Uliginosum
Carduus Nutans
C. Pratensis
Lactuca Muralis

Jasione Montana
Vaccinium Oxycoccus
Veronica Scutellata
Echium Vulgare
Anagallis Tenella
Sparganium Simplex
Lemna Gibba
Orchis Latifolia
Narthecium Ossifragum
Juncus Squarrosus
Eriophorum Vaginatum
Scirpus Pauciflorus
Carex Dioica
C. Curta
C. Laevigata
C. Fulva
Triodia Decumbens
Nardus Stricta [Note 62]

Chapter XIX. A Day in the Park with a Naturalist.

"The poetry of earth is never dead;
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead
That is the grass-hopper's – he takes the lead
In Summer luxury, -- he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed." [Note 63]

Greatly as I love the country, and familiar as I am with the birds and animals that sport so freely in the woods and fields, I can lay no claim to be a Naturalist. I was desirous that my little work should contain a sketch of the *fauna* of the Park, but felt acutely my incapacity to do justice to the subject. Under these circumstances, I hailed with pleasure the offer of Mr. Montagu Browne, F.Z.S., -- than whom there is no more observant, or experienced naturalist in the Midland district -- to assist me. [Note 64] One outcome of this promise was, that we were to spend a day in the Park together.

We fixed upon Monday, July 28th, 1879, for our excursion, and I placed myself under his guidance unreservedly. We started from New Street, and alighted at the Wylde Green Station, where I was directed to make a note to the effect that although the sun was shining brightly, it was not a favourable day for collecting lepidoptera. The wind was blowing violently, and butterflies or moths seldom fly much in windy weather.

As we entered the lane leading to "Powell's or the "Spade Mill" pool, Mr. Browne appeared to me to have become suddenly insane. [Note 65] Producing from his ample pocket, first a green net, and then a large wide mouthed bottle, he told me that the contents of the latter were as deadly poison as prussic acid. As I looked at it, he cautioned me against inhaling the vapour, as that even, was deleterious. He next put some dry blotting paper into the bottle to absorb any moisture that might be present, and then told me that *the poison was ready*. His next proceedings were equally strange. With a stout oaken stick which he carried, he commenced to attack the hedges and bushes as though he expected to find some lurking enemy. Presently he shouted out gleefully "I've got him!" and in the green net or trap showed me a specimen of the Common Brimstone moth (*Rumia Crotoegata*). The poison was now brought into use; the moth was about to be liberated, as Mr. Browne had already specimens, but at my request, it was gently placed within the ample mouth of the bottle, and in less than a second the poor insect was dead. This process, which certainly is a merciful manner of insecticide, was only repeated, in the case of two or three other subsequent captures. The next catch was one of the Crambites, a grass-loving little moth, and then came a very close searching of some large groups of stinging nettles, in which my friend expected to find rare caterpillars; specimens of Geometrae, or larvae of Vanessidae, but he was disappointed.

As we approached Powell's pool, a slimy pond on the left, at the margin of which was a well, was thoroughly searched, and resulted in some good catches of water beetles, and then Mr. Browne suddenly fell into raptures at a "find" such as even he had seldom had before. A small puddle was apparently all alive, and on examination we found hundreds of tadpoles at the very point of transformation into frogs. There were tadpoles pure and simple. There were tadpoles with the two hind legs of the frog. There were others with the four legs and the head of the frog and with the power of leaping, but with the tail of the tadpole still remaining. Finally the grass all around was alive with fully developed frogs, of minute size, skipping about, and playing at leapfrog with each other in great glee.

Ascending the dam of the pool my companion's experienced eye detected upon the water at fully a third of a mile away, a water bird, which he instantly pronounced to be a Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus* L.) These beautiful birds were scandalously destroyed in great numbers a year or two ago, and the plumage used as trimming for ladies' dress. As the bird neared us the distinctive features by which

the Grebe is known from other aquatic birds were pointed out: -- the crest; the backward carriage of the head and neck; and the habit of diving every half minute or so. The progress of the bird under the water was very rapid, as it frequently emerged, fifty or sixty yards from the point of diving, in less than a quarter of a minute. It finally retreated to a group of reeds where we lost sight of it. We were told that large numbers were upon the pool but we only saw this one.

We entered the park, and soon captured a good specimen of the "Sandy-wave" moth, which went into the bottle. Then came a frantic chase after an unknown variety, which escaped. Then Mr. Browne suddenly fell upon all-fours in chase of a lizard, probably *Zootoca vivipara*, which however he did not catch. He mentioned a curious circumstance in connection with this reptile, which is not generally known. It was supposed until lately that when the habitat of the lizard was damp or boggy, the young were brought forth alive; but that in dry sandy places were oviparous, making nests, and depositing eggs in the manner of other reptiles. It has been discovered, however, that this was a mistake, and that two species were formerly confounded under the one name *Lacerta agilis*, which is really the correct name of the oviparous variety. The next capture were grasshoppers, some fine specimens of which were taken, and their beauties and peculiarities enthusiastically pointed out. The Belle moth (*Eubolia palumbaria*) was seen in great numbers, and a good male specimen of the Heath moth (*Fidonia atomaria*) was secured. As we approached the woods, myriads of the Pea green moth (*Tortrix viridana*) were seen fluttering around the oak trees, their delicate pale green wings gleaming in the sunlight like aerial jewels. The oak trees around were unfortunately nearly stripped by the depredations of their caterpillars.

Sitting upon the stile at the entrance of Holly Hurst, my companion called my attention to an oak tree, and bade me notice a patch of black upon the bark, evidently made with some black and viscid fluid. Mr. Browne explained to me that this -- which was repeated upon nearly every rough-barked tree we came to, but seldom upon the smooth trees such as the holly -- was the mark left by a bait used by hunters of night-flying moths. The mixture with which the trees are bedaubed, is composed of beer, treacle, and rum, of which it appears that moths are very fond. Mr. Browne assured me that he had often spent whole nights in that wood, and had been rewarded by capturing some very rare and remarkable specimens, sometimes even in storms of lightning, wind, and rain.

After a pleasant stroll through the devious pathways of the noble woods, we emerged upon the broad moors to the west, and here we commenced to hunt again. Ascending a sandy, gravelly hill, a small stone got into my friend's shoe, rendering a halt necessary. Just as he had removed the shoe, he suddenly jumped up, net in hand, and set off "one shoe off and the other shoe on," full tilt through the furze bushes, and in search of a moth which he thought to be the "Ruby tiger." [Note 66] He lost it however, and a cloud obscuring the sun at the moment, he struck his net upright to mark the spot where the insect had alighted, and came back with bleeding foot to replace his shoe. When the sun once more brightened the scene, up he jumped again, and in a few minutes was rewarded by taking a fine specimen of a species always welcome to collectors, a male of the Clouded-buff moth, (*Euthemonia Russula*). This he evidently looked upon as an achievement, and when, a few minutes later, he captured a "Beautiful yellow underwing," (*Anarta Myrtilli*), he became quite enthusiastic. Several more varieties were taken, but they were as nothing after these two "events." They will be found classified in the list of Lepidoptera found in the park, which is appended to the next chapter, and which, shirking the responsibility of writing so many Latin and Greek names, I have notified by the number appended to their names in Mr. Montagu Browne's well-known compilation "The Label List of the British Macro-Lepidoptera."

But naturalists and scribblers -- particularly after hours spent upon broad heaths, and gorsy moors, beneath a hot sun, and in a pure atmosphere -- are very apt to become hungry and thirsty, and so we wended our way to the old hostelry known familiarly as "the Parson and Clerk." [Note 67] As we crossed the peat moss, we picked up the wing of a snipe, which had evidently been thrown aside or left by some sportsman or marauding animal. Soon a live specimen of the same bird rose just in front, uttering the well-known cry "Escape," and on looking at him as he flew, we saw a majestic heron in the sky, his big wings moving slowly with the contemptuous "expression" -- if one may use such a term

– which the flight of this bird seems to convey. Remarking that we had not seen a lapwing during our walk, we pass the gate and are soon seated in the snug low parlour of the well-known inn, where my friend startled the pleasant-looking waiting maid, who had brought in a huge loaf and half a cheese, by asking her, anxiously, if “that was all the bread they had!”

A hearty meal, a bottle of pale ale, and a good rest, and off we started again to walk to the Chester road station, three miles away. As we passed near to the high ground called the “King’s standing” – so called from the fact that Charles I. stood there to address his army as they passed on their way from Shropshire to Edge Hill [Note 68] – we notice a newly-ploughed field on our left, from which as we looked over the gate, a flock of thirty or forty lapwings rose from their meal of worms and larvae, and floated in circles above us. Their flight was peculiar, and justified the name they bear – lap-wing. Their chief ambition appeared to be, to teach us the proper pronunciation of the word “peewit,” in which, after a little practice, we became quite adepts. As we passed on, we missed the pine wood that formerly stood on the right at New Oscott, and observed that the opposite coppice had been carefully enclosed. We soon reached the Beggar’s Bush, and wondered which of the two stories current as to the origin of its name is correct. One statement is that the body of a beggar was found one morning underneath it, dead, and the locality of the bush being between two parishes, and belonging to neither, both refused to inter it. The body lay unburied for some time, and was the subject of a great deal of litigation, which was ultimately settled by the two parishes defraying the expenses jointly. The other and more probable story is that at the period when the road was alive with stage coaches and post horses, an old beggar sat daily beneath the bush to solicit alms from passengers. The bush is now carefully protected from injury by an iron fence. [Note 69]

Passing the gateway of Oscott College, and gradually descending the pleasant hill – discovering, as we thought, the site of the ancient lake, which gave the locality the name Boldmere – we came at length to the station, just in time to catch the train to Birmingham. [Note 70]

Chapter XX. The Fauna of Sutton Park.

“The populous solitude of trees and birds,
And fairy-formed and many coloured things,
Who worship Him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life.” [Note 71]

Mr. J.C. Phillips, of Black-root-pool, has kindly supplied me with a considerable portion of the following list. The classification has been entirely made by Mr. Montagu Browne. F.Z.S., who has also added considerably to the list. Where Mr. Browne thinks the habitat within the park doubtful, he has placed a note of interrogation (?)

MAMMALIA

Order III. – Cheiroptera

Common Bat.	Long-eared Bat.
Pistrelle.	Highflyer, Great Bat or Noctula

Order IV. – Insectivora.

Common Shrew.	Hedgehog.
Water Shrew. (?)	Mole

Order V. Carnivora.

Badger.	Pine Martin. (?)
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Polecat.	Fox.
Weasel.	Wild Cat.*
Stoat or Ermine.	

* The Wild Cat is inserted in the list on the authority of Mr. Phillips, who shot one which he feels certain was a true specimen. Mr. Browne says, however, 'I should be chary in accepting this as the true Wild Cat (FELIS CATUS.) Many domestic "Tabbies" run out in the woods and lead a semi-wild life. In this condition the hair roughens and the tail thickens until no one but an anatomist can tell them from the real Wild Cat. I know of no English locality for the true FELIS CATUS."

Order VI. -- Rodentia.

Common Mouse.	Short-tailed Field Mouse or Vole
Dormouse (?)	Squirrel.
Brown Rat.	Hare.
Water Vole.	Rabbit.

AVES

Order I. Passeres

Song Thrush.	Pied Wagtail.
Missel Thrush.	Yellow ditto.
Redwing.	Winter ditto (?)
Fieldfare.	Tree Pipit.
Ring Ouzel.	Meadow ditto.
Blackbird.	Hedge Sparrow.
Chiff Chaff	Bullfinch.
Whitethroat.	Goldfinch.
Lesser ditto.	Greenfinch.
Garden Warbler.	Chaffinch.
Blackcap.	Siskin (?)
Skylark.	Nuthatch.
Reed Warbler.	Redpole.
Grasshopper Warbler.	Linnet.
Redstart.	Hawfinch.
Robin.	Tree Sparrow.
Nightingale.	House ditto.
Stonechat.	Bunting.
Winchat.	Yellow Ammer.
Wheatear.	Reed Bunting.
Wren.	Starling.
Goldcrest.	Magpie.
Spotted Flycatcher.	Jay.
Wood Lark(?)	Jackdaw.
Great Titmouse.	Rook.
Blue ditto.	Carrion Crow.
Coal ditto.	Hooded ditto (?)
Marsh ditto (?)	Treecreeper.
Long-tailed ditto.	Swallow.
Great Gray Shrike.	Martin.
Red-backed ditto.	Sand Martin.

Order II. – Picarlar

Green Woodpecker.	Kingfisher.
Great Spotted ditto.	Hoopoe (?)
Lesser ditto ditto.	Night Jar.
Wryneck.	Swift.
Cuckoo.	

Order IV. – Columbæ.

Ring Dove, or Wood Pigeon.	Turtle Dove.
Stock Dove.	

Order V. – Gallinæ

Red Grouse.	Common Partridge.
Black Grouse.	Red-Legged ditto.
Pheasant.	

Order VII. – Accipitres.

Sparrow Hawk.	Barn Owl.
Kestrel.	Short-Eared ditto.
Merlin.	Long-Eared ditto.
Hobby.	Tawny, or Wood Owl.

Order VIII. – Grallæ.

Golden Plover.	Jack Snipe.
Lapwing, or Peewit.	Curlew,
Ringed Plover.	Heron.
Oyster Catcher (?)	Bittern.
Redshank.	Water Rail.
Green Sandpiper.	Land Rail.
Common ditto.	Spotted Crake.
Dunlin.	Moor Hen.
Woodcock.	Coot.
Common Snipe.	

Order IX. – Anseres.

Hooper or Wild Swan.	Red Throated Diver.
Gray lag Goose.	Great Crested Grebe.
Brent Goose. (?)	Little Grebe.
Canada Goose.*	Shag.
Wild Duck.	Common Tern.
Pintail ditto.	Arctic ditto.
Widgeon.	Blackheaded Gull.
Teal.	Common Gull.†
Pochard.	Kittiwake. [Note 72]
Scaup Duck.	

* "One or two shot occasionally in hard Winters. Probably semi-domesticated ones." M. Browne.

† About the year 1873, I was fishing from a punt on Blackroot Pool, when a flock of Gulls came overhead. One of the birds, probably attracted by some fish which lay in the punt, came and perched on the vessel in which I was sitting. E.E.

REPTILIA

Order II. – Saurians.
 Viviparous or Heath Lizard.
 Blindworm, or Slowworm.

Order III. – Ophidians
 Common or Ringed Snake.
 Viper, or Adder.

Order IV. – Batrachians.
 Common Frog.
 Edible Frog. (?)

Great Crested Newt
 Common, or Smooth Newt.

PISCES.

Order I. – Acanthopterygil.
 Perch.
 Bullhead, or Miller's Thumb.

Three-spined Stickleback
 Ten ditto ditto (?)

Order IV. – Physostomi.
 Carp.
 Gudgeon
 Roach.
 Tench.
 Bream.
 Minnow.

Loach.
 Spined Loach. (?)
 Pike.
 Common Trout.
 Sharp-Nosed Eel.
 Broad-Nosed Eel.

Sub-Class Cyclostomata
 Lampern

LEPIDOPTERA.

The numbers are those appended to the English and scientific names in Mr. Browne's Label List.

DIURNI.

No.	4	5	6	8
	9	10	11	22
	25	26	27	34
	36	37	40	41
	47	48	50	

NOCTURNI

65	66	67	70
75	76	78	98
99	100	101	102
127	132	139	140
141	145	146	149
157	160	164	164A
165	167	171	

GEOMETRAE.

172	174	176	179
181	182	183	186
187	194	198	199
200	204	205	211
220	262	267	276
278	284	285	295
304	305	306	307
308	310	311	356
384	385	386	387
392	394	399	404
406	413	417	419
423	428	430	431
432	431	432	433
435	437	445	

CUSPIDATAE

446	451	455	459	466	478
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NOCTUAE

479 483 493 500
 509 515 518 519
 533 536 537 539
 540 541 542 543
 544 545 552 556
 557 565 567 569
 573 574 578 581
 584 586 588 591
 592 593 595 596
 601 603 605 611
 612 613 615 616
 617 619 620 622
 624 625 626 627

629 631 633 636
 639 641 642 645
 646 648 652 654
 655 656 657 658
 659 660 661 665
 668 669 675 678
 690 699 700 701
 703 706 711 713
 715 718 719 720
 722 728 741 748
 749 761 764 767
 769 772 773 774
 775 776 [Note 73]

The pools and streams in Sutton Park teem with life, from the lowest to the higher forms. Here may be found the rotifers and a thousand other microscopic forms; the fresh-water shells Lymneas, Unios, &c., the larvae and imagoes of the various Water-Beetles, Euphenerae, and Dragon Flies; the fresh-water Shrimps, Craw-fish, &c., sufficient in fact for the study of a lifetime.

Chapter XXI. The Pools in the Park.

“Sweet pool! upon thy wave to-day
 What streamers flaunt, what banners play,
 What crowds thy bosom knows;
 Bright are the barks, the burthen fair;
 And pleasure is the helmsman there.” [Note 74]

[here there is a sketch of]
 BLACKROOT POOL

It is a singular fact that, although Sutton Park contains several large pools and streams, no water runs into it. All the water, therefore, which fills these large pools or lakes, and which runs in a wide and rapid stream from the park, has its sources in the park itself. Much of it is doubtless surface water, but there are many perennial springs and wells, which add enormous quantities to that which falls in rain within the park. All the pools are artificial; being formed by embankments thrown across the valleys, and so confining the waters. The most westerly is BRACEBRIDGE POOL, a fine sheet of water 35 acres in extent, with an island in its centre, and noble woods on each side coming down to its very margin. This pool was constructed by Sir Ralph Bracebridge, who was ranger of the park in the time of Henry V. It has since been known by his name, and was for several generations the property of his descendants. It has, however, within the last few years been purchased from the Hartopp family by the Sutton Corporation, who let the fishing to private persons. Pools like this were very necessary in Roman Catholic times to provide Lenten fare, in places so far from the sea that marine fish were almost unknown. Bracebridge Pool was granted to the ranger upon condition of supplying the Earls of Warwick, who were lords of the manor, with a certain number of bream yearly. The stews where the bream were stored remained until recently, just below the dam, but they have now been filled up by the surplus railway soil which has been deposited on the spot. Dugdale in his History of Warwickshire says, in reference to this and Keeper’s Pool:-

“Concerning which pools I have observed that Sir Ralph Bracebridge of Kingsbury, Kt., having a lease of them from [the year] 7 Henry V., covenanted to pay [to the Earl of Warwick] the yearly rent of x.l. [ten pounds] or cxx brems, the price of each brem being reckoned at xxd., but if they should happen to be at a greater rate, then to be paid back proportionately, whereunto I shall adde part of an accompt made by the before-recited Earl of Warwick’s bailiff in 32 Henry VI., that the price of such fishe in those days compared with other things may better appear:-

“Item, John Benbage and Will Lempe for fyching on Wensday next before the Exaltacion of the Crose, and did take ii brems and were lade to my Lord to Lychefelde be Will Alyn; and to the sede fychers hyre and for hyre, cost mans mete, and hors mete, iiis. xd.

Item, the same fychers were send for againe on Thursdaie next after the Exaltacion, and was ther Thursday, Frydaie, and Satyrday, and tok four brems; ther hyre and ther costs iiis. viiid. Item, the cost of bakyng the seyde iii brems in floure viid. Item, in spys, Pepyr, Safurn, Clows, and Synamum, vid. Item, the cost of caryng the seyde iii brems to Mydham, to my Lord in the north contrey, be Thomas Harys of Sutton, xs.

Item, for the Swans, four quarters of otes and a bushell, -- two quarter of hem and streke iid., -- and two quarter and a bushell, a streke iiid. (viis. xd.)” **[Note 75]**

BLACKROOT POOL is fed by the surplus waters from Bracebridge. It is a fine sheet of water situated between hanging woods. The Midland Railway skirts its upper margin. It was constructed in the year 1757, and is about 15 acres in extent. It is sometimes called Perkin’s Pool, from the name of a former resident in Sutton, who rented it for many years. The name Blackroot was given to it from the fact that the blackened root or stump of an oak tree stood on a mound near the centre formerly showed itself above the water, and was used for tethering boats. On a stormy night a few years ago, the force of the wind upon the boats was so great that the root became loose, and was drawn by the boats to the shore.

This pool is also the property of the Corporation, who let it to Mr C. J. Phillips for boating and fishing. **[Note 76]** In the summer, the surface of the pool is crowded with gay and merry boating parties, while in quiet nooks, or over deep places, patient anglers ply the gentle art. The writer has spent many pleasant hours in a punt upon this pool, and has been rewarded with some heavy takes of bream, pike, tench, perch and roach. The bream are very fine, fish of four and five pounds weight being very common. On one evening in 1875, the writer took seventeen bream which weighed 45 lbs. Pike have been taken 35 lbs. weight, carp of 10 or 12 lbs. each are occasionally landed, and there are some very large eels. Day fishing tickets are to be had of Mr. Phillips. There is a bathing house on the south side, for the use of which no charge is made.

KEEPER’S POOL was constructed in the reign of Edward IV., it is a small sheet of water lying to the south of Black-root. Until recently this was the property of the Somerville family, but it has been purchased by the Corporation. It is too small for boating, but is capital for perch fishing. Mr. Phillips, of Black-root is the lessee. I believe it is reserved entirely for annual subscribers. The water comes from Keeper’s Spring, which lies about a couple of hundred yards west. **[Note 77]**

LONGMORE Pool was constructed in 1733. It is fed by the waters of Rowton’s Well, and by the drainage of the southern slopes of the park, flowing to it by a small stream called Longmore Brook. This pool, with the adjoining mill and fields are Corporation property, and the tenant has the sole right of fishing. The pool is almost seven acres in extent. **[Note 78]**

POWEL’S POOL skirts the park on the south-east. It is not property within the park, and is the property of the Somerville family. Mr. Parkes, of Coldfield Works, Dartmouth Street, Birmingham, is the lessee, and grants annual fishing tickets. The pool is the largest within the parish, and is nearly fifty acres in extent. **[Note 79]**

WINDLEY POOL also skirts the park, and belongs to the Somervilles. It receives the surplus water from Powel’s Pool, and is probably twenty-five acres in extent. It is a favourite place for boating, and fleets of boats of all imaginable kinds are in readiness at moderate charges. It is a good pool for fishing, but the angler must go early in the morning, before the water is disturbed by the boating. Mr. Neville is boat-master, and he has recently added a number of new boats of the most approved build. For

persons unaccustomed to boating, competent watermen are in attendance. Refreshments are provided at the Boat-house. The pool is accessible from the gardens of the Crystal Palace. The ancient entrance to the park was by the dam of this pool. [Note 80]

Chapter XXII. The Crystal Palace and its Gardens.

“The Park was loud with games; clear laughter-shrieks
Came from the groups of girls beneath the trees.
The cricketers were eager at their play;
The pool was dotted pleasantly with boats
Which gaily flitted here and there. The setting sun
Gleamed o’er the scene with golden rays of light;
Blessing with farewell smiles the happy crowds.” [Note 81]

The Crystal Palace at Sutton, and the beautiful grounds by which it is surrounded, are a fitting supplement to the natural beauties of the locality. [Note 82] They are situated within a few minutes’ walk of each of the three Sutton railway stations; are but a short distance from the town itself; and adjoin the park, into which there is a private entrance from the grounds. The gardens are about thirty acres in extent, and are laid out with much taste, the alternations of greensward and flower-beds, of over-hanging bowers, and groups of pleasant evergreens, of winding walks by the margins of crystal streams and placid pools, and of open spaces for dancing, and other recreative games, render it one of the most delightful spots in the Midland Counties. The native charms of the place have been so utilised, and art has so improved nature, that, as a whole, there are few places so well adapted as these gardens for recreative purposes, and for the thorough enjoyment of a day in the country.

In addition to their sylvan and rustic beauty, the gardens have the great advantage of having been admirably adapted to their intended purposes. People when they go into the country to enjoy themselves, want something to eat and to drink, as well as to look at, and listen to. All these matters have been thought of here, and are amply provided for. A large and picturesque hotel, overlooking one of the most beautiful parts of Sutton Park, adjoins the Palace, and stands within the grounds. Under its hospitable roof there is “space and verge enough” for simultaneously satisfying the wants of many hundreds of visitors, promptly, quickly, economically, and comfortably. From the simple sandwich, or bun, to the *recherché* dinner of half-a-dozen courses, the wishes of all can be met, and no matter whether a dinner party consist of a dozen or of a thousand persons, the comfort of each guest is secured, and his requirements satisfactorily and sufficiently supplied.

Ample provision has also been made for the amusement and recreation of the visitors. There are boats for sailing or rowing; canoes for paddling; and punts for patient fishermen upon Windley Pool, which adjoins the gardens, and is leased to the Crystal Palace Company. A gateway from the gardens opens upon the dam of the pool. There is a splendid bicycle track nearly half-a-mile in circuit. The centre of this circle has been levelled, and is one of the best cricketing grounds in the district. There are swings for children; dancing ground for more ambitious people; shady avenues for “spooning” purposes; and arbours for those, whose spooning days, like mine, are over, and who like to sit quietly, and enjoy the grateful incense of a good cigar. Twice a week, in the summer season, a military band is in attendance, and enlivens the visitors with delicious music. Then there is a wicket gate opening from the gardens into Sutton’s grand old park, where visitors can stroll through leafy glades and magnificent old woods till they are tired; when, on coming back to the gardens, the “comforts”, without which there is little permanent enjoyment, are available at a moment’s notice.

Usually, as “a day’s out” draws to a close, there are “disagreeables” about getting home again. Some exuberant souls want to “stop a bit longer,” but others who have brought their children, and

old folk whose breath is shaky, don't like the night air, and want to go. These gardens are so situated that these little matters are easily and satisfactorily arranged. Within a trifling distance, at intervals of half-an-hour or so, trains start for Birmingham and elsewhere, so that those who wish to get home early have no difficulty, while those whose appetite for enjoyment is so keen that they will insist upon "staying to see the fireworks," may remain until the gardens close, and yet find the train ready to take them home in time to secure a good night's rest.

Sometimes a day's holiday in the country is spoiled by unpropitious weather. That makes little difference at the Crystal Palace. It is true that you cannot wander in the park, or stroll among the flowers and shrubs, but the beautiful and roomy glass pavilion is at your service where you can dance, or romp, or gambol, or enjoy yourselves in your own way, regardless of gloomy clouds and drenching rain outside. There are also cozy nooks in an underground grotto, where quiet and elderly people can sit, and smoke, and chat, wondering why places like this were not available when they were young. This is a marvellous age of improvement, and these gardens are an outcome of the times. There are no brutalizing dog-fights, bull-baitings, cock-fighting, or pugilism here. The whole surroundings are humanising, healthful, and pleasant, and are so satisfactory in all their arrangements, that when night comes on, and visitors are obliged to go, their thoughts range into the region of the future, and in most cases long before their trains reach New Street, the weary excursionists are planning when to come again.

Chapter XXIII. The Royal Hotel.

"It sits so high that ere the rippling stream,
That stealeth through the vale towards the sea,
Is lifted with the virgin morning's beam,
Its windows sparkle bright and silvery;
Not only does it win the earliest kiss
Of sunny morning's sweet and rosy mouth,
But all the balmy odours of the south
Conspire to make it fit abode of bliss."

CAPERNE. [Note 83]

The Royal Hotel at Sutton is one of the principal architectural ornaments as well as one of the chief conveniences of the place. [Note 84] Perched on the summit of an almost precipitous rock clothed with evergreens, its picturesque towers and pinnacles form a beautiful object from every point of view. Its position, too, is as remarkable for its convenience as for its beauty. Its grounds adjoin the London and North-Western Railway Station, to which there is a private approach; and its hospitable doors are within three minutes' walk of each of the two stations on the Midland line. It is close to the town of Sutton, and within a short distance of the entrance to Sutton Park, and yet it is so quiet and secluded that an inmate might easily imagine himself to be in the depths of a remote and rural district.

The pleasure grounds in which the hotel stands have been admirably laid out in a succession of terraces. Some of these contain bowling greens; others are arranged for croquet, lawn tennis, and similar games; besides which there are broad promenades, and curving quiet walks among the flower beds, or beneath the trees. The view from the upper terrace, or from the hotel windows, is one of great extent, and when seen in the golden light of sunset is of surpassing beauty, which must be seen to be realised. Every variety of surface is within the range of vision, from the highest results of landscape gardening in the valley beneath, to the wild and barren moorlands in the park, which have been untouched, perhaps, by cultivators from the creation. The view embraces many objects of interest, including Barr-beacon, Oscott College, Boldmere Church, the Mason Orphanage, and the

Druidical station on Maney Hill, while close at hand are the turrets of the schools of Sutton, and the gray tower of the venerable church.

The south front of the hotel is so well-known, that I have preferred to give, as an illustration, a view of the less familiar frontage, by which visitors in carriages approach the house from the High Street at Sutton. Its quaint roofs, and rising staircase-windows give it a picturesque appearance, and are suggestive of

[here there is a sketch of]
THE ROYAL HOTEL

the welcome to be met within. The hotel was built especially with a view to the comfort of its inmates; it is fitted with all the modern appliances conducive to that purpose. There are many suites of private apartments, varying in accommodation, according to requirements. In these apartments, families or single persons may have all the quiet and privacy of home combined with the ready and ample service which only a large establishment can supply. There are also public coffee rooms, dining rooms, billiard rooms, and all the thousand and one little conveniences which minister so greatly to human wants and weaknesses.

Sutton, even without the hotel, would be a charming place, but with it, it is perfectly delightful. It is indeed a treat to open one's bed-room window in this hotel on a fine spring morning to let in the glorious sunshine, and the fresh air; air, not only laden with the balmy odour of flowers, but musical with the songs of birds from the leafy trees close by. It is equally pleasant to be able to take an early walk in the glorious park of Sutton; to come back with nerves tingling with health, and with sharpened appetite to find a luxurious breakfast ready, and afterwards to rise from the table and stroll leisurely through pleasant gardens to a gateway opening upon a station, where a train awaits our coming, which in half-an-hour will deposit us in the very centre of the busy metropolis of the Midland Counties.

Chapter XXIV. Objects of Interest Near Sutton.

OSCOTT COLLEGE is about two miles from Sutton and can be approached by a pleasant walk through the park. It is a fine building on a splendid site, and, as is generally known, is the chief Roman Catholic establishment in England. The view from the summit of the tower is very extensive and beautiful; and the grounds surrounding the College are very picturesque. The following account of the College has been obligingly furnished expressly for this little book by Rev. Canon Estcourt, the Vice-President:-
[Note 85]

"St. Mary's College, Oscott, was founded in 1795 by Bishop Milner, the eminent Roman Catholic controversialist, as a seminary for the education of the clergy of his district, and college for the sons of the higher class of Roman Catholics. **[Note 86]** In 1838 the new college was built and opened under the direction of the president Dr. Weedall. **[Note 87]** It is a large building of brick with stone facings in the Tudor style. The architect was Mr. Jos. Potter of Lichfield; but the internal fittings of the chapel and college were designed and made under the direction of Augustus Welby Pugin, the celebrated Gothic Revivalist, who lived at the college for two years, and was professor there of architecture and ecclesiastical antiquities. **[Note 88]**

The average number of students is 120. There are schools for divinity, philosophy, and the humanities. The college is affiliated to the London University, and the annual examinations are under the care of the Oxford and Cambridge Examiners. The superiors of the college are the President, Vice-President, Prefect of Studies, Prefect of Discipline, and Procurator, assisted by a staff of about twenty professors, lay and clerical. The list of presidents comprises Dr. Weedall, Bishop (afterwards Cardinal) Wiseman, Dr. Logan, Dr. Moore, Dr. Morgan, Dr. Northcote, and at present Dr. Hawksford. **[Note 89]**

The fittings of the college are admirably adapted for scholastic purposes, and every encouragement is given to athletic exercises. The chapel is beautifully ornamented, and together with the sacristies contain some valuable specimens of church-plate and ecclesiastical embroidery, both ancient and modern. There is a large collection of oil paintings of considerable value, which were purchased in Italy, and presented to the college in 1840 by John, 16th Earl of Shrewsbury. The library contains about 30,000 volumes, and the theological section of the library is very valuable on account of Biblical, Patristic, and Controversial collections. The museum has an interesting collection of manuscripts, *incunabula*, or early printed books, medals, coins, tokens, wood carvings, typographical specimens, &c., &c.

Oscott was the resort of most of the converts at the time of the 'Oxford Movement,' and many eminent men were received here by Bishop Wiseman on their conversion to the Roman Catholic religion; amongst others Dr. (now Cardinal) Newman. The college counts amongst its alumni, several eminent men in the learned professions and the army, and also several of the present Roman Catholic Bishops, and his Eminence Cardinal Howard." [Note 90]

MASON ORPHANAGE. – This celebrated Orphanage, built and endowed entirely by the munificence of one man, is at Erdington, not far from the Chester Road Station. It is a fine example of modified Gothic, with a lofty tower, clock, and a musical set of chimes. About 320 orphans, of whom 120 are boys and 200 girls, are here boarded, lodged, clothed, and educated. [Note 91]

ROMAN ROAD. – The old Roman Road, called Icknield Street, crosses the western portion of the park, and may be reached in a few minutes from Streetly Station. Its course is very perceptible, though it is covered, like the moor which it crosses, by heath and gorse.

BARR BEACON is a remarkable group of trees on the summit of a hill, about three miles west of Sutton. It is supposed to have been a Druidical shrine. It is visible for many miles in every direction, and the Beacon Hill has no doubt been lighted up with signal fires in the warlike times of our Saxon forefathers.

MOOR HALL is a mansion about a mile north-east of Sutton. It occupies the site of the residence built for his own occupation by Bishop Vesey, Sutton's great benefactor. Only one apartment of the original structure remains. In the grounds is an old stone-built farm house in which, it is said, the bishop was born. The staircase is built entirely of stone, and the steps wind round a central shaft, like those of belfry stairs in churches. [Note 92]

NEW HALL, a castellated structure about a mile east of Sutton, is said to be the oldest inhabited house in England. The waters of a moat surround it on all sides. It was originally built A.D. 1200, but was enlarged and partly rebuilt in 1360, from which date it has been known as *New Hall*. It is the residence of John de Hely Chadwick, Esquire, the twenty-sixth lineal descendant of its founder. [Note 93]

PEDDIMORE HALL. – An ancient mansion, which formerly stood some four miles east of Sutton, is worthy of note, as having been the ancient seat of the Ardens. The double moat which surrounded the house still remains, but the house has long since disappeared. A farm house has risen on the old foundations. It is principally remarkable from the fact that Shakespeare's mother was an Arden, a member of this ancient family, who were residents here long before the Norman Conquest. [Note 94]

Chapter XXV. Miscellaneous Information.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

SUTTON PARISH CHURCH. – Services: Sunday 8.0, 9.30, and 11 a.m.; 3.0 and 6.30 p.m. Wednesday, 12.0 noon. Friday, 12.0 noon and 7.30 p.m. Rector: Rev. W.K.R. Bedford, M.A. Curates: Rev. F.W. Beynon, and Rev. G.F. Hough, M.A. Sexton: Mr Stonehouse, the Dam.

DISTRICT CHURCHES

MANEY. – A temporary iron Church, erected at the cost of the Rector of Sutton, as an appendage to the Parish Church. Services conducted by the parochial clergy. Sundays, 11.0 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m.

WHITEHOUSE COMMON. – The Rector of Sutton has fitted up a large room, where Divine Service is conducted on Sundays, at 3.0 p.m.

HILL. – St. James' Church, consecrated 1835. Incumbent: Rev. Montagu Webster, M.A.

WALMLEY. -- St. John's Church, consecrated 1845. Incumbent: Rev. G.W. Robinson, M.A.

BOLDMERE. – St. Michael's Church, consecrated 1857. Incumbent: Rev. E.H. Kittoe, B.A.

OTHER PLACES OF WORSHIP

ROMAN CATHOLIC. – Holy Trinity Chapel, Lichfield Road, Sutton. Priest in Charge: Rev. J.B. Harkness. Services: Sundays, 10.0 a.m. and 7.0 p.m. Catechetical Instruction, 6.30 p.m.

A CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL was opened in Park Road, in April, 1880. I have applied unsuccessfully for information as to services, &c.

PRIMITIVE METHODISTS. – There is a Chapel belonging to this denomination at Maney.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. – The Plymouth Brethren have an iron Chapel in the Manor Hill Road, Maney.

POST OFFICE

CHIEF OFFICE: High Street – Savings' Bank, Money Order and Telegraph Office. Mr. H. Bromwich, Postmaster.

LETTERS DESPATCHED to Birmingham, for all parts of the country, 10.15 a.m., 7.20 p.m.

DELIVERIES: 7.0 a.m. and 3.30 p.m.

PILLAR RECEIVING BOXES at Lichfield Road, London & N.W. Railway Station, and Maney.

COUNTRY DISTRICTS: Morning delivery only.

BRANCH OFFICE: Mere Green.

PILLAR BOXES: Little Aston and Shepherd's Pool.

THE PARK-RULES

INHABITANTS. – *Bona fide* inhabitants of the Parish of Sutton have the right of free entrance to the Park at all times. They have also the right (subject to a small registration fee) of free pasturage therein for horses and cattle; and for pigs, in the acorn season – subject to certain conditions.

VISITORS. – Visitors pay an entrance fee of Twopence on *Sundays* and *Fridays*. On other days the fee is One Penny.

HORSES AND CARRIAGES. – For horses, whether for riding or drawing carriages, the fee is sixpence each. Occupants of carriages pay the visitors' entrance fee. *Tickets* are given, which must be retained and shown to the park servants when required.

PIC-NIC PARTIES. – Suitable spots for pic-nics are marked on the map with a *red cross*. At the spot near Blackroot Pool, so marked, women with hot water, &c., are usually in attendance.

REFRESHMENTS. – Tea, coffee, and non-intoxicating drinks, with solid refreshments of simple character, are on sale near the spots marked on the map with the letter R in *red ink*.

RIDING. – Ponies and donkeys, saddled and bridled, are on hire at the spots marked on the map with the letter D *in blue ink*. The drivers are licensed, and wear numbered badges. Complaints of misconduct should be made to the park keepers.

BATHING in the Park after 9 o'clock a.m. is strictly prohibited.

BIRD-NESTING AND BIRD-SNARING within the Park are not permitted.

BOATING. – Boats of all kinds are available at Windley Pool and at Blackroot Pool.

FISHING. – Bracebridge Pool, Longmore Pool, and Powel's Pool are not available for fishing.

WINDLEY POOL. – Fishing may be had in this pool, either from the banks or from punts, on reasonable terms. There are good roach, perch, tench and pike.

KEEPER'S POOL. – Mr Phillips is the lessee. Annual terms may be known at Blackroot Pool.

BLACKROOT POOL. – Mr. C.J. Phillips, lessee. Daily Tickets for fishing, from bank or punt.

RAILWAYS

THE LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY STATION at Sutton is close to the town. There are frequent trains to Birmingham, and from thence to all parts of the country. On holiday occasions special trains are run as fast as they can be got ready. A continuation of the line to Lichfield is in contemplation.

MIDLAND RAILWAY. – The Midland Company has three Sutton Stations. The TOWN STATION, for ordinary traffic; the PARK STATION, for excursionists and visitors to the Park, and to the new sporting establishment at Four Oaks; and STREETLY STATION, on the west side of the Park, for visitors from the Walsall side. The Stations are sufficiently extensive to accommodate very large numbers of passengers, without pressure or inconvenience. Trains run frequently in both directions.

RACE COURSES

FOUR OAKS PARK has recently been purchased by a company for a racing ground, and other sporting purposes. This is all the information I am able to give, as the proprietors tell me that their plans are not yet complete. **[Note 95]**

HORSE AND CARRIAGE KEEPERS, FOR HIRE

HOLFORD, Royal Hotel.

ALLPORT, adjoining Station Hotel, Station Street.

LOVETT, Royal Oak, High Street.

APARTMENTS

Persons seeking Apartments are recommended to apply to Mrs. Brentnall or to Mr. Haynes, Booksellers, High Street.

FINIS

Advertisements **[Note 96]**

A.D. 1825. Kenworthy & Bailey, Printsellers & Dealers in Modern Pictures and Water Color Drawings, Carvers and Gilders, 39, Cherry Street, Birmingham. N.B. – Frames of the newest and best workmanship made for Oil Paintings, Drawings, Prints &c. Pictures Cleaned, Lined, and Restored. Re-Gilding, &c.

The Birmingham India-Rubber Co., 124, New Street. Manufacturers of Permanently Elastic Stockings, Knee Caps, Leggings, Anklets, Wristlets, Abdominal and Supporting Belts. Hot-Water and Air-Proof Beds, Pillows, Cushions, Spine Rests, &c. Waterproof Sheets, for Invalid's Beds. Bassinet & Children's Bed Sheets. Nursing Aprons, Waterproof Bibs and Napkins, Sponge Bags. Portable Baths, Teething Corals, Teats, Milk Tubes, Breast Exhausters, Nipple Shields, Feeding Bottles, Dress Preservers, Umbilical Belts, Bandage Webs, Injection Bottles, Enemas and Syringes, Invalid Urinals, Night Commodes, Pile Cushions, Truss Pads, Pilches, Pessaries, Ice Bags, Eye Douches, &c. Hospital, Domestic, and Surgical Requisites of every description. 124, New Street.

Gillon's Lime Juice Cordial. "Gillon's Lime Juice is genuine, while its state of preservation is highly satisfactory." Lancet, Nov. 5th, 1870. The Lime (*Citrus Acida*) and the Lemon (*Citrus Lemonum*) are varieties of the same class of plants. Both are natives of India. The Lime is supposed to be the original plant; the Lemon being a larger variety produced by cultivation, in the same way as the plum has been produced from the common sloe. The Lime is principally cultivated in the West Indies, where it is grown in enormous quantities for the sake of its juice. As in all original varieties of fruits, there is some astringency in the juice of the Lime. This makes it superior to Lemon juice as a beverage. Lemon juice is intensely acid, and has a tendency to produce purgative action. The astringency in the Lime prevents this, and renders it perfectly innocuous, while it adds to its agreeable flavour, giving it the peculiar "dryness" which is so admired in Sherry and other wines. Animals have an instinctive knowledge of wholesomeness in their food. In the south of Brazil, where the Lime grows in a wild state, the flesh of cattle killed in the fruit season has a distinct smell and flavour of the Lime, from the quantity of fallen fruit they pick up and consume. Its beneficial use by man has not been lost sight of. For more than a century no ship has been allowed to go to sea without an ample supply, and it has saved the lives of scores of thousands. Seamen no longer fear the dire scorbutic diseases to which their forefathers were subject. As a preventative of rheumatism, and kindred complaints, and as a palliative where the disease exists, it is acknowledged to be unequalled. Dr G.O. Rees considers that it acts by undergoing changes in the stomach, which supply oxygen to such elements as tend to produce uric acid; converting them into urea, and so facilitating their passage from the system.

John Gillon & Co., by great care in the preparation of the juice in the tropics, and by judicious and scientific manipulation in this country have produced a CORDIAL, which, retaining all its salubrious qualities, is a grateful, cooling, pleasant, and delicious beverage; whilst its price, considering the extent to which it may be diluted, is simply inappreciable. Prepared by John Gillon & Co., Leith, and Sold Elsewhere. Crescens Walker, Sole Wholesale Agent, 31, Paradise Street, Birmingham.

New Stationer. Large Assortment and Cheap. James L. Allday, Shakespeare Printing Steam Works, 39, Colmore Row, Birmingham. Printing, Lithography, and Law Stationery, &c., on the Premises. The Map of Sutton in this Book was printed by J.L. Allday.

Crystal Palace Hotel and Pleasure Grounds, Sutton Coldfield. Contractor: O.E. McGregor, Proprietor of the Molyneux House and Pleasure Grounds, Wolverhampton. These delightful and popular grounds possess advantages of locality and convenience which eminently fit them for a day's pleasure and change after the smoky atmosphere of the town, and the humdrum of the workshop. The beauty and variety of the surrounding scenery are too well known to need description. Boating on the pools, dancing on the lawns, and in the Palace, Cricket, Swings, Bicycling, &c. Dinners, Teas, and other Refreshments contracted for on the most liberal terms; Capabilities for providing for pleasure parties of any extent, even if 1000 in number. Orders by post punctually and promptly attended to. Private Dining, Tea, and Sitting Rooms. The choicest Wines, Spirits, Ales, and Cigars at town prices. Military and Quadrille Bands every Monday and Saturday. Cheap Excursions during the summer months by London & North Western and Midland Railway Companies. Charge by rail, including admission to the Gardens, Palace, and Park, One Shilling. Address – O.E. McGregor, Molyneux House, Wolverhampton. P.S. – Gentlemen can be accommodated with apartments overlooking the Park.

A Cup of Delicious Invigorating Coffee in perfection and without trouble may be had by using Symington's Essence of Coffee & Chicory. This preparation is specially recommended as a Unique, Wholesome, and Economical Dietetic Beverage. Sold by Grocers Everywhere. Wholesale Agent: Crescens Walker, 31, Paradise Street, Birmingham. Manufactured by Thomas Symington, Edinburgh.

W.J. Haynes, High Street, Sutton Coldfield, Established 1858. Plumber, Decorator Painter, Glazier Paper-hanger, &c. Bookseller Stationer News Agent, &c. Dealer in Paper Hangings Gas Fittings Lamps, Lamp Oils, &c. Birthday Cards Valentines Christmas and New Year Cards in great variety. Currall's Patent Ventilators supplied and fixed by competent workmen Books, and a great variety of Fancy Articles, suitable for presents and rewards. Estimates given for General Repairs, Joiners' Work, &c. Almanacks, Diaries, Annual Volumes, &c. W.J. Haynes, High St., Sutton Coldfield

D. Leonardt & Co., Patentees and Manufacturers of Carbonized and other Steel Pens, Gold Pens, Marcographic Pens, Pen Holders, Pencil Cases, &c. Universal Pen Works, 69, George Street, Parade, Birmingham. Large Gold Medal, Moscow, 1872. Medal of Merit, Vienna, 1873.

Montagu Browne, Naturalist, Birmingham, (Author of "Practical Taxidermy," Compiler of the "Label-List of the British Macro-Lepidoptera.") Supplies all Entomological Requisites. Butterfly Nets. Cyanide Bottles. Entomological Pins. Collecting and Store Boxes. Zinc Oval pocket boxes, for keeping Insects from drying in hot Weather. Setting Boards. Cabinets. Breeding Cages for Larvae. Setting Board Store box complete, (see Fig. 35,) "Practical Taxidermy." Artificial Eyes, and all Materials for fitting up, kept in stock for supplying Naturalists, Amateurs, &c. Egg Drills, and Blowers. Taxidermists' Tools, suitable for collecting at home and abroad. British and Foreign Birds' skins, and Eggs, at lowest rates. Quotations given when ordered. Botanical Tins. Label-List of the British Macro-Lepidoptera, (Butterflies and Moths,) for labelling Cabinets, price 6d., post free 7d. Collecting Butterflies and Moths (Illustrated) 1s., post free 1s. 1d. Re-printed with additions from "Practical Taxidermy." Practical Taxidermy. – A manual of instruction to the Amateur, in collecting preserving, and setting-up of Natural History specimens of all kinds. – (Illustrated.) Price 3s. 6d. Post free 3s. 9d. List of British Birds, 7d. post free. Books on Natural History occasionally in stock. Send stamped Addressed Envelope for enquiries or price lists.

Henry Hope Horticultural Builder and Hot-Water Engineer, 55, Lionel Street, Birmingham, Established A.D. 1818. Cast-iron Hand Glass Frame; the sides cotted together, and the top moveable. Painted oxide, but not glazed. 14 18 20 22 24 in. square 7s. 9s. 10s. 11s. 13s. each Glazed with 21-oz. sheet, and painted oxide. 14 18 20 22 24 in. square 13s. 15s. 17s. 18s. 21s. each Packages to be returned, carriage paid, within one month.

Blackroot Pool, Sutton Coldfield Park. Boating, Good Fishing and Refreshments. C.J. Phillips, Proprietor

J.S. Merryweather, 57, Bull Street, Birmingham, Hosier, Glover, & Shirt Maker. The Universal Shirt, considered the best fitting in the Trade. Collars, Scarfs, Ties &c. in the Newest Styles. Umbrellas, Dressing Gowns. Travelling Rugs, &c. Shirts to Order at short notice. A choice Stock of Oxford and French Print Shirtings to select from.

Sutton Coldfield. Ashfurlong Hall Classical and Commercial Boarding School, (In unison with Trinity College, London.) The above School is delightfully situated in its own Park and Grounds of Fifty Acres, on the Tamworth Road, about One Mile distant from the Sutton Station of the London & North Western and Midland Railways. The course of study is adapted to the requirements of candidates for the principal competitive Examinations as well as for pupils intended for professional and commercial

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NOTES

Note 1. Eliezer Edwards (1815-91) was a Birmingham historian. In addition to *Sutton Coldfield A History and a Guide*, his publications included *Personal Recollections of Birmingham and Birmingham Men* (1877) (first published in the *Birmingham Daily Mail* under the initials S.D.R.), *The Old Taverns of Birmingham, etc*, *Sir Rowland Hill, K.C.B.: A Biographical and Historical Sketch with Records of the Family to which he Belonged*, and *Words, Facts, and Phrases; a Dictionary of Curious, Quaint, and Out-of-the-way Matters*. Born in Bristol he moved to Birmingham in 1845 and set up a glass manufacturing business. He was also an inventor with an eccentric turn of mind. The *Gazette* for 1871 lists a patent which he took out on 1st February 1853 in respect of "a new or improved bedstead which may be used as a vehicle". *Showell's Dictionary of Birmingham* (1885) gives more details: "A patent was taken out by Eliezer Edwards in 1853 for a bedstead fitted with a wheel and handle, that it might be used as a wheelbarrow." He also registered a design for a buttonhole nosegay holder in May 1866, described in the Design Registers (No 197158) as follows: "This design is for a posy or buttonhole pin. The phial (a vessel for holding liquids) is used to hold water to keep the flower or posy fresh. The long needle is used to hold the phial securely to the costume of the wearer." He was not a successful businessman and he was forced into bankruptcy in 1871 with debts totalling ten times the value of his assets. It was only after this debacle that he took up writing about local history. He was the editor of *Edgbastonia* a free monthly magazine containing articles about the Edgbaston district of Birmingham and its prominent inhabitants, which was started in May 1881. He died ten years later at Lindon House

in Harborne. It will be seen that Edwards was not a strict historian, but spoke more of his personal experiences and opinions, with lively and humorous anecdotes. Lines of verse are quoted at the beginning of each chapter and occasionally in the text, which shows that Edwards had a literary bent and a wide taste in poetry ranging from the well-known to the obscure.

Note 2. William Cowper (pronounced Cooper) (1731-1800) was a prolific poet, best known nowadays for *The Ballad of John Gilpin* and the hymn *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*. The line quoted by Edwards comes from a poem in six books in blank verse entitled *The Task*.

Note 3. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82) was a popular American poet, famous for *Hiawatha*, *Paul Revere's Ride* and *Excelsior*, amongst other works. The lines which Edwards recalled to mind are taken from *The Village Blacksmith*.

Note 4. The verse at the head of *The Journey to Sutton* comes from a poem by Charles Rann Kennedy (1808-67) entitled *The Railway*. Kennedy was a Birmingham-born barrister who also published poetry and translations of Greek and Latin verse. He was the younger brother of Benjamin Hall Kennedy, the author of the celebrated textbook *Kennedy's Latin Primer*.

Note 5. For an account of Oscott College see Chapter XXIV.

Note 6. Sir Josiah Mason (1795-1881) was a rags-to-riches Birmingham industrialist engaged in pen manufacture and other trades. He invented the first steel pen-nib. He spent £300,000 on establishing his orphanage for which generous endowment he was awarded a knighthood. In 1875 he founded the Mason Science College, at a cost of £250,000, which later became the University of Birmingham. Sir Josiah Mason's Orphanage in Chester Road was opened in 1868 and demolished in 1964.

Note 7. The lines of Thomas Babington Macaulay 1st Baron Macaulay (1800-59) are the closing stanza of his poem *The Armada*. Edwards did not quite remember the lines correctly; the original has 'Darwin's rocky dales', 'Ely's stately fane' and 'O'er the wide vale of Trent'.

Note 8. This is the present Sutton Station fronting to Railway Road. The London & North Western Railway Company line from Birmingham to Sutton opened in 1862.

Note 9. The railway line from Sutton to Lichfield opened in 1884.

Note 10. The only mention of Sutton Coldfield in Shakespeare's plays comes in *Henry IV Part One* Act 5 Scene 2:

Falstaff (making his way slowly along Watling Street from London to Shrewsbury, where later the King's army was to beat rebel forces led by Harry Hotspur): "Bardolph get thee before to Coventry, fill me a bottle of sack, our soldiers shall march through. We'll to Sutton Cophill tonight."

Other versions refer to Sutton Co'fil, which is probably how the name was pronounced in Shakespeare's day. The spelling of Shakespeare without its final e was an affectation on Edwards' part. In Shakespeare's time there were a hundred or so ways of spelling his name, but by the time of Dr Johnson in the 18th century the spelling had become standardised, although some antiquarians refused to adopt it.

Note 11. The Midland Railway Company line from Water Orton to Walsall opened in 1879, after much controversy over the line passing through Sutton Park. The station at Penns was in Penns Lane near the junction with Walmley Road. It was closed and demolished in 1965, as part of the infamous cuts recommended by Dr Richard Beeching.

Note 12. Sutton Town Station was in Midland Drive, a new road named after the Railway Company. It was closed in 1924 and is now used as offices.

Note 13. Sutton Park Station was in Midland Road, another new road named after the Railway Company. It was closed in 1965.

Note 14. Sir John Cradock-Hartopp sold Four Oaks Hall with 246 acres on land to Four Oaks Park Limited for £60,000 in 1880 and they spent a further £40,000 on creating a racecourse there, building paddocks, stables, offices, a club stand for members, a large public grandstand, a press and jockey stand, and a stand for Tattersall's, the country's leading racehorse auctioneers. The racecourse was officially opened in March 1881 and was initially a great success, but its fortunes soon declined and after struggling on for nine years the company was wound up and its mortgagees sold the site for residential development.

Note 15. The lines are taken from William Cowper's poem *Retirement*, omitting the fourth line: "Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day-dreams." See Note 2.

Note 16. The Honourable Edward Swynfen Parker Jervis (1815-96) of Little Aston Hall donated the land on which St. Peter's Church in Roman Road was built in 1874, and he bore the whole cost. According to Ted Hiscock's *Gone Are The Days, A History of Little Aston and Surrounding Area* (1986) Parker Jervis paid a total of £10,000 for the building of both the church and a parsonage. Streetly Station was on the Midland Railway Company line from Water Orton to Walsall at the corner of Foley Road East and Thornhill Road. It was closed in 1965, although the line still carries freight traffic.

Note 17. The lines are taken from a long poem called *The Muses' Elizium* by the Warwickshire poet Michael Drayton (1563-1631), perhaps best known for his *Ballad of Agincourt* ("Fair stood the wind for France"). Again, Edwards, who was presumably quoting from memory, changes some of the words. The original poem refers to "my silken baldric" and "my horn so loud and shrill". He also omits the previous line, which contains the necessary rhyme:

"I'm clad in youthful green, I other colours scorn."

Drayton was buried in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey.

Note 18. The lines are from *Henry VI Part Two* Act 2 Scene 2:

Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick: "My heart assures me, that the Earl of Warwick
Shall one day make the Duke of York a King."

Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York: "And Nevil, this I do assure myself,
Richard shall live to make the Earl of Warwick
The greatest man in England, but the King."

Note 19. These are the dying words of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (Warwick the Kingmaker) in *Henry VI Part Three* Act 5 Scene 2. Shakespeare's last line was: "Is nothing left me but my body's length."

Note 20. In fact it was Roger de Beaumont 2nd Earl of Warwick, son of the first Earl, who acquired Sutton in 1126 by effecting an exchange of properties with King Henry I.

Note 21. The last Beauchamp Earl of Warwick was married to Cecily Neville, the sister of Richard Neville (the Kingmaker) who himself was married to Anne de Beauchamp (1426-92), the last Earl's sister.

Note 22. The verse is taken from a translation by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of *Stanzas on the Death of his Father* by the Castilian poet Don Jorge Manrique (c. 1440-78).

Note 23. Although the stone-built farmhouse at 29 Moor Hall Drive is reputed to have been Bishop Vesey's birthplace, doubts have been cast on this tradition in recent years. In his *Buildings of England* Sir Nikolaus Pevsner suggested 1520 to 1540 as the likely date of construction, which would imply that the farmhouse was built by Bishop Vesey around the time that he built Moor Hall. If so, his birthplace may have been a timber-framed building which was demolished to make way for the stone-built house. See Roger Lea's *History Spot No. 288* dated 13th December 2013.

Note 24. Sampson Samuel Lloyd (1820-99) was the tenant of Moor Hall for about fifteen years from 1866. He was a wealthy iron-founder and mine-owner from Wednesbury and also a major shareholder in Lloyds Banking Company Limited. He was appointed as the chairman of Lloyds Bank in 1884 and was a Member of Parliament from 1874 to 1885, initially for Plymouth and then for South Warwickshire. He married twice and had nine children.

Note 25. Bishop Vesey died on 23rd October 1554. The inscription on his tomb in Holy Trinity Church wrongly records that he died in 1555 in the 103rd year of his age.

Note 26. Rev Montagu Webster (1819-1903) was the Warden of Sutton Coldfield in 1874 and 1875. He was the vicar of St. Peter's Church Hill and the brother of Baron Dickinson Webster, the owner of Penns Hall and Penns Mill. William Kirkpatrick Riland Bedford (1826-1905) was the Rector of Sutton from 1850 to 1892. John Wiggan was the owner of Park House in Sutton Park. There were two Thomas Haywards, father and son; the elder was a prosperous wheelwright who later retired to live at Bleak House in Lichfield Road and the younger lived at The White Cottage (later Ye Olde Pie Shoppe) on the Parade. Dr J.H. Lakin practised in partnership with Dr (later Sir) Alfred Evans at 1/3 High Street. He was killed in an accident in 1877. John Henry Cull was a schoolteacher who lived at and ran a Preparatory School for Young Gentlemen, also known as Mr Cull's Academy, from 56 High Street. Thomas Storer Eddowes (1825-1903) was a solicitor with offices at 46 High Street; he was Warden of Sutton Coldfield in 1871, 1872 and 1873. Henry Addenbrooke (1821-1902) and his nephew Thomas Vincent Holbeche (1846-1904) practised as solicitors at 1/3 Coleshill Street; they were the Corporation's Deputy Stewards (the equivalent of Town Clerk) until Holbeche was appointed as Sutton's first Town Clerk in 1886. Charles Cooper was appointed as the Corporation's surveyor in 1850; his duties included the management of the Corporation's estates, including the woods in Sutton Park.

Note 27. The quotation is taken from *Essays Civil and Moral* by the philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, 1st Viscount St. Alban (1561-1626). Some misguided persons think that he was the true author of Shakespeare's plays.

Note 28. In fact, the descendants of Bishop Vesey's brother Hugh and sister Agnes continued living in Sutton for several generations. For example, Hugh Harman's grandson Ralph Massey was Warden in 1593 and his great-grandson Kenelm Yardley was Warden in 1616. Agnes's great-grandson William Gibbons was Warden in 1592, 1600 and 1607. The Pudsey family of Langley Hall boasted of their relationship to Bishop Vesey down to the 18th century. Robert Pudsey married Hugh Harman's daughter Eleanor and his grandson George Pudsey (died 1674) and great-grandson Henry Pudsey (died 1678) were the first Capital Burgesses (magistrates) appointed under the 1664 Charter. Henry's grandson Pudsey Jesson (1696-1748) was Warden of Sutton Coldfield in 1726 and 1727, and Pudsey's son William Jesson, who lived at Rookery House in the High Street, died in 1786. The last owner of Rookery House in the Jesson family was William Jesson's daughter Elizabeth Pudsey Lynch who died in 1830. Sir Charles Holte 6th Baronet of Aston Hall (1721-82) married Anne Jesson, the daughter of

Pudsey Jesson. Their grandson Charles Holte Bracebridge, who was an administrative assistant to Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War, died in 1872. He was Bishop Vesey's nine times great-nephew.

Note 29. Yew Tree Cottage in Lower Parade was still in use as a private residence in the 1920s and was eventually demolished when South Parade was laid out.

Note 30. The Boldmere district of Sutton Coldfield was formerly known as 'The Coldfield'.

Note 31. The old Manor House of the Earls of Warwick was demolished in the 1520s. A farmhouse, also known as the Manor House, was built on the site in about 1700. A new property was built in the grounds of the Manor House in about 1920, which in 1945 was given the name of 'The Manor House', and the old Manor House was renamed 'The Manor'.

Note 32. The Royal Hotel refers, not to the hotel in the High Street which had that name for over a century until it was renamed 'The Townhouse' in 2019, but to the hotel in King Edward Square which was opened in 1865 to cater for travellers using the new Sutton railway station. The hotel was never a commercial success and closed after only thirty years (at which point the High Street hotel changed its name from 'The Swan' to 'The Royal'). After five years as a sanatorium the buildings of the old Royal Hotel became the offices of the Borough of Sutton Coldfield (late Birmingham City Council) until they were sold off in 2016 and converted into residential apartments.

Note 33. In 1880 Sutton's Town Hall, opened in 1859, was in Mill Street, now the Masonic Hall Building. The present Town Hall in Upper Clifton Road was opened in 1906.

Note 34. The lines are adapted from the first verse of a poem called *Barbara* by the Scottish poet Alexander Smith (1829-67), the original of which reads:

"On the Sabbath-day,
Through the churchyard old and gray,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves I held my rustling way,
And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms,
'Mid the gorgeous storms of music – in the mellow organ-calms,
'Mid the upward-streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn psalms,
I stood careless, Barbara."

Note 35. George Sacheverell (1632-1715) inherited New Hall in the 1650s and lived there for the rest of his life. He was appointed as High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1709, aged 77, and he appointed his namesake (believed not to be a relative) Dr Henry Sacheverell (1674-1724) as his chaplain. Dr Sacheverell was a hot-headed high-church Anglican, who preached an inflammatory sermon, first at All Saints Church Derby and then at St. Paul's Cathedral London, condemning the deposition, twenty-one years earlier, of King James II. He was impeached by the House of Commons, his sermons were publicly burned and he was banned from preaching for three years, during which period he resided at New Hall under George Sacheverell's protection. When King George I was crowned in 1714 he preached another incendiary sermon at Holy Trinity Church in Sutton, deploring the accession of a low-church monarch. When George Sacheverell died, Dr Henry Sacheverell married his widow a month later.

Note 36. Edward Sadler (1758-1837) was an attorney who moved from Castle Bromwich to Sutton Coldfield in about 1800. He lived at and practised from 36 High Street. His brother Robert was the Vicar of Shustoke and also the minister at Over Whitacre church. When Edward died his son Richard (1798-1856) inherited 36 High Street with the ancient font serving as a bird-bath in the back garden,

which his father had rescued from the Griffin Inn at Shustoke. When Richard died his widow Sarah gave the font to Holy Trinity Church, most likely in fulfilment of her husband's dying wishes.

Note 37. There is no evidence that Mary Ashford was foully murdered. She was found drowned in a pit of water off Penns Lane, having spent the previous evening and the early hours of the morning with Abraham Thornton, who was charged with her murder. He proved by several witnesses that he was elsewhere at the time Mary Ashford met her death and was acquitted on the strength of this alibi. Mary's brother appealed against the acquittal and Thornton challenged him to trial by battle, which he declined. Both appeal of murder and trial by battle were abolished in the following year. Thornton's attorney was Edward Sadler (see Note 36). Mary's death was either suicide (unlikely) or accidental drowning (most probably).

Note 38. The Shakespearean quote comes from Jaques' famous speech in *As You Like It* known as *The Seven Ages of Man* starting "All the World's a Stage". (Act 2 Scene 7)

Note 39. Bishop Vesey's first foundation deed was dated 14th May 1527 and named twenty-one individuals as trustees, but it appears that the trust failed for legal reasons, and in 1544 Bishop Vesey transferred the school lands to the Warden and Society of Sutton Coldfield, who mismanaged the trust funds until decrees of the Chancery Court in 1634 and 1638 ordered that the future management of the school should be in private hands again.

Note 40. Charles Barker, the Headmaster of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School since 1817, died in 1842 at the age of forty-nine following a fall from his horse, probably as the result of a heart attack. It is not quite correct to say that the decree of the Chancery Court was the result of agitation. In fact, the 1840 Grammar Schools Act, introduced to parliament by one of the trustees (or governors) of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, Sir John Eardley Eardley Wilmot M.P. for North Warwickshire (1783-1847), had enacted that no new headmaster of a grammar school was to be appointed unless a scheme of education to include subjects other than Latin and Greek had first been approved by the Chancery Court.

Note 41. Rev Albert Smith was the Headmaster of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School from 1863 to 1902.

Note 42. The verse comes from *The Dream of Eugene Aram* by Thomas Hood (1799-1845). In the original the third line reads: "And four-and-twenty happy boys." Evidently, Edwards wanted to include girls.

Note 43. The lines are taken from *The Task* by William Cowper. (see Note 2)

Note 44. The verse comes from *Sunrise on the Hills* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (see Note 3)

Note 45. Bushey Park, lying just north of Hampton Court Palace in Richmond-upon-Thames, was given to King Henry VIII by Cardinal Wolsey. At over 1,000 acres it is the second largest of London's eight Royal Parks, famed for its mix of waterways, gardens and roaming herds of red and fallow deer.

Note 46. *To One Who Has Been Long In City Pent* is a sonnet by John Keats (1795-1821).

Note 47. The Royal Promenade Gardens adjoining Sutton Park in Clifton Road were opened in 1868. They comprised a fernery, two acres of rhododendrons, azaleas, rose-beds, an Italian garden, ornamental lawns and flower-beds, a lake, a bicycle track, a bowling green, a cricket pitch, a croquet lawn, an archery field and a conservatory with a large glass dome, reminiscent of Hyde Park's Crystal

Palace built for the Great Exhibition in 1851, whose name the Promenade Gardens soon acquired. (see the advertisement at the end of Edwards' book)

Note 48. In 1826 Sir Edmund Cradock-Hartopp of Four Oaks Hall acquired 63 acres of Sutton Park, including the wood known as Ladywood, from the Warden and Society of Sutton Coldfield in order to increase the already generous size of Four Oaks Park. In exchange he gave 93 acres of land to the Warden and Society, most of which was incorporated in Sutton Park, including the Meadow Platt and land around Powell's Pool. Sir Edmund also paid for the construction of Park Road leading to a new main entrance to the Park by the Town Gate.

Note 49. The pretty cottage occupied by Mrs Wiggan was Park House. Her late husband John had acquired the Blade Mill, powered by the stream which flowed out of Keeper's Pool, in 1850 and had converted it into a gentleman's residence with ornamental walks alongside the stream.

Note 50. The lines are taken from a poem entitled *The English Holiday* by Eliza Cook (1818-89). In the original the first line reads: "Yet think, their lives of toil and gloom." Cook was a social reformer who championed women's rights and advocated better conditions and better education for the working classes.

Note 51. Mr C.J. Phillips leased Blackroot Pool from the Sutton Corporation, and hired out boats, licensed fishing and sold refreshments.

Note 52. The licensee of the Station Hotel in Station Street was William Stent, ably assisted by his wife and a resident barmaid.

Note 53. The verse is taken from a poem entitled *Sutton Park* by Charles Barker, the Headmaster of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School (see Note 40), who spent his time in hunting and shooting, writing poetry and local politics (he was Warden of Sutton Coldfield in 1836 and 1837), much to the detriment of his teaching duties. The original poem reads:

"Or, turning, let us gently rove
Through some deep-bosomed holly grove,
Fit scene for friendship and for love."

Note 54. Again, Edwards has not correctly remembered these well-known lines from *Home-Thoughts from Abroad* by Robert Browning (1812-89), which should read:

"That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture."

Note 55. Henry Jackson was the licensee of the Four Oaks Inn, also known as the Park Tavern, in Belwell Lane.

Note 56. Sir William Edmund Cradock-Hartopp (1797-1864) inherited Four Oaks Hall in 1849 and, at considerable expense, he replaced the wooden fence which separated Four Oaks Park from Sutton Park from Four Oaks Gate to Hartopp Gate with a high wall in Staffordshire brick, which still stands to this day.

Note 57. Modern research has shown that the so-called 'Ancient Encampment' between Bracebridge and Blackroot Pools is neither ancient nor an encampment. The ridges and depressions which Edwards refers to may date back to the creation of a deer park in the 12th century, but are more likely

to result from gravel-extraction in connection with the building of Four Oaks Hall in the 17th century. See *The Archaeology of Sutton Park* (2013) by Dr Mike Hodder.

Note 58. The lines are from a poem called *The Woodlands* by Eliza Cook (see Note 50); again Edwards made several changes to the original poem:

“And they smile upon you ever with the pure and holy smiling
Of their lovely human sisterhood; and ever, as ye pass,
Look up to you beseechingly as though they were beguiling
You to take your seat beside them, on the warm and sunny grass.
And think you they will answer if with gentle words ye woo them?
O, believe me! They have voices sweet as any singing bird:
But they speak to those who love them, and who lean their souls unto them:
And by such, and by such only, are their gentle voices heard.”

Note 59. James Eustace Bagnall (1830-1918) was a Birmingham-born botanist whose specialist interest was bryology (the study of mosses and liverworts). His publications included *Notes on Sutton Park: Its Flowering Plants, Ferns and Mosses* (1876), *Handbook of Mosses* (1886), *Flora of Staffordshire* (1901) and *Mosses and Hepatics [Liverworts] of Worcestershire* (1903). He was elected an Associate of the Linnean Society in 1885. He took up botany as a hobby in 1864, but earned his living as a clerk in a Birmingham firm of steel pen-nib manufacturers for over fifty years.

Note 60. Charles Darwin wrote *Insectivorous Plants* in 1875.

Note 61. Rev Thomas Fuller (1608-61) was a noted author who wrote histories of the Church of England and Cambridge University. His most famous work, *History of the Worthies of Britain*, was published a year after his death.

Note 62. The common names of the plants mentioned in the text are provided by Edwards, but not those set out in the lists of mosses, ferns and rare plants found in Sutton Park. Some of the Latin names have changed since the lists were prepared, but the common English names are as follows:

Mosses: Papillose peatmoss, Mountain fork-moss, Bordered screw-moss, Round-fruited thyme thread-moss, Long-stalked hair-moss, Feather moss, Straw spear-moss, Curly-leaved moss, Pincushion moss, Serrated earth-moss, Short-tooth hump-moss, Tree climacium moss, Ringless hook-moss, Varnished hook-moss.

Ferns: Eagle fern, Lady fern, Male fern, Fancy fern, Mountain fern, Moonwort, Deer fern, Hard-shield fern, Broad-bucket fern, Marsh fern, Common polypoly.

Rare plants: Lenormand’s water-crowfoot, Early willow-grass, Heath dog-violet, Red sand-spurrey, Large bittercress, Marsh violet, Upright chickweed, Water chickweed, Common stork’s-bill, Dwarf furze, Marsh cinquefoil, Harsh downy-rose, Spatula-leaf loosestrife, Alternate-leaved golden saxifrage, Lesser marshwort, Fen bedstraw, Musk thistle, Meadow thistle, Wall lettuce, Sheep’s-bit, Bog cranberry, Marsh speedwell, Viper’s-bugloss, Bog pimpernel, Unbranched bur-reed, Swollen duckweed, Leopard marsh orchid, Bog asphodel, Heath rush, Sheathed cotton-sedge, Few-flowered spike-rush, Northern bog-sedge, White sedge, Smooth-stalked sedge, Hybrid sedge, Heath-grass, Matgrass.

Note 63. The lines are taken from John Keats’s sonnet *On the Grasshopper and Cricket*.

Note 64. Alexander Montagu Browne (1845-1928) was a well-known naturalist who was the curator of Leicester Museum. He wrote several books, including *Practical Taxidermy* (1884) and *The Vertebrate Animals of Leicestershire and Rutland* (1889), illustrated with Browne’s own meticulous drawings. He was a member of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society and a Fellow of the

Zoological Society. He also compiled *The Label List of the British Macro-Lepidoptera* in which he listed the names of over 750 large butterflies and moths, giving each a number for ease of future identification. He advertised at the end of Edwards' book as the supplier of "all entomological requisites" giving no specific address other than "Montagu Browne Naturalist Birmingham".

Note 65. The route Edwards and Browne took from Wylde Green Station in Station Road was presumably into Boldmere Road, across Jockey Road (formerly Jockey Lane) and into Stonehouse Road, the lane leading to Powell's Pool. The water from Powell's Pool served a mill which was used in the manufacture of spades, forks and other agricultural tools from 1824 to 1881; the pool was known locally as Spade Pool.

Note 66. "One shoe off and the other shoe on" comes from a nursery rhyme first recorded in 1797, derived from the traditional street cry of hot dumpling sellers:

"Diddle, diddle dumpling, my son John,
Went to bed with his britches on;
One shoe off, and the other shoe on,
Diddle, diddle dumpling, my son John."

Note 67. The Parson and Clerk in Chester Road was formerly known as the Royal Oak, and the gate into the Park opposite the inn is still known as the Royal Oak Gate. The name may be connected with King Charles I's visit to the area in 1642. (see Note 68)

Note 68. In 1642, during the Civil Wars, King Charles I, after a stay at Aston Hall, reviewed his troops standing on a Bronze Age neolithic bowl barrow, which gave the district of Kingstanding its name. The barrow, now a National Heritage listed monument, is off Kingstanding Road, just before the road becomes Sutton Oak Road, leading into Chester Road.

Note 69. The hawthorn bush or tree was destroyed in the mid-1930s when Chester Road was widened, but was soon replaced following a local outcry. The new bush was in turn bulldozed when traffic-lights were installed at the junction in 1998.

Note 70. Baldmoor Lake, from which Boldmere derived its name, was on the south side of Chester Road just below Oscott College. Edwards and Browne had had quite a walk to get back to Wylde Green Station.

Note 71. The lines are from Verse 102, Canto III of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* by George Gordon 6th Baron Byron (1788-1824), except that in the first line Edwards has changed Byron's "bees" to "trees".

Note 72. It is remarkable that Montagu Browne identified 118 different birds (not including eight whose habitat was doubtful) in Sutton Park, many more than can be seen today.

Note 73. See Note 64 for Browne's *Label List*. Without access to the list the numbers are meaningless, but it is remarkable that Browne could identify 209 different butterflies and moths in Sutton Park.

Note 74. The verse comes from Charles Barker's poem *Perkins' Pool* (see Note 53). Shirley Farmer Steele Perkins (1768-1852) of Moat House, Warden of Sutton Coldfield in 1804, took a lease of Blackroot Pool in Sutton Park in 1802, which he used mainly for boating parties from Moat House, and it soon became known as Perkins' Pool.

Note 74. Sir Ralph Bracebridge took a lease of the pool that became known as Bracebridge Pool from Richard de Beauchamp 13th Earl of Warwick in 1419. Sir William Dugdale in *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656) refers to “bremes” not “brems”, which makes it clearer that the rent was £10 or 120 bream. Edwards reproduces the obscure language of the 1453 bailiff’s account exactly as it appears in Dugdale’s book, but the passage is somewhat out of place in Edwards’ own book. Mydham is probably Middleham Castle near Leyburn North Yorkshire. In 1757 the Warden and Society leased Bracebridge Pool in perpetuity to Simon Luttrell and his successors as owners of Four Oaks Hall. In 1869 the current owner of the Hall, Sir John William Cradock-Hartopp (1829-88), surrendered the lease to the Warden and Society for the sum of £1,520.

Note 76. See Note 74. Shirley Farmer Steele Perkins’ son William Steele Perkins (1799-1864) inherited the lease of Blackroot Pool in 1852 and shortly before his death he surrendered it to the Warden and Society for the sum of £210.

Note 77. Keeper’s Pool is believed to have been created as a fish-pond by John Holte who was Keeper of the Sutton Chase in the reign of King Henry VI (1422-61). Ownership of the pool passed from the Holte family to the Somerville family and the latter sold it to the Warden and Society in 1879 for £3,500.

Note 78. Edwards misspells Longmoor Pool, although it is correctly spelt on the map at the front of the book. In 1733 the Warden and Society granted a lease of land near Longmoor Brook in Sutton Park for 21 years at a yearly rent of one shilling to John Riland (1690-1765), son of the Rector of Sutton and Warden in 1728. He built a dam and created Longmoor Pool for fishing and boating. In 1754 the lease was renewed for a further 21 years at the same rent, and at the same time a lease of four acres of land adjoining the pool for 63 years at a yearly rent of £2 was granted to Richard Reynolds to build a house and corn-mill.

Note 79. Sir Thomas Holte of Aston Hall created a pool on part of his Sutton Coldfield estate in 1730. It acquired the name of Powell’s Pool, or Powel’s Pool, when William Powel was the lessee of a mill used for rolling sheet metal in 1750. It was also known as Spade Mill or Forge Mill. The pool remained in the ownership of the Holte family and then passed to the Somerville family until it was acquired by the Sutton Coldfield Borough Council and incorporated in the Park in 1937, when Monmouth Drive was laid out. Francis Parkes and his son Arthur were the lessees of the mill, then used for producing spades, forks and other tools, for many years from 1843.

Note 80. Wyndley Pool is the oldest pool in Sutton Park; it served as the manorial fish-pond when Roger de Beaumont 2nd Earl of Warwick (c. 1102-53) acquired the Manor of Sutton in 1126. It remained in private hands when King Henry VIII gave the Park to the newly created Warden and Society of Sutton Coldfield in 1528. Like Powell’s Pool, by the 18th century it belonged to the Holte family of Aston Hall and passed by inheritance to the Somerville family in the 19th century, and it was acquired by the Borough Council and incorporated in the Park in 1937.

Note 81. The lines are adapted from *Afternoon Sports* by the Scottish poet Alexander Smith (1829-67). The original verse reads:

“Labour laid down his tools and went away.
The park was loud with games; clear laughter, shrieks,
Came from the rings of girls amid the trees;
The cricketers were eager at their play;
The stream was dotted with the swimmers’ heads;
Gay boats flashed up and down. The level sun
Poured o’er the sward a farewell gush of light,

And Sport transfigured stood.”

Note 82. See Note 47.

Note 83. Edward Capern (1819-94) was known as ‘the Postman Poet’ as he composed much of his poetry while delivering letters on foot for the Post Office in his native Devonshire. He was also known, with less justification, as ‘the Devonshire Burns’. He lived in Harborne Birmingham in the late 1870s and early 1880s.

Note 84. See Note 32.

Note 85. Edgar Edmund Estcourt (1816-84) was a canon of St. Chad’s Roman Catholic Cathedral in Birmingham.

Note 86. John Milner (1752-1826) was the titular Bishop of Castabala and Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District.

Note 87. Dr Henry Weedall (1788-1859) was a domestic prelate to Pope Pius IX.

Note 88. The architect Joseph Potter (1756-1842) lived at Pipehill in Lichfield. Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-52), the son of a French architectural draughtsman, is well-known for having revived Gothic architecture in England.

Note 89. In chronological order the Presidents were: 1824-40 Dr Henry Weedall, 1840-47 Cardinal Nicholas Patrick Stephen Wiseman (1802-65) the first Archbishop of Westminster Cathedral, 1847-48 Dr Henry F.C. Logan, 1848-53 Dr John Moore, 1853-59 Dr Henry Weedall again, 1859-60 Dr George Morgan, 1860-77 Dr James Spencer Northcote (1821-1907) and 1877-80 Dr John Hawkesford.

Note 90. Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-90), well-known as the author of *The Dream of Gerontius* and the hymn *Lead Kindly Light*, was canonised as a saint in 2019. Cardinal Edward Henry Howard (1829-92) was the nephew of the 12th Duke of Norfolk.

Note 91. See Note 6.

Note 92. See Note 23.

Note 93. 20 generations of the owners of New Hall can be traced from the 13th century to 1880: Sir Patrick Sacheverell (c. 1200-c. 1272), Robert Sacheverell (c. 1250-c. 1286), William Sacheverell (born c. 1287), William Sacheverell (born c. 1310), John Sacheverell (died c. 1398), Robert Sacheverell (born 1370), John Sacheverell (1390-c. 1459), Ralph Sacheverell (c. 1420-88), John Sacheverell (c. 1448-85), Henry Sacheverell (1475-1558), John Sacheverell (c. 1500-58), John Sacheverell (1518-92), Henry Sacheverell (1548-1620), Valens Sacheverell (1604-c. 1651), Charles Chadwick (1637-97) whose wife was Anne Sacheverell (died 1689), Charles Chadwick (1674-1756), John Chadwick (1720-97), Charles Chadwick (1753-1829), Hugo Malvesyn Chadwick (1793-1854), John de Heley Malvesyn Chadwick (died 1897).

Note 94. Peddimore Hall started as a hunting lodge built by Henry de Arden in about 1200, and was converted to a manor house by Henry’s grandson Thomas de Arden in about 1286. Thomas traced his ancestry back to Turchill de Arden (died c. 1088) the last Anglo-Saxon Earl of Warwick. Peddimore Hall remained in the Arden family until Robert de Arden died without issue in 1643; the Hall was sold

and demolished and a new hall was built on the same site in about 1660, now a Grade II listed building in private ownership.

Note 95. See Note 14.

Note 96. There are 41 advertisements at the end of the book, which is an indication of how popular it was thought the book would be, or of how persuasive Edwards was. Only nine of the advertisers were from Sutton Coldfield, three hotels (the Crystal Palace Hotel and Pleasure Grounds, the Four Oaks Inn and the Royal Hotel), two pools in the Park (Blackroot Pool and Wyndley Pool), one school (Ashfurlong Hall Classical and Commercial Boarding School, principal Mathew Wilson) and three shops in the High Street, which was the retail and business centre of Sutton before the Parade came into being in 1879 and the centre shifted down the hill. The three High Street retailers were George B. Ashford, chemist, J. Grenfell, watchmaker and jeweller, and W.J. Haynes who was a bookseller, stationer and newsagent, but also a plumber, decorator, painter, glazier and paper-hanger. He is named (as J. Haynes) on the title page of Edwards' book as one of the booksellers who stocked the book.

SOURCES FOR THE NOTES

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N.B. The illustrations in Edwards' book can be viewed at www.sclhrg.org.uk/usefultools

