JOHN ASHTON

HYDE PARK FROM DOMESDAY-BOOK TO DATE

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Содержание

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PREFACE

The only History of Hyde Park, at all worthy of the name, is Vol. I. of "The Story of the London Parks," by Jacob Larwood. But, its author says, definitely, "What happened in Hyde Park subsequently to 1825, approaches too near to contemporary history to be told in these pages." This (for Hyde Park has a history since then), added to the inaccuracies and imperfections of the book, has induced me to write a History of Hyde Park from Domesday Book to Date.

JOHN ASHTON.

CHAPTER I

The forests round London – The manor of Eia in Domesday Book – Its subdivision – The Manor of Hyde – The Manor of Ebury – The Manor of Neate – The Neat houses – Henry VIII. and Hyde Park – Queen Elizabeth and Hyde Park – James I. – The deer in the park – Last shooting therein – Foxes – The badger.

In old times London was surrounded by forests, of which the only traces now remaining are at Bishop's Wood, between Hampstead and Highgate, and the Chase at Enfield. FitzStephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II., tells us, in his Description of London, that beyond the fields to the north of London was an immense forest, beautified with woods and groves – or in other words, park land – full of the lairs and coverts of beasts and game, stags, bucks, boars and wild bulls. Contrary to what one might expect, these forests were not reserved for the sole hunting of the King and his favourites; but, as we are informed by the same writer, many of the citizens took great delight in fowling, with merlins, hawks, etc. (which showed how wealthy they were at that time), and they had the right and privilege of hunting in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, in all the Chiltern country, and in Kent, as far as the River Cray. And this forest of Middlesex was only disforested in 1218 (2 Henry III.).

If, however, Hyde Park was, primævally, a forest, it must have

been cleared and brought into cultivation in the Saxon times, for there is no mention of a forest, or even woodland, in the Domesday Book account of the Manor of Eia – in which Hyde Park was situate: on the contrary, it seems as if it was highly cultivated, as is evidenced by the following translation of that portion of the book relating to this manor: —

"Ossulton Hundred. The land of Geoffrey Mannevile.[1] Geoffrey de Mannevile holds the Manor of Eia. It was assessed for 10 hides[2]/. The land is 8 carucates/[3]. In demesne 5 hides, and there are 2 ploughs/[4]. The villans[5] have 5 ploughs, and a 6th might be made. There is 1 villan with half a hide/ and 4 villans each with 1 virgate,[6] and other 14 each with half a virgate/ and 4 bordars[7] with one virgate, and 1 cottager. Meadow for 8 ploughs' teams, and of hay/ 60*s.* of pasture 7*s.* In all the profits it is worth £8/ when received £6. In the time of King Edward £12/. Harold, son of Earl Radulf, held this manor, whom Queen/ Editha had

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[1] Ancestor of the family of Mandeville, Earls of Essex.

[2] A hide was 100 or 120 acres – as much land as one plough could cultivate in a year.

[3] A Carucate was as much arable land as could be cultivated by one plough in a year, with sufficient meadow and pasture for the team.

[4] A plough is the same as a Carucate.

[5] These were not slaves, but persons used and employed in the most servile work, and belonging, both they and their children, and their effects, to the lord of the soil, like the rest of the cattle or stock upon it.

[6] A Virgate was from 8 to 16 acres of land.

[7] Bordars were peasants holding a little house, bigger than a cottage, together with some land of husbandry.

the custody of with this manor, on the day that King Edward was alive and dead./ Afterwards, William, the Chamberlain, held it of the Queen in fee for £3,/ yearly to farm. And after the death of the Queen, he now holds it/ of the King, in the same manner. It is now 4 years since William lost the manor, and nothing has been received from the King's farm, that is £12."

This Manor of Eia was bounded on the north by the *Via Trinobantina*, a road which crossed England from the coast of Suffolk to that of Hampshire, and we now call that portion by Hyde Park the Uxbridge Road: and on the east ran the *Watling Street*, a road from Chester to Dover (of which the Edgware Road is a portion), which crossed the *Via Trinobantina*, and continued down Park Lane to the Thames – which was the southern boundary of the manor.

About the compilation of Domesday Book the Manor of Eia (we know not why) was divided into three manors, named severally Hyde, Ebury (or Eubery), and Neate (or Neyt), and was given by Geoffrey de Manneville to the Monastery of St. Peter in Westminster, where his wife Athelais was interred, and it was in the possession of this monastery till 1536. The Manor of Neate was nearest the river, about Chelsea, and there it was that the abbots of Westminster had a pleasure house. We read[8] how Nicholas Littlington, who was prior of the Monastery, was made Abbot on the elevation of Abbot Simon Langham to the See of Ely in 1362, and how "he improved the estate of the convent at

[8] An History of the Church of St. Peter, Westminster, by R. Widmore, 1751.

Hyde" – and also how he died, November 29th, 1386, "at the Manor house of Neyte near Westminster, at that time thought a good building; for the Duke of Lancaster,[9] styling himself King of Castile, desired leave of the Abbot to reside there during a sitting of parliament at Westminster." And here also was born John, the fifth son of Richard, Duke of York, on November 7th, 1448. Here died (May 12th, 1532) John Islip, who was elected Abbot of Westminster October 27th, 1500, and was buried in a chapel in the Abbey, which he built and which is still called by his name. In his abbacy (1502-3) the building of Henry VII.'s Chapel was begun, and in 1532 he negotiated an exchange between the Abbey and the King; the latter had from the Abbey about one hundred acres of land, part of which was made into St. James's Park, and the former received in exchange the priory of Poughley, in Berks, of which Cardinal Wolsey had procured the dissolution, to help him endow the colleges he designed at Oxford and Ipswich.

Islip's successor was William Boston, and, in 1536, an Act of Parliament was passed (28 Henry VIII., c. 49) and confirmed by a conveyance dated July 1, 1537, granting the King the lands belonging to the Abbey of "Nete, within the towne and paryshes of Westmynster and Seynt Martyn's in the Felde," as also the manors of Neyte, Ebery, and Todington, of the advowson of Chelsea rectory, of some lands at Greenwich, and of several meadows and closes near the Horseferry: in return for which

[9] John of Gaunt, brother of Edward III., and titular King of Castile.

the Abbey was to receive the site of the newly dissolved Priory of Hurley, in Berkshire; which, somewhat singularly, formerly belonged to the same Geoffrey de Manneville who gave the Abbey the Manor of Eia.

The Manor of Ebury lay between the other two manors, and comprised the district now known as Belgravia and Pimlico. It never was historically famous, but it helped to swell the coffers of the Grosvenors, especially that of the present Duke of Westminster and his father, for the manor (of 430 acres) then called Eabury or Ebury Farm came into the possession, in 1656, of Sir Thomas Grosvenor, who married the daughter and sole heiress of Alexander Davies, Esq., of Ebury Farm, who never could have contemplated the princely fortune he was leaving to her descendants.

Once only do we hear anything particular of the Manor of Ebury, and that is in connection with Queen Elizabeth.[10] "That *Ebery Farm*, containing 430 Acres, Meadow and Pasture, which was holden of her Majesty by lease, was granted to one *Whashe*, who paid £21 *per Ann.* And the same was let to divers Persons, who, for their private Commodity, did enclose the same, and had made Pastures of Errable Land; thereby not only annoying her Majesty in her Walks and Passages, but to the hindrance to her Game, and great Injury to the Common, which, at *Lammas*, was wont to be laid open, for the most Part; as by ancient Precedents thereof made, do particularly appear, both in the Time of *Henry*

[10] Strype's edit, of Stow's Survey, ed. 1720. Book VI. p. 80.

the Eighth, *Edward the Sixth*, and *Queen Mary*. And by the Grant made from her Majesty to the new tenants, it appeareth, that they are to enjoy the same lands in such sort as their predecessors did, which was then always *Lammas* ground, and now enclosed about 20 years past."

At least this was the plea of those who broke down the fences, etc., in 1592. "The Parishioners, having, as they supposed, that Lord's[11] Countenance, sent divers Persons on the 1 of *August*, being *Lammas day*, who, with Pickaxes, and such like Instruments, pulled down the Fences, and brake the Gates, having with them the Bailiffs and Constables, to keep the Peace."

The Manor of Neate lay alongside the river Thames, and although we have seen that the old moated mansion was of some importance, still, at the time of the above dispute (in which it shared with the neighbouring manor), it was only termed *a farm*, the house and all the ground around it having been granted by Edward VI. to Sir Anthony Brown; still the name of the manor was perpetuated in the "Neat Houses" – which were places of rural entertainment, and which Strype (Book vi. p. 67) describes: "The *Neat Houses* are a Parcel of Houses, most seated on the Banks of the River *Thames*, and inhabited by Gardiners; for which it is of Note, for the supplying *London* and *Westminster* Markets with *Asparagus*, *Artichoaks*, *Cauliflowers*, *Musmelons*, and the like useful Things that the Earth produceth; which, by reason of their keeping the Ground so rich by dunging it (and

[11] Lord Burghley, High Steward of Westminster.

through the nearness to *London*, they have the Soil cheap), doth make their crops very forward, to their great Profit in coming to such good Markets."

There are no traces of these "Neat Houses" now; they disappeared entirely before the destructive builder, but they were in existence during this century, and stood where now is St. George's Row, Warwick Street, Pimlico. Yet it is evident that before it sunk wholly into market gardens, the "Neat Houses" was a place of amusement where people of good standing in society might attend without prejudice. In those days people's tastes were much simpler than in our time, and drinking syllabubs, and playing at an imaginary Arcadian life with imaginary Chloes and Strephons was fashionable.

It would be hard, indeed, if Pepys had nothing to say about this suburban place of entertainment, where he takes his wife and Mistress Knipp, an actress, of whom his wife was jealous. "Aug. 1, 1667. After the Play, we went into the House, and spoke with *Knipp*, who went abroad with us, by coach, to the *Neat Houses*, in the way to *Chelsy*; and there, in a Box in a Tree, we sat and sang, and talked and eat; my wife out of humour, as she always is, when this women is by." And again, "May 28, 1668. Met *Mercer*[12] and *Gayet*, and took them by water, first to one of the *Neat Houses*, where walked in the Gardens, but nothing but a Bottle of Wine to be had, though pleased with seeing the garden; and so to Fox Hall, where with great pleasure we walked, and

[12] Who had formerly been a kind of companion to his wife.

then to the upper end of the retired walk, and there sat and sang, and brought a great many gallants and fine people about us; and, upon the bench, we did by and by eat and drink what we had, and very merry."

It seems a pity after such a merry scene to chronicle a death, but it was not a common one. *Domestic Intelligencer, August 5th, 1679.* "We hear that Madam Ellen Gwyn's mother, sitting lately by the water-side at her house by the *Neate Houses*, near *Chelsea*, fell accidentally into the water, and was drowned."

There seems no reason to doubt but that Henry VIII. wanted these manors for the purpose of hunting, as they lay so contiguous to the 100 acres which, in 1532, he had added to St. James's Park; and that this was his intention is shown by a proclamation made in 1536, wherein the King, who was passionately fond of all field sports, and excelled in them, as in every other manly exercise, says, that being desirous of having hares, patridges, pheasants and herons preserved round about his Palace of Westminster, for his own disport and pastime, forbids anyone, under pain of imprisonment, and further punishment according to his will and pleasure, either to hunt or hawk "from the Palace of Westminster to St. Giles' in the Fields, and from thence to Islington, to Our Lady of the Oak, to Highgate, to Hornsey Park, and to Hampstead Heath."

Hyde Park was then of much greater extent than it is at present, and comprised 620 acres; but what with the portion taken to add to Kensington Gardens, and land taken away at

Hyde Park Corner, it now does not measure 400 acres. There is very little doubt but that when this manor of Hyde came into the possession of Henry VIII. he fenced it round, because its northern, southern, and eastern boundaries were all public roads, and, although in all probability men would not dare to poach on this Royal manor, yet the *feræ naturæ* must necessarily have been kept within bounds if there was to be hunting or any other kind of sport. And it must have been a high fence, for deer were plentiful, and they certainly were hunted and shot. In a letter from the Lords of the Council to Sir John Masone,[13] ambassador from England at the French Court, dated June 2nd, 1550, and giving an account of the reception and amusement of the embassy of Messrs. de Chastillon, Mortier and Bouchetel, who were sent by Henry II. to receive Edward's ratification of the treaty by which Boulogne had been ceded to France for the sum of 400,000 crowns, we find that, "Upon Tuesday, the King's Majesty had them on hunting in Hyde Park, and that night they supt with his Highness in the Privy Chamber."

Queen Elizabeth also hunted in Hyde Park – and, like her brother, offered sport therein to noble visitors. For instance, she so entertained Count John Casimir, son of Frederick III., Elector Palatine, and a general in the Dutch service, as we learn from the Talbot Papers,[14] in a letter from Gilbert Talbot and his wife to the

[13] England under the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, by P. E. Tytler. Lond. 1839, vol i. p. 288.

[14] Illustrations of British History, etc., by E. Lodge. Lond. 1791, vol. ii. p. 205.

Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, dated February 13th, 1578. "My L. of Lecester also hath geven him dyvers other thynges, as geldynges, hawks and houndes, woddknyves, falchyones, hornes, crossebowes, and sondry peces of brode clothe fytte for huntynge garmentes, bothe for wynter and sumer, for he delyghtethe greatly in huntynge, and can chouse his wynter deere very well. He kylled a barren doe wth his pece this other daye in Hyde P'ke from emongst CCC other deere." And to show that the Queen herself, if she did not actually join in the sport, looked on, there is an entry in the accounts (1582) of the Board of Works, of a payment "for making of two new standings in Marybone and Hyde Park, for the Queen's Majesty and the Noblemen of France[15] to see the hunting." This is also mentioned by John Norden in his *Notes on London and Westminster* (1592). "Hyde Park substancially impayled with a fayre lodge and princelye standes therein. It is a stately parke and full of fayre game."

In the 1575 edition of Geo. Turberville's "*Noble Art of Venerie or hunting*" (p. 95) we have a fine picture of Queen Elizabeth on one of these stands, whilst, kneeling on the ground, and bareheaded, the royal huntsman presents the "fewmets," or droppings of the deer, on some leaves, in a plate, for the Queen's inspection; and the following is "The report of a Huntesman upon the sight of an Hart, in pride of greace.

" 'Before the Queen, I come report to make,

[15] The Duke of Anjou and his Court.

Then husht and peace, for noble *Tristrame's* sake.
From out my horne, my fewments first I drawe,
And then present, on leaves, by hunter's lawe;
And thus I say; my Liege, behold and see
An Hart of tenne, I hope he harbored bee.
For if you mark his fewmets every poynt,
You shall them find long, round and well anoynt,
Knottie and great, without prickes or eares,
The moystness shewes what venison he beares.' "

Another engraving shows the Queen about to take assay of the deer, the kneeling huntsman handing her a knife for the purpose. And this is "the English manner, in breaking up of the Deare.

"First, where hee appointeth the Deares foote to be cut off, and to be presented to the Queen or chiefe, our order is that the Queen or chiefe (if so please them) do alight and take assaye of the Deare with a sharpe knife, the which is done in this maner. The deare being layd upon his backe, y^{e} Queen, chiefe, or such as they shall appoint, comes to it. And y^{e} chiefe huntsman (kneeling, if it be to the Queen) doth hold the Deare by the fore foote, whiles the Queen or chiefe, cut a slit drawne alongst the brysket of the deare, somewhat lower than the brysket towards the belly. This is done to see the goodnesse of the fleshe, and howe thicke it is."

In the 1611 edition, James I. takes the place of Queen Elizabeth.

James I. no doubt, as he was so fond of hunting, hunted the deer here, although he had Theobalds and Windsor, with many

another hunting ground. And the deer were kept up in Charles I.'s reign, when Hyde Park was still an enclosed and private Royal park: and the deer were still preserved, for, when the Park was sold according to a special Resolution of the House of Commons of the 1st Dec., 1652, what were left of the deer, during those troublous times, were sold for the benefit of the Navy, and they were valued in the specifications at £765 6*s.* 2*d.* I can find no record of their sale – but they were sold. And soon after the Restoration, when James Hamilton, Esq. (one of the Grooms of the Bedchamber), was Ranger – he advised the Park being surrounded by a brick wall, and restocked with deer, which was done. But the deer no longer roamed the Park at will; they were confined in an enclosure, called Buckdean Hill, the Deer Harbour, or the Paddock, close by the Keepers' Lodge, admission to which seems to have been obtainable by payment of a shilling – at least, in 1751, as we see by the following extract from a poem by W. H. Draper, entitled, "The Morning Walk, or the City Encompass'd."

> "Behold the ranger[16] there! with gun aslant,
> As just now issuing from his cottage[17] fold,
> With crew *Cerberian*, prowling o'er the plain
> To guard the harmless deer, and range them in
> Due order set, to their intended use.
> Key he can furnish, but must first receive

[16] Keeper, whose duty was to shoot trespassing dogs, and foxes.

[17] His lodge.

One splendid shilling, e'er I can indulge
The pleasing walk, and range the verdant field."

As far as I can learn, the last Royal shooting of the deer in Hyde Park was on the 9th Sept., 1768, and it is the more interesting, considering how intimately we are now allied with the House of Saxe Cobourg Gotha. In *The Public Advertiser* of Sept. 12, 1768, we read: "Same day, their Serene Highnesses the two Princes of Saxe Gotha, and many other Foreigners of Distinction, together with a great Number of our own Nobility, and Gentry, attended the Diversion of Deer Shooting in Hyde Park, which continued all the Evening till Dark, when one was at last killed, after being shot at ten Times. What rendered it so difficult to kill him, was the Hardship of getting him from among the Deer, and no other was allowed to be shot at but this one: Several Wagers were won and lost upon this Occasion."

The deer still remained, until early in this century, in this enclosure, which was in the north-west corner of the Park, bounded on the north by the Park wall, on the west by Kensington Gardens, on the south by the Serpentine, and on the east by a fence. Dogs were allowed in the other parts of the Parks, as our poet says, —

"But lo! a faithful spaniel, there stretch'd out,
Not food for powder meet, relentless gun!"

But the "relentless gun" was evidently necessary against the

foxes, for there is a Minute of the Board of Green Cloth in 1798, by which Sarah Gray is granted a pension of £18 per annum, to compensate her somewhat for the loss of her husband, who was accidentally killed by a shot from the gun of a keeper, who was hunting for foxes in Kensington Gardens. It would be a thankless task to look for them there at the present time; but it is not very many years since there was a badger, who took up his abode in a drain in the Gardens, and could not be dislodged. Strange and weird legends were told concerning this badger, one of which was that he had devoured a policeman, clothing and all, with the exception of his boots and helmet. The badger was ultimately caught, and purchased, I believe, by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who sent it into the country, and there gave it its liberty.

CHAPTER II

Hyde Park in the early Commonwealth – Its sale – Toll on horses and carriages – A hurling match – Cromwell's accident – Attempts to shoot him in the Park – Notices against trespassers – The Park at the Restoration.

It was not until after the martyrdom of the King, and a little before Cromwell found himself strong enough to become Lord Protector of the three Kingdoms, that the Parks, etc., were sold. But on Dec. 31, 1652, was passed "An Act for the Exposing to Sale divers Castles, Houses, Parks, Lands and Hereditaments, Belonging to the late King, Queen, or Prince, Exempted from sale by a former Act:" and among them was "All that Park commonly called *Hide Park*, in the county of *Middlesex*, with all Houses, Woods and Perquisits thereunto belonging."

At the beginning of the troubles between the King and Parliament, the exclusiveness of the Park grew somewhat lax, and it became a place of fashionable resort; but the sour, puritanical spirit of the times prevailed, and, in 1645, it was ordered "that Hyde Park and Spring Gardens should be kept shut, and no person be allowed to go into any of those places on the Lord's day, fast and thanksgiving days, and hereof those that have the keeping of the said places are to take notice and see this order obeyed, as they will answer the contrary at their uttermost peril."

And, presumably, this order was acted on until 1649, when it was resolved that the London Parks – Whitehall, Hampton Court, the New Park at Richmond, Westminster Palace, Windsor Castle and Park, and Greenwich House and Park – should be the property of the Commonwealth, and thrown open to the public.

But in 1652, it was thought fit to sell Hyde Park, Greenwich House and Park, Windsor Park and Meadows, Cornbury Park, Oxon, Somerset House, and Vauxhall House and Grounds, for the benefit of the Navy, and duly sold they were. Three lots were made of Hyde Park – called the Gravel Pit division, or that part abutting on the Bayswater Road, which was very well wooded; the Kensington division, which lay on the south, which was principally pasture land; whilst the third comprised what were termed the Middle, which comprised the Ring, the Banqueting division – in which was the Cake House – near the present site of the Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society; and the Old Lodge division, which said Old Lodge was near Hyde Park Corner; and this third lot was very well wooded.

The first lot was bought by Richard Wilcox for the sum of £4144 11*s.*; the second was secured by John Tracy for £3906 7*s.* 6*d.*; and the third fetched £9020 8*s.* 2*d.*, and became the property of Anthony Dean, a ship-builder, who let the right of pasture of his portion; and the lessees immediately began to recoup themselves by exacting a toll on the carriages and horses entering the Park. Says Evelyn, in his diary, under date of April 11, 1653, "I went to take the aire in Hide Park, where every coach

was made to pay a shilling, and horse sixpence, by these sordid fellows who purchas'd it of the State as they were cal'd."

This toll seems afterwards to have been raised, or it might only have been for the occasion, which was the first of May, when it was fashionable to be seen in the Park; for, in a letter dated May 2, 1654,[18] J. B. informs Mr. Scudamore that "Yesterday, each coach (and, I believe, there were fifteen hundred) paid half-a-crown, and each horse one shilling. The benefit accrues to a brace of citizens, who have taken the herbage of the Park from Mr. Dean, to which they add this excise of beauty. There was a hurling in the *paddock course* by Cornish gentlemen, for the great solemnity of the day, which, *indeed* (to use my Lord Protector's word), was great. When my Lord Protector's coach came into the Park with Colonel Ingleby and my Lord's daughters only (three of them, all in green-a) the coaches and horses flocked about them like some miracle. But they galloped (after the mode court pace now, and which they all use wherever they go, round and round the Park,) and all that great multitude hunted them, and caught them still at the turn, like a hare, and then made a lane with all reverent haste for them, and so after them again, that I never saw the like in my life."

Cromwell himself was present at this hurling match, according to the *Moderate Intelligencer* of April 26 – May 4, 1654. "This day there was a hurling match of a great ball by

[18] Correspondence of Lord Scudamore, Ambassador at Paris in 1635, etc., privately printed.

fifty Cornish gentlemen on the one side, and fifty on the other; one party played in red caps, and the other in white. There was present his Highness the Lord Protector, many of the Privy Council, and divers eminent gentlemen, to whose view was presented great agility of body, and most neat and exquisite wrestling at every meeting of one with the other, which was ordered with such dexterity, that it was to show more the strength, vigour and nimbleness of their bodies, than to endanger their persons. The ball they played withal was silver, and designed for that party which did win the goal."

But, if Cromwell could drive the coach of State, he could not always manage to drive his own, and there is one memorable instance of his coming to grief in Hyde Park, in 1654, in endeavouring so to do, the story of which is thus told by General Ludlow (who was no friend to the Protector) in his Memoirs.[19]

"In the mean time, *Cromwel* having assumed the whole Power of the Nation to himself, and sent Ambassadors and Agents to Foreign States, was courted again by them, and presented with the Rarities of several Countries; amongst the rest the Duke of *Holstein* made him a Present of a Set of gray *Frizeland* Coach-Horses, with which taking the Air in the Park, attended only with his Secretary *Thurlow*, and Guard of Janizaries, he would needs take the place of the Coachman, not doubting but the three pair of Horses he was about to drive would prove as tame as the three Nations which were ridden by him: and, therefore,

[19] Vol. ii. p. 508.

not contented with their ordinary pace, he lashed them very furiously. But they, unaccustomed to such a rough Driver, ran away in a Rage, and stop'd not till they had thrown him out of the box, with which Fall, his Pistol fired in his Pocket, tho without any hurt to himself; by which he might have been instructed how dangerous it was to intermeddle with those things wherein he had no Experience."

In Thurloe's *State Papers* (vol. ii. p, 652) there is another account of this accident, in a letter, dated October 16, 1654 (N.S.), from "The *Dutch* embassadors in *England*, to the States General.

My Lords, – After the sending away of our letters of last friday, we were acquainted the next morning, which we heard nothing of the night before, that about that time a mischance happened to the lord protector, which might have been, in all likelihood, very fatal unto him, if God had not wonderfully preserved him; as we are informed the manner of it to be thus. His highness, only accompanied with Secretary Thurloe and some few of his gentlemen and servants, went to take the air in Hyde Park, where he caused some dishes of meat to be brought; where he made his dinner, and, afterwards, had a desire to drive the coach himself, having put only the secretary into it, being those six horses, which the earl of Oldenburgh had presented unto his highness, who drove pretty handsomely for some time; but, at last, provoking those horses too much with the whip, they grew unruly, and run so fast that the postillion could not hold

them in; whereby his highness was flung out of the coach box upon the pole, upon which he lay with his body, and, afterwards, fell upon the ground. His foot getting hold in the tackling, he was carried away a good while in that posture, during which a pistol went off in his pocket; but, at last, he got his foot clear, and so came to escape, the coach passing away without hurting him. He was presently brought home, and let blood; and, after some rest taken, he is now pretty well again. The secretary, being hurt on his ancle with leaping out of the coach, hath been forced to keep his chamber hitherto, and been unfit for any business; so that we have not been able to further or expedite any business this week."

Larwood, in his *Story of the London Parks*, gives quotations from two poetical lampoons, which I have not been able to verify, and, therefore, give them on his authority. And, he says, there was a poem called *The Jolt*, by Sir John Birkenhead, treating of this accident. The first quotation he gives he does not say whence it is taken, and is as follows:

> "Every day and hour has shown us his power,
> And now he has shown us his art.
> His first reproach was a fall from a coach —
> And his next will be from a cart."

A pleasant allusion to his probable fate, for a criminal who was to be hanged, was taken to the gallows on a cart, and, the halter being round his neck, the horse was whipped, and the cart being drawn from under him, the unfortunate man was left swinging.

The other quotation, he says, occurs in a ballad called, "Old England is now a brave Barbary."

> "But Noll, a rank rider, gets first in the saddle,
> And make her show tricks, curvate and rebound;
> She quickly perceived he rode widdle-waddle,
> And, like his coach-horses, threw his Highness to the ground."

Hyde Park seems to have been fraught with danger to the Protector, for in 1657 there was a plot to have assassinated him. The chief conspirators were a man named Sindercombe, or Fish, a cashiered quarter-master in Monk's army, and another named Cecil, who turned approver; who in his evidence[20] said,

"That the first time they rode forth to kill him, was the latter end of *September* last, (*viz.*) the Saturday after he had left going to *Hampton Court*.

"That the second time was when he rode to *Kensington*, and thence, the back way to *London*.

"The third time, when he went to *Hide-Park* in his coach.

"The fourth time, when he went to *Turnham Green*, and so by *Acton* home, at which time they rode forth to kill him, and resolved to break through all difficulties to effect it.

"The fifth time, when he rode into *Hide-Park*, where his Highness alighting, asked him, the said *Cecil*, whose horse that

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[20] *Mercurius Politicus.* January 29-February 5, 1657.

was he rode on, *Sundercomb* being then on the outside of the Park; and then *Cecill* was ready to have done it, but doubted, his horse having at that time got a cold."

That they meant to kill the Protector there can be little doubt, and looked after their means of escape afterwards, for we read in the papers of the day[21] how – "Once, they thought to have done their work as his Highness was taking the aire in *Hide-Park*; and, to make way for their Escape, they had, in one place, Filed off the Hinges of the Gates, and rode about with the train attending his Highness, with intent to have given him a fatall Charge, if he had chanced to have galloped out at any distance from the company." They also had pulled down some of the fencing, so as to leave them another place of egress.

Sindercombe was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered; but, on the night previous to his execution, he found means to poison himself, and so cheated the gallows. The coroner's jury found a verdict of *felo de se*,[22] and "On the same day, *February 17*, *Miles Sindercom* aforesaid, being found to have murthered himself, his Body was, according to Law, drawn to the open place upon *Tower Hill*, at a Horses Taile, with his head foreward, and there, under the Scaffold of Common execution, a Hole being digg'd, he was turned in stark naked, and a stake, spiked with Iron, was driven through him into

[21] *Mercurius Politicus.* January 15-22, 1657, and *The Publick Intelligencer*, January 19-26, 1657.

[22] *Mercurius Politicus.* February 12-19, 1657.

the earth; That part of the stake which remaines above ground, being all plated with Iron, which may stand as an example of terror to all Traytors for the time to come."

Previous to this, it had been found necessary to protect the Park, by authority, as we see by two entries in the *Journals of the House of Commons*. "7 Oct., 1643. *Ordered*, That the Officers and Soldiers at the Courts of Guard be required not to permit any to cut down Trees or Woods in *Hyde Park*, or *Maribone Park*, but such as are authorized thereto by Ordinance of Parliament; and not to suffer any such persons to go out of the Works to cut the Woods in these two Parks, or to bring any from thence, but by Warrant from the Committees appointed for that Ordinance: and the Officers and Soldiers at the Courts of Guard are required, from time to time, to be aiding and assisting to *Sir John Hippesley*, a Member of this House, on all Occasions, to prevent the cutting down or destroying of the said Parks, unless it be by Authority of the Ordinance aforesaid."

And there is another entry on Oct. 14, 1644. "Whereas Information hath been given, That several unruly and disorderly Persons have, in a tumultuous and riotous Manner, broken into *Hide Park*, pulled down the Pales to destroy his Majesty's Deer and Wood there, notwithstanding strict Command hath been given to the Contrary: It is *Ordered and Ordained*, by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, That the said Park and Deer, and the Woods and Pales, belonging to the said Park, are hereby protected from the Violence of any Person or Persons whatever:

and that no Soldier, or other, shall presume to pull down, or take away, any of the Pales belonging to the same, nor kill, or destroy, any Deer therein; or cut, fell, or carry away, any Wood growing in or about the said Park, or Mounds thereof. And it is further *Ordered* for the better Prevention of the Mischiefs aforesaid, That all Captains and Commanders of Guards and Forts near the said Park, shall give Notice of this Ordinance to the Soldiers under their several Commands: And that they themselves likewise do their Uttermost Endeavours, that this Ordinance shall be obeyed in all Points: And, lastly, that if any Others, not being Soldiers, shall offend contrary to this Ordinance, that the Keepers of the said Park, or some of them may charge any of his Majesty's Officers with the said offenders: Who are to be brought before the Parliament, to be proceeded with according to their Demerits."

When the King "came to his own again," the gentlemen who had purchased Hyde Park, had to restore it to the Crown, on the grounds that the sale had never been ratified by Parliament: and an early Act of His Majesty's was to build a wall around the Park, and re-stock a portion of it with deer.

CHAPTER III

The camp in Hyde Park during the Plague of 1665 – Boscobel Oaks in the Park – When first opened to the public – What it was then like – The Cheesecake House – Its homely refections – Orange girls.

In 1665, at the time of the great Plague, Hyde Park was put to a sad use, as is well described in a contemporary poem entitled "Hide Park Camp Limned out to the Life, etc."

"In *July*, Sixteen hundred sixty and five,
(O happy is the Man that's now alive)
When God's destroying Angel sore did smite us,
'Cause he from sin could by no means invite us:
When Lovely *London* was in Mourning Clad,
And not a countenance appear'd but sad;
When the Contagion all about was spread;
And People in the Streets did fall down dead.
When Money'd fugitives away did flee,
And took their Heels, in hopes to scape scot-free.
Just then we March't away, the more's the pitty,
And took our farewell of the Doleful City.
With heavy Hearts unto *Hide Park* we came,
To chuse a place whereas we might remain:
Our Ground we view'd, then streight to work we fall,
And build up Houses without any Wall.

We pitched our Tents on Ridges, and in Furrows,
And there encamp't, fearing th' *Almighty's Arrows*.
But O alass! What did all this avail:
Our men (ere long) began to droop and quail.
Our Lodgings cold, and some not us'd thereto,
Fell sick, and dy'd, and made us more adoe.
At length the Plague amongst us 'gan to spread,
When ev'ry morning some were found stark dead.
Down to another Field the sick were t'ane;
But few went down, that e'er came up again.
For want of comfort, many, I observ'd,
Perish'd and dy'd, which might have been preserv'd.
But that which most of all did grieve my Soul,
To see poor Christians drag'd into a Hole:
Tye Match about them, as they had been Logs,
And draw them into Holes, far worse than Dogs.
When each Man did expect his turn was next,
O then our Hearts with sorrow was perplext.
Our Officers amazed stood, for dread,
To see their men no sooner sick but dead.
But that which most of all did grieve them, Why?
To help the same there was no remedy.
A Pest-house was prepar'd, and means was us'd,
That none should be excluded, or refus'd:
Yet all would not avail, they dy'd apace,
As one dy'd out, another took his place.
A sad and dismal time, as ere was known,
When Corps, in the wide fields about was strown.

“But stay, my Muse; I think ’tis but a folly
To plunge ourselves too deep in Melancholly;
Let us revive a little, though in jest,
Of a bad Market we must make the best.
Is nothing left to chear us? not one Sup?
We’le try conclusions, ere the Game be up.
Methinks I hear some say, Friend, Prithee hark,
Where got you drink and Victuals in the *Park*?
I, there’s the Query; We shall soon decide it,
Why, We had Men, cal’d Sutlers, provided;
Subtle they were, before they drove this Trade,
But by this means, they all were sutler made.
No wind, or weather, ere could make them flinch,
Yet they would have the Souldiers at a pinch.
For my part, I know little of their way,
But what I hear my fellow Souldiers say;
One said, Their Meat and Pottage was too fat;
Yes, quoth another, we got none of that:
Besides, quoth he, they have a cunning sleight,
In selling out their Meat by pinching weight;
To make us pay sixpence a pound for Beefe,
To a poor Souldier, is no little grief.
Their Bread is small, their Cheese is mark’t by th’ Inch,
And, to speak truth, they’re all upon the pinch.
As for their Liquor, drink it but at leisure,
And you shall ne’re be drunk with over measure.
Thus would they often talk to one another;
And, for my part, I speak it as a Brother,
They for the Sutlers put up many a Prayer,

When, for themselves they took not so much care.
This was, it seems, most of the Sutlers' dealings,
But yet, I say, there's none but have their failings.
They might do this (poor men), yet think no evil.
Therefore they'l go to God, or to the D – .

"But leave them now, because Tat-too has beat,
And fairly to our Tents let us retreat,
Where we keep such a coyl, and such a quarter,
And all to make the tedious nights seem shorter.
Then down we lie, until our bones do ake,
First one side, then the other weary make.
When frost did pinch us, then we shake and shiver,
And full as bad we were in stormy weather;
A boistrous blast, when men with sleep were dead,
Would bring their Houses down upon their head.
Thus in extremity, we often lay,
Longing to see the dawning of the day
Which brought us little comfort, for the Air
Was very sharp, and very hard our fare.
Our sufferings were almost beyond belief,
And yet we found small hopes to have relief.
"Our brave Commanders, Valiant, Stout and Bold,
Was neither pinch't with hunger, nor with cold,
They quaft the Bowls about, one to another,
With good Canary they kept out the weather;
And oft to one another would say thus,
(When we are gone, then gone is all with us)
And thus, in mirth, they chear'd their Spirits up,

By taking t'other Pipe, and t'other Cup:
Much good may it do their hearts; we should have done
The same ourselves, had we been in their room.
We were as glad when we got to a Cup
Of nappy Ale, to take a pretty sup;
But durst not go to Town, on any cause,
For fear the Martial catch us in his Claws.
About the *Park* to walk for recreation,
We might be free, we knew our Bounds and Station.
But not a Coach was stirring any where,
Unless t'were such as brought us in our Beer.
Alass, *Hide Park*, these are with thee sad dayes,
The Coaches all are turn'd to Brewers' Drayes;
Instead of Girls with Oranges and Lemons,
The Bakers' boys, they brought in loaves by dozens;
And by that means, they kept us pretty sober,
Until the latter end of wet *October*.
They promis'd we should march, and then we leapt,
But all their promises were broke (or kept).
They made us all, for want of Winter Quarters,
Ready to hang ourselves in our own Garters.

"At last, the Dove came with the Olive Branch,
And told, for certain, that we should advance
Out of the Field; O then we leapt for joy,
And cry'd with one accord, *Vive le Roy*.
What did the Sutlers then? nay, what do ye think?
For very grief, they gave away their drink:
But it's no matter, let them laugh that wins,

They were no loosers (God forgive their sins).

"Upon *Gunpowder Treason* day, (at Night)
We burnt our Bed-Straw, to make Bone fire light;
And went to Bed, that night, so merry hearted
For joy we and our Lodgings should be parted;
Next morning we were up by break of day,
To be in readinesse to march away.
We bid adue to *Hide Park's* fruitful Soil,
And left the Country to divide the Spoyl.
With flying Colours we the City enter,
And, then, into our Quarters boldly venture.
Our Land-Ladyes sayd *Welcome* (as was meet),
But, for our Landlords, some lookt sowr, some sweet.
So soon as we were got into warm Bed,
We look't as men new metamorphosed.
But now I think 'tis best to let them sleep,
Whilst I out of the Chamber softly creep,
To let you know, that now my task is done,
Would I had known as much when I begun.
A sadder time, I freely dare engage
Was never known before, in any Age.
God bless King Charles *and send him long to reign,*
And grant we never may know the like again."

In connection with Hyde Park and the Restoration, I may mention the following, copied from *The Times*, December 18, 1862. "A Relic of the Past in Hyde Park. Perhaps few of the many who visit this Park are aware that on the right hand side of

the Carriage drive, between the Receiving house and the Bridge, there still remains an interesting relic of the Stuart period. It is a tree, one of two planted by Charles II. from acorns taken from the Boscobel Oak, in Somersetshire, in *which his father successfully sought refuge*, and were planted here to commemorate the event. They have both been dead some years, and one, much decayed, was removed in 1854; the other, beautifully clothed with ivy, which gives it the appearance of life, still remains. In common with all the other old trees in the Park, it is protected by a fence of iron hurdles; but, surely, a relic like this deserves a handsome and appropriate railing, with a descriptive brass plate affixed, to point out to strangers this historical antiquity, now known only to local historians."

If the traditional lore of the writer of the above is on a par with his historical knowledge (*vide italics*) this statement has not much value. Indeed, a correspondent in *Notes and Queries* (3s. iii. 96), referring to this paragraph, and speaking of the trees, says "the tradition really and truly connected with them is the fatal duel fought by the fifth Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton, in November, 1712."

Hyde Park seems to have been first opened to the public about 1637, for in the dedication of James Shirley's play of *Hide Parke* (published in that year) to the Right Hon. Henry, Earl of Holland, he says, "This Comedy in the title, is a part of your Lordship's Command, which heretofore grac'd, and made happy by your smile, when it was presented, after a long silence, *upon first*

opening of the Parke." And it is from this contemporary play that we are able to learn somewhat of the Park itself. Nightingales and cuckoos abounded, and both are several times mentioned.

> Mistress Caroll. Harke, Sir, the Nightingale, there's better lucke Comming towards us.
>
> Fairfield. When you are out breath
> You will give over, and for better lucke,
> I do beleeve the bird, for I can leave thee,
> And not be in love with my owne torment.
> M. Ca. How, sir?
> Fa. I ha said, stay you and practise with the bird,
> 'Twas Philomel they say; and thou wert one,
> I should new ravish thee.
>
> •••
>
> Mistress Bonavent. I heard it yesterday warble so prettily.
>
> Lacy. They say 'tis luckie, when it is the first
> Bird that salutes our eare.
> Bo. Doe you believe it?
> Tryer. I am of his minde, and love a happy Augury.
> La. Observe the first note alwayes
> Cuckoo!
> Is this the Nightingale?

And then also there were refreshments to be taken at the

Keeper's Lodge (sometimes called Price's Lodge, from Gervase Price, a keeper), as we read in *Hide Parke*.

> Rider. I wish your sillabub were nectar, Lady.
>
> Mistress Bonavent. We thank you, sir, and here it comes already.
>
> *Enter Milkemaide.*
>
> Mistress Julietta. So, so, is it good milke?
>
> Bon. Of a Red Cow.
>
> Mistress Caroll. You talke as you inclin'd to a consumption. Is the wine good?

Pepys mentions this Lodge and its refreshments more than once. "*June 3, 1668.* To the Park, where much fine company and many fine ladies, and in so handsome a hackney I was, that I believe, Sir W. Coventry and others who looked on me, did take me to be in one of my own, which I was a little troubled for: so to the Lodge and drank a cup of new milk, and so home." – "*April 25, 1669.* Abroad with my wife in the afternoon to the Park, where very much company, and the weather very pleasant. I carried my wife to the Lodge, the first time this year, and there, in our coach, eat a cheese cake and drank a tankard of milk."

Not to know the Lodge was to show oneself of small account, as we see in a comedy called "The English Monsieur," by the Hon. James Howard, son of the Earl of Berkshire, acted with much applause at the Theatre Royal, in 1674.

"Comely. Nay, 'tis no London female; she's a thing that never saw Cheesecake, Tart, or Syllabub at the Lodge in Hyde Park."

According to Thomas Brown, of Shifnall, the ladies also partook of refreshment in their coaches, for he says, – "See, says my *Indian*, what a Bevy of Gallant Ladies are in yonder Coaches; some are Singing, others Laughing, others Tickling one another, and all of them Toying and devouring Cheese Cakes, March-Pane, and *China* Oranges."[23] And this in the sober days of William and Mary!

About this time the name of "the Lodge" was generally dropped, and it was called the Cake House or Mince Pie House, until it was pulled down early middle of the century. It was situated nearly on the site of the present Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society, as is shown in a "Plan of Hyde Park, as it was in 1725. From a Plan of the Parish of St. George, Hanover Square, in the Vestry Room of that Parish."[24] It was made of timber and plaster, and must have had a very picturesque look when the accompanying illustration was taken in 1826. The other view of it, in 1804, shows its surroundings in the Park. "The Cake House" furnished the title of one of Charles Dibdin's table entertainments, first performed in 1800.

Then too there were the Orange girls, whose vocation was not entirely confined to the theatres,

and who were chaffed by, and gave saucy answers to, the beaux. In a play by Thomas Southern (the author of *Isabella* and

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[23] "Amusements Serious and Comical, Calculated for the Meridian of London." Lond. 1700, p. 55.

[24] "Environs of London." D. Lysons, 2nd ed. vol. ii. part i. p. 117.

Oroonoko), published in 1693, called *The Maid's last Prayer*, *Or* Any, *rather than Fail*, we find (p. 37) Lord and Lady Malapert discussing the propriety of visiting their country seat.

L. Mal. Well, well, there are a thousand innocent diversions.

La. Mal. What! Angling for Gudgeons, Bowls, and Ninepins?

L. Mal. More wholesome and diverting than always the dusty Mile Horse driving in Hide-Park.

La. Mal. O law! don't profane Hide-Park: Is there anything so pleasant as to go there alone, and find fault with the Company? Why, there can't a Horse or a Livery 'scape a Man, that has a mind to be witty. And then I sell bargains to the Orange Women.

CHAPTER IV

Foot and horse racing in the Park – Prize fighting – Duelling – The duel between Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton.

Then, also, there were races run in the Park, both horse, coach and foot. In Shirley's *Hide Parke* we read, —

L. Bonavent. Be there any races here?
Mr. Lacy. Yes, Sir, horse and foot.

•••

Mistress Bon. Prethee, sweetheart, who runnes?
La. An Irish and an English footeman!
M. Bon. Will they runne this way?
La. Just before you, I must have a bet!
[Exit.

M. Bon. Nay, nay, you shall not leave me.
Mistress Carroll. Do it discreetely, I must speak to him,
To ease my heart. I shall burst else.
Weele expect 'em here, Cousen, do they runne naked?
M. Bon. That were a most immodest sight.
M. Ca. Here have bin such fellowes, Cousen.
M. Bon. It would fright the women!

M. Ca. Some are of opinion it brings us hither.
Harke what a confusion of tongues there is.
Let you and I venture a paire of Gloves
Upon their feete; I'le take the Irish.
M. Bon. 'Tis done, but you shall pay if you lose.
M. Ca. Here's my hand, you shall have the Gloves if you winne.
M. Bon. I thinke they are started.

The Runners, after them the Gentlemen

Omnes. A Teag, A Teag, make way for shame.
La. I hold any man forty peeces yet.
Venture. A hundred pound to ten! a hundred peeces to ten!
Will no man take me?
M. Bon. I hold you, Sir.
Ven. Well, you shall see. A Teag! a Teag! hey!
Tryer. Ha! Well run, Irish!
Bon. He may be in a Bogge anon.
[Exeunt.

The horse race is thus described.

Enter Jockey and Gentleman

I. What dost thinke, *Jockey*?

II. The crack o' th' field against you.
Jo. Let them crack nuts.
I. What weighte?
II. I think he has the heeles.
III. Get but the start.
Jo. However, if I get within his quarters, let me alone.
[Exeunt.

Confused noise of betting within, after that, a shoute

M. Ca. They are started.

Enter Bonvile, Rider, Bonavent, Tryer, and Fairefield

Ri. Twenty pounds to fifteene.
L. Bon. 'Tis done we'e.
Fa. Forty pounds to thirty.
L. Bon. Done, done, Ile take all oddes.
Tr. My Lord, I hold as much.
L. Bon. Not so.
Tr. Forty pounds to twenty.
L. Bon. Done, done.
M. Bon. You ha' lost all, my Lord, and it were a Million.
L. Bon. In your imagination, who can helpe it?
La. *Venture* had the start, and keepes it.
L. Bon. Gentlemen, you have a fine time to triumph,

'Tis not your oddes that makes you win.
Within—Venture! Venture!
[Exeunt Men.

Julietta. Shall we venture nothing o' th' horses?
What oddes against my Lord?
M. Ca. Silke stockings.
Ju. To a paire of perfum'd gloves, I take it.
M. Ca. Done!
M. Bon. And I as much.
Ju. Done with you both!
M. Ca. Ile have em Spanish sent.
Ju. The stockings shall be scarlet, if you choose
Your sent, Ile choose my sent.
M. Ca. 'Tis done, if *Venture*
Knew but my lay, it would halfe breake his necke now,
And crying *A Jockey! hay!*
[A shoute within.

Ju. Is the wind in that coast, harke the noyse.
Is *Jockey* now?
M. Ca. 'Tis but a paire of gloves.
Ju. Still it holds.
[Enter My Lord.

How ha' you sped, my Lord?
L. Bon. Won, Won, I knew by instinct
The mare would put some tricke upon him.
M. Bon. Then we ha' lost; but, good my Lord, the circumstance.

L. Bon.

L. Bon. Great *John* at all adventure and grave *Jockey*
Mounted their severall Mares, I sha'not tell
The story out for laughing, ha, ha, ha,
But this in briefe; *Jockey* was left behind,
The pitty and the scorne of all the oddes,
Plaid 'bout my eares like Cannon, but lesse dangerous,
I looke all still: the acclamations was
For *Venture*, whose disdainful Mare threw durt
In my old *Jockey's* face, all hopes forsaking us,
Two hundred peeces desperate, and two thousand
Oathes sent after them: upon the suddaine,
When we expected no such tricke, we saw
My rider, that was domineering ripe,
Vault ore his Mare into a tender slough,
Where he was much beholding to one shoulder
For saving of his necke; his beast recovered,
And he, by this time, somewhat mortified,
Besides mortified, hath left the triumph
To his Olympick Adversary, who shall
Ride hither in full pompe on his *Bucephalus*,
With his victorious bagpipe.

These pedestrian races between "Running footmen" seem to have been common in Hyde Park, as Pepys notes under date August 10, 1660. "With Mr. Moore and Creed to Hyde Park by Coach, and saw a fine foot race three times round the

Park, between an Irishman and Crow, that was once my Lord Claypole's footman." And for another instance of horse-racing in the Park we can find one in the comedy of *The Mulberry Garden*, by Sir Charles Sedley (1668), where, in Act I. Scene 2, Ned Estridge, speaking of Sir John Everyoung, says, " 'Tis a pleasant old fellow. He has given me a hundred pounds for my *Graybeard*, and is to ride himself, this day month, twice round the Park, against a bay stone horse of *Wildishe's*, for two hundred more." Whilst for a different kind of race we have the testimony of Evelyn, who says: "May 20th, 1658. I went to see a coach race in Hide Park, and collationed in Spring Garden." In *The Merry Life and mad Exploits of Captain* James Hind, *The great Robber of England*, a noted highwayman *temp.* Charles II., is a story of "How *Hind* robbed a Gentleman in *Hide Park* of a Bag of Money. *Hind* being well mounted, went one Evening into *Hide Park*, to see some Sport, and riding by a Gentleman's Coach, espied a Bag of Money, upon which *Hind* used some Discourse about the Race that was going to be run; but the Race beginning, the Gentleman caused his Coach to stand still, that he might the easier judge which of the Horses run best. Hind's head not being idle, rode close to the Coach side, took the Bag of Money in his hands, and rode away with it. The Gentleman presently missing his Bag of Money, cries out, *Stay him, Stay him, I am robbed*. Many rode after him, especially the Captain whom he robbed at *Chalk Hill*, who pursued him very hard. *Hind* riding by *St. James's*, said to the Soldiers, *I have won the Wager*; but holding of the Bag fast, his

Cloak fell off, which he left for them that came next. But when he came to his companions, he said, *I never earned a hundred pounds so dear in all my life*."

Larwood says that foot-racing was carried on till early in the present century, and gives instances down to 1807; the only one I am at all able to verify was one run by two boys on 5th March, 1807 – when one dropped down dead —*but that race was run in St. James's Park*.

In the somewhat brutal days of George III. (which brutality has descended to our own times) the Park was disgraced by prize-fights, and several duels were fought there, although the place was not so private as Wimbledon Common, Putney, or Kensington Gravel Pits. One of the favourite places in the Park for these encounters was near the Cheesecake House, or Price's Lodge, for it was there that the celebrated duel between Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton took place in 1712, and it certainly retained its position till 1751, when Fielding wrote *Amelia*, where Colonel Bath and Booth meeting in St. James's Park, the Colonel says, " 'I will tell you therefore, Sir, that you have acted like a Scoundrel.' – 'If we were not in the Park,' answered *Booth* warmly, 'I would thank you very properly for that Compliment.' – 'O Sir!' cries the Colonel, 'we can soon be in a convenient place.' Upon which *Booth* answered he would attend him wherever he pleased. – The Colonel then bid him come along, and strutted forward directly up *Constitution Hill* to *Hyde Park*, *Booth* following him at first, and afterwards walking

before him, till they came to that Place which may be properly called the Field of Blood, being that part a little to the Left of the Ring, which Heroes have chosen for the Scene of their Exit out of this World." Booth ran the Colonel through the body, without seriously injuring him, and a reconciliation took place, ending, " 'I bleed a little, but I can walk to the house by the water, (*the Cheesecake House*) and, if you will send me a Chair thither, I shall be obliged to you.' "[25]

I propose to give an account of some authentic duels which have taken place in Hyde Park, commencing with that of Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton, on November 15th, 1712, all the rest being taken from *The Gentleman's Magazine*.

This duel was invested with a political colouring, the Duke being the leader of the Jacobite faction in Scotland, and Mohun being a violent Whig; so that the Tories, enraged at Hamilton's fall, did not scruple to call it a Whig murder, and denounce Lord Mohun's second, General Macartney, as having unfairly stabbed him; but from the evidence taken at the two inquests,[26] there is not a *scintilla* of truth in the statement.

The story of the duel is, briefly, this. The two noblemen were opposing parties in a lawsuit; and, on Nov. 13, 1712, met in the chambers of a Master in Chancery, when the Duke remarked of a witness – "There is no truth or justice in him." Lord Mohun replied, "I know Mr. Whitworth; he is an honest Man, and has

[25] *Amelia*, by Hy. Fielding, ed. 1752. Book 5, ch. vi. p. 132.

[26] Brit. Mus. 515. 1. 2/215

as much truth as your Grace." This, fanned to flame by officious friends, was enough; and, two days afterwards, they fought, early in the morning, in Hyde Park, near Price's Lodge; their seconds, Col. Hamilton and General Macartney, also fighting, as was the custom; or, as they expressed it, "taking their share in the dance."

The duel is shortly described by a witness, "John Reynolds *of* Price's *Lodge in the* Park, Swore, That hearing of a Quarrel, he and one *Nicholson*, got Staves and ran to part them: that he *Reynolds* was within 30 or 40 yards of Duke *Hamilton* and my Lord *Mohun* when they fell. That my Lord *Mohun* fell into the ditch upon his back, and Duke *Hamilton* fell near him, leaning over him. That the two seconds ran in to them; and immediately after them this *John Reynolds*, who demanded the Seconds' Swords, which they gave him, without any Resistance. He then wrested the Duke's Sword out of his Hand, and *Nicholson* took away my Lord *Mohun's*, and gave it to *Reynolds*, who carried the four swords some distance from the parties: He return'd and help'd Duke *Hamilton* up, who still lay on his Face. He got him up, and he walk'd about 30 Yards: they desir'd him to walk farther, and he said he could walk no farther."

By this witness, supported by two others, we see no mention of General Macartney stabbing the Duke, as represented in the illustration, and as it was currently reported at the time. Macartney fled; but Col. Hamilton remained, stood his trial, and was found guilty of manslaughter. He accused Macartney of the foul deed, and great was the hue and cry after him. The

Duchess was naturally enraged, and offered a reward of £300 for his apprehension, the Government supplementing her offer by an additional £500, but Macartney got away safely. When things were quieter, he returned, stood his trial at the Queen's Bench, Colonel Hamilton's testimony was contradicted, and he was acquitted of the murder, but found guilty of manslaughter. The punishment for this, by pleading benefit of Clergy, which, of course, was always done, was reduced to a very minimum – something amounting to the supposed burning of the hand with a barely warm, or cold iron – and he was restored to his rank in the army, and had a regiment given him.

CHAPTER V

Duelling in Hyde Park

The first duel in Hyde Park (chronicled in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which commenced in 1731) is one fought on February 24, 1750, "between Admiral *Knowles* and Captain *Holmes*, with pistols, when two or three shots were exchanged on each side, but no hurt was done. His majesty being informed that more challenges were depending, particularly four Challenges sent to the said Admiral, order'd three officers into Custody." But the bellicose officers under his command did not care for that example, and on March 12 next ensuing, "at 7 in the morning was fought in *Hide Park*, a duel with sword and pistol between Capt. *Clarke* and Capt. *Innes*, belonging to Admiral *Knowles's* squadron; Captain *Clarke* fired first, and the ball went through Capt. *Innes's* breast into his body, of which wound he dy'd at 12 o'clock at night; the Coroner's jury brought it in wilful murder." Captain Clarke was sentenced to be hanged, but was respited. If the facts brought out at the trial were true, he ought to have suffered the extreme penalty of the law, for his pistols were rifled, with barrels 7 inches long, whilst those of his antagonist were only ordinary pocket pistols, with barrels about 3½ inches

in length; and they were not more than five yards distant from each other, when they turned about, and Captain Clarke fired before Captain Innes had levelled his pistol.

"Jan. 5, 1762. A duel was fought in *Hyde Park* between an *English* officer and an *Irish* gentleman, when the former was so dangerously wounded in the belly, that his life has been despaired of. He is now, however, in a fair way of doing well… A lady in *Bond Street*, said to be nearly related to the young officer who was wounded in *Hyde Park*, shot herself through the head with a pistol, and died in great agonies."

"May 13, 1769. A duel was fought between two gentlemen in *Hyde Park*, occasioned by a quarrel at Vauxhall, one of them was run thro' the sword arm, and the other wounded in the thigh, after which they were parted by their seconds."

"July 19, 1769. A duel is said to have been lately fought in Hyde Park between a Captain Douglas and the Rev. Mr. Green, who some time ago was tried for a rape at the Old Bailey, and acquitted. Mr. Green, it seems, disabled the Captain in his sword arm; but, what is the wonderful part of the story, the Captain Douglas, whom the Rev. Mr. Green disabled, cannot be found, so that it is supposed this parson, as the humourous sexton of a neighbouring parish says, never fights with a man but he buries him."

"Mar. 17, 1770. A duel was fought in Hyde Park, between George Garrick Esq^{re} and Mr. Baddeley, both of Drury Lane Theatre, when the former, having received the other's fire,

discharged his pistol in the air, which produced a reconciliation."

George Garrick was the brother of David, the celebrated actor, and Baddeley is notable for two things, one, as being the last of the "King's Servants" (as the actors at the two patent theatres were called) who wore his master's scarlet livery, and the other in leaving a small legacy to provide cake and wine for the green room of Drury Lane Theatre every Twelfth Night; a custom which, for some time, was in abeyance, but has been revived, in a most liberal and costly manner, by Sir Augustus Harris.

The somewhat bald notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of this duel, is supplemented by a more extended one in the *Town and Country Magazine* for March, 1770. "The world have been so ill natured as to suggest that Mrs. B – y had formed a connection with the late Mr. H – d: and that Mr. M – z has since been his happy successor. These reports, whether true or false, occasioned some altercation between Mr. B – y and his wife; and, through resentment, he received her salary, without accounting to her for it.

"Mr. G – e G – k remonstrated with Mr. B – y upon his conduct, which so much displeased him, that he wrote a letter of complaint upon the occasion to Mr. D – d G – k. This epistle being shown to Mr. G – e G – k, he strongly resented it the next time he saw Mr. B – y, who, thereupon, challenged him. In consequence whereof, (after Mr. D – d G – k, had ineffectually endeavoured, for nearly three hours, to dissuade his brother from

this hostile design) Mr. G – e G – k engaged Mr. S – s, the attorney, for his second; and Mr. B – y had sufficient influence over his supposed rival, Mr. M – z, to induce that gentleman to become his second.

"These preliminaries being adjusted, they repaired to Hyde Park, and the seconds having marked out the ground, Mr. B – y had already fired at his antagonist, when his wife, who had received intimation of the affair, flew upon the wings of love, (that is, in a hackney coach,) to the field of battle; and, arriving at this critical time, threw herself upon her knees; and, whilst she looked very languishing, (*but whether at her lover, or her husband, is not certain*) cried out '*Oh! spare him! spare him!*' which entreaty, it is imagined, induced Mr. G – k to fire his pistol in the air, and a reconciliation took place.

"Mr. Davis, our wooden engraver, passing by at the time, was a spectator of the whole transaction, which enabled him to give our readers so lively and picturesque a representation as that annexed, of this curious and uncommon scene; from which there can, no doubt, remain, but that they were both *left-handed* upon this occasion."

"Oct. 15, 1771. About eight o'clock in the morning, a duel was fought in Hyde Park, between Major B. and T., a gentleman of great fortune in Yorkshire; when, after discharging a pistol each, the latter received a wound in the side, and was immediately carried in a coach to the house of a surgeon near Piccadilly. It is said the dispute arose from Mr. T. having, a few days since,

insulted Major B. for shooting upon part of his estate, without being authorized to do so."

Here is a duel caused by what was afterwards called "The War of American Independence," which, however, at the time of its occurrence, had not commenced, although it was imminent.

"Dec. 11, 1773. A duel was fought in Hyde

Park between Mr. Whateley, banker in Lombard Street, brother to Mr. Whateley, late Secretary to the Treasury, and John Temple Esq[re], Lieutenant-Governor of New Hampshire, when the former was dangerously wounded. The cause of the quarrel was the discovery of the confidential letters written by Messrs. Hutchinson, Oliver, Paxton, etc., which were lately laid before the assembly at Boston, and have since been published in most of the London papers."

The next I record has one name well known to literature as a principal, that of "Fighting Parson Bate," otherwise the Reverend Henry Bate – afterwards Sir Henry Bate Dudley – who is mainly remembered as having founded two newspapers of note, namely the *Morning Post* and the *Morning Herald*. "Sep. 14, 1780. A duel was fought in Hyde Park between the Rev. Mr. Bate and Mr. R.,[27] one of the proprietors of the *Morning Post*, occasioned by some reflections cast by the former on the whole body of the proprietors, which was resented by the latter. Mr. Bate fired first, and wounded his antagonist in the muscular part of his arm, the other without effect; and then the seconds interposed, and the

[27] Richardson.

matter was accommodated."

One of the most vindictive duels I have read of is that which took place on October 1st, 1797. The principals were Colonel King, afterwards Lord Lorton, and a Colonel Fitzgerald, who, although a married man, had eloped with Colonel King's sister. The following is the account given by the gentleman who acted as second to both parties.

"Agreeable to an arranged plan I accompanied Colonel King to a spot near the Magazine in the Park. Colonel Fitzgerald we met at Grosvenor Gate, unaccompanied by a friend, which, by the way, he told me yesterday, he feared he should not be able to provide, in consequence of the odium which was thrown upon his character; at the same time observing 'that he was so sensible of my honour, that he was perfectly satisfied to meet Colonel King unattended by a friend.' I decidedly refused any interference on his part, informing him 'that had not nearer relations of the – been on the spot, he would have seen me as a principal.' He replied, 'he would try to procure a friend;' and withdrew. I addressed him this morning by 'where is your friend, Sir?' Answer (as well as I recollect), 'I have not been able to procure one: I rest assured that you will act fairly.' – I then desired him to apply to his surgeon; which he immediately did, who refused appearing as a second, but said he would be within view. Colonel K. was equally desirous to go on with the business. – I consented. However, I prevailed upon a surgeon, who accompanied Dr. Browne, to be present, as a witness that all was fairly conducted.

It was no common business.

"I placed them at ten short paces distance from each other; that distance I thought too far: but I indulged a hope that Colonel F., sensible of the vileness of his conduct, would, after the first fire, have thrown himself on Colonel K.'s humanity. His conduct was quite the reverse; in short, they exchanged six shots each, without effect. K. was cool and determined; – the other, also, determined, and to appearance obstinately bent on blood; after the fourth shot, he said something to me about giving him advice as a friend. I told him I was no friend of his, but that I was a friend to humanity; that if, after what had passed, he possessed firmness enough to acknowledge to Colonel K. that he was the vilest of human beings, and bear, without reply, any language from Colonel K., however harsh, the present business, then, perhaps, might come to a period. He consented to acknowledge that he had acted wrong, but no farther; – that was not enough. He now attempted to address Colonel K., who prevented him, saying 'he was a d – d villain, and that he would not listen to anything he had to offer.' They proceeded. Colonel F.'s powder and balls were now expended; he desired to have one of K.'s pistols. To this I would not consent, though pressed to do so by my friend. Here ended this morning's business – we must meet again; it cannot end here…

"P.S. – On leaving the ground, Col. F. agrees to meet Col. K. at the same hour to-morrow.

"Both the Colonels the same day were put under arrest."

Another duel, which I may almost stigmatize as brutal, occurred on March 11th, 1803. "This morning, a most extraordinary duel took place in Hyde Park, between Lieutenant W. of the Navy, and Captain J. of the Army. The antagonists arrived at the appointed place within a few minutes of each other. Some dispute arose respecting the distance, which the friends of Lieutenant W. insisted should not exceed six paces, while the seconds of Captain J. urged strongly the rashness of so decisive a distance, and insisted on its being extended. At length, the proposal of Lieutenant W.'s friends was agreed to, and the parties fired *per* signal, when Lieutenant W. received the shot of his adversary on the guard of his pistol, which tore away the third and fourth fingers of his right hand. The seconds then interfered, to no purpose; the son of Neptune, apparently callous to pain, wrapped his handkerchief round his hand, and swore he had another which never failed him. Captain J. called his friend aside, and told him it was vain to urge a reconciliation. They again took their ground. On Lieutenant W. receiving his pistol in his left hand, he looked steadfastly at Captain J. for some time, then cast his eyes to Heaven, and said, in a low voice, 'Forgive me.' The parties fired as before, and both fell. Captain J. received the shot through his head, and instantly expired; Lieutenant W. received the ball in his left breast, and immediately inquired of his friend if Captain J.'s wound was mortal. Being answered in the affirmative, he thanked Heaven he had lived thus long; requested a mourning ring on his finger might be given to his

sister, and that she might be assured it was the happiest moment he ever knew. He had scarcely finished the words when a quantity of blood burst from his wound, and he expired almost without a struggle. The unfortunate young man was on the eve of being married to a lady in Hampshire, to whom, for some time, he had paid his addresses."

The last duel I find connected with Hyde Park, but was fought at Chalk Farm, is the following: "April 6th, 1803. This morning, as Lieutenant-Colonel Montgomery and Captain Macnamara were riding in Hyde Park, each followed by a Newfoundland dog, the dogs fought; in consequence of which the gentlemen quarrelled, and used such irritating language to each other, that a change of addresses followed, with an appointment to meet at 7 o'clock the same evening near Primrose Hill; the consequences of which proved fatal."

Lord Burghersh, in giving evidence before the coroner's jury, spoke of the triviality of the offence given and received by these two hot-headed idiots. He said, "On coming out of St. James's Park on Wednesday afternoon, he saw a number of horsemen, and Colonel Montgomery among them; he rode up to him; at that time he was about twenty yards from the railing next Hyde Park Gate. On one side of Colonel Montgomery was a gentleman on horseback, whom he believed was Captain Macnamara. The first words he heard were uttered by Colonel Montgomery, who said: 'Well, Sir, and I will repeat what I said, if your dog attacks mine, I will knock him down.' To this, Captain Macnamara replied,

'Well, Sir, but I conceive the language you hold is arrogant, and not to be pardoned.' Colonel Montgomery said: 'This is not the proper place to argue the matter; if you feel yourself injured, and wish for satisfaction, you know where to find me.' "

Montgomery fell, mortally wounded, and Macnamara was tried at the Old Bailey, on 22nd March, for manslaughter. Lords Hood, Nelson, Hotham, and Minto, and a great number of highly respectable gentlemen gave him an excellent character, and, in spite of the judge's summing up, the jury went against his directions, and acquitted the Captain.

Larwood says that the last affair of honour which took place in Hyde Park was in April, 1817, when the Hon. H. C. and a Mr. John T. fired twice at each other and were both wounded; but, as I cannot verify this duel, I give it under all reserve.

The last *fracas* in Hyde Park that I can trace took place on July 12th, 1870, between Majors Gordon and Kane, retired officers in the Indian service, the combatants belabouring each other with their sticks, in retaliation for an affront alleged to have been offered at a private dinner-table.

CHAPTER VI

Skating on the ponds and Serpentine – The Ring – Many notices thereof – Fireworks in the Park – Bad roads therein, and accidents caused thereby – Regulations in the time of Queen Anne – Making the drive – Riding in the Park.

Soon after the opening of the Park to the public, the water therein was utilized, during a hard frost, for skating, as Pepys tells us in his diary: "Dec. 8th, 1662. Then into the Parke to see them slide with their skeates, which is very pretty. Dec. 15th. Up and to my Lord's, and thence to the Duke,[28] and followed him into the Parke, where, though the ice was broken and dangerous, yet he would go slide upon his scates, which I did not like, but he slides very well."

This must have been, in all probability, on one of the pools in the park – as it was not till 1730 that Queen Caroline, wife of George II., began to make "the Serpentine," as the lake in Hyde Park is called. After that was finished, and a good hard frost came, so that it was frozen hard, it was the resort of the few of the upper classes who could skate. I do not say it was reserved for them, but in those days there were no cheap omnibuses from Whitechapel, and London was but a very small portion of its present overgrown bulk. At all events, in the last century, people

[28] The Duke of York, afterwards James II.

could skate without overcrowding, or annoyance from bands of roughs, such as obtain at the present day, as is well shown in the accompanying illustration of "Winter Amusement, a view in Hyde Park, from the Sluice at the East End, 1787." Royalty, in the person of George, Prince of Wales, did not object to disport itself on the lake, and not being overcrowded, we never hear of the ice breaking, or lives being lost until 1794, when a building was erected on the site of the present Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society, wherein those suffering from injuries or immersion could be attended to.

But the chief use of the Park as a place of fashionable relaxation was driving within its precincts, and especially in the "Ring," a small enclosure, which is shown in the 1747 map, just where is the letter "A" in "Park." The practice seems to have obtained as soon as the Park was thrown open to the public, and we have already seen how, in the Commonwealth time, a charge was made for the entrance both of carriages and horses. On May Day, however, was the finest show. Possibly that then, as now, the coaches were renovated, and the horses had new harness. We learn something of this in a very serious tract, published in 1655, with a very long title, a portion of which is: *A serious Letter sent by a Private Christian to the Lady Consideration, the first day of May, 1655*, which commences thus: —

"Lady, I am informed fine Mrs. *Dust*, Madam *Spot*, and my Lady *Paint*, are to meet at *Hide-Park* this afternoon; much of pride will be there: if you will please to take an Hackney, I shall

wait upon your Honour in a private way: But, pray, let us not be seen among the foolish ones, that ride round, round,

wheeling of their coaches about and about, laying of the naked breast, neck and shoulders over the boot, with a Lemon and a Fan, shaking it at young Mrs. *Poppet*, crying, *Madam your humble servant, your very humble servant*, while some are doing worse. Young Sir *William Spruce*, *Mounseir Flash*, and the Lord *Gallant*, will be all on horseback," etc.

But the gossiping pages of Pepys furnish us with a good view of Hyde Park, and I have, therefore, selected some quotations as illustrative.

"April 30, 1661. I am sorry that I am not at London, to be at Hide-Parke to-morrow, among the great gallants and ladies, which will be very fine.

"May 7, 1662. Thence to Paul's Church Yard; where seeing my Ladys Sandwich and Carteret, and my wife (who, this day, made a visit for the first time to my Lady Carteret) come by coach, and going to Hide-Parke, I was resolved to follow them; and so went to Mrs. Turner's: and thence found her out at the Theatre; where I saw the last act of the 'Knight of the burning Pestle,' which pleased me not at all. And so, after the play done, she and The. Turner and Mrs. Lucin and I, in her coach to the Parke; and there found them out, and spoke to them; and observed many fine ladies, and staid till all were gone almost.

"April 4, 1663. After dinner to Hide Parke: my aunt, Mrs. Wight and I in one coach, and all the rest of the women in Mr.

Turner's… At the Parke was the King, and in another coach my Lady Castlemaine, they greeting one another at every tour.[29]

"April 18, 1664. To Hide Parke, where I had not been since last year; where I saw the King with his periwigg, but not altered at all; and my Lady Castlemaine in a coach by herself, in yellow satin and a pinner on; and many brave persons. And myself being in a hackney and full of people, was ashamed to be seen by the world, many of them knowing me.

"April 22, 1664. I home, and by coach to Mrs. Turner's and there got something to eat, and thence, after reading part of a good play, Mrs. The., my wife and I, in their coach to Hide Parke, where great plenty of gallants, and pleasant it was, only for the dust. Here I saw Mrs. Bendy, my Lady Spillman's faire daughter that was, who continues yet very handsome. Many others I saw with great content, and so home.

"March 19, 1665. Mr. Povy and I in his coach to Hyde Park, being the first day of the tour there. Where many brave ladies; among others, Castlemaine lay impudently upon her back, in her coach, asleep, with her mouth open.

"April 24, 1665. So by coach with my Wife and Mercer to the Parke; but the King being there, and I, now-a-days being doubtfull of being seen in any pleasure, did part from the tour, and away out of the Parke to Knightsbridge, and there eat and drank in the coach, and so home.

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[29] Whenever "the tour" is mentioned, the "Ring" is meant which was the most fashionable part.

"April 21, 1666. Thence with my Lord Brouncker in his coach to Hide Parke, the first time I have been there this year. There the King was; but I was sorry to see my Lady Castlemaine, for the mourning forceing all the ladies to go in black, with their hair plain and without any spots, I find her to be a much more ordinary woman than ever I durst have thought she was; and, indeed, is not so pretty as Mrs. Stewart, whom I saw there also.

"May 1, 1667. Thence Sir W. Pen and I in his coach, Tiburne way, into the Park, where a horrid dust, and number of coaches, without pleasure, or order. That which we, and almost all went for, was to see my Lady Newcastle; which we could not, she being followed and crowded upon by coaches all the way she went, so that nobody could come near her: only I could see she was in a large black coach, adorned with silver instead of gold, and so white curtains, and everything black and white, and herself in her Cap. But that which I did see, and wonder at with reason, was to find Peg Pew in a new coach, with only her husband's pretty sister with her, both patched and very fine, and in much the finest coach in the park, and I think that ever I did see one or other, for neatness and richness in gold and everything that is noble. My Lady Castlemaine, the King, My Lord St. Alban's, Mr. Jermyn, have not so neat a coach that ever I saw. And, Lord! to have them have this, and nothing else that is correspondent, is, to me, one of the most ridiculous sights that ever I did see, though her present dress was well enough; but to live in the condition they do at home, and be abroad in this coach astonishes me.

"March 27, 1668. To the Exchange a turn or two, only to show myself, and then home to dinner, where my wife and I had a small squabble, but I first this day tried the effect of my silence, and not provoking her when she is in an ill-humour, and do find it very good, for it prevents its coming to that height on both sides, which used to exceed what was fit between us. So she became calm, by and by, and fond, and so took coach to Hide Park, where many Coaches, but the dust so great that it was troublesome.

"March 31, 1668. So took up my wife and Deb., and to the Park, where, being in a hackney, and they undressed, was ashamed to go into the tour, but went round the Park, and so, with pleasure, home.

"July 10, 1668. Thence in the evening, with my people in a glass hackney-coach to the park, but was ashamed to be seen. So to the lodge, and drank milk, and so home."

But it was not for long that his pride was to be thus hurt, for he started a coach of his own, which came home on the 28th Nov., 1668, and which must have been a very gorgeous turn-out, if we can believe a description of it in a pamphlet called *Plain Truth, or a Private Discourse between P*(epys) *and H*(arbord). "There is one thing more you must be mightily sorry for with all speed. Your presumption in your coach, in which you daily ride, as if you had been son and heir to the great Emperor Neptune, or as if you had been infallibly to have succeeded him in his government of the Ocean, all which was presumption in the highest degree. First, you had upon the fore part of your Chariot, tempestuous

waves and wrecks of ships; on your left hand, forts and great guns, and ships a fighting; on your right hand was a fair harbour and galleys riding, with their flags and pennants spread, kindly saluting each other, just like P(epys) and H(ewer). Behind it were high curled waves and ships a sinking, and here and there an appearance of some bits of land."

Now he could ride in the Park with pleasure, as he notes, "March 18, 1669. So my wife and I to Dancre's to see the pictures; and thence to Hyde Park, the first time we were there this year, or ever in our own coach, when with mighty pride rode up and down, and many coaches there; and I thought our horses and coach as pretty as any there, and observed to be so by others."

But this coach evidently was not grand enough for him, for we read: "April 30, 1669. This done, I to my coachmaker's, and there vexed to see nothing yet done to my coach, at three in the afternoon; but I set it in doing, and stood by it till eight at night, and saw the painter varnish it, which is pretty to see how every doing it over, do make it more and more yellow: and it dries as fast in the sun as it can be laid on almost; and most coaches are, now-a-days, done so, and it is very pretty when laid on well, and not too pale, as some are, even to show the silver."

Of course he must needs show this off at once, and on May Day, he duly made his appearance in the Park. "At noon, home to dinner, and there find my wife extraordinary fine, with her flowered tabby gown that she made two years ago, now laced exceeding pretty; and, indeed, was fine all over; and mighty

earnest to go, though the day was very lowering; and she would have me put on my fine suit, which I did. And so, anon, we went alone through the town with our new liveries of serge, and the horses' manes and tails tied with red ribbons, and the standards gilt with varnish, and all clean, and green reines, that people did mightily look upon us; and the truth is, I did not see any coach more pretty, though more gay, than our's all the day … the day being unpleasing, though the Park full of Coaches, but dusty, and windy, and cold, and now and then, a little dribbling of rain; and, what made it worse, there were so many hackney coaches, as spoiled the sight of the gentlemen's; and so we had little pleasure. But here was W. Batelier and his sister in a borrowed coach by themselves, and I took them and we to the lodge: and, at the door, did give them a syllabub and other things, cost me 12*s.*, and pretty merry."

Next day, he went again. "After dinner, got my wife to read, and then by coach, she and I, to the Park, and there spent the evening with much pleasure, it proving clear after a little shower, and we mighty fine, as yesterday, and people mightily pleased with our Coach, as I perceived; but I had not on my fine suit, being really afraid to wear it, it being so fine with the gold lace, though not gay."

But he was destined to undergo the humiliation of hearing his friends' criticisms on his new-born finery. "May 10th, 1669. Thence walked a little with Creed, who tells me he hears how fine my horses and coach are, and advises me to avoid being noted

for it, which I was vexed to hear taken notice of, being what I feared: and Povy told me of my gold laced sleeves in the park yesterday, which vexed me also, so as to resolve never to appear in Court with them, but presently to have them taken off, as it is fit I should, and so called at my tailor's for that purpose."

One more quotation, to show that fireworks were exhibited in the Park, and I have done with Pepys. "May 29th, 1669. Home to dinner, and then with my wife to Hyde Park, where all the evening; great store of company, and great preparations by the Prince of Tuscany to celebrate the night with fireworks, for the King's birthday."

From that time to the present the Park has always been a fashionable drive, not always attended with safety to its frequenters: witness two accidents there in 1739. *The London Daily Post*, of Sept. 19, 1739, says: "On Monday evening last, as their Royal Highnesses the four Princesses [daughters of George II.] were coming to town from Kensington, a single Horse Chaise, with a Gentleman and his daughter in it, drove against the leading Coach in Hyde Park; the Chaise at length overturned, and the Horse falling under the Horses of the leading Coach, put them into such confusion, that four of them came down, and trampled for some time on the Horse and Chaise; the Gentleman and his daughter were much hurt, and the Postillion to the leading Coach had his Thigh broke by his fall; the Princesses were extreamly frightened, and cry'd out for Help. Several Persons came up to their Assistance; they returned to Kensington and

were blooded: the Postillion is attended by the King's Surgeons."

Closely following on this was another accident, as we read in *The Weekly Miscellany* of Oct. 20, 1739. "Sunday night last his Grace the Duke of Grafton, coming from Kensington, and ordering his Coachman to drive to the New Gate in Hyde Park, in order to make some Visits towards Grosvenor Square, the Chariot, through the Darkness of the Night, was overset in driving along the Road, and, falling into a large, deep Pit, the Duke slipt his Collar bone, and the Coachman broke his Leg, which was splintered in many Places: and on Monday, the Limb was taken off by Amputation. One of his Grace's Footmen was, also, much hurt."

Even in Queen Anne's reign it was found necessary to issue some rules and directions (July 1, 1712) "For the better keeping Hyde Park in good Order." The gatekeepers were to be always on duty, and not to sell ale, brandy, or other liquors. No one should leap over the ditches or fences, or break the latter down. "No person to ride over the grass on the South side of the Gravelled Coach Road … excepting Henry Wise, who is permitted to pass cross that Part of the Park leading from the Door in the Park Wall, next his Plantation." No grooms nor others were to ride over the banks, or slopes, of any pond. No stage coach, hackney coach, chaise with one horse, cart, waggon, nor funeral should pass through the Park, and no one cut or lop any of the trees.

Henri Misson came over to England in the reign of James II., and published his experiences, which were translated by John

Ozell, in 1719. Speaking of Hyde Park, he says, "The King has a Park so call'd at the end of one of the suburbs of *London*. Here the People of Fashion take the Diversion of the Ring: In a pretty high place, which lies very open, they have surrounded a Circumference of two or three hundred Paces Diameter with a sorry kind of Ballustrade, or rather with Poles plac'd upon Stakes, but three Foot from the ground; and the Coaches drive round and round this; when they have turn'd for some Time round one Way, they face about and turn t'other; So rowls the World."

On the completion of the Serpentine, and the consequent road on its north bank, the cramped and confined Ring went out of fashion, as we learn in No. 56 of *The London Spy Revived*, December 6, 1736. "The Ring in Hyde Park being quite disused by the Quality and Gentry, we hear that the ground will be taken in for enlarging the Royal Gardens at Kensington in the next Spring." But this was probably either only a rumour, or else Queen Caroline was better advised. The old name, however, still clung to the new road, and the carriage ride round the Park is still indifferently called the Ring or the Drive.

In the Library of the British Museum are two copies of an old ballad (circa 1670-5) entitled "News from *Hide-Park*,"[30] a portion of which gives a graphic description of the Park at that time.

"One Evening, a little before it was dark,

[30] Rox. ii. 379. – Lutt. ii. 147.

Sing tan tara rara tantivee,
I called for my Gelding and rid to *Hide-Parke*
On tan tara rara tantivee:
It was in the merry Month of *May*,
When Meadows and Fields were gaudy and gay,
And Flowers apparell'd as bright as the day,
I got upon my tantivee.

"The *Park* shone brighter than the Skyes,
Sing tan tara rara tantivee:
With jewels and gold, and Ladies' eyes,
That sparkled and cry'd come see me:
Of all parts of *England*, *Hide-park* hath the name,
For Coaches and Horses, and Persons of fame,
It looked at first sight, like a field full of flame,
Which made me ride up tan-tivee.

"There hath not been seen such a sight since *Adam's*
For Perriwig, Ribbon and Feather,
Hide-park may be term'd the Market of *Madams*,
Or *Lady-Fair*, chuse you whether;
Their gowns were a yard too long for their legs,
They shew'd like the Rainbow cut into rags,
A Garden of Flowers, or a Navy of Flags,
When they all did mingle together.

"We talke away time until it grew dark,
The place did begin to grow privee;
The Gallants began to draw out of the Park:

Their horses did gallop tantivee,
But, finding my courage a little to come,
I sent my bay Gelding away by my Groom,
And proffered my service to wait on her home.
In her coach we went both tantivee."

CHAPTER VII

Rotten Row, the King's Old Road – The New King's Road made and lighted – The Allied Sovereigns in the Park – The Park after the Peninsular War – The Duke of Wellington in the Park – The Queen and Royal Family in the Park.

If we look at the old map of Hyde Park, we shall find that what is now called *Rotten Row* was then termed *The King's Old Road* and *The King's New Road*, whence the generally accepted derivation of *Rotten Row*, from *Route du Roi*. Soon after the accession of William III., and his purchase of Kensington Palace, his route from St. James's Palace to his residence lay through the Green Park and the King's Road in Hyde Park, and, finding it dark at night, he had it lit by three hundred lamps, which, for the time, rendered it a fairyland of brilliancy; so much so, that Thoresby, in his diary (June 15, 1712), "could not but observe that all the way, quite through Hyde Park to the Queen's Palace at Kensington, has lanterns for illuminating the road in the dark nights, for the Coaches."

As we see, the New King's Road was a trifle more direct than the old one, and skirted the Park. It was finished in 1737, as we find in *The London Spy Revived* (No. 183, September 23, 1737). "The King's Road in Hyde Park is almost gravell'd and finished, and the Lamp Posts are fixed up; it will soon be open'd, and the

old Road level'd with the Park." The original intention was to do so, returf it, and once again make it a portion of the Park, but it was never carried out.

It would be absurd to chronicle even a portion of the people who have appeared in the Row and Ring: the list would simply consist of every person of note that lived in or visited London. It was used as a place for exercise and social intercourse, as we see in the two accompanying illustrations of the Row in 1793.

Another social group, date 1834, may also be given, but although they were well-known dandies of their day, they are unknown now, and their names are not worth recapitulating.

But never-to-be-forgotten visitors were the Allied Sovereigns, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, who were present at a grand review of all the regular troops, and most of the volunteers who resided in or near the metropolis, in Hyde Park on 20th June, 1814. With them were their brilliant staffs, while the Prince Regent, attended by the Duke of York, etc., acted as host to his Royal and Imperial guests.

Captain Gronow, in his *Anecdotes and Reminiscences*,[31] gives the following description of "Hyde Park after the Peninsular War. That extensive district of park land, the entrances of which are in Piccadilly and Oxford Street, was far more rural in appearance in 1815 than at the present day. Under the trees cows and deer were grazing; the paths were fewer, and none told of that perpetual tread of human feet which now destroys all idea of

[31] 1st Series, 2nd edition, 1862, p. 71.

country charms and illusions. As you gazed from an eminence, no rows of monotonous houses reminded you of the vicinity of a large city, and the atmosphere of Hyde Park was then much more like what God has made it, than the hazy, gray, coal-darkened half twilight of the London of to-day. The company, which then congregated daily about five, was composed of dandies and women in the best society, the men mounted on such horses as England alone then could produce. The dandy's dress consisted of a blue coat with brass buttons, leather breeches, and top boots; and it was the fashion to wear a deep, stiff, white cravat, which prevented you from seeing your boots while standing. All the world watched Brummell to imitate him, and order their clothes of the tradesman who dressed that sublime dandy. One day, a youthful beau approached Brummell, and said, 'Permit me to ask you where you get your blacking?' 'Ah!' replied Brummell, gazing complacently at his boots, 'my blacking positively ruins me. I will tell you in confidence; it is made with the finest champagne!'

"Many of the ladies used to drive into the Park in a carriage called a *vis-à-vis*, which held only two people. The hammer-cloth, rich in heraldic designs, the powdered footmen in smart liveries, and a coachman who assumed all the gravity and appearance of a wigged archbishop, were indispensable. The equipages were, generally, much more gorgeous than at a later period, when democracy invaded the parks, and introduced what may be termed a 'Brummagem society,' with shabby-genteel

carriages and servants. The carriage company consisted of the most celebrated beauties, amongst whom were remarked the Duchesses of Rutland, Argyle, Gordon, and Bedford, Ladies Cowper, Foley, Heathcote, Louisa Lambton, Hertford and Mountjoy. The most conspicuous horsemen were the Prince Regent (accompanied by Sir Benjamin Bloomfield); the Duke of York, and his old friend Warwick Lake; the Duke of Dorset, on his white horse; the Marquis of Anglesea and his lovely daughters; Lord Harrowby and the Ladies Ryder; the Earl of Sefton and the Ladies Molyneux; and the eccentric Earl of Morton on his long-tailed grey. In those days, 'pretty horsebreakers' would not have dared to show themselves in Hyde Park; nor did you see any of the lower, or middle classes of London intruding themselves in regions which, with a sort of tacit understanding, were then given up, exclusively, to persons of rank and fashion."

But there was one constant visitor well within the memory of man, belonging both to 1814 and the Park, which he used almost daily until his death. I mean the first Duke of Wellington, with whose sharply-defined features, blue frock coat, and white trousers, every Londoner was familiar.

The Queen, too, until the great grief of her life fell upon her, was a pretty constant visitor to the Park – in her younger days on horseback; and who has not seen the Princess of Wales and her children there? Although, as Captain Gronow justly observes, the frequenters of the Park are not so aristocratic as they used to be,

and society generally is much more mixed.

CHAPTER VIII

The springs in Hyde Park – Used as water supply for Westminster – Horses in the Park – The Westbourne – Making the Serpentine – The "Naumachia" thereon – Satires about it – The Jubilee Fair.

Hyde Park has several springs of water, one of which was said to have been slightly mineral. The one shown in this illustration still exists, and the author of "The Morning Walk" thus eulogizes one: —

"But let my footsteps first pursue their course
To yon clear fountain, hid in shady grove,
And quaff the clear salubrious crystal brook,
Emblem of purity! when innocence
Partakes, and all the wakened sense restores.
O blessed *Jordan*! at thy limpid stream,
Gladly I mingle with the cheerful throng,
And drink the cup, and then renew my walk,
With strengthen'd nerves, down the delightful shade."

Some of these springs were utilized for the supply of water outside the Park – but the larger quantity came from the Westbourne. Still, in 1620, the Dean and Chapter of Westminster had permission given them to use the water of four springs in Hyde Park for their benefit, and letters patent were granted to

"Thomas Day, Gent. of Chelsea, to enable him to take the water from Hyde Park to the City of Westminster." This, I take it, meant to utilize the Westbourne, as the Dean and Chapter had the springs: but both their privileges were annulled by the King's Bench, as it was alleged that the ponds in the Park were, by these means, so drained that there was not enough water left for the wants of the King's deer.

In the time of James I. there were eleven pools in the Park, and a glance at Roque's map of 1747 will show that many were then still remaining; indeed, in the accompanying illustration of the Bathing House in 1794, we see a horse drinking at one of them. By this, we see that horses were turned out to grass in the Park. In 1751, grooms used to exercise their horses there, as did also a riding master named Faubert.

> "See, too, the jolly courser, with his groom,
> Expert, not like to him who *Persia's* crown
> Obtained, yet skill'd with upright crest and arm,
> Compacted knee, to give the rein and bitt
> Their motion due, his flight retarding not.
> – Next *Faubert* view with graces of menage,
> And troops of horse in strictest motion wheel."

From the heights of Hampstead spring several small streams, such as the Fleet, the Brent, and the West Bourne, probably so called to distinguish it from St. Mary le bourne, which was further east. Roque's map shows its position with regard to the

Serpentine, but, before that misnamed lake was made, it ran right through the Park from north to south, leaving the Park about Albert Gate, where was a bridge, from which Knightsbridge takes its name. Then it flowed by what are now William Street, Lowndes Square, and Chesham Street, falling into the Thames near Ranelagh.

Queen Caroline, wife to George II., conceived the idea of utilizing this little stream, and making it into a lake, and, as it was supposed that she was expending her own money on this work, no objection was raised to her so doing, but it is said that at her death she left the King to pay a sum of no less than £20,000 on account of it. We learn when it was commenced from *Read's Weekly Journal, or British Gazetteer*, Saturday, September 26th, 1730. "Next Monday, they begin upon the Serpentine River, and Royal Mansion in Hide-Park: Mr. Ripley is to build the House, and Mr. Jepherson to make the River under the Directions of Charles Withers, Esq^{re}." This latter gentleman, who was Surveyor General of Woods and Forests, died shortly before the Serpentine was finished, probably in 1733, when his successor was appointed; and in May, 1731, it was deep enough, in part, to allow two small yachts upon it. Its cost was estimated at £6000 – but a portion of that (£2500) had to go as compensation to the Chelsea Water Works Company, who held a 99 years' lease, granted to one Thomas Haines, in 1663, whereby, on annual payment of 6*s.* 8*d.*, he had command of all the springs and conduits in the Park.

The water supply for the Serpentine came from the Westbourne, until, in the course of time, owing to the extension of building, the houses around draining into it, its water became too foul for the purpose, and, in 1834, it was cut off, and connected with the sewer in the Bayswater Road; and the supply thus lost is made good by the Chelsea Water Works, who pump in water at the Kensington Gardens end, and the overflow at the very pretty Dell forms a striking feature in the landscape gardening of the Park. Formerly, as we see in Roque's map, the overflow was conducted into a pool, which was bridged over by the King's Old Road.

The Serpentine was not utilized for any purpose until August 1st, 1814, when a national rejoicing called "The Jubilee" was held in the Park, to celebrate the conclusion of peace with France, and the celebration of the centenary of the accession of George I. There were to be illuminations, fireworks, and balloon ascents in St. James's and the Green Parks, and in Hyde Park a fair, and a "Naumachia," or sea-fight, which was somewhat appropriate, as the famous Battle of the Nile was fought on August 1st, 1798.

The mimic three-deckers and frigates were necessarily small, and they were made out of ships' barges at Woolwich, and great was the chaff made about this "liliputian navy." Here are some skits thereon: —

"*John Bull*, the other day, in pensive mood,
Near to the Serpentine Flotilla stood;

His hands were thrust into his emptied pockets,
And much of ships he muttered, and of rockets;
Of silly Fêtes – and Jubilees unthrifty —
And babies overgrown, of *two and fifty*;[32]
I guess'd the train of thought which then possess'd him,
And deem'd th' occasion fit, and thus address'd him:

" 'Be generous to a fallen foe,
With gratulations meet,
On Elba's *Emperor* bestow
Thy Liliputian fleet:

" 'For, with his Island's narrow bounds,
That Navy might agree,
Which, laugh'd at daily here – redounds
In ridicule to thee.'

"Says John, 'Right readily I'll part
With these, and all the gay things,
But it would break the R – 's heart
To take away his play things.' "

Or take the two following distiches: —

"A simple Angler, throwing flies for trout,
Hauled the main mast, and lugg'd a First Rate out.

[32] The age of the Prince Regent.

"A crow in his *fright*, flying over the Fleet,
Dropped something, that covered it all, like a sheet."

In contemporary accounts, the "Naumachia" was generally very summarily dismissed, and the following is, perhaps, one of the best of them.

"Between eight and nine o'clock, the Grand Sea Fight took place on the Serpentine River, where ships of the line, in miniature, manœuvred and engaged, and the Battle of the Nile was represented in little. Of this mock naval engagement on the great Serpentine Ocean, it would be extremely difficult to give any adequate description. It is, perhaps, sufficient to observe that it was about on a par with spectacles of a similar nature, which have been frequently exhibited at the Theatres… We were as heartily glad when the cockle-shell fight was over, as we had been tired of waiting for it. We were afraid, at one time, whether it would have neither beginning nor end. Indeed, there had been a wretched skirmish between four and five in the afternoon, between an American and an English frigate,[33] at the conclusion of which, the English colours were triumphantly hoisted on the rebel Yankee… At a signal given, the fireworks in the Green Park were let off, and four of the little fleet in the Serpentine were set on fire. The Swans screamed, and fluttered round the affrighted lake."

[33] Technically we were then at war with America – a war which began June 18th, 1812, and was ended by the Peace of Ghent, December 24th, 1814.

Such an opportunity for his satirical pen could not be missed by C. F. Lawler, the then *pseudo* Peter Pindar, and he wrote thereon: "Liliputian Navy!!! The R – t's Fleet, or John Bull at the Serpentine." – "The P – e's Jubilee." "The R – l Showman." "The R – l Fair, or Grande Galante Show." And, on the sale of the Temple of Concord, which had been erected in the Green Park: "The Temple knock'd down: or R – l Auction. The last lay of the Jubilee." They are mostly scurrilous and spiteful, but from the first of them I take the following: —

"Now to Hyde Park the crowds repair,
To mark the wonders of the fair;
To view the long extended line,
The glory of the Serpentine.

"Now sounds the Cannon, near and far,
The signal for the naval war,
The cockle fleet their flounder sails
Now spread to catch the whisp'ring gales.

"Now meet the rival ships; now rave
The echoing thunders o'er the wave;
Within the banks the eels retire,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.