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THE PENN PIONEER

and

JORDANS NEWS-SHEET

No. 8

DECEMBER 1927

Price 3d.

EDITORIAL

Perhaps the most momentous event which has happened in Jordans since the last issue of the *Penn Pioneer* is the virtual rejection of the proposals made by Jordans Estates, Ltd. These proposals, if accepted, would have meant an almost complete reversal of the ideals which inspired the Founders of Jordans Village.

Jordans was founded as a self-governing community, the aim of which was "to provide fuller opportunity for the development of character."

Although this ideal has sometimes met with unsympathetic smiles, and events in the village have given opportunity to the sceptic to bring forward his time-honoured remark about "mixing up business and idealism," still Jordans, when brought to the point, has shown that it does not wish to give up the idealism of its founders, and become simply one more speculative building estate. This fact was demonstrated by the appointment at the Annual Meeting, in March, of a Committee "to investigate the affairs of the Society and to consider the best course to be taken to develop the Estate and communal life of the village in accordance with the Rules of the Society."

Though the Founders of Jordans believed that it could be made a financial success as well as an ideal achievement, there has unfortunately been, up to the present, ground for the criticism that, financially, it is something of a failure. Whether this has been because of following the ideals of the founders, or because they have been altered or rejected, could be traced out through the history of the Society by anyone sufficiently interested. We do not propose to enter into that controversy here.

But at the present time it would seem, from hints that are dropped, that even from a purely financial point of view, the prospects of Jordans are not nearly as bad as we have sometimes been led to think.

The Committee appointed in March has been one of the most active committees ever appointed here or elsewhere, and we may look forward to a Report from them which will certainly be a milestone on our path, and may, perhaps, even mark the opening of a new era in the history of Jordans.

There are still people—very many of them—keen to see Jordans succeed in every way, and they are willing to give time and energy to help it. The ideals of our founders are still with these enthusiasts, and they are not shirking the difficult business side upon which the vindication of these ideals to the world will depend.

But apart from the business side of Jordans, to quote one of the recent village songs, "The Fellowship of Jordans is the thing that's come to stay." This is the dominant note in this issue of the *Penn Pioneer*. It is the apology for our existence, if such apology be necessary.

Jordans is growing. It will grow more and more, we hope and believe, as time goes on. It seems at present, that some of the original ideas of village industries and crafts have had, for one reason or another, to be

abandoned, but the idea of "Our Village" has never been dropped and need never be dropped. It rests with Jordans people whether we increase as a larger and larger family, extending friendly hands to our neighbours, and remain a Community, or whether we become simply a part of Greater London—a rather select suburb. Readers of the *Penn Pioneer* will have no doubt in which direction we are tending. "Our Soul is marching on!"

WINTER TIME

(With apologies to the shade of Tennyson.)

Now the winter woods stand silent, with blue hearth smoke drifting through:
Did the men who dreamed of Jordans fail in what they tried to do?

Kindly hearts and laughing faces, red-roofed cottages a-row,
In the midst the grey-green beeches, quiet Meeting-house below.

There our bare-legged landscape painter hawks his cress from door to door,
There the massed perambulators cluster round the Village Store.

On the stage our star performer, best of friends when pig is wrong,
Our most versatile of plumbers fills the Hall with flute or song.

Various are our means of transport: Esmeralda leads the way,
But the old Tin Lizzie's quicker than the cycles of Cathay.

Thick the air is with Committees, and with Sub-committees too,
Sacrosanct Official Secrets; but they sometimes trickle through.

O my Jordans of the beech trees! O my Jordans, cranks and all!
O the muddy, dirty footpaths! O the draughty Village Hall,

Where sometimes the Jordans Players move us all to mirth or tears,
Or the merry country dances take us back to vanished years.

Still the winter woods stand silent, with the hearth smoke rising slow,
But the men who founded Jordans wrought far better than we know.

E. C.

SUNDAY MORNING

Out of the clash of Force in æons past,
From whirling worlds and heaving seas of flame
This wondrous thing emerged—a Sabbath Morn!
No hint of travail on its face appears.

Serene and confident, golden and quiet,
With friendly trees and sturdy earth
It smiles a welcome to its worshippers—
Themselves the product of æonic strife
Here, in this quiet wood, is living peace.

The universal life, which flows through all,
Is entered here and known. . . . Will future years
Again bring strife, making this peaceful hour
A tearful memory? It shall not be!

There is an inner peace, an inner calm,
That shall not pass away though empires rise
Or fall. Founded on knowledge, faith and love,
This living peace shall out of chaos bring
The Radiant State,—the City Beautiful,
Even as this Sabbath Morn brings light and life.

J. C. C.

THE AUTO-DA-FÉ

On November 5th, 1927, there was a strange and stately ceremony, begun in the Village Hall, and carried to its stormy completion in the centre of the Village Green.

We gathered once more in the Hall. The curtains—the new curtains—were drawn back to display an impressive assembly, the Lord Mayor, with Judge and Advocate and Recorder, Bishop and Aldermen. On the floor of the Hall, nearest to the dais, were strange and gloomy figures, black-clad, with tridents over their shoulders.

A magnificently attired Town Crier, who seemed a little uneasy about the stability of his paunch, called for silence. From the other side of the dais the herald gave the trumpet call. Then the Lord Mayor read his proclamation.

A resident in the Village, we were told, digging in his little garden, had, much to his surprise, found a weed. He dug deeper but could not find the end of the root. "From morn he dug, from noon to dewy eve," and found at last, not the end of the root, but a large and ancient chest, which was displayed to our astonished gaze.

Then the Advocate arose and told us of the contents of the chest, which were, one by one, held up for our admiration. Space fails us for a complete list, but an old portrait was there, and a picture of Wat Tyler and Mat Hams on the roof of the Palace of Pleasure. We saw a lantern of the poet Gray, a gruesome length of steel cord, used to extract confessions from prisoners of old, and a document of mysterious import, of which all that was known was that the hair of the lawyer who had once tried to understand it, had turned white in a single night.

But then the Recorder of Common Sense shattered all our hopes and told us that what we had seen were but matters of every day. The building in the picture was but "Severals," and the portrait that of a modern child. The lantern did indeed belong to Gray, but to Harold, not to Thomas, the barbed wire had recently been removed from the Village Green, and as for the mysterious legal document—why, it was the ordinary ninety-nine year lease of Jordans Village.

Amid a breathless silence, the Judge gave solemn and considered sentence, and the whole matter was proclaimed, with pomp of bellman and of herald, to be a hoax, and the chest and its contents were condemned to public burning on the Village Green.

Then the procession passed out into the stormy night, where for a short space the rain had ceased, and we were led to a great funeral pyre, where all was solemnly consumed, with flaring accompaniment of rocket and of Catherine wheel. Then back to the Hall for seasonable fare of chestnut and potato. Finally, a drama of Guy Fawkes was given. Since Jordans is a home of idealists, it was fitting that the play should end, not with Fawkes' torture and death, but in his triumphant success, with King and Parliament blown sky-high, and the acclamations of the populace resounding in the streets. The actors tried to sing a closing round, but were too much overcome by their emotions for the words to be audible.

Then the Herald laid aside his trumpet and sang the new Village Chant.

And so to bed.

"ONLOOKER."

FRED ROWNTREE

Since the last issue of this paper a link with the early life of the Village has been severed by the passing of Fred Rowntree.

We remember him so well, tramping the then open fields before ever a house was to be seen, busy, joyfully busy, marking out sites and roads, his keen insight and vision always in play, as though he could see the Village complete and accomplished, as undoubtedly he could.

Or one remembers him on Committees, still visualising future objectives, at times explaining and appealing, at other times almost obstinate in his refusal to modify or compromise, but always flowing over with enthusiasm, always giving out of his abundant energy to those with whom he worked or strove—always inspiring people, even against their will, at times, to give of their best.

Or again, we picture him at leisure week-ends, working in the garden at the corner of the Green, wrestling with the stubborn soil which he loved so well, working untiringly from early morn till evening, so obviously happy and at one with his surroundings, until, rugged as he was in appearance, one came to think of him as part of the natural grandeur of the place. As in fact, he was, for one could not think of Jordans in those days without thinking of Fred Rowntree; nor to-day either, for we have only to look at the red brick and tiled cottages around the Green and elsewhere to realise how indelibly his name is stamped on the surroundings.

"Reader, if thou would'st see his monument, look around."

F. H.

PERSONAL

We are glad to welcome so many little new-comers to Jordans since our last issue. The "Natives of Jordans" are fast becoming a fact! In the order of their appearance they are:—Ernest John Christopher Polge, John James Cavett, Roland and Oliver Hobson, Audrey Dorothy Matthams, Oliver Dalton, Marjorie Hunt, Elizabeth Annesley Voysey, George Edward Brightman, Joscelyn Mary Cooper, Allison Elizabeth Mary Hall and Brenda Rachael Bigland.

We also welcome Joyce Hughes and Alison Rita Cooper, whose names were not included in our last issue.

* * *

We have rejoiced in four weddings since our last issue. In August, 1926, Joyce Thorne was married to Frank Ward. In September, 1926, Ethel Crawshaw to Alfred Morland. In April, 1927, Phyllis Jones to Wilfrid Bligh, and in August, 1927, Ann Robertson to Bevan Whitney.

* * *

Good-byes are sad things, but it is good to think that they also mean welcomes in another place. We are sure that this has been so in the case of our friends, the Robertshaws, who have left Jordans for Letchworth. Both Mr. and Mrs. Robertshaw have done very much for Jordans, and we are glad that we still have Mr. Robertshaw on the Committee of Management.

* * *

A hearty welcome to all who have come to live at Jordans since our last issue! Best wishes to those who have left us—including Margaret Bligh, who has recently taken up Missionary Service in India.

* * *

We rejoice with Mr. and Mrs. Roake on Mr. Roake's recovery from his serious illness. Our best wishes are with him, and we trust he will soon regain his usual strength and vigour.

* * *

We are glad to have Mrs. Shepherd with us again after her illness, and we hope that the genial atmosphere of Jordans will help her to a complete recovery.

JORDANS JOTTINGS

How did Mr. Greenwood rejoin his attaché case on the morning when he threw it into the moving 8.42 a.m. train (destination Paddington) whilst he himself was left to travel to Marylebone on the 9.17 a.m.?

Assuming that it is possible to get to the station on a bicycle in four minutes, and, if by chance, you find you have only three minutes, at what point would it become necessary to throw your bicycle into the arms of a passing female pedestrian and scramble through the wire fences? Perhaps Mr. Cooper can tell.

* * *

Charlie is finding it very difficult now to hold up morning trains for late-comers, since the day when one, whose name we will not mention, instead of hurrying gratefully into the train kept back for his convenience, calmly walked into the ticket-office to collect his *Times*.

* * *

There is no truth in the rumour that Mr. Greenwood is bringing an action against Mr. Polge on account of his (or Esmeralda's) furious driving to the danger of the public.

* * *

It is said that owing to the dearth of fires in Jordans, individual members of the Fire Brigade deliberately create conflagrations in order to vindicate their existence and to demonstrate their ability. A very attractive dell on the estate was almost destroyed in this way last Easter. The wife and children of an offending fireman who were picnicking in the dell narrowly escaped cremation. This might have been a unique instance of poetic justice.

* * *

They say that Mr. Saunders has now contracted to supply Mr. Wilfrid Bligh with his usual monthly ration of water-cress, amounting to three tons, exclusive of non-vegetable matter. The deal almost fell through because Mr. Saunders' customers objected to finding snails in the coal.

* * *

Dr. Bevan Brown will be relieved to hear that the British Olympic Association has decided that amateur athletes who are paid for "broken time" will be allowed to compete in the next Olympic games. It will therefore be possible for him to enter his baseball team for the next year's games at Amsterdam.

* * *

Mr. Shepherd's tender for cutting the wire round the village green was the lowest received, and in view of his experience in this class of work, it was accepted by the T.M.C.

NEWS OF MEETINGS AND SOCIETIES, ETC.

ECONOMICS STUDY CIRCLE, 1926

In connection with Jordans Meeting a series of addresses on Economic Problems was given at the Hostel during last winter. The series was opened by Professor Soddy of Oxford, who gave a very stimulating and controversial address on Credit and Currency Reform. He was followed by Montague Fordham, M.A., Mrs. Davis, of Smith's College, University of Massachusetts, Mr. Arthur Penty and Mr. George Benington, of the Friends' War and Social Order Committee.

All of these meetings were well attended by Village people, as well as by Friends from Jordans Meeting, and they gave rise to much interesting discussion.

JORDANS FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The Fellowship Meeting is held every Sunday evening in the Village Hall, and stimulates much varied and helpful thought. The meeting is of a religious character but with scope for many aspects of truth.

Interesting addresses were given by as many as 36 different speakers.

The attendance averages from 25 to 30; and the meeting has been able to send contributions during the year to the following: Foreign Mission Work of Friends; Hospital Sunday Fund; Dr. Barnardo's Homes; Lebanon Hospital; Country Holiday Fund; and the West Ham Hostel for Working Girls. Also a small gift for Miss Bligh in her new work. It is hoped, in addition, at Christmas time, to send something towards a fund for the unemployed miners in South Wales, and to a Children's Centre in Canning Town, E.

WOMEN'S ADULT SCHOOL

The School meets regularly on Tuesday afternoons from 3.0 to 4.15 and, after a cup of tea, undertakes the consideration of the lesson suggested by the National Adult School Union Lesson Handbook. There is generally a good discussion, nearly all present taking part. We are glad to have gained some new members lately; and we always welcome visitors.

FOLK-DANCING GROUP

One of the most popular activities in the Village this winter is the Folk-Dancing. A large group—a very large group—meets each week and trips the light fantastic toe (we hope!) to the strains of Miss Hankinson's tin whistle.

Miss Hankinson holds the combined office of Instructor, Demonstrator and Musician. She seems to be possessed of an unerring source of energy and good humour, which are very necessary assets in dealing with her large and heterogeneous class.

JORDANS SOCIAL GUILD

The Social Guild continues active as the unifying force in the Village. Its officers are as keen as ever and have produced a first class programme, opening with the Social on October 1st, which was quite an historic occasion. Invitations to this Social Gathering were sent to all the men who had helped to build the Village Hall, and several of these old stalwarts of Jordan turned up, one travelling all the way from Sheffield for the occasion. During the evening, Mr. Hancock, who now provides a most welcome link between the early days of Jordans and the present time, reminded us of how the building of the Village Hall was truly a labour of love, the whole of the work being done voluntarily by the men in their spare time. A programme of Music, Songs and Recitations, and the acting of a short Irish play, "The Rising of the Moon," completed a very enjoyable evening, and refreshments revived those who had travelled many miles, through much mud.

Other evenings which have been arranged under the auspices of the Social Guild include a delightful evening, for which Mr. Ryan was responsible, an interesting lantern lecture on "Camping in the English Lake District," by Mr. Dalton, a stimulating address on "Disarmament," arranged by the local branch of the League of Nations Union, and an evening arranged by the Dramatic Society. The Social Guild Committee, with others, was also responsible for the Fifth of November Celebrations; a full account of which appears elsewhere.

JORDANS PLAYERS

Jordans Players, the late dramatic society, are now affiliated to the British Drama League. "Caste" was played last spring; and in the summer many of the players took part in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Festival arranged by the T.M.C. They also presented an amusing programme in the Hall on December 3rd. Look out for their next production in 1928!

WORKING PARTY AND STUDY CIRCLE

A Studying Work Party, or a Working Study Circle, has been formed and meets every Monday at one or other of the members' houses.

The members, while discussing together Bertrand Russell's book "On Education," sew children's garments to be distributed by the "Save the Children Fund."

Some of the members have a leaning towards the sewing, and some towards the study, and some few are those happy beings who can do two things at once.

The net result, however, is:—A substantial parcel dispatched, and several chapters of the book digested.

We hope the Working Study Party will continue to circle!

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Three hundred years ago, when Shakespeare was entertaining the town with his plays, the English country-side was also being entertained by their own players. It was indeed the end of the time of "Merry England," to be destroyed in the new generation by the curse of the growth of Puritanism and the coming of business enterprise. When Shakespeare was writing his fairy play, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," he put the scene in Athens, but no doubt he was thinking much more of the English country life to which he belonged. He thought it a good opportunity of making fun, to a town audience, of the country players that he knew well.

The Jordans Players' representation of scenes from the "Midsummer Night's Dream," on July 16th, was given in one of the disused sand-pits of Crutches Wood, which formed a delightful setting.

It was simply and yet admirably performed. The craftsmen's parts were acted badly, as Shakespeare intended them to be acted, and the fairy parts with the charm that belonged to them.

So many of the Jordans people of all ages were taking part that it seemed just possible that there might not have been enough left to form an audience. Nevertheless, there was, as it turned out, a large audience collected from far and near, who obviously enjoyed themselves. It was a real success and the actors and organisers deserved the congratulations that were rained upon them.

M. F.

THE VILLAGE CHANT

(Tune: "John Brown's Body.")

Though weeds grow high at Jordans, and the roads are none too clean,

In many other ways I think that we can "take the bean."

Our Store can pay a "divi" and the barbed wire's off the Green!

So our soul is marching on!

Chorus:

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

So our soul is marching on.

Though many of our Founders are no longer with us here,

They've left their work behind them, and their memory is dear.

'Twas they who thought of Jordans, so let's give them all a cheer!

For their soul is marching on!

Chorus:

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

For their soul is marching on.

Some people say that Jordans can but hardly pay its way;

That it is but a pious hope:—a "dog that's had it's day."

But the Fellowship of Jordans is the thing that's come to stay.

And our soul is marching on!

Chorus:

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

And our soul is marching on.

"MUSE."

SCHOOLS—SECONDARY, CENTRAL AND ELEMENTARY

On Monday, October 31st, under the auspices of the Bucks County Education Committee, a Public Inquiry into the need for a Public SECONDARY SCHOOL for boys and girls of Beaconsfield, Chalfont St. Giles, Chalfont St. Peter, Gerrards Cross, Denham, Seer Green and district, was held at the Masonic Hall, Gerrards Cross. There was a very large attendance.

Representatives from the Beaconsfield District Council and the Parish Councils of Chalfont St. Giles, Chalfont St. Peter, Denham and Gerrards Cross, the Rector of Beaconsfield, and several other residents from the area, gave their views. They were unanimous as to the necessity of a School or Schools in the district, and the majority of speakers were in favour of the school being built somewhere near Gerrards Cross Station. The Bucks Education Committee have since decided that a school shall be built at Gerrards Cross.

The Education Committee has also decided to build a CENTRAL SCHOOL at Turners Corner at the top of Welders Lane, near Chalfont St. Peter, and it is on the programme for 1928-29.

But the most pressing need for Jordans and Seer Green is an up-to-date ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, and a petition was recently sent to the Education Committee of the County Council.

This petition was signed by 78 parents (26 in Jordans, and 52 in Seer Green), also by 30 other supporters (15 in Jordans and 15 in Seer Green).

Of the 78 parents, 40 are Nonconformists, 32 Church of England, and 6 various.

The signatures were collected within a week, and as it was considered advisable to send in the petition before the next meeting of the Council, it was not possible to ask all residents to sign.

The existing school has accommodation for 55 to 60 children, but over 100 are in attendance, whilst many children have to walk to Chalfont St. Giles, and the school there is also full.

Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education, in his report for 1926, which has just been published, writes:—

"Education should be charming to the young. It should be growth and harnessing of its animal instincts, its bodily senses, its mental faculties. It should spell happy days in the sunshine, and in the wide and winsome fields of nature. It should consist of the beginnings of music, art, and letters, of adventure and heroism, of the vigour of the youthful body, and the curiosity of the awakening mind, of tales of romance, of games."

This is the kind of education we want for all children.

M. H.

**CHILDREN'S CORNER
FATHER CHRISTMAS**

"I do wonder what Father Christmas will bring me to-night. I hope it's the big teddy I asked for. I called up the chimney ever and ever so loud, so I don't think he could have helped hearing me, do you, Jill?"

Jill put down her sewing and looked up.

"Oh, no, that's all right, Baby; I guess he heard you."

"What did you ask for?" asked Babs.

"Oh, I didn't ask for anything this year, I'm getting too old to ask for presents from Father Christmas, now, I guess. But do stop chattering, Babs; I shall never get this table-cloth finished for Mother's present to-morrow."

"Well, I shall never be too old for Father Christmas, Jill," said Babs. "And, O Jill, you do think there is always and always a Father Christmas, don't you? 'Cause a little boy at school said there wasn't, and I don't want it to be true. 'Tisn't, is it?"

While she was speaking the door had opened and a boy, about fourteen years old, had entered. He stood watching Babs with an amused smile on his face, but, as she finished, his face suddenly clouded and he turned sharply towards his sister, as if anxious to hear her answer.

Jill looked up at her brother, and her face, too, was grave. She waited a moment, looking straight at him, and then, smiling at Babs, she said, "No, Babs dear, it's not true; there's always a Father Christmas, isn't there, Jack?"

"Rather!" said Jack, turning away, and taking a book from the shelf he began to read.

That night, as he was going to bed, Jack was thinking hard. After all, Jill was only one year older than him, so perhaps it wasn't surprising that she didn't know. Perhaps girls went on believing these things longer than boys. Even he might have

believed in Father Christmas still if the boys at school hadn't laughed at him so much! But what was to happen? Jill would waken in the morning expecting to find some presents, and Mother had said that she was only going to fill Baby's stocking this year. She can't have told Jill, though, or else she would have known about there not being a Father Christmas. Poor Jill! She would find only an empty stocking! But she shouldn't, though! Jack had an idea. He crept to his drawer and took out a little parcel marked "Jill, with love from Jack"; and, crossing out the word Jack, he wrote Father Christmas instead. Then he opened the door and went out on to the dark landing.

"Who's that?" said a frightened little voice in the darkness. Jack switched on the light suddenly.

"Why, Jill, what are you doing here?" he cried.

The light made them both blink and they stood looking rather guiltily at each other. Jill hastily pushed something inside her dressing-gown.

"Jack, what are you doing?" she said, coming nearer to him. Jack looked rather ashamed, and glancing down at the parcel he was carrying, he said, "I was only coming to give you this."

"But Jack, I was bringing you this!" said Jill; "I thought you didn't know!"

At that they both began to laugh.

"Well I never did!" said Jack. "Fancy us both thinking the other didn't know!"

"But what made you tell that fib to Babs?" he added.

"It really wasn't a fib," said Jill; "and I did so want her to go on believing. Father Christmas does go on for ever and ever, you know, Jack. Mother told me the other day when I was telling her that I knew. He is the Spirit of Christmastide, that makes everyone want to give everyone else presents."

E. M. D. C.

ADVERTISEMENTS

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