



So. Farewell then 2018

The vindication of Christmas

Philip Hancock
takes us through
the dark times
when festive
frolicking was
actually banned

...says Bob the Yuletide Lobster at
our annual Christmas Moot

Desert fox

A gritty profile of
this month's guest
speaker, thespian
and long-time NSC
Member Callum Coates

RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • No. 147 • JANUARY 2019

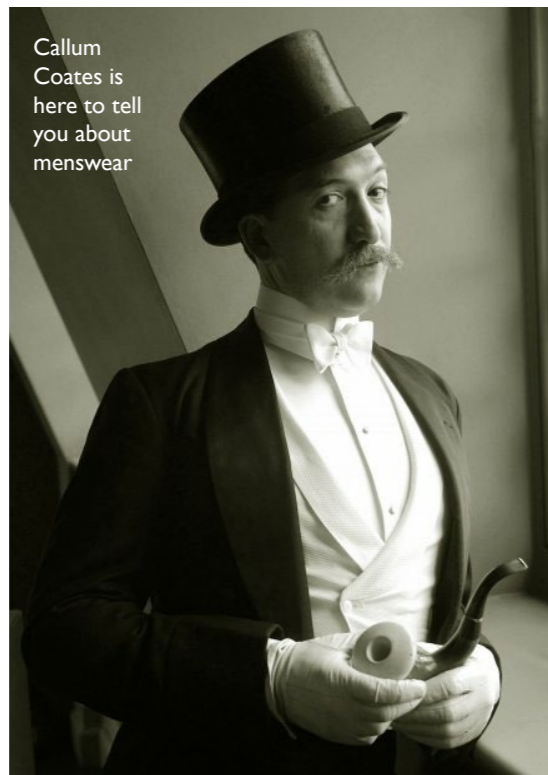


The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of The Wheatsheaf, just off Oxford Street. The Wheatsheaf is one of Fitzrovia's historic pubs, a one-time haunt of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell, Augustus John and Julian Maclaren-Ross. In fact Thomas met his wife Caitlin in The Wheatsheaf and, legend has it, he was known to flash at women there as well. Fitzrovia's associations with literature go back to the eighteenth century. In the twentieth century both Woolf and Shaw lived in Fitzroy Square; Pound and Lewis launched *Blast!* at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel in Percy Street. John Buchan lived in Portland Place and in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* Richard Hannay has a flat there. Both Lawrences (D.H. and T.E.) took rooms there, as did Aleister Crowley, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Katherine Mansfield.

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 2nd January in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Callum Coates will give us a sartorial talk first delivered at Eltham Palace (in character as Stephen Courtauld): *What is a Man to Wear?* "For many centuries male fashion had been an area of self-expression and flamboyant show," he explains, "a highly visible and often gaudy indicator of wealth, status and even politics and religion. After blessed Beau Brummell's reforms, however, men began to conform to a strict set of rules governing what a man should wear when."

"Arguably, the zenith of formal menswear dates from 1900 to 1939. Tonight's talk will look at examples of clothing from that era, a guide for how to wear them today and how to avoid looking like a penguin dressed in a bin bag."



Callum Coates is here to tell you about menswear

The Last Meeting

Our speaker was Philip Hancock. Last December Philip gave us a rousing talk on the dark side of Santa Claus, covering the pugnacious nature of St Nicolas, the strange German tradition of Krampus, a devil-like character who punishes bad children rather than rewarding the good, and Santa's history of advertising booze, cigarettes, firearms and war. This year he carried on this tradition by telling us about how Christmas, as a warm, much-loved, seasonal landmark, was a relatively recent invention. Essentially inherited and absorbed from pagan traditions (evidence suggests that Christ was actually born in the summer), Christmas was for centuries such an occasion for gluttony and debauchery that it was eventually banned by the Puritans—it is never mentioned in the Bible, which prescribes only the Sabbath as a religious observance.

An attempt at an essay version of Philip's talk begins on page 4.



(Above) The majestic Christmas tree keeps us mindful of What It's All About; (left) Torquil opens proceedings; (right) Philip takes questions from the floor



(Clockwise from above left) Philip narrates a key scene from Puritan history, involving a dog fight about Christmas; the audience pay close attention; Eugenie Rhodes clutches a precious hard copy of the *Resign!* Christmas number; post-talk the room melts into heated debate; as the evening ends the tree still stands, both an inspiration of hope and a silent sentinel to the good and evil in men's hearts. Or maybe just a tree.



The Vindication of ❄️ Christmas ❄️

Professor Philip Hancock on a little-known period of Christmas Past

AS ANOTHER CHRISTMAS disappears over the horizon, I can't help but feel that a number of Sheridanites are unlikely to be mourning its passing. Indeed, I am sure that there are some amongst you who would like to see the so-called "festive" season banished from the calendar for good, and all who celebrate it "boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart", as I believe someone once said. Or perhaps I am misjudging the seasonal spirit to be found among you. Nonetheless, those of you who do indeed consider the whole thing to be simply "too much" might have found something to like about 17th-century England; for it was a time when—following what today we might call a "War on Christmas"—its celebration was in fact banned.

To understand why this came about, however, one has to venture back into the earliest decades of the first millennium and the birthplace of the Christian church, namely Rome. Back then, and when not running away from lions or angry mobs, Christians were not particularly inclined even to try to identify the date of, let alone celebrate, the birth of their professed saviour; birthday celebrations being something they generally left to the "pagans". Certainly, scripture provided no suggestion that the birth of Christ should be a religious celebration, nor was there any clear indication of when in the calendar it actually took place.

As the Christian church in Rome gradually grew in strength and influence, however—Christianity having been decriminalised across



HAULING IN THE YULE-LOG.—From drawing by H. M. Paget.

the Empire by Constantine in AD313—its attempts to be recognised as the official religion of the Empire were somewhat thwarted by the widespread popularity of the established religions. In particular, the Church found itself having to compete with a number of widely observed mid-winter festivals that were associated not only with these polytheistic belief-systems, but also with a worship of the slow return of the sun to the sky and the enjoyment of an abundance of harvested food and drink that would need to be consumed before much of it turned (fig.1).

In what was largely an act of political expediency the date of the nativity, and indeed a requirement to celebrate it was, therefore, set by the Church right in the middle of these established festivals; that is, on 25th December. Thus, popular pagan festive practices such as feasting and drinking, the hanging of evergreens, and the giving of small gifts—among others—could continue but now be recognised as Christian; signalling that conversion didn't mean the end of the winter knees up. Furthermore, as Christianity spread across Europe, this process of incorporation continued

with northern festivals such as Yule becoming a synonym for Christmastide, and with many of its practices—some wholesome, such as the burning of the Yule log, some far less so—again becoming part and parcel of the seasonal shenanigans.

Let us now, however, fast-forward 14 centuries to England, and what some consider to be the high-water mark of Christmas. By the late 16th century the Tudor Christmas had become not only a season of great ecclesiastical significance but also one of immense popularity, celebrated by all classes and ranks, but especially so by the crown and aristocracy. Great feasts



Fig.3



Fig.4

Fig.5

those “protestants” of a more puritanical disposition gradually to exercise political, cultural, as well as ecclesiastical influence across the Kingdom.

In London, for example, dismayed by what they considered to be the lack of piety and restraint amongst its populace, they turned their ire on what they deemed to be the ungodly pleasures of theatre-going, an activity they considered to be a riotous and heathen pastime that did nought but encourage drunkenness and licentiousness (fig.4). Thus, in 1596, the Puritans succeeded through their increased political presence in Parliament in having the public presentation of all plays within the limits of the City banned; forcing theatres such as The

Globe and The Swan to operate

south of the Thames and starting a struggle between theatre and Parliament that would continue for decades.

While theatre was one thing, however, nothing got the goat of your average Puritan more than Christmas (fig.5). Driven by an adherence to the word of scripture, and with no patience for what they considered to be the Catholic accommodation of the aforementioned pagan practices of the season, Christmas was at the top

were held, old Roman practices such as the election of a Lord of Misrule were often revived, and the doors of the rich and not so rich were opened to friends and neighbours, all of which led Christmas to become the very embodiment of what the Victorians, at least, liked to think of as Merrie Olde England at its finest (fig.2).

Yet even then, at the peak of the season’s popularity, trouble was on the horizon. For while Christmas had flourished under the auspices of the Roman Church, which was wont to turn a blind eye to its excesses, in 1517 Martin Luther had kicked off the Reformation with an “alleged” act of guerrilla carpentry that had the Christian world up in arms (fig.3). Eventually, this led to a whole host of non-conformists and not so fun-loving criminals staking their claims to be the purveyors of the one true Christian faith across Europe. Back home in dear old Blighty, while never anybody’s intention, the eventual creation of the English Church also allowed

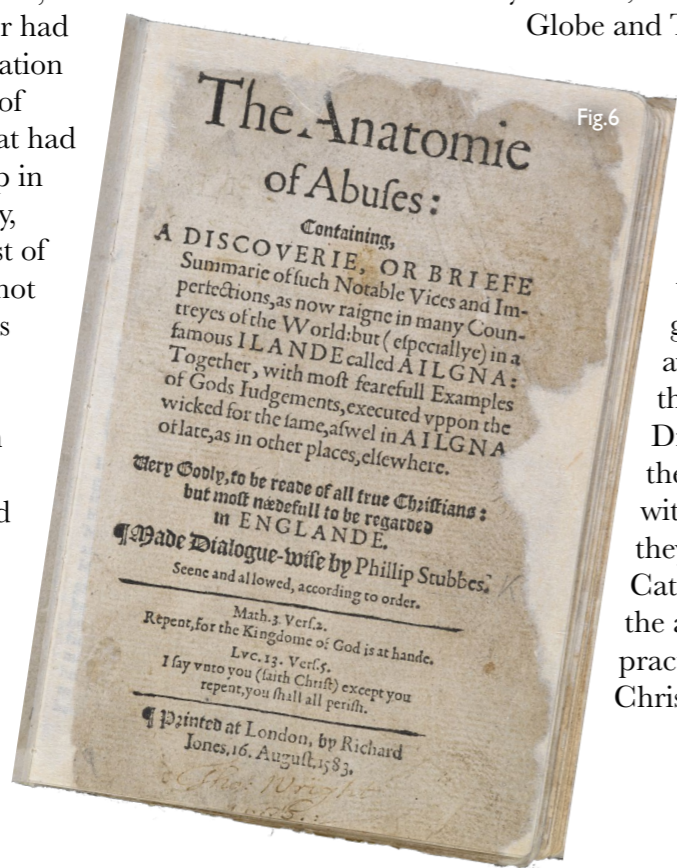


Fig.6

of their reformatory hitlist. In 1583, Puritan pamphleteer Phillip Stubbes published *The Anatomie of Abuses* (fig.6) in which he railed against not only foul un-Christian practices such as the wearing of fancy clothing and owning too great a variety of hats, but also the evil of Christmas:

More mischief is that time committed than in all the year besides, what masking and mumming, whereby robbery, whordeom, murder and what not is committed? What dicing and carding, what eating and drinking, what banqueting and feasting is then used, more than in all the year besides to the great dishonour of God and impoverishing of the realm.

It was not until the English Civil War, however, (fig.7) that these puritanical elements within the reformed churches of both England and Scotland were really able to exercise their ideals through their conditional support for the Parliamentary cause, and the subsequent rule of the Commonwealth of England, Ireland and Scotland.

Now it is often said that Oliver Cromwell “banned” Christmas. But is this the case? Well, while Cromwell was certainly a Puritan by disposition, he was also a reasonably shrewd



politician who realised that any direct assault on the people’s festivals might lead to a decline in support of the Parliament and its army. Indeed, recently uncovered historical evidence now suggests that he was in fact somewhat partial to the odd festive round of charades himself (fig.8). Nonetheless, at the time he particularly needed the support of the Scottish Presbyterians who had overseen—being the miserable buggers that they were—a ban on Christmas and similar idolatrous celebrations in Scotland since 1638 and who now wanted to see, as a condition of their favour, such a ban extended south of the border.

As such, while more independent members of Parliament had sought to temper the

excessive demands of such religious hardliners in a number of areas, the issue of Christmas was one they wouldn’t budge on. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on which side you were on, it was all brought to something of a head in 1644 when Christmas

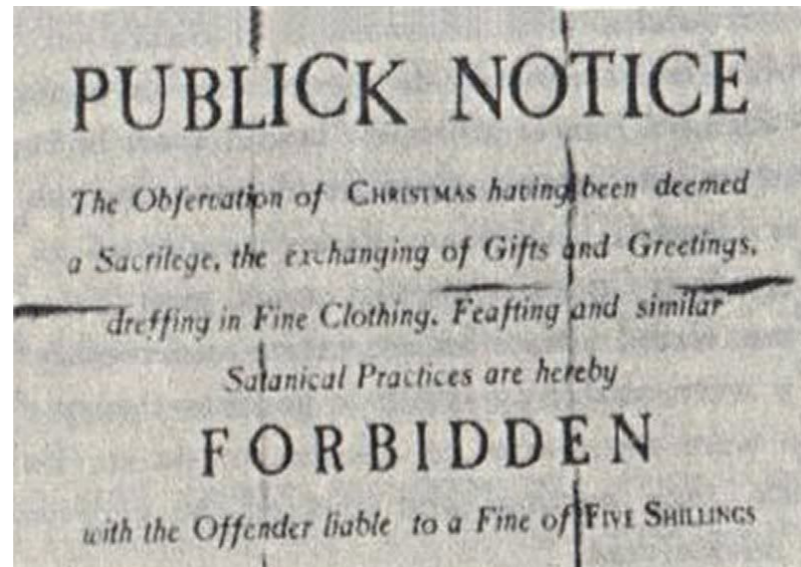


Fig.8

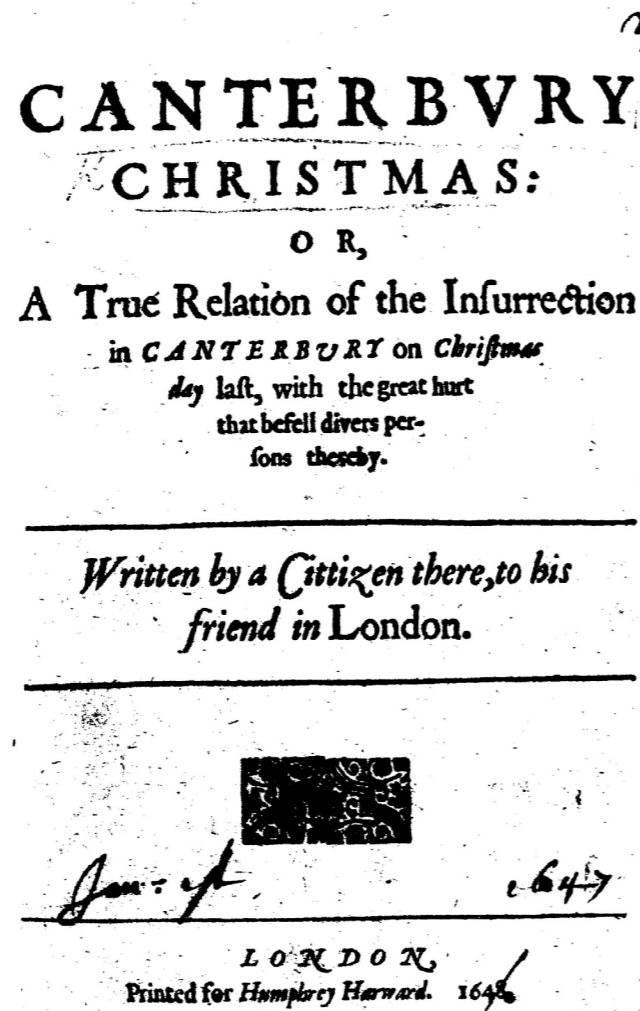
Day managed to fall on the last Wednesday of the month: a day which had only recently been established as a legally enforceable day of solemn fasting. As such, the first blow against Christmas was struck when Parliament was left with little option other than to decree that the fast must take precedence over Christmas and, as such, anybody found celebrating the day in the usual manner would be guilty of heresy. And from here on in, things moved at something of a pace.

In 1645, the Puritan assault on the still largely “Catholic” Church of England resulted in a revised *Directory of Public Worship* replacing the *Book of Common Prayer*, which set out not only a new church organisation but also the forms of worship that were to be adopted and followed in England and Wales. This clearly stated that apart from Sundays no other so-called holy days, including Christmas, should be observed as religious festivals. By adopting this as official state doctrine Parliament, therefore, effectively made Christmas a sacrilegious celebration. It wasn’t until two years later, however, in June 1647, that the Long Parliament, as it was then, passed an ordinance confirming the abolition of the feasts of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun, making their observance not only spiritually sacrilegious, but actually illegal. Thus, religious services on the day were banned, and shops and markets were required to remain open while Parliament itself ensured it sat on the 25th of December (fig.9).

Not that the good folk of England were going to simply lie down and be deprived of their traditional winter festivities. While many continued to celebrate the season in both religious and secular terms in the privacy of their own homes, many also took to the streets



(Above) Fig.9; (below) fig.10



not only to make merry themselves, but also to intimidate those who appeared to be obeying the new rules by, for example, opening for trade. Certainly, for the first two years of the ban, there are records of disturbances and riots across the south of England. In 1646,

for example, there were fights in the streets of Bury St Edmunds as supporters of the ban came face to face with festive revellers. Then, in 1647, perhaps the most famous uprising took place when in Canterbury a petition of over 10,000 names was presented to the Mayor on Christmas Day, demanding either the return of Christmas or the restoration of the monarchy (fig.10). Violence quickly erupted with those shops and businesses that had opened attacked, and armed exchanges reportedly taking place when Puritan supporters attempted to close down a Christmas church service.

Such disturbances carried on over the course of the next few years with Parliament itself seemingly torn on how to deal with the matter, as moderate Parliamentarians continued to struggle with religious extremists. In 1652, however, it seemed that the extremists had won the war, with Parliament reasserting that Christmas Day should not be celebrated or indeed recognised in any form whatsoever. In practice, this still meant that private rural services could be held—but anybody taking part in such activities within London, or other major towns, ran a serious risk of arrest and even imprisonment. In 1656, for instance, the diarist John Evelyn reportedly attended a Christmas Day service at the Earl of Rutland’s private London chapel and was arrested and questioned by Parliamentary soldiers as to why “contrarie to an Ordinance made” he was found to be observing “the

superstitious time of the Nativity”. He, of course, feigned ignorance as to the nature of the service and was subsequently released.

This 17th-century struggle was not just a physical conflict, however, but a battleground of ideas as well. Indeed, for some it represented the start of printed propaganda as a weapon of war—especially for the supporters of the monarchy. Christmas became a symbol of an English identity that was predominantly rural, peaceful and generous, something that was starkly contrasted with largely urban, repressive and ascetic puritanism. Indeed, the title of this essay is itself taken from a pamphlet, produced in 1653, that lamented the abolition

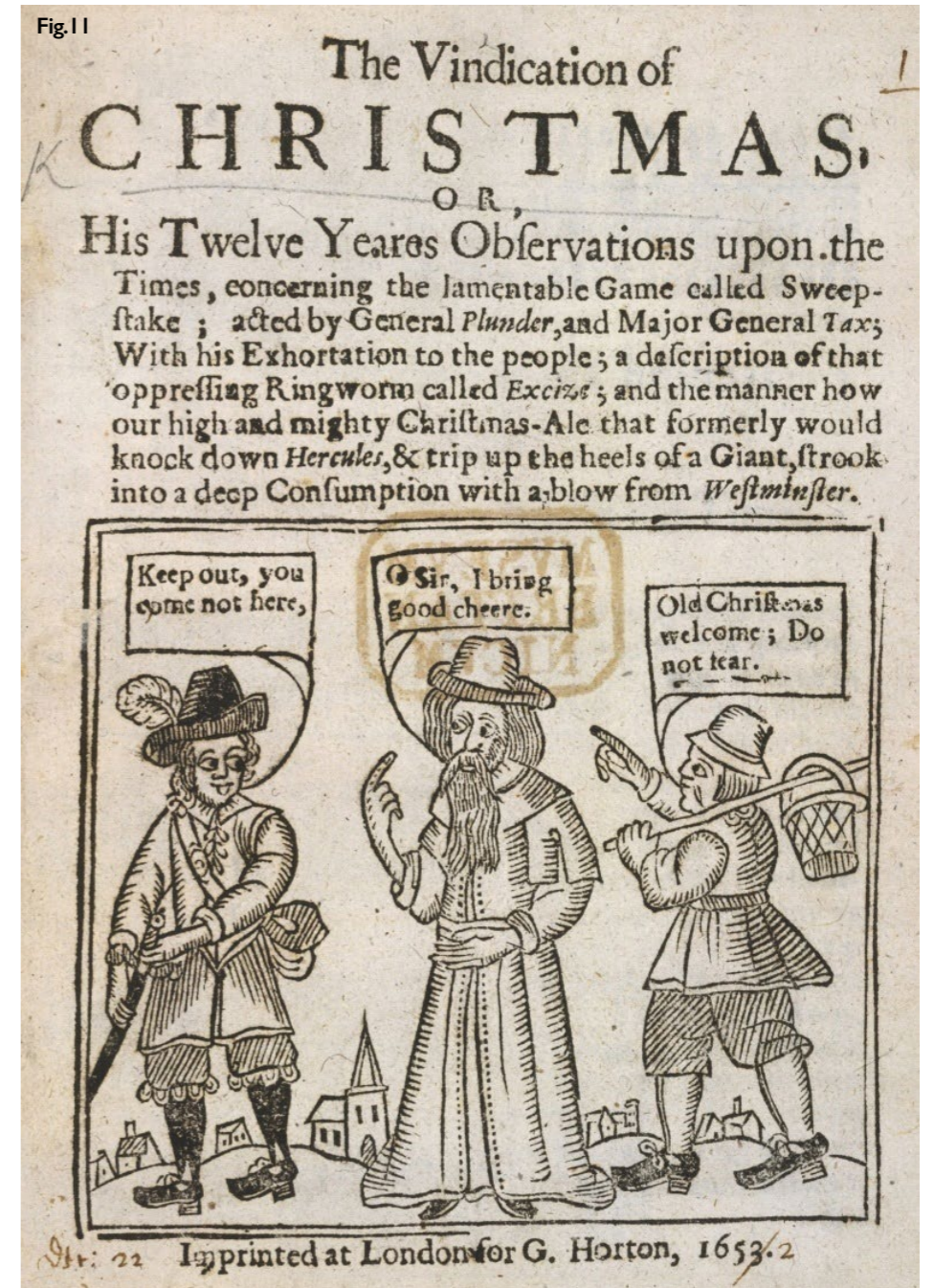




Fig.12

of Christmas by the Parliamentary government of the interregnum (fig.11). Here, the central figure of olde Father Christmas proclaims to all, “O Sir, I bring good cheere,” while a parliamentarian soldier warns him to “Keep out, you come not here.” The third character, however, a simple but true English yeoman responds with “Old Christmas welcome; Do not fear.” This demonstrates not only that the author was no Shakespeare, but that the true spirit of not only Christmas, but Englishness, resided—as suggested above—not in the towns and cities, but in the countryside; a theme that would later be taken up especially by the Victorians in their passion for the season. Furthermore, the pamphlet goes on to portray Christmas as a time when, despite what the Puritans might claim, good honest men “discoursed merrily, without either profanity or obscenity”, while Parliamentarian forces, on the other hand, were happy on this good day

to “plunder pottage-pots, to ransack ovens, and to strip spits stark naked”. As a piece of political propaganda, the content of the pamphlet also goes well beyond the question of Christmas, however, criticising what is perceived to be the actions of a government obsessed, amongst other things, with taxing the poor in order to maintain a standing army of repression both at home and abroad. A similar exercise in anti-Parliamentary pamphleteering was undertaken in 1658 by Josiah King. Entitled *The Examination and Tryall of Old Father Christmas* (fig.12), here this somewhat benign and gentle image is used to good effect to conversely portray the Puritan faith as a deviation from the good-willed spirit of, once again, true Englishness:

Behold the majesty and grace,
Of loving, cheerful Christmas face,
Whom many thousands with one breath
Cry out let him be put to death
Whose deeds can never die
So long as man has memory

While not strictly speaking of the printed medium, similar themes were also evident in the Royalist ballad of 1646, also entitled “The Trial of Father Christmas”:

To conclude, I'll tell you news that's right,
Christmas was killed at Naseby fight:
Charity was slain at that same time,
Jack Tell-truth too, a friend of mine,
Likewise then did die, roast beef and shred pie,
Pig, Goose and Capon no quarter found.
Yet let's be content, and the times lament,
you see the world turned upside down.

As we all know, of course, the story did indeed end happily for old Father Christmas. With the restoration of Charles II in 1660 all previous laws and ordinances were declared null and void, leaving Christmas to once again become the festival of the people and for a surplus of colourful hats to be flourished with gay abandon (fig.13). Yet even so, Christmas never really reached the level of popularity it



Fig.13

had once enjoyed—especially in the towns and cities—with many shops continuing to open and many finding it to be an ordinary working day. Indeed, it took nearly 200 years and the writings of men such as Charles Dickens and Washington Irving before Christmas once again became the national celebration it once was. Nor were the ramifications of this period of history felt only here. As Puritan colonists accelerated their escape to the New World, they took with them their hatred of the season, banning celebrations in many towns and cities along the East Coast of the Americas. But that, as they say, is another story.

In conclusion then, the bad news is that Christmas is still with us and looks likely to be so for many years to come. While Wars on Christmas continue to come and go—today

we are told the aggressors are now an evil axis of atheists, liberals, multi-cultural capitalists, homosexuals, and Starbucks (fig.14)—the season stands as an affirmation of not only the human ability to spend, eat and drink more than can possibly be good for either us or the planet, but perhaps on a more positive note, our ability to cock a snook in the face of the dark and cold of mid-winter and celebrate the pleasure and vitality of life. Indeed perhaps both the pagans and the Puritans were right—albeit about different things—and as such whether the



Fig.14

season for you was one of paganesque debauchery or old fashioned Puritan miserabilism I think the best I can do at the risk of offending some, all, or indeed none of you, is hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday.



FRIDAY 21ST DECEMBER saw our traditional pub gathering just before Christmas. Since the dawn of the Club it was held at the Dover Castle in Weymouth Mews, but when that closed down three years ago we shifted our patronage to the Rising Sun on Cloth Fair.

The primary function of the Christmas Moot is to check that Lord Mendrick is not dead—he spends most of the year in Malaya, teaching the children of the rich and is only released from his shackles to visit his family seat at Christmas. Last year he confounded us all by simply not turning up, but it seems he was nevertheless alive, a fact he proved vibrantly this time around.

Of course, the copy of *The Chap* in the photo admittedly only really proves he was alive at some point after issue 19 was published. In case you're wondering what the *Chap* magazines are doing, I stumbled upon a cache of back issues under the sideboard and brought them along to give away. These are mostly numbers 17 and 19: if you fancy some, let me know and I'll bring some along to our club night on 2nd January.

Many thanks to all who came along and spread good cheer. And I can safely wish you all a merry Christmas, as the date you will receive this is still four days before Epiphany, so technically still Christmas...

Christmas Moot

A photo report from the Club's 2018 Yuletide pub gathering. Mostly pictures of people drinking beer, to be honest



(Right) Lord Mendrick—still not dead



(Clockwise from top left) A rare sighting of Bunty in the foreground, with Chuckles, Callum and Mrs Palmer-Lewis behind him; at the white-wine end of the table social media is feverishly checked; Luca Jellinek and Philip Hancock share a, doubtless ribald, joke; the Curé (right) with the Earl of Essex—who was clearly raring to go and later complained that everyone went home too early; it turned out to be the shortest day of the year and, although you can't see it too well, George is wearing a Baphomet pendant to mark the occasion; Matthew Howard holds forth

(Clockwise from top left) Darcy Sullivan in an outré cord coat; Ed Marlowe; James Blah, in the most cutaway of cutaway collars; Robert smiles obligingly while Henry stares into the distance; three graces (left to right) Mrs Palmer-Lewis, Mrs H. and Mrs Mitchell; Giles Culpepper with some bloke he claimed to be having a reunion with, but I suspect was the arresting officer; Mrs Palmer-Lewis is scandalised (usually by Mr Howard) while Adrian broods

THE BROGUES GALLERY

WITH ARTEMIS SCARHEART



In which a Member of the New Sheridan Club is asked to introduce themselves to other Members so that those at Home and Across the Seas may all get to know fellow Club Members. No part of this interview may be used in court or bankruptcy proceedings.



Callum Coates

Name or preferred name?

Callum Coates.

Why that nom de plume?

For it is my name! To quote John Proctor... I did play with the idea of a nom de plume of Angus MacEwan (familial reasons) when I wanted to say things that might get me in to bother, but so far I

haven't used it.

Where do you hail from?

If you take out a plastic £10 note, you can see where I grew up. Godmersham Park. Though I hasten to add I lived in the village not the great house, but I did visit frequently, like Pip to Miss Havershams.

Favourite Cocktail?

Aviation or Commodore are current faves, though I tend to order a Dry Martini when out and about. Waterstones Piccadilly used to do particularly good ones.

Most Chappist skill?

Loafing indolently.

Most Chappist possession?

My house is entirely filled with things that could be considered Chappist and I think it would be very hard to choose which is the most. My leather umbrella stand? The pith helmets hanging on the wall or the field boots in the hallway? The two vintage union flags? The meerschaum pipe? The handmade Fez, bespoke in Cairo? My Poojah shrine in the hallway, from my time in India? My collection of swords and my highland targe? The Toureg scarf that I wore camel trekking in Morocco or the complete Bedouin outfit I acquired in Jordan? My collection of antique books? I'm erring towards my 1940s telephone or my 1945 Pifco Radio...

Personal Motto?

Absque iudicio. [Without judgement— Ed].

Favourite Quotes?

I cannot think of anything anyone has ever said that I hold to be true so consistently that I could consider it a favourite. I am a chameleon and my outlook changes frequently. However, I am very partial to "GET IN THE BACK OF THE VAN!", the words screamed by an actor friend of mine in *Withnail & I*. It wasn't in the script and on the last of many takes Tony just improvised it and has become possibly the most famous one line part in cinema history.

Not a lot of people know this about me...

I got lost in Wadi Rum and was rescued by the Royal Jordanian Desert Patrol. I don't think I was quite in a life or death situation but I was remarkably calm and quite content that if I was to die there in the desert, there were far worse ways to go. I have looked death in the eye on a number of occasions and so far we have agreed not to take our relationship any further.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Longer than I remember.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

Lost in the annals of time. Possibly via David Piper's nights, the Whoopee Club and Rakehell's Revels? Possibly via Gustav Temple. Maybe through the Fitzrovia Radio Hour. My memory is clouded by cocktail consumption.

What one thing would you recommend to fellow Members and why (cocktail, night out, tailor, watchmaker, public house, etc.)?

The Boot and Flogger in Southwark. It's a Davy's Wine Bar but it feels about as near to an 18th-century Inn as you can get. The only thing it sorely lacks are proper log fires.

Your three chosen dinner party guests from history or fiction and why?

Shakespeare—I work at The Globe and I have a lot of questions for him. The vampire Lestat—he has exceptional taste and, assuming that he can remember episodes of his time through the centuries, could tell us what life (or undeath) was like in the past. I'd have to get in a few bags of blood though. Aphra Behn—playwright, author, spy, libertine. What's not to be fascinated by?

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?

Answer: Artemis Scarheart.

Have you done a Turn yet? If so what was it on, if not what are you planning to do?

First one of 2019 I shall be talking about 1930s formal menswear. I don't consider myself an expert at all and I'm sure we all have wildly conflicting opinions but it's one that I have given at Eltham Palace in the past and I hope will amuse. I may do one in the future about 16th- and 17th-century clothes

Thank you for allowing yourself to be interviewed in the palatial surroundings of the NSC Club House. On behalf of the Members may I respectfully ask you to resign.





CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

A PLEASANTLY DIVERSE collection of Club branded items from Members this month: this page, top to bottom, we have a dog lead and a hotel carpet in Coventry, both from Frances Mitchell, an Art Deco wastepaper basket from Actuarius, the late, great Tommy Cooper from Matthew Howard, some wrapping paper from Charles Tsua, plus the Warmington-on-Sea bell-ringers and the Club's space lab, both from Adrian Prooth. Opposite, top to bottom, a time travel experiment snapped in 1963 from Ivan Debono, some Club budgie-smugglers from Callum Coates, a trinket box from Debono again, a chap on *Homes Under the Hammer* from Meredith Lloyd, a handsome vintage Art Deco cocktail shaker and a BBC reporter courtesy of Artemis Scarheart.





Forthcoming Events



**BOTH OFFICIAL NSC JAUNTS (🚫) AND
THIRD-PARTY WHEEZES WE
THINK YOU MIGHT ENJOY**

FOR THE LATEST developments, see the Events page at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk plus our Facebook page and the web forum.

🚫 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 2nd January
7pm–11pm (lecture around 8pm)
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place,
London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

Night and Day: 1930s Fashion and Photographs

Until 20th January
Tuesdays–Saturdays, 11am–6pm (Thursdays till
8pm), Sundays 11am–5pm
The Fashion and Textile Museum,
83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF

Admission: £9.90 (£8.80 concs, £7 students)

Following the success of 2017's *1920s Jazz Age: Fashion and Photographs*, the museum are following up with this exhibition. As a decade of design, the 1930s saw off the excess of the Jazz Age and ushered in the utilitarianism of World War II. As the flapper grew up, so too did her fashions. The new silhouettes of the 1930s played with the hard-edged chic seen in the Art Deco and Moderne styles, the unexpected as seen in the surrealists and the sensuality of silver screen sirens. The exhibition explores the day and evening styles of the decade, complemented by photographs of the stars who championed them. With fashion as the lens, *Night and Day: 1930s Fashion and Photographs* traverses the great period of social change that was the 1930s.

The Golden Era of Jazz

Every Thursday
7pm
Jamboree, 566 Cable Street, London E1W 3HB
Admission: Free before 8pm, £4 between
8 and 9.30, £5 after that

A weekly night of 1920s jazz and 1930s swing presented by clarinettist Ewan Bleach with various guests.

Tiger Rag

Every Friday
Arcola Bar, Arcola Theatre, 24 Ashwin Street,
Dalston, London E8 3DL
10pm–2.30am



The Black Tie Ballroom Club is serious about dancing and serious about the dress code

Admission: £7 entry after 10pm; dance lessons £10

Live jazz, blues, swing, calypso, Dixieland, ragtime, musette, tango, etc. Try your hand at the beginner lesson in swing, Lindy hop, shag, balboa and Charleston dancing, with no partner or prebooking required. Intermediate lessons 8–9pm and beginner lessons 9–10pm.

Black Tie Ballroom Dance Classes

Every Friday (except, presumably, when the BTBC itself is taking place at the same venue) 6.30–8pm, followed by social dancing till 10.15pm
The Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 6AQ (02073870411)

Admission: £15 for lesson and social dancing or £10 just for the social from Design My Night

From the makers of the Black Tie Ballroom Club (see below), the method of these beginners classes assumes new students have musicality or experience in other dance forms such as Lindy, places the emphasis on moving in time to the music, and aims for 80% of beginner students to confidently and gracefully get around the dancefloor with a partner after the first lesson, and be ready for the improvers class after two lessons.

The Dandy Drinking Club

Saturday 5th January
7–11pm
Mr Fogg's Tavern, 58 St Martin's Lane, London

WC2N 4EA

Admission: Free

Dress: Male dandy attire from the 17th to the mid-20th century

Jonny Haart's Dandy Drinking Club returns for its first outing the new year. Note that both men and women are welcome, but the dress code specifies male dandy clothing.

Die Freche Muse

Saturday 5th January
9.30pm–3.30am
The Old Boys Club, 66 Boleyn Road, London N16 8JG

Admission: £10 via PayPal

Dress: Not too specific, but the old nights were 1920s–1940s

Baron Sanderson revives his defunct club night for one last outing, for the benefit of his daughter, who is now 18 and regrets never having been able to go while he was running the nights. Based on the tradition of Berlin Weimar cabaret the evening features burlesque, singing and Dixieland jazz. Places are strictly limited, so if you are interested enquire via the Facebook event.

Illicit Signals Bletchley

Saturday 5th–Saturday 26th January
8–10pm
COLAB Factory, 74 Long Lane, London SE1 4AU
Admission: £30 from Design My Night

Immersive evening where you must solve puzzles based on the wartime Bletchley Park code-breaking facility, while also juggling dilemmas of whether or not to keep personal secrets. More details at www.designmynight.com/london/whats-on/immersive/illicit-secrets-bletchley.

Wodka Wednesday

Wednesday 9th, 16th and 23rd January
7pm
Jamboree, 27 Three Colt Street, London E14 8HH

Admission: £6 on the door, £4 in advance

Fred Snow and his Bootleg Trio host this regular music night, citing as influences Woody Guthrie, Tom Waits, Marlene Dietrich, David Bowie, 3 Mustaphas 3, Jacques Brel, Agnes Bernelle, Alex Harvey, Queen and Velvet Underground.

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Friday 11th January
Beginners' class from 7pm, main dance from 7.30–11pm
The Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 6AQ (02073870411)
Admission: £15 earlybird from Design My Night, £20 standard or £25 on the door
Dress code: Strictly black tie, evening dress or smart vintage attire

Dance the waltz, quickstep, foxtrot, tango, jive, rumba and Charleston to live music from the Ewan Bleach Quintet and a selection of pre-war records. If you can't yet dance, there's a free ballroom dance lesson for absolute beginners from 7pm to 7.30 pm. Or if you prefer you can just watch. Candlelit tables and chairs for all guests, a balcony area with tables for those who don't choose to dance, and four or five male and female taxi dancers available free of charge for those who do. The venue is dry, but free tea, sparkling water and Coca Cola are provided, and guests may smuggle in their own drinks if they are discreet. Indian vegetarian snacks are



also provided for all our guests at no additional charge.

There is a large wooden dance floor and the venue is located in Fitzroy Square, London W1. Dress code is strictly black tie and evening dress only, and the event usually sells out. Activities include a quickstep bus stop, a snowball waltz and a Paul Jones. There are photos and videos on the facebook page, website and ticket link. Any questions, please phone George Tudor-Hart on 020 8542 1490.

Jinx's Joint

Saturday 12th January
7pm–12.15am
Bounds Green Bowls & Tennis Club, The Clubhouse, Brownlow Road, London N11 2BS
Admission: Not specified

Night of music and dancing to rhythm and blues, doo-wop, rockabilly and rock and roll with resident DJs Mr Jinx and Voodoo Doll, plus guests.

The Candlelight Club

Friday 18th & Saturday 19th January
7pm–12am
A secret central London location
Admission: £25 in advance
Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

A 1920s clandestine speakeasy party in a secret London venue lit by candles, with live jazz bands, cabaret and vintage vinylism.

Just over 100 years to the day since Prohibition passed into US law (it was ratified on 16th January 1919), the Candlelight Club brings the spirit of the speakeasy roaring into 2019. Live music will come from Duncan Hemstock and his mighty All-Stars, with hosting by cabaret cove Champagne Charlie and vintage vinylism from the Bee's Knees. Guests receive an email two days before revealing the secret location and are encouraged

Hear Oscar Wilde reveal all at the Tea House Theatre

to dress in 1920s outfits—so pull on your flapper dress, let the giggle-water flow and get ready to Charleston. More at www.thecandlelightclub.com.

“The closest you'll find to an authentic Jazz Age experience in central London. Its unique ambience, fuelled by hundreds of candles, is truly a scene to behold.” —*Time Out*

Tea with Oscar Wilde

Thursday 24th January
8pm
The Tea House Theatre, 39 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL
Admission: £15 from Eventbrite

A chat show with a difference—join Oscar Wilde (played by Jonathan Goodwin) as he interviews a leading celebrity of the Victorian era, recounts a story or two and invites his audience to get “Caught in the Act”. An evening of comedy, music and audience participation.

Gothic Encounter at Strawberry Hill

Friday 25th January
6–9pm
Strawberry Hill House and Garden, 268 Waldegrave Road, Twickenham TW1 4ST
Admission: £18 in advance

Horace Walpole's house is currently hosting an exhibition that reassembles key treasures from Walpole's own collection. At this special late opening, in addition to viewing the exhibition you'll be able to meet housekeeper Margaret and Walpole himself in a “theatrical Gothic encounter”.

RA Lates: Vienna Cabaret Night

Saturday 26th January
7–11.45pm
The Royal Academy, Burlington House, London W1J 0BD
Admission: £25–40 in advance

A one-off event recreating Vienna's avant garde art scene. In the 1900s, Vienna experienced an unrivalled golden age of art, architecture, design and fashion before the outbreak of the First World War. With two million inhabitants it was the most populous city in Europe and rapidly expanded as immigrants flocked from Austria's rural provinces. Klimt and Schiele each founded new rebellious artistic groups to challenge the conservative values

Seize your chance for a Gothic encounter at Strawberry Hill



of the bourgeoisie, such as the Secession and the New Art Group. Both artists also designed products for the Weiner Werkstatte (Vienna Workshops) who wanted a return to handmade crafts, a reaction to the new industrial and mechanised age. This cultural flourishing extended to the performing arts when the Kabarett Fledermaus opened in 1907, a vibrant underground nightspot where the Viennese avant garde experimented with theatre, poetry and dance performances. The RA's event will feature experimental cabarets, secret café societies, life drawing, film screenings, salons in decadent bourgeois drawing rooms, fashion shows, speakeasy bars and live music until late.

Clerkenwell Vintage Fashion Fair

Sunday 3rd February
11am–5pm
Freemasons Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ
Admission: £5

Some 45 stalls offering vintage clothes, shoes, handbags, hats, gloves, textiles and jewellery from the 1800s to the 1980s. There is also a tea room, alterations booth plus sometimes live entertainment too. More details at www.clerkenwellvintagefashionfair.co.uk.

Ed Marlowe with Bing Crosby from *White Christmas* superimposed. To find out why, see our Club Night report on page 3.

