



# THE SIGNAL

A Community Newsletter for  
KINNERSLEY-SARNESFIELD-LETTON- NORTON CANON - BROBURY  
STAUNTON-ON-WYE-MONNINGTON-ON-WYE-MOORHAMPTON

No. 63

OCTOBER 1987

PRICE 12p

## LOST VILLAGES.

THE infinite variety of the English countryside never palls and a whole lifetime is insufficient to exhaust its peculiar attractions. Who, for instance, has failed to come across, when driving along the byways, the not uncommon sight of a church standing apparently all on its own in the middle of a field with, perhaps, only an adjacent vicarage or manor house for company? There is no village or even hamlet in sight and one wonders why the church was ever built there in the first place, when there is no congregation to fill it. The answer, nine times out of ten, is the same - the church stands on the site of a lost village.

There are many hundreds of such sites in Britain. In some of them, such as Heath in Shropshire, there is only the church itself, standing completely isolated in a field with not even a track or footpath to give access to it. In other cases even the church has gone and there is nothing to indicate that there was ever a settlement on the site, apart from a few mounds and hollows in the fields to mark the locations of cottages and farm buildings. In some cases, such as Preston Wynne in our own county, the church stands on its own in a field but the village is nearly half a mile distant and appears at some time or other to have moved away from its church.

The death of a once thriving village can have been caused by a variety of vicissitudes or even disasters. One of the most common causes was the plague epidemic known as the Black Death in the fourteenth century, which decimated whole communities. The houses and cottages of the victims were left derelict and were very soon plundered for their stone by later builders so that not a trace remained. Another reason for decay was the simple fact that the original purpose for which the village was built had itself ceased to exist.

PLEASE NOTE THAT COPY FOR THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF  
'SIGNAL' SHOULD REACH TRISANNA, STAUNTON-ON-WYE  
(PHONE MOCCAS 517) NOT LATER THAN MONDAY, THE  
12th OCTOBER.

In feudal days villages sprang up around the castle of the local lord for whom the peasants worked and when the castle decayed the village decayed with it.

In some cases the village died because the site was ill-chosen in the first instance. There may have been lack of water, the soil may have been poor or, quite often, the site was indefensible in an era when hostile raids were frequent. Sometimes the village was deliberately destroyed by the local lord, in earlier times so that the land could be used for sheep grazing and in later days because the landowner wished to extend his domains or landscape his park and didn't want a village blocking his view. This sometimes, in the long run, turned out to be an advantage for it often meant that the landowner would build a better village for his tenants than the one he had destroyed. A good example of this is Milton Abbas in Dorset, the very pattern of a well-planned village.

There are many other reasons for lost villages. Maritime settlements could be submerged by the sea due to shifting coastline (there have been at least seven lost in East Yorkshire due to inundation around Spurn Head) and some villages, such as Pudding Norton in Norfolk, decayed because the soil was exhausted. Others, such as Byland in Yorkshire, were removed by the powerful local abbey, and in later years quite a few, particularly in Northumberland and Durham, perished through industrial decay.

As most people know, one of the worst examples was in Northern Scotland where, in the early years of the last century, whole communities were uprooted (and in some instances forced to emigrate) by local landowners who wished to create sheep pastures or deer parks - the notorious Highland Clearances.

In our own time, villages have been drowned beneath reservoirs (such as in the Kielder district in Northumberland and in the Washburn valley in Yorkshire) or have been depopulated to create military training areas, as in the case of Imber on Salisbury Plain.

Another factor causing village decay was variable climate. It is almost impossible to imagine that there was a time when Britain had a far warmer climate than it has today, but it is a fact that during the Norman period from about 1100 to 1300 Britain's weather was almost Mediterranean. This, of course, was the period when most British villages first sprang up, and when the average temperature began to fall, as it did from 1300 onward, they suffered accordingly. The climate was particularly inclement between 1600 and 1700, so much so that this period has become known as the Little Ice Age. Many hundreds of villages perished during this period through waterlogged soil, failed crops and other consequences of deteriorating climate. (It seems very likely that we are experiencing the beginning of another little ice age at the present time as there has been a marked deterioration in our climate since the end of the last war, as all of us are only too well aware.)

There are a fair number of lost village sites in Herefordshire and one of the best examples is Kilpeck of which only the famous Norman church, the castle ruins and an adjacent farmhouse are all that remains of the original

settlement, although there has been some modern development a short distance away. But we have one of the best examples of a lost village in our own area - Brobury, on the north bank of the Wye near Bredwardine.

All that is left of Brobury today is the chancel of the church (now converted into a residence,) one or two farmhouses and the Brobury House estate by Bredwardine bridge. But that the village was quite considerable at one time is evident through the number of traces that remain of the former cottages. Foundations of these are still visible in the tangled undergrowth of the woodlands lining the slopes known as the Scar on the river bank, and there were, only a few years ago, one or two former half-timbered houses of which only the framework remained, but these have since been tastefully restored.

What makes Brobury rather unusual among lost villages is that its decline has taken place within living memory. Many of the older residents in the area can remember the time when the now vanished cottages were inhabited and the village was a thriving community. The cause of Brobury's decline appears to have been, chiefly, lack of employment, a trend which is becoming increasingly prevalent in rural areas as agriculture is mechanised and the drift to the towns continues.

Although research into the sites of lost villages has not so far been carried out in Herefordshire to the extent which it has in some other counties it is fairly certain that the county has a good number of such sites, in most cases marked only by an isolated church or ruins of a church. Some which come immediately to mind include Acton Beauchamp, Avenbury, Dewsall, Grendon Bishop, Hentland, Laysters, Llanrothal, St. Margarets, Turnastone and Wacton, although it is possible that some of these churches may have originally been built to serve private estates and not villages. They are all good examples of what can happen when climatic, economic or social changes upset the established pattern of life.

For those wishing to learn more about lost villages I can recommend 'The Lost Villages of Britain' by Richard Muir, published by Michael Joseph in 1982, a comprehensive, well-illustrated book which deals exhaustively with the subject.

M.B. Collingwood

We continue to overlook the fact that work has become a leisure activity.

Mark Abrams

#### BIRTHDAYS

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY WISHES TO  
KAREN AUSTIN OF NORTON CANON  
WHO IS 18 ON THE 10th OCTOBER.

Norton Canon

5th Oct  
11th "

Bryn Evans  
Hannah Gittins

#### Staunton-on-Wye Endowed Primary School

##### A S S I S T A N T C L E A N E R

required at the above-named school, with effect from 28th September 1987. 7½ hours weekly. Details of duties and salary upon application to the Head Teacher.

Life is very unfair - for which many of us should be deeply grateful.

Oscar Wilde



## WEDDINGS

We send congratulations and best wishes for future happiness to the following newly-weds:

Nicholas Mason of Staunton-on-Wye to Lesley Chillman of Tyberton.

Carole Chant of Staunton-on-Wye to Stephen Smith of Tupsley. Linda Jones of Staunton-on-Wye to Timothy Wood of Hereford.

Michael Stokes of Staunton-on-Wye to Lynne Preece of Madley.

## STAUNTON-ON-WYE LADIES' CLUB

On Thursday, 15th October at 7.30 pm in Staunton-on-Wye village hall, Miss Sue Hubbard, Herefordshire County Archivist, will give an illustrated talk on the history of Staunton and district.

This will be an open meeting to which everyone is cordially invited, and it is certain to be a very entertaining and interesting evening.

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## CHURCH NOTICES

### SERVICES DURING OCTOBER

#### Byford

4th 6.30 pm Harvest Festival  
18th 11 am Morning Prayer  
25th 10 am Family Service

#### Kinnersley

4th 6.20 pm Harvest Festival  
(preacher Canon P. Ross) followed by Harvest Supper at the Old Rectory  
11th 10 am Morning Prayer  
18th 10 am Holy Communion  
25th 10 am Family Service  
28th 10 am Holy Communion

#### Letton

11th 11 am Family Service  
25th 6 pm Evening Prayer

#### Monnington-on-Wye

11th 9.30 am Holy Communion  
18th 6.30 pm Harvest Festival

#### Norton Canon

4th 9 am Holy Communion  
11th 9 am Morning Prayer  
18th 9 am Holy Communion  
25th 9 am Family Service

#### Sarnesfield

11th 10 am Holy Communion  
25th 10 am Morning Prayer

#### Staunton-on-Wye

4th 11 am Holy Communion  
11th 11 am Morning Prayer  
18th 11 am Holy Communion

Cathie Collingwood of Staunton-on-Wye is back at home following hospitalisation after a serious accident. She is making good progress and would like to extend her grateful thanks to the many kind friends who sent their best wishes.



## GARDENING IN OCTOBER

ALREADY we are thinking and planning for Spring 1988, and bulbs which have been bought should be planted as soon as possible together with the bulbs lifted earlier in the year. Daffodils should have been planted in September and prefer a well-drained soil into which humus, especially leaf mould, has been incorporated. Tulips are better planted in October, although planting can continue until December. Dappled shade prolongs bloom life and prevents fading. Sprinkle bone meal, 4 ozs to one square metre to planting area and plant  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 times depth of bulbs. Similar rules apply to most bulbs.

It is not too late to use a selective weedkiller on an established lawn. If worms are a nuisance use a worm killer from the end of September. Continue to scarify the lawn if not completed and aerate and apply a top dressing of Autumn fertiliser.

Lift Summer bedding plants towards the end of October (earlier if the space is needed for bulbs or Spring bedding plants.) Lift and divide herbaceous plants that have become overcrowded, use the young growths from the edges of the plants and discard pieces from the middle. If time is pressing you will have another chance to do this task in the Spring.

Prepare the ground for roses and deciduous trees and shrubs that may be arriving from late October onwards. You can prune roses in Autumn to improve their appearance and to reduce the chance of wind rock. Final pruning can be completed in the Spring. Do not cut off any decorative hips of the shrub roses. Prune rambler roses, prune young growth on Pyracanthus to expose the ripening berries.

If you have a pond, cover with netting to prevent leaves falling into the water and contaminating the pool.

Hedges can be clipped and continue to deadhead dahlias to ensure a continual show of blooms until the first frosts. Plant or move evergreens this month, or leave until next April.

Take hardwood cuttings in October. A good way to increase some of your favourite bushes at no cost. Cuttings in the open ground is a simple method of propagation. Care should be taken to choose a suitable site, sheltered, but away from roots of trees and shrubs and free from perennial weeds. Since the cuttings are best inserted in Autumn to stand through the winter, the place chosen should not be dank or airless and the soil should be well drained, on heavy ground incorporate sand and peat. Open a furrow with a spade so that the face of the furrow is vertical. The depth of the furrow depends on the size of the cutting. Sprinkle a little sharp sand along the bottom of the furrow. Insert the cutting the right way up against the vertical face of the furrow and 3 to 6 inches apart depending upon the vigour of the shrub concerned. The bases of the cutting should be on the sand and one third of the length should project over the top edge of the furrow. Replace the soil and press it down firmly with your foot. Keep free from Summer weeds, water cuttings when weather is dry. Next Autumn your cuttings should be rooted and ready for replanting. Plants which can be propagated in this way include Willows, Common Dogwood, Forsythia, Philadelphus, Aucuba (spotted Laurel,) Deutzia, Ribes, Spirea, Roses. Cuttings should be approximately 12 inches long.

Happy Gardening, — One Green Finger

## THE METAL BOLT CHARITY SCRAMBLE

Did you hear the terrible roar of many motor bikes the other Saturday with a commentary over the public address system and wonder what was going on? It was the members of Hereford Motor Cross Club having a sponsored scramble for Charity at Thyddwr, Staunton-on-Wye.

All the members were sponsored to ride and the money raised by sponsorship and for entrance at the gate is to go to the Orthopaedic Fund at the General Hospital for the purchase of - ORTHOFIX AXIAL FIXATORS!!

What on earth are those? - You may well ask. They are in fact metal pins or bolts which are used to pin broken bones together instead of using the usual plaster of paris cast. They enable the bones to be adjusted as they mend making a better repair job, healing more quickly, with no cumbersome plaster.

Everyone involved with the event hopes you will forgive the noise - it is only a once-a-year event for charity. It is not yet known how much money has been raised but a notice will appear in 'Signal' when all the sponsor money has been collected in. The cost of each fixator is £700 plus, so let's hope it was a very successful day.

It was a funday and many local riders took part, with special races for dads and mechanics to try their hand, and even the St. John's ambulance men, who gave their time free for the event, had 'a go' and raised over £40 in sponsorship on the field. Nicky Andrews of Staunton, (nearly 5 years old) also rode a great lap and collected over £60 towards the total.

The village hall committee organised the barbecue and refreshments and raised £115 towards the hall kitchen improvements fund from which they will be giving a donation towards

the 'Metal Bolts.' The committee would like to thank the Moto Cross Club for giving them the opportunity to raise funds in this way.

Many thanks to all who were involved. It was a great day - even the weather was kind, with just an odd shower of rain which helped lay the dust, and hopefully a large sum was raised towards the purchase of several 'bolts.'

Joan Jenkins

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION Eardisley Branch

The branch is celebrating the 60th anniversary of its inauguration in October and a special Diamond Jubilee dinner will take place at the Curzon Herrick Hall, Eardisley, at 7.30 for 8 pm on Friday, 30th. October with entertainment to follow. Tickets, £6.50 per person, can be obtained from Mr. Cyril Kinsey of Staunton-on-Wye, phone Moccas 435.

The Annual General Meeting of the branch will be held at the New Inn, Eardisley at 8 pm on Wednesday, 4th November.

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## EARLY PRIMROSE

In the beginning of time when the world was young  
There flashed through the trembling air,  
A golden ray from the firey sun  
That touched the earth where the brambles run  
And founded a primrose there.

Frank A. Evans

## FOOTPATHS

Leominster District Council is working towards the setting up of a Community Programme team to survey and repair public rights of way in the district, if possible without causing complications. The Council will be seeking parish help with identifying paths, and parishes which have taken no action in the past are asked to consider this as a request for help so that problems are now created with landowners.

It is felt that as it is their land they should not be expected to act as unpaid park keepers in what is a working countryside. It is hoped that, together, neighbourly progress can be made to reach agreed objectives for the benefit of all.

.....more *foibles*

I do not think that I'm fussy  
But one or two things bother me.  
I have the toilet seat left up  
Or the saucer sat beside the cup,  
The curtains hanging higgledy piggle  
And newspapers left all of a diggle,  
Or if I've bought a nice new book  
And someone's had the nerve to look  
Inside and made it somehow seem  
Rather used and not pristine.  
I like my kitchen knives to be  
Put back in order just for me.  
In others this would surely be  
Irrational eccentricity -  
But eccentric is what I ain't,  
I merely think that I am quaint!

Jill Valentine

## CARE OF THE ELDERLY

Are you interested in paid/voluntary work with the elderly?

Are you caring for an elderly person at home?

If so, you might like to join a free, 6 week introductory course in Kington. The sessions will look at the basic demands of looking after someone older - daily care, health, benefits, outside help etc.

The course will be informal, practical and geared to the needs of those who attend.

The course runs on Fridays from 10.30am - 12.30pm at Lady Hawkins School, Kington. If you have problems in attending, such as transport or caring for a child or relative, let us know - we may be able to help.

Ring Cathy Moon on Eardisley 360 for more details and if you wish to join. Come and meet the organisers informally over coffee and see if the course is for you at 11am on Friday 30 October at Lady Hawkins School.

This course is funded by REPLAN and run by Kington FE Centre, WEA, Marches Project and the Self Help Health Action Project.

## TOURISM

An ever-increasing number of tourists visit Herefordshire each year, and although this creates more jobs it also brings increasing pressure on local amenities.

Leominster District Council feels that the answer is to encourage visitors to travel around the district so that they are spread more widely and, hopefully, help to keep profitable village shops, post offices and pubs.

The Council is at the moment working on various trails with this aim in mind, but if tourists are to be encouraged to visit our countryside they need to have information when they get to it.

The response to the Council's recent request about illustrated signs for towns and villages has so far been rather disappointing, but the request is repeated.

It would be useful to know whether villages have suitable sites - i.e. outside shops or post offices - for tourist information boards which would encourage visitors to stop and, possibly, shop. Those interested are invited to get in touch with the Council's Chief Executive at Grange House, Leominster (phone 2291 or 2951) but at the same time to bear in mind that as resources are limited it may take time.

## CHARACTERS ALL

The elderly Jewish gentleman who used to walk down to Regents' Park when the weather was suitable, and hire two deck chairs - one for himself and the other for his cat. CAT was a most superior creature. He had long, silky white hair and the bluest of blue eyes. He wore a collar and lead of soft white leather

with a bow to match it's eyes and a very supercilious expression - particularly when the hoi polloi stopped to stare at it.

The elderly helper in a market garden wore a beautifully embroidered linen smock and a round felt hat. It must have made all the traditional scarecrows in the county green with envy. During the summer he was apt to accost shoppers he knew by leaning on his extra long handled hoe and grinning from ear to ear until his upper denture slipped, after which he would say 'do you want any lettooses today, my dear?'

The council street cleaner retired and came back after a couple of months. When asked if he was doing holiday relief his reply was, 'I've come back. That other fellow didn't keep my streets clean and I couldn't stand seeing them look like that.'

A. Aldhous

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### THIS DESIRABLE RESIDENCE.....

MOVING house is a traumatic experience which most people undergo at some time or other, sometimes on more than one occasion. It has always been a frustrating business and such modern complications as gazumping, mortgage raising and contract signing delays have only added to the trauma.

Not least of the frustrations is the initial process of scanning the estate agents' advertisements in order to settle on what seems to be a suitable property. Every house advertised appears to be just the sort of thing you have been dreaming about for years, but experience has proved that the advertisements can't always be relied on. Like politicians, estate agents have the habit of indulging in 'double speak' and the advertisements can, not infrequently, have quite a different meaning from what they actually say.

As 'Signal's' policy has always been to assist its readers on all possible occasions we think it might be of help to possible house purchasers if we were to detail some of the favourite phrases used by estate agents with, alongside, what they so often really mean. Here are just a few which come to mind:

Situated in a popular location - on a high-density estate on the wrong (i.e. unfashionable) side of town.

In a highly sought after location - on the right side of town, and therefore highly priced.

Within easy access of local amenities - has a disco on one side and a pub on the other.

Unexpectedly back on the market - the new owner has just discovered dry rot in the roof.

Reduced for quick sale - the owner has just heard that a new motorway is planned to pass by the bottom of the garden and wants to unload the property before anyone else finds out.

Of historic interest - mediaeval, and hasn't been touched since it was built. Probably haunted.

In a mature residential area - an early Victorian estate - drab, depressing and cold.

In a tranquil rural position - on the flight path of low-flying aircraft.

Compactly planned - tiny rooms, cramped, no cupboards.

Interesting contemporary residence - designed by an avant-garde architect. The biggest eyesore for miles around.

Has considerable character - as above.

Requires attention - derelict, but can be saved if several thousands are spent on it.

For renovation - just about falling down.

Period residence - run-down Victorian.

In an elevated position - open to winds from every direction. Icy cold in winter.

Stream runs through grounds - floods regularly every winter.

Executive-type residence - pricey, but a good status symbol.

Adjoining open farmland - enjoys a variety of farmyard smells, particularly in the muck spreading season when the wind's right.

Could be exploited to better advantage - needs gutting completely and redesigning.

Granny flat attached - outhouse suitable for conversion.

In a quiet cul-de-sac - used by motorists to turn their cars.

## ARROWVALE WINE CIRCLE - SOCIAL EVENING

AS Chairman I viewed with some trepidation the prospect of this particular meeting where success depended entirely on the individual contributions by members. It is not everyone who takes kindly to the idea of speaking in public - even though the 'public' on this occasion consisted of friends they have known for a long time. Perhaps the idea of 'making a fool of oneself' in front of people you know is worse than in front of strangers?

In the event all my fears proved groundless. All our eight participants spoke entertainingly about subjects which were of interest to us all. The culminating item (i.e. when, in pairs, we competed by trying to make hats out of newspaper sheets) ensured that the evening ended on a really high note. Thanks to all concerned.

Gareth Evans

## AMNESTY WEEK 4th-11th OCTOBER

TO those of us who are conscious of the torments inflicted upon the innocent in many of the world's awful prisons, it may seem that we are powerless to help. Faced by the daily evidence provided by television, radio and the press, we are tempted to tell ourselves that charity begins at home and that the whole business is too remote.

However, Amnesty does provide us with a method of helping. Since 1962, twentyfive thousand suffering men, women and children have been rescued from their oppressors. With Amnesty, every degree of commitment, whether it be moral support or full-time activity, is appreciated and known to have value.

This work has the permission of The Home Office (very rarely given) to hold house-to-house collections annually. On 4th October leaflets will be posted through the letter-boxes and a collection made on 11th October. Please give generously.

Finally, we do need collectors for the local villages. Please telephone me at Weobley 318370 if you would like to discuss the possibility of helping, or indeed if you have not been visited and do wish to contribute.

M. Jennings

A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you actually look forward to the trip.

We can't all be heroes because someone has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by.

Will Rogers

On being asked to suggest an epitaph for her tomb the American writer and critic Dorothy Parker suggested 'This one's on me'.

It was in a cafe they first met,  
Romeo and Juliet,

It was in a cafe he first got in debt,  
For Romeo'd for what Juliet.

Trapped in a kiosk for a while,

If he were so versatile,

What number would a crocodile?

The louder he talked about honour  
the faster we counted the spoons.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

## and more foibles

1. Lists, all sorts. I love them. I write them, mislay them, retrieve them, add to them, and of course, I always lose them. What bliss! That means I can start all over again!
2. Wherever I go, be it on business or on pleasure, to the bank, to the doctor or the dogs, if there is free literature to be had I must have it and I never throw it away just in case!
3. If my bank balance would stretch to it, I would buy a different electronic gadget every day - just to fool with.
4. I carry a penknife at all times.
5. Coffee after every meal and preferably numerous times in between, strong, black and potentially lethal.
6. Whistling to music, but never the pertinent tune.
7. All my clothes must have numerous pockets, which are invariably bursting with trivia. This is the hardest foible to live with as easy access to the necessities of life i.e. keys, small change, glasses etc. is made almost impossible. ANON.

### Misprints from the press

The Council has decided to use part of the charity donation to buy new wenchers for the park because the existing ones are very delapidated.

Members of the Women's Institute who recently visited York were, in the course of their tour, shown parts of the Minister not usually on view to the public.

Last week we unfortunately described Capt. Algernon Fortescue M.C., D.S.O. as a 'bottle-scarred warrior.' This should, of course, have read 'battle-scarred warrior.'

Miss Smith, the music mistress, gave a talk on 'Moments with the masters.'

Field Marshal Montgomery flies back to front.

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to Saturday 8 am till 7 pm  
Sundays 9 am till 1 pm



# ***A last look at house selling***

(A few more examples carried over from P.9)

The first floor affords outstanding panoramic views - No roof.

Set in unspoiled countryside. - Brambles and bindweed growing through living room floor.

Lively, go-ahead neighbourhood. - Epidemic vandalism and occasional riots.

Garden has been cultivated. - But not since the eighteenth century.

Would make perfect holiday home. - No electricity or phone, water from a stream. Snowed up January to March.

Tastefully modernised. - All inside character obliterated and plastic-stone cladding outside.

Substantial propagation shed. - Sheet of heavy duty plastic tacked to side of woodshed.

Abundance of wildlife. - Woodworm, mice and salmon leaping up the rising damp.

Quaint. - Goodness knows what's holding it up.

Secluded position. - Two miles off a track and surrounded by a bog.

Full scope for central heating. - Needs burning down.

Drainage is to septic tank. - Would suit someone with permanent catarrh.

Enjoys ample sun. - South facing wall has collapsed.

Mature gardens. - Ideal for jungle warfare training.

Within easy reach of the sea. - Teetering on the edge of an eroding cliff.

Extensive grounds. - Boundary disputes with neighbours.

Easily maintained garden. - Half a dozen plant pots in sunless back yard.

A listed building. - Leans dangerously.

Architect designed and constructed. - Contravenes building regulations.

Recent kitchen extension at back. - Contravenes planning regulations.

Well fertilized garden. - Contravenes health regulations.

D.M.

The four stages of man are infancy, childhood, adolescence and obsolescence.

Art Linkletter

No one can have a higher opinion of him than I have - and I think he is a dirty little beast.

W.S.Gilbert

An unwelcome guest is one of the best things going.

These are foul and slanderous allegations. Just you wait until we can get our hands on the alligators.

Trades Union Official

About the time you think you can make ends meet, somebody moves the end.

Herbert Hoover

Living in the past has one thing in its favour - it's cheaper.

Anon