

# Ramblers Gems



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## The Clocks Go back

Don't forget to turn your clock back one hour on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October at 2 am at the end of British Summer Time

An easy way to remember which way the clocks change is to think of the seasons: in spring the clocks 'spring forward', while in autumn they 'fall back'.

British Summer Time, which was initially introduced by Willett, a builder from southeast London, who proposed the idea after growing frustrated with having to cut short his rounds of golf at dusk.

He self-published a pamphlet called Waste of Daylight, which suggested that the clocks would move back 20 minutes each day for several days, to a total of 80 minutes.

The idea was pooh-poohed, but the First World War changed the government's views on the issue. Germany brought in summertime in 1916 so that it could keep munitions factories open longer – and the UK immediately followed suit. Sadly, Willett died in 1915 so never saw his plan in action. In 1940, the nation was put on Double British Summer Time – two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time in the summer and one hour ahead during winter.

Why don't we have BST all year round?

With the promise of longer days and more sunshine, over the years there have been repeated calls for British Summer Time to be made permanent. The argument against are:-

**Scotland:** One of the biggest obstacles to change has come from Scotland, where MPs warned that the sun would not rise until 10am in some northern parts of the country. Alex Salmond once called the campaign an attempt to "plunge Scotland into morning darkness".

**Dangers of darker mornings:** The pro-BST crowd points to the dangers of dark evenings, but those against year-round BST have suggested that children walking to school in the mornings could face higher risks in the dark.

**Benefits for early risers:** Lighter mornings have traditionally been supported by postal workers, the construction industry and farmers. Those living in Scotland voice particular concerns about people having to travel to work in the dark.

Michael C

## Lancashire Witches

by Jim Gradwell

'Tis said they used to fly by night.  
Filling the countryside with fright.  
With broomstick and cat,  
And sugar-loaf hat,  
And weird, blood-curdling screeches;  
The crops thy'd blight, the cattle they'd maim,  
Bringing death and misfortune wherever they came,  
Till villagers shuddered to hear the name  
Of the terrible Lancashire Witches.

But see 'em today when th' Wakes are on,  
When their work's laid by, and they're out for fun;  
They chatter and laugh,  
As the lads they chaff,  
And each eye with roguery twitches;  
Their lithesome figures and neat attire  
Would set the soul of a stone on fire:  
He ne'er had a mother who cannot admire  
The beautiful Lancashire Witches.

The here's to the Witches of Spindle and Loom,  
Our hope in a slump and our pride in a boom:  
Their fingers deft.  
With warp and weft,  
Are the source of all Lancashire's riches;  
Be the skies overcloud or bonnily blue,  
Their pluck and their skill will pull Lancashire through;  
For the heart and sound and the metal rings true  
Of the winsome Lancashire Witches.

*This poem is taken from a book entitled Sentiments and Observations of a Working Dyer an expression in rhyme by Jim Gradwell written in 1926*



Eleanor

## The Winds of Autumn

by Benita Moore

When the winds of autumn murmur  
Down the valley and the dales,  
And the scarlet chestnuts now down low  
Beneath the Autumn gales.  
The hillsides flush with rowan's  
And the crystal streams cascade,  
Bright robins sing out cheerfully  
Amongst each golden glade.  
The elderberries glisten bright  
Like bunches of black gold,  
Bold thrushes search for for sleepy snails  
As the Autumn winds blow cold.  
The first frosts add a sparkle  
To the bracken on the sod,  
And the mellow mists float around the trees  
A blessing for our God.  
Yes, when October comes along  
And we see fair Autumn's face,  
The loveliest of seasons –  
It's a gift we can't replace.

Pesto Cenorr

## At Sunset

By Ellis Nightingale

I'm sitting atop an old stone wall  
That's not as cold as you would think  
And I'm staring at the pink-tinged sky  
And the last of the sun before it sinks

The air is full with the softest chatter,  
It ebbs and flows like a restful sea  
And I can think of nothing better  
Than wasting time so perfectly.

Jane C



## Hollinshead and a Brief History of Time

A story of time that is attached to Hollinshead Hall at Tockholes was once told by an old gentleman who lived in the Tockholes area. After Hollinshead Hall had fallen into disrepair and was in the process of being demolished the workmen discovered on the south west corner of the building, on the second floor a strange room, the corners of which had been rounded off. In this rounded portion were a number of 'slits' or apertures, like the ones that you see in old castles from which archers shot their arrows in defence. These could not have been used for the purpose of defence as they were six feet from the floor level and were about a foot long and two inches wide. They numbered eight or nine and at the time most were filled with old dust and mortar. The old gentleman went on to outline the explanation for these strange features.



The ruins of Hollinshead Hall Tockholes

When Julius Caesar formulated his calendar, he measured the time the sun took to go around the earth was  $365\frac{1}{4}$  and that every fourth year should be a leap year. This calendar continued until the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Galileo discovered the earth travelled around the sun and Pope Gregory, a great astronomer, by careful reckoning found that the actual time the earth took to travel round the sun was in 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes and 10 seconds. He computed that since Caesar time the world had lost 10 days in the reckoning of time. In 1582 most of the countries of Europe adopted this new Gregorian calendar and to bring time up to date they "jumped" 10 days.



The Well House at Hollinshead

England stuck with the old calendar, but in the 1850's as we were doing a vast amount of trade with continental countries this difference in dates was causing no end of confusion. The head of the Hollinshead family at the time was asked to bring forward proof that Britain's time was wrong. So back at Hollinshead Hall he had that room rounded off and the slits made into the wall. He also installed a large pendulum clock, powered by two large stones as weights. The clock was set to keep accurate time with all the main clocks in England. By carefully watching the clock for six years, Hollinshead found that it had lost more than an hour by the sun. The clock was so installed that the sun shone through the "slits" onto its face and used as an accurate sun dial.

Here was the proof that Pope Gregory was right, and Britain at last decided to adopt the Gregorian calendar. It was to be known as the New Style Calendar, for even at this time anything associated with Rome frowned upon. The changeover was a little complicated for by this time England had lost another day. To bring the time in line with other countries they decided to jump 11 days, and at midnight on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1752 the next day became 14<sup>th</sup> September. There are no dates in British history between those dates and the people believed that they had lost 11 day and paraded in all the large towns and cities demanding "Give us back our 11 days"

Michael C



## A Letter from the Cotswolds

It is said that this relatively modest but notable home in the Cotswolds inspired the design of the Royal Pavillion also known as the Brighton Pavillion, the summer home of the Prince of Wales laterally King George IV.

The home to which I refer? Sezincote Manor nestling in the Cotswold countryside not far from Moreton in Marsh. The private drive up to the house is worth the visit alone.

I had a chance to visit the house and garden this summer and can wholeheartedly recommend you put it on a must-see list, just make sure that you also pre-book an escorted guide to the inside of the house, you only visit four rooms but these should not be missed.

It may seem strange to find a Mughal Indian Palace in the North Cotswold countryside but that is Sezincote (pronounced "Seas in coat"), its onion-shaped dome, umbrella-shaped *chhatris* and *chajjas* (*Overhanging roofs*); Mughal gardens, serpent fountains, temples, Shiva lingams and has Nandi bulls statues guarding the estate. The architecture of the estate can best be described as a British re-interpretation of Georgian architecture in classic Mughal forms.

The manor was purchased by Colonel John Cockerell in 1795 and refashioned into the Indian Palace style by his brother, Sir Charles Cockerell who inherited the house following his brother's death in 1798.

The original house was built in the accepted 18th-century Georgian style and constructed using locally quarried sandstone but as a result of his 25 years working in India, Sir Charles was inspired to redesign it in an Indian architectural style. He engaged his architect brother Samuel Pepys Cockerell to re-fashion the house in a Mogul style. (As far as I can discern not related to the other Samuel Pepys)

Walking down the drive to access this Gloucestershire garden, the verdigris onion dome comes into view, a design straight out of India.

The south front, complete with curving orangery, unfurls above an English landscape that has remained unchanged since the mid-19th century.



From the end of the first world war, the house and gardens had been neglected and were in a sorry state until after the Second World War when it was purchased by the current family and restored to beauty.

A natural spring emanates from a temple to the sun god Surya the waters tumbling down through the garden to feed gentle pools, eventually making its way into the Island Pool in the valley bottom, from where it flows gently out into the River Evenlode. Scattered around the gardens are the India-inspired ornaments, temples and statues I previously mentioned, an Indian-styled ornate bridge is adorned with bronze Nandi bulls, these statues are the third iteration as the first and second were worn away by people stroking their backs, take a look over the bridge to see the serpent fountain feeding water back to the stream.

The gardens were originally designed by Humphry Repton who, so I am informed, was the last great English landscape designer of the eighteenth century, often regarded as the successor to Capability Brown; he also sowed the seeds of the more intricate and eclectic styles of gardens build in the 19th century. A quotation from him seems to indicate where he found inspiration.

*"Sources of pleasure in Landscape Gardening: Conformity, Utility, Order, Symmetry, Picturesque Effect, Intricacy, Simplicity, Variety, Novelty, Contrast, Continuity, Association, Grandeur, Appropriation, Animation."*



To my mind, some of these qualities contradict each other, but perhaps that is due to different use of language from then and now.

However, some parts of the garden, those closer to the Orangery, are of more modern design but in keeping with the Indian look. Talking of the Orangery, it is a very pleasant place to sit and contemplate the house and garden with a lovely cake and cup of Assam.

**Michael Mc**

## So spooky

Are you heading off to walk around Pendle Hill this Halloween with the expectation of coming across some supernatural encounter? You may be disappointed as the siting of such phenomenon in this area is rare.

Another area in Lancashire that is credited with the title of having the most haunted house in Britain is Chingle Hall, just off Whittingham Lane between Whittingham and Goosnargh. It is a 13th Century moated Manor House and the oldest remaining brick built residence in Britain.

There are many footpaths around the area so as a rambler you may be able to plan a walk that takes you right past the property. The house and grounds are privately owned and are not open to the public, but a public right of way passes very close by and you should be able to feel a tingle in the spine or a sense of foreboding as you pass by.

Built in 1260 by Adam de Singleton it was the birthplace of the Catholic martyr, St John Wall who was executed at Worcester for his faith. After execution, his head was eventually brought back to Chingle Hall where it was buried.

During the Reformation, Chingle was a Mass Centre and hid many priests and monks resulting in reports of many spectral sightings over the years!

It is said that Cromwell stayed here on the eve of the Battle of Preston in 1648 and at least one Royal sympathiser was captured. There have been a number of reports of the sound of hoof beats together with the rattle of other accoutrements on the lane outside over the years. There have also been reports of a Cavalier mounted on a horse, knocking on the kitchen door or that same Cavalier walking down the corridor above the Great Hall.



Chingle Hall

In the 1920's the Hall was owned by the Longton family. Their son wanted to marry a local girl but the father forbid this which resulted in the son hanging himself from a beam in the barn. The father even refused to cut through the rope when they found the son claiming it was too expensive a piece of rope to waste!! A few years later the new owner Mrs Howarth was pushed off a ladder by invisible hands.

The Longtons had a number of tragedies. Their 16year old daughter suffered a stroke when climbing the stairs. She never fully recovered but just before she died, she said she had seen a Roman Soldier on the stairs. Although this was dismissed, in later years a photographer who was taking shots of a "cold spot" which included a mirror in a corner clearly showing a Roman soldier.

Longtons daughter with her long hair and emitting the strong smell of lavender has been spotted on a number of occasions in the "Priest's Room" and even in 1987 a woman visitor fainted in the Priests Room. She told of seeing the ghost of a girl with long hair. Others didn't see the girl themselves, but all commented on the strong smell of lavender.

Not all spirits are as gentle as these. Eleanor was the daughter of the family living at Chingle Hall at the time who was kept a prisoner for several years in a room which is now a bathroom. Some stories say she was insane.

In 1981 a small dinner party was being held at Chingle Hall when a lady, after a visit to the bathroom, returned shaken and upset. She had been pushed very violently from behind until her face was up against the lattice work of the window resulting in her face being indented with lines from the window lead. This same spirit once propelled a visitor violently across the floor of the Great Hall.

Compared with these ghosts, the monks, the mysterious knocks, door bolts being moved in the night, the sound of chains being dragged across the floor the smell of incense lavender or burning wood these are accepted as a fact of life by present owners of Chingle Hall. So, on your next walk in this area be vigilant. You never know what you might see!

**Glenda B**