

# AMERICANS COMPLETE INVASION OF BRITAIN

Triumph of Almighty Dollar Is

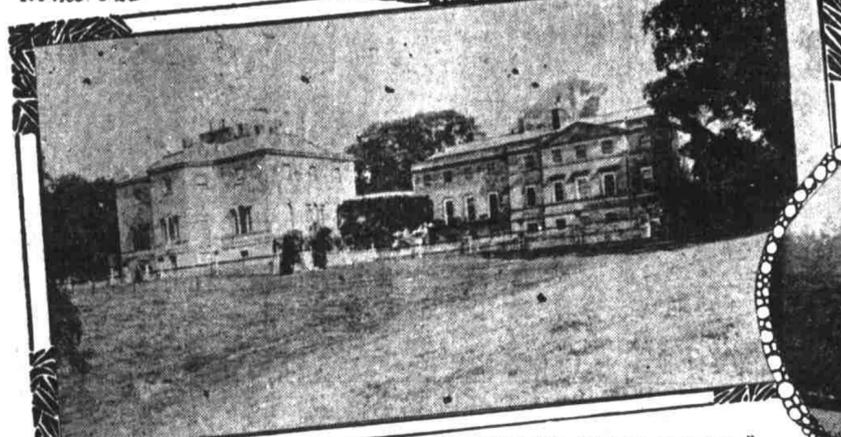
Complete by Purchase of Historic Mansions Along Thames--Nearly a Million Spent by New Owners in Entertaining During This Season Alone--British Nobles Very Sore Over Events



MEDMENHAM ABBEY ON THAMES 100 YEARS OLD



"DOWNE PLACE" ON THE THAMES



"NUNEHAM PARK HOUSE" ON THE THAMES



"AMBERLEY COTTAGE" NEAR TAPLOW

By Hayden Church. (Copyright by Curtis Brown.)

ONDON—"The river has been Americanized." That is the cry that now is going up in England, and an uncommonly doleful one it is. For the "river" referred to is the Thames, and the Thames, or at least the fashionable part of it which lies between Richmond and Oxford, and includes Henley and royal Windsor, ever has been regarded as a sort of English "holy of holies." So now that wealthy Americans practically have taken possession of it lovers of the old order of things are disconsolate, and the trans-Atlantic conquest of England is regarded as complete.

Americans have "invaded" this sacred river district before, of course, but only as "single spies" in the persons of William Waldorf Astor, Mrs. Brown Potter and one or two others. Now, however, the "battalions" have arrived, and this summer, for the first time, the pick of the residences which fringe the banks of the classic stream from the point where it practically vanishes to that at which it becomes merely commercial, are in the hands of wealthy folk from "across the pond." It is the tale of Mayfair, of the English country houses and of the Scottish grouse-moors over again—but the Americanization of its beloved "river" is the bitterest pill which the English fashionable world yet has had to swallow.

papers over the acquisition of the famous "Riversdale" by George Kessler, made lovers of the fashionable "reaches" of the river begin to look about them. And on every side were the latest variety of American "invaders" in possession of the most desirable houses and the most pretentious "bungalows."

Now, with the river season at its height, the thing is complete. I do not propose to give anything like a full list of the Americans who have houses in the vicinity of Maidenhead, of Bourne End, and of Windsor, where the king's palace is situated; it will be sufficient to indicate a few of the best known of them.

To begin with, then, we find "Amberley Cottage," one of the "richest" and renowned of river cottages, in the hands of Tyler Morse, of New York. Mrs. Adair is permanently located at what is now called "Adair Place," near Windsor, while Mrs. Marshall Field and her sister-in-law are at Henley, with Mrs. Glasgow as their near neighbor. The Thaw family are established at "The Hermitage," Bourne End, which has been taken in the name of the Countess of Yarmouth. The Fosters, of Boston, are at "The Arches," Henley, while Mrs. Brown Potter's former home, Bray Lodge, has been sold to the Baroness May de Pallandt, formerly of Cleveland, Ohio. "Downe Place," Ascot, which belongs to Colonel Harford, is occupied by Mrs. Anthony Rexford, and I hear that for one week of the Ascot races the rental of this beautiful house was \$1,500.

Chief of these always will be Cleveley, the great white house set like a pearl among the emerald woods, but, of course, its sale by the Duke of Westminster to William Waldorf Astor is the most ancient of ancient history. As if to accentuate American ascendancy in this year's river season, however, there has been more lavish entertaining at Cleveley recently than at any time since the stately seat passed into transatlantic hands. Young Waldorf Astor and his beautiful Kentucky wife have been having a succession of brilliant house parties there, prominent among the guests having been Mrs. John Jacob Astor and Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson.

Especially considering that many names are left out because the writer has not been able to ascertain definitely from what American cities their respective bearers hail. Sixteen, however, in all conscience, and, as I have said, intensely expatriating to the Britishers who hold that the Thames at least might be left an English possession. After all, however, it is not so much the actual "invasion" of these exclusive reaches of the upper Thames that conservative English folk resent so highly, but the fact that, with the rest, the principal "show places" on the river have fallen into the possession of the enemy.

Will all the other "great show" places along the Thames be Americanized in time? Thames enthusiasts affirm not and point out that Lord Desborough, who owns Taplow Court; Sir George Young, proprietor of the famed Formosa at Cookham, and the Earl of Baginbun, whose Thames seat is called Oakley Court, all are ardent river lovers and would not sell or lease for a trainload of American dollars.

The abbey itself was built a matter of seven hundred years ago and housed for several centuries the Cistercian monks. In the days of the Georges the former monastery had become a residence and was owned by Sir Francis Dashwood, who gathered around him some of the wildest blades of London town. He established a mock order of Franciscans there, of which John Wilkes, of "Wilkes and Liberty" fame, was a member. Sir Francis was the grand prior. The doings of the order became so riotous that it and the abbey finally became known as the Hell Fire club. Though now in American hands it still is known to river habits by this lively name. When royalties and distinguished visitors to the country are taken for a river trip it has been usual to visit Medmenham as a stopping place for refreshments on the way up, the occupants of the old place acting as the hosts.

extensive grounds. Tenant after tenant suddenly threw up the lease and left saying they could not live there. Vacant for years the house was finally ordered to be pulled down. So soon as excavations were made, ten years ago, the workmen came upon grave after grave. The skeletons were all of women. The mystery of Bolney Court was solved. Fifty years previously the owner or tenant, a giant of a man, reputedly crazy, lived there alone in solitary grandeur but for female servants. These servants gradually disappeared and new ones took their places as fast as the old ones left. No local women would take service there and so the girls were recruited from London or distant parts of the country.

Abbeys the last straw. And the capture of Medmenham abbey was the last straw. Until it was announced, recently, that the most historic of all the Thames-side residences had been taken over by Henry Marsh, of New York, it is doubtful if any but the "house agents," as they are called here, realized how complete had become the American domination of the upper Thames. But the sight of the Stars and Stripes floating over the ancient headquarters of the "Hell Fire club," added to the noise that was made in the news-

Principal Show Places Taken. So the list might be continued for a good part of a newspaper column, did it seem desirable. It would include the names of A. H. Mellon, of Pittsburgh, who is established at Sunninghill park; Dr. Abbott Anderson, who has Bray Rise, and J. G. Clarke, who is resident at the Clock house, Maidenhead. Not to mention Pauline Chase, one of the luckiest of American actresses, who is chaperone of Littlecroft, near Maidenhead, and Camille Clifford, who one day will be Lady Aberdeen, and who is entertaining with her husband, at a bungalow just across the river.

King Visited Nuneham Park. Bar Cleveley there is perhaps no finer seat on the banks of the Thames than Nuneham park and here again we find an American chateau, in the person of Mrs. Lewis Harcourt. I am not sure if I am right in saying that this is Mrs. Harcourt's first season as a "river hostess," though Nuneham park's former owner, Sir William Harcourt, died only two years ago, but certainly it had a brilliant beginning when King Edward himself expressed a wish to see the wonders of the seventeenth century mansion and incidentally get better acquainted with its mistress, and passed the week end with the first commissioner of works and his American wife. She, of course, is a daughter of the late Walter Burns, brother-in-law of J. Pierpont Morgan. Incidentally the former New York girl, who

Americanizing Old Palaces. One would not care to bet on it, however, especially with such places as Medmenham Abbey and Bolney Court already under the stars and stripes. The former of these, which is situated just above Temple Lock, can be described without exaggeration as one of the most interesting piles in England. The best known of its recent owners was Herbert Oakley, who, when he died a few years ago, left it to his beautiful young widow. She later married Colonel Sir Douglas Dawson, King Edward's master of ceremonies, who lately has taken up the appointment of controller of the lord chamberlain's department, and it is Sir Douglas who has leased Medmenham Abbey to Mr. Marsh, the New Yorker.

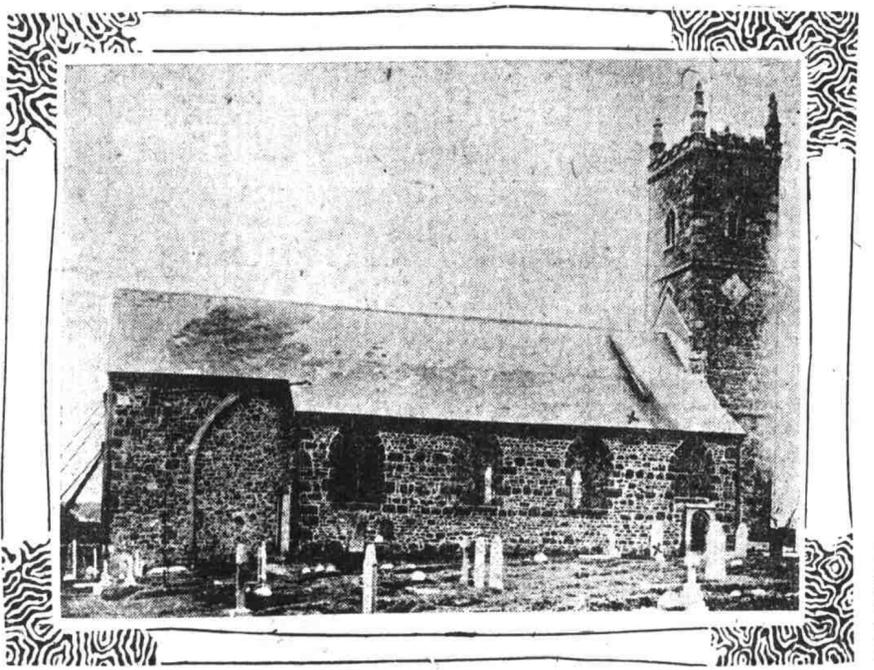
Haunted House of the Thames. Bolney Court, which the American Deacons are occupying this season, since time immemorial has taken premier position as the haunted house par excellence of the river. Of course every old house on the river is haunted or at least has the reputation of possessing a ghost of sorts. In olden days, as now, the river mansions were owned by nobility, and it frequently happened that when some noble wanted to get rid of a friend an invitation was extended to visit the river. Here in the house standing by the murmuring stream the visitor was done to death and the body easily got rid of by throwing it in the river.

Amberley cottage, where Tyler Morse has hoisted the stars and stripes, was built by Earl Russell, prime minister of England, known best to fame as Lord John Russell. It was created Viscount Amberley at the time of the American civil war and so christened his river house. The house, though called a cottage is a big place with a score or more bedrooms and large grounds. It is situated just above Boulter's Lock and opposite to Cleveley Woods.

## AMERICAN PRISONERS BUILT CHURCH Were Among Those Captured in War of 1812

1812 and Confined at Dartmoor--Church Gone to Decay--Money Needed to Repair It--Rector Appeals to Americans to Contribute

ONDON—Most of the American prisoners captured by England in the war of 1812 were confined in what was then a military prison on the bleak moor of Dartmoor, in Devon. Some of those prisoners helped build a church there. On that account the church possesses some claim to interest Americans. It has fallen into decay, and an effort is being made to raise the funds necessary to repair it. The rector, the Rev. George S. Thorpe of Bridestowe, Devon, thinks the fact that American prisoners in England were engaged on the construction of the church may move some Americans to contribute to its restoration. "I don't know whether any of them will feel like 'shelling out' on that account. But there is no doubt that they will be interested in the building of this church, which I have received from Mr. Thorpe.



The Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Dartmoor, Which Was Partly Built by American Prisoners Captured by England in the War of 1812.

Begun by Frenchmen. The manner of its building is probably unparalleled, certainly so in England. It was in the early days of the nineteenth century, when the whole world was convulsed with war and bloodshed and England was solely pressed by its two wars with Napoleon and with America. The history of those wars concerns us only in its relation to the building of this church. Many of the French prisoners of war were removed for safety to a military prison formed at the largest parish in England, of 60,000 acres of moor and heath and streams; but unlike most of all, in its origin.

peace of Paris in 1814 found the church half finished. It was at this juncture that the connection of the church with Americans begins. A month after the peace of Paris, 60 American prisoners of

war confined at Princetown, were allowed to take the place of the released French prisoners and on the same conditions as to pay, etc. These Americans continued to labor on the church until

some time after the war between America and England had been ended by the treaty of Ghent in Belgium, in December 1814. The work of building was actually stopped in April, 1815, when the prisoners were practically completed.

It appears from the records that to American hands were due the roof and higher parts of walls and tower.

Neglect, Fire and Tempest. Though thus unique in its origin, yet bravely for nigh on a hundred years it has borne the rigor of the Dartmoor climate, looking out unceasingly with its dark storm-beaten tower to the graves of those stranger exiles, but escaping not scatheless. Neglect and fire and tempest successively impaired its strength. Fallen into ruin and forsaken by the government in the late fifties, it was adopted by the parish of Lydford and reverently restored in the early sixties, only to feel the devastating influences of fire in 1868. Again restoration it gradually began to crumble and decay. In the hand of the spoiler fell on it in 1899, ostensibly to restore, but in reality to mutilate and mar. Better days have since dawned for the historic building. Little by little the ravages of the restoration are being repaired, the obliterated porch replaced. This donation may be sent to the Rev. George S. Thorpe, M. A., Lydford rector, Bridestowe, Devon, England, and will be gratefully acknowledged by him.

THIS WOMAN WAS NOT A GENIUS--Caroline Prescott Says That Doing the Best One Can Is Better After All Than Being a Genius

By Carolyn Prescott.

THEY say that all geniuses are concealed; that modesty, one of the greatest of the virtues, is lamentably absent in the breasts of the great men and women who have achieved prominence.

Gluck, Meyerbeer, Handel, Beethoven—nearly all musicians—were conceited. If not to say egotistical. Nearly every writer, actor, lecturer and public man, we are told, carries about with him an exaggerated opinion of his own importance.

How refreshing, then, it is to see some one who is perfectly content to be a "violet by the mossy brink," and unassuming in will to be on with the work that life points out, without exclaiming of their greatness to the whole world.

Down in New Orleans not long ago died Madame Begue, 75 years old, who until six months before her death had been a cook—no, not ordinary, either, but a cook.

Just a square from the statue of Jackson in the quaint old picturesque part of New Orleans stands a plain two-story dwelling, which was Madame Begue's home for the 75 years she lived upon this earth. On a corner near her home stand groups of Indians, who sell curios, and who for a copper penny will give a breakfast that had power to call men and women back from foreign lands—breakfast that was an ounce of bread and comfort.

The dining room and kitchen adjoined, and always standing upon the threshold to bid one welcome stood Madame Begue, plainly dressed in black alpaca frock, her lace collar fastened with an old-fashioned gold "breastpin," her black hair plainly parted and braided in a nest coil on the top of her head, a quality of earrings to match the "breast-

lover and many were the stolen meetings of the train beside the river bank. The Lord of Wargrave had other plans for his daughter and had forbidden any meetings. Lady Elizabeth's absence being suspicious, one dark night she was followed, and seen to meet her lover. Her father and brothers rushed the man and killed him before her eyes. The young Elizabeth was married six years later her body was found in the river. Since then her ghost wanders through the grounds seeking to meet the lover of 300 years ago.

Trademen Rejoice. Regarding "Riversdale," the beautiful place at Bourne End which George Kessler recently bought and has renamed "New York Lodge" many details have been published, so they need not be reprinted here. I am told, however, that this, one of the few river places that have been bought outright by Americans, cost the champagne man \$55,000, and he is said to be spending \$100,000 in remodeling, enlarging and furnishing it. It has only 20 bedrooms and is not quite large enough for the new owner's requirements. Incidentally British journalistic pens have been dipped in gall to write of the renaming of "Riversdale," and comment on the announcement that 2,000 electric lights will illuminate the grounds at night.

However, all this means business for British "trademen" by whom, and by the Thames watermen, the invasion of the river by Americans is welcomed, though it be gall and wormwood to the exclusive English set. While the latter are wealthy, and spend money right and left, yet Americans are spending more money. It will easily approach \$100,000, the sum that the newcomers will spend there this season. Each bungalow or house is completely furnished when rented by the season, and this furnishing on the river means a proper equipment of boats such as canoe or punt, skiff and launch. The latter may be a steam, gasoline, electric or motor launch, and every house of decent size has one of all sorts as well as the other boats. The cheapest kind of bungalow costs \$20 per week and the cheapest strand of house is \$100 per week. In a bungalow one needs three indoor servants and one outdoor who attends to the garden, is engineer of the launch and perhaps chauffeur of the motor car. The houses served from half a dozen to two dozen servants or more, depending on their size. This, of course, runs into a lot of money.

Demand for River Homes. The other day I went to see the head of a well-known firm of real estate agents at Maidenhead. They have branches everywhere along the river and handle most of the property so that it is to them that Americans rush if they want a house. It was this firm that sold George Kessler his house, that sold Mrs. Brown Potter's house, secured a tenant for Amberley and practically all the other houses mentioned.

"The invasion of the river by Americans," said this authority, "is sudden. They have come with a rush and have had more requests for river places than are on the market. It is the first season that the Americans have come on the river in such numbers. Just in the middle of the season for we have scores of applications for houses and house-boats from August 1. We are finding it hard to get Americans who have just rented places for the season are so much in love with the gay river life that they have instructed us to buy the houses for them, if possible. Others again have already given us instructions to rent places for them—the same place if possible—next year.

"The Americans will spend an immense amount of money on the river. Many cannot get houses or are taking apartments at the river hotels.

How Money Is Spent. "Roughly I should estimate the money which will be spent this year by Americans here as follows:

Rents	\$ 250,000
Upkeep and living expenses	400,000
Fetes, extra hotels, river excursions	80,000
Spent at hotels, apartments, houseboats	100,000
Outlay of day by day visitors	50,000
Rough total	\$ 860,000

"Should one include what Americans spend at Ascot and at special entertainments and special clothes, the rough figures might go well over the million mark."

Now that glorious Henley Regatta is over, the Americans will be enjoying the August weeks in houseboats. Before Henley the owners of these palatial floating homes would not hear of renting and even now they want an enormous figure.

Beside the hundreds of American families domiciled for the season on the river, there are many more who spend the 2,000 or 3,000, perhaps more, who spend week-ends and weeks at the old-world river inns, or the newer hotels, and who, during their stay on the river, under the hour, and spend the day along the beautiful river stretches.

And this is a picture of Madame Begue.

Her table was not laid with a glittering array of silver and cut glass; there were no softly shaded lights and satiny textured napkins and tablecloths, and liveried waiters and water boys. Madame Begue and her husband waited upon the table themselves, and the room was just large enough to hold 30 persons. And if one wanted to eat breakfast at Madame Begue's, one had to engage a meal two weeks in advance.

The quaint windows were filled with gay flowers, and contained withal, the old-fashioned round table was covered with snow white linen. Heavy delect plates and horn-handled knives and forks, a queer old castor and plated spoons went to make up the table furnishing.

"Nothing very attractive in this," one says. "Very perhaps not, but the breakfast and Madame Begue that formed the attraction. In the old visitors register some of the best-known names in the United States, the owners of which, during their stay in New Orleans, sought Madame Begue's table as a continental.

Every noted actor, lecturer, traveler, politician that has thrilled the country for 40 years past has, at one time or another, had breakfast there—if he could.

Madame Begue has gone, and with her has faded the memory of those breakfasts. This plain, modest little French woman, who laid no claim to being a genius, did the one thing she knew how to do, and did it just as well as she could, so well that people came from hundreds of miles to eat at that plain table in her old-fashioned dining room. If she had been a genius she might also have died famous, but I dare say there are more people who were really and truly grieved to hear of Madame Begue's death than would have been were she a concealed genius.

Doing the best one can, even if it is but to serve the best breakfast in the country, is better, after all, than being a concealed genius.

The National Women's Trade Union league, the promoters of which claim to have over 100,000 workers enrolled in membership, held a convention at New York recently and elected officers. The delegates, also, mapped out work for the coming year and formulated plans for a national convention.

The French unit of horse-power is one-seventh less than the English.