THE ART OF ROBERT SMITH SURTEES;
and its Reflection of Mid-
Victorian England

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by

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION
I

Robert Smith Surtees was one of the few Victorian novelists to come from a manor house. Yet in many ways the life he lived at Hamsterley Hall was more reminiscent of the eighteenth century than the one in which he lived, hunted, and wrote. There is much in Surtees besides Fox-Hunting, but it should be admitted at the outset that Hunting is his main interest and glory. When one realizes that his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather all kept foxhounds, it is not surprising to find him escaping to Fox-Hunting from law, politics, and society in his novels as he did in life. The burning questions of the day which plagued his fellow novelists seldom appear in his works. The politicians who played so prominent a part in Disraeli and Trollope receive scant notice from Surtees. Similarly the problems posed by the poor and the evils caused by the growing numbers of factories were left to George Eliot and Charles Kingsley. There is no need to look for Oliver Twist pathetically crying for more in Surtees. About as close as one will come to a consciousness of poverty in Surtees is an offhand comment such as that concerning Job Tod, Captain Shabbyhounde's groom.

The poor creature did not look as if he had had a good meal for a month, and most likely he had not; for the Captain gave him but twelve shillings a week, and he had himself, a wife, and three small children to keep out of it. How meek,
passive poverty is imposed upon in this world!


Or, perhaps the isolated and casual bit of observation in Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, and even there the reflection is connected with Fox-Hunting.

The Strand was kept alive by a few slip-shod housemaids, on their marrow-bones, washing the doorsteps or ogling the neighboring pot-boy on his morning errand for the pewters. Now and then a crazy jarvey passed slowly by, while a hurrying mail, with a drowsy driver and sleeping guard, rattled by, to deliver their cargo at the postoffice. Here and there appeared one of those beings, who, like the owl, hide themselves by day and are visible only in the dusk. Many of them appeared to belong to the other world. Poor, puny, ragged, sickly-looking creatures, that seemed as though they had been suckled and reared with gin. "How different," thought the Yorkshireman to himself, "to the fine, stout, active labourer one meets at an early hour on a hunting morning in the country!"

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Similarly he might make a brief comment on a Squeers-like character but, unlike Dickens in Nicholas Nickleby, he was not interested in exposing the evils of the educational system in his novels, but merely in introducing one of his sharply etched pompous caricatures trying vainly to
make a speech against incessant interruptions from James Pigg.

Slooman being on the best of terms with himself, coughed and hemmed and stroked his chin, and looked complacently around, as much as to say, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips let no dog bark." He was a little, bristly-headed, badger-pyed, pedantic, radical schoolmaster, who formed his own glebe, and managed matters somewhat in the style of the celebrated Wackford Squeers, frequently recreating the boys with a little work on the farm.


Like Anthony Trollope, he had a keen love and appreciation for country life and Fox-Hunting, but his field is much more limited. You won't find the politics or pictures of clergymen in Surtees. Occasionally there will be a pastor out hunting, such as Parson Goodman of the Goose and Dumpling Hunt, but even then there won't be the stress that


was laid on the Fox-Hunting of Rev. Mark Robarts in Trollope's *Framley Parsonage* for example.

An obvious difference with his fellow novelists is his complete lack of the typical Victorian heroine. There is not only none to compare to the sweet, unreal and doll-like
Dora Spenlow of Dickens, but in the whole gallery of Surtees' women there is only one, Belinda Jorrocks, who could be termed a good, sympathetic, lovable girl. This is especially striking if one remembers that Trollope in his Barsetshire series alone created five sweet, lovable, and wholesome girls in Mary Thorne, Lucy Robarts, Lily Dale, Grace Crawley, and Eleanor Harding.

Surtees was an observer, a sardonic one, whose main interest was in recording, in exaggerated form, the life of his class. It was not a pretty world, especially to the Victorian reader with strict ideas about art being moral and uplifting. In 1913 Kipling described Frank Midmore's first shock upon looking into Surtees, and there must have been a similar reaction for many non-sporting Victorians who happened to read him.

It was a foul world into which he peeped for the first time - a heavy-eating, hard-drinking hell of horsecopers, swindlers, matchmaking mothers, economically dependent virgins selling themselves blushingly for cash and lands. Jews, tradesmen, and an ill-considered spawn of Dickens-and-horse-dung characters ---5.


All in all, Surtees's books were strange ones to find among the namby-pamby and moral volumes of his day. One must remember that at this time Dickens and Thackeray might
chafe at the restrictions placed on writing about the relationships between the sexes, but they observed them nevertheless. Anthony Trollope, realist though he was, has a complacent passage in his Autobiography which is a revealing indication of the tone and standards of the period.

The novelist, if he have a conscience, must preach his sermons with the same purpose as the clergyman, and must have his own system of ethics. If he can do this efficiently, if he can make virtue alluring and vice ugly, while he charms his readers instead of wearying them, then I think Mr. Carlyle need not call him distressed, nor talk of that long ear of fiction, nor question whether he be or not the most foolish of existing mortals.

I think that many have done so; so many that we English novelists may boast as a class that such has been the general result of our own work. Looking back to the past generation, I may say with certainty that such was the operation of the novels of Miss Edgeworth, Miss Austen, and Walter Scott. Coming down to my own times, I find such to have been the teaching of Thackeray, of Dickens, and of George Eliot. Speaking, as I shall speak to anyone who may read these words, with that absence of self-personality which the dead may claim, I will boast that such has been the result of my own writing. Can anyone by search through the works of the six great English novelists I have named, find a scene, a passage, or a word that would teach a girl to be immodest, or a man to be dishonest?


What a rebel was Surtees when seen against such a background. John Jorrocks was cut from different cloth. A different note is seen clearly when this married man lands in France.

"How the people are swarming down to see us!" he exclaimed, "I see such a load of
petticoats - glad Mrs. Jorrocks an't with us; may have some fun here, I guess. Dear me, wot lovely women! wot ankles! beat the English, hollow - would give something to be a single man!"\(^7\)

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His sojourn in France with the Countess Benvolio leaves him a wiser and poorer man. His later exploits in Hillingdon Hall with Mrs. Flather and Mrs. Trotter were certainly outside the bounds of propriety. Surtees is being far more blunt and plain-spoken, for example, than Thackeray ever was regarding Lord Steyne and Becky Sharpe Crawley. Their relationship was handled in such a circumspect manner that no one could complain. On the other hand, Surtees states the situation plainly with Jorrocks and Mrs. Flather.

"It's hard to resist such a hen angel as you," said Mr. Jorrocks, getting up and bolting the door; but as we dare say our readers have had enough of this dialogue, we will not accompany the parties any further.\(^8\)

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Mr. Jorrocks would never receive such punishment as the thrashing the wronged husband, Rawdon Crawley, gave Lord Steyne, and if he had been caught his transgression would have been handled as a humourous situation rather than as moral retribution. The difference can be seen in *Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities* when Mrs. Jorrocks confronts
her husband with the evidence of an amorous peccadillo. A card was found in his pocket - "a delicate pale pink, with blue borders, and gilt edge - and read - we would fain put it all in dashes and asterisks - 'Miss Juliana Granville, John Street, Waterloo Road.' " In this

\[9\] Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. op. cit. p. 67.

instance, the Yorkshireman saw a storm was brewing and left, but he had "not taken above three or four turns up and down the coffee-room" before Jorrocks came along and the two went with the Surrey Stag Hounds as if nothing had happened.

To cite another case, despite the fact that Anthony Steel refers to "what may or may not have been a perfectly respectable alliance", it is unlikely that any careful


reader will have any doubts regarding the respectability of the affair between Facey Romford and Mrs. Sponge in Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds.
II

Probably the best book to begin with in sampling Surtees is the one with which Kipling's Frank Midmore evidently began, Handley Cross, or Mr. Jorrocks's Hunt. While certain purists will argue that this is not as good a book as either Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour or Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds (and technically speaking they are right), the fact that Handley Cross has Surtees's outstanding creations, the cockney Sportsman, John Jorrocks, and his Sancho Panza, James Pigg, is enough to place it first. It is unfortunate that to many, Jorrocks (and indeed Surtees) is known only by a cursory acquaintanceship with Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. This was published in book form in 1838 from sketches which had appeared, beginning in 1831, in the New Sporting Magazine. These sketches show the promise that is fulfilled in Handley Cross, but in them, although some of the famous Jorrocks sayings appear, he is not the consistent robust cockney squire he later becomes. In fact, he is as far below his later self as Mr. Pickwick is in the first uninspired pages of Pickwick Papers, which were probably influenced by these early sporting sketches of Surtees. Handley Cross, published in 1843, makes Jorrocks a master of Fox-Hounds, gives him a perfect complement in his northern huntsman, James Pigg, satirizes a fashionable watering place, and is crowded with fine caricatures. However, it is mainly a book
about Fox-Hunting, and there is the happy circumstance of Surtees writing about the things he liked and knew best, coupled with the gusto of his most enthusiastic and successful character. But to discuss Handley Cross is to discuss Jorrocks and he will be discussed in detail on a later page.

Hillingdon Hall, published in 1845, carries on the story of Jorrocks in his old age, although he denied this in his flirtation with Mrs. Trotter.

"Doesn't know nothing about old 'uns," replied Mr. Jorrocks. "Never mean to be old - stick where I am - jest the right age - wiggour blended with discretion." 11

11
Surtees, Hillingdon Hall. op. cit., p. 201.

This novel has been deprecated or ignored by practically all critics, which is unfortunate and hardly just. Certainly it is true that in a novel not noted for either plot or construction, Hillingdon Hall undoubtedly contains more of these deficiencies than his other novels. Likewise, the lack of Fox-Hunting has troubled many devotees of Surtees, but it does have Jorrocks and James Pigg as well as Wopstraw, Bowker and Heavyside (who roars exclusively in capitals). The satire on the Anti-Corn-Laws is well done, although Surtees's interest in agricultural development becomes rather boring. The main interest is in the characters and one is glad to see Pigg marry Batsey just in time. Our old
cockney squire is rather a failure at farming but has a surprising and unplanned rise to first Justice of the Peace and later Member of Parliament.

This novel was followed by the two lesser books, The Analysis of the Hunting Field, published in 1846, and Hawbuck Grange, published in 1847. Surtees describes the first of these adequately in his Preface.

The work opens with a meet of foxhounds, for the purpose of introducing the characters as they generally arrive: master and servants first, black coats next, red after them, and so on; but in its progress the season is supposed to advance until the work ultimately forms a "souvenir" of that of 1845-6, one that all sportsmen will admit was eminently deserving of the compliment.

It was, perhaps, the best season of modern times, and its lustre will be increased by the unfavourable one that followed. 12

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In this series of sketches, Surtees lives up to popular opinion, and up to his reputation with many who think of his writing only of Fox-Hunting. He describes the various characters, the Master, Huntsman, Whipper-in, groom, etc., and while his observation is accurate and his satire sharp, this technical book was not well received. However, even to a layman, there is interest in clear exposition of the fine points of a sport. Then, too, Surtees included a vivid, if unsympathetic, portrait of Colonel Codshead with
his eternal "You don't know of a horse that will suit me, do you?"

13


Captain Shabbyhundes, the gentleman horse-dealer, also is as well drawn as any of Surtees's caricatures, and shows Surtees's gift for bringing to life his minor characters in a few incisive passages.

Captain Shabbyhundes has a taste for horses, but it is not the taste of a sportsman - a taste that amounts almost to affection for an animal that pleases him; for Captain Shabbyhundes would sell anything he has - his own father if he could get anything for him - and his taste amounts to a sort of enterprising dabbling in an interesting article that brings him in money. 14

14

Surtees, The Analysis of the Hunting Field, op. cit., p. 196

Hawbuck Grange met with similar success the following year, and indeed, is hardly more than a fictional account of a hunting season. Surtees indulges in his second love, Hare-Hunting, and his account of Mr. Trumper's Goose and Dumpling Hunt is especially good.

"Hare-hunting certainly ought not to be made a business of. It should just be taken when one's in the humour." Nevertheless, we don't subscribe to Beckford's doctrine - that a ride to the sixth milestone and back would be as good as hare-hunting; for we think, taken
quietly, that hare-hunting is the next best spot to fox-hunting.\footnote{15}

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15
Suttees, Hawbuck Grange. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 10.
\end{flushright}

Thomas Scott is one of Suttees's "nice" people, and indeed this enthusiastic old squire has a quiet charm. Like Jorrocks, Sponge, Romford, and Scamperdale, he had the keen love for the sport itself that Suttees demanded.

"Tallyho!" exclaimed Tom Scott. "I declare there he is, bounding out of yon thick patch of gorse, straggling up to the hill-top; and banging down the side like a rocket. Tallyho! Tallyho! Confounded old fool that I am! I declare I am just as keen about seeing him as I was the first time out, and that's a quarter of a century ago," added our friend to himself.\footnote{16}

\begin{flushright}
16
\end{flushright}

It is from this honest squire that we get one of Suttees's rare references to politics in answer to Lord Lazytongs's question as to whether he is a Tory.

"Dash'd if I know what I am," said Tom, "it makes precious little odds what men like myself are. I was a Tory, or Conservative, or whatever you call it, and joined the gomemouches in abusing the Whigs and hooring Sir Robert; but I've thrown up politics, and devote myself to draining, and d--ning him instead."\footnote{17}

\begin{flushright}
17
Suttees, Hawbuck Grange. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 68.
\end{flushright}

There is a rather inept attempt at romance, with Tom Scott periodically being discouraged with hunting and thinking he'll marry his lady love, Lydia Clifton. However, she
never makes an appearance (except in a letter), and at the end she is to be married to her cousin, and presumably Tom Scott will remain with his first love, Fox-Hunting. Possibly Surtees was fonder of Scott than of Sponge or Romford who were summarily disposed of by marriage at the end of their respective books.

Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour appeared in book form with illustrations by John Leech in 1853. This was Surtees's first popular success, and this satiric record of Soapey Sponge during one hunting season is certainly one of the author's three best books. The modern reader will hardly accept the Preface without at least one grain of salt.

The Author gladly avails himself of the convenience of a Preface for stating that it will be seen at the close of the work why he makes such a characterless character as Mr. Sponge the hero of his tale. He will be glad if it serves to put the rising generation on their guard against specious, promiscuous acquaintance, and trains them on to the noble sport of hunting, to the exclusion of its mercenary, illegitimate offshoots. 18


This is a little too much like the moral which the Victorian public demanded, and, while Sponge is no gentleman but a cunning and conscienceless horse-coper, he is a sympathetic rascal (more than any of the people he swindled), he has a genuine love of the sport of Fox-Hunting, and in
the end falls in love with Lucy Glitters, a lady (using
the term broadly) of no property or means. It might be
mentioned that Facey Romford makes his appearance in this
work, and, in fact, is the only one who gets the better
of Sponge. However, even this is questionable, because
Soapey omitted paying his cardplaying debt of seven pounds
ten shillings.

"Well, dash my buttons!" groaned Sponge, as
the discordant noise shot through his aching
head, "but this is the worst spec I ever made
in my life. Fed on pork, fluted deaf, bit with
bugs, and robbed at cards - fairly, downrightly
robbed. Never was a more reg'ler plant put on
a man. Thank goodness, however, I haven't paid
him, never will, either. Such a confounded, dis-
reputable scoundrel deserves to be punished -
big, bad, black-guard-looking fellow! Believe
he's nothing but a great poaching blackleg. Hasn't
the faintest outline of a gentleman about him -
not the slightest particle - not the remotest
glimmerin'." 19

19
Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit.,

Young Tom Hall ran serially in the New Monthly for
several months but was withdrawn (because of an argument
between editor and publisher) and was never finished. It
was not republished until 1926. Anthony Steel has pointed

20
Steel, Jorrocks's England. op. cit., p. 32.

out that Young Tom Hall contains much of the raw material
and many embryonic characters of two later novels, Ask Mamma
and Plain or Ringlets?

These two novels appeared in the late fifties (the interval possibly being caused by the Crimean War), Ask Mamma in 1857-8 and Plain or Ringlets? in 1859-60. By this time, although Surtees was not popular to the extent that Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, and Trollope were, he had a following mainly assured by Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour and the later editions of Handley Cross.

His Preface to Ask Mamma should be noted not only for the light it throws on the composition and purpose of that novel, but also for the insight it gives into the work of Surtees in general.

It may be a recommendation to the lover of light literature to be told that the following story does not involve the complication of a plot. It is a mere continuous narrative of an almost every day exaggeration, interspersed with sporting scenes and excellent illustrations by Leech. 21


The hero of Ask Mamma is not as interesting as one expects from Surtees. Billy Pringle, "the richest commoner in England," loves the clothes and show of the Hunt more than the sport (which offers Surtees fertile ground for satire), but he never comes alive as minor characters such as Sir Moses Mainchance or Major Yammerton do. However, it is interesting to note in Siegfried Sassoon's Memoirs of
a Fox-Hunting Man, Stephen Colwood and George Sherston were so thoroughly conversant with the works of Surtees that they used a jargon drawn largely from characters in his novels, and in such banter Sherston was referred to as "the richest commoner in England".

In our Surtees obsession we went so far that we almost identified ourselves with certain characters on appropriate occasions. One favorite role which Stephen facetiously imposed on me was that of a young gentleman named Billy Pringle who, in the novel which he adorns, is reputed to be very rich. My £500 a year was thus magnified to an imaginary £10,000 and he never wearied of referring to me as "the richest commoner in England". The stress was laid on my great wealth and we never troubled to remember that the Mr. Pringle of the novel was a gandified muff and "only half a gentleman". 22


In addition to the characters, there is a satire on farming and good and bad landlords, excellent accounts of both Fox and Hare Hunting, and that ever present Victorian passion of matrimonial match-making.

Plain or Ringlets? is the story of the contest between the flashy Mr. Bunting and the banker's plain son, Jasper Goldspink, for the hand of Rosa McDermott. The title reflects this conflict (Bunting preferred Rosa with her hair worn fashionably plain while Goldspink preferred her hair in ringlets) as well as indicating Surtees's awareness of women's fashions in reflecting correct popular
styles. It must be admitted that these courtships grow a little dull, and although the social historian may value the good picture of the fashionable watering-resort, Roseberry Rocks, many will deplore the fact that over a third of the book passes before Hunting arrives on the scene.

Anthony Steel, mainly interested in the picture of the period presented, is hardly fair.

It [Plain or Ringlets?] contains, be it noted, one "good" character in Jovey Jessop, the perfect master of hounds - and very duli he is. Apart from him the book is interesting. 23

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23

Steel, Jorrocks's England. op. cit., p. 35.

Jovey Jessop is not the caricature M.F.H. as, say, John Jorrocks, Lord Scamperdale, or Facey Romford, but he is a well-drawn sportsman. One wonders how Anthony Steel could make such an arbitrary statement if he remembered Jessop's visit to the doctor, Davy Whitlow (one of Surtees's admirable, vivid characters who appears but briefly in one chapter), and Jessop's subsequent acquisition of Thomas Boyston to take care of his drinking for him. As a result, Boyston came to be known as "the Jug".

It was not that Mr. Jessop cared about wine, but he cared about company, and he presently hit upon an expedient for having
the latter without the inconvenience of
the former. 24

Robert Smith Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? London:
New York (Eyre and Spottiswoode: Charles Scribner's Sons,
1929) p. 312.

Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, published in 1865, is one
of the few instances of a posthumous novel (neither the
text nor illustrations received the approval of Surtees)
which, if it is not the author's best novel, at least con-
tains some of his best work. Certainly, avoiding the arbi-
trary selection of one "best" novel, there can be no
disagreement about Handley Cross, Mr. Sponge's Sporting
Tour, and Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds being Surtees's three
best works.

This last is the best-constructed novel Surtees wrote,
and if the incomparable Jorrocks is excluded, Facey Romford
can hold his own with any of the famous caricatures and
grotesques created by Surtees. The story of Facey, dis-
appointed in expectations of wealth, becoming an M.F.H.,
living in grand style in Beldon Hall, and trying to marry
an heiress is never boring and moves swiftly and convinc-
ingly. There are fine accounts of Hunting because Facey, what-
ever his faults, is a keen sportsman, and possibly is Surtees's
best huntsman. Facey belonged to the intuitive school of
which there is an excellent example in the run from Winstable
Wood in Doubleimupshire.

Some men are good at finding foxes and bad at hunting them, others are bad at finding, and good at hunting them; while others again are good at neither operation. Mr. Facey Romford combined both qualities, he could find as well as hunt. He had an intuitive knowledge of the nature and habits of the animal, and seemed to say to himself as he approached a cover - his little pig eyes raking it in all directions - "Now, Francis Romford, my beloved friend, if you were a fox, where would you lie? Would you choose the east side by the road, with the chance of intrusion from every stray cur and stick-stealing besom-maker; or would you take the west, where it is quieter with worse lying; or would you mount halfway up the hill where there is a sunny sand bank to bask upon, with a nice close gorse in the rear?" and whichever part of a cover Facey fancied, there generally was to be found the fox. Sometimes he would whip them out of places that nobody ever thought of trying, straggling bushes, briary banks, angular nooks - quarters that offered the benefit of seclusion without attracting notoriety by their size. "How can you be sure he's not there," Facey would say, "if you don't try?" Not that he went with the pack, and the posse comitatus at his heels, but he sent Swig or Chowey or some one to whip the place in passing. He never gave a keeper a chance of saying that he drew over his foxes, or left them behind. 25


There is also included Surtees's fullest account of a Stag-Hunt. The story of "Benicia Boy" and his master, Mr. Stotfold, while told at greater length than the Stag-Hunt in Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, indicates that, if possible, Surtees's disapproval of Stag-Hunting increased as he grew older.
In addition to the Hunting, there are many sharply etched dances, dinners, and parties, and the usual matrimony-inclined mothers and daughters.

The working alliance between Romford and Mrs. Sponge, already mentioned, will be discussed more fully in a later section.
SECTION II

SURTEES'S TECHNIQUE AS A NOVELIST
It is important to remember that Surtees wrote in an era when the novel was hardly considered a legitimate art form, and the sporting novel was regarded as having even less pretensions. It is not too difficult to see why his early sketches of sporting adventures and the hunting field and even his later endeavors at novels have disappointed contemporary critics familiar with the self-conscious art and preoccupation of form found in practically any modern novelist.

Actually, of course, it must be kept in mind that there is a surprising difference between the early sketches on John Jorrocks which ran in the New Sporting Magazine in 1831, and his last novel, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, published in 1865. The early Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities lacks continuity in the isolated adventures and situations as well as consistency in the characters themselves.

Jorrocks himself furnishes the best example of inconsistency in characterization. His behavior upon meeting his friend and guest, the Yorkshireman, in Paris is outrageous and not convincing.

"How now?" roared Mr. Jorrocks, with rage and astonishment. "How now! ye young scaramouche, vot do you mean by insulting a gentleman sportsman in broad daylight, in the presence of a lady of quality? By Jingo," added he, his eyes sparkling with rage, "if you are not off before I can say 'dumpling', I'll run you through the gizzard and give your miserable carcass to the dogs", suitting the action to the word, and groping under his clock for the hilt of his sword. - A
crowd collected, and the Yorkshireman, perceiving symptoms of a scene, slunk out of the melee, and Mr. Jorrocks, after an indignant shake or two of his feathers and curl of his mustachios, pursued his course up the gardens. 26

26 Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. op. cit. p. 174.

This is not the way the John Jorrocks of Handley Cross would act, and indeed is not in line with his character as summed up in the earlier sketch, Surrey Shooting - Mr. Jorrocks in Trouble.

Our readers are now becoming pretty familiar with our principal hero, Mr. Jorrocks, and we hope he improves on acquaintance. Our fox-hunting friends, we are sure, will allow him to be an enthusiastic member of the brotherhood, and though we do not profess to put him in competition with Musters, Osbaldiston, or any of those sort of men, we yet mean to say that had his lot been cast in the country instead of behind a counter, his keenness would have rendered him as conspicuous - if not as scientific - as the best of them.

For a cockney sportsman, however, he is a very excellent fellow - frank, hearty, open, generous, and hospitable. 27

27 Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, op. cit. p. 42.

The last sentence phrases Jorrocks admirably and truly. That is the real Jorrocks who later moved with such consistent vulgarity and gusto through Handley Cross as to gain a permanent niche in literary fame.
Similarly the Jorrocks of the *Jaunts and Jollities* who complained to the Yorkshireman that he had just been outsmarted at the racetrack by his friend the Baron does not exhibit the horse-sense and cockney care of his money which form an integral part of his character in *Handley Cross*.

"There's that beggarly Baron as we mat at Newmarket, has just diddled me out of four naps and a half, by getting me to back 'osses that he said were certain to win, and I really don't know how we are to make 'tongue and buckle' meet, as the coachmen say. Somehow or other they are far too sharp for me. Cards, dominoes, dice, backgammon, and racing, all one - they invariably beat me, and I declare I haven't as much pewter as will coach me to Calais."

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The later, hard-headed Jorrocks is exemplified by his caution and practicality in his reply to the invitation of Miserrimus Doleful to be M.F.H. of Handley Cross Spa.

"I have no manner of doubt at all, that I'm fully qualified for the mastership of the "Andley Cross fox-hounds, or any other - 'unting has been my 'obby ever since I could keep an 'oss, and long before - a southerly wind and a cloudy sky are my delight - no music like the melody of 'ounds. But enough of the rhapsodies, let us come to the melodies - the E.S.D. in fact. Wot will it cost? In course it's a subscription pack - then say how many paying subscribers have you? Wot is the nett amount of their subscriptions - how many couple of 'ounds have you? Are they steady? Are they musical? How many days a week do you want your country 'unted? Is stoppin' expensive?
What 'un a country is it to ride over? Stiff, light, or middlin', or what? Enormous, endless woodlands without rides, stiff wales, with small enclosures and unreasonable raspers amid masses of plough; or pleasant copse-like covers, with roomy grass enclosures to reward the adventurous leaper with a gallop? Is it, in short, a country where a man can see 'ounds without zactly ridin' to tread on their tails? Are your covers wide of your kennel? I never heard of your 'ounds before - wot stablin' have you? Is 'ay and corn costly? In course you'll have your stock of meal by you? Are there any cover rents to pay - and if so, who pays them? How are you off for foxes? Are they stout and wild, and like to take a deal o' killin', or jest a middlin' sort of hanimal that one may look to who-hoop-in pretty often? Write me fully - fairly- freely-frankly, in fact, and believe me to remain, gentlemen, all your's to serve."

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However, Handley Cross was written with a surer hand than Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, and certainly John Jorrocks is a masterfully drawn and consistently conceived character throughout Handley Cross and Hillingdon Hall. In the same vein it should be indicated that Sponge and Facey Romford are handled with the same artistic integrity and are permitted never to step out of character in any of their appearances.

Mr. Sponge may not be quite a gentleman, but he is certainly true to his standards, such as they are, and there is a sense of rightness about all his action.
His first major swindle of Mr. Waffles of two hundred and fifty pounds was so easy, that Sponge was vexed he had not cheated him out of more money. His graphic comment is admirable and quite revealing.

"Confound it!" exclaimed Sponge. "I don't do myself justice! I'm too much of a gentleman! I should have had five 'hundred - such an ass as Waffles deserves to be done!"

30
Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. I, p. 32.

His cool effrontery in remaining as an unwelcome guest in various country houses, and never leaving until he had another free billet was all in keeping. He was a sportsman and would have his fox-hunting regardless. Even the scene where he falls in love with Lucy Glitters after a good run ending in a kill is completely convincing.

Sponge was never so happy in his life. He could have stood on his head, or been guilty of any sort of extravagance, short of wasting his money. 31

31
Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. II, p. 546.

Indeed, Surtees's ability to create characters who live and are memorable is perhaps his outstanding gift as a writer. Wingfield-Stratford in his penetrating Victorian Tragedy has indicated the great number of well-known living eccentrics and their influence in England in the early nineteenth century. Surtees, with his observant and satiric
eye, was the man to make such people live and breathe on paper. Of course, there should be no mistake here: Surtees's books would be galleries of grotesque rogues, fools, and knaves no matter in what period they had been written. However, Surtees evidently had a fertile field from which to cull his figures.

The humour of Surtees lies largely in his comic figures and in them the comedy was mainly supplied by eccentricity and vivid and memorable speech. Every reader of Surtees has his favorites, for they exist by the dozen in each of his books. 32

32

A few characters and their vivid comic speech are mentioned here in connection with Surtees' technique of writing. A fuller treatment of his famous creations is handled in Section Three.

Captain Shabbyhounde and Colonel Codshead of The Analysis of the Hunting Field have been mentioned. Another comic figure is Jogglebury Crowdey with a mania for carving walking sticks, and while host to Mr. Sponge, spoiled a fine hunt for him by his insistence on collecting sticks.

He [Crowdey] hadn't the slightest taste for the sport, but being a great man for what he called gibbev sticks, he hunted for the purpose of finding them. As we said before, he generally appeared at large woodlands, into which he would ride with the hounds, plunging through the stiffest clay, and forcing his way through the strongest thickets, making observations all the while of the hazels, and the hollies, and the blackthorns, and, we are sorry to say, sometimes of the young oaks and ashes, that he thought would
fashion into curious-handled walking-sticks; and these he would return for at a future day, getting them with as large clubs as possible, which he would cut into the heads of beasts or birds, or fishes, or men. At the time of which we are writing, he had accumulated a vast quantity - thousands; the garret at the top of his house was quite full, so were most of the closets, while the rafters in the kitchen, and cellars, and out-houses, were crowded with others in a state of deshabille. He calculated his stock at immense worth, we don't know how many thousand pounds; and as he cut, and puffed, and wheezed, and modelled, with a volume of Buffon, or the picture of some eminent man before him, he chuckled, and thought how well he was providing for his family.

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. II, p. 371.

Surtees adds to his portrait of this hopeful gentleman by creating him with a peculiar speech which is freely interspersed with puffs and wheezes.

"But I should have (wheeze) spoilt my (puff) set," replied the gibbeystick man. S'pose any (wheeze) body was to (puff) offer me five guineas a (puff) piece for the (puff) pick of my (puff) collection - my (puff) Wellingtons, my (wheeze) Napoleons, my (puff) Byrons, my (wheeze) Walter Scotts, my (puff) Lord Johns, d' ye think I'd take it?"

"I should hope so," replied Mrs. Jogglebury. "I should (puff) do no such thing," snorted her husband into his frill. "I should hope", continued he, speaking slowly and solemnly," that a (puff) wise ministry will purchase the whole (puff) collection for a (Wheeze) grateful nation, when the (wheeze) something "is no more (wheeze)."

The concluding words being lost in the emotion of the speaker (as the reporters say). 34

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. II, p. 376.
Jack Rogers (or Monsieur Jean Rougier as he liked to call himself), if for nothing else, will be treasured by Surteesians for the one excellent chapter where he hears Yammerton girls snooping through his master's bedroom and making many uncomplimentary references to himself.

But Monsieur was too many for them. Miss [Clara] had dropped her glove at the foot of the bed, which Jack found on emerging from his hiding place, and waiting until he had the whole party reassembled at Tea, he walked majestically into the middle of the drawing room with it extended on a plated tray, his "horrid eyes" combining all the venom of a Frenchman with the hauteur of an Englishman, and enquired, in a loud and audible voice, "Please, has any lady or gentleman lost its glo-o-ve?"

"Yes, I have!" replied Miss, hastily, who had been wondering where she had dropped it.

"Indeed, marm," replied Monsieur, bowing and presenting it to her on the tray, adding in a still louder voice, "I FOUND IT IN MONSIEUR PRINGLE'S BEDROOM." And Jack's flashing eye saw by the brightly coloured girls which were the offenders.35


Surtees had a good ear for slang and the speech of the day, and this, coupled with his aptness in seizing upon the right word, enabled him to give English literature a group of comic, eccentric characters second only in number to the gallery of his greater contemporary, Charles Dickens.

Oftentimes a character will be known by an indicative expression which is given additional force by frequent repetition.
Possibly the best example here is Jorrocks, many of whose phrases have become a part of our language. It has been commented that today, more than a hundred years after his creation, one is likely to hear at horse shows and hunt meetings such old favorites of his as "COME HUP! I say, YOU HUGLY BEAST!" or "How I wish I was a heagle!" Among enthusiasts there will surely be quoted "Where there's ceremony there's no friendship", "I'm a Post Hoffice Directory, not a Peerage man", or Jorrock's definition of fox-hunting "'Uting is the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent of danger!" Only a little less well-known are many of the comments of his renowned huntsman, James Pigg. Repetition is especially effective and, indeed, the memorable Pigg is a man of few words which recur time and time again. "Keep the tambourine a rowlin!", "Brandy and baccy 'ill gar a man live for iver!", and "MUCK'S YOUR MAN!" (Pigg's old-fashioned reaction to progressive fertilizing methods), run through Handley Cross and Hillington Hall. Pigg's vividly scornful replies, usually containing but little truth and beginning with "ar niver", are worth noting.

A stiff fence with a strongly made-up gap, brings him up short, and turning to Pigg, he [Pomponius Ego] holloas out, - "I'll hold your horse if you'll pull it down!"
"Ar niver gets off!" replies James, flying over the fence. 36

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"Vot, you've got a missus, 'ave you?" observed Mr. Jorrocks.
"Housekeeper, that's to say", replied Pigg, "housekeeper - ar niver marries them", added he, with a shake of the head. 37

Surtees, Hillingdon Hall. op. cit., p. 235.

"Not till to-morrow, James", replied Mr. Jorrocks, "not till to-morrow - but howsomever you see and get me the prize - and don't you get drunk".
"Ar niver gets drunk!" replied Pigg, with a growl, bundling past his master. 38

Surtees, Hillingdon Hall, op. cit., p. 257.

Lesser characters are made more lifelike by the same device. Mr. Goldspink, referred to by Surtees as "old Sivin and Four", habitually interspersed finances and calculation into his thoughts and conversations on other matters.

"Siven and four's elivin, and sivin's eighteen, and three's twenty-one, don't know that it would cost much more to live in the country than it does here, and eight is twenty-nine - might kill one's own mutton and save twopence 1/2 pund that way, and nine is thirty-eight - would have to keep a chay, but then the nag would lead the coals, and sivin is forty-five - might turn him to account in other ways, and six is fifty-one - a cow would come in capital, and sivin is fifty-eight, and help to keep a pig, and eight is sixty-six - might have some poultry too, and sivin is sixty-three, and eggs at summum like trade price." 39

Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? op. cit., p. 163.
Other examples that come to mind are Major Yammerton and his: "Five-and-thirty years master of harriers without a subscription", and Lord Scamperdale's "You think because I'm a lord, and can't swear or use coarse language, that you may do what you like." This latter phrase usually precedes truly brilliant invective. It is unlikely that Scamperdale and his boon companion, Jack Spraggan, are surpassed in inspired cursing in fiction of the nineteenth century. They were at their best when a stranger was in danger of riding over his lordship's hounds.

"By the powers, he's among 'em again!" shouted his lordship, as the resolute beast, with his upturned head almost pulled round to Sponge's knee, went star-gazing on like the blind man in Regent Street. "Sing out, Jack! sing out! for heaven's sake sing out," shrieked his lordship, shutting his eyes, as he added, "or he'll kill every man Jack of them."

"Now, SURI" roared Jack, "can't you steer that ere aggravatin' quadruped of yours?"

"Oh, you pestilential son of a pantry-maid!" screamed his lordship, as Brilliant ran yelping away from under Sponge's horse's feet. "Sing out, Jack! sing out!" gasped his lordship again.

"Oh, you scandalous, hypocritical, rusty-booted, numb-handed son of a puffing corncutter, why don't you turn your attention to feeding hens, cultivating cabbages, or making pantaloons for small folks, instead of killing hounds in this wholesale way?" roared Jack; an enquiry that set him foaming again.
"Oh, you unsightly, sanctified, idolatrous, Bagnigge-Wells coppersmith, you think because I'm a lord, and can't swear or use coarse language, that you may do what you like; not you, sir; I'll present you with a testimonial! I'll settle a hundred a-year upon you if you'll quit the country." 42

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 174,175.

Surtees's characters are robust and vulgar, and while they may be unlovable, they are never boring. They are filled with a zest for life, and this pleasure in living is transmitted to the reader. The enthusiasm with which he wrote and his comic characters are certainly two of the main reasons his reputation has increased the past hundred years while many vastly more successful contemporaries are comparatively unread.

It is easy to be critical concerning his poor construction, his negligent handling of plot, and his unfortunate long-windedness. However, it should be kept in mind that in his Preface to Handley Cross Surtees pleaded that "The reader will have the kindness to bear in mind that the work merely professes to be a tale, and does not aspire to the dignity of a novel," and the Preface to Ask Mamma is an even stronger statement of the author's intention, with its recommendation that "the following novel does not involve the complication of a plot."

This Preface is quoted in its entirety on Page 15.
Surtees was accurate in calling Ask Mamma "a mere continuous narrative of an almost every day exaggeration", and with the exception of Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, this could justly be applied to any of his novels. It is interesting to note that the exception is the last thing Surtees wrote. The rise and fall of Romford is told neatly and in a comparatively compact fashion which is all the more striking because of its contrast with previous works. In reading them it is all too apparent that Surtees, like his colleagues Anthony Trollope and Charles Dickens, often not only began writing without a preconceived plan but started publication while the last part of a work was still unwritten.

It cannot be denied that Surtees was careless in his fondness for repeating stories and jokes popular in his day. One of the brighter parts in The Analysis of the Hunting Field was the account of Colonel Codshead and young Tom Rapid.

Codshead is always "wanting a horse." There are a good many of this sort in the world, men who are always on the look out, but who never buy — — — —

If you were to show Colonel Codshead a hundred and fifty horses he could pick a hole in each. Indeed people are tired of showing him them, and to say that you know a man who wants a horse, and name Colonel Codshead, is enough to provoke a smile on the face of the owner. Young Tom Rapid, who is always in a hurry, having nothing whatever to do, always greets our hero with, "Well, Cod, how are you?" adding, in the same breath,
"I don't know of a horse that will suit you." 44


The account of Cuddy Flintoff in Ask Mamma written several years later has a familiar ring even to the names and characteristics of Tom Rapid and Charley Flight.

Cuddy was one of that numerous breed of whom every sportsman knows at least one — namely a man who is always wanting a horse, a "do you know of a horse that will suit me?" sort of man. Charley Flight, who always walks the streets like a lamp-lighter and doesn't like to be checked in his stride, whenever he sees Cuddy crawling along Piccadilly towards the Corner, puts on extra steam, explaining as he nears him, "How are you, Cuddy, how are you? I don't know of a horse that will suit you!" So he gets past without a pull-up. 45


Another old favorite of the hunting field was even more persistent, appearing in no less than three novels, Handley Cross, Ask Mamma, and Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds.

This traffic was in turn interrupted by an extraordinary hyena-looking cap and scarlet-coated youth, with a cane-coloured beard and moustache, cantering furiously about on a long-tailed cream-coloured hack, dashing at every group of grooms and dark-coated horsemen with the inquiry— "Have you seen my fellow? Have you seen my fellow?" At last he made for the pack, and hazarding the same enquiry of Pigg, that distinguished observer, after a careful though somewhat impertinent scrutiny, exclaimed,
"N-o-r, ar'm d--d if iver ar did."\(^{46}\)

Still, John [Imperial John] stands erect in his vehicle, flourishing his whip, halloowing and asking for his fellow.
   "Ring the bell for moy fellow! - Do go for moy fellow! - Has anybody seen moy fellow? Have you seen moy fellow?" addressing an old smock-frocked countryman with a hoe in his hand.
   "Nor, arm d--d if iver ar i did!" replied the veteran, looking him over, a declaration that elicited a burst of laughter from the bystanders, and an indignant chuck of the Imperial chin from our John.\(^{47}\)

--- Mr. Stotfold began staring about, squeaking for the carriage. He wanted the old gentleman in green again.
   "Have you seen my fellow? - have you seen my fellow?" demanded he, running from party to party.
   "Have you seen my fellow?" asks he, rushing up to Independent Jimmy, now standing by the side of the panting iron grey.
   "Nor, arm d--d if iver ar did," replied Jimmy, bursting into laughter.\(^{48}\)

Also Surtees had the Victorian fault of verbosity.
Like so many of his prolix fellow-novelists, he didn't know when to stop writing. Handley Cross is a good example of a writer's masterpiece in deplorable need of cutting. It is far too long, with many scenes unduly prolonged, and others which shouldn't be included at all.

Probably the trial of Jorrocks for lunacy is the classic
example of verbosity. Surtees has an excellent bit of satire here (suggesting that overly-keen foxhunters must necessarily be mad). The climax where Jorrock's own huntsman, James Pigg, turns the scale against him is incomparable with his "Mad, aye! ne doot! what else could he be?"

Pigg. - "Why, noo, ar should say he's [Jorrocks] a varra good ard man, beith at hyme and abroad - he gives me monny a shillin', and monny a glass o' brandy i' card weather, and sic like times."

Serjeant Horsefield. - "Ah, but I want to know more about his headpiece, you know - more how you think he manages his establishment in-doors and out."

Pigg. - "Why, noo, ar should say he manishes 'em all gaily well, berrin' that bit bowdekite, Ben; but sink him! gin ar had him, ar'd soon manish him."

Serjeant Horsefield. - "And his hounds, how do you think he manages them?"

Pigg. - "Why, noo, ar think the hunds 'ill be just 'bout the warst thing he does. He's all for stuffin' of their bellies till they're not fit to gan, and his back casts are perfectlie ridicklus."

Serjeant Horsefield. - "Well, but that is a mere matter of opinion, isn't it?"

"Ar, but ar say it isn't matter o' 'pinion!" roared Pigg. "Ye gan and ax Payne, or Goodall, or any on 'em, if iver they mak back casts first, unless they see if fox has bin hidded."

Serjeant Horsefield. - "But you don't mean to say that, because a man makes back casts first, he is necessarily mad?"

Pigg. - "Mad, aye! ne doot! What else could he be?"

Mr. Moonface. - "Well, how, you told my learned friend something about back casts. Will you allow me to ask if you think any man in his senses would make back casts?"

"Niver such a thing! Not at first hand like; always make the head good first. Sink it! ar's talked, and ar's battled, and ar's cussed wor ard maister, till ar's been fairly aside myself!; but the vary time - may be, afore iver the hunds have cast theirself - up he's com'd, blawin' his horn, and taken them back o'er
o'er the vary same grund, while the fox all the time was gannin' straight away."

Mr. Moonface. - "And that you consider very ridiculous?"

"Parfectlie ridicklus!"

Mr. Moonface. - "And what no man that knew what he was about would do?"

Pigg (vehemently). - "Never sec a thing! Niver sec a thing! Ax ard Sebright, or ony on 'em. Whatever ye de, always cast forrad for a fox," saying whinh, Pigg hitched up his breeches again, and rolled franticly out of the witness box. 49

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However, too much space is devoted to the lunacy case, and it, like many scenes in Surtees's later novels, is used to bring in his legal knowledge. Although his familiarity with law was considerable, his very accuracy sometimes caused him to include a disproportionate amount of legal facts and consequently the narrative suffered.

In connection with a discussion of Surtees's tendency to meander, it is only fair to indicate that despite this typical Victorian habit, he did not stop to preach as Thackeray, Kingsley or Disraeli were prone to do at any point in any novel.

He wrote in an easy, slangular style which suited perfectly his comic sporting novels, and his use of frequent and good dialogue has been a factor in maintaining his readability in the critical twentieth century. Unlike many criticized Victorian novelists, he was not guilty of
overburdening his tales with lengthy passages of description. Description is handled carefully and as a part of the narrative. Often just enough of the country is described to bring a fox or hare hunt vividly to mind.

In Hawbuck Grange, for example, there is a passage where Tom Scott leaves the squalid and unattractive town of Sludginton. As he rode into the hills, the contrast was striking to the dirty, noisy Inn he had just left.

How beautiful everything looked - magnificent, we might say, - the noble mountains, in all their pure and placid grandeur, swelling over each other till the snow-clad points of the highest seemed to touch the very sky. The goats and sheep browsing on the side looked like mere specks; while the bells of the cattle lower down kept up a lively jingle, as each motion in feeding set them a-going. The road was well calculated for showing off the scenery; now winding around the hill bases, now past some stupendous steep, with naught but stunted trees starving in the rocky desolation around; now skirting some gentle slope up which the plough had ventured as high as the depth of soil would carry; now past some wooded dell at the base of adjoining hills, down whose rugged course the mountain torrent flowed in gentle, sparkling streams. All about was so pure and healthy - such a contrast to little cramped Sludginton. The white farm-houses, the rose-twined heather-thatched cottages, the rustic bridges, the very rustics themselves, all had a clean wholesome look, far different to the frowsy ostler and people Scott had left at the Goldtrap Arms. 50

Surtees, Hawbuck Grange. op. cit., pp. 94, 95.

Probably there are few novels in which weather plays as prominent a part as in those of Surtees. It is natural, of course, for a novelist who is both a farmer and a fox
hunter to stress this, but Surtees is able to sustain a consciousness of weather in readers who belong to neither group. Jorrocks faithfully consults his weather prophet, Gabriel Junks, the peacock, before any hunting day. The changes in weather are of prime importance to fox-hunting, and thus the dull, dark winter days of England form the background for many a run. The reader is keenly aware of whether the ground is hard or soft, or it is a bright or dull day, the frost, the rain, the wind, dry spring or late fall. There is a good account of the waning season and the last hunt in *Handley Cross*.

The morning of the last day was anything but propitious. The sun shone clear and bright, while a cutting east wind starved the sheltered side of the face - horses' coats stared, the hounds looked listless and ill, and men's boots carried dust instead of mud-sparks. Fitful gusts of winds hurried the dust along the roads, or raised it in eddying valleys on hills and exposed places. It felt like anything but hunting; the fallows were dry and parched, the buds on the trees looked as if they thought they had better retire, and all nature yearned for rain - rain would be a real blessing. 51

51

**Surtees, Handley Cross. op. cit., Vol. II, p. 536.**

Then there was the time, one dull day, when Tom Scott decided to give up hunting and turn to matrimony because "It's no use persevering in a sport when one hasn't weather to enjoy it in."

How different everything looked the next morning. The dreary, foggy, water-charged
clouds had cleared away, and been succeeded by bright, smiling sunshiny weather.

The landscape was just like a newly cleaned picture. What yesterday was all blotch, mystery, and confusion, today stood forth most luminously distinct. Nay, beauties appeared, that a stranger would have said had been added - Oakhope spire, the herd's white cottage on the Compton Hills, and the skyline breaking fringe of beech, crowning the summit of Blackdown Moor. All nature seemed to rejoice in the change. The cattle grazed freely in the fields instead of sheltering behind trees and hedge-rows, the labourers doffed their jackets to their work, children played bareheaded around the cottages, and the horses in the stable had acquired a silky gloss on their late dull unkindly coats. 52

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Surtees, Hawbuck Grange. op. cit., pp. 44,45.

Several studies have been made revealing that a surprising number of Surtees's situations were drawn from real life.

The truth is, that being, as he always was ready to allow, a recorder and commentator rather than a novelist, he drew almost all his incidents from experience instead of from imagination. 53

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It is certainly true that many incidents can be traced to their source in life. Also while many characters such as Pomponius Ego, James Pigg, Jock Haggish, Serjeant Bumptious, and Lord Scamperdale have quite recognizable
originals, one should be careful not to stress, as has been done too often, this fact to the exclusion of his creative ability. Such a stand is hardly convincing in view of his robust and vital creations such as John Jorrocks, Soapey Sponge, or Facey Romford. However, he was a recorder in the sense that he employed extremely accurate observation and was meticulous in details. Mention has been made of his close attention to weather, to countryside, and to everyday speech.

Section Four will discuss the reflection of mid-Victorian England in Surtees' novels more fully, but in connection with his close observation, it should be indicated that a modern reader can obtain a surprising knowledge of the dress, travel, eating habits, sports, fashion, and prejudices in Surtees. In other words, his people are presented so vividly and in such a detailed manner that we know what they wore (even to the jewelry), how they slept, the discomforts of their travel, and especially what they ate and drank. There are dozens of accounts of Hunt dinners and breakfasts to say nothing of the other dinner parties, where the food is described with gusto and painstaking exactitude.

After the hare-hunt in Hawbuck Grange it is clear where the Goose and Dumpling Hunt got its name. There is a goose to each two men.

For people who are fond of goose (and who is not?) a greater treat could not be devised.
There was no taking the edge of the appetite off with soup, or fish, or patties, or cutlets, or side dishes of any sort; but they sat down to dine off the one thing they expected. This, too, was done in the fairest, most equitable way imaginable; for instead of a favoured few getting the breast and tidbits, leaving nothing but gristly drumsticks for late comers, each man had his own half goose, and could take whatever part he liked first, without eating in haste and fear that the next favoured cut would be gone ere he could get at it again. All, too, dining off goose, and eating most profusely of stuffing, none could reproach the other with "smelling of onions."

The dumplings now came rolling in - ten dumplings on ten dishes and five boats full of sauce. Apple dumplings are the order of the day, but the apple crop having failed they had recourse to currant dumplings, approaching very near to plum.

Cheese followed these, and then they cleared the old oak table and drew it towards the fire. The party ranged round: biscuits and filberts constituted the dessert, and "glasses" formed the beverage. Mrs. Trumper stood in for a tumbler of something and water, and when she retired, the little maid again appeared, and diving into the cupboard, produced sundry clay pipes, a large tobacco box with a hare hunt on the lid, and several little round boxes with sand in the bottom, which she distributed among the party. 54

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Lord Scamperdale's eating habits were given in one neat paragraph.

His lordship's fare was as rough as his furniture. He was a great admirer of tripe, cow-heel, and delicacies of that kind; he had tripe twice a week- boiled one day, fried another. He was also a great patron of beef-
steaks, which he ate half raw, with slices of cold onion served in a saucer with water. 55

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. I, p. 186.

Surtees disapproved of large Hunt dinners and breakfasts, but his books are studded with excellent accounts of them. There is the unforgettable "Dinner a la Russe", where Facey Romford "had about ate to repletion" on two kinds of soup, fish, and "anonymous viands" before the mutton appeared. Then he was persecuted with turkey, grouse, woodcocks, partridges, snipes, creams and jellies, puffs and pastries, chopped cheese, cream or water ice, pineapple, grapes, and Jersey pears. This, of course, is not mentioning the beverages, which included punch, hock, white hermitage, Moselle, Burgundy, Port, Beaujolais, Badminton cup, sweet and dry wines, and bitter and sweet ales. 56

Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., pp. 226-234.

No less memorable is the breakfast at Farmer Spring-wheat's, where Sponge and Jack Spraggan were so intent

on the round of beef, ham, turkey, sausages, tongue, cakes, sweets, jellies, muffins, crumpets, coffee, laced tea and cherry-brandy that they missed "the finest run that ever was seen!"

No less detailed are the accounts of dress and jewelry, and they are included for practically everyone down to minor characters.

Thus we not only know what a major character such as Jorrocks wore at his first sporting lector, but also the appearance of such minor characters as Green in Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities or the Marquis of Bray in Hillingdon Hall.

He [Jorrocks] wore the full-dress uniform of the hunt; sky-blue coat lined with pink silk, canary-coloured shorts, and white silk stockings. His neckcloth and waistcoat were white, and a finely plaited shirt-frill protruded through the stand-up collar of the latter. Bunches of white ribbon dangled at his knees. 58

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As usual, Green was as gay as a peacock. His curly flaxen wig projected over his forehead like the roof of a Swiss cottage, and his pointed gills were supported by a stiff black mohair stock, with a broad front and black frill confined with jet studs down the centre. His coat was light green, with archery buttons, made very wide at the hips, with which he sported a white waistcoat, bright yellow ochre leather trousers, pink silk stockings and patent leather pumps. In his hand he carried a white silk handkerchief, which smelt most powerfully of musk; and a pair of dirty wristbands drew the eye to
sundry dashing rings upon his fingers.

Behold him [the Marquis of Bray], then in his blue coat aforesaid, with a delicate bouquet in the button-hole - a most elaborately-tied white cravat, the folds of the tie nestling among six small point-lace frills of an exquisitely embroidered lawn shirt front over a pink-silk under-waistcoat, and diamond studs of immense value, chained with Lilliputian chains - his waistcoat of cerulean blue satin, worked with heart's east, buttoned with buttons of enormous bloodstones, the surface of the waistcoat traversed with Venetian chains and diminutive seals - pink silk stockings, and pumps - gliding into the drawing-room, with an airy noiseless tread, and a lightly scented, much-embroidered, lace-trimmed handkerchief in his hand.

Surtees maintained this accuracy in recording the life he saw around him so well that his novels lack completely the sentimentality, the undying attachments and happy endings which overburdened so much Victorian writing. Surtees and Dickens were similar in many respects; the humour of their eccentric people, their success at comic speech, pictures of nineteenth century law, and their ability to transmit to their readers the gusty, vulgar zest for life of their characters. However, the cold, censorious eye of Surtees never permitted any Dickensian lapses into bathos and sentimentality. A classic example
of his avoidance of the pathetic and sentimental is his account of the death of Jack Spraggon. This passage has been criticized as being heartless, but it is rather, savage realism. The cynicism behind the theft of the thimble-riggers and Jawleyford's consolation, as well as the humour in his lordship's grieving memories of Spraggon will surprise no careful reader of Surtees. Indeed, it is perfect as it stands and there is not a word that should be altered. It is certainly one of the most brutal passages in English fiction.

"Oh, my poor dear Jack!" exclaimed his lordship, throwing himself off his horse, and wringing his hands in despair, as a select party of thimble-riggers, who had gone to Jack's assistance, raised him up, and turned his ghastly face, with his eyes squinting inside out, and the foam still on his mouth, full upon him. "Oh, my poor dear Jack!" repeated his lordship, sinking on his knees beside him, and grasping his stiffening hand as he spoke. His lordship sunk overpowered upon the body.

The thimble-riggers then availed themselves of the opportunity to ease his lordship and Jack of their watches and the few shillings they had about them, and departed.

When a lord is in distress, consolation is never long in coming; and Lord Scamperdale had hardly got over the first paroxysms of grief, and gathered up Jack's cap, and the fragments of his spectacles, ere Jawleyford, who had noticed his abrupt departure from the stand, and scurrying across the country, arrived at the spot. His lordship was still in the first agony of woe; still grasping and bedewing Jack's cold hand with his tears.

"Oh, my dear Jack!" "Oh, my dear Jawleyford! Oh, my dear Jack!" sobbed he, as he mopped the fast-chasing tears from his grizzly cheeks with a red cotton kerchief. "Oh, my dear Jack! Oh, my dear Jawleyford! Oh, my dear Jack!" repeated he, as a fresh flood spread o'er the rugged surface. "Oh, what a tr-treasure, what a tr-tr-trump he was. Shall never get such another.
Nobody could s-s-lang a fi-fi-field as he could; no hu-hu-humbug 'bout him - never was su-su-such a fine natural bl-bl-black-guard;" and then his feelings wholly choked his utterance as he recollected how easily Jack was satisfied; how he could dine off tripe and cow-heel, mop up fat porridge for breakfast, and never grumbled at being put on a bad horse. 61

61

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 575,576.

Frederick Watson has given a discerning passage on sentiment in Robert Smith Surtees: a Critical Study.

It is an obvious weakness in Surtees that he lacked sentiment, but what could be more genial than the picture of the holiday children bustling along under the affectionate gaze of the "Jug", or more adorable than the maid who welcomes Charley Stobbs? 62

62


In similar vein one could certainly add Mrs. Springwheat at the Hunt Breakfast, and perhaps the spontaneous falling in love of Sponge and Lucy Glitters after a capital run.

Modern critics deplore the habit many Victorian writers had of investing their characters with names illustrative of some characteristic or profession. In our time, of course, this practice is chiefly seen in comic strips. Henry James expressed his disapproval of such descriptive
names in his essay on Anthony Trollope.

It is part of this same ambiguity of mind as to what constitutes evidence that Trollope should sometimes endow his people with such fantastic names. Dr. Pessimist Anticant and Mr. Sentiment make, as we have seen, an awkward appearance in a modern novel; and Mr. Neversay Die, Mr. Stickatib, Mr. Rerechild and Mr. Fillgrave (the last two of the family physicians) are scarcely more felicitous. It would be better to go back to Bunyan at once.

63


If possible, Surtees was a worse offender in this device than Trollope. His pages abound in names such as Sir Harry Scattercash, Soapey Sponge, Lord Strutandstride, Simon Hookem, Walter Fleeceall, and Robert Foozle. One might add Mr. Easylease, the land agent, Mr. Cypher, the auditor, and Mr. Brick, the builder. Certainly, the latter three are something less than admirable, but in a satiric sporting novel they rather fit the tone than otherwise. Indeed, the characters, Sir Harry Scattercash or Robert Foozle are made more memorable and humorous by the possession of such pertinently descriptive names.
SECTION III

SURTEES’S HANDLING OF CHARACTER
In a large part, the growing reputation of Surtees is based on two factors. He wrote with more skill and knowledge about fox-hunting than any other man, and in his century, he was second only to Dickens in invention of memorable, comic characters. The first point will be discussed later. His ability to draw eccentric, grotesque people has been touched upon in the preceding pages, but the unforgettable Jorrocks, Sponge, and Romford deserve further attention.

Surtees, the classic novelist of fox-hunting, is best known for one character, John Jorrocks of Great Coram Street. This is indicated in part by the fact that editions of his works carried "Creator of Jorrocks" on the cover. Indeed, it was largely due to the Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities that Surtees was persuaded to write his first novel, Handley Cross, which was concerned with Jorrocks becoming a Master of Fox-Hounds.

Surtees was eminently fitted to portray the English temperament, and this is nowhere shown better than in Jorrocks, the vulgar and shrewd cockney sportsman. Nathaniel Hawthorne once spoke of the novels of another enthusiastic fox-hunter, Anthony Trollope, as being "written on strength of beef and through the inspiration of ale", and this discerning statement applies equally well to Surtees.

Frederick Watson has indicated the English character
of Jorrocks and touched upon many essential and basic truths which help to illustrate his universal appeal and popularity.

In the philosophy of the cockney M.F.H. is an expression of much that is peculiar to England and the English middle class. Jorrocks was hearty, homely, shrewd and vulgar in a sense unknown to any nation except his own. To look askance at him is merely silly. If anyone refuses to admit that vulgarity is a substantial component of the English constitution he must have isolated himself very carefully from popular festivals of his fellow country-men. Jorrocks was vulgar as Falstaff was vulgar. Both were noisy, intemperate, boastful, and self-confident. But both were also English in flesh and bone, and if Jorrocks was vulgar he was not hypocritical. His secret lies in his sincerity.

The ordinary man catches in Jorrocks the echo of much that is inherent in his own physical and mental structure. He is not one of those heroes of fiction far beyond the aspirations of the counting house, but within the compass of anyone. He discovers in him the same tendency to moralize about bad habits, although very imperfect himself, to flirt on the sly with comely ladies, to possess a bark with hardly any bite to follow. 64

64 Watson, op. cit., p. 82.

It is significant that the best known fox-hunter in fiction in addition to not being a gentleman, was a timid horseman, whose riding was something of a joke, and whose ability to avoid leaps approached genius.

"Are you a hard rider, Mr. Jorrocks?" now asked his hostess, still thinking anxiously of her dinner.
"'Ardest in England, mum," replied our friend confidently, muttering aloud to himself, "may say that, for I never goes off the 'ard road if I can 'elp it." 65


Nothing illustrates his troubles during a hunt so much as his own picturesque and articulate grief when he comes to a leap he is afraid to make or when he has fallen behind and lost his hounds. There are many expressive examples, but two should help give the flavour of his speech and hint at the reason for his large and universal audience.

"Dash my vig, here's an unavoidalble leap, I do believe," said he to himself, as he neared the headland, and saw no way out of the field but over the fence - a boundary one; "and a werry hawkward place it is too," added he, eyeing it intently, "a yawnin' blind ditch, a hugly quick fence on the top, and may be, a plough or arrow, turned teeth huppermost, on the far side.

"Oh, John Jorrocks, John Jorrocks, my good frind, I wishes you were well over with all my 'eart - terrible place, indeed! Give a guinea 'at to be on the far side," so saying, he dismounted, and pulling the snaffle-rein of the bridle over his horse's head, he knotted the lash of his ponderous whip to it, and very quietly slid down the ditch and climbed up the fence, "who-a-ing" and crying to his horse to "stand still", expecting every minute to have him a-top of him. The taking-on place was wide, and two horses having gone over before, had done a little towards clearing the way, so having gained his equilibrium on the top, Mr. Jorrocks began jerking and coaxing Arterxerxes to induce him to follow, pulling at him much in the style of a school-boy who catches a log of wood in fishing.

"Come hup! my man," cried Mr. Jorrocks coaxingly, jerking the rein; but Arterxerxes
only stuck his great resolute forelegs in advance, and pulled the other way. "Gently, old fellow!" cried he, "gently, Artexerxes my bouy!" dropping his hand so as to give him a little more line, and then trying what effect a jerk would have, in inducing him to do what he wanted. He appeared to have no notion of leaping. Jorrocks began to wax angry. "Dash my vig, you hugly brute!" he exclaimed, grinning with rage at the thought of the run he was losing. "Dash my vig, if you don't mind what you're arter, I'll get on your back, and bury my spurs in your sides. COME HUP. I say, YOU HUGLY BEAST!" roared he, giving a tremendous jerk of the rein, upon which the horse flew back, pulling Jorrocks downwards in the muddy ditch. Artexerxes then threw up his heels and ran away, whip and all. 66

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, the picture of despair - "wot shall I do? wot shall I do? - gone away at this hour - strange country - nobody to pull the 'edges down for me or catch my 'oss if I gets spilt, and there's that Pigg ridin' as if there was not never no such man as his master. Pretty kettle of fish!" continued Mr. Jorrocks, trotting on in the line they had taken. A bridle-gate let him out of cover, and from the first hill our master sees his hounds going like pigeons over the large grazing ground of Beddington Bottoms, with Pigg and Stobbs a little in the rear, riding as hard as ever their horses can lay legs to the ground.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, starting off again, "was there ever such a misfortunate individual as John Jorrocks? - 'Ark! vot's that? Pigg's 'orn! Oh, dear, only a cow! Come hup, 'oss, I say, you hugly beast! there surely never was such a worthless beast lapped in leather as you," giving
Arterxerxes a good double thonging as he spoke. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" continued he, "I wish I was well back at the Cross, with my 'ounds safe i' kennel. - Vot a go is this! - Dinner at five - baked haddocks, prime piece of fore chine, Portingal honions, and fried plum-puddin'; and now, by these darkenin' clouds, it must be near four, and here I be's, miles and miles away - 'ounds still runnin', and advertised for the Beef and Carrots on Wednesday - never will be fit to go, nor to the Daisy nouter." 67


However Jorrocks's keenness is his saving grace. His love for the hunt, for the sport itself, runs through his every appearance. The tone is set in the first mention of him in the Jaunts and Jollities.

"Oh, you rogues," cries Mr. Jorrocks, a cit rapturously fond of the sport. 68

68 Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, op. cit. p. 7.

Later Jorrocks explains his passion to the Yorkshireman.

"Fox- 'unting is indeed the prince of sports. The image of war without its guilt, and only half its danger. I confess that I'm a martyr to it - a perfect victim - no one knows what I suffer from my ardour. If ever I'm visited with the last infirmity of noble minds, it will be caused by my ungovernable passion for the chase. The sight of a saddle makes me sweat. An 'ound makes me perfectly wild. A red coat throws me into a scarlet fever. Never throughout my life
have I had a good night's rest before an 'unting morning.' 69

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Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. op. cit. pp. 83, 84.

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His ecstasy during the heat of the chase knows no bounds. A typical example was the "Cat and Custard-Pot" day when his enthusiasm ran so high that he even made a couple of leaps in order to join the pack.

"By 'eavens, it's sublime!" exclaimed he, eying the hounds, streaming away over a hundred-acre pasture below. "By 'eavens, it's sublime! 'ow they go, screechin' and towlin' along, jest like a pocket full o' marbles. 'Ow the old wood reechoes their melody, and the old castle seemingly takes pleasure to repeat the sound. A Jullien concert's nothin' to it. No, not all the bands i' the country put together."

"How I wish I was a heagle!" now exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing the wide stretching vale before him. "How I wish I was a heagle, 'overin' over 'em, seein' which 'ound has the scent, which hasn't, and which are runnin' frantic for blood." 70

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Surtees had no use for the large number of men like Billy Pringle in Ask Mamma or Tarquinius Muff in Hawbuck Grange who hunted because of the clothes and show, or "gentleman horse-dealers" like Captain Shabbyhounds in The Analysis of the Hunting Field who merely hunted to sell horses.
It is indicative that Jorrocks, Facey Romford, Soapey Sponge, Lord Scamperdale all, whatever faults they had, liked to watch hounds work and loved hunting for its own sake. Their ardour redeemed them, at least in part, for their crudeness, boorishness, or outright deceit and trickery.

The lack of snobbery, in what was largely an age of snobbishness, is prominent in Surtees. Jorrocks is outstanding here in his magnificent cockney self-possession, at all times, and lack of social aspirations. He was always true to himself. There are several excellent instances which illustrate this basic, typically English quality of Jorrocks.

"Pray, Mr. Jorrocks, who was your mother?" inquired his grace [Duke of Donkeyton], after he bowed and drank off his wine.
"Please your Greece, my mother was a washerwoman."
"A washerwoman, indeed!" exclaimed his Grace- "that's very odd - I like washerwomen - nice, clean wholesome people - I wish my mother had been a washerwoman."
"I wish mine had been a duchess," replied Mr. Jorrocks. 71

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71
Surtees, Hillingdon Hall. op. cit., p. 87.

An equally good illustration is Jorrocks's unabashed reply to the army officer during the Pomponius Ego day.

"OLD 'ARDI" roars he to the foreward roadsters, who are now getting among the hounds. "You 'air-dresser on the chestnut 'oss!" holloaing to a gentleman with very big ginger
whiskers: "PRAY 'OLD 'ARD!"

"HAIR-DRESSER!" exclaims the gentleman, in a fury, turning short round: "I'm an officer in the ninety-first regiment!"

"Then you hossifer in the ninety-first regiment, not looks like an 'air-dresser, 'old 'ard," replied Mr. Jorrocks, -- ""72

72

However, perhaps, as good an instance as any of Jorrocks's freedom from affectation is seen at his dinner party in Jaunts and Jollities.

"But stop, gentleman!" cried Mr. Jorrocks, as he reached the top of the stairs, "let me make one request - that you won't eat the windmill you'll see on the centre of the table. Mrs. Jorrocks has hired it for the evening, of Mr. Farrell, the confectioner, in Lamb's Conduit Street, and it's engaged to two or three evening parties after it leaves this."

"Lauk, John! how vulgar you are. What matter can it make to your friends where the windmill comes from!" exclaimed Mrs. Jorrocks, in an audible voice from below. --

"What wine do you take, Stubbs?"

"Why, champagne is good enough for me."

Mr. Jorrocks. I daresay; but if you wait till you get any here, you will have a long time to stop. Shampain, indeed! had enough of that nonsense abroad - declare you young chaps drink Shampain like h'ale. There's red and wite, port and sherry, in fact; and them as can't drink, they must go without.

73

In view of the later success of Jorrocks, it is not always realized that Handley Cross was a failure when first
published. Frederick Watson has stressed the flouting of current social standards as being the chief reason for its poor reception.

What is the explanation of Handley Cross? Only a rather obvious alienation of the public to whom it was intended to appeal. In 1843, when it was published in book form (three volumes), the social pre-dominance of fox-hunting was at its height. It had developed, decade by decade from the end of the eighteenth century into a magnificently conducted and high-ly exclusive cult. The M.F.H. was usually a landed proprietor, and, as such, in days before county councils and social services, was a pro-minant figure in agriculture, politics and local affairs. He was a leader as well as an employer. He united the social as well as the commercial sections of a locality, undisturbed by Press, strangers, or crises. 74

74 Watson, op. cit., p. 69.

Surtees's persistent satire or disregard of the social side of the hunting field undoubtedly affected his popular-ity among fox-hunters in his day. Now, of course, it is hard to believe that the currently little-read Whyte-Melville, a more conventional rival in fox-hunting novels, enjoyed infinitely greater success in the mid-nineteenth century. It took considerable courage in the first half of the nineteenth century to make a cockney grocer success-ively a fox-hunter, Master of Fox-Hounds, Justice of the Peace, and finally Member of Parliament.

What a magnificent cockney Jorrocks was! It has been said that Surtees created no lovable characters, but even
if this statement be accepted, Jorrocks was certainly the nearest approach to one found in his works. Indeed, he is so convincing and amusing that it takes an effort to consider how noisy and boorish he could be.

Mention has been made of his extra-marital adventures with Mrs. Flather and Mrs. Trotter in Hillingdon Hall and with the Countess Benvolio in Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. Perhaps an even more flagrant lapse was his seduction of Mrs. Markham, Sir Archery Depecarde's housekeeper, while staying at Pluckwelle Park under false pretenses; they thought him someone else. Surtees, never delicate

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about using the same story twice, later had him shown to a room in Ongar Castle in the belief he was an invited guest. In straightening out the matter, the aggressive cockney spirit is shown in its most outrageous form.

Groom. "Please, sir, would you 'blige me with your name, sir?"
"Certainly! Mr. Jorrocks, to be sure! The M.F.H.? Who else should it be?"
"Oh, I fear, sir, there's a mistake, sir. This room, sir, was meant for Captain Widowfield, sir. Those are his clothes, sir."
"The deuce!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, in disgust. "Didn't Pigg tell you I was comin'?"
"It was the captain's servant I took for yours, sir."
"Humph!" grunted Mr. Jorrocks, "that won't do; at all events, I can't part with the garments."
"I will thank you, sir, to let my servant remove my clothes from my room," observed Captain
Widowfield, in a slow, determined tone through the door.
"My good friend," replied Mr. Jorrocks, altering his accents, "'ow is it possible for me to part with the garments when I've nothin' o' my own but wot's as drippin' wet as though I'd been dragged through the basin of the Paddington Canal? regularly salivated in fact!"
"I have nothing to do with that, sir," exclaimed the captain, indignantly; "I'm wet myself. Will you open the door, I say?"
"No, I won't," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "and that's the plain English of it!" So saying, he swaggered back to the fire with the air of a man resisting an imposition.

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76

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Mr. Jorrocks's behaviour socially is blunt and uninhibited. A Duke's castle held no fears for him, and his familiar, impudent acceptance of the introduction to the Marquis of Bray by the Duke of Donkeyton is typical in its brashness.

"Jeems, my dear! — — — Come here, and let me introduce you to our excellent friend, Mr. Jorrocks, who's been kind enough to come all the way from-from-from to dine with us."
"To dine and stay all night, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks to the Duke, letting fall his coat laps, preparatory to offering his hand to the Marquis.

The Marquis bowed and grinned, and laid his hand upon his heart, as if perfectly overcome by the honour — proudest moment of his life.
"Where I dine I sleep, and where I sleep, I breakfast, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks, resuming his position, finding it impossible to compete with the Marquis in bows.

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77
Surtees, _Hillingdon Hall, op. cit._, p. 85.
His unrestrained comments at the Muleygrub's dinner were even more outrageous. He cooly deprecates their servants, amount of plate, and food.

Stiffneck, seeing his [Jorrocks's] idleness, was presently at him with the dish of mince.

Mr. Jorrocks eyed it suspiciously, and then stirred the sliced lemon and meat about with the spoon. He thought at first of taking some, then said he thought he wouldn't, then he fixed he couldn't. "No," said he, "no", motioning it away with his hand, "no, I likes to chew my own meat."

The rissoles were then candidates for his custom.

"Large marbles," observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself - "large marbles," repeated he, as he at length succeeded in penetrating the hide of one with a spoon. "Might as well eat lead," observed he aloud, sending them away too.

"I often thinks now," observed he, turning to his hostess, "that it would be a good thing, mum, if folks would 'gree to give up their stupid make-believe side-dishes, mum, for nobody ever eats them, at least if they do they're sure to come off second best, for no cuk as ever was foaled can do justice to sich a variety of wittles."

"Oh! but, Mr. Jorrocks, how could you send up a dinner properly without them?" exclaimed the lady with mingled horror and astonishment.

"Properly without them, mum," repeated our master, coolly and deliberately; "properly without them, mum- why that's jest wot I was meanin'," continued he. "You see your cuk 'as sich a multitude o' things to do, that- it's utterly impossible for her to send them all in properly, so 'stead o' gettin' a few things well done, ye get a great many only badly done." 78

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Then again Surtees described in felicitous phrasing this faculty Jorrocks had for being at ease in any surroundings.
Mr. Jorrocks, whose Maxim of "Perfect ease being perfect gentility" never allowed him to feel out of his element, —— 79

79
Surtees, Hillingdon Hall, op. cit., p. 93.

At Ongar Castle (after his appropriation of Captain Widowfield's clothes) he "fell with a heavy thump", on the floor and had to be carried to bed. A perfect example of his redoubtable drinking, as well as an amusing and effective "curtain" speech, is the last line of Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities.

He [Jorrocks] then attempted to rise for the purpose of marking time, but his legs deserted his body, and, after two or three lurches, down he went with a tremendous thump under the table. He called first for "Batsay", then for "Binjimin", and, game to the last, blurted out, "Lift me up! - tie me in my chair! - fill my glass!" 81

81
Surtees, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, op. cit., p. 240.

The vital and robust figure of Jorrocks is not complete without his perfect complement, his huntsman, James Pigg. John Jorrocks by himself probably surpasses any character Surtees drew, but there can be no question that Pigg and Jorrocks together form an unbeatable combination. Over a fourth of Handley Cross is past before Pigg makes his entrance.
However, from then on the book is improved much in the same manner as Dickens' Pickwick Papers once Sam Weller joins Mr. Pickwick. After an unauspicious beginning, the dour Pigg and Jorrocks are drawn together by their enthusiasm for the chase. This first scene shows the physical appearance and dress of Pigg as well as contrasting beautifully those two independent and shrewd individuals.

He [Pigg] was a tall, spindle-shanked man, inclining to bald, with flowing grey-streaked locks shading a sharp-featured, weather-beaten face, lit up with bright hazel eyes. A drop hung at his nose, and tobacco juice simmered down the deeply indented furrows of his chin. His dress was a strange mixture of smart-coloured, misfitting clothes. A blue and white cotton kerchief was twisted carelessly round his scrappy neck - a green-baize jacket, with the back buttons almost between his shoulders, flattened upon a pair of baggy dirty-white cords, between which, and a little red waistcoat, a vast protuberance of soiled linen appeared. His shrunk drab mother-of-pearl buttoned gaters, dragged upon an ill-shaped leg, making his stooping, lathy figure more ungainly, and the scantiness of his upper garments more apparent. His hands, encased in shiny yellow ochre-coloured gloves, were thrust a long way through the little jacket sleeves, between which and the gloves, coarse dirty wrist-bands appeared - one hand clutched a boy's turned-up hat, and the other rested on a rugged oak staff.

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Jorrocks, as he eyed him, observing aloud to himself, "Vot a long-legged beggar it is," inwardly resolving he wouldn't do. "Your servant, Sir," said the figure, shuffling the little hat into the staff hand, while he raised the other to his forehead, and kicked-out behind. "Heard tell ye was in wants of a hontsman."

"Humph," grunted Mr. Jorrocks again, "you don't look much like one. Vere d'ye come from?"

"Carn't say as 'ow I do," replied Mr. Jorrocks thoughtfully, still eyeing the bird of Paradise. "Is it any way near Dundee?"

"Dundee? no - what should put that in your head?" snapped Pigg.

"Wot should put that i' my head?" retorted Mr. Jorrocks, boiling up. "Vy, it must be near somewhere!"

"Near somewhere!" now exclaimed Pigg, indignant at the slight thus put on his famous city. "Why, it's a great town of itsel' - ye surely ken Newcassel where arle the coals come frae?"

"You said Cannied Newcassel," enunciated Mr. Jorrocks, slowly and emphatically - "you said Cannied Newcassel," repeated he, "from which I natterly concluded it was near Dundee, where they make the candied confectionary. I get my marmylad from there. I'm not such a hignorant hass," continued he, "as not to know where Newcastle is. I've been i' Scotland myself! Durham at least."

They then took a good long stare at each other, each thinking the other a "rum un."

Jorrocks gave tongue first. "Wot 'ounds have you been with?" asked he.

"A, a vast," replied Pigg, "yen way and another," "Yen way and another," muttered Mr. Jorrocks, still eyeing him intently.

"Aye, ar' ken all the hounds amaist. Tyndale, and D'orm, and Horworth, and arl."

"Ah, but those 'ull be Scotch dogs," observed Mr. Jorrocks, "a country I knows nothin' whatever on - have you been in any civilized country?"

"Aye, civil, aye, they're all civil enough - 'gin ye're civil to them. If ye set up your gob, they'll mumpit, ar's warn'd."

"No- no- that's not wot I mean," retorted Mr. Jorrocks, getting angry and shuffling about in his seat. "I want's to know if you've ever been in any of the crack countries?"

"Cracked countries," repeated Pigg thoughtfully, scratching his head - "cracked countries, aye-yes- Warlesend."

"Nol, nol!" growled Mr. Jorrocks, kicking out his legs, "any of the cut 'em down and 'ang 'em up to dry countries?" asked our master, thinking to
exterminate Pigg and be done.
"Why- no- ar' hannah," drawled Pigg, twiddling his hat about.
"Ah then, you'll not do for me," replied our friend, with a supercilious chuck of the chin.
"Why, why, sir," replied Pigg, "ye ken best."
"Ye ken best," repeated Mr. Jorrocks, aloud to himself, adding, "what a rum beggar it is to be sure."
Then they kept eyeing each other again for awhile.
"Con-founded nuisance," muttered Mr. Jorrocks to himself, "not being able to get an 'untsman," recollecting the boiled lobster, Plaster of Paris Poll Parrot merchant, and other scenes. "Confounded nuisance indeed."
Then he thought he'd sound Pigg again.
"Do you think now," continued he, speaking very slowly, and looking very intently at the applicant, "do you think now you're ekle to my place? first-rate establishment, splendid pack of 'ounds, invaluable 'osses, swell country, critical field."
"Why, now, it's not for me to say," replied Pigg, turning his quid, "but ar's fond o' 'ounds, and ar'd de my best te please ye."
"Well," thought Mr. Jorrocks, "that's summum at all events, let me be master, which is agreeable. Wouldn't ha' been so with Mr. Bragg I guess. You can ride I s'pose?" observed he, addressing the applicant in a more conciliatory tone.

Pigg. - "Ride! aye, ar wish ar'd nout else te de."

Mr. Jorrocks. - "And clean an 'oss?"

Pigg. - "Aye, ne doubt, - grum him, that's to say."

"You'll be werry keen, I s'pose?" said Mr. Jorrocks, brightening as he went.
"Ar's varra hungry, if that's what ye mean," replied Pigg, after a moment's consideration.
"No," said Mr. Jorrocks, "I means, you'll be desperation fond of 'unting."
"Fond o' huntin'! Oh faith is I - there's nout like huntin'."
"Dash my vig! so say I," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, still brightening up, "so say I! it's the real Daffy's Elixir! The Cordial Balm
o' Gilead! The concentrated Essence o' Joy! — — "32

82

One of the famous scenes is Pigg and Jorrocks drinking together one night, toasting their hounds and hoping for rain and one last hunt of the season.

The fire began to hiss, and Mr. Jorrocks felt confident his prophecy was about to be fulfilled. "Look out of the window, James, and see what a night it is," said he to Pigg, giving the log a stir, to ascertain that the hiss didn't proceed from any dampness in the wood.

James staggered up, and after a momentary grope about the room — for they were sitting without candles — exclaimed, "Hellish dark, and smells of cheese!"

"Smells o' cheese!" repeated Mr. Jorrocks, looking round in astonishment; "smells o' cheese! — vy, man, you've got your nob i' the cupboard — this be the vinder;" continued he, rising and opening some shutters painted like the cupboard door in the other corner. 83

83

It is easy to understand Kipling's Frank Midmore and his shock at the "foul world" of Surtees. In the masterly account of the Testimonial dinner for Pigg, there is first a fighting and scrambling for seats, astonishment at the way Pigg ate with his knife, and climaxed by the guest of honor falling on the floor in a drunken stupor. At this
point, Mr. Jorrocks, noting that the testimonial was a watch stolen from him some time before, coolly pocketed that memorial.

Reference has already been made to Pigg's statement "Ar niver marries 'em", and an even more blunt statement of his unconventional and un-Victorian relations with women is found in Hillingdon Hall.

"Then I was a thinkin'," observed Mr. Jorrocks, rubbing his chin and casting his eyes up to the mullioned ceiling of the room; "I was thinkin' that Batsey, p'haps might be useful to you."

"So," said Pigg.

"She's a fine woman," observed Mr. Jorrocks; "and I should like to place her in good hands."

"Ne doot," replied Pigg, "ne doot;" adding, "Why, ar dare say ar could manish her too."

"There'll be a lettle incambrance," observed Mr. Jorrocks, in an undertone.

"Why, why," replied Pigg, with a jerk of the head, "why, why:" adding, "ar expects it's mar owne."

"Vot, another!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "Who'd ha' thought it?" 84

84

Surtees, Hillingdon Hall. op. cit., p. 333.

All in all, Pigg (despite Jorrocks's initial doubts) made an excellent and loyal huntsman. They had much in common in their liking for drink, an eye for women, and a passion for sport. They also had the same rough independence, shrewd capability, and broad and boisterous wit. There was great variance, of course, in the matter of riding. Pigg was a fearless rider who rode at anything to keep with
hounds, whereas Jorrocks frequently lost them by hunting for gaps and gates. Their happy knack for apt phrases has already been indicated.

Handleby Cross has been called a "text-book on fox-hunting", and Pigg and Jorrocks are responsible. They are a lusty and virile pair of sportsmen, and since Hillingdon Hall, fiction has not seen their like again.

Soapey Sponge and Facey Romford are Surtees's other two major creations, and Steel has indicated their stature in the sporting world in his reference to Surtees's first popular success with publication of Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour.

From this time on, however, no denizen of that world would be without his Sponge and Jorrocks, and subsequently his Mr. Romford. 85

85 Steel, op. cit., p. 29

Despite the Preface, Mr. Sponge is more of a sympathetic hero than otherwise. Reference has been made in preceding sections to his lack of scruples in horse dealing, his lack of sensitivity in habitually overstaying his welcome as a houseguest, and his carelessness in paying debts. It might be added that he was an out-and-out fortune hunter.
He had seen a good deal of service in the matrimonial wars, and was entitled to as many bars as the most distinguished peninsular veteran. No woman with money, or the reputation of it, ever wanted an offer while he was in the way, for he would accommodate her at the second or third interview; and always pressed for an immediate fulfillment, lest the "cursed lawyers" should interfere and interrupt their felicity. Somehow or other, the "cursed lawyers" had always interfered; and as sure as they walked in, Mr. Sponge walked out. He couldn't bear the idea of their coarse, inquisitive inquiries. He was too much of a gentleman!

"Love, light as air, at sight of human ties
Spreads his light wings and in a moment flies."

So Mr. Sponge fled, consoling himself with the reflection that there was no harm done, and hoping for "better luck next time."

He roved from flower to flower like a butterfly, touching here, alighting there, but always passing away with apparent indifference. He knew if he couldn't square matters at short notice, he would have no better chance with an extension of time; so, if he saw things taking the direction of inquiry, he would just laugh the offer off, pretend he was only feeling his way - saw he was not acceptable - sorry for it - and away he would go to somebody else. He looked upon a woman much in the light of a horse; if she didn't suit one man, she would another, and there was no harm in trying.

87

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 121, 122.

Regretfully it must be stated that Sponge was a fraud, a gentleman only in his dress, and, in general, what was known in his day as a "sharp customer."

However, he had the independent spirit and shrewd capability, so much admired by Surtees, and which is also seen
in Jorrocks, Pigg, Romford and a host of lesser characters. Like Romford and Pigg, and unlike Jorrocks, Sponge was an able and fearless horseman and fox-hunter. In line with this, Sponge was of the old school (Tom Scott of Hawbuck Grange is another example), who knew horses and took care of their mounts personally. This is a pleasant contrast to the newer generation such as Billy Pringle whose horses had to take their chances with whatever stable and stablemen were handy. Thus we see that the first thing Sponge did on arriving at Laverick Wells was to go to the stables and check the accommodations for his horses. The difference is seen in Pringle's arrival at the estate of Sir Moses Mainchance.

The pampered Napoleon the Great, the horse that required all the warmth and coddling in the world, was next introduced, fine Billy alighting from his back in the yard with all the unconcern that he would from one of Mr. Splint's or Mr. Spavin's week day or hour jobs. Indeed, one of the distinguishing features between the new generation of sportsmen and the old, is the marked indifference of the former to the comforts of their horses compared to that shown by the old school, who always looked to their horses before themselves, and not unfrequently selected their inns with reference to the stables. Now-a-days, if a youth gives himself any concern about the matter, it will often only be with reference to the bill, and he will frequently ride away without ever having been into the stable. If, however, fine Billy had seen his, he would most likely have been satisfied with the comfortable assurance that it was "only for one night", the old saying "enough to kill a horse", leading the uninitiated to suppose that they are very difficult to kill.
One short passage reveals a great deal about the cultural level of both Sponge and Romford. Soapey Sponge was a one book man, and that hardly an inspiring one, while Romford's library (as we find later in Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds) consisted of "Boxiana", "Fistiana", "Bell's Life", and "White's Farriery."

"Thank'ee, no: thank'ee, no. I've a book in my pocket," replied Sponge, diving into his jacket-pocket; adding, as he fished up his "Mogg", "always carry a book of light reading about with me."

"What, you're a literary cove, are you?" asking Facey in a tone of surprise.

"Not exactly that," replied Sponge; "but I like to improve my mind." 89

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89

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 504.

Sponge's "Mogg" was that invaluable but now forgotten household book of the nineteenth century, containing distances and fares, "Omnibus and Metropolitan Carriage Time Table, Hackney Coach, and Cabriolet Fares" by Edward Mogg.

Sponge knew his fares, and Surtees in a few sentences gives a picture of London transportation as well as the shrewdness and wordliness of Mr. Sponge who never paid six-pence where three would serve.

He had a sort of "'bus" panorama in his head, knew the run of them all, where they started, where they stopped, where they watered, where they changed, and, wonderful
to relate, had never been entrapped into a sixpenny fare when he meant to take a threepenny one. In cab and 'bus' geography there is not a more learned man in London.

Mark him as he stands at the corner. He sees what he wants, it's the chequered one with the red and blue wheels that the Bayswater have got between them, and that the St. John's Wood and two Western Railway ones are trying to get into trouble by crossing. What a row! how the ruffians whip, and stamp, and storm, and all but pick each other's horses' teeth with their poles, how the cads gesticulate, and the passengers implicate now the bonnets are out of the windows, and the row increases. Six coachmen cutting and storming, six cads sawing the air, sixteen ladies in flowers screaming, six and twenty sturdy passengers swearing they will "fine them all," and Mr. Sponge is the only cool person in the scene. He doesn't rush into the throng and "jump in," for fear the 'bus should extricate itself and drive on without him; he doesn't make confusion worse confounded by intimating his behest; he doesn't soil his bright boots by stepping off the kerb-stone; but, quietly waiting the evaporation of the steam, and the disentanglement of the vehicles, by the smallest possible sign in the world, given at the opportune moment, and a steady adhesion to the flags, the 'bus is obliged either to "come to," or lose the fare, and he steps quietly in, and squeezes along to the far end, as though intent on going the whole hog of the journey.90

Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 6, 7.

It should be added that while Sponge lives up to his surname, his nickname "Soapey" is not as apt. He is no talker, and is anything but servile. A good example of his arrogance was the day he invited himself to go shooting with Jogglebury Crowdey, spent his time criticizing Crowdey's dog, shooting and pace, and capped the day by shooting
Crowdey's dog Ponto intentionally to teach him a lesson. Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour was the account of Sponge during a hunting season, at the end of which he married Lucy Glitters, abandoned horse dealing, and began the "Sponge Cigar and Betting Rooms" in London. In Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds we find that Soapey deserted Lucy when his business failed, and went to Australia. The last we hear of him is taking Facey Romford (and what a combination they make!) into partnership in a bank. The practical, worldly, and clear-thinking Sponge is shown vividly when Lucy Sponge rejoined her prosperous husband in Australia.

She resolved to discard the assumed name of Somerville, and set out for the Antipodes in search of him; so, following in the wake of the Romfords, she presently found him, and both Facey and Soapey gave her a most cordial greeting.

The voyage out had agreed with her, and she was looking, if possible, handsomer than ever. Soapey took her without hesitation, on the sensible principle of letting "bygones be bygones." 91

91 Surfes, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 464.

Whatever his faults, he was an extremely able horseman, and was a genuine sportsman. Unfortunately, he had to move in devious ways to provide himself with the fox-hunting he loved. It is likely most readers will have the same sympathy and affection for him that Surfes evidently
had. Finally, it might be not amiss to quote Surtees's closing words in connection with Sponge's "Betting Rooms" as compared to other money lenders.

Nay, bad as he is, we'll back old Soapey to be better than any of them, - with which ecomium we most heartily bid him ADIEU. 92

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92 Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 581.

Facey Romford appears briefly in Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour where he enjoys the distinction of being the only person who gets the best of Sponge.

He is next seen in his own book Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds where after having lived for years in expectation of "me oncle Gilroy's" fortune, that hope was blasted by his uncle's death and the discovery of a hitherto unknown family.

Well, then, at the time the aforesaid calamity befell him, he was just turned of thirty-one, tall and muscular, with a broad expansive chest, heavy round shoulders, and rather knock knees. His large backward-growing-all-round-the-chin-gingery-whiskered face was lit up with a pair of little roving red-lidded pig eyes, that were constantly on the watch, - sideways, lengthways, cornerways, all ways save frontways. He looked as if he was always premeditating a parable, but somehow never produced it. Not that he was a fool-far from it, as those who had had anything to do with him in the betting or horse-dealing lines could testify; but he looked like a satirist who could cut a man in two with a sarcasm, only, like a generous giant, he refrained from doing so. In short, a sort of
you'd-better-leave-me-alone-looking
man. 93

93
Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 9.

Romford after having swindled our old stick-carving
friend, Jogglebury Crowdey of fifty pounds, went to London
to seek a livelihood. Lack of money was something of a
handicap, but after having considered a career as an auction-
eer, station-master, farmer, horse-dealer and chief constable,
suddenly thought of becoming a master of hounds. There is a
typical Surtees touch in the mention of the old apple-woman
when Romford was struck by his bright idea.

A master of hounds! That was the thing —
the very thing for his money! — or rather,
his no money — and he gave his great thigh
a slap that sounded like the report of a
pistol. "Well done, ingenuity!" cried he,
swinging his right arm about, sending an
old apple-woman into the gutter, as he rolled
away from the window, feeling a new, reno-
vated, regenerated man. 94

94
Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 23

He is probably the most thorough going fraud Surtees
produced. He became a Master of Hounds by letting people
assume he was his namesake who was rich, owned Abbeyfield
Park, and was patron of three livings. By the same mis-
understanding (which Facey, using a seal made from bread,
furthered by sealing his letters with the crest of the rich
Francis Romford), he assembled an excellent pack of hounds
without paying for them, rented Beldon Hall from Lord Lovetin, had Lucy Sponge live with him as his sister (under the name of Mrs. Somerville), and by using Lord Lovetin's name obtained unlimited supplies from London tradesmen. Even after the inevitable denouement, he coolly made Lord Lovetin pay him to leave, and joining Soapey Sponge, became a banker in Australia.

His self-confidence and determination were shown when he first decided to become an M.F.H.

He felt fully persuaded he would be a master, just as Mr. Disraeli felt fully persuaded he would be an orator, and Louis Napoleon that he would be an emperor - it was fated so. 95

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Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 25.

Romford was no more presentable socially as an M.F.H. than Mr. Jorrocks. When the Watkins made the first call to Beldon Hall, they didn't see Facey who, in shirt sleeves, was cleaning his gun in the butler's pantry. As they toured the house with Lucy Sponge, Facey was trapped and forced to escape through the coal-cellar grate.

Determined not to be caught - especially in his shirt-sleeves - he dashed valiantly at the iron bars, and, mistaking the side of the cellars, crawled out right in front of the Watkins' horses' heads, to the astonishment of Mr. Spanker and the magnificent footman, who at first thought it was the long-expected ale-jug coming. Not being, however, easily discouraged, friend Facey just asked them in a careless indifferent sort of way, if they had seen
a rat come up, and being answered in the negative, he turned in again at a side door as if nothing particular had happened, the Watkins's men wondering if it was the gardener, or who it could be.

An idea of his social gifts can be seen as he plays "what he thought the agreeable to the hostess" at the Hunt breakfast at Pippin Priory.

"How many children have you?" asked he.
"Five," replied Mrs. Large.
"Five, have you (humph), - two couple and a half. How old are you?" Facey eyeing her intently, as if making his own calculation.
Mrs. Large was not going to answer this question, so she parried it by telling the footman to hand Mr. Romford the butter.
"What's your Christian name?" was the next question.
"Mary," replied his hostess.
"Mary (humph), - just plain Mary, is it?"
"Just Mary," asserted our hostess, who did not consider herself plain by any means.
The conversation then proceeded much as follows:-
Facey. - "Is this place yours, or do you rent it?"
Mrs. Large. - "Oh, it's our own."
Facey. - "Much land about it?"
Mrs. Large. - "A good deal."
Facey. - "Two or three thousand acres, p'raps?"
Mrs. Large. - "Perhaps."
Facey. - "Much game?"
Mrs. Large. - "A good deal."
Facey. - "Is what's-his-name your husband there - (nodding towards Mr. Large) nasty particular about it?"
Mrs. Large. - "Well (hem), not more (cough) than other (hem) people."
Facey. - "Wouldn't mind one walking over it occasionally with one's dog and one's gun if it came in one's way, I s'pose?"
The last sentence indicates a difference between Facey and most of the enthusiastic sportsmen (i.e. Jorrocks, Sponge, Scamperdale, etc.) in Surtees. Like them Facey thought fox-hunting the greatest sport in the world, but he was also a lover of shooting and fishing, two sports which are usually little stressed in Surtees. As seen here with the Larges, he liked to gain permission, but if that wasn't forthcoming, it must be admitted that Facey poached without scruples.

As a matter of fact, his interest in getting a country to hunt did not stem entirely from his love for fox-hunting. His hunting would get him shooting, and shooting would get him fishing, and the three would get him into society, and there was no saying but he might get an heiress after all. 98

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98 Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 24.

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He cared as little for stag-hunting as Surtees and Mr. Jorrocks although he was tricked to riding with Mr. Stotfold's stag-hounds. He also had a distaste for the unsporting and fairly prevalent practise of using a "bag-fox"; that is, an imprisoned fox released for a hunt.

"So much the better," rejoined Romford. "Don't care if he beats us;" adding to himself, "no credit in killin' a bag-fox - rather a disgrace, ol should say." 99

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99 Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 253.
Romford's ability in hunting a fox was mentioned on an earlier page, and in his skill and enthusiasm, he takes his place among the other keen sportsmen in Surtees. Like Sponge, he might be seeking an heiress, but that was never allowed to interfere with sport. The accounts of his runs with the Heavyside Hunt and in Doublemupshire with Lucy Glitters Sponge acting as Whip, are excellent. If he wasn't a particularly socially presentable M.F.H., he couldn't be surpassed in the field, and we shall leave him with the general opinion of the Larkspur Hunt after his first run with them.

His unadorned eloquence, queer questions, and napkin-pocketing gaucheries were forgotten or merged in the brilliant nature of his exploits. He was a trump, and no mistake. 100

Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 195.

Like Fielding, Dickens, Conrad, and many other leading English novelists, Surtees was not particularly successful in his delineation of women. Also, to use Frederick Watson's phrase, he treated them "with almost consistent churlishness." It is striking that there is only one case of a love match in all his novels, that of Belinda Jorrocks and Charley Stobbs, with the possible exception of Lucy Glitters and Soapey Sponge. Belinda Jorrocks was his only good, Victorian girl, and her romance with Charley Stobbs was singularly dull. In general his women are either trying to catch a
husband or are mothers trying to help their daughters catch one. There is the long list of mothers hunting men with fortunes for their submissive daughters, Mrs. Yammerton, Mrs. McDermott, Mrs. Watkins, Mrs. Flather, Mrs. Trotter, Mrs. Hazey, Mrs. Jorrocks and countless others. Surtees wrote "'no money, no matrimony' might almost be written above some doors", but according to every

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mother he portrayed, that phrase could have been written above every door. With the one exception of Belinda Jorrocks, every daughter was willing and eager to accept the man with the most money and position. Thus Clara Yammerton married the elderly, unscrupulous, and unprepossessing Sir Moses Mainchance; Emily Jawleyford married the crude, stupid, and ugly Earl of Scamperdale; Rosa McDermott married Jasper Goldspink although she had previously accepted Mr. Bunting when she thought him wealthy; and Miss De Glancey after having set her cap for several eligible men such as Lord Ladythorne and Captain Languisher, at the end cynically accepted John Hybrid whom she had previously scornfully rejected.

However, Lucy Glitters, imperfect Victorian heroine though she was, is an exception in that she is a well-drawn and life-like woman. Even her name is a perfect choice. The reader is never under any illusions about her. Surtees
refers to her at the outset as "the beautiful and tolerably virtuous Miss Glitters." A little later the Raw

102

__Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 498.__

children refuse to enter Nonsuch House (where Lucy Glitters and Miss Howard are visiting Lady Scattercash) because their mother had forbidden it.

"- - - Why did your ma. say you were not to come in?" continued she [Miss Howard], addressing the younger one.
"Because-because," hesitated he, "she said the house was full of trumpets."
"Trumpets, you little scamp!" exclaimed the lady, reddening up; "I'll get a whip and cut your jacket into ribbons on your back."
And thereupon she banged down the window and closed the conversation.

103

__Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 518.__

But Lucy Glitters is an attractive, clever and charming girl. She was capable, resourceful, and uncomplaining whether in the hunting field or behind the desk in the cigar shop. Her part in Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour is fairly brief. She and Sponge fall in love after an exhilarating fox-hunt and are married at the end of the book.
In Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, the Sponges's cigar shop is not doing well, and Sponge eventually deserts Lucy.
Now, though Lucy's attractions were great, and though she never sold even one of her hay-and-brown-paper cigars under sixpence, or even gave change for a shilling, still Soapey and she could not make both ends meet; and when poverty comes in at the door, love will fly out of even a glittering cigar shop window.

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Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 17.

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Eventually Lucy joined Facey to act as Whip to his hounds and growing "fond of the hounds and horses" refused to leave. Because of her, Facey had to leave the Heavyside Hunt, but Lucy talked him into letting her accompany him to Beldon Hall as his married half-sister. This extremely unconventional arrangement was successful until the Countess of Caperington (formerly Lady Scattercash) denounced her in public with one vindictive sentence.

"You are Mrs. Sponge - Lucy Glitters that was - most pernicious woman!" 105

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Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 451

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There is not space to go into detail about the life at Beldon Hall where Mrs. Sponge as Mrs. Somerville captivated all Doubleimpshire. But it is important to note that she became an acknowledged lady Whip. She was an excellent rider (having once ridden in a circus), but in addition had courage and an intuitive sense for the finding of foxes.

In general, ladies were not welcome in the hunting field in the early nineteenth century. Surtees himself
disapproved of women fox-hunting, and in 1830 gave some reasons in his Hunting Tours.

I do not like to see women out with foxhounds. A man does not like riding before them, or leaving them in the lurch; and even if they do "go along," the whole field is kept in alarm lest an accident happen. With harriers it is all very well, because whether you jump a fence or take five minutes to pull it down makes but little difference in the general way; but it is quite une autre chose with foxhounds.

106


However, in Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour, written twenty odd years later, Lucy Glitters and Sponge have a beautiful run with Sir Harry Scattercash's hounds, and in Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, written in the early 1860's, Lucy Sponge is presented as an excellent Whip. Surtees was reflecting the changing attitude towards women, on the hunting field as elsewhere, during this thirty year period.

In addition to Mrs. Sponge's skill and courage as a horsewoman, one or two scenes can be cited which will help balance the unconventional actions of this "tolerably virtuous" lady.

Her joy at Sponge's safety after the Grand Steeplechase is convincing.

Lucy sobbed and laughed, and sobbed and laughed again; and seemed as if her
little heart would burst its bounds.

There is a casual, wistful touch after her first fox-hunt with Facey.

"Brush is bespoke," muttered Facey, advancing to Lucy, and decorating Lottard's head with it. "Better than the baccyshop, this," said he, in an under-tone, with a knowing wink, as he adjusted it. And Lucy thought of the time when another sportsman (Mr. Sponge) placed a well-won brush in her hat, and sighed.

Under present day standards Lucy Glitters Sponge is not likely to be judged as harshly on moral grounds as she was at the time of her inception, and certainly most people will find her more charming than, say, the mercenary Misses Yammerton or Rosa McDermott.

It is with regret that such memorable and fascinating characters as Independent Jimmy, Lord Scamperdale, Robert Fozle, Bill Bowker, and many others have not been given more space, but it was felt that a fuller treatment of such major portraits as John Jorrocks, James Pigg, Soapey Sponge, Facey Romford, and Lucy Glitters would better represent Surtees's handling of character.
SECTION IV

SURTEES'S PICTURE OF MID-VICTORIAN ENGLAND
Too much stress should not be laid upon the value of the novels of Surtees as a true representation of the England of his day. Although his observation was clear and accurate, it must be remembered that he was primarily a satirist rather than a realist, and that his field was limited and narrow.

Thus as much as we may admire the humour of Lord Scamperdale, Earl of Ladythorne, Sir Harry Scattercash, and Sir Moses Mainchance as caricatures of the English nobility, and in some cases even find their originals which prove them to be not too exaggerated, it would be dangerous to judge the nobility from its representation in Surtees's novels. He was interested in presenting only one side of the picture, the imperfect side.

Similarly, if we are to take his Handley Cross Spa as literally true, such a community was composed entirely of scamps, drunks, and frauds. Dinners break up in brawls; deceit, vulgarity and greed dominate society; and even the doctors are quacks. To say that this gives us an idea of the typical Spa in England in the nineteenth century would be comparable to stating that Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio, is a factually true representation of a small town in Ohio in the twentieth.

Also one will find scant mention of economic and political changes which were taking place in England, or concern with the intellectual or religious controversies which loomed so important in Victorian life.
Hillington Hall is concerned with agricultural improvements, and it is only natural that a professional farmer like Surtees would not make Jorrocks, city-bred that he was, too successful at farming. The interest in drainage and fertilizer can be seen in the discussion between the amateur farmers, the Duke of Donkeyton and Jorrocks, neither of whom is very sure of what he is talking about.

"Very good!" exclaimed the Duke; "extremely good! monstrous good, indeed— but you must instruct as well as amuse—encourage science, experiments, chemistry; teach them the virtue and use of manures."

"Guano! nitrate o' sober! soot! and all that sort o' thing," interrupted Mr. Jorrocks.

"Farmers are a long way behind the intelligence of the day; a monstrous long way," continued the Duke, "too much of 'what my father did, I'll do' style about them. They want brush-up. You take yours in hand, Mr. Jorrocks—make them drain." .

"Smith o' Deanston! Tweedale tile! furrow drainin'!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Apply their land to proper uses," continued his Grace, "Don't force it to grow crops it has no taste for—much may be done in the way of judicious management. For instance, where land won't grow corn, try trees—much of the land in this country is too poor for agricultural purposes—would grow wood well. All the pine tribe flourish well in this country and pay well for planting; very well indeed; monstrous well."

"Grand things they are too!" observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, thinking of the pineapple he'd had before dinner; I'll teach them a trick or two," added he, "pine dodge in particular—address them—'Friends and fellow-countrymen!' throwing out his arm and hitting Mr. Thomas Chambers a crack in the eye, and so closing the conversation for a moment.109

109

Surtees, Hillingdon Hall, op. cit., p. 95.

There is a great deal of farming in Hillington Hall,
but unless one is reading the book specifically for a picture of agricultural life and methods, it is often dull and uninteresting. Many a reader must have wished that Surtees had been more like James Pigg who once said to Jorrocks, "Sink the farm!" exclaimed Pigg, "ar niver talks about farmin' when ar can talk about huntin!-


Surtees' thorough knowledge of Law and his active career as a Justice of the Peace resulted in many excellent pictures of courts and legal actions. Dickens, of course, is noted for many such passages, and while Surtees' scenes are usually not so amusing as Dickens', they are frequently more detailed and accurate from a legal standpoint. Mention has already been made of the lunacy case of Mr. Jorrocks in *Handley Cross*, but the appointment of Jorrocks as Justice of the Peace gave an opportunity for many more in *Hillingdon Hall*. A modern reader gets a surprisingly clear picture of the preliminaries and machinery of getting the court in session from the case of Doleful versus Jorrocks.

Great was the rush as the coach drew up at the venerable Saxon archway of the county courts, and it was not until the police had formed a double line that the under sheriff gave the stiff-necked footboy the signal to open the door. Out he popped; next came little Marmaduke himself in a full court dress, with an Elizabethan ruff, or what in former times, was called "three steps and a half to the gallows," from the size and number of its folds. Marmaduke had borrowed the idea from a portrait of one of his ancestors, wherein
that worthy sporting moustachios, he had very appropriately added a pair to his own countenance. Having descended the flight of steps from the coach with great caution, as well for the purpose of exhibiting his person as to prevent his tripping over his basket-handled sword, the judges followed and entered the building amid a prolonged flourish of trumpets.

This, and the rushing in of a white-wanded bailiff, exclaiming, "Gen'lemen of the grand jury wanted i' Kurt!" startle a room full of rosy-gilled, John Bull-looking squires, in full cry after various subjects - hay, harrows, horses, hounds - who forthwith hide their hats and canes, hoping they'll be forthcoming when wanted, pull on their buckskin gloves, and scramble into a spacious pen of a box just as the judge, Baron Funnyfile, is bowing to Messrs. Briefless, Done-up, Drearyface, and other ornaments of the "rope walk," before taking his seat for the day. Silence being at length obtained, the commission of the peace is called over, and her Majesty's most gracious proclamation against vice and immorality openly read, the loose hands judging each other at appropriate passages, and saying, "That's a hit at you, Smith!" or, "What a thing it is to be a loose fish, Jones!" The magnates of the grand-jury box then answer to their names and are sworn, the florid verbiage of the foreman's oath contrasting with the bald plainness of the "you say ditto to that" of the rest.

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III


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But since Surtees was a shrewd observer with a love for detail, we often get a surprisingly vivid idea of the way of life of the nineteenth century Englishman. Fox-hunting is portrayed as it has never been done before or since, and probably the well-known enthusiasm of the Englishman for sport was given its clearest expression in fiction.

However, even in his portrayal of sport, personal
prejudice shines through, and there is not a complete and unbiased account of the sporting world. Fox-hunting, of course, is pre-eminent, and hare-hunting is acknowledged to be a capital sport. There is not much interest in shooting, and while Facey Romford likes to fish, Surtees included no accounts of fishing. Racing, cock-fighting, steeple-chasing and the attendant evils of betting were all detested by Surtees. Stag-hunting didn't have his approval, although he turned his satiric eye on the idea of hunting a carted stag in *Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities* and *Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds*.

But if a clear exposition of fox-hunting is desires, not only the technical side of the sport, but also who made up the field, what they wore, how it was financed, etc., Surtees is the authority to consult.

Mention has been made in preceding sections which illustrate the care with which the meals and clothes were minutely described. Not only does the reader know what Lord Scamperdale, Facey Romford or Tom Scott like to eat, but from the novels as a whole can be gathered a good idea as to the dining habits of the English middle-class.

In connection with dress might be mentioned Surtees's alertness to fashion and fads. Mr. Bunting preferred Rosa McDermott to wear her hair fashionably while Jasper Goldspink liked it in ringlets. There were many references to the increased popularity of crinoline, of which Surtees disapproved,
and many comments were passed regarding its impracticality and unattractiveness.

So at the proper time, the ladies pointed their taper toes and started off gaily with the first quadrille of the evening. Great was the wheeling, and circling, and spreading, and guiding of crinoline, and divers the apologies of the fair obstructionists for stopping each other's ways. But with a little patience of mutual concession, each fair lady at length got through her portion of the figure. Better have been stopped altogether than not have carried her full complement of crinoline. Wonderful fashion! We suppose we shall have the other extreme next, and dresses as scant as they are now inflatedly full.

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112
Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? op. cit., p. 32.

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-- --, and the passage to the carriages, with the gathering of crinoline, and squeezing sideways through the narrow doors to the amusement of the bystanders, who wonder how such dresses are ever to be pushed in. Careful butlers who have delegated their authority to the footmen for the day, aid in the cram

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113
Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? op. cit., p. 57.

The fad for bloomers was indicated by Miss Constantia Mendlove in Handley Cross who was always referred to, because of her faithfulness to the new costume, as the Bloomer. Her garb, "the full-bloom costume of a Bloomer," was given in detail.

This brought the fair lady, in her silver-buttoned light-blue silk vest, with a flowing jacket of a darker blue above a lavender-coloured tunic and
white trousers, fingerling her cambric collarette and crimson silk necktie above her fichly-figured shirt, with mock-diamond buttons scattered freely down the front.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{114}Surtees, Handley Cross, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. II, p. 616.

It will be noted that Surtees' description of ladies' apparel shows him to be as exact as he was in his knowledge of men's clothing. Another instance was his easy reference to the current way Rosa McDermott wore her bonnet.

Miss, munificent in white muslin, with cherry-coloured ribbons, and the prettiest of French chip bonnets, trimmed with bouquets formed of the blossoms of the cherry intermingled with the fruit. We are happy to add that it set more over the forehead than these apparently useless articles have lately done.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{115}Surtees, \textit{Plain or Ringlets?} \textit{op. cit.}, p. 57.

Watson has indicated the importance of \textit{Plain or Ringlets} in preserving the child-like delight of the middle-class Victorians in newly discovered recreations.

The opening chapters of \textit{Plain or Ringlets} are particularly valuable as a picture of the early Victorians quite carried away by the new sensations of picnics, regattas, and dances. The middle class had for the first time discovered the sea, and, as a consequence, there sprang into existence the landlady with her card of 'Apartments' in the grimy windows of Seaview Place. Most readers with vote \textit{Plain or Ringlets} rather dull and scrappy, but what a picture of Victorians at play!\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{116}Watson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 228.
The holiday air of these watering places is given on the first page of Plain or Ringlets?

A real continental summer having visited England, people showed their appreciation of the boon by making the most of the luxury. It was out-of-door life for everyone - Turkey carpets, red curtains, fur cloaks, thick boots, umbrellas, no longer commanded respect, but were superceded by the lightest, airiest muslins, gossamers, and slippers. Coals, save for cooking purposes, might have been slates altogether, for anything that anybody cared. To seal a letter became an act of fortitude. Spashing and dabbling in the sea was the only way of keeping cool. All the watering-places swarmed to repletion. Thanks to George Stephenson, George Hudson, and the many other Georges, who invested their talents and valuable money in the invaluable undertakings, railways have brought wealth and salubrity to every one's door. It is no longer the class distribution that used to exist, this place for that set, that for another; but a sort of grand quadrille of gaiety in which people change places continually, and whirl about until they finally settle down, thoroughly satisfied with some particular selection. They then take the pet place under their wings, talk it up and run other places down, finding out beauties that none can see but themselves. 117

117 Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? op. cit., pp. 1,2.

The foregoing passage also hints at Surtees' awareness of the importance of the part played by the Railways in the vital changes in English life. The writings of Surtees are a good source for mid-nineteenth-century travel. Surtees was extremely sensitive to the changes being made in modes of travel and since the railroads were just gaining a foothold in 1830, his thirty-odd years of writing spanned the important period of Railway growth.
As one might expect, the advantages of Railroads to sportsmen were indicated.

It was a great boon to the sporting world when railways enabled them to follow their callings in distant countries, - the shooter to fly down to the Highlands, the fox-hunter to move about with his horses, taking a hunt wherever he liked, instead of the old weary five-and-twenty or thirty miles-a-day trail by road, with the rest required at the end of a journey. 118

118

Surtees, Plain or Ringlets? op. cit., p. 300.

The reactionary view of some noblemen was shown in his satiric study of the Duke of Donkeyton who, as many conservative Englishmen actually did, successfully kept railways from his domain.

Donkeyton Castle was clear of railways. You could not hear the sound of a whistle on the calmest day, or with the most favourable wind. The Duke had a great dislike of them - monstrous dislike. Would have thought the constitution destroyed if one had come near him - not his own constitution, but the constitution of the country. 119

119

Surtees, Hillingdon Hall, op. cit., p. 336.

Surtees also lamented that the romance of travel had been dissipated by them.

Railways have destroyed the romance of traveling. Bulwer himself could not make anything out of a collision, and trains, trucks, trams, and tinkling bells are equally intractable. No robbing, no fighting, no benighting, no run-away-ing. One journey is very much like another, save
that the diagonal shoots across country are distinguished by a greater number of changes. But with the exception of certain level crossings, certain mountings up, certain divers down like a man changing his floor at a lodging, there is really nothing to celebrate. It's "Away you go!" or, "Here you are!" 120

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120

Surtees, Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds, op. cit., p. 36

However, Surtees appreciated the Railway, and his novels are filled with graphic descriptions of the discomforts of travel by coach as compared with the comparative luxury of the trains. There is the account of a night drive of Sir Moses Mainchance.

It is labour and sorrow traveling on wheels, with a light horse and a heavy load, on woolly winter roads, especially under the depressing influence of declining day - when a gorgeous sunset has no charms. It is then that the value of the hissing, hill-rounding, plain-scudding railway is appreciated. The worst line that ever was constructed, even one with goods, passengers, and minerals all mixed in one train, is fifty times better than one of these ploughing, sobbing, heart-breaking drives. 121

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121


In the romance of Fine Billy and Miss Willing which was furthered by a slow stage coach is another more specific comparison.

Posterity will know nothing of the misery their forefathers underwent in the traveling way; and whenever we hear - which we often do -
unreasonable grumblings about the absence of trifling luxuries on railways, we are tempted to wish the parties consigned to a good long ride in an old stage coach. Why the worst third class that ever was put next the engine is infinitely better than the inside of the best of them used to be, to say nothing of the speed. As to the outsides of the old coaches, with their roostings, their soakings, their freezings, and their smotherings with dust, one cannot but feel that the establishment of railways was a downright prolongation of life. Then the coach refreshments or want of refreshments rather; the turning out at all hours to breakfast, dine, or sup, just as the coach reached the house of a proprietor "wot oss'd it," and the cool incivility of everybody about the place. Anything was good enough for a coach passenger.122


Anthony Steel regarded the pictures of nineteenth-century travel so important in the novels of Surtees that he devoted two chapters to a study of this preoccupation in Jorrocks's England.

123 Steel, op. cit., chapters 5,6.

As might be expected, Surtees's doctors are handled in no kindly fashion, and at times are not even licensed to practise. The two best known are the rival doctors of Handley Cross, Roger Swizzle and Dr. Sebastian Mello. The shrewd Roger Swizzle was what Surtees called "a great experimental (qy. quack) practitioner" who with a jolly air and common sense sent his patients "away as happy as princes."
With lanquid hypochondriacs he was subtle, firm, and eminently successful. A lady that took it into her head that she couldn't walk, Roger had carefully carried out of her carriage into a room at the top of his house. When raising a cry of "Fire!" she came spinning down stairs in a way that astonished herself. He took another a mile or two out of town in a fly, when, suddenly, pulling up, he told her to get out and walk home, which she at length did, to the great joy of her husband and friends. With the great and dignified, and those who were really ill, he was more ceremonious. "You see, Sir Harry," he would say, "It's all done by eating! More people dig their graves with their teeth than we imagine. Not that I would deny you the good things of this world, but I would recommend a few at a time, and no mixing. No side dishes. No liqueurs - only two or three wines. Whatever your stomach fancies give it! Begin now, tomorrow, with the waters. A pint before breakfast - half an hour after, tea, fried ham and eggs, brown bread, and a walk. Luncheon - another pint - a roast pigeon and fried potatoes, then a ride. Dinner at six, not later mind; gravy soup, glass of sherry, nice fresh turbot, and lobster - wouldn't recommend salmon - another glass of sherry - then a good cut out of the middle of a well-browned saddle of mutton, wash it over with a few glasses of iced champagne; and if you like a little light pastry to wind up with, well and good. Mind, no salads, or cucumbers, or celery, at dinner, or fruit after. Turtle soup is very wholesome, so is venison. Don't let the punch be too acid though. Drink the waters, live on a regimen, and you'll be well in no time." 124

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Surtees, Handley Cross, op. cit., Vol. I, pp.16,17

However, Swizzle gains the reader's sympathy, fraud though he is, in his cavalier treatment of Mrs. Barnington.

She was a malade imaginaire-ist, having originally come as a patient of Swizzle's; but that roistering practitioner had grievously offended her by abruptly closing a long list of inquiries by replying to the question if he thought she might eat a few oysters, with
"Oh, hang it, marm, yes - shells and all!" 125

Swizzle's rival, Dr. Sebastian Mello, the antithesis of Swizzle, who affected large volumes and Latin prescriptions, was completely discredited at Jorrocks's trial.

"And so you are a physician in a great way of practise, are you?" drawled Mr. Coltman, through his nose, in a careless, colloquial sort of style, as if he meant to have a good bit of conversation with Mello before he was done.
"I am," replied Sebastian Mello, with a slight tinge of red on his countenance.
"You are sure of that?" asked Mr. Coltman, carelessly turning over the pages of his brief, as if he were thinking of something else.
"I am," replied Mr. Mello.
"You are!" rejoined Mr. Coltman, looking him full in the face. "Now, sir," said he, very slowly, "do you mean to assert that? Do you mean to say that you have ever taken a degree?"
"I mean to assert, sir, that I am a physician in full practise."
"Will you, on your oath, sir, say that you are a regularly qualified and admitted physician? On your oath, sir, will you say it?"
Mr. Sebastian Mello was silent.
"Will you, sir, swear?" continued the inexorable Mr. Coleman, "that you have any diploma, save what your assurance and the credulity of your patients has conferred upon you?"
Mr. Mello was silent.
Mr. Coltman, throwing out his hands, made a pantomimic appeal to the jury with his eyes, and then, with a wave of his head, motioned Mr. Mello to retire. 126

In his portrayals of the Justices of the Peace one sees
incompetence, while in his references to the new rural 
police there is corruptness as well. The fact that Surtees 
was a Justice of the Peace himself adds weight to his atti-
tude. Jorrocks, Muleygrub, and Captain Bluster do not have 
the best background and training for their position as 
judges. The day Mr. Jorrocks took the oaths and his seat 
on the bench furnishes an idea of their qualifications. 
The case before the court was a man charged with pasturing 
his ass in Green's cornfield for a night, and the chairman 
asked "Pray, what does Mr. Jorrocks think?"

Mr. Jorrocks then, with great gravity, delivered 
himself of the following opinion:--
"Every man wot keeps a jackass is a waggabone," 
said he very slowly. "Every man wot keeps a jack-
ass keeps a pair of big panniers also, and there's 
no sayin' wot on airth goes into them."
Mr. Jorrocks paused.
"Then what do you think should be done to him?"
asked the chairman. "What punishment shall we in-
flict upon him?"
"Skin him alive!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, look-
ing as if he would eat the defendant.
"I'm afraid that's hardly 'law'," observed the 
clerk, looking respectfully up at his ten-pound 
friend.
"If it's not law, it's what law ought to be," 
observed Mr. Jorrocks, with great gravity.
"A very good observation; very capital observa-
tion!" observed Captain Bluster, as soon as Mr. 
Jorrocks had done; "You'll make an excellent magis-
trade."
"I think I shall," said Mr. Jorrocks, "I think I 
shall, as soon as I get up a little law at least."
Captain Bluster: "Oh, hang the law! The less law 
one has in a justice-room the better. Get Stone's 
'Justice's Pocket Manual,' it'll keep you all right 
as to form; and if you read 'Sam Slick', it will do 
you more good than all the rubbishing stuff the lawyers 
write put together. Stone for the law - Slick for the 
sense."
"Stone for the law and Slick for the sense," re-
peated Mr. Jorrocks.
"Yes; and the first time you're in London go to the Judge and Jury Court at the "Garrick's Head" in Bow Street, and learn some Latin sentences from Chief Baron Richards - Latin tells well from the bench."

The chairman then informed the prisoner that he was convicted, and had to pay to Her Majesty the Queen the sum of one pound over and above the costs of the prosecution and the amount of damage done by the donkey. 127


The chapter on Superintendent Constable Shark is a masterpiece, and there is recreated the country "Pollis" in all their glory, or as Surtees would phrase it, in all their lack-of-glory. Making due allowance for the exaggeration, there is an informative sketch of the evils and chicanery existing in the new rural police. It is a shame the chapter is too long for reproduction here which shows Jorrocks thwarting Shark and his fabricated bill of expenses. However, the presentation of Superintendent Constable Shark is valuable for its preservation of a type and for the insight shown concerning the rural machinery of the Law.

The gentleman, however, who had followed close upon Betsey's heels, here made his appearance, and Mr. Jorrocks found himself confronted with the man of law. He was a hairy, seedy, well set-up, military-looking man, dressed in a shabby hook-and-eyed braided blue frock coat, which concealed as well the deficiency of linen as of waistcoat. His trousers were very broad, badly washed cords, strapped under a pair of boisterous badly-soled boots. Altogether, he was a sort of cross between a serjeant and a circus-master. He was a draft from the rural police in an adjoining county, where his disolute habits had procured him a hint that his
"resignation would be accepted," an arrangement that enabled the Chief Constable to give him high testimonials for his present situation, to obtain which, of course, he represented to the innocent Justices he had resigned his former appointment. He was now Superintendent Constable, and he who couldn't control himself, was placed in authority over others.

He had a capital berth of it, having no one to look after him, and took his salary as a sort of retaining fee, looking upon "incidents," as he elegantly called his extortions, as the real emoluments of his office.

He was a sharp fellow, too, and could twist and trim facts so as to inveigle people into prosecutions who would never have instituted them if left to themselves. In these cases, he had his fling at Sessions or Assizes, where, with always fresh victims to work upon, he preyed upon their generosity with considerable advantage, besides having his "reglers" from the reprobate lawyer with whom he confederated. If he could not manage a commitment, then he would have a little snug bill of costs drawn out so as to exhibit great activity, though his researches were generally directed to parts of the country where he wanted to visit rather than to where he was likely to catch the offender. His horse-like most of these worthies' horses - was a Phantom one, for he rarely had one, never if he could turn a penny by selling it.

His activity was unbounded. He would drink in any company, no matter how low, for the purpose, as he said, of worming out secrets, though the quantity of drink he took generally made the information of very little value on the morrow. No offence was too trifling for his vigilant eye. Indeed, he showed his activity chiefly in trifles, and in drawing out bombastic reports of his wonderful exploits. Omar Pacha himself, at the head of a victorious army, was not half such a hero as Superintendent Shark marching triumphantly along with a few shivering stink or turnip-stealers, whose fluttering rags scarcely concealed their poverty-stricken nakedness.128

There is a richness of detail in Surtees about life in the country. Reference has been made to his representation of country doctors, small courts, rural police, and the hunting field. There is a wealth of information concerning Balls, Dinners, and Parties given at the Manor Houses and Castles. A full account of life at these Country Houses is gained by following Mr. Jorrocks "for where the M.F.H. dines he sleeps, and where the M.F.H. sleeps he breakfasts," or Soapy Sponge whose "dexterity in getting into peoples' houses was only equalled by the difficulty of getting him out." There were also his discerning scenes of fashionable watering places. The difficulties and discomfort of travel were etched clearly both before and after the Railways, and he left many accounts of the inns and taverns available to travelers where, with his usual painstaking exactitude, in addition to the type of accommodations found, there is also given a record of the expenses involved.

However, although in the main Surtees's attention was fixed upon life in the country, it must not be assumed that there is no mention of London in his novels. He spent several years there, knew it thoroughly, and consequently his shrewd comments on London life are as valuable, if not as frequent or as comprehensive, as those on country life.

The passages in Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities where Mr. Jorrocks and the Yorkshireman ride from London to hunt
with the Surrey Hounds (a practise followed by Surtees
while living there) are excellent both in their brief touch
on the poverty seen, as well as the exuberant and impudent
ridicule of the cockneys over the incongruity of scarlet
coats in London.

The opening pages of Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour show
the London of a young dandy, and his daily summer stroll
gives an idea of the day of a young London "swell."

It was a murky October day that the hero of
our tale, Mr. Sponge, or Soapey Sponge, as his
good-natured friends call him, was seen mizzling
along Oxford Street, wending his way to the West.
Not that there was anything unusual in Sponge
being seen in Oxford Street, for when in town his
daily perambulations consist of a circuit, commencing
from the Bantam Hotel in Bond Street into
Picaclilly, through Leicester Square, and so on to
Aldridge's, in St. Martin's Lane, thence by Moore's
sporting-print-shop, and on through some of those
ambiguous and tortuous streets that, appearing to
lead all ways at once and none in particular, land
the explorer, sooner or later, on the South side of
Oxford Street.

Oxford Street acts to the north part of London
what the Strand does to the south; it is sure to
bring one up, sooner or later. A man can hardly
get over either of them without knowing it. Well,
Soapey having got into Oxford Street, would make
his way at a squarey, in-kneed, duck-toed, sort of
pace, regulated by the bonnets, the vehicles, and
the equestrians he met to criticize; for of women,
vehicles, and horses, he had voted himself a con-
summate judge. Indeed he had fully established in
his own mind that Kiddey Downey and he were the only
men in London who really knew anything about horses,
and fully impressed with that conviction, he would
halt, and stand, and stare, in a way that with any
other man would have been considered impertinent.
Perhaps it was impertinent in Soapey - we don't mean
to say it wasn't - but he had done it so long, and
was of so sporting a cut and gait, that he felt him-
selves somewhat privileged. Moreover, the majority
of horsemen are so satisfied with the animals they
bestride, that they cock up their jobs and ride along with a "find any fault with either me or my horse, if you can" sort of air.

Thus Mr. Sponge proceeded leisurely along, now nodding to this man, now jerking his elbow to that, now smiling on a phaeton, now sneering at a 'bus. If he did not look in at Shackell's, or Bartley's, or any of the dealers on the line, he was always to be found about half-past five at Cumberland Gate, from whence he would strike leisurely down the Park, and after coming to a long check at Rotten Row rails, from whence he would pass all the cavalry in the Park in review, he would wend his way back to the Bantam, much in the style he had come. This was his summer proceeding. 129

129
Surtees, Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour. op. cit., Vol. I, op. 1,2.

There is another interesting glimpse when William Pringle and Miss Willing enter London one dreary December evening.

At length, a sudden turn of the road revealed to our friends, who were sitting with their faces to the horses, the first distant curve of glow-worm-like lamps in the distance, and presently the great white invitations to "TRY WARREN'S, or "DAY AND MARTIN'S BLACKING," began to loom through the darkness of the dead walls of the outskirts of London. They were fast approaching the metropolis. The gaunt elms and leafless poplars presently became fewer, while castellated and sentry-box-looking summer-houses stood dark in the little paled-off gardens. At last the villas, and semi-detached villas, collapsed into one continuous gas-lit-shop-dotted street. The shops soon became better and more frequent, more ribbons and flowers, and fewer periwinkle stalls. They now got upon the stones. 130

130
Thus, it should be realized that one will not find the faithful representation of Victorian life and manners in Surtees as is presented with such charm and verisimilitude in the novels of Anthony Trollope. However, he drew from life, and his painstaking attention to detail was so accurate that his works are crammed with accounts which enrich the careful reader's knowledge of Victorian England. His keen satire and rebellion against the accepted literary conventions of his day show an exuberant, vital world which complements the writings of Dickens, Trollope, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, and other contemporaries.
SECTION V

SURTEES'S RECEPTION BY THE VICTORIAN
PUBLIC AND CRITICAL STANDING ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER
As has been shown, Surtees was not at all successful in his own day. At a time when novels were immensely popular, his books not only had nothing like the sale of Dickens', Thackeray's, Eliot's and Trollope's, but sold far worse than lesser novelists such as Whyte-Melville. His biographer, E.D. Cuming, has pointed out that it was fortunate that he did not have to depend on his income from writing for a living. If that had been the case, his later works would probably not have been written, and literature would be without Romford, Sponge, Scamperdale, Lucy Glitters, Independent Jimmy, and dozens of vivid characters. To get an estimate of what his contemporaries were grossing, Anthony Trollope, not as popular as either Dickens or Thackeray, wrote in his Autobiography in 1876 that "during the past twenty years I have made by literature something near £70,000." 131

131 Trollope, op. cit., p. 317.

It is also indicative that Trollope did not even mention Surtees in a discussion of English novelists of his day in his Autobiography (chapter XIII). This is especially significant when one remembers that Trollope was an enthusiastic fox-hunter, and also in view of the fact that he covers the field quite thoroughly, referring to Thackeray, George Eliot, Dickens, Bulwer-Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Charles Lever, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Reade, Annie Thackeray, Rhoda
Broughton, and Disraeli.

There are several reasons for the comparative contemporary neglect of Surtees. As previously indicated, he irritated the fox-hunting crowd by a disregard of their social canons (also as Surtees once slyly remarked, a single book will often last a fox-hunter a long time), and he was too much of a rebel against literary standards of his own time to appeal to the lovers of light literature. Also the sporting novel was not in particularly good repute and was more likely to be found ranked with the various sporting magazines than under serious consideration as literature. It is likely that the success of Pickwick Papers, originated on the same plan as Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities (i.e. adventures of a cockney sportsman), by outshining Jorrocks, kept Surtees from being better known. In fact, at the time, there were accusations that Jorrocks was copied from Pickwick, but a glance at date of publication will clear Surtees of this charge. The mistake was probably because Pickwick Papers first appeared in 1837, and Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities was first published in book form in 1838. However, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities had appeared as a serial in the New Sporting Magazine in the years 1831-1834.

Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour marked the beginning of his extremely successful collaboration with John Leech (of whom it has rightly been said that he was Surtees's interpreter.
rather than illustrator), and also a better reception by the public. It has always been difficult for modern admirers to find editions of Surtees, and when found, they are invariably quite expensive. It has often been explained that the reason is because of the excellent coloured prints by Leech or Alken. This hardly will stand examination since other books illustrated by Leech and Alken do not draw similarly high prices.

Evidence that Surtees is growing in popularity can be seen in the number of recent editions of his works. The last twenty years have seen editions of all his novels, in many cases several of them. For example, there have been six editions of Handley Cross in this century. Young Tom Hall, an uncompleted novel, appeared in book form for the first time in 1926. A biography (E. D. Cuming) was published in 1924. There have been various articles in magazines, and several critical books; the bulk of which has appeared in the last twenty-five years.

The comment on Surtees in The Dictionary of National Biography is amusing in its partisan and (one suspects) poorly considered judgment.

The coarseness of the text [Handley Cross] was redeemed in 1854 by the brilliantly humorous illustrations by John Leech, who utilized a sketch of a coachman made in church as his model for the ex-grocer. Some of Leech's best work is to be found among his illustrations to Surtees's later novels, notably "Ask Mamma" and "Mr. Romford's Hounds." Without the original
Despite this pronouncement, Surtees has gained steadily both in popularity and critical esteem. His books are at a premium in any bookshop. He is accepted as the classic novelist of fox-hunting. Watson has stressed this factor in keeping his name alive as well as hinting at his qualifications which have given him a place in English literature.

The hunts carry on. The farmers remain friendly. At a time when the whole world is at its wit's ends hounds still meet and draw the same coverts beside which our ancestors prophesied the end of everything. Fox-hunting even today is actually on the increase, not decline. That the hunting public is not an insignificant one is indicated by the number of packs in Great Britain, the Dominions and Colonies, and the United States of America at the present time. There are no less than five hundred and fifty-five hunts. The number of people actively or otherwise concerned with hunting is very considerable. They form a constituency tenacious in its loyalties alike to the traditions and the literature of the sport. Year in and year out, from generation to generation, they have certainly carried Surtees through those bad patches when an author is voted old-fashioned or out-of-date.

It is a great advantage for any man to write about a subject, whether it is a science or a sport, which suffers little change, and he would be a rash prophet who would not wager that Handley Cross will not be read in A.D. 2000. But if this steadfast public which comes to few authors over a century may be admitted to have kept Surtees's books in circulation it still remains, as a secondary problem, to be discussed whether his novels can be judged by ambitious critical standards or
whether they have been justly dismissed as 'merely sporting.'

A critical estimate of Surtees's novels must concentrate in the end upon three distinct qualifications for serious attention. He was a satirist, if not upon his great level, at least quite worthy of Thackeray's unqualified praise; he was a creator of genuine comic characters; and he wrote with an infectious enthusiasm which is so rare that it has gone far to give him a special niche in English literature.\footnote{133}

\[133\]
Watson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 257, 258.

The current demand for Surtees is even more striking if one considers him in relation to his contemporaries. Although Dickens still maintains his preeminent place in the Victorian novel, and Trollope after a slump (partially caused by publication of his frank, matter-of-fact autobiography) has been adding to his reputation, most Victorian novelists have fallen from their once high esteem and are comparatively forgotten. George Eliot who reached almost unprecedented popularity in mid-nineteenth century is judged much more critically now. Mrs. Gaskell's reputation has steadily diminished, while many such as Whyte-Melville, Charles Lever, and Rhoda Broughton are comparatively unheard of and unread.

It is likely that Surtees, on the other hand, will continue to be read for some time to come, and it might be added his audience will not be composed entirely of fox-hunters or admirers of the illustrations of John Leech.
While he does not reach the level of Victorian giants such as Dickens, Thackeray or Trollope, his place, slightly lower, is secure, for his novels complement theirs, and perfect our knowledge of the Victorian Era supplied by the nineteenth century novel.
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The first date after the title indicates date of the original edition. The second date is edition of work used in this paper.

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