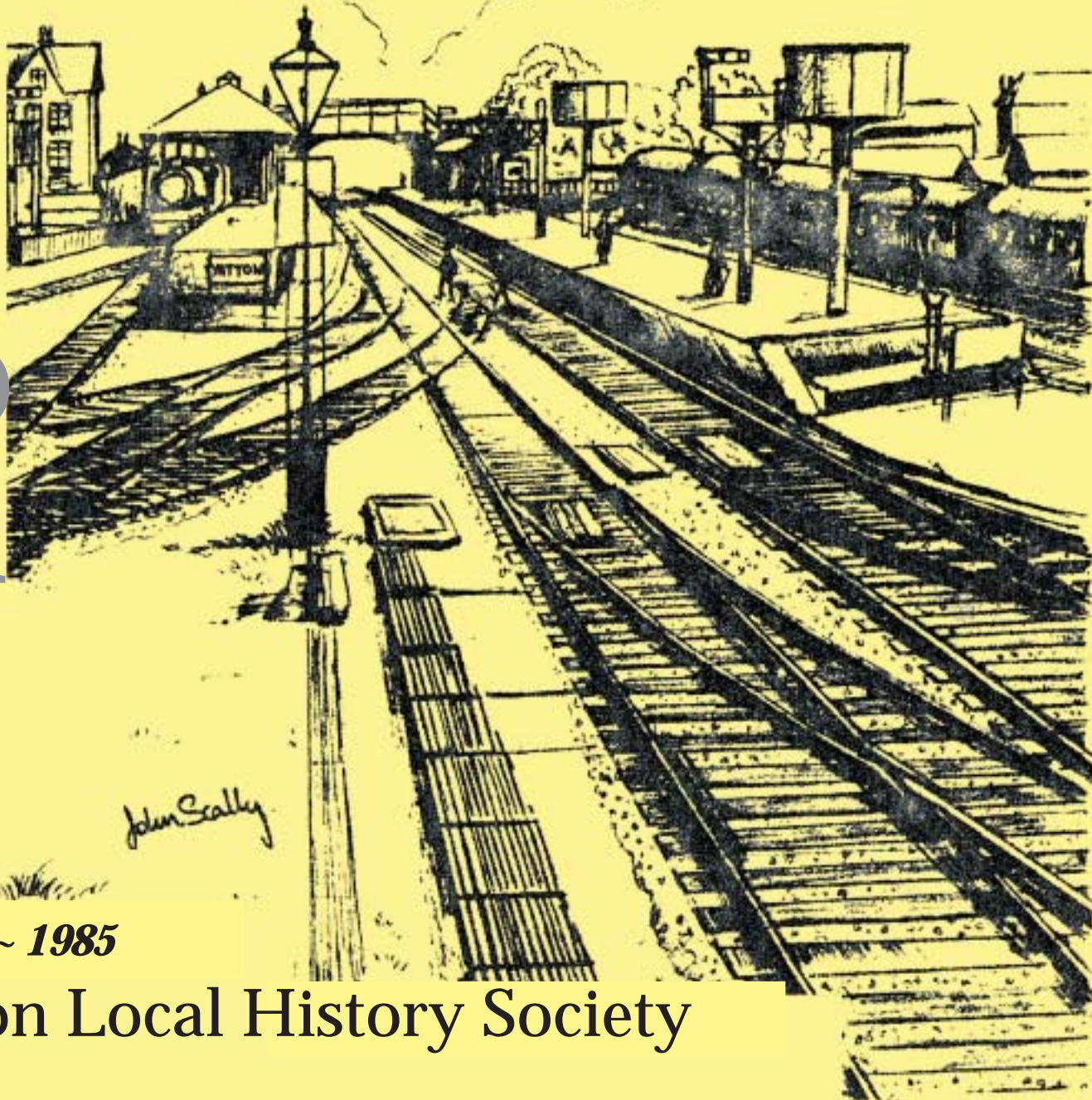


# YATTON

# E S T E R D A Y



*No: 2 ~ 1985*

Yatton Local History Society

The sale of “Yatton Yesterday”, Volume 1, exceeded all our expectations. After three print runs, we finally sold 800 copies. We are indeed grateful to our three local newsagents and to Peter Bell, of Claverham Post Office, who joined our distribution team — all services given free.

John Scally has produced for us another superb front cover. We hope you find the contents interesting, and our thanks go to the various contributors, named therein.

Finally, we can only produce Volume 3 with your help with documents and memories of Yatton’s past. We look for your support.

A. F. Coe  
Chairman  
Yatton Local History Society

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## EDITORIAL

**W**elcome to Volume 2 of “Yatton Yesterday”. We have been overwhelmed at the response to Volume 1 now sold out. Our hope is to publish annually, but that depends on all of you supplying us with information concerning Yatton’s past.

A few ideas come to mind. What about articles on Yatton’s schools, both private and state, or memories of the many tradesmen who have helped to forge Yatton’s history?

May I express my thanks to the Society researchers who are responsible for this publication. I hope to be here to encourage them for some years to come.

**Jack Crease**  
*President*  
*Yatton Local History Society*

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## THE SIGNAL BOX

In view of the design on the front cover, an article about Yatton Station seemed very desirable. We were lucky enough to contact Mr. Malcolm Watham, who has a fund of knowledge of the local Railway system. In fact, he proposes writing a book, in due course, of his memories, illustrated by some superb photographs. He has kindly agreed to allow extracts from his notes to be published in this edition.

“My family have been associated with the G.W.R. from about 1875 until the present day B.R. My grandfather was a signaller on the G.W.R. at Neen Sollars in Shropshire in 1880, and must have joined the Railway before that in the Hereford area. He was later at Titley Junction in Herefordshire as a stationmaster, then at Draycott, then Worle, and back to Draycott where he retired. My own father was a telegraphist in the Yatton Station West Box, 1910-14, with his younger brother Albert, killed in the War. He was signaller at Claverham for about thirty years. When I first came on the Main Line in 1941 as a signaller, we used to work on the same shift, he at Claverham and I at Yatton East, a little box on the moors, above the station. My brother Vivian was telegraphist at Yatton West, and also signaller at Yatton East. My cousin Bill occasionally came to Yatton West as a signaller and his son as a relief telegraphist. This means from 1910 until 1960 six of our family worked at the Junction Box.

As a signaller's son, I loved trains and one highlight was to run up to the Railway bridge at 5.30 p.m. and watch the 5.15 p.m. from Bristol thunder past, and about a minute later the slip coach would run in under its own momentum. It was then picked up and taken to Clevedon. (This slip coach was for the benefit of first class passengers to save them crossing the platform to catch the Clevedon train. Many high class passengers visited Clevedon in those days.) The slipping point was at Claverham and the instructions were ‘no slipping in fog’. On one occasion when it was foggy, the guard missed the slipping point. It overran past Yatton as far as Hewish and had to be fetched back by the yard pilot.

Down by the Gas Works crossing there was a travelling post office picking-up post. The Up Penzance mail train would pick up the leather bag of mail. This must have been in the thirties.

I started at Yatton West in 1941. The signal box windows were painted black about a foot from the top and all were covered with fine blast-proof netting stuck on the glass. Hessian rolls were dropped down from the ceiling in the evening to keep the light of the fire from showing out of the windows. We had a small sheet steel shelter to hold one person.

During my spell there as a signaller, we used to go up into the attic and delve around. We found rolls of messages written by my father and his brother. We found train register books from the days when men worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week. There were the signatures of men signing ‘on’ and ‘off’. There was also a train register of a Royal Train journey of 1897. The greatest find was two books of counterfoils which we believe to be counterfoils of copies of bonus claims by drivers for shunting operations. My book covers a six-month period at Yatton – 250 pages from October 8th 1890 to June 12th 1891. It gives engine numbers of all

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movements claimed for. They must be broadgauge as the change over to narrow gauge took place in 1892. We found all this material covered by about three inches of coal dust and soot that came through the ventilators. I took one book and my friend, the other. We found to our surprise that Yatton West Box appeared to have been built in three sections. It was a Bristol and Exeter box, built in the 1840s, with a fancy gable end. Yatton was then known as Clevedon Road Halt. It was extended when the Clevedon branch was built, and later, for the Cheddar Valley Line.

I went on the Main Line at Yatton East when only twenty years of age. It had 23 levers. I have a train register of that time. On Saturday, August 5th 1950, twenty trains passed between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. I have had 120 pass in eight hours, and on one twelve-hour shift I once had 150 pass. A lot of responsibility for a twenty-year old.

At Yatton East the fog was unpredictable on the moor, and an up train would move it one way and a down train would bring it back, hence it was difficult to know when to get the fogmen out. If a fog lasted for days, the men were on duty for twelve-hour shifts. They wore special overcoats, black with a red collar. They would collect their equipment from the signalman on duty and sign in the train register book. When on duty at a distant signal, they collected a red, green and yellow flag, and a lamp with four positions — red, green, amber and clear (no glass). They had several packets of detonators, plenty of hot drinks in flasks and food. Each hut had a stove in it and local drivers who knew them would drop off in passing a large piece of coal too large to shovel through the fire-box doors. When warmed up, the little hut could be quite cosy.

Once, I was on a night shift. At 5 am, it was a bit foggy, moving about in patches. The down 3.30am, West Depot to Wells freight was in the Yatton platform shunting and the 4.40am, West Depot to Weston was coming down to me from Claverham with a 7200 Class on and about sixty wagons of coal for Weston Gas Works. He had obviously come down too fast from Flax Bourton and Nailsea and did not have his train under control. I heard him coming, blowing his brake whistle. I fired him with the detonators and gave him the red light with a hand lamp. As he went by he shouted, "I can't hold them". I stood at the window after sending the signal "Train running away on the right line". I awaited the bang



*Malcolm Wathen in Yatton West box, with colleague Jim Waters behind, on 22 April 1964  
(Photo: self-timer by Malcolm Wathen)*

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when it hit the brake van of the freight in the platform at Yatton. It stopped just short of it and the driver ran all the way back to apologise. He was in a terrible state.

The freight trains were more interesting in the 1940s than today — almost all the wagons being privately owned. It was a geography lesson in itself to watch them go by – Hickleton Main, Wath Main, Ebbw Vale, Bassaleg, Accrington Stanley, Saxa Salt, R.O.P. Oil Wagons. The King Class engines would often stop in front of the Box and I used to be awestruck by their majesty. One Paddington driver was a huge handsome moustached man, about 6 ft. 6 ins, tall and weighing 18 stone or more. When he invited me up to have a look around, I was scared. He ‘d been known to tease, by pretending to throw lads into the fire-box.

During the War the Bank holiday traffic was still considerable and on these days every siding would be full up with coaching stock from Weston-super-Mare which had taken holiday-makers down and would be needed again in the evening. A lot of Wake & Dean furniture went by rail. The goods porter would go round in the afternoon to sheet these trucks to protect the loads.

Another service to the village was the telegraph system. At Yatton West during the war we still had single-needle Morse instruments. They were used to send messages from the Bristol Telegraph office to Cheddar Valley stations. Most of the messages for the village came over the single needle and were taken up to the station for distribution. At the end of each day copies of the messages were rolled up in a piece of paper, stuck around with paste or glue and put in a cupboard. Eventually they ended up in the attic already mentioned.

There was a bookstall on the up platform at Yatton, run by a man who later opened up a shop in the middle of the village. Many ladies worked at the station during the War. There were three women porters and two lady assistants to the lineman, one of whom had evacuated from the London Blitz.

In the early part of the War, when Bristol was taking a hammering, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth came to visit the city. For their safety the Royal Train was stabled in the Cheddar Valley loop between Yatton and Congresbury.

One of my warmest memories is of the old Sentinel Steam lorries delivering beer to the Railway Hotel and the Railway Inn, now “The Firebox” and “The Market Inn”. During my career as a signalman I have taken photographs of all memorable occasions, derailments, etc., and have a considerable collection of “steam” negatives which have never been printed. I have photos of all signal boxes (interior-exterior) where I have worked including Yatton West, Uphill and Malago Vale Boxes. Anyone interested can contact me on Wrington 862650.”

**Malcolm Watham**

*Mr. Watham recounts in his notes the times he spent at Congresbury, Blagdon, Cheddar, Huntspill, and in particular, Lodge Hill, where he had to report at 6.30 a.m., cycling thirty miles return each day. Humorous episodes and experiences should make this book fascinating reading.*

**T. Coe**



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## THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN YATTON

The Society of Friends was founded by George Fox in 1652. *“Some of the first that received the Truth and the Messengers thereof were .... Jo. Whiting of Naylsey, who kept meetings at his house till he dyed in 1658”* (this is John senior). The first record of a general meeting of Friends in Somerset is dated 1659, at Glastonbury. <sup>(1)</sup>

By a deed of gift of 24th May 1673 Robert Davis conveyed the Half Acre plot *“near unto a certain place called Claverham being in the parish of Yeatton . . . that the said plot shall be a burying place for the said people called Quakers and for others who shall desire thare to be buried .... on the said ground may be built a house for the .... Quakers to meet together to worship the Lord their God and for some of their poor Friends to inhabit therein . . . .”* <sup>(2)</sup> So it seems as if it was used in part as an almshouse.

The deed states that they *“work out their owne salvation with feare and trembling and are therefore reproachfully called Quakers . . . .”* also that they *“refused those idolized publique burying places commonly called (though falsely) consecrated or holy ground.”*

The Friends named in the deed are Henry Moore (Backwell), Arthur Thomas yeoman of Barrow and Cleeve (m. Lydia Gundry 1670), William Parsons of Churchill, William Goodridge and Samuel Sayer of Banwell, Gabriel Davies of Claverham yeoman (m. Ann Yeeles 1678 and d. 1689), John Bullock (m. Mary Clothier 1675), Samuel Hipsley of Cleeve (m. Ann Bullock 1675, d. 1683) and John Allen yeoman of Yatton. Henry Moore and Samuel Hipsley had been to a meeting at Ilchester in July 1668.

Other early members included Thomas Churchouse of Claverham, Thomas Avery and William Avery (d. 1681) of Yatton, Arthur Thomas junior of Cleeve yeoman 1675-1720, John Davies of Claverham (m. Elizabeth Godwin in 1676), John Galton of Yatton and Taunton, clothier. In 1696 the Monthly Meeting was being held at Claverham on the third Wednesday.

George Harris of Yatton (d. 1673) was imprisoned at Ivelchester (Ilchester) in 1662 when his name occurs on a list of prisoners – he had given 10/- (50p) *“towards the supply and support of such of our fellow prisoners . . . . as have not a sufficiency of those outward things to afford necessaries”*. <sup>(3)</sup>

Life was not easy for dissenters, who objected to paying tithes for *“mayntaining of steeple houses”*. Many of the leaders of the 1660s died in prison or later as a result of treatment there. The Conventicle Act of 1670 resulted in raids on meetings... *“The same magistrate who committed John Whiting (the son, to Ilchester prison) had on one occasion disturbed the*

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*meeting at Claverham, whilst Charles Marshall was praying, pulling him down between the gallery rails, by which he was seriously injured".* The total loss to Friends in Somerset from distrains under the Act was estimated by John Whiting to be £3,000. <sup>(4)</sup>

*"At Yeaton from the said Gabriel Davis by sequestration six oxen and two cows worth £27. 0s. 0d."* <sup>(5)</sup> A further extract from the "Sufferings" relates to a raid at Claverham in 1681 – *"On the 12th of the month called February three Justices, viz. Sir John Smith, Edward George and John Pigot Esq. came to a meeting at Claverham and commanded the Friends who were sitting in silence to depart, which they not doing, the Justices took their names, and charged the constable to keep them out of the house. They afterward issued their warrants for distress, by which were taken from Arthur Thomas of Barrow, two cows worth £6. 10s. which the officers sold to Justice Pigot for £5. From William Beakes two cows of like value, which the people refused to buy, were taken by Justice George into his own custody, till sold to a brother-in-law of his for £4. From Gabriel Davis and John Davis of Yeaton, cattle worth £5, and from Samuel Hipsley and Thomas Mitchel, goods worth 19s, (95p). There were also fined for being at the same meeting Henry Moore, Samuel Jobbins and Thomas Cooke".*

The Toleration Act allowed dissenters to meet for worship subject to a certificate being obtained for each meeting place. At the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions in 1689 Somerset Friends got certificates for 51 meeting houses or private houses, including Claverham. <sup>(6)</sup>

The Friends persevered and in 1729 the old meeting house was replaced by the present building in Meeting House Lane. In 1747 the meeting house book records receipt of money from the sale of apples and wood, also money paid out, e.g. to Richard Hipsley for a hundred of faggots for Mary Curtis 12/- (60p); a well rope 2/6d. (12½p). <sup>(7)</sup>

In 1824 a meeting was held about levelling the burial ground and beginning at one corner with graves, keeping them in regular rows. The first names in the Register of Burials are Mary Palmer aged 79, spinster of Claverham 1824 and Mary Eddington aged 64, widow of Yatton, 1825. The last entry is Nathanael Sholl aged 92, retired confectioner, Yatton, 1911. <sup>(8)</sup>

To the Friends education was of great importance and money was given for the establishment of schools. Richard Durban of Jasmine Farm Claverham made his will 8.4.1729, proved 26.4.1729 (the year the new meeting house was built). After making various bequests including £5 for the repairing of Claverham Meeting House, he says

*"I give and bequeath all the rest and residue of my Personal Estate Goods and Chattles, not before bequeathed, unto my friends Joseph Briant of the Parish*



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*of Wrington, James Wreach of the Parish of Congresbury and Samuel Horwood and Samuel Willmott of the Parish of Yatton, in trust and for the use hereinafter mentioned.*

*Item: My will is that my Friends in Trust before-mentioned do lay out my substance in free land for ever, or to put it out to interest, and the interest of the said money, or the rent of the land, to be bestowed out on Teaching or Taughting of a school for poor children for ever, at the discretion of my Trustees, and after my Trustees' decease to who they should appoint to be in trust for the said school".*

An inventory of Durban's effects was taken and, after paying his expenses and buying benches and desks, £542. 0s. 7d. remained. This money was mostly laid out in land which for many years was let to Friends. The school was established immediately, Mary Maskall and Sarah Corse being employed at 2d. a week each to teach "*a parcel of poor children*". In January 1730 Jonah Thompson commenced as schoolmaster at £20 p.a. He left in 1735, going in 1762 to Dorset to establish the school at Compton. Succeeding masters at Yatton were Jonas Binns, William Madox, Nathaniel Ainsworth and Thomas Ainsworth who left in 1775 and was paid £12 for the year. On Lady Day 1775 John Benwell commenced, remaining nine years at £15 pa, after which he went to Sidcot in April 1784. Mary Avery's name appears but by 1796 George Burnett was the school-master – he died December 1821. <sup>(9)</sup>

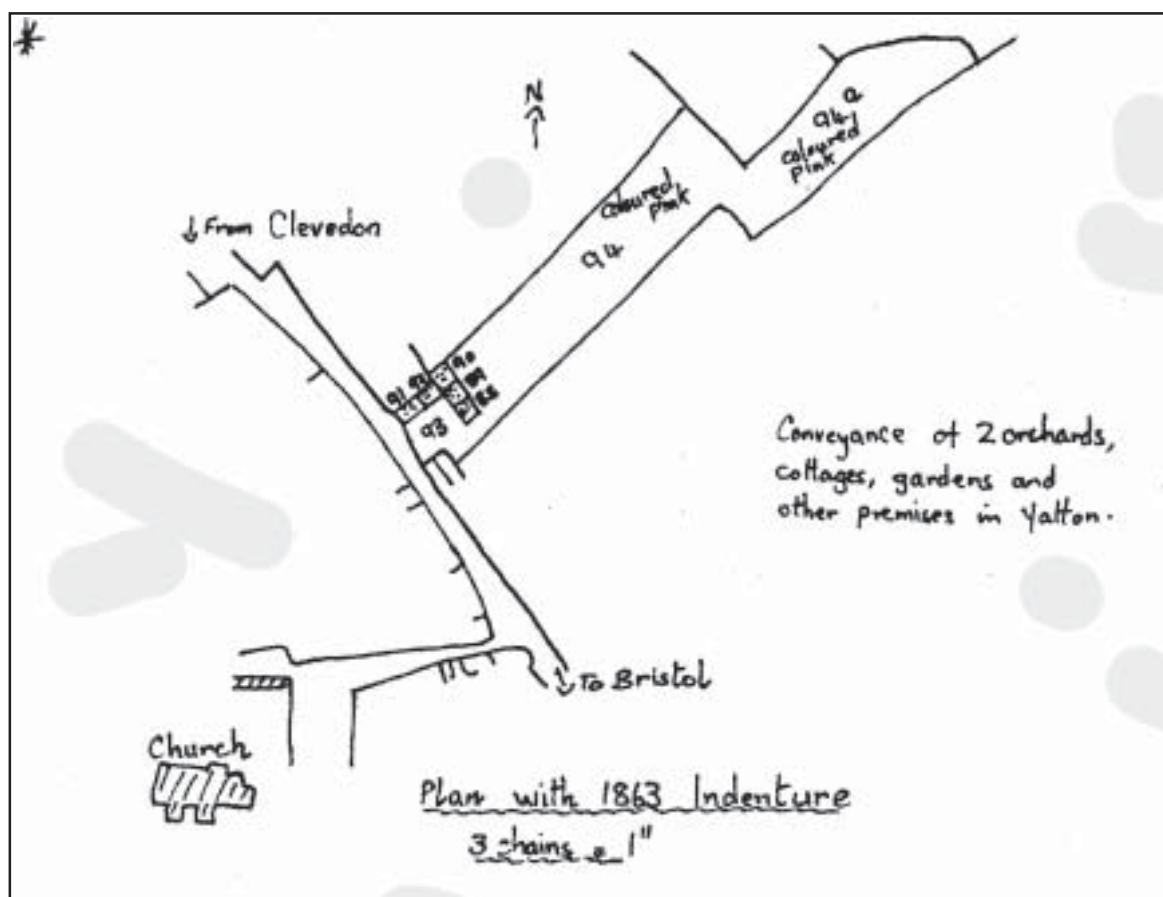
In 1732 John Hains was paid £1. 10. 0., the yearly rent of the school house, and in 1735 it was referred to as "Porberry House". <sup>(9)</sup> Collinson (*History of Somerset*) says that a quarry of limestone was opened in 1782 in a garden "at the south-east end (of Yatton) near the Quaker schoolhouse. Maurice Gregory's grandson in his memoirs (*Family Annals*) says that he, Maurice (1785 - 1859) went to Durban's Yatton school "*then carried on at Rock House*" and then to Nether Compton under his uncle Thomas Thompson (Jonah's son who married Maurice's aunt). Rock House at that time is said to have been occupied by William Eddington, so possibly the school was held in one part only. Later it was at the 'British Schoolroom' (since 1926 the Cadet Hall) and this is marked 'school' on the 1883/5 25" O.S. map.

Trust money was paid out from 1797 to John Benwell for educating children at his school at Sidcot. Knight, in '*Heart of Mendip*' says that when the Friends bought this property for a school in 1808 Benwell became the first head, and that the next year another house for girls was opened.

In 1815 Hester Greenwood (who later became Mrs. Colman) received £15 as the school-mistress of Yatton Free School, rising to £20 in 1824.

Kelly's Directory lists the teacher in 1859, 1875 and 1883 as Miss Elizabeth Avery. She was a member of Yatton meeting in 1887. <sup>(10)</sup> In 1866 the Claverham meeting was closed (but not the graveyard, and occasional meetings were still held; in June 1939 Mr. Badman was paid £2 for work in the graveyard.) <sup>(11)</sup> By a deed of 20th December 1863 two orchards, cottages, gardens and other premises in Yatton were conveyed to the Trustees for the Society. They were: Henry Catford of Clevedon watchmaker, Frederick F. Cotterell of Bath, paper stainer, Henry Ferris of Bristol, Joseph Storrs Fry of Bristol, chocolate manufacturer, John T. Grace of Bristol accountant, Alexander Grace of Bristol, mealman, Francis Gregory of Yatton grocer, James Gilpin Gregory son of William Gregory of Yatton, grocer, Arthur Tanner of Sidcot gentleman and Albert Wedmore son of Joseph of Weston-super-Mare. The property included Samuel Avery's cottage and shop "adjoining the turnpike road from Bristol to Clevedon", and a bakehouse, stable and cottage occupied by E. Gallop and W. Baker. The land was bought for a meeting house and burial ground. <sup>(12)</sup>

In August 1911 the four remaining of the above Trustees agreed to sell the meeting house to Richard Durban's Trustees, so that the undenominational school could move there. (*The present Infant School*).



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They retained the use of one room, and a cleaner continued to be paid by the Friends, the last item in the account book being 9/- paid to her in October 1939 for 9 weeks' cleaning.<sup>(13)</sup> A right of way to the burial ground was reserved (*in the N.E. corner of the playground*) until the ground was sold in 1965. In 1912 the Durban Trustees were John Hardwick, Charles Stuckey, Arthur Collings, Frederick James Clement, John Burdge, Richard Winter Burdge and Edward Edwards.<sup>(14)</sup>

The Society owned land and used the income to support poor Friends. In 1909 Footmead (by Gangwall) was let at £5. 5. 0. p.a. to Mr. Burdge "*who has left the country*" and so Walter Hughes became the tenant.<sup>(15)</sup> On a 1734 map<sup>(16)</sup> Macquarie Farm is marked "*Quakers Charity Gift*". They still owned it in 1840 when the tenant of the farm and surrounding land was Maurice Gregory, who retired about 1851. He was also tenant of the rest of the Society's land in Yatton, viz., Vaspool (*by the railway*), the 14 Acres and the 8 Acres (*west of Horsecastle*) and Coldharbour and another field east of Moor Road.<sup>(17)</sup> By 1921 they still owned Footmead but had sold the farm and land and had investments in Canadian and Australian shares.<sup>(18)</sup>

The Yatton Preparative Meeting account book commences in 1867 with the furnishing of the new meeting house. In 1896 the room was let to the Yatton Winter Evening Society monthly from November to March, rent £1 in all. In 1896, too, coal from Counsell and coke from C. Knowles cost 1/- (5p) per cwt. and the December quarter's gas bill was 8/3d. (41p). In the same year Luke and Elvira Woodard, Friends from America, were provided with railway tickets to Bristol, 1/- each. Emma Gallop was paid £1. 4. 0. (£1.20) quarterly for "*care of Meeting House*" until she gave up in 1911 – no increase in pay. The pump was constantly having to be repaired and the clock also seems to have given trouble. Postage for 1924 was 1/1d. (5½p). In 1903 the Monthly Meeting was held at Yatton and 1/7½d (about 8p) spent on buns and biscuits.<sup>(19)</sup>

On 31. 12. 1887 members of Yatton meeting included Edmund, Sarah, Emma, Sophia, William, Eliza, Francis and Elizabeth Gregory, Willmotts, Osmonds, Martha Palmer, Sophia Taylor and George Stephenson. Total: males 10, females 26, attenders 2 - 38.<sup>(20)</sup>

In the 18th and 19th centuries we have a picture of prosperous shopkeepers, and of graziers occupying many of the farms sending their children to the schools at Nether Compton and Sidcot, and intermarrying mainly with similar Quaker families from Somerset and S. Gloucestershire. As nonconformists, higher education was denied to them and their energies went into business enterprises. Even so, they were often better educated than their neighbours, and after the coming of the railways and

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increased mobility most of the families seem to have left Yatton for wider opportunities outside. The Sidcot School register shows that of Bishop Gregory's children born at Claverham Court, Ann, Catherine and Sarah died at Croydon, his son Frederic became a dye manufacturer of Ipswich and his son Thomas, a grocer, died at Reading. His grandson died in Australia in the merchant service. Other Gregorys went to Canada (N.B. "Bishop" was his Christian name). Of the sons of William Eddington (junior) one died at Norwich, two manufactured steam ploughs at Chelmsford, one taught in Kendal and another died in Bermondsey.

The "*Family Annals*" by Edward Gregory d. 1956, aged 94 – mentioned above — give a picture of these times; he quotes too from the writings of his father, Maurice's son. <sup>(21)</sup>

Edward Gregory of Pucklechurch married Martha Tucker at Nailsea Old Church in 1661; she was related to John Whiting and Edward soon joined the Society. His grandson Edward, 1713-68, moved to Yatton in 1738 on marrying Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Hipsley of Park Farm – Thomas came in 1712 from Backwell to the farm, which he rented from Earl Poulett. On Edward's death it was said "*He was an elder amongst us and ruled with diligence.*" His wife Elizabeth soon died and he then married Ann Cary. Elizabeth's sons were William 1739 - 1800 of Macquarie Farm (the father of Maurice) and Thomas 1744-1810 married Ann Bishop of Pensford (the father of Bishop). Ann Cary had 7 children and the youngest, Edward 1753-1831, only 15 when his father died, carried on at Park Farm which he later bought from the Poulett estate, leaving it to his son, also Edward, 1800 - 1872. He in turn willed it to his nephew Samuel Tanner, who sold it.

Edward d. 1831 did without sugar for 37 years as a testimony against the slave trade. His accounts show that in 1827 he was worth £6,182. William d. 1800 (his half-brother) had a 4½ acre orchard on the Ridge and also rented around 500 acres of land. "*He was a spare, thin man of considerable energy . . . he carried on the Home Farm of 49 acres (Macquarie) and had two farms near Chepstow. He rented 40 acres of Clevedon sea wall from Sir Abraham Elton*".

William's daughter Sally (Willmott) was accidentally shot in 1790 when passing through Congresbury riding a horse, and died aged 27. She had been to visit her sister who married the inventor of Banbury cakes. William's wife, Deborah, Maurice's mother, "*was a stout short woman of high principles. She once visited under religious concern, probably with another Friend, a woman of position as regards worldly prosperity who owned Claverham great house and was living an adulterous life*".

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Maurice married Phoebe Churchus from Tockington, Glos., but this family originally lived at Court House Farm from the early 1700s until about 1826 when the house and 32 acres of land were sold for around £2,800. (*This is now the site of Yatton Precinct*).

Another of William and Deborah's sons, Henry 1778-1834, had eleven children and lost membership of the Friends through "*marrying out*". "*A stout, well-made man. He wore top boots. He was too fond of drink, and coming home from Backwell Fair walking, he fell into a narrow stream by the side of the road, and baying back the water with his body, was drowned*".

Samuel Willmott of Claverham Court, with Thomas Hipsley of Park Farm, were the two Friends who made the Durban inventory in 1729. Samuel, one of the original trustees of the charity school, was "*a singularly able man willing to go out of his way to help a neighbour*". He rented all the land belonging to the Durban Trustees until his death in 1757. He married a Gregory and their daughter Mary 1733-1816 married Robert Churchus and lived at Court House Farm. When old she was blind but active in mind. "*She wore a lavender coloured silk dress and had a pair of scissors attached to her side from a silver chain. She was a kindly woman*". Her son Edward travelled all night by coach in 1810 to see the funeral procession of Princess Amelia, daughter of George III.

Bishop Gregory was the last child of Thomas and grandson of twice-married Edward. He was born on 22nd October 1783 and died 29th March 1857, marrying Sarah Eddington in Claverham in 1811. After living at Barberry Farm he was at Claverham Court for 29 years. His children attended Sidcot School as weekly boarders. On his retirement in 1847 he and Sarah moved to Yatton, then to their sons' farm at Sharpham Park (*Arthur and Alfred*). Later they moved to Weston where he died and is buried. Two of his daughters married into the Clark shoe family of Street.

Bishop "*was a man of great integrity and simplicity, combined with humility . . . . and true Christian charity . . . . he was warmly attached to the Society . . . . for many years he was an elder and overseer . . . . he was possessed of sound judgment exercised with Christian concern and a regard for the feelings of others*"<sup>(22)</sup>

Thomas Eddington from Kingston Seymour had a son William who became a Friend and married at Claverham, died 1806 aged 51. His children were all born at Rock House (*one of them marrying Bishop*) — all except one were girls.

The son, William 1800-1883, married a Gregory and was the grandfather of the astronomer Sir Arthur Eddington. A plaque now on the wall of 42 Walliscote Road, Weston, reads "*Arthur Stanley Eddington, scientist, 1882-1944, lived here as a boy*".

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Maurice's son Thomas, 1828 - 1907, (*father of the writer of the "Annals"*), married a woman from Alcester and moved to Bristol. One of their sons, Alfred, emigrated to New Zealand in 1899; Alfred's grandson John was born in Australia in 1942. And so descendants of the handful of men and women who joined the Society in this district at its beginnings must be scattered all over the world – perhaps we shall hear from some of them.

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Help is also gratefully acknowledged from Mrs. R. M. Stone of Ilford, Essex, and Mrs M. Lloyd of Bristol for the loan of the Sidcot School register.

**Marian Barraclough**



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## Mr CHARLES EDWARDS

The Society has been delighted to receive a letter from Mr. Charles Edwards of Chelmsford. He had been sent a "Yatton Yesterday" No. 1 by his brother-in-law, Mr. Arthur Edwards, and expressed his pleasure at its contents and also that Yatton has a Local History Society.

The article on the old church clockworks re-aroused his interest in that subject especially as the author Robert Young's father, Frank, had been an old friend. He also knew Ronald Clement's parents and was a spectator the following day at the scene of the grandfather's fire. However, he queries Mr. Clement's date of the fire putting it a few years later. Ronald is hoping to find a recorded account and so fix the date accurately.

Mr. Edwards was well acquainted with the elderly sisters who lived at Weeping Ash Farm, Miss Hardwick, Mrs. Yeates and Mrs. Lewis. Once as a boy, when cycling to the dentist at Clevedon, he sought refuge from a storm under the weeping ash. The kindly sisters took him into the house and "made a fuss" of him. Miss Hardwick "*small, cheerful and chirpy like a bird*", Mrs. Yeates "*probably knocking 70 but who was still incredibly beautiful*" and the older sister Mrs. Lewis, who was stone deaf and so took no notice but gazed out of the window. No doubt many people in Yatton still remember these sisters.

Many of us still remember how uncomfortable coconut matting can be on bare knees at morning prayers as the young Charles was forced to suffer when visiting "uncle" John Hardwick at Puxton.

It is a pleasure to hear from old Yattonians who have enjoyed our first publication and we trust Yatton 2 will be as acceptable. We welcome Charles Edwards as a life-member to join his old friend and neighbour Jack Crease.



## A DAY AT THE SEASIDE

Excursions from Bristol to Weston were popular. Sometimes in the evening there were so many trains they lined up engine to bumper waiting to return. The railwaymen welcomed the rain, as they could then start the exodus by six o'clock.



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## THE ORIGINS OF YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Yatton Parish Council came into being as the result of the Local Government Act 1894.

Until then it had been common for several different authorities to be responsible for various functions in the same parish. These included the Rector (or Vicar), the Churchwardens, the Overseers, various combinations of these, the Vestry with sometimes a Sanitary Board and special authorities created by Act of Parliament or ancient local custom. The 1894 Act transferred all civil functions to the Parish Meeting and the Parish Council, leaving the ecclesiastical authorities responsible only for church affairs and ecclesiastical charities.

The first Yatton Parish Meeting was on 4th December 1894 at 7 p.m. in the National School (the old building in Church Road), the notice being signed by the Overseers, Charles Baker and Charles Binning. The sole business was to elect a Parish Council of 10 members: there were 21 nominations and a poll was demanded and held on Saturday, 15th December 1894.

Those elected were: C. Baker, J. Bourne, S. P. G. Cox, B. Crossman, R. Dutton, W. Gregory, Dr. P. P. Johnson, C. Knowles, W. A. Lyddon and J. Salmon. The Council first met on 4th January 1895 and elected as its Chairman the Rev. W. Arnold who was Vicar of Yatton from 1891 to 1895. For many years the Chairman did not have to be a councillor (in many villages the local squire was elected), but when Mr. Arnold left Yatton Dr. P. P. Johnson became Chairman and ever since, in Yatton, the Chairman has been an elected councillor.

The Council appointed as its Clerk, Mr. R.H. Burdge who had been Vestry Clerk and as its Treasurer Mr. Newnham of the Wilts & Dorset Bank. It appointed George Phillips and R. Dutton as Waywardens and Alfred Naish and John Light Wyatt as Overseers. A precept of £20 was fixed for the first year and it was agreed that all meetings should be open to the public unless otherwise decided. A quorum for meetings of six members was agreed, printed circulars were ordered for notices of meetings, and the next meeting was fixed for 18th January 1895.

The Council also instructed the Trustees of the Parochial Charities to distribute monies and to give the Council particulars of the Charities. For several years the Council thought it had become responsible for the Charities but eventually the Charity Commissioners sorted out the position and provision was made for some of the Charity Trustees to be appointed by the Council.



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In 1894 Yatton included Cleeve and Hewish. Cleeve became a separate parish in 1949 while Hewish became part of Congresbury as the result of several boundary alterations in 1962. Further boundary adjustments with adjoining parishes occurred in 1982.

The Local Government Act 1972 gave parish councils power to call themselves “town councils” and their chairman “town mayor” but these powers have not been exercised in Yatton.

Yatton was in Long Ashton Rural District in the County of Somerset until Local Government reorganisation in 1974 when it became part of Woodspring District in the County of Avon. In the old administrative divisions of Somerset, Yatton had been in the Hundred of Winterstoke.

*Jack Vincent*

Sources – mainly Minute Books of Yatton Parish Council



## **YATTON WATER COMPANY (1907)**

Concealed among the trees at the highest point of Henley Hill is a low, fenced-off mound with an entrance arch which, until very recently, bore the legend “Yatton Water Company 1907”. In the closing years of the twentieth century we take instant pure tap water very much for granted, along with flush toilets and instant sewage disposal. Things were very different ninety years ago.

Conditions in Yatton in 1895 were sufficiently malodorous to cause Yatton Parish Council to inspect all houses and drains following a complaint by Mr. A. G. Collings concerning sewage between the Butchers Arms and the Vicarage. In July of that year Mr. Prince’s pond (near Cherry Grove) was found to be contaminated by sewage – and similar material was overflowing from cesspits in houses owned by Messrs. Crabbe and Lyons into the street, along with even more noxious effluent from a slaughterhouse. The daily output from the schools also overflowed along the main road. As the drain outfall was to a ditch behind the Vicarage, that gentleman was understandably concerned. It was resolved that owners should be compelled to keep cesspits in good order and the Council set an example by draining the Almshouses pit for £2.5.0d. and building a new one to the latest legal requirements for a further £7.10.0d.

It was hoped that this decisive action would alleviate the problem but, as so often happens, the British weather took a hand the following year. 1896 brought an unprecedented drought. The absence of rain meant that sewage

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was not carried away and wells throughout the parish became contaminated. Complaints of Nuisance (*a delightful euphemism*) gained momentum: April, Nuisance at Railway Hotel; May, at The Lodge; June, Mr. Prince's pond again. In July the Council met to consider "*what steps, if any, should be taken to procure Good Water for the inhabitants of Yatton and Cleeve*". Somewhat surprisingly it was resolved that no scheme whatsoever should be entered into. By August conditions had become so desperate that the handle was removed from the parish pump. A report by the Medical Officer of Health had expressed grave concern over the contaminated state of various water samples from wells around the parish. The Council blamed the recently formed Bristol Waterworks Company, which they accused of lowering the water table by extracting from the River Kenn at Chelvey far more water than that to which they were properly entitled.

Acrimonious correspondence ensued with both the Rural District Council and Somerset County Council. The villagers sought to force Bristol Waterworks Co. to restrict their extraction rate to the limitations laid down under the 1865 Act forming the Company. By 1897 the Council was urging legal action, but when an enquiry was mooted they found themselves unable to substantiate their complaints with exact details and dates.

Matters were further exacerbated by a scarlet fever outbreak in the village in '98: R.D.C. pressure to install a new drainage system was lent weight by a damning report from a Dr. Fuller, The Council continued to resist Long Ashton pressure, presumably on cost grounds.

During 1899 Mr. Lyons' cesspit continued to overflow, running for 30 yards along the highway to join Mr. Light's watercourse. In spite of this a public meeting at the National Schoolroom voted 60 - 17 against a water supply and 44-23 against new drainage. No firm scheme was produced for consideration, Mr. Price complained of Claverham Ditch, which at this time held pure tannery effluent. Nuisances continued elsewhere, with sewage from Mr. West's house affecting West Mead Rhine. By October a Mr. Cotterell and eight principal residents wrote to the Local Government Board about the deplorable state of sanitation in Yatton, Claverham and Cleeve and the Council agreed the need for something to be done.

On the instructions of the R.D.C., Mr. Cotterell produced a combined fresh water and drainage scheme for an estimated cost of £9,710 the water to be obtained from Bristol Waterworks Co. This was felt to be far too dear and the Parish Council commissioned a Mr. Powell to prepare an alternative report for a fee not exceeding 20 guineas. By June 1900 Mr. Powell produced his report, which interestingly dealt only with the water aspect, drainage being deferred until a later date. He drew attention to three springs at Claverham on the south side of the road near Bishop's Well and Holy Well, which he estimated would together produce 164,000 gallons per day if bored to depths of 60 and 150 feet. An expenditure of £100 on trial bores was agreed. By the

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following year Mr. Powell advised that the springs would supply ample water for the parish and application was made to spend £300 on a permanent 60' deep well to yield 2,000 galls per hour. Meanwhile, the parish pump had again run dry and was further deepened at a cost of £4.15.6d.

On the sewage front, the summer of 1901 saw the purchase by the R.D.C. of an "*iron bodied liquid manure cart and water cart with pump for filling and trough for discharge*", 180 gallon capacity. The price was £24.10.0d. and the device was to be hired out to residents at 1/- (5p) per 24 hour period.

Following on Mr. Powell's enthusiastic report, approaches were made to Capt. Hardman, the major landowner, with a view to purchasing land from him for the erection of a pumping station at the spring site, together with wayleave for pipes and further land on Cadbury or Henley Hill for a header reservoir. Capt. Hardman sought a bargain whereby Cadbury House would be supplied free of charge and all the Hardman estate houses in the area would be supplied on the same terms as Yatton houses. Various counter proposals and offers were made and at the end of March 1902 Mr. Bramble, Capt. Hardman's legal adviser, was instructed to draw up transfer deeds for a consideration of £350. A clause was inserted whereby, if the water supply to a nearby pond appeared to be affected by pumping activity, a free supply would be provided to replenish it.

Tenders were obtained from five companies to expand the borehole to a well of 7'6" diameter with 9" brick lining to a depth of 60'. These ranged from £480 from Wm. Handcock & Co. of Bristol to £248 from Pethick Bros. of Vauxhall Bridge, London, whose quotation was accepted. Pressure was still being exercised by Long Ashton to accept their scheme and this continued over a long period. As late as May 1904 the Council took legal advice over its powers to oppose the R.D.C. scheme and their right to raise a £9,000 loan, to undertake their own plans: they went so far as to empower a Bristol solicitor, Mr. Roberts, to take whatever steps might be necessary, including retaining a KC, to oppose the Long Ashton plans. The deciding point in the end appears to have been that, under the R.D.C. proposals, several substantial ratepayers at outlying farms and houses, especially in Hewish, would not have been served by the mains. These properties, together with several at Lower Claverham, would have necessitated an extra 6 miles of piping. Mr. Powell shrewdly advised that Bristol Waterworks would undoubtedly look for at least a 10% return on their employed capital, whereas his locally funded scheme would be self liquidating. Long Ashton capitulated in 1906 and advised that the Local Government Board had sanctioned a loan for the villagers' projected enterprise.

Meanwhile the drainage problems had not gone away: in December 1902 Elborough Street was covered with mud and refuse and the road had sunk 2' below pathway level in places. In spite of this the R.D.C. Inspector of Nuisances found that it was not in an insanitary condition.

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The water course at the end of Rock Road was contaminated and the sanitary cart had been damaged and retained by Mr. Millier: it was resolved that he should be made to repair it and that it should henceforth remain in the Parish Clerk's keeping.

1907 saw work proceeding rapidly: the reservoir was completed and mains laid across Cadbury Hill to The Scaur, along High Street and Claverham Road to Cleeve, Lower Claverham and Horsecastle. Standpipes were erected at Kingston Bridge, the Gas House, Claverham Chapel, Hollowmead, Plunder Street, Cleeve Chapel and by Mrs. Payne's gate at Lower Claverham. Meetings were held to fix the level of charges and general operating rules. The more prosperous house-holders were laying in service pipes with a view to connecting their properties. The first 18' of pipe from the mains was laid free of charge to the owner.

The assets of the company at this stage comprised the Pumping Station, from which a gas engine transferred the water up a pipe to the 150,000 gallon header reservoir on Henley Hill during the night hours. There was no remote "full" indicator – pumping continued until the dawn revealed water flowing back down the pathway! From the reservoir a 5" galvanised pipe with lead joints ran to The Scaur, whence it branched to Claverham and continued down Yatton High Street as a 4" main with 3" spurs to Church Road, Elborough Avenue and 2" pipes to Laurel Terrace, Wemberham Lane and Wakedean Gardens, narrowing to 1½" past Jones Bridge.

Needham's, the Clevedon plumbing firm, had carried out most of the installation work and the day to day operation was supervised by Mr. Harry Rattle, the Engineer, under the direction of a Parish Council committee.

In 1910 Clevedon Fire Brigade reported various pressure tests at hydrants, recording 80lbs at Claverham House and 90lbs at Horsecastle Bridge. Many villagers however did not apply for immediate connection – presumably if they had for years had to visit a well or pump to obtain their water, it was no greater hardship to walk to the nearest standpipe. Tutts Stores, for example, were not connected until August 1937. Our neighbours at Kingston Seymour were denied the benefit of mains water until 1952 when, due to the acid nature of their soil, asbestos and plastic pipes had to be used to carry cleanliness to that remote outpost.

1921 saw the sewage problem rearing its head again: Dr. Newsome, the Long Ashton Rural District Council's Medical Officer of Health, reported on nuisances (*by this time with a small 'n'*) at the Milk Depot (*now Smart Windows*), Castle Terrace, Horsecastle, Elborough Street and Yatton Sewer Outfall at the end of Well Lane. Further pressure was applied by Dr. Savage of Somerset CC and a committee of inspection was formed. It found that many cesspits were not watertight and in many cases rainwater was deliberately being routed into them. Suggestions were made regarding the

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piping of the worst blackspots and serving enforcement notices on the recalcitrant. The committee viewed and ordered a Vacuum Cesspit Emptier to be charged out at 6/- (30p) per hour; the now redundant Mark I model was sold at Yatton Market in June 1922 for £11.00. At a meeting at this time, according to a newspaper report but interestingly not recorded in the minutes, a move was made to reduce Mr. Rattle's salary by 10%. This was defeated. His remuneration at this time was 50/-, (£2.50) per week with free housing, lighting and coal.

The 1925 Annual Parish Meeting was told that the scheme was proceeding entirely to plan, with 18 years of the 30 year loan paid off. Occasional operational problems occurred – the following year it was reported that a shortage of water throughout the village on one day had been due to a mains fracture at Horsecastle when both Mr. Rattle and his workman were away in Bristol. Demand steadily increased and in 1931 Wake & Dean Ltd. (*whose phone no. was Yatton 15*) applied for a 1¼" service pipe to replace the existing ½" one.

The early '30s at last dispersed the periodic Nuisance. The Medical Officer of Health threatened a full scale Ministry Enquiry when Stowey Rhine was found to be particularly badly contaminated. By May 1931 a main sewer had been laid along the length of Yatton High Street. This work had some effect on the Water Company's operations – a burst main in The Ridge in 1932 was blamed on inadequate trench reinstatement following sewage pipe laying. Samples of mains water by Somerset CC in 1931 were pronounced good. Well water, whilst not of particularly high purity, at least became of potable quality again.

By 1937 it became difficult to maintain adequate supplies from the existing sources with the pre-war building boom gaining momentum. Cleeve was afflicted with periodic shortages and irate letters were written. In 1936/7 Elborough Estate (now Derham Park) was being developed and a 4" spur main was installed to serve the new properties. Stowey Park was built up during 1938. To meet these additional demands a new borehole of 240' depth was sunk to give an extra 10,000 gallons per hour, more than doubling the Work 's capacity. This was the "Burmill" bore, named after Messrs. Burge and Millward, the Scheme trustees and senior committee members.

There were occasional silting problems with the new borehole; one coincided with an illness of Mr. Rattle in March 1938 and for a hectic week the Parish Clerk, together with Mr. Millward and committee member Mr. Head, rallied round to supervise pumping and reading of water meters. Mr. S. Richards of Cleeve, who was to serve the Company until his retirement in 1975, joined at this time and served throughout the war years in the reserved occupation. There were in existence beautifully printed maps on linen showing the extent of the system and the location of valves and standpipes. The extremities of the Company's network before the War were:

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A370 outside Brockley Church entrance, Kingston Bridge, Church Road and Lower Claverham via Meeting House Lane. The pump at Pearce's Butchers shop of A370 in Cleeve used to dry up during the hours when water was being extracted to top up the reservoir. Mr. Harry Smith recalls that the Burmill water was of a particularly hard quality which used to "fur up" saucepans cold if left overnight.

The war years were relatively unexciting, the single supply interruption being in 1940 when Stowey Park (now the Claverham Road end of Stowey Road, then a cul de sac) was shut off to allow the removal of an unexploded bomb. Several other bombs, possibly from the same stick, fell across the hill between the road and reservoir with some cows killed and many windows broken. Damage to the pumping station was limited to windows and an engine drive belt cut by shrapnel.

Around 1950 the Company was taken over and merged with the Bristol Waterworks Company, who now supply water direct from Chelvey through a 12" main, still via the old reservoir.

Yatton Water Company Charges, 1928:

10/10d (54p) per annum for r.v. not exceeding £8

For r.v. above £8, extra 1/3d (6p) per £

Above to include one w.c. up to £15 r.v., two w.c.s above £15,

6/- (30p) for each additional w.c.

6/- (30p) for every fixed bath

Extra charges (unless metered)

5/- (25p) for every trap or carriage 6/- (30p) per horse

Cows 2/6d (25p) per cow except on farms, the supply to which must be metered

*R. H. Young 1985*

**Sources:** Mr. S. Richards of Cleeve (verbal),  
Mr. H. Smith of Yatton (verbal)  
Parish Council Records 1895/1936



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## **J. L. HILL FURNISHERS, HIGH STREET, YATTON FORMERLY KNOWN AS “THE STORES”**

The property is now owned by Mr. Robert Hill who continues the business which his father, Mr. J. L. S. Hill, started. His father, who died in 1973 as a result of a traffic accident, bought the premises in 1944 from Mr. William James Bailey, although at the time of purchase it was occupied by the Military Authorities. However, the property, which is adjacent to the “Prince of Orange”, has an interesting history, salient points being as follows:

In July 1784 the Rt. Hon. Earl Poulett, Viscount and Baron of Hinton St. George in Somerset, arranged a lease of 99 years on the property with John Tilly, a grocer, with a sum of £75.00 changing hands. John Tilly was *“about 30 years of age, Elizabeth (his daughter) was about 2 years of age, John (his son) was about one year old”* according to the lease document, and the property was described as being a dwelling house and backside, formerly a brewhouse and part of a five acre holding. Prior to this it seems likely that a Harry Sumner was the tenant but this is to be confirmed.

In 1789 the leasehold of the property changed hands with Earl Poulett selling for £100 to G. Poulett and J. Bastard. John Tilly remained as tenant until his death on 22nd June 1800, aged 47 years and he is buried in Yatton Churchyard, grave ref. no. B36. His widow Jane continued with the business until 1814 when she decided to sell the lease to a John Hodges, Yeoman and shopkeeper. However, Jane was not the only person interested as it appears that all of John’s family were involved, perhaps as executors. They were as follows:

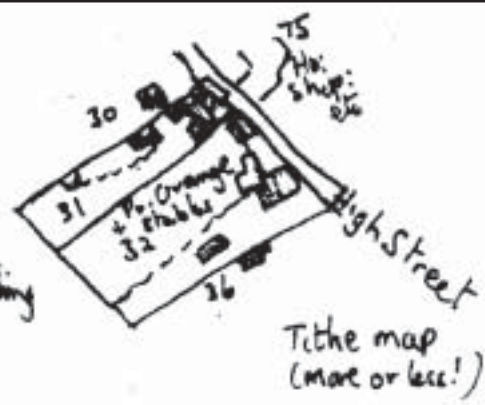
James Powell and his wife Elizabeth, daughter  
John Tilly (Jnr,) grocer, son  
William Tilly, milkman, son  
Joseph Tilly, milkman, son  
Samuel Tilly, labourer, son

Jane lived until 1831, died 2nd February, aged 80, and is buried with her husband.

John Hodges leased the property to a Mr. William Seaward (or Seward) for the sum of £100 in 1814 but what business was carried on we do not know, although it did not last long as in the month of May 1818 the property was leased to a Mr. Robert Hancock and his wife for £450, and in 1828 Robert Hancock purchased the property from John Hodges. We do not know the purchase price but we know that in 1831 Robert Hancock had a loan of £200 from a William Cox. Robert Hancock was described as being an artist.

Hull's Shop

1784 'The Store'  
Dw. Ho. formerly  
brewho: + pt. Sacre holding  
1889. Grocers.



From  
Tithe Map  
c. 1840.





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In 1844 Robert Hancock sold the property to a Mr. William Smart. Again we do not know the price. We know that in 1864 a dividing wall was built between the property and the "Prince of Orange"; presumably this is the wall now existent, and it cost 10 guineas (£10.50) which was shared between the pub and William Smart.

In 1867 a Mr. W. Tilley sold land to William Smart. Presumably this W. Tilley was a descendant of John and Jane Tilly named in the 1784 lease, although the spelling of the name varies. We know the fields which were numbered as 350, 351, 352 and 355 on the 1840 Tithe Map and were as follows:

350 - Lower West Meadow

351 - Causeway Acre

352 - West Meadow

355 - Great Causeway Acre

These are indicated on the attached sketch map and are all off the Claverham Road by what is now the Roman Catholic Church. The selling price was £1,260 and there was a tenant, a Mr. Burdge. This, we assume, was the original five acre holding of 1784, so that all the property was in the hands of William Smart, although this price of £1,260 suggests that the buildings were included, but the documents seen specify the land and do not mention the property.

However, on to 1889 when Mr. William Smart died and the property and land were put up for auction. The whole of the land and buildings were auctioned by Henry Shiner on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1889. This was in accordance with William Smart's will of 1st February 1882. His wife, Hester, who died on 29th November 1888, was named in his will as beneficiary but as she died before William, the executors, Mr. Thomas Henry Sheppy, Corn Dealer of Congresbury, and Thomas Hardwick were named in his will. Unfortunately, Thomas Hardwick had died on 5th March 1882 and Henry Smart replaced him as executor. So Henry Smart and Thomas Sheppy arranged for the auction. We have a very good description of the property from that auction, as follows:

Lot 1 all that capital dwellinghouse, grocers shop and premises situate in the main street of Yatton, No. 31 on the Tithe Map of 1840 and containing 1 rood and 11 perches. Buildings containing 2 sitting rooms, kitchen, 5 bedrooms, dairy, store-room, wash- house, candle-house, with loft over, meeting house with furnaces, cotton-room, bacon-house, 3 stall stable and harness room with loft over, cart house, potato and coal houses, piggeries and good walled garden.

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We understand this was arranged in the form of a courtyard with three buildings forming a U-shape. Traces of the old stables and piggery remain together with the old walls and two sections of one wing of the U-shape. We assume this was the five acre holding. The fees were £31.10s, (£31.50) for the auction.

As a point of interest, the valuation of the premises for fire insurance, by Norwich Union Fire Insurance in 1889, was £450 for the house (presumably including the shop), £100 for the tallow house, stables and outbuildings and £150 for the cart house and other buildings. This total of £700 is higher than the purchase price paid by William Smart Jnr.

Interest was shown in these premises by various businessmen, mostly from Bristol, and during the period from 1882 to 1897 various loans were raised with the buildings as security.

To continue our story, Mr. William Smart, Junior, was declared bankrupt on 26th February 1897 at the Gloucestershire County Court, sitting in Bristol, and a meeting of creditors appointed Edward Thomas Collins as trustee. The buildings were sold to Mr. Edward Burdge for £600 in that year and he ran the business until 1909. His trade was given as Baker.

In 1909 Edward Burdge sold the shop to Mr. W. J. Bailey for £700 and the shop became a grocer's. It seems that it traded until 1939 as a grocer's and the buildings were used as stores by the Army during the Second World War. It was then taken over by Mr. Hill as we know.

The present shop was built in 1952 but the dividing wall between Hill's and the "Prince of Orange", which we think is the one built in 1864, had window openings (*presumably original*) which show how much the level of the present "Prince" car park has been raised.

We hope to discover more about this property, especially prior to 1784, when research on the "Prince of Orange" is completed.



## THE PICKERS

The line from Weston to Clevedon and Portishead was nicknamed "The Linger and Die". Blackberry and mushroom pickers from Weston came out on this line to Kingston Seymour, picked to their heart's content and caught the return train back home.



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## APPRENTICESHIPS AT WAKE & DEAN LTD. OF YATTON

Over the eighteen years from 1914 to 1931 copies exist of nineteen indentures of Apprenticeships at Wake & Dean Ltd. Originally the company was described as a “*Manufacturer of School, College, Hall and Church Furniture*” but by 1920, House, Bank and even Sanitary Furniture were included. The apprenticeships were usually described simply as for “*furniture making*”, but one indenture refers to the “*Trade, Art and Mystery of a Cabinet Maker*”.

The normal period of apprenticeship was five years. The Company or Master bound himself to provide the necessary training in return for an initial payment which was £50 in 1914 and stayed at £50 throughout the 18 years. The indenture guaranteed the completion of training even in the event of the sale, take-over, or failure of the business. Where appropriate the Master also undertook to provide the apprentice with “*meat, drink, board, lodging, clothing and all other necessaries*”, and “*mending and medical attention*” were also mentioned. This was necessary as the boys sometimes came from as far away as Reading, Kingston or Pontypridd.

The Apprentice himself promised “*his Masters faithfully to serve, their secrets to keep, and their lawful commands everywhere to do gladly . . . . He shall do no damage to his Masters nor see it be done of others but to his power shall forthwith give warning to his Masters of the same.*”

The apprentice’s undertakings in the matter of his use of his own time were also strict. “*He shall not contract matrimony within the said term . . . . He shall not commit fornication or adultery . . . . He shall not play at cards, dice, tables, bowles or other unlawful games. He shall not bed nor gamble nor haunt taverns or playhouses, nor absent himself night or day from his Masters’ service unlawfully.*”

In point of fact the apprentice probably had little time or money for these temptations. In 1914 a 54-hour week was specified (*including ½ hour for breakfast and one hour for dinner*), spread over 5 days and Saturday morning. Saturday afternoon, Bank Holidays, Christmas and Good Friday were free, and two weeks holiday (*with pocket money*) were provided (*3 or 4 days at Christmas, 3 or 4 days at Easter, 2 days at Whitsun, and the balance in August*). By 1920 the working week had been shortened to 47 hours.

In 1914 the apprentice received 1/- per week for his own use, rising by 1/- per week each year to a maximum of 5/- in his fifth year. By 1920 this had generally increased to 10/- per week for the first year rising from 5/- per week to 30/- in the fifth year (*on completion of the apprenticeship the going rate of pay was then 1/- per hour*) – but as late as 1928 one apprentice was still on a scale starting at 7/6 per week for two years and rising by stages to 15/- in the fifth year. The more normal scale by the late 20s and early 30s was 10/- or even 15/- in the first year with increases thereafter according to merit.

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The boys came from a wide area. Apart from Reading, Kingston and Pontypridd (*mentioned earlier*), Shipham, Banwell, Winscombe, Bridgwater, Weston, Clevedon and Long Ashton all sent boys to Wake & Dean. Yatton was of course represented. No doubt these apprenticeships were much sought after, as they provided a fine training and offered a secure future in a very troubled period.

In only one instance is there any sign of things going wrong. To one set of papers of 1920 is attached a note – “*the boy M . . . if I remember rightly ran away so these indentures are practically useless.*” There had to be one exception to prove the rule.

*Pat Scally*



## THE NURSERIES STORY

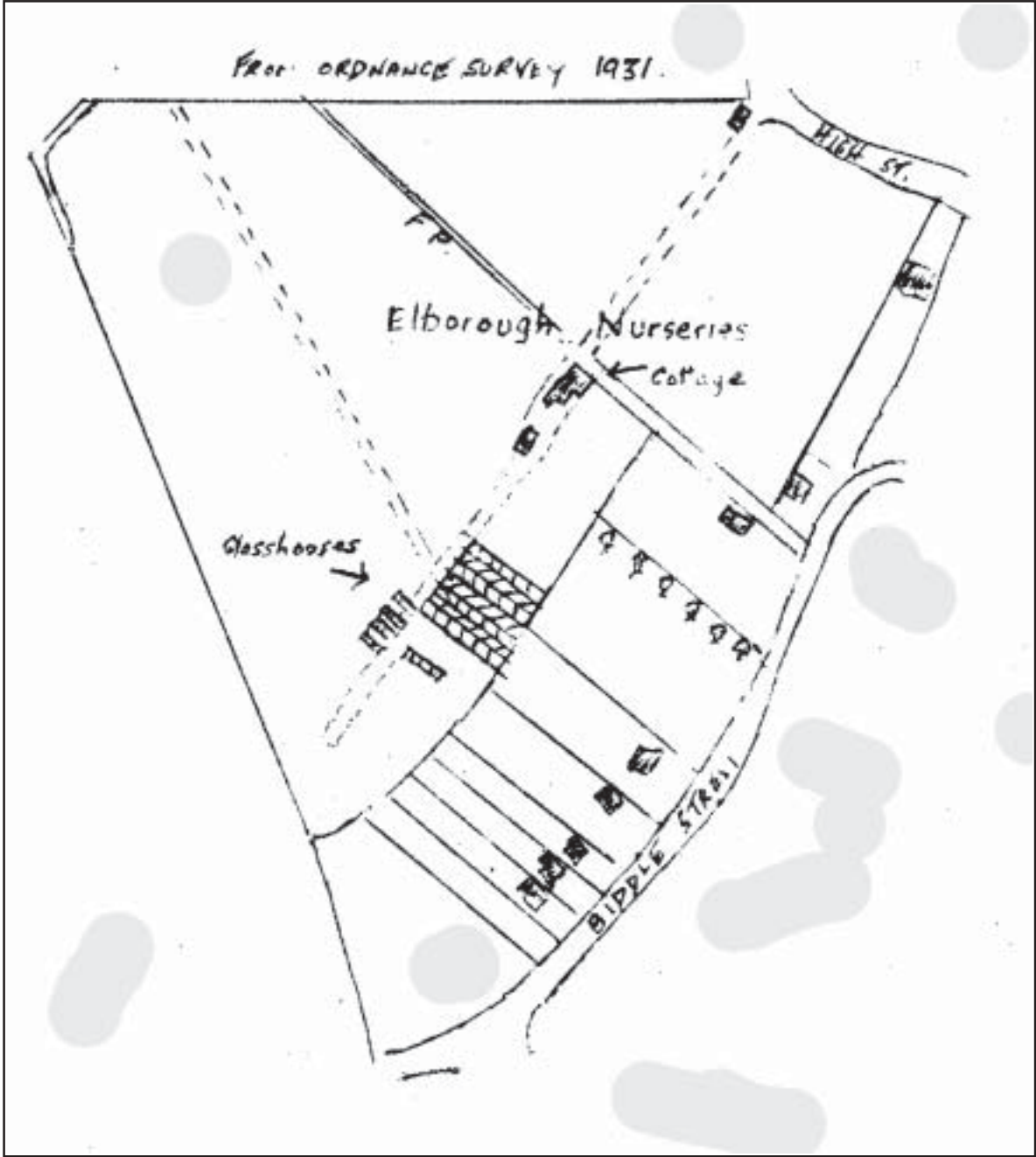
The “Nurseries”, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. P. Gibbs, has had many links both with the history of Yatton and various outsiders. An abstract of title, dated 1919, kindly lent by the present owners, goes back to 1825 when John Cox, Stephen Cox and William Derham had dealings over land called Upper Furlong.

From the 1840 Tithe Map, we know that the cottage and buildings were owned by Robert Williams and tenanted by Samuel and Martha Gregory. In 1852 William Derham had granted an annuity of £100 to his daughter, Penelope, married to a Robert Brown of Tower Hamlets, Bow, London. In October of that year, he left all his properties in Yatton, Nailsea, Wrington and Congresbury to his son, Joseph. William died in 1853, but his name still lives on in Derham Park.

By 1865, a John Mullett Bishop became involved with Thomas Tanner and Francis Gregory as trustees. Mary Bishop, his widow, appointed William Gregory and Alfred Bishop Gregory as trustees in 1868. Could they be relatives of Samuel and Martha Gregory? By 1875 Theophilus Derham (*William’s grandson*) had died, leaving his property to his wife, Phoebe who then married Joseph Miles in 1876.

At this stage, John Francis, of Mount Square, Cardiff, appeared on the scene and bought plot 147, the land bordering the High Street, behind the Mount and the Library. In 1895 at an auction at the Railway Hotel, he acquired from Amos Williams of Yatton, Mary Risdon of Dunster and Ann Pearse of Reading, the Elborough Three Acres with the cottage and buildings, plus the Six Acres, plus the Elborough Upper Field for £1,375.

In 1896 he added Long Forward Field from J. F. Derham, tenant of the Rolls of Yatton Rectory. In 1898 he purchased Elborough Lower Field from Rhoda Latham, wife of Joseph Latham, a leather merchant of Bristol and Robert Follett, a cordwainer of Yatton. Over all this period the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had been involved with each deal, concerning the tithes and possibly ownership.



Before moving into the twentieth century, another facet of the “Nurseries” history must be recorded. On its fields was the old Yatton cricket ground whose boundary extended as far as the present Titan Ladder Company. Outside the cottage was a flight of steps leading to a door giving access to an upper room. This was used as a changing room for Yatton’s

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cricketers. This was clearly remembered by the Misses Starke's father who often saw them there prior to a cricket match. Arthur Iles's father witnessed the ground being used by Somerset to entertain both New Zealand and Indian touring teams. He also claimed that W. G. Grace and Jessop played there. However, the most fascinating revelation has been Bob Young's copy of "Yatton Cricket Club - Season 1881". It records every match and details from 14th May to 4th October of that year. Players included Jack Crease (President Jack Crease's father) and James Crease (his uncle). Tankerville-Chamberlayne (President) was a leading light, as well as A. Clapp, the village postman and later wicket-keeper. J. Atherton also played.

A report in front of the score book reads:

*"First we would call attention to the excellent state of the ground, the visitors without exception having expressed themselves delighted and surprised that such a cricket ground could be found in a country village. This is due to the unremitting attention paid to rolling and mowing by the Captain, Mr. Radcliffe. Secondly, on the other hand, we have to deplore, in common with most other cricket clubs, the very unseasonable weather which interfered with the success, and certainly with the pleasure, of many of the matches." (Shades of 1985!) "In all 23 matches were played, the last as late as 4th October, on a wicket which would not have disgraced Lords."*

We move into the twentieth century with a handbill of 1910, as follows:

*"Plan, particulars and conditions of sale of market garden and building land. Choice site of over 17 acres with 13 glass houses, dwelling house, stabling, store and packing rooms. Frontage of 380 ft. to the High St. Ripe for building. Elborough Nurseries to be sold by auction by Mr. Josiah Herbert at the Railway Hotel, Yatton, on Wednesday Sept. 21st 1910 at 6:30 in the evening."*

The property was bought by Arthur Iles's grandfather, Thomas Iles, who had a shop in 220 North Street, Bedminster. Four sons were also involved in travelling by horse and cart daily to supply the shop, and the nursery was run by Billy Banwell, Foreman. Albert Iles, one of the sons moved into the cottage in 1918. There were seven 100ft greenhouses and five 33ft greenhouses in a block, and an odd one half way down the area now Elm Close. They produced arum lilies, cinerarias, begonias, chrysanthus, cucumbers and above all tomatoes, the first ever seen in Yatton. They were sold at 4d (1½p) per lb. Wreaths and crosses were 5/- or 2/6 (25p or 12½p).

Arthur Iles himself was born at the "Nurseries" and worked there as a boy. He recalls that the foreman's first weeks wages was a 5/- piece (25p) which he lost in a cabbage patch. There were many fruit trees on the property, interspersed with daffodils. The present drive and footpath was known as Crabs Alley. The greenhouses are clearly marked on the 1931 Ordnance Survey map. There were water tanks at the end of each greenhouse from which the watering was then done by hand. Four-inch pipes

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led into each tank and the water source was from a large 10,000 gallon tank at the end of Elborough Street. This was filled from a 100ft well pumped up by a cog-wheel system and turned by a pony walking in circles. It took 1½ hours to fill the tank and Arthur was paid 6d (2½p) for each session. His other chore was to knock up seed boxes in the upper room, formerly used by the cricketers. His paper round gives an idea of the size of Yatton in those days. From end to end of the village he had to deliver no more than 70 papers each morning.

To revert to the cottage itself, in 1920 it was extended to add a kitchen and a bedroom, with a flagstone covering the well. The stables were close to the cottage. The site now has a bungalow on it in the right hand corner of Elm Close.

In 1934 Elizabeth, Arthur's grandmother died and in her will left the cottage to Albert and Jack, her sons – value at £800. The remainder of the land was sold to J. & G. Moseley Bros. Ltd. for £1,900. In the ensuing years the development followed. Biddle Street changed to Chescombe Road and by 1950 Derham Park came into being. A long placard depicting a large £5 note advertised houses at £400, saying “£5 deposit and the house is yours. “

The most recent change came in 1978. Albert Iles had died and the property was auctioned in July at the Bell at Congresbury when Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs became the new owners. Various changes followed. The well in the kitchen was uncovered and made a feature of the room and the outside was refaced. In 1982, a dining room, a hall and a bedroom were added. In 1983, the last greenhouse in the garden was pulled down and thus the “Nurseries” story comes appropriately to its end, to the present day.

***Tony Coe***

Acknowledgements to:

Mr. and Mrs. P. Gibbs (verbal and documents)

The Misses Starke (verbal)

Mr. Arthur Iles (verbal and documents)

Mr. Bob Young (Yatton CC 1881)



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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF HORSECASTLE

About 1800 there were cottages at three corners of Horsecastle cross roads (not the south-east side). Home Farm was there, also further down on the same side the large house below the chapel, now West Town Bakery. Opposite Home Farm, a farm latterly known as "The Lawns" existed until about 1930 when it was replaced by part of the furniture factory. Horsecastle, Macquarie and Park Farms were also there. Apart from this, sporadic building had commenced on Horse Castle Common by permission of Earl Poulett, for example, the plot shown as "M" on the Inclosure Map, this being at the S. W. junction of Horsecastle and Wemberham Lane, where the three ruined cottages known as "The Brow" recently stood. This plot was leased by Earl Poulett in 1789 to John Earl, labourer, by whom the ground is said to have been "lately inclosed from the waste". The lease specifies a cottage and garden on Horse Castle Common, the annual rent being 1/6d. (7½p), (Ref: DD/PT Box 34, S.R.O.)

### Rose Cottage

The plot marked "G" of 1 rood 8 perches (approx. quarter acre) was let to John Drissell in the same year, also at an annual rent of 1/6d payable at Lady Day and Michaelmas, and has been in the same family ever since. His lease was granted for the lives of his children, Sarah (6), William (4) and John (3), and the heriot to be paid at the death of one of the "lives" was 2/6d (12½p). His name is spelt "Dussole" in his lease, although he signed his name "John Drissell".

In 1814 it appears that he bought the property for £30, the acreage then being 2 roods, 38 perches. John died in 1839. In 1854 William Drissell died; his wife Nancy left the property to Edward Gregory to be sold by him at her death and the money shared between her eight children. She died in 1863 and the property, including the orchard of 8 perches, was sold at auction to Richard Drissell (one of the children) for £67, Mr. Richard Trevithick being his mortgagee for the sum of £60. Another of Nancy's children, William, died a few weeks before she did, being killed on the railway. He left five children, all minors.

Richard left the property to his wife and in 1906 Ernest Albert Drissell, a ganger on the G.W.R., bought it from her for £100. He died in 1956 and his son, William Ernest conveyed the cottage and orchard to Alfred Moore whose wife was a Drissell. Mr. Moore, who came to Yatton from London with Wake and Dean, occupied the cottage until its demolition in 1985, giving almost 200 years of occupation by the same family. (*N.B. At the time of writing it is about to be demolished*). When Mr. and Mrs. Moore moved in, there was no water laid on and no drainage, but a well in the garden.



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## Osmond Bridge

Yatton station was opened on 14th June 1841. It was known as "Clevedon Road" until the Clevedon branch was opened on 28th July 1847. This line crossed the Horsecastle area causing a certain amount of disruption. In June 1846 Thomas Osmond, a tiler and plasterer, conveyed to the Bristol & Exeter Railway Company 2 roods 8 perches, and three tenements thereon, occupied by himself, Martha his mother and William Osmond. The cottages stood underneath the present Osmond Bridge embankment on the south side. Sturges acted as agents for the railway and paid Thomas £250 -- but apparently they had difficulty in evicting William, as shown by correspondence between them and Thomas, (S.R.O. DD/WY Box 169).

## The Orchard

This house, almost hidden to the north of Osmond Bridge embankment, is shown on the Inclosure Map 1805 (marked "0"). At the time of the tithe map (1840) there were two cottages here, both owned by Ann Earl, one being occupied by her and one let to John Earl.

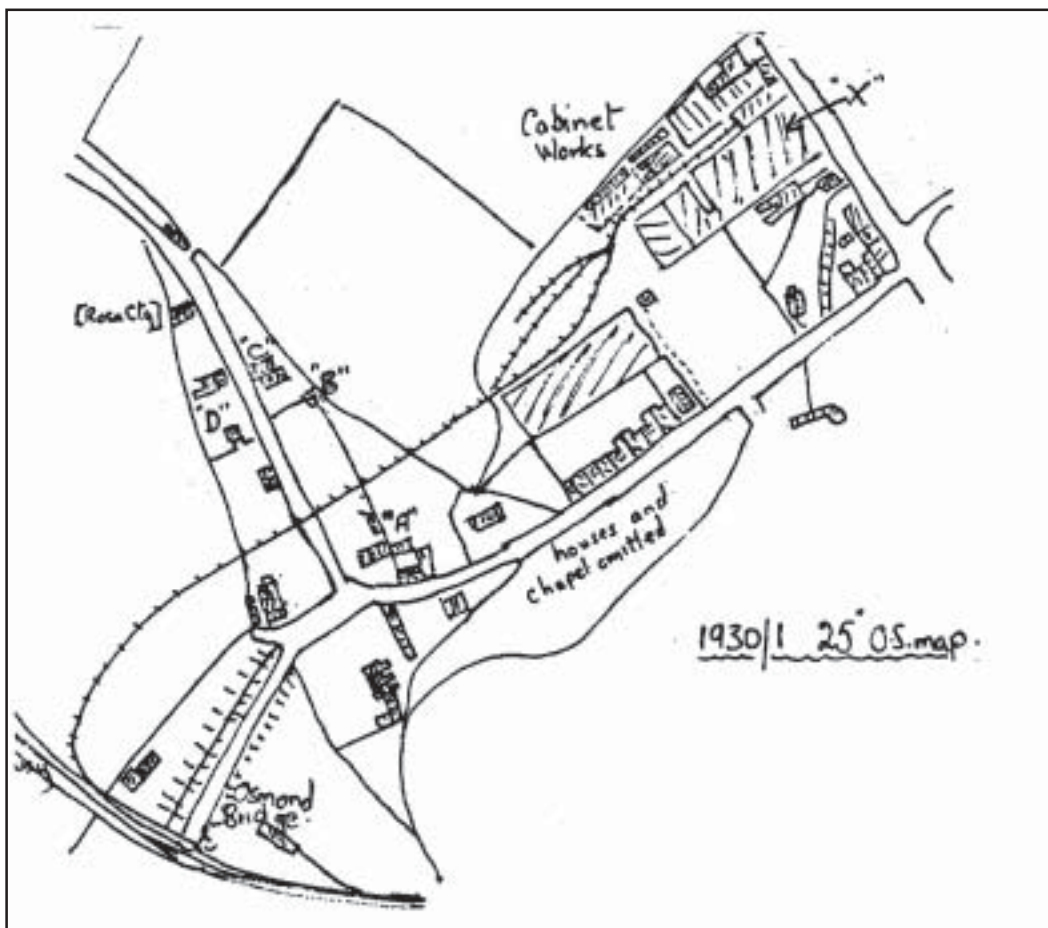
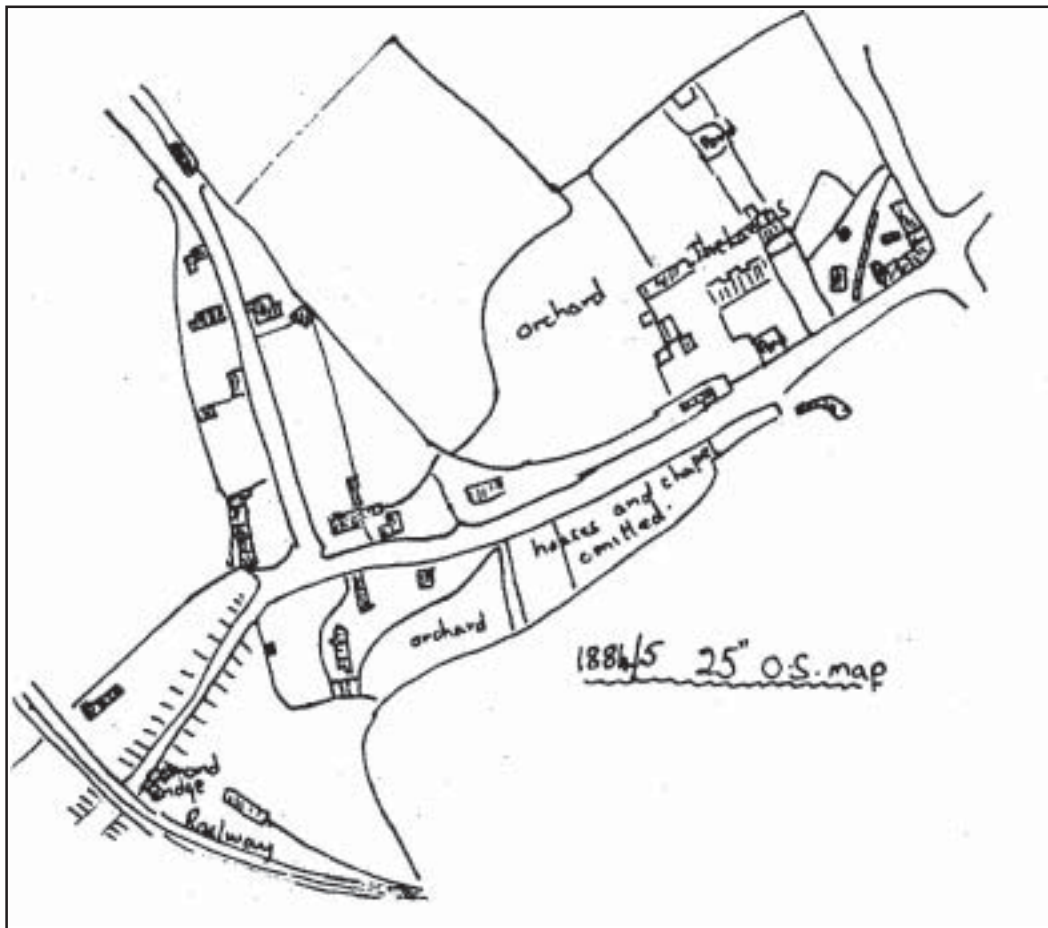
## 19 — 23 Horsecastle

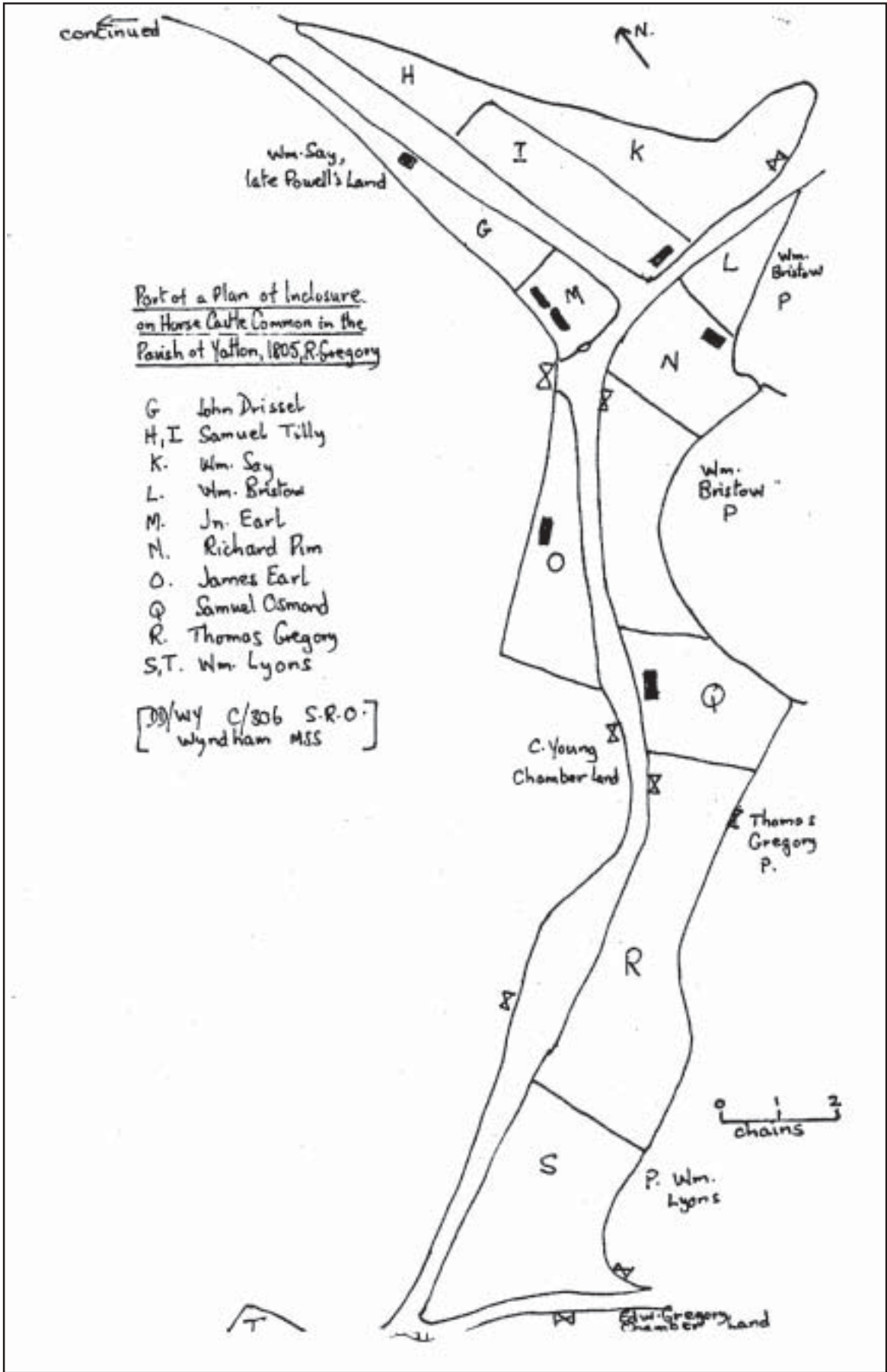
Numbers 19, 21 and 23 Horsecastle - which face Osmond Bridge - are probably "N" on the Enclosure Map, 1 rood 22 perches and then leased to Richard Pim. The original cottages are now the back rooms of these houses, additions having been built on the fronts in 1901, giving them a "Victorian" appearance. The original cottages consisted of one room downstairs and two interconnecting bedrooms over. This pattern is probably typical of the cottages built on the Common.

## Growth of the Furniture Factory

A comparison of the 1885 and 1931 maps shows how Wake and Dean's works spread over the area. The 1903 map (*not reproduced here*) marks "Cabinet Works" at "X" on the 1931 map. All the cottages on the corner "A" had been demolished by 1951 when a Wake and Dean plan shows a polishing and despatch shop here, but "B" (*a pigsty*) and "C" were still standing (*where the modern bungalow is*), plus three properties belonging to Mrs. Chidsey on the other side of the road ("D"). All were subsequently demolished leaving only Rose Cottage on that side of the road.

The terrace 18 - 32 Horsecastle was built at the end of the 19th century, but cottages behind Crossways House (*N.W. corner of Horsecastle crossroads*) were pulled down after 1931 for the erection of the "new mill". Wakedean Gardens houses were built as homes for those working at the factory, and completed just before the war in 1939.





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At the time of writing (September 1985) the factory site has been cleared and is to be developed for housing.

*Betty Fussell*

We thank the following for their help:

Mr. Moore for letting us see the deeds of Rose Cottage and lending old photographs.

Mr. Clement of Avalon for a plan of the factory.

Somerset Record Office for the Inclosure Map DD/WY C/306, the original of which is to be found in the Wyndham MSS housed in their office.



## **PAPER BOY OF THE TWENTIES**

**B**ert French of Rock Road recalls for us the days when he did a paper round. After a holiday in Congresbury, he moved down to South View Terrace with his parents in 1925. He used to report to the station Wyman's Bookstall at 7 a.m. to meet the paper train from Bristol, sort the bundles and then catch the 8.10 to Cheddar. At Axbridge, he collected his bicycle with its front carrier and delivered papers in Axbridge, Cross and Weare.

If lucky he could catch the 11 am. back to Yatton, if not he had to wait until 1 p.m. Periodicals sometimes influenced the time span — they included such publications as The Tatler, Doctors' Journal, Farmer and Stockbreeder, Tit-Bits, Women's Weekly, Comic Cuts and the Rainbow. He collected the money once a week, plus one penny for delivery. His wage was 10/- per week (i.e. 50p).



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## CONDITIONS IN 1930 IN YATTON

I have recently seen a copy of the Annual Report for 1930 of the Medical Officer of Health of Long Ashton Rural District – Herbert Newsome, M.B., B.S.

The estimated population was 20,540 (living in 5,208 homes), most of whom are said to be agricultural workers except in the parishes immediately adjacent to Bristol, although Yatton had a furniture factory employing over 100 hands and a tannery at Claverham.

The only hospital in the District was the Isolation Hospital – a corrugated iron and wood building at Long Ashton. Hospital treatment generally was provided by the large hospitals in Bristol but there was said to be a need for cottage hospitals in Pill, Nailsea, and Yatton to relieve congestion in Bristol. In Yatton numbers of notifiable diseases in 1930 had been: Scarlet Fever, 2; Enteric Fever, 1; Pneumonia, 1; Tuberculosis, 3. Home nursing was provided by the Yatton Nursing Association. Many parishes had no public water supply, relying on wells and in some cases rainwater. Yatton had a public supply which was much appreciated, with numerous new connections of both old and new homes being made. Reports on some samples of water examined at the County Laboratory had been unsatisfactory but the cause of the trouble had been found and the supply made satisfactory.

As regards drainage and sewerage, Yatton had serious pollutions of rhines (especially the Stowey Rhine) by cesspool overflows. During the year a survey of the parish had been made, and a plan drawn up which was then shortly to be the subject of a Ministry of Health Inquiry. The scheme involved laying a public sewer throughout the parish, extending beyond its boundary to discharge into the Bristol Channel and it was hoped that work would begin in 1931. It was hoped that its construction would remove many serious pollutions of rhines and ditches and be a boon to the inhabitants. At this time many other villages – including Nailsea – also relied on cesspools.

Yatton had a weekly refuse collection (fortnightly in Cleeve) but the only other parishes to have refuse collection were Long Ashton and Pill.

The three schools in Yatton were all connected to the public water supply and all had W.C.s; connected at the Church School to a sewer, at the Undenominational School to a sewage filter and at Cleeve to a cesspool. The numbers of children attending were 102, 69 and 59 respectively.

In the District 102 new houses had been built in 1930, none of them by the District Council. As regards Yatton there had been eight new houses and 45 in the previous five years. The report states that general conditions in Yatton were not good with some tendency to overcrowding. Many poor types

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of cottages were in a bad state of repair. Most of the new houses were in Cleeve and Claverham. There were 20 Council-owned cottages, but it was said there was a great need for cottages for those working at the furniture factory, most of whom lived outside Yatton.

In 1930 Yatton included Cleeve, Claverham and Hewish.

*Jack Vincent*



## THE CHURCHYARD

The churchyard surrounding the church of St. Mary the Virgin is bounded by walls on the North, West and East sides but to the South it has been extended, once at the end of the last century and a further burial ground added about thirty years ago. The original South boundary appears to be traceable by a line of tree stumps and trees from West to East which crosses the path from the South Porch before it bends for the second time. The first addition was consecrated in 1885 and the further burial ground was acquired by the Parish Council in 1956. In making a recording of the churchyard I have, to date, only recorded what I believe to be the oldest part of the churchyard. Any references in this article refer to that area.

Yatton churchyard is representative of a strong closely knit community of agriculturists and craftsmen with many family names recurring over the centuries. There are none of the huge ornate box or bale tombs so beloved by the Cotswold wool merchants. The earliest memorials of the late 17th century are simple stones that record little more than the names, and dates of those buried there. Throughout the 18th century pennant stone was used, which unfortunately flakes, so losing many of the inscriptions and ornamentations. This is regrettable for these upright tombstones have the elegance of decoration and writing representative of their period. The heads of the stones have relief carvings of swags and garlands perhaps with an urn, a crown, book or a snub-nosed angel with page-boy hair style surmounting an inscription beginning with flowing capital letters. One such stone bears a skull, hourglass and a heart with pierced arrows illustrating the verse below. Later, flat Ledger or long stones rounded or prism-shaped came into favour, raised a few inches from the ground. With the introduction of white Italian marble and the varieties of granite, the graves are often curbed and the stone polished to take the lettering and with some statuary. Local stone, such as that from the Mendip quarry of Draycott with its attractive colouring, is still being used for some memorials. In the last century a cross raised on three steps was very usual. These steps often bear the name of several members of one family followed by a verse or bible quotation and many "Peace Perfect

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Peace” or “Rest in the Lord”, etc. The industrial growth of the last century is represented by a few iron crosses forged in decorative fashions. More recently a small plain stone giving just the name and date marks a grave and so in three hundred years the styles seem to have come full circle.

However, inscriptions can be of great interest giving names, relationships and hints of positions held in the village or even further afield. The earliest recording is of Elizabeth Lane 1679, the wife of John Lane Gent; closely followed by Mary 1683, sister of Hubert Galton Gent; and Samuel Coleman 1688. Throughout the 18th century the yeomen were anxious to have their status noted. Taylors, Babers, Tyleys, Allfords, Lyons, Thomas, Parsons and Hardwickes are a few of these staunch farmers. In this century farmers are represented by the Burdges, Crossmans, Prices and others, but the names of Vimpeny and Hurditch I have not heard in Yatton today. Priests of the parish are also recorded, Prebendaries Barnard, Peart, Walrond and the Rev. Hayes Robinson, as are their lay helpers. Very near the South wall of the chancel, a stone bears the name of the Broackes family who between 1694 and 1739 provided six churchwardens for St. Mary’s and later Thomas, Alexander and Edward Price rendered the same service. Another churchwarden was Cuthbert Stuckey who was also an alderman of the county and died in 1769. Joseph Lukins, who died in 1785 and of a family long connected with Yatton and the church, was Parish Clerk, and William Avery before his death in 1829 served as sexton.



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Not all the tombstones tell of local inhabitants or of those born in the village. Hugh Jenkins, formerly a member of the House of the Assembly in the Province of Georgia in N. America, died here in 1821. In 1876 Thomas Stone, although his epitaph is not recorded on good Welsh slate, is recorded as late of Llanelly, Carmarthenshire. John Courtney, "*late of H. M. Coastguard Service*" dropped anchor here and had a stone one to surmount his resting place. With his wife Elizabeth, both nonagenarians, they had indeed been brought "*to a safe haven where they would be.*" Lying in priestly style under a full length cross is the Rev. Stephen Brillan Dowell, Past fellow of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, and Vicar of Arrington, Cambridge, who was born 1792 and died 1867. Beside him lies John Dowell who was "of this parish" and the two are protected by a strong, low iron fencing. One wonders about them as about the red, rather ornate, urn atop a very tall pillar surrounded by a curb enclosing a space for many burials. Only one name is recorded on the pillar. What was the accident that caused the death of the young man of 18 whose fellow workmates placed a stone vase on his grave "*to show their sympathy?*" Close to the west wall, curbed and well sealed, are a double and a single grave. They are linked together and bear no inscription. Soon no one will know who they were.

There are many interesting and sad things to think about. In the 19th century when child deaths and those of young people were more usual, families lost many of their sons and daughters. Among them one notes the children of the Preb. Barnard, the Says, the Derhams and the Rev. Clerk and his wife Stuart whose three little sons died almost as soon as they drew breath. Proudly, on family graves are recorded the names of sons who were killed or died while serving in the first and second world wars of this century. Baber, Bennett, Clark, Hillman, Jenkins, Kingcott, Mills, Parsons and Sparshott are among these families. The fine churchyard cross of 1499 standing near the South Porch was restored in 1919 as a memorial to those whose lives were ended so untimely in the First World War.

The most fascinating writings are the rhymes and verses on many of the 18th century and early 19th century stones. Most well known is the charming gypsy epitaph of Merrily Joules. The lettering has lost the bright red and blue colouring which once picked it out, but the words are as sweet as ever.

"Here lies Merrily Joules  
A gypsy bright  
Who left Isaac Joules  
Her heart's delight 1827"

Isaac lived for another fourteen years. Many of the Joules family are buried nearby and their descendants still are brought to Yatton for burial.

One of the earliest rhymes has initials only, S.T.D. and S.D., but speaks of faith and love.



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Amid these stones there lies entombed  
A husband father and a friend  
A loving wife by him doth rest  
Among the just and hope she's blest  
For pity's sake sweet Jesu keep  
The souls of them who here doth sleep.

William and Abraham Avery died young in 1749 and 1757 but their mother, Mary, lived to be 80. At the foot of their grave, a stone with suitable symbols incised reads –

Lord thou has pointed out my life  
In length much like a span  
Mine age is nothing unto thee  
So vain is every man.

M. A.

80 years on earth I lived  
Till my thread of life was spun  
Now in all hope of Christ I rest  
Since all my labours done.

John and Hannah Taylor lost several of their young sons. John's own verse reads

A husband and a father dear  
A loving friend lies buried here  
To be dissolved into the dust  
In hopes to rise among the just.

But is there a slight sting in the tail for Hannah? -

A loving wife and tender mother  
A sincere friend and a good neighbour  
As weeds with flowers grow in the ground  
Folly with virtue oft is found.  
With charity cover what hath need  
And strive her virtues to succeed.

There are many more of these verses, notably of the Parsons family and if you catch the light in the right direction to show the lettering they are well worth deciphering. Small wonder that my daughter and her friend were often late home from afternoon Sunday School "because we have been reading the tombstones".

The finest monument of all has no inscription to be read, the church of St. Mary the Virgin. It stands as a witness and a memorial to the labourers, craftsmen and farmers of Yatton who throughout the Middle Ages from their poor homes and often water-logged farms and with little outside help gave

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and gave continually to build this truly magnificent church. In it and around it they held their festivals, revels and churchwarden's ales with a boisterousness and rough hilarity far removed from or indeed acceptable in today's church celebrations and fetes.

The churchyard records the deaths of the people of Yatton. It is also full of the life flowing from Yatton yesterday, to today and we trust into a far future.

*Doris M. Nicholas*



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Yew Tree House,  
Kingston Seymour,  
Clevedon, Avon.  
April 6th

Dear Mr. Coe,

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed reading the Yatton L.H.S. first publication of "Yatton Yesterday", also Mr. Hoddell's talk on Yatton market.

I grew up at a time when Yatton tradesmen and the people of Kingston Seymour were very dependant on each other, so I have many pleasant memories of that era.

As you suggested, I have written a little of them and hope that they may be of some interest.

Sincerely,

*Ken Stuckey*



## GOIN' UP YATTON

**F**or many years it was almost a daily trip for someone to go up Yatton with the horse and crank axle cart.

Earliest memories were of going with my father or one of the men to the station with the milk which was sent on to Nestle's at Chippenham. Later on it was my turn to take it myself to the milk stand at Brick House Farm.

Other regular trips were to the blacksmith's at North End, to Yatton Market and the railway station to take and collect goods.

Sometimes it was to old Mr. Clements who mended the harness in the room over Loader's shop. We also bought cartridges there. The Travises who bought it were my cousins. Mr. Atlay came next door and set up business repairing stationary engines and other mechanics after he came out of the Air Force.

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It was also interesting to read of the varieties of apples growing at North End, for we still have several of the same varieties growing in my orchard.

The land sales brought back a lot of memories; Horsecastle Farm, Ham Farm where the late Maurice Crossman lived. His mother and my Grandma were two of seven Hardwick sisters who, I think, lived at Weeping Ash Farm.

Mr. Lionel Summers who lived at the Grange, North End, was a very clever craftsman, making church furniture at Wake and Deans, later Avalon.

As you also state, my uncle, the late Harold Stuckey, bought the "Gables" and it was always a treat to go up to see them. My uncle took over the generating plant from Mr. Wilson who used to run a cable down on to the flooded moor so that his friends could skate when it froze over.

My father would recount the handed-down story of the ox roast and the crowd of "toughs" who came down from Bristol and wrecked the proceedings.

My memories dwell on the names of tradesmen who came to Kingston; Combes and Vowles, the bakers; Stuckeys, butchers; and Arthur Wynn with probably the first mobile shop in the district and who was also the best gardener.

I cannot finish without mentioning George Warburton, the postman, who at one time walked to Kingston and then delivered the mail around the village, and they used to say that sometimes when he got back from the round he would have to come back with a telegram.

*Ken Stuckey*



**CONSIDERATION**

**W**hen one old lady resident was very ill, sawdust was put down in the High Street to deaden the sound of the horses' hoofs.



**MOTOR CARS IN YATTON**

" June 6th 1905, Parish Council Meeting

Mr. T. G. Simmonds wrote to the effect that the dust caused by the motor cars going through Yatton constituted a nuisance and suggested that the attention of the Police should be called to the high rate of speed at which they frequently passed through the street and as there were many complaints, he hoped the proposed water cart would soon make its appearance."



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