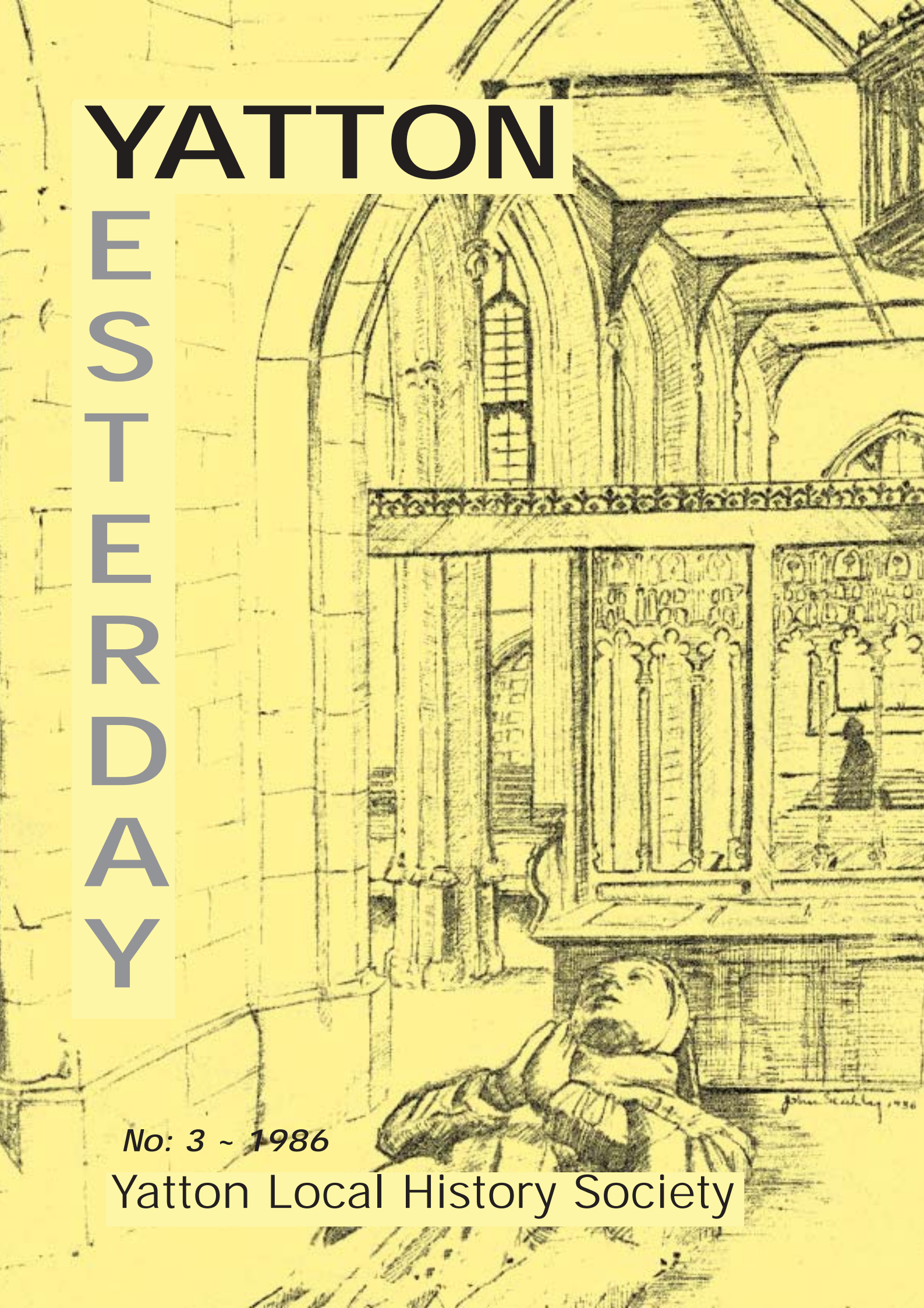


YATTON

ESTERDAY

No: 3 ~ 1986

Yatton Local History Society



EDITORIAL

We regret the passing of our President who, even the week before he died, expressed such enthusiasm for the production of this edition. Bob Young's fine obituary speaks for all of us.

As with our 'Railway' edition, Book II, with its leading article by Malcolm Wathen, we can again be topical. In the year of 'The Wedding' we include the Royal Family Tree as it applies to Yatton, accompanied by a superb front cover by John Scally.

Thanks are again due to all our contributors and researchers, both society members and Yatton residents, named herein. The article on the 'Stores' in Book II was researched and written by Brian Bradbury but regretfully not acknowledged.

Copies of 'Yatton Yesterday' Books I & II are still available.

Our thanks again to our three local newsagents and Claverham Post Office who have sold to date 800 copies of Book II.

Can there be a Book IV? We need your help with records and memories of Yatton's past.

A. F. Coe
Chairman

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Cover design:

Interior of church from the De Wyck chapel with effigy of Sir Richard Newton by John Scally
Reset and Printed at Woodspring Resource Centre, Clevedon; Tel. 012754 870219

OBITUARY

Our President and friend Jack Crease died on 12th September as this edition went to press.

A long article indeed would be required to explore the rich thread which this man wove in the fabric of twentieth century Yatton life. Born on 24th January 1898, he grew up in the village, fought in the trenches of the Great War and was invalided out of the army severely wounded. He subsequently joined the Probation Service and at retirement held the position of Chief Probation Officer for the County of Somerset.

His village interests were broad indeed: hardly a club or society will fail to miss him. In earlier years he had been prominent in the affairs of the Church Hall and worshipped at St. Mary's. Latterly he was lay reader at the church of Wick St. Lawrence. The British Legion, Conservatives, Horticultural Society, Cricket Club, Pensioners and many others share our loss.

It was a measure of Jack's energy that, although a very Senior Citizen himself, he undertook to organise much of the entertainment for the Senior Citizens. It was a measure of his charm and understanding that he was regularly visited and asked for advice by teenagers seventy years younger than himself.

Jack Crease will leave a far greater void than will many more visible personages – indeed, John Betjeman's lines might have been written of him:

“A gentle guest, a willing host,
Affection deeply planted –
It's strange that those we miss the most
Are those we take for granted.”

Requiescat in pace.

RHY
September 1986



Yatton's Ancestors of Royalty

Sixteen generations back, each of us had 65,536 ancestors in that generation.

Probably no living person can trace them all but our Royal family is able to trace many of them, although the number is reduced because several ancestors were inter-related.

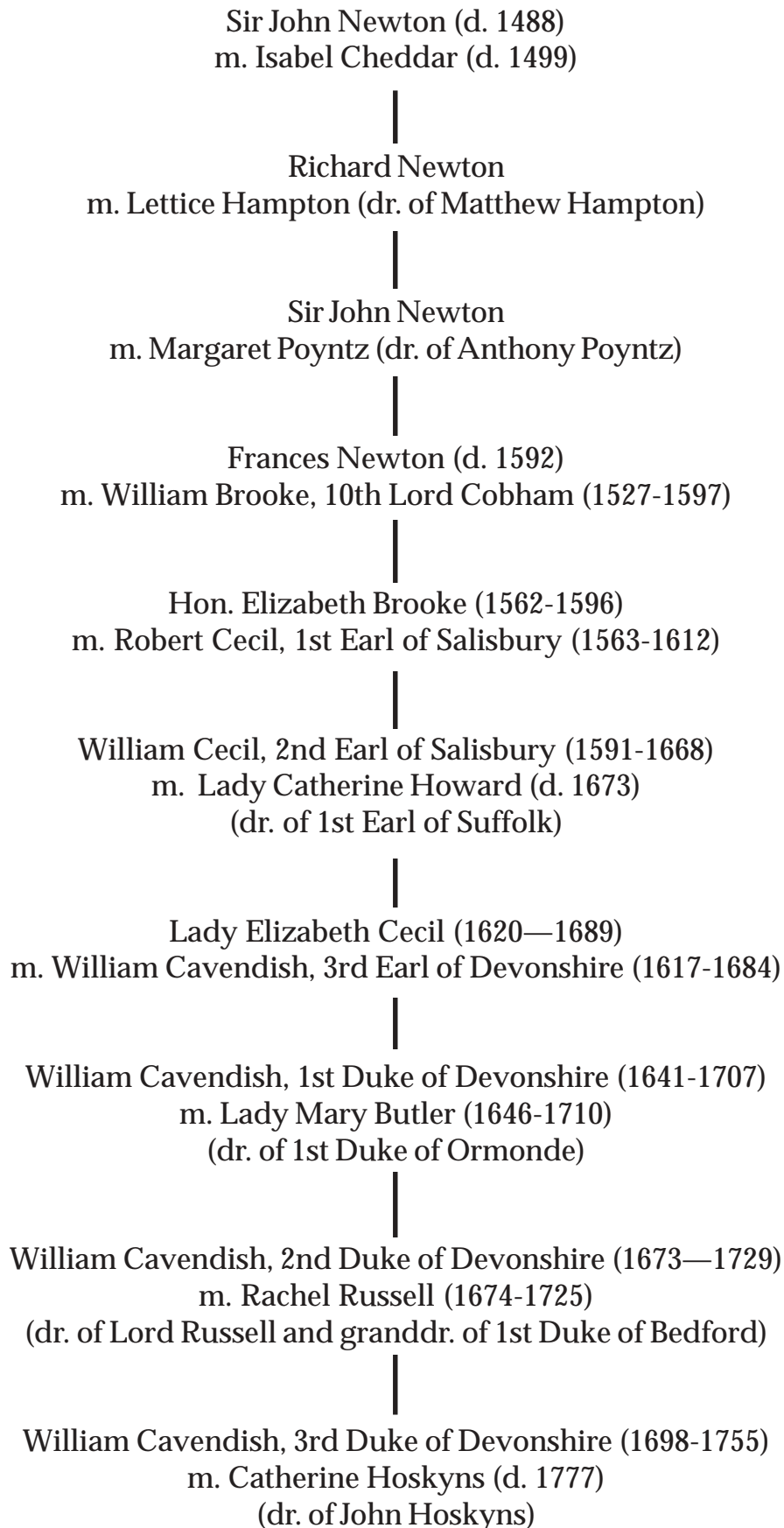
Two of these ancestors are buried in Yatton Parish Church :-

Sir John Newton, who died in 1488, and his wife Isabel, who died in 1499. They lived at Court de Wyck, Sir John having been the son of Sir Richard Newton, Lord Chief Justice of England, and Dame Isabel being remembered as Yatton's first lady churchwarden.

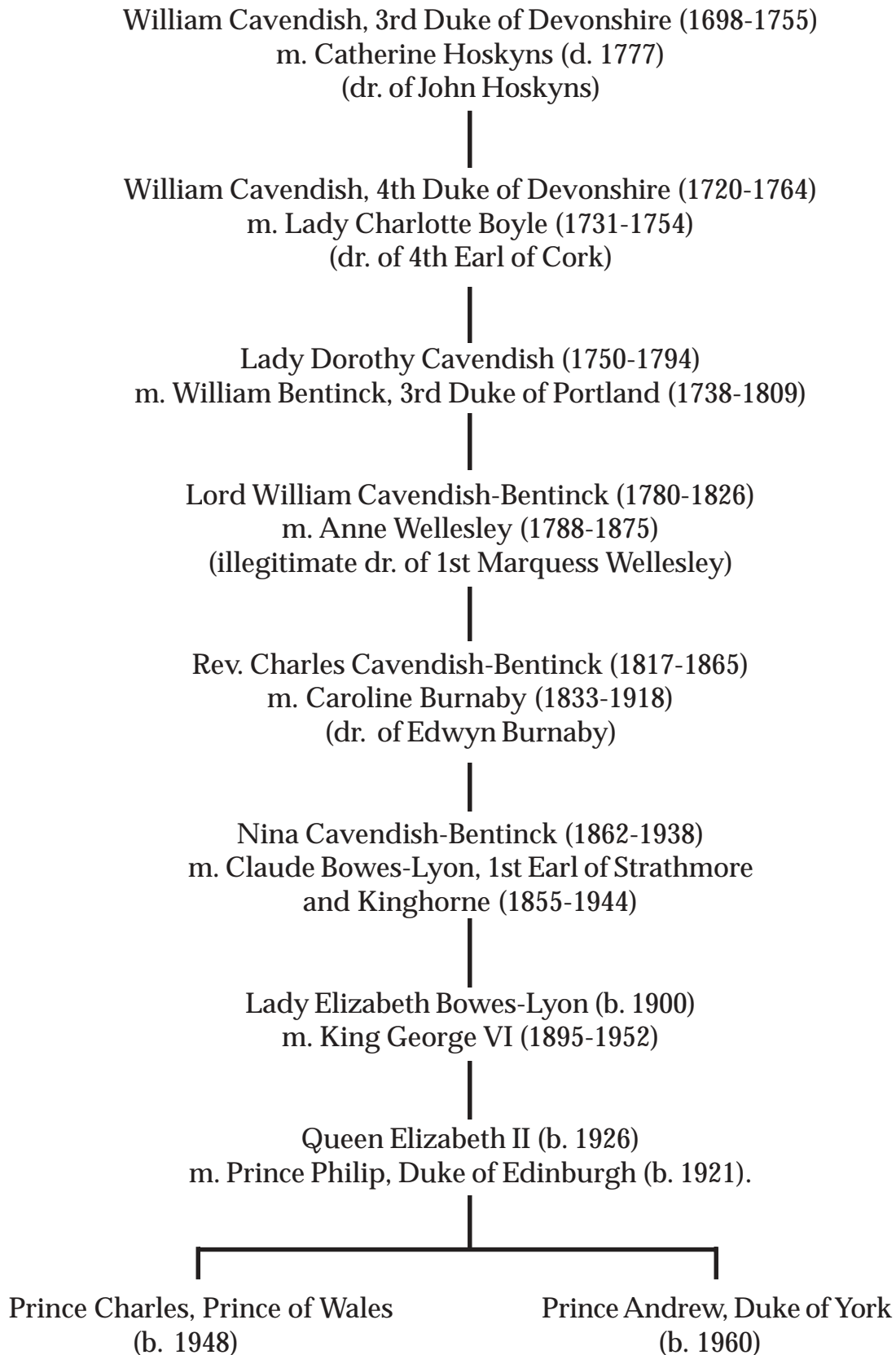
These tables are based on the books 'The Lineage and Ancestry of HRH Prince Charles, Prince of Wales' by Gerald Paget (published by Charles Skilton Ltd. in 1977) and, as to the Spencer and Ferguson ancestries, on Burke's Peerage and Burke's Landed Gentry.

NOTE: Some other published accounts of the Newton genealogy give different versions of the earlier entries, but all agree that Frances Newton, who was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Elizabeth I and married Lord Cobham, was a descendant of "our" Sir John and Dame Isabel Newton. Other records show the second line as Thomas Newton (died 1496) married Joanna (daughter of John Hampton and widow of Thomas Chokke).

A. From Sir John Newton to 3rd Duke of Devonshire



B. From 3rd Duke of Devonshire to Prince Charles and Prince Andrew



C. From 3rd Duke of Devonshire to Lady Diana Spencer

William Cavendish, 3rd Duke of Devonshire (1698-1755)
m. Catherine Hoskyns (d. 1777) (dr. of John Hoskyns)

|
Lady Elizabeth Cavendish (d. 1796)
m. Hon. John Ponsonby (1713-1789)
(son of 1st Earl of Bessborough)

|
William Ponsonby, 1st Lord Ponsonby (1744—1806)
m. Hon Louisa Molesworth
(dr. of 3rd Viscount Molesworth)

|
Hon. Mary Ponsonby (d. 1861)
m. Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey (1764-1845)

|
Lady Elizabeth Grey
m. John Bultiel (d. 1843)

|
Louise Bultiel (d. 1892)
m. Edward Baring, 1st Lord Revelstoke (1828-1897)

|
Hon. Margaret Baring (1868-1906)
m. Charles Spencer, 6th Earl Spencer (1857—1922)

|
Albert Spencer, 7th Earl Spencer (1892-1975)
m. Lady Cynthia Hamilton (1897—1972)
(dr. of 3rd Duke of Abercorn)

|
Edward Spencer, 8th Earl Spencer (b. 1924)
m. Hon. Frances Roche (b. 1936)
(dr. of 4th Lord Fermoy)

|
Lady Diana Spencer (b. 1961)

D. from 3rd Duke of Devonshire to Sarah Ferguson

William Cavendish, 3rd Duke of Devonshire (1698-1755)
m. Catherine Hoskyns (d. 1777) (dr. of John Hoskyns)



William Cavendish, 4th Duke of Devonshire (1720-1764)
m. Lady Charlotte Boyle (1731-1754)
(dr. of 4th Earl of Cork)



George Cavendish, 1st Earl of Burlington (1754-1834)
m. Lady Elizabeth Compton (d. 1835)
(dr. of 7th Earl of Northampton)



Lord George Cavendish (1810-1880)
m. Lady Louisa Lascelles (d. 1886)
(dr. of 2nd Earl. of Harewood)



Susan Cavendish (d. 1909)
m. Henry Brand, 2nd Viscount Hampden (1841-1906)



Hon Margaret Brand (1873-1948)
m. Algernon Ferguson (d. 1943)



Arthur Ferguson (1899-1966)
m. Marion Montagu-Douglas-Scott (b. 1908)
(dr. of Lord Herbert Montagu-Douglas-Scott
and granddr. of 6th Duke of Buccleuch)



Ronald Ferguson (b. 1931)
m. Susan Wright (b. 1937)
(dr. of FitzHerbert Wright)

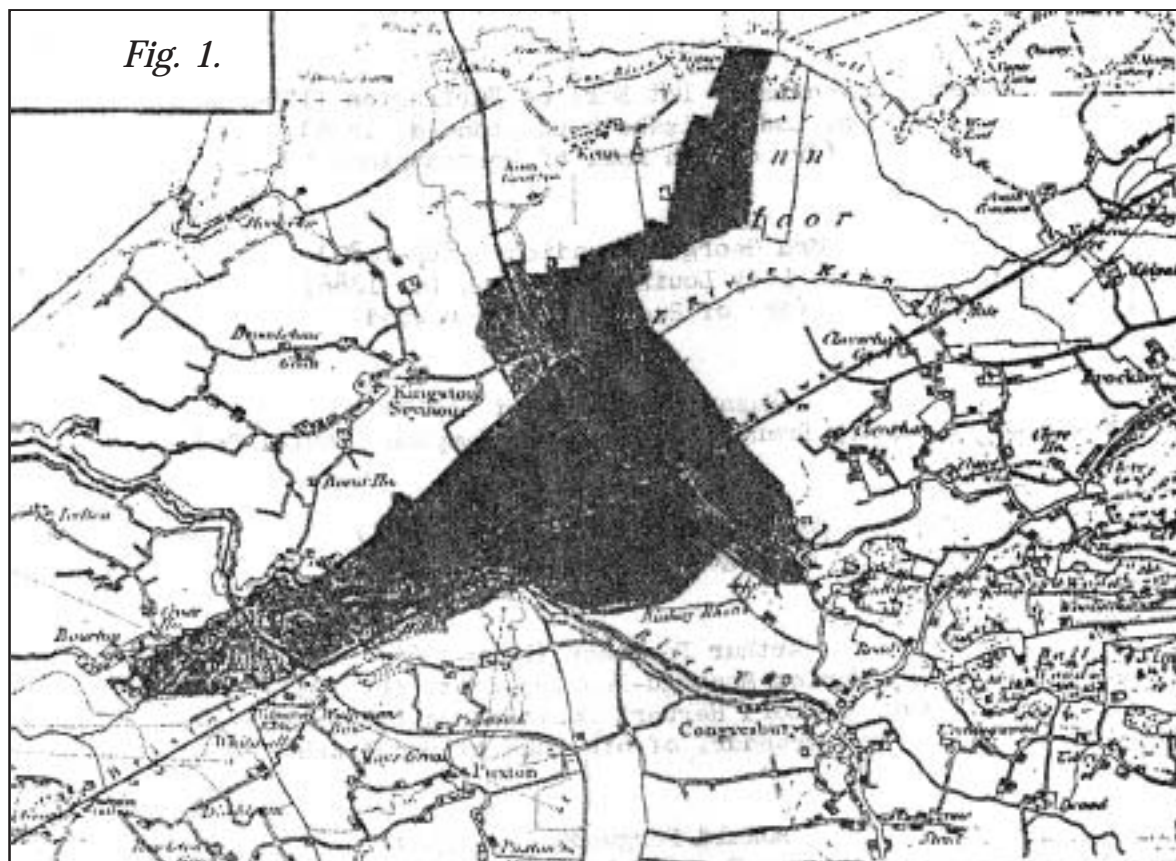


Sarah Ferguson (b. 1959)



Yatton in the Eighteen Fifties – Part 1

This short study is primarily based on the census for the village recorded on the 5th April 1851 by Benj Haynes who defined Yatton as COMMENCING AT ROCK HOUSE INCLUDING THE STREET, RECTORY, THE BARLOW, NORTH END, HORSECASTLE, WEMBURY, THE MOOR LEADING TO KENN, HEWISH, LAMPLEY AND MOOR STREET. It is within these limits research has been confined as shown in dark shading (Fig. 1).



YATTON – Based on Col. Mudge's 1817 corrected survey

In 1792 Collinson wrote of Yatton “*It consisted of a very long street through which runs an excellent road*” the census shows 26 farms (Fig. 2) most of which had been established along this road as far as Kenn.

Fig. 2 YATTON ACREAGES 1851		
Acres	Farms	Dairy evident
0 – 25	6	1
26 – 50	4	1
51 – 100	8	5
101 – 150	6	2
151 – 200 +	2	1

YATTON HIGH STREET (Map No. 1) – Data Sheet

Where necessary present day identification or usage given in brackets.

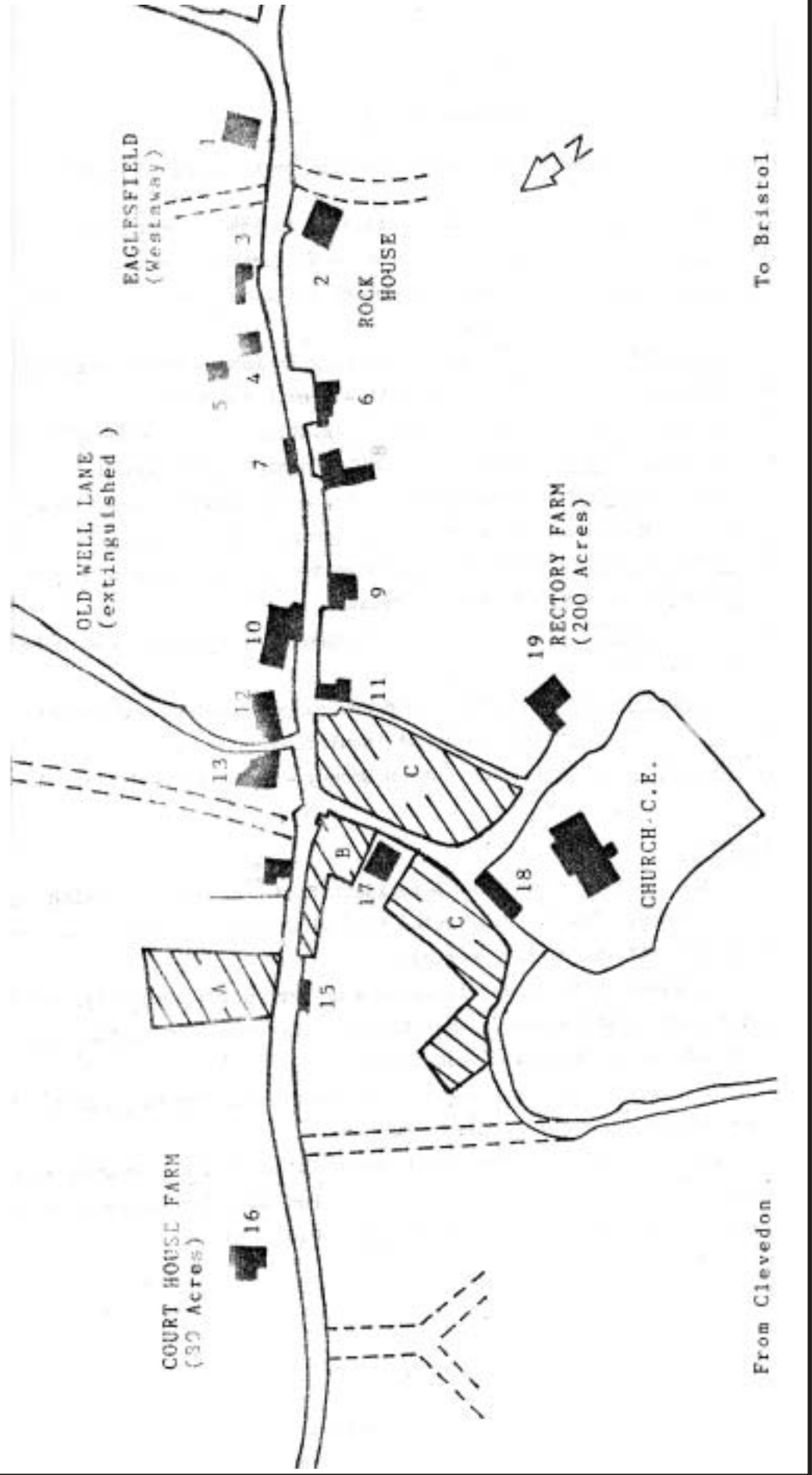
- 1) EAGLESFIELD (Westaway) George Norman, Solicitor – 1 House servant.
- 2) GIRLS BOARDING SCHOOL (Rock House) Mary Heale, Principal – 14 pupils – 4 House servants.
- 3) BUTCHER'S SHOP (Edward's Yard) George Gregory, Butcher – 2 House servants.
- 4) DOCTOR (No. 10 High St.) John Hurd, Surgeon in practice – 1 House servant.
- 5) THE LAURELS Susanah Vowles, Landed proprietress – 1 House servant.
- 6) PRINCE of ORANGE Augustine Atherton, Innkeeper – 1 House servant.
- 7) GENERAL STORE/ POST OFFICE (Estate Agents & Avon TV) Messrs. Gregory — Errand boy living in – 1 House servant.
- 8) TALLOW (Hill's shop) William Smart, Chandler – Son assisting in CHANDLER'S SITE shop — 2 House servants.
- 9) BUTCHERS ARMS Silvester Atherton, Beerhouse keeper – 1 House servant,
- 10) GROCER/TAILOR /DRAPER (Ladies Hairdressers) Joseph Derham – 3 Daughters assist in shop – 1 House servant.
- 11) CAUSEWAY HSE Betty Wornell, Annuitant – 1 House servant.
- 12) GREY HOUSE Sarah & Emma Tucker, Land property & Rectorial Tithes owners – 2 House servants.
- 13) OLD VICARAGE SITE (No. 40 High Street) Thomas J. Barrow, C.O.E. Minister – 1 House servant.
- 14) COACH HOUSE (Vicarage Press)
- 15) SMITHY (Woodworking shop) Occupier not proved.
- 16) COURT HOUSE FARM (Gateway site) Samuel Baker – 2 Farm servants – 1 House servant.
- 17) C.O.E. SCHOOL (Redundant) Built in 1834 for 164 children.
- 18) POOR HOUSE (Church house) Housing 29 persons.
- 19) RECTORY FARM William Tucker – 2 House servants.

The Poorhouse (Church House) was home for 29 persons, ages ranging from 7 months to 80 years, 14 being children; the census recorded 39 paupers living in the village.

The village shops and commercial premises were located on the rising ground between Well Lane and Rock House. (Map No. 1)

YATTON HIGH STREET - 1850s (MAP No. 1) - SHOWING POSITION OF COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

Scale: 1 : 2,500 (approx)



YATTON HIGH STREET (Map No. 2) – Data Sheet

Where necessary present day identification or usage given in brackets.

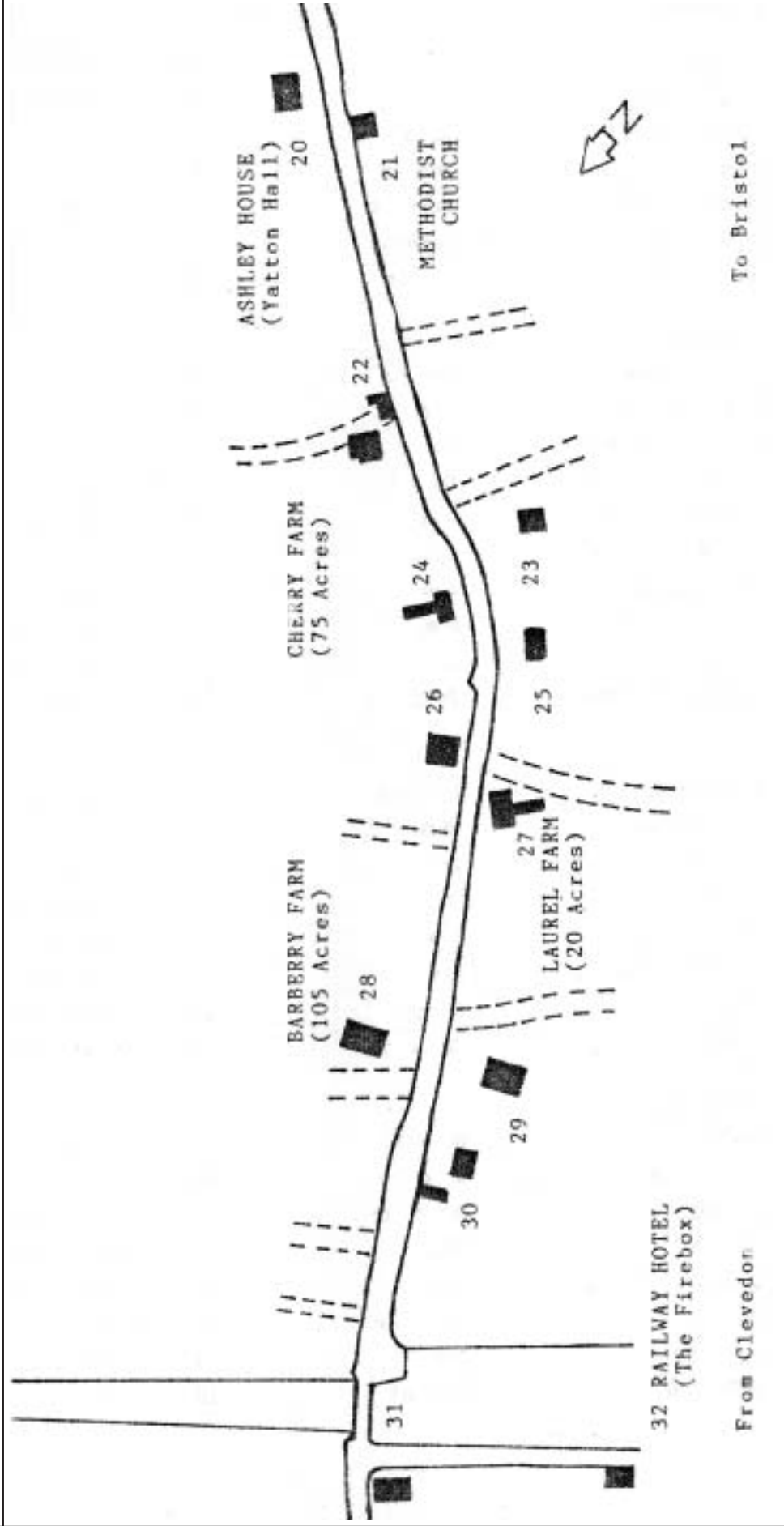
- 20) ASHLEY HOUSE (Yatton Hall) – existing in 1840 – occupier not proved.
- 21) OLD METHODIST CHURCH (Demolished) – W. Derham dissenter’s certificate 1825.
- 22) CHERRY FARM (Cherry Grove) – Robert Williams – Daughter assists in house – 3 sons employed on farm.
- 23) OLD HOUSE (The Lodge site) – existing in 1840 – occupier not proved.
- 24) CHILTON HOUSE existing in 1811 – occupier not proved.
- 25) RECTORY COTTAGE (Eagles Estate) – existing in 1840 – occupier not proved.
- 26) GRENVILLE HOUSE Built after 1840 – occupier not proved.
- 27) LAUREL FARM (The Beeches, Nithsdale, & The Ridge) – John Atherton – Daughter employed in dairy – 3 sons employed on farm.
- 28) BARBERRY FARM Thomas Say – 1 Daughter employed on farm – 2 sons employed on farm — 1 House servant,
- 29) THE LINDENS Available evidence suggests – James Baily, Musician – 1 House servant.
- 30) SOMERSET HOUSE Available evidence suggests – Dr. Wadborough.
- 31) BELLE VUE HOUSE Occupier not identified,
- 32) RAILWAY HOTEL (Firebox) James Wookey, Innkeeper – 4 servants.

This farming development coupled with good access to Bristol markets via the Yatton turnpike was, no doubt, a major factor for Yatton having one of the highest populations in North West Somerset at the start of the 19th century. A position it maintained until the rapid development of Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon in the 1860s. (Fig. 3)

Fig. 3 POPULATION LEVELS FOR YATTON AND NEIGHBOURING VILLAGES *Ancient Parish Area				
Village	1801	1851	1861	1871
Yatton *	1147	2063	1852	1832
Nailsea.	1983	2567	2337	2239
Congresbury	827	1258	1190	1242
Clevedon	334	1905	2940	4039
Weston-s-Mare	137	4033	8033	10564

YATTON HIGH STREET - 1850s (MAP No. 2) - SHOWING POSITION OF COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

Scale: 1 : 2,500 (approx)



Roads constructed since 1851 shown dotted.

The census recorded 197 houses, (4 uninhabited) 10.3% of which had lodgers, while three unfortunates were listed as living in barns, sheds or alike.

The principle houses were located along the High Street, with craftsmen and labourers housed mainly in three areas. (Shown crossed hatched on map no. 1)

- A) THE BARTON (30 persons) – including a dressmaker, shoemaker, carpenter, plasterer, 4 agricultural labourers and 4 charwomen.
- B) POUNDFIELD (53 persons) – including a blacksmith, stonemason, milliner, 3 railway labourers, 3 agricultural labourers and 2 charwomen.
- C) BIDDLE STREET (87 persons) – including a tailor, upholsteress, 3 plasterers, servant, carpenter, dressmaker, shoemaker, 15 agricultural labourers, washerwoman and charwoman.

Employment

Seventy two occupations were identified involving a working population of 522 persons, Fig. 4, illustrates this wide range, typical of so many rural employment patterns of this period.

Analysis of the occupations show an agricultural society, but the greater part of the working population was employed in domestic and supportive roles; 13.59% of the households had servants.

Although the railway had been in the village for 10 years by 1851, only 16 persons were engaged on the railway.

Banking did not arrive until the 1890s but William Gregory in his shop was operating a post office where money orders were issued and paid out. Letters arrived at 7.30 a.m. and despatched at 5.30 p.m.

Farm Households 1851 - High Street (Map No. 2)

Court Farm		Age	Occupation
Samuel Baker	Husband	52	Farmer
Sarah Baker	Wife	53	
Hannah Baker	Mother	89	
Matilda Taylor	Servant	19	House servant
Ruth Parker	Servant	33	Farm servant
Isaac Gregory	Servant	26	Farm servant

Cherry Farm

Robert Williams	Husband	57	Farmer
Mary Williams	Wife	47	
John Williams	Son	24	Employed on farm
Caroline Williams	Daughter	21	Employed in house
William Williams	Son	18	Employed on farm
Manuel Williams	Son	16	Employed on farm
Albert Williams	Son	13	Scholar
George Williams	Son	10	Scholar
Amos Williams	Son	7	Scholar
Elizabeth Williams	Daughter	5	Scholar

Laurel Farm		Age	Occupation
John Atherton	Husband	65	Farmer
Sarah Atherton	Wife	62	
Moses Atherton	Son	35	Employed on farm
James Atherton	Son	32	Carpenter
Alfred Atherton	Son	24	Employed on farm
Edward Atherton	Son	20	Employed on farm
Mary Atherton	Daughter	19	Employed in dairy
James Atherton	Grandson	7	Scholar

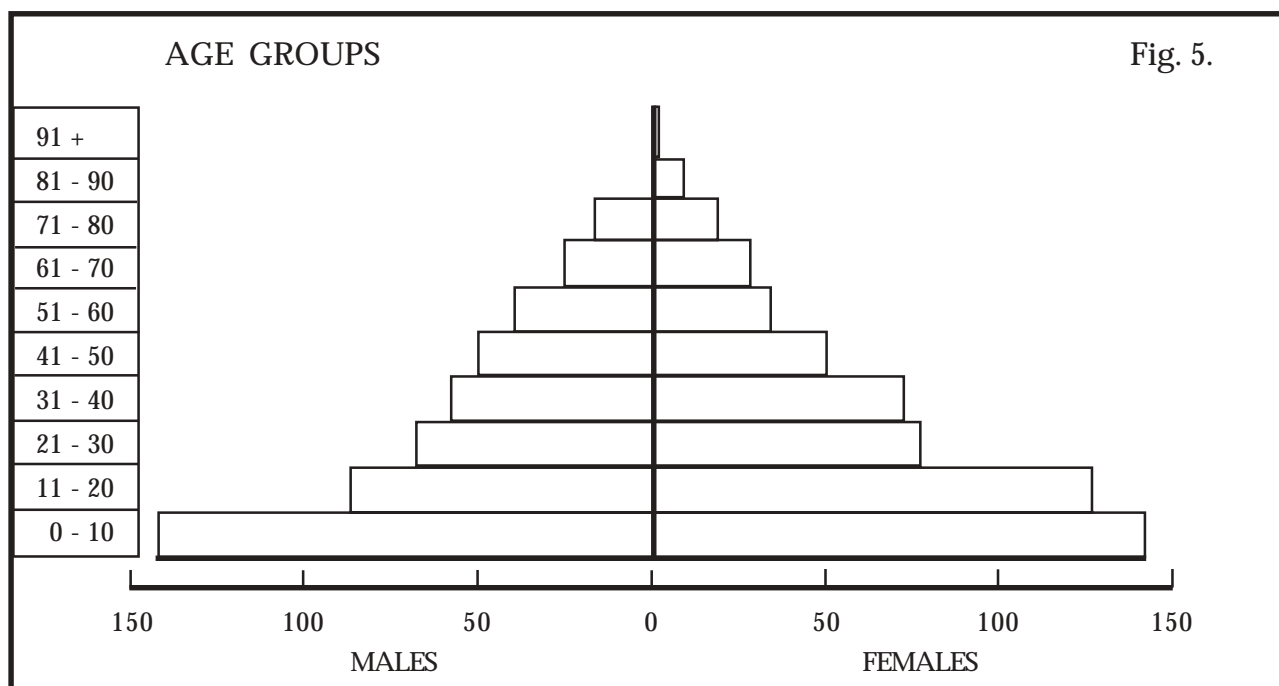
Barberry Farm

Thomas Say	Husband	59	Farmer
Elizabeth Say	Wife	46	
Martha Say	Daughter	21	Employed on farm
Albert Say	Son	19	Employed on farm
Henry Say	Son	15	Employed on farm
Elvina Say	Daughter	12	Scholar
William Say	Son	9	Scholar
Maria Kerton	Servant	18	House servant

The Pattern of Employment for Villagers 1851

Ag. bailiffs	1	Errand girls	1	Plumbers	1
Ag. labourers	106	Errand boys	1	Plasterers/Tilers	6
Annuitants	9	Farmers	26	Railway labourers	10
Apprentices	5	Farm managers	1	Railway superintendents	1
Blacksmiths	6	Gardeners	6	Railway policemen	4
Butchers	5	Grooms	1	Railway porters	1
Bakers	4	Hawkers	2	Saddle/harness makers	1
Beerhouse keepers	5	Housekeepers	5	Sawyers	3
Bonnet makers	4	Inn keepers	2	Schoolmasters	2
Basket makers	2	Iron mine agents	1	Schoolmistresses	5
Butter dealers	1	Land proprietors	5	Schoolteachers	3
Butcher's labourers	1	Launderesses	3	Servants (farm)	52
Clergymen	2	Musicians	1	Servants (house)	65
Carpenters	11	Milliners	2	Shoemakers	16
Coopers	1	Midwives	1	Shop assistants	4
Charwomen	10	Mariners	1	Shop keepers	6
Cattle drovers	1	Needleworkers	1	Solicitors	2
Coal hauliers	3	Nurses	1	Solicitor's clerks	2
Cattle doctors	1	Nurses (monthly)	1	Stonemasons	9
Dealers (potatoes)	1	Nursemaids	1	Tailors	5
Dealers (hay)	3	Out of business	1	Tailoresses	3
Dressmakers	23	Proprietors of houses	3	Tallow chandlers	1
Drapers	1	Post boys	1	Upholsterers	1
Doctors	1	Paupers	39	Washerwomen	5

Population Pyramid for 1851



Population

The 1851 census recorded 527 males and 582 females, the population structure shown on the pyramid (Fig. 5) suggests potential for an expansion in the total population during the succeeding decades. However, surprisingly, reference to later returns show the numbers reached a peak in the early 1850s, which remained fairly constant after a slight drop until an upturn in the early part of this century. Examinations of the birth places of the inhabitants (Fig. 6) show those with the highest figures were within 5 miles of the village; 82.13% were within Somerset and 6.94% in adjacent counties.

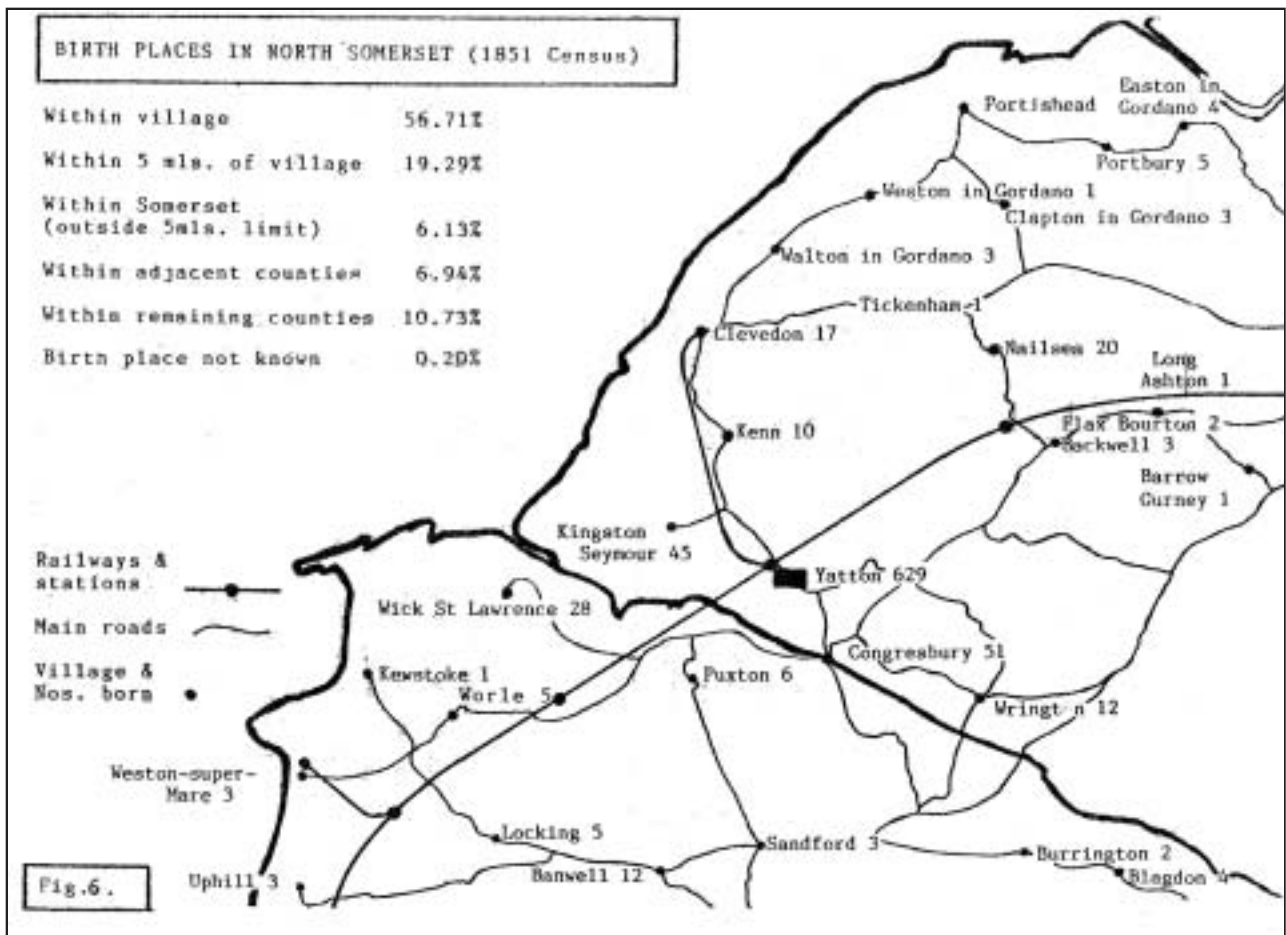
Apart from two persons from Lancashire and two from Yorkshire no one came from counties north of Worcestershire. Outside of England, 3 came from Wales, 1 from Ireland and 6 from the West Indies. (The C.o.E. Minister and his family).

On the day of the census the oldest male was JOHN JONES aged 93, a retired labourer, born in Puxton and living in Biddle Street; the youngest being the day old son of the Tallow Chandler, William Smart. The oldest female was Mrs. HANNAH BAKER aged 89, retired farmer, born in Flax Bourton and living with her son at Court House Farm. A contemporary travel guide stated *“Many of its inhabitants lived to a great age which speaks well for the health of the locality”*, a view upheld by the population pyramid. (Fig. 5).

Transport

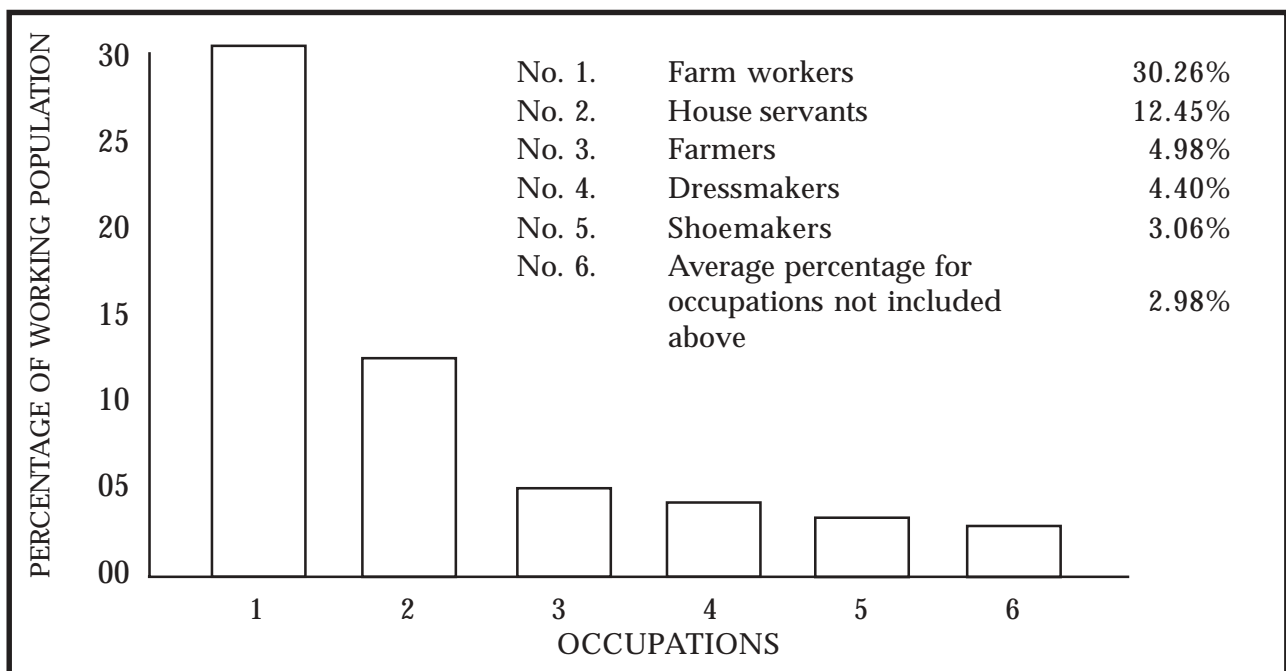
By the 1850s the railway was already offering services not only between Bristol, Exeter and Clevedon but also to London via the Great Western Railway (Fig. 8). The question must be asked how many of the villagers could afford the fares when most wages were in the region of 12 shillings (60p.) a week.

Yatton station was referred to in a Weston-super-Mare travel guide of 1854, which suggested visitors take a 15 minutes train ride to Yatton where four wheeled horse carriages may be hired, which will convey the visitors through Yatton to Wrington and return for them in the evening at a cost of about ten shillings (50p.).



Road travel to and from Bristol was available by wagonette; at the start of the decade a daily service to the Red Lion, Redcliffe Street, Bristol was being operated by J. Ware. This service appears to have been reduced in 1855 to Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, operated by W. Vickery and by the end of the decade the three day service was changed to Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, operated to the Wheatsheaf, Thomas Street.

Fig. 7. Analysis of Occupations



GREAT WESTERN AND EXETER RAILWAY TIME TABLE.

FROM	1.		2.		3.		Exp.		Mid.		K.		K.		Exp.		1.		2.		K.		Mid.							
	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.	mn.						
Reading	7	5	9	30	10	15	19	30	2	45	4	50	8	0	10	15	19	30	2	45	4	50	8	0						
Bath	9	15	3	25	12	3	19	4	15	6	50	7	15	3	30	39	45	5	50	7	20	6	15	50						
Bristol	Mail	9	45	3	25	12	25	3	40	4	40	7	30	3	45	45	50	5	50	7	30	6	40	1	15					
Nailsea	8	10	16	5	48	...	3	15	5	48	8	5	8	3	7	8	8	7	8	8	8	7	8	...						
Chvedon Junction	8	18	10	6	2	...	3	34	6	2	8	14	4	14	7	22	8	18	7	22	8	18	7	22						
Stanwell	8	26	10	31	6	16	...	3	31	6	16	T	T	7	32	8	26	7	32	8	26	7	32	...						
Weston Station	8	25	10	27	6	18	12	40	3	25	6	13	8	15	8	15	8	15	8	15	8	15	7	35	8	25	7	35	1	55
Highbridge	8	53	10	34	6	45	...	3	54	6	42	8	42	8	45	8	45	8	45	8	45	8	45	8	45	8	45	8	45	
Bridgewater	9	10	11	6	7	8	1	15	4	17	7	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
Taunton	9	20	11	26	7	23	1	40	4	27	7	32	9	27	8	25	8	25	8	25	8	25	8	25	8	25	8	25	8	25
Exeter	10	40	12	45	9	0	2	30	5	50	9	0	10	30	10	40	10	40	10	40	10	40	10	40	10	40	10	40	10	40

(NIGHT MAILS.—Carriages leave the Weston Station at 10.30 for the Up mail train, returning at 11.10; and at 1.30 for the Down mail, returning at 2.25.
 NOTICE.—Tickets must be obtained Five minutes previous to the time named for starting.

TABLE OF FARES FROM WESTON.						
Up.	1st Cl.			2d Cl.		Return Tickets.
	s.	d.	c.	s.	d.	1st Cl. 2d Cl.
Stanwell	1	0	0	0	0	1 0 0 0
Yatton	1	6	0	0	0	1 6 0 0
Chvedon	2	6	1	0	0	2 6 1 0
Nailsea	2	6	9	0	0	2 6 9 0
Bristol	4	6	3	0	0	4 6 3 0
Bath	7	0	4	6	2	7 0 4 6
Gloucester	17	6	11	0	0	17 6 11 0
Cheltenham	19	0	14	0	0	19 0 14 0
Oxford	21	6	15	0	0	21 6 15 0
Reading	23	6	16	0	0	23 6 16 0
Paddington	31	6	21	6	0	31 6 21 6

Down.	1st Cl.			2d Cl.		Return.
	s.	d.	c.	s.	d.	1st Cl. 2d Cl.
Highbridge	2	0	1	0	0	2 0 1 0
Bridgewater	3	0	2	0	0	3 0 2 0
Taunton	5	0	4	0	0	5 0 4 0
Exeter	13	0	9	0	0	13 0 9 0
Plymouth	25	0	17	0	0	25 0 17 0

* Great Western Return tickets are not available via the Brit. and Alm. line; & nor further than Exeter on the down line.
 It runs Tickets which may be taken out on Saturdays, will be available on the return on Mondays, but not for Sundays; nor will a Sunday ticket be good for returning on Mondays. If persons enter the train, on their return journey, before midnight, the hour at which they reach their destination will not be regarded. The rule of charge for return tickets is—Half-Price for the Back Journey.

Fig. 8. Extract from Weston-super-Mare Gazette, 15 March 1851.

This initial article is to be followed by others which will cover the remaining districts of the ancient Parish of Yatton.

Kenneth Dougherty

- SOURCES**
- 1) Daniel Harwood, Yatton Parish Map 1840.
 - 2) Yatton Tithe Map and Award 1841.
 - 3) Census (Yatton District) 1851.
 - 4) Weston-s-Mare Gazette and General Advertiser 15.3.1851.
 - 5) Brown, New Guide to Weston-s-Mare and Neighbourhood 1854.
 - 6) Matthew, Bristol Directories 1850 - 1860.
 - 7) Harrison, Post Office Directory for Somerset 1859.
 - 8) Collinson, History of Somerset.

Goin' Out Wimbram

Just as the young Stockhams and Haymans went “down Wimbram” from Horsecastle, so I went “out Wimbram” to fish in the Little River and get conkers from the lovely avenue of horse chestnuts that are along its banks.

Then in 1926 my father bought the corner of Wimberham that lies on the Kingston side of the river and so for the next fifty or more years I often went to work in the buildings, orchard and field known as the High Wharf.

There was no more pleasant place to work during the summer days and no lonelier one in winter. One could be there every day for a week and not see a soul, but in summer I am sure that there were more cattle and sheep in a half mile stretch along the river than any similar area in Somerset. I got to know the area with its centre piece the forty acres and its background of steam trains which we knew so well that we could tell the time by them.

Now, as I gaze across in 1986, I think of the Domesday book of nine hundred years ago which describes “a pasture called Wemberham is there which before 1066 belonged to Congressbury, a manor of the King's.”

So let us take a walk around and look for a few of the interesting objects in the area. Starting by the horse chestnuts which were no doubt like many of the other lovely trees there which were planted on the instructions of the Smyth Pigott family who owned the land a hundred years ago.

When was the Little River dug to take away some of the flood waters from the Claverham and Yatton moors and leave that bit of Yatton on the Kingston side and why was the field called the High Wharf? Surely a wharf had close connections with the sea.

But let us walk on down the river and look at the bit where the Little River used to run into the Yeo and known as David's Yere or Ear. The Yatton story by the late Mr. Greenhill tells us that in 1548

“Thys yere the sylver cross of our church was sold to Master Kenne and twenty of ye honest of ye parych of Yatton, and by there lyke assent the money of the sayd crosse was bestowed by Wyllyam Croke and Wyllyam Craddock upon ye makyng of a sirten sklusse (sluice) or yere agenste the rage of ye salte water called ‘Danys yere’ set and beyng in West Wemerham, the wych yere then beyng ruynus an yn decay and the seyde perysheonars beyng chargyd with the makyng there off by the commyssoners sewards (commissioners of Sewers) upon ye payn of £x to be made by ye seyde perysheonars by a day serteyne, by ye same commyssoners provided as yn ye boks or decrees more playnly may apere.”

And now turning left along the Yeo and across the Sheep House ground and see what is left of what was no doubt the shelter for lonely shepherds whilst looking after their charges. The walls have gone and only the stone floor remains.

The river is much wider now than it was when I first remember it. It was tidal then and I have walked it many times and tried unsuccessfully to catch rudd from the fine shoals which darted away into the shadows as one drew near.

What a lovely name for the next two fields, the Rambles, and what a winding course the river takes.

Nearing Wimberham Lane one comes to the highlight of the walk, the site of the Roman Villa. Only one of the four posts which were placed there to mark the site when the Smyth Pigotts sold it in 1914 remains.

YATTON



When it was found in 1884 it was a seven day wonder and people used to come for miles to view it. When I was a boy I remember an old chap telling me that he was employed there as a watchman and they used to sell the pieces of tessellated pavement for half a crown each.

Before turning for home, a last look at the Yeo and to remember a sight that I shall never forget. I was doing a bit of wild fowling by moonlight and looking down into the river I could see and hear a family of otters playing together in the water.

And now back into the forty acres and along the Wemberham rhyne to the chestnuts and pondering on the story of the stone coffin that was found here in 1828 and as the historian Rutter says:-

“In a field called Great Wimberham and about a mile and a half from Kingston Seymour church, a foot below the surface was a freestone coffin with a lid, shaped to the body and fractured. It was of uncommon thickness and had been excavated to form a solid block. It contained, besides the bones of a skeleton of middle stature, some parts of a lead coffin.”

One last memory dwells in my mind as I cross the old stone bridge, for I can still picture the figure of Herbie Palmer in pork pie hat, stick in hand and dog at heel, who daily for so many years “herded” the many cattle and sheep that grazed there just as his father George had done before him.

Ken Stuckey
Kingston Seymour



Where Yesterday is Still Today

At Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Americans have recreated, as accurately as research can reveal, a complete village representing the first settlement of the original Pilgrim settlers from the Mayflower. It is a collection of shingled cottages, with little gardens or perhaps even a paddock, inside a palisade on a sunny slope looking out to Plymouth Bay. It is a living village, with goats and chickens, and with actors playing the roles of the first settlers. The clock has stopped there in 1627. The inhabitants will interrupt their cooking and building and gardening to talk to you about their persecution in England or their ten years in Holland, but they will look blank if asked about later years.

Two visitors from Yatton were warmly welcomed there recently and were urgently directed to the house of Mistress Carpenter who hailed from Wrington. Mistress Carpenter was the sister of the wife of their governor, William Bradford — her sister had died on the long voyage out. Mistress Carpenter told how hard their life was on these new shores — though she welcomed the hills around them, recalling her beloved Mendips. She spoke nostalgically of the old fair at Congresbury and asked eagerly for news of Wrington. Regrettably the Yatton visitors could not help her much — but perhaps today there are still kinsfolk of that brave lady around here in Wrington?

Pat Scally



Exhibition

Woodspring Museum, Weston-super-Mare, are staging an exhibition “People and Places 1086 — 1986” from 8th November to 30th December. Our society has been asked to contribute examples of the historical recording work we do, and we are displaying photographs and maps of Horsecastle both before and after Avalon.

Opening hours: Monday to Saturday 10 - 1 and 2 - 5.



Excavation at Claverham

When Mr. P. Franklin was ploughing a field early in May he uncovered a stone structure. He contacted us and we in turn asked Jane Evans, curator of Woodspring Museum, to look at it. It was then excavated by members of Clevedon Archaeological Society and a plan produced of they think, a causeway and ditch or drain.

We are grateful for Mr. Franklin's co-operation; it is in this way that history is discovered - for instance, about 20 years ago a somewhat similar structure found on Ham Farm turned out to be a Romano-British corn drying kiln. So keep your eyes open!



Village Cricket

The earliest record in my possession is a printed and bound recording of the club results for the 1881 season, to which reference was made in Tony Coe's article on The Nurseries (YYII, 1985). The cricket club of those days was officially styled The East Somerset Cricket Club and was very much the child of Mr. Tankerville Chamberlayne, who lived at The Lodge, High Street. He caused the cricket field to be laid out on grounds adjoining The Boards and now covered by Derham Park/Elm Close and Mendip Road. Here were held cricket festivals at which the club team played teams of 22 farmers each year: sides of cold beef and whole lambs were purchased from Martin's butchers shop (later to become Edwards') with barrels of ale from the hostelrys and open house would be kept.

The game was taken seriously and played to a high standard. Of 19 games played in 1884, 13 were won, 4 drawn, one lost and one abandoned due to rain. Visits were made as far afield as Cardiff and Marlborough College, presumably by train. The Cardiff fixtures that year are of particular interest as the great W. G. Grace appeared for us at both encounters: at home he only managed 11 runs but took 5 for 47, while at Cardiff he scored 107 and secured 7 wickets for 81. This match resulted in a draw in East Somerset's favour, the Welsh being 223 all out against the villagers' 205 for 2. Over 3000 spectators attended and the large sum of £36.6.0d. was taken at the gate. "WG" was again at Yatton on August 4th 1884 to meet Wells, scoring 117 runs and taking 6 wickets for 31. His lesser known brother E. M. Grace also turned out for the village at an away fixture versus Thornbury during this season.

By 1899 Mr. Chamberlayne and the captain/groundsman Mr. Radcliff had disappeared and the club was undertaking less exalted fixtures: Sidcot School, Langford and Blagdon appear. The Yatton side now declined and was closed a few seasons later in 1912, presumably following the sale of The Nurseries in 1910. However, a (possibly) rival club had been formed in 1905 at Claverham under the presidency of Mr. Charles Knowles, who had appeared for East Somerset in the previous century. It adopted the Newton crest and conducted its games at a field roughly behind Claverham Coaches premises. I have a snapshot of a game in progress there circa 1919, but exact location of the ground has been hampered by sixty years' growth of trees and hedges obscuring the background landmarks.

Cricket apparently ceased during WWI, but began again after the Armistice, tragically with far fewer young players from whom to choose teams. Our own President, Jack Crease, who had been invalided out of the Army wounded, was a prime mover in restarting the club, which in 1922 moved to the present location at Henley Lane, when the title became Claverham (Yatton) Cricket Club. This ground was rented from Mr. Parsons at Henley Farm, who in turn leased it from Dr. Vincent Wood, whose house and grounds occupied the area where Henley Lodge now stands.

One character I recall with great affection is H. T. "Harry" Chambers, who died in 1960 aged 80. He also provided a firm link with the old East Somerset Club, for whom he had played as a young lad in the 1890s, and achieved the unparalleled distinction of serving as Secretary to Claverham for the whole fifty years from 1910. Harry laboured under the disadvantage for a secretary of being stone deaf, but his minutes and reports were models of clarity tinged with humour and he was a useful cricketer in his day, heading both batting and bowling averages in several pre WWI seasons. Harry was already an old man when I knew him in the 1950s but still sprightly: always wearing a suit and trilby hat, bicycle-clipped and smiling, pushing his ancient cycle up the slope into the ground. His portrait still has a place of honour in the pavilion. Harry's son Reg captained the XI in the late 1950s and early 1960s and his grandchildren Robert and Dawson still play today.

Another memorable figure was Mr. R. L. Gosling, club captain 1914-1928 and subsequently chairman, president and chairman again during the decades after WWII. A solicitor by profession, this imposing and kindly man oversaw the legal affairs of the cricketers for many years and continued to support as a spectator well into the 1970s.

He was succeeded as skipper by Mr. E. W. Ebdon of Causeway House, an ex-county rugby player and cricketer who had also turned out for the England hockey team. E. W. Ebdon drilled the team of the 1930s to an extremely high standard. Cricket in those days was not an enterprise to be undertaken lightly and regular net practice was obligatory. Some idea of the standards he expected will be apparent from an anecdote of the late Malcolm Stone's, who succeeded Ebdon as village schoolmaster. One hot and drowsy afternoon in late summer Claverham, who had batted first, were fielding the penultimate over of a match in which the visitors, whose last batsman was at the crease, needed but six runs to win. Malcolm, way out on the boundary and squinting into the setting sun, saw the batsman make a truly mighty hit. As the ball rose like a rocket, he heard Ebdon's dry voice observe, "Stone has it, gentlemen". It seemed as if the ball would continue its ascent for ever; finally it paused and hurtled down through the glare into the dazzled fielder's hands and the catch was held. The ripple of applause which Stone prepared to acknowledge was not, he noticed to his chagrin, for him, but for the revered captain who was already entering the pavilion, followed by his colleagues.

The pavilion which served the club from the 1920s to the late 50s (the present building was acquired and erected in 1956/7) hardly warranted such a title. It was a wooden, windowless shed, divided like Gaul into three parts. The smallest, left hand room was devoted to the preparation of teas under the control of a succession of capable ladies: Mrs. Chambers, Miss Howe, Mrs. Stone and a loyal cadre of wives and girlfriends. In the very early days water was boiled by Mrs. Parsons at Henley Farm for 2/- a match, but later a primus stove and finally a calor gas one was acquired. On thundery August Saturdays the atmosphere rivalled a turkish bath and the butter could almost be poured onto the bread. The remainder of the building was partitioned in half for visitors and home team changing purposes. At the rear of the structure was a rudimentary toilet of memorable awfulness, which probably contributed greatly to the fertility of Arthur Wynn's adjoining allotment, where the bungalows now stand.

The pavilion was located about where the entrance gate is today. Access to the field then was further up the lane where there is still a gap in the wall. As Henley Lane is at a considerably lower level than the cricket field, there was a very pronounced dip, extending ten yards or so out into the field, to facilitate entry. This singularity was deplored by so many a visiting fielder who, running confidently for an easy catch, suddenly fell sprawling as the ground opened beneath his feet, to the relief of the home supporters.

Cricket Club finances between the wars and indeed post war until the advent of bar revenues, were generally parlous. Claverham were saved from financial disaster on several occasions by determined self help under the guidance of H. Baber and Jack Crease who organised fetes and Harry Chambers who arranged whist drives. These activities were vital to survival and accounted for well over half the income during 1925 and 1927. 1930 ended with a balance of 3/8d (18p) and 1931 was even worse at 1/- (5p). Jack Crease again organised a fete, which took place at the ground in August and raised the impressive sum of £66.9.4d., enabling the 1932 season to end with a balance in hand of £31.18.0d. The underlying cash flow however was still negative, due in part to the local authority levying rates upon the ground for the first time. This imposition was bitterly contested by the club, who argued that neither Wrington nor Congresbury paid rates. Mr. Gosling represented the club at a formal objection hearing and made a speech which, in Harry Chamber's words, "would have melted the heart of a cabbage", but to no avail.

By 1934 the current account was in deficit by £20.16.0d. and Jack Crease was again prevailed upon. Admission to the fete of 4th July 1935 was 6d: star events were an inter-schools netball tournament and a cricket match between the Bowling Club and the cricketers. The latter, presumably in deference to the date, were armed with baseball bats. These main attractions were supported by stalls including dairy produce, fruit and vegetable, refreshments and a pound, together with a dozen or more sideshows embracing skittles, ping pong, clock golf and coconut shy. The day was brought to a successful conclusion by a dance in the Church Hall (admission 1/6d) to the music of Cyril Brewer's Rhythym Boys. When the sums were done the further impressive amount of £64.4.9d, had been raised and the much feared crisis averted. Harry wrote a letter of thanks to Jack in April 1936, observing:

"I dread to think what the result would have been otherwise — either extinction or Prince of Orange ground and a rotten pitch". I presume that the ground referred to here would be the Recreation Field, for of course Rectory Drive did not exist then.

The superb quality of the Claverham pitch has always been a source of pride to the members. Its creation and care from 1922 until 1960 was largely the work of my father Frank Young, who was said locally to know every blade of grass. He probably did, for when the pitch was first acquired as a meadow, it was taped off into 12 inch squares from which every weed was grubbed out by hand before mowing and rolling. Dad was an extremely able cricketer who headed the batting averages in twelve of the sixteen seasons from 1921 to 1937 and was still topping the bowling as late as 1958. His best season with the ball however was 1926, when he took 130 wickets for an average of 3 runs each. He had the honour of captaining the team from 1948 to 1955. For all his prowess with bat and ball, however, I believe that it was his attitude to the game he loved which moved his friends from Claverham and many other local clubs to subscribe to the memorial gateway by which the field is now approached. His appeals were always polite and he would no more have queried the umpire's decision than he would have dug up the pitch he had created.

Frank Young's early death in 1961, within a month or so of Harry Chambers, was a cruel double blow to Claverham, but one to which the members responded positively and successfully, progressing to their present very healthy state. His cherished pitch continues to thrive under the current care of Norman Stockham and Robin Tambling.

The close season of 1960/61 however marked something of a watershed between the old ways and the new and is a convenient point at which to conclude an historical account. At about this time the new pavilion, which had been a school building at Bruton, began to boast creature comforts and the bar was opened. This was a development viewed with much suspicion by the older generation, some of whom severed their connection with the club over it. As with so many other sporting organisations, however, it has proved over the years to be a financial mainstay.

For me, village cricket evokes sunny pre-war seasons, when Claverham players who failed to score paid 3d. into the "Duck Fund", which was used to purchase deck chairs, and spectators not in the know were mystified by the ironic applause which always greeted a first run. It recalls the struggle to purchase the first pavilion for £50 and the water boiled for tea being carried down Henley Lane from the farm. Also the walnut tree which stood for many years at the Claverham corner of the square itself and which Dr. Wood the President would not suffer to be felled during his lifetime. It counted for four runs if the trunk was struck. Vigorous hits were also directed towards the Henley Lane end and there was some competition among the blither spirits to improve the ventilation of Arthur Wynn's greenhouses, which offered a tempting target.

One recalls the annual pre-season battle to coax the Dennis motor mower into life. This usually ended with the burly figure of G. G. F. "Frank" Pearce, spin bowler and garage

proprietor, being summoned to assist. He was invariably successful, emerging triumphant from a cloud of blue smoke after half an hour or so like the demon king in a pantomime. Frank Pearce, Malcolm Stone and Ernest Stockham were among the few cricketing car owners in the years around World War II and their inclusion in the selection for away matches was virtually assured even during their rare “off form” spells.

The mention of blue smoke also calls to mind the late George Eager, a coastguard based at the Walton lookout station above Clevedon. George ran a good sideline in sports reporting for the local weeklies and the Saturday editions of the Evening Post and World. He would cover Clevedon, Congresbury and Claverham in the afternoon, telephoning the salient features of the matches through to the sports desks. George rode a very early moped whose struggle up the Scaur would be audible to the experienced ear at the ground. By the time the noise had risen to a crescendo, the unlikely apparition clad in quasi-naval uniform and peering from the blue haze filling the lane below would already be shouting the weekly questions to the spectators on the wall: “Who’s batting? How many? Who’s taking the wickets?” The answers were scribbled down and George would be off, seemingly without having stopped his machine. Three or four paragraphs would appear that evening in the Pink ‘Un and Green ‘Un, with a more detailed account in the later weeklies.

Many of the figures from earlier days of Claverham cricket still smile down self-consciously from the excellent collection of photographs in the pavilion lounge, resplendent in their striped blazers. It is good to know that their obvious enjoyment of the game and pride in their club are traditions still followed to the present day at Henley Lane.

R. H. Young

Sources: Claverham CC records
East Somerset CC scorebooks
Press cuttings
Mr. Charles Edwards
Claverham CC members past and present

Footnote: It is hoped to prepare a more formally definitive history for club archives: to this end I would greatly appreciate any reminiscences from former players and friends of Claverham cricket.



“When I Were A Girl”

When I were a girl, some few years ago,
Well, t’weren’t quite the same I recall,
Some things have got better, some things have got worse,
As for me, well, I’m not quite so tall . . . as I were.

I was born down in Clav’ram, not far from this hall,
Ten minutes to walk with a pram.
‘Course it’s grown a bit since, and its people have changed,
Why, there’s some folks that say “Claver-ham”.

In the High Street, our house was, no number, no name,
No need, us all knew who was what.
Fred Lawrence, the postman, could even recount,
What was **in** most the letters we got.

My mother’ d her hands full, there’s none would deny,
With seven of us at her knee.
There were four little maidens and three little lads,
And the youngest of all - that was me.

By the time I was nine, my sisters had gone,
They’d to work, just as soon as they’re able.
In service they were, little scraps in their teens,
With their feet under some other table.

That left me and the boys, and like all of their sex
They’d not lift a hand in the house.
I’d the dishes to do and the plates and the cups,
Nor be suffered to grumble or grouse.

‘Twas Mondays I hated the worst of the week.
After school, what I wanted was fun.
But the beds must be made, when the sheets had been washed,
And dried by the wind and the sun.

Mind, our Dad did his bit on a washday as well.
He’d be up by half-five, shine or rain,
There were buckets to fill and the boiler to light,
‘Fore he’d pedal away down Mud Lane on his bike.

He worked on the railway six days for our keep.
At morn off he’d go with tea in his can,
A huge chunk of cheese, bread and cider quite cheap,
T’was all that he needed to feed th’ inner man.

'Course, I were at school all the day, like the rest,
Our Bill had to take me with him.
I don't s'pose he minded, he never said much,
Though some days he looked a bit grim Later on I'd
go on my bike.

Un-de-nom-in-ational, that was its name,
The school here in Yatton I was sent.
A splendid long word, I was proud of it then,
Though I hadn't a clue what it meant.

But the best thing about it, the school I do mean,
Well, t'weren't lessons nor play-time nor treats,
But the ha'penny a day that was put in my hand
To buy broken biscuits or sweets I'd buy 'em from Tutt's
if they 'ad some, but
if they didn't Colling's
did, didn't er?

I'd a pinny my mother'd make sure that I wore
To save her from washing my skirt,
But I'd hide it away, then on the way home
I'd rub it around in the dirt . . . so she wouldn't know.

My clothes were hand-downs, and a few bits of best
Bought from Tutt's, who sold Ladies' and Men's,
And groceries, too, by the pound and the ounce -
Things came, then, in dozens, not tens . . . Still can't get used
to this old decimation.

Vowles were the bakers and Edwards had meat,
There were Collings and Baileys as well.
Miss Eyre's aunty sold sweets and Collings gent's clothes
And Taylor's had jewellery to sell.

But mostly we had things brought round, on a cart,
With a steady old horse for to pull.
Mr. Scribbins brought coal, his horse knew every step,
The milkman had two buckets full.

Motor cars, then, were but few on the roads
Though Mr. Vicarage had a van that was blue,
And the Babers up Meeting House Lane had a car,
And a chauffeur that drove it round too.

Every Monday in Yatton a market was held.
All kinds of things were for sale.
The inn, called the Railway was open all day
Serving pint after pint of good ale and cider,

But the greatest excitement for parents and kids
That came round every year
Was to travel, on Dad's priv'lege pass on the train,
For a whole day at Bridgwater Fair.

In our best we were dressed, awaiting Bill Knowles
And his trap, not long, after dawn.
He'd ferry us all to the station in style,
For the huge sum of ninepence return.

It be dark when we came back to Yatton again.
We'd stop by the Prince for a drink.
Dad went into the bar, the small room for ma
For fear of what others might think.

We young ones went round to the back of the pub
For a big drink of milk in a mug.
We'd be sleepy by now, from the fresh air and fun,
And the kitchen was homely and snug.

Ah, those were the days! Life's made quite a turn.
There's not many old Claverhamites left here around.
Old Mrs. Childs made ice cream in a churn.
Just a penny a cornet. No bells did she sound.

It was quieter then, and simpler, I guess,
Less clamour, less hassle, less whirl.
But when I looks back, I'm glad that I lived
Around he—ur, when I were a girl.

Mrs. Lukins



A History of Horsecastle Chapel

What is the history of Horsecastle Chapel? There are no tombstones, no lists of vicars or churchwardens, no memorial tablets or windows -- yet it is known that for several generations services have been held in unbroken sequence Sunday morning and evening and weekdays since 1865. In that year, according to the deeds, the building passed from the possession of the "Bible Christians" to eight persons who paid £120 for it.

Who were the Bible Christians? They were a small branch of the great "Methodist" revival of the 18th century, led by John and Charles Wesley, Whitfield and others. At a time when the established church was at a low ebb and bitterly opposed to "field" preaching, the Wesleys and Whitfield brought the gospel to the poor and oppressed of this country with far-reaching beneficial effect. Before the end of the century much of the British Isles had been influenced by the revival and large numbers of chapels and preaching houses flourished.

However, in Devon and Cornwall there were places without a preacher or preaching house. A farmer's son, William Bryan, felt called to preach the gospel in such places.' He was "by birth Anglican, by influence Quaker, by choice and temperament Methodist". Taking Christ for his example, in 1814 he became a wandering evangelist. Mrs. Bryan kept a shop in order to support her husband. William Bryan was a popular preacher and people gathered to hear him in homes, often farmhouses. The groups multiplied and as they grew larger they built chapels — Horsecastle being one of them - in about 1840.

The Methodist rules of 1742 were accepted by the Bible Christians, as they were now known. They recognised women preachers, they encouraged temperance and education. This revival movement spread to Canada and Australia but gradually it lost its evangelistic zeal and in 1907 became part of the Methodist church.

There are no known minutes of church meetings at Horsecastle before 1893 so we have a blank period of more than twenty years after the purchase of the chapel from the Bible Christians. It would be relevant, however, to consider religious movements of the period - a time of growth for non-conformity. In our own village the Methodists opened a new chapel in 1888, the foundation stone of which had been laid only months earlier. This chapel replaced one which had been in use since 1829.

In about 1828 a group opposed to the clericalism of existing churches met for worship in a private house in Dublin. In 1831 a similar group went about preaching; they became known as "Plymouth Brethren" .. Within a few years groups of Brethren developed in many of the principal towns, notably in Bristol.

In the same year that the Dublin meeting came into being (1828) the vicar of the parish church of Corsham, Wiltshire, resigned his living; became, in fact, a dissenter. He, the Rev. John Methuen, came to Clevedon where he held daily Bible readings in his home. Among the large attendance there were Bristol merchants who had homes in Clevedon - including Mr. Finzel, a German sugar-merchant who lived in the house which is now St. Brandon's School.

When John Methuen retired and left Clevedon, John Victor, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, took his place with even greater success. It was decided that a building was necessary and Copse Road Chapel was opened in 1841 with the Rev. John Victor as pastor. He was one of the eight trustees of Horsecastle Chapel when it was taken over from the Bible Christians. The others were Jabez Horne, Inspector of Schools, Westbury-on-Trym; Joseph Hardwick, farmer, Congresbury; William Burdge, John Hardwick, Jnr., and William Palmer, farmers, Yatton; John Pocock, horsehair manufacturer, Bristol, and John Horne, school-master, Clevedon.

It will be seen that Horsecastle had support from individuals and groups beyond the village of Yatton. During Mr. Victor's pastorate and until 1914, a quarterly meeting was held at Copse Road Chapel to arrange preachers not only for Horsecastle, but for Kingston Seymour, Nailsea West End, Tickenham and Yatton. Within living memory it was the custom for the preacher to avoid Sunday travel by spending Saturday and Sunday nights in Yatton, entertained by one of the families.

In 1868, three years after the chapel changed hands, it was decided that a school-room should be erected "in such a manner that it could be utilised as additional accommodation to the chapel when required". This was done at a cost of £60, which money was advanced by Mrs. Jones who had earlier advanced the money to buy the chapel. The whole debt was gradually paid off by the members. In 1913 the chapel was registered as a place for the solemnisation of marriages and it was decided to set aside 30 shillings (£1.50) for the purchase of a Bible for presentation to the first couple to be married there.

This first marriage was that of Oliver Ernest Burdge and Margaret Louise Edwards, on 14th January 1914 – the same Mrs. Burdge who died on 18th September 1982, aged 93 years. Her husband was the youngest son of William Burdge, one of the first chapel trustees. He married Eliza Jones in 1859 and they had fifteen children, most of whom grew to maturity. Let the modern mother consider the lot of Eliza Burdge! As well as the care of a growing family and the management of a large farmhouse, she must have been either feeding or expecting a baby for most of 24 years. The babies were brought to chapel – by pony and trap when the family lived at Claverham.

For some years prior to 1922 a Miss Apps, sometimes called “Sister Annie”, was paid a salary of £52 per year, which sum was contributed by the United Methodists at Claverham, Mr. and Mrs. Franck and Horsecastle Chapel. She has also been described as a Bible woman but it is not clear what her duties were. Baptisms took place at Copse Road until 1951, when a baptistry was constructed at Horsecastle.

In 1915 Horsecastle became responsible for arranging its own preachers. This continued until 1980 when Mr. Peter Cresswell was appointed as the first Pastor.

The premises were enlarged in 1974 to provide more classrooms and a kitchen.

Plans have now been passed for the erection of a new Horsecastle Chapel in Horsecastle Farm Road, on part of the Avalon Factory site. It is hoped that the building will be commenced during 1986.

Dorothy Burdge

Sources: Deeds and Minute Books of Horsecastle Chapel



War in The Village

(Extracts from an account by Charles Edwards of a boy’s remembrances 1914 – 18)

Like the late George Bernard Shaw, I don’t care nowadays for birthday celebrations. Long ago, it was different. My twenty-first party was such a success we had another like it a year later.

In 1968 I had my 63rd birthday. I realised then that I belonged to the youngest living group of those who could remember what things were like before August 4th 1914.

That lovely summer day of August 3rd, that golden evening of civilised life, is vividly in my mind. During the previous year or so, the charabanc had made its impact on our village life, and particularly on my father. Right from the moment that the internal combustion engine became reasonably reliable, he loved a ride in a motor car or charabanc, and so did I. Neither of us was interested in how the things worked; neither of us had the slightest desire to drive a car; neither of us was ever specially interested in cars as quick means of getting from one place to another, but we both loved a good ride. Just before the First War, and, again, just afterwards, my father was an inveterate organiser of charabanc parties. His enormous nose would sniff the early morning air, and he would say, “Going to be a spell of fine weather; time we had another charabanc outing.” We were on one of those outings on that August 3rd, 1914.

It was a stupendous day for a small boy – Exmoor, Dartmoor, Dawlish, Teignmouth and Torquay, all for the first time and all on one day. Even the grown-ups almost forgot the war clouds until we stopped at Taunton on the homeward journey. Then the young men heard the

cries of the newsboys, scrambled out of the charabanc and shouted excitedly over the news. The next morning, my father came into my bedroom and woke me. "We are at war with Germany, son", he said. "Will you have to go and fight?", I asked. "No, no. I'm a bit too old and it will soon be all over".

Yes, of course, it would soon be all over. I knew all about war. There were those glamorous cigarette cards, "Regimental Uniforms". There was my book about soldiers which Uncle John Crease had given me last Christmas. There was ex-Colour-Sergeant Baber along Claverham Road – grey but erect, fierce in appearance, gentle in voice. There was old Major Atkins, with his Inverness cape, bowed body and large solitaire ring. His battles had been over long before the Boer War. I knew all about the Boer War and often played games about it.

Now the North Somerset Yeomanry were really going to war. Half a dozen of the best young horsemen in the village suddenly disappeared. To the boys King Albert of the Belgians was a hero but the Kaiser was despised and uncomplimentary rhymes were bandied around about him. There was an air of exhilaration among the older people, and this was intensified after the first recruiting meeting on the village green – Brave Little Belgium; Your Duty: A Just Cause – but I noticed that grand old man, Tommy Gurnett, the signalman, and his wife walking down the church causeway after the meeting. They were hand-in-hand (something only very young lovers did in those days) and they were weeping when everyone else had been cheering. Their two youngest boys, the only ones still at home, had been in the rush of those who had stepped forward and almost overwhelmed the recruiting officer. I cannot remember another recruiting meeting like it – all the best lads of military age went early in that war, and a good many did not come back again.

Then the news became bad. The Belgians were overwhelmed. Mons was fought and the Angel legend came to the village, and so, too, did the news of the first casualties: young Kingcott, Stuart Jackson's brother and two more were dead. Perhaps the other boys would not be back by Christmas. Even so, it was a long time before the war bit deep into village life. True, the spy scare died down fairly soon and like all the other boys I drew battle cruisers with flames stubbing out from enormous guns and black smoke belching from funnels. I followed the fortunes of rival armies, moving little coloured flags on the map of Europe. I answered politely and correctly, but a little sullenly, when rich Mrs. H. questioned me on our allies, their capital cities and where they were fighting.

Change in the village came gradually with the drain on manpower. I noticed that people who had lost their sons, or stood in danger of losing them, stopped talking about the war with bravado or indignation; indeed, they didn't talk much, unless their lads did anything which roused their pride to bursting point, as when that pillar of integrity, old Tom Gurnett, heard that one of his boys was being sent home from the trenches to train to be an officer - an **officer** AND a **gentleman**! Slowly, war became total war: that hypnotic Kitchener poster; Lord Derby's armlets; the boys who were waiting to be 18 or big enough to pass for 18; finally, conscription. Then, there was hardly a home in the village which wasn't directly or indirectly involved; the war had come to stay.

For a small boy, however, it remained kaleidoscopic. There were the Belgian refugees, including that handsome, dashing boy, August van Wetter, who learnt English in less than no time, joined the Scouts, got us into scrapes and out of them and boxed superbly. There was the blackout, sternly enforced by Langford, the village bobby; though no Zep. came within a hundred miles of the place. Later, there were the London refugees who did know about Zeppelins. With them, the language difficulty was greater than with the Belgians: Zummerzet with a Walloon or Flemish accent was easier to understand than Cockney. Aeroplanes slowly

ceased to be a rarity; but when one crash-landed on a Sunday morning in the next village, there was a pilgrimage to it. Only one man and six boys sang in the choir that morning, and the vicar preached sadly on Absent Friends. There was the great day when 5,000 of Kitchener's men route-marched through the village and halted for a break; and all down the mile-long street, tea, coffee, cocoa, lemonade, cider, beer and whiskey flowed out of the front-doors. A month or so later, nearly all the 5,000 perished in France. There were the intercession services in the church; the large perpendicular windows couldn't be blacked out, but P.C. Langford ignored the three flickering candles. We sang "O God of Love, O King of Peace", and Vicar Wright's lovely quavering voice intoned the Intercession; and on our way out, we turned our torches to our left as we passed through the south porch to see if Hugh Mansey, the village school-master, had added in neat script the latest names to the Roll of Honour – names known to us all.

Soon, our own family was involved; not deeply, for most of my generation were much too young and the others were too old. Cousin Harold Masters went into the army; he was getting on and fit only for home service, which I believe he found very dull. His brother, Wesley, joined the navy and enjoyed himself as a petty officer cook in a soft billet at Devonport – until he was posted to a destroyer. Cousin Owen Edwards joined the Somerset Light Infantry, but quickly found himself in the Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was in Gough's Fifth Army in March 1918, and spent the rest of the war in a coal mine in the Ruhr. Here he snatched himself from the edge of starvation by making a key to the German potato store and raiding it by night. His reminiscences enthralled me; for this best beloved of my cousins, intelligent, observant, reflective, gentle and humorous, made me realise better than any book I have read what the First War meant to the ordinary soldier in France and in captivity.

Rationing came late in the war. It didn't hit the countryside as heavily as the towns. The bread was dirty grey instead of white; some commodities disappeared altogether. Greater care was taken of gardens and allotments. My father kept fewer cows and later they, too, went. We made no more butter except by shaking in turns the thin cream in a glass sweet jar to make a small amount for our table.

There was always a sharp distinction in my mind between **real** soldiers and the Local Defence Volunteers, the Home Guard of the First War, in their peagreen uniforms. They were an earnest serious lot, but all the small boys I knew regarded them with amusement. We watched them digging trenches – they just hadn't a clue. They would stand and argue for half an hour and then mark out the lines on the turf and set to work laboriously. And what piddling little trenches they were – they weren't even good enough for us to play in. Their drilling on the school playground was even worse, but that was the fault of their commanding officer, a kind, amiable gentleman who didn't know the rudiments of it. One evening, my father and I were passing the playground and saw two uniformed figures, the schoolmaster, Hugh Mansey, and a former pupil, Dick North, standing outside, red-faced and doubled up with mirth. When they had cooled down a bit, Mr. Mansey gasped, "I've just been thrown out of my own playground". The C.O. didn't know the words of command: the whole company had found itself crushed against one stone wall and still trying to march through it, with the rear ranks busily and delightedly marking time by bumping the volunteers in front up their behinds. Hugh Mansey, who knew all drillbooks, military and educational, from A to Z, and young Dick who had been thoroughly put through it by Mansey, had committed the direst sin – they had laughed in the ranks!

Real soldiers were different. Men home on leave were heroes to me —silent heroes, most of them, for they wanted to forget for a few precious days the Hell they had left behind them. Oddly enough, the normally quiet ones were willing to tell me about it. Lads like Cousin Owen were the backbone of the British Army, steadfast, reliable, willing to endure, adept in the tenuous art of survival.. He stripped the glamour from my mind and recreated the Flanders of 1917. I

read it all later in Sassoon and others, but there was no bitterness in Owen's gentle, matter-of-fact narrative, punctuated now and again with laughter at the ludicrous. For some months he had been a stretcher-bearer. He had no particular enmity towards Germans and respected the German soldier – "Jerry is pretty hot on the bayonet; you need to watch your step". He made no violent criticisms of his immediate officers or of Higher Command; the nearest he ever got to it was uttered on his return from Germany – he said, "I was on rising ground before I was taken and had a good view; and I reckon we could have held them if we had been allowed to do so". His only bitter comment was on the quality and scarcity of cigarettes.

Another soldier friend, George Hillman, nearly 20 years older than myself, came from the next village. He wouldn't talk much about the fighting, but when I asked him if he was ever frightened, he said, "*Lots of times, boy, but especially once*". He was in the Royal Engineers, but got lost in the March retreat of 1918 and found himself in the midst of a Highland regiment. He was roped in to cook for them but on the next morning he had to run for his life – in his innocence he put sugar in the porridge! He cherished the memory of his final leave shortly before the Armistice. He turned up at the parish church for Evensong. During the last hymn, the local pork butcher came singing loudly down the aisle, with the collection bag in his hand. Suddenly he spotted George, pumped his hand vigorously and said, "My boy, I be so glad to see you safe and sound and away from them horrible trenches". Then he remembered his duty, resumed singing "All praise and thanks to God" and relieved the next two pews of pennies and tanners. Suddenly he rushed back and shouted, "Tell your mother I've got a nice bit of bacon saved back for her". Nothing was too good for the boys.

The end seemed to come suddenly. There was no Mafficking in our village on that first Armistice Day. The vicar came into the school just before the end of the morning, told us the news and wept as he said a few prayers – **his** boy was now safe. We were sent home for the rest of the day. The church bells rang joyously that evening and I believe the pubs were fairly full. Otherwise, it was quiet everywhere, very, very quiet, like a super-Sunday. My mother just said, "*I hope poor dear Owen will come back safely from Germany*".



Letter to the Editor

*Winter Sweet
South Park Drive
Gerrards Cross
Bucks SL9 8JH
7. 5. 86*

Dear Mr. Coe,

My sister and I were evacuated to the Burdges at Court House Farm in 1940 and went to school at Barbary House.

I passed through Yatton last year and was appalled to see a garage* where the beautiful farmhouse had been – so I was delighted to see in "Local History" that you had gathered together some memories of "Yatton Yesterday" which we might recognise.

I should be grateful if you would send me the edition which you think would ring most bells.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Bridbury (Mrs.)

Editor's note: * – *the Gateway*

Causeway House, Yatton

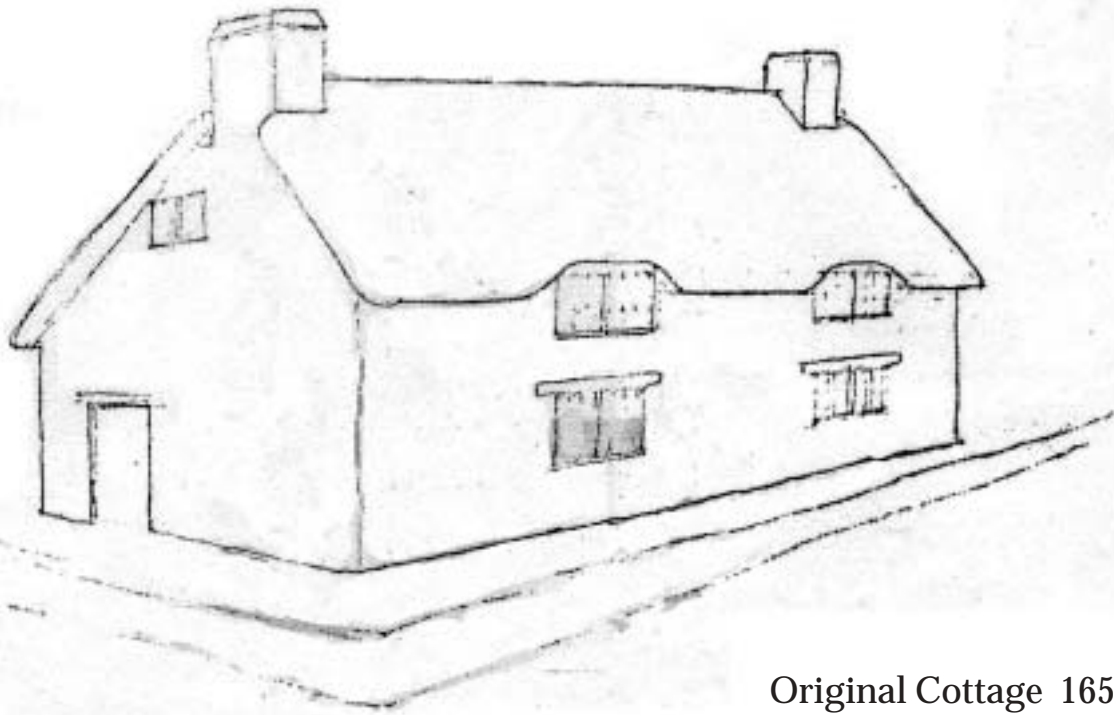
Causeway House takes its name from the Causeway which runs from the High Street to the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The agent's details referred to it as "a charming cottage property in excess of 250 years old". The photograph attached to the details was not taken from a very positive angle, but oddly, there was something about it which had a ring of history to it. On inspecting it internally, I began to form the opinion that it was an original two-up, two-down cottage which had been extended at both ends and indeed, on living here, it has proved to be the case.

Many people, through its history, have made alterations and adjustments to it. In our humble attempt to put the basic structure back to a good state of repair, we have uncovered many things that have helped to date the cottage more closely and add our own touch of history.

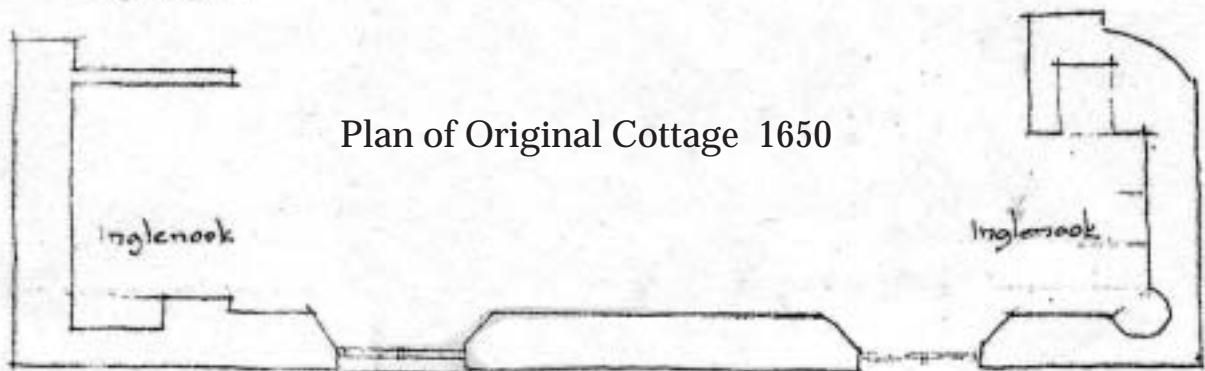
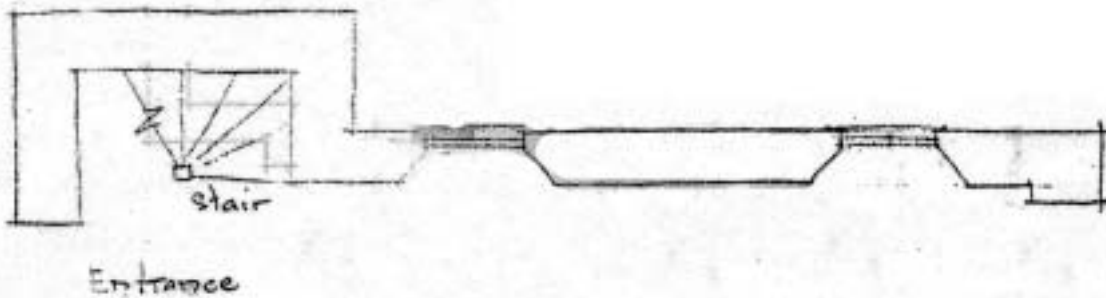
On measuring the building, and setting these measurements to a plan, one could see that quite clearly there was possibly not only one inglenook, but two. One of the very first jobs of investigation that I carried out was to find and open up the original inglenook. On the face of the wall was a 1930 normal tile fireplace. On discovering the total width of the original inglenook and the timber beam over, one slowly uncovered the layers of history. Behind the plastered brick face, gradually unfolded the shape of the brick backing to an old Victorian fire-oven. Either side of this structure had been filled in with stone rubble, and over this, had been built a stone flue within the original flue. Slowly all this was removed, revealing the original inglenook, with its side seats, on the outside wall, its projections to support the shelf and high up the wooden pegs in the timber beams where perhaps the hams were hung for smoking. Unfortunately, the timber beam across the opening had been attacked by death-watch beetle, but is still very strong, the main heart of the wood is very hard. It is only the pithwood that has disintegrated. On the right-hand side of the fireplace, a free stone slab supports the structure of the flue.

How did these inglenooks or fireplaces come to be developed? Up to the period in history prior to Elizabeth I's reign, the fireplace was generally in the centre of the building, in the room generally called the Hall, the smoke freely rising up through the roof. It was in the period of Queen Elizabeth I's reign that slowly the luxury of the chimney stack began to develop. The wealth of the peasantry improved and grew into the Seventeenth Century. The Hall with its central fireplace gradually gave way to the fireplace with the chimney stack at each end of the main ground floor room, and slowly a first floor was developed to use as bedrooms. Houses had several enclosed hearths. Perhaps one at each end of the building, with its own chimney stack. This second fireplace gradually became the kitchen, and this I found when I opened the second inglenook. This inglenook included a large oven, with no direct heating, on one side, and an oval shaped recess on the other side. The fire was apparently raised in the centre of the opening with a stone pier on either side. Unfortunately, most of that had been removed. The timber beam over the opening had also been removed at some time and replaced with a metal bar. This I hope to replace with an old beam that I have obtained.

In the Seventeenth Century glass became more extensively used in windows. But, just prior to this period, window openings were framed but unglazed, and this was yet another find. Investigating a way to get into one of the roof spaces, I uncovered an "unglazed" window. This was a moulded oak frame with a centre mullion, and a square bar down the middle of each of the openings. At the other end of the original cottage, I uncovered another unglazed window, but in a very crude state of construction, without any moulding at all. When we investigated the ground floor casement windows we found that the casement was supported by linings which were encasing an old frame of an "unglazed" window. So the two original ground floor front windows of the original cottage were unglazed timber. These windows would have either had some form of curtaining, or shutters to keep out the cold winds.



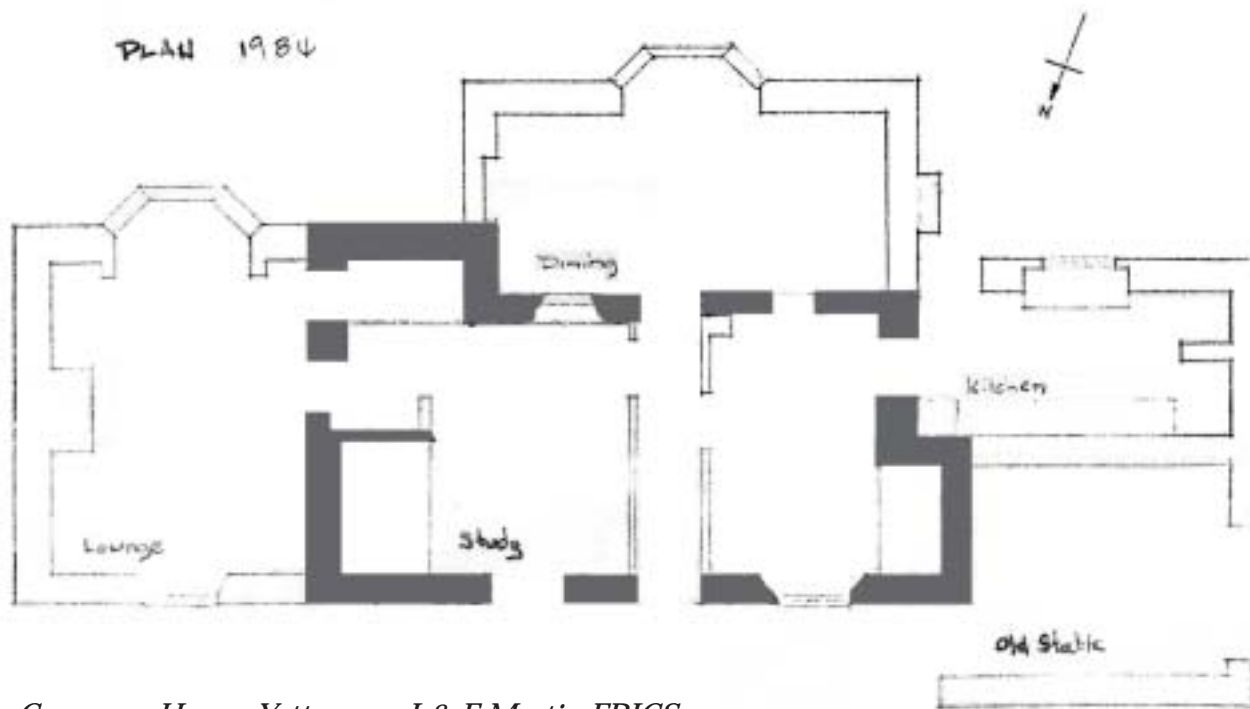
Original Cottage 1650 ?



Plan of Original Cottage 1650

The roof has one or two of its original timbers, and the two principle trusses are there in part. But, a lot of renovations have taken place, obviously due to the beetle attack over the years. Looking under the original elm boards, there are traces of corn husks and remnants of straw, which leads me to consider that the original roof of the cottage had been thatched.

It is said that the cottage had been owned by the Church, but whether this was from the very beginning, or was taken over at a later date, cannot be established as yet. No doubt we shall gradually uncover this. However, the wealth of the people owning the cottage obviously increased, because during the Eighteenth Century, a room was added to the East end. I believe this was easily accomplished, because the doorway into this room at the side of the first inglenook,



Causeway House, Yatton – I & F Martin FRICS

was the entrance door to the cottage. When we pulled the rotted lining out of the doorway, we found that behind it was a very large, obviously old frame to a fairly wide door. It had puzzled me for some time why the remains of the stairway to the first floor was not in this position.

Many examples of the two-up, two-down cottages that I have surveyed, particularly around the Cotswolds, always had the circular staircase rising up in the wall by the side of the inglenook, but this did not appear to fit into this pattern. It wasn't until investigating and replacing old boards, on the first floor landing, that I discovered the top stair of the original staircase, and it seemed to indicate that this staircase was in a semi-turret construction, as you can see indicated on the plan.

Further extensions must have taken place in the Eighteenth Century on the West end. This took the form of probably a scullery on the South side and a stable on the North side, with a hayloft above it. The hayloft still had the original slit in the floor through which the hay was fed down to the rack below for the horses to feed from. The North wall of the stable was, probably originally built with three openings in it, and after a period these were bricked up. The floor of the stable must have been stone on the edge as remains of this were found.

On the South side of the original cottage, a further room with a bedroom above it was built almost as an independent construction. It is difficult to date this positively but I would think the original structure was built during the 18th Century, during the 19th Century it was considerably altered. At one period probably towards the late 19th, early 20th Century this room contained the front entrance to the cottage where one entered through from the stone wall on the High Street through to this entrance door on the North gable end. Certainly during the Victorian period, fireplaces and brick chimney stacks were built into each gable of this southerly extension.

We hope the repairs and renovations take this lovely 17th Century cottage well into the 21st Century. It has recently been listed and we hope this will preserve this part of Yatton's history.

Ian Martin



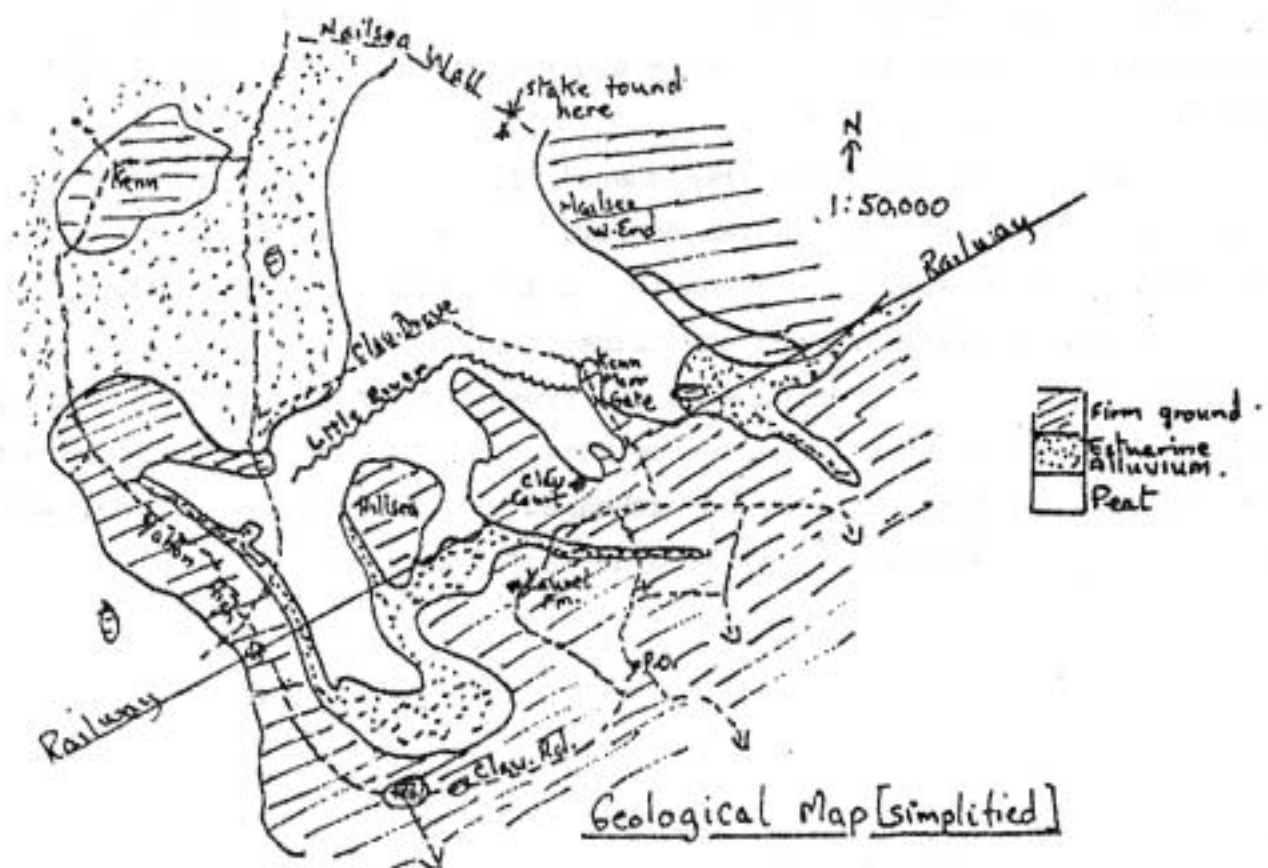
The History Of Claverham – Part I

Report on Research undertaken up to September 1986

“Claverham” in this context covers what today is known as “Lower Claverham”. The High Street area was called “Week” (Court de Wyck) and the two areas were separate tithings within the parish of Yatton.

Claverham was probably inhabited in Stone Age times. When trenches were cut in the early 1970s for Kenn Pier pumping station four pieces of wood were found, three alder and the fourth an oak stake thought to be associated with a trackway over the swamp (compare work done on the Somerset Levels). It was found near the parish boundary at Nailsea Wall and is thought to be of Neolithic/Bronze Age date. Trackways were used for moving over the swamps and also for fishing and wild-fowling there. Freshwater swamp, when peat was laid down, alternated with estuarine incursions which left silt, and there were low hills of sand and gravel (e.g. the site of Kenn).⁽¹⁾

The geological map shows Claverham Court on the edge of the firm ground. Hillsea, though higher, is cut off by a belt of estuarine alluvium which possibly flooded in winter. The ending “ea” or “ey” indicates an island, or firm land in a swamp, as in Nailsea, Brinsea. Today all land surrounding Hillsea is drained by rhynes. The map clearly explains the present settlement pattern of the area.



There is much evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement in the parish of Yatton. A Romano-British pot was found south of the railway at Hillsea and no doubt other items await discovery. Saxon pottery has been found locally and before 1066 Gunhilda held Claverham. At the time of Domesday it belonged to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, who let it to Fulcran. There was land for 3 ploughs; the lord had 1 plough with 1 hide and 1 slave, and the 3 villagers (villeins)

and 12 smallholders had 2 ploughs and 1 hide. It was worth 30/- (£1.50) and was obviously a small place.⁽²⁾ By the time of Henry III (died 1272) it was held by the Sores of Backwell from whom it came to the Rodneys and their representatives, who held the advowson of the chapel (the right to present incumbents). The chapel was endowed with tithes.⁽³⁾

The Free Chapel of Claverham, dedicated to St. Swithun (Swithin). Chapels were often described as “free” because they were not dependent on the parish church, the incumbent being appointed by the patron. Freedom from the bishop’s jurisdiction applied only to **royal** free chapels.⁽⁴⁾

The free chapel at Claverham (near the Court) should not be confused with the Newton’s private chapel at Court de Wyck – wrongly referred to on p.79 of Vol. 4, Somerset Record Society – nor with the old chapel in Yatton churchyard mentioned in the survey of Edward VI (1548) which the inhabitants wanted to buy to have money for a sluice gate — confused with Claverham free chapel in the footnote on p.162 of the above volume. There was also the “chapel of St. James in the churchyard at Yatton” to which money and goods were being left by will between 1504 and 1545.⁽⁵⁾

Rectors of Claverham free chapel are listed in the Bishops’ Registers.⁽⁶⁾ In 1326 William de Sor, Rector of Claverham, was blind and aged. In 1330 there was a commission to enquire into the vacancy at the chapel of CLAVERHAM and the tithes thereto belonging, and to institute John Yoly of Blagdon – at the presentation of Walter de Rodeneye. In 1337 John Ioely was allowed to “*let his chapel to farm to a fit person for 2 years*” and the next year he exchanged with Nicholas de Iforde, who resigned and was replaced by William de Weston in 1340.

Master Nigel Hamme was appointed in 1406, but he had a “proxy”, William Brett. John Bernard was the rector in 1408 when he exchanged with Sir Walter Wyncaulton, in the person of William Peirs. It seems likely that most rectors were non-resident.

Then there appears to have been some disagreement about the chapel. In February 1420 “*there was handed to the bishop the king’s writ of ‘ne admittas’ prohibiting him from admitting any person to the free chapel of Claverham, touching the advowson of which there is a contention in the king’s court between Henry Wyell Esquire and Robert Matson clerk, and John Pederton, Robert Fitzjames clerk and John Walshe clerk, until it have been discussed to which of these parties it belongs*”. The following month another writ was handed to the bishop on behalf of Henry Vyell and Alice his wife, John Rodeney Knight and John St. John Knight, plus the other three mentioned above. However, in 1426 John Carter became rector.

In the mid 15th c William Choke, son of Sir Richard of Long Ashton, was instituted whilst a minor, and so Thomas Merssh was appointed as warden of the Free Chapel of Claverham. Later Thomas Cornish replaced Sir John Wodde, and was presented by Sir John Rodney. It is unlikely that he spent much time at Claverham as he was a precentor of Wells Cathedral and vicar of St. Cuthbert, Wells. Between 1526 and 1545 incumbents included Thomas Kempe, Robert Kelyng, John Popley and Henry Harrison.

Under the Chantry Act of Edward VI (1547) there were dissolved “*all manner of colleges, free chapels and chantries*”, endowments were confiscated and all goods, plate etc. were seized by the king. Their land was subsequently sold off.⁽⁷⁾

A Survey and Rental of the free chapel of Claverham, dated 1548, showed it to be worth 58s. 7d. per annum (£2.93) of which 10s. (50p.) was paid to the vicar of Yatton. The only plate was a gilt chalice, and the incumbent, since 1545, was Simon Porter, a scholar, aged 18. The rental is interesting in that it shows who was living in Claverham in 1548 and paying tithes to the chapel.⁽⁸⁾

“Alice Graunt holds 2 acres of meadow and renders per ann. iijs. iiijd. William Wamperfelde holds 1½ acres of meadow and renders per ann. iijs. Mr. Capell holds an acre of meadow and renders per ann. xxd. Divers persons there render one year with another for divers agistments, and for tithes to the same Free Chapel appertaining or belonging, viz. Thomas Wale, Joan Hilman, Joan Erle, John Barnes, Joan Bradmer, Mr. Capell for the tithe of hay of Hilsey, Joan Hilman for tithe of hay, John Brodmer, John Craddock, Joan Erle, John Vynpeny, John Morfeld, William Croke, Fohn Fyssher, Wm. Wamperfelde, Edward Avery, William Sergaunt, William Bene, Thomas Antony, Walter Somer, Alexander Harrys, Alice Graunt, John Pascall and John Hilman”. (amounts omitted).

Vyell (Viel, Viall) is a name which occurs frequently. In 1406 and 1408 Henry Vyell (“domicellus”) held the advowson of the chapel before the 1420 dispute occurred. He and Alice his wife are mentioned in 1401-2 with reference to 60 acres of land at Claverham. In 1427-8 Henry and Alice are said to *“hold for their lives and after them to remain to William Viell their son the said manor of Claverham, except 5 messauges, a carucate of land and 20 acres of meadow”*. In 1437-8 William Vyell had the advowson.⁽⁹⁾

In 1503 John Broke is *“intituled by reason of a lese to hym made by James Viell esquier to present to the said chapell”*.⁽¹⁰⁾ James died in 1508 and was buried in London. He left *“to Mary Viall my wife all my manor of Claverham.”*⁽¹¹⁾

Going back to 1422, the bishop granted to *“Henry Viell Esquire licence to have masses and other divine offices celebrated within his manse of Claverham as often as he or his wife be too ill conveniently to leave the said manse”*.

Did the Viell family live at Claverham Court? It seems probable.

Claverham Court: Collinson says that the Capels held Claverham after the Rodneys, but he does not mention the Viells. In 1635 Arthur Capell of Little Hadham, Herts, Esq., is mentioned in a *“lease of a mansion house in the Manor of Claverham”*. A deed of partition of the Manor is dated 1654 and in 1696 a deed refers to *“mansion house and lands at Claverham.”*⁽¹²⁾

In 1729 Samuel Willmott *“of Claverham Court”* helped to make the Durban inventory (see p.11 of *“Yatton Yesterday No. 2”*).

There is an Abstract of Title (1874) of the Rev. George Turner Seymour and his Trustees to an estate called Claverham Court containing A.184: R.O: P.35. He lived at Tyntesfield, Wraxall, and at the tithe commutation (1841) was *“impropriator of the tithes accruing from chapelry lands”*. He received £48 in lieu of these tithes. His father, George Penrose Seymour of Belmont, Wraxall, who married Louisa Cam of Claverham House, and died about 1827, owned the Court previously.

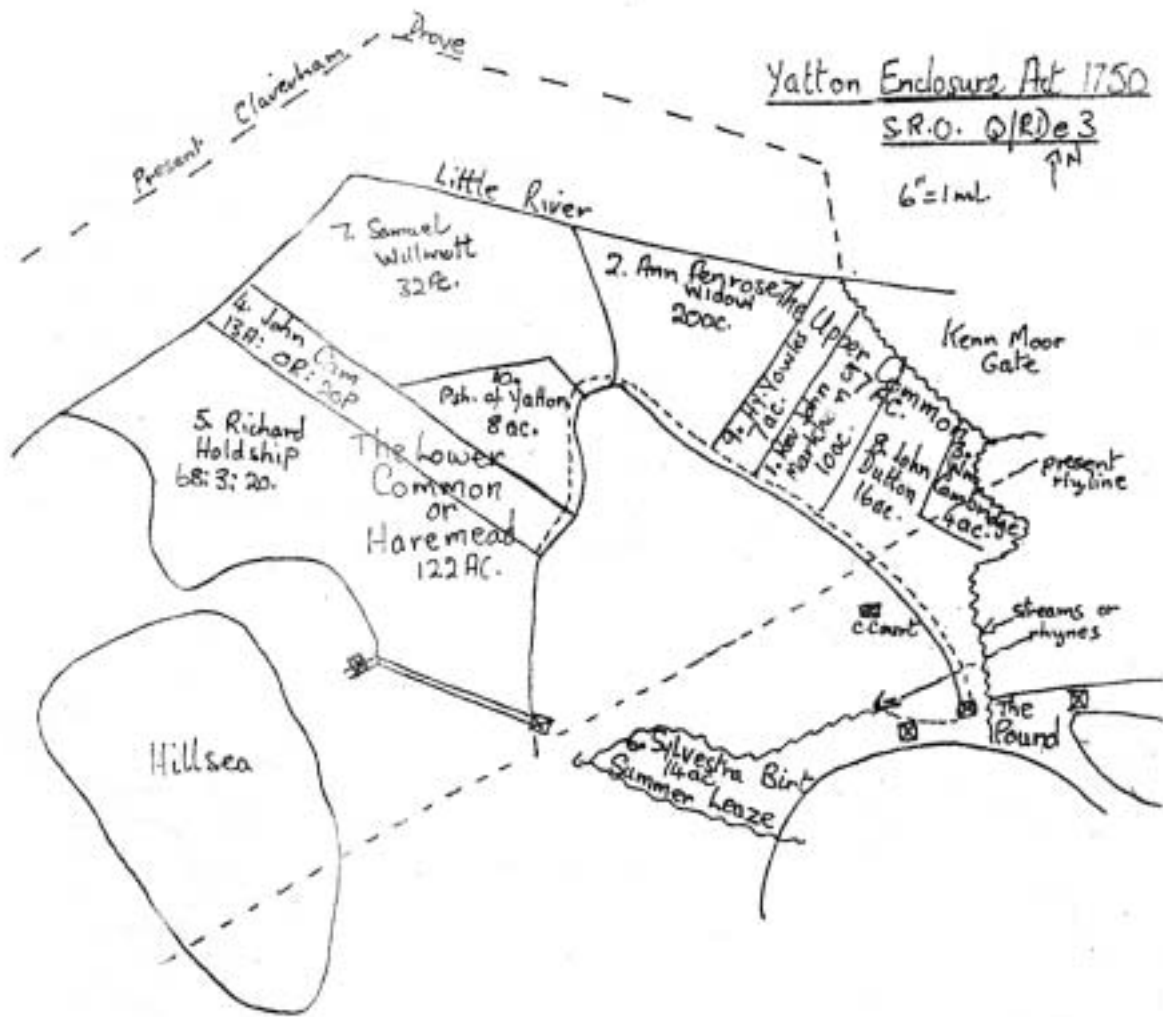
George, the son, married Marianne, daughter of the famous John Billingsley of Ashwick Grove, who left her “a considerable fortune”. George was still alive in 1874, having moved to Devonshire. The Court was let to tenants: in 1841 (tithe) it was Bishop Gregory, tenant for 29 years; in 1851 (census) John Seager Winter, aged 39, from St. Philips, Bristol; William Arthur Winter until 1884, then Mr. William Burdge. When **Mr.** H. J. Crossman sold it in 1967 it had been “in the **same family** for 50 years”. Until fairly recently the main driveway was the lane to the east of the property.



A report dated 1984 states that Claverham Court, house of superior status, probably dates from the 15th c., but that extensive alterations do not allow a fuller survey. The most important survival is a 2-light stone window at the back of the hall, which was unglazed and had iron bars.⁽¹³⁾

Where was the Free Chapel? Collinson (1791) says it “stood near the old court or manor-house where large ruins of old buildings and gravestones have been dug up”. He doesn’t say he actually saw them. Col. James Bramble of Cleeve House said in 1891 “the land in question is S.E. of Claverham Court on the opposite side of the public road. The marks of foundations are evident”.⁽¹⁴⁾ He does not quote sources, so it is impossible to know why he thinks it was the land across the road, or whether the foundations were those of the chapel. Several of the present inhabitants say they have always supposed the chapel to have been in this field – Bullocks Orchard, No, 961, Tithe Map. However, there is a suggested alternative site.

In 1814 a deed concerning Seymour and his trustees detailed the whole Court estate. The first item is the Court and its outbuildings, and the second item “All that piece of formerly meadow or pasture ground called **Chapple Hays** but then planted to an orchard, whereon

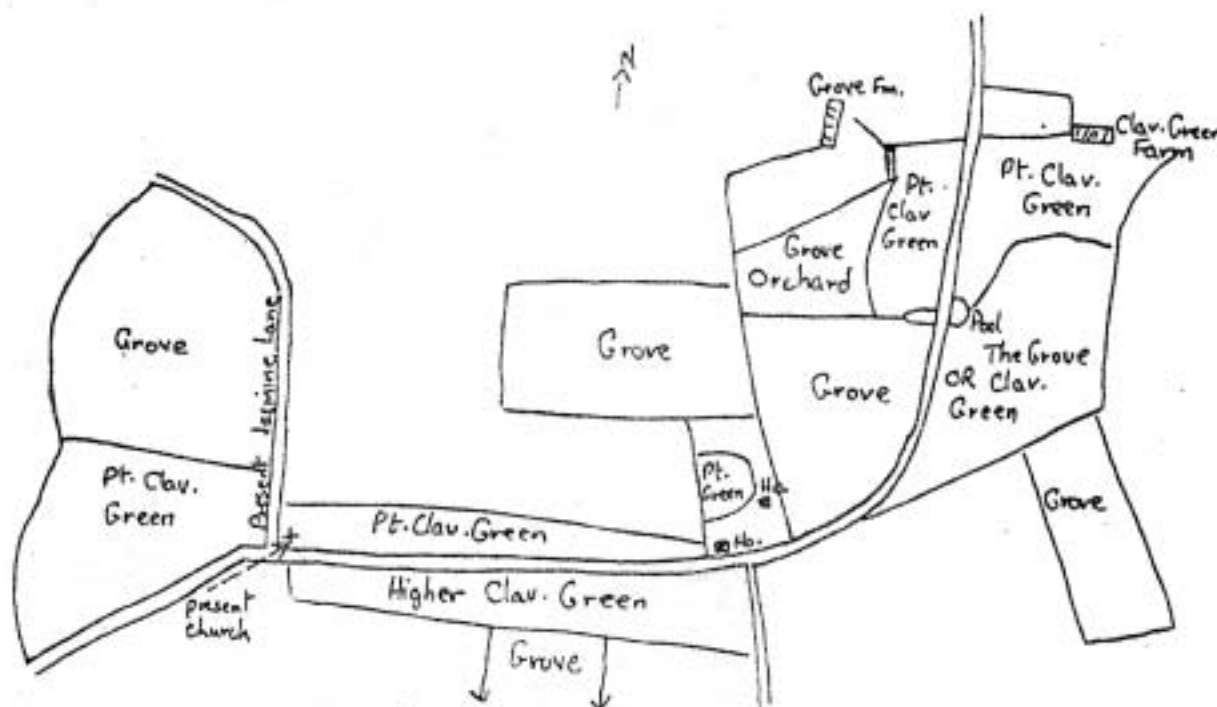


formerly stood the free chapel of St. Swithin, then demolished, containing 4: 0: 18". Next is listed all the rest of the land surrounding the Court, and the land over the road comes right at the end. Furthermore, Bullocks Orchard contains 2.792 acres, and Tithe No. 962, Home Orchard, next to the Court and bisected by the modern driveway, is 4.049 acres.

Mr. Michael Aston, archaeologist from Bristol University, thought that Home Orchard was the more likely site. A deed dated 1696 (12) confirms this: "*All that capital messuage or mansion house in Claverham (Claram) with outhouses, barns, stable, dovehouse, yards, orchards and gardens and also one close of pasture ground thereto adjoining called Chappell Hayes*" (estimated 3¾ acres)

Enclosure of the Common, 1750: land was allotted to people in proportion to the number of shares they held on the common. The three commons totalled 193 acres and the new owners are shown on the plan. They divided the land into fields and enclosed them (with rhyndes). It is obvious from the geological map why this land was left as common. The Rev. George Penrose Seymour afterwards bought Hare Mead, 32 acres, from Samuel Willmott, (to whom it was allotted in 1780), and it was made into a decoy pool. The enclosure play may explain the widening of the road and grass verges between Chestnut Farm and the driveway to the Court.

So far we have no evidence of enclosure for Claverham Green (map below). In 1788 "*it was agreed by the Vestry to give Jno Parsons. . . . their consent to erect a cottage on Claverham Green, he having been previously promised a grant by Earl Poulett's steward upon his obtaining the consent of this Vestry; but that this shall not be considered as a precedent in future for others to claim the same privile(d)ge*".⁽¹⁵⁾ Nine years later permission was given to build a cottage on "*a piece of waste ground known by the name of Cleeve Hill*". The latter was common land (enclosed by Act of 1810) and the inference is that so was the Green at one time. The straight road and field boundaries east of St. Barnabas church are typical of enclosed land.



Field names from maps 1800 and Tithe 1841.
Were "green" and "grove" interchangeable names?

In 1800 there still remained arable fields divided into strips, e.g. Dockley Field and Claverham Field, both south of Brockley Way. Meadow east of the road to Kenn Moor Gate was divided into strips (e.g. Longmead). Otherwise the pre-enclosure fields were fairly small and irregularly shaped, and do not appear to have been open fields. Most of the land was pasture, with a number of withy beds.⁽¹⁶⁾

Kenn Moor Gate.



Earl Poulett's map, circa 1800

- 1141: Cottage, garden, yard: occ. John Perry, aged 63, rent 1/- (5p)
- 1143: Cottage, garden, orchard, occ. Nathaniel Williams, rent 1/-
[owned by Earl Poulett]

It is interesting to see the development of Kenn Moor Gate after the Parliamentary enclosure of 1810/1815, when Kenn Moor was drained and the drove roads laid out. Claverham Drove was made at that time and called "Claverham Road". Refer, too, to the geological map. There was literally a gate here. Pre - 1815 Claverham ended at the Little River on the north side, but it is not known when this drainage channel was constructed.



- 1098: Ho, gdn, orch, occ. John Perry
 - 1099: Ho, gdn, orch, occ. James Perry
 - 1100: Ho, road, barn, orch: occ. Saml Taylor
occ. Chas. Taylor
 - New Houses
 - 1107: Ho, gdn, owned Chas. Taylor, occ. John Lyons
 - 1106: Ho, gdn, owned James Perry, occ. by
 - 1105: Ho, stable, owned Wm. Perry
 - 1101 + 1102: Chas. Taylor's orch: + gdn.
 - 1103 + 1104: Gdns. occ. James Perry
 - 1097: Owned Thos. Jones Esq, occ. James Mulford.
- Double lines are rhynes.
Houses are shaded, outbuildings dotted.

Today Bridge House Farm is on the site of cottages 1098 and 1099; 1100 has gone but the lane (Taylor 's Road on the enclosure plan) remains. 1105 is a ruin, 1106 is "Stonehurst" and 1107 is "Stonehurst Batch". The field 1108 is slightly higher than its surroundings, hence "batch". Fields 1097 and 1133 may still be recognised. The building of the railway in the late 1830s must have caused great excitement in this then remote area.

Other buildings in Claverham

Grove Farm: a 2-storey 16th c. house of hall range and north wing, the south wing added in 17th c.⁽¹³⁾

Chestnut Farm: the earliest part is mid-17th c. and of 2-room plan, with central entrance and gable fireplace. A third room with a gable stack was added before the end of 17th c. and another wing c. 1800.⁽¹⁷⁾

Lower Farm (previously Old Farm): dates from mid 16th c.⁽¹³⁾ Jasmine Lane was called Old Farm Lane. In 1841 Thomas Jones Esq. owned the farm and Jasmine Farm as well, this latter dating from 1702, being the home of Richard Durban.

Manor Farm: surviving details suggest an early 17th c. date but the fact that the hall stairs are in a turret could mean an earlier date.⁽¹³⁾

Claverham House: before mid 18th c., very extensive range of farm buildings – the home of the Cam family, and in 1917 sold for £1,500 as part of the estate of Lewis Ralph Price J. P., deceased.

Sweet Briar Cottages: the deeds are complete and we have been able to see them thanks to the co-operation of the owner of No. 2. In 1769 a group of men from Bristol acquired “Punts”, 1 rood 16 perches, with **one** house, previously belonging to R. Ponfield yeoman and before him to Robert Brooke blacksmith, so this would date it to at least mid-18th c. It was sold in 1824 to Thomas Taylor. He sold 15 perches of the garden to his son Thomas in 1828. The son built a cottage on this ground in which he was living in 1841 (he died in 1868). This is the present “Clarence House”. A deed of 1837 states that the father, who had just died, then divided the remainder of the garden into two parts and “*built an additional messuage, cottage or dwellinghouse upon part of the said garden*”. The two cottages were put up for sale at the Lord Nelson that July by his executors.

The neighbouring **Home Farm**, previously Ford Farm, was in 1817 conveyed by Earl Poulett to James Foord (yeoman). Poulett was selling most of his Claverham property about this time.

We hope eventually to have reports on all the old buildings of Claverham, including “Week”. Obviously there were dwellings here in medieval times, and it is likely that the 16th and 17th c. buildings were replacements on the same sites. Yatton Local History Society is grateful to the owners of property in Claverham for their help and interest. For an account of the Society of Friends in Claverham, see “*Yatton Yesterday*”, No. 2, pp. 5 - 12.

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Marian Barraclough



We reproduce below the text of a notice of 82 years ago, presently in the clock room of the Church tower:

St. Mary The Virgin, Yatton

The Belfry

The Belfry is a part of the Church, and is consecrated to the service of Almighty God. The bells are instruments of sacred music: they should be to the Parish at large what the Organ is to the Congregation assembled in the Church. They should tell forth the Praises of God, and awaken solemn thoughts in the hearts of all who hear them. The office, therefore, of a Ringer is a Holy Office, and should ever be performed in a reverent manner.

Rules

- (1) The Ringers: There shall be 12 Ringers, who shall be appointed by the Vicar, and who shall be responsible for the general work of the Belfry.
- (2) Use of the Belfry: No person except the Ringers shall be allowed in the Belfry without leave of the Vicar or his deputy. No drinking or smoking is allowed within the Churchyard gates.
- (3) Duties: The Ringers are responsible for the Chiming and Ringing on all Sundays, on Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Day, Whitsun Day and New Year's Eve; and at such other times as the Vicar and Churchwardens shall appoint. There shall be no ringing on any other occasion without the Vicar's permission.
- (4) Scale of Charges: In the event of the Ringers being required to Ring on any other than the days specified above they shall be entitled to 2/- (10p) each for the first hour and 1/- (5p) for every succeeding hour, the total fee to be not less than Two Guineas (£2.10).
- (5) Practice: All the members shall meet for Practice on Mondays from 7.30 to 9 p.m. from September 1st to Shrove Tuesday.
- (6) Absence: When a Ringer is absent from his duty on the days specified in Rule 3, or from Practices, his Absence shall be marked in a book to be kept by the Treasurer, and unless he has given written notice one hour beforehand to the Captain, or can offer a satisfactory reason, he shall be fined 4d (under 2p) for every such absence.
- (7) Punctuality: Unless an hour's notice has been given, a fine of 2d (1p) must be paid for being five minutes late on the days specified (Rule 3).
- (8) Fines: All fines must be paid to the Treasurer, and they will go into the Ringers' Fund.
- (9) Conduct: If any Ringer shall be guilty of drunkenness, swearing, habitual neglect of public worship in Church, or of any unseemly conduct, he shall be liable to instant dismissal.
- (10) Disputes: In case of any dispute arising among the Ringers with respect to any matter connected with the Belfry, reference shall be made to the Vicar, and his decision shall be final.
- (11) Secretary and Treasurer: A Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed, to whom all fines are to be paid: his accounts are to be audited yearly, and the balance is to be distributed as the majority may decide.

January 1904

F. A. MATHER, VICAR



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