
MORE YATTON YESTERDAYS

NUMBER 9



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Cover picture is of the 'Butchers' Arms' about 1880. It is a cross passage house
of the seventeenth century type with three rooms with later additions.
It was shown on the tithe map of 1799 but there is no entry so the origin is
obscure, as is the origin of the public house name.
The road end was a blacksmiths' shop in the nineteenth century.

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Editorial

Yatton Local History Society started publishing *Yatton Yesterday* in 1984 and followed this with *More Yatton Yesterdays* in 1998. Many earlier editions have sold out but if you are missing one it is always worth asking if any remain. Yatton Library has a complete set for reference.

This ninth edition of *More Yatton Yesterdays* includes historical illustrations and articles relevant to the old parish of Yatton that is mainly Yatton, Claverham and Cleeve. We are grateful to all our contributors particularly as some have had to wait a year or two for their work to appear. Although the Society has tried to verify where possible the information submitted, the responsibility for the accuracy of each contribution remains with the author.

The Publications Subcommittee (Mary Campbell, Allan Denny, Pat Denny, Marianne Pitman, Jill Riddle and Ruth Summerell) are very grateful to Mary Campbell for her time and expertise in typing the manuscripts and Jill Riddle for her exceptional editing skills. We are also grateful to those who sell our books without charge including Nicola at Yatton Post Office, Clive at Yatton News and Jenny and Eddie at Good News Wine and Food at Cleeve. Finally we would like to thank all our customers and hope that some of you will contribute to a possible tenth edition.

Marianne Pitman (Chairman)

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The Butchers’ Arms

In 1933 my father and mother, Percy and Margaret Rostron took over the tenancy of the ‘Butchers’ Arms’ from a Mr R Screen. The building was owned by George’s Brewery of Bristol. My father died in 1957, so I took over the tenancy with my then husband, P. Chiswell. I was the landlady and ran the business with the aid of my brother, R. Rostron, until 1979.

Before Mr Screen I think the tenancy was taken by a family called Parsons and then a family called Holliman. I have an old photograph of c.1880 showing the landlady and some of the customers.

I had another relation in Yatton, Mr Victor Skuse, who had taken over the tenancy of the Railway Inn from the Palmer family.

My own childhood in the Butchers’ Arms was extremely happy. I have seen many changes in Yatton, but not always to its advantage!

My brother had been born at the Bell in 1933 when it belonged to Mr & Mrs Jim Dyer.

Joy Sweet (nee Rostron)



Local Place Names in North Somerset

Place names are a fascinating part of our heritage. Very few village or town names are modern or even recent; some even date back a thousand years or more.

Names are derived from many sources: political and social history, religious associations, influential families, activities in the landscape, language from invaders who occupied the area, hills, fords, woods and man-made monuments.

It is thought that the spellings and pronunciations of place names have altered over the centuries due to occupation by the Romano-Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Danes and the Norman French, who brought their own languages and put their own names and spellings to places they lived in. Some remain, whilst others such as British-Celt names are rare because Saxon conquerors are believed to have wiped out the British language when they occupied this country.

Changes also came when people learnt to write and began to record place names, as shown in the Domesday Book. This was because the census-takers were Norman French and could not understand the English, who in turn were mostly illiterate. So place names were seldom spelt or pronounced correctly as they would have been in the documents of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.

The meaning of place names is complex, and some names are given several interpretations. The origin and meaning of the name 'Somerset' has been debated by historians without any definite conclusion, "The land of the summer pastures" being one. When we look at some local village place names in the area there is uncertainty over the spellings and explanations.

Backwell:- This name literally means the "well at the back".

Historical notes:- Thorkhill held Backwell before 1066; after then Fulcran and Nigel, who held it from the Bishop of Coutances, held it.

Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances was also known as the Bishop of Lo. He was Bishop of Coutances from 1048.

Claverham: - In the Domesday Book this is spelt as Cliveham or Claveham. Claverham means the "village where there was clover" (Domesday Book/Davey). In old English, "ham" meant a farm, so place names with this ending may indicate that the origin of the settlement was based on a farm.

Historical notes: - Before 1066 Guinhilda held Claverham, then after 1066 Fulcran held it from the Bishop of Coutances.

The manor of Claverham had a Court House, which is now known, as Claverham Court Farm, situated in Lower Claverham. In the reign of Henry III (1272) the Sores of Backwell held the manor, it was then held by the Rodney family, who had the right to appoint a rector of their own choice for the free chapel of St Swithin. The chapel was said to be situated in a field adjacent to the Court called Chapple Hays. Its ruins were still visible in 1791, but have since disappeared. The local history society's research team YCCART in an endeavour to locate the ruins has carried out some geophysics.

Cleeve:- According to the Domesday book, Cleeve means the cliff or hill slopes.

Historical notes: - Cleeve was part of the civil parish of Yatton until 1949.

Flint fragments were found in the Bickley area of Cleeve, during excavations and again during field walking by History Society members. (Bickley means Bica's clearing.) A timber building which dated from 1150-1300 AD was also discovered in a field originally called 'Old Croft'. Saxon pot from the time of the death of King Alfred (about 900 AD) has also been found.

Clevedon: - "Cleve" means a cliff or hill slope and "don" is a Celtic word or name for a river. Therefore "Clevedon" can mean "the cleft by a river".

Historical notes: - Before 1066 John the Dane held the land. After 1066, Matthew of Mortagne was granted Clevedon by William the Conqueror, and in turn Hildebert held the land from Matthew of Mortagne.

Congresbury: - The place where St Congar was buried. Congar (1000AD) was the founder of the church near the Iron Age fort (Domesday Book/Davey). The name has also been spelt as Cungresberie and Cugresberia.

Historical notes: - It is said that St Congar was buried at Congresbury and that from this "fact" the place derives its name. Very little is known of St Congar other than that he was a hermit.

The popular pronunciation of this name is Coombsbury. In the Domesday Book it is spelt Congresberie, while the name of the hundred is spelt as it is now. In the 16th and 17th centuries the spelling changed frequently, eg: Conggresbury (1560), Cunesberes (1566), Conggresbury (1599), Combebrey (1612) and Coombesburey (1758).

According to the Domesday Book, Earl Harold held Congresbury before 1066. After 1066, William the Sherriff acquired it. The Domesday Book records "Of this manors' land three thanes Alfward, Ordric and Ordwulf hold 3 hides and 3 virgates of land, they held them themselves before 1066, they could not be separated from the lord of the manor. Bishop Maurice holds this manor's church with ½ hide value 20s. From this manor's land, have been taken away 2 hides, which lay there before 1066. Bishop Giso holds 1 hide value £4. Serlo of Burcy and Gilbert, son of Thorold, hold the other hide value 40s". King Alfred gave a monastery here to his tutor Asser.

Kingston Seymour: - In old English "ton" is a village or enclosure and King Alfred held land here, hence Kingston or the King's village. Later on the land was passed to the Seymour family and became Kingston Seymour.

Historical notes: - Alfred had held these lands before 1066 and this manor did not pay taxes except for 1 hide.

After 1066 William de Monceaux held Kingston Seymour from the Bishop of Coutances. The Bishop was a trusted friend of William the Conqueror and held the position of a Chief Justice. He died in 1093.

Tickenham: - Again the ending "ham" means a farm, and in this case it was Ticca's farm.

Historical notes: - Before 1066 Saewulf and Theodulf held Tickenham as two manors. After 1066 William of En held both manors combined together.

The church at Tickenham is one of only three in this country with a dedication to Saints Cyricus and Julietta, who were martyred about 304 AD. Cyricus is said to have been the young son of Julietta, a Christian widow. While his mother was being racked, Cyricus scratched and kicked the governor in order to get to her; whereupon the governor threw the child down the steps leading to his tribune, killing him instantly. Their feast day is celebrated on June 16th.

Weston-Super-Mare:- In old English Weston can mean the “west, or west of the, village or enclosure”. Super-Mare is Latin for “above or on the sea”. Weston and its approaches lay on the great plain of the Northmarsh section of the Somerset levels.

Historical notes:- There is some evidence of Roman occupation. Pottery was found when the foundations of the Technical College were dug.

Worle: - According to the Domesday Book, Worle meant “the wood of the wood-grouse”.

Historical notes:- Before 1066 Aigar held the land, and then Walter of Douai held Worle from the king.

Originally this area was occupied in the New Stone Age and Bronze Age, and burials and implements have been excavated from these times. The Celts built a hill fort on Worlebury Hill and it is part of a chain of defensive sites in the Mendip area. Grain pits have been found on Worlebury Hill. These were cut into the rock and used to store grain; when filled the top of the pit was sealed. This ensured a supply of food during the winter months.

Wrington:- Again the ending “ton” means village or enclosure.

Historical notes:- The land was held by St Mary’s of Glastonbury and has never paid tax. When acquired by Bishop Thurston, it was valued at £20.

Wick St Lawrence: - This was a chapelry of Congresbury, where its inhabitants were buried until 1326. It is situated in the Northmarsh valley.

Yatton: - In old English, a “ton” was an enclosure or a village and a “yat” was a gate, and today we take the meaning of “Yatton” to be the gateway to the enclosure or even the gateway to the moor. The Domesday Book describes the settlement as “near the marshlands of the River Yeo and subject to flooding”.

Historical notes: - Lands in Yatton were held by John the Dane before 1066, then the land was held by the Bishop of Bath and Wells. The Domesday Book says that “of this manor’s land Fastrad holds 5 hides from the Bishop, Hildebert holds 4 hides from the Bishop” etc. At one time Yatton was the largest parish in Somerset.

Judy Sack and Philippa Cormack

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St James, The Missing Chapel

St Mary's church at Yatton not only has its ghost (the Grey Lady), but it has another mystery — the Missing Chapel.

During the late 1800s St Mary's church warden's accounts of 1445 to 1560 were translated from a mixture of Latin and Old English into modern English. In these accounts there are references to four chapels at the church: those of St Katherine, St Thomas, St John and St James.

We know that the statue of St Katherine stood on the corbel stand that is above the Remembrance Table by the de Wyck wall tombs in the North Transept, so the de Wyck chapel would have been dedicated to St Katherine. The Chapel of St Thomas was in the South Transept, which is currently the Vestry. The Chapel of St John is the Newton Chapel where the magnificent mosaic of the Eagle of St John covers the floor in front of the chapel's altar. So where is the Chapel of St James?

The Chapel of St James must have existed somewhere, as there are sporadic references to it in the church warden's accounts from 1448 until 1547. That's nearly a hundred years, but annoyingly none of these references positively identifies its location.

Since 1890 various historians have located St James in both the de Wyck and Newton chapels but at the same time saying that these chapels were also named after the other saints. So nobody was really sure where St James's Chapel was?

It is rumoured that there was a chapel where the archway is that leads into the de Wyck chapel, more or less where the grand piano is today. This idea is supported by the fact that there is an exposed rough piece of stone work high up on the north west corner of the tower that was supposedly caused by cutting back the buttress to make room for this chapel.

This may be correct, but the chapel would have been demolished between 1420 and 1440 to make way for the North Aisle, and our records of the Chapel of St James do not start until 1448! So if it was not there, where was it? Some said that it must have been the Newton Chapel, but that was not built until 1492-5, so it was not there either! It had to be somewhere else. Let's look at the facts as presented by the church warden's accounts and see what they tell us.

Looking Back

The first reference of 1448 says that two men were paid to clean out the Chapel of St James. This means that it had either just been built or restored, or it had been around for some time and was no longer used for worship and had possibly become a store room. Now we must remember that St Mary's had been rebuilt between about 1420 and 1445 with a new Nave and both North and South Aisles, so the congregation must have had an alternative place of worship away from the church. Mary Peart's guide book of 1931 states that there was a chapel in the church-yard which was reported by the Chantry Commission of 1548 as being in ruins. Was this the Chapel of St James? Let's continue looking at the relevant accounts.

In 1452 some timbers were removed and a wall built and new timbers added, then a roof constructed of lathes covered with moss (as underlay) and stone tiles from Nailsea were placed on top. St James's appears to have had

a roof of tiles on timber: this is different to St Mary's which had been roofed throughout with sheets of lead. If this chapel had been attached to the church, would it not have had a lead roof as well? Six years later in 1458 this chapel was made clean again. Why? Had it fallen into disuse or been used for storage?

Then in 1470 we hear that it is indeed being used for storage as timber is being kept there that will be used for the extension to the church house. As this house is to the north of the church, was the chapel on the north side of the church as well?

It is another fifteen years before St James is mentioned again when in 1485 Annie Brown gave a gown to be sold for the repair of this chapel. Then 14 years later in 1499 the tiles and timber from the chapel of St James were being sold off: now what is happening?

Well, we know that the Newton Chapel had been completed in 1495 and also that Lady Isabel Newton had been a churchwarden for the year 1496/7 and that she had died the following year: 1498. So had the dedication of the old chapel been transferred to the newly built Newton Chapel? Historians have concluded that St James's Chapel was really the Newton Chapel, but there is nothing in the accounts to tie St James with the Newton Chapel, which was always referred to as the 'new chapel'. Moreover there is a later reference to 'the chapel of our Lady Newton' and in a Newton Will it is described as 'Our chapel of St John at the church of Our Lady at Yatton'. So the Newton Chapel could not have become the new St James as it had been dedicated to St John.

What appears to have happened is that the Chapel of St James had been given a new lease of life, as in 1500 two men were appointed proctors (wardens) for the

Chapel of St James. A separate accounts book was created for this chapel that would be known as the 'Low Book', whilst the accounts for St Mary's would become known as the 'High Book'. Between 1500 and 1502 several sums of money were transferred from the High Book to the Low Book.

NB (Note that all the references that are being used for this story are from what is now being called the High Book).

There were still items of work for the Chapel of St James that were being paid for from the High Book: these included Walter Crossman making a silver cross, whilst the carpenter carried out several items of work. The mason repaired the gable end wall and also the cornices, whilst the plumber laid lead on the roof. So the Chapel of St James was now having a similar roof to the rest of the church. Then in 1503 the carpenter repaired two doors and the glazier repaired two windows and some men were paid to clean out the chapel.

Continuing Confusion

So it is easy to see how historians have confused St James with the Newton Chapel, thinking that this work was due to the alterations required to the Newton Chapel for installing the Newton tomb. However, the warden's accounts tell us that from 1502 onwards there were several bequests from the parishioners to the St James's Chapel. Would they have done this if St James had been the private chantry chapel of the Newton family? So had the Chapel of St James been restored for the parishioners?

Let us review the situation at St Mary's at the beginning of the 16th Century. The Chancel would have been closed off at the Nave Arch by the Rood Screen. In the South Transept the chapel of St Thomas (where the vestry is) could have been used for

public worship but it had lost its hagioscope (squint) when the tower stair turret had been built in about 1450 to give access to the new spire. The squint was used during the Mass to allow the chapel priest to keep in time with the vicar at the High Altar.

In the de Wyck Chapel in the North Transept, the altar slab for St Catherine's chapel had been squeezed into the corner between the arch and the de Wyck tombs (where the Remembrance table is now), due to the opening for the archway being made into the Newton Chapel. The Chapel of St John was the chantry chapel belonging to the Newton family, so it is quite possible that people were not allowed in there.

Therefore there may have been a need for another chapel and possibly that's why St James was being restored for public worship. In 1506-8 money was given to St James for the making of the choir and the painting of the ceiling and a bell was made from 37 lbs (16.5kg) of donated material. In 1510 the St James Ale Fair raised nearly £3 and in that year the mason made a tower for this chapel, presumably for the new bell to be hung within.

So the Chapel of St James now appears to be a detached place of worship with its own bell with which to summon people. We also know that at this time monks (written as Friars and possibly from Woodspring Priory) were being paid to take the services in the Chapel of St James and that bequests were made to both St Mary's church and St James Chapel (through the High and Low Books).

Between 1519 and 1521 the harvests failed and a severe famine occurred and thousands died, but King Henry VIII seems to have ignored his people's pleas for help. The accounts record that several people were buried under the floor slabs in St Mary's church but this was expensive at 1 noble (6 shillings and 8 pence),

so the less well off opted to bury their loved ones under the floor in St James's Chapel which only cost five shillings. Despite these desperate times the roof was reroofed in 1521 with the old lead being taken to the parsonage. In 1525 St James's Day was celebrated with an Ale Fair in the churchyard and in 1530 the Statue of St James was re-gilded and a window in this chapel repaired in 1533.

In 1534 Henry VIII had his altercation with the Pope that led to the Reformation and the creation of the Church of England, to the dismay of the people who had always regarded the Pope as their spiritual leader, subsequently the numbers then attending church services fell dramatically. From 1542 to 1544 money was often transferred from the High Book to the Low Book, to offset the rising costs of providing services in the chapel and the resulting reduction in income. However, it would not be until 1547 that parish churches like St Mary's at Yatton felt the full effects of the Reformation. The church warden's accounts for 1547-8 noted that two men were paid 12 pence for the taking down of images on the rood loft and the statue of 'Our Lady' was removed from the Chancel.

There was then civil disorder throughout the land and soldiers were sent in to keep the peace, with their upkeep being paid for by the parish church! Little is heard of the Chapel of St James except that in 1547 the cost of burying a body under the chapel floor slab had now dropped from five shillings to half a noble (3 shillings and 4 pence).

In 1548 chantry chapels, such as the Newton Chapel of St John, were dissolved and during the survey by the Chantry Commissioners, it was recorded that a chapel in the churchyard at Yatton was in ruins, so was this the defunct Chapel of St James? So where was the Chapel of St James located and why was it built?

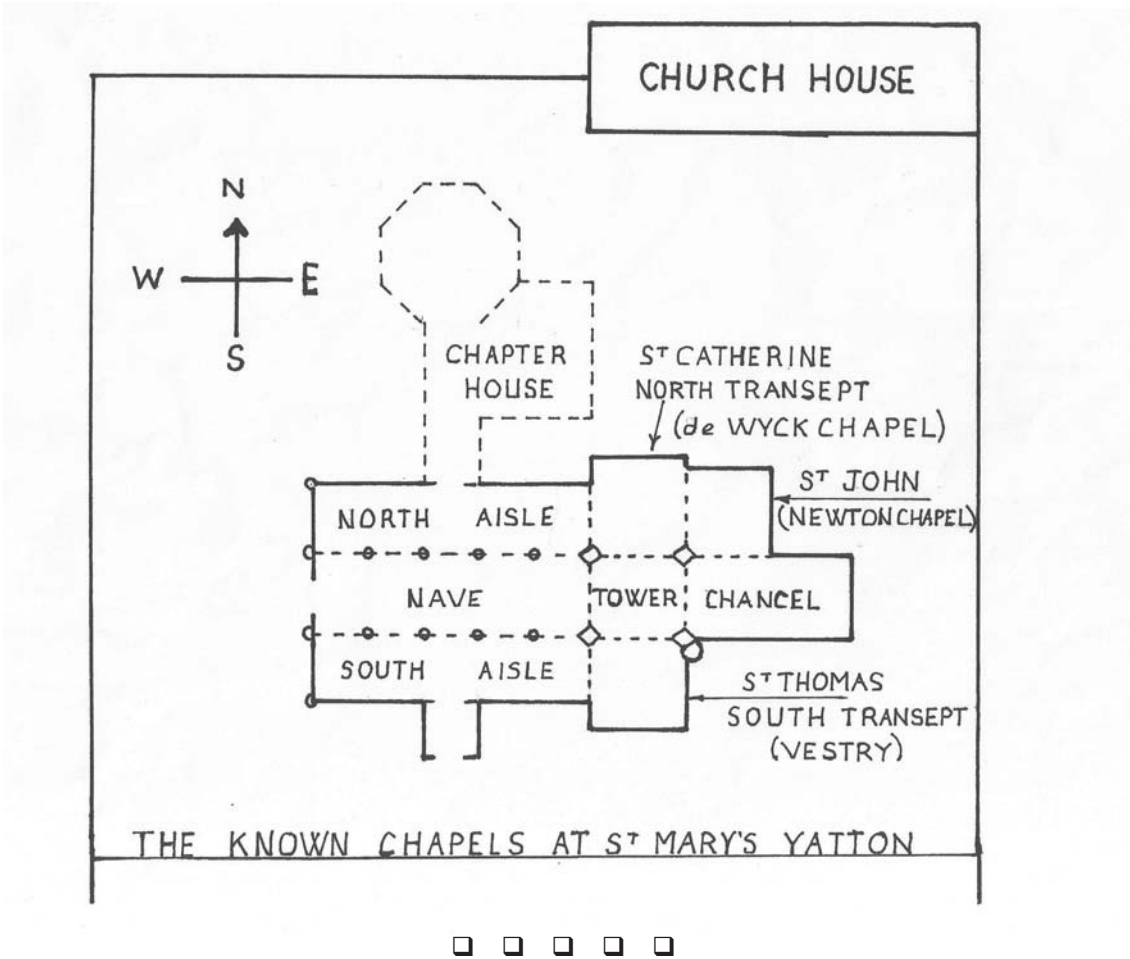
Possible Locations

There are a few theories: one is that it was a chapel of ease in another part of the village, but would they have used it for storing large timbers for the church house? Another is that the chapel was the remains of the old Norman church that was located on an adjacent circular shaped churchyard where the old wood yard used to be and where now there are houses. These remains were then being made into a chapel as an alternative place of worship during the 1420-45 rebuilding. Or, on the same theme, was it a new and purpose built chapel for worship during that period?

Some people have said that many years ago there was pile of stones to the north of the church, but these stones have since been used for other buildings or walls. There is part of a church (or chapel) window in a wall in Church Road opposite the Bier House. The diminished pile of stones could have been the remains of St James’s Chapel, but unfortunately this is the area where the Chapter House stands now!

So it seems that the exact location and purpose of the Chapel of St James will always remain a mystery!

Allan Denny



Bilbie Cottage

and further notes on Yatton's Bilbie Bells

For some time in 2008 I had noticed that 22 High Street now had a bright new name plate: 'Bilbie Cottage'. Knowing that the Bilbie's had been Bellfounders and Clock-makers at Chew Stoke from 1698 to 1811*, and also that some of the bells at St. Mary's Church, Yatton, had been cast by Bilbie, I began to wonder whether the present owner of 22 High Street had found something on his property deeds that suggested a member of the Bilbie family had either lived there for a while, or more likely, that a pit for casting one of the bells had perhaps been located within its boundaries.

I questioned the Yatton Local History Society president, Brian Bradbury, but he was unable to help, so I decided there was only one way to find out about this, and that was to write either to the owner or see him personally. In December I was lucky to be walking past the house one day when a gentleman came out. Grasping the nettle I introduced myself as the Society's Treasurer and asked what had initiated the new house name. Imagination can be a dangerous tool at times, as I soon found out! Mike Rapps and his wife were the new owners and they had moved in during the past year. In his childhood Mike had lived right next to the old Bilbie bell-foundry site in Chew Stoke, so when they got to Yatton they simply decided to bring a bit of nostalgia with them – and called 22 High Street, Yatton, 'Bilbie Cottage'. No great historic connection there then at all!

Just to complete the story though, I have given Mike the details of the Yatton bells, so that he can see there just could have been a connection. The pre-1980 tenor bell (heaviest bell and lowest note) was originally cast by James Bilbie of Chew Stoke in 1809. (It cracked and was re-cast in 1980, see Reference 3.) It appears to have been one of **only two** Bilbie bells ever cast for Yatton, the other being the new treble (lightest and highest note) bell cast in 1770 by Abraham Bilbie for the old ring of six bells. Mysteriously, this latter bell is not recorded in Reference 1, but comes to light on page 20 of Reference 3, q.v. On page 21 of the same reference it mentions that this bell was recast in 1852, so neither Bilbie bell now exists.

* See Reference 1: pages 37, 117, 364 & 365.

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Geoff Marchant



Yatton and Clifton Links

This is the story of fourteen ordinary people who were born in Yatton or Cleeve before 1841 and how a tiny piece of their lives can be traced through the Government Censuses in 1841 and 1851 of Yatton (Cleeve and Claverham) and in 1851 of Clifton.

Life was very hard in those days for many people: children were sent out to work at an early age. In 1841 a small sister and brother aged 8 and 6 were described as 'servants' working for a farmer in Yatton. On the whole there were plenty of agricultural labourers required in Yatton and Cleeve, but very little work for the girls. They often had to seek it elsewhere and because Clifton and Hotwells were fairly close many went into service there.

Harriet Merrick was born in Cleeve to an agricultural labourer, John Merrick, who had been born about 1796. He and his wife Elizabeth had several children: Sarah 18, John 11, Harriet 9, William 7, Hannah 5 and Thomas 2. There were at least two more children away from home in 1841. Sarah aged 15 was working for Farmer Player and was living at his farm and Eliza aged 12, who appears in the 1851 census, also was working for James Player. We do not know where Harriet went for her first employment but we know that by 1851 a Harriet Merrick aged 17 was working as a housemaid at 1 Cumberland Place for a music teacher and his wife who was a French teacher. Although the ages listed differ by two years, it is extremely likely that the two Harriets are the same person. Cumberland Place is halfway between Hotwells and Clifton, a steep climb whichever way one went.

Martha Brett was probably the daughter of David and Martha Brett of Yatton. David was born about 1786 and was an agricultural labourer. The Bretts may have had at least seven children; six boys were at home on the night of the census. If there was also a daughter aged 14 called Martha after her mother, she may have been the Martha Brett, born in Yatton, who appears in the 1851 Clifton census. In 1841 she was not listed

with the family on the night of the census, but she could have been working outside the parish. In 1851 Martha Brett was working for Joseph and Georgina Swayne as a nurse to their two-week-old daughter at 12 York Place, Clifton.



12 York Place, Clifton

Joseph was a Physician and Accoucheur at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. The Swayne family is interesting to the writer of this article because Joseph's nephew, Walter Swayne, followed his uncle into the profession and brought the writer into this world!

There were two families named Taylor in Claverham in 1841 and we cannot be certain to which family **Mary Taylor** aged 15 belonged. She was either George and Charlotte's daughter or James and Jane's daughter. Both families were living in Claverham, the men working as agricultural labourers. George lived with his father, brother, wife and children, Charles aged 10, George 9, Louisa 8 and Caroline 4, so Mary could have been their eldest daughter. She was not home on the night of the census. We know where Mary was that night. She was in School Cottage living with the schoolmaster William Harding and his wife and looking after their six-month-old baby William. She must have been a model pupil to be chosen as the headmaster's servant. The other Claverham family is less likely to have been Mary's family as one of the sons Isaac was 15, the same age as Mary, (unless they were twins).

In the 1851 Clifton census Mary was at 16 Richmond Terrace. Her work must have been hard, as she was one of two house servants working in a lodging house belonging to a Mrs Eames. It was a late 18th century Clifton terraced house of several floors and a basement below the terrace. Mary had only a sixteen-year-old girl to help her. The residents on the night of the census were Mr and Mrs Selwood Riddle with their son aged 13; George Evans, a steam packet agent; a widow, Rebecca Bell and her 11 year-old daughter Sarah, who had come from Cheltenham.

Louisa Rogers was also born in Cleeve and was working in Clifton in 1851, aged 26. The 1841 census of Yatton, which unfortunately omits the full addresses, shows no family which could be hers in Cleeve. The only Rogers family in the area was that of a Claverham farmer with very young children. However there were three Rogers boys in Cleeve, Oliver (20), Robert (15) and Thomas (14). The eldest and youngest were employed as agricultural labourers and Robert was a shoemaker. They lodged with George and Anne Williams, a limeburner in Cleeve. At the same time a Louisa Rogers aged 13 was a servant to a tailor and dressmaker in Yatton. Could these three boys have been Louisa's brothers? Perhaps their parents had died. Because of the age discrepancy Louisa Rogers aged 26 in 1851 may not be the same person as the 13-year-old servant in 1841. However it is very likely that they were the same, due to the following facts: 1) Louisa was not a very common name at that time; 2) many mistakes were made in ages given in the census; and 3) in 1851 Oliver Rogers had married and one of his four children was called Louisa, perhaps after her aunt. In Clifton Louisa was one of two house servants working for a widowed solicitor and his young daughter at Nelson Villa. This was a big detached house in Queen's Road, which was later demolished in the 1950s to build the University Student's Union.

George Williams, who so kindly housed the boys in what must have been a very small house, not only had a wife and three daughters with him but a Mary Butcher, aged 50 lived there and, strangely enough, a three year-old boy called George Brookes. Where did he fit in?!

Sarah Young may have been the daughter of James Young, an agricultural labourer and his wife Elizabeth who were living in Yatton. James and Elizabeth had five children living at home. If she was their daughter Sarah would have found her first job quite familiar because in 1841 at the age of 15 she was working for a carpenter, George Gallop and his wife, whose family consisted of Mary aged 8 and her four younger brothers, Edwin, George, James and Robert. By 1851 she had moved to 5 Sion Row, near the Suspension Bridge, (then partly built), working for James Emery and his wife whose income came from letting property.

Ann Beacham in the Yatton 1841 census was a 17-year-old servant. This census does not give the relationship to the various entries so it is not possible to know for whom she was working. By 1851 Ann Beacham was a housemaid at 13 Cornwallis Crescent. This was a lodging house but of a rather superior

kind! The residents on the night of the census were Sir W. and Lady Cockburn with their two sons and two daughters. They had brought their own ladies maid and housemaid with them. Sir W's home appears to have been at Bath where he and two of the children had been born. The wife came from Hereford.

Another housemaid born in Yatton was **Mary Ann Beacham** who in 1851 was in 4 Gloucester Row, looking over the Downs, the home of a very rich lady who must have accrued her fortune through the slave trade. The owner of the house, Catherine Smythe, was born in the West Indies. She was a West Indies Proprietor and she lived alone, waited on by a ladies maid, another housemaid and a cook. In 1841 the only Beacham family listed in Yatton are two agricultural labourers in Horsecastle, one with no family and one with small children. There is no way of telling if they were related to Mary Ann or Ann Beacham.



13 Cornwallis Crescent, Clifton



4 Gloucester Row, Clifton

Elizabeth Erl [sic] may have come from Horsecastle where there were several people named Earl. One of them, Ann Earl aged 81 in 1841, could have been her mother. Elizabeth was 55 in 1851 and must have been a well-qualified cook. She was employed by a George Sanders, a magistrate living in Clifton Hill House. This was one of the largest houses in Clifton and is now a Hall of Residence for the University of Bristol. A footman was among those employed in this house.

Mary Smith, aged 27 in 1851 and born in Cleeve, was married to Frederick Smith, a victualler, living in the heart of Clifton at 3 Clifton Place, from where her husband would have been carrying on his business. At first it did not seem possible to trace her in Yatton, as we only had her married name. However most fortunately her mother was staying with them on the night of the census and so we know her name was Verrier. There was a family in Yatton in 1841 to whom she could have belonged but the mother's name was Hester not Ann. Mary could, although the ages are slightly different, have been the Mary Verrier aged 15 who was listed in the 1841 Yatton census next to a mother, named Kingston, with two children. Although not called a servant she could have been living with this family.

A family whose movements can be traced from Congresbury to Clifton via Cleeve are **Edward, Emma and Eliza Hunt**, aged 23, 20 and 18, who are listed in the 1851 Clifton census as having been born in Cleeve. Their father William was a gardener and had been born in Congresbury. He married and moved to Cleeve before the birth of his children. By the time they were grown up and moved to Clifton, his wife must have died, so that in 1851 the three children lived

with their father at 5 Weston Square, near Caledonia Place, Clifton. Edward had become a mariner, the two girls dress-makers and one wonders in what large garden William was working. There were many in Clifton. There are Hunts living in Cleeve to this day.

Rebecca Orchard's maiden name is unknown, but she had been born in Yatton. Her husband was described as a mason. In 1851 they were living in what must have been a temporary structure under the Avon Gorge, their address being given as 'Quarry'. In these difficult conditions, Rebecca was bringing up two sons and five daughters.

All quarrying in the Gorge was stopped in the late 19th Century, when it was seen to be causing enormous damage to the beauty of the area.

James Cankett and his wife also lived in a fairly humble manner on Durdham Down. He must have been apprenticed to a chimney sweep when young. No Canketts are listed in Yatton in 1841 so perhaps he was under the care of the Parish. However by 1851, aged only 26, he was running his own business and was described as a 'master sweep' employing one boy aged 16. At least he was keeping within the law unlike a 'master sweep' at the same date, living in Clifton Road. The latter employed two boys, one of whom was aged only 11. Worse still was Isaac Andres at 1 Providence Place: he employed his 8 year-old son William as a chimney sweeper. No doubt he intended to do the same with his other sons aged 5, 3 and 2 months! The law to abolish 'climbing boys' had been passed in 1840 but it was evaded to such an extent, as in the case of William, that a further bill had to be passed in 1875.

Mary Campbell

Funeral Parade 1927

In January 1927, the funeral of a young Bristol policeman PC E.J. Cook took place at Yatton Church. A local press report stated that the funeral was one of the largest seen in Yatton for many years.

The esteem and regard for PC Cook by his comrades was shown by the large number of police who attended in full dress uniform. A local newspaper photograph showed that the cortege had formed up at Top Scaur, near the War Memorial. It was reported that as the cortege passed through the Village to the Church, the streets were lined with people, all of whom knew and respected 'Ted', as he was known in the village, and every blind was drawn. His cortege was met at the Church gates by the Rev. Hughes, Vicar of Kenn. The Service was held in St Mary's Church, Yatton.

The family mourners included his mother, his two sisters, Mrs Sims and Mrs Knott, and his young widow (they had only been married for eighteen months).

Ted Cook had grown up in Horsecastle, living with his family in 4 Castle Close (now 31 Horsecastle Close). He had led a very active life, which had included army



Bristol Policemen attending the funeral on 19 January 1927 of PC Edward James Cook, who had died of pneumonia aged 28 years.

service during the last year of the 'Great War'. When he died aged 28, he had served for several years as a police officer at Trinity Road Police Station in Bristol, where his older brother was a sergeant. In an unfortunate set of circumstances, he had become the victim of an epidemic of influenza, which had spread in some areas that year. On a visit to his mother and sisters in Horsecastle, one of his sisters, who was a nurse decided that he was too ill to return to his home in Bristol.

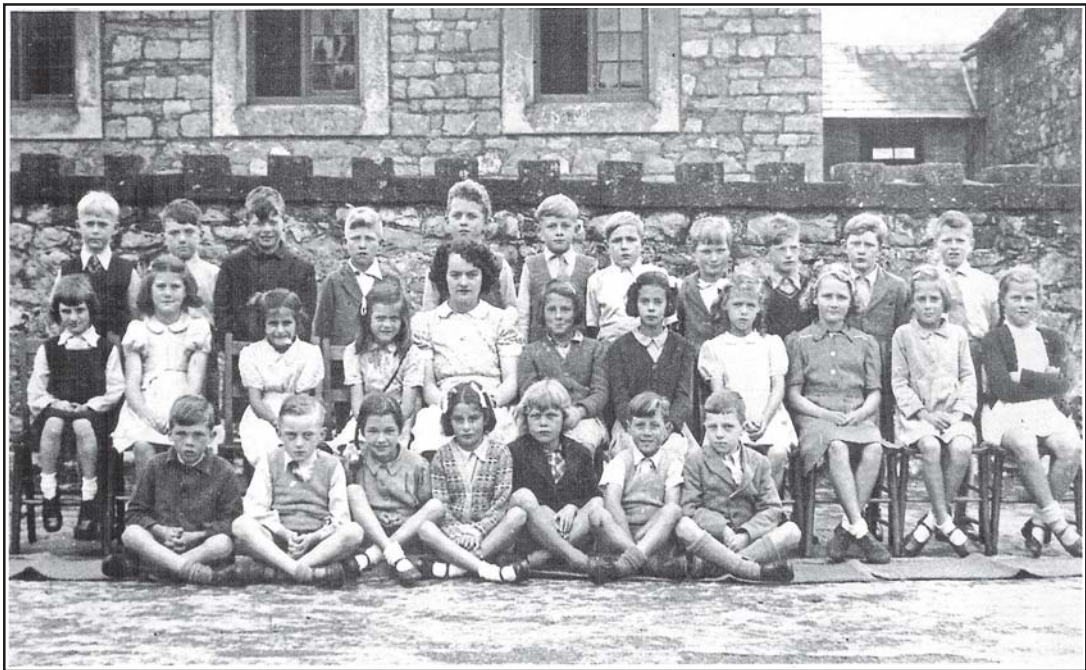
An ambulance was called to take him to hospital, where his condition worsened, as he had developed pneumonia.

His two sisters continued to live in Yatton for many years and two of his nieces Heather King and Vera Day (nee Knott) and two of his nephews, Trevor and Graham Knott still live in Yatton at the present time.

Vivian Wathen



Yatton Church School 1946-1947



John Michael Denis John Michael John Trevor Robert Peter Keith Peter
Guard Archer Burg Dobson Price Martin Parsons Trickey Pritchard Gregory Davis

Joy Linda Denise Pamela Mrs Joyce Janet Alma Jean ? Dawn
Price Williamson Durban Richards Price Stockham Brice Claxton Greenman Sims

Peter Keith Pamela Madeline Yvonne Brian ?
Cadwgan Britton Warner Phippen Gilling Hayman

PC Claxton – Yatton Village Bobby

My father, Sydney Claxton was born in Norfolk on 25th April 1907. He served, I believe, three years in the Royal Norfolk Regiment. He joined the Somerset Police in 1930 and served his early days in Weston and Taunton.

He met my mother in Taunton (she was born in Flax Bourton and her father was also a Somerset policeman). I was born in Taunton and at a year old moved to Wellington. We were due to move to Yatton in April 1939, but this was delayed owing to the young family catching measles.

Sydney took up his duties in Yatton in June 1939. At this time there were six children in the family. We finally ended up as a family of eleven children, from the eldest down: Bryan, Raymond, Jean, Eric, Enid, Alma, Sybil, Nesta, Susie, Eileen and Mervyn. Eight now survive. At present the only family member living in Yatton is a grandson; the remainder are spread throughout the South West.

Sydney Claxton retired from the Police Force in June 1960 after serving for 30 years and moved to Elboro Avenue. During the following years he served as a court usher in the Magistrates Court in Bristol, Security Officer at Avalon Furniture and Caperns. My mother, Ethel, died in February 1980.

Sydney never considered moving away, as he had friends and his roots were too deep in Yatton. He spent his last two years at Somerset House and enjoyed his trips to the shops. In his younger days he had played cricket for Claverham and the Somerset Police. During the war he maintained a large allotment and went rabbit and pigeon

shooting to boost the family table. He also repaired our shoes and cut the boys' hair. It must have been quite a struggle with a young family. We also had visits from army units, especially the bomb disposal squad, who were often called to Kingston Seymour to deal with mines washed ashore. We had a couple of Germans who had been captured and had to be held, pending the arrival of a military escort. In the main we had few problems in the village.

Bryan Claxton



*Back l-r: Bryan, Sybil, Jean, Raymond, Alma, Enid, Nesta, Eric
Middle: Susan, Mervyn, Eileen, **Parents seated***

The 1st Cleeve & Claverham Scouts

I was fortunately invited to attend the 50th celebrations of the 1st Cleeve and Claverham Scout Troop. The troop met in what, at that time; also served as a Youth Club situated opposite the nurseries in Cleeve that now display a giant watering can! The site of the then corrugated iron hut is now occupied by what looks like stabling for horses next to a pair of semi-detached houses.

I was one of the original members of the 1st Cleeve and Claverham Scout Troop led by John Pritchard. Every Thursday evening I used to cycle from halfway up the Congresbury side of Rhodyate Hill to our meetings. That really was not exceptional in those days, since many members came from Claverham and other villages. In fact Skip lived over the crest of Wrington Hill from Cleeve, so any First Aid training at his house meant a long climb up "Plunder Street" and Wrington Hill.

There were, as I recall, at my time three Patrols – Owls, Peewits and Curlews. Of the then members sadly some are now pushing up the daisies – certainly my cousin Geoff Inglis and possibly others, since one loses touch when one lives in Peacehaven, 175 miles away! Names that do spring to mind are Peter Emmerson who used to live in the 1930 detached house next to the Meeting House in Meeting House Lane and who was my patrol leader and Donald "Timber" Wood who lived down towards Chelvey Bridge. From Claverham we had Arthur, Trevor ("Bomber") and Hayden Parsons, Reuben "Pop" Hiscocks, Peter James, Peter Sutton, John Nunney, Michael Williams, and Gordon Skidmore and Anthony Fowler from Yatton. Cleeve residents in the troop were Geoff Bailey, David Weeks (who lived next door to the Scout Hut) and Mark Gostling. There were more but memories fade!! I still have the Owl's Patrol Roll from when I was PL, with Peter James as our Second, Reuben Hiscocks

and Peter Sutton. Skip confirmed in 1999 that I was in the first patrol of the Troop.

For Fund Raising we used to collect waste paper and glass jars and bottles from one end of Cleeve to the other using an old fashioned Trek Cart! There was also of course the annual "Bob-a-Job" Week at Easter time. It was mostly weeding paths and cleaning windows for 5p in today's money, although of course 5p went much further in those days!! If you collected more than £1 you were doing well!!

It occurs to me that in those days - pre nanny state - there was much more freedom in what you did, how you did it and where you did it. Half-way between Claverham and Yatton there used to be a building that was used (and still is) as a Catholic Church. Opposite that is a now derelict site which used to be a garage, coach firm, funeral directors and removal firm, known locally as Pearce's. When we went camping we travelled in the back of Pearce's furniture lorry sitting on our camping gear, with the top half of the rear doors uncovered! Oh unhappy Health and Safety Executive if that were done today!!!

Annual camps were housed in ex-army bell tents where we slept in a circle round the centre pole, feet to the middle. Latrines were dug by hand – no JCBs or Portaloos in those days! I remember attending a Somerset Jamboree which was held near the inland lighthouse at Burnham-on-Sea.

Our first camp was with a Nailsea troop presumably because Skip had not yet done the required training; it was held on the hill to the west of Beer in Devon. The field in which we pitched camp was enormous and, as it was foggy when we arrived, we could not see the boundaries all round until next morning. However it was just the right time of year for mushrooms and after a troop forage we ended up with a pile of these two feet high in the stores tent! David Weeks' father came along as Quartermaster and from this camp onwards he was known as 'Golly' Weeks - bang goes PC!!! He achieved this because one morning a scout said that he did not like marmalade, whereupon Golly replied "It's not marmalade, it's orange jam!". The scout went away and enjoyed his Robertson's marmalade!

Another camp I remember was held at Nettlecombe near Dunster. This was in a wooded valley and was purely C & C Troop. I was the proud owner of a two-man ex US Army bivouac. The weather was not of the best at that camp so we mounted this bivouac on top of two stout poles under which we had an altar fire. One of our duty cooks, who later became an RAF Chef, was cooking fried eggs one morning.

One of the Nailsea leaders was Colin Warry and he had his motorbike at camp. I seem to recall a certain incident when we did a Royal Corps of Signals bike ride with eight of us on one machine close to an adjacent guide camp for obvious reasons! I also understand that frank and meaningful discussions took place following that incident! Colin and I recalled this memory at the 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Another incident occurred when one "professor type" scout, whose sole object was to try to photograph rabbits in the

bracken, finished up with one leg outside the brailings of the bell tent. Some inconsiderate scouts tied his ankle to an adjacent tent peg and then went into the tent and woke everyone up!!

I still have my First Class Hike Report complete with leaf pressings and drawings of various interesting features encountered en route. Peter James and I started this hike at Stanton Drew at a Toll House (596667) and thence proceeded to map references 582663 via 538663 and 525665, finishing at 496641 near to Goblin Coombe having camped out overnight on the way. This was carried out on the 24th-25th May 1952 when I was aged 14.

The Remembrance Day Parades were alternately attended at the War Memorial at Holy Trinity Church, Cleeve and at Yatton Scaur Memorial. Geoff and I always felt proud at Cleeve since we had an uncle's name read out at Cleeve – Donald Inglis.

In the year of the Queen's Coronation we constructed a Campfire in the Old Quarry opposite what was Cleeve School. My then girlfriend, whom I later married, was treated to a barbecued sausage cooked by her future husband!

I had the opportunity in later years to repay to Scouting the benefits I had obtained in my days with C & C and was able to attend the 50th Anniversary held at Yatton Bowling Club. John Nunney and Colin Warry were both there and I had the honour of presenting "Skip" – by then President - with a memento of that occasion. It was not until that event that I learned of an altercation between Skip and my father. My father in his younger days was a bit of a tearaway when it came to motorcycles and was anxious that I did not follow in his footsteps! After one event it would seem that

Skip had given me a lift home on the back of his little pale green 125cc BSA Bantam! Dad was not best pleased and let John know in no uncertain terms! John related this incident to me at the reunion on 3rd October 1999 for the first time!! I reminded John that according to the Camp Bank Card in my possession he still owed me £2 which I deposited at one of the camps!

The skills which I had learned with C & C stayed with me and I was able to pass those skills on to a younger generation in my various capacities in the Scout Movement here in East Sussex. I must say that it gave me much pleasure to do this and that Scouting had given me the skills and confidence needed in that process.

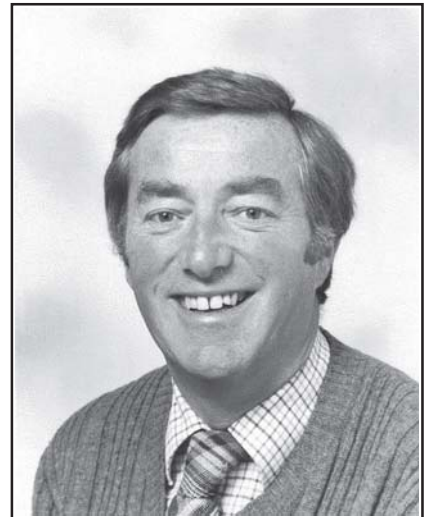
Gerald Inglis



Memories of a Yatton Junior School Headmaster

It is always best to start at the beginning, which in this case sees me driving over Mendip, from Bath to Yatton, to attend an interview for the post of head teacher at Yatton Junior School, at 2pm on 8th July 1965. Those with any knowledge of modern interviewing procedures will no doubt be aghast at the informality, not to say casualness of the interviews.

I was met by Mrs Champion, the school secretary and clerk to the Managers, and shown into a caravan classroom at the rear of the building with the other candidates. There we waited until we were called, one by one, into a much smaller temporary building which normally doubled or trebled as head-teacher's room, secretary's office and staff room. We were not shown around the school, we did not meet the staff or speak with the current head-teacher, Mr Stone. The interviews were conducted by the Managers - Rev. Wilkes, Vicar of Yatton and Chairman, Mr Burdge and Mr. Price, farmers, Mr Pearce, garage proprietor, Miss Gillard, retired teacher, and Miss Hall, a county education officer.



The candidates were each questioned for about fifteen minutes, and soon after the final interview I was called back and offered the post. And that was it. I was the headmaster elect of Yatton Junior School.

So how on earth did the Managers make their choice? If minutes of the meeting were kept I have not seen them. I did hear much later that Miss Gillard had said that it would be lovely to have young children in the school-house, thank you Peter and Andrew! Also I was teaching the top class at a Bath school which concentrated on

getting as many children as possible through the 11+ examination for the grammar school, as of course did Mr Stone at Yatton. However, it had been decided, and at the end of December we moved into the school-house. From 1st January 1966, and for the next twenty very happy years, I was the Head of Yatton Junior School.

At this time the school was situated in Church Road, in the building which is now converted into apartments. There were four classes in the main building, two of which were separated by a glass and wooden folding screen, which was pulled back each morning to allow the holding of assembly. There was a caravan classroom behind the main building, plus the smaller caravan referred to above. A sixth classroom was situated in the room which is now the bar of the village hall. The playground was across the road in what is now the village car park. A gate in the wall allowed access from the school. A member of staff had to be there at all playtimes to permit safe passage. There was no playing field, but when conditions were favourable games were played on the Rock Road field.

School dinners were provided in the village – then the church – hall. How this was done was a minor miracle. Each day Mrs Skidmore, the school cook and three or four assistants cooked a hot two-course meal for about 150 children. The kitchen was just a small room behind the stage but fortunately Mrs Skidmore was an excellent chef and organiser. Under such conditions she had to be, but I'm sure present health and safety officers would have much to say about the conditions under which the caterers worked.

Somerset County Council Education Committee enthusiastically supported the principles of comprehensive education and the abolition of the 11+ examination which determined the type of secondary school children should attend, either grammar or modern. But when I came to Yatton the 11+ was still in existence and continued for the next two or three years. Children who 'passed' went to Nailsea Grammar School (as it then was) and those who 'failed' went to Clevedon Secondary Modern. This selection often meant that in schools which were large enough, children were 'streamed' to facilitate preparation for the exam. The 'bright' ones were placed in an 'A' class, the slower ones in a 'B' class. In Yatton Junior School, with six classes, there were four A classes - one for each year group – and two 'B' classes – one for children from the first and second years, the other for children from the third and fourth year groups. And the staff – do you remember them, old Yattonians? Miss Bunstone, Mrs Nicholas, Mrs Stone (who retired with her husband), Mr Hutton, Mrs Knott and Mr Cox, Mrs Porter was the cleaner and caretaker.

Although it was by no means exceptional in the early 1960s, relationships in the school were extremely formal. The staff all used Mr, Mrs or Miss when speaking to one another, and boys were addressed by their surnames. Parents were expected to keep their distance and were kept firmly beyond the school gate. Open evenings were unheard of and the only event involving the public was the annual whist drive held in the village hall. The first prize was always a coffee table donated by Avalon.

In 1965 the village was beginning to grow, and the school roll topped 200, which meant that, for the first time, the head-teacher did not have the responsibility of taking a class, and that there would be a new appointment, that of deputy head-teacher. Several teachers applied for the post, including two members of staff. The successful applicant was Mr Rylands, who came from a school in Kent and who quickly became a popular member of staff.

One of the carrots dangled in the advertisement for the head-teacher's post was the statement that a new school was being planned and that the old building would then be vacated. Those of us in the teaching profession knew only too well that it was best to take such promises with a large pinch of salt. Remember how long it took for the new infant school to materialise.

When I raised the subject at my interview the Managers were as much in the dark as I was, so I came with no great expectations on that score. Imagine my surprise therefore when a few months after my arrival I noticed a builder's shed being erected on some ground opposite the fish and chip shop: I spoke to the workman and received the reply 'Oh we're going to build a new school here, and we're starting next week'. A telephone call to an education officer at Taunton confirmed that a start was imminent, and joy in the staff room, and most likely in the village generally, was unconfined.

It is never a good idea to institute sweeping changes as soon as you take up a new post, and a move into new and

vastly different premises made it sensible to leave any changes until we were installed in the new building. But one major innovation I did introduce was the formation of a Parent Teacher Association. Times were changing, and the days of keeping parents at a distance were numbered. So, in the October of my first year, I invited parents to an open evening to discuss the formation of a PTA and invited the head-teacher of a Nailsea junior school to describe how his PTA worked. This was followed by a discussion on the desirability of forming one in Yatton. Those present were most enthusiastic and a small committee was formed, with me as Chairman, to get the organisation started. A month later we held our first meeting, to which all parents were invited, followed by a talk on physical education in the primary school and, two months later, a talk on comprehensive education, which Somerset Education Committee was keen to implement.

The day for which we had all been waiting arrived on 12th June 1967 when we moved to the new building behind the present library. The children were marshalled across the High Street carrying as many books and as much equipment as they could manage. It was quite an event and an elderly lady who watched asked Mr Rylands if they were being evacuated! Space demands that I leave this history there.

The early years in the new school and the many changes that were subsequently made must wait for another article.

*John Burgess
May 2009*



Memories from Years Ago

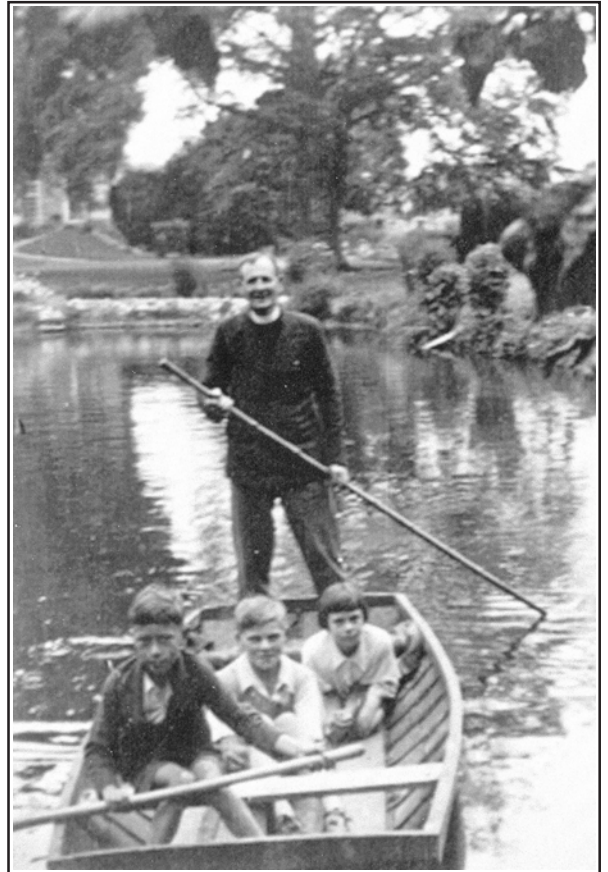
I was born on Cadbury; the house was on the right at the top of the lane leading off Small Way. Our neighbours were the Kents next door and, further down the lane, the Clarkes. Our family moved off the hill into Penleigh, Yatton in 1933. I went to the Church School in the September of that year. The school was run by Mr Dyte and it was very different from my schooling at Congresbury. I had only to walk for a short distance from Penleigh in the High Street instead of over a mile to the school at Congresbury; there were no cars in those days.

The early years were taken up with play and exploring the fields behind my home. The present school and Stowey Park had been built but Mendip Road had not yet been constructed. Well Lane was just a cart track running down the side of the Grey House. Mr Price used to take his cattle down to the fields and bring the hay back to Rectory Farm in the summer along this track.

The one thing that I recall well was the magnificent building which was the Vicarage. The building on the other side of the wall, by the present school's pedestrian crossing, was the coach house where the Vicar's transport was kept with his horses. I was given to understand that in those days the Church was very prosperous. If you look at the size of the coach house you can picture the size of the actual Vicarage. The lawns and gardens were very large and in the centre was a pond. This was in the shape of a capital T with a small bridge joining both sections. On Church Fete Days the Reverend Kemp would provide rides in a punt if you were lucky.

All sorts of activities took place on the lawn on this day. In the centre of the lawn was a large oak and down one side of the pond were six or seven tall poplars. Under the oak, Guides, Red Cross, Scouts and others would show their parents what they had learnt during the winter and spring. I remember a Mr Cadogan ran the scouts and

afterwards it was taken over by the local curate, whose name I cannot remember. The scouts spent many a weekend during holidays camping at Stream Cross. Water for washing, drinking etc was obtained from a



Rides in the punt. Edward Reynolds is the boy with the oar in hand.

pipe that came from a spring in the next field. It was at these camps that we earned the badges we wore on our shirt sleeves. Another of my memories was opening the five barred gates at the entrance to some of the roads. This was on summer Saturday afternoons, to help the bowlers of Yatton and their visiting teams to park and enter the Bowling Green.

My father, George, also kept bees and had a plot and a half at Frost Hill Allotments, where strawberries and other vegetables were grown. The strawberries had to be picked, when in season, morning and evening. Many were the times I was given a wicker basket and went off to fill it up completely. The strawberries were then sold to some of the Yatton folk. Honey was sold to Clevedon Dairies in Hill Road and also to people who called at the door. Pigeons and budgies were also kept and quite often the pigeons would fly in a flock followed by ten to twenty budgies. They would land on the roof of the building which is now the new Library and then they would fly back down to their loft and cages, respectively. I also recall helping Mr Parsons deliver milk from a cart laden with churns. The milk was measured by cans dipped into the churns and then poured into the customer's jug.

The front room of Penleigh had other callers since both a dentist and doctor from Clevedon and Congresbury respectively rented it for their services. Mr Calder, the dentist, was the most feared among us young ones.

Later on I remember at the start of World War II that the army was billeted in what is now the fish and chip shop; previously it

was a radio repairers. The soldiers manned the searchlight and balloon posts along the Wrington Road and I think they also manned the decoy down past Kenn Pier. I also did a paper round for Mr Manley. In those days we could name all the people from Top Scaur to Claverham Post Office. Nowadays I would not like to try. As the war went on Air Raid Wardens, Firefighters and Home Guards were formed. Six of us young ones joined the Home Guard as messenger boys. We were under Mr Atlay's command and some of the messages were passed by word of mouth between us. I am quite sure that sometimes they made no sense whatsoever.

The lads I remember were Tom Atlay, Alan Viney and Bob (something). One time we had to attack Nailsea Home Guard. We were told not to say anything to anybody about what we were going to do. We all met at Atlay's Garage on the Sunday morning, a real motley crew on bikes; the men had rifles. We cycled off across the Moors to the West end of Nailsea to find only a couple of men on the look out; these were captured. It seemed that they expected us to attack from the Main Road end!

The members of the army who were billeted in Yatton were always on the move, as they filled in before going overseas. One soldier called Gavin chatted with Dad over the wall. He had just been married and Dad being an old softie said " Get her down here". We therefore formed a friendship that lasted until this day. Unfortunately, like Dad, Gavin has passed away but his wife Eve is still alive in Northallerton, Yorkshire and we still correspond.

Edward Reynolds



The Wood Yard, Church Road

In 1968 I had a new teaching job at the Art School in Bristol and chose to live in the North Somerset village of Yatton, for its rural location and the ease of commuting to work. The quiet, traditional village was changing rapidly, undergoing a dramatic expansion, with new estates being built on its fringes. Where there had once been open green fields now the muddy unsurfaced track of Stowey Road wound through a large building site.

I needed a convenient supply of timber to repair our old house. Next to the church I was pleased to find a wood yard run by two elderly men, the Clarke brothers. It had an overgrown, almost neglected atmosphere. The entrance path led towards the heart of the yard with its power saws and lifting gear. There were several rickety sheds, one of which housed an automatic band saw sharpening machine that was always working when I wandered around the yard on Saturday mornings. The cutting equipment was large scale and the brothers worked steadily, quietly getting on with their tasks with a concentration that one didn't like to interrupt. Large piles of country cut timber were stacked high around the huts, all sliced and seasoned and carefully stacked in the shape of the original logs. Parts of the yard were overgrown with nettles and brambles and small pathways wound their way around what looked like long forgotten stacks. I remember my surprise at the size of the place; it seemed so out of scale with the village. Later I learnt that the wood yard was so large because during World War II it had supplied

Aircraft Company for the construction of the wood framed Mosquito fighter-bombers.

Having bought timber for fencing and several jobs around the house and garden I was something of a regular customer and on nodding acquaintance with the more outward going of the brothers. On one of these visits, whilst waiting to be attended to, I picked up a piece of thin oak planking cut from the log. It was a lovely honey colour with that slight vinegary smell of meadow oak. Seeing my interest in the wood and following a discussion about Somerset church woodcarvings, Mr. Clarke gave me the piece to take away, so that I could "have a go".



At home I found the chisels from my art student days at Leeds, a college with a strong belief in carving, where both Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore had studied. With thoughts of the carved misericords that I had seen in Wells Cathedral and the pew ends that I had lately discovered in various Somerset churches, I tentatively set to work on a pictorial relief of a deposition set in the fields around Yatton. The effect on me was wonderful; I loved the physical process, with the crisp bold cutting of the oak and the dramatic possibilities of light playing across the surface of the wood. I recognised the challenge in taking such an ancient art form and using it in a more contemporary way.



Fields around Yatton

In my new found enthusiasm I went back to the yard for more wood. Mr Clarke took me to a stack of seasoned meadow oak, sliced in varying degrees of thickness. He told me that the log had been in his yard for at least 25 years and that the tree had originally come from a field above Cheddar. Counting the rings I calculated that it had been growing in that field since 1660, from before the Battle of Sedgemoor and the Great Fire of London.

I could not resist buying wood with such a history. I knew that I had to have it. I bought it all. The price was reasonable, so much so that now I am sure that it was a kindness rather than a commercial transaction. I like to think that Mr Clarke was pleased that 'his wood' was going to have another life.

It's been almost forty years since I discovered relief carving, as a result of my visits to the Yatton wood yard. I've produced a steady stream of work since

then: carvings for exhibitions, commissions for book covers and advertising campaigns and even a picture of a Ferrari that was used in the publicity for the Hungarian Grand Prix!

Some time after I had left the village the yard was inevitably bought by developers and the land covered in houses.

I am delighted to have recently completed a commission for a relief panel to be hung in the wonderful new Children's Hospice at Charlton Farm, Wraxall, on the theme of the children's book *The Sheep Pig* by the author, Dick King-Smith.

In my studio I still have reliefs carved in meadow oak from my days in Yatton. The wood has gradually darkened over time. Occasionally I give the carvings a dust and a polish, for it doesn't take much effort to make the old wood gleam.

Peter Murphy



Communications around Yatton

Post Offices, Post and Telephone Boxes

Post Offices

Prior to the 17th century royal ministers used King's Messengers, whilst others sent letters via servants or friends. The first public postal service was set up in 1635 under the patronage of the Duke of York. It cost two pence a sheet to send a letter up to 80 miles between London and large towns. From 1660 long distance stage coaches carried the post but in 1784 John Palmer set up a network of specifically mail coaches centred on London. By 1800 starting in Bath, under the auspices of the nineteen year old postmaster, Ralph Allen, many provincial towns were included for a penny. By 1840 the whole country was served using Rowland Hill's penny black but the railways then began to take over.

Nearer home in the 1800s Cleeve may have had a post house at 17th century Cleeve Court Farm, which was possibly the centre of the hamlet. The farm had an unusual amount of stabling and this was the suggested explanation. During 1826 the Cleeve receiver had his annual salary increased from £5 to £6. He was to deliver post to Cleeve, take charge of the Yatton letters and make up bags for Bristol. By 1830 the deliveries were made by horse between villages. Also in 1832 Yatton regained its receiving house which had been lost in 1806. Letters could be written, delivered and a reply sent and received the same day!

In 1861, the Post Office Savings Bank was set up. In 1883 the parcel post was added to the service provided by the post office and in 1908 pensions were included. Today there is a post office in Yatton with sub branches at Cleeve and Claverham.

Yatton has had at least three sites in the High Street. The first that can be identified was Gregory's Stores opposite the Prince of Orange where Mrs W Gregory was

postmistress. It was a receiving house and granted and paid money orders besides becoming a Post Office Savings Bank when these were set up. Letters arrived from Bristol at 7.30am, were sent to London at 7.30pm and to other destinations at 5.44pm.

An early postmaster was Charles James Ingles who was born in 1858 and married Lucy Horler in 1880. In 1875, Theo Derham was postmaster and in 1883, Miss Catherine McCormack was postmistress.

The next post office was at number 120 which is a semi-detached brick house built near the corner with The Avenue.

Claverham Post Office opened in 1902 and remained in the place it first started, in a shop built between 1821 and 1840. The door originally opened onto Claverham High Street. The first sub-postmaster was Sidney Lawrence who was also a wheelwright. Letters were delivered at the post office at 8am, 3pm and 7pm and despatched at roughly the same times. Post boxes were cleared once a day from 1872 and twice a day from 1894.



Photograph courtesy of M Tozer

The photograph below, from 1922, shows Sidney's daughters (one of whom was called Ivy) and Wilfred Cleverdon. The provision of a post box was the responsibility of the postmaster but the VR plaque was standard.

The Post Office closed in 2008 when the postmaster sold the premises and a sub-branch of Yatton Post Office opened in Claverham Village Hall in June 2009 for three mornings a week.

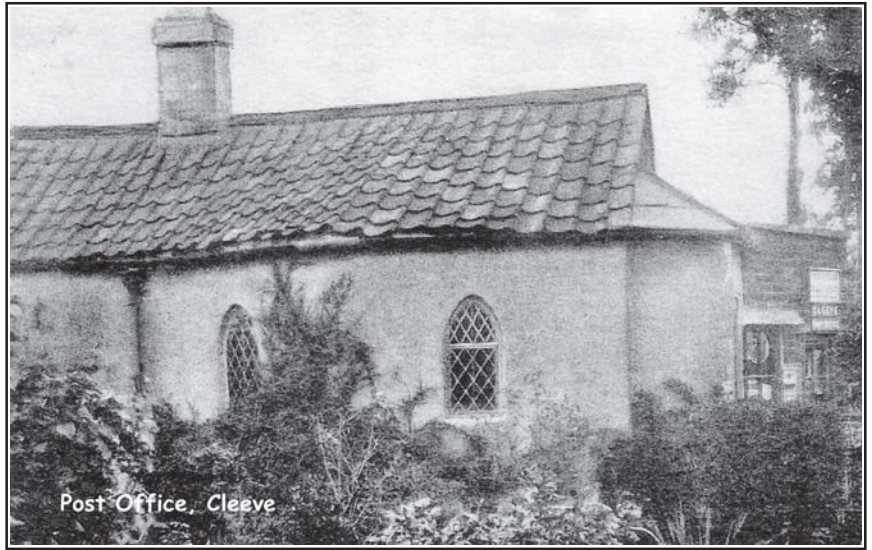


Photograph courtesy of Jean Darby

Cleeve's Old Post Office was built between 1840 and 1885 on Pound Green and was used until 1912. It opened onto the Main Road and an elevated portion of pavement still exists there beside a blocked doorway.

In 1861 Mrs Francis Burgess was the postmistress and then between 1876 and 1883 Henry Lansbury was postmaster. Between 1883 and 1894, Miss Melinda Parsons was postmistress, shopkeeper and dress maker.

By 1912 Cleeve Post Office had moved to a 17th century cottage incorporating a later shop beside the Old Inn at 132 Main Road.



Photograph courtesy of Stan Croker

It remained there until late 2006 when the subpostmaster retired.

In July 2007 a sub office to Yatton was set up for three mornings a week in the Newsagents in Bishops Road.



Photograph courtesy of David Knights

Post Boxes

Sir Rowland Hill, Secretary of the Post Office, wanted to improve postal services via infrequent packet boats for the Channel Islands. Following a suggestion in 1850 by Anthony Trollope (the novelist and Surveyor's Clerk who organised the post in Guernsey), locally designed red pillar boxes were set up, the first one being in 1852. Carlisle followed as the first place on the mainland to be included in the scheme.

As local designs and colours (which included olive green) were difficult to spot, the designs and the scarlet colour were standardised between 1859 and 1879.

The sovereign's cipher was included from 1857 starting with VR for Queen Victoria. Later much smaller and cheaper wall mounted boxes were designed for villages.

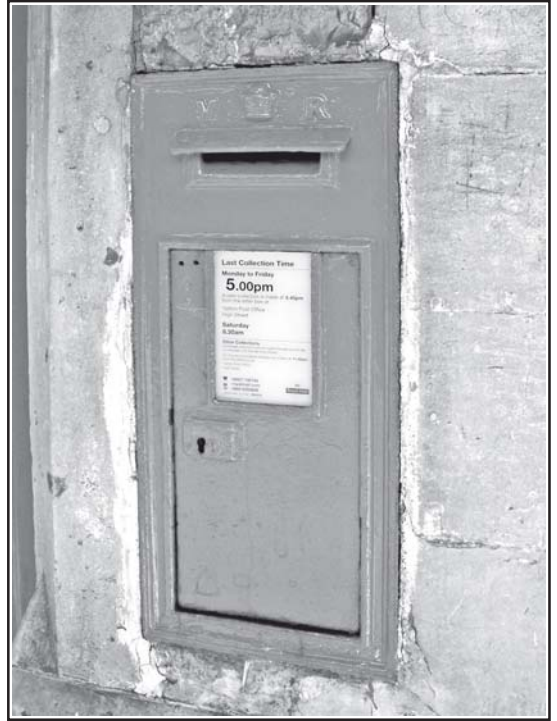


Fig. 1

When gas lighting was introduced, letter boxes were attached to lamp standards but these have since been superseded by free standing boxes.

There are at least a dozen currently used post boxes in Yatton, Claverham and Cleeve: they can be dated from the sovereign's initial such as VR for Victoria Regina. The earliest is a Victorian wall-mounted post box at Yatton station dating from 1871. *fig 1*

A rare Derby castings oval pillar-box dating from 1932 stands outside Yatton Post Office. It has the initials GR for George V and has a posting aperture on one side and a stamp machine placement on the other. It was one of only seventy-five made, and considered so rare that it was moved with Yatton Post Office from 120 High Street to the present site in 1968. *fig 2*



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Two other letter boxes of George V's reign can be found in Yatton, in the wall of Crossways House, Horsecastle Close and at 87 Claverham Road in a boundary wall.

In Elizabeth II's reign a pillar box was erected outside 120 High Street; a second one outside Claverham Post Office, *fig 3* has since been moved across the road to Claverham Park; and a third at Woodview Drive, Cleeve stands near the dentist's surgery where the post bike was photographed in 2007. *fig 4 and 5*

There is another wall-mounted post box outside the beauty salon at Cleeve but the rest are pole-mounted, such as the one outside the Prince of Orange shown below. *Fig 6*



Fig. 5



Fig. 4



Fig. 6

Telephone Boxes

The early 1900s marked the appearance of the first telephone kiosks with designs and colours specific to the locality. In 1921 a standard model adapted from a Birmingham design was agreed upon, only to be replaced by the familiar box with a domed roof. Sir Giles Gilbert Scott based the roof on the lantern at Dulwich Picture Gallery!

There were a number of subsequent designs until in 1939 the K2 Mk2, as it was poetically called, started production. It had been adapted so that it was more able to withstand vandalism and eventually all 70,000 produced were painted vermillion.

At least one remains in Yatton, there is one in Claverham High Street (shown below) and another in Millier Road at Cleeve.*fig 7*

In the year 1985 when British Telecom was improving the telephone service they introduced the KX100, which is seen above



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

at Heron Green, Cleeve. This one has been removed for reasons of economy because many people now use mobile phones instead.*fig 8*

Another design of phone box seen in Yatton is at the station (see below). It is an example of the KXPlus range and has many variants designed in the twentieth century.*fig 9*



Fig. 9

Local Telephone Exchange and Numbers

In June 1908 the National Telephone Company opened a telephone exchange at Yatton Post Office in the shed to the right of the picture. *Fig 10* Wake and Dean had telephone number 15 and coal merchants Clement and Co were 16. In the mid 1930s

the exchange moved to Woodhill and four figure numbers were adopted. W H Pearce & Sons, who were butchers at Cleeve had the number 3183 and Clements had 2216.

Later the exchange was moved to Wrington Lane. It closed in the 1960s at about the time the prefix 83 was added to the numbers.

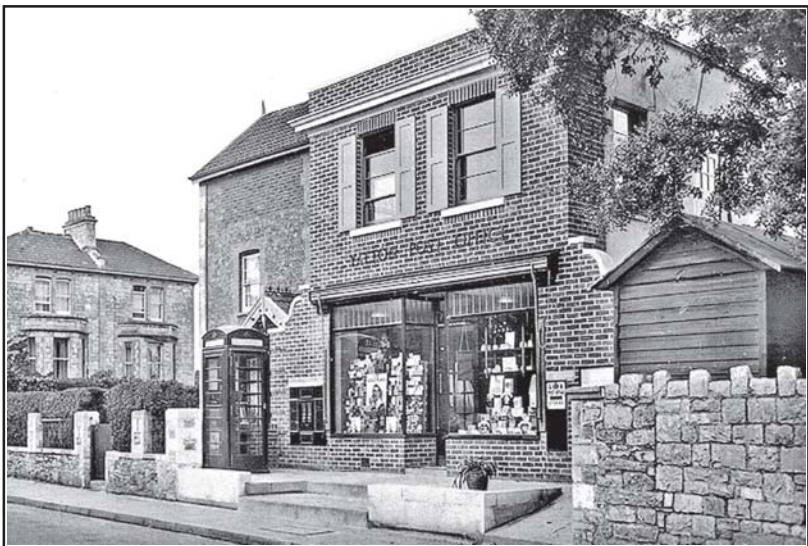


Fig. 10

Marianne Pitman

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Handbells in Yatton

Having been asked to write about Yatton's handbells, at the request of the Society's Publications Committee, I recalled that there had been a much earlier handbell group in Yatton. My wife and I made contact with Philip and Ann Wait, who now live in Cheddar, and we spent a very enjoyable hour or so looking through Philip's Scrap Book and being told of the Yatton Junior School Handbell team which had been in operation from about 1975 to 1984. This team had been formed by Philip when he was a teacher at the junior school. As some pupils moved on each year, the team had to have a "rolling" membership, thus making the teaching and learning a continuous task. With the approval of Rev. Gordon Pollock the old set of St. Mary's church handbells were on permanent loan to the school and, though these were quite a heavy set of bells, the youngsters wielded them well, rang them in St. Mary's often at Christmas and went out on numerous other appointments.

I enquired if I was right to believe the ringers had played in the Yatton Precinct at Christmas for several years but Philip thought this had occurred only once as the music kept blowing away! They had used A4 music sheets, with the bell **notes** written about half an inch high, shown in **bold capitals** for the melody and normal lowercase letters for the harmony. Each ringer had his or her own sheet of music and a stand to put it on. (This contrasts with our Chalice Team music being written out by bell **numbers** and with, generally, one or more pieces of A3 music on one extended music stand being followed by all the team. Our music is also securely clipped to the stand, hopefully to avoid disasters when we are outside on a windy day, or inside when someone opens a door, or brushes past!)

Philip's team had played in Weston super Mare, at a Salvation Army home, and also in Broadmead, Bristol when, one Christmas, Debenham's Store management treated them to lunch and



*Handbell ringers in Broadmead, Christmas 1978
Photograph courtesy of Bristol Evening Post*

Marks and Spencer's laid on a tea. They had collected for charity and been well received. They also visited and played at an Old Folks Home in Fishponds that same evening, though Philip recalls with humour

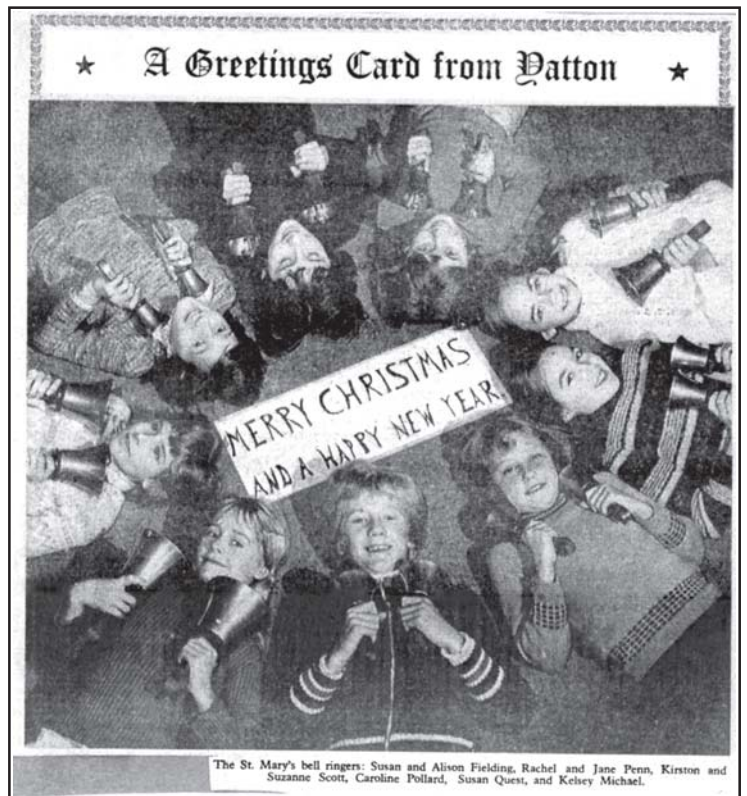
that the following year one 'Grumpy Old Man' immediately walked away saying "Not you lot again!". Most of the older people, however, were only too pleased to be allowed to 'have a go' and even more so, to chat to the young pupils as they probably got very few young visitors.

In his much-valued scrapbook Philip has a wealth of pictures and write-ups of school and other events, and the handbell team is well documented. Two pictures from local papers of the time are shown, one (thought to be from the *Weston & Somerset Mercury*) shows the team of 1978 lying on the floor in a circle, full of smiles and grasping their bells. The banner headline states 'A Greetings Card from Yatton'. The 'St. Mary's bell ringers' team was Susan and Alison Fielding, Rachel and Jane Penn, Kirston and Suzanne Scott, Caroline Pollard, Susan Quest (Musical director) and Kelsey Michael. The write-up says that seven girls were from Yatton and two from Claverham, aged 10 – 12 years, and all past or present Junior School pupils, who practised at Philip's home. They had rung for Yatton Old People's party in the junior school, then on Sunday at the Bristol Children's Hospital, on the next Thursday at Winford Orthopaedic Hospital and on the Friday at Broadmead, followed by Meadowsweet Old People's Home in Fishponds. On Christmas Eve they were to be at Kingston Seymour at 4.30pm, Cherry Orchard Old

People's home in Clevedon at 6.30pm, Clevedon Cottage Hospital at 7pm, and Clevedon Salvation Army Home at 7.30pm; all followed by Christmas Morning at Yatton Church – what a fantastic programme for any team!

The other picture shows the 'St. Mary's Magnet Youth Club band in Broadmead today' with Lisa Wojtowycz (12) being the only member named. (So come on Yattonians, tell us who the others are, especially if you recognise **yourself** in the photo!)

Geoff Marchant



Yatton Handbell Christmas Card

(Photograph courtesy of Weston & Somerset Mercury)

YCCCCART

*A Brief History of the Yatton, Congresbury, Claverham and Cleeve
Archaeological Research Team*

In 2004 John Atwell of Claverham Court Farm contacted me to say that the Tithe Barn on the farm needed some work to ensure its preservation. Deterioration of the roof meant that the building was not weather-tight and any advice regarding grant aid would be very welcome. He said that he had also contacted Vince Russett, the North Somerset County Archaeologist, to see if he could help in any way, particularly as the barn was an important structure historically. In due course a meeting on site was arranged and I contacted several members of Yatton Local History Society who met with John, Vince and myself and it was agreed that the building did need some remedial work in order to secure its future. It was also agreed that a survey of the barn was a priority to record the structure prior to any work being carried out. A group of willing individuals then agreed to meet on Thursday mornings to carry out this survey.

We were aware that there was a lost Chapel on the same farm, so that became our next target. Could we find it? We investigated a stone 'outcrop' which seemed promising but did not find anything positive, although we did a small investigative 'dig', under Vince's supervision of course. Later in the story we borrowed some geophysics equipment and surveyed the likely areas for the 'lost' Chapel. Other areas investigated on this farm over a period of some years included a Duck Decoy, an Ox House, water courses and leats and a Pound. We also looked for a Poor House, supposed to be in the area and found signs of a small house but there is some doubt why a Poor House should be so far from other habitation.

The Survey Group increased in size as other interested people decided to come along to see what we were up to. Our activities expanded as we were made aware of other features in the general area of Yatton that could prove to be of some interest, as the Group was then an Archaeological section of the Local History Society. We were invited by Mrs M. Campbell to investigate a circular feature in the woods at Bickley. We spent a lot of time and effort in clearing away scrub,

small trees and brambles until we were able to see that there was a tumble of stone which had originally formed a wall roughly circular in plan. This was our first hill slope enclosure (named Bickley 1), the first of many we have found since we started this investigation.

We have investigated during the past five years many areas and features including several more hill-slope enclosures on the slopes of Broadfield Down between Cleeve and Bristol International Airport, a Roman 'Villa' site, World War 2 Decoy, a Prisoner of War camp and a slit trench. We have also carried out 'digs' in Yatton gardens and walked fields which may have hidden archaeological features.

About three years ago we realised that Cadbury Iron Age hill-fort had not been fully surveyed. At about the time we decided to start this large undertaking, several of us decided that it would be a very sensible idea to form a separate group directed to Archaeology. Part of the thinking behind this was the suggestion that we could raise some funds and maybe purchase some equipment, as up to that point we had needed to borrow any geophysics equipment required for our

investigations. I must mention that Vince Russett's involvement in all this has been invaluable, with his support and freely given advice and help.

Therefore, in 2008 YCCCART (Yatton, Congresbury, Claverham and Cleeve Archaeological Research Team) was officially formed with a membership of about twenty and a full committee. As mentioned above, we were dependent on borrowing any geophysical equipment that we needed in order to research several more sites we had identified as being important. We needed to purchase the necessary equipment for our own use. The obvious way to raise substantial funding was to apply for a grant from suitable organisations, so we started to look for a funding source that would be sympathetic to our needs and aims. Several small organisations were considered but we eventually approached the Heritage Lottery Fund who were able to offer a substantial grant if we could provide them with a good application. So later in 2008 we submitted our application for a substantial grant to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This involved completing about twenty pages of questions with supporting documentation and detailed costings of the equipment and a full programme of work. Our application was turned down with no real reason being given and we returned to seeking other possible providers.

Then, in early 2009, out of nowhere, we received a telephone call from the Heritage Lottery Fund inviting us to re-apply, as they had some additional funding available.

We thought that we could do this fairly quickly (they set a tight schedule) and agreed to make a fresh application. Then we discovered they had changed all their application forms and we had to re-work the

whole application! We did this within their target time and we received a grant of £34,100 for our project in May 2009.

With this funding we are purchasing various items of equipment to enable us to carry out geophysical and manual surveys of the many and varied sites in our area.

At this point I should mention the formation of Community Archaeology in North Somerset (CANS): this is a collection of local archaeology groups all set up by Vince Russett, who are investigating most of North Somerset's archaeology. As part of our grant application we included the member groups of CANS as users of the equipment that has been purchased when we are not using it ourselves. This will enable our equipment to be used over a larger area and we are committed to providing assistance and suitable training in conjunction with Vince.

We have now been or in some cases are continuing surveys of various sites with particular emphasis on Cadbury Hill Fort and its environs and also the Roman Kiln sites in Congresbury. We expect to investigate these further along with many other sites in years to come and we are also involving the local schools, local organisations and the general public in our activities by giving guided walks, presentations and talks to enable everyone to become aware of the history and the heritage of our local environment.

YCCCART meets on Thursday mornings, so if you would like to be involved ring 01934-838018 or 833764 for more information. No experience is necessary.

Brian Bradbury
(YCCCART Chairman)



Cadbury-Congresbury – our Local Hillfort

The hillfort known as Cadbury-Congresbury is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is of more than local importance, not perhaps because of its construction during the Iron Age (?600BC-50AD), but because of the evidence of re-occupation during the period c.450-550AD. By this time, Rome, of course, was no longer the centre of the Mediterranean world, but a Romanised civilisation was now based in Byzantium. Pottery of an eastern Mediterranean type that had previously been found in only two places – Tintagel and South Cadbury – was found during excavations in 1968-73 (Rahtz *et al*, 1992), along with evidence of imports of wine, olive oil and glass. This showed that Cadbury-Congresbury was a high-status settlement with long-distance trade links in the post-Roman period, both to the Anglo-Saxon areas to the east, and to North Africa and perhaps Spain or France, as well as the eastern Mediterranean. There are a number of other local hillforts (Worlebury, Dolebury, Cadbury-Tickenham, Brent Knoll, for example), but after the excavations the national importance of Cadbury-Congresbury was recognised.

A multivallate hillfort

The hilltop of Cadbury-Congresbury has produced signs of activity in Neolithic and Bronze Age times, but the first evidence of occupation comes from the pre-Roman Iron Age, when substantial defences turned the hill into a multivallate hillfort. It has often been said that Cadbury-Congresbury has only one rampart (univallate), but anyone who has climbed up or down the hill on the eastern side will know that there are a series of impressive ditches and banks defending the approach from that side. There are two small enclosures at the top of the hill, beside the eastern entrance, which have been interpreted as ‘guard houses’, reinforcing the defences of the fort.

In addition to the main hillfort, the top of the adjacent Henley Hill was the subject of excavation in advance of quarrying in the 1960s (Watts and Leach, 1998). Finds from the site included some pottery, at least one brooch and the remarkable bronze figurine, which seem to indicate some religious activity during the late Iron Age. Later, a series of Roman temples of increasing size were built in the 1st – 4th centuries,

surrounded by about 90 burials, which may have been from the post-Roman period. However, all these remains were completely destroyed by quarrying and only the slightest trace of them might possibly remain. But it has recently been noticed that there is one place in the uppermost ditch on the northeast side of the hillfort where a causeway across the ditch has been left when digging out the rock. This is in such a position that an observer looking out along the causeway would look directly at the religious site and later temple on Henley Hill, suggesting that the site was important to the people who built the ramparts in the Iron Age.

Within the fort, excavations found that it was re-occupied in the late 5th century, and subsequently new earthworks were built, including a bank dividing the hilltop into two parts. Although only a small part (6%) of the area was dug, there was evidence of 8 structures, both circular and rectangular, from that period, and by the sixth century the occupants had achieved the high status shown by the imports described above. However, in the late sixth or early seventh

century the settlement appears to have declined, or been abandoned. There was some mediaeval and post-mediaeval activity on the hill, including ochre and lead mining, and iron mining at Henley Wood.

It was probably in the 19th century that the various quarries were established around the site, including the Congresbury parish quarry (which eventually destroyed 6% of the interior of the hillfort), Henley quarry and two others. Also in the 19th century, the hill top copse was planted. The 20th century saw the construction of the reservoir on Henley Hill (in 1907), and the cessation of grazing on the hill, first by sheep, and later, disastrously, by rabbits, due to myxomatosis. This has allowed the growth of scrub over much of the grassland, with dire consequences for both biodiversity and archaeology.

The area of Ancient Monument status forms the core of the Local Nature Reserve, which extends as far as Henley Lane. There is a 'Right to Roam' over the entire hill and there is much of interest to see. Firstly, of course, the ramparts, especially on the eastern side, consist of massive banks and ditches and at the top of the track, where once was an entrance to the fort, it is still possible to spot the low banks of the small 'guardhouse' enclosures. From the track, follow the ramparts through the woods to the north and you will come to the 'causeway' blocking the

main ditch and forming a viewing platform across to Henley Hill. In the interior of the fort, it is not easy to see the cross-bank which bisected the hillfort because of later disturbance, but if the grass is short you might spot several circular depressions where the houses of the Iron Age (and later) once stood.

New survey

In 2007, members of YCCCART began a complete physical and photographic survey of the ramparts, which will take many months. Mark Corney completed a full survey of the interior of the fort in 2003-4, but the ramparts have not been surveyed since the campaign of 1968-73, and it is important to see whether there have been vandalism or from natural causes. Also, we hope to make visits to the hillfort more enjoyable for everyone, by clearing brambles and scrub from some of the features so that they are more visible and perhaps by providing more information for visitors, with notice boards or maybe leaflets made available.

Cadbury-Congresbury hillfort is one of the most important historical features in the two parishes of Congresbury and Yatton – equally as important as the two parish churches. It is vital that it receives the level of care and attention that it deserves, and we have every reason to be proud of the heritage that our ancestors left us.

Shirley Everden

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Reminiscences

In one of the copies of *More Yatton Yesterdays* there was a picture of Horsecastle Terrace, which brought back memories to me of Vivian Wathen's dear parents and his brother, along with the Philpots, the Parsons and Stan and Mary Davey (my cousins). There were also my dear Uncle and Aunt, George and Emily Van Klaveren and family, who provided me with such wonderful hospitality.



Horsecastle Terrace reproduced from MYY08

It was not long after the war years, at the time that Fanny Blankers Coen, the Dutch hurdle and sprint winner hit the headlines at the Olympic Games. I had come from Holland for a long stay in Yatton, the youngest of four children. My mother had died before the end of the war and as well as being good for me to leave home at that time, it was also good for my father to have a little "space".

I have memories of Horsecastle Chapel, where we made so many friends. The Sunday School class was run by Aunt D. at the Grange Farm. I used to go to the corner shop at times, which was run by Lewis Pearce, and also to Les Griffith's shop. He married Edith Kingcott of Kingston Seymour.

With my cousin Margaret, who is now in Canada, we used to join the boys during our free hours from school in activities such as jumping ditches, climbing trees

and walking over the moors and Wemberham. I recall hearing the sounds of the hounds in the kennels. One of the boys was Colin Forse: I remember him on his bicycle, in fact I never remember him without it!

My uncle George was the driver of the steam trains from Yatton to Clevedon and Brian Parsons was the fireman. Dorothy, my cousin, worked in the booking office at Yatton Station and another relative worked for British Rail in Bristol. They were good old days, never mind the smutty smoke which used to blow in through the open windows!

I used to have to report to PC Claxton regularly as I was a 'foreigner'. The Burdge family always gave us such wonderful hospitality in their homes at Weeping Ash Farm, The Grange, Chestnut Farm and Brick House Farm.

Ali Harris (nee Van Klaveren)



A Sunday Afternoon Stroll

I attended St David’s Preparatory School, Cadbury House, as a boarder in the early 1950s. I was ten years old. My most pleasant memory was when we walked to the Black and White Cafe, also known as Halfway Café, on the A370 at Congresbury to purchase cakes on a Sunday afternoon. The Cafe has now been replaced by a petrol station.

The school rules ensured that each boy was to have no more than 2 shillings and 6 pence (12.5p) spending money a week. In actual fact the richer boys had more and the poorer ones less, but even with this we were all happy and none went hungry.

During the Sunday afternoon walk to the cafe we sometimes met village girls and we would exchange pleasantries. It was all very polite and proper. I remember that I really fancied one of them especially, but we could not show our feelings. I think she knew as we exchanged shy smiles.

There was little traffic to worry about and we walked quite freely. Sometimes the school’s Austin 7 would pass us, driven by the Headmaster, Major Kerr, or the Headmistress, Mrs Griffiths. In each case we would raise our caps to the driver. We would sometimes meet the Major on our walks. I regret that we never asked him to join us, as I think now he was rather lonely, but of course we were just young boys at the time. A ‘Major Road Ahead’ sign we found very funny, especially if we saw it after meeting the Major.

Michael Claridge



Amendment

Amendment received from Mrs Cynthia James to caption for Yatton C of E School Sports Team 1946-7. Photograph published in *More Yatton Yesterdays* 2006 No 8 page 41.

- Back Row: *Ralph Mitchell, Peter Colley (these two were reversed in your publication), Brian Baker, Keith Kerton, Barry Smedley, Eric Claxton, Roger Davis, Leslie Tutton, David Lyddon.*
- Middle Row: *Shirley Brooks, Stan Hayman, Ken Sprod, Tony Parsons, Derek Wall, Roy Amos, Maureen Mealing, Linda Williamson.*
- Front Row: *Cynthia Smith, John Guard, Wendy Richards(?), Diana Tranmer, Don Stockham, Diana Vaughan, Alma Claxton, Joan Nicholson, unknown.*



Enquiries and Feedback

We quite often receive enquiries from people seeking information about their ancestors, some writing from as far away as Australia and New Zealand. It seems a lot of West Country folk emigrated to those countries. We make it clear that we are unable to help with family trees but do our best to point people in the right direction to find the information they need. If the enquiry relates more to Kingston Seymour we contact Bob Ford who has a wealth of knowledge about Kingston in the ‘old days’.

One recent enquiry came from relatives seeking a grave in Yatton Churchyard. The burial was registered in the Church Records but there was no sign of a headstone. Also no headstone had been recorded when members of our Society surveyed the Churchyard some years ago, and every grave with a headstone was given a number. We were able to say that probably the relations had not provided the money to pay for a headstone.

Another recent enquiry was for copies of old photographs of Yatton Market, which

we were able to provide, specifying that they could not be reproduced without our permission.

The most recent enquiry was for information about Larchmount Hall, which was a Girls’ Boarding School but is now the Masonic Hall.

We are always pleased to receive any comments on or revisions to our articles or to receive any further enquiries.

Ruth Summerell



YLHS Committee Members 2009 – 2010

Ruth SUMMERELL	President	Mary CAMPBELL	Archivist
Marianne PITMAN	Chairman	Pat DENNY	Photo Archivist
Philippa CORMACK	Vice Chairman	Allan DENNY	Research/Exhibitions
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