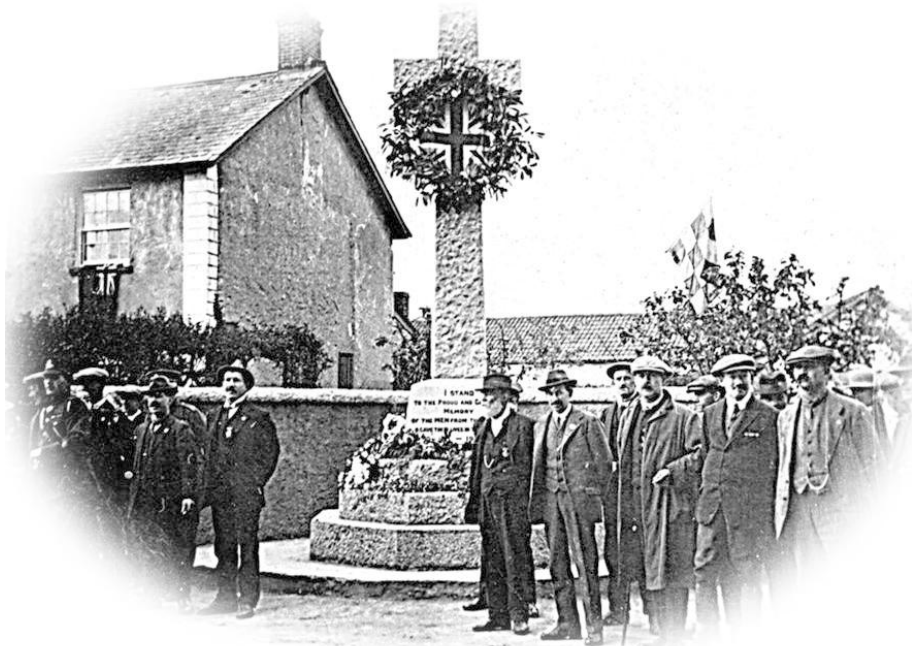


# WOODBURY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

## 2012 NEWSLETTER



### “LEST WE FORGET”

*Following our most interesting talk on the War Memorials of Devon, it seemed appropriate to remember those of our village who constructed ours in 1920, and which was unveiled and dedicated by Major Morrison Bell M.P. and the Rev. R.H. Neely B.A. on the 10th July of that year. The memorial cost in total £184.11s.9d. and was built by the voluntary labour of men of the Parish.*

*The term “Lest we forget” can also have other connotations in the sphere of general history. This newsletter contains some of those stories which should also not be forgotten. Those inside these pages reflect the various people of the area who have come and gone before us. Not all relate to Woodbury, but make interesting reading nevertheless, and we must thank those who have put pen to paper to record them.*

## ~ Richard Kayley ~

**M**y family association with Woodbury is brief but fascinating. It starts with a Yorkshire man who marries a Cheshire lass in Lancashire, where he is working as a gamekeeper, and she is in the cotton mills.

After the marriage, he comes to the Woodbury area for work. He's the gamekeeper Richard Kayley, and from approx 1840 - 1870 he lived in the Keeper's cottage at Stowford, and was employed by the Rolle family estates. His wife's sister, Margaret, follows them to Devon from Cheshire, finding work in Exeter, where she falls pregnant and marries William Dearing, (whose family come from Fatherford village near Okehampton).

Richard Kayley helps to find the newly weds work at Nutwell Court and William Dearing is footman to Sir T Drake, living in a tied cottage on Nutwell Road. William Dearing and his wife Margaret quickly have five children, (including one called Richard Kayley Dearing), when William Dearing, of Nutwell Road Woodbury dies, (I cannot find the burial in Woodbury Church records...can anyone help with that one?). The children are all very young and his widow, Margaret, is expecting their sixth child at the time, (my great grandmother, who is born after her father's death). Widow Margaret Dearing is no longer entitled to the tied cottage and so sends her children off in different directions simply to survive, the eldest two go to live with their Uncle Richard Kayley, (the gamekeeper), who has no children of his own. Young Alice Dearing, aged just 8 years old, is sent as a servant to John Skinner, the Grocer (1871 census), probably making lace with his wife Sarah Skinner, Alice later marries into the local Sanford family when she is 18.

The three younger children are taken in by two teenage girls, Martha and Elizabeth Redcliff/Redclift, whose parents, Greenwich Pensioner Edward Redclift and his wife Mary Ann (Budd) married very late in life and died leaving these teenage girls on their own. The girls are lacemakers in Colaton Raleigh and would have also been paid, probably by Richard Kayley, to care for the Dearing youngsters, helping them all.

Margaret Dearing, the widowed mother of these six children goes on to have a seventh child in Colaton Raleigh, less than a year after my great grandmother

was born, one can't help but wonder if Richard Kayley was taking advantage but the child is recorded as illegitimate and is wet nursed out in the village because Margaret leaves, in search of work out of the area. Was she shamed into this course of action? You can imagine how she would have been treated. At this point she leaves all seven children behind including this baby, just a couple of months old, however, the baby, James, dies before he is 1.

Margaret Dearing never returns, she lies about her age and marries again whilst in service in the New Forest area. She eventually bears an eighth child, a daughter, with whom she remains for the remainder of her long life, never coming back for the six surviving children she left behind in Woodbury and Colaton.

Around 1870, Richard Kayley leaves the employ of the Rolle Estates and becomes Head game keeper on the Powderham Estate, living in Arch Lodge until the 1880's. His name regularly crops up in Devon papers between 1840 & 1880, for obtaining his yearly game licences, catching & prosecuting poachers in the courts, as well as sometimes being on the wrong side of the law; for example he was using illegal wire snares and for "ill using" a borrowed horse to hunt deer on the estate, to quote just two articles. As Uncle and guardian of the abandoned Dearing children, they all took the name Kayley-Dearing, the children (3 girls, 3 boys) were all servants from the ages of 8 or 9 and all had moved away from Devon by their late teens, except Alice Sanford, who moved as far as Heavitree.

When she was only 12, my great grandmother was sent back to her extended family in Cheshire, to be a nanny in a large house, where one of her jobs was to walk the 6 miles there and back to the local market! She married into a good family and her remaining sister moved to Cheshire to live with her. They always stayed together and had long happy lives.

A right Catherine Cookson story if ever there was..... The gamekeeper, the homeless widow and the abandoned children of Woodbury and Colaton Raleigh.

***Ruth Lancaster***

***Ruth Lancaster lives on the Cheshire Lancashire borders. It just shows what Woodbury stories are still out there in "foreign" parts.***

## ~ History in the making! -The Keble Martin Stamp Story ~

One of the first tasks facing Edward Short on succeeding Anthony Wedgwood Benn as Postmaster General (PMG) in 1966 was to finalise the 1967 stamp programme. The Deputy Director General (Posts), A Wolstencroft, wrote a memorandum on 1 August 1966, explaining the policy changes affecting special stamp issues first outlined by Wedgwood Benn in December 1964: the commemoration of anniversaries was no longer confined to those with royal or postal significance; a new category of special issue reflected the British contribution to world affairs including art and science; and last but not least, the fostering of 'minuscule' design in the form of postage stamp art had been an aim. A combination of the last two objectives led to three special issues in 1966 that were purely pictorial celebrations of indigenous themes - British Landscapes in May, British Birds which was about to appear (8 August) and British Technology, scheduled for 19 September. Wolstencroft made a particular recommendation that there should be a similar number of pictorial issues in 1967.

Replying to Wolstencroft's minute the PMG wrote: 'I have had another idea. I don't know whether you have seen the Rev. Keble Martin's remarkable book of British wild flowers. These beautiful drawings would make an excellent series of stamps - and it would go down well at the Palace. HRH [the Duke of Edinburgh] was instrumental in getting the book published.'

The book to which Edward Short referred was 'The Concise British Flora in Colour', by the Rev. W Keble Martin, published by Michael Joseph Ltd in 1965. A copy of the book was obtained by A A Mead of the PSD, who pointed out that the popular Botanical Congress series had only been issued two years previously — 'another wild flower series so soon would be gilding the lily'. Replying to the PMG on 1 September, Wolstencroft agreed that the material was excellent - taking up Mead's point on the Botanical Congress issue of 1964, he wrote, 'I wonder whether it is not just a little soon for another flower set as such ... but one could get from the illustrations in the book an attractive set depicting [either] the flowers and fruit of well-known shrubs and small trees ... or the leaves and blossoms of trees', suitable for the proposed British native trees' issue as currently approved. Alternatively a set of the Keble Martin designs might be held over until 1968.

However, following a discussion between Wolstencroft and the PMG, the Rev. Keble Martin was contacted by telephone on 4 November and was willing to attempt the designs personally, although it had been the intention of PSD to adopt the SAC's recommendations that he should choose examples of his own work which could subsequently be developed by the stamp printers, Harrison & Sons Ltd, or an established stamp artist. A set of instructions was sent the same day, while a formal invitation and set of instructions went to both Chopping and Gentleman on 7 November. The instructions largely allowed for a free hand apart from the following stipulations: the format should be horizontal; the treatment should be pictorial; the subjects should be indigenous to Britain, and exclude those depicted in the 1964 Botanical Congress stamps; only six colours should be used in total on the block of four 4d, and no more than six each on the 9d and 1s 9d; and a minimum of six designs should be submitted. A payment of 60 guineas would be made for each piece of submitted artwork up to 360 guineas maximum, thus effectively discouraging artists from submitting more than the minimum number of designs, although extra or alternative pieces would be accepted for viewing. An extra 190 guineas would be payable for each design adopted. Attached examples of the most recent stamps (Landscapes and Birds) were intended to indicate current idiom, it being stressed that artists were free to work in their own style. The artists were given the names of those SAC members who were themselves practising designers, from whom they might seek advice if the need arose. The deadline was 12 December.

Chopping and Gentleman and a Miss Grierson sent in four designs on 12 December and two on 18 December; two more were received between 28 and 30 December after PSD asked her for designs in contrasting colours to those she had used up to that point.

On 8 November Mrs Barbara Everard wrote to the GPO; she was a botanical illustrator of long standing whose work was regularly exhibited and won medals at events of the Royal Horticultural Society, and was currently being shown in Belfast. She was also a stamp collector and had won a bronze medal for a thematic entry on flowers at that year's Stampex. Miss M G Mantz of PSD replied on 17 November giving her a deadline of 13 December, and asking her to contact Beaumont for further details. Mrs Everard sent one set of six and one of five designs on 5 December, and two more designs in time for the SAC meeting on 22 December.

On 5 December William Hardman, an architectural designer with an interest in postage stamp art, sent three designs for the floral issue to Miss Mantz, which were accepted for subsequent viewing by the SAC. He had been corresponding since the previous October, when his local philatelic society had urged him to approach the GPO in the interests of better stamp design. He modestly explained: 'Having looked at the collection of new British stamps, and then compared them with good & continental designs, I decided that someone must at least try a rescue operation.'

On 9 December Mr and Mrs Mervyn and Valerie Benford, who had contacted Beaumont previously and received an encouraging reply, sent in a set of designs that they hoped might be considered for the block of four 4d stamps — 'we think continuity of design makes a great contribution to the impact'. This was the couple's first foray into the field of stamp design; the set was seen by the SAC.

### **SUBMITTED ARTWORK VIEWED**

The designs were seen by the SAC on 22 December. The following list of submitted artwork is based on that produced for the Committee's reference on that occasion, with additional information from the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA). Commissioned designs were listed by number and unsolicited alphabetically.

Keble Martin (received 12 December):

Primrose and bird's eye primrose — 4d (10 — or 15) Hawthorn, bramble — 9d (11)

Larger bindweed, viper's bugloss — 4d (12) Ox eye daisy, coltsfoot, buttercup — 4d (13)

Bluebell, red campion, wood anemone — 4d (14) Heather — 1s 9d (15 — or 10)

### **FIRST RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEE**

The SAC's first choice was designs 11 to 14 by Keble Martin for the block of four 4d, together with Richard Chopping's designs 4 and 9 for the 9d and 1s 9d respectively; the second choice was designs by Chopping throughout, the block of 4d to be made up of nos. 3, 4, 8 and 9, and nos. 1 and 2 respectively for the 9d and 1s 9d. The suitability of gold for use on the Queen's head was considered; this had already been used for the Battle of Hastings 6d and 1s 3d and Christmas stamps in 1966, but not very impressively. However, R F York reported on behalf of Harrisons, the stamp printers, that the gold heads were being improved by

constant experiment, and the committee thought it worth seeing the latest results before coming to a decision. If the issue featured gold heads, there should not be a separate coloured panel for the head and value, although this style then tended to be in favour. It was felt the stamps should not include the names of the flowers, to avoid needless controversy; British wild flowers were often known by anything up to fifty different names in the vernacular, and the experts frequently disagreed on their names in Latin, as subsequent correspondence and articles in the 'British Philatelic Bulletin' would amply prove.

K Hind of the Postal Services Department (PSD) reported the SAC's findings to Edward Short on 28 December. PSD was opposed to the use of gold heads on the issue, but agreed that the names of plants should not be shown. Richard Chopping's designs were not favoured, and it was felt that Mary Grierson's would be more acceptable to the public. Hind suggested that either four Keble Martin designs be used for the 4d block, and Grierson's for the 9d and 1s 9d, or vice versa. A final decision could wait until the two or three designs additionally requested from Mary Grierson were to hand. Hind was able on 30 December to inform the PMG that she had now supplied two extra designs. He considered that these new designs, featuring the thrift and primrose, were attractive enough to be paired with designs A (dog violet) and B (pasque flower) to make up a set of four Grierson designs for the 4d block, and Keble Martin designs used for the two higher values.

The PMG's opinion, stated on 5 January 1967, was that Keble Martin's designs 11 to 14 should make up the block of four 4d, as had been the SAC's first preference; he agreed that Mary Grierson's designs should be used for the 9d and 1s 9d and suggested either C and A2 (bindweed and celandine) or A (dog violet) and the primrose. He supported the opposition to gold heads and the inclusion of flower names, and commented only that the artists' names should be shown. The Director of Postal Services, G R Downes, confirmed next day that the names would be printed in the gutters of the stamps.

### **APPROVAL BY THE QUEEN**

Short wrote to the Queen on 10 February, confining himself to the GPO's first choice of the designs, those as on card D: essays were enclosed with explanations of the changes still to be made. The Queen sent her approval on 13 February. The choice of the four Keble Martin designs for the block of 4d was apposite, as each represented one of the four major groups of wild flowers, hedge plants were typified by the hawthorn and bramble, weeds by the bindweed and vipers' bugloss, meadow plants by the ox eye daisy, and woodland plants by the bluebell. Meanwhile Sir George

Taylor of Kew Gardens assisted in resolving some residual uncertainties over the identity of a few of Keble Martin's subjects: the last of these was cleared by a telephone call to his wife, Mrs Flora Keble Martin, confirming the 'celandine' was a buttercup. Harrisons was able to produce final essays of all the stamps for showing at a press launch and publicity release on 22 February. Initial essays were supplied on 1 and 2 February, and final essays on 22 and 23 February.

The guests at the press launch included Mr and Mrs Keble Martin, Miss Grierson, and James Fitton on behalf of the SAC, as well as various representatives of the GPO, Harrisons, and the CoID. In March the artists received payment for their work as follows: Rev. Keble Martin, £1,176 (four accepted designs at 250 guineas each, plus two unaccepted at 60 guineas each); Mary Grierson, £777 (two accepted, plus four unaccepted); Richard Chopping, £378 (six unaccepted). David Gentleman had already been paid £378 for his unaccepted designs the previous month. The remaining artists (Hardman, Everard, and the Benfords) received no payment for their unaccepted and unsolicited designs. Mary Grierson's identical treatment, as regards fee, to Keble Martin, Chopping and Gentleman, is somewhat anomalous as her work had been offered rather than commissioned by the GPO in the first instance, and the usual practice was that the GPO's fee arrangements only applied to those artists it approached itself. However, it would have been embarrassing not to have rewarded Miss Grierson at the full rate.

By the time the stamps were finally withdrawn from sale on 23 April 1968, by which time 92.4 per cent of the 'good' stamps supplied by Harrisons had been sold. Detailed figures of stamps made waste are not recorded, but were reported as unusually high in the case of the 9d, to the extent of affecting supplies to some offices — 'the wastage of imperfectly printed stamps far exceeded the printer's expectation and even a second printing run did not provide us with a reserve' (Assistant PMG Joseph Slater to Sir Dingle Foot, 31 May 1967). Difficulties were also reported in the production of the 4d stamps, but unfortunately it is not recorded what the problems were in either case.



## THE ARTISTS

**REV. KEBLE MARTIN, MA, FLS, DSc**, was born in 1877; he went to school at Marlborough and later studied at Oxford. He was a lifelong botanist, taking a degree in the subject at university, and being elected a Fellow of the Linnaean Society in 1928. His 'Concise British Flora' was described as 'the triumphant outcome of 60 years of meticulous and devoted study, research, note taking and draughtsmanship'.

**MARY GRIERSON** was born in North Wales and attended Bangor County School before training in domestic science. Following wartime service as a flight officer in the WAAF, she took up a career in aerial survey work from 1947. In her spare time she studied drawing (under John Nash, among others) and was awarded the Diploma of the Royal Drawing Society. She also won the very rarely awarded Gold Medal of the Royal Horticultural Society for an exhibition of her botanical drawings and in 1961 became official artist at Kew. She later submitted stamp designs for the Christmas issue of 1968 but was not successful on that occasion.

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Giles Allen the author.

[www.postalheritage.org.uk](http://www.postalheritage.org.uk)



The Keble Martin 4d. stamps

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### ~ The story of Fred White - 8.3.1909 - 21.5.2005 ~

Fred's earliest memories are living near Woodbury Salterton and playing in Grindle Brook. He also has memories of a member of the family coming to visit, who was a soldier. This seemed to quite impress him. He also got into trouble with his mother for getting into a fight with a group of older boys. From there the family moved to Aylesbeare where he had to take his two

younger sisters to school with him. He again got into hot water **W**ith his parents for being late at school, his younger sister Millie generally being the cause.

From Aylesbeare the family moved to Lincombe, at Sidbury, where he lived the rest of his childhood and has lots of fond memories. He continued his education at the village school and should have gone to King School, but his father felt that as a farmer's son he would learn more about farming at home, so he stayed at Sidbury school until he was fourteen. The headmaster encouraged his studies and he had a chance to go to college but yet again his father kept him at home. While at school he got up to mischief with the other boys and often related the tale how one night his pals tied the door knockers for a row of cottages together and pulled the string. As the villagers answered their doors the next door knocked, everyone was furious and the village policeman was sent to deal with the culprits. He found the boys and gave chase but they had put a rope across the Manor drive and as the policeman fell over they vanished into the laurels. Fred was one of the accused but always maintained his innocence.

He always took an active part on the farm and was very proud to win not only the junior class but was overall winner at the local ploughing match. In later years he donated the plough to Bicton Gardens farm museum and his granddaughter Faye proudly displays his winner's certificate in her house in Ireland.

He saw tremendous changes over his lifetime; he remembered seeing Italian prisoners of war making clog bottoms at Lincombe, the army commandeering some of his father's work horses, and having ricks of hay.

They would mark the rick by putting a lance with a barb so that it could not be pulled out until they could take the hay away.

A great adventure was to go to Honiton for Honiton Fair and see all the surrounding fields full of horses and wagons. He and his Father saw some poachers on Sidbury Manor land. They rushed and told the gamekeeper, the poachers were caught and Fred and his father had to go to court as witnesses. The case before was a paternity case and the magistrate sent Fred out of court as being too young to hear about such things, but he seems to have got hold of all the details!

Fred enjoyed his childhood at Lincombe and there he developed his love of the countryside and, through his mother's paying guests, a lively interest in the outside world.

Fred moved with the family to Passaford, where he worked on the farm; Millie and Beattie helped with the milk round, his mother continued to take paying guests, and Fred was very proud that the King's physician stayed with them and later wrote a book on fishing, which included the river Otter and his stay at Passaford. Fred enjoyed showing a copy of the book to his friends.

Although a shy man Fred was heavily involved with Otterton church and met Ruth at a church function. Fred and all the Land Girls walked home to Passaford and Pinn regularly after church. The Land Girls often played cards at Pinn Cottage and eventually persuaded Fred to join them. The rest is history. Fred and Ruth married on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 1945 and lived at Passaford with Fred's mother.

During the second world war Fred carried on farming and at night was on Fire Watching duty. He spent most of the time watching foxes and badgers. On one occasion a German bomber dropped incendiary bombs on the farm. Most sunk into newly tilled ground, but one or two caught light and Fred stamped on them to put out the flames and then realised that he had on a pair of new boots, which were badly burnt and would be impossible to replace.

At the end of the war Ruth took on the paying guests side of the farm business and she and Fred made a wealth of friends through it, many for the rest of their lives. Meat was scarce due to rationing, and Fred frequently provided pigeon and rabbit to supplement their supplies, so when his brother in law was coming to visit, he was told to go and shoot something for lunch. He only had one cartridge left but could find nothing on the farm to shoot, so he ventured on to the common and eventually he got on the track of a deer. Because he could only have one shot, he got as close as possible, and as he took aim the deer moved and revealed a second deer behind it. He fired quickly and to his surprise killed both deer, and Passaford had meat on the table for quite a while.

Electricity was put in in the early fifties, but Fred never got together with the mechanics of it, and on several occasions Liz came home from school to find the farm in darkness. Fred would wait for her to mend the fuse so that he could milk. He often went to market with Ellis Curwood and would take Sue his daughter, and to her embarrassment insisted on wearing breeches and gaiters when all the other farmers wore trousers. He had a natural affinity with children, and on many occasions would play Tag all over the farm. No one could catch him. He also enjoyed a game of cricket on the road, and rarely told his daughters off, but encouraged a sense of adventure. He was very proud

when Sue won Miss Devon Young Farmer, and was supportive of all the riding activities. Once when a pony misbehaved he got onboard and rode the pony around the farm at high speed to sort the pony out, and to Sue and Liz's disgust he lost the stirrups, and they had to walk all around the farm to find them.

Fred had a wicked sense of humour and when his daughters were teenagers and were supposed to be home at a certain time, he knew they were always late and would creep in and not put on any lights. Every so often he would move a chair in the hall so that they would fall over it and wake the dogs. Their mother would give them a lecture in the morning and he would hide in the little kitchen with a big grin on his face.

Fred was not a great farmer but loved the countryside, shooting and gamekeeping, and Ruth felt he should spend his time farming. So on summer evenings he would leave the milking machine running and go off with his friend John, the local gamekeeper, to have an hour's shooting. She never found out.

Fred was very proud of the family's long association with Passaford and enjoyed telling tales of past ancestors, but in his sixties decided to retire from farming and moved to Lackland at Sidbury, where he took on as Gamekeeper for the local shoot, mole killer for East Devon, and looked after several gardens as well as his own. He enjoyed all of these activities and again increased his circle of friends. He bought a small plot of land and soon filled it with apple trees that he had grafted himself, but it was wise not to ask where the grafts came from! He and Ruth enjoyed days fence judging for the local pony club and seeing their grand children compete. They carried on helping the pony club until they were well into their eighties.

Fred and Ruth moved to Dowee Cottage in their late eighties when Fred felt he should give up driving, and also had the reassurance of Liz and her family living next door. He immediately set to and made a new and productive garden along with several apple trees, so that he could continue to show his apples and even in his last year, one day after coming out of hospital, showed apples at Colaton Raleigh and District ploughing match.

This spring he sowed a lot of seeds and planted out his tomato plants in his garden and issued orders to Sue to do the things he could not. *Anon*

~ The Mystery of a Vanished Draper's shop in Woodbury Salterton ~

*‘To be sold by Public Auction at the late dwelling house of Mr. John Hitt, lacemaker and shopkeeper, deceased, in the parish of Woodbury all the genuine stock-in-trade of the said deceased, consisting of a variety of lace, linens, woollens, groceries and haberdashery goods.’*

*‘The creditors of John Hitt, late of Woodbury, are desired to meet Mr. Huxham relative to a claim made by Mr. Gard of Honiton (lacemaker) of a quantity of lace which was in the custody and possession of John Hitt at the time of his death’.*

*‘To be sold by Public Auction a large collection of linen, woollen and hosiery goods, together with 2000 yards of fine and common lace and edgings, being the effects of the late John Hitt.’*

**T**hese three notices, which appeared in December 1779 and January 1780 in the Exeter Flying Post, raises the question as to where this shop was situated in the parish and who was this John Hitt trading on such a large scale.

I managed to find the will of John Hitt in the National Archives, but this did not give much information apart from naming his wife, Elizabeth, and his 13 year old daughter Sarah Butson Hitt. Mr. Huxham (named in the above notice) was appointed the guardian of Sarah until her sixteenth birthday.

The land tax list for the parish starts in 1780, the year after John's death, but it did record in Woodbury Salterton a house 'formerly Hitts' occupied now by a man called Gitsham. I then followed the line of owners and occupiers of this house in White Cross Lane up to 1832 when the name had been changed from Chowns to Searles, and later Braddicks.

The existence of this shop became more mysterious when I later discovered in the National Archives an inventory of John Hitt's goods in Woodbury Salterton at his death. Recorded in two columns on 8 pages of A2 paper are his household goods, the contents of his shop, and his debtors. Amongst the groceries listed are sugar, ginger, liquorice, starch, gunpowder, tobacco, earthen-ware, whalebone, tinctures, medicines, and all kinds of cooking and kitchen ware. The stock-in-trade showed over 400 different rolls or packages of material in a huge variety of fabrics, colours and patterns. There were 234 separate lengths of different bobbin lace (including black lace)

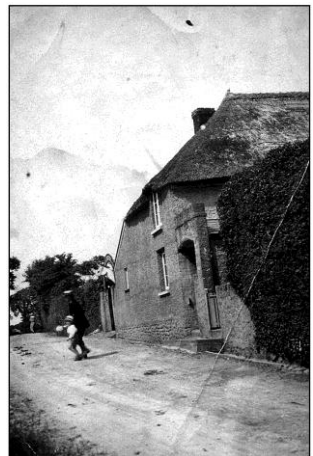
amounting to over 2000 yards, as well as men's ruffles and ladies' lappets. It is likely that local lacemakers brought their lace to him, probably receiving in return groceries rather than cash.



The picture to the left is taken in the middle to late 19<sup>th</sup> century of Asenath Hitchcock, a well known lacemaker of Woodbury Salterton. The shop also sold large varieties of socks, gloves, hats, scarves and handkerchiefs, as well as other haberdashery goods for men, women and children. His stock of cotton and linen handkerchiefs amounted to over 300 different kinds in patterns of stripes, spots and checks of every colour. The value of all the goods on the inventory was assessed as over £500, which in 1779 was a large sum of money, the equivalent of about £60,000 in today's money.

From the way that all the items held were packaged in small units it would appear that, not only was John Hitt selling locally, but was also acting as a middle-man or wholesaler dealing with drapers' shops and itinerant sellers who went from village to village hawking their drapery goods.

The evidence for this is in the list of debtors who came from places as far away from Woodbury as Barnstaple, Bristol, Plymouth, Wareham, Tiverton and Chudleigh. From the quantity and variety of stock held it would be quite impossible for this to be an ordinary village shop, though the grocery goods and some of the haberdashery John Hitt would have sold to parishioners. The position of the shop is also interesting being just between Woodbury and Woodbury Salterton villages and on the road leading straight up to the Sidmouth Road which was used by stagecoaches and led to a number of towns. John Hitt must have bought the property, which had possibly been some sort of shop at an earlier date (though I have found no evidence for this), because of its proximity to the Sidmouth Road.





here was taken in the early  
*Gillian Selley*

I have found two John Hitts born in 1739, one in Aylesbeare, and the other in Clyst Honiton the son of a man from Pinhoe, but cannot find which of the two is the draper. His daughter, Sarah who was born in Farringdon, married in 1886 a William Marden at Topsham. There the trail goes cold.

What we do know though is that this shop and warehouse in White Cross Lane in Woodbury Salterton is still standing, though much altered, and is now known as Ridges. The photograph

here was taken in the early 1900s when the shop belonged to a saddler..

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~ 100 years of change ~

I began putting together my family tree about 30 years ago. I decided to start with my father's family, the Grangers, because I knew they had lived in Dorset for many years. This turned out to be a wise choice.

As a mains History student at Rolle College I had learnt a lot about records and using primary sources from the senior tutor. I decided to begin with the Dorchester Record Office. This turned out to be a genealogist's dream. In three hours I discovered that my family had lived in one village, Long Burton, since the Church records began in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. They had married girls from the surrounding parishes so I could collect all the information in one morning. They were agricultural workers, thatchers and farm carpenters. One female relative gave birth to 'A base-born child'. Another poor soul, having moved into another parish with her husband, was sent back to Long Burton when she was widowed. She was put in an open cart with her few possessions and her children, so that she would not become a charge on her husband's parish.



*The Granger family*

Apart from these items life seems to have been quite hum-drum.

However, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century times were changing, agriculture in the area was in decline and like many others at this time, my Grandfather, Henry George



*Hazel's father*

Granger, who had been born in 1857, decided to change his way of life.

Weymouth was a busy port and a growing tourist destination. Although it is only some 30 miles from Long Burton, Henry must have seen the opportunities it offered. At the age of 40 he moved his wife and four children into the town and set up his own carpentry business. My father, his youngest son, was still in petticoats when they moved. The Grangers had become part of the drift to the towns.

Judging from photographs of the time they appear to have been successful. Photographs show a prosperous looking group, smartly dressed, whilst a previous one taken of his wife and three children in 1990 in Long Burton shows a much less affluent group.

I like to feel our family mirrored history at that time and afterwards. My father was apprenticed at 14 to a high-class grocer. This was considered an excellent move, but young Edgar hated it! In later life he said he had never become interested in sport because he always had to work on Saturday afternoons. To alleviate his boredom he joined the local Yeomanry and in August 1914 they were in camp at the Nothe, Weymouth. They were immediately mobilised and Edgar went to war at the age of 18.

He served throughout the war in Salonica and the Turkish zone. He was never wounded, but he did have one scare. A bullet hit his tin-helmet and set up a ringing which deafened him. When he looked round he saw that his company had advanced. He knew the penalty for desertion was to be shot at





*Father in wartime*

dawn and ran as fast as he could to rejoin his comrades. The war was to have a profound effect on Eddie, he encountered technology. He became very interested in the communications systems which were gradually coming into use and he developed a passion for all things mechanical. He told one story of going into the company office, and being left alone for a bit he had experimented with the typewriter there. He said he had pressed a lever and the carriage had shot off the machine. Apparently he managed to get it back before anyone came in!

When the war ended he immediately joined the embryo Post Office telephone service. He began by climbing poles with spiked boots to erect the wires, travelling by bicycle. Later he graduated to motor bikes, and came close to killing himself in a serious accident which kept him in hospital for six months. This coincided with my birth, and hospital rules being very strict he did not see me close up until I was six months old. When he was fit to return to work he was posted to Bristol, Bath and eventually Salisbury, there he gained rapid promotion and became the chief-inspector of the South Wilts region. Throughout the second world war he was responsible for providing temporary exchanges for the forces billeted there in the run-up to D-Day. After the war another step forward brought automatic exchanges and he was busy overseeing this development. He was promoted to Major in the Home Guard.

I like to think that this little story shows how the world changed for one family from agricultural labourers in rural Dorset, through an entrepreneurial move to an urban environment, to a nation-wide communication system. The story does not quite end there. Although Eddie died in 1962 and did not see his 7 year-old grandson grow up, he would have been so pleased to know that Tim inherited his love of technology, and working for the Vodaphone group was closely involved in the production of G3 phones, which were state-of-the art before G4 came along!

*Hazel Pyatt*