

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!



This booklet was produced during the 70 weeks of the Covid-19 lockdown through 2020 - 2021.

It was a collective exercise between certain History Society members, who came up with some interesting historical facts which were hitherto unknown. It was thought that these should be preserved and published. Members received one page every week by email, for 70 weeks.

Those who contributed were:

Gillian Selley

Joyce Peachey (née Middleton)

Malcolm Randle

David Elphick

Julian Ware

Compiled, and also contributed to, by Roger Stokes

2021

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1



This is a family photo from 1914/15 with a Canadian connection. You will recognise the setting.

My grandfather had an elder brother who emigrated to Saskatchewan in 1913 and signed up with The Canadian Expeditionary Force as soon as war broke out. This must be them having a break during manoeuvres on Salisbury Plain. They look very relaxed here not realising what lay ahead. Tom survived the war, returning to Canada with a wife and raising a brood of Bartletts on their farm. Both lived to a grand old age.

Family legend has it that Tom and his brother Dick [my grandfather] tossed a coin to see who should emigrate, but we don't know who 'lost'!

Picture from *Joyce Peachey*.

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2



Traffic Warden? In the early 1940's with the advent of the motor car to the masses, it became necessary to provide Halt signs to roads and have a Highway Code to try to prevent accidents. At the Woodbury crossroads an AA patrolman was stationed for long periods to control the traffic. What traffic you might say?! There are many newspaper reports that people were fined 5 shillings for failing to stop - even on a bicycle! However, it is reported that every time he went to lunch there was an accident. If he came back today, I think he would have nightmares, although at the moment, 80 years later, it is still a bit like this due to the current lockdown!

Picture from *Woodbury Photographic Archive (WPA)*.

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3



Early in the 20th century, the economic facts of life became a little grim in Woodbury, and members of some families looked to distant lands to seek their fortunes, like Joyce's Grandfather in the first picture. The families at the time consisted of many children by today's standards, probably numbering up to eight or so. It was difficult for them all to find meaningful, and profitable, employment in the locality. One such person who took this course was Alfred Stokes, son of William Birch Stokes who lived in Ailsa Cottage at the top of Broadway, and died in 1899. Alfred went to Saskatchewan in Canada in 1910 and set up as a farmer, to be followed later by a brother called Harry, and two sisters, Ivy and Mary. His sweetheart Elsie Phillips from Ford Farm joined him four years later to get married and have four children. The photo of the whole family was taken in Canada in 1929.

Picture from *Roger Stokes*.

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4



Being a rural area, all the country crafts were needed to be known by those living there. These ranged from hedging and ditching, walling and, in particular, any skills which helped in the preservation of food. The “Good Life” system of home production featured very prominently in everyone’s family. Little was wasted if at all possible. Classes were organised in all aspects of home economics, and the photo above shows one such class held c.1915. Many of these classes would be held on local farms, and tuition given by a DCC instructress.

The inevitable spirit of competition was present as to who had made the best cheese or butter or whatever. A rather humorous, but to the point, comment was observed in the local press, by the judge of a recent butter-making contest. *“The butter making contests, as usual, excited a great deal of interest, and, as already stated, the entries were so large that a division of classes had in some cases to be effected. Generally, the work was well done, and some excellent butter was produced. It was somewhat singular, however, to find in one or two instances that competitors who had previously won prizes were beaten by novices. The explanation of this seemed to be supplied by the circumstance that the latter had had the benefit of recent instruction, whereas the former had apparently neglected to keep themselves in practice, and so lost the advantage of the lessons they had received. To those who are interested, the hint may be seriously taken to heart.”*

Picture from Woodbury Photographic Archive. (WPA).

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5



Fancy Butter

This photo shows the work of my great-aunt, Hannah Mary Trenchard, which won a first prize at an Annual Dairy Show in London. A farmer's daughter from Axminster, she exhibited her 'fancy butter sculptures' in many agricultural and dairy shows over thirty years from 1900.

At the Dairy Show the exhibits were displayed in large glass cases and kept cool by blocks of ice but imagine the logistics involved in transporting the delicate butter flowers first by horse and trap and then by train from her farm dairy to London.

Completely self-taught and taking her inspiration from nature she became famous in her sphere and even worked for several years from 1920 as head dairymaid to the Duchess of Albany who was the widow of Queen Victoria's youngest son, Leopold.

While I have her notebooks of press clippings and testimonials along with some photos and certificates, sadly nearly all of her many first prize medals were lost when a later family farmhouse in Membury was burnt to the ground in 1922.

Picture and story from *Joyce Peachey*.

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6



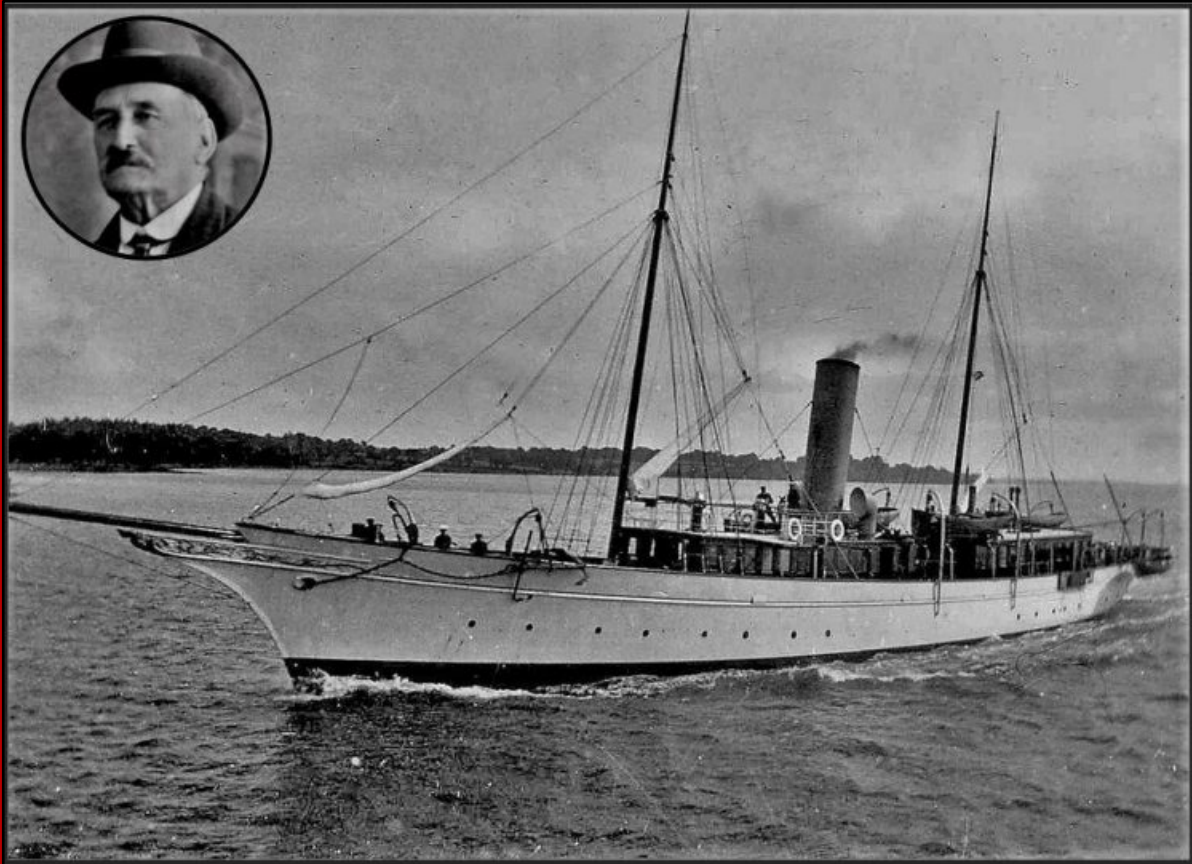
Blackhill House

This watercolour showing the north and west aspect of Blackhill House was painted in the 1930's by a young female artist who lived there in a gypsy caravan. My family moved there in 1947 and this is how I remember it when I was young. We grew up without electricity and until the reservoir was built at Blackhill, water was drawn by a hand pump and then a petrol pump from a very deep well. The fenced off steps next to the house led to an underground rainwater tank. The house was unusual in having two staircases leading to separate upper floors on different levels. A wide staircase accessed a high ceiling room which ran the length of the south side. It had a large picture window facing south and bay window to the east. What could have been the original function of this room? Called the Summer House on a 1809 map, Woodbury Tithe Map of 1839 lists the owner and occupier of the plot known as Blackhill Green as Lord Rolle. Later census records show the occupants to be farmers and gamekeepers and as far back as the 1892 a local newspaper reports Blackhill to be a popular destination for annual Sunday School picnic teas with bands, cricket, swings, races and games. Serving teas continued until 1938 and my mother told me when they first moved in visitors would drop by to say how much they enjoyed their days out at Blackhill before the war.

Picture and story from *Joyce Peachey*.

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The photo is of the Steam Yacht 'Vandelis' which, in 1903 was captained by my second great uncle, Captain John Berry Knox (photo inset). He was born in Plymouth in 1850 and in the late 19th century had moved with his family to Dartmouth where he operated the Vandelis for several years. By 1911 he had moved to Ipswich with his wife but it is still a mystery as to why he moved so far east. Maybe it was to be nearer his daughter who had married a shipping clerk from Ilford in Essex? His daughter and granddaughter were staying with him in both 1901 and 1911. He lived on to the age of 98, by which time he was living at Southend with his daughter and family.

The Knox family were seafarers from Plymouth. John's brother, Captain Robert Knox, was a well known yacht master and racing pilot who had himself owned steam yachts. In 1880 he moved to Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Whilst there, he became very well known in yachting circles where his skills were in much demand by many prominent yacht owners. He lived at Cowes until his death in 1928 during which time he'd had charge of many large yachts, both sail and steam.

Their father, John Berry Knox (1820–1904), was my second great grandfather. Residing in Plymouth for his whole life, he started out as a fisherman but subsequently became a master mariner, as did both his sons.

Picture and story by *Malcolm Randle*.

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If you wander up Honey Lane in Woodbury Salterton you will see a pretty cob and thatched cottage on the right hand side. This cottage was built on land belonging to the important freehold estate of Bridge farm and at some point in the 17th century was given to the parish and into the hands of the churchwardens and overseers of the Parish. It was leased out for a 99 year term for 2s per annum, but in 1732, with the permission of the parishioners, the cottage was sold by the churchwardens for £15. The proceeds of the sale were to go to the poor of the parish, which explains the probable reason for the original gift of the cottage (and its rents) to the parish of Woodbury. It is possible that the owner of Bridge Farm left it to the parish in his will, or a sum of money to build a cottage for the benefit of the poor of the parish.

Picture and story from *Gillian Selley*.

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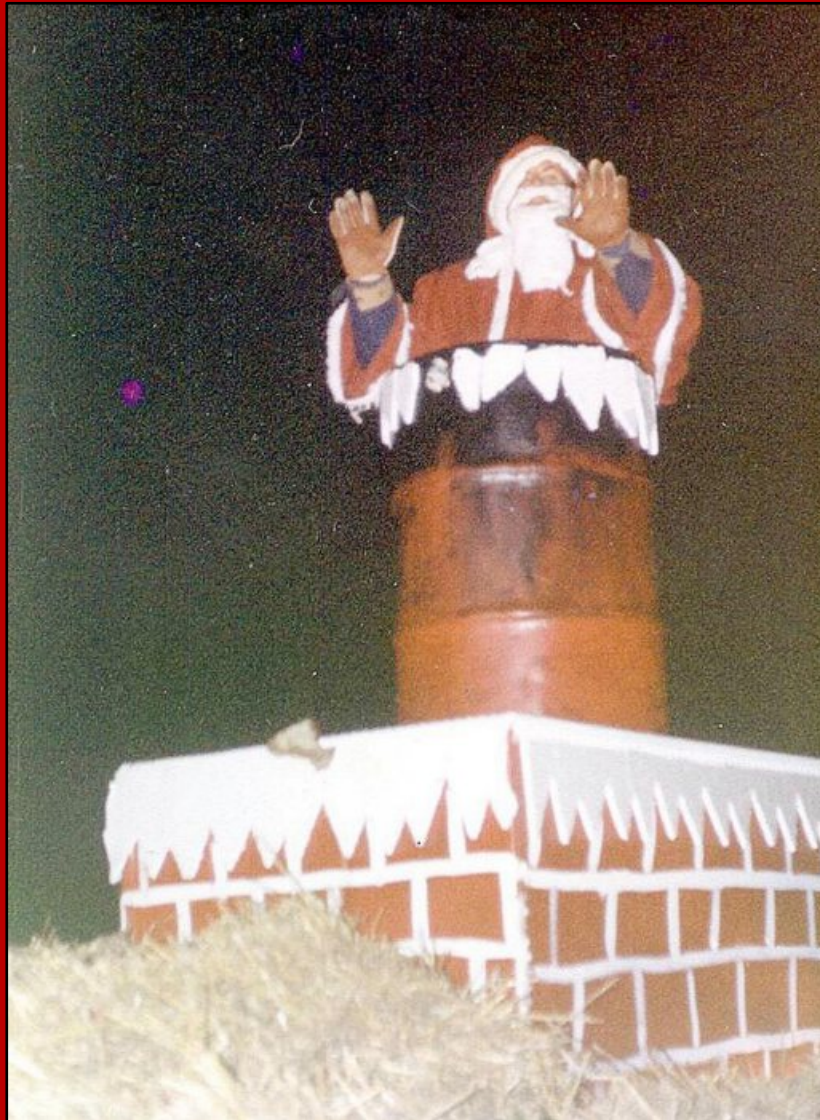


This picture shows the Green Spot before it was turned into the pretty restful area that we see today. Originally this was the site of the village cattle pound, which is shown on a map of 1796. The cottages nearby (demolished in the 19th century) were described as ‘cottages nigh the pound’. By the early 1800s the pound must have been little used as Lord Rolle decided to lease the area for the building of three cottages. These cottages were occupied by farm labourers and their families, but tragically were burnt to the ground in 1868. In all ten cottages in the vicinity were destroyed or damaged from the fierce fire which originated in an outhouse of the butcher’s shop at what is now known as Wellpark House. Photographs taken before the 1950s show the area to be very run down and unattractive. It is assumed that the Rolle/Clinton Devon Estate gave the plot to the parish at some time as it appears to be in its ownership.

Picture and story from *Gillian Selley*.

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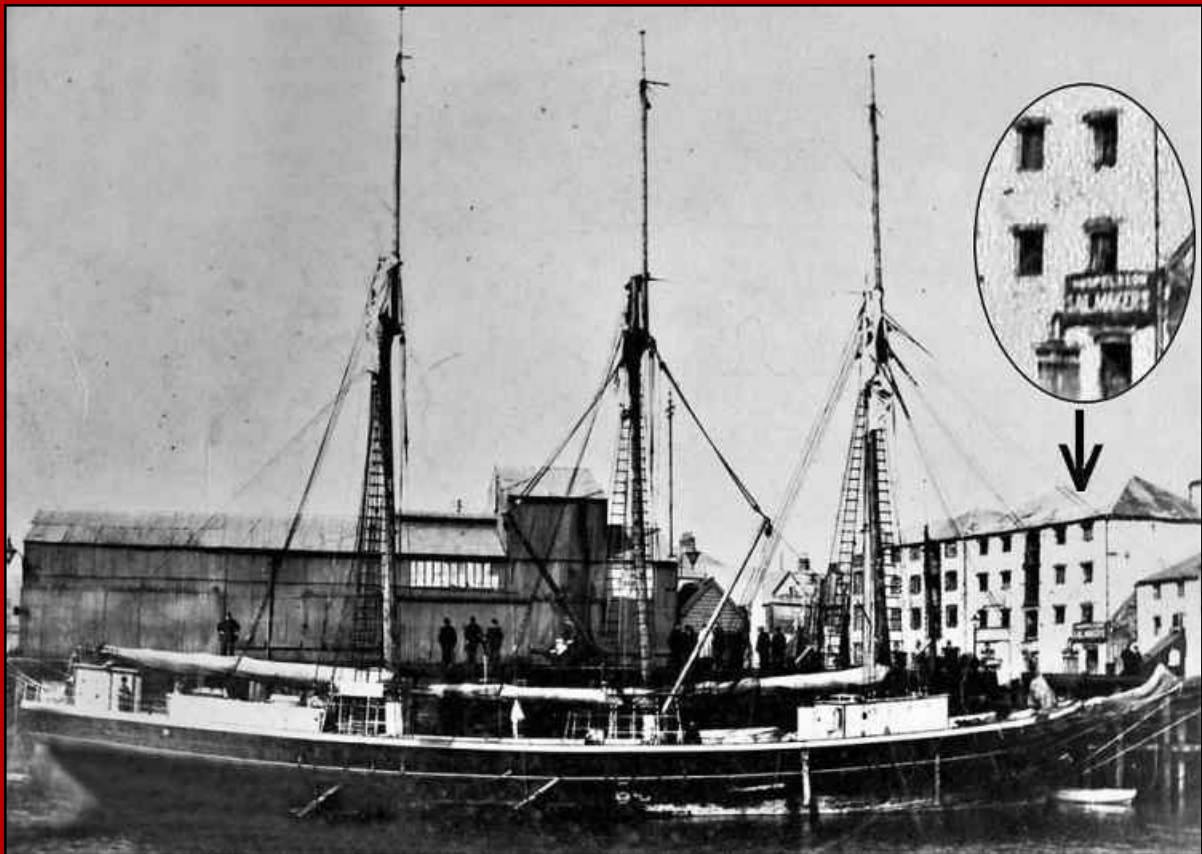
Not all history is serious stuff, and we have had some fun and humour throughout the years.

In 1971 Father Christmas came to Woodbury in an unusual manner! Those of you who were here then will remember it well. It was decided to put some extra effort in to the annual carol singing around the village, so I built this “chimney pot” from an old water tank and a 45 gallon oil drum, and put it on a farm trailer. The late Peter Spray was installed in the oil drum, which was a tight fit, and waved his way around the village ducking under power lines where appropriate. Consternation was caused in Flower Lane, when a certain junior looked out of his bedroom window to see Peter passing at eye level, and rushed down to tell his parents that Santa was here! There were many other stories of ‘sightings’ through uncurtained windows, some of a delicate nature, which can’t be mentioned here. Peter, who had a gammy leg anyway, was eventually extracted from the chimney with great difficulty, but this must have been his “Finest Hour”. God rest his soul!

Picture and story by *Roger Stokes*

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11



John Hoopel & Sons – Sailmakers of Plymouth

The photo above is of the Barbican at Plymouth in the year 1900. It was part of the main Sutton Harbour and at that time, whilst many ships and boats were still powered by wind and sail, steam had already become well established. Highlighted in the photo are the sailmakers lofts of John Hoopel and Sons who were prominent in the business.

John Hoopel was my 2nd great grandfather whose second son, Richard, married Ambrosine Knox, my great grandmother. She was the sister of John and Robert Knox, the subjects of 'Times Gone By' No.7.

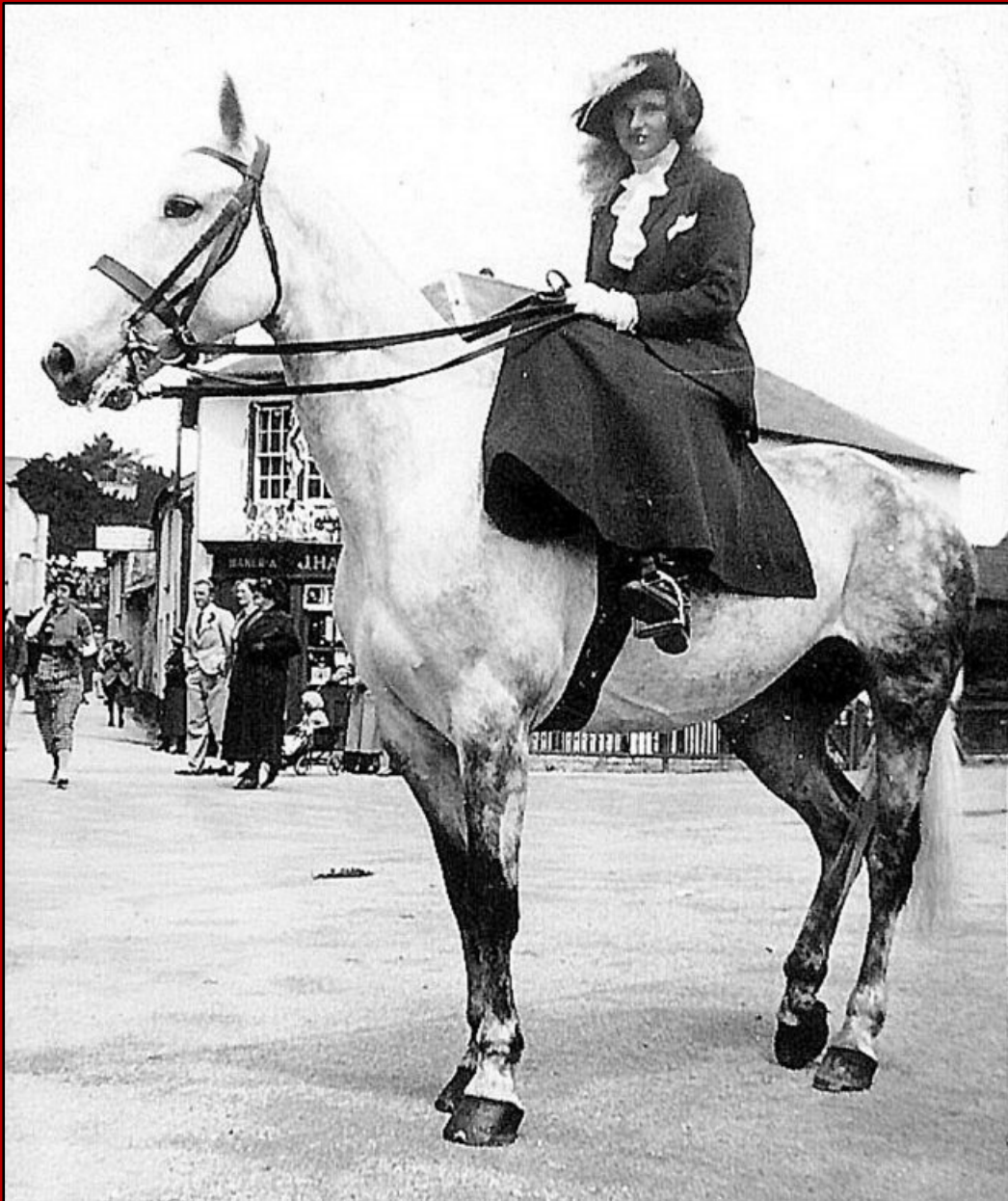
John Hoopel was born at Salcombe, Devon in 1817 where, in the 1851 census, he was described as a sailmaker. By 1861 he had moved to Plymouth where both he and his eldest son, John Enoch Hoopel, were sailmakers although it is not known whether they had their own business at that time. In 1862 his third son, Andrew, was born and in 1881 the sailmaking business was flourishing. He employed his two sons, John and Andrew, plus three apprentices. By 1891 all three of his sons were employed in the business. John Hoopel died in September 1900 aged 83 and a month later Richard also died, aged only 49.

Both his remaining sons, John and Andrew, continued the business until at least 1911 after which, no doubt, the demand for sails diminished rapidly.

Picture and story by *Malcolm Randle*.

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12



This picture was taken in 1935, 85 years ago now, during the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary. The picture was taken on the Arch, outside James Hall's confectionary shop, now 'Rook Pie'. Everyone was in carnival mode to celebrate this, and many riders were dressed up for the occasion, and you could even stand your horse in the middle of the road. This was possible then, of course, as there were probably only one or two motor cars in the village, unlike today!

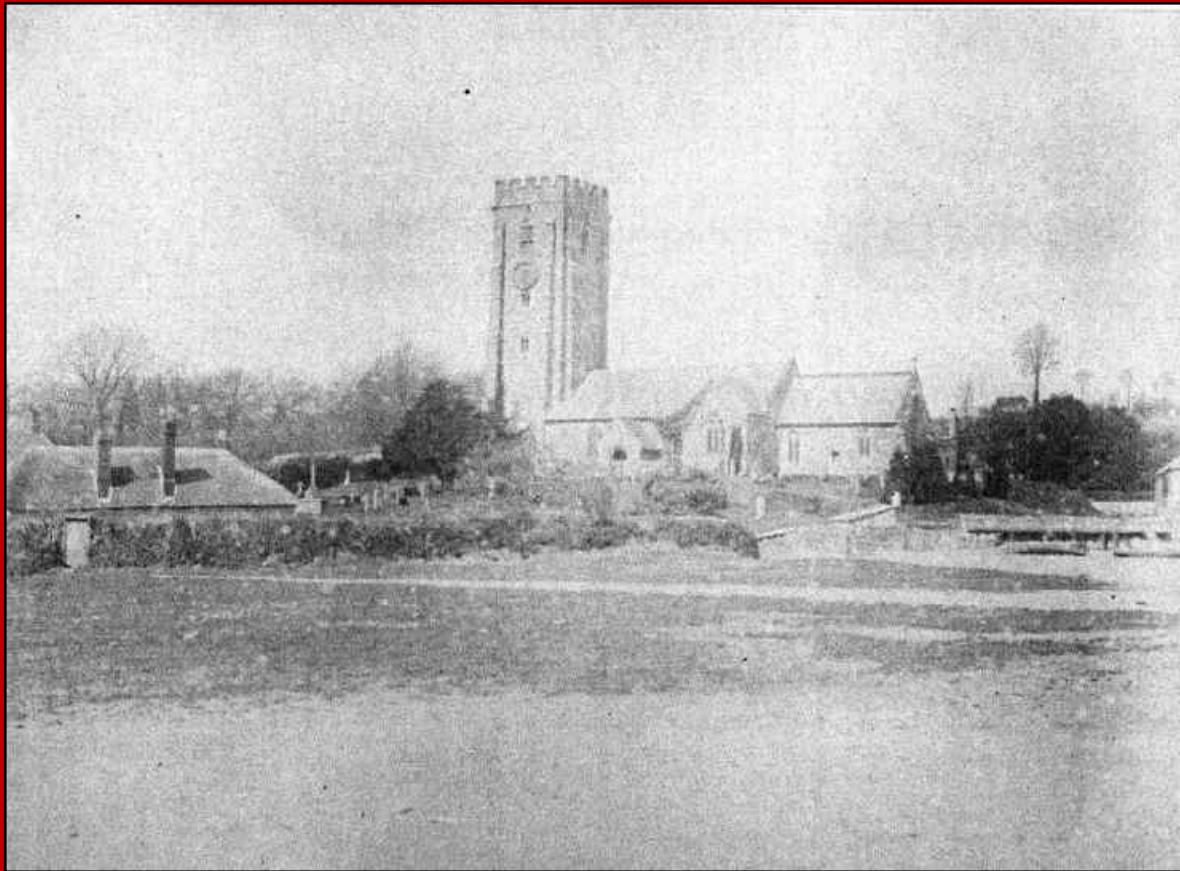
However, I have always thought that Woodbury was the birthplace of the mobile phone. One is clearly seen in this picture being used in 1935. If you look at the lady walking on the left of the picture, it looks like she is using one. What do you think – am I right?

Picture from *Woodbury Photographic Archive*. Text by *Roger Stokes*.

IF YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL PLEASE SEND IT TO ME AND IT CAN BE INCLUDED.

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13



This is a bit of a fuzzy picture taken across the Green towards the Church. It was taken c.1888, and well before the lime tree was planted in 1897. At this point of time the area looks pretty bleak, and there does not appear to be any large trees around what is now Fairfield. In fact, if you look closely you can see the Path Fields and elm trees in the distance to the right.

On the left side you can see the old thatch cottage where the most recent occupants were the Ledmond family and also the Joy family until the 30th September 1960, when the Great Flood struck. 2.9 inches of rain in three hours brought a torrent of water rushing down Castle Lane and into the brook at the bottom of Bonfire Hill. None of the water courses could take it, trees blocked the culverts by the Fire Station and the water took to the road, pouring around by the church wall and completely demolishing the two cob built cottages. Water also poured down over the Arch and on down to Gilbrook, where more damage and flooding took place. The same water then went on down to Exton, and by the time it had got there had increased in volume, and completely destroyed the old Exton church which was also built of cob. I remember it well!

Picture from the *Woodbury Photographic Archive*, text by *Roger Stokes*.

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This picture was taken 1875 in Demerara, or British Guiana as it is probably better known, and depicts a group containing several people from the Woodbury and Exmouth area. The first son of Woodbury attracted to Demerara was Henry Thomas Stokes, better known as 'Harry'. Born in 1842 in Woodbury, he is recorded as being an Overseer (or foreman) on a sugar plantation in Demerara in 1863 at the age of 21. By going up through the ranks he eventually became a manager which was the top job. It is not difficult to see how Harry became a sugar planter. Thomas Porter II was patron of the living in the parish of Lymptone. His son, Tom, the active planter in the family, may well have visited Woodbury after his father's death in 1857 when Harry Stokes would have been 17. Several West Indian planters were then living in the area – among them the Porters in Winslade and Exmouth, the Teschemakers in Exmouth and the Bidgoods in Newton Abbot. Harry would certainly have known the Porters, and maybe all three families. The opportunities in the tropics could have been mentioned by any of them when they met at the now Nutwell Lodge Hotel, which seemed to be the recruiting office for this area. Harry is seen in the picture above, right of centre, when he was in a managerial position, surrounded by his team of European Overseers, and his Guyanese wife Marion on his right side. She was a local Guyanese girl. They had 4 children during the period, and returned each time to Woodbury to make sure the child was born here, presumably as a British citizen. They were successful on three occasions, but must have got their dates wrong for the fourth, which was registered as 'Born on the high seas'! They had a good life over there while it lasted, but when the sugar prices crashed in the latter part of the century, they all came home broke by 1900. I am just amazed how far they travelled back then – it's a long way to go even now!

Picture and story by *Roger Stokes*

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I thought I had seen it all, but NO! A lady who lives in South Wales who bought one of my books recently, sent me this picture following receipt of the book, with the following comment. "My father passed away a few weeks ago and I have been going through his "treasures " which included boxes and boxes of photos. I have attached one I think you may be particularly interested in. The four men, (standing on the top of the gantry), are from left to right James (Jim) Godfrey, Walter Godfrey, Frank Godfrey and Edward Godfrey, 4 brothers. Standing directly under are sisters Lou Godfrey and Sarah Wood, both nee Harnell". The lady is a descendant of the Godfrey family who used to live here in Queen Victoria's reign and onwards. In the 1893 census William J Godfrey (probably the 4 men's father), was registered as a Chimney Sweep. There are seven members of the family buried in the churchyard, the last one being Walter Godfrey in 1957. The picture was obviously taken in 1935 during the silver jubilee celebrations of King George V and Queen Mary. I have never seen a picture of this gantry before, which was erected between the Maltsters Arms and the house across the road. There are four grown men standing on the top, all waving, but how they got up there I have no idea, but the construction must have been extremely strong. The picture is not of best quality, but I have deciphered that the slogan on the left side says "God Save the King".

Picture courtesy *Jan Bennett*. Supporting text by *Roger Stokes*.

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16



“Rook Pie”

Most people have known this building for the last 30 years or more as an antique shop, but its history is rather different. The house was built on a plot of freehold land by Robert Phillips as premises for his building business as well as a dwelling house in the early 1800s. The Phillips family comprised carpenters and masons and had lived in the parish since the middle of the 18th century – the family was responsible for most of the building work done in Woodbury for over 100 years. They owned many properties in the village and Woodbury Salterton, many of which they had built or restored. Robert Phillips occupied the premises, comprising a cottage, barn and garden in 1839 and was described as a master carpenter employing eight men by 1850. His wife was a lace dealer. By 1871 the cottage was known as Vine Cottage and had been divided into two dwellings. In the late 1880s the cottage was leased to Thomas Daley who, with his family, ran the village post office from the premises. By the 1880s the cottage that Daley occupied on Broadway was too small for the increase of post office business. The first post office in the village had been in the cottage of Edward Ekers, a carpenter, in Hammetts Tenement – this building was pulled down and was replaced by Lawn Cottage and the ironmongers shop. When the post office was built on Broadway in 1913 Thomas Daley moved to those premises and Vine Cottage was occupied by a baker, James Hall (uncle to Bill and Eileen Pratt who ran the large nurseries in Exton). It later became a teashop run by the Mitchell family, and afterwards by a retired Royal Marine, called Norman Joy, and his wife. Its next transition in the 1980s was into an antique shop, and it has now become a shop of new and second-hand quirky objects.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

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17



This unusual grave can be seen in St Swithun's graveyard with no explanation of its significance. Ernest Hodson came from London and was the son of a man described in the census as an auctioneer or fine art dealer, and his mother as a picture restorer. He enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1904. His naval papers record that at the age of 18 he was 5ft 11 ins. tall with tattoos of a bird and snake on his left arm and a butterfly, fern and rose on his right one. He served in the First World War and was involved in the naval actions of the Bight, Dogger Bank and Jutland. By 1917 having reached the rank of Petty Officer he was discharged as unfit for further service, suffering with TB and the effects of being gassed during the battle of Jutland. When he left the navy he settled at Linda Vista in Exton. Two years later he died in February 1919, aged 31. His obituary appeared in the Western Morning Times describing his naval career and paying tribute to his charitable work, in spite of his failing health, in the cause of the children of blinded soldiers, and being associated with St Dustan's. Even though he had fought throughout the war and was seriously injured because of his service his name does not appear on the Woodbury War Memorial.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

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18



'Underneath lies the dust of Mr Henry Pollexfen Knt and Chief Justice of y^e Common Pleas who for his exemplary justice, integrity and eminent knowledge in y^e learning of the law lived highly esteemed and dyd greatly lamented being a reall ornament to y^e court of wherein he sate to his Country and y^e age he lived in. He dep'ted this life y^e 15 day of June 1691 y^e 59th yeare of his dii Januarii A.D. Elizabeth MDCCCLXXXIII'

This is the memorial in Woodbury Church to Sir Henry Pollexfen, the Lord of the Manor of Nutwell, who lived at Nutwell Court from 1686 until his death in 1691. He was the son of Andrew Pollexfen of Sherford in Devon, was called to the bar at Inner Temple in 1658 and became a bencher of his Inn in 1674, becoming the leading practitioner on the Western Circuit. On the recommendation of Chief Justice Jeffreys he opened the case for the Crown in the prosecution of the Duke of Monmouth's followers at the Western Assizes (known as the Bloody Assizes as so many West Country men were ruthlessly tried and executed for their support of Monmouth in the uprising against King James II). In 1688 Henry vigorously supported William of Orange, who consulted him privately about the situation prevailing in the wake of James II's departure in December. He suggested that William would be justified in declaring himself King, a view most found extreme. The following year Henry was knighted and appointed Attorney General. When he died his son, Henry, succeeded him as Lord of the Manor. This son married Gertrude, a daughter from the first marriage of Sir Francis Drake of Buckland Abbey, and to add to the confusion Elizabeth Pollexfen, Sir Henry's sister, became the third wife of Sir Francis Drake. Henry and Gertrude had no children and the Lordship of Nutwell passed into the hands of the son of Sir Francis Drake and Elizabeth. Nutwell remained in the ownership of the Drake family for nearly 200 years.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley.

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A photograph of Woodbury Mills shortly before it was demolished in the late 1980s. Seen here is Eric Ware whose father Gordon started the business in 1911.

This was also the home of the Wares' tannery business and their farm at Gilbrook. The three businesses between them employed many Woodbury men.

Gordon was the youngest of six sons. His brothers, Harold and Edgar, had taken over the tannery and farm, and it was decided to give Gordon the old stone mill to see if he could make a living out of it. The mill had been used to grind acorns from India used in the tanning process, but Gordon started grinding corn to make feed for local farmers' animals. Gordon's mill flourished and while there were two other mills at Exton and Topsham, he had an important advantage. Their grindstones relied on waterpower to turn them which could dry up in summer. The mill at Woodbury used a Fielding and Platt Gas engine that wasn't weather dependent.

Eric joined the business in 1937, when he was 15 years old. Starting at 6.30 each morning, he would light up the gas engine with two buckets of anthracite which would then drive the mill's grindstones all day.

The covered tunnel through the building (shown in the photograph) is where lorries would load and unload their sacks, which were then pulled up by a chain pulley into the mill.

The balcony above is where the Wares would summon employees at the start of each day. The men would wait on the bridge over Gilbrook until they heard the whistle blown from the balcony to announce the start of work.

The mill closed in 1968 and was eventually pulled down, along with the tannery, to make way for the houses at Gilbrook Close. The farmhouse at Gilbrook and the long barn are all that remain of these once thriving enterprises.

Picture and text by *Julian Ware*.

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Harold Benn was born in 1887 in Brazil, where his father was a coffee merchant. He served in the British Army in France as a liaison officer with the Portuguese Expeditionary Force from 1915 until 1919. He retired with the rank of Acting Major in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, and returned to Rio de Janeiro where he had been working as a coffee merchant when war broke out. His future wife, Joyce Elwell, joined the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and served in various military hospitals in France from 1915 to 1918. Harold and Joyce both received the Star, Victory and British War Medals, but Harold additionally was awarded the Military Order of Aviz conferred by The President of the Portuguese Republic. Harold was also mentioned in Despatches received from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig: *'I have the honour to submit the name of this person, who served under my command during the period 16th September, 1918, to 15th March, 1919, whose distinguished and gallant services and devotion to duty I consider deserving of special mention'*. Harold's first wife died in 1922 and the following year he and Joyce were married in Brazil. Ten years later they moved to Woodbury where they lived in Knoll cottage on Broadway for the rest of their lives. At the age of 53, Harold re-joined the army and served in the UK until 1945. Two of his sons were killed in the war, one in France and one at sea in the Merchant Navy. Harold died in 1955 after a very full life and Joyce seven years later.



Pictures and text from *Gillian Selley*.

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On the 15th September 1958 the name of the railway station at Exton was changed to “Exton” from its original name of “Woodbury Road” at the request of the Exton Women’s Institute. The station had been opened on the 1st May 1861 and following the standard practice of the London & Southwestern Railway was called Woodbury Road since the village of Woodbury was three miles distant over undulating and unmade roads and at that date Exton was a small hamlet.

In 1855 there had been plans for a railway from Exmouth to Exeter which would have followed the route of the present line from Exmouth to Topsham but then cross the river Exe on a bridge to join up with the main line on the other bank of the river. These plans never came to fruition and when the London and Southwestern main line reached Exeter Queen Street (Exeter Central) on the 19th July 1860 a branch line was built from Exeter to Topsham to join up with the route of the previously proposed line to Exmouth.

Exton Station was originally manned by a station master and two porters but became an unmanned halt on the 28th February 1965.

Picture and text by *David Elphick*.

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22



When the bomb fell on Exton!

One night in the summer of 1942 an incendiary bomb was dropped on Exton and set fire to the roof of a cob and thatch cottage on the left of the entrance to the Avenue. The fire bowser from the Marine camp was called out. It weighed half a ton and was usually towed by a truck. On this occasion as they were leaving the camp, the engine of the truck failed and the crew were ordered to manhandle it down the hill to the fire. With 3 men on the tow bar and 3 more pushing they manoeuvred it on to the road, but they could not control it, and it ran away from them down the hill and landed in the hedge by the stream next to the cottage. The Marines found four or five people and two children passing buckets of water to a man on a ladder who was pouring it on the smoke coming from the thatch. As there was not enough water in the stream to operate their bowser, they were ordered to dam the stream, but before they could do so Topsham fire brigade arrived with their one thousand gallon tank, and put so much water on the cob that the next day the cottage collapsed. It has never been rebuilt.

Picture and text by *David Elphick*.

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23



60+ Club Outing June 1963

60-PLUS CLUB IN TANK 'HOLD-UP'

FFIFTY-SEVEN members of Woodbury Sixty-Plus Club, travelling in two coaches to Bournemouth on Tuesday for their annual summer outing, were held up for two hours near Crideock, Dorset, when an Army lorry with a tank on board slewed across the road. Traffic was halted for some distance in both directions.

"But nobody minded", said club president and organiser, Mrs. B. Ferris, "and for the whole two hours we sat and sang songs, in fact, we sang till we were hoarse."

Sadly, not many around now who would remember this!

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This is part of a picture taken from the top of the church tower, back in the early 1900s. It is looking down on the White Hart, and on the left of the picture you can see two thatched cottages. It was these cottages that were washed away in the Great Flood of 1960, when water came down Castle Lane in such quantity, that the stream by Haydon's Cottage at the bottom of Bonfire Hill could not take it. It spilled out over by the Fire Station and continued its path down the road. Trying to find its natural course, which was underground at that point, it could not, and unfortunately the two cob cottages were in the way, and got the brunt of it. The cob foundations were severely undercut by the force of the water, and the cottages eventually collapsed. They were never rebuilt, and the area was turned into the small car park that is there at present. I remember it well!

On the other side of the picture you can see what I think is/was the Artillery Hall, where the local military used to do some of their training. There was no car park there then, and all that remains now is the short bit of wall which protrudes out from the back of the current antique shop.

Pictures and text by *Roger Stokes*.

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I have always wondered who the artist was of this lovely drawing, which is obviously of somewhere in Woodbury, and also where it might have been in the village.

Carol Fogg from Exmouth, mother of Simon, who has given us a couple of talks about Woodbury Common, picked up on this from something I put on the Exmouth Past and Present website. There have been a lot of Worsleys through the years, many of whom were artists, but she thinks that this picture is by this Henry Worsley, or his son, also Henry (Kerr) Worsley. She thinks the key to it might be what looks like a 'fancy' initial, H.

“Henry Worsley was born in 1796, in Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, son of Nathaniel and Margaret. He got married to Margareta Deborah Mason in Maker, Cornwall in 1820. She was born in Totnes. They had a number of children, the first ones were born in Plymouth, and three other children were baptised in Charmouth (Born, 1829 -1834), while he was residing in Bath, which would suggest, that at that period, he was able to travel around to do his Westcountry sketches. He was a professor of Drawing at King's College, London, until his death in 1854. I have been looking for Henry's children's marriage documents, as more than likely you would see his signature as a witness (to see if he uses the same type of 'H') - but I haven't found one yet.”

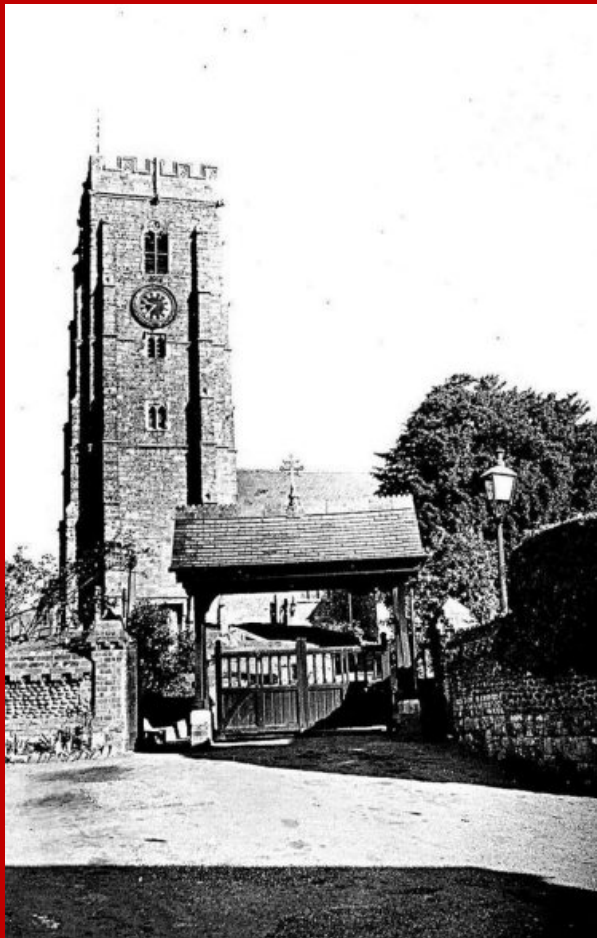
Does anyone else have any ideas of this location?

Text by *Roger Stokes and Carol Fogg*

Picture from *The Woodbury Photographic Archive*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

26



The cost of the new Lytch Gate

		313
<i>Rev. J. L. Fulford</i>		
<p>2/2 For making and fixing a New Lytch Gate to Woodbury Church according to plans & specifications by Rev. R. W. Fulford and according to estimate of January 9th 1903</p>	<p>£ 0 1 - - - 58 18 0</p>	
<i>Received by Messrs Stokes Sept 9th 1903</i>		

“On New Years Eve a very pleasant evening was spent in the Schoolroom, in connection with the presentation of a new Lytch Gate to Woodbury Parish Church, when Mrs Langdon Fulford kindly entertained the choir, ringers and workmen of Messrs. Stokes and Summerfield. The latter had helped in the work of making and erecting the Lytch Gate. A supper and social evening was arranged. The Lytch Gate was recently put up to the memory of Mr C R Fulford, who died in S. Africa. Among those present were Mrs and the Misses Fulford, Sir Chas. Pearson, Rev. and Mrs Godfrey Bird, Messrs. Lear, Hallett, Hy. Stokes senr and junr., and Summerfield. The Vicar was unable to attend. At 7.30, the company, in number 53, sat down to an excellent supper, after which the usual toasts were gone through. In the absence of the Vicar, the toast of “Church and State” was responded to by Mr Lear, who took the opportunity of thanking Mrs Fulford and family for their handsome gift. The Rev. Godfrey Bird proposed “The health of Mrs Fulford and family”, which was received and accorded musical honours. The remainder of the evening was spent in harmony with music and song. Those who assisted were Mrs Bird, pianoforte solo; Mr H. Fulford, song; The Misses Stokes and Polgrean, duet; Miss K. and Mr H. Fulford duet; Messrs W. Abbott, H. Stokes junr., H. Hearn and H. Hitchcock, songs. The Rev. Godfrey Bird amused the company with a laughable reading, “Sign writing up to date”. Hearty cheers were given to Mrs Fulford and her family for their kindness, after which the singing of “Auld Lang Syne”, and “God Save the King” brought a very pleasant evening to a close, all agreeing they had spent a most enjoyable time.”

Press cutting from 1904 to mark the provision of a new Lytch Gate. Still there of course!

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

27



The Berry family c.1901

Back row left to right: Abraham George 1884 - 1934,
May 1885 - 1964. Front row: Reginald 1896 - 1973,
Ivy 1894 - 1965, Amelia (Kenwood) Berry 1858 - 1928,
Maggie 1897 - 1994, Edwin 1859 - 1916, Ted 1891 - 1960.

Abraham George Berry was the first captain of the Woodbury Fire Brigade, and the family was very involved with the Brigade until it was eventually disbanded in 1926.

No doubt one of the reasons for this is that their machinery works was adjacent to the fire station, so they were on the spot for quick action. Edwin married Amelia Kenwood also from Woodbury, and from the old established Kenwood cooperage family. Both families had been very prominent throughout the 19th Century, but were to become extinct in Woodbury during the following sixty years.

Picture from Woodbury Photographic Archive. Text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

28



The fire on the Common on the 14th. May 1984 (above) was one of the most intense of the century. But read below to see what happened in 1933, where major ingenuity came in to play. I wonder if they could do that today!

Fire on Woodbury Common.

Water Pumped Two Miles from River Near Newton Poppleford.

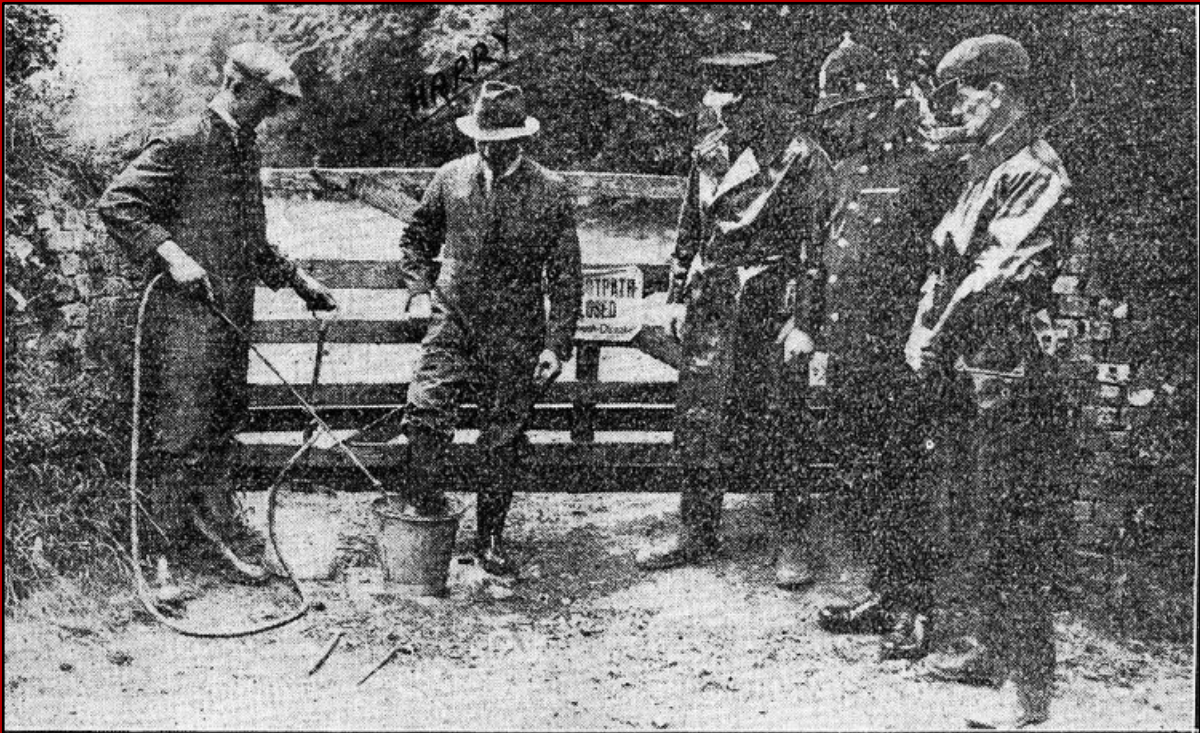
Ten thousand feet of hose were used by four brigades in an all night fight against a fierce heath fire detected last night on Woodbury Common, and even with their united efforts it took the brigades hours of hard work to completely subdue the flames. The firemen were assisted by members of the Devon County Police, including Sergt. Gould (Budleigh Salterton), Sergt. Taylor (Ottery St. Mary), Constable Rayner (Woodbury) and Sergt. Turner (Aylesbeare) together with a number of the Clinton Estate employees.

Second Officer Wain gave an Express & Echo representative some idea of the difficulties that had to be overcome. We were told that the nearest water supply was at Newton Poppleford some two miles away, but in the meantime another stream was found on the common side of Newton Poppleford. The men dammed up the stream and then the Exmouth pump lifted the water from the stream and pumped it to the Exeter engine. From there it was pumped to the Sidmouth engine, which in turn pumped it to the Ottery pump, which directed it onto the fire.

Express & Echo 1933.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

29



R.S.P.C.A. inspectors and the local police constable watch to see that the farm workers' boots are properly sprayed. ("E. & E." Photos)

WOODBURY'S ORDEAL BY FIRE.

Anyone who did not know what was happening at Woodbury last night might have thought that a swailing was going on. Into the evening sky rose dense volumes of smoke which spread itself like a shroud of mourning over the district. And well it might, for that smoke came from such a crematorium as it has not seen before.

Heartbreaking to Mr Harry Stokes it must have been to watch that smoke; to hear the sizzling and cracking in the blazing furnace which belched it forth; and to reflect that into those consuming flames were being hurled the entire stock of his farm. Altogether 235 animals on Webbers farm, and one or two more besides, received the sentence of death during the weekend. Almost with the regularity and the monotony of a machine gun, humane killers did their dread work, so that by tonight there will be a strange silence brooding over hitherto smiling acres where grazed 54 bullocks, 131 sheep and about 50 swine in turn grunted and snored.

Only a farmer can realise what that means; this sudden and terrible end to years of hard work and planning and hoping. Compensation there may be, but no money can fully compensate when calamity of this kind befalls. Yet so dread a disease is Foot and Mouth, so mysterious in its origin, and so difficult to keep within bounds, that apparently only this most distressing ordeal of death and destruction by fire can cope with it. It is sad to think that until some long looked for discovery is made, there seems to be no satisfactory alternative.

Express & Echo Tuesday June 8th. 1937

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

30



The barn in this picture belongs to a leasehold farm in Woodbury Salterton known as Melhuishes or Browns. In 1650 it was held by a George Brown. In 1693 his daughter, Agnes, married John Dagworthy, and in his wife's right he inherited the farm on the death of his father-in-law. Since that date the farm has been known as Browns and has been in the hands of the Dagworthy family. In the middle of the 18th century his son, Samuel Dagworthy, turned his hand to making serge, and insurance records described his property including the workshops. In 1753 the premises comprised a dwelling house, dye house, comb shop, tending shop with rooms above, and were built of stone and cob, and thatched – the value was £150. His household goods and stock-in-trade were also insured to the value of £150. The record for 1760 has also survived with slight variations to the contents – dwelling house, cellar, tending shop, comb shop, linney and chambers over the whole length, and valued still at £150. The household goods and stock-in-trade were now worth £145; the stable and open linney valued at £5. 'The present dwelling house is of a good size and has a large building at the back of it'. From the insurance description it seems that the barn was purpose-built on two floors to carry on the serge-making business. The size of the farmhouse indicates that he probably housed some of his workforce and apprentices in his dwelling house. The serge industry was declining throughout Devon, and a small business would not survive, though there is no evidence to show exactly when Samuel ceased trading, but because he farmed the land as well as running his serge-making business, he was able to make an adequate living. The barn shown above is probably part of the premises described in the insurance policies of the Sun Fire Office.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.



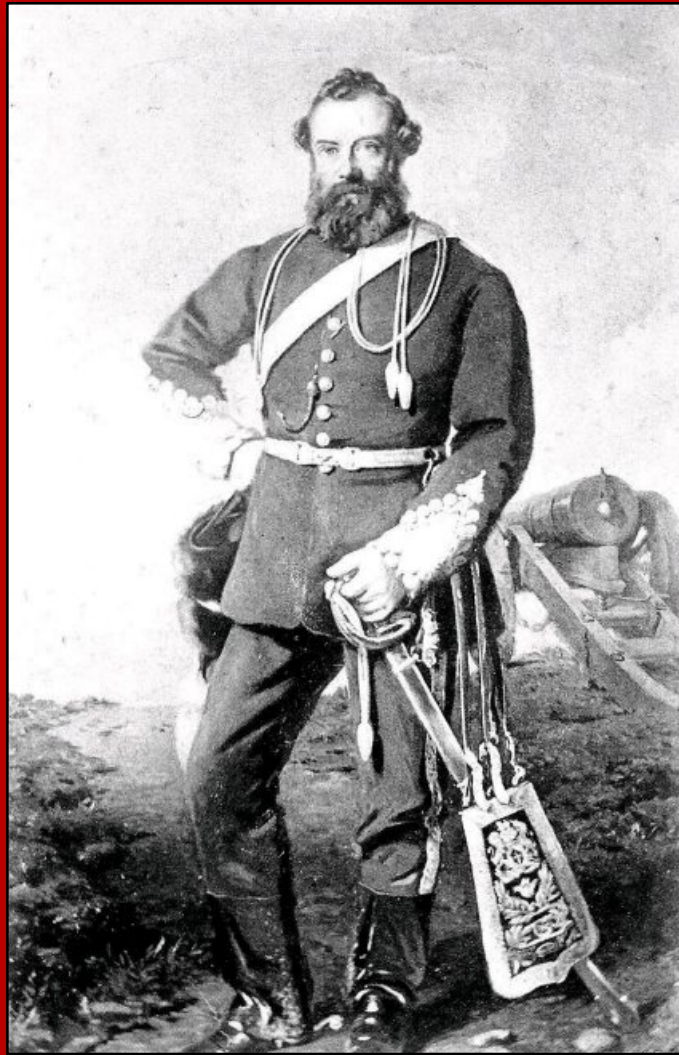
In fond memory of
Pippa Thompson (1928-2001)
who loved birds.

These are the words on the granite bird bath on the Green Spot. This photograph shows the official opening of the memorial with the people who banded together to buy and have it erected (this included Sally Elliott who took the picture). Pippa came from an old Devon family, on her mother's side, the Browse Tuckers of the South Hams. She went to art school and her painting and the countryside were her great loves, especially birds. Though she suffered from a variety of serious illnesses all her life, including scoliosis, she worked in London, caring for her widowed, sick mother, and did secretarial work (including some time with Yehudi Menuhin) to support herself and her mother. Many people will know her name as the artist of the Woodbury parish map, which hangs in the Village Hall, and copies of which can be found all round the world, as well as the designs for tea-towels and greeting cards (the proceeds of which went towards the upkeep of the parish church). Her water-colours were painted from life, and most of them featured trees and hedges and wildlife in the landscape, as well as exquisite paintings of flowers. She was an incredibly brave woman who suffered a great deal of pain and discomfort, but joined in and supported the village activities, and was the inspiration for the History Society. She died suddenly in hospital after an emergency operation in 2001. Pippa was a very intelligent and well-read person with a sharp sense of humour – an example of what one can achieve when suffering from very serious physical disabilities.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

32



This portrait of Dr Robert Brent was commissioned by the people of the parish of Woodbury to present to the doctor on his retirement from his medical practice in Woodbury, in appreciation of the work he had done for the medical care of the people of the parish. It was painted by a Sydney Hodges, a well-known Devon artist, who painted the portraits of several eminent Devonians. It was presented to Dr Brent's wife Annie in 1867 and hung in their house, Sydney Cottage on Broadway. In May 1870 Robert founded the Masonic Lodge in Topsham, which he named Brent Lodge. Its meetings were first held in an upstairs room in the Globe Hotel in Topsham, but later a building was acquired in Victoria Road, which is still used by the Freemasons. This portrait of Brent has pride of place in the Masonic Lodge building even though it shows him in his uniform of Lt Colonel of the Woodbury Volunteer Artillery, which he was responsible for establishing in 1859. Mrs Brent (who had remarried and was again widowed) sold Sydney Cottage and moved to Newton Abbot in 1901, shortly before she died. She presented the portrait of Brent to the Masonic Lodge in Topsham. It is unlikely that the members of the Brent Lodge know the significance of the picture or the unintended insult to the parishioners, who had paid for the portrait, by having the picture hidden away for the eyes only of Topsham Freemasons.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

33



Cottles Farm stands almost at the meeting place of two lanes which merged to form one lane up to the Common. It is obvious why the main lane was called Castle Lane, but why was the other one called Cottles Lane? The farm started life as a cottage with three acres of land attached. It appears in documents in the early 17th century and a century later was leased by the Stabback family for many years. The cottage was known at this time as Purcombes, taking the name from one of its fields – it was also described in 1765 as ‘nigh Purcombe Hill’. In 1779 the cottage was leased to a Thomas Cottle and remained in his hands until his death in 1801 – he is buried in Woodbury. Ever since Thomas Cottle held the cottage and lands it has been known as Cottles Tenement (or occasionally as Purcombes). Towards the end of the 19th century Mark Rolle, in his scheme of rationalisation of the farms of Woodbury, incorporated land into the Cottles smallholding turning it into a viable farm. The northern end of the building was then occupied by the farm servants, with the older and better southern half occupied by the farmer. Several farmers have been tenants over the last 100 years, and the farm has continued to grow in acreage, taking in more lands from farms which no longer functioned.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

34



Woodbury House is an attractive Georgian house built in 1781, the first house in the parish to be built of brick. Its origins are very interesting as it was built on land owned by Philippe Lempriere who had been the Attorney-General of Jersey, but was forced to flee the country in 1769 when there was a revolt against him and his elder brother Charles, who was the Lieutenant Bailiff of the Island. Philippe had many business interests in London and Southampton, and after having lost his wife and children to illness in Jersey, he married again, this time to Mary, the daughter of Charles Weekes who was the owner of Thorn Barton and its lands in Woodbury. Lempriere was a tough businessman, and on finding that Charles could not raise the money to pay the marriage settlement, called in his debt and claimed most of Weekes's lands including those in Woodbury. On part of land he had bought from another local man he built Woodbury House, or as it was known until the 19th century Axes after John Axe, the original owner of the land. Philippe died in 1787 leaving all his estate to his great-nephew apart from the contents of the house and a small annual sum to his wife. She had the choice of living in his house in Southampton or in the one in Woodbury – she chose the latter. She died in 1798 and the property went to the son of Philippe's nephew (after a codicil to the original will). The whole estate was sold to Lord Rolle, apart from Woodbury House and certain lands of Thorn Barton. All early reports of Lempriere show him to have been an unpleasant corrupt man whose main concern was his own power and acquisition of money. His legacy to the village, though, is one of its most attractive properties. Sadly, according to the present owner of Rozel Manor (still the home of the Lempriere family) a portrait of Philippe and other members of his family were put into storage during the WW2 and were destroyed in a fire.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

WOODBURY DISTRICT
VEGETABLE, FLOWER AND AGRICULTURAL
SHOW & GYMKHANA
SATURDAY, 23rd JULY
GATES OPEN 12 NOON, at
GLOBE HILL, WOODBURY
MAIN BUS ROUTE
OVER £140 IN PRIZE MONEY

CLASSES FOR
HORSES, CATTLE, FLOWERS
AND VEGETABLES

OPEN JUMPING
(under B.S.J.A. Rules)
Skittling, Darts and Numerous Sideshows

CHILDREN'S SPORTS
AND
COUNTRY DANCING DISPLAY
Lunches served from 12 o'clock till 2 p.m.
Teas during the Afternoon
LICENSED BAR - ICES

ADMISSION:
ADULTS 1/6 CHILDREN 6d. CARS 5/- inc. driver
Flower etc. Schedules to be had on application to
W. Summerfield, Poundlea, Woodbury. Agricultural and
Gymkhana entries to H. G. Stokes, Webbers Farm, Woodbury
or W. J. Reeves, Rydon Farm, Woodbury. Gen. Sec. Phone 341
No outside vendors will be admitted on the Showgrounds



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I found this poster in one of my boxes of historic documents, whilst looking for something else, the other day. It relates to the annual flower show and gymkhana which was held in Woodbury every year from 1923 until probably the early 1950s. More about this next week, but just look at the prices and phone numbers. The £140 prize money must have been quite a lot back then!

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.



Flowershow and Gymkana 1923

The village has always been very competitive in the growing of produce, whether it be flowers or vegetables. From the 1920's until the early 1950's an annual produce show was staged in the field to the north of Oakhayes Lane where it meets the main Exeter road. Ultimately the field became known as "Flowershow Field". Later, when the Cricket Club took over an area here it became known as "The Cricket Field". Now of course there is a new cricket field.

To make a full day of entertainment a gymkhana was added to the proceedings, and this became part of a circuit of gymkhanas put on within the district. I am led to believe that one certain gentleman was a good show jumper, and he would try to get to as many shows in one day to win as many prizes as possible. A little like the modern jockey, but without the helicopter! Ultimately, other more amateur riders became a little dismayed, and entries dropped off a bit.

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

37



The Woodbury and District Skittles League was formed by several members of the Woodbury Skittles Team in September 1956 after building their own home alley at the Malsters Arms in Woodbury

This photograph shows the Woodbury Skittles Team, captained by Alan Middleton, with the Gerald Mitchell Cup for the season 1960/61. They also won the 'A' league the following season 1961/62

My father, Charles Middleton, held office as Secretary of the League from 1956-1980 and Fixtures Secretary from 1956-1964. In the beginning I often helped to manually enter the match results onto a large spread sheet he had drawn out. Long before computers simplified the job!

The Woodbury and District Skittles League was still going strong until Covid 19 struck and in 2018/19 there were 40 local teams split between 3 leagues and a ladies league of 7 teams.

The 1960 team were as follows

Standing left to right

A Skinner, L Brown, B Huxtable, S Bowden, C Wakley, C Middleton, not known*, W Boyland, F Miller.

Seated left to right

F Salter, F Bowden, A Middleton, J Rowsell.

Picture and text by *Joyce Peachey*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

38



Pictures:
Rushmore Farm House 1965
Rushmore Old Barn 1990



Just down over from the Woodbury Common Estuary Car Park, stood Rushmore Farm, at the top end of the bridle way that starts opposite Cottles Farm in Castle Lane. This was a Rolle Estate property in a very remote location, and was most difficult to access from the nearest road. It was about half a mile in across the common from either the top of Castle Lane, or Four Firs Cross, with a very steep descent down to the house.

It was farmed up until 1960 by Reggie Newton and his wife Maud, who retired in that year, and moved down to live in the village at the bottom of Flower Street. The Newton's didn't have a car, and their only form of transport was a pony and trap. The farm was about 90 acres in total, 80 of which was just scrub land like Woodbury Common, which accommodated his cows and other livestock. His few cows produced milk, and this was transported daily in a couple of churns to a milk stand near the top of Castle Lane, by his trusty pony and trap, from where it was picked up by the milk lorry. Reg would then come down to the village to have a quick pint at one of the pubs. The story goes, that sometimes he had more pints than he should have, and was not capable of 'driving' home. He therefore said to the pony, "Home boy!", and good as gold the pony just took him the mile and a half home. This was probably Woodbury's first driverless vehicle!

Sadly, the house became derelict after a few years, with no one living there, and an arsonist eventually set fire to it, and it burnt down. The barn remained until the early 90's, but eventually the cob walls of that succumbed to the vagaries of the weather, and partially collapsed. The rest had to be demolished for safety reasons. However, this was not before it had had a visit by the Duke of Edinburgh in his helicopter in the 1980's. Sadly now, all is gone, and only remembered by a few people, including myself.

Pictures and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

39

We met we married a long time ago,
We worked long hours and wages were low,
No telly ,no radio, no bath, times were hard,
Just a cold tap and a loo up the yard.

No trips abroad, no carpets on floors,
We had coal on the fire and never locked doors,
The children arrived – no choice in those days,
And we brought them all up without any State aid.

No valium, no drugs, and no LSD
We soothed away pain with a nice cup of tea
If you were sick you were treated at once-
No filling out forms and come back in a month.

No vandals, no mugging – we'd nowt to rob,
In fact you were rich with a couple of bob.
People were happier in those far off days,
Kinder, more caring in so many ways.

Milkmen and paperboys would whistle and sing.
A night at the flicks was a wonderful thing.
We had our troubles, we had our strife,
We just had to face them, t'was all part of life.

Something a little different for Christmas. This poem came across my bows a little earlier in the year, and I thought it might appeal to older members in particular. How true it is, and I can remember all of this – can you?! The author is unknown.

Happy Christmas to all!

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

40



The Skeleton Army confronting the Salvation Army

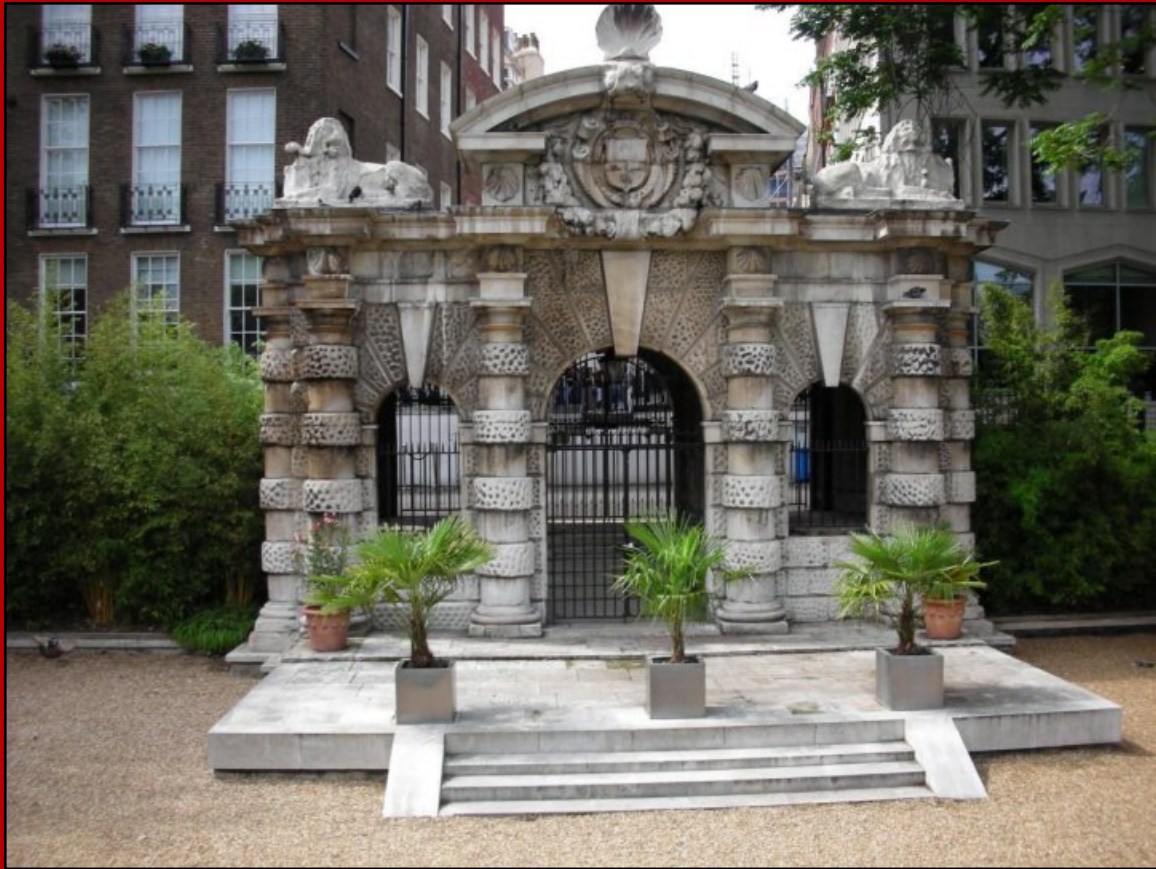
In 1881 'Skeleton Armies' were raised in Exeter and a few other places in the South of England to oppose and disrupt the Salvation Army's marches against alcohol in the late 19th century. Clashes between the two groups led to the deaths of several Salvationists and injuries to many others.

In 1883 a band of Salvationists, led by William Jewell, came from Exeter to Woodbury and conducted a service in the square in front of the post office (now the antique shop). Wyndham Potter, an 18 year old labourer of Woodbury, who was standing behind Jewell, kicked and assaulted him forcing the meeting to be abandoned. According to the local policeman Potter was a member of the 'Skeleton Army'. The following week the Salvationists again came to Woodbury where they were confronted by a crowd of the 'Skeleton Army', led by a William Vinnicombe. This 'army' had disrupted meetings in Exeter and, having heard about the religious meetings being held in Woodbury, came to do the same in the village. Vinnicombe being very drunk, and singing and swearing, marched in front of the Salvation Army members, and then led his 'army' to the Globe Inn. He was ejected by the police with his followers and about a crowd of 100 people and escorted along the road to Exeter. Vinnicombe was sent to prison for one month with hard labour, and Potter was fined 10s with 20s 6d costs.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

41



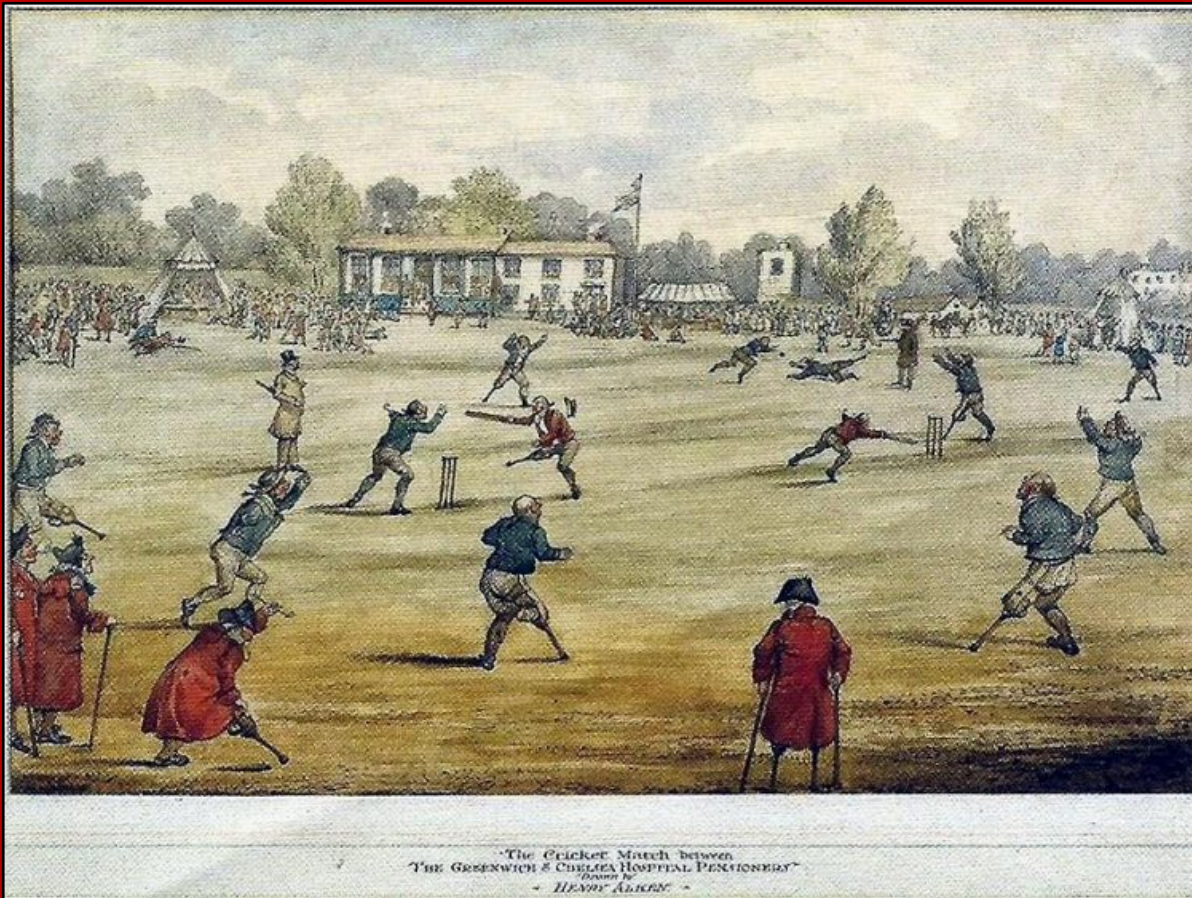
Nicholas Stone

This magnificent gateway is on the Embankment in London and is the work of the famous stonemason, Nicholas Stone. He was born in 1586, the son of a quarryman of Woodbury. His name does not appear in the baptismal register for Woodbury though his brother's does. He was first apprenticed to Isaac James, a Dutch-born London mason working in Southwark, London. In 1606 Stone was introduced to Hendrik de Keyser (1567–1621), master mason to the City of Amsterdam, and worked for him in Holland, marrying his daughter. In 1613 he settled in St Martin-in-the-Fields, where he established a large practice and workshops and soon became the leading English sculptor of funeral monuments. In 1626 he was appointed master mason and architect at Windsor Castle and in 1632 was appointed as master mason to the Crown. By the end of the 1620s he had become England's leading sculptor in stone and marble and by the following decade he had achieved a similar position in the building trade. He retained this pre-eminence until the end of his working life. He had more than 80 commissions which were primarily executed in alabaster, marble, or stone. He produced some of the most significant monuments and sculptures of the entire 17th century in England. In his capacity as a master mason Stone's works included building the Banqueting House at the royal palace of Whitehall to Inigo Jones's designs (1619–21) and Goldsmiths' Hall in the City of London to designs of his own (1635–8). His career came to an end with the outbreak of the English civil war. Though prosperous at the close of his working life he was later 'sequestered, plundered and imprisoned', supposedly on account of his loyalty to the crown. He died at Long Acre, London, on 24 August 1647 and was buried at the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Maimed army and navy pensioners

This etching records a game of cricket played between the army pensioners from Chelsea and the naval pensioners from Greenwich in the early 19th century. Several matches are recorded between the two including a game in which one-legged naval pensioners challenged one-armed army pensioners. These games were very popular spectator events, and not surprisingly, there was a lot of gambling. Usually two innings were played over a period of two days. As has been commented this gives a whole new meaning to the term 'leg stump'! In 1859 a cricket club was founded in Woodbury by the Reverend John Loveband Fulford and almost certainly played on the large grass area in the front of his new house of Parsonage. As far as is known all the team had full use of their limbs, though the vicar, playing in the first game fell and injured his leg. The first team which represented the parish was made up of a few gentlemen and sons of well-known tradesmen in the villages. The first two games were against a Topsham side, when Woodbury managed to rustle up a few runs. Their next opponents were the men of Ottery St Mary, who gave them a good thrashing with Woodbury only managing to score five runs, of which two were 'extras'. There were no more reports of Woodbury cricket after the summer of 1859, so perhaps they became disillusioned after such a trouncing.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*



Ailsa Cottage

As you walk along Broadway towards Town Lane you pass two pretty semi-detached cottages. They have been altered over the years but the early origins are still visible. Ailsa Cottage, the furthest one, has an unusual history. It was known for many years as Leonard's and then Nicholas's Cottage from the families of those names. William Nicholas was a stone mason who leased the cottage in 1751; by 1824 a thatcher called Michael Howe was occupying the cottage – it was recorded that there were six tenants living in the complex in 1832, the period when Woodbury's population was increasing. The earliest surviving record shows that in 1579 James Fetherstore held one cottage and two parcels of land in Broadway for the rent of 3s. 4d – he was still in possession in 1605. In 1930 the cottage was occupied by Dr Henry Wallace Furnivall, the son of Woodbury's doctor. Henry and his wife had returned from Singapore where he had worked with the Malayan Medical Services in Singapore. He sadly died not long after moving back to Woodbury (where he was born), but his wife remained in the cottage and in time remarried. There were no children from the marriages; however, Dr Furnivall had brought back with them a servant, Ayah Mary Viagoula, from Singapore who remained in Devon with them. She was known in the village as 'Black Mary' and remained here until her death in 1985. Her simple gravestone can be seen in the extension burial ground.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

44



In 1968, when we were farming at the old Webbers Farm, Woodbury was one day descended upon by a visiting group of artists. Each one painted a different area of the village for the whole day. At the end of the day, residents were asked if they wished to purchase the paintings, and my mother bought this one.

The picture shows what is now the area of Culvery Close, looking in from the bottom of Bonfire Hill end. The Dutch Barn, which is shown here containing hay, was built in 1932 by the Rolle Estate, as my father was tenant of the farm, and the buildings needed some improvement. Behind the barn was a lean to extension, and that had another extension attached as well. At the back of the picture you can see the end of Birdcage Cottage, which is still there today.

When the farm premises were sold in 1983, the Dutch Barn was dismantled, and we re-erected it at the new farm premises in Castle Lane. So it is currently now 88 years old. It was made of far thicker steel than you would get today!

Up until 1983, these premises were the home to 100 cows, 500 pigs, and at times up to 800 sheep at lambing time. It also had a small silage tower under the barn, and on frosty mornings the smell of silage would linger in the valley until lunch time. No one minded or complained about this in those days. Different from today, no doubt! The old Fordson tractor, UTT 606, which was hitched up to a muckspreader, had a slurry loader on the side, which I designed and built in the mid 60's. This was later manufactured and sold nationally for a while, before being superseded.

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Rydon Farm

Rydon Farm is an ancient farm that is now one of the only working farms in the parish with a herd of over 350 Friesian cross Holstein milking cows, sturdy animals with a high milk yield. The farm has been in the occupation and later the ownership of the Glanvill family for over 200 years. One cannot be sure of the exact date of its origins as an individual farm, but probably in the early 1600s. In 1729 it was described in a rental as Rydon (46 acres) valued at £32 with the annual rent of 7s. The word Rydon probably means land where rye was grown. From 1500 there were fields in the area of the present farm called Rydon and it seems that the farm may have acquired its name from these fields. Since these Rydon fields and the farm itself are close to the ancient corn mill, the implication is that it was a major crop in that area. At least two of the fields have part sandy soil, suitable for growing rye. In the 16th century, when these fields were recorded there would have been a demand for rye, which made a cheaper though much-inferior bread, in a parish that had a large number of poor labourers. It is a puzzle as to why the rent paid for the farm was so low for the size of the farm and its value in comparison with other estates belonging to the Manor. In 1798 the farm was completely arable, apart from one meadow, but by 1839 there were only four arable fields but 10 fields of pasture, two meadows and one orchard. This is a big change over a 40-year period, so either agricultural needs had changed or perhaps the Glanvill family had different ideas in farming.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.



Cooks Higher Venmoor

On the way out of Woodbury, past Gilbrook, one comes to the hamlet of Venmoor. This hamlet consisted of five farms: first on the left was Cooks Higher Venmoor and close by were Plymptons and Lower Venmoor; opposite them was Hills Venmoor and further along the road on the left was the biggest of the farms, Cadhays Venmoor. Cadhays was the last fully working farm in the hamlet until about ten years ago, when it converted the farm yard and some of the lands to become Woodbury Business Park. Hills Venmoor was owned by the Rectory Manor of the Vicars Choral of the Cathedral, but the other four farms were part of the Manor of Woodbury (the Rolle Estate). All are ancient farms, though the farmhouses are of different ages, and were named after their occupants at some period. Gradually the farmhouses were detached from the farms and the lands amalgamated into other farms – all are now privately owned dwelling houses. Higher Venmoor was the home of Jacob Butter, who was the parish doctor from the late 18th century until his death in 1838. By 1859 all the farms were still active with the Rolle Estate ones being leased by an influential farmer, James Ashford, who was the son-in-law of Dr Butter. At the beginning of WW2 a young boy from South London was sent as an evacuee to the farm, which he loved so much, that after returning to his home after the war and having a successful career, he bought the farm whilst he was working at Kent University. On his retirement he settled in Woodbury and renovated Higher Venmoor where he lived until it became too much to look after and he felt obliged to move. This was, of course, Reg Brown.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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CAPT CROKER HORROR STRICKEN AT ALGIERS,
*on witnessing the Miseries of the Christian Slaves chain'd & in Irons
driven home after labour by Infidels with large Whips.* Page ibid

Slavery by the Barbary Pirates

We hear a lot about the African slave trade but very little about the white slaves in North Africa. In the 17th and 18th centuries North African pirates scoured the English Channel capturing ships and taking the crews and cargoes back to Algeria and other parts of North Africa. These English people, mainly from Dorset, Devon and Cornwall were treated very harshly, chained up and half starved. Occasionally the pirates would come on land and take people from the coastal areas. It was possible to rescue these poor slaves by redeeming them with large sums of money. In 1680 there is a list, amongst the papers of the Churchwardens of Woodbury, of 177 parishioners who contributed towards the redemption of one of these captives, and again a collection was made in 1693. Since it was not known the exact country of these pirates they were referred to as being Turkish. There were numbers of parishioners who were seafarers, mostly from the parts of the parish along the Exe. A maritime survey of 1619 records the names of five masters (including merchants and ship's captains), 15 sailors, and there were seven shipwrights (who also went to sea). Wills of seamen have survived, leaving their affairs in order, if, as Richard Lovering of the parish wrote 'I die in my next or any succeeding voyage'. It was usual for sailors and soldiers to make their wills before going overseas or to war, as they were well aware of all the dangers of a maritime and military occupation.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Traffic Offences in 19th century Woodbury

19th century traffic regulations for rural areas show how our present rules of the road have evolved. The Petty Sessions held in Woodbury reveal the types of offences for which riders and drivers were brought before the courts. One of the commonest offences was sitting on the cart and driving it without using reins. The next most common misdemeanour, usually committed by Woodbury butchers or hawkers, was in Exmouth or the surrounding villages where they were making deliveries when they caused an obstruction by leaving their carts unattended – the cart was usually left outside a pub! There were often cases of evading paying the toll at the turnpike gates. Sometimes the cart itself was the problem. In 1818 and 1835 there were prosecutions because the owners' names were not visible on the cart; in 1901 a horse and cart was being driven without a light; and in 1877 a man was fined for driving an unlicensed spring cart. Speeding was not uncommon and was described to the magistrates as 'driving furiously'. There were also cases of drink driving, though these were usually found because the driver had broken another traffic regulation. The fines imposed could vary from 2s 6d to 20s (£10 to £80 in modern money), with costs to be paid on top of the fine. Traffic accidents also occurred in the parish; a particularly nasty one in 1847 when the maltster from Lympstone was driving through Woodbury Salterton and he was thrown from his horse and suffered bad injuries. Four months later he was driving down Globe Hill when his horse shied and he was thrown out of the gig and was again badly injured. As with traffic nowadays, only a very tiny percentage of offences came before the courts and were reported!

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Vicars Choral in Civil War

This is the College of the Vicars Choral in Kalendarhay in Exeter – sadly a victim of the blitz in 1942. In their Hall they would have discussed their financial matters, especially the running of their Rectory Manor in Woodbury. The Manor consisted of seven farms in Woodbury Salterton, and four farms and various small estates, cottages and fields in Woodbury – in all amounting to over 300 acres in 1839. When Exeter fell to the Parliamentary forces in 1644, the Cathedral and its buildings were all taken over by Cromwell's army and vandalised. Included in this defacement were the premises of the Vicars Choral who were disbanded, as music and singing were no longer allowed in Puritan Exeter. The Rectory Manor would have been larger at this time than it was in 1839 as the Vicars Choral, for financial reasons, were obliged to sell off quite a lot of their property in Woodbury by 1800. Since the Vicars Choral ceased to exist from 1644 until they were restored to their College in 1660 the tithes of the parish were in disarray, as was the running of the manor and collection of rents. The Manor was sold to a merchant, John Holwell, a member of a prominent Woodbury family who were non-conformists and the tithes sold off by the Sequestrators. In 1660 the Manor was returned to the Vicars Choral who, by Royal command, had their lands restored and their place in the Cathedral. The return of Woodbury was vital to them as the rents and tithes were the main source of income for the impoverished Vicars Choral. By 1936 the College of Vicars Choral had been disbanded and taken over by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who sold many of the old Rectory Manor properties.

Pictures and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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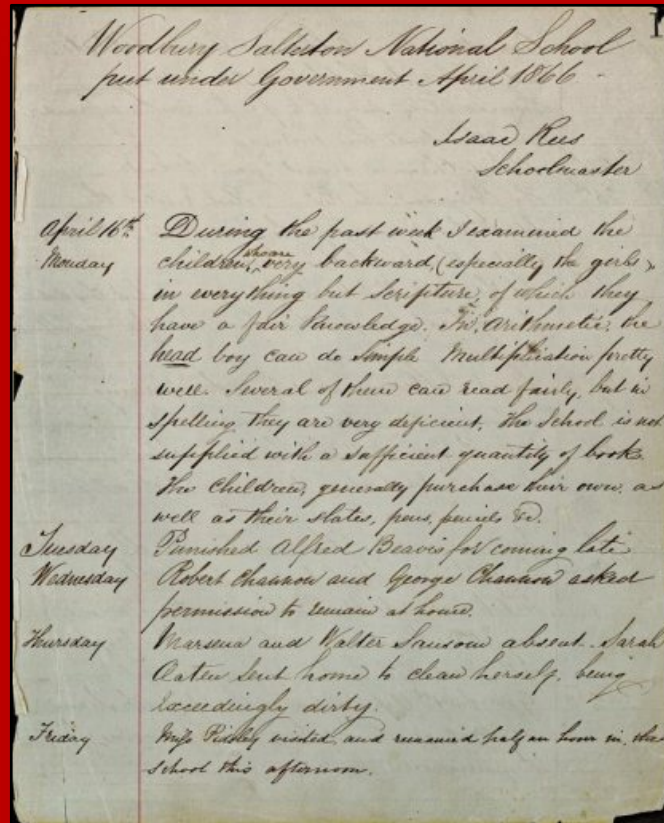
Cob wall find at Higher Venmore

When Chris Bond was trying to repair a collapsed wall for Reg Brown at Higher Venmore he discovered in the cob the above doll as well as two shoes. When these are found in walls they are normally replaced in the repaired part, but this particular wall had completely collapsed so, with Reg's permission, Chris kept the items. Malcolm Randle alerted me to the existence of these artefacts and took this photograph, as well as two pictures of the shoes. I contacted Chris and he was very happy to donate the items to the Woodbury History Society – they had been languishing in a tin in his shed. I contacted various authorities and it was agreed, from just looking at the photographs, that they probably dated from the late 18th century. The reason for burying objects in walls, roofs and chimneys dated back many years. There are two possible explanations for this custom: one being to ward off evil, which would be trapped by the artefact and prevent it coming into the house; the other reason is that it was possibly used as a fertility object. The burying of shoes in various parts of a house was very common up to the late 19th century – this again was for similar reasons as for the doll. The link with the nursery rhyme of 'the old woman who lived in a shoe' has also been suggested. Perhaps it was a tradition arising from earlier witchcraft. We cannot know why the outer wall at Higher Venmore has these objects buried – it is possible it was part of an earlier wall at the back of the present house, or even part of the original dwelling itself.

Picture and text by *Gill Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Woodbury Salterton School Logbook

I have just picked out a few snippets from the Woodbury Salterton school log books, of which there are four. They have all now been scanned. The book was started in 1866. They are a little humorous in this day and age, but of course reflect life in an agricultural village at the time. The first one says, "The school unusually noisy today, was obliged to use the cane freely to preserve order. Church Catechism said fairly this morning. Harry Salter has the itch". "The room was exceedingly dark today. The children in the upper part of the school could scarcely see the figures on their slates". "Several children unable to come to school on account of chilblains, and several have colds". "Punished George Channon, Thomas Pyle and Sydney Havill for stealing apples of farmer Phillips orchard yesterday. Punished Walter Pyle for robbing four orchards. The seventh chapter of Joshua was read to illustrate the crime for which the above was punished". *What that has got to do with it I am not exactly sure!* The next day, poor old Walter, "went and begged forgiveness of the different persons from whom he stole apples, and seems sincerely sorry for his offence". Lastly, "Elizabeth Pyle came this morning to get permission to remain at home this week on account of the hay harvest. Several children remain absent for the above reason". I think in all the above, the word punished means CANE, and it appears regularly throughout the book!

There are over 500 scanned pages of the Salterton school book on the History Society website, which are worth a read. They will certainly give you a chuckle or two! The files can be downloaded as pdf if you want, and/or enlarged on a computer for easier reading.

Picture and texts from *the WHS website*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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This would have been a familiar scene in Bonfire Lane in Woodbury, in the 1930s and 40s. Pigs and cows from Webbers Farm would have been seen daily taking themselves from the farm, up Bonfire Hill to the Path Fields. Here they would spend the day, unattended, foraging for their food. They would head for home later in the day, without any prompt, and go back to their beds for the night. The same thing would happen again tomorrow, and so on. There were also four or five other cow herds traversing the village every day.

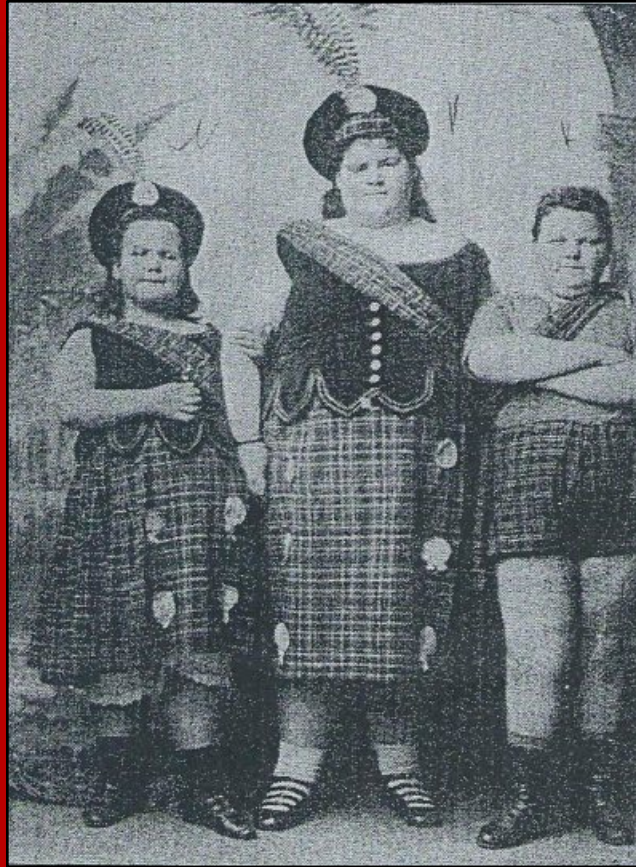
Back then of course, there were few motorized vehicles in the village, unlike today, so the risk of an accident was exceptionally rare. In fact, I have never heard that there was one with a vehicle. I am sure that all villagers who lived here then, knew exactly the itinerary of all daily animal movements, and would steer clear at the appropriate time. Indeed, they probably set their clocks by it!

Bonfire Hill was special to me when I was young, as us young boys would build a soapbox carts, take them to the top of the hill, jump on and whizz down at high speed. Probably as fast as the 'real' cars in the picture. However, one day when I came down something went wrong, and I finished up in Trixie Sellicks sting nettle patch, where I got stung all over! Those were the real 'Times Gone By' days, and I remember them well. Good honest fun!

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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The Snell Giants

This picture of 1889 shows Anna (aged 9 at 15 st 2lbs), Clara (aged 15 at 29 st. 5 lbs.) and Tom (aged 11 at 16 st. 4 lbs.) who were the children of William Snell, a baker from Exeter, who emigrated to Australia in 1870. The children were born in Australia – does this say something for the food or the climate? William's mother-in-law was Sophia Tucker, the daughter of Joseph Tucker of Heathfield Farm in Woodbury Salterton. The Tuckers had farmed Heathfield for over 200 years, and are still farming there. William saw the potential of making money from his enormous children and exhibited them around the world. On Clara's passport on her entry to South Africa her occupation was given as 'giantess'. Clara and Anna continued to travel the world, reaching even greater height and girth, and earned enough money to buy a pub. Both girls married, (Anna to a Mr Small!) and died in early middle age. Tom, when he reached the age of 21 left the family, having had enough of this exploitation and eventually became a farmer. One of his sons, Jim, followed him into farming and delved into this extraordinary family history. He has been to Woodbury and I have met him in Melbourne – a tall, well-built, but slim man! He felt very close to his grandmother's farming family at Heathfield and every year sent me a calendar of his photos of the farmland where he lived. Sadly, he died this year, and Woodbury's last link with the 'Snell Giants' has ended.

Text and picture by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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On 25 February 1891 *SS Utopia* sailed out from the Austrian port of Trieste for New York City carrying a total of 880 emigrants: 59 crew, 3 first class passengers, 815 third class passengers, and 3 stowaways, of which in all there were 85 women and 67 children. Whilst the ship was attempting to dock in Gibraltar at night a strong gale swept it into the battleship *HMS Anson*. A hole was torn in the side of the *SS Utopia* and it sank within 20 minutes. The naval yacht *Resolute* was nearby and the captain sent out a small boat with sailors to try and pick up survivors. One of these was a young man called James Turl, who was from Woodbury Salterton. Other nearby ships immediately sent rescue crews to the site, but rough weather and a strong current made it difficult for them to approach the wreck. "Rescuers, blinded by the wind and rain, saw nothing but a confused, struggling mass of human beings entangled with wreckage. Two sailors from another RN ship were drowned when their boat drifted onto rocks. The search and rescue continued until late at night, but to little avail. Out of 880 passengers and crew of *Utopia*, there were 318 survivors: 292 passengers, 3 Italian interpreters, and 23 of the crew.[[]The remaining 562 passengers and crew of *Utopia* were dead or missing. Turl and his comrades managed to save 14 people from the water, and for this act Turl was presented with a medal for bravery.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

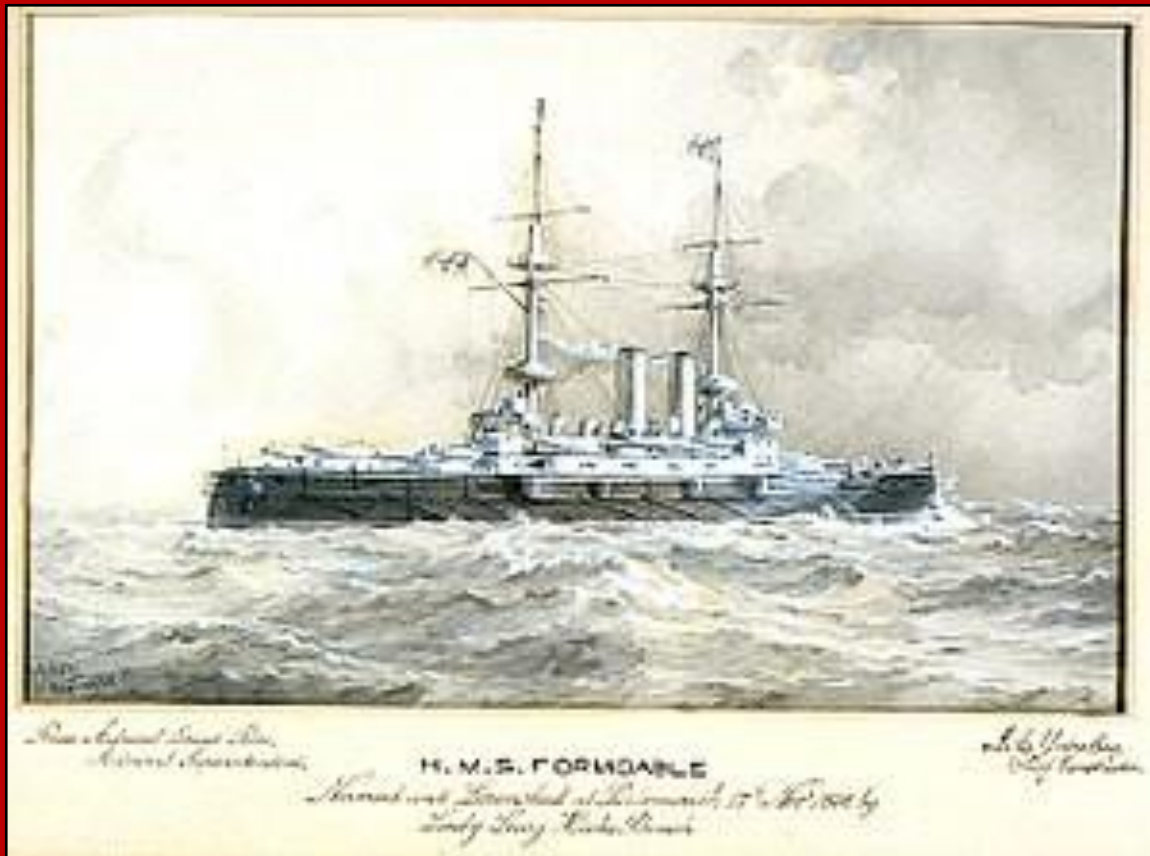
55



François John Lear MC

When the new Woodbury Church of England School was built in Town Lane in 1871 a man from Torquay was appointed as head teacher. Tom Lear was the son of a carpenter who had trained as a pupil teacher. A son Francois John was born to him in 1883 who also trained as a pupil teacher at Woodbury School. By 1911 Francois was now a fully certificated teacher and was living in the family home on Broadway. His oldest brother, also a teacher, was living away from home, and he had a sister, still at home, who was a piano teacher. In 1914 Francois was living in Dawlish as a schoolmaster and is recorded in the register of Freemasons in Salem Lodge. In 1916 he was called up for service in the Royal Horse Artillery. He was sent out to India, where he joined a Masonic Lodge in Bombay, with the rank of Sgt, and was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant the following year. He was posted to France in 1917 with the rank of full Lieutenant. His father, and the people of Woodbury, must have been so proud to read in The London Gazette a report of Francois receiving the Military Cross in July 1918 for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. The citation read: *when he was in command of a section of his battery a shell set fire to an ammo dump, putting two detachments temporarily out of action. After getting the wounded clear, he organised search parties and continued his work. The great courage, determination and initiative displayed by this officer set a splendid example to the men.* He remained a teacher throughout his working life, and died in Worthing in 1960.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley.



The Tragic Davey family of Woodbury

HMS Formidable, the third of four ships of that name to serve in the Royal Navy, was the lead ship of her class of pre-dreadnought battleships. The ship was laid down in March 1898, was launched in November that year, and was completed in September 1901. In 1902 the ship was in Sardinia where a tragic accident occurred, when the ship's derrick fell after hauling in boats, and three naval men were killed. Amongst the dead was John Searle Davey of Woodbury, the son of John Searle Davey and Mary nee Soper. This was a double tragedy for Mary as her husband had been killed in 1887 by falling from the shafts of a wagon. He had been bringing a load of manure back to his employer at the Gilbrook tannery, when he evidently slipped from the shafts and was crushed by the wheels whilst passing through Clyst St Mary – the horse, with its load, made its own way back to the tannery! To add to the sad list, Mary's brother in law was killed in 1894 by an earth fall at the waterworks on the Common. The sad story continues: Mary's grandsons, Arthur and Job Davey, died in the First World War. Arthur enlisted at the start of the war and was part of the Expeditionary Force - he was killed in action at Givenchy in December 1914. Job also enlisted early in the War and was killed in Flanders in 1917. There must have been much mourning in Woodbury by the end of the War, as two other young men of the extended Davey family were also killed in action. One cause for rejoicing, though, was that a further five members of the Davey families returned safely to Woodbury.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.



The Court House on Globe Hill

The County of Devon was divided into 22 divisions for Petty Session Courts, with Woodbury chosen as one of those divisions which included all the parishes between Otterton, Exmouth, Clyst St Mary, and Farringdon. The Sessions were originally held in the Globe Inn because it had a large room considered suitable. It was soon realised that this was not an appropriate venue and so in 1859 Devon County bought land on Globe Hill and commissioned an architect from Bicton, Mr Kingdon, to draw up plans for a Court House, and accommodation for prisoners and the police. Mr Bradford, a builder from Exeter was chosen to put the plans into commission. The architect's plans can be consulted at the South West Heritage Centre at Exeter and are very detailed, including the types of brick to be used and where they were to be acquired. The Court House was used for the first time on the 10th of June 1861. This must have been a relief to the landlord of the Globe Inn since he had received no rent from the magistrates for the use of his rooms. The Court House continued for the next 50 years to administer justice, but gradually Exmouth, the rapidly-growing town, took over most of the cases. The building had many uses in the 20th century: a remand home for young offenders; a home for unmarried mothers; and later council flats. The building became very run down and in the early 21st century it was sold to a developer who turned it into private flats – a difficult task as it is a listed building.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.



Webbers Farm House

This house, built in 1850, was large with 6 bedrooms and two staircases. The front stairs and the back stairs. The house also had two distinct ends – the “posh” end, and the servant’s end. I hasten to add however, that despite this being my birthplace, I was brought up in the servant’s end! The “posh” or owners end had nicely planed oak floorboards, and was for a previous period in time, whereas the servants end had ill fitting elm floorboards. A central door in the landing upstairs, and another in the passage downstairs divided the two areas. It seems amazing to me that such a differential should have been built into the original house. There must have been a definite “upstairs and downstairs” attitude in the early days, even in a farmhouse. My father became the tenant of the farm in 1932, but the exterior has changed little since then.

On the ground floor there were two large reception rooms, a kitchen which then was called a scullery where all the food was prepared, and a large room actually called the kitchen which was where all the farm workers would come for their meals around a large table. This room also contained a large inglenook fireplace, on each side of which were, and I expect still are, two bread ovens. The chimney was large and open and straight up to the top. I can remember putting an extending ladder right up to the top from inside the fireplace, and going up to the top and looking out! However, such chimneys had major disadvantages. My parents used to sit on benches on either side of the roaring fire in an effort to keep warm, but the draft up the chimney took all the heat upwards, so that they had lovely rosy faces but frozen feet! Eventually they blocked off the inglenook with a brick front in an effort to keep the house warmer. This lasted until the early 1970’s when my wife and I took it out again, and reverted to the inglenook. However, by then woodburners had come in and drafts could be controlled, so we were able to have the best of both worlds!

Now of course this area is known as Woodcote Court.

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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During the last month I have scanned about 200 fifty year old 35mm slides, which have not been seen since the 1970s! This has brought to light a few more village scenes, which, unless you are aged 55 plus, and lived in the village then, you will never have witnessed. Back then, daily village life was much different to what it is today. Apart from the herds of cows which could be seen traversing the main village street daily, there were also other animals such as sheep and young cattle, which could be seen going to and fro from one field to another. Usually there was one person in front, closing garden gates as they went along, and another behind opening them up again. This was a daily occurrence, and people enjoyed seeing these animals going past, not least for their droppings, which were avidly picked up to be put on their tomato plants! Because most of the farms in Woodbury had their fields far from the farmstead, animals sometimes had quite long distances to travel. Many a time I have walked with sheep and cattle from the village, up Castle Lane to the Common, where they would then go along the track below the Castle, to fields below Four Firs crossroads. To go to other fields, we would go along Town Lane and then up the main road towards Budleigh, to fields below the Quarry at Blackhill. At sheep dipping time, we would also walk with sheep to Postlake Farm at Clyst St George, which was over a mile each way, and where they had a sheep dipping tank. We would usually only meet one or two cars the whole way, on any of these trips. Around this time however, things changed drastically as car numbers increased, and it was no longer safe to have animals on the roads. From then on they had to be transported, so the scene above on Bonfire Hill would never be seen again. This was obviously a detriment to local householders, who no longer had their hedges trimmed environmentally!

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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This is another of my scanned slides from 1975. Once again, those of you who are not over 55 in age will know little of what was happening back then.

The country was struck by what was called Dutch Elm disease, and this covered most of the British Isles. It totally killed off all the majestic elms in Woodbury parish over a period of years, some of which may have been the best part of 100 years old. It was quite a sad time, but as in all tragedy's, it gave a bonus to someone else. In this case it provided parishioners with a bonus of logs to keep the home fires burning for many a year. However, the wood was extremely hard, and not easily possible to split by hand, especially if the grain was 'twisted', which a lot of it was. This heralded the advent of hydraulic log splitters, which took the effort out of the job, but it even made some of them 'grunt' a bit!

This picture shows the elms that were at the rear of the now village car park, being felled into what is now Haymans Orchard. This is now filled with houses, so it is a good job that this was done before they were built!

Picture and text by *Roger Stokes*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Lady Jane Grey

So, what is the connection between Lady Jane Grey and Woodbury? The last surviving daughter of the Albermarle (d'Aumarle) family, who were the Lords of the Manor of Woodbury, was born about 1343 and married William Bonville of Shute. She was her father's heiress and on inheriting the manor it was joined to the numerous estates of the Bonville family. In 1474 Cecily Bonville, who inherited the manor from her father (who with her grandfather was executed after picking the wrong side in the Wars of the Roses), married Thomas Grey the 2nd Marquess of Dorset, and the manor became part of the estates of the Grey family. Cecily's granddaughter was the ill-fated Lady Jane. Her father Thomas, the 3rd Marquess, was very opposed to the Catholic Queen Mary and became involved in a rebellion against her, and as a consequence was sent to the Tower and beheaded in 1554. Since all property of a traitor was escheated, reverting to the Crown, Lady Jane (her father's heir) was unable to inherit the Manor of Woodbury. A successful Sergeant-at-Law, John Prideaux, a Devonian working in London, bought the Manor of Woodbury as well as the Manor of Nutwell, and set up residence at Nutwell Court. The original direct link with the Albermarles, first resident family of Lords of the Manor of Woodbury, was now broken forever.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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The picture above is of Andrew Brice who published an Exeter newspaper in the early 1700s. Most of the news he printed was national news brought down daily from London, unless there was a local scandal to enlarge his readership. His malevolent reporting was the cause of an affluent Woodbury farmer, called Nathaniel Langley, to be found guilty of a murder at Mallacks Farm in 1722. In 1726 a disgruntled servant claimed before a magistrate that Langley was a murderer. Brice was able to discover all the details of the case and reported it in full in his newspaper, giving his own prejudiced view which poisoned the jury against Langley. The Judge directed the jury to find him not guilty, but the jury was determined to give a contrary verdict. The judge refused to give the order for him to be hanged and Langley remained a chained prisoner in Exeter High Gaol for over a year until he received a free pardon. A petition had been sent to the King concerning the case and, in reply to the Royal request, the judge detailed all the evidence and why he considered Langley to be completely innocent. The biggest factor in his loss of freedom and good name, as well as the permanent confiscation of all his estates and goods, was the vicious tongue of Andrew Brice and his newspaper.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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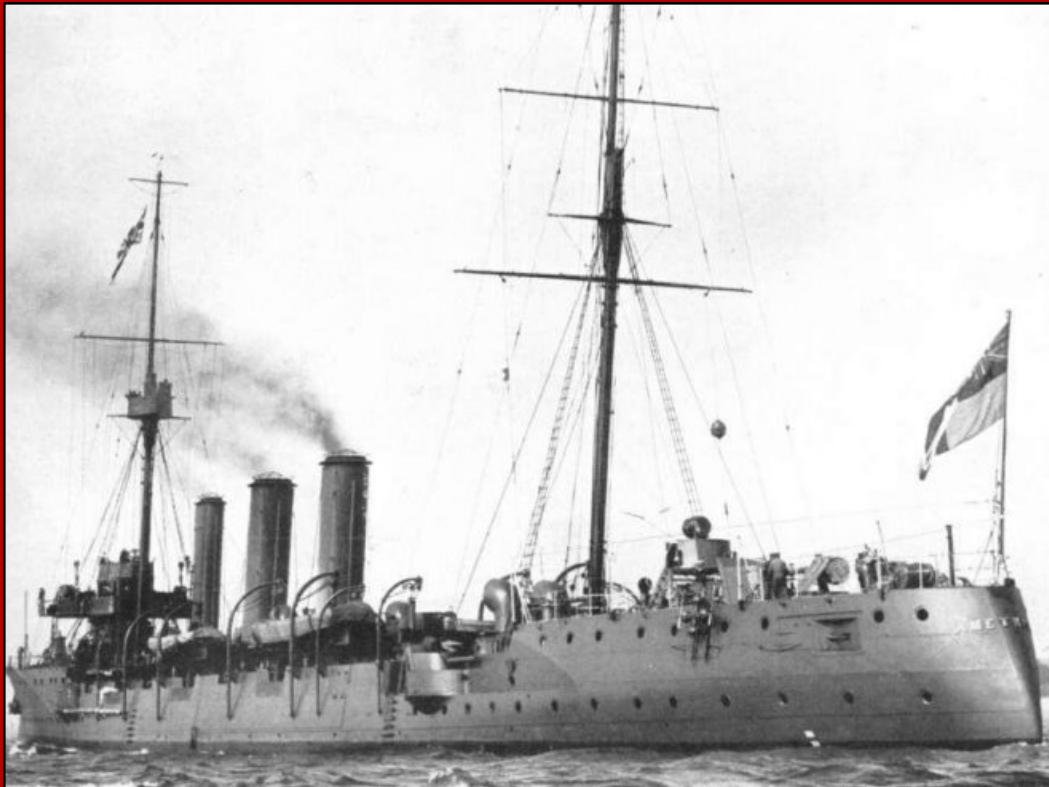
Doddington Hall in Lincolnshire

This was the home of George Jarvis, a serving officer in the army, who inherited it from his fiancée who died a few weeks before their marriage. He was one of the 21 children of Thomas Jarvis, a sugar plantation and slave owner in Antigua in the West Indies. The Jarvis family had been plantation owners since the early 1700s and the men had held high office in the island. So, what has this got to do with Woodbury? One of George's sisters, Rachel, made an unfortunate marriage in Antigua to a wastrel called John Wilkins, and after producing two sons ended up as paupers living in a cottage at the bottom of Cottles Lane in Woodbury in the early 1800s. From a life in Antigua of great wealth with servants to obey her every whim, Rachel was reduced to suffering from the cold of a damp cottage with barely enough money to survive without the help of the Overseers of the Poor. In her desperate state Rachel contacted her brother, who was now living at Doddington Hall, and explained her desperate condition. He took pity on her and sent her a regular allowance of money. After Rachel's death in 1841 (at the age of 86), George continued to send an allowance to her son Oswald, who had married a village girl called Mary Soper, and had three children to support. Oswald and his son were labourers and Mary and the daughters worked as lace-makers. When George died, he left an annuity of £50 per year to his nephew. George's son continued to look after the Wilkins family and even supported Oswald's children when he too died. The daughters were so appreciative that they wrote to their wealthy relatives to thank them and also sent them articles of lace made especially by them. The Wilkins girls married and moved to Exeter and the Jarvis family continued to live at Doddington. Oddly enough the present owner and her sister were school-friends of my own daughters at a convent-school in Cambridge, and I only discovered the connection when researching the Wilkins family in Woodbury.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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On 14 Mar 1915 the light cruiser, HMS Amethyst, was leading six minesweepers in an attempt to clear the mines in the Dardanelles campaign and was hit by Turkish artillery and badly damaged. Twenty two men were killed on board and 38 men were wounded, four badly, of which was a young stoker called Sydney Leonard William Lear. He died 11 days later in the RN Hospital in Malta from his injuries caused by multiple shell wounds. Sydney was a stoker '1st class' and joined the navy as a 12 year old boy in 1910. By 1911 he was recorded in the census as a stoker '2nd class' at Portsmouth. Stokers working in the depths of the ship were the most vulnerable of all the crew on board any vessel, also with the most unpleasant job. Sydney was the son of Sydney Thomas Lear, who had been born in Woodbury, but went to London where he was apprenticed to a jeweller, eventually setting up his own business in Paddington. In 1890 he married Arabella Millie Brown, a servant from the house where he lodged. Their son, Sydney Leonard William, was born in 1898, the year before his father died at the early age of 32, leaving a widow and three small children. In 1910 Arabella married again and settled in Eastbourne with her new husband, her daughters and stepchildren. On the naval documents concerning Sydney's death he is listed as Sydney Leonard William Lear Allcock (his stepfather's name) which has made it very difficult to trace his history. For a long time it seemed as if there had been some sort of error on the Woodbury War Memorial until I realized that Sydney's name was added (though it is possible that he may never have been to Woodbury) by his grandfather Tom Lear, the former headmaster of Woodbury School, but still living in the village.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.



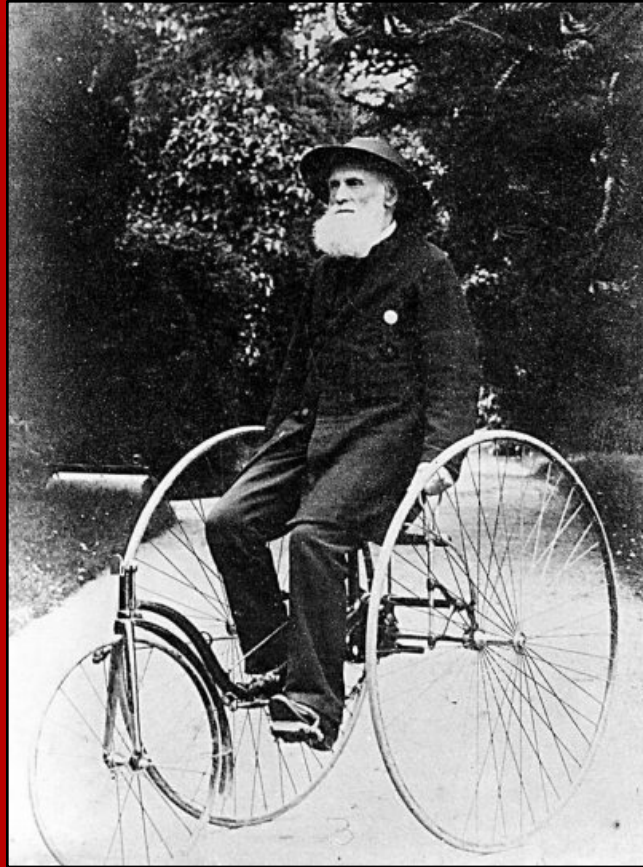
Woodmanton Cottage

This is the sad sight of the devastating fire which destroyed the roof of much of this cottage in 2017. If you wander through Woodmanton, today, you will see that the building has been re-thatched and repaired, and is once more a very attractive cottage. It has an interesting background as one of the Rolle Estate farms in Woodmanton, and known as Heathys Tenement or Haynes Ground. Woodmanton was made up of 10 farms all belonging to the Manor except Lower Woodmanton Farm (formerly Reeds & Rocketts) which was a freehold estate. Heathys was a 36 acre estate and can be traced back to the 1605 survey of the Manor of Woodbury, so there was a Tudor farmhouse on the site. It would be interesting to know if there are any indications of Tudor (or earlier) occupation in the house or grounds. The lessees of the farm in 1605 were called Hearth (or Heath), from which the name of the estate arose. But in 1708 it was leased by Richard Manston, a shipwright from Parsonage Stile (next to Nutwell Court), and later by Thomas Curtis, a mariner from Lymptone, whose wife had inherited the estate from her father Richard Manston. The deeds only record the lessee, so it is not known who actually farmed the estate at the early period. In 1863 the lessee, Robert Nicks, was declared bankrupt and the farmhouse and contents were advertised for auction – the farmlands became absorbed into the lands of Woodmanton Farm, which was in the hands of William Nicks. And so Heathys disappeared as a farm leaving just a dwelling house and garden.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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The Reverend John Loveband Fulford 1814-1896

The Vicar of Woodbury, the son of a serge-maker from South Tawton, was educated at Cambridge (not an Oxford man and supporter of Pusey as accused) – his model and influence in church architecture was Pugin. For many years Fulford was the secretary of the Exeter Ecclesiastical Architectural Society and contributed a number of articles to its journals on church architecture. His son, Robert Medley was a trained architect and responsible for work on many churches in Devon, as well as drawing up plans for the repairs and alterations to St Swithuns. Amongst the Vicar's many talents was wood carving, with some of his efforts on show in the choir benches. He was a musical man: played the flute, tuned and repaired the church organ, and also turned his hand to making instruments. The famous occasion of the removal of the church organ to his house so that he could mend it caused uproar amongst his adversaries in the parish – even though most of them never crossed the threshold of the parish church! He also rang the bells and was a member of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers. He founded a cricket club in the parish and played in the early matches before injuring his leg. He moved with his family into the newly built, though incomplete, Parsonage House in 1849 before it was actually finished, so he probably wielded his hammer and chisel on it. He was also a member of the Cycling Touring Club for over 20 years- parishioners would regularly see him riding around the parish on a cycle which he himself had designed.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

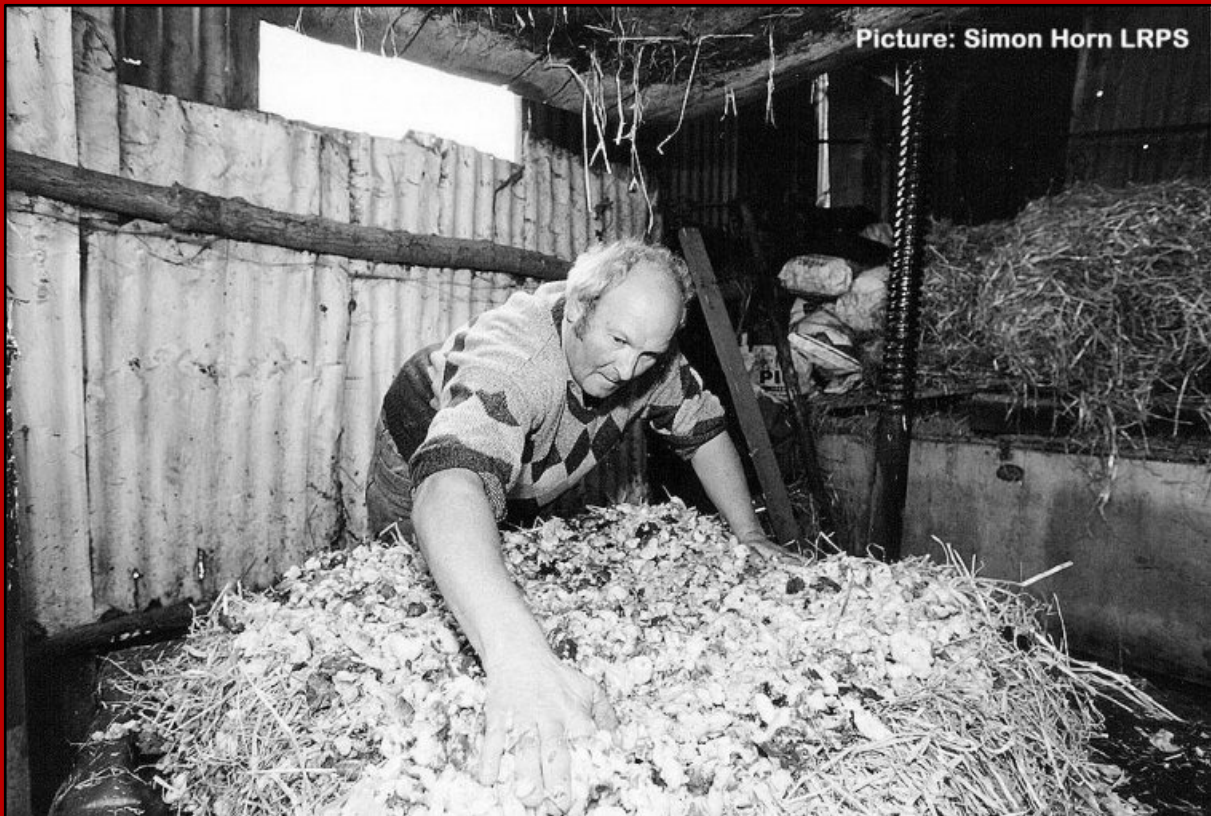
67



William Whetcombe merchant in Turkey

William Whetcombe was a merchant with the Levant Company in Smyrna (now Izmir) in Turkey - the above picture showing how it looked in the 17th Century. He was born in Woodbury in 1610, the son of a merchant mariner who held estates in Exton and Ebford. He was apprenticed to an Exeter grocer called George Macey and made a freeman of the City of Exeter, after which he joined the Levant Company and traded in produce from Turkey, mainly raisins. His two older brothers were also merchants, one based in London and the other in Kinsale in Ireland. William did not marry, nor did he return to Devon, but died in 1654 in Smyrna at the age of 44. He left a very interesting will in which all his bequests were left in the currency of the time, Royals of Eight ('pieces of eight'). The will throws some light on his life in Turkey including the fact that he had slaves. He willed that his two slaves should be freed and given a sum of money, but the son of the male slave was not only given his liberty but a trust was set up by two of his friends with money to be used for his education. He named amongst his beneficiaries his 'master', George Macey in Exeter, members of his family and the captains of his two ships. Additionally he left money for the poor of Woodbury and Ebford. His parents, William and Agnes, had both died by this time and their grave stone can be seen on the floor of the north aisle of St Swithuns. His older brother Tristram died in Kinsale in 1657 – he had been mayor of the town for many years and was a successful merchant in the fishing and salt industries. The third brother, Benjamin, was also very successful, retiring eventually to a manor house and estate in Gloucestershire. He left, in his will, £100 to be used to buy an estate, the rent and profits from it to be given annually to the poor of Woodbury and Ebford. This estate still exists and is now known as Stallcombe House.

Picture and text by *Gill Selley*.



Cider making in Woodbury

During the whole of the 20th Century, and before, cider making has taken place in the Parish. In the early years, most farms would have had their own equipment to process the apples from their own, and the many other orchards in the area. Cider was an important part of the staple diet of all good farm workers. Whereas we may take a cup of coffee or tea when we take a break during the day, they would resort to the cider bottle for comfort. As their jobs then were almost 100% physical compared with today, perhaps they also got their strength from the apple.

Rural cider making waned during the 1950's as the larger cider makers took over and orchards were scrubbed out, but the art has never completely died out in our parish. Made in Woodbury "Scrumphy" as it is known, could still be obtained if you knew where to go, up until the early 2000's! For many years in the recent past cider was made annually at Gillbrook, where an old press still remains. When this ceased, the late Norman Bowles of Woodmanton Farm decided to renovate his old and disused press, and bring it back into production. Five local lads, assisted by Normans expertise in the matter, enjoyed many years of production at Woodmanton until he retired in 1980. Luckily, they took a lot of photographs, so the method was not lost. Following that, limited production continued from Woodbury's last remaining working press at Lower Mallocks Farm. This also was discontinued in the early 2000's, due mainly to the current difficulty in getting local apples, and the ages of the 5 lads now getting towards their 70's. Some of the cider from the Gilbrook press used to be exported to pubs in Exmouth, on the back of the coal merchants empty lorry, after he had delivered his coal. That's initiative for you!

The classic picture above, shows David Olesky putting the finishing touches to a cider cheese before pressing. Dave, and some of the other lads still live in Woodbury. The picture, one of several, was taken by Simon Horn, a local press photographer of the time, who used to live in the village.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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**£5
REWARD**

WHEREAS
Some evil-disposed Person or Persons did on the Night of Tuesday last, or Wednesday Morning, Maliciously, Wantonly, and Wilfully break **THREE WHEELS** belonging and attached to a Scuffle, which is used for Cleaning Land, the Property of **RICHARD COLES**, at Ebford, Parish of Woodbury

Whoever will give Information of the Offender or Offenders to the said **RICHARD COLES**, shall on conviction, receive the above

REWARD.

Exeter, Woodbury, April 10, 1841.

Woodbury Association
FOR THE
PROTECTION OF PROPERTY.

**5 POUNDS
REWARD.**

WHEREAS some Person or Persons, did on Monday Night last, the 13th. Inst., or early on Tuesday Morning, Break open a Corn Chamber, at Ford Farm, in the Parish of Woodbury, and Steal therefrom a quantity of Corn and Grain, viz.—7 Bushels of Barley, 2 Bushels and Half of Wheat, and 2 Bushels and Half of Peas, the Property of Samuel Lindsey.

This is to give Notice that Whosoever will give Information of the Offender or Offenders, so as to lead to Conviction, shall receive the above REWARD, by application to

J. S. LINDSEY,
Secretary, and Treasurer

Woodbury, December 26th, 1841.

PRINTED, AND STATIONER, FOLE-STREET TOPSHAM.

It's quite clear that crime is not something new in Woodbury. Between 1841 and 1845 there were a number of agricultural incidents, a couple of which are shown here. If the perpetrators were found and convicted, the penalties could be severe. A spell of hard labour in the Exeter jail was the usual outcome. The same applied in 1857, but some 200 years before these posters, in 1674, the significance of Woodbury's orchards and apples were equally prominent. A case came before the Quarter and Petty Sessions in Exeter, when Peter Scott, yeoman of Woodbury and his wife Elizabeth, along with Gilbert Snow, yeoman, John Isacke, husbandman and Zacheus Melhuish, a worsted comber, were charged with causing a disturbance and assembling in the orchard of William Dyer, clothier of Woodbury. They were also charged with stealing 20 bushels of apples, and 10 bushels of pears worth five pence, from the said William Dyer, and did beat down and carry away 30 apple trees and pear trees from the orchard and garden, worth fifty shillings. Back then of course, this would have been a considerable value. What the ultimate intention was for this "orchard war's" scenario is unclear, but it does show that both the fruit and trees were objects of some importance, back then.

Pictures and text by *Roger Stokes*.

WOODBURY IN 1902 ..

CORONATION FUN IN A DAY OF EVENTS

Reprinted from the "Devon and Exeter Gazette," August 12, 1902. The paper is now incorporated in "The Western Times and Gazette," and published by us.

WOODBURY was en fete on Saturday. The day was heralded in by the ringers, who rang merry peals in the early morning and again in the afternoon. At 8.30 a.m. there was a celebration of the Holy Communion.

START FROM 'THE ARCH'

At 11 o'clock there started from "The Arch" a fancy procession, which was marshalled in the following order:—Outriders of Yeomanry, commanded by Sergeant-Major Knott; East Budleigh Band; fire engine, manned by the Brigade; various horsemen in costume; car representing Britannia (Miss Copp), attended by Canada (Mr. Passmore), India (Mr. Phillips), Australia (Mr. H. Glanville), South Africa (Mr. J. Copp); clowns; lace makers (the chief industry), arranged by Mrs. Skinner; decorated perambulators; May Queen (Miss Summerfield), with six children in attendance; Friendly Societies; Japanese car, arranged by Mrs. H. Hearn; King (Mr. Shell) and Queen (Mr. Moss) drawn in a car by four ponies, with outriders and postilions, attended by numerous horsemen and Volunteers; car of Red Cross ambulance, with nurses, coolies and wounded soldiers; Church Lads' Brigade, under Mr. W. Daley; Peace (Miss Pyne), with Briton (Mr. Smith) and Boer (Mr. Marks); Robin Hood and his Merry Archers; decorated perambulators; four children representing the United Kingdom, with the distinctive flags and emblems of each country; clowns; six boys and six girls as Soldiers of the King, under the direction of Mrs. Passmore; Red, White and Blue Choir (18 in all) who sang patriotic and topical songs during the procession and at the different stopping points; Red Riding Hood and the Wolf (Mr. Passmore's car); Chinese horseman (Mr. Stamp).

WAGGONS AND HORSES

The waggons and horses were kindly lent by Messrs. Copp, Channon, Crook, Glanville, Hallett, Miller, Passmore, Phillips, Perry, Skinner, Smith, Summerfield, Mrs. R. Glanville, etc. The cars, after being photographed, proceeded round the village.

This very pretty show reflected the greatest credit on all who took part in it, and will long be remembered by Woodburians. The

chief work of organisation fell upon Mr. and Mrs. Passmore, Messrs. Phillips, Shell and Abbott, the last-named acting as marshal.

An adjournment was then made to the Oakhayes Field (kindly lent by Major Gordon), where all the inhabitants over 15 years of age sat down to an excellent dinner. The chairman (the Rev. R. Neely) proposed the toast of "The King and Queen"; "Church and State," responded to by the Rev. G. Bird; "Navy and Army," coupled with the name of Mr. Hodgkinson. The enjoyment of the dinner was intensified by a telegram, brought by Mr. D. Daley, announcing the completion of the Coronation ceremony at Westminster. After dinner there was a long round of amusements. The band played frequently during the rest of the day. At 4 o'clock tea was partaken of, after which Coronation medals were presented to the children by the Rev. J. and Mrs. Bird.

SPORTS AND CONCERT

The sports were resumed, and a concert was organised, in which the following took part: Red, White and Blue Choir (trained by Mr. Passmore), Miss Stokes, the Little Soldiers, and Mr. and Mrs. Moore, with Mrs. Sansom. The pianoforte was kindly lent by Mrs. Fulford. The Fire Brigade gave a very smart exhibition, under their energetic captain, Mr. Abbott. The merriment continued till 9 o'clock, when an adjournment was made to the bonfire, built by Mr. Dew in a field lent by Mr. Copp. The bonfire was lighted by Mr. Neely. After singing the National Anthem and "Auld Lang Syne" the party dispersed.

Besides those already mentioned, Messrs. Lear and Stokes (sen. and jnr.) worked very hard both in organising the festivities and on the field of operations. Besides the organised decorations, in which Mr. Dew played the leading part, most of the houses were decorated with flags, wreaths, etc., and there were several beautiful arches. In the evening the Post Office presented a pretty appearance with its festoons of fairy lights. The tea was arranged by a committee of ladies, and the dinner and amusements by a committee of gentlemen, who toiled hard and successfully to make the day a red-letter one for Woodbury.

As this is the last edition of 'Times Gone By', I thought this might be appropriate. I recently found this press cutting amongst 'my heap', which shows how Woodbury responded to the coronation of Edward VII in 1902, following the death of Queen Victoria. As always back then, the whole village was put into party mode. I always find the descriptive text of these old press reports fascinating, with their, what we would now call, ' quaint ' vocabulary, but it is always spot on. You can see that the village was really flourishing 120 years ago, and the odd car was something to behold, not like today! I hope you have enjoyed this series through the lockdown, but hopefully we will now be able to get back to normal by the September meeting. My sincere thanks to all the contributors through the last 18 months, without whose help this series would not have been possible. I hope that you now know a little more about your village than you did before.

Roger Stokes